

## **Biographies of Selected Transport Entrepreneurs in Kano**

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### **Abstract**

*The paper examines the biographies of selected transport entrepreneurs in Kano. These entrepreneurs are Alhaji Muhammad Nagoda, Malam Uwaisu Ahmadu (Babba Dan'Agundi) and Alhaji Ibrahim Madugu (Na Bakon Wayya). The specific objectives were to examine the biographies of these transport entrepreneurs as well as their contributions to the development of the modern road transport industry which facilitated, stimulated and sustained the ensuing growth in trade and commerce in Kano and Nigeria at large. Hence, road transport system is one of the most contributing factors that made Kano a regional powerhouse in commerce, agriculture and industry. However, the selected entrepreneurs are known to be highly enterprising and industrious. They have spread their tentacles far and wide. They are industrialists and at the same time merchants and transporters engaging in the distribution of consumer products. They became the catalyst of development through provision of employment opportunities by training of interested young apprentices who later became successful transporters. The sourced materials for this work include archival materials, oral interviews and written records.*

**Keywords:** Biographies, transport, entrepreneurs, Kano

**Introduction**

The concept of biography has several definitions; it has been widely accepted as a story of person or someone written by someone else. Biography can also be defined as a story of life. Thus, a biography presents, a subject story, highlighting various aspects of his or her life including intimate details of experience and may include an analysis of subject personality. Biographies can be short or long. Short biographies tell the basic facts of someone's life and importance, while larger biographies of course with a lot of more details but they tell a good story. Biography is important in social, intellectual, economic, religious and political lives of people in a given society.

Kano is blessed with many prominent people who at one time or the other have distinguished themselves in different fields of enterprise. The irony however, is that some of these prominent figures for a long time in their lives have remained unknown to many people. Biographies and roles played by these personalities have received little historical attention. The study of the biographies of Alhaji Muhammad Nagoda, Malam Uwaisu Ahmadu (Babba Dan'Agundi) and Alhaji Ibrahim Madugu (Na Bakon Wayya) stems from this neglect. There is a need to look into the role played personalities in transport entrepreneurship and industrial activities in Kano State and Nigeria at large.

Road transport service was started in Kano as far back as 1930s during the Northern Region Government under the British colonial authority. Alhaji Abdu Angale was the first indigenous transport entrepreneur who acquired the first commercial lorry in 1938. In the 1940s, Alhaji Muhammad Na Goda and Malam Uwaisu Ahmadu (Babba Dan'Agundi) had also ventured into the transport services. As a result of this development, the gate of the Kano city had to be widened to allow free flow of vehicle in and outside the city. This study therefore discusses the profiles of some of the selected indigenous transport entrepreneurs in Kano. They initiated, perpetuated, promoted and sustained the business.

## **Alhaji Muhammadu Nagoda 1875-1980**

### **Birth and Early Life**

Muhammadu Na Goda was born in 1875, at a small village of Goda in Dawakin Kudu local government of Kano State. At the age of seven i.e. in 1882, his father took him to Maiduguri for his early Islamic education. After memorizing the Qur'an, Nagoda returned home (Kano). Before his return, his father died and therefore his mother Hajiya Fadimatu gave him nine kobo to venture into business. As a young and enthusiastic gentleman, Nagoda invested the money in a textile business such as selling clothes like shirts, trousers and women wrappers.

At the age of twenty-seven i.e. 1902 which was at the eve of the conquest of Kano by the British, Na Goda ventured into animal sale business, by transporting cows from Kano to Lagos using the old caravan trade route to the south. After selling the cows, on his return journey he used to buy kola nut and sell it in Kano. As a mark of business prosperity, Na Goda left Dawakin Kudu and relocated to Mazankwarai in Kano city where he built his own house in 1919 which was exactly the period that saw the end of the First World War. Nagoda soon became a successful businessman and was recognised among the leading Kano wealthy merchants, a status that earned him respect and as such, the area the house was built was later renamed after him and is call *Kwanar Goda*. Other business activities engaged by Nagoda during the first quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century included trading in European imported goods such as salt, sugar, soap, cloth and kerosene which he purchased from European expatriate firms such as John Holt, C.F.A.O and R.T Briscoe.

