

## ADAMAWA 2007



**Koiranga Jada**

... the bridge builder

## STAR INTERVIEW

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Pages 24 & 25

## COUNT DOWN TO CENSUS 2006

(21 - 25 March)

**26 DAYS TO GO**

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Courtesy: National Population Commission

## FRONT PAGE COMMENT

### Nigeria's killing fields

The violence associated with the demonstrations against the blasphemous Danish cartoons led to the loss of several lives and the burning of many churches in Maiduguri last weekend. Tragically, reprisals have also occurred in several cities and towns in Eastern Nigeria, with another harvest of deaths and destruction of properties.

It was truly regrettable that a blasphemous attack on the person of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) in a small country in Europe, which has been rightly condemned by the Nigerian Council for Islamic Affairs (NCIA) and the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), would become the reason for an orgy of violence, killings and the massive destruction of properties all over Nigeria. We have no doubts in our minds at *Daily Trust* that what has happened in the past one week is one tragedy too many; it is therefore unacceptable and must be condemned by all Nigerians.

It is unacceptable that a demonstration to protest blasphemy was then allowed to lead to the killing of innocent Christians and the destruction of churches in Maiduguri. What we ask, is the responsibility of the law-abiding Christians in the city of Maiduguri for the cartoons that were irresponsibly commissioned, published and syndicated by newspapers in Europe? At the same time, how can we accept the reprisals on innocent Muslims and Northerners in Eastern Nigeria?

Clearly, it has become very important to place these recurrent killings, counter-killings and wanton destruction of properties within a context of the current political situation in Nigeria. The Nigerian state has become increasingly unable to find a solution to various problems associated with the development process; this incapacity has its roots in the years of military dictatorship when the state was wilfully privatised and became the instrument of the personal greed of the military dictators, especially from the mid-1980s.

Unfortunately, the return to civil rule has also deepened the frustration in our different communities, because the political elite has been unable to meet the yearnings of the mass of the Nigerian people. As part of the desperation associated with political rivalry, leading members of the political elite have often hinged their conquest of the political space on manipulation of ethnic and religious differences in society.

It is instructive to note that Borno State, where the violence occurred from, is a hot bed of rivalries within the ruling All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP) and between the ANPP and the PDP. While these internecine fights are related to the struggle for supremacy in the politics of the 2007 elections in that state, there is the added problem of the open support for the third term agenda of President Obasanjo by the governor of Borno State, Ali Modu Sheriff. Taken together, these factors must have contributed significantly to the crises that engulfed Maiduguri last week, leading to the tragic loss of lives and the unfortunate reprisals in Eastern Nigeria.

The Nigerian state must become more responsible in the manner that the issues of development are tackled; a genuine effort must be deployed to ensure that development is people-centred so that the background grievances rooted in poverty can be frontally tackled. We must also be more responsive to our diversities in ethnic and religious terms, by upholding and defending the rights of each and all to legitimately exist within the bounds of lawful pursuits.

We join all right-thinking individuals and groups who have condemned the killings that commented last week in Maiduguri, and the reprisals in the Eastern part of Nigeria. The perpetrators and sponsors of these tragic events must be brought to book. It is important to underline the fact that we cannot achieve meaningful development in an atmosphere of insecurity and killings. These killings and reprisals are unacceptable and must be stopped forthwith.



BUK students demonstrating against Obasanjo's alleged 3rd term agenda in Katsina yesterday.

Pic: Musa Kazauru.

## PUBLIC HEARINGS

# Nigerians oppose third term

Nigerians through their states and group representations, have rejected the third term agenda at the constitution review public hearings that ended yesterday, insisting on the retention of the two-term of four years tenure as contained in the 1999 constitution.

Presentations at the two-day constitution review public hearings in the six zonal centres opposed President Olusegun Obasanjo's alleged third term bid, saying it was an immoral and undemocratic agenda.

The public hearings organised by the National Assembly Joint Committee on the Review of the 1999 Constitution, closed yesterday in Lafia (North-central), Katsina (Northwest), Maiduguri (Northeast), Osogbo (Southwest), Abakaliki (Southeast) and Port Harcourt (South-south).

From Habeeb I. Pindiga, in Lafia, Lawal Ibrahim, in Katsina & Isa Umar Gusau, in Maiduguri.

In the Northwest zone, Kano, Katsina and Zamfara states opposed the third term

while in the Northeast, Gombe, Bauchi and Borno were silent on the bid.

Earlier on Wednesday, Yobe state governor, Bukar Abba Ibrahim craved for a limitless tenure.

Before the Lafia session

was hastily closed, over 10 submissions were made against third term while eight of the 45 memoranda registered by the secretariat wanted the president to remain in office beyond 2007.

Cont. on Pg. 2

### HOW THEY STAND AT A GLANCE

Zones	Position/3rd term	Other information
Katsina	Majority against constitution review and 3rd term	Not well attended. It was conducted amidst tight security. Only Kaduna and Katsina governors were present.
Lafia	Divided and not well attended	Ended abruptly. Three governors were in attendance. They are: Kogi, Nasarawa and Kwara.
Oshogbo	Support 3rd term	Well attended. All PDP governors in S/west were in attendance. Only Lagos governor was absent.
Maiduguri	Majority against third term	Not well attended, 5 governors were present. They are: Yobe, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Bauchi.
Abakaliki	Divided	Well attended.
Port Harcourt	Majority against third term	Well attended.

# News

## Onitsha crisis

### Youths burn corpses

**R**oadside burials of the dead in Onitsha, the capital of Anambra State, have become a common sight in the city.

The youths are very happy that this time is bringing some relief to the people of Onitsha, the so-called 'Anambra capital'.

The youths, who were deflected by religious and secular leaders, thanked them for their intervention.

In Onitsha, an alleged burial site was found in the city.

Meanwhile, President Obasanjo has been asked to declare a state of emergency in Anambra State in the face of the crisis.

### Public hearings *Cont. from page 1*

Among the submissions in Lafia were those of the Academic Staff Union of the State University of Lafia, the National League for Human Rights and the State Government.

Though the hearings were scheduled to last throughout Wednesday and Thursday, the Lafia centre was hurriedly closed at about 11 am yesterday. A few more people had to be taken to the centre for retards.

Professors Awa and Chidi in the audience and it is agreed that the National League for Human Rights is a judge in the case.

The youths are very happy that this time is bringing some relief to the people of Onitsha, the so-called 'Anambra capital'.

... (faint text at the bottom of the page)

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# NEWS

## PUBLIC HEARING

### NORTH-CENTRAL

# Submissions reject third term

Opponents of President Olusegun Obasanjo's alleged third term bid, stole the show yesterday at the public hearings on the constitution amendment concluded in Lafia, Nasarawa state.

Majority of submissions made at the hearing secretariat at the closing session rejected third term, describing the agenda as immoral and a scheme for life presidency.

A total of 10 anti-third-term submissions were recorded against eight pro-third term out of the total of 45 registered at the North-Central zone.

Twelve other memoranda were silent on the tenure question, while 13 papers

From Habeeb I. Pindiga,  
Assistant Political Editor (Lafia)

could not be sourced from the secretariat.

The anti-third-term groups and individuals include the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), Nasarawa state chapter of the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), Professor Ayo Dunmoye, Electoral Reform Network, League for Human Rights, Supreme Council for Sharia in Nigeria, Jama'atu Izalatul Bida Wa'ikamatis Sunnah, Young Muslim Congress, Niger state and Mr. Abdulhamid Ozohu-Suleiman.

Those canvassing for third term include retired Air

Commodore Jonah Jang, National Youth Council of Nigeria, Mrs. Esther Ezeji, North-Central Civil Society Coalition, National Association of Nigerian Students, Evangelist Sam Ebok, Women in Plateau and Alhaji Musa Ujah.

Contrary to expectations, only Niger state among the six North Central states presented a position paper at the hearing.

But Governor Abdullahi Adamu, while declaring the hearing open on Wednesday, highlighted some areas of interest to his state.

Benue, Kogi, Kwara and Plateau states did not submit any document.

Several anti-third term

and pro-third term groups circulated leaflets at the hearing.

In its four-page paper, the National Civil Society Coalition Against Third Term (NACATT) alerted of a life-presidency plan in the third term agenda.

"To support the third term agenda is to support political uncertainty and instability. If the proponents succeed, there can be no guarantee that they will not ask for a fourth term or even seek to make General Olusegun Obasanjo a life president ... The third term agenda virus must be resisted," the group said.

Most anti-third term presentations warned that the agenda could lead to a life presidency and may breed crisis in the country.

The pro-third term elements argued for continuity of government reform programmes to support their advocacy.

# I will reject public hearing report - Rep

By Emmanuel Bello,  
Political Editor

Amidst the controversy surrounding the public hearing on constitutional amendment, a member of the House of Representatives says he will reject the report of the hearings when presented to the National Assembly.

Hon. Balarabe Wakili, a lawmaker from Kano state, said he does not recognise the event. "I did not send anyone to do public hearings and there isn't a single bill on the floor of the House authorising the event. Bottom line is that this is as illegal as theft and other vices. It is unconstitutional and to expect me to address it is ridiculous."

According to the ANPP legislator, the public hearing is the height of absurdity as the zonal arrangement is not reflective of general views. "If they were serious about this exercise, they should have gone to the local governments, the states and all the nooks and cranny of this country. That way, we would know that the opinion of

Nigerians count." A member of the Northern Members Forum, Wakili says that the joint committee on the constitution would expect legislators to consider the reports.

"They are forcing their way into everything and I'm sure they will return from this show and ask us to consider the report. We are not going to be forced to do what's against the wishes of Nigerians. No one can enslave us and our generation and we shall resist this attempt," he said.

Although expressing a personal opinion, Hon. Wakili says there is a groundswell of opposition in the National Assembly who are prepared to put up a stiff resistance, observing that the last has not been heard of the anti-third term forces.

He urged Nigerians to join in reflecting a skewed constitution that will facilitate the third term ambition of President Obasanjo.

# Bauchi central, ASUU, others oppose third term

From Isa Umar Gusau,  
Maiduguri

Citizens of Bauchi central zone comprising Ningi, Misau, Warji and Darazo, the constituency of Hon. Abdul Ningi, the co-chairman of the National Assembly Joint Review Committee at the North-East zonal public hearings presented a position opposing the proposed third term agenda.

The position of the Bauchi central zone was presented on Wednesday evening by one Alhaji Y. Babayo, who shook hands with members of the review committee including the co-chairman soon after his presentation.

According to Babayo, the Bauchi central zone, he says, considers the constitutional review as ill timed and therefore suspicious noting that the six local government areas jointly disapprove any amendment of the constitution at this moment.

"The timing of this review is wrong. Why shouldn't you wait until when another government comes? We in Bauchi central zone do not endorse any amendment. We reject any amendment of tenure," Babayo

declared. He argued that although there are cries that the Nigerian constitution was faulty, much of the problems he noted, lies heavily on non implementation of the constitution.

Babayo said that "no matter how good we review the constitution, things can never be good, without good implementation," tasking Nigerian leaders to be sincere in their actions and do the right things.

Apart from Babayo, all those who made submissions on Wednesday through oral presentations also spoke against the third term plot, describing it as unacceptable.

The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) speaking through its North-East co-ordinator, Dr. Yunusa Dada, from the University of Maiduguri declared that any attempt to extend the tenure of the Obasanjo administration will mean prolonging the sufferings of Nigerians.



President Olusegun Obasanjo receiving a report from the EFCC chairman, Malam Nuhu Ribadu, during the presentation held at the State House, Abuja ...recently.

Pix: Joe Oroye.

# Adamu carpets absentee govts

From Habeeb I. Pindiga,  
Assistant Political Editor (Lafia)

Governors who did not attend the constitution review public hearing have done a disservice to their people, says Nasarawa state governor, Alhaji Abdullahi Adamu.

Three of the six North-central state governors stayed away from the two-day hearings held at the Ibrahim Abacha Youth Centre, Lafia.

The absentee governors are Abdulkadir Kure (Niger), George Akume (Benue) and Joshua Dariye (Plateau).

Fielding questions from newsmen shortly after the hearing ended yesterday, Adamu said though nothing

compelled governors to attend the hearings, they should have led their people to the exercise as part of their (the governor's) leadership responsibilities.

"There's nothing compelling any governor to come. It's a civic responsibility. If you don't want to attend, don't come. Its like if we are going to vote tomorrow. You can decide not to vote," he said.

The governor added that "nobody will ask any governor why he did not come. But

as leaders, we should lead our people to such important events."

Adamu said the absentee governors have lost important knowledge imparted at the hearing.

Delivering a closing remark earlier, the governor described the exercise as a success with a "massive" turnout.

Though the hearing ended yesterday morning, Adamu said any person willing to contribute can send in their memoranda directly to the National Assembly or through the state government.

"If after closing today (yesterday), you still believe you have something they should have, send it to their (National Assembly) secretariat or to us," he said.

Heavy security presence noticed on the opening day was relaxed a bit yesterday.

Truck-loads of antiriot policemen were all round the hearing venue and barricaded the three routes leading to the complex.

Yesterday's session was marred by low turnout.

Some groups and individuals earlier registered to present memoranda were not around to do so.

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# News

## PUBLIC HEARINGS

# Taraba supports 3rd term, boycotts hearing

The Taraba state government yesterday joined its counterpart from Yobe, with a declaration in support of the third term agenda, while making submissions at the last day of the North-East zonal public hearing which took place in Maiduguri, Borno state capital, while on the contrary, Adamawa state boycotted the public hearing with no representatives of government except private individuals.

Declaring the position of the Taraba state government, Ibrahim El-Sudi, who made his presentation in the presence of Governor Jolly Nyame, said the government was fully in support of a three term tenure of four years. "We, the government of Taraba state, fully support three term tenure of four years. This is the position of government and so many people in Taraba state," El-Sudi said.

The speaker also said the state government's submission was to be made later, as certain things, he said, was yet to be concluded in the reports. Governor Ali Modu Sheriff of Borno state, who spoke after Goje, similarly announced that the submission of the Borno state government could not be read out, as according to him, there was need for some finishing touches. After speaking in

Stories From Isa Umar Gusau, Correspondent (Maiduguri)

support of the constitutional amendment, Governor Sheriff however presented a copy of the Borno state government's submission to the National Assembly joint committee, even though he had said it was not completed.

Governor Ahmad Adamu Mu'azu of Bauchi state who came yesterday at the last day of the public hearing, also spoke in support of the constitutional amendments, while he also read out the position of the Bauchi state government.

Senator Paul Wampana stated that the PDP in the zone has thrown its support for a three term tenure of four years seeking an extension for President Olusegun Obasanjo among other



Governor Jolly Nyama

present political office holders in the country.

Senator Wampana said that the call was necessary in view of the need for continuity that is performance driven towards a better Nigeria. The national vice chairman, North East, also called for the creation of a state out

of what he referred to as the Sardauna province, noting that such is necessary as it has been long neglected.

He also called for what he described as "graduated elections into National Assemblies," which he explained is a situation where some members of the Na-

tional Assembly would remain in office while new aspirants contest elections with a view to avoid situations where there will be fresh legislatures taking Nigeria back to the learning process.

Senator Wampana said that such would ensure continuity in legislative duties

and hasten governance activities, while it will equally enhance specialization among law makers.

He said he was concerned about the law making body having been in the system and known problems associated with law making in Nigeria.

# Bauchi, Borno, Gombe silent on third term

Bauchi, Borno and Gombe states hid their positions on whether or not the three state governments are in support of the third term agenda which was the most prominent issues at the North East zonal public hearings on the constitutional amendment.

In their separate remarks, Governors of the three states who addressed participants and the joint committee on the amendments; spoke in support of the constitutional amendments while they skipped the third term issue.

Governor Danjuma Goje of Gombe state who was first to speak at the opening of the public hearing on Wednesday, said he was in support of the constitutional amendments while he fully associated himself with the position of the Gombe state government, while he said that the submission of the state was to be made later, as certain things he said were yet to be concluded in the reports.

Governor Ali Modu Sher-

iff of Borno state, who spoke after Goje, similarly announced that the submission of Borno state government could not be read out, as according to him, there was need for some finishing touches.

After speaking in support of the constitutional amendment, Governor Sheriff however presented a copy of the Borno state government submission to the National Assembly joint committee, even though he had set it was not completed.

Governor Ahmad Adamu Muazu of Bauchi state, who came yesterday at the last day of the public hearing, also spoke in support of the con-

stitutional amendments, while he also read out the position of the Bauchi state government of aspects such as power rotations along the north and south, concentration of power among others, while he kept silent on the third term agenda, after which Bauchi state government's position was submitted to the National Assembly Joint Committee by the state's Attorney-General immediately governor Muazu finished speaking.

Although Borno, Bauchi and Gombe governments did not reveal their positions on the third term, the National Vice chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), North-East zone, Senator Paul Wampana, who spoke after the governors, said he was had the authority of the three governors and others in the zone to

announce that they are in support of the third term agenda.

Wampana disclosed that the submissions made by Borno, Bauchi and Gombe states were in support of the third term, apparently trying to back what seemed to be the unpopularity of the third term at the venue.

"We have seen Borno, Bauchi and Gombe states, Taraba and Yobe states all of them are in support of the third term tenure of four years.

I have their authority to announce on their behalf, that they are in support of the third term," the North East, PDP chairman said, amidst uproar from delegates, who screamed in rejection, with some of them, saying that, the governors should speak out for themselves.

### Day one (Wednesday)

#### Supporter(s) of third term

1. Yobe Government

#### Against 3rd Term

1. Suleiman Kubo (Gombe - Individual)
2. Professor Musa Yakubu (Adamawa) - Individual
3. Tijanni Usman Karofi (Taraba - Muslims Community) Jalingo
4. Professor Musa Abbas (Yobe) - Individual
5. Yusuf Sunday (Adamawa) - Individual
6. Yo Babayo (Bauchi central zone) 6LGs - Group
7. Dr. Yunusa Dada (ASUU, North East) - Group
8. Professor P. O. Daili (Zonal co-ordinator, Gender and Constitutional Reform, Network) - Group
9. NLC, Yobe state - Group

### Day two (Thursday)

#### Against 3rd Term

1. Sunday Khadri (Adamawa) - Individual
2. Abdulkadir Mijin Yawa (Bauchi) - Individual
3. Barrister Yakubu (Bauchi South senatorial - 7LGs) - Group
4. Mohammed Bago (North East Youths coalition) - Group
5. Sadiq Abba (Adamawa) - Individual
6. Maijama'a Umar (Bauchi)
7. Albert Gideon (Adamawa) - Group

#### For 3rd Term

1. Taraba state government
2. Senator Paul Wampana (North-East PDP)

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- VII) Company Audited Accounts for the last three years
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**Submission:** The Pre-Qualification bid must be returned to the Office of the Vice Chancellor, Kano University of Science and Technology, Wudil on or before Tuesday, March 14th 2006 by 12:00 noon. all bids will be opened on the same day by 2:30pm at the University Conference Hall in the presence of all Bidders or their Representatives in attendance.

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Ag Registrar

# CRIME & PUNISHMENT

## Robbers attack bank with explosives, kill two

**D**aredevil armed robbers yesterday attacked the Suleja branch of Zenith bank in Niger state with explosives and assault rifles in an operation that lasted four hours.

The suspected armed robbers numbering about 20, were said to have attacked the bank in six vehicles Thursday, at about 1.00 am after shooting and wounding the driver of a

By **Shohu Abubakar,**  
Reporter

police patrol team. Witnesses said the robbers arrived the bank, which is about half a kilometer away from the Suleja police station, shot and killed one of the two policemen on duty at the bank and a private security guard before gaining entry into the bank.

The robbers thereafter planted explosives at the

bank's entrance which was diffused by the police bomb disposal squad at 1.14 pm yesterday.

Our reporter who visited the robbery scene saw bullet holes on various parts of the bank, shattered windows and hundreds of expended ammunition shells.

The doors leading to the strong room were damaged with welding machines before the robbers

gained access to the bank's safe and carted away an undisclosed amount of money.

A private security man at a complex near the bank told our reporter that two of the vehicles used by the robbers patrolled the street with men shooting from the vehicles throughout the period the attack lasted.

Many adjoining buildings and shops to the bank

were sprayed with bullets. Hundreds of empty shells of different sizes and makes littered the streets.

The Niger state commissioner of police has relocated to Suleja along with senior detectives from Minna, the state capital, to commence investigations into the robbery.

Meanwhile, the branch manager, accountant and other senior officials of the bank are being quizzed

by defectives trying to unravel how the crime was committed.

When contacted for comments, the Niger state police public relations officer (PPRO), Mr Lawan Shinkafi, confirmed the incident but refused to volunteer details.

He asked our reporter to call back today, as according to him, "we are still trying to put things together."



Bank 6: The Zenith bank in Suleja was attacked by robbers yesterday with several bullet holes on the building.

By: Shohu Abubakar

# CRIME & PUNISHMENT

## "I had my best welcome party in Prison" — Ex-inmate

A retired senior para-military officer and now a frontline politician, said the most heart-touching party ever organized in his honour was at the Benin prisons where he stayed for 82 days awaiting trial.

The politician, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said he was arrested by the police in the former Bendel state when he was travelling from Lagos to Warri. Unknown to him, he said, the car was snatched from the owner at gun point.

The para-military officer said he boarded the vehicle on the outskirts of Lagos along the Lagos-Ibadan expressway.

"I was in uniform when I flagged down the car and shouted 'Benin'."

The car pulled up near me and I joined the three occupants, all of them young men in their mid-twenties.

"The guy in the passenger seat at the front came out and joined one other person at the back and I jumped into the front seat. With me in uniform, we had a very easy drive through several police and federal highway patrol team checkpoints along the way. The two at the back were enjoying themselves with a bottle of hot drink while the journey lasted," he said.

He explained that on getting to Okada junction, they met a federal highway patrol team, which on sighting their vehicle, flagged them down to stop.

He said they noticed that one of them holding a paper and looking at the car's number plate and said something to the other policemen who cocked their guns and threatened to shoot if they refused to stop.

"Suddenly, I realized that there was an uneasy calm in our car. The driver started reversing and the policemen were running after us threatening to shoot. But we could not reverse for a long distance because there was a lorry and another vehicle behind us.

When I looked back, I saw the two guys at the back seat with a gun each. I could not immediately understand what was going on.

"Our driver swerved the car into the bush and they all ran out leaving only me. I surrendered to the police.

They started kicking me, calling me 'armed robber, fake officer' and all what not. I was searched and taken into their vehicle. They took me to police the command in Benin," he said.

The officer said that it was

By Shehu Abubakar,  
Reporter

at the state criminal investigation department that he understood that the three men he was travelling with were suspected armed robbers who snatched the car from the owner in Lagos.

The suspects who knew that the police may be looking for them, decided to

cell all through my stay there. Again, while the inmates in the D-line cells were sleeping on mats, we were given a school size mattress each.

