

State Response to Internally Displaced Persons and Invigoration of Boko Haram Insurgency in Northeast Nigeria

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Abstract

The insurgency orchestrated by Boko Haram in Northeast Nigeria has no doubt led to the emergence of large number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). The strategy adopted by the Nigerian state in response to this proliferation of IDPs has implication for the overall counter insurgency programme in Northeast Nigeria. This study examined whether the inadequacies that characterize Nigerian state response to IDPs bolstered the financial and personnel strength of the Boko Haram sect. The study relied on secondary data collected via documentary approach and analyzed through content analysis. We adopted the gatekeeper state theory as the explanatory framework for the study. Based on the foregoing, the study contended that the preoccupation of the political elites to accumulate resources obtained both from external and domestic sources channeled for management of the IDPs weakened state capacity to secure the IDP camps and resettle the IDPs. As a corollary, the IDPs became easy sources of recruitment for the Boko Haram sect. Again, the poor securitization of the IDP camps and relief materials saw some of the resources being appropriated by the Boko Haram sect. The study concludes that the lapses in state's response to management of the IDPs invigorated the insurgent groups by providing new sources of funding and personnel for the group. We recommend the need to mainstream IDP management in overall counter insurgency programme by ensuring that IDP camps and relief materials are secured from the insurgents.

Keywords: Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs); Insurgency; Boko Haram; Northeast; Security

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Introduction

Boko Haram also known as *Jama'atu Ahlissunnah Lidda'awati wal Jihad* (People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad) has gained notoriety globally due to its unprecedented terrorist activities in Nigeria and the neighbouring countries. Although the actual date of the emergence of the group remains a source of controversy, scholars like Onuoha (2013) traced the origin to as far back as the period between 1995 and 2002, which he described as the latent incubation stage. Boko Haram abhors the legitimacy of the secular Nigerian state and wishes to wage war against it in an effort to replace it with an Islamic Caliphate. The sect gained infamy following its adoption of violence in pursuit of its objective since 2009 after launching an insurgency against the government in several North Eastern states of Nigeria in which thousands of people were killed (Internally Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), 2013).

Meanwhile, one major feature of any state challenged by insurgency is the proliferation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in and around the state. IDPs have been defined as:

persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border (African Union, 2009, p. 3).

The violent activities of the sect coalesced with the heavy-handed counter insurgency operations of the Nigerian military to result in the proliferation of (IDPs) in the North East especially beginning from 2014. In fact, as at March 2017, there were over 1.8 million recorded IDPs scattered in the six North Eastern states with Borno state housing the largest number of IDPs (International Organization for Migration (IOM) 2017). In fact, Boko Haram insurgency has accounted for the highest number of recorded IDP in Nigeria as a whole in the past decade (Mohammed, 2017).

In a bid to address the challenge of IDPs proliferating in the North East, Nigerian government has responded via various strategies and mechanism including using the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA).

The activities of NEMA and SEMA have also been supported by local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In 2015, the Presidential Initiative on North East (PINE) was set up to as channel through which the government will address the challenges of IDPs. By 2016, the Presidential Committee on North East Initiatives (PCNI) was created to provide an over-arching framework to rebuild the North East and address the challenges of the IDPs. Some writers have noted that Nigerian state's response to the IDP challenges is inadequate due to inadequate resource allocation and poor coordination of activities of overlapping agencies (Mohammed, 2017). Other scholars have decried absence of clear cut policy and institutions saddled with the task of addressing IDP challenges (Fatile & Bello, 2015). While such explanations are not necessarily wrong, there is need to examine the implications of poor state's response to IDP challenges for the overall counter insurgency operations. This study therefore intervenes to examine whether the poor response of Nigerian state to the proliferation of IDPs in the North East has provided opportunity for Boko Haram to recruit members and finance its operations.

Theoretical Framework

Our analysis is anchored on the gatekeeper state theory. The concept of 'gatekeeper state' was coined and expounded by an African historian Frederick Cooper in his seminal work titled *Africa Since 1940: The Past of the Present*. Cooper (2002) attempted to explain the character of African states who depend on recognition and support from external agents to be able to extend their powers internally and command the respect of the people. Cooper (2002) traced the gatekeeper character of contemporary African states to their colonial history and experiences.