### **Nagoda as a Transport Entrepreneur**

By 1930s, lorries were introduced to Kano and Nagoda was among the second indigenous businessmen in Kano who purchased these Lorries after Alhaji Abdu Angale and used them for goods and passenger services. People often referred to the new Lorries as “*Kara-kara Motar Na Goda ta hana Yan Dako Sakewa*” (the new Na Goda lorry which deprived head loaders from having excessive freedom). These types of vehicles include Mercedes and Leyland Lorries. Before their introduction, goods were conveyed using pack animals (such as donkey, oxen, horses and camels) and head loading. By late 1940's and early 1950's Na Goda became a groundnut License Buying Agent (LBA) which gave him the opportunity to buy many Lorries. These Lorries therefore became relatively available servicing the route from the ancient Kurmi market to the modern Sabon Gari market. They as well ease movement of people and goods from one place to another.

Between 1958 and 1976, the German Volkswagen company introduced mini bus, which became relatively available and cheap. It soon acquired the name *Kia-kia* (a Yoruba word meaning hurry-hurry). The Volkswagen bus was also easy to maintain for passenger service than the lorries. Hence, the former was limited to goods haulage while the later became more accessible for passenger services. Moreover, by 1977 the Japanese Toyota Hiace bus also replaced the Volkswagen bus; the Hiace was more economical than the Volkswagen. Na Goda was the first person to buy the mini buses and gave them out for intra-city and inter-state transport services. Muhammadu Na Goda died on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1980. He left about 70 cars ranging from Lorries, kit-cars, and buses. However, his children continued the transport business.

**Malam Uwaisu Ahmadu (Babba Dan'Agundi) 1919-1995**

Malam Uwaisu Ahmadu, better known as Babba Dan'Agundi was primarily a politician by occupation and a transporter by profession. He was born on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 1919 at Kurmawa quarters near Dan'Agundi gate in Kano city, to Malam Ahmadu and Hajiya Biba. It was in that year, precisely forty days following the birth of Babba, that Emir of Kano Abbas died. At the age of five, he began his traditional Islamic education under the tutelage of his grandfather, Malam Faruk, and other members of the family. At the age of 10 i.e. in 1929, Malam Babba found himself without a job, and having lost his father from an earlier age, he needed to get himself gainfully employed. That was why he sought for a self-sustaining engagement such as bicycle hire which he did with some of his peers like Alhaji Mudi and Bashir Uda. It is in the spirit of this restless search for a means by which he could sustain himself, independent of elders, whom he did not have anyway, that Malam Babba enrolled himself into the new Beminster School at the age of fifteen i.e. in 1934.

**The Young Babba at Beminster Craft School**

The early thirties saw the influx of products of Western technology such as the bicycle, motor bike or scooter, cars, Lorries which plied the roads to and from the city much to the awe and admiration of the youth. There was a sense of power and mastery exhibited by riders and drivers of these technological gadgets most of whom did not go to school long enough to be acculturated by the Whiteman. Consequently, Malam Babba saw an opportunity to earn a living in the newly developed transport industry. So, looking determined, inquisitive but very serious, MalamBabba, on his own

initiative, and perhaps with some support from his family, got enrolled in to the Beminster the first training or Craft school for vocational engagements in 1934.

The Beminster craft school was established by a British colonial officer specifically to train young people in various crafts designed to cater for the pre-vocational needs of young pupils in woodwork, building, metal work, vehicle repair, driving, land survey, etc. It was therefore to the driving section in Beminster that 'Dan Agundi went. He was met there by the late Alhaji AbubakarJakada, one of the driving instructors. Thus, in 1935, barely one year after his enrolment, Malam Babba left the school as a qualified driver-mechanic. Not only that, the school which already had a standby arrangement with the Vehicle Inspector's Office, had, on graduation, secured a Driving License for the new driver.