"So, the first day I arrived that cell, I joined the cell president and his deputy to eat dinner from the same plate. It was a very rare privilege in the prison. The next day, I was told by the cell president that a welcome

retired army colonel, was asked to pray and after the prayer, a bottle of Fanta that was emptied into a nylon bag and brought to the cell by a prison warder was diluted with water.

At that stage, he said everybody in the cell stood up including the president. They all picked a cup each and started singing a song that he realized was famous

the only moment that he enjoyed and even forgot that he was on remand.

"Come and see respectable people who ordinarily should be enjoying a well refined wine or juice in their houses, now singing, dancing and drinking ordinary water; about 10 litres with just a bottle of Fanta added to it and yet they felt they were enjoying themselves.

I also felt happy that the party was in my honour. It was very remarkable indeed," he said.

On the living conditions in the prison, he said the life of an inmate is full of idleness. He regretted that human resources are being wasted in Nigerian prison yards and called on government to review the condition of the prisoners.

He said between Mondays and Fridays every week, an inmate is allowed to go out of the cell and sit on the corridors for only 30 minutes daily. The remaining period, he said, the inmates spend in their various cells.

On Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays, he said, all the inmates remain in their cells throughout. However, he said such restrictions are only limited to those on remand, while Prisoners serving jail terms move freely within the prison yard from morning till evening.

The ex-inmate described the prison as a different world of its own, saying that a lot of commercial activities go on inside the yard. He said food items like soup, meat, garri, cooked rice, bread, biscuits and sugar are sold freely by prisoners and inmates.

He said restricted items like cigarettes, Indian Kemp, hot drinks are also traded in the prison. According to him,

such items are either smuggled into the yard by prisoners who go out of the yard for one form of labour or the other or smuggled in by Prison warders.

He said barbing, laundry and manicure are cheaper in the prison. Items other than food commodities locally sourced in the yard cost much higher than in the open markets.

He said inmates and prisoners interact freely and even share true life experiences including the reasons that led to their remand in prison. He said several inmates in private discussions with fellow inmates admitted their guilty while others maintain innocence.

That was where I met one Ekwere, a very elderly man who told me he was serving his 7th jail term for theft. He admitted committing theft in all the seven cases he was arrested and charged to court.

He said he has never stayed on awaiting trial even once because he sees it as a waste of time and told me that once he is charged to court, he will plead guilty so that they will instantly pronounce his term and sentence him to prison.

He told me how he learnt carpentry in the prison and how he served one of his jail terms when the two former governors of old Kano state, Alhaji Abubakar Ruffo and late Sabo Bakir Zango were in the Benin prisons with him. He said Bakir Zango paid money to organize an adult literacy class for prisoners that he (Bakir Zango) also attended.

The ex-inmate recalled that he was free to see a lawyer advise given by the creation of a public prosecutors (DPP).



Prisoners at a carpentry workshop in a prison yard... recently

give him a lift because he was in uniform so that they can easily pass through police checkpoints on their way to Benin unhindered.

He said the police in Lagos where the robbery took place had sent signals to all the neighbouring states including the old Bendel state with the registration number of the car and the description of the three man robbery gang.

He said despite explanations he gave the police and his identity card and the subsequent information, the police got from his director, identifying him as a para-military officer who had official permission to travel, he was still charged to court and remanded in prison custody.

He said when he was taken to the Benin prisons for remand, he identified himself as a para-military officer. He said because the Customs, Immigrations and Prison services were all under the internal affairs ministry, he enjoyed a lot of privileges while in prison custody.

"I was taken to the 'A1' cell which I understand was reserved for important personalities. I observed that while other cells like the 'D'-line cells accommodated 30-42 inmates, we were between six and nine in our

party would be organized for me that night.

I was wondering, how on earth a party could be organized in the prison. I said to myself.

He said in the evening, after they had taken their dinner, all the cell members sat on their various mattresses. While a bucket of water was kept in the middle of the room with about ten empty cups and some cabin biscuits.

After a welcome address was delivered by the president, he said he was called upon to narrate his biography and the full story of what brought him to prison.

According to him, he explained everything to them including his detention at the police station for close to two weeks before he was charged to court.

He said the laws of the cell were read out to him. A long deliberation on his case took place during which several suggestions on how to go about the case were given by the inmates. He was also advised on how to behave in court and so on.

He said the president thereafter, announced his acceptance into the cell which he said was addressed as "country no big man." He said one of the inmates, a

among the cell members.

The man who built the church.

The man who built the church is not the man that has done the best.

The man who built the prison yard is not the son of a bitch!

Oh! drink, drink, drink and send the bills to me tomorrow when we meet again!

He said as they sang and danced, they drank from the plastic bag. He said since his arrest and detention, that was



Female prison inmates singing while top prison officials watch with interest... recently

# CRIME & PUNISHMENT

## Apo six: Accused denied bail, remanded in prison

By Benjamin Auta, & Shuaib Y. Aladire

The six suspects standing trial for the murder of the Apo six traders have been denied bail by an Abuja High Court. Justice Ishaq Bello, made the order yesterday, while ruling on the bail application by the defence counsel, Ricky Tarfa (SAN).

Tarfa in his bail application said since the prosecution is unwilling to prosecute the matter diligently the accused persons should be granted bail.

He said the first accused Mr Danjuma Ibrahim has medical problems that needed to be attended to.

However prosecution counsel, Mr Mamman Mike Osuman objected to the bail application, and asked the court to disregard the prayers until a formal application for bail is made.

On tendering the original statements of a prosecution witnesses made at the sitting of the investigation panel of the Apo six killing, he said he has made a formal request to the inspector general of police to that effect.

He said since his letter was delivered to the inspector general yesterday he is yet to receive a reply and prayed the court to adjourn the case.

Justice Bello adjourned the case to March 1, 2006 for hearing of the bail application. The judge expressed displeasure that the government which is prosecuting a case as sensitive as this is unprepared to release vital documents to the prosecution, adding that the society is watching to see that justice is done.



Sunday Ehindero, Police IG



Police Armoured tank stationed at PDP National Secretariat with mobile policemen combat ready during PDP NEC meeting held in Abuja...recently.

Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje.

## Impeachment: Ladoja withdraws suit

A Federal High Court in Abuja yesterday struck out the suit challenging the impeachment of the former Governor of Oyo State, Chief Rashidi Ladoja.

Justice Stephen Adah

By Ruby Rabiu, Senior Reporter

threw out the suit following the application for discontinuance of the action brought by Ladoja.

When the matter was called yesterday, the parties

were not represented in court by lawyers. The court however observed that the plaintiff had filed a motion of discontinuance of the matter.

Justice Adah consequently struck out the motion. Ladoja had gone to

court seeking to invalidate his impeachment by the Oyo State House of Assembly on the ground that it did not follow the proper procedure en-

shrined in the 1999 constitution.

Ladoja joined the Attorney General of the Federation in the suit.

## Court relocates Fasehun, others to Kuje

An Abuja High Court yesterday ordered that the six factional leaders of the Oodu's Peoples' Congress be moved from Suleja to Kuje prisons.

Justice Añwuli Chikere made the order following complaint made by a defence counsel; Mr. Oluwole Kehinde that the condition under which Dr. Frederick Fasehun, Gani Adams and four others are being kept in Suleja prisons was pathetic.

The six are standing trial on a four count charge of treason. The other four are Mr. Ajayi Edward Olusola, Alhaji Oyinlola Awe, Chief Wahab Isiaka and Alhaji Mudashiru Adeniji

At the resumed hearing yesterday, counsel to Fasehun and two others, Mr. Kayode Ajulo told the court that he has filed a motion challenging the jurisdiction of the court.

The Director of Public Prosecutions of the Federa-

By Ruby Rabiu, Senior Reporter

tion, Mr. Salihu Aliyu told the court that he was just served the motion yesterday.

He observed that once the issue of jurisdiction was raised, it had to be resolved before the court could proceed to trial.

Although the court expressed surprise that the counsel had just filed the motion despite the fact that he had about 10 days from the last adjourned date to file the motion, Ajulo notified the court that the lawyers in the matter were based in Lagos hence it was difficult for them to file the motion before yesterday proceedings.

Kehinde, counsel to Adams, the fifth and sixth accused men, however told the court that he had also filed a bail application on behalf of his clients. The DDP again stated that he had not been served a copy of the motion.

Justice Chikere then asked Kehinde to address her on whether the court could entertain his bail application if the court had no jurisdiction.

The counsel submitted that the court could so entertain the application because the liberty of the accused persons was the issue involved. "The issue of jurisdiction raised is based on procedure not substance," he added. The DPP asked the court to give him time to file a counter-affidavit.

At this juncture, Kehinde informed the court that the accused persons are being held in Suleja saying that the condition of their detention was "terrible".

He urged the court to move them to custody where they would not suffer unduly. Aliyu agreed with the defence counsel that the accused be moved to Kuje prison. The court obliged and adjourned to March.

### POLICE COMMISSIONERS TELEPHONE NUMBERS

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2. Adamawa State	075-674012, 624012
3. Akwa Ibom State	085-200008, 201711
4. Anambra State	048-550022
5. Bauchi State	077-542621
6. Bayelsa State	089-490060, 490132
7. Benue State	044-532962, 044-553015
8. Borno State	076-232915, 232043
9. Cross River State	087-231101, 230663
10. Delta State	956-281485, 280441
11. Ebonyi State	043-25134, 20325
12. Edo State	052-253798, 253520
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14. Enugu State	042-250335, 042-256257
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16. Imo State	083-233343, 083-2307113
17. Jigawa State	064-721138, 721128
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20. Katsina State	065-431703, 430914
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# Opinion

## Akume's intervention

By Adagbo Onoja

I cannot locate the source of Benue State governor, Akume's political wisdom in standing up to President Obasanjo's third term 1992, which is a very pleasant but surprising development. Whatever is the source of that heroism, the Benue governor should be lauded and regarded as a role model that come his way on account of his political training and investment.

History: Akume's rebellion became an open thing in terms of his political opposition to the third term, among others, General Muhammadu Buhari had said that 29 governors had signed up as leaders of the third term militia. In arithmetical terms, that meant only seven 'rebels' were left standing in the gubernatorial forest that do not support third term for the president and other layers of elected officers in the country. At that time, the question was who could be the seventh of the rebels?

The Benue governor had come out categorically to be counted out of cheer leadership of the third term project when news spatters and speculations claimed he was there. But it was not thought that he would go further than that or would be made those sure to win the long distance. This is in the sense that, unlike the other guys on the list, he is the only one who does not appear politically rugged to stand up to President

Obasanjo's kamikaze politics. Oyi Kalu of Abia State is a self-made person and, like all such people, he is as self-referent and as rugged as they come. Watching him recently holding court at the Government House, Umuahia, I came to the conclusion that his powers are not really in his being a governor. He will still be some actor even when he is not holding political power at any level. In fact, there is a sense in which his case is similar to the relationship between the USA and Cuba. The Americans have only left Castro to romp because they know that even if they succeed in bombing him to death, they would still not be able to consolidate power in Cuba.

Bola Tinubu's case is similar in virtually every respect to Orji Kalu's. Tinubu is a sophisticated populist, with an exceptional capacity to read the mood of his state and oblige and in the process of which he has bound his base to himself. He, therefore, has a minimum requirement to stand up to anyone he chooses to, including the president.

Abdulkadir Kure of Niger is none of the above but as a former bureaucrat, he cannot be ignorant of counter-veiling tactics. Additionally, he is surrounded by established Generals who are perceived to be his shield. This may not be

correct in an automatic sense but that is the perception. Most times, perception is everything.

Boni Haruna obviously enjoys Atiku's architecture of power and it would have been morally and politically unbelievable for him to ditch Atiku, whatever the case.

Kano's Ibrahim Shekarau is certainly not running a typically brilliant Kano regime in the mould of Audu Bako or Rimi years but his transgressions would have to be so utterly self-evident for anything like happened to Ladoja to happen to him at the moment. An internal Kano stimulus can send him packing, but it is doubtful if an externally-inspired move from Abuja can achieve such now.

Joshua Dariye of Plateau has retreated into the political canopy constructed by old, tested war horses in the state and, has so brilliantly, been exposing the rottenness of those who say they are fighting corruption. They might get him eventually but he would stretch them a lot before he goes down.

This leaves Akume as the only one on the list without such a rock-solid fallback beyond his reported closeness to Vice President Atiku. He is thus easily an underdog in any power struggle between him and a sitting president of Nigeria. The prospects of such a struggle must be frightening in the context of ethnic relationships in Benue, Ti-

Federal power in Nigeria historically and the Obasanjo presidency in particular.

This is even more so that Obasanjo is not the sort of person who would initiate a peace move behind the scene. Rather, he preaches and punishes. And the sledgehammer might have been put together with him in mind.

But that is not the issue to worry about. What is important is that whatever made Akume to go against third term should also steady him for a test of strength. Because Obasanjo will mobilise to overawe him, one way or the other. Like Atiku, the governor should learn quite early to anticipate those things.

Akume - Obasanjo relationship has a long history dating back to 2000. On the pretext that Akume is pro-Atiku, the president has not quite allowed him to actualise himself much. In itself, that is not a problem because relationship between members of the power elite must have its ups and downs. Sometimes, it could be fight-to-finish but they do reconcile and rehabilitate each other. That is the trend all over, save in a few circumstances. So, it is foolishness to jump into such races and begin to take sides, sentimentally.

But here, we are dealing with a situation whereby the president in question has a history of hostility to his own idea of

reality. And he has a history of conquest as a mode of conflict resolution. And, above all, he wants to prolong his stay in power, a project in which blackmail and intimidation have been well used, particularly against other holders of power in the country.

This is the context from which to understand Akume's supportable rebellion at this point in time. He does not need to be an angel to say no to what is simply objectionable and is already the basis for civil disturbances in parts of the country, if what started in Katsina last Saturday is anything to go by.

In any case, is it not an evidence of the president's poverty of managing relations that a governor like Akume who is not of a rigid ideological persuasion would prefer the vice president to the incumbent president, irrespective of the actual reason(s) for such preference? Particularly that this is the case with many other governors, including many of those who have been sufficiently intimidated to play ball on the third term.

It is in the analysis, management and resolution of this type of conflict that we can establish the significance and insignificance of individuals in social process. So many groups, interests, organisations, platforms and individuals are going to fight against third term. Some will do so at class-level

platforms. Others at gender level or religious level. And yet others at ethnic platform level while yet some others will operate at the level of civil society coalitions. Some of these emergent centres of opposition, like the Church, were those the president has tactically cultivated over the years in anticipation of this moment while nationalist politicians, activists and other progressives stood in splendid alienation from such constituencies that were waiting for mobilisation along popular democratic aspirations. When the contradictions of such projects as, third term bring these platforms or individuals out in opposition to democratic aberrations, the surprise needs to be recognised and documented. This is the point in recognising Akume's intervention, particularly since President Obasanjo, the chief security officer of the federation, its chief moral officer, chief religious officer, chief diplomatic officer and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic cannot see the dangers in confronting objective interests of the nation with his own subjective considerations.

Onoja is a member of the Editorial Board of Trust newspapers (tabbaejakonoja@yahoo.co.uk)

## Beko's unfinished struggle

By Charles Dickson

Beko Ransome-Kuti dead: The human life is one product with an expiry date only known to the Creator. Beko, one of the leaders of the pro-National Conference Organisation and co-founder of the Campaign for Democracy, a medical doctor who gave more injections to the civil society's struggle than he did in any hospital ward, succumbed to death and played many of our leaders have wondered what death is and why it only certain occasions that can occur at any time. He fought for the cause, he was the years' son of the struggle, three scores and ten years.

He was never tired of the struggle, he encouraged Nigerians never to get tired and he argued and fought for the liberation of the masses, saying, "the fight must be continued to a logical conclusion. I am not tired but I am tired of doing nothing. There are many things that must be done, people, my style of arguing this article. This is a wake-up call that Nigerians should know that the destiny lies in their hands and not in the government of the day. There is that we have. The fight is that we continue to sit and watch, the rot will continue.

Silence, the condition of quality of being or keeping still; the absence of sound over a period of time without speech

or noise; the refusal or failure to speak out. In its verb form, it's to curtail the expression of, suppress; silencing criticism and/or silencing opponents.

This is no English class lecture on the word silence or keeping silent; rather, this is a call to Nigerians from Beko's ghost asking why the silence. Why are Nigerians quiet while everything that can go wrong has practically gone wrong with the people, the polity and the society at large?

The silence that is embraced in all the definitions highlighted earlier. The civil society has entered a condition of silence; the populace is, keeping still. There is no opposition except for a few dissenting voices that are ready to sell their birthright at the right price.

As a nation we are witnessing a period of time without speech for noise. The hypocrisy, irritating for true and patriotic observers, as the abnormal has suddenly become a natural and beautiful thing. From the top to the bottom, everyone has returned to watching in the hope that everything is okay or things are getting better, while the truth is that things are indeed on a volcanic eruption situation.

Beko has lived his life and

gone despite his shortcomings and goings-on; he left a story of the struggle. What would our own story be as told by others when we are no more? How did we try in our own little way to change society for the better? Did we just sit back and support the decay or we sat on the fence not bothering?

We need to break the silence. Nigerians need to wake up, rally together to stop the vampires that call themselves leaders. At the rate we are going, our silence is an absence of people that will fight their own battle; the absence of a people, a nation without true resilience to injustice, to misuse and poor governance.

The Senate has endorsed the sack of 160,000 federal workers. From the breakdown, the junior workers are hard hit as they account for 152,000 of that figure and government is talking about reform and tying about having essential jobs. In the real sense, it is just going the opposite. Yet we have kept silent. The opposition does not exist or better put, it's powerless for those workers. Life is about to become a full-time nightmare, because even when the jobs lasted, the lack of salaries and delay in payment of them made life a living day hell. The government has made no provisions; it has not dialogued with the labour movement. Of course, that is

not necessary as their wings have been clipped. It is February and almost easing into March, yet January salaries have not been paid. And the government keeps congratulating itself for achieving what Graham Bell could not achieve with the telephone.

The opposition has failed woefully, achieving very little that can be tagged success in a viable state with a virile opposition, and no bunkum or blarney with any form of reality could be talking about a third term. The PRONACO dream which Beko fought for so much has not been able to leave the drawing board. The best befitting passage he can get is for the PRONACO thing to kick-start because as it stands, it is a dream of the sounds of silence, a void so enormous that it is deafening.

Directions need to resist the National leaders called PDP, Obasanjo, Tony Anenih, Bode, Abacha and all that they stand for. We need to have a repositioning. We have been on the wrong path, we need to correct our leadership on the masses, ruling based on Nigerian principles, tackling problems based on instincts not on any known guide. They make policies depending on the side of the bed

they woke up from and start blaming.

The recent comments in support of a third term by some governors and top government officials only point to the fact that the plague of Abacha's five leprosy fingers have not left us. The opposition needs to wake up the NADECO way, not with those crooks that used NADECO as a springboard to foot themselves. There is a battle ahead and we cannot just sit and watch it make us feel through. Are we ready to appease the spirit of Chima Okoro, New Beko and all those who have sacrificed their lives for the struggle?

We need to voice out our frustration, tell the crooks that we are ready to keep them out, whether by voting, voting or anything, we should share them out. And our only plan, we should make them accountable for the crimes they have committed against the nation. We should work to build a democratic system that is based on the principles of justice, equity and fairness. We need to have a repositioning. We have been on the wrong path, we need to correct our leadership on the masses, ruling based on Nigerian principles, tackling problems based on instincts not on any known guide. They make policies depending on the side of the bed

political will; it has simply been dancing in circles and have given a new name to failure which it calls reform. There is no gainsaying that despite the fact that we have earned more in the last seven years that our whole existence is mind-boggling, because today, we are poorer for it.

Brother Beko, adieu, as you journey to the world beyond. Even though you did not believe in the existence of an Almighty Allah, please intercede for Nigeria as we that you have left sit and listen to the sounds of silence, the sounds of a void so enormous that we are deafened. Some say silence is golden; but is it really? If silence is the absence of sound, it is a void, an enormous, deafening void. Shhhhhhhhh... can you hear it? It is the sounds of nothing and it is the sounds of nothing of nothing. Part continues to slip away, as if it were a grain of sand in an hourglass. Silence is a pain, you, Shhhhhhhhh... can you hear it? The sounds of nothing.

The contents of Beko's struggle, and all those who were his struggle, are in peace and the heart of the nation.

