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THE DEBATE

2003: Should
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Pages 23 & 24

STAR FEATURE

The famous
dye-pits of
Kano

Page 16

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for sale

ACF wades into Nasarawa crisis ...as Senate summons IG

The Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF), the umbrella organisation for leaders of thought from the northern states, has intervened in the ethnic clashes in Nasarawa State which has claimed scores of lives and dislodged thousands of people from

By Dare Oyewole, in Kaduna,
Austine Odo and Reuben
Yunana, in Abuja

their homes within the past few weeks.

Senate has also summoned the Inspector-General of Police, Mr. Musiliu Smith to brief it on measures taken to contain the endless

ethnic war in Nasarawa State.

The ACF announced in Kaduna yesterday that it was sending a 12-man delegation to the state to broker peace between the warring ethnic groups, even as traditional rulers from the rival groups have declared their support

for the peace moves so far made by the state governor, Alhaji Abdullahi Adamu, and his Benue counterpart, Mr. George Akume, whose state is accommodating 27,000 Tiv refugees from the conflict zone. The Tivs also make up the majority group in Benue State.

According to ACF's Deputy Publicity Secretary, Alhaji Bukar Zarma, who spoke to *Daily Trust* in Kaduna yesterday, the delegation would depart Kaduna for Nasarawa today to condole the people of the state and effect the peace treaty.

He said the team would be led by Justice Mamman Nasir, the *Galadiman* Katsina. Other members of the team are; Lt-General



Gov. Abdullahi Adamu

contd. on pg 2

Reps probe OMPADEC fund

By Henry Omu

The House of Representatives agreed yesterday to investigate allegations of fraud made against the presidential committee which supervised the winding up of the Oil Minerals Producing and Development Commission (OMPADEC) over the N10 billion released to the committee by the Federal Government for the exercise.

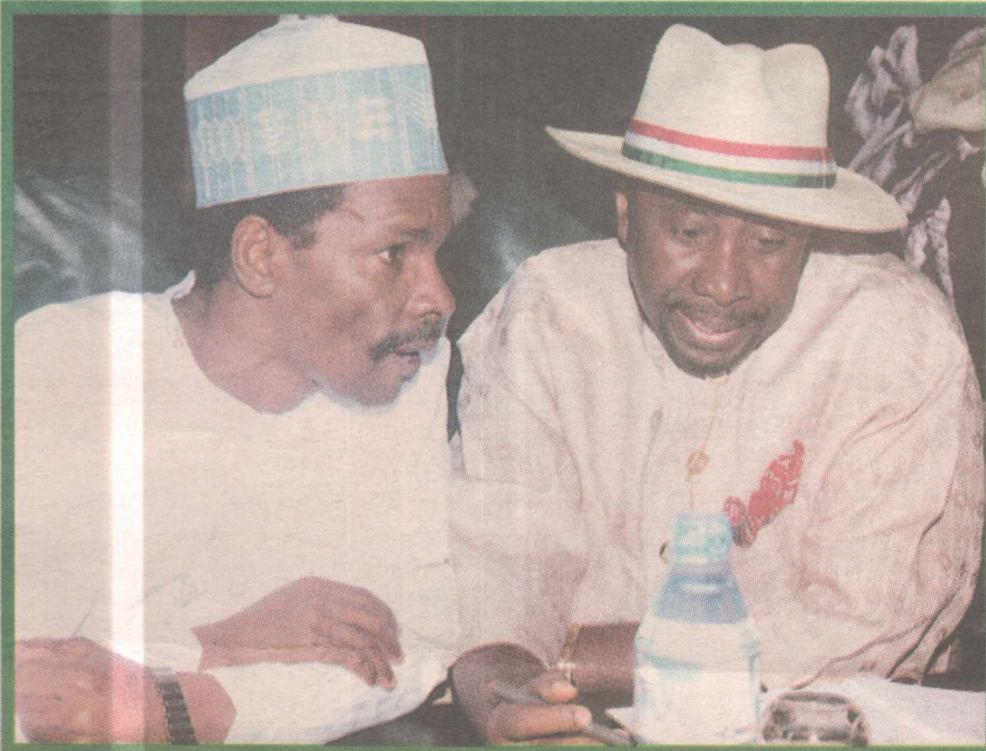
In addition, the House has further mandated its committee on the Niger Delta to hold a public hearing on how the N10 billion was spent and report back to the House.

The N10 billion, now at the centre of controversy was released by the Federal Government for the payment of debts owed contractors of OMPADEC, including all other outstanding debts.

But while moving a motion for the probe, the Chairman, House Committee on Niger-Delta, Rep Iheanacho Obioma, said his committee had received petitions alleging sharp practices against the committee in connection with the handling of the N10 billion.

He therefore, not only sought leave of the House to

contd. on pg 2



The Minister of Water Resources, Alhaji Mukhtar Shehu Shagari (l) and his Minister of State, Chief Precious Ngalele (r) putting heads together during the Federal Executive Council (FEC) meeting in Abuja... yesterday.

Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje.

Police take over military barracks

By Suleiman Mohammed

The Federal Government has directed the Defence Ministry to take inventory of abandoned military barracks in the country and hand them over to the Nigeria Police Force.

The directive yesterday at the Federal Executive Council (FEC) meeting followed complaints by the Inspector-General of Police, Alhaji Musiliu Smith, of inadequate residential accommodation for the men and officers of the Nigeria Police Force, and his subsequent plea for the conversion of

abandoned military barracks across the country, to cater for the police.

Briefing State House correspondents of the development, Transport Minister, Chief Ojo Maduekwe, said the Defence Minister, Lt-General Theophilus Danjuma (rtd) has been directed to carry out the exercise and further brief the council.

He said the Defence Ministry would assess all the needs of the Nigeria Army before carrying out the exercise, adding "this is impor-

tant because government wants to address the accommodation problem of the police force."

FG approves N10bn for space project

The Federal Government yesterday set aside N10.5 billion for the take-off of a space project, just as it announced the constitution of an eleven-member National Space Council headed by President Olusegun Obasanjo.

Announcing the development after the Federal Ex-

Shonekan laments death of Vision 2010

Former Head of the Interim National Government (ING), Chief Earnest Shonekan, has lamented the non-implementation of the recommendations of the Vision 2010 project which he chaired during the late General Sani Abacha administration.

Chief Shonekan said the document would have catapulted Nigeria to the dream world, stressing that for the country to join the league of developed nations, it must implement certain aspects of the Vision 2010 documents.

Speaking with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in London, Chief Shonekan

described the document as a blue light for the development of the country.

The Vision 2010 project, he said took about 10 months to produce by selected groups that cut across all segments of the Nigerian society, including students, market women as well as 48 expatriates who were heads of global organisations.

"It was a thorough searchlight which looked at all problems confronting Nigeria and proffered solutions to them," he said, adding that all decisions arrived at were by consensus.

Chief Shonekan emphasised the need for effective and efficient utilities such as electricity and infrastructure, which he said are necessary for development.

He called for the diversification of the economy from dependence on one product, oil, adding that a sound economy was key to all other aspects of development.

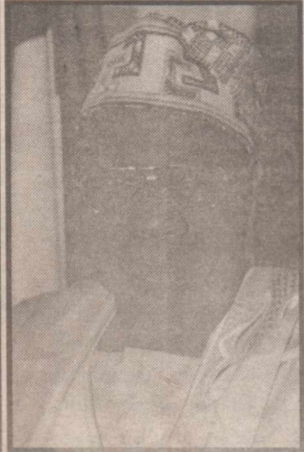
On the performance of the Obasanjo government so far, he said government was doing its best to achieve the desired result. "The rots set

contd. on pg 2

NEWS

Mahmoud Atta advocates parliamentary system of government

Former Chief of Protocol to the Sardauna of Sokoto, Alhaji Ahmadu Bello has called for the jettisoning of the presidential system of



Obasanjo government and its replacement with the parliamentary system.

Addressing journalists in Abuja yesterday, Atta a former chairman of First Bank Nigeria Plc said the presidential system of government breeds corruption and called for the adoption of the 1963 constitution.

"I am suggesting that the 1963 constitution should be adopted by each state. Northern Nigerian constitution should be adopted by all states in the north, the same should go for states in the west, east and midwest," Atta, who spoke under the aegis of "Parliamentary System Association of Nigeria," said.

According to him, in a parliamentary system of government all ministers were elected while in the presidential system they were appointed leading to corruption.

"During the First Republic all ministers were appointed from elected

By Reuben Yunana

members, but now, we are forced to accept the services of those people who had been rejected by their constituencies during elections.

"That is why these people don't have feelings for their constituencies when they are elected ministers Special Assistants and Ambassadors," Atta said.

Another minus for the presidential system he said is the promotion of mutual suspicion between the

various components and the Executive and Legislature.

According to him, it is practically impossible to run an open system because the president only comes to the legislature whenever he wants his budget passed.

"After the passage of the Appropriation Act the legislature does not get the chance to know how the budget is being implemented. The presidential system is corrupt system of government and we should discourage it," he said.

Minister appeals to nurses to shelve strike

Ahead of the July 6, ultimatum given to the Federal Ministry of Health by the National Association of Nigerian Nurses and Midwives (NANM), the Minister of Health, Prof. Alphonsus Nwosu, has appealed to the association not to embark on strike for the sake of their patients.

The minister, who made the appeal at a meeting with the executive officers of the association on Tuesday, assured that his ministry was determined to ensure that justice, fair-play and equity prevailed among all professional associations in the health sector.

The nurses are demanding the application of world accepted relativity ratio of nurses' salaries to those of doctors which they claim was not applied in the approvals made for the Nigerian Medical Association.

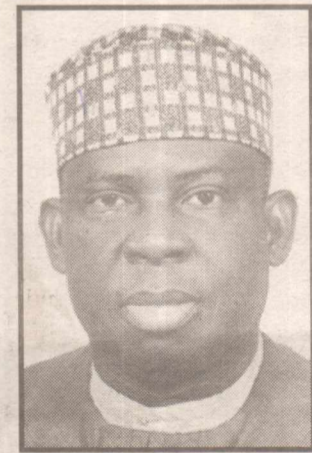
Furthermore, the associa-

tion argued that government did not put into consideration the welfare of other health professionals in its bid to placate doctors.

However, the minister, Prof. Nwosu, begged the nurses to reconsider their position as their grievances would be addressed in due course.

He pleaded for time, especially as he had just come out of drawn-out negotiations with doctors.

He pleaded for time, especially as he had just come out of drawn-out negotiations with doctors.



Prof. A.B.C. Nwosu

Reps contd. from pg. 1

embark on the probe, so as to determine the extent of fraud, but also that it hold a public hearing on the allegations as well.

The motion was eventually adopted through a voice vote when Speaker Ghali Na'Abba put the question to members as to whether it be approved or not.

Speaking to newsmen later, the committee chairman explained that on receiving the petition, an adhoc committee was created to investigate the allegations during which it discovered that, "there was an element of truth in the petition."

Rep. Obioma said the adhoc committee went to states like Abia, Rivers and

Delta, where it was discovered that the winding-up committee reawarded as well as paid for contracts already completed and paid for by the Professor Eric Opia management.

Said the committee chairman: "In Abia, we discovered that projects paid for by the management of Professor Opia were revalued, re-awarded and paid for by more than 100 per cent, above the initial contract amount.

"My motion, therefore, is seeking to make the committee to do a thorough investigation on the activities of the OMPADEC winding-up committee, and the public hearing is the only way to

force out more revelations by all those involved," he said.

Moreover, the lawmaker said the committee is in possession of documents supporting the allegations of fraud, and that the House is interested in knowing whether the N10 billion was properly utilised by the winding-up committee.

"From our preliminary investigation, we believe more questions need to be asked. We believe that from the petitions and documents before us, the allegations are 70 per cent true," Rep. Obioma stated.

The petitions, according to him, were written by aggrieved contractors and former staff of OMPADEC.

Nigeria has been ranked second to Egypt among countries whose missions in New York have accumulated fines amounting to a total of 31.3 million dollars (more than N3.13 billion) between 1997 and 2000.

Information received in New York indicates that Nigeria's two missions in the city and their officers are owing 14 million dollars (more than N140 million) in unpaid fines for parking violations while Egypt is owing 16 million dollars (more than N163 million) for the period.

Following Nigeria are Kuwait (981,500 dollars), Indonesia (973,500 dollars), Russia (799,000 dollars), Brazil (635,000 dollars) and Morocco (553,800 dollars) in that order.

There are 12 African countries among the top 25 countries owing the city unpaid fines for parking in

Foreign Missions in New York owe N3.1 billion

unauthorised places.

Although diplomats are traditionally provided immunity against paying such fines, New York City Mayor, Mr. Rudolph Giuliani, has said that as from August 1, vehicles of consular officers that owed more than 230 dollars in parking fines since 1997 will be impounded.

The policy does not apply to permanent missions to the UN, which do not operate on the basis of bilateral relations with the U.S.

The city is targeting consular officers on the basis of a U.S. State Department briefing paper in 1998 that said vehicles of consular officials, who though have full criminal immunity, can be towed and impounded in accordance with local proce-

dures.

In a reaction to the city's planned action, the U.S. State Department warned on Monday that the new policy could have broad international consequences.

Such consequences include retaliatory measures, such as the subjection of American diplomats to national and local laws in the countries whose officers have had their vehicles seized or are forced to pay those fines.

Nigeria's Consul-General in New York, Mr. Taofiq Oseni, told NAN that he became concerned about the amount of parking tickets that consulate drivers were incurring about two years ago and took some measures to curtail it.

FG contd. from pg. 1

ment, Centre for Geo-dicey and Geo-dynamics as well as the Centre for Space Transport and Proportion among others.

The new Space Council, he said, would oversee the activities of the Space Agency. With President Obasanjo as chairman, the council also has the vice-president, Atiku Abubakar, the National Security Adviser (NSA), Ministries of Defence, Internal Affairs, Education, National Planning, Science and Technology, and representatives of the private sector and two scientists as members.

According to the Minister, the approval was done as

ACF contd. from pg. 1

with the governors and community leaders to ensure the return of peace.

The Senate took these steps following the adoption of a motion sponsored by Patrick Aga who spoke under "matter of urgent importance."

Presenting the motion, Senator Aga lamented that since the current crisis began over two months ago, many lives have been lost while property worth billions of naira have been lost, with thousands, many of them women and children now displaced.

According to him, despite the fact that countless persons including a Special Adviser to the Nasarawa

a sign of government's commitment to science development and to "avoid been delinked from the rest of the world."

Other issues approved by the meeting include, the release of \$5 million pledge to the African Academy of Science and another \$400 million for the African Capacity Building Fund accordingly.

He further disclosed that the sum of N459 million was approved for the rehabilitation of the Warri Refinery and Petrochemical Company tank gading and inventory system installed since 1978.

State governor were slaughtered in cold blood, the police is yet to make an arrest or bring the situation under control as well as post more security operatives to the area.

Senate condemned the crisis and called on the Federal Government to urgently send relief materials to ameliorate the sufferings of people displaced by the crisis.

Trouble broke out in the state following the murder by unknown persons on June 12, this year, of the traditional ruler of Azara chieftdom in Awe Local Government Area, Alhaji Musa Ibrahim, who was also special adviser to the state governor.

Shonekan contd. from pg. 1

in for a long time and it will take a long time to clear," he said.

He explained that other

countries of the world were now beginning to take Nigeria seriously; situation he attributed to "President

Obasanjo's trips abroad, to market Nigeria," but called for more improvement on the part of government.

NEWS

IG files N100m suit against Insider magazine

The Inspector-General of Police, Alhaji Musliu Smith, has filed a libel suit against the publishers of *Insider* magazine and its Editor-in-Chief, Ben Charles Obi, claiming N100 million as damages. In a statement of claim filed at the Lagos High Court in Ikeja on June 18, 2001, and made available to newsmen, the plaintiff said that the publishers of the weekly magazine, with a large circulation throughout Nigeria, falsely and maliciously published a story concerning him and his office.

The plaintiff claimed that the defendants published the words "recklessly and without regard whether the words were true or not," adding that "the magazine did not make any efforts to check the truth thereof." The statement of claim with suit No. ID/1373/2001 also said that the defendants had been given the opportunity to publish a retraction and apology but failed to do so.

It added that the

publishers published the said words calculating thereby to increase the circulation of the magazine, with a view to making a profit from the sale of copies of the magazine.

"The defendants published the said words knowing that the public would be anxious to read such publication, having regard to the fact that the plaintiff is a prominent figure in the society, and that he held a sensitive position which is a position of trust," the statement added.

The plaintiff claims jointly and severally damages for libel contained in the article published under the caption, "End of the road" on pages 23 to 25 of the May 28, 2001 edition of the magazine in the sum of N100 million.



Mr. Smith, Police IG

ASUU agreement binding on FG, states - *Fashina*

Ikenna Emeka Okpani

The President of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Dr. Oladipo Fashina, who last Tuesday officially called off the three-month-old ASUU strike after reaching agreement with government, has said the agreement was binding on both the federal and state governments.

This, according to him, was because there is only one university system in Nigeria and the Federal Government has the responsibility to maintain high standards in the university system.

"On this basis, there is an

agreement that the Federal Government will provide general assistance to states - both those that own universities and those that need assistance in the area of higher education," he said.

Allaying the fears of lecturers in state universities over the refusal of the Federal Government to accept the provisions of grants to them, Dr. Fashina said all the provisions on funding, basic salaries and autonomy were informed by data collected from both federal and state universities and that the provisions on all negotiated

issues apply to state universities.

Dr. Fashina noted that ASUU had embarked on strike on April 2, 2001 to persuade government to sign agreement reached between it and the union.

Meanwhile, the Minister of Education, Prof. Babalola Borisade, called on ASUU, "to join hands with government to build a fully functional and enterprising university education system that Nigeria can be proud of."

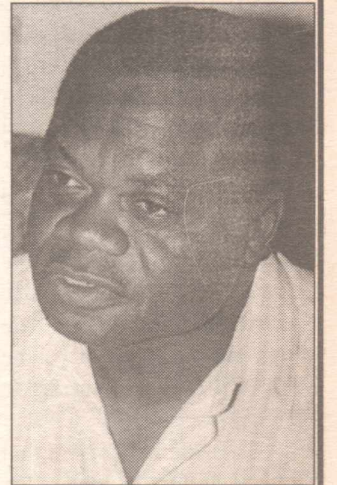
In a statement made available to *Daily Trust*, Prof. Borisade thanked Nigerian students for their understanding while the strike lasted, adding that their patience and mediation in the impasse was worthy of commendation.

Furthermore, he thanked the Parent Teacher-Association of Nigeria (PTAN) for mediating in the negotiations, the National Assembly and Prof. Ayo

Bajo-led government negotiation team.

"Though the process of reaching an agreement was tedious, long and tortuous but the final agreement has been a triumph of reason, dialogue and collective bargaining," Prof. Borisade said.

Government, according to him was absolutely



Dr. Oladipo Fashina committed to restoring our tertiary institutions to acceptable standards obtainable everywhere but the restoration, he added, must be systematic and gradual.

Communal clash claims seven lives in Taraba

A protracted communal clash in Sunkundi village of Wukari Local Government Area of Taraba State has claimed no fewer than seven lives while property worth millions of naira were destroyed.

A News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) correspondent

who visited the affected area learnt that the problem started when a farmer accosted a cattle rearer for grazing on his farm near the border between Taraba and Benue.

Sources in the area told NAN that the misunderstanding between the duo later degenerated into a full-blown communal violence last Saturday with kinsmen of both parties attacking one another with guns, knives, bows and arrows and other dangerous weapons.

They said in the ensuing attacks, a man was killed by members of an ethnic group who mistook him for one of their enemies while an entire settlement was razed down by members of another ethnic group in retaliation for the killing of their kinsmen.

Transport minister rides on bike to FEC meeting

Transport Minister, Ojo Maduekwe, yesterday defied the morning heavy downpour and lived up to his promise to ride on a bicycle to the Federal Executive Council (FEC) meeting.

Maduekwe, had a week ago apologized to Nigerians for his inability to do so that day because he got back to his home in the early hours of the morning and would have been late for the meeting, if he had insisted on riding on a bicycle. He was determined not to fail again in his promise as the rain would have prevented him,

thereby putting his credibility to question.

The minister, riding in company of his personal aides, including the Chief Press Secretary, all numbering about 10 and clad in track suits, departed his residence at about 8.45 a.m. and arrived at the state house at about 9.30 a.m.

Maduekwe, who had his changing clothes in a suit carrier with his council memo strapped at the back of his bicycle, told newsmen that he was "excited" to have been able to take the lead in practicalising the bicycle culture he was preaching.

The Chief Press Secretary, Mr. Greyne Anosike, who spoke to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) after the exercise, described it as a "sweet experience," adding, "the joy of riding in the rain made the exercise more exciting."

Anti-graft: Court threatens to revoke bail granted a SAN

An Abuja High Court trying cases referred to it by the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), yesterday threatened to revoke the bail granted to Milton Ohwovoriole, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), for absenteeism.

Ohwovoriole, who is facing criminal charges along with Mika Anache, Adebisi Olafisoye, and Adeyemi Omowumi in a N3.5 million bribery scandal, was not present at the resumed sitting yesterday.



The Minister of Transport, Chief Ojo Maduekwe, riding on a bicycle from his ministerial quarters to the Presidential Villa to attend the Federal Executive Council meeting ... yesterday. Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje

Cartoon Contest!

Entries are invited for a cartoon contest in Daily Trust newspaper. Entries could be on any theme, and they should have contemporary relevance and significance.

Rules of the contest

1. All submissions must be original and expressed in the English Language.
2. All entries should provide evidence of talent and imagination.
3. Each contestant is allowed to make three submissions only.
4. The theme of each entry should be clear to any reader.
5. Submissions should be sent to the Editor, *Daily Trust*, P.O.Box 6873, Wuse, Abuja. 'Cartoon Contest' should be written on the top left-hand corner of each envelop. Tuesday 31st July is the closing date for the submission of entries.

Note: If you have already sent your entries, okay, but if not, please make it 26cm wide by 13.5cm deep.

Prizes

There would be a first prize of N10, 000. 00, a second prize of N7, 000 .00, and a third prize of N5, 000.00. Each award also attracts a commission to produce cartoons for Daily Trust and Weekly Trust Newspapers.

NEWS

N2.3b NEPA fund: NLC urges Ige, Agagu to resign

The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has called for the resignation of Chief Bola Ige, the Minister of Justice and Attorney-General as well as Dr. Olusegun Agagu, Minister of Power and Steel.

According to a press statement signed by the NLC President, Chief Adams Oshimhole, the two ministers should resign for their role in the improper lodgement of N2.3 billion belonging to NEPA.

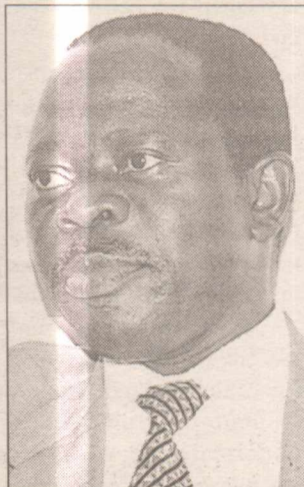
The NLC expressed shock at the revelations made at the sitting of the Senate Committee on Public Accounts probing the improper lodgement of the N2.3 billion belonging to NEPA.

The statement stated that the revelations made by Dr. Agagu showed that the N2.3 billion was improperly lodged in a low yielding call deposit account which does not belong to NEPA. According

From Samson Ojo, in Lagos

to NLC, Chief Ige's decision to have lodged the money in an account at 6 percent interest when the prevalent rate was at least 17 percent was suspicious.

The text of the statement



Comrade Adams Oshimhole read: "Those who gave evidence before the Senate Committee laid the blame for this lodgement and delay in remitting NEPA funds on the doorsteps of Chief Ige."

The NLC posited that Chief Ige could not except himself as a minister he since would have known about the appropriation and it was the business of the Ministry of Power and Steel which he headed then to remit such funds to NEPA.

The statement blamed Dr. Agagu for unilaterally disbursing N51 million interest accruing from the money rather than return the money to the federal treasury for appropriation as the constitution specifies.



L-R: The Head of Civil Service of the Federation, Alhaji Mahmud Ahmed Yayale, the SGF, Chief Ufor Ekaette, and the Minister of Aviation, Dr. (Mrs.) Kema Chikwe, during the Federal Executive Council meeting held at the State House ... yesterday. Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje

Police release results of recruitment test

The results of the recruitment examination into the Nigeria Police taken on 16th September, 2000 have been released.

In a press release signed by the Police Public Relations Officer and made available to *Daily Trust*, candidates who sat for the examination have been advised to check for their results at the FCT police command headquarters.

From there, the release added, successful candidates will proceed to Kaduna on 9th July, 2001 for training. They are, therefore, to come along with their credentials.

Meanwhile, recruitment into the Nigeria Police Force in the Federal Capital continues every Tuesday and Thursday all through the year.

Tinubu angry with FG over pensioners fund

Governor Bola Tinubu of Lagos State has expressed his anger over the N900 million pension fund owed the state by the federal authorities and has promised to sponsor pensioners' protest against the Federal Government.

According to him, the Lagos State government has continuously funded the payment of retirees in the hope that the Federal

From Bright Ewulu, in Lagos

Government would reimburse the monies expended on the pensions.

The governor, according to a release signed by his Chief Press Secretary, Segun Ayobolu, declared this while addressing protesting retirees at his office and disclosed his readiness to provide them money for transport to Abuja and a day's meal.

Minna businessman refutes allegation of destabilization

A prominent politician-cum businessman, Alhaji Bawa Rijawi, has reacted to the allegation against him that he was sponsoring anarchy in the state.

Earlier in *The News* magazine had carried an article in its last week's publication which licensed the state Governor, Engr. Abdulkadri Kure, who demanded to know what prompted the politician to indulge in such action.

Reacting to the allegation before the newsmen in the state, the businessman-cum-politician remarked that he only heard the rumour, and that nobody had tendered any evidence of his plot to destabilize the peace and tranquility of the state.

The magazine had earlier alleged that the businessman in connivance with one Alhaji Isah Waziri Suleiman, the former All Peoples Party

From Kashim Sule, in Minna

(APP) chairman were training some people to vandalise the Kainji Dam and throw Minna metropolis into darkness, in order to force the state governor to remove the Emir of Minna, as the Emir was no longer enjoying the loyalty of his subjects.

Defending himself, the businessman remarked: "I'm not a troublemaker. I'm a harbinger of peace for the development of Niger State as a whole. In fact, I don't know whether the emir has problem with the state government, his subjects or the politicians and the governor of the state."

He stressed that he was not gunning for any title from Minna emirate as this was improper of him to do so revealing that he is a double title holder in his home town and was satisfied with that.

Expressing the enemies of peace in the state, he said, he was not one of them and thought that everybody would agree totally emirs and leaders generally. He declared that since the creation of the state 25 years ago, the state hosted 12 military and civilian governors and he had got on well with them.

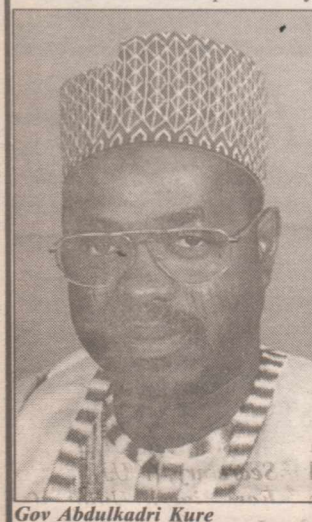
"The retired Commodore Murtala Nyako was one of the military governors most admirable and Colonel Emein the worst."

NAPTAN supports deregulation of examination body

The National Parent-Teacher Association of Nigeria (NAPTAN) believes that no examination body should be given the exclusive right to conduct terminal examinations for Senior School Certificate (SSC) students.

Apparently referring to the imbroglio generated by the recent House of Representatives passage of a bill vesting monopoly on the National Examination Council (NECO) to conduct SSC examination for school candidates, NAPTAN says that WAEC and NECO should be allowed to conduct the examination simultaneously.

At its 36th National Executive Council (NEC) meeting in Lagos, the association supported the 1999 National Council on Examination's (NCE) decision to vest the power to conduct the examination on both bodies. NAPTAN also says the deregulation in the examination sector was overdue considering the inadequacies suffered recently by the West African Examination Council (WAEC), a body which had enjoyed monopoly for over 50 years.



Gov Abdulkadri Kure

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DAILY TRUST

EDITORIAL

Value of human life

Our nation appears to have entered a most traumatic pass, and this is confirmed by the riots and bloodletting occurring with increasing frequency over the past few months. These conflicts have taken macabre and weird forms of expressing themselves. This assumed pathological proportions recently in Nasarawa State where a special adviser and traditional ruler was not only assassinated but beheaded to make a point.

Today, no value seems to be placed on human life we are all enjoined to protect. The low value placed on human life which these riots have demonstrated, is also indicative of the depravity of the perpetrators of the carnage. So far, this wastage of human lives were exhibited in Lagos, Ketu, Sagamu, Aba, Shendam, Awe, Lafia, Kaduna, Takum and many others in the past two years. It is either a crisis has broken out in a town, or a community is passing through a festering debacle, which is bound to express itself in looting, maiming and deaths, sooner or later. This is the unpleasant balance in which we find ourselves today.

A careful survey of most of these conflicts indicates that the slow reaction of the security apparatus was a principal reason for escalation. This was particularly clear at Awe where there had been reference to an 'age old' hostility between the prominent groups resident there. This is also true of several other communities where conflicts have erupted. A well-equipped security outfit is fundamental to the present purpose. It should be so co-ordinated to monitor potential crisis areas to nip them in the bud.

It would appear that the palpable neglect of the rural areas is a contributory factor to the skirmishes. We will urge that government should act to improve the quality of life in the rural areas. This would involve attending to the traditional problems in each area, whether this relates to land, markets or traditions. Police stations in these areas should be better equipped, and made more relevant and meaningful to the host community. Structures which have been established for the expression of popular grievances in those communities and the cities, should be more responsive. Such a structure would then be playing a significant role in restoring hope to the troubled communities.

Human life does not appear to have any significance when these conflicts erupt. These conflicts are also fuelled by the tyranny of poverty, marginalisation, century-old suspicions and much more. *Daily Trust* believes that so much needs to be done to restore value to human life, which is, and should be regarded as sacred.

Events in an environment are illustrative of the quality of the human material in that location. Nigerians should therefore place more premium on the sanctity of human life.

THURSDAY COLUMN

Gender equality and democracy

Culled from *Democracy in Nigeria: Continuing Dialogue for Nation-Building*. By International IDEA

Beginning in 1929, women in the southern part of Nigeria combined the struggle for independence with attempts to address the socio-economic policies of the colonial administration and their impact on women's status and quality of life. In the "Egba women's riot" and the "Aba women's boycott" in the East, women crystallized the strategic importance of the need to question the link between the political and monetary policies of incumbent authorities and the impact of these on women's lives.

Under the leadership of Mrs. Ransome-Kuti, women questioned the character of governance; the authoritarian, arbitrary nature of decision-making by the Sole Native Authority and the colonial governments. Women organized "militantly" and began to develop a movement that immediately became a part of the independence national movement, but also developed a clear voice in questioning the implications of existing policies on the quality of life and status of women. Thus women as a constituency began to emerge as a force to be reckoned with. Evoking cultural traditions, like threatening to bare their bodies at the Obis palace in Abeokuta, their strategies and tactics differed from those applied by the women's movements on other continents. Of course, it is equally valid to claim that there was an ongoing process of symbiosis with the experiences of women elsewhere, insofar as the leadership of women in Nigeria was aware of the "stirrings of women" the world over.

It was from these anti-colonial resistance struggles that the foundations for women's emancipation, equality and empowerment were first laid. Under the leadership of Mrs. Ransome-Kuti, the movement quickly spread beyond the south-western part of Nigeria, and in 1947 Nigeria saw the first truly national body organized across class, regional and ethnic lines. The National Women's Union, which in 1953 metamorphosed into the Federation of Nigerian Women's Societies (FNWS), was political in character and content. For the first time, under the banner of FNWS, women demanded political participation and direct representation in all legislative houses. Its primary demand was one third of seats. The one-third quota remains a popular demand for women today in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

FNWS demanded that it be represented in all local councils, that one-third of seats in all legislative houses be allocated to women, that there should be universal suffrage and that whenever a law was to be introduced the FNWS should be informed and its opinion sought. Thus at independence, women from the southern regions were enfranchised. The experience of women in Nigeria is varied. Whereas their counterparts in the South were enfranchised at independence, women in the North were enfranchised only in 1979.

Despite these epoch-making events, women's participation in the struggles for a democratic and just society has not resulted in corresponding political power, nor have their interests and concerns been included in the democratic agenda. Women in post-independent Nigeria have experienced some measure of success, but only within the overall framework of an emerging patriarchal state.

The media and gender

Most of the mass media establishment, particularly at state and local levels, is either government owned or has not lived up to its constitutional role as an impartial umpire and monitor of the processes of governance. Where the media are mindful of their responsibilities, they are usually the fulcrum for promoting democratic culture by providing the avenue for public discourse, policy input and credible checks on the excesses of state power. The absence of this critical role by the media is particularly evident when we speak of women and democracy. Little has been done to promote the contributions by women to public life. Even where women get a mention, old prejudices and stereotypes are evident.

Experiences from societies where women have achieved some form of political empowerment indicate that a number of factors have facilitated their success. These same factors have had different application in Nigeria. When we consider women's numerical presence at national decision-making levels, their overall educational and technical capacities, and a history of widespread political activism, it becomes difficult to justify the present low level of representation by women. In examining some of the factors that have contributed to political empowerment elsewhere we need to remember that even within Nigeria these factors vary from place to place and therefore are not equally applicable in all parts of the country.

Some factors on which there is some form of consensus are the following:

The presence of a "critical mass" of women in anyone political forum: a woman on her own in a forum of men is not and cannot be expected to consistently score points in overturning the nature and processes inherent within such male-dominated environments. A number of women together can be a source of important support and encouragement

The women politicians ability to network among themselves and with a number of interest groups outside of their operational forums: There is no doubt that efforts by women will become largely successful when the women inside the various political forums come out of their setting and chant the same slogans inside that women are chanting outside. As voices rise in unison, those against the position of women will realize that the time has come for them to listen to women's demands.

