



**TROPICAL COMMERCIAL BANK PLC.**  
Simply Dependable  
72B Maruta Mohammed Way, P. O. Box 40300 Kano, Tel: 084-631991 640000-4

**STAR FEATURE**  
**The thrills and drills of the 2005 Hajj**  
Pages 22 - 27



We are on the GO to building an enduring financial institution.  
**Inland Bank (Nig.) Plc.**  
Totally Devoted to You.

## RECRUITMENT

# NNPC violates Fed character

**We did nothing wrong - Spokesman**

The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), has breached the Federal Character principle as enshrined in the 1999 constitution in a recent recruitment exercise it conducted, in which 30 top

By Ahmed I. Shekarau,  
Group Business Editor

management staff were employed in the Corporation. The 1999 constitution provides that every government ministry or public cor-

poration shall have regard for federal character in recruiting its management staff to promote national unity.

Specifically, Section 171 (5) which deals with appointments into the public service of the Federation by the Presi-

dent himself says: "In exercising his powers of appointment under this section, the President shall have regard to the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity".

Also, the Constitution

says in Part One of the Third Schedule which deals with the responsibilities of the Federal Character Commission (FCC) that: "Notwithstanding any provision in any other law or enactment, the Commission (FCC) shall ensure that every public company or corporation reflects the federal character in the appointment of its directors and senior management staff".

However, a document made available to *Daily Trust* shows that in a recent exercise it conducted where it recruited 30 senior management staff from the positions of Group General Manager (GGM) down to Deputy Managers (DMs), the NNPC flagrantly disregarded the federal character principle.

The list of newly appointed top management staff"

Contd. on Pg 2



The Sultan of Sokoto Alhaji Mahmmadu Maccido and the CAN chairman Arch. Bishop Peter Akinola during the Tsunami disaster relief fund raising ceremony held at the State House Abuja... weekend. Pix: Joe Oroye.

## Confusion over sack of BPE DG

There was uncertainty at the weekend over whether or not Dr. Julius Jibril Bala has been relieved of his appointment as director general (DG), of the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE).

*ThisDay* newspaper reported yesterday that "President Olusegun Obasanjo may have relieved the director general of the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE), Dr. Julius Bala, of his appointment." The paper said it gathered authoritatively that Bala was sacked at the weekend and the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Budget Monitoring and Price Intelligence Unit (BMPIU), Mrs. Oby Ezekwesili, asked to replace him.

However, when contacted by *Daily Trust* for confirmation and reaction to the report, Dr. Bala said he was not officially communicated on the

By Ahmed I. Shekarau,  
Group Business Editor, and  
Anas A. Galadima, Business Reporter

development and prefers to reserve his comments.

"I also read it in that news report just as you read it, so I can't comment on that," he told *Daily Trust* on telephone yesterday. When asked further whether he has not received any official letter on the matter, Dr. Bala said: "I just told you that I also read it in the newspaper like you did."

Concerted efforts to get official confirmation from the presidency regarding the reported sack of the BPE boss yesterday failed.

When our reporter got through to the Senior Special Assistant to the president on media and publicity, Mrs. Remi Oyo, on telephone last night, she said she was in Lagos and had no information regarding the development.

However, another source in the presidency who prefers anonymity, told *Daily Trust* that the reported sack "is true."

Although no clear reason was given in its report on why Dr. Bala was sacked, the *ThisDay* report said he may have been fired "as a result of his tardiness in the implementation of some aspects of the privatisation policy."

Another source told *Daily Trust* yesterday that "Bala

Contd. on Pg 2

## 25 injured in Jigawa, Bauchi border clash

No fewer than 25 people have been injured while thousands have been displaced in a midnight clash between two communities along the border of Jigawa and Bauchi states.

Reports from the area indicate that fighting ensued after an old animosity between the two communities over relocation of an over 300 year old market from Maruta village in Jigawa state to Gurmin village in Bauchi state, last year.

*Daily Trust* reports that several lives were lost and many people injured in similar clashes last year after a detachment of policemen from the Gwaram division invaded the Maruta market claiming to be pursuing armed robbers and killed several people including chil-

From Hassan A Karofi,  
Correspondent (Dutse)

dren. Since then reports say there has been no love lost between the two communities who have been living together for years.

The latest clash, according to investigations, erupted after several attempts by the Maruta community to reclaim their market failed.

Investigations revealed that a wedding ceremony over the weekend ignited the recent hostilities after the representative of the Gurmin community in the Bauchi State House of Assembly was reported to have publicly said the relocated market will never be returned to Jigawa State. This, according to an eyewitness, escalated the al-

ready charged atmosphere leading to a midnight attack on the Gurmin community by their neighbouring Maruta youths.

According to further investigations, both communities have been threatening

## I stand by my words = Makarfi tells Senate

Governor Makarfi says he stands by his words when he said the on-going political reform conference would have been unnecessary if the National Assembly had performed its duties in the first four years of the democratic dispensation.

He told newsmen in Kaduna at the weekend that he was only making a comparison between what obtained in the first four years of the National Assembly and

each other over the market since last year resulting in several fights that forced the Jigawa and Bauchi state governments to set up a committee on the matter led by their deputy governors.

Contd. on Pg 2

From Sani Babadoko,  
Bureau Chief (Kaduna)

what obtains now.

"The first National Assembly started with problems. We all know that there were struggles within itself, between it and the states, between it and the federal government and that definitely must have affected what work it would have done which is not the case now.

"That the situation now, if it has been what we started

Contd. on Pg 2

# News

## NNPC *Contd. from Pg 1*

staff scooped by *Daily Trust* shows that while a state like Ogun got up to five slots among the top management staff, all the 19 northern states have only eight slots.

More so, even within the North, the imbalance is further reflected with Adamawa state alone having three of its indigenes employed, followed by Kwara state with two candidates, while Kaduna, Kano and Katsina have one each recruited.

Adamawa, a very dependable source in the NNPC told *Daily Trust*, "may have succeeded in getting three slots in the exercise to reflect the Group Executive Director in charge of Corporate Services, Alhaji Ibrahim Waziri, who doubles as the officer within the corporation that supervises the recruitment exercise".

Besides, while five states in the South west geopolitical zone, with the exception of Lagos state got nine of the 30 slots, the South east zone had four, with Abia state alone getting three of those chances while Anambra has one.

The list of the newly employed senior management staff also shows that even oil producing states of Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa and Cross River were left out in the exercise, while their counterparts like Abia, Edo and Rivers have three, four and three places, respectively out of the 10 chances allocated to the nine oil producing states.

Though *Accenture*, a consulting firm has been engaged to conduct the recruitment exercise in which several vacant positions in the Corporation were advertised, *Daily Trust* learnt that its

Group Managing Director, Mr. Funsho Kupolokun, sends list of those to be appointed.

When contacted for the NNPC's reactions to these and other allegations on Friday, the General Manager, Public Affairs Division of the Corporation, Dr. Levi Ajuonuma, denied any wrong doing in the recruitment exercise, arguing further that at no time did Kupolokun interfere with the process.

"The appointments truly reflects federal character and reflects the diverse background and competences that the NNPC requires", Dr. Ajuonuma said, adding further that "each geo-political zone of the country was duly represented in the appointments".

On the allegation that Kupolokun hands down lists of candidates to be recruited, the NNPC spokesman said: "That is not true at all. The GMD did not have anything to do with that".

He reiterated that if there is any seeming imbalance in the NNPC's recruitment exercise, it arose largely because the Corporation places so much emphasis on merit.

The NNPC late last year, sacked over 3,000 of its workers and advertised many of the positions that became vacant for various cadres of staff. As part of the recruitment exercise, 500 vacancies were also advertised for graduate trainees.

*Daily Trust* gathered that interviews for the graduate trainees commenced last week Thursday, with candidates called for interviews through GSM phones or e-mail at the last minute-two days to the interview- leaving out many others.

## Confusion *Contd. from Pg 1*

may have been fired for his incompetence."

Dr. Julius J. Bala who hails from Plateau state was appointed to replace Malam Nasir Ahmad el-Rufai as director general of the BPE in July 2003. This followed the appointment of el-Rufai as minister of the Federal Capital Territory.

A day to Dr. Bala's appointment, el-Rufai had handed over the Bureau to Malam Tijjani Abdullahi as acting director general.

The sudden appointment of Dr. Bala as substantive DG a day afterwards was, therefore, an indication of a power struggle between two opposing camps - the el-Rufai camp, which was allegedly preferred by Vice President Atiku Abubakar, who doubles as chairman of the National Council on Privatisation (NCP), and the Bala camp whose cause was said to have been championed by the deputy Senate President, Alhaji Ibrahim Nasiru Mantu.

This simmering tussle made Bala's 20-month tenure in the BPE trailed by series of controversies, with the exit of many top officials of the

agency widely believed to be el-Rufai's "men." These include Tijjani Abdullahi who was deputy director in-charge of infrastructure networks, Malam Hassan Musa Usman, who was deputy director and team leader, Telecoms sector privatisation and Ms. Bolanle Onagoruwa, then in-charge of energy sector privatisation, among others.

Dr. Bala's team is alleged to be "very slow" in privatising public corporations listed in the privatisation schedule. But he argued that his team is taking its time "to prepare the enterprises very well and prepare all the ground rules to avoid the failure of the privatisation processes," as was the experience in some enterprises during el-Rufai's tenure as DG, such as the sale of Nigerian Telecommunications Limited (NITEL) to Investors International (London) Limited (IILL).

Another major allegation against Dr. Bala's stewardship of the BPE is lack of transparency in the sale of some of the companies privatised during his brief tenure.

## List of New Senior Management Staff Employed in the NNPC

No.	Name	State	Position	Grade
1.	Chuks Onuoha	Abia	GGM, IT	M3
2.	Chris C. Akamaio	Abia	Manager, F&A	M5
3.	Ernest O. Ochuma	Abia	DM, IT	M6
4.	Dr. Attahir Yusuf	Adamawa	GM, F&A	M4
5.	Ahmed Sambo	Adamawa	GM, F&A	M4
6.	Muniru Mai	Adamawa	DM, IT	M6
7.	Chidi D. Omeano	Anambra	Manager, IT	M5
8.	Maurice A. Phido	Delta	Manager, F&A	M5
9.	George Osahon	Edo	GGM, Upstream Operations	M3
10.	Bernice I. Okosun	Edo	Manager, Insurance	M5
11.	Isegen O.A	Edo	DM, IT	M6
12.	Tunde I. Ehizojé	Edo	DM, E&P	M6
13.	Jeremiah Oluwaniyi	Ekiti	DM, F&A	M6
14.	Usman Mohammed	Kaduna	Manager, IT	M5
15.	Isa Muhammad Inuwa	Kano	GM, F&A	M4
16.	Abdulkadir U. Saidu	Katsina	DM, Commercial	M6
17.	Isiaka Abdulrasak	Kwara	GM, F&A	M4
18.	Lukman O. Giwa	Kwara	DM, IT	M6
19.	Mathew Adebayo	Ogun	GGM, IT	M3
20.	Fisoye Delano	Ogun	GGM, CPDD	M3
21.	Modupe Bammeke	Ogun	GM, Insurance	M4
22.	Eyitope O. Onadipe	Ogun	Manager, E&P	M5
23.	Akintunde V. Adeolu	Ogun	Dep. Chief, Insurance	SS2
24.	Olusegun Akintemi	Ondo	DM, IT	M6
25.	Olukunle Osoba	Osun	DM, IT	M6
26.	Muti A. Popoola	Osun	DM, E&P	M6
27.	David Ige	Oyo	GM, Strategy	M4
28.	Abiye Membere	Rivers	GM, PSC/FES	M4
29.	Don B. Ahohi	Rivers	Manager, IT	M5
30.	Austin Waka	Rivers	DM, F&A	M6

## Makarfi *Contd. from Pg 1*

ing invectives on his person as a "psychopath" and alleging a hidden agenda to the conference.

Governor Makarfi was the chairman of the presidential committee that streamlined the conference agenda and the senators saw in his statement as reported in one of the national dailies (*not the Daily Trust*) as the sign of the hidden agenda.

Here is the full text of his encounter with newsmen:

**What is your reaction to the action of the National Assembly over what they thought you said. What was the current statement you**

For instance, while Delta Steel Company, Aladja, Warri in Delta State was earlier sold to a company called Bovah through an open bidding round that was conducted publicly and televised nationwide, the steel company was eventually handed over to Global Infrastructure (ISPAN), the Indian firm currently managing Ajaokuta Steel Company to run as core investor in an exercise that was widely believed to be shrouded in secrecy.

made?

I was making a comparison that we did not start as experts. We started with problems. In the first National Assembly, we all know that there were struggles within itself, between it and the states, between it and the federal government and that definitely must have affected what work it would have done which is not the case now.

That the situation now, if it has been what we started with, most of the things that people are calling to be addressed, there might not be the need for it to be addressed because they would have been addressed. And I do not see what is wrong in making this statement. It is a known fact of what we witnessed in the first four years of our administration.

**What of The Sun report. Did you speak in that context?**

Ahh, No! No! Also you see a lot of politics is moving into so many things now. People, for political reasons, tend to change the context of whatever we are saying and the president made an address and the president's address

should be interpreted within the context of the entire agenda which is agreed and submitted to the conference. And that agenda has indicated what are those issues to be discussed and even if in his statement he had indicated preference for something, he did not delete the other options from the agenda which he gave them. So that was to say that we are free to discuss the agenda which he gave them. He has made some statements in some other directions and they should look at that in its totality.

**How would you react to the harsh words from senators to your statement?**

You have to talk to them. I do not react in such a manner. We are all responsible leaders and it is really up to them. Not my cup of tea.

## States that lost out in the exercise

1. Akwa Ibom
2. Bauchi
3. Bayelsa
4. Benue
5. Borno
6. Cross River
7. Ebonyi
8. Gombe
9. Imo
10. Jigawa
11. Kogi
12. Lagos
13. Nasarawa
14. Niger
15. Plateau
16. Sokoto
17. Taraba
18. Yobe
19. Zamfara

## Policeman dismissed as calm returns to Makurdi

The 29-year-old police corporal, Vincent Achukwu, who shot dead a commercial bus driver in Makurdi on Wednesday has been dismissed from service.

Cpl Achukwu who confessed that he killed the driver under the influence of alcohol, was dismissed after an orderly room trial found him guilty of the offence, acting police com-

**From Hir Joseph, Correspondent (Makurdi) with agency reports**

missioner, Ibrahim Mohammed, has said.

In addition to his dismissal, the former police corporal has been charged to court after appearing before a Makurdi chief magistrate court last week for culpable homicide.

Investigations into the matter is still in progress while chief magistrate, Mrs. Theresa Shija, ordered Achukwu remanded in prison custody and adjourned hearing till April 14, 2005, for further mention.

In the meantime, the State security council and the state chapter of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), have condemned the killing of the bus driver, even as the security council also condemned the mob action on Assistant Inspector-General of Police (AIG), Mr. Ben Oghomone, who was beaten and dragged on the road by the mob at the burnt Wurukum police outpost in Makurdi.

In a statement by the security council signed by Col. Edwin Jando (rtd), the council which described the killing as irresponsible and reckless, also condemned the destruction carried out in the town by hoodlums and urged a stop to such activities.

## 25 injured *Contd. from Pg 1*

Although the community comprising of traditional rulers from the Katagum and Dutse emirates have met severally, both communities are not satisfied with the action taken leading to the weekend clash in which millions of naira and property were reportedly destroyed.

The police have since been deployed to the area to restore law and order.

When *Daily Trust* visited the area shortly before the eruption of hostilities, leader of both communities had called on their youths who have been threatening violence to be calm. According

to the ward head of Gurmin, Mallam Mohammadu Sani and that of Maruta who is also called Mallam Mohammadu Sani the situation has already been taken to higher authorities as all arrangements have also been taken to prevent any break down of law and order. A few days after that however, the violence erupted again.

Most of the injured have been evacuated by the police and relatives to nearby hospitals in Gwaram and Shira towns.

The police public relations officer in the Jigawa state police command, ASP Sun-

day Digha, confirmed the clash but could not say how many arrests have been effected but he said a detachment of mobile policemen were drafted to the area to ensure the return of peace.

This clash is another in a series of violent clashes that has left many dead and thousands injured in the area despite high level meetings that have so far failed to bring a lasting solution to a problem many in the area believed was caused by the police.


Already, government officials from Bauchi and Jigawa states have been to the area to calm nerves and prevent further bloodshed.

# FirstAtlantic

## Our Balance Sheet Growth

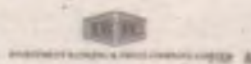


In 5 years of outstanding financial services delivery, our assets have grown from N7.9billion in June 2000 to N30billion in June 2004

The big  offer

Offer for subscription  
3,000,000,000 ordinary shares of 50k each  
**@ N2.50 per share ONLY.**

Offer opens February 21st, 2005 and closes March 21st, 2005



Joint Issuing Houses:

First Atlantic Bank Limited

Application forms are available at all First Atlantic Bank branches, other banks, and stock brokers nationwide. You can also buy on-line @ [www.firstatlanticbank.com](http://www.firstatlanticbank.com)

**FirstAtlantic**  
FIRST ATLANTIC BANK PLC  
1997

*working in the future*

# News

## CAC boss charged for contempt

A federal high court in Abuja, has ordered the Registrar-General of the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), Alhaji Ahmed Al-Mustapha to appear before it on March 21, for contempt.

Al-Mustapha is to show cause why he should not be committed for contempt for disobeying court orders.

The court had on November 5 last year, by "Writ of Subpoena Ducus Tecum" ordered the Registrar-General of the commission to produce some documents before it.

The documents included a certified true copy (CTC) of the extract of the commission's registry dispatch register for October 29, 2004 and a CTC of Certificate of an Up stamped

Deed of floating debenture of a private company, Itex Limited.

The Deed dated July 11, 2002, was allegedly issued in favour of Inland Bank Plc.

The documents were needed to assist the court decide a suit before it involving a controversial loan granted to Itex Ltd by Inland bank Plc.

In the substantive suit Itex Ltd alleged that the bank forged the commission's Deed in respect of more than N281 million overdraft it secured from the bank between 2002 and 2004.

Counsel to the company, Dr Olumide Ayeni, said that the document was forged by the bank to facilitate unlawful seizure of his client's property.

Ayeni also contended that they had repaid in fulls the loan with interest, adding that the bank applied spurious interest rates on the facilities contrary to the directives of the Central Bank of Nigeria.

"The bank debited the plaintiff's account with a cumulative amount of more than N393 million between February and March last year as repayment of the loan with interest" he said

Counsel to the bank, Mr Yakubu Maikasuwa, however, said that the plaintiff was still indebted to his client to the tune of more than N236 million.

Maikasuwa also argued that his client directed him to implement the Up stamped Deed of floating debenture on the loan against the plaintiff.

He contended that the Deed was not fraudulently obtained as alleged, adding that it was duly executed, stamped and registered as a security for the transaction.

The trial judge, Justice Binta Murtala-Nyako, adjourned hearing in the substantive suit to April



Justice Muhammad Uwais, CJN.

## BON MD to resign

The managing director and chairman executive officer of Bank of the North Limited, Alhaji Garba Yakasai has expressed intention to resign from bank.

In a notice of resignation addressed to the managing director of the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Cooperation (NDIC) dated February 28, 2005 and made available to Daily Trust in Kano, Alhaji Yakasai said the decision was personal but above all "in order to give younger and more vibrant hands the opportunity to serve the bank for improved performance."

He expressed gratitude for the opportunity offered him to serve the bank during the bank's most trying period in addition to over four decades of unblemished banking career.

Alhaji Garba expressed gratitude to friends and well wishers for their support and guidance during his tenure, just as he enjoined customers of the bank to maintain their patronage so that its future is guaranteed.

It would be recalled that Alhaji Yakasai was appointed BON MD with nine other seasoned bankers in August 2003, following Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and NDIC intervention via the removal of the previous managing director, Alhaji Muhammad

From Mustapha Isah Kwaru, Reporter (Kano)

Bulama, in a bid to save the bank from collapse.

Meanwhile, BON has bagged two awards in recognition of its outstanding performance at the recently concluded 26<sup>th</sup> Kaduna International Trade Fair.

The Kaduna Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture (KADCIMMA), that issued the rating, observed that out of the 10 banks that participated in the fair, BON emerged the most courteous bank and therefore regarded as the most improved bank at the exhibition.

## Poverty level has dropped

### — Kpakol

Coordinator of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), Dr. Magnus L. Kpakol, says that the level of poverty in the country has dropped from 65.6 per cent in 1996 to 54.4 per cent in 2004.

Dr. Kpakol who disclosed this at NAPEP's monthly press briefing in Abuja, said the organisation will do everything possible to tackle poverty in the country.

He said that the organisation is tackling poverty in the areas of micro credit farmers empowerment, capacity acquisition, Keke-NAPEP and community

By Abdullahi M. Gulloma, Labour Reporter

economic sensitisation.

According to him, NAPEP is providing over N500 million revolving credit around the country that would change the lives of 120,000 Nigerians.

Dr. Kpakol also disclosed that the organisation is providing over N250 million, which according to him, would impact positively on the lives of 30,000 Nigerians.

On the issue of farmers empowerment, the NAPEP coordinator said that the organisation is providing N240 million for farmers empowerment in order to encourage farming.

Chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Housing and Urban Development, Hon. Osita Izunaso, last week disclosed that the Nigeria Police Force is the first on the list of defaulting establishments that have failed to remit contributions to the National Housing Fund.

Addressing newsmen in Abuja on Friday, Hon. Izunaso said that most workers in Nigeria do not know that their organisations do not remit monies to the housing fund.

He also said that Nigerians assume wrongly that the national housing fund is for civil servants or public sector workers alone. "If a person earns up to N3,000 monthly, by the end of six months, he or she automatically qualifies for a loan from the fund to obtain a house,"

## Police, others fail to remit contributions to NHF

By Zainab Alimi, Political Reporter

he explained.

He added that all civil servants who have been contributing to the fund for the same period of time also qualify for the loan, saying that the improper implementation of the housing fund Act has deprived millions of Nigerians the opportunity to own houses.

To check the situation therefore, the committee will, according to the chairman, be holding a public hearing on the violation of the national housing fund Act 3 of 1992.

The aims of the public hearing, he said, is to identify people and corporate organisations that have defaulted in

the remittance of contributions to the fund, interact with stakeholders on how to make the Act effective and draw up a legislative agenda or sanction that will ensure strict compliance with provisions of the Act.

The public hearing, slated for March 7-0 2005 and March 14-17, 2005, according to Mr. Izunaso, became necessary in the face of a huge loss which the fund has been suffering due to fraudulent activities of some parastatals.

Other establishments which he listed as defaulters include among others, Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), NNPC, NEPA, NITEL, NAA, NASS, NTA, FRCN, INEC, NIPOST, MOBIL, Julius Berger, commercial banks and ministries.

## Tribalism, religious bigotry, Nigeria's problems - Maitama Sule

From Ikenna Emeka Okpani, Bureau Chief, Port Harcourt

Nigeria's former representative to the United Nations, Alhaji Yusuf Maitama Sule, has stated that the major problems facing Nigeria were those of ethnicity and religious bigotry even as he stated that Nigeria still has the potential to become a great country if these ills are checked.

Speaking after the conferment of a honorary doctorate degree on him at the 21<sup>st</sup> convocation of the University of Port Harcourt, Alhaji Sule said that the country's diversity in tribes should have been a source of strength to the nation and urged all Nigerians to eschew ethnicity.

For him, the two major religions of Islam and Christianity preach peace and peace, he said can only be achieved in Nigeria if every Nigerian imbibed "love in his or her heart." Alhaji Sule, who is also the chairman of the board of the National Universities Commission (NUC), charged Nigerians to be dedicated to the growth of the country irrespective of where they come from.

In his address, President Olusegun Obasanjo represented by the Minister of Education, Prof. Fabian Osuji, said it was gratifying to note that apart from a few recent students' protest in some universities; Nigerians were be-

countries were preceded by major transformations in their education system.

"The Nigerian university system must therefore embark on the systematic modernization and updating of its curricula in order to meet the challenges of

globalization in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The emerging goals of the modern university must be oriented towards the preparation for a globally connected liberal and profes-

sional learning while enhancing the prospects of employment for its products in the global market place", President Obasanjo noted.

The vice chancellor of the university, Prof. Nimi Briggs, told the audience that the university recently developed strategic plan titled "Building the future; The university of port Harcourt" which defines "for us where we were, where we are now and where we hope to be."

## NIGERIA'S MOST RELIABLE SUPPLIERS OF POWER GENERATORS AND SERVICE COMPANIES

Power generation and distribution in Nigeria have been grossly inadequate to meet the electricity supply requirements, despite the huge investment and attention by the authorities to revive the sector.

As a result, the epileptic and erratic power supply has forced several organisations to source for alternative power. Giving its critical role to the nation's industrial and economic growth, the participation of the private sector has become imperative and desirable.

Recognising the contributions of the private sector in this troubled sector. Media Trust Limited, the publishers of *Daily and Weekly Trust Newspapers* will publish a special supplement on the major dealers/marketers and servicing companies of power generating sets and accessories in Nigeria. The focus is to sensitize the public on their contributions/achievements to the nation's economy, promote their image and identify challenges facing the sector. The publication date is Tuesday, March 15, 2005. For further enquiries and participation, interested companies are requested to call the Special Projects Department on any of the following nos: 08028494170, 08037038663, 08042145839, or 09-6720346.

# News

## National Confab...

## National Confab...

## National Confab...



President Olusegun Obasanjo inspecting the new administration building at the State House with the Chief of staff, Gen. Abdullahi Mohammed, Mr. Oronsaye and officials after the commissioning ceremony. First left is the Managing Director of Julius Berger, who inducted the officials round the building

## Referendum: Lawyer blasts Afe Babalola, others

By Habeeb I. Pindiga, Political reporter

A renowned legal practitioner and member of the defunct Oputa Panel, Barrister Bala Nggilari, has described calls for referendum on the recommendations of the national political reform conference as "strange and mischievous" coming from "people who should know better".

A Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), Chief Afe Babalola, and a number of delegates, some of them legal luminaries, last week at the confab canvassed for directing the conference's effort to a referendum instead of tabling it before the National Assembly.

Nggilari, who is also a member of the House of Representatives from Adamawa state, told *Daily Trust* in Abuja at the weekend that it was strange that lawyers like Babalola and Barrister Mike Ozekhome who knew well that the constitution empowered the legislature to make laws would be making such statements.

He said it smacked of mischief to be calling for referendum when the constitution never recognised such.

"Whatever is the outcome of the confab at the end, to give it a legal backing, it must come to the National Assembly. There is no other way. I find it very strange for some of the views expressed by people who should know better, people like Afe Babalola, Ozekhome.

"If non-legal experts express (such) an opinion because they don't appreciate the position of the law, you will forgive them. But for Afe Babalola to call that decisions of the confab should go straight to referendum and it should override the National Assembly is strange. Let him give me the constitutional provision that gives the confab the legality to jettison the constitution without following the laid

down procedure.

"I think people calling for that need to have themselves re-examined and their heads should be examined as well. It's either they are doing it deliberately out of mischief or they have some ulterior motives. And I must say in respect of Afe Babalola, as a very senior respected member, a lot of people who look up to him in the (legal) profession will be terribly disappointed," Nggilari said.

## Prof. Jega advocates

### investment in infrastructure

A former ASUU national president, Prof. Attahiru Jega, has called for substantial investment in the country's infrastructure. He suggested that government needed to invest enormous capital to rejuvenate the nation's infrastructure to impact positively on the lives of the citizenry.

Jega was commenting on President Olusegun

## Nigeria's presidentialism too expensive - Ex-minister

One time minister of Agriculture and delegate to the national political conference, Dr. Hassan Adamu, has described the presidential system practised in the country as money-guzzling, and called for refinement of the model to be affordable.

Adamu, who came to the confab on the platform of the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), told journalists in Abuja weekend that the system operated vested too much power in the president.

He said, however, that since President Olusegun Obasanjo has listed presidentialism as part of the 'no go' areas, the confab should retain it but with such amendments to make it suitable for Nigeria.

The former diplomat also said that there was nothing wrong with presidentialism *per se*, because "all systems are good", explaining that the main problem for Nigeria was leadership.

"I agree that all constitutions are good. But our problem is in the leadership. So the best thing is for the leaders to look inwards. Leaders should fulfil promises; they should fear God. Without this,

Nigeria won't succeed," he said.

Adamu, however, said the nation would have fared better if it adopted a parliamentary system, due to

the nation's diversities.

The former minister also spoke on the 2007 elections, in which he said federal power must shift to the North since there was said to be a gentleman's agreement for the North to take over after a Southerner had led the nation for eight years.

## Miyetti Allah takes case to confab

Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria says it is set to make a case on members' plight at the ongoing national political reform conference.

Alhaji Muhammadu Oroji, the FCT branch chairman of the association, announced this to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) at the weekend in Abuja. He said members of the group, mainly migrant livestock rearers, had "always been schemed out of national affairs and their welfare neglected by the government".

According to Oroji, the association would specifically demand a subsidy on livestock production equipment, and the security of members' lives and property.

"In many European countries, including the Netherlands, Germany and the U.K., livestock farmers enjoy huge agricultural subsidies as part of a deliberate national food policy," he stressed.

Oroji, who is also aspiring for the national leadership of the pastoralists, said they would fight for the re-introduction of cattle routes, grazing lands and water supply points.

He also revealed that they would seek the introduction of an insurance cover for their livestock at the reform conference.

According to Oroji, "the intention is to stop incessant

clashes between cattle breeders and farmers in parts of the country.

"This will not only encourage livestock farmers, but also boost protein supply in the country," he added.

## Debate on Obasanjo's speech continues today

By Habeeb I. Pindiga, Political reporter

The national political reforms conference reconvenes today at the International Conference Centre, Abuja, to continue debating President Olusegun Obasanjo's inaugural address.

For four days last week, representatives of states and groups took turns to state their positions on the president's speech. Leaders of each of the 36 state delegations, 37 elder statesmen, six traditional rulers and heads of the interest groups represented spoke, following a decision to take contributions from heads of delegations before interested individuals.

The conference will resume with interested delegates making their positions on the speech known. About seventy of them had indicated interest to speak as at Thursday when the confab adjourned for delegates to consult with their people.

## Scholar wants confab to deliberate on 1996 draft constitution

From Tashikalmah Hallah, Correspondent Bauchi

contents of the report are being examined.

"Politically, the conference that took place did a lot of work, and the constitution that was framed out of that political debate is much better than what we have today.

"I am happy that most of the people attending this conference now were also at the 1996 conference. And I challenge them, in the spirit of nationhood, to produce the 1996 draft and present it to their colleagues for onward debate.

"Let them examine the contents and pick those issues that are vital to our development; because all the gains we had made at the constitutional conference of General Sani Abacha were

thrown away, just because it was of Abacha. I am happy that the Oputa Panel report has been presented to them.

"Now, if the delegates are happy to receive the Oputa Panel report, then let them also have the courage to dust both the constitutional conference and the Vision 2010 reports and deliberate on them," he added.

Dr Garba also tasked the delegates to salvage the image of local governments, which he said remained a thorny issue in the polity. According to him, local governments remain the engine room for a speedy development, stressing that their ambiguous positions in the polity have denied people for enjoying the dividends of democracy.

Obasanjo's inaugural address at the ongoing national political reform conference in Abuja.

The university don urged his fellow delegates to dispel any hidden agenda by convoking the conference by pushing through what their respective constituencies requested them to accomplish.

Similarly, Dr Chris Abashiya from Kaduna state stressed the need for the government to strengthen the structures binding the polity, such as rotational presidency, federal character, religion and ethnicity. He urged the delegates to ensure that the constitution clearly provided for specific schedules for the vice-president, deputy governors and local government vice-chairmen, so as not to produce "useless appendages".

Also speaking, Alhaji Umar Tofa, from Kano state, made a demand for meaningful economic reforms that have direct bearing on the lives of the people by way of eliminating poverty, hunger and disease to achieve lasting peace, unity and stability.

He suggested for heavy investment in the agriculture, health, education, water supply, electricity and roads to uplift the living standard of the people.

In his contribution, Alhaji Ishaku Jikantoro from Niger state advocated that religious leaders and traditional rulers should be given a chance to rule the country.

## MASSOB not in support of Confab

By Beatrice Onuchukwu, Stringer Awka

The Movement for the Actualisation of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) and the Biafran Liberation Front (BLO) have said that they are never in support of the ongoing national confab in Abuja.

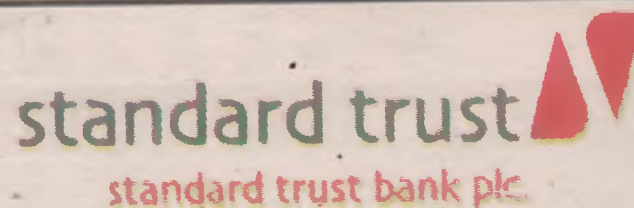
Making the declaration in Onitsha, Anambra state, the movement's commissioner for Information and Foreign Affairs, Evang. Godswill Sunday Okoro, explained that the conference can never unite all the ethnic nationalities in the country, and warned the federal government to stop deceiving Nigerian citizens.

According to him, only the truth can save the nation from the combined forces of socio-economic, political and religious crises which have drowned the nation since independence.

"There is nothing like planning for equity, justice and fairness in this political reform," he said; and cautioned that the masses should be aware of further plots to loot public funds, create basis for further marginalisation of Easterners and South-South, political killings and unemployment.

He regretted that despite all efforts made by Nigeria's past heroes to liberate the nation, there is nothing on ground to show that the country is on the developmental plane.

"Today, our leaders of thought and elders have left autonomous nationalities, cultural differences, religious bigotry, Shari'a war, crimes, coup d'etat, ritual killings and threats of succession as legacies for our generation," he stated.



## UBA / STB MERGER: Press Release (2)

Sequel to the formal announcement on January 19, 2005 of the approval of the merger of United Bank for Africa Plc (UBA) and Standard Trust Bank Plc (STB) by the respective Boards of the two banks, we are pleased to provide you with an update of events as it relates to the merger.

- We had taken the decision to merge our two banks out of the desire to provide the Nigerian banking public with world-class services through an extensive network that will bring us as close as possible to everyone with a banking need.
- We envisage a bank with a comprehensive and well-priced product suite.
  - We envision a bank that will have the strength and capacity to support our customers' businesses and contribute meaningfully to the economic development of our country through direct job creation and by supporting ancillary businesses.
  - We dream of a bank that will play a leading role in the development of e-banking and alternative payment systems in the country.
- We are pleased and very grateful for the support and positive response to our merger decision from all our stakeholders thus far. We have received the pre-merger consent of the Central Bank of Nigeria and a letter of "no objection" from the Securities and Exchange Commission [SEC] with regards to the merger in line with statutory provisions. These initial approvals from the regulatory authorities of the merger are indeed heartwarming and provided us with the impetus to forge ahead to the next steps in consummating the merger.
- We have commenced the process of a legal merger of our banks by setting up a steering committee made up of senior staffs of the two banks. We have engaged the services of highly reputable specialists and consultants from across the globe to support the committee and ensure a transparent and seamless exercise with minimal downside risk.
- These experts include some of the Nigerians in Diaspora with experiences from such firms as J. P. Morgan and Goldman Sachs, who are helping the process.
- Concurrent with the merger process, we have also set up teams to commence the process of value extraction and integration of our people, cultures, operations and systems.
- The teams are co-led by two Executive Directors (one each from UBA and STB).
  - Global integration experts under the overall leadership of McKinsey & Company- a global leader in mergers, acquisitions and integration have also been engaged to drive the integration.

