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Court: VP can wield Yar'adua's powers

By Atika Balal, Muldeen Olaniyi & AbdulMutallib A. Abubakar

VICE President Goodluck Jonathan can exercise all the executive powers vested in the President of the Federal Republic in the absence of President Umaru Yar'adua by virtue of Sec-

tion 5 of the Constitution, a Federal High Court in Abuja ruled yesterday. Uncertainty however trailed the ruling because while Attorney General and Justice Minister Mike Aondoaka welcomed it, the ruling Peoples Democratic Party [PDP] said Jonathan will not exercise Yar'adua's powers just yet.

Justice Daniel Abutu had ruled that the Vice President can lawfully discharge any or all the functions of President Umaru Musa Yar'adua in his absence in the interest of peace, order and good governance of the federation pending when the President resumes from his medical leave.

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HAITIANS pass destroyed buildings yesterday in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, after a massive 7.0 earthquake struck on Tuesday. Thousands of people are feared dead.

Sgt Rogers crippled in car crash

By Abubakar Yakubu & Abubakar Sadiq Isah

LEADING member of the Abacha-era Strike Force Sergeant Barnabas

Jabila, alias Sergeant Rogers, has been crippled from the waist down and has just been discharged from the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital, Gwagwalada after a vehi-

cle incident that occurred along the Jos-Abuja highway last November, *Daily Trust* learnt yesterday.

Sergeant Rogers, who is a principal witness in the ongoing trial of

Major Hamza Almustapha and four others for the 1996 murder of Alhaja Kudirat Abiola, suffered head and spinal cord injuries in the accident.

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PIC: KENNEDY EGBONODJE



PRESIDENT of Kaduna Chamber of Commerce, Hajija Saratu Iya Aliyu, during her courtesy visit to Media Trust Corporate Head Office, Abuja, yesterday.

80 Turkish investors, others for Kaduna Trade Fair

By Sunday Williams

PRESIDENT of the Kaduna Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture Hajija Saratu Iliya Aliyu yesterday said about 80 investors from Turkey alongside others from China and India are to participate in the 31st Kaduna International Trade Fair slated for 19th to 28th of February 2010.

Speaking when she led executive members of the chamber on a visit to the Corporate Head office of *Media Trust*, publishers of *Daily*

Trust, *Weekly Trust*, *Sunday Trust* and *Aminiya* in Abuja yesterday, the president said, "We are going to have an interactive session with the delegation from Turkey. They are coming with their various businesses and will be looking for partners. Apart from that we also have our usual seminar where we will focus on the theme of the fair".

Hajija Saratu said all efforts on the Trade Fair were geared towards complementing government's efforts and revamping the country's economy.

She said invitation had already

been sent to the Presidency with the hope that the president would send a representative if absent, to declare the Fair open. Also speaking, the Chamber's Deputy President Alhaji Umar Yahaya said they had reached out to the Minister of Science and Technology to promote made in Nigeria goods at the Fair.

"We recognise the need for us to promote made in Nigeria goods and this is why we felt it very important to visit the Minister of Science and Technology because we believe that there are

many prototype machines that are just lying there without being patronised and it is usually going to be patronised if promoted by attending trade fairs."

Media Trust Executive Director/Editor-in-Chief Mannir Dan Ali said trade fairs like the one the Chamber is organising are usually avenues to concentrate on the challenges in the economy and the possible solutions.

He said the paper would continue to show interest in the activities of the trade fair and the chamber generally.

EFCC arraigns 9 over theft of N188m cheques

THE Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in Lagos yesterday arraigned a nine-member syndicate for allegedly stealing cheques worth N188 million. The accused persons who are facing an 11-count charge of conspiracy, stealing and attempted stealing at the Ikeja High Court, were alleged to have stolen N165 million bank cheques belonging to African Petroleum Plc.

They also allegedly stole a cheque worth N23 million belonging to the Lagos State gov-

ernment. The accused are Ray Uba, Felix Okoli, Onyebuchi Moses, Nojim Oshifade and Ini Noah. Others are Adebayo Okhio, Sesan Awonuga, Yemi Adegbuyi and Macdonald Nyeche. They were alleged to have committed the offences with four others at large - Timothy Adesanya, Victor Osawe, Kazeem Taimiyu and Adebowale Johnson sometime in August 2008. The EFCC told the court that the accused used an Access Bank dispatch rider, Ini Noah, engaged by AP and the

Lagos State government, to lodge the cheques in their various bank accounts.

The commission said the accounts were opened in the name of Adebowale Johnson after they had converted the cheques to third party cheques. The offence, according to the EFCC, is contrary to Sections 516, 390 and 509 of the Criminal Code, Laws of Lagos State. The accused persons pleaded not guilty to the charges. Efforts to grant them bail failed, following the request of the com-

mission for more time to respond to the bail application by their counsel.

Counsel to the defendants, Mr Olatunde Adedoyin and Mrs Okoro Chioma, had urged the court to grant their clients bail but the EFCC's counsel, Mr Francis Usani, opposed the application. Justice Morenike Obadina ordered the suspects to be remanded in Kirikiri medium prison till Feb. 2 when the bail application would be heard. (NAN)

AC challenges ban on political activities

From Aliyu M. Hamagam, Gombe

THE Action Congress in Gombe State has filed a suit at the Federal High Court in Gombe challenging the constitutionality and legality of the recent ban on political activities in the state by the Commissioner of Police Barrister Joseph Ahmed Ibi. Briefing newsmen yesterday, the state Sec-

retary of the party, Barrister Luka Haruna, said the press statement made by the Commissioner of Police Barrister Joseph Ahmed Ibi on 31 December 2009 was a calculated plan to truncate political activities in the state by using the law that does not exist. "We firmly believe that the press briefing conducted by the Commissioner of Police, Gombe State command, CP

Joseph A. Ibi on the 31st December, 2009 in Gombe state is a violation of the provisions of Section 39, 40 and 42 of the 1999 Constitution and therefore undemocratic, unreasonable and unjust", he said. THE AC scribe added that seeking police permit for convening assembly or meeting or procession as stated by the commissioner in his press briefing was unconstitu-

tional, null and void in the light of the decision by the Court of Appeal in the case of the Inspector General of Police and All Nigeria Peoples Party.

According to him, the action of the police commissioner was to gag and prevent some selected citizens of the states from interacting, assisting, commiserating, soliciting and relating with one another.

AC calls 82 witnesses in Osun guber petition

THE Action Congress (AC) has so far called 82 witnesses to testify before the Osun State Election Petition Tribunal.

The tribunal began sitting on July 23 last year, hearing the petition filed by the AC governorship candidate, Mr Rauf Aregbesola, against the victory of Gov. Olagunsoye Oyinlola in the April 14, 2007 election. The AC also called a foreign fingerprint expert, Mr Paul Jobbins, as a witness.

NAN recalls that the lead counsel to Aregbesola, Mr Deji Sasegbon, has closed his case before the Justice Ali Garba-led panel. Meanwhile, Oyinlola will on Jan. 20 open his defence.

Sasegbon had earlier, urged the panel to order INEC and the police to prepare their defence alongside Oyinlola.

The tribunal chairman granted the prayer and ordered them to prepare their defence at the same time. (NAN)

Bauchi to go tough on religious crises

From Muhammad Abubakar, Bauchi

THE Bauchi State government is to deal with any person or group of persons, no matter how highly placed, who use religion to ignite violence in the state.

Governor Isa Yuguda gave the warning at a one day workshop organized by the Nigerian Interfaith Action Association (NIFAA) in Bauchi.

Represented by his Deputy, Alhaji Babayo Garba Gamawa, the governor said, "Enough is enough, we are tired of religious crises in the state, henceforth, government will not fold its arms and watch anyone, no matter how highly placed in the society cause another crisis in the state".

He also enjoined religious leaders not to allow politicians use their places of worship for political campaigns as in most cases they make inciting statements that could lead to chaos in the society and advised both Christians and Muslims to love one another and make Bauchi the envy of other states in the country.

In their separate remarks, representatives of the Christian and Muslim communities, Reverend Turbe Ngodom who stood in for the CAN Chairman and Mallam Musa Garba Limanci who represented the Chief Imam of Bauchi Central mosque, admitted that the initiative would help. Earlier, the Executive Director, Nigerian Interfaith Action Association NIFAA Bishop Sunday Onuoha said the workshop was aimed at sensitizing religious leaders on the need to unite in the fight against malaria.

He said Bauchi state is one of the beneficiaries of the programme and there are enough mosquito treated bed nets to go round all households in the state.

Nigeria to allow armed US security agents on flights

By AbdulFattah Olajide

NIGERIA is set to sign an agreement with the U.S. to allow armed American security agents be on flights between the country and the U.S.

Aviation Minister Babatunde Omotoba who announced the move after yesterday's Federal Executive Council (FEC) meeting said the U.S. security agents would also train Nigerian security agents to perform a similar role on other air carriers.

Omotoba also announced that the FEC approved N488 million for the purchase of ten full body scanners for installation at the nation's four international airports. He said the security measures were necessitated by the December 25, 2009 botched

terror attack on a U.S. airliner by a Nigerian, Farouk Abdulmutallab.

He said three of the scanners would be installed at the Murtala Mohammed International Airport in Lagos, while Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja, and Aminu Kano International Airport, Kano, would get two each. The minister said two of the scanners would also be installed at the Port Harcourt International Airport, while the remaining scanner would be placed on standby.

Said he: "Following the event that occurred aboard the U.S. airliner from Amsterdam to Detroit on Dec. 25, 2009, governments all over the world have taken steps to ensure that aviation is safe and secure and Nigeria cannot be

an exemption. Subsequently, we rolled out various security measures, including 100-per-cent frisking and scanning; to ensure that air travellers are safe. Part of these security measures is to deploy 3-Dimension Super Body Scanners at our airports."

"At today's FEC meeting, the Council approved the purchase of 10 scanners at the cost of N488 million. The scanners will be deployed at four international airports and we will keep one as a redundancy.

In addition to the purchase of these scanners, as directed, we have deployed anti-terrorism police squads to our international airports to ensure that passengers are safe and secure," he stated. Also speaking on the issue, the Minister of State for

Information and Communications, Alhaji Aliyu Bilbis, said the scanners would locate all sorts of concealed contraband such as weapons, guns, knives, box-cutters, as well as items like explosives, inflammable liquid and gels.

Also speaking at the occasion, the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, accused the sacked former chief executives of troubled banks of attempting to scuttle the ongoing banking reform through media war, saying he would remain undaunted.

He said those behind the media campaign against him have so far spent N120 million out of the N300 million they allegedly set aside for the campaign. "The publication you

referred to, we actually know the person that writes the publications, we actually know the person that has paid for the publications, we actually know how much has been spent. There was a budget of N300m, N120m has been spent. We know exactly who they are and where they are. We know what the relationships are with the CEOs that were removed, but it is not important in any way at all because it has no impact on what we are doing and what we'll continue doing and that is it."

Sanusi said the 6.9 per cent GDP growth recorded in 2009 is expected to rise above seven per cent in 2010. He stated that the exchange rate of the naira against foreign currencies and foreign reserves are expected to remain stable.



FROM left: Deputy Speaker, House of Representatives, Usman Bayero Nafada with Governors Isa Yuguda of Bauchi State and Danjuma Goje of Gombe State shortly after the burial of the mother of the Deputy Speaker, Hajia Aisha Bayero, in Gombe on Tuesday.

Yar'adua: Buhari, Atiku want 15-man team to Saudi Arabia

By Abdul-Rahman Abubakar

FORMER Military Head of State, General Muhammadu Buhari and former Vice President Atiku Abubakar led other top politicians in the country to the National Assembly yesterday to call on the Federal Government to constitute a 15-man investigation team to visit President Umaru Musa Yar'adua in Saudi Arabia.

In a position under the auspices of the National Democratic Movement (NDM) presented to Senate President David Mark yesterday signed by General Buhari and Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, the group of politicians said the step has become necessary as a disconnect now exists between President Yar'adua and the people of Nigeria.

The movement suggested that government must activate the pro-

vision of Section 144 of the 1999 Constitution which deals with situations that involve incapacitation of Mr. President as a result of ill health.

It said the team of 15 credible persons to Saudi Arabia should be made up of a retired Justice of the Supreme Court, one member of the Federal Executive Council (FEC), the President's personal physician and other highly respected and independent medical practitioners nominated by Nigeria Medical Association (NMA).

Others to be on the team as proposed by NDM include the Majority and Minority Leaders of both chambers of the National Assembly and one representative each from the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA), National Labour Congress (NLC), Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), the National Council of

Women Societies (NCWS) and the National Association of Nigeria Students (NANS).

It said the team should travel to Saudi Arabia to establish the 'exact' location of President Yar'adua and "Meet the President to express the commiseration of Nigerians and their goodwill to him and his family."

The movement said the team must also "Meet with doctors treating the President to obtain detailed information on the exact nature of his illness and prospect of recovery as is ethically possible and as will be politically necessary to satisfy Nigerians.

At the end of the visit, the team should compile and submit a report, including recommendation(s) on implications of the President's condition for administration and politi-

cal stability of the nation to the Vice President, who should table same as memorandum for consideration at the meeting of the FEC.

The vice president should then address the nation on their decision which should include the way forward."

In his response, Senator Mark said the Legislative arm is aware of the concerns being expressed by the people but that the matter would only be addressed through "the letters and spirit of the Constitution."

Top members of NDM at the event include, former Sokoto State Governor Attahiru Dalhatu Bafarawa, Second Republic Governor of Kaduna State, Alhaji Lawal Kaita, General Jeremiah Hussein (rtd), Senator Lawali Shuaibu, Senator Ben Obi, Mrs. Titi Ajanaku and a host of others.

Pro-Yar'adua group says health a non-issue

By Abubakar Mommoh

A pro-Yar'adua group has commended the National Assembly for the maturity it has exhibited on the current status of President Umaru Yar'adua.

The leader of the group, Alhaji Aminu Dan Arewa expressed happiness with the National Assembly for not succumbing to the antics of "misguided and unpatriotic acts of some individuals and groups who wanted to plunge the country into needless constitutional crisis."

In letter addressed to the President of the Senate on Tuesday during a solidarity march to the National Assembly in Abuja, Dan Arewa said those calling for the resignation of president Yar'adua on health ground are not only anti-people but are against the larger interest of Nigeria.

He said the motives of those demanding for the resignation of Yar'adua are questionable and not in the national interest, adding that "any effort to plunge the country into disorder will be resisted by all Nigerians".

Expressing confidence in the Yar'adua administration, the group said the president had shown capacity and had performed creditably well in running the affairs of the country.

"President Yar'adua had steered the ship of the state in the context of worst economic crisis facing the entire world and Nigeria had come out of it and our people have been enjoying a relatively better living standards. This is unprecedented"

He listed some of the achievements recorded by the president to include the Amnesty programme in the troubled Niger Delta and dogged implementation of the 7-Point Agenda.

Terror list: Senate to talk to US Congress

By Abdul-Rahman Abubakar

THE Senate yesterday resolved to negotiate with the Congress of the United States to settle the issues surrounding the alleged attempt by Umar Farouk AbdulMutallab to bomb a US airplane.

The resolution followed a motion by Senate Leader Teslim Folarin that the image of the country has been negatively affected by the

development.

He said the US has since Monday, January 4, 2010 listed Nigeria among "Countries of interest" whose nationals will have to undergo thorough screening while travelling.

The Senate directed its Committee on Foreign Affairs chaired by Senator Jibril Aminu (PDP, Adamawa Central) "To open up communication with its counterpart in the United States of America

with the view to resolving the problem."

While commending Alhaji Umar Abdulmutallab for reporting his son's tendencies to the US Embassy and other appropriate security agencies, the Senate however rejected a prayer by Deputy Senate President Ike Ekweremadu seeking for a resolution to urge the federal government to reward Dr. Abdulmutallab with a national honour for his courage.

...as Reps debate terrorism today

By Nasidi A. Yahaya

THE House of Representatives yesterday resolved to debate a motion seeking to dispel international views that Nigeria harbours terrorists.

Raising Order 8(4) under the House rules, at yesterday's plenary session, Rep Halims

Agoda (PDP, Delta State) drew the MPs attention to the alleged attempt by a Nigerian to blow up an American bound plane.

He said the action has resulted in putting the country on the list of terrorist countries in the world, adding that that is an unfair treatment of a country of over 150

million people.

Agoda said: "Mr Speaker, we need to let the world know that our country is not a terrorist country and we are not terrorists."

When Speaker Dimeji Bankole asked whether the motion be taken at today's plenary session, majority of the MPs answered "yes".

Aviation scam: Eder spent €3m on foreign trip – Witness

By Sunday Ejike Benjamin

MANAGING Director of Avsatel Communications Limited Mr. George Eder, standing trial in the alleged N6.5bn scam in the Aviation Ministry, spent €300,000 on a trip, a prosecution witness said yesterday.

Kazeem Oseni, who is also an operative investigator with the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), told the Abuja High Court that Mr. Eder told him that he spent the sum on a trip to Austria after the contract was awarded by some management staff of Nigeria Airspace Management Agency (NAMA), The Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NIMET) and officials of the ministry of aviation.

Eder and Borishade are standing trial alongside Mr. Roland Iyayi, former Man-

aging Director of Nigeria Airspace Management Agency (NAMA) and Mr. T.A Dairo, the Personal Assistant to Borishade for alleged forgery and corruptly enriching themselves in the execution of the N6.5 billion Safe Tower Project.

The witness said he did not investigate Eder's claim from NAMA, NIMET and the aviation ministry. He said he could not substantiate the claim because he did not investigate that aspect and pointed out that Borishade got €5,000 out of the money.

The EFCC investigator also told the court that he has never read the agreement between the federal government and the contractor that handled the contract even after their arrest.

Oseni who was being cross examined said he did

not investigate whether Borishade's trip to Vienna, Austria, was in respect of the Safe Tower Project or a social visit.

The trial Judge Justice Sadiq Umar had granted the application by the EFCC to amend the charges on the former Aviation Minister and others standing trial for alleged involvement in the N6.5 billion scam in the Aviation industry.

Borishade, George Eder, the Managing Director, Avsatel Communications Limited are standing trial alongside Mr. Roland Iyayi, former Managing Director of Nigeria Airspace Management Agency (NAMA) and Mr. T.A Dairo, the Personal Assistant to Borishade for alleged forgery and corruptly enriching themselves in the execution of the N6.5 billion Safe Tower Project.

Ribadu vs. CCT: AGF seeks to join suit

By Atika Balal

ATTORNEY General of the Federation (AGF) Michael Aondoakaa yesterday asked an Abuja Federal High Court to grant him leave to join as party in a suit filed against the Code of Conduct Tribunal (CCT) by former Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Nuhu Ribadu.

His Counsel, A.A Malik said the AGF ought to have been included as a necessary party in the suit, as he has a duty to protect the interest of the federal government in the matter and in any other matter affecting it.

Ribadu's counsel, Femi Falana however told the court that he needed time to respond to the application filed by the AGF. He said his client's suit has nothing to do with the office of the AGF. Ribadu had sued the CCT for accusing him of failure to declare his assets as required by the public officers Code of Conduct laws of Nigeria.

The CCT had also issued an arrest warrant for Ribadu who has not appeared before the tribunal to take his plea.

Justice Mohammed Garba Umar adjourned the case to January 18 to enable the court hear the application filed by the AGF.

Pro-Yar'adua rally in pictures



PRESIDENT of the Support Yar'adua Group Alhaji Aminu Dan Arewa addressing the pro-Yar'adua rally at the National Assembly Complex, Abuja on Tuesday afternoon.



MEMBERS of the Support Yar'adua Group women's wing at the rally.



OTHER members of the Support Yar'adua Group.



ANOTHER scene from the pro-Yar'adua rally in Abuja on Tuesday.

VP can wield Yar'adua's powers

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Abuja based lawyer Christopher Onwuekwe, through his counsel Amobi Nzelu, had gone to court seeking a declaration that by the combined provisions of Sections 5 (1) and 148 (1) of the Nigerian constitution 1999, the Vice President can exercise the executive powers vested in the President in the absence of the president having regard to the circumstances of the suit.

The plaintiff stated in an affidavit of urgency that 'In the President's absence, the Vice President has refused/ neglected / failed to exercise any or all the executive powers vested in the President pending when the President will return and take over such powers.'

In response to the plaintiff's originating summons, the defendants in a written address conceded that by virtue of section 5 (1) of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the President may assign any of the powers vested in him to the Vice President or any Minister of the Federation.

They submitted that under section 148 (1), the President may assign any business of government to the Vice President at any time. They further submitted that section 148 (1) like section 5 (1) of the constitution neither delineates the scope of such assignments nor do they prescribe any procedure to be adopted nor the form of instrument that may be used in vesting the executive powers of the President in the Vice President. This may be done in any manner the President may deem fit.

Attorney General Michael Aondoakaa (SAN), who appeared for the defendants [the Federal Executive Council and himself], did not oppose the reliefs being sought for. He said the delegation

of duties and functions by the President to the Vice President was not due to any form of incapacity, temporary or otherwise as the Vice President can act for and on behalf of the President whether or not the President is away from the country, once the President delegates the functions to him.

He argued that the contention of the plaintiff that the President is temporarily incapable of discharging the functions of his office is mischievous as the plaintiff lacks the constitutional capacity and competence to make a declaration on the President's capacity, temporary or otherwise. He asked the court to hold that the Vice President is discharging the functions of the President as and when they become necessary, as no vacuum has been created by the absence of the President.

Suspensions that the suit had Attorney General and Justice Minister Michael Aondoakaa's backing were raised by several observers last night because the AG roundly welcomed the ruling, saying it showed there was no power vacuum and would allow ministers to get on with the business of governing. He also said there was now no justification for the other three cases - due before court on Thursday - to go ahead.

Appearing on the Nigeria Television Authority's [NTA] Network News last night to explain the import of the court ruling, Aondoakaa said it means that the Vice President can exercise all the powers vested in the President by virtue of Section 5 of the Constitution, on behalf of the President, without having become an acting President by virtue of Section 148 of the Constitution.

Aondoakaa said by virtue of the ruling, Jonathan can exercise all the president's powers, including signing legislative bills and making appointments, by vir-

tue of Section 5, but he would be doing do on behalf of the president. He said no one else but the president can question any deed of the vice president in exercise of powers under this section. He said the court made it clear that Section 148, by which Jonathan can become acting President, can only be applied if the president himself conveys such to the National Assembly in a letter. In that case, Aondoakaa said, Jonathan will not be acting for the president but for himself. He added that neither the Federal executive council nor himself will appeal against yesterday's ruling.

In one of the cases, president of the West Africa Bar Association Femi Falana wants all decisions taken by the cabinet during the president's absence to be annulled. In another, the Nigeria Bar Association is demanding that Yar'adua formally hands over power to the vice president. Yet another group is asking the court to declare Yar'adua missing.

Plaintiff's lawyer Amobi Nzelu told Daily Trust on telephone last night that with the ruling, Vice President Jonathan is now free to exercise all the powers of the president. If he does not, the lawyer said, they will return to court and sue him for contempt.

However, in his response to the ruling, PDP National Chairman Prince Vincent Ogbulafor explained yesterday the reasons why the party thought it was not yet time for Vice President Goodluck Jonathan to steer the ship of Nigeria in acting capacity pending the return of the ailing President Umaru Musa Yar'adua.

Ogbulafor said the opposition would not be allowed to set any agenda for the party. He said some politicians who were bent on destabilizing the country were behind the ongoing controversy, calling on all Nige-

rians particularly those involved in the democratic project to display unmitigated loyalty, maturity and restraint in the course of their actions.

Asked to explain if the decision not to hand over to the Vice President was the PDP position that was borne out fear that he (Jonathan) may sit tight once in power, Ogbulafor said, "the opposition cannot set an agenda for us. The president left here and I don't think when he left here he intended that he will not return to the country by now. You are a human being and you can fall sick any time. If you go for a check-up, your health will deteriorate in such a way that things will wait for you to come back."

"All we have to do is to pray for the sick man to quickly recover. Thank God that we heard the voice of the President which put to question those who are frivolously wishing the President dead. At least we can now prove to them that the president is alive so that we can now join hands and pray for him to recover in time and return to the seat of government. So we hope that very soon having heard his voice he will return to do his job."

He added, "The Vice President has proved that he is good enough to be acting president. That is why in the first place President Yar'adua chose him to be his Vice President. If he wasn't qualified or competent having being a former governor, I don't think he would have been chosen. We believe and pray strongly that Mr. President will soon return."

"As a knight of the church, we don't wish any sick man dead and you as a human being who is God fearing will not pray that the President should die. So we pray for him to recover. Therefore we will continue to pray for him to recover and we will con-

tinue to ask the Vice President to continue working seriously on behalf of all of us Nigerians. We have commended him, he is doing very well. So I think very soon Mr. President will return back to this country."

When further asked to explain the reasons behind Yar'adua's decision not to hand over to his deputy since both are from the PDP and his controversial interview with the foreign media, Ogbulafor said, "Regarding the question on whether he should hand over to vice president, why not? I think since Mr. President has been doing extremely very well and the party has not hidden the fact from the populace. Since the president left the country, there has been no gap at all. The Federal Executive Council has continuously been making the decision and there is no vacuum at all. The vice president has been filling it."

"I think he has been acting even when not formally handed over. So we are happy with the Vice President's action and whether the President addressed us in Hausa service of foreign media or whichever language, Hausa language is a Nigerian language. If he can speak Igbo and address us in Igbo, why not? It depends on who approaches him. If you approach him, he can speak to you in English. If you can speak to him in Igbo and he can speak the language, he will do so. He is a Nigerian who can address us in any language of Nigeria."

Ogbulafor however backed the idea of getting the video footage of President Yar'adua whenever the delegation from the House of Representatives visit him in Saudi Arabia, saying 'we have no objection to that' when asked about the possibility of such media strategy.

Sgt Rogers crippled in car crash

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There were contradictory accounts of the incident. While sources told Daily Trust that Rogers' car was rammed by another car along the Jos highway and it somersaulted, his brother told our reporters yesterday that a mechanic who worked on Jabila's vehicle before the accident failed to tighten the bolts of the back tyre. He said, "While he was on motion within Abuja, the back tyre pulled out and the car somersaulted and crashed in November 2009." Although Jabila was in hospital for some weeks, family members managed to keep it a secret, until yesterday.

There were also conflicting reports on the severity of Jabila's injuries. Hospital sources said he suffered serious spinal injuries and is now paralysed from the waist down, but his brother said the family has concluded plans to take Rogers to another hospital to undergo a CT scan because of the pains he complains about in his shoulder region. According to him, the consultant handling his case discharged him yesterday so

that he can recover fully at home.

At the accident/ emergency ward unit of the hospital yesterday morning, plain-clothes military intelligence officials carrying guns were seen providing security in the ward where the accident victim was and only close family relations were allowed to see him after going through strict clearance.

From a distance, our reporter sighted Jabila lying down on a hospital bed inside the ward and a nurse said that medical officials in the ward had earlier been warned by intelligence officers not to allow people to go near him or reveal his identity.

Chief Medical Director of the hospital Dr Peter Alabi expressed surprise to learn from our reporters that Rogers was admitted in the hospital. He made several phone calls before confirming Jabila's admission in the hospital.

The chief medical director declined further questions, while other hospital officials said the accident victim had declared his intention earlier not to speak to anybody outside his immediate family members.

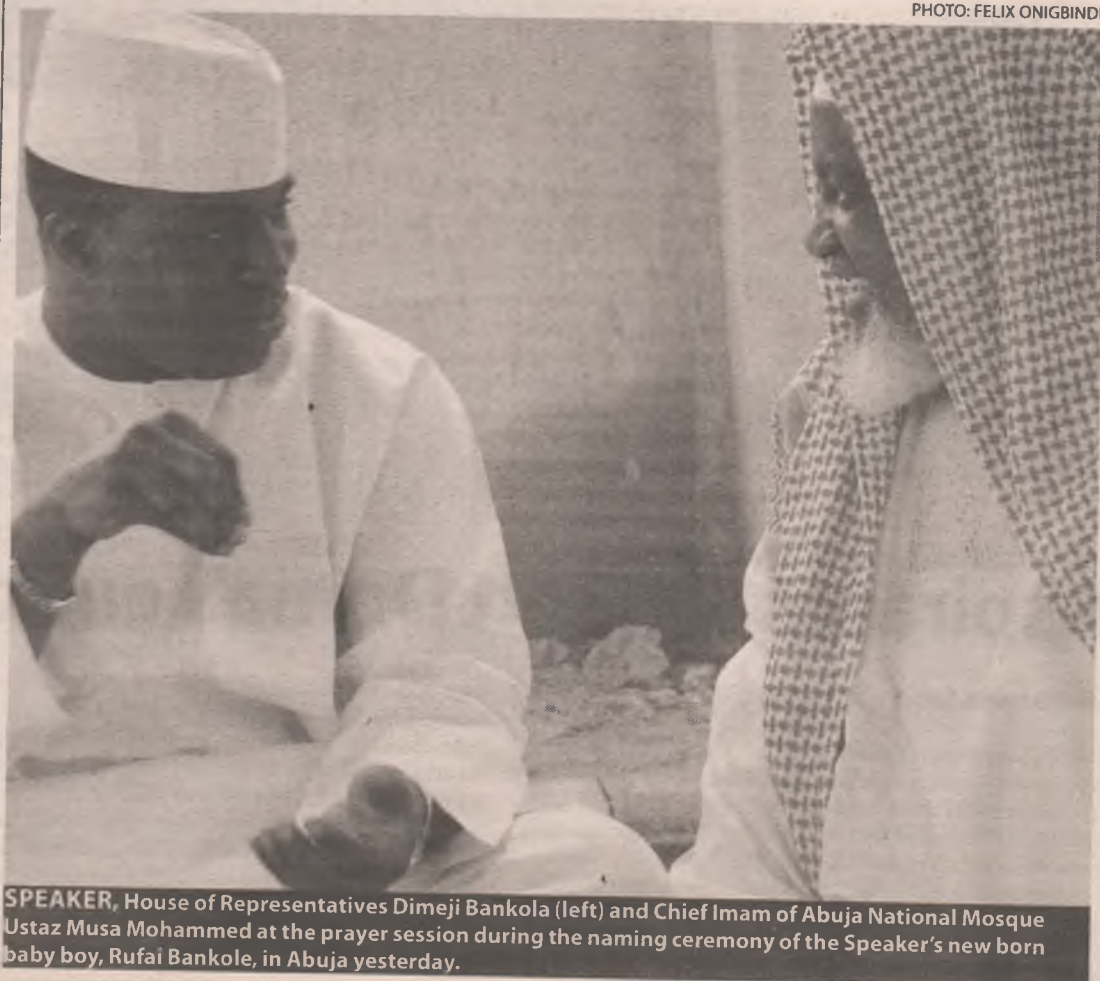


PHOTO: FELIX ONIGBINDE

SPEAKER, House of Representatives Dimeji Bankola (left) and Chief Imam of Abuja National Mosque Ustaz Musa Mohammed at the prayer session during the naming ceremony of the Speaker's new born baby boy, Rufai Bankole, in Abuja yesterday.

Police arrest MASSOB leader

From Johnkennedy Uzoma, Owerri

POLICE in Imo State have arrested the leader of the Movement for the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) Chief Ralph Uwazuruike for detaining a Nigerian-American, Pascal Okorie, at Okwe in Onuimo Local Government Area of the state.

The MASSOB leader had detained Mr. Okorie for four days on arrival in the country. This led to his invitation by the State Commissioner of Police Aloysius Okorie yesterday. Uwazuruike was after interrogation and detention at the State Police Command Owerri flown to Zone 9 Police headquarters in Umuahia, Abia State.

MASSOB's Director of Information Mr. Uchenna Madu told Daily Trust on telephone that Uwazuruike was invited by the com-

missioner over the detention. He said when it was discovered that Mr. Okorie was hatching plans to use MASSOB members to disrupt the forthcoming election in Anambra State, their leader detained him.

Daily Trust gathered that Uwazuruike corroborated his statement before the Commissioner of Police. It was also learnt that the commissioner directed the MASSOB leader to immediately release Okorie and bring him to the command.

Close sources told Daily Trust that Okorie who is the coordinator of MASSOB in America, refused to give Uwazuruike the money collected from there. Efforts made to get the commissioner, Mr. Aloysius Okorie on phone for confirmation were futile.

The Public Relations Officer Mr. Linus Nwivu could not also be reached for comment.

Armed robbers kill guard in Kano school

From Hisham Habib, Kano

A security guard was killed while two others were injured at the Government Secondary School, Makoda in Kano recently when armed men attacked the school and stole the solar

powered water pumping equipment.

The guard, Malam Muhammad Makoda, was attacked and beaten with dangerous weapons until he died while the two other men were also beaten and tied up.

The robbers made away with the equipment worth N1.2 million according to the Public Relations Officer of the state Ministry of Education Malam Sani Tukur.

The state Commissioner for Education Alhaji Musa Salihu described the incident as unfortunate, and called on security agents in the state, especially the civil defence corps and vigilante groups to be watchful for any sign of insecurity, and said investigation by the police had commenced.

He prayed for the soul of the deceased and consoled his family over the loss.



IGP Onovo



GOVERNOR Ibrahim Gaidam of Yobe State (left) receiving midwifery kits from the representative of the Executive Secretary, National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHDA) Dr. Mohammed Lawal Hadejia (middle) during a ceremony in Yobe State, yesterday.

Kaduna health workers give govt ultimatum

From Ismail Mudashir, Kaduna

HEALTH workers in Kaduna State yesterday gave an ultimatum to the state government to abide by the agreement reached last November or face an indefinite industrial action.

The state government had promised to meet the requirements of the union after a three-day warning strike over improved welfare package by the workers in November.

Addressing newsmen in Kaduna yesterday, the state chairman of the Association of Resident Doctors Dr. William Ayet said the workers would resume the suspended strike if the government failed to take appropriate action to address the issues affecting the workers.

He said the state government had failed to implement the

agreement of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the acceptance and implementation of their demands in November last year.

"We suspended the three-day strike following a memorandum of understanding signed by the consultative health workers and the Head of Service to reach an agreement before the passage of the 2010 budget. They promised to address our demands before the presentation of the budget to the House of Assembly but now they have violated the agreement reached by presenting it before addressing our demands," he said.

The chairman noted that the 350 per cent increase approved for the health workers was to enable them catch up with other states which goes to show how poor the state's health workers' salaries had been in recent years.

Group faults Jang on crisis white paper

From Andrew Agbese and Ahmed Mohammed, Jos

THE Yalwan Shendam Muslim Forum in Jos has accused the Plateau State Governor Jonah Jang of being selective and unfair in the release of the White Papers on the 1994 and 2001 crises in Jos.

A representative of the community, Dr Abdullahi H. Abdullahi, yesterday told the panel investigating the November 28, 2008 crisis that between 1994 and 2003, there were six different commissions of inquiries which submitted reports on crises that took place in different parts of Plateau but the governor released only two.

Dr Abdullahi said apart from the 1994 and 2001 crises,

there were other four reports outstanding like the Justice Felicia Dusu report on the Yalwan Shendam crisis in 2002 and three other different reports by different judicial commissions of inquiry set up under Justice Jummai Sankey report on the Langtang crisis in May 2002, the Wase crisis in November 2002 and the Quaan Paan crisis in March 2003.

He said it was obvious that the state government was in a hurry to release white papers as it made mistakes in publishing same, saying the first report on the 1994 crisis had two different dates with the first one dated 24th September 2004 when the administration was not in power and the second one dated 25th March 2009.

Aspirants boycott Doma's endorsement for 2011

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

THE endorsement of Governor Aliyu Akwe Doma by a forum of Nasarawa-South people Tuesday did not receive the blessing of some aspirants of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the state as they boycotted the Lafia meeting which was convened by the Emir of Lafia Alhaji Isa Mustapha Agwai.

A communiqué of the Lafia Division Unity Forum (LADUF) which was signed by the emir who is also the chairman, Joint Council of LADUF and the forum's secretary, Barrister Mustapha Galadima, said the meeting resolved that for the avoid-

ance of doubt, there is no vacancy at the Lafia Government House in the 2011 election for the office of governor Nasarawa State. The communiqué which passed a vote of confidence on the administration of Governor Doma, sought the support of the people of the state for the governor.

But the invitation to attend the meeting was not honoured by two governorship aspirants of the PDP from the zone. LADUF is a forum of the people of Nasarawa South senatorial district comprising Lafia, Awe, Doma, Keana and Obi Local Government Areas.

One of the aspirants, Barrister Musa Elayo, a former Minister of State for Justice, told Daily Trust that he received a telephone invi-

itation for the meeting and that he was told the agenda included the endorsement of an aspirant for the governorship position. He however said he did not attend, although he did not state reasons.

Elayo said he did not want to make comments on the resolution of a meeting he did not attend, but said the endorsement of an aspirant for any electoral office was the responsibility of a political party, and not a pressure group. He said he had no issues with the endorsement, calling the agenda "their own opinion". The Emir of Lafia, who heads the Nasarawa State Council of Chiefs, had led traditional rulers in the state to endorse the governor during a visit to the Government House last year.

Six die as police, robbers clash

From Aliyu Machika, Katsina

THREE policemen and three armed robbers died Tuesday in a gun battle at a robbery scene along the Danja-Bakori road in Bakori, Katsina State. The robbers who were about five attacked the Bakori branch of a new generation bank killing three policemen

on guard.

