

DAILY TRUST

Abuja's First Daily Newspaper

VOL. 1 NO. 8

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2001

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Thursday Column

Nick Dazang on:
IBB's marine story

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Shagari's book

A boy goes to school

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Abuja.

President Olusegun Obasanjo yesterday dissolved the federal executive council and indications are that at least ten ministers may not be re-appointed into the new cabinet to be nominated to the Senate next week.

At yesterday's valdictory session President Obasanjo thanked the ministers and directed the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), Chief Ufot Akaette to formally notify the ministers of his decision.

In a statement after the meeting the Chief Ekaette reiterated that the President has reiterated how critical and important this year was to the present administration and the advancement of democracy in Nigeria.

The *Daily Trust* gathered at the Aso Villa that some prominent ministers in the administration may not return due to ill health or may have publicly disagreed with the president or for some personal reasons.

The new list according to presidency sources, would include new faces some from the Senate and House of Representatives. The SGF's statement

Obasanjo dissolves cabinet 10 ministers to go

stressed the need for a focused, committed, united and dedicated to the ideals enunciated by the president.

Yesterday's session which began at about 10:30 a.m. lasted till 1:30 p.m with all the ministers in attendance.

Daily Trust gathered that President Obasanjo announced his intention to change the cabinet, including some Special Advisers and Assistants. He then thanked the ministers for their contributions to his administration.

Professor Jerry Gana, Minister of Information and National Orientation who briefed State House correspondents at the end of the meeting, confirmed the dissolution of the cabinet saying that President Obasanjo had directed the (SGF) to convey his appreciation in a special message to the ministers.

Daily Trust learnt that immediately President Obasanjo formally informed the ministers of his intention to reshuffle the cabinet, the Aso Chamber,

By Suleiman Mohammed

venue of the meeting turned into graveyard. Similarly, all the ministers were seen in groups discussing the new development after the meeting.

Presidency sources explained that the changes were

aimed at injecting fresh blood into the administration particularly this year, which the president considered as critical to the success of his administration.

The SGF has promptly complied with President Obasanjo's directive and for-

mally written to the ministers announcing the dissolution of the council and the body of advisers.

The statement, signed personally by the SGF said, "the president used the occasion to reiterate how critical and important the year 2001 is to the

administration, to advancement of democracy and to Nigeria as a nation."

According to the SGF, it was imperative that the council and all its members must remain focused, committed, united and dedicated to the principles, enunciated and channeled by the president.



Mr. Damishi Sango, and Chief Jubril Martins-Kuye, at the last Federal Executive Council meeting... yesterday.

Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje

...Lobbyists besiege Aso Villa

People lobbying for ministerial appointments have besieged the Aso Rock Presidential Villa for last minute consultations with key officials in the Presidency in the run-up to next week's announcement of new ministers by President Olusegun Obasanjo.

Daily Trust investigations at the villa yesterday revealed that the groups which cut across the three political parties have been trooping into the presiden-

tial villa to further confirm the inclusion or otherwise of their nominees in the anticipated cabinet list.

The Presidential Liaison Officer (PLO) to the Senate, Alhaji Kashim Ibrahim Imam had announced during the week that the cabinet list would soon be presented to the Senate for screening and confirmation.

Daily Trust investigations further revealed that prominent politicians who

Contd. on pg 2

OPC mayhem: Faseun is liable, Gani Adams still wanted

Lagos state police commissioner, Mr. Mike Okiro has waded into the controversy over the release of Dr. Fredrick Faseun insisting that the leader of the disbanded Oodua People

From Bose Musari in Lagos

Congress (OPC), was liable for the myriad of ethnic violence that rocked Lagos state.

In a telephone interview with *Daily Trust* in Lagos

yesterday, Mr. Okiro said Dr. Faseun was "as a matter of fact" liable for the skirmishes that ravaged most parts of the state last year.

He however, debunked the allegation that Faseun's case file was pilfered before

—Okiro

it got to the office of the state Director of Public Prosecution (DPP), Mrs. Fola Authur Worrey who was consequently deprived of vital information on which to prosecute the OPC leader.

Earlier in his testimony before the Justice Famakinwa Tribunal on ethnic violence in the state, Mr. Okiro hinted that, he had evidence on which to prosecute Dr Faseun.

The police boss who refused to disclose the evidence, however, exonerated Faseun's faction of OPC

Approval for Pfizer drug test was forged

Fresh facts have revealed that the letter of approval for the Trovan drug test purportedly given to Pfizer by a Nigerian ethics committee was forged and backdated to support the US drug company's innocence in the drug scandal.

By Ahmed Shekarau

The test of the Pfizer drug, Trovan, which killed 11 children in Kano and deformed 200 others has continued to generate controversy worldwide with facts indicating the culpability of the American Pharmaceutical company emerging on a

daily basis.

The recent information exclusively available to *Daily Trust* revealed that letter of approval for the Trovan drug test was typed on Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital's letter headed paper and dated March 28, 1996, purportedly six days before Pfizer's tests began

but that it might have been written almost a year after the trial and backdated to save the drug company from any legal action.

According to the information, the Nigerian doctor who supervised the 1996 Pfizer drug experiment, Abdulhamid Isa Dutse, disclosed that "the letter may

have been written as long as a year after the test was completed."

Dutse, our source revealed further, allegedly forged the letter when Pfizer officials asked him to get for them an approval from a Nigerian ethics board.

Our information dis

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NEWS

Senate takes stock, congratulates self on 76 bills

Taking stock of its activities since inauguration in June 1999, the senate rose from a two-hour plenary session yesterday with a self-congratulatory note for an enviable feat, having deliberated on seventy-six bills.

Dr. Dalhatu Tafida (Kaduna North), chairman, senate committee on rules and business told his colleagues that such a feat calls for celebration as members have displayed high sense of respon-

By Ibrahim Modibbo,
Political Editor

sibility by being diligent and responsive to deliberations in the year 2000.

He said that during the period under review, seventy-six bills were brought before the senate, out of which sixteen were from the Executive while the remaining sixty bills were sponsored by members of the senate.

Describing the performance as unprecedented, Dr.

Dalhatu Tafida stated that the number when compared to only one bill sponsored by members of the senate in four years during the second republic, has shown that members have done reasonably well and would still do better in the years ahead.

Breaking down the bills in terms of usage, the Chairman stated that out of the seventy-six, eleven have been passed and has since become law, sixteen others are ready for gazetting while two bills were nega-

tive and one was withdrawn by its sponsor.

He said that the bills passed include corrupt practices and other related matters commission bill, bill for an act to establish Niger-Delta Development commission (NDDC), supplementary appropriation bill 1999 and the national order of precedence bill.

Others include, the establishment of Police service commission bill, National Assembly Service Commission bill, second supplementary appropriation bill 1999, and appropriation bill 2000, bill to amend appropriation act 2000 and appropriation bill 2001.

The chairman who also spoke on the importance of the senate legislative calendar said that such a guideline is as it gives senators instruction on when to attend plenary sessions and when to go for national assignments and oversight functions.



Senate President Anyim

Advancing reasons for the decline in attendance of plenary reasons by senators in the last quarter of the year 2000, the chairman said the development does not call for apprehension nor alarm as most senators have been busy attending to their committee assignments which makes it impossible for the 108 senators to attend all the sessions at a time.

Dr. Dalhatu Tafida stated that each committee is expected to furnish the house with details on its assignment as the committees have been given the mandate to supervise government agencies, parastatals and departments with a view to performing their oversight functions.

He said "Just as it is applicable in the United States, we want our senators to be adequately briefed on the activities of the government agencies and department they supervise so that when called up, they would be able to talk with degree of authority on the such departments".

The chairman who spoke at length on the need to have close bilateral cooperation between the Executive and the legislature said "when the executive comes up with a bill, we have resolved to accelerate debate on it for careful and speedy passage, as this would enhance better understanding between us for the common good of our people".

Oseni replaces Okupe

President Obasanjo has made his first appointment after the dissolution of the cabinet yesterday when he approved the appointment of Mr. Tunji Oseni as his new Special Assistant on Media and Publicity. He replaces Dr. Doyin Okupe.

The appointment which came in the light of the anticipated cabinet reshuffle is with immediate effect. Mr. Oseni was a one-time Managing Director of the Daily Times newspaper.

Earlier, Dr. Okupe, the

former Special Assistant expressed his appreciation to President Obasanjo, describing him as a wonderful leader who respects the superior views of his aides.

Reflecting on his experience while in the state house, Dr. Okupe identified the turbulence full crisis as the most difficult period to manage.

Evolve more political parties in Nigeria

Participants at a two-day workshop on the review of the 1999 Constitution, North-West zone, have advocated the involvement of more political parties in the country.

The participants who made this known in a communiqué issued at the end of the workshop held in Zaria last Tuesday, said all constitutional provisions which impeded free involvement of more political parties should be expunged from the constitution.

They observed that requirements such as registration of political parties, payment of registration fees or deposits. Geographical spread and federal character of parties.

Constituted undue restriction and inhibited free evolution of political parties and hence should be expunged.

The participants, who noted that Nigeria was a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society, advocated that freedom

of religion and association should be maintained and guaranteed in the constitution.

On human rights, the participants stressed the need to appropriately rephrase the provisions of fundamental human rights in the constitution, which they said, were "restrictive while in some cases they are superfluous".

They agreed that voters lists should be made available for inspection well ahead of the time of elections while polling booths should be made permanent and located at registration centres.

The participants of the workshop also reaffirmed their position that Nigeria was an indivisible and indissoluble state, saying that the continued corporate existence of Nigeria is indeed the constitutional imperative which the fourth republican constitution should guarantee, preserve and protect.

Pfizer contd. from pg 1

closed further that: "the American Pharmaceutical Company later used (the document) to satisfy US regulators and to justify its conduct of the human testing."

The forged letter, according to our source, indicates that "the hospital (Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital) ethics committee had reviewed the plan to test Trovan on 100 children with meningitis and found the protocol to be "adequate."

The letter, therefore, gave the American drug company the permission to proceed with the Trovan trial on the children.

The medical director of the teaching hospital, Dr. Sadiq S. Wali however, denied it saying it was "a lie."

Wali disclosed recently that the hospital had no ethics committee at the time Pfizer's test was conducted and that it did not organize it until months later.

Said he: "the hospital is quite clear. We had no ethical committee," adding that no letterhead stationery was created bearing his name before the Trovan drug test was conducted.

Dutse, Pfizer's principal investigator during the tests, according to reports, said he felt the letter reflected the informal approval he had obtained from three doctors who reviewed Pfizer's test plans and told him they saw no ethical problems.

Daily Trust investigations revealed, however, that one of the doctors Dutse cited, Professor Idris Mohammed of the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital, disputed Dutse's account.

Mohammed, who was the chairman of the federal government committee on eradication of the epidemic also argued that "there was no ethical committee at the time of the trial, none met, and no approval was prop-

erly given for the trial."

Meanwhile, Pfizer's spokesman, Andy McCormick has denied knowledge of possible irregularities in the Nigerian ethics approval document.

McCormick said Pfizer is currently investing into the alleged forgery, adding that the American company is cooperating with the Nigerian government in the government's investigations into the drug scandal.

OPC contd. from pg 1

from the mayhem.

"I see Faseun as a peace loving, non-violent individual," he told the panel, adding that Divisional Police Officers for Iyana-Ipaja and Ajegunle also had similar reports on Faseun's faction.

"The people arrested said they were from the other faction of OPC and not Faseun's faction, he stressed, blaming the Lagos ethnic violence on Gani Adams faction of OPC.

He told the panel: "within the first week of my resumption in office, I invited the two factions of OPC to have a dialogue with them. Faseun honoured the invitation with two members of his group but Gani Adams did not come.

The police boss reiterated that leader of the ultra-violent OPC faction, Ganiyu Adams is still on the wanted list. "We are still looking for Gani Adams," he said.

Reacting to this, Dr. Faseun told reporters at the venue of the tribunal's sitting that police should lift the ban on Gani Adams, "Gani is a young man who could be scared of the police shoot at sight order and if he appears, he could be shot," he declared.

He should be made to feel free like other citizens. If he is free, he can appear before the panel and his ideas could be useful.

But I am not accusing him of causing the problem, I was accused too," he concluded.

Lobbyists contd. from pg 1

stormed the villa, include the PDP national secretary, Chief Okwesilieze Nwodo, former Inspector-General of Police, and Presidential aspirant, Alhaji M.D. Yusuf and former PDP national chairman, Chief Solomon Lar, among others.

It was learnt that although president Obasanjo has kept the list close to his chest, the PDP hierarchy was still interested in effecting some changes in the list it earlier submitted for consideration, even though, it was gathered that some of the nominees are yet to confirm their acceptance.

Competent sources told Daily Trust that the president has expressed unhappiness with the daily influx of lobbyists into the villa. "The President is highly dis-

turbed, but there is nothing he can do since it is part of the system," said a presidential aide.

"You know it is not easy to make appointments in a democratic setting unlike in a military dispensation when announcements can easily be made without much consultation," the aide said.

It was further confirmed that no fewer than ten ministers would lose their positions for alleged non-performance while others would be re-assigned to other ministries.

According to the aide, "people should not expect a complete change of the cabinet members because, there are still those who are serious, and who deserved to be retained."

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NEWS

Briefly

Niger commerce ministry gets condition for N50m loan

The request for N50m made by the Niger state ministry of commerce and industry in Niger state for the promotion of small scale industries this year will be granted if the ministry appointed a board to monitor its expenditure. To this end, the permanent secretary in the ministry Alhaji Nuhu Musa said plans are in top gear to comply with the directive in the next week. The state house of assembly, currently screening the budget proposal for this year gave the directive to the ministry.

NSHA clears pilgrims board

The house has cleared the state pilgrims welfare board of financial misappropriation during the last holy pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The speaker said after scrutinizing the board's books, he was convinced there was no any foul play. "the documents showed that everything was in order."

Tarauni L.G. spends N16m on school buildings

The Tarauni local government council in Kano state has spent the sum of N16 million on building of a secondary school in Kundila. The council chairman, Alhaji Kabiru sanda stated that, the construction of the school became necessary due to the increased demands of secondary schools in the area. He said the council has constructed roads, hospitals as well as construct wells and boreholes all aimed at providing portable drinking water in the area.

Keffi LG chairman gets ultimatum

The Keffi Development Association has given the local government chairman Captain Ibrahim Abdullahi (rtd) an ultimatum to effect changes in his administration or they will call for his removal from office through constitutional means. Vice-President of the foundation gave the list in a press conference organized by the association in Makurdi road Lafiya, accused the chairman for not constructing a single road in Keffi town since the inception of his administration nineteen months ago.

5 perm secs, 11 others demoted, retired in Ondo

Five permanent secretaries recommended for dismissal by the retired Justice Rasheed Fawehinmi panel of inquiry in Ondo state, have been demoted by one salary grade and retired from service with effect from July 19, 2000 according to a government house statement.

The statement, signed by the commissioner for information, Mr. Oly Adegboro, in Akure, said a



Gov. Adefarati

while paper on the panel's report as stating that 34 persons, including two past military administrators were asked to pay a total of N503,670,876.02. According to the statement, top on the list is retired Navy Capt. Anthony Onyearugbulem, who si to refund N153,845,289, retired Col. Moses Fasanya to return N45,093,270, while eight past commissioners are to refund a total N164,96 million.

Lagos Cattle dealers debunk government reason for ejection

From Samson Ojo in Lagos

As Governor Bola Tinubu's one-week ultimatum expires cattle dealers at the ultra-modern Oko Oba Abattoir in Agege, Lagos have debunked Public health hazard used as the basis for ejecting them.

The dealers, who spoke anonymously for fear of being harassed by government agents, said the governor's anger was precipitated by a petition forwarded to him by one Mr. Ojikutu, an Oke Oba resident.

Ojikutu had alleged in the petition a copy of which was made available to Daily Trust, that "Sickly cows which failed the medical test of health inspectors were usually slaughtered secretly on Sundays when the health inspectors were off from duty".

The petitioner also complained about foul smell emanating from the abattoir as a result of improper disposal of human and animal waste.

In an interview with Daily Trust, Alhaji Sani Dangama, operations manager of Cattle Utilities Limited, the Company the manages the abattoir, said there was a lot of exaggeration in Mr. Ojikutu's peti-

tion. "There is no way you will prepare a cow without leaving animal stains like blood and droppings. After a few minutes, they begin to produce offensive odour", Dangama explained.

Daily Trust gathered that the main problem faced by users of the abattoir which produced more than half of the beef consumed in Lagos, is the lack of pipe born water.

Alhaji Dangama who revealed that an average of 800 Cows are slaughtered daily at the Oko Oba slabs, said his company maintain a high standard of sanitation at the complex. "Ojikutu and his promoters have more than altruistic motives behind the campaign against cattle dealers at Oko Oba abattoir", he stressed.

Cattle Utilities Limited which leased the premises of the abattoir from the State government about two and a half years ago, Dangama insisted, are conscious of the need for maintaining a hygienic environment. Until President Olusegun Obasanjo cancelled the monthly environmental sanitation days, the abattoir observed this exercise rigor-

ously. Since then the management of the premises tried to enforce daily clean up, with every Thursday scheduled for special cleaning.

Corroborating Alhaji Dagama explanation Alhaji Alao, a butchers told Daily Trust that every trader and butcher did their duty in keeping the environment healthy.

A Sharia court sitting at Zagga in the Bagudu local government areas of Kebbi, has sentenced a councilor, Alhaji Dankaka Morocco, to a total of 11 months in prison for illegally assembly, and for authorizing gambling.

The presiding judge, Malam Gazali Zagga, however gave Morocco an option of N10,000 fine, N5,000 for each of the two offences.

In addition, Morocco is to receive 15 strokes of cane for contravening the Sharia Law banning musical entertainment during festivities.

In his ruling, Zagga said

Sharia: Councilor sentenced to 11 months

that the prosecution had proven its case against the councilor, adding that from the councilors confession, the court was satisfied that he illegally assembled local boxers and gamblers to perform for three days during the Sallah celebrations.

The judge also said that



Gov. Aleiro

the action of the councilor was an embarrassment not only to his people but to the entire state, being an elected person, who with others drafted and authorized the bye-law in the area.

On the two drummers, Usman Kero and Danbana Kunguan-Daji, who performed for Morocco, the judge ruled that the court was satisfied with the evidence before it and their confessional statement and gave them an option of 5,000 fine each, in addition to six lashes.

The Bagudo local government had last year passed a bye-law on marriage and naming ceremony banning musical entertainment during such ceremonies.

Obasanjo leaves for Switzerland

By Suleiman Muhammed

President Olusegun Obasanjo is expected to leave Abuja tomorrow for Switzerland to attend a two day annual meeting of the World Economic Forum.

The President will depart Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja for Zurich International Airport from where he is expected to travel by road to Davos, venue of the World Economic Forum.

According to programme made available to Daily Trust at Aso Villa, the President would on Saturday hold preparatory discussion and a breakfast session, entitled, "Redefining the Role of Government in the 21st Century". It will be followed by a working

lunch entitled, "Nigeria, a New Chapter".

The informed gathering of World Economic Leaders will commence on Sunday at the Congress centre, Jakobshorn.

President Obasanjo who is expected back to Nigeria on Monday, next week would be accompanied by the National Security Adviser, Lt. General Aliyu Mohammed, Chief Philip Asiodu, the chief Economic Adviser to the President and Alhaji Rilwan Lukman, the presidential Adviser on petroleum.

Others are, Chief Kola Daisi, Executive Chairman of Nigeria Investment promotion Council (NPC), and Ambassador Dele Cole, Special Adviser on International Relations.

Fire razes Abuja High Court

By Uwem Umo

A fire outbreak Tuesday night at the premises of the Abuja high court has destroyed two Judges chambers and property worth millions of naira.

The high court extension complex located on Mombolo street Wuse, Zone 2, near Heritage Press Abuja, comprises the upper Area court, the FCT Judiciary Service Commission about six magistrate courts who all sit in one court room and share two chambers and high courts 7,8,9, and 10.

The fire which was said to have started around 1:30 a.m. entirely burnt a bungalow comprising High courts 9 and 10.

The inferno which destroyed the chambers of Justices M.N. Oniyangi and Ishaq Bello also destroyed the registrar's offices, the offices of the court clerks and over 500 case files.

According to the security men guarding the complex, the timely assistance of neighbours who helped call the Wuse zone 3 fire service station saved the entire complex and adjoining houses from being razed down with the aid of the harmattan wind currently blowing this part of the country.

There has been no arrest but police in Wuse division headed by Mr. Wale Davies a superintendent (SP) said investigations are going on.

Meanwhile, salvage efforts have been going on aimed at retrieving any valuable that may have been spared.



Photo shows President Olusegun Obasanjo address ECOWAS parliamentarians at a cocktail he organised for them at the end of their 1st session in Abuja. Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje

NEWS

Gombe receives N2m Islamic books

The Gombe state government has imported from Saudi Arabia, books on Islamic jurisprudence valued at over N2 million, as part of plans towards the introduction of Sharia in the state.

Presenting the books to Governor Abubakar Hashidu Tuesday, in Gombe, the chairman of the state Sharia committee, Alhaji Adamu Usman, noted that the books which, included translated copies, would go a long way in ensur-

ing the successful implementation of Sharia law in the



Gov. Hashidu

state. Usman is also the majority leader in the state House of Assembly.

Receiving the books, Hashidu reiterated his on the citizens of the state to respect each other's right to practice religion of his choice without any hindrance.

"We have the responsibility for every citizen of this state, so whatever we are going to do we will make sure that this right of individuals is strictly observed and followed according to the constitution," he said.

Hashidu assured Christians and other non-Muslims in the state that the Sharia legal code would affect the day-to-day activities of Muslims alone.

THISDAY editors escape death in plane crash

All the 15 passengers, mainly members of staff of *THISDAY* newspaper, and three crew members on board the chartered aircraft that crashed last night in Maiduguri, are safe, the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports.

NAN correspondent in Maiduguri reports that the aircraft, which belonged to Air eagle took off from Jos and crash-landed in a farm behind the Artillery Military barracks, about 12 km away from the Maiduguri International Airport at about 10:30 p.m.

Witnesses told NAN that all the passengers and crew members were safe and were immediately rushed to the Maiduguri University Teaching Hospital, where they were treated for minor injuries and discharged, but that the aircraft, with is an "L410" with registration number "9L-CG" was seriously damaged.

The 15 passengers on board the aircraft were all members of staff of *THISDAY* newspapers, who chartered the aircraft for their "Meet-the-nation tour." A reliable source at the Maiduguri international airport told NAN that the airport first got to know that the aircraft was on its way to Maiduguri when it was about 20 nautical miles to the airport,

and that when it was about 13 nautical miles to the airport, the pilot made contact with the control tower.

The source also said that the Maiduguri control tower advised the pilot to divert to

the nearest airport, because the weather in Maiduguri was bad. According to the source, the pilot complained that he had no fuel to take him to the nearest airport, even to the Potassium airstrip in Yobe which was the nearest.

One trillion naira lost on abandoned property

-Haruna

Governor of Adamawa state, Mr. Boni Haruna has said the nation has lost over one trillion naira on abandoned projects scattered across the nation.

Mr. Haruna who disclosed this when the students of course 23 of the command and staff college Juji, paid him a courtesy call explained that both federal, state and local government most stop the culture of abandoning projects.

He noted with dismay that the country will continue to draw back in the area of development if such culture still remain, adding that "we most work towards wiping away the attitude of abandonment."

Governor Boni Haruna also maintained that the present government has a lot of job to do with included thorough campaign on the issue of abandoning projects, pointing out that the exercise most go down to the grassroots levels.

He said Adamawa state has a lot of abandoned projects and that is why when he assumed office he deliberately refused to establish any new projects.

"What I did was to concentrate on the projects abandoned by the previous governments and I am happy that I have completed almost all those abandoned."

Responding, the leader of the students, Navy Captain C.C. Akanme told Governor Boni Haruna that they were on the study tour of the state, adding that the group will at the end of their assignment come up with a blue print of what ever result they found.

He said that social economic problems, particularly the area of ecological and erosion as well as mineral resources of the state are major places of attention. The students therefore commended Governor Boni for a wonderful reception accorded them while in the state.

Navy Captain Akanme also used the occasion to condole the Governor over the death of his commissioner of Agriculture, Barrister Tayedi Daniel.

Fire destroys property worth N18.5 million in Ebonyi

Property valued at N18,575,500 were destroyed in the 15 fire accidents that occurred in Ebonyi last year, according to a statement signed by Mr. Stephen Nwokerekwu, the state's chief fire officer.

The statement, made available to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) today in Abakaliki, also said that property worth N116,062,000 were however, recovered while one life was lost.

It said that all the fire incidents occurred within Abakaliki metropolis and its environs.

He said that among the

places ravaged by fire during the period under review, were the state audit, governor's office, and ministry of works' premises.

According to the statement, two private individuals, Messrs K.E. Muoneke and A.U. Enyi, each lost property worth N2 million when fire gutted their respective residences.

The chief fire officer listed the constraints of the state fire services to include inadequate fire-fighting vehicles, poor communication network and insufficient staff, and appealed to members of the public to avoid any act that would cause fire



Gov. Egwu

The Debate begins

Two weeks from today, that is Thursday, February 8, 2001, we will begin the publication of debates on topical issues of the moment.

The selected topic for debate is
The Generational Shift: The promise of under-50 politicians.

We have received the opinion of some contributors. We are awaiting yours.

Remember: the publication date is
Thursday, February 8, 2001

Thanks for your patronage

THURSDAY COLUMN

IBB's marine story

By Nick Dazang

Those who thrive on integrity and truth must be gratified that theirs is an unassailable fortress. Each time the small denizens of darkness—armed with mammon and all—attack them, they [apostles of truth] come out unscarred and unblemished. And the minions of darkness come to an unavoidable grief. Or how does one explain the unfortunate and pitious fate of General Ibrahim Babangida and his army of spinmasters? Each time they spin a yarn, the tall, ungainly saga does not only come down unstuck and to their discomfiture, it fails resoundingly, to rivet their audience or exonerate their client.

The latest—out of a series of public relations fiascos—is the weak and languid rationalisation General Babangida gave *ThisDay's* Eniola Bello in a recent interview [see *ThisDay*, Sunday, January 14, 2001]. General Babangida claimed, among others, that he made a mistake by not retiring former Head of State, General Sani Abacha before he “stepped aside” in August 1993. He further claimed that it was Abacha's seeming non-interest in politics that misled him to believe he had no political ambition. While denying the much-touted pact between him and the late General Abacha, General Babangida blamed the advent of General Abacha to power on Chief Ernest Shonekan's inability to assert himself.

