

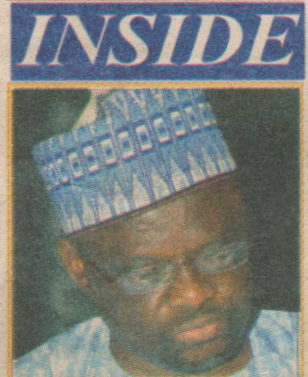
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TUESDAY, APRIL 14, 2009 VOL. 21 NO. 47 RABI'UL THANI 19, 1430 AH N100



INSIDE
Lame heads police reform implementation committee
Minister of Police Affairs Dr. Ibrahim Lame will head a 14-member committee that will implement the police reforms, the Federal Government announced yesterday.
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NAIRA EXCHANGE RATE

	Selling	Buying
EURO	212	210
POUND	247	245
DOLLAR	177	175

Source: Muhammed Zazi Bureau de Change, Lagos.

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My hijab didn't contravene dress code - Sacked nurse
- PAGE 3

Wedding tragedy: Family of 13 perish

Thirteen members of the same family lost their lives on Sunday in a road accident at Dungun-Ma'azu village of Sabuwa Local Government Area in Katsina State.
The victims were returning home after attending a marriage ceremony in Minna, Niger State, witnesses and relations said.

From Lawal Ibrahim, Katsina & Mustafa Abubakar, Ilorin
Ten others were injured when the vehicle conveying the family members, a Nissan Urvan, had a tire burst and the driver lost control and crashed into a ditch.
The dead were mostly women and children, while only the driver and his

conductor survived, according to Malam Abdurrasheed Kafinta, who arrived at the scene of the accident shortly after it occurred. He lost his wife and daughter in the crash.
Kafinta said the vehicle was conveying over 20 members of the same family on their way back from the wedding ceremony of a relation in Minna.

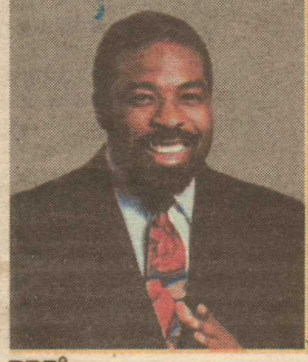
"We were coming together in two different buses, one conveying us men and the other conveying women and children. They left us at Birnin Gwari after a lunch break only for us to find their vehicle involved in an accident. I was the one who recognise them and quickly identified the dead body of my wife,"
Cont. on Pg. 5

Gunmen, Navy clash in N/Delta

In spite of the Federal Government's plans to grant amnesty to militants, gunmen yesterday attacked Nigerian Navy personnel protecting a Royal Dutch Shell oil facility in the Niger Delta, killing one sailor and stealing four speedboats belonging to the firm.
The attack on a navy houseboat at Nembe in Bayelsa State in the early hours was an apparent retaliation for the sinking of four militant speedboats over the weekend by the Nigerian navy, spokesman of the Joint Military Taskforce in the Niger Delta Colonel Rabe Abubakar said.
A youth activist from Nembe told news
Cont. on Pg. 5



Victims of a road accident near Jos, being conveyed to hospital. Two other persons died in the crash. Photo: Afolabi Sotunde



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NEWS

Fire kills student in Sokoto

From Rakiya A. Muhammad, Sokoto

A fire incident in Sokoto has resulted in the death of a student of Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto, Miss Fatima Musa. Another fire reportedly razed 12 houses in Maikujera village of Rabah Local Government Area of the state. The house in which the late Fatima, a 300-level student of Microbiology was residing was said to have caught fire after an explosion of a power generating set. Daily Trust learnt that the late Fatima died following first degree burns she sustained in the fire which occurred at her residence at Mabarar-Gidan-Dahela in Sokoto South Local Government Area of the state. The owner of the house, one Abdulganiyu and his son were also said to have sustained burns and are receiving treatment at the Usmanu Danfodiyo University Teaching Hospital, Sokoto. Late Fatima has been buried in Sokoto according to Islamic rites. In the Maikujera fire incident, no life was lost, but one person was said to have suffered burns. The Special Adviser to Governor Aliyu Wamakko on Library Matters, Alhaji Umar Ahmed who visited the victims yesterday enjoined them to regard the incident as an act of God. He prayed God to prevent a re-occurrence.

NAMA begins second phase of flight calibration

The Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA) will today commence the second phase of flight calibration of navigational equipment at some airports across the country. The General manager Public Affairs of NAMA, Mr Supo Atobatele, who made the disclosure in a statement, said the exercise, would involve a flight-check on the newly installed Primary and Secondary Surveillance Radar at the Lagos airport. He said the VHF radio and the Glide path on the international runway at the same airport would also be calibrated. Atobatele said other airports to be covered by the Dakar based firm, ASECNA, during the seven-day exercise, include Maiduguri, Gombe, Jos, Enugu, Port Harcourt and Calabar. He listed navigational aids to be calibrated at the airports as Instrument Landing System, Very High Omni-directional Radio Range, Distance Measuring Equipment, Glide path and Precision Approach Instrument. Atobatele said the Instrument Approach Procedure for Gombe airport would also be carried out during the flight-check exercise. Calibration of is a regular quality maintenance feature of NAMA and all equipment must pass the calibration test before being put to use. The GM restated the determination of NAMA to ensure the airspace was made safe for flights to operate. (NAN)

Plateau PDP faction wants Jang suspended

From Andrew Agbese, Jos

The Chief Emmanuel Mangni faction of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Plateau State has asked the National secretariat of the party to suspend Governor Jonah Jang from the PDP. The party in a letter to the national chairman of the party, Prince Vincent Ogbulafor dated 30th March 2009, recommended the suspension of the governor from the PDP, saying it was the only way the party in the state could be redeemed from collapse. They said this was because the governor had been working against the interest of the party while excluding majority of the party members and had not shown respect to the president of the country who is also the leader of the party. The party further explained that since Jang became governor of the state in 2007, the fortunes of the party in the state had been dwindling, leading to the loss of two crucial elections within the past one year. The letter signed by the chairman, Mangni and the secretary of the party, James Pam Stephen, also accused Jang of excluding prominent members of the party from participating or contributing to the party, saying as a result of this, key stakeholders especially those that contested the party primaries with the governor have been excluded from the party.

NMA begins strike in Edo

From Vincent Egunyanga, Benin

The Edo State branch of the Nigerian Medical Association (NMA) will today begin a 24 day strike to protest new tax regime recently introduced by the state government. State chairman of the Association, Dr. Osahon Enabulele who disclosed this at a press briefing in Benin City yesterday said the strike was informed by the expiration of the 21-day ultimatum given to the state government to amicably review the tax rate and fees imposed on medical practitioners. The NMA said the aim was to give government another opportunity to engage the Association in a constructive dialogue towards reasonably determining affordable fees and levies. It said all medical and dental practitioners would wear black arm bands to mourn what he called "death" of health care delivery in Edo State. Appealing to the state government to address the grievances of the Association



Children celebrating Easter Monday at Wonderland, Abuja.

Pic: Felix Onigbinde

Emir urges Nigerians 'to re-brand their hearts'

Emir of Katsina, Alhaji Abdulmumini Kabir, yesterday called on Nigerians 'to re-brand their hearts' as the first step toward making the re-branding of Nigeria project a success.

Kabir made the call in Katsina while receiving materials for the rehabilitation of cemeteries donated by the wife of the state governor, Hajija

Fatima Shema. The materials, which included shovels, wheelbarrows, buckets, rakes and diggers, would be used to rehabilitate cemeteries in 10 local government areas of the state, he said.

"To re-brand Nigeria is to re-brand our hearts, as it is only when our hearts are re-branded that the country can be re-branded," the emir said. He said

the fear of God by all was the beginning of the re-branding of the country. Kabir urged leaders in all fields of human endeavour to ensure fairness and justice in discharging their responsibilities. He also appealed to Nigerians to support the leadership of the country "not by praise singing, but by prayers".

The emir commended Fatima for providing the ma-

aterials, and appealed to wealthy individuals to render similar assistance. "There is no better place to rehabilitate than the grave yard as it is the final abode of every human being," the emir noted. Earlier, Fatima said the materials were provided by Service to Humanity Foundation, an NGO, as part of its contribution to communal services. (NAN)

Ijaw group threatens attacks

From Vincent Egunyanga, Benin

A group, TORU - IBE Liberated Movement of Niger Delta has told Governor Adams Oshiomhole of Edo State to expect more attacks in the state if Ijaw indigenes are not included in political positions in the state.

The group, which claimed responsibility for the recent kidnap of the wife of the state Commissioner for Works, Mrs. Itohan Obayagbona warned that it would carry out more attacks in the state if nothing was done to address the continuous marginalisation of Ijaws in the state.

In a statement in Benin yesterday signed by Mr. Ibe-Dubanor Godsent, the group said the abandonment of the Ijaws of the state by successive administrations was the reason for their action. They also said their action was informed by the continuous marginalisation and the non-inclusion of the Ijaws into the Edo State Executive Council.

"We are bringing to the notice of the Federal Government of Nigeria, the way and manner the Ijaws of Edo State

are being oppressed and marginalized and wish to state categorically that we are responsible for the kidnap of the Commissioner of Work's wife.

"We wish to state categorically that except the NDDC commissioner slot for Edo State is given to the Ijaws of

Edo, the state should be ready for more attacks and in no distant time a conscientious name will be submitted to the state governor. What we need now is rapid development of the Ijaw speaking areas of Edo State and immediate inclusion of the Ijaws in political positions", the group said.

Police warn trouble makers on Yuguda's defection

The Police in Bauchi have warned those planning to cause crisis during the formal defection of Governor Isa Yuguda of ANPP to PDP in Bauchi today to desist or face its wrath.

The Commissioner of Police in Bauchi, Atiku Kafur, gave the warning during a press briefing in Bauchi yesterday. Kafur said the police were aware of a plot by some disgruntled elements to cause chaos and that the police had taken measures to deal with the situation.

"Any person or group of persons found conspiring to cause the breach of peace in the state will be dealt with according to the laws of the land. I

urge the general public to cooperate with the police by promptly providing useful information that will assist in maintaining law and order in the state," he said. Kafur said that policemen would be deployed to all the nooks and corners of Bauchi on patrol. ANPP flags have been replaced by PDP flags in Bauchi metropolis, preparatory to the formal defection. Policemen have been deployed to some strategic places in the town to forestall any break down of law and order.

The governor was initially a member of PDP, defected to ANPP shortly before the 2007 general elections, following his inability to clinch the gubernatorial ticket. (NAN)

NEWS

I didn't contravene dress code

—Sacked ABUTH nurse

A female nurse who was sacked by the Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital's (ABUTH) management over wearing of hijab yesterday said the veil she used did not contravene any nursing dress code.

Speaking exclusively to *Daily Trust*, Safiya O Ahmad said the hijab she wore was breast length, the type approved by the National Council of Nursing and Midwifery of Nigeria for Muslim women nurses.

"I received my letter of appointment on December 14, 2008 and I assumed duty on 2nd of January, 2009. I was trained at the ABUTH School of Nursing and I know the type of uniform they use. When I was a student, I used a breast length Hijab and when I assumed duty as a staff, I maintained my breast length Hijab.

"The day I assumed duty, the Chief Nursing Officer of ABUTH told me that my hijab was too long, that I should revert to the neck length hijab. I told her that this was the hijab I was using since I was a student. In fact I told her that the breast length hijab was approved by National Nursing and Midwifery Council," she said.

According to Safiya that was the beginning of her trouble as the matter went up to the top management level which later warned her verbally and in writing that she should revert to the neck length hijab.

"In order to make them understand that what I am wearing is neither against the rules of ABUTH nor our national body, I cited the examples of other federal hospitals that allow their nursing staff to wear longer hijabs than mine. States

From Isa Sa'idu, Kano

like Zamfara and Kano are using waist length hijabs in both federal and states' hospitals. By this I feel if I am using a breast length hijab there shouldn't be a problem because we are operating under the same body," Safiya said.

According to Safiya, the ABUTH's management told her that they are not talking about national laws they are only interested in what the hospital wants its staff to do.

"It is from that episode that they sent me a letter advising me to change to neck length Hijab in my own interest. Despite that I maintained my breast length hijab while they kept on pestering me.

Later on they sent me another letter on 28th of March, 2009 that my services in the hospital are no longer required. That was what they said, the reason for the termination was not mentioned," Safiya said.

Safiya denied that a query was sent to her before the termination of her appointment. She also denied that some Muslim leaders were used to convince her to revert to the neck length hijab as claimed by the ABUTH management.

She said that Malam Mustafa Isa Qasim, Chief Imam of the ABU central mosque, had advised the management of the hospital not to take any action against her as the hijab she was using is not against the nursing profession and the laws of the university in general.

Reacting to Safiya's claims

in a telephone interview yesterday, the Chief Medical Director of the ABUTH, Professor Abdulummini Hassan Rafindadi, said that throughout the duration of the disagreement he didn't see the type of Hijab Safiya was using.

"To me, I don't have to see the type of Hijab she was using because her superior officers have recommended that the hijab she was using is against the dress code of the

hospital. You should know that we have a system and this system is entrusted on us, we have to maintain it if we want it to progress without any sentiment. The fact is that why is it that she is the only one who is being queried. If what she was doing was right nobody should have queried her. Other Muslim women, who are complying with our rules on hijab, nobody queried them or terminated their appointment," Rafindadi said.



In this photo, Safiya Ahmad wears the hijab which led to her sack by the ABUTH authorities, allegedly because the veil violated the dress code. Pic: Isa Saidu

Obama moves to end 50-yr Cuba embargo

President Barack Obama directed his administration yesterday to allow unlimited travel and money transfers by Cuban Americans to family in Cuba, and to take other steps to ease U.S. restrictions on the island, according to a senior administration official.

The formal announcement was made at the White House yesterday afternoon, during presidential spokesman Robert Gibbs' daily briefing with reporters. The official spoke on condition of anonymity so as not to upstage the president's announcement.

With the changes, Obama aims to create new space for the Cuban people in their quest for political freedom and a democratic government, in part by making them less dependent on the Castro regime, the official said.

Other steps taken yesterday include allowing gift parcels to be sent to Cuba, and issuing licenses to increase communications among and to the Cuban people. About 1.5 million Americans have relatives in Cuba.

Obama had promised to take these steps as a presidential candidate. It has been known for over a week that he would announce them in advance of his attended this weekend of a Summit of the Americas in Trinidad and Tobago.

"There are no better ambassadors for freedom than Cuban Americans," Obama said in a campaign speech last May in Miami, the heart of the U.S. Cuban-American community. "It's time to let Cuban Americans see their mothers and fathers, their sisters and brothers. It's time to let Cuban American money make their families less dependent upon the Castro regime."

Sending money to senior government officials and

Communist Party members remains prohibited. Restrictions imposed by the Bush administration had limited Cuban travel by Americans to just two weeks every three years. Visits also were confined to immediate family members.

Other steps taken Monday include expanding the things allowed in gift parcels being sent to Cuba, such as clothes, personal hygiene items, seeds, fishing gear and other personal necessities. The ad-

By Charles Onunaiju with agency report

ministration also will begin issuing licenses to allow companies to provide cell and television services to people on the island, and to allow family members to pay for relatives on Cuba to get those services, the official said.

Also in that Miami speech nearly a year ago, Obama promised to depart from what he said had been the path of previous politicians on Cuba policy — "they come down to Miami, they talk tough, they go back to Washington, and nothing changes in Cuba."

"Never, in my lifetime, have the people of Cuba known freedom. Never, in the lives of two generations of Cubans, have the people of Cuba known democracy," he said then. "This is the terrible and tragic status quo that we have known for half a century — of elections that are anything but free or fair, of dissidents locked away in dark prison cells for the crime of speaking the truth. I won't stand for this injustice, you won't stand for this injustice, and together we will stand up for freedom in Cuba."

He also promised to engage in direct diplomacy with Cuba, "without preconditions" but with "careful preparation" and "a clear agenda."

Some lawmakers, backed by business and farm groups seeing new opportunities in Cuba, are advocating wider revisions in the trade and travel bans imposed after Fidel Castro took power in Havana in 1959.

But Obama is keeping the decades-old U.S. trade embargo against Cuba in place, arguing that that policy provides leverage to pressure the regime to free all political prisoners as one step toward normalized relations with the U.S.



U.S. President Barack Obama

Ogun crisis: Reps insist on takeover

The House of Representatives yesterday insisted that Ogun state House of Assembly must reconvene for its legislative functions today or have its legislative powers taken over its functions.

The lawmakers two weeks ago threatened to take over activities of the state assembly by invoking section 11, subsection 4 of the Constitution if the members failed to reconvene today.

A statement by House of Representatives' Spokesperson, Rep Esemeyiboh (PDP, Akwa Ibom) said: "My attention has been drawn to statements credited to Kayode Samuel, Commissioner of Information and Orientation in Ogun State on a television programme (Kaakaki on AIT) faulting the House of Representatives' resolution on Ogun State crisis on April 1, 2009.

"Let me say that the House of Representatives stands by

By Tashikalmah Hallah & Nasidi A. Yahaya

its resolution "warning feuding parties in the Ogun State House of Assembly and the government of Ogun State that the House of Representatives would be compelled to invoke the powers granted it by Section 11, subsection 4 of the Constitution if the Assembly fails to reconvene on or before 14th April, 2009."

According to him, the stand of the House is in line with the provisions of the constitution and several precedents set by the House in its ten years of existence.

He added: "you will recall that the House did similar thing in the case of Anambra state during the crisis that engulfed the state following attempts to remove Chris Ngige as governor. Similarly resolution was taken in Oyo State during a similar crisis. The House also recently passed a similar resolution in the case of looming

crisis in Ondo State recently which yielded positive results of all the parties following due process and legal means in resolving their dispute."

Rep Eyiboh said the House usually responds to such crisis within a week or two along the line of constitutional stipulations but had to wait for almost two months of the crisis in Ogun State in deference to the position of the Speaker, Dimeji Bankole who is from the state and the mediatory efforts of the other well meaning stakeholders in Nigeria.

He said efforts by some prominent indigene of the state that sought to reconcile Gbenga Daniel and members of the State Assembly had failed which prompted the House to intervene.

He stated: "It was only after those efforts and reportedly that of many traditional rulers and other well meaning persons failed and when it was discerned that Ogun State Government have no respect

for party elders and constitution in respect of the state legislature that the House threatened to invoke the provision of the Constitution as contained in Section 11(4), if the State Assembly is not allowed to seat.

We expect the parties to the crisis and the security agencies to do the right thing according to the constitution and allow the State Assembly to do its constitutional duties for the good governance of Ogun state and its people.

The MP said instead of wasting resources and energy in blaming Speaker Bankole or opposing the resolution of the House as being done by Mr. Kayode Samuel and other agents of the State government, parties relevant to the crisis including the security agencies should provide a conducive environment for the State Assembly to sit and once this is done there will be no need to invoke section 11, (4) of the constitution.

NEWS

Kabo Air launches Kano-Dubai direct flight

From Hassan Karofi & Jaafar Jaafar, Kano

Kabo Air Limited has launched direct flights from Kano to Jeddah and Dubai with a view to catering for the growing number of passengers on the Kano route. Speaking to newsmen during the launch, the director of Flight Operations Captain Joseph P. Machimu said they procured a 215-passenger carrier for the routes.

Captain Machimu said the Kano to Dubai flight will begin on Friday this week, while that of Kano to Jeddah will commence on Thursday.

He said Kabo Air is offering the first class cabin as business class so that passengers, who are mainly business travellers, will enjoy the luxury of the first class at a lower cost.

According to him, the company has acquired a Boeing 767 for the operations, which he said was no mean a milestone for Kabo Air.

He said the company has made adequate plans for the operation, over five years of rigorous preparation before the launch.

Captain Machimu said the air fare is pegged at N112,000 for a return ticket so that the passengers will have a quality service at a lower rate.

He said Kabo Air has now reduced the stress for Kano and other states' passengers who hitherto have to travel to Lagos to catch Dubai-bound flights.

He said the Boeing 767 is a midrange plane which they intend to use for six months and that they may increase the flight capacity with increased passengers volume.

Also speaking, the managing director of Golden Season Travelling Agency, Alhaji Aminu Yusuf Bako said the most-sought after flight has come to their doorstep, saying the passengers who had to go to Lagos to travel to Dubai have now got a direct flight to their business destinations.

Police reform: FG raises implementation c'ttee

The Federal Government yesterday announced the names of members of the Police Reform Implementation Committee to be headed by the Minister of Police Affairs, Dr Ibrahim Yakubu Lame.

The Chief Press Secretary to the Minister, James Odaudu said in Abuja that the 14 member National Implementation Committee which consists of the representatives of the Police Force, the human rights and Civil Society Groups as well as the 6 geo-political regions will be inaugurated on Thursday.

He said the Committee will also have the Inspector-General of Police, Chairman of the Police Service Commission and a representative of the National Human Rights Commission as members.

Other members representing the six geo-political zones of the country are; Alhaji Mohammed Shaba Lafiagi (North-Central), Kabir Turaki, SAN (North-West), Retired Deputy Inspector General of Police, Mohammed Dan Madami (North-East), Retired Assistant Inspector General of Police, Sunday Aghedo (South-South), Bisi Alamu (South West), and Goddy Nwokeji (South-East).

He said Professor Idris Abdulkadir, Professor Femi Odekunle and Architect Ibrahim Bunu would serve as members while the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Police Affairs, Dr Ezekiel Oyemomi will be the Secretary of the Committee.

"In line with President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua's desire on the implementation of government programmes as

contained in the 7-Point Agenda, the Federal Government has concluded plans to kick-start the implementation process of the reform of the Nigeria Police Force, with the inauguration of a National Implementation Committee billed for Thursday," he said.

The responsibilities of the Committee are co-ordinating the implementation of the Government White Paper on M.D. Yusuf Committee report on the Reform of the Nigeria Police Force.

He said, "The Committee will be charged with setting up and monitoring appropriate sub-committees to handle such aspects of the reform as Training and Capacity Building, Equipment and Logistics, Welfare and Administration and others deemed necessary for the successful implementation of the reform agenda.

The Committee which will liaise with the Ministry of Police Affairs, the Police Service Commission and the Nigeria Police Force to ensure the implementation of the reform, is also expected to establish time-lines for the various activities and aspects of the reform."

Other responsibilities of the Committee include the invitation and co-ordination of International Development Partners for the implementation of the reform, establishment of actual costs for the implementation of the reform, prioritising and allocating budgeted funds in accordance with agreed time-lines.

Reps C'ttee to meet 500 militant groups in N/Delta

As part of its interventionist efforts towards solving the crisis in the Niger Delta region, the House of Representatives Ad hoc Committee on Niger Delta is set to meet with over 500 militant groups.

Chairman of the yesterday that the Committee would in the first week of May meet with the militant groups among other stakeholders in the region.

"In our schedule, we have over 1000 militant groups in the region but we plan to visit at least half of them as well as other stakeholders during our meeting with people of the area soon," he said.

Ningi (PDP-Bauchi) said the committee at its meeting had agreed to spend 27 working

days in the region with the hope of seeing the problems in the area themselves.

"Our duty there is to look at PTDF, onshore and offshore fields, NDDC, various multinationals operating in the Niger Delta and take a look at their Memorandum of Understanding.

"We are also going to look at environmental degradation, poverty level and ecological funds", he said.

He said the intervention of the House was to complement the efforts of the executive in the region and see how legislation would be used to solve the problems of the area.

"This is the very first time a committee of this nature is coming from National Assembly apart from one set

up by the executive and the sectional one being introduced," he added.

Ningi, who is also the Chairman, House of Representatives Committee on Police Affairs, said the committee had made necessary security arrangements for their visit to the region.

"It is sad that Niger Delta Ad-hoc Committee, which came into being since Oct. 2008, could not go further than receiving memoranda from the public. I think the issue of the region is more serious than the constitutional review which money has been budgeted", he added.

On the amnesty granted to the militant groups in the region, Ningi said the President was right to extend

it as the federal government has been blackmailed for a very long time.

"It speaks volume of the President's belief in the rule of law. It shows government's magnanimity. I have been saying it that there is no military solution to the problems in the region, except you get across to them", he stressed.

Ningi said that the President was right in granting the amnesty and should, therefore, be encouraged in the overall interest of peace and stability.

NAN reports that Speaker, Dimeji Bankole in Oct. 2008 created a 25-member ad hoc committee on Niger Delta to find a lasting solution to myriad of problems in the area. (NAN)



From left: UBA Relationship Director, North, Reginald Ihebuzor; General Manager, Euritma Building of Hungary, Istvan Fritz; UBA Regional Director, North, Ibrahim Puri; and Technical Director, Euritma Building Istvan Bereiz during a Hungary business delegation visit to Nigeria in Abuja yesterday. Pic: Felix Onigbinde

'Weights and measures may earn Nigeria N30 billion annually'

Government needs to force the weights and measures laws of 1990 on oil and gas exports to generate at least N30 billion revenues for the federation account annually, " Eng. Yabagi Yusuf Sani, a consultant to government in this respect has said.

Eng. Yabagi Yusuf Sani, Chief Executive Officer of Nigerco told *Daily Trust* after the firm's meeting with the Minister of State for Commerce that the money to be realized would cushion the effect of the current economic meltdown on the country.

By Uthman Abubakar

He said the ministry was, however, unable to perform this duty due to shortage of funds and the Department of Petroleum Resources of the NNPC usurped the duty, performing it with a process that allegedly created room for alleged large-scale fraud to the detriment of the country.

Consequently, in 2000, the then administration of the former President Olusegun Obasanjo contracted Nigerco Nigeria Ltd, in conjunction with two other foreign firms, SAAB ROSEMOUNT TANK CONTROL of Sweden and National Weights and Measures Laboratory of UK to develop a legal metrology infrastructure for verification of weights and measures in the country to enable the Weights and Measures Division of the

Commerce Ministry to perform its statutory functions.

He said since then, however, due to alleged political intrigues, the division has not been able to perform the duty, leaving only and the DPR to do it.

"We are bringing up the issue and stressing the need for the enforcement of the law as contained in the Act due to the raging call for transparency and accountability, especially in the oil and gas sector, most especially as it affects the crude oil and gas export."

"You have agencies working at the export terminals. One of those agencies critically important is Weights and Measures. Today, this agency is not operating in the Nigerian export terminals," he observed, saying, "Metrology device should be introduced in the oil and gas terminal such

that the equipment used to measure is accurate to certify that you are transferring, for example, 100 million barrels exactly, nothing more, nothing less. This will effectively check fraud. The equipments used today are not verified by weights and measures."

Eng. Sani said the purpose of the meeting was to now establish a credible and reliable legal metrology infrastructure in Nigeria as it obtains in other countries and, principally, to introduce new table of fees to generate the at least N30 billion annually for the federation account as prescribed by the extant laws of the Federation.

It is also to ensure that all trade practices and measurements of custody transfer of goods and services in all sectors of the economy, especially the Oil and Gas, Power/Energy, Communication, Water and Agriculture sectors are accurate, fair and legal.

NEWS

Passenger lands plane in US after pilot dies

Doug White and his family had just enjoyed a smooth takeoff and were ascending through the clouds when the pilot guiding their twin-engine plane tilted his head back and made a guttural sound.

The retired jet pilot, Joe Cabuk, was unconscious. And though White had his pilot's license, he had never flown a plane as large as this. "I need help. I need a King Air pilot to talk to. We're in trouble," he radioed.

Then he turned to his wife and two daughters, ages 16 and 18: "You all start praying hard." Behind him, his wife trembled. Sixteen-year-old Bailey cried. Eighteen-year-old Maggie threw up.

White, 56, landed the plane on his own about 30 minutes later, coaxed through the harrowing ordeal by air traffic controllers who described exactly how to bring the aircraft to safety. The pilot died, but White somehow managed.

White had logged about 150 hours recently flying a single-engine Cessna 172 but had no experience flying the faster, larger King Air. He declared an emergency to air traffic controllers — White already knew how to use the radio. On Sunday afternoon, he got his first lesson landing the larger craft.

They were on their way home from Marco Island, where they'd traveled after his brother died from a heart attack the week before. White owns the King Air plane and leases it out through his company, Archibald, La.-based White Equipment Leasing LLC.

White got his pilot's license in 1990, but said 18 years had passed since he recently started flying again.

White had his wife try to remove the pilot from his seat — afraid that he'd slump down and hit the controls.

But the space was too small. His wife couldn't remove him. They strapped him back in.

White knew they were supposed to stop at 10,000 feet altitude, but he watched as they continued their ascent, thousands of feet higher than they were supposed to be traveling. Flying the Cessna, White said he's never gone higher than 7,000 feet.

White tried to stay calm and listen to the air traffic controllers as they relayed instructions.

"It was a focused fear," he said. "And I was in some kind of a zone that I can't explain."

One of the air traffic controllers called a friend in Connecticut certified in flying the King Air. He got out his flight checklists, manuals and cockpit layout sheets and issued instructions to the controller. The controller relayed the process to White thousands of feet above.

At one point, White said he tried putting the autopilot back on, but it steered the plane north, as the Cabuk had programmed in the flight's destination in Jackson, Miss. Flying by hand, White navigated the plane through the descent and safely landed shortly after 2 p.m. in Fort Myers.

Fire trucks and EMTs were waiting on ground. White said they tried for about 30 minutes to revive Cabuk, the pilot.

He didn't survive. The medical examiner's office has not yet determined his cause of death.

A day after the ordeal, White said he could never have done it without the help of the air traffic controllers. "Heartfelt thanks," he said. "They don't make near enough money, don't get near enough respect for what they do."

Family of 13 perish

Continued from Page 1

my daughter and my injured mother. I fainted there and was taken to the hospital along with them," Kafinta said. He said 10 survivors were hospitalised at the Funtua General Hospital.

The wife, daughter and a sister of Kafinta were buried at Tudun Malamai grave-

yard in Funtua, while the remaining dead persons were buried at Dandume.

Muhammadu Bashiru, one of the family members who spoke to *Daily Trust* by telephone, said 10 family members including six women and four children were buried at Danmaiya graveyard in Dandume.

Also on Sunday, many people died in a separate accident involving two passenger buses and a motorcycle at Kanbi along Bode Sa'adu-Jebba road in Kwara State.

An eyewitness, who reported the incident to newsmen in Ilorin yesterday, said the accident occurred when

a motorcycle rider crossed the road, and in an attempt to avoid him, the two buses had head-on collision.

One of the buses was coming from the South, while the other was coming from the North; he said. The remains of the dead were taken to different hospitals in Jebba.

Gunmen, Navy clash in N/Delta

Continued from Page 1

men that the militants took the security personnel unawares as they carried out the attack under heavy rain storm. The activist said during the attack, two Naval personnel allegedly shot dead were flown out of the area in a helicopter while the militants took captive about four naval personnel with some marine staff in the houseboat they were guarding, *NAN* news agency reported.

Shell spokesman Precious Okolobo said there was no damage to oil facilities or any impact on production but said he had no further details, according to *Reuters* news agency.

"The attack was jointly carried out by (militant leaders) Kitikata and Fara Dagogo, it was however foiled, regrettably and in the process of defending the facility, one naval rating was killed, two sustained minor injuries and four Shell speedboats were carted away by the miscreants," Abubakar said in a statement.

The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) said it was not involved in the attack but put the death toll higher, saying three sailors were killed, four abducted and two navy gunboats seized.

"At about 0300 hours today, April 13, 2009, the Nigerian military opened fire on some youths in the Nembe Creeks in Bayelsa State who then regrouped and attacked the military

position which resulted in the humiliating defeat of the better equipped military.

"Three naval ratings were killed and four abducted. Two fully armed gunboats were also seized and stripped of all its military hardware," MEND said in a statement by its spokesman Jomo Gbomo.

Attacks on industry facilities by militants or saboteurs seeking to steal crude oil are frequent in the creeks of the Niger Delta. But direct confrontation with the military has been relatively rare in recent months.

President Umaru Yar'adua said 10 days ago he was ready to grant amnesty to gunmen in the Niger Delta if they agreed to lay down their weapons but also said security chiefs would meet soon to work out "new rules of engagement" for the region.

MEND has rejected Yar'adua's offer of amnesty.

"The outcome of this incident can clearly give an insight into what a bigger battle will turn out to be like when the military launches its much talked about invasion," it said.

Abubakar warned "armed hoodlums" against any further attacks on its locations, saying the military had resolved to carry out a "decisive and appropriate" response and urging them to accept the "olive branch" being handed to them by the government.

UNIBEN council disowns Prof Gbenidion

The purported appointment of Professor Uche Gbenidion by President Umaru Yar'adua as acting Vice Chancellor of the University of Benin is completely false and has no foundation whatsoever, Uniben's Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Governing Council Professor Mwendaga Jibo said yesterday. He was reacting to a story published in yesterday's *Daily Trust*.

Prof Jibo said "On the contrary, Prof Uche Gbenidion was suspended from office as the acting vice chancellor by the Governing Council at its meeting of April 6, 2009 for gross misconduct.

Rather than carry out the council's instruction to convene a Senate meeting to elect

By Abdulkadir Badsha Mukhtar

an acting VC as directed by the Federal Ministry of Education, she instead sued the Senate and Council and deceived the Senate that she had obtained a court injunction restraining the Senate from holding a meeting."

He added, "When members of Senate insisted on seeing the injunction, what she presented to them was no injunction, but copies of the papers she filed in court. So Senate went ahead and conducted an election for acting VC. When Council met, it decided to play safe and suspended her for gross misconduct for suing the university without giving the 30 days

pre-action notice. The council considered two candidates and appointed one of them as acting VC."

According to the Uniben Pro-Chancellor, "Gbenidion showed gross disrespect to the Council by travelling to Abuja on the day Council was meeting and handed the university over to the University Librarian. She also made no arrangements for that day's Council meeting, even though she knew it was scheduled. She then went to the Ministry of Education in Abuja, after which the Minister summoned the Council chairman.

I went and briefed the minister that she was suspended and would face more severe action for showing persistent

disrespect to Council. For example, she refused to withdraw her court action despite a written directive from Council to do so.

Council would not condone her gross disrespect because it could lead to chaos at Uniben. The university's Registrar and one other professor have been on suspension for two years for similar offences, and Prof Gbenidion was chairman of the committee that recommended their suspension. We cannot have one rule for others and another rule for her."

Prof Jibo also said the council had fully briefed the Sultan of Sokoto Muhammadu Sa'ad Abubakar about the case in his capacity as Uniben's Chancellor.

Saminu Turaki in stable condition - CMD

Former governor of Jigawa state, Saminu Turaki who was involved in a car accident is said to be responding to treatment at the National Hospital Abuja and is presently in a stable condition.

The former governor is presently in intensive care unit and his condition is being monitored closely by doctors, The Chief Medical Director, said.

Dr Segun Ajuwon told *Daily Trust* on phone that Turaki's condition is stable and his responding to treatment. *Daily Trust* saw some senators arriving at the hospital to visit their colleague, but they refused to comment on his state of health.

A member of the former governor's family, who identi-

By Ruby Rabin

fied himself as his brother told *Daily Trust* that his brother was okay and had even spoken to a few of the visitors who came by.

He said they were satisfied with the rate of response but declined to say if they had any plans to fly him abroad.

The senate president, Mark who came to the hospital by 9.15 pm had instructed his personal physician, Mr David ukoho to monitor Turaki.

He emerged about 15 minutes later and drove off.

One of the family members told Trust that the senate president had conversed with the governor for about 10

minutes and promised to check on him the next day.

The source said the upper house wants to ascertain that Turaki was stable enough to travel abroad for treatment before he is moved. He added that the former governor was operated on Saturday, his head was shaved and his fractured arm has since being placed in POP.

It would be recalled that trust had reported that the former governor was on his way to Kazaure from Birnin Kebbi to attend the turbaning of Alhaji Nu'uman Barau Dambatta Ajiyan Kazaure when the accident occurred.

Among those who paid the governor a visit include, the Deputy Senate President, Ike Ekweremadu, the senate leader, and some of his colleagues who trooped into the hospital.

NEWS

FG to evacuate stranded Nigerians in India

Alhaji Maigari Jibrin, minister of state for foreign affairs has said the federal government has concluded arrangements to evacuate Nigerians who lost their jobs and are stranded in India.

The minister told newsmen in Machina in Yobe on Sunday that, "many Nigerians have registered with the mission in New Delhi, indicating their interest to come back home.

"We are working assiduously, in conformity with Mr. President's seven point agenda, to create jobs and opportunities to Nigerians including those coming back home," he added.

Jibrin was in the border town of Machina to attend the international cultural festival organised by the Machina Emirate Council which attracted participants from some neighbouring countries and tourists from across the world.

The minister commended the emirate for organising the festival, which he said "fosters unity and investment opportunities among African countries in the spirit of the ECOWAS and African Union protocols."

He said the festival exposed the younger generation to the rich cultural heritage of the people and contributed to the re-branding programme of the federal government.

The minister also said, the festival has also opened up rooms for investments

and, bilateral relations among the participating communities and countries.

Maigari noted that, the event has economic advantages as "the visiting tourists will buy one or two local

products from the area which means economic empowerment of the people in the

- Minister

community." he urged the other traditional and community lead-

ers to emulate the Machina emirate's initiative to look inwards and develop

programmes with economic potentials to empower their people. (NAN)



Women excavating sand for sale.

Pic NAN

Onaiyekan calls for 'new ideas' on N/Delta problem

Most Rev. John Onaiyekan, the Catholic Archbishop of Abuja, yesterday called for "the creation of new ideas and new ways of looking at things" in an effort to resolve the Niger Delta problem.

"You cannot deal with Niger Delta if you cannot deal with the state of affairs in the area," he said.

Onaiyekan said in Abuja that the grievances of the Niger Delta people should be seriously addressed; saying amnesty would not solve the problem in the area.

"It's only a criminal that enjoys amnesty. So, we

have to distinguish down there in the Niger Delta, those who are fighting for injustice.

"Unfortunately there are some criminal elements who are just criminals and who are taking advantage of it to gather money," he noted.

According to him, the Federal Government should not be talking about amnesty rather it should have serious discussions and re-arrange how to manage the affairs of the people.

"If amnesty is another way of saying let us go and have serious discussions and for the review of the situation of the way we have been managing, okay, I agree with it.

"But when you talk about amnesty like a pardon for people who have committed crimes and who have agreed that they have committed crimes it could be counterproductive," he added.

According to Onaiyekan, it will not be a surprise if many Niger Delta people do not grab the amnesty offer with satisfaction.

He said that amnesty would only make sense for the criminals who kidnapped oil workers to come and collect money and squander and not disclose what they had done.

With pessimism, he said even with the Ministry of Niger Delta, nothing would be achieved.

"Don't forget that we always have the Ministry of Education and our education problem has not been solved.

"We have the Ministry of Health and our hospitals are still there," he concluded. (NAN)

Peacekeeping: Nigerian military chiefs, UN officials meet in New York

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), Air Chief Marshal Paul Dike and Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lt. Gen. Abdulrahman Danbazau, will on Thursday in New York hold talks with senior UN officials on Nigeria's peacekeeping operations.

The UN correspondent of the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that

Dike and Danbazau are due to arrive in New York on Wednesday on a three-day official visit to the UN headquarters.

Nigeria's Defence Adviser at the UN, Maj.-Gen. Taiwo Obasa, told NAN yesterday in New York that the visit by the high military command would be pre-

ceded by a courtesy call on the Nigeria's Permanent Representative to the UN, Joy Ogwu on April 16.

Obasa said the military chiefs, "will later in the day hold a meeting with UN Under Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Alain Le Roy, and with other officials of the department of peacekeeping operations."

He added that the CDS and COAS would also meet with Sussana Malcorra, the UN Under Secretary-General for the Department of Field Operations (DFS) same day.

The defence official said that Dike and Danbazau would later hold discussions with UN Military Adviser, Lt.-Gen. Chikadibia Obiakor, as well as with Nigerian military officers on secondment to the UN peacekeeping and field operations departments.

Although the agenda of the meetings was not made known, NAN gathered that discussions would dwell on Nigeria's role in UN peacekeeping missions, as well as the security and safety of Nigerian troops in Sudan's Darfur region.

Also likely to be dis-

cussed is the recent request by both the UN and U.S. to Nigeria to contribute soldiers to peacekeeping mission in strife-torn Somalia.

Nigeria's Gen. Martin Agwai, is the force commander of the UN-AU Mission in Darfur (UNAMID), which is expected to have 26,000 troops, police and civilian personnel on full deployment.

Presently, the mission has about 19,000 peacekeepers, of which 5,000 are Nigerian soldiers and police personnel.

Recently, there have been concerns at the spate of attacks on peacekeepers by rebel forces in Sudan's Darfur region.

On March 9, four peacekeepers, including three Nigerians were shot and wounded while returning to their base in El Geneina, West Darfur after a routine patrol.

The mission has so far lost 14 personnel in separate attacks by rebel forces.

The UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recently called on member states to provide the "critical logistical equipment" needed to empower the mission. (NAN)

Cleric cautions against hoarding

An Islamic scholar, Ustaz Shaffe Badmos yesterday spoke against hoarding of products especially foodstuff in order to create artificial scarcity thereby prompting increase in the price of such commodities in the market.

Ustaz Badmos made the appeal while delivering a lecture on 'Buying and Selling in Islam' at a four-day seminar organised by the Organisation of Tadamunul Muslimeen (OTM), Federal Capital Territory (FCT) branch.

Speaking further, Ustaz Badmos said arbitrary fixing of prices, fraudulent reduction of measurement in trading, purchase of stolen items as well as dubious behaviour

By Muideen Olaniyi

of agents in order to achieve excess gains are among practices forbidden by Islam.

He pointed out that Allah detests any transaction involving the sale of alcohol, pig and dead animals among others stressing that any trading activity must be based on pure items.

The cleric added that buyers and sellers must have mutual agreement and must ensure that they deal with physical items that can be collected immediately.

While explaining that the items to be sold must belong to the seller as one of the necessary conditions in buying and selling in Islam, he added that such items' prices, quantity and weight

must be known by the two parties.

According to him, "it is also noteworthy that the product to be sold must be beneficial to the buyer. All the conditions in buying and selling are set out to avoid cheating because Islam hates any forms of cheating and fraudulent acts.

He kicked against a situation whereby people save money in banks in order to earn interests noting that Allah permits buying and selling but forbids interests.

The four-day seminar themed: 'Surviving in the Midst of Global Financial Crisis' ended yesterday with a female programme at Nurul Bayan International Academy, Wuse Zone 5, Abuja.

NEWS

Police distribute emergency call numbers in P/Harcourt

The Rivers State police command has commenced distribution of emergency call numbers to the public to help them reach the police quickly during emergencies. The command's spokesperson, Ms. Rita Abbey said that the release of the phone numbers was part of the command's security awareness campaign aimed at making people in the state more security conscious. Speaking with newsmen in Port Harcourt yesterday, Abbey said the command had printed calendars with security and emergency numbers for distribution throughout the state. "So far, we have carried out this exercise in Port Harcourt city and Obio/Akpor local governments. We went to strategic places and gave the people these documents to use and reach us in case of any emergency" she said. Abbey said divisional police officers would carry out the exercise in their zones and they have been directed to ensure that people at the grassroots also get the emergency numbers. She urged the people to use the numbers to reach the police for any emergency case and assured that the police would respond in good time. (NAN).

Police arrest 1,202 suspects in Zone 11

Police in Zone 11, which comprises Ondo, Oyo and Osun States arrested no fewer than 1,202 suspects for various offences in the month of March. A police source disclosed the figure to newsmen in Osogbo yesterday. The source said Oyo State recorded the highest number of arrest with 896 suspects, followed by Osun with 183 suspects, while Ondo State recorded 123 suspects. A breakdown of the figure showed that more than 34 persons were arrested for armed robbery, while 216 suspects were nabbed for stealing during the period. The source also said that 131 suspects were arrested for burglary related offences. Seven persons were arrested for murder cases, eight suspects were nabbed for arson, while 16 suspected rapists were also arrested. According to the source, police arrested 143 suspects for alleged fraud, related offences, 73 persons for breach of peace, while 276 persons were picked up for assault related cases. "The remaining suspects were arrested for other offences," the source said. (NAN).

Kwara SUBEB to appoint VPs for junior secondary schools

From Mustapha Abubakar, Ilorin

The Executive Secretary of the Kwara State Universal Basic Education Board (KWSUBEB) Alhaji Aliyu Mohammed has said that the board henceforth would be appointing vice principals and teachers of junior secondary schools in the state. Alhaji Aliyu Mohammed who disclosed this while declaring open a workshop on "Effective Time and Stress Management for Principals, Vice Principals and Teachers of Junior Secondary Schools" in Ilorin also said the newly constituted board would complement the state's efforts in enhancing effective school management. The Executive Secretary said the board had mapped out strategies to be adopted in selecting the best candidates. He further explained that the board would continue to recognize and reward hard work through periodic merit awards and encourage the training and retraining of teachers.

Anambra awards N300m road contract

From Beatrice Onuchukwu, Awka

Governor Peter Obi of Anambra has awarded the 5km road contract at the College of Education Nsugbe road to Niger Cat construction company at a contract sum of N300million. During the flag-off ceremony at the weekend, Obi said the road project would be executed in phases in line with government's policy of efficient management of resources and effective coordination of contractors. He explained that completion of the project would open up the entire area and boost socio-economic activities. The governor also directed the community to set up a technical committee to assess and evaluate erosion sites for government's consideration. The Commissioner for Works, Sir Callistus Ilozumba said the road had been fully designed with all necessary components to stand the test of time while the contractor had been fully mobilized. He enjoined the people to ensure regular supervision of the project and report any short-coming to the Ministry. A representative of Niger-Cat, Mr. Ziad Baassri thanked the governor for giving them the opportunity to contribute to development in the state and assured that the project would be completed on schedule and according to specifications.



Picknickers enjoying themselves at the Bar-beach in Lagos yesterday.

Pic: NAN

Mark pledges scholarships to families of Makurdi crash victims

Senate President, David Mark has donated N1.3 million to facilitate the burial of members of the Saints Peter and Paul Idoma Catholic Community who lost their lives in a ghastly motor accident on Palm Sunday in Makurdi recently. Senator Mark who expressed sadness over the tragedy which took place at a time Christian faithful all over the world were celebrating the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ also promised to give scholarship to one child from each of the victims' families.

Mark made this promise through an aide during a visit to the Catholic Bishop of Makurdi Diocese, His

From Hir Joseph, Makurdi

Lordship, Rt. Dr. Athanisius Usuh and the remaining executive members of the SS Peter and Paul Idoma Community in Makurdi at the weekend.

Represented by his Chief of Staff, Chief Agbo Ogah, the Senate President, commiserated with the Catholic Bishop, government and people of the state over the incident and urged them not to be downcast but be assured that the deceased members are resting in the bosom of the Lord.

He stated that though it was difficult for anyone to understand why God allowed the victims whom he noted were on a worthy mission, to

die in that accident however urged the five surviving officials of the group to be encouraged and take the loss in good faith.

In his response, the Catholic Bishop of Makurdi explained that he was at a celebration within Makurdi that fateful day when someone hinted him of the tragedy pointing out that one of the women who died in the accident was on her way to mass with her husband that morning when she received a call to join them on that trip.

Dr. Usuh who commended the Senate president for the condolence visit maintained that though it was difficult for any mortal

to explain what went wrong, disclosed that most families of the victims were still devastated by the incident.

"Even though we as mortals don't understand, God does. He has given, He has taken and we praise Him for that," he said.