Access to training opportunities which familiarize women with the necessary rules and means to enhance their performance: Not only women, but men who enter the sacred corridors of power, need to be conversant with the particular dynamics within. What the form is, and how best to use it to

one's own advantage, are key questions for those who wish to make an impact in their careers. In some instances women who have been willing to undertake training, and have had access to it, indicate that it was useful in helping them to understand and better handle the situations with which they were confronted.

Media coverage of politicians and their agendas: In many instances, the media is an effective conduit to the average person's living room. As such, they are an important means for the masses to recognize people, learn of their messages, and familiarize themselves with the differing agendas on offer. In most cases, the media tends to reflect the dominant mores of their respective societies, and as such, are more interested in the male politicians - especially those higher up the authority ladder.

Women politicians rarely receive equivalent coverage - unless they happen to be the wives of the head of state, and even then the coverage is relatively much less than that allocated to the male head of state. In some established democracies it is not unusual to hear that "the media clinched the vote", and although the media in many parts of the country are yet to play such a decisive role, their importance should not be underestimated.

The system of governance they work within - both the democratic content and the nature of the electoral system. Given the recent electoral result, it is problematic to categorically state that there is a strong correlation between democracy and women's political empowerment. Some parts of the country show that there were far more women in decision-making positions under the military than there are now. Nevertheless, it is important to maintain that women have a greater chance of access to political decision-making in a more democratic polity. In a context where multiple voices and representation are encouraged, and where ethnic or religious affiliations do not determine political agenda, women stand a greater chance of visibility and access to public fora.

What seems to be equally critical - and this again by no means across the board is the type of electoral system in use. Studies of established democracies indicate that proportional representation systems seem to offer more opportunities for women to gain access to public positions. This is mostly due to larger constituencies and hence bigger party lists, which in turn, mean that more women are likely to make it onto those lists than would normally be the case in smaller constituencies. But for this to be possible, women and men need to be properly informed about the electoral system and the procedures required. It is interesting to note that in many emerging democracies around the world, the type and nature of the electoral system is not a feature that receives much coverage. This is also true of Nigeria where few people know what kind of electoral system they have, let alone what its repercussions are. This begs the question of the need for more political awareness raising and education among people.

A final concluding remark would be caution against an essentialist view of women's political participation and commitment to gender equality. It is the premise of this report that in the process of building gender equality and engendering democracy, partnerships have to be formed between all those committed to a society based on freedom, justice and equality. It is a partnership among men and women throughout Nigeria and this partnership requires men's activism in the field of women's equality.

Primarily, it is the responsibility of the Federal Government to create an enabling environment for women's equality and gender equality. Creating an enabling environment will be hollow and meaningless if it is not expressed in concrete policies, programmes and resources.

There exist a number of structural and constraining factors which impact women's participation in terms of both numbers and quality. The Government must examine these, and develop systematic programmes, which can facilitate women's equality. All arms and levels of government have the responsibility of demonstrating political will and leading Nigerians as conscious agents for change, equality and justice for all Nigerians. These can be effectively achieved through the following recommended policies and measures.



LETTER OF THE DAY

Congratulations

We write to commend you and your organisation (Media Trust Ltd.) for the consistent, balanced and fair editorial reports which have continued to endear your young newspaper to the citizenry in the last few months.

In particular, the national secretariat of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) is delighted to note that your medium has continued to respect the tenets of professionalism as contained in the International Principles of Professional Ethics of Journalism and Code of Conduct.

We wish you the best in your pursuit of objectivity, truth and fairness to all and sundry. The national secretariat will in the nearest future pay an official visit to your office with a view to rubbing minds on the desired development of the journalism profession in the country.

Keep the flag flying.
Olu Akinboyewa,
 Assistant National Secretary, (NUJ),
 For: Nigeria Union of Journalists.

Opinion

BALA: A dirge for a patriot

By Abubakar Jika

It came as a rude shock to me. The last time we met towards the end of last year, he was full of vitality, confidence and in his usual humble disposition. I have come across death of so many friends and colleagues, but the death of Dr Jubril Bala Muhammad took the icing in its sheer waste of human resources. A waste of what could have been, but was not destined to be. As a Muslim we can only take solace in Gods injunction that: "from him we come and to him we shall return."

I find it difficult writing a tribute for Dr. Jubril Bala Muhammad. This is not for lack of what to say, but the fact that there is so much to write about. There is so much to celebrate in the life of Bala and so much to mourn in his death. He represents one of the best Nigeria can offer. A great loss. He is the second academic, a friend who died so young, at the prime of his life.

I still recall, with great pain, the death of Dr Umar Ibrahim Toungo, also of the University of Maiduguri in a similar circumstance: ghastly motor accident, 15 years ago. The similarity did not end there. Both were on their way to Maiduguri. Both also took leave of absence to serve their community at leadership levels. Dr Toungo was first adviser and later commissioner, agriculture and natural resources in the defunct Gongola State. Dr Bala was special assistant to Ibrahim Bunu who was Minister of the Federal Capital Territory.

I first met late Dr Jubril Bala Muhammad when he joined us at the Department of Mass Communications, University of Maiduguri as a graduate assistant in 1986. I had joined the department a year before also as a graduate assistant. I was actually doing my masters degree, but because I was running the programme in the same university I assisted in teaching and research. I shared the same office with him. One sunny morning in early 1986, I came to the office and found a tall, lanky young man at my table. The office had two tables and of course no locks as many offices in the universities are wont to do. I was of course surprised. He immediately stood up, thrust his hand and announced his name: Jubril Bala Muhammad. I shook his hand and told him my name. I then told him by the way that he was sitting at my desk. He quickly apologised and moved to the other one.

I grinned and told him 'you must be the graduate assistant we were expecting'. Bala nodded and within a few minutes we became friends. I got to know that he was expelled from ABU Zaria over the famous or infamous Rice Riots. He was then the public relations officer. I told him they should have fought over other issues than rice. Bala took time to explain the fundamental issues involved. These were beyond petty issues but bordered on class and class relations. I agreed with him.

Dr Jubril Bala Muhammad shared the same office with me for about three years. We both lived at Mairi, near the university then. He was imaginative, very sharp and principled. He could argue with you on what he believed strongly about from morning till dusk. He was then a radical firebrand. We all were in the 1980s. Nigeria had not witnessed June 12 and the trivialisation of a national mandate.

It was June 12 and its subsequent ethnicisation that redefined the national question for many of us. Many of us spent our youth fighting class struggles in the campuses. We all supported late Abiola and were among the reported 14 million Nigerians who gave him the mandate. We could not therefore understand why the Yorubas, including their intellectuals, appropriated the victory and reduced the issues to the North opposing the South. That incident, in the eyes of Bala, myself and others, forced a redefinition in addressing the nagging national question.

Bala and myself hitherto shared the view that addressing the issues of classes and class relations is more fundamental than the national question. Even though by the time he joined us at the department, which was relatively young, a robust culture of intellectual discourses and academic excellence was being pioneered, Bala's presence did raise the tempo of these activities. His unrelenting quests for intellectual finesse

were legendary.

Though Jerry Komia Domatob, the then head of department and a Cameroonian belonged to the right of the centre, he did concede to Bala's intellectual finesse which sometimes did come with youthful exuberance. Indeed, though at certain stage in the evolution of the department at Maiduguri Bala belonged to a different academic faction, which admittedly had more members, he never lost sight of the need to set and ensure standards. These were great days at the department of mass communications at the University of Maiduguri.

The quality of our products then attests to these. The bulk of the senior academics, including the current head of department at Maiduguri, were products of these rigorous periods. It is an attestation of the intellectual furnace of that era, that we have more of our products with PhDs than some other older departments in Northern Nigerian universities. It is true that the department of mass communications at the University of Maiduguri is virtually self-sufficient in terms of manpower. This is largely due to the foundation laid in those days and Dr Jubril Bala Muhammad's untiring efforts.

Dr Jubril Bala Muhammad had his masters and later a PhD and took over the headship of the department. Though I left Maiduguri over a decade ago, Bala and I kept in touch. As his friends would testify, Jubril Bala Muhammad valued friendship. Those who were not close might think he was difficult to get along with, but those who got close to Bala found his humility, selfless attitude to people and issues and his candour disarming.

Though Bala did live a Bohemian lifestyle in his youth, he completely changed in his last 10 years on earth. He became a virtual born-again. He became very religious. He was all along a caring academic. He combined these with his humility and desire to serve the people. Many gave credit to his wife who bore him two kids. Though we spoke several times over the years and I followed the progress of their marriage with keen interest, we never met.

Dr. Jubril Bala Muhammad was to later serve his people as councillor in the late 1980s. No doubt that gave him ample practical exposure to the problems of the grassroots. He returned to the classroom a changed person. He became more practical. He was still an academic but one that was grounded in theory and practice.

He later rose to associate professorship, a step from crowning a glowing career with the ultimate prize: professorship. Many are now suggesting that the University of Maiduguri should honour Bala posthumously, with a professorship. That would not only be a fulfilment for a tireless soul, but an acknowledgement of our worthy contributions in those trying times. He was the sole survivor then of our epoch, an epoch yet to be rivalled in the annals of that university.

Bala was a constant fixture in the nascent pro-democracy movements in the North. He was an inspiration, a pillar so to say in most of these organisations. He travelled far and near to present seminar papers.

When Ibrahim Bunu invited him, due to his brilliance, to manage his public relations, Bala painfully agonised over his options. Many of us believed he should lend a helping hand and learn firsthand the problems of the centre. He faced so many problems at Abuja, chief of which was the inability of the civil service bureaucracy to accept him and his ideas.

The last time my wife and I saw Bala at Abuja, he confessed to us his difficulties but vowed to soldier on. Even then, perhaps he was privy to the running battles his boss was having with "Baba" (Obasanjo) himself. Few months after Obasanjo drove away Bunu. Many claimed that he was "strong headed" and "argumentative". Many claim that this era is that of "come and eat" and not "come and show you know a lot". Sunday Afolabi, Internal Affairs Minister, publicly told Bola Ige, Attorney General, who was his boss this. This is not Dr Jubril Bala Muhammed's crowd. Many, including himself, were relieved when he returned to the classroom. All of us are sad he is dead. Adieu Comrade Bala. May his gentle soul rest in perfect peace.

Jika is of the Writers' Collective, Department of Mass Communications, Bayero University, Kano.

Wake up AMAC chairman

I wish to call on the chairman of Abuja Municipal Area Council, (AMAC) Mrs. Esther John Audu, to please wake up from her two-year slumber. It is high time for the people of Municipal Area Council to see a constructive development within our area.

I was totally irked when I recently heard the 'action minister', Professor Jerry Gana, calling on the incumbent to continue under the popular political arrangement: *Tazarce. Tazarce* with areas like Nyanya, Karu, Garki village,

Abdullah Salihu Abubakar,

Karmo, Gwagwa etc. having no potable water? Garki village, Anguwan Hausawa to be specific, has no motorable roads. During the rainy season, the roads in the area are not 'trekkable', not to talk of being motorable, due to the adverse effect of gutter and mud. In fact, I don't need to shape for you the deteriorating condition of roads in Garki village, Karmo, Idu and Gwagwa. Equally annoying are the mountainous heaps of refuse in the

Nyanya and Karu suburbs, which you have seen for yourself during your campaign tour.

Remember, Hon. Chairman, that the residents of Garki village were those who voted *en masse* in your favour during the last election. We don't want for you to start sharing money to us; all we need from you is to develop our area, which is the heart of the Centre of Unity, and nothing more. For one good turn deserves another.

Abubakar is of Anguwar Hausawa, Garki village, Abuja.

Re: No to Zamfara governor

By Kabiru Musa Gusau

The unsavoury tone with which one Rufai Buhari Katsina wrote on the above topic in *Daily Trust* of Thursday, June 14, 2001 prompts an early response from all good Muslims. It is disgusting and very disappointing too that such bigoted sentiments are principally peddled to underscore political relevance and cheap popularity. If I may ask from the onset, what moral authority has Rufai, who in his category as *Safih* cannot even speak for himself, not to talk of the Muslim community as a whole? And what legal or constitutional right has he to speak on behalf of Zamfara people in advancing an opposition to the governor of Zamfara State? Ironically, the writer engages in a malicious campaign to undermine our faith, our sensibilities and of course, our collective intelligence. By his write-up, Rufai has succeeded in exposing his faithlessness, moral dilemma and stark ignorance. Had Rufai come from Anambra or Enugu States where the population is predominantly Christian, it would have been a different ball game altogether but regrettably, this man hails from Katsina and therefore a confrontational stance as his is least anticipated.

The confusion, ignorance and moral dilemma of Rufai are apparent from the very fact that he could not cite a single verse of the Holy Qur'an or the tradition of the Holy Prophet to back-up his argument but rather finds reference in Rev. Mathew Kukah of the Christian faith who calls Muslims "The so-called Shariah zealots" (*wal Iyazu Billah*). In Islam there is nothing like "The so-called Shariah zealots", but a good Muslim as we are taught abides by the provisions of Sharia to the best of his ability. Also, Islam requires total submission to the will of Allah (SWT). It is unfortunate that a Reverend, who is expected to preach peace, love and tolerance condescends to call the Muslims "The so-called Shariah zealots". In any case, Rev. Mathew Kukah does not share our faith as Muslims, how about you Mr. Rufai? Do you realise that your proclamation is tantamount to blasphemy. The prophet (PBUH) says: "Man tashabbaha bi qaumin fa huwa minhum" (He who emulates a group of people is among them). I advise you to seek forgiveness from the Lord of mankind.

According to Mr. Rufai, the blueprint for the adoption of Sharia by the Zamfara State governor is obsessed by prohibition of alcohol consumption. Well, if that is true (even though it is not), what is wrong in laying emphasis on prohibiting the consumption of *Ummul Khaba'ith* (The mother of all crimes). Alcohol consumption is a pathway to intoxication which leads to light-headedness and consequently makes every crime feasible. Therefore, a ban on alcoholism is equal to getting rid of the evil from the root. In several verses of the Holy Qur'an Allah (SWT) prohibits the consumption of alcohol because it is the devil's workshop and Satan desires to create enmity among the faithful and deter them from prayers through alcohol and gambling. Much to your dislike Mr. Rufai, the ban on alcohol is a testimony that Sharia is in force and its consumption symbolises the lack of proper application of Sharia in a society.

By your ill-advised and fallacious conscience you propose a reign of terror through the establishment of the ungodly institutes of alcoholism, theft, adultery and fornication and later, say five to 10 years, as if you are sure you will be alive tomorrow, then we abolish them. What an ungodly proposal!

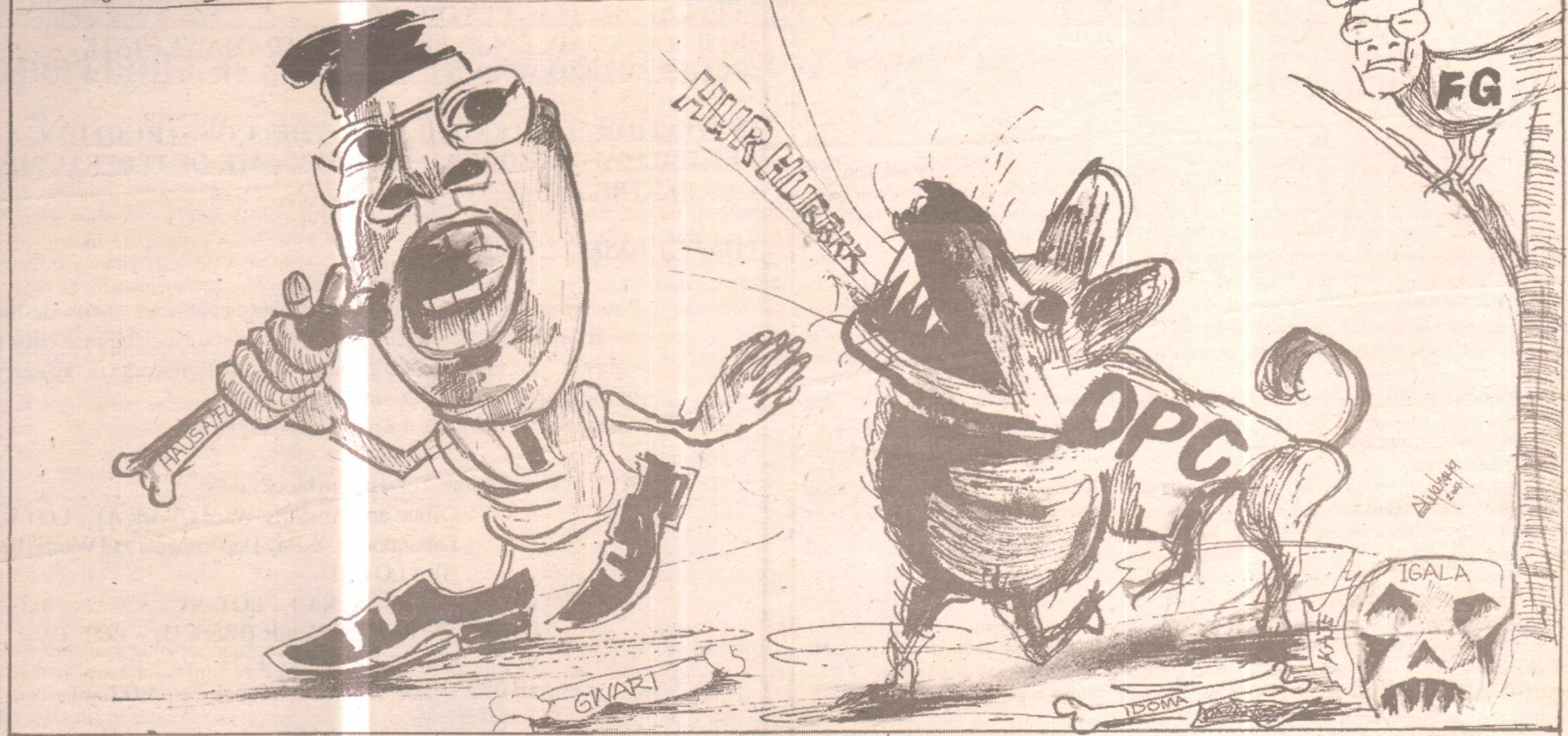
On the achievement of Governor Ahmed Sani of Zamfara State, please Mr. Rufai, let the people of Zamfara State speak out. You are an outsider, a mischievous one, who blindly comments from what you are able to gather from the junk newspapers. The achievements are written all over the wall. First and foremost, the agitation for the implementation of Sharia by Muslims was triggered by years of neglect, frustration and outright injustice within the so-called Nigerian constitution. No doubt, the wholehearted proclamation of religious (Islamic) renaissance, whether you like it or not, is to all-true Muslims a capital project incontestable. Our transcendental world by far outshines obsession with the mundane world.

Mr. Rufai, I would rather ask you to come down to Zamfara State personally and objectively assess the level of achievement in the number of roads rehabilitated or constructed within the state capital and some local government areas like Talata Mafara, Kaura Namoda, Maradun, Anka etc. In a nutshell, you need to see the fertiliser company, ZACAS, (Zamfara College of Arts and Science), the activities of ZAPA (Zamfara Agency for Poverty Alleviation), completed new secretariats, completed presidential lodge, construction of 1,500 housing units, tractors for farmers, rehabilitation of various sections of the educational sector and many other numerous achievements.

Please Mr. Rufai, know that you have no moral justification whatsoever and you have over-stepped the bounds by telling the whole Zamfara State of about two million people what to do or not to do. The choice is ours and as long as it remains so, we don't need a kobo from alcoholic VAT, and your citation of a speech by Sheik Gumi here is highly misplaced. Mr. Rufai when you have nothing doing next time never descend on Sharia because we shall resist any venomous malice with all our might, especially the one emanating from the harbingers of mischief. Finally, I advice you to attend Qur'anic school to learn the teachings of Islam - that way you will learn to appreciate better the laws of Allah (SWT)

Kabiru Musa Gusau is of Plot 112, Tunis Street, Wuse Zone 6, Abuja.

LAGOS STATE TO USE OPC IN FIGHTING CRIME
— GOV. TINUBU



YOUR LETTERS

The wage earner's dilemma in Kano

It is almost a year, since Kano State government adopted the Islamic legal system, Shariah. This was welcomed with much jubilation and fanfare, most particularly by the downtrodden, who had been waiting for such a timely deliverance. However a year has passed and yet the manna from heaven is not forthcoming. Human foibles or not, doubting Thomases will continue to wag their tongues. It is then inconceivable to spend forty years in modern wilderness before reaching the promised land.

With the dividends of just rule still being awaited, the lives of many inside the old city have been continuously under the threat of *Yan-Daba*.

Today, most state workers in Kano find themselves on the horns of a dilemma. It is common knowledge that before April 2001, all cadres of government employees in Kano State had a choice to make as to the form of payment of their remuneration either in cash payment or through banks; denial of such rights is quite undemocratic. It has brought untold suffering to many since towards the end of April and beyond. I personally had to hand-over my salary *in toto* to creditors.

Panacea or not, bank payment has become a night-mare to almost all junior workers in Kano, coupled with the fact that this hapless lot cannot understand the *modus operandi* of most of the

assigned banks. Presently a vicious cycle is in motion churning out untold woes to the employees and their dependants; many are stranded because cheques were not delivered on time to the banks or time is not ripe for it's proper maturation. All jargon couched in obscurity. Also because of the monthly charges banks deduct from salary payments, this translates to additional tax burden besides the one removed by the government from an already ailing emolument.

A scenario where workers go on for months without wage or even for years as in the case of aged pensioners is thus untenable under the auspices of Shariah system unless there is something doubtful as to the whole

exercise. We must not forget that part of Shariah package is social justice and equitable distribution of wealth as typified in the Prophet's Madinah.

In this vein, it is pertinent to recall that prophetic traditions in Islam laid special emphasis on paying a labourer before the sweat on his forehead dries. Same view is to be found in the Old Testament; see Leviticus 19:13, Jeremiah 22:13 and Malachi 3:5.

Those at the helm of affairs in the state should be made to understand that despite the silence of the labour unions over freezing of wage, which has been in effect for two years now, it's very much antithetic to the spirit of justice and fairness as laid down in the Holy Qur'an. The Prophet was reported to have said that "all of you are Shepherds and each one of you would be questioned as to his flocks".

Mohd. Mujahid
No. 54, Court Road,
Gyadi-Gyadi,
Kano.

Open letter to Governor Turaki of Jigawa State

As a concerned citizen of Jigawa State and a true patriot and observer of your policies and programmes, I write to forward some few suggestions which I believe will help in moving our young state forward. This is necessitated by my desire to contribute my quota to the development of the state. I would have wanted to see you physically to express my views, but due to your tight-schedule coupled with the normal protocol, I choose to use this medium which I am sure will reach you.

Sir, I am an indigene of

Dutse, the seat of government, I have sampled all your political office holders and discovered that Dutse local government is completely thrown by the wayside as there is nobody from Dutse in your cabinet or in any parastatal. I felt it is high time this issue is addressed.

Sir, you are aware of the numerous voters from Dutse who trooped *en masse* and voted you into office, you also know that the chairmanship of Dutse Local Government Council as well as the state House of Assembly members are all won by APP candidates, these are

true evidence on how our people hold you in high esteem.

The fact that we still remain peace loving although you took away most ministries and parastatals outside Dutse, demonstrates our support and loyalty to your administration. I therefore call on you to please reward us by appointing our people into your government so that we can also fill our quota and render all the necessary services towards developing our young state.

Sanusi Tijjani Dutse,
Federal Polytechnic,
Damaturu,
Yobe State.

As a farmer in Anguwar Gabas, Sabon Gari Local Government Area of Kaduna State, I am contributing to the development of my local government, I take part in food production in my state and give my quota in food security to our great country, Nigeria. As a stakeholder in the forgoing concerns of my local government, I know that good management is not only important in agrobusiness, it is also important in the management of public funds. It is painful to see that the tractor for our local government that is supposed to work in our farms is seen busy in the

Calling Sabon Gari LG

construction of a road in the neighbouring Jushi ward.

As the flag bearer of a party that is the PDP is this giving credit to your party? Is the power of the party used against us by way of looting the treasury and mismanagement of our resources?

Idi Aliyu Mai Tattasai,
Anguwar-Jabba, Dogon
Bauchi,
Sabon Garin,
Zaria.

Lets nurture our nascent democracy

It is well known that all land sundry have struggled to achieve this present democratic experience, which has brought about positive changes in the lives of many Nigerians.

If the benefits of democracy as they are presently, must continue to

accrue, then those that we have democratically elected to represent and lead us should be personalities who possess such sterling qualities. Often inspired by the orientation of selflessness, possess wisdom and justice to provide for the material welfare of the citizens and also be overwhelmed by such regal attributes of being citizens with the interest of the polity at heart.

Therefore, it is obvious that anything good and worth having is worth working for.

Prince Mann Bamidele,
Department of Agric.
Extension and
Management,
Ahmadu Bello
University,
Zaria.

Stop it, Gov Kwankwaso

I wish to express my dismay over Kano State government advertising in one of the *Ngbati Press* (*Newswatch* magazine of June 25, 2001) titled "Kwankwaso changing the face of Kano", Haba! Kwankwaso, do not gratify bashers of Hausa/Fulani (North) by granting them a minimum of N1 million advantage, while the Northern press are capable of doing it better. I call the attention of Kano State government, other Northern states and local governments to stop committing this misguided act.

Auwalu Bala Indabo,
Wudil L.G.A.
Kano State.



BAYERO UNIVERSITY, KANO VACANCIES

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates to fill the underlisted vacant positions existing in the University Health Services of Bayero University, Kano

- 1) **Senior Medical Officer**
Qualifications:
Candidates must possess MB.BS or MB.CH.B from a recognized University and must have registered with the Nigerian Medical Council. Candidates must also have at least, four years post-graduation working experience in a similar Institution. Ability to communicate in Hausa Language will be an added advantage.
Salary Grade Level: HATISS 11 – N243,732.00 – N345,612.00 per annum.
- 2) **Medical Officer I**
Qualifications:
Same as in No. 1 above but, applicants should be less than thirty years of age.
Salary Grade Level: HATISS 10 – N218,004.00 – N314,364.00 per annum.
- 3) **Principal Nursing Officer**
Qualifications:
Candidates must possess certificate in Nursing from a recognized institution, plus any other additional qualification. Candidates must also be a registered Nurse with six years post-qualification working experience. Ability to speak Hausa language will be an advantage.
Salary Level: HATISS 11 – N243,732.00 – N345,612.00 per annum
- 4) **Senior Nursing Officers**
Qualifications:
Same as in No. 3 above. But female candidates are required to have, apart from certificate in Nursing, Mid-wifery certificate from a recognized school of Nursing plus any other additional qualification.
Salary Grade Level: HATISS 09 – N185,436.00 – N230,780.00 per annum.
- 5) **Nursing Officers**
Qualification
Same as in No. 4 above. Female candidates must possess the required qualification as specified in No. 4 above
Salary Grade Level: HATISS 07 – N133,632.00 – N198,816.00 per annum.
- 6) **Pharmacist I**
Qualifications:
Candidates must have obtained degree in Pharmacology from a recognized University and must have registered with the Pharmaceutical Council of Nigeria. Candidates must have worked in a similar position in an institution of higher learning or elsewhere for at least three years.
Salary Grade Level: HATISS 08 – N157,512.00 – N235,128.00 per annum
- 7) **Laboratory Scientists**
Qualifications:
Applicants are required to be in possession of a degree with a good classification in Laboratory Science from a reputable institution. Candidates must have at least three years working experience.
Salary Grade Level: HATISS 08 – N157,512.00 – N235,128.00 per annum.
- 8) **Dentist**
Qualifications:
Applicants must possess degree in Dentistry from a recognized institution. Candidates must have registered with the Nigerian Medical and Dental Council. Three years post-qualification experience is required.
Salary Grade Level: HATISS 10 – N218,004.00 – N314,364.00 per annum
- 9) **Pharmacy Technicians**
Qualifications:
Candidates must possess certificate from the School of Health Technology with emphasis on Pharmaceutical studies. An appreciable length of working experience is required.
Salary Grade Level: HATISS 06 – N101,760.00 – N156,024.00 Per annum.
- 10) **Medical Record Officers**
Qualifications:
Applicants must be in possession of a Diploma in either Medical Records or Statistics from a reputable institution. Three years post-graduation working experience is required. Knowledge of how to operate the Computer is required.
Salary Grade Level: HATISS 07 – N133,632.00 – N198,816.00 per annum.
- 11) **Assistant Medical Records Officers**
Qualifications:
Same as in No. 10 above. One-year post-graduation working experience is required. Computer operation knowledge will be an added advantage.
Salary Grade Level: HATISS 06 – N101,760.00 – N156,024.00 per annum
- 12) **Senior Health Superintendents**
Qualifications:
Applicants must be in possession of a Master's Degree in Public Health from a recognized University. Experience in Hospital or sanitation work, together with a certificate in Nursing or any Health Science Course will be an advantage.
Salary Grade Level: HATISS 08 – N157,512/00 – N235,128.00 per annum
- 13) **Medical Radiographer**
Qualifications:
Candidates are required to be in possession of a Diploma in Radiography from a reputable institution, plus at least three years post-qualification experience.
Salary Grade Level: HATISS 07 – N133,632.00 – N198,816.00 per annum.

METHOD OF APPLICATION:

Application should either be made on Form/APP/SSA obtainable from the Establishment Division, or, three copies of typewritten applications, giving personal details, qualifications, post applied for and experience, etc. Applications must be submitted to the Registrar's Office, Bayero University, P.M.B. 3011, Kano, Two weeks after the date of publication.

Only shortlisted candidates will be invited for interview

Singed:
FARUK MOHAMMED YANGANAU
REGISTRAR.



FEDERAL MEDICAL CENTRE, YOLA
HOSPITAL ROAD, P.M.B. 2017, YOLA, ADAMAWA STATE
(OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR)

INVITATION TO TENDER FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION WORKS IN THE NEW SITE OF FEDERAL MEDICAL CENTRE, YOLA

PHASE 1 (ONE) 'A'


1. Tenders are hereby invited from suitable contractors, who are registered with the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing in at least category 'C' for the construction and rehabilitation works in the new site of the Federal Medical Centre, Yola.
2. The scope of work for the project is as follows:
 - A. Conversion of classroom blocks into:
 - i) Office and Amenity Ward (Block A) – LOT.I
 - ii) Laboratories, X-Ray Departments and Wards (Block B) – LOT. II
 - iii) Wards (Block C) – LOT. III
 - iv) Theatres and Wards (Block D) – LOT. IV
 - v) Office (Block E) – LOT . V
 - vi) Office and Wards (Block F) – LOT. VI
 - B. Construction of:
 - i) 4 No. Ramps – LOT VII
 - ii) Fence, Gate House and Generator House – LOT. VIII
 - iii) Out Patient Department – LOT. IX
 - iv) Kitchen and Laundry – LOT. X
 - C. Rehabilitation of Residential Blocks (2-Units each) One Bedroom Bungalow:
 - i) Blocks A,B,C,D, and F – LOT.XI
 - D. other works
 - i) Drilling of Industrial Borehole, connection to ground and overhead tanks – LOT. XII
 - ii) External Works, Drives and car parks, landscaping and horticulture – LOT. XIII
3. Tender documents are obtainable from the Office of the Medical Director, on the payment of a non-refundable tender fee of Twenty thousand Naira (N20,000.00) per Lot by BANK DRAFT made payable to Federal Medical Centre, Yola, to the Finance Department.
4. Completed tender documents are to be submitted in sealed envelopes and marked 'TENDER FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION OF' including the LOT being tendered for to the office of:

The Medical Director
Federal Medical Centre,
Hospital Road,
P.M.B. 2017, Yola
Adamawa State

Not later than three weeks from the date of this publication, by 4.00pm of the last day.

5. All tender submissions must be accompanied with the following:-
 - i) Certificate of Incorporation in Nigeria
 - ii) Federal Ministry of Works and Housing registration certificate, category 'C'
 - iii) Tax clearance certificate for the last three years
 - iv) Evidence of registration with the Federal Medical Centre, Yola in the appropriate category
 - v) Tender processing fee receipt
 - vi) Evidence of similar past job performances including equipment and staff profile
 - vii) A Bank reference
 - viii) Programme of work for the lot being quoted for.
6. Failure to comply with the above stated requirements invalidates the tender submission.
7. THE TENDERS BOARD reserves the right to accept or reject any tender wholly or in part and is not bound to accept the lowest tender.

ALIYU MOH'D NAYEJO
For: Medical Director

TRUST  INTERNATIONAL

Foreign & Diplomatic

Remembering Algerian war of independence

Today is the 39th anniversary of Algerian independence from France. Unlike most African countries, Algeria fought a ferocious war to liberate itself from colonialism. In this piece, **Kevin Ebele Adinnu, Foreign Desk Editor**, examines Algeria's past in an attempt to explain its present.

Recently, President Fidel Castro of Cuba visited Algeria and showered basketful of praises on the country for its achievements since its independence on July 5, 1962. To some analysts, the encomium was unexpected as Algeria was witnessing another uprising at the time of the visit – that of the Berbers in the Kabylie region – apart from the yet-to-be-fully-resolved 1992 election crisis.

In an interview with *Daily Trust*, we asked the outgoing Cuban Ambassador to Nigeria, Giraldo Mazola, why Castro heaped such “undeserved” praises on Algeria. He took us down memory lane. He reminded us that besides South Africa, Algeria remains one African country that fought a veritable liberation war against France, the colonial powers in that country.

Today is the anniversary of Algerian independence from France, after a war that cost 10,000 French soldiers and 250,000 Algerians.

The story of Algerian independence struggle dates from 1830 when French soldiers marched into Algeria under the guise of eradicating piracy in the Mediterranean Sea. It did not take long before the real nature of French occupation, to wit, exploitation of the resources and market available, became glaring. However, these motives were well concealed under the French colonial policy of assimilation. The policy regarded all French colonies including Algeria as extensions of France and wanted to make Frenchmen out of Africans. Hence, all colonial people became subjects of France with a representation in the Assemblée Nationale (National Assembly) in France. However, the colonial subjects enjoyed limited rights.