Before this writer proceeds to pummel and pulverize General Babangida's hollow claims, let him observe that they [the claims] are simply convenient and opportunistic and they speak volumes about the General's character. And coming only after the demise of General Abacha, they should be taken, not with a pinch of salt but with a bagful. While Abacha went on unbridled rampage, visiting death and mayhem on Nigerians, where was General Ibrahim Babangida? Was he in the intrepid ranks of NADECO, which prominent members like Pa Abraham Adesanya, came under a hail of Sgt. Roger's bullets? Did he work in cahoots with the dignified Group of 34 to stop or oust Abacha?

For the purpose of logic and this treatise, let us start by addressing General Babangida's last claim: that the advent of Abacha to power should be blamed on Chief Shonekan's inability to assert himself. Very few rationalisations can be so preposterous and so insolent. In the first instance, the choice of Chief Shonekan was well calibrated and a clever ploy perhaps undiscerning only to Chief Shonekan himself who was blinded by vaulting ambition and spurred by the urge to undo his kinsman. Coming from Ogun State and an Egba just like the late Chief Moshood Abiola, no one could have been in a better position to scupper Chief Abiola's claim to his mandate as Chief Shonekan. Also, circumstances then prevailing could not have rendered Shonekan anything but the miserable poodle and stool pigeon that he was: the legitimacy of his so-called Interim National Government (ING) contrived by General Babangida had been eroded by a court of law. As if that was not bad enough, there was then popular outrage against Shonekan's illicit government as to further render it illegitimate. Furthermore, the decree setting up the instrument of the ING had been couched in a manner as to accord General Sani Abacha an undue advantage—an advantage which he subsequently took with two hands. General Babangida also claimed that it was Abacha's seeming non-interest in politics that misled him to believe he had no political ambition. At first blush and taken at first value, this claim must present General Abacha either as a highly underrated person or such a consummate actor who

could skilfully conceal his ambition until the very end. On closer examination and placed against the facts, however, this claim by General Babangida is at best a tale best told to the marines. It is probably the greatest insult ever hurled on the intelligence of Nigerians. As at the time General Babangida held sway, our values were so desecrated that the aspiration of every pupil at the Command Secondary Schools strewn across the country and every cadet at the Nigeria Defence Academy [NDA] was either to be a military administrator or head of state. The positions of Chief of Army, Air force or Navy, which ordinarily were the craving of any authentic and professional soldier, had become so doggerel that they were shunned. If pupils could aspire so much what more of a General who knew the appurtenances and perks of the office of Head of State and the unrestrained pillaging of the national till that went with it? Secondly, since 1983, General Abacha has conspired with fellow travellers such as General Babangida to either overthrow one government or install the other at whim. One recalls vividly that during the Orkar coup, it was General Abacha who saved the hide of a flummoxed and embattled General Babangida. It is only conceivable, going by human nature, that one day, the kingmaker and praetorian guard would elect to be king himself. Thirdly, even as General Babangida held sway and had cause to visit Kano, the crowd that welcomed him and Abacha was reported, to the hearing of General Babangida, to have urged Abacha to succeed General Ibrahim Babangida. The refrain: “Sani sai kayi” rent the air. Thenceforth-General Abacha who had proved his loyalty to General Babangida beyond doubt had not only assumed the status of heir apparent, especially in the northern consciousness, he was publicly referred to as the khalifa. Indeed there is an apocryphal story which this writer has on good authority that he, General Babangida, did not take kindly to the prompting of his khalifa to succeed him, a point General Babangida reportedly made by way of a joke at the inception of an AFRC meeting to General Sani Abacha's discomfort.

If indeed there was no pact or understanding between Generals Babangida and Abacha as alleged, why did the former strain himself to give General Abacha such an unprecedented and undue advantage and, for good measure, by fiat? Why did General Babangida keep a deafening silence during Abacha's regime only to start singing now, in the aftermath of Abacha's demise, like an inebriated canary?

If General Babangida's claim and rationalisations fall flat, he cannot exonerate himself from the Abacha menace either. By his comportment and utterances, General Babangida foreshadowed and set the tone of General Abacha's excesses. The dastardly death of Dele Giwa through a parcel bomb took place during the Babangida regime and up to the time he left office. Giwa's killers had not been apprehended. Corruption, during his regime became so rampant that public officials were urged on to dip their hands in the public till. Some who did so crudely, to the consternation of Nigerians were later exonerated for merely “misapplying” and “misallocating” funds. The whole country became a vortex of corruption and those who refused to immerse themselves in the cesspool were either hounded or marginalised in the scheme of things. And the Babangida regime which rode to power on the crest of human rights became its chief abuser by dint of its arbitrary arrests and detentions of enemies, imagined or real. Abacha did not only perfect these excesses, he honed them to a sanguine and crimson art. Instead of regaling us occasionally with self-serving rationalisations for his sundry misdeeds and failings,

your foresight and wish you success as you take this bold step.

Once again, accept our sincere best wishes and assurance of patronage whenever the need arises.

Alhaji Yakubu S. Akor, Asst. Gen. Manager (Corp. Affairs), NICON Insurance Corporation.

General Babangida should come clean, own up and apologise. That way, he will speedily reconcile himself with Nigerians and have some peace. As a sage once said, “to confess to a sin is next to being innocent of it”.

Will Babangida ever dare to apologise?

Mr. Nick Dazang, former Editor of *Abuja Newsday* is a member of *Daily Trust's* editorial board.

EDITORIAL

Regional governors' meetings

Ordinarily, regional meetings by governors shouldn't raise any eye-brows. In the past, especially during the Gowon era such meetings were common-place and were common place and there was nothing to worry about.

At that time, the governors met to discuss matters of common interest ranging from border issues to their state economies that were linked historically. At that time too, their joint assets inherited since the colonial days were yet to be fully shared. Besides, the number of states were fewer than today and people were not subdivided thereby making it highly imperative for them to hold periodic meetings in order to strengthen togetherness. All these were in consideration of the absolute need for the continued corporate existence of our great country. The centre always encouraged such meetings at the regional levels.

Even today one has no reason to oppose the idea of governors of either the North or South holding such meetings, as long as their intentions do not endanger the security of the nation. One is only forced to hold a contrary view when one notices a negation of such noble principles.

We do not know which group started it, but the crazy dimension which the meetings are beginning to take portends danger to the future of this country. At their recent meeting in Kaduna, the northern governors delivered a powerful message which greatly shook the nation. Their judgement of “No North, No Nigeria” was a clear signal to all those who can see the hand writing on the wall. The future of this country is at stake. Next came the meeting of the Southern governors. They spoke in similar vein, though in a different style. They called for the re-structuring of the country which is another name for dividing the country along ethnic, religious and tribal lines. Certainly, no Nigerian will encourage such kind of sabre-rattling under the guise of regional meeting. Sadly enough, the governors meeting is slowly beginning to turn into a theatre of war with each side trying to grab the throat of its opponent or at best undermine its aim. Already, the northern governors whether justified or not, have issued a warning that they would order their people to retaliate, if in future their indigenes are killed again in any part of the south, while the southern governors are yet to issue statements condemning their people for the killing of northerners in their states, they found it easy however, to re-new their call for a state police which is a synonym for regional army.

It is obvious by now that our country has a litany of problems to grapple with. A way must be found to solve such problems. We equally share the view of federal government with regard to holding a sovereign national conference. While some may go to the national conference with a clear mind on how to move the country forward, others will however, be at the meeting with a hidden agenda on how to divide the country along their selfish lines.

Perhaps, the constitution may appear to be the only option for an amicable solution to the problems of re-structuring, revenue sharing and the leadership question. It is heartening to note that efforts towards a review of the constitution is underway and grievances concerning such matters can easily be channelled through the committee. Rather than chant the slogans of war, it is advisable for the governors to adopt the constitutional approach. Issues which the northern governors raised, i.e the endless killings of their people are issues which can be dealt with following the due process of the law. Culprits responsible for such dastardly acts, must be duly punished without any one being regarded as a sacred cow. Perhaps, if the due process of the law was followed and the state did not abandon its responsibilities of protecting lives and property, the northern governors wouldn't have been crying foul over the matter.

STAR LETTER!
Congratulations

This is to heartily congratulate you on the successful debut of *Daily Trust* newspaper, a new addition to the weekly publication - *Weekly Trust*. It is really a laudable achievement that will

undoubtedly boost efforts at bringing the world closer to the people in this age of globalisation. May I, on behalf of the Management and Staff of NICON Insurance Corporation, commend

Opinion

Sir Ahmadu Bello: The leader of the century

By Paul Mamza

Paul Bell, the famous South African writer once wrote that: "Personality is no substitute for intellect and nor is simplicity. But in a leader, intellect alone is useless without personality and simplicity". It is in this light that Sir Ahmadu Bello, the late Sardauna of Sokoto and Premier of the defunct northern region is being remembered.

His formidable intellect, elemental personality and unimpeachable integrity made him to save the North from the cocoon of wretchedness and ignorance, thereby placing it on the national map. To the Premier, charity and humanity must begin at home. By Paul Bell's assertion, the late Sardauna is a complete leader because he was a tripod mixer of intellect with personality and simplicity. There's no single Nigerian leader both living and dead that had the audacity, momentum, zeal and focus to lead his people to highest heights like Sir Ahmadu Bello. He established the largest university south of the Sahara, the largest polytechnic in Africa, one of the largest investment conglomerate (NNDC) in Africa, one of the biggest printing presses (*New Nigerian Newspapers*) in Africa, one of the leading

banks (Bank of the North Ltd) in Africa etc. A symbol of convenient equilibrium of all the adverse forces in the north, Sir Ahmadu Bello smelted the north into a united entity even with the highest ethnic configurations in the country, a phenomenon that is very difficult to achieve even in monolithic societies in other parts of the country. An icon of the institutional regeneration of the north, a projectile that boost the north into national consciousness, Sir Ahmadu Bello provided the north with timely respite and saved it from a virtual destiny of unhealthy competition. Amidst the perfidy and prediction of negative attitude towards western education and opportunism restricted to the most powerful, the late Sardauna broke the deadlock by paving way for equal competition between the rich, poor, powerful and the less-powerful in areas of commerce, education, military, bureaucracy, finance, media etc. An upholder and tutor along the line of truth and integrity, Sardauna's implants flourished even after 35 years of his death. The bulk of the past leaders of the country from the north starting from Gen. Yakubu Gowon to Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar are products of his making. His infrastructural legacies are as

enduring as the oak tree (Gambji) named after him. An initiator of a forum of all leaders from the north which later culminated into the all northern governors meeting, an idea of the southern part of the country had to emulate 34 years after Sardauna's death. Sir Ahmadu Bello struggled hard to see the north in particular and Nigeria in general restored to stability and prosperity within the context of a pragmatic engagement with the new world order. His imaginative leadership allowed for huge foreign investment in the north and these investments still remain the only finished projects in the north since his death. One of Sardauna's close associates and one-time personal secretary reiterated Sir Ahmadu Bello's leadership style that encouraged the pursuit of education, hear him, "if a northern civil servant attended a course and did well especially in competition with others from elsewhere, you would see the premier beaming with pleasure like a school tutor at the success of his pupil with a gift. It did not matter what his tribe or religion was. His pleasure was in the knowledge that a northerner has done well". The premium placed by the late Sardauna on education was enormous as he had to force people to enrol in

schools. Most of the products of this effort are those that constitute the bulk of the northern elite of today.

On the issue of personality and simplicity, one cannot fault the compassion, accessibility and good will of the late Sardauna. Sardauna was a rally-point for all in north, the rich, the poor, the powerful, the weak, Hausa or Fulani, Kanuri or Marghi, Idoma or Tiv, Jukun or Chamba, Gwari or Nupe, Mummuye or Highi and this is a unique disposition which is hardly seen today. Sardauna, conscious of his origin, became a morass of all the segments of the northern representations. His father is from the famous Sokoto Caliphate and his mother is from Zing - a domain which is predominantly made up of Christians and animist minority tribes. He therefore, became a natural converger of all the centrifugal forces in the region. Sardauna's leadership model became synonymous with the progress and posterity of the north supported by men and women from all segments of the north. His lieutenants like Justice Mamman Nasir, Mr. Micheal Audu Buba, Mr. Sunday Awoniyi, Pastor David Lot, Sir Kashim Ibrahim, Mr. Joseph Tarka, etc worked tirelessly with the Sardauna as a formidable team to project the north upwards.

To be continued.

Atiku Abubakar and the north

By Timawus Mathias

Until Reception 2000 hosted Vice-President Atiku Abu-bakar to a tumultuous ovation in Kaduna, the question of whether the north supports him or not had remained subterranean. Since the Kaduna Reception, comments, most of them spurious have flown to and fro, revealing some disturbing trends in the polity. Those who dreaded the giant old north and thought it to have been broken by the creation of states are suddenly confronted with a region that had now come together like a frightening electronic jigsaw puzzle. Reception 2000 has brought the old north in for reckoning - a power block whose support, anyone seeking to make a political milestone, must woo.

Now being toasted is the notion (I say unfair to the VP), that while deputizing for Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, Atiku Abubakar is in fact nursing plans for a go at the leadership of the land in 2003. Reception 2000, they quip, is in fact, the launching of that ambition. Atiku has quickly asked Nigerians to discountenance this notion as unthinkable and the mischievous speculation of detractors.

The aversion of some members of the Arewa Consultative Forum to Atiku Abubakar's political office, has now been openly stated. Critics, the larger majority of them, yesterday's men in northern politics, have expressed their grouse. Some of them did not show up at the reception, even as they had been invited, and were in fact in Kaduna to attend the Sir Ahmadu Bello memorial lecture. Curiously some of those who were not at the Ahmadu Bello Stadium, venue for the event were to tell Nigerians through the BBC and Voice of America, that the event was poorly attended, and that seats were empty, even as the pictures told a different story. A pitiful phenomenon in which parents lied before their own children to the whole world.

Apart from berating General Yakubu Gowon, the emirs and chiefs, Chief Solomon Lar, Alhaji Sule Katagum, Alhaji Hamza Zayyad, for attending, various spokesmen for Arewa Consultative Forum are already calling for punitive measures against the "members" who defied Forum "directives" and attended the Reception. Note must be taken of the fact that the Emir of Ilorin, chairman and other quite important members of the ACF, namely former Kaduna state Governor, Alhaji Lawal Kaita, National Council of Women's Society strong woman, Hajia Laila Dogon Yaro, and Ciroman Keffi, attended the event.

The Arewa Consultative Forum, reportedly refused to honour the invitation to be at the Ahmadu Bello Stadium following a decision taken at their meeting, for members to boycott the reception. The re-

ports indicate that the ACF felt it should have been requested to organise and host such a reception if one was considered a necessity. This is an unfortunate position. One would have thought that the members of ACF would appreciate being relieved of the burden of organising, in addition to coming to the reception, in which they would have been accorded their due honour. They have taught, and their siblings believe that a child does not inherit his portion from his parents until the parents are no more. They have taught, and are again believed that a child secures exaltation greater than that of the parents before their very eyes if God so decides. And this should make any parent proud.

The fall-out from Reception 2000 thus reveals a regrettable rigidity in the posture of some northerners, it would seem that whatever Atiku tries to do, he will never get it right in their eyes. To them, representing and leading the north means reporting to them regularly for directives and returning to Aso Rock to carry out the directives. Obviously, this cannot be practicable. It is all very unfortunate. Here we are, craving for unity yet drifting apart in the search for it. Without sincerity, persons who feel compromised in the power game are playing the ethnicity card. Should they succeed, they would cause strife and dissension among people and they do not care if it leads to violence and death, as long as their purposes are served, then it is all right.

With all due deference to their wisdom and experience, we must remember that the very people who called upon Nigerians to elect Obasanjo have become the most vocal critics of the regime. Musa Musawa who led the loud din of the Vote for Obasanjo campaign is now the spokesman of the unofficial opposition party. The erstwhile escorts, financiers, and point men have all so suddenly become venomous critics of the administration, and defenders of ethnic minorities, minorities that include the Hausa-Fulani. It is all so sickening. We have forgotten so soon the steps leading to the emergence of today's leadership, the result for the collective will and resolve of Nigerians particularly northern Nigerians that because the south, particularly the Yoruba had been badly wounded, there should be a power shift in their favour. This gesture has remained an expression of our leaders' love for, and acceptance of democracy and the continuance of the country, Nigeria, as one united nation.

Now we are being led by these same leaders to oppose the government so that in having their way by being accommodated in the regime, we would all be satisfied that the north has now been reckoned with. Once this is done, the crowd would be caused to chorus a different song, and thereafter, would be scattered.

To be continued.

A case against state police

By

Salisu Na'inna Dambatta

Several Nigerian Newspapers reported on January 11, 2001, that the 17 governors of Southern States have called for an amendment of the constitution to make it possible for any state of the Federation to establish its own state police department. They hinged their argument for state police on current security situation in the country. Sound as the argument of the governors may appear to be, the truth is that the argument is not shared enthusiastically by all Nigerians and it is even reported that some of the governors who, at the meeting accepted the resolution on the issue, have expressed contrary views privately.

Ordinarily, there would not have been any controversy over the creation of state police, but for the calibre of citizens making a case for it, despite the provisions of the 1999 constitution. No matter how imperfect it may be, all the elected governors derive their legitimacy as public functionaries from this law. The constitution says at Part III, Supplemental B, that is, section 214(1), "There shall be a Police Force for Nigeria, which shall be known as the Nigeria Police Force and subject to the provisions of this section no other police force shall be established for the Federation or any part thereof". By this provision, the Nigeria Police Force is one of the major pillars on which our federation rests. So it is a sensitive institution.

The wisdom for the prohibition of establishing police

for the states is both based on the unpalatable history of misuse of regional and native authority police by those at the helm of affairs in the past, and fears that there is the likelihood that ethnic political groups could deploy them against non-natives, just as we witnessed recently in parts of the southwest where members of the quasi police force, called the OPC, have unleashed violence variously on Igbos, Ijaws and the northerners. They shed blood, destroyed property and shook the country to its foundation. In this wise, state police are more likely to promote ethnicity, statism and separatist mentality as opposed to national unity or Pan-Nigerianism. The bit by the governors on the crime situation in the country and the perceived inability of the police to eliminate all crimes is something that could be shared by states outside the three zones in the south, but even then, the federal government since the inception of the Obasanjo administration has been taking policy measures which have so far strengthened the police in the discharge of its mandate of law enforcement, fighting crimes and public protection.

For instance, the manpower shortage in the force is being addressed with the approval given to the force to recruit 40,000 able-bodied, qualified citizens into the force every year for five years in a row. In the year 2000, the target was exceeded as the force actually recruited and trained 55,375 new hands. They were trained in the eleven functional police training institutions located in Lagos, Delta, Oyo, Ogun, Anambra, Plateau, Bauchi, Borno, Kano, Kaduna and

Sokoto States. Logistics support in terms of hundreds of highway patrol jeeps, dozens of brand new Peugeot saloon cars, scores of motor cycles, the 800 ALGON Jeeps, bicycles and communication equipment, has been extended to the force, coupled with the recent creation of additional zonal commands to reduce bureaucracy and enhance the process of decision making, it is joyful that police morale has gone up and the overall result is better performance in crime detection across the country.

This is illustrated by information gleaned from media reports which indicate that between 25th August and the end of December last year, 844 armed robbers were arrested by the police across the country. A total of 348 robbers and 29 policemen were killed in police operations to rid the society of bad eggs. The police were able to recover 227 various offensive weapons from criminals within the period. In the North East in particular, bandits and cattle rustlers had a rough time with the police, who reported a huge success in crime-busting in Hawul local government area of Borno state. Commissioner of Police Alhaji Uba Bala Ringim is performing his duties there diligently.

One of the shortcomings people accuse the police of, is corruption by some of its elements. To address this problem, Inspector General Musiliu Smith creatively introduced the Police Open Access Complaint System, whereby aggrieved citizens could report any misdeed by an enlisted person to the appropriate authority for action. Within a short period, the police authorities received 155 of its men following complaints by members

of the public. The self-sanitization exercise, if faithfully implemented continuously, would help in minimizing some of the corrupt practices the people complain of against the police in the long term. The media, recognized vigilante groups and members of the general public owe it a duty to themselves and the society to assist the police by reporting any suspicious elements, exposing criminals and putting into effect the popular slogan that the police is a friend, especially of the good, the honest and the law-abiding citizen.

It is praiseworthy that, despite the bashing the police takes from members of the public nearly on a daily basis, and the seeming lack of confidence in them by the 17 Southern governors, contingents of the Nigeria Police Force have won medals and accolades at various United Nations Peace Keeping operations across the globe. This projected the image of Nigeria positively, boosted our national prestige and certified the force as competent at the international level. While the 17 southern governors are free to continue to vainly agitate for state police, they may wish to combine that with the taking of concrete social and economic measures that could help in reducing the push and pull factors that make, some of their voters see crime as attractive. Poverty alleviation measures need to be taken by them for the benefit of their people. Concentrating on an issue that is not feasible may bring cheap popularity to some of the governors, but that diversionary tactic will not replace the imperative for them to use the resources at their disposal to improve the welfare of their people.

Salisu Na'inna Dambatta is a Chief Information Officer in the Presidency.

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CABINET RESHUFFLE
-Obasanjo



YOUR LETTERS

Short 'n' Sharp

Give us a religious page

I wish to express my gratitude to the Almighty Allah for providing us with a reliable source of news - "Weekly Trust", I am very addicted to this weekly-weekly medicine.

To our surprise here comes "Daily Trust", this paper will fill the gap between us and the so called papers of the South.

My suggestion is that: we need a religious page especially on Friday.

Ado Abdullahi

R/emo, Kano state.

Bola Tinubu's Prevarication

When northern state governors paid a courtesy visit on Bola Tinubu, consequent upon the recent Lagos mayhem, Bola Tinubu asserted that the inhuman killing of northerners was over publicized. Such a prevarication really sent jitters down my spine, but I quickly reasoned; what else do you expect from someone who is born in two different years and attended schools that never admitted him?

Ibrahim Ado

28th Link, Hausawa New Layout, Gyadi-Gyadi, Kano.

The Answer to HEDA's Question

I refer to the open letter written to His Excellency, the Governor of Jigawa State, Alhaji Ibrahim Saminu Turaki in the Weekly Trust of December 1-7, 2000 and a subsequent one in the Weekly Trust Edition of January 5-1, 2001, signed by one Alhaji Sarki Kafinta Mallam Madori, Interim Chairman of the above-named Association.

In their submission, the association has berated the governor for making the emirate, instead of the Senatorial districts, as the basis for resource allocation, "which has led other emirates to try to make the people of the good Hadejia emirate the Cinderella of our time" - to borrow from Kafinta.

The solution to HEDA's quest is for His Excellency, the Governor to reactive the defunct Auyo Emirate and probably create another one at Mallam Madori for HEDA to have more resource allocation to itself than the Jigawa North West Senatorial district, comprising of Ringim/Gumel/Kazaure Emirates put together.

Aminu B. Kazaure, Yarimawa Quarters, Jigawa - Jigawa state.

FRCN, why side with Christianity alone?

Kindly give me a small space in your widely read-paper to lay my complain to Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria, Abuja. I could not believe my ears when I heard an advertisement on the FRCN Abuja during network news that the management was reducing advert rate because of Christmas and New year without making a mention of Sallah (Eid-el Fitri) which was celebrated on the same date with as Christmas. As if that was not enough, music wishing everyone Merry Christmas and happy New year followed.

In the same station, and also during another network news on 22/12/2000, at 7am, the management came up with yet another advert, this time thanking its numerous clients for patronage and at the same time wishing them happy Christmas and New year as if all your Clients celebrate Christmas and new year only.

FRCN, has the marginalization reached your end?
Umar A. Audu, Gangare Jos, Plateau State.

Re-Slinging mud without facts

I read with great concern the write up in The Guardian Newspaper of Tuesday January 9, 2001 titled "Slinging Mud without facts" written by one Ben Lawrence.

In the same way Vice President Atiku Abubakar appears to see Nigeria in general as his constituency and does not seem to show much concern for his ward, local government, state and the northern region in general, likewise the Chairman of Gwarzo local government, Alhaji Aminu Abdulsalam, acts like another nationalist of sorts.

Comrade Aminu Abdulsalam no doubt sees himself as not only the chairman representing Gwarzo Local Govt., but as a true representative of Kano, the North and in some cases Nigeria in general. This can be discerned in his utterances when he brought home two Jeep cars from Abuja.

No doubt this position that he maintains brings national popularity to him. However it is unfortunate that the series of meetings he attends out side his local Government and state are making it difficult for him to stay at home and fulfil his campaign promises.

To laymen like me whenever you talk of development, we quickly focus our eyes and minds on physical development, such as road rehabilitation, provision of water and medical facilities, etc. Regarding this, there is little to write home about. Taking Gwarzo local Govt. Capital, that is Gwarzo town as a case study, within the 17 Months he spent in office you can only sight one Capital project. This project is nothing but a shopping complex that was built along Gwarzo-Dayi Road.

The Chairman must have

After going through that article, I began to imagine what facts Ben needed. Perhaps knowing the angle he is operating from, I wish to, as a concerned Nigrician engrave it upon Ben

Come Home Gwarzo LG chairman

thought that, that is all the people of Gwarzo who are business oriented need as an avenue or a place for investment.

To calm down the pressure mounted on him by the people, he has succeeded in giving post-dated contracts for rehabilitating two of the town's roads. On hearing this information we all jumped and jubilated thinking that he is now ready to deliver. Only to hear later on that the contracts were awarded to a company that is currently constructing Gwarzo-Kutama road (a state Road) and that it will start the work only when it finishes the state road, going by the terms of the contracts.

Mr. Chairman, looking at the importance of the above roads to the populace, may I hereby advise you to revisit the terms of the contract and make sure that work begins at once, and to also advise you to look at the need to change the decaying and mostly broken water pipes that are buried even before the work begins.

I will like you to note that the aim of this short piece of mine is to advice you against listening to the so-called Gwarzo elites that surround you and fail to advise you, and to register to you the feeling of the electorate and the general public in Gwarzo local govt. before the coming of the next election.

Abdullahi Sani
Kofar Kudu, Gwarzo, Kano state.

that Governor Orji Uzor Kalu as an elected Governor of his people qualifies more than any other person from his arca to assess the performance or contribution of the Federal Government to the development of his area. Being a role player in the People's Democratic Party (PDP) electioneering process that brought the present Government to power, I am aware that he has been an avid supporter of the programmes of the PDP.