Their main areas of focus include

- Strategy and Organisational Model
  - Information Technology Integration
  - Business Risk Management
  - Branch Repositioning
  - Personnel Harmonization Issues

• In the meantime, we have put arrangements in place to ensure that throughout the merger period, our valued customers will continue to receive superior and uninterrupted services from the two banks. Our customer service personnel are available in all our Branches to ensure prompt services.

• We wish to thank all our shareholders, customers, service providers, friends and well-wishers, who have called and visited us in support of this merger. We are humbled by the show of solidarity and encouragement from a broad spectrum of Nigerians. Our pledge is that we will spare no effort in creating a bank that you will be proud of and one that will be a signpost of Nigerian enterprise and a 'role model for African businesses'.

# News

## FACES OF NATIONAL CONFERENCE DELEGATES PIX: KENNEDY EGBONODJE



*Dr. Olusola Saraki (Kwara)*



*Comrade Adams Oshiomhole*



*Engr. Charles C. Ugwu*



*Chushe Okojle*



*Gen. G. O. Ejiga (rtd)*



*Rev. F. A. Adebisi*



*Ahmed Moh'd. Gusau (Sokoto)*



*Emma Ugboaja*



*Alh. (Dr) Hassan Adamu*



*Miliki A. Idris*



*Gen. Victor Malu (rtd)*



*Rev. Daniel Okoh*



*HRH, Igho PCN Egbogu (Enugu)*



*S. D. F. Ejiofor*



*Chief Gbade Giwa*



*Chief Mike Nkwocha*



*George Korgba*



*Rev. Monsignor John Aniagwu*



*Dr. Uma Eleazu (Abia)*



*Salihu Lukman*



*HRH Eze G. C. Adiukwu*



*Professor Audu Idrisa*



*Mrs Icheen Magaret*



*Dr. Dauda Ishaya*



*Chief Afe Babalola (Ekiti)*



*Peter Adeyemi*



*Chief Sam Bolarinde*



*Chief (Mrs) Bisi Ogunleye*



*Chief Stephen Okoh*



*A. B. Achimugu*



*Ebonyi*



# Opportunities abound for the prepared



In barely three years of operations, NUB International Bank Limited has taken good advantage of the numerous opportunities that abound in the growth sectors of the Nigerian economy.

This has led to the phenomenal growth in the Bank's performance as well as competitive returns on investment.

Join us to be part of this success story.



NUB International Bank Ltd.  
*...we never stop serving you*

[www.nubbank.com](http://www.nubbank.com)

Head Office: Plot 554, Adetokunbo Ademola Crescent, P.M.B 5095, Wuse II, Abuja. Tel: 09 - 5237051, 4700651

# The power of partnership

## Synergy

We see our relationships with our clients as lifetime partnerships, providing solutions to their business needs with a long term view of being part of their success story. This we do by taking more than a passing interest and infact becoming an integral part of their business.

Time and time again we have demonstrated this commitment to clients by providing a synergy that breeds success. This is the spirit of FSB International Bank ...building partnerships for sustainable results. Visit any of our branches today.



**FSB International Bank plc**  
The natural business partner



CIN/BSO/ADV/01/03/329/98



## YOUR LETTERS

### Ribadu: Between patriotism and overzealousness

The Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) is no doubt a patriot, a man who has exhibited the love of his country above self. His achievements within a short time will remain indelible in the history of Nigeria.

It is not a hidden fact that no man is perfect especially when exposed to fame and power. The possibility of getting drunk and losing control is not far fetched. In the case of Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, when he visited the Onne Port in Port Harcourt, it was reported that he said, all containers with Contraband good (not less than 10,000) would be conveyed to Abuja

by road and their contents burnt thereafter. The aim of this idealist exercise was to serve as a deterrent. Considering the weight of this statement, I choose to presume that the man was quoted out of context. This presumption was based on the fact that such an educated public office holder does not need an economist to tell him that such a proposition has no economic value even in the face of excessiveness.

Although there were no public reactions to this statement, I believe the general public shared my opinion. Now he has stirred another controversy in Johannesburg, South Africa while addressing a group of Nigerians. During this address, according to the publication of the *Daily Trust* Newspaper of 1st March, 2005, he claimed to have "checked" former President Ibrahim Babangida's affairs and has not succeeded

in pinning the former leader with money laundering or any financial crime. His statement did not end there, but further added that "but he is crafty. Nowhere will you see his name as the owner of any property or the holder of any bank account abroad, but that does not mean he will escape. Never, never again in Nigeria will someone like him come to rule the country. It is too late for people like that. The world has changed".

We do not need a soothsayer to say that these statements are heavily prejudiced. It is highly surprising and disappointing that a man believed to be a trained lawyer could toy with the etiquettes of this noble profession. This Johannesburg outburst has cast a dark spell on Ribadu's objectivity. He has played the role of the petitioner, prosecutor and judge in the same case (Ribadu VS Babangida).

Ribadu's outburst on Babangida is not the same ferocious style he had adopted in prosecuting previous cases; that is prosecution even in the absence of substantive evidence. Definitely, he is a man thrown between patriotism and overzealousness.

*Haliru Ibrahim  
No. 25 Ogaminana*

### Re: Bush, Obasanjo and Musharraf. Three of a kind

In an article published in your esteemed newspaper on January 26, 2005 entitled "Bush, Obasanjo and Musharraf, three of a kind" by Mohammed

Haruna, the writer has tried to portray Presidents Obasanjo and Musharraf as 'dictators'. While the writer is entitled to his views, he appears to have confused

strong leadership with dictatorship. The latter implies the arbitrary exercise of power bypassing the official institutions of the state, such as the legislative as-

sembly, the judiciary and even the constitution. In both Nigeria and Pakistan, these institutions are functioning more or less smoothly and have fre-

quently asserted their legitimate authority. The news media is free and all the other components of democracy have taken root in their respective societies. In other words, in both countries democracy, with all its imperfections and shortcomings, is a functioning reality.

You will, no doubt, agree that strong leadership is the imperative, especially in developing countries, to ensure their political stability and socio-economic progress. The Presidents of both Nigeria and Pakistan are trying their best to provide the much-needed strong leadership and have succeeded to a considerable extent. To brand them as dictators, with all its negative connotations, is not only a factual inexactitude, it is detrimental to the march towards greater political maturity.

*Akhtar Hussain Kazmi,  
Counsellor, High Commission of Pakistan, 1805 Samora Micheal Street, Asokoro, Abuja.*

### FCT: What does Bagudu and Ngbako want again?

With the benefit of hindsight, it is now evident that the 2003 general elections witnessed the worst forms of political manipulations in the history of this country.

For that was the era when rigging became so sophisticated that it was no longer restricted to the polling booths but conceded results were conjured up and posted on the internet even before the official results were announced. That was the era when political godfatherism took a more frightening dimension and headed for the worst.

The phenomenon, which was reported in almost all parts of the country, unveiled its worst form in Anambra State where a serving governor was abducted as his godfathers openly demanded for their profits from the state treasury.

Little did anybody realize then that as such appalling

situations were taking place in the country that the Federal capital Territory was suffering the grip of a similar cliques which would stop at nothing to monopolise all the lucrative and plum political offices intended for the indigenes of the FCT.

These cliques which move about with larger-than-life egos and insatiable thirst for the plum of office have like a parasite glued themselves to the psyche of the FCT, strategically positioning themselves to suck blood endlessly while leaving others with nothing. This has led many in the FCT to ask; what does Ambassador Ayuba Ngbako and A.B. Mammann want?

For the few who are not yet aware, the duo represent the most clique in the FCT who have disturbingly continued to monopolize every political position that is due to the FCT without regard for the principle of

equity and justice thereby residing principle of fair play with contempt.

Ambassador Ngbako to start with, was chairman of the Abuja Municipal Area Council, AMAC, for three consecutive terms. This he was able to ensure through his connection with the top brass successive military regime.

During that unfortunate era, when Ngbako held sway as the chairman AMAC, he did little or nothing to improve the lot of his people in the FCT. Since he left that position however, the indigenes of the FCT have come to realise the kind of person he is. Why is it that Ngbako keeps mute on the atrocities of government whenever he is in public office but always complains when such appointments are withdrawn from him?

For example is it not well known that when Ngbako was given the FCT

ambassadorial slot 1999 and 2003 that he completely cut himself off from the saying that ambassadorial position is not an elective position and, therefore, he would not attend to anybody? At that time, many indigenes of the FCT, who had gone to meet the then Nigerian Ambassador to the Gambia returned disappointed.

Not done with that, the ambassador, who is well aware of the luxuries of office, allegedly sponsored and imposed his nephew, Zaphaniah Jisalo as AMAC chairman even when he knew that his brother was not the best out of that contested the 2003 elections.

To add salt to injury, Ngbako is now clamoring for the position of a mayor to be created in the FCT to replace that of a minister. When such is done, he may use the resources available to him to

hijack Abuja's mayoralty.

General A.B. Mammann is even more pathetic. He was privilege to serve as the minister of Industries at different times, yet has no single record of achievement to show.

After retirement from service, the general, who has never hidden his contempt for the people, recoiled to a solitary life and removing whatever links he has with the people. Little wonder his people paid him back in his own coins in the last elections, when he was not able to deliver his own ward.

*Ibrahim Musa, No. 5, Gwagwalada Abuja  
Ibmusa@yahoo.com*

Reactions to articles published in this paper may be directed to the editor via the email address: [editor@dailytrust.com](mailto:editor@dailytrust.com)

# Trust International

## Foreign & Diplomatic

# Egypt and democratic reform

By Dr. Louay M. Safi

The Bush Administration has made education reform in Muslim societies a key demand, and has earmarked considerable sums of money to fund democratic education. The substantial funds allocated to democratic education in Muslim countries have attracted many organizations involved in democratic training in South American and Eastern Europe. The decision to spend money on democratic education signals a positive change in attitude, and the Bush Administration should be applauded for taking this forward-looking initiative, and for increasing the pressure on the autocratic Middle Eastern regimes to undertake democratic reform.

Democratic reform will not, however, come about by merely pouring cash and making demand from outside. The reform will ultimately emerge as a result of popular demands and reformist steps by internal political players. Outside pressure by democratic nations should compliment, rather than displace, the ongoing internal social and political struggle in place long before the menace of global terrorism hit the United States.

The temptation to champion democracy in the Middle East by micro-managing the reform process is counterproductive, and is likely to play into the hands of anti-democratic forces intent on stemming out the fledgling democratic forces under the rubric of safeguarding national independence and countering foreign interference. Rather than pressuring autocratic government to change school

curricula and superimpose a set of abstract criteria through state apparatus, US government should use its influence to increase the margin of freedom for political expression and action by civil society organizations. The forces of reform and modernization are already at work in Muslim society, and have, despite severe limitations imposed by the state on their actions, made considerable strides to effect educational, cultural, and political reforms.

The struggle for democracy in Egypt provides us with a good insight into the dynamism of reform in this key Middle Eastern country, and underscores the need for a new approach by the United States and Europe to facilitate the emergence of stable and sustainable democracy. The country is ruled by a political party that wears a liberal democratic garment, but protects the interests of a corrupt oligarchy, and rules with an iron fist. The party tightly controls the press, has continuously supported emergency laws, and enjoys full monopoly over the licensing of new political parties. The party has, for years, marginalised opposition, and refused to legitimise any political group that advocates Islam as the foundation of social and political reform.

For years, the ruling elites of Egypt have refused to recognize the Muslim Brotherhood group as a legitimate political actor by invoking secularism. Excluding an Islamic party that has not clearly defined how it plans to protect the constitutional rights of religious minorities is



Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak

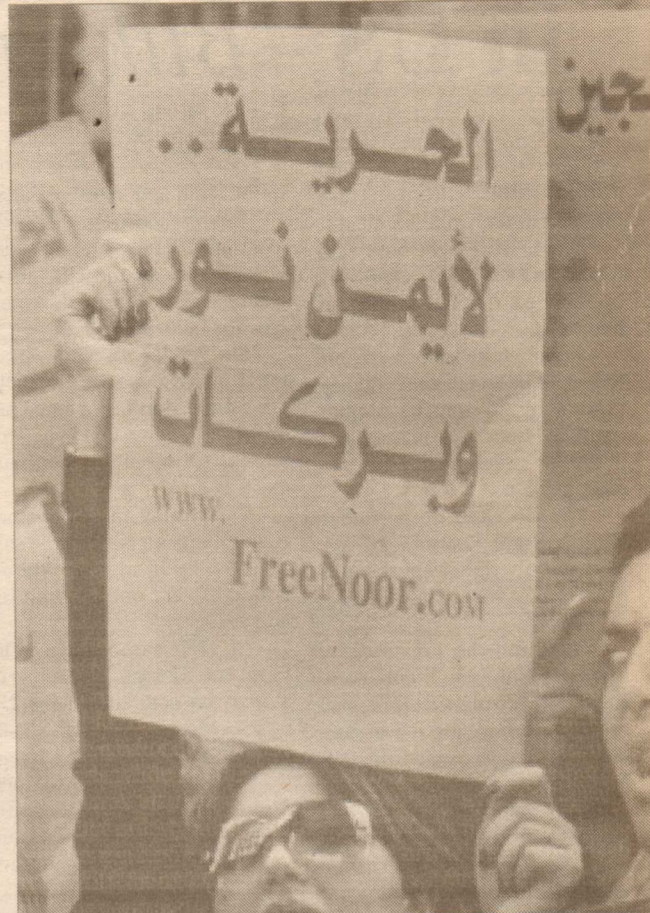
justifiable, though the state has never set clear standards and qualifications to explain its position. However, using religious adherence of party members and leaders as a ground to exclude parties that promote a non-religious national platform is a clear violation of democratic principles.

In 1996, the committee in charge of licensing political parties, an arm of the Egyptian's national congress, turned down the application of a new political party, the Wasat Party, co-founded by a Muslim and a Copt. Egyptian security forces arrested the founders, accused them of being a front for the banned Muslim Brotherhood. Notwithstanding that the party leaders were acquitted by a military court, the

Egyptian government insist on denying the Wasat Party's application, and continues to curtail political freedom and prevent the emergence of popular political opposition. The Wasat Party has very moderated views, and is open to people regardless of their religion and gender. It has a good number of Christian Copts and women, both in the Party's leadership and the rank-and-file.

The Wasat Party, and other popular groups, is castigated for insisting on grounding their reformist message in Islamic values and traditions. Yet it is this kind of work, in which the basic cultural and religious assumptions and traditions are challenged from within, and through reference to Islamic values and normative sources, that is essential for advancing the process of democratisation, and for fostering a spirit of openness and tolerance. Islamic sources emphasise the values of equality, religious freedom, respect of diversity, and fair dealings, essential for any democratic reform. And reform movements must appeal to Islamic values that form the moral sub-terrain of contemporary Muslim cultures.

For over half a century, Western democracies have relied on the power of Middle Eastern states to effect modernisation by imposing modern forms on their populations. The result has



Gamila Ismail, the wife of Egyptian opposition leader Ayman Nour and his deputy in the al-Ghad or Tomorrow party, at a rally of his supporters at Egypt's High Court, yesterday, in protest of his arrest.

been scandalous. Political systems that silence opposition, and use an iron fist to transform religiously rooted traditions and introduce modern lifestyle, have created police states that foster corruption and breed extremism and violence. Nothing can stem the tide of

extremism, except a political environment that promotes dialogue, freedom of press and association. In a society in which ideas are allowed to compete, extremism will be forced to move from the centre stage to the fringe of society, and moderate voices and practices will prevail.

IVIEWS

## Vacancies

A reputable organisation, invites applications from interested and experienced candidates for the following positions:

### 1. Secretary - Location: Abuja

#### Requirements:

- MA/MSc/BA/BSc
- Computer literacy is a must
- Fluency in both written and spoken English
- Be responsible and innovative.

### 2. Driver/Cook/Gardener/Security

#### - Location: Abuja

#### Requirements:

- A minimum of OND in any discipline with a Trade Test Certificate.
- Responsible and should be aged between 25-35 years
- Recommendation letters from at least two reputable organisation or individuals.
- Fluency in both written and spoken English language.

#### REMUNERATION: Highly attractive

Interested candidates should forward their handwritten applications, including their resume (indicate contact address, telephone numbers and email address) and photocopy of credentials to:

**The Administrative Officer Fax: 09-5237785**  
**P.O.Box 7012 or**  
**Maitama - Abuja**

***For over half a century, Western democracies have relied on the power of Middle Eastern states to effect modernisation by imposing modern forms on their populations. The result has been scandalous. Political systems that silence opposition, and use an iron fist to transform religiously rooted traditions and introduce modern lifestyle, have created police states that foster corruption and breed extremism and violence.***

# Trust International

## World Report

### Rights abuses rampant in US - Bukhari Bello

The executive secretary of the National Human Rights Commission, Bukhari Bello has said that human rights violations are rampant in the United States.

The human right boss said this when *Daily Trust* sought his opinion on the US report on human rights in Nigeria.

Although he said the report was justified and that the country faces violations in its human rights and rule of law records, but that in the United States they are more grievous.

The US State Department Human Right Report for 2004 said serious rights abuses and violations of rule of law abound in Nigeria.

Although the presidential spokesperson, Mr. Femi Fani Kayode has dismissed the human rights report, saying it was not the official position of Washington, and that it was collated by few officials of the embassy.

Citing example of rights violations by the US government, Bukhari said the government of US continues to detain people at the Guantanamo Bay in Cuba in contravention of international standard for prisoners.

He said America is deeply engrossed in the violations of the rights of the child.

Explaining further, he said while all countries of the world are signatory to the United Nations commission for the rights of the child (CRC), it is only the United States and Somalia that have no signatory in the commission.

He said Somalia did not sign because of its political problem and or lack of government.

According to him, Nigeria has even domesticated the rights

By Jibrin Abubakar, Reporter Foreign Desk

of the child and improved on it.

Bukhari added that there exist extra-judicial killings and election abnormality in the US, citing example with the Bush-Algere election controversy.

On gender discrimination, the human rights boss said in the US women don't earn equal pay with men, adding that in Nigeria such discrimination does not exist.

Confirming the US human right reports on Nigeria, he said they are truth, old and known issues. "Every one has said it," he said.

In the same vein, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has condemned the US rights reports, describing it as 'swindling and deception'.

Nigeria, North Korea and Venezuela are in the same category while the report said human rights conditions are

improving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Speaking on the state of prison in the country, 65 per cent of inmates in Nigerian prisons are detainees awaiting trial.

He regretted that the infra-structures at the prisons were not conducive for human habitation and that most of them may die before their trial.

"If after some time we do not receive any positive response from the government on the state of the Nigerian prisons we will go to court and challenge the government," he added.

He said both the prisons and the barracks that house the prison warders are in the same bad shape.

According to him, although the government is not interfering in the activities of the NHRC, but may only incapacitate them in the areas of funding.

"We are working towards the autonomy of the NHRC. We need to fine-tune some areas. The most important is funding," he said.



Osama bin Laden

The mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, has launched an attack on Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon by calling him a "war criminal" in an article published yesterday.

The article was published by the British *Guardian* newspaper.

"Ariel Sharon, Israel's prime minister, is a war criminal who should be in prison, not in office," Livingstone wrote in an opinion piece for the paper. "Israel's expansion includes ethnic cleansing.

"Palestinians who had lived in that land for centuries were driven out by systematic violence

### Sharon is a war criminal-UK mayor

and terror aimed at ethnically cleansing what became a large part of the Israeli state," the article said.

"Today, the Israeli government continues seizures of Palestinian land for settlements, military incursions into surrounding countries and denial of the right of Palestinians expelled by terror to return," it

added. In the article, the London mayor again rejected accusations of anti-Semitism.

He stressed his steadfast opposition to racism and his regard for the Jewish people.

Livingstone accused Israel of misinformation about the scale of anti-Semitism in Europe and seeking to silence critics by calling them anti-Semitic.

Relations between Livingstone and key sections of the Jewish community in Britain are tense after his clash with the *Evening Standard* Jewish reporter Oliver Finegold.

Finegold was likened to a German concentration camp guard by the mayor two weeks ago.

Livingstone has refused to apologise for his remarks about the reporter.

### '200 al-Qaeda members operate in UK'

Former Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir John Stevens said up to 200 Al-Qaeda "terrorists" are operating in UK and the threat of attacks is real.

He has backed proposed anti-terror laws, saying critics were naive about the "brutal" threat posed by fanatics.

Sir John, writing in the *News of the World*, said militants trained by Osama bin Laden "fester" across the country.

But the Liberal Democrats accused him of sending "mixed messages" adding to an already "complicated situation".

The Prevention of Terrorism Bill, which passed through the Commons by 14 votes last week, faces further opposition when it reaches the House of Lords next week.

Among the proposals for terror suspects are house arrest, curfew, tagging and bans on internet and telephone use.

But civil rights groups have criticised the government plans and called for an end to detention without trial.

Foreign terror suspects are held at Belmarsh prison in London without trial, even though Law lords have ruled this breaches human rights legislation.

And critics said the

principles of justice and human rights are fundamental to British law and should not be lost.

But Sir John said any delay in enacting the legislation would bring "comfort" to al-Qaeda.

### Odd World

#### Early men had better brains-Report

Tiny pre-humans who lived on an Indonesian island until about 12,000 years ago had brains so surprisingly sophisticated that the creatures may represent a previously unrecognised species of early humans, or hominids, scientists reported on Thursday.

CAT scans of the inside of a skull — among the bones of eight individuals found in a cave on the Indonesian island of Flores — suggest brains that would have allowed advanced behavior such as toolmaking, the international team of researchers said.

They said further study of the skull of the creature, nicknamed "the Hobbit" after a literary character, showed it clearly was a normal adult of its species, not a mutant or diseased specimen, as some critics have alleged.

"I am bowled over," said Dean Falk of Florida State University, who studied CAT scans to make a virtual cast of the inside of the creature's skull.

"I thought we were going to see a little chimpanzee-like brain and I was wrong. Nothing like this has been seen before," she told a telephone briefing.

Falk saw features that would have allowed the "Hobbit" to have made the tools found in the Indonesian cave, to use fire and to hunt as a group.

"I never thought I would see it in a brain this small," she said.

Homo floresiensis stood only about 3 feet (one meter) tall and had a brain about a third the size of modern adult humans. It had long arms and would have walked upright.

"We know from the record that these little humans, these little meter-high humans, were hunting things like pygmy elephants, were making fire and were making stone tools," said Mike Morwood of the University of New England in Australia, who led the initial mission that uncovered the bones.

#### Old remedy for pimple

Take two puppies, cut off their heads and collect the blood, reads the 17th century instructions — not for some voodoo rite but to cure pimples among the middle class.

Weird health and beauty recipes have been around for a long time. Now two old manuscripts, found at a British stately home and coming up for auction, suggest some truly odd cures for everyday ailments.

The 300-year-old cookery, medical and household recipe books, lavishly illustrated and with elaborate script, give advice on almost everything, from treating burns to getting rid of freckles, said manuscript specialist Luke Batterham.

"These books are a very direct insight into what people were interested in in the late 17th century," Batterham told *Reuters*. "People seem to go a very long way for beauty, now and then."

One recipe advises to take "2 Puppies before they can see, chopp of their heads & hang them up by the heels to bleed," then mix with white wine to rid the patient of unsightly pimples.

Scalds and burns, another says, are best treated with a mixture of sheep's dung and fresh goose grease, while four-day-old lemon juice rubbed on the face is guaranteed to eradicate unwanted freckles.

The two books are expected to fetch a total or more than 2,000 pounds (\$3,844) when they go for auction at Bonhams in London on March 15

### Syria withdraws from Lebanon

#### ... US seeks full withdrawal

The United States is leading continued pressure on Syria for a full withdrawal of its troops from Lebanon.

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad announced on Saturday a phased redeployment to the Syrian border, but Washington says this is insufficient.

Israel, France and Britain have also called for a complete pull-out.

Syria has been under intense pressure to withdraw from Lebanon since the February car bomb death of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

Many Lebanese accused Syria of being involved in the killing, but Damascus has strongly denied this.

Facing intense international pressure and daily street protests within Lebanon, Mr. Assad told Syria's parliament on Saturday that troops would be pulled back first to the Bekaa Valley in eastern Lebanon, and then to the Syrian border.

He said that would fulfil commitments to both the 1989 Taef accord that ended the Lebanese civil war, and a UN resolution from 2004 calling for foreign forces to leave Lebanon.

But the US said the announcement was insufficient.

"It's clear to us, not just the United States, but the international community, that his words are insufficient," US spokesman Adam Ereli

said. "We have not heard the words: 'immediate and full withdrawal'."

Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom called the announcement "unacceptable" and "purely a cosmetic measure".



President Bush

# FEATURE

## In printing, the faster the better

By Hussaini Garba Muhammed and Moshood O. Mohammad, who were in Lagos

It was the morning of Tuesday, the 25<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2005. We had all converged at the venue of the four-day workshop from our various organizations, most of them, off set printing companies, newspaper houses, packaging and labeling firms, government agencies, corporate organizations, tertiary institutions and various other stakeholders in the printing industry, amidst the usual hustle and bustle of Lagos. We would be there till Friday, the 28<sup>th</sup> day of January.

We were there in groups comprising various numbers of trainees, beginning from just a pair, each representing its own organization. We looked strange to each other and we, indeed, regarded each other as strange. The atmosphere, mildly seasoned by the humid heat of the once federal capital of the world's most populous black nation, was clothed in excitement and uncertainties. It was a typical gathering of diversity. Who were all these gentlemen and ladies? How divergent are their attitudes, views and cultures, their education and intelligence as well as their focus and disposition. Each of the about 200 trainees, divided into two groups for the morning, afternoon and evening sessions of about 60 participants each to facilitate smooth running of the workshop, naturally felt such questions racing through his or her mind at the very first sight of the entire convergence. Naturally also, he or she suppressed it with maturity. We were all Nigerians gathering there from different parts of Nigeria to acquire more skills on how to practice well our noble profession, which is printing.

The organizers of the workshop were the Heidelberg Nigeria Limited, established in 1998 as a subsidiary of Heidelberg Druckmaschinen AG of Germany, widely acclaimed as the world leader in the manufacture and distribution of printing/publishing machinery. Our workshop, tagged "DI Action Week", was

widely acclaimed as the biggest live direct imaging demonstration in Nigeria. The grand workshop afforded us the participants the ample opportunity, not just to update our technical skills, but to acquire new and broader ideas and make new contacts as developing professionals. Heidelberg said it was a part of its contribution and commitment to the growth of the printing and publishing industry in Nigeria and was also in fulfillment of its set out mission to play a major role in the industry in the country.

We knew, and those of us who did not, had to know, that printing technology is the transfer of an image from image-bearing surface into a substrate by simple application of an impression. That, indeed, was the foundation knowledge, and the foundation fact, of the workshop and our entire profession itself. It is the necessary foundation for the acquisition of diverse knowledge in the various other professions that have to communicate among themselves through printed words or illustrations.

We dived into the deep sea of different formats of printing- newspapers, magazines, textbooks and professional journals to know and confirm the profound essence of printing in the field of knowledge and, therefore, its necessity in acquiring and communicating it. We had to establish what we regarded as the indisputable fact that, for instance, without printing all other sectors of the economy would practically not operate. We clearly saw printing as the main vehicle of knowledge.

The workshop was to enable us to assess the ability of Heidelberg and its commitment to providing solutions to the problems of the industry in Nigeria by providing all aspects of printing and publishing equipment. The company's complete range of solutions from prepress to finishing include sheet-fed, digital imaging, digital web, post-press and second hand

refurbished equipment. Heidelberg believed that the equipment printers and publishers have to acquire and use to boost their business include Quickmaster 46 DI Pro (four-colour direct press im-

lieved it had to make such tall claims mainly to facilitate its acceptance as a leader in the industry in the country. It, at least, impressed that in us as its trainees because it had to.

The managing director of the company called Mr. Bejer, expressed the company's vow to assist printers wher-

fuel us to do well for the development of our profession and the entire country.

During the workshop Heidelberg also claimed that its four-colour presses and digital printing equipment are available in Nigeria more than ever before, but it would not say how easy it would be for

sewing, binding, trimming and wrapping in a complete printing job; and Customer support dealing with spare parts and services which renders backup service for equipment installed everywhere in Nigeria. It is also responsible for training and re-training of clients and ma-



'All's well that ends well,' as the picture depicts the well-packaged, neat newspaper.

age press), polar DC-M Die-cutter (for scratch cards, beer labels etc.), polar jogger for jogging papers before cutting and polar 92 cutting equipment. The workshop participants were trained to use them. They may not be the only equipment necessary, but we were trained to believe that they are.

We also dived into the abyss of history to remember that printing was first introduced in Nigeria in 1846 by a group of Presbyterian churchmen who came through calabar from Scotland led by Mr. Hope Wadel and Mr. Samuel Edgerly (both printers). The practice that time was predominantly centered on the distribution of Christian religious books. Now the field has been expanded to include the printing and distribution of books, newspapers, magazines and various other related matter at various levels and in different languages.

"We have made our clients earn money on their equipment and regularly commended with them through newsletters, open houses and seminars both for company owners as well as equipment operators," Heidelberg's Business unit Manager/Marketing consumables, Mr. Anselm Eze, claimed, believing, "by training and assisting operators and owners in these aspects, we are making the Nigerian graphics industry appreciate quality to the benefits of all Nigerians." Justified or not, the company be-

ever they are in Nigeria, "and we accept change as the rule, not the exception, and drive it by encouraging creativity". Most of us the participants might naturally have observed that the vow might not be easily achievable within the available space and time in the country, especially considering the general orientation of the professionals and other relevant technocrats and bureaucrats. But a seemingly well intentioned vow had been expressed, and we had to accept it as such under the circumstances to

the buyers of its wares to obtain them at affordable prices. It could, therefore, be a mere claim of a typical salesman. As a main part of the training, we were taken through the company's three broad business units: Prepress/consumables which handles the sales of a full range of prepress equipment and press consumables; Press/finishing, the unit that takes care of all equipment involved in actual printing/publishing and all the postpress operations like cutting, folding, stitching,

chine operators.

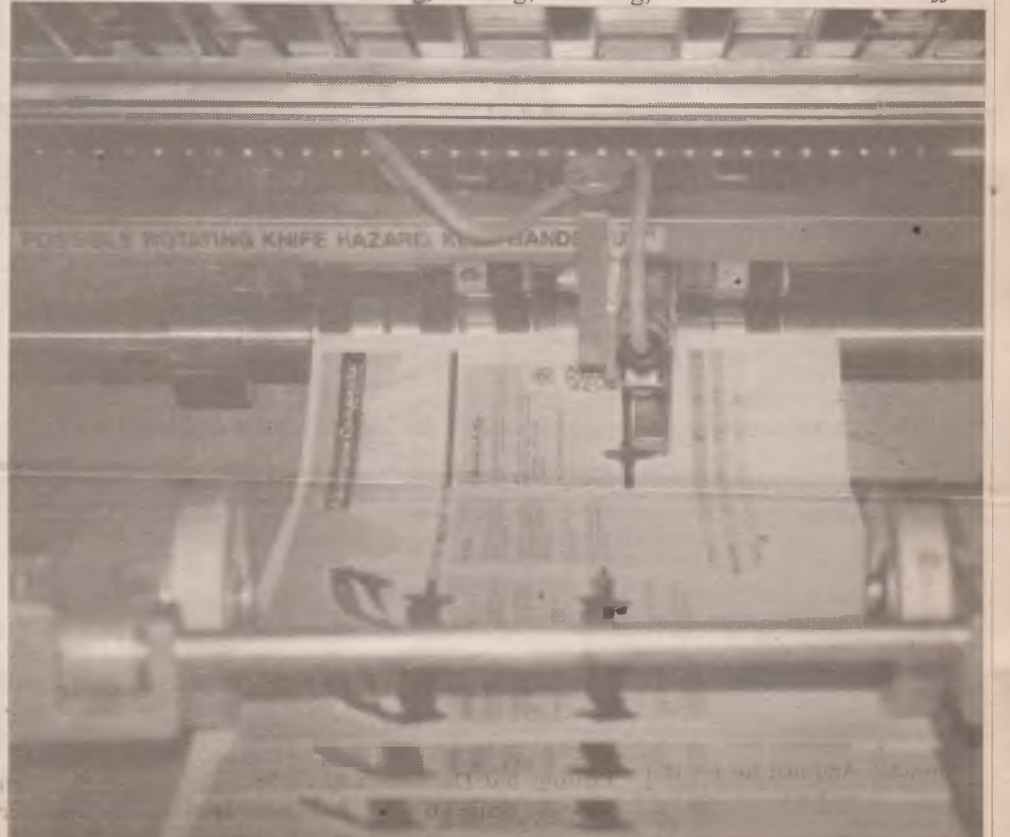
Heidelberg claimed that whatever success it has achieved in its business operations in Nigeria hinges on the "regular" customer seminars and workshops it has been organizing and sponsoring in the country to facilitate the improvement of the printing industry in the country.

For Heidelberg, the motto for the graphics/printing industry in Nigeria is: "the faster the better".

Muhammed and Mohammed are Daily Trust Production Staff.



A cross-section of participants at Heidelberg workshop.



Participants were shown how a folder machine folding newspapers.

**ABUJA MUNICIPAL AREA COUNCIL  
AREA 10, GARKI  
ABUJA**



**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**INVITATION TO TENDER**

The Abuja Municipal Area Council hereby invites tenders from reputable Building/Engineering Construction contractors registered with Abuja Municipal Area Council for the following projects:-

S/NO	PROJECT LIST/LOCATION	TENDER FEE =N=
1.	Construction of road network at AMAC Market FHA Estate Lugbe.	25,000.00
2.	Construction of fence at AMAC Market FHA Estate Lugbe	15,000.00
3.	Construction of additional office block at AMAC Secretariat	20,000.00
4.	Construction of Legislative Chamber at AMAC Secretariat	20,000.00
5.	Construction of AMAC White House at Gudu District	30,000.00

Further brief can be obtainable from the office of the Head of Works and Housing department, Abuja Municipal Area Council Secretariat after payment of non-refundable tender fee attached to each project above from the date of this publication.

All tenders are to be submitted to the office of the Secretary, Abuja Municipal Area Council in a sealed envelope marked "Confidential" Tenders for the above listed project and addressed to: The Management, Abuja Municipal Area Council, Area 10, PMB 64, Garki, FCT-Abuja, Nigeria not later than 12:00pm on 17th March, 2005. Tenders will be opened same day at 3.00pm

The Area Council is not bound to accept the lowest tender and shall not give

Signed  
Management

**Trust Classified**



**THE PRESIDENCY**

IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE OF THE WHITE PAPER ON THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO THE ALIENATION OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT LANDED PROPERTY ALLOCATION OF ALTERNATIVE HOUSING UNITS TO OCCUPANTS OF THE DISPOSED HIGH-RISE BUILDINGS, REEVE ROAD TOWERS AND LEGICO QUARTERS

**RE-ALLOCATION/OFFER TO PURCHASE**

The list of the above occupants was published in *Daily Trust* of 4/3/2005. The names of occupants numbering 1-511 which began from the first Page is the list of "Relocation of Former Occupants of 1004 Housing Estate Victoria Island Lagos". This title was however missing on the published list. The error is regretted.

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE OF THE FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, ABUJA**

**PROBATE DIVISION**

WHEREAS the person whose name is set in the first column hereunder died intestate on the date and place in the said column. AND WHEREAS the person whose name is set out in the second column hereunder claimed the relationship of the said deceased and has applied to the above court for Letters of Administration of the personal property of the said deceased. NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the said Letters of Administration will be granted to such persons unless "NOTICE TO PROHIBIT" the grant thereof is filed in the Probate Registry of the above named court within 21 (twenty-one) days from date of publication of this notice.