The incident took place at about 11 am. Our correspondent learnt that police at the Danja Division later in a gun battle killed three of the armed robbers, arrested one while one of them escaped. One of the robbers who refused to speak with newsmen when he was paraded

is alleged to be a serving military personnel. Briefing newsmen, the Katsina State Police Commissioner Alhaji Umar Manko confirmed the incident, saying the robbers killed the police officers on arrival to gain easy access into the bank. He said one of the officers killed was a Sergeant, the other a Corporal and the third a

Police Constable. Manko said N424, 115,000 was recovered from the robbers.

He added that the robbers took away two AK 47 rifles belonging to the officers killed, but they were later recovered. Other items recovered by the police include a vehicle with registration number AA 141 YDB,

an AK 47 rifle with three magazines as well as a pistol.

The commissioner who wondered why there was no CCTV camera and a security door in the bank as directed by the Inspector General of Police said hence forth, banks without those equipment would no longer be given police security.

Emir of Fika, others condole IBB

From Ayegba Israel Ebije, Minna

FORMER President Ibrahim Babangida has continued to play host to sympathizers from across the country. At his Hill Top residence yesterday to console him over the death of his wife, Maryam was the Emir of Fika who is also the Chairman of the Yobe State council of chiefs and Chancellor of the University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State Alhaji Muhammadu Abali Ibn Idrissa.

Also present were the Emir of Bade Alhaji Abubakar Umar Suleiman, Emir of Minna Alhaji Faruk Bahago and the Orodje of Okpe Kingdom retired

Major General Felix Mujakperou.

Speaking on behalf of the traditional rulers, the Orodje of Okpe Kingdom retired Major General Felix Mujakperou said they were there to sympathise with Babangida over the death of his wife. He said Maryam was a friend of all, irrespective of religion or tribe. He noted that she assisted people, especially women through her pet project.

Other visitors at the Babangida residence yesterday were the Governor of Sokoto State Alhaji Aliyu Wamako and former Secretary to the Government of the Federation Alhaji Babagana Kingibe.



ATTORNEY-general of the Federation and Minister of Justice Micheal Kaase Aondoakaa (second left) with the Commandant of the National Defence College, Rear Admiral G.J. Jonah (second right) and other principal staff officers of the college to mark the visit of the Attorney-General to the college for a lecture.

Rector warns against exam malpractice

From Ismail Adebayo, Birnin-Kebbi

NEW students of the Waziri Umaru Federal Polytechnic Birnin-Kebbi have been charged to eschew examination malpractice and other social vices or be expelled. The Rector of the institution Arc. Mohammad Kabir Nabade gave the charge yesterday at the 15th matriculation ceremony of the institution. He said examination malpractice would not be condoned.

"Examination malpractice of whatever sort has

no place in this institution. Any student who engages in examination malpractice, cultism, prostitution or drug abuse will be dismissed and made to face the law", he said.

He called on academic and non-academic staff of the institution to embrace current trends.

"While the students are expected to work very hard and show more commitment to their studies in order to survive and excel, lecturers must constantly enrich their knowledge and acquire more qualifications".

Lawyer challenges principal's dismissal

From Adelanwa Bamgboye, Lagos

A Lagos based legal practitioner, Barrister Folorunsho Ogunkun, has given the management of St. Nicholas College, Magodo, Lagos a seven day ultimatum to reverse the dismissal of the college principal Mr. Felix Omotosho. In a letter titled, "Demand for an apology for defaming Mr. Felix Oyejide Omotosho, and reversal of his unfair dismissal", the lawyer is also demanding an apology for the alleged defamation.

Part of the lawyer's letter reads, "You alleged that our client was handcuffed and this singular reason caused you to dismiss him. May we humbly ask, was our client given an opportunity to state his own side of the story? Has he been convicted by a court of competent jurisdiction".

FG to spend N12.6bn on Jebba-Kano railway rehabilitation

From Ayegba Israel Ebije, Minna

THE Federal Government is to spend N12.6 billion to rehabilitate the Jebba, Kano Railway line, the Managing Director of the Nigerian Railway Corporation Mr Seyi Sijuade has said.

He made the disclosure in Minna Monday after a meeting with stakeholders on the project, including the contractor handling the project, Messrs Coastain West Africa Ltd.

He said the project which was expected to have taken-off in December last year had to be put on

hold because they were awaiting the approval of the supplementary budget and the reassessment of the scope of work to be done. Sijuade called for support from all stakeholders, saying the railway rehabilitation was part of government's efforts to reposition the sector.

Anambra professionals vow to prevent rigging

From Zakariyya Adaramola, Lagos

THE League of Anambra Professionals (LAP) yesterday vowed to prevent rigging and other fraudulent practices in the February 6 Anambra State governorship election, just as it called on voters to vote right and defend their votes. Speaking yesterday in Lagos, the president of the group, Dr. Ikem Odumodu, said they would do everything legitimate to ensure that electorates' votes count. Dr. Odumodu said LAP was working hard to ensure that no candidate was imposed on the state, adding that it had already put

machineries in place to ensure that the rightful candidate emerged as governor.

According to Dr. Odumodu, LAP will monitor the February 6 election in all wards in Anambra and will report to appropriate authorities any fraudulent practice witnessed during the election.

He added that the group would organize a debate for all the candidates so that the electorates would know who to and who not to vote for.

"Let me inform you that the League of Anambra professionals (LAP) is deeply committed to ensur-

ing that the forthcoming governorship election in our state is free and fair. We will do everything legitimate to ensure that our peoples' votes count. We will not give any room for rigging. A debate will hold on the 22nd of January, 2010 at the Women Development Centre, Akwa, Anambra State and will be moderated by Ikenna Nduagua, a distinguished broadcaster and a son of Anambra State", he said.

He cautioned the voters against collecting any form of inducement from candidates, saying it would not pay them in the long run.

US/Nigeria relations on course – US sec

By AbdulFattah Olajide

UNITED States Deputy Secretary for Homeland Security, Ms. Jane Holl Lute has acknowledged the excellent relations between Nigeria and the US, noting that the US is Nigeria's oldest and best friend.

She made the remark when she visited Vice President Goodluck Jonathan in the State House in Abuja pointing out that the purpose of her visit was to find the way forward for aviation safety, so that travellers between Nigeria and the United States can feel safe in the skies.

She also promised to convey the Vice President's views to the US government demanding the removal of Nigeria from terror watch list.

Speaking earlier, Jonathan has urged the United States government to remove Nigeria as a "country of interest", on its ter-

rorism-linked countries list and expressed sadness over the listing.

He explained that of the about 16 international anti-terrorism legislations, Nigeria has ratified nine, adding that even before the December 25 incident, Nigeria had proposed an anti-terrorism bill which is

before the National Assembly. Dr. Jonathan told the American delegation that though the December 25 terror suspect, Farouk Umaru Al-Muttallab, is of Nigerian descent, he left the country at an early age, and essentially received socialisation and indoctrination outside the country.



VICE President Goodluck Jonathan with the Head of Civil Service, Mr. Steve Oronsaye at the Federal Executive meeting in Abuja yesterday.

Soldier stabs man to death

By Misbahu Bashir

A man claiming to be a serving military officer in Abuja allegedly stabbed a man to death after a brief scuffle, Daily Trust learnt.

The said army officer was in his uniform when he stabbed one Musa, a member of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) to death at Zuba Park.

The Police spokesman in Abuja, Superintendent Jimoh Moshood said the soldier who came to the park to board a commercial vehicle to the city centre requested pen from Musa to write in his hand book. Disagreement ensued between the two over some utterances which eventually angered the soldier. "The soldier brought out knife and stabbed Musa in the stomach and he slumped and died at the spot.

The police intervened and arrested the soldier while the body of the deceased was deposited at University of Abuja Teaching Hospital Gwagwalada," he said.

Supt Moshood said the alleged soldier is in police custody and the police are making efforts ascertain from the military authorities if he is a genuine soldier.

Civil Defence warns against foreign guards

By Abdulkadir Badsha Mukhtar

THE Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corp (NSCDC) has warned Private Guard Companies in the country against using any foreigner as its Director or Board Member.

The Commandant General Dr. Ade Abolurin gave the warning yesterday in Abuja while presenting new licences to some Private Guard Companies.

He said the companies should see themselves as privileged Nigerians who

are determined to serve the nation in their various capacities as Private security operatives in the collaboration with the regular security agencies of governments.

Abolurin said, "The license is not to be used as an instrument to destroy government policy. Any operative found wanting using the company for espionage mission or having any foreigner as a director or board member will have its license revoked, therefore the Private Guard Companies available should report to the Corps as a watch-dog."

He said that guards must ensure that

their activities erase the erroneous impression that Private Guard Companies operatives encourages criminals bearing in mind that credible people without criminal records must be recruited with a view to sanitizing the industry where many believed that some dangerous activities like bank robbery, theft, and house breaking are encouraged by Private Guard Companies.

The Corps according to Abolurin will not compromise the standard set to ensure sanity within the industry, saying any erring operative will be dealt with decisively in line with the provision of the law.

Waziri pleads with judiciary on granting injunctions

By Bofo Edet

CHAIRMAN of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission Mrs. Farida Waziri on a courtesy visit on the Chief Judge of Lagos State Justice Inumidun Akande, yesterday appealed to judges who have formed the habit of granting frivolous injunctions and exparte orders to desist in the interest of the judiciary.

Mrs. Waziri said the action was capable of not only portraying the judiciary in

bad light but could also erode public confidence in the judicial system.

According to her, "the Commission deeply appreciates the efforts of the judges particularly the designated judges attending to our matters. They have been of immeasurable assistance to us. We can only appeal to you to help us with more of their services without prejudice to your right to choose, retain, redeploy or re-design new modus operandi for the designated judges."

She solicited the understanding of the chief judge about the need to strengthen the capacity of judges designated to handle EFCC cases.

"The Commission will kindly plead for the designation of more magistrate courts for the consideration of pre-trial detention orders, issuance of search warrant and warrant of arrest. The existing one is capable but grossly inadequate for the rising challenges of the Commission," she explained.

EFCC denies probing NTDC

By Boco Edet

ECONOMIC and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) has denied a media report that it is investigating N2.3 billion fraud against the Director-General of the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC), Otunba Olusegun Runsewe.

A publication, Power Steering Magazine had reported that the alleged fraud bordered on the management of 2006 Abuja Carnival and duplication of the 2009 budget of the NTDC.

The magazine claimed that Runsewe and top officials of the NTDC had been summoned and questioned by the EFCC.

EFCC's Spokesman Femi Babafemi who made the clarification described the story in the magazine as "far from the truth."

Babafemi said: "We do not have a case at hand against the NTDC. I want to make it clear that we are not investigating either Runsewe or NTDC. I am not aware of any petition against the corporation or any of its staff."

NUT chairman faults hand-over of schools to missionaries

From John Kennedy Uzoma, Owerri

THE Imo State government has been criticized for handing over 44 schools in the state to missionaries. The criticism came

from the state Chairman of the Nigerian Union of Teachers Barr. Josiah Eze who expressed surprise over the announcement by Governor Ikedi Ohakim. He said the NUT was surprised by the governor's pronouncement on the issue

because the committee set up by him on the matter had not submitted its report. Eze said governor did not follow due process. He said the committee set up to look into the matter is headed by Prof B.E.B.Nwoke of the Imo State Uni-

versity with all the bishops in the state, 3 traditional rulers, members of ANCORPS and chairman of the NUT. He said the committee was still deliberating on how best to handle the issue when the governor announced the hand-over. He

urged government to wait for the committee's report and implement its recommendations. Governor Ikedi Ohakim had on January 4, 2010, announced the hand-over of 44 schools in the state to missionaries.

Group cautions politicians against heating up polity

From Zakariyya Adaramola, Lagos

A group, Muslim Rights Concern (MURIC) has cautioned politicians against heating up the polity over the health of President Umaru Yar'adua. MURIC in a statement signed by its Chairman Dr. Ishaq Akintola in Lagos yesterday said though Nigerians had a right to know the health status of their president, it should be done in good faith.

"We are aware that government officials released information about the president's health condition shortly after he left for Saudi Arabia. Nobody has come out to say he is somewhere else. The same government officials have been issuing statements on the matter. We are shocked that Nigerians who are reputed to be deeply religious do not have faith in God over the president's illness. MURIC states clearly, unequivocally and unambiguously that the matter of human health is in the hands of the Creator and it amounts to spiritual immorality for Nigerians to show more interest in power than in the health of their leader. Islam teaches that every soul must taste death (Qur'an 3:185) but it is not sickness that determines who dies. Neither is good health a parameter for determining those who will live. Allah says every man has an appointed time with death (Qur'an 10:49). Healthy people may therefore die while the sick that we think will die may live long. We urge Nigerians to get closer to God and to be prayerful", the group said.

Muric added, "This is the first time a sitting president of this country is going through this kind of predicament. It is a time to show understanding, tolerance, patience and neighborliness. We must avoid making demands capable of causing ethnic tension".



LEADER, National Democratic Movement, General Muhammadu Buhari (left) presenting a letter on the state of the nation to the Senate President David Mark in Abuja yesterday.

Gana faults calls for President Yar'adua's resignation

From Ismail Mudashir, Kaduna

FORMER President Olusegun Obasanjo's campaign Coordinator in the 1999 elections, Alhaji Umar Gana, has slammed all those calling for the resignation of President Umaru Yar'adua,

saying they are agents of destabilization. Gana who is the Chairman of the Democratic Advancement Option (DAO) while addressing newsmen in Kaduna yesterday urged them to set sentiment aside and put the interest of the country first. He said the freedom of expression had blos-

somed under the present administration, saying no Nigerian had been arrested or detained unlawfully for merely expressing views either for or against government officials.

"It is worthy to commend the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice Micheal Aoodakaa

for his apt and tailor-measured responses to the issue. While I hold sacrosanct the rights of citizens to express their views and make constructive criticisms, I believe that President Yar'adua has laid a solid foundation for continuity of service delivery," he said.

Ex-ambassador urges overhaul of education system

From Ahmed Mohammed, Jos

FORMER Nigerian Ambassador to Switzerland Ambassador Yahaya Kwande says the nation's education system should be overhauled to raise the stand-

ard at all levels. Ambassador Kwande who spoke with newsmen in Jos, the Plateau State capital yesterday said the education system in the country had totally broken down. "Our leaders do not care about education. they do not visit schools to see for

themselves what is happening, unlike in the past when leaders visited schools", he said.

Kwande who was a teacher in the 1950s and 60s said it was because of the poor standard that those who could afford to send their children to study in

foreign countries were doing so. "In some cases children in the cities go to the villages to take exams because some teachers helped students to cheat. How can a country with that kind of situation succeed", he said.

Sacked LG officials: Zamfara govt loses appeal

From Rakiya A. Muhammad, Sokoto

THE Court of Appeal in Sokoto State has dismissed a motion by the Zamfara State government challenging the judgment by the Zamfara High Court, ordering the immediate reinstatement of the former Chairman of Gumi Local Government Area Alhaji Suleiman Gyalange and members of his council who were sacked in December, 2005.

The Appeal Court dismissed the motion, saying it amounted to abuse of court processes. It would be recalled that the sacked local government chairman and his council members challenged their dissolution by the Zamfara State government at the Gummi High Court on January 11, 2006, and on April 3 2009, the court ruled in favour of the applicants. The state government then went to the Court of Appeal to challenge the judgment. But the court dis-

missed the appeal for lack of diligent prosecution.

The state government subsequently filed a motion at the Appeal Court for a reinstatement of the case earlier dismissed by it. But delivering judgement on the motion Tuesday, Justice Umar Belgore said the Appeal Court could not rule against a decision earlier taken by it. Reacting, the state Commissioner for Justice Alhaji Iliyasu Bukkuyum said the state would appeal against the

judgment of the Appeal Court. But counsel to the former chairman, Barrister Victor Olisa, said they intended to secure an order from the Zamfara High Court enforcing its earlier judgment that the sacked officials be reinstated. He called on the state government to respect the Rule of Law and implement the decision of the Court of Appeal. The sacked chairman expressed gratitude to God for the victory and commended the judiciary for the decision.



PIC: NAN

FROM left: Ekiti State PDP Secretary Mr. Gboyega Akinola, state Chairman Chief Bola Olu-Ojo and organising secretary Mr. Adebayo Adeosun at a news conference on the resignation of former governor Ayo Fayose from the party in Ado-Ekiti, yesterday.

Vision 20-2020 impossible without manufacturing — Minister

By Hamisu Muhammad

ACTIVE involvement of Nigerians in manufacturing ventures is imperative to the country's dream of being among the top 20 industrialised nations by the year 2020, Science and Technology Minister Alhassan Bako Zaku has said.

Speaking yesterday while receiving the management board of the Kaduna State Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (KADCCIMA), the minister said without serious linkage between the industry and the research institutions there will be no meaningful development.

"We can't achieve the Vision 20-2020 unless we are producing. We are still a consuming nation. Every nation wants to come to Nigeria to sell its products, we are just assisting them to create jobs for their people and create unemployment for our own people because we prefer to import anything," he said.

The minister said at the moment Nigerian economic growth heavily relies on oil and if the oil dries up, it will be all over.

He commended the KADCCIMA board for recognizing the ministry as partner in progress, saying that he has been waiting for such collaboration to move the nation forward.

Farouk's saga is a wake-up call — Group

By Abbas Jimoh

NIGERIAN leaders should see the listing of Nigeria among countries of interest to the US following the alleged attempt by a Nigerian to blow up an American airliner as a wake-up call.

Executive Director of Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) Auwal Musa-Rafsanjani who made the call yesterday in Abuja said leaders should conduct themselves democratically, show more seriousness in the affairs affecting

the average citizens and good governance.

He however maintained that Farouk's alleged attempt should not be a basis to list Nigeria among countries on the US terror watch list.

"We insist that the US should differentiate Umar Farouk AbdulMutallab from other Nigerians, in terms of visa issuance and border post screening. All citizens should be treated on their individual merit, instead of a blanket punitive action. We appeal to Nigerians in the Diaspora to shun all acts that are

capable of ridiculing the entire country; especially they should avoid Internet scam, credit card fraud and other crimes.

Rafsanjani said US action following Christmas day incident was due to the seeming collapse of governance, lack of leadership and the failure to institute genuine legal framework for electoral reform and the fight against corruption.

"Farouk is just a watershed for the Americans to express their anger over the poor governance and the hypocrisy of the political elites," Rafsanjani said.

Yar'adua: Group opposes Reps' visit to Jeddah

By Abbas Jimoh

THE Right Monitoring Group (RMG), a coalition of Civil Societies (CSOs) and Non Governmental Organisations (NGO) has condemned the proposed visit by a delegation of members of the House of Representatives to ailing President Umaru Yar'adua in Saudi Arabia. National Coordinator of the group, Olufemi Aduwo, told *Daily Trust* yesterday in Abuja that the visit is unnecessary and an insult to Nigerians.

"The proposed visit is hypocritical and unnecessary. What Nigerians want is a live presentation of President Yar'adua. Nigerians want to see President Yar'adua live on television, even if he is on the sick bed, the way Fidel Castro was televised live. That is the only time we can be sure we are not being deceived," Aduwo said.

While commending the police for the matured handling of Tuesday's protest on the state of the nation led by Prof. Wole Soyinka, he however expressed doubt the authenticity of the BBC report.

Russia/Nigeria trade may drop by 15% — Envoy

By Aisha Umar

RUSSIAN Ambassador to Nigeria Alexander Polyakov has predicted a drop in the volume of trade between the Russia and Nigeria this year. He made the statement at a press briefing at the embassy in Abuja yesterday adding however that the future of trade relations between the two countries is bright. He attributed the drop to global financial crisis noting that trade between the two countries did not stop but may plunge between 10 to 15 percent this year.

"I am happy to say we are likely to almost maintain our levels of bilateral trade this year, even if the volume of our bilateral trade has declined it would be minimal... it is likely to continue its steady advancement in the year of 2010", he stated.

He noted that though 2009 figure was as yet unavailable Russian statistics place trade values between the two nations at \$300m, adding that the CBN places these figures at close to \$1.5bn, "because they take into consideration indirect trade," he explains.



CHALLENGING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Society for Family Health (SFH) is one of the leading public health NGOs in Nigeria, implementing programmes for improving Reproductive Health, HIV/AIDS prevention and Maternal and Child Health. SFH works in partnership with the Federal Government of Nigeria, the British Department for International Development (DFID) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). We recently received a two (2) year grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to implement a Maternal and Neonatal Health Learning Project in **Gombe State**. The project, which is one of first of its kind, aims to demonstrate effective, scalable approaches to improving critical maternal and neonatal health practices in the home and position successful approaches for scale up in Nigeria and other parts of Africa. **Recognizing that this is a learning grant and the strategic role research and evaluation will play, the following 2 year fixed term contract vacancies have been created:**

Front Desk Officer (Ref: FDO, Gombe)
email to: fdo@sfnigeria.org

Job Profile:

Reports to the State Project Manager. The successful candidate will be responsible for the **general cleaning and upkeep of the office. S/he will attend to all visitors, take messages and handle all mail running requirements for the office.**

Qualifications/Experience: The desired candidate:

- Must have a Minimum OND in any relevant field
- Must be Computer literate
- Must have excellent interpersonal skills and very good phone ethics
- Must be able to communicate well and have good understanding of the Hausa language

IT Coordinator

(Ref: ITSO, Gombe) email: itc@sfnigeria.org

Job Profile:

Reports to the State Project Manager. The successful candidate will be responsible for supporting the IT-Manager to identify and put into place the information technology (IT) requirements of Gombe field office. S/he is to play a big role in building SFH capacity in the

area of IT. S/he will make it a point of duty to personally attend to the staff support calls on all IT related issues, ensure that all systems can communicate with the server and internet, and advice on training needs. The Support Officer will be involved in the installation and maintenance of IT infrastructure in Gombe field office. S/he will ensure the smooth functioning of the wireless access and telephone services within the office and the call centre. S/he will also assist in the administration of SFH network, maintenance of equipment and contacts with external contractors.

Qualifications/Experience: The desired candidate:

- Must possess BSc/HND degree in any of the following: Computer Science/ Information Technology or Electrical Electronics Engineering
- Must be conversant with Microsoft office 2007 packages
- Must possess a minimum of three (3) years post NYSC experience preferably in a similar capacity
- Must have excellent inter-personal skills, self motivation as well as good computer/writing skills
- Must have good knowledge of IT user support

Compensation & Benefits:

The compensation package for this position is very attractive and designed to motivate talented candidates. Both positions are based in Gombe State.

Method of Application:

A one page application letter using the position "Ref" as subject, should be addressed to the Associate Director-HR, clearly providing evidence of competences required for the job, as well as current remuneration and comprehensive Curriculum Vitae indicating clearly your **telephone numbers, e-mail address and current contact address should be sent within one week of this publication** to the email address beside the job you are applying for. Do note that any candidate with multiple submissions will be disqualified. Candidates without the minimum requirement need not apply. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

***SFH is an equal opportunity employer. FEMALE CANDIDATES ARE STRONGLY ENCOURAGED TO APPLY**

Online Reactions

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ON www.dailytrust.com



'Politicians create unnecessary tension over Yar'adua's health'

YES, this is very rare when you look at what is happening now in the country over this mat-

ter. And what Nigerians need to understand here is that most of those politicians stirring all

this fuss have their families living abroad so even if there is any crisis in the country, they

will just flee abroad and live the poor to suffer. May Allah continue to protect our country

from any form of crisis.
Abubakar Chika Maru
abubakarsuleiman2009@yahoo.com



PROFESSOR Wole Soyinka

Soyinka: He's gone AWOL

ABSENT Without Official Leave? Can't Soyinka differentiate between voluntary and involuntary actions? Falling ill is involuntary and the extent of the illness determines how much of a person's will is taken over. If the President had the will to decide to stay back and apply for leave I am absolutely certain he would not have left the country so suddenly and as such his absence under such circumstances is not peculiar. In Nigeria's situation it is the detractors that are making the country stand still and not the president's illness and absence.

Farouk Dau
faroukdau@yahoo.com

Why are the citizens of Nigeria still not bearing with what Allah has done? I hope Allah will continue providing Nigeria with health, economic stability and peace despite all this.

Ayuba A Na-Ayuba
ayubaalhasannaayuba@yahoo.com

Egypt Pharaohs butcher Eagles

WE had it coming. The Egyptian team were technically better and we know it. This is a team that has been together in camp for over three weeks. How do we expect to match their fitness and discipline when our senior players only reported to camp four or five days to the tournament?

Abdulkadir s. Daura
dauraas@hotmail.com

Well done Super Eagles, because you lost to a team that was more organized than you with a very respectable margin. This deserves commendation!

Suhail
hqibisuahail@yahoo.com

The Yar'adua health crisis: 7-man House team to visit Jeddah

THERE we go again. A Committee of 7 from the House to 'convey goodwill and discuss...'. I hope the members are going to individually contribute for the junket. Millions have prayed for Umaru quietly, why should that of the 'Honourables' be different? Is it because it is not sincere? What do you discuss with an ill man on his sickbed?

The entire issue has been used as bait to take our minds from pressing National issues and the bait has been taken! What is the state of our schools, roads, water supply and security? Come-on allow Umaru to recover and face your constitutional duties here. Electoral Reforms, Constitutional Review, etc...there is so much to do. I call on fellow Nigerians to leave this mundane issue - Umaru is ill - there is no doubt about it; does that need to stop Nigeria in her tracks?!

Muhammad Nalya
naiyamd@yahoo.com

I commended the efforts of Prof Soyinka and other notable Nigerians that carried out the peaceful demonstration in our Nation's Capital yesterday. This has simply proven that we still

have some conscious and concerned Nigerians that still have the love of the masses at heart and the country itself. We are waiting patiently again to see the possible positive action by the National Assembly in this case. Nigerians are tired with this style of governance.

Muktar
mukky.mukky@yahoo.com

We must continue to pray for the quick recovery of our president. However, the time for the leadership of the National Assembly to visit Mr President on his recovery bed is now. It is sad, indeed, ungodly for anybody to wish Mr President dead. It is also proper that Nigerians should be informed very sincerely about the true conditions of Mr President's health. God will keep our president to continue and sustain the good work he has started. I wish him quick recovery.

Nnamdi Douglas
Nnamdidouglas@yaoo.com

Why now? All this while, neither the honorable members nor the members of the senate ever constituted any panel to ascertain the true state of Mr. Presi-



PRESIDENT Umaru Yar'adua

dent's health. After 43 days why now? Is it a show they're putting up or what? I really can't believe this. Yes Nigerian's deserve to know the where-about and state of their president, but I wouldn't nominate either the Representatives or the Senate.

Abdulkadir Ali Bage
alizaki001@yahoo.com

That is exactly what we expect

from our leaders and not mass rioting and the rest. Bankole and co. keep it up.

Adam B. Bababe
adambababe@yahoo.com.au

The 7-man house team should include an NTA crew in order to capture on video the physical state of our President.

Alhaji Sule Adamu
alhsuldam@yahoo.com

I don't believe it was Yar'adua's voice - Lawmaker

AS far as I am concerned, Mr President did not speak to anybody. I was watching the Senate debate the issue yesterday and a member asked the Senate President to confirm a media report that he spoke with the president few days ago. He promised to confirm but did not do so. This clearly implies that he did not speak with him. PDP should please save the country.

Sammy
oopimoko@yahoo.com

Whose voice do you believe it is since you don't believe it is his? I am shocked that a Honourable member should compare the voice of the Number One citizen of this the country with voice of a singer.

Abubakar Chika Maru
abubakarsuleiman2009@yahoo.com

Those of us making noise about the President's absence are just doing so for the sake of making the right noises. The people who are supposed to talk about this issue know where and how the president is doing and since they have not voiced out yet, I don't think anything is wrong with the president. He is just undergoing a medical check-up as usual. This one just took long than usual.

Abbas
donbasio@yahoo.com

I totally agree with Muhammad Aminu. Why will the president

speaking through a foreign media when we have our own media and why would he opt to dispel our fears over his health by going on radio instead of television. I smell a rat. I don't believe it is the president's voice. The Federal Government and the family of the president should stop deceiving us.

Ahnadu
asimails@yahoo.co.uk

I agree. I don't see why we cannot have a video confirmation of the president. This is 2010. With all the technology available today, people cannot just digest radio talk and go and lie down.

Ghit
ghitzmoore2@gmail.com

Yar'adua debate: Senate to grill NTA over blackout

INVESTIGATIONS, investigations, investigations..... nothing has come out of previous investigations; this one's not going to be different.

Muhd Dan Muhd
sbashira@yahoo.com

Eagles' performance heartbreaking - Hamilton



COACH Shuaibu Amodu

PLEASE disband this team and the technical crew and save us of the impending heartbreak. Enough is enough.

Manu
degodsfada@yahoo.com

Yesterday's poor performance by Nigeria's Super Eagle is enough to send Coach Amodu and his technical crew packing. There is no hope that the team

can progress beyond this level. It is not wise to waste our scarce resources on a team that is not ready to make us proud. They should simply return home without playing any other match and should not be allowed to go to South Africa for the World cup.

Sonny Olorogun
somyolorogun2006@yahoo.com

“ Idang Alibi

idangalibi@dailytrust.com; 08036938729

Shamsudeen Usman and the return to development planning

For those who still pay attention to some of the policies and plans of government, one of the things the Yar'adua administration has promised to do is that with effect from this year, Nigeria will go back to the era of development planning as a strategy for national growth and development. The fact that this significant shift in the philosophy of governance in our country is not being widely commented upon indicates that not too many people are aware of this plan.

If the return to the old but better way of running governance indeed takes effect this year as planned, this is certainly one of the things we would commend the Yar'adua administration for. For that decision will represent courage, wisdom and plain good sense. The present system of the absence of formal planning has not served us well at all. There is a popular saying that if you fail to plan, then you have planned to fail. There is another saying that proper planning prevents poor performance.

Our inability to embark upon deliberate and coordinated national planning over the past 25 or so years has severely hampered our growth and development. Nigeria has been witnessing a steady decline since then and in some sectors, what we see

“ I do not care very much whether the government wants to be socialist or capitalist

today is utter decay. The Development Planning strategy which we adopted even before 1960 ensured the country's rapid growth between the year of our independence and the 80s when the military jettisoned this strategy in favour of rolling plan, and ad hoc strategy, such as the use of task forces, dependence on proposals from consultants and contractors, gut feelings of the men and women in power or reliance on their whims and caprices.

It takes courage and good sense to go back to what worked when it is realized that the path we have chosen now will not take us to our national Promised Land.

Some knowledgeable persons have volunteered the opinion that some times, the way for a nation or a people to achieve progress in their life is not to go forward as our Nigerian politicians perennially urge us to do. In fact, what may be required is to go backwards. As a people we have gone forward and have reached a precipice, a dangerous hill with deep gullies full of poisonous reptiles. Going forward will be very unwise in the circumstance. The only stares us is certain disaster. For what reasonable step to take is to go backward. And so it is that the Yar'adua admin-

istration has decided that we should go backward to the era of development planning as a strategy for our national progress.

We are all aware of the weaknesses of the system that has been in place since 1984 when the military again seized power and stayed put for unbroken 15 years before again handing over in 1999. The main feature of lack of planning is of course absence of discipline. Every leader does as he pleases. The leader and his wife will more or less impose on the nation their pet projects. Some times projects that are not in any years' budget are funded while those in it never get funded. It is responsible for the so many abandoned projects littering the landscape. Every successive leader comes with his own pet project and as soon as he leaves, that project will become abandoned no matter how laudable it might be.

More importantly, lack of planning is at the root of the very little progress we have made in the past one quarter century of our national life.

Development Planning on the other hand will ensure that many knowledgeable people are co-opted into the process of conceiving policies and plans that will drive the national development efforts. Many people will be stakeholders and the buy-in for many projects will be guaranteed. The chances of failure of many government projects will be minimal. The citizens will clearly see the direction government is going. Many will become more enthusiastic in joining hands for national development. Corruption will be easy to detect and foil because there is a clear direction of where we are going as a people. The present system gives too much room for opaqueness.

The Yar'adua administration has come under criticism for its tendency to engage in policy summer-saults or reversals. Some have also said that the government appears confused about whether it wants to adopt socialism or stick to the present free-market economic system. I do not care very much whether the government wants to be socialist or capitalist, what I know from the experience this nation has had since independence is that development planning has more advantages that the system we have been practicing since the mid-80s whatever its name may be.

With the adoption of the new development strategy, what it means is that the burden of Nigeria's national growth and development now falls on the shoulder of Usman, the Minister for National Planning. Is he fully aware of the enormous burden on his shoulders? We hope he realizes it. Usman is now Nigeria's deputy chief *visioner* and executor. He and his principal have a duty to mobilise Nigerians to participate actively in nation-building. I wish them luck.

“

By Mohammed Sulaiman

Yar'adua's health and politics of 2011

The recent signing of the 2009 Supplementary budget into law by President Umaru Musa Yar'adua has doused the roaring fire of misinformation, disinformation and propaganda that has polluted the public domain since he travelled to Saudi Arabia for medical treatment. Before the signing of the supplementary budget, the nation was saturated with different demands for his resignation, handing over to Vice President Goodluck Jonathan or even outright declaration of incapacitation by the Federal Executive Council. Making these unnecessary calls were mainly by politicians from the opposition parties and disgruntled members of the ruling PDP. From all the brouhaha, what has really emerged is the politics to the race of 2011 presidential elections that some people are trying to use to their selfish ends.

The president's health condition was obviously a cause of anxiety to every patriotic Nigerian especially as at the time he was about to make his presentation of the 2010 budget estimates to the National Assembly. His inability to make the presentation himself was partly caused by the members of the National Assembly because of the disagreement between the Senate and the House of Representatives regarding the venue of the presentation as each chamber was insisting on its position, necessitating the budget presentation to the two chambers to be made separately by the Presidential Adviser of Assembly Matters, Senator Abba Aji. This singular act and also because the president did

“ There is no single evidence that anything has stopped working because he is not around

not formally write to the National Assembly to inform that two chambers that he was proceeding abroad to receive medical treatment triggered an unprecedented propaganda against the president.

Section 145 of the 1999 Constitution stipulates that “Whenever the President transmits to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives a written declaration that he is proceeding on vacation or that he is otherwise unable to discharge the functions of his office, until he transmits to them a written declaration to the contrary, such functions shall be discharged by the Vice President as Acting President”. The propaganda war was first launched by a group of ex-this and ex-that that called itself G53, which sought to blackmail the government and create unnecessary tension and anxiety in the polity. The first issue was the delayed signing of the 2009 supplementary budget that they were harping on. From this they moved to the inauguration of the new Chief Justice of the Federation, Justice Katsina-Alu and the President of the Court of Appeal, Justice Isa Ayo Salami, ceremonies that they claimed must have been performed by the

president, and no one else. The two justices were sworn-in by the out-gone Chief Justice of Nigeria, Justice Idris Kutigi. This was in conformity with the second schedule of the Oath Act Cap 33 of the Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, the President or the Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN) can administer both the Oath of Allegiance and the Judicial Oath on the CJN. They were soon to be joined by others in a systematic fashion to stampede the government and force Yar'adua to either resign or handover to Jonathan. Lately, even the Nigeria Bar Association has joined the bandwagon. The strategy seems to be aimed at removing Yar'adua from the scene to pave the way for some people to seek for the presidency in the coming 2011 elections. In this regard, they already started speculating for candidates to be appointed as Vice President whenever Jonathan assumes the presidency. Names like Governor Sule Lamido of Jigawa State from the Obasanjo fraternity, General Aliyu Gusau Mohammed from the military ex-generals class, and host of other names, were speculated. In this political chessboard, a north-south dimension was also added by others so that their favoured candidates have a chance. The intrigues for the road to the presidential villa have started in earnest using the sickness and absence of President Yar'adua as a spring board.

What is most baffling in this politics of the 2011 elections is how some people politicize the president's sickness, as if they were never sick at one time or the other in their lives. They make so many hues and cry as if he was the first president in the world to be sick or afflicted by one ailment or the other. Instead of all of us to pray for his quick recovery, some are even wishing him dead so as to attain their selfish ambition. Many seem to forget that sickness, good health, life and death are all in the hands of Almighty God and anybody can fall sick or die anytime. We should therefore stop wishing one another death or making jest or politics of someone's sickness. The campaign of calumny against the Yar'adua administration that the government has grounded to a halt because of his absence from the country is false. There is no single evidence that anything has stopped working because he is not around. The weekly Federal Executive Council meetings still holds normally, ministers run their respective ministries without any problem and law and order continue to prevail in the country. A visitor to the country will never know the president is not in the country without being told. We therefore thank God that the president is recuperating very well and was able to sign the 2009 supplementary budget thereby giving lie to the propagandists that he is incapacitated.

In conclusion, we appeal to all politicians to stop playing dirty politics and politics of sickness of the president. Let them present an acceptable manifesto to the people instead of just empty rhetoric. We should all pray for the quick recovery and return of the president to continue steering the ship of state. We should all continue to support the government for the successful and urgent implementation of the 7-point Agenda for the betterment and progress of the society.

Sulaiman wrote from Dogon Daji, Sokoto.



Your Letters

Maryam Babangida, a painful loss

The news of the death of Mrs. Maryam Babangida following a protracted illness came as a shock to us at Igbinedion University. As Muslims however, the words 'Innalillahi wa inna-ilaihi raji'un' (from Allah we came and to Him we shall return) were immediately recited to soothe the shock. Hajiya Maryam Babangida died at the age of 61 years at an American hospital on the 27th of December 2009. Her remains were buried at the Babangida family Hilltop residence in Minna, with thousands of people in attendance.