His support for the candidature of Obasanjo, if I may refer you to a publication in Thisday Newspaper on Sunday March 28th 1999, cost him some reprimands from his people, but being the kind of man who pursues his vision as if his life depends upon it, he convinced his people that they would not regret the path he was leading them into.

On his part as a Governor, he has virtually transformed Abia township roads to what is obtainable else where in developed societies. That's why he has become so endeared to the old, and young in Abia State. It therefore became expedient that when his people were being gradually annihilated consciously or otherwise on the Federal high ways in the Abia area of the east, he had to call the attention of the federal government even though recent adverts and a press conference by the Economic and Transport Ministers respectively purport that Contract for the roads had been awarded etc,

which I suppose was done in paper only at Abuja. The fact remains that federal roads in the East are in a sorry state, requiring urgent Government attention. The problem of electricity and fuel supply to the area are better experienced than described.

Dr. Orji Kalu, can never speak on behalf of Arewa Consultative Forum because he is not a member, neither does he come from that area, rather he has been applauded for his stand in the interest of Ndi Igbo in the Nigerian context recently. I suppose that if what he knew today where available to him 1998/99, the ball game would have been different today. Perhaps it was in that context that he has advised that any politician in the future canvassing for Igbo votes, must be ready to implement the Igbo agenda in Nigerian polity.

Dr Orji Uzor Kalu as far as I am concerned has become a man of the people, the kind Nigeria needs in the present dispensation. A person who can tell the truth and stand by it no matter who is involved.

I appreciate the fear of people like Ben Lawrence and that of his masters but unfortunately, what Dr. Kalu is talking about now transcends ethnicity. Though it might require courage but I believe it is time to call a spade a spade.

Long live Nigeria.

Augustine Nwaneri -
A public analyst; Abuja.

Too many typographical errors

I would like to congratulate you on the successful debut of the Daily Trust which we have been anxiously awaiting for sometime. I think I also speak for thousands of your readers when I say that you have our support all the way. However, I would like to draw your attention to a little flaw which must be nipped in the bud in order to ensure the quality of the daily. In your maiden and second issues, I observed a lot of typographical errors which if left unchecked will send a wrong signal to your discerning readers. Mind you, your immediate community i.e Abuja is mostly made up of enlightened professionals, public servants, diplomats, politicians and some academics, but so are your

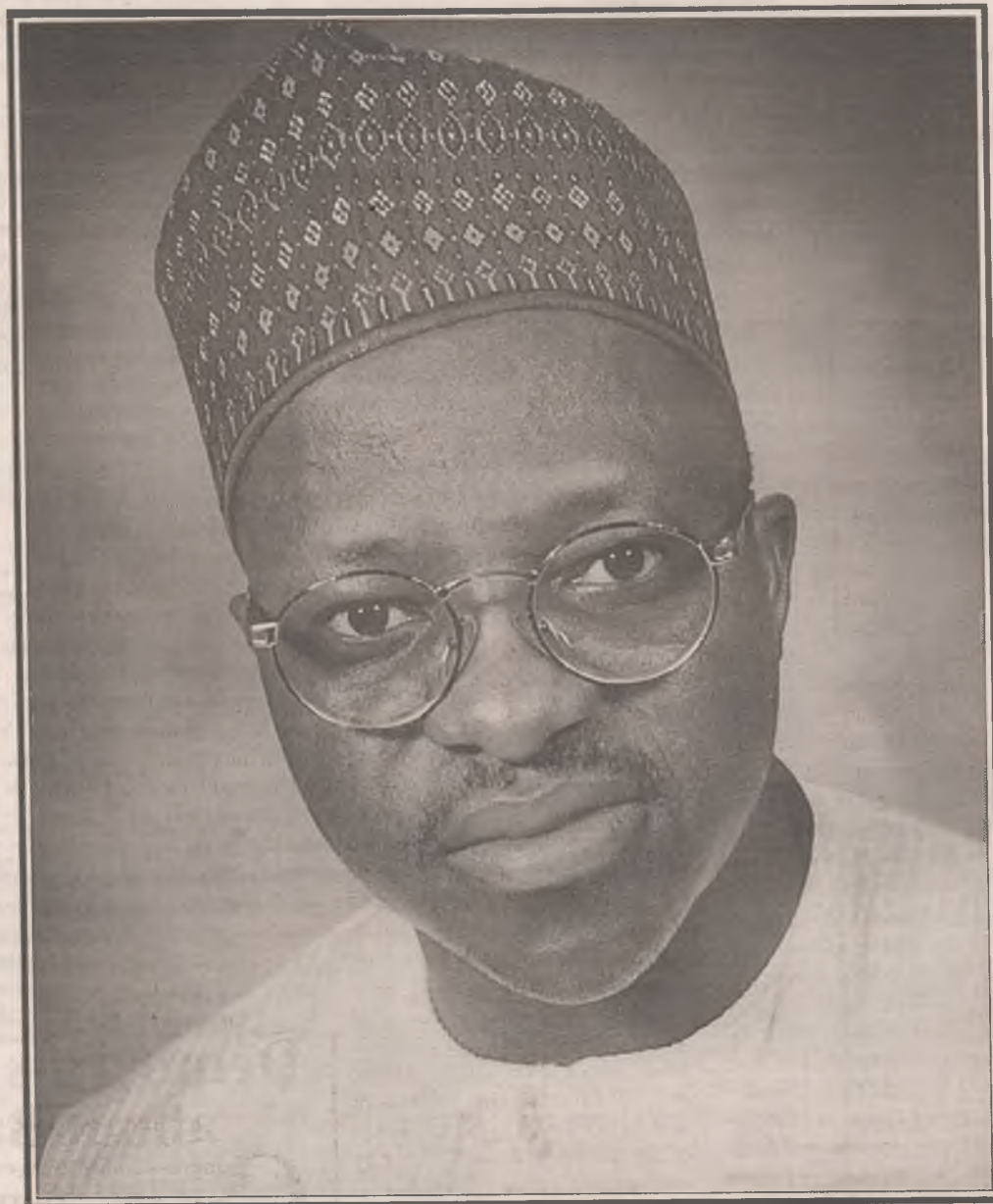
wider target markets like Lagos, Kano, Port-Harcourt, etc. The first impression I get of a newspaper replete with such mistakes, is that of a low budget and non-veteran journalist-staffed paper, neither of which I believe the Daily and Weekly Trusts are. So do something about it please or else your competitors, especially among the south-western media will be smiling and saying to their readers "we told you those Mallams are no match for us". Good luck and May Allah (SWT) see you through.

Nurain Hassan Ibrahim
Fortune International Bank Plc. Banex Plaza, Aminu Kano Crescent Wuse II, Abuja.



CONGRATULATIONS

THE journalism coast is cloudy.
The terrain is slippery.
It is only those with strong-will
and the likes of *Weekly Trust* that
can weather the storm.



Chief Joshua Chibi Dariye
Executive Governor, Plateau State

The government of **Plateau State** wishes to congratulate and rejoice with the management of Media Trust Limited on the publication of *DAILY TRUST*.

Long live DAILY TRUST!

Long live Plateau State !!

Long live Federal Republic of Nigeria !!!

Chief Joshua Chibi Dariye
Executive Governor, Plateau State.

TRUST INTERNATIONAL

FOREIGN & DIPLOMATIC

Daily Trust poses questions to Mr. Liang Yinzhu, ambassador of the People's Republic of China in Nigeria about China-Taiwan relations, the years of mistrust and suspicion, Taiwan's grievances and China's claims.

After 50 years of mistrust and separation, the People's Republic of China and Taiwan have opened their borders for direct travels and improved trade. Is that the first step to political reunification?

Yinzhu: First of all I want to point out that there is only one China in the world. Both Taiwan and mainland belong to China, and China's sovereignty and territorial integrity can not be divided. This is a fact universally recognized by the international community. Sometimes reports from Western media refer to mainland China and Taiwan as two countries, which is incorrect. The question of Taiwan is one left over from the Chinese civil war. It is also a result of foreign intervention. For a long period of time, the Chinese government has been making unremitting efforts for the peaceful resolution of the Taiwan question. To open direct transport and develop trade cross the Straits are by no means recent proposals. The mainland proposed long ago the establishment of direct links - between the two sides of the Taiwan Straits for direct postal, air, and shipping services before getting reunited so as to meet the needs of the people on both sides, expand personnel exchanges and economic cooperation and promote co-development and co-prosperity of both sides, thus creating a favorable condition for the final peaceful reunification. Such direct links are special arrangements within a sovereign country, not bilateral relations between two countries. While the Taiwan authorities, exploiting the excuse of the so-called "equality, security and dignity", pursues the so-called policy of "exercising patience and keeping restraint" and deliberately create obstacles for direct links cross the Straits.

Nevertheless, the spontaneous indirect personnel, economic and trade exchanges across the Straits have grown rapidly over the past years. The unpopular measures taken by the Taiwan authorities to delay direct links has been under increasing criticism by the people on the Island. It is our sincere hope that the Taiwan authorities would follow the will of the people to open direct links cross the Straits as soon as possible so that the peaceful reunification of the motherland can be achieved at an early date.

In the events of that possible reunification, are the issues of Taiwan's quest for independence and self determination finally resolved?

Yinzhu: National reunification is the common desire of the people on the mainland and Taiwan and of all the Chinese throughout the world. Those who advocate independence of Taiwan and engage in splittist activities against China are only a small number of politicians who out of their own personal interests, distort history, delude

China would not tolerate separation in Taiwan

By Abdullahi Doki

--Ambassador

people's minds, sparing no efforts in hindering the cause of national reunification. The Chinese government and people would not tolerate the prolonged separation of the country and are fully determined and prepared to prevent the independence of Taiwan or any other activities aimed at splitting China. There is no reason what so ever to separate Taiwan from China. It is well known that the policy of "one country, two systems", Hong Kong people administrate Hong Kong", "Macao people administrate Macao", "high degree of autonomy" implemented by the Chinese government in Hong Kong and Macao since their return to the motherland has been proven very successful. Hong Kong and Macao enjoy a much higher degree of autonomy than what people might imagine. The policy of "one country, two systems" has never been practiced by any other country in the world besides China. Once Taiwan reunites with the mainland, the policy to be adopted by the Chinese government would be more flexible for Taiwan than for Hong Kong and Macao.

Historical documents from Beijing always said that Taiwan is an inalienable part of Chinese territory. What, briefly, Mr. Counselor has been responsible for the present China-Taiwan disagreement and alienation?

Yinzhu: Taiwan is an inalienable part of the Chinese territory which is an irrefutable historical fact. The Chinese people were the earliest developers of Taiwan. Starting from the Yuan Dynasty (1206AD-1368AD), the successive Chinese governments of different periods set up administrative bodies to exercise effective jurisdiction over Taiwan. In mid 17th century, Dutch colonialists invaded and occupied Taiwan. The Chinese national hero Zheng Chenggong expelled the Dutch colonialists in 1662 and recovered Taiwan. In 1895, owing to the defeat in the 1894-1895 Sino-Japanese War, the Qing government was forced to sign the unequal Treaty of Shimonoseki, ceding Taiwan to Japan. After being defeated in World War II in 1945, Japan unconditionally accepted the Potsdam Proclamation and the Cairo Declaration and returned Taiwan to China according to the two international documents. It became an issue once again due to the anti-popular civil war started by the Kuomintang nationalist party after the Second World War and the intervention by foreign forces in particular. The rise of the Taiwan question was in essence the outcome of foreign intervention. Relying on the support of the United States, the Chiang Kai-shek clique launched an all-out civil war in 1945 and retreated to Taiwan after suffering a defeat. In 1950 the Korea War broke out and the United States sent its 7th Fleet to invade the Taiwan Straits and stationed its 13th Air Force in Taiwan. In 1954, the United States concluded with the Chiang Kai-shek clique a so-called "Mutual Defense Treaty", leading to the separation cross the Taiwan Straits. However, the prolonged existence of this kind of abnormal situation has not imbued Taiwan with a

status and rights recognized by international law, nor can it change the legal status of Taiwan as an integral part of China. The current issue is that the splittist forces in Taiwan and some foreign anti-China forces attempt to separate Taiwan from China, which is strongly opposed by the Chinese government and people.

How would China effectively resolve the separatists agitation in Taiwan and stop the anti-China foreign backer of these tendencies from altering Chinese territorial claims forever?

Yinzhu: For a long period of time, the Chinese government has all along worked hard and wholeheartedly for the national peaceful reunification and adopted a series of active policies and measures for all-round development of cross-Straits relations. However, a small handful of separatists in Taiwan represented by Lee Teng-hui have maliciously violated the One-China principle, blocked the peaceful reunification and development of relations between the two sides, causing tension cross the Taiwan Straits. Since coming into power, the new leader of Taiwan has so far not accepted the One-China Principle, leading to the existing serious tension cross the Taiwan Straits. In order to safeguard the interests of the entire Chinese people including our Taiwan compatriots and maintain the peace and development in the Asia-Pacific region, the Chinese government remains firm in pursuing "peaceful reunification, one country, two systems" and does its utmost to achieve peaceful reunification of China. However, if there occurs an event in which Taiwan might be carved out of China in any name, or if Taiwan is invaded or occupied by foreign countries, or if the Taiwan authorities refuse, the peaceful reunification through negotiations, the Chinese government will only be forced to adopt all resolution necessary, including the use of force, to safeguard China's sovereignty and territorial integrity and complete the great cause of reunification. The Chinese government and people have the determination and ability to safeguard China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and will never tolerate, condone or remain indifferent to the realization of any attempt to divide China. Any such attempt is doomed to failure.

Is the One-China Principle an acceptable basis of reunification to Taiwan and well-meaning allies of Beijing?

Yinzhu: The One-China Principle has been evolved in the course of the Chinese people's just struggle to safeguard China's sovereignty and territorial integrity and its basis, both *de facto* and *de jure*, is unshakable. Only by adhering to the One-China Principle can peaceful reunification be achieved. By One-China Principle, we mean: there is only one China in the world; both mainland and Taiwan belong to China; China's sovereignty and territorial integrity can not be divided. Under the One-China Principle any question can be discussed. Through equal consultations, the two sides cross the Taiwan Straits can find out ways to solve their political dif-



Mr. Liang Yinzhu, Chinese Ambassador

ferences and realize peaceful reunification. The premise and basis for peaceful reunification would no longer exist if the One-China Principle is denied.

There is no doubt that the One-China Principle is accepted by the majority of people cross the Straits and universally recognized by the international community. In fact, before 1990s the Taiwan authorities had always followed the One-China Principle, which can be found in their regulations and policy documents, and it is not imposed unilaterally by the mainland. Since the early 1990s, a handful of separatists in Taiwan represented by Lee Teng-hui have gradually deviated from the One-China Principle and advocated separation, thus creating a growing force for Taiwan Independence.

However, the splittist activities in Taiwan are opposed by most of the people on Taiwan Island. The steady increase of the unofficial exchanges cross the Straits despite the interference by the splittist forces in Taiwan displays the will of the people. At present, the new leader of Taiwan still refuses to accept the One-China Principle. This is the root cause for the crisis existing cross the Straits. Cooperation benefits the two sides while separation hurts both of them. The people in Taiwan are very worried about the splittist position taken by the Taiwanese leader. If the new leader of Taiwan really cared about the life of the 2.6 million people of Taiwan, he should abandon his stance for Taiwan Independence and return to the One-China Principle as early as possible.

Democrats raise concern about Bush tax cut

Congressional Democrats have voiced fresh concern about President George Bush W. Bush's proposed tax cut, saying it would leave little room in the budget for other priorities such as health care.

Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle of South Dakota and House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt of Missouri said Bush's 10-year, \$1.6 trillion proposal could balloon to more than \$2 trillion when interest costs and other effects on the budget are taken into account.

"There virtually is no room in the budget for anything else, if you're not going to invade the Social Security and Medicare funds, which everybody says we're not going to do," Gephardt

told reporters.

Bush is expected to fine-tune his plan before he sends it to Congress in a few weeks. He has said he was "open minded" to suggestions by some congressional Republicans that the cut be made retroactive to January 1, 2001, a move that would add to the loss in federal revenue.

Republicans argue that tax cuts will boost the slowing US economy.

Democrats favour a smaller cut to help middle-class families pay for such things as child care and education. Daschle said Democrats have not decide on how much to cut but others have suggested a package of some \$600 billion to \$700 billion over 10 years.

TRUST INTERNATIONAL

AFRICA & THE MIDDLE EAST

25 US embassy staff leave Congo

The United States said that some two dozen of its embassy staff and dependents had voluntarily left the Democratic Republic of Congo after the assassination of President Laurent Kabila.

State Department spokesman, Richard Boucher told a news briefing that the Americans had departed under special provisions that offered them a paid flight out.

But, he also said that the capital Kinshasa was calm and that Ambassador William Swing had represented his country at Kabila's elaborate state funeral on Tuesday.

In more serious cases where the security of embassy staff is at risk, the US government orders its staff out.

"The authorized departure of US government personnel has led to a draw-down of about 25 non-emergency personnel and Embassy dependents, who have departed," Boucher said.

"The Embassy is closed in adherence to the national days of mourning, but we do continue to provide emergency services to American citizens," he added.

Monday and Tuesday were declared public holiday. Yesterday, Kabila's

son, Joseph was sworn in as ruler of the war-torn Central African country.

Boucher said the Americans would stay out of the country until the United States decided it was safe for them to return.

He noted that airports were open and a curfew had been lifted for the mourning periods.

Ministers in the African country have promised a full inquiry into the killing Kabila on January 16 by a bodyguard who was then immediately shot and killed himself.

Authorities in Kinshasa say the soldier acted alone and no clear motive has emerged.

Middle-East peace hung in the balance on Wednesday after Israel suspended intensive eleventh hour negotiations with the Palestinians following the grisly murder of two Israelis in the West Bank.

Israeli Prime Minister, Ehud Barak recalled his top negotiators from the talks in Taba, Egypt late on Tuesday for morning consultations that would determine whether Israel continues the push for peace less than two weeks before prime ministerial elections on February 6.

"We cannot let the wretched murderers kill our peace process," Israeli negotiator Justice, Minister Yossi Beilin said after putting his bags in the car at the airport.

Palestinian negotiator Ahmed Korei said his team

Mideast peace hangs in balance as talks suspended

was "sticking around" at the venue for now, but would also be weighing whether to return to the negotiating table.



Barak

Less than a day ago, both sides had sounded cautiously upbeat, commending each other for the serious nature of the discussions meant to hammer out an understanding on the key issues at the heart of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict; the future of Jerusalem, borders, Palestinian refugees

and Jewish settlements. Palestinians had forecast a possible breakthrough by the end of the week while acknowledging that wide gaps remained.

But Tuesday's slayings abruptly dampened spirits in Taba.

An Israeli official said the two victims were restaurant owners from Tel Aviv who, accompanied by an Israeli Arab business associated, were eating lunch in the Palestinian-ruled town of Tulkarm when they were seized and shot dead.

Their bullet-riddled bodies were dumped by the side of the road and the Israeli Arab was free, Deputy Minister Ephraim Sneh said.

The deaths brought the toll to at least 310 Palestinians, 47 Israelis and 13 Israeli Arabs killed in almost four months of violence.

South African minister calls for vigilance against racism

South Africa's foreign minister, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, has called for collective vigilance against racism to enable Africans to benefit from new opportunities created by globalization.

In an address delivered at the African regional preparatory meeting of the World Congress Against Racism on Tuesday in Dakar, Senegal, the South African minister said that racism had continue to marginalize the continent further with profound effects on the victims of racism and ethnicity.

"Globalization has created new opportunities and challenges for humanity today but we are concerned that the benefits of globalization have not accrued to the people of Africa", Zuma said.

Emphasizing the need for governments and the civil society to put in place necessary mechanisms and enforceable measures against the vice, Zuma urged the international community to strive for effective corrective measures which would give hope to millions of victims of racism in the world.

"We need to act collectively and in strong partnerships to eradicate the threat which racism and related intolerance pose to humanity as a whole". The South African Minister told the gathering and expressed the hope that Africans would never

again be subjected to the sufferings and humiliation of the past.

She said that Africa's history of imperialism, slavery and colonialism had

continent.

Libya opens mass trial on African migrants mayhem

The trial has opened in Libya of 331 people charge with stirring up civil strife

dants had been involved in "stirring up civil strife and rift between Libyans and their African brothers".

The trial opened yesterday and was expected to last several weeks.

Diplomats in Tripoli said the case was the biggest political trial in Libya in many years. They said the defendants faced harsh sentences, including life imprisonment, if found guilty.

The clashes erupted in late September after Libya's top legislative and executive body, the General People's Congress, ordered a crackdown on employing foreigners.

Gangs of Libyans beat up black Africans, dragging them from care of storming workplaces in what diplomats described as deliberate campaign against migrant workers from poor sub-Saharan African countries.

The mayhem erupted in the El Zawia area, east of Tripoli, and spread to the capital and some other cities for more than two weeks.

Libyan officials said that up to six immigrants were killed in the attacks but immigrants and media reports gave a higher death toll.

The violence occurred as Gaddafi was touring Arab nations to drum up support for his plan for a union of African countries modelled on the United States of America



Thabo Mbeki

had cumulative impact on the continent and its people, perpetuating inequality, underdevelopment, poverty and exploitation.

While paying tribute to the collective support and efforts of all Africans and progressive people the world over in the fight against, and eventual defeat of apartheid, Zuma said that it would require strong mobilization and a programme of deracialisation of society to eradicate racism in South African.

The minister observed that other forms of intolerance and discrimination resulting in ethnic conflicts and xenophobia, had led to some of the most gruesome killings and genocide on the

and attempting to derail Muammar Gaddafi's African Unity plan.

The Libyan news agency Jana reported yesterday that the defendants, including Libyans and migrants from Chad, Ghana, Niger and Nigeria, were appearing in a Tripoli court. The charges related to wave of violence against migrant workers from sub-Saharan African in late September and early October last year.

"They stand accused of carrying out actions aimed at harming the Libyan political Jamahiriya system, attempting to block the African unity project and plotting against Libya's leadership in Africa," Jana said.

The agency said prosecutors had also submitted evidence alleging the defen-

Countries in Congo war to meet at UN in February

The Security Council has organized a meeting of foreign ministers of nations fighting in Congo to push the peace process forward after the death of President Laurent Kabila, a UN official said on Tuesday.

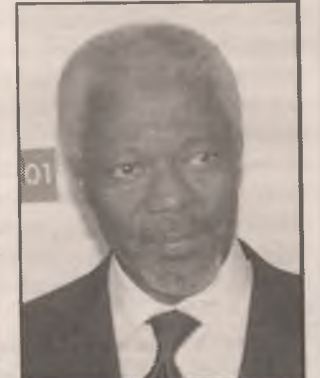
The session is expected to take place on February 21 and 22 in New York among the countries involved in the many-sided war in Democratic Republic of Congo, spokesman Fred Eckhard told reporters.

The council's plans for second meeting on the conflict, go back to December, Kabila and other heads of state or prime ministers met in New York last January to see if the often-violated cease-fire agreement could be put back on track.

That gathering resulted in a council decision to create a 5,537-member mission to monitor the cease-fire agreement, negotiated in Lusaka, Zambia, in mid-1999. UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan has been unable to send in the full UN force because of continuing fighting.

Rwanda and Uganda both have troops in Congo, backing rebels who tried to topple Kabila. Zimbabwe, Namibia and Angola have all sent in soldiers to bolster the Congolese government's ragged army. French Ambassador

Jean-David Levitte would like next month's meeting to consider UN deployment in Goma and Bukavu on the Rwandan-Congo border, where he said "the



Kofi Annan

heart of the problem lies" for ensuring Rwanda's security.

Rwandan Hutus responsible for the 1994 genocide in that country have escaped to Congo.

Levitte has also said he hoped a decision to dispatch the full UN forces might come after February's meeting, although at this point diplomats said that appeared doubtful.

Despite uncertainty surrounding Kabila's death, the council decided to go ahead with the new Congo meeting. Kabila, killed by a bodyguard last week, was buried on Tuesday in the Congolese capital of Kinshasa and will be replaced by his son, Joseph Kabila.

TRUST



INTERNATIONAL

An elated Sule Lamido quipped, shortly after the ceremony, that "with this tempo, G-77 politics could even achieve multi-lateral balance in international economic relations much earlier than we all think". The Nigerian Foreign Affairs Minister was obviously referring to the observable enthusiasm and feeling of a successful year that pervaded the floor and the members when Nigeria turned over chairmanship of Group of 77 and China to Iran in New York, January 12, 2001.

Speaker after speaker at the impressive ceremony expressed a certain confidence in the correctness of the politics of G-77 in the year 2000 and what that portends for North-South relationship.

Nigeria, which was handing over to the Islamic Republic of Iran said that "the year 2000 was particularly significant in the annals of the history of our group in many respects. The historic gathering of our Heads of State and Government at the first ever South Summit in Havana from 10-14 April 2000 remains a watershed. The Group of 77 rediscovered itself in Havana and has now set an irreversible agenda on the path to achieve higher goals. The Havana Programme of Action and the Declaration represents, respectively, a road map and a blue print for the attainment of these goals".

Iran which was taking over as chairman of the group for the year 2001 agreed with the rather expansive but agreeable self-congratulation of Nigeria. Iranian foreign affairs minister, Dr. Kamal Kharrazi agreed with Lamido that "what was achieved in Havana last April is of historical proportions and import." He further said that "The Group of 77, comprising of almost four-fifth of the world's population and poised between the achievements of the past and the hopes and expectations of a yet uncharted future, succeeded, at long last, to meet at the highest political level and agree on two negotiated texts; that is the declaration of the South Summit and the Havana Programme of action. Together, they em-

G-77: Nigeria's graceful exit

By Adagbo Onoja

body the long term vision and the strategic perspective of the group in a rapidly changing world, with all its disquieting uncertainties".

Almost all the members agreed with this summary of the past one year by the two countries on the high table of G77 Politics at the occasion-Nigeria and Iran. Pakistan, for example, gave a very graphic portrait of Nigeria's tenure: "What makes Nigeria's chairmanship truly distinct is its wake-up call about the working methods of the group Nigeria also led the group through some of the very difficult negotiations especially during the five year review process of the UN Conferences. Under the able guidance of Nigeria, the Group of 77 was able to safeguard its interests on a number of vital issues including financing for development, ten-year review of the UN conference on Environment and Development, Globalisation and Information Technology, the review of the scale of assessment for contributions to the UN regular budget as well as to the budget for Peace-keeping operations."

Every other speaker equally praised Nigeria's chairmanship of the group giving as the high point of the tenure, President Obasanjo's leadership of the troika of Non-Alignment, the OAU and G77 to the equally historic engagement with the industrial powers at Okinawa, Japan last July.