Essentially, the basic assumptions of the gatekeeper state theory as articulated by Beresford (2016, p.471) include *inter alia*:

- external dependency on international resources;
- an inability to provide basic services or perform basic social functions for the population.
- volatile gatekeeper politics based on political patronage.

On the basis of the basic postulations of the gatekeeper state theory, we argued that that there has been proliferation of IDPs in the North East since 2014 due to state failure to contain Boko Haram insurgency. Meanwhile, Nigeria has depended largely on charities by donor

agencies to meet the humanitarian needs of the IDPs. For instance, out of the 139 billion naira budgeted by the Presidential Committee on the North East Initiative (PCNI) for providing comprehensive relief to IDPs in the North East, over 110bn was expected to come from external donors.

Worse still, as a gatekeeper state, much of the funds received from donor agencies together with funds appropriated by the federal government have mainly been appropriated by the leadership and their cronies through shady contracts. An assessment of the implementation of the situation in the North East have shown that the huge amount of money from donor agencies and federal government appropriation to provide relief materials to the IDPs have not translated to improvement of the conditions of the IDPs in the North East. Some of the funds donated by non-governmental organizations and individuals towards alleviating the plight of the troubled people include: the sum of N6.3 billion donated by Dangote and other individuals; \$800 million donated by World Bank; \$248 million donated by UNDP for the rebuilding of the North East out of which \$24 million has been released so far; \$200 million donated by United States; \$750 million donated by Saudi Arabia and N900 million donated by the donated by Australian government, among others. from the sum of N55.92 billion pledged by donors in 2014 for the Safe School initiative, the N23 billion has been redeemed (Odufowokan, 2016).

Boko Haram Insurgency and Proliferation of IDP in North East Nigeria

The *Jama'atu Ahlissunnah Lidda'awati wal Jihad* (People Committed to the Propagation of the Prophet's Teachings and Jihad) popularly known as Boko Haram which means "Western education is sin" gained infamy since 2009 following the group's uprising against the government which resulted in over 800 deaths and the arrest, detention and execution of Mohammed Yusuf while in the custody of Nigerian Police. After the death of Yusuf, Abubakar Shekau who was Yusuf's hardline top deputy became the new spiritual leader of the group (Onuoha, 2014). The major objective of the group is to replace the secular Nigerian state with a strict Islamic Sharia law, applicable throughout the entire country. Boko Haram draws its members mainly from disaffected youths, unemployed graduates, and destitute children, mostly from but not limited to Northern Nigeria. The group has no clear and precise structure and this contributes to its ability to orchestrate its guerrilla warfare.

In trying to analyze the dynamism of Boko Haram, Onuoha (2013), demonstrated that the group has undergone various stages of metamorphosis which began with a “Latent incubation” stage (1995-2002) when it existed as harmless Islamic group operating as *‘Ahlulsunna walijama’ah hijra’*. Between 2003 and July, 2009, the group entered its second stage in which it metamorphosed to a “Militant Mobilization” state known as ‘the Nigerian Taliban’. During this period, it targeted and attacked public building and state security forces. From August 2009 – May 2011, Boko Haram entered the third stage which is the ‘Islamic Insurgency’ phase characterized by guerrilla warfare, suicide bombing attacks, kidnapping and assassination of targets. Finally, from June 2011 to 2012, Boko Haram metamorphosed into a “Domestic Terrorist” stage, in which the group sought to extend its influence and associations beyond Nigeria. The group is believed to have focused on more suicide bombing during this period, as a way to avoid the new military task forces designed to eliminate the group.

It is during this final stage of ‘Domestic terrorism’ which has continued till date that Boko Haram unleashed unprecedented mayhem in Nigeria especially in the North East region with states like Borno, Yobe and Adamawa being the worse affected. The high and increasing level of violence perpetrated by Boko Haram since then has made it gain notoriety as the third most deadly terrorist organization in the world. As a result, Nigeria currently ranks as the 4th country worse hit by terrorism in the world due to Boko Haram activities (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2014).