A lot has been written and said of the life and times of the late first lady. Her Better Life for Rural Women programme was a practical approach at tackling the crushing

problem of poverty and ignorance in the country. Drive poverty away from the (rural) woman (who is the foundation of the family structure) and one would successfully defeat penury in a generation. That must have been the thinking behind the approach embarked upon by the late Mrs Maryam Babangida.

Even in retirement, she was into numerous philanthropy programmes across the width and breadth of this country. I remember having to wait and then re-arrange an appointment to see Her Excellency because she was in a rural and remote area of Niger state distributing relief materials to the needy. Hajiya Maryam Babangida's passion and energy for humanity was unparalleled.

At the convocation ceremony of Igbinedion University in 2004, she was present as she was one of the recipients of honorary doctorate degrees. She used the opportunity to lay the foundation stone of the Igbinedion University Okada central mosque. She went further to fund the mosque project to an enviable level.

Our few interactions with the late Hajiya Maryam Babangida revealed her to be a caring mother and an exceptionally humble person. She would ask us individually our courses of study and how we were faring. She would advise us, as she would her own biological children to work hard and that there was no shortcut to success. Her generosity and love for nature was as remarkable as her signature glamour and class. On visits to her home in Minna, she would lead us around her garden and tell us to plant flowers and trees in our places of abode. From every department of national life come stories of how she touched lives in every class of Nigerian society from the armed forces to rural dwellers.

Dr. Maryam Babangida's loss will be irreplaceable and she will be dearly missed. We are consoled by the fact that she lived a positive life in the worship of her creator and the service of humanity.

Ahmed A. Bulama, College of Clinical Medicine, Igbinedion University, Okada.

Text us on 08 131 8000 30

Wingless Eagles

NFA should re call those young, talented and dedicated crops of players for special training against South Africa 2010. Enough of the hypertension.

MAHMOOD M., Minna, 08069830221.

...Blame the coach

AMADU Sha'aibu is a complete letdown. To say he can't win the Nations Cup is clear indication of his incompetence. Coaches don't talk like that.

AUWALU Kawu Kibiya, 07085702342.

Is that right?

SO Nigeria has been on US watch

list? I think the US has been looking for a reason to black list Nigeria; now that Farouk has offered them the opportunity they quickly jumped at it. Or how does one explain the hasty decision to place us on a list of "countries of interest"?

NGBALE Biliron, Abuja, 08034532231.

Eye-opener

THIS is a call to us to always do the right thing at the right time. It's only here that children of politicians and the wealthy go to school anywhere but home. Wit all the unnecessary religious crises we have, don't we harbour terrorists in our midst? We should

do what is right and stop making noise.

TARIF, Zaria, 07034980576.

Remembering Mamman Ali

HIS memory, ideals and indelible footprints will forever remain evergreen in the hearts of teeming admirers.

UHUAMI Abdulmajid, 08036060282.

Not fair of Yar'adua

TO expect Nigerians to wait for his recovery before the country can move forward. A developing country like Nigeria needs a full-time president!

FATIMA Bashir Ilu, Kano, 07030893232.



By Shehu Na'barau

Sokoto election petition tribunal's decision deserves to be upturned

The majority decision of Sokoto Governorship and House of Assembly Election Petition Tribunal amounted to miscarriage of Justice, because it contained errors that can be pinpointed in law and therefore departure from the rules that characterize a proper trial.

It is over two years since the tenure of former governor of Sokoto State, Alhaji Attahiru Dalhatu Bafarawa, ended. In effect, if Alhaji Muhammadu Maigari Dingyadi succeeds in his appeal that comes up next week, Sokoto State would have been governed for over 20 months by someone who was not elected in accordance with section 1(2) of the Constitution of the Federal republic of Nigeria, 1999 and the Electoral Act, 2006.

The election for a new governor was first conducted in April, 2007. Dingyadi and Democratic Peoples Party (DPP) challenged the result of the election by presenting a petition which, inter alia, contended that the candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Alhaji Aliyu Magatarkada Wamakko, was not its duly nominated candidate, and that he was not qualified to contest the election or be returned as duly elected on the platform of PDP.

The Tribunal dismissed the petition. Dingyadi and DPP successfully appealed to the Court of Appeal; the Tribunal's decision was reversed. In consequence, the result of the election was annulled and the return of the PDP candidate as duly elected was voided. The ground upon which the election was nullified by the Court of Appeal was that as at April 14, 2007, when the Sokoto State Gubernatorial Elections was held, Wamakko was not qualified to contest, because it breached the Constitution and the Electoral Act evident from the Deputy Governor but it was Mukhtari Shahu Shagari that was returned with him as Deputy Governor. This also begs for explanations.

Wamakko, who was adjudged to be unqualified to contest the election of April 14, 2007, and his election nullified by the Court of Appeal, was again defiantly placed for the second time on the ballot in the fresh election conducted on May 24, 2008, pursuant to the judgment of Court of Appeal. He was again returned by INEC as having been duly elected as Governor of Sokoto State.

Dingyadi and DPP presented a petition to the Election Petition Tribunal sitting in Sokoto, Sokoto State on June 26, 2008, challenging the return of Wamakko to the office of Governor in the fresh election held on May 24, 2008 on the platform of the PDP. The Tribunal in its ruling of February 18, 2008, dismissed the petition.

The petition before the trial tribunal was not about pre-election. It is an independent suit which is not comparable to that suit commenced before May 24, 2008 Sokoto Governorship election at the Federal High Court Abuja. All these features of differences as to course of action, issues for determination etc., exclude the operation of abuse of court process as to multiplicity of actions on the same subject matter before different courts at the same time. What is more, the Federal High Court declined jurisdiction, striking out the suit without determining its merit.

A case that was not determined on the merit cannot be a bar to a subsequent suit. It cannot be said to have finally determined the rights of the parties. The judgment of the Court of Appeal determined the rights of the parties on the merit; but the judgment of the Federal High Court did not. That latter judgment cannot therefore operate as cause of action estoppels to foreclose the reopening of the issue left undecided, by way another suit in the appropriate court that has jurisdiction.

A fresh action at the appropriate judicial forum cannot rightly be objected to on ground of estoppels or abuse of court process as the Tribunal argued. The Court of Appeal Kaduna, in the course of writing the judgment of April 11, 2008 cannot be said to have been unaware of the extant provisions of the Electoral Act as regards the process of nomination.

The consequential orders of the Court of Appeal in the judgment delivered in Dingyadi vs. Wamakko clearly did not contemplate Wamakko as being qualified to stand for fresh elections. It is our view that the judgment of the election tribunal in the Sokoto State Governorship election is wrong and contrary to established legal principles and current position of the law. It is also against the weight of evidence adduced in the trial. It is therefore unreasonable and unwarranted. It is hoped that it will be upturned in the interest of justice, democracy and rule of law in Nigeria.

Na'barau contributed this article from 57, Nagwamatse Road, Sokoto.

DAILY TRUST

EDITORIAL

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E-travel desk for ministers

The Head of Civil Service of the Federation, Mr Steve Oronsaye recently raised some eyebrows over his proposal to establish a Service-Wide Electronic Travel Desk to monitor the travel schedules and expenditure of ministers, permanent secretaries and other top government functionaries. Oronsaye's proposal, which was said to have received the blessing of President Umaru Yar'adua last July, generated contentious debate at the Federal Executive Council meeting, held on December 9, 2009; most cabinet members reportedly objected to the idea.

The issue arose from a memorandum to Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) dated November 30, 2009 announcing the setting up of the desk in the office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation (OHCSF). According to the memo, "MDAs shall have Travel Desks in their various offices to collate official travel approvals and make requests on behalf of the travelling officers to the central travel desk for processing through the official web portal of the OHCSF. Each year, all travel votes for MDAs shall be aggregated and domiciled in the OHCSF under the heading: Central Travel Vote". The memo directed the Accountant-General of the Federation to open and maintain bank accounts for the management of the Central Travel Vote with the Central Bank of Nigeria; and noted that the HCSF would be responsible for the operation of the accounts. Similarly, the 'Central Travel Desk' would confirm all travel requests from MDAs; make all electronic ticketing and reservations, issue tickets to the travelling officers through their respective travel desks, generate reports for accounting purposes (reconciliation and payment); and continually negotiate rates with airlines, among other issues that may arise.

According to the proposal, the e-Travel Desk would start on a pilot basis for 11 MDAs effective December 1, 2009, while the guideline would become operational with effect from January 1, 2010. However; this has been stopped due to the on-going controversy because the new directive is believed to contradict the content of earlier memorandum to the President dated 7th July, 2009, which stipulated that 'the 2010 appropriation for the purchase of all air tickets for MDAs will be domiciled in the Federal Ministry of Finance', not the OHCSF as indicated in the November memo. By inference, the new measure is expected to commence this year, since there was no appropriation to that effect in the 2009 budget. Similarly, it was argued that the Head of Service has no legal mandate to operate the proposed accounts. To this end, the FEC meeting directed the Attorney General of the Federation to point out the discrepancies to the Head of Service.

The situation, as it stands, portends potential conflicts. First is the likely rift between the executive and other arms of government as Oronsaye circular issued was also copied to the Chief Registrar of the Supreme Court, and the Clerk of the National Assembly, suggesting that their travelling votes would also be subject to scrutiny by his office. This could be interpreted to be an attempt by the executive arm to seek to control the judiciary and the legislative arms of government. More so, coming at a time when the country is warming up for the 2011 general elections, the proposal could be susceptible to a lot of interpretations.

The decision taken at the Federal Executive Council meeting of December 9, suspending the Oronsaye initiative pending resolution of identified grey areas, is prudent and a step in the right direction, because it appears to be a duplication of existing rules requiring that ministers or other senior government functionaries cannot embark on any foreign trip without the consent and approval of the president through the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF). Similarly, no head of department or agency travels without the approval of the Head of Service. The new proposal would, if allowed to stand, add to the already cumbersome bureaucratic bottleneck that has over the years impeded government machinery.

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Reproductive health: Leaders take action (I)

Last year, the Kano-based Development Research and Project Centre DRPC organised leadership development and reproductive health retreats in three states, Sokoto, Niger and Zamfara. The retreats began in July at Abuja and the participants were political executives, mainly legislators and Local Government functionaries. A few members of the judiciary also participated. DRPC commissioned some of us as consultants to design and conduct the retreats which took place simultaneously in the three states. The United States Agency for International Development USAID supported the retreats which used a participatory approach involving a lot of exercises and de-emphasised paper presentations. The leadership component of the retreat focused on defining and understanding leaders and leadership which had sessions on the leadership factor in development while the reproductive health component focused on applying leadership learning to the problems and challenges of women's health. There were also sessions on maternal health in development and a panel discussion on Islamic perspectives on Women's health and child spacing. At the end of the retreat, the participants developed Individual Action Plans IAP in which they stated how they would use what they have learnt to initiate change and promote development in the reproductive and maternal health sector in their communities.

Another group of participants that the DRPC worked with under the same project were the Islamic leaders and traditional leaders who were sponsored to Alexandria, Egypt for a course on Islamic perspectives of RH/FP. During the course and study tour they interacted with several resource persons and attended workshops where presentations were made by accomplished clerics and Islamic scholars from the famous Al Azhar University. The Traditional rulers and Islamic scholars returned to Nigeria in August 2009.

In December, the DRPC commissioned the consultants who facilitated the in-country retreats for political leaders to undertake an impact assessment tour of the project and document any progress the participants might have made in the implementation of their Individual Action Plans IAP. Among the consultants were Dr. Ahmed Yahaya who visited Niger State, Dr Khalid Suleiman who interviewed some leaders in Sokoto State while Dr. Danladi Abubakar who did the same in Zamfara state. I was privileged to go to the three states to meet with and document the success story of some of these reproductive health leaders.

In Sokoto I met with the Sokoto State Commissioner for Women

Civil Society Watch

By Hajiya Bilkisu (mni)

Affairs Hajiya Kubura Abubakar whose IAP was focused on training nurses for the Primary Health-care Centre in her community in Shagari Local Government. She said providing human resources for the management of health facilities is a challenge in the rural areas because the right calibre of staff, such as doctors, nurses and midwives do not want to live and work in the rural areas. She therefore decided to identify educated

able level." He has in addition to sensitisation talks set up a Community Mobilisation Committee to sustain the initiative, renovated the decrepit maternity clinic in Gagi and connected the building with electricity by linking it to the national grid. He was supported by some development partners such as WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, State ministries of Health and Women Affairs. UNFPA among other donors provided 20 beds to the maternity clinic. His other passions included compulsory girl-child school enrolment and prevention of early and forced marriages, all of which he has now recognised have direct impact on maternal and child health. To demonstrate his leadership by



The United States Agency for International Development USAID supported the retreats which used a participatory approach involving a lot of exercises and de-emphasised paper presentations

indigenes of her local government whom she can encourage to train as health workers and return to work in their communities. When I was going to interview her, I went with the retired Principal of Sokoto State School of Nursing and Midwifery, Hajiya Fatima Gummi, the Chairperson of Advocacy Nigeria Network working on reduction of maternal mortality in Sokoto state and we discussed how to accelerate her IAP with support from the institutions that train these cadre of health workers.

One of the leading traditional rulers from Sokoto who attended participated in the Egypt study tour was Alhaji. Sani Umar Gagi, District Head of Gagi. He is currently the Sultanate Councils leading member in promoting reproductive health, family planning, polio eradication, HIV/AIDS control and supporter of other development issues. He said that the Egypt Study Tour he participated in was indeed a turning point because, according to him, 'it opened my eyes on the need for the Muslim communities to change their attitude towards reproductive health issues. I was particularly empowered by the lectures on 'Islam and Family Planning' and 'Population and Development' as they prepared me with adequate skills to address the RH problems in my community in a culturally appropriate manner using the religious language and symbols. 'On his return from Egypt he was motivated to embark on community mobilisation and general enlightenment which he believed will "drastically reduce our maternal mortality rate to a more accept-

example, he supported his two wives to go back to school.

I met and interviewed Alhaji. Nura Attajiri, an Executive member of the Sokoto State Chapter of the National Council of Muslim Youth Organizations (NACOMYO) – a faith-based civil society organization. He was trained as Pharmacy Technician and served in many PHCs in Sokoto. His Islamic activism led him to enrol for degree program in Arabic. Prior to his involvement in development activities, Nura 'hated' anything to do with family planning and reproductive health. He viewed it as the evil machinations of the Jews and Christian West *yahudu da nasara* to control the population growth of Muslims.

He however began to shift ground when he started attending meetings, workshops and seminars organised by government, UNICEF and other development partners working in Sokoto State. His involvement in the Girl Child Education Project (GEP) led him to appreciate the link between female education with development. He operates a skills acquisition centre in his house in Sokoto where women are trained in tailoring, knitting and embroidery along with basic literacy and numeracy. In his IAP he decided to incorporate reproductive health and family planning in to the curriculum of the centre. Since his training in Egypt, more attention is given to the RH/FP component of the curriculum. Female health service providers are also regularly invited to give health talks on child and maternal health.



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Time 8.00 pm

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Mrs. Winnie Madhikizela-Mandela
Anti-Apartheid Fighter and Member of Parliament

Alhaji Ahmed Joda
Chairman, National Communication Commission

Hajiya Laila Dogonyaro
Former Chairperson, National Council of Women Societies

Ms. Samia Nkrumah
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INTERNATIONAL

Guinea junta chief convalescing in Burkina Faso

GUINEA'S junta chief Moussa Dadis Camara, who barely survived an assassination attempt in December, has been flown from Morocco to Burkina Faso to "continue his convalescence," the Burkinabe foreign ministry said yesterday.

"After a month of treatment in Morocco, and considering the evolving state of his health, Moussa Dadis Camara arrived in Ouagadougou where he will continue his convalescence," said a foreign ministry statement.

However, his surprise arrival in Ouagadougou raised new questions about the future of negotiations between the military leadership and the opposition in Guinea.

President Blaise Compaore, who met Camara shortly after his arrival here late Tuesday, has been mediating between stand-in junta leader General Sekouba Konate and the opposition in Guinea.

Konate, who is defence minister, recently asked Guinea's Forces Vives coalition of opposition parties, trade unions and civil society to share power in a transition government and has called for democracy in the country.

Konate was due to fly to Ouagadougou on Wednesday to meet the junta chief. Camara walked "with difficulty" from the plane, supported by two aides, a local reporter said. "He is lucid, he is speaking," a source in Compaore's office told AFP.

The junta leader had not appeared in public since being evacuated to Rabat for medical treatment after being shot in the head by his aide de camp on

December 3 during a dispute, allegedly over a bloody crackdown on an opposition rally.

It was not immediately clear if Camara intended to stay in Burkina Faso, return to Guinea or travel to another country.

"I don't know yet because we haven't spoken since his arrival in Ouagadougou but President Dadis will go back when it is decided," a top junta official Moussa Keita told AFP by phone.

"Nothing is preventing him from going home," Keita said. But his unannounced departure from Morocco left a host of unanswered questions yesterday.

Did the junta chief leave voluntarily or was he expelled by Rabat? Did he choose to go to Burkina Faso rather than directly to Guinea? Is he in a fit state to return to power, given his apparently serious wounds?

The United States expressed concern about the possible return of Camara. "Any effort by Dadis to return to Guinea would concern us," said a US State Department official who requested anonymity.

French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner said in an address to parliament in December that it would be better for Camara to stay in bed in Morocco "because his return alone is capable of setting off a civil war that we don't need".

The bauxite-rich west African country has been under military rule since a December 2008 military coup launched by Camara following the death of longtime leader Lansana Conte. Tensions peaked last September 28 when troops massacred at least 156 people at an opposition rally.

Seven children killed in Somalia shelling

SEVEN children were among ten people killed in shelling by Somali government forces in Mogadishu yesterday as the troops backed by African Union peacekeepers fired mortars into districts held by Islamist insurgents.

The seven children were struck by shells while playing football in the capital's southern Wardhigley neighbourhood, witnesses and medical officials said.

"I saw the bodies of seven children killed after a mortar shell struck a playground near... a primary school," said Mohamed Abdulle, a witness.

Two other civilians died of their wounds in the city's Medina hospital where 13 people were taken for treatment, the hospital's director Mohamed Yusuf Hasan told AFP, while another civilian was killed by a stray bullet.

The shelling was in retaliation

for an attack by the hardline Islamists who had fired shells at the bases of the AU and government forces, said Mohamed Ali, a Somali government security official. The Al-Qaeda-inspired Shebab militants and their Hezb al-Islam allies vowed to topple the internationally-backed government of President Shariif Sheikh Ahmed when they launched a deadly onslaught last May.

They have since waged regular attacks against the government, reducing its control of war-racked Mogadishu to a few streets where it is protected by the understrength AU forces.

But in recent days, the Shebab have faced a fierce offensive from a government-allied group opposed to a brand of strict Islam they have imposed in the parts of central and southern Somalia under their control.

Sudan army, rebels clash in Darfur

SUDANESE forces clashed with rebels yesterday in a key area of the troubled western region of Darfur, rebels and peacekeepers said.

"We have taken Gulu," in Jebel Marra, the fertile plateau in the heart of Darfur, Ibrahim al-Hillu, spokesman for the Sudan Liberation Army faction of Abdel Wahid Nur, told AFP.

Sudanese aircraft had earlier bombed rebel positions in the Jebel Moon and Jebel Marra areas, Hillu said, adding that clashes had left casualties among

civilians as well as rebels and government troops.

"Today, there were clashes between the army and SLA-Abdel Wahid," an official with the UN-African Union peacekeeping mission (UNAMID) told AFP but did not confirm if the rebels had taken control of Gulu.

"Some NGOs are on the ground assisting the local population," the official added. Sudanese warplanes have also bombed positions of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) in Jebel Moon over the past few

days.

The Darfur conflict that erupted in 2003 initially pitted two rebel groups against the Khartoum government and its Arab militia allies. But both the rebels and the pro-government militias have since splintered into an array of factions.

The United Nations says up to 300,000 people have died from the combined effects of war, famine and disease, and that another 2.7 million have fled their homes. The government puts the Darfur death toll at 10,000 people.



REBELS from the Sudan Liberation Movement faction of Abdel Wahid Nur occupy a deserted house in the northern Darfur region in 2006.

International

Yemen: A fractured State from within

By Charles Onunaiju

EVEN before the Farouk Abdumutallab affair, that shot the country to international limelight, Yemen has always been on the boil. The central government in Yemen has been fighting more serious battles for many years before the so-called Al Qaeda threat emerged.

Near the border with Saudi Arabia, separatist Houthi rebels have with increasing ferocity been waging a guerilla war. Last August, President Ali Abdullah Saleh, with great fanfare, announced the "final offensive" against the Houthis. But it was only with the intervention of the Saudi army and the help of American air power that the Houthis were temporarily subdued; they are far from defeated.

The Houthis have shown that they are capable of fighting on two fronts – against government forces and the invading Saudi forces. They briefly took the battle across the Saudi border in November. Without the massive Saudi and U.S. intervention, the Saleh government would have collapsed.

In the south, a renewed secessionist movement is gaining momentum. South Yemen, which gained its independence in 1967 after driving out the British, joined the north in 1990 to form one united country. Since then the southerners have felt discriminated against.

The south has had a progressive political culture. It was known as the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and was aligned with the Soviet Union in the 1970s and the 1980s during the Cold War. Many in the south had opposed unification.

A civil war erupted in 1994, with the central government in Sana'a using Salafist and jihadist elements to crush the former socialists in the south. Now those opposed to unification have been regrouping in the south under the banner of the secessionist "Southern Movement", which poses another serious challenge to President Saleh's 30-year rule.

The Southern Movement is led by the former Marxist leader Ali Salem al-Bidh, the man responsible for negotiating the first reunification agreement.

The Houthis, also known as the Zaidis, are Shia tribes-people. They were the traditional rulers of Yemen for more than a thousand years before a coup in 1972 overthrew the imamate. The Yemeni Shiites comprise around 40 per cent of the country's population of 22 million. Yemen is among the poorest states in the region.

To make matters worse, its fast-depleting oil resources are expected to last only for another seven years or so. Much of the state's revenues are earned through oil exports. The region



PRESIDENT Ali Abdullah Saleh

that the Houthis dominate is among the most underdeveloped in Yemen. The Houthis first took up arms in 2004, citing political, economic and religious marginalisation by the Saudi- and U.S.-backed central government.

Both the Houthis and the Southern Movement are willing to find a peaceful solution but have insisted that the "corrupt and authoritarian" Saleh-led government has to be replaced first.

Even at the best of times, the Yemeni government's brief rarely extended beyond the major cities. The fiercely independent tribes, especially in the north, adhered to their own set of rules. Yemen is also awash with arms.

The Interior Ministry put the number of guns among the population at the beginning of the decade at 60 million. For every individual, there are three guns. The jihadist elements always had strong roots in the north. Tens of thousands of Yemenis were encouraged to go to Afghanistan to fight the Central Intelligence Agency-sponsored war there.

These "Arab-Afghans" form the core of Al Qaeda in Yemen today. Osama bin Laden's family roots are also in Yemen.

Al Qaeda first signalled its presence in Yemen by launching an audacious attack on the American battleship USS Cole in 2000. President Saleh had to promise

total cooperation with the U.S. in the second Gulf war to prevent Yemen from being targeted after the events of September 11, 2001.

Saleh had taken a principled stand during the first Gulf war and declined to join the American-led coalition that launched a 40-day war against Iraq. The U.S. and Yemen's Gulf neighbours were livid with Saleh at the time. More than a million Yemenis were sent packing from their jobs in the

The Iranian government has strongly denied any involvement and has supported a united Yemen. At the same time, Teheran has been critical of Saudi and American intervention in the country's internal affairs.

The Saudi authorities allege that the Houthis are the cat's paw for Iranian and Shia expansionism. Though no clinching evidence has been provided about Iranian connivance with the Houthis, Washington and Riyadh continue to insist that Teheran is fishing in dangerous waters. The Saudis, however, have reason to be worried.

The Shia-dominated population centres in Yemen lie adjacent to the restive minority Shia population in Saudi Arabia, which is concentrated in the provinces of Najran and Jizan, the site of the country's eastern oilfields.

The Shias in Saudi Arabia are known to be unhappy with the country's Wahhabi brand of Sunni Islam and their treatment as second-class citizens. For the Yemeni government, the priority at the moment seems to be the fight against the Houthis.

But the weak central government seems to have acceded to the Obama administration's pressures to adopt a more proactive role against the groups affiliated to Al Qaeda. The government does not want to talk about its close collaboration with the Americans. The popular mood in Yemen remains

strongly anti-American.

President Saleh announced in the first week of January that the security forces had eliminated many Al Qaeda fighters. The U.S. provided firepower and intelligence to help the security forces kill around 34 suspected Al Qaeda fighters in the southern province of Abhyan.

Local residents have said, however, that those killed were innocent civilians and that there were no Al Qaeda fighters in the area. Yemen is now the recipient of the largest U.S. counter-terrorism aid package after Pakistan.

US intelligence agencies themselves said that the number of Al Qaeda activists did not exceed 200. Senior Yemeni officials have said that the threat posed by Al Qaeda "is being exaggerated". Bouthaina Shaaban, the adviser to the Syrian presidency who was on an official visit to New Delhi, said that what was being witnessed in Yemen today was an orchestrated attempt by the West to divide Arabs on sectarian lines.

She said that the presence of Al Qaeda in Arab countries was being used as a pretext for military intervention by the U.S. in the Arabian Peninsula.

The situation in Yemen has become further complicated because of the instability in Somalia, situated across the Gulf of Aden. The U.S.-sponsored overthrow in 2008 of the government led by the Islamic Courts has led to the rise of more militant groupings such as Al Shabaab.

According to Western intelligence agencies, this group has a working relationship with the AQAP in Yemen. As a result of the meltdown of their state and increasing violence and destitution, more than a million Somalis have taken refuge in Yemen.

In truth, far from being Al Qaeda haven and its centre of international operations as widely alleged in the aftermath of the Abdumutallab affair, Yemen is a State under severe strains from its own internal schisms, worsened by Saudi and America's geo-political concern to rein in the alleged Iran's influence in the region.

For the Southern Yemenis, the extent of political, economic and social rights and reforms under the Socialist banner from 1967 till 1990 when it merged to form the United Yemeni republic will remain attractive, strengthening their resolve for a separate socialist state in the south or a thorough going reforms of the corrupt regime in Sanna who are happy to hide its gross deficiencies with the readily provided excuse of Al-Qaeda meddling, now roaringly supported by America's obsession with a shadowy, group whose banner of militant anti-Americanism is happily flown by anyone with grievances with Washington and any modest means to inflict wound on its enormous pride.

“In truth, far from being Al Qaeda haven and its centre of international operations as widely alleged in the aftermath of the Abdumutallab affair, Yemen is a State under severe strains from its own internal schisms, worsened by Saudi and America's geo-political concern to rein in the alleged Iran's influence in the region.

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Hajiya Turai Yar'Adua
First Lady, Federal Republic of Nigeria

Guest of Honour:

Hajiya Laila Dogonyaro
Former Chairperson, NCWS

Date: Thursday, 21 January, 2010

Venue: Congress Hall, Transcorp Hilton Hotel, Abuja

Time: 10.00 am

Guest Speakers



Mrs. Winnie M. Mandela
Anti-Apartheid Fighter and
Member of Parliament



Hajiya Naja'atu Mohammed
First Female President of ABU Students' Union
and Political Activist



Senator Kofu Buknor-Akerele
Former Deputy Governor, Lagos State
and PDP Stalwart



Ms. Samia Nkrumah
Member of Parliament, Republic of Ghana

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International

Turkey sets deadline for Israeli apology

TURKEY rejected an Israeli attempt yesterday to make amends for humiliating its ambassador, and threatened to bring its envoy home if Israel didn't deliver an apology by the evening.

Deputy Foreign Minister Danny Ayalon issued a statement criticizing his own undiplomatic behavior, which included forcing Turkish Ambassador Ahmet Oguz Celikkol to sit on a lower seat and not shaking his hand.

But the statement fell short of an apology and failed to defuse a diplomatic feud that has further

strained ties between the once-close allies.

"They have been given time until tonight, they either fix it or our ambassador will head for Turkey on the first flight tomorrow" for consultations, Turkish President Abdullah Gul said. "After that, we will make an evaluation."

Ayalon set off the diplomatic firestorm when he summoned Celikkol late Monday, ostensibly to complain about a Turkish TV drama that has been perceived as anti-Semitic. The show, "The Valley of the Wolves," depicts Israeli

security forces as kidnapping children and shooting old men.

Ayalon invited Israeli TV crews to watch the meeting, and pointedly explained to the cameramen how he was snubbing the ambassador by placing him on a lower chair and refusing to shake his hand. Celikkol later said he hadn't known what Ayalon was saying to the cameramen. In a statement delivered to Israeli media late Tuesday, Ayalon stood behind his decision to summon Celikkol.

But "it's not my custom to

offend ambassadors," said Ayalon. "And in the future I will explain my positions in accepted diplomatic ways." The Foreign Ministry and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office had no comment on the Turkish deadline.

Earlier in the day, Netanyahu weighed in publicly on the feud for the first time, saying in a statement that he was satisfied with what he characterized as Ayalon's "apology," but chided him for his undiplomatic conduct.

Ayalon's protest to the Turkish envoy was justified, the statement

said, but it "should have been expressed in an accepted diplomatic fashion."

Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, who has caused several diplomatic flaps of his own with undiplomatic remarks about the Arab world, said Israel sought direct dialogue with Turkey to ease the tensions. Israel won't "tolerate any anti-Semitic remarks and incitement against Jews of the state of Israel," but doesn't want confrontation with Turkey, Lieberman said in Cyprus, where he was visiting political leaders.



IRANIAN firemen stand outside the building where a remote-controlled bomb explosion killed an Iranian university lecturer in Tehran.

Israeli Islamist leader gets nine months for assault

A court has sentenced hard-line Israeli Islamist leader Raed Salah to nine months in prison for assaulting a police officer, a spokesman for his movement said.

"The court sentenced Sheikh Raed to nine months in prison and gave him a six-month suspended sentence for rioting and attacking a policeman," Islamic Movement spokesman Zahi Njeidat told AFP.

Salah has until February 28 to appeal the decision, his lawyer Khaled Zabarka said, adding that his client had not yet decided whether to do so.

The alleged assault took place during demonstrations that erupted in and around Jerusalem's Old City in February 2007 when Israel embarked on a construction project near the flashpoint Al-Aqsa mosque compound.

Muslim demonstrators said the repair work near the Dung Gate threatened the foundations of the nearby compound, which is the third holiest site for Muslims, who refer to it as Al-Haram Al-Sharif (The Noble Sanctuary).

The compound is the holiest site for Jews, who refer to it as the Temple Mount, and has been the scene of several outbreaks of violence over the course of the decades-old Israeli-Arab conflict.

In August 2007, Salah was indicted for "inciting racism and violence" for calling for a "third Intifada," or uprising, to defend the mosque.

Iran speaker accuses Obama of state terrorism

PARLIAMENT speaker Ali Larijani, Iran's former chief nuclear negotiator, accused US President Barack Obama of state terrorism yesterday over the killing in Tehran of a leading atomic scientist.

In an angry address to Iran's conservative-dominated parliament, Larijani reiterated Iranian

charges that the US Central Intelligence Agency and Israel's Mossad were behind the scientist's death in a bombing on Tuesday. "Such filthy actions are easy to carry out but such adventurism will do you no good," the ISNA news agency quoted Larijani as saying in reference to Obama.

"You have practically pro-

moted acts of terrorism," he said. "This black spot will be recorded in the dossier of US crimes against the Iranian nation." Massoud Ali Mohammadi, a particle physics professor at prestigious Tehran University, was killed by a bomb strapped to a motorcycle in the capital's well-to-do northern suburbs on Tuesday.

Murdered Iran atomic scientist mired in mystery.

Neither the police nor the intelligence services have yet reported any leads in their investigation and Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki stopped short of explicitly accusing Washington of being behind the bombing.

Bomb hurts 3 in south Lebanon Hezbollah stronghold

A bomb apparently meant for a Hezbollah figure went off yesterday in a southern Lebanese stronghold of the militant group, wounding his daughter and two other students waiting for their school bus, military and security

officials said.

The officials said the bomb exploded around 7:30 a.m. (0530 GMT) at the entrance of an apartment building in the village of Kfar Fila. The three wounded students — two girls and a boy,

whose ages range between seven and 16 — were opening the building's entrance door at the time of the blast. The village is located in an area known as a stronghold of the Iran and Syria-backed Shiite militant group.

The region, north of the Litani River and far from the border with Israel, is not part of a volatile border zone in which Hezbollah has been banned from having weapons under a U.N. resolution that ended the 2006 war between the

militant group and Israel.

Security officials said the target was likely a Hezbollah security official who lives in the building. Another Hezbollah supporter also lives in the same building, they said.

International



ARTALYTA Suryani, a corruption convict serving a five year prison sentence for bribing an Indonesian prosecutor, sits in her luxurious room during a raid by the anti-judicial mafia task force at Pondok Bambu prison in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Indonesia rages over luxury jail cells for wealthy

IT'S a bedroom most poor Indonesians can only dream about — air conditioned with a spacious double bed, flat-screen television, private bathroom, adjoining karaoke suite and serviced by maids and assistants.

But this bedroom is the prison cell of a woman serving a five-year sentence for bribing an Indonesian prosecutor.

News that business tycoon Artalyta Suryani had bought comfort behind bars using the same tactics for which she was punished has enraged ordinary Indonesians and embarrassed authorities in a country already known as one of the world's most corrupt.

The details of the luxury living conditions of Suryani and other rich prisoners have been splashed across the front pages of national newspapers and

dominated television coverage this week, the result of a surprise visit to Jakarta Pondok Bambu women's penitentiary by a team set up by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono to eradicate the so-called "Judicial Mafia."

"We found a number of wealthy inmates had been provided with exclusive facilities," team member Denny Indrayana said yesterday. "They allegedly paid some corrupt individuals in the prison to get all they want. It shows the weakness of our judicial system."

Yudhoyono's government has made fighting corruption the centerpiece of its agenda, securing the convictions of several governors and legislators in recent years.

But progress is slow in a country where graft is endemic especially among poorly paid law enforcers.

Philippine massacre witness implicates suspects

THE first witness to testify against a powerful clan member accused of leading a pre-election massacre of 57 people in the southern Philippines said yesterday he saw the defendant and his family firing guns as victims knelt and begged for their lives.

The testimony came on the second day of the murder trial of Andal Ampatuan Jr., the top suspect in the Nov. 23 killings of journalists, relatives and supporters of a rival who was challenging Ampatuan for the governorship of Maguindanao province in May elections.

Ampatuan, the only one indicted so far in the deaths, pleaded innocent to murder charges at his arraignment when the trial opened last week. His father, clan patriarch Andal Ampatuan Sr., and several other close relatives have been implicated but not formally charged in the killings. They also face separate charges of rebellion.

Rasul Sangki, vice mayor of Ampatuan township, told the court he witnessed the killings after Ampatuan summoned him to a road checkpoint where police officers stopped the caravan in which the victims were traveling.

"I went with him because I was scared," Sangki said. "If I did not follow him, he might get mad at our family. He is feared in our province." He said the victims were ordered at gunpoint to lay face-down and then were divested of money, cell phones and TV cameras.

N/Korea says it will allow more US tourists

NORTH Korea said yesterday it will begin to allow in more American tourists after years of heavy restrictions on visits to the isolated country, according to a tour operator.

The United States has never had diplomatic relations with North Korea since the Korean War ended in a truce, not a peace treaty.

More recently, tensions have remained high over the North's nuclear program.

Only about 2,000 tourists from the U.S. have visited since the country opened to Western tourism in 1987, according to the founder of a China-based tour group that says it has taken most

of those visitors into the isolated country.

But the Koryo Group, which specializes in North Korea tourism, said it received an e-mail from the state-run Korea International Travel Company yesterday afternoon saying the country will accept more American tourists this year.

The message gave no explanation for the move and said more specific information would come later, the agency's founder, Nicholas Bonner, told The Associated Press. "This is a big, big change," he said.

Tensions with the outside have risen in recent years over the North's pursuit of nuclear

weapons, with Pyongyang saying this week it would not resume negotiations aimed at ending such programs until its relations with the US improve and international sanctions against it are lifted. The US rejected the proposal.

In recent years, Americans have been allowed to visit North Korea only briefly during the country's Mass Games, a synchronized propaganda spectacle with a cast of 100,000.

Bonner said his Beijing-based agency escorted about 280 American tourists to the country last year, but estimated those numbers could jump to about 1,000 per year if restrictions were

eased. He said his agency handles about 90 percent of the Americans visiting North Korea.

North Korea is governed by a secretive, hardline communist regime whose motivations and decision making processes remain obscure.

But one analyst said Pyongyang's move appeared aimed at improving the North's image among Americans as part of its ultimate goal of establishing diplomatic ties with Washington.

"The North wants to project a positive image toward Americans by increasing contacts," said Paik Hak-soon, an analyst at the Sejong Institute, a private security think tank near Seoul.

...Warns South Korea over propaganda leaflets

NORTH Korea's military warned yesterday that it would retaliate against South Korea if Seoul doesn't stop activists from launching propaganda leaflets across their divided border.

The two Koreas agreed in 2004 to end decades of propaganda warfare across the Demilitarized Zone dividing the neighbours. However, the South Korean government says it cannot prevent activists from sending the leaflets, citing freedom of speech, though it has urged them to stop so that they don't damage relations on the peninsula.

The North's military said it "will never tolerate even the slightest acts" of undermining "our leadership's absolute authority." The comments came in separate statements issued in Korean and English that were carried by the official Korean Central News

Agency.