But it was Mark Mallock Brown, UNDP Chief who created the real stir with his praises for Nigeria's chairmanship. After opening his remarks with congratulations to "my very dear and leading friend, Sule Lamido", Brown swiftly declared that "Nigeria is the only country in the world where the (Foreign Affairs) Minister and the Ambassador are as tall as the UNDP". This was greeted with a prolonged hilarity before he went on to advise the South to break out of technical assistance and consultancy services trap of the North in favour of the South-South initiatives thereto. This is what he believes will enable the South to join the "express train of globalisation", an expression he credited to

Mr. Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General. Speaking earlier, Mr. Annan expressed the belief that the Group of 77 could make

of disparities and the inherent instabilities of the world system," declared Iran. "Globalisation does not have a human face," said



Lamido and Mbanefo in New York

globalisation positive.

It was not clear if Brown and Annan were, in any way, responding to Dr. Kharrazi who had stated that "the biggest challenge facing us today relates to the unenviable position of the south in the global arena; endemic and pervasive poverty and increasing marginalisation in the real world on the one hand and peripheral role and weight in the international, multi-lateral arena on the other. This overall setting is further complicated and made worse by the rapidly changing situations, priorities and agendas. Changing this setting has always been among the major and much aspired ideals and objective of the developing world, and has been pursued by its sole universal deliberative body, the Group of 77. It is still the same predicament we face now, as in the past and still the same challenge we have to overcome. The question is not whether but how."

On this question, the broadsides were really against globalisation. "The globalisation process, rampant as it currently is, has been rightly diagnosed as a principal culprit for the further exacerbation of the situation and intensification

truly distinct is its wakeup call about the working methods of the Group. Nigeria brought to the fore the important aspects of the group's functioning that needed to be addressed. Firstly, the urgent need for the establishment of a mechanism to enhance the Group's capacity for substantive analysis of the issues. Secondly, strengthening of follow-up mechanism for the implementation of the Group's decisions"

It was understood that this and other commendation heaped on Nigeria were for real, concrete achievements, and much beyond diplomatic niceties. In other words, Nigeria might have reinforced previous strands of intellectual-activist tradition in the Politics of G77 and things may never be the same again. If this should be true, then a combination of the residual statism and third worldism of President Obasanjo, Afro-nationalism of Lamido, the pragmatism of Chief Arthur Mbanefo and the analytic-technical competence of the core of Presidential intellectuals and Nigeria's UN diplomats, some of who were openly commended by Lamido last week, would explain part of it. Added to this is the collaborative enthusiasm of other core third worldists in the Group of 77, those Lamido described as "individuals and leaders with moral authority to demand a fair share of the benefits of world resources for their own people."

Whatever the case, Nigeria felt confident to list out what it considers the agenda of G77 politics in the year ahead:

"As we move into the uncharted waters of the new millennium, we must not lose sight of the critical issues that face us in negotiations with our partners for the future of mankind. Our challenge in the year 2001 requires that our group should ensure concerted positive action on

the following important issues, among others:

World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and related intolerance;

High level international Intergovernmental event on financing for development;

Preparation of the 10-year review of UNCED in 2002;

Special session of the General Assembly for Follow-up to the world Summit for Children;

General Assembly high-level dialogue on strengthening international economic cooperation for development through partnership;

Special session of the General Assembly for overall review and appraisal of the implementation of habitat agenda;

Third United Nations conference on least developed countries".

The list sits pretty well with and compliments the demands for a global vision in which the needs of developing countries should be at the core, in which, as India argued last year and repeated this year, market forces alone is not adequate, national approaches are needed and the burden of adjustments should be shared, the global trading regime made more responsive to the needs of developing countries.

Instructively Iran has pledged to, in the words of her Foreign Minister, restore the focus on development in existing international relations and correction of existing systemic imbalances. But more than anything else, the G77 revolves a lot around the wisdom handed down as follows:

"Let us continue to demonstrate the uniqueness and remarkable endowment of the Group of 77. That is, the ability to fashion and present to the world the most formidable and moral force".

Quantity is indeed transforming rapidly into quality.

Adagbo Onoja
PA Media Affairs to Hon. Minister, Foreign Affairs, Abuja

"But it was Mark Mallock Brown, UNDP Chief who created the real stir with his praises for Nigeria's chairmanship. After opening his remarks with congratulations to "my very dear and leading friend, Sule Lamido", Brown swiftly declared that "Nigeria is the only country in the world where the (Foreign Affairs) Minister and the Ambassador are as tall as the UNDP".



GOODWILL MESSAGE

Every dream can become a reality only if the dreamer steps ahead. Your dream from inception was to make flying a flourishing and informative newspaper. This we believe you have achieved with *Weekly Trust*, and hope you will do same with *Daily Trust*



Prince Abubakar Audu
Executive Governor, Kogi State

On behalf of Kogi state government and people, I wish to extend our support and goodwill message to you on the birth of *DAILY TRUST* newspaper. We appreciate your efforts. Keep the flag flying

₦ £ \$

BUSINESS DAY

₦ \$ ¥

ICAN President makes case for economic recovery

Nigeria's economic fortune may continue to founder until the current foreign exchange rate regime based on market forces is replaced with that hinged on purchasing power parity (PPP). The President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN), Mr H.A. Agbebiyi declared this at a seminar on budget 2001 organised by ICAN on Tuesday at Airport Hotel, Lagos.

He said the current exchange rate of the naira is not a true picture of its value, adding that the

From Bright Ewulu, in Lagos

current economic situation impacts negatively on the overall economy.

In the same vein, one of the resource persons at the seminar, Dr. Abiodun Addigbe of University of Lagos, urged government to ensure that recent duty reductions inputs in the budget are actually in the interest of Nigerian manufacturers.

According to him studies have shown that until a nation's Gross Domestic

Product (GDP) begins to adequately improve, efforts at improving the standard of living of the people and development always fail.

Mrs. Babington Ashaye of Yaba College of Technology in her contribution opined that government should integrate the private sector in her Poverty Alleviation Programme and should enhance its welfare policy to include all the unemployed in the system.

She called for the reform of Nigeria tax laws with a view to simplifying them and making them understandable to a greater number of

the populace.

Calling on the Information Minister, Dr. Jerry Gana, she stated that there is apparent need for government to improve on its information documentation system so as to integrate the whole population in its economic programme.

Dr. Chibuke Uche of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka took a cursory view of budget 2001 and declared that the poverty eradication policy of the government can only be made possible by effective implementation of what has been set down on paper.

On his own part, Chief Kola Jamodu, Chairman,

Universal Trust Bank praised the government for the early passage of this year's budget, saying that it is a sign that the politicians are prepared to move the country forward.

He said although the nation's economic fortune



Mallam Adamu Ciroma

was fraught with maladies last year but government has shown the will as solicited in budget 2001 to bring the dividends of democracy to the mass of Nigerians.



From left to right: Chief Akpoebi, Dr. A.S. Abam and Barrister Ikechukwu Obiorah all commissioners of the Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation and Fiscal Commission engaged in a tete-a-tete during their parley with President Olusegun Obasanjo and members of the National Assembly at ECOWAS Secretariat, Abuja, recently. Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje.

AP Shareholder challenges Board composition

A Shareholder in African Petroleum Plc (AP), Chief Akintunde Asalu has challenged the composition of the Board of Directors of the company, which comprises four representatives of Sadiq Petroleum Limited (SPL), which is AP's core investor.

Chief Asalu said at the Extra-Ordinary General Meeting (EGM) of AP yesterday in Abuja that though the reorganisation of the Board did not generate much controversy as in the case of other companies while the federal government divested its shares, "we are not far from having dissenting views."

He advised the directors to reconsider the present composition of the Board, which, according to him, "has four out of its 10 directors coming from Sadiq Petroleum."

The shareholder also called for the reduction of AP Plc's outlets (filling stations) "in view of the current situation in the nation's oil industry for our

By Ahmed Shekarau

company to maximise its profits."

Responding to Chief Asalu's grouse, the Executive Director Operations of AP, Mallam Abdullahi Sule who is general manager of Sadiq Petroleum told *Business Day* in an exclusive interview that "there is nothing unfair about the composition of the Board if you look at it."

Sule said contrary to Asalu's claim that the Board comprises 10 members, "it has 13 members out of which four are from Sadiq Petroleum, and I don't see anything wrong with that."

The Chairman of SPL, Mr. Peter Eloka Okocha, who is also the Chairman of the reconstituted Board of AP Plc, told Asalu and other shareholders to note that AP succeeded in securing more quantity of products than other petroleum companies in view of the large number of outlets it has nationwide

Okocha therefore kicked against reducing the number of AP's filling stations, stressing that "if we shrink, the quantity of products supplied to us will also shrink."

Emphasising on the need to have many retail outlets, the Managing Director of AP, Alhaji Umar Abba Gana noted that "we don't open stations just because of present situations, but in anticipation of future situations."

Abba Gana observed that maintaining large number of outlets has other advantages, "particularly now that AP is diversifying into the upstream sector."

The EGM, which was organised on the advise of the Bureau for Public Enterprises (BPE), was done to present the new Board members to AP shareholders.

SPL, whose bid for the core investor position in AP was earlier disapproved due to lack of managerial and technical expertise had repositioned itself and finally succeeded in purchasing the federal government's 30 per

cent share in AP, which was formerly held by the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, NNPC on behalf of the government.

UBA Plc to fund private sector

The United Bank for Africa (UBA) Plc is to provide medium-term funding to private sector operators in the Nigerian economy in the areas of power, telecommunications, textile, manufacturing, petroleum services, tourism and marine transportation. According to Ogie Egboibe, UBA Public Relations Manager, funding has been made possible by the African Development bank's (ADB) endorsement of the credit worthiness of UBA Plc with a US\$30 million line of credit.

"The objective of the line of credit is to finance the establishment, expansion, modernisation and diversification of private sector productive facilities in various sectors of Nigerian economy."

He said the bank would also provide financing for the re-capitalisation recently privatised companies

From Adelafiwa Bangboye, in Lagos

so as to increase their productive capacities.

"By endorsing the credit worthiness of UBA Plc, the ADB is further assisting in strengthening UBA's capacity to raise capital from the International Market and in Nigeria." He sated further that the initiative also supports and encourage the development of efficient capital markets and a vibrant private sector in Nigeria, and is in line with ADB's private sector policies of co-operating with commercial and merchant banks.

According to Eboigbe, the funding will target export-oriented projects which would expectedly contribute significantly to government's revenue and towards the over all GDP growth, thereby reducing unemployment and increasing export.

Stock Market Report for January 23, 2001

A total of 15.41 million shares worth N236.98 million were exchanged in 1,398 deals on the floor of the Nigerian Stock Exchange with 88 companies participating, according to information from the Abuja Trading Floor of the Nigerian Stock Exchange.

There were no transactions in the Industrial Loans/Preference Stocks sector and the Federal Government Development stocks sector.

Price Movement

The Nigerian Stock Exchange All-Share Index closed at 8,578.79, a decrease of 1.79%. The index opened at 8,735.73 billion.

The bears maintained their lead on the floor today, with a

total of 13 companies making gains in their share prices and 25 making losses.

Gains were recorded in the Banking, Food/Beverages & tobacco, Insurance and the Conglomerates sub sectors.

Afribank Plc led the price gainers, as it appreciated by 45 kobo to close at N9.48 per share, followed by Northern Nigerian Flour Mills Plc, it appreciated by 39 kobo to close at N8.29 per share.

Other price gainers include Prestige (17 kobo); hallmark Bank Plc (12 kobo); SCOA (11 kobo); Crusader (8 kobo); Coop Bank (7 kobo); Coop Dev (6 kobo); John Holt (5 kobo); UBA and Eko Bank (4 kobo apiece); FBN (3 kobo) and UBN (1

kobo).

Losses were recorded in the Petroleum Marketing, food/Beverage & tobacco, Breweries, Conglomerates, Domestic/Industrial Products, Automobile & Tyre, Textiles, Health Care, Banking Real Estate and the insurance Sub sectors.

Total Nigeria Plc led the price losers, crashing by 254 kobo to close at N60.20 per share, followed closely by Nestle Food Plc which dropped in its share price by 221 kobo, to close at N42.02 per share.

Other price losers include Guinness (154 kobo); NB (137 kobo); Agip (132 kobo); Lever Brothers (113 kobo); Cadbury (103 kobo); NBC (66 kobo); Flour Mills (58 kobo); IGI (38 kobo); Dunlop (23 kobo); Vita foam and UNTL (20 kobo apiece).

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NASSI seeks explanation on 10% profit disbursement

The Nigeria Association of small-scale industrialists (NASSI) has called on the federal government to clearly define how banks will disburse their 10 per cent profit to the manufacturing sector.

Mr. Charles Chukwu, the NASSI Administrative Secretary, said in Lagos that the sector would prefer a long-term fund with at least 10 years gestation period, adding: "It is only a long-term loan that will be of any benefit to the sector."

He further advised that only banks with branches all over the country, including the rural areas, should be allowed to disburse such funds.

He also called for very low lending rates on the funds, citing a bank like the ADB, which gives loan that carry about 50 years gestation period, with less than 0.5 per cent interest rate.

"Our banks want to make all the profits in one year and that is why they charge 30 per cent interest on loans," Chukwu said, pointing out that the "huge profits they declare are an indication that they are over charging their clients in terms of interest rates."

The NASSI official stressed that qualification for obtaining funds from the banks should be that the company should have evidence of being a member of an organized association.

He said that such qualification should serve, as a collateral since most of them could not afford the "huge collaterals" demanded by banks.

He said that the suggested measure would also prevent such money from getting to "unenterpreneurial individuals who would end up spending it wrongly, and therefore won't be able to pay back."

Mr. Chukwu advised the federal government to give the money meant for the Poverty Eradication Programme (PEP) to the private sector as an investment to help to boost the manufacturing sector.

The Administrative Secretary of NASSI, Mr. Charles Chukwu, told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Lagos that "If this is done, more employment will be created and more people will get jobs."

He said that if the government used the money to fund the sector, its capacity utilisation would be enhanced, noting that by handling the poverty programme, government was putting too much burden on itself.

According to him, a major problem was that

government appeared not to have properly assessed the poverty phenomenon before embarking on its eradication, adding: "there is gross unemployment and this should be addressed".

"The problem we have in Nigeria is that the government has not been able to define its role and confine itself to such which is to manage the resources of the people on behalf of the citizens," Chukwu said.

"What happens now is that government now utilises the resources of the people for its own use," he pointed out.

Chukwu called on the federal government to channel the resources of the people in such a way that the citizens would benefit from them.



Chief Joseph Sanusi, CBN Governor.

Mubeco in receivership, properties up for auction

From Dare Oyewole
in Kaduna

The property of Mubeco Petroleum Company Limited, Kaduna may be auctioned as a receiver has formerly taken possession of the company on the orders of the Federal High Court sitting in Lagos.

This was sequel to the company's inability to pay back the debt of N1.2 billion it owed three different banks.

The company owed by Senator Musa Bello was alleged to be indebted to the First Bank of Nigeria Plc; N580 million, Nigerian Industrial Development

Bank limited (NIDB) N460 million and Midas Merchant Bank Limited; N160 million.

Business Day learnt that Senator Musa Bello as a director of the company has executed various Deeds and Debenture in favour of the Banks giving the Banks authority to appoint Receiver/Manager if the company defaults and/or failed to repay its debts.

Subsequently, First bank of Nigeria Plc appointed Mr. Tunde Bello as receiver/manager on September 3, 1999 while the Nigerian Industrial Development Bank Limited appointed Mr. Mathias Adaba as its own receiver sometime in April last year.

The Federal High Court in suit number FHC/L/CS/624/2000, it was gathered, has endorsed the appointment of Mr. Tunde Bello as receiver for First bank. the Court granted the receiver/manager orders to enter and remain in the company.

Ruling on the exparte originating summons, Justice E.O. Sanya Olu among other things ordered the receiver to enter into the factory at Kaduna take possession of same and take such steps as may be necessary to realise the assets of the respondent with a view to paying its outstandings to First Bank.

The Nigerian Stock Market Gainers/Losers as at 23/01/2001

Gainers

| COMPANY | OPENING PRICE | CLOSING PRICE | CHANGE |
|------------|---------------|---------------|--------|
| AFRIKBANK | 9.03 | 9.48 | 0.45 |
| NNFM | 7.90 | 8.29 | 0.39 |
| PRESTIGE | 3.46 | 3.63 | 0.17 |
| HALLBANK | 2.42 | 2.54 | 0.12 |
| SCOA | 2.40 | 2.51 | 0.11 |
| CRUSADER | 1.70 | 1.78 | 0.08 |
| COOPBANK | 1.48 | 1.55 | 0.07 |
| COOPDEV | 1.21 | 1.27 | 0.06 |
| JOHN HOLT | 1.38 | 1.43 | 0.05 |
| UBA | 16.06 | 16.10 | 0.04 |
| EKOBANK | 0.99 | 1.03 | 0.04 |
| FIRST BANK | 24.65 | 24.68 | 0.03 |
| UBN | 26.04 | 26.05 | 0.01 |

Losers

| COMPANY | OPENING PRICE | CLOSING PRICE | CHANGE |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|--------|
| TOTAL | 62.74 | 60.20 | 2.54 |
| NESTLE | 44.23 | 42.02 | 2.21 |
| GUINNESS | 30.88 | 29.34 | 1.54 |
| NB | 27.54 | 26.17 | 1.37 |
| AGIP | 26.48 | 26.16 | 1.32 |
| LEVBROS | 22.63 | 21.50 | 1.13 |
| CADBURY | 20.67 | 19.64 | 1.03 |
| NBC | 14.36 | 13.70 | 0.66 |
| FLOURMILL | 11.70 | 11.12 | 0.58 |
| IGL | 7.61 | 7.23 | 0.39 |
| DUNLOP | 4.64 | 4.41 | 0.29 |
| VITAFOAM | 4.32 | 4.12 | 0.20 |
| UNTL | 4.27 | 4.07 | 0.20 |
| SLBEECHAM | 3.60 | 3.43 | 0.17 |
| UACN | 3.43 | 3.26 | 0.17 |
| OWENA BANK | 2.50 | 2.40 | 0.10 |
| WEMA BANK | 2.10 | 2.00 | 0.10 |
| INLAND BANK | 1.99 | 1.90 | 0.09 |
| MANNY BANK | 1.95 | 1.86 | 0.09 |
| UAC-PROP | 1.72 | 1.64 | 0.08 |
| SAVANNA | 1.70 | 1.62 | 0.08 |
| ACCESS BANK | 1.35 | 1.29 | 0.06 |
| LASACO | 0.92 | 0.88 | 0.04 |
| TOWERGATE | 0.95 | 0.91 | 0.04 |
| ETERNAOIL | 0.95 | 0.91 | 0.04 |

Summary of NSE Transactions

| | OPENING | CLOSING | %AGE CHANGE |
|----------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| MKT. CAP | 502,725,356,168.89 | 493,726,596,994.59 | -1.79 |
| INDEX | 8,735.14 | 8,578.79 | -1.79 |

| DEALS | VOLUME | VALUE | No. OF COMPANIES |
|-------|------------|----------------|------------------|
| 1,398 | 15,405,452 | 236,979,360.50 | 88 |

Source: NSE, Abuja Area Office.

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Microsoft to pay Sun \$20 million in settlement

Software giant Microsoft Corp. and Sun Microsystems Inc. on Tuesday settled a bitter, three-year-old lawsuit, with Microsoft agreeing to pay its rival \$20 million for limited use of its Java programming technology.

The suit, filed by Sun in October 1997, alleged Microsoft had violated terms of its licensing agreement for Java by improperly modifying the technology so it would only work with its Windows computer operating system.

Sun, which makes powerful server computers and software that dish up Web pages, is a perennial foe of Microsoft that has helped the U.S. government in its antitrust case against the software titan. Microsoft is appealing a federal judge's ruling last year to split the company in two. The settlement of the suit, which had

not gone to trial, lets Microsoft use Java in existing products such as its Internet Explorer browser, and those now in a testing phase, for the next seven years.

Java is a "write-once, run anywhere" computer language that lets programs run on a variety of operating systems and devices. Microsoft critics charged that the company altered Java to try to maintain the dominance of Windows.

A previous five-year license and distribution agreement for Java stuck in March 1996 was terminated, two months early. A Microsoft counter suit was also dropped.

But future Microsoft products cannot use Java, which is liberally sprinkled throughout the Internet on Web sites and integrated into much Web-based software.

It was not immediately

known how the settlement will affect Microsoft's .NET strategy, a sweeping plan for the next several that can deliver data to users anywhere.

I was not immediately known how the settlement will affect Microsoft's .NET strategy, a sweeping plan for the next several years that aims to turn Microsoft's software into a service that can deliver data to users anywhere.

Last year, Microsoft launched a rival computer language to Java called C#, pronounced C-sharp, that analysts expect will take the place of Java in future Microsoft products.

Shares in Microsoft rose more than \$1 to \$61-7/16 in regular trading.

Although the settlement laid to rest an annoying legal issue for two industry giants, it did little to temper the open scorn both companies have shown each

other.

"Sun has used the legal system to compete against Microsoft for the last several years," said Microsoft spokesman Jim Cullinan. "Both sides have had rulings lately for and against them. This was going to be costly litigation and both parties looked and said

what can we do to bring this to an end."

"We're very pleased with this. It protects our customers and current products, since they are not impacted by the settlement," Cullinan said. "As you know, in this industry, seven years is a very long time."

colourfully - called for the break-up of Microsoft, scorned its products as inferior and labelled the company a bully,

"Microsoft is unwilling to accept the rules of the Web. Its behaviour with regard to Java, and when presented with the choice of compatibility or termination, it chose termination," Patricia Sueltz, vice president of Sun's software systems group, told a conference of press hounds.

"I don't think we gave away anything. We brought the suit, they're writing a check for \$20 million, we've terminated the agreement, they get to continue to distribute an outdated version of our technology, but they can't use it for .NET, so think about it and you decide," Sueltz said.



Bush, US President

Sun also claimed triumph out of the settlement, saying it preserved the integrity of its product.

"It's pretty simple: this is a victory for our licenses and consumers," Sun Chief Executive, Scott McNealy said in a statement.

McNealy has often publicly -

FG urged to reduce procedural documentation in FEM

The federal government has been urged to reduce documentation procedure in the foreign exchange market so as to attract more players into the market.

According to a communiqué issued at the end of a one-day seminar organised jointly by the Financial Institutions Training Centre and the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in Lagos last weekend, in-



Chief Joseph Sanusi, CBN Governor.

creased players in the market would help to narrow the premium between the official and parallel market rates.

The communiqué, a copy of which was made available to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Lagos, said that participants at the seminar also agreed that more players in the market would help to address the problem of continued depreciation of the naira.

"As a complimentary measure, the country's borders need to be more effectively policed to contain threats posed by the activities of smugglers." It stressed.

The communiqué stressed the need for government to take appropriate administrative measures to effectively protect domestic producers against undue competition from their foreign competitors.

It said that the current size of the public sector was unwieldy, and urged the government to trim its workforce.

"Furthermore, the govern-

ment needs to muster the political will to implement the relevant laws aimed at checking the level of corruption in that sector and the economy in general," it maintained.

The workshop participants suggested that the Nigerian Police and other security agencies be re-organised and empowered to guarantee the safety of lives and property to attract foreign investors.

They contended that the recent government directive that generator importers should get clearance from NEPA was capable of diverting the agency from its primary assignment, and urged government to rescind the directive.

"In line with its posture on transparency and accountability, the government should present a quarterly account of its performance against budget to enable the citizenry monitor the progress being made on its implementation." The communiqué concluded.

OPEC oil cuts: World Market update

Oil prices were little changed on Wednesday but sentiment was slightly dented by U.S. fuel stocks data, which put to rest any lingering concerns of a shortage of heating oil this winter in the United States.

Three Norwegian oil unions agreed an eleventh-hour 3.25 percent pay deal, averting a strike that would have curbed the country's daily crude output of about 3.2 million barrels.

The strike threat had lifted crude prices late on Tuesday.

U.S. benchmark light, sweet crude was trading six cents off at \$29.51 a barrel after dipping 23 cents a day earlier in New York to settle at \$2.57.

Brokers said crude looked likely to slide further, continuing a reversal of last week's hefty gains, which were triggered by OPEC's decision to curb supplies to the market from February.

"It looks like everything is going to slowly come off," said a New York broker. "The weather is mild and people now think there's going to be enough heating oil this winter. Everyone's beginning to focus

on spring," he said.

The API data, released after the close of business on Tuesday, showed a smaller-than-expected draw in U.S. distillates in the week ending January 19.

The API recorded a decline of 826,000 barrels in distillate inventories, which include the key winter heating oil, to 114.13 million barrels, bringing the year-on-year deficit to just 531,000 barrels.

Three months ago, the year-on-year deficit on distillate inventories stood at 32 million barrels.

In the equivalent year-ago period, distillate stocks plunged by more than eight million barrels.

Analysts said barring a dramatic blast of late winter cold, the distillate figures suggested that the U.S. was now out of the woods on its winter oil concerns that had driven oil prices to 10-year peaks late last year.

"The (distillate) draw was just a tenth of a year ago, and as we're almost in February the market is increasingly going to start thinking about spring rather than winter," said analyst

Peter Beutel of Cameron Hanover.

U.S. February heating oil futures were trading 0.72 cents down at 85.50 cents per gallon.

The API reported crude stocks of almost two million barrels at 288.4 million against market expectations of a 150,000 barrel rise because of a high level of imports.

Major crude supplier and OPEC member Iran has notified Japanese clients of a 10 percent cut to supplies of its Light and Heavy crude grades in February.

Several Middle East members of the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates also have informed buyers of lower lifting volumes next month following OPEC's latest pact.

The producers' cartel agreed last Wednesday to lop 1.5 million barrels per day (bpd) off group output to avoid any glut in the market in the second quarter when peak winter oil demand wanes.

OPEC's new output quota from February 1 will be 25.2 million bpd.

Plateau government awards N2 billion contracts

The Plateau State Government has awarded contracts worth about N2 billion since its inception in May 1999, the State Commissioner for Works, Housing and Transport, Mrs. Felicia Gyang, had said.

Briefing contractors on yesterday in Jos, Gyang said that the government had so far paid more than N1 billion to them.

The Commissioner, who expressed dissatisfaction with some of the contracts currently being executed,

also warned the contractors handling such projects to "sit up" as the State Government would not hesitate to revoke the contracts.