### **Early Public Life**

Fully equipped with driving skills, Babba Dan'Agundi was ready to venture into a career that would later make him what he became. He started work as a Driver in the house of Salim, a Lebanese businessman, nicknamed *Gajere* “the Short One”. The Lebanese had long been in Kano City. They were among immigrant communities comprising Syrians, Sudanese, Libyans, and the Lebanese who were attracted to Kano by the city's bustling business opportunities. They mainly dealt in animal skin and hide, textiles, groundnut, cotton, and a wide range of small scale manufactured goods and raw materials.

Dan Agundi's hard work and honesty made his master to elevate his position to the rank of Chief Driver, which became the

subject of envy from the rest of the drivers in the household of Salim. By now, Salim had already given Babba Dan'Agundi a car as a gift for his personal use. The other drivers started to plot against him. Their ultimate goal was to either frustrate Babba's effort in the discharge of his duties, or frame him up, so that he could be dismissed from Salim's services. On realizing these moves, Babba Dan'Agundi thought it was time to move on. Therefore, after serving Salim for 10 years i.e. from 1935-1945, he quit his position as Chief Driver, an action which his patron found shocking and disturbing.

By the time he left the service of Salim Gajere, Malam Babba had acquired his own vehicle. It was reported that Salim Gajere himself gave a car to his Chief Driver when the going was good for master and employee. Another account has it that Malam Babba sold off the herd of cows he inherited from his father to purchase his first car. Whichever it was, Malam Babba's vehicle was the first in the Dan'Agundi ward. Within a short time his fleet of vehicles was to multiply and more people got source of employment. This marked the beginning of Babba Dan'Agundi's public life.

### **Transportation vs Politics and Unionism**

Throughout the 1940s Malam Babba concentrated on his transport business in which he hauled goods and conveyed passengers in and around Kano. He also occasionally made long trips to far away towns and into neighbouring countries. Given his disposition and frame of mind as one who would not pass by anomalies or leave uncorrected any wrong that he witnessed, Malam Babba had to be involved in groups and organizations around him. Thus, simultaneous with his transportation of goods and people, he

joined two organizations that were later to prove important in his life. These were the Kano Transporters Union and the Northern Elements Progressive Association (NEPA), precursor to the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU).

The Kano Transporters Union was an organization which had its roots in the 1930s when, despite the global economic recession, Kano and some parts of the British West African colonies were flooded by Lebanese, Asians and other foreign nationals. There then was the subsequent establishment of mills, ginneries for processing farm produce which was then also on the rise. Both the raw and processed produce needed to be transported from the farms and factories to consumers, the railways stations and the port for onward transmission to the United Kingdom (UK). The Native Authority (NA) and the then Regional Government based in Kaduna had done their best by constructing main and feeder roads and by providing materials and some services and organizations such as the Marketing Boards. On their part, the transporters were increasing in number and vehicle owners and drivers were in a cut-throat competition to get the largest share of the business. It was then that a group of individuals thought of establishing a union of transporters to sanitize the mad rush for passengers and facilitate goods delivery for all the parties, the producers, buyers, agents and the transporters themselves.

As a result, the Kano Transporters Association was registered in September 1938 following a letter sent to the Resident and copied to the Police Commissioner and the High Court signed by some of its members. Among other things, the new union included the Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba and other African nationals in Kano; its objectives included checkmating haulage price differentials by fixing it to 4d per



tone per mile and the practice of unethical deals which, in the letter, the Asians, particularly the Syrians were said to engage in. The union was evidently registered in 1938 when Malam Babba was still in the employment of Salim Gajere.

When he eventually joined the union of transporters around 1945, some ten years after leaving Salim Gajere, Malam Babba's leadership potential was soon to be recognized by other members. By 1950 he became the undisputed president of the union who commanded respect from members, all of whom admired, respected and worked in line with his pragmatic and radical insight and practical suggestions on how to go about their business. Malam Babba's regime as a President of the union revamped its importance and gave it a fresh and vigorous sense of direction. Under Malam Babba, the union gained greater respectability and was eventually given a boost by the Federal Government of Nigeria by the decree on indigenization which preserved the transport sector to indigenes only. Subsequently, transporters joined the class of rich men in the country and their business was raised in status.