Also in his response, chairman of the burial committee and one of the remaining five officials of the community, Dr. Edwards Okwori noted that what happened though highly regrettable, was the will of God which every man should submit to.

He thanked the Senate President for the visit and pledged the group's unalloyed support to Senator Mark to ensure he succeeds in all his endeavours.

Katsina to provide primary schools with computers

The Katsina State government will provide computer facilities in all its primary schools by 2010, Alhaji Sule Kuki, Executive Chairman, State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB), says. Kuki stated this at the opening of a meeting of Sararin Kuka Primary School Old Boys' Association on Monday in Katsina.

He said some primary schools had started enjoying the computer facilities, adding that by 2010 all primary schools would be provided with computers. He said the decision to provide computers to primary schools was part of the state government's commitment toward promoting computer literacy.

Kuki said the state government had paid N480 million counterpart fund to the National Universal Basic Education Commission. Kuki, who said the state had more than 1.2 million pupils in primary schools, called for collaborative efforts with the private sector to provide sound and qualitative education in the state. He commended the Sararin Kuka Primary School Old Boys' Association for executing meaningful projects in the schools. The chairman of the association, Alhaji Adamu Bako said the association had renovated the school's facilities. About N900,000 was realised at an appeal fund launch during the meeting attended by dignitaries that included the former Managing Director of the News Agency of the Nigeria, Malam Wada Maida. (NAN)

Install Uke of Takum now, says leader

From Andrew Agbese, Jos

The leader of the Kuteb people in Jos, Dr. Nuhu Ande Yaba, has called on President Umaru Yar'adua to ensure that a paramount ruler is installed for the Kuteb people of Takum in Taraba State after about 12 years since the last one died.

Dr. Ande Yaba who spoke with journalists in Jos, attributed the lack of development in Takum land to the crisis over the selection of the next Uke of Takum, but advised government not to be misled into delaying action on the matter,

saying this would further worsen the situation.

Lamenting the number of lives and property that have been lost in Takum and the surrounding villages due to the crisis, Dr. Yaba said government should not hesitate in giving the stool to a Kuteb son as according to him, "smuggling in somebody outside Kuteb would add fuel to the fire."

Dr. Yaba said he was happy that virtually everywhere in the country where mistakes had been made in appointing inappropriate people to mount the throne had been corrected, saying Takum should not be different.

NEWS

Soldiers nab armed robbers on Kogi road

From Sam Egwu, Lokoja

Three armed robbers who attacked travelers on Kogi roads were yesterday arrested by soldiers at Itope in Kogi State. Three shot guns, 40 live ammunitions, one pump action gun, bags of onions, phones as well as wrist watches were recovered from them. The bandits, Daily Trust learnt, had been attacking travelers at the Otukpa-Enugu highway before luck ran out on them at about 5.30 am yesterday. Deputy Commander of the Chari-Megumeri Barracks, Colonel Olumide Kolajo who paraded the suspects before newsmen at the open field of the military yard said they were nabbed following a tip-off. Colonel Kolajo gave the names of the suspects as Simon Eweche from Ebonyi, Ukechukwu Chris from Enugu and Oyeka Uzor, a driver with one of the transport companies in Anambra State. One of the robbery suspects, Chris told newsmen that two of their accomplices whose identities he did not disclose, had earlier boarded a luxury bus ahead of them which they intended to rob at a flash point on the Enugu highway.

Namadi's aide advocates law on girl child education

From Ismail Mudashir, Kaduna

Unless a law is enacted by the National Assembly, all efforts to address the poor state of girl child education in the country, especially in the North, would not yield the desired results, Senior Special Assistant to Kaduna State governor on Girl Child Education, Mrs. Laaitu Danladi has said. Speaking with Daily Trust in Kaduna yesterday, she said all efforts by government to address the poor enrolment of the girl child in schools were not yielding the desired results. "There is urgent need for the enactment of a law to compel parents in the country to be enrolling their female children in schools like their male counterparts. If this is not done, the problem would persist but if parents know that a stiff penalty awaits them if they fail to see to the education of their daughters, the problem would be addressed", she added. She called on religious and traditional rulers in the country to sensitize their subjects on the need to stop discriminating against the female child. "Very soon we are going to embark on a massive sensitization campaign across the 23 local governments of the state. We are going to carry everybody along in the state because to address this problem we need the support of all, especially the rural dwellers as they are the most affected people," she added.

Blind association seeks Ondo govt aid on employment

The Nigeria Association for the Blind (NAB) Ondo State Chapter yesterday in Abuja called on Ondo State government to provide employment to its members. Sunny Alegbeleye, the association's Public Relations officer who made the call in interview with newsmen said majority of its members were unemployed. Alegbeleye, who is studying English Education at Federal College of Education, (Special) Oyo, said that he had written on behalf of the association to present the problem to the new government in Ondo state. "When I discovered that most of our members are staying at home without a job, I wrote, not only on behalf of the blind alone but also on behalf of people with disability in the state" he said. He commended the Ondo State government for the N50,000 bursaries given to the disable yearly and urged them to increase it. "The money is not enough to take care of our needs for a whole session, so they should increase it to, at least N200, 000. The state government is trying for some of us that are in higher institutions but has neglected those in primary and secondary schools, government should pay attention to them as well. (NAN)

Armed robbers raid Katsina village

From Lawal Ibrahim, Katsina

A gang of armed robbers at the weekend ransacked Gaiwa village in Bindawa Local Government area in Katsina State, injuring three people and forcing the residents out. The incident occurred at around 9:00 pm on Sunday. The robbers who waited until the residents retired to their houses, emerged from the farms and began to shoot sporadically into the air. The robbers ransacked the whole village, taking away property and an undisclosed amount of money. Two of the injured were at the time of this report receiving treatment at the Bindawa Comprehensive Health Centre, while the third was hospitalised at Kankia General Hospital. The Divisional Police Officer (DPO) of Bindawa Local Government, Danjuma Gombi who confirmed the incident to newsmen said the police had intensified efforts to arrest the robbers.



An overloaded vehicle spotted along Abuja-Kaduna highway at the weekend.

Pic: Abdulkadir Badsha Mukhtar

CAN demands prosecution of corrupt leaders

The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in Kano State has asked the Federal Government to prosecute former corrupt leaders and shun pressures to interfere in on-going investigations against some of them. Briefing newsmen on activities marking the Easter celebration in Kano, CAN Vice Chairman, Rev. Ransom Bello said any form of interference in the ongoing corruption investigation would not serve a better purpose in the quest for true nationhood.

He stated that Nigeria needs sacrifice at every level of development to be able to achieve her dreams, pointing

From Hassan A Karofi, Kano

out that such measures remained a basis for any group or nation to survive.

The Vice Chairman said what Nigeria needs at this time of nationhood is a visionary leader that has the courage to promote truth in governance, adding that he must be seen to stand by truth all the time.

"Our present government needs courage to promote truth in governance, they need to stand for the truth, and if there are things that are being investigated they should allow things to take shape, trying to bury the truth or trying to spare some

special people in the community because of their positions cannot take us anywhere", Rev Ransom Bello said.

He added that for any nation to achieve anything, the place of sacrifice cannot be overemphasized, maintaining that the success story of Jesus Christ was his courage to give his life for others to live.

According to Rev Bello, "Easter time is a time for celebration, it is a day Jesus Christ was arrested and crucified, it is supposed to be a bad news, but it turned out to be good news because the effect of what happened thousands of years ago is what produced

Christianity today".

He called on the government to diversify the economy to meet the economic challenges of the modern world, adding that investment in other unexplored sectors would no doubt revive the economy.

"The only panacea is to diversify the nation's economy, we should not put all our eggs in one basket because time is no longer on our side to rely solely on revenue from oil", Bello said.

He then stressed that Nigeria should be re-focused on agriculture, saying if government could pay serious attention to this sector, the future economy would be brighter.

Hoodlums attack worshippers at Easter celebration

Christians celebrating the Easter in Gwada area of Niger State were yesterday attacked by a group of hoodlums.

The hoodlums who brandished different weapons attacked the unprepared worshippers, beating and wounding them. The attackers destroyed everything they could lay their hands upon, including

From Ayegba Israel Ebije, Minna

church musical instruments and furniture. Though no reason was given for the attack, many believe the mob was out to stop the religious procession from taking place as they left the premises of the church as soon as the worshippers dispersed. Confirming the report, the Police Public Relations

Officer, Niger State command,

ASP Richard Adamu Oguche told our reporter that a detachment of mobile policemen had been sent to the place to restore law and order, adding that hostilities of any form had ceased following the presence of his men. He said to ensure that sanity was fully restored in the area, two assistant commissioners of police in

charge of operations and metropolis were organizing the law enforcement agencies there to maintain peace.

Against wide spread rumours that churches were burnt, the police spokesman said nothing of such had happened in the area, adding that it did not go beyond the skirmish at the church premises.

Why we can't phase out 'Molue' on Lagos roads -LAMATA

With more than 75,000 'molue' and 'danfo' buses plying Lagos roads, the Lagos Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority (LAMATA) says it will be a herculean task to phase them out. Weighing the enormity of such ambitious plan, the Managing Director of LAMATA, Dr Dayo Mobereola, said yesterday that the state would require 6,000 new buses to accomplish such feat.

He told newsmen at an interactive session that the

number of buses under the supervision of LAMATA currently stood at 755, a figure he said was insignificant to replace the danfo buses. Mobereola said that an average of seven million people move on Lagos roads per day, with the projection expected to hit 12 million by 2015, making the transportation system to become a serious challenge.

"Even if we put 6,000 buses on the roads today, the road will still be jam-packed," he added.

The LAMATA boss

however said that the process of removing the old buses, which has become an eyesore on Lagos roads, would be in phases.

"Again, you have to do it in a systematic way, that will allow this thing to work, you don't want to force 75,000 operators out of job like that," he added. For the state to meet the target, Mobereola said that the agency was already partnering with the private sector to put in place its own transport scheme, while providing the platform and

enabling environment for it to survive. There are four of them that we are talking to right now, willing to join. We have the ability to ensure that they all work together in delivering a good transportation system for Lagos, while we serve as the melting point," he said.

He noted that the transportation strategy of the state was a reflection of the society, assuring that the agency would continue to operate a system that meets the best practices in the world. (NAN)

NEWS

Cleric advises Yar'adua on 7-point agenda, tenure elongation

The FCT Chairman of the *Izalatul Bid'a Wa Ikamatu Sunna* (IBWIS), Ustaz Nasiruddeen Hussaini Bayero has advised President Umaru Musa Yar'adua to make use of the opportunity Allah has offered him by achieving success in at least one out of his administration's seven-point agenda.

Ustaz Nasiruddeen also advised the President to resist attempts by those urging him to seek for second term in office, noting that it is not how many years a leader stays in office that matters.

The Muslim cleric gave the advice while addressing Muslim faithful at a public lecture, organized by the FCT branch of the Islamic group at Pasali, in Kuje Area Council.

The IBWIS Chairman said Chief Olusegun Obasanjo's eight years presidency could not achieve half of what General Murtala Mohammed six month leadership achieved for the country.

"President Umaru Yar'adua will do well to try and make a great success of, at least, one out of the seven-

point agenda before he is four years in office," he said, saying, it would be impossible for a leader to achieve any tangible thing in two terms of eight years what he could not achieve in a term of four years.

"Every good Muslim should aspire to make better use of any opportunity Allah makes available to him. This presidency is a good opportunity for Umaru Musa Yar'adua and he should not allow it to slip off without making use of it."

Ustaz Nasiruddeen said there would be many of Yar'adua's associates who would probably be telling him that a second term in office will offer him opportunity to perform well but that such people are interested only in using the president to remain relevant in the corridors of power.

He said the fear of Allah begins when a Muslim avoids things forbidden by Allah and sticks to those He (Allah) enjoins him to do.

According to him, the rampant acts of disobedience to Allah's commands are responsible for a lot of misfor-

tunes and distress, such as HIV/AIDS, that bedevils the world today.

Also speaking at the occasion, the Chairman of the Kuje branch of the Izala group and chief Imam of the staff quarters' Jum'at mosque, Ustaz Zakariyya Muhammad said the celebration of the birthday of Prophet Muhammad had no basis in Islam.

He said the concept of celebration of birthdays was purely Christian which some later-day Muslim scholars borrowed and implanted in Islam.

The Commandant General (CG) of the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps, Dr. Ade Abolurin has tasked his men on effective disaster management across the country.

Abolurin made the charge when he received the Corps' Rescue Team which underwent training program on Disaster Management in Israel.

He said there is the need for the Corps team to ensure effective performance of their duty.

Abolurin emphasised that the ball was now in the court of the team to prove to government and the Nigerian people that the confidence reposed in them as part of the Corps' drive on training is not a waste.

"The Corps is expected to

NSCDC boss tasks rescue team on disaster mgt

By Abdulkadir Badsha Mukhtar

be seen in its efforts at curbing disasters and as a re-invigorated and re-vitalised Disaster Manager in the country in line with its core mandates."

Dr. Abolurin told the training participants to see themselves not only as assets to their families but also a valuable treasure to the Federal Government of Nigeria.

The training according to him is to ensure that personnel do not deviate from their core mandates and have no room for unnecessary complains and laxity. He also urged the

team to therefore, make sure that all hands are on deck in fighting corruption, in ensuring protection of life, property, and safety of the citizenry in conformity with Mr. President Seven Point Agenda.

Speaking on behalf of the rescue team, Corps Ezebilo Uche promised that the money expended on them would be justified through their performance, as disaster is an unavoidable occurrence in the society.

FG to reposition Naval Dockyard

By Shehu Abubakar

The Minister of Transportation, Alhaji Ibrahim Bio has expressed the determination of government to reposition the Nigerian Naval Dockyard in Lagos to meet the maritime requirements in Nigeria and the West and Central African sub-regions.

The Minister said that despite the fact that Nigeria is a major maritime operator in West and Central Africa, unfortunately, there is no reputable or recognized world class Dockyard in the country. He said the present administration is determined to provide one.

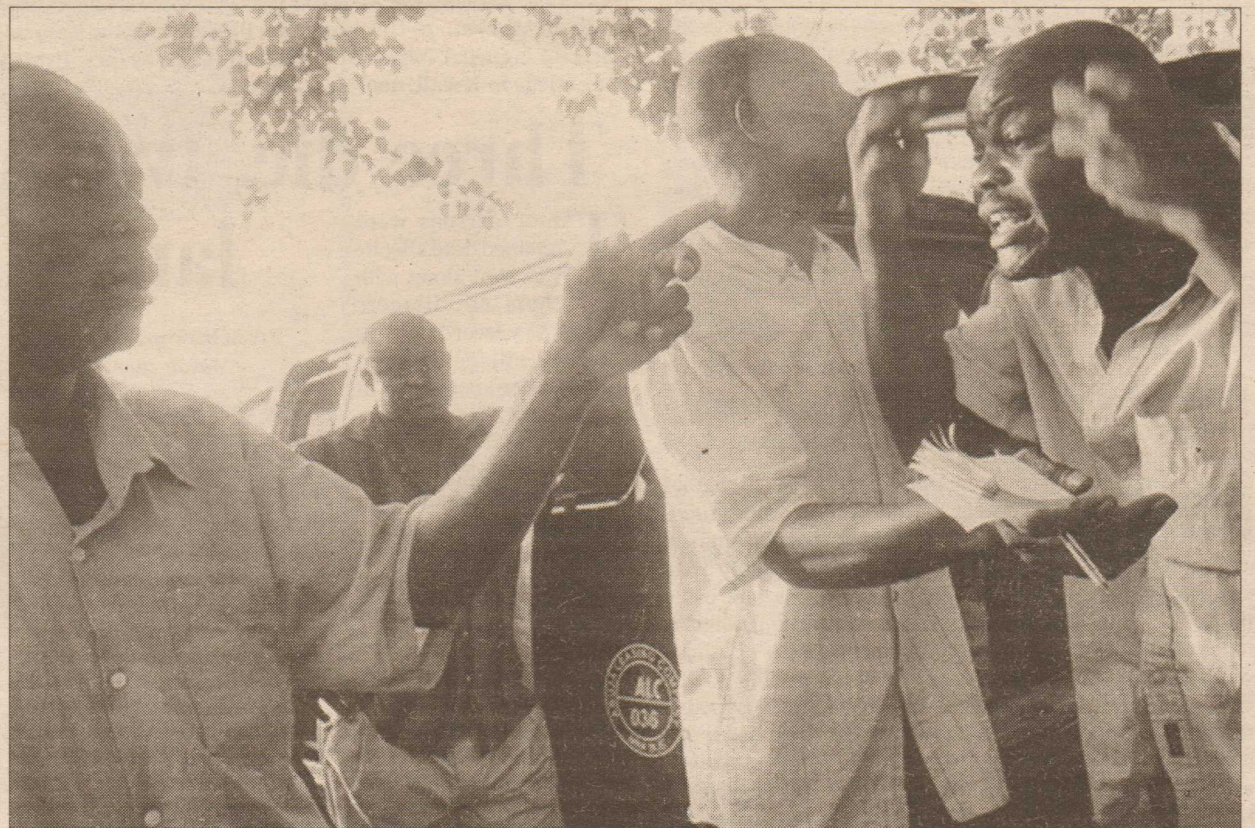
Alhaji Bio said this when he paid a working visit to the Naval Dockyard in Lagos as part of his familiarization tour of maritime facilities.

He expressed satisfaction over the execution of the memorandum of understanding between the Nigerian Navy and the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) especially as regards the safe keeping of Nigerian territorial waters; a joint responsibility for the two organisations.

The deputy director of press and public affairs to the minister, Mr. Kingsley Agha who was in the minister's entourage told *Daily Trust* in a telephone chat that Alhaji Bio further stated that with more effort, Nigeria's status in the International Maritime Organization (IMO) will be enhanced as maritime safety is of paramount importance within the maritime community.

He further assured that the Naval Dockyard will get the urgent attention it deserved as it has the potential to serve the Nigerian Navy as well as serve other merchant vessels in Nigeria's territorial waters.

Speaking earlier, the Commandant of the Dockyard, Rear Admiral Salisu Mohammed had told the minister of the untapped potentials of the Dockyard, stating that if put in proper shape; it has the capacity of taking care of service requirements of ships in the sub-region. He said that the Nigerian Navy was partnering with NIMASA to fight piracy for the benefit of Nigerians.



A driver (right) and a National Union of Road Transport Workers NURTW official (left) arguing over passengers at Gwagwalada Motor Park in Abuja, yesterday. Pic: NAN

NANS urges govs to shun students' politics

By Nasidi Adamu Yahaya

The National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) yesterday called on governors to desist from making comments on students' politics, saying their involvement is tantamount to bias.

The students' body is specifically calling on Governors Godswill Akpabio, Emmanuel Uduaghan and Adams Oshiomhole of Akwa Ibom, Delta and Edo states respectively to leave the affairs of selecting executives of

the students union to the body alone.

This plea was contained in a statement issued by the Chairman, Campaign Committee of NANS, Comrade Mohammed Bello and Secretary, Campaign Committee, Olusegun Balogun both of Akpan Bassey Etuk Williams' campaign organization.

It states that "NANS is purely students' association and squarely for student af-

airs. However non students and intruders including state governors have infiltrated their rank in attempts to dehumanise the once viable student movement by dabbling into her electoral process like they emasculated them and other electorates during the 2007 national and state elections."

It said that in recent publication in a national newspaper (not *Daily Trust*) of April 9 2009, Governors Oshimole of Edo state and Emmanuel

Udughan of Delta state, publicly declared their support for one Joseph Onajaeme contesting for NANS Presidency.

"We fully understand that such palatial supports are not without handsome amounts of money, and really, we have it on good authority that several millions of naira exchanged hands between these students-Governors and their newly-found student-godson," the statement said.

NEMA plans early warning system against disaster

By Abdulkadir Badsha Mukhtar

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has said it is supporting the establishment of an effective early warning system in the country to forecast hazards and issue alerts before any disaster occurs.

Speaking at the induction course for the agency's newly recruited officers, the

Director General, AVM Muhammad Audu-Bida (rtd) said, with effective collaboration with other stakeholders, early warnings can be provided on potentials or actual disasters like flood, earthquakes, and erosion.

He said this is to enable

individuals or communities threatened by such hazards to act in sufficient time and in an appropriate manner in order to reduce loss of lives, injuries, and damage to properties.

Efficient and effective management, according to Bida, can only be achieved in the country with the support and cooperation of all

stakeholders and every Nigerian. He added that, there was no way his agency could deliver its mandates on disaster management in isolation but that it was doing everything possible to bring together and coordinate the stakeholders to achieve the desired goal.

The Director said the NEMA in collaborations

with relevant ministries and agencies are working to ensure the workability of a system that would be useful for effective and timely dissemination of warning information to protect lives of the people.

He said the recent recruitment of 192 new staff in the agency was aimed at strengthening the staff

strength, which was one of the identified areas of need as approved by its Governing Council.

He therefore, challenged the new staff to brace up to contribute towards the realization of the agency's mandates through being committed to assigned duties and responsibilities.

NEWS

Sokoto bans commercial video viewing centres

Governor Aliyu Wamakko of Sokoto State yesterday in Shagari town announced the ban on the operations of all commercial video viewing centres across the state. Wamakko announced the ban at the 30th anniversary and graduation ceremony of Magaji Rufa'i Islamiyya School, Shagari. The governor asked the commissioner of police and other security agencies in the state to implement the ban to the latter. "All the centres would be closed down, while defaulters will be prosecuted," he warned. Wamakko said the action followed the corrupt tendencies of the youths due to the activities of the centres which showed materials that were contrary to the cultures and norms of the people of the state. He urged the residents to assist the security agents in ensuring the successful implementation of the ban. "The people should render useful information on the existence of such centres in the areas," he said. The governor also urged preachers in the state to sensitise the people on how to live according to the tenets of Islam. (NAN)

Plateau is investor friendly- Tallen

From Andrew Agbese, Jos

The Plateau State government says the state remains investor friendly despite the recent sectarian crisis that engulfed parts of Jos. The Deputy Governor, Mrs. Pauline Tallen who said this while commissioning a furniture factory in Jos, called on individuals and organizations that have brilliant investment ideas to invest in the state. She said the state investment company, PIPC, was ready to help investors willing to come to Plateau to establish businesses by providing incentives such as land and other infrastructure. "Government cannot develop industries alone, as a matter of fact, government's role is to create an enabling environment for industries to thrive and therefore we encourage the private sector to support government's dream of making Plateau an industrial haven," she stated.

Police prevent religious crisis in Kazaure

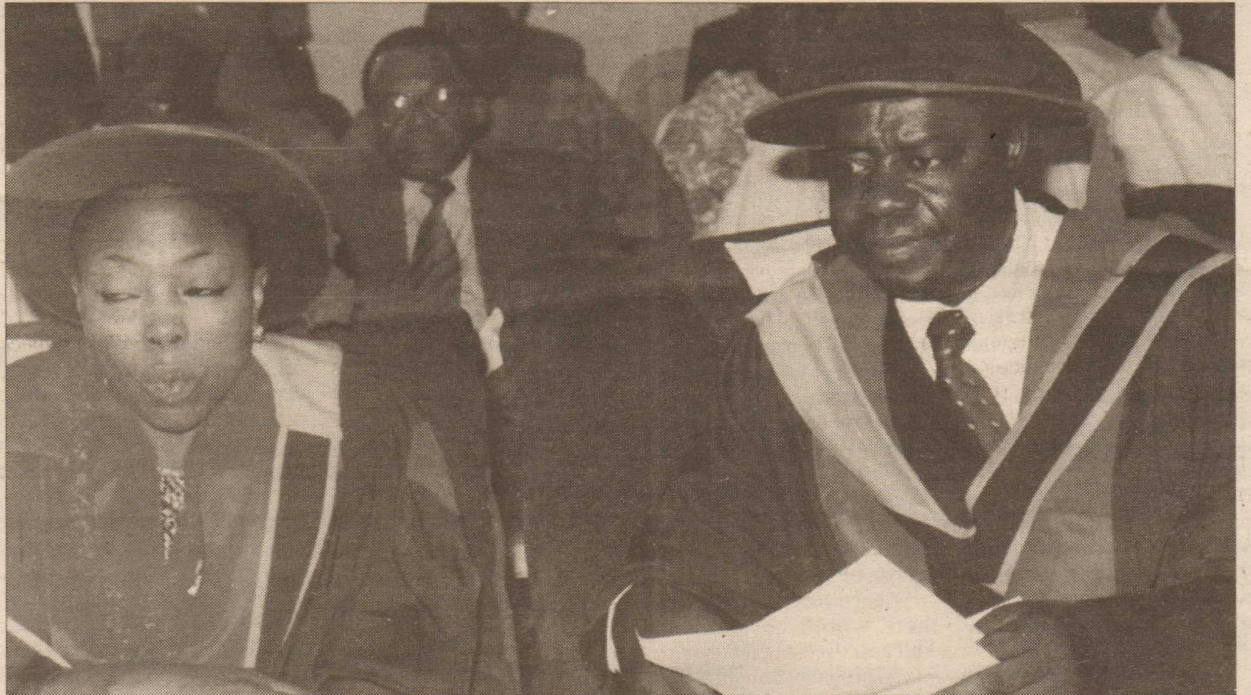
From Yusha'u A Ibrahim, Dutse

Police in Jigawa State Sunday prevented a major religious crisis that erupted between the Shi'ites and Izalah groups at Unguwar-lokon- Rijiyi in Kazaure Local Government Area of the state. An Eyewitness in Kazaure told Daily Trust that although there was no loss of life, four persons were badly injured. He pointed out that the crisis between the two religious groups erupted over conduct of the annual prophet's birthday popularly known as Maulud. Trouble according to the eyewitness started when members of one of the groups tried to prevent the other from conducting the annual event. He added that the quick intervention of heavily armed policemen saved the situation. "The police had to use several canisters of teargas to disperse the crowd", he said. The eyewitness explained that the crisis could have been a bloody one if the police had not acted swiftly, noting that the two groups used local weapons to fight each other. When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer, ASP Abdul Jinjiri confirmed the incident, saying that the police had already deployed men to restore law and order in the area.

Board decries decay at Makurdi Medical Center

From Hir Joseph, Makurdi

The governing board of the Federal Medical Centre (FMC) in Makurdi, Benue State has decried the decay at the hospital and promised government's intervention. The board, according to a press statement signed by the centre's Public Relations Officer (PRO) Mrs. Monica Agida, acknowledged that the centre was facing serious challenges in areas of manpower and staff housing. The statement said the board led by its chairman, Senator Cosmos Niagwam on a familiarization visit to the centre also paid a courtesy call on Governor Gabriel Suswam and sought the assistance of the government in tackling the challenges facing the center. The statement added that the board particularly asked the governor to provide a perimeter fence around the permanent site of the centre at Apir. The governor on his part, promised to do something about the situation.



Hajiyah Maryam L. Ibrahim, Vice President of the Association of National Accountants of Nigeria (ANAN) with the Director General, Nigerian College of Accountancy, Prof. Ambrose Okwoli, during the 3rd convocation ceremony of the college in Kwall, near Jos, recently.

Three die, two injured in Borno land dispute

Three persons were reported dead after he was shot along with two others as villagers fought yesterday in Koshebe village of Mafa Local Government Area in Borno State. The clash was over an age-long controversy over land and grazing reserves dragged on by the two rival groups.

Our correspondent who ran into two victims with gun shots in critical condition at the accident and emergency unit of the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital, Maiduguri yesterday learnt that they were attacked by a rival group a few minutes after midnight following disagreements on Saturday between the two groups. The gun shot victims include Ahlan and Umar Abdul.

From Isa Umar Gusau, Maiduguri

The chairman, Mafa Local Government Area, Alhaji Mahmud Lawan Maina who confirmed on telephone that three persons were killed however said it was not true that hundreds of people had fled the village or were displaced, maintaining that normalcy had since returned as police were restoring orderliness. Maina also said the Criminal Investigation Department of the state police command was handling the matter. He said disagreements between the villagers had been on for a long time over land with each group claiming that its portion was being trespassed on. He denied

promising free access to the grazing reserve. Maina also said the former councillor, one Abdallah, was not responsible for the clash.

Villagers in one of the warring groups told our correspondent that the disagreement began with the prevention of villagers from trespassing on grazing reserves for hunting or tree felling.

"Most of us were going into the grazing reserve for various reasons to meet livelihood before forest workers stopped us from entering the place. But along the line, the current chairman of Mafa, Mahmud Lawan told people during his campaign in 2007 that he was going to allow people

into the land if he was elected chairman and people voted for him. When he was elected, people began to trespass on the land. Sometime back, forest officials came and insisted that no one goes into the place", one of the villagers said.

He added that at the time of speaking to newsmen, he didn't know the whereabouts of his wife and children as over 300 people had been displaced.

The villagers who earlier spoke to daily trust however said the chairman was protecting the former councillor and the aggressors because of their political relationship while they (the villagers) said the chairman viewed them as political opponents.

Maina however insisted that there was nothing political about the issue, noting that the disagreement had long existed.

Tiv leaders burn book on Akume's allegation

From Hir Joseph, Makurdi

Tiv leaders in Benue State on Easter Sunday burned copies of a 508-page book which chronicled allegations of theft of the state's funds by former governor George Akume, saying their action marked a reconciliation within the Tiv leadership.

National Auditor of the PDP, Dr. Samuel Ortom and two leading anti-corruption crusaders, Senator Joseph

Waku and Dr. Godwin Dabo' Adzuana in whose Makurdi residence the ceremony took place, expressed optimism that the burning of the book which was authored at the instance of the host would unite Tiv leaders.

Titled: "How Billions of Benue Funds were Stolen During the Akume Administration", the book

authored by one "Dr. James Yatswenga" at the instance of Dr. Dabo' Adzuana has a forward written by another leading anti-corruption crusader, Alhaji Abubakar Tsava.

Dr. Dabo told those who graced the ceremony that the decision to burn the books came from his discovery that the materials used for it which were supplied by Alhaji Tsav had allegations that could not

be substantiated.

But Tsav denied in an interview with newsmen that he supplied the materials. The former Lagos State Police Commissioner admitted that he wrote the forward.

Dr. Ortom who commended Dabo for championing a process that would mark an end to bickering among Tiv political leaders said the symbolic burning of the book was a declaration that Akume did not loot Benue funds.

Akpabio urges religious leaders to join fight against kidnapping

Religious leaders in Akwa Ibom have been charged to join the fight against armed banditry and kidnapping in the state.

Governor Godswill Akpabio gave the charge in an Easter

message to the people. He urged clergymen and women to preach against the vices of kidnapping, armed robbery and other immoral acts. He told religious leaders not to fold their hands and watch

bandits crucify innocent people.

The governor noted that innocent Jesus died through conspiracy of man against man, regretting that the multitude preferred a

murderer to be set free at the expense of the righteous Christ.

He reminded the people of Akwa Ibom to abhor thoughts of disunity and imbibe the lesson of Easter, which was

love and brotherhood. "Let us remember that the real test of the Akwa Ibom spirit is not how we handle our feelings, but how we overcome them and rise together to turn our

weaknesses into our strengths," the governor said. Akpabio urged the people to relive the Easter lesson in the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. (NAN)

OPINION

Politics of river basins authorities

Chances are that as you are reading this discourse, the new Board of Directors of the 12 Nigerian River Basins Development Authorities are being inaugurated by Agriculture and Water Resources Minister, Dr Abba Sayyadi Ruma in Abuja. Though we gave the title of this piece as the politics of the river basins authorities, we will focus more of the challenges before the new boards being inaugurated today. We are beginning with the ridiculous Bill before the Senate sponsored by the Deputy Senate President, Sen Ike Ekweremadu from Enugu State. He was before coming to the senate, Secretary to the Enugu State Government under Governor Chimaroke Nnamani.

In case you are not aware of this unfortunate Bill, the senator is seeking the approval of the Senate to approve the split of the Anambra/Imo River Basin Development Authority into two so that the South East geopolitical zone should have two river basins authorities like the rest of the zones. Can you believe this coming from a whole senator? It is like the stupid argument being made that an additional state should be created for the South East zone just because other zones have six and above but they have only five states!

As we know from elementary geography, river basins are geographical entities based on watershed catchment areas and not a political calculation. It is therefore this reality that as of today, there are only 12 river basins authorities in the country based on 160 dams across the country impounding 13 billion cubic of water. These river basins development authorities are the Lake Chad River (Maiduguri), Upper Benue (Yola), Lower Niger (Ilorin), Upper Niger (Minna), Lower Benue (Makurdi), Ogun/Osun (Abeokuta), Benin/Owena (Benin), Anambra/Imo (Owerri), Cross River (Calabar), Niger Delta (Port Harcourt), Hadejia/Jama'are (Kano), Sokoto/Rima (Sokoto).

If politics was the moving consideration and not geography, there would have been several of them and not just 12. Somebody should please educate the Enugu State Senator to withdraw the Bill and stop making a fool of himself. Let us for now leave politics and geography and let us look at history and

Ujudud Shariff

ON TUESDAY

ujushariff@dailytrust.com

agriculture. The first river basin development authority was the Lake Chad Basin that covered at the beginning over 25,000 square kilometers but has now receded to about 2500 square kilometers.

The large chunk of the water has been dammed somewhere in the Congo Republic leaving the downstream of the dam in Nigeria empty causing poverty and misery to our people in Borno State. It was built by the Northern Nigerian government to provide water for irrigation having realized since that time we cannot rely on rain fed agriculture to feed the growing teeming population. This was followed by the Bagauda and Tiga dams in Kano State under late Alhaji Audu Bako of blessed memory. It was not until 1976 that the Federal Government established 11 river basin authorities with the primary aim of boosting agriculture through irrigation farming.

To date, we have less than 100,000 hectares under cultivation out of the estimated 500,000 hectares planned for the river basin areas in the whole country. It is in this context and in consideration of the very harsh economic environment the world over that we are appealing to the new boards being inaugurated today to take their jobs most seriously to boost our agriculture and secure food security. In line with the 7-Point Agenda of President Umaru Yar'adua, they must revitalize the whole concept of river basin development.

In addition to the several challenges they are likely to face, we appeal to them to take the following most seriously: Firstly, they should rehabilitate and develop the irrigation and drainage structures. This is most fundamental because a cursory look at some of the existing structures would make many of us weep. Some of the channels are blocked due to many tears of disuse and lack of maintenance. Secondly and related to the first is the issue of expansion of the

irrigated areas. We will take the Kano River Project as an example. A project that was started since the late 1960s with an estimated coverage area of 100,000 hectares, it is unbelievable that 40 years later, we have not been able to cover 22,000 hectares! We are still on phase 1 of the whole scheme which was earlier estimated to feed the whole country by 2005.

The boards should implore the Agric Minister to fund them adequately from the 200 billion Naira special agriculture intervention fund. The future of Nigeria rests on agriculture and agriculture squarely rest on irrigation. The hope of our leaders that started these river basin authorities is to fight poverty, idleness and illiteracy through the irrigation schemes that would make farming possible throughout the year. Poverty, let it be stated, has been recognized as a Northern problem by the leadership of late Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto of blessed memory since the 1960s and began to fight it seriously through irrigation farming.

The 2007 statistics on Nigeria's poverty levels released by the Bureau of Statistics that Central Bank Governor Chukwuma Soludo made popular that highlighted the devastating extent of poverty in the region that identified Jigawa State with 90 per cent living below one United States Dollar per day and Oyo State with only at 20 per cent level. Thirdly, we urge that special attention be focused on research development especially on high yielding crop varieties. The Almighty God has blessed Nigeria with so much in different sections making comparative advantage very easy to identify ranging from rice, maize, wheat, sorghum, yams, cassava and many varieties of fruits like mango, orange and the like.

Fourthly, the issue of fisheries development from the 160 dams should be tackled most seriously so that in the next few years, Nigeria would be an exporter of fish. This is where the

Public Private Partnership should come in. Government should spearhead these types of businesses and not abandon everything to the private sector. Government has everything to do with business as against the failed former notion. Thanks to the global economic meltdown, we are watching how the United States and other European countries are taking over some banks and other strategic industries.

Fifthly, the issue of marketing the products should not be left to chance. As the farmers are mobilized to embrace irrigation farming and go back to land, the markets for their products must be developed. Just imagine the wastage that happen during the season for tomatoes, pepper, onions and the like simply because of our unwillingness to establish agro-allied industries across the country. Sixthly, they should reexamine the strategy of using sprinklers for irrigation. Because of numerous problems, we cannot use sprinklers to irrigate our farms in those sandy areas where the sand particles block the system. The experience in Bakolori (Sokoto/Rima) and Wudil (Hadejia/Jama'are) should guide us as veritable lessons. And because the spare parts are imported, it makes it very expensive to be maintained. They should devise another strategy of starting the irrigation schemes from the downstream sector of the dams rather than from the upper sectors as is presently done.

Finally, we end by wishing the new boards well and praying for their success in revitalizing agriculture through irrigation in this country. They should please save the country from the embarrassment of watching irrigation being to grow maize in the Kano River Project instead of wheat. Maize as we all know should be planted during the rain fall. As we are going back to the old good days of development plans, let the production of wheat through irrigation be the priority of the basins from the North West and North East parts of the country. The time has come to do things through the old fashioned way. We made wheat production a national priority before in Kano State just twenty years ago. Please someone should tell Minister Ruma that the governor and the agric commissioner who made that possible are still alive and he can benefit from their wealth of experience.

Getting it right in the Niger Delta

Since the discovery of oil in the Niger Delta region some 50 years ago and its subsequent ascendancy as the mainstay of the country's economy between the 1960s and the 1970s, the region, which now becomes the goose that lays the golden egg for Nigeria gradually heated up to boiling point.

The region witnessed the rapid emergence of youth restiveness and sporadic formations of militant groups principally agitating for all considerations and concessions commensurate with their region's contribution to the country's economy. The concern is that whatever happens in the Niger Delta region impacts on the country positively or negatively.

In an effort to placate the region derivation rose from three to 13 percent, additional states were created by the military regimes, agencies like OMPADEC, the precursor of the present Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) were set up to speed up development in the region. Oil companies and western donor agencies poured a great deal of resources into the region to reduce environmental degradation and poverty. But with all these, development is barely noticeable due to the alleged corruption, waste and mismanagement of resources that goes to the region from all tiers of government. While officialdom may be quick to deny all these, it is difficult to dismiss them with the wave of the hand.

The setting up the NDDC during the Obasanjo regime was not an easy sail. The National Assembly had to use its two-third majority to overcome the President's veto on issues that had to do with the power and administration style of the commission. The question is: has the NDDC succeeded? The answer to this question may be hard because while the commission set out to bring succor to the region, militancy during the same period

By Akpan Victor

it existed nearly rose to the level of insurrection. Destruction of oil facilities, oil bunkering and kidnappings held sway. This is hardly what was anticipated when all these development agencies were set up.

President Umaru Yar'adua must do the right thing to make things work for the people of the Niger Delta. The creation of the Ministry for Niger Delta by his administration may not bring any difference to the communities unless there is commitment towards solving the real problems of the people. While the intention is noble the goal will come to naught unless the government ensures effective supervision of all agencies including the ministry.

The troubles the Niger Delta had (and still has) been giving the country become too terrible to be ignored, and the NDDC had to come afloat as a sure-cure for the problems in the region.

One of the recent controversies that heated up the polity about the Niger Delta region is the dissolution of the board of the NDDC which attracted attention in the media and other stakeholders. The contending issues before the dissolution of the NDDC board include which state will produce the next chairman of the commission and whether Mr. Timi Alaibe should remain in office as managing director to complete his four-year tenure till 2011.

A presidency statement that dissolved the NDDC board remained silent on the fate of Mr. Alaibe who was appointed by former President Obasanjo and was confirmed by the Senate on May 8, 2007 to complete the tenure of his predecessor, Mr Emmanuel Aguariavwodo, who resigned on November 7, after one year and seven months into his 4-year tenure.

Now that the board was dissolved, the next thing is to see how President Yar'adua will form the new board to man the affairs of the commission for the betterment of the region in particular and the country in general.

One key thing to consider is the maintenance of justice among the oil-producing states with regard to levels of participation in the statutory duties of the board of the commission. The Act establishing the NDDC right from the onset clearly spelt out the method of the distribution of posts on the board, which state gets which post and at what time as well as the qualifications for getting the posts accordingly.

The chairman of the board, according to the Act is appointed on rotation basis among the seven states in alphabetical order, while the managing director comes from the state producing the largest quantity of oil among the seven and it goes down over the years to the state producing the smallest quantity.

At the establishment of the commission, Abia produced the chairman while Bayelsa, which was then producing the largest quantity of the commodity, got the office of the managing director, serving for two terms until last week's dissolution of the board.

According to the arrangement established by the Act, Bayelsa should have a shot at the chairmanship while Akwa-Ibom, now producing the largest quantity of oil, takes its turn at the office of the managing director.

This is the normal order in strict accordance with the NDDC Act for the following practical reasons: Akwa-Ibom, especially considering the 2008 quantum output, has overtaken Rivers, Bayelsa and Delta because the former Obasanjo administration had transferred the ownership of some oil wells from Rivers to Akwa-Ibom. The heightening restiveness in the Rivers-

Bayelsa-Delta axis of the region led to drastic drop in quantum production from 2.3 mbd to 1.7 mbd. This setback in that three-state axis and the ownership of more oil wells constituted the natural advantage for the comparatively peaceful Akwa-Ibom to overtake all other states in larger quantum production. This state should, therefore, normally and naturally take its turn in the office of the managing director of the commission.

However, the Yar'adua administration repudiated the rule of law it professes by breaching the vital terms of the law establishing NDDC by appointing the chairman of the board from Rivers, not Bayelsa, and the managing director from Bayelsa, not Akwa-Ibom when it reconstituted the board last weekend. This is not the way to do it right if we must be guided by the rule of law in the way we do our things.

This breach of the Act, which has set a perilous precedence, not only threatens the legal order of managing the affairs of the crisis-ridden region, it could have grave, ripple effects on oil production.

For every arrangement established for a group of components of a given entity to serve the purpose of its establishment for the good of all, a strict adherence to the terms of the law establishing it must be upheld on the basis of equity and other emerging imperatives of justice among the associating components.

However platitudinous it sounds, this is one of the most significant facts in the management of Nigeria's Niger Delta, which now constitutes the topmost imperative for the prosperity and stability of the country's economy.

Let's get things right, please, according to the rule of law we profess for the peace and prosperity of our dear country.

Victor writes from Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

EDITORIAL

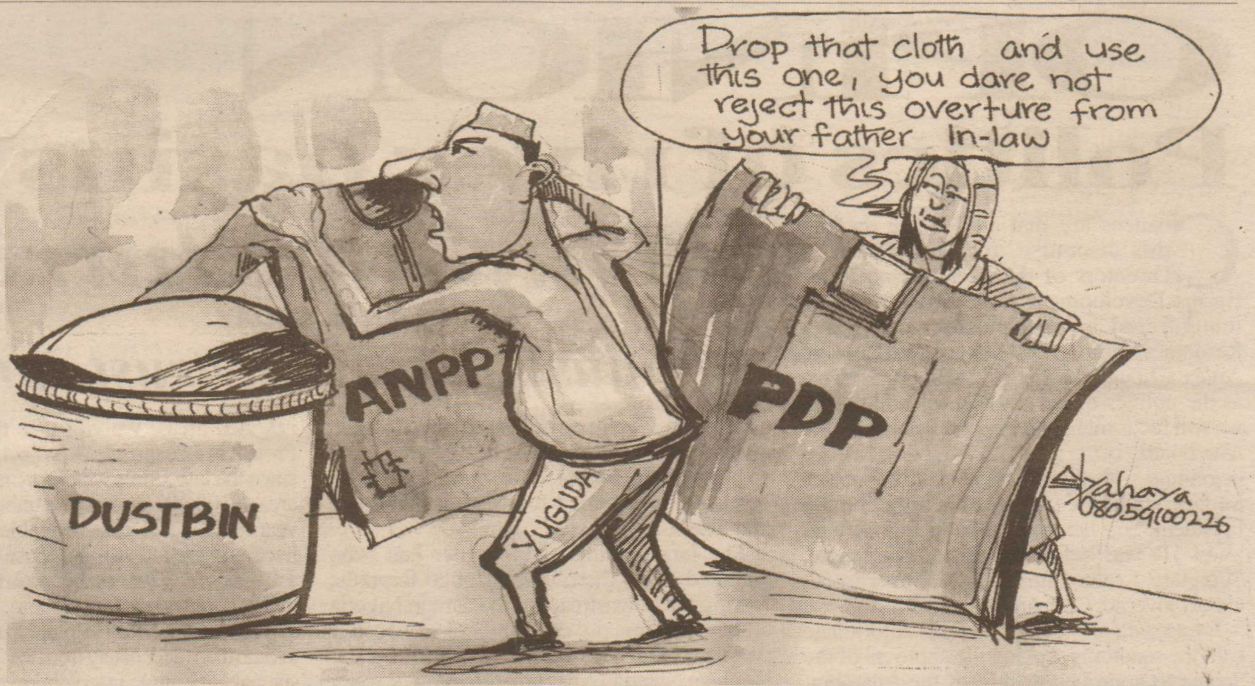
Perils of fleeing to Europe

About 300 African migrants comprising Nigerians and nationals of other African countries crammed into three leaky boats recently drowned when their boats capsized off the coast of Libya killing many of them. The boats, according to Libyan authorities, lacked life-saving materials. Hundreds of migrants are said to have died in the last few months attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea from North Africa to Europe, and the Gulf of Aden from Somalia to Yemen. There is currently an estimated one million irregular migrants from Ghana, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, and Cote d'Ivoire in Libya drawn by the need for unskilled labour. An unknown percentage of them are said to be nursing the aim of continuing their migratory voyage to Europe.

The consequences of young Africans going to Europe in search of greener pastures include the danger they subject themselves to through the use of unseaworthy vessels. They are also exposed to ruthless smugglers who use them as couriers of contraband goods. Many of the African migrants take this risk in search of a better life. It is unfortunate that Africans at this stage of their development, still live under the illusion that Europe and America are heavens on earth. The mad rush to Europe through braving the vicissitudes of the hot Sahara desert and the Mediterranean Sea are not for want of good counsel. A few take heed after hearing from the advice of personal experiences of those who have undertaken the perilous journeys, but many fail to listen and learn until they have come face-to-face with the dreadful realities of life in Europe, and then they realize that the poor living conditions unleashed upon them by bad governance in their home-countries are actually far better than what they have let themselves into.

One reason that makes many Africans hang on to illusions about the West is the fact that they let themselves be persuaded by all that they hear or watch on television channels about Europe as an Eldorado where the streets are paved with gold. Of course, those who succeed in reaching there in one piece soon find out that if you do not belong life can be as harsh as it is in Africa. We urge Nigerians, nay Africans to discard the notion that Europe is the only solution to their economic woes. The troubles they go through in their unlawfully embarked upon trips even before getting to Europe are not worth the gains derivable from it. Many arrive in Europe only to be sent to prison or camps to wait for repatriation back where they come from. Those who manage to evade the law soon find out how difficult it is to survive on the streets. We strongly therefore enjoin our youth to think hard before they embark on some disastrous misadventure to Europe where they become a nuisance.

