

Our Torchbearers

by Abdullahi Buba

They were humane, full of promises
When they came campaigning
Shedding crocodile tears to our plights
Of lacking this, lacking that
They promised to provide these and those lacks
They promised free:
Education
Healthcare delivery
Security to lives and properties
To boost agricultural sector
To provide millions of jobs
To train youth to be skilfully empowered
To provide enough petrol at affordable prices
To mend the gap between the haves and the haves-not
To house every citizen
To improve standards of living
But said our ballot would bail us

Yes! We succumb to their pledges
We gave them our votes
They climbed the stairs of power
Schools shut down
Teachers sacked
Healthcare services deteriorated
Vices multiplied
Agriculture abandoned
Youth neglected
Petrol scarce, expensive
Rich-poor margin widened
Masses camped on town outskirts
Standard of living deteriorated

Their riches multiply manifold
Their children school oversea
They travel abroad for medical checks
They siphoned security to their domain
They purchased farmlands and abandoned them
They built and purchased houses
They compete in buying the latest car
Their standard of living improved
Through our ballots