### **Wealthy Transporter**

Malam Babba grew rich and as his contemporaries reported he had about 18 assortments of vehicles running business in and around Kano as well as making commercial trips to neighbouring countries like Chad, Ghana, Niger and Benin Republic. His fleet of vehicles at a time included two personal saloon cars, Japanese passenger buses (Hiace and Liteace), Mercedes Benz lorries, tipper trucks for sand and laterite; long trailer vehicles for hauling groundnut bags and cotton bails to depots, mills and ports in the

country. One of his surviving drivers recalled names of vehicles like Henshel, Subaru, GMC & Ford trucks. At that time Malam Babba had in his service over 36 drivers and driver-mates with most coming from Kano, and especially from his Dan'Agundi ward, and some from among the Ibo and Yoruba of southern Nigeria, while a few were other African nationals. Some of his drivers were Yahaya Na Doki, Alhaji Cigari, Abdulkadir Gajere and Ahmed Basha, Alhaji Dange, Ummaru, Audu Aliya, Lawane.t.c. These drivers transported goods like hides and skin, cotton, groundnut, oranges, *lalle* or henna, grains to near and distant places in Kano, Nigeria and other countries. Acquaintances reported that Malam Babba had no warehouses to hoard goods. Instead he dealt directly with depots and ports where the goods remained in transit. His vehicles were used to transport contingents and supplies for UN Peace Corps in Angola.

Colleagues, fellow drivers and transporters of Malam Babba in those years included Alhaji Audu, father of A.G. Abdullahi, Alhaji Sani Marshall, Alhaji Yakubu Soso, Alhaji Ado Direba, Alhaji Baba Na Zage, Alhaji Barau, Alhaji Tasiu, and Baba Mudi. Some of these contemporaries served under Lebanese masters as drivers before assuming their independent positions as transporters like Malam Babba. Mal Babba's economic success as a transporter in those years easily earned him the lucrative position or privilege of being appointed a Licensed Buying Agent for the Cotton and Ground nut marketing Boards. It was without doubt that Malam Babba was a rich merchant and could relax and simply superintend over and enjoy his riches.

However, luxury and complacency were not in Malam Babba's character. So, even with a big fleet of vehicles and employees

working for him he still drove vehicles and was often seen on the road conveying passengers and their goods to and from rural markets in and around Kano. In his account of how he came to meet Malam Babba, Alhaji Lili Gabari, one of the few ardent NEPU politicians in Kano, recounted how one day in 1948 he joined the transport vehicle of Malam Babba with his market wares from Jahun to Kano. He confessed that he was struck by the unusual determination, honesty and down-to-earth simplicity of that driver-owner of the vehicle which he joined to go to Kano from Jahun that day. Subsequently, he said, he continued using the services of Malam Babba's vehicles and the two discovered that they had many things in common. Their relationship was later to be cemented by the political activities that culminated in the establishment of the Northern Elements Progressive Union or NEPU. Malam Babba came in to NEPU as a wealthy man. He was therefore addressed and referred to throughout, even by stalwarts of the organization like Malam Aminu Kano as “*Yallabai*”, in recognition of his royal lineage as much as his immense financial standing.

Malam Babba's profession as a transporter was to suffer and finally to be jettisoned with his involvement in politics. Like with all other professions, transportation needed a capital which is constantly serviced and replenished by accrued profit. Even before joining politics, Malam Babba's transport capital was under pressure from his act of doling massive assistance to neighbors or any needy persons that came his way. When he joined politics and chose a party of the masses most of whose members coming from among the poor, Malam Babba subjected his profits and capital as a transporter to unprecedented pressure. He became, in addition to

being an eloquent advocate and defender of NEPU agenda and ideas, the chief financier of the organization. His vehicles were used for trips to campaign sessions, political rallies and the opening of branches in near and far away towns and regions in which party members did not pay their fare. In addition, he often gave money to bail out arrested party members, to feed families of others and to finance other party undertakings. Moreover, Babba's trucks served as free "speed posts" as letters of the party from the national secretariat in Kano were dispatch to far distant provinces with relative ease. In short, in his support for the activities of NEPU, Babba sacrificed his valuable assets by selling his vehicles one after another in order to meet NEPU's pressing financial demands which, finally brought down his transportation business. No wonder, his other name was "Rumbun NEPU", or NEPU's granary of funds. For this, he did not only gain full acceptance within the party caucus, but was actually "Yallabai" whom even Malam Aminu Kano, the leader of the party regarded and treated with deference.