Still the fact remains that entreaties are not enough to dissuade our youth in their quest for a better life. Tangible measures targeted on them must be taken. Governments should do more to create job opportunities and enact policies that will better the living conditions of the African youth. One such way is to make them see farming as a means of enabling themselves. After all, many of those who succeed to get to Europe end up as farm hands owing to their lack of work permit. Policies geared towards encouraging the youth to take to farming put in place in the past have been abandoned. They should be dredged up and be implemented. Of course, the new attempt should go beyond sloganeering and empty rhetoric which characterized earlier efforts. Furthermore existing sources of employment should be sustained and nurtured through the required policy initiatives for them to be of service and assistance to the youth. This will include ensuring that the manufacturing sector now flagging is giving the needed impetus to continue to grow. Additionally, the media should educate African citizens about the realities of life in Europe and America, especially now that the global economy is melting down. In Nigeria the National Agency for the Prohibition of Prostitution and Trafficking in Persons (NAPPTIP) should intensify effort to check the illegal migration of Nigerians to Europe.



Your Letters

Can Nigeria have a working democratic system?

A democratic government is a government of the people; it is a social condition where the people are the political force. Therefore, for Nigeria to have a working democratic system, it should employ some of these tools:

First, the three arms of government should be independent, especially; the judiciary. The judiciary must have job security, if they are to execute their duties effectively and efficiently. Every Nigeria should have uninhibited access to the judiciary system, for a democratic government to work. The judiciary must work without fear or favour.

Secondly, the government should adopt the deliberative leadership style. This leadership style entails building on the capacities of the citizens to think, talk, and work together in their common interest. For a democratic

government to work, it must learn to incorporate the opinion of the populace when making decisions. Since most public office holders have failed in their duties, a referendum could be adopted to get public opinion.

Lastly, the press should have freedom to do their duties. They are most times the people's eyes and mouth. Therefore, if the democratic government is to work, the press must live up to the people's expectation. The

freedom of information bill is a big step forward to making the press effective.

Dr. Charles Ejiofor, Lecturer, Department of Parasitology and Entomology, University of Abuja.

Two years without Sheikh Ja'afar

Yesterday was exactly two years since the violent assassination of Sheikh Ja'afar Mahmud Adam by some yet to be identified gunmen. The revered Islamic scholar and spiritual leader, guide and mentor, was killed on Friday April 13, 2007 while leading the early morning *subhi* prayers at the Dorayi Jumu'ah mosque in Kano.

It is disheartening that two years after his assassination, his killers are still unknown. But they can not remain unknown forever.

In fact, the Almighty knows who they are just as He knows their motive and sponsors. The truth shall always prevail and justice will surely be served.

And unknown to his killers, Sheikh Ja'afar was never afraid of death as a true believer. They only 'helped' in fulfilling the lifelong wish and desire of every Muslim to be martyred for the sake of Allah. Sheikh Ja'afar wouldn't have died in vain.

Luckily for the Muslim *umma*, Sheikh Ja'afar's

preaching, works, teachings, etc, are still with us and they remain as relevant as ever. Even generations yet unborn will surely benefit from his works.

May the Almighty Allah reward late Sheikh Ja'afar for all his good works and overlook his shortcomings. May the Almighty also grant Sheikh Ja'afar and all his likes who have been martyred, the highest stages of paradise.

Ahmad Rasheed Makarfi, Tudun Wada Makarfi, Kaduna State.

Text us on 08059100257

Jang must expatiate

Plateau State Governor Jonah Jang was quoted by *Daily Trust* of Monday, April 13, 2009 saying that arms cache was intercepted in Jos. The governor must expatiate: who carried the operations, where and when? Which installations were targeted? These are serious allegations.

Nasiru Garba, Abuja, 08098900132

Yar'adua and 2011

President Umaru Yar'adua should put his 2011 agenda on hold and concentrate on the demands of his office. To be sincere, the president's chance of getting a second term in office, based on performance, is bleak.

Yusuf Lawal Nadabo, Kaduna, 08062687722

Copy from Obasanjo

Former President Obasanjo performed satisfactorily as far as the telecommunication sector is concerned. Today mobile phones are affordable to ordinary Nigerians. President Yar'adua should use same initiative for the power sector.

W. Iwu, Kaduna, 08069196127

Technocrats not politicians

As President Yar'adua moves closer to appointing new governor for the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), technocrats should be given priority. The youths also be given the chance to occupy leadership positions for them to contribute to nation building.

A. Nura, Abuja, 08033496706

Our councillors' attitude

If we are serious about reforms, we must start from ward councillors. From there, we can easily get the formula needed

to reform and even rebrand Nigeria. Our councillors really need attitudinal reorientation.

Kandy Kagoro, Kaduna State, 07037745900

EFCC, Farida and corruption

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) is setting a bad precedence. Ex-governors, ministers etc accused of corruption are given light sentences, while petty thieves get 10 years and above. Two different law books!

Ubale Bompai, Rano, 08033246464

CBN and inflation

Why is the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) not releasing enough N20, N50 and N100 notes respectively? We are always running short of these denominations already. The higher denominations are only triggering inflation.

Usman Zaria, Kaduna, 08069196127

Let's stop 'eye-services'

A lot of bill boards and sign posts were pulled down as 'eye service' during President Yar'adua's one day visit to Nasarawa State by the state urban development board. Governor Akwe Doma never gave any order to the board to destroy people's property.

Pastor DJ Job, Angwa Tudumama, Keffi, 07031996006

On Buhari's ambition

A piece with the title "2011: How realistic is Gen Buhari's ambition?" was well written. General Buhari should storm the stage come 2011 under a credible platform, or as independent candidate, but not under ANPP. Many ANPP top shots are after his popularity for their selfish gains.

Nazifi Shuaibu, NazifiShuaibu@bankphb.com

Opinion

That fear of Jacob Zuma must be good for Africa

By Okello Oculi

Jacob Zuma has a fourteen-letter middle name. It is "GEDLEYIHLEKISA". Like most African names, it holds a special history under Zulu tongues. The history that is important here must be that of "the elephant as is, and as builder, of successful "underground structures" or intelligence networks and organizations of liberation fighters". Even George Orwell did not conceive of the "elephant" as master secret service operative; and boss in his kingdom of liberation struggle animals. George Orwell was the famous British novelists who hugged the terror of the poor in European (not African) society; as well as the cynicism of those who run power in a state, including the one most driven by dreams of bringing justice and building utopia here on earth. Jacob Zuma, a lad born on April 12, 1942, would lose his father to early death around 1946; and rapidly grow into filling in for him by taking "on odd jobs to supplement his mother's income". His mother earned the wage as a domestic servant in a white household that treated her as a sub-human.

Zuma climbed from the poor orphan boy whose mother could not afford to pay his school fees in Kwazulu Natal Province, to being "Head of Underground Structure and thereafter Chief of Intelligence Department" by 1987. Building on the hundreds of youths who fled out of schools for blacks, following the brutal massacres of the Soweto revolt of 1976, Zuma used his re-location in Mozambique and Swaziland to create an intelligence and harassment force that was so effective in hurting the apartheid security forces that President PW Botha put enormous pressure on the government of Mozambique to ask him to leave the country and relocate to the headquarters of the African National Congress in Lusaka, Zambia. Considering that the South African intelligence network was at the time being most deadly in killing officials and operatives of the ANC - including the brilliant scholar Ruth First who died from a parcel bomb sent to her by post - Jacob Zuma, the "elephant secret agent, must have been brilliant in protecting himself and his brood. It was a tribute to his genius that racist president Botha was forced to resort to bullying the government of Mozambique to drive him further afield from the borders of South Africa. To cap that achievement, Jacob Zuma would by 1990 be sitting across the table from top officials of the hideous apartheid government to negotiate for that government's acceptance of the legitimacy of the ANC; and their surrender of political power.

An official of the South African Communist Party, who knew Zuma from his teens, has reported that the boy was an enthusiastic

and devoted attendant of literacy classes run by the ANC for those who could not afford to pay school fees. More than being a self-taught man, Zuma had literacy lessons that, unlike those in regular schools, were vigorously salted with political and survival education under hostile and brutal rule by white racists. The very character of his 'schooling' was one that was likely to prepare a brilliant mind with skills for covert politics; and persuasion of others to join a dangerous business of actively opposing apartheid. His ten years in prison on Robben Island (1962 - 1972), was his "undergraduate" education. He had been arrested among a group of 45 recruits travelling to train in Umkhonto We Sizwe military camps outside South Africa.

From 1975 when he arrived in Swaziland and Mozambique, Zuma began his years of learning the craft of international regional politics. It was a period when the Liberation Committee of the Organisation of African Unity, OAU was bringing in larger quantities of arms to feed the ANC's war effort. It was a period of practical contact with international relations embedded in the geography of Southern Africa. Simple realities surrounding the fact that Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Tanzania run in a landmass that rolled, uninterrupted, from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Indian Ocean in the east, fell on Zuma. Namibia, South Africa and Mozambique also holding hands in a continuous land-grab also came into Zuma's military arithmetic. That the landlocked countries of Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe each shared borders with South Africa, assumed high strategic and diplomatic significance in Zuma's new and highly turbulent education. It was also a time to dream of the prospect of the belt of land from Angola, Congo DR, Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania in the north, joining the belt consisting of Namibia, South Africa, and Mozambique in the south, into a possible future union government. It was time to note over and over that under that geography was buried rich deposits of oil in Angola; diamonds in Botswana, Congo DR, Namibia, South Africa and Angola; and gold in South Africa, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Congo DR, etc. And that they fuelled the politics of hate that run apartheid and the support it enjoyed from European and American leaders and business groups. Zuma's education had climbed beyond prison walls.

By 1979, Zuma would have been in a position to influence the imagination that formed SADCC as an organization of states that wished to "disengage from trade

dependence on apartheid South Africa", as a means of weakening that enemy state. The diplomatic drama had sucked in countries as far north as Nigeria into what was termed "the frontline states" in the struggle to defeat racist rule; and bring democratic politics to Namibia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Angola and South Africa.

That short narrative is the abridged record of Jacob Zuma, the "elephant secret service liberation fighter" with a fourteen letter middle name. As an activist inside South Africa, he had, on graduation from the university of Robben Island prison, plunged into "building underground structures" from 1973 to 1975. The skills he built from it would be most useful, as a fighting tool, when President Thabo Mbeki sought to terminate Zuma's political rise (by dropping him from the Vice presidency of the country), in 2007. From his intelligence work; his work in training angry, bitter and impatient graduates of the Soweto student revolt of 1976 (that had arrived in Swaziland and Mozambique for military training), combined with his underground mobilization inside Kwazulu Natal province had built for Zuma that rare resource of followers known as "mass power". When he wielded that power in contesting for the presidency of the ANC, he carried his supporters from a thunderous dancing mass in the streets to voters who would humiliate Mbeki with a gap of 854 votes.

This record prepares us for understanding the panic with which Jacob Zuma's impending electoral victory in the April elections, and his expected assumption of the presidency, is regarded with veritable panic by those who fear a transition to a leadership of a person who successfully fought the liberation war with Chaka the Zulu's tradition of close combat against the enemy at close range with a short spear and shield. He knows white rulers as exploiters of his mother, of his own labour; as his jailor and tormentor in prison; as a gun-firing enemy as intelligence killers hunting down ANC officials; as panicking negotiators across a conference table; as politicians campaigning and managing the 1994 elections, and as defensive fighters against the historic post-1994 African rule. He is that "elephant" known in African tales as one with diverse surprises in its stomach for it grazes far and wide; or a formidable porcupine to catch and swallow.

One group that would resent him are those who wish that he forgets the poverty of those who today live his mother's poverty and humiliation as a domestic servant in white households; those children who today remind him of his mother's failure to afford to pay his school fees. Others are those who know that Zuma knows that whites only

respect the language of counter-violence by blacks; that Jacob Zuma knows that behind claims of political morality lie primarily the defence of wealth in land, mines, banking, industrial manufacturing and commerce in the hands of whites in South Africa and Namibia. A commentator has noted that one group outside South Africa are the 220,000 people living in England who, in 2007, owned second homes in South Africa. In short, they are those who wish that living in poverty-ridden violent slums in urban areas and rural remains of "bantustans", should, for the majority of blacks and coloureds, be the main dividends of post-1994 democracy in South Africa.

These fighters of a rear-guard war to retain the core privileges of apartheid clearly lack the will to build a new South Africa whose stability will be anchored on economic justice; and not be held up by massive use of police and military violence to keep down angry and frustrated millions of the poor. Some may even dream of winning back power by replaying the Congo game of 1960 in which Belgian troops flew back into its former colony to overthrow Patrice Lumumba under the pretext of protecting lives of Belgian citizens. Archbishop Desmond Tutu's verbal arrows thrown at Zuma, run the risk of giving legitimacy to such blood-waving designs. The great Archbishop saves such groups from the burden of crafting a new society out of breaking up evils deeply soaked into ancient bricks and attitudes of mind of apartheid.

There are, however, positive sides of Zuma's climb to the presidency. As they say, he moves from "grass to grace"; with the promise of a grace that arouses hope and creative energies out of the grass. He has experienced, as a major participant, leaders backed by hate and brutal interests, sitting down around a table and negotiating with the power of tenacious belief in possible changes for better futures. He has known that posed at the edge of political and historical cliffs, with disaster staring from valleys below, can stir surprising juices of statesmanship in adversaries genuinely seeking peace and progress. South Africa, with the benefit of the recent tragic drama in Zimbabwe next door, will need those resources in Jacob Zuma the man of history that has come after the euphoria has dimmed a little of Mandela's walk with freedom riding on his stubborn words. Africa can only be glad if, with Zuma in the presidency, that ancient of African-American wit comes to pass: 'when white folks say something bad about something, it or he must have something good for black folks'.

Oculi is Executive Director, Africa Vision 525 Initiative.

Why Nigerian companies are folding up

By Ahmad Ibrahim Ja'e

When I was a child, I used to wonder when I hear people discussing issues that had to do with government and they blame the government for all the economic crises going on in the country. For example, they accuse the government for the closure of most of our industries or that the government is responsible for the high unemployment rate in the country. I used to tell myself 'anyone who finds himself unemployed should not blame anyone but himself because any enterprising person will never find himself unemployed.' However, as I grew up, I came to understand the above statement by the poor masses to be on the right track. A certain incident that occurred proved that the masses are more than hundred percent right.

I was working in a small manufacturing company established by a hardworking and patriotic indigene from the North; I happened to be the marketing manager and there was a friend of his who came from Europe for the purpose of conducting business in Nigeria. This young *bature* patronized our company as we were almost in the same business with him. There came a period of recess in the company and this

man got a contract worth millions of naira from a non-governmental organization.

This contract was for the supply of products that we produce; in fact our company produced the samples that were used by the *bature* to secure this very contract through open competitive bidding.

Trust human beings, you know they always like to maximize profit and minimize cost. In line with the above ego-fulfillment in human beings, this *bature* had several connections internationally especially Asia where they produce all kinds of cheap, standard and substandard products for the consumption of the poor third world countries that have no alternative. He contacted his business partners over there and they gave him a quotation that included transportation to Lagos port and a credit facility of six months. Having produced the samples, he felt that he should contact us to get a quotation and he went further to give us the quotation he received from the Asians.

My boss handed over the quotation to me and tasked me to quote as low as possible so as to beat the price of the Asians

as that was the only determining factor to getting the job. After series of calculations, re-calculations and short-cuts, I found out that the price the Asians offered was not even enough for our company to buy materials from Lagos (which was the cheapest place we could get our raw materials in the country) not to talk of labour, overhead costs and profit. In fact we were ready to accept the job even if we were not going to make profit but at least to break even in order to keep our staff busy because an idle mind, as they say, is a devil's workshop.

I finally handed over the estimate to my boss which was higher than the Asians' by about thirty percent. After series of meetings and phone calls with my boss the *bature* finally decided to take the job out of the country. When my boss informed me of the *bature's* decision, I said to him 'the man should have considered us because we produced the samples for him free of charge, moreover even at the price we gave him, he will end up with a profit of about forty percent.'

My boss said to me that it was not his fault, had it been the government had

policies and laws that would force the *bature* to do the job in the country, he wouldn't have taken our money elsewhere. I said to myself 'this case is only a small example of what our local companies are going through. No wonder most companies are folding up due to the difficult situation they find themselves. This problem, coupled with the problem of NEPA, PHCN, NITEL, WATER BOARDS, NNPC and what have you are the ones killing this country and if nothing is done, very soon Nigerians will be better off in Niger, Somalia etc than in their home country.'

Lest I forget: A few weeks ago, we went to buy tyres and found out that the price have skyrocketed. When we asked the dealers, they told us that the company that produces tyres in the country has closed down due to the above mentioned factors. They have to resort to importing tyres from Asian countries of which some of them are not reliable. I think the earlier the Federal Government wakes up from its deep sleep the better for us. Mr. President, please take note.

Ja'e wrote in from No. 390 Ja'e Road, Sabon layi, Shika, Giwa L.G.A, Kaduna State. abufati2003@yahoo.com



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MALAM (DR) IBRAHIM SHEKARAU
The Executive Governor of Kano State

The Executive and Members of Muryar Dala (Dala Local Government) Kano State, congratulates His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Kano State **Malam (Dr) Ibrahim Shekarau**, for the conferment of Honorary Doctorate Degree in Public Administration by the University of Nigeria Nsuka, Etulusi of Ede land and Mujahidi Uban Marayu of Nigeria.

These awards came as the will of Allah (Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala) considering the Tremendous achievement recorded in human and social endeavours, which lead to his re-election for the second term in office.

We wish his Excellency the very Best in life and pray for Allah's guidance and uplifting of his status now and in the future.

SIGNED: Chairman Muryar Dala

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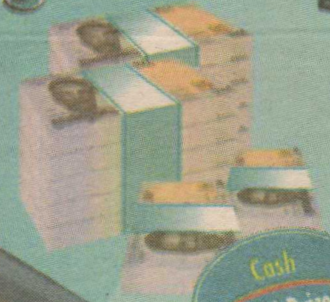
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AFRICA REPORT

Mauritania coup leader announces presidential bid

The head of the Mauritanian junta announced yesterday that he will resign "before the end of the week" in order to launch his candidacy for presidential elections slated in June.

General Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz, who took power in an August coup, said during a live radio press conference that he was quitting "to establish my candidacy for presidential elections," due on June 6.

The general, who ousted the west African country's first democratically elected leader Sidi Ould Cheikh Abdallahi last August, has to stand down by April 22 if he wants to become a presidential candidate.

"There will be no postponement of the June 6 elections. Ninety percent of Mauritians want these elections, it is the people's choice," he said last week in response to media speculation. After deposing Ould Cheikh Abdallahi, the general formed a state council of 11 military officials.

Mauritania's government has already announced the creation of a new electoral commission to organise and monitor the election.

Ould Abdel Aziz also warned that "African Union sanctions are not and will not be effective" as an African Union delegation stepped up mediation efforts here to end the political crisis.

He added: "Even if 50 African countries, and not (just) the 15 on the peace and security council, decide on sanctions, nothing will change..."

"Those on the outside who want to see sanctions imposed... are realising they are useless. It's really to the Mauritians (they) must go to look for the solution," he stated.

The delegation arrived late Saturday with AU peace and security council president Ramtane Lamamra and Libyan Foreign Minister Aly Triki, whose country holds the continental body's rotating presidency.

The envoys held talks with Mauritanian Foreign Minister Mohamed Mahmoud Ould Mohamedou on Saturday.

On Sunday, however, a significant slice of the opposition Rally for Democratic Forces (RFD) came out in favour of taking part in the vote in a dispute that has split the party.

"We ask the party's president and his authorities to consider this option within the framework of internal dialogue," RFD vice-president Kane Hamidou Baba, suspended from the party on Saturday, told a news conference. Meanwhile, the head of another party that backed last year's coup, the Alliance for Justice and Democracy-Movement for Renovation (AJD-MR), also said he will stand.

The AU's peace and security council announced last month it would impose sanctions on "those in power," with the list due to be drawn up at the end of April.

The AU mission follows a mediation bid by Senegal last week. Libyan leader Moamer Kadhafi also visited the country in March but opponents of the coup rejected his mediation as biased.

...As opposition rejects elections as farce

A coalition of parties opposed to last year's coup in Mauritania's rejected yesterday the military junta's planned elections as a farce aimed at legitimizing army rule.

"This is a vast comedy," Mohamed Ould Moloud from the National Front for the Defence of Democracy (FNDD) told AFP of earlier announcement that junta chief General Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz would resign this week to stand for election.

"It's a false resignation, a pretend resignation that the general is doing to trick public opinion and have people accept the putsch" of August 6 last year, Ould Moloud added.

At present, most of the opposition to the junta and its government plan to boy-

cott the vote scheduled in less than two months' time.

The general has to resign both from the army and the High State Council—the junta—45 days ahead of elections in order to stand in the presidential poll.

General Aziz said that Senate president Ba Mamadou would be the interim head of state until the election, but his rivals riposted that the head of the parliamentary body would be surrounded by a "pro-junta government."

An African Union mediation team in the nation on the western edge of the south Sahara desert met on Sunday night with Sidi Ould Cheikh Abdallahi, the ousted head of state, his daughter Amal said.

The AU team, including the chief of the pan-African body's Peace and Security

Council, Ramtane Lamamra, and Libya's Foreign Minister Ali Abdelsallam Triki, talked to Mauritania's first democratically elected leader in his home village of Lemden, 250 kilometres (150 miles) east of Nouakchott.

The envoys, who are stepping up regional efforts to try and mediate a way out of the political crisis, were due to meet junta leader General Aziz later on Monday.

"African Union sanctions are not and will not be effective," General Aziz said, when he also confirmed the elections would go ahead as planned on June 6.

The AU's peace and security council announced last month it would impose sanctions on "those in power," with the list due to be drawn up at the end of April.

Mortar shells fired at US congressman in Somalia

US congressman Donald Payne came under mortar fire yesterday as he was leaving in a plane from Mogadishu airport, but no one was injured in the attack, an African Union official told AFP.

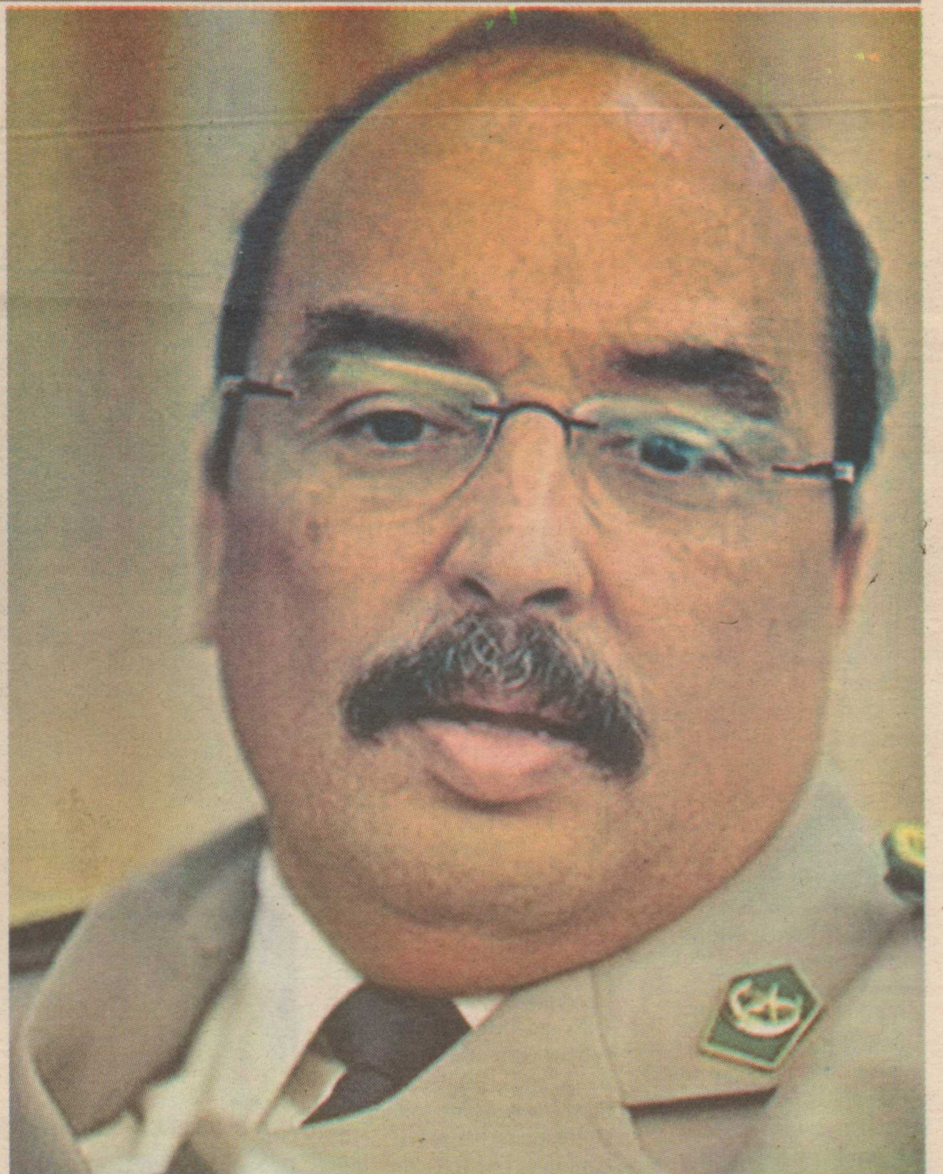
"The plane of the congressman was leaving and the mortars started falling. There were no casualties, but the attack was aimed at the congressman. He flew out safely," the AU official told AFP on condition of anonymity.

Payne, congressman from New Jersey and a member of the foreign affairs committee, ar-

rived in Mogadishu hours earlier for talks with President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed and his prime minister on rampant piracy off the country's coast.

His visit came the day after US forces shot dead three of four Somali pirates who had been holding an American captain hostage for five days in the Indian Ocean.

A Somali pirate chief earlier Monday threatened to target Americans in revenge for the rescue of a US captain in a dramatic operation that saw naval snipers kill his captors.



Leader of Mauritania's ruling junta, General Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz announced yesterday that he will resign "before the end of the week" in order to launch his candidacy for presidential elections slated in June.

Gabon president challenges French account freeze

Gabonese President Omar Bongo is seeking to overturn a French court order freezing nine of his bank accounts in the country, a source close to the case said Sunday.

The accounts were frozen in February after a French court ordered Bongo to return a sum paid to him by the son of a jailed Frenchman in exchange for his release, amounting with interest to 1.1 million euros (1.45 million dollars).

Bongo's lawyer filed a challenge with a Paris court, saying the president had already set aside the sum, and arguing that the freeze on his accounts, which hold a total of 4.39 million euros, is unnecessary, the source said.

The court is to examine Bongo's request on April 28, the source added.

Frenchman Rene Cardona was imprisoned in 1996 after a business dispute with Bongo, to whom he had sold a fishing and shipping firm. He was released after his son Thierry paid almost half a million euros into Bongo's personal account.

Last September a French court ruled the payment had been illegal and ordered Bongo to repay the entire sum plus interest and legal costs. The Gabonese leader's lawyers had argued that the case was a private dispute, pointing out that a Libreville commercial court had sentenced the Frenchman to pay Bongo 900,000 euros in damages.

Africa's longest serving head of state, 73-year-old Bongo has ruled his oil-rich but socially impoverished former French colony since 1967 and has been a close associate of a string of French leaders.

In recent years his often murky economic ties with French figures have complicated his relations with Paris and have become the subject of a legal challenge by anti-corruption activists.

A French police investigation has reportedly established that Bongo and his family own at least 33 luxury properties in France, including a villa in Paris bought in 2007 for 18.8 million euros.

Soldiers "attack" brother of Togo president

Soldiers attacked Kpatcha Gnassingbe, brother of Togo's President Faure Gnassingbe, in an overnight raid on his house, but he escaped unharmed, witnesses said yesterday.

The troops overcame soldiers on guard duty and stormed into Gnassingbe's

bedroom, which they looted, like that of his children, shooting inside and around the house, witnesses told AFP.

"It was a heavily armed unit of the (elite) Rapid Intervention Force.

They neutralised the soldiers who were watching

over the house," one source close to the president's brother said.

"Mr Gnassingbe was there, but not in the rooms targeted by the attackers. They encircled the building and were firing in all directions for at least three hours," the source added.

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FOREIGN & DIPLOMATIC

EL Salvador: A left turn of US staunch ally

With the victory of a left-wing candidate in the presidential election, El Salvador is the latest country in Latin America to be swept by the "pink tide". It is counted among the staunchest allies of the United States. During most part of the 20th century, El Salvador was under brutal U.S.-backed dictatorships. Since 1989, the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA), a U.S.-backed party having strong links with the military and former vigilante groups, has been in power.

The Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) began a guerilla war in the early 1980s to dislodge the military junta that was riding roughshod over the will of the people for more than five decades. The FMLN was formed after five guerilla armies merged in 1980. It signed a peace treaty in 1992, formally ending decades of fighting. It also agreed to an amnesty for the death squad killers and officials who were responsible for the death of thousands of Salvadoreans.

The FMLN's candidate, Mauricio Funes, won the presidential election held in the second week of March, defeating Rodrigo Avila, his rival from ARENA. Funes had to overcome overwhelming odds. In a society that is still polarised after decades of violence, the ARENA campaign used scare tactics to bully the electorate into submission. Funes was portrayed as a puppet of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez and Cuban leader Fidel Castro.

Today, two of America's foremost enemies, the FMLN and the Sandinistas in neighbouring Nicaragua, are in power. Salvador Sanchez Ceren, the newly elected Vice-President, was a leading FMLN commander during the civil war.

Right-wing U.S. politicians tried to lend a helping hand to the Salvadorean right wing. Dana Rohrabacher, a Republican Congressman, described the FMLN as a terrorist organisation and an "ally of Al Qaeda and Iran". Influential Republican Congressmen threatened to end the Temporary Protection Status that Washington has accorded to the 260,000 Salvadoreans in the U.S. who do not have proper immigration papers.

The country's economy, which is in dire straits, depends heavily on the remittances of its citizens working in the U.S. As much as 17 per

By Charles Onunaiju

cent of the country's gross domestic product depends on foreign remittances. It is estimated that one-fourth of the eight million people of the country is in the U.S. The government actively encouraged Salvadoreans to leave the country and seek employment outside. Citizens were issued passports within hours of applying.

Funes, who was chosen by the FMLN for his "moderate" image, was quick to reassure his countrymen that he accorded the highest priority to relations with the U.S. "Nothing traumatising is going to happen here," he told a local television station after his victory.

He also promised "respect for private property, macroeconomic stability and a responsible fiscal policy". About 60 per cent of El Salvador's exports go to the U.S. and the U.S. dollar is the official currency. On the campaign trail, Funes had said that he was against joining the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA), the alternative trade bloc being promoted by Venezuela, Cuba, Bolivia, Honduras, Nicaragua and Ecuador.

El Salvador was among the first countries to join the U.S.-promoted Central American Free Trade Association (CAFTA). A recent poll showed that an overwhelming majority of Salvadoreans hold CAFTA responsible for the collapse of their agricultural sector, the loss of domestic jobs, the rising cost of living and the growing crime graph. El Salvador is also not a member of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), which strives for meaningful economic integration among the states of the region.

Funes has said that his role model is Brazil's Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva. At the same time, he has said that he admires other left-wing leaders in the region such as Chavez, Evo Morales of Bolivia, and Rafael Correa of Ecuador. The Venezuelan government has been supplying highly subsidised fuel to many of the municipalities controlled by the FMLN.

It is well known that the FMLN as a party has great admiration for the socialist experiment being carried out in Venezuela under the leadership of Chavez. Though Funes has said that he has no plans to "build socialism" in his country, he may avail himself of the opportunity to steer



President of EL-Salvador Mr Mauricio Funes.

El Salvador away from the embrace of the U.S. and opt for multipolarity in foreign policy.

Before plunging into the political fray, Funes was a popular broadcaster working for the Spanish language version of the CNN. One important factor for Funes' moderate stance is that his party may have to depend on ARENA to conduct legislative business. El Salvador is in the throes of an economic crisis. Political cooperation between the two leading parties, the FMLN and ARENA, is needed to rescue the country from the impact of the recession. The country is witnessing an alarming drop in remittances from the U.S. Remittances are a lifeline for the large number of Salvadoreans living in extreme poverty.

The U.S. was keenly watching the FMLN's stance on regional issues, especially those pertaining to Venezuela and Cuba. It was only in the first week of March that the Barack Obama administration gave a categorical assurance that it would accept an FMLN victory. Late last year, Charles Glazer, the U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador and a Bush administration appointee, described the FMLN as a supporter of terrorist groups such as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and called on Salvadoreans to vote against the party in the general elections. He spoke in the presence of John

Negroponete, the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State. Glazer has since been recalled by the Obama administration.

It was only because of the intervention of the U.S. that the FMLN was kept out of power since the early 1990s. In 2004, the FMLN was deprived of a sure victory by machinations orchestrated with the help of Washington.

The FMLN's goal during the days of the guerilla war was to end 50 years of rapacious rule by an elite that had turned the country into one of Latin America's poorest and the most violent. Salvadorean society continues to be wracked by extreme violence. Ten homicides are reported every day – one of the highest rates in the world.

The violence is a legacy of the brutal civil war. The U.S. aid funnelled to the Salvadorean army and the right-wing vigilante groups in the 1980s ran into millions of dollars. U.S. advisers and troops and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) operators were stationed in the country to help the army suppress the people.

During the course of the 12-year-long civil war, 70,000 Salvadoreans were killed and another 6,000 "forcibly disappeared". Most of them were victims of right-wing vigilante groups whose leader was Major Roberto D'Aubisson. The murder of Archbishop Oscar Romero, while conducting an open-air mass, was a "cause celebre" in Latin

America. Every Sunday, Romero used to conduct mass in front of the dozens of bodies found on the streets of the capital, San Salvador. Those carrying out these massacres were trained by the U.S. Special Forces and intelligence agencies.

Romero was a votary of "liberation theology" and was sympathetic to the FMLN's egalitarian goals. Before his killing by state-sponsored assassins, he had denounced from the pulpit "the war of extermination and genocide against a defenceless civilian population".

Funes had pledged on the campaign trail that he would not repeal the amnesty law that was introduced as part of the 1992 peace pact. The law prevents the prosecution of all those involved in the killings and the torture that took place in the 1970s and 1980s. Some of the people who played an active role in the civil conflict held important posts in the outgoing government.

A United Nations-supported Truth Commission set up after the peace accord in El Salvador concluded that the order for Romero's killing and the separate killings of six Jesuit priests and four American churchwomen came from the highest echelons of the U.S.-backed government of the time. The U.S. had funnelled \$6 billion at the height of the FMLN struggle to prop up the right-wing

government. According to an FMLN leader, El Salvador had become the "Israel of the region". The Salvadorean elite has been showing its gratitude for all the help received. El Salvador was the only country in the region to send troops to Iraq in support of the U.S.-led invasion. Because the move has been very unpopular domestically, the government announced that it was withdrawing the last of its troops from Iraq before the presidential election.

El Salvador was also chosen by the George W. Bush administration to host the newly created International Law Enforcement Agency. This agency is said to be the replacement for the notorious School of the Americas, which trained military officers of the region in counter-insurgency and the use of "dirty tricks" against progressive governments and movements.

The government of El Salvador is also part of "Plan Mexico" – a 2008 Bush administration initiative which seeks to replicate the failed multi-billion "Plan Colombia", aimed at fighting narcotics smuggling and narco-terror groups.

Funes, who takes office on June 1, has a tough road ahead. He will have to run a country that has remained tied to the U.S.' apron strings ever since it gained independence in the late 19th century.

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MIDDLE EAST & ASIA

Iran welcomes nuclear talks with West

Iran welcomes nuclear talks with the United States and other countries, Tehran's top nuclear negotiator said yesterday.

The negotiator, Saeed Jalili, made the comments during a telephone call with the European Union's foreign policy chief, state television reported.

During the conversation, Jalili said the talks should be aimed at "constructive cooperation" between countries.

Last week, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said Iran was open to talks — but only if they were based on respect for Iran's rights, suggesting the West should not try to force Tehran to stop uranium enrichment.

Jalili's comments appeared to be more of a definitive answer, but he stressed that Iran would issue an official response to the invitation soon, the TV reported. He did not elaborate.

The United States announced last week that it would join direct talks with Iran that Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia are seeking to convene. The talks aim to break a long deadlock over Iran's nuclear program, which the U.S. and its allies fear aims to build atomic weapons. Iran denies the charge.

Ahmadinejad said Thursday that Iran would present a new proposal for negotiations, saying "conditions have changed" — an apparent reference to President Barack Obama's election and Iran's own progress in its nuclear program since previous talks with Iran were held last year. He didn't elaborate on the proposal.

Jalili also insisted in his conversation with Javier Solana, the EU foreign policy chief, that the all parties involved in the talks should have the "right understanding of international developments and realities," the TV reported.

Ahmadinejad announced on Saturday that Iran now controls the entire cycle for producing nuclear fuel.

The step was significant toward furthering Iran's nuclear energy capabilities and could be designed to strengthen Iran's position at a time when the Obama administration has said it would negotiate with the Iran over its nuclear program.



Thai protesters attack a driver of a car mistaken for Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva

Thai soldiers spray gunfire, tear gas at protesters

The political unrest that seized the Thai capital yesterday claimed its first fatality in what the government described as an evening gunbattle between protesters and city residents enraged at their violent disruption.

The scuffle came after a day of clashes between the protesters — who are pressing for the ouster of Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva — and thousands of troops across the city. Troops fired warning shots and tear gas at the demonstrators and finally forced most to retreat and regroup near their stronghold around the prime minister's offices.

For more than 12 hours, red-shirted protesters — most of whom are supporters of ousted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra — and the soldiers locked in a series of running street battles across Bangkok that left at least 79 people injured.

Security forces had appeared to be pushing the protesters into a smaller area, but by late afternoon street fighting had broken out in several neighborhoods between normal citizens and the protesters.

But an early evening gunbattle at a market in one residential area near the prime minister's offices left one man dead, said Minister of the Prime Minister's Office Sathit Wongnongtoey.

Dr. Chatri Charoenchivakul of the official Erawan Emergency Coordination Center said the victim was shot in the chest and two other people were wounded by gunshots.

Malls and shops were shuttered and official celebra-

China pledges to improve human rights

China pledged yesterday to improve human rights throughout the country, in a highly publicised plan issued ahead of the 20th anniversary of the Tiananmen counter revolutionary protests.

The "National Human Rights Action Plan," the first-ever such document to be issued and approved by the cabinet, promised Chinese citizens more legal protection, better livelihoods and greater

political rights. "The realisation of human rights in the broadest sense has been a long-cherished ideal of mankind and also a long-pursued goal of the Chinese government and people," it said.

"Governments and government departments at all levels shall make the action plan part of their responsibilities, and proactively implement it."

Rights groups said it was encouraging the government

for the Thai new year were canceled. More than a dozen countries, including the United States, issued travel warnings urging citizens to avoid trips to Thailand and for those already in Bangkok to stay in their hotels and away from the protests.

The violence threatens to slash tourism revenue and could lead to the loss of 200,000 jobs in the industry that directly employs about 2 million people, said Kongkrit Hiranyakit, chairman of the Tourism Council of Thailand.

It is also likely to give pause to foreign businesses considering building factories or making other investments — especially since it comes just months after a group of rival protesters occupied the capital's airports for a week, stranding thousands of tourists and businessmen and sending the economy into a tailspin.

Clashes erupted between protesters and residents in at least three areas earlier.

In a Muslim-dominated neighborhood on Phahon Yothin road, a clash between protesters and residents erupted. Hundreds of protesters threw objects at residents, burnt tires, went into the mosque and tried to set some food stalls in the area on fire. Residents came out with wooden sticks and a fight broke out.

In the evening, three women wearing red shirts were beaten up by at least six drunken men about a few kilometers from Government House, said Police Spokesman Col. Suporn Pansua.

Xinhua news agency.

It vowed to improve social security, health care, employment and wages, while pledging to safeguard a wide range of rights ranging from education to a clean environment.

The plan also said China's communist rulers would allow greater democracy, while urging officials to better listen to criticism from ordinary citizens and the media.

4 Lebanese soldiers killed in ambush

Gunmen ambushed Lebanese troops in the east of the country yesterday, spraying their military vehicle with gunfire and rocket-propelled grenades, a senior military official said. Four soldiers were killed and an officer was wounded in the attack.

The ambush on a major road near the town of Rayak comes after a recent push by Lebanese troops to crack down on the drug trade in the Bekaa Valley and carried the hallmarks of a revenge attack by clansmen. The official said the gunmen, traveling in three four-wheel drive vehicles, sped away after the attack.

"The army is chasing the gunmen and calls on citizens not to shelter them," the official told The Associated Press. He spoke on condition of anonymity in line with government regulations.

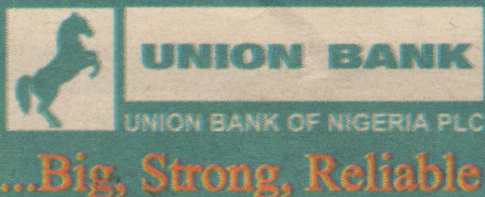
The northern part of the Bekaa has Hezbollah strongholds but it is also a notoriously lawless region where Shiite clans involved in the drug trade have long held sway. Authorities occasionally crack down on drug dealers in the Bekaa, including a recently launched military campaign targeting members of one particularly powerful clan.

An AP reporter and other witnesses in the eastern city of Baalbek said gunmen, believed to be members of the Jaafar clan, unleashed volleys of celebratory gunfire shortly after news of the military casualties were reported. Two members of the clan had been killed last month by the army.

President Michel Suleiman, a former army commander, urged the military "not to be lenient with the attacking criminals in order to defend the dignity of the army and the country and protect national peace," according to a statement issued by the president's office. Interior Minister Ziad Baroud said the attack on troops is linked to the army crackdown on outlaws.

"We will be working on practical steps as soon possible," he told Associated Press Television News.

Baroud later said that yesterday's attack will not deter the army from pursuing its campaign against criminals. The violence comes as Lebanon gears up for June parliamentary elections pitting the Iranian-backed Hezbollah and its allies against the pro-Western factions that currently hold a slim majority of the parliament seats.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN UNION BANK OF NIGERIA PLC

Union Bank of Nigeria PLC is going through transformation with a view to repositioning itself as a clear leader in the financial services Industry. Consequently, we seek intelligent and dynamic professionals to fill the under-listed roles. Applications are sought from individuals possessing requisite experience, qualifications and skills to join the organization's emerging performance driven environment.

1 Relationship Managers, Corporate Banking (Ref.001/CB)

Reports to: HoD, Corporate Banking

Responsibilities

- Credit appraisals and structuring of syndicated loans
- Manage existing customer relationships
- New business development
- Monitor approved credit facilities
- Monitor and ensure customers' compliance with credit agreements
- Ensure customer transactions are effectively processed

Requirements

- A good first degree in any discipline, post graduate degree will be of advantage
- Minimum 5 years relevant experience
- Specialized skills in aviation/maritime/telecoms/energy/infrastructure and financial institutions is an added advantage

2 Unit Head, Business Process Management (Ref.002/QA)

Reports to: HoD, Quality Assurance

Responsibilities

- Daily management and long term roll-out of the business management framework
- Problem solving with stakeholders for the best solutions to business process problems
- Coach line management and subject matter experts on business process management credit/marketing, operations and business support

Requirements

- First Degree in a numerate. A Masters degree is an advantage
- Minimum 12 years relevant experience

3 Team Leads, Quality Monitoring (Ref.003/QA)

Reports to: Head, Field Quality Monitoring

Responsibilities

- Implement service improvement platforms for routine customers' concerns resolution, service etiquette implementation, in-branch experience etc
- Provide returns to head office promptly
- Ensure that service delivery is conducted in accordance with union bank quality standards bank-wide

Requirements

- First Degree in any discipline. A Masters degree is an advantage
- Minimum 8 years relevant experience
- Very strong analytics, and data capture skills

4 Process Subject Matter Experts (Ref.004/QA)

Reports to: Head, Business Process Improvement Unit

Responsibilities

- Measure process performance against SLAs, and implement continuous process improvement.
- Diagnose and redesign processes, develop process performance measurement templates, and implement process improvements.
- Train and coach line management and processors, respectively.

Requirements

- First Degree in any discipline. A Law or masters degree is an advantage
- Minimum 10 years relevant experience in a finance-related organization
- Good understanding of core BPI elements - Process definition, measurement, analysis, improvement & control, & tools - and effectively function to improve internal process efficiency in respective process areas

5 Team Leads, Complaints Management (Ref.005/QA)

Reports to: Head, Complaints Management

Responsibilities

- Responsible for the daily management and long term roll-out of the Complaints management and service recovery framework bankwide.
- Coach line management on commitment to the voice of the customer

Requirements

- First Degree in any discipline. A Law or masters degree is an advantage
- Minimum 10 years relevant experience in a finance-related organization
- Very strong analytics, banking operations, inspection and investigative skills

6 Quality Assurance Officers (Ref.006/QA)

Reports to: Team Leads, Quality Assurance

Responsibilities

- Assist the zonal quality champions in monitoring service delivery standards bank-wide
- Assist SMEs in SLA measurement and the use of process management tools
- Team leads in feedback management, complaints management and service recovery
- Assist team leads in implementing service improvement platforms for routine customers' concerns resolution, service etiquette implementation, in-branch experience etc
- Assist team leads in feedback management, complaints management and service recovery

Requirements

- First Degree in any discipline. Master's degree is an advantage
- Minimum 2 years relevant experience
- Very strong customer service soft skills, including complaints resolution skills, data gathering

7 Internal Control Officers (Ref.007/IC)

Reports to: HoD, Internal Control

Responsibilities

- Ensure compliance to the Bank's processes and procedures
- Conduct investigations and reconciliation functions
- Follow up on audit recommendations
- Prepare regulatory/statutory returns

Requirements

- A minimum of a good first degree in any discipline
- Relevant professional qualification such as ACA, ACCA and/or CFA
- Minimum 5 years experience in a reputable bank as an internal control officer

8 IT Audit Officers (Ref.008/IC)

Reports to: Head, IT Audit

Responsibilities

- Conducts reconciliation/audit & inspection of IT department
- Makes recommendations to the unit head on process improvements
- Assists in the preparation of comprehensive inspection reports
- Investigates the violation of operational procedures
- Assesses the adequacy of / adherence to company's stipulated internal control procedures

Requirements

- A good first degree in Banking and Finance, Accounting or Computer Science.
- Possession of CISA (Certified Information System Auditor) certificate will be an added advantage.
- Minimum of five years experience in bank/financial institution and IT Audit

9 HR Generalists & Specialists (Ref.009/HR)

Reports to: HoD, Human Resources

Responsibilities

- Develop, align, communicate and implement a HR Service Deliver strategy that reflects the Bank's philosophy, local and global strategies and general approach to managing employee related processes.
- Advise functional line management on HR strategy and support the strategy implementation
- Research and prepare HR policies in line with industry practices and labour laws
- Define and implement the Bank's compensation and rewards strategy
- Manage employee/industrial relations
- Develop and manage optimal staffing levels in the Bank
- Provide expertise to business units on employee performance management issues

Requirements

- A minimum of a good first degree in any discipline
- Minimum 6 years relevant experience for Generalist roles and 12 years relevant experience for Specialist roles

General Skills Required

- Good Computer Literacy
- Excellent Oral & Written Communication Skills
- Strong Negotiation Skills
- Analytical and Problem Solving skills
- Leadership/Supervisory Skills

Method of Application

To apply, e-mail your CV as an attachment to recruitment@unionbanking.com

In addition, applicants are required to provide the following information in a row within an Excel** spreadsheet in the order stated below:

- Position Reference Number
- Name
- Years of post qualification experience
- Years of banking experience
- Current Employer
- Current Role
- Graduate Qualification (Degree, Course & Institution of Study)
- Post Graduate Qualification (Degree, Specialty & Institution of study)
- Professional Qualification

Kindly include your contact information (daytime address, e-mail, telephone number) on your CV and ensure that we receive your application within TWO weeks of this publication.