Available evidence reveals that between 2009 and 2012 alone over 3,500 Nigerians were killed by the group through its violent activities. This figure increased significantly in the period 2013 to 2014 with over 8,000 deaths occurring in the period attributed to Boko Haram violence (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2014; START, 2015). Table 1 presents details of number of reported Boko Haram attacks and corresponding number of deaths and injuries for each year from 2009-2014.

Table 1: Boko Haram Attacks Between 2009 and 2014

Year	Number of Attacks	Number Killed	Number Wounded
2009	10	304	NA
2010	17	72	130
2011	125	327	453
2012	423	1251	827
2013	233	1728	380
2014	493	7112	1785
TOTAL	1301	10794	3575

Source: Calculated based on Data from National Consortium for The Study of Terrorism & Responses to Terrorism (START) (2015). *Global Terrorism Database (GTD)* Available online at www.start.umd.edu/gtd (accessed 15-10-2015).

Proliferation of IDPs in Northeast Nigeria

Boko Haram insurgency has resulted in the proliferation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) with millions of people internally displaced from their places of living and sources of livelihood in the country. The volume of IDPs arising from Boko Haram insurgency is regarded as the highest recorded volume witnessed in the country in the last two decades with over two million people displaced with and outside Nigerian borders (Mohammed, 2017). As of March 2017, the number of IDPs in the Northeast region of the country alone totaled over 1.8 million (International Organization for Migration (IOM), (2017). Table 2 shows, that Borno state is the worst hit with over 1.4million IDPs.

Table 2: IDPs According to States in the North as at March 2017

States	IDP Figure	Population (Proj. to 2010)
Adamawa	146605	3,912,837
Bauchi	56607	5,832,115
Borno	1428947	5,160,411
Gombe	26063	2,936,295
Taraba	57902	2,806,058
Yobe	116619	2,910,958
Total	1,832,743	23,558,674

Source: International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2017). Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM): Nigeria Round XV Report, March 2017. Abuja, Nigeria: IOM – The United Nations Migration Agency. Available online at <http://www.nigeria.iom.int/dtm>

Although, some other factors like communal clashes and natural disasters have contributed to the rise in volume of IDPs, majority of the IDPs in the Northeast are displaced due to Boko Haram insurgency. For instance, IOM (2017, p. 7) reported almost all the IDPs identified in Borno, Gombe and Yobe were displaced by the insurgency while 97% and 70.5% of the IDPs in Adamawa and Bauchi respectively were displaced by Boko Haram. More so, the displacements escalated as from 2014 as only 1% of the people were displaced prior to 2014. However, in 2014 percentage of the total population displaced increased to 33%, by 2015 it was 31%, the figure rose to 34% in 2016 and first quarter of 2017.

Nigerian state response to the proliferation of IDPs in North East Nigeria

The frightening volume of IDPs in the Northeast has drawn both national and international attention. Meanwhile, the 2009 African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa also known as the Kampala Convention highlights the responsibilities of State parties to IDP. Such responsibilities include protection and provision of humanitarian assistance to the IDPs. Specifically, Article 5(1) of the Convention provides that:

States Parties shall bear the primary duty and responsibility for providing protection of and humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons within their territory or jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind (African Union, 2009, p. 7).

Although, Nigeria ratified the Kampala Convention in 2012, there has been no coherent policy relating to management of IDPs in the country. A draft policy on IDP was revised following the ratification of the Kampala Convention but has not been passed into law (Mohammed, 2017). At the national level, various strategies and mechanisms were adopted to enable the state respond to the proliferation of IDPs. The various institutions saddled with the responsibility of handling issues relating to IDPs include the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants, and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI); National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA).

National Commission for Refugees, Migrants, and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI).