Malam Babba served as the treasurer, from the formative period of the party to its glorious days as the major opposition political party to NPC in Northern Nigeria. This role was given to him in view of his wealth, sincerity and accountability in handling financial matters. He was a strong pillar in financing NEPU activities. In fact, According to Alhaji Tanko Yakasai, Babba was the second major transporter in the whole of Kano province after Alhaji Mamman Nagoda and was among the few richest people who possessed personal cars in Kano city.

Thus, as a well to do person, with established transport

business and also being a ground nut Licensed Buying Agent, at the formative stage of NEPU, Malam Babba was almost the sole financier of NEPU. Alhaji Babba's transportation business and his fleet of vehicles fluctuated with his level of involvement in NEPU politics throughout the nation's first republic. When he was released from prison detention during the Gowon regime, the former buoyant and wealthy transporter had no vehicles left in his possession. Due to his financial commitment to the activities of NEPU, the once rich Malam Babba experienced spates of pecuniary financial difficulties and, to cap it all, he finally resorted to riding a Raleigh bicycle, which he hired from Sharu Angale at Fagge quarters for his daily movement in the city. His son Alhaji Ibrahim recalled how his father had to be conveying him to school on a bicycle and to depend on his former business colleagues like Alhaji Aminu Dantata, Baballella, and others for financial support before he resuscitated his business. Subsequently, he was able to raise some bank loan and bought a couple of vehicles to restart his business. But things were never the same after the first Republic and Malam Babba had to combine transport with securing and executing government contracts which he easily secured. Subsequently, the Malam Babba Dan Agundi was appointed and turbaned as the Sarkin Dawaki Mai Tuta by Emir Ado Bayero in 1977 and the transportation business ceased altogether. Malam Babba Dan'Agundi passed away on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July 1995.

### **Alhaji Ibrahim Umar Madugu (Na Bakon Wayya) (1929-1994) Birth and Early Life**

His nicknames were (Madugu Na Bakon Wayya and Madugu *Cika-koshi Arzikisai Allah yayi* (meaning: eat to your maximum satisfaction, being and becoming rich is the will of God). Madugu was born in 1929, at Jujin 'Yan Labu quarters of Kano city. At the age of seven i.e. 1936, his father took him to Karofin Dala for his early Islamic education. By 1909, the British government had established an experimental, fragmented school at Nassarawa in Kano, where there were different sections: for the sons of aristocrats, an elementary school, vocational school and a teacher training school. But Kanawa were still sceptical about the benefits of western education or Boko one popular axiom associated with western education in Hausa Muslim communities of those days is “*Boko - Bokoko a wuta*” (western education is a gateway to hell). Hence, Alhaji Ibrahim Madugu did not attend the formal western school or Boko. The Boko schools were seen as representing secular ideas and Christianity on the other hand. As fate has it, Madugu was one of the victims as he lamented later of such rejectionist attitude to western education. But if he had attended formal western school, he would have been classified among the modern African elites and Nationalists.

Thus, the period of Madugu's childhood was a watershed in the history of Kano. The interwar years (1919-1938) were characterized by a number of developments; the death of Emir Abbas in 1919 and the beginning of a new phase in Anglo-Kano relations and the worldwide economic depression (1929-1939). This profoundly affected the fortunes of many children. They grew up to

see the value system and traditional economy of Kano being dismantled by the colonial forces. The railway opened up Kano's traditional economy to a regular capitalist exploitation as Europeans brought finished goods and took away raw materials thereby starving local industries. By 1929, the year of Madugu's birth, there were more than twenty foreign and indigenous merchant firms operating in Kano. Some of these firms included the British Cotton Growing Association, The London and Kano Trading Company, The Niger Company, John Holt of Liverpool, Lagos Stores and French Company. Gradually an export oriented economy based on groundnut, the demand for clerks and other manpower and the emergence of the township system presented a number of new opportunities for young children.