**DECEASED ADDRESS**

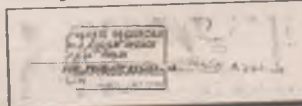
Chief (Engr.) Andrew A. Agom  
40B Agadogba Avenue,  
Park View Estate,  
Ikoyi, Lagos State.  
Died on the 3rd day of March, 2004

**SCHEDULE**

**APPLICANT FOR GRANT**

Chief (Mrs.) Elizabeth E. Agom  
40B Agadogba Avenue,  
Park View Estate,  
Ikoyi, Lagos State.  
The Widow

Dated in Abuja this 3rd day of March, 2005



**SOKOTO STATE YANFATAUCHI TRADERS ASSOCIATION**

This is to inform the general public that the above named body has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration under Part C of the Companies and Allied Matters Act of 1990.

The trustees are:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Alh. Ladan Almustapha - Chairman          | 2. Alh. Tukur Balarabe - Gen. Secretary    |
| 3. Alh. Bello Blackie - Treasurer            | 4. Alh. Ibrahim Bako - Financial Secretary |
| 5. Alh. Dahiru Yalo - Patron                 | 6. Alh. Aminu Haladu - Auditor             |
| 7. Alh. Malami Groups 3 - Patron             | 8. Alh. Isiyaku Almustapha - Patron        |
| 9. Alh. Mu'azu Alkin - Allah - Legal Adviser | 10. Aminu Shehu Bello P.R.O.               |

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar- General Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse Zone 5, P.M.B.198 Garki Abuja within 28 days of this publication.

Signed:  
ALH. TUKUR BALARABE  
GENERAL SEC.

**CONSOLIDATED TELECOM ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA**

This is to inform the general public that the above named Association has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration under Part C of the Companies and Allied Matters Act of 1990.

The trustees are:

- Hajia Binta EL Rufai
- Anozic Obinnaya Obi Esq
- L.A. Olapade C.A.
- Bayero Dari Esq
- Alhaji Shehu Ahmed Giant

Any objection to this registration should be forwarded to the Registrar General, Corporate Affairs Commission P.M.B. 198 Wuse Zone 5, Abuja within 28 days of this publication.

SIGNED  
YUSUF SALEH  
Chairman

SIGNED  
ALH. UMARU SABO  
Secretary

**TEXTILE DEALERS ASSOCIATION SOKOTO CENTRAL MARKET**

This is to inform the general public that the above named Association has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration under Part C of the Companies and Allied Matters Act of 1990.

The trustees are:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Alh. Nasiru Kigo - Chairman          | 2. Alh. Murtala Arzika Sarki - General Secretary |
| 3. Alh. Arzika Musa Aurumi - Treasurer  | 4. Alh. Tukur D/Binta - Financial Secretary      |
| 5. Alh. Zakari/Ya'u Sale - Auditor      | 6. Alh. Bashir Umaru Faru - Patron               |
| 7. Alh. Malami Gado - Patron            | 8. Alh. Kabiru Marna - Patron                    |
| 9. Buhari Nasiru Kigo - Organizing Sec. | 10. Alhaji Ibrahim Mairariya - PRO               |

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar- General Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse Zone 5, P.M.B.198 Garki Abuja within 28 days of this publication.

Signed:  
Alh. Murtala Arzika Sarki

**LOSS OF DOCUMENT**

This is to inform the general public that the Original Land Allocation Paper File No. MFCT/LA/2000/MISC.17452 over land plot No. 2888G belonging to M/S KIDDIESLAND FAMILY CLUB & PARKS of 4B Yedseram Street, Maitama Abuja is missing. If found, please return to the nearest Police station or Jiddah & Asscoaites Suite 120, Lozumba Complex Area 10 Abuja.

Signed  
Adeola Adedeji Orolugbagbe

**CHANGE OF NAMES**

I, formerly known and called IDRIS MUHAMMAD, now wish to be called UMAR ISYAKU IDRIS. Former documents remain valid. General Public to note.

I, formerly known as SAMSON MATHEW, now wish to be called UMORU SUNDAY. All former documents remain valid. Public, please note.

I, formerly known as JOSEPH NWUKABU, now wish to be called MR. NWUKABU YAKUBU. All former documents remain valid. Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs, DNCR H/quarters and public to take note.

I, formerly MISS AKUDO LAMED EMENYONU, now wish to be known as MRS AKUDO LAMED PHILOMENA OHAMARA. All former documents remain valid. General public to take note.

I, formerly MUDI INUWA, now wish to be called MAHMUD BALA NADALA. Bayero University, Kano and JAMB Office to take note. All former documents remain valid.

I, MISS EYITAYO AKINOLA, wish to be addressed as MRS EYITAYO HASSAN. Former documents remain valid. General public to note.



# WHO'S LOOKING AFTER YOU?

In today's world, you need someone who gives you confidence, protects your financial well-being and frees you from fear and worry. You need Guaranty Trust Assurance for your financial needs, whether it's Insurance or Investments, we've got the solution.

Call us today and discover the possibilities of enjoying a happier life.



For life and living

**Guaranty Trust Assurance Limited.**  
 Plot 928A Bishop Abiodun Cole,  
 Victoria Island, Lagos  
 T: (01) 270 1560-5, F: (01) 461 3284  
 Website: [www.gtalmtd.com](http://www.gtalmtd.com)  
 Email: [info@gtalmtd.com](mailto:info@gtalmtd.com)

A subsidiary of Guaranty Trust Bank Plc

# REFLECTIONS

By ISSA AREMU

## Confab: Go-slow areas

**Y**ours sincerely searched in vain for the so-called 'no-go areas' (in those words!) in Mr President's inaugural speech to the on-going Political Reform conference. But I can see some unintended go-slows being created for the confab. Paradoxically, the arguments for and against the desirability of some 'no-go areas' tended to dominate the thrust of the debate on the Mr President's speech which in turn has created some go-slow for the confab.

In fact both Chairman Justice Niki Tobi and secretary, Father Kukah spent great deal of their take-off on the defensive; proving that this was a no bar conference! A conference with a feet of clay is certainly not what anybody desires and certainly not a conference weighed down by avoidable self-invented official word-overload such as 'minimum issues'. Which then raises some questions as to what President's speech writers strive to achieve with

shows that Nigeria's unity is a reality and not some abstract concepts. The main controversy that has trailed this conference deals with protests against exclusion (e.g. women, civil society, youth!) rather than boycott, meaning there is profound abiding faith in Nigeria's project by masses of Nigerians than the officialdom tend to acknowledge. Observers insist that masses are converts to unity only the

**"It is not clear if this singular itemisation of 'minimum' issues was an invitation to some 'no-go areas' but the popular interpretation is that it was a disguised 'No parking' order to conferees.**

**Whatever they are, what is clear is that rather than fast forwarding this confab, the alluded 'minimum issues' inadvertently constitute some ground-norms for some go-slows for a time pressed confab as NPRC"**

In concluding his celebrated speech, the president certainly alluded to 'certain issues' which according to him 'must now be accepted as minimum issues that must be regarded as given'. They include 'oneness of the country, federalism and federal system of government, presidentialism, multi-religiosity, federal character, popular participation, the fundamental objectives and directives of the state policy and separation of powers.' It is not clear if this singular itemisation of 'minimum' issues was an invitation to some 'no-go areas' but the popular interpretation is that it was a disguised 'No parking' order to conferees.

Whatever they are, what is clear is that rather than fast forwarding this confab, the alluded 'minimum issues' inadvertently constitute some ground-norms for some go-slows for a time pressed confab as NPRC.

**"The reported shouting matches of 'yes' 'no' which tend to greet every contribution at this conference may take us away from genuine dialogue. If the trend continues we may be witnessing argumentation (such as military or civilians are sources of our woes!) rather than genuine conversation and dialogue"**

references to such 'given issues'.

If the issues are as given, why then begging them? Why raising maximum alarm on given minimum areas in a problem-identifying and problem solving conference meant to address the not-so-given issues? Would it not have been more desirable if the thrust of President's speech centres on not so-given problem areas rather than given issues? The best way for any given issue to remain given is to immune it from some unnecessary given hysteria.

Take the issue of oneness of Nigeria for instance. Why reminding us of the obvious about the issue that is as given? By making fetish of oneness are we not inadvertently begging the issue and accordingly playing into the hands of people with little faith in unity? This conference alone is a clear testimony of the hard earned country's unity. It

rulers are still in doubt. Even the main complaint of the main protagonists like Chief Anthony Enahoro is lack of invitation to the national platform. It is not what you proclaim from the rooftop of what is fashionable but what you do in reality. For all his later day self-doubt, Enahoro will still be remembered as a mover of independence motion for a united Nigeria and a Federal Commissioner of a united Nigeria than a convener of some imaginary conference of ethnic nationalities! So what then about official sermons about oneness that is never in doubt in the first instance? The challenge for the government is to assist the confab to find solutions to myriad of problems impeding the full actualisation of the so-called minimum given issues rather than creating unnecessary go-slows through reference to the obvious.

Lastly, the reported shouting matches of 'yes' 'no' which tend to greet every contribution at this conference may take us away from genuine dialogue. If the trend continues we may be witnessing argumentation (such as military or civilians are sources of our woes!) rather than genuine conversation and dialogue. Argument, if not properly channelled may be the worst go-slow area for this confab. Thomas Jefferson was quoted as saying that; 'I never saw an instance of one or two disputants convincing the other by argument'.

(issaaremu@yahoo.com)

## Opinion

### A cynical look at 'resource control'

By Tokunbo Ajasin

**A**ll the hue and cry about National Dialogue boils down, in the final analysis, to the economics of revenue generation and expenditure.

Much emphasis has been laid on the control of the resources available to the country, particularly the resources under the ground, and more particularly the crude oil resources.

Part of our problem derives from the definition of resources by our policy makers. In the current dispensation as in the recent past, our governments generally see resources mainly in terms of minerals particularly oil and gas resources, ignoring for the most part other resources, specifically those above the ground. This definition has consequently given rise to so much agitation especially on the issue of derivation.

It is no wonder that Niger and Lagos States are clamouring for the application of derivative principle when it comes to hydroelectric power and the ports/maritime authority respectively.

However, to all intents and purposes, resources should be defined in a more holistic way in such terms as land, labour and capital. The moment we look at our resources in this format, it should be a lot easier to devise how to harness them and ensure equity in their usage. Economic resources namely land, labour and capital are available in all parts of the federation. Land is a natural resource, which can be degraded by erosion, cultivation, mining and chemicals. On the other hand, irrigation, mining, reclamation, cultivation and chemicals can enhance and/or increase the value or size of land. Capital in most cases is a man made resource. Infrastructures like electricity, roads, communication, transportation, buildings, information technology and all other forms of technology are examples of capital resources developed by man. Labour is a human resource and master of the other resources, without which the other resources will lie idle and undeveloped. Consequently, it is the most important resource any nation can possess. It can be developed and enhanced through education or it can be left undeveloped or underdeveloped to the point that it deteriorates.

All states of the federation possess these resources in varying degrees, and each has the potential to develop its resources to any level depending on its political will. Consequently, efforts should be diverted to finding ways in which these resources can be optimally utilized for the good of all rather than continue to agitate over who controls what. In doing this we need to be just, honest and considerate. It must be realized that those who have the most do not necessarily need the most, whereas those who contribute the least do not necessarily deserve the least. Just as cattle move from the dry land in the north to towards the coastal areas of the south in order to graze, likewise people will move from the poor areas to the richer zones. The continuously increasing populations of Lagos, Port Harcourt and Abuja aptly demonstrate this.

It is high time we discarded the current system of revenue

allocation. The system where federal government collects revenue and doles it out to itself, the states and local governments is to me an aberration. It creates a mentality of sharing without the concurrent aspect of baking the national cake. A situation in which a state governor or a local government chairman sits in his office and awaits monthly allocation from the federal coffers every month without any effort leaves much to be desired.

It is no wonder that such revenue is in most cases misappropriated, and not subject to transparency and accountability. It is high time we devised a system that allows each government to collect and spend its revenue independently. That way, each authority will become more ingenious in the way that it seeks revenue, and thrifter in the way it spends it.

A government that cannot independently source and fund its operations is definitely not worth its name. Our current system encourages indolence, discourages creativity, is unjust and discriminatory, allows a lot of wastage, is less accountable and not development oriented.

Every government or administrative unit is set up to perform certain functions, and in order to perform those functions; it must be endowed with some resources. To attain any level of efficiency in the performance of those functions, a good government must think of the best means of raising and spending its funds. What we have hitherto seen with our governments is a situation of "easy come, easy go" in terms of how they obtain and spend the funds in their care.

Each tier of government should be empowered to tax the resources within its ambit. For example while the Federal government will have taxation powers over all the resources within the federation, each state will have taxation powers over the resources within its state. The federal, state or local governments cannot lay claim to any resource *ab initio*. They can only lay claim to them through purchase, expropriation or treaties. The ownership of all other resources resides in individuals, families or companies. These resources are either sold or used to generate additional income, while the proceeds are taxable by government in the hands of the owners/recipients. There are other forms of taxation or levies, which are utilized by any government to increase its revenue profile. Examples are rents, royalties, rates, consumption tax, sales or

value added tax, fines, fees, service charges, interest, penalties etc, the list is inexhaustible.

If such a system is adopted, what will happen is that the more prosperous states will be inundated with people who will require more services which the state will be able to provide through its increased revenue as a result of its increasing tax base. Conversely, the poor states will either lose human resources or be forced to source for funds in order to maintain the same social services or reduce its expenditure since there will be less pressure on the provision of social services.

As a fiscal instrument, each tier of government can use taxation to regulate the pace of its economic development. The rate at which taxation is used for the development of the state depends on the ingenuity of its government. For instance, some states may levy sales tax, while others may not. The rates of income taxes and exemptions will vary from state to state.

The revenue accruing to the Federal government from taxation will be used for prosecuting its programmes, as well as giving grants and matching aids with specified conditions to deserving states and/or local governments in accordance with its priorities.

It is often argued that the citizens may be overtaxed in such a situation. Even though this is possible, nevertheless alert and vibrant citizenry will forestall such cases. It must be borne in mind that a government as well as its citizens will have to strike a balance between how many and how taxes are levied and the quantum and quality of service delivery. Governments in a democracy will be more careful and frugal with spending because there is a limit to how much they can collect through taxes without annoying the electorates who will have no qualms about voting them out of government should they consider the tax burden as being too heavy.

In conclusion, it is my belief that where each state, as well as the federal government exercise complete dominion over its area of jurisdiction, there will be less agitation over resource control or derivation as a basis of revenue allocation. So long as boundaries have been specifically determined and agreed; and functions of the federal government have been unambiguously defined and agreed, revenue allocation as we now know it will become a thing of the past.

Ajasin writes from 46, Secretariat Road, Bodija, Ibadan and can be reached at tokunboajasin@skannet.com

**"Efforts should be diverted to finding ways in which these resources can be optimally utilized for the good of all rather than continue to agitate over who controls what. In doing this we need to be just, honest and considerate. It must be realized that those who have the most do not necessarily need the most, whereas those who contribute the least do not necessarily deserve the least"**

# Business Trust

## Finance

### Recapitalisation: NAL Bank to raise N10bn

The NAL Bank Plc is to raise its paid up share capital to N10 billion by offering four billion ordinary shares of 50 kobo to the public at N2.50 per share.

Announcing this at an investors' forum in Kaduna on Wednesday, the chairman of the bank, Malam Bashir Borodo said besides meeting the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) directive on N25 billion recapitalization, the increase would enable the bank to upgrade its branches, enhance information technology, invest in cut edge securities and enhance its interbank trading.

He said the bank's total assets as at 30 June, 2004 was N33.72 billion which represented a 17 per cent

From Sani Babadoko,  
Bureau Chief (Kaduna)

growth over the previous year's total assets of N28.83 billion.

He said the bank's vision is to be Nigeria foremost truly universal banking group offering seamless financial solutions to its chosen customers. The bank's mission he added is "to delight our customers with innovative financial solutions."

Mallam Bashir said NAL Bank Plc was incorporated on 25<sup>th</sup> December 1960 as Nigerian Acceptances Limited (NAL) as a wholly owned subsidiary of John Holt (Liverpool) Limited to carry out among other things, the business of banking in Nigeria.

He said in July 1969 NAL

merged its operations with those of Financial Holdings (Nigeria) Limited and in November 1969, NAL became the first Nigerian financial house to be granted a license to operate as a merchant bank.

He said the bank changed its name from Nigerian Acceptances Limited to NAL

Merchant Bank Limited in July 1981, to reflect the full range of the bank's activities, and to enhance public perception of the bank.

The bank's managing director, Mr. Ben Akabueze said among the bank's products are: the Optima Account, NAL Maxiyield

account, the Nigeria Energy Sector Fund, the Frontier Fund, Premium Investment Certificate, Precious Earning Paper, ValueCard, NAL personal Goal Account, NAL Special Savings Account, NAL School Support Package and NAL Children's Education Scheme.

### First Atlantic Bank predicts share price appreciation

By Anas A. Galadima,  
Reporter (Business)

The chairman of First Atlantic Bank, Mr. O'tega Emerhor, has predicted that the share price of the bank will appreciate from the N2.50k it is currently being sold, to about N10.00 after the bank's proposed merger with Assurance Bank, Manny Bank and Guadian Express bank later this year.

Mr. Emerhor, who spoke during a stakeholders' forum organized by the bank in Abuja over the weekend, said his prediction is based on the fact that when the new mega bank - Astra Bank - comes into being, it will have more capital at its disposal and this will enable it do a lot of activities which could raise the value of its shares.

The new Astrabank, he said, will have over N40 billion shareholders' fund, over 130 branches and N200 billion asset base.

He called on investors to take advantage of First Atlantic Bank's ongoing offer of 3 billion ordinary shares of 50k each at N2.50

per share adding that who ever buys the bank's shares today, gets an instant appreciation of 91k.

This, he said, is due to the fact that while the bank's shares are trading at N3.41k on the floors of the Nigerian stock Exchange (NSE), the bank is offering its shares at N2.50k giving buyers the opportunity to gain 91k on

each share purchased.

The managing director of the bank, Mr. Okey Nwosu who also spoke at the forum, said the bank was the first to introduce internet banking in Nigeria adding that since the introduction, in November 2000, the bank has never had any case of internet banking fraud.

"We have had attempts," he said, "but they were not successful because our sites are certified and highly secured" he added.

### Jaiz shareholders endorse public offer

By Aminu Yusuf Ibrahim  
(Intern)

Shareholders of the proposed Jaiz Bank Plc, in Bauchi, have unanimously endorsed its directors' decision to make the bank a mega bank rather than a medium or community bank.

The endorsement was made at the investors' forum, organized by the bank in Bauchi, to sensitize shareholders on the progress made so far in the quest to establish a bank that complies with Islamic principles of economic and financial transactions.

The board members under the leadership of its chairman, Alhaji Umar Muttalab, have been going round the country to enlighten shareholders about the current developments in the proposed bank assuring them that their monies are safely kept in the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN).

Explaining why the proposed bank has not started operations, the managing director of the bank, Mallam Mustapha M. Bantube said the bank had fulfilled all the conditions and was ready to commence operations when the CBN announced the N25 billion capitalization for banks.

This new policy he said, forced the board to choose among four options; to pursue an Approval in Principle (AIP) from the CBN and raise capital to meet the N25 billion minimum capitals or merge with existing major banks and serve as an Islamic banking window.

The other options were to either take over suitable distressed banks or to convert Jaiz International to a finance company. But they took the first option.

The MD further explained that the board had met with the CBN governor in a bid to get the AIP adding that the governor had assured them that he would soon issue the AIP which will provide them the necessary legitimacy to raise the required N25 billions.

### Bank reforms to encourage SME financing - Obasanjo

From Hamisu Muhammad,  
Reporter (Business)

President Olusegun Obasanjo disclosed that the ongoing banks reform embarked upon by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) is to strengthen the banks for financing small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) in the country.

Speaking at the official commissioning of the office complex of the small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) in Abuja, Obasanjo said the new banking reforms when concluded is expected to encourage flow of funds for financing SMEs in Nigeria.

Obasanjo who spoke through his vice, Atiku

Abubakar said the informal sector had suffered neglect by the past administrations which made it an unproductive sector in terms of national development, he said there were major disconnect between the SMEs and the large enterprises which led many firms in the country to fold off.

Obasanjo also blamed the deteriorating state of the infrastructure in the country as part of the contributory factor of the collapse of the sector.

According to him, several measures have been planned to improve the sector, citing the

recent companies' registration, tax reform and the new tariff regime as a steps towards development of the sector.

He described the new office complex of the SMEDAN as a significant milestone for the development of SMEs in Nigeria.

The director general of the SMEDAN, Mrs. Modupe Adeloaja said with the new complex, SMEDAN can now run full stream stressing that the agency was already productively facilitating the access of SMEs to major financing banks especially the bank of industry, the Nigeria Agricultural Co-operative and Rural Development Bank.

### FSB gets new chairman, holds AGM

After years of poor performance, the FSB International Bank Plc has been able to record a profit of N253.8 million last year.

The new chairman of the bank Chief Bayo Kuku announced at its 13<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting in Kaduna on Thursday that last year's profit represents an improvement from a loss

position of N2.67 billion in the previous year.

The previous years' poor performance led to the resignation of the former chairman/CEO, Mallam Mohammed Hayatu-Deen last June but Chief Kuku said the bank's total deposit liabilities grew from N23.743 billion in 2003 to N28.24 billion in 2004 while total assets of the bank grew from N46.33 billion in 2003 to N61.17 billion in 2004.

He however said in view of the low performance "we propose that no dividend be paid this year to give the bank a chance to recover fully."

The Chairman also disclosed that the bank is in merger talks with two other banks to satisfy the Central Bank's N25 billion recapitalization directive. He said before the directive the bank had targeted a capitalization of N40 billion in its vision 2008 strategy document.

Chief Kuku said in order to return the bank to profitability and improve its competitiveness based on "project Eagle" new initiatives are being taken which include; mobilization of low cost deposits, recapture market loss while it was absent from the foreign exchange market, cost containment and reduction, service delivery upgrade, re-engineering operations, empowerment of staff, aggressive debt recovery and deployment of superior products.

### Today's flight schedule

#### Albarka Air

Lagos - Abuja	07:20
	10:30
	15:15
	13:00
Abuja - Lagos	8:45a.m.
	11:00
	13:15
	17:00
Maiduguri - Abuja	06:50
Abuja - Maid.	17:00
Lagos - Yola	1:00 p.m
Abuja - Yola	14:30
Yola - Abuja	15.30
Yola - Lagos	4:00 p.m

#### Chanchangi Airlines

Lagos - Abuja	8:15a.m.
	11:00a.m.
	12:10p.m.
	4:45p.m.
Kaduna - Lagos	8:30a.m.
P/H - Lagos	9:00a.m.
	4:30p.m.
Abuja - Kaduna	2:30p.m.
Kaduna - Abuja	1:30p.m.

#### IRS Airlines

CBQ - Abuja	8.00 a.m.
Abuja - Lagos	9:45a.m.
Lagos - Kaduna	9:30a.m.
Kano - Lagos	7:30p.m.
Lagos - Kano	11:15a.m.
Kaduna - Lagos	11:00a.m.
Lagos - Abu/MM	2:30p.m.
Abuja - MM	1:45p.m.
MM - Abuja	3:45p.m.
Abuja - CBQ	5:15p.m.
Kano - Abuja	1:15p.m.
Abuja - Kano	2:30p.m.
Kano - Lagos	3:45p.m.
Lagos - Kano	6:00p.m.

#### EAS Airlines

Lagos - Abuja	8:15p.m.
	11:45a.m.
	5:45p.m.
Abuja - Lagos	10:15a.m.
	7:15p.m.
Lagos - Jos	11:45a.m.
Jos - Lagos	2:30pm.

Dasab Airlines	
Auja - Lagos	8:30 a.m.
Lagos - PHC	10:30a.m.
PHC - Lagos	12:30a.m.
Lagos - Kano	2:30 p.m.
Kano - Lagos	4:30 p.m.
Lagos - Abuja	6:30pm.

ADC Airline	
Lagos - Abuja	7:15 a.m.
	12:45 p.m.

Abuja - Lagos	8:55 a.m.
Lagos - Calabar	11:15 a.m.
Calabar - Lagos	7:20 a.m.
P/H - Lagos	9:45 a.m.
Lagos - Sokoto	8:55 a.m.
Sokoto - Lagos	11:55 a.m.

Most airlines operate the same flight schedule on week days.

## DIARIES

that need not cost a fortune

**JIWAC**

Corporate Office:  
14, Adedoye Debo Street, (Off N1) Surulere, Lagos.  
Field Office: 14, Adedoye Debo Street, Surulere, Lagos.  
Tel: 01-4711411/570047/0302112465/702516118

• Jiwac's Corporate Diaries • Other Diaries • Gift Diaries • Foreign Diaries • Corporate Gift Items

• PREMIUM QUALITY • QUICK DELIVERY

# Experience the thrill of a Real Local Soccer Sensation



Presents

## A FRIENDLY MATCH

### Kano Pillars *vs.* Ranchers Bees

DATE: Sunday 13th March, 2005 Time: 4:00pm.

VENUE: Ahmadu Bello Stadium, Kaduna

ADMISSION IS **Free**

**FREE RIDE**  
Available to the Stadium From  
• KADUNA SOUTH  
• SABO • KAWO

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS (All in March)

EVENT	DATE	MEETING POINT
LG Train	11th-13th	Kawo Taxi Park
LG Op. Keep KD Clean	12th	Nepa R/About
LG Marathon	12th	Ahmadu Bello Stadium
LG Durbar	11th-13th	Kawo Taxi Park
LG Friendly Football	13th	Ahmadu Bello Stadium

Keep a date with **LG**... its gonna be for fun all the way.

Go ahead... Celebrate Life



AUTHORISED DISTRIBUTORS

**FOUANI NIGERIA LTD.**

LAGOS OFFICE: 11-13, Warehouse Road, Apapa  
Tel: 01-5873722, 01-5873727, 01-7917397  
KADUNA OFFICE: Kharakas A2 Ahmedu Bello Way, Kaduna Tel: 062-211304  
KANO OFFICE: 35, Zoo Road, Kano. Tel: 08037733444  
ONITSHA OFFICE: GOSSAC EMPORIUM Ltd. 56, Iweka Road, Onitsha  
Tel: 046-484636

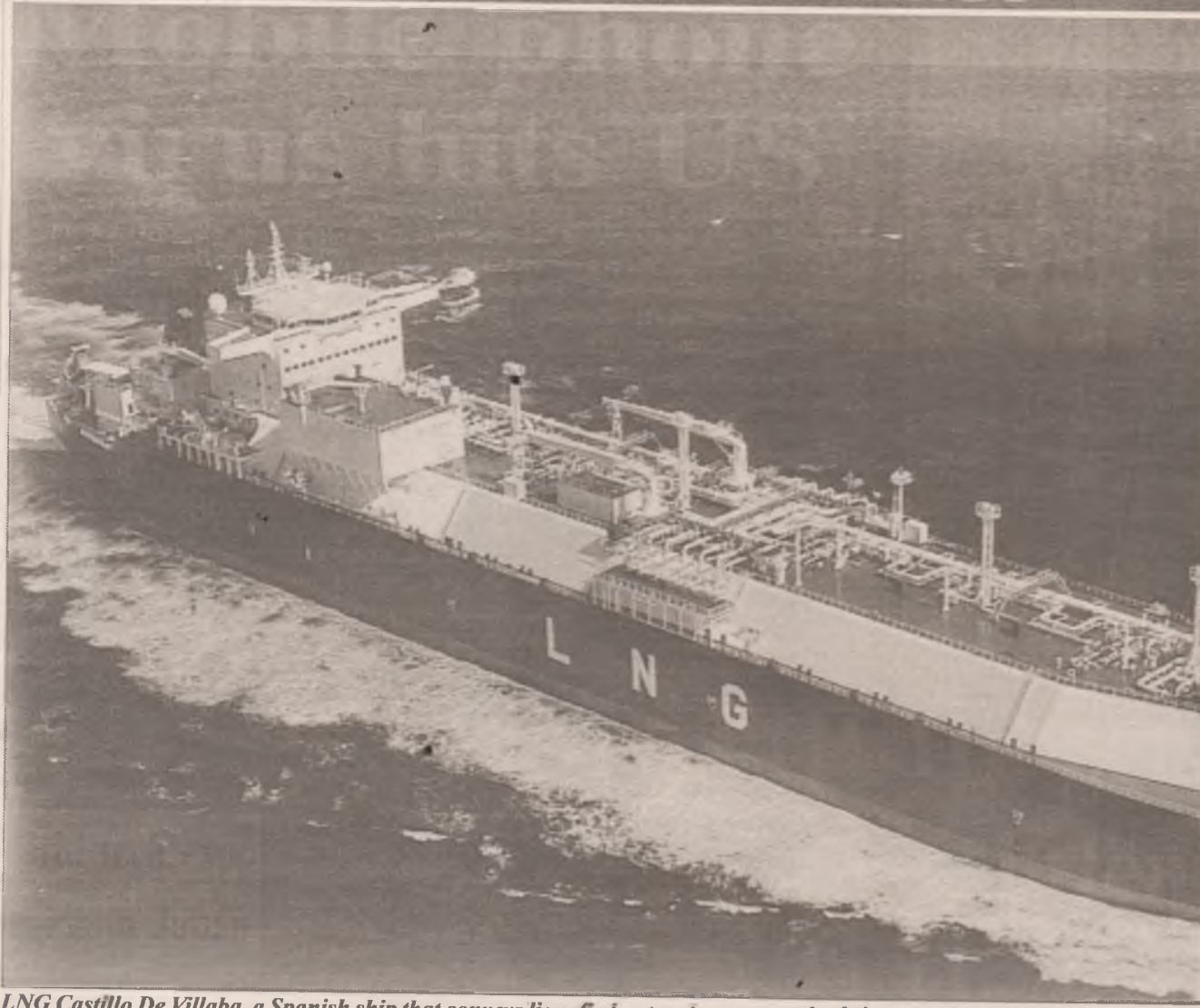
**SOMOTEX NIGERIA LTD.**

LAGOS OFFICE/SHOWROOM: Km 18, Ikoredu Road Ojota, Behind Philips Ojota. Tel: 01-8913043  
EXT.130, 08033924178, 08023015841.  
ABUJA OFFICE: B3, 37-40, Banex Plaza, Aminu Kano Crescent, Wuse Zone II Abuja. Tel: 09-6721528, 08035534645  
IBADAN OFFICE: c/o Medrite Limited Millennium House, 2, Ring Road Challenge Roundabout, Ibadan.  
Tel: 02-2311666, 08055526871.  
KANO OFFICE: 107, Maganda Road, Bompai Industrial Area Kano. Tel: 064-646694, 08037418694.  
ONITSHA OFFICE: 2, Nkasi Shopping Plaza, 1st Floor, Old Nkasi Road, G.R.A Onitsha. Tel: 046-3000690, 08033924158.  
PORT HARCOURT OFFICE: 78 Nnamdi Azikiwe Road, Port-Harcourt. Tel: 084-484117, 08033947888.

CLIQUE • NIGERIA

# Business Trust

## ENERGY



LNG Castillo De Villaba, a Spanish ship that conveys liquefied natural gas to terminals in several countries across various continents.

## Total chief wants greater access to OPEC reserves

The Chief Executive of French energy giant, Total Oil, Thierry Desmarest has said that Western oil companies must have greater access to oil and gas reserves in Organisation Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) countries and Russia to continue increasing their output.

Mr. Desmarest who explained that his company was able to replace its production only by exploration, said: "Our target is to continue to grow with output of about 4.0 percent per year. To obtain additional reserves to keep production growing at 4.0 percent per year we need to conclude agreement with producing countries to get access to reserves."

He also pointed to Total's investments in OPEC countries such as Iran, Nigeria and Venezuela as key elements of its portfolio, while stating that in OPEC, some countries are open, but even

From Mohammed Shosanya, Correspondent (Lagos)

when they are open, decision taking is often slow.

Desmarest further noted that more investment was needed by OPEC to restore the security margin between oil consumption and supplies.

## Shell supplies gas to Korea

Shell has announced that Kogas, the Korean gas company has selected Shell Joint Venture Project - Sakhalin II and Malaysian Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) as suppliers of up to 4 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) of LNG to Korea for a period of 20 years starting from 2008.

Kogas is the world's largest buyer of LNG and Korea is the second largest LNG market in the world.

According to Peter D Wit, President, Shell Gas and Power Asia Pacific, the selection of two Shell joint ventures in such an important tender underlines Shell's global LNG leadership.

"It also reflects the strengthening of the Asia Pacific market reflecting an overall increase in global demand for LNG and the value of our diverse portfolio of LNG projects."

He added that Shell projects have been consistent and reliable suppliers to customers in Asia maintaining supply and honouring commitments to established customers for more than 30 years.

## ChevronTexaco affiliate signs Agbami FPSO construction contract

The affiliate of Chevron-Texaco Corporation, Star Deep Water Petroleum Limited, has signed the agreement for the award of contract for the construction of the Floating Production, Storage and Offloading (FPSO) vessel for Agbami Field.

The contract was awarded to Daewoo Shipping and Marine Engineering (DSME) Corporation of South Korea.

The Managing Director of ChevronTexaco Nigeria and Mid-Africa Business Unit, Mr Jay Pryor, signed on behalf of the Agbami Unit, while the President and Chief Executive Officer of DSME, Mr S.L. Jung, signed on behalf of the contractor.

According to a statement, signed by the General Manager, Government and

Public Affairs, Mr Femi Odumabo, the signing of the \$1.1 billion FPSO construction contract is a key milestone in the development of the Agbami field scheduled to come onstream in 2008 with a daily production of about 250,000 barrels of oil.

Pryor, who congratulated Daewoo Shipping and Marine Engineering (DSME) for winning the bid to build the FPSO for the Agbami Field, said that the project would emphasize ChevronTexaco's core values in the area of Safety, Environmental Stewardship, Transparency, Local Content Development and Community Engagement.

"We are aware that many people regard Agbami

as remarkable for its reserves," Pryor said, adding: "but we want the project execution to show that it has more to offer Nigeria and its other stakeholders than production figures."

On the company's commitment to environmental stewardship, Pryor said: "our goal is to leave very minimal impact on the environment as we produce the Agbami Field."

The Group Managing Director of NNPC, Mr Funsho Kupolokun, said that with the signing of the FPSO construction contract, the country was again set to extend the frontiers of success in the industry and create further opportunities for growth and development for Nigeria.

"We project that upto an astonishing 7,000 metric tonnes of fabrication and 300,000 man-hours of engineering and services will be performed by

Nigerians on this FPSO contract alone. This is significantly more than has

## ... moves to sell UK outlets

Chevron Texaco Global Marketing has disclosed that Texaco Limited, UK subsidiary of Chevron Texaco Corporation and Somerfield Plc, the fifth largest food retailer in the UK have signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) to negotiate the sale of approximately 140 Texaco owned service stations in the United Kingdom to Somerfield.

The proposed agreement, Chevron Texaco Global Downstream said, is part of its strategic direction to improve returns by focusing on areas of strength, enhancing and managing three world class brands - Chevron, Texaco and Caltex.

According to the company, following the proposed

sale, Texaco is reducing capital invested in certain retail outlets which will see it maintaining a marketing presence in the UK as a branded wholesaler, supplying fuel to 1,100 Texaco branded third party service stations.

## PTDF boss bags Eisenhower fellowship

The 2005 multi-nation programme, a United States based non governmental organisation's fellowship for visionary and dedicated leadership has nominated the Executive Secretary, Petroleum Technology Development Fund (PTDF), Dr. Yusuf Hamisu Abubakar as this year's Eisenhower fellowship award winner for Nigeria.