Following this policy, France encouraged a lot of



Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika gestures during a meeting in the remote town of Illizi some 2,000 kilometers south of Algiers in the Sahara desert region, June 20, 2001.

Frenchmen to come down and settle in Algeria, which they considered as an extension of their country. These French settlers called colons at a point accounted for 10 per cent of Algeria's population. Rather than mix up with the indigenous people in the spirit of assimilation, these French settlers constituted themselves into an aristocracy becoming increasingly economically powerful.

Not only this, these settlers dictated French policy in Algeria. Assimilation notwithstanding, the wide gulf in welfare between the settlers and the indigenous Algerians prompted Frantz Fanon, to describe the colonial situation as Manichean.

According to Fanon in *Wretched of the Earth*:

The zone where natives live is not complementary to the zone inhabited by the settlers. The two zones are opposed, but not in the service of a higher unity. Obedient to the rules of pure Aristotelian logic, they both follow the principle of reciprocal exclusivity... you are rich because you are white; you are white because you are rich. This is why Marxist analysis should always be slightly stretched every time we have to do with the colonial problem.

The blatant discrimination against the indigenous population and the suppression of dissent by France created the basis for a growing independence movement.

When during the second European War (World War II), the Germans overran Mainland France, the later anchored in Algeria relying heavily on the colonies to support its war aims.

Expectations of Algerians that France would reward their loyalty with political independence did not materialise after the war. Some reforms were made but Algerians did not consider them wide ranging enough, hence, agitation for independence crept up.

Two groups surfaced to champion the cause – Armée de Liberation (Liberation Army), ALN; and the Front de Liberation Nationale (National Liberation Front), FLN. Under the leadership of Ahmed Ben Bella, after they had merged, the movement embarked on a military solution and diplomacy as the only viable means of achieving self-determination. Their aim was to create an independent Algeria, a social democratic nation within an Islamic framework.

France responded by sending over 400,000 soldiers to Algeria to swiftly crush the movement. The brutal massacre of members of the FLN in 1954 in the Philippines by France only served to turn the tide of world opinion against France.

Despite mass arrests and torture, the French could not break the backbone of the Liberation Movement. So serious was the battle of Algeria that a coalition of French generals and settlers who were bent on holding on to Algeria sacked the French government in 1958 and installed Charles De Gaulle in power.

Ironically, it was De Gaulle that laid the foundation of Algerian self-determination in 1959, a let down which prompted his attempted assassination, well documented fictionally in *The Day of the Jackal* by Frederick Forsyth.

In 1962, the French government and the representatives of the FLN signed the Evian's Accord in which France accepted self-determination of the Algerian people.

Ahmed Ben Bella became independent Algeria's first president on July 5, 1962.

Some analysts consider the unending crisis in Algeria today as part of the legacy of the war of independence. This, however, is debatable.

Suffice it to state that in 1992, the cancellation of election results that a Muslim party was poised to win has pitched various military-backed governments and the Muslim party supporters in an unending cycle of violence.

Again, since April, the Kabylie region of the country has been boiling with many deaths so far recorded as the Berbers continue to agitate for the upliftment of the culture and the elevation of their language to the status of Arabic.



Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika holds a dove aloft that was released as he walked amongst the crowd, June 21, 2001. Bouteflika was visiting the city of Wilaya d'Adrar in the remote Saharan region of the nomadic Touareg people some 1,600 kms (994 miles) south of the capital Algiers. Bouteflika said he would continue his mandate despite continuing violence in Algeria.

TRUST INTERNATIONAL

AFRICA & THE MIDDLE EAST

Morocco names new ambassador to UN

Morocco's King Mohammed VI has appointed a career diplomat and expert on the Western Sahara issue as permanent ambassador to the United Nations, the official MAP news agency said.

Mohammed Loulichki, 44, was until now Morocco's ambassador and coordinator to the UN mission in the disputed Western Sahara territory, the job he took in 1999.

The UN Security Council last month gave a green light to five months of talks between Morocco and the Polisario Front on a draft autonomy plan for the former Spanish Colony.

The Algeria-based Polisario Front is seeking independence from Morocco for the Western Sahara.

Israel to target more Palestinian militants - radio

Israel's security cabinet decided yesterday to take stronger action against Palestinian militants in a campaign to head off attacks against Israelis, Israel Radio said.

The report said the 13-member forum approved a decision by senior cabinet members on Tuesday to target more Palestinian militants in what the Palestinian Authority has called a policy of assassination.

"The policy (of restraint) will continue, but our response to acts carried out by the Palestinians will perhaps be slightly stronger," Health Minister Shlomo Benizri, a member of the security cabinet, told Army Radio.

Palestinians accused Israel of assassinating some 40 activists since an uprising against Israeli occupation erupted last September after peace negotiations deadlocked.

An Israeli helicopter attack killed three Islamic militants in the West Bank on Sunday, drawing criticism from Washington, which also condemned Palestinian violence against Israelis.

Guinea's opposition has moved to prevent President Lansana Conte from joining the ranks of African presidents who change the constitution to keep hold of power.

Conte has not said he wants a third term when his mandate expires in early 2004 but growing calls from followers for him to stand in a third election have suggested to many in the West African country that he does not oppose the idea.

Speaker after speaker at a meeting of the CODÉM opposition alliance denounced calls on the former army ruler to stay in

Guinea opposition moves to block Conte third term

office by changing the constitution, which has a two-term limit. That could be changed through a referendum.

Former Prime Minister, Sydia Toure, said streets demonstrations and sit-ins were among options being considered to try to prevent a third term and said the opposition was ready to risk confronting security forces.

"There is a need for the people to register their rejection of this

unconstitutional move," he told Reuters.

Conte seized power following the death of socialist dictator Sekou Toure in 1984 and opened up the mineral-rich country after decades of national paranoia. He won 1993 and 1998 elections condemned by the opposition as fraudulent.

The United States and the

three countries in West Africa it sees as the best examples of democracy - Ghana, Mali and Senegal - last week denounced constitutional changes to prolong an incumbent's hold on power.

Under pressure, Zambian President Frederick Chiluba recently stepped aside from a third term that would have

meant changing the constitution. There is a strong speculation that President Daniel arap Moi will change Kenya's constitution to let him stay.

Namibia's constitution was changed in 1999, allowing President Sam Nujoma to stay on. Burkina Faso removed a limit on terms in 1997, ending doubt over whether President Blaise Compaore could stand in the 1998 election, which he won.

Quattara guns for UN job

Ivory Coast's opposition leader, Alassane Quattara, whose banning from elections is at the root of years of political crisis, is in the running for the job of UN representative to the Congo, diplomats said on Tuesday.

Appointing Quattara to help oversee peace efforts in the Democratic Republic of Congo would also be seen as a way to defuse tension in Ivory Coast, where 200 people died last year in post-election political and ethnic violence, they said.

UN officials in New York confirmed to Reuters that Quattara was a leading candidate for the job and had travelled there for interviews last week.

Quattara has been in self-imposed exile since late last year after violence surrounding an October presidential election from which he was excluded on nationality grounds and which veteran opposition leader Laurent Gbagbo won.

Gbagbo won the vote and became president despite efforts by army ruler Robert Guei to cling to power by rigging the result. Scores were killed in the resulting violence.

But Quattara, a former deputy managing director of the International Monetary Fund, was again banned by a court from standing in parliamentary elections in December, which led to more bloodshed.

The long-running dispute over Quattara's nationality and his eligibility to stand for president was central to a

socio-political crisis, which led to the country's first coup in 1999, destroying Ivory Coast's reputation for stability.



President Lasana Konte.

Iraqi UN envoy defects to US

Iraq's deputy permanent representative at the United Nations has asked the United States for asylum for himself and his family, Iraqi opposition and diplomatic sources has said.

Mohammed al-Humaimidi, the second highest ranking Iraqi in New York, walked into the police station in New York City's 17th Precinct last Friday and told the police of his wish, a spokesman for the Kurdistan regional government said.

Humaimidi is seeking asylum for his wife, Layali al-Khatawi, and their three sons, the spokesman said.

The Iraqi diplomat was

one of three or four envoys who were scheduled to return home this month.

"At least one diplomat seems to have left the mission and appears to be wanting to stay in the United States," said one UN diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Mohammed Aldouri, Iraq's Ambassador to the United Nations, would neither confirm nor deny the defection, saying three or four diplomats had ended their terms and Baghdad had applied to the United States

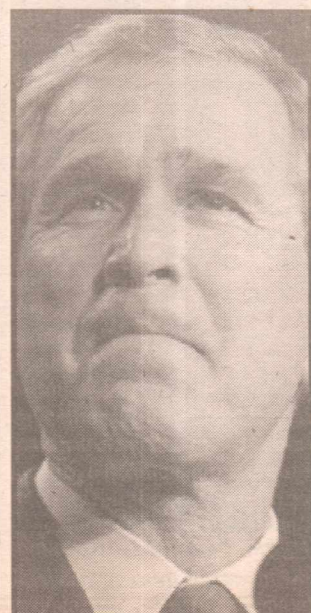
for their replacements.

"I don't know which of them stayed in the area, but they finished their terms," he told reporters.

New York City police officials referred all calls to the US State Department, which would neither confirm nor deny the report. A spokesman for the Immigration and Naturalisation Services, said: "We cannot confirm or deny it."

An FBI spokesman in New York said the agency had no information on the reported defection.

for their replacements.



President George W. Bush.

Malawi pardons 880 prisoners

Malawi President Bakili Muluzi on Tuesday pardoned 880 prisoners to mark the southern African country's 37th anniversary of independence from Britain.

Muluzi said on a prison visit that the inmates would be released today,

preparatory to the anniversary celebrations tomorrow.

"As we celebrate our independence anniversary this year, I asked the Minister of Home Affairs and the Chief Commissioner of Prisons that on July 5, 880 prisoners should be released," he said.

Muluzi did not give details of the selection process.

His pardon comes a week after a non-governmental organisation, the African Commission for Human and Peoples' Rights, said prison conditions in Malawi were among the worst on the continent.

It cited overcrowding, poor diet, lack of medical care, poor hygiene and sanitation and outbreaks of communicable diseases, including HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, meningitis and diarrhoea.

About 8,000 prisoners are incarcerated in Malawi's 23 jails.



A Palestinian policeman checks damage to an armored personnel carrier rocketed in an Israeli helicopter attack early in Gaza Strip.

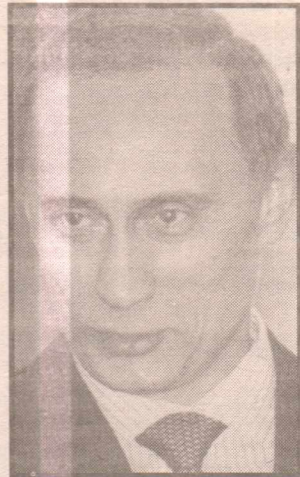
TRUST INTERNATIONAL

World Report

Putin sends Independence Day message to Bush

Russian President Vladimir Putin sent US leader, George W. Bush an enthusiastic Independence Day greeting on Wednesday, saying he hoped their forthcoming meeting in Italy would build on a successful introduction last month.

The two men are due to meet again at a Group of Eight meeting in Genoa later in July, where Bush is expected to urge Putin to be flexible on US plans for a missile defence shield, which Moscow



President Vladimir Putin, Russian Leader.

opposes. "I look with optimism upon future Russian-US relations," Putin's letter said, in extracts released by the Kremlin.

"We have laid a firm foundation for a new stage in

bilateral relations and have given a powerful impulse to further development of constructive, pragmatic and predictable cooperation between Russia and the United States," it said.

Both leaders were upbeat after their first meeting in Slovenia last month, where they exchanged invitation to

the US in September.

"I am sure that the forthcoming intensive, substantive, dialogue between us will make a real contribution to strengthening international security and strategic stability," Putin wrote to Bush.

Falun Gong members in suicide bid

Sixteen followers of the Falun Gong spiritual movement attempted mass suicide last month in a labour camp in China and 10 may have died, a Hong Kong human rights group said on Tuesday.

The 16 hanged themselves in Harbin city in the northern province of Heilongjiang on June 20 after their sentences were extended for staging a hunger strike, the Information Centre for Human Rights & Democracy said in a statement.

Communist authorities have been keeping the case secret, the group said.

About 30 Falun Gong practitioners in the labour camp began a hunger strike on June 15 to protest against the frequent beatings of the movement's adherents there. As a result, the camp lengthened their terms of imprisonment by three to six months.

A family member of one of those who had been rescued, told the information centre 10 had died in the incident.

Chinese policemen confirmed to the group there was a mass suicide and "many people" died.

The Hong Kong group said 153 Falun gong practitioners have died because of persecution by the Chinese government since Beijing banned the movement in July 1999.

More than 10,000 Falun Gong adherents have been sent to labour camps since the crackdown, it said.

Overseas-based Falun gong activities put the death toll in Chinese police custody at more than 200.

China said the group is an "evil cult" responsible for the deaths of 1,660 people by suicide or refusing medical treatment. It said a handful of Falun Gong followers died of suicide or neglected illnesses while in police custody.

US criticises Sri Lankan air strikes

The United States has criticised Sri Lankan air strikes on Tamil Tiger rebel-held territory and called on the two sides to seek a negotiated solution to a nearly two-decade-old ethnic conflict.

"We have noted with concern the Sri Lankan government's decision over the weekend to bomb LTTE positions in the Jaffna peninsula," the US Embassy said in a statement after Sri Lankan Air Force jets bombed Liberation tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) bases in the north of the country over the weekend.

"While we respect the right of any nation to defend its territorial integrity, it is also true that violence begets violence."

A government statement on Tuesday said the air raids were necessary to pre-empt a rebel offensive, while the tigers have warned the strikes could permanently damage an already limping Norwegian-brokered peace initiative.

The embassy statement reiterated comments from Secretary of State, Colin Powell in May that peace

negotiations should begin soon.

"In this regard, we continue to support strongly Norway's attempt to facilitate such negotiations," it said.

The government statement said the attacks were carried out because "all the evidence suggested that the LTTE is planning a major attempt to recapture Jaffna peninsula."

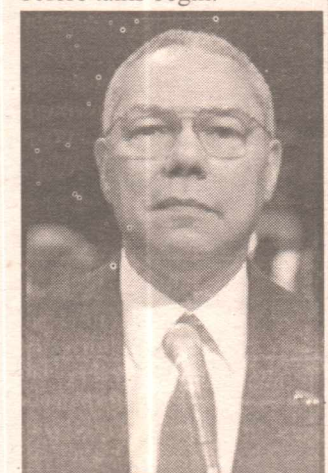
The LTTE has denied the allegations, saying the air strikes, the first in months, were timed to whip up support for the ruling coalition ahead of a no-confidence vote in parliament later this month.

The bombing raids on Saturday and on Sunday targeted LTTE bases in Pooneryn, rebel-controlled territory separated from

Jaffna town by a four-km (2.4 mile) strip of sea.

More than 64,000 people have been killed since the rebels started fighting in 1983 for a separate state for minority Tamils in the country's north and east.

The government has rejected rebel demands that a ban on their group be lifted and a ceasefire be declared before talks begin.



Colin Powell, US Secretary of State.

Sinn Fein describes killing as sectarian

A man shot dead in Northern Ireland on Wednesday was the victim of a sectarian killing, a Sinn Fein party politician said.

"It is a sectarian shooting, there's no doubt about it," said Martin McManus, a Sinn Fein councillor who knew the victim.

The killing, on a road in the town of Antrim, north of Belfast, comes just five days before a controversial annual Protestant parade - at Drumcree.

The parade has in the past led to sectarian violence even though it has been banned by the Parades Commission from entering a flashpoint Roman Catholic area.

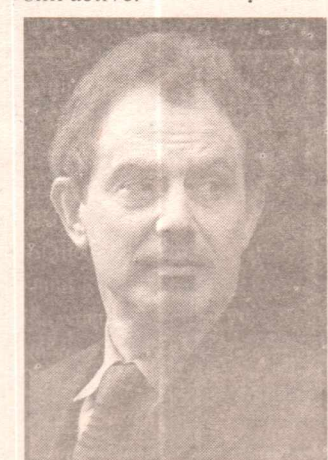
McManus told BBC radio the victim was waiting for a lift to work. "Eyewitnesses were on the scene. Men pilled up and shot him twice. He died at the scene, I believe."

The killing occurred hours before the British and Irish Prime Ministers were due to hold crucial Northern Irish peace talks in London.

They are trying to throw a lifeline to the province's peace process, which plunged deeper into crisis on Sunday when David Trimble resigned his first minister of a ruling Protestant-Catholic coalition.

Trimble resigned because the Irish Republican Army, which is the guerrilla ally of Sinn Fein, has refused to disarm after a long war against British rule.

The IRA, which draws support in pro-Irish Catholic zones, and mainstream "loyalist" Protestant militia foes have declared ceasefires but renegade factions opposed to the peace pact are still active.



Tony Blair, British Prime Minister.

Russia denies violating agreement on base

Russia has denied on Tuesday that it had violated an internationally-brokered agreement to close down a military base in Georgia's breakaway Abkhazia region by July 1 and said Georgia must help to make its troop withdrawal possible.

Georgian officials dismissed the explanation, and said they would continue to press Moscow to withdraw from the Black sea base as promised, making their case to international organisations.

"The military base of Gudauta has been disbanded, but the withdrawal of personnel and the remnants of material is being blocked by the local population," Russia's foreign Ministry said in a statement.

It called on Georgia to respect an obligation to create "conditions for the safe completion of the withdrawal of the Russian military base in Gudauta, and said Georgia had ignored Moscow's request to post a Russian team to guard the base.

"Since no reply to the above-mentioned proposal had come from Tbilisi by the agreed deadline (July 1), no documentary hand-over of the base facilities took place," it added.

But Georgian officials said they were unconvinced by the Russian explanations.

"Russia's statements saying that people in Gudauta are preventing them from closing this base are just an excuse. We don't accept that," Georgian Foreign Ministry spokesman Kakha Sikharulidze said by telephone.

Kakha Imnadze, spokesman for Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze, said Georgia was ready to continue bilateral and multilateral negotiations until the base is closed.

The Gudauta base is located in the territory that has been outside the control of the Tbilisi government since Abkhazian secessionist forces drove out Georgian troops and hundreds of thousands of Georgian civilians in a 1992-93 war.

A second Russian base, near the Georgian capital Tbilisi, was fully evacuated by the Sunday deadline.

Georgia has accused Russia of assisting the Abkhazian separatist fighters, who took up arms against Tbilisi shortly after the former Soviet republic gained its independence.

Russia has security concerns in Georgia and said it needs a further 14 years to close two other bases in the south Caucasus nation, which shares a border with Chechnya.

But Western-Oriented Georgia, with aspirations to join NATO, has accused its mighty neighbour of foot-dragging and is pressing for the withdrawal of all Russian forces as soon as possible.



A woman poses in front of a communist party flag outside a museum in Beijing Sunday, July 2001, as it marks the 80th anniversary of its founding.

ADVERTORIAL
**BROADCAST BY THE GOVERNOR OF BENUE STATE, HIS EXCELLENCY GEORGE AKUME, TO THE PEOPLE OF BENUE STATE
ON THE CRISIS BETWEEN THE TIV AND THEIR NEIGHBOURS IN NASARAWA STATE ON MONDAY, JULY, 2, 2001**

My dear people of Benue State,

1. I wish to address you today on the unfortunate crisis involving the Tiv and some of their neighbours in the Nasarawa South Senatorial District of Nasarawa State. The purpose of the broadcast is to brief you on the nature of the crisis, its effect on the Benue State and our efforts so far to contain the ugly situation.

2. You may recall that since January 2001, the Tiv of Nasarawa State were reported to have come under sporadic attacks by some people leading to loss of lives and property. Following the murder by unknown persons on June 12, 2001 of the traditional ruler of Azara Chiefdom in Awe Local Government Area, Alhaji Musa Ibrahim, who was also a Special Adviser to the Governor of Nasarawa State, these attacks assumed a new dimension. Many Tiv settlements were razed down and many people were killed resulting to displaced Tiv people fleeing to the neighbouring local government areas of Guma, Makurdi and Gwer-West in Benue State.

3. The communal crisis in Nasarawa State has created a huge population of displaced people in these local government areas with the largest concentration of Daudu, Kaseyo, Umenger, Udei, Torkula and Yelwata. The crisis has also adversely affected farming activities in the crisis areas of Nasarawa State and adjoining border areas of Benue State. The crisis, if not brought under control immediately, will portend grave consequences for the food security of these areas, the two states and indeed the entire nation.

4. Faced with a humanitarian crisis of immense proportions, the Benue State Government responded immediately by creating camps for the displaced people and providing food, water and essential materials such as mats, blankets, plastic containers etc. So far, government has expended over twenty million naira to provide basic needs for about seventy-five thousand people that have been officially registered. I want to seize this opportunity to thank the Catholic Diocese of Makurdi, Doctors without Frontiers, International Red Cross society and other non-governmental agencies that have assisted in this regard.

5. Fellow citizens of Benue State, I want to make it abundantly clear that the crisis is a local one involving only one senatorial district of Nasarawa State. It is not a crisis between Benue and Nasarawa States neither is it a conflict between the Tiv of Benue State and other ethnic groups in Nasarawa State.

6. I want also to emphasize the fact that since the beginning of the crisis, the governments of the two states have condemned the resort to violence unequivocally and spared no effort towards finding solutions to the crisis. To this end several joint meetings have been held at Kadarko,

Abuja and Lafia. The paramount rulers of the two states, His Royal Highness Orchivirigh Dr. Akawe Torkula, Tor Tiv IV, and the Emir of Lafia, Alhaji Mustapha Agwai and the traditional councils have lent their full support to peace moves.

7. The resolutions of the joint meeting held in Lafia on Friday, June 29, 2001 provide a framework for the restoration of peace in the affected areas. Among others, the meeting called for the cessation of hostilities, the return of displaced people to their homes and the establishment of joint patrols by the police commands from both states. It also called for an increase in the strength and affective presence of security agencies in the affected area, the reopening of schools and the establishment of joint peace and reconciliation committees at the inter-state, local government and district levels.

8. My dear people of Benue State, I wish to emphasize the need for peace among the warring groups in Nasarawa State. The Tiv people of Nasarawa State and their neighbours have lived together for a long time and must not allow detractors to destroy their peaceful coexistence. The bloody crisis has already exerted a heavy toll in terms of lives, property and development. Neither Benue State nor Nasarawa State can afford to be distracted from focusing on development at a time there is so much at stake.

9. For peace and normalcy to return to the crisis zone, the affected people must resolve to give peace a chance, to forgive and forget and to embrace dialogue rather than violence as a form of conflict resolution. As neighbours, we need to encourage the reign of peace in Nasarawa State. The present crisis has shown that any problem capable of destabilising adjoining areas of the state will have spill over effects on Benue State.

10. I want to assure the good people of Benue State that the crisis is receiving due attention and there is no cause for alarm. You should all remain calm and feel free to go about your lawful endeavours without fear. I shall continue to work with my brother and counterpart in Nasarawa State, Governor Abdullahi Adamu, towards finding lasting solutions to this crisis. I call on the chairmen of the affected local governments, traditional rulers, elected representatives of the areas, community leaders and other people of goodwill to assist the government of the two states in our effort to ensure that peace prevails in the crisis area.

11. I hope that the people of Benue State and Nasarawa State will support our efforts so that together we will create a conducive atmosphere for the development of our sister states.

Thank you and God bless you all.

BUSINESS DAY

A banker has expressed optimism that many community banks will scale Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) hurdle given their contribution to rural growth and development.

Onitsha branch manager of Intercontinental Bank Limited, Mr. Lawrence Madu who stated this while

Community Bank catalyst for rural dev -Banker

addressing the Association of Community Bank Managers in Anambra State, was emphatic that a good number of community banks are virile.

He observed that some of the banks in the state which form a substantial

From Bright Ewulu, in Lagos

percentage of 1014 community banks nationwide, had shown great strength and character since inception.

Moreover, he noted that the banks have been effective

in the mobilisation of deposits among the rural populace.

Madu introduced Intercontinental Bank's two new products, Intercontinental Premium Savings Account (IPSA) and the Intercontinental Classic

Current Account (LCLASS) and urged the community bank managers to avail themselves of the benefits in the products.

Chairman of the association, Chief K. M. Oguejiofor, Commended

Intercontinental Bank for the cordial relationship between it and community banks in the state.

Chief Oguejiofor called on the management of the bank to organise regular seminars for the association to further assist the community banks in the state.

Insurance firms cautioned on computerisation

Insurance firms in the country have been advised not to rush into computerisation as is the practice in the banking industry.

The Managing Director of Leadway Assurance Company, Mr. Oye Hassan-Odukale, told newsmen at the weekend in Lagos that it was not compulsory for insurance companies to computerise their operations and go on the internet as their banking counterparts.

Hassan-Odukale noted that though most of the insurance companies were embarking on the computerisation of their operations, insurance transactions "are not time critical" as the banking business.

He explained that because of this, insurance companies did not have to go on-line like banks.

According to him, in the

insurance industry, practitioners take longer time to investigate claims by insured persons before payments are made.

Hassan-Odukale contrasted the insurance financial transactions to that of the banks where, on pressing computer buttons, the depositor's particulars, his statement come up and he would be paid immediately.

A good number of insurance companies are now computerised and they make use of the internet to market their services.

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) recorded an overall surplus of N51.246.7 million from its financial operations last year, the Central bank of Nigeria stated in a report in Abuja.

The reports released by the CBN stated that the surplus, which indicated an increase of over N3 million when compared with the surplus of 1999, which was N48,090.5 million was largely due to rise in income and decline in the operating expenses of the bank.

The reports, which reviewed the operations of the apex bank in the previous year, also stated that the

CBN records N51.2b surplus

performance of the country's economy improved modestly during the year as the growth in real output rose by 3.8 percent when compared with 2.8 percent in 1999.

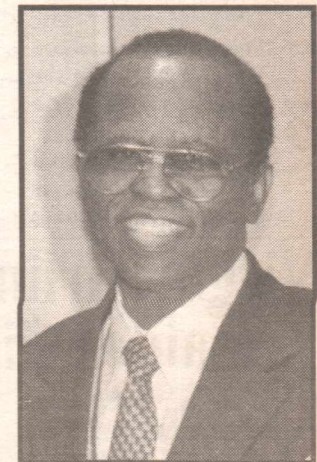
It stated that due to increased oil revenue the deficit in the external balance was reversed, adding that the balance of payments shifted from a deficit of N359,567.3 million (3,357.2 dollars) in

1999 to a surplus of N314,148.7 million (3,090.4 dollars) in 2000.

The reports also said that during the year 2000, the pressure on the foreign exchange market intensified, a situation that led to the depreciation of the naira.

It also showed that the country embarked on a programme of economic adjustment policies supported by a stand-by arrangement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). "the programme paved the way for discussions with the Paris Club of creditors in October 2000, on the rescheduling of Nigeria's 21.4 billion dollars debt," it added.

The reports added that negotiations for debt relief, which commenced in December 2000 was structured along the



Joseph Sanusi, CBN Governor "Houston terms," and that it provided for the rescheduling of the debts for between 18 years and 20 year.

Under the agreement, the country can also negotiate separate bilateral arrangements with each member of the Paris Club on issues relating to the country's debt.

NSE wades into non disclosure of debts by privatised oil coys

Worried by the news of non disclosure of debts by the privatised oil marketing companies, the management of the Nigerian Stock

Exchange (NSE) has taken steps to protect the investors in these companies.

Already, two oil companies, African Petroleum (AP) and National Oil and Chemical Marketing Company (NOLCHEM), have been privatised.

its operations and also massively abused credit facilities.

Anichebe added that although the report was similar to the N22.5 billion hidden debt profile of AP, the report also showed that most of the various accounts operated by NOLCHEM lacked the authority of the board.

For the President of the association, for the advancement of the shareholders' rights, Dr. Faruk Umar, the BPE revelation was an acceptance of their incompetence.

"The AP debt is unfortunate; It only shows the shortcomings of the BPE," Umar said.

Umar said, however, that it was good that Sadiq Petroleum, the core investor in AP, had decided to stay and salvage the situation, as an indigenous investor.

"The implication of the acceptance by Sadiq Petroleum to manage the AP debt profile means that it will take the investor more than five years to recoup its investments," he said, noting that "the core investor will definitely focus essentially on servicing the debts in the first five years without paying attention to the shareholders."

Mr. Tony Asho, general manager of the Summa Guaranty and Trust Company, said that revelations were a serious setback.



Ndidi Okereke NSE, DG

In a move to protect investors, the NSE last week invited officials of AP and NOLCHEM to shed more light on their financials status after privatisation.

The meeting, which was adjourned to reconvene later this month, also sought to find out how the new managements would liquidate the debts and also provide value for their investors.

Mr. Joseph Anichebe, Deputy Director of Bureau for Public Enterprise (BPE), disclosed last week that an audit report submitted to it on June 27, indicated that NOLCHEM under-provided for bad and doubtful debts in

Eight Uyo LGs reject revenue sharing formula

The eight oil producing local councils in Akwa Ibom State have rejected the state government's revenue sharing formula on the 13 percent derivation fund the state receives monthly from the Federal Government.

The councils presented their position at a public hearing in Uyo, organised by the finance and appropriation committee of the State's House of Assembly where a bill on the issue is currently receiving attention.

The chairmen of oil producing councils, whose joint position was presented by the Nkpat Enin Local Government Chairman, Mr. Udo Umoatan, said that the state should take 50 percent

instead of the 60 percent proposed in the bill.

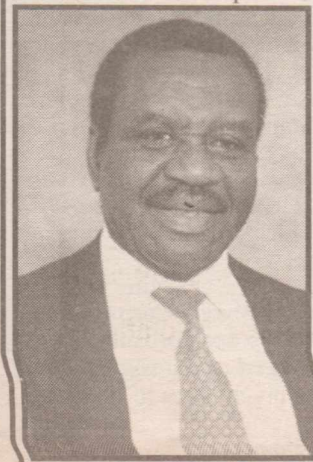
The local governments suggested that 25 percent of the fund should go to the oil producing council areas, while 25 percent should be shared on the basis of equality of councils.

Before the public debate on the bill sent to the house by the executive, the chairman of the committee, Chief Isang Isang, had told NAN that the executive had proposed a sharing formula of 60 percent to the state and 13 percent to the oil producing council areas.

The bill also suggested that 10 percent should be shared on equality of councils, 10 percent for special development and seven percent for emergencies, to be kept by the state government.

Isang explained that the public hearing was organised to enable the citizens air their views on the issue which he said, was of fundamental importance to the people of the state.

On accruable monthly revenue from the 13 percent derivation, he said the state received about N2 billion monthly from the Federal Government.



Governor Obong Attah of Akwa-Ibom

Intern'l Insurance Summit to address poverty alleviation -Bailey

The 4th Nigerian International Insurance Summit (NIIS), which is scheduled to hold in Abuja from July 18 to July 21, will address the issue of poverty alleviation among people at the grassroots level.

The body organising the summit, the National Insurance Commission (NAICOM), has developing the insurance culture among the rural populace as another issue to be addressed at the summit.

Briefing newsmen in Lagos about the forthcoming summit, the head of NAICOM and the country's Commissioner for Insurance, Chief Oladipo Bailey, said that insurance at the grassroots would generate employment for the rural populace.

Bailey said that it was wrong for some Nigerians to think that insurance was elitist and was for only people in the urban areas.

According to the commissioner, the coming summit will enlighten participants, most of whom are to be drawn from all the local government councils in the country, that people in the rural areas can buy insurance policies too.

Bailey said that alleviation of poverty for the populace should not end with provision of food, job, and money for the poor masses.

He said that poverty alleviation should include the protection of assets put together or owned by the poor masses which were the fruits of their labour.

The commissioner said that through insurance, these assets would be replaced in case the unexpected happened.

Bailey noted that as the Association of Local Governments of Nigeria (ALGON) was closer to the rural populace, NAICOM would use ALGON members participating at the summit to get to this important segment of the country's population.



Adamu Ciroma, Finance Minister

BUSINESS DAY

MAN wants broader equity base for Industrial Bank

The Federal Government has been advised to broaden the equity base of the proposed Industrial Bank to include the private sector, foreign investors and the general public in order to ensure its effectiveness.

"Government's exclusive ownership of the bank is not ideals, as it is significant for other stakeholders in the nation's industrial sector to be represented on its Board," Chief Charles Ugwu, president of the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Lagos.

He, however, said that "the idea of the bank is fantastic, but its equity base

should be broadened to ensure operations."

Ugwu said MAN had proposed some initiatives to President Olusegun Obasanjo to help rehabilitate the ailing industries and promote those industries with the potential to uplift the economy.

"What the economy needs are long-term funds with low interest rate of between 7 percent to 9 percent annually, which could be repaid within a period of between 12 years and 15 years," he said.

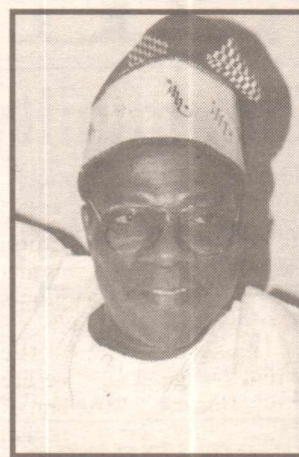
A delegation of MAN, which visited President Olusegun Obasanjo on in Abuja, suggested that the Federal Government should set aside a minimum of one

billion dollars every year over a three to five year period, to be disbursed as a revolving loan to specific target companies in the industrial sector.

The MAN President, however, explained that those organisations to be

targeted should be carefully chosen to reflect those that exert the greatest impact on the economy.

He said that the target companies should include the Automotive Industry, Agro-allied and Food, Pharmaceuticals, the Electrical Industry, Petrochemicals and other sectors that have direct relevance to the general well being of the people.



Kola Jamodu, Industries Minister

South Africa to redesign national currency

South Africa is to have new currency designs within the next 18 months following moves by the country's Reserve Bank to commission artists to design a series of new notes to reflect the country's transformation from apartheid to democracy seven years ago.