At the age of twenty i.e. 1949, Madugu teamed up with his father who happened to be a businessman. Alhaji Umaru and his son Madugu used to travel to Kazaure, Yankwashi and Karkarna now Jigawa State, to purchase groundnut. The groundnut would be taken to Alhaji Alhassan Dantata in Kano who was then a Groundnut License Buying Agent (LBA) for the European expatriate firms.

### **Madugu as a Transport Entrepreneur and Industrialist**

At the eve of Nigeria's independence i.e. 1959, Madugu With the consent of his father, abandoned groundnut business and ventured into transport business. By 1960, Alhaji Salisu Na Gomma a close business associate of Madugu bought D.K commercial bus and gave it to Madugu which he then uses for commercial transportation within Kano metropolis. Within a year, Madugu was able to buy his own bus. Consequently, between 1961 and 1978, Madugu was

adventurous to own more than 20 buses. Few years later, he became a transport magnate. The success he had in the transport business led to the establishment of his transport company known as 'Madugu Na Bakon Wayya Transport Company Limited'. As soon as the company was inaugurated, Madugu bought many long buses (luxurious buses), which were used for conveying passengers from Kano to Lagos, Ibadan, Maiduguri, Zaria, Sokoto, Port Harcourt, Katsina, Niger among several other places. The drivers were accompanied with mechanics and observers to look after the buses and the drivers so that when the car develops any fault, the mechanic would fix them.

Because of the boost in transport business, Madugu established a business relationship with some foreign automobile import companies in Nigeria around 1973, where he bought cars from them and sold. Leading among these companies were United Africa Company (UAC), John Holt, Niger Company, Unilever and A.G. Leventis. Subsequently, some of these companies considered him as the major distributor of their products in Nigeria. Consequently, he established a trading station at 'Yan Kura where he sold cars like: Honda Accord and Civic. He also sold motorcycles like: (Road Master), Honda Belli and vehicle spare parts. In 1975, He was able to secure import licence from the government which gave him the opportunity to import cars directly from overseas. As a result of this development, Madugu established a company at Bachirawa known as Madugu Na Bakon Wayya Transport Company Limited. The company was set up in 1978 at Bachirawa, Ungogo Local Government, Kano State. It was established to sell car and motorcycle spare parts such as: batteries, Dashboard, rear view mirror, wing mirror, door handle, accelerator, clutch, brake, tail



lights, exhaust tailpipe, hub cap, windscreen wiper, headrest, hand brake, rear defroster, roof, sun roof, windshield, head light fog lamp, fog light, shock absorber, gear box, wheel, tattle, driving shaft, horn among several others. Such types of cars are Honda Accord, Honda Civic, Mercedes Benz, Peugeot and Honda Motorcycles.

### **Transport vs Politics**

Alhaji Ibrahim Madugu was an ardent supporter of Malam Aminu Kano, especially during the Second Republic. During the election of 1979, Madugu supported Peoples Redemption Party (PRP) of which Malam Aminu Kano was its presidential aspirant. Because of that he contributed immensely in the Malam Aminu Kano's party (PRP). He sacrificed his energy, wealth as well as other important things that were required in the campaign process. It was unveiled that Alhaji Shehu Shagari, the presidential candidate of National Party of Nigeria (NPN) heard that Madugu donated 20 buses to PRP for their campaign; he therefore requested that similar gesture should be extended to NPN.

Nonetheless, due to Madugu's generosity, he gave 8 buses to NPN for their campaign but however reserved his ultimate support for PRP. According to Alhaji Tanko Yakasai, Alhaji Madugu was a passionate supporter of Malam Aminu Kano's Northern Element Progressive Union (NEPU) even during the first Republic. Thus, with the emergence of the PRP in 1978, Madugu continued to shower his support to Mallam Aminu Kano's party (PRP). However, Madugu's involvement into politics was not to secure political position, after all he was not a political activist, but he was regarded as a financier who contributed in financing some of the activities of the party.