By Hamisu Muhammad, Reporter (Business)

The Eisenhower fellowship was founded in 1953 as a tribute to Dwight Eisenhower, the 34<sup>th</sup> American President, and is designed to reflect his conviction that greater understanding among nations contributes to the peace and progress of all countries and people.

Information from the public affairs unit of the United States Embassy in Nigeria revealed that the nominee passed through a rigorous selection process for about six months before finally selected as this year's winner.

According to the information, the multi-nation program is designed to choose leaders of vision, passion, and purpose who are most likely to make

significant contributions to their societies.

"The programme would allow the participants from around the globe to have the opportunity of forming connections with each other and to experience the variety of experiences to be found in the US within the 6 weeks duration slated for the exercise," it added.

## FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, MINNA

(Office of the Registrar)

### RE-OPENING OF F.U.T. MINNA

The Federal University of Technology, Minna will reopen and commence registration for the 2004/2005 academic calendar as follows:

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| (i) Monday, 14th March, 2005:  | Remedial, UME, Direct Entry and Postgraduate Students. |
| (ii) Monday, 21st March, 2005: | 200,300,400 and 500 Level Students.                    |

2. Registration of Remedial and Postgraduate students will take place at the Bosso Campus while registration of all other levels will be at the Main Campus, Gidan Kwano.

3. The University has also released the supplementary list of candidates offered provisional admission through UME and Direct Entry. The list and the approved schedule of fees/charges for fresh and returning students can be accessed through the University Website: [www.futminna.net](http://www.futminna.net)

(Signed)  
M. D. USMAN  
Acting Registrar

# Business Trust

## 1ST-TIER SECURITIES

## THE NIGERIAN STOCK EXCHANGE

REPORT AS AT FRIDAY, MARCH 4, 2005

COMPANY NAME	NO OF DEALS	QUOTATION(N)	QUANTITY TRADED	VALUE OF SHARES
ADSWITCH PLC.	2	0.43	37,900	16,297.00
CUTIX PLC	1	1.30	6,500	8,450.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>44,400</b>	<b>24,747.00</b>
<b>AGRICULTURE/AGRO-ALLIED</b>				
OKITIPUPA OIL PALM PLC	3	0.78	3,300	2,574.00
THE OKOMU OIL PALM COMPANY PLC	23	16.99	354,804	6,121,985.77
PRESCO PLC.	12	9.89	40,753	412,628.73
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>38</b>		<b>398,857</b>	<b>6,537,188.50</b>
<b>AUTOMOBILE &amp; TYRE</b>				
DUNLOP NIGERIA PLC.	19	1.94	136,780	261,355.30
INCAR NIGERIA APLC.	1	1.30	1,000	1,300.00
R. T. BRISCOAE PLC.	1	5.60	15,000	84,000.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>21</b>		<b>152,780</b>	<b>346,655.30</b>
<b>BANKING</b>				
ACCESS BANK PLC	17	3.42	300,142	1,026,485.64
AFRIBANK NIGERIA PLC.	27	6.63	602,844	3,996,855.72
CHARTERED BANK PLC	1	3.90	2,000	7,800.00
COOPERATIVE BANK PLC.	6	1.92	224,650	431,328.00
COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT BANK PLC.	7	0.67	60,250	40,692.50
EIB INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	1	2.26	2,400	5,424.00
FIRST BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	478	22.90	1,490,729	34,247,305.74
FSB INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	34	1.20	332,607	398,419.99
GUARANTY TRUST BANK PLC.	279	9.10	3,327,576	29,973,784.85
GULF BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	14	0.50	1,430,000	715,000.00
INTERNATIONAL MERCHANT BANK PLC.	44	0.55	4,525,242	2,558,640.19
INLAND BANK (NIGERIA) PLC.	1	1.26	10,000	12,600.00
INTERCONTINENTAL BANK PLC.	21	7.81	121,000	945,010.00
LION BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	5	0.62	11,249	7,191.85
MANUFACTURERS BANK NIGERIA PLC.	4	1.13	100,000	113,000.00
OCEANIC BANK PLC	32	5.18	1,685,925	8,363,692.50
OMEGA BANK (NIGERIA) PLC.	8	1.50	72,816	107,455.90
STANDARD TRUST BANK PLC	5	7.41	9,400	69,654.00
TRANS INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	4	1.53	487,000	744,270.00
TRADE BANK PLC.	1	1.35	214	288.90
UNITED BANK FOR AFRICA PLC.	15	10.09	79,941	799,410.00
UNION BANK NIGERIA PLC.	383	19.00	1,679,805	31,552,413.80
UNIVERSAL TRUST BANK PLC	1	0.66	5,000	3,300.00
WEMA BANK PLC.	6	3.93	28,986	113,914.98
ZENITH BANK PLC	188	13.96	5,574,194	76,437,907.05
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>1,582</b>		<b>22,163,970</b>	<b>192,671,845.61</b>
<b>BREWERIES</b>				
GUINNESS NIGERIA PLC.	193	80.00	700,831	56,069,294.49
NIGERIAN BREWERIES PLC.	281	34.65	754,265	25,502,184.37
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>474</b>		<b>1,455,096</b>	<b>81,571,478.86</b>
<b>BUILDING MATERIALS</b>				
ASHAKA CEMENT PLC.	80	23.00	441,036	10,007,688.73
BENUE CEMENT COMPANY PLC.	3	4.15	50,000	208,340.37
CEMENT COMPANY OF NORTHERN NIG. PLC	7	6.80	70,295	464,079.60
WEST AFRICAN PORTLAND CEMENT CO. PLC.	20	9.91	100,430	1,000,423.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>110</b>		<b>661,761</b>	<b>11,680,531.70</b>
<b>CHEMICAL &amp; PAINTS</b>				
BERGER PAINTS PLC.	7	4.40	24,476	108,506.40
CAP PLC.	1	7.35	4,032	29,635.20
D. N. MEYER PLC.	2	4.85	5,000	24,250.00
NIGERIA-GERMAN CHEMICALS PLC.	2	3.80	11,334	43,949.20
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>12</b>		<b>44,842</b>	<b>206,340.80</b>
<b>CONGLOMERATES</b>				
G. LEVENTIS NIGERIA PLC.	1	0.95	1,686	1,601.70
C F A O NIGERIA PLC.	9	4.35	18,396	80,022.60
CHELLARAMS PLC.	2	1.71	44,000	75,240.00
JOHN HOLT PLC.	3	0.76	47,805	36,331.80
UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC.	120	14.30	444,659	6,393,308.27
P. Z. INDUSTRIES PLC.	58	10.69	160,225	1,732,407.32
S C O A NIGERIA PLC.	4	1.09	5,023	5,475.07
U.A.C. NIGERIA PLC.	56	14.17	129,197	1,830,721.49
U.T.C. NIGERIA PLC.	1	1.11	30	33.30
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>254</b>		<b>851,021</b>	<b>10,155,141.55</b>
<b>CONSTRUCTION</b>				
ULIUS BERGER NIGERIA PLC.	4	15.55	1,700	26,426.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>1,700</b>	<b>26,426.00</b>
<b>ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY</b>				
NIGERIAN WIRE AND CABLE PLC.	1	0.80	20,000	16,000.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>20,000</b>	<b>16,000.00</b>
<b>FOOD/BEVERAGES &amp; TOBACCO</b>				
7-UP BOTTLING COMPANY PLC	26	21.85	24,461	539,272.95
CADBURY NIGERIA PLC.	153	50.50	447,299	22,247,356.28
FLOUR MILLS NIGERIA PLC.	28	16.61	46,337	769,657.57
NIGERIA BOTTLING COMPANY PLC.	42	50.50	52,922	2,666,076.50
NESTLE FOODS NIGERIA PLC.	67	136.20	69,749	9,327,927.47
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>316</b>		<b>640,768</b>	<b>35,550,290.77</b>
<b>HEALTHCARE</b>				
EKOCORP PLC.	1	0.66	1,125	742.50
EVANS MEDICAL PLC.	11	2.85	140,000	393,048.00
MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC.	3	5.10	5,000	25,500.00
NEIMETH INTERNATIONAL PHARM. PLC.	5	2.99	108,150	324,591.00
PHARMA-DEKO PLC.	1	4.30	2,000	8,600.00
GLAXOSMITHKLINE CONSUMER NIGERIA PLC	13	8.20	28,818	231,098.16
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>34</b>		<b>285,093</b>	<b>983,579.66</b>
<b>INDUSTRIAL/DOMESTIC PRODUCTS</b>				
B.O.C. GASES PLC.	10	2.73	40,866	114,925.98
VITAFOAM NIGERIA PLC.	17	2.91	122,638	360,494.48
VONO PRODUCTS PLC.	1	1.90	568	1,079.20
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>28</b>		<b>164,072</b>	<b>476,499.66</b>
<b>INSURANCE</b>				
ACEN INSURANCE COMPANY PLC	1	0.60	1,000	600.00
AIICO INSURANCE PLC.	8	1.64	54,050	92,922.00
CORNERSTONE INSURANCE CO. PLC.	3	1.45	90,000	125,450.00
LAW UNION AND ROCK INSURANCE PLC.	3	1.20	9,000	10,800.00
LINKAGE ASSURANCE PLC	6	1.42	94,100	133,622.00
NIGER INSURANCE CO. PLC.	5	3.03	40,000	121,200.00
ROYAL EXCHANGE ASSURANCE PLC.	6	2.85	19,316	54,422.68
UNIC INSURANCE PLC.	6	0.96	12,548	12,025.60
WEST AFRICAN PROV. INS. COY. PLC.	8	2.59	862,826	2,112,470.56
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>46</b>		<b>1,182,840</b>	<b>2,663,512.84</b>
<b>MANAGED FUNDS</b>				
C & I LEASING PLC.	3	1.39	28,999	39,828.61
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>28,999</b>	<b>39,828.61</b>
<b>PACKAGING</b>				
BETA GLASS COMPANY PLC.	1	3.87	750	2,902.50
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>750</b>	<b>2,902.50</b>
<b>PETROLEUM(MARKETING)</b>				
AFROIL PLC.	4	0.78	28,000	21,955.00
AFRICAN PETROLEUM PLC.	108	53.00	587,683	30,999,368.45
ETERNA OIL & GAS PLC.	13	2.04	73,090	149,103.60
MOBIL OIL NIGERIA PLC.	41	158.50	31,254	4,955,158.10
CONOIL PLC.	76	99.81	73,047	7,294,920.57
TEXACO (NIGERIA) PLC.	44	156.00	95,003	14,465,244.31
TOTAL NIGERIA PLC	69	168.00	42,550	7,139,527.50
OANDO PLC.	209	88.00	576,953	47,796,650.75
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>564</b>		<b>1,507,580</b>	<b>112,821,928.28</b>
<b>PRINTING &amp; PUBLISHING</b>				
ACADEMY PRESS PLC.	1	1.90	5,000	9,500.00
LONGMAN NIGERIA PLC.	1	2.11	2,000	4,220.00
UNIVERSITY PRESS PLC.	1	1.64	3,500	5,740.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>10,500</b>	<b>19,460.00</b>
<b>REAL ESTATE</b>				
UACN PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT PLC.	46	7.46	147,590	1,112,849.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>46</b>		<b>147,590</b>	<b>1,112,849.00</b>
<b>TEXTILES</b>				
AFPRINT NIGERIA PLC.	1	0.44	60,000	26,400.00
UNITED NIGERIA TEXTILES PLC.	11	2.10	94,638	198,484.84

## TOP 10 TRADES AS AT FRIDAY

SYMBOL	VOLUME	VALUE	TRADES
GUINNESS	700,831.00	56,069,294.49	193
NB	754,265.00	25,502,184.37	281
WAPIC	862,826.00	2,112,470.56	8
GULFBANK	1,430,000.00	715,000.00	14
FIRSTBANK	1,490,729.00	34,247,305.74	478
UBN	1,679,805.00	31,552,413.80	383
OCEANIC	1,685,925.00	8,363,692.50	32
GUARANTY	3,327,576.00	29,973,784.85	279
IMB	4,525,242.00	2,558,640.19	44
ZENITHBANKS	5,574,194.00	76,437,907.05	188

## TOP 10 GAINERS

SYMBOL	LAST CLOSE	FRIDAY'S CLOSE	CHANGE
NESTLE	130.00	136.20	+6.20
UNIPETROL	84.45	88.00	+3.55
NB	33.00	34.65	+1.65
TEXACO	155.00	156.00	+1.00
ASHAKACEM	22.39	23.00	+0.61
NBC	50.00	50.50	+0.50
UBN	18.51	19.00	+0.49
SKBEECHAM	8.04	8.20	+0.16
WAPIC2	50	2.59	+0.09
OKOMUOIL	16.90	16.99	+0.09

## TOP 10 LOSERS

SYMBOL	LAST CLOSE	FRIDAY'S CLOSE	CHANGE
NOLCHEM	104.69	99.81	-4.88
MOBIL	161.21	158.50	-2.71
AP	55.47	53.00	-2.47
TOTAL	170.00	168.00	-2.00
7UP	23.00	21.85	-1.15
PZ	11.24	10.69	-0.55
PRESCO	10.41	9.89	-0.52
CADBURY	51.00	50.50	-0.50
GUINNESS	80.33	80.00	-0.33
RTBRISCOE	5.89	5.60	-0.29

## Equity prices appreciate at exchange

The prices of listed stocks on the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) appreciated by about 0.07 per cent after weeks of price losses. At the end of trading for the week, the market capitalisation which had been under pressure rose by N12 billion to close at N1.719 trillion.

The all-share index also grew by 149.20 points to close, at 21,158.90 points. Nestle led the price gainers chart, chalking up N6.20 to close at N136.20 per share.

Oando gained N3.55 to close at N88 per share while the Nigerian Breweries share price rose by N1.65 to close at N34.65. On the other hand, Conoil led the price losers chart, shedding N4.88 to close at N99.81 per share.

Mobil Oil share price lost N2.71 to close at N158.50 while African Petroleum (AP) dipped by N2.47 to close at N53 per share.

The market analysis for the last trading day of the week showed that investors interest remained highest in the Banking sub-sector with 22.16 million shares worth N192.67 million executed in 1,582 deals. A further breakdown showed that Zenith Bank with 5.57 million shares valued at N76.44 million accounted for the bulk of the transactions in the Banking sub-sector.

The Petroleum Marketing sub-sector followed with 1.51 million shares valued at N112.82 million traded in 564 deals while the Breweries sub-sector accounted for N81.57 million committed on 1.46 million shares in 474 deals.

In all, investors today bought 29.92 million shares worth N457.13 million in 3,552 deals. Meanwhile, the following are the major price gainers and losers at the NSE on Friday.

## NAICOM approves two new insurance products

The National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) has approved two new insurance policy products to further boost the insurance products available to policy holders in the country.

The products, Flexible Investment Assurance Plan (FIAP), and Niger Group Education Plan (NIGREP), which will hit the insurance market soon are from the stable of Niger Insurance Plc.

The Managing Director of the company, Alhaji Bala Zakaniya'u, told NAN in Lagos that "the products are some of the many new innovative policies the company would be coming out with soon.

Zakaniya'u said that in view of the economy of the country, there was need for more policy products that would cater for all the clientele of the insurance industry. He explained that the education policy (NIGREP) will guarantee the continuous education of a child in the same school of choice of the deceased or disabled parent/sponsor.

"The school authority will be responsible for the management of the policy which the school itself could take or the Parents Teachers Association (PTA) or both," he said. On how NIGREP operates, he said that premium per child in a class was level and that it would be paid with the school fees and that the school would be required to remit the premium to the company.

"In the event of death or accidental permanent incapacity of sponsoring parent, the insurance company will each term remit to the school authority the affected student/pupil's school fees until he/she reaches the level of Education in the country."



CHARTERED BANK

CHARTERED BANK PLC  
RC119632

Offer for Subscription

of

2,495,350,255

Ordinary Shares of 50 kobo each  
at ₦3.40 per share

PAYABLE IN FULL ON APPLICATION

THE APPLICATION LIST FOR THE 2,495,350,255 SHARES BEING OFFERED FOR SUBSCRIPTION WILL OPEN ON 21 FEBRUARY 2005 AND CLOSE ON 21 MARCH 2005

**PURPOSE OF THE OFFER**

The Offer is one of the initiatives taken by the Bank to meet the Central Bank of Nigeria's new ₦25 billion capital requirement. The proceeds will provide Chartered Bank with additional working capital and fund the enhancement of its Information Technology Platforms which include upgrading the Bank's existing systems capabilities to adequately service a vastly enhanced branch network and develop e-commerce products and services, increase collaboration with domestic and international e-payment schemes amongst others. The proceeds of the Offer will also finance the expansion of the Bank's branch network through the creation of 25 branches: Lagos (8), Agbara, Ota, Oshogbo, Ado-Ekiti, Ondo, Ilesha, Eket, Nnewi, Umuahia, Port Harcourt, Yenogoa, Lokoja, Abuja, Gombe, Lafia, Kaduna, and Kano.

**INDEBTEDNESS**

As at 30 November 2004, the Bank had no outstanding debentures, mortgages, charges or similar indebtedness or material contingent liabilities other than in the ordinary course of business. However, the Bank had contingent liabilities in the ordinary course of business amounting to ₦14.67 billion, comprising acceptances, guarantees and other obligations for the accounts of customers.

**SHARE CAPITAL AND RESERVES OF THE BANK AS AT 30 NOVEMBER 2004**  
(Extracted from the Reporting Accountants' Report)

		₦000
<b>AUTHORISED</b>	6,500,000,000 Ordinary Shares of 50 kobo each	3,250,000
<b>ISSUED AND FULLY PAID</b>	4,004,649,745 Ordinary Shares of 50 kobo each	2,002,325
<b>RESERVES</b>	Statutory reserves	2,174,319
	Small scale industries reserves	753,673
	General reserve	598,842
	<b>SHAREHOLDERS' FUNDS</b>	<b>5,526,159</b>

**FORECAST OFFER STATISTICS**

(Extracted from the Reporting Accountants' Report)

Year Ending 31 March	2005	2006	2007
Forecast earnings per share (kobo)*	30	24	36
Forecast earnings yield at the Offer price	9%	7%	11%
Forecast dividend per share (kobo)	10	12	20
Forecast dividend yield at the Offer price	3%	3%	6%
Forecast price/earnings ratio at the Offer price	11	14	9

**HISTORY AND BUSINESS**

Chartered Bank was incorporated as a private limited liability company on 27 October 1988 and granted a commercial banking licence by the Central Bank of Nigeria in November 1988. The Bank commenced operations on 05 December 1988 and became a public limited liability company on 13 May 1998. The Bank currently operates with a Universal Banking Licence, providing various services including capital market activities, investment banking and insurance amongst others.

Chartered Bank is a leading full service universal bank offering a comprehensive array of specialized products and services. The Bank is registered by the Securities & Exchange Commission as Issuing House, Investment Advisers, Receiving Bankers and Funds/Portfolio Managers. The Bank operates through a network of 50 branches located in the six geo-political zones of the country and offers specialized and differentiated financial services to its customers via a teamwork approach, which with continuous process re-engineering has produced substantial gains in efficiency. Also, its investment in Information Technology has made it possible to offer on-line real time services and improve its service delivery.

**FUTURE PLANS**

The strategic direction of Chartered Bank is to focus on growth opportunities in consumer banking to complement its leading position in corporate and commercial banking in order to achieve a pre-eminent position in financial services delivery in the country and West African Sub-Region. With the ongoing consolidation in the banking industry, the Bank would actualize value-enhancing merger partnerships with similar institutions with a view to diversifying and growing its earnings base whilst exploiting fully the available options under the universal banking dispensation.

In the next three years, the Bank plans to grow its service outlets through expansion of its branches to the few remaining state capitals where it does not have a presence at the moment and other major viable commercial centres in the country. This will enable it gain market share in particular in deposit mobilization and customer base. In addition, the Bank will deploy more of its proprietary Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) to more locations nationwide to provide specialized value added services to its customers whilst also leveraging on the shared services available through collaboration with other ATM networks. In light of the foregoing, we believe that the Bank has a bright and prosperous future and therefore encourage the investing public to take advantage of this opportunity to invest in the Bank.

**RATINGS AND AWARDS**

The Bank is an industry leader in terms of balance sheet size, earnings and profitability. It is also known for its high ethical standard. Chartered Bank has consistently improved its rating as issued by the foremost rating agency in Nigeria, Messrs Agusto & Co from a "BBB+" rating in 2001 to an "A" rating in 2002, "A+" in 2003 and an "AA" in 2004. The current rating reflects the Bank's solid financial condition and strong capacity to meet its financial obligations as and when they fall due.

**PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATION AND ALLOTMENT**

**1. APPLICATION**

- The general investing public is hereby invited to apply for the shares through any of the Receiving Agents.
- Applications for the ordinary shares must be made in accordance with the instructions set out at the back of the application form. Care must be taken to follow these instructions, as applications, which do not comply, will be rejected.
- The Application List for the ordinary shares now being offered will open at 8am on 21 February 2005 and close at 1.30pm on 21 March 2005. Applications must be for a minimum of 1,000 shares and in multiples of 100 thereafter. The number of shares for which an application is made and the value of the cheque or bank draft attached should be entered in the boxes provided.

**2. ALLOTMENT**

Investment Banking & Trust Company Limited, FBN (Merchant Bankers) LIMITED and the Directors of the Bank reserve the right to accept or reject any application in whole or in part. All irregular or suspected multiple applications will be rejected. The allotment proposal will be subject to the clearance of the Securities & Exchange Commission.

**3. APPLICATION MONIES**

All application monies will be retained in a separate bank account by the Receiving Banker pending allotment. If any application is not accepted, or is accepted for fewer shares than the number applied for, a crossed cheque for the full amount or the balance of the amount paid (as the case may be) will be returned by registered post at the applicant's risk within 5 working days of allotment. A share certificate will be sent by registered post at the applicant's risk not later than 15 working days from the date of allotment.

**DIRECTORS AND OTHER PARTIES TO THE OFFER**

**DIRECTORS**

Lt. General Mohammed Inuwa Wushishi (Rtd) G.C.O.N  
(Chairman)  
12 Rabah Road  
Kaduna

Mr Moses Olujimi Adedoyin  
(Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer)  
Plot 1712 Idejo Street  
Victoria Island  
Lagos

Mr Rasheed Aderemi Kolarinwa (Executive)  
Plot 1712 Idejo Street  
Victoria Island  
Lagos

Professor Alfred Bandele Kasunmu SAN  
10 Sabiu Ajose Crescent  
Surulere  
Lagos

Mr Bhagwan Ishwardas Mahtani  
PC 30 Afribank Street  
Victoria Island  
Lagos

Mr Ratan Ishwardas Mahtani  
PC 30 Afribank Street  
Victoria Island  
Lagos

Professor Green Onyekaba Nwankwo O.O.N  
61 Marina  
Lagos

**COMPANY SECRETARY**

Mr Lawrence Juwah  
Plot 1712 Idejo Street  
Victoria Island  
Lagos

**ISSUING HOUSES AND RECEIVING BANKERS**

Investment Banking & Trust Company Limited  
I.B.T.C. Place  
Walter Carrington Crescent  
Victoria Island  
Lagos

**FBN (Merchant Bankers) LIMITED**

9/11 Macarthy Street  
Onikan  
Lagos

**JOINT STOCKBROKERS TO THE OFFER**

Clearview Investments Company Limited  
6th Floor  
NCR Building  
6 Broad Street  
Lagos

**Cooper Fleming Stockbrokers Limited**

Churchgate Towers  
PC 30 Afribank Street  
Victoria Island  
Lagos

**Counters Trust Securities Limited**

7th Floor  
Niger House  
1/5 Odunlami Street  
Lagos

**DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION**

Copies of the following documents may be inspected at the offices of Investment Banking & Trust Company Limited, I.B.T.C. Place, Walter Carrington Crescent, Victoria Island, Lagos and FBN (Merchant Bankers) LIMITED, 9/11 Macarthy Street, Onikan, Lagos, during normal business hours on any weekday (except public holidays), from 8am on 21 February 2005 to 1.30pm on 21 March 2005.

- Certificate of Incorporation of the Bank;
- Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Bank;
- The Prospectus issued in respect of the Offer;
- The Shareholders' Resolution authorising the Offer;
- The Board Resolution authorising the Offer;
- The audited financial statements of the Bank for each of the five years ended 31 March 2004 and the eight months ended 30 November 2004;
- The Report of KPMG Professional Services, Reporting Accountants, on the audited financial statements of the Bank for the five years ended 31 March 2004 and the eight months ended 30 November 2004;
- The Report of KPMG Professional Services, Reporting Accountants, on the Profit Forecast of the Bank for the years ending 31 March 2005, 2006 and 2007;
- The list of outstanding claims and litigation referred to in the Prospectus;
- The material contract referred to in the Prospectus; and
- The written consents of the parties to the Offer.

Future View Securities Limited  
Future View Plaza  
Plot 161D Adufu Taylor Close  
Off Idejo Street  
Victoria Island  
Lagos

Profund Securities Limited  
PC 1 Engineering Close  
Victoria Island  
Lagos

Security Swaps Limited  
1st Floor  
Okoi Arikpo House  
5 Idowu Taylor Street  
Victoria Island  
Lagos

Summit Finance Company Limited  
Summit House  
6 Ajele Street  
Off Broad Street  
Lagos

Trusthouse Investment Limited  
3 Sumbo Jibowu Street  
Off Ribadu Road  
Ikoyi  
Lagos

**JOINT AUDITORS**

Akintola Williams Deloitte  
(Chartered Accountants)  
1 Town Planning Way  
Ilupeju  
Lagos

Horwath Dafinone  
(Chartered Accountants)  
Ceddi Towers  
16 Wharf Road  
Apapa  
Lagos

**REPORTING ACCOUNTANTS**

KPMG Professional Services  
(Chartered Accountants)  
22A Gerrard Road  
Ikoyi  
Lagos

**SOLICITORS TO THE BANK**

Aina, Blankson & Co  
133 Igbosere Road  
Lagos

**SOLICITORS TO THE OFFER**

Abdulai, Taiwo & Co  
(Solicitors)  
Goodwill House  
278 Ikorodu Road  
Lagos

**REGISTRARS**

Corporate Diamond Securities & Investments Limited  
5th Floor  
Elder Dempster House  
47 Marina  
Lagos

Issuing Houses:



INVESTMENT BANKING & TRUST COMPANY LIMITED  
I.B.T.C. Place, Walter Carrington R.O. Box 71707 Victoria Island Lagos Nigeria  
Telephone : +234-1-2626520 facimile: +234-1-2626541/2



FBN (Merchant Bankers) LIMITED  
9/11, Macarthy Street, Onikan P.M.B. 12711 Lagos, Nigeria.  
Telephone 2600890-9, Fax: 2633600 Telex: 28111 FBNMB NG.  
Telegraphic address: FIBAMB  
E-Mail: fbnmb@fbnmb.com

# The thrills and drills

By Abdullahi Bego, Region

When my mobile telephone rang one Tuesday morning in early January as I was about to go to work in Abuja, I never thought that was going to be the springboard to my becoming one of the guests of Allah and His prophet (SAW) at this year's Hajj. A colleague came on the line when I answered, and after traditional salutations, he broke to me the news of a sponsorship to perform the Hajj.

I was at once enveloped by a mixed feeling of joy and anxiety. Being one of the five pillars of Islam, Hajj is a religious duty that every Muslim would want to perform, some even annually if the opportunity would avail itself. This underlined my joy; that I now had the opportunity to perform Hajj, to see and circumambulate the Qa'aba, to be clad in the white robe that reminds one of the Day of Judgement, to stand at Arafat, to be in the milieu of people passing the night at Muzdalifah, and many more. These occupy such an important place in Islam that were one to perform them to the best of their abilities as taught by the Prophet (SAW), and duly observe all other obligations, one would be eligible to have all their sins forgiven and return home as if they were just 'born'.

But then my anxiety lurked around my joy. It was an anxiety borne of fear and hope. Would I be able to perform the Hajj that Islam enjoins or would I simply be one of those Hajj-goers who gained nothing but physical stress because they were heedless of the spirit of Hajj? Could I have the presence of mind to 'circumambulate' the Throne with the angels who glorify the Name of their Lord by circumambulating

the Qa'aba with the people? Could I have the strength of mind to stone my inner Satans, my lowly self, my anger, desires, impatience, etc by stoning the Big Satan at Jamarat? Would I be among those who would reach the level of 'cognition' at Arafat by witnessing to the Majesty of Allah and the Noble status of His Messenger? Would I be able to run back and forth from truth and honesty at Safa to patience, humility, humanity and resolve at Marwa?

These and other questions bordering on the lessons and spirit of Hajj boggled my mind, as I tried to internalise the reality that within the next few days, I would be one of millions of Muslims who would answer Allah's call to perform the Hajj.

We left Abuja on Friday evening on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January, 2005 aboard a Kabo 747 aircraft that took us directly to Jeddah. Two years back, I was at Jeddah airport as a transit passenger from Tehran, where I went for a one year stint at Iran's Hausa radio service. Back then, I had prayed, as we left Jeddah airport and were flying over what I believed was Mecca, for God to enable me return as a pilgrim to His Sanctified House. That Friday aboard Kabo Air as we flew out of Abuja, I selfishly thought this was the answer to my prayer.

The journey to Jeddah was smooth, and most passengers on that flight slept away the hours linking Nigeria with Saudi Arabia. Many were exhausted, understandably, having spent between four to seven days at the Gwagwalada Pilgrims Transit Camp waiting for an aircraft to lift them for Hajj, and haggling with officials

that none was forthcoming until that Friday.

It therefore came as a great relief when an announcement from the flight deck intimated us that we were now about to land at Jeddah airport.

For many of us who had planned to proceed to Medina (since Hajj proper was still about ten days away) immediately we arrived Jeddah, it happened that we arrived a little 'late'; just a few hours after the gates of Medina were closed for pilgrims wanting to reach the Prophet's city by road. The option was therefore either to proceed to Mecca and then visit Medina after the completion of Hajj rites or visit Medina by air and personally bear the cost of air ticket.

Many of us chose the latter option. We boarded an Islamabad-bound Saudi Arabian Airlines jet which took us to Medina in forty five minutes. On sighting the hills and mountains surrounding Medina, a picture of the early history of Islam immediately came to my mind. Here was Medina, the City that received and hosted the Prophet (SAW) as its own; the City which, having opened its doors to Islam, became the door to Islam for others.

For me and, undoubtedly, for many pilgrims, the sight of Medina held a special attraction; the intensity rising as we disembarked from the aircraft and headed towards our accommodation in time for a visit to the Prophet's Mosque.

Medina was such a beautiful and clean city and its people were very accommodating. I expected nothing less. Within the next several days, however, I was to find, to my consternation that this uniquely Medianan

atmosphere contrasts sharply with the one at Mecca.

My first visit to the Prophet's Mosque came a few hours after our arrival in the City. We had visited the Nigerian Hajj Mission in Medina and seven of us were put into one group and lodged in the same place. All of us were later to become very good friends.

his sayings, the Noble Prophet (SAW) had said that anyone who visited him after his death, it was as if he had visited him while being alive. Elsewhere, the Prophet said that the salutations of his visitors are being conveyed to be him and he responds, when someone greets him in his grave. Such was the enormous opportunity I

ing camels and other mounts, the Hijrah of the Prophet (SAW) and his companions was indeed a journey powered by a strong faith in Allah and the mission of His Noble Prophet (SAW). The distance might be short, depending on how one looks at

existence while p... Sa'y reminds one... this world is all a... determi-nation, res... dependence on All...

We remained in... next two days... beginning of Hajj... the very hospitable... in Medina. I wa...



Pay five riyal and mount a camel. Camels are respected in Saudi Arabi more than any other place.

Amongst us all, our main concern was to take a nap and then proceed to the Mosque as soon as the call to prayer was made.

When the call to prayer finally came at around half past midday on Saturday, we all took our bath and ablution and headed for the Mosque. As we drove, I kept thanking God for the opportunity to visit the Prophet (SAW). In one of

had, along with millions of pilgrims, who performed this year's Hajj.

We spent seven days in Medina, saying all our five daily prayers at the Prophet's magnificent Mosque and visiting some of Islam's historical sites such as the Mosque of the Two Qiblas, the Uhud Mountain and battlefield, where the Prophet (SAW) and his companions fought one of the early battles for the defence of Islam, the Seven Mosques and many more.

**Journey to Mecca:** We left Medina for Mecca on the eighth day of our arrival there. Having formally made the intention to perform Umrah and Hajj at the Miqat in Dhul Hulayfah outside Medina, we proceeded to Mecca in the afternoon immediately after Zuhr prayer. Although the whether was not so hot, the sheer length of the journey - about 440 kilometres - sapped a lot of energy.

The distance between Mecca and Medina was a cover of very difficult, even impossible, terrain; mountains and hills dotted the entire landscape. One easily remembers the spiritual-cum-physical flight that was Hijrah, which the Prophet (SAW) and his companions undertook from Mecca to Medina. How difficult was their journey!

Trekking on foot or rid-

it, but it changed history and affected humanity positively, forever.

It took us nearly eight hours to reach Mecca by bus. For the next three to four hours after our arrival in Mecca, however, we were to remain seated inside our bus, as the driver and a couple of other officials tried to sort out where it was that we were going to be accommodated.

A colleague from the *New Nigerian* traveling in the same bus told me later that he and a few others were inside the same bus for two additional hours after we had disembarked because, as pilgrims who had arrived the Holy Land via 'international route', it proved even more difficult sorting out where they would be accommodated in Mecca; and their agent was not immediately on ground to provide much needed services.

Once we got our accommodation, we proceeded to the Holy Qa'aba for Umrah. We circumambulated the Qa'aba, prayed, performed the Sa'y (moving between Safa and Marwah) and then shaved our hair, successfully completing the rites of Umrah Tamattu'.

It was such a great experience. Circumambulating the Qa'aba unites one with the source of

disappointed w... of many Mecca... make money... through what... described as a rip... ferrying you to... Shari' Sittin w... that directly lin... for instance, w... the equivalent... when the dista... standard, sho... than N40!

**Muna and Hajj:** Pilgrims... Tuesday, the... time for Arafat... It turned ou... biggest Hajj... recorded histo... Saudi official... 2.86 million... Arafat and pe... this year. The... News, howev... "close to four

Those of u... through Abuj... taste of the v... niences which... failed to get... lodge at the A... at Muna. F... looking arou... space, we lo... tents and inn... No sooner h... came in to s... were 'reserv... Hajj and so... elsewhere.

Knowing... ldn't be arg... told the off... courtesy as... since the Ar... conceivably



Pilgrims buying food at the Muna camp.

## Section 1: Invitation for Bids

The Federal Government of Nigeria  
Kebbi State Health System Development Project II  
Procurement of Vehicles and Motorcycles  
Credit No. 3653 -UNI - IFB No. KB/HSDPII/GD/007/NCB/05

1. This invitation for bids follows the general procurement notice for this project that appeared in *Development Business* issue No. 608 of June 16, 2003.
2. The Federal Government of Nigeria has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) toward the cost of Health System Development Project II and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payments under the contract for Procurement of Vehicles and Motorcycles.
3. The Kebbi State Health System Development Project II now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the supply of the following items.

Lot 1: 1 No. 4 Wheel Drive Double Cabin Pick up  
Lot 2: 30 Nos Motorcycles

Bidders may bid for any one or more lots and discounts offered for the award of combined lots would be considered in bid evaluation.