Prince Charles Dickson, Jos, Plateau State (pcdbooks@yahoo.com)

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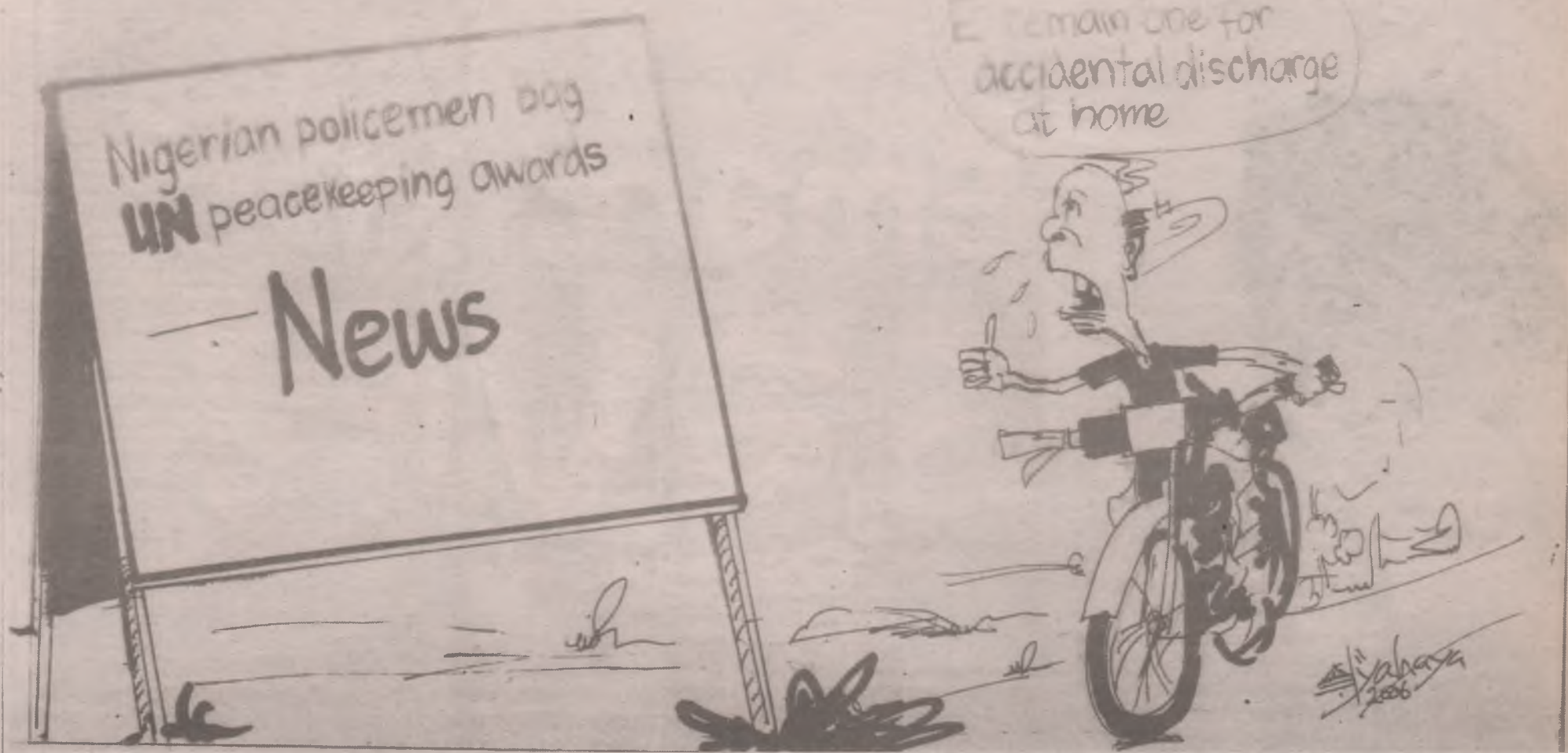
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## YOUR LETTERS

# Leadership misunderstood me

My attention has been drawn to an editorial written on 9th February, 2006 under the title "Not so Senator Aji" in *Leadership* newspaper where the paper commented on a bill sponsored on the floor of the National Assembly. The bill which is readily accessible on [www.nass.gov.ng](http://www.nass.gov.ng) is titled: "A BILL FOR AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE ABSORPTION OF QUALIFIED AND INTERESTED GRADUATES WHO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE SERVING THE NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE CORPS INTO THE NIGERIA POLICE FORCE IN ORDER TO AMELIORATE THE PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYMENT, IMPROVE SECURITY, AND OTHER CONNECTED MATTERS. In that editorial, you surprised me by suggesting that, "Senator Aji's latest move aimed at giving succour to university graduates and reducing crime is as undesirable as it is impracticable." I am sure you will agree that it

is desirable to improve on both the quantity and quality of our police force, so that it can adequately cope with the current challenges of increased population and sophisticated crimes. While I commend the Obasanjo administration for actually recruiting nearly half of our current police force only in the last seven years, it still stands at less than 400,000, which when viewed along with our current population of over 150 million, certainly leaves plenty of room for improvement. I am sure you will also agree that the Digital Age in which we now live has also given rise to a new generation of sophisticated crimes and criminals. Consequently, modern policing requires deterrent and forensic techniques, which increasingly involve digital and biometric technology. The inclusion of qualified graduate personnel into our police force is, therefore, certainly a practical way of addressing this real problem. My bill does not seek to instantly turn graduates into police officers without training them in the process.

**FG, please look into teachers' salary**

Allow me space in your noble newspaper to call upon the federal government over the issue of Universal Basic Education (UBE). It's very unfortunate that teachers are left behind in this programme. Most of the teachers, especially those in primary schools are receiving less than N7,500 as their salary per month; despite the fact that teachers are the

backbone of any development globally. The federal government and the National Assembly must join hands to upgrade the conditions of service of primary and secondary schools teachers. Otherwise, the Universal Basic Education would seem an exercise in futility. It would mean that the objective for creating it would have been defeated.

**Abdullahi Abdullah, Yakasai Quarters, Kano Municipal, Kano.**

Indeed, Section 6 of the bill states categorically that, "Where the corps members have successfully scaled through the screening and recruitment exercise, the Police Service Commission shall employ such corps members into the Nigeria Police Force for training and deployment. I am also surprised at your argument that "a security agency like the police is too important to be thrown open to every graduate that wishes to work for it." The Nigeria Police like all other government organisations has to be open not only to every graduate that wishes to work for it, but to all Nigerians that meet its requirements. That is why my bill puts emphasis not only on "interested" but also on "qualified" graduates. Although graduates like all other recruits have to meet the educational, physical, behavioural and other requirements before they are considered, Section 4 of the bill separately provides for character assessment by requiring that "Organisations where NYSC members have served their primary

assignments shall submit assessment report on such corps members to the Police Service Commission for consideration in process of selection." So there is no intention or indication in my bill to turn the Nigeria Police Force into a graduate dumping ground as implied in your editorial. You concluded your editorial by asking a pertinent question "... has

**Patrick Wilmot, please come back to Nigeria**

Please editor, allow me space to use this popular newspaper to call on Dr Patrick Wilmot, the former lecturer with the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria who was deported during the rule of General Ibrahim B. Babangida, to come back to Nigeria, for he is very important to us. With the death of people like Wada Nas and Bala Usman, we need people like him to fill

it been established that graduates make better policemen than non-graduates?" The answer is obvious. Graduates do not only make better policemen and policewomen (who you appear to miss), but they also make by far, better newspaper editors.

**Senator Muhammad Abba Aji, Aji Sudani of Dikwa, Member, Senate Committee on Defence, Power & Steel, NASS Complex, Abuja.**

the vacuum created, which up till now has not been filled. More so, with him and the likes of Generals Victor Malu, Buhari, Mr Sam Nda Isaiyah, Colonel Dangirwa Umar, etc. you can charge us to be more real in fighting the monster called Obasanjocracy.

**Sani Garba Mohammed, Karaye LG, Kano State.**

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



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# Opinion

## Census: Counting and caring for the insane

By Rabo Makeri

A widely-reported story based on a statement by the National Population Commission (NPC), had it that the insane or mentally-ill people in the country would be counted during the forthcoming national population census.

The story is interesting, not because of the details its content gave out on how the NPC planned on counting the insane after midnight, but because of the suggestion in the story that insane persons were likely to be calmer, friendlier and hopefully more willing to answer all the questions they would be asked by the enumerators sanely by that time.

And more profoundly, the story has put the issue of the insane on the table, proved official affirmation that the insane in the society are, after all, human beings and citizens who are entitled to and should share many rights with their sane compatriots. This is in addition to discharging certain civic duties expected of them; in this case, that of agreeing to be counted during the census.

It is good that the insane in Nigeria, or those lacking "an inability to either determine the difference between "right" and "wrong" (or in a more practical sense, "legal" and "illegal") or understand the consequences of one's own actions" would be counted and their abodes identified and registered. This would, should or could facilitate giving them what is their due by the state - free, befitting medical attention and total rehabilitation.

This expectation is validated because the top leadership of this country and the management of the National Population Commission (NPC) in their efforts to win popular support for, and participation in the census, have said times without number that the data arising from it would help in planning for the advancement of our collective wellbeing.

The insane should be given priority in terms of benefiting from the advantages associated with the census data. This is suggesting that after ascertaining their numbers in all parts of Nigeria, that fact should be used in planning for their immediate treatment in sanatoriums across the country. Doing so would promote their wellbeing as human beings and citizens.

The data should similarly inform the basis for the training of more mental health personnel and the provision of additional mental health clinics

nationwide. The training of more mental health workers and provision of more specialised hospitals for treating people with mental disorders call for more public funding, which many Nigerians would back. Of course, it is certain that governments at the federal and state levels have programmes or policies designed for caring for the insane in the society. There are laws to back the policies. The Mental Health Bill to replace the Lunacy Act CAP 112 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 1958 which is pending at the National Assembly, is a good example.

But as reported in the new World Health Organisation (WHO) mental health atlas, (the atlas contains a global overview as well as country-by-country surveys covering 16 themes, including the state of mental health policy, legislation and financing, mental health facilities, numbers of psychiatric beds and professionals). Such policies and programmes are poorly-implemented in most of the world due to meagre funding.

The atlas notes that many countries continue to spend only a very small proportion of their total health budget on mental health. One fifth of the more than 100 countries supplying figures to the survey spend less than 1% of their health budget on mental health. This is in stark contrast to WHO's estimate that 13% of all disease burden is caused by the wide range of neuron-psychiatric disorders," said the report posted on the Internet site of the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Listing "the bare facts" regarding mental health worldwide, the WHO said, "Mental illnesses are common to all countries and cause immense suffering. People with these disorders are often subjected to social isolation, poor quality of life and increased mortality. These disorders are the cause of staggering economic and social costs."

It reported further that, "450 million people worldwide are affected by mental, neurological or behavioural problems at any time."

This comment from a top WHO official is instructive: "The new Atlas findings reflect the ongoing reality that the world still considers mental healthcare as a low priority within public health. There are enough scientific and ethical

reasons to change this attitude and to invest more in mental health," said Dr Benedetto Saraceno, Director of Mental Health and Substance Abuse at WHO. "Public health planners and decision-makers need to take the mental health needs of their populations more seriously."

However, the observation by the World Health Organisation staff of the poor attention paid to mental health issues by governments in the world does not mean that the matter is totally ignored. For instance, here in Nigeria, the government of Kano State led by Malam Ibrahim Shekarau, who recently visited the Torey Home for the mentally-retarded in Kano to ensure that the patients are properly cared for, picked from the streets and rehabilitated at least 400 insane persons, according to a report in a Kano State government publication, *Laying the Foundation of an Ethical Rebirth* Volume 2 issued by Malam Sule Ya'u Sule, the Director of Press to the governor.

The report initially published in the Monday, August 9, 2004 edition of the *Vanguard* newspaper explained that the lunatics were rehabilitated and reunited with their families through the Kano State Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation Agency. It was indicated further in the report that 100 of the lunatics were from other states and Chad Republic. They were rehabilitated in rehabilitation centres across the state.

The Executive Secretary of the Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation Agency, Alhaji Balarabe Muhammad, was quoted as saying that Malam Ibrahim Shekarau "has released substantial amounts for the upkeep of the lunatics as well as the maintenance of the centres."

The example from Kano State provides a legitimate basis to believe that it is possible for each of the 36 states in the country and the Federal Capital Territory Administration to take care of the insane on the same scale (of at least 400) as done by the Kano State government annually. The federal government on its part should match the numbers cured by each state. Consequently, the lives of some 29,600 lunatics would be changed for the better every year in this country by the federal government and the governments of the 36 states in the federation, including the FCT administration, if this were done.

There is no doubt that Nigeria has homes for keeping the insane, a sprinkling of psychiatric clinics and hospitals. But facilities and specialised personnel are inadequate. Some non-governmental organisations (NGOs) treat people with mental disorders, but many of the insane are taken to traditional medical practitioners for attention, if not cure. This is neither rejected nor endorsed in this article as it is a subject that needs deep knowledge, or at least, very close study.

Rabo Makeri is a public affairs analyst.

## Third Term: Hon. David Idoko is on his own

By Onah L. Iduh

Being a constituent from the same Ado/Ogbadibo/Okpokwu Federal Constituency with a population of approximately two million people, it came as a shock to read in the papers that Hon. David Idoko, who is our 'eye and ear' at the House of Representatives, is among the third term ideologues scheming what is likely to be the greatest political scam in the annals of Nigerian history.

Since the news broke, I have talked and discussed with several other members of our constituency and they equally expressed disgust on the stand of our Honourable Representative. In fact, some of them are so passionate that they are advocating for their recall.

Personally, I have no objections or inhibitions to whatever Honourable Idoko believes in; or for that matter, whatever political platform he chooses to align with. But as a constituent, I am distressed that he is advocating for something many of his people hate to the marrow. It should therefore be on record that he is speaking not for his people in Ado/Ogbadibo/Okpokwu Federal Constituency. Honourable Idoko is on his own, period.

If he were to have any grain of respect for his constituency, wisdom or courtesy demands that he consults with his people back home before jumping on the third term train. This is an issue that is so sensitive to not only our constituency, but also to the whole of Benue State, which along with Niger and Lagos states, boycotted the charade called public hearings of selected pro-third term government stooges.

Perhaps, Hon. Idoko may have a reason for his unilateral decision to support the third term agenda, but this stands in absolute contrast to the relationship between President Obasanjo and the state such that the Benue State House of Assembly's decision to boycott the public hearings in Lafia received popular acclamation. There is the profound feeling in Benue, and rightly so, that the president has continuously hounded and humiliated Benue sons out of power. Some of the victims of Obasanjo's hatred for Benue, and most especially the Idoma, are Abu Obe, Chief Audu Ogbeh and Dr Odeh Ojowu. Chief Ogbeh happens to be from Hon. Idoko's constituency.

Of course, Idoko did not

come out openly to support third term or tenure extension in a vainglorious and blunt toga. Rather, he and those that the third ideologues are able to capture came out in a so-called nationalist camouflage as National Unity Forum (NUF). No wonder then that Idoko acknowledged that NUF's "friends and admirers see its mission as that which begins and ends with an extension of tenure of office." According to a statement read by Idoko, their focus "is necessarily not so," but rather to save Nigeria by rooting for the review of the "1999 constitution [which] is known to contain so many imperfections."

Then Idoko's statement, like the biblical "Esau's hands but Jacob's voice" began to take the sonorous voice of those who are planning to stay forever inside Aso Rock. "It is pertinent to point out that our polity has been witnessing some basic structural changes. The reforms are percolating and spreading to all sectors. How far and how long the reforms would be allowed and encouraged to go on without being truncated or aborted is strictly the decision of the majority of Nigerians and not the decision of a vocal few." He added: "We of the Forum are committed to a wholesome implementation of the reform agenda as we see in these reforms the capacity to transform our society at large for the better" (emphasis mine).

I ask; what has constitution review got to do with economic reforms? Are the neo-liberal reforms, which have done more harm to every citizen of Nigeria, the worst affected or impoverished group of which his constituents are at the bottom, going to be codified into the Nigerian constitution? Will Nigeria split if the constitution is not reviewed at this time? Is the

rotation of presidency which the Mantu committee recommended for inclusion in our constitution not more dangerous to the survival of the nation than those being branded by Hon. Idoko's Forum as ethnocentric? A thousand and one questions could be reeled out of Idoko's logic for his support for constitutional review, but it would be futile to attempt providing any rational answers to them.

It is worthy of note that for the almost three years that Hon. Idoko has been in the House, he has never raised his voice to the many social and economic issues confronting his Ado/Ogbadibo/Okpokwu Federal Constituency neither has he been known to have personally provided even the most elementary project, hand-pumped borehole, that some of his colleagues are seen to be doing.

Secondly, barring underhand political moves, our constituency hardly forgives such aggrandisement. Idoko should note the circumstances that led to the ouster of his predecessor in the House, Hon. Obande, who was among the Obasanjo gang rooting for the impeachment of Alhaji Ghali Umar Na'Abba, the former speaker of the House.

As a political neophyte, the earlier Idoko realised that the apostles of 'continuity' are merely mercenaries whose God is money and whose consciences are incapable of differentiating between good and evil, separating what is criminal from that which is ethical, the better it would be for him. Commonsense should dictate to our representative that even if Obasanjo succeeds in buying or blackmailing many governors and politicians of Idoko's ilk to jump on to the third term train, he may have to become God before some people would be convinced to support him a day further than May 29, 2007.

Onah is an assistant editor with Daily Trust newspaper.

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# Trust International

Africa



President Museveni

## 'Nigerians should be centre-piece of democracy'

Returning United States International Grantee and Chief Planning Officer of the National Planning Commission, Edwin Ogbeihe, yesterday advocated that Nigerians should be made centre-piece of democracy and given priority in development efforts.

During a press briefing by the US Embassy in Abuja, Mr Ogbeihe, a participant of the International Visitor Programme organized by the US State Department through the US Embassy in Nigeria with the purpose of Nigerian experts to visit the US and exchange values, said that observations were made about the inefficacy of institutions established for accountability, transparency in government and business in developing country when compared to that of US.

He said that elective offices should be service to the people and an avenue to make sure that everything in terms of services and infrastructure are made available contrary to the notions that it is a means to make money.

He added that many things have gone wrong in the public sector and that there ways to improve in terms of transparency and accountability.

However, he admitted that the system in Nigeria can not change instantaneously to look like what was experienced in US, but added that every Nigeria within his or her capacity can start the change in their offices in

Elkanah Chawal,  
Foreign Desk Reporter

public agencies and businesses.

Mr Ogbeihe recommended e-government for the running of government, adding that websites creates a two-way link between the government and the people.

He encouraged a well managed tax system, recommending lower taxes with wider collection base while condemning the act of using tax payers' money for elections and personal purposes.

The International Visitor Programme seeks to build mutual understanding between the US and other nations through professional visits to the US.

## Ugandans vote in landmark polls

Ugandans are going to the polls for the first multi-party presidential and parliamentary elections for 26 years. Early voting appeared calm, with long lines at the outdoor polling stations despite some delays and thunder storms. There are five presidential candidates, but the front-runners are President Yoweri Museveni and Kizza Besigye.

Dr Besigye has complained of intimidation and harassment after being arrested last year on charges of treason and rape.

Voting started late in some polling stations in the capital, Kampala and the eastern town of Jinja due to the late arrival of polling materials.

Security is heavy, with 12,000 army reserves deployed at nearly 20,000 polling stations.

Fears of violence are highest in the north, where some 2m people have fled their homes because of rebel attacks.

A BBC reporter in the eastern town of Tororo says voters dispersed during heavy rains.

Opinion polls suggest a close contest between Mr Museveni and Dr Besigye in the presidential race. A candidate needs more than 50% to win, or the two front-runners will contest a second round. About 10.4 million people can vote and results must be declared by Saturday.

Voters are also choosing members of the 284-seat parliament. Polls will close at 1700 local time (1400 GMT).

Dr Besigye says the election will not be free or fair - and points to his arrest on charges of treason and rape to back up his claims.

Mr Museveni has accused Dr Besigye of links to rebel groups and has referred to his supporters as "terrorists".

Mr Museveni had been seen as leading a "new generation" of African leaders but was criticised for changing the constitution to let him contest these polls after being in power for 20 years.

However, he has been praised for raising living standards and improving security after years of misrule under Idi Amin and Milton Obote.

On the eve of the poll, he warned that voting was "not a joke". "It is a matter of life and death. If you decide wrongly, you will bear the consequences," he said in a national address on state-run radio and television.

"I am voting for

Museveni because his manifesto is the best, because of the history of how he has stabilised and brought peace to this country," James Muwanga, 32, told Reuters news agency in Kampala.

Museveni cannot accept defeat, Dr Kizza Besigye wants power by hook or by crook But Olive Namtongo, 29, said she would vote for Mr Besigye's Forum for Democratic Change (FDC).

"The country needs change. He [Museveni] is running out of ideas," she said. Thousands of observers are watching the elections amid fears of violence.

Electoral Commission chairman Badru Kiggundu said authorities would "not hesitate to take action against any form of violence".

East African election advisers have warned Uganda's army not to interfere with the voting process, while police have issued a list of "hotspots" where violence is expected during or after voting, local media reported.

Satellite phones are being used to ensure permanent contact with outlying regions.

Dr Besigye used to be Mr Museveni's personal doctor but the pair fell out and he ran against the president in the 2001 elections, before going into exile, saying he feared for his life.

The BBC's Will Ross, in Kampala, says the rift between the two has grown so large they both say they have not exchanged a single word for over six years.

## At least 2 dead as strong quake shakes Mozambique

A strong earthquake rocked northern Mozambique on Thursday, killing at least two people and sending frightened residents into the streets across southern Africa as aftershocks rolled through the region.

The earthquake, which news reports said was the largest to hit the area in more than 100 years, was felt as far south as Johannesburg and Durban in South Africa.

Mozambique's mines minister said one person was killed and at least 18 others injured when the quake struck just after midnight (2200 GMT on Wednesday) about 160 km (100 miles) southwest of Mozambique's northern port of Beira.

Radio Mozambique reported that another person died, apparently of a heart attack, at a local hospital as the quake hit. The

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) reported at least three significant aftershocks during the night. Police in Beira denied persistent rumours that a building had collapsed in the city, although local journalists said at least one house had fallen down in the rural district where the quake was centred.

Governor Raimundo Diomba of Manica province said officials were fanning out into the countryside to assess damage, but communications were difficult.

"We have no human or material damage to report yet, we sent teams to make a detailed evaluation of the situation," he said.

Minister of Mineral Resources Esperanza Bias, speaking to reporters after a cabinet meeting convened to discuss the earthquake, said one person died and 13 were injured in largely rural Manica. Four more were injured in Beira, she said.

Bias said the government had asked emergency officials to quickly draw up plans to deal with future quakes.

"Earthquakes are not a part of our disaster management plan," she said.

South African petrochemicals company Sasol said the quake was felt at its natural gas fields in Mozambique but production had not been disrupted and no damage had been found.

"We are checking that everything is in order but early indications are that there was absolutely no damage," said Sasol spokesman Johann van Rheede.

In Durban, South Africa, witnesses described people running into the streets. Similar scenes occurred in Maputo, where many people spent the night in the open, and more than 1,000 km (620 miles) to the north in Zimbabwe's capital Harare, where people fled their apartments after the tremors began.

In the Zimbabwean city of Mutare, about 270 km (168 miles) west of Harare close to the Mozambique border, residents said the quake jolted houses and apartment buildings but did not appear to have caused widespread damage. "It sounded like an explosion, but I haven't heard of any casualties," said a local journalist contacted by telephone.

Mutare, a city of about one million in Zimbabwe's mountainous Eastern Highlands, is where President Robert Mugabe is due to hold a major celebration on Saturday to mark his 82nd birthday. In the tiny kingdom of Swaziland, sandwiched between Mozambique and South Africa, people also ran into the open after the quake hit, witnesses said.

USGS experts said the region could expect more tremors. "An earthquake of this size shakes the ground for quite a distance away from its epicentre so we're expecting that there is damage from this earthquake," said William Leith, a USGS earthquake specialist.

"It's a significant and unexpected earthquake in this region," he said by telephone from the USGS headquarters in Reston, Virginia. "We'll expect aftershocks from an earthquake this large."

## Famine: Burundi sets up food security fund

The Burundian government has declared famine in five provinces and set up a fund, known as the National Solidarity for Food Security, through which civil servants, private companies and individuals can contribute money to feed hundreds of thousands of people who are facing food shortages.

In a presidential decree signed on 17 February, President Pierre Nkurunziza declared famine in the provinces as Muyinga and Cankuzo in the northeast; Ngozi and Kirundo in the north; and Rutana in the southeast. The decree also established the amount of manda-

tory contributions Burundian citizens must donate to the fund during a period of four months, beginning in March.

"The contribution is due to be paid by any person engaged in an income-generating activity in Burundi or outside Burundi and not living in affected areas," the decree stated.