The North demanded South Korea immediately punish activists engaged in sending leaflets and disband their organizations, saying hundreds of thousands of propaganda leaflets were flown to the North on Jan. 1.

"The separatists at home and abroad will never be able to flee from a stern punishment by the nation for challenging history," the English-language statement said. The North has issued similar threats in the past, including one late last year.

Chun Hae-sung, a spokesman at South Korea's Unification Ministry, said yesterday that the South has no law that could ban activists from launching leaflets. He didn't elaborate.

Some protesters also burned large North Korean flags with Kim's picture printed on them.

PUBLIC NOTICE

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BETWEEN
TABITHA ADIDOPETITIONER
AND
TRUST WORLD INSURANCE COMPANYRESPONDENT
IN THE MATTER OF TRUST WORLD INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED
IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANY AND ALLIED MATTERS ACT 1990
IN THE MATTER OF THE INSURANCE ACT 2003
IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION FOR THE WINDING UP OF
TRUST WORLD
INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED
ADVERTISEMENT OF PETITION
NOTICE is hereby given that a petition for winding up of the above-named company by Federal High Court holden at Lagos was on the 10th December, 2009 presented by petitioner (Tabitha Adido) and that the said petition is directed to be advertised and sat down for mention/hearing before the Court sitting at Lagos on the 3rd of February 2010, and any creditor or contributory of the said company desirous to support or oppose the making of the order on the said petition may appear at the time of hearing in person or by his counsel for that purpose; and a copy of the petition will be furnished by the undersigned to any creditor or contributory of the said company requiring such copy upon payment of the regulated charge for the same.
I.A. OPUTA-AJEIH
Gani Adetola-Kaseem SAN Chambers
Principal Partner
E-mail: gaidawsan@yahoo.co.uk
Tel: 08033950575
Address: 208 Ikorodu Road,
Palmgrove, Lagos

International

Mexico-US cooperation cited in 2nd druglord arrest



TEODORO Garcia Simental, known as 'El Teo,' center, is guarded by federal police as he is presented to the press in Mexico City.

THE capture of a brutal druglord accused of ordering massacres, beheadings and the dissolving of bodies in caustic soda marks the second time in less than a month Mexico has taken down one of its most powerful traffickers.

Teodoro Garcia Simental, known as "El Teo," was seized by federal troops Tuesday when they stormed a seaside vacation home near the southern tip of the Baja California peninsula.

The arrest of the Tijuana-based trafficker is considered another victory for the enhanced surveillance techniques being cultivated with the assistance of Washington. U.S. anti-drug offi-

cial had been helping Mexican authorities track Garcia for more than five months.

The arrest also raised hopes among the families of hundreds of people missing and believed killed by Garcia's gang, their bodies dissolved in vats of caustic soda so no trace was ever found.

"I have received calls from Guadalajara, Mazatlan and Mexicali, from the families of people who disappeared in Tijuana and hope that this man will confess to where he left the bodies of their sons, wives and fathers," said Cristina Palacios, president of a victims rights groups representing the families of the disappeared.

Palacios said that of the more than 300 cases of missing people documented by the group between 2007 and 2009, 60 percent to 70 percent are linked to Garcia's gang, which used the services of Santiago Meza Lopez, known as "The Stewmaker," who authorities say confessed to dissolving 300 bodies.

Authorities say Garcia, in his mid-30s, ordered his rivals disposed of in especially grisly ways. Those who weren't dissolved were sometimes beheaded and their bodies hung from bridges. He took hefty ransom payments from kidnapping Tijuana business leaders.

UK fugitive who taunted police on Facebook caught

AN escaped British convict whose online antics drew an international Internet fan base has been caught after nearly four months on the run, police said yesterday.

Craig "Lazie" Lynch, 28, was caught by Scotland Yard in southern England on Tuesday night. The force confirmed only that he had been arrested and gave few other details.

Lynch was serving time for burglary at a minimum security prison in Suffolk, eastern England. He escaped on Sept. 23 and

has spent much of his time since posting defiant photos of himself mocking the police on the Internet.

The ensuing media attention drew as many as 40,000 fans to his Facebook page and other associated fan sites, spawning T-shirts and even a tribute song.

Lynch's page could not be located yesterday. Suffolk Constabulary said that Lynch had been charged with escaping from custody and was due to appear in court later yesterday.

Pope meets, forgives woman who knocked him down

POPE Benedict XVI met yesterday with the woman who knocked him over at St. Peter's Basilica during Christmas Eve Mass, and he forgave her, the Vatican said.

Susanna Maiolo, a 25-year-old with a history of psychiatric problems, and her family met in a private audience with the pope at the end of his general audience, Vatican spokesman the Rev. Federico Lombardi said.

Maiolo told the pontiff she was sorry for what had happened, while Benedict inquired about her health and "wanted to demonstrate his forgiveness," Lombardi said in a statement. The Vatican said no photos or video would be released of the meeting.

Maiolo, a Swiss-Italian national, jumped a security barricade in St. Peter's Basilica at the start of Christmas Eve Mass and pulled Benedict down when a security guard tackled her. The pope was unhurt.

Maiolo had tried to reach the pope in the same way during the 2008 Midnight Mass service but didn't manage to get to him. She has been treated at a clinic outside

Rome since the incident.

While there, she received a visit from Benedict's personal secretary, Monsignor Georg Gaenswein, who had wanted to show the pontiff's concern for her well-being, the Vatican said at the time.

The Vatican investigation into the incident continues, Lombardi said. A retired Vatican diplomat, French Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, fractured his hip in the commotion and had to undergo surgery. Benedict visited Etchegaray in the hospital last week.

Benedict's decision to meet with Maiolo and forgive her follows a similar gesture by Pope John Paul II. In 1983, John Paul met with and forgave Mehmet Ali Agca while the gunman was serving a 19-year sentence in an Italian prison for having shot the pope in 1981 in St. Peter's Square.

On Monday, Agca, 52, ends another 10-year prison sentence for killing a Turkish journalist in 1979.

He told reporters in Turkey on Wednesday that he would answer questions about the attack after his release.



ITALIAN Interior Ministry, photo of Susanna Maiolo, identified by the Vatican as the woman who jumped a barrier inside St. Peter's Basilica at the start of Christmas Eve Mass, and rushed at Pope Benedict XVI.



**Power Holding Company of Nigeria Plc.
KANO ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION PLC**

**INVITATION FOR TENDER TO MANUFACTURERS/
CONTRACTORS/SUPPLIERS FOR 2010 CAPITAL BUDGET**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In line with Federal Government's seven point agenda and its desire to further enhance electricity supply in the Country, Management of Kano Electricity Distribution Company intends to execute some essential Federal Government funded Capital electric power projects for 2010 financial year.

Interested, competent and reliable companies are therefore invited to tender for the execution of the projects and or supply of under listed equipments and materials to our company under the 2010 Capital Budget.

(A) EXPANSION

LOT 1A CABLE AND KITS FOR NETWORK EXPANSION (U/GROUND HT AND LT CABLE)

Lot A1-1: Procurement of HT Cables
i. 150mm² x 3 Core 11KV Cable
ii. 35mm² x 1 Core XLPE Cable
iii. 500mm² x 1 Core 11KV Cable

Lot A1-2: Procurement of LT Cables

i. 150mm² x 4 Core LT Cable
ii. 500mm² x 1 Core LT Cable
iii. 300mm² x 1 Core LT Cables

Lot A1-3: Procurement of Termination Kits

i. 35mm² - 70mm² Outdoor Raychem Terminal Kit
ii. 120mm² -185mm² x 3 Core 11KV Straiten through Joint Kits
iii. 120mm² -185mm² x 3 Core 11KV Terminal Kits (Indoor & Outdoor)

Lot A2: CONSTRUCTION OF 11KV AND 33KV OVERHEAD LINE ASSOCIATED WITH INJECTION SUBSTATION

Lot A2-1: Procurement of Overhead Line Materials for 11KV and 33KV Lines

Lot A2-2: Procurement of 150mm² AL-Conductor

Lot A2-3: Procurement of 10.06m RC Poles

Lot A2-4: Construction of 11KV and 33KV Lines associated with Injection Substation.

(B) OPERATION

Lot B 1: REPLACEMENT OF OBSOLETE SWITCHGEAR

Lot B1-1: Procurement of 33KV SF6 Outdoor Breaker

Procurement of 33KV Control Panel

Lot B1-2: Procurement of 33KV gang Isolator

Lot B2: PROVISION OF TEST EQUIPMENT

Lot B2-1: i). Procurement of Clamp on Ammeter for load reading 0 - 1000A, 0-2-20 -1000A

ii). Digital Insulation Tester 0 - 10KV

iii). Hammonon (Power) Model PS4500 by Power Sight

iv). Design jet 26100PS 60 inch Large

Format color plotter with additional accessories.

v). Laptops (2GB RAM, Core DVD, 150+GB HDD)

Lot B3: DESIGN AND COMMENCEMENT OF CONSTRUCTION OF STANDARD COMPANY STORES

Lot B3-1: Design and Construction of a Standard Company Store in Kano

Lot B4: HEAVY EQUIPMENT VEHICLES, CRANES, ETC

Lot B4-1: Procurement of

i). 1No 15Ton Lorry with 7Tons Crane
ii). 1No working vehicle.

Lot B5: PROVISION OF SAFETY TOOLS AND WEARS

Lot B5-1: Procurement of

i). Safety Belts
ii). Audio Lines Testers

iii). Pairs of Safety Boot
iv). Hand Gloves for both 11KV and 33KV

v). Operating Rod
vi). Grounding Stick

vii). Safety Helmet
viii). High Voltage Rubbers Foot mat

xi). Pairs of Rain boot

(C). MAINTENANCE

Lot C1: FEEDER PILLARS AND RMU

Lot C1-1: Procurement of 4-Way, 800A, Feeder Pillar and RMU

Lot C2: LINE REINFORCEMENT/REPLACEMENT (REHABILITATION OF OVERHEAD) HT AND LT LINES

Lot C2-1: Procurement of Overhead Line Materials for 33KV and 11KV Lines

Lot C2-2: Procurement of 10.06m RC Poles

Lot C2-3: Construction of 33KV and 11KV Lines

Lot C2-4: Rehabilitation of 33KV Lines

Lot C3: REHABILITATION OF DISTRIBUTION SUBSTATION

Lot C3-1: Procurement of Transformer Oil

Lot C3-2: i). Procurement of 33KV and 11KV J+P 'D' Fuse Complete

ii). Procurement of 33KV and 11KV Lighting Arrestor

iii). Procurement of various J+P 'D' Fuse Elements

Lot C3-3: Rehabilitation of Distribution Substation at

i). Dala and Sharada Business Units
ii). S/Gari and Nassarawa Business Units
iii). Kumbotso and Dakata Business Units

vi). Katsina and Funtua Business Units
V). Dutse and Hadejia Business Units

Lot C4: TRACE CLEARING FOR 33KV 11KV LINES

Lot C4-1: Trace Clearing for 33KV Lines

Lot C4-2: Trace Clearing for 11KV Lines at Dala, Sharada, S/Gari, Nassarawa and Kumbotso Business Units

Lot C4-3: Trace Clearing for 11KV Lines at Katsina, Funtua, Dakata, Dutse and Hadejia Business Units.

Lot C5: 11KV AND 33KV RECONDUCTORING

Lot C5-1: Procurement of 150mm² AL - Conductor

Lot C5-2: Procurement of 33KV and 11KV Fiber Cross Arm

Lot C5-3: Procurement of 11KV and 33KV Pin Insulator

Lot C5-4: Reconductoring of 33KV Lines

Lot C5-5: Reconductoring of 11KV Lines

Lot C5-6: Reconductoring of LT Lines

2.0 TENDER REQUIREMENT

Interested bidders are required to fulfill and submit the following information: -

- A copy of certificate of Incorporation of the Company in Nigeria.

- Company Profile including among others organizational structure and key professional staff.

- Copy of Company and equipment Brochure.

- Current Company Tax Clearance for the last three years.

- Up-to-date VAT Registration Certificate and evidence of VAT remittances.

- Evidence of financial capability from a reputable Bank.

- Evidence of technical, operational and managerial capability.

- Company's Audited account for the last three (3) years.

- Verifiable evidence of previous experience i.e. having successfully carried out similar work/supply in the last five years.

- Test certificate issued by well-known international Standard test laboratory for Manufacturers of equipments.

- Samples of Test Report of Manufactured Equipment.

- Evidence of payment of non-refundable fee of **₦ 30,000** for collection of bid Documents

- Any other information or document(s) that will place the company on a comparative advantage over others.

- Evidence of construction materials owned by the company (in case of construction).

- Evidence of qualified Engineers with COREN registration in the company's payroll (in case of construction).

3.0 SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENT

The company's managing director should duly sign the documents, while all pages of the submitted documents must be duly signed and stamped. This should be spirally bounded in two (2) copies and submitted in a sealed envelope indicating the lots as contained in this advertisement and boldly marked with "Project name, technical or financial" at the left hand corner of the envelope, clearly indicating the name of the company, mailing address and GSM number.

NOTE

(i) Kano Electricity Distribution Company will verify all claims by companies, hence, all necessary authority and guarantee for verification must be submitted.

(ii) No bidder will be considered for more than two lots.

(iii) Application should be per lot and documents for different lots must be in separate envelopes, clearly and boldly labeled as indicated earlier.

(iv) Technical Bid documents must be separated from Financial.

CLOSING DATE

Two sets (Original and copy) plus soft copy are to be submitted. All information shall be provided in English Language. **Submission of tenders shall close at 12.00 noon of Friday 26th February 2010**

The documents are to be submitted to the following address: -

The Chief Executive Officer,
Power Holding Company Of Nigeria
Kano Electricity Distribution Company,
No. 1 Niger Street
Kano.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Failure to comply with any of the stated requirements/conditions on this invitation will automatically disqualify bidders.

Only local manufacturers will be considered for the procurement of RC poles, Aluminum conductor and cables.

This advertisement shall not be construed as a commitment on the part of PHCN Management nor shall it entitle responding Contractors to seek any indemnity from PHCN by virtue of such contractors having responded to this advertisement.

**SIGNED: MANAGEMENT
KANO ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION COMPANY**

INVITATION TO TENDER

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In line with Federal Government's seven point agenda and its desire to further enhance electricity supply in the Country, it has granted approval to procure Distribution Transformers for maintenance and reinforcement of electricity supply infrastructure in Kano Electricity Distribution Company.

Consequently, Kano Electricity Distribution Company now invites tender for the supply of Distribution Transformers and construction of the Distribution sub stations.

2.0 SCOPE OF WORKS

LOT	DESCRIPTION
Lot 1	Supply of 20No. 500KVA, 11/0.415KV, 2No. 500KVA, 33/0.415KV, 3No. 300KVA, 11/0.415KV, 2No. 300KVA, 33/0.415KV Distribution Transformers for the use at Dakata Business Unit
Lot 2	Supply of 6No. 500KVA, 11/0.415KV, 4No. 500KVA, 33/0.415KV, 6No. 300KVA, 33/0.415KV 4No. 300KVA, 33/0.415KV Distribution Transformers for the use at Dala and Sharada Business Units
Lot 3	Supply of 7No. 500KVA, 11/0.415KV, 4No. 500KVA, 33/0.415KV, 6No. 300KVA, 11/0.415KV, 4No. 300KVA, 33/0.415KV 4No. 200KVA, 33/0.415KV 2No. 100KVA, 33/0.415KV Distribution Transformers for the use at Kumbotso and Nassarawa Business Units
Lot 4	Supply of 8No. 500KVA, 11/0.415KV, 4No. 500KVA, 33/0.415KV, 6No. 300KVA, 11/0.415KV, 4No. 300KVA, 33/0.415KV 3No. 200KVA, 33/0.415KV Distribution Transformers for the use at S/ Gari and Katsina Business Units
Lot 5	Supply of 6No. 500KVA, 11/0.415KV, 4No. 500KVA, 33/0.415KV, 6No. 300KVA, 11/0.415KV, 4No. 300KVA, 33/0.415KV 4No. 200KVA, 33/0.415KV Distribution Transformers for the use at Funtua and Hadejia Business Units
Lot 6	Supply of 3No. 500KVA, 11/0.415KV, 2No. 500KVA, 33/0.415KV, 3No. 300KVA, 11/0.415KV, 2No. 300KVA, 33/0.415KV 2No. 200KVA, 33/0.415KV 8No. 100KVA, 33/0.415KV Distribution Transformers for the use at Dutse Business Unit

1.0 ELIGIBILITY OF PRODUCT

Only transformers from European Markets are eligible to be supplied under this procurement.

Transformers must have been in PHCN, network for not less than 5 years.

Transformers not sited at the bidder's warehouse will not be ordered.

Only companies with required expertise, equipments and experience will be considered for the construction.

The construction companies must have evidence of satisfactory performance in PHCN network.

2.0 SPECIFICATION

The transformers to be supplied should be suitable for used in PHCN Network as stated in 3.0 above

3.0 REQUIREMENT OF TENDER

A copy of certificate of Incorporation of the Company in Nigeria, Company's Profile including among others organizational structure and key professional staff, evidence of ability to perform, manufacturing capacity, copy of Company and equipment Brochure should be submitted.

Evidence of having successfully done similar supplies and location in the last five years.

Test certificate issued by well-known international Standard test laboratory for Manufacturers of Distribution Transformers.

Samples of Test Report of Manufactured Equipment.

Current Company Tax Clearance for the last three years.

Up-to-date VAT Registration Certificate and evidence of VAT remittances.

Evidence of financial capability from a reputable Bank.

Warehouse to be inspected before issuance of Works Order.

Any other information or document(s) that will place the company on a comparative advantage over others.

Shipping documents to be enclosed in the bid.

Evidence of construction materials owned by the company (in case of construction).

Evidence of qualified Engineers with COREN registration in the company's payroll (in case of construction).

NOTE

(i) Kano Electricity Distribution Company will verify all claims by companies, hence, all necessary authority and guarantee for verification must be submitted.

(ii) No bidder will be considered for more than two slots.

4.0 SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENT

Interested Applicant should collect bid Documents on payment of **₦ 30,000** to fill and submit their Technical bid documents stated in 5.0 above together with financial bid documents in sealed envelopes indicating the lot and marked "Tender for supply of Distribution Transformers" or "Tender for Construction of Distribution Substation" Name and Mailing address of the Tender company shall be clearly marked on envelope(s). The documents must be delivered by hand to reach the following address:

The Chief Executive Officer,
Power Holding Company Of Nigeria
Kano Electricity Distribution Company,
No. 1 Niger Street
Kano.

Application should be per lot and documents for different lots must be in separate envelopes, clearly and boldly labeled as indicated earlier.

Two sets (Original and copy) plus soft copy are to be submitted. All information shall be provided in English Language. **Submission of tenders shall close at 12.00 noon of Friday 29th January 2010**

Failure to comply with any of the stated requirements/conditions on this invitation or bid document will automatically disqualify bidders.

This advertisement shall not be construed as a commitment on the part of PHCN Management nor shall it entitle responding Contractors to seek any indemnity from PHCN by virtue of such contractors having responded to this advertisement.

**SIGNED: MANAGEMENT
KANO ELECTRICITY DISTRIBUTION COMPANY**



Federal Inland Revenue Service
15, Sokode Crescent, Off Michael Okpara
Street, Wuse, Zone 5, Abuja.

INVITATION TO TENDER

INTRODUCTION

The Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), as part of its ongoing transformation initiative in line with its modernization objectives intends to embark on IT System Security Audit of FIRS e-Tax Services system and other mission critical IT Systems.

The purpose of this audit is to evaluate the security of the e-Tax services and to identify any possible security glitches therein. The audit shall evaluate the e-Tax services systems operational at the Federal Inland Revenue Service.

FIRS, therefore invites suitably qualified firms to bid for IT System Security Audit of its e-Tax Service system and other mission critical IT System

2. TENDER REQUIREMENTS:

Interested firms are required to collect detailed Requirement for Proposal (RFP) from Room 123 Revenue House, Federal Inland Revenue Services, 15 Sokode Crescent Wuse Zone 5, Abuja, subject to the provision of evidence of payment of N10,000 (Ten thousand naira only) non-refundable tender fee to the FIRS Central Pay Office (CPO), Revenue House.

3. Interested firms are also required to possess Certificate of registration from Corporate Affairs Commission, current Income Tax Clearance Certificate (issued in 2009), VAT Registration Certificate and must have prior experience executing similar IT Security Audit Projects.

4. SUBMISSION OF TENDERS

All tenders must be sealed, clearly marked as indicated in the RFP, registered, addressed and submitted to the following below:

The Deputy Director,
Procurement Department,
Corporate Services Group,
Federal Inland Revenue Service,
Revenue House (Room 123),
15, Sokode Crescent, Off Michael Okpara Street,
Wuse, Zone 5,
Abuja.

Submission of bids closes at 12:00noon, 15 February 2010.

Bids will be opened on 15 February, 2010 at 2:00pm in the presence of representatives of bidders, who choose to attend, and the general public at the Conference Room Revenue House 15, Sokode Crescent, off Michael Okpara Street Wuse, Zone 5, Abuja.

Signed:
Peter B. Hena
Ag. Head Procurement Department
For Executive Chairman, FIRS.

BUSINESS

0805 1000 536



L-R: Mr Wale Tinubu, Chief Executive Officer, Oando Plc, Mr Tony Elumelu, Group Managing Director/ CEO, UBA Plc and Mr Ade Odunsi, Executive Director, Sahara Energy Group at the breakfast meeting with oil and gas industry players organized by UBA in Lagos ... on Tuesday

NNPC challenges Nigeria on fuel scarcity

From Mohammed Shosanya, Lagos

THE Group Managing Director of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation [NNPC] Mr Mohammad Sanusi Barkindo has challenged stakeholders on the need to save the nation's oil gas industry from total collapse. Barkindo dropped the advice yesterday in Lagos at the opening ceremony of the 2-day Mid-stream and downstream oil sector stakeholders organised by the NNPC. He stated that the meeting is a strategic forum with stakeholders in downstream sector. The NNPC boss said that the sector is faced with lots of challenges ranging from massive importation of products non-functional refineries and some bottle neck within the local context in Nigeria.

Kano Customs generates N1.03bn last year

From Auwalu Umar, Kano

THE Kano/Jigawa Area Customs Command generated N1.03 billion revenue last year, out-going comptroller in charge of the command Usman Kankara Bello has disclosed. He said the command over-shot the target of N993 million given to it by customs headquarters with N43 million or 4.3 percent surplus. Comptroller Bello has been redeployed to take over the helms of affairs at the FCT command while Comptroller Oyeyemi Rafiu Oyeniyi of the customs headquarters has been posted to Kano as head of the command. Speaking at the hand-over ceremony in Kano, Comptroller Bello said the command recorded remarkable achievements in the areas of revenue collections, anti-smuggling operations, welfare for men and officers of the command as well as establishment of cordial relationship with other security agencies and other stakeholders. He said apart from meeting the headquarters' target, the collection had also met his own target of N1 billion with wide margin surplus.

He said the command also recorded N26.9 million as only Negotiable Duty Credit Certificate (NDCC). The performance, according to him, was achieved despite some challenges such as removal of excise duty on some products as well as low level of activity at Malam Aminu Kano International Airport. This was in addition to bureaucratic delay in transferring containers to Kano Inland Container Terminal (ICNL), he said. He said the customs headquarters had now increased the target for 2010 for the command to N1.5 billion because of the command's high revenue generation last year, a feat, he said, that earned the command a commendation from former Comptroller General of Customs Nwadiro Bernard-Shaw.

CSCS settles N6.4trn transactions in 12 years

•2 million share certificates dematerialised

From kayode Ekundayo, Lagos

THE Central Securities Clearing System (CSCS) of the Nigerian Stock Exchange said it has cleared and settled transactions worth over N6.4 trillion between 1997 and 2009.

Speaking in Lagos during the review of CSCS performance in 2009, the managing director, Onyewuchi Asinobi stated that between 1997 and 2009, the clearing house cleared and settled 552.8 billion units of share with 2009 alone accounted for 102.8 billion units against 191.5 billion units recorded in 2008, about 46 per cent decrease.

Asinobi explained that CSCS was able

to dematerialised 2.0 million share certificates in 2009 as against 3.3 million shares certificate processed in 2008, adding that in 12 years, the clearing house was able to dematerialised 12.5 million share certificates and that the company has since 1997 provided platform for a full dematerialised securities market but that the infrastructure has remained under-utilised

He said that 1, 550 shareholders used their shareholding in CSCS depository as collateral to obtain loan in year 2009 as against 4,705 shareholders in 2008 while more than 15,206 shareholders have used their shareholding as collateral for loan since inception of CSCS to

year end 2009.

Asinobi stated that a total number of 132,374 deals were cleared in OTC Bond market in 2009 as against 80,135 deals in 2008, representing an increase of about 65 per cent.

Also a total number of 42,769 deals were cleared in OTC Treasury Bills in 2009 as against 33,346 deals in 2008

He however stated that the valued of Bond transactions in 2009 amounted to N18.2 trillion as against 10.2 trillion in 2008, representing an increase of about 78 per cent.

The value of Treasure Bills transactions also increased by 21 per cent to close at N9.9 trillion against 2008 N8.2 trillion in 2008.

CBN EXCHANGE RATES				BUREAU DE CHANGE RATES	
	Buying (NGN)	Central (NGN)	Selling (NGN)	BUYING	
CEA	0.3014	0.3114	0.3214	DOLLAR.....	N151
DANISH KRONER	28.7781	28.8757	28.9733	EURO.....	N219
EURO	214.231	214.9577	215.6843	POUNDS.....	N249
POUNDS STERLING	238.4799	239.2888	240.0977	SELLING	
RIYAL	39.3093	39.4427	39.576	DOLLAR.....	N153
SDR	231.8759	232.6624	233.4489	EURO.....	N222
SWISS FRANC	145.003	145.4948	145.9866	POUNDS.....	N251
US DOLLAR	147.41	147.91	148.41	Source: FeatureNet Solutions	
WAUA	228.6019	229.3773	230.1527		
YEN	1.595	1.6004	1.6058		

Stock Market Index	
Date:	Wednesday, January 13, 2010
Index:	22,252.38
Deals:	7,426
Volume:	666,776,619
Value:	N 3,403,574,377.53
Cap.:	N 5,330,809,606,435.41

Business/Aviation

New SAHCOL mgt gets FAAN backing

Stories from Nahimah Ajikanle Nurudeen, Lagos

THE Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) has promised to give full support to a member of SIFAX Group, the new management of Skyway Aviation Handling Company Plc (SAHCOL), former Skypower Aviation Handling Company limited.

The SIFAX Group which recently took over the ownership and operation of the defunct SAHCOL was charged by the

Managing Director of FAAN, Mr Richard Aisuebeogun to focus on safety procedure in its operations to make it compete favourably with other international cargo handling companies.

Aisuebeogun made the remarks in Lagos when the new management team of SAHCOL paid him a courtesy visit in his office.

He said the new owner is a private sector establishment that had considerable financial muscle that could reposition for favour-

able competition in the aviation handling business.

He observed that competition should bring high quality service delivery with best practices and profitable business.

According to him, FAAN was concerned about some unwholesome practices on the ramp, and called for more training for airside drivers and other operational staff of the handling companies.

While assuring the new management of SAHCOL of FAAN's full cooperation, Aisuebeogun

urged the new company to pay the outstanding debt owed the Authority on the 5 percent concession fee and regular outstanding bills as at when due.

Aisuebeogun added that FAAN could only allow one month credit to the new company which is the same condition that applies to all customers of the Authority including airlines and concessionaires.

He stated further that the Authority would continue to liaise with BPE to reconcile the

outstanding debts owed FAAN by SAHCOL before the new management took over.

Aisuebeogun had earlier commended SAHCOL for its role in ensuring successful ground handling of Hajj operations in 2009.

In his remarks, SAHCOL's Managing Director, Mr. Chike Ogeah, said the money being owed FAAN was captured in the whole process of privatisation of SAHCOL and assured that the Authority would be paid as soon as possible.

Emirates seeks Nigeria's participation in Dubai Festival

EMIRATES airline has called on Nigerian passengers to participate in 2010 14th edition of Dubai Shopping Festivals (DSF).

According to him, Nigerians can shop in the shadow of the newly-launched 828m Burj Khalifa formerly known as Burj Dubai, while those travelling with Emirates can benefit from a range of towering hotel bargains.

The DSF shopping extravaganza, which is held annually in Dubai, kicks off on 28th January 2010. Emirates Airline, one of the major sponsors of the DSF is offering a unique package, which allows customers to enjoy hotel accommodation for low prices.

The airline stated that the special offer is valid for the period of 28th January till 28th February 2010 and provides Emirates' customers travelling from Nigeria to Dubai with a choice of accommodation from a range of twenty two selected properties to suit all pockets. This package which is available to all Emirates passengers, regardless of class of travel is the Airline's way of promoting the event and offers passengers with a minimum three nights stay for the price of two nights on meal plan booked and in multiples.

The price also includes breakfast, personalized meet-and-assist upon arrival and transfers between Dubai International Airport and the hotel by chauffeur-driven private cars.

Announcing the special offer, Emirates Country Manager Nigeria, Paulos Legesse said "This offer is designed to ease the accommodation burden for our esteemed passengers who are coming to take advantage of this year's Dubai Shopping Festival. We therefore urge our customers to take advantage of this opportunity, pick up their suitcases and go shopping."

Legesse further commented on the airline's continued support for the festival, "Emirates has supported the festival since its inception fourteen years ago as part of the airline's mission to promote Dubai world-wide as a tourist destination. We have successfully raised the event's profile worldwide with our global promotional activities and the increasing number of tourists during the month-long festivities is proof that our package is a great hit with our customers" he said.



INTERIOR of Japan Airline Boeing 777

Qatar Airways takes delivery of new aircraft

THE Doha-based airline Qatar Airways has taken delivery of four new aircraft this month, wrapping up an eventful 2009 for and as part of preparation to expand its global network.

With the largest delivery schedule in a single month for Qatar Airways, the two Boeing 777-200 Long Range aircraft and two Airbus A320s take the airline's rapidly-growing fleet size up to 76 aircraft.

Qatar Airways currently has outstanding orders for more than 220 aircraft worth over US\$40 billion.

With a planned delivery schedule of more than one new aircraft a month over the next few years, the new aircraft deliveries will replace older aircraft and boost the fleet to maintain a young and modern portfolio of planes.

The latest arrivals round up a busy year for Qatar Airways, which saw the airline take delivery of a total of 11 new aircraft; launch four new routes - Houston, Melbourne and two Indian destinations of Amritsar and Goa.

Qatar orders 24 Airbus A320 families of aircraft; and set up a new corporate jet subsidiary of Qatar Executive.

One of the two newly-delivered Boeing 777-200LRs will be used to step up frequency on the recently-launched non-stop Doha - Melbourne route from the current three-flights-a-week to daily which he began January 1.

NAHCO to disburse N300m housing allowance to workers

WORKERS of the Nigerian Aviation Handling Company (NAHCO), Plc will receive N300 million by the end of January 2010 coupled with plans to open discussions with its workers' union for annual salary increase.

The Managing Director of NAHCO, Mr Sule Seriki Bates said at the end of year during the thanks giving service for staff and friends of the cargo and passenger handling company in Lagos.

According to Bates, the company's decision to commit to the staff's welfare was informed by the fact that only a well motivated personnel could deliver the NAHCO's objectives, which has become imperative in view of the harsh operating environment.

He said: "We started 2009 on an uncertain but optimistic note. We set out to implement a programme that was anchored on customer retention, business growth and expansion as a way of consolidating on the gains of change."

He also projected a business budget of over N7.5 billion for the year 2010 even as the company last year made a profit after tax of N1 billion.

Bates further said: "This will continue to be our priority as management needs not be reminded that the people factor is key to corporate success. Despite the harsh operating environment, we are determined to offer every staff the opportunity to flourish. I have directed that the housing allowance

in full be paid to all staff as part of this month's salary. Although, the total budget for this is huge, as over N300 million, the management will go ahead and pay."

He urged NAHCO staff to buckle up for the challenges ahead, saying that the company plans to work with a new awareness of the possibility of strong competition to boost cargo and ground handling industry with a new operator in the sector.

The company according to him secured additional handling contracts with Delta Airlines, Egypt Air and Aero Airline, even as it has entered into business discussions with China Southern Airlines and an American carrier: United Airlines, set to commence operations soon.

Business / International

US financial crisis panel begins in Washington

THE US Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission has begun the first of its public hearings.

Goldman Sachs chairman Lloyd Blankfein told the panel that US government support was critical in the crisis. "We benefited from it," he said.

The panel was set up by Congress to examine the causes of the crisis.

Executives from JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America and Morgan Stanley are also testifying about their banks' role in the financial crisis.

Findings and the report of the panel, which has been given a reported budget of \$8m to carry out its task, will be presented to Congress and President Barack Obama by 15 December.

One of the members of the panel, Keith Hennessey, has already posted on his blog the questions he would like to ask bank chiefs.

Asked by the panel's chairman Phil Angelide to point out the two biggest instances of negligent behaviour and apologise for its behaviour, Mr Blankfein declined

to take the bait.

"Clearly, I wish we were much less leveraged then," he said.

Bank of America boss Brian Moynihan said he understood the anger felt by the public over large levels of compensation being planned at financial institutions that were bailed out by the government over the past year.

Mr Moynihan said he was "grateful" for the taxpayer support. Bank of America has now paid back the \$45bn bail-out it received in 2009.

The 10 commissioners,

appointed by Republicans and Democrats, also include a former Wall Street analyst, Heather Murren; the chairman of the board at technology company Symantec, John W Thompson, and a market regulator and lawyer, Brooksley Born, as well as former elected officials from both major political parties.

Ms Murren told the BBC that there were officially 22 issues under investigation, from regulatory reform, to mortgage fraud and executive compensation.

James Reda, who heads an

executive compensation advisory firm, told our correspondent that Wall Street was trying to respond to the issue of bonuses "but their hands are tied".

"If they don't pay these individuals high bonuses, they run the risk of losing those people," he said.

Meanwhile, Ms Murren has said that there is a strong feeling among the public that those who contributed to the financial crisis should be held accountable and perhaps not compensated so strongly. BBC.



GOOGLE Chairman Eric Schmidt

Google 'may pull out of China after Gmail cyber attack'

INTERNET giant Google has said it may end its operations in China following a "sophisticated and targeted" cyber attack originating from the country.

The company did not accuse the Chinese government directly, but said it was no longer willing to censor its Chinese search engine - google.cn.

This could result in closing the site, and its Chinese offices, Google said.

The top executive of its Chinese

rival Baidu called the move "hypocritical" and financially motivated.

Google said the e-mail accounts of Chinese human rights activists were the primary target of the attack, which occurred in December.

The search engine has now said it will hold talks with the government in the coming weeks to look at operating an unfiltered search engine within the law in the country, though no changes to filtering had yet been made.

Google launched google.cn in

2006, agreeing to some censorship of the search results, as required by the Chinese government.

The company said its investigation into the attack found two accounts of its online mail service - Gmail - appeared to have been accessed.

However, the attack was limited to accessing account information such as the date the account was created and subject line, rather than e-mail content, it said.

It said it had also discovered

that the accounts of dozens of US, China and Europe-based Gmail users, who are "advocates of human rights in China", appeared to have been "routinely accessed by third parties".

It said these accounts had not been accessed through any security breach at Google, but "most likely via phishing scams or malware placed on users' computers".

At least 20 other large companies from a wide range of businesses were similarly targeted, it added.

German economy shrank 5% in 2009

THE German economy shrank by 5% in 2009, hit by a slump in exports and investment, official data has shown.

It was the first time in six years that the economy had shrunk, and it was the largest contraction since World War II, the Federal Statistics Office said.

Germany, Europe's largest economy, emerged from recession in the second quarter of 2009.

The government predicts growth of 1.2% in 2010, but reports suggest it is set to raise its forecast to 1.5%.

The worst postwar performance to date was a 0.9% decline in gross domestic product (GDP) in West Germany in 1975.

The worst since 1990's reunification of Germany was a 0.8% fall in 1993.

Economists were cautiously optimistic about Germany's growth prospects.

"The recession is yesterday's story; today's story is the ongoing recovery," said Carsten Brzeski at ING Financial Markets.

"Today's numbers, however, mask a slowdown of the rebound in the fourth quarter.

"Despite all government stimulus packages, the deterioration of public finances has been much more limited than in most other eurozone countries.

"Looking ahead, the recovery will continue this year. With GDP growth above 2%, we expect the German economy to be the growth engine of the eurozone in 2010." BBC.

UK economy 'returns to growth', think tank says

THE UK economy grew by 0.3% in the fourth quarter of 2009, a leading economic think tank has said.

The National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) predicts that the econ-

omy returned to growth, bringing an end to the recession.

NIESR's estimates come ahead of the official gross domestic product (GDP) figures for the fourth quarter, which will be released on

26 January.

NIESR said the pace of growth appears to be increasing. It estimates that there was a 0.2% increase in GDP in the three months ending in November.

"The broader picture of the depression is that output fell sharply for twelve months until March and has not changed very much since then, although evidence of a recovery is starting to emerge." BBC.

Star Feature

Eight minutes of magic

After years of blindness, about 600 blind persons selected from across the 23 local government areas of Kaduna State, can see again, following an eight minute magic, called surgery. **Ismail Mudashir** reports how the magic was done.

“MY desire to give qualitative education to my five children was dashed sometimes ago when I lost my sight, as a result of what the ophthalmologist called cataract. Since then, I have ceased to see what is happening in this beautiful world,” a 46 year old blind farmer ‘Nura Aboi’ of Sanga Local government area of Kaduna state said shortly after he regained his sight. This was courtesy of free eye surgery carried out at the Yusuf Dantsoho General Hospital last week.