4. Bidding will be conducted through the National Competitive Bidding (NCB) procedures specified in the World Bank's *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits* and is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the guidelines.
5. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from Kebbi State Health System Development Project II (KBSHSDPII), 21 Emir Haruna Road, Birnin Kebbi, Tel/Fax 234068-320968-70 and inspect the bidding documents from 10.00am to 3.00pm commencing on Monday 7th March, 2005.
6. A complete set of bidding documents in English may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee N15,000.00 (Fifteen Thousand Naira only) or USD 120 (One Hundred and Twenty dollars only). The method of payment will be in cash or bank draft payable to Kebbi State Health System Development Project II. The document will be collected by hand or sent by courier services on request.
7. Bids must be delivered to the address below at or before 10.00am local time on 6th April, 2005. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of at least 3% of bid price or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders representatives who choose to attend at the address below at 10.00am local time on 6th April, 2005.

The Project Manager,  
Kebbi State Health System Development Project II,  
21, Emir Haruna Road, Birnin Kebbi, Kebbi State  
Tel/Fax 234 64 320 968-70

## Invitation for Bids

The Federal Government of Nigeria  
Kebbi State Health System Development Project II  
Procurement and Installation of Internet, E-mail and Fax-mode  
Credit No. 3653 -UNI - IFB No. KB/HSDPII/GD/001/ICB/05

1. This invitation for bids follows the general procurement notice for this project that appeared in *Development Business* issue No. 608 of June 16, 2003.
2. The Federal Government of Nigeria has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the cost of Health System Development Project II and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payments under the contract for Procurement and Installation of Internet, E-mail and Fax mode.
3. The Kebbi State Health System Development Project II now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the supply and installation of the following items.

Lot 1: Procurement and Installation of Internet, E-mail and Fax mode  
Lot 2: Procurement of 10 No. Computers, 10 Printers and 2 Epson LT 2070

4. Bidding will be conducted through the National Competitive Bidding (NCB) procedures specified in the World Bank's *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits* and is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the guidelines.
5. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from Kebbi State Health System Development Project II (KHS DPII), 21, Emir Haruna Road, Birnin Kebbi, Tel/Fax 234068-234068-70 and inspect the bidding documents from 10.00am to 3.00pm commencing on Monday 7th March, 2005.
6. A complete set of bidding documents in English may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee N15,000.00 (Fifteen Thousand Naira only) or USD 120 (One hundred and twenty dollars only). The method of payment will be in cash or bank draft payable to Kebbi State Health System Development Project II. The document will be collected by hand or sent by courier services on request.
7. Bids must be delivered to the address below at or before 10.00am local time on 7th April, 2005. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of at least 3% of bid price or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders representatives who choose to attend at the address below at 10.00am local time on 7th April, 2005.

The Project Manager,  
Kebbi State Health System Development Project II,  
21, Emir Haruna Road, Birnin Kebbi, Kebbi State  
Tel/Fax 234 68 320 968-70

## Invitation for Bids

The Federal Government of Nigeria  
Kebbi State Health System Development Project II  
Procurement and Installation of Internet, E-mail and Fax-mode  
Credit No. 3653 -UNI - IFB No. KB/HSDPII/GD/008/NCB/05

1. This invitation for bids follows the general procurement notice for this project that appeared in *Development Business* issue No. 608 of June 16, 2003.
2. The Federal Government of Nigeria has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) toward the cost of Health System Development Project II, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payment under the contract for Procurement and Installation of Computers and Peripherals and photocopiers.
3. The Kebbi State Health System Development Project II now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the supply of the following items:

Lot 1: 12 Nos Computers, 12 Nos Printers, 12 Nos UPS and 12 Nos Stabilisers  
Lot 2: 7 Nos Photocopiers  
Lot 3: 4 Nos Laptop Computers

Bidders may bid for any one or more lots and discounts offered for the award of combined lots would be considered in bid evaluation.

4. Bidding will be conducted through the National Competitive Bidding (NCB) procedures specified in the World Bank's *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits* and is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the guidelines.
5. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from Kebbi State Health System Development Project II (KHS DPII), 21 Emir Haruna Road, Birnin Kebbi, Tel/Fax 234068-320968-70 and inspect the bidding documents from 10.00am to 3.00pm commencing on Monday 7th March, 2005.
6. A complete set of bidding documents in English may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee N15,000.00 (Fifteen Thousand Naira only) or USD 120 (One hundred and twenty dollars only). The method of payment will be in cash or bank draft payable to Kebbi State Health System Development Project II. The document will be collected by hand or sent by courier services on request.
7. Bids must be delivered to the address below at or before 10.00am local time on 8th April, 2005. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of at least 3% of bid price or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders representatives who choose to attend at the address below at 10.00am local time on 8th April, 2005.

The Project Manager,  
Kebbi State Health System Development Project II,  
21, Emir Haruna Road, Birnin Kebbi, Kebbi State  
Tel/Fax 234 68 320 968-70



## BORNO STATE GOVERNMENT

*Felicitating  
with  
Mr. President*

*As the President and  
Commander-in-Chief  
of the Armed Forces,  
Chief Olusegun  
Obasanjo turns 68,  
the government and  
people of Borno  
State rejoice with  
him and wish him  
many more years of  
good health and  
service to the nation.*

*May God continue to  
guide you and give  
you good health,  
Mr. President.*

SIGNED

Senator(Dr.) Ali Modu Sheriff  
Executive Governor, Jigawa State



Alh. (Dr.) Usman Aliyu Shagari, GCFR (Turakin Sokoto)  
Former Executive President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria



Senator(Dr.) Ali Modu Sheriff  
Executive Governor, Jigawa State



## Advertorial

## NUHU RIBADU AND HIS CAMPAIGN OF CALUMNY AGAINST IBB

It is understandable that having suffered a disastrous loss of influence in the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), the other camp would resort to crude propaganda and other desperate moves in their bid for the 2007 presidency. It is surprising, however, that they would choose Nuhu Ribadu, a public officer, as one of their lead attackers in their desperate war against General Ibrahim Babangida.

As a public officer who is expected to be apolitical in his assignment, Nuhu Ribadu's alleged comment in South Africa over General Babangida's assumed presidential ambition in 2007 is unfortunate.

In the said comment reported in the *Daily Trust* of March, 1, 2005, which the newspapers credited to *Financial Standard*, a weekly newspaper published in Lagos, Mr. Ribadu was reported to have said his Commission (Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC) is investigating former President Babangida. A number of other national dailies, among them, *ThisDay* and *The Sun*, had subsequently culled the said story, which they celebrated as their lead story.

According to Ribadu, the Commission has not found any bank account or property in his name, because in Mr. Ribadu's words, "he is so crafty". Ribadu was however, quoted to have assured his audience that they will continue to look for something, because the man IBB will never be President again.

The concluding part of Ribadu's statement has only betrayed that he is a politician in uniform rather than a cop prosecuting an anti-corruption war. Ribadu is looking for evidence to nail IBB, when he has piles of documents on his desk more than enough for him to question his political benefactor.

Ribadu likes to grandstand as a tough cop, waging a genuine anti-corruption war, against everybody except himself. Many believe the young man is on political campaign, pursuing politically-motivated investigations. There are many questions begging for answers in Ribadu's conduct for anyone to take him seriously.

1. What has Ribadu done with the mass of evidence that indicted his benefactor in the multi-billion naira sleaze in the COJA games?

2. What has Ribadu done with the mass of evidence that indicted his benefactor in the multi-million dollar pentascope deals?

3. What about the privatization sleaze, where Ribadu's benefactor pocketed a Petroleum coy for a pittance through front and untoward methods?

Mr. Ribadu needs to know that no one takes him serious. After all, he locked up Bulama of Bank of the North for allegedly taking N600m from Bank of the North while those who allegedly took over 19 billion (see Tell 21/2/05) from SGBN are walking the street free because they are friends of his benefactor.

*Alhamdulillah*, Ribadu confessed that he has not been able to find any account abroad or property in IBB's name; but he is desperately searching. Yet, it is common knowledge that his benefactor who supported him to get EFCC job goes about celebrated as a moneybag, even though he was a public servant before he suddenly became rich. That is enough jobs for Ribadu if he is honest.

Pray, is it not a testimony to IBB's integrity that twelve years after he left office, professional crime busters who are on political assignments are not able to find evidence of the fabled "IBB loot"? The fabled "IBB loot" has only existed in the imagination of mischief makers and unrepentant political foes who have elected to perpetually drink from the pool of hatred for some self-serving reasons.

Rather than say the man is crafty, will it not be more honourable to admit that, contrary to the impression that many propagandists have tried to paint over the years, the man is not a thief? Finally, let it be known that if it is Allah's wish that IBB will return to power in 2007, one million Ribadu cannot stop him.

**SIGNED**

**Rilwan Ahmadu**

**Plot 1082, Airport Road**

**Kaduna**

**08027660007**

# Feature

## Challenges of the 2005 Hajj

Editor (North East)

forming the at the life of out sacrifice, live and total h. Mecca for the before the Contrary to atmosphere somewhat

able space we have seen, it would not be out of place if we were allowed to stay, especially because the Amirul Hajj's concern himself was the welfare of pilgrims. The official let us stay.

But throughout our stay in Muna, I have seen several pilgrims who simply spread their mats outside and continued to sleep in the open because enough tents were not provided for all pilgrims.

On Wednesday 19th January, we all moved to Arafat, spent the whole day and moved back to Mash'aril

Haram (Muzdalifah) in the evening. Again, although the distance between Arafat and Muzdalifah is as much as seven to eight kilometres, we decided to trek back because there weren't enough buses to carry pilgrims. Many, though, paid from their own pockets to reach Muzdalifah.

Two friends and I decided to trek because, although we could pay from our pockets too, the traffic was so long and static that going by foot seemed much easier.

After the completion of the rites, we returned to Mecca to perform the Tawaf and Sa'y before returning to Muna again for the two or three days of worship (Ayyamut Tashriq).

**Staying at Muna:** During the Ayyamut Tashriq, many Nigerian pilgrims simply milled around the tents to meet and discuss with friends. The Nigerian community in Saudi Arabia, consisting largely of people called *Takari*, made a lot of money, like their Meccan counterparts, by selling food and other provisions to pilgrims at mostly exorbitant prices.

The Ayyamut Tashriq days are meant to be days for the remembrance of Allah. My own reading of the situation, however, is that many people, especially from Nigeria, do not even remain in their tents, let alone engage in *zikr*. A situation where people make Muna a mundane place for engaging in largely worldly affairs does not speak well of keeping to the spirit of Hajj.

Those *Takari* women who sell food were to suffer one of the most serious setbacks to their lucrative businesses when a torrential rainfall on Saturday 22nd January in Muna, Mecca and other Saudi cities swept away many of their wares, living them to try to re-start all over again.

**Return to Mecca and the Drills Ahead:** I left Muna after spending two out of the three Ayyamut Tashriq days. It was Saturday, and up to around or

close to midday, there was no premonition that the rains would fall, or that they would leave so much damage and misery behind.

I performed the last stoning of the Satan at *Jamarat* and proceeded to Mecca with two friends from the members of my 'group' with whom we had visited Medina earlier.

We arrived safely at our lodge and were about to set out to a nearby restaurant when the rains began to fall. We had no idea what was going on elsewhere, except the thought that this was a rainfall like any other.

Hours later, another member of our 'group' came in and broke the sad news that the rains had caused such a scale of damage and destruction not seen in recent Saudi history. "All the shops around the *Haram* were inundated", he told us.

If this was shocking, the revelations of another member of the 'group', who arrived much later, were even more shocking. "I saw old people in great difficulty", he said, adding "the rains have washed away many disabled people under the tunnels".

**Returning Home:** During the next several days, as people recovered from the effects of the rains and the stress of the Hajj exercise, pilgrims were to grapple with preparations of returning home.

For most pilgrims from other parts of the world, this was nothing to worry about. Pakistan, for instance, took 150,000 pilgrims for this year's Hajj. Indonesia and Malaysia reportedly took much more. Iran and other Central Asian nations also took record numbers.

But among all these pilgrims, there were no tensions associated with any difficulties to return home. Their airlines, mostly national airlines, were on hand to lift them back. Thus, despite their large numbers, pilgrims from, say, Malaysia or Iran, were steadily being taken home at a time that pilgrims from many African countries have not even started having their luggage weighed.

For many Nigerian pilgrims, the experience was traumatic. Many had spent days at Jeddah airport while a number of others had to engage in demonstration to protest what they believed was official negligence of their plight.

The truth, as I understood it, was that Nigerian Hajj officials did try, but they did not try hard enough. You wonder, for instance, why only one out of the two official airlines would have aircraft ready to bring pilgrims home, and even undertake over twenty trips before the other could

even begin to think of hiring aircraft because it either had none, or hadn't enough. You ask why the contract was not revoked and re-awarded to a competent airline. And you get no answers.

The difficulty of many Nigerian pilgrims at Jeddah was accentuated by the lack of medical personnel at the airport. A number of pilgrims did fall sick; even in my presence a woman having stomach complications was vomiting terribly; an old man hit by cold had to contend with fever and rheumatism. Yet the medical team members, at least up to the time I was at the airport, remained in Mecca.

In all fairness, the medical mission did an outstanding job. There



Worshippers gathered at the entrance of Haram Mosque in Makkah during one of the prayers.



Pilgrims taking a wall at Mina camp. Here they prepare to stone the devil at the Jamrat.

were at least four national Hajj missions spread around Mecca where Nigerian pilgrims were being catered for, in addition to individual state medical missions. I also learnt that close to N30 million was spent at the national level to purchase drugs and other medical consumables to cater for pilgrims. All these went a long way in caring for pilgrims who had fallen sick. But the absence of any medical team at the Jeddah airport, when many pilgrims were spending two to four days waiting for an aircraft, is a diminution that must be addressed in the future.

After spending 36 hours at the Jeddah airport, it was time for me to return home. I was eager to return and see

my family but I knew I was going to miss the Holy Land. Whatever difficulties one encountered, Hajj is one religious exercise that one would like to perform every year, given the opportunity.

However, even while the aircraft was on ground, the 'Nigerian factor' was still visibly at play. Pilgrims could not organise and ready themselves to board the aircraft in good time. Others would come with impossible amount of luggage and insist on taking them at the same time.

A Kabo Air staff told me that the indiscipline and lack of orderliness of many Nigerian pilgrims were the reasons why only a few

airport slots were given to Nigerian Hajj aircrafts daily during the return journey. This is because while only around two hours would be needed by the aircraft of other countries to take passengers and leave the airport at any given time, a Nigerian aircraft would take up to six hours, thus denying other aircrafts the space to park and take passengers. "This is why they give us just a few slots everyday", he reiterated.

After morning prayers led by the Islamic Scholar, Sheikh Ibraheem Saleh al-Husseini on Tuesday 1st February, we flew out of Jeddah to Abuja, thus ending a very memorable spiritual journey to this year's Hajj.

# IT World

## Why cybersecurity legislation is difficult - AG

The Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Chief Akin Olujinmi said that unless an institution with requisite power to enforce law on the current menace of cyber crime is put in place it will be difficult to curtail the problem in the country.

Speaking at the cyber security forum for the banking and financial sector in Abuja the Attorney general of the federation who was also the co-chairman of the Nigerian Cyber crime Working Group (NCWG) said "a law seeking to foster cyber security in any system must create an institution and vest it with requisite powers to enforce the law."

Chief Olujinmi who spoke through his representative, the coordinator, NCWG, Mr.

Bisil Udota said, in order to minimized the crime that sort of law must grant the institution the power of international law enforcement cooperation.

According to him, information and communications technologies (ICTs) has the tendency of placing users of the media in the global domain, whether they like it or not and the legal and illegal use of these systems cross traditional international boundaries to the extent that harms occurring in Nigeria might have emanated from a different countries.

Said he: "the reality of ICTs is that, we cannot expect to reap the benefits accruing from these systems, without facing the threats of the negative reprisals that are possible due to the nature of its system.

The managing director of the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC) who also spoke at the forum said in order for a financial institution to harness the benefits of deploying ICTs in the financial services industry and minimize its threats there is the need to put in place an appropriate cyber security policy and implementation process.

According to him, the absence of such a policy is the emergence and thriving of cyber crimes, in our societies.

Other speakers include the deputy governor, financial sector surveillance, Central Bank of Nigeria, Mr. Tunde Lemo and the managing director, Zenith Bank Plc, Mr. Jim Ovia.



L-R: His Royal Highness, the Emir of Kano, Alhaji Ado Bayero listening to Trend TV representative, Mr. Stanley Emeka Osigwe when the Emir visited Trend TV stand at the recently concluded 26th Kaduna International Trade Fair.

## CBN, NDIC express fear over e-banking system

Financial sector regulators in the country, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC) have admitted that there is growing risks emanating from the electronic banking system (e-banking) conducted by the Nigerian banks.

The Managing Director, NDIC, Mr. Ganiyu Ogunleye said in his address at the cyber security forum organised for banks and financial institutions in Abuja that inspite of its benefits, the deployment of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in packaging and delivering financial products and services poses a lot of challenges to regulators/supervisors as well as operators in the country.

By Hamisu Muhammad,  
Reporter (Business)

He said the development of internet banking (though still at a relatively early stage), has brought a number of issues of regulatory and supervisory concern to the fore amongst which are security of financial transactions, consumer protection, cross-border issues, money laundering etc.

According to the NDIC boss if these challenges are not properly addressed, they could precipitate a systemic crises in the nation's financial services industry.

On the similar note, the deputy governor, (financial sector surveillance) Mr. Tunde Lemo said at the forum that, the rapid globalization and improvement in information technology has brings with it a very great risk of cyber-crime, fraud and forgery on a huge scale.

## Property: Globacom, Microsoft to settle out-of-court

Apparently done to mend the cracked relationship between the two of them, the fourth entrant in to the buoyant GSM market in Nigeria, Globacom and the world renowned software giant, Microsoft Nigeria, have finally decided to explore out-of-court settlement in the property right case between the duo.

Microsoft had, last year, dragged Globacom to court, complaining that the GSM operator did not pay for its product used.

But according to a source in Microsoft, who spoke to *IT World* in Lagos yesterday, Globacom and Microsoft have reached an understanding on how to settle the case out of court.

The *IT World* source said the two quarrelling companies were prevailed upon to end the court case and settle out of court in order not to rock the boat in the buoyant ICT sector of the country.

Though piracy and illegal use of products issues, according to the source, costs Mi-

Mr. Lemo said the rapid growth of e-finance in many emerging markets and its increased use demand a harder look at e-security in the financial sector.

He revealed that the figure that showed that Nigeria had 5.1 percent of the online fraud in the world is very high looking at the spread of internet users in the country compared to some developed countries.

He said as a result, the CBN issued a guideline on e-banking in August, 2003 which request all banks operating within the country to have in place a comprehensive risk management process that assesses, control and monitors risks.

Another guest speaker at the forum, the managing director, Zenith Bank Plc, Mr. Jim Ovia said the financial institutions and businesses are now more vulnerable to the wiles of cyber criminals with the advances in technology.

Microsoft million of dollars yearly, "it decided to settle with Globacom so that both can continue to work together as a team to grow the ICT industry."

His words: "We have finally decided to explore out-of-court settlement in the raging issue between us (Globacom/Microsoft). The out-of-court settlement decision is not unconnected with the intervention of well meaning people in the industry. They said for the ICT industry to continue with its brilliant performance, we must end the rift between us," said the source.

Microsoft, according to the source, might have decided to forgo the case, but the software company is still keen on telling the business market, the end-users and its partners that abuse of intellectual property is still a crime in Nigeria and "we will do everything possible to fight piracy."

He said the company would work with Nigerian copyright commission and other relevant institutions to fight abuse of intellectual property in the country.

## Microsoft to train software developers

From Zakariyya Adaramola  
Correspondent (Lagos)

World renowned software giant, Microsoft, has promised to train potential software developers in Nigeria through a programme it tagged "Microsoft Assisted Developers Support Skills."

Making the promise last week in Lagos, the Country Manager (CM) of Microsoft Nigeria, Mr. Gerald Ilukwe said the programme would give Nigerian students the opportunity to become software developers through a special training to be given by the software company.

He explained that Microsoft intends bringing technology to bear in a positive manner on the educational institutions in Nigeria, adding that this aims to help students become experts in what is rapidly becoming a global digital society.

"We have concluded plans to start training Nigerian teachers and students to become software developers. This will really help Nigeria in what is rapidly becoming a global digital society. The programme also helps us to bring technology directly in the class room and to provide a platform for the digital, intellectual and socio-economic growth of Nigeria," said Ilukwe.

The country manager said the company works closely with Nigerian teachers and educational leaders such as school Net to help develop the curricula such that technology could play a greater role in developing the economy.

In addition to supporting schools with technology and training, said Mr. Ilukwe, the company as well as the Education Tax Fund, (ETF), are seeking to establish a forum of strategic organisations that can help develop a roadmap for increasing ICT literacy among Nigeria's society. Such a forum, he added, would help to develop teacher training methodology that could act as the future standard for schools across the country.

"We are here to create sustainable long-term models for the transformation of technology's role in the education sector by bringing our resources, practices and programmes together in partnership with the efforts of the Nigerian government," said Mr. Ilukwe.

It would be recalled that Microsoft signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with ETF in Abuja last year.

## Briefs

### SMEDAN

The Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency (SMEDAN) has launched its website [www.smedan.gov.ng](http://www.smedan.gov.ng) for effective dissemination of the activities of the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the country.

Speaking at the launching ceremony in Abuja, President Olusegun Obasanjo said the website came at the right time going by the growing need of the quick and effective information dissemination.

Obasanjo who was represented by the vice President Atiku Abubakar said Nigeria will not be left behind in the global community of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in bridging information gap.

The Director General, SMEDAN, MRS. Modupe Adelaja said the website would enable the agency to be more closer to the SMEs in the country through posting the development of series of model business plans for prospective SMEs.

### New iPods

Apple Computer Incorporated released new versions of its popular iPod digital music player, cutting prices and expanding memory capacities.

The price of the 4-gigabyte iPod mini was cut \$50 to \$199. A new 6-gigabyte version will sell for \$249.

The 60-gigabyte "iPod photo," first introduced in October, which can display photos on its small color screen or when connected to a TV set, was cut from \$599 to \$449. A new 30-gigabyte model for \$349 replaces a 40-gigabyte version for \$499.

The battery life of the second-generation mini models has also been improved. The playback time on a single charge is now 18 hours, up from 8 hours of previous models.

## Over 80% software in Africa is illegal - Microsoft

Microsoft Nigeria has disclosed that over 80 percent of the software in use on the continent of Africa is unlicensed thereby costing African economies millions of dollars every year.

Disclosing this in Lagos at an interactive session with journalists last week, the Country Manager (CM) of Microsoft, Mr. Gerald Ilukwe said the use of unlicensed software in Africa poses great danger to users of software thereby depriving them of enormous benefits of genuine product.

"The use of unlicensed software is of grave concern to Microsoft. According to surveys conducted by the International Data Corporation (IDC) and the Business Software Alliance (BSA) - of which Microsoft is a core member internationally - over 80% of the software in use on the continent is illegal," said Ilukwe.

The Microsoft country manager said the software manufacturing company is focusing on educating the business market, the end-users and its partners on intellectual property and the need to pay the requisite amount

for the products that are used.

"Raising the level of compliance with software licensing regulations is a challenge for Microsoft. However, it is crucial, as the company would like to protect its intellectual property rights and channel more funds back to global research and development. Microsoft is focusing on educating the business market, the end-users and our partners about intellectual property and the need to pay the requisite amount for the products that are used," said Microsoft CM.

Mr. Ilukwe, who said though Microsoft would not take the hard line and immediately threaten legal action over non-compliance, it will however work keenly with the copyright commission and continue innovating ways to stop piracy on the continent.

"What we don't want to do is take the hard line and immediately threaten legal action over non-compliance. So we are also keen to work with the copyright commission here in Nigeria. We have also introduced the 'Windows Genuine Advantage (WGA) programme in order to crack down on counterfeit software in Nigeria," said Mr. Ilukwe.

# To our esteemed Readers and Advertisers

## Advertorials, petitions and related materials in Weekly & Daily Trust Newspapers.

**M**edia Trust, publishers of *Weekly and Daily Trust* take very seriously, its responsibility to the public to publish all points of view, including those we do not share. We think this is the function of an independent, liberal newspaper dedicated to the pursuit of the common good. We are also conscious of the fact that it is a shortsighted business policy for a newspaper to shut out a particular point of view for its own reason or due to pressure from powerful institutions and advertisers.

But we are also aware that professional agitators can use the pages of newspapers to malign governments, companies and individuals on spurious grounds.

Caught between our desire to give voice to the concerns of the voiceless and to protect public and institutions from unfair and demoralising attacks, we have been forced to develop a more stringent policy for the placement of advertorials, petitions and other related materials in the pages of our newspapers.

**The new policy is as depicted hereunder:**

1. The writer(s) of such advertorials must not be anonymous but people who can stand by what they say, with their full names and addresses.

2. If there is any accusation at any person or organisation, such writer(s) must substantiate the claims with evidence, which can stand before a Court of law. For example, **if they claim that a contract was inflated**, they must show Media Trust, relevant documents to back this up.

3. The placement must be fully paid for, before it is carried.

4. The author(s) should be prepared to accept corrections or alterations made by us but the corrected version would be shown to the author(s), before publishing.

5. In the alternative, we are prepared to enter into an indemnity agreement with those who place such advertorial which will put the onus of proof squarely on them.

6. The publishers have the right to reject any piece considered to be libelous, containing assertion without supporting facts and figures to prove the authenticity of such claims.

7. Media trust employees that collect such materials have been instructed to contact the advert manager, who will also consult further with the relevant superior officers to analyse the piece before placement is made.

8. If the publishers of *Daily Trust/Weekly Trust* reject any materials regarded as unprintable based on the above considerations, they will not enter into any correspondence with the author(s).

Finally, we wish to assure our readers that we will not shy away from publishing fair and balanced criticisms of any government or individual, which is in the nature of free exchange of ideas.

This, we will continue to do in our free opinion columns and with advertorials where some readers feel strongly enough to pay for them. We thank you for your support and assure you that we will do our best to keep your trust.

**Signed:**

Management

# IT World

## Mobile phone virus hits US

The world's first mobile phone virus "in the wild" has spread to the United States from its birthplace in the Philippines eight months ago, a security research firm said on Friday.

The virus, called Cabir, has spread slowly into 12 countries and marks the beginning of the mobile phone virus era, which could one day disrupt the lives of many of the world's 1.5 billion mobile phone users.

The biggest impact of the relatively innocuous virus, found in about 15 variations so far, is draining mobile phone batteries, said Mikko Hypponen, director of Finnish anti-virus research company F-Secure

Hypponen said Cabir was found on Monday in a technology gadgets store in Santa Monica, California, when a passing techie spotted a telltale sign on the screen of a phone in the store.

"It's interesting (the Cabir variant) has now been found in the United States, but it's not the end of the world," said Hypponen.

The mobile-virus threat will grow in the future as virus-writers become more sophisticated and phones standardize on technologies that make it easier for viruses to spread across not just specific devices but the whole industry.

The danger is small at the moment, in part because of the range of handheld technologies. This is unlike the personal computer world dominated by the Windows operating system made by Microsoft Corporation.

Also, many handheld device makers have recently released new mobile phones equipped with anti-virus software.

The store owner's phone had also been infected, Hypponen said. Both devices were Nokia Analysts

say the various features in smart phones make them more vulnerable to viruses than voice-only phones.

Hypponen said it was likely other devices in the area were also infected by Cabir, although there was no confirmation of that.

Unlike computer viruses that spread quickly around the world via the Internet, Cabir spreads slowly because it travels only over short distances through a wireless technology known as Bluetooth. It also requires a user to restart the phone after it has been exposed for the virus to take hold.

In cases where Cabir spread to different countries, an infected phone has typically been carried by the user to another country.

Cabir has been found in countries ranging from China to the United Kingdom.

In November, another virus program known as "Skulls" aimed at advanced mobile phones was sent to security firms, not to consumers, as a so-called "proof of concept" to alert them of the virus writer's capability.



A new build-in digital camera walkman unveiled by Sony recently

### World tech expo begins in Japan

A six-month World Exposition, the international showcase of technology and innovation will be opens next month in central Aichi prefecture Japan.

Japan said short-term, non-employment visas issued from this Friday to September 25, the last day of the World Expo, would be free if the trip included a visit to the event.

The exemption "is expected to promote visits from overseas, especially from neighboring Asian countries," a foreign ministry statement said.

Japan generally charges 3,000 yen (29 dollars) for a single-entry visa and 6,000 yen for a double-entry or multiple-entry visa.

Japan already allows nationals of 58 countries to enter without visas and is exceptionally exempting South Korean and Taiwanese tourists to encourage them to visit the World Expo, which opens March 25.

Japan hopes 15 million people will visit the World Expo, which will include displays by 122 countries with the main theme of making technology friendly to the environment.

The Japanese hosts will also show off a wide range of robots, including ones which will guide visitors through the Expo in four languages, play and talk to children and take out the trash.

The World Expo traces its history to the 1851 Great Exhibition in London. Aichi is the base of Japan's biggest company, Toyota, and on February 17 opened an international airport.

## HP gets aggressive on printer pricing

Hewlett-Packard Company has fired the first salvo in what may turn out to be a price war over consumer inkjet printers, a move made easier by last week's ouster of Chief Executive, Carly Fiorina, analysts said on Thursday.

"We are not satisfied

with our consumer hardware performance in the first quarter, and we will take aggressive action to correct this in the coming quarter," said Vyomesh Joshi, who runs both HP's printer and PC businesses on a conference call with analysts.

The No. 2 computer maker and No. 1 printer maker posted a rise in quarterly profit of less than 1 percent, helped by a 10 percent revenue gain.

But profit margins narrowed in its imaging and printing business, the source of two-thirds of HP's operating profit, amid strong pricing pressure from rivals including Dell Inc. and Lexmark International Incorporated.

Analysts said HP is likely to focus its considerable resources on sales of printers that also scan, fax and copy — called all-in-ones — a segment in which Lexmark has done well in recent years.

"The news is bad for Lexmark," said analyst Shannon Cross of Cross Research. "There has been growth at the sub-\$100 level and HP has started

putting products out there, but there is the need to take prices down to compete more effectively."

As a result of a 13 percent decline in HP's consumer printer hardware revenue, versus a 16 percent rise by Lexmark in its most recent quarter, HP may also give additional incentives to retailers, offer rebates or boost the number of HP representatives roaming stores to woo consumers.

Shares of Lexmark fell \$3.05, or about 3.7 percent to \$79.00 in late afternoon trade in the New York Stock Exchange. HP shares slipped 13 cents to \$20.93, and Dell eased 6 cents to \$40.54 on the Nasdaq.

Analysts said it's too soon to tell whether HP's move will be countered by Lexmark and by Dell, which sells Lexmark inkjet printers under the Dell brand. Pricing action could also come from other players including Epson or Canon, which have said they intend to take US share in photo printers.

"HP is going to go out to make more of a statement, just to get it into customers' minds that Dell is not the ultimate low-price selection — 'come to us and see what we can do for you,'" said Jennifer Thorwart, an analyst at research firm IDC.

The increasing availability of recycled printer cartridges could also further hamper margins at both HP and Lexmark, but analysts said the devices don't yet pose a major threat.

HP's decision to be even more aggressive with rivals comes only a week after the departure of Fiorina, who analysts say was fiercely protective of the printer unit and was not a fan of toying with prices and the likelihood of thinner margins.

## African telecom regulators laud NCC

Some African telecom regulators and ICT experts, who attended the 4th African Internet Summit and Exhibition (AFRINET) in Abuja have commended the NCC for establishing a consumers' parliament.

The monthly consumer parliament, which provides a platform for resolving disputes among all telecom operators and their consumers, was created by the Executive Vice Chairman of the NCC, Mr Ernest Ndukwe, in 2003.

The regulators and delegates from 25 African countries witnessed the proceeding of an

African ICT Consumer Parliament in Abuja at the weekend.

The head of telecom regulatory body in Ghana, Major John Tandoh, said the consumer parliament provided a participatory opportunity for getting complaints from telecom consumers and providing immediate solutions.

He said the consumer parliament had been established in Ghana to diffuse tensions

between operators and

consumers, but that it was held once a year.

Another regulator who witnessed the parliament, Modibo Camara, said he was impressed with the large turn out of consumers at the parliament and the lively discussions on services.

He advised NCC to structure the parliament in away that past sessions could be reviewed so that consumers could have an understanding of issues raised and efforts made by the regulatory body to

address them.

The head of the consumer parliament, Alhaji Abdullahi Maikano, said that the African ICT consumer parliament was the 61st session since the parliament was established in 2003 and that it was holding in Abuja for the first time.

Maikano, also, announced that the NCC had mapped out plans to start shifting the parliament round the six geo-political zones of the country so as to give other consumers the opportunity to air their views on telecom services in the country



Engr. Ernest Ndukwe, NCC boss

## Alcatel, Microsoft to develop internet TV

The French maker of telecommunications gear, and Microsoft Corporation Tuesday said they will jointly develop Internet-based TV services for telephone companies.

In November, Microsoft announced it would provide TV technology to SBC Communications Incorporated

"We are committed to integrate the current Alcatel video solutions with Microsoft

TV IPTV Edition, resulting in a market-leading integrated offering," Alcatel Chief Executive Serge Tchuruk said. Telecom operators around the world are keen to exploit high-speed Internet connections to also offer TV.

In Europe, several companies, including Telefonica SA and Deutsche Telekom AG, have launched such services.

Alcatel's US shares rose 42 cents, or 3.4 percent, to close at \$12.82 on the New York Stock Exchange.

# This investment route will benefit you NAL Bank Offer



## NAL Bank Plc

RC 2392

offers for subscription

# 4,000,000,000

Ordinary Shares of 50K each

at **N2.50** per share

Payable in full on Application

APPLICATION LIST OPENS: February 28, 2005.

APPLICATION LIST CLOSES: March 30, 2005.

JOINT ISSUING HOUSES:



VETIVA  
CAPITAL MANAGEMENT LIMITED



### 5 Reasons to invest in NAL Bank shares...

- NAL Bank is an institution founded upon inventiveness, quality and integrity.
- NAL Bank pioneered merchant banking in Nigeria, as far back as 1960. Today, NAL Bank has expanded its operations to include commercial banking services, while retaining its leadership role in investment banking.
- NAL Bank is the flagship of a strong financial services group, which includes NAL Asset Management & Trustees Ltd, NAL Registrars Ltd, NAL Insurance Brokers and Nigeria Stockbrokers Ltd.
- NAL Bank has consistently recorded annual profits since inception.
- NAL Bank is a solid, well-structured and professionally-run bank.



NAL Bank Plc

(Incorporated in Nigeria)

Get your application form from all NAL Bank branches nationwide, participating banks and stockbrokers, or download online at [www.nalbankplc.com](http://www.nalbankplc.com).

\*Read the prospectus and consult your stockbroker, accountant, banker, solicitor or any other professional adviser for guidance.

# ABUJA TRUST

## Abuja zone consumers owe NEPA N80m

Electricity consumers in Abuja Zone owe NEPA N80 million, the zonal chief operations officer, Mr. Edwin Ikwu, has said. Abuja zone of NEPA comprises the FCT, Nasarawa, Niger and Kogi states.

He told a two-day executive management retreat for senior NEPA officials from the zone in Lokoja last week that monthly revenue collection

from the zone was between N550 and N620 million.

Ikwu said revenue collection from the Zone peaked at N640 million last July, before it nose-dived to N620 million.

Ikwu said the zone's debt collection efficiency was between 65 and 80 per cent, adding that debt owed the zone but yet to be confirmed was between N76 million and N80 million.

Reviewing the performance

of the zone in 2004, he said energy delivered had improved significantly. According to him much of the electricity energy could not be distributed to consumers because necessary infrastructure had not been installed.