"Often bank notes are the window to a nation. There has been a change in the political dispensation in South Africa since 1992 and the Reserve Bank has an opportunity here to portray the new dispensation on new bank notes," said Abubakar Ismail, General Manager for Currency and Protection at the apex bank.

The reserve bank chief said it was a world wide practice for countries to change the design of their currencies every seven or eight years, mainly for security reason, adding that South Africa's current move to change its bank notes was part of a normal world wide currency procedure.

The current series of green R10 notes, brown R20 notes, pink R50 notes, bluish R100 notes and yellowish R200 notes were issued in 1992, giving them a "pocket span" of nine years now.

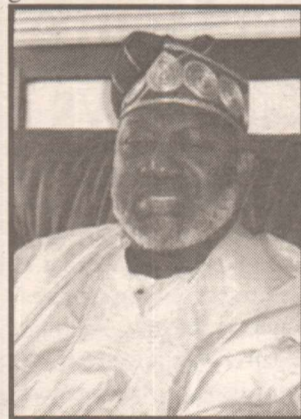
Ismail said that prime consideration when countries change the designs of their currency include updating the national depictions on bank notes.

The Reserve Bank said that it was cautious about keeping one currency design for too long for fear that massive innovation in computer technology could facilitate criminal efforts in counterfeiting.

Nigerian director to ADB assumes duty

Nigeria's new executive director to the African Development Bank (ADB), Alhaji Lawal Sani, has formally assumed duty in Abidjan, the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports.

The new director told NAN in Abidjan that his first assignment was to focus on some outstanding loan agreements between the bank and some Nigerian establishments and state governments.



Alhaji Lawal Sani, Min. of Cooperation & Integration in Africa

He said that he would also work to resolve the little misunderstanding between the ADB and Nigeria over the Nigerian Trust Fund (NTF) to enhance understanding between the bank, Nigeria and the borrowing countries.

NAN reports that the

bank and the Federal Government were yet to agree on proposed amendments to the agreement under which the fund was established.

The contentious issue include the bank's resistance to Nigeria's demand for a separate board for the fund, since it is a bilateral fund and not an institution as the ADB and the ADF, and that setting up a board would be very expensive for the fund.

The bank is also requesting more autonomy from Nigeria in running the fund to enable it apply its own criteria in giving loans to deserving countries from the fund without having to

ask for Nigeria's approval before doing so.

Nigeria, on the other hand, wants the bank to make it mandatory that Nigerian experts and consultants be given priority in contracts from the NTF loans, a demand which the bank perceived as against its principles of open tendering.

Sani said that he would work assiduously to see that Nigeria asserts its true position in the bank.

The Katsina state-born new executive director was, until the new appointment, the deputy general manager in charge of public sector in the Union Bank of Nigeria, where he had held many other posts, including deputy general manager special assets.

Taiwanese trade delegation expected in Nigeria soon

A seven-man Taiwanese delegation of leading electronic and electrical product manufacturers, Tatung Company Limited, is scheduled to arrive in Nigeria on July 8, for a three-day business visit.

A statement by the Trade Mission of the Republic of China (Taiwan), in Lagos, said the delegation would conduct a study of the Nigerian market and investment environment in a

bid to invest in the country's economy.

"The visit and the eventual setting up of a business venture will no doubt be of mutual benefit to Nigeria and Taiwan," the statement said.

Established in 1918, Tatung Company Limited, now commands a capital base of about \$1.185 billion and the company's main business is in the manufacturing of home appliances and computer related products.

Virgin Airlines launches maiden flight today

Virgin Atlantic Airways, the second British carrier on the London-Lagos route, will today launch its maiden flight into the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport (NAIA), Abuja with a Boeing 747 aircraft, the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports.

A reliable source at the Ministry of Aviation, who confirmed the date in an interview with NAN in Abuja, said that the aircraft would stop-over at the Murtala Mohammed International Airport (MMIA) and depart for the Abuja airport same day.

Virgin's arrival in Lagos would provide the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) the opportunity to certify the aircraft to be used for the flight operation.

According to the source, the chairman of the airline, Sir Richard Branson, will

formerly introduce the service into the Nigerian aviation market both in Lagos and in Abuja respectively.

The Nigerian and the British government last April signed the "dual designation" agreement on the Lagos-London route.

With this development, Nigeria was able to break the two decades of monopoly of British Airways on the lucrative route.

Following the agreement, both countries now allow two airlines to operate the route, hence Virgin Atlantic Airways has joined the British Airways to fly the route.

Industry watchers believe that Virgin's entry on the route would reduce the cost of the fare as well as reduce the stress and humiliation Nigerian passengers suffer at the hands of British airways officials.



(R-L): Mr. Moyo Ajekigbe, Executive Director, Consumer and Retail Banking, First Bank of Nigeria Plc explaining a point during the launching ceremony of the three newly introduced products of the Bank while Mr. Toyin Abayomi-Banjo, Head, Corporate Affairs, holding the poster and Mrs. Christy Okoye, Head, Consumer banking look on.

Railway pensioners protest non-payment of 13 months arrears

Hundreds of Nigeria Railway pensioners in Abia State, comprising aged men and women, stormed Government House Umuahia on Tuesday to protest the non-payment of their 13 months' salary arrears.

Chief Godwin Njoku, who led the protesters, said they were hungry, and now begging to survive for the past 13 months.

He said that they came to the Umuahia branch of the United Bank for Africa (UBA) to receive two months of the arrears, following a radio announcement by the executives of their association.

He, however, expressed regrets that they were not paid, having been told at the bank that not all their

vouchers had been received.

Addressing the pensioners, the Special Adviser to the Governor on Economic Planning and State Integration, Chief Chidi Ubani, pledged that that state government would intervene in the matter to ensure that they were paid their arrears.

He said that government was "deeply concerned" about their plight, adding that it would direct their complaints to the Federal Government for prompt action, "because you served the nation meritoriously and so, deserve your pensions as and when due."

Ubani, who after visiting the Railway Corporation, also went to the bank, where he urged its management to take urgent steps to alleviate the suffering of the pensioners.

BUSINESS DAY

Union vows to resist job-cut in privatised NPA

From Tokunbo Oloke, in Lagos

The Maritime Workers Union has vowed to resist any attempt to retrench any of its members in a post privatised Nigeria Ports Authority (NPA).

President-General of the union, Comrade Anilolease Irobor declared the workers' position in reaction to statement by Transport Minister, Ojo Maduekwe that port workers would be sacked after the NPA would have been privatised.

The minister who was speaking at the workshop organised to mark the one-year anniversary of Joint Dock Labour Industrial Council (JODLIC) in Lagos, said that the operation of the NPA which include structures, assets and infrastructures would be privatised while the NPA would remain as regulatory body.

After the privatisation exercise, he stressed "we are not preaching retrenchment of workers, but I cannot say there would be no retrenchment but the market

forces would determine it as well as the private operators at that time."

In a sharp contrast, Irabor told the minister that maritime workers will continue to maintain sanity in the port, but the union would resist any reforms that tends to cause the union's members to lose its job.

According to the president general, "we are ready to use our last point of blood to fight anything that can make our members lose their jobs in the name of privatisation."

Moreso, he disclosed that NPA was not originally slated among the company's to be privatised but adding that the name NPA was smuggled into the list overnight by some powerful people who think they are bigger than everybody.

"If the NPA is privatised, then the lives of the yet unborn children of this great are not safe security wise, rather the interested private operators should go to a place like railway, NEPA or NITEL," he added.

However, the minister who was overwhelmed by the Irabor's talk simply laughed over the matter and said the appropriate quarters will address the issue critically again.

OPEC retains crude output limit

Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) producers on Tuesday agreed to keep oil output limits unchanged as expectations rose for an imminent resumption of Iraq's U.N.-supervised crude exports.

The organisation left output for 10 members at 24.2 million barrels a day, keeping in place the supply restrictions it set earlier this year.

OPEC is struggling to defend prices at its \$25 a barrel target because of the likely resumption of

substantial Iraqi supplies and an economic downturn that is eating into world oil demand.

"We took account of the situation in the market which is well supplied. Stocks are at a very good level relative to last years," said OPEC President, Chakib Khelil.

Saudi Oil Minister, Ali al-Naimi said the cartel was prepared to rein in supply again if the return of Iraqi oil proved too much of a burden for prices.

"If Iraqi oil returns we may have to take steps to cut

back," said Naimi. "Demand is reflecting the slowdown in economic growth. It is not picking up in the east or the west."

London Brent blend eased 26 cents to \$25.40 a barrel taking losses to more than \$4 a barrel in the space of a month.

Iraq is thought likely to lift a self-imposed block on oil sales after a United Nations vote on Tuesday which will renew existing measures against Baghdad, including an oil-for-food exchange.

Faced by the threat of a Russian veto, the U.S. and Britain on Monday abandoned efforts aimed at overhauling the 11-year-old Gulf War embargo. Instead, oil-for-food will be renewed for five months.

That would appear to meet Iraq's conditions for a resumption of its two million barrels daily of oil sales although a draft U.N. resolution includes a reference to the sanctions reforms. Baghdad stopped exports in early June in protest at the plans.

...awaits Iraqi response

Iraq has yet to respond but an Iraqi oil official in Vienna said his government was likely to seriously consider resuming exports.

"If the U.N. agrees a straightforward rollover without any elements of the U.S.-British proposals then the Iraqi government would seriously consider restarting exports," the official said.

Iraqi newspapers celebrated the climb down as a victory.

Previously expecting to compensate for the Iraqi stoppage, OPEC found it had no option but to maintain production unchanged to keep prices in its \$22 - \$28 target.

OPEC ministers are hoping that the return of Iraqi deliveries will not cause any further decline in oil prices.

"Now we believe the market has considered Iraq's return and in the third quarter we are very close to balance between supply and demand," said Iranian Oil

Minister, Bijan Zanganeh.

Most oil analysts think there is more likelihood of oil prices climbing than falling.

"OPEC is looking backward at the moment at stocks building," said Leo Drollas of the Centre for Global Energy Studies in London.

"In fact they should be looking forward and what is happening next is in the

opposite direction because demand for oil is beginning to rise seasonably."

"Even if Iraq comes back there are still bullish pressures on the market because of seasonal factors which could create upward pressure on prices," said Raad Alkadiri of Petroleum Finance Corp in Washington.

OPEC's next scheduled gathering is on September 26 - 27.

Manual inspection stalls clearing at ports

The manual method implored in the 100 percent goods inspection at the ports by the Federal Government has showed down the processes of goods clearing, Business Day investigations has shown.

Unlike the former process where electronic gadgets were used, this effecting clearance between 48 and 72 hours, the situation has now cumbersome, especially that containers were completely emptied and clearing agents would have to repackage the contents during and after inspections.

The situation, it was learnt was further compounded following the lack of basic equipment by the customs to prosecute the inspection exercise, even as freight forwarders pay more for excess cargoes due to poor repackaging.

It was discovered on the spot assessment that after unstuffing the contents from the containers, it used to be difficult to stuff everything back into the container because the surfing used be done by machines at the port



Ojo Maduekwe, Transport Minister

of origin. As a results excess contents on the ground used to attract cost at the expense of the clearing agents.

Also, another thing discovered is that since the 100 percent examination is done manually, the process was very cumbersome and tiring as very few containers are released on daily basis, thereby making

decongesting efforts worthless.

Another knotty issue is the preferential treatment attitude adopted by the trailer drivers who are found of rejecting short distances but prefer long ones because it attracts more wages.

Speaking on this development, maritime expert, Dr. Olu Ologbese, implored the government to rescind its plans on the 100 percent examination.

'No more casual labour in oil sector'

From Samson Ojo, in Lagos

Stakeholders in the Nigeria oil industries have resolved to conceal casual and contract employment in the oil and gas sector.

This was the agreement reached in a meeting between the National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG), the Managing Directors of Oil Companies and the Managing Director of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Mr. Jackson Gaius-Obaseki.

Most of the oil companies Business Day learnt have commenced the regularisation of the employment of their casual and contract workers.

The General Secretary of NUPENG, Comrade Joseph Akinlaja, who disclosed this in an interview with Business Day in his office in Lagos yesterday.

He disclosed further that the stakeholders present at the meeting have also agreed that a "condition of service" should be put in place for those workers whose jobs could not be regularised.

He added that a monitoring process would be put in place while another

meeting would be convened after six months of this agreement to assess the progress made so far on the issue of canalisation.

The NUPENG General Secretary, Comrade Akinlaja said that workers have been advised to accept the suspension of their proposed strike action to pave way for the implementation of agreements reached at the meeting expressed satisfaction over the outcome of its meeting with other stakeholders in the oil industry. He disclosed that the problem of contract and consolidation labour was recovering appropriate attention from employers in the sector.

According to Comrade Akinlaja, the meeting between NUPENG, managing directors of oil companies, representative of Ministry of Labour and Employment and representative of Nigeria Labour Congress a was convened at the instance of the Group Managing Director of NNPC, Mr. Obaseki, and it was agreed that employers in the oil

industries should commence the regularisation of what used to be casual and contract jobs.

"With that we are satisfied as a union and we advised our members to atleast allow the suspension fo the strike to stay while we monitor the progress of the agreement reached," he said.

It would be recalled that union had given a notice of strike for June 28 and 29 to protest the use of consolidation and contract employment in oil industries, which the government quickly intervened, and called for a meeting of all the stakeholders in the industries.



Musa Gwadabe, Labour Minister

NCAA D-G insists on deadline for wet lease of aircraft airlines

Domestic airline operators have been warned that the July 30 deadline for operators to do away with foreign registered aircraft remained valid.

The Director-General of the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), Mr. Zakari Haruna, gave the warning in an interview with newsmen at the current National Civil Aviation Policy review workshop in Abuja.

"The July 30 ultimatum on all wet-leased aircraft still stands," he stated. "By that date, the local operators must not use it again, until another 12 months."

Haruna explained that any operators doing business other than the one specified

in their respective Air Operators Certificate (AOC) licence, stood the chance of the revocation or suspension of such a licence.

The NCAA Director-General affirmed the authority's optimism toward the workshop because of the objectives which were fully supported by the president.

"It will definitely come out with recommendations that will put aviation in the country on a very sound footing," Haruna said.

Commenting on the challenges facing aviation regulation in the country, Haruna remarked that the major challenges had been for Nigeria to get onto the international environment, to have global acceptability standard.

Body decries government interference development finance institutions

From Bala Mohammed Nasir, in Dutse

Capital inadequacy and government's frequent interference, among other things are the bane of development finance institutions' operations in the country.

This assertion was made by the Association of Nigeria Development Finance Institutions after its recent meeting which was held in Dutse, the Jigawa State capital.

The association lamented that development finance institutions have over the years been strangled, especially during the military era where they were left unattended and their functions passed to commercial banks that were reluctant to carry them out as it should be.

The association claimed that experience has shown

that commercial banks don't normally fund development programmes on their own unless they are forced to do so. Where they did, those facilities are killed wittingly especially during the military, it said.

The meeting focused specially on issues relating to the problems and prospects of the Development Finance Institutions especially those belonging to states. It also held the meeting in order to acquaint, especially state governments of the operations of DFIs because, they were specifically established to take the responsibility of mobilising and allocating funds to finance projects in the real sectors as they serve as catalysts for economic development.

Kano has always been famous for its tradition of dyeing. Kofar Mata is the principal site for this activity, and the culture

By Tadaferua Ujorha
goes back some 500 years. Tradition holds that in those days, merchants would leave Mo-

rocco with bales of cloth, which they would take to Kano to be dyed in the colours they desired. Therefore, dyed cloths from Kano were

The famous dy

in great demand, and the art of dyeing helped to put the name of Kano on the cultural map of the globe. Indeed, many travellers and adventurers who passed through the Central Sudan within this 500 years period, commented on the superior quality of dyed material from Kano.

The Dye-pits at Kofar Mata

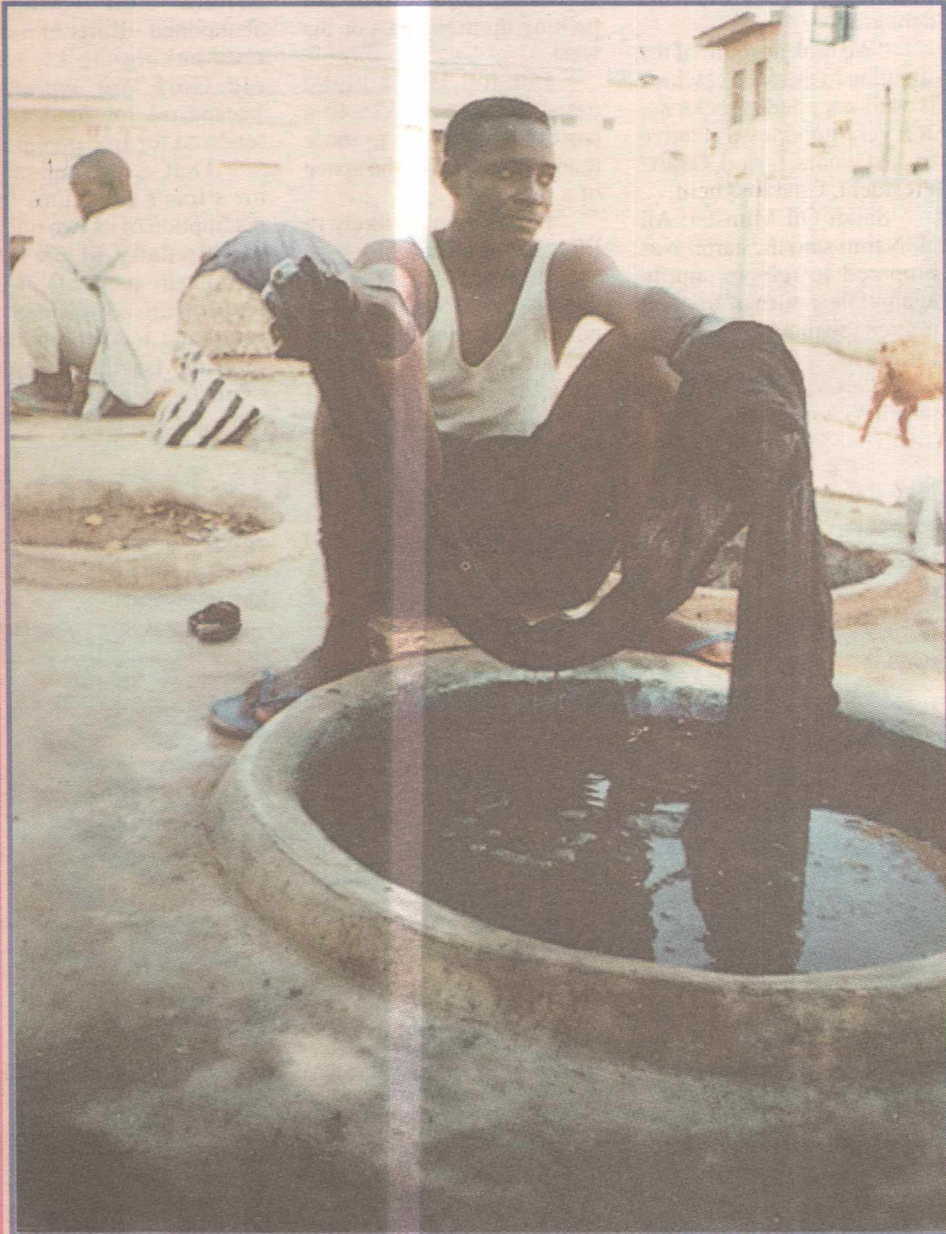
The man had long and sturdy limbs and his veins stood out clearly in the early morning sunlight, as he raised the gown out of the dark blue water. It rested in his hands for a while and then he placed it once more in the dark blue waters. As he made to do so, he looked into the face of the sun, as though imploring the massive orb to assist him in dyeing the rather stubborn length of cloth. His teeth were somewhat reddened, but it seemed as though they had a certain blueness to them as though years of dyeing at these historical pits might have impacted upon his incisors in this rather blue fashion. His noble limbs might have emerged from the regular exercise of working at the pit.

There are 150 pits at the Kofar Mata dyeing site, and each pit is owned by an individual whose ancestors also played a role in the art of dyeing at this spot. Also, there is a *Shuguban aiki* (leader of dyers) whose role is to supervise works around the pits and to see to the general co-ordination of activities there. He also receives visitors when they choose to call upon the enchanting spot.

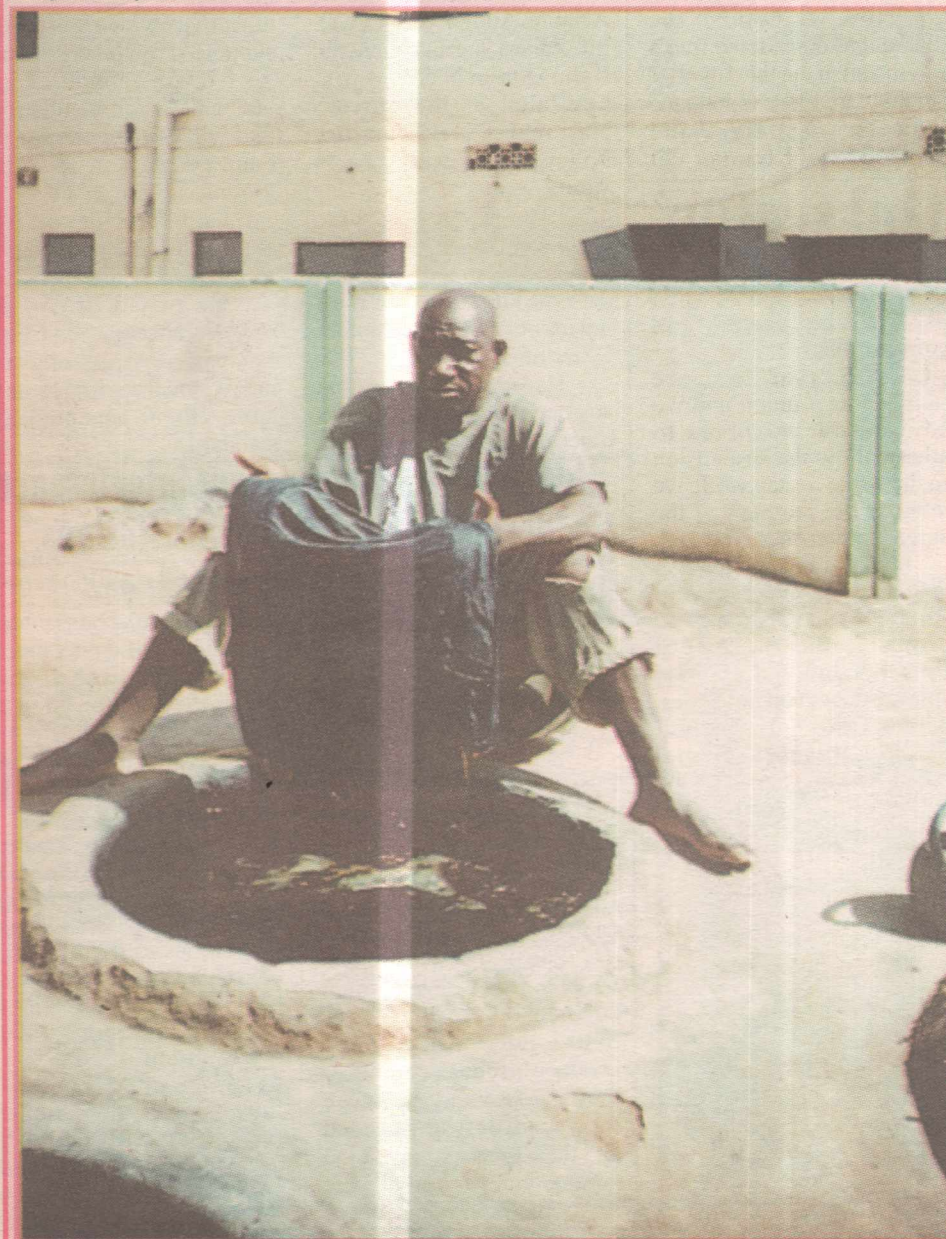
Four colours are worked with here in the process of dyeing. These include blue, light blue, navy blue and black. Numerous ingre-

dients are vital to the process of dyeing cloths at the Kano dye-pits. These include natural indigo, which is obtained from a flowering plant, which grows like a rose.

Another is ash such as is obtained from firewood, and the next is tassium. These are not combined all at once to produce the dye. Rather, a pit of about six metres depth is filled with ordinary water and it is left for two to three



A dyer busy at work



View of the dye-pits

Feature

Indigo-pits of Kano

days. Later 50-60kg of natural indigo is applied and the pit is left in this state for three days. Next, potassium powder is added. Then the pit is left for a time of four weeks, which is a period in which the mixture ferments. Within the

period the pits are opened by 4 p.m. each day to be stirred for a while and covered till the next day. After four weeks the solution turns brown which means it is

now mature for the process of dyeing.

Securing the various colours

At Kano, the entire family of blue is available as dye, but there is a little difference in the process of achieving each. It takes one hour thirty minutes to achieve the light blue colour. This calls for a lot of patience by the man working at the pit. The pure blue colour requires a total of three hours of work, while navy blue requires four hours. The black appears to be the most difficult of all and it requires a total of six hours of dyeing to achieve it. Air is important in the process of dyeing. Thus, the man raises the cloth from the water in an alternating sequence, which also sees the cloth back in the dark blue substance. An air and gas exchange is vital to this traditional method of dyeing.

The dyers of Kofar Mata

Danlami Mohammed and Alhaji Audu Kofa Mata have been involved in the art of dyeing since the period of early childhood. They disclosed that when traders visit they normally request for dark colours, while the ordinary people require the lighter colours. It costs N200.00 to dye a trouser and its accompanying small kaftan. But they added that there are problems with the trade today. Five months before the rains is a very busy period and those who bring work are the farmers. But when the rains come the farmers go to the farm, and the business declines. During Sallah people come from the Emir's palace, Kano and make special requests for dyed cloths. They mentioned too that foreigners are their principal patrons, but Nigerians are not very keen

on their products, which make both men unspeakably sad.

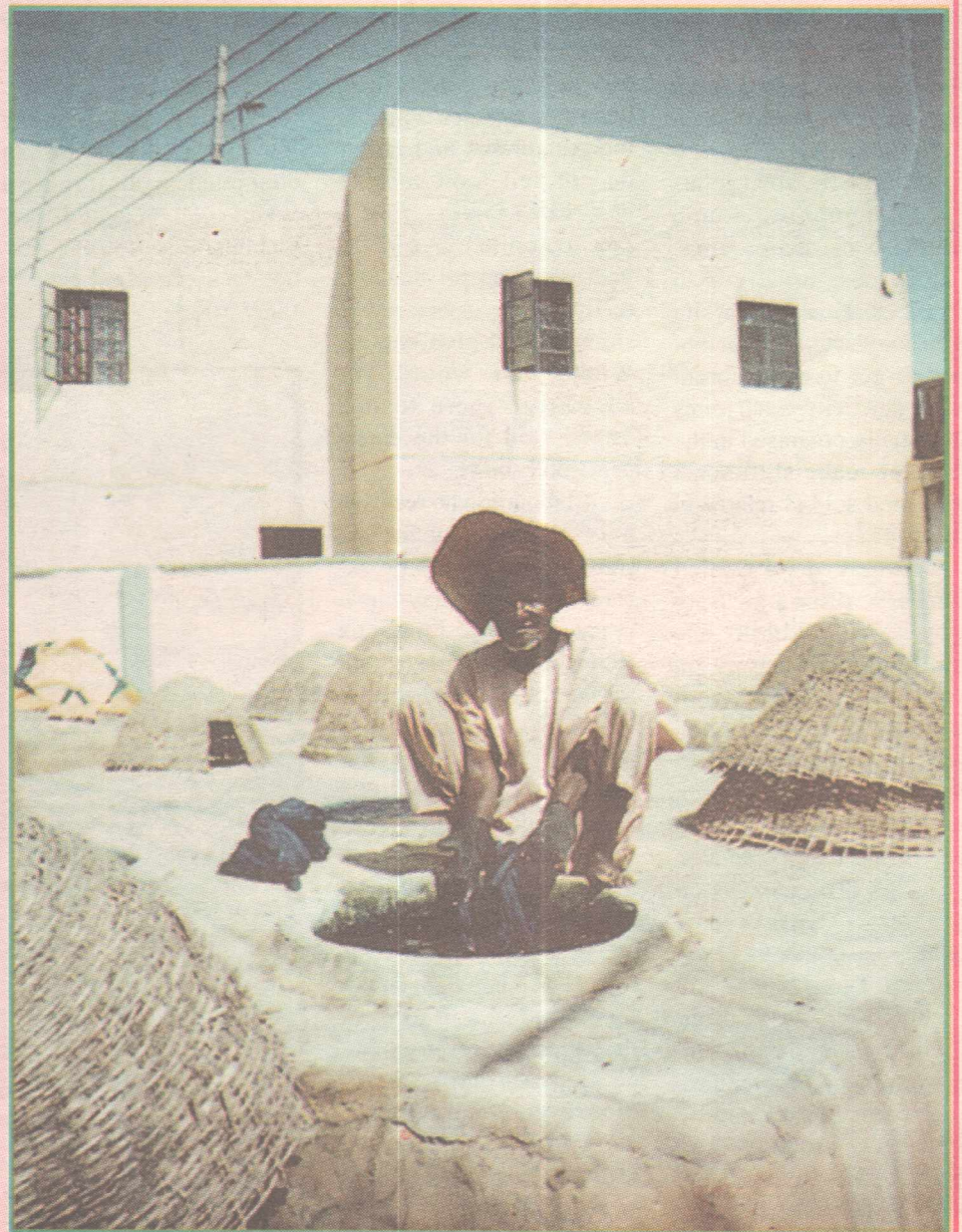
Women also work with the male dyers at Kofar Mata, although they do not stay at the open pits but operate

from nearby residences. Hajiya Maimuna Ismail is one. She plays the complementary role of providing intricate and stirring designs for the material, which is to be dyed. Some of the de-

signs she produce go by very unforgettable names such as Three pillars, Emir's palace, Bride and Bridegroom, seven Hausa states, moon, star, clouds etc.



Hajiya Maimuna Ismail



Feature

Food joints: A case for the masses

By Yakubu Ozohu-Suleiman

Some people call it "Ebeano", others call it "Stop over." Name it whatever, the fact remains that the city of Abuja is currently witnessing a proliferation of food joints. In fact if statistics are taken, we may find out that the commonest signpost in Abuja reads, "Food is ready." This may be difficult to observe because it is mainly written in chalk or charcoal or biro or even pencil on small plates or papers and usually hanged in some corners round the food joints. In some cases, there are no signposts, but as soon as you see some cups, plates and jugs on tables, you need not be told that you have met one of the food joints in the city.

In fact food joints are so common in Abuja now that one can hardly move 50 metres without coming across one. It appears not a difficult business to begin. All it requires are some cups, plastics jugs to serve water. Cooler for storing food and jerrican for water storage. One or two benches and tables. That's all. Cook your food at home and bring it to the joint, you will get customers.

Tent is not necessary as many of these joints are located around the fences of buildings. Wherever it may be necessary some sticks or planks are erected and covered with cement bags as tents. No complain from customers.

Originally, food joints are commonly found around construction sites. The purpose usually is to serve workers at the site who may want to eat but cannot get to a restaurant in the inner city. Such joints are usually organised in the form of make-shift tents with food sold at relatively cheap prices.

As the Federal Capital Territory with its growing attractions, Abuja has continued to witness an influx of people from various parts of the country. This has led to unprecedented increase in population of the city, and majority of the people who are either civil servants on transfer, private sector employees, labourers or job seekers or people who are generally seeking resettlement in the city did not come with their families. So, cooking at home becomes unattractive and rather difficult. Even the few who are in the city with their families tend to spend

more of their time in the offices or sites. In this case, they don't have any option than to patronise the food joints. Indeed, more than 60% of the population of Abuja is composed of

In an opinion Survey, *Daily Trust* gathered from workers who patronise the food joints that many people prefer eating at the food joints mainly for two reasons: One is that food is cheaper at the joints than in hotels and restaurants. And

nutritional requirements of the body," said *Daily Trust*. The workers reacted that what they eat at the food joint are also for the body. "The body does not reject what we eat here, and what we need is energy to work. We are healthy, and

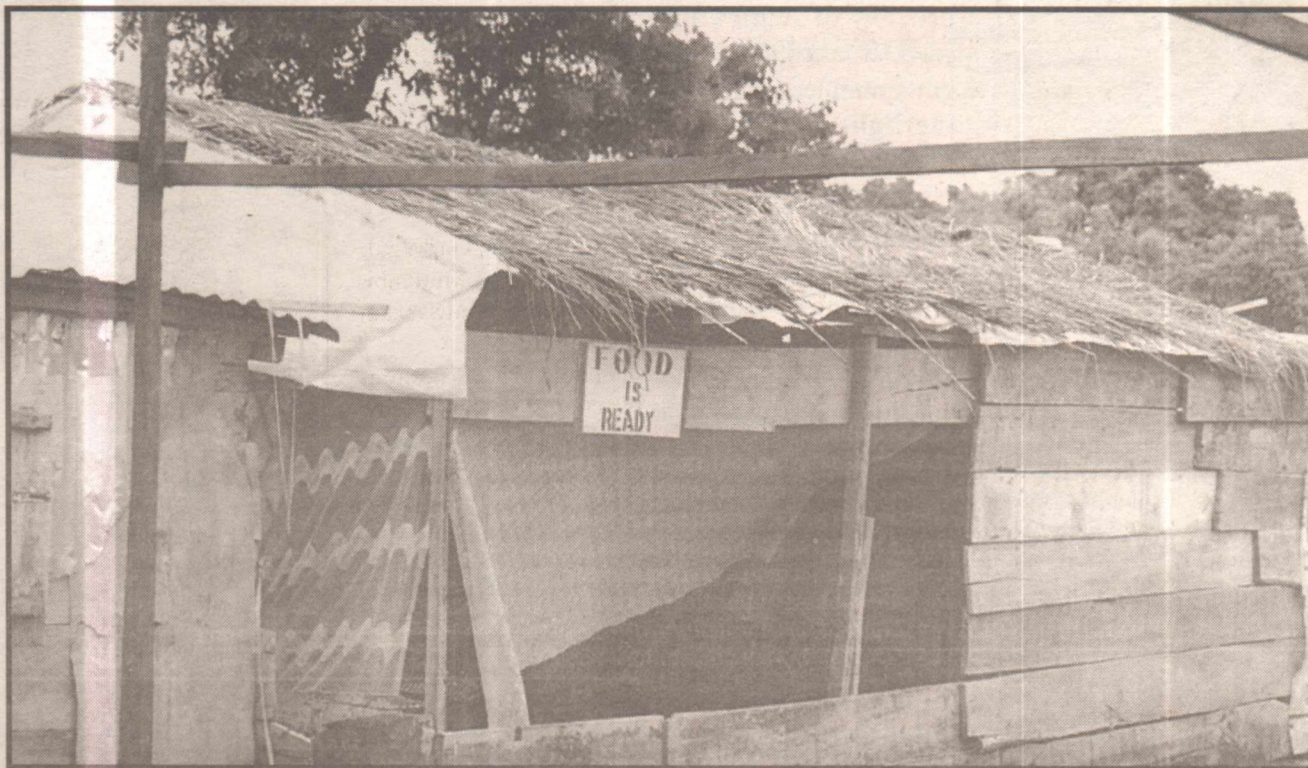
the food joints said that if the government would quite them, it means the government does not want workers to eat again," she said

This one no be the self employment wey the government dey talk How them go come quit us

sistent rise in the prices of food stuff. *Daily Trust* sought to know how the operator's food joints cope with the situation.