“It was just one morning when I woke up from sleep. I discovered that everywhere around me was dark, and I could not differentiate between morning, afternoon and night again, even as I could not see things around me. I not only lost hope of seeing again, but I have learnt to live with this sudden blindness,” he said

According to him initially, it was just one of my eyes that was affected by the cataract. It started with the left eye and later it consumed the two eyes. It took me some time before I became used to the new system, because sometimes, I try to walk alone, but I sustained injuries along the line as I hit my legs.”

The blindness, Nura Aboi said has reduced his farming output, and the revenue of his family, to near zero. “Before now I used to have over 40 bags of maize and soybean annually from my farm, but since the loss of sight, it has reduced to 10, my children could not handle the farm well. I almost lost my job at the palace. I am the secretary of the village head of Ambei village in Sanga local government, because I cannot discharge my duties again. But I thank God, with this operation, things will bounce back for my family.”

In her own case, Mrs Christiana Simon of Manchok in Kaura local government, who could not control her emotions, when approached by this reporter for an interview, as tears flowed freely down her face. “What do you want me to say than to thank God for giving me sight again. I will forever remain grateful to Him and all those who facilitated

the surgery.”

She added: “for years, I have been rendered useless as a result of this eye problem. I can no longer do my beans business in the market. At 40 I am looking like 60, because of this cataract. May god bless those who facilitated this operation.”

They were among the 592 patients of cataract who benefited from the free eye surgery programme of a team of 10 eye surgeons from the federation of Islamic Medical Associations (FIMA) facilitated by the wife of the Kaduna state governor, Hajiya Amina Namadi Sambo, carried out under her pet project tagged “I care-women and youth initiative”.

Cataract is an eye disease in which the lens becomes covered in an opaque film that affects sight, eventually causing total loss of sight. The condition usually affects older people, and is generally found in both eyes to varying degrees. It can be treated surgically by replacing the lens with an artificial implant.

Leader of the FIMA team, Dr. Intzar Hussain Butt of the Ittefaq Hospital Lahore, Pakistan, said over one million Nigerians are blind, with 75 percent of them suffering from cataract, while the rest are from glaucoma and lack of vitamin A. “Over a million Nigerians are blind and they cannot see this beautiful world because of these diseases.”

He said continued decline of vision is the major symptom of cataract and that the cause is age-related. “Cataract is prevalent in Nigeria because of lack of experts. In Nigeria,

“For years, I have been rendered useless as a result of this eye problem. I can no longer do my beans business in the market. At 40 I am looking like 60, because of this cataract. May god bless those who facilitated this operation”.



MALE beneficiaries of the free eye surgery exercise.

you have less number of eye surgeons, especially in the northern part of the country, this is the bane of the disease.”

While advising the government of Nigeria to intensify efforts at training of eye surgeons, and encourage medical students to specialise in the area, he reiterated the commitment of his organisation to assist the country in this direction. According to him, for Nigeria to reduce the disease, surgery equipment must be provided in major cities of the country.

“We are doing all these on charity basis – All the 10 doc-



“ We are doing all these on charity basis – All the 10 doctors we came together with are volunteers. They don't charge anything ,rather they spend their money. Our joy is to make the blind see again. The happiness and the prayers which come from patients ,are more than anything to us. In less than 10 minutes surgery, a blind person regains his or her sight ,and this ends their long time trauma,” he said.

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Speaking on the programme, Mrs. Sambo said 592 cataract patients were selected from the 2,843 persons screened for various eye related diseases in the 23 local government areas of the state. She said the selected patients were asked to

assemble at Yusuf Dantsoho General Hospital, Tudun Wada, for easy coordination of the exercise.

Hajiya Amina, who solicited for the support and cooperation of stakeholders towards her project, reiterated her commitment to make the programme a continuous exercise to assist patients of eye related diseases in the state.

“I conceived the “I care-women and youth initiative” to help children, women and youth in the state to live their lives well. The focus of my pet project cuts across all spheres of life. We have programme, on health, education and woman empowerment, and we are not going to relent in our quest to uplift the standard of people in this category,” she assured.

Meanwhile, a mild drama ensued at the venue of the surgery, as a 25 year old mother, Aisha Idris cried like a baby, drawing the attention of Hajiya Amina Namadi Sambo to the plight of her seven month old blind baby boy.

Her wailing drew the attention of all those who were present at the Hospital, including the governor's wife, who was at the Hospital to inspect the ongoing surgery of the 592 patients of cataract, selected for her free eye surgery programme.

The woman who resides at Gobaro road Unguwan Rimi while speaking to our correspondent said the baby, Nura Idris was born blind, and that his blindness was noticed by his father when he was two days old.

“Since his father who is a security guard noticed it, we have been restless but all our efforts to get him operated of the deformity are yet to produce results as he cannot see. He has an object in his eyes, and according to ophthalmologists, he must be operated for him to see,” she said.

According to her, the boy cries all the time and that he hardly eats. “He does not eat, and Nura cries all the time. As you can see, I can no longer eat and sleep well, because of his problem,”

She appealed to the wife of the governor to help in finding solution to the plight of the boy. “We have taken him to the National Eye Centre, Kaduna for medication. The staff of the Hospital don't help matters, because each time we want to see doctor, they will ask us to come back another time. Please ma, help in giving my baby sight. You have done it for others, please do it for the poor boy,” she said as tears flowed from her eyes.

Noticing the wailing woman, the wife of the governor ordered that the woman be allowed access to her. She carried the boy and told his mother to bring the boy to her office next Thursday.

Governor Mohammed Namadi Sambo was also at the venue of the surgery, with all the who-is-who in the Kaduna state. He expressed satisfaction with the surgery. “I am extremely happy that these blind persons can see again following this timeless operation. We will continue to support these humanitarian services. We are going to encourage this. We are going to encourage the continuation of this services life changing services.”

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ataract. May god bless those who

Business

Foundation to facilitate LGs/traditional ruler's partnership in business

By Sunday Williams

AN Accra, Ghana based Non Governmental Organisation (NGO), Africa Sister Cities Foundation is planning to facilitate business partnerships between local government authorities and African traditional rulers.

Addressing news men in Abuja on the NGO's biennial conference and trade exhibition scheduled to hold in

Accra, the president of the Africa Sister Cities Foundation, prince Kwame Kludjeson, said the conference is one of the dynamic programmes of the organisation.

He said the conference is aimed at executing the organisation's mandate of creating, strengthening and promoting sister's cities partnerships among African cities and similar jurisdiction abroad.

He said the conference which will hold between may

10th to 15th 2010, will create opportunities for Local government officials and traditional rulers from Africa to meet their foreign counterparts to forge partnerships and strengthen existing ties.

He said the conference will adopt a position paper that will direct country advocacy through sister's Cities Foundation in Africa to get appropriate government agencies to empower traditional rulers to support local development.

Freight Forwarding begins operations in Kano

From Auwalu Umaru, Kano

KANO zonal office of Council for the Regulation of Freight Forwarding in Nigeria (CRFFN) has begun operations. The office is to oversee the council's affairs in all the 19 states in the north. It is being headed by assistant registrar of the council, retired Lt. Col Garba Hadi Sani.

The council came into being following the promulgation of an act in 2007 establishing the regulatory body.

There was a brief ceremony at the office in Kano yesterday during which some key members and officials of the council were introduced to staff of the office. Yesterday's event was chaired

by a senior member of the council Chief S. Asani who was assisted by registrar of the council Sir Mike Jukwe, council head of administration Opara Basil Ndubuisi and council member Alhaji Muhammadu Sanusi Wakili.

Speaking on the statutory functions of the council, the registrar, Sir Mike Jukwe, said the council was established to among others determine the persons who constitute freight forwarders and also determine the standards of knowledge and skills to be attained by persons seeking to be registered as freight forwarders.

Jukwe also said the body

would regulate and control the practice of freight forwarding in addition to the powers vested in it to equally regulate and control all associations of freight forwarding agents.

The regulatory body, according to him, would ensure uniform standards of professional conduct and education relevant to freight forwarding agents. He said the council would ensure the promotion of the highest standard of competence, practice and conduct among members of the profession.

The registrar said the bill establishing the council was presented to the national assembly in 2004. He said

the House of Representatives passed the bill on March 20, 2007 while the Senate passed it on March 13, 2007 and it was finally passed into law by former President Olusegun Obasanjo on April 30, 2007.

He said a tribunal would be established later in the year to ensure the implementation of the council's duties and enforce discipline among members.

The Kano zonal office, according to him, would be formally opened later with Kano State governor Malam Ibrahim Shekarau, Minister of Transport and Emir of Kano Alhaji Ado Bayero as well as other stakeholders to be invited for the ceremony.

PAN opens Abuja office

By Sunday Williams

ON Monday, January 18, 2010, the Minister of State, Commerce & Industry, Mr. Humphrey Abah will commission the new Abuja corporate operations office complex of PAN Nigeria Limited, a statement from the company said.

It said the new office comes with a standard showroom and after-sales and service facility that will effectively respond to customer needs and enquiries, as well as boost the existing network of Peugeot dealerships and service points in the FCT area.

"PAN Nigeria House, located opposite GSS Mabushi, Mabushi District, Abuja, is also expected to consolidate on PAN Nigeria's structural build-up to meet with the increasing commercial and administrative demands of the FCT and adjoining states," it added.

According to the Managing Director, Dr. Haroun Ibrahim Aliyu, "The Abuja Corporate Office is indeed a dream come true to the management of PAN Nigeria Limited, as it serves to actualize our desire to complement our corporate outlook with a befitting structure in a critical market area like the FCT".

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

The entire management and staff of Medicaid Radiology Ltd congratulate their Chairman, Senator Abubakar A. Bagudu on his swearing-in as the Senator representing Kebbi North Central. May Almighty Allah continue to guide him aright. We wish him a successful tenure.

Signed: Management

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Senator Atiku Abubakar Bagudu
(Kebbi State North Central, PDP)

Business/Agric

Nigeria's politicians turn to farming



CHAIRMAN of the All Farmers Association of Nigeria
Abdullahi Adamu



FORMER President Olusegun Obasanjo



FORMER PDP Chairman Audu Ogbe.

By Tina A. Hassan

THE term political farmers has been used frequently in agricultural circle to such an extent that it has become difficult to ignore completely. Politicians are enviously jostling for a piece of perceived 'goodies' coming into the sector. It would appear that there is a growing class of farmers in the country who have special privilege and get the resources meant for small farmers.

At a recent event organised by the International Center for Soil fertility where the Kingdom of Netherlands committed some amount of money into the agricultural sector in Nigeria through the center, the number of prominent politicians that turned up for the event was amazing. Politicians are now embracing farming in Nigeria.

Prominent among them is the Chairman of the All Farmers Association of Nigerian Abdullahi Adamu. Adamu was a former governor of Nasarawa State. He was a very powerful governor while in power. But even at that time he had always made his passion for agriculture known. He is one of the biggest farmers in the country. He is a top member of the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP). There is fear that the voices of local farmers are no longer heard. The peasant farmers are voiceless, if they had one before. The funds meant for agricultural sector development are largely being influenced by the policy makers in the ministry down to these big time

'political farmers.' It took time before the N200billion Commercial Agric Credit Scheme was also narrowed down to include the local farmers. Even then there are fears that the local farmers may not be able to meet the conditions to draw from the fund. Just N40billion was said to have been set aside for small farmers. How many local farmers are aware of this policy that seems to begin and end in Abuja? How many local farmers have been seen in banks over the years? No wonder banks were jostling to take part in the largesse.

The Adamawa State Governor Murtala Nyako is also a politician and a farmer. His farm is also one of the biggest in the country. He runs his farms and his state. There are many other politicians who have settled down to be farmers.

At another function in the National Food Reserve Agency (NFRA), the term political farmers featured again and this time, AFAN was referred to as a political body under Federal Government.

Other notable farmers in the country are former President Olusegun Obasanjo, former Minister of Information Jerry Ghana, and the former National Chairman of the Peoples' Democratic Party Dr. Audu Ogbe.

The question analysts have been asking is why do Nigerian politicians turn to farming? Why do the real investors and the business class prefer to put their money in stocks while the country's economic fortunes crashed?

When called upon to give an insight into Cassava farming

in Nigeria at the presentation of cheque by the Netherland to Nigeria, the managing Director of the Dutch Agricultural Development Trading Company (DADTCO) in Nigeria Peter Bolt said: "I want to talk to the real farmers and not the political farmers".

Analysts have said that the small holding farmers are the one that really subsidize agriculture in Nigeria. They say the current administration is yet to come to terms with that reality.

Agricultural loans that are supposed to be accessed by the small holders farmers are usually attached with strict conditions that these farmers find difficult to meet and this has continually served as obstacles to accessing them and it is only the big political farmers who still influence programs in the government, have access to such funds.

The National president of the Rice Farmers Association Alhaji Abubakar Wodi in a recent interview commented that local farmers are faced with a myriad of problems, one of which is access to loans to boost farming.

Wodi also said our politicians whom we call leaders only pay lip service to harnessing this great potential in agriculture, little wonder when foreigners and donors come with their money to invest in the sector, they often be the sole beneficiaries. But observers say there is nothing wrong with politicians wearing two caps. The fear is whether they are sincere farmers.

World Bank pumps N800 million into Fadama III

From Mustafa Abubakar, Ilorin

EIGHT hundred million Naira is to be injected into the Fadama III agricultural project by the World Bank, States and Local Governments in the country over the next five years.

The Kwara State Project Coordinator of Fadama Development Office, Ilorin, Malam Usman Akanbi disclosed this while answering questions on a Radio Kwara personality interview programme, "Playing Host".

Malam Akanbi explained

that local governments in the country would also participate in the programme and pay a counterpart fund of two million naira on yearly basis for the period of the project.

He said the benefiting communities would equally pay ten percent of the entire

sum of the project to be sited in their various domains.

He commended the Kwara State government for consistently paying her counterpart fund in the Fadama project and appealed to local government councils that were yet to pay their own part of the deal to do

so, saying that the non-payment had been a great challenge to the success of the project in the state.

Akanbi said some local government areas in the State that benefited from Veterinary Clinic, boreholes, wells, culverts, fertilizers and chemicals under the project were yet

to pay their two million Naira counter fund for the 2008 and 2009 Fadama II seasons.

The project coordinator however enjoined benefiting communities to pay their own ten percent contributions to the project, as they are the direct beneficiaries.

Soya beans record increase in sales

DEALERS in soya beans at various markets in Makurdi the Benue capital, have attributed the increase in the sale of the commodity to high demand from consumers within and outside the state.

Mrs Elizabeth Ogoh, a soya beans seller at the market, who commented on the situation on Tuesday in Makurdi, expressed

happiness over the development.

"It will interest you to know that most of my customers are mostly women who prepare soya bean milk for their children.

"Business is booming for us and I am pleased with the high patronage."

Mrs Hembadon Kur who also sells soya beans at the mar-

ket, said she sold eight to 10 bags of soya beans worth N10,000 everyday.

Mrs Edwina Okeke, who buys the commodity regularly, said she consumed soya beans due to its high nutritional content.

"My family and I love soya bean because of its dietary value," she said. (NAN)

Business/Finance



Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE)

Wednesday, January 13, 2010

COMPANY Name	No of Deals	Quote (N)	Quantity Traded	Value of Shares (N)
2ND-TIER SECURITIES				
ADSWITCH PLC	7	2.30	100,000	219,000.00
CAPITAL OIL PLC	12	0.57	197,000	111,110.00
SECTOR Totals	19		297,000	330,110.00
AGRICULTURE				
FTN COCOA PROC. PLC	42	0.63	6,492,052	4,314,340.63
LIVESTOCK FEEDS PLC	20	0.73	610,540	445,694.20
OKITIPUPA OIL PALM PLC	1	6.53	200	1,242.00
PRESCO PLC	6	5.60	35,000	190,000.00
SECTOR Totals	69		7,137,792	4,951,276.83
AIR SERVICES				
AIRLINE SERV. & LOG. PLC	17	2.44	694,047	1,681,770.76
NIG. AV. HAND. COY PLC	81	8.08	1,094,281	9,235,611.94
SECTOR Totals	98		1,788,328	10,917,382.70
AUTOMOBILE & TYRE				
DN TYRE & RUBBER PLC	18	0.50	3,182,010	1,591,005.00
INCAR NIGERIA PLC	1	3.06	2,320	7,099.20
R. T. BRISCOE (NIG.) PLC	16	6.27	147,657	927,054.41
SECTOR Totals	35		3,331,987	2,525,158.61
BANKING				
ACCESS BANK PLC	201	7.90	6,383,415	50,741,476.86
AFRIBANK NIGERIA PLC	66	2.87	3,820,157	11,305,152.86
DIAMOND BANK PLC	56	7.50	4,227,728	32,862,187.15
ECOBANK NIGERIA PLC	9	10.10	23,963	230,044.80
FIRST CITY MON. BANK PLC	70	7.50	3,519,700	26,374,925.70
FIDELITY BANK PLC	184	2.57	13,414,698	35,962,116.45
FIRST BANK OF NIG. PLC	809	15.14	40,795,831	618,484,233.59
FINBANK PLC	297	0.63	171,120,322	109,482,998.21
GTBANK PLC	464	16.07	14,458,345	242,019,945.86
STANBIC IBTC BANK PLC	47	7.50	958,366	7,193,438.12
INTERCONT. BANK PLC	42	2.18	1,316,615	2,870,220.70
OCEANIC BANK INT. PLC	85	2.45	4,510,889	11,051,678.05
BANK PHB PLC	46	1.90	7,391,846	14,044,507.40
SKYE BANK PLC	126	5.79	4,735,685	26,693,040.70
SPRING BANK PLC	14	0.76	145,747	110,767.72
STERLING BANK PLC	36	1.30	2,060,633	2,738,709.38
UNT. BANK FOR AFR. PLC	273	11.38	14,585,062	166,405,113.61
UNION BANK OF NIG. PLC	197	6.40	3,799,001	24,775,757.23
UNITYBANK PLC	81	1.06	12,960,264	13,639,473.34
WEMA BANK PLC	81	1.15	9,342,770	11,689,553.19
ZENITH BANK PLC	391	15.80	52,579,385	840,767,890.50
SECTOR Totals	3,575		372,150,422	2,249,443,231.42
BUILDING MATERIALS				
ASHAKA CEMENT PLC	75	12.70	971,842	12,465,533.86
BENUE CEMENT COY PLC	29	48.11	433,781	20,875,980.35
CEMENT CO. OF N/NIG. PLC	54	13.91	987,160	13,961,206.84
LAFARGE WAPCO PLC	22	30.26	349,165	10,506,233.92
SECTOR Totals	180		2,741,948	57,808,954.97
CHEMICAL & PAINTS				
BERGER PAINTS NIG. PLC	4	3.20	18,354	61,669.44
CHEM. & ALL. PROD. PLC	2	28.00	200	5,600.00
NIG.-GERMAN CHEM. PLC	1	15.04	125	1,786.25
SECTOR Totals	7		18,679	69,055.69
COMMERCIAL/SERVICES				
AFROMEDIA PLC	7	0.70	639,000	447,300.00
NAT. SPORTS LOTTERY PLC	8	3.75	50,144,099	188,040,371.25
RED STAR EXPRESS PLC	27	2.50	1,054,920	2,798,498.80
SECTOR Totals	42		51,438,019	191,286,170.05
COMP. & OFFICE EQUIP.				
NCR (NIGERIA) PLC	2	8.51	5,800	46,922.00
OMATEK VENTURES PLC	5	0.56	439,664	246,211.84
THOMAS WYATT PLC	1	1.84	100	175.00
TRIPPLE GEE & COY PLC	3	4.60	6,544	28,597.28
WIGGINS TEAPE NIG. PLC	1	2.92	300	834.00
SECTOR Totals				322,740.12
CONGLOMERATES				
A. G. LEVENTIS (NIG.) PLC	17	2.46	284,208	698,196.85
JOHN HOLT PLC	1	9.28	500	4,410.00
PZ CUSSONS NIGERIA PLC	46	26.00	154,084	3,983,488.41
TRANSN. CORP. OF NIG. PLC	50	0.55	4,539,735	2,520,316.33
UAC OF NIGERIA PLC	65	38.42	1,010,359	39,347,012.49
UNILEVER NIG. PLC	110	23.15	3,202,774	75,594,519.75
SECTOR Totals	289		9,191,660	122,147,943.82
CONSTRUCTION				
COSTAIN (WA) PLC	87	4.28	2,144,149	9,437,426.13
JULIUS BERGER NIGERIA PLC	31	29.40	211,139	6,157,814.52
MULTIV. RESOURCES PLC	7	0.50	828,869	414,434.50
ROADS NIGERIA PLC	1	3.30	5,000	17,300.00
SECTOR Totals	126		3,189,157	16,026,975.15
FOOD/BEV. & TOBACCO				
7-UP BOTTLING CO. PLC	6	29.40	6,156	178,026.36
BIG TREAT PLC	82	0.83	6,588,480	5,751,627.95
CADBURY NIGERIA PLC	24	12.31	204,838	2,521,555.78
DANGOTE FLOUR MILLS PLC	422	13.20	8,738,502	120,056,146.06
DANGOTE SUGAR REF. PLC	100	15.00	1,809,490	27,137,830.60
FLOUR MILLS NIGERIA PLC	77	40.85	1,737,576	73,470,164.97
H/WELL FLOUR MILL PLC	4	8.49	9,000	75,020.00
NAT. SALT COY NIGERIA PLC	211	5.77	0,752,193	65,767,397.84
NIG. BOTTLING COY PLC	15	24.82	448,722	11,137,280.04

NESTLE NIGERIA PLC	25	254.90	133,248	34,061,776.11
N/NIGERIA FLOUR MILLS PLC	2	22.94	2,020	46,338.80
TANTALIZERS PLC	39	0.93	2,844,980	2,668,351.00
UTC NIGERIA PLC	8	0.90	67,200	63,108.00
SECTOR Totals	1.015		33,342,405	342,934,623.51
HEALTHCARE				
EVANS MEDICAL PLC.	5	1.00	40,584	40,613.20
FIDSON HEALTHCARE PLC	19	1.90	753,631	1,479,627.00
GLAXOSM. CONS. NIG. PLC	25	23.52	122,390	2,900,394.07
MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC.	5	4.68	121,750	569,790.00
NEIMETH INT. PHARM. PLC	14	1.62	486,194	787,634.28
UNIONDIAG. & CLIN. SERV. PLC	15	0.64	726,500	469,525.00
SECTOR Totals	83		2,251,049	6,247,583.55
HOTEL & TOURISM				
CAPITAL HOTEL PLC	5	1.50	7,025,999	10,540,768.43
IKEJA HOTEL PLC	11	0.98	342,424	342,024.94
SECTOR Totals	16		7,368,423	10,882,793.37
INDUSTRIAL/DOM. PROD.				
FIRST ALUM. NIGERIA PLC	2	0.50	41,500	20,750.00
VITAFOAM NIGERIA PLC	35	5.55	257,607	1,445,193.71
VONO PRODUCTS PLC.	2	0.69	5,255	3,625.95
SECTOR Totals	39		304,362	1,469,569.66
INF. & COMM. TECHN.				
CHAMS PLC	81	0.79	9,408,451	7,389,096.83
IHS NIGERIA PLC	2	4.24	2,000	8,060.00
MASS TEL. INNOV. NIG. PLC	1	0.50	30,000	15,000.00
STARCOMMS PLC	48	2.01	2,803,968	5,943,468.24
SECTOR Totals	132		12,244,419	13,355,625.07
INSURANCE				
AFRICAN ALLIANCE INS. PLC	1	0.83	1,000	790.00
AIICO INSURANCE PLC.	59	0.93	3,156,372	2,924,123.52
CONTINENTAL REINS. PLC	11	1.10	893,440	947,325.80
CORNERSTONE INS. CO. PLC.	23	0.54	1,203,690	673,113.50
CUST. AND ALLIED INS. PLC	11	2.97	624,910	1,846,416.50
EQUITY ASSURANCE PLC	1	0.50	50,000	25,000.00
GOLDLINK INSURANCE PLC	69	0.76	73,897,668	56,163,227.68
GUAR. TRUST ASSUR. PLC	39	2.21	6,165,000	13,938,635.00
GUINEA INSURANCE PLC.	2	0.50	10,000	5,000.00
CONS. HALLMARK INS. PLC	3	0.50	10,800	5,400.00
INT. ENERGY INS. COY PLC	46	0.62	17,941,333	11,589,029.32
LASACO ASSURANCE PLC.	45	0.60	3,637,522	2,182,243.20
LAW UNION & ROCKINS. PLC.	26	0.50	4,062,480	2,041,724.80
LINKAGE ASSURANCE PLC	4	0.50	238,000	119,000.00
MUT. BENEFITS ASS. PLC	5	0.64	590,000	377,600.00
N.E.M. INS. CO. (NIG.) PLC.	50	0.55	1,981,280	1,110,633.51
NIGER INSURANCE CO. PLC.	8	0.98	265,516	259,485.87
PRESTIGE ASSURANCE PLC.	7	3.80	125,304	476,612.72
REG. ALLIANCE INS. COY PLC	1	0.50	18,000	9,000.00
SOVEREIGN TRUST INS. PLC	3	0.50	119,000	59,500.00
STACO INSURANCE PLC	1	1.09	100,000	109,000.00
STAND. ALLIANCE INS. PLC	19	0.70	1,234,900	867,320.00
UNIC INSURANCE PLC.	9	0.91	442,200	402,862.00
UNIV. INSURANCE COY PLC	3	0.50	62,000	31,000.00
INTERC. WAPIC INSUR. PLC	18	0.95	1,128,600	1,072,170.00
SECTOR Totals	464		17,959,015	97,236,213.42
MEDIA				
DAAR COMMUNICAT. PLC	22	0.53	397,000	210,620.00
SECTOR Totals	22		397,000	210,620.00
MORTGAGE COMPANIES				
ASO SAVINGS & LOAN PLC	47	0.69	10,423,052	7,450,385.58
RESORT SAV. AND LOANS PLC	6	0.50	5,534,000	2,767,000.00
UN/HOMES SAV. & LOANS PLC	47	0.95	5,629,553	5,715,899.27
SECTOR Totals	100		21,586,605	15,933,284.85
OTHER FINANCIAL INST.				
CRUSADER NIGERIA PLC.	1	1.43	239	325.04
DEAP CAP. MAN. & TRUST PLC	4	2.02	163,000	329,260.00
ROYAL EXCHANGE PLC	3	0.55	92,500	50,875.00
SECTOR Totals	8		255,739	380,460.04
PETROLEUM(MARKETING)				
AFRICAN PETROLEUM PLC.	75	37.10	440,286	16,395,763.58
BECO PETROL. PROD. PLC	3	2.41	19,520	44,700.80
CHEVRON OIL NIGERIA PLC	8	69.79	6,437	470,353.55
CONOIL PLC	33	33.57	172,499	6,019,468.90
ETERNA OIL & GAS PLC.	110	6.60	3,753,558	23,129,094.02
MOBIL OIL NIGERIA PLC.	8	99.95	2,076	207,501.76
OANDO PLC	7	93.99	27,194	2,555,964.06
TOTAL NIGERIA PLC	11	150.00	15,824	2,436,128.64
SECTOR Totals	255		4,437,394	51,258,975.31
PRINTING & PUBLISHING				
ACADEMY PRESS PLC.	12	6.55	235,750	1,481,862.50
LONGMAN NIGERIA PLC	4	9.00	4,130	36,364.00
UNIVERSITY PRESS PLC	7	5.29	103,100	544,039.00
SECTOR Totals	23		342,980	2,062,265.50
TEXTILES				
UNITED NIGERIA TEXT. PLC	1	1.90	14	27.86
SECTOR Totals	1		14	27.86
THE FOREIGN LISTINGS				
ECOBANK TRANSN. INCORP	24	15.00	626,050	9,406,178.95
SECTOR Totals	24		626,050	9,406,178.95
OVERALL Totals	7,426		666,776,619	3,403,574,377.53

What is Common Shares or Common Stock

Securities that represent part ownership in a company and generally carry voting privileges. Common shareholders may be paid dividends, but only after preferred shareholders are paid. Common shareholders are last in line after creditors, debt holders and preferred shareholders to claim any of a company's assets in the event of liquidation.

Google

GAINERS

BCC	1.21
NBC	1.18
AP	0.95
CADBURY	0.58

LOSERS

NESTLE	9.14
FLOURMILL	2.14
GUARANTY	0



NIGERIAN NAVY

DIRECT SHORT SERVICE COMMISSION - COURSE 19

NOTICE TO CANDIDATES SHORTLISTED FOR APTITUDE TEST

1. Candidates who applied for the Nigerian Navy Direct Short Service Commission - Course 19 are advised to check at the centres of their choice or online at the following websites if they have been shortlisted:

www.service.nigeriannavy.gov.ng or
[Http//service.nigeriannavy.gov.ng](http://service.nigeriannavy.gov.ng)

2. Shortlisted candidates are hereby notified that the Aptitude Test will take place on 23 Jan 10 by 0730 hrs. They are to come along with photocopies of the following documents.

- a. Duly completed Attestation of LGA Form printed online.
- b. Duly completed Parent/Guardian Consent Form printed online.
- c. NYSC Discharge Certificate.
- d. Bachelors Degree, HND/equivalent or Higher Degree Certificate(s) or Duly signed Statement of Result(s).
- e. Membership of Professional Body Certificate (if any).
- f. Birth Certificate / Age declaration.

3. For further information call 09-870 4817, 09-870 8475 and 08078406568

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NO, THANK YOU!

We have an in-house policy of rewarding staff who keep to the straight and narrow path.

The practice of journalism today in Nigeria has acquired some odium due to the "brown envelope syndrome". For those who may want it spelt out, "brown envelope," is the practice whereby journalists, or those who pass off themselves as such, insist on being paid to cover events, write news report or feature articles (that are clearly not to be paid for). This practice is not limited to the lowly reporter; it obtains also at the high echelons in media organisations.

Similarly, many reporters and editors are offered gift and gratification, sometimes with the overt aim of influencing their work. Some of these gifts could be described as "token." If not, it may be offered in ways it would be rude or self-righteous to reject there and then.

In the circumstances, it has become necessary for us to make public our company's policy on gift-taking, so that our numerous readers, newsmakers, advertisers and other well-wishers can help us with its implementation.

It is the policy of Media Trust that its editors and reporters should not solicit for gift or gratification either through begging, flattering, cajoling or blackmailing those they encounter in the course of their work. Where a gift can be graciously declined, we expect our staff to do so. However, where it is pressed on them, they will declare it so that the company can write a letter thanking the giver and donating the gift to charity.

However, we sincerely expect those who patronize our publications as readers, advertisers and newsmakers, not to seek to influence our reporters and editors with bribe, gratification and gift.

We have an in-house policy of rewarding staff who keep to the straight and narrow path. You can assist us by reporting anyone who claims to be our staff, yet engages in such unethical conduct.

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Thank you.

Signed:
Management

 **Media Trust Limited**





NIGERIA GOVERNORS' FORUM

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NIGERIA IS NOT A TERRORIST STATE

PRESS RELEASE BY THE NIGERIA GOVERNORS FORUM ON THE LISTING OF
NIGERIA AS A TERRORIST COUNTRY BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Recently, the US Transport Security Administration (TSA), an Agency under the Department of Homeland Security listed Nigeria as a "country of interest" effective January 4, 2010, following the December 25, 2009 incident involving a Nigerian national accused of attempting to bomb Northwest Flight 253, a US-bound flight to Detroit, Michigan.

We the Governors of the 36 States of Nigeria denounce in totality any act of terrorism and regret the incident of December 25, 2009 involving a citizen of our country. However, the Forum condemns in strong terms this classification of Nigeria by the US government in its fight against terrorism.

We consider it uncharitable to hold the whole country accountable for the irresponsible behaviour of one of its citizens. This characterization of Nigeria by the TSA because of an isolated incident by a clearly troubled and misguided individual who happens to be a Nigerian is very unfair.

Nigeria has never supported or condoned any act of terrorism. On the contrary, it is heavily involved in peacekeeping around the world and has demonstrated strong commitment and taken practical steps, including legal, institutional and regulatory measures as well as strengthened international cooperation to address the challenges of terrorism. In specific terms, Nigeria has:

1. Ratified several of the universal instruments relating to the prevention and suppression of international terrorism, including terrorist financing convention. Nigeria has also taken measures to implement the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1267 and 1373, including the circulation, monitoring and updating of the UN Consolidated Terrorist 'watch list' to all relevant domestic authorities for the purpose of compliance. Furthermore, Nigeria has signed and ratified the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) and has the institutional, legal and regulatory platforms to implement its measures.
2. Commenced the implementation of the e-Gate at most ports of entry. In addition, the Advance Passenger Information System (APIS) is in full operation as the names of intending passengers are usually verified against the UN Consolidated List ahead of arrival into the country;
3. Appropriate institutional framework, including a functional Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) committed to addressing the challenges of terrorism and terrorism financing. The Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU) is a member of the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units and exchanges information on money laundering and terrorism financing with all Egmont Group members. Efforts at repositioning and creating an independent national FIU is ongoing.
4. A robust suspicious transaction reporting infrastructure anchored by the NFIU. This is aimed at combating terrorism and terrorism financing.
5. Operational Inter Ministerial Committees, including the National Focal Point and Anti Money Laundering/Combating the Financing of Terrorism Inter Ministerial Committee, which were established primarily to address the challenges of terrorism and terrorism financing;
6. Relevant legal framework designed to curb acts of terrorism and terrorism financing. Currently, Nigeria is at the verge of concluding the process for the passage of a comprehensive Anti-Terrorism Bill, Non Conviction Based Asset Forfeiture Bill and a Cyber Crime Bill. This effort which predates the December 25 incident is aimed at comprehensively addressing the challenges of terrorism and are additions to extant legal framework on terrorism/terrorism financing;
7. Strengthened its law enforcement, security and intelligence

agencies, particularly in terms of human resources, infrastructural and capacity development and funding to position them to address the challenges of terrorism and terrorism financing;

8. Undertaken far reaching reforms, particularly in her financial system to avoid the misuse by criminals, including terrorists.

The voluntary engagement of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) by the Nigerian Government in 2006 to address observed weaknesses in Nigeria's anti money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) regime and the subsequent willingness of the country to subject herself to AML/CFT mutual evaluation by the Inter Governmental Action Group Against Money Laundering in West Africa (GIABA) - an FATF-Style Regional Body, are clear demonstration and evidence of Nigeria's commitment to address the problem of terrorism and terrorism financing.

Nigeria has mechanisms designed to foster cooperation with the international community on all matters of terrorism and has never at any point failed to cooperate with any country on matters relating to the combating of terrorism or terrorism financing.

Furthermore, that the father of Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, a respectable Nigerian, reported this matter to the US security authorities long before the incident occurred shows that neither the family nor Nigeria supports Farouk's act or the tendencies he began to manifest just prior to the incident.

Against the backdrop of the foregoing, and in the spirit of the good diplomatic relationship Nigeria has had with the US, we call on the US authorities to reverse this decision on Nigeria. The phrase "country of interest" evokes memories of the unfortunate phrase "person of interest" - a term used to draw negative attention to Atlanta security guard Richard Jewell as a potential suspect in the Atlanta Olympic Park bombing (without a formal accusation). It eventually turned out that Mr. Jewell was innocent. On a national level, 140 million innocent Nigerians are now being tainted by being so labeled "a country of interest".

The Forum believes that the decision of the US authorities is too harsh and has far reaching negative socio-economic and political implications on the States, the citizenry and Nigeria as a nation. It would also detract from the gains of the last decade of democracy in Nigeria.

We seize this opportunity to advise the US authorities to desist from relying on the unpatriotic and subversive comments by fifth columnists in evaluating the state of Nigeria, as they appear to have done in arriving at this decision. The US must come to terms that it too is dealing with acts of terrorism by its own citizens both within its territory and abroad. Do these acts therefore qualify the US authorities or in fact other countries, to declare the US "a country of interest"?

The designation of Nigeria as a "country of interest" is arbitrary, discriminatory and completely inconsistent with the spirit of the US constitution and best practices in international diplomacy. It questions the very basis upon which the founding fathers of the US stood and for which others have admired the country.

In light of the above therefore, the 36 Governors of the federating states in Nigeria under the non-partisan platform of the Nigeria Governors' Forum (NGF), do hereby call on the US authorities to immediately remove Nigeria from the list of "countries of interest" recently published by the US Transport Security Administration (TSA).

This is not the time for unrealistic finger pointing and buck passing. What is required right now is cooperation and concerted efforts by the Comity of Nations to rid the world of the terrorism scourge that currently threatens our very existence.

Signed
CHAIRMAN
Nigeria Governors' Forum

NATIONAL ORIENTATION AGENCY (NOA)

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL



NATIONAL WORKSHOP/EXHIBITION ON WASTE TO WEALTH ORGANISED BY THE NATIONAL ORIENTATION AGENCY AT THE AREWA HOUSE, KADUNA FROM 9TH - 10TH DECEMBER, 2009

COMMUNIQUE

1. PREAMBLE

One of the key objectives of the National Orientation Agency (NOA), is to raise national awareness and mobilize Nigerians to act in ways that promote national development. Pursuant to this objective particularly in the context of the Agency's sustained advocacy for the 7-Point Agenda of the present administration, the Agency organized a two-day Waste to Wealth National Workshop/Exhibition with the theme "Waste Recycling as a Tool for Wealth Creation and Employment Generation" held at the Arewa House, Kaduna, from 9th - 10th December, 2009.