She reiterated the readiness of the state government to pay contractors, who completed their jobs according to contractual agreement and in line with the state government's re-engineering programme.

Gyang, who disclosed that the state governor had approved the payment of all certified jobs, also urged resident engineers to live up

to their responsibilities by ensuring adequate supervision of their respective projects.

She warned that "government will remove from site, any engineer found wanting in the discharge of his responsibilities".

Responding on behalf of the contractors, Mr. Stephen Miner, Managing Director of Rotech Nigeria Limited, gave an assurance that they would justify the confidence reposed in them by the government to enable it meet the aspirations of its people.

PUBLIC NOTICE ALIF ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

Notice is hereby given to the general public that the above named Foundation is applying for registration under part "C" of the Companies and Allied Matters Act Number 1 of 1990.

The Trustees are:

1. Alhaji Baba Hassan Kachalla
2. Idris Hayyatu
3. Umar Abdullahi
4. Sani Abdu
4. Mohammed Mustapha Bintube

Any objection should be forwarded to the Registrar General Corporate Affairs Commission, Abuja within 28 days of this publication

Signed: A.S. Hassan Esq

Last Tuesday, the scope of automobile sales and maintenance in Abuja was widened, with the commissioning of Abadat Motors. Our cameraman, Kennedy Egbonodje got these pictures for *Daily Trust*.



Left to Right: Mr. Philippe Beodet, Managing Director Peugeot Automobile Nigeria Ltd (PAN) with Mr. George Irele, Director Large Scale Industries Federal Ministry of Industry (who represented the minister) and Alhaji Abdulfatai Buhari MD/Chairman Abadat Motors while commissioning the company's showroom and ultra modern workshop in Abuja.



The representative of minister of Industry, Mr. George Irele inspecting some units of Peugeot 607 at the Showroom. Watching with interest are Mallam Baba Yahaya of PAN Public Relations Dept, Engineer Suleiman Bawa, Alhaji Abdulfatai Buhari, MD Abadat Motors and Mr Phillippe Beodet the PAN Managing Director.



Mr George Irele, Director Large Scale Industries, unveiling plaque to commemorate the commissioning of Abadat Showroom and ultra modern workshop. Other watching are Mr Phillippe Beodet, MD PAN and Alhaji Abdulfatai Buhari MD of Abadat Motors.



Alhaji Abdulfatai Buhari explaining a point to Mr. George Irele, Director Large Scale Industries and other visitors during the commissioning ceremony.



Fleet of Peugeot 607 Cars on display at Abadat motors showroom.



A tyre technician stressing a point on the operations of a tyre service equipment also available at Abadat Motors ultra modern workshop.



The Managing Director of Abadat Motors, Alhaji Abdulfatai Buhari discussing with Mr. Phillippe Beodet (R), Mr Olivier Levigne PAN AGM Network and distribution and Mr. Etienne Rintieu, Manager Parts and services Dept.



Engineer Suleiman Bawa (Sitting 3rd from left) discussing with other associates of Alhaji Abdulfatai - MD/ Chairman of Abadat Motors.



Alhaji M. Ndatsu, GM commercial PAN discussing with Mr. A.C. Okocha MD of Okocha Motors.



The Managing Director of PAN, Mr Phillippe Beodet discussing with Mr George Irele, Director Large Scale Industries and Alhaji Abdulfatai - MD of Abadat Motors.

This page was sponsored by Engr. Sulaiman Bawa

Star Interview

NEPA has not been given \$51 million - Danjuma Goje

The National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) was given \$51 million lifeline recently. How is it going to utilise the money especially when there are suspicions that NEPA received grants previously without any significant impact on power generation?

I want to correct an impression here. NEPA has not been given a \$51 million grant. I don't know what's your source is. All I know is that NEPA, like other parastatals under the federal government have been receiving some budgetary allocations. Last year, NEPA was supposed to receive about N30 or N31 billion. But I want you to understand that NEPA's problems are multi-faceted and that money is just like a drop in an ocean. This is because, the whole power sittings made up of three components, generation, transmission and distributions have virtually collapsed. So for the system to work efficiently for consumers to benefit and appreciate our activities, all the three components must work. And this takes a lot. However, most Nigerians are concerned about distribution and billing. Their major concern is to have constant supply of electricity. But we have to generate and this affects the power plants, the three-hydropower thermals. Then you come to talk of transmitting across the many transmission lines nation-wide, which costs government a lot.

From the millions of families to the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), we distribute energy. The first problem our administration tried to tackle is power generation, in view of the fact that we first of all have to generate enough electricity before we think of where to distribute. By the time we came, the nation's eight power plants, with a total installed capacity of almost 6,000 megawatts, were producing barely 1,400 megawatts. We therefore tried to revive these plants, which were mostly neglected. The first thing we did was to award a contract for the rehabilitation of Egbin Power Plant, which has the capacity to produce 1,320 megawatts.

Also, last year, we awarded contracts for the rehabilitation of four of the six power generation units, each of which has an installed capacity of producing 220 megawatts, but which were down. And we awarded the contracts for the rehabilitation to Moriveni, which is the initial manufacturer of the plants. I'm glad to say that the company has restored one. So, we now have three units, which produce 660 megawatts, which is 50 per cent, while we expect the remaining 50 per cent to be restored by October.

But are you saying you are not aware of the recent grant to NEPA, which was widely publicised by the media?

No. Those reports are not factual. \$51 million was not released to NEPA. But as part of NEPA'S budgetary allocations for last year, it received about N8 billion towards the end of the year. This money is to be used as down payment for the construction of some transmission lines for us to effectively transmit electricity as we hope to meet our target of 4,000 megawatts by the end of this year.

NEPA always complains that the tariff it charges are too low compared to what is charged for electricity supply elsewhere. Nigerians however complain of being

The Minister of state for Power and Steel, Alhaji Mohammed Danjuma Goje however believes Nigerians do not appreciate the multi-faceted problems of NEPA because they are only interested in receiving stable supply of electricity constantly. He assured, in this interview with Aliyu Ma'aji, Daily Trust Business Editor, that the governments renewed efforts will yield favourable results.



Alhaji Danjuma Goje overcharged by NEPA and see no reason why they should be charged highly when a substantial part of NEPA's funding comes from the Federation Account, which is taxpayer's money. How would you react to this?

Well the whole thing is a vicious circle. For obvious reasons, NEPA has continued to receive subsidies from government. But all over the world, government alone does not sustain the power system. The private sector is always brought in. But once the private sector is brought in, then you have to remove subsidy otherwise you cannot do business at all. Our main concern at the moment however is to make NEPA work efficiently. Then we'll have to raise the tariff, though Nigerians may react swiftly to that. We'll then try to explain to them. Maybe they'll understand.

In spite of the fact that NEPA sees its tariffs as low compared to the cost of supply, Nigerians still complain that the bills sent to them are at par with what they are supplied...

I don't think people are overcharged, particularly in the states. We are not collecting what we should collect. You see some of those that make such complaints may not have been charged for a very long period, often times for years. So by the time NEPA sends its bills to such persons, they start screaming that they have been overcharged. Infact, we are now taking

steps to ensure that we improve our revenue generation drive by collecting whatever is due to us.

The issue of Independent Power Projects (IPPs) has been generating some controversies. For instance, the Lagos State Governor, Senator Bola Tinubu is blaming the federal government for the failure of his state to achieve its IPP, while you were reported to have called Tinubu to order and tried to absolve the federal government of any blame. What is generating all the controversies?

I see a bad future for the IPPs because Nigeria cannot be different from other countries. Other countries are doing well in this area, but there is something that is wrong here in Nigeria. On the issue of Enron, which is a Lagos project, what I told Governor Tinubu is he should stop blackmailing the federal government. Because I see what he is doing as blackmail. The federal government has done well in terms of what it is supposed to do on this project. However, Tinubu goes about giving Lagosians the impression that the federal government stalled the take-off of the project. You see, the worrisome fact about the impression he creates about this Enron project is that he tells his people that once the project is on the ground, the problem of electricity in Lagos will be over. The whole Enron project agreement, which we signed, is just meant to generate 270 megawatts of electricity. Lagos State

requires more than 90 megawatts. Infact, right now, NEPA's allocation to Lagos State is in the region of about 600 to 700 megawatts...

(Cuts in) what particular amount is NEPA generating at the moment?

What we are generating totally is about 2,400 to 2,500 megawatts. And we allocate about 600 to 700 megawatts to Lagos State alone. So will the production of 270 megawatts by Enron solve the electricity problem of Lagos State? But Tinubu gives Lagosians the impression that the federal government is not interested in the take-off of Enron, which is not true. We know that Enron's take-off will add to the megawatts generated in the system, that's why we agreed to purchase power from Enron. Mind you, this Enron is neither going to transmit nor distribute electricity to Lagosians. It is the same NEPA that is going to transmit and distribute electricity for them and Tinubu knows all these. That's why I advised him not to blackmail the federal government.

Now to the proposed privatisation of NEPA. This is also generating a lot of debate. Many Nigerians feel NEPA requires at least five years of restructuring to be repositioned for privatisation. But the government is planning to privatise it by next year. So why don't we leave the privatisation until after NEPA is properly repositioned?

NEPA is being repositioned and it is going to generate 4,000 megawatts of electricity by December this year. This will stabilise supply all over the country. But we cannot wait until we reach the optimum level of generation before we privatise NEPA. We want to bring in the private sector in order to sustain this tempo.

How is NEPA going to look like after its privatisation?

I don't know much about this privatisation business. The Vice-President, who is the Chairman of the National Council on Privatisation, may explain that better. All I know is that NEPA will be broken into several components. There will be several generation companies, several distribution companies, maybe one transmitting company, I don't know...

(Cuts in). But are you sure that will enhance its performance?

Of course! It will provide very good services for Nigerians.

It appears you are an Apostle of the privatisation programme?

Of course, I support privatisation 100 per cent. At least we have seen socialism and communism collapsing in Russia, giving way to capitalism. Even China is going capitalist. The whole of Eastern Europe is adopting the free market economy. And Nigeria cannot afford to be indifferent to the economic transformations going on across the globe.

Has the proposed draft bill on the electricity law been sent to the National Assembly?

No. It has not yet been sent to the National Assembly. It is still with the National Council on Privatisation.

Star Interview

Contd. from Pg. 17

What should Nigerians expect from such a bill when it is passed into law?

I will not disclose that because it is still before the Council.

What role is the Power and Steel Ministry going to perform by the time the draft bill is padded into law?

You are still asking me to respond to the same question I refused to answer.

The Director-General of Bureau for Public Enterprises (BPE), Mallam Nasir el-Rufai is reported to have said that the privatisation of NEPA may affect the jobs of about 20,000 of its employees. Is there any arrangement to absorb them elsewhere in order not to worsen the nation's unemployment situation?

I heard this tale as you are saying from some NEPA staff. They said it appeared in Vanguard newspaper but I haven't seen that paper. I don't know Rufai's statement. So I wouldn't want to dabble into this issue. I'm not also aware of any move to retrench 20,000 NEPA staff.

But the tradition anywhere is that once an organisation is privatised, there has to be some rationalisation of staff. Do you envisaged such occurrence in NEPA?

I don't know yet because we've not started privatising it. Our concern at the moment is to satisfy the electricity needs of Nigerians first.

Let's look at rural electrification. What is government doing to enhance that?

The government attaches great importance to rural electrification because we realise that it is what is required to improve the lives of the rural populace. For the last 10 years that the programme has been on, only about 200 projects were completed. But within about 19 months of the present administration, we have commissioned over 200 projects. We are committed to ensuring that we meet our 300-marked target. That shows you the level of our concern about it. Infact, government made an allocation of N17 billion to rural electrification, the highest amount ever earmarked for that project in the 2001 budget. We intend to undertake at least 150 rural electrification projects within this financial year. We've been going round commissioning such projects completed all over the country.

The military administration of General Olusegun Obasanjo envisioned an industrialised economy for Nigeria and established Delta Steel Company (DSC) at Aladja in the late 1970s and subsequently the three Inland Rolling Mills as well as the Steel Complex at Ajaokuta were established. But after sinking over N120 billion in the DSC project, the company was shut down without producing more than N1 billion worth of liquid steel. Now, the present Obasanjo administration is pumping money with the aim of repositioning the company. What assurance are you giving Nigerians that their resources will not go into the drain the way other resources went?

Don't confuse these two things. First, I want you to give credit to his Excellency, Olusegun Obasanjo. These projects were started by his government during his first outing. When he left, subsequent governments messed them up. God has now brought him back and he wants to complete what he started. And that's why Ajaokuta is being resuscitated. The Delta Steel is also going to be resuscitated. Just last week, we approved the contract for its rehabilitation, which will be jointly carried out by a consortium of foreign and local companies at the cost of \$100 million. Also, a working capital of \$40 million dollars is

approved for its take-off. This, as I said, will be jointly financed by an Austrian company, Voest Alpine which is contributing a loan package of \$55 million. There is Osaka Steel, a Nigerian Company with Chinese Partners. It is coming up with \$40 million. While the federal government is coming up with \$45 million which will be divided into two. \$22.5 million will be regarded as a loan to Aladja Steel plant which the government will recover, and the remaining 50 per cent will be regarded as the federal government's equity for the revitalisation of the plant. So you can see that out of the whole amount, the federal government is only contributing \$45 million while the private sector contributes the remaining. The whole money is going to be recovered when the plant is rehabilitated and resumes production. It is not going to be money sunk by the federal government as before. This is part of the strategies of Mr. President to involve the private sector in order to ensure efficient management of these enterprises, because these companies will also be involved in the management of the plant until their money is recovered. Ajaokuta too, we have just received the audit report and *Insha Allah*, it is going to be completed very soon.

There are fears by some people from Delta Steel's host community that some shareholders from other parts of the country, the north in particular are planning to hijack the company. And this seems to be generating controversy like in the case of sale of Benue Cement to Dangote...

(Cuts in). What is your source of information? I don't know who is spreading this wild rumour. Is it what the *Guardian* man, Alifa Daniel wrote? That's rubbish. I'm not happy that Alifa is trying to bring politics into this issue. I know that the people of Aladja are very happy that the federal government is trying to rehabilitate this plant. Their Senator, Senator Brume, who incidentally was the first Managing Director of the company came here to my own office and expressed his appreciations for the government's move to revive the company. So what the *Guardian* wrote is not true.

Is there any plan to pay the company's

former staff their unpaid salaries?

I'm sure if you have done your homework very well, you wouldn't have asked me this question, because, there was salary arrears of over five years when we came in. But immediately when we came in, we allocated over N900 million in last year's budget for the settlement of such debts, and the salaries are being paid. The government is very conscious of that and is taking care of the issue of the workers' salaries and benefits. There is still arrears of about two to three months now. But before the rehabilitation is completed, there would have been no arrears at all.

Is it going to re-absorb all the staff?

Were they retrenched? Because you don't re-absorb what you didn't retrench. When you say re-absorb, it makes it look as if they were retrenched.

But most of them have left due to redundancy and particularly at the time when their salaries were not being paid...

(Cuts in). I don't believe that. My assumption is that every worker is still there and that's why government is giving them money. Well, it has not been drawn to our attention here.

But the contracting firm is reported to have laid claim to 70 per cent of the funds released, as being part of payments for an earlier contract executed. What is your response to this report?

I'm not aware of that. I know that the government approved the sum of N15 billion for the reactivation and completion of ALSCON. And the foreign partners, Ferostaal in particular, is going to contribute about \$26 million towards the completion of the project. With these funds put together, the plant will be put back into operation and production will resume as usual.

How would you react to allegations that Reynolds International Incorporated of America, one of the joint partners withdrew from the partnership agreement in view of perceived corruption and mismanagement which may run down the company?

(Emphatically) No. Reynolds was bought over by Al-Qua. Al-Qua accepted the 10 per cent share of Reynolds. But Al-Qua expressed its intention to withdraw

from the running of the company because it made an offer to take over the running of the Company and we refused. It had its won policy of not going to play a second fiddle. But its proposal to take over the running of ALSCON is not favourable to Nigeria's interest and that is why we refused. So it decided to leave. It is not because the company is facing any eminent collapse.

What measures have the Ministry of Power and Steel taken to ensure that members of Boards of its parastatals who were recently inaugurated do not exploit their appointments for self-enrichment, which may cripple such companies again?

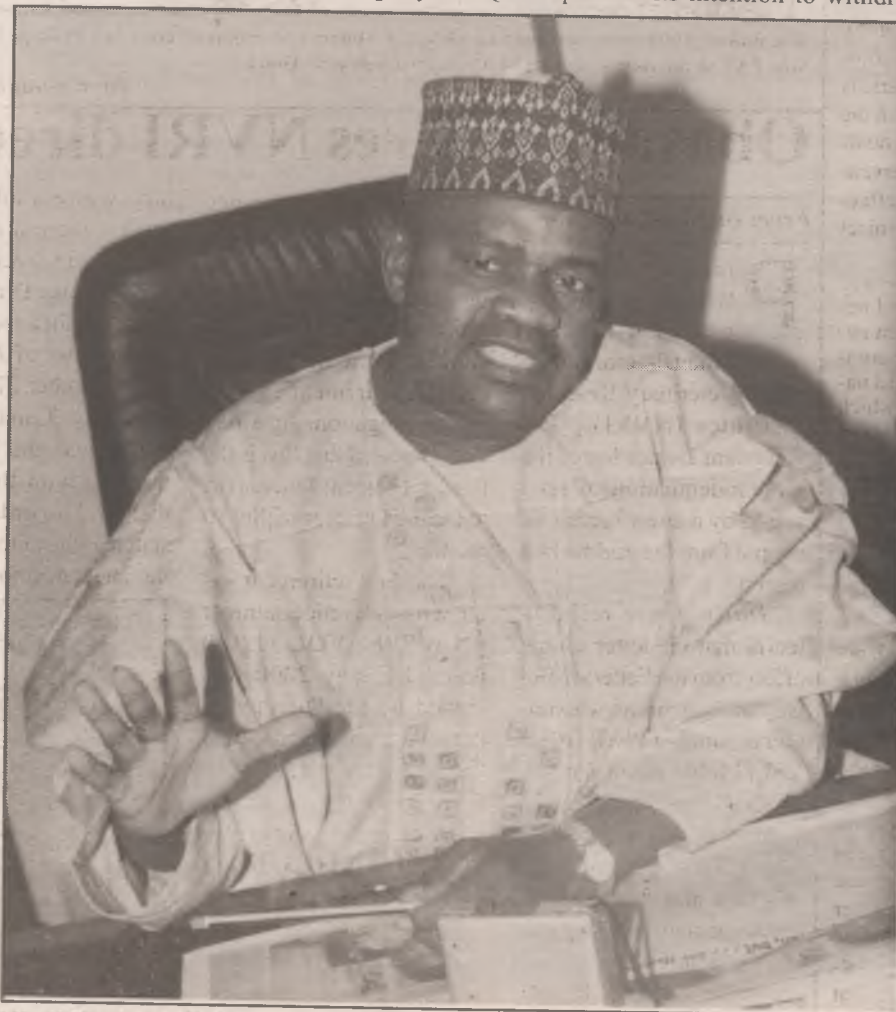
Well, this starts from the top. Mr. President himself, as the head of the country's government, is committed to probity and to the resuscitation of these companies. Secondly, we in the ministry are also committed to his ideals. Also, you'll realise that Mr. President carefully selected responsible people who are committed to the ideals of their (political) party and the government. And with this set of people in place, the cra of taking wrong decisions that led to the collapse of these companies is over. We want to ensure that we deliver to Nigerians and so everything possible is done to make sure money is not being misappropriated and wasted.

The Hydro-Producing Areas Development Commission (HYPADEC) is agitating for compensation for the incidents of flood from the Shiroro and other dams that ravage their communities. They are proposing a bill in that respect to the National Assembly. Has there been any effort to assist such states, that is, Niger, Kogi, Kwara and Kebbi?

They wrote to the Presidency and not to the ministry so I don't know anything about that. That is above us, it's for the President.

Now, tell us who Alhaji Mohammed Danjuma Goje is?

Well, Danjuma Goje was born on the 10th of October, 1952. so I am almost 41 years now. I was born in a village called Pindiga, in Akko Local Government Area of Gombe State. I had my primary school education between 1961 and 1967 in a smaller village under Pindiga, called Kashiro. I am a village man, you know. Then, 1968 - 1972, I was in Bauchi Teachers College. I taught for a year in 1973 as a Grade II teacher in a primary school. I attended SBS Zaria between January 1974 to June 1975. I obtained a B.Sc. Political Science from ABU Zaria between '75 and '78. I worked for a year as a graduate assistant in the same University, after my National Service (NYSC). I eventually moved to the Bauchi State government as a Assistant Secretary II. I was appointed a local government secretary from 1981 to 1984. I however joined the Federal Civil Service as a Chief Administrative Officer, with the National institute for Medical Research, then under the Ministry of Science and Technology. In June 1989, I decided to resign and go into private business as Chairman of some companies. Meanwhile, I was also into politics though I didn't contest for any position until 1998. I contested for the seat of the Gombe Central Senatorial District under UNCP, I won even when the constituency was DPN dominated. I then joined the PDP and I'm a member of the Gombe State Executive Committee. Incidentally, I was appointed Minister of State for Power and Steel by his Excellency, President Olusegun Obasanjo. That's Danjuma Goje for you!



Alhaji Danjuma Goje

NEWS

Nigeria's High Commission in Britain under probe

Nigeria's High Commissioner to the U.K. Prince Bola Ajibola, has constituted a four-man commission of inquiry to investigate allegations of bribery at the consular section of the commission in London.

Speaking at its inauguration on Tuesday, the high commissioner said that the inquiry had become expedient to conduct a full investigation into the allegations "in the interest of transparency and accountability."

He further explained that the inquiry was in line with the present administration's policy of probity and honesty in all areas of its operations at home and abroad.

He, however, lamented the "lack of good response from the public" on allegations usually made against

the officials. NAN reports that the commission's terms of reference are: to look into allegations of bribery and corruption among all staff of



Alh. Lamido, Foreign Affairs minister the consulate both at home and abroad, investigate whether there has been any cases of corrupt practices involving any member of staff, and recommend adequate measures to prevent such practices in the future; re-

ceive written memoranda from members of staff and the public from Jan. 24 to Feb. 28, while oral evidence will be received from March 1 to 30.

In his remarks, the chairman of the commission, Maj.-Gen. Abel Akale, said that all Nigerians should be concerned about the allegations, and pledged to work in accordance with the commission's terms of reference "in the interest of Nigeria and Nigerians."

Akale, who is the defence attaché at the commission appealed to the media to give adequate publicity to the commission "to elicit public reaction and encourage all to come forward."

Others members of the commission are Navy Capt. Bodunrin Adisa Raji and Col. Okonkwo Edwin, while Mr. Ibrahim Zango, a special assistant to the High Commissioner, will complete the list.

ETF introduces library development fund

Osborne Adi Jnr.

The Education Tax Fund, (ETF), and librarians across the country have agreed to operate a separate account for library development outside its educational intervention programme.

Consequently, all allocations under the Library Development Fund would now be defined as "ETF Library Development International Fund" to avoid any possibility of fund diversion by the various institutions earmarked to benefit from ETF Programmes.

In a communiqué at the end of their one day consultative meeting in Abuja, they also resolved that key areas of intervention should be prioritized by individual beneficiary schools, just as librarians are to be fully involved in the implementation and accounting for "ETF Library International" Programme.

Part of the resolutions reached at the meeting was that funds allocated to library development should be

utilised strictly in the following areas;

- < Acquisition of books, journals and periodicals;
- < Procurement of equipment, like computers and photo copiers,
- < Preservation of facilities and automation of libraries.

They also called for ETF intervention in the capacity building of librarians nationwide and the resuscitation of the mobile library system for out reach services.

To ensure transparency and accountability, the communiqué stated that librarians should be fully involved in the implementation and accounting for ETF library intervention programme and the effective monitoring of the project by ETF.

They noted that there was large scale decadence and neglect of the library system nationwide, and therefore commended the interventionist nature of ETF Programme which was rather complimentary without usurping the statutory mandate of the beneficiaries.

Yobe plans head count, training for destitutes

Abdullahi Bego, in Damaturu

Yobe state government is to conduct a census of destitutes throughout the State and establish an Endowment to train them for gainful employment.

In a communiqué issued out the end of its meeting, the state's committee on Shariah monitoring also said modalities are being worked out to establishing a body that would collect Zakkat from wealthy Muslims and distribute to the less

privileged.

Also to be introduced, according to the communiqué, are standard weights and measures to enforce Islamic regulations in trading and business practices.

The communiqué however noted the continued practice of hawking in many parts of the State despite the ban earlier placed on it. The committee therefore warns against hawking, saying law enforcement agencies will step up measures to ensure full public compliance.

The Chief of Army Staff, Lt.-Gen. Victor Malu, said in Lagos Tuesday that 200 army officers had been notified of their retirement, which would become effective within the next three to six months.

Addressing a news conference at the army headquarters, Malu gave a breakdown of the number of affected officers as one brigadier, 39 lieutenant colonels, 51 majors and 109 captains.

He said the officers were, 'those overaged in their present ranks, those who have failed promotion board or staff college qualifying

200 army officers retired

examinations three times, and short service combatant officers who have spent 10 years in service, but have not converted to regular combatant commission.

"Others are officers with disciplinary cases, medically unfit ones and undeployable ones", he said, and explained that the screening of the affected officers due for retirement, was carried out by the army career review board late last year.

The army chief also said that 34 other officers, including six Generals, were

granted voluntary retirement by the board. (NAN)



Gen. Malu

NNPC sympathises with explosion victims

The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) has reported cases of kerosene explosions in Benin resulting in loss of at least seven lives and property.

The NNPC also confirmed injuries to at least 21 others in such incidents in the city on Tuesday.

The corporation in a statement by its General Manager, Public Affairs, Mr. Ndu Ughamadu, advised products marketing companies to always ensure that their tanks for dispensing kerosene to consumers are not contaminated.

The statement also advised consumers, on their part, to always ensure that

safety procedures are adhered to in handling petroleum products.

The NNPC image maker reiterated the corporation's policy to sell standard products to marketers at its depots.

The statement expressed sympathy with the families affected by the explosions.



Alh. Buhari Abdulfatai, chairman of ABADAT Motors Ltd (right) receives Mr. Philippe Beodet, MD, PAN at the commissioning of Abadat workshop in Abuja

Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje

Port reforms create 5,000 jobs

Tokunbo Oloke, Lagos

The Executive Chairman of Joint Dock Labour Industrial Council (JODLIC) Alhaji Ahmed Tijani Ramalan has said that the recent port reforms has provided jobs for 5000 youths.