"We used to sell food cheaply to customers in this joints before, but because of he increased cost of food stuff in the market, we had to reduce the quantity we serve customers here so that we too can gain something." The problems faced by majority of the operators of food joints, according to the respondent, are from the weather. The rainy season she noted has not been very friendly with their business. On the average, however, she, just like her colleagues in the business could still make daily income sufficient to keep the household going. In her words "The business is lucrative if we are allowed to continue. You know Abuja is the federal capital, and the government may not allow this kind of small business to continue."

Well, there is no doubt that the food joints have come to serve the plight of the masses of an expensive city like Abuja. What, however gives one a cause for second thought is the fact that most of these places are also used to promote prostitution. It is very common to find young girls employed as customer attendants at the food joints. Apart from seeking extra means of income for themselves, these girls often fall into the trap of their employers whenever they refuse or fail to lure men to the joint for patronage. This is an issue that may not be



One of the numerous "food joints" around Abuja

Pix Felix Onigbinde

low-income earners, and this is the category of people whose purpose is mainly served by the food joints. In most restaurants and so called low profile hotels in the city, a plate of food, say pounded yam or rice cost not less than N300, and they are served in small quantity. Besides some of the restaurants and hotels do not sell food such as *eba, uka (Amala), foofoo (Akpu)*, boiled or roasted yam with red oil that can really occupy space in the stomach and give energy. What then would the masses go there to do? Thank God for the emergent food joints.

A labourer who receives only N300 a day for his causal job wouldn't be expected to spend the whole money at just a sitting in a restaurant. Similarly, a civil servant who receives only N8, 000 wouldn't be expected to spend same after committing almost N3, 000 on transportation to the office.

Incidentally a plate of food say *eba, amala*, rice and beans at the joints costs only N50. Though the quality of food sold in some of these joints are poor, but charges are harmonised. More over, the quantity and variety of food obtainable at the joints makes them even more appealing to people.

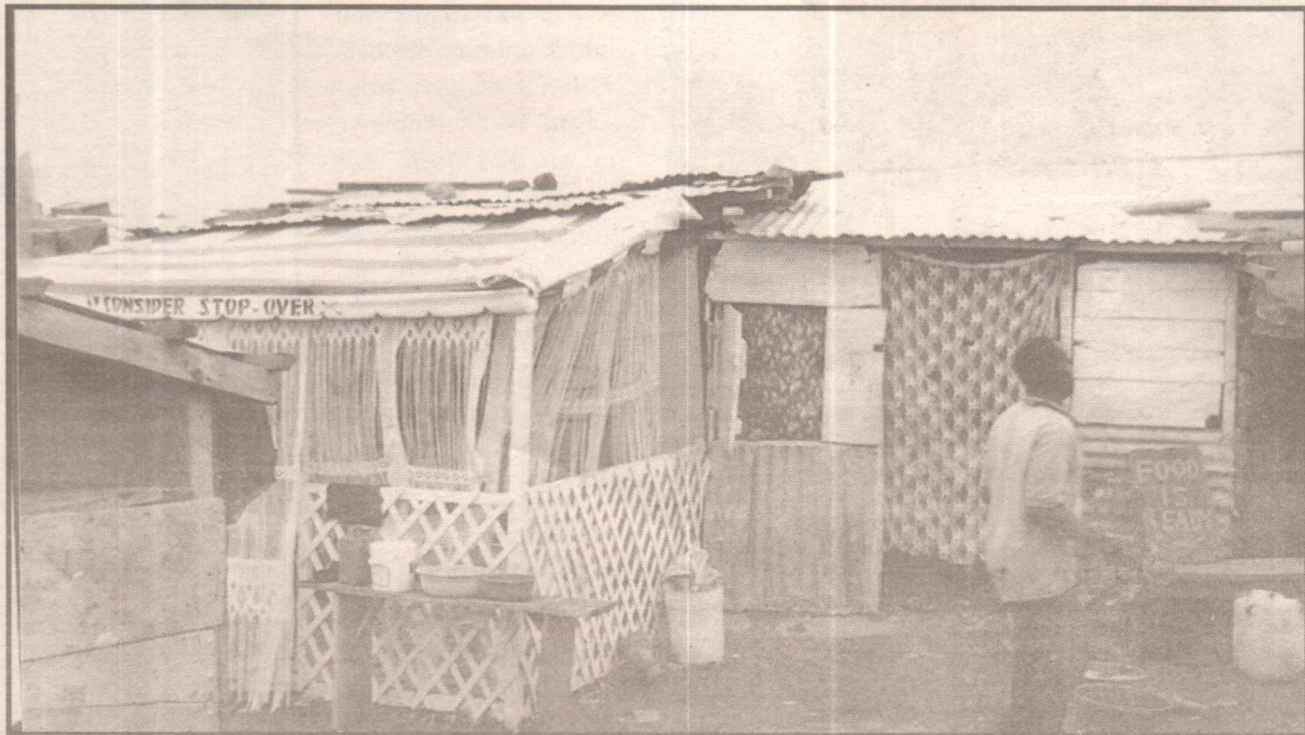
if they patronise restaurants and hotels they may not have anything to show at home for their work. The second reason is that what people are made to pay for in the restaurants, and hotels are not basically the cost of the food they eat there. One of the correspondent said: "We pay for luxuries which are not contained in the food we eat in the hotels and restaurants. Besides, one cannot easily be satisfied with their food, in terms of

if we were to fight with those people who eat in the big hotels, we will beat them."

But what if the government decide to quit all the food joints in Abuja today and order operators to seek permit to establish full-fledge restaurants? The *Daily Trust* questioned. The respondent replied in a chorus: "We would protest. Impossible! the government cannot do that. Do they think that everybody can afford hotel meals?"

again? So far as we maintain clean environment, they should not quit us,"

She further lamented, saying that the difficult situation in the country was what had forced most of them into operating food joints. "The business is easier to begin and we don't usually ask for permit. Although the spread of food joints in Abuja city seems uncontrolled, it has nevertheless come as a strong force enabling the masses of Abuja workers



Another "food joint". Here, food is rather cheap

quantity."

"But you know the food in the hotels are more carefully prepared to meet the

Where are we going to eat again?"

Reacting to the same issue, an operator of one of

to cope with the expensive city.

For quite sometimes now, there have been con-

difficult to curb as it is somewhat linked to the economic situation in the country.

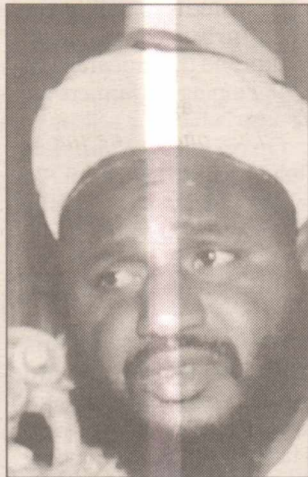
NEWS

Maradun LG spends N100m on roads

The Maradun Local Government Area of Zamfara State has awarded a contract worth N100 million for the tarring of two roads, its Chairman, Alhaji Yahaya Chado, has said.

Chado said that the roads to be tarred were the 40-km Magami-Maradun road and the 10-km Danbaza-Maradun road. He stated that the council also spent N2.2 million to control erosion at Janbako village, and constructed an embankment at Tsibiri village at the cost

of N2.4 million. Chado further stated that the council had



Gov Ahmed Sani

constructed 10 dispensaries at a total cost of N7 million.

The dispensaries are located at Alijima, Kindigah, Malikawa, Sakkida, Kadage, Sububu, Rudumu, Danbaza, Manasa and Gwarwawo. In addition, he said the council had constructed 12 primary and Islamiyya schools at a total cost of N2.5 million.

Chado also said the council purchased working materials worth N6 million and distributed them for community development projects. He urged the people of the area to support government's development efforts.

Committee on communal crisis submits report

A 12-member committee inaugurated by the Niger State government four months ago to look into the strained relationship between the Fulani cattle rearers and the Mokwa community has

submitted its report. Among the recommendations the committee proffered are that families of those who lost their lives should be compensated, the farmers whose crops were destroyed should also be assisted and an enlightenment campaign

should be organised for the opposing groups by the government so that they can realize the benefits they stand to gain from continued mutual coexistence.

Receiving the report, Governor Abdulkari Kure, commended the committee for its good job and promised that the government would study the recommendations and take appropriate decisions.

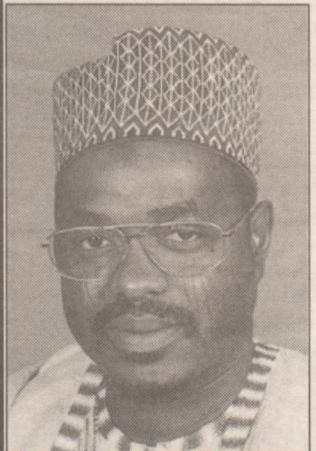
LG begins sale of fertilizer to farmers

The Kirfi Local Government Council in Bauchi State, has commenced sale of fertilizer at subsidized rates to farmers to boost food production in the area, the council chairman, Alhaji Mohammed Adamu, has said.

Adamu told newsmen in Bauchi on Tuesday that a bag of fertilizer was being sold at N800 as against the price of N1,140 in the market, adding that more than 13 trailer-loads of the

commodity had been received from the state government.

He said the council had purchased 60 ox-ploughs and bulls to be distributed to farmers as loans, adding that the council also planned to provide them with other chemicals that could improve their yield. The chairman said that the council would provide adequate assistance to people in the area with a view to encouraging them to embark on self-help projects.



Gov Kure

submitted its report.

Presenting the report to the governor, the chairman of the committee, who is also the Commissioner for Local Government Affairs, Alhaji Sheshi Katcha, said the committee did not betray the confidence reposed in it.

He pointed out that in order for lasting peace to be achieved in the area, the laws at both state and local

Jigawa govt to establish five grazing reserves

The Jigawa State government is to establish five grazing reserves for Fulani cattle rearers this year, the Permanent Secretary in the state's Farm Settlement Agency, Alhaji Idi Bukar, has announced.

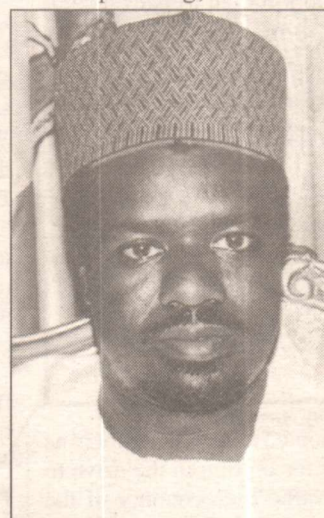
Speaking during a courtesy visit to the Emir of Ringim, in Jigawa State, Bukar said that the establishment of the grazing reserves was to minimize the frequent clashes between farmers and cattle rearers in the state. He said the grazing reserves would be established in Garbagal, Kukar Mekiya, Mutumbi, Galla-Shabaru, and Sankara areas of the state.

The permanent secretary said that already,

bush clearing at the Sankara grazing land had commenced, adding that when fully established, the reserves would provide sufficient pasture for nomads to reduce unnecessary encroachment of farmlands.

Responding, the Emir,

Alhaji Sayyadi Mahmud, who commended the state government for the move, said district heads and other traditional rulers in the emirate would be directed to ensure the protection of the Sankara grazing reserve in Ringim, when fully established.



Gov Saminu Turaki

Benue govt organises seminar to raise revenue

The Benue State government is to organize seminars on enhanced revenue generation at the state and local government levels, as part of efforts to strengthen its revenue base according to the chairman of the state's Board of Internal Revenue, Mr. Ityazenda Atser.

Mr. Atser told newsmen in Makurdi on Tuesday that the seminars had become necessary to sensitise public officers involved in revenue matters.

He said the fiscal base and financial abilities of the state and local governments were extremely weak, and decried the over-dependence on statutory allocation from the federation account by the states and local governments.

The chairman explained that the seminars would enable the operators of the government revenue systems to look deeply inward, for the optimization of their revenue collections. Atser also said that the seminars would also educate and sensitise both the governing body and operational arms of the state and local governments, in line with the ongoing reforms introduced under the current tax law.

Police stop conference of Kwara Yoruba Forum

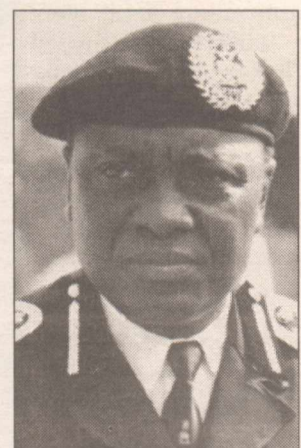
The much-publicised conference of Kwara Yoruba Forum, scheduled to have begun in Ilorin on Tuesday, was stopped by the police. The police spokesman in the state, Mr. Kayode Olorunmaiye, explained that the conference was stopped "owing to security implications and threat to the already charged tension in the

state capital."

Olorunmaiye said the police command had received security reports about the conference and "having weighed the reports, it is our belief that the conference will aggravate the tension in the town."

According to the handbill, it was not the free will of the Yorubas in the north to be made a minority in a country where they naturally belong to the majority group, adding: "the Yoruba are the single largest nationality in the Nigerian federation."

Anti-riot police were drafted to the planned venue of the conference at Circular Hotel, and at No. 18, Ejiba Street, which houses one of the conveners of the conference. A man who refused to disclose his name told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) that it was undemocratic for the police to have stopped the conference.



Mr. Smith, Police IG

Parents urge Sokoto govt to prevent hunger in schools

Parents in Sokoto State have appealed to the state government to take necessary measures in preventing hunger in the three boarding primary schools in the state.

According to the Voice of America (VOA) broadcast monitored in Abuja, the spokesman for the parents, Malam Garba B. Shehu, was reported as saying that all the pupils of the three experimental boarding primary schools established

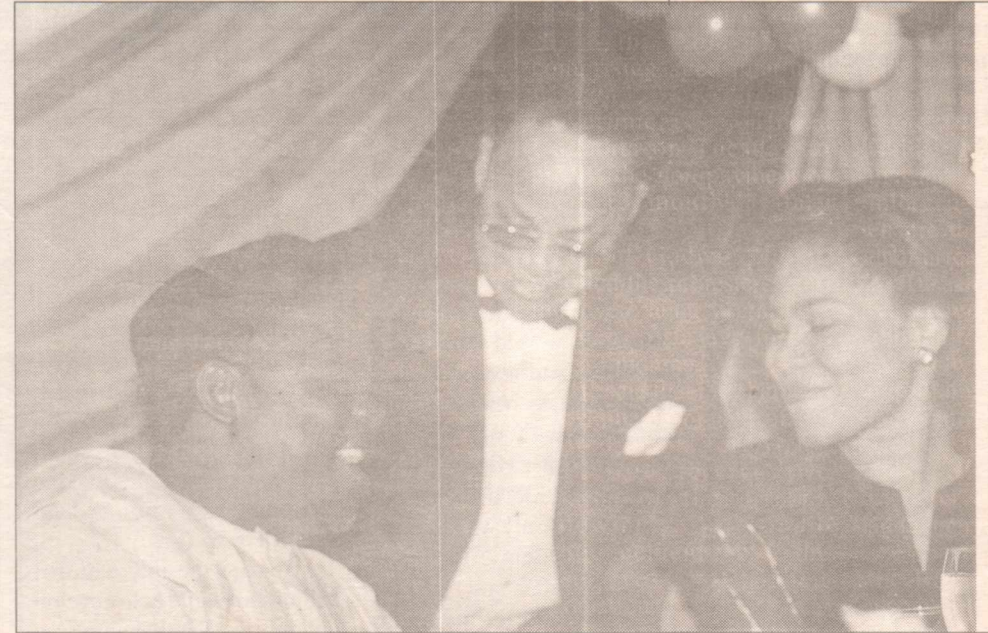
by the state government are now in difficulties due to inadequate nutrition, which he said would affect the pupils' educational standard.

He said that he visited the schools where he discovered inadequate food for the pupils, and the food provided had bad taste.

His words: "The children told me that they are just eating the food due to hunger and that they couldn't find another one, we have spent about five months without eating meat."



Gov Bafarawa



Chairman, Senate Committee on Information, Senator Jonathan Zwingina (left), FRCN Director-General, Mr. Eddie Iroh (middle) and Mrs. Susan Iroh during FRCN's 50th Anniversary celebration in Abuja ... recently. Pix: Felix Onigbinde

NEWS

Why FG constructs roads —Anenih

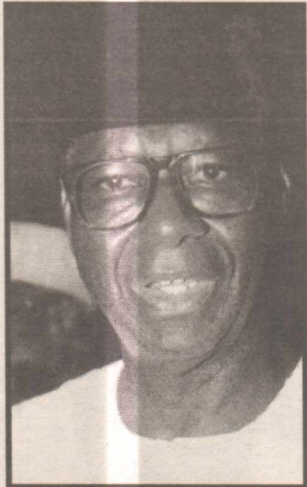
Minister of Works and Housing, Chief Tony Anenih, has explained that the decision of the Federal Government to develop roads across the country is based on the fact that road development is the bedrock of the economic transformation of the country.

Speaking through the Minister of State in the ministry, Mr. Garuba Madaki Ali, at the flagging-off ceremony of the completion of Kaduna Refinery road in Kaduna on Monday, he said commerce and educational attainment are made possible through roads.

According to him, good road enhances agriculture, as it provides access to farmers for evacuation of farm produce.

He said it was in this regard that the government

From Dare Oyewole, in Kaduna



Tony Anenih adopted road development as its focal point in the drive to revamp the economy of the nation and alleviate poverty, adding that the policy of the administration at the inception was to develop 5,000 kilometres of roads

every year.

Chief Anenih said in consonance with this objective the government awarded three contracts in Kaduna State, which include Kaduna-Kachia-Gimi road, Saminaka-Zangon Kataf-Kafanchan road and the River Wonderful Bridge as well as the inter-state road between Plateau and Kaduna States.

He stated that many other road constructions embarked upon by the government across the country had been completed.

Chief Anenih stated that the flagging-off of the

Kaduna Refinery road signified the commitment and sincerity of the present administration towards the road development policy in the country.

Also speaking at the occasion, the State Acting Governor, Engineer Stephen Shekari, said the state government shared the commitment of the Federal Government in the provisions of adequate roads.

He said so far, the state had committed N13 billion to the rehabilitation and reconstruction of rural roads evenly distributed across the state.

The six-kilometre dual carriageway that was awarded to PW Nigeria Limited at a cost of N1.4 billion is expected to be completed in four months.

Kogi government to refurbish 30 tractors

The Kogi State government has set aside N15 million for the refurbishment of 30 tractors and the procurement of vital inputs for farmers for this year's farming season.

Governor Abubakar Audu made the disclosure in Lokoja when he signalled the commencement of this year's Food-For-All Programme and the sale of fertiliser in the state.

He said that his administration would continue to give necessary support and encouragement to farmers through the supply of farming inputs at subsidised rates.

Audu noted that under

the programme, over 100 hectares would be ploughed, harrowed and ridged for allocation to interested farmers at highly subsidised rates.

The Governor added that the programme was intended to encourage local farmers, civil servants and public officers to engage in large scale mechanised farming and urged the people of the state to seize the opportunity to engage in profitable agricultural activities.

He said that adequate arrangement had been put in place to ensure prompt and equitable distribution of fertiliser in every nook and cranny of the state.

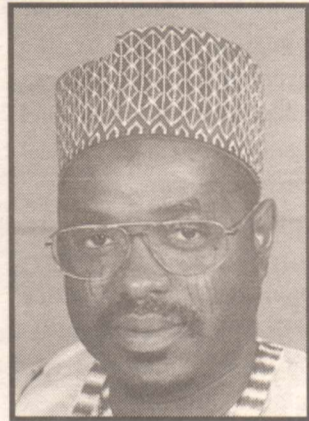
Governor Audu also said that a special committee would be constituted to monitor the distribution of the commodity, stressing that stiff penalty would be meted out to anyone involved in diversion of the product or selling it above the approved prices.

Over 2,460 metric tonnes of various brands of fertilisers were procured by the state government and would be sold at the following approved rates per bag: NPK, N1,140; UREA, N1,102 and SSP, N960.

Bahago appeals for calm

The Emir of Minna, Alhaji (Dr) Umar Faruq Bahago, has called on the people in his emirate to remain calm and be law abiding, even as more and

From Akinade Adeniji, in Minna



Gov Kure

more groups continue to pledge their loyalty to the emir over a recent call for his removal.

Speaking in an interview, the emir said that the reaction of the people, especially their show of love, support and loyalty had proved that the call by the petitioners was unpopular.

Alhaji Umar Faruq Bahago enjoined the people to keep on maintaining peace even in the face of provocation by

those who occupy strategic positions in the state, warning that nobody should jeopardise the existing peaceful co-existence in the emirate.

It would be recalled that the former chairman of the All Peoples Party (APP), in Niger State, Alhaji Isah Waziri Sulaiman, had in a petition dated 21st May, 2001 accused the emir of enslaving the various people of Minna emirate and "the defederalisation of the Minna Emirate as presently constituted."

Muslim journalists elect new officers

The Association of Muslim Media Practitioners (AMMPON) has elected Mr. Qasim Akinreti, of Voice of Nigeria, to serve as its president for the next two years.

Akinreti took over from Alhaji Liad Tella, who is now Managing Director of *Monitor* newspaper in

Ibadan, Oyo State.

Also elected were Alhaji Biola Lawal, of the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), as Vice-President; Taiwo Junaid, of Lagos State Television, Secretary; and Rashidat Hassan, of Murhi International Television, Assistant Secretary.

Waheed Adebayo, of *Punch* newspaper, was elected Publicity Secretary, while Wasiu Olayiwola, of Radio Lagos/Eko FM, was returned as Social Secretary.

In an address, the new AMMPON President assured the association's members that he would do his best to protect their interests and ensure that the association's objectives were equally achieved.

Anglican diocese says no marriage without HIV certificate

The Enugu Anglican diocese has directed that any couple intending to wed in an Anglican church must provide certificates of HIV and blood group tests before the marriage can be solemnised.

The directive was contained in a communiqué issued in Enugu at the end of the 11th synod of the diocese.

The synod decried the increasing rate of crime among teenagers in the country, and called on parents and guardians to wake up to their responsibility of giving their children and wards

a Godly upbringing.

It advocated an increase in religious instructions in schools, and urged the government to censor foreign and local films, some of which could induce young people into crime.

According to the communiqué, the synod unanimously accepted the Enugu Bishop's presidential address, which would serve as policy document for the diocese this year.

The synod also decried the rising cost of staple food items in the country, and urged every Nigerian to go back to the

farm to produce agricultural products for industrial and domestic consumption.

It called on the Federal Government to avoid duplication of political offices as part of efforts to cut down on the cost of democracy.

Other areas of national life that attracted the concern of the synod, the communiqué said, were the "outrageous foreign exchange rate," irregular payment of workers' salaries, incessant strikes, rising wave of ethnic clashes, and religious bigotry in some parts of the country.

Gov Odili canvasses support for Niger Delta indigenes

The Rivers State Governor, Dr. Peter Odili, last weekend canvassed support for a proper place for the indigenes of the Niger Delta in every field of human endeavours.

He stated this when the Rivers/Bayelsa States

From Wisdom-Uduak Patrick, in Port Harcourt

chapter of the Nigeria Institute of Architects paid him a courtesy call at the Government House in Port Harcourt.

Odili said: "The Niger Delta should be given her proper place professionally, environmentally and economically."

According to Odili, the measure would boost the economy and also stimulate the people to become more conscious of their environment, saying, "Rivers State and indeed the Niger Delta is the only way to go in the new economy."

The Rivers State governor welcomed the marriage of various professional groups, noting that it would help to

strengthen the nation's economy.

He also disclosed that the state government's prototype houses under its urban renewal programme was conceived, designed and supervised by members of the institute and hinted that government still looks forward to a stronger cooperation with the institute.

Earlier, the chairman of the Rivers/Bayelsa chapter of the institute, Mr. Ezigbo Okoro, had told the governor that it was a joint agreement by architects of the South-South and South-East zones that the Archbuild exhibition be held in Port Harcourt.

He said the international exhibition would help develop not only the South-South area but the South-East markets as it would attract tourists and other benefits to the zones.

Thriffs and credit society disburses N2.7m

The Nigeria Union of Teachers' Thrift and Credit Co-operative Society has disbursed about N2.7 million as loans to more than 100 members of the society in Kogi Local Government Council.

The chairman of the co-operative, Malam A. Odaudu, who made this known in Koton-Karfe at a meeting of the organisation, said that the gesture was to encourage members to establish small-scale businesses to better their lots.

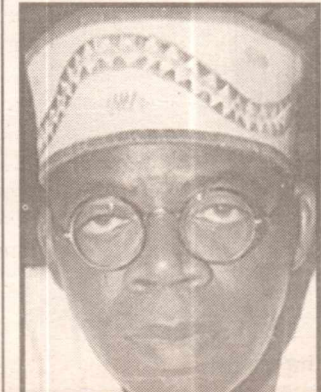
Odaudu stressed the need for all beneficiaries of the scheme to pay back on time to enable other members to benefit.

He appealed to those who were yet to join the scheme to do so without further delay and commended the education secretary in the area, Malam S. Aliyu and other officials of the education authority for their support and co-operation to the scheme.

Also speaking, an official

Tinubu inaugurates 152 housing units in Lagos

Governor Bola Tinubu of Lagos State has inaugurated 152 housing units, built at a cost of N119.8 million under phase II of the Ayangbunren housing estate in Ikorodu.

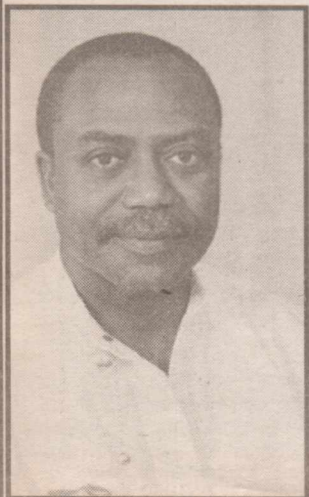


Gov Tinubu

Tinubu, speaking on the occasion, said that the project was meant to reduce the housing problems confronting Lagos residents, adding that 45,000 units more would be provided by the year 2003.

He urged the people to continue to keep the environment clean and join hands with the government in its efforts to build a new Lagos.

The State Commissioner for Housing, Mr. Lanre Towry Coker, described the housing estate as "democracy dividends," saying the state government believed that Lagos residents were entitled to decent accommodation.



Gov Odili



INSIDE POLITICS

2001 budget: Reps indict FG on poor implementation

By Henry Omuu

The chairman House of Representatives appropriation committee, Rep. Barau Jibrin has indicted the federal government of only implementing 25 percent of the 2001 Appropriation Act.

The lawmaker made the indictment, Tuesday, when he presented the report of the appropriation committee on the 2001 supplementary bill before the House for adoption and subsequent passage into law.

Rep. Jibrin informed the House, that finance minister, Malam Adamu Ciroma during his budget defence, had explained that the poor budget performance was because of government's determination to adhere strictly to "due process" in contract awards.

According to the committee chairman, despite assurances by Ciroma that the 2001 budget and the supplementary budget would be fully implemented by the federal government, the House committee "is sceptical about this assurance, as the year 2001 Appropriation Act

performance is just about 25 percent, six months into the year."

Giving reasons why the supplementary budget was delayed in the House, the lawmaker explained that this was due to the requests made by the House asking for the revenue profile and sources of funding for the budget.

Equally, he said the House requested for the performance of the 2001 budget and justification for supplementation as well as the adherence to the rules of the House in respect of money bills.

The lawmaker further informed the House that the Presidency submitted a fresh request for N14.25 billion when the initial budget of N133.677 billion had already been committed to the appropriation committee, thereby bringing the total supplementary request to N147.927 billion.

Rep. Jibrin explained that based on the revenue profile provided by the finance ministry, the anticipated revenue surplus to be used in funding the 2001 supplementary budget amounted to N199.6 billion.

A breakdown of the amount shows that the federal government realised N45 billion from excess crude oil sales, PPT and

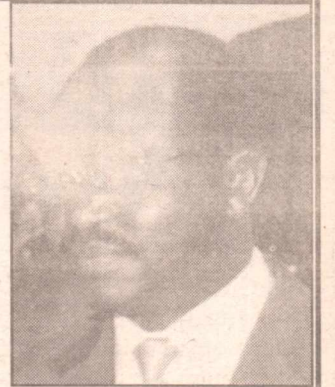
royalty payments from January to March, 2001.

The excess receipt from open acreage allocation fees was N55 billion, excess Naira realisable from exchange rate depreciation, N44.6 billion and receipt from sale of GSM licences stood at N55 billion.

Furthermore, the government Rep. Jibrin said realised N938.05 billion as federally collectible revenue

from January to May 2001, thereby recording a surplus of N109.38 billion or 13.2 percent of the 2001 budget.

He explained that an analysis of the details provided by the finance ministry revealed that, tax on petroleum had a deficit of N5.18 billion; companies income tax estimated at N29.117 billion had a deficit of N2.47 billion; education



Speaker Na'Abba

tax expected to yield N2.92 billion had a deficit of N1.24 billion while the federal government's independent revenue estimated at N59.38 billion recorded a deficit of N46.36 billion.

Taraba Assembly stops N600m contract •summons ALGON officials

The Taraba House of Assembly has directed that work should stop immediately on the N600 million contract awarded by the state government for the construction of 17 houses for commissioners in the state.

The House has similarly summoned the state chairman and secretary of the association of local

governments of Nigeria (ALGON) to answer questions relating to the legal status and operations of the body.

These resolutions were adopted in Jalingo by the Assembly while deliberating on matters of urgent public importance.

Moving the motion on the award of a N600 million contract for the construction

of 17 houses for the commissioners in Jalingo at the cost of N35 million each, a member representing Nguroje constituency, Alhaji Bashir Marafa, informed his colleagues that there was no provision for the contract in this year's budget.

According to him, only N100 million was earmarked for the construction of staff quarters and not N600 million.

In their various contributions, the members condemned "the fraudulent nature of the award of the contract to an incapable firm," citing its "records of bad performance in the state."

The legislators observed that the Federal Revenue Mobilisation and Fiscal Allocation Commission had recommended the moneti-

sation of the remuneration of public officers, including housing.

They asked government to stop providing accommodation for such category of officers, including legislators, saying that the state's resources should be used to provide basic amenities for the people.

The lawmakers said that such extra-budgetary expenditure was capable of making nonsense of fiscal policies besides depriving the state of anticipated budget surplus.

The speaker directed the clerk of the assembly to communicate the resolution to the executive and to invite all special advisers and assistants to appear before the house to justify their appointments and explain why they "misadvised the governor to take wrong decisions."

... Anyim constitutes joint committee over supplementary budget

By Reuben Yunana

Senate President Pius Anyim is to constitute a joint finance committee of equal members from both the Senate and the House of Representatives to resolve the discrepancies in the two versions of the

supplementary budget passed by the two houses.

This is in line with section 59 (2) which empowers the Senate President to convene such a meeting to examine the bill with a view to resolving such differences.

Both Houses have resolved to look into the constitution in order to resolve the differences in the figures.

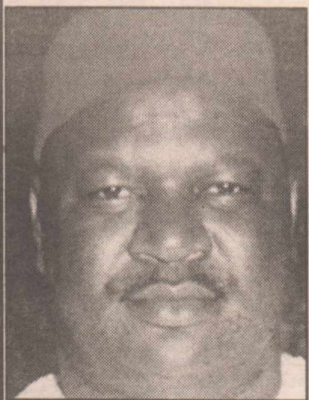
While the Senate last week passed the second supplementary budget 2001, fixing it at N145.3 billion the House of Representatives passed the budget with a figure of N146 billion.

Briefing Senate corres-

pondents after an executive session yesterday, chairman, senate committee on information Senator Jonathan Zwingina said the leadership of the senate and the house would ensure that the mater

is resolved amicably.

"I want to confirm that through various meetings we have held, the joint finance committee if and when convened by the President of the Senate would reach an amicable resolution of the discrepancies in figures for the benefit of the people of Nigeria," he said.



Senate President Anyim

Senator kicks against state electoral bodies

Third republic senator, Chief Polycarp Nwite, has said that State Independent Electoral Commissions were "a trap to destroy Nigeria's democracy."

He told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Abakaliki that "if every state is to establish its own electoral body, there will be 36 independent problems which will not augur well for the country."

Nwite said that the best option to safeguard the country's young democracy was to do away with the state electoral body.