According to the decree, senior civil servants - including members of parliament and the president's cabinet - will contribute 8 percent of their monthly salaries. Civil servants earning more than 100,000 Burundian francs (US\$100) will contribute 2 percent of their pay, while those whose annual basic salary is equal to or less than

\$100 will contribute 100 Burundian francs (one US cent) during the four months.

Burundian families in provinces not affected by famine will also make a one-time contribution of 100 francs each to the fund. Small-scale enterprises are required to contribute \$100 each; medium-sized are to give \$200; large companies will put in \$500.

At the same time, Nkurunziza issued another decree to establish an eight-member commission to supervise the management of the food security fund. The commission would be in charge of "determining the nature, the level and the duration of the contribution to national solidarity, as well as modalities of its management and collection", the decree stated.

# Trust International

## World Report



Market traders were setting up when the roof collapsed.

## 50 dead as roof collapses in Russia

At least 50 people were killed and nearly 30 injured when the snow-covered roof of a market collapsed in Moscow, Russian officials have said.

Rescuers are racing against time to find some 10 people believed to be alive under the rubble at the market in the eastern Bauman district.

Survivors were reported to be using mobile phones to help guide rescuers. A criminal investigation is under way but officials say a heavy snowfall overnight may have been a factor.

Some 21,530 sq ft (2,000 sq m) of the roof of Basmany market caved in on traders as they prepared for business at 0545 (0245 GMT), on what is a national holiday in Russia.

Up to 40 people could have been in the market at the time, Moscow city prosecutor Anatoly Zuyev was quoted by RIA-Novosti as saying.

Dozens of ambulances were sent to the scene and sniffer dogs were brought in to help search for survivors.

Fifty rescue teams were working in the wreckage. Some were using pick-axes to cut holes in the debris as heavy equipment could not be brought in for fear of further collapse.

But, seven hours into the rescue mission and with tem-

peratures around freezing, time is running out, say correspondents.

"We are working at full strength all over the territory of the market," Yuri Akimov of the emergency situations ministry, said.

"Rescue workers are working underneath the building to save those still alive, and we are hoping to

save the majority of them."

Emergency Situations Minister Sergei Shoigu told reporters at the scene that those who were trapped under the rubble had been "knocking and crying out", as well as using their phones, to help rescuers.

Mr Zuyev said investigators were looking into three possible causes; a

build-up of snow, lack of maintenance or design faults to the building.

Snow had been falling in the Russian capital for several hours the previous night.

The market was built in the 1970s by the same architect who designed a large swimming pool in Moscow which collapsed two years ago killing 28 people.

## Costa Rica completes vote recount

Costa Rica has completed a manual recount of the votes cast in the election more than two weeks ago - but there is still no official winner.

The recount was ordered after the first count put Nobel Peace Prize laureate Oscar Arias, less than 0.5% ahead of his left-wing rival, Otton Solis.

New results show Mr Arias with a 1.1% lead. But Mr Solis has filed legal challenges which need to be settled. Electoral officials have said hundreds of complaints are being investigated.

It is not clear how long the process will take and when the official winner will be declared.

Meanwhile, former President Arias told a news conference: "I thank the Costa Rican people for their confidence."

He added that he would lead the country again, 20 years after his first term as president. Mr Arias, 65, had

enjoyed a big lead over his rival in opinion polls.

But far from the easy victory that had been predicted for him, the election on 5 February became Costa Rica's hardest-fought vote in the last four decades, with the two leading candidates virtually neck-and-neck.

According to the original electronic count, Mr Arias, from the National Liberation Party, had 40.5%, compared with 40.2% for Mr Solis from the Citizens' Action Party - a difference of fewer than 3,300 votes.

But after the manual recount of nearly 1.4 million ballots, the Nobel laureate widened his lead collecting 40.9% of the votes, while his opponent received 39.8%.

The front-runners were expected to go through to a second round if the winner did not get at least 40%.

The election comes amid wide disillusionment with politics after a string of corruption scandals in the country.

Mr Solis wants to renegotiate a free trade deal with the US. Three former presidents, Jose Maria Figueres, Miguel Angel Rodriguez and Rafael Angel Calderon, have been accused of taking illicit payments from foreign companies.

## Haiti 'to allow' Aristide return

Haiti's President-elect Rene Preval has said the constitution permits the return of ex-President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, now in exile in South Africa.

He was speaking after Mr Aristide said he intended to return to his country as soon as possible. The ousted leader said his supporters had voted for his return by electing Mr Preval, his former ally. But the US state department said Mr Aristide's return would serve no useful purpose and could destabilise Haiti.

"Aristide is from the past. We're looking to the future," State Department spokesman

## French 'anti-Jew gang chief' held

The suspected head of an anti-Semitic gang which kidnapped, tortured and killed a young French Jew near Paris has been arrested in Ivory Coast.

Youssef Fofana, 26, is in the custody of French police who went to Ivory Coast to question him.

The French authorities had issued an international warrant for his arrest after he had left the country. Victim Ilan Halimi died after being found naked, bound and gagged in a crime that shocked France. The 23-year-old man had been held for ransom for three weeks.

He was dumped near the Sainte-Genevieve-des-Bois train station near Paris on 13 February, and found lying in agony with horrific injuries to his body. He died on the way to hospital.

French ministers believe he may have been a victim of anti-Semitism. President Jacques Chirac is expected to lead mourners at a memorial service for Mr Halimi in Paris later on Thursday.

More than 1,000 people, mostly Jews, marched in the capital on Sunday to condemn the killing.

Mr Fofana, who is of Ivorian origin, is believed to have fled France before police made several arrests last week.

Mr Halimi's family were sent ransom demands by e-mail and text messages from the kidnap gang, whose leader called himself "brains of the barbarians".

Prosecutors initially ruled out anti-Semitism, saying the gang - believed to be behind six other botched kidnappings - were unemployed and motivated by money.

But Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin told a meeting of Jewish community leaders on Monday that the judge handling the case was investigating leads pointing to an anti-Semitic attack.

"We will do everything we can to arrest the authors of this barbarous crime and bring them to justice," he added.

## US asks Yemen to arrest radical cleric

The United States has formally asked Yemen to arrest a prominent hardline Yemeni cleric who is on U.S. and U.N. lists of terrorism suspects, state Web sites said on Thursday.

The Web site of Yemen's ruling party, Almotamar.net, said the request came in a letter from President George W. Bush to his Yemeni counterpart Ali Abdullah Saleh.

It said the letter requested Yemen freeze the assets of Sheikh Abdul-

Majid al-Zindani, a leader of a main Islamic opposition party, and ban him from travel.

Yemen has repeatedly said it would not hand over Zindani to the United States, despite its close security cooperation with Washington, unless it was presented with concrete proof. The United States accuses Zindani, who runs a religious university in Yemen, of being a spiritual mentor to al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden and of supporting "terrorist causes."

"The American side has presented a formal request to the Yemeni government asking it to arrest Sheikh al-Zindani ... and to freeze his assets and prevent him from traveling abroad," the state-run September 26 site (www.26sep.net) said.

It quoted Yemeni sources as saying Sanaa asked Washington to present it with "clear evidence" against Zindani.

The Yemeni government has only accused Zindani of preaching violence and militancy at his university.

Late last year, Zindani joined an official Yemeni delegation at a meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference that was held in Saudi Arabia, Almotamar said.

Adam Erel said.

He was responding to Mr Aristide's first comments about his possible return since Mr Preval won the vote earlier this month.

"For the past two years, the Haitian people fought peacefully through demonstrations calling for my return," Mr Aristide, who was forced from office in 2004, said on Wednesday.

"When they went to vote, they voted for my return and they said it very clearly." However, he said the date of his return was not yet clear. "It will emerge from consultation with those who are concerned.

# Trust International

Middle East & Asia

## 100 killed in reprisal Iraq shrine attack

Iraqi police have recovered at least 100 bullet-riddled bodies of people believed killed to avenge a bomb attack on an important Shia Muslim shrine.

A curfew has been called in the capital Baghdad and dozens of Sunni mosques have been attacked across the country.

A prominent Arab reporter and her crew have been killed in Samarra, where they had gone to cover the attack on the shrine in the central Iraqi city. Iraq's leaders are warning publicly about the dangers of a civil war.

"We are facing a major conspiracy that is targeting Iraq's unity," President Jalal Talabani said.

"We should all stand hand in hand to prevent the danger of a civil war."

The attack on the al-Askari shrine takes the danger of a civil conflict to a new level, the BBC's Middle East editor Jeremy Bowen says. Iraq has seen a wave of violence following the bombing of the shrine, which is one of Shia Islam's holiest sites.

The journalists for the Dubai-based al-Arabiya TV had gone to Samarra to report on the bombing and the angry protests that followed.

Atwar Bahjat was a well-known face on Arabic television

Correspondent Atwar Bahjat's body was among the three found early on Thursday about 15km (10 miles) north of the city, police said. The deaths come amid a wave of anger over the bombing, which destroyed the 100-year-old golden dome of the shrine.

The killings of the prisoners in Basra followed clashes in the city between followers of firebrand Shia cleric Moqtada al-Sadr and Sunnis. Iraqi political and religious leaders have all called for calm.

But a spokesman for Iraq's top Shia cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani said the anger may be hard to contain.

"You wouldn't expect an abrupt or sudden calm, because there are some people whose reaction you can't control," London-based spokesman Fadel Bahar al-Eloum told the BBC.

Our correspondent says the assault on the shrine could multiply the danger and the violence.

An attack on a shrine is a direct assault on the identity and rights of an entire community, our correspondent says.

He says a civil war would destroy the chances of the elected central government,

which will be led and dominated by Shias when it is formed.

## Iraqi journalist murdered

The killing of Atwar Bahjat, who rose to fame reporting from Iraq for both main Arabic satellite news networks, has shocked Arab journalistic circles.

Gunmen kidnapped and killed her and two members of her crew near Samarra where they had gone to cover reaction to Wednesday's shrine bombing.

A member of the al-Arabiya TV team who escaped described how two gunmen showed up as they stood in a crowd of Iraqis.

They dragged Bahjat and her colleagues away and shot them. Their bodies were found on the outskirts of Samarra, an area racked by sectarian violence since Wednesday's explosion that destroyed the revered Shia Muslim al-Askari shrine.

A spokesman for al-Arabiya said Bahjat, an Iraqi citizen, was a Sunni Muslim. She was one of very few women to work as frontline conflict reporters for Arabic television.

The 26-year-old had only recently moved to Saudi-owned al-Arabiya TV from the rival Qatari-owned station al-Jazeera.

The Qatari station has been heavily criticised by US military and political leaders for its coverage in Iraq, including suggestions that correspondents had prior knowledge of insurgency attacks - a charge denied by al-Jazeera.

Al-Arabiya said it lost contact with its team at 1500 GMT, shortly after nightfall. The three bullet-ridden bodies were found the following morning. Her last report was replayed by al-Arabiya on Thursday morning.

The station has been showing the last report Bahjat filed - in fading light beside a road outside Samarra, close to where the team was kidnapped.

They had been about to return to base in the northern city of Kirkuk when two gunmen drove up in a pick-up truck, al-Arabiya correspondent Ahmed al-Saleh reported on the morning news programme.

"The two gunmen started firing their machine-guns in the air, which caused the people to panic and to run away," Saleh said.

"One of them started shouting 'We want the anchorwoman'. Atwar was in the news van and shouted to the crowd to help her.

Civil war could lead to the break-up of the country, and would export even more instability and violence across the wider Middle East and beyond, he says.

"The crew tried to speak to the gunmen, but they snatched them and took them to an unknown location."

The correspondent described Bahjat as a "victim of truth; she loved her country and died because of her impartiality."

The chief U.N. investigator into the assassination of a former Lebanese prime minister headed to Damascus on Thursday for talks on Syrian cooperation with the inquiry, Lebanese security sources said.

They said Serge Brammertz was driven in a heavily guarded convoy across the Lebanese border into Syria for his first visit to the Syrian capital since taking over from Detlev Mehlis last month. A U.N. spokeswoman had no comment on the report.

The United Nations has demanded full Syrian

## UN Hariri probe chief visits Damascus

cooperation with the investigation into the February 14 2005 killing of Rafik al-Hariri. The Security Council has threatened Syria with further action — possibly sanctions — if it does not do so.

Belgian prosecutor Brammertz was expected to hold talks with Syria's new foreign minister, Walid al-Moualem, on cooperation. Syria had refused requests by Mehlis to question President Bashar al-Assad

on the murder but allowed security officials to be questioned in Vienna.

Mehlis had implicated senior Syrian security officials and their Lebanese allies in the killing. Four Lebanese generals are under arrest in Lebanon.

Large protests in Beirut accusing Damascus of the murder forced Syria to bow to international pressure in April and end three decades of military presence in its smaller neighbor.



## ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL ACCOUNTANTS OF NIGERIA

(FOUNDED IN 1979 AND CHARTERED BY ACT 76 OF 1993)

### CALENDAR FOR 2006 SESSIONS OF THE MANDATORY CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (MCPD)

Pursuant to Rule 14(10) of Association of National Accountants of Nigeria Rules 1995, we are happy to invite you to attend the 2006 Mandatory Continuing Professional Development (MCPD) Programme. The Programme has been arranged for four Sessions as approved by the Council as follows:-

GROUP I (1st Session)	VENUE	DATE	LIST OF HOTELS
Imo State Zone Imo, Anambra, Rivers, Enugu, Abia, Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Bayelsa, Ebonyi, Delta, and Edo States.	Disney Hotels & Resort Ltd. Kilometer 4 Owerri/Onitsha Rd. Owerri, Imo State.	March 27 <sup>th</sup> - 30 <sup>th</sup> 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Imo Concorde Hotel, Owerri.</li> <li>Pine Wood Hotel.</li> <li>Rapom Hotels, off Orlu Rd. Owerri</li> <li>Bestway Hotels, Owerri/Orlu Rd.</li> <li>Owerri Hotel Plaza-Plot 80, P/H Rd. Owerri-08032694514</li> <li>Bombolini Hotel-Plot C44, Bombolini Area-08033598325.</li> <li>All Seasons Hotel-Plot 5047 Commercial District New Owerri.</li> <li>Aladinma Royal Suite-Eti/Ohoaza St., Aladinma.</li> </ul>
GROUP II (2nd Session)	VENUE	DATE	LIST OF HOTELS
Bauchi State Zone Bauchi, Gombe, Kaduna, Niger, Abuja, Taraba, Kogi, Kwara, Adamawa, Nasarawa, Plateau, and Benue States.	Zaranda Hotel, Bauchi/Jos Rd. Bauchi State.	June 19 <sup>th</sup> - 22 <sup>nd</sup> 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Awala Hotel, Maiduguri/Ningi Rd. Bauchi.</li> <li>Hausba Hotel, Behind Zaranda Hotel, Bauchi State.</li> </ul>
GROUP III (3rd Session)	VENUE	DATE	LIST OF HOTELS
Ogun State Zone Ogun, Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Ekiti, and Ondo States.	Mic-Corn Golf Hotel and Resort Ltd, Ibotun Road, Ada Ogun State.	Sept. 18 <sup>th</sup> - 21 <sup>st</sup> 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presidential Hotel, Ilam Road.</li> <li>Abogunloko Hotels, Ada.</li> <li>Zadai Hotels, Gbongan Road.</li> <li>Hotel Terminus, Old Garage Road.</li> <li>Heritage Hotel.</li> </ul>
GROUP IV (4th Session)	VENUE	DATE	LIST OF HOTELS
Sokoto State Zone Sokoto, Kano, Jigawa, Yobe, Kebbi, Zamfara, Katsina, and Borno States.	Gigirya Hotel, Sokoto Bye Pass Rd. Sokoto State.	Dec. 4 <sup>th</sup> - 7 <sup>th</sup> 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shukra Hotel, Kaduna/Guzuo Rd.</li> <li>Sokoto Guest Inn, Gawa-Nawa Area</li> <li>Sokoto Hotel, Kaduna/Guma Rd.</li> <li>Regent Guest House-Kaduna Rd.</li> </ul>

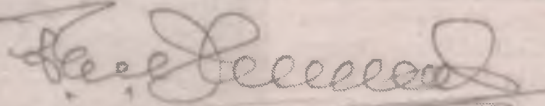
THEME: "APPRAISAL OF STATUTORY AND REGULATORY FRAME WORK OF FINANCIAL REPORTING"

#### COURSE FEE

Fifteen Thousand Naira (=N= 15,000) per participant. The fee is to cover course souvenir and lunch only. Payment in Draft should be made to the Association of National Accountants of Nigeria. Personal Cheques are not acceptable. **No Credit will be granted to any group.** Members should make arrangements to pay their fees and claim refund from their employers.

#### FOR WHOM

It is compulsory for every member of the Association to attend this programme **AT LEAST ONCE** a year. In other words, all members, whether Practising or Non-Practising, must attend. **There is no Exemption.** Certificate issued at the end of the course revalidates the membership of the Association. Members are free to attend any of the programmes convenient to them.

  
SIR PETER C. IBERWE, B.Sc. (Hons), FCMA, FIMC  
REGISTRAR/CHIEF EXECUTIVE

# Trust International

## Odd World

### And biting chicken is news?

An Italian news-reader bit into a piece of roast chicken live on his nightly news programme, saying he was demonstrating that consumers had nothing to fear from bird flu in cooked poultry.

"I just want to show Italians that as far as I'm concerned, you have nothing to fear from eating chicken," Lamberto Sposini told millions of viewers of his prime time programme on Canale 5 before biting into a

leg of chicken.

Italy has recorded a total 16 cases of the deadly strain of bird flu since it was first announced to have killed several wild swans two weeks ago.

Despite being detected to date only in wild birds, the discovery has led to a 70 per cent drop in poultry consumption in Italy and threatened 30,000 jobs.

Italy has asked the EU for aid for its stricken poultry industry.

### Water that prevents bird flu!

Bottled water said to prevent bird flu has gone on sale in a Czech supermarket.

The water called Fromin Aktium comes in orange, lemon and grapefruit flavour and is made by Czech company Aquamat, regional daily Rovnost reported Wednesday.

It is on sale at two outlets of the Hypernova supermarket chain owned by Netherlands-based Ahold.

"The drink is a prevention against all viral-type infections, therefore against bird

flu as well," Aquamat manager Ivan Novotny told the paper.

The Czech Republic's chief health officer, Michael Vit, said his office had demanded the firm withdraw the product, describing the marketing as "misleading."

Hypernova spokeswoman Katerina Cerna told Rovnost that it would withdraw the water if the label claiming its anti-bird flu effectiveness is banned. Cerna was not immediately available for further comment.

### Robbers steal urine

Whoever broke into a state probation and parole office left with items that can be key evidence — urine samples of those under court orders not to use alcohol or illegal drugs.

Agents who work out of the state Department of Corrections Probation and Parole office in US periodically require people under the court orders to submit the samples for testing.

Police Capt. Mike Babe said someone broke into the Waukesha office Monday night or early Tuesday and took all the urine samples that had been stored in the office.

Babe said police were called at 7:19 a.m. Tuesday when someone discovered a door was broken and the samples were gone.

Police and probation and parole personnel would not comment on how many samples were stolen or if anything else was missing.

Police Sgt. Jerry Habanek said Wednesday evening the matter remained under investigation and no other information was being released. Probation and Parole supervisor Avery Gould declined comment while the incident was being investigated.

### Thief picks victims by sniffing

One Japanese burglar truly knows the smell of money.

The thief dubbed the "King of the Night" stole luxury items from women's apartments by sniffing the fragrances coming from their doors, news reports said Wednesday.

Seiichi Shirota, 46, allegedly stole 3.65 million yen (30,700 dollars) worth of luxury watches and other goods from two women's residences in Kawasaki city, southwest of Tokyo, a local police official said.

"I targeted women's houses as they keep brand goods and jewelry. I detected them with the smell of cosmetics and perfume

escaping from the entrance doors," he was quoted as saying by press reports.

Reports said he targeted mainly bar and nightclub hostesses who are more likely to wear perfume than other Japanese women.

Police investigators nicknamed Shirota the "King of the Night" as he often started his theft spree from around 8:00 pm after the women go to work, the Mainichi Shimbun daily said.

Police suspect Shirota was linked to some 200 burglary cases in Kawasaki and neighboring Yokohama city last year in which 60 million yen worth of goods were stolen, the daily said.



A proud chicken. An Italian news-reader bit into a piece of roast chicken live on his nightly news programme, saying he was demonstrating that consumers had nothing to fear from bird flu in cooked poultry.

### Would-be rock star plunges from bed to death

A teenage guitarist got so carried away while bouncing up and down on his bed mimicking a rock star that he flew out of a third floor window to his death, a Singapore newspaper reported Wednesday.

The *Straits Times* said Li Xiao Meng, a 16-year-old from China who was studying at Singapore's Hua Business School, was a keen musician who liked to jump up and down while playing his guitar in his hostel room.

"But on November 17 he took things a bit too far," the newspaper said, reporting on a coroner's court findings.

Ruling death by misadventure, the court said evidence "points to the deceased unintentionally falling out of the window to his death when he was hyped up with exhilaration, jumping up and down on the bed placed against an open window while mimicking a rock guitarist."

Normally the windows were locked, the newspaper said, but students sometimes forced them open so they could smoke, something prohibited by the hostel.

### School pig castration sparks protests

A teacher who castrated a live pig in front of her high school class is the target of protests by animal rights activists throughout the country.

The protests began after People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals posted information about the incident at Rosamond High School on its Web site last month. The posting does not say when the castration occurred.

"We're concerned not only because animals suffer during these routine castrations but also because of the message it sends to students who are still forming opinions about treatment of animals in our society," said Stephanie Bell, a PETA cruelty case worker.

Rod Van Norman, superintendent of the Southern Kern Unified School District school in the Mojave Desert about 70 miles north of Los Angeles, said animal castrations often occur in agriculture classes and are an important skill for students to learn.

"I don't know why

they're picking on a little school district," he said.

Charles Parker, assistant state Future Farmers of America adviser at the California Department of Education, said anesthesia is not normally used during pig castrations, which are done to calm male animals, prevent them

from breeding and improve meat quality.

Bell said she hopes the nationwide attention will prompt the school district to reconsider teaching castration.

Van Norman said that's not likely. None of the complaints have come from par-

ents of district students, he said.

A posting on PETA's Web site, however, says the organization learned of the castration from Rosamond parents, who reported that one student vomited after observing the procedure and others were extremely upset.



This photo released by the Los Angeles Zoo shows Willy, a 10-year-old, 187-pound Red River porcine, right, nuzzling his new companion Nicole, a 16-year-old bongo antelope in an unusual affair.