Established by Decree 52 of 1989 now Cap. N21, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 (NCFRMI Act), the Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons is the coordinating agency of all migration-related issues in Nigeria. The Commission's mandate was expanded on by the federal government through an executive order to cover issues relating to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and the coordination of migration and development in 2002 and 2009, respectively. This expansion has been contentious, as the bill to repeal the NCFR Act of 2000 to extend its mandate to IDPs, stateless persons, and migrants was never passed and therefore is yet to acquire the legal approval required (Mohammed, 2017).

National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) was established in March 1999 by Act 12 of 1999 as amended by Act 50 of 1999, to manage disasters in Nigeria. NEMA's mandate is to address disaster-related issues, coordinate responses to all emergencies, and provide relief through the establishment of concrete structures and measures (Mohammed, 2017). Specifically, the functions/powers of the Agency, as enumerated in Part 11 Section 6 subsection 1 of the Act, among others include:

- ❖ formulating policy on all activities relating to disaster management in Nigeria and co-ordinate the plans and programmes for efficient and effective response to disasters;
- ❖ monitoring the state of preparedness of all organisations or agencies which may contribute to disaster management in Nigeria;
- ❖ collating data from relevant agencies so as to enhance forecasting, planning and field operation of disaster management;
- ❖ educating and informing the public on disaster prevention and control measures;
- ❖ co-ordinating and facilitating the provision of necessary resources for search and rescue and other types of disaster curtailment activities in response to distress call;
- ❖ co-ordinating the activities of all voluntary organisations engaged in emergency relief operations in any part of the Federation.

State Emergency Management Agencies

Part III of the 1999 NEMA Act focuses on the establishment of state emergency management committees for each state of the federation which shall be headed by the governor of the state, and include a number of cross-cutting services, including the State Ministry of Women.

In addition to the activities of NEMA, SEMA and other agencies/organizations responding to the challenges of IDPs in the North East, in 2012, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) was set up to assist resolving the IDP problem in the North East. The HCT was composed of:

- NEMA and the SEMAs, all Federal and State Government MDAs with primary/responsibility roles of initiating, organizing, coordinating and implementing humanitarian assistance in Nigeria;
- The UN Humanitarian agencies;
- International Office of Migration;
- Several Components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement;
- Other Non-Governmental-Organizations and International Organizations that undertake humanitarian action in-country or have operational relevance in the humanitarian field.

The challenge with this response strategy includes the fact that much of the agencies like NEMA and SEMA are not specialized agencies for IDP management and as such lack the relevant resources and skills to adequately address the challenge of IDPs being experienced in the North East region of Nigeria. This manifested in operational ineffectiveness witnessed in their management of IDPs. There was also no efficient over-arching coordinating framework to coordinate activities of participating agencies especially with the deluge of agencies and organizations especially NGOs which tried to respond directly to the challenge of IDPs in the North East.

In order to address these challenges of operational ineffectiveness, lack of coordination and the like, the Presidential Initiative on North East (PINE) was created overarching framework for government response to the humanitarian crisis in the North East. In 2016, the Presidential Committee on the North-East Initiatives (PCNI) was set up to coordinate existing initiatives,

strategies, and stakeholders in order to ensure a concerted action to support the northeast. The Committee launched ‘The Buhari Plan’ which serves as a comprehensive plan for the northeast recovery (Mohammed, 2017). The Buhari Plan which provides an overarching framework for State’s response to IDPs in the North East is built around 10 pillars of economic development which includes safety and security; good governance; infrastructure; agriculture; health; education; entrepreneurship; women and youth empowerment; regional planning and strategic growth; environment; border security and international trade development; and solid minerals (Presidential, Committee on the North East Initiative [PCNI], 2016, p. 27). The PCNI came up with a 139 billion naira budget to address the challenge of IDPs and revamp the economy of the North East (see table 3).