Ikwu said with the "unbundling" of NEPA and the granting of financial autonomy to operating districts and business units, customers expect greater performance from the corporation.

He said the retreat was meant for managers to brainstorm on the way forward, chart a new path for increased output, revenue generation and improved service delivery.

Also speaking, the zonal head of finance and accounts, Malam Idris Mohammed, said NEPA's new business operation involved the application of new techniques, new thoughts, quick solution to problems and the devolution of powers.

Mohammed said in order to enhance effectiveness; NEPA's board of director gave the units some degree of financial authority.

## Sacked workers take UBA to court over allowances

An Abuja High Court sitting at Gadu district will on Wednesday, March 9, 2005 begin hearing in a case filed by 36 sacked workers of United Bank of Africa Plc (UBA) over unpaid allowances.

The affected workers were working at the various branches of the bank within the Federal Capital Territory before their dismissal.

Justice Abubakar Talban would begin fresh hearing of the suit filed since 1999. Another court had ruled against the workers, which they appealed, but the appeal court ordered the court to reassign the case for fresh hearing.

In a statement of claim, the plaintiffs through their counsel, Abdulhamid Mohammed, said that before the termination of their appointment, they had two accounts, personal

Kemi Ogedengbe,  
Judicial Editor

savings account and call account with the bank.

They stated that before their termination, they had variously made pension contributions, National Insurance contributions, National Housing Fund, to the defendant's bank.

The plaintiffs averred that the termination of their appointment, the defendant bank ought to have refunded them all their contributions but were denied their entitlements.

They asked the court for a declaration that the retirement exercise of the plaintiffs was in breach of the agreements and for an order of the defendant to pay to the plaintiffs all their entitlements and benefits of about N9 million.

## FG releases N40m for Zuba-Abuja highway

The federal government has released the sum of N40 million to the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) for the repairs and maintenance of the Zuba-Abuja expressway.

FERMA managing director, Charles Unuigbo, who disclosed this while inspecting some federal roads in Gwagwalada, Abaji, Kwali, said the amount is to be spent under what he termed "special maintenance plan."

He said Dantata and Sawoe has been contracted to handle the repair works on the 38km road under a retainer contract basis.

"The road, built since around 1982 has never had any repair or maintenance work done on it.

"The President graciously approved the amount so that thorough maintenance work can be carried out," he said.

According to him, some of the failed portions of the road would be repaired before the rainy season sets in.

Inspecting the Karmo-Gwagwalada road, which was built in the late sixties, Unuigbo said that FERMA would embark on the immediate repairs of the road through

strengthen the road by constructing new drainage, total asphalt overlay and scrapping and filling the failed portions," he said.

The final solution to the road, he said would be to dualise it and over N400 million would be needed for total rehabilitation.

Unuigbo also inspected the Madallah-Suleja-Zuba interchange road, where repair works were being carried out on them.

## Court charges man with illegal firearms possession

Edith Asuquo of Durumi Village, Abuja, has been arraigned for alleged illegal possession of firearms.

Asuquo appeared before a Chief Magistrate's Court sitting at Jabi, Abuja, on a four-count charge of criminal conspiracy, unlawful possession of firearms, buying military firearms and hiding of offenders.

The accused and two others Charles Mwabueze and Obiora George, who were absent from court, were said to have conspired with one Ilo Samson and Solomon Ekejiaba, still at large, to buy the firearms from one Chima Ekejiaba, a soldier working at the Guards Brigade Headquarters, Abuja.

The prosecution told the court that the firearms bought included four pump-action rifles, six pistols and

two rounds of ammunition were recovered from George. Similarly, the prosecution further alleged, four pump-action rifles with 298 rounds of ammunition were recovered from Mwabueze and a pistol and 45 rounds of ammunition with 9 cartridges from Asuquo.

He claimed that Asuquo and Mwabueze agreed to produce Samson on May 4, 2003, but failed to do so, adding that the offences contravened the penal code.

The offences, said the prosecution, were committed on April 4, 2003, and prayed the court for a bench warrant to be issued against the other accused persons who were absent.

The trial Magistrate Othman Musa, granted prosecution's prayer and ordered the accused to

## Farmer in court for attempting to sell friend

A farmer, one Ali Suleiman of old Karmo, has appeared before an Abuja Chief Magistrate sitting in Jabi, Abuja over an attempt to sell his friend at the sum of N100,000.

The prosecution told the court that the accused was arrested on December 5, 2004 while negotiating with one Haruna Auta of Zauda Village in Karmo area.

The prosecution further told the court that the accused had completed all the processes in the transaction with Auta before he was apprehended by the police.

The accused was charged with attempt to commit an offence, which the prosecution said contravened the penal code.

The accused, who was not represented by a counsel, pleaded not guilty. The trial magistrate, Othman Musa, granted him bail in the sum of N100,000 with a surety in like sum and adjourned the case to April 19, for hearing.



When the price of kerosine goes beyond the purchasing power of the poor; this old woman is a resident of Abuja

## Producers condemn increase in price of 'Pure water'

Producers of 'Pure water' have described the increase in the price per sachet of the product in Abuja as "illegal and intolerable."

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that retailers now sell a sachet of pure water for N10 instead of N5.

Some major producers told NAN in Abuja that the increase was a manifestation of greed by the retailers who wanted to take advantage of the prevailing hot weather in the capital city.

Mr. Chris Otona, chairman, EMT Water, said, there was no reason for any increase in the retail price of a sachet because the producers had not increased their prices. "The water board has not increased its tariffs and I wonder how the retailers can suddenly decide

to increase the price without the approval of the producers," he said.

Also commenting on the increase, the managing director of Three Star Water, Mr. Florunso Peter, attributed the increase to selfishness on the part of the retailers. "Although many retailers still sell a sachet for N5 there are some who have capitalised on the prevailing water scarcity in Abuja and the weather, to increase the price of pure water," he said. Peter said pure water producers did not at any time resolve to increase the price of a packet of pure water, which contains about 12 sachets, above N60. He, therefore, urged retailers of the product to revert to the old price.

However, Malam Abubakar Usman, a retailer, who spoke to NAN, debunked the argu-

ment of the producers of pure water.

He said the increase in the price per sachet was sequel to the increase in the cost of a packet of pure water. "We are now purchasing a package of pure water at the rate of N100, instead of N60, where then is our fault if we decide to increase the price of a sachet," he argued.

Commenting on the issue, a senior staff of the FCT Water Board, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told NAN that the board was surprised when it learnt of the increased in the price of a sachet of pure water.

"The board has not announced any changes in its water rate. The tariff rate since last year has remained at N100 for commercial metre, and N30 for personal metre while water tankers operators still pay N4,000 and N3,000 respectively," he said.

**KOLAO HERBS LIMITED**

**KOLAO HERBAL PRODUCTS**  
...sure remedy for healthy living

14, JOHNSON ST., OFF OBAFEMI AWOLowo WAY, IKEJA, LAGOS.  
TEL: 01-7744644, 3450387, 0802 309 3598, 0802 309 3373, 0803 376 7271

**IKOYI**  
Suite 32, New Giwa Shopping Mall, Behind NITEL, Rumens St., Off Kingsway Rd, Ikoyi.  
Tel: 0802-366-1989

**ABUJA**  
Suite B1, Zuma Shopping Mall, Near Corporate Affairs Comm. Office, Wuse Zone 5  
Tel: 0802-345-9265

**ILORIN**  
Shop 60, P Shopping Complex, Taiwo Oke Rd, Ilorin. Tel: 0802-847-1835

**AKOKA**  
15B, University Rd, Abule Oja B.S, Yaba, Lagos.  
Tel: 08023377176

**IBADAN**  
Railway Shopping Cmplx., Opp. Habib Bank Plc, Iyaganku Rd, Dugbe.  
Tel: 0802-309-3373, 0803-380-2311.

**LOKOJA**  
4, Kporoka Quarters, Along Market Rd, Lokoja.  
08034832805, 0802-309-3598

**FESTAC**  
10, 1 Avenue, Opp 11 Rd, Festac  
Tel: 0802-368-1988

**PORT-HARCOURT**  
14, Azikiwe Street, Ikoju B/Stop, Mile 2, Diobu, Port-Harcourt, 0802-309-3374

**ENUGU:**  
102, Nike-Lake Rd, Opp. NDE (Party House), Trans Ekulu. 0803 488 2763

**BENIN:**  
10, Ekenwa Rd, Benin City  
Tel: 0502-847-1834

**OSOGBO:**  
17, Ahmed Raji Shopping Onward Area, Gbongan. 0803 488 2804, 0802 847 143

**KANO:**  
17/19, Balaat Hughes St., Court Rd., Agwan, Kano. Tel.: 08052335526 0802-345-9273.

**IJEBU-ODE:**  
57, Olisa Street, Opp. M.P.P GSM World House, Tel.: 0805-530-2610

**AKURE:**  
Akure South LGA, Office Complex, Beside Alpha Hotel, Ondo Rd., Isikan. Tel.: 0803 488 2798 0802-309-3373

**JOS:**  
287, Nasarawa Gwon, Opp. C/S Rd., Agwan, Rukuba Junction. Tel: 0803 488 2809, 8882 345 9273.

**OJO:**  
7, Iyana Iba Road, Near Ojo Terminal. Ojo. Tel: 01-2730000

**EPE:**  
39, Ayemere Rd, Paramount, Epe. 0802 830 2610.

**LACINE (Body Defence)**  
Promotes immune response, thereby helping the body to fight infection i.e. Staph, gonorrhoea, Candidiasis on its own.  
NAFDAC Reg. No: 04.6137L

**UNIVASUR (Hope for Healthy Living)**  
It is traditionally used to boost immune system. It also enhances immunity to reduce the risk of viral and fungi infection.  
NAFDAC Reg. No: 04.5929L

WE ALSO HAVE OTHER DRUGS FOR:

Management of low sperm count, improve poor libido, Staph infection, HIV I & II (Univasur contain 20 potent chinosilical ingredients that enhance immunity against HIV), Mouth Odour, Prostrate Enlargement (frequent urination that occurs in old age), Fibroid/Blocked fallopian tube, without operation, Slimming, Diabetes, Hypertension, Asthma/Tuberculosis, Arthritis, Malaria, Hepatitis - B.

Notes: AGENTS WANTED NATIONWIDE)

# KANO TRUST

## Polio: 44 personnel trained

By Mustapha Isah Kwaru,  
Correspondent, Kano

No fewer than 44 health workers have undergone extensive training on the first phase of 2005 polio vaccination exercise in Nassarawa local government area of Kano State, the council chairman, Alhaji Nasiru Gawura, stated this while briefing newsmen.

He said the training was to ensure the success of the exercise and halt common mistakes made by immunisation officials.

The council chairman, who expressed dismay on what he called 'I-don't-care' attitude towards immunisation exercise by some parents, warned that they should do away with any rumours concerning the polio vaccines.

The council boss said the exercise is only intended to eliminate and halt the spread of the six killer childhood diseases, explaining that 18,920 vaccines are to be used in the exercise.

Meanwhile communities in Dambatta local government have been tasked to support and cooperate with the polio immunisation officials.

## Five service opens outstation

By Aliyu Saleh Machika,  
Correspondent, Kano

Kano State Fire Service has committed fifteen of its service men and a fire vehicle to its outstation in Rano local government area.

The state director of the service, Alhaji Umar Muhammed Saron-Dinki, disclosed this while handing over the personnel and the vehicle to the area chairman.

He said the personnel will be under the care of the security agents in the area who would supervise their activities.

The director, represented by the deputy director of the service, Alhaji Isah Mahe Waziri, has stated that what the service did is in consonance with the policies of Kano State government under the leadership of Mallam Shekarau which emphasised the need to protect peoples' lives and properties.

He called on all the local councils within the Rano zone and its people to support and cooperate with the fire service men.

## 'Shariah: KNSG demolishes sports club

Kano State sports Club has been demolished following the order of the state government.

The club, located at Nassarawa near the race-course was demolished, according to government, due to the club's activities, which contravenes the shariah legal system operating in the state.

The state commissioner for information, Alhaji Garba Yusuf Abubakar, who led the demolition exercise explained that the sports club was government property and that it was constructed for the purpose of recreation and sports. He said that contrary to the objectives for which it was set up the place was being misused. In his words: "government has observed that alcohol was being consumed while immoral activities were

By Jamilah Nuhu Musa,  
Correspondent, Kano

going on unabated."

The commissioner said that though the management of the club was warned severally to desist from the acts and operate according to established rules and regulations and to portray shariah values but it refused to heed this warning.

Government, he stated, therefore decided to demolish building and reconstruct and redesign it to meet the original objective for the benefit of the people.

Attempts to get some comment from the management of the club failed as they could not be reached while a cross section of the people interviewed in the area commended government for the move.

## Road: Shagari qtrs residents send SOS to Shekarau

Residents of Shagari quarters in Kumbotso local area have called on the state government to as a matter of urgency come to their aid by rehabilitating the road linking the area to Zoo Road.

Some of the residents told *Kano Trust* that the road was in a deplorable condition and is causing serious damages to vehicles particularly during rainy season.

Alhaji Kabiru Dalha who spoke to *Kano Trust* over the bad condition of the road said that apart from the need to rehabilitate the road, drainages should also be constructed, as flooding is the main cause of destroying the road.

He suggested that since the dualisation project of Zoo Road commenced, Shagari quarters road should be included in the rehabilitation work so as to solve the problem once and for all.

Another resident, Malam Sani Abubakar told our correspondent that people living in the area are facing serious hardship as commercial buses/taxis and cyclists have

Yusha'u Adamu Ibrahim,  
Correspondent, Kano

abandoned the road due to its bad shape, a situation that he said forces residents to often trek from Gidan Zoo to Shagari Quarters.

## USAID launches farmers' cooperative in Kano

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has launched a farmers' cooperative seed store in Badume Village of Bichi local government area in Kano State.

Launching the project last week, the U.S. ambassador to Nigeria, Mr. John Campbell, said the USAID-funded store was part of the agency's support for the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS).

He expressed the U.S. government's continued support to Nigeria's national

development and poverty reduction efforts.

He noted that in spite of the importance of agriculture to Nigerians and the economy, the country had continued to face crises of stagnant production arising from food imports and low level of agricultural export.

Campbell said the construction of the seed store "demonstrates the commitment of the U.S. to help Nigeria to develop its agricultural sector to generate greater employment, improve food security and increase rural incomes".

Campbell explained that the

## ITF trains 20,000 workers in Kano

The Industrial Training Fund (ITF) has trained more than 20,000 workers in Kano since 1983. The training manager, Alhaji Sule Indabawa, gave the figure last week in Kano at the centre's 2004 end-of-year review ceremony.

Established in 1983, ITF, he said trained people mainly from Kano and Jigawa and a few from other states. He said 26 skills training programmes were implemented in 2003 as against 22 last year.

In 2004, 450 workers were trained in various skills in which 126 organisations ben-

efited. Out of the trainees for the year, 143 were from Daula Hotel Kano, Kano State Teachers Board and Fata Tannery in Kano, he said.

The centre introduced six new training packages, while the eight existing programmes were upgraded to meet the needs of industries, he added.

The centre has received training equipment, machinery and tools worth N16 million, Indabawa said.

It also received the 2004 merit award for best performance in all ITF activities, he added.



Kano State governor, Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau (c), conferring with Kano State delegates in Abuja...recently

## Kano to revive groundnut production pyramid

There are fresh indications that the Kano State government may have resolved to revive groundnut production, following a motion adopted by the state House of Assembly asking the government to as a matter of urgency imple-

ment the policy.

The house member representing Ungogo constituency, Abdullahi Lawal Adaraye, who moved the motion observed that, it is imperative that government should accord serious priority for the overhaul of groundnut production

realising what it used to be in the past.

The lawmaker expressed dismay that Kano and the north in general were left behind in the area of producing income-generating crops, stating however that the federal government's recent policies for improved cassava production might be detrimental to groundnut production.

The speaker of the assembly, Alhaji Balarabe Saïdu Gani, speaking on the motion, asked government to give the issue recognition saying it will boost revenue generation and halt the growing dependency on oil.

He also canvassed for the establishment of a state marketing board so as to encourage farmers. He explained that restoring the production of the commodity will produce jobs for the teeming unemployed population as well as overhaul foreign exchange earnings.

According to Alhaji Gani, government should allocate sufficient land to farmers for groundnut production noting that it will serve as a proactive strategy for the successful and hitch free implementation of the policy.

## LG spends N50m on women centre

Nassarawa local government area of Kano State is to spend the sum of N50 million on the construction of a modern women centre in Gwagwarwa quarters of the local council.

Chairman of the local council, Alhaji Nasiru Yusuf Gawuna, who disclosed this while inspecting the multi-million-naira project said the centre would be equipped with modern facilities.

He explained that when completed various trainings such as vocational and skills

acquisitions, computer, tailoring, knitting, soap and groundnut oil-making skills will be acquired by women of the area.

The effort, which he said is part of the council's move towards improving the well-being of women in the area, could alleviate the poverty among the womenfolk.

The chairman further disclosed that some amount of money would also be given to the trainees by the council as capital for them to set up small-scale business in their various locations.



Sen. Ogunlewe, works minister

# News

## House committee discusses Arochukwu-Ohafia landslide

The House of Representatives Committee on the Environment was last week mandated to visit parts of Arochukwu-Ohafia federal constituency in Abia state to assess the extent of the damage caused by a recent landslide at Ozuabam and Ibinta Ihechiowa areas of Arochukwu local government area and to commiserate with the victims. In a motion on the floor of the House by Honourable Mao Ohuabunwa, the ecological fund was urged to address attendant ecological problems in the affected areas.

Hon. Ohuabunwa noted that the landslide led to massive destruction of farmlands, livestock, residential homes, and property, as well as the displacement of numerous families from their traditional homes. He said that the Arochukwu-Ohafia federal road was extensively damaged by the landslide, which cut off all forms of movement of persons, goods, and services between the

By Zainab Alimi, Political Reporter

affected communities and other parts of the state. He called on the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to quickly dispatch relief materials to the victims of the landslide and also urged the Federal Ministry of Works to urgently embark on the reconstruction of the damaged road.

Meanwhile two bills have been passed into law on the floor of the House, having successfully passed through their third reading. They include a bill for an Act to amend the Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme Fund, as well as a bill to establish the Chartered Institute of Certified Secretaries and Reporters for the registration and discipline of certified secretaries and reporters, which would provide a governing board charged with formulating policies for the institute, among other things.

The House also adopted the report of the joint committee on the judiciary and justice on a bill for an

Act to amend the Acts Authentication Act Cap. 4, Laws of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1990; provide for the office of the senate president; and update and bring the Act in line with the 1999 Constitution.



Alhaji Aminu Masari, Speaker, House of Reps.

## Cross River Councils have failed - Speaker

From Bassey Ita, Correspondent (Calabar)

The speaker of the Cross River state House of Assembly, Honourable Bassey Ewa, has castigated local government chairmen in the state, saying that 'with the exception of the chairmen of Abi and Obubra local governments, all others have

failed in the area of project implementation.' Hon. Ewa was speaking to newsmen against the backdrop of the recent probe of the local councils' incomes and expenditures by the House, which culminated in the arrest of six chairmen. He said that the chairmen had collected as much as N36 million each since they assumed office in 2004.

Hon. Ewa stated that the probe was to enable the House ascertain how the councils' finances were spent, adding that the matter was provided for by the law. He urged the people of Cross River state to take advantage of the revelation in lobbying for projects that would benefit their communities.

Disclosing that the councils' officials were punished because of their failure to comply with the directives of the House on their financial transactions as provided for by law, Ewa described the alleged bribery scandal involving the House and the chairmen as unfounded. He denied any strain in his relations with the people of Yakuor, whom he was alleged to have betrayed.

## NOSOSA commends Shekarau

From Sani Babadoko, Bureau Chief (Kaduna)

The vice president of the Northern Old Students' Association (NOSOSA), Hajiya Lata Tombayi, has commended the Kano state governor, Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau, for his untiring efforts to salvage education in the north. Hajiya Tombayi's group, which undertook a tour of the north-west zone to study the educational situation in the area, told *Daily Trust* at the weekend that 'the only governor who touched the heart of the members of the group and that of the ordinary man in the street is the governor of Kano state, Mallam Shekarau. He has done everything possible to salvage and revive education in the north.' She said that that was not because Shekarau was a classroom teacher before he became governor,

but because he placed education at the forefront of his priorities. She called on other northern governors to emulate his example.

Hajiya Tombayi painted a very distressing picture of the state of education in Zamfara, Kebbi, Jigawa, Sokoto, and Kaduna states where the 'nonchalant attitude of officials' has turned education into a time-bomb ready to explode. She listed Sokoto, Zamfara, and Kebbi states as the worst hit states, where 70 per cent of the school age children were out of school in spite of the federal government's Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme.

Hajiya Tombayi, who said that NOSOSA's tour was

intended discover how, as a pressure group, it could reverse the worsening trend in education in the north, described it as the height of hypocrisy for the same states that are unable to absorb the products of their primary and secondary schools to champion the setting up of state universities. 'Most of the primary and secondary schools in the states produced half-baked students that are not qualified to fill their quota in the existing universities.' She said that when such states spoke of establishing state universities, they were only making political statements because they could use the resources to improve primary and secondary education. She lamented that there were no teachers in places like Jigawa to man the secondary schools.

## PAY YOUR NEPA BILLS @ INLAND BANK

Inland Bank (Nig.) Plc has been appointed by the management of NEPA Zonal Distribution, Abuja as one of its REVENUE COLLECTION Banks

You can now pay your NEPA bills at any of any of the following Branches at Wuse, Central Business District, Bwari, Airport and Lafia



RC 112876

Inland Bank (Nig.) Plc

Totally Devoted to you

# EKO TRUST

Waste disposal charge:

## LASG seals up business premises

Golden Gate Restaurant on Kingsway Road, Ikoyi and several other eateries and Thursday sealed up as the Lagos State government commenced its enforcement drive for the recovery of waste disposal service charge from defaulters.

Among the affected restaurants are: Chicken Republic, Munchies and Al-Basha, all along the Awolowo Road. The enforcement became imperative as companies and tenements with the metropolis continued to show reluctance to pay for services rendered by the Mega Waste Managers lured by the state government to ferry waste from their domains to dump sites.

By Olumide Bajulaiye

The government, according to Dr. Mrs. Titi Anibaba, a director of environment services in the state ministry of environment, was paying on monthly basis more than N150 million to the 40 Mega waste collectors in the state.

Golden Gate was sealed for owing N180, 000, Chicken Republic N50, 000. The enforcement team was led by the director, enforcement and compliance in the ministry, Mr. Toyin Onisarotu.

Two of the eateries sealed like chicken republic and munchies claimed that they had paid but were unable to produce the receipt. Munchies were however partly sealed because it has been paying before. Bacchus, also on Awolowo Road was spared because the management promised to offset its bill last Friday.

## Foreigner in court for duping Nigerian

Mohammed Shosanya, Correspondent, Lagos

A foreign national, Amiteshwar Singh, 49, is now telling an Igbosere Chief Magistrate's Court in Lagos all he knows about the duping activities against a Nigerian.

In a charge, A/18/2005, the accused was said to have sometime in the month of March 2001 at Idumagbo, Lagos obtained the sum of one million and eighty thousand naira from Alhaji M.O. Ramono by false pretence of supplying him sewing machines.

He was also alleged to have sometime in the month of October 2003 at No 3, Alhaji Bashorun Street, Lagos issued a Guwelim Express Bank Plc cheque number 01096412 to Alhaji M.O. Ramono of M.O Ramona and Bros Limited in the sum of one million and eighty thousand naira, which was rejected on presentation.

The prosecution said the action of the accused contradicts section 419 (A) of the criminal code.

He pleaded not guilty to the charges while the presiding magistrate, Chief Magistrate Ayo Isaac admitted him to bail.

Further mention on the matter was slated for March 7, 2005.



Prince B. Tinubu Lagos Gov.

## Lagos redevelops Yaba Industrial Estate

Lagos State government on Thursday approved plans for redeveloping the old Yaba Industrial Estate built in 1967 while it said that tenancy in the various estates in the state would be reviewed.

In addition, the state government has announced that henceforth, tenancy at the estates across the state will cease from being permanent so as stop the problems encountered at the estates.

The commissioner for commerce and industry, Prince Lanre Balogun, gave the hints during a press briefing to commemorate the second year anniversary of second term of Tinubu administration at Alausa Secretariat.

Balogun explained that



Two of the contesting rams at the Ram Lovers Association of Nigeria 2005 championship games in Lagos...recently. Pix: NAN

## FG says it released funds for 20 councils

The federal government has debunked the allegation by Lagos State government that it has not released the state's councils outstanding statutory revenue allocation (SRA) in the Escrow Account as being publicised by Lagos.

The federal government made this revelation in reaction to the threat by the Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT), Lagos chapter to disrupt the nation's economic activities if by the end of March the withheld local council funds were not

released.

In a release made available to newsmen in Lagos Last week from the office of the legal assistant to the minister of Works on legal matters and public affairs, the federal government said there was no controversy over the money as it has been released as instructed by the Supreme Court.

The release signed by Barrister Kole Oyeleye emphasised that Lagos State was just crying wolf without seeing any, adding that the state government deliberately resorted to unethical use of the press to spread misinformation.

The federal government noted that it wholly believes in the rule of law and constitutionalism, thus, it stated that the supreme court judgment had been adhered to by releasing the allocations to 20 local governments as

recognised by the constitution.

It however, added that it was left for the state government to meet its own obligation by naming the 20 local government chairmen to manage the allocation.

"It is left for Lagos State government to name the

accredited 20 council chairmen who are the statutory members of the state joint local government account allocation committee which is empowered to manage the allocation as envisaged by Allocation of Revenue Act, Cap 16 1990," the statement read in part.

## Man, 28, docked over N450,000 theft

A 25-year-year-old man, Lekan Taiwo, has been arraigned before an Igbosere Chief Magistrate on allegation of stealing the money of a retired judge.

According to the charge, the accused and one other, now at large, on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of January 2005 at plot 26, Bisola Durosinmi Elti, Lekki Phase 7 in Eti Osa local government area of Lagos conspired together to commit

the offence.

He was specifically alleged the have stolen the sum of \$3, 200 worth about N450, 000 belonging to one Hon. Justice Tajudeen (rtd).

The alleged offence ran foul of section 390(9) of criminal code cap 32 vol II laws of Lagos.

The accused pleaded not guilty as charged and has since been bail.

Meanwhile a Tapa Magistrates' Court in Lagos has arraigned a twenty-eight-year-old, John Hessen for assaulting a police officer.

The accused in charge number R/9/2005, was said to have on February 22<sup>nd</sup> 2005 at about 0900 hours at Obalende Bus Stop, under the bridge, Ikoyi assaulted one woman traffic police, Mojisola Ayela, by removing police cap from her head.

The action of the accused, according to prosecution, contravenes section 356 of the criminal code of Lagos state. When the matter was called, he pleaded not guilty as charged while the presiding magistrate admitted him to a bail

## Muslims work to develop estate, propagate Islam

### Islam

Muslims, under the aegis of Gowon Estate Muslim Ummah (GEMU), say they have concluded plans to facilitate the provision of social amenities to enhance development and growth of Islam.

The secretary of the launching committee, Alhaji Muhammad Lawal, said, in a statement in Lagos that Muslims in the estate were

working to facilitate the establishment of sound Arabic schools as well as Islamic hospitals and maternity homes and recreation centres.

He stated that the Ummah was also working on the construction of a befitting central Mosque and Islamic complex for the estate, which would gulp about N250 million.

The launching, he said, would be attended by many dignitaries across the country, and would be

chaired by Mr. Rauf Aregbesola, Lagos State commissioner for Works and Infrastructure.

Lawal said the Ummah was also constitutionally empowered to forge cordial relationship among Muslims and non-Muslims of Gowon Estate so as to promote peaceful co-existence.

He added that the Ummah would work for spiritual growth of Muslims in the estate and enhance their understanding and practice of the Islamic religion.



# CHIEF BOLA IGE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CENTER

Education for Development and Democracy Initiative (EDDI).  
National Centre for Women Development, Central Area, Abuja.

Will you become Computer Literate in the 21st Century?  
With The gift of BIITC from the US Government, YES you can !!

©

BOLA IGE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CENTER (BIITC)

Register now for any of the following courses:

### Computer Appreciation

- \* Introduction to Computer
- \* Introduction to Internet
- \* Introduction to Ms-Word

DURATION: TWO WEEKS  
COST: ₦6,750

### Certificate in Computer Operations

- \* Introduction to PC Using Win XP
- \* Internet Explorer 6.0
- \* Microsoft Word 2003
- \* Microsoft Excel 2003
- \* Microsoft Power Point 2003
- \* Microsoft Access 2003
- \* Front Page 2003 : Introduction

DURATION: TEN WEEKS  
COST: ₦35,850

### Diploma in Networking

- \* Network Fundamentals
- \* Network using Window 2000 O/S
- \* Linux Fundamentals

DURATION: SIX WEEKS  
COST: ₦23,750

### Diploma in Desktop Publishing

- \* Microsoft Publisher
- \* Adobe PageMaker 7.0: Basic
- \* Adobe PageMaker 7.0: Type Design
- \* Corel Draw 12 : Introduction
- \* Corel Draw 12 : Advanced

DURATION: EIGHT WEEKS  
COST: ₦27,500

### Diploma in Programming

- \* Introduction to Programming
- \* Object Oriented Programming Principles
- \* Visual basic 6.0 : Introduction
- \* Java 2 Programming Language

DURATION: TWELVE WEEKS  
COST: ₦45,500

### OUR SERVICES INCLUDE:

- |                            |                               |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| IT Consulting and Training | Website Development & Hosting |
| Seminars and Workshops     | Skills Development Programmes |
| Customised Solutions       | Business Service Centre       |
| Project Management         | Internet Browsing             |
| Video Conferencing         | Facility Rentals              |
| Research                   |                               |

### Diploma in Computer Engineering

- \* PC Assembling
- \* PC Maintenance
- \* PC Troubleshooting
- \* PC Configuration & Software Installation

DURATION: SIX WEEKS  
COST: ₦22,500

### Diploma in AutoCAD

- \* Fundamental Concepts and Tools
- \* Basic Drawing and Tools
- \* Detailing (Drawings)
- \* Hatching
- \* Co-ordinate Systems
- \* Plotting AutoCAD drawings

DURATION: FOUR WEEKS  
COST: ₦22,500

### Diploma In Web Animation and Image Editing

- \* Macromedia Flash Mx — Introduction
- \* Macromedia Flash MX — Advanced
- \* Macromedia Fireworks MX— Introduction
- \* Macromedia Fireworks MX — Advanced

DURATION: FIVE WEEKS  
COST: ₦38,850

### Diploma in Web Page Design (Using Dreamweaver)

- \* Internet Explorer
- \* HTML 4.01 Web Authoring level 1
- \* HTML 4.01 Web Authoring level 2
- \* Dream Weaver MX: Introduction
- \* Dream Weaver MX : Advanced
- \* Flash MX : Introduction

DURATION: TWELVE WEEKS  
COST: ₦48,850

### Diploma in Web Development

- \* Introduction to Programming
- \* HTML 4.01 Web Authoring level 1
- \* HTML 4.01 Web Authoring level 2
- \* Web Development with Cascading Styles Sheets
- \* Flash MX

DURATION: TEN WEEKS  
COST: ₦45,500

**Training Session:** Morning 10:00-1:00 p.m.  
Evening 5:00-8:00 p.m.

Commencement Date: 21st March, 2005

For more details, visit us at the above address

CALL: 09-671-5939, 09-234-3343, 0804-413-2805, 0802-317-3838  
Or E-MAIL: training@crnigeria.org, yadedeyin@crnigeria.org

# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

National Assembly Complex, Abuja

House Committee On Privatization & Commercialization

CALL FOR MEMORANDUM AND INVITATION TO AN INVESTIGATIVE HEARING ON DELAYED TAKE-OFF OF PRIVATIZATION SHARE PURCHASE LOAN SCHEME. (PSPLS) TAKING PLACE ON THURSDAY THE 17<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF MARCH 2005 AT THE HEARING ROOM 1 BY 10.00AM PROMPT



The House of representatives at its session on 1<sup>st</sup> day of February, 2005 mandated the Committee on Privatization and Commercialization of the House to conduct investigative Hearing on the above subject matter in order to determine the roles played by the BPE, Agencies, Companies and individuals in the delayed take-off of the above scheme and Contracts awarded and Monies spent so far for the scheme and whether due process has been followed in all activities undertaken by any Agency, Company or Individual connected with the scheme.

Consequently, the Committee invites presentation of memoranda from the following:-

- (a) Bureau of Public Enterprises
- (b) Image Kraft Ltd.
- (c) Central Bank of Nigeria
- (d) Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation
- (e) Standard Trust Bank (STB) Plc
- (f) Gulfbank Plc
- (g) Denham Management Ltd.
- (h) Corporate Affairs Commission
- (i) All other interested persons and groups

2. The memoranda must be

- (i) Type written in double space
- (ii) Submitted in 35 copies and
- (iii) Forwarded by hand or courier to the Secretary of the Committee, House Committee Room 15 National Assembly Complex Abuja.

Not later than Friday the 11<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2005.

NOTE: THE INVESTIGATIVE HEARING IS SLATED FOR THURSDAY THE 17<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF MARCH, 2005 AT THE HOUSE HEARING ROOM 1 BY 10AM PROMPT.

**Rep. (Barr) N. C. Ughanze**  
Chairman, House Committee on Privatization and Commercialization

# News

## 18 new refineries underway

In its bid to ensure improved fuel supply in the country, the federal government has granted 18 new refinery licences to operators, and is set to divest 51 per cent ownership of public refineries to private operators.

The presidential adviser on Petroleum and Energy, Dr Edmund Daukoru, announced this on a convocation lecture entitled: "Developments in the Petroleum Sector: Recent Policy Initiatives for Revenue Maximisation," presented at the University of Port Harcourt as part of the activities marking the 21st convocation of the university.

He said that in addition, government has taken the additional step to grant upstream acreage to interested downstream investors to enable commercial viability of the project through integration with the upstream as integration would make petroleum products available to areas which are remote from existing refineries.

Dr Daukoru, who stated that a total of \$5.8 billion has been spent in replacing vandalised infrastructure, called on oil companies and host communities to turn a new leaf.

"The communities must be made to benefit directly from the incomes realised from the exploitation of the natural resources in their areas; and both industries and government cannot overlook this. I look upon oil companies and government to rise up to their societal responsibilities by providing conducive operating environment that maximises this cooperation.

From Ikenna Emeka Okpani, Bureau Chief (Port Harcourt)

"On the other hand, this relationship requires maturity and patience on the part of the host communities. To reap the full benefit, I implore our host communities to be peaceful and to do their utmost to support the oil and gas activities in the Niger-Delta for their interest and that of the nation at large," he said.

Dr. Daukoru said Nigeria and the host communities were suffering from what he called the 'paradox of plenty' where oil exploration has exposed the region to socio-cultural disruptions, such as lowering of moral values, incidence of HIV/AIDS, youths' violence, breakdown of traditional authorities, abandonment of education and skill acquisition as well as environmental degradation and corruption.

He said the large influx of 'petro-dollars' created the demand for imported goods, while pushing up the strength of the local currency; and this in turn rendered locally produced export goods uncompetitive.

"What followed was a dearth in agriculture and local fledging industries, runaway inflation and unemployment and an increasing dependence on the vagaries of the oil market."

Other symptoms of this 'paradox of plenty', he said, include default on sector funding obligation; unemployment, abandonment of taxes, and political instability.