A statement by the head of public affairs and information of the council, Mallam Isa Suwaid said it has also enhanced business activities in the maritime sector. The council chairman who led members of JODLIC governing board and other stakeholders to a meeting with Minister of Transport, Chief Ojo Maduekwe added that, there was growth in small scale business activities in the sector.

"Having reviewed the activities of the Council for the last six months Ramalan contended that the Council for the last six months achieved its objectives, which include restoration of sanity, law and order in the seaport"

The Chairman also noted that not only was the sector better off, the dockworkers themselves were now smiling because of an improvement in their condition of service.

Earlier in his speech, the transport minister commended the JODLIC management and members of its governing board noting that the achievement in the sector was a combined effort.

Obasanjo retires NVRI director

From Buhari Bello in Jos

President Olusegun Obasanjo has approved the retirement of the Director of National Veterinary Research Institutes (NVRI) Dr. Abubakar Lamorde despite the condemnation of such action by a cross-section of people from the middle belt region.

Daily Trust reliably learnt that the letter to that effect from the Federal Ministry of Agriculture with reference number PN/B. 1088/Vol.111/403 dated January 10, 2001 was signed by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, Dr. Umaru Alkaleri and addressed to the Chairman NVRI Governing Board.

In the letter, the Permanent Secretary quoted another letter from the Head

of Service with reference member PEN/64915/110 dated January 10, 2001 stating that the "President had directed that Dr. Lamorde should immediately proceed on retirement".

Investigations by Daily Trust showed that this is the third retirement letter written to the Director within 10 months.

The first retirement letter with reference number PN/B 1088/VOL.11/180 dated 18, may 2000 was signed by the Director of personnel management of the Ministry Mr. C.A.N. Ebe while the one with reference number PN/B.1056/VOL.11/316 was issued by the same Dr. Umaru Alkaleri, the Permanent Secretary of the ministry.

It was also gathered that the same permanent secre-

tary wrote another letter with reference number FMA/Perm./Sect./10/1/197 inviting the Director, Dr. Lamorde for a meeting with the minister of Agriculture on November 27, last year.

Daily Trust gathered that it was the November meeting with the minister that Dr. Lamorde was reinstated as the Director before the latest development.



President Obasanjo

NEWS

Bread scarcity hits Lagos as bakers close shop

The strike embarked upon by master bakers in Lagos last week, has started to take its toll on Lagosians as bread, a staple food in the former federal capital, has gone out of reach of the masses.

Mr Ishola Arowolo, a baker at Ketu disclosed to *Daily Trust* that the bakers' decision to close their shops was to protest the huge increase on the cost of flour.

Corroborating, Mr. Arowolo Mr Razak Bakare also a baker said the prices of other ingredients used in baking have also skyrocketed in recent times. "We are on strike because we want the Federal Government to bring down the prices of flour and baking ingredients and in this way bread will be more affordable for the common people, he stated.

Asked when the strike would be called off, Mr Bakare stated that, "we are not in a hurry; it depends on how soon the government yields to our demands."

Meanwhile, the bakers association has set up a task force to sanction bakers who may want to open

By Samson Ojo, in Lagos

shops thereby rendering the strike action ineffective. The bakers task force, *Daily Trust* learnt were visiting bakeries to enforce the strike and confiscate baking ingredients of erring members:

Most Lagosians spoken to by *Daily Trust* on how they were coping with the

dearth of bread, expressed their sadness over the situation and called for urgent response to the demands of the bakers.

Mrs Tinu Aina, a school teacher at Ojota Grammer School told *Daily Trust*, that her family has been adversely affected, "bread is our favourite food, the bread scarcity is really making things difficult for us", she said

National integration group meet deadlocked

From Buhari Bello, in Jos

Few days after the second meeting of the National Integration group in Jos, strong indications have emerged that the meeting may have ended in a deadlock.

Reliable sources at the government house told *Daily Trust* in Jos that the deadlock may be connected with the presence of some "unidentified" interest groups which stormed the venue of the meeting held at the main exco chamber of government house, Jos.

The meeting which attracted new faces attending the gathering for the first time also had in attendance ministers, members of the National Assembly and Special Assistants to the President whose motive

for partaking in the under 50's affairs was not known.

"I told you that not much discussion was made at the meeting because people could not freely express their feelings, on all the issues listed in the agenda due to the presence of these unidentified interest groups."

Daily Trust investigation has it that the presence of the such persons at the Jos meeting did not go down well with the organizers who suspected interior motives.

Although, no communiqué was issued at the end of the six hour deliberation, speculations filtered after the meeting shown that it may be as a result of the fear being contained by the group.

According to an insider who pleaded anonymity, "when we started the meeting and the agenda was read out, the expectations were that people will discuss freely with open mind on the issues, but that was not to be" because he said "some people inside the meeting were only interested in the comments to be made by other people.

Such situation, he told *Daily Trust*, has hindered some of the participants including those who attended the maiden meeting of the group from making any meaningful contribution on the meeting's agenda.

Consequent upon this development, it was learnt that the national integration group has decided that only those invited would attend the third leg of the meeting scheduled for Kaduna.

Mrs Babangida calls for prompt payment of bills

From Akinde Adeniji, in Minna

Former first Lady, Mrs. Maryam Babangida has said payment of electricity bills is necessary for the sustenance of NEPA's distribution of electricity.

Speaking at the official commissioning of the N71m Tungan Mallam rural electrification project in Niger State at the weekend, Mrs Babangida said it would equally go a long way in ensuring NEPA's internally generated revenue.

"I urge you to pay your electricity bills promptly, as prompt payment of electricity bills ensures that adequate revenue is internally generated by NEPA to sustain its operations",

On the part of NEPA, she enjoined the authority to "ensure regular electricity supply and avoid constant increase in its tariff".

Mrs Babangida recalled the electioneering promise of taking development closer to the rural areas and expressed delight that the commissioning was a

fulfilment of the people's aspiration.

"It gladdens my heart that the ceremony we are performing today is there-



Mrs. Babangida

fore the translation of the covenant between the people of Niger State and the vigilant and visionary leadership of Governor Abdulkadir Kure", she asserted.

She appealed to the authorities of NEPA to allow beneficiaries of rural electrification projects to pay a flat rate for the power they consume, describing electricity as the back-bone of socio-economic development around which commercial activities rotate.

Nassarawa poly provost warns against intolerance

From Abdullahi Shu'aibu, in Lafia

The provost of Nassarawa state College of Agriculture, Lafia, Alhaji Moh'd Baba Idris has warned students against religious, sectional or ethnic tendencies on the campus.

Alhaji Baba Idris gave the warning on the occasion of the matriculation ceremony for fresh intakes into the college also reminded the students of the federal government



The President of NBA, D.C.J. Okochu (right) Chief Bola Ige, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of the Federation (left) both listening to President Olusegun Obasanjo (middle) during a courtesy call by the NBA.

PIX: Kennedy Eghonodje

MOSOP reject Shell's re-entry into Ogoni

From Aisha Momoh, in Port Harcourt

Former vice president of the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP), Elder Lekue Lah has criticized Shell Petroleum Development Company on its approach towards re-entering Ogoni land to resume operations.

Mr. Lah told newsmen in Port Harcourt that Shell has not changed but merely shifted ground in their usual straight jacketed attitude to the genuine yearnings of Ogoni people.

According to him, "Shell have not changed, they can not talk of re-entering Ogoni area through organizing football matches though sports is a unifying factor but I think sports and oil are of two different significances.

The MOSOP activist however, suggested that Shell should do something for the Ogoni communities, as they hope that this year 2001 will bring good tidings to the Ogoni people because the oil firm own a lot to the people.

Lekue Lah who was the former Bori local government chairman described the relationship

some of the resources to the area.

Commenting on the crisis in MOSOP, the activists said there is no crisis in MOSOP, but a change in the leadership that was unwill-

"I drove Kudirat's assassins"

Mohammed Abdul, a.k.a. Katakoto, Mohammed Abacha's driver, yesterday confessed at a Lagos High court that he drove the vehicle which conveyed the alleged assassins of Alhaja Kudirat Abiola during the assassination attempt on Mr. Alex Ibru.

In his evidence-in-chief, Katakoto who was testifying at the resumed trial of the chief of army staff (COAS), Lt. Gen. Ishaya Bama and four others, said it was "in the process of this assignment he went to then Lagos state commissioner of Police, Mr. James Danbaba. So he (Danbaba) was aware of this assignment. If I make a report to the Police, it will still end up at Danbaba's office", he claimed. Katakoto, also told the court presided over by Justice Ade Alabi that the officer in charge of Mobile Police, Aso Rock, CSP Rabo

ing to go. Lawal had earlier warned him of the consequences of disclosing the assignments to anyone, threatening that, he would kill Katakoto and members of his family should the assignment be disclosed.

Katakoto said that "even the guns that were used were collected from the commanding officer, Bonny camp, Col. Jubril Yakubu".

Mohammed Abdul was the second prosecution witness (PW2) who gave evidence after the star witness, Sergeant Barnabas Jabilia, (A.K.A Rogers), who finished his cross examination yesterday over the attempted murder of Mr. Alex Ibru, *The Guardian* publisher,

In his evidence-in-Chief, Katakoto told the court that the first assignment he came to Lagos to perform was the abortive attempt on Ibru's life while the second was the murder of Kudirat Abiola.



Musliu Smith, IGP



INSIDE POLITICS

Diallo, Mantu head Ecowas Parliament

By Henry Omu

The 120-member ECOWAS Parliament yesterday in Abuja elected new officials to steer its affairs, with Malian parliamentarian, Prof. Ali Diallo and Nigeria's deputy senate president, Alhaji Ibrahim Mantu emerging as speaker and first deputy speaker respectively.

All officials elected into the 17-member bureau were unopposed candidates, while a Nigerian parliamentarian who had initially challenged Prof. Diallo

stepped down after failing to muster the required members of sponsors.

Apart from the election, the parliament similarly, approved a draft budget of \$14.19 million (N14.47b) including its draft rules of procedure.

While five other deputy speakers were elected from Burkina Faso, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Niger and

Gambia, the position of secretary-general of the parliament was zoned to Ghana just as Nigeria's Abubakar Kyari emerged as first treasurer.

Other positions include the post of second and third treasurer allocated to Senegal and Togo, while Sierra-Leone, Liberia, Ghana, Republic of Benin, Cape Verde and Cote D'Ivoire produced one parliamentary secretary each.

Speaker Diallo in his acceptance speech after his opponent had backed down, told his colleagues that Mali was ready to

forego her sovereignty for the integration of ECOWAS-member nations into one state.

"My country will not

spare any effort to achieve the political, economic, social and cultural integration of ECOWAS.

Benue speaker advocates govt of integration

The speaker of the Benue State House of Assembly, Mrs. Margaret Icheen has said in Makurdi that the present democratic experiment in Nigeria could only work "if the governed are made to be part of the government".

Icheen stated this at a public forum on the 2001 state budget organised by the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) Benue council.

The speaker, who was represented by the majority leader of the house, Mr. Timothy Iorchur, said that it was proper to expose the monetary functions of the government for public debate in order to carry the people along.

She expressed happiness that the state budget for this year was designed to serve the immediate needs of the people while at the same time, laying a solid foundations for the future.

Icheen, who commended the NUJ for organising the forum, expressed optimism that the outcome of the forum would to a large extent, influence the nature of debate on the

2001 appropriation bill, currently before the house of assembly. Also speaking, the state commissioner for finance and economic planning, Dr. Christopher Obute, said the state government had the confidence to implement the budget.

Obute appealed to Benue people to support the government to facilitate the implementation of the budget.

Earlier, the Benue chair-

man of the NUJ, Joyce Bur explained that the union was committed to providing the fora for the public to contribute effectively to governance.

The Benue governor, George Akume had submitted a budget to the State House of Assembly in which the government proposed to generate N15.374 billion and spend N24.494 billion, a deficit of about N9.2 billion.

2003: PDP chieftain supports Obasanjo

The state chairman of the ruling Peoples Democratic Party in Cross River State, Chief Benedict Ikobi says the need to maintain southern Nigeria solidarity and to tackle the problems affecting the country in general would warrant his support for President Obasanjo's second term.

Chief Ikobi who spoke to Daily Trust in his office on the preparation and build up to the 2003 presidential polls, said that the party in the state will mobilize support for Obasanjo's second term if the president so wishes.

He also stated that the south-south geo-political zone will equally close ranks and work for the anticipation of that mandate.

The state PDP chairman stated that now that the presidential mandate is in the hands of the south of Nigeria, it was incumbent

From: Bassey Ita in Calabar

on all southerners to join hands to ensure the success of the president as well as support his intentions to run for a second term instead of creating divided loyalty in the ranks of the south-south, south west and south-east.

He observed that Obasanjo has been able to establish a workable polity even in the breeze of confusion and disruptions waved by military jingoists and therefore needed to be given the leeway to consolidate and conclude this laudable feat.

Chief Ikobi also stressed that although his efforts were not to realised last year following the delay in the release of the budget this year will be blessing to all Nigerians as the early release and passage of the budget will further entrench the dividends of democracy in the system.

N-West canvasses for more parties

Participants at a two-day workshop on the review of the 1999 constitution, North-West zone, have advocated the evolution of more political parties in the country.

The participants, who made this known in a communiqué issued at the end of the workshop held in Zaria, said all constitutional provisions which impeded free evolution of more political parties should be expunged from the constitution.

They observed that requirements such as registration of political parties, payment of registration fees or deposits, geographical spread and federal character of parties constituted undue restriction and inhibited free evolution of political parties and hence should be expunged.

The participants, who noted that Nigeria was a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society, advocated that freedom of religion and association should be maintained and guaranteed in the constitution.



Lawmakers from Niger Republic, Moumouni Djermakoye (left), Mahamane Ousmane (2nd left), House of Reps. members, Abubakar Kyari and FCT minister, Alh. Ibrahim Bunu sharing pleasantries at the cocktail party held for ECOWAS Parliamentarians by President Obasanjo... Tuesday. Pix by Kennedy Egbonodje.

Anyim tasks Nigerian ambassadors

By Henry Omu

Senate President, Anyim Pius Anyim has called on heads of Nigeria diplomatic missions to help redeem the country's poor image abroad.

Senator Anyim stated this yesterday in Abuja, while receiving the Nigerian Ambassador to Japan, Mr. Emmanuel Otiotio, who paid him a courtesy visit in his office.

He advised all accredited Nigerian ambassadors to place as priority, the need to attract investment from their countries of posting into the nation's economy.

The Senate President stressed the need for the nation's diplomatic missions abroad to pay adequate attention to the welfare of Nigerians living in their respective countries and expressed satisfaction with the role Ambassador Otiotio was playing in strengthening relations between Nigeria and Japan as expressed in the recent visit of the Japanese prime minister to Nigeria.

He advised Ambassador Otiotio to ensure that the gains of the visit were fully harvested in areas of greater involvement of Japan in rebuilding the nation's economy.

Responding, Ambassador Otiotio expressed grati-

tude to the National Assembly for their role in repositioning Nigeria in the international community.

He promised to pursue vigorously all the ideals that would promote cordial relations between Nigeria and Japan.

Ambassador Otiotio welcomed measures taken

by the Senate President to bring stability to the National Assembly and wished him well on the challenges ahead.

He thanked the federal government for the establishment of the NDDC and advised the board members to satisfy the yearnings of the people of the area, through result-oriented approach to implementation of NDDC programmes.

Presidency not afraid of U-50 politicians -Okupe

From Buhari Bello in Jos.

The former special assistant to the president on media relations, Dr. Doyin Okupe has debunked allegations that the Presidency is having sleepless nights over the activities of National Intelligence Group (NIG).

Dr. Okupe who spoke exclusively to Daily Trust in Jos, before his removal yesterday, said it is not true that the presidency is behind the formation of the NIG as is being speculated.

According to the presidential spokesman, "there is no need to fear because the young ones are getting together and are saying that they want to have a hand in the destiny of this country".

Nigerians according to him, have come to realise that after 40 years, the nation is not where it is supposed to be but, "I think if we put our best and this group represent some of

our best, we must fight with the best that we have".

The special assistant to the president also told Daily Trust that he was attending the meeting of NIG for the first time because he identified with the group's aims and objectives, saying "am not here to conspire against anybody or to plan to remove people from office".

He explained that the U-50 gathering is a meeting of some of the best that Nigeria has to offer, and if there is any hope for the country, I think it lies with the group.

Also speaking to Daily Trust, Mr. Haruna Dabin of the Peoples Democratic Institute, Abuja said, the interest of the group is to prepare the generation that is likely to take over leadership from the older ones to be able to fraternise together.



KANO STATE GOVERNMENT
KANO STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING & PROTECTION AGENCY (KASSEPA)
 NO.2 Durbin Katsina Road, Bompai, P.M.B. 3046, Kano
INVITATION TO BID

The Kano State Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, in its continued effort to provide meaningful development projects to its teeming populace, intends to carry out works under Contract System, for which this invitation for Bidding is issued. The Kano State Environmental Planning and Protection Agency (KASSEPPA), hereinafter referred to as the Employer calls for Bidding from reputable Contractors for continuation of its Phase III Urban Road projects which are as follows:

| CONTRACT | DESCRIPTION |
|----------|-------------------------------------|
| KUR13 | Badawa Bus Stop-Eastern Bypass |
| KUR14 | Kawo Extension - Eastern Bypass |
| KUR15 | Mandawari - Aisami - Aminu Kano Way |

The works will include the construction of Culverts, the scarification and reconstruction of failed pavement sections, the provision of double coat surfaced dressed Asphaltic carriageway, the repair of existing drainage structures and the provision of new drainage facilities.

Eligible applicants may obtain between 22nd- 31st January, 2001 the Bid documents from:-

The Director Engineering Department

Kano State Environmental Planning & Protection Agency (KASSEPPA),

No. 064-630338

The documents are available for a non-refundable cash payment of N25,000.00 only per Contract document. One of the minimum requirements for qualification will be to have successfully carried out as Prime Contract, at least two works of a nature and complexity equivalent to the proposed works during the last five years. Submission of Application for Bidding must be received in sealed envelopes, which must be either delivered by hand registered mail to:-

The Director Engineering Department,

Kano State Environmental Planning & Protection Agency (KASSEPPA),

No.2, Durbin Katsina Road, Bompai Kano.

Tel: 064-630338.

Not later than 31st January 2001 and be clearly marked Application for Bidding for

Contract No. _____ The Kano State Environmental Planning and Protection (KASSEPPA) reserves the right to accept or reject late applications. Applicants will be advised in due course, of the results of their bids. AND IT IS NOT BINDING on the Employer to accept the lowest Bid.

Signed

MANAGING DIRECTOR

Kano State Environment Planning & Protection Agency (KASSEPPA)
 Kano State

Congratulations

The management and staff of RAHUSA VENTURES NIG. LTD. heartily congratulate the Hon. Minister of Power and Steel, Alhaji Danjuma Goje, the Executive Governor of Katsina state, Alh. Umar Musa 'Yar'adua, the Deputy Governor of Katsina state, Alhaji Tukur Ahmed Jikamshi on the commissioning of Danja Rural Electrification Project on Friday 26th January, 2001.



Alhaji Danjuma Goje
 Hon. Min. of State for Power & Steel

We also rejoice with the government and people of Katsina state on this laudable achievement. RAHUSA VENTURES is happy to have brought this project to reality. This is one of the numerous projects we are handling for the Federal Ministry of Power & Steel.

Long live Katsina State -
 Long live Federal Republic of Nigeria
 Long live RAHUSA VENTURES

Signed

Alh. Mohd. Sanusi Wada, CEO



Alh. Umar Musa 'Yar'adua



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Agriculture

A new concept in High Fish production!

By Sharon Anochie

Most ambitious people yearn to make millions in a short space of time and with minimum investment. But it is hard to identify the ideal business venture that fits this requirement. That is probably why so many people waste a large part of their time and hard-earned money in unproductive and high-risk investments.

There is no such thing as "Luck". The only reason why some people make fortunes more easily than others is because they acted on the right idea at the right time. Every successful businessman, political praise singer, musician, writer or fraudster knows this truism.

Some people are seriously searching for an investment opportunity that might yield them a good dividend in a year. But just close your eyes and try to think of any venture that is sure to give a quick return on investment in less than six months, plus a profit margin of 2 to 10 times of the invested capital. Commercial intensive fish farming is it. Incredible, it seems. But it's true – ask any commercial fish farmer who is open-minded.

Yet, a lot of people invest a minimum of N3 million in one venture or the other and still think it great when they make a profit of 20 per cent a year. One could only imagine their reactions when they invest about half of that amount in the new estate-type Flow-Through Pond (FTP) system and make a profit of between N10 million to over N20 million in under six months.

The FTP estate-type pond is a new concept in intensive pond fish farming from AQUACULTURE SYSTEMS TECHNOLOGIES LTD., Lagos. It is designed for operational convenience, maximum productivity and profit in fish farming.

The FTP pond-farming module comes either in concrete or synthetic membrane liners. The objective being to make pond fish farming less tasking and laborious. Above all, it can be sited anywhere – in your backyard, farm estate, school, factory premises or any other place you can think of. The design also beautifies the environment with its surrounding green grass turf, fountain-like aerator operations and very clear water – you can even count the fish.

On site, the only thing you require is electricity (either from NEPA or a small generator set) to power the French-made FAIVRE aeration systems at critical hours of the day or night.

Although it is more convenient to have a bore-hole

water supply facility on site to service the ponds when required, one can also hire tanker trucks to provide good quality bore-hole water from outside about once a month. FTP ponds sited on the banks of streams or rivers can conveniently utilise the water from such water bodies. Drilling wells on site and using axial-flow pumps to draw the water up and into the fish-holding facilities can also serve.

The FTP fish-farming module is not a re-circulation system. It is a still water pondage for semi-intensive, intensive or super-intensive culture of any freshwater fish or crustaceans (crabs, lobster or prawns). The system is characterised by advanced management techniques, constant oxygen saturation of the culture water and the fact that it can be sighted anywhere there is land. Maximum space requirement for the biggest FTP module is 560 m².

The FTP pond-farming module can be converted to a re-circulating system whenever the need arises. By adopting the re-circulation technique, it may be possible to reuse the water to a very high degree, thus reducing the water consumption dramatically. This method is very suitable for water-scarce areas.

The FTP farm pond has either square or rectangular design configurations with round edges for good water circulation. The pond bottoms have special features for easy drainage that make them self-cleaning. As industrialisation of fish farming continues, so does the importance of systems and equipments providing higher profit at lower risk.

The FTP fish-farming module has three different size designs. The first is FTP-80 which is a raceway-like tank pond measuring 10m x 8m. Its production capacity in one cycle of 5-6 months is 30 metric tonnes of catfish or carp. That is 20,000 fish of average individual harvest weight of 1.5 kilograms. For tilapia, the production capacity for the same period is 14 metric tonnes or 28 metric tonnes a year.

The second in the series is the FTP-200 measuring 20m x 10m. Production capacity per cycle of 5-6 months is 66-99 metric tonnes of catfish or carp. That is 66,000 fish. For tilapia, the production volume is set at 46.2 metric tonnes – for 66,000 individuals of average harvest weight of 700-900 grams, according to genetic make-up.

The third and the largest of them all is the FTP-500 estate farm module. This high-revenue-yielding production system measures 25m x 20m. Its production capacity per cycle of 5-6 months is 125-187.5 metric tonnes of catfish or

carp. For tilapia, the volume is 87.5 metric tonnes for the same period.

The farm gate price for catfish is N210 per kilogram weight. If in doubt, go to CHI Ltd., at Ajao Estate in Oshodi (Lagos) on any Monday morning and see for yourself. The price is even higher in other places. For a 1.5-kilo catfish, the price is between N250-300. But yet, the demand is far greater than the supply.

Any of these modern FTP

the ponds – probiotic treatment additives that rapidly remove ammonia from the pond water, prevents the build-up of organic wastes on the pond bottom, and act as an effective probiotic against disease-causing bacteria. This pond treatment additive enhances water quality and thus reduces requirements for water exchange and increase fish or shrimp survival and growth rates.

The modern FTP pond farming system is the way for-



Alhaji Hassan Adamu
Minister for Agriculture

still water pond systems is ideal for commercial fish farm estate development for high volume production of freshwater fish. For those who want to enter the equally lucrative ornamental fish breeding and export business – the FTP system is the Eureka! The moderate sizes of the FTP production ponds make them very easy and convenient to manage.

Many people are dreaming about venturing into small-scale marine shrimp farming and export business but lack sources of information and expert advice. These people generally want to start small and scale up later as revenue starts to flow in. FTP ponds are tailor-made for extensive, semi-intensive, intensive and super-intensive shrimp farming operations in any ocean front location with good quality seawater.

Who will provide the juvenile shrimps (seed stock) for on growing? Good question. Aquaculture Systems Technologies Ltd. is well positioned to render this service as well. That includes regular provision of high quality nursery and grow-out marine shrimp feeds specially formulated for the particular species under production.

Management technique for the FTP pond system also includes the periodic introduction of beneficial bacteria into

pleted at Rumuokoro in Port Harcourt – in the residence of a client, Mr. Edema Ejogbam. Negotiations, too, are on going for a battery of three modules of FTP-200 at Owo in Ondo State, at the country home of a client resident in Lagos. Yet serious enquiries for the system still continue to pour in from all over the country.

The FTP modular pond technology is the future for all still water pond farming. Each independent farming module comprising the main grow-out pond and 3-nursery raceway system is equipped with aeration systems from FAIVRE of France.

Early fingerlings are raised in the nursery facility under our special management technique before transfer to the main grow-out pond. This progressive transfer of stocks (PTS) technique prevents disease, cannibalism, promotes faster growth and excellent feed conversion factors.

In such an ideal environment, the fish will have only one thing in mind – growth. FTP pond modules are either built in concrete or synthetic membrane liners. Lining ponds with membrane sheets is of course cheaper than concrete. Our pond liners have long life, high resistance to ultra-violet light and ozone, and a guaranteed life span of 15 years under continuous production before replacement. It is ideal for shrimp and fishponds, water reservoirs and other large water containments.

Concrete ponds are permanent structures. They are suitable for ponds not more than 500m², and which are located within a residential home, factory, etc. But whether concrete or membrane-lined, the FTP pond farming technology is designed to make pond fish farming possible anywhere, and to make farming more convenient and less laborious. The aim is simply to increase fish-pond water quality and provide an ideal environment favourable for the faster growth and health of the cultured species. The advantage over earthen ponds include:

Shorter ponds cleaning time – soil treatment with lime is not necessary as in earthen ponds, and it is easy to clean the concrete or lined pond by high pressure water jet. Thus, the long period of earthen pond bottom drying between productions is eliminated.