In attendance at the opening ceremony were the Special Guest of Honour, His Excellency, Arc. Mohammed Namadi Sambo, Executive Governor of Kaduna State represented by the Honourable Commissioner for Poverty Alleviation, Mr. Joshua Shekarau Uchissa, the Honourable Minister of Culture, Tourism and National Orientation, Senator Jibrin Bello Gada, represented by the Chairman, Board of the National Orientation Agency, Mallam Yusuf Yakubu; the Director-General, National Orientation Agency, Alh. Idi Mohammed Faruk, MFR.

Also in attendance were the Guest Speaker, Prof. M.K.C. Sridhar of the Niger Delta University, Amasoma, Bayelsa State; the Chairman and members of the NOA Board, Executive Directors and Directors of NOA; representatives of the National Coordinator of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) and the Directors-General of the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency (SMEDAN) and the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) as well as the representative of the President of Environmental Health Officers of Nigeria, Kaduna State Chapter.

Participants at the Workshop/Exhibition included fabricators, processors, waste collectors, existing and potential investors, environmental health officers, waste management experts, cooperative societies and other Non-Governmental Organizations, Microfinance Banks, NYSC members, students, artisans, members of the press and the general public.

2. WORKSHOP/EXHIBITION OBJECTIVES

The National Workshop/Exhibition had the following objectives:

- To raise public awareness on waste recycling as a tool for environmental sanitation, health promotion, wealth creation and employment generation;
- To provoke the creativity of Nigerians in creating wealth and generating employment through waste recycling;
- To showcase diverse waste recycling equipment and products in the country.
- To explore the possibilities of popularizing new and existing technologies using the platform of popular organizations such as cooperative societies, Community Based Organizations (CBOs) among others and
- To recommend appropriate financial support framework for small scale entrepreneurs to invest in waste recycling.

3. PAPERS PRESENTED/EXHIBITION MOUNTED

Papers Presented

- Waste Recycling in Nigeria: An Overview** by Prof. M.K.C. Sridhar, Department of Environmental Health, College of Health Sciences, Niger Delta University, Amasoma, Bayelsa State.
- Fabrication of Waste Recycling Machines: Prospects and Challenges** by Engr. Felix Oiadapo, Dominion Industrial Services Limited, Agege, Lagos.
- Waste Recycling Process: The Practical Experience of An Investor** by Dr. Ibrahim A. Mohammed-Dabo, Department of Chemical Engineering, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
- Starting A Small Scale Waste Recycling Business** by Mr. Olarenwaju Aladeitan, Department of Public and International Law, Faculty of Law, University of Abuja, and
- Financing Small Scale Enterprises** by Mr. Deji Fisho, Managing Director, Fortis Micro Finance Bank Limited, Abuja.

Exhibition Mounted

- Machines for crushing waste plastics and cow horns and shoes.
- Machines for crushing nylon waste into powder form.
- Aluminum products recycled from melted waste aluminum scraps.
- Machines for threshing of maize and soya beans.
- Full polished parboiled rice processing machine for parboiling, drying and milling.
- Two-in-one poultry feeding making machines.
- Fabrication of bending machines for metal work construction.

4. OBSERVATIONS

After exhaustive and objective discussion of papers presented and in-depth appraisal of waste recycling equipment/products exhibited, participants observed that:

- The timing of the Workshop/Exhibition was apt and the theme germane in the light of the alarming unemployment rate and disturbing environmental challenges;
- Waste recycling is a veritable tool for promoting a clean and healthy environment, wealth creation and employment generation;
- Nigeria generates over 50,000 metric tonnes of waste daily but unfortunately waste recycling has remained largely unknown to many Nigerians;
- Nigeria is richly endowed with the raw material, the market and the indigenous technology to sustain any industrial investment;
- Some of the challenges confronting waste recycling include:
 - The campaign for zero waste
 - Low investment level
 - Perceived low quality of recycled products
 - Low patronage of recycling machines and recycled products
 - Lack of basic infrastructure such as power/energy
 - Limited access to long term credit facilities
 - Influx of quacks into the fabrication business
 - High cost of engineering materials.

- Recycling practices in Nigeria are still largely in the informal sector;
- The most difficult and expensive aspect of waste recycling is the process of waste collection and sorting;
- Most scavengers are illiterate, lack appropriate training, exposed to health risks and not properly organized to elicit the desired recognition and support in carrying out their activities.
- Most Nigerians who are aware of recycling and its enormous potentials, lack the requisite financial and technological capabilities to practice effectively;
- As critical and important as waste segregation is in the recycling process, it is not implemented at household and community levels as a necessary policy;
- There is no effective linkage and integration between research institutions, government and the industry in developing indigenous technologies to commercial level;
- Research institutions are not adequately funded.
- Local fabricators are not adequately publicized to attract entrepreneurs who are willing to invest.
- In every sense of the word, there is no waste in waste. Instead, waste is an economic resource.
- The experiences of countries such as China and Malaysia which have made fortune from waste should inspire Nigeria to harness the latent potentials of waste.
- Most small scale businesses had collapsed even before they had taken off because they were not preceded by a sound business plan.
- Partnership is central to the growth and sustainability of any business concern.
- The growth of small scale enterprises is the panacea to the nation's alarming unemployment challenges.
- Most micro-finance institutions provide funds mostly to traders in preference to research endeavours.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Arising from the observations made, Workshop/Exhibition participants unanimously resolved and recommended that:

- The National Orientation Agency, working closely with relevant Government Agencies and other stakeholders

should sustain its advocacy and sensitization at all levels on waste to wealth in order to ensure that Nigerians fully understand and appreciate the health, economic and social benefits of waste recycling.

- A local/international market should be built for recycled products in each of the six geopolitical zones of the country to further stimulate investments in waste recycling.
- Local fabricators should be trained to fabricate machinery required to transform complex waste or waste containing more than one item.
- Government should design and promote policies to encourage waste segregation at source as an integral part of solid waste management. Private Sector involvement should be encouraged to ensure that urban households are provided with designated bins to aid waste segregation.
- Government should establish waste collection centres at every municipal park and supermarkets.
- Waste recycling practices should be formalized and integrated into the formal sector to make it visible and active.
- Funds should be specially provided and channeled to waste recycling entrepreneurs through appropriate financial mechanism that will guarantee both availability and accessibility.
- Governments, particularly at the State and Local Government levels, should encourage the setting up of cottage industries in waste recycling in urban and rural areas.
- There should be a close linkage and an integrated approach between government, research institutions and industries in the development and promotion of waste recycling technologies.
- The National Orientation Agency should provide in each of the six geopolitical zones, a platform for the periodic convergence of all stakeholders in waste management, waste recycling, wealth creation and poverty eradication with a view to stimulating a more active, productive and integrated approach in the development of the waste to wealth sector.
- There should be deliberate effort to publicize and promote locally fabricated machines to encourage local patronage as against the current high rate of importation.
- Small scale investors in waste recycling should be properly trained and equipped to ensure that a well researched business plan precedes any investment. In this regard, they should be encouraged to identify and work closely with relevant Agencies such as SMEDAN, NAPEP, NDE among others.
- There is need to encourage Micro Finance Institutions to invest in technology development through the provision of adequate financing. They should also partner with government to give the small scale enterprises an enabling environment to do business.
- The existing loan guidelines should be modified so that small scale enterprises should be able to repay their loans over a longer period as this will give them greater use of the funds that are available to them. Often times, the moratorium imposed on their loans is too short.

6. APPRECIATION

Workshop participants expressed profound appreciation to the National Orientation Agency for organizing the National Workshop/Exhibition as well as commended the Agency for its consistent drive in publicizing key policies and programmes of government. Participants urged the Agency to sustain its advocacy and public enlightenment on the waste to wealth programme.

Workshop participants also expressed appreciation to the government and good people of Kaduna State, for their keen interest and support of the Workshop/Exhibition.

SIGNED COMMUNIQUE COMMITTEE

- David M. Dogo
- Idang Alibi
- Olobo Tasiah
- Bonaf J. Tagwai
- Ahmed M. Yandeh
- Ngozi Ekeoba
- Kelechi C. Ogbedeagu

DIGEST

How to avoid flu...



L.M.H. HOW: IT IS EASY TO CATCH

THERE'S no modern miracle for avoiding flu, says Lucy Atkins.

The flu season in Britain is peaking right now and it is easy to feel fatalistic about your chances of infection. But experts say that there are many simple ways to flu-proof yourself. The main problem is that most of us do not bother.

Flu has a devilishly efficient transmission mechanism. "It works a bit like an aerosol," says

Professor Steve Field, chair of the Royal College of GPs. "When someone sneezes, droplets fly from the nose and mouth." The virus then enters your respiratory system via "flu receptors" in your mouth, nose and eyes.

Avoiding a sneezer is, therefore, a great idea. However, since droplets from a sneeze can travel the length of a double-decker bus, and a cough can infect anyone within about a metre, this is not

always possible.

Do not be tempted to buy surgical face masks, though. According to the Health Protection Agency, scientific evidence suggests they are not "an effective preventive measure" for flu.

The problem is that the flu virus can also live on surfaces - door handles, lift buttons, phones, a shared towel - for up to two days. You touch an infected surface, touch your own

flu receptors and, bingo! Frequent hand washing is the only way to tackle this effectively (see below).

Studies also show that strengthening your immune system can protect you. It is important to get adequate sleep, stop smoking and reduce stress levels. Eating well also works wonders. "Poor nutrition can compromise the immune system," says Anna Denny, nutrition scientist at the British Nutrition Foundation.

Some foods positively bolster your defences. According to Denny, there is good evidence that selenium (found in Brazil nuts), iron (in red meat and pulses) and zinc (in shellfish, cereals, meat and dairy products) are immune-boosting. Vitamins A (in carrots, butternut squash, orange or yellow peppers), C (citrus fruits, kiwi fruit) and E (in seeds and oils such as sunflower oil) are also useful flu defenders.

Radical weight loss diets may be the norm at this time of year but they could make you more susceptible to illness. One recent study from the US (on mice) found that the rodents on calorie-controlled diets were more likely to get sick than those getting enough food. "Cutting out food groups could weaken the immune system," confirms Denny. It is no good eating badly, then spending a fortune on mega-doses of vitamin C. "Vitamin C is water soluble," explains Denny. "If you take large doses you will simply pee out the excess."

Those who swear by the herb echinacea may be surprised to learn that studies into echinacea and the flu virus are inconclusive. In fact, says Denny, "There is very little evidence to suggest that taking nutritional supplements reduces the risk of picking up infections."

The flu vaccine will give around 70-80 per cent protection, but this is recommended for those at risk of serious complications, such as the over 65s. For the rest of us, it is all about scrubbing your hands, eating vegetables and using disposable hankies. This may sound low-tech, but, as Prof Field says, "such measures are surprisingly effective".

Culled from telegraph.co.uk

Why that 'healthy' juice could be as bad for your teeth as cola

CAROLINE Daniels had always prided herself on the fact she ate a healthy diet, exercised regularly and avoided too much alcohol. On nights out with friends, she'd sip on Coke, rather than wine, and every day she drank fruit juice rather than teas and coffees.

But then, two years ago, she started suffering agonising pains in her teeth.

'Just a sip of cold orange juice would send a sharp pain through my teeth and up towards my gums,' says the 54-year-old assistant shop manager from Epsom, Surrey.

'And cold fizzy drinks were just as bad. The pain was enough to make me wince or even gasp out loud. It got to the point where I'd leave my drink untouched.'

Over the next six months, the pain got steadily worse, until finally Caroline went to see her dentist. He explained she had widespread damage to her tooth enamel. The hard, protective enamel had eroded

away, exposing the dentine - the softer layer underneath.

The dentine naturally has small holes in it leading to the nerves. But now, without the protective enamel, anything hot or cold was able to penetrate through these holes to the nerves, causing pain.

'I asked him how this could be possible,' says Caroline. 'I'd always been so diligent about brushing my teeth after every meal.' Her dentist then explained that her fruit juice and fizzy drink intake - three large glasses of orange juice a day and the occasional Coke - were the problem.

'The sugar and acid in the juices had attacked the enamel of my teeth, and the fizzy drinks would not have helped. I was amazed, because I'd thought I was being so healthy.'

What's more, Caroline was making the situation worse by brushing her teeth immediately after drinking. This is because the enamel is softened for up to an hour

after drinking acidic juices, making it vulnerable to aggressive brushing.

Dental erosion is an increasingly common problem. Unlike decay, where parts of the tooth are attacked by bacteria in the mouth, dental erosion is caused by acid.

There are several causes of erosion - including acid reflux, when natural acids in the stomach flow up the mouth, sometimes eroding the back teeth, and over-brushing with abrasive toothpastes.

However, it is thought that the main culprit is acids in our diet, found in fruit juices and fizzy drinks. Research in the U.S., published last year, found that daily exposure to fruit juice caused even more damage to tooth enamel than some of the controversial home whitening treatments.

'The acid in orange juice is so strong that the tooth is literally washed away,' said the study leader YanFang Ren, an associate professor in the department of dentistry at the University of Rochester. 'It's potentially



NOT so innocent: Sugar and acid in fruit juice attack the enamel in your teeth

Sign Language



What a sweet smile! Please keep off.

Photo location: Beijing, China, by Marie Derdzinski.

Culled from www.signspotting.com

SUDOKU

The Sudoku puzzle consists of a 9x9 square grid made up of smaller 3x3 square grids (regions). The numbers already present within the puzzle are "given"- these are there to start you off. The aim is to complete the puzzle by filling the empty cells. Every digit from 1-9 needs to fit in each row, column and region of 9 squares. Each row, column and region must contain just one instance of each number, 1-9.

64

			6	1		9		
			3	8				
5	1	6		7	4	8		2
9								3
			5		9		1	
2								4
3		7	1	2		5	4	6
				6	8			
			2	5	3			

EASY CROSSWORDS

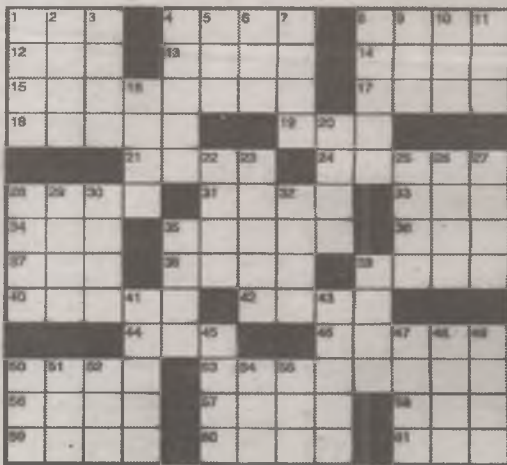
ACROSS

- 1. Johnny _____
- 4. Bank machines (abbr.)
- 8. Lacking humidity
- 12. From _____ Z (2 wds.)
- 13. Fisher of "Mannix"
- 14. Ten cents
- 15. Yankee Doodle's "feather"
- 17. Thick cord
- 18. Site
- 19. Boxing result (abbr.)
- 21. German "mister"
- 24. Hollywood spectacles
- 28. Helen of _____
- 31. Not complex
- 33. Quaker grain
- 34. Bustle
- 35. Adam's son and namesakes
- 36. _____-la-la
- 37. Compass dir.
- 38. Nile queen
- 39. Disney dog
- 40. Busybody
- 42. Sandwich shop
- 44. Tolling insect
- 48. "Love _____ the Ruins"
- 50. Tell all
- 53. Impressionist
- 56. Inmate's

DOWN

- 1. Sloping passage
- 2. And others (2 wds.)
- 3. _____ Raton
- 4. Concur
- 5. Truth, in China
- 6. 1/60 of an hr.
- 7. Cut open
- 8. _____ in the bucket (2 wds.)
- 9. River, in Madrid
- 10. Mischievous child
- 11. Low grade
- 16. Painful
- 20. Florida's islands
- 22. Film holder
- 23. Judged from one to ten
- 25. Very small quantity
- 26. Trey, e.g.
- 27. Halt
- 28. Those others
- 29. Artifice
- 30. Black cat, e.g.
- 32. Flip-flop, e.g.
- 35. Look over
- 38. Green bean
- 41. Dining furniture
- 43. Teen's farewell
- 45. Spat
- 47. Elevator pioneer
- 48. 1916 Lopez hit
- 49. Actor
- 50. Trio following A
- 51. DiCaprio's nickname
- 52. Yodeler's location
- 54. Dogpatch's Daisy _____
- 55. Boise's state (abbr.)

52



Solution to Easy Crosswords

51

U	S	E	S		R	O	B		S	H	A	W		
S	O	U	P		E	V	E		T	O	T	E		
S	T	R	O	L	L	E	R		I	B	M	S		
					R	E	I	N	S		L	O	S	T
A	R	C	T	I	C		E	M	T					
B	A	H	S			E	R	A	S	E	R			
E	G	O		R	A	N	K	S		T	A	M		
		U	P	S	E	T	S			M	A	I	N	
				W	O			B	R	I	L	L	O	
E	M	M	A			M	A	L	E	S				
D	I	O	N			I	C	E	B	E	R	G	S	
E	L	S	E			Z	E	E		R	E	E	K	
N	O	S	E			E	D	D		S	P	R	Y	

Solution to Sudoku 63

2	3	1	4	5	7	6	9	8
4	9	5	6	8	3	7	1	2
7	8	6	9	1	2	5	4	3
5	2	3	7	9	8	1	6	4
9	6	8	1	3	4	2	5	7
1	4	7	5	2	6	3	8	9
8	1	2	3	4	5	9	7	6
6	5	4	2	7	9	8	3	1
6	9	2	4	5	3	7	1	8

News Extra

Earthquake devastates Haiti as thousands feared dead

- Death toll unknown, communication cut off
- 200 feared dead in one hotel collapse alone
- Quake felt in Jamaica, Cuba and Dominican Republic
- Presidential palace in ruins and UN building reduced to rubble
- Red Cross fears up to three million people could be affected
- Strongest earthquake to hit Haiti since 1770

Thousands of people are feared dead in Haiti after a massive 7.0 earthquake devastated one of the world's poorest countries.

Bloodstained bodies lay strewn in the street of the capital, Port-au-Prince, as the full horror of the disaster began to emerge in the early hours of yesterday.

Eyewitnesses said gravely injured Haitians were crying out from the rubble, pleading for doctors as night fell. With the country in chaos and facing still more damage from a series of 30 aftershocks, their cries went mostly unheard.

One hotel collapse in Port-au-Prince is feared to have claimed the lives of more than 200 people.

The destruction is said to be staggering, even in an impoverished nation accustomed to tragedy and disaster. The National Palace is in ruins, a major hospital crumbled and tens of thousands of people homeless.

The headquarters of the United Nations peacekeeping mission also collapsed and a large number of staff in the five-storey building are believed to have been killed.

Up to 250 people normally work at the UN headquarters and none had been rescued by late last night. It was unclear how many people were in their offices when the earthquake hit.

With communications disrupted, it may be days before the full death toll is known. The pictures tell a harrowing story.

But Karel Zelenka, a Catholic Relief Services representative in Port-au-Prince, told American colleagues that 'there must be thousands of people dead.'

The quake, the most powerful in the region for 200 years, was centred about ten miles west of the Haitian capital, a city of two million people, many of them living in flimsy shanty slums.

It struck at 4.53pm Tuesday and was followed by as many as thirteen aftershocks, one of them as strong as 5.9 on the Richter scale, a sizeable earthquake in its own right. The centre was also relatively shallow, less than ten miles below ground, raising the risk of damage.

Survivors held hands and sung hymns as they waited for help to come. But many people spent the night fighting for their lives.

In Washington, President Obama pledged to send aid. US



THE earthquake caused widespread destruction including the collapse of major roads



RESIDENTS sleep in the streets of Port-au-Prince which has been hit by more than 30 aftershocks



TWO men help a woman freed from rubble in Haiti

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton added: 'We will be providing both civilian and military disaster relief and humanitarian assistance.'

The British government was urgently seeking information about the scale of the catastrophe.

'We continue to monitor the situation and are urgently seeking information about the devastation caused by the quake and whether any British nationals have been affected,' said a Foreign Office spokesman.

US State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley said in Washington that US Embassy personnel were 'literally in the dark' after power failed.

'They reported structures down. They reported a lot of walls down. They did see a number of bodies in the street and on the side-

walk that had been hit by debris. So clearly, there's going to be serious loss of life in this,' he said.

With phones down, some of the only communication came from social media such as Twitter. Richard Morse, a well-known musician who manages the famed Olafson Hotel, kept up a stream of dispatches on the aftershocks and damage reports.

The news, based mostly on second-hand reports and photos, was disturbing, with people screaming in fear and roads blocked with debris. Belair, a slum even in the best of times, was said to be 'a broken mess.'

Tuesday's quake was felt in the Dominican Republic, which shares a border with Haiti on the island of Hispaniola, and some panicked residents in the capital

of Santo Domingo fled from their shaking homes. But no major damage was reported there.

In eastern Cuba, houses shook but there were also no reports of significant damage.



THE earthquake epicentre was ten miles outside Port-au-Prince, the Haitian capital

News Extra

The Obamas force two firms to pull advertising campaigns using their image

Two American companies have been forced to pull the plug on advertising campaigns that used images of the President and First Lady without White House permission.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals used Michelle Obama's first official White House portrait in an anti-fur ad campaign with the slogan 'fur-free and fabulous!'

The campaign also shows presenter Oprah Winfrey, singer Carrie Underwood and supermodel Tyra Banks.

Meanwhile, a giant billboard of Barack Obama in Times Square, New York, will also be removed.

Weatherproof Garment Co also said it will take down the image that shows the President wearing one of its coats.

The ad, which shows the president during a visit to the Great Wall of China, went up without Obama's permission, clashing with a White House policy disallowing use of the president's image or likeness for commercial purposes.

'We made the commitment to the White House, and we are going to take it down even though it's a very grey area and we were advised by a lot of people to leave it up,' company President Freddie Stollmack said.

'In this case, discretion is the better part of valor,' he said. 'We don't want to alienate the White House and win the battle and lose the war.'



NOT authorized: The image of Michelle Obama (second left) is in fact her first official White House portrait

The ad won't come down immediately. Stollmack said a new advertisement had to be created first.

Ingrid Newkirk, president of

PETA, was equally reluctant. She said it was because she knew the First Lady could not officially endorse an anti-fur campaign advert.

However, PETA did insist it had used her image in its Washington advertising campaign based on White House confirmation that she does not wear fur.

It is the first time PETA have upset the wife of a world leader. In June 2009 the group sent a letter to Mrs Sarkozy accusing her of wearing what appeared to be fur during public appearances.

The furious former model wrote: 'I do not wear, buy or own fur.'

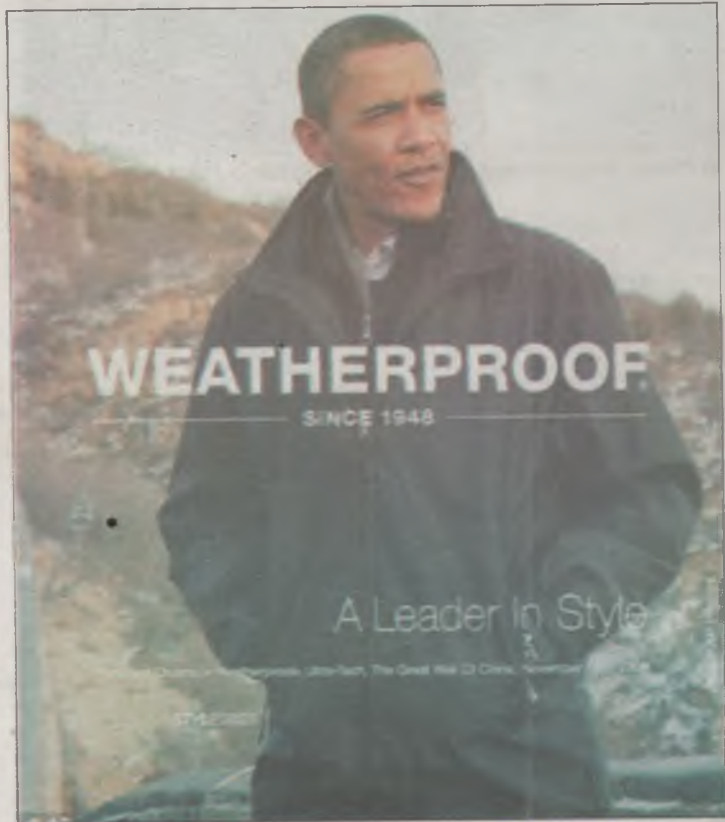
'Every designer who kindly lends me clothes for public

Weatherproof Garment Co also said it will take down the image that shows the President wearing one of its coats

appearances can tell you that I do not accept to wear fur pieces, even when they're only a small part of the outfit.'

PETA also urged the White House to take a stand against the Ringling Bros. circus, which last week debuted its newest performing elephant, 'Baby Barack'.

PETA says circus elephants are abused but Feld Entertainment, which owns the circus, says its elephants are well cared for and using the name Barack is intended as an honor.



CLOTHING company Weatherproof used an image of President Obama in front of the Great Wall of China in a Times Square billboard

News Extra



A woman hurt in the face during riots last week in Rosarno, Italy, joined other residents Monday in a march, contesting suggestions they are racist.

Were the mafia behind Italy's migrant riots?

The official figures show there are 1,600 agricultural workers in this town, Rosarno, all but 36 of them Italians. The reality, exposed by the raw and violent riots in Rosarno last week, was far different. Some 1,200 foreigners, most of them Africans, earned about \$30 a day under the table picking oranges and clementines. Now that the town is largely cleared of foreign labour, the fruit remains on the trees.

In other places, \$30 is not a living wage. But this is one of the poorest parts of Italy, and many local people do not earn much more, even if most will not pick fruit.

"Who is taking care of us?" asked Maria Amato, 39, a homemaker. "Until days ago, we didn't exist."



DEMOGRAPHIC reports hide just some of the truth about Rosarno.

In a broad sense, the worst immigrant rioting ever seen in Italy — shocking here not only because of the anger of migrants, some of whom clashed with local residents, but also for the attacks on them by townspeople — cuts to the heart of the nation's difficult evolution from a place of emigrants to one of immigrants.

But it is also a story fixed to this place. The economy is so weak here that locals and immigrants are competitors. In a town where people are reluctant to reveal their last names and often their first, a mysterious element complicates any full understanding of the riots: the ongoing strength of the Calabrian Mafia, or 'Ndrangheta, which has deep roots in agriculture. The son of a local organized crime boss was arrested and accused of wounding a policeman in the riots, suggesting that the mafia may have orchestrated the locals' response to the immigrants' violence.

"It's a very, very complicated situation," said Francesco Campolo, a police prefect who is one of three interim commissioners appointed by the region to govern Rosarno since the arrest last year of the mayor, who was charged with having organized crime ties.

This week, the absence of the immigrants, 1,200 of whom were whisked by bus and train to detention centers over the weekend, was clear. On Tuesday, firefighters demolished a former factory that served as seasonal housing for many migrants. It stood, just barely, a long roofless space of tin

shacks, dirty mattresses, hand-me-down clothes, mud and garbage.

Authorities are investigating these central questions: How did the protests become so violent? Who, if anyone, orchestrated the citizens' retaliation? And who benefits from the immigrants' temporary or perhaps permanent disappearance from the area?

Alberto Cisterna, who over-

sees Calabria at Italy's National Anti-Mafia Commission in Rome, called Rosarno the Corleone of Calabria, where clans of the 'Ndrangheta exert "extraordinary control."

Official estimates indicate that the 'Ndrangheta did 44 billion euros, or more than \$60 billion, in 2008, in international drug and arms trafficking, public works fraud, usury and prostitution.

Many authorities say that in a town where the 'Ndrangheta is

strong, the presence of the immigrant workers must have been welcome, or at least convenient.

They note that agriculture is not profitable if transportation and labor costs are high and producers pay about 75 cents for a carton of fruit.

In any case, most agricultural outfits may have Italians on the official rolls, but they pay migrant workers under the table to harvest the fruit — if it is harvested. For years state authorities have not cracked down on the arrangement.

Calabria, like other southern Italian regions rich in agriculture, has long benefited from hefty European Union agricultural subsidies. To prevent fraud in which small acreage yielded puzzlingly large harvests, in 2007 the European Union changed its rules to base subsidies on the number of hectares planted rather than the tons produced.

The result, some authorities hypothesize, is that it may be more lucrative for some Calabrian landowners to let their harvests rot on the tree and collect the subsidies than to pay pickers. In theory, the migrants may have become less useful and, possibly, less tolerated.

Still, over nearly two decades, their presence had become part of the fabric of Rosarno, whose 16,000 residents included an estimated 2,500 immigrants. This week some local shops were hurting for the migrants' business.

"Before Christmas I baked a whole batch of sandwich rolls just for them," said Letizia Conducci as she worked the counter at her family's bakery.

Like many Rosarno residents, she vehemently defended what the townspeople had done over the years to help the migrant workers and was outraged that they had wounded residents. "Ninety-nine percent of us helped them," she said. And in the riots, she said, "they destroyed the town."



ITALIAN police and carabinieri officers in riot gear deal with a group of protesters

Labour report

HOS calls for review of promotion guidelines for civil servants

By Francis Okeke

THE Head of the Civil Service of the Federation Mr. Stephen Oronsaye has said that there is an urgent need for relevant agencies of governments to review the guidelines for promotions in the civil service.

Oronsaye stated this at the end of a 2-day Forum for the review of "training modules for capacity building" in the civil service held in Abuja.

"Successful participation in appropriate training programmes", he said, should be a prerequisite for the presentation of officers for promotion examination at all cadres and levels.

To facilitate this new move in the Federal Civil Service, the Head of Service said that his Office intends to put a memorandum before the Federal Executive Council and seek approval to enable the critical stakeholders modify their operating guidelines

accordingly.

He assured participants at the Forum that the series of mandatory training programmes for officers of Grade Level 8 to 16 which began in November 2009 will continue but with the suggested changes in the modules.

The Forum, an initiative of the Office of the Head of the Civil Service, was attended by stakeholders from the Federal and State governments, the Management Development Institutes and

other invited manpower development experts from the academia and the private sector.

Among the conclusions and suggestions made at Forum was the need to include modules for capacity development of the junior cadre of officers in the public service, who are invariably involved in the implementation of government policies and programmes.

Other suggestions made include the need to design "tar-

geted skills-building short-term courses; development of competency model for the public service based on appropriate professional skills required to run government business matched to levels, functions potentials and the changing role of government to enable more systematic training programming and resourcing."

Forum also suggested that the courses are to be calibrated across levels and phased such that it fits the career progression of officers.

Job creation: NDE and the 4, 790 jobs for Jan-March 2010

By Francis Okeke

OVER the years, the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) has evolved as a one stop shop for employment for both the lettered and the unlettered as well as the able bodied and the physically challenged.

It serves different purposes for different groups. Unemployed graduates, who have waited so long unsuccessfully for white collar jobs, turn to the NDE where they are equipped with self employment and entrepreneurial skills. These skills enable them utilise innate abilities they never knew they possessed.

NDE's Director General Malam Abubakar Mohammed has consistently said that graduates who benefited from the special graduate attachment programmes always regretted not embracing the opportunities presented by the NDE schemes earlier than when they did.

Malam Mohammed said that in Abuja for instance, under the graduate attachment scheme, among other trainings, beneficiaries are attached to various ministries and parastatals that have interest in them where they provide labour for a specified period of time and at the end of it, if any of the organisations find them fit, they take them up." He said graduates are also trained on a programme called "Start your own business" after which they are attached to various outlets. At the end of the attachment, they write a feasibility study for any business of their choice and some of their collaborators especially banks assist with loans to fund such businesses.

For the uneducated and secondary school leavers as well as vulnerable people such as the disabled and people living with HIV/AIDs, there are 105 different types of skills and trades to pick from and lift them out of the labour market and poverty.

Last year, during the commissioning ceremony of skills acquisition centres in Edo State, NDE's DG said in Benin City, the state capital that the commissioning was part of NDE's contribution to actualising the various developmental aspirations of the nation.

According to him, the "training is designed to consolidate NDE's effort to sustain employment generation interventions and poverty reduction endeavours in selected pilot locations in order to remove



DIRECTOR General, NDE Malam Abubakar Mohammed

idle hands from the streets by providing them with marketable skills for self employment."

He added that "skills acquisition is a major instrument of empowering our citizens to access decent and productive employment to continue to actively participate in the socio-economic development of our dear country."

As the new year progresses, the NDE in a recent statement said it is set to create Four Thousand, Seven Hundred and Ninety (4,790) jobs for various categories of the unemployed nationwide in the first quarter of this year.

The statement signed by NDE's Assistant Director of Information and Public Relations Barrister Nnamdi Asomugha said the "this effort is designed to inject quickly into the economy fresh jobs in order to reduce the scourge of mass-unemployment in the country within the first quarter of this year.

This is part of the Directorate's implementation of its statutory mandate under the 2009 supplementary budget."

Asomugha said "the cycle of the training and resettlement would be concluded on or before March 31st 2010. Registration of intending beneficiaries shall commence on Friday 15th January 2010." He explained that the work plan for the realization of the initiative will be implemented through three distinct schemes targeted at graduates of tertiary institutions, unemployed youths, the vulnerable group (like the physically challenged, widows, women etc) as well as school leavers.

He noted that under the "Skills Training Scheme," graduates of tertiary institutions totalling 1,850 will be recruited trained and resettled at the rate of 50 persons per state and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja in special skills like Information Computer Technology (ICT), Social and Technical

Skills that are relevant to the current labour market needs of the country.

A total of 8 specialized ICT skills ranging from Computer Networking to Desktop publishing will be offered as well as social and Technical skills like Events Management and Autotronics among others. All the trainees will be fully resettled immediately the training is completed to enable them start their own businesses, the statement added.

It further stated that under the "Rural Employment Promotion" initiative, the NDE will resettle 1,090 trainees of its Rural Agricultural Development Training Scheme (RADTS) drawn from the 36 states and FCT at the rate of 10 trainees per Senatorial zone. Graduates of the training scheme are expected to set up various small scale livestock production businesses using their resettlement packages.

Through this initiative, the NDE intends to encourage young school leavers and graduates of tertiary institutions as well as other interested persons to take to farming as a viable means of livelihood, boost food production and create the next generation of farmers who will take over from the aging ones.

Another group made up of 1,850 persons will be recruited, trained and subsequently resettled under the Employment and Wealth Creation component of the intervention. At the rate of 50 participants per state and FCT, this scheme is targeted at unemployed women and other persons within the vulnerable group like the physically challenged, persons living with HIV/AIDS Commercial Sex workers etc.

These set of trainees will benefit from domestic skills such as Fashion design, Hair Dressing, Catering, Confectionery etc and immediate resettlement packages to enable them become self-employed.

The opportunities provided by NDE's intervention especially for unemployed graduates is enormous as it will reduce the indignities of begging friends and relatives for even the most basic essential needs as such graduates are forced to do.

Embracing and acquiring skills as provided by the NDE by women will help reduce the rate of crime and prostitution in the society as well as lead to an improvement in living standards of families across the country.

DAILY TRUST

EDUCATION

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Dukku tasks NYSC on promotion of adult literacy programme

By Abdullahi M. Gulloma

MINISTER of State for Education Hajija Aishatu Jibril Dukku has called on the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) and other stakeholders to sustain collaboration with the Education Ministry in order to scale up adult literacy programme towards the achievement of Education for All (EFA) goals.

Speaking at a meeting with the Director-General of NYSC Brigadier General Maharazu Tsiga in Abuja yesterday, the minister said

partnership with the NYSC over the years in this regard has been yielding very remarkable result.

She said there was the need for the NYSC to sustain its supportive roles on Mass Literacy delivery which is the most neglected EFA goals so that the over 26 million Nigerian adult illiterates will be trained.

"It is very important to get these Nigerians literate because the year 2015 is just around the corner, and we need to work hard towards achieving the Education For All (EFA) goals

and the Millennium Development Goals by the 2015," she said.

It would be recalled that the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education Commission signed a memorandum of understanding with the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) on August 21, 1997, to promote adult literacy programmes in the country.

In his remarks, Director-General of NYSC Brigadier Marharazu Tsiga promised that the co-operation of NYSC on the programme

would be sustained.

According to him, 80 percent corp members posted to states are deployed to teach in schools, adding that in Rivers, Cross River and Benue States 100 percent of the corp members are deployed to schools.

The NYSC Director-General also dismissed calls by some individuals for the scrapping of the scheme, saying that such calls were being made out of ignorance of what the corp members are doing on the field, especially in the rural communities.

On his part, the Executive Sec-

retary of Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) Dr Ahmed Modibbo said states should be advised to key into the new collaboration by enhancing the allowances of corp members teaching in their states.

Speaking at the meeting, the Executive Secretary of Nigerian Education Research and Development Commission (NERDC) Dr. Godswill Obioma said some corp members would be required in NERDC to serve as research assistants.

Akpata is new rector of Idah polytechnic

By Abdullahi M. Gulloma

PRESIDENT Umaru Musa Yar'adua has approved the appointment of Mr Mathew Itopa Akpata as the substantive Rector of Federal Polytechnic, Idah, Kogi State.

This was contained in letter signed by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education Professor Oladapo A. Afolabi.

The appointment which takes effect from December 23, 2009, is for a period of four years in the first instance and renewable for another four years after the first tenure. Until his confirmation, Mr. Akpata was the acting rector of the polytechnic since June 2008.

Born on June 20, 1958, Mr. Akpata, who hails from Oboroke-Ihima in Okehi Local Government of Kogi State, started his formal education at R.C.M Primary School, Oboroke-Ihima in 1963.