"Revenues from exports most often flow to the centre in the first instance, rather than to the federating units. The manner of sharing those revenues then becomes a persistent political

distraction; the ultimate lessors are the people at the grass roots as the focus on rural development gets drowned out by the endless debates on revenue sharing and resource control" Dr Daukoru said.

The lecture was attended by the executive secretary of the Petroleum Technology Development Fund and the deputy governor Of Bayelsa state, Dr Goodluck Jonathan.

The University of Port Harcourt is convoking a total of 2,560 graduates in its 21st convocation.

No fewer than 10 thousand Nigerians have so far been deported from Saudi Arabia since the start of the deportation exercise by the Saudi Arabian government on February 17 2005.

Even though the figure is unconfirmed, Daily Trust gathered that the deportation exercise is under the supervision of the Saudi government, and three airlines: Saudi, Kabo and Sudan. The airlines were said to have been contracted for the airlift of the deportees back to Nigeria.

Sources at the Malam Aminu Kano International Airport revealed that 14,000

## Saudi deports 10,000 Nigerians

people were allocated to the Kabo Air and the rest were expected to be deported by Saudi and Sudan airlines.

Daily Trust also learnt that some of the deportees were not Nigerians, as the nationals of various West African countries could be seen struggling to clear their goods at the airport. One of the deportees, Alhaji Lawal A. Yahaya, said he had spent one month in Jeddah before he was deported back to Nigeria.

Alhaji Lawal, who is from Mubi, Adamawa state, said also that there were still more

From Yushalu Adamu Ibrahim, Correspondent (Kano)

Nigerians in the Jeddah airport waiting to lifted back home.

Another deportee, Hajia Yalwa, who simply said she was from Kabara quarters in Kano city, disclosed that she was no longer willing to go back to Saudi Arabia, except for religious obligations. She added that about three Nigerian women were delivered of their babies where they were kept by the Saudi authorities.



Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar, former head of state and chief mediator in the Liberian peace process with ECOWAS Executive Secretary, Mohammed Ibn Chambas on arrival from Liberia, yesterday

## Balarabe Musa launches book on election rigging

A book entitled, *Rigging Ways: The Constitution and Electoral Process in Nigeria*, that deals with the methods of rigging elections is to be launched in Kaduna. According to a statement made available to Daily Trust in Kaduna, and signed by the chairman of the Conference of the Nigerian Political Parties (CNPP), Alhaji Abdulkadir Balarabe Musa, on behalf of the organising committee, the book analyses many techniques used in election rigging.

From Aliyu Haruna, Correspondent (Kaduna)

The statement disclosed that the book is necessary for all active and prospective politicians, and those who conduct and supervise elections, including the electoral officers, the police, election tribunal members, lawyers, party agents and journalists. It added that the

author of the book, Aliyu Umaru Esq., is a highly intelligent and successful legal practitioner.

The launch of the book, which will take place on Saturday, 19th March, 2005 at the International Trade Fair Complex, Kaduna, at 10 am, is expected to be graced by personalities, such as Major General Muhammadu Buhari (rtd), Chief Chukwuemeka

Ojukwu, Lagos state Governor Ahmed Bola Tinubu and Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau, governor of Kano state, among others.

### Dariye, Akume hold secret talks

From Hir Joseph, Correspondent, Makurdi

The Plateau state governor, Joshua Chibi Dariye, last Friday held talks with his Benue state counterpart, George Akume.

Chief Dariye, who arrived at the government house, Makurdi, amidst tight security, was received by his host at about 11.00 am from where both drove to the private residence of Akume along Makurdi-Gboko road.

In a brief chat with newsmen after the brief meeting, Chief Dariye said he was in the state to sympathise with his counterpart over the mayhem in Makurdi. However, a government house source said the one-day visit was purely for secret talks.

## My life is under threat — ANSIEC Chairman

The chairman of Anambra state Independent Electoral Commission (ANSIEC), Chief Cornel Umeh, has raised alarm over a threat to his life.

Umeh told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) at the weekend in Awka that he had, for the past one month, been receiving life-threatening telephone calls from unknown people.

According to him, last month, an unfamiliar male voice rang his private MTN mobile line, called him by his first name and asked him to resign his appointment now or risk losing his life.

"The phone call, which came about 9.51 p.m., on Feb. 26, was most threatening. One could only recognise it was a deep male voice.

"He said: 'Cornel, resign now or lose your life; this should be the last warning' and immediately switched off the phone. "But I want to state here that I am not afraid. My life is in God's hands, not a human being like myself. I will continue to serve the people of

Anambra with all my heart," he said.

Umeh explained that he had already reported the matter to the appropriate authorities

"I have also visited and written letters to the police commissioner in the state, Mr Felix Ogbaudu, before, during and after the Nov. 2004 mayhem in Anambra to give me police protection and the efforts yielded no fruits till this moment. Rather, the commissioner told me he needed clearance from the Inspector-General of Police.

"On further pressure, he asked me to write the Inspector-General of Police through the governor which I refused because it against the spirit of section 197 of the 1999 Constitution which established the commission," he added.

He enjoined the people of the state to be patient with the commission as all efforts were geared toward achieving the best and ensuring that the people's desire and confidence are restored.



Member, House Committee on education, Hon. Ezekiel Anaka (right) and Hon. Zakari, Moh'd Shinaka during the public hearing on a bill for an act to establish the Nigeria-UNESCO Commission held at the National Assembly Complex, Abuja ... weekend

Pix: Felix Onigbinde

# NEWS

## GSS Gombe closed down

Government Science School Gombe, one of the oldest post primary schools in the state, has been closed down indefinitely following students unrest.

The riot which started on Sunday last week was caused by what the students perceived as neglect by their principal, Mallam Bello Umar Pindiga of their colleague who needed medical attention.

Students who spoke to *Daily Trust* before the school was closed on Tuesday, said they were irked by the highhandedness of the principal who

From Mohammed Abubakar, Correspondent (Gombe)

showed little concern over the condition of Hassan Sulaiman who had been sick six days before the incident.

They alleged that the principal ignored their plea to give the sick student the desired attention at the nearby specialist hospital.

Hassan of JS3 was an exchange programme student from one of the northern states.

During the unrest that lasted three days, the students burnt the principal's car, a Toyota

Carina II, vandalized the only internet centre in the school and torched a whole block of 2 class rooms housing a sports affairs office.

Both the principal and permanent secretary in the ministry of education declined to comment on the issue referring all questions to the commissioner of education, Alhaji Labilwa Ahmadu Madugu.

Efforts to speak to the commissioner proved abortive also as he was said to be on a special assignment outside the state capital.

The Sokoto state government is to spend about N2.7 billion naira on the construction of three roads within the metropolis.

Speaking to newsmen at the end of the state executive council meeting last week, the state commissioner for information, Alhaji Ibrahim Gidado disclosed that the executive council has approved the dualisation of the township roads.

The commissioner further explained that the roads include, Aliyu Jedo road, 1.5km, and awarded at the cost of over N370 million, Moyijjo road, 1km, at N310million and Deggel road, 1km, at over N318 million respectively.

## Sokoto earmarks N2.7bn for road construction

From AbdulFatai AbdulRazak, Stringer (Sokoto)

He stressed also that the scope of work on these roads involved clearance, earth work, culverts and drainages on both sides and the reconstruction of the existing historical gate plus all other road works, adding that the council has also approved the down payment of N25% to the construction firm, PW Nigeria Ltd.

The commissioner stated

that the executive council approved the award of the contract for bush clearance of Bafarawa Isa - Mornona road to be executed at the cost of over N1 billion naira with 30% down payment to PW Nigeria Ltd, the contractor.

While justifying the award, Alhaji Gidado remarked that it was in order to extend the life span of the roads, adding that the asphaltting will make the road durable and also stand the test of time.

The completion period he said is nine months.



Minister of Health, Professor Eytayo Lambo (right), discussing with Senator Ben Obi and the Director-General of NAFDAC, Dr. Dora Akunyili during the 3rd Award ceremony of NAFDAC schools' competition organised for members of Consumer Safety Clubs in Abuja .... recently.

## Kudirat: Court fixes April 7 for hearing

The trial of the former Chief Security Officer (CSO) to late General Sani Abacha, Major Hamza Al-Mustapha, over the murder of Alhaja Kudirat Abiola, was last week adjourned by a Lagos high court due to the failure of the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI), to produce him in court.

Al-Mustapha was charged along with CSP Rabo Lawal and Alhaji Lateef Sofolahan for assassinating the wife of the acclaimed June 12, 1993 presidential election winner, Alhaja Kudirat Abiola, along Oregon Way in Ikeja in 1996 and ever since, the case was transferred to the presiding judge, Al-Muistapha, has never turned up for proceedings.

This has prompted the court to issue a warrant for the authority of the DMI in January to bring Al-Mustapha before it on Tuesday. When the matter was called, the former chief security officer was

From Mohammed Shosanya, Judicial Correspondent (Lagos)

not in court and was neither represented by any counsel. But the two co-accused were brought to court and represented by counsels.

The court therefore fixed April 7 for the DMI to bring Al-Mustapha to court to expedite action on the trial.

It would be recalled that last week, the embattled former chief security officer alongside few other accused in the murder trial of the Guardian Publisher escaped the contempt charge of an Ikeja high court following the 'walk out' protest they staged against the presiding judge, Justice Kayode Oyewole, while proceedings were going on.

Also, this Monday, a federal high court presided over by Justice Dan Abutu fixed March 18, this year for Al-Mustapha's prayers for the production of certain

documents needed to expedite action in the on going security breach trial.

## Donald Duke to appear in court with certificates

Governor Donald Duke of Cross River state is to appear before the governorship election petition tribunal sitting in Calabar with original copies of his academic and professional certificates.

The Appeal court had declared weeks ago that Duke should present his original credentials to the tribunal following an appeal brought before it by the governorship candidate of the National Democratic Party (NDP) in the 2003 elections, Chief Anpang Obi-Odu.

Chief Obi-Odu had challenged the election of Duke as governor of the state and the decision of the election tribunal to set aside the original subpoena ordering Duke to present his certificates before it.

The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), had on April 19, 2003, declared Donald Duke winner of the governorship election.

Duke, according to the tribunal resolutions on Thursday, is to appear on March 15 with on-

alarmed by the general spate of insecurity along Okene-Abuja, Lokoja-Kabba and Kabba-Okene roads, the House of Representatives last week urged the Inspector-General of Police to promptly review and reinforce the entire security arrangement on all roads to curb acts of armed robbery on them.

The House also urged the IGP to immediately create police posts at different locations and within manageable distances to ensure effective and result-oriented policing along the entire road network.

The prayers of the 15 sponsors of the motion which was moved by Hon. Musa Ibrahim Ahmadu and seconded by Hon. Ado Okino, was also amended to include urging the IGP to intensify police patrols through the provision of communication gadgets.

Arguing in support of the motion, Hon. Ahmadu decried the activities of armed robbers on the roads which have cost a lot of lives and properties, making the roads death traps for commuters.

By Zainab Alimi, Political Reporter (Reps)

He recalled with sadness how a legislator, late Hon. Talabi was shot dead on one of the roads while another, Hon. Mercy was also attacked and her police orderly killed.

"The road is so important, because it is the major road which links the north and south and the police only scrambled to the scene of the crime after the armed robbers have finished assaulting the commuters," he lamented.

He added that the inefficiency of the police as well as the resulting crime wave on the roads has translated into a national embarrassment and the government must check the trend.

Other members of the House

including Hon. Shola Adegboye and Hon. Lanre Adeyemi said it was regrettable that more policemen have become known notoriously for extorting money from road users rather than protecting lives, adding that it was shameful for policemen to flee crime scenes and shun distress calls for fear of armed robbers.

"Only those who have never been robbery victims can afford to take this motion lightly," they argued. "The police need to be properly trained to combat crime they need to develop crime patterns and be proactive," and therefore called for a holistic review of police operations in the country, "to check the lackadaisical attitude of police to crime."

## Land ownership tussle: PLSG urged to implement Plateau Peace Conference resolution

The Plateau state government has been called upon to implement the Plateau Peace Conference resolution to check the tension which is brewing in Qua'an Pan

From Rakiya A. Mohammed, Correspondent (Jos)

local government area of the state over the ownership of Namu land.

Two groups of the Pan people and the Goemai are in the ownership tussle over Namu.

Addressing a press conference in Jos, spokesperson of the Pan Youth Association of Qua'an Pan local government area of the state, Clement Auta, urged the state government to set up a panel in line with the Plateau Peace Conference as contained in Vol. 1 section 7.6.17 resolution V11 in order to deal with the claim of ownership over Namu.

He described as baseless, claim a document which he noted was being circulated purported to be an extract from a resolution of the Plateau Peace Conference.

According to Mr. Auta, the said document erroneously claimed that there was ample evidence to prove that Namu is Goemai land.

Mr. Auta stressed that the said document was contrary to the Plateau Peace Conference resolution as contained in volume 1 section 7.6.17 resolution V11 which stated that "a panel should be constituted to look into the claims by the Goemais and the Pan people over the ownership of Namu and other related issues."

He however promised to get in touch with Duke before March 15<sup>th</sup>

"The certificates will be produced when we see the first respondent. We have not seen him. My lord, I understand the photocopies of the LLB and the law school certificate were presented sometimes ago.

"With all respect, we will produce what the law says we should produce. "My lord we are all human beings, you ask me now to produce my certificate, I might not readily get them."

Counsel to the NDP candidate, Mba Ukweni, objected to the plea and stressed that the governor has been around in the state commissioning projects across the state.

He however, said his client would allow the first respondent, Duke "go the whole hug."

The court later adjourned to March 15 for the appearance of the governor with his credentials following a consensus by the two parties and the court.

From Bassey Ita, Reporter (Calabar)

going copies of his academic and professional credentials.

Lead counsel to Duke and immediate past president of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Chief Wole Olanipekun (SAN), told the tribunal that the governor could not appear with his original certificates as demand on Thursday but will appear with the said documents on March 15<sup>th</sup> as he has nothing to hide over the issue.

The governor's counsel explained that ever since the tribunal resumed sitting after its last adjournment, he has not set his eyes on his client, Duke.

"I wasn't here at the tribunal when your lordship made that order. Since I came into Calabar, I have not seen the first respondent," said Olanipekun who promised that his client, Duke, will produce the said document when he is notified since he has produced photocopies before the press.

# News

## Demolition of FRCN's Sokoto FM station

From Aminu Mohammed, (Regional Editor) & Abdulfatah Abdulsalami Correspondent, Sokoto

The Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria's (FRCN) FM station in Sokoto was last Friday demolished by the Sokoto State Urban and Regional Planning Board (SSURPB).

The demolition exercise last week was carried out after what the SSURPB claimed was as a result of several letters of notice served to. The corporation, to remove the "Illegal structure" which was situated within the premises of the Sokoto Rima River Basin Development Authority (SRRBDA) along Gusau Road.

Narrating how the demolition exercise took place. The Managing Director of the Sokoto Rima River Basin, Development Authority, Alhaji Usman Adamu Kaoje told Daily Trust that he received a letter from the Sokoto State Government on Friday giving him a 21 day ultimatum to remove the FM station from the premises of the Rima Basin which was strictly allocated to the Federal Government for office and residential purposes but to his dismay, the demolition exercise was carried out within three hours of the notice served.

According to him, he got the information that the Regional Planning Board has already sent a bulldozer to pull down the Radio station and when he came out from his office he ordered his gatemen not to allow the

bulldozer in. "To my surprise however they went through the back door and pulled down our fence thereby forcing themselves inside".

Alhaji Usman Adamu Kaoje confirmed to our reporters that he made attempts to contact the State Police Commissioner but was told he could not see him until after an hour "and within that one hour the FM station has already been demolished," he said.

According to him, he was able to see the Police Commissioner after the demolition exercise and he was surprised to find out that the police commissioner was already aware.

However, the Sokoto State Police Commissioner, Alhaji Idris Mohammed who spoke to Daily Trust through the command's PPRO said he was not aware of any attempt made by the MD of the Rima Basin and that the only attempt he made to see him was when he the MD came to his house and met him after the demolition has already been carried out. The police commissioner told Daily Trust that the conflict between the two parties involved in the matter was a civil matter which could best be resolved by the court of law.

On its part, the Sokoto State Government defended its action claiming that it has sent several warnings to the Rima Basin Authority

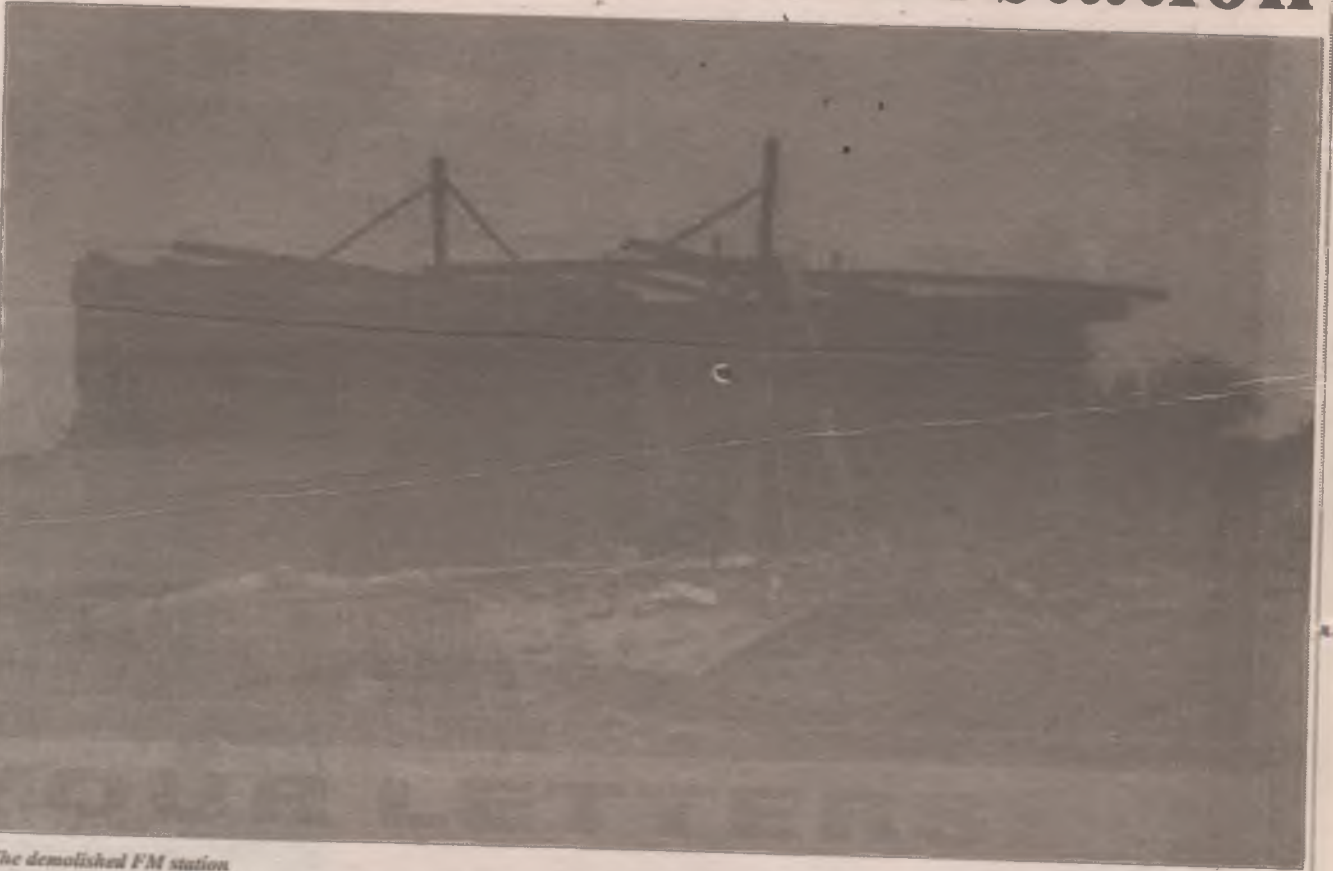
not to allow the FRCN's FM station to be sited in its premises but to no avail.

Answering a question on why the board gave the authority 21 days within which to remove the structure but went ahead on the same date the notice was structure, the special adviser for the Regional Planning Board, Alhaji Kabir Usman Binji claimed that it was a typographical error and that the 21 days was meant to read 24 hours". According to him, the Sokoto Rima River Basin Development Authority contravened the Sokoto State Urban and Regional Planning law No. 7 of 1995 demolition notice. "Initially the land was set aside to the Federal Government for the purpose of the board's head office and residential ac-

commodation. However, the land at present was curved out and an office and transmitter currently under construction which is contrary to the earlier agreement", he said

Last Friday's demolition of the Federal Government's FM station in Sokoto served as the anti-climax of the controversy between the Sokoto State government and the Federal Government in the last two years.

As part of the Federal Government's programme to establish an FM station in each of the 36 states in the Federation, the FRCN requested for a piece of land from the Sokoto State government but was denied which resulted in siting the FM station at the premises of the Sokoto Rima River Basin Development Authority.



The demolished FM station



Gov. Attahiru Bafarawa



Mr. Eddie Iroh, FRCN DG

# Farewell Daddy

"Each of us possesses a spark of individual brilliance. Everyone of us is capable of accomplishing something in our own unique way that cannot be accomplished by anyone else. Striving to discover what is our niche in this vast human market is part of our conquest of life".

— Chin-Ning Chu



**Professor Tiramiyu Belo-Osagie**  
(81 yrs)

The Board, Management and Staff of Intercellular Nigeria Plc, commiserate with our friend and brother, Mr. Hakeem Belo-Osagie, immediate past Chairman of UBA Plc on the glorious transition of his father, Professor Tiramiyu Belo-Osagie, a renowned Obstetrician and Gynaecologist.



# News

## FG spends N300m for ammunition storage facilities

The minister of Defence, Engineer Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso, said the federal government has expended over N300 million for the constitution of storage facilities for ammunitions, to ensure the safety of military formations.

Engineer Kwankwaso denied reports that the federal government was not concerned about the safety of the barracks, and added that the assumption by the public that the ministry was indulging in business as usual was false, as various construction and renovation projects were being performed in various military formation across the country.

The defence minister, visited the Nigerian School of Artillery to inspect the ongoing project, said although the school was left to decay since the 1970's, but the present administration is determined to revive the school to meet the various demands of the military.

He explained that most of the projects were already in 60 per cent completion and funds are being solicited for and have been included in the 2005 budget, and when released will be used to complete the various projects.

"After the Ikeja Cantonment bomb explosion, the federal government dedi-



Engr. Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso

## APGA asks Supreme Court to dismiss Kalu's appeal

The All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) has prayed the Supreme Court to dismiss an election petition appeal filed by Governor Orji Kalu of over the April 19, 2003, gubernatorial election in the state.

The party alleged that the appeal was a ploy by the governor to frustrate hearing and determination of the petition of its gubernatorial candidate for the State, Chief Onwuka Kâlù (a.k.a. Okpuzu), before a newly constituted election tribunal for the state.

In a motion on notice filed by its counsel, Mr Charles Eduzor, the party contended that the Supreme Court has no jurisdiction to entertain any appeal emanating from an election petition.

"By virtue of the provisions of Section 246 (1) and (3) of the 1999 Constitution, the decision of the

By Ruby Rabiú cated a lot of it's funds to the construction of storage system for explosives and also for renovation of abandoned barracks which could be used for various military exercises," he said.

He continued: "I want to reassure you that the Ikeja Cantonment crisis has been contained and the lesson learnt has been taken seriously so as to avert future recurrence of that unfortunate situation."

## FIRS warns banks, agencies over tax arrears

The chairman, Federal Inland Revenue Services (FIRS), Ms Ifueko Omoigui has warned ministries, agencies and banks in the country to settle their tax arrears with the sources or face the wrath of the law.

Speaking to the newsmen in Abuja Friday, the revenue boss said plans to make public the defiant government agencies and banks are underway. According to her, there are huge arrears which figures could not easily be quantified unsettled by such government agencies and ministries, saying that already the FIRS is working with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to remit some tax revenue yet to be paid by some collecting banks.

In her words: "We have some banks holding our money and we are working with the CBN to remit such money."

It would be recalled that the chairman of the FIRS made it public that the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) is owing the federal government over N8 billion in tax revenue which had accumulated

Kwankwaso added that when the storage facilities are completed and are functioning, ammunitions and explosives will be moved from military formation across the country and housed in the storage system where they will be monitored to avoid detonators.

He commended the Presidential Committee on Barracks Rehabilitation who he urged to continue their good works in rehabilitating barracks so as to solve the problems of accommodation.

By Hamisu Muhammad, Reporter (Business)

over the years.

She disclosed further that beside NEPA, the Nigerian Port Authority and some other major ministries and parastatals are among the list of the tax non-compliance.

Meanwhile, speaking on the new reform policy of the tax system, Ms Omoigui said from now on, all Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) who engage in commercial activities/business will pay tax.

She said FIRS discovered that there are many NGOs who are engaged in commercial activities and are generating huge profit without paying tax.

Responding on the new bill seeking to amend the Education Tax Fund, Ms Omoigui said "the fact that there are no more Education Tax Fund doesn't mean that there are no more fund for education."

She said when the bill is approved by the National Assembly, such fund will be derived from the federal government consolidated revenue funds.

She said the objectives of the new FIRS reforms is to ensure that the service is strengthened in order to carry out its activities effectively, adding that it would also help to increase voluntary compliance through an efficient and equitable tax system.

Other objectives is to eliminate obsolete and unrealistic provisions/penalties in the tax laws, increase revenue collection and thereby increase funding for economic development as well as increase Nigerians' stake in the development of the country.

Besides Education Tax Act Bill for presentation to the National Assembly, the chairman said there are eight others which include, to establish FIRS as an autonomous body, amend the Personal Income Tax Act, Petroleum Profit Tax Act, Companies Income Tax Act, Value Added Tax Act, National Automobile Council Act, Customs Excise Tariffs and Sugar Development Council Act.

Celebrating Excellence

# KURE @ Only 49



**\*His Excellency, Alhaji A. A. Kure FNSE**  
Executive Governor, Niger State

On behalf of all your friends of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the North Central Zonal Headquarters, Lafia, take this opportunity to felicitate with you, our dynamic and result-oriented very supportive colleague, the Executive Governor of Niger state, **ENGR. ABDUKADIRE A. KURE** on the occasion of your 49<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

Your Excellency, we, your friends of the North Central Zonal Working Committee appreciate your unending support to us in moments of difficulties since we were elected. We take this opportunity to acknowledge that, without your timely financial and moral support we could not have been able to successfully hold our historic Zonal NEC meeting at which Senator (Dr) Ahmadu Ali emerged the new National Chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party at 11.23pm on March 1, 2005.

We thank Allah for your life and hereby acknowledge your well documented life of humility, transparency, love for justice coupled with the unending fear of Allah and the fairness you have always manifested in your dealings with all human beings.

We your friends of our great party in the North Central Zone shall continue to Pray to Allah to consistently give you good health, wisdom and the ability to continue to successfully rule the people of Niger State in peace and harmony until 2007. We wish you many more years of useful, productive and result oriented leadership to the people of Niger State until 2007 and Nigerians as a whole after May, 2007. Amin.

**Dr. Akpenlamen Godwin. Dabo'Adzuana**  
Assistant National Auditor, PDP  
(On behalf of Committee of Friends)

# Inside Politics

## Obasanjo's conquest of the PDP

Governors of all Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) states were all seated, and the leadership of both chambers of the National Assembly too. Board of Trustees (BOT) members and members of the National Working Committee (NWC), party leaders in the states, and everybody who is somebody or hopes to be somebody in the ruling party was either in the stuffy conference room, owing to inadequate ventilation, sitting or standing, or hanging around the premises of the Wadata Plaza, national headquarters of the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Abuja because a major decision on the fate of the party was to be taken, although it was generally suspected to have been predetermined or rather prearranged.

It was on Wednesday, March 2 when the successor to Chief Audu Ogbe as the National Chairman of the PDP was to emerge, and as it turned out, he was an associate of president Obasanjo both politically and professionally. He is retired colonel Ahmadu Ali of the infamous "Ali must Go" national student crisis in 1978 when he was the federal commissioner of Education in the military government of Obasanjo who was then Head of State. Recalling the experience in his remark at the occasion, though on a lighter note, president Obasanjo however said, "Ali has come and Ali must stay". Although Ogbe was not sighted at the occasion, he however, sent a congratulatory message to his successor.

The headship of the PDP by Ali has opened a fresh and peculiar vista in the organogram of the ruling party-the preponderance of ex-service men in key positions. President Obasanjo is a retired army general; the national chairman of the party, Ahmadu Ali is a retired army colonel while Chief Tony Anenih, whose appointment as BOT chairman was confirmed by the National Executive Committee (NEC) the same day it cleared Ali, retired as a police commissioner. Also, the national vice chairman, South West, Chief Olabode George retired as a Commodore in the Navy while the national legal adviser, retired colonel Yohana Madaki was military governor of former Gongola State. It is however hoped that the "Ali Must Go" crises of 1978 will not be re-enacted in the PDP because at least the tragic flaw of the past that

By Hammed M Bello,  
Senior Political Reporter

might have provoked the crisis will be avoided. But suffice it to say that there are already mounting protests by some aggrieved interests in the party who complained against the militarisation of the party which they said

apologists and those who stand to gain from such association, and on the other hand, advocates of civilianised political process will coalesce to wage a political war which end cannot be easily predicted. In the picture of all these permutations are President Olusegun Obasanjo, Vice

being considered as a south-south president to succeed Obasanjo.

At the NEC meeting, Atiku, who many think might be losing out in the political arithmetic of the PDP sat brooding for most part of the occasion with occasional smiles here and there and he

and legacy banqueted by the late Shehu Musa Yar'adua, the leadership of which falls on Atiku, would be exploited to throw spanner in the works of whichever group that is moving to frustrate the Atiku group.

There are suspicion also that President Obasanjo and

ratify the appointment of Ali. All the governors in the zone, according to Alkali, cooperated with the North-Central caucus in adopting Ali who was said to be the choice of the presidency.

There has been doubt as to whether or not Ali can make any difference in giving the party the fearless leadership required to check the creeping dictatorship and acts of indiscipline in most PDP states, particularly in Anambra, or whether he can challenge the authorities that put him there when they err. It is difficult to bite the finger that feeds you, otherwise might run short of fuel supply, and in that respect, Ali might just be a stooge planted to ensure a hitch-free driving of the party like some beast of burden.

The presidency was believed to have felt slighted and embarrassed by the letter to president Obasanjo on the state of the nation and had resolved never to allow a reoccurrence, and part of the strategy was to strip the chairmanship position of certain interventionist powers, including the scrapping of the National Working Committee. There had been alleged moves to dissolve the NWC, but that its members were said to have fought against it. Again, the insistence for the dissolution heightened and was to be addressed at the NEC but was said to have been stood down till the next NEC meeting. The constitution of the party does not make any categorical provision for any such scrapping of any of the party's organ.

Whether Ali has come to stay or not, in the days ahead, it will become clearer why he was chosen in preference to other candidates like Fidelis Tagun, Alh Shabba Lafiagi, Senators, A.T. Ahmed and Alex Khadiri and Co.



President Olusegun Obasanjo

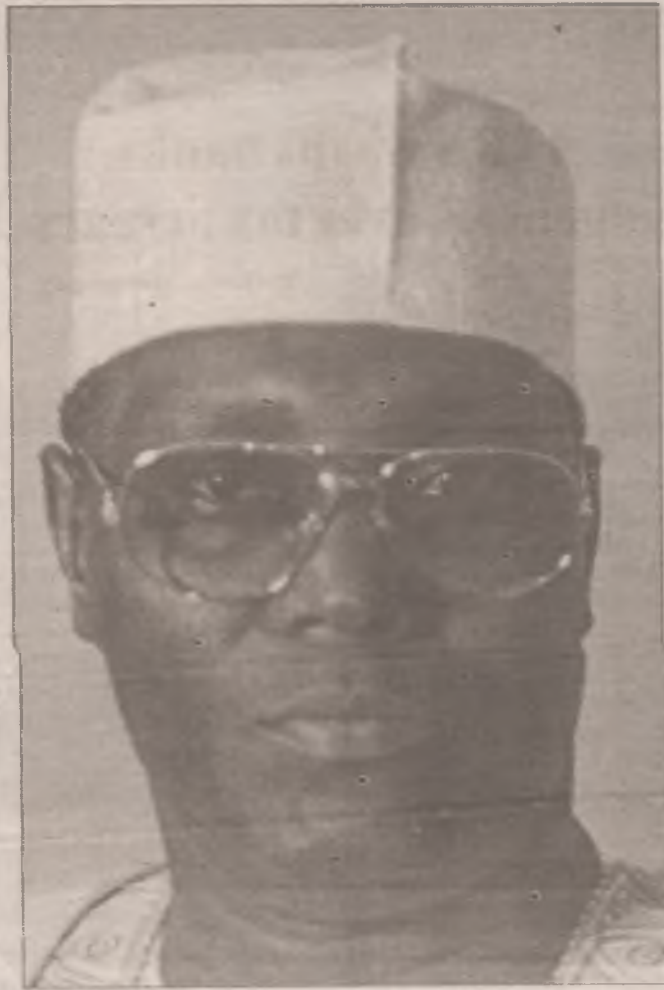
had dangerous implications and must be checked. The protesters suggested that true democratisation required the civil society to evolve the process of representative governance, and not, as it were, the recycling of retired generals and ex-service men, or their infiltration of the political process.

Those familiar with the military circles will recall that absolute loyalty and strict obedience to the last superior order is never compromised. A junior officer takes orders from his superior and implements it to the letter with all religious adherences, failing which he will be marked a dissident and will most certainly pay the price. The bond of esprit-de-corps is inextricable, the language and signals are coded and not intelligible to the civil society, and on that basis, any conscious, deliberate or orchestrated process of militarising the political process might usher in sort of dichotomy, polarisation or the emergence of parallel factions in the ruling party. This might even rock the boat if not properly handled. The possibilities are for party members with military background to converge in a group along with their

President Atiku Abubakar and former military president, Ibrahim Babangida.

The suspicion is that though the president, and sometimes his aides, have severally denied a third term agenda, his programmes and actions are viewed as suggesting the opposite. The suspected militarization of the PDP, for example, is seen as part of the moves to tighten the grip of the party machinery by having loyalists in key decision-making positions, and the likes of Anenih, Ali and George are the close confidants deployed to spearhead the suspected game plan.