Table 3: Summary Budget for the Immediate Comprehensive Relief Programme

S/N	DELIVERIES	INITIAL COSTS (₦)	NO. OF DELIVERIES	TOTAL COSTS (₦)
1.	14 Food Items	35,602,939,655	2	71,205,879,310
2.	13 Non-Food Items	50,347,588,776	1	50,347,588,776
3.	Unconditional Cash Transfers	1,642,860,000	5	16,429,750,000
TOTAL FOR IMMEDIATE COMPREHENSIVE RELIEF		44,615,038,571		137,983,218,086
ESTIMATED ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS		1,063,877,864		1,170,005,864
GRAND TOTAL FOR IMMEDIATE COMPREHENSIVE RELIEF				139,153,223,950
TOTAL FEDERAL FUNDING APPROPRIATED & EXISTING BUDGETS				28,200,000,000
TOTAL ESTIMATED FUNDING GAPS				110,953,223,950

Source: Presidential, Committee on the North East Initiative [PCNI], (2016)

To further bolster the capacity of the federal government to address the mounting humanitarian pressures in the North East, on 17th of November 2015 the Senate raised the amount proposed by the Executive in the budget for the IDPs from six billion naira

(N6,000,000,000.00) to ten billion naira (N10,000,000,000) (National Assembly Proceedings 2016). In addition to this funding , funds donated by non-governmental organizations and individuals towards alleviating the plight of the troubled people include: the sum of N6.3 billion donated by Dangote and other individuals; \$800 million donated by World Bank; \$248 million donated by UNDP for the rebuilding of the North East out of which \$24 million has been released so far; \$200 million donated by United States; \$750 million donated by Saudi Arabia and N900 million donated by the donated by Australian government, among others. from the sum of N55.92 billion pledged by donors in 2014 for the Safe School initiative, the N23 billion has been redeemed (Odufowokan, 2016).

However, much of the fund were expended through bogus contracts and did not translate to alleviation of the challenges of IDPs in the North East. Table 4 shows some of the contracts awarded with the funds released for alleviating the humanitarian crisis in the North East.

Table 4: Contracts Awarded under the Presidential Initiative on the North East.

SN	BENEFICIARY	PURPOSE	AMOUNT (N)	BANK	ACCT. NO.	DATE
1	VFS/Conference for Reb of the NIL	PCNI Conference	50,000,000.00	GTB	0199701417	1/1/16
2	VFS/Conference for Reb of the NIL	PINE Contribution to Conference on Rebuilding the N.E	50,000,000.00	GTB	0199701417	1/1/16
3	Sahel Associates Consulting	Being 50% payment for Consultancy services with respect to rehabilitation of burnt schools	7,005,486.00	SKYE	1770467560	17/3/16
4	Emmanuel Global Enterprises Limited	50% payment for consultancy services with respect to rehabilitation/renovation of primary & secondary schools in Adamawa	9,937,590.30	ECOBANK	1913020719	17/3/16
5	Prime Cost Engineering Consultants	50% payment for Consultancy Services with respect to supply and installation of tents & rehabilitation of destroyed schools in Yobe and Borno	9,799,630.20	FBN	2017780722	17/3/16

6	JOSMAN Technologies Limited	Payment for removal of invasive plant species along river channels and 115 Hectares simplified village irrigation in Yobe	203,357,908.80	FCMB	3046159014	29/03/16
7	JOSMAN Technologies Limited	Payment for vehicle and removal of invasive plant species, and irrigation project in Komadugu, Yobe water channels	20,689,399.00	FCMB	3046159014	29/03/16
8	Isyours Investment Limited	Payment for supply of non-food items to IDP in Borno	37,754,900.00	SKYE	4090216786	30/03/16
9	Isyours Investment Limited	Payment for supply of food items to IDPs in Bauchi	9,355,750.00	SKYE	4090216786	30/03/16
10	Isyours Investment Limited	Payment for supply of food items in Borno	50,299,270.00	SKYE	4090216786	30/03/16
11	Isyours Investment Limited	Payment for supply of relief materials (food & non-food) to IDPs in Borno	50,299,270.00	SKYE	4090216786	30/03/16
12	Isyours Investment Limited	Payment for supply of relief materials (food & non-food) to IDPs	37,754,900.00	SKYE	4090216786	30/03/16
13	Greenstone General Enterprise Limited	Payment for rehabilitation of police station in Gombi, Maiha LGAs Adamawa	97,630,694.41	Zenith	1014071875	31/03/16
14	JMT Global Technologies Limited	Payment for rehabilitation of police station in Kwambir, Adamawa	80,710,360.62	Zenith	1014367188	31/03/16
15	Dantex Nigeria Limited	Payment for the supply of food & non-food items Adamawa and Yobe States	258,075,000.00	Zenith	1010557708	01/04/16