He went to Lennon Memorial College, Ageva-Okene, from 1972 to 1976,

and he attended Bayero University where he got a Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Chemistry with 2nd class upper division from 1976 to 1981. In 1988, he had his masters degree in Chemistry from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Mr. Akpata is the 6th rector of the polytechnic which was established in 1977. He joined the services of the polytechnic in 1982 as Lecturer III and rose to become Chief Lecturer, Head of Department of Science Laboratory Technology from 1999 to 2003, Dean of School of Technology from 2001 to 2003 and Deputy Rector in June, 2005.



MR Mathew Itopa Akpata

Minister inaugurates e-learning committees

By Abdullahi M. Gulloma

EDUCATION Minister Dr Sam Egwu has set up two committees to facilitate the implementation of e-learning initiatives approved by President Umaru Musa Yar'adua.

The two committees are the Policy Coordination Committee on e-Learning

Initiatives and the Implementation Committee on e-Learning Initiatives.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Dr Egwu said the e-learning initiative is aimed at repositioning the education sector and enable it meet global standards and respond to the needs of the society.



GOVERNOR Babangida Aliyu of Niger State and the Minister of Education Dr Sam Egwu at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Principals of Federal Unity Colleges in Minna, Niger State.

Group seeks review of Arabic, Islamic studies teaching method

From Zakariyya Adaramola, Lagos

A Lagos-based group, Kiddies Companion Foundation (KCF), yesterday said the current approach being used by most Nigerian Arabic and Islamic studies teachers to teach both subjects needed a reappraisal and improvement.

KCF's training coordinator Malam Abdulkabir Tijani Al-aswad told *Daily Trust* in Lagos yesterday that those teaching Arabic and Islamic studies in both western and traditional almajiri schools are still using old method of teaching which makes pupils loathe the subjects.

He said the group recently began to change that old orientation by recruiting 10 select graduates of traditional Islamic schools known as Madrasa and properly trained

them on the new method of teaching Arabic and Islamic studies.

He said the 10 trained graduates would soon be sent to teach in some primary and secondary schools in Lagos.

"The fact that teaching of Islamic education in Nigerian schools needs a reappraisal and improvement cannot be overemphasised. As we all know, the madrasa or the almajirai schools are graduating students who do not know the modern approach to use in teaching Islamic studies.

"There is need for teachers of Arabic and Islamic studies to teach based on the modern educational approach as this will make the learning of Arabic easy for Nigerians and make them speak Arabic as they speak English," he said.

PLSG says teachers strike is unfair

From Ahmed Mohammed, Jos

PLATEAU State Government has described the strike embarked upon by the Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) which affects primary and secondary schools in the state as unfair.

The state Commissioner for Women Affairs Mrs Serah Yusuf told journalist in Jos yesterday that "it's sad that Plateau teachers embarked on another strike at a crucial time when the state government is mak-

ing effort to implement the agreement reached with the NUT."

She said teachers must not reject verification exercise aimed at flushing unqualified teachers, adding that it is the responsibility of the state government to verify teachers that are qualified.

According to her, the state is backward in education because of the number of unqualified teachers that teach in primary schools, hence the need for the screening exercise.

CAMPUS ROUNDUP

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HOTLINE: 08035910371

UniJos to mobilise 2471 corps members

From Musliudeen Adebayo, UniJos

THE University of Jos will mobilise 2471 graduates for the 2010 'Batch A' programme of the National Youth Service Corps, Mr D.K. Chuga of the university's Directorate of Student's Affairs has said.

Mr Chuga said this in a statement issued on behalf of the Dean of Students Affairs

Professor Elizabeth Abama.

The statement instructed all prospective corps members to check their names and ensure that they register online for the NYSC programme.

It will be recalled that the prospective corps members finished their exams in April 2009 but could not be mobilised for the September and November batches

because of the industrial action embarked upon by the university lecturers.

Bello Sadiq a graduate from the Faculty of Social Sciences said, "I thank God and the directorate for the quick release of the list. Now those of us who have been waiting for the list will have rest of mind."

Also, Maroph Olatunde of the Faculty of Natural Sciences said, "We thank God,

we were to be mobilised in September last but they couldn't do it. I believe God's time is the best."

In another development, the Faculty of Medical Sciences has concluded plans to conduct this year's induction ceremony of its new members. The induction of new doctors is scheduled to take place today, Thursday, January 14, 2010.



MINISTER of FCT, Senator Adamu Aliero (second right), Minister of State for FCT Chief Chuka Odom (second left), Executive Secretary of FCDA Engineer Sani Alhassan (left) and the Secretary of FCT Health and Human Resources Mrs. Precious Gbeneol

Dons donate N5m medical equipment to Unilorin

TWO physicians, Dr Tunde Odutoye and Dr Jeroen Kerrebijn have donated medical equipment to the University of Ilorin. They made the donation during a recent Head and Neck Dissection Course organised by the ENT Department of the University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital in conjunction with St. George's Hospital, University of London and Erasmus Medical Centre, University Hospital, Rotterdam.

The equipment donated, estimated to be more than N5 million include Zeiss Operating Microscope, Diagnostic Clinical Audiometer and 2-point Electric Powered Heinz Otoscopes.

After being received by the Provost of the College of Health Sciences Professor B. J. Bojuwoye, who

led the delegation to the Vice-Chancellor Professor Is-haq Oloyede, the team was led on a visit of the ENT Department Theatre and Radiology Department on the new site of the University of Ilorin Teaching Hospital.

It was there that the dons were treated to a presentation on "Patterns of Head and Neck Cancers in Ilorin, Nigeria" by Dr S.O. Adebola and Dr Idris.

Dr Tunde Odutoye is a Consultant Ear, Nose, Throat (ENT) Head and Neck Surgeon at the St. George's Hospital, University of London while Dr Jeroen Kerrebijn is a Consultant Head and Neck Surgeon and Chief of the Division of Head and Neck Surgical Oncology at Erasmus University Hospital, Rotterdam, Netherlands.

Afe Babalola Varsity commences academic activities

THE Executive Secretary of National Universities Commission (NUC) Professor Julius A. Okojie visited the Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti (ABUAD) as the university which was recently licensed by the NUC prepared to commence academic activities.

During the visit, Professor Okojie interacted with some of the pioneer students and inspected the physical and instructional facilities on the campus to ensure that they complied with the required standard.

Professor Okojie while expressing satisfaction with the standard of facilities on the ground commended the founder of the university Chief Afe Babalola (SAN) for establishing a university capable of producing highly skilled and socially relevant

graduates capable of applying scientific knowledge for the resolution of social problems.

He described Chief Babalola, as a self made man and a detribalized Nigerian who had contributed immensely to the development and particularly to the Nigerian University System.

During the visit, Professor Okojie addressed some staff and students of the university and urged the staff to be proud as the pioneer members of staff of the great university through hard work and total commitment to their duties. To the students, he advised them to be well behaved by shunning those social vices that will negatively affect their academic pursuit.

He also seized the opportunity

to interview the principal officers employed for the university to ascertain their suitability for the respective positions. At the interview session, he advised the university to take full advantage of all relevant training and development programmes available to keep the principal officers abreast of emerging trends in university management.

In his welcome address, Chief Afe Babalola expressed gratitude to God for granting him such wisdom that resulted in the establishment of a university that would be helpful in uplifting university education in Nigeria.

He thanked the Executive Secretary of NUC for his supportive role which had made the university to attain its present enviable status.

Unilorin steps up WAUG hosting plans

AS the University of Ilorin prepares to host the 13th edition of the West African University Games (WAUG) next year, the management of the university has increased the tenor of its readiness to make the event a most memorable experience for all the participants and a pride to the nation.

While management continues to work round the clock in getting at all it takes to host the games ready, was learnt that a Local Organising

Committee would soon be inaugurated by the university. The committee will implement the ground work that had been done by the Steering Committee on the games.

The West African University Games was inaugurated in 1964 after a meeting of all West African Universities in Ibadan with the objective of promoting unity among the students of West African universities and enhancing sports development in the region.

Institutions that have hosted WAUG are the University of Ibadan (1965), University of Ghana (1967), University of Ibadan (1969), University of Lagos (1971), University of Liberia (1973), University of Ife (1977), Universite du Cote d'Ivoire (1981), Universite du Ouagadougou (1989), University of Benin (1995), Universite du Calavi, Cotounou (1999), Universite du Ouagadougou (2003) and the University of Ghana (2008).

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DAILY TRUST

EDUCATION

Hitachi, Green Circle partner schools on interactive learning

From Chris Agabi, Lagos

HITACHI Software, a subsidiary of the Hitachi group in conjunction with Green Circle Network Africa is partnering Nigerian universities, polytechnics and post primary schools on interactive learning solutions.

The partnership programme tagged "Hitachi-Green Circle for Excellence" seeks to provide platforms to share best practices and benchmark new solutions in teaching and learning in Nigeria and other

parts of Africa to bridge the knowledge gap between the developed and developing nations.

Briefing journalists in Lagos, the managing director and Chief executive officer of Green Circle Network Africa, Mr. Josh Ladipo Oke said the challenge of transforming our educational system is not only on what we are teaching but more importantly how we teach and learn.

"A fully interactive multimedia environment has proven to stimulate and enhance learning by increasing attention span and

fast track clear understanding of issues," he said.

He said the initiative targets the use of technology to stimulate the appetite to learn and inspire students, adding that with the interactive learning solutions and interactive classrooms, students can access resources in over 1000 Hitachi partner institutions across the world.

Mr Oke said the institutions that signed will benefit from grants and funds for capacity building and will get access to global education gateway and train-

ing grants, stressing that the initiative is open to all educational institutions that demonstrate willingness by building ICT infrastructure with at least 30 interactive classrooms.

He said the schools that have deployed the interactive learning include University of Ibadan, Adekunle Ajasin University, University of Technology Minna, University of Nigeria Nsukka, Federal Polytechnic Ibadan, Adamawa State University, National Open University, Premiere Academy and Life Forte School, Ibadan.

FG inaugurates advisory committee on open, distance learning

By Abdullahi M. Gulloma

A national Advisory Committee on Open and Distance Learning (ODL) was inaugurated by the Federal Government to advise government on the best practice of open and distance learning and strengthen the capacity of existing institutions providing ODL.

Inaugurating the committee in Abuja, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education Professor Oladapo Afolabi said the committee is also expected to liaise with existing educational regulatory bodies and institutions offering open and distance education programmes to ensure maintenance of standards.

He said the inauguration of the committee was in compliance with the National Policy on Open and Distance Education, stressing that distance education can make education accessible to all.

The 35-member committee is chaired by a renowned educationist Professor Gabriel Afolabi Ojo and has 90 days within which to submit its report.

Students visit orphanage centre, donate foodstuff

By Maureen Onochie

THE management and students of the Premiere Academy yesterday presented gifts such as bags of rice, toiletries and baby milk to motherless children at the City Refuge Orphanage, Maitama.

Principal of the school, Mr Peter Mcleod who led the team to the orphanage centre, said it was very important to take children to such places so that they can share love with their fellow children who are in need.



STUDENTS and staff of Premiere Academy College during their visit to the City of Refuge Orphanage, Maitama, Abuja.

Don tasks northern governors on modernisation of Quranic schools

DR Usman Mohammed of the University of Abuja has advised northern state governments to introduce institutional reforms to modernise the Quranic (almajirai) school system.

"The almajirai (Quranic education pupils) have always been the major players in most religious riots as witnessed recently in the Boko Haram and Kala kato violence in Maiduguri and Bauchi states. At most times, they are those that are either killed or arrested during and after such riots and it is high time we introduced reforms that will transform the pupils into societal and religious assets," he said.

Dr Mohammed, a teacher of International Affairs told the News Agency of Nigeria that the system needs urgent

reforms because the pupils were being exploited and turned into "underage labourers."

"The system, as it is at the moment, encourages the abuse of children by the Malams (teachers) as they do jobs that are above their ages. The children are sent to far distances and left to survive on their own; that makes them very vulnerable. Sometimes they go out to beg and get money for the teachers. This is wrong," he said.

Noting that begging was not allowed in Islam, he said that the pupils' resort to begging to survive was not only out of tune with Islam but reduced them to a social menace.

To modernise the schools, he suggested that Quranic education be merged with western education to enable the children

to appreciate both systems.

"When you combine both types of education, you demystify the fear of boko (western education) as well as the phobia associated with not knowing what western education means. It is such fear that culminated into the war against western education in the Boko Haram violence of last year," he said.

He observed that the hostility against western education would be minimised with the exposure to it, as the pupils would know that it was not harmful to them.

He also called for drastic steps that would reduce poverty in the north, noting that such was usually responsible for the availability of idle hands usually recruited to cause violence.

"The almajirais are poor, so it follows that if violence is predicated on poverty, they will be vulnerable to being recruited to fight over every trivial issue."

Dr Mohammed also called for constant dialogue among religious groups, saying that they should all have one resolve to reject violence and terrorism and disown those involved in it.

"Once someone knows that he will be disowned by all religious groups if he is engaged in terrorism, he will not involve himself in such practice," he said.

He advised religious, community and political leaders to work toward peaceful co-existence, adding that government should always pursue policies that would encourage people of various interests to live together.

CITY NEWS



HOTLINES: 0803-3493-462 & 0703-8927-513

email: citynews@dailytrust.com

News about your capital city

90-yr-old man sues lady for refusing marriage

By Romoke W. Ahmad

A 90-year-old man has dragged a 24-year-old lady to court for refusing to marry him as agreed from the inception of their relationship.

The elderly man asked the court to retrieve every property he bought for the lady during the courtship period.

The man, Usman Garkuwa of Masaka Nasarawa, told an Abuja Upper Area court recently that he wants every penny spent on the lady paid back; adding that from

his calculation everything spent amounts to about N345,600.

He said the lady, Aishatu Ibrahim, agreed to the union and that was why he bought everything she requested.

"When I first approached her, she agreed to my marriage proposal and started demanding for things from me, which I didn't hesitate to give her," he lamented.

He said the lady requested for items like fridge, stabilizer, DVD, etc, adding that he bought them for her in the trust that she will marry him.

He further told the court that the girl did not tell him that she was not going to marry him and when he noticed her behaviour towards the relationship, he went to her village, Giza in Nasarawa State to see her relations, who revealed to him that it was the mother who had been discouraging her from getting serious with him.

According to him, "her mother is the genesis of our problem because she denied ever knowing me before now and refuses to collect anything from me as my mother-in-law because it is now

she realizes that I am too old to be her daughter's husband".

Responding to the allegations, Aishatu admitted having a relationship with the man but said there was never a marriage agreement between them because she later discovered that the man charmed her to have an affair with him.

"I knew him when I had rashes on my body and we went to him for the cure because he is an herbalist. So from there, he started giving me love charms so that I can marry him and although I had a

relationship with him but everything he bought for me are in the name of the affair between us," she said.

Although Aisha initially said she did not collect anything from the man, she later succumbed when the elderly man presented witnesses.

Presiding Judge, Issa Alhaji Yahaya ordered that the property bought by the elderly man for Aisha be brought to court at the next adjournment and then adjourned the case to January 21, 2010 for further hearing.

'Arrest NURTW members selling police game stickers'

By Abubakar Yakubu

THE President of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW), Dr Gidado Hamman, Tuesday called on the police to arrest any NURTW member still selling stickers of the cancelled West Africa Police Games that was to hold last year.

Hamman was reacting to a protest by officials of the Self Employed Commercial Drivers Association (SECDA) to the police high command, where they complained that SECDA drivers are daily harassed and forced to purchase the stickers at N10,000 by NURTW officials at Area 1 Garage.

The NURTW boss, who faulted the statement of the police image maker that the police was not aware of the sticker, revealed that the police invited NURTW to partner with her in order to raise enough fund to host the sporting event.

He said during the discussion held between the police and NURTW officials, it was decided that stickers instead of receipt be printed and a consultant (Oval Integrated Service Limited) appointed by the police to coordinate the affairs of the collection.

According to him, after the stickers were printed once, they re-distributed to all NURTW branches, all

over the country to be sold to members at N200.

"An account with Zenith Bank was opened for that purpose was opened and after the game was cancelled we ordered that sales be stopped three months ago," he added.

Hamman said the last money paid in by Katsina State was made on October 30, 2009 that brought the total sum of the money in the account to N19,831,337.

He said letters were written to all state branches of the union to return the unsold stickers, adding that the branches have been responding to the order.

The union president also lamented that the land application NURTW submitted to the Federal Capital Development Authority to process in 2003 for a driving school as well as staff quarters is yet to be approved.

He informed the police to also arrest thugs that parade themselves as NURTW members and said the union's membership card is renewed every year with only authentic members having the one for 2010.

"We don't condone the activities of thuggery and also deny the police statement that our members intend rig the election in Anambra State as we do not have members in the state based on a court order," he added.



HAGGLING over transport fare at Jabi Park recently.

PIC: KENNEDY EGBONODJE

Youth flogged 12 strokes for theft

By Foluke Ojomu

A 13-year-old boy, Chionso Okafor, was yesterday ordered to be caned 12 strokes by an Abuja magistrate court for stealing electronic items belonging to one Sanusi Babatunde.

The police prosecutor had told the court that the

offence was committed on January 8, 2010 at Saburi Village.

He said the accused conspired with one Ado Shaibu and Onyedika James, who are now at large to break into the house of the victim and make away with the items valued at N35,000, thereby

committing offences punishable under Sections 79, 350 and 287 of the Penal Code Law.

When the charges were read to the accused, he pleaded guilty and begged for leniency.

The prosecutor urged the court to flog him summarily

under Section 157 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC).

Magistrate Babangida Hassan ordered that the boy be caned 12 strokes because he is a minor.

He said the punishment will serve as a deterrent to other youths.

Two jailed 10 months for theft

By Usman A. Bello & Foluke Ojomu

TWO persons, Adamu Isa and Saminu Abdullahi have been sentenced to four and six month's imprisonment respectively for allegedly stealing and receiving stolen property belonging to one Umar Bissala.

Police prosecutor, Haruna Danlami had earlier told the court that on January 2, Adamu Isa who resides at Dei Dei, stole two

food warmers valued at N1,600 from Umar Bissala, adding that the second accused person, Isa Adamu dishonestly received the property knowing that they were stolen.

He further told the court that the two count charge is punishable under Sections 288 and 317 of the Penal Code Law.

When the content of the First Information report (FIR) was read to the accused persons, they pleaded guilty and begged

the court to temper justice with mercy, saying they will not do so again.

The prosecutor urged the court to try them summarily under Section 157 of the Criminal Procedure Code, (CPC).

Based on their confession, Magistrate Babangida Hassan sentenced Adamu Isa to four months imprisonment or an option of N6,000 fine, while Saminu Abdullahi was sentenced to six months with a fine option of N10,000.

Bizman in court over forged land documents

By Hussein Yahaya & Ibraheem A. Fatai

A 30-year-old businessman was on Monday arraigned before an Abuja magistrate court for allegedly using forged land documents to sell five non existing plots of land to one Anichok Moses.

The man, Abdulmalik Suleiman of Kuchingoro was accused of selling the land purported to be located at Dei-Dei Livestock Estate, Abuja, for N600,000 to the complainant.

Prosecutor Umoh Inah told the court that on September 17, 2009, Anichok Moses reported to the police that none of the five plots of land the accused sold to him sometimes in 2008 exists.

"The accused after selling the plots of land gave the complainant in return some forged land documents and committed an offence punishable under Section 366 of the Penal Code Law," the prosecutor stated.

When the charge was read to the accused, he denied it and requested for bail, which was not objected to by the prosecutor.

Magistrate Ademuyiwa Oyeyipo granted the accused bail in the sum of N250,000 with one surety in like sum, who must reside within the court's jurisdiction and swear to an affidavit to produce the accused in court on the adjourned date.

The case was adjourned to January 27 for hearing.

Man accused of blocking house entrance

By Hussein Yahaya & Ibraheem A. Fatai

THE police Monday arraigned a middle-aged man before an Abuja magistrate court for allegedly preventing one Tan Omoro from entering his own apartment.

The man, Sterling Ellis was accused of committing the offence on January 9 to 10 and was consequently arrested by the police.

Prosecutor Ahmed Mohammed stated in court that on January 10, 2010, Tan Omoro of Alexandra Street, Bayelsa House, Wuse 2, Abuja, reported to the police that the accused intentionally locked the main entrance to his own apartment.

"The accused person's unlawful action prevented the complainant from entering his apartment for two days and the offence

committed is punishable under Section 256 of the Penal Code Law," he said.

When the charge was read to the accused, he pleaded not guilty and requested for bail.

Magistrate Rosemary Kanyip granted the accused bail in the sum of N40,000 with a reliable surety in like sum that must reside within the court's jurisdiction.

The case was adjourned to February 4 for hearing.

Artisan charged with defamation of character

By Hussein Yahaya & Ibraheem A. Fatai

A 35-year-old artisan was on Tuesday charged before an Abuja magistrate court for allegedly defaming the character of Mrs. Christiana Okolo of Mabushi village, Abuja.

The accused, Godfrey Isaac of Mabushi village, Abuja, was said to have accused the complainant of being responsible for the death of her husband, Lawrence Oni.

Prosecutor Mustapha Mohammed informed the court that on January 5, 2010, the complainant came out of her apartment to witness the misunderstanding between

the accused and another tenant.

"Immediately the accused saw the complainant, he started insulting her and accusing her of killing her husband, thereby committing an offence punishable under Section 391 of the Penal Code Law," the prosecutor added.

When the charge was read to the accused, he denied it and requested for bail.

Magistrate Hadiza Shagari granted the accused bail in the sum of N10,000 with a reliable surety in like sum, who must reside within the court's jurisdiction.

The case was adjourned to February 9 for hearing.



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We now invite applications to our full-time programmes for Sept 2010/11:

Legal Practice Course (LPC)
Duration: 10 months

LLM Corporate and Business Law
Duration: 12 -15 months. This programme will be replaced with the LLM International Business Law from September 2011

LLM International Human Rights
Duration: 12 -15 months

Mr Masood Ahmed, LLM programme Leader will be conducting interviews in the following agents' offices and will be able to make spot offers:

Date	Time	Location
18-01-10	14:00 - 16.30	BC1E, Ground Floor Metro Plaza, Plot 991-992 Zakariya Maimalari Street, Central Area, Abuja Mob: 080-6678-8636 Tel: 09-872 5983
19-01-10	14:00 - 16:30	Dave Abion Consulting, Suite 217B (2 nd Floor), Jinifa Plaza (opposite securities & exchange commission office), Muhammadu Buhari Way, Abuja. Tel: 09 872 9252
20-01-10	14:00 - 16:00	Preparation for Life, No.48 Agades Crescent, Off Aminu Kano Crescent (Opposite Globacom Office), Wuse 2, ABUJA Tel: 080 3238 1916,
21-01-10	10:00 - 12:00	Preparation for Life, Oxbridge College, 49 Sobo Arobiodu Street, GRA, Ikeja Tel: 01-453 7879
	13:00 - 16:00	BCIE, Valley View Plaza, 99, Opebi Road, Ikeja. Lagos. Mob: 07034 446009
22-01-10	14:00 - 16:00	BCIE VI office, Plot 146 C, Immam Abibu Adetoro Street By Sinari Daranijo, Victoria Island Annexe. Lagos Tel: 01 462 4088
23-01-10	10.00 - 16.00	Kenneth Ilalokhoin, Global Network, Cambridge College, 64 Adekunle Fajuyi Way, GRA Ikeja Tel: 080 3374 9866 global_eduserve@yahoo.co.uk

To book your interview session, please contact your preferred agent or Mr Chibuzor Onochie, Birmingham City University Regional Officer on Tel: 070 3444 6009 Email: chibuzor.onochie@bcu.ac.uk

www.bcu.ac.uk

Company donates equipment to hospital

By Usman A. Bello & Romoke W. Ahmad

A company, Bijo Surgical limited yesterday donated hospital equipment worth hundreds of thousands of naira to the pediatric ward of the Asokoro General Hospital.

The company's Managing Director, Ikechukwu Akanisi, while presenting the equipment to the hospital's management, said they made the donation to assist the hospital

so that the children's ward can function properly.

"We made the donation towards the upliftment of the hospital as well as to contribute our quota for the development of healthcare in the country and we believe a gesture of this nature will complement government's efforts to make health care accessible to the residents," he said

He called on the management to make judicious use of the equipment so that

children and other patients can benefit from the gesture, adding that the company will continue to assist the hospital within its limited resources.

Responding, Dr Uche Afoma, chairman, medical Advisory committee and head of the Pediatric unit of the hospital, who received the items on behalf of the chairman, commended the company for providing the items to the hospital.

She said the equipment

will help the hospital to realize its goal of reducing maternal mortality rate as well as other ailments, adding that they will ensure that the equipments are well utilized.

The hospital's management called on other companies to emulate the gesture displayed by Bijo Surgical Limited.

The items donated included a wheel chair, baby's bed, baby weighing machine as well as cough examination machine.

Police urged to be tolerant

By Misbahu Bashir

THE police in Abuja have been told to be fair when handling matters that affect the public.

The advice was made yesterday by the FCT Police Commissioner, Mr John Haruna, after inspecting the rehabilitated cells at Wuse Police Station.

He said policemen must be forbearing and trustworthy especially while managing cases involving the public, adding that the ability of policemen to be tolerant will improve their image and stimulate people's desire to provide them with information.

The call came amidst speculations of alleged violations of human rights by policemen, including bullying and extra judicial killings.

He said the cells have been made more spacious with quality fitted tiles so as to improve the detention standard of detainees.

The Divisional Police Officer (DPO) of the station, CSP Zubairu Sabiu, said detainees are being handled with respect and care.

The station was renovated through voluntary donations from the public.

FCT residents want road network extended to satellite towns

By Hussein Yahaya

AN appeal has gone to the authority of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) to extend its road network projects to rural communities and satellite towns within the territory in order to ease transportation problems in these areas.

Most residents who spoke with

our reporter decried bad road networks in almost all the satellite towns in the territory, adding that the situation is badly affecting smooth transportation flow.

Chairman of the Bwari branch of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW), Mohammed Abdulsalam, called for the expansion of the Bwari-

Dusten Alhaji road, describing the road as 'too narrow for a smooth drive'.

"The road expansion is long overdue, considering the number of commuters that usually make use of the road on a daily basis," he said.

He lamented that most portions of the road are filled with

potholes, adding that the FCTA should assist motorists to expand the road.

Some market women at the Bwari Central Market also called for the total rehabilitation of the Bwari-Ijakoro road to ease transportation of agricultural products to other parts of the FCT.

Residents of rural settlements

of Ushafa, Payi and Jigo also appealed to the FCTA to extend its road projects to various communities.

It would be recalled that the FCT minister, Alhaji Adamu Aliero, recently promised that infrastructural development of satellite towns in the territory will receive his attention in this fiscal year.

EXTERNAL VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT



The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) announces the following vacancies:

1. Senior Strategic Advisor
2. Coordination Specialist

The positions as described in the TOR will be funded for UNDP by DFID through its Policy and Knowledge (PAK) facility. The contractors will be consultants to UNDP, not UNDP employees and will report to the UNDP Resident Coordinator in Nigeria. HTSPE will finalize the arrangements for the contract with the candidate recommended by UNDP.

The contract will be for one year, paid monthly in arrears. The fee range for the position of Senior Strategic Advisor will be between £3,800 to £4,300 per month depending on educational qualifications and directly relevant experience. For the position of Coordination Specialist the fee range will be between £3,000 to £3300 per month.

For further details on the job description and application process, please visit UNDP's corporate job site at (<http://www.ng.undp.org/jobs.shtml>) and submit applications.



GOMBE STATE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Gombe State Agricultural Development Project, Fadama III Component IV (Support to ADP and Adaptive Research)

Expression of Interest As Service Provider.

This request for expression of interest following General Procurement Notice (GPN) for the Third National Fadama Project (IDA credit No.4494 UNI) which appeared in the Daily Trust and Punch Newspapers of July 3rd 2009.

The Federal Government of Nigeria has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) for the implementation of National Fadama Development Project III and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payment for component four of the project.

The main objective is to have a data bank of service provider upon which they will be invited any time the need arises who will give training, research activities and advice on new technologies in the areas of Agriculture, Engineering and Agricultural Economics.

Gombe State ADP implementers of component IV will carry out the following functions:

Support to Advisory Service Providers.
Quality Assurance of Advisory Services.

Training of Facilitators.
Sponsored Research and On-Farm Demonstration.
Training of Extension Staff.

The Gombe State Agricultural Development Project now invites eligible interested Service Providers to express interest in providing services.

Interested Service Providers must provide adequate information indicating that they are qualified to undertake the services. Consequently, the Service Providers should submit along with their Expression Of Interest (EOI) a detailed Curriculum Vitae (CV) of all their staff indicating the following:-

Qualification, Experience, Evidence of similar assignments, Nature of assignment, Special Skills, Names and addresses.

Expression of interest must be submitted in two copies clearly marked "EXPRESSION OF INTEREST AS A SERVICE PROVIDER" addressed and delivered to the address below:

The Programme Manager,
Gombe State A.D.P.
PMB 046,
Ministry Of Agriculture,
Gombe State,
Gombe.

ENVIRONMENT

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Gaidam launches Operation Keep Yobe Clean

From Hamza Idris, Damaturu

GOVERNOR Ibrahim Gaidam of Yobe State yesterday in Damaturu launched "Operation Keep Yobe Clean", a programme meant to improve waste disposal and envi-

ronment sanitation in urban and rural settlements.

The governor who launched the programme with the donation of 10 tipper trucks, one caterpillar and dozens of wheel barrows, brooms, shovels and pesti-

cides lamented that poor sanitary attitude in Damaturu and other urban centres was a source of worry to authorities.

"Healthy environment is a catalyst for social and economic development...the introduction

of this programme is apt because the world has realised the importance of clean environment", Gaidam said.

Gaidam said Environmental Protection Committees have been formed in all the 17 local govern-

ment areas of the state.

Commissioner for environment Alhaji Wakili Sarki said hundreds of men and women have been recruited and would be sweeping the streets of major towns every morning.

Britain braces for more snow

AGENCIES responsible for the supply and distribution of grit are due to hold another salt summit as forecasters warn of more snow on the way.

Drivers continue to face hazardous conditions on the roads as authorities cut back on gritting as supplies run critically low.

Transport Secretary Lord Adonis said the Highways Agency and local authorities agreed to reduce salt use on roads by "at least 25 per cent" with further measures to conserve salt likely to be introduced later this week.

But shadow transport secretary Theresa Villiers said the Government had failed to learn the lessons of the last spell of heavy

snow in February 2009.

And the wintry weather looks set to continue for the next few days before a slight thaw sets in as the mercury begins to rise later in the week.

On Monday, snow and ice continued to cause problems on the trains, with many rail firms operating revised timetables and Eurostar running a restricted service. Britain's airports were open but passengers were warned to check with their airline before leaving home.

Teenagers across England managed to sit crucial A-level and GCSE exams as many schools reopened their gates despite facing icy conditions.

'38 African countries have less than 50% coverage on sanitation'

By Benjamin Auta

THIRTY-EIGHT countries in Africa, Nigeria inclusive might not attain the Millennium Development Goal in sanitation as their coverage is less than 50% in the sanitation sector, says a survey report on sanitation by WaterAid.

The survey which was jointly conducted by WHO/UNICEF joint monitoring programme for water supply (JMP) is the official UN mechanism tasked with monitoring progress towards MDG target 7c on drinking water and sanitation.

The survey said that with Millennium Development Goals (MDG) on sanitation, over 400 million people need to gain access to proper sanitation over the period of 2006-2015 as only six countries in the continent are on track to meet the goals by the year 2015.

The report also said that "since 1990, the African population without sanitation has increased by 135 million to 583 million in 2006, even

as increase in coverage is not keeping pace with population growth."

The survey which described open defecation as the most 'risky sanitation practice' has dropped in Africa from 33% in the continent in 1990 to 24% in 2006 although the absolute number of people practicing open defecation has increased with over 20 million people.

On the overall 360 million Africans had access to improved sanitation facilities in 2006 as coverage in facilities increased from 33% in 1990 to 38% in 2006.

On the coverage level in the rural and urban centers in the continent, the survey said that there is an improvement in coverage with 53% coverage in the urban areas and 29% coverage in the rural areas.

The survey while calling on African Minister's Council on Water to facilitate regional and international cooperation through the coordination of policies also called for immediate action regarding water and sanitation issues in their country and continent at large.



DESPITE the efforts of the Lagos State government in making the environment clean and healthy yet it is in some peoples character to live with refuse. Residents of Sogunro Community, Ogbu dumping refuse at No Dumping of Refuse Area.

FG to commence implementation of afforestation programme

By Mustapha Suleiman

THE Federal Ministry of Environment is to commence intensive implementation of the National Afforestation Program this year as part of the Federal Government's efforts at combating Climate Change impacts and creating wealth for Nigerians.

As a step in this direction, the Minister of Environment, John Odey met with top officials of the

Ministry and Heads of the Agencies in the ministry to properly streamline the activities of the ministry.

The meeting reviewed the performance of 2009 and strategies on how to tackle multifarious environmental challenges facing the country with the ultimate objective of delivering dividend of democracy to Nigerians.

Mr. Odey enjoined the staff of the ministry to be more produc-

tive this year in order to achieve the desired goals of sustainable environmental development.

The minister also disclosed that two dedicated lines would be opened for all staff to reach him and brief him on staff welfare and work environment in the ministry.

He said that staff welfare, discipline and work environment will be key emphasis to the ministry this year.

ENVIRONMENT



GOVERNOR Ibrahim Gaidam of Yobe State, launching one of the 10 tipper trucks as part of Operation Keep Yobe Clean... yesterday



MEN stand in line sending-001



KRASNOYARSK, Russia: A boat watchman walks along the Yenisei riverbank in -36C weather

Kogi will tackle climate change with massive tree planting - Commissioner

Architect Mohammed Sule, the Kogi State Commissioner for Environment and Physical Development, in this interview, speaks on the environmental challenges in the state. Excerpt.

From Isiaka Wakili, Lokoja

WHAT are the major environmental challenges of Kogi State?

We all know that the greatest environmental challenge across the world today is climate change. So many things are getting wrong in that direction. The harmattan is not as it used to be. The temperature level has gone far below the zero degrees centigrade. At the level of Kogi State, the erosion problem in the Eastern part of Kogi is so enormous that we have to put in almost N5 billion in the last one year to put it under check. Waste management is another environmental issue we are sorting out. Instead of allowing people to burn wastes like before, we are now asking them to put them together and we send the waste disposal officials of the ministry to repack them so that we would be able to reduce pollution in the state.

But every nook and cranny of Lokoja, the state capital, is still littered with refuse.

No. I think you need to try to follow our programmes. We are committed to making Lokoja one of the cleanest cities in the country. If you go round the city, you would see how far we have gone on this.

Specifically, what have you done in this regard?

We have constructed dump sites with concretes for people to dump wastes from where we remove them. We are working towards getting to all other parts of the state. So there is an improvement. We only need to keep counselling our people.

How much has the state expended on the sanitation of the state?

We have a board, that is,

the Waste Management and Sanitation Board (WMSB) with over 200 workers who are involved in cleaning offices and Lokoja city alone. Apart from paying them, the cost of such activities and that of the maintenance of vehicles and equipment are also taken care of by the state government through certain subvention to the Board and the contribution from the Ministry. So, we don't really earmark any specific amount for the exercise every month. But by the time we put the salaries of the staff and the cost of running the exercise

school children and other people of the state. We are going to do this because the effect of climate change is so serious that we just have to do something. We will equally participate in the proposed palm tree plantation that the government is working on because the palm trees are known to have helped to reduce the effect of climatic problems. On the problem of erosion, we have appealed to the federal government for support and by the time they respond, together with our own efforts, we would be able to address the problem. On the waste management, we are going to work in all the corners of the streets. There are a lot of things that will happen in the next two years in Lokoja and the entire state.

Like what?

From the on-going dredging of the River Niger, we are going to have two ports each in Lokoja and Idah. Also, the stadium project embarked upon by the state governor, Alhaji Ibrahim Idris, will be completed this year. The stadium complex has the capacity of between 20, 000 and 30, 000 people. We anticipate that the stadium will be an alternative to the Abuja National Stadium. So, there are a lot of activities going on, and for us in the Ministry of Environment Physical Development, we have to prepare the state for all these.

It seems Lokoja does not have a master plan...

It does. In fact, the new one is almost completed and we are now working in line with it. It is just that there are certain errors that we have asked the consultant to correct before the final hand-over to us and the subsequent presentation to the State Executive Council. All these are to be done before it is passed into law. Whatever we are doing now is in line with this master plan which will be completed very soon.



ARCHITECT Mohammed Sule

together, it is a whole lot of money.

What is your assessment of the response of the people of the state to the sanitation exercise.

There response is improving. They used to see it as a burden to carry their wastes to our dump spots within the city, but now, with the awareness campaign all over the place, they are embracing the concept of cleanliness.

Does your ministry have any strategy to combat the environmental challenges in this fiscal year?

A lot. Like I told you earlier, the climate change is a concern to everybody. It is real. We are going to put certain measures in place to reduce the effect.

What are these measures?

Like massive tree planting. We will involve the local government council chairmen,

ANNOUNCEMENT

DEBARRING OF FEDERAL COLLEGE OF CHEMICAL AND LEATHER TECHNOLOGY, ZARIA TO PARTICIPATE IN NYSC SCHEME

This is to inform the General Public and in particular all graduates of the Federal College of Chemical and Leather Technology, Samaru-Zaria that the College has been debarred to participate in the National Youth Service (NYSC) Scheme.