# Business Trust

## Currencies

### West African Unit of Account

Country	N Equivalent
The Gambia	6.0320
Ghana	0.0143
Guinea	0.0588
Liberia	1.8633
S/Leone	3,563.84
Nigeria	192.48

### Parallel Market

	Average
Dollar	144 145
Pounds	261 175

## Flight schedule

**Virgin Nigeria**  
 Los - Abj: 7.00am, 10.55, 6.55pm  
 Abj - Los: 9.00am, 12.55pm, 8.55pm  
 Los - PHC: 7.15am, 3.00pm  
 PHC - Los: 9.00am, 4.45pm  
 Los - Acc: 2.55pm; Acc - Los: 3.35pm  
 Los - Douala: 6.30pm;  
 Douala - Los: 8.30pm

**Bellview Airlines**  
**Monday - Friday**  
 Lagos - Abuja  
 0650, 0950, 1130, 1400, 1600, 1955  
 Abj - Los - 0800, 1130, 1320, 1600, 1800  
 Los - P/H - 0715, 1130, 1320  
 Los - Kano - 0630

**Saturday & Sunday**  
 Los - Abj - 0800, 1130, 1600, 1950  
 Abj - Los - 0800, 1320, 1600, 1800  
 Los - P/H - 0800, 1340, 1700  
 P/H - Los - 0945, 1520, 1830  
 Los - Kano - 0800  
 Kano - Los - 1130

**IRS Airlines**  
 Los - Abj - 7.15am, 8.15am, 11.00am,  
 12noon, 3.00pm, 4.15pm,  
 Abj - Los - 10am, 11am, 1.00pm, 2.00pm,  
 4.15pm, 5.15pm.  
 Los - PHC - 11.45am, 12.45am,  
 PHC - Los - 1.30pm, 2.30pm,  
 Los - Kan - 5.30pm, 6.45pm,  
 Kan - Los - 7.45am, 9.00am.

**Weekend**  
 Los - Ab - 9.15am, 10.15am, 1.00pm, 2.00pm, 11.00am,  
 12.00pm, 9.30am, 10.30am,  
 Abj - Los - 11.00am, 12am, 2.45pm, 3.45pm, 12.45pm,  
 11.15am, 12.15am,  
 Los - PHC - 11.5pm, 2.15pm.



The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) recently organised a workshop on Corporate Governance and Board Effectiveness for NNPC group board and its subsidiary boards. Photo shows the GMD of NNPC, Dr. Funsho Kupolokun (right) exchanging views with the president of the Institute of Directors Nigeria, Mr. Femi Ekundayo at the opening ceremony of the workshop.

## 'Nigeria requires N585bn to meet NEEDS target'

By Anas A. Galadima, Asst. Business Editor

Nigeria needs at least \$4.5billion (about N585billion) to achieve the objectives of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), managing director of First Bank Nigeria Plc, Mr. Jacobs Moyo Ajekigbe has said.

Speaking at the West African Investment Forum (WAIF) in Abuja, Ajekigbe said about \$1.5billion (about N1.5billion) of that amount will be in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to spur economic growth in the country and consequently reduce poverty.

He pointed out that besides funding; there is a need for the country to concentrate heavily on the development of infrastructural facilities as way of providing a conducive atmosphere for smooth operation of businesses, describing poor infrastructure as a major set back to economic progress in the country.

According to him, major infrastructural inadequacies in the country include; epileptic power supply, poor road networks, shortage of water supply for both domestic and industrial purposes, expensive telecommunications services, ineffective industry regulations and lack of proper public education and low quality of the public health-care system.

He observed that infrastructure development is capital intensive; quoting the World Bank as saying that sub-Saharan Africa needs to spend 5 percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) between 2005 and 2015 on infrastructural development in order for it to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

## ICAN tasks FG on reforms

By Benjamin Auta, Reporter

The chairman of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN) Abuja district, Mr Fred Okonta, has called the federal government to erect permanent structures that will empower Nigerian to benefit from its reform programmes.

He made the call when students of Accountancy Department of the Federal Polytechnic Nasarawa paid him a courtesy visit last week.

Mr Okonta said "we want the federal government to erect permanent structures in the country that will facilitate and accelerate the growth of

the reform programmes as well as empower the ordinary man."

He called on Nigerians to make sacrifices as the present reform programme is aimed at strengthening the small and medium industries as he said that more funds will be circulated to facilitate their growth.

Mr Okonta, added that ICAN would continue to bridge the gap between institutions, students and the financial sector stating that the occasion is aimed at guiding them on how they can become chartered accountants.

He observed that the mis-use of public funds in the past years has led to significant cutbacks in official development assistance (ODA) in most third world countries.

He said, following the decision of the House to evict the bank from its premises, all security services to the bank be withdrawn immediately, and called on the executive arm of government and the local government councils to sever relationship with the bank forthwith. He said the action will serve as a deterrent to other banks and companies that impliedly or expressly fail to support the state government in its development efforts.

intensive; quoting the World Bank as saying that sub-Saharan Africa needs to spend 5 percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) between 2005 and 2015 on infrastructural development in order for it to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

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In his paper titled *Accessing Finance for Infrastructural Development in West Africa*, Ajekigbe pointed out that reform in the infrastructural sector needs to take two patterns-public/private partnership or full privatisation that would see a total divestment of government equity in most infrastructural projects.

## Assembly orders bank out of Akwa Ibom

From Edet Ekanem (Uyo)

The Akwa-Ibom State House of Assembly yesterday ordered the First City Monument Bank Plc (FCMB) to leave the state within seven days. It has also ordered the bank to vacate its premises within the period or be treated as an illegal tenant.

The speaker of the House of Assembly, Chief Nelson Effiong who handed down the order during a sitting explained that because the bank failed to appear on the invitation by the House to explain the rationale behind its decision to dismiss Akwa-Ibom indigenes from work following the merger with state owned (former) Cooperative Development Bank Plc last December.

They maintained that since the bank has in its deliberate scheme tried to frustrate the state in its development stride, all deposits belonging to the state government and that of the state

House of Assembly be withdrawn immediately from the bank.

He said, following the decision of the House to evict the bank from its premises, all security services to the bank be withdrawn immediately, and called on the executive arm of government and the local government councils to sever relationship with the bank forthwith. He said the action will serve as a deterrent to other banks and companies that impliedly or expressly fail to support the state government in its development efforts.

It would be recalled that the state House of Assembly invited the executive members of the two banks to appear before it on 14/2/06 to proffer solutions on the impasse, namely mass dismissal of staff who are of Akwa Ibom origin, non integration of former executive members of Cooperative Development Bank representatives and failed again on 21/2/06.

## Farmers to enjoy low interest on loans

From Bright Ewulu, Deputy Business Editor (Lagos)

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has in conjunction with Nigerian banks lowered interest rate on Agricultural loans to 8 per cent.

This was the agreement reached at the bankers' committee meeting in Lagos which was attended by CBN Governor Professor Charles Soludo and other top executives in the industry.

According to the bankers' committee members, namely Zenith Bank Plc Managing Director, Mr. Jim Ovia, Unity Bank Plc CEO, Alhaji on Bello, CBN Director Banking supervision, Mr. Ignotius Imala etc who addressed the press after the meeting the interest rate on the loans will be 14 per cent of the interest.

They informed that the 25 banks will on March 29, 2006 embark on a road show in London to showcase the banks so as to work towards attracting foreign direct investments into the country.

## INSIDE ABC transport coy goes plc

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## Owerri residents bean searchlight on telecom operators

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## Robbers snatch #25m from bank

...P22

## Six workers to share \$365 lottery

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## Stock Exchange

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# Business Trust

## NLNG to ship 14m tonnes of gas to Europe

The Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas Limited (NLNG) has said that it plans to ship over 14million metric tonnes of liquefied natural gas to Europe next year.

Chris Haynes, the managing director of the gas company who disclosed this in Lagos added that over 8million metric tonnes per annum (mtpa) of liquefied natural gas will be shipped to the United States of America after Train 6 comes on stream in 2007.

Haynes whose company took delivery of its cargo through Train 4 last month (January 2006) to Lake Charles Terminal in the United States explained that the start of supply from NLNG plus project marks the company's

From Mohammed Shosanya, Correspondent (Lagos)

preparedness and ability to be a reliable liquefied natural gas producer in the world.

According to him, Trains 4 and 5 comprise the NLNG plus project which will supply LNG to European and North American markets through BG, ENI, Iberdrola, Shell, Total and Transgas.



Secretary to the government of the federation, Chief Ufot Ekaete, cutting the tape to declare the 27th edition Kaduna International Trade Fair open, to his left is Governor Ahmed Mohammed Makarfi of Kaduna, and to the right, the president of Kaduna Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (KADCCIMA), Hajiya Saratu Iya Aliyu ...recently.

## ABC transport coy goes Plc

From Bright Ewulu, Deputy Business Editor (Lagos)

The management of ABC transport company has announced the conversion of the company to a public limited liability company.

In a statement released in Lagos, the company said its shareholders passed a resolution to make the company one of the quoted companies on the floor of the Nigerian Stock Exchange.

The company's head of corporate services, Mr. Uchenna Okagu said based on this the company has put in place machinery that will ensure total restructuring of the company and its listing on the floor of the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE).

If this happens, ABC transport will be "the first road transport operator and an indigenous company to encourage stake holders to get involved and adequately participate in shaping its economic future," the statement said.

The statement disclosed that the company is on the verge of boosting its West African route to include Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire, in addition to its Ghana route courtesy of NEXIM Bank's \$1.7million loan to further explore and consolidate its west coast operations.

ABC transport came into operation on February 13, 1993, and is an offshoot of Rapido Ventures Ltd, an educational material and audio-visual equipment company founded by Mr. Frank Nneji in 1983.

## Two Nigerian firms begin operation on offshore wells

Two indigenous firms, Peak Petroleum Industries Nigeria Limited and partner, Equator Exploration have announced the commencement of their first well in the OML 122 offshore.

Located in 25-60km offshore in water depths of 40-300 metres, the OML 122 also covers an area of 1,295 sqkm on the Western Niger Delta, East of Shell's giant Bonga field on OML 118 and southwest of Shell's EA field on OML 79.

According to a statement issued in Lagos, the well currently being drilled by Peak/Equator the B-1 DX well is designed to explore an appraisal well on the field discovered by the B1 well by Deminex oil in the 1970s.

It further added that the current well will test further up-dip deeper sands that has water bearing in the origin - 1 B-1 well.

It is drilled to a target depth of 3,100 metres over a 35 day period by the Bulford Dolphin Semisub. This will be the first of two wells to be drilled by Peak and Equator on OML 122 over the next three months. All target intervals will be logged with complete logging suits and flow tasted.

The companies disclosed second exploration well billed to take off early this year will test an encouraging, large structure south of the B-1 DX well in a water depth of 135 metres.

This structure is covered by 3D seismic data acquired in 1999 and reprocessed recently by Peak, Equator and then technical partners.

## Owerri residents beam searchlight on telecom operators

The 27th session of the Nigerian Communications Commission's telecom consumer parliament will hold of Friday, February 24, 2006 at Modotel Hotel, Owerri. It will commence at 1pm prompt.

A statement from the NCC signed by its head of Public Affairs, Dave Imoko said the earlier plan was to hold a Consumer Outreach Programme for the education of telecom consumers, but due to popular demand from telecom subscribers in Owerri, it has been repositioned as a

session of the Telecom Consumer Parliament.

The monthly Telecom Consumer Parliament puts telecom operators and the industry regulator on the spotlight of the consumers.

"This session will deal with the services of both fixed and mobile operators in the South East. The parliament will handle all issues pertaining to quality of service, consumer rights protection, environmental impact assessment, interconnection, tariffs and universal service provision", the statement said.

Against the backdrop of recent unpleasant developments in the country's aviation sector, the minister of aviation, Professor Babalola Borishade has expressed disappointment over poor airport facilities in the country.

Speaking with correspondents in Lagos recently he said; "it's quite a pathetic situation. But because of the sensitivity of the industry, I have restrained myself from

## Borishade unhappy with airport facilities

exposing the depth of the rot. You will remember that my first assignment was to get a plane out of the tarmac at the Murtala Muhammed airport in Lagos which got stuck. The runway commissioned in 1978 had outlived its usefulness and it was the only runway available.

"There were so many things that were really, really bad. Some bothering in culpable negligence on some officials and some people who have handled some specific projects before particularly the tower. You walk into the tower. You find a jumble of wires all improvised because the facilities were really obsolete and it took the ingenuity of Nigerians to get those things to work," he said.

Borishade also blamed the regulatory agencies for the mess in the navigational systems of losing "confidence in themselves" adding that "because of the things that they used to do before have been reversed by those in big offices and therefore the motivation for them to be really efficient was no longer there."

The regulatory agencies he stressed, was compromised with facilities dilapidated and obsolete leading to the unfortunate air mishaps involving Bellview and Sosoliso airlines last year. "The Airline operators took advantage of the laxity in the regulatory regime to do what they liked. Profit motive because their target and they couldn't care less about safety or security."

The minister, however expressed resolve to tackle the "decadence" which according to him, has lasted almost seventeen to twenty years.



Professor Babalola Borishade

## GARU COMMUNITY BANK (NIGERIA) LIMITED BAUCHI

### NOTIFICATION OF THE 8<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of Garu Community Bank Nigeria Limited will be held at Awalah Hotel, Bauchi on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2006 at 10.00am to transact the following business.

- To receive and consider the financial statement for the years ended 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2003 and 2004 and reports of the Directors and Auditors thereon.
- Consider if fit pass the resolution which shall be proposed as ordinary resolution "that pursuant to the Articles of Association of the Bank" the Directors having so recommend it is desirable to capitalized the sum of N1,887,388.00 (One Million Eight Hundred and Eighty Seven Thousand Three Hundred and Eighty Eight Naira only) from revenue reserves, and accordingly that such sum be set free for distribution among the members registered at close of business on 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2003 on the condition that the sum be not paid in cash, but be applied in paying one to every Ten shares held by Shareholders to be allotted and distributed.

The share so distributed be treated for all purpose as capitalized nor as income and Directors shall give effect to this resolution on receipt by the company of necessary permission from the authorities.

- To consider and pass resolution on proposed dividend of 10K per share amounting to N1,887,388.00 (One Million Eight Hundred and Eighty Seven Thousand Three Hundred and Eighty Eight Naira Only) for 2003 and 5k per share amount N1,047,928.00 (One Million and Forty Seven Thousand Nine Hundred and Twenty Eight Naira Only) for the Year 2004.
- To re-elect, Rectify the Directors appointment
- To authorize the Directors to fix the remuneration of the Auditors
- Transact any other business

By order of the Board  
Barrister Abdulkadir Hussaini Suleiman  
Company Secretary/Legal Adviser  
A. H. Suleiman & Co.  
(Justice Chambers)  
Ran Road,  
Opp. Tafawa Balewa Tomb,  
Bauchi

# BUSINESS TRUST

## Management Tips

# The merits of aiming high

By Tom Geoghegan

**I took a 21-year-old a few minutes to come up with an idea which has made him more than one million dollars in four months. So what's his secret?**

It started with a blank notepad, an overdraft and a shortage of socks.

Now it's a million-dollar business.

Last August, as a three-year degree loomed, Alex Tew lay on his bed in his family home in Ricklade, Wiltshire. It was time for his nightly brainstorming session.

This time, the problem was his finances. He already had an overdraft, which was sure to multiply at university, and he felt his poverty was reflected by his lack of decent, or matching, socks.

As I made money, more people talked about it and the more people talked about it, the more money I made

Student's cash-raising idea

The first thing he wrote in his notepad was "How can I become a millionaire?" Twenty minutes later, the Million Dollar Homepage idea was born.

It was selling pixels, the dots which make up a computer screen, as advertising space, costing a dollar per dot. The minimum purchase was \$100 for a 10x10 pixel square to hold the buyer's logo or design. Clicking on that space takes readers to the buyer's website.

With \$999,000 banked so far, Alex recalls his thought process at the time. He says: "I wrote the title to spark the creativity and then wrote down the attributes the idea needed. It had

to be simple to set up and understand.

"It had to have a name to capture the imagination and be something that could be set up quickly with no physical deliv-

So I snapped up the domain name that very night."

**Snowballing**

Alex spent £50 on buying the domain name (milliondollarhomepage.com) and a basic web-hosting package. He designed the site himself but

publicity gave his site more traffic, which in turn persuaded more advertisers to have faith.

An iconic image of internet art?

"It snowballed," he says.

"As I made money, more people talked about it and the more peo-

Times and Orange, and the million dollars is almost surpassed. Two million different people have accessed the site, which has a wry blog and FAQs, in the last seven days.

"I've been blown away. These have been the most exciting and hectic months of my life. Things are quite surreal at the moment and because it's been so busy it hasn't really sunk in.

"It seems like Monopoly money. Previously I'd associated money with working at Tesco getting paid £5 an hour."

His first business venture was when, aged eight, he drew comics and sold them at school. He had no intention of going to university because he wanted to try out some of his ideas.

**eBay twist**

But after three years of odd jobs such as stacking shelves in Tesco, and setting up some websites, like humanbeatbox.com, which led to a cameo part in EastEnders, he decided on a degree. Yet before he'd even started his business management course at Nottingham University, he was on his way to earning a million dollars.

Employing a press officer has helped generate publicity and sales in the US, where he spent a week doing interviews, and he thinks his own honesty in setting out his million-dollar plan chimes more with the Americans

than with British reserve.

His last 1,000 pixels will be sold on Wednesday on eBay, in a clever and lucrative twist to the story. At the time of writing, bidding was an astonishing \$152,100, which reflects how much demand has outstripped available space.

"I didn't want to create another page because I wanted to keep the space exclusive, that's one of the attractions for buyers. It will be quite lucrative for me, but it's the best option because I didn't want to turn away people who wanted to be part of it and the increased cost they'll pay will hopefully be value for money because of all the interest in the last 1,000 pixels."

Far from being part of a gimmick, Alex says his advertisers have been more than happy with their investment. And Chris Magras, the president of US website promotion company Enginseeker.com, confirms that his \$6,400 was cash well spent.

"Our leads and sales have increased by 30% and the traffic has not stopped," he says. "The buy was perfect for a one time source of continued advertising and has paid for itself in its first month."

Alex believes his success - and there are hundreds of other similar sites trailing in his wake - is down to two things: the power of word of mouth and the story of a student making a million, which enchanted the media.

*Culled from BBC InDepth*



The creator and the creation  
cry required.

"I wrote down some keywords and then the idea came out 20 minutes later - selling pixels.

it began as a blank page. His friends and family paid the first \$1,000 dollars, which he spent on a press release. That small

ple talked about it, the more money I made."

Four months and 2,000 customers later, including The

## International

# Gang robs finance depot of £25m

A massive police search continued yesterday in the UK for the armed gang who stole at least £25m from a security depot in Kent.

In what is thought to be Britain's biggest robbery, the manager, his family and 15 staff at Securitas were threatened and forced to co-operate.

Securitas staff at the depot in Tonbridge spent the night conducting an audit to assess how much was taken.

They are trying to establish the accuracy of claims that as much as £40m could have been stolen.

The Governor of the Bank of England has called for a review of security arrangements for banknote storage.

### Manager handcuffed

The gang first struck at about 0830 GMT on Tuesday on the A249 near Stockbury, Maidstone, when two members posing as police officers persuaded the manager to pull over in his car.

A man wearing a high-visibility jacket and "police-style" hat got out of the vehicle, which had blue lights in the radiator grille, and spoke to him.

The manager then got into his unmarked vehicle, believing them to be police officers, but was handcuffed.

1: Security depot manager abducted near Stockbury

2: The man's wife and young

son are taken from their home in the Herne Bay area

3: Armed and masked robbers raid the depot in Tonbridge

What the cash depot does

Two further gang members, again posing as police, visited his Herne Bay home telling his wife and young son he had been involved in an accident.

The depot manager was transferred to a white van, tied up at gunpoint, and told to co-operate or his family would be in danger.

At about 0100 GMT on Wednesday he was taken to the Vale Road depot where at least six men, some armed with handguns, threatened and tied up the staff.

The money was loaded onto a white 7.5 tonne truck before the gang drove off at about 0215 GMT.

The manager, his wife and son - who had been taken to an undisclosed location - were unhurt.

Det Supt Paul Gladstone, of Kent Police's serious and organised crime unit, said the robbery had clearly been "planned in detail over time".

### UK HISTORY OF ROBBERIES

December 2004 - £26.4m stolen from Northern Bank headquarters in Belfast

February 2002 - Thieves take \$6.5m (£3.4m) from a British Airways van at Heathrow

### Airport

November 1983 - £26m in gold bullion and diamonds stolen from the Brinks-Mat high security vault, also at Heathrow

1963 - Armed robbers steal £2.6m in the Great Train Robbery

A Bank of England spokeswoman said: "We have already been reimbursed by Securitas for the initial estimate of £25m and any further sum will be reimbursed to the bank as soon as the amount is known."

She added there was no cost either to the bank or the taxpayer.

The Tonbridge depot is one of several regional storage centres operated by Securitas around the UK.

On Thursday, police were studying CCTV records from the site.

Mr Gladstone said: "It is vitally important that we hear from people who may have seen something suspicious or someone acting oddly either round the depot in Vale Road, or in any of the locations where this gang were operating in the time up to the robbery."

Detectives want to hear from anyone who saw:

The manager's silver Nissan Almera car being stopped on the A249 northbound, just past the Three Squirrels pub.

A Volvo or similar car rendezvous with a white van. Police believe the car joined the

M20 at junction 7 and travelled westbound to junction 4 before taking the West Malling bypass.

The white 7.5 tonne truck in the Tonbridge area in the early hours of Wednesday.

In December 2004 a £26.4m raid at the Northern Bank's Belfast headquarters became the biggest robbery in UK history.

Anyone with any information is asked to contact a special incident room on either 01622 652361 or 01622 652366.

What is your reaction to this case? Are you a security expert? How can the handling of cash be made safer? Send us your comments.

On the face of it the plan seems a blindingly obvious way of carrying out a raid. It is the stuff of countless films. Capture the manager, blackmail him into letting you into the depot, tie up the staff and grab the money. Surely it must have been a scenario that was anticipated and planned for, so there must have been an added twist. Quite what that was remains to be revealed but clearly, for security reasons, we can't be told everything just now.

Chris Carter, Sheffield, South Yorkshire

I am amazed that robberies of this size go on these days when so many of our financial actions are done via a computer, or from plastic in to a till. I would imagine the actual, physical

money in circulation to be diminishing? However this is a well planned 'job' where career criminals have planned and probably had friends get jobs in the right places to enable this job to take place. It's common place to hear certain circles of people talk as though they have a big plan.....

Ms Smith, Manchester

Dispense with cash all together. Business and personal bank accounts are only credits and debits. In any event, the banks could not support a national "withdrawal" of all funds,

so the cash is never actually there or available. Most transactions can be carried out electronically and through the use of credit cards. No cash - no theft.

Brian, Cambridge UK

If Securitas had several small depots instead of one large one the risk would have been spread and it might not have been worth the effort for the criminals. I'm surprised that a company that handles such large sums of money don't have ink dye mechanisms on the vaults like banks do.