Only electronic applications received within the stipulated time will be considered.

**** Please see illustration of format for excel spreadsheet below:**

	Name	Years of Post Qualification Experience	Years of Banking Experience	Current Employer	Current Role	Graduate Qualification			Post Graduate Qualification			Professional Qualification
						Degree	Course	Institution of Study	Degree	Specialty	Institution of Study	
001/CB	Ade Smith	20	17	XYZ Bank	Principal Manager, HR	B.Sc	Sociology	University of Lagos	M.Sc	Human Resources	London School of Economics	ICAN, CIPM

Trust International

WORLD REPORT

Serbia to seek extradition of Nazi suspect from US

Serbia's war crimes prosecutor says he will seek the extradition of an accused Nazi living in the U.S. Peter Egner is accused of working with a Nazi mobile unit that murdered thousands of Jews, Gypsies and political dissidents in Serbia during World War II.

Serbia's war crimes prosecutor Vladimir Vukcevic said Monday he will seek the 87-year-old Egner's extradition once he is stripped of his U.S. citizenship.

Egner, who is living in Bellevue, Washington, has been trying to stop the U.S. federal government's efforts to strip him of citizenship. The U.S. Justice Department filed a lawsuit against him in July.

Easter Monday hostel blaze kills 21 in Poland

Poland's deadliest fire in nearly three decades tore through a homeless shelter yesterday, claiming 21 lives and forcing parents to toss children from windows to rescuers.

Firefighters stationed just 200 yards (metres) away were on hand in minutes but unable to prevent the blaze from trapping terrified residents in the two-storey building in the small, northwestern town of Kamien Pomorski.

The fire broke out around 1:00 am (2300 GMT) and spread "at an incredible speed," said local firefighters' spokesman Daniel Kowalinski.

About 80 percent of the building was in flames when the first firefighters arrived a couple of minutes after receiving the alert, he said.

"People could not leave their rooms," Kowalinski said. "The hallways were on fire and filled with smoke. Parents threw their children through the windows so firefighters and witnesses could catch them." Witnesses described horrific scenes.

"It was total chaos," one told Poland's PAP news agency. "People with their clothes on fire jumped from the windows."

The Easter Monday disaster shocked overwhelmingly Catholic Poland and Prime Minister Donald Tusk and President Lech Kaczynski rushed to the stricken town to offer comfort to the traumatised victims and population of 10,000.

Kaczynski declared that a

three-day period of national mourning would be observed, starting at midnight.

Tusk promised aid that would include "not only new housing, but also material aid to victims' families".

He called on "everyone to show respect for the tragedy and show proof of solidarity with the families with sober celebration of this (Easter) holiday."

Poland's national fire service spokesman Pawel Frateczak said it was the nation's deadliest fire since a 1980 blaze at a home for the mentally ill in north-central Gorna Grupa that killed 55 people.

He confirmed 21 people were dead and another 21 hospitalised, including one with serious injuries. An 18-

month-old child was among those hurt but was in "satisfactory" condition, according to a doctor cited by TVN24 television.

"The injured were mainly people who fled the burning two-storey building even before the firefighters arrived," Frateczak said, adding that many of them had leapt from the windows and suffered bone fractures. A team of psychologists had been dispatched to the scene to help victims deal with their traumatic experiences.

Police and prosecutors said they had begun an investigation into what caused the fire as firefighters helped extinguish the flames and began the grim search of the building's burnt-out shell for any more bodies.

Frateczak reported later Monday that the search effort had been completed and no more bodies found.

At least 77 people were staying at the hostel, which houses homeless people and poor families, when the blaze erupted. The building was constructed in the 1970s as a workers' hostel and transformed into a shelter several years ago. Its roof and two storeys partially collapsed in the fire.

Firefighters said a number of people managed to escape by using an emergency stairwell. European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso contacted Tusk to ask him to express his and the EU's "deepest sympathy to the families of the bereaved and to the Polish people."



Former Catholic bishop turned president of Paraguay, Mr. Fernando Lugo

Paraguayan bishop-turned-prez admits paternity

Paraguayan President Fernando Lugo admitted yesterday he is the father of a child conceived while he was still a Roman Catholic bishop.

Lugo surprised journalists by acknowledging he had an intimate relationship with Viviana Carrillo, the child's mother — just five days after lawyers for Carrillo announced they were filing a paternity suit against him.

"Here and now, before my people and my conscience, I declare with absolute honesty and a sense of duty and transparency in relation to the controversy provoked by the paternity suit, that there was a relationship with Viviana Carrillo," Lugo said.

"I assume all responsibilities ... and recognize the paternity of the child," Lugo said, promising to protect the boy's privacy. The president said he will not comment further on the matter, but will instead focus on his presidency.

Carrillo did not immediately respond to the president's sur-

prise announcement, but her lawyer, Claudio Kostinchok, said he was pleased.

"By recognizing he is the father of the child, he proves us right," Kostinchok said. "We didn't invent anything."

Kostinchok said he didn't know immediately what would happen with the lawsuit. Last week, he said he would withdraw it after Carrillo denied approving it.

But Judge Evelyn Peralta said the law requires the case to continue, even if Carrillo's lawyers withdraw it. Lugo will be notified in three days of the content of the lawsuit, she said. Lugo, 57, resigned in 2004 as bishop of San Pedro, capital city of San Pedro province, which is the poorest region of the landlocked South American country. Carrillo is from the province.

In December 2006, he announced that he was renouncing the status of bishop itself to run for president. But it was not until July 31 of last year that Pope Benedict XVI gave him unprecedented permission to resign, relieving him of his chas-

tity vows.

The Vatican had insisted during the 2008 presidential campaign that Lugo would always be a bishop under church law.

Kostinchok says the boy was born on May 4, 2007, and that the child is named after Lugo's grandfather, Guillermo Armindo.

Carrillo is now 26, but her intimate relationship with the bishop-turned-president began when she was 16, according to local news media reports.

Msgr. Mario Melanio Medina, bishop from the southern province of Misiones, was the first member of the Paraguayan clergy to react.

"Lugo lied to the Church, but better late than never, as the saying goes," Medina said. "He won't be the only one who lies to the Church, but he recognized his mistake and that is a courageous act" that may serve as an example for others to follow, the bishop added.



**FEDERAL MINISTRY OF WORKS, HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
HEADQUARTERS, MABUSHI – ABUJA**

**INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION AND TENDER FOR
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF 2009 BUDGET**

The Federal Ministry of Works, Housing and Urban Development intends to implement the projects contained in the 2009 Budget bordering on Works, Services and Goods to include the following areas:

- a) Construction/Rehabilitation of some Federal Roads and Bridges
- b) Consultancy Services for the Engineering Design for the construction/rehabilitation of Federal Roads and Bridges
- c) Consultancy Services for the Supervision for the Construction/Rehabilitation of Federal Roads and Bridges
- d) Procurement and installation of streetlights on Federal Roads and Bridges
- e) Upgrading of facilities in the Ministry, Training Schools and Workshops
- f) Procurement/Installation of 1000KVA Generator, Lifts, and other Office Equipment

2. In view of the above, the ministry is inviting reputable interested companies and service providers for pre-qualification and tendering for the execution of the projects.

3. Pre-qualification Requirements

- i) Evidence of registration with Corporate Affairs Commission
- ii) Registration with COREN (if it is for consultancy services)
- iii) (Company's Current Tax Clearance for the last 3 years
- iv) VAT registration Certificate
- v) Evidence of financial capability and banking support

- v) Audited account of the Company (if applicable)
- vi) Company's profile showing:
 - a) Technical Qualification and experience of key personnel to be involved in the projects
 - b) Plants, equipment and technology capacity
- vii) List of similar projects executed in the last seven (7) years;

4. Companies currently working for the Ministry whose contracts are unjustifiably behind schedule need not apply.

5. The pre-qualification documents (2 copies) shall be signed, sealed in an envelope clearly marked "Confidential" and boldly written "Pr-equalification for (Name of the Relevant Area of Interest) and returned to:

*The Secretary
Ministerial Tenders Board
Department of Public Procurement
Federal Ministry of Works, Housing
and Urban Development
Headquarters, Mabushi – Abuja*

So as to reach him not later than 2 weeks (21st April, 2009 by 10.00am) from the date of this publication.

6. Submissions will be opened on Tuesday 21st April, 2009 in the Conference Room of the Ministry at 12.00noon. Contractors or their representatives and the general public are all invited

*Signed
THE PERMANENT SECRETARY
FEDERAL MINISTRY OF WORKS, HOUSING
AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
HEADQUARTERS, MABUSHI ABUJA*



Invitation for Prequalification (IFP) Federal Government of Nigeria Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS)

PROCUREMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF AN ENTERPRISE FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS SOFTWARE

IFP: Information Technology Project

Issuance Date: Tuesday 14th April 2009

The mission of the Federal Inland Revenue Service is to "operate a transparent and efficient tax system that optimizes tax revenue collection and voluntary compliance".

In pursuit of this mission, FIRS recently completed the re-engineering of its Finance & Accounts (F&A) functions and as part of the reform program now seeks a robust, customizable and scalable software package to automate the re-engineered processes.

FIRS, therefore, wishes to procure and implement an Enterprise Finance and Account Software package.

2. Accordingly, FIRS now invites eligible vendors to bid for the provision, installation, configuration, customization of an Enterprise Finance and Accounting Software package.
3. Bidding is in two stages and this advertisement relates only to the first stage, which seeks to pre-qualify eligible providers for the second stage bid.
4. Prequalification is open to all vendors that meet the following minimum qualification criteria:
 - The vendor must have been in operation for a minimum of five (5) consecutive years as a provider and implementer of software system.
 - The vendor must have functional local (Nigerian) offices and the bulk of the implementation team must be based in Nigeria
 - The vendor must have prior experience implementing the solution in at least three (3) other Nigeria-based organizations. These organizations must be similar to FIRS in size. Experience implementing the solution in a large tax/revenue agency similar to FIRS is highly desirable.
 - The proposed solution must be an enterprise level, supported and commercially-available package that has been deployed and in use on a "live/production" basis (for at least one year) in organizations similar to FIRS.
 - The proposed solution must utilize/be compatible with one of the following

Relational Database Management Systems (RDBMS): Oracle or Microsoft SQL Server.

- The proposed solution must be upgradeable, and must allow for additional programs/modules, interfaces customized reporting, batch processing, etc to be added on a site specific basis without changing baseline source code and in a manner that does not prevent or unduly complicate the upgrade path.
 - The proposed solution must be highly configurable so as to support significant customization without requiring modification to the source code.
 - The proposed solution must provide generalized finance and accounting functionality and not contain business rules, forms, etc specific to any particular agency or organisation.
- The bidding company must submit:
- A certified copy of the current Tax Clearance Certificate and any other documentation proving that the company (and any partners with which it is jointly bidding as the case may be) is in good standing with the Tax Authorities in Nigeria or the vendor's home country.
 - Tax Identification Number (TIN), for Nigerian vendors.
 - Audited financial statements for the last 3 years to demonstrate the financial capability of the vendor in terms of profitability and adequate working capital.
 - Evidence of being a software company or an accredited representative of one.
 - Legally binding joint ventures agreement if the bid is in partnership or in a consortium with other(s)

5. Interested eligible vendors may obtain further information from the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) and inspect the bidding documents from 0800hrs 1600hrs, Monday to Friday, 14th April 2009 - 20th May 2009 (exclusive of Public Holidays) at the Procurement Department, FIRS Head Office, No 15 Sokode Crescent, Wuse Zone 5, PMB 33, Garki, Abuja, Nigeria. Phone: +234 (0) 9-670564 or 234 (0) 8035980159.

6. A complete set of bidding documents in English Language would be given to Pre-qualified vendors upon payment of a nonrefundable tender fee of Ten Thousand Naira (N10,000.00).

7. Vendors should submit original and three (3) copies of their prequalification documents in separate sealed envelopes. Each sealed package should clearly indicate the vendor's name and address and marked as follows:

"Procurement & Implementation of Enterprise Finance & Accounting Software"
The packages must also indicate the copy number e.g. ORIGINAL, Copy No. 1, etc., as appropriate. Vendors are also required to submit an electronic copy of the document.

8. Prequalification documents must be delivered to the address below at or before 1400hrs 27th May 2009. Prequalification documents submitted late will be rejected. Prequalification documents will be opened in the presence of the vendor's representatives who choose to attend at the address below at 1500hours on 27th May 2009.

9. FIRS reserves the right to accept or reject any or all documents, or any item or part thereof, or to waive any informalities or irregularities in bids. The FIRS also reserves the right to withdraw this publication at any time without prior notice and the FIRS makes no representations that any contract will be awarded to any of the responding vendors.

10. This procurement is also published on the website of FIRS at www.firs.gov.ng

The Procurement Department
Federal Inland Revenue Service
Revenue House
No. 15 Sokode Crescent Wuse Zone 5
PMB 33, Garki
FCT Abuja - NIGERIA
Tel: (+234-0) 9-670564 or 234 (0) 8035980159.
firs_procurement@yahoo.com

Signed
Ag. Head, Procurement
For: Executive Chairman, FIRS



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT

Headquarters, Mabushi, Abuja

PROCUREMENT DEPARTMENT MINISTERIAL TENDERS BOARD

EROSION AND FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION

1. **Introduction:** The Federal Ministry of Environment intends to carry out Erosion and Flood Control Works in the following selected Locations in the Country as appropriated in the 2009 Budget:

LOT "A" PROJECTS

- LOT A 01: Dotun Igede Road, Ijebu NELGA Gully Erosion Control – Ogun State
 LOT A 02: Erosion Control at Lalaba, Argungu – Kebbi State
 LOT A 03: Erosion Control at Okarki, Ahoada West lga – Rivers State
 LOT A 04: Erosion Control at Nkalagu Community, Isheulu
 LOT A 05: Erosion Control at Awe LGA, Nassarawa State
 LOT A 06: Erosion Control at Gandutse, Kura LGA, Kano State
 LOT A 07: Erosion Control at Emene/Mgbom in Ohazara LGA, Ebonyi State
 LOT A 08: Erosion Control at Smith Close, Ekot Ekpene, Akwa-Ibom State
 LOT A 09: Erosion Control at Umulew-Umuna Ideato SOUTH LGA, Imo State
 LOT A 10: Study and Design of Shore Protection at Tombia, Rivers State
 LOT A 11: Erosion Control at Palmgrove, Ondo town, Ondo State
 LOT A 12: Erosion Control at Takum, Taraba State
 LOT A 13: Erosion Control in Jahun, Miga LGA, Jigawa State

LOT "B" PROJECTS

- LOT B 01: Jada Erosion Control – Adamawa State
 LOT B 02: Mgbuitanwo Emolua Erosion Control – Rivers State
 LOT B 03: Erosion Control at Ayegbaju
 LOT B 04: Agwatashi Erosion Control works, Nasarawa State
 LOT B 05: Tekpaji/Ibba Erosion Control, Niger State
 LOT B 06: Erosion and Flood Control around University Campus to Onuiyi, Nsukka, Enugu State
 LOT B 07: Water Harvesting through Erosion Control in Bashar, Wase LGA, Plateau State
 LOT B 08: Erosion Control at Ebushu Orin, Ekiti State
 LOT B 09: Erosion Control at Okporowo, Ahoada East LGA, Rivers State
 LOT B 10: Erosion Control in Odo-Odere, Idanre, Ondo State
 LOT B 11: Erosion Control at Igbalasa, Oke-Ijebu Owo, Ondo Sgstate
 LOT B 12: Erosion Control in Onitsha Uku Aniocha North LGA, Delta State
 LOT B 13: Isale Ibefun Gully Erosion Reclamation
 LOT B 14: Gully Erosion Control at Gege/Agbeni, Ibadan, Oyo State
 LOT B 15: Ada-Okere-Ukoni-Amedokhian Old road Erosion Control Esan North East LGA, Edo State
 LOT B 16: Erosion Control at Kakirai Secondary School, Kano State
 LOT B 17: Erosion Control at Ayesan
 LOT B 18: Erosion Control at Ogotun, Ekiti State
 LOT B 19: Erosion Control at Ise, Ekiti State
 LOT B 20: Erosion Control at Aramoko, Ekiti State
 LOT B 21: Erosion Control at Ipoti/Odoowa
 LOT B 22: Erosion Control at Efon Alaaye
 LOT B 23: Erosion Control at OdoAyedun and Oke-Ayedun
 LOT B 24: Ecological/Flood Control in Ekiti North Constituency II
 LOT B 25: Owode Yewa Erosion Control
 LOT B 26: Erosion Control at Ogbonihian Near Dekina along Anyigba-Dekina-Shintaku
 LOT B 27: Power line, Uwa Dumez RPAD Ivbiotot Quarters, Ikpoba-Okha LGA, Edo State
 LOT B 28: Ogosi Erosion Control, Ikpoba-Okha, Edo South LGA, Edo State
 LOT B 29: Umuoji Erosion Site, Umuoji, Anambra State
 LOT B 30: Nnobi Erosion Site – Anambra State
 LOT B 31: Erosion Control at Ikole, Ekiti State
 LOT B 32: St. Barnabas Erosion Site, Ojoto, Anambra State
 LOT B 33: Iruebene Ojoto Erosion Control Phase II, Anambra State
 LOT B 34: Republic United Osaroguwa Erosion Control, Upper Sponba Road, Ikpoba-Okhan LGA, Edo State

LOT "C" PROJECTS

- LOT C 01: Ngurore River Bank Protection, Phase II, Yola, Adamawa State
 LOT C 02: Alasa/Wada/Alada Erosion Control, Ogbi LGA
 LOT C 03: Odooba Comprehensive Erosion Control OOLGA
 LOT C 04: Erosion Control at Uvu, Borno State
 LOT C 05: Erosion Control at Agboba Bridge, Kwara State
 LOT C 06: Numa town Roundabout Erosion Control, Demsa LGA, Adamwa State
 LOT C 07: Ido Osi/Moba Erosion Control
 LOT C 08: Ijesha Modu/Eloli
 LOT C 09: Namatari Flood Water Project, YSLA, Adamawa State

- LOT C 10: Okehelen-Awo Road, Flood Water Harvesting Uromi Edo State
 LOT C 11: Harvest of Water through Flood Control at Naraguta, Jos North LGA, Plateau State
 LOT C 12: Harvest of Water through Flood
 LOT C 13: Onirugba/Ogundeko/Elebutu Flood Control, Ijebu Ode LGA, Ogun State

LOT "D" PROJECTS

- LOT C 01: Kudan Erosion and Flood Control, Kudan LGA, Kaduna State
 LOT C 02: Erosion Control and Channelization of Nana Ojaitun-Igbeti Road Drainage, Ogbomosho North, Phase II, Oyo State
 LOT C 03: Ecological Problems in Abeokuta South/North Ogun State
 LOT C 04: Ugbonabor-Ugbo Okpala-Obeagu Junction Erosion Control Site
 LOT C 05: Erosion/Flood Control at Iludu and Eda, Ekiti State
 LOT C 06: Ofure Road, Akhebo Road – Hospital Road, Erosion Control (Ubiaja), Edo State
 LOT C 07: Control Erosion at Auchu, Etsako West and Hievbe in Owan East LGA, Edo State
 LOT C 08: Erosion Control in Okeara, Erinle and Akori River, Agboye – Odotin LGA, Osun State
 LOT C 09: Erosion Control in Gwoza – Borno State

2. **Objective:** To control the menace of Erosion and Flood in the selected states

3. **Scope of the Works:**
- | | |
|--------|--|
| (I) | Site Clearing |
| (II) | Excavation for drains and earth works |
| (III) | Provision of Interceptor drains and Culverts |
| (IV) | Filling of gullied areas |
| (V) | Re-shaping of gully edges |
| (VI) | Concrete works/Reinforcements |
| (VII) | Stone pitching works |
| (VIII) | Grazing of Reclaimed land |
| (IX) | Ancillary works |
| (x) | Studies and Design of Flood/Erosion Projects |

4. **Eligibility:** Interested reputable contractors are requested to forward for consideration the following pre-qualification documents;

- (i) Certificate of the Company's Registration / Incorporation
 (ii) Provide details of company profile including the Curriculum Vitae of Key professional staff and others resources
 (iii) Company's Current Tax Clearance Certificate
 (iv) VAT Registration for the last three years (Evidence must be attached)
 (v) Company profile reflecting executive capacity, plant & Equipment owned and personnel
 (vi) Verifiable evidence of previous cognate experience in jobs of this magnitude, including certificate(s) of job completion
 (vii) Evidence from the Company's Bankers confirming its financial capacity to undertake the works, if awarded.
 (viii) Audit Reports for the last three (3) years

5. **Submission Deadlines:** The completed prequalification documents must be forwarded in sealed envelopes with chosen LOT specified and marked on the top left hand corner "CONFIDENTIAL" and boldly written **PREQUALIFICATION: "EROSION CONTROL WORKS IN.....LOT"** to reach:

The Secretary
 Ministerial Tenders Board
 Federal Ministry of Environment
 3rd Floor (Room B301)
 Headquarters, Mabushi
 Abuja

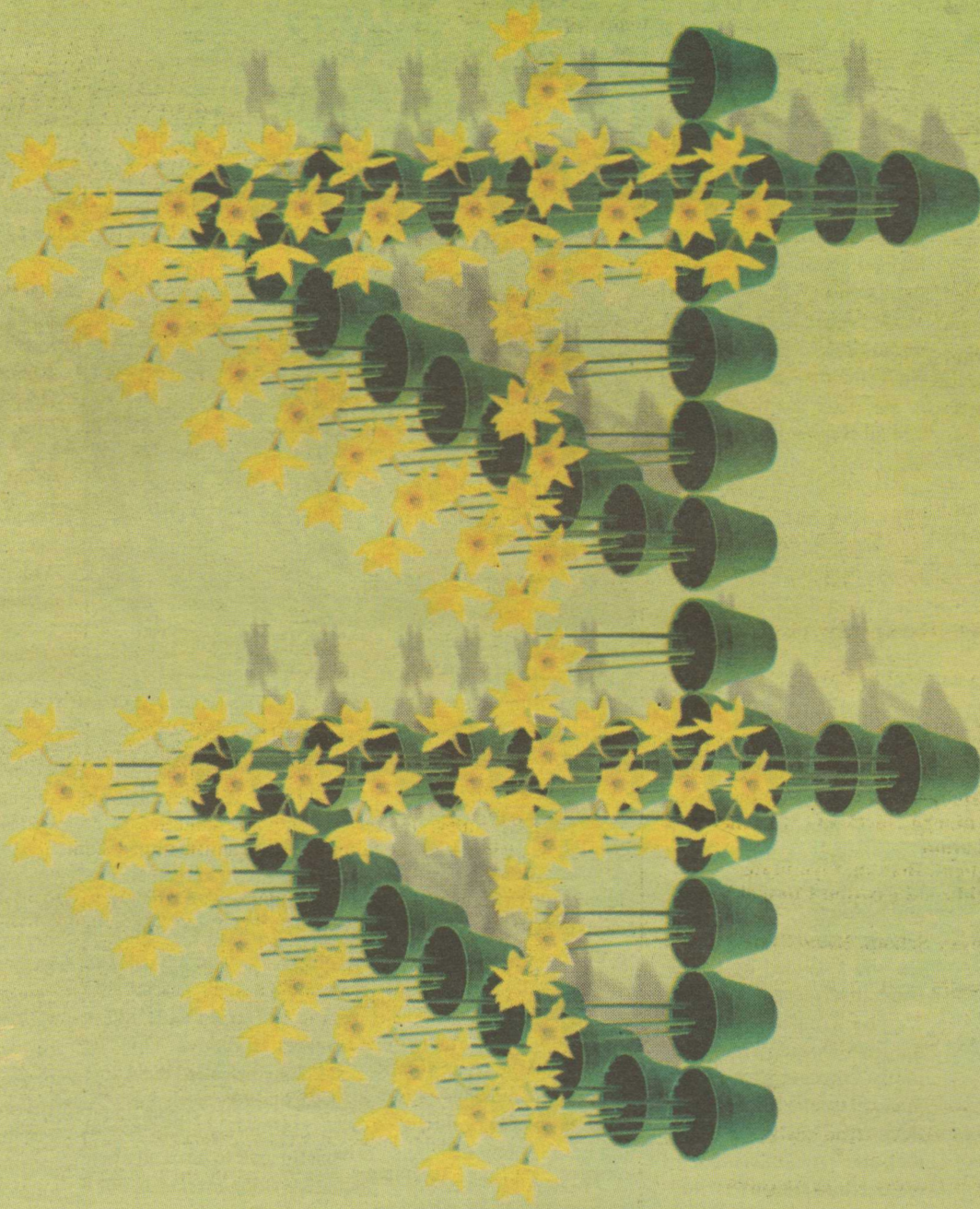
Not later than 12noon, Two (2) weeks from the date of this publication

6. **Formal Opening of Bids:** Opening of all bids is scheduled for by 12 noon at the Conference Room, Federal Ministry of Environment, Headquarters, Mabushi – Abuja

Signed:
 Director (PAM&I/Procurement)
 for: Honourable Minister

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BUSINESS TRUST

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● **VP seeks input into oil, gas reform** —Page 31

● **Magatech to roll out 3.5 m lines in North** —Bruce —Page 32

Hotline: 08051000536



Flight Schedule

Chanchangi Airlines

Lagos-Abj: 07.15, 10.00, 13.10, 15.30, 16.45 (Sun) 16:45 (Sat)
Lagos-Kad: 10.00
Lagos-Owrr: 08.00, 10.00, 14.30
Kad-Abj-Lagos: 10.30, 11.45
Abj-Lagos: 08.10, 13.40, 15.00

IRS Airlines

Lagos-Abj: 09.45, 11.45, 12.45, (Mon-Fri) 09.30, 12.45 (Sat & Sun)
Lagos-Kano: 06.15 (Mon-Fri), 16.30 (Sat & Sun)
Kano-Lagos: 07.30 (Mon-Fri), 10.30 (Sat & Sun)

Aero Contractors

Lagos-Abj: 06.50; 13.30; 16.30; 19.45 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); 12.30 (Sun) 16:45 (Sat)
Abj-Lagos: 07.30; 13.30; 19.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat); 10.30; 14.30; 19.30 (Sun) 18.30 (Sat)
Lagos-Ben: 07.45; 11.00; 15.30; (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun) 12.30; (Sun); 15.30 (Sat)
Ben-Lagos: 09.15; 12.30; 17.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); 17.00 (Sat); 14.00 (Sun)
Lagos-Cala: 13.15; (Mon-Fri/Sat); 08.30; 19.00 (Sun)
Cala-Lagos: 14.45; (Mon-Fri/Sat); 10.30 (Sun)
Lagos-Enu: 09.30; (Mon-Fri/Sat); 15.00 (Sun)
Enu-Lagos: 09.30; (Mon-Fri/Sat) 16.45 (Sun)
Lagos-PHC: 07.30; 09.30; 15.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
PHC-Lagos: 11.15; 17.30 (Mon-Fri/Sat) 18.00 (Fri)
Lagos-Warri: 07.45; 16.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat) 09.15 (Sun)
Warri-Lagos: 09.15; 17.30 (Mon-Fri/Sat) 10.45 (Sun)

Virgin Nigeria

Lagos-Abj: 07.15, 09.00, 11.30, 14.00, 15.50, 17.00, 18.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Abj-Lagos: 07.00, 09.30, 10.15, 11.15, 13.35, 16.15 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Lagos-PHC: 07.40, 09.30, 10.00, 12.20, 13.30, 14.00, 16.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
PHC-Lagos: 10.50, 11.20, 12.45, 15.30, 16.15, 17.15 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Abj-Kano: 18.00 (Mon-Fri)
Kano-Abj: 08.20 (Mon-Fri)

Bellview Airlines

Lagos-Abj: 06.50, 12.55, 17.00 (Mon-Fri) 16.40 (Sat) 17.00 (Sun)
Abj-Lagos: 07.40, 14.50, 18.25 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Lagos-Kano: 06.50 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Kano-Lagos: 10.10 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)

Arik Air

Lagos-Abj: 07.30, 10.20, 14.20, 16.45, 17.45, 18.05 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Abj-Lagos: 09.20, 09.30, 10.30, 12.15, 16.20, 17.45, 20.05 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Abj-Cal: 10.25, 17.25 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Cal-Abj: 08.50, 15.50 (Mon-Sat) 19.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Abj-Ben: 10.35 (Mon-Fri)
Ben-Abj: 12.00 (Tue-Fri)
Lagos-Ben: 08.00, 11.45, 15.30 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Ben-Lagos: 09.15, 13.35, 17.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Lagos-Cal: 07.00, 14.05 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Cal-Lagos: 12.00, 19.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Lagos-Enu: 07.30, 14.30, 16.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Enu-Lagos: 09.30, 18.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Lagos-Jos: 11.30, (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Jos-Lagos: 13.15 (Mon-Fri)
Kano-Lagos: 15.30 (Mon-Fri/Sun)
Lagos-PHC: 07.20, 07.50, 09.15, 11.30, 12.30, 15.10, 15.55, 16.45, 17.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
PHC-Lagos: 07.00, 08.30, 09.15, 11.10, 13.40, 14.30, 15.00, 17.05, 17.50 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)

Economists seek 'alternative' CBN, stock market

Owing to the poor performance of the economy and the inability of the regulators to stem the tide of the country's economic woes, an economist has advocated for an independent and autonomous regulator.

Speaking to *Daily Trust* on phone Malam Gambo Hamza said: "My suggestion is that there is a need to establish another financial service regulatory authority which is independent of the CBN. This will make the CBN to concentrate on monetary issues."

According to him, it is being practice in the United States and the United Kingdom.

Daily Trust can report that the Financial Services Authority (FSA) in the United Kingdom is an independent non-governmental body, given statutory powers by the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000. It is a company limited by guarantee and financed by the financial services industry.

The Treasury appoints the FSA Board, which currently consists of a Chairman, a Chief Executive Officer, three Managing Directors, and 9 non-executive directors (including a lead non-executive member, the Deputy Chairman). This Board sets our overall policy, but day-to-day decisions and management of the staff

By Jibrin Abubakar
are the responsibility of the Executive.

The FSA is accountable to Treasury Ministers and through them to Parliament. It is operationally independent of Government and is funded entirely by the firms



CBN Gov Prof. Soludo

it regulates. The FSA is an open and transparent organisation and provides full information for firms, consumers and others about its objectives, plans, policies and rules.

According to Malam Hamza, the financial service regulatory authority will be in charge of all financial organisations, while maintaining its independence and autonomy.

He said the CBN should be limited to monetary policy formulation and guidelines, and not regulation.

He said it is easy for corruption to set in when an organisation like the CBN controls virtually everything in the economy.

He said the position of

the CBN governor is too powerful and that was what brought about the profound concerns on who occupies the seat.

The tenure of the incumbent governor of the CBN Professor Chukwuma Soludo expires next month.



NSE DG Prof. Ndi Okereke Onyiuke

The CBN has failed to control inflationary rate which currently hovers around 15 per cent, experts say.

In the same vein, Dr. Sanusi Abubakar, an economist told *Daily Trust* yesterday that one of the solutions to the meltdown of the country's stock market is to have an alternative stock market in Abuja. This, he said may be called the Abuja stock market.

Daily Trust can report that the call to have an alternative stock market is not a new one.

But Malam Hamza disagreed, saying Nigeria has not reached the stage of having another Stock Exchange.

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"What we need is better regulation. How can the Director General of Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) be the chairman of Trans National Corporation (Transcorp)? You can also see the problem between Dangote and AP. Dangote is a Vice President of the NSE. The only thing is that the NSE should stop operating as a CUH."

Daily Trust can report that from a peak of N12.6trillion capitalisation in March 2008, the NSE went into a spiralling decline, dropping 45.8% by the end of the year.

Nigerian Stock Exchange All Share Index fell 37 per cent this year, the steepest quarterly decline in more than a decade and the worst of 89 benchmark indexes tracked by Bloomberg.

Meanwhile, the report of the SEC Committee on the Nigerian Capital Market has said that the contributory factors for the decline in the investors' confidence are: Ineffective market regulation and supervision, weak institutions and corporate governance, lack of regulatory pro-activity and cohesion, unregulated margin financing, concerns about transparency, uncompetitive cost structures, inefficient and cumbersome processes.

CBN EXCHANGE RATES

Date	Currency	Buying(NGN)	Central(NGN)	Selling(NGN)
8/4/2009	CFA	0.2734	0.2834	0.2934
	DANISH KRONER	25.692	25.7807	25.8694
	EURO	191.527	192.1884	192.8497
	POUNDS STERLING	212.8994	213.6346	214.3697
	RIYAL	38.6133	38.7467	38.88
	SDR	216.0706	216.8167	217.5628
	SWISS FRANC	126.1434	126.579	127.0145
	US DOLLAR	144.8	145.3	145.8
	WAUA	214.9853	215.7277	216.47
	YEN	1.448	1.453	1.458

FINANCE BUSINESS

NSE trading platform should be overhauled – Report

The current trading system which the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) is operating needs to be overhauled to improve pricing based on numbers of shares obtained through negotiation, the report of the committee set up to review the capital market rules has recommended. The committee's full report was made available by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Part of the recommendations was the need to adopt a quote-driven system.

Under the current market system, trading transactions is based on offers. But the report said "a shift to a quote-based system where dealers announce bid-and-ask prices and meet orders out of holdings will improve transparency."

The report said: "In a pure quote-driven market, it is expected that dealers provide liquidity, and improved pricing based on numbers of shares obtained through negotiation. Achieving this will require an upgrade of the NSE trading platform (through an overhaul of the current system).

The report said: "The NSE should also hasten the broadband initiative for seamless remote accessibility to the trading engine. SEC should explore the framework for the operation of inter-dealer brokers to facilitate price discovery by market participants and investors as a means of increasing market depth and liquidity."

Also recommended was the need for the establish-

*Recommends 6-hour trading

By Idris Ahmed

ment of appropriate structures, governance and processes for market making to create a wholesale investment market around institutional investors that will provide market depth and liquidity.

The report said the SEC and NSE should fast-track and immediately finalise and publish the rules and guidelines, structures and processes for market-making.

The report also said that the SEC should work with the NSE to increase the trading hours on the floors of The Exchange to significantly increase daily trading volumes and value, thereby improving market liquidity.

"Specifically the NSE should move to a six-hour trading day (from 9:00 am – 3:00 pm) on the date it switches on the new quote-driven system. This will provide sufficient time for trading and concurs with other trading hours around the world", the report said.

The report said the role of the SEC Chairman should be re-defined so that the Executive Chairman is someone with a university degree qualification and at least 15 years' relevant experience in capital market operations, finance and investment, law, economics, accounting, business administration or any other related field.

The report said: "Policies should also include a provision that calls for the Board

members to retire by rotation to ensure continuity. SEC non-executive board members should also have rel-

evant experience and qualifications.

It said: "Appropriate laws should be put in place

that requires full-time Commissioners to have a university degrees and at least 12 years relevant experience in capital market operations, finance and investment, law, economics, accounting, business administration or any other related field."



From left: Group Captain Murtala Salawu, Vice Chairman, Courteville Investment Plc; Mr. Kenneth Okafor, GM, Quotations and Listing, Nigerian Stock Exchange; and Mr. Adebola Akindele, MD/CEO, during the listing of Courteville Investment on the floor of the Nigerian Stock Exchange in Lagos recently. Pic: Oladipupo Odunewu.

Islamic insurers lack investment options

The emerging Islamic insurance industry, or takaful, is set to continue its strong growth but insurers are constrained by a lack of investment opportunities, an executive said.

Abdul Rahman Tolefat, chief executive of Allianz Takaful, expects general insurance to grow by 15 percent and life insurance by 20 percent annually over the coming years, he told the Reuters Islamic Banking and Finance Summit.

Global takaful premiums are estimated to have reached \$2-3 billion, Tolefat said.

"Growth will be driven by international players coming to the market," he said.

Tolefat also said customers in the Gulf Arab region are increasingly interested in building up savings for their retirement as government pensions are often not sufficient.

He said the third main driver of growth will be innovation in distribution channels, as insurers are increasingly turning to banks to distribute their products.

"For us that's a big priority, people here trust banks more than insurance companies; insurance is very new in this market, because only car insurance has been mandatory," he said.

Under Islamic insurance,

members contribute to a pool of funds which is used to indemnify participants who suffer a loss. Profits made from investing the funds are distributed among members.

German insurer Allianz has been one of the first Western insurance companies to venture into the growing takaful market.

Unlike in conventional insurance, takaful companies do not insure risk. Their role is limited to managing the takaful fund, for which they get a management fee.

But Tolefat said takaful companies lack both short-term and long-term assets to

invest the funds in. The market for Islamic bonds, or sukuk, has not yet developed a strong secondary market as investors hold most sukuk until maturity.

"If I want to offer an annuity, I cannot because I don't have Islamic bonds for 20 years or 15 years. The maximum you can find in the market is five or seven years," he said.

Tolefat said that while medium-term investments such as sukuk with 5-year maturity are available, takaful companies also struggle to manage their short-term liquidity, as they typically have to rely on or-

inary three- to six-month deposits with banks with no exit option.

The credit crunch and global economic slowdown have virtually frozen sukuk markets worldwide, adding to pressure on the \$1 trillion Islamic finance industry as a whole.

But Tolefat said there were still plenty more products that can be developed by asset managers of Islamic banks, he said.

"You take a sukuk, put it into a fund, get a rating, give it a liquidity option and a lot of takaful companies will come and invest," he added. Reuters.

FG retirees to get N55b pension benefit

By Abubakar Buba

Poised to ensure a secured life for workers at retirement, the National Pension Commission (PENCOM) said that it had paid a total of N55.21 billion into the Retiree Savings Account (RSA) of federal government employees, who retired at December, 2008.

Another N89 billion has been remitted for the payment of the accrued retirement benefits of workers prior to the commencement of the present pension scheme.

The commission added that it has enrolled and verified 11,304 federal government employees retiring between 2008 and 2009 for the issuance of retirement bonds.

PENCOM's head of risk management, Mr. Loyinla Olulana said that the total benefit due for services rendered by FGN workers which includes gratuity and pension up to June, 2004 amounts to N1.68 trillion.

He said that the commission makes an average monthly withdrawal of N210 billion for the payment of RSA retirees under the programmed mode of pension withdrawal which is a periodic.

"7,181 RSA retirees are currently receiving retirement benefits by programmed withdrawal. The commission makes a total average monthly withdrawal of N210 million and a cumulative withdrawal of N18.6 billion", he said.

Oceanic Trustees embark on awareness campaign

Oceanic Trustees, a subsidiary of Oceanic Bank International has embarked on a campaign to educate Nigerians on the importance of securing the future of their families and assets through trustees' services.

Chairman Oceanic Trustees, Mrs. Cecilia Ibru flagging off the campaign called on Nigerians to tap into the opportunities offered by the firm, especially in planning and management of assets adding that optimal asset management in today's highly paced modern world comes with its own challenges.

The subsidiary according to her came into being to address these needs and offer peace of mind to those who have assets and are looking for ways to effectively manage them. The chairman explained that Oceanic Trustees has developed a range of products and services that cater for all strata and structure of the society.

According to her, Oceanic Trustees offers two broad categories of trustee services: corporate trusts and private trusts. Services under corporate trusts include debentures (syndications and consortium lending), Security trusts asset backed securities, real estate Investment trusts (Private Issues and Cooperatives), trusts of employee welfare schemes, trusts of employee share ownership schemes.

As Trustees to private trusts, Oceanic Trustees offers services in living trusts, testamentary trusts, educational trusts, real estate trusts and custodial trusts. Oceanic Children Education Trust (OCET) is one of such vehicles through which the trustees assist parents and guardians to plan for the education and well being of their wards.

OCET is designed to ensure that Nigerian children often faced with dashed hopes of acquiring qualitative education up to the full extent of their abilities once their parents/guardians are unable for one reason or the other, to continue sponsoring their education are given a life line.

PRESS STATEMENT

BY THE COALITION ON BEST PORT INDUSTRY PRACTICES IN NIGERIA

Right Wing First Floor Triana Building 18/20 Commercial Road, Apapa, Lagos 234 703 000 3440

CONTRAVENTION OF NIGERIAN LAWS BY BUA CEMENT 1: THE WHOLE TRUTH

The Coalition on Best Port Practices is a vanguard formed by some patriotic and well meaning Nigerians to promote and engender the growth of best industry practices in the Nigerian maritime industry. Foreigners currently dominate the maritime industry in Nigeria due to the high capital requirement for the maritime business and the absence of any form of assistance and protection for the local operators by the Nigerian government.

This has led to significant decline in the Nigerian owned merchant fleet due to lack of fleet renewal, high cost of newbuildings and economic downturn over the years with a corresponding decline in human capacity development in the maritime industry leading to erosion of skills and competences of local operators to work the maritime trade competitively. If the local shipping operators are to handle projected growth adequately, the critical capacity and capability issues must be addressed.

With the paradigm shift in public policy towards local content and national treatment such as the Cabotage law, it is expected that indigenous maritime infrastructure and capacity will grow. The development of a national merchant fleet will generate economic benefits and foreign exchange income for the national economy and, if successfully managed, can enjoy certain cost advantages if best port industry practices thrive.

There is need to urgently put in place a course of action that will create opportunities to ensure the development and growth of adequate indigenous capacity and competences to enable the local maritime industry compete favourably with foreign shipping interests in the domestic maritime industry within a short time and participate effectively in the cross trades in the West and Central African sub region. We must develop a shipping policy for Nigeria that will encourage and support Nigerian shipping firms so that they can compete on an equal footing with shipping firms of other countries by ensuring best industry practices in our maritime activities.

There is therefore need to enthrone best practices and procedures in the maritime industry in Nigeria to ensure that we become truly a maritime nation and the hub for trade in the region. We need to steer back on course our maritime heritage to the betterment of not only the maritime community in Nigeria but in the national interest towards ensuring that our maritime strategy puts us in our rightful place as the maritime hub in the West and Central African sub region.

In furtherance of this objective, the coalition will uphold and defend best port industry practices by exposing any unwholesome act by individuals or organization in the maritime industry in Nigeria that sets out to undermine best industry practices. We are of the firm view that all maritime contravention that may impact negatively on the livelihood of many Nigerians if not checked and may impinge on the national economy ought to be reported to the appropriate authorities to investigate and in order stop such malfeasance forthwith.

We are therefore constrained to make our position known to well meaning maritime stakeholders and the general public on the various contravention by the BUA Group despite their continued publication of false and rash press releases in the mass media intended to hoodwink Nigerians into believing that they were the aggrieved party and not culpable under the extant laws of the land due to our petitions to the various regulatory agencies of government for prompt action and appropriate sanction on the BUA Group.

The fact of the matter is that the BUA Group is operating an unapproved floating cement terminal (FCT) named BUA Cement 1 employing foreign nationals and crew in violation of the immigration and labour laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and is also carrying out ship to ship transfer (STS) within the BUA Port and Terminal in Port Harcourt Quays in flagrant contravention of all extant laws and regulation to operate and manage FCT in Nigeria.

To our utter chagrin, it is a pity that the BUA Group have chosen this path of infamy through their various publications in the mass media misinforming the general public on the need to disregard an alleged wave of pre-meditated negative campaign unleashed on their cement and ports operation in the last three weeks by disgruntled elements in the maritime sector, in connivance with their competition and a few other uninformed and/or greedy Nigerians who have infantile and unrealizable ambitions instead of showing remorse for ill acts.

The Recommendation of the Nigerian Ports Authority Management Committee on Operations of BUA Cement 1 Factory Vessel at Port Harcourt Port clearly Indicted the BUA Group

The Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) Management Committee did not commend the BUA Group as falsely reported in the various publications sponsored by the BUA Group.

The findings and observation of the NPA Management Committee are highlighted as follows:

- the first call of the MV BUA Cement 1 in Lagos was on the 1st of September 2008 as an ocean going vessel;
- her first call to Port Harcourt was 1st of November 2008 as an ocean going vessel to discharge bulk cement. By implication she has assumed the status of a Cabotage vessel as result of the number of voyages she has done between Port Harcourt and midstream Bonny;
- the vessel does not have the necessary document from NIMASA, Nigerian Immigrations and other agencies to operate as Cabotage vessel;
- the vessel's operation is not in compliance with the provision of the Nigerian Coastal and Inland Shipping Act 2007;
- the vessel has not applied to the Federal Ministry of Industries to operate as a factory pursuant to the guidelines of the factory Act;
- there is no evidence showing the vessel submitted any Environmental Impact

Assessment Plan (EIAP);

- no evidence of the business plan submitted by BUA Cement to NPA management has been approved;
- the floating factory is berthed at common user berths;
- the five(5) of the Sri Lankan factory workers engaged on board MV BUA Cement 1 have expired sea man passports (Apdx 1);
- the vessel was given three (3) pre-conditions for its operations (Apdx 2a) : (a) Submission of business plan proposal to NPA management (Apdx 2b), (b) The vessel must not stay for more than two (2) weeks on every call, (c) That ship to ship transfer can only be done if the first pre-condition is met, carefully studied by the Authority and a possible permanent location approved for it;
- the vessel performs two types of operations: (a) Suction, bagging and discharge bagged cement directly from the vessel to the trucks, (b) Receives bulk cement from a feeder vessel that moored along side the factory vessel whenever the quantity of bulk cement is low. However, as at the time of conducting this inspection no feeder vessel was moored along side;
- that BUA Ports and Terminal is yet to complete the registration process of her Dock workers with NIMASA;
- that Dock workers were well kitted, however it was noted that the new kits were issued a day prior to the visit by the committee;
- that no death was recorded since the arrival of BUA Cement 1;
- the Crew list of fifteen (15) Seamen and Twenty Eight (28) SRI LANKAN CREW LIST consist of persons engaged as Factory workers. The crew list consist of three (3) Greek nationals and twelve (12) Ukrainian nationals, however all the twenty eight persons addressed as Factory Crew by BUA management are from Sri Lankan (foreigners). BUA however claimed to have engaged thirty two (32) Nigerians as factory workers. Based on the document captioned SRILANKAN CREW LIST (Apdx 1) issued to the committee by the captain of MV BUA Cement 1, it can be clearly established that of the twenty eight (28) persons on the list, six (6) are clearly involved in the performance of dock work, while the remaining Twenty two (22) persons are engaged in the performance of seafarers jobs (Chief Engineer, 2nd Engineer, 3rd Engineer, Electrician, Oiler, Cooks and Fitter).
- the level of pollution from BUA cement operational area can be said to be at a tolerable level;
- the none implementation of various welfare issues for dock workers, prominent among which include lack of Toilets/Bathrooms, canteen, medical facilities, cloak room, non implementation of condition of service and appointment letter (Apdx. 3).
- Even with the inadequacies observed, the Port have reported significant increase in revenue as a result of the operations of the vessel (Apdx. 4)

The Recommendations are also highlighted

- That BUA Cement 1 vessel must have a dedicated terminal or permanent location not in the common users facility;
- The factory vessel (MV BUA Cement 1) should be properly registered as a factory with the Federal Ministry of Industries, Cabotage Enforcement Unit of NIMASA and all other relevant government agencies;
- All the factory crew members engaged in Dock work and seafarer related jobs to be replaced with competent Nigerian Dock workers and Seafarers;
- BUA Ports and Terminal should be directed to update the registration status of its Dock workers and all persons involved in the performance of Dock work with NIMASA immediately;
- BUA should comply with all relevant requirements regarding full provision of Personnel Protective Equipments (PPE) and cloak room for all its Dock workers;
- That BUA Ports and Terminals should comply with the provision of toilet facilities, canteen, cloak room and medical facilities for all dock workers engaged in her terminal;
- That BUA should further improve on pollution control in its terminal;
- The Terminal Operator should develop a very good working relationship with the various stakeholders in the Port especially the Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria (MWUN) as this will help in resolving most of the labour related issues and a quick turn-around of vessels;
- BUA Ports and Terminals should make all efforts to improve on its status as a responsible terminal operator by way of improving welfare issues as it regards her dock workers;
- BUA Port and Terminals should make deliberate efforts to add value to the existing facilities it took over from the NPA.