The College has received the Computer print out from NYSC Headquarters, Abuja. All affected Candidates are therefore advised to check their names with the Students' Affairs Officer on or before Friday, 15th January, 2010.

Please, Candidates are advised to take this announcement seriously, to avoid any error on the final Call-up letters or exemption certificate.

Signed
Management

ENVIRONMENT

FG, stakeholders to meet on climate change governance

By Mustapha Suleiman

A crucial meeting of all stakeholders in the National Climate Change Governance in Nigeria is to be held soon.

The Federal Ministry of Environment is calling the

meeting to review the recent Climate Change Agreement made in Copenhagen during the 15th meeting of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

During the National Stake-

holders meeting every aspect of the Copenhagen Accord will be reviewed and deliberated in line with Nigeria's interest.

The stakeholders meeting will draw participants from the public and private sectors, especially the Organized Pri-

ivate Sector, the academics, the civil society as well as from all the three tiers of government in Nigeria.

The forthcoming stakeholders meeting will also sign-post the intensive preparation of Nigeria to ensure that a legally

binding agreement on emission cut and adaptation matters is procured at the next Climate Change Conference in Mexico.

Nigeria had participated actively at the Climate Change Conference held in Copenhagen Denmark in December last year.

Big freeze could signal global warming 'pause'

THE Arctic conditions which have brought Britain to a standstill over the past week could be the start of a "pause" in global warming, some scientists believe.

The world could be in for a spell of cooler temperatures, rather than hotter conditions, as a result of cycli-

cal changes in ocean currents for the next 20 or 30 years, it is predicted.

Research by Professor Mojib Latif, one of the world's leading climate modellers, questions the widely held view that global temperatures will rise rapidly over the coming years.

But Prof Latif, of the Leibniz Institute at Germany's Kiel University and an author for the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), believes that the cool spell will only be a temporary interruption to climate change.

He told a UN conference in

September that changes in ocean currents known as North Atlantic Oscillation could dominate over man-made global warming for the next few decades.

Controversially, he also said that the fluctuations could also be responsible for much of the rise in

global temperatures seen over the past 30 years.

Prof Latif told one newspaper at the weekend: "A significant share of the warming we saw from 1980 to 2000 and at earlier periods in the 20th Century was due to these cycles - perhaps as much as 50 per cent."

Is Lafia and environs condemned to filth?

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

WHATEVER the authorities at the Nasarawa State Urban Development Board (NUDB) are doing elsewhere that is keeping them from their primary objective: to evolve and sustain a clean environment, devoid of sleaze and the attendant public health hazards - must be of more serious concern needing priority attention. Otherwise, the growing dirt which the people of the state, and particularly residents of Lafia, the state capital are condemned to live with should have attracted the officers and men of the board. But the case is the reverse as the board has continued to look the other way while heaps of mounting refuse continues to pile up to unimaginable heights at streets corners and every available spot. The story of Lafia's grubby state is not only about refuse heaps which have become common place, the blockage in the few available drainages as well as overgrown grass which have taken over public places stare even bystanders in the face.

Observations have shown that generation of both solid and liquid wastes is monumental in Lafia, while an effective disposal system is lacking. This is just as regulation of residents' reckless attitude to public health is completely absent as they are allowed to carry on with this unfriendly treatment of the environment with arrogant impunity.

At various points, the waste bins provided at strategic locations would over-flow with refuse, just as various refuse heaps can be seen dotting the landscape. This development can be mostly observed along Makurdi-Jos, UAC and Doma roads as well as the adjoining streets of Almakura, Abuja and other major links in the metropolis. Our correspondent has paid repeated visits of these roads, and has observed that refuse heaps are a permanent feature on them with no effort at collecting them for onward disposal.

This development is further worsened by lack of drainages along



MEN of the NUDB have been overwhelmed by the amount of refuse dotting the slummy metropolis of Lafia, forcing them into the burning option.

the streets, except along Jos-Lafia-Makurdi road which has a perfect stretch of the provision but without any maintenance. The drainages along this road are blocked at various points since residents have turned them into dump sites while authorities look the other way as though everything is okay.

Further observation shows that along Shendam road which links major government offices and ministries as well as the United Nations office called UN House, grass has been allowed to overgrow, presenting another eyesore.

In a manner that has further worsened Lafia's already sleazy environment, the urban authorities have resorted to the desperate burning of the heaps of refuse along streets of the metropolis. Daily Trust has reported that for some times now, men of the NUDB have been overwhelmed by the amount of refuse dotting the slummy metropolis, forcing them into the

burning option. The illicit practice, according to further observations, is unfriendly to the environment as it has further worsened public hygiene in the state capital. The burning usually takes place a week after street sweepers gather up the refuse, since disposal vans hardly go round to collect them.

At all times, observations have shown that the charred remains of burnt refuse heaps bellow with smoke at major roads and streets. Shop owners and residents have continually condemned this practice as offensive to their health. They said the urban law enforcement agency adopted this practice in the late days of 2009 as a desperate method of dealing with the ever present refuse heaps in the state capital. "We have severally complained because burning refuse on the streets is dangerous to our health but the officers have continued with the practice. It is most unfortunate that a government that

budgets huge sums for environmental sanitization yearly, can not tackle garbage in the metropolis of the state capital", a resident of Shendam Road, who gave his name only as Adamu said.

Daily Trust observed that although signposts erected by NUDB adorn various points along the federal highway, warning against indiscriminate dumping of refuse, the authorities still overlook it when people flout the urban rule. This development is mostly observed at Masaka, Ado and Mararaba - all slums adjoining Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The refuse heaps dot both lanes on the dual carriage way as they block the drainages and deface the road divider. As one enters into Nasarawa State on the way from Abuja through Nyanya, he or she is coming face to face with this sordid spectacle. At certain points, the refuse sites have buried the signposts warning against the

illegality, but authorities still carry on as though everything is orderly. Or at best, men of the NUDB would set them ablaze in the middle of the road and walk away.

The development has completely overwhelmed government's planned aesthetic beauty for the state capital, Daily Trust has observed. A score card of the Governor Aliyu Akwe Doma's administration shows that the government had procured 2,000 waste bins, placed at strategic locations to collect refuse for onward disposal. The government coordinated waste collection programme which is part of the urban development sector of the state, according to the score card made available to Daily Trust, was designed to ensure environmental sanitation and aesthetic beauty of the state capital. But this has not been achieved with the attitude of the NUDB towards the environment.

NUDB General Manager, Jafaru Ango refused to comment when Daily Trust called his phone, but the state information commissioner, Abdullahi Mustafa confirmed our observations as "very critical", saying he will make contacts with NUDB on the development. The commissioner, nevertheless, said NSUDB has "been doing its best", although he still added that "giving the circumstances with which the board operates", it will be difficult for it to achieve more than what is on the ground presently. He failed to explain "the circumstances", however, other than argue that a clean environment is not the responsibility of government alone. The commissioner insisted that residents are contributory to the dirtiness of Lafia, and called on them to develop decent attitude to their surroundings to complement government's efforts at maintaining and sustaining a clean environment.

Daily Trust recalls that Jafaru Ango had said his board has been "doing a lot", although he failed to mention more than the occasional clearing of refuse on the streets.

Inside Politics

Appeal Court affirms Okorie's expulsion from APGA

By Sunday Ejike Benjamin

THE Abuja Division of the Court of Appeal yesterday affirmed the expulsion of Chief Chekwes Okorie from the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) just as it confirmed Chief Victor Umeh as the authentic national chairman of the party.

In a judgement delivered by Justice Jimi Bada, the appellate court said the judgement of the trial court on the matter which earlier affirmed Okorie's expulsion and upheld Umeh's position as the chairman of the party was flawless.

Justice Bada said the trial Judge must have weighed all the circumstances based on the available evidences and exhibits placed before his court to have arrived at the decision.

It would be recalled that an Abuja High Court presided over by Justice Hussein Baba Yusuf had on April 16, 2008 held that Okorie who is the founding chairman of the party and two other top leaders of the party were validly expelled by the party for anti-party activities.

Justice Baba-Yusuf in his judgment agreed with the Counsel for the defendants Ikwueto (SAN) and held that Okorie was guilty of the charge of anti-party activities on which basis he was expelled by the National Working Committee (NWC) of the party.

According to him: "I have considered the submissions of Counsel in the matter I am convinced that there was a meeting of the NWC of the party where

the decision to expel Okorie was taken".

Okorie is challenging the decision of the Abuja High Court and he is asking the Appeal Court to set aside the judgment and enter a declaration that the appellants were not validly expelled.

The panel of Justices of the Appeal Court posited that the trial by the lower court was discretionary and must be upheld by the appellant court, saying that: "The trial court had the discretion to do what it did because the evidences directed them to do so".

The court in its ruling said: "After a long tussle between all the parties, the decision of the lower court is hereby upheld and the appeal is hereby struck out for lacking in merit".

The court also awarded a cost of N75, 000 to be paid to the respondent (Umeh) by the appellant (Okorie).

Reacting to the judgement, Counsel representing Okorie, Chief Chris Uche (SAN) told the court that his client will exhaust his constitutional rights of appeal in the matter.

Chekwes Okorie, in his reaction said he would appeal against the judgement of the appellant court at the Supreme Court.



CHIEF Chekwes Okorie

PDP raises N395m for Soludo

THE Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) on Tuesday scooped more than N395 million at a fund raiser for the Anambra governorship poll. The highest donation of N250 million was made by Chief Arthur Eze, the chief launcher at the occasion, while Chief Emeka Offor and Chief Ifeanyi Okoye contributed N100 million and N10 million, respectively.

Other donations came from Chief Lawrence Ojemili, N10 million; Chief Udemezue Chukwurah, N5 million; the PDP National Working Committee, N10 million and Dr Emmanuel Egboga, N1 million.

Vice President Goodluck Jonathan, who is the chairman of the campaign committee, said that another event would hold soon in Lagos to attract more funds for the contest. Jonathan assured the electorate that the party would win the Feb. 6 election.

"I am quite sure that PDP will win the governorship election in Anambra if sufficient funds are generated to run its affairs," he said. Governor Isah Yuguda of Bauchi State, who is the Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Campaign Organisation, said he would come out with enough resources for the exercise in the next 10 days. (NAN)

ANPP says Aminu Baba's movement to PDP act of cowardice

From Mamud Lalo, Jos

THE Plateau State chapter of the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) has described the movement of its candidate for the November 2008 Jos North local government election Alhaji Aminu Baba to the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) as an act of cowardice and the height of betrayal.

The state secretary of the party Muhammad Nazif Ahmad stated this in an interview with our correspondent in Jos yesterday.

Alhaji Aminu Baba last week declared that he had decamped to the PDP, saying that his movement would provide him a broader platform to actualize his ambition

of serving his people. He also said that he was following the foot step of his boss, former minister of state for information and communication Alhaji Dasuki Nakande who also cross-carpeted to the PDP last year.

The ANPP scribe also described the action of Aminu Baba as an act of betrayal stressing that "this is a man that the ANPP gave mandate to contest for Jos North LG council chairmanship; this is a man who the good people of Jos North supported in all predicaments to ensure that PDP did not rig his election, as a result we had a civil uprising that culminated to the loss of over 700 lives and billions of naira."

PDP insists it sacked Fayose

From Kayode Ekundayo, Lagos

THE Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Ekiti State yesterday said it had expelled former governor of the state Mr. Ayodele Fayose from the party before his purported resignation.

At a press briefing in Ado-Ekiti on Tuesday, the Ekiti State PDP chairman Mr. Bola Oju Ojo said the former governor's resignation letter sent to the national headquarters of the party is belated because he had already been sacked by

the state chapter of the party.

Fayose had reportedly submitted his letter of resignation to the PDP headquarters in Abuja on Monday, January 12, 2010.

In the letter posted to the National Chairman electronically and copied to the state chairman of the party, Fayose said:

"Your Excellency will recall my letter in April 2009 of my decision to step aside from the party (PDP). This was due to the prevailing political situation which is no news to you vis-à-vis issues relating to the May

2009 Gubernatorial by-election and its fall out.

After due consultation with my supporters and constituency, it becomes morally and courtesy right for me to formally inform your good self and your party of my exit, and relinquishing of my membership of the PDP."

But Olu-Ojo said the headquarters of the PDP had long ratified Fayose's letter of expulsion. However, he admitted that the letter was yet to be delivered to the former governor.

Warrant of arrest on Kalu justifiable – Imo Speaker

From Johnkennedy Uzoma, Owerri

SPEAKER Imo State House of Assembly Chief Godluck Opiah has said that the warrant of arrest issued by the House on the former governor of Abia State, Dr. Orji Uzor Kalu is justifiable.

The Imo Assembly had earlier summoned Kalu to defend his allegations that Governor Ihedi Ohakim had spent huge amount of money belonging to the state when he cross carpeted to PDP, gave money to northern Emirs during their visit to the state last year as well built mansions outside the country.

But Kalu, who is chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Peoples Progressive Alliance (PPA), the party which provided the platform for Ohakim's election, disregarded the summons of the House, an action which compelled the lawmakers to order for his arrest.

During his first media chat with journalists at his country home, Abacheke, in Ohaji/Egbema Local Government Council yesterday, Opiah said that what the House did was proper, stressing that the lawmakers would look stupid if they had swept the matter under the carpet.

He said though Kalu had gone to court to obtain injunction to stop the arrest, the matter would be followed to its logical conclusion, he assured.

SPORT

Experts slam Amodu
for ignoring Nigeria
league

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Lawal foresees disaster for Eagles

By David Ngobua

AS reactions continue to trial Tuesday's 3-1 bashing of Nigeria's Super Eagles by the Pharaohs of Egypt at the ongoing Africa Cup of Nations in Angola, former player of the team, Garba Lawal has said going by what Eagles' group opponents displayed, he wouldn't rule out disaster for the Eagles, if they refused to step up their game.

Speaking to Trustsports yesterday on the chances of the team, the former international said it is quite bleak as only a miracle will save the team in the hands of its remaining group opponents.

He said having watched Mozambique and Benin Republic play, it has become really hard for him to speak on the chances of the Eagles who were a sorry sight in their match against Egypt.

Lawal maintained that since there are no more minnows in the Africa Cup of Nations, Eagles will need to redouble their efforts if they are to salvage what is left of the country's chances.

The former international said the present Eagles lack the kind of fighting spirit that saw his generation win matches even when the chips were down.

He said in his days, anytime the going got tough, he and his team mates always dug deep into their resilient spirits to redeem any bad situation.

According to the Lobi Stars Coach/player, it was a sad moment for him as he watched how the Egyptians made a mince meat of the Eagles who failed to put up any serious resistance.

"In our days, we never watch

any team humiliate us. Even when we lost, nobody ever doubted our commitment and fighting spirit. But the story is no longer the same. I am afraid the team may not go far if the attitude of the players remains the same. Moreover, every nation on the continent now knows how to play football very well. This is one of the reasons why I find it hard to say what will happen to Eagles".

He blamed Eagles scandalous defeat in the hands of the Pharaohs on their refusal to push forward just as he said the Nigerians paid too much respect to the Egyptians who took control of the game right from the blast of the referee's whistle.

He explained that when he saw the Pharaohs retain control of the ball for a whole minute after the commencement of the match, he knew that something bad would happen to the Eagles if they fail to step up their game.

Lawal said as the Egyptians continued to surge forward, Eagles stayed back and refused to push their opponents back.

"Eagles got punished because they refused to push forward. They got laid back and the Pharaohs continued to attack them. They dominated ball possession and waited for openings to score the back breaking goals.

"Right from the beginning of the match, I noticed something about the Egyptians that gave me serious concern. At the blast of the referees whistle, Egypt possessed the ball for more than one minute before Eagles had a touch of the ball. Inside me, I knew Eagles were in for a big trouble".



INEFFICIENT... Super Eagles forward Yakubu Aiyegbeni, left, controls the ball as Egypt's Hosni Abd Rabou defends during their match on Tuesday. Aiyegbeni did not have a single shot at goal during the game

NFF blames Amodu for Eagles defeat

By Orkula Shaagee

TUESDAY'S 3-1 loss by the Super Eagles of Nigeria to the Pharaohs of Egypt in the opening Group C game at the ongoing 2010 Africa Cup of Nations tournament in Angola has been blamed on Shaibu Amodu-led technical crew that failed to

make proper substitutions during the epic duel.

The Federation officials, media representatives and host of others in Angola are still licking their wounds over the poor substitutions that cost the country the match after taking the lead.

"Nigeria Football Federation chiefs, team officials, media rep-

resentatives and officials of the Nigeria Embassy in Angola as well as members of the Nigeria Football Supporters Club could not believe that Egypt, which had not beaten Nigeria at the Cup of Nations since 1963 could so embarrass the World Cup finalists.

"The larger blame is being put on the technical crew for poor sub-

stitutions and inability to read the game and make the proper technical and tactical changes necessary to turn it around", said an NFF official.

The official further said that the Nigeria camp at the African Cup of Nations in Angola remains in shock after Tuesday's humiliating 1-3 defeat by champions Egypt.

The Pharaohs clipped the Eagles' wings despite going behind after 11 minutes to a Chinedu Obasi rocket.

He added, "Everyone expected Nigeria to dominate henceforth but the sluggish Eagles allowed the smart and skilful Pharaohs into the game and were humbled at the end".

Amodu: We lost control

NIGERIA coach Shuaibu Amodu says his side lost control and were punished for making silly mistakes and then letting their heads drop after conceding a goal.

"We played well and controlled the game, especially in the first half, but somehow we made some silly mistakes and we were punished," he said after the game.

The Super Eagles took the lead through Chinedu Obasi on 12 minutes, but then gave away a soft equaliser and Amodu said they lost their character after that.

"When we conceded the goal, the players let their heads drop. They lost their character and against a team like Egypt, you need to be mentally strong. We were not and we got punished for it."

Skipper Joseph Yobo agreed and said the Eagles were unsettled by the Pharaohs' second goal.

"We started well and got a goal but they came at us and equalised, they also scored early in the second half to unsettle us. Had we come out in the second half as we did in the first half, we would have won this very difficult game."

Mgbolu faults Amodu's selection

FORMER image maker of the erstwhile Nigeria Football Association, Austin Mgbolu has expressed fear that lack of competition for places among the players will work against the team in Angola.

Mgbolu said in an interview with *brilafm.net* that it was unfortunate the players were not made to fight for shirts for the final list to Angola.

"We don't seem to have the components of a grade A team, most of our players are not doing so well in their clubs.

"A lot of injuries which will rob them of the opportunity of doing their best in Angola are there. We ought to have looked inwards.

"There ought to be a local camping with players from the local league and some other players that have not been given opportunity to feature," he reasoned.

Mgbolu went on to declare that the current situation in the Eagles camp does not accord him the kind of confidence he would have loved to hold going into the competition.

"The problem we have now is that majority of those players have been in camp, even before they are tested. The team is more or less hand picked which is not good enough," he argued.



2010 AFRICAN CUP OF NATIONS

Credit where it's due - Nigeria were beaten by a better side

Peter Staunton, Goal.com

THIS morning my colleague, Awenlimobor Sylvester, leads the calls for Shuaibu Amodu to be replaced as the coach of the Nigeria national team following their resounding defeat in Angola.

The Super Eagles, whilst showing flickers of competency against Egypt yesterday, were second best throughout and lacked any sort of coherence. Aside from the individual contributions of the brilliant Chinedu Obasi, the west Africans came up well short.

It is obvious that the side led by Amodu is a tangled mess of under-performing big-name players and colleagues who are patently not up to the task. One does not have to look too far around the team to find the so-called stars who are not pulling their weight. At the back, the experienced Joseph Yobo and the capable Taye Taiwo ought to have done a lot better while defenders like Yussuf Mohamed and Obinna Nwaneri, both tactically and in terms of ability, are not African champions in waiting.

But that is one of many areas in which the Super Eagles differ from Egypt. As illustrated, the Nigerian back-line may not be composed of the most talented individuals but neither is the well-drilled Burkina Faso defence of Paulo Duarte, which shut out Cote d'Ivoire.

One key contrast between



NIGERIA players react as they pass by Egyptian goalkeeper Hassan Shahata after they lost their match against the North Africans on Tuesday.

Amodu's Nigeria and Egypt as evidenced yesterday came in the comfort that the Pharaohs drew from their tactical system as opposed to the relative chaos in the Nigeria ranks. In front of Nwaneri and Yobo sat Ayila; while he screened and Jon Obi Mikel fruitlessly made the play, Dickson Etuhu floated as a sort of a spare man. Strategical ineptitude, as well as inability on the field, left Nigeria in trouble from the start.

Instead, Hassan Shehata favoured his usual back-three, with Ahmed Fathi and Sayed Moawad running either side of the halfway line. With Hosni Abd

Rabo and Hossam Ghaly providing the foil in front of the rearguard, the likes of Wael Gomaa, Mahmoud Fathallah and Hani Said were never overly exposed. Discipline and adherence to the system gave Egypt the platform on which to launch their assault on Nigeria; as much as this was a poor performance from the Super Eagles, it was a fine one from the Pharaohs.

The 34-year-old Ahmed Hassan, sipping the elixir of immortality, was immense. His range of passing and spatial awareness were key here for Shehata's side and it was he, more often than not,

who had the key to unlocking the Nigerian defence in a masterclass of midfield orchestration.

Even in the absence of Mohamed Abo Terika and Amr Zaki, Egypt pack a devastating punch up front. Emad Moteab and Mohamed Zidan made all the right runs to pull the ramshackle Nigerian defensive line hither and dither. Only Vincent Enyeama, and indeed under-par finishing, prevented the Egyptians winning by a bigger margin.

So credit where it's due; Nigeria may be in meltdown, but on this form the Pharaohs will take some stopping.

Lazy Eagles should fear Benin, Mozambique

Awenlimobor Sylvester, Goal.com

WHAT on earth would his apologists throw at us this time? What would midwives of Nigeria's misfortune say in response to the calamity that has befallen Nigerian football this day? We watched as we were led into the dungeon of sporting embarrassment by the chief herdsman of incompetence, Amodu Shuaibu.

The Nigerian Football Federation asked us to gag our mouths and allow a rudderless Amodu to complete his job of utterly destroying the senior team. But we know a pig cannot fly, and you would only annoy it with your insistence on making it airborne.

It was not only a shoddy display by the Nigerian team against African giants Egypt; it also showed the deep reserve of ineptitude inside Amodu.

First, the Nigerian team lacked a coherent game plan. It would suffice to ask the mediums and sorcerers, for they are the only ones that can read into that man's

mind now, what formation he had in mind when he asked his boys to step onto the field; was it a 4-3-3, 4-4-2, 4-2-4, 2-4-4? Crazy!

What did he intend to achieve by fielding a burly Yakubu Aiyegbeni on the flank rather than through the middle? What inspired his mind-boggling substitutions that only left bigger holes and lesser fluidity in the Nigerian team?

When Amodu was departing the country, a reporter asked him at the International Airport why he was proceeding to the African Nations Cup with players who had tired legs, his reply was a simple: "you are stupid". Now I wonder who really feels 'stupid'.

We had a situation where Joseph Yobo, Mikel Obi, Yakubu and Taiye Taiwo were practically strolling on the field of play. Yobo's listless attitude on the pitch was more embarrassing as he was wearing the captain's armband, and failed woefully to inspire his team.

In the defensive department of

the team, Yobo and Nwaneri were paired together, but they did not understand each other; this was evident in the first and third goal of the Egyptians, and the two players failed to take responsibility on several other occasions too. On the flanks were two static players who just did not comprehend their roles on the field of play. Taiye Taiwo was absolutely disappointing.

Taiwo failed to track back when the team was under pressure and failed to provide support for the attack line when he ventured forward, prompting one to wonder what exactly his purpose on the field of play was. His decision to turn his back to the ball inside his area resulted in the second goal for the Egyptians. His counterpart Yusuf Mohamed did not fare any better, as his lack of confidence on and off the ball really caused concerns for the team.

The midfield was stacked with defensive minded players who always got in each others way,

When will we realize that Mikel Obi is not an attack-minded player? Etuhu and Ayila were the only working figures in that midfield, while Mikel was more interested in back-passes and putting pressure on the already weakened defence.

Yakubu was played totally out of position on the flanks, whereas he might have had a lot more purpose as an out-and-out striker. Chinedu Obasi was by far the best Nigerian player on the pitch, and his goal was a work of individual brilliance. To think Amodu had contemplated dropping him!

The team lacked discipline and cohesion. Those in favour of Amodu's perpetuation as chief coach of the Super Eagles have only succeeded in dragging the sporting reputation of the country further through the mud.

With the pacy and precise brand of football both Mozambique and Benin played out in the second group game; can we boldly assert that the lazy Nigerian team can beat either of them?



2010 AFRICAN CUP OF NATIONS

Experts slam Amodu for ignoring Nigeria league

NIGERIA'S former internationals have slammed Super Eagles Coach, Shaibu Amodu, for consistently ignoring players from the Nigerian league.

In their reactions to Tuesday's defeat of Nigeria by Egypt at the ongoing Africa Cup of Nations in Angola, the former internationals also faulted Amodu's tactics.

Former left back, Felix Owolabi, wondered why the national coach saw nothing good in the local league, while he continued recycling ageing players.

Describing the Eagles' rear-guard as "defenceless defence", Owolabi said that Tuesday's game showed that Amodu lacked tactical and technical ability.

Amiesimaka said many of the players were injured, unfit and old and displayed a lack of real professionalism

He said the midfield was not creative, while the attack lacked bite, adding that they did not play with any cohesion.

He described Chinedu Obasi's 12th minute stunner as individual brilliance.

"Amodu just folded his hands there and did nothing."

Owolabi noted that the tactical approach of other teams, which did poorly in the first half improved in the second half.

He said this was not the case with the Eagles, who did not play for more than 30 minutes of the whole 90 minutes.

He said it would take a miracle to qualify from the group after

Benin and Mozambique played a 2-2 draw.

Owolabi said both Benin and Mozambique were likely to complicate the situation for the Eagles.

He added that the Benin boys, who were youthful, would play with more confidence against the Eagles.

Former Green Eagles left winger, Adokiye Amiesimaka, blamed the players, the Amoduled technical crew and the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) for the poor outing.

Amiesimaka said many of the players were injured, unfit and old and displayed "a lack of real professionalism".

He noted that as a result of the absence of coordination between the defensive midfield and back-line, they failed to track their opponents whenever they ran into scoring positions.

He said the strong domestic league of the Egyptians was on display as nine of their 11 starting line-up play in the country.

The former Rivers Commissioner for Justice slammed Nigerians for "condoning mediocrity in administration and tolerating cheating at critical development stage."

He blamed the NFF for its failure to develop the game from the basics.

An advocate of indigenous coach to handle the national team, Amiesimaka did not spare Amodu, who he accused of believing "in big names even when they lacked commitment".

Former international goalkeeper Joe Erico told NAN that the Super Eagles played without resilience and were not sufficiently mobile.

Erico said the competition was not over yet for the Eagles but added that the entire defence and midfield required to be strengthened.

"The pace was too much" for skipper Nwankwo Kanu, who came in for John Mikel Obi, he said.



AMODU has ignored players from Nigeria league

Yobo: We must step up our game

By Orkula Shaagee

SUPER Eagles captain and Everton of England defender, Joseph Yobo said yesterday urged his teammates to step up their game at the African Cup of Nations in order to rescue their tournament and avoid a demoralizing effect ahead of the World Cup finals in South Africa.

Nigeria Football Federation Chief Media Officer, Ademola Olajire says the former Nigerian youth international was reacting to a shocking 3-1 loss to tournament defending champions, Egypt at the Ombaka Stadium in Benguela, Angola on Tuesday.

"This team feels bad about what has happened and we know it is time to step up our game radically to avoid early elimination from this championship. No one is happy about the result, and we are looking forward to giving our all in the next games", Yobo said yesterday morning as the players and technical crew held a critical meeting with Federation chiefs at the Nigeria team's Hotel Praia Morena in Benguela.

Tuesday evening's 1-3 embarrassment by Cup holders Egypt is considered a humiliation of unacceptable proportion and the players know how bad the Nigeria Football Federation brass feels about it.

He added: "We have a match against Benin Republic on Saturday and then we go to Lubango on Wednesday to play Mozambique. Now, we have our back to the wall and we know we must perform. We will lift our game and do Nigeria proud".

With the Tuesday loss, Egypt top Group C of the 27th African Nations Cup with maximum three points from one match, while Benin Republic and Mozambique share second with one point apiece after a 2-2 in the second game of the day in the group.

The Super Eagles of Nigeria occupies the basement of the group without a point.

RESULTS & FIXTURES

Cameroon 0, Gabon 1
Zambia 1, Tunisia 1

TODAY'S FIXTURES

Algeria vs Mali 5pm
Angola vs Malawi 7:30pm

Historic win for Gabon as Indomitable Lions crumble

DANIEL Cousin scored to give Gabon a 1-0 win over Cameroon on Wednesday as a fourth World Cup qualifying team failed to win at the African Cup of Nations.

Cousin, a striker for Hull in the Premier League, had a simple finish in the 17th minute after veteran Cameroon center back Rigobert Song made a defensive error.

Gabon leads Group D with three points. Tunisia and Zambia play their first matches in another group game later Wednesday.

World Cup qualifiers Cameroon, Algeria and Nigeria have

all lost matches at the African Cup, while Ivory Coast has drawn.

The match pitted French coaches Paul Le Guen of Cameroon and Gabon's Alain Giresse, with the Indomitable Lions dominating early on as Achille Emana's elusive run ended with goalkeeper Didier Ovono turning his shot on to a post in the eighth minute.

Arsenal midfielder Alex Song almost gave Cameroon the lead a minute later, but failed to connect with Geremi's far-post cross.

It was largely against the run of the play when Cousin broke the deadlock, taking advantage

of Rigobert Song's poor defending and connecting with Roguy Meye's through ball to beat goalkeeper Carlos Kameni with a shot into the bottom left corner.

Rigobert Song is making a record eighth appearance at the African Cup. Alain Gouamene of Ivory Coast and Egypt striker Hossam Hassan have each made seven.

Cameroon almost leveled when Achille Webo hit a powerful low shot that forced Ovono to make another save in the 20th.

Emana then provided a well-timed through ball for Webo

inside the box, but Ovono again used his legs to again save in the 32nd.

Gabon, making its first appearance at the tournament after a 10-year absence, had several chances to finish off the game but failed to take advantage of Cameroon's hesitant defending.

Cameroon's Samuel Eto'o, a three-time African Footballer of the Year, had a chance to equalize in the 75th after collecting a pass from Jean Makoun but the Inter Milan striker fired wide from close range.

THE THURSDAY COLUMN

Is'haq Modibbo Kawu

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The more we see, the less sense things make

A week can be a pretty long time in politics. Last week, saw the height of spin when Tanimu Yakubu, Yar'adua's Economic Adviser turned himself into a megaphone of sorts, telling Nigerians in a well-coordinated performance, that was syndicated in many newspapers, that the ailing president spoke to key government officials, on Tuesday, January 5th, 2010. The absurdity of becoming the spokesperson for the vice president, senate president and speaker of the House on that occasion was probably lost to him and the other people orchestrating the machination of spinning Nigerians into further confusion. Of course, the individuals concerned were obliged to play along. It is a very old game of courts. During the reign of Akbar Muhammad Jallaludin, one of the most famous of the Mughal rulers of old India, a court adviser asked a visiting peasant regarded as a wise man in the presence of the King, just what he (the adviser) was thinking at that moment. If he failed, he would be beheaded. The wise peasant thought for about a minute and replied: "You are thinking that our king is a very wise king; the best in the whole universe, he cares for the entire society and you're praying, that long may he reign!" The adviser acknowledged immediately that the man was right and applauded!

Even if Jonathan, Mark and Bankole did not speak with President Yar'adua, they naturally had to play along in an elaborate game of deception which the 'Katsina Mafia' has foisted on our country. Furthermore, isn't Yakubu Tanimu said to be one of the most important of the sidekicks of the president? He can therefore hijack the role of presidential megaphone at least for that instance; because the truth is that they had boxed themselves into a corner with the medieval manner they have handled information in respect of the president's ill-health. They brought the template they used in Katsina, when Yar'adua was said to be out for about six months, during his first term as governor and thought Nigerians can be manipulated like people were in Katsina state. They did not reckon with the restiveness of so many sections of the country neither did they seem to be bothered about the unfavourable reputation they've been earning for Nigeria. But if anybody thought that the paralysis around was a product of genuine naivety, even Donald Duke, himself a PDP member, noted that they fail in governance, but they have not stopped awarding contracts!

An equally interesting piece of the jigsaw was the belated attempt by the PDP governors, led by Bukola Saraki, to become more assertive after the initial untruth that Saraki and Yuguda saw Yar'adua in Saudi Arabia and he was in good shape. It is now clear that we were lied to by the governors, because they were not allowed to see Yar'adua. The new thing is that the impasse has led to a re-assessment of the political situation; the governors do not want to tie their political fates to an ailing president whose condition they were unable to verify. That was why they launched a "solidarity visit" to Goodluck Jonathan. The circumstance seemed to have favoured Jonathan, just for a week and the Katsina Mafia was rattled that the elaborate charade was about to blow away like straw in a storm. Tanimu Yakubu's group played a fast one by roping the vice president, senate president and House speaker into the telephony loop and on Tuesday this week, delivered what in French is called a coup-de-poing by getting what was said to be President Yar'adua's voice on the BBC!

A patriot will ask just why the BBC and not NTA and Radio Nigeria? Was our man elected in Britain? Why must the charity of those who rule us always begin abroad? Do these chaps realize what patriotism really mean? Do they have an iota of respect for the Nigerian people at all? Maybe these were not the considerations for them at the moment. They have at least diffused temporarily the wild rumour of the past week that the president was dead. But they cannot sleep easy, because the mass mobilization and street manifestation movement has been re-launched. On the day that Yar'adua was made to speak for 58 seconds on the BBC, Nigerian civil society activists reclaimed the streets to remind those who manipulate Nigeria in smoke-filled recesses that this country belongs to the Nigerian people. Yar'adua is Nigeria's president, even when he also belongs to his family and his sidekicks; and for as long as he remains the president of our country, Nigerians have a right to information about his state!

THISDAY Newspaper invites war criminals to celebrate Nigeria's Independence

The front page of THISDAY newspaper of Wednesday, January 6, 2010, carried a report that former British Prime Minister, Tony Blair and former US Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, have been invited to attend an Awards ceremony to celebrate Nigeria's 50th independence anniversary. Of course a newspaper has the right to invite whosoever it chooses to, but our media must also be sensitive to international opinions as well as respect the memories of our nation's heroes and the struggle to achieve independence. THISDAY said these two individuals "will be discussing the theme: 'Nigeria in the next 50 years'". The paper then regaled us with a very impressive CV

of these two imperialist politicians as if that was all there is about them. It is an unforgivable act of omission to ignore the fact that the two individuals ARE WAR CRIMINALS!

Tony Blair as British Prime Minister, was the notorious lapdog of George W. Bush, who joined the illegal American invasion of Iraq in 2003, on the basis of lies and dodgy and "sexed up" intelligence that Saddam Hussein could weaponize nuclear missiles in 45 minutes. Subsequently, there were no weapons of mass destruction found in Iraq after the invasion and occupation. Condoleezza Rice was the National Security Adviser to the George W. Bush administration which launched the invasion on the basis of fraud and lies, ignoring the UN. More than one million Iraqis have lost their lives and millions more have been injured or are in exile. These are the war criminals that THISDAY newspaper has chosen to invite to grace an occasion to celebrate our country's independence. It is mind-boggling and unacceptable! Nigerian civil society groups must make it impossible for war criminals to enter our country by launching a campaign against the invitation. A few months ago, they launched a campaign against a proposed visit of President Omar El-Bashir of Sudan, for alleged crimes in Darfur. This is the time for our civil society groups to launch the biggest campaign ever against mass killers of the people of Iraq. Tony Blair and Condoleezza Rice should not be welcome in a country of decent people and Nigeria is a decent country. These two individuals have blood dripping from all parts of their body and the flesh of Iraqi children is hanging on their teeth. They should be facing their fate at the International Criminal Court at The Hague, not visiting Nigeria!

“On the day that Yar'adua was made to speak for 58 seconds on the BBC, Nigerian civil society activists reclaimed the streets to remind those who manipulate Nigeria in smoke-filled recesses that this country belongs to the Nigerian people”

SPORTS REPORT



MICHAEL Essien

Essien joins Ghana team in Angola

Chelsea midfielder Michael Essien has joined up with the Ghana team in Angola and is fit to play in the African Nations Cup, a spokesman for the Black Stars said on Wednesday. Essien, who has recovered from a hamstring injury, should have arrived on Sunday but bad weather in London

delayed his departure to Africa.

"He has arrived in Angola this morning. He is with the team and he fit to play and available," a Ghana spokesman said.

"If the coach decides that he plays, he will be available."

Ghana play their Group B opener against the Ivory Coast on Friday in Cabinda.



OBAFEMI Martins

Martins off to Europe for treatment

Highly rated attacker Obafemi Martins has left the Nigeria squad in order to undergo treatment on his shin in Europe. The Wolfsburg star underwent surgery in November, but still complains of pain.

"Martins has gone back to Europe to see his specialist with regards the problem with his shin. He has complained of pains in his right shin, which the experts said should not be the case after he underwent surgery recently," said a spokesman for the Nigerian FA to reporters.

The injury kept Martins out of Nigeria's starting XI for the 3-1 loss against Egypt on Tuesday and the attacker did not take part in Wednesday morning's session at the training ground in Benguela.