Chris, Dartford, UK

## Eight workers share \$365m US lottery win

Eight lottery players in the US have shared \$365m (£210m) jackpot - the biggest win in the game's history.

The seven men and a woman, who work at a meat plant in Nebraska, will each get \$15.5m (£8.9m) after taxes as they chose to take the money in a lump sum.

They won Saturday's Powerball lottery on a single ticket in Lincoln. Wild rumours had been gripping the town until the winners came forward.

The previous record was \$363m (£208m), shared between two tickets in 2000.

"I didn't know what to think. I still don't know what to think," Robert Stewart, one of the eight winners, was quoted as saying by the Associated Press news agency.

The other winners were

named as Quang Dao, David Gehle, Alain Maboussou, Chasity Rutjens, Michael Terpstra, Dung Tran and Eric Zornes.

The winning ticket was bought at a shop on Saturday, but no-one came forward to claim it until Wednesday.

That led to three days of wild speculation and media activity in the town. Even the shop's security cameras were studied to try to spot the winner.

The winners had the option of taking the money in one lump sum or instalments over 30 years. They chose the cash option.

The Powerball lottery is played in 28 states plus the District of Columbia and the US Virgin Islands.

# Business Trust

## 1ST-TIER SECURITIES

## THE NIGERIAN STOCK EXCHANGE

REPORT AS AT THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2006

Company Name	No of Deals	Quotation(N)	Quantity Traded	Value of Shares
ADSWITCH PLC.	1	1.55	5,000	7,750.00
CUIX PLC	1	2.52	1,866	4,702.32
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>6,866</b>	<b>12,452.32</b>
<b>AGRICULTURE/AGRO-ALLIED</b>				
THE OKOMU OIL PALM COMPANY PLC	5	17.99	2,746	48,818.69
PRESKO PLC.	23	11.40	37,108	423,977.20
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>28</b>		<b>39,854</b>	<b>472,795.89</b>
<b>AUTOMOBILE &amp; TYRE</b>				
DUNLOP NIGERIA PLC.	25	2.58	99,818	245,977.95
R. T. BRISCOAE PLC.	18	5.03	158,562	808,508.94
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>43</b>		<b>258,380</b>	<b>1,054,486.89</b>
<b>BANKING</b>				
ACCESS BANK PLC	219	2.67	19,232,893	51,554,611.09
AFRIBANK NIGERIA PLC.	29	9.10	2,715,512	24,711,159.20
DIAMOND BANK PLC	2	7.75	1,800	13,950.00
EIB INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	4	2.26	244,059	551,573.34
FIRST CITY MONUMENT BANK PLC	4	5.11	44,500	227,395.00
FIDELITY BANK PLC	3	2.93	270,000	791,100.00
FIRST BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	705	36.15	3,223,355	115,953,005.86
GTBANK PLC.	308	13.98	5,219,228	72,810,072.38
GUARDIAN EXPRESS BANK PLC	23	1.51	5,236,000	7,906,360.00
INVESTMENT BANKING	4	4.57	2,107,000	9,628,990.00
INTERCONTINENTAL BANK PLC.	240	10.39	8,862,901	91,985,873.68
NAL BANK PLC.	6	2.80	25,500	71,400.00
OCEANIC BANK PLC	90	5.80	5,420,831	31,170,922.25
TRANS INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	1	0.36	3,331	1,199.16
UNITED BANK FOR AFRICA PLC.	177	11.75	6,204,045	71,800,294.18
UNION BANK NIGERIA PLC.	159	25.48	3,194,586	81,398,051.28
UNITY BANK PLC	3	2.50	1,929,000	4,822,500.00
WEMA BANK PLC.	6	3.74	27,684	103,538.16
ZENITH BANK PLC	9	19.64	47,000	923,080.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>1,992</b>		<b>64,009,225</b>	<b>566,425,075.58</b>
<b>BREWERIES</b>				
GUINNESS NIGERIA PLC.	89	105.97	584,292	61,304,622.96
NIGERIAN BREWERIES PLC.	270	35.51	1,227,454	44,092,718.22
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>359</b>		<b>1,811,746</b>	<b>105,397,341.18</b>
<b>BUILDING MATERIALS</b>				
ASHAKA CEMENT PLC.	171	32.30	6,532,431	212,894,464.41
BENUE CEMENT COMPANY PLC.	12	6.50	187,385	1,218,002.50
CEMENT COMPANY OF NORTHERN NIG. PLC	11	6.89	58,052	390,412.60
NIGERIAN ROPES PLC.	1	1.61	2,500	4,025.00
WEST AFRICAN PORTLAND CEMENT CO. PLC.	115	18.09	782,761	14,168,756.13
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>310</b>		<b>7,563,129</b>	<b>228,675,660.64</b>
<b>CHEMICAL &amp; PAINTS</b>				
BERGER PAINTS PLC.	9	3.57	22,862	79,905.60
CAP PLC.	13	9.30	48,735	436,251.21
D. N. MEYER PLC.	8	3.73	47,231	170,534.26
NIGERIA-GERMAN CHEMICALS PLC.	7	4.10	18,065	74,066.50
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>37</b>		<b>136,893</b>	<b>760,757.57</b>
<b>CONGLOMERATES</b>				
A. G. LEVENTIS NIGERIA PLC.	9	1.13	50,411	56,150.15
C F A O NIGERIA PLC.	13	3.57	252,082	941,874.91
JOHN HOLT PLC.	15	1.33	27,762	37,063.46
P. Z. INDUSTRIES PLC.	50	16.20	164,705	2,668,221.00
U.A.C.NIGERIA PLC.	106	16.70	358,356	6,014,139.50
UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC	156	20.99	532,240	10,702,200.79
U.T.C. NIGERIA PLC.	5	0.74	27,707	20,501.38
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>354</b>		<b>1,413,263</b>	<b>20,440,151.19</b>
<b>CONSTRUCTION</b>				
CAPALBETO	1	13.30	515	6,849.50
COSTAIN (W.A.) PLC.	6	0.99	7,210	7,348.40
JULIUS BERGER NIGERIA PLC.	2	21.51	967	20,800.17
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>9</b>		<b>8,692</b>	<b>34,998.07</b>
<b>FOOD/BEVERAGES &amp; TOBACCO</b>				
7-UP BOTTLING COMPANY PLC	51	30.00	253,387	7,937,435.23
CADBURY NIGERIA PLC.	162	54.36	616,417	33,576,198.48
FLOUR MILLS NIGERIA PLC.	71	26.60	470,726	12,719,944.41
P. S. MANDRIDES & COMPANY PLC.	1	7.60	650	4,940.00
NIGERIA BOTTLING COMPANY PLC.	53	61.00	517,168	31,311,489.12
NESTLE FOODS NIGERIA PLC.	78	198.45	201,263	39,351,719.55
NORTHERN NIGERIA FLOUR MILLS PLC.	6	15.20	25,794	397,842.16
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>422</b>		<b>2,085,405</b>	<b>125,299,568.95</b>
<b>FOOTWEAR</b>				
FOOTWEAR & ACCESSORIES MAN. PLC.	1	0.30	5,000	1,500.00
LENNARDS (NIGERIA) PLC.	3	0.62	55,400	34,162.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>60,400</b>	<b>35,662.00</b>
<b>HEALTHCARE</b>				
EVANS MEDICAL PLC.	2	2.27	2,300	5,230.00
GLAXOSMITHKLINE CONSUMER NIGERIA PLC	37	10.00	164,080	1,639,702.95
MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC	2	5.36	105,000	562,800.00
NEIMETH INTERNATIONAL PHARM. PLC	2	3.23	1,831	5,914.13
PHARMA-DEKO PLC.	1	4.40	10,057	44,250.80
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>44</b>		<b>283,268</b>	<b>2,257,897.88</b>
<b>INDUSTRIAL/DOMESTIC PRODUCTS</b>				
ALUMINIUM EXTRUSION INDUSTRIES PLC.	1	2.18	2,333	5,085.94
ALUMACO PLC.	2	0.98	335	328.30
B.O.C. GASES PLC	4	2.40	750	1,872.00
FIRST ALUMINIUM NIGERIA PLC.	4	0.71	200,000	142,000.00
VITAFAM NIGERIA PLC.	25	3.26	219,435	704,154.36
VONO PRODUCTS PLC.	5	1.16	15,795	18,381.64
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>41</b>		<b>438,648</b>	<b>871,822.24</b>
<b>INSURANCE</b>				
AIICO INSURANCE PLC.	2	2.39	29,000	69,310.00
CORNERSTONE INSURANCE CO. PLC.	24	1.26	1,213,907	1,562,915.34
CRUSADER INSURANCE PLC.	1	1.32	23,259	30,701.88
LASACO ASSURANCE PLC.	4	0.60	73,500	42,930.00
LAW UNION AND ROCK INSURANCE PLC.	5	0.83	104,508	86,741.64
NIGER INSURANCE CO. PLC.	3	2.28	22,395	73,007.70
PRESTIGE ASSURANCE PLC.	2	2.48	86,840	216,163.20
ROYAL EXCHANGE ASSURANCE PLC.	4	2.94	17,818	52,384.92
STANDARD ALLIANCE INSURANCE	5	1.28	264,877	338,245.02
UNIC INSURANCE PLC.	19	1.13	479,564	560,020.32
WEST AFRICAN PROV. INS. COY. PLC.	11	3.05	170,972	522,880.32
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>80</b>		<b>2,486,640</b>	<b>3,555,300.34</b>
<b>MANAGED FUNDS</b>				
C & I LEASING PLC	6	1.10	119,696	133,590.04
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>119,696</b>	<b>133,590.04</b>
<b>MARITIME</b>				
JAPAL OIL & MARITIME SERVICES PLC	3	1.80	26,500	47,610.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>26,500</b>	<b>47,610.00</b>
<b>PACKAGING</b>				
NAMPAK NIGERIA PLC	2	1.58	367,244	580,245.52
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>367,244</b>	<b>580,245.52</b>
<b>PETROLEUM(MARKETING)</b>				
AFRICAN PETROLEUM PLC.	108	38.98	241,157	9,297,510.80
CONOIL PLC	74	82.06	11,397,042.94	11,397,042.94
ETERNA OIL & GAS PLC.	3	2.75	55,492	152,603.00
MOBIL OIL NIGERIA PLC.	24	162.00	20,660	3,365,655.91
OANDO PLC	136	90.00	168,835	15,152,655.92
TEXACO (NIGERIA) PLC.	24	99.01	12,674	1,310,791.56
TOTAL NIGERIA PLC	27	183.50	21,530	3,959,779.56
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>396</b>		<b>658,469</b>	<b>44,636,039.69</b>
<b>PRINTING &amp; PUBLISHING</b>				
LONGMAN NIGERIA PLC.	7	4.03	18,800	75,764.00
UNIVERSITY PRESS PLC.	1	1.57	2,996	4,703.72
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>21,796</b>	<b>80,467.72</b>
<b>REAL ESTATE</b>				
UACN PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT PLC.	22	9.25	81,740	744,973.20
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>22</b>		<b>81,740</b>	<b>744,973.20</b>
<b>TEXTILES</b>				
UNITED NIGERIA TEXTILES PLC.	13	1.82	384,800	711,561.79
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>13</b>		<b>384,800</b>	<b>711,561.79</b>

### TOP 10 TRADES AS YESTERDAY

SYMBOL	VOLUME	VALUE	TRADES
AFRIBANK	2,771,078.00	25,216,809.80	32
LBN	3,198,919.00	81,508,456.12	162
FIRSTBANK	3,363,741.00	121,011,245.50	724
GUARANTY	5,333,794.00	74,396,721.45	320
OCEANIC	5,420,831.00	31,170,922.25	90
UBA	6,206,545.00	71,829,089.18	180
ASHAKACEM	6,724,611.00	219,169,494.79	182
GUARDIANXP	7,683,800.00	11,602,538.00	32
INTERCONT	9,240,001.00	95,902,658.68	262
ACCESS	19,256,893.00	51,618,691.09	221

### TOP 10 GAINERS

SYMBOL	LASTCLOSE	YESTERDAY'SCLOSE	CHANGE
NESTLE	190.50	197.00	+6.50
GUINNESS	104.50	105.95	+1.45
AP	38.15	38.99	+0.84
OKOMUOIL	17.50	18.00	+0.50
LONGMAN	3.84	4.03	+0.19
BERGER	3.40	3.57	+0.17
DNMEYER	3.56	3.73	+0.17
FIRSTBANK	35.85	36.01	+0.16
DUNLOP	2.46	2.58	+0.12
NNFM	14.90	15.00	+0.10

### TOP 10 LOSERS

SYMBOL	LASTCLOSE	YESTERDAY'SCLOSE	CHANGE
MOBIL	169.00	162.00	-7.00
CONOIL	85.85	83.00	-2.85
NB	37.00	35.50	-1.50
TOTAL	185.00	183.50	-1.50
FLOURMILL	27.68	26.60	-1.08
7UP	31.00	30.00	-1.00
ASHAKACEM	34.00	33.20	-0.80
CADBURY	56.01	55.50	-0.51
CAP	8.86	8.51	-0.35
UAC-PROP	9.49	9.20	-0.29

## Debt relief: Spain cancels Nigeria's \$127million debt

By Anas A. Galadima, Asst. Business Editor

Nigeria and the Kingdom of Spain on Monday signed the fifth bilateral agreement thereby automatically cancelling \$127.7million (about N16.6billion) debt owed the country by Nigeria.

The agreement is a follow-up to the Agreed Minute signed between Nigeria and the fifteen (15) Paris Club creditor countries and a formalization of the monumental debt relief package granted to Nigeria by the Paris Club in October 2005.

A statement from the ministry of finance said those present at the signing ceremony were the Honourable Minister of Finance, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala who signed the agreement on behalf of the federal government and led the Nigerian team which included Senator Udo Udoma- Chief Whip of the Senate.

Other members of the federal government's entourage include, Dr. Kingsley S. Ebeanyi-The Ambassador of Nigeria to Spain; Dr. Mansur Muhtar-Director-General, Debt Management Office of Nigeria; and senior officials both from the Debt Management Office and the Nigerian Embassy in Spain.

On the Spanish side, Mr John Bedosa, President of CESCE, the Spanish Export Credit Agency, signed the agreement on behalf of the Spanish government and led the Spanish team which included, Mr. Ramon Guzman - Director-General, International Financial Affairs in the Ministry of Economics and Finance, Mrs Beatriz Reguero - Director, Country Risk and International Relations Department, CESCE; and other senior officials from CESCE.

Nigeria owes Spain \$ 227,591,229. With the signing of this agreement, Spain is cancelling Nigeria's debts amounting to \$127,758,669 which will be in two (2) phases. The first phase which takes immediate effect involves the cancellation of \$53,546,640. The remaining \$74,212,029 will be cancelled in April.

"The signing of this agreement will facilitate the resumption of normal bilateral economic relations between Nigeria and Spain including the restoration of the Export Credit Cover by the Spanish Export Credit Agency - CESCE, which is needed to improve trade and investment relations", the statement said.

The Paris club of creditor nations agreed last year to cancel \$18billion of the nearly \$31 billion owed it by Nigeria. With the signing of the agreement with Spain, the first phase of the deal has been concluded with the country. Similar deals have been signed with the individual countries of the club.

**N**igerians will like to know what Jaiz International Plc is all about. What is the story behind the bank?

# Non-interest banking will

It is an attempt to look towards international non-interest banking. Non-interest banking is at times called interest free banking or Islamic banking. They all mean one and the same thing. It is just about 35 years old, and therefore it is still new. It was started in the Middle-East, but today it is a global phenomenon. It is being practiced in the USA, Canada, Bahrain, Senegal, South-Africa and almost every country is practicing it now. The size of the industry is fairly big. There are about 200 non-interest financial institutions all over the world, including New York City, USA, where there is an Islamic index. The 200 institutions are spread over 70 countries.

So, our captains of industry here in Nigeria, people like Dr. Muttalib, Dantata, Adegbite, Professor Adebisi, Abdulazeez Udeh, people that cut across all regions of the country, decided that there is a growing demand for non-interest banking locally, because it is based on ethical principles, and it appeals to both Muslims and Christians. That is why they felt that we need to give our people another choice, that we should improve the economy of our country, and make more input in the banking industry.

**What is responsible for the fact that non-interest banking was successful in the countries you mentioned earlier?**

**In this interview with Bright Ewulu, Deputy Business Editor, the Managing Director/CEO of Jaiz International Bank Plc, Mohammed Mustapha Bintube airs his views on non-interest banking, Jaiz efforts to raise equity in order to meet CBN requirements and approval, and issues bordering on the just concluded consolidation of the nation's banking sector. He spoke on the Wholesale Dutch Auction System (WDAS) recently introduced by CBN, and its implications etc. Excerpts:**

The first thing is that there is respect for the rule of law in those places. They are disciplined in those places. They have got their economic strategies right, and they have diversified the financial base. We visited Malagasy, the country that has the largest Islamic banking system, and we found that most of the customers of the Islamic banks there are non-Muslims, and there is no feeling that some people want to lord their religious beliefs over them. This is provided just like any other product in the market, and both Muslims and non-Muslims are patronising it. It is a growing business, and they are making a lot of money out of that. I think we too, if we put our mind to it, we are going to succeed.

**Do you think it would really work here?**

It would work here, because it works in developing countries like Malaysia, Bangladesh, and Bahrain. Here in Nigeria we are more endowed in terms of human resource

and material resources. So we have all the ingredients to make it succeed. But, like I said, the difference between us and them, is that they have respect for the rule of law, and discipline, and they were able to get over this parochial feeling. Here we are so much divided: there are divisions in religion and ethnic groups. Of course even in the United States there is still what they called the Affirmative Act, which tries to bring out the disadvantaged people. This is not bad, but where these differences are brought to the fore, that is when problems develop. You know I have a lot of friends and professional colleagues, and we are still good friends, despite differences in religion and ethnic background. We should bring this to the national level, because this is the ingredient we need to succeed, not only to succeed like Malaysia and others, but to surpass them, and we have the capacity to do that.

**How are you going to**

**solve the human capacity issue? You know the non-interest banking system will be different from traditional banking. Who are those to work in the bank, the management team cannot do the whole work?**

Yes, you are right. It is another big challenge, apart from the challenge of how to convince people that we are not trying to lord some beliefs over them. On the challenge of human capacity, still, we have been speaking to people in Malaysia, Bangladesh and Bahrain, that have done this and succeeded, and they have indicated interest to come and set up training centres here, to train people not only from Jaiz, but from other banks as well. So, we are very hopeful, because we know Nigerians are very intelligent, and they learn faster.

**I heard that your offer was oversubscribed the other time you attempted to raise money in the market, what did you do to achieve this degree of success?**

First, like I said, if you look at our memorandum of understanding, it was based on welcoming everybody – Muslims and Christians – and the two major religions abhor usury. So, we quoted the Bible and the Holy Quran, and we make sure that this informs our marketing effort all over the country. So, by the time we finished, we had 22,000 shareholders spread all over the country – in the north, south, east and the west. Of course, in certain places, people did not invest much, but then the willingness is there. I think the challenge now for us, is to ensure that we do what we actually promised these people, and I am optimistic we are going to do that. I am also sure that more people will come on board.

**What are the challenges out there?**

The other challenge is to raise the capital of N25 billion. It is going to be a huge challenge, because it is a different product. It is different from others, because we have a different market approach from others. I think we are going to overcome this challenge, once people are made to be aware of the benefits that they would get through the bank.

The other challenge is the challenge of selling something new. When a new product is introduced into the market, it is initially difficult to break into people's minds about the new product. But, like I said, enlightenment will make us overcome this.

**In what ways can non-interest banking benefit the economy?**

As you know the administration championed the reduction of interest rates in the country when it came in some years ago. The Governor of the Central Bank, who introduced the reform programme, and who was also the architect of the NEEDS document, has been trying to lower the cost of doing business in Nigeria. Besides power, interest is the major problem facing the industries in Nigeria.

**So, what are we bringing? What are we bringing is zero interest. So, that is one of the benefits we are giving the market.**

Secondly, we are introducing something new. The finan-



Alhaji Mohammed Mustapha Bintube

cial system itself, and we have additional products to sell. In other words it is going to be diversified. Thirdly, the ethical thing we are trying to introduce, along with the system, is already yielding good fruits, because some banks are already introducing the same ethical products. There is what they called fraternity in the market. We are going to bring fraternity to the market. We are happy that some other institutions are doing this. If we all do this, we are going to raise ethical values in the industry to a higher position.

**According to CBN, bad debts in the banking industry amount to N300 billion. These are loans taken by people, but never paid back. Has Jaiz considered this issue?**

Well, I am happy that most of us in Jaiz are products of the banking industry. Our technical partners that are coming, are not bad eggs. They have been doing this for about 20-25 years, so they have the experience. But I think one important thing is that managers of banks should be disciplined, and should not compromise on standard banking practice.

**The first thing is that there is respect for the rule of law in those places. They are disciplined in those places. They have got their economic strategies right, and they have diversified the financial base. We visited Malagasy, the country that has the largest Islamic banking system, and we found that most of the customers of the Islamic banks there are non-Muslims, and there is no feeling that some people want to lord their religious beliefs over them. This is provided just like any other product in the market, and both Muslims and non-Muslims are patronising it. It is a growing business, and they are making a lot of money out of that. I think we too, if we put our mind to it, we are going to succeed.**

# Work in Nigeria – MD, Jaiz Bank



Abu, MD/CEO Jaiz International Plc

**Consolidation has come and gone, although experts will say it is just beginning. What do you see in the post consolidation period?**

I see well consolidated banks emerging. I see the challenge for bank owners and bank managers to generate more revenue, so that shareholders can get an appropriate rate of return, because once the capital base is increased, shareholders expect to be receiving higher dividend. I also see the creative capability of bankers being unleashed, because the competition is going to test their weight. It is going to be the survival of the fittest. As you can see, CBN has said you have passed the hurdle of the N25 billion capital base, but you still have to have one million dollars shareholders fund, that is N130 billion. These are the positive sides that I can see.

But the other side is that some have to lose their jobs, but that is part of life. But my fear is that, would these people get a good pension. The other downside of consolidation, is that there would be a clash of interests. Two banks with different working conditions and policies, may wit-

ness a clash of these different things. These things need to be managed very well, so there may not be a problem, and the future of Nigerian banking will be bright.

**What do you think integration will cost a bank?**

Right now, I cannot give you a precise figure, but I know that in Malaysia where this is done, it normally costs about three percent of the Gross Domestic Product

(GDP). This is not only the cost the bank expended on the cost of lay off etc, but even the regular in terms of supporting the system. Our GDP that last time was about 57 billion US dollars, and two percent of that will give you 11 billion dollars, and that is a lot of money. But like I said it is for us to mitigate the downside, to ensure that they work to our advantage.