Aeration is more efficient in FTP ponds because of the hard bottom. So less dissolved oxygen is lost into the soil, giving substantial savings in power.

Less feed is lost in the FTP ponds. Percentage of uneaten feeds less compared to traditional earthen ponds, as there is no chance for the feed

to mix with ponds bottom soil or mud.

FTP ponds are designed to be suitable for all types of soils. No more reliance only on clay soils which has limited the selection of aquaculture sites. Now ponds can be built on any soil type – sandy, rocky, acid sulphate soils, etc. Water quality in the FTP ponds is not affected by surrounding soil, and therefore the chance of pond water contamination from the soil is effectively eliminated.

Aquaculture Systems Technologies Ltd. is today the only Nigerian company solely and actively engaged in modern technology-based aquaculture engineering and consultancy. We are the first and the best. Our efforts and services have now been extended to fish feeds and nutrition, feed technology and feed strategies – with the clear aim of keeping our leading edge.

The cost of building one module of FTP-80 is about N970,606. Its production volume is 26,000 catfish or over 26 metric tonnes per cycle of 5-6 months worth N5.2 million at the pond bank or N10.4 million in revenue in one year (two production cycles).

For the FTP-200, building cost is around N1,457,050. Production volume per cycle is 66,000 catfish or 66-75 metric tonnes. The net profit after deduction of farm building and production costs is N7,122,400 for catfish; or N9,969,510 to N15,129,510 for export tilapia. Double these figures to get your profit for two production cycles of one year.

The FTP-500 is the mother of them all – measuring 500m² in area. Building cost for this technology-based larger intensive fish production facility is about N3.3 million. Net profit in only one cycle of 5-6 months is estimated at over N20,686,050 at the farm gate (wholesale). Volume – 125,000 catfish (187.5 tonnes) per cycle.

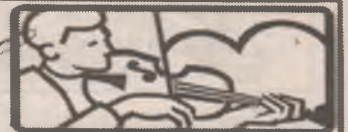
The reason for providing the above costs-benefits figures is that we now only attend to serious enquiries. Curiosity and information seekers should provide self-addressed and stamped envelopes for replies.

For increased yield and profitability in fish farming, we have developed these low cost, economically viable FTP culture technologies for several marine and freshwater species both for monoculture and composite culture of compatible species. In addition, breeding and hatchery technologies and feed formulations have been standardised for scientific farming.

Mr. Sharon Anochie is a Lagos-based culture fisheries technologist – specialising in commercial aquaculture development and shrimp business consultancy.



Arts & Entertainment



BOOKS

A boy goes to school! (III)

Continued from yesterday
A PLAN GOES AWRY

Education is a process covering one's whole life span, from the cradle to the grave. Learning, for me, has therefore been a continuous process, inside and outside formal educational structures. Here, however, I am concerned with the former, including the years I spent as a teacher and as an educational administrator. The period spanned the first 34 years of my life. It started from my early childhood in Shagari, taking me to several places within and outside the former Sokoto Province. The experiences of these exciting years were without doubt crucial to my subsequent successes and failures in life.

Only the first six years of my life were spent continuously at Shagari, though I made regular visits, usually during school holidays. When at home, I participated actively in the affairs of my family and community from which I learnt tremendously. My longest stay in the village, other than my first six years, was in 1938 when an epidemic of meningitis in the North forced the closure of our school for five months. I mixed freely with the people during those five months, not so much as a child but as an enlightened student eager to learn and assist wherever I could.

That was the time I began to identify myself actively with the problems and aspirations of my people. The attachment grew stronger with each passing day regardless of where I was working or living. Except between January 1984 and July 1986 when compelling circumstances dictated otherwise, I never spent one whole year without visiting the village. I remember vividly when I first left Shagari in 1931. This was in pursuit of western education, a pursuit forced upon me and upon my brother-guardian.

Our father had died a year earlier, when I was only five. Shagari village in 1931 did not have any western school. So, it was to Yabo that I went for my elementary education. Yabo and Dogondaji were the only places in the whole western districts of Sokoto Division that had an elementary school each. Indeed, there were only a handful of schools in Sokoto Province itself, as was also the case in most other provinces of Northern Nigeria. Muhammadu Bello, the first child in our family to be sent to school, had also gone to Yabo. Our father had sent him there because every District and Village Head was required to send one of his children or wards to school.

When Bello himself became the Village Head in 1931, it fell upon him to act likewise. But since he had no son at the time, he decided to send me instead as I was under his care and just about the right age. Even though Bello had himself been to school, this was a reluctant decision on his part as most people then were distrustful of western education. The fear was that a Muslim child might go the way of the infidel.

One morning, as we were working on the farm, Bello called me aside and asked whether I would like to go to school at Yabo. I told him plainly that I did not want to leave home for any strange place. He would still send me to Yabo, he said, but I should not worry as he had an idea that might just save the situation. I agreed. He

Here, the account unfolds to reveal Alhaji Shehu Shagari as a child striding around his school at Yabo, learning about the world and encountering fierce bullies, too. In Yabo his relations are a great help, and he begins to form a strong affection for the peasant.



The book

then asked whether I could count from one to ten, to which I said I could. So, he advised that if I was asked to do so at Yabo, I should deliberately flunk. That, he assured would cost me my admission and mean my return to Shagari.

My mother took me to Yabo, where we first saw the District Head who happened to be her brother. He was also directly involved in the admissions process. I deliberately failed the examination. Accordingly, he asked my mother to take me back home as he considered me too young for admission to the school. Bello's idea worked well to the relief of everyone at home in Shagari. There was jubilation; but it was short-lived.

YABO: ADVERSITIES AND RESPONSES

Bello was still required to send a child to school. So a few weeks later, I was called again to Yabo for another test. This time I was escorted by Gago, one of the Shagari village elders, straight to the school because the District Head was not in town that day.

The headmaster, Mallam Umaru Sanyinna, sent me straight into a class where children of my age were undergoing numeracy tests by one Mallam Sahabi Sifawa, a man of formidable appearance. I had also noticed that any boy who failed to count correctly was slapped or caned. So, when the fierce looking teacher eventually asked me to count from one to ten, I promptly and correctly obliged. So impressed was he that he asked me to slap other boys who subsequently failed the test! I was promptly admitted into the school.

Discipline in the school was strict and the lessons were first class. If the teachers were harsh, the senior boys were even worse. This worried me intensely, particularly as I was the youngest in my class. (For some unlucky reasons, this happened to be my unfortunate experience in almost all the schools I attended.) So, I found myself living among 'strange' colleagues, and it took me some time to discover that not everyone was unfriendly after all.

One immediate and major problem for me was finding a suitable accommodation in Yabo. I initially stayed with my maternal uncle, Sarkin Kabi Shehu. But I found my uncle's family rather large and not particularly homely as none out of the women in the house seemed to take real care of me. I was just one of many children in the house. I ate as and when I could obtain food, and did not have any particular room to myself or one I could share with others. And what's more, my uncle was too busy to pay any particular attention to me or any of his children.

Later, my mother came and moved me to another house. This time I was specially placed under the care of a kindly lady, Yatu the wife of Datti Mai Dogarai, himself a very kind gentleman. But my honeymoon with Yatu was short-lived, as she was soon divorced from Datti. I was then placed under the care of Datti's eldest wife, 'Yar-lokoko. She cared only for her own children and she neither gave me food nor attended to my other needs, except when compelled by her kindly husband whenever he was home, which was often rare. When he was later installed the Village Head of Dorawa, he transferred me to the care of his younger brother, Garban Datti. I was very well looked after in Garban Datti's house, but my new found happiness was again short-lived. I soon moved to the school hostel, where most of the residents came from outside Yabo District (places like Bodinga, Sifawa, Danchadi, Kilgori and Sanyinna), and had no guardians in Yabo. It was here that I was to encounter the worst bullies of my school days.

At first, I had great difficulty making friends mainly because the older pupils considered me to be too young. We all lived in small round mud huts with thatched roofs. There were no shutters to the doors and windows. We slept on mats, spread on dusty floors, as beds were then a luxury. There were four boys to each hut, and I still remember my three roommates, Bello Bodinga, Garba Takatuku and Shehu Bulanyaki. We each took turns to fetch water every evening from a nearby well, and this was poured into big troughs (*kwatarni*) for communal use.

Our daily routine always began rather harshly: the senior boys would wake up the juniors with their whips (*gwali*) very early to sweep the entire compound. We would then take our compulsory cold bath, even during the coldest months of the harmaṭṭan season (*hunturu*). This was followed by physical training (PT) exercise on the football pitch. Classes started at 7 a.m, followed by breakfast two hours later. Every child had to fend for himself.

Some would buy cooked meals while others would go into town or even into the bush in search of food. *Fura da nono* (a mixture of dough and yoghurt), or fura as it is simply called, was served at lunch after school hours but there was never enough to fill our empty bellies. There were games in the afternoon but some pupils would be sent to work on the school farm and vegetable garden. Evening meals of *tuwon dawa* (stodgy guinea corn meal) with stew

Contd. on Pg.26



Arts & Entertainment



BOOKS

Contd. from Pg.25

(miya) were irregular; but on the average we had three of these in a week.

Inadequate school meals often forced some boys to resort to some extraordinary means of feeding themselves. For instance, some boys would go into the nearby bush in search of such things as wild fruits, mice, fowls, hedgehogs, tortoise and alligators. Luckily for some of us, the various handicrafts which we acquired at school, making such things as baskets, raffia-fans and hats enabled us earn some money with which we bought food. I used to hawk my own and other pupils' handicrafts in and outside Yabo whenever the opportunity arose. In the course of hawking these wares, I discovered, to my considerable delight, that I had a number of relatives in the Yabo vicinity, namely in Kaura Yabo, Tagule, Bengaje and Bulaga. They not only subsidized me with food but with money as well whenever I visited them or when any of them was in Yabo on business. As there were no lessons on Fridays, I would trek home to Shagari every Thursday afternoon and return the next day. I usually brought back some little money, which only saw me through a few days.

In spite of our miserable existence, schoolwork went on smoothly and standards were fairly high. Only the menacing attitude of the older boys adversely affected me psychologically to the extent that I had to repeat my first year. But I soon adjusted and I was promoted from class I to class III. To my great relief, I subsequently became a non-boarding pupil to stay with Wazirin Yabo, and then with Majidadin Yabo. Though my stay with both people was not very comfortable, it was by far better than the harsh life of the school hostel.

While staying with Wazirin Yabo I had the good company of my cousin and classmate, Maishanu Toronkawa. We turned out to be the best two students of our class. But Maishanu did not stay long enough before he moved on to the Central Elementary School in Sokoto, thus enabling Bello Bodinga to become the other of the two top pupils of our class. Our academic pre-eminence was not at all envied by our classmates. For almost everyone dreaded the prospect of qualifying for transfer to the faraway Sokoto Middle School, the criterion of which was taking either the first or second position in the final examinations of Elementary class IV. Predictably, Bello Bodinga and I eventually qualified for transfer to Sokoto. This was bad news at home in Shagari! But as far as I was concerned, anywhere else must be better than Yabo. In retrospect, however, I must say that my experiences at Yabo were of tremendous advantage.

At Yabo, I was fortunate to continue with my Islamic religious lessons. Our Arabic teacher at the elementary school was Mallam Sabo Bengaje who retired in 1980 after 50 years' service at the same school! There, we were taught the Qur'an and Tauhid as well as other aspects of Islamic religious education, Mallam Sabo also ran a Qur'anic school on the traditional pattern after school hours where I was one of his most enthusiastic pupils.

There was also a night school in the house of the chief imam nearby, which I also attended every night and to which I always contributed my share of firewood or corn stalks for the bonfire, which served as our lighting, I also took informal lessons from two of my maternal aunts, one of whom was married to the Waziri while the



At home at Shagari with villagers and relatives, etc.

other was the wife of the court registrar (mufti). So involved was I that by the time I went to the Sokoto Middle School in 1935 at the age of 10, I could recite not only about four hijabs (sections) of the Qur'an, but could also read and write in Ajami (Hausa script in Arabic alphabet). It was also at Yabo that I first learnt the virtues of patience and perseverance, as well as of competition, self-discipline and self-reliance.

Above all, my time at Yabo gave me the opportunity to observe and appreciate the faith, courage and determination with which the peasant always strove to eke out a living for himself and family while simultaneously struggling happily to fulfil his duties to God and his community. Many years later, I reflected on those wonderful qualities of the peasant in a speech I delivered at the Yabo Secondary School prize-giving day ceremony of July 1976. The relevant part of the speech merits citation in ex tenso:

The ordinary, simple but indefatigable peasant is the teacher who teaches you never to complain, but always to endeavour to make the best of what you have and be self-reliant, the peasant you see around you doing his daily routine of carrying manure to the farm, working from dawn to dusk, tilling the soil on his patch of land, building



Alhaji Shehu Shagari

his own hut with the grass and mud he has collected himself; carrying his own water and firewood from the bush to his home; this peasant never complains to anyone about shortage of anything except that he prays to Allah over the shortage of rain. He is forever determined to exploit God's bounties to his use; he would fish or hunt for meat, wear only the scanty clothes he can afford, or do without; but at the same time he is conscious of his civic responsibilities. He pays his tax regularly and participates actively in community development work without demanding wages. He is self-disciplined and respects authority to a fault.

From him we have a lot to learn if we want to be happy, for he is obviously a happier person than the greedy and selfish pedant who lays more stress on his rights and privileges than on his obligations and responsibilities. We do not, however, need to be peasants in order to be contented and happy. The opportunities that we have which he has missed have conferred on us not privileges alone but also great responsibilities. We have been very fortunate indeed to be among those few in this country who have been given the benefit of free education at the expense of the poor peasants who form the bulk of the population of this nation. This education has given to everyone of you tremendous opportunities to rise to the highest echelons of society if only you can work half as hard as the peasant. The peasant, however, can never reach that position even if he works still harder, for he lacks the opportunities that you are enjoying through no fault of his. He depends on you and your education to contribute towards the betterment of his well-being. You have a duty to serve him in whatever capacity you are able to serve. This sacred duty to serve the public should be first and foremost in the mind of everyone who has been privileged, as you are, to have the benefit of secondary school education. You have no cause to complain because you are already privileged. And, please, whenever you feel like complaining about anything, consider seriously the plight of those millions of your fellow countrymen and women who are less privileged. What can you do to assist them? You can assist them by facing your problems boldly and surmounting them courageously with a sense of duty and responsibility. Let us for once do away with silly excuses for inertia and incompetence by making the best out of what we have and by trying to improve our efforts towards the progress and development of our country.

We can achieve a lot by trying to do more instead of always asking for more.

Mr. Chairman, I have dwelt so much on this matter because I feel there is a tendency nowadays for everyone to complain about lack of this or that, as an excuse for not doing what is expected of him or her. This attitude must change if we are to develop this country as a united and self-reliant nation.

It is pertinent here to draw on some significant recollections of my four-year sojourn in Yabo. These may give the reader some idea of the frightening underdevelopment of Yabo, as I believe of many other Nigerian communities during the colonial era. In the field of education, for example, hardly any progress was made; this is clearly shown by the fact that the whole of former Sokoto Province (roughly the size of present Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara states) had only one secondary school. At a lower level, the entire Yabo District, for instance, had only one elementary school. Somewhat surprisingly, the British failed to take seriously the training of the very indigenous people they required to assist them run affairs at local level. It was in 1933, exactly 30 years after British occupation that the first of any kind of formal instruction was provided for all the village scribes in Yabo District. During a number of weeks at our school, they were taught reading, writing and arithmetic in Hausa using Roman characters. Prior to this training exercise, all their official records, including tax records were kept in Ajami which, the supervising British colonial officials knew practically nothing about. Public infrastructures were also lacking. The first modern well (kwakwara) in Yabo was sunk in 1932, decades after the colonial authorities knew that the old ones had been infested with bats and snakes. The authorities showed no interest in building roads and sometimes frowned on the actions of Village Heads who took the initiative. I remember the experience of Sarkin Kabi Shehu of Yabo. He was the first District Head in Sokoto Emirate to own a car, a second-hand one which he bought in 1933.

But there were no local roads on which to drive it. Yabo lay some 3km to 5km between two trunk roads: the Sokoto-Argungu-Birnin Kebbi road and the Sokoto-Jega-Yelwa road. Sarkin Kabi Shehu therefore took the initiative and built a road to link Yabo with the two main roads. He was subsequently summoned to Sokoto and severely reprimanded by the colonial authorities. I can only suppose that he was rebuked for failure to seek prior planning permission, which would seem perfectly correct. But given the circumstances of the time, the action of the authorities seems curiously officious and short-sighted. This was all the more so considering that colonial rule had touched the entire Yabo District but mainly by neglect. Besides the one and only elementary school in Yabo, there was only one sewing machine. Sarkin Kabi Shehu owned it but the tailor was Majidadi, the man who once looked after me. Until 1935, there was not a single bicycle in the whole of Yabo District. It was from this incredibly rural setting that I was to move on to Sokoto, a city with cars, lorries, bicycles, stone and brick buildings, shops and even a hospital which I had not seen previously. My early experience of Sokoto was more or less like that of Alice in Wonderland. But it was soon to turn into yet another bit of nightmare.

To be continued.

Kudos To the Pacesetter



A view of Pa Abraham Adesanya low-income Housing Estate, Ajah. Inset: Gov. Bola Ahmed Tinubu with Oba Adeyinka Oyekan of Lagos cutting the tape to declare the Estate open

Governor Bola Ahmed Tinubu,

You have blazed the trail again,
 With the commissioning, on Monday, 15th January 2001, of the
 first phase of the ultra-modern 1,300 units
PA ABRAHAM ADESANYA Low-income housing estate,
 Ajah, in Eti Osa LGA of Lagos State.

This is a low income estate with first class infrastructural facilities including a functional drainage system, network of roads, electricity supply and pipe-borne water.

You are indeed showing the light for others to follow.

We are proud of you.

SIGNED

BATCO GROUP

... THE PACESETTER

- Initiated the Independent Power Project (IPP Enron)
- Revolutionised Health Care Delivery: (Dial Dr. 1,2,3 and an ambulance will be at your doorstep)
- Blazed the trail in paying the final year exam fees of all SSC III students in the State.
- Pioneered the Southern Governor's Forum
- Introduced the PSP in refuse collection and management thus eliminating of refuse dumps-sites in the metropolis

and more ...



NEWS

Plans to commercialise refuse collection run into hitches

Stories by Musa Badamasi

The proposed commercialization of refuse collection in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) has met its first set back in the satellite towns surrounding the federal capital city, Abuja.

Daily Trust investigation revealed that modalities to ensure easy collection of commercialized refuse are yet to be put in place to ensure compliance by residents.

It was gathered that since the pronouncement of the idea by the Minister of federal Capital Territory Alhaji Ibrahim Bunu, appropriate committee or task force is yet to be instituted to pursue the idea to a logical conclusion.

Part of the problems facing the project is that all satellite towns are yet to be demarcated for refuse collection as no specific designated areas in most satellite towns as collection point for refuse and its rate.



Alhaji Ibrahim Bunu

Also, the Abuja Environmental Protection Board (AEPB) is yet to extend its service to satellite towns of Nyanyan, Karmo, Gwagwa, Idu and Deidei to ensure environmental cleanliness of the area.

Speaking recently on the issue, the minister, Alhaji Bunu has indicted the management of AEPB for not capable of meeting the refuse collection demand of the entire FCT because of the rate at which waste is been generated in

the city as well as its surrounding.

Meanwhile the proposed pilot project of privatizing refuse collection been plan for Nyanyan by the Federal Ministry of Environment in conjunction with the Ministry of Federal Capital Territory (MFCT) is yet to take off as scheduled.

Presently further investigations by Daily Trust showed that the refuse and waste disposal situation in all the satellite towns are in serious deplorable state.

Electrical contractors to assist NEPA

The Licensed Electrical Contractors Association of Nigeria (LECAN) Abuja Chapter would assist the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) in the fight against vandalism of NEPA's equipment within the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

This was disclosed to Daily Trust by LECAN Abuja chapter chairman, Engr. Victor Olafasan who said that every member has been instructed to keep an eyes on various NEPA in-

stallations and report promptly any suspected move that could affect power supply in the territory.

According to him, the Association has commenced arrangement to put in place monitoring task force in all the area councils in the FCT in collaboration with various authorities at that level.

Engr. Olafasan stated that the Association mandate is to ensure that all electrical works that is to be car-

ried out in the FCT are properly done according to required standard specification.

"We are equally to educate the public on our resolve that only licensed and registered electrical contractors would henceforth be allowed to carry out any type of electrical works throughout the FCT", he noted.

Engr. Olafasan emphasised that LECAN's primary concern dwell on ensuring safety of the general public in their activities and usage of electricity saying "Electricity is the most dangerous thing as well as important to life, its management and operations must not be carelessly handled or entrusted in the hands of incompetent groups or individuals", he disclosed that efforts are still on to flush out and penalise people that are impersonating to be members of LECAN while they were actually not with the Association.

He called on Federal Government to properly enforce electrical law as enshrined in the Act I CAP 106, law of Federation 1990. The detail of which is gazetted by Federal Ministry Power and Steel, Electrical Inspectorate Services Department.

To qualify as member of LECAN according to Engr. Olafasan, one must possess at least trade test and ability to carry out various electrical works without flaws. Individual capability must have been certified by the constituted panel of government of which LECAN was equally represented.

Presently, there are over 300 duly licensed and registered members of LECAN in the FCT whose activities operations are fully recognised by NEPA

Abuja INEC begins training programme

The federal Capital Territory (FCT) Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has commenced training programme for its staff in preparation for this year voters registration exercise.

Daily Trust investigations at FCT INEC office located at area 10 Garki revealed that the training programme is being organized and funded by the United States Agency for international Development (USAID)

The training is focused at preparing key operational staff of the commission to ensure a successful implementation of various electoral programmes expected to be rolled out in due course to strengthened the country's nascent democratic dispensation.

Among those that are

being presently train include computer analyst category, computer operators as well as Research and Statistics Personnel, while the training of other group will continue in February.

When contacted about voters registration development, Mr. Martins Boris Chiroma Head of Public Affairs disclosed to Daily Trust that the arrangement to commence the exercise is underway and appropriate programme is being developed to ensure a hitch free voters registration exercise.

He disclosed that the essence of the exercise is to update the existing voter's registration to have comprehensive statistics of voters in the FCT in preparation for the next round of elections.

Mr. Chiroma noted that the exercise would take care of those who are unable to register during the last exercise while those that recently

become of voting age would equally be registered.

According to him FCT is growing daily while settlements spring up, such as Gwarimpa Estates, Lugbe and new Jabi resettlement "all this area would be furnished with new polling centres where people can be registered and cast their votes in any election.

In a related development, Daily Trust gathered that Directorate of National Civil Registration (DNCR) in-charge of proposed National Identity card would make use of FCT INEC polling center to collate data from eligible Nigerians for the identity card programme.

Also a programme is being worked out to ensure collaboration and good working relation between all agencies and political parties to streamline election operation in the interest of the entire country.

Abuja gets multi-million Naira auto garage

By Osborne Adi Jnr.

Car owners in the Federal Capital City, Abuja may now hieve a sigh of relief as a modern workshop, with ultra-modern state of the Art equipment has been commissioned in Abuja.

The workshop, which is a product of a private initiative, unlike before it, is a multi-dimensional garage fitted with fault detecting devices that are connected to a central global service center located in Manchester United Kingdom via the internet.

Alhaji Abdul-Fatai Buhari, chairman and Chief executive of ABADAT Motors, owners of the new workshop said at the commissioning yesterday that facilities assembled in the garage include a DIAG 2000 Multiplex error detector, which linked the complex to facilities in Europe that immediately detect fault in vehicles.

He said ABADAT was

introducing into the nation's new capital what he described as an Auto Rapid Center that would take just 30 minutes to service a car.

Under the new service program, notice of broken down vehicles can be made either through personal visit or phone call and there are workmen on the standby that would be immediately deployed to affect instant repairs of such vehicles or recover them to the workshop.

Alhaji Buhari said ABADAT management was challenged to set up the workshop following calls by the federal government to foreigners to come and invest in the country, adding that such calls can only be made meaningful if Nigerians first set the course by investing in the country.

The commissioning of the workshop also heralded the introduction of the 607 brand of Peugeot into the Nigerian market



Dr. (Mrs) Awoshika, National Co-ordinator, National Programme for Immunisation (NPI), immunising a child to commence this year's immunisation exercise in FCT.

FOR THE RECORD

Communiqué issued at the end of the meeting of the Northern Governors Forum held on Monday 22nd January 22, 2001 at General Hassan Katsina House, Kawo, Kaduna.

The Northern Government Forum met on Monday 22 January 2001 at General Hassan Katsina House KAWO Kaduna. The meeting which was presided over by his excellency, the Executive Governor of Yobe State, Alhaji. Bukar Abba Ibrahim (FNIQS) took far-reaching decisions on issues which are of interest to the 19 northern states and the nation.

Economic development of the North:

The executive government discussed the interim report of the committee of the Secretaries to the state government set – up specifically to recommend strategies for the socio - economic and political development of the North and approve the selection and appointment of a team of reputable consultants to advice on the appropriate means of uplifting the economic potentials of the North with specific attention on the following:

- a. Communication: which should include the development of Trans- Saharan Highways, Inland waterways, International Airports and necessary infrastructure for accelerating the economic development of the North.
- b. Power potentials, which include Hydroelectric, power sites such as in Niger, Bauchi, Kano, Jigawa and Taraba States as well as solar energy.
- c. Oil and gas potentials in Bauchi and Chad Basin, Taraba, Benue States etc;
- d. Agro allied product markets e.g. Groundnuts, Grains Cotton, Soybeans, Ginger, cattle, Gum Arabic etc
- e. Solid mineral deposits in various States and of course;
- f. The vast area of Tourism potentials in many states of the North.

2. The privatization of the new Nigerian Newspaper (NNN)

The executive governors discussed the recent decision of the Federal Government to privatize the NNN and NOTED that in the first place the NNN was taken over by the Federal Government from the Northern 19 States, which own the company, without compensation.

They therefore called on the Federal Government to immediately hand over the NNN to their rightful owners.

Privatization:

The executive Governor discussed the report on the participation of the 19 Northern States in the on going Privatization Exercise and Resolved to continue to participate actively in the programme through more effective public enlightenment, through direct purchase of shares by the various state investment companies with the aim of ensuring that the north was not left behind in this exercise.