The NPA management has refused to implement these recommendation leading to the present escalation in labour unrest in the Port Harcourt Quays which if not checked may spill over to other ports in Nigeria.

The BUA Group as a Corporate Social Responsible Organization should start the process of complying with the recommendation of the NPA Management Committee rather than these various false publications that do not represent the proper direction for a sustainable port development programme for the BUA Group to take industrial peace and harmony to reign in the Port Harcourt Quays.

The Minister of Transport should therefore rise to the occasion by compelling NPA to implement the recommendation of the NPA Management Committee so that peace can reign in the Port Harcourt Terminal 1 leased to the BUA Group on a common user basis under the Ports Reform Programme of the Federal Government of Nigeria.

If the BUA Group wants to set up a cement terminal in Nigeria they should strive to meet all our extant laws for such activities rather than the present acts of breaking of our laws.

There were 13 companies granted licences to import bagged cement only the BUA Group is in contravention of our extant laws. The licence granted to the BUA Group was strictly for the importation of bagged cement and not bulk cement which they are presently bringing into the country using the floating cement terminal (FCT) named BUA Cement 1 which is a cement factory ship.

MINAJ among other companies granted licences are bringing in bagged cement into the country as stipulated. It is noteworthy to state that MINAJ has two vessels currently discharging bagged cement at FLT/FOT in Onne Port, they are MV Vinolin Might and MV Bulk Harbour with 20,000 metric tonnes of bagged cement onboard respectively when they arrived. The BUA group also has at berth 2 in the PTOL terminal next door to its own terminal MV Sea Rider discharging 25,998 metric tonnes of bagged cement.

These vessels are working without any hinderance, as they are in compliance with the stipulation to import bagged cement not bulk cement as per the official letter granting the importation of the bagged cement that was for valid until December 2008. We are however not concerned with the issue of validity given the commendable actions of these new entrants to reduce cement prices.

Why the BUA Group chose to misrepresent to Nigerians their illegal acts which continue to undermine the noble intention of government to bring down the cost of cement is totally disheartening and very worrisome. It calls for a thorough investigation at the highest level of government to unravel the perpetrators of the dastardly acts and bring them to book immediately.

Genesis of BUA Contravention of Extant Laws

Given the exigencies of time required to comply to the proper procedure for bringing in and operating a floating cement factory (FCT) in Nigeria, the BUA Group was given a provisional approval by the Nigerian Ports Authority for the FCT to call at the Lagos Ports Complex to discharge the bulk cement she had on board and then go outside to the roads until she is in conformity with all statutory requirements and conditions governing such shipping and port activities in Nigeria. This provisional approval that has led to the present contravention by the BUA Group was given in error.

Unfortunately, the vessel which is a bulk in- bag out ship has operated continually in Nigerian waters and within the Lagos and Bonny Pilotage Districts in the past six months having made her entry into Nigeria on the 27th August 2008 in flagrant contravention of the provisional approval given in error by the Nigerian Ports Authority.

Thus far, the vessel has called illegally at our ports on six successive voyages as enumerated below:

Voyage	Vessel Name	MT	Arrival	Departure	Days	Operation
1 JPST	Bua Cement 1	25,000	02/09/08	12/09/08	14	Cement bagging
2 JPST	Bua Cement 1	18,500	06/10/08	15/10/08	10	Cement bagging
3 BUA	Bua Cement 1	11,000	30/10/08	10/12/08	42	STS, Cement Bagging
	Argy. Roula (Longsided)	10,000	10/11/08	17/11/08	8	STS
4 BUA	Bua Cement 1	NIL	30/12/08	12/01/09	14	STS, Cement Bagging
	Smart (Longsided)	24900	30/12/08	02/01/09	4	STS
5 BUA	Bua Cement 1	NIL	18/01/09	17/02/09	31	STS, Cement Bagging
	Mehmet Aksoy (Longsided)	26500	20/01/09	27/01/09	8	STS
	Leros (Longsided)	27800	03/02/09	10/02/09	8	STS
6 BUA	Bua Cement 1	7,000	5/03/09		39	STS, Cement Bagging
	Leros (Longsided)	27,600	3/04/09		10	STS

The ports system is vital to Nigeria's maritime trade and to her productivity. It is a life-line. As growing globalization continues to exacerbate, the challenges facing the Nigerian maritime industry in an increasingly complex and unpredictable global environment, particularly in the maritime domain should be addressed. Our territorial waters, which are part of our maritime domain, provide tremendous opportunities and are of enormous importance to Nigeria's marine navigation, security and prosperity.

Appropriate regulatory measures are necessary to check invasion of the country by sub-standard, illicit, dangerous or prohibited goods. Beyond that, it is imperative that operations at the ports be safe, secure and efficient to facilitate prompt and uncomplicated transfer of cargo to the other transport modes and performance of assigned responsibilities.

The vessel is presently also in contravention of the following regulations and rules governing such shipping and port activities in Nigeria:

Nigerian Maritime and Safety Administration Act 2007 (NIMASA Act)

Part XIII Shipping Registration and Development. (The vessel is not registered with NIMASA and as such does not comply with the requirements of the Coastal and Inland Shipping (Cabotage) Act, 2003 for such ship to operate in Nigerian coastal and inland waterways.) The floating cement terminal is supposed to be moored and stationed at a location to be designated as her exclusive marine zone under the provisions of the Nigerian Maritime and Safety Administration Act 2007 for safety and security reasons.

Merchant Shipping Act 2007, MSA Act No. 27

Part II Restriction on trading in Nigeria (Foreign Ships are restricted from domestic trade in Nigerian inland and coastal waters).

Part III on registration and licencing of ships (All vessels trading in Nigerian waters must be registered and licenced as stipulated in the MSA Act No.27).

The Coastal and Inland Shipping (Cabotage) Act Cap 5 LFN 2003

Part II Restriction of Vessels in Domestic Coastal Trade (Prohibition 3. A vessel other than a vessel wholly owned and manned by Nigerian citizens, built and registered in Nigeria shall not engage in the domestic coastal carriage or cargo and passengers within the coastal territorial inland waters, or any point within the waters of the exclusive economic zone of Nigeria.

Part III Waivers The vessel, which is Panamanian flagged, was built in Japan in 1972 and converted to a floating cement terminal in 1984. The vessel has on board fifteen (15) seamen consisting of three (3) Greek nationals and twelve (12) Ukrainian nationals with another crew of twenty eight (28) Sri Lankan nationals. The vessel has no waiver on Build, Registration, Manning, and Ownership from NIMASA.

Part IV Licence to Foreign Vessels The vessel does not have a licence to trade in Nigeria

Part V Registration Age of Vessels Statutory Limit is 15 years (BUA Cement 1 is 35 years)

The Factories Act Cap 126

The BUA Cement 1 is a Floating Cement Terminal, (Factory Ship) which should be registered under the Factory Act Cap 126, LFN 1999.

- The vessel has no applied to the Minister of Industries for registration of the floating cement terminal as a factory pursuant to the guidelines of The Factories Act Cap 126, LFN 1999.
- She is also not in compliance to the Factories Act for Docks (Safety of Labour) Regulation. The cement factory operation is unsafe, as the dockworkers were not issued with proper and adequate safety equipments.

The Nigerian Port Authority Act Cap 38 LFN 1999

• The vessel is operating as terminal within another terminal in breach of the Development and Operating Plans as provided in the BUA Port and Terminal Limited Lease Agreement signed between BUA Group and NPA/BPE on a common user basis.

• The vessel has not applied to the Nigerian Ports Authority for the required authority to construct and operate as a marine terminal in Nigeria in accordance with the Nigerian Port Authority Act Cap 38 LFN 1999.

• The BUA Group has continued to operate a ship to ship (STS) transfer to service the FCT at berths 6 and 7 in blatant disregard of the NPA letter to the Managing Director of Bua, Ports and Terminal referenced HQ/GM/M/OP/465 dated 19th October 2008 on the unauthorized mooring, berthing and STS operations at the Port Harcourt Port.

• Despite efforts by Nigerian Ports Authority in setting up a management committee to look into the industrial dispute between the organized labour under the aegis of Maritime Workers of Nigeria (MWUN) and the management of BUA Cement and Nigerian Ports Authority, which had threatened industrial peace and port operations across the country, the floating cement terminal continues to operate illegally in our territorial waters.

The Immigration Act Cap 171 LFN 1999

• The passports of the twenty nine (29) Sri Lankan nationals on board the BUA Cement 1 were analyzed and it was observed that 17 (seventeen) expatriates came with temporary work permit (TWP) that were issued and cancelled, a facility unknown in immigration procedure of the NIS, 5 (five) expatriates came with unspecified type of visas, 7 came with Business Visas some of which had expired while 9 (nine) visas were extended at least once and 5 (five) were currently expired. None came in with a Subject to Regularization (STR) visa and they were not part of the crew aboard the vessel. The immigration contravention were irregular visa entry, suspicious immigration facilities, residing without legitimate permit and working without relevant quota grants and resident permits. They were engaged in activities for which they were not permitted making them Prohibited Immigrants (PI) so they ought to be eased out of the country in accordance with the provisions of the Immigration Act.

Implication for the Nigerian Maritime Industry

The main concern and issues raised by these illegal, unsafe and insecure activities by the BUA Group are as follows:

- Operating a floating cement factory without obtaining the appropriate government approvals;
- Bringing in over age vessel into our waters with the attendant safety, health, environment and security implications;
- Danger to safe navigation in the Bonny pilotage district by double banking of vessels during STS operations at berths 6 and 7 in the Port Harcourt Quays;
- Gross violation of the operating plan in the Lease Agreement for the Port Harcourt Terminal B by the BUA Group;
- Contravention of the various provisions of the legislative and regulatory frameworks and structures governing Labour, Health, Trade & Environmental Standards in the maritime industry in Nigeria;
- Sidelining of local maritime labour with the attendant job losses and erosion in human capacity building in the Nigerian maritime industry;
- Influx of expatriates without work permit through unethical Immigration, Labour, Health, Trade & Environmental practices; and
- Colossal loss of revenue due to government through underhand practices by the BUA Group through evasion of payment of actual duty due to the Federal Government, which is 10 percent for bagged cement as evinced in the award letter to the beneficiaries for the importation of the bagged cement into Nigeria.
- Why the various statutory regulatory agencies of government have refused to take appropriate action to investigate this malfeasance and sanction erring parties.

With the present foreign domination of the maritime industry in Nigeria, the consequences of the implication for the maritime industry in Nigeria are very dire. It is very challenging given the current global financial meltdown.

Conclusion

It is in the best interest of the maritime community in Nigeria that the Federal Government investigate thoroughly these nefarious activities by the BUA Group with a view to identify the various parties that have contributed to the malfeasance in order to sanitize and improve the quality of shipping and other ancillary services in Nigeria.

This will surely expose where the incidence of blame lie so that corrective and preventive measures including appropriate sanctions are applied on any party found to have construed, connived or abetted knowingly or unknowingly in these unwholesome acts that breach all best management practices in the maritime industry.

There is need to set the records straight to bring out the whole truth so that the BUA Group entry into cement importation and the ensuing unethical and unsavoury practices by the Group which the various BUA press releases try to cover are exposed and put to public scrutiny and probity for Nigerians to ascertain the reason for the current inability of the various statutory regulatory agencies of government to call the BUA Group to order.

We do not believe it is in the national interest for Nigerians to be misled through false publication in the media by unpatriotic and selfish entities that have refused to comply with the laws of our great nation, Nigeria. Conscience is an open wound only the truth can heal it.

For and on behalf of Coalition on Best Port Industry Practices in Nigeria

Oke Maduegbuna
National Coordinator

NORTHERN BUSINESS



Thriving *accha*'s biz in Plateau

A *accha*, also known as hungry rice is among the important cereals that is commonly grown by farmers in Plateau State and predominantly in the Middle Belt. The states include Niger, southern Kaduna, Federal Capital Territory, Bauchi among others. Owing to its importance, the crop is now part of the mandate of the Nigeria's foremost cereals research institute, the National Cereals Research Institute, Badegi, Niger State.

Apart from being a staple food for most people in the area, *accha* is also produced in a commercial quantity scale by farm operators and used as fodders. The crop is also readymade source of supplementary dietary fibre, said to be good for diabetic patient.

Although, the origin of the grain in the plateau was difficult to ascertain but most of the farmers interviewed by *Daily Trust* maintained that the crop has been in existence for a long time.

The major *Accha* producing areas in the state are Riyom and Barkin Ladi local government areas and it is on a large scale from where it is transported to other states across the country.

Steven Ayuba who is among the farmers in Barkin Ladi who cultivates *Accha* told *Daily Trust* that the cereal is usually planted mostly in a submerged land, where the seed is broadcast thus allowing it to germinate within a week, "The seed are usually spread on the farm land with bear hands on a prepared land which allows it to germinate within a week".

Like most cereals *Accha* thrives best during the raining season but planting of the seed is done between May and June, "The *Acha* grows well during the raining season after the planting of the seeds in the months of May and July every year" Ayuba said.

Continuing he said however that "too much rain could hinder its growth as it will make it to grow beyond the normal size and if that happens in most cases, it loses its taste".

The harvesting period of the crop is usually during the months of November and December, when it becomes available in the market, "By November or December the crop is always ripe for harvest in most cases, it is a time to determine whether there is good harvest, although, we do record good harvest".

On the criteria with which they determine a good harvest, Ayuba explained that that "when a measure is sold

From Mahmud Lalo, Jos.

within the range of N150 to N170, that an indication of a good harvest and crop will be available".

He added that when the grain is sold higher then it means the crop is in short supply. "But if it sold at prices within the range of N200 and above, you can tell that the crop is scarce and it was probably due to poor harvest".

Ayuba noted that the crop has no specific disease that can hinder its growth pointing out that the crop could suffer attack of weeds. "Sometimes the

crop can suffer from the attack of weeds, that is if the weeds grows faster than the crop, your *Accha* farm land will be overgrown with weeds and it will affect the growth of the crop, therefore the farmer has to be engaged a continuous weeding process so as to prevent the weeds from taking over the farmland".

For instance, unlike maize, *accha* does not require fertilizer to thrive on the farmland, "it grows without the help of fertilizer, though some use to apply it but in most cases farmers never bother to apply the fertilizer".

Accha can be preserved for as long as one month post harvest, however, it could generate some tiny worms if not properly preserved, "The best way to preserve it is to leave the hulk on the grain, and when you want to use it you can then remove the hulk". He added

The grain can be prepared in series of delicacies depending on the cuisine one wishes to prepare; it can be eaten alone and in a great variety of soups as side or main dishes. The most common ways it is prepared on the plateau is in the form of *tuwo*, porridge, *pap*, or it can

be par boil like rice.

Accha crop can in form of black or white, depending on the type of seed planted, but a dealer at New Market in Jos, who did not want his name mentioned explained that the types of *accha* are differentiated in Jos according to the place it comes from, "For instance, some people call the one from Bauchi as Bauchi *Accha* or plateau *Accha*, but actually there is no difference in the two". She explained.

According to her, the *Accha* business is a lucrative one as a measure is sold at N200 and sometimes even more. "That is why some

people prefer to go for other cereal crops than *accha*".

She said the reason why it costs more to buy than other cereals is because of the rigorous process of cultivating the grain.

On whether the farmers have ever enjoyed any support from the state government which help in developing *accha* production in the state, Ayuba said there was none, lamenting that calls for government's assistance were in vain.

Among the challenges faced by the farmers, Ayuba stated that *Accha* production was tedious and could be alleviated with the help of mechanized farming, for instance, the milling machine can help in dehusking the from the chaff".

According to Ayuba, removing the hulk from the seed is the most difficult part of harvesting the crop. He added, "That part of the job is usually done by women after the men have cut off the main grass from the field, and that is one reason why a lot of farmers don't opt to plant the *Accha* seed because of its hard process involved in its harvest, but I assure you the with milling machines *Accha* production will improve significantly on the plateau".

The local method of milling the crop usually allows the farmer to have by-products which can be used for other domestic chores. Apart from the smooth straw which serves as fodder for animals, it can also be used for roof thatching, livestock bedding among others ..

The straw according to Ayuba cost N200 per pile, which serves as another source of income for him, "Most of the cattle rearers around these areas buy their straw from me at the cost of N200 per pile, i make quite a lot of money which augment my income". He said.

Ayuba therefore, appealed to the state government to come to their aid by providing them with loans that can allow them purchase the machines.

When contacted if the state government had plans to assist the *accha* farmers in the state, the Commissioner for Agriculture in Plateau State, Nabasu Amfani Yakubu told *Daily Trust* that the government was already addressing the need to make fertilizer available to them at subsidized rate.

He added that fertilizer was sold at exorbitant prices to the ordinary farmer, but through government's intervention, farmers were able to have access to fertilizer without experiencing much difficulty.



Accha displayed in Jos market



Accha grass used as fodder in Barkin Ladi local government area of Plateau State

ENERGY BUSINESS

VP seeks input into oil, gas reforms

Vice President Goodluck Jonathan has called on the Nigerian Gas Association (NGA) to offer the Federal Government its professional advice in the oil ongoing reform of the oil and gas sector.

According to him, the development will help make the reforms being undertaken in the oil and gas industry successful.

The Vice President stated this when the Association paid him a courtesy visit at the State House recently.

According to the Vice President, it is very gratifying

Stories from Mohammed Shosanya, Lagos

to see that Nigeria possesses the experienced people, with the necessary expertise to advise on various aspects of the oil and gas reforms being undertaken by the Federal Government.

He said: "The Nigerian Gas Association, with such experts within its membership can play a key role in advising and guiding the government in a manner that will ensure that Nigeria obtains the best and highest value from these

reforms. I therefore personally request your quality feedback and input into the process."

Speaking, the Minister for Petroleum Dr. Rilwanu Lukman thanked the NGA for the many salient observations made during the visit, and told the Association that many of its recommendations had accurately anticipated the various strategies being put in place by the government.

He also noted the government's readiness to consider the other recommendations made by the Association.

He said: "The accuracy

and objectivity of the NGA's proposals for the gas sector of the industry are impressive and deserve to be studied in greater detail. In particular, the idea of the creation of a Gas Flares Out Strategy Team, comprising of all key stakeholders in the industry is interesting and will be further explored by the administration"

Engr. Charles Osezua, the NGA's President assured the government of the Association's commitment to continue to contribute to the development of Nigeria's gas industry in an unbiased and

professional manner.

He said: "The NGA is fortunate to draw its membership from across the various areas of the gas industry – government, private sector, upstream, midstream and downstream. We therefore have the advantage of being able to bring a balanced, considered and total view to the various issues facing the gas industry and also proffer sustainable solutions to them".

Formed in 1999 with the

aim of promoting the growth and development of all sectors of the Nigerian gas industry, the Nigerian Gas Association presently has over 750 corporate and individual members. Its membership is drawn from all the gas producing companies, natural gas transmission and distribution companies, LPG marketing companies, gas engineering firms and students from institutions of higher learning.



L-R: Rotimi Oyekan, the Lagos State Commissioner for Finance and Wale Tinubu, Group Chief Executive, Oando PLC at the Business Day CEO Forum Nigeria held in Lagos recently.

Oando begins work on 210,000 MT Lekki Terminal project

As part of its strategy to ensure optimal value extraction across its diversified investments along the energy value chain, Oando PLC has flagged off the development of an ultra-modern refined petroleum products import Terminal at the Lagos State Lekki Free Trade Zone (LFTZ).

To this end, Oando has commissioned the Front End Engineering Design (FEED) of the terminal scheduled to be completed by the third quarter of 2009, whilst the entire project is expected to be commissioned in the first quarter of 2012.

The 210,000 MT capacity terminal is conceptualized to be best-in-class and the largest purpose built product terminal in the sub-Saharan Africa dispatching over 500 trucks per day in what is set to revolutionise petroleum products distribution in Nigeria.

This investment, according to Mr. Ayo Ajose-Adeogun, CEO Oando Refinery and Terminals is a precursor and in synergy with Oando's plan to develop a Greenfield Refinery Project in the same location. Already, a comprehensive 4-month detailed bankable feasibility study for an ultra-modern re-

finery has been concluded.

He said, "This project will have a direct impact on the downstream sector as it will radically reduce the traffic to Apapa port, which was originally built to handle only 10% of Nigeria's energy import requirement as against the 90% it does today. It will also increase Major Marketers' throughput by bridging the huge supply gap."

"The Lekki Terminal Project will have a Single Point Mooring (SPM) facility located about 7km offshore, which will support the berthing of 80,000 deadweight tonnage (dwt) vessels for the

first time in West Africa, thereby significantly providing unprecedented cost efficiencies".

Also commenting on the project, Mr. Wale Tinubu, Group Chief Executive, Oando PLC said it will be the benchmark for product reception terminals in sub-Saharan Africa that will once again attest to our superior execution capabilities.

"We project strong early cash flow that will provide immediate shareholder value and the financial platform for the development of our ultra-modern refinery in the same location."

Mining: Nigeria loses N6.2bn annually

The Association of Miners and Processors of barites (BB) has said that Nigeria has lost over N6.2 billion annually to incessant granting of waivers for the importation of barites into the country.

The Association also said that the development may cause the mining sector to collapse because it 90 per cent patronage is from

the oil industry. Secretary-General of the union Mr. Veriatus Ams-Amahon, who said this at a stakeholder meeting in Lagos weekend said the development was a bane to the mining sector.

He expressed regret over the persistent importation of the mineral through waivers despite the ban by the Federal Government.

He said importers take advantage of the waiver to flood the country with imported barites resulting to poor patronage of locally made barites, adding that the government ought to protect the local industries because there is a large deposit of barites and bentonite in Nigeria.

According to him, over the time the oil sector had refused to patronize the lo-

cal manufacturers because they could still get the imported product through the back door.

He said that for the sector to contribute its quota to the nation's Gross Domestic Products that other sector such as pharmaceutical, paints, patronise the local barite. Glass, plastic and construction industry should patronize the sector

Oil falls as demand set to slow

The price of oil has fallen after the International Energy Agency predicted that the global recession would cut demand for crude this year.

The IEA said on Friday that world oil demand would fall by 2.4 million barrels a day to 83.4 million barrels.

In Asian trading, US light crude fell 79 cents to \$51.45 a barrel. London Brent oil was down 47 cents at \$53.59.

However, trading was light, with markets in London largely closed for the Easter holidays.

The Paris-based IEA said its forecast of lower oil demand was influenced by "a growing consensus that economic and oil demand re-

covery will be deferred to 2010".

It also noted that developed countries' oil inventories had risen in February to 61.6 days of forward cover, the highest since 1993.

Victor Shum, an analyst in Singapore with the Pervin & Gertz consultancy, said the IEA's lower forecast represented "very serious demand destruction".

Since hitting a record high of more than \$147 a barrel in July last year, the price of oil has fallen dramatically.

It dropped below \$40 a barrel at the end of 2008 before recovering slightly, but remains nearly \$100 below peak levels.

BBC.

Aulic to turn Lagos trade fair business haven in W/Africa

Aulic Nigeria Limited, a service company which won the competitive bid for the acquisition of the Lagos International Trade Fair Complex has promised to turn the complex into a haven of business opportunities in West Africa.

Part of the plans to ensure this drive, according to the company's Managing Director, Nick Ezech, is the creation of West Africa financial business centre around the complex.

He explained that the centre, apart from serving as a melting pot of business prospects, would also give Nigeria a deserving place among the committee of nations in West Africa sub-region.

Eze, who spoke with newsmen in Lagos at the weekend, said the overhaul of the complex has been segmented.

He said the infrastructures therein cannot stand the demands of contemporary trade fair and exhibition

centres, adding that Aulic is embarking on aggressive drive to phase out the obsolete equipment in the complex and replace them with modern ones.

"We are replacing and rebranding the complex, which was built for business transaction. We want to bring them back. The complex has the requisite shape for exhibition"

He said the company has also tighten the noose on security lapses in the complex and environs, adding that the development is borne out of the need to guarantee security of lives and properties in the complex.

The company had last year staked N57.9 billion on the trade fair complex to clinch its ownership following invitation for bids by the Federal government.

Ezech said his company is collaborating with a California-based company in providing training programme for youths, craftsmen and businessmen on modern business technique.

FINANCE BUSINESS

Towards sustainable interest rates

Major stakeholders particularly banks' chief executives and the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) had recently examined the state of the nation's economy and the need to sustain the current interest rates fixed by the apex bank and the banks. At the town hall meeting called by the CBN, many Nigerians advocated for the downward review of the rates.

Nigeria has been considered to be one of the countries with the highest interest rate in the world, with most of the European countries, United States of America (USA) and the Asian countries such as China and Korea reducing their interest rates to below five per cent, Nigeria has just pegged its interest rate at 22 per cent with an additional two per cent charges, making it 24 per cent.

With the UK reducing interest rate to 0.05 per cent, US zero per cent, and the Asian countries such as China and Korea reducing their interest rates to below five per cent, Nigeria has just pegged its interest rate at 22 per cent with an additional two per cent charges, making it 24 per cent.

This regime is expected to be in place up to end December 2009 when a review will be undertaken.

But prior to the fixing of the interest rate, banks in the country have been charging between 32 and 40 per cent as interest on loans.

The Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Prof. Chukwuma Soludo, while announcing the fixing of the interest rate, said the decision was an outcome of the Bankers' Committee meeting which comprised of top officials of the apex bank and banks' chief executives.

On the rationale for pegging interest rates, the CBN boss said, "the market-based approach to interest rate determination as practised until now remains the best approach but given the unusual global crisis and the consequent impact on Nigeria, there is a need to moderate competition and lay greater emphasis on the safety and soundness of the system.

"It was observed that interest rates have recently risen to levels considered to be intolerable and not supportive of the desired economic recovery. They would also observe a lending rate which will be at most seven per cent above the deposit rate. All other charges would be at most two per cent."

He said the committee

From Kayode Ekundayo,
Lagos

observed that currently, in some cases, banks were charging as high as above 32 per cent as lending rates and give as high as 21 per cent on deposits, adding, "the cost of doing business by the banking sector is very high relative to most of other economies, especially in the areas of power and security."

To ensure that the lending rate was reduced, the apex bank decided that its discount window, where it lends to the banks will not be more than 500 basis points above the Monetary Policy Rate (MPR), at maximum of 14.75 per cent with the current MPR rate at 9.75 per cent.

The apex bank also disclosed that the regime of consolidated supervision would begin this year that is the joint examination of banks with other regulators including Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Nigerian Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC) and National Insurance Commission (NAICOM).

"When the situation normalises the market will be allowed to play its role. The CBN will continue to monitor developments in the money market and stand ready to take appropriate actions to ensure liquidity and stability of the financial system."

Operators in the finance industry, especially the banking sector saw the reaction of the apex bank to soaring interest rates in the banking industry as a return to the regime of controls, but other stakeholders in the economy thought the CBN should do more by intervening and further reducing the interest rate.

At the town hall meeting initiated by CBN, the Governor, Edo State, Comrade Adams Oshiomhole, said there is need for more government intervention to ensure that genuine manufacturers have access to funds.

He particularly asked the government to intervene in the interest rate by pegging the rates and not allow them to the vagaries of market forces, adding that such government intervention will go a long way to rejuvenate the manufacturing sector and create employment in the country.

He said that the country and Nigerians would be better off when the country adopt a state intervention

system instead of the market base economy, explaining that if the government put a cap on interest rate and, it would engender economic growth.

Oshiomhole noted that large amount from the N8.1 trillion credit granted by the banks to the real sector was to the oil and gas, telecommunications and trading sectors, adding that the sec-



President of the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN), Dr. Erastus Akingbola

tors accounted for about N6.1 trillion of the credits in 2008.

He said that the government could further reduce interest rate to single digit and that banks should be mandated to lend to specific sectors but not a matter of generalising the real sector.

Making an analogy, the former NLC president said when he was building his house in Kaduna, there was government policy that pegged the interest rate at nine per cent and targeted at certain sectors of the economy.

Chairman of the Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG), Mazi Sam Oshuabunwa, said that though the apex bank has started moving towards reducing the interest rate, but should ensure that most of the loans granted by banks should be directed at the real sector but not at ordinary traders.

He noted that interest rate should be brought low to allow the real sector to manufacturing sector to take its responsibility of engendering the growth of the economy.

He also agreed with Oshiomhole that it is only a functional and vibrant manufacturing sector that could generate employment and create wealth for the country.

Chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Banking and Currency, Ogbuefi Ozongbashi, who lauded the apex bank for embarking on some of the

lending facilities, saying that interest rate on lending facilities should be fixed at a very low percentage while banks and finance houses should be allowed to determine the deposit rates.

His reasons, "It is the banks that determine who they want to give loans but they can give better and higher deposit rates to increase their depositors' funds and their balance sheets."

He said there is no financial institution in the country that gives loan at a reduced rate, explaining that even the micro-finance banks set up to provide funds for small and medium industries per month, which translates to between 25 and 30 per cent for a year.

Responding, the CBN Governor, Prof Chukwuma Soludo, said that there had been improvement in the level of facilities granted to the manufacturing sector now than before the consolidation period.

He noted even though there was improvement but that there is room for more improvement in the facilities.

The CBN governor explained that although the market-propelled rates were the best approach in the industry until now but that the stiff competition among operators had pushed rates to unacceptable levels.

"The market-based approach to interest rate determination as practised until now remains the best approach but given the unusual global crisis and the consequent impact on Nigeria, there is a need to moderate competition and lay greater emphasis on the safety and soundness of the system," the governor said.

Speaking recently at a forum organised by the apex bank, Soludo said that the measure was to ensure that the liquidity pressures and run up to common year end do not drive bank to "race to bottom."

He argued that despite the complaint that the interest rate was high even before the intervention of the CBN, credit to the manufacturing sector, as at February 2009, was N999.45 billion as against N352.04 billion in 2005.

He said that the major determinant of interest rate, which is the inflation rate has increased over the years with the headline inflation for March 2009 put at 14.75 per cent, saying that other countries where the interest rate is below five per cent also have inflation rate that is below five per cent.

"These countries that have less percentage of interest rates such as US and UK, you also have to look at their inflation rate. Most of them have less than one per cent of inflation rate," he said.

President of the Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN), Dr. Erastus Akingbola, said that the rate of the interest rate could not be used to determine the growth of the manufacturing sector, as there are many challenges, such as inconsistent policies, poor policy implementation and dilapidated infrastructural facilities, especially power.

He said that market base interest rate regime will help the economy to grow rather than the control regime, saying that in the US and UK, there interest rates are based on the market forces.

“On the rationale for pegging interest rates, the CBN boss said, “the market-based approach to interest rate determination as practised until now remains the best approach but given the unusual global crisis and the consequent impact on Nigeria, there is a need to moderate competition and lay greater emphasis on the safety and soundness of the system.”

TELECOMS BUSINESS

Megatech to roll out 3.5m lines in North-Bruce

Megatech engineering limited, one of the northern owned telecommunication company recently signed a contract agreement with ZTE of China for the expansion of its facilities after it acquired a CDMA Network license. In this interview, Ms Megal Bruce, the company's Managing Director, spoke about the company's plans and its determination to become a leading telecommunications company in Nigeria.

You recently signed an agreement with ZTE of China after you acquired a CDMA license, can we know how this could impact on your business?

Going from our involvement with ZTE from the beginning, when we decided to diversify into the CDMA field, we had our first license to cover Kano and we wished that we have only one carrier and we applied to the NCC and after about 3 months, they granted us the HIS-6 in the 19 states of the North. We already signed the contract for Kano at the time. We did not have the frequency for the other states then. So when we did our 'first call' ceremony, we felt we should use that opportunity to sign the memorandum of understanding with ZTE because they have done their best and they have delivered good service to us. So we felt we should sign an MOU with them to extend their services to other states which we already have the license and frequency for. So we intend to roll our services to other states before the end of this year.

With the memorandum of understanding now signed what actually should your customers expect?

ZTE is our vendor and we are the operator. We know we are going to roll out in the 19 states simultaneously and we know how many base stations, what we are going to do now is to ship in the materials and before the end of the year, we would

From Hassan A. Karofi,
Kano

have installed them.

How did you arrive at the decision to go into partnership ZTE?

We asked all the vendors to send in their proposals and all the vendors obliged and after consideration, we talked to technical experts to look into their proposals and we found that ZTE presented us with the best coverage and best quality.

Do they have the tradition of excellence elsewhere?

Yes, they are the number one CDMA operator in the world although they are not based in Nigeria.

How many lines do you intend to roll out in these northern states?

We are looking at 5 million lines but of course, as demand increases, we also increase our capacity because the capacity for technology is limitless. So we have made our projection to 3.5 million for the 19 states but with 24 states, because we just acquired Abuja also, and as we progress, we would surely expand our capacity.

How can you compete effectively with others?

I would not agree with you that the market is saturated because I still believe that there is need for better quality of service in the country especially in Kano. Basically, the service is not here so we decided to come to Kano and set up our base in



Ms Megal Bruce

Kano because actually, our chairman is from the North and he has his family in the north and every time he comes to this part of the country, it is very difficult for people to reach him. So, he saw the need to improve the service and that is why he decided to invest in the telecommunication sector. So when you say it is saturated,

it is not so. People are getting what is available but not what they want. The other networks are available but it is not as if they are satisfied with what they are getting. We are here to change that. And to give the people good quality services for less cost. The good thing about the CDMA quality is that it is cheaper than the GSM. So,

definitely, our tariffs are going to be cheaper than GSM. And because we are for the people, we are going to ensure that we provide services that are affordable.

How do you intend to tackle the problem of interconnectivity with other networks?

Interconnectivity is another issue all together because there are different ways of interconnecting with other operators. We can interconnect with fiber, we can interconnect with MCMCT1, and it depends on how you want to interconnect. For instance if I interconnect with you with 16E1, the traffic might not work if you connect with 16 E1 because the bandwidth is already taken. But any call coming in to interconnect, would be dropped. That is how it is done. But we have gone a step further.

And the agreement which we signed with ZTE enables us to have 64 E1 to interconnect with each operator. So we are insured of interconnectivity with other operators and take drop calls.

Kano is recently adjudged as having the highest unemployment in the country, how can Megatech assist in this direction?

Hundreds of thousands of Kano people would surely benefit from Megatech. First, directly from the employment we offer those who work in the company and then the dealers who would be engaged. We have various categories of dealers because we have the main dealers to the common dealer and then the dealers would their own retailers of our products also. Even the handicap who sells recharge cards would be engaged and this would greatly help in reducing unemployment. Since the headquarters is in Kano, it would definitely play a great role in ensuring that unemployment

is reduced. As we are expanding to other states, the indigenes of the states there would get their own ratio of the employment. And we must remember that every thing now is IT driven and so, if we give service to internet providers, we are ensuring continuity in the business of these internet centers which are a major employer of labour in Kano and other part of the country.

One thing is that Kano is a growing economy and when we talk about how we can survive our competitors, you would notice that anywhere in the world, monopoly does not help the people but when you have competition, it gives rise to quality service. With Megatech in Kano, we are surely going to help the indigenes by training their children in terms of their IT experience and of course, definitely, we would also need some hands for us to operate. The competent ones who have to move out of Kano because the PTO's are not in Kano would stay back because we would employ them here in Kano. This company would grow better if the IT infrastructure is in place. So, Megatech would be an addition to the employment market in Kano.

Looking at the challenges of infrastructure like electricity, how can you cope?

Before you go into business, you look at your cost analysis and you already know your promises and your threats and we have taken that into consideration and we are not taking the problem of electricity as a challenge that cannot be overcome any more because we have based our business plan on the absence of infrastructure like electricity. If there was electricity when we came into the industry and now there is no electricity, it would have been a different thing. But now we know the situation in the country and we have our plans to overcome the problem.

What is the vision of Megatech in the coming years?

We want to be a mobile hub. We also want to provide all the services that can be provided in technology. You want to make a call, video conferencing and any other thing you want to do, you don't have to leave your home with Megatech on ground, and we should be able to do whatever we want to do.

We are looking at 5 million lines but of course, as demand increases, we also increase our capacity because the capacity for technology is limitless. So we have made our projection to 3.5 million for the 19 states but with 24 states, because we just acquired Abuja also, and as we progress, we would surely expand our capacity.



NATIONAL INSURANCE COMMISSION,

Shippers' Plaza, Wuse Zone 5, Abuja.

Tel: 09-6734076.

CURRENT LIST OF LICENSED INSURANCE BROKERS IN NIGERIA

- Members of the Public, Government Agencies, Ministries, Departments and Parastatals are hereby notified of the current list of Licensed Insurance/Reinsurance Brokers in Nigeria.
- All enquiries regarding the status of any Insurance Broker(s) should be directed to the National Insurance Commission, Shippers' Plaza, Michael Okpara Street, Wuse Zone 5, Abuja, Tel: 09-6734076, for clarification.
- All existing Insurance Brokers are required to comply with the provisions of the NCRIB Act relating to enrolment and membership.

S/N	NAME OF BROKER	REG-NO	S/N	NAME OF BROKER	REG-NO	S/N	NAME OF BROKER	REG-NO
1	A.B. ALHASSAN & CO. INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-060	102	FIRST DOMINION INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-170	201	MENTOR & HOPKINGS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-089
2	A.E.J INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-281	103	FIRST ECO(WA) INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-444	202	MERCY FAITH INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-040
3	A.O.RICHARD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-167	104	FIRST GUARANTY RISK SOLUTION INS BROKERS	RBC-349	203	METI INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-605
4	ACCEPTANCE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-618	105	FIRST MUTUAL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-400	204	METRIC INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-048
5	ACCREDITED INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-480	106	FIRST STANDARD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-433	205	METRO PERIL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-189
6	ACCURATE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-136	107	FIRST TRUST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-161	206	METRO SERVE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-573
7	ACI INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-430	108	FLASH INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-165	207	MIB INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-466
8	ADEHMOS BROKERS LTD.	RBC-256	109	FLOURISH INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-608	208	MIDLINKS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-391
9	AFN BROKERS LTD.	RBC-245	110	FORTIS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-345	209	MISSION INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-425
10	AFRIBANK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-135	111	FOUNTAIN INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-052	210	MODEL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-380
11	AFRICAN GENERAL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-147	112	FRONTIER TRUST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-350	211	MODERN STANDARD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-512
12	AFRICAN INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-105	113	FRONTLINE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-488	212	MULTI TRADE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-372
13	AFRI-OVIS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-031	114	GALAXY INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-577	213	MULTI-BOND INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-355
14	AFRISK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-486	115	GAYWOOD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-090	214	MULTIPLE BOND TRUST INS BROKERS LTD	RBC-634
15	ALL STATE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-323	116	GEM INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-202	215	MUSTARD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-049
16	ALPHA BROKERS LTD.	RBC-010	117	GENESIS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-333	216	NALEX ASSOCIATES LTD.	RBC-061
17	ALPHA CHOICE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-550	118	GEOMAINS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-299	217	NAVIANCO INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-551
18	AMANA INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-093	119	GLANVILL ENTHOVEN & COMPANY (NIG.) LTD.	RBC-058	218	NELSON UTI INSURANCE BROKERS LTD. LTD.	RBC-095
19	ANTONIO INSURANCE BROKERS	RBC-361	120	GLANVILL ENTHOVEN LIFE & PEN CONSULT. LTD.	RBC-055	219	NEW ALLIANCE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-578
20	AREMOTT BANWILL & COMPANY LTD.	RBC-192	121	GLANVILL ENTHOVEN REINS. BROKERS LTD.	RBC-057	220	NEW CASTLE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-581
21	ARIMOKS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-526	122	GLOBAL ALLIANZ INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-436	221	NEW CENTURY PROTECTION INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-431
22	ARK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-029	123	GLOBAL RISK NETWORK INS BROKERS LTD.	RBC-465	222	NEW PLANET INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-066
23	ARK LIFE & PENSIONS INS. BROKERS LTD.	RBC-067	124	GLOBE TRADE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-503	223	NIGERIA LIFE & PROVIDENT CO LTD	RBC-141
24	ASSET INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-313	125	GOLDCREST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-582	224	NORTHLINK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-282
25	ASSOCIATED INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-364	126	GOODGATE INS BROKERS LTD	RBC-599	225	OGE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-661
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27	ATLANTIC INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-153	128	GRAND UNION INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-386	227	ONWARD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-469
28	AUSTIN & ASSOCIATES LTD.	RBC-092	129	GREAT HOPE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-410	228	OPTIMUM INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-612
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30	BARMCO INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-595	131	GRS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-462	230	OWN-STEP INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-407
31	BEST DEAL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-511	132	GT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-597	231	OZONIC INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-534
32	BESTWORTH INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-359	133	HAKASH & CO. (INSURANCE BROKERS) LTD.	RBC-215	232	PANDORA INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-443
33	BETHEL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-492	134	HANNET INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-635	233	PATER NOSTER INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-402
34	BIDAC INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-259	135	HAN'S INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-240	234	PATMODIT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-014
35	BISCONS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-379	136	HEADSTONE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-513	235	PAK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-154
36	BISMOWAK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-121	137	HELMSMAN INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-236	236	PEAKTHRUST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-432
37	BONDWELL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-370	138	HIGHGATE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-042	237	PECUNIARY & TRUST INS. BROKERS LTD.	RBC-065
38	BOOF AFRICA INSURANCE BROKERS LIMITED	RBC-182	139	HIGHTOWER INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-083	238	PENGUIN INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-234
39	BOS INSURANCE CONSULTANT & COMPANY LTD.	RBC-124	140	HIGHWAY INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-545	239	PERFECT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-109
40	BRICKRED INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-659	141	HOGG ROBINSON NIGERIA LTD.	RBC-001	240	PERFECT TRUST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-397
41	BRIDGESTONE INS BROKERS LTD	RBC-624	142	HOME & OVERSEAS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-322	241	PETRA INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-169
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43	CAPSTONE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-494	144	HOPE EQUITY & TRUST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-453	243	PINNACLE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-172
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45	CENTRE TRUST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-594	146	IDEAL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-151	245	PLATINUM GOLD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-440
46	CHATTLE HOUSE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-401	147	IMAGE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-126	246	PLUM INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-047
47	CHOICE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-458	148	IMPACT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-248	247	PORTFOLIO INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-366
48	CHYLY INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-562	149	IMPERIAL TRUST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-107	248	PREMIER INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-002
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50	CITA INSURANCE BROKERS	RBC-518	151	INDUSTRIAL RISK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-168	250	PRIME INVESTMENT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-088
51	CITILADS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-063	152	INFINITE TRUST INS BROKERS LTD	RBC-627	251	PRIME TOUCH INSURANCE BROKERS	RBC-640
52	CLARKSON EDU & COMPANY LTD.	RBC-011	153	INLAND RISK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-516	252	PRISK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-106
53	CLASSIC INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-160	154	INSURANCE BROKERS OF NIGERIA LTD.	RBC-021	253	PROFESSIONAL EDGE INS BROKERS LTD	RBC-629
54	CLEAR VISION INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-378	155	INTEGRITY TRUST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-472	254	PROPERTY & PECUNIARY INS BROKERS LTD	RBC-555
55	CLIMAX INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-216	156	INTERLINK ASSOCIATES & CO. LTD.	RBC-023	255	PRUDENCE INSURANCE BROKERS & CONSULTANTS	RBC-363
56	COLENSON NIGERIA BROKERS LTD.	RBC-044	157	INTERNATIONAL CHARTERED INS. BROKERS LTD.	RBC-190	256	PRUDENTIAL ALLIANCE INS. BROKERS LTD.	RBC-292
57	COL-VAL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-272	158	INTERNATIONAL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-073	257	PSIBL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-315
58	COMPETENT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-082	159	INTERNATIONAL TRUST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-570	258	QUALITY INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-354
59	CONCRIS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-515	160	INTRA NIGER INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-137	259	QUICKLINK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-560
60	CONGLOMERA INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-291	161	IRVING INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-554	260	R T S INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-606
61	CONTINENTAL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-074	162	J.AKIN-GEORGE & COMPANY LTD.	RBC-024	261	RAHIMBOD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-171
62	CORPORATE TRUST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-374	163	JACOB & CAROLINE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-015	262	RDS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-384
63	COSMIC INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-016	164	JAYFORD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-523	263	REGENT ALLIANCE INSURANCE BROKERS	RBC-417
64	COUNTRY & CITY INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-085	165	JOHN HILL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-502	264	REHOBOTH INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC614
65	CREDO INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-426	166	JONADS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-072	265	REMCO INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-304
66	CRISTAL HOPE INSURANCE BROKERWS LTD	RBC-586	167	JONES SIMPLEX & CO. INSURANCE LTD.	RBC-079	266	REVELATION INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-442
67	CROWN INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-157	168	KAL & KAY INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-035	267	RHM INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-459
68	CRYSTAL TRUST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-012	169	KAY-ESS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-481	268	RIGHT TIME INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-552
69	CUSWORTH INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-530	170	KEDGE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-455	269	RISK ANALYST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-457
70	DADAFI INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-476	171	KELSAN INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-617	270	RISK CONSULTANTS LTD.	RBC-174
71	DATABANK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-641	172	KEMEX INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-579	271	RISKGUARD AFRICA INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-438
72	DAVISTHER INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-305	173	KHANI INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-252	272	RISKPLAN INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-445
73	DFS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-382	174	KIND INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-274	273	RISKVIEW INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-454
74	DINTA RISK & INS. BROKERS LTD.	RBC-071	175	KOGUNA BABURA INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-022	274	ROKING INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-334
75	DIPOD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-139	176	KOLKUF INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-131	275	ROOMANS ENELI FLYNN & COMPANY LTD.	RBC-149
76	DISTINCT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-680	177	KUK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-034	276	ROYAL CHAMBERS INS BROKERS LTD	RBC-628
77	DOVE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-556	178	KWARA INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-535	277	ROYAL CROWNFIELD INS BROKERS LTD	RBC-450
78	ECO INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-395	179	LAGOON INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-377	278	ROYAL LINK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-339
79	ECO-PILLAR INSURANCE BROKER LTD.	RBC-146	180	LAND GOLD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-078	279	ROYAL MARINE & GENERAL INS. BROKERS LTD.	RBC-276
80	EDISON & PARTNERS INS BROKERS LTD	RBC-610	181	LAUDABLE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-222	280	ROYAL SPRING INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-636
81	EFFICIENT WAYS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-580	182	LEADFORT INS BROKERS LTD	RBC-617	281	ROYAL TRUST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-186
82	ELIWAD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-224	183	LEGACY INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-404	282	S.I.OSAS & COMPANY	RBC-288
83	EMERALD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-196	184	LEGEND ASSOCIATES INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-365	283	SAFAD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-201
84	EQUITY PROVIDERS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-191	185	LEKTOL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-163	284	SAHAB INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-437
85	ESENARD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-226	186	LEVERAGE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-214	285	SAKINA INSURANCE BROKERS & COMPANY LTD.	RBC-341
86	ETERNALIE RISKS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-506	187	LIBRA INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-050	286	SAMASH INSURANCE BROKERS LIMITED	RBC-064
89	FAITH TRUST INSURANCE BROKERS	RBC-414	188	LIFE TIME INSURANCE BROKERS CO. LTD.	RBC-415	287	SAMENA INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-173
90	FASAHA INTER INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-639	189	LIVINGSTONE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-449	288	SANUCOM INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-353
91	FAVOUR INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-375	190	LYN INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-413	289	SARA INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-387
92	FBN INSURANCE BROKERS LIMITED	RBC-267	191	MAC-CULLUM INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-598	290	SBG INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-367
93	FC&T INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-116	192	MAINWAY INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-103	291	SCIB NIGERIA COMPANY LTD.	RBC-028
94	FCN INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-110	193	MAN MOUNTAIN INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-204	292	SECURE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-308
95	FEMI JOHNSON & COMPANY LTD.	RBC-005	194	MARHABAN INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-027	293	SENFORCE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-130
96	FENGATE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-243	195	MARVELOUS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-589	294	SHEPHERD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-009
97	FEYBIL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-439	196	MASCOT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-277	295	SHINING LIGHT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-568
98	FIDELITY BOND OF NIG. INS. BROKERS LTD.	RBC-038	197	MASUN INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-207	296	SIERRA INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-587
99	FINANCER BROKERS LTD.	RBC-051	198	MAYAS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-399	297	SIGMA INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-294
100	FIRST COVER MASTER INS BROKERS LTD.	RBC-390	199	MAYFAIR BROKERS LTD.	RBC-059	298	SILVER STREET INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-483
101	FIRST DIAMOND INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-489	200	MEGATECH INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-422	299	SILVER TRUST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-037