**What would you say on**

**consolidation in the insurance industry?**

I am not an insurance man, but capitalisation per se is not bad. In fact it is going to increase the capacity of these insurance companies. I think it is how it is done that needs to be discussed.

In terms of overheating the system in the capital market, as you can see from the first round of the consolidation exercise, the system has clearly shown that it is liquidity, and the positive side of it is that it is now bringing out money that has been lying without being directed to the proactive sector. All these monies that are outside the banking sector, are now coming to the capital market. I think that is good.

**Let us look at the pension fund?**

Well, like I told you, don't forget the fact that even though capitalisation of banks and insurance companies is mopping the liquidity in the system, but the coming of the pension scheme, will also see a lot of liquidity mopped out. So it is going to be one way out, another way in.

**Does non-interest banking have anything to do with micro-financing?**

The micro finance scheme, as you said, is one of the plans of the federal government to wipe out poverty in the country. You can see majority of Nigerians living below the poverty line. If the micro finance scheme is well imple-

mented, believe me, it is going to bring a lot of good to Nigerians: pressure of white collar jobs, would be drastically reduced, because these people looking for government jobs, would now own their businesses. They would be self employed, and hairdressers, carpenters, barbers and others, would get their own finance to set up businesses. So, this micro finance, if adequately implemented, will go a long way in mitigating poverty in Nigeria.

**A banker once told me that banks are doing very well in the field of agriculture?**

Maybe it is not the banks in that area that are not good in agriculture, maybe agriculture, as being practiced in the country, is very difficult to be made into a bankable project. So, it is not that banks shy away from financing agricultural projects, but that the kind of people involved, the level of technology used, makes it difficult for agriculture to be a bankable project. Other than that, I think banks support agriculture indirectly, by lending to manufacturing companies, like Nestle, PZ, and Cadbury, to go and do farming. So, we can say banks lend to farmers indirectly. Banks still lend to fish farmers, and other organised farmers. But if you talk about the traditional farming, this is where banks have problems, because these farmers have no proper record keeping system, and the technol-

ogy they are using is obsolete. I think the micro finance system should be able to take care of some of these challenges.

**Is government supporting Jaiz?**

The government, through the Central Bank, is supporting Jaiz, in the sense that despite the new capitalisation requirement, they still accommodated our application, and they said they have no objection for us to set up the Jaiz non-interest bank. Infact, the government has already made provision for this kind of bank for long, and it is left for us now to work closely with CBN, to set up the bank properly, and use it to improve the economy, and help to bring down interest rates in the country.

**What is your advice or word for investors in Jaiz?**

You see, as I said, interest-free banking is now gaining ground all over the world. Citibank is doing it across the globe. It is an ethical kind of banking. Shareholders of Citibank are smiling to the banks, because there is profit in the business.

So, what we are trying to bring to Nigerian investors is good profit. Jaiz is coming to the market within the next few weeks – towards the end of February, and I think no Nigerian investor should miss this opportunity. Let every Nigerian be part of the pioneer investor, because if they don't invest now, in future they would invest at a premium.

***It would work here, because it works in developing countries like Malaysia, Bangladesh, and Bahrain. Here in Nigeria we are more endowed in terms of human resource and material resources. So we have all the ingredients to make it succeed. But, like I said, the difference between us and them, is that they have respect for the rule of law, and discipline, and they were able to get over this parochial feeling. Here we are so much divided: there are divisions in religion and ethnic groups. Of course even in the United States there is still what they called the Affirmative Act, which tries to bring out the disadvantaged people. This is not bad, but where these differences are brought to the fore, that is when problems develop. You know I have a lot of friends and professional colleagues, and we are still good friends, despite differences in religion and ethnic background. We should bring this to the national level, because this is the ingredient we need to succeed, not only to succeed like Malaysia and others, but to surpass them, and we have the capacity to do that.***

## Advertorial

# ENOUGH OF THIS

## PRESS BRIEFING ON THE SAD EVENTS OF THE KILLING OF CHRISTIANS, DESTRUCTION OF CHURCHES, PROPERTIES, HOUSES AND BUSINESSES ON THE 18TH FEBRUARY, 2006 BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 10.00AM AND 3.00PM

### Preamble

We, the Christians in Borno State have been facing persecution for quite sometime. All efforts on our part to reach out for peace and harmonious co-existence have not been reciprocated positively by our Muslim brothers. It is not a hidden fact that peace-loving Christians find it difficult to get piece of land to build churches. Even when such lands are acquired, during the process of construction there have been attempts to destroy the building and/or block the progress of building. For over 15 years Christians were not allocated lands for building churches. Even when government developed housing estates, government not only allocate Muslims land for building mosques, but also build them with government resources. For example to name but a few are: Ramat Shopping Complex, 202, 303 and recently completed 777 housing estates.

It is also a known fact that Christian children or wards are denied the teaching of Christian religious knowledge in public school. Over 10 years ago, when Christians took the matter to court, the government decided that the matter should be settled out of court. But successive governments have refused to discuss it further despite several representations by the Christians. In addition, Christians are denied appointments and promotions in key positions. The recent appointment of Chief Judge of Borno State is a point in case. The present Chief Judge was appointed ahead of six others who are senior to him, including the two most senior Judges who are Christians.

The main media organ of Borno State, Borno Radio and Television (BRTV) do not air Christian programmes, in spite of continuous requests by Christian bodies.

Consequently, the incidence of Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2006 is the culmination of the outburst to eliminate Christians in Borno State. This is because, there is no connection to a cartoon Published in Denmark more than a month with Christians in Borno State as at 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2006. In fact, the Christian Association of Nigeria in Borno State was the only body that came out openly to condemn the cartoon in the State. Since Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February, there was information of planned attack on Christians in Maiduguri. In addition, there was an announcement over the media on Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> February that the so-called peaceful rally was going to hold. Therefore, there is no justification or lack of knowledge by government and security agents in Borno State to avert the wanton destruction of lives and properties of Christians.

The attacks were spontaneous all over the town in a coordinated manner for it to have been carried out by so-called miscreants and hoodlums. The groups that carried out the destructions were clearly seen being led by leaders. In fact the leaders went around with a list of targeted Christians and their properties.

With this planned massive destruction of lives and prosperities, we the Christians in Borno State have lost confidence in the government and the security agencies in the State to protect our lives and our properties. As at the last count:≤

- a) About 50 Christians lives were killed
- b) Hundreds of Christians were wounded
- c) About 40 number of churches were destroyed
- d) Several number of Christians business property were destroyed
- e) Several number of Christians homes were destroyed

These are interim figures as we continue to get more reports.

It has come to our notice that Reverend Joshua Adamu has attended the inauguration on the State government's committee on the crisis. We categorically state that he did so on his own and not representing the Christian community in the state. We are not surprise with this development because he is the only Pastor whose church and residence were destroyed by the Muslims and accommodated by the government at its guest house, while hundreds of Pastors are left in the cold. Nobody care to see how they are faring.

As things stand, we the Christians in Borno State will not participate in any committee set up by the government of Borno State, since we have lost confidence in their ability to do justice to Christians. We therefore request the Federal Government of Nigeria as follows:

- a) Call on the Federal Government of Nigeria to set up a high powered judicial panel of inquiry.
- b) To recall the Commissioner of Police and and Director of State Security Service in Borno State.
- c) Direct the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to come to the aid of the Christian victims in Borno State both in terms of their livelihood and places of worship.
- d) Take over the investigation and persecution of those involved in the mayhem of Saturday 18<sup>th</sup>, February, 2006.
- e) We appreciate the effort played by the military following the inadequacy of the Police and kindly request that the military should continue with the good work of protecting us.

As law abiding citizens living in Borno State covered by appropriate provisions of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, we demand the following from the Borno State Government: ≤

- a) Full compensation for the victims based on independent valuation.
- b) Government should also compensate the relatives of those killed.
- c) Immediate removal of the Permanent Secretary of Religious Affairs who was one of the petitioners of the building of a Church in Maiduguri and now rewarded with the position of Permanent Secretary of Religious Affairs, while demanding appropriate posting of Christian officers to that Ministry since it's not a one-sided affair.
- d) Free treatment for all injured people.
- e) Equal treatment in matters of land allocation for worship
- f) Teaching of Christian religious knowledge to children of Christians in public schools
- g) Equal Access by Christian bodies for airtime on BRTV

Finally, while we continue to be law-abiding citizens, we also have the constitutional right to defend our lives and property on further provocation. **ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.**

Signed:

**CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA (CAN)  
BORNO STATE**

Dated 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2006.

# THE HOMIE FRONT

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## Why women lose hair —Expert

By Marcy Holmes, NP, Certified Menopause Clinician

One of the most common and emotionally devastating complaints I hear from my patients is thinning hair and hair loss. At Women to Women, we understand that a woman's head of hair is her crowning glory — and losing too much hair can be a serious and frightening blow to her self esteem.

Reacting so strongly to the physical state of your hair may seem like vanity — who hasn't had a bad hair day — but it's not. Your hair is one of the first areas, along with skin and nails, to manifest signs of hormonal imbalance, poor nutrition and illness. Understanding how hair regenerates and paying attention to any changes in your hair growth and appearance are important parts of taking care of your

self. The truth is, a certain amount of hair loss is normal (anywhere from 50-100 strands per day), but excessive hair loss and hair thinning indicates that something is not right. The causes of accelerated hair loss are very individual and depend on a complicated set of factors, including hormonal and metabolic imbalances, emotional stress and nutritional deficiencies. Unfortunately many conventional doctors downplay hair loss as an inevitable part of aging for both sexes, treating it with topical products like Rogaine that enhance existing hair but offer no real solution to the causes of hair loss, and therefore no prevention of

continued hair thinning. This leads many women — especially those in menopause — to think that there is nothing they can do to stop their hair loss.

Regularly referred to with the catch-all term *alopecia*, female hair loss actually has different degrees of severity, causes and treatment. The good news is we've seen many cases resolve over time with an active, holistic and hopeful approach.

While we don't claim to know the ultimate cure for hair loss (don't believe anyone who says they do!), we don't think a balding woman should resign herself to shopping for hair thickeners and wigs when there are so many other fundamental choices she can make to support natural hair growth where it counts — at the root, not just of her hair, but of her whole health

picture. So let's talk about why women lose hair and what you can do about it.

Causes of hair loss in women

A strand of hair is made up of extruded, compacted dead cells. Everything you put into your body eventually comes out in your hair, usually within three to six months. Similar to growth rings in a tree, the strata of cells in a strand of hair paint an unflinching picture of where you've been and under what conditions. This is one reason many alternative practitioners look at the quality and quantity of patients' hair as a valuable diagnostic tool.

But hair itself is only the visible part of the story. Hair grows from living follicles in the skin of the scalp. At the shaft, or root of the hair, all of

your major systems are at work, including your circulatory, endocrine and central nervous system. That's why it hurts when someone pulls your hair!

Every hair follicle has four distinct phases it cycles through on a regular basis: growth or *anagen*, transition or *catagen*, resting or *telogen*, and returning growth or *mesanagen*. A full cycle can last anywhere from two to five years per follicle. Unusual hair loss and thinning occurs when a follicle is stuck in the telogen or resting phase. Bald spots occur when a large group of follicles turn off all in one place. Most of the time this happens slowly, but in some severe cases can happen all at once, causing a clump of hair to fall out.

Culled from [www.womentowomen.com](http://www.womentowomen.com)

# THE HOME FRONT

## Fragments

By Safiya I. Dantiye, Editor, The Home Front  
safiivadantiye@yahoo.com

### Between reproductive health and abortion

The definition of reproductive health on the web, [www.whiteribbonalliances.com](http://www.whiteribbonalliances.com) "is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its functions and processes. Reproductive health, therefore implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when and how often to do so".

From the above definition it is little wonder that NGOs like Association of Concerned Mothers and Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria, Nigerian Council of Ulama, Nigeria Association of Women Advancement, among others rose up against the so called National Institute of Reproductive Health bill recently considered by the senate.

Even though some medical doctors deny that reproductive health has anything to do with abortion, many people will not believe it, besides abortion is not indeed the only aspect they fear, but the so-called safe sex. Because safe sex is telling you to go and have sex, as far as you use protective measures against sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and against pregnancy.

The issue of 'choice' in reproductive health is also strange to us, it is implying that even a married woman should have the freedom to decide when and how often to become pregnant, and if it happens by accident, she has a choice to either leave it or abort it.

The *African Woman Newsletter* of April 2005 had as its special issue focus on reproductive health. And the lead story was thus "choice: that's all we ask for."

According to the newsletter, speaking at a regional consultation on unsafe abortion in Addis Ababa in March 2003, professor O.A. Ladipo of Nigeria's Association for Reproductive and Family Health, has a recipe for preventing unsafe abortion: "We must look more broadly than the health system. We must address the problems of unprotected sex and unwanted pregnancy by helping women and girls to understand how they get pregnant and giving them the information, skills and ability to manage their fertility in the way that works for their lives. Men must get involved and see how they can support the women in their lives in reproductive health and choice issues."

Therefore no matter what medical experts may say, abortion cannot be unconnected from reproductive health.

Few years ago when the issue of sexuality education was advocated for inclusion in secondary school curriculum, many

**"The issue of 'choice' in reproductive health is also strange to us, it is implying that even a married woman should have the freedom to decide when and how often to become pregnant, and if it happens by accident, she has a choice to either leave it or abort it."**

people similarly were against it. One woman advocate told me that it would be called by another name which would be acceptable, but having the same objective. At that time I was worried about my 11 year old son in JS 2 being shown a condom in school and taught how to use it to prevent against STDs, but also against unwanted pregnancy, while having a satisfying sex life, even if the proponents will not admit that.

One woman working for an NGO once told me that they wanted to go to Kano and educate people about safe sex (she is not from Kano), because according to her in spite of their religious inclination, people there indulged in affairs, therefore, in order to fight against HIV/AIDS, they should be taught how to do it safely.

In any event, all people that uphold decency should protest against anything, a bill of whatever that will encourage promiscuity in our society. The society has a lot to lament on prostitution and HIV pandemic to be nonchalant about such an infamous bill. Besides, don't we have morals any longer in this country? Our children see a lot of immorality in TV, Internet, films and so on without giving them the go ahead, albeit subtly to go and experiment on sex, to see if it is really safe. Therefore, the ill the Reproductive Health bill will bring to us is more than its advantage, if it has any. By the way why can't the sponsors of the bill have one for free health care in the country?

Note: This will be my last column for some weeks, because I am going on leave, so until I resume, by Allah's will.

## Challenges of inter-ethnic marriage

By Michel Williams

In a nation that has about 150 million people in more than 250 ethnic groups, the idea of marriage among these groups may not longer be a novelty, but does come with its own particular challenges.

The challenges have been a point of focus for the years as it has played negative role in bringing couples together from different ethnic groups. No matter what, many people don't like the idea of a person

languages.

In situations like this, the happiness of the lady and the gentle man is snatched away and they will never be happy. What parents should do is to accept any man or woman as 'a person from a certain unfamiliar part of Nigeria rather than the name and identity'.

In any case, another factor that influences or

it has worked out positively.

Most often their children understand both local languages. In one such, a case, an army corporal, Edet Isaac from Cross-River who lives in Kaduna stated that he got married to Stella Ifeyinwa from Imo state and that their four children understand and speak their father's language, Efik, and their mother's language, Igbo, apart from Yoruba and Hausa languages, because they lived in Lagos for 12 years where the

marriage to succeed, partners should try as much as possible to learn each other's languages. This will endear in-laws to you by at least making the attempt to speak their language.

People going into this kind of marriage should know that they are facing an enormous challenge, as such they should do all they can to be integrated into their new family, (including men by taking an interest in their



Minister of State for health Mrs Halima Tayo Alao (left) and her counterpart from education Dr. Grace Oguche during the FEC meeting held at the State House...recently. Pix: Joe Oroye

from a different ethnic group coming into their family. They see that person as a 'foreigner' with a different culture and custom. Some simply don't want to have a different ethnicity in their family, because the children of such a marriage will have mixed ethnicity. A couple that are forced to separate by their parents due to their ethnic differences and marry from their own ethnic group, may find it difficult to be love their spouses. This is because their hearts are still with their loved ones.

It may not be wrong to note that, ethnicity barriers (excuses why you must not marry him or her) could be a channel of nurturing infidelity, in a circumstance where an Igbo father deny his daughter her Hausa boy friend for marriage with often reasons of distance and differences on local

encourages inter-ethnic marriage is national programmes which give people a chance to experience other people's culture, with northerners going to south and easterners to west. This programme include National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), which one of its objectives is to give young graduates the opportunities to know and share other people's culture, norms and tradition, which often turns out to be more than just a year of multi-cultural experience.

Through the NYSC, many young people from different ethnic groups get to know each other and marry at the end. Also the military and Para-military organisations have national influence which encourages inter-ethnic marriage. In the military circle, many people marry from different ethnic groups, and

children learn Yoruba.

One important factor that is a big obstacle in inter-ethnic marriage is language, which becomes a problem even when the marriage is done with the consent of the parents.

Therefore for such a

wives' customs and traditions).

Thereafter, Nigerians should embrace inter-ethnic marriage for the unity of the country, especially in reducing inter-ethnic clashes which usually leaves people killed and injured.

**"Through the NYSC, many young people from different ethnic groups get to know each other and marry at the end. Also the military and Para-military organisations have national influence which encourages inter-ethnic marriage. In the military circle, many people marry from different ethnic groups, and it has worked out positively."**

# THE HOME FRONT

## LIVING

### Trust Kitchen

#### Cheese pizza

- Ingredients:
- 4 cups of flour
  - 1 teaspoon yeast
  - 2 teaspoons oil
  - 1 1/2 cup warm water
  - 1 sliced onion
  - 2 Peppers
  - 2 Tomatoes
  - 1 Garlic clove
  - minced meat
  - Cheese

#### Method:

Mix flour, yeast, oil, salt and warm water, stir smooth, knead on a board, sprinkle 1/2 cup of flour. Cover and let rise for 2 hours. Then turn onto board, cut and roll each piece to a circle, lift over a baking tray.

Semi fry vegetable with garlic make sauce with them and add sliced cheese, minced meat, magi and salt to taste. Sprinkle sauce on pizzas and put another piece of flour to cover it, bake in preheated oven until golden brown and filling has melted.

Courtesy: Kitchen Pride, by Jamila Tijjani Maiadua



## QUOTES ON WOMEN

The failure of women to produce genius of the first rank in most of the supreme forms of human effort has been used to block the way of all women of talent and ambition for intellectual achievement in a manner that would be amusingly absurd were it not so monstrously unjust and socially harmful.

*Woman's Share in Social Culture, 1912*

A successful woman preacher was once asked "what special obstacles have you met as a woman in the ministry?" "Not one," she answered, "except the lack of a minister's wife."

*Anna Garlin Spencer*

Whatever women do they must do twice as well as men to be thought half as good. Luckily, this is not difficult.

*Charlotte Whitton*

So much has been said and sung of beautiful young girls, why don't somebody wake up to the beauty of old women?

*Harriet Beecher Stowe*

I am a woman above everything else.

*Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis*

If you want anything said, ask a man. If you want something done, ask a woman.

*Margaret Thatcher*

If women are supposed to be less rational and more emotional at the beginning of our menstrual cycle when the female hormone is at its lowest level, then why isn't it logical to say that, in those few days, women behave the most like the way men behave all month long?

*Gloria Steinem*

There is no female mind. The brain is not an organ of sex. As well speak of a female liver.

*Charlotte Perkins Gilman*

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# THE HOME FRONT

## LIVING

# Conflicting arguments on Child Rights Act

**B**arely four years after signing the Child Rights Bill into law by President Olusegun Obasanjo, serious debates are still raging between the proponents of the bill and those that are fighting against it.

Some of the contentious areas in the Child Rights Act include section 21 and 23, which provides for the payment of a fine of N500,000.00 or jail term of five years for any person who marries off his daughter at any age below eighteen while the husband who consummates such marriage will be jailed for life, because he will be considered to have raped girl.

Section 10, sub-section (1 and 2), section 12 (1, 2) and section 19 of the Child Rights Act also talked about inheritance by giving an illegitimate child the right to inherit or be given same share to female child, which is in direct contradiction to Islamic injunctions on the subject as contained in the Qur'an.

Malam Jibrin Adamu, who expressed objection to the Child Rights Act, cited the sections concerning the adoption of a child which, according to him, contradicts Islamic injunction.

His words: "I hate it because section 141 and 147 of the Child Rights Act on adoption are in clear contradiction with the Islamic law. What this law is saying is that you can adopt a child with whom you have no biological relation, and he can inherit you. So, it in a way legitimises what Allah has made illegitimate.

Explaining further, he said, "The law also says by the time you adopt a child, he or she will have all the rights that your biological son will have. So by the time you do that he will be perfectly in a position to inherit you after death. That is clearly repugnant to the teachings of Islam. It clearly contradicts the provisions of the Qur'an and the traditions of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W).

He added: "They are also saying that it is wrong for you to marry off your daughter or your adopted daughter before she reaches the age of eighteen and it also attracts punishment of up to fourteen years imprisonment.

Ustaz Musa Isma'ila Gamawa described as ridiculous the section that says parents cannot give out

By Abubakar Haruna, Reporter

their daughter in marriage until she is eighteen years old.

His words: "The most ridiculous section is that which says that a father and a mother cannot marry off their daughter, until she is eighteen years old. If they do so before she is eighteen years old, they are liable to a fine of N500, 000, an amount of money they may never have earned in their life. Alternatively, they will be imprisoned for five years or both, just to force them to leave their children up to the children eighteen before they marry them off.

He added: "Another provision is that which says the husband who marries a girl before she is eighteen will be treated as somebody who has raped that girl even though she is his lawful wife under Islam."

Pastor Mikel Obi Agarata of the Christian Bible Church, Abuja observed that the Child Rights Act was only stressing what most parents



Minister of women affairs, Hajia Inna Maryam Ciroma

do naturally. He said that there was no need for some of the laws, especially as common sense already makes provision for their observance.

He, however, commended the federal government for trying to bring together

guidelines to regulate the family, while cautioning it against over-legislating on some of the issues.

On the contrary, Mr. Dantala Simon, a human right activist, identified ignorance as the major factor causing some people to misconceive

the Child Rights Act.

He said "Most of the people are ignorant about Child Rights Act. That is why they are condemning it. Child Rights Act is a document that seeks to prevent and protect children in the society"

He explained that the Child Rights Act is a document that is issued to domesticate the Child Rights Convention, which Nigeria signed and ratified in 1985, stressing that the introduction of the Child Rights Act now makes it possible for Nigerians to have a Nigerian document on the Child Rights Convention.

Comrade Ishaq Abdullahi believed that the Child Rights Act doesn't contradict the Islamic legal system.