The third republic senator, who contested the governorship election in Ebonyi under AD platform, said that governors were imposing structures to perpetuate themselves "while the true democrats are not in power except in the south-west."

The senator, who is now in the ruling PDP, remarked that the three political parties lacked ideology, saying that there was no commitment in the structures of the existing parties.

I won't run for presidency in 2003 -Atiku

By Suleiman Mohammed

Vice-President Atiku Abubakar yesterday denied funding any group to promote him as presidential candidate for the 2003 elections, saying he enjoyed unparalleled harmony working with President Olusegun Obasanjo.

Reacting to report of appearances of posters purportedly promoting him for the 2003 presidential election, the Vice-President in a statement signed by his special assistant (Media) Mr. Chris Mamah, described it as "an act of political brinkmanship to paste posters about an individual without the consent or knowledge of such an individual."

"The posters are clearly the ploy of agents provocateur who are out to sow the seed of discord within the present administration and to distract it from its determination to fulfil its electoral promises to Nigerians," the statement noted.

Last Monday, the Presidential Liaison Officer (PLO) to the Senate, Alhaji Ibrahim Kashim Imam

announced that President Obasanjo would re-contest the 2003 presidential election along with the vice-president Atiku Abubakar, whom he said would contest in 2007 for the number one position.

But, Mr. Mamah denied knowledge of the idea, stressing that vice-president Atiku has always pledged his unflinching loyalty to president Obasanjo. "He seizes this opportunity to again pledge his support and loyalty to the president."

"He remains committed to the programmes of this administration and unwavering in his determination to work with President Obasanjo in his efforts to revamp the Nigerian economy and move the nation forward," the statement re-affirmed.

According to Mr. Mamah, an investigation would be carried out to ascertain those behind the posters and bring them to book.

He emphasised that vice-president Atiku has no cause to address his mind beyond his present task of assisting

President Obasanjo to fulfil the dream of making Nigeria the pride of all Nigerians.

Only last Tuesday, posters of vice-president Atiku Abubakar surfaced at various

points in Abuja metropolis, promoting him as "potential" presidential candidate in the 2003 election, setting speculations agog at the Presidential Villa, Abuja.

Abia PDP suspends council chairman

The chairman of the Isikwuato Local Government Council of Abia State, Chief Okechi Kanu, has been suspended by his party, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), for "insulting the party executive".

Confirming the suspension order in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Umuahia, the

party's secretary, Mr. Godwin Nna, said that Kanu had insulted members of the executive when they visited the area last week.

Nna said that the party leadership in the state was in the local government area to inspect developmental projects being executed by the council in line with the party's manifesto, when he "ordered" the party chairman, Chief Tony Ukasanya, "to leave the council" because he declined to occupy the seat reserved for him.

"The council chairman insulted the party chairman. He also disgraced the party because we found out from the ward party chieftains that he has not done anything in the area since he took over."

"When we got there for the inspection, he did not even care to receive us. He insisted that the party chairman should sit where he provided for him".



Gemade



THE DEBATE

2003: Should IBB contest?

Fire on the mountain...

As a Nigerian, IBB has every right to contest for the presidency. Given also that he has the basic criterion in Nigeria of having in stock billions of money he allegedly mopped up while he held Nigeria hostage for almost a decade, he may rightly or wrongly believe that he will easily buy the electorate. It is quite unfortunate that after the debilitating eight years Nigeria was cursed with IBB, the self-acclaimed 'Evil Genius' is striving to manipulate his way back to power to complete the final emasculation of the common man.

Nigerians should know and they better do before we commit the suicide of bringing to power an undertaker whose first attempt at taking all of us to the cemetery was foiled by divine providence in the form of the man's greed and lust for power.

To me and to millions of Nigerians, IBB is worse than the late General Sani Abacha, whom he groomed and nurtured to power. The fire IBB started in 1985 is still raging and consuming millions. It is the same fire that this government is still trying to put out, albeit dispiritedly. The population of mentally deranged Nigerians who could not withstand the harsh economic policies of SAP and the suffocating institutionalisation of corruption swelled since 1986. If our society were to have reliable statistical data, certainly we would have topped the list of psychiatric cases the world over.

Obviously, IBB did not chop alone. The ominous and sepul-

By Onah L. Iduh

chral jingles of his coming are issuing from those who chopped with him and are no longer at ease with even the feeble attempts by the present government to bring sanity and meaning to our dehumanised existence.

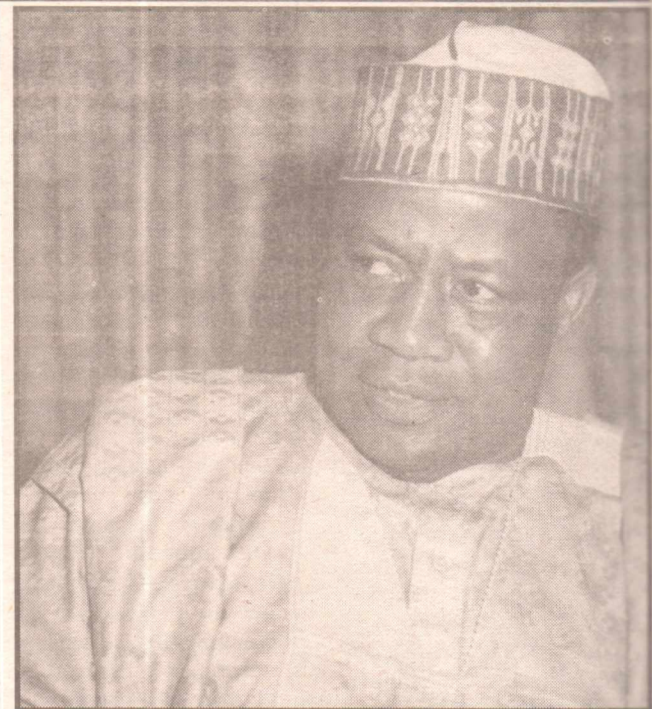
The questions that all rational Nigerians should ask themselves and perhaps IBB are: (i) what does he want in power again after his devastating eight years whose only glory is the immeasurable wealth he and his cronies acquired to the detriment of famished millions of Nigerians? (ii) Has Nigeria become so desolate, depraved and unimaginably barren of qualified personalities that we should con-

tinue to resort to calling on those who have devastated our land particularly retired Generals to come back to power? And finally, are we so hegemonically or feudalistically fixated to believe that the only hope of our economic and social redemption lies in recycling those who have ruined and squandered the unquantifiable fortunes of our land; those whose ideas and mien are suited for the 19th century; a group whose false aristocratic hubris have led the country so many times on the tragic path of anarchy and disintegration one of which IBB was a major and perhaps sole engineer - June 12.

Although IBB's reign terminated ignominiously in 1993, the parable of his deeds will

continue to be told to generations unborn. If IBB were as good as his minions are trying to portray him, he would not have been publicly recanted by some of the new political associations seeking for registration by INEC. Like all evil phenomena, his moves in coming to power will continue to be clandestine and nocturnal.

To those who are liberated, who have agitating minds, who are thinking human beings and who are proud of wearing the toga of the Nigerian patriot, the mere call by some people on IBB to contest come 2003 should be perceived as a dirge whose obvious finale would be the mass burial of millions of Nigerians. Onah is a staff of Daily Trust, Abuja.



Babangida

IBB is not a tribalist

IBB, should stand; for the following reasons. When one views Babangida's military administration, critically, one can deduce that it was full of laudable programmes and policies which uplifted the economic and social status Nigerians.

His attributes among others include fairness, honesty and trust worthiness, hardwork and competent leadership, to mention but a few.

Considering his able leadership in eight (8) years, we expect Babangida to perform much more than he did, as a leader, in uniform, if given yet another chance to perform in a demo-

By Munnir Mohammed Baba-Tunde

cratic situation for Nigeria. Babangida, a philanthropist was also a dynamic and untribalistic in his dealings with

the governed and also shows no religious differences. If really we want justice to take its course we should give Babangida another chance to rule this country, for eradication of cynacism and scepticism about government

and governance of our beloved nation. Therefore come 2003, Babangida should stand. Munnir is of Unguwar Kasa Tilden Fulani, Toro Local Government, Bauchi State.



Gemade

...He is a motivator

General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida is a Nigerian by birth from Minna the Niger State capital. He was a former military head of state like General Olusegun Obasanjo, but he known more than the later on the dimensional problems facing our country, Nigeria. I have never met or seen

By Ja'afaru Danzaria

IBB with my naked eyes and I have never sought any assistance from IBB. I often see him on newspapers, journals and TV. Therefore, I am in a better position to give an objective analysis on the above subject matter. From what I heard people saying, IBB is a humble person, very generous, a personification of intelligence, a symbol of a good father and husband, a committed muslim, a motivator to the core, a respecter of traditional institutions and of course a good schemer, second to late Shehu Musa Yar'adua.

IBB has every right to stand the 2003 presidential election because there is no law or any part of our constitution that banned him from contesting any elective position. We have seen his re-engineering of the country during his first outing through the NDE, DFFRI, Peoples Bank, Better Life for Rural Women, Privatisation and Commercialisation of Public Sector, ECOMOG, production of wheat etc.

There are people in this country who do not forget neither do they forgive, IBB's only sin was the annulment of June 12 election. But he has compensated the Yoruba people by handing over to Chief Shonekan, as if that was not enough, he facilitated the election of another Yoruba man in the person of Chief Obasanjo, yet these people are still not happy with that, such people, even God can not satisfy them. Therefore, I advise IBB to rule out these group of people by 2003 - since he can not have 100% support of all Nigerians.

By what is going on today in Nigeria, IBB is getting more supporters day-in-day-out, his stickers abound everywhere as such his second journey to ASO-

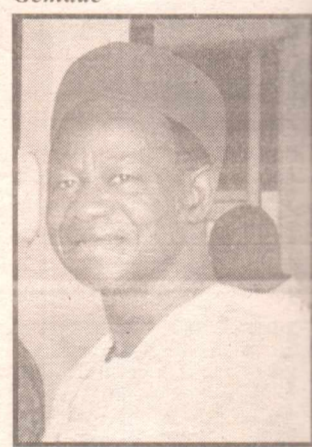
VILLA is just a matter of time, Insha Allah, IBB is today a household name and by personal opinion poll conducted in the former regions, the following result are enough for the second journey.

- North - 90% support IBB
- East - 70% support IBB
- West - 30% support IBB
- M/West - 60% support IBB

Whether we like it or not, IBB has stepped into late Shehu Musa Yar'adua's shoes, as a result, he is our political kingmaker in the northern Nigeria, he is more respected than any political leader and more influential in the North. 2003 election is going to witness a large turn out of people who want to see IBB in Aso-Villa without spending anything. Those who think they can use money to change the course of event, I am sorry, people will collect such money but yet they will vote for IBB. People are currently campaigning for IBB secretly. 2003 SAI-BABA. I want everybody to compare IBB's foreign policy with that of OBJ, compare IBB's sports policy with that of OBJ, compare IBB's agricultural policy with that of OBJ, compare IBB's educational policy with that of OBJ, compare IBB's generosity policy with that OBJ etc.

Finally, I am of the opinion that IBB MUST stand for 2003 presidential election whether he likes it or not. Our people say "Lokacin abu ayi shi."

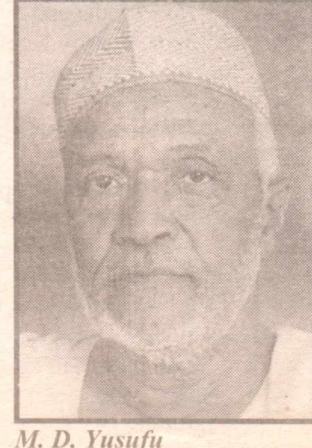
Ja'afaru is of No. 2A Bauchi Road, Off Abuja Road, Rigasa, Kaduna.



Awoniyi



Atiku



M. D. Yusufu

Psychophants are decieving IBB

If some groups and individuals would be calling on us to vote for IBB in 2003, then could they convince us, or justify their numerous claims that he is really worth our while; that he is the ideal person to whom we should entrust the already economically and socially fragile Nigeria. We still have in mind the woes of his 1985 to 1993 military regime. We have all witnessed how bribery and corruption flourished in the country, which is the epicentre of the problems we have been suffering from since then. The economic ills of that regime fired Nigeria to the top of the list of the most corrupt countries in the world.

Then can he (IBB) or the advocates of his 'bid to return' clean him of the accusations that his previous regime did more bad to Nigeria and Nigerians than good? If not, then do they want us to believe he is different now? Or that he will come with an altogether different intention? (To fix his past errors as some claim), or does the military uniform and the civilian dressing make any difference? What we know, of course, is that he is still the same IBB we know in those days. We all ask him to go away in 1993 ('IBB must go' if you can remember), and now why should we want him back again?

We would like to draw the attention of those calling on him to contest in the 2003 elections that they should not feel that they could scare the whole lot of Nigerians into believing that IBB

By RDYM

has a popular support with the expensive posters and stickers they are littering the country with. They should stop wasting their time and efforts, for we can prove to them that 85% of Nigerians don't want him to return, but many people are making the mistake of believing that they are helpless in the face of such wealthy pack of individuals (like IBB and those around him). Many feel that their votes would amount to nothing if such people decided to pump money into the process. We should know that as long as money (the Banknotes) would not be counted as votes (in IBB's favour) in 2003, then we have the power to push him aside as long as he cannot force us to sell our votes to him. And if we all know that we have not voted for him, then we can challenge any claim that he has win the election.

Those calling on him to return are certainly doing that for either of these reasons:

* They are forming associations apparently campaigning for him but in fact doing that not really because they want him back, but because they want their share of what he may decide to spend on the elections, consequently deceiving him (IBB) into believing that he has enough support and popularity to win the election, or

* They are planning to install some 'election manipulation machinery' in place to rig the votes in his favour by all means - provided he will spend much.

One misfortune with Nigeria today is the existence of numerous individuals and associations who are ready to make money at the expense of having leaders who may lead the country to a complete destruction.

We have had enough of IBB, he has ruled for eight years, and eight year is time enough for him to have conceived and implemented any good policy. If he did more bad than good during his previous regime, then how long did he want us to keep him in office after 2003 to fix Nigeria? Certainly, the Nigeria of today is far worse-off than the one he took over from General Muhammadu Buhari in 1985, and if eight years after 1985 he still cannot push the country forward, and when the situation is relatively better, then what do we expect him to do with the Nigeria we are having now? Or is he trying to form a monarchy for the ruling elite? So that the power to govern would always circulate within their circle?

We have run businesses with the Igbos and we have faith in them as long as economic matters is concerned, then why can't we give one of them the chance to mend the cracks in our economy? They could certainly do it better than most others.

Therefore, the idea of IBB coming back to power should be kept aside; lets jointly look for a better future for Nigeria.

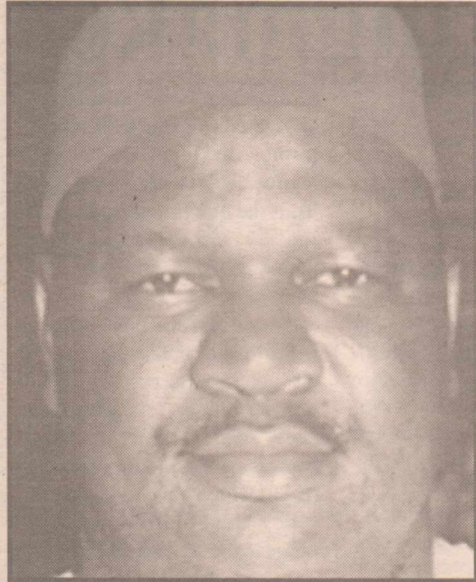
Right Direction Youth Movement (RDYM) rdym@yaysib.com P.O. Box 355 Maiduguri.



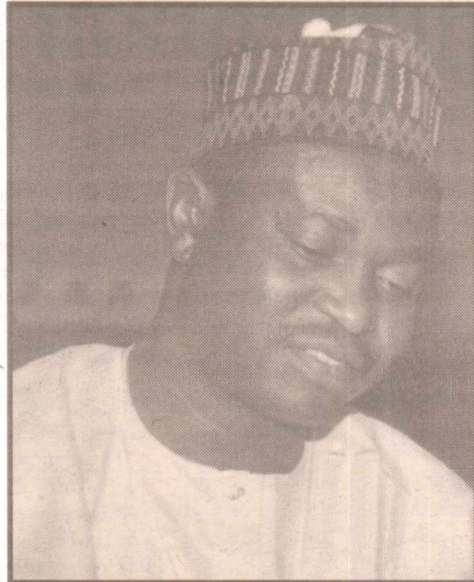
THE DEBATE



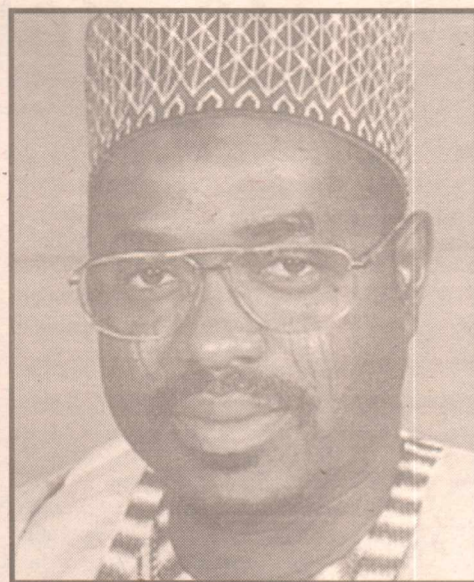
2003: Should IBB contest?



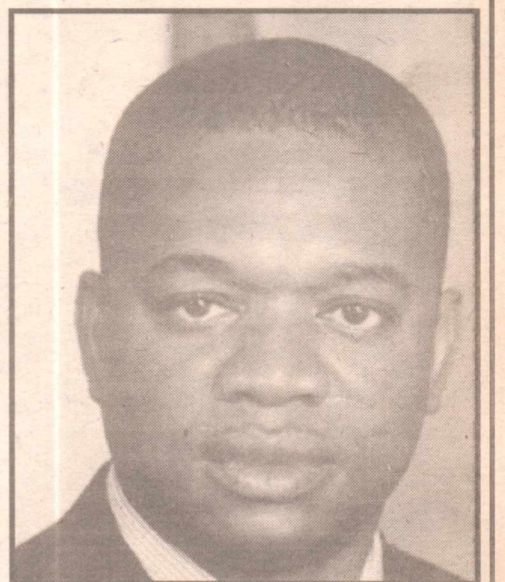
Anyim



Na'Abba



Gov Kure



Gov Kalu

IBB, 'Step in', don't 'step aside'

Before the strong Yoruba politician, Chief Obafemi Awolowo died, he once told Nigerians that Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida (now retired General) would someday remain "the issue" in Nigeria. Coincidentally however, the former military president has once also told Nigerians that Chief Awolowo would remain an issue in Nigeria. A matter of symbolism anyway.

Over a decade after the death of Chief Awolowo, he is still an issue in Nigerian politics while General Babangida has since 1985 remained the "main issue" in contemporary events. Even though, General Babangida has been linked to most of the attempted and successfully or executed coups in Nigeria's history, his advent as the Commander-In-Chief in 1985 was the climax of the making and unmaking of successful coups in the country.

For eight years, the former Military President carried the burden of leadership on his head and shoulders to engineer and re-engineer Nigeria and by the time he "stepped aside" in August 1993, Nigerians could still beat their chests and say, we are proud of our country.

General Babangida "stepped aside" when the naira was still strong, food, especially garri was on every table that needed it, NEPA was a proud parastatal, NITEL could link every Nigerian to any part of the world, drugs were available in every government hospital, university graduates had no difficulties in securing jobs and most importantly, security was guaranteed.

Babangida's administration came with many programmes some of which failed to make the desired impact for improper implementations, yet those that were implemented to their logical conclusions had positive impact on many Nigerians. Agreed that the administration's greatest setback was the annulment of June 12, 1993 election, which was the most freest and fairest election ever conducted in Nigeria, but to date the truth of the unfortunate scenario is yet to come out and until he (Babangida) decides to rewrite history beginning from June 12 to June 23, 1993, the blame would forever remain on him as the pivot of that administration.

By Aminu Mohammed

Again, some diehard critics of General Babangida have been consistently labelling his administration as the most corrupt and an administration which legalised corruption in the country. There are those who also would not relent in their quest until he is brought to book but have been asked to provide the government with evidence but could not come out with any.

Going through the eight years of the Babangida administration, the only crime the commander-in-chief committed was allowing the June 12, 1993 election to hold and then later annulling it. Though, some might argue that the introduction of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) which Obasanjo was the foremost critic was yet another crime, but like every coin, SAP has its merits and demerit.

Before General Babangida "stepped aside" in 1993, his eight-year rule had fashioned out programmes like NDE, DFFRI, MAMSER and the privatisation programme the present government is continuing with, the people of the Niger Delta who are today battling for 13 percent derivation would remember the Babangida administration for setting up OMPADEC and for creating Akwa Ibom State for development.

Infact, there was no section of the country that was neglected by the Babangida administration. Issues like marginalisation, ethnicity, nepotism and all the "isms" were not part of the eight-year administration. Nigerians were given free choice to engage in economic activities while investors both domestic and foreign were happily accommodated in a peaceful environment.

However, eight years after General Babangida left office, Nigeria is today a sad story as a country which has been mortgaged to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank rendering the Central Bank toothless. The security situation today is not only a sad one but beyond lamenting. Infrastructure have all collapsed while all financial, educational and social institutions are in deplorable conditions.

Baba, with all we hold dear, your choice for 1999 has proved

otherwise and another costly mistake to allow him to continue will be devastating. At least, from all the nooks and crannies your "master" has failed to deliver the dividends of democracy and should be allowed to go back to his farm.

Before I finally say "Nigeria sai Baba," I would like to remind you of one of your great sayings

shortly before you "stepped aside". "Someday, the future generation will say of Nigerians of today, for their tomorrow we gave out today," Baba, that tomorrow has been betrayed and unless you "step in" that dream of having a better tomorrow will be a mere dream. As a military president, you were a democrat and your foresight in establish-

ing a centre for democratic studies in Kano was a testimony. Your resolve to have two party system for the country was only betrayed by enemies of your growing influence.

The voice of the people is said to be the voice of God. Your posters pasted everywhere in the country are indications that the populace have faith in you and

are reminding you of the great speech you made in Jos that "we shall continue to be part of the democratic process." The time is now. If not you, who? Certainly not OBJ. If not now, then when? Surely not 2007. And if not here, where? Mr. President-in-awaiting Sir, the people have spoken. "Nigeria sai Baba!"

Aminu Mohammed wrote in from Abuja.

He is a bull in a China shop

The answer to the poser is an emphatic No and the main reason is that Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida could be likened to a bull dog in China shop because all his antecedents smack to as confusionist who just happened to find himself at the corridor of power who rule this country for consecutive good eight (8) years but at the end do not know what to do which even led him to "Step aside".

The big question that any discerning observer or analyst should ask is - what did Ibrahim B. Babangida forgot to do before that he now want to make an inroad into the Nigeria political terrain and canvass for the votes of the Nigeria populace? How does a person who truncated a transition to democratic governance by the annulment of an election that was perceived to be the best election ever held in this country (2th June, 1993)?

The reason IBB should not stand for election is that he was the one that had battered this country. And also the Nigerian economy has been battered so greatly right from the time of IBB and this is as a result of his economic policies. This brings to focus SAP, which IBB initiated with the active support of IMF which made the people of this country to be self-reliant and translate to the improvement in the economy and arrest the grey areas quickly slumped into making the country to be in mess and to be at the whim and caprices of this financial institution as the living condition, quality and standard of the people has not improved during his reign instead it is the impoverishment of the people that we saw.

Turning to the political terrain of which IBB want to participate as it is being postulated

By Usman Garba Santuraki

by statements of his so-called boys and associates his antecedents can easily be in the minds of Nigerians as his role in the June 12 1993 presidential election quite reveal that IBB is anti-democratic therefore no any responsible electorate would consider him for the next election of 2003.

IBB forced a great member of politicians to go round the country and canvass for votes but at the end of the day shoved them aside. I am emphatically referring to the 23 presidential candidates of the two political parties he set up SDP and NRC who went into the primaries of the parties but at the end throw them away with the bath water. Also more importantly, one need to look at the billions of tax payers money that IBB spent in the

name of transiting this country to democratic governance but in the end truncated the process which ensured popular participation and free choice that cut across all religious ideological indignations. Also that process that was truncated by IBB is a process that laid down the foundation for a more assertive electoral relevance of progressives and the conservative forces in Nigeria.

Corruption which had been institutionalised as a state art was unprecedented during IBB regime and it is then that government official perceived their offices as an avenue to milk this country dry. To borrow ASIKPO J. ESSIEN - IBO words in his article which featured on Monday column of Daily Trust June 11, 2001 he said "I remember a particular military

government which never wanted to talk about corruption throughout its tenure inspite of the frequent promptings by the press. But when the media intensity on corrupt practices of the government was too much for it to bear, it untimely stepped aside for a maximum despot who succeeded in putting Nigeria on the geopolitical map of the world as the number one corrupt country on planet earth".

Therefore, IBB has no justifiable reason, after he truncated democracy in 1993 should now come to canvass for the people's vote in 2003 and he should not stand.

Usman Garba Santuraki Writes from No. 75 Tafida Street, Jimeta-Yola Nprth Local Govt. Adamawa State.

He is not straightforward

All papers carried IBB and 2003, it sounds funny though I believed it is all made to make money i.e to attract buyers. But, it's funny if today people have forgotten IBB's philosophy and I quote. "Never let people to know your next step." With this philosophy I believed IBB and 2003 are cock and bull stories, no fact in it. Let this be clear to everybody's mind IBB and 2003 are riddles.

Though, even if he wishes to contest for presidential seat no one can stop him and he might win. Afterall, he know how to

By Muhammed Bashir Abdullah

play the trick, as he was called the "Maradona" he is a real player who can play well to the conviction of Nigerians. Then if he wishes he is welcome by Nigerians and his supporters.

In Nigeria, we are very good in patching up to achieve our aims, besides IBB's situation is a patch up too, as it happened to Obasanjo, immediately he become the president, his son that graduated from NDA is sent on a four years course abroad for patch up reasons. Therefore, IBB's campaign for 2003 is a

people's self interest situation not straight from IBB's mind as he is never a straight forward somebody and cannot be read so easily.

Lets see what 2003 will called as every body is glamouring Atiku, Obasanjo, IBB and other governors. It could be miraculous and unfair because they may be wiping a death horse. As death wait for no one, if it comes, it will take you away. All this glamouring is euphemisms. Mohammed Bashir Abdullahi Sheikh Yahaya Arab, House, Badarawa, Kaduna.



THE DEBATE



2003: Should IBB contest?



Obasanjo

He should remain kingmaker

Since his disengagement from the nation's military institution and subsequent stepping aside and handing of the mantle of leadership to the then President Ernest Shonekan, former President, Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida was on several occasions caught chairing consultative fora among friends, well wishers, different social groups and associations soliciting for their moral support on behalf of other Nigerians in making his "coming back to power agenda" a reality.

Initially, one may wonder what precisely this honourable gentleman is all after, having ruled and over ruled this great

By Dahiru Suleiman

nation for a period of eight years. I think he should remain a kingmaker. If I can recall, IBB had tasted to power politically or otherwise for years even before becoming "President" going by various (political appointments) he held in the Nigerian Army.

As energetic president during his time and a military technocrat, IBB has succeeded tremendously in steering the leadership of this country. Least amongst his achievements include the transfer of the seat of government from Lagos to Abuja, creation of additional states and local government in

the federation, restructuring the armed forces by upgrading its vital units, engineering the civil service structure, formation of various parastatals and boards, peoples and community banks for the upliftment of the generality of Nigerians among others.

Having witnessed all these remarkable successes, IBB spoilt everything completely by turning things upside down before handing over to his successor (Shonekan) a country at the brink of disintegration, which necessitated the emergence of late General Sani Abacha's regime. Many will agree with me that all economic, political and social blunders that we are wit-

nessing today, all emanated or originated from the leadership of former President Babangida's regime, least to say, it originated from the annulment saga of the June 12, 1993 election coupled with several "man made problems."

Even before then one can recall that the country has passed through several travails in witnessing all sort of mess, especially with the introduction of Structural Adjustment Policy (SAP) which gave room for currency devaluation, massive purge in the civil service as a prerequisite for the obtaining of IMF loan, the loan that plunged the nation's economy in to turmoil without any meaningful benefit to most Nigerians.

It was the same IBB who allegedly encouraged corruption, kick backs, inflation, increase in fuel, foodstuffs etc. In fact, he opened the eyes of government functionaries to steal from the government coffers and go scot free without any interrogation or prosecution, talkless of unemployment opportunities to the teeming youths and university graduates on yearly basis.

Others are lack of control and discipline in the civil service, lack of financial control and discipline, insecurity, bribery and corruption among Nigerians and many woes that can't be analysed. How can a sensible country with a reasoning populace allow a man with such character be given the chance to claim power again?

Again one interesting issue that many Nigerians will never forget and forgive IBB was his failure to utilise the billions of dollars the country earned during the Gulf War crisis to develop and resuscitate the economy and improve the living conditions of Nigerians, but ended up misusing such funds on extravagant spending just for selfish motives, leaving Nigerians in abject poverty, yet want the same population to allow such misdeeds to be forgotten, just for such a person to re-claimed power again.

Another offence of IBB was the introduction of religious and tribal politics encouraged by his administration, the mess that threatened the nation's existence as a corporate entity, politically and socially. Infact this same scenario always brings disaffection among Nigerians resulting in frequent uprising disrupting peace and stability of the nation, instead of bringing peace and harmony among Nigerians.

With this short analysis on IBB's regime one may wonder the type of leadership the country will produce in the near future, if accidentally people like Babangida and co. with all corrupt tendencies will have their ways in persuading Nigerians to rule, then I really pity us for the simple reason that we're not for "Progress" but for "failure."

Dahiru wrote in from Dutse, Jigawa State.

The cap fits IBB

By Ibrahim Barde

For quite some time now IBB has become an object of discussion in Nigeria. To stress the point, the issue of whether he runs for President or not has taken centre stage; a very few but vocal tribal irredentists have dragged the name of IBB to the slaughter slab, maligning and disparaging his personality for no clear cut reason than the issue of June 12 whose apologists have laboured hard and long to reduce it to ethnic chauvenism. On account of annulment of June 12, the antagonists have questioned the morality of President Babangida returning to the saddle as President without him even saying whether he wants to run or not. The attacks on Babangida have been ceaseless and the tempo is increasing each passing day. The attackers, mainly from the South-West see nothing good in Babangida's eight eventful years of leadership in Nigeria and his offence is none other than the annulment of June 12, 1993 Presidential election in which the late Philanthropist and promoter of sports, Moshood Abiola was presumed to be winning before the results were stopped.

Agreed that the cancellation of the election of June 12 threw our beloved country into political turmoil that we had never witnessed before since the civil war. It pains us that the election which was thought to be the freest and fairest could have bridged the age-long North-South dichotomy and buried the ever simmering religious suspicion and intolerance that for most times threatens the foundation of our collectivity as a nation. Despite the fact that Abiola's SDP ticket was a Muslim-Muslim one, it baffles and shocks me to the marrow that June 12 which is supposed to be a national affair (for it was indeed so) has been made to shrink into a tribal war by the Yorubas and their vocal press against the rest of Nigeria. Abiola's original constituency - the South Westerners in their emotional outbursts have wittingly or unwittingly cheapened the June 12 struggle into a Yoruba cause. One funny thing about this Yoruba cause is that Abiola was never voted for by the Yorubas.

He was elected from outside his enclave. When Nigerians were voting for him, they were doing so because he was a Nigerian and not because he was a Yoruba man. Kano, the home State of Bashir Tofa who was one of the contestants on the platform of NRC, denied him their votes and instead voted for Abiola because he was thought to be better. But today, Kano people are even perceived enemies to the June 12 protagonists.

One good thing about the June 12 palaver is that Babangida who was the President has done the right thing by accepting full responsibility for what transpired, leading to the cancellation of the election. He did so because he was the head

of the government and not that the decision to annul the election was solely his. This is enough even for the most pained and cheated to forgive and forget so that we can move forward as a nation. But the protagonists have continued with their war unabated and this has instead won for IBB sympathy, especially from those who were ill disposed to his policies and style of leadership. So, rather than blackening IBB's name, the anti-IBB crusade has created for him a large followership. At every nook and corner of the country, the youths who, obviously, are the most active in politics (for they are the voters) are discussing the possibility of IBB returning to the saddle as the leader of this country. In fact, most Nigerians would rather want IBB to come back now. Some are do-

ing so because they miss his surprise moves each time there was a national issue to be tackled, a situation which led to him being called Maradona (after the legendary Diego Maradona) for unexpected (dribbling) ways he tackled issues. Others are calling on him to come out because of his large heartedness and generosity and some say they miss his toothy smile or gap tooth on the screen of our TV. And the serious minded ones want IBB to return in order to give meaning to State craft and leadership. Creating new ideas and pushing the country forward through new innovations.

Barde, a Kano based journalist, wrote from shop 12, Kaltume House, Tarauni by Maiduguri Road, Kano. Tel: 064-663454.

Should past Presidents stand?

By P.T.Y. Dalli

As regard to whether or not IBB should stand for Presidential election in 2003, I will like to state that constitutionally IBB is free to contest if he wishes since nobody has come out with specific allegations on his past activities while in the office. Even the subsequent governments after his regime never came out publicly to accuse him of wrong doing. In the word of Rev. Fr. Mathew Kukah, "IBB is not as bad as people portray him." IBB has been misunderstood indeed.

He was more tactical in his approach, dynamic in action than any President whether civilian or military this country ever produced. If anything bad had happened during IBB, regime, this would have been as a result of collective decisions taken and not single handedly taken by him. Most highly placed Nigerians who participated fully in IBB, regime have been part of subsequent regimes.

The much talked about annulment of June 12 election was not the intention of IBB but was influenced by influential people in almost all parts of this country. These people today benefit tremendously from federal and state governments while IBB is being made a scapegoat. The achievements of IBB in social and economic sectors in most parts of Nigeria are not compa-

rable with most regimes that have existed in Nigeria.

