**2. Compulsory Set Text (20mks)**

John Lara, *The Samaritan*

The state of affairs in Maracas Municipality is to be blamed squarely on its leaders. Write an essay to bring out the validity of this statement basing your arguments on the play, *The* *Samaritan* by John Lara.

**Introduction**.

When those in positions of authority are corrupt and not working as expected in a place, the life of the citizens and the activities do not develop. This is the situation experienced among the leaders in Maracas Municipality through Mayor Mossi, Inspector Bembe, Justice Jaden, Harvester, Seymour and Ted King as brought out in the play, *The* *Samaritan*, by John Lara.

Ramdaye, the Deputy Mayor of Maracas municipality, is a selfish man whose corrupt ways lead to the suffering of many citizens of Maracas. Despite knowing that he has never accomplished anything in his life other than swindling people, the people overwhelmingly vote for him. He is in charge of the Department of Physical Infrastructure. He uses this position to award his companies and those of his relatives tenders for construction of roads, bridges, pavements, drains and water courses. They misappropriate the funds and do a shoddy job. He is also in charge of construction and maintenance of secondary roads. Due to his ineptness, the workers do such a shoddy job that the poor-quality roads look like abandoned battlefield destroyed by bombs. Even tractors get stuck on such roads! Moreover, citizens still elect him even when they know him as a conman who prints fake title deeds and sells the same plot to as many as ten people. He sold Bembe, the Inspector General of police, land that belongs to Maracas university. That is how he has earned his livelihood all these years. He has destroyed lives of countless people because of his greed (P42). When he learned about the “Rodengate Affair”, in which justice Ian Jaden was rearing rats and introducing them into farms to undermine local production in order to import corn through his company, Prime Orchard Limited, he is silenced by bribery. He is given money and shares in the company. His family is also doing all Municipal Council projects that fall under his department denying deserving citizens a chance to offer their prowess and earn an honest coin. Thus, residents continue to suffer under his watch. Indeed, citizens suffer when they elect rogue leaders like Ramdaye.

Ted King is also a self-seeking leader who causes anguish to the citizens of Maracas Municipality owing to his selfish nature. He is the Municipal Secretary for the Department of Health and Environment. Despite his infamous reputation as a pirate and a nuisance to the public, people vote for him overwhelmingly into the Municipal Council. The youth and all are excited by his evil hairstyle, ripped jeans, bangles, necklaces and other adornments. After inviting bids for construction of health centres, Ted ensures companies associated with his relatives and friends win the tenders. He conspires with them and steals all the money allotted for the project and ends up putting up site offices that resemble cowsheds. A former DJ, Ted was responsible for noise pollution and pirating other people’s music. Citizens, tired of the nuisance and agony, complained ceaselessly. Furthermore, he is illiterate and spews gibberish on the floor of the chamber. He reeks of illicit brew like one who sleeps in a brewery or a nightclub. Together with Seymour, he is responsible for supplying air to the Municipal Council. This means that their companies receive huge sums of public funds without rendering any service. He further supports Seymour’s rallying call that they reallocate the budget in order to use public funds to fight the corruption cases against them. Citizens who vote in leaders like Ted end up in anguish since the self-seeking leader does not deliver services to them instead, they embezzle funds for their selfish interests.

Thirdly, Seymour, is the self-seeking secretary to the Municipal Department of Planning and Development. In spite of his moral failings, the people elected him overwhelmingly. He bribes people using his drug money to buy his way into office. To get building plans approval in Maracas municipality, people simply bribe Seymour and the rotten Inspectorate Unit under him. Proper building standards are not adhered to thus putting the lives of the people living in such buildings at great risk. Never mind that Maracas is in a seismically active area. The people have also suffered under his callous leadership since anyone who dares bat an eyelid ends up disappearing mysteriously. He runs a murderous gang known Black Swan Gang which is responsible for shootings and violence. People read about this in the papers but they still elect him. Apart from that, he demands that Mossi justifies reallocation on the need to address the issue of the terrible waste disposal system in the town. It is a serious health hazard for the citizens since the garbage is strewn all over the place and the drains are broken. Instead of fixing the problem, he wants them to use the funds to fight off the imminent corruption cases against them. Seymour is also known for drug trafficking. He has ruined the lives of many children who have dropped out of school because of drugs, some have become cabbages, some roam aimlessly or have lost their minds and worse still others have died because of drugs. He also has a fake law certificate that he uses to intimidate people with. His whole family including his two children and wife have been ruined by drugs. Surely, people who vote for such evil leaders can only blame themselves for the agony their leaders put them through.

The mayor of Maracas municipality, Mossi-oa-Tunya, is also a selfish leader whose actions result in untold suffering for the subjects under him. He claims that he was voted in by hundreds of thousands of people. All these people voted for him in spite of his iniquity. Using his powers, he tries to halt the operations of The Samaritan App, an innovation used to fight corruption and other vices in Maracas Municipality. He tries intimidate Ms. Narine, the Principal, and Ms. Nicole the Ethics and Innovations teacher at Sagrada Secondary School. In the past, he has been forced by Seymour to misallocate public money to fund unnecessary demands like sitting allowances for useless committee meetings. He is also responsible for the municipal capture; the worst form of corruption and abuse of office. His private interests determine the direction of public policy. He asks Mr. Harvester to use public funds to buy all newspapers that portray the Municipal leaders in bad light and to organize daily press conferences to clear their names and save their skin. Apart from that, he runs a gang of riotous youth known as the Red Eagle Gang. He admits stealing public resources when he alludes to a loaf bread meant for the people from which he takes three slices for himself. Although the buck stops with him, he points fingers at other leaders like Ramdaye and Seymour, completely refusing to admit blame. He is only keen on protecting his political career. Under his watch, the citizens suffer a den of leaders who participate in corruption, murder, stealing, dishonesty and sexual perversion. Electing such leaders is a sure way to end up in the quagmire of agony.

In conclusion, citizens who want their region to develop with expediency must elect honourable leaders of integrity. Supporting inept leaders who only care about their own interests results in agony for the citizens.

I – 2mks; 3:3:3:3 C – 2mks L – 4mks