16	Lintex International	Payment for the supply of temporary shelters	117,000,000.00	Keystone	1006128691	01/04/16
17	Dantex Nigeria Limited	Payment for the supply of temporary shelters	108,000,000.00	Zenith	1010557708	08/04/16
18	Umruq Nigeria Limited	Payment for supply of food items	37,619,200.00	GTB	0140198073	31/03/16
19	Umruq Nigeria Limited	Payment for supply of food items	2,084,400.00	GTB	0140198073	31/03/16
20	Horizon Interlinks Global Resources Ltd	Renovation Of Police Station And Others	12,245,117.48	FCMB	3669263015	13/04/16
21	Buni Gari Company	Renovation of Classrooms	18,899,165.50	Fidelity	5600287270	13/04/16

Source: Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2016). Votes and Proceedings, 8th National Assembly Second Session No. 18

Boko Haram Exploitation of IDP Camps for Recruitment and Funding

The poor response of the Nigerian state to the proliferation of IDPs is demonstrated in its inability to manage and secure the IDP Camps housing much of the IDPs in the North East. As a result of this, Boko Haram exploited the IDP camps for recruitment and stealing of relief materials. Thus, Boko Haram has on various occasions invaded the IDP camps to abduct people some of whom are eventually converted to Boko Haram members. Some of the reported incidence in which Boko Haram invaded IDP camps include the following:

Attack of IDP Camp in Dalori

On 30 January 2016, Boko Haram attacked Dalori IDP camps 1 and 2 and killed four persons in a suicide attack over the night. Dalori camp is located on the road from Maiduguri to Konduga, Bama and the border between Nigeria and Cameroon, 15 kilometers South-East of Maiduguri. The camp has been targeted by many attacks from the Boko Haram insurgency, including suicide attacks.

Attack on IDP Communities in Adamawa

On 24 August, 2017, Boko Haram attacked and burnt down Bayan Dutse and Kubu Communities of Madagali LGA of Adamawa state. The incident left 14 residential houses

destroyed after the terrorists carted away relief items meant for Bayan Dutse village (Marama, 2017).

Attack of IDP Camp in Banki

On Friday, September 1, 2017, some Boko Haram fighters penetrated the IDP camp in Banki on Nigeria's border with Cameroon which houses 45,000 internally displaced people (IDP). During the invasion, the sect used knives to kill some of the IDPs, forcefully abducted some others and carted away food stuffs from the IDP (Olugbode, 2017).

Conclusion

The insurgency perpetrated by Boko Haram has led to the proliferation of IDPs in the North East. The number of IDPs scattered in the six North Eastern states has continued to increase since 2014 reaching over 1.8 million as at March 2017. Meanwhile, the response of Nigerian state to the challenges of IDPs have remained inadequate owing to factors such as tendency of elites to appropriate funds and materials meant for the IDPs, weak capacity of existing agencies saddled with the task of addressing the challenge of IDP and lack of coordination of activities of collaborating agencies and NGOs. This study contend that the inability of the Nigerian state to adequately manage the IDP camps created opportunity for the Boko Haram sect to orchestrate attacks on the IDP camps which enables them to recruit IDPs as members and cart away relief items meant for IDPs.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, we put forward the following recommendations:

- The humanitarian intervention as articulated by the Presidential Committee on North East Initiatives (PCNI), must ensure adequately monitoring of the disbursed funds and relief materials to ensure that funds are well utilized and relief materials reach the people most in need.
- The counter-insurgency campaign must prioritize securitization of IDPs camps against infiltration of Boko Haram members.

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