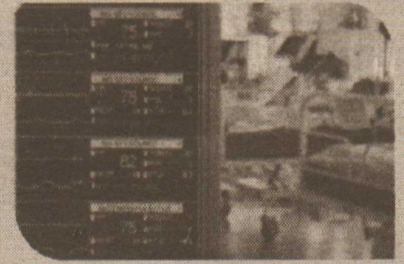
CURRENT LIST OF LICENSED INSURANCE BROKERS IN NIGERIA (Cont'd)

S/N	NAME OF BROKER	REG-NO	S/N	NAME OF BROKER	REG-NO	S/N	NAME OF BROKER	REG-NO
300	SIMONS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-347	354	WALTHAM INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-360	408	GREENLINK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-238
301	SKEEM INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-329	355	WHITE SANDS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-176	409	GULF INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-521
302	SKYLARK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-487	356	WORLDLINK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-424	410	HALTON INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-278
303	SOLID TRUST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-179	357	WORLDMARK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-087	411	HAPATOMAH INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-346
304	SOLUTIONS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-505	358	WPN FAITHFUL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-429	412	HAVARD INTERNATIONAL INS. BROKERS LTD.	RBC-185
305	SONGHAI INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-393	359	XCELLENCE & TRUST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-532	413	HOPKINS & MENTOR INS BROKERS LTD	RBC-089
306	SOUCHE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-132	360	XL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-351	414	INLAND INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-091
307	SOUND INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-225	361	YADAH-G GLOBAL INSURANCE BROKER LTD	RBC-567	415	IY MAJESTY BOND INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-520
308	SOURCE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-0606	362	YO&A INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-463	416	JOKEN INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-484
309	SPRINGFIELD & CO. INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-423	363	ZAPHON INSURANCE BROKERTS LTD	RBC-602	417	KAPEX INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-242
310	STAKEHOLDERS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-604	364	ZHAN INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-510	418	KARDINAL INS. BROKERS LTD.	RBC-148
311	STANDARD INSURANCE CONSULTANT LTD.	RBC-008	365	ZILLION INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-590	419	KINGSLEY INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-264
312	STAR INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-006	366	ABBEY INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-310	420	LECTERN INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-625
313	STAR SHIP INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-620	367	ACCORD NIG. INSURANCE BROKERSLTD.	RBC-357	421	LIB INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-558
314	STC STARLITE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-344	368	ACORN INSURANCE BROKERS LIMITED	RBC-371	422	LIBERTY TRUST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-446
315	STEPHEN & SOLOMON INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-246	369	ADS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-473	423	LINKALL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-086
316	STRATEGIC ALLIANCE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-381	370	AF OSU INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-369	424	M & M INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-211
317	SUBTLE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-637	371	ALEXANDER REISSE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-279	425	MALET INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-642
318	SUPREME TRUST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-542	372	ALFAM INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-162	426	MANNY INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-538
319	SYNERGY INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-235	373	ALLIED TRUST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-229	427	MBC INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-307
320	T. A. BRAITHWAITE INS. BROKERS & CO. LTD.	RBC-089	374	ARIZONA INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-541	428	MIC-MAC INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-616
321	TELMAK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-456	375	ASHMOUNT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-193	429	MILLBANK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-540
322	THE UNITED AFRICAN INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-025	376	ASO SOLID INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-327	430	MINET NIG. INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-033
323	THOMAS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-068	377	AYO RANDLE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-316	431	MOTHERSWORTH INSURANCE BROKERS	RBC-613
324	THORNEDGE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-324	378	BAMBI INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-385	432	MULTI-LATERAL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-144
325	THREE-DS BROKERS COMPANY LTD.	RBC-041	379	BELLCREST INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-286	433	NATIONWIDE & GLOBE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-200
326	TIKVA INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-524	380	BLUE ORBIT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-159	434	NETWORK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-158
327	TIME INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-232	381	BOFF & CO. INSURANCE BROKERS LIMITED	RBC-013	435	NEW-AGE INSURANCE BROKERS LIMITED	RBC-268
328	TIP INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-600	382	BRIGHTWAYS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-230	436	NEWORLD INS BROKERS LTD.	RBC-368
329	TODAY INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-166	383	BSL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-564	437	OMNISCIENT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-441
330	TON-DYKE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-631	384	CARRIER INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-017	438	OMOWELL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-626
331	TONIMAS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-569	385	CAUTIOUS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-043	439	ORIWU INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-104
332	TOP BRACKET INSURANCE BROKER LTD.	RBC-175	386	CHROME INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-271	440	PARAMOUNT EDGE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-585
333	TOTAL SECURITY INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-536	387	COMMERCIAL MARINE INS. BROKER LTD.	RBC-213	441	PERIL GUARD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-583
334	TRANSGLOBAL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-217	388	CREDIBLE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-218	442	PLATFORM INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-471
335	TRIBUTE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-588	389	CYREG & CO. (INTER.) INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-142	443	PREFERED INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-283
336	TRINITY MILLS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-314	390	DYKES INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-045	444	PREMIUM INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-096
337	TRIO INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-321	391	EASY-FLOW INSURANCE BROKES LTD.	RBC-451	445	PRESIDENT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-108
338	TRIPPLE RESOURCE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-406	392	ECLONA INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-208	446	PRESS-ON INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-309
339	TRUST FORTE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-434	393	EDMANS INTERNATIONAL LIMITED	RBC-405	447	PROMPT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-019
340	TRUST LINK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-495	394	EMINENT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-198	448	PULSE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-528
341	UBA INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-712	395	F.A. ONI INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-468	449	ROSEAT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-122
342	UNI-CHARTERED INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-133	396	FAIRWAY INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-630	450	STOCK INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-273
343	UNIMAG INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-098	397	FIRST SPRING INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-233	451	SUMMERFIELD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-501
344	UNION COMMERCIAL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-020	398	FIRST UNIVERSAL INS. BROKERS LTD.	RBC-295	452	SWIFT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-522
345	UNION GATE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-084	399	FOBS INSURANCE BROKERS LTD	RBC-592	453	TRIPOD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-251
346	UNIQUE FUSION INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-418	400	FRANCHISE INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-261	454	TURNING POINT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-427
347	UNITED VANGUARD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-244	401	FUSL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-411	455	VIBRANT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-111
348	UNIVERSAL ASSURANCE CONSULT BROKERS LTD.	RBC-537	402	GLOBAL RISK ASSOCIATES LTD.	RBC-221	456	VIRGIN INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-475
349	UPWARDS INTER.INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-164	403	GLOBAL RISKS PERSPECTIVE INS BRKS LTD	RBC-574	457	VITTA INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-298
350	UTIB INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-228	404	GLOBAL TREND INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-497	458	VTL INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-128
351	VALID INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-514	405	GOLDEN SHIELD INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-389	459	WISEWAY INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-145
352	VICTORY INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-403	406	GOMBOT INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-030	460	WOODLAND INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.	RBC-270
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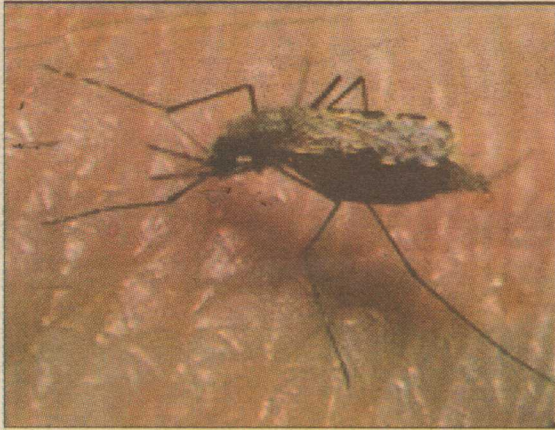
Trade-in: 0702 877 7398, 01-732 9999



DANA MOTORS OFFERS YOU 18 DEDICATED KIA AFTER SALES SERVICE CENTRES NATIONWIDE



DIGEST



A mosquito feeding on human blood

'Double whammy' malaria drug hope

A new "double whammy" malaria drug which works on its own and reverses resistance to other drugs is being developed by US researchers.

The drug contains a chemical which prevents the malaria parasite getting rid of a toxic by-product of feeding on red blood cells.

It also disables a genetic defence that prevents the existing drugs chloroquine and quinine working, Nature reports.

But the team says it could be at least 10 years before the drug is available.

There are around 250 million cases of malaria and 880,000 deaths worldwide each year.

Food

The drug, developed by Jane Kelly and colleagues at Portland State University, is called an acridone derivative.

It targets the way mosquitoes digest haemoglobin in red blood cells, from which they take amino acids as their food.

A substance called haem, a by-product of this process, is toxic to the malaria parasites, carried by mosquitoes, so they have to convert it into a pigment called haemozoin.

This drug prevents that conversion taking place, meaning the toxic pigment remains.

It is the same effect as that of chloroquine and quinine.

But the researchers have found that, as well as working on its own, the acridone can restore and enhance the effectiveness of these other drugs too.

Malaria parasites have developed a genetic mutation preventing chloroquine and quinine absorption, and expelling them from the parasite's body.

This new drug is able to disable that defence mechanism, allowing the chloroquine and quinine to do their job. The researchers have successfully tested the compound in the lab and on mice, however they need to do more animal studies on the safety and effectiveness of the drug before they move on to human studies. It is also relatively inexpensive to make and has so far appeared to be safe in tests.

Dr Mike Riscoe from Portland State University who worked on the study, said: "What we wanted was to design a molecule that would be of itself an antimalarial drug, but that would have the power to work together with drugs like chloroquine and quinine, even against parasites that were resistant to those drugs. "We would hope to make existing drugs like chloroquine and quinine useful again, so combining those with this new one could help to combat the rising tide of drug resistance in this neglected disease."

Culled from bbc.co.uk

Microchip that tells the doctor if you've taken your pills

Microchips in pills could soon allow doctors to find out whether a patient has taken their medication.

The digestible sensors, just 1mm wide, would mean GPs and surgeons could monitor patients outside the hospital or surgery.

Developers say the technology could be particularly useful for psychiatric or elderly patients who rely on a complicated regime of drugs – and are at risk if they miss a dose or take it at the wrong time.

It could also be used for the chronically ill, such as people with heart disease, to establish whether costly drugs are working or whether they are causing potentially dangerous side effects.

The sensors could even remind women to take the Pill if they forget.

The 'intelligent' medicine works by activating a harmless electric charge when drugs are digested by the stomach.

This charge is picked up by a sensing patch on the patients' stomach or back, which records the time and date

that the pill is digested. It also measures heart rate, motion and breathing patterns.

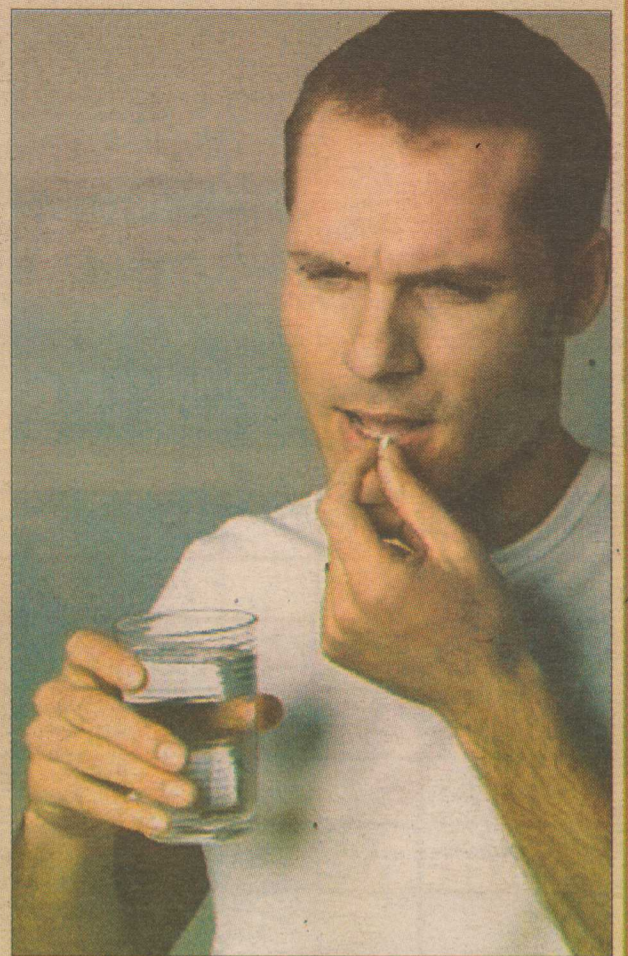
The information is transmitted to a patient's mobile phone and then to the internet using wireless technology, to give a complete picture of their health and the impact of their drugs.

Doctors and carers can view this information on secure web pages or have the information sent to their mobile phones.

The silicon microchips are invisible to patients and can be added to any standard drug during the manufacturing process.

Two major drugs companies are investigating the technology, developed by US-based Proteus Biomedical. Trials are to begin in the UK within 12 months.

Professor Nick Peters, a cardiologist at Imperial College London, who is co-ordinating trials, said the technology was 'transformative'.



New technology: Doctors could soon monitor whether a patient has taken medication by microchips in pills

'This is all about empowering patients and their families because it measures wellness, and people can actually be tracked getting better,' he said.

'Psychologically speaking, that's hugely helpful for patients and enormously

reassuring for carers.

'Normally patients would have to be in hospital to get this level of feedback, so the hope is that it frees up beds and saves the NHS money.'

Culled from dailymail.co.uk

Edge of Space found



Hold on to your hats, or in this case, your helmets: Scientists have finally pinpointed the so-called edge of space — the boundary between Earth's atmosphere and outer space.

With data from a new instrument developed by scientists at the University of Calgary, scientists confirmed that space begins 73 miles (118 kilometers) above Earth's surface.

A lot remains very fuzzy, however, as the boundary is surrounded by a host of misconceptions and confusing, conflicting definitions.

For starters, astronauts can say they've been to space after only passing the 50-mile (80-kilometer) mark.

Meanwhile the boundary recognized by many in the space industry is also a somewhat arbitrary 62 miles (100 kilometers). Scientist Theodore von Kármán long ago calculated that at this

altitude the atmosphere is so thin that it's negligible, and conventional aircraft can no longer function because they can't go fast enough to get any kind of aerodynamic lift. This 62-mile boundary is accepted by the Federation Aeronautique Internationale (FAI), which sets aeronautical standards.

The United States, however, has never officially adopted a set of overflight rights of satellites and other orbiting bodies, according to NASA.

NASA's mission control uses 76 miles (122 kilometers) as their re-entry altitude because that's where the shuttle switches from steering with thrusters to maneuvering with air surfaces, NASA states. Others point out that the "Now Entering Space" sign should be posted way out at 13 million miles (21 million kilometers) because that's the boundary where Earth's gravity is no longer dominant. (While astronauts experience weightlessness in space, this isn't because there's no gravity there, it's due to the balance of forces acting on them as they orbit.)

In the new study, an instrument called the Supra-Thermal Ion Imager detected the boundary by tracking the relatively gentle winds of Earth's atmosphere and the more violent flows of charged particles in space, which can reach speeds well over 600 mph (1,000 kph).

Culled from livescience.com

Drug can help scars heal, new research shows

A drug - called Avotermin - which can help scars heal, has been created for the first time, in a breakthrough described as one of the "holy grails" of scientific research.

Injected into the skin after an injury it encourages the tissue to repair itself more quickly, reducing permanent disfigurement.

Avotermin could be used by surgeons before

they operate on patients, to minimise damage, as well as on those who have suffered an injury.

'Although silicone gels and other treatments have been available to treat scars for a number of years, avotermin would

be the first drug successfully developed for the purpose. It was created using a natural chemical, called transforming-growth factor $\alpha 3$ (TGF $\alpha 3$), the same substance which means that babies do not suffer

scarring while they are in the womb.

Scarring is difficult to treat because of the complex series of processes the body uses to naturally close wounds.

Scars are caused by the body's own immune system,

which overreacts to a cut and uses too much skin to bridge the gap.

They can range from a skinned knee to more serious scarring, such as a leg ulcer.

Culled from telegraph.co.uk

DIGEST

SUDOKU PUZZLE

The Sudoku puzzle consists of a 9x9 square grid made up of smaller 3x3 square grids (regions). The numbers already present within the puzzle are "given"-these are there to start you off. The aim is to complete the puzzle by filling the empty cells. Every digit from 1-9 needs to fit in each row, column and region of 9 squares. Each row, column and region must contain just one instance of each number, 1-9.

EASY

58.

	5			8				9
	1	4					5	
		7	2	4				1
6		9	8	5		7		
	7		3	9	2		6	
		5		1	7	3		8
7				3	8	4		
	2					9	8	
4				2			7	

SOLUTION TO SUDOKU PUZZLE No. 57

5	4	8	7	9	1	2	6	3
1	6	3	2	8	4	5	9	7
7	2	9	6	5	3	1	4	8
4	9	2	5	7	6	8	3	1
6	7	1	8	3	2	9	5	4
8	3	5	4	1	9	6	7	2
2	5	6	1	4	7	3	8	9
9	8	4	3	2	5	7	1	6
3	1	7	9	6	8	4	2	5

SIGN LANGUAGE



Shoplifters of the world unite.
Photo location: Marsaxlokk, Malta by Helen Lawrence
Culled from the telegraph.co.uk

FIND & CIRCLE JUMBO

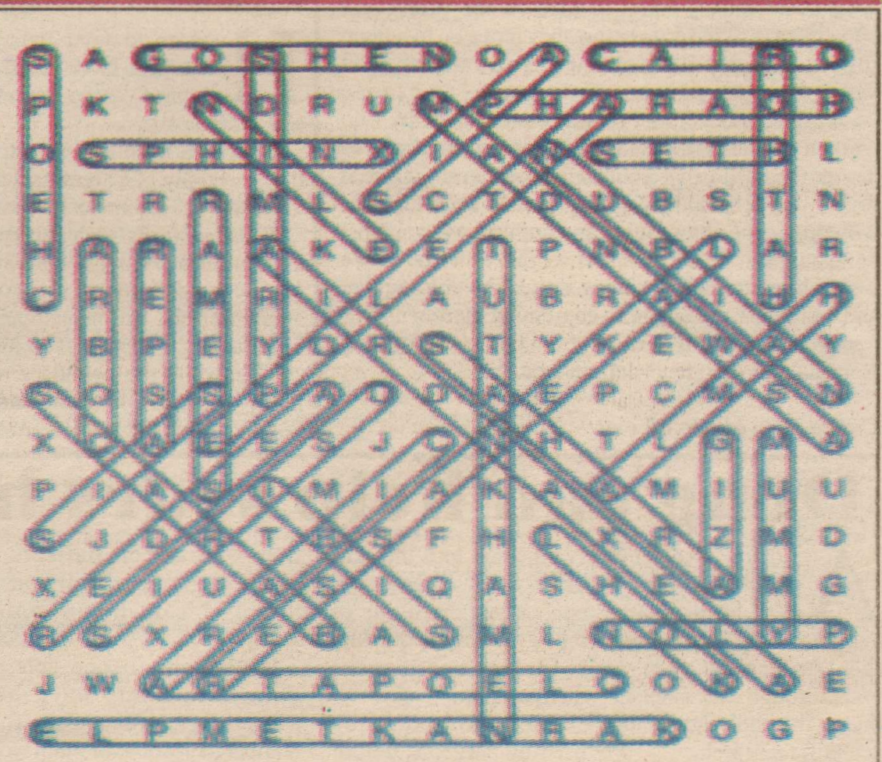
FIND & CIRCLE JUMBO puzzles are solved by finding all the hidden words in the diagram. The words are always in a straight line and may read up, down, forward, backward, or diagonally. Cross a word off your list once you have circled it. Many words will overlap.

47

Fido on vacation

Airplane	EMOHR OTOMOTELYK		
ASPCA	SPOTSSESICREXELB		
tips	PRETAWXNUPSEADS		
Auto	DAEHAKCEHCNWPNL		
Bowls	TOKHEDISDAOROEW		
Camp	ARRCTOURLEIICIO		
Canned	NSAFFPOJPCITTXARB		
food	UMPVRRHRORAACNFM		
Check	PLRCEILELRVONTO		
ahead	WHEAALAUDCRNEEO		
Collar	WOLAATGHAIEFDPR		
Confine	VTIRSEIUSASIFKU		
Consider	HEAPRHTPIEENOHD		
others	HLRECORDSDREOKI		
Crate	EXTRACHARGEFDX		
Exercise	home	Reserva-	park
stops	Pet-	tions	Travel
Extra	friendly	Roadside	guide
charge	Records	Room	Treats
Fresh air	Rega-	Tour	Walk
Health	lations	Trailer	Water
Hotel			
Leash			
Motel			
Motor			

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 46



PROPERTY

HOTLINES:
08064416006, 08035946883

High rent, environment worries Idi-Araba residents

A first time visitor to the area might easily assume that there is a mortuary nearby based on the number of flies that ravage the area on daily basis coupled with the stench oozing out from the drainage. Most of its buildings have been taken over by flood. No thanks to the rubbles from the recent collapsed building that claimed the lives of many. The one-time neatest street has almost been reduced to mortuary.

Welcome to Ojerinde Street, Idi-Araba where residents become apprehensive of the imminent rainy season which could spell doom for them on account of the now blocked drainage in the area. There is also the real fear of a possible cholera and other diseases outbreak in area unless the state government immediately takes precautionary measures.

The notice on demolition has more or less become an avenue for estate agents in the area to reap fortune as a room apartment now costs between N150,000 and N200,000 while two-room apartment and above would go for N400,000 and above. To 80 year-old Pa Muraino Ibrahim and his 72 year-old wife Madam Titilayo Muraino, both tenants of 38 Ojerinde Street, the development has only succeeded in adding salt to their injuries as they could not raise money to rent any of these expensive apartments.

A one-time tailor at Bakare Street in Mushin, Pa Ibrahim said their landlord told them he has sold the house since August last year, but failed to introduce the new landlord to them until it was marked for demolition last month. The visually impaired octogenarian said: "I was a tailor for a period of 50 years before I developed eye problem about five years ago. I used to have customers at Oshodi, Ajegunle, Mushin and I was among those who pioneered the sewing of 'Bante' for women to keep their money. The flood problem in this area started as a result of the drainage system that has been blocked. It became worse when the three-storey building collapsed and the rubbles fell into the gutter. Since then the drainage has been completely blocked. The government should find a solution to this problem".

His wife Madam Titilayo also said the couple has lived in the house for almost fifteen years, "This house used to be a mini-market, but since it has been marked for demolition, a lot of people have parked out. There were 16 families living here, but you are able to meet us here because we don't have money to rent another apartment. Our children have consulted various estate agents and the list they gave us was N150,000 per room," lamented the septuagenarian.

At No 36 and 37 of this Street, residents said their children are in danger if nothing is done to arrest the flood. According to Mrs. Kenny Ige: "Our children can no longer play outside because of flies and the stench. The situation is even worse if we confine ourselves to the rooms; you can see us holding handkerchiefs to cover our noses. The passage is always taken over by flood each time it rains while our children cannot go to school on a rainy day."

NRC commences demolition of illegal structures in Ilorin

From Mustafa Abubakar, Ilorin

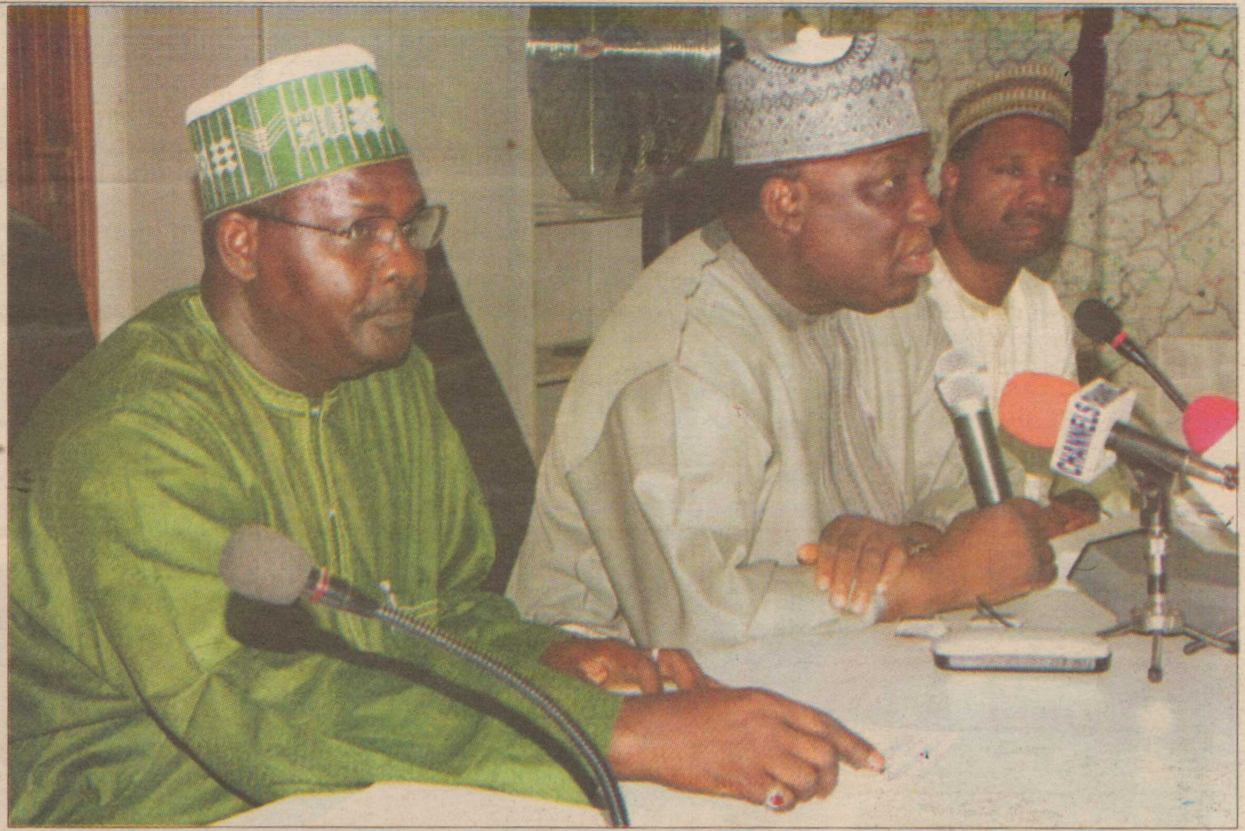
Officials of the Nigeria Railway Corporations (NRC) have in Ilorin, the Kwara State capital, commenced the demolition of illegal structures erected along the rail line at the Post Office area of the town.

The exercise which commenced at the commercial nerve centre of the state capital, sent shop owners along the railway lines into wailing while policemen mounted surveillance around the area to forestall a possible breakdown of law and order. Speaking during the demolition exercise, the corporation's Zonal Manager, Property, Mr. Abdulsalam Olayinka, said that the corporation had issued quit notices to the traders since 2006.

He said that the demolition was in readiness for the rehabilitation and modernization of the nation's railway system from Lagos to Kano.

Speaking with newsmen, one of the affected shop owners, Mr. Daniel Okoli, denied receiving any quit order from either the federal government or the Railway Corporation. He appealed to the federal government to come to their aid by relocating them to a more befitting place.

Railway officials in an interview with journalists claimed that there is an existing law which stipulates that the traders should leave 50 meters on both sides of the railway line throughout the country. They disclosed that the demolition is to pave way for the dualisation of railway lines that will pass through Lagos- Osogbo- Ilorin-Kaduna-Kano.



L-R: Engr. Sani K. Haliru, Director Highways Construction and Rehabilitation, Dr. Hassan Muhammad Lawal, Minister of Works, Housing and Urban Development and Dr. Tukur Bello Ingawa, Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Works, Housing and Urban Development at a meeting with correspondents in Abuja last week.

Women want access, jurisdiction over land

By Nasir Imam

Women in Nigeria have called for a system that must allow women access to and jurisdiction over land and natural resources and guarantee their representation in decision-making.

A statement from Priscilla M. Achakpa, of the Women Environmental Programme (WEP), and Mrs. Gloria C. Ujor of the Federal Ministry of Environment (FME) Nigeria, said this was part of a communiqué issued at the end of the pre-CSD 17th stakeholders forum on the thematic areas of agriculture, land, rural development, drought and desertification in Africa held in Abuja last week.

The statement said

women also want agrarian reform that secures tenure for small-scale farmers, tillers and indigenous peoples, especially women should integrate the worldview on territory of peasants, the landless, indigenous peoples, fisher folk nomadic pastoralists, minorities, displaced peoples, etc.

Agrarian reform, the communiqué added, must be complemented by adequate support services and recognition of the socio-environmental functions of land, sea and natural resources in the context of food sovereignty and must also guarantee access to land and ownership of natural resources by both men and women, securing local

control of vital livelihood factors.

They also want transparent and inclusive processes in the development of land policies that are people-centered, recognize diverse tenurial systems, and involve innovative and accessible systems of recognition of land rights of both men and women.

The statement said sustainable land management and agro ecological strategies should be centered on peasant and family agricultural and artisan fishing, and there should be recognition of the fundamental role of women in agriculture, and natural resource use and management.

Government, according

to the communiqué, should implement short and long term use strategies and spatial planning strategies and also reduce coastal erosion and land losses caused by sea level rise.

The forum brought together over 40 representation from the Nigerian Major Groups, civil society groups, scientists, government ministries and agencies both from state and national levels, UN-HABITAT, academics, media practitioners, representatives of community based groups, to come out with key recommendations and messages for negotiation at CSD 17 billed to be held in the month of May at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

Obi raises alarm over federal roads in Anambra

From Beatrice Onuchukwu, Awka

Governor Peter Obi has once again raised alarm over the dilapidated conditions of federal roads in Anambra State.

Governor Obi who was speaking while playing host to the Senior Executive course 31 of the 2009 Study Groups II and V of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS) Kuru, who paid him a courtesy call at the Government House, Awka.

He maintained that between 1999 till date, the federal government has not executed a single road project in the State but expressed optimism that his constructive engagement

with the federal government has begun to yield positive dividends.

Governor Obi recalled that the state had no clear plan when he assumed office, adding that the state government has adopted a functional vision to achieve the principles of Millennium Development Goals MDGs on or before 2015.

He said that nobody can talk about Nigeria without mentioning Late Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe who liberated the country from political bondage.

Governor Obi promised the visiting team of the total co-operation of the state to

enable them document the state very well in the course of their study in the state.

Speaking earlier, the leader of the team, Professor Aminu Doaye said that they were in the state in line with the mandate given to them by President Umaru Yar'Adua to produce and present publicly a policy document on good governance that can fast track the achievement of Vision 2020 and seven point agenda of the economic empowerment programme of the Federal Government.

He advocated collaborative efforts in the quest to achieve the seven point agenda of the federal government and commended

the pace of development springing up in various parts of the state simultaneously.

He stressed that they are looking for the best practices of good government to document and publicize their development plans for other states to copy.

Colonel Augustine Odidi of Study Group V, had in a brief speech, thanked the state government for the warm reception accorded them since they arrived the state and commended Governor Obi's laudable efforts to develop the state especially in the areas of uplifting the tenets of good governance and rule of law in the society.

ENVIRONMENT

Windstorm destroys houses, shops in Abaji

Properties worth thousands of naira belonging to some residential houses and shops owners were Sunday evening destroyed by a heavy wind storm in Abaji town.

The heavy downpour, accompanied by strong wind, which lasted for over four hours, pulled down roof tops of some mud houses at Naharati, Abattoir and Kpokpolobi communities as well some houses within the metropolis of the council.

Our reporter, who visited

By Abubakar Sadiq Isah

some of the affected areas yesterday morning, saw some of the victims salvaging their luggage's to neighboring houses, while shops owners selling electronics, beer palours, barbing saloon and provision stores opposite the Abaji round-about, along the Lokoja road, were also seen wading through the heavy flood to remove their wares for safety.

A victim, Malam Shuaibu Yakubu, who was

affected by the heavy storm said he had just completed roofing his house the previous day, while preparing to pack inn with his family when a large pellets ice crystal descended from the skies and destroyed his house.

"The carpenters just finished roofing the house yesterday, hoping to pack in with my family members today when a heavy wind descended on it and removed the whole zinc of my house" he said.

He disclosed that he and

his family have been living in a self-contained house which he rented for over six years when his money expired last month, and appealed to the authorities of the council to come to their aid by providing them with relief materials.

All the drainage system from the senior staff quarters junction to Izala Mosque and the Abaji main round-about opposite Asio filling station, were overtaken by the flood, restricting motorists coming from the south to slow down.

Some of the commercial motorcycle operators ran for safety, as some pedestrians tried to manoeuvre through the flood while others solicited for help from private motorcycle owners.

While sympathizing with the victims, the Chairman of the council, Alhaji Yahaya Musa Mohammed, who

described the disaster as shocking, promised that the council will assess the extent of damages caused by the storm in order to assist the affected people within the limited resources of the council.

Meanwhile, no human lives were lost or injury sustained in the disaster.

Experts to meet on mining sector growth

Experts on mining from ECOWAS Member States will meet in Abuja from today ahead of a Ministers of Mines Conference at the close of the week to consider the "Draft ECOWAS Directive on the Harmonization of Guiding Principles and Policies in the mining Sector."

The draft document is the first of three documents whose adoption would lead to the harmonization of the regimes in Member States and therefore the desired mining legal environment in West Africa.

The other documents are the draft regional mining Policy and the draft Mining Code.

Areas of the draft directives the experts are

expected to consider are the harnessing of mineral resources for growth and development in the region, equitable mining regime, improving governance in the mining sector as well as the institution of some mechanisms to ensure intergenerational equity.

Others include enhancing the value chain and linkages between the mineral resources sector and other sectors of the economy, participatory ownership of the minerals sector by all stakeholders, enhancing institutional and human capacities for the development of the minerals sector and the institution of a mechanism for monitoring and evaluation of the impact of mining activities on the citizens of West Africa.

Trinidad envoy school sanitation projects

The High Commissioner to the Trinidad and Tobago, Mrs Victoria Mendez Charles, in conjunction with the Development Research and Project Centre (DRPC) is funding school's sanitation programme under the early childhood care development project ECCD in some selected schools in Kano.

The six selected schools under the first phase of the collaborative effort are Bright international, Staff Nursery and Primary School, Dawakin Kudu, Usman Memorial, Tudun Maliki, Hamza Best and Hills School, Darmanawa.

The group's coordinator of the DRPC, Dr Yahaya Hashim, disclosed this during the handing over ceremony of the school's sanitation funding to the six benefiting schools in Kano.

He said the support became necessary in view of

From Hassan A Karofi, Kano

the significance of early education as a critical stage in the development of children. Dr Hashim further explained that the project is aimed not only at early child education but the inculcation of more responsive attitudes to the children so that they could become more responsible when they reach adulthood.

He said the decision of the Trinidad and Tobago High Commissioner to donate to some Kano schools stem from her early visit to Kano when she donated N25,000.00 for some programmes in some communities.

'The success of the utilization of that fund culminated into the present funding to these six schools to boost their environment and educate children on safety and health issues' he said.



Firefighters battle flames engulfing a hostel in Poland, where 22 people died.

Rain disaster drives border community into Cameroon

Following a mysterious rainfall that wreaked havoc on Mbamnga, a border community on the Mambilla Plateau in Taraba state, over four hundred victims who were rendered homeless by the disaster are now migrating to neighbouring Cameroon in search of succour.

Village head of Mbamnga, Jauro Usmanu Abubakar, who disclosed this to our reporter who visited the community at the weekend, called on both Sardauna local government council and the state government to urgently come to the assistance of the victims in order to stop them from migrating into

From Fidelis Mac-Leva, Jalingo

Cameroon.

According to Abubakar, the heavy downpour which occurred on April 1, 2009, was preceded by large pellets of ice crystals which descended from the skies and caused damage to homes and public buildings.

Having lost their homes and valuables to the disaster, the victims are relocating to Cameroon in search of farmlands to cultivate and continue with their lives, Jauro Abubakar said.

Although no human lives were lost, the destruction caused by the

rain disaster at Mbamnga was said to have affected over four hundred and twenty four houses thereby rendering their occupants homeless.

Daily Trust, however, gathered that dozens of domestic animals such as goats and sheep, including chickens, died as a result of the rain disaster.

Other public buildings that were affected by the downpour which lasted for several hours include the Mbamnga Police station, the Central Mosque, Redeemed Peoples Mission, RPM Church, as well as primary and secondary schools in the area.

Chairman of Sardauna local government council,

Ismaila Yahaya Bappa, who described the disaster as shocking, said the local government had never experienced that kind of rainfall in the past.

Bappa who said the situation was beyond the local government council to handle, appealed for urgent assistance from the Taraba state government in order to prevent further migration into Cameroon.

The member representing Mbamnga constituency in the State House of Assembly, Abel Diah, promised to take up the matter with the state government with a view to providing relief and assistance to the victims.

UK police round up 100 eco-protest suspects

More than 100 protesters in the United Kingdom have been arrested yesterday over an alleged plot to attack a major power industry facility.

The arrests were made in the Sneinton area of Nottingham in the early hours of this morning.

It is believed the protesters were targeting the Eastcroft incinerator, off

Meadow Lane in Nottingham. A spokesman for Nottinghamshire Police said: 'Officers from Nottinghamshire Police have this morning arrested over 80 people at a location in the

Sneinton area of Nottingham on suspicion of conspiracy to commit aggravated trespass and criminal damage at a power industry facility.'

Police refused to

comment on the circumstances surrounding the arrests and said they would not be releasing any details until tomorrow.

Jon Beresford, chairman of Nottingham Against

Incineration and Landfill (NAIL), said people had become increasingly angry after the Government gave the go-ahead to a planned expansion of the plant.

-Daily Mail

PROPERTY

Lagos to sign twin-city agreement with Cairo

Lagos, the commercial capital of Nigeria, is expected to sign a twin-city agreement with the city of Cairo, the Egyptian capital in a relationship which is expected to enable the two cities explore and exploit their similarities and potentials for the benefit of their citizens. A statement from the office of the Senior Special Adviser to the Lagos State Governor on Media, Hakeem Bello, said the agreement, which details are already being worked out, is also expected to ignite healthy competitions in the area of development between the two cities, a situation which, in turn, is expected to entrench the essence of good governance

and deliver service to the citizens of both cities.

Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babatunde Fashola, who gave vent to the agreement in Cairo, Egypt while on a working visit to the Governor of Cairo, Dr. Abdel Azim Mussa Wazir at the weekend, said Lagos would gladly embrace the agreement as a platform for delivering quality service to the people.

Governor Fashola, who was in Egypt on the invitation of the Joint Venture Partners of El-Sewedy Group, known world-wide for the production of transformers, metres and cables and who are currently building a factory in Badagry Lagos,

however, said the two cities have so much in common such as population which, according to him, is not very different from each other and the historic roles they both played in the modern civilization of Africa.

"I must say that our two cities, Cairo and Lagos, are very historic cities, historic for commerce and for the great roles they have played in modern civilization of Africa. Lagos is historic for her role as a trading port for the Portuguese from around the 17th Century and Cairo for the role she has played in modern civilization Architecture", the Governor said.

The Governor suggested that the

agreement be sign in Lagos as soon as the details are worked out saying it would provide him a welcome opportunity to host the Governor of Cairo in Lagos.

Thanking the Governor of Cairo and other organizations in that country which had earlier hosted him and his entourage, Governor Fashola reiterated, "Healthy competitions among cities would entrench the essence of leadership and entrench good governance and deliver service to the people on whose behalf we all exercise authority."

Earlier, while welcoming Governor Fashola to his office, Governor Mussa Wazir expressed his joy in meeting with his Lagos counterpart and his delegation and hoped that the Twin-city Agreement would further strengthen the existing relationship between Nigeria and Egypt.

Kebbi promises to re-build Tungar-Kungi

The Kebbi state government has promised to re-build the Tungar-Kungi village in Bagudo local government area reportedly destroyed by people from Madakali town in Benin Republic.

The state Deputy Governor, Alhaji Aliyu Ibrahim, who made the promise on Friday when he visited the village in company of some top government officials, described the act as "disheartening."

He said a detailed report on the incident would be prepared by the state government and forwarded to the Federal Government, for necessary action.

Ibrahim, who visited the Lolo temporary settlement site for the displaced villagers, said the hospitals and schools destroyed would be rebuilt, while those who lost food stuffs, money and livestock would be compensated.

He, however, said that

the "refusal of the people to retaliate showed their concern for peaceful co-existence."

The District Head of Kosati, Alhaji Muhammadu Illo, claimed that people from Madakali village in Benin Republic, about two kilometres away, allegedly attacked Tungar-Kungi village.

The Chairman of Bagudo Local Government Council, Alhaji Muhammad Samaila, praised individuals, the state emergency relief agency and groups for their assistance in taking care of victims of the attack.

"The Council has provided N300,000, 50 bags of grains, some textile materials, mats and kitchen utensils, in addition to donations from individuals and groups," he said.

Samaila said the state emergency relief agency donated 100 bags of grains, 150 mattresses, 100 bundles of textile materials and kitchen utensils.

Infrastructure, market devt promotes choices for farmers -NGO

Sustainable land management and transparent process in the development of land policies have been identified as key strategies in promoting agricultural development in the country.

This observation was made by Women Environmental Programme (WEP), an NGO, during a stakeholders forum held on the thematic area of Agriculture and land development held in Abuja.

The group observed that the agrarian reform that secures tenure for small-scale farmers should be encouraged, adding that

By Mustapha Suleiman

agrarian reform should be complemented by adequate support services.

The NGO further recommended that sustainable land management and agro ecological strategies centered on peasant and family agriculture and artisan fishing should be sustained. At the end of the stakeholder's forum, participants resolved to stand by the recommendations so as to have a common view at the CSD in New York.



A newly completed detached house in Setraco quarters, Gwarimpa, Abuja.

City floating on the sea could be just 3 years away

A floating city off the coast of San Francisco may sound like science fiction, but it could be reality in the not-too-distant future.

One project engineer described the prototype as similar to a cruise ship, but

from a distance the cities might look like oil-drilling platforms.

According to the plan, the floating cities would not only look different from their land-based counterparts, but they might operate differently, too.

Patri Friedman, a former Google engineer who now works for the Seasteading Institute, said floating cities are the perfect places to experiment with new forms of government.

Some of the new political ideas the group is tossing around include legalizing marijuana and making intellectual property communal — so that everyone would take ownership in art produced on the city at sea.

"The idea isn't just about getting away from rules or getting rid of rules. It's about a system that encourages experimentation with different political systems," he said.

Friedman said the

floating city may be built in modular pieces so that city blocks and neighborhoods can be recombined to create new urban layouts.

The idea of building cities on the sea is not new, he said, but the Seasteading Institute has come closer to realizing the goal than others.

"A lot of people over the past hundred plus years have had this idea and even specifically building cities on the ocean to try out new forms of government," he said. "But they've pretty much been totally imagined and if they did try, they totally failed."

There are several unknowns about future attempts to create floating

cities, said Christian Cermelli, an engineer and architect with Marine Innovation and Technology, based in San Francisco.

Cermelli, who is part of a team of designers creating a blueprint for the first seastead, said it's unclear if construction is possible — or what it would cost.

Still, a prototype for the idea may be finished in as little as three years, he said.

Friedman said seasteads are loosely based on oil rigs, but with important modifications.

"We care more about sunlight and open space, so the specifications are different," he said. "Also, oil platforms are fixed in place. We think it's important to

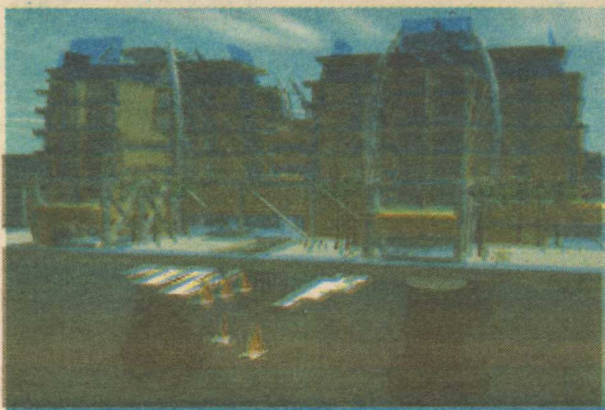
have more modular cities. So you would build a city out of buildings that can actually be separated and rearranged."

Cermelli said the ocean cities may use technology from suspension bridges "to expand the space at sea and basically get a roomier platform."

Friedman says the idea of seasteading has met a range of reactions.

"Some people think we're crazy. A lot of people think we're crazy," he said. "Some people think terrible things could happen, others think it would be great."

About 600 people have joined the Seasteading Institute.



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City news

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Passengers report drunk driver to FRSC

By Abubakar Sadiq Isah

Passengers inside a bus belonging to Ismism Transport Company Thursday reported their bus driver who was drunk to FRSC officials stationed at Abaji, in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

The bus driver, Friday Magaji was immediately apprehended and arraigned before a mobile court sitting at Giri junction for drunk driving.

Narrating the incident, Abaji Unit Commander of the FRSC, Mr. Joseph Ojerinde, said at about 1.45 pm on that day, one of the passengers on board the bus rushed to report at the FRSC unit command that the bus driver conveying them from Benin to Abuja drove recklessly.

He said after the report, FRSC officials were mobilized to the area where the vehicle was parked and the driver asked to come out for observation.