My suggestion is that the topic chosen should have been written thus "2003, should past presidents stand? This would have affected all the past presidents of this country rather than IBB alone. The utterances of these past presidents today is a threat to the unity of this country and yet some of them are still nursing ambitions to return to power. However, if wishes were horses, I would advise IBB to

shun those who come to encourage him to contest or vie for 2003 Presidential election. His name has been dragged in mud deliberately and therefore his free movement and speeches in some parts of the country may be doubtful.

He should use the wealth he has acquired for charity work especially helping the needy. He should also maintain sealed lips on all issues and insults on his person.

Dalli is of No. 5B Rimi Drive, U/Rimi, Kaduna.

IBB has some explaining to do

By Yusuf Sani

In order to contribute my view on the above headline, I hereby write my opinion and advice to "Rtd General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida".

Firstly, as a Nigerian citizen IBB has the right to contest any election since the constitution allow any Rtd, soldier to contest. But before IBB decide, I advice him to explain to Nigerians why he cancelled the June 12th election which Abiola claimed to victory?

Secondly, I want IBB to explain to Nigerians, why throughout his tenure of eight years he didn't commission single industry built by him or through his effort?

Thirdly, please IBB explain

to Nigerians, why in your tenure you received the IMF loan?

Lastly, Please, IBB explain to Nigerians, why during your dictatorship you failed to probe your ministers, or military governors?

If the General can give satisfactory answers to the above questions, I have no doubt he can stand for the year 2003 election successfully - *Insha Allahu*.

I have no personal grudge against IBB, and I wish him good luck.

Yusuf is of Yassauta, Box 249, Funtua.



Rimi



Guobadia



Idris Kuta

HABITAT (Housing and Environment)

Expert laments environmental pollution in the Niger-Delta

It is often said. "In life we do not get something for nothing, except possibly, illness," and the mangrove trees live with the same threat.

"Mangrove swamps are one of the most sensitive and vulnerable habits and should oil actually reach these plants it can have profoundly damaging effects."

"It is impossible to clean the oil off a mangrove without extensively damaging the tree and its root system to the extent that the majority of trees will die."

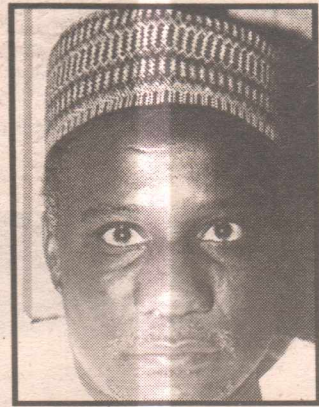
These were the words of Mr. Simon Rickaby, while mourning the effects of pollution by oil spillage on the mangrove and also its antecedents on Navigation and welfare of the people living in the coastal area and of the Nigeria Basin.

Speaking on the topic, "pollution and its effects on Navigation and the welfare of the inhabitants of the Niger Basin, within the West and Central Ajulan Sub-region," Mr. Rickaby said from time immemorial, Major rivers

such as the Niger have been utilised by mankind for a number of essential and beneficial uses in the survival and development of communities, which are served directly and indirectly by rivers and its network of water ways.

However, he lamented that the so-called development of mankind has brought about an impact on, and in some cases an unbalancing of the ecology and environment of the Niger River Basin.

This he attributed to the growing numbers of oil spillage in the country particularly in the Niger



Min. of Environment Alh. Kabir Said.

Delta, which has been consistently endangering both man and animals in the region.

The oil spills he said block this breathing pores, and also interferes with the tree's salt balancing mechanism, which causes the tree to drop its leaves and die.

The roots system can also be damaged by freshly spilt oil through burrows made by the roots themselves, or burrows made by small animals such as crustaceans and molecules, he added.

Should the trees die, he said not only the ecosystem around them disappear, but the fallen tree clogs the river and waterways preventing the migration of mangrove seeds from reaching sites unaffected by oil residue.

The expert also said this has prevented farmers from fishing and other farming activities in the Niger Delta region culminating to civil unrest, as witnessed in the past two years.

Said he! "If you can't grow crops and can't fish, the likelihood is you will not be

able to trade or earn a living, which means life becomes unbearably difficult."

"This will probably lead to migration, frustration, anger and civil unrest over something you had no control over."

I have illustrated the effect of oil pollution on the mangroves, an essential assets of the Niger Delta; the effects on water supply, the food chains fishing activities, and the ability to trade, with the consequential effect on local communities."

To avert the destruction of the ecosystem, advocated the activation of any spills that occurred to the relevant authorities particularly the police and the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), and the prompt response by the agencies.

Also, the government should mount aerial surveillance, as it can also be used for routinely flying over vessels, oil producing Units, dredging operations and industrial plants to check for illegal discharges.

You and the environment

By Dr. Sani Mashi

Our surging environmental problems

Development is tied very closely to environment because for it to be achieved, resources must be harnessed, extracted, processed and consumed. When these happens, wastes must be released which can influence negatively or positively the state of the environment. As we attempt to develop therefore, we do certain things that can make the environment to continue to be useful or otherwise to us with regards to future attempts towards development.

Nigeria is a country with diverse environmental resources. Being a country having what economists call primary and semi-secondary economy, resources are pillars of our national development efforts. Perhaps conscious of this, a number of regimes in the country have been paying much attention towards environmental problems, several agencies have come and gone with responsibilities for tackling environmental problems. For example, National Committee on Drought and Desertification (NCDD) was created in 1970s in response to the devastating effects of the 1973/1974 drought that affected most areas in northern Nigeria's Sudan-Sahelian region. Oil Minerals Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPAC) was created in the 1980s to among other things tackle the numerous environmental problems that were facing the Niger Delta. Similarly during the 1980s the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA) was established with full powers, to protect Nigeria's environment. As state levels, a number of related agencies have come on board, and many have gone. Yet, environmental problems have not only persisted but seem to just be on the increase.

Environmental problems in Nigeria are many and diverse. Starting from coastal areas, we have surging ocean waves, beach and coastal erosion and destruction of coastal swamps by saline water of the Atlantic ocean. We also have air, water of the Atlantic Ocean. We also have air, water and soil pollution resulting from the activities of multinational oil corporations. Wood collectors and game chasers are also clearing vast expanses of tropical forests and forcing millions of species, plants and animals into extinction. Gully erosion are also devastating vast expanses of valuable lands and which houses are built and crops are grown. In many urban areas, domestic, industrial and related activities are also polluting the air, water soil and even plants. In the middle regions of the country, mining activities (legal and illegal), excavation for laterites collection, grazing and cultivation have created vast scars and gullies of varying sizes, plant cover are being destroyed and land productivity being forced to lower down. Flooding resulting from human manipulations of natural drainages and waterways are also important environmental problems. Moving up north, aridity, flooding, environmental charges resulting from construction of dams, Soil productivity declines, salinity and water logging in irrigation areas, drought and extension of desert-like conditions into productive areas are very serious problems. These are only generalisations of the environmental problems, which face Nigeria. While most Nigerians know they are facing these problems, they know little of its seriousness and extent. Thus, even if they are to confront them, they hardly know where to start from.

In a war situation, a society normally declares a state of emergency. Strategies and plans are usually formulated which shall guide how the war is to be fought. Such is followed almost religiously. That is why in a war situation, the slogan is often that "no retreat no surrender for either of the two could spell doom for the society. As such, almost all resources are channelled towards prosecuting a war until a reasonable degree of success is attained.

In Nigeria, there is expected to be a prospect of winning if we adopt a war-like approach to fighting environmental problems. We can for instance, be in a situation in which resources are continuously channelled towards prosecuting a war against the problem. Thus, we cannot afford to be in a situation in which the vital equipments we require to monitor our environment go out of repairs. Neither can we afford to leave our personnel with the responsibility of prosecuting the war to be without arsenals or tools to fight. This can however mean that the government officials who will not be in the war front fighting our environmental problems would be forced to make sacrifices.

The war is therefore for us to fight. We have the resources to fight. It is necessary for us to fight it. But we must make sacrifices. If we continue not to fight it we would continue to suffer. Our grand children would certainly inherit an environmental war in which we have been squarely defeated.

Dr. Sani A. Mashi lectures at the Department of Geography University of Abuja.

Insist on EIA before embarking on project, FG told

The federal government has been urged to always insist on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) before embarking on or citing any projects in the country, Dr. FB Dayo has said.

Dr. Dayo, an Environmentalist and managing Director of Triple 'E' Systems Associates Ltd, in a paper he delivered at the just concluded International Conference on Navigation Activities within the Niger Basin in the West and Central African sub-region, explained that the importance of EIA to the development of any society cannot be over emphasised.

According to him, many projects are being cited or have been embarked upon by the government and the private sector without recognition to the probable or possible effects of a planned industrial or civil project activities on the ecosystem, resources and environment.

This, he said has been the bane of the crisis between the owner of the project and the host community and the sudden collapse of the infrastructures and endangerment of animals residing in the area.

In carrying out EIA, he said, Standard methods must be employed for all activities adding that the baseline data collection, should involve dry and rainy season field sampling, combined with intensive and extensive literature review.

In the same vein, he explained some impacts of the project should be identified using modelling software to aid in environmental characterisation and impact identification.

"Fundamentally, it should be noted that the EIA is useful

By Tashikalmah Hallah

for all aspects of the project, which include, dredging activities, potential environmental and social impact Identification and mitigation development, for all phases of the project" he noted.

Until 1992, he said, the importance of EIA, is little known in the country, however, the Federal Military Government under the former president Ibrahim Babangida realise its importance and promulgated decree 86 (Cap 108, LFN) which made EIA mandatory for all major development projects.

Triple "E" systems Associates Ltd, was the principal consultant hired by the FG to conduct the

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) on the proposed dredging of the lower Niger from Barrel in Niger state to Warri in Delta state.

Dr. Dayo explained that this company has concluded its study and has submitted the report to the government and was optimistic that if the tenets of the report is being implemented, the dredging would be successful and would mute no opposition from the lost communities.

Said he. "The fundamental importance of the EIA process for navigation improvement in the Niger Basin is to make the project sustainable and environmental benign.

"There are several other issues that were raised and/or addressed by the EIA with

relation to the environmental benignness of the dredging project, but which we cannot go into now due to time and space constraints."

"However, one thing is very obvious, and this is that the EIA, applied to navigation improvement in the Niger Basin, makes the projects environmental friendly, and therefore sustainable."

On the dredged spoil disposal, which will constitute another environmental problem if the dredging commence. Dr. Dayo recommend that the spoil should not be dumped less than 100 metres from the river, adding that there should also be regular breaks between dredge Spoil heaps, so that there will be free flow of flood water from upland areas.

Minister wants bush-burning curbed

The Minister of State for Works and Housing, Mr. Garba Ali Madaki, has called for strict enforcement of all laws banning bush-burning in the country, to check the wanton destruction of valuable economic trees and boost farming.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that Madaki made the call on Wednesday in Benin at the launching of "Operation Produce More", a programme conceived by the Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation to boost farming.

The minister said that it was regrettable that though there were pieces of legislation banning bush-burning in some states, the practice, had however, continued unabated.

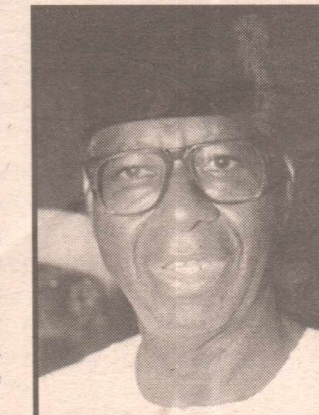
"This is because there is a lack of political will to enforce them", he stated.

He also said that attempts by

the government to boost farming would not yield the desired results, if the menace of bush burning was not curbed.

Madaki further called on farmers, particularly the small-scale ones to discard the demand for chemical fertiliser and return to the use of local manure, such as "crowding"

According to him, "since chemical fertiliser was scarce and beyond the reach of small-scale farmers, the only



Min. of works & housing Tony Anenih

affordable alternative to them, is the use of local manure and I advise them to embrace it."

He said that the old practice whereby corns were harvested and their leaves were left in farms to rot and dissolve into the soil to become manure should be encouraged.

Madaki said the concerns expressed by some Nigerians over the recent rise in prices of foodstuff were unnecessary and advised that farmers should be supported by the government, through the granting of soft agricultural loans to assist them in their endeavours.

He said that the rise in the price of garri, a staple food, was a healthy development, as according to him, "farmers are now beginning to get value for their farm produce." He said that Nigeria has a large arable land and that "we ought not to be complaining of hunger if people have not abandoned the farm for the cities to do menial jobs."

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Crime & Punishment



Sani Abacha, one other docked for robbery

Two middle-aged men, Sani Abacha and Tajudeen Ishola have been arraigned before an Ibadan Chief Magistrate Court on a three count charge which include armed robbery and illegal manufacturing of firearms.

The first defendant, Sani Abacha was accused of conspiracy with others now at large to commit felony and armed robbery on one Adereni Lawal on the 10th day of June 2001.

While the second accused, Tajudeen Ishola, was alleged of illegal assembling and manufacturing of a single barrel gun for the first accused without any official permission to do so.

The first charge reads "Sani Abacha and two others now at large on the 10th day of June 2001 at Ojo, Ibadan, did conspire together to commit felony, with armed robbery punishable under section 5 (3) of robbery and firearms (special provisions) Act. Cap 398 vol. XXII laws of the federation of Nigeria 1990."

He was also said to have robbed Aderemi Lawal with locally made pistol including of one locally made pistol of two grinding machines valued at N44,000.00 and a sum of N15,000 cash and thereby committed an offence contrary to and punishable under 1 (2) (A) of the robbery and firearms (special provisions) Act Cap-392 vol XXII laws of the federation of Nigeria

From Yinka Oladoyinbo, in Ibadan

The third count charged the second defendant, Tajudeen Ishola with manufacturing and assembling a single barrel gun for Sani Abacha without possession of a permit to do so and thereby committed an

offence contrary to section 23 and punishable under section 28 (1) (A) (W) of the firearms Act Cap. 146 vol. IX law of the federation of Nigeria 1990.

The two accused however, pleaded not guilty to the charges brought against them with a plea to the court to use its power to grant them bail.

Suspected robber shot in escape bid

An arrested armed robbery suspect who attempted to escape from police custody has been shot dead by the police in Lagos.

According to the police sources, one Inspector E. Omoteyo and four others left with one armed robbery suspect, Patrick Ikpe, to their hideout at Akowonjo area at Lagos to arrest other suspected members of the gang who have been terrorising Lagos in the past few weeks.

While on their way to the

From Adelanwa Bamgboye

hideout, the suspect reportedly jumped down from the moving vehicle in an attempt to escape but was immediately gunned down by his police escorts.

His remains was later deposited at General Hospital, Ikeja for autopsy while Idimu police have intensified investigation to arrest other members of the gang.

On the same day, at about 2:30 a.m. following a distress call that a gang of

The Gyadi-Gyadi Federal High Court in Kano has adjourned hearing into the Pfizer case till 30th July, 2001.

This followed a preliminary objection to the appearance of the principal state counsel in the office of the Attorney-General of the Federation, ministry of health, in the case.

Pfizer case adjourned

From Jamilah Nuhu Musa, in Kano

The counsel to the plaintiff Mr. L.O. Shola said the principal state counsel Mr. Folorusho Akinlolu can not appear in the matter.

According to Mr. L.O. Shola, the Attorney General is yet to file a memo concerning the appearance of the principal state counsel, Adding that the clearance of this fundamental irregularity is imperative.

He also challenged his notice of preliminary objection that the counsel to the respondents was representing Pfizer, who he claims is a private international company.

According to him, the Attorney-General does not have the power to represent an international company.

He, therefore urged the court to discountenance all the documents filed by the defendants for non-compliance of the law.

In his response, counsel to the respondent, Adetunji Oyeyepo, conceded to the non-filing of the memo and admitted that it was an oversight.

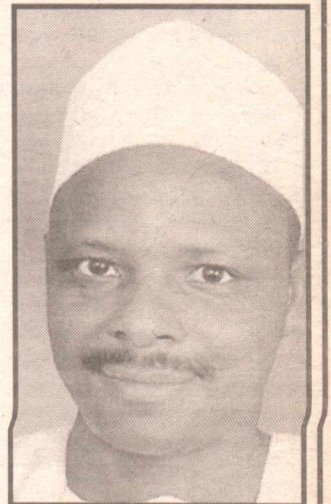
He said the court should not consider it as a fundamental defect that

cannot be cured.

As to the submission that the Attorney General of the ministry of health has no power to represent Pfizer, the counsel said there is no where in his document where the Attorney-General indicated interest to represent the international company.

He urged the court to discountenance the submission of counsel to the plaintiff and allow the motion to be heard.

In the final analysis the court adjourned the case to 20th July, 2001.



Governor Kwankwaso, of Kano State



Governor Ahmed Tinubu, of Lagos

Police kill six robbers

From Shehu Abubakar, in Benin City

Six members of a 12-man armed robbery gang met their Waterloo on Tuesday in Lagos when they were shot dead by the police after successfully raiding a bank.

The state police commissioner, Mr. Mike Okiro, who confirmed the incident, said five of the robbers were killed at the scene of the robbery, while the last one was shot dead in Yaba by the police during a hot pursuit.

Apparently to show the depth of their anger against the recent upsurge in armed robbers' activities in the metropolis, a mob went ahead to burn the five bodies at the robbery scene.

Okiro, in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), explained that by the time the police who pursued the fleeing robbers returned to the scene, the mob had burnt the bodies.

He said the robbers stormed the Lewis street branch of Union Bank Plc on Lagos Island in two commercial buses, and that the police demobilised one while the survivors fled in the other bus.

The commissioner added: "The police pursued the get-away bus and cornered it near Empire Hotel in Yaba where the robbers engaged the police, adding; "One of the robbers was killed and the rest escaped."

Two AK 47 rifles, one locally-made pistol, one berreta pistol and many rounds of live ammunition were recovered from the robbers.

An eyewitness told NAN that the gang, comprising nine men and three women, stormed the commercial bank at about 11:00 a.m. shooting into the air to scare away customers and other members of the public.

The eyewitness added that after forcing their way into the banking hall, the robbers threatened to shoot any official or customer who refused to co-operate, and made away with an undisclosed sum of money.

Although some residents of the area sealed up all possible escape routes to forestall escape plans by the robbers, they still broke through the cordon.

The police immediately gave the robbers a hot chase to Yaba where the sixth member was killed while the others escaped.

... nab two others

Two dangerous armed robbers who have been terrorising travellers and residents in Lagos, have been nabbed by gallant police officers in Lagos.

According to Daily Trust sources, on Tuesday at about 1:00 pm. a team of mobile police men attached to Area 'B' Apapa led by police constable Oyewole Olumide, while on duty arrested two suspected armed robbers by name Temitope Ogunowo of Sawmill Bus stop, Badagry

and Sikiru Rayemi of No. 55 Ariye Street Igando.

When searched, a locally made single barrel gun, two locally made pistols with eleven rounds of .9 mm live ammunition and 12 cartridges were recovered from them.

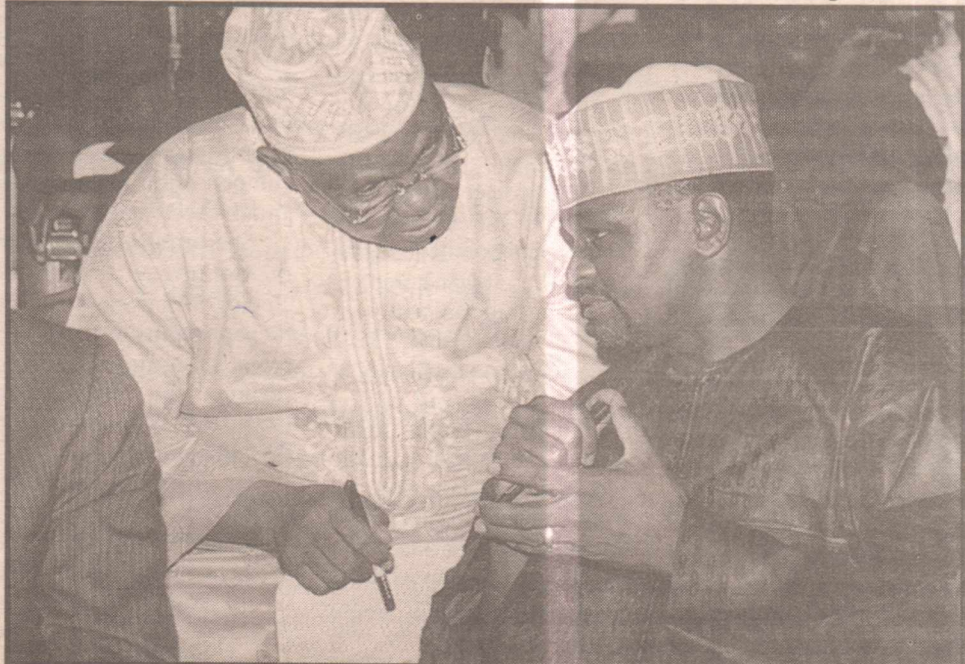
Meanwhile, Trinity police station is now investigating the incident.

On the same day at about 5:30 pm. No. 74997, Sergeant Yahaya Emmanuel and his team while on a Stop and search duty at Alaba

Suru Black spotted three suspected armed robbers and after an exchange of fire, they could not withstand the police superior fire power, they took to their heels.

They were immediately pursued but only one of them was arrested after being shot in the leg and a single barrel gun cut to size was recovered from him.

The suspect and the exhibit were taken to Ajegunle police station for further investigation.



Major Hamza Mustapha (right) conferring with former DMI boss, Brigadier Ibrahim Sabo (rtd.) at the Oputa Panel... Tuesday
Pix by: Felix Onigbinde

Ex-Bayelsa speaker gets bail

The former Speaker of the Bayelsa State House of Assembly, Mr. Heineken Lokpobiri who was implicated in the bomb blast at the State House of Assembly and declared wanted by the Bayelsa State police command but instead handed over himself to the Assistant Inspector-General of Police Zone 5, Benin City where he was detained for over a week, has now been released on bail while investigation into the case continues.

Mr. Lokpobiri's problems started when some hired killers trailed him to Port Harcourt in Rivers State and opened fire on his jeep.

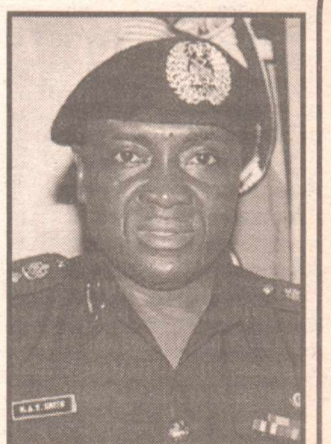
On the assumption that he had been killed, the hired killers took off only to realise that he wasn't dead and so they went and confessed their act.

The Police in Rivers State therefore arrested, detained and were in the process of questioning the self-acclaimed and confessed hired killers when the Bayelsa State Police Command allegedly demanded for the transfer or release of the suspects to them claiming that one of them was a witness in a case of murder at Bayelsa State where the junior brother to the embattled speaker was said to be the suspect.

The Rivers State Police Commissioner whose command is under the Zone 5 A.I.G. at Benin was however reported to have handed over the suspects to the A.I.G. at Umuahia who takes charge of Bayelsa

command among others. While that was on the, Bayelsa State House of Assembly commenced impeachment process for the removal of Governor Alamiyeneyeseigha.

The state was thrown into a very serious power play between the executive and



I.G.P. Musiliu Smith

the legislature.

Suddenly, the state House of Assembly decided to suspend the speaker and a few days later, there was a bomb blast at the House of Assembly which the executive blamed on the embattled speaker who was immediately relieved of his post.

Speaking exclusively to Daily Trust in his office, Assistant Inspector General of Police in charge of Zone 5, Mr. Raimi A. Odojin said he has released Mr. Lokpobiri on bail and the police are trying to reach some key witnesses to testify on the issue before deciding on whether or not former speaker was connected to the bomb blast

Abuja News

Yayale tasks civil servants on democracy

The Head of Civil Service of the Federation, Alhaji Mahmud Yayale Ahmed, has charged civil servants in the country to help the present administration to actualise the gains of democracy.

Addressing civil servants in a recent forum in Abuja, Alhaji Yayale Ahmed reminded them that having attained the much desired democratic rule, it is civil servants that would make sure that government's good plans for public welfare were implemented.

"We are happy that democracy is here, all of us want to remain that way, we want democracy dividends, we want good schools and better hospitals, we want the good things of life, this is where the civil service comes in, it is you and me, and all of us that will help government to make these things happen," he said.

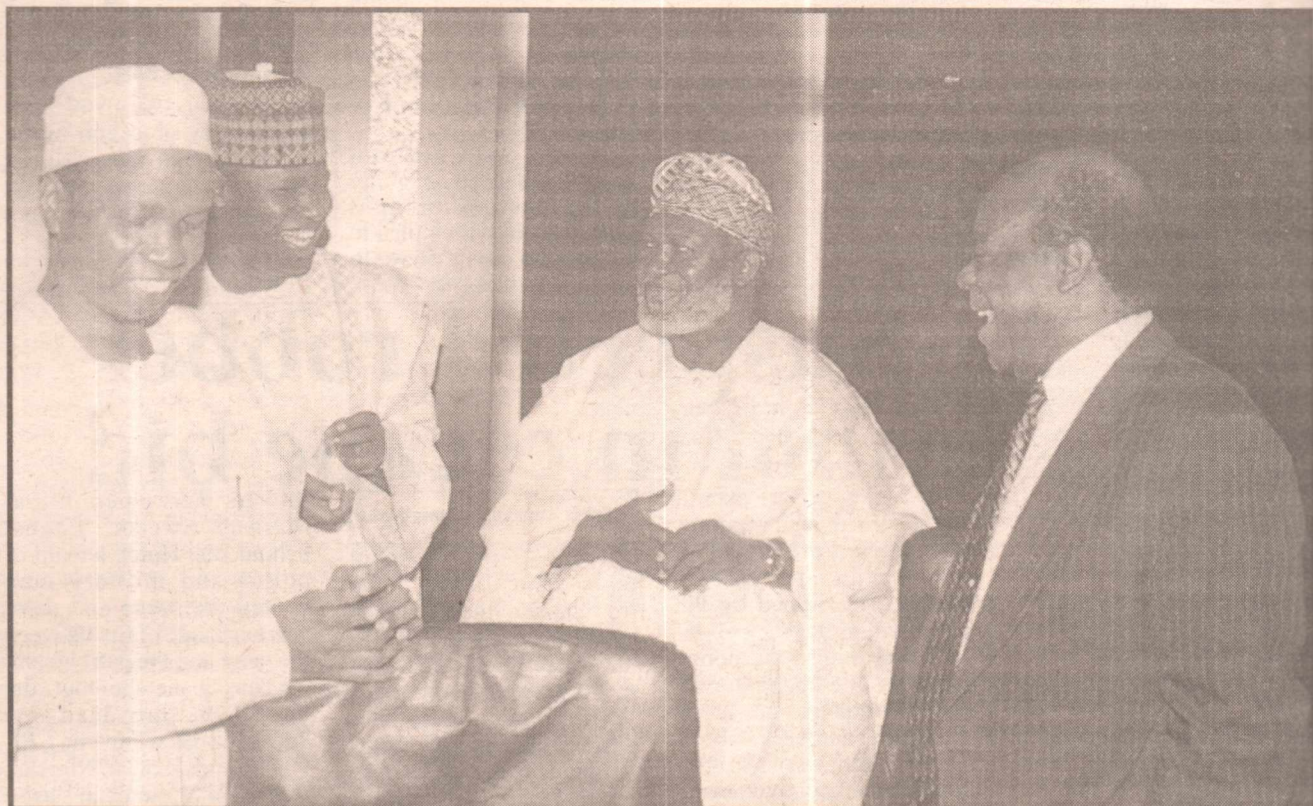
According to the number one civil servant in Nigeria, government had put in place, certain motivational strategies such as increase in salary, establishment of a civil service college, provision of transportation and housing and prompt payment of

pension and gratuities within a month of leaving service. He therefore, appealed to the civil servants to put in more efforts to improve the civil service.

He promised to as a leader, defend their interests and champion their cause if they remain loyal, disciplined and honest in their dealings and shun corruption and indiscipline, which he said, would make it very difficult for him to look after their interests.

"We are ready to make use of whatever ideas you give to make your service and our service better," Alhaji Yayale assured.

Responding, the workers thanked the Head of Service for his care and determination to re-focus the civil service and pleaded their loyalty to make the Nigerian civil service a "dream civil service" for which every Nigerian would be proud. They expressed their preparedness to put in their best under the purposeful and dynamic leadership of Alhaji Mahmud Yayale Ahmed, according to contributions made by their various representatives.



From left; Head of Service of the Federation, Alhaji Yayale Ahmed, Minister of Agriculture, Alhaji Adamu Bello, Minister of Integration and Cooperation, Chief Bimbola Ogunkelu, and Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Chief Ufot Ekaete, share a light moment at a recent meeting of the Federal Executive Council in Abuja.

Pix: Kennedy Egbonedje

AIDS doctor calls for recourse to herbs

Nigerians have been charged to harness their natural endowments towards handling their health related problems instead of depending on the western world for solutions to every problem.

Speaking with *Daily Trust* in an exclusive interview in Abuja yesterday, an Abuja-based medical consultant and proprietor of Enoch Hospital, Dr. Ifeanyi Enoch Heart said Nigerians should reflect on the old days when "We had greater resistance and immunity to many diseases, when we were not fully introduced to western anti-biotics."

According to Dr. Enoch Heart who is also a claimant to the cure for HIV/AIDS, the search for an effective and permanent cure for the disease which had proved difficult for technologically advanced approaches lies within natural herbs which nourishes the body and act as poison to the virus, killing and eliminating it from the body.

Dr. Heart pointed out that the complex metabolic activities of the potents derived from the natural herbs, fruits vegetables, saps, animals, and inclusive micro-organisms are effective and capable of totally eliminating HIV/AIDS and other dangerous diseases.

He therefore called on Nigerians to "come home" to herbs and give ear to local claimants to the cure for HIV/AIDS. He pointed out that his herbal medicines which

are available in his hospital at plot 9, Cadastral Zone B4, beside Bouygues Camp, Jabi Abuja, ensures a complete cure and freedom from the scourge called HIV/AIDS



Prof. A.B.C. Nwosu, Health Min.

AMAC seeks safety in schools

The Ministry of Federal Capital Territory (MFCT) and Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) in collaboration with Andromedia Nigeria Limited this week rounded up a seven-day fair titled, "1st FCT schools safety and security."

Speaking at the occasion, the AMAC chairman, Chief Mrs. Esther Audu commended the initiators of the school safety and security programme for the idea and promised to support the programme, which according to her, came at the right time.

Throwing more light on programme, the vice chairman of AMAC, Engineer Chris Ekpunobi

NOA DG harps on reverence for leaders

The National Orientation Agency is to organise a programme aimed at educating Nigerians on the need to develop a positive disposition towards their leaders, the new Director-General of the Agency, Dr. Ifeanyi Chukwuka, has said.

Dr. Chukwuka who made the disclosure in his maiden address to staff of the Agency in Abuja yesterday, decried what he described as a negative disposition by Nigerians towards their leaders and called for a change of this attitude to encourage the leaders to put Nigeria to greater heights.

The Director-General who attributed Nigeria's social vices to indiscipline, observed that the United States of America has today become a great nation because Americans respect their leaders.

"It is indiscipline that make us run down our leaders, it is indiscipline that make us corrupt, we've never heard Americans running

By Austine Odo

down their President and that is why they are respected by other countries," he stressed.

Dr. Chukwuka therefore wondered how Nigerians expected the international community to respect their President if they called him names or destroyed him.

The NOA Chief Executive also criticised the emergence of ethnic conflicts in the country as well as the agitation for a sovereign National Conference or regional police, saying Nigeria's indivisibility was unnegotiable.

"The call for sovereign National Conference is unnecessary," he argued, "hence the National Assembly members are to represent the various geopolitical entities and are eminently qualified to sort out whatever problems that are confronting us as a nation," he maintained.

He reasoned that any call for a SNC accounts to a negation of the National Assembly which by

implication, is a call for its dissolution.

The Director-General urged Nigerian politicians to imbibe the spirit of

sportsmanship and shun the pull-him-down syndrome which he said, had characterised the Nigerian Political System.

Minister battles water scarcity in FCT

By Emmanuel Ande

Determined to put to rest the persistent water crisis in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and its environs, the new Minister of Water Resources and Rural Development, Alhaji Mukhtar Shagari, has directed the contractor handling the Gurara dam and water transfer project to complete the work on or before the stipulated time in the contract agreement.

The minister told newsmen in Abuja yesterday that water is the primary source of boosting the economy of any country and that the economic gains of the project is so great that he could not allow anything to affect the project.

The minister stated that if the project was completed, it would generate an electricity capacity of 21 mega watts, and would create rooms for irrigation for farmers and also improve fishing.

The project which is to cost about N41 billion, is to be executed by Salini Nigeria Limited, an Italian company based in Nigeria with two other sub-contractors, S.E.C. Nigeria Limited which is to handle the laying of the pipelines from Gurara to the lower Usman dam at the cost of N25.5 billion, while the water transfer project from the upper Gurara basin into lower Usman dam which is to be carried out by Salini Nigeria Limited is to cost N15.123 billion, while the balance is to be used for compensation to the affected

communities.

According to the minister, the three consultants to supervise the project are: water and dam service company, Coyne-et-Bellier in joint venture with a Nigerian company called De-Crown West Africa Nigeria Limited and Quadi-tect which is to handle resettlement cases.

The new water resources minister disclosed that the project is to be completed in December 2003, and that it would be the main source of water supply to the FCT while the Usman dam will stand by after the project is completed.

Commenting on the number of the affected communities, the minister said that about 13 villages are effected by the project and that arrangements between the affected communities and the consultant charged with the responsibility of paying compensation had reached an advanced stage.

Shagari also directed that the contractor should not employ their workers outside the communities that the project is located, in order to reflect the immediate importance of the project to the communities.