Unfortunately for Madugu, after the 1979 election NPN won the presidential election. Immediately after the inauguration of Alhaji Aliyu Shehu Shagari, Madugu started facing challenges from the federal government due to his adherence and support for the opposition party (PRP). Consequently, his license was seized by the then minister of commerce; Yusuf Bello Maitama (Sardaunan Dutse) in 1982 under Shagari's administration.<sup>27</sup> After the seizure, Madugu's strength on car import was drastically reduced. Before this incident Madugu was the major importer and distributor of Honda cars in Nigeria. But after the incident, he lost most of his customers because he could not provide them with new stocks.<sup>28</sup>

However, he was able to recover the lost from other investments and companies he established later such as, Madugu Mosquito Coil Company (1989) (which specialized in the production of insecticide), Madugu Agro Allied (1991) (which specialized in the production of farming equipment and agricultural products), B.M & Brothers Enterprises (1994) (which specialized in the production of essential commodities such as rice salt and cement). Furthermore, Madugu collaborated with other industrialist in setting up a business venture. Such joint venture was the City Tea bag Company. He died on 25<sup>th</sup> December 1994 after brief illness.

## **Conclusions**

The selected early indigenous transport entrepreneurs were responsible for inspiring and mentoring other indigenous transporters who followed suit and dominated the industry especially in the 1970s and 1980s. Such transporters were Alhaji Sani Marshal (1927-2007) who began business in bicycle hire and repair. Marshal worked as a motor mate on the Chad route and was employed as a driver in Maiduguri. He acquired his first lorry in 1955 operating in the north. In the early 1960s, he shifted to Lagos and operates on the Accra route. In 1966 he had thirty Lorries and was a transporter for the Northern Regional Marketing Board operating from Lagos. Alhaji Garba Bichi traded in grain and bicycle spare parts, purchased unserviceable vehicles in Kaduna and entered lorry transporting in 1953, become a Licence Buying Agent (LBA) in 1960 with thirty Lorries at the peak of his activity.

Forest posited that among the indigenous transporters and haulage groups and those that became prominent in the late 1960s and 1970s were Dantata Transport, Haruna Kasim, Sani Marshal Transport, Garba Bichi and Sons, as well as Bello Bichi Transport. He further argues that advances in transport were assisted by the Igbo Exodus from the northern states during the Nigerian Civil War 1967-70 which subsequently led to switch to road traffic that followed the disruption of the railways and produce evacuation. Thus during the Civil War the Organization of Northern Transporters and Merchant Syndicate emerged under the leadership of Aminu Dantata and was promoted by the government. Consequently, the transporters union merchants had 100 Lorries by the end of 1966, rising to 700 in 1970.

The entry of the entrepreneurs into the transport sector and

their desire to dominate it make the union lobbied the government of the day to kick the Lebanese, Syrians and Arabs who hitherto dominate ownership of lorries used for road haulage between Kano to Lagos, out of the transport sector. This process was completed in 1972-1976 with the promulgation of the Nigerian Enterprise Promotion Decree which preserves the transport sector exclusively for indigenous participation. Thus, by 1976, there were 30 large-scale indigenous road haulage and transport companies in Kano, rising to 61 in 1980. The transport companies became involved in the transportation of passengers, distribution of cement, fertilizer and petroleum products.

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Interview with Alhaji Muhammadu Mansur Lili Gabari, a famous politician who played an active role in the formation and early activities of NEPU in the 1950s. He was also a transport entrepreneur and driver in the 1950s. He is 84 years old and interviewed at his residence at Bakin Zuwo on 26/11/15

Interview with Alhaji Ibrahim Umar Madugu (Na Bakon Wayya) who was interviewed on 15-10-2010, He was born in 1962 in Kano city. His father Alhaji Madugu Na Bakon Wayya was among the early pioneers of intra-city transport service in Kano metropolis

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