According to him, the blood-shot eyes of the driver and his unkempt state made the FRSC officials subject him to an alcohol detection test, where the test showed positive.

The commander also said that the driver confessed to drinking alcohol while on steering, adding that his bus was immediately impounded, while he was booked for dangerous driving and drinking under the influence of alcohol.

"The bus driver was arraigned before a mobile court sitting at Giri-Airport road, where he was convicted and sentenced to two weeks imprisonment," he stated.

The unit commander further stated that a letter has been written to the driver's employer in order to intimate them about the incident, adding that the bus driver will come for a mandatory one week public enlightenment lecture at the unit command, after which a certificate will be issued to him.



The scene of the accident at Kwali Thursday.

Pic: Abubakar Sadiq Isah.

One dies, 5 injured in auto crash

A car conveying six persons to the south to celebrate the Easter holiday, Friday crashed and killed one person, while the five other occupants sustained various degrees of injuries at Abaji town, along the Abuja-Lokoja highway.

An eyewitness said the accident, which happened near Total filling station in

By Abubakar Sadiq Isah

the town, involved a Toyota Corona car with registration number HW 585DGW.

"The driver of the car was speeding while approaching Abaji town and on the pro-

cess of overtaking a luxury bus, he lost control, crashing into a wide drainage, killing one person on the spot," he added.

He said officials of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) rushed to the

scene and evacuated the victims to the hospital.

Abaji Unit Commander of FRSC, Mr. Joseph Ojerinde, blamed the accident cause on the car driver, whom he alleged drove dangerously on top speed.

He said the corpse was taken to the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital's Morgue, while the injured are at Abaji General Hospital.

When our reporter visited the hospital yesterday, three of the injured victims were receiving treatments and the rest two discharged.

In a related development, four persons were injured in another accident that occurred last Thursday afternoon at GSS Yangoji village, along Abuja-Lokoja road.

According to an eyewitness, the driver of a Toyota Carina car with registration number BD 229 BWR overtook at a sharp bend and collided with a Toyota Hiace bus belonging to Ifesinachi Transport that was coming from the opposite direction.

Kwali Unit Commander of FRSC, Mr. Tukur D. Sifawa, while confirming the accident, blamed cause on the car driver for wrongful overtaking.

He said the four victims were rushed to Kwali General Hospital.

Health practitioner urges proper supervision of health centers

The Chairman of the FCT National Association of Community Health Practitioners, Mr. Elijah Alkali Zakwoyi has called for regular supervision and monitoring of primary health centers in the Federal Capital Territory in order to ensure optimal performance at the grassroots.

Mr. Zakwoyi made the call recently at the association's conference at Gwagwalada.

He also called for the creation of a department of 'Pri-

By Hussein Yahaya & Mustapha Suleiman

mary Health Care' at the Area Council Service Commission to further enhance effective health care delivery at the grassroots.

Zakwoyi expressed his concern on the level of primary health care in the FCT and called for measure to address the situation.

"Most of the facilities in

the health centers are dilapidated, while the structures are nothing to write home about," he lamented.

He emphasized the need for more political will by the area council authorities towards improving health care deliveries at the grassroots, through the provision of basic facilities; rehabilitating dilapidated structures as well as employing qualified health officials.

Zakwoyi listed some of the problems affecting the centers as stagnation in promotions, wrong placements, delays in licensing and members refusal to go on rural posting.

He urged members of the association to rise to these challenges, by availing themselves of information and communication technology education in order to enhance their performance.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ON CAPITAL MARKET AND INSTITUTIONS



The House of Representatives Committee on Capital Market and Institutions acknowledged the reference made to it by African Petroleum (AP) Plc on the alleged manipulation of its share price by NOVA Finance and Security Limited and Alhaji Aliko Dangote.

Based on that, the Committee wishes to remind not only AP Plc but investors and the general public that it has for long been investigating so many issues surrounding AP Plc.

For the record, the committee had at various times investigated and intervened on:

AP Plc ACQUISITION BY ZENON OIL LIMITED: The way and manner the AP Plc was acquired by ZENON Oil was vehemently opposed by the Committee due to the fact that due process was not followed in the transaction.

NON-LIFTING OF TECHNICAL SUSPENSION ON AP Plc SHARES: The AP Plc shares were placed on technical suspension for over nine months, well beyond the stipulated period, without any word from the regulators. It is on record that the suspension was only lifted after the Committee wrote to Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) and Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) in a letter dated November 17, 2008 asking why the suspension was not lifted.

THE PHENOMINAL RISE OF AP Plc SHARE VALUE: The Committee specifically mentioned this issue to the Board of SEC when it paid a familiarisation visit to the Committee. The Chairman and the Committee members specifically wanted to know the rationale behind the jump in AP Plc share price from N46.27k to N293, which was 627%

increase compared to NSE index increase of only 198.7% during the corresponding period.

ZENON OIL MERGER WITH AP Plc: Because of the controversy that surrounded the proposed merger between ZENON Oil and AP Plc, the Committee insisted that ZENON OIL must make its books open to the public for transparency. Based on that insistence by the Committee, ZENON Oil said it has dropped the merger proposal.

AP Plc 2008 HYBRID OFFER: The Committee, because of a number of alleged abnormalities noticed in the AP Plc 2008 Hybrid Offer, organized a public hearing where it invited the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of AP Plc, Mr. Femi Otedola, SEC, NSE and all the underwritten financial institutions to the offer. Every other person and organization honoured the invitation and appeared before the committee except Mr. Otedola.

Based on the request made to it by AP Plc to investigate the alleged manipulation of its share price, the Committee has fixed APRIL 22, 2009 to commence investigation into the allegation.

Those invited to appear before the Committee are: The Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of AP Plc, Chief Femi Otedola, Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE), Chief Executive Officers of all underwriters to the 2008 AP Plc Hybrid Offer, Managing Director of NOVA Finance and Securities Limited and Alhaji Aliko Dangote.

SIGNED:
HON. AHAMED ALIYU WADADA
CHAIRMAN

City news

Nyanya women wail over death of Kumuyi's wife

Women that live at Area C Nyanya, Abuja, yesterday morning wept loudly when the news of Pastor William Folorunsho Kumuyi

By Abubakar Yakubu

's wife was announced by a radio station. Some of them fell on the ground rolling, while others

wondered why such calamity should befall the family of the General Overseer of Deeper Life Church.

"Pastor Kumuyi affected our lives greatly when he came to Nyanya to preach and we are in sympathy with

him," one of the women said.

Another lady wondered loudly whether the pastor's wife accompanied him on his recent trip to Abuja.

"We were surprised at our General Overseer's Easter re-

treat message as it was made to give strenght to people that have lost loved ones," she said.

She said Pastor Kumuyi cautioned Christians not to grieve over situations they cannot control, especially af-

ter losing a loved one, adding that such person should emulate the life of Christ.

It would be recalled that Mrs Biodun Kumuyi died in the early hours of Saturday morning at her resident in Lagos after a brief illness.

Display of pornographic films worries women

Female residents of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) have called on the police to raid traders that sell pomographic films in DVD and VCD forms along the walkways and parking lot of Wuse Market.

They said the display of such films in public is capable of corrupting the minds of children as well as pushing them into sin.

Mrs. Rahmat, a resident said if nothing is done to stop the public display, a time would come when such corrupt films would find their ways into the hands of children.

"One day I was walking along the road with my three-year-old son and he saw the film, asking why they were naked people," the woman said.

Another female resident blamed the police and AEPB

By Ibraheem A. Fatai & Hussein Yahaya

officials for not impounding such films.

"The images there are obscene and the police does not need anyone to tell them what to do in this case," the lady said.

Hajia Mariam, a resident, blamed the society for no refusing to patronize traders that sell pomographic films.

"If those patronizing them stop, the producer and sellers of such films will be forced out of the illicit business but as far as they continue to buy their products, they will grow in numbers," she said.

She called on security agencies to do something about the development before irreparable damages are done to the mind of the youths and the society at large.



Children having fun yesterday at Wonder Land, Abuja.

Pic: Felix Onigbinde.

Abuja residents want more parks

Residents of Abuja over the weekend called on the FCT Administration to create more parks and relaxation centers in the city centre.

They said the few parks in the city were crowded during the Easter period, which made some of them stay in their various apartments.

Mr. Frank, a civil servant, lamented that he had no where to go and had a boring Easter holiday.

"I often take my family out to the parks to have fun during holiday periods but since the closure of some parks recently, we all remained indoors," he said.

He called on the FCT Administration to create more parks in every residential area in order to stop the over crowding nature of the few ones in the city.

By Ibraheem A. Fatai & Hussein Yahaya

Another resident, Miss Chinyere, said the FCT Administration would have sanctioned erring parks operators instead of demolishing their places.

According to her, those demolished parks had their advantages as they were places for relaxations especially after a busy day.

Speaking further, she said in modern cities of the world, such parks exists and not having such places makes life in the city dull because people stay indoors.

Our reporters who went around Utako and Wuse 2 noticed some locked up parks.

In another development,

street hawkers and traders at Wuse Zone 6 yesterday had a field day in selling their wares.

Walkways leading to Wuse Zone 6 bus stops were used to display commodities and some of the traders expressed gratitude to God for keeping officials of the Abuja Environmental Protection Board (AEPB) away, so that they can sell their goods.

Okechukwu, a second-hand cloths seller said they decided to sell on the walkway because they cant afford to rent shops because of their high cost.

Majority of those spoken to admitted that they made brisk business, adding that AEPB officials should always allow them display their goods on the streets during public holidays.

Cleric preaches tolerance

Reverend Father Gabriel Shauibu of Saint Theresa Catholic Church, Bwari has called on Christians to always learn from the activities associated with the crucification of Jesus Christ.

He stated this on Sunday, during a church service to mark this year's Easter celebration. The Priest reminded them that Jesus died

By Hussein Yahaya & Ibraheem A. Fatai

for their sins and he advised that they be tolerant with themselves as well as their neighbours.

"Jesus Christ was born, lived and died for the sins of his followers and anybody who believes in Him will enjoy eternal life," the Priest said.

He urged Christians to

use the period for sober reflections and stressed the need for them to always sacrifice their time and resources for the service of doing God's work.

The Priest also used the occasion to pray for the unity and progress of the country and urged Nigerians to continue to pray for those in position of authorities for the over all benefit of the nation.

FACTORY FOR SALE

AREWA TEXTILES PLC
PLOT G. INDUSTRIAL ESTATE,
KAKURI, KADUNA SOUTH

This is to advice the General Public that the factory is under Receivership and is for sale.

The Factory occupies a land size of 8649.19 acres and it is on a very level ground within a large industrial Estate in a fully developed area in Kaduna.

It comprises the following:

1. Civil works - Land and Factory Buildings
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3. General Services Plants - Generators, Transformers and Gas storage plants
4. Chattel - Air-condition and Computers
5. Trucks and Vehicles
6. Carpentry workshop and /Engineering Equipments - Boilers and Steam House.

It is available for inspection by interested buyers during working hours.

Interested buyers should contact either or both Joint Receivers stated below.

Offers should include self-addressed envelopes to reach either or both Joint Receivers within three weeks from the date of this publication.

FOR SALE
RESIDENTIAL/COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES AT KADUNA

The following properties under receivership are for sale.

S/N	PROPERTY ADDRESS	PROPERTY TYPE	LAND AREA
1	Millennium suites No. 1 Sheri close off Gwari Avenue, Barnawa, Kaduna	The Property Comprises of a Conference Hall, Restaurant, 2No. Blocks of Suites, 5No. Blocks of 2No. Semi-Detached 2 Bedroom each	29,690m ²
2	No. 3 Kachia Road, Kaduna	Storey Building Comprising of 2No. 3 Bedroom Flats and 11No. 2 Bedroom Flats + BQ + Club House	10,433.24m ²
3	Arewa Quarters Narayi High Cost, Kaduna	32no. 2 Bedroom Flats	17,330.85m ²
4	No. 24 Kujama Close, Kaduna	2 Block of 8No. 2 Bedroom Flats with 8 Rooms BQ	4,579.20m ²
5	No. 1A Kurena Road, off Gwari Road, Kaduna	2 Bedroom Duplex	5,907.72m ²
6	No. 9 Challawa Crescent, Kaduna	A Block of 2No. 2 Bedroom Semi Detached Duplex	3,174.40m ²
7	No. 16 Challawa Crescent, Kaduna	A Block of 2No. 3 Semi Detached Duplex	5,018.40m ²
8	No. 3 Kubani Crescent, Barnawa, Kaduna	A Block of 2No. 3 Semi Detached Duplex	3,132.34m ²
9	No. 5 Kubani Crescent, Barnawa, Kaduna	A Block of 2No. 3 Semi Detached Duplex	4,381.72m ²
10	No. 40 Kubani Crescent, Barnawa, Kaduna	A Block of No. 3 Semi Detached Duplex	2,811.60m ²
11	No. 41 Kubani Crescent, Barnawa, Kaduna	A Block of 2No. 3 Semi Detached Duplex	2,697.48m ²
12	No. 42 Kubani Crescent, Barnawa, Kaduna	A Block of 2No. 3 Semi Detached Duplex	3,072.88m ²
13	No. 44 Kubani Crescent, Barnawa, Kaduna	A Block of 2No. 3 Semi Detached Duplex	3,901.21m ²

Interested buyers should inspect them and submit their bids within two weeks from the date of this publication to both or either of the Joint Receivers stated hereunder.

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ADVERTORIAL

INTRODUCTION

The integrity of Mallam Isa Yuguda will remain intact and due to the denial of the receipt of the Resignation letter of Gov. Yuguda by both the national and state leadership of ANPP. This clearly shows the way the leadership of the party always double speak when it comes to truth and honesty. Their denial compelled the S.S.A Media to Gov. Isa Yuguda, Ahmed Yarima to bring the truth of all that happened to the general public, to enable them know and understand the truth.

The letter was written on Wednesday 8th April 2009, and it was taken to the National Secretariat of the ANPP, received and stamped by the party official on Thursday 9th April, 2009. Below is the true copy of the content of the letter and a slight ANPP logo that was stamped as a true evidence that ANPP received the letter of resignation.

MALLAM (DR.) ISA YUGUDA, FNIM (MATAWALLEN BAUCHI)

Isa Yuguda Crescent,
Nasarawa Jahun, Bauchi,
Bauchi State.

Wednesday, 8th April, 2009.

The National Chairman,
ANPP National Secretariat,
Plot 759 Bassan Plaza,
Behind NICON Insurance Plaza,
Central Area,
Abuja.

Mr. Chairman Sir,

NOTIFICATION OF MY RESIGNATION FROM ANPP:

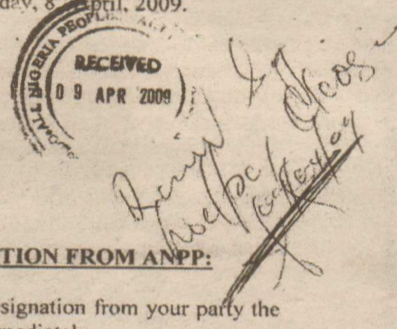
I wish to humbly tender notice of my resignation from your party the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) effective immediately.

2. You would recall that I and my teaming supporters on Wednesday 13th December, 2006 decamped from the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) following the hostile actions of the then Governor of Bauchi State Alh. Ahmadu Adamu Mu'azu against us especially by disenfranchising us at the party's primary election. Because of the warm and cordial relationship that existed between myself the then President, and the majority of the members of the leadership of the PDP, I sought their consent to leave the party for another party where I and my teaming supporters who wanted to contest election would be given a level playing field. They had given me their fatherly advice and wished me well in the pursuit of my ambition along with my supporters who wanted to contest election during the 2007 elections. We were unanimous in our decision to join ANPP as several other parties made attempts to woo us in joining their parties. Some of the parties were formed by people who resigned from the ANPP and had expressed and entertained a lot of fears if I joined the ANPP and had advised against it. Some of the

reasons among several others they advanced included but not limited to the following: - Injustice, inequity and that the party was under the control of two individuals whose influence and interest in the party was enormous to the extent that any individual or groups who normally held contrary views with theirs would not get the required justice and fair play and would be considered an outcast. I took that advice with a pinch of salt but to my surprise and shock, the said allegations that were made against the party eventually came to be true and factual. My decision to resign my membership is based on many reasons some of which are as follows:-

- On joining the National Unity Government (NUG), Mr. President had allocated Ministerial seats and that of Special Advisers, Special Assistants and Ambassadors to the party. To our disappointment and surprise, the leadership of the party displayed selfishness and injustice as members of the executive in Abuja and that of Board of Trustees shared the position among themselves and their close relations instead of giving it out to those party faithfuls who had worked for the party particularly those whose appointment would earn the party respect.
- The denial of Bauchi State of the Ministerial and Ambassadorial appointment that were given to the party on joining the National Unity Government. The first instance, after Bauchi State had accepted and conceded the ministerial nomination to Ambassador Babajida from Borno State and not Borno State and after his rejection, the seat was given to the North Central Zone instead of being returned to Bauchi as originally agreed. The seat was according to the National Secretary of the party Sen. Dr. Saidu Umar Kumo given to North Central having being pressurized by the party's Board of Trustee Chairman Alh. Gambo Magaji and Sen. Sani Ahmed Yerima that the seat be given to Nakande who was his presidential campaign coordinator in Plateau State. The Ambassadorial slot too was also denied Bauchi State which made me as the leader of the party in Bauchi State appear incompetent in defending the interest of our people. We took a decision not to protest but forwarded our complaint to the National Headquarters of the party believing that the leadership of the party would write a letter of apology for the injustice meted on our dear State.

- When eventually the President reshuffled his cabinet the two Ministers given to the ANPP as part of the agreement under the National Unity Government were dropped. The Governor of Borno State nominated his younger brother to replace Nakande from Plateau State while Alh. Sani Ahmed Yerima nominated his wife to replace the candidate in flagrant disregard to the earlier resolution that gave Bauchi State the ministerial slot. The leadership of the party endorsed the candidate from Borno State without consultation with the people of Bauchi and my humble self. Following this development, I paid a visit to the Chairman and Secretary of the party and explained to them the stand of the people of Bauchi State and they assured me that justice would be done following which I recommended a candidate that was eminently qualified, but was however overlooked by yourself and the Secretary.
- On the request of Mr. President that three nominees be presented instead of one among which one would be selected. I made the position of Bauchi chapter of the party clear to the effect that the three (3) candidates to be selected should be from Bauchi State not from within the north east zone. That was equally overlooked and swept under the carpet by your good self and the Secretary and further directed that we returned to the north east zone to decide which among the states should take the slot despite my appeal.
- Being an obedient party member, I respected that decision, despite the apparent injustice. The National Vice Chairman North East in person of Abdulrahman called for a meeting in Damaturu where three ANPP Governors, Party Chairmen and Executive Members were in attendance. We were to deliberate on one item agenda - (Ministerial Appointment) but to my dismay the Vice Chairman, North East Zone held a meeting the previous day with five (5) Chairmen in the Zone except that of Bauchi and came with a communiqué which he insisted must be part of the agenda for the meeting despite our protest. Two resolutions in the communiqué were insulting and disrespectful to the leadership of the party in Bauchi and the people of Bauchi State. The first resolution was condemnation of the former Bauchi State Chairman - Sanin Malam for writing a petition whose content were not acceptable to his colleagues and the leadership of the party which was earlier brought to my attention by the party and for which I tendered unreserved apology. The second resolution was to allocate the seat of Ministerial nominee to Borno State which was yet another insult and betrayal to the respected people of Bauchi State who pride themselves as having come from the state where politics started. I personally drew the attention of the leadership and staged a walkout with my delegates. This was reported to the Chairman and I assumed he would called for a meeting to resolve the anomaly and that was not done. Instead of the meeting to be suspended pending resolution at the party's Headquarters, the same Vice Chairman North East Zone Abdulrahman continued with the meeting with two (2) of my colleagues Governors and went ahead to nominate the same candidate who is the junior brother to Sen. Ali Modu Sheriff while Abdulrahman the Zonal Vice Chairman North East and the Taraba State Chairman as the second and third nominees respectively. This was communicated to the leadership in Abuja. The Chairman and Secretary endorsed the nominees to Mr. President after our complaints and the walkout staged by myself and my delegates at the meeting. This we considered as the ultimate injustice. We had earlier told the leadership that if justice was not done, we would find our way out of the party as failure to do that would have meant more injustice awaiting us in the party in future.
- I have taken into account the party's leadership inability to resolve conflict and ensure justice and equity among members and this is exemplified especially in the way and manner the Governor of Zamfara State Alh. Mahmud Shinkafi was chased out of the party by the same clique who claimed ownership of the party while the party leadership remained helpless. The same thing applies to other states, the Buhari Organization, the integrity group, who are threatened with sack from the party. The future of the party is bleak and will continue to dwindle every day with little hope of reversal. So many prominent Nigerians have come in to the party and left. For instance, Chief Omogalu, a one time National Secretary of the party and a strong member has left the party stating reasons of painting a picture of irredeemable future for the party. The exit of founding members of the party like former Sokoto State Governor Alh. Dalhatu Bafarawa, Jamil Isyaka Gwamna and mass resignation of Gombe State party executives.



City photo news



A man obeying nature's call at Central Business Area, Abuja recently.



Traders at Utako Market yesterday.



Underaged wheel barrow pushers at Mpape over the weekend. Pics: Felix Onigbinde

ADVERTORIAL (Cont'd)

At the moment there is crisis in the party, the integrity group who are in court, the impending formation of mega party, the Buhari Organization that is already looking at the possibility of leaving the party and the creation of factions in the party in Bauchi, Yobe and Niger States.

g. It has also come to my notice that the leadership of the party is discussing with other parties on the formation of a mega party where it was reported that Hon. Emma Eneukwu of ANPP, National Publicity Secretary is to be the Secretary of the committee. This is a new development in which the leadership of the ANPP in Bauchi considers very seriously as yet another development that would threaten its future prosperity. If injustice has been perpetrated without apology to the State leadership of the party and by extension the people of Bauchi State, what guarantee do we have that a bright future would come our way if we join a more complicated, consortium where ANPP leadership is playing a dominant role? I must say that my decision and that of my associates in Bauchi State is right. I want to state in clear terms that my political associates in Bauchi State while feeling unsecured in ANPP are not disposed to joining any association.

h. The leadership of the party with utter disrespect and disregard to my person and people of Bauchi State had published in the Leadership Newspaper of Wednesday 4th March, 2009 that "I am a liar" and that my statement to the effect that I remitted N5million monthly is not true. I had never in my life been so accused of being a liar publicly and my name brought to disrepute by an individual or group or any association. I had on Monday 16th March, 2009 through an advertorial in Daily Trust and Leadership Newspapers published the details of remittances of monthly N5million check off dues to ANPP Headquarters Abuja through the state chapter of the party from August 2007 - January 2009 and had requested for an apology from the leadership of the party because the allegation was made by no any person than Mr. Emma Eneukwu the National Publicity Secretary. Instead of receiving an apology, the secretary of the party vide an advertorial advised me "to take necessary step and set the record right" as they have no records of such payments as stated in our publication by the National Secretary Sen. Dr. Saidu Umar Kumo. Meanwhile, in our

letter to the party Leadership, we attached all copies of the vouchers and cheques which confirms beyond reasonable doubt that there was monumental fraud in Bauchi State Headquarter of the party. Given such evidences and instead of directing an investigation to be carried out by the Audit Unit of the party's Headquarters, he just simply diverted from the path of justice and shyed away from his responsibility as National Secretary. No such apology was received by me from National Secretariat and neither did you cause an investigation to be carried out on the fraud which by extension condoning misappropriation of funds by the then party Chairman - Sanin Malam.

i. This and other reasons too numerous to mention were considered by our colleagues in the Bauchi State chapter and decided that the future is not bright in the party and given the fact that I am the leader in Bauchi State I convinced my self beyond reasonable doubt, that our prospect in the party is very bleak. Consequently, with a deep heart I wish to tender my resignation from the party with immediate effect.

3. I want to thank the Chairman, for the support given to me in the past especially during the time I came for registration with my members in January, 2007 and the timely facilitation of our papers at INEC Headquarters.

4. I wish the party well and members of the party too in their future endeavour.

5. Accept the assurances of my highest regards.

MALLAM (DR) ISA YUGUDA, FNIM
(MATAWALLEN BAUCHI)

Signed by
AHMED YARIMA
S.S.A MEDIA TO GOV ISA YUGUDA

HEALTH & REPORT

email:healthreport@dailytrust.com

We face challenges with health facilities – Dr. Kwonchi

You were at the National Assembly recently where you contributed in a public hearing on a bill seeking to make it mandatory to treat bullet wound victims even without a Police Report. What is the concept of the bill which is a clear departure from reporting first to the Police before treatment?

I think this is a very much welcome procedure that the House of Representatives wants to make the law to enable a victim of bullet wound to be attended to very quickly to save the life of the patient. If we have to wait until we call the Police or any law enforcement agent who may not be readily available, we may end up with the patient dying before getting any treatment and this we have witnessed many times. In fact, before they even thought of this law, we had already enacted our law to treat emergency cases in Adamawa State within 24 hours free of charge.

What are the similarities between what the House of Representatives is proposing and what you have in Adamawa State?

We have a similar thing only that what we do is we start the process of treating, then we request the law enforcement agencies to come and have whatever statement they want to take. But still in Adamawa State, I think the medical personnel are sceptical about bullet wounds, especially if they came on their own. But usually bullet wound cases are brought by the Police, but if they came on their own, medical personnel are sceptical. But this law now enables the medical personnel to go ahead and treat. If a person happens to be a criminal, then the law will take effect. But it is good to save lives because medical personnel by their training are supposed to save lives regardless of who is involved. And then you know that as it is, a person remains innocent until it is proved otherwise. That is why this bill is handy.

During the public hearing, the safety of medical personnel was raised. How do doctors safeguard themselves against gunshot victims who are criminals and who may want to escape justice from hospital beds?

Yes, there is that likelihood of something going wrong but that would not stop us from going ahead to protect the innocent.

In this interview with Daily Trust, the Adamawa State Commissioner of Health, Dr. Zainab Kwonchi, calls on men to allow their wives take advantage of health services and facilities provided by the state and also on her efforts in repositioning the Adamawa State health sector.

By Francis Okeke

There is this eye programme that is currently going on in Adamawa State; could you tell us what it is?

Right, the independent marketers of petroleum by name NIPCO decided to give back to the people of Nigeria part of what they get from Nigeria. So, they decided to make a donation in eye care. NIPCO therefore, renovated a double ward in Adamawa State and provided mattresses and renovated the theatre and then brought INDO Eye Care Foundation from India to operate five hundred eye patients in Adamawa State. We, the government of Adamawa State appreciated this kind gesture. On its part, NIPCO, the Independent Oil Marketers has promised to do more. They promised to come back within one year and operate one thousand eye victims; not only that, they would establish an eye institute that would train medical personnel in eye care and then provide community eye services. They also intend to take care of maternal health by having intervention in the maternal section of the Specialist Hospital Yola. So, actually, we highly appreciate their kind gesture.

When did they carry out the operation?

They did the operations from the 5th to 13th of March, 2009.

Let's go to Adamawa State as a government: What have you been doing to give healthcare to the people?

Right, we are doing a lot of things; we are planning big. Adamawa State has established free medical treatment for pregnant women and children less than five years. This programme is ongoing, Adamawa votes N20 million every month on this intervention. The intervention also votes free treatment for all accident victims and emergencies generally including dog bites and snake bites within twenty four hours. All these are free.

Adamawa has bought emergency ambulances and I mean first class American ambulances for emergency services. All you need to do is just call the numbers that are available and the ambu-



Dr. Zainab Kwonchi

lances would come and pick the patients wherever such emergencies occur.

Also, we contracted an American organisation to come and train personnel in the emergency services. So, now, our personnel in that section can compete favourably with American emergency system

There is this complaint from rural areas, especially in northern Nigeria that only state capitals enjoy some of these facilities provided by government, what is the situation in Adamawa State?

Actually, if you consider the Eye Camp that we just had, we divided the state into three, according to the Senatorial districts. We went to the Senatorial zones to do

that. Our emergency ambulances are distributed according to Senatorial zones; we go to each Senatorial zone to do that. Our emergency outlets are distributed according to Senatorial zones and each Senatorial zone had two ambulances. In other health interventions, in my department, we never concentrated on only one angle or one side of the state. Whatever we do, we consider the Senatorial zoning system and what we establish in one zone, we give every zone; the free medical care that is given to women and children, that will include antenatal, labour, Caesarean Section and children inpatient as well as outpatient in all our hospitals, not only in the state capital but

in all Adamawa State Government hospitals and that cuts across the whole state. So, we in Health have never restricted ourselves to any rural or urban dichotomy. But you know also that we are federating; there is also the responsibility of the local governments. I think why they do not see intervention in the rural areas is because the local governments may not be doing as much as the state governments are doing. So, if all of us are doing what we are supposed to do, it will cover up the entire states.

What has Adamawa State done in epidemics such as Lassa fever that is currently generating interest across the country?

Really, not only Lassa, there is also avian flu; we have a unit for that. We have not had any case of Lassa in Adamawa State. But all the same there is a unit avian flu and then the Lassa under the disease control agency.

What have been the Health Ministry's achievements over the past two years that you have been Commissioner?

Well, when I came, the morale of the workers was very low and there was a health sector devoid of adequate manpower not because of anything but because remuneration was low compared to federal institutions and other states. So, they went to such states. I tried to raise their remunerations to be at par with those institutions and I am happy to tell you that today, the remunerations are at par with those institutions and people are no more fleeing. In fact, those who fled want to come back. We screen them now to take them back. This is one.

In terms of infrastructure,

Adamawa State has partnered with the World Bank to renovate health facilities, especially in primary health care system. We have started having positive results and health facilities being completed and operated. When I came also, there was this loan we took from America, interest free for the health sector, N1.5 billion and we have started renovating six hospitals. We are not only renovating, some are construction fresh from the ground like the Mayo-Belwa General Hospital. The others are being upgraded and they include, Borong, Toungo, which are upgraded from cottage hospitals to general hospitals

Having said all these, what are the challenges faced by the Adamawa Health sector?

The challenges all revolve on the need to modernise because the health sector, more than any other sector needs to be modernised. Also, medical treatments and medical interventions need to be modernised. It is a very great challenge. Sometimes we feel like we need to pull down the whole roof and bring up a new one. Everything needs to be modernised really; this is a great challenge. Of course, modernisation also includes capacity building; the frustration here is the constraint of staff. Money is not available to do all we will like to do but it is our prayer that we will be able to bring some change for the better through sinking money in the health sector because whatever you do, if you do not have a healthy society what can you do? For you to farm, for you to construct, for you to educate, you need healthy persons.

PPFN tours GFM project states to raise awareness

By Onimisi Alao

National President of Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria (PPFN), Mrs Lami Buba is visiting project states of Global Funds for Malaria (GFM) to lend support and encouragement to the success of the programme, according to the current edition of the PPFN Quarterly Journal which has just been published.

The journal reports that the PPFN President had so far been to Plateau, Kaduna, Zamfara, and Sokoto project states "out of concern and commitment to the success

of the GFM projects."

The PPFN is the Nigerian national organization of global International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), a service provider and advocate of sexual and reproductive health for individuals and communities. Accordingly, the PPFN is involved in family and reproductive health services for Nigerians.

The Global Fund, on its part, is funding projects to protect families from transmission of malaria worldwide.

It carries out the functions through volunteers in the different countries and localities that it covers.

According to the PPFN Journal, the visit of the PPFN's president to the GFM project states has helped to reinforce PPFN's support for the project and increased awareness of the project through advocacy to community rulers, opinion leaders and the mass media.

"During the visit in each state, the president held meetings with staff, volunteers and youth stressing the importance of the project

to PPFN and the need for collective support for the project in order to achieve its target and the main goal of reducing infant, children under five years and maternal mortality and morbidity rates which she said was unacceptably high," the PPFN Journal reports.

It adds that in all the four states visited, volunteers showed appreciation for the visit and vowed that they were encouraged and that they would strive to do even better than they had always done in carrying out their assignments.

Politics

Want to scrap LGs? Visit Jigawa

What do you think can make Nigeria realise its potentials?

Nigeria has come a long way. The belief is generally that an adult at 40 years and above can take care of himself as well as ensure the welfare of others. And so Nigeria at almost 50 years should not be seen as one in its infancy. Nationhood should not only be seen in the general sense, but also the ability of the people of such nation to realise their potentials. Therefore, for Nigeria to provide such opportunity for her people, it has to tackle critical sectors of the economy. And that can only be done if there is good governance at all a levels - federal, state and local government levels. To me, if we are really sincere about moving this country forward, there is no alternative to good governance. It is only good governance that can put in place good roads, uninterrupted power supply, functional education system, develop agriculture to ensure food security, provide adequate security for the people, ensure efficient transportation services that includes rail, water, air and land. And I can tell you that it is only leaders with altruistic approach to governance that can ensure all these. A leader whose pastime is to acquire and build a financial empire for himself cannot achieve this. Unfortunately, this has been the lot of the country over the years. But this is not to say that there is no hope, of course there is hope. Things are changing in parts of Nigeria due to the type of leaders who are at the helm of affairs there.

Given the gloomy picture you painted, are you confident that one day we can get the kind of leadership you are talking about?

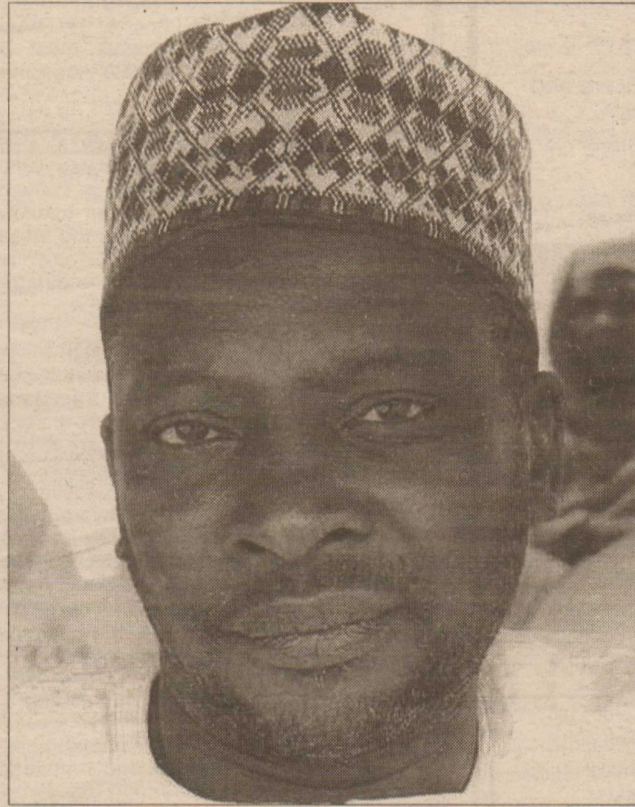
Why not? I mentioned before that things are changing in parts of Nigeria. Without sounding immodest, look at Jigawa State today, go round all the local council areas and see what both state and local government councils are putting in place. You see functional local government secretariats, water projects, roads, health services where free drugs are provided to the people. You look at the faces of people at the grassroots and see surprise written all over them. They wonder if they could have all these facilities in their life time but they are having them. These facilities are there now because the

first —D/Speaker

Alhaji Sule Inuwa Udi is Deputy Speaker of the Jigawa State House of Assembly. In this interview, he speaks on the advocacy for the scrapping the local government system and also on the need to ensure good governance in the country.

From Yusha'u A. Ibrahim, Dutse

leadership in the state has vowed to uplift the standard of living of the people. Can you imagine a state governor shedding tears? But Lamido did it when he saw the level of deprivation of the people, people dying due to lack of basic drugs to cure common flu.



Alhaji Sule Inuwa Udi

But some of us are not surprised because this is a man who said at the age of 60 years, he did not need anything but to give quality service to his people. That is what he is doing, we have seen it, and the people are now enjoying dividends of democracy to the fullest in the state. Let me tell you a secret, recently, the governor ordered performance assessment tour of the 27 local council areas. Imagine an elected official sitting at a round table in a public arena with electorates to hear from them. That is accountability at its highest level. You can't see that anywhere apart from Jigawa State because the hands of the chief executive in the state are clean. This is a man who does not touch local councils' allocations. Go and ask them, I am a legislator; I am privileged to know what is happening in the state. The governor gives the councils full autonomy not like in other places where governors pay lip service to issues of local government areas.

Why do you think Nigeria has not attained an appreciable level of development since independence in 1960?

Leadership is number

one, number two is leadership and number three is leadership. It is after this that others come because they mean nothing in themselves until they are put to meaningful use. I will continue to use my state under Lamido as an example. The other day one of my friends came to the state and exclaimed. He wondered how within a year and a half roads are put in place linking all the emirates, the disabled are being catered for and so on and so forth. We need leaders with great foresight. We need good leaders who will put their societies first. We do.

There is this clamour for scrapping of the local government system in the country. Will you support this view?

No, at all. Those making such call do so out of ignorance. I am a legislator, not a local government chairman so any statement I make is totally free from all forms of biases or selfishness. Why should you scrap a system that is doing well like in our state? You scrap the system and you will regret it. The only thing I will call for is for all relevant bodies charged with the responsibilities of ensuring good governance to carry out their functions to the letter. There is corruption everywhere in the world but when the laws are fully applied, and then good governance can be achieved. I am still of the opinion that the lack of performance of local government chairmen is the attitude of a sitting governor. If the governor is not a pretender, is not corrupt, is not saying one thing in the public and doing another in private then development will come to the grassroots rapidly. Do you know that governor Sule Lamido calls for local governments' accounts verification periodically? He does that because I feel since he allows them access to their funds as allocated to them from federation account, he does not want abuse of public trust so he calls on them to give account of their stewardship to the people periodically. We in the legislature are also carrying out our oversight function on the local government. So you can imagine the combined efforts of both arms of government on the local governments. You want to scrap local government areas? Please I urge you to visit Jigawa State before you do that.

AC wants Aondoakaa sacked

The Action Congress (AC) yesterday called on Minister of Justice and Attorney-General of the Federation Mr. Michael Aondoakaa to resign or be kicked out for what it said was his role in hampering the fight against corruption.

In a statement in Lagos by its National Publicity Secretary Alhaji Lai Mohammed, AC said the minister had remained the single biggest obstacle to Nigeria's anti-corruption efforts.

AC accused Aondoakaa of "muddling" the Halliburton bribery scandal, in which some Nigerian officials allegedly collected \$180 million in bribes to facilitate a contract.

"After his unnecessary trip to the US (to obtain the same information he could have sourced from investigators and intelligence agencies here), he virtually gave a clean bill of health to the accused by saying a

By Muideen Olaniyi

large chunk of the money has been found in an unknown account in Zurich and that no one can be prosecuted if offered a

bribe but has not received it!"

The statement added: "If all these instances and many more are not considered egregious enough to warrant the resignation or

firing of the minister, then the Yar'adua administration is not ready to tackle the corruption monster, which has given our country and her people a bad name in the comity of nations."

Abayomi backs mega party

Lagos-based lawyer and human right activist Dr. Tunji Abayomi has expressed his support for the planned formation of a mega political party in Nigeria.

The mega party is an idea mooted by political parties opposed to the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP).

Speaking with *Daily Trust* yesterday, Abayomi who was an Action Congress governorship aspirant in 2007 election in Ondo State said, "I think the idea of mega party is good because as it is now without a major political restructuring, the

From Leye Adewumi, Akure

nation may likely become a one-party state, and that party will be PDP."

He also threw his weight behind the presidency for the appointment of the chairman of Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

Abayomi said the appointment of INEC chairman should not be given to the National Judicial Council (NJC) because it would politicise the council.

"Many people believe that if the appointment of the INEC chairman is given to

Yuguda is welcome back to PDP —Ningi

As Bauchi State Governor Isa Yuguda stages a comeback to Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) from the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) today, Rep Abdul Ningi (PDP-Bauchi) has described the governor's decision as "heart warming."

"It is heart warming that he has realised early enough that he would not be able to function properly within the ANPP, which is a stranger to him," Ningi said in an interview in Abuja.

Ningi said the fact that Yuguda was elected on the platform of ANPP did not mean the party was popular.


"It is not the party that was popular but him. He could have won the April

2007 governorship election if he had chosen another party, choosing ANPP was an accident.

"He is welcome, as a former PDP minister for five years, where he made all his connections. He is more at home in PDP than in any political party. He could not have achieved anything under ANPP except in PDP," he said.

Yuguda recently gave a notice to ANPP of resigning from the party, attributing it to internal squabble which had factionalised the party.

However, both the CNPP and other stakeholders in the state had been mounting pressure on Yuguda to resign and re-contest on the platform of PDP, if indeed he was a popular candidate. (NAN)



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1. Overview of Road Maintenance Management Process
2. Innovative Methods of Managing Road Maintenance
3. Modes and Causes of Pavement Deterioration
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5. Measurement of Pavement Distresses and Interpreting the Results
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WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

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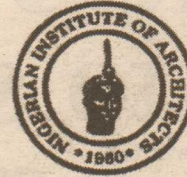
VENUE: Arcade Club Suite, Abuja

OTHER WORKSHOPS FOR THE YEAR

SN	WORKSHOP TOPICS	DATE (2009)	VENUE
1.	MEASUREMENT, ESTIMATING AND PRICING OF CIVIL ENGINEERING WORKS	MAY 5-7	Elephant House, Ikeja
2.	PROJECT MONITORING AND CONTROL PROCEDURES IN PRACTICE	MAY 19-21	Arcade Club Suite, Abuja
3.	PROCEDURES FOR SELECTION OF CONSULTANTS AND MANAGEMENT OF CONSULTING SERVICES	MAY 26-28	Arcade Club Suite, Abuja
4.	PROCEDURES FOR SELECTION OF CONTRACTORS AND MANAGEMENT OF CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS	JUNE 2-4	Arcade Club Suite, Abuja
5.	ENGINEERING MEASURES FOR IMPROVING TRAFFIC FLOW AND ROAD SAFETY	JUNE 9-11	Arcade Club Suite, Abuja
6.	COST EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR ROAD MAINTENANCE MANAGERS	JUNE 23-25	Concord Hotel, Owerri
7.	DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF RURAL ROADS	JULY 7-9	Arcade Club Suite, Abuja
8.	MODERN METHODS OF MANAGING DISPUTES IN ENGINEERING CONTRACTS	JULY 14-16	Hamdala Hotel, Kaduna
9.	LEADERSHIP SKILLS FOR PROJECT MANAGERS	JULY 28-30	Gateway Hotel, Abeokuta
10.	EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF PROJECTS AT THE IMPLEMENTATION PHASE	AUGUST 4-6	Royal Tropicana Hotel, Kano
11.	GEOMETRIC DESIGN OF ROADS, INTERSECTIONS AND INTERCHANGES	AUGUST 11-13	Elephant House, Ikeja
12.	PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (PPP) PROJECTS	AUGUST 25-27	Arcade Club Suite, Abuja
13.	SITE SUPERVISION AND QUALITY CONTROL OF ROAD PROJECTS	SEPTEMBER 1-3	Arcade Club Suite, Abuja
14.	STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL MANAGEMENT OF CAPITAL PROJECTS IN NIGERIA	SEPTEMBER 15-17	Pathfinder Hotel, Ado-Ekiti
15.	GEOTECHNICAL INVESTIGATION FOR CIVIL PROJECTS AND INTERPRETING THE REPORTS	SEPTEMBER 22-24	Arcade Club Suite, Abuja
16.	ANALYSIS AND DESIGN OF STEEL STRUCTURES AND READING STRUCTURAL DRAWINGS	SEPTEMBER 28-30	Elephant House, Ikeja
17.	STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS, DESIGN AND LOCATION OF CONCRETE BOX CULVERTS AND BRIDGES	OCTOBER 6-8	Arcade Club Suite, Abuja
18.	SOURCING AND MANAGEMENT OF EQUIPMENT FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS	OCTOBER 13-15	Arcade Club Suite, Abuja
19.	DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF CIVIL WORKS IN RIVERINE LOCATIONS	OCTOBER 20-22	Aldgate Hotel, Port Harcourt
20.	EFFECTIVE TECHNICAL WRITING AND PRESENTATION SKILLS	OCTOBER 27-29	Premier Hotel, Ibadan
21.	CAUSES OF COST OVERRUNS IN ROAD PROJECTS AND PREVENTIVE MEASURES	NOVEMBER 3-5	Royal Hill Choice, Makurdi
22.	MIX DESIGN AND QUALITY CONTROL OF ASPHALT AND PORTLAND CEMENT CONCRETE	NOVEMBER 10-12	Elephant House, Ikeja
23.	STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS AND DESIGN OF HIGH RISE BUILDINGS	NOVEMBER 24-26	Elephant House, Ikeja

FEES: N50,000.00 PER PARTICIPANT FOR EACH WORKSHOP

For details, registration, etc, please contact: **08033469413, 08054890243, 08034885989** or e-mail: **techgradecon@yahoo.com**



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NIA PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE EXAMINATION

SEPTEMBER 2009

NIA FINALS II (DIRECT ADMISSION) EXAMINATION

SEPTEMBER 2009

Applications are invited from graduate architects who fall under any of the categories below and wish to be pre-qualified for the September 2009 Professional Practice and Finals II (Direct Entry) Examinations.

1. NIA PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE EXAMINATION (SEPT. 2009)

This examination is open to candidates with the following qualifications:

- (a) Associate members of the Institute who have had a minimum of two years supervised post-qualification practice by March 2009
- (b) Graduate Architects from NIA-recognised institutions Overseas with a minimum of two years supervised post-qualification practice (Six months of which must have been spent in Nigeria)
- (c) Candidates who have passed the NIA Finals II Examination with a minimum of 2 years cognate work experience thereafter by March 2009.
- (d) Candidates in all cases must be currently resident in Nigeria and also currently fully involved in the practice of Architecture under the supervision of a financial full member of the NIA with a minimum of three years membership.
- (e) Applicants in all cases must be financial Associate members of NIA. Candidate must indicate Associate Membership number on the Examination forms.

2. NIA FINALS II (DIRECT ADMISSION) EXAMINATION (SEPT. 2009)

This Examination is for candidates with M.Sc (Architecture) degree or its equivalent awarded by Nigerian or foreign Universities whose Architecture programmes are not accredited by the Nigerian Institute of Architects (all applicants who studied abroad will be required to give the Institute authority to directly collect their detailed transcripts for assessment). Candidates who have passed the R.I.B.A. Part II or equivalent may also apply. Candidates must have obtained the degree at least nine months prior to March 2009.

METHOD OF APPLICATION:

Application Forms and a booklet "Conditions for Admission into the Examination" are obtainable from the NIA Secretariat in Abuja upon the payment of N2,500. Candidates are advised to study the booklet before completing their forms.

Candidates' application forms are to be submitted with the following:

- (a) A non-refundable examination fee of N20,000 and N25,000 for PPE and Finals II Examinations respectively.
- (b) Logbooks duly endorsed by your Supervising Architects (PPE only)
- (c) Transcript forwarded directly from your University (Graduate candidates from Overseas Universities only)
- (d) A form completed by the Supervising Architects (PPE only).
- (e) Photocopies of educational certificates (WASC, Diploma and Degrees) and NYSC Certificates. Statement of results shall not be accepted.
- (f) Name and address of the accrediting Board in candidate's country of study (foreign graduates only).
- (g) All applicants must have their certificates sighted and endorsed by a current NIA Council member.
- (h) Two nos. recent passport photographs.
- (i) 4 nos. self-addressed and stamped 9" x 4" envelopes.
- (j) Sworn affidavit to support any discrepancies in names or other particulars on Certificates (if any)
- (k) A duly completed Full membership application form for PPE candidates and Associate membership application form in the case of Final II candidates.