3. Security Situation:

The Executive Governors reviewed the security situation in the nation and particularly

in the region and noted that there has not been much change since the last meeting. They therefore resolved to emphasize the decision at the earlier meeting.

That the Federal Government should recruit more policemen, equip and train them better and generally improve their welfare.

They further resolved that their various Zonal Security Meetings should pay special attention to all security issues unique to their various zones and take appropriate steps to arrest threat to lives and property. Similarly the Executive governors noted the urgent need to monitor the influx of aliens who are often heavily armed and violent and also to take steps to control over-zealous religious groups whose activities are found to be a threat to religious harmony and cohesion.

Executive Governor noted with grave concern the recent massacre of innocent people and defenseless civilians in Benue State over oil spillage for which they were not responsible.

The Executive Governor condemned the criminal killings and abduction of undetermined number of villagers.

They called for release of the abducted individuals and immediate investigation to determine the damages done and subsequent payment of compensation to the affected communities.

Similarly, the Executive Governors expressed their sympathy to the Executive Governor of Adamawa State on the brutal murder of one of the members of the States Executive Council. They call for thorough investigation of this heinous crime by the relevant authorities.

The Executive Governor lamented the unprovoked attack on Ilorin by the OPC. The Executive Governors BELIEVED that these attacks and harassment were unjustifiable and CALLED on the Federal Government to take decisive action to put a final stop to such unwanted attacks. EXPRESSING their total dissatisfaction with the way and manner the serious case against the OPC was handled, the Executive Governors DECIDED that the Attorney –general of the nineteen States would meet to specifically review the way and manner the case was handled and advise the forum.

4. Supply of Petroleum Products:

The Executive governor reviewed the petroleum situation and lamented that the crises had persistently remained unchanged with its attendant devastating effects on the socio - economic activities of citizens across the country. They therefore resolved that the Federal Government be pressed upon to address the ugly and embarrassing situation once and for all. While welcoming the decision of the NNPC to establish mega fuel stations, they PROPOSED that such stations should be es-

tablished at locations to be proposed by the Executive Governors.

5. Hajj Operations:

The Executive Governors discussed the preparation of the 2001 Hajj, and lamented the poor performance of some carriers in the past and called for improvement in the performance of the Carriers for this year's Hajj. They resolved that any poor performance in the past would not be tolerated.

They also resolved that the current fare is too high and should be reduced in order to lessen hardship on intending pilgrims.

6. Banning of Street Begging:

The Executive Governors discussed the issue of street begging and agreed that the nineteen Northern States should look into this issue in a joint action. They therefore resolved to take steps to eradicate street begging in all 19 northern states. To that effect they decided to set-up a Committee of Commission in-charge of social welfare in the Northern States to look into the problems and proffer solutions.

7. HYPPADEC

The Executive governors discussed the memo on the proposed Hydro-Power Producing Areas Development Commission (HYPPADEC) as a means of addressing the menace of the construction of dams on river Niger and Kaduna on the people of the areas which result in flooding and land degradation etc. The Executive Governors resolved to support the on-going efforts of their colleagues of Niger, Kwara, Kogi and Kebbi states so as to ensure the passage of the National Assembly.

Similarly, the Executive Governors called on the presidency and the National Assembly to take urgent steps on the Bill calling for the Establishment of the Desertification Commission.

8. Arewa Economic Summit:

The Executive Governor noted the effort spearheaded by some Northern intellectuals and professionals on the holding of the first Arewa Economic Summit and resolved to give firm support to that initiative so that the objective behind the holding of the summit would eventually be achieved.

9. Value Added Tax (VAT)

The Executive Governors examined the pressure being mounted on the Federal government to change the indices used in allocation of VAT to the states. The Executive Governors observed that VAT is consumption Tax and not a production Tax. They therefore reaffirmed their confidence on the current indices used in its distribution.

10. Date of Next Meeting:

The next meeting was fixed to take place on 19th March 2001.



SPORTS



France gets red card for World Cup costs

France soccer team may still be world champions, but the country's accountant have issued a red card to the French state for lavishly funding the 1998 World Cup and a new space-age stadium at a taxpayers' expense.

on Wednesday that the former conservative government had been far too generous to the French firms that built the Stade de France near Paris, and far too quick to pick the bill for leaner years once the contest was over.

report on France's finances that the then government had also gone over the top of the World Cup organization itself.

"France public authority bore almost the costs but the bulk of the revenue from the commercial rights went to the international football federation," FIFA the court of

auditors said.

The Stade de France, a sort of futuristic flying saucer on struts, cost 2.55 billion francs (\$365.7 million) to build. The entire project cost 5.7 billion franc due to the expense of reclaiming marshy land and building access roads and rail links.

The three construction company involved—Bouygues, SGE they would and GTM—said in the right-of-reply section of the report that they would never have been able to raise the cash needed, had they not received a good deal from the state.

Another sample by the government of the time was its agreement to pay compensation to the consortium, which took charge of the stadium if a club failed to take up residence after the World Cup.

Paris Saint German of the first division backed off and



Zidane... French football idol

two-and-half years after the World Cup finals the stadium still had no club in residence.

The court of Auditor said the government had to cough up more than 775 million francs in both the 1998/1999 and 1999/2000 seasons in compensation.

The current socialist-led government said it was trying to sort out the problem and had managed to secure 16 billion francs in fees for the stadium this year.

Briefs

Cairns out of action for six months

All-rounder Chris Cairns has given up his battle to be fit for any New Zealand matches this summer and decided to undergo knee surgery which will keep him out of international cricket for six months.

Cairns, ruled out of New Zealand's recent tour of South Africa because of his troublesome right knee, made a comeback for the first one-day international against Zimbabwe but could bowl only three overs.

Vettori to return against Sri Lanka

New Zealand left-arm spinner Daniel Vettori is back in the New Zealand squad for the first two of five-scheduled limited over internationals against Sri Lanka, New Zealand Cricket said on Wednesday.

Vettori has been out of the team for four months with a stress injury to his back, sustained on the tour of Zimbabwe and South Africa.

South African game is changing its face

Conrad Jantjes is a prodigiously gifted sportsman. He has played rugby, cricket and soccer for South African age group teams and is likely to have his first taste of Super 12 rugby with the Johannesburg-based Cats this season.

The 20-year-old Jantjes is set to become a household name in the Republic. Yet such fame would have been unlikely 20, or even 10-year-ago for the simple reason that Jantjes is black.

Kaladze signs 4 year deal with AC Milan

Georgina winger Kakha Kaladze said on Tuesday he had signed a 4-1/2-year contract with AC Milan.

"I'm very happy with the deal I got here," the 22-year-old international told Reuters by telephone from Milan.

Liverpool deny Zickler interest

Liverpool have denied making an approach to Bayern Munich striker Alexander Zickler despite the player's claim to be having talks with the English premier league club next week.

Speaking after training on Tuesday, the 26-year-old German international said: "It's a great honour for me. The first talks will take place at the end of the week."

Schumacher back on track for Ferrari

World champion Michael Schumacher got back to business on Tuesday with his first test for Ferrari since the season-ending Malaysian Grand Prix in October.

The German completed 43 laps of testing at the Circuit de Catalunya.

African World Cup Qualifiers:

Everything to play for

It will be another busy weekend for African football as the continent top soccer countries battle for five of Africa's World Cup berths. African champions, Cameroon travel to Lome to face stubborn Togo in what looks like an easy tie for the Indomitable Lions. But observers are not keen to dismiss Togo's chances having pulled some surprise and unlikely results in recent past. The Togolese had the distinction of being the only team to beat the Lions at last year's African Nations Cup when they stunned the eventual winners 2-1 earlier in the tournament. Although it is unfitting to describe this encounter as a grudge tie, the home side will definitely be looking forward to repeat their giant-killing performance. They will bank on the tenacity of German-based striker Bashirou Salou for the goals. However, the Lions are undaunted in their quest for a fourth consecutive World Cup appearance. With a squad of tested professionals including African Footballer of the Year Patrick Mboma, Samuel Eto'o Fils and midfielder Lauren

Mayer, the Lions are bookmakers favourites to clinch all the three points at stake. A Cameroonian slip will allow the Angolans, who entertain lowly Libya in Luanda, to bridge the gap in Group A. The Lions lead the stream with six points followed by Zambia and Angola with three points each.

In Group B, it will be make or break for Nigeria when they file out against Sudan on Saturday in Port Harcourt. Top in the minds of Super Eagles is how to get back into reckoning in the pool that also has arch-rivals, Ghana. The Eagles should do well to beat the hapless Sudan to keep pace with group leaders, the Black Stars, who also face George Weah's Liberia in Accra on the same day.

The Moroccans, who are now sitting on top of Group C will face a difficult tie in Cairo against a rejuvenated Pharaohs, while another North African power-house, Algeria would seek to revive their mundial hopes when they take on Namibia tomorrow in Annaba.

The fixtures in Group D showed that another North African mammoth, Tunisia

would be guest of Congo Republic in Brazaville, whereas Madagascar play host to the Elephants of Cote d'Ivoire in Antananarivo.

Meanwhile in Group D run-away leaders, Guinea will make a bold attempt towards snatching the sole ticket when they welcome Malawi to Conakry on Sunday. The Bafana Bafana of South Africa are involve in the other group game as they trade tackles with Burkina Faso in Johannesburg.



Egyptian captain Hossam Hassan exchange flags with his Tunisian counterpart Chokri El-Quaer during the Nations Cup in Kano. Hassan will be on hand against Morocco this weekend.

Federal Government of Nigeria

Hadejia Jama'are River Basin Development Authority

Maiduguri Road, Hoto, P.M.B. 3168, Kano.

Invitation for Pre-qualification to Tender for Rehabilitation of Tsohuwar Gwaram Earth Dam in Jigawa State

Invitations are hereby extended to interested resident and registered Civil Engineering construction companies for application for pre-qualification to tender for the contract of the rehabilitation of Tsohuwar Gwaram Earth Dam in Jigawa State. The site is located about 230km North-east of Kano City. The scope of the works covers, but not limited to the following:

- Earthworks in the dam embankment (excavation and filling), about 50,000m³,
- concrete works in spillway, diaphragm wall, outlet structure, etc about 1,000m³
- embankment protection works with lumpstones, about 10,000m³,
- Other related auxiliary works.

All interested contractors are each expected to submit his application, supplying the following information.

- i. Evidence of registration with Corporate Affairs Commission of Nigeria
- ii. List of works/jobs carried out with dates, volumes and locations.
- iii. List of company's plant, equipment and machines available for execution of works under reference.
- iv. List of company's key personnel with their respective qualifications and experiences.
- v. Company's Banker's references and evidence of financial standing.
- vi. Any additional information to assist this Authority in pre-qualifying the company.

Information will be sealed and sent to:

The Managing Director
Hadejia Jama'are River Basin Development Authority,
Maiduguri Road Hoto,
P.M.B. 3168,
Kano -Tel, 064-668183

And to reach him on-or before 2nd February 2001 by 12 noon.

Alh. Garba Muhammad
Executive Director (Admin & Finance)
For: Managing Director

AFRICA 2002 WORLD CUP FIXTURES

Group A: Angola, Cameroon, Libya, Togo, Zambia
Sunday, January 28: Angola vs Libya; Togo vs Cameroon

Group B: Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sudan
Saturday, January 27: Ghana vs Liberia; Nigeria vs Sudan

Group C: Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Namibia, Senegal
Friday, January 26: Algeria vs Namibia; Egypt vs Morocco

Group D: Congo Rep., Cote d'Ivoire, Congo DR, Tunisia, Madagascar
Sunday, January 28: Congo vs Tunisia; Madagascar vs Cote d'Ivoire

Group E: Burkina Faso, Guinea, Malawi, South Africa, Zimbabwe
Saturday, January 27: South Africa vs Burkina Faso; Guinea vs Malawi

Clement upsets Kafelnikov to reach open semifinal

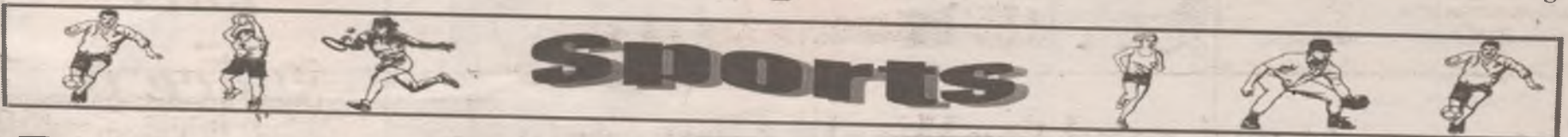
Fifteenth seeded Frenchman Arnaud Clement upset former champion Yevgeny Kafelnikov of Russia 6-4 5-7 7-6 to reach the semi-finals of the Australian open on Wednesday.

Clement who will now meet compatriot and doubles partner Sebastien Groasjean, secured a place in his first grand slam semifinal with a

courageous display to win in three hours and eleven minutes.

The French man sealed the match when Kafelnikov put an over head smash into the net, one of the flood of errors from the racket of the 1999 Australian open champion and last year's runner-up.

The all-French semifinal guarantees France their first finalist in Australia since Jean Borotra won in 1928.



Derby dangles N3m on Taribo

From Richard Abayomi, Lagos

The English premier, Derby County has opened discussion with the Super Eagles ace defender Taribo West on the possibility of putting his pen on paper for the English team.

Taribo West, whose football career was on the downward trend following the refusal of his former club, Inter Milan to feature him in most of its league matches, was eventually loaned to the English premier side.

Impressed by his performance *Trustsports* gathered that the club management is ready to pay Taribo the sum of 20,000 pound sterling (N3m) as his weekly wage if he is ready to pitch his tent at the end of the three months arrangement with them.

It was however gathered that the Rivers State-born defender is yet to make up his mind on whether to continue his football career in England where his compatriots Kanu Nwankwo and Celestine Babayaro are plying their trade.



Defence ace Taribo West in Inter's colour. Derby County believes he is too valuable to let go.

Of transfer rows and money spinners

By Ismaila Umaru Lere

The battle is on. Club versus country – and the countries are losing. The best managers and top players, floating along on one million dollar salaries and the adrenalin rushes for daily involvement, are saying “thanks but no thanks” to the supposedly gilded invitation to manage or play for their national teams.

Europe is merging. Club football is where the real financial clout resides. Nwankwo Kanu could hardly suppress his mirth when asked by his club manager Arsene Wenger whether he would like to play for his fatherland in last summer's Sydney Olympic soccer tournament or lose a huge wage chunk to be earned playing in the domestic and continental competitions.

English Premiership side, Leeds United and South Africa are on the verge of another bitter row over the services of dependable defender Lucas Radebe. The South African football authorities (SAFA) are bent on having the Bafana Bafana captain for next Saturday's World Cup qualifiers against Burkina Faso, while Leeds preferred to keep the injury-prone player for their crucial FA Cup tie against Liverpool.

Leeds manager, David O'Leary is reluctant to release the central defender “the question people should ask the likes of Lucas is where their bread and butter come from?” he said.

As if to buttress his point, the Irish tactician added: “Any club that does well builds their success in the domestic competitions. It brings in money to allow clubs to pay these big wages. So should players be allowed to take off when it suits them?”

To wriggle itself out of the tight situation, SAFA are working out a new deal on appearance fees and bonuses to lure Radebe, who has missed all but one of his country's last 15 games through injury or club commitments, to play more internationals.

Whatever the outcome, Radebe stand to benefit more. And this almost certainly corresponds with recent phenomenon of player power sweeping the European game from Iberia to the Caucasus. Now clubs are enmeshed over improved wage talks with their players perhaps in anticipation to the new EU transfer rules. Manchester United, easily identified as the richest club in the world, were engaged last week negotiating the salary increment of key players David Beckham, Dwight Yorke, Ryan Giggs, Paul Scholes and Andy Cole to improve their contract and incentives.

Notice, too, the way many European managers talk about international engagements. “We pay the guy's wages, he goes off to play Eritrea and come back with a leg missing.” Wenger certainly talks this way. And there are strong indications that Kanu's London club, Arsenal would not budge over NFA insistence of having the lanky forward for the World Cup tie against Sudan this weekend. Right now, the lad is still being expected at the Super Eagles camp in Port Harcourt. And it's yet to be known whether he will honour the national call.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes, a powerful struggle is developing between UEFA, who control the lucrative Champions' League, and FIFA, the world governing body increasingly marginalized by the burgeoning strength of the European elite. The latest fiasco was generated from FIFA's unilateral proposal to the European Commission over the abolition of transfer fees for players above the age of 24. The two bodies are poles apart over the modalities of a new transfer structure to be presented on Wednesday to the European Commissioners who have branded the current transfer system illegal for favouring clubs at the expense of players.

Also contentious are Sepp Blatter's proposal to unify international calendar, so as to minimize clashes between club and country over players, and staging the World Cup every two years. Indeed, some egg-heads in Europe still believe that those proposals are daft and unrealistic. They perceive the biennial World Cup plan as a threat to the sport, and would destroy the European Championship, turn international football into a long qualifying process and undermine the World Cup itself.

But rational thinkers should come to grip with the fact that FIFA is losing out the battle against European money-spinners and as such it must rebuild its power base. Only through the international game can it do so. UEFA takes all the glory (and the cash) from the growth of the Champions' League. And, sadly, as money floods into major clubs from enhanced TV contracts (and pay-per-view), ‘poor’ African players in Europe – and their managers – are starting to regard the national duty the way cowboys used to regard rocky passes. That way an ambush lies.

We are now on a threshold of footballing history. Whatever transpires between FIFA, UEFA and the EU on Wednesday will have far-reaching consequences on the games future. What matters is what comes next.

Where do you stand? Do you think there is a conspiracy to undermine international football? Are the clubs getting too big for their Umbros?

Bonfrere may miss Eagles/Sudan clash

By Owoidoho Otong

Bereaved Super Eagles technical adviser, Johannes Bonfrere, may be conspicuously missing on the bench when the Eagles trade tackles with their Sudanese counterpart Saturday at the Liberation Stadium, Port Harcourt.

Bonfrere, who lost his mother-in-law to the cold hand of death last weekend may be unable to join the Squad which has been tutored since Tuesday by coaches Ahmodu Shuaibu and freshers on the block Austin Equavoen and Lawrence Akpokona.

The Dutch though had earlier informed the NFA

that he would endeavour to join the camp on Friday barely 24 hours before the crucial encounter which may make or mar Nigeria's Korea/Japan 2002 World Cup dream.

Soccer pundits are however convinced that Ahmodu was equal to the arduous task having watched the Sudanese crumble 2-0 before the Elephants of Cote D'Ivoire last weekend in a Nations Cup qualifier.

The Chief Coach of the Eagles has been shouting instructions to the players since camping resumed Tuesday assisted by Lawrence Akpokona said to be tactically sound and Equavoen who only few

years ago played with most of the boys in the present Eagles squad.

NFA spokesman Austin Mgbolu was optimistic that the Dutchman who was visibly disturbed by the loss may arrive the country in time to pilot the technical crew in their plots to maul the Sudanese.



Bonfrere

Eaglets stranded

The Golden Eaglets may have been stranded following the refusal of the Italian Embassy in Lagos to issue the lads visas.

The Embassy, according to NFA image maker Austin Mgbolu, “had made outrageous demands including insisting on the presence of the parents of the Eaglets before the visas could be issued.

The development ensured that the Nigerian contingent to Bari, Italy, the venue of the third edition of the Meridien Cup was stranded.

The tournament involving Mali, Cameroun, Egypt, the host Italy, Spain, Czech Republic and Portugal kicks off on Saturday with the Eaglets filing out against Czech Republic. The NFA had formally taken the matter to the Federal Government.

Blatter calls for unity in EU/FIFA transfer talks

FIFA President Sepp Blatter has appealed for unity between the world and European soccer authorities to achieve a speedy and satisfactory conclusion to negotiations with the European Commission over player transfer.

Blatter also confirmed that he was taking over the leadership of talks between football's governing bodies and the EU which resume in Brussels on Wednesday to try to solve the row over transfer rules, which the Commission has branded illegal.

Meanwhile, UEFA chief executive Gerhard Aigner says soccer revenues cannot be stretched indefinitely and national associations should consider salary caps.

“Financial revenue cannot be stretched infinitely, and the interest of the supporters also has its limits,” Aigner said on the official UEFA website.

Federal Government of Nigeria

Hadejia Jama'are River Basin Development Authority

Maiduguri Road, Hoto, P.M.B. 3168, Kano.

Invitation for Pre-qualification to Tender for the construction of water supply at Azare, Bauchi state

Invitations are hereby extended to interested resident and registered Civil Engineering construction companies for pre-qualification application to tender for the above stated works. Azare Town is located in northern Bauchi State, 250km from Bauchi town and accessed again through Kano, 225km north-easterly. The works, divided into three lots include and not limited to the following scope:

- Lot I - Headwork's (Drilling and Equipping of series of productive 200mm boreholes, Collecting pipeline, Chlorination station, Clear water reservoir, Office & residential buildings, Booster pumping station, roadworks, Power supply, etc)
- Lot II - Transmission (about 30,000m long, 500mm ductile iron main pipeline, valves and other necessary fittings, etc)
- Lot III - distribution (Pumping Station, distribution network, Refurbishment of existing pipe network, Power supply, etc).

Each applicant will submit his application supplying the following information:

- a. Evidence of registration with Corporate Affairs Commission of Nigeria
- b. List of works/jobs carried out with dates, volumes and locations.
- c. List of company's plant, equipment and machines available for execution of works under reference.
- d. List of company's key personnel with their respective qualifications and experiences.
- e. Company's Banker's references and evidence of financial standing.
- f. Any additional information to assist this Authority in pre-qualifying the company.

Information will be sealed and sent to:

The Managing Director
Hadejia Jama'are River Basin Development Authority,
Maiduguri Road Hoto,
P.M.B. 3168,
Kano-Tel, 064-668183

And to reach him on or before 2nd February 2001 by 12 noon.

Alh. Garba Muhammad

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DAILY TRUST



Sports Illustrated

This space is for Sale

Oneya disowns Akpokona, Equavoen

By Owoidoho Oton
 The coast is still hazy over the recent recruitment of two new coaches, Lawrence Akpokona and Austin Equavoen to join the Super Eagles technical crew. NFA Chairman, Brig-Gen Dominic Oneya (rtd) added voice to the string of controversies surrounding Jo Bonfrere's imposition of the duo on the NFA when he denied any knowledge of their recruitment. Brig. Gen. Oneya who was visibly disturbed and clearly disenchanted when approached by *Trustsports* for comment on the employment simply stated "I don't know what you are talking about. No new coach has been recruited local or foreign for the Super Eagles". Dominic Oneya's outburst contracts sharply

with the association's Scribe, Dr. Tijani Ahmed Yusuf who penultimate day had said that both coaches Equavoen and Akpokona have been enlisted into the Eagles' technical crew. Tijaji Yusuf who was on his way to Lagos to resolve the impasse surrounding the issuance of visas to members of the Golden Eaglets observed that the only thing left was concluding on the contractual terms with the duo. Yusuf noted that the Glass-House would meet to marshal out the contractual terms with the new coaches after this weekend's crucial World Cup 2002 qualifier against Sudan, in Port Harcourt. But Dominic Oneya's declaration that he was unaware of any new addition to the Eagles technical crew makes the coast hazy and the fate of both hanging.

Dutchman Jo Bonfrere had only last week ordered the redeployment of Assistant Coach, Stephen Keshi to the Flying Eagles even as he was silent on the fate of coach Ahmodu Shuaibu. In place of Keshi, Bonfrere requested for coaches Austin Equavoen who has no previous national coaching experience and Lawrence Akpokona who was with the Dutch during the Sydney soccer Games. Penultimate day Keshi who had shunned a truce meeting at the instance of Sports Minister Damishi Sango emerged with an acceptance note contrary to the much expected letter of resignation.



Super Eagles attacker Victor Ikpeba in a goal-bound move against Namibia. He will plot Sudan's fall this weekend. *Pix Omo Oba.*

Hingis battles past Serena

World number one Martina Hingis demiled one half of the Williams express on Wednesday when she squeezed past sixth seed Serena 6-2 3-6 8-6 into the semi-finals of the Australian Open. Waiting for her in the last four is Serena's elder sister and third seed Venus who survived her own drama-packed quarter-final, fighting back from the brink of defeat to beat tenacious South African Amanda Coetzer 2-6 6-1 8-6. Top seed Hingis ended the prospect of an all-Williams semi-final when she fought back from 4-1 down in the third set to beat Serena, who has served for the match as a thunder storm roared above Melbourne Park's closed roof. The Swiss who won the season-opening grand slam from 1997-99 and was runner up last year, will be bidding for her fifth consecutive Australian open final but had to draw on the last gram of her courage and guile to beat the powerful Serena. Serena said she had not eaten for two days after a bout of food poisoning and was attended by a court-side trainer several times after the first set. Serena led 4-1 in the final set and served for the match at 5-4 after breaking Hingis's serve for the third time in the set. But the American dropped serve herself as Hingis in turn staged a fight back, chasing down balls from all corners of the court. Hingis then levelled with another break in the 10th game. Serena bravely fought off a match point against her serve, desperately lunging at a volley in the 14th game but was unable to hold off Hingis again on the second match point.



Hasim "The Rock Rahman" knocks out Trevor Berbicks in a heavy-weight bout. He is billed to face Lennox Lewis in April.



Nigerian-born Polish striker Emmanuel Olisadebe is on verge of hitting a goldmine in Greece. Panathinaikos doles out 3 million dollars for his service.

Professor Nomau's travails, written & illustrated by Babonic Mustapha

Panel 1: Woman: "I'D LIKE TO SPEAK TO YOU ABOUT YOUR HUSBAND'S DEATH." Man: "KAI... A LOT OF PEOPLE WANT TO SPEAK TO ME ABOUT HIS DEATH, BUT NO MATTER HOW MUCH I TALK HE'S NEVER COMING BACK, SO WHY CAN'T YOU JUST ALLOW HIM TO REST IN PEACE?"

Panel 2: Man: "YOUR HUSBAND WAS A GREAT MAN INDEED, I AM ALSO ONE OF HIS FANS." Woman: "BUT RIGHT NOW I WANT TO TALK ABOUT THE CAUSE OF HIS DEATH... I DON'T THINK IT WAS AN ACCIDENT."

Panel 3: Woman: "WHAT...WHAT DO YOU MEAN?" Man: "THE POLICE SAID IT WAS AN ACCIDENT."

Panel 4: Woman: "IF YOUR HUSBAND IS TRULY DEAD, THEN I HAVE A FEELING THAT HE WAS MURDERED." Man: "TO BE CONTINUED."