**15 Foolish Errors of Dakkada – To Governor Udom**

By Anamu Keme

I’m told Dakkada refers to can-do spirit; the motivated attitude; the outward stimulation for an inward drive to excel; and so on. Since Governor Udom presented this as his heartfelt message to Akwa Ibom people, it was expected that, technocrat, he would have taken the time to weigh all odds before accepting a concept such as this; that is, even if it was originally his idea. Apparently, he didn’t.

But, we must consider that if there is a time for Akwa Ibom to arise (dakkada), it is now; and if there’s a governor who could bring that attitudinal change, it is you, Udom. You obey the traffic light; your drivers don’t drive recklessly; you don’t use the siren; you don’t splash cash around; you maintain a servant-leader outlook. Your people should cut you some slack; there’s arguably no governor in Nigeria at present who appears more serious minded, not even El-Rufai – who doesn’t have the challenges you are faced with. Let’s therefore re-title this piece to *“15 Antonyms for this ‘Dakkada’”.*

1. **The idea of a carnival** - If you sincerely wanted Akwa Ibom people to ‘dakkada’, it certainly wouldn’t be initiated with showiness. How do you imagine using a carnival to inspire mentality transformation? Sir. All that campaign was fanfare – to any progress-oriented mind; and the fact that your APC detractors haven’t said anything sensible in this regard shows they are senseless. For if you really meant for people to ‘dakkada’, you would have targeted the Education curriculum, for instance.
2. **‘Gift, Turn off the lights’ -** When I heard Iyanya was going to perform in the show, I classified the project a ruse; yes, a deception. I’m sorry. And the young man did not disappoint – he justified my disappointment. How do you engender MORALITY with ‘Gift, turn off the lights’? Governor, did you consider these things?
3. **Exaggerated suspense -** On the lighter note, the suspense lasted for too long. I expected that ‘your friend Udeme [is a great man]’ would have known better as an advertising guru. It took 3 weeks for a theme – with a lightweight message – to be understood by the target audience. That’s a failed campaign. To prove it, go to Uyo and measure the effect of that campaign; you’ll see that nobody’s mindset is any better as a result of ‘dakkada’.
4. **Tacky Preparation in spite of time and funds**

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Governor, can you notice that one of the placards in the callisthenic display was missing? Did you notice the confusion among the dancers? Did you notice no lack of coordination? I’d be surprised if you didn’t. The moment I saw it, I said, OMG! This is tacky. Akwa Ibom had long crossed this level. What is wrong here? The next point answers the question.

1. **Lack of faith in indigenes -** Where was Aniekpeno Mkpanam in all of this? Was he on sick leave? I don’t care if 9999 carol had errors or if it took too much funding; the English teacher certainly had proved his worth in terms of organizing state events and protocol. So, where was he?

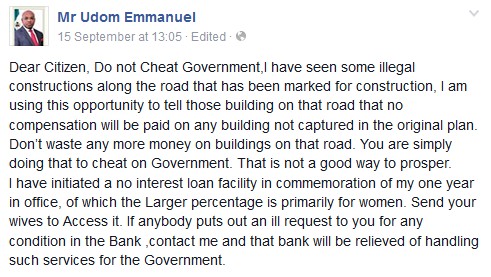
In case you weren’t told, let me make it plain to you and to the public:

* That shabby event sound was taken from Lagos, along with the technicians. I’m curious to know what Governor Udom did to them after such an embarrassing job delivery.
* The t-shirts were all printed and moved to Uyo from Lagos.
* Even the food was supplied by Yoruba guys led by Lekan. And it was as horrible as what Akwa Ibom people serve to their dogs at Ojuelegba. Ask the event crew members. Governor Udom, how could you!
* The placards you saw were flown in from Lagos. On the same day.
* They changed the dance several times before arriving at that discounted performance we saw.
* The lights were flown in from Lagos. As if we don’t have show light back in Uyo.
* The choreography was contracted to Bailamos Dance Company a group run by Yorubas and so on.
* Guess what. They went to Lagos to bring in a dance troupe called Crown Troupe. Talk about blatant disregard for Akwa Ibom State.
* Finally, the dancers confirm that it took an Akwa Ibom girl to rescue that dance we spent over 30 minutes watching – the same Akwa Ibom people the Government gleefully ignored in the first instance.
* Guess what too. Clarence Peters was hire d all the way from Lagos, to come cover the event. Can you estimate the amount of capital flight? If you saw Eddie Brendan and other names you know in the arena, it probably was because Governor Udom and/or his event consultants do not know them.