NIA Examination Preparatory Seminar is compulsory for all PPE and Finals II Candidates. The Seminar will be held from 7th - 8th September 2009 in Lagos and Abuja for PPE candidates and Lagos only for Finals II candidates respectively. The seminar fee is N10,000 to be paid with the examination fees.

All payments must be made only into the NIA account no. **0132010007752** at any Diamond Bank branch and the bank payment teller submitted with the application form. Cash/cheque

EXAMINATION DATE:

The NIA Professional Practice and Finals II (Direct Entry) Examinations will be held from 21st - 25th September 2009.

EXAMINATION CENTRES:

The PPE will be held at four centres in ABUJA, LAGOS, KADUNA and ENUGU, while the Finals II Examinations will be held at the ABUJA and LAGOS centres only.

Candidates must indicate on their application form the centre at which they wish to sit for the examination.

COMPLIANCE:

Strict compliance with all conditions stated above is pre-requisite to being qualified for admission into these examinations.

CLOSING DATE:

All completed application forms must reach:

The Hon General Secretary,
The Nigerian Institute of Architects
2 Kukawa Close,
Off Gimbiya Crescent,
Area 11, Garki,
P. O. Box 10015, Garki, Abuja.

not later than Friday 24th April 2009. Late applications will not be accepted.

(SGD)

ARC J. O. TOLUHI, fnia
HON GENERAL SECRETARY

SPORTS

Hotline:
08059100030 (Text Only)

Handball needs adequate attention - HFN Secretary

Chinedu Ezeala-Ogundare, Secretary of the Handball Federation of Nigeria (HFN), says adequate attention by the International Handball Federation (IHF) will improve the standard of the game in Africa.

Ezeala-Ogundare's comments came on the heels of a seven-day developmental programme, which the IHF is organising in Lome, Togo, for players and officials from handball-playing nations in Africa.

The HFN secretary told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) yesterday in Lagos before departing for Lome, that the programme would help to develop and update the knowledge of players and officials in the Africa Zone III countries.

"I see this developmental programme as a good thing coming to all African handball-playing countries."

"It will go a long way in improving their knowledge and exposing them to the latest in the global world," she said.

She advised the countries in Zone III to send their technical officials to participate in the programme, slated to hold from April 13 to April 20, 2009 in Lome.

Ezeala-Ogundare said that players selected from Nigeria for the programme were picked for their performance in the U-20 male and female championship in Edo, in August 2008.

She added that the selection of the six officials on the delegation, was based on their records with the HFN.

"The selection was based on merit, the players and officials are promising and I believe this programme will be of benefit to them and their states," she added.

Coach Fedelis Obi, a member of the team, said he was glad to be part of those going for the developmental programme.

"I feel honoured to be among those to benefit from the first developmental programme organised by the international handball body," he said.

Obi said that the programme would help him to prepare athletes for the 2012 Olympic Games in London.

We are not ready to develop football, says Ikhana

By Ibraheem A. Fatai

Football in Nigeria will continue to go down the hill if nothing drastic is done by all stakeholders to arrest the ugly situation.

Sharks coach Kadiri Ikhana made this assertion after the Premier League match against FC Abuja on Sunday at the Old Parade Ground in Abuja.

According to Ikhana, the horrible conditions of most of the stadia in Nigeria makes it difficult for football to grow, nothing that poor pitches and poor administration are the major bane of Nigerian football.

"How do you expect players to play good football on a water logged pitch like the one we have here in Abuja today?" asked the former Kwara United

coach.

He decried the "win at home syndrome" which, according to him, has deprived visiting



Ikhana teams of the hard earned points, saying such attitude makes our

football look as if we are fighting war.

"We have made ourselves look as if we are not playing football, as if we are fighting war. 'I have done enough, so must win at all cost' attitude is making the whole thing look crazy," lamented the Edo State born football tactician.

Speaking further, he lamented the non-inclusion of home based players in the Super Eagles, saying such attitude is killing our morale of such players, because, according to him, they have been made to believe that they cannot play for their father's land.

On whether he would be ready to take up NFF job of supervising Henry Nwosu

(Under-17 coach) as being rumoured in some quarters, Ikhana said although he would never beg or lobby for any job, but would be ready to serve Nigeria in any capacity.

"There is no way your country will call on you to come and serve her and you say no, but, there is no point begging or lobbying for job. As a coach, when you beg or lobby to get a job, you may not do it well," Ikhana said.

On hiring and firing of coaches that have suddenly become part of Nigerian football in the recent past, the former Kwara United coach said, hiring and firing of coaches are normal things in football.

"I could be fired...May be

when I get to Port Harcourt I may lose my job, because I didn't win here in Abuja. Somebody will axe you and another will hire you. That is why some of us coaches are falling sick and dying every day," said Sharks' coach.

Adamu disagrees with Pillars coach over Kaduna stadium

Kaduna State Sports Commissioner, Shehu Adamu, has disagreed with Kano Pillars Coach Abdulmalik Jabir, over the size of the Kaduna Township Stadium.

Shehu said it was untrue that the Township Stadium was smaller than the Sani Abacha Stadium, Kano, where the Pillars played their matches before relocating to Kaduna.

"FIFA Vice President, Jack Warner, gave the stadium a pass mark when he said it had the best pitch in Africa."

"Ranchers Bees played their WAFU Cup matches on the same pitch that Jabir said is sub-standard."

"The size of the pitch is the same with that of ABS and any other stadium for that matter."

Jabir said last week that Pillars would be delighted to have all their matches in both competitions played at the Ahmadu Bello Stadium.

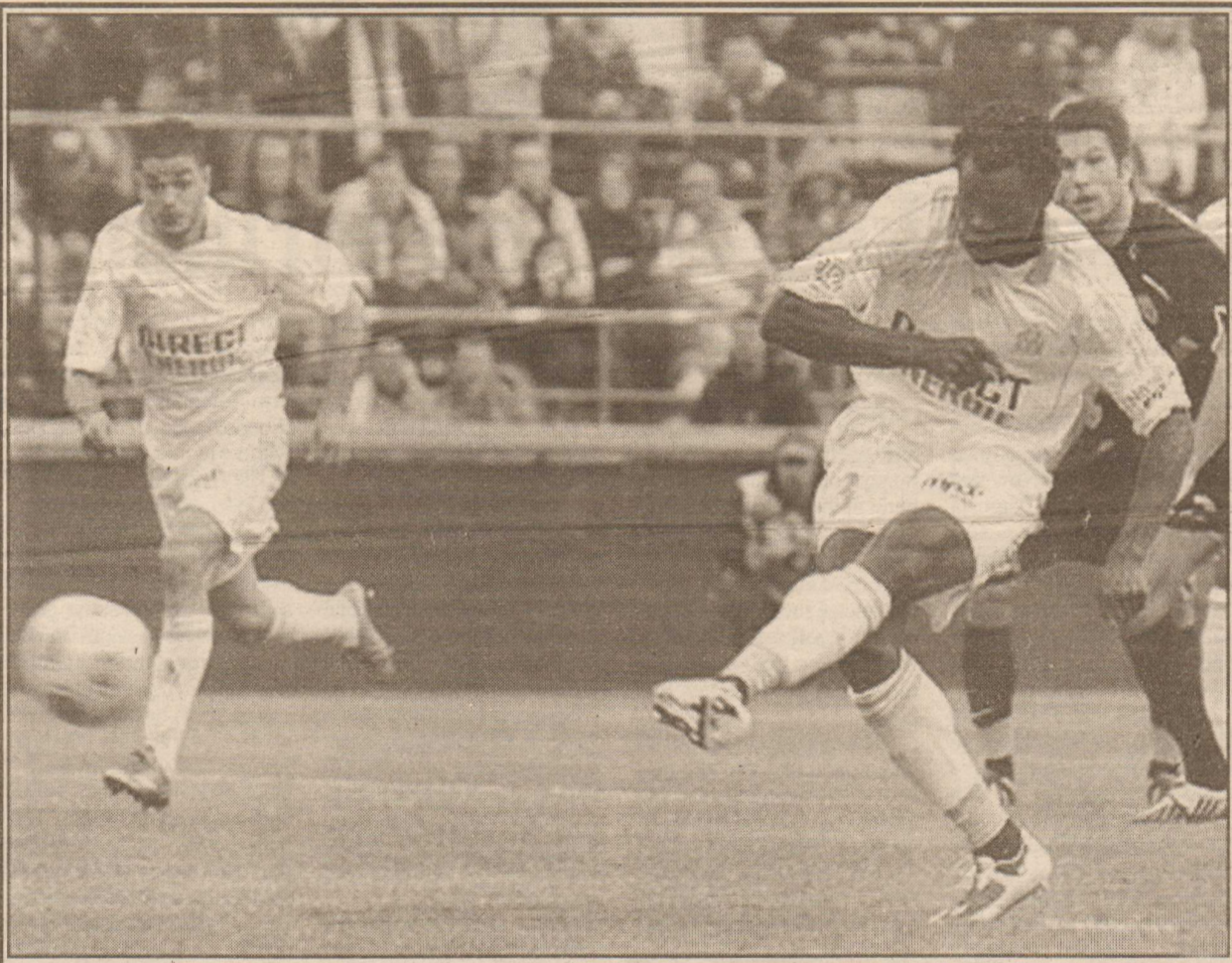
He also claimed the Kaduna Township Stadium was smaller than the Sani Abacha and Ahmadu Bello stadiums.

Shehu said the state had met FIFA's requirements.

"They want a standard stadium with a main bowl: the Ahmadu Bello Stadium is okay; they also want three training pitches."

"We are working on the two other training pitches situated at ABS."

"The two pitches have been cleared and are being back filled with black sand for the planting of carpet grass," he added.



A brace from Super Eagles defender, Taye Taiwo, right, helped his French club Olympique Marseille to a 4-1 victory over Grenoble in the French Ligue 1 at the weekend.

Handball team in Lome for training

Fourteen handball players and six officials left Lagos on Monday for Lome, Togo, to participate in the African Zone 3 U-20 Handball Development Programme.

The officials comprise coaches, referees and a lecturer at the National Institute for Sports, Lagos.

The programme slated to hold from April 13, 2009, to April 20, 2009. Chinedu Ezeala-Ogundare, Secretary, Handball Federation of Nigeria (HFN) said that the programme promised to prepare players as well as officials for international championships.

"The training programme is part of preparations for the World Cup, the Olympics, and other international championships."

national championships.

"The HFN wants to use this opportunity to expose the players and officials to the current development in the game and update their skills," she told NAN in Lagos before departure.

According to her, the programme is the first international event that Nigeria will be participating in this year, adding: "this is why we made all efforts to ensure that we are there with a full house"

"We have gone through our records and have come up with promising players and officials who have shown signs of improving their skills if given intensive training programme" Ezeala-Ogundare said.

Egypt 2009: Uwe urges early preparation

Former Nigerian international, Andrew Uwe has called on Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) to institute programmes that would make the Flying Eagles to commence camping ahead of the World U-21 cup slated for Egypt in September, reports Abiodun Jimoh.

Uwe who was disturbed at the level of preparation so far for the team noted that while other African countries have started camping for the epic final in September, Nigeria has not made any step towards it hereby putting the chances of the team in jeopardy.

He affirmed that the debacles that surrounded the team non-impressive outing in Rwanda should not deterred the NFF from start making adequate planning towards winning the cup on African soil, adding that series of friendly matches should have been staged for the team to assess their quality before going for the world event in less than five months.

He however expressed confidence that coach Samson Siasia who has been saddled with the responsibility of leading the team to the world championship has the charisma to deliver the needed results for Nigeria having done that in the past.

Siasia is an experience coach that knows what is at stake in leading the team to world cup in September and based on this he will not disappoint the country as every Nigerians are solidly behind him in his ambition to achieve the needed results and I pray that he will win the cup only if he get the needed support from NFF."

Quote of the Day

"We have made ourselves look as if we are not playing football, as if we are playing war. 'I have done enough, so I must win by all cost' attitude is making the whole thing look crazy."

— Sharks FC coach, Kadiri Ikhana, bemoaning the state of Nigeria's domestic football and the "win at all cost syndrome".

Sports

Cabrera wins Green Jacket after playoff

Argentina's Angel Cabrera won his second major championship with a nerve-jangling playoff victory at the U.S. Masters on Sunday, becoming the first South American to claim the prized Green Jacket.

The 2007 U.S. Open champion edged out Americans Kenny Perry and Chad Campbell at Augusta National as he clinched his second PGA Tour title with a par four at the second extra hole.

After hitting his approach to 12 feet at the 10th, the 39-year-old Cabrera calmly two-putted before raising his right arm in celebration.

Perry, 48, bidding to become golf's oldest major winner, overshot the green with his approach at the 10th and was unable to save-par after chipping back 18 feet past the cup.

Campbell, like Perry seeking his first major triumph, dropped out when he bogeyed the first extra hole after hitting his approach into a bunker at the par-four 18th.

"This moment, and also Oakmont, are the happiest moments of my life," Cabrera said before being helped into his Green Jacket by 2008 champion Trevor Immelman of South Africa.

"It's the dream of any golfer to win the Masters. I'm so emotional I can barely talk.

"When I won the U.S. Open, (compatriot) Roberto De Vincenzo gave me a nice picture and there was a green jacket in it, making me go for it," added Cabrera through an interpreter.

De Vincenzo came close to Masters glory in 1968 only to submit an incorrect scorecard, giving American Bob Goalby a one-shot victory instead of sending the year's first major to a playoff.

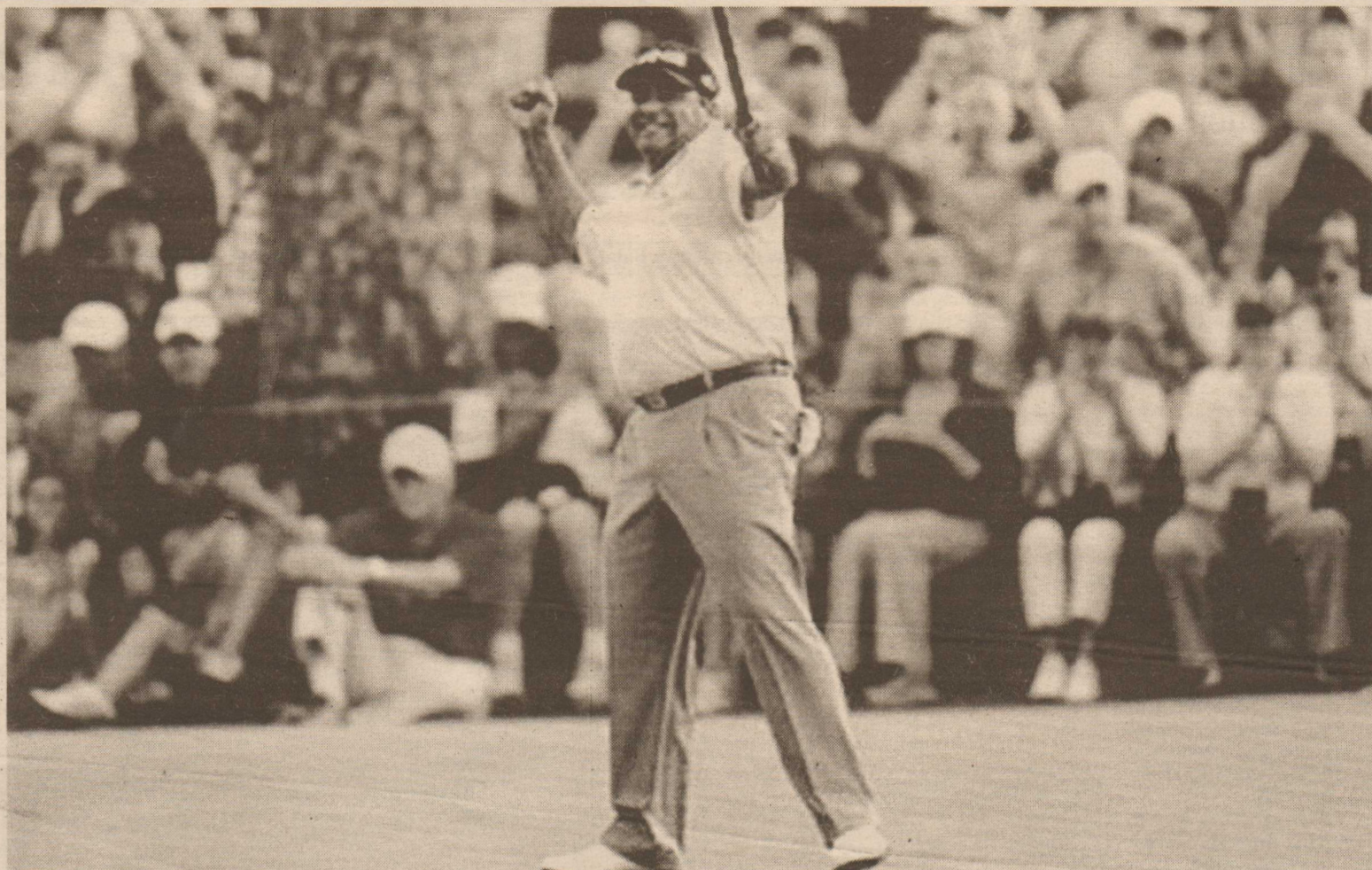
However, De Vincenzo had already become the first South American to win a major in the 1967 British Open at Hoylake.

On a sun-soaked day at Augusta, Cabrera signed off with a 71 for a 12-under total of 276, finishing level with Campbell (69) and Perry, who appeared to have the title within his grasp before bogeying 17 and 18 for a 71.

One of the longest hitters in the game, Cabrera held a share of the third-round lead with Perry and briefly edged a stroke in front by sinking a three-foot birdie putt at the par-four third.

His progress then stalled with bogeys at the fourth, fifth and 10th before he rallied over the last eight holes.

Much of the interest on a glorious spring afternoon was focused on the high-profile pairing of Mickelson and Woods as they treated a huge gallery to a dazzling display of shot-making in low-scoring conditions.



Angel Cabrera of Argentina celebrates after winning the Masters golf tournament in a sudden death playoff at the Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Georgia, United States on Sunday.

An unlikely end to a thrilling Masters

There were so many ways this most thrilling of Masters could have ended.

What if Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson had carried their duel into a playoff? Now that would have turned Augusta National upside down.

Or how about Kenny Perry, the ultimate grinder, winning his first major at an age when most players are prepping for the senior tour? Boy, that would have been something.

Instead, it was a burly man from Argentina who crafted an ending no one could have envisioned. Down at the 10th green, long after Woods and Mickelson had headed for exits and dragged many of the patrons with them, Angel Cabrera barely beat the setting

sun with a gimme of a putt as Perry looked on helplessly.

OK, it wasn't Hollywood.

But Cabrera sure earned it.

When his swing got loose and produced two straight bogeys on the front side, he hung in there. When he faced a two-stroke deficit with two holes to play, he didn't give up. And, most impressively, when his first tee shot of the sudden-death playoff rolled to a stop behind a big tree on the first playoff hole, he never lost hope.

Cabrera somehow hooked his ball around one tree and past several more, getting it back to the fairway. Then he knocked it up on the green, 8 feet behind the hole, and made the putt to save a remarkable par. Perry messed up his approach and had

to settle for par, too. The third member of the playoff, Chad Campbell, missed his 6-footer and the race was down to two.

Only one more hole was needed. Perry found mud on his ball in the middle of the 10th fairway, and his shot veered left of the green. Cabrera knocked his below the hole and—for perhaps the first time all day—he was finally the one in command. Perry's chip raced past the flag, and he missed the putt coming back.

Perry didn't even get a chance to finish. Cabrera's putt stopped next to the hole. He marked it, took a quick look to make sure there was nothing on it, and calmly delivered the winning stroke on his second career major.

At Oakmont two years ago, Cabrera stared down Woods and Jim Furyk to win the U.S. Open. Now he has joined the green jacket club and wiped out any perception that his first major title was a fluke.

He wasn't the only one. From the time Woods and Mickelson stepped to the tee, sharing a firm handshake and icy stare, there was a sense this would finally be the day the Masters delivered an Augusta-like finish. Another day broke warm and sunny. The flags drooped limply atop the scoreboard. The greens were still soft and inviting after a fierce storm a couple of nights earlier.

This was finally a Sunday for some fireworks, and they were soon going off all over the course.

The main event was Woods vs. Mickelson, or so it seemed

most of the day. Mickelson scored the early blows, delivering six birdies before the turn for a record-tying 30. Woods bounced off the ropes with a 30-footer for eagle at No. 8. They both had a shot as they headed to Amen Corner, trailed by a gallery that grew to 10-deep in spots.

"It was fun," Mickelson said. "We've had some good matches in the past. I'm usually on the wrong end of it, but it was fun playing with him."

The script began to unravel at No. 12, the devilish little hole known as "Golden Bell." Mickelson pulled out a 9-iron and took a tentative swing. The ball checked up short of the flag, spun backward and didn't stop rolling until it splashed in Rae's Creek. Mickelson wound up with a double bogey, which seemed to suck all hope out of his game.

"The ball went in the water," Lefty said, "and I stopped making putts."

Woods was one stroke out of the lead after he planted his tee shot next to the flag at No. 16, producing his third birdie in four holes. But golf's greatest closer couldn't finish the comeback. His last two tee shots were both wide and outside. He slammed another shot off a tree. A bogey-bogey finish left him one stroke behind Mickelson and tied for sixth, his worst finish at Augusta since 2004.

He's now gone four years without a green jacket, the longest drought of his Masters career.

"I was right there," Woods said. "I hit a good tee shot down

17, the wind just held it just enough, wouldn't let it cut back, and I was dead from there."

At least he has a Masters title—four of them.

Perry headed to the penultimate hole with a two-stroke lead and seemed the most unlikely guy on the course to let it slip away. He had gone 22 holes since his last bogey, and merely needed a nice, safe finish to add some green to his wardrobe.

Then, he seemed to realize just what was happening. His hands got a little sweaty, his arms a little shaky. He was caught up in the moment, and it got to him.

But Perry put his tee shot into a bunker. He scattered the gallery on the left with his second shot. A delicate chip left him with a 15-foot putt for the win. But it crept up short of the hole—the tentative stroke of an average golfer who choked, Perry's own brutal assessment of the miss.

"I had that putt everybody makes," he said. "Mark O'Meara has made it. Tiger made it. I knew exactly what it did, and I hit it easy. I mean, I just hit it bad."

This was Perry's second heartbreak in a major. In 1996, he squandered another lead on the 72nd hole at the PGA Championship, then lost in a playoff to Mark Brooks.

Perry knows this might be his final chance.

"It just seems like when I get down to those deals, I can't seem to execute," he moaned in his Kentucky drawl. "Great players make it happen, and your average players don't. That's the way it is."



Both Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson stuttered at Augusta.

Sports

ROMA FINALE 2009

Barcelona wary of Bayern's wounded pride



Barcelona's Daniel Alves, right, and Bayern Munich's Frank Ribery, left, vie for the ball during their quarterfinal first leg match at the Nou Camp in Barcelona, Spain.

Barcelona take a 4-0 advantage to Munich but are wary of Bayern's wounded pride when they face the Germans on Tuesday in their Champions League quarter-final return leg.

Barca coach Pep Guardiola warned their high scoring victory in Spain last week could bring the best out of the German champions, who have called the defeat a debacle and said they have no real chance of qualifying.

"Bayern are capable of scoring four goals, all the more so when they are wounded," Guardiola said at a news conference.

"I don't believe the statements about them already having given the tie up for lost," he said.

"I am sure they will put in a good performance and we have to go there with a lot of ambition to win the match. If we are speculative they will roll over us."

Guardiola left key players, including midfielder Xavi, Primera Liga top scorer Samuel Eto'o and captain Carles Puyol, out of his starting line-up for Saturday's comfortable 2-0 home win over struggling Recreativo Huelva.

The former Barca and Spain midfielder will have to watch the match from the stands after being dismissed from the bench in the first leg and seeing his appeal with UEFA rejected.

"I'll be in the stands but it does not matter, it is something

completely secondary," he said.

Barca central defender Rafael Marquez is suspended after picking up a yellow card at the Nou Camp.

Bayern, who had not lost in the Champions League this season before last week's defeat, have said the team has an obligation to restore the club's pride.

Boosted by their 4-0 crushing of Eintracht Frankfurt on Saturday, the Germans are looking to bow out with their heads held high.

"With this win (against Frankfurt) we repaired part of the damage but not all of it. We have a lot to do on Tuesday so that we can say goodbye to the competition in a good way," coach Juergen Klinsmann said.

Klinsmann is again expected to field 34-year-old keeper Hans Joerg Butt, ahead of Michael Rensing, who had been his first choice throughout the season until last week.

"Unfortunately I have to hurt Michael and put his development on the back-burner so we can get the results we need to get," the coach, in his first season at Bayern, said.

Klinsmann, under fire for his three erratic performances throughout the season, will have a largely fit squad with only central defender Daniel van Buyten in doubt.

Defenders Lucio and Philipp Lahm, who both missed the first leg through injury, should be fit to play.

Bolton unlikely inspiration for Liverpool task

If Liverpool want extra inspiration for the enormity of the task they face at Chelsea in the Champions League tonight they need only look as far as Bolton Wanderers.

Liverpool need to score at least three goals at Stamford Bridge to have any chance of overcoming Chelsea in the second leg of their quarter-final tie after losing 3-1 at home to Guus Hiddink's men last week.

Bolton scored three goals in eight minutes at Chelsea on Saturday although, by the time they managed their first, they were already trailing 4-0 and Chelsea had taken off Frank Lampard and Didier Drogba with the game seemingly won.

Although Chelsea held on to beat Bolton 4-3 and keep the

pressure on Liverpool and league leaders Manchester United in the Premier League title race, Bolton did show that Chelsea's defence was not impregnable.

"I am a bit concerned we let in three, but every match is different," said Chelsea's interim coach Hiddink. "However, let's say it is a lesson learnt."

Although Chelsea will be without suspended skipper John Terry in the heart of their defence following a booking in the first leg, they have plenty of fine players in reserve as they proved at Anfield where Serbian defender Branislav Ivanovic made a rare start and

scored twice.

Ricardo Carvalho, who returned to the side after missing the last three games, is expected to fill Terry's role.

Liverpool will be hoping to avoid a second successive exit from the Champions League at Stamford Bridge where they lost in the semi-finals last season.

However, they have won there already this season when their 1-0 victory in October ended Chelsea's record 86-match unbeaten home run in the Premier League.

Since then though, Chelsea have replaced Brazilian coach Luiz Felipe Scolari with Hiddink

and seen their fortunes improve hugely under the Dutchman with nine wins in 11 matches in all competitions.

Hiddink out-thought his wily rival Rafa Benitez last week by deploying Michael Essien in a man-to-man marking role on Steven Gerrard which neutralised the Liverpool skipper's influence.

Gerrard will have to stamp his authority on the match from the start if Liverpool are to make any dent in Chelsea's lead, but they did bounce back well with an emphatic 4-0 victory over Blackburn Rovers on Saturday despite the captain being rested.

They will have Javier Mascherano back in midfield following the Argentine's suspension from the first leg.

Despite witnessing Lionel Messi's artistry dismantle FC Bayern München from the Camp Nou substitutes' bench last week, Philipp Lahm insisted he is relishing the prospect of coming face to face with the FC Barcelona star in the second leg of their UEFA Champions League quarter-final on Tuesday.

With Lahm laid low by a calf injury in Catalonia, Christian Lell switched flanks to fill in at left-back and was tormented by Messi, who scored twice and helped create Barça's two other goals to give the Spanish Liga leaders an emphatic 4-0 advan-

Lahm looking to tidy up Messi turmoil

tage to take to Bavaria. Now fit again, the German international will be the man charged with containing the twinkle-toed Argentinian at the Fußball Arena München, and though he maintained he is merely a cog in the Bayern wheel, Lahm could scarcely contain his growing anticipation of a personal duel with Messi.

"It's not just about single players, it's about the team," said the 25-year-old, who also missed his side's 4-0 defeat of

Eintracht Frankfurt at the weekend, which lifted Bayern into second place in the Bundesliga and revived flagging morale. "Each of us has to play to his full potential against such a good team and against such good individuals. We have to be at 100 percent of our capabilities, and if we are then we can beat Barcelona. I also want to perform as well as I can, especially against Messi, who is one of the best players in the world. I'm really looking forward to this battle."

Coach Jürgen Klinsmann acknowledged that the return of Lahm and centre-back Lucio, who missed the Camp Nou rout with a thigh strain, would give Bayern "more stability" in defence as they aim to make UEFA Champions League history by becoming the first club to overturn a four-goal first-leg deficit in the competition. Last week's defeat provoked a fierce barrage of criticism directed at both the team and Klinsmann, and although Lahm tempered expecta-

tions that the four-time European champions could keep their ambitions intact by producing a footballing miracle, he admitted that there was a strong determination within the Bayern squad to prove they are worthy of their place among the continent's finest eight teams.

"It'll be very tough and we want to be realistic about our chances of going through, which are very limited indeed. Barcelona are the overwhelming favourites and just a win would

give us a boost," conceded Lahm, whose return will see Lell revert to his usual position at right-back. "Last week's defeat was a big blow. Now we have to show them what we can do. At home we want to show the fans what we can really achieve. We want to show that we deserve to be in the quarter-finals of the Champions League. We want to put right the humiliation of last week and show that we can compete with the best teams in Europe."

Sports

ROMA FINALE 2009

Fernando keeping his feet on the ground

Manchester United FC's playing staff were quick to praise FC Porto's attacking ability following last week's 2-2 draw at Old Trafford in the first leg of their UEFA Champions League quarter-final, but perhaps the key to the visitors' impressive display was the contribution of a hitherto unheralded 21-year-old Brazilian defensive midfielder.

Loaned to CF Estrela da Amadora last season, Fernando has grabbed his chance following Paulo Assunção's summer departure to Club Atlético de Madrid, with the former Vila Nova FC player even earning praise from

Jesualdo Ferreira, a coach usually loth to singling out players.

"As you all know already, I don't like to talk about individuals, but seeing the way Fernando and [Aly] Cissokho played against United at Old Trafford in a Champions League quarter-final gave me great pleasure," said the 62-year-old.

For his part, Fernando admits to having been thrilled by the "positive comments" surrounding his performance, revealing the same humility in conversation that makes him approach every ball as if it were the most important of his career.

"Of course I'm happy with

all the praise I've received," explained the former Brazilian Under-20 international. "I knew we were going to face very difficult opponents and I tried to start the game very focused. I think we managed that. Despite the result, it's not over. Manchester United will travel to the Estádio do Dragão with the aim of winning and we'll have to be ready.

"Cristiano Ronaldo is a great player, but I was very humble and didn't hesitate for a second. If you don't play like that then Ronaldo can make all the difference.

"I'm pleased with the kind words of my coach, but that won't give me extra motivation to work," continued Fer-

nando. "I'm always fully motivated because I'm at a great club. My main goal is to keep working hard in order to improve my game." Ferreira feels that same attitude will take the team far between now and the end of the season, with Porto also going strongly in the Portuguese Liga after keeping themselves four points clear with Saturday's 3-0 win over Estrela.

"Some of the players are improving by the day and that's why we feel even more confident," stated Ferreira. "I have a lot of belief in this team and in our work. Our fans can rest assured that we will do everything in our power to get the job done."



Fernando of FC Porto

Aurélio maintains belief after Chelsea setback

Liverpool FC defender Fábio Aurélio popped into the Talk Football chatroom, answering uefa.com users' questions the day after his side suffered a 3-1 reverse against Chelsea FC at Anfield in the first leg of their UEFA Champions League quarter-final. The Brazilian is anticipating a thrilling climax to the Premier League season as the Reds compete for the title against the London club and leaders Manchester United FC.

After the loss to Chelsea on Wednesday, how do you think the team will recover in the Premier League and on Tuesday at Stamford Bridge?

Fábio Aurélio: We need to separate the tournaments. We are doing quite well in the Premier League and cannot afford to lose momentum. Winning will put more pressure on Manchester United. Chelsea are not a matter until next week.

As you scored against Manchester United in the 4-1 league win at Old Trafford, do you think you can score against Chelsea and help Liverpool overcome the Blues?

Fábio Aurélio: It will all depend on where the free-kicks occur. I would love to have an opportunity from a dead ball and will practice some more free-kicks.

What went wrong against Chelsea?

Fábio Aurélio: The game started quite well for us. We set the pace and it seemed to be our night. But that first goal kind of stunned us. Congratulations to Chelsea, though, as they played well.

Do you think you have what it takes to win the Premier

League?

Fábio Aurélio: We can win the Premier League. The team knows that there is a good chance we can catch United if we don't drop points. United are under pressure, especially because Chelsea are also involved. Every game will be a final.

With your recent great result against United, are Liverpool focusing on the Premier League ahead of all other competitions?

Fábio Aurélio: Nobody is giving up on the Champions League, for this team have defied the odds before. We have scored four against United and Real Madrid and need to remember that.

Do you think it is normal to see four English clubs still involved at this stage of the Champions League? Or does this exaggerate the quality of Premier League clubs compared to the rest of Europe?

Fábio Aurélio: Having the four English clubs in the quarter-finals attests that the Premier League is the best in the world. It reflects both the quality of the game but also the structure of the clubs. It can't be mere coincidence because it's been



Fábio Aurélio

happening for a long time.

Did you know Branislav Ivanovic was such a threat on corners before the game yesterday? What kind of tactics do you have in place at corners?

Fábio Aurélio: Branislav Ivanovic surprised everybody. Nobody expected that guy to come out of the blue and score twice against us. Before the game we were actually thinking he could be used as a weak point because he was being improvised as a right-back.

Which club has impressed you most in the Champions League this season?

Fábio Aurélio: I like what

Porto have been doing. They showed against United they are dangerous and fearless. Not anyone can score twice at Old Trafford.

What were you thinking before the game when you beat United 4-1?

Fábio Aurélio: It's hard to think that you could be putting four goals past Real Madrid or Manchester United. But when everything goes one's way these things can happen. It was very important for us to beat United so we could think again about winning the Premier League.

Who is the player that you consider the best in history?

players and stats. Sometimes he asks me about Brazilian players I have never heard of.

How did you react to last-minute winning goal from Manchester United's Federico Macheda in the 3-2 league win against Aston Villa?

Fábio Aurélio: It was like a bucket of cold water being poured over my head. Villa were playing so well and could have won 3-1. Then Cristiano Ronaldo finds a goal out of nowhere and a teenager scores a screamer on his debut.

The two goals from corners against Chelsea have seen people blame the zonal marking. Do you think it is right?

Fábio Aurélio: The zonal marking has worked for us before so I don't think we should be blaming it for the result. Goals also happen as a result of strong performances and Chelsea managed to put us in situations where they beat the system. If there were perfect schemes, matches would always end in draws.

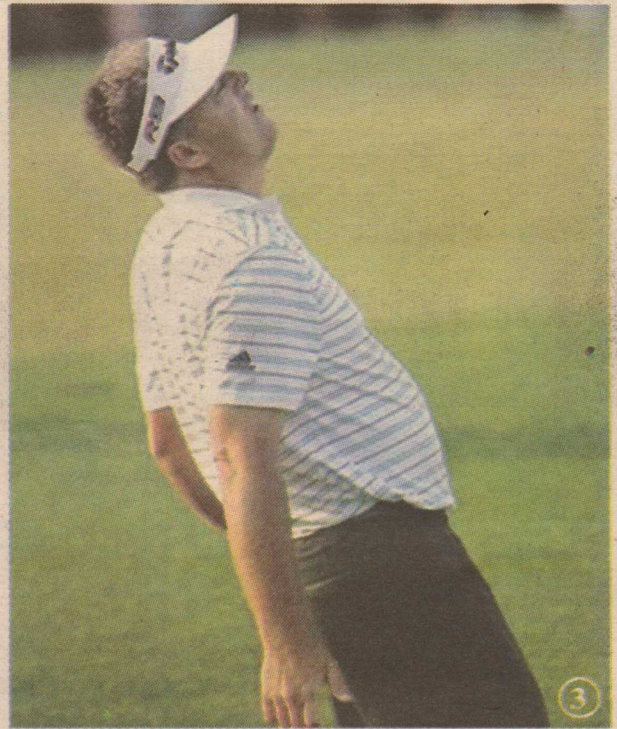
Which player are you most excited to play against?

Fábio Aurélio: I don't really get excited facing world-class players but it is challenging to face guys like Arjen Robben or Lionel Messi. They play with the ball pretty close to their feet and it's a nightmare trying to read what they will do with the ball.

What are some of the most difficult, but at the same time most rewarding, aspects of travelling with your club?

Fábio Aurélio: The only hard thing is being away from my wife and kids. I would love to take them with me. At least it's very different from Brazil where sometimes you get locked in a hotel, even before home matches.

Sports Illustrated



CAPTION

South Africa.

par for the tournament.

Club in Augusta, Georgia.

1. South Africa's Roelof van der Merwe celebrates after taking the wicket of Callum Ferguson during their fourth one day international cricket match against Australia in Port Elizabeth,

2. Jim Furyk walks off the 18th after his final round of the Masters golf tournament at the Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Georgia. Furyk finished with a seven-under

3. Kenny Perry reacts after his chip shot to the 18th green missed the cup during the first hole of sudden playoff at the Masters golf tournament at the Augusta National Golf

4. Australia's Michael Clarke plays a shot against South Africa during their fourth one day international cricket match in Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

5. Shingo Katayama of Japan bows to the gallery as he walks up the 18th fairway during the final round of the Masters golf tournament at the Augusta National Golf Club in Augusta, Georgia.

6. Chelsea manager Guus Hiddink, sixth left, talks to his players before a team training session at Stamford Bridge in London, yesterday. Chelsea are due to play Liverpool in the Champions League in London tonight.

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DAILY TRUST

Tuesday, April 14, 2009

SPORTS Bits

Eaglets beat Zambia

Nigeria's Under-17 team, who will host the 2009 FIFA World Championship, finished third at a Dubai invitational tournament after they beat Zambia 2-1 in their final match yesterday.

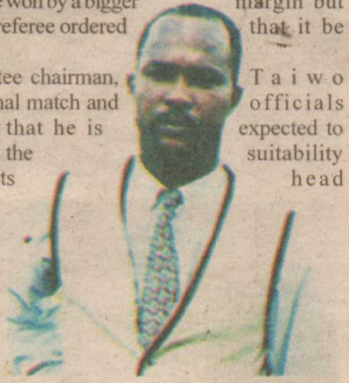
South Korea, who will also feature at Nigeria 2009, won the four-nation competition with seven points after they defeated hosts UAE 2-0. UAE are also poised for the FIFA Championship in Nigeria in October.

Striker Adamu Hassan Lawal opened scoring for Nigeria in the second half before Terry Envoth doubled their lead late on. Zambia pulled a goal back while the Nigerian schoolboys, known as the Golden Eaglets, would have won by a bigger margin but missed a penalty after the referee ordered that it be retaken.

NFF technical committee chairman, Taiwo Ogunjobi, watched this final match and disclosed to Goal.com that he is expected to submit a report as regards the suitability of the Eaglets head coach, Henry Nwosu.

Nwosu's competence has come under focus after some lacklustre showings by the team and already the NFF have interviewed three top coaches for his job - Kadiri Ikhana, John Obuh and Stanley Eguma.

Nigeria are the defending world champions at Under-17 level after they won the competition for the third time in South Korea two years ago.



Taiwo Ogunjobi, NFF technical committee chairman, is expected to submit a report as regards the suitability of the Eaglets head coach, Henry Nwosu.

Villa face nervous wait on Agbonlahor

Nigerian-born England striker Gabriel Agbonlahor is to have a scan on the hamstring he injured in the 3-3 draw against Everton on Sunday and does not know when he will be fit again.

With Emile Heskey also injured, Aston Villa have only one experienced forward, John Carew, fit.

Agbonlahor said: "It felt pretty sore against Everton and I came off because I did not want to make it any worse."

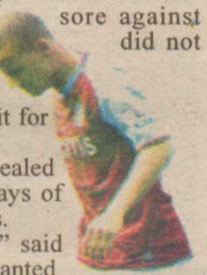
"There is something wrong but I don't know what. We'll have to wait for the results of the scan."

Villa manager Martin O'Neill revealed that Agbonlahor had missed two days of training before the game with a virus.

"He had not been feeling great," said O'Neill. "But we always knew he wanted to come out and play."

"This is one of the big things about him, Ashley Young, and a number of the other lads - they want to play."

"When Gabby came off, his hamstring was sore. Everything was wrong with him in terms of not being physically fit for the game but he still did great. That is the kind of character he is."



Ferrero finally ends win drought

Former world number one Juan Carlos Ferrero ended his five-year wait for a tournament win with victory in the Grand Prix Hassan II in Casablanca. The unseeded Spaniard, who won the French Open in 2003, beat fifth seed Florent Serra 6-4 7-5 for the 12th singles title win of his career.

Ferrero broke Serra six times on his way to his first win since the Madrid Masters in October 2003.

Serra had been chasing his first title since winning in Adelaide in 2006.

It was a first win for Ferrero over the Frenchman after defeats in their two previous meetings, including a loss in Brisbane earlier this year.

The victory should be some solace to Ferrero after his world ranking of 115 deprived him of a shot at a third Monte Carlo Masters next week.



Our national housing poverty

The provision of housing by government especially for public officers dates back to the time of our independence in 1960. My brief study of the subject revealed that the various regional governments at the time had their respective housing programmes not totally different from what they inherited from our English colonial masters.

The military administrations that followed the collapse of the First Republic virtually retained the status-quo. It wasn't until the Second Republic administration of Alhaji Shehu Shagari that the subject became a matter of intense national discourse at the national level and also sadly a tool of intense politicking between the states and the government at the center.

We must, however, credit the military presidency of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida with the articulation of our first truly structured and all-embracing legal instrument or framework to address the alarming gap in the housing needs of all Nigerians when it evolved the National Housing Policy (NHP) in existence today.

The NHP as conceived by the IBB regime was both a recognition of Nigeria's exploding population and urban growth rate and also an admission, for the first time, that government alone was incapable of addressing the massive shortages experienced in the sector.

Decree No. 3 of 1992 which created the National Housing Fund (NHF) as the main driver of the new policy, was envisaged to ensure the pooling of resources and the active participation of the private sector in the provision of qualitative and quantitative housing for all Nigerians. The whole thing was supposed to be simple and effective.

As earlier indicated, the new policy covered workers in both sectors of the economy who were expected to contribute 2.5 percent of their salaries to the NHF. The contribution was made mandatory for participation in the scheme. Employers of labour were required by law to remit the funds to the coffers of the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria (FMBN).

The same law also mandated banks to invest 10 percent of their loans and advances to the FMBN, while insurance companies were required to contribute between 20 and 40 percent of their non-life and life funds into real estate development to make it easier for workers to acquire homes of their dreams. In addition, the three tiers of government were required by law to contribute a minimum of 2.5 percent of their annual revenues into the NHF.

The way the system was designed, the consolidated contributions into the NHF are domiciled with the FMBN which keeps 50 percent on a guaranteed interest of 4 percent in favour of individual contributors. The Primary Mortgage Institutions (PMIs) kept the remaining to be loaned out to eligible participants in the scheme. Workers could borrow to build houses before their mandatory retirement age of sixty, after which they could withdraw their entire contributions if they chose to.

The PMIs were expected to bridge the funding gap between the FMBN and the contribution of workers. They were obliged to evaluate all loan applications by workers and to grant it at half the prevailing market rates. Another important aspect of the policy is that it encouraged other private and public initiatives towards bridging the housing gap of Nigerians. To that extent, state and local governments as well as private building societies were not precluded from contributing.

Everything appeared so good on paper, especially for low-income earners unable to afford reasonable shelter for themselves and their families after the Structural Adjustment Programme priced them out of range. Today, however, it is obvious that the tiny percentage of Nigerian workers who reside in houses they can safely call their own owe their good fortune to the sale of federal government houses which resulted from the monetization programme embarked upon by the last administration.

Today, as I write this, the FMBN which is the principal custodian of the NHP along with its supervising ministry, will be hard-pressed to publish a single list of beneficiaries from the scheme different from the accidental involvement of a few PMIs in the sale of government houses.

In what must surely count as a sad testimony to the failure

TUESDAY COLUMN

with Muhammad Al-Ghazali

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of the policy, nearly two decades after the NHF was created, and even with the endless sloganeering on the dictates of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG's), fewer Nigerian workers own homes of their own.

As a matter of fact the spectre of collapsed urban residential buildings and greedy landlords continues to loom large in our national consciousness. Despite the existence of rent edicts in many states, workers continue to be at the mercy of greedy landlords aided by equally selfish lawyers unrestrained by any form of moral obligation to the average citizens of the country.

In fairness to them, with the general paucity of nuances of social responsibility in the actions and pronouncements of government on the matter added to the endless pussy-footing on what, ordinarily, should have been declared a case of national emergency, why should they? In Lagos and Abuja in particular, the proliferation of cartels operated by landlords and their agents continues to keep the heads of many Nigerians well below the poverty line.

In between, wages have not only stagnated, the government even contemplated wage cuts as if that alone could halt the rampaging effects of the melt-down in the global economy. Without the benefits of the NHP becoming obvious to ordinary Nigerians, it seems the authorities are simply unconcerned about the fact that the

mandatory contributions to the NHF itself constitutes a depreciation of the net pay of workers nationally.

Like so many initiatives developed on these shores the NHF now seems headed for implosion except God touches the hearts of those with the direct responsibility of implementing the programme for the benefit of Nigerians. Again, like so many things Nigerian, it seems far easier identifying the problems afflicting a particular policy, than finding the right solutions to them.

The few experts I have spoken to point at the absence of the key issue of housing among the 7-Point Agenda of the current administration as a major indicator of the priority given to the sector. Others slammed the merger of the Works, Housing and Environment ministries as a serious set-back towards our quest to meet the minimum UN requirements on habitation. Presently, the gap between the UN minimum requirements and the status-quo is too alarming for comfort.

My take on the matter is that only neophytes can possibly fail to see the serious connection between adequate housing for the average worker and our overall economic productivity. Adequate housing after all, does wonders to the psyche of the average individual. Housing gives that unassailable sense of security well beyond the psychological realm.

It determines the degree of our commitment to any task as well as our sense of duty. No human being can be expected to give his very best when he lives in squalid conditions. Home ownership also enables workers to dedicate resources expended on unreasonable rental fees on adequate feeding and education for their families. Needless to add that and aggregation of all these factors ultimately affects the random statistics on the prevailing crime rates fed to the public by the police.

Quite inevitably, the FMBN also carries a heavy burden for its virtual sabotage of the positive intentions of the NHF. For nearly twenty years now workers have contributed their part to the growth of the scheme without being rewarded with the timely and efficient disbursements of loans which should be their minimum expectations.

I know of several workers whose files were forwarded to the FMBN for the past few years still awaiting approval. Others chose to blame he musical chairs at its supervising ministry as the major inhibiting factor.

Whatever may be the exact reasons behind the slow pace of disbursement of loans to eligible beneficiaries by the FMBN, or the lack of priority accorded the housing sector however, the President hardly needs me to remind him that no form of economic transformation will be possible in the land when the greater majority of our able-bodied workers are left at the mercy of a negligible percentage of landlords or reside in shanty towns. The time to put things right is now and I mean it with every sense of responsibility.



Works, Housing and Urban Development Minister Dr. Hassan Lawal