There is a theory however that Anenih is in favour of a south-south president in 2007, should the third term project crash while others suspect he might be secretly playing the Atiku's card. The remark by Anenih in acknowledgement of confirmation of his chairmanship of the BOT is instructive in this context. He said he will not use the position to wear the crown, but will use it to make others wear the crown. He made the statement perhaps to react to speculations that he is



Vice President Atiku Abubakar

might be calculating on how best to wrest the party apparatus and wield the power to call the tune as he has been known to do. Many governors of PDP were on the side of the Vice president and were determined to ensure that his 2007 presidential ambition does not suffer any setback. Some of the Atiku loyalists include Governors of Delta state, James Ibori, of Abia, Orji Uzo Kalu, of Edo, Lucky Igbinedion, Boni Haruna and Danjuma Goje of Adamawa and Gombe states respectively. The Peoples Democratic Movement (PDM), a political movement

Ibrahim Babangida are best of friends and are working in tandem ahead of 2007 in the spirit of esprit-de-corps despite what appeared like a not too cordial relationship, and that it is in furtherance of that objective that Ahmadu Ali emerged as the party's national chairman. The entire process that brought Ali in was believed to be the implementation of a dummy handed out to the North central caucus of the party headed by the national vice chairman in charge of the zone, Alh Ibrahim Alkali whose recommendation NEC adopted to unanimously

***The suspicion is that though the president, and sometimes his aides, have severally denied a third term agenda, his programmes and actions are viewed as suggesting the opposite. The suspected militarization of the PDP, for example, is seen as part of the moves to tighten the grip of the party machinery by having loyalists in key decision-making positions, and the likes of Anenih, Ali and George are the close confidants deployed to spearhead the suspected game plan.***

# What's in our Offering?



## Expect even more from us

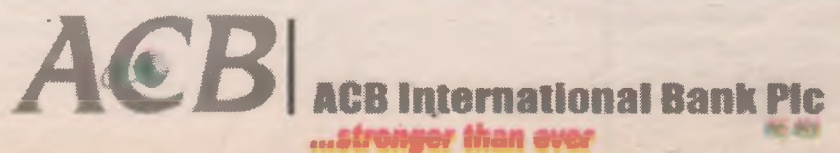
ACB International Bank Plc offers for subscription

# 25,000,000,000

Ordinary Shares of 50k each at 80k per share  
Payable in full on application

**Offer opens 2 March and closes 31 March 2005**

Joint Issuing Houses



url: [http:// www.acbibank.com](http://www.acbibank.com)

THE THE country

independence

history

# Inside Politics

## Confusion in IBB's camp in Kwara

Confusion is brewing in late General Abdulkarim Adisa's project 007 camp following the replacement of the former minister of works and Housing as a national coordinator of the project. Already, former governor Mohammad Lawal has been tipped to take over from where late General Adisa stopped but Adisa's supporters are not comfortable with the development.

Daily Trust first reported the secret talk held between President Ibrahim Babangida

From Abdulrazaq Adebayo, Correspondent Ilorin

and Alhaji Mohammed Lawal at his Tanke residence, Ilorin on the day General Adisa was buried, followed by another visit of president Babangida six days later last Friday.

The replacement plan according to sources was sealed last Friday in Ilorin during President Babangida's visit to the family of General Adisa.

However, supporters of General Adisa have started murmuring that the two groups would find it difficult to work together as approaches of the groups differ and seem

incompatible.

A member of Adisa's project 007, who preferred anonymity, explained that "Lawal's approach to issues and missions would not be workable with us because his approach differs from General Adisa's tactics and maturity employed to manage crisis.

Daily Trust further gathered that Lawal became the only alternative to step into General Adisa's shoes because he has resources at his disposal to carry on with task for IBB's presidential ambition in 2007.

Political watchers observed that the replacement of General Adisa may break up his fold with the likelihood of factions emerging.

The peoples Democratic Party (PDP) secretary in Kakau ward of Chikun Local Government council area of Kaduna state, Mr. Zakariah Abashe has cautioned senators to leave Governor Makarfi alone and rescind their decision.

Abashe stated this in a statement made available to Daily Trust at the weekend that the decision that senators visiting Kaduna should not pay courtesy visit to the governor should be shelved.

He said what Makarfi said about the senators was a fact that cannot be disputed by Nigerians.

Hear him: "What can anybody say is the contributions of senators to the suffering of Nigerians? And again since the inception of democracy in the country

## Leave Makarfi alone

—Senators urged

the condition of the ordinary man on the street has not improved, if anything it has become worse."

Abashe advised the senators to take serious the problem of the country and not waste time on irrelevant issues.

According to the secretary, what Makarfi said was the bitter truth which as we all know, nobody wants to hear.

He said Makarfi, as the man who midwived the setting up of the confab, knows better the motive behind the confab which will at the end of the day be beneficial to Nigerians.

According to him, by the time the confab is successfully ended, Nigeria

will not be the same again as many changes will be made to suit the composition of the country, religiously, socially and economically.

Abashe then advised the Senators to shelve their plan and legislate in a manner that will move Nigeria forward.



Mr. Zakariah Abashe

## IBB to declare presidential ambition march 26

—Prince Ekpennyung

From Edet Ekanem, Stringer

Former Head of state, retired General Ibrahim Babangida (IBB) may declare his intention to contest the presidential election in 2007 in Uyo, Akwa Ibom state on March 26.

The declaration will form part of activities planned for his South-south political rally slated to hold in Uyo that day.

The Akwa Ibom state chairman of the IBB Vision 2007, Prince Ime Ekpennyung, who made this known to Daily Trust in an interview on Friday said he had been officially notified of the development and already, various arrangements have been made for the successful hosting of the event.

Prince Ekpennyung said the rally will be the climax of all rallies ever attended by the former president in parts of the country, adding that it would be a world shaking event.

He disclosed that arrangements have been concluded in Uyo in particular and other states throughout the country for the epoch making events.

The vision 2007 chairman, who also described the rally as an international event and the climax of all the political moves by the IBB since leaving office in 1993 as the military head of state, will be colourful with the objective to usher in IBB into the main stream of contemporary Nigeria politics with a focus on socio-economic transformation of the country upon his resumption of office as the next president of the country.

He said Akwa Ibom was chosen to host the rally for the south south during the just concluded IBB political rally held on the 19<sup>th</sup> February 2005 in Ibadan, stating that Uyo will turn agog when IBB's friends, past military administrators and those who desire for positive change will converge in Uyo to receive the former head of state.

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

Now you can

# Stop Printing Payslips

with HumanManager Self-Service

SystemSpecs  
**HumanManager**  
Human Resource • Payroll • Pension

Why print payslip forms at great cost?

Why keep a "special squad" who spend hours distributing payslips at the end of every month?

Why litter the environment with discarded payslips?

Why expose staff confidential information to road side hawkers?

Why spend so much money printing payslips that many employees may not bother to look at?

... Now that there is a secure and convenient way for your employees to view and print their payslips - past and present - as required, from any computer on your intranet or the Internet.

The HumanManager Self-Service advantage.

For more information, call Deremi on 01-2633785-6, 8129172, 4754542, 08035555052 now.

**SystemSpecs**  
5th-8th floor, 136, Lewis Street, Lagos.  
e-mail: info@systemsspecs.com.ng  
www.systemspecs.com.ng

# SPORTS

## Mourinho confident of winning Premiership crown

Jose Mourinho believes that Chelsea are within reach of their first league title in half a century after brushing past Norwich City.

The Blues moved eight points clear at the top of the English Premiership with a 3-1 victory at Carrow Road and that lead could be extended when they tackle West Bromwich Albion on March 15.

Two late goals from Mateja Kezman and Ricardo Carvalho sealed the Blues' 12th away win of the season, after Leon

McKenzie had briefly threatened to upset the form book by equalising Joe Cole's first half strike.

The Portuguese now wants to claim his first Premiership title in front of Chelsea's own supporters at Stamford Bridge on the penultimate weekend of the season.

He said: "I keep saying that I believe we will win the title but then I get accused of being arrogant."

"We have an advantage. At the moment it's eight points - if we

draw with West Bromwich Albion it's nine points and if we win it's 11. If we manage not to lose against West Brom, we are back in a situation where we are in control. We are very confident that we can win the championship.

"It doesn't matter to me when we win it but I do think that I would like to win it at home. I know that winning the championship at Stamford Bridge would make the supporters very happy."

"If we win it with two weeks

to go at our own ground that would be fantastic. But if we have to go to the last week of the season then we will."

Mourinho also had reassuring news for Chelsea followers regarding the fitness of Netherlands winger Arjen Robben, who was ruled out of this clash with an ankle injury.

He said: "I think Arjen will be back for the next Premiership game but I have doubts for our Champions League match against Barcelona on Tuesday. He also has doubts and I don't

want to put pressure on him.

"If Arjen says on Monday after training that he is ready, then that is great but it could be too early for him."

If their attacking verve in this performance is anything to go by, Chelsea might not need the former PSV Eindhoven star. Cole, in particular, boosted his chances of starting against Barca by scoring a sublime goal to give Chelsea the lead in the 21st minute.

The England midfielder spanned past Mark Edworthy's challenge

and fired into the top corner from 20 yards.

Kezman's close-range finish and Carvalho's thunderous header — both set up by Frank Lampard — cancelled out McKenzie's nodded leveller for Norwich and the defeated Canaries manager Nigel Worthington could not hide his admiration for Mourinho's team.

He said: "Chelsea are solid, patient and relentless. I can understand why they are top of the league and I think they will win the title now. Arsenal and Manchester United will make it hard for them but Chelsea have belief now."

"Mourinho is honest and has created a bond with his players through his man-management. Forget about the money he has spent - he has gelled world class players into a team and that's very impressive."

Worthington admits that his side is now struggling to avoid relegation, after falling six points adrift of safety with this second home defeat in a week.

He added: "It's an uphill task but we'll keep smiling. We will bounce back from this because we are a good group. The lads have worked their socks off against a very good team and that's all I can ask."



Mourinho

### Collina to referee Chelsea, Barcelona clash

Italian Pierluigi Collina will referee the Champions League first knockout round second-leg match between Chelsea and Barcelona on Tuesday, UEFA said on Sunday.

Chelsea coach Jose Mourinho said last week he thought Collina, widely regarded as the world's best referee, would take charge of the game at Stamford Bridge.

Mourinho was unhappy with the performance of Swede Anders Frisk during the first leg in Barcelona, which Chelsea lost 2-1.

Mourinho said Barcelona coach Frank Rijkaard had gone into Frisk's dressing-room during halftime.

The 45-year-old Collina took charge of the 1999 Champions League final and the 2002 World Cup final.

Also on Tuesday, German Herbert Fandel will referee the second-leg match between AC Milan and Manchester United at San Siro and Russian Valentin Ivanov the second leg between Olympique Lyon and Werder Bremen at Lyon's Gerland ground.

## Ferguson knows title climb has become mountain

Sir Alex Ferguson has admitted that his side's lingering hopes of overhauling Chelsea in the Premiership title race could have ended in the mud at Selhurst Park.

United's goalless draw with Crystal Palace allowed Chelsea to open up an eight-point gap at the top of the table and, with the advantage of a game in hand, Jose Mourinho's men will have to collapse in the most unlikely fashion if they are not to go on and claim the title.

"It was a bad result for us," Ferguson said after watching his

side fail to break down Palace's massed defence on a quagmire of a pitch.

"When you are going for the championship you need to win these games, and we have not done that, so we have given ourselves a real mountain to climb."

Despite his frustration, Ferguson declined to criticise the performance of his team, who could find themselves with only the FA Cup to play for this season if they fail to overturn a 1-0 deficit in the second leg of their Champions League second

round tie with AC Milan in Italy on Tuesday.

"We have given a great advantage to Chelsea but I'm pleased with the commitment of the team," Ferguson said.

"In the second half we worked our socks off. We should have won it but in football if you don't take that chance to open the game up you are going to give yourself a mountain to climb."

United were frustrated by a combination of wayward finishing and an inspired performance from Gabor Kiraly

in the Palace goal, whose heroics allowed the home side to cling on for the last 26 minutes with 10 men following the sending off of Greek international Vassilis Lakis.

But Ferguson will also be left wondering whether it was wise to start with Wayne Rooney, Cristiano Ronaldo and Paul Scholes on the bench in a match in which victory was essential.

"We had some chances and some penalty claims but at the end of the day — I think mainly because the goalkeeper's made two or three fantastic saves — they've just dug in and got a point for survival," Ferguson said.

"When a team's down the bottom of the league, you have to expect them to fight, they're going to fight for their lives and that's what they did."

Despite Ferguson's pessimism, Palace boss Iain Dowie believes United are still capable of mounting a late challenge to Chelsea.

"There are still nine games left and I wouldn't put it past United to go and win all of them so they are not out of it yet," the Palace manager insisted.

Dowie was delighted with the efforts of his own team and felt they were good value for a point that had added value because of fellow strugglers Southampton's

win over Spurs.

"I don't really think we were hanging on at the end although there were a few hairy moments," Dowie said.

"They were always going to create chances because they created a plethora of chances against Milan so they can do it against anybody."

"They have mercurial talent but our whole back four were magnificent and our resolution and bravery won the day in the end. It was a big performance against a side that I consider to be the best attacking force in the division."

"My wife rang me this morning and said it the odds were 9-1 that United would score three goals or more and I was tempted! So to keep a clean sheet was very pleasing."

"It's a good result for us but there is still a long way to go. There are another nine games to be played but we have a nice break now before a nice easy away game at Chelsea."

Dowie refused to allow the victory for relegation rivals Southampton — now just two points behind Palace — to take the shine off a satisfactory day for Palace.

He said: "We can't be looking over our shoulders but obviously it was a big result for Southampton."



AC Milan midfielder Gennaro Gattuso admitted that he would jump at the chance to join Champions League rivals, Manchester United

### Gattuso targets United move

AC Milan midfielder Gennaro Gattuso admitted that he would jump at the chance to join Champions League rivals Manchester United.

"My dream is to play for

Manchester United in England," Gattuso told the Mail on Sunday ahead of Tuesday's Champions League tie.

"I know it is a bit soon to talk about it because we have this big game coming up against United, but I have always been fascinated by them. I would love to have a new experience, even in the next year or two," the 26-year-old former Rangers player said.

"I would choose Manchester United ahead of Chelsea because the stadium has a very special atmosphere and the club is world famous, like Milan."

But Gattuso does not expect to be moving soon.

"When a club has been good to you, as Milan have been to me, and they say you are not for sale, it is difficult to know what you can do," Gattuso said.

"I have always been happy at Milan and I still am. But I think you need a new stimulus in your career. It is a question of the circumstances being right."

"I am sure Sir Alex (Ferguson) knows all about me, because last year his assistant was Walter Smith, who had faith in me when I was young at Rangers."

## Better late than never, insists Costacurta

AC Milan's evergreen defender Alessandro Costacurta insisted his team make their own luck after leaving it late once again in a last-gasp 2-1 win at bottom club Atalanta.

Andrea Pirlo's strike in the fourth minute of stoppage time sealed a sixth consecutive Serie A victory for the title-holders and kept them at the top of the table alongside Juventus, who won 2-1 at Roma.

Milan and Juve both have 60 points with 11 matches left to play.

Three of Milan's wins in the last four weeks have been secured by goals in time added on, but Costacurta says luck has played only a part in their flawless run.

"These results cannot just be put down to good fortune," said the 38-year-old former Italy international.

"It shows remarkable consistency. We always keep going until the final whistle and that's where we edge our opponents."

"Unlike some teams, Milan never give up and I think the points are fully deserved."

Second-half substitute Massimo Ambrosini headed Milan in front in the 71st minute, only for Nigerian striker Stephen Makinwa to equalise for the Bergamo side two minutes later.

With the seconds ticking away, and the reigning champions heading for an embarrassing draw against a team that has amassed just 18 points, Pirlo pounced after Filippo Inzaghi's

header had been parried by Alex Calderoni.

Milan coach Carlo Ancelotti admitted his team were pushed all the way by a team that has amassed only 18 points this season.

"Atalanta played very well and put us under constant pressure," he said. "We left them far too much space to hit us on the counter-attack."

Juventus beat Roma in a bad-tempered clash at the Olympic stadium.

A controversial 44th minute penalty scored by Juve captain Alessandro Del Piero settled a niggly match in which 10 players received yellow cards and more than 70 fouls were committed.

Fabio Cannavaro's close range header gave the visitors an early

lead before Antonio Cassano cleverly sprung the offside trap to slot home an equaliser.

Roma were incensed with referee Salvatore Roccalbuto for awarding the decisive spot-kick as replays showed that Traianos Dellas had fouled Marcelo Zalayeta outside the penalty box.

"The images are clear and therefore I don't need to say anything about the referee's error," said Roma coach Luigi Del Neri.

The match was given added spice by the return of Fabio Capello, who walked out on Roma last summer to coach Juventus.

He was branded a traitor by Roma supporters for joining their bitter rivals after having previously stated he would never work for the Turin club.

# A WELL-DESERVED HONOUR



*The Board of Directors, management and staff of*  
**TROPICAL COMMERCIAL BANK PLC**

*felicitate with our Director*  
**ALHAJI (DR.) YUSUF MAITAMA SULE**  
**DAN MASANIN KANO**

*On his Conferment with an honorary degree of Doctor of*  
**Literature** *by the University of Port Harcourt.*

**This prestigious honour is yet another recognition of your landmark accomplishments and unflinching commitment to the service of humanity.**

*Congratulations Sir!*



**TROPICAL COMMERCIAL BANK PLC**

Head Office: 71B Murtala Mohammed Way, P.O. Box 4636 Kano. Tel: 064-631991 / 64005044, Fax: 064-644506 / 640052  
Tel: 771791 TRUCOENGC, E-mail: tcbplc@samdax.com

*Simply Defendable*

# Sports

## PREMIER LEAGUE

### Gateway fail to nail Kwara Utd

League leaders Kwara United extended their unbeaten run in the Premier League when they held Gateway FC to a 1-1 draw in an exciting match played at the MKO Abiola Stadium on Saturday.

A spate of early raids yielded dividend for the home side as early as the seventh minute when Chinoye Ehirim's header from a free kick left Kwara keeper Alkpan

Bassey gaping.

The visitors responded immediately, with their midfield quartet of Obinna Okwu, Nkoro Ndubuisi, Abdurazak Murtala and

Chukwuma Akabueze dictating the pace of the game.

Their efforts paid off 15 minutes later when striker Isa Ali Isa nodded powerfully past Henry Ayodele from a corner kick taken by Nkoro Ndubuisi. Several other goal scoring opportunities were frittered by both teams as the opening half ended without further goals.

Gateway began the second half looking more

business like, but the catalogue of misses continued as Solomon Odume, Ibrahim Ajani and substitute Lookman Kareem had close calls.

While the home side reveled in their fluid attacking play, Kwara United depended more on fast counters, and in one of such moves, Chukwuma Akabueze scored what looked like a legitimate goal on the hour, but referee

Victor Ijereme surprisingly disallowed it.

In a post-match comment, Gateway coach David Egbiri told KICK OFF that he was going to rectify his team's goal-scoring problems.

"We were just unlucky not to have won today's game. It was unbelievable to see my strikers wasting so many chances, but we will make amends in due course," he said.

### Utaka fires Gabon warning

Nigeria forward John Utaka sent warning signals to the Panthers of Gabon with two strikes in the French Ligue One on Saturday as Lens ran out 3-1 winners against Auxerre.

Utaka, who was named in Christian Chukwu's 22-man squad to face the Gabonese in Port Harcourt at the end of the month, came on for Ferreyra Jussi on 71 minutes. Five minutes later, he was on target to hand Lens a 2-0 lead on Olivier Thomert's first minute strike.

As if to prove that he had completely shrugged off the injury that kept him out of the starting line-up, Utaka hit home again on 83 minutes to secure a comfortable finish for the hosts, who still had time to concede a late consolation for Auxerre.

And in Italy, Ayo Makinwa further strengthened the case for his inclusion in Chukwu's squad by pulling relegation-haunted Atalanta level against giants AC Milan on 73 minutes. His goal was not enough however, as Milan claimed all three points in a 2-1 victory.



Argentine soccer legend, Diego Maradona successfully underwent stomach surgery to reduce his ballooning midline.

### Sharks squeeze past Berger

The patient Port Harcourt fans finally had something to cheer about when Sharks beat Julius Berger 2-1 on Saturday. An uneventful first half, which witnessed heavy rain for half an hour, was brought to life in injury time when Charles Omokaro scored after being given enough time by Berger's defence to control Valentine Nwabili's lofted pass.

Sharks were unlucky not to have doubled the scores within five minutes of the restart, as a 30-yard thunderbolt from Nwabili came off the crossbar with goalkeeper Sunday Makama clearly beaten. The pressure, however, paid off in the 65th

minute when a defensive mix up between Makama and Segun Emman gifted substitute Belema Fenibo an empty net which he obliged to tap in.

Berger reduced the tally in the 77th minute through Babatunde Yusuf who beat the offside trap before displacing Sharks' keeper John Lawrence. Berger's goal scorer Yusuf told KICK OFF that a momentary lapse in concentration gave Sharks the advantage.

"The first half was even, then towards the end our defence gave away a soft goal, but we did come back strong in the second half.

"We played well but lost to a good side," he said. Coach Fatai Amoo agreed

with Yusuf. He told KICK OFF: "We were cautious at the start because it was an away match, and this is a young team just getting to know themselves. "The second half was better, and we look forward to improving on this performance."

Sharks' team manager Sunny Isockweima urged the home fans to show more understanding. "We played better in Lagos and still lost to NPA, so let us be content with his win. There is still a long way to go in this contest," he said.

### NFA finds Ogunjobi 'negligent'

The NFA board on Friday accepted the resignation of former Secretary-General Taiwo Ogunjobi after finding him guilty of "negligence and not following due process in the handling of financial affairs".

The NFA boss did not however disclose the findings of the three-man committee set up to investigate the former chief executive. NFA chairman Ibrahim Galadima, who made the announcement in Abuja after a board meeting which

lasted three days, also announced a massive purge in the organization.

"All the Heads of Department have been laid off," Galadima announced. "The issue of the vacancies in these positions will be addressed soon." Of the 125 members of staff employed by Glass House, 55 had their appointments terminated, 10 were redeployed while seven were retired.

## League chief in show of shame

It was a nasty exhibition of shame Saturday when Chairman of the Security Committee of the Nigeria Football League (NFL), Abdulazeez Mohammed, threw caution to the wind and assaulted another top official after his team Ranchers Bees had lost a local derby at the Ahmadu Bello Stadium in Kaduna.

Mohammed, who is team manager of Ranchers Bees,

failed to control his frustrations moments after his team had gone down 2-1 to local rivals Kaduna United in a Pro League Division 1A fixture as he manhandled the chairman of the Kaduna State FA, Shehu Adamu.

The NFL chieftain delivered several blows to send the smaller Adamu sprawling down the pitch right in front of several other top league officials including

NFL executive secretary, Salihu Abubakar.

The top NFL official also stopped security personnel from arresting a Ranchers Bees fan, who was hell bent on causing trouble after the game. Ironically, the local derby did not produce any violence among the over 10 000-strong crowd, who saw Kaduna United go in front with two goals in the second half before Ranchers pulled a

goal back via penalty kick late on.

The new leadership of the NFL has cracked down on violence at league venues this season and it is believed it will now come down hard on its own official who was behind the latest episode in Kaduna.

### CAF Awards: NFA accused of cover-up

Over three weeks after the NFA launched investigations into the voting fiasco of the CAF awards, the body is yet to come out with the report of the scandal and Friday Nwankwo Kujah, a close confidant of Nigeria skipper Austin Okocha has told KICK OFF that it was just a ruse to cover up the inefficiency in the system.

"They were just using that to while away time and cover the eyes of the ordinary Nigerian football lovers and get the issue out of the public eye," Kujah told KICK OFF. "They know it is their fault and they are trying to cover up. "How long does it take to

check you fax machine, confirm if a fax arrived or not and let people know? The fact is that they are guilty. The fax arrived, it was received by somebody and Caf has told them that in very clear terms. The CAF man said he spoke to Bola. How many Bolas are in the NFA?"

"CAF has shown them their own copies of the delivery report of the fax they sent to Nigeria. It didnt take them two days. But the NFA has taken three weeks and we still don't know who received the fax.

"The CAF officials reminded them that when they owe them money, NFA calls them every day. But now,

for something that involves their own countryman, they are trying to cover up. They should produce the report of the investigation and let us see. If they think they can sweep this under the carpet, they are wasting their time."

And Kujah reiterated Okocha's appeal for the media to refrain from asking him questions about the award.

"He has put it behind him. All he is saying is that it is not an award for Jay Jay, but a Nigerian award, and if he lost the award, it is a Nigerian loss. His focus now is to help the Super Eagles qualify for the World Cup."

## WORLD YOUTH CHAMPIONSHIP DRAW

The draw for the FIFA World Youth Championship Netherlands 2005 held yesterday has thrown up some fascinating encounters in all six groups. The tournament will be staged between 10 June and 2 July in Doetinchem, Emmen, Enschede, Kerkrade, Tilburg, and Utrecht. Dutch stars Marco van Basten, Hans van Breukelen, Guus Hiddink and John van't Ship conspired to pull out a mouth-watering series of clashes including Brazil v Nigeria in Emmen and Argentina v Germany in Enschede.

Group A (Kerkrade):	Group C (Doetinchem):	Group E (Tilburg):
Netherlands	Spain	Colombia
Japan	Morocco	Italy
Benin	Honduras	Syria
Australia	Chile	Canada
Group B (Utrecht):	Group D (Enschede):	Group F (Emmen):
Turkey	Argentina	Brazil
China	United States	Nigeria
Ukraine	Germany	Korea Republic
Panama	Egypt	Switzerland

*This Space is  
for Sale*

# DAILY TRUST

MONDAY COLUMN

Monday, March 7, 2005

## EDITORIAL

### As Tafa Balogun formally retires

Yesterday, Sunday the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 2005, was the date set for former Inspector General of police Tafa Balogun to formally retire from the police force. As the former IG officially relinquishes his erstwhile title, it is a matter worthy of note that after weeks of unsettling quiet, the government, through President Olusegun Obasanjo, has finally acknowledged that the circumstances that led to Balogun's ouster as the police boss were, at best, not particularly auspicious.

We are constrained to revisit this issue because, despite the gravity of the case against Balogun, the Federal Government, it seemed, saw no urgency in addressing the matter. Indeed, if anything, the government maintained a disconcerting silence that could easily have been interpreted as outright disinterest.

In view of this, we commend the president for admitting that Balogun's retirement came about as a result of evidences of mind-boggling corruption. President Obasanjo, who gave credence to what many Nigerians already knew by making this admission on his regular radio programme, should never forget that right from the outset he made the fight against corruption one of the cornerstones of his administration.

It is well and good that the case is under official investigation and that Balogun, as revealed by the President, has been placed under house arrest. Yet it would even be better if this issue is treated with the seriousness it requires considering the stance of the law on matters of abuse of office, corrupt enrichment, fraud and sundry conspiracies.

Lest the nation forget, the salient concern in this case centres around the troubling revelations that immediately followed Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF) Obong Uffot Ekaette's 17<sup>th</sup> January 2005 announcement that Balogun had retired from the force and was to proceed immediately on a pre-retirement leave. Right from the very next morning, the nation was inundated with a remarkable level of media coverage that sought to expose and explain the unsavoury particulars surrounding the premature and somewhat puzzling retirement of an erstwhile very visible Inspector General of police.

We consider it important to recall that an aspect of the exceptional level of public excitement over the matter, especially in the print media, concerned the position that the SGF's announcement, which was rather curt, came about as a result of a compromise 'soft landing' agreement reached after the government was briefed on the colossal nature of the incriminating facts against Balogun.

To add credence to this not-so amorphous situation, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), an investigative organ of government, said it had offered to the government evidences showing that Balogun had dishonestly used his office to amass sums in various currencies running into billions of naira which were lodged in several bank accounts within and outside the country. Indeed, it also said that it was based on these evidences that government decided to ease out Balogun. It is remarkable that it took the government more than six weeks to verify this position.

What is more, while government kept sealed lips over the matter, it appeared as if there was a concerted effort not only to wish the case away, but also positively hush it up. In this regard, we lament that the same print media which went to town with such fanfare when the Balogun story first broke, had absolutely forgotten—or perhaps more accurately, been persuaded to forget—about this matter that has far-reaching national and international consequences. It is even more shameful that credible manifestations, upon which the charge of a wide-ranging print media conspiracy to bury the issue could be built, surfaced. And damaging reports emerged of pecuniary inducements and high-level ethnic sabre-rattling involving the highest echelons of society, all in a bid to guarantee that Nigerians never learn the truth of the Balogun matter.

Taking into consideration all the preceding information, yet without prejudice to the president's recent admission, we reiterate that this issue must not be swept under the proverbial carpet. We urge that the ongoing investigation be conducted professionally and thoroughly to ascertain the truth regarding the dire allegations levelled against Balogun by the EFCC. Should the allegations against the retiring IG merit prosecution, then the law is obliged to take its course. We repeat that anything less would make nonsense of the claims of the government regarding accountability and probity.

## The Kukah I didn't know

By Kabiru A. Yusuf  
kabiruyusuf@dailytrust.com

We were at an informal meeting of Newspapers Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN) at the Abuja home of the immediate past president of the association Alhaji Ismaila Isa Funtua. The NPAN has a small problem regarding its representation in the National Political Reform Conference which began last week. Like most organizations contacted by the government to nominate one or more of its members to the conference, NPAN had sent the name of Mr Nduka Obaigbena, the publisher of *ThisDay* newspaper. I thought it was to the credit of the current executives of the association, especially the president Mr Ray Ekpu, that it did not do what most others did, by simply asking either the president or another executive member to attend.

So imagine our surprise when two names, the other being that of the chairman of *Punch* newspaper, Mr Ajibola Ogunshola, showed up as those representing the association at the conference. Quiet inquiries—you do not aggressively question those riding the crest of power—indicate that the presidency simply added Mr Ogunshola's name as an additional representative of the NPAN without bothering to consult its members. To complicate matters the man from *Punch* has given every indication that he intends to speak on behalf of an association of which he has not been an active member since he lost the election to be its president two years ago.

We were discussing the details of a meeting in Lagos called to resolve this potential conflict, when I heard Nduka, sitting to my immediate left shout into his mobile phone "Reverend!" He had called Hassan Matthew Kukah, the secretary of the conference, to tell him that he should expect to hear from us on the issue of representation. For full effect he gave each of us the phone to speak to Kukah, first Ray Ekpu, then Sam Amuka (publisher of the *Vanguard*), next Ismaila Isa, then finally me.

I had not spoken to Kukah for years and even after his recent appointment I have been undecided if the occasion calls for congratulation or condolence. From comments he has made in the media, I am aware that he is not happy with some of the reports in the newspapers, especially ours, on the conference. So after brief greetings, he noted what he called the "cynicism" of our comments and reports. I replied that I thought they need the cynicism and that in any case our role is that of a watchdog, which is often an unhappy one. But I should have said, blessed are cynics for they are so often proved right and it is a happier outcome if they are wrong! But the poor man was having his dinner and as one of Nigeria's men of the moment, I am sure he is harassed by telephone calls.

Most of us in the media regard Hassan Kukah as one of our own. He maintained a good column in the *New Nigerian* newspaper for many years. When he moved to the Catholic Secretariat in Lagos in the 1990s, he quickly wowed the media there, becoming a columnist and commentator in several publications. Kukah is both a good writer and a good talker, and as a sworn bachelor with no family distraction, he has plenty of time to read, write and debate. He also has the ability to adapt his message to his particular audience, which is a critical skill for someone moving from a government newspaper in a largely Muslim environment, to the hothouse of Lagos, where a hundred flowers may bloom but they nevertheless all smell the same.

It was in Lagos that I got to know Kukah well. I spent many an afternoon with him in his rooms at the Secretariat where we would discuss the problems of Nigeria, alone or in the company of some other of his journalist friends or priests. I remember a particular session in the Catholic church on Taylor Street, Ikeja, where as a Muslim I addressed some Catholic priests on the subject of religious tolerance. It was also in the company of Kukah that six of us (including Bilkisu Yusuf, Sani Zahradeen, Idowu Fearon) attended an interfaith conference in the United Kingdom in May, 2000 and in fact another one as late as last year in Australia, where Bilkisu and I made the long journey, but Kukah's paper was presented in absentia.

So if we find ourselves on different sides these days, it has not always been that way. In the days when the Northern-led military was in power, we joined our colleagues in the south to demand for full restoration of democracy. We also share a vision for equitable and fair relations between Muslims and Christians, especially in the north. But it is ironically with a return to democracy and power-shift, that our positions began to take a different hue. Kukah still wrote with sensitivity on the divisive issue of religion, but it is clear that he has now also achieved a shift of constituency from his old northern audience to a new one in the south. This was reinforced by first his appointment into the Oputa panel and now to the position of secretary of the political conference. Even for someone as dexterous with words as Kukah, it is hard to maintain a balance between these two often conflicting constituencies.

Take the way he handled legitimate protests from parts of the

north that appointments by Obasanjo to the conference deliberately favoured Christians in a country where religious sensibilities are a fact of life. Kukah himself has once written that "is it not because we are sick and tired of being toyed with that we as Christians voted for Chief Abiola despite the insult of having both Muslims in the presidential race?" This was in July 2001, while commenting on remarks General Buhari was alleged to have made urging Muslims to vote for Muslim candidates.

But last week Rev. Kukah dismissed as "absolute nonsense" complaints that it violates an unwritten rule of our coexistence to appoint two Christians (one of them a reverend father to boot) as chairman and secretary of the conference. Sounding angrier that Obasanjo himself, he told a *Weekly Trust* reporter who raised that concern: "For me all this talk about Christians and Muslims is absolute nonsense. Okay, there are people making money out of agitation, and you cannot put them out of business. I understand that. But there are some of us who have other ideas on how this country should run."

The problem of this country is not the absence of such idealism, but its application where real people are involved. If religion did not matter why did Obasanjo not appoint two Muslims to head the conference? As a matter of fact I think Alhaji Lateef Adegbite will make an excellent secretary or chairman. He is a proud Yoruba man, but a prouder Muslim and he has a PhD in constitutional law. But while a Christian activist like Kukah is portrayed in the Lagos press as a liberation theologian, Adegbite, in spite of his education, his reasonableness and Egba pedigree, is regarded as some sort of a religious fundamentalist, because it is not fashionable to be a Muslim activist. There is after all no Christian fanatic, only a Muslim one and even a maverick like Obasanjo dares not appoint someone so out of favour with his fellow Southerners.

The extent to which Kukah calibrates his views to be in tune with such opinion show in his response to another group of Nigerians who are unhappy with the conference as presently constituted. The so called PRONACO (and I have not frankly bothered to find out what that means), led by veteran agitators such as Abba Enahoro and Wole Soyinka, want a different kind of conference that will allow all ethnic groups to debate as equals and eventually form some sort of confederation. Now PRONACO, which does not claim to represent anyone except a few disciples in Lagos and Benin, was seriously courted by the government to attend the conference convened by Obasanjo.

But even after rejecting such overtures, with an eye on the usual media attention, Kukah continued to cajole PRONACO to come back into the fold. About Enahoro and Soyinka, he said with considerable deference: "Both statesmen are people who are old enough to be my parents. They know more about this country (really?) than I can claim to know. Neither can I nor the president nor anyone can claim to know or love this country better than Soyinka and Enahoro. So if they decide not to participate in this process, it cannot be out of lack of trust in the country."

PRONACO predictably was not impressed. One of its members, Chief Gani Fawehimi criticized Kukah for accepting to be secretary of a body that would now review the report of the Oputa Panel report of which he was a member. "I have respected this man for a long time, but I did not know that he will go to this level of self-degeneration. The lure of office makes our people to behave irrationally."

I do not know if Kukah is interested in real power, but it will be unfair to accuse him of being a sycophant. But now that the shoe is on the other leg, he seems comfortable with the double standard of the Obasanjo government. For it is certain that if Dr Dajji Ahmed, Abdulkareem Dayyabu, Abdulkadir Balarabe Musa and other northern rejecters of the conference had decided to hold a parallel meeting in Kaduna or Kano, neither the government nor probably would have been so sanguine about it.

Very often leaders and would-be leaders are quick to blame the media for raising uncomfortable issues, such as ethnicity, religion and abuse of office. But the problem really is not what newspaper say but what the leaders do. How many of them are able to rise above petty personal and sectional interests? How many are not the slaves of their little egos or worse? How many can be just when being so goes against them or theirs? This is the challenge.

I have said before that Kukah is as good a choice as any for this sensitive assignment. But at the end of the day he would be judged not by how many sound bites he delivers to the media, but on how the conference either contributes or detracts from the well being of Nigeria. The antidote to cynicism is trust, but this is not conjured out of nothing, but is achieved by giving every group its due. Our leaders assume that Nigerians are a difficult lot to please, but I suspect there is a simple reason for this: few of them have really tried very hard.