Akwa Ibom people, if you care at all about a forward mindset, the Dakkada mentality, PLEAD with your governor to bring back Aniekpeno Mkpanam, Aniekan Umanah, Anietie Ukpe and such talented individuals who have the experience, skill and heart to keep Akwa Ibom’s image on the high.

I don’t support you retaining Akpabio’s leadership structure, Sir; but wisdom demands that you bank on the experience of those men, since you are inexperienced in what they offer.

1. **Lying that there’s no funds -** The amount of money Akwa Ibom spent on the anniversary celebrations and the Dakkada campaign does not depict a state that lacks funds. Rather, it gives off the impression that someone must be lying about Akwa Ibom being broke. This brings me to the next point.
2. **Owing workers -** As of today, 28th September, Nigeria’s highest oil producing state owes her largely civil servant population. Leave grants have not been paid; pensioneers are starving; most local government workers are owed; workers recruited as far back as November 2014 have seemingly been forgotten. Workers are now rumoring that Governor Udom is building mansions in Onna and Ewet Housing while they are living on credit. What a joke! Udom was seen as a saviour by these workers; and their faith in him is such that they still believe he is. Let’s hope that this write-up nudges him to rescue his reputation before it becomes too late.
3. **Shivering before a toothless Political Enemy.** In a sense, the reaction of Akwa Ibom people, elders, youths, parliamentarians and plain level indigenes to the DSS saga is an indication of the Dakkada ideology. On the contrary, the Governor’s, maybe, careful, but sluggish and suspicious reaction to it shows the opposite. That was the point where the governor shivered before a spineless political enemy and the people rose up to ‘cast out the stranger’.
4. **Claiming you’ve already been in power for 1 year.** This is a curious and interesting one. I stumbled on the Governor’s message to Akwa Ibom people, where he, using surprisingly poor grammar – *with haphazard use of punctuations* – charged them not to build on roads and then he claimed to have been in power for one year. People, see it for yourself below.



I can’t shout…

1. **The ‘narrative’** - Please, Your Excellency, who exactly is this your spokesman that uses ‘narrative’ as if that is the only English he knows? They even say he is a journalist – with 35 years experience. Is he not the man who bungled your image by lying to the media, and was caught red-handed with audio evidence posted online? Is he still working with you? *It is either the man does not know a thing about Public Relations and the Media or he is only doing his job:* *working for Umana Umana* (who brought him down in the first instance). I’m sorry sir, but keeping that man is indicative of either fear or weakness. And that cannot be Dakkada.
2. **Insulting Civil Service -** Unknown to on looking Akwa Ibom people, the former Accountant General, Mr. Isobara was replaced by a bank manager. Civil servants know that this is a taboo – a civil servant is supposed to grow by means of promotion to get to the level of the state’s AG. As a result, staff of the AG’s office would tell you how that the AG bungles his duties, signing nonsense and refusing sense.
3. **Lack of Follow up plan** - I observed the Dakkada campaign wishing that such a lofty project deserved to be made a proper philosophy. If you spend so much to introduce a concept, you should have kept it horizontally penetrating the lives of the people in order to achieve lasting effect. In essence, it shouldn’t have died with the fanfare; otherwise, it means you had no faith in what you called a project of faith.
4. **Toying with new media -** It surprised me that even on the day of the event; #dakkada was trending as a promoted hashtag. That means, the organizers did not have the sense to engage the people for whom the project was designed, to keep it in conversations unsolicited. If you can’t attain unsolicited advocacy, your publicity is a failure. I wonder why it usually takes APC to get New Media right. You have created a New Media unit to work for you, oh Governor, yet the entire system is being frustrated by the same bug that famously brought down PDP in the last elections.
5. **Your Discomfort with the media -** And, dear sir, please quit expressing your unhappiness with the free media. You sound like an authoritarian. If you do not want them to criticize you harshly, then listen to them and pick what is wise – discard the rubbish that come with it. If you do not want them to criticize you, then you do not want to be in power. Initially, you did not even have the courtesy to recognize the Press in your speeches. The same way you accepted correction in that, please look into what the media say – and learn.

That said, I, we, sincerely expect that you do not make that painful mistake of taking aliens from Lagos, or wherever, to go execute a project that Akwa Ibomites have perfected skill in, in Akwa Ibom. Take note, sir.

1. **Naira Bet -** On a lighter note, please sir, go and un-follow Naira bet on Twitter. It says a lot about your personal financial practices.