He urged the traditional rulers in the area to assist the contractors so that the project would be completed on the stipulated time. He promised to be visiting the project site every month to assess the level of work done by the contractor.



Chief (Mrs) Esther Audu (JP)

Abuja News

Abuja residents praise FRCN

As the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria FRCN continues the celebration of its 50th anniversary, residents of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, have given the station a pass mark for excellent broadcasting.

Residents of several parts of Abuja who spoke to Daily Trust yesterday, believe that even though the FRCN operates in parcularly difficult circumstances, it has over the years, simply put itself in an enviable position.

According to Pa Ben Chukwuma, a retired civil servant who lives in Kubwa, "FRCN or Radio Nigeria has made radio listening something to look forward to." He believes that Radio

Stories by Austine Odo & Emmanuel Ande

Nigeria has made the very best use of a bad situation by maintaining the pride of its place as the only Radio Network in Nigeria.

Hear him: "my son, do not look at Radio Nigeria from the point of view of a government agency. Look at Nigeria Airways, NEPA, look at other government establishments. It is because of the low level of performance that people mention privatisation, otherwise, if they had lived up to expectation, people wouldn't believe they must be privatised to perform, but FRCN has lived and performed over the years, without breaking down."

Another resident of the FCT, Mr. Fedelis Iyoha who

stays in Karu, opins that if other federal government establishments had performed as the FRCN, Nigeria would have moved further and better.

He is particularly impressed that the FRCN has not disappointed the nation. "The FRCN," he said, "is like an obedient wife, it serves the government of the day with absolute loyalty and honesty. Do you ever see Radio Nigeria closing down?" he asked.

Mallam Dahiru Muhammad lives in Wuse Zone 5, he says the radio is his wife because of the performance of Radio Nigeria.

"I have no companion here in Abuja. My family lives far away in Katsina,

but I am always in touch with my radio, and I religiously tune to Radio Nigeria for all my broadcast needs. Radio Nigeria is a pride of the nation," he said.

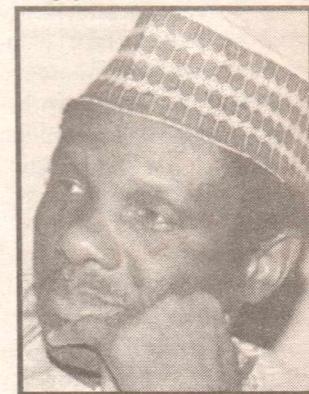
Also speaking, Mrs. Pauline Onoja, a housewife who lives in Gwagwalada said the FRCN should be re-engineered to compete favourably with another radio networks in the world. She praised the management and staff of Radio Nigeria for what she called "an excellent work" they have been doing over the years, adding that

especially in recent times, the FRCN has become a mouthpiece of the masses and not a mouthpiece of government. She said she had so much confidence in all FRCN stations that she tunes to them regularly wherever she goes.

However, an unemployed male school leaver who commented on grounds of anonimity, said the FRCN could not be said to be free of government interference.

According to him, he who pays the piper dictates

the tone, and the FRCN simply has to do the bidding



Prof. Gana, Information Min. of government.

Rainstorm disrupts business activities in FCT

Business activities in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) were disrupted yesterday, following a heavy rainstorms that lasted for over four hours in the early morning of yesterday.

Over 80 per cent of Abuja was thrown in total darkness, as the rainstorm uprooted electric poles and destroyed houses and other properties amounting to about N50 million.

Motorists were note left out as the bridge linking Maitama junction and Wuse old market was completely taken over by water, a situation which forced some motorists to park.

In Wuse old market the destructions ranged from dislodgement of shop roofs re-location of wares by the rainstorm without the knowledge of the owners and

some of the shops were completely taken over by flood.

When Daily Trust visited Area 1 motor park, opposite the old Federal Secretariat, the park was over flooded, commuters to hang around the road to board vehicles to their various destinations.

However, Abuja Environmental Protection Board (AEPB) workers were seen everywhere working to

clear the waters.

In Area II, Garki, some staff of the Ministry of Federal Capital Territory (MFCT) were seen roaming about looking for a place to feed themselves as the food hawkers at the main gate of the minister were unceremoniously sacked by the rainstorm.

major victims of the rain disaster would be compensated.

Gana charges NOA on new programmes

The Minister of Information and National Orientation, Prof. Jerry Gana, has inaugurated the newly-reconstituted management of the National Orientation Agency (NOA) with a call on the members to "reposition the agency toward better sensitisation of Nigerians about government programmes."

Gana who inaugurated the members on Tuesday in Abuja, said; "You must reposition, focus and carry out massive campaigns on the 'Operation Produce More' and 'Patronise Made-In-Nigeria Goods' currently being launched by us as we

continue our media tour."

"These two new programmes, when embraced by Nigerians, would propel our economy to greater heights and make us self reliant," he said, adding that "Government on its part has put in place everything that would make the programmes succeed."

Gana challenged them to also come up with appropriate slogans and messages to make Nigerians aware of the need for democracy to be jealously tended and sustained.

Dr. Ifeanyi Chukwu became the new Director-

general of NOA with the exit of Prof. Ejiogu and three other senior officers who were recently removed from office.

The new members include Mrs. Sarah Achepe, Executive Director (Finance and Administration), and Mr. Olusegun Runsewe, who takes charge as executive director (political and civil education).

Alhaji Kabir Yar'Adua is the executive Director (Planning Research and Statistics), while Mrs. Bridget Okuja is executive director (Orientation and Mobilisation).

Yayale releases cheques to retirees

The Head of Civil Service of the Federation, Alhaji Mahmoud Yayale Ahmad, will today release cheques for pension and gratuity payments to retirees from the Federal Civil Service.

This is in fulfilment and a continuation of his pledge to clear all outstanding pension and gratuity owed the retired workers.

It would be recalled that the Head of Service in a parley with civil servants in Abuja recently, promised to effect prompt payment of their pensions and gratuities, as a way of ensuring their well being even after retirement.

Today's event is scheduled for the office of the Head of Service at the Federal Secretariat Complex, Phase II, Abuja and it comes up at 10:00 a.m., according to the Chief press secretary to the Head of Service, Yusuf Aliyu Addy.



The scene of the accident along Muhammad Buhari Way, Abuja... yesterday Pix by: Felix Onigbinde

12 feared dead in auto crash

Twelve occupants of a Karmo-bound Toyota cummuter bus are feared dead as the bus yesterday crashed along the Mohammed Buhari way in Abuja, seriously injuring all 12 occupants.

Witnesses told Daily Trust that the incident which took place at about 6:20 pm. near the popular Chelsea Hotel, was caused by an

attempt by the driver to divert to another part of the road at top speed.

Casualty figure was not immediately established but witnesses said the injured were taken to hospital.

Sympathisers at the scene were seen pulling the injured out of the wreckage, with their belongings scattered across the road. Men from the Federal Road

Safety Corps and the Police later came to help the injured and took them to hospital.

The wrecklessness of Commercial drivers in the FCT, has given residents and transport authorities a serious cause for concern.

Despite the spirited efforts by the FRSC and police to check their excesses, the drivers still flout traffic rules

Risk manager cautions on materialism

Residents of the FCT have been advised to avoid using price to determine the quality of products to check exploitation by greedy entrepreneurs.

Giving the advice in an exclusive chat with Daily Trust in Abuja yesterday, a risk management consultant and factor agent, Mr. Kene Molokwu said the craze for expensive imported goods by Nigerians sometimes lead to the purchase of items which might in the long run fall short of expectation and lead to the neglect of viable local industries.

Mr. Molokwu pointed out that it would be wiser for Nigerians to suspend the purchase of imported expensive goods until prices lowered, in order not to jeopardise their standard of living through over expenditure. Though Mr. Molokwu noted that government had no role in the choice of individuals, he suggested that government could play a great role in the provision of social security, appropriate taxing and reduced tariffs for goods.

"If you buy goods at high exchange rate, you have to make provision to recover the cost, government is supposed to stabilise the economy so that dealers do not exploit the people," he interjected.

The risk expert also

urged government to harness the nation's resources and provide better living conditions for Nigerians in order to improve their earning power.

Mr. Molokwu who spoke against the backdrop of the rising cost of things in the FCT, advised residents of Abuja to shun very expensive things which had cheaper substitutes. According to him, expensive things are not necessarily the best, and if certain products could brought at a lesser price, Nigerians should go for them.

He further advised the Federal Government to take social welfare of citizens as priority, take more serious steps about the national identity card project to check activities of illegal clients and become more sensitive to the yearings and aspirations of the masses.



President Obasanjo



SPORTS



Akinwande, Izon in Beijing showdown

Boxing

Nigeria's top boxing squad, David Izonritei and Henry Akinwande are to take on opponents in the undercard events of the showdown between Wight champion, John Ruiz and his challenger, Evander Holyfield in Beijing, China in August.

Izonritei, 32 and Akinwande, 36, are both based on the US pursuing their professional boxing careers.

Foremost boxing promoter Don King, who signed on Izonritei only a month ago, announced in New York on Tuesday that Izonritei, 27-3 (23 Kos) will be fighting Tommy Martin, 21-2 (15 Kos) of the US in Beijing on August 5.

Izonritei was originally scheduled to take on the freshest heavyweight champion, Hasim Rahman of the US, at the Beijing event but that arrangement was overtaken two weeks ago by a court decision ordering Rahman to either have a rematch against Britain's Lennox Lewis or stay off the ring for 18 months.



Nigeria's heavyweight boxer, Henry Akinwande, right, in action against Alexandre Zolkin. He will feature in Beijing's undercard boxing showdown.

Rahman recorded an upset victory over Lewis in a fight in South Africa April 22. As the new champion, Rahman chose Izonritei as his first challenger but Lewis went to court claiming that the contract for their South African Fight provided for an immediate rematch.

At the Tuesday news

conference, King said he had offered Lewis \$12.5 million for a rematch, an amount he said was more than what Lewis earned in his last fight as champion.

For Izonritei, the cancellation of the fight against Rahman was a disappointment to many. From last year alone, he said three sched-

uled fights against former champion, Mike Tyson, were cancelled.

"It is another disappointment, after all the disappointments I went through with Tyson," he said.

Izonritei's compatriot, Akinwande, will be squaring up against America's Nate Jones in Beijing.

A former World Boxing Organisation (WBO) champion, Akinwande, 40-1-1 (26 Kos) is rated in the top five ranks by most boxing organisations. His reputation in the US was, however, tainted in 1997 when he withdrew from a fight against Lennox Lewis.

He was scheduled to challenge the champion, Evander Holyfield, in 1998 but the fight was cancelled at the last moment when the Nigerian was found to be infected hepatitis.

Since resuming fighting in 1999 after completing treatment, Akinwande has won all his seven fights by knockout of his opponent, the respected Maurice Harmis of the US.

At 6ft. 7inches, Akinwande has the longest reach of 86 inches in contemporary boxing.

The two Nigerians hope for a boxing crown in the near future. Even though Akinwande is rated higher than Izonritei, the latter stands a better chance of getting an early championship shot if Rahman fights Lewis soon and comes out standing.

Hungary to celebrate centenary in style

Hungary will celebrate their soccer association's (HFA) 100th anniversary with a friendly international against Germany on August 15 in Budapest.

"This event is very important to us, because we played a key role in the world's football over the past one hundred years," HFA president Imre Bozoky told a news conference on Tuesday.

The match is the centrepiece of a year of celebrations and will be attended by the presidents of world governing bodies FIFA, Sepp Blatter, and Europe's UEFA, Lennart Johansson.

France's 1984 European championship-winning captain Michel Platini and 1974 World Cup-winning captain Franz Beckenbauer of Germany have also accepted the HFA's invitation.

A statue at the Nép stadium bearing the names of all the footballers who have played for Hungary over the past 100 years is also planned.

Aragones sets sight on return to top flight

Atletico Madrid coach Luis Aragonés says he has returned to the club with aim of steering them back into the first division.

"My challenge is to see Atletico back in the first division, because a club like this cannot stay in the second division any longer," Aragonés told reporters at his presentation on Tuesday.

Madrid-born Aragonés, who this season guided Real Mallorca into third place in the Spanish first division and a berth in the next edition of the Champions League, highlighted three reasons for his return to Atletico.

"The basic reason is the affection I have for the club and am tired of packing my bags and I am keen to return home."

"The last reason for my decision is that I think it will give me a very good opportunity to show that I can still achieve important things in football," he added.

Aragones, 62, admitted that there would need to be big changes in playing staff if next season's bid to return in the first division was going to be successful.

"A new team is going to be built," he said. "Quite a lot of players are going to have to leave because they haven't achieved what the club requires."

"But 60 to 70 per cent of the players that replace them will be players that are capable of playing the first division."

Atletico, relegated from the first division for the first time in 66 years, two seasons ago, missed out on a swift return to the top flight after they finished fourth in the recently

completed second division championship.

Aragones, noted for his outspoken comments and a wry sense of humour, is the most experienced coach in Spanish football having coached eight first division sides including Atletico, Barcelona and Valencia.

He joined Atletico as a player in 1964 and then coached the team of vice separate occasion between 1974 and 1993, guiding them to a league championship and three triumphs in the King's Cup.

He finally left the club after a tempestuous spell in which he was at loggerheads with controversial club president Jesus Gil.

Miguel Angel Gil, Direc-

tor-General of Atletico, said that Aragonés's decision to return was the start of a new era for the club.

"I want to thank Luis (Aragones) for having cho-

sen to return home to his club. This is going to signal the recovery of the true value of Atletico. Luis isn't just part of the history of the club, he is also its future," he said.

Valencia close on Juventus striker Kovacevic

Valencia are close to signing Yugoslav international striker Darko Kovacevic from Juventus, according to the Spanish club's president Pedro Cortes.

"Negotiations are quite advanced and we are close to reaching a deal, but nothing definitive has yet been agreed," Cortes was quoted as saying in Spanish press

on Tuesday.

"I cannot say anything more until the deal is completely closed," he added.

If the deal, reported to be worth over \$16 million, goes through it will signal the start of the Yugoslav's second spell in Spain.

He scored 41 goals in three seasons with Real Sociedad before joining Juventus in 1999 for \$19 million.

Nigeria wobbles on the track

Beware! We are coming to get you." That appears to be the message of Nigeria following the inroads made by other West Africans into Nigeria's area of dominance at the Third Region 11 Africa Amateur Athletics Championships in Lagos last week.

With the country's defeat in what used to be our traditional forte - the sprints - by Ghana, it is glaring that more work had to be done if other countries are not to overtake Nigeria soon.

The three-day event was an eye opener as followers of track and field events noted that Nigeria appeared to have rested on its oars.

Although Nigeria trooped the championships,

Athletics

the loss of the male and female sprints blurred the overall victory.

AFN officials appear nonplussed and would not offer any explanation.

But Simon Ekpe, Lagos-based journalist believes that "unless something is done and urgently too, the national team might face a catastrophe at the 8th All Africa Games in 2003 in Abuja. "We lost the title to Ghanaian Myles Mills in Johannesburg, South Africa in 1999 and at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games, Abdulaziz Zakari of Ghana was the top African in the finals where no Nigerian made it," noted Ekpe.

"It the trend is not reversed, Nigeria may just be

playing a second fiddle even in its traditional area," added Ekpe.

Ghana produced the fastest male and female athletes, winning the 100m races. Vida Anim eclipsed Nigeria's Chinedu Odozor in the 100m and 200m races.

"I always look forward to meeting the Nigerians in competitions because it gives you an idea of your current standing," said 18-year-old Anim.

Delegation leaders and athletes who participated in the three-day meet gave a pass mark to the hosts and organisers of the event.

The third edition of the championships provided ample opportunities for the countries within the sub-region to expose their budding athletes.

Hyundai Hellas signs as Athens 2004 car sponsors

Athens 2004 Olympic organisers (ATHOC) have secured a national sponsorship deal with Greek car dealers Hyundai Hellas, who will pay 5.65 billion drachmas (\$14.04 million) in cash and kind.

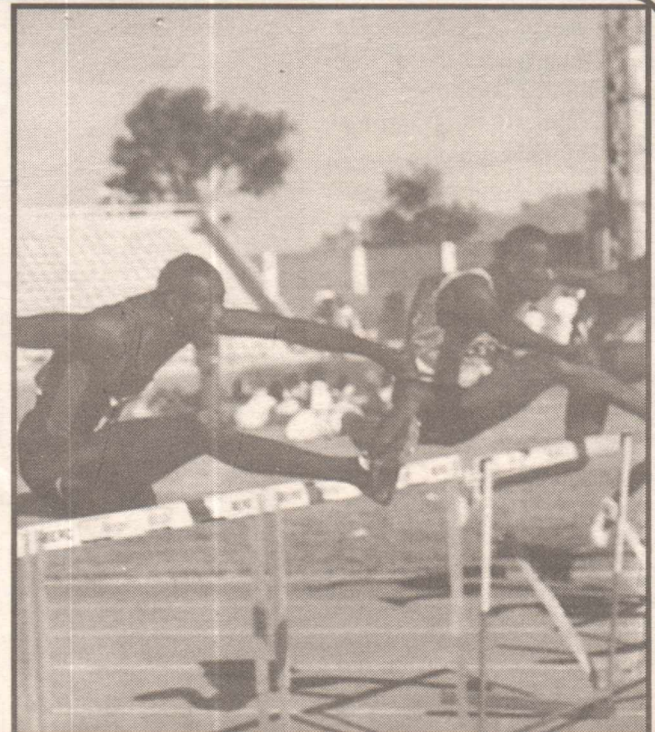
"With this sponsorship... we have exceeded 100 per cent of our goal, with only six of the scheduled 40 sponsorships," ATHOC president Gianna Angelopoulos said in a statement released late on Tuesday.

Hyundai Hellas represents the Korea car manufac-

turers Hyundai Motor (05380.KS) in Greece. Angelopoulos said negotiations for a car sponsor had been particularly difficult because there are no Greek car manufacturers.

"Despite this, Athens 2004 surpassed the corresponding level of the Sydney sponsorship, even though there are three car manufacturers in Australia and car sales are double the number in Greece," she said.

The deal will cost Hyundai Hellas 1.5 billion drachmas in cash and the balance in kind.



Nigeria athletes competing in the 110m hurdle during the National Sports Festival. Nigeria fumbled at the sprint events of Region 11 Athletic Championship.



SPORTS



Decree 101 NFA wants partial autonomy

*Submits proposal to National Assembly

The NFA has formally submitted its position on the proposed bill on the amendment of the obnoxious Decree 101 to the National Assembly.

Trustsports scooped from an impeccable source that the NFA position was formally consigned to chairman of the Senate Sports Committee, Senator Bello Maitama Yusuf last Friday.

The committee had last month requested for a documented position on the decree said to be a hindrance to the NFA's autonomy and mercantile drive.

Accordingly, the committee had shown sympathy and empathy with the authority of the Glass House and subsequently vowed to facilitate the amendment of the decree on the desired position of the NFA.

Though the NFA egg-heads had quickly canvassed for partial autonomy on the ground that government divestment of its interest would

be detrimental, the committee insisted on the consensus in a documented form to enable them incorporate it into the proposed bill on the decree.

The NFA, which had aduced unfavourable economic terrain as a major reason why the private sector has continued to shy away

from investing and sponsorship of sports particularly football despite the mileage it would derive therefrom, said only gradual withdrawal will be acceptable to them.

However, the committee countered the position stating that they would fashion a law that would free the NFA from government bureaucracy and meet the yearnings of Nige-

rians on how football should be run in the country.

Trustsports learnt that Friday's submission did not adopt any new position different from the NFA's peculiar stance though it was broad based and indepth.

The submission apart from the decree 101 also touched on other crucial issues including proposals from the sports ministry.

Referees chief urges Anambra govt to develop sports

Cyril Ntomchukwu, newly re-elected chairman of Anambra chapter of the Nigeria Referees Association (NRA), has urged the state government to develop grassroots sports.

In his post-election speech, Ntomchukwu said that sports especially soccer had brought honour to the country in general and the state in particular.

He pledged to work for the improvement of the as-

sociation and called on members for dedication.

Chief Mike Umeh, chairman, Anambra FA called on referees for the development of soccer in the state, reminding them that their activities should always be guided by the NFA's status.

"We need each other for the development of the game," said Umeh.

The chairman, who was represented by Mr. Victor Nwangwu, the state FA secretary urged the referees to

pay the arrears of their affiliation fees.

The election of the ten-member executive held at the St. Paul University auditorium, Awka, was conducted by Chief Mike Obaro of the Bayelsa Referee Council.

Mr. F.C. Nwafor, retained his post as secretary while Udennaka Bebito was elected the Public Relations Officers, Miss Nkipu Igerensgu (Training Officer) and Mr. E.U.O. Erike second vice-chairman.



The Osueke of Enyimba vie with Jigawa's Yusuf Mohammed during a league encounter in Kaduna. Enyimba defeated Gombe United 2-1 to brighten its chances of winning the Super Four.

African Champions League

Julius Berger battles TP Mazembe Aug. 11

Nigeria's Julius Berger takes to the field on August 11 in Kinshasa, where they will face the Democratic Republic of Congo's TP Mazembe in their African Champions League campaign, according to the fixtures of the first two rounds of the competition released Tuesday.

The Bridge Boys will entertain Mamelodi Sundowns of South Africa in Abeokuta on August 25 in their second match of the competition.

Mamelod Sundowns open their campaign with a home game in Pretoria against Tunisia's Esperance on August 11 while the Tunisians will be home to Mazembe in Tunis on August 25.

Below are the dates, venue and kick off times of the first two rounds of the African Champions League, as released by the Confederation of African Football (CAF) on Tuesday.

Fixtures

Group A

Saturday, August 11

Mamelodi Sundowns (South Africa v Esperance (Tunisia), Pretoria (1300)

Saturday, August 11

TP Mazembe (DR Congo) v Julius Berger (Nigeria), Kinshasa (1530)

Saturday, August 25

Julius Berger v Mamelodi Sundowns, Abeokuta (1400)

Saturday, August 25

Esperance v TP Mazembe, Tunis (1900)

Group B

Friday, August 10

Chabab Belouizdad (Algeria) v ASEC Abidjan (Cote d'Ivoire), Algiers (1600)

Sunday, August 11

Petro Atletico (Angola) v Al Ahli (Egypt), Luanda (1530)

Friday, August 24

Al Ahli v Chabab Belouizdad, Cairo (1730)

Sunday, August 26

ASEC Abidjan v Petro Atletico, Abidjan (1600) (all kick off times GMT):

ITF, CAT to monitor Tinubu tourney

The International Tennis Federation (ITF) and the Confederation of African Tennis (CAT) will monitor this year's edition of the Bola Tinubu International Tournament, beginning on Friday at the Lagos Lawn Tennis Club (LLTC), Lagos.

"The monitoring is aimed at influencing the world and African governing bodies to grant Nigeria a licence to host Association of Tennis Profes-

Tennis

sional (ATP) and or, a satellite points winning tournament," Chief Pious Olu Akinyelure, chairman, Organising Committee of the championships told newsmen Tuesday in Lagos.

Akinyelure, represented by the committee's vice-chairman, Mr. Afolabi Salami, said that officials of both bodies were impressed

with the maiden edition's success and had decided to send a higher cadre of officials this year.

He said that Sule Ladipo, Ganiyu Adelekan and Rotimi Jegede have been invited from overseas to participate in the championships to ensure Nigeria was well represented.

The chairman added that home-based players would also get their chances, adding that provision had been made for two male and two female wild card entries to play in the 10-day tournament.

He said that entries had been received from Ghana,

Democratic Republic of Congo, Benin Republic, Sierra Leone, Togo and Cote d'Ivoire adding that defending champion Claude Ngoran from Cote d'Ivoire was also on the list of registered players.

Akinyelure then thanked individuals and corporate bodies that had contributed to the success of the tournament and tennis generally in the country so far.

According to him, the championship was being put together by a consortium of committed friends of the governor.

Tennis umpires protest govt nominee to NTF

The Nigeria Tennis Umpires Federation (NTF) has protested against the nomination of Mr. Ossai Williams as its representative on the Board of the Nigeria Tennis Federation (NTF).

Letty Enyogai, NTUF Secretary-General in a letter to the Minister of Social Development and Sports, said that it had informed the ministry that Mr. Filipi Popoola would be its representative on the NTF after the last Annual General Meeting of the federation.

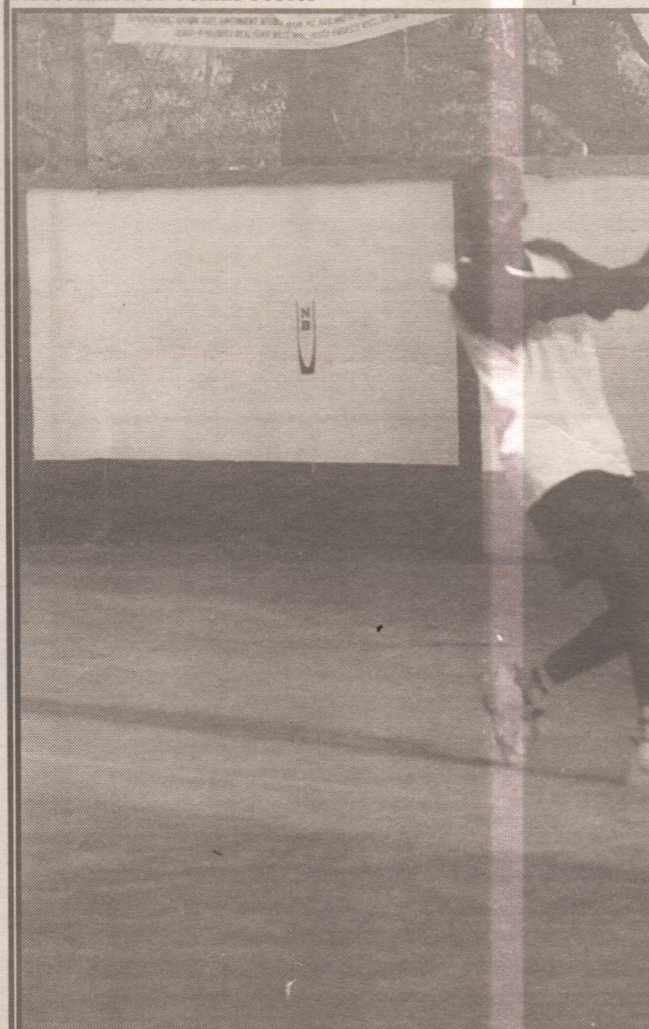
"Mr. Filipi Popoola was nominated in his capacity as the president of NTUF, a holder of the International Tennis Federation (ITF) White Badge and someone, who is versed in the knowl-

edge of the Rules of Tennis," Enyogai said.

The letter, a copy of which was also addressed to the Director of Sports Development in the Ministry, also drew the attention of the minister to the representatives of corporate organisation nominated to the NTF Board.

"Though Coca Cola had been identified with tennis in Davis Cup, the main corporate bodies which are identified more and actually sponsor major tennis events in Nigeria are the Nigeria Breweries Plc. Nestle Nigeria Plc and Central Bank of Nigeria," Enyogai added.

She urged the minister to use his good offices to effect an immediate change for the growth of the game in the country.



Alfred Koripamo will be one of the star attractions at the forthcoming Tinubu Tennis Tournament.

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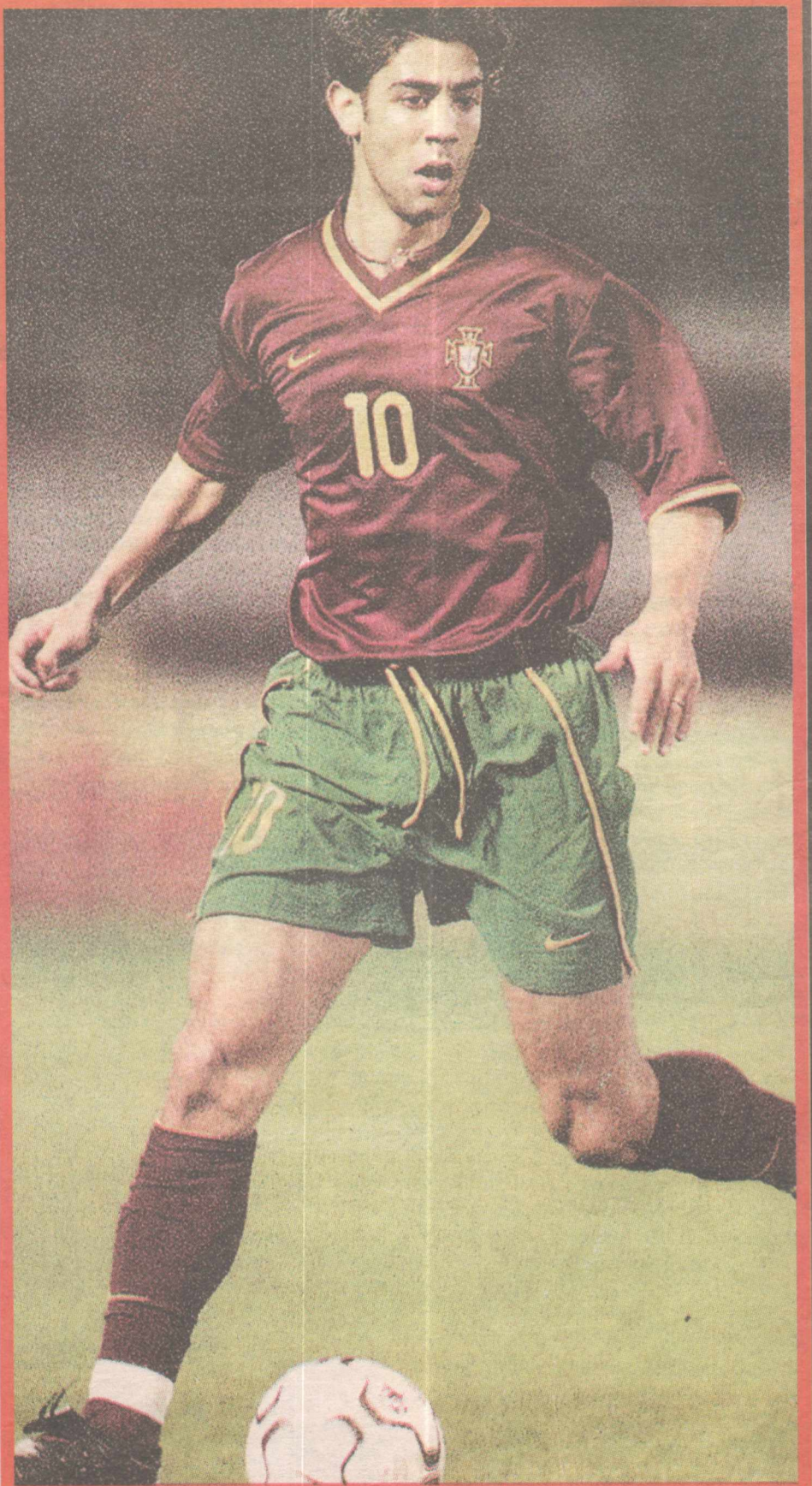
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Italy's Ivan Quaranta, left, outsprints Mario Cipollini, right, to win the 5th stage of the Tour of Italy cycling race from Avellino to Nettuno...recently.



Entertainer-in-chief...Portuguese playmaker, Manuel Rui Costa signed yesterday a 5-year deal worth 35 million dollars with Italian giants, AC Milan.

Super League

Elegbe saves Uwua's job

*as Enyimba beat Gombe 2-1

Enyimba FC chief coach, Godwin Uwua was full of praises for Tony Elegbe when he slotted home the winner in 55th minute of the tension soaked match against Gombe United played at the mainbowl of the National Stadium, Lagos.

Uwua, whose job was already on the line following the state government tall order that he must win the Super League and pick the ticket for the lucrative Champions League next year or be sacked.

In apparent show of gratitude to the Almighty God and former Insurance FC coach knelt down on the track immediately the centre referee signalled the end of the match, with his hands raised to high heavens, saying: "God I thank You for giving us this day,"

It was Enyimba FC who drew the first blood in the

From Babs Oyetoro,
in Lagos

17th minute when Chukwudi Nwosu capitalised on Gombe defensive to notch home the curtain eraser. Gombe boys who had the better part of the first stanza fought back adroitly and levelled up in the 35 minute through Daniel Njoku.

However, the "People's Elephant" came out smoking in the second half, making dangerous incursions

into Gombe's vital area. And their efforts paid off in 55th minute when Elegbe snatched the winner.

Earlier on, in the afternoon, Rangers saw their dream of winning the Super Four nose dived when they were forced to a 1-1 draw by NPA Warri in the tournament opener.

Today's fixtures

Ranger Vs Gombe Utd
NPA Vs Enyimba

Search is on for Shorunmu's replacement

By Patrick Andrew

The Nigeria Football Association, NFA, has commenced a frantic search for Ike Shorunmu's replacement in the Super Eagles.

The NFA, *Trustsports* learnt, is anticipating retirement hence does not want to be taken by surprise.

Consequently, the NFA has instructed the Super Eagles' technical crew led by Amodu Shuaibu to begin a frantic search for a

possible replacement.

Trustsports learnt that the crew has consequently resolved to use the WAFU Nations Cup holding in Senegal in September to begin to groom Dele Aiyenugba, Rotimi Sunday and Austine Egide who manned the post for Nigeria against Namibia to step into the shoes of Shorunmu. Shorunmu, who nar-

rowly missed the France '98 World Cup due to shoulder dislocation, the NFA reasons, might not survived beyond a couple of years.

The Glass House, therefore, feels that there is a need to groom at least three goaltenders who would be handy when the need arises for their services in the Super Eagles.

"The WAFU Nations Cup therefore, will provide the avenue to begin groom-

ing some goalkeepers as well as test some Europe and home-based stars who have had nothing to do with the World Cup campaigns so far. Whatever talents are facing would be integrated into the present Super Eagles squad," the source said.

The WAFU Nations Cup tournament is an innovation intended to groom local players to star-

dom. The tournament according to the organisers is exclusively for home-based players who have not been exposed to continental fiestas.

WAFU President, Abdulmumini Aminu, said the tournament which will involve all West African countries will enable them to raise a new crop of players for the Mali 2002 Nations Cup and other continental competitions.