His words: "I think the Muslim community should, for the first time, be happy that the federal government has been able to put in place a document that is working directly with the provision of Islam. Our religion has said you should educate your child and you should help your child to be a useful member of the society. That

is exactly what this document is talking about"

The contentious issue which people who have not read the document will continue to hammer on is that the document seeks to prevent people from marrying off girls who have not attained the age of eighteen, or one cannot go into a marriage contract before the age of eighteen. Such Nigerian-made laws as the Universal Basic Education (UBE), which makes primary and secondary education obligatory, are in tandem with the Child Rights Act because by the time the child completes the two levels of education he or she will have attained the age of eighteen.

Comrade Abdullahi wrote off the Child Rights Act as just a man-made document, and it must, therefore, be littered with mistakes, believing that that is why the Minister of Women Affairs, Hajia Maryam Ciroma, stressed that state governments are allowed to adjust it to suit the religion practiced by majority of their peoples.



Children from Abuja children's home at the occasion of children's Christmas party for the less privileged organised by Jummai Olowoleni foundation in Abuja.

# THE HOME FRONT

## Health interactive

With Dr Aminu Magashi

### Q and A section

#### Whitish substance seen

**I** am married recently and I noticed whitish substance in my wife's private part, please is it a big problem?  
Yusuf from Lagos

**Y**our wife may be having Candidiasis (infection with a fungal agent called *Candida albicans*) and it can present with itching, and at times painful intercourse and discharge. It is commonly contracted through sharing under wears and clothing with an infected person or in the toilet, to mention a few.

It does not pose any serious danger to you, your wife can purchase Nystatin pessaries, and be inserting one pessary high up into her private part in the morning and evening for five to seven days. And let her wash her under wears with warm water and strong detergent and improve on personal hygiene. If the problem persists beyond that, please consult a medical doctor.

#### Menses and itching

**I** used to experience severe itching before and after my period. A test was done and found nothing wrong. Please what is wrong with me?  
Debora

**I**t is very likely; there is nothing wrong with you. What you are experiencing may be the general reactions due to high level of certain hormones in your system before and after menses, among them is Progesterone. I will like to know what test you did and whether the itching is in the private part alone or it is general body itching.

Itching with discharge may not be only due to high level of hormones in the system, it could be due to infection. Till I hear from you.

#### I am having gum bleeding

**I** read your column whenever it hits the stable and it is very educative, and please I will like to know why my gum bleeds in the morning before I brush my teeth.  
Thank you  
Maryam Kaduna

**W**hat you are experiencing may be deficiency of vitamin C which is called Scurvy, it presents with swollen gums and its bleeds easily and if someone gets injury, it takes time before it heals. I advise you to take a lot of fruits, especially orange, vegetables and liver (the only animal source of the vitamin). And please use a very soft tooth brush for now, if the problem persists after improving in your dieting, visit your medical doctor.

#### Tuberculosis

**I** was diagnosed with tuberculosis two years ago and placed in Isoniazide, Rifampicin, Hivid and Invirase. After 10 month of treatment, the doctor confirmed me to be free of Tuberculosis. I am no longer on treatment now. But recently I am having watery stool.  
TB

**A**mong the drugs you mentioned, it is only Isoniazide and Rifampicin that are anti tuberculosis drugs, the other two drugs that you mentioned in your letter are anti viral drugs, mostly used for treatment of HIV infection. I presume your doctor has explained to you before commencing treatment. It is very common, these days, to have the co-existence of TB and HIV infection.

The fact that you stopped treatment, and develop watery stools, suggest depress in immunity and I will advise you to visit you doctor, so that CD4 count will be repeated to see whether to commence another treatment or not.

#### Basic facts about family planning methods

**K**udos to our able doctor, please can you in brief mention all the methods of Family Planning?  
Jemila from Abuja.

**F**amily planning is the process of planning one's family whereby the number of children to bear is decided as well as the interval at which to have them based on informed choice and the desire to have them.

Family planning has a positive influence on maternal and child health by reducing high risks pregnancies such as

- Pregnancy before the age of 18 years
- Pregnancy after the age of 35 years
- Pregnancy after 4<sup>th</sup> birth
- Pregnancy less than two years apart



Members of Drug Abuse and Similar Crimes Control Foundation at the NDLEA during launching of stickers, T-shirt and Drug Abuse Control campaign.

#### Methods of Family Planning

**Traditional Methods:** Although historically traditional methods of contraception are recognized, the ingredients and efficacy of many of the appliance methods need to be determined. These are usually in the form of:

- Mixtures of plants, herbs, charms
- Use of copper or zing rings or pendants
- Sponge or cloth soaked in vinegar or potassium salts.
- Postpartum abstinence

#### Modern Methods

##### Steroidal Contraceptives

##### The Oral Pills

- Combined Oral Contraceptives
- Oral progestin mini pills

##### Advantages

- 99% effective
- Relief of dysmenorrhea
- Relief of pre-menstrual tension
- Reduced risks of anemia
- Reduced risk of ovarian and uterine cancer

##### Side Effects

- Nausea
- Weight gain
- Mild headache
- Secondary amenorrhea

It is use is contraindicated in the history of cardiovascular diseases and impaired liver function and history of cancer of the breast.

#### Injectable Steroid

The two long acting Injectables are:

- Depot medroxyprogesterone acetate (DMPA)
- Norethisterone oenanthate

##### Advantages

- Very effective
- Long acting following single injection
- Simple to administer
- Independent of coitus

##### Side effects

- Secondary Ammenorhea
- Irregular bleeding
- Wight gain
- Mild headache
- Occasional depression

#### Norplant (Sub dermal Implant)

This is long lasting, a Norplant (progestin known as levonorgestrel). It is sub dermal implant consisting of 6 implants in sterile sealed plastic pouch, released in a simple diffusion. Within 24 hours it provides contraception

#### Intrauterine Contraception

IUCD such as Copper T, 7 and 380 or lippes loop

##### Advantages

- It is very long acting, can lat up to 6 years
- Effectiveness of almost 99 %

##### Side effects

- It can cause infections if not inserted properly
- It can also cause slight bleeding

##### Among its contraindications are:

- Evidence of Pelvic Inflammatory Diseases
- Suspected cancer of the genital tract
- Uterine fibroid
- Severe menorrhagia

#### Barrier Methods

**Condom:** Is a mechanical barrier that protects against pregnancy as well as sexually transmitted infections

Among its side effects is when someone is allergic to rubber and if not put properly, it can tear, rupture and burst.

**Diaphragm (Dutch cap)** is a female barrier method which is fitted over the cervix

##### Spermicidal

These are chemical agents that act by inactivating sperms in the vagina. They are informing of jellies, creams and forms which destroy sperm cell membrane.

#### Coitus Interruptus

This is a method where by when the man is about to ejaculate, he quickly withdraws from the coitus. It has a very high failure rate.

#### Surgical Contraception

- Bilateral tubal ligation for the females
- Vasectomy for the males

It is being practiced for those who completed their family and it is irreversible.

Write in confidence to [healthinteractive.dailyptrust.com](http://healthinteractive.dailyptrust.com) send text message to 08023810589 or P.O. Box 14 67, Kano, Nigeria.

# THE HOME FRONT

## FASHION AND STYLE

### Sunglasses: Not just for shielding eyes

By Habiba Adamu  
Asst. Head, Home Front

To some people wearing sunglasses is regarded as a fashion or just to shield the eyes from sunlight. However sunglasses, otherwise known as sunshades have more valuable functions as they protect the eyes from damage and diseases. Sunglasses also help to delay wrinkles that appear by the side of the eyes {Laugh lines}.

Overexposure to Ultraviolet {UV} rays {UV rays are invisible form of radiation from sunlight} is the major cause of eye damage and disease which can be prevented by wearing sunglasses. There are several factors that increase your risk of eye damage which included, environment; altitude; latitude; weather; season; length of time spend out doors, the more time you spend the more UV you receive; eyes and colour of skin because people with light colour of eyes and skin are at greater risk and time of day between 10am to 4pm when UV rays is high.

According to Kate Hirekaan an executive at insight eye clinic, Abuja Sheraton, sunglasses are tinted eyeglasses often worn to protect the eyes from foteign particles, dust, sun rays and even the light of an oncoming vehicle. Some of the sunglasses she said come in designer brands such as Fendi; Armani; Calvin Klein; Donna Karan; Police; Kenneth Cole; Vera wang etc.

She added that one can also buy a frame of his/her

desire and then change the lenses. Some of the frames with high quality are Cartier and Fred which cost N120,000 each; Alfredunhill cost N80,000; Mont Blanc cost N50,000; Giorgio Armani cost N30,000; Gucci cost N25,000 and so on.

There are thousands of sunglasses available today, bellow are some of the important features to look for

**“There are several factors that increase your risk of eye damage which included, environment; altitude; latitude; weather; season; length of time spend out doors, the more time you spend the more UV you receive; eyes and colour of skin because people with light colour of eyes and skin are at greater risk and time of day between 10am to 4pm when UV rays is high.”**

to ensure that your eyes are protected according to American Academy of Ophthalmology.

**UV coating:** Plastic and glass lenses absorb some UV light; however, the UV protection in the lenses can be improved by adding a special coating to the lenses.

**Mirror coating:** Mirror finishes are just thin layers of various metallic coatings on ordinary lenses. Although, it reduces the amount of visible light reaching your eyes, do not assume they will protect your eyes from UV radiation. Check the level to ensure it block 99 to 100 percent of UV rays.

**Gradient tint:** These

lenses are permanently shaded from top to bottom or from top and bottom towards the middle. Single gradient lenses {dark on top and light on the bottom} are useful for driving because they reduce glare while allowing your eyes to see clearly, but not for sport. While the double lenses are the opposite. Tinting has little to no effect on UV rays.

**Polarized:** Polarized lenses are the best way to

reduce reflected glare, such as sunlight that bounces off of smooth surfaces like snow or water. These lenses are useful for skiing, fishing and driving. Polarization does not have any relation to UV light absorption, but many lenses are now combined with a UV coating. Be sure to check the label before making your purchase.

**Blue Blocking:** Whether blue light is harmful to the eye is still being debated; however, there is some scientific evidence the retina may be more sensitive to blue visible light. Lenses that block all blue light are tinted amber. This tint allegedly makes distant objects appear

more distinct, especially in snow or haze. These lenses are popular with skiers, hunters, boaters and pilots.

**Wrap around:** Wraparound sunglasses are designed to keep light from shining around the frames and into your eyes, protecting your eyes from all angles.

**Photochromic:** Depending on the amount of UV rays exposed to, photochromic lens will change from light to dark. Although some photochromic lenses may be good UV-absorbent sunglasses, it takes time for them to adjust to different light conditions. The majority of the darkening takes place in about thirty-seconds; however, the lightening takes about five minutes.



Women looking gorgeous in their sunglasses



# **NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE SCHEME**

## **PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT**

The registration of Civil Servants in all Federal Parastatals for participation in the Formal Sector Social Health Insurance Programme, earlier scheduled for January 24, 2006 will now commence on Monday, February 27, 2006 and will last for one month.

The registration team of NHIS officials, representatives of Health Maintenance Organisations and Image Technologies Limited have already been deployed to Federal Parastatals in all the 36 States of the Federation.

## **REQUIREMENT FOR REGISTRATION**

1. One passport photograph each for employee, spouse and four biological children.
2. Blood Group of employee, spouse and four biological children (if available)
3. Dates of Birth of employee, spouse and four biological children.

For Easy Access to Healthcare!

Hurry And Register Now!!

**SIGNED:  
MANAGEMENT**

# EKO TRUST

## FG urged to expedite action on structure rehabilitation

Special Adviser to the Lagos State Governor on Political and Legislative Powers, Hon. Oyinlomo Danmole, has called on the federal government to expedite action on its pledge to partner with the state government on the rehabilitation of infrastructure in the state.

Speaking in Lagos, the special adviser said so far there has not been any concrete financial commitment from the federal government beyond the pledge or promise to assist and the series of meetings with the state government officials.

According to him, federal infrastructure in the state requires urgent and immediate attention with the huge and heavy financial outlay being beyond the means of the state government.

He said apart from the immediate requirement, a long term solution was to grant the state a special status for the purpose of revenue allocation, adding that citizens can also assist by way of prompt payment of their taxes.

While also expressing sympathy to the families of an individual who lost his life while crossing the expressway as reported on the programme, he said govern-

ment will continue to provide facilities to sustain a good life and the facilities provided must be used in the best interest of the citizens.

In noting that Lagos continued to absorb an influx of people from all over the federation, Danmole said it was imperative for such people to also abide by the rules and laws that have been put in place to ensure a comfortable and good life.

The special adviser said the ruling party in the state will eventually merge with other political groups and associations to wrest power of the centre.

"By 2007, whatever the platform upon which we contest the people are bound to support us, they have seen our abilities, especially through the unique impact that the Bola Tinubu administration have had on the people of the state, it is this that we want to replicate in the nation" he said.

Assuring that the state will remain beyond the reach of the PDP, in spite of its desperation to capture the state, the special adviser said the inroad into the South West by the PDP will be temporary and that the new platform to be adopted by the AD will take the reins of power at the 2007 polls.



Prince Kingsley Ogba (left) National President, Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) in handshake with Governor Bola Tinubu of Lagos State, during a visit to the Secretariat...recently  
Pix: Oladipupo Odunewu

## Security agents on red alert in Lagos

In a swift reaction to prevent a spill-over of any religious violence spreading across the country, the Lagos State government Wednesday placed all security agencies on red alert over an alleged plans by some people in the society to cause disaffection between religious groups with the aim of causing violence in the state.

Also, Governor Tinubu

Stories by Olumide Bajulaiye, Correspondent (Kano)

has summoned a meeting with various religious leaders, community leaders and traditional rulers with a view to finding ways to prevent any outbreak of violence and the need to maintain peace and tranquility among the people.

The meeting it was gathered also aimed at strength-

ening the existing inter religious harmony and understanding in Lagos State.

According to the state Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Mr. Dele Alake, the move, became necessary in order to nip the move in the bud. Adding that unpatriotic elements were trying to exploit the recent religious tension in some parts of Nigeria to ignite crisis in Lagos State.

Riot had ensued across the globe in which several people were killed and churches burnt over what Muslim faithful called "the blasphemous" cartoon against Prophet Mohammed that was published in a Danish newspaper, in Denmark. The Muslims in Borno State had started a protest, killing non Muslims in the process.

Also there was a reprisal attack on Moslems in Onitsha, Anambra State leading to the death of close to 20 northerners living there.

Governor Bola Tinubu had last week, appealed to representatives of the Muslim Students Society of Nigeria (MSSN) who had staged a peaceful protest against the blasphemous cartoon to maintain peace in the state, urging them not to allow enemies of progress to use them.

Mr. Alake said that reports reaching the state government revealed that the characters had intended to aggravate the strong Danish newspaper cartoon to further provoke religious groups to

be at logger heads with each other.

His words: "It is important to note that the Danish government has apologized for the offending cartoon and there is thus no need to fight each other on the unfortunate incident." He accused those behind the plot as pursuing selfish political and economic interests contrary to their pretence of fighting for any religious cause.

Mr. Alake noted that they believe that the best way to cause instability on a national scale in the country is to provoke communal and religious violence in Lagos, where every faith and ethnicity in Nigeria is represented.

His words: "Mischievous elements who engage in suspicious activities like advocating reprisal action by any religious group against others should be reported to the law enforcement agencies."

The commissioner therefore, enjoined Lagos residents to go about their legitimate business without fear of molestation or harassment as the state government has put security agencies on red alert.

The state government is determined to continue to maintain a peaceful atmosphere for inflow of foreign investment and rapid socio-economic growth. Accordingly, "all security agencies have been put on alert to apprehend disturbers of peace and protect lives and property." Alake stated.



From left: Becky Igtuse, head, Corporate Affairs, NAHCO, Buky Awoyemi-Igbukwe, company sec./legal adviser, NAHCO and Mr. Azegbo Stephen at a briefing on the latest developments in the aviation industry in Nigeria...recently

# News

## Awoniyi, Na'abba barred from ABU

Efforts by Chairman of Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF), Chief Sunday Awoniyi and former Speaker of the House of Representatives, Alhaji Umar Ghali Na'abba to address students of the Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria on the dangers of President Obasanjo's unpopular move to impose himself on the country beyond 2007, were frustrated yesterday as the duo were disallowed from addressing the students in the institution's main campus.

Awoniyi and Na'abba, according to one of the organizers of the one day conference, Mallam Usman Garry were already in the university as early as 10.30am to deliver lecture on "The Dangers of 'Hird Term", but were later told that the lecture has been cancelled. "They said we did not follow the laid down Protocol of inviting such personalities into the

**From Waziri Isa Gwantu, Correspondent (Zaria)**

university", Garry regretted. Confirming this to *Daily Trust*, spokesman of the university, Mr. Bitrus Galmaka, said the lecture was cancelled because organizers of the one day conference did not inform both the chief executive of the university and the Dean of the faculty of Social Sciences on the programme in good time to allow for adequate preparation to host the invited guests.

"Infact, the vice chancellor who is away in Abuja for official engagements only got to know about the programme this morning. The deputy vice chancellor (Administration), Professor Yakubu Nasidi, too, who is sitting in for the vice chancellor only heard of the programme in the late hours of yesterday", he opined.

Mr. Galmaka noted that it

is our tradition in ABU to fully prepare, to host personalities like the ACF Chairman and Ghali Na'Abba. The students were very wrong for inviting these great sons of the North without consulting the management".

He stressed that nobody has any personal grudges against these distinguished leaders, "our only problem was with the students who did not deem it fit to contact and inform us that they were expecting such personalities in the university for a lecture on such a very sensitive and controversial issue."

However, one of the organizers of the conference who did not want his name mentioned for security reasons informed *Daily Trust* that they learnt from impeccable source that the lecture was cancelled based on a directive from above.

The students protested the cancellation of the lecture

which compelled both Awoniyi and Na'Abba to rush out of the university after they were served tea and coffee in the vice chancellor's office.

However, before Na'Abba left the university prem-

ises, the students made attempt to force him out of his car to still address them, but he politely refused promising to do so some other time.

Attempt by *Daily Trust* to speak with visibly disturbed

Chief Awoniyi on the disappointment was fruitless as he failed to comment. "I am not prepared to talk on the said development now. I may however talk later", Chief Awoniyi told *Daily Trust*.

## VON boss elected CBA president

The director general of Voice of Nigeria (VON), Alhaji Abubakar Jijiwa, has been elected president of the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association (CBA), to lead the association for the next two years.

Alhaji Jijiwa, who is also chairman of Broadcasting Organisation of Nigeria (BON), emerged winner last weekend after contesting against a delegate from Fiji Island at the end of the association's conference held in new Delhi, India.

Disclosing this to newsmen in Abuja, a newly elected CBA president said his election is going to be third times that Nigerians became the president of the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association.

He revealed that the then director general of Nigerian Broadcasting Commission,

**By Abdulwahab Deji Ajikobi**

Rev. George Bako, was elected in 1970s and in 1999, the former director general of Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), Alhaji Muhammed Ibrahim, was also elected.

According to him, the tenureship of Alhaji Muhammed Ibrahim was not long because Nigeria was then suspended as member of Commonwealth. He added that "I am very glad that Nigeria has got back its glory from CBA."

The CBA president while speaking on his first priorities said he will ensure that some of the members of Commonwealth who was currently suspended due to not meeting up some of their obligations are readmitted into the membership.

"A good number of these countries are from Africa, specifically, Ghana, Serbia Leone, Uganda, Gambia."

"These countries, he said, are very important because we can not have president of CBA headed by Nigerian and these members are not part of CBA."

He added that he will look ahead towards capacity building and provision of training facilities for Commonwealth countries for development.

CBA boss said he would give developing countries opportunity to enable their broadcasters to go for additional training because he wants them to be good casters, producers and radio and television journalists.

CBA, he said, will also provide platform for member stations to have a closer relationship among themselves, urging the members of CBA to confront the challenges of digitalization as in the next 2015, analogue system will be faced out.

## NPS reshuffles 58 top officers

The acting Comptroller General of Prisons, Mr. Okwara Uche Kalu, has approved the posting of 58 senior officers of the Nigeria prisons service.

In a press release made available to *Daily Trust*, Mr. Uche Kalu, said that "postings and transfer is normal in paramilitary organizations and it is an exercise that is

**By Benjamin Auta, Reporter**

expected to bring out the best in every officer."

He said the exercise is to afford the officers opportunity to acquaint themselves with various schedules in the service.

According to the schedule, five deputy comptrollers

general swapped positions, while the deputy comptroller in charge of health, Dr. Gboye Oloyede retained his office.

Others are DCG Ishaya Jajafa, moved to finance from works and logistics, Alhaji Mohammed Bah, moved to works and logistics and Mr. Pascal Nzerem moved to administration and supplies directorate.

Others are Dr. Mrs Joy Agi, operations, Mrs. Clara Onwuli, inmates training and productivity.

The posting also affected zonal co-ordinators, commandant, prison staff college, Kaduna, 24 comptrollers of prison and 23 senior prisons officers nationwide.

Handing and taking over is expected to be completed within two weeks.

## Chickens now safe for consumption - Makarfi

Poultry birds in Kaduna State have been declared safe for consumption by the state government.

Governor Ahmed Mohammed Makarfi, who made the declaration yesterday while addressing newsmen, said people should feel free to eat poultry meat and eggs, but should be well cooked before consumption.

"Though there were cases of bird flu in Nigeria and Kaduna State, the outbreak has been contained and the people should feel free to enjoy their chicken and chicken products. Some people believe it is not safe to eat chicken and egg, but they are wrong because it is very safe to eat them."

"We are in the tropical region and we normally cook our food thoroughly before consumption, so we are safe. Once the chicken is not half cooked it is very safe to consume it.

The "Avian virus is not strong enough to withstand heat once the food is cooked or boiled it is safe from the flu virus," he said.

*Daily Trust* recalls that

**From AbdulRaheem Aodu, Correspondent (Kaduna)**

following the outbreak of the bird flu in some parts of Kaduna State and other states, most people have refused to consume chicken and its products.

## EFCC arrests Birnin Kudu LG chairman in Jigawa

Stunt looking security operatives from the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Abuja have stormed Jigawa State and arrested the chairman of Birnin Kudu local government area of Jigawa State, Alhaji Sa'adu Ayuba.

*Daily Trust* reports that the chairman have been entrapped in a battle of alleged corruption with some youth organizations in the council that nearly led to break down of law and order some months ago.

Alhaji Sa'adu Ayuba's arrest came shortly after he returned to Birnin-Kudu from Abuja where he led a delegation to the Independent Electoral Commission (INEC)

**From Hassan A. Karofi, Correspondent (Dutse)**

Abuja to submit a petition to recall the member representing Birnin Kudu/Buji federal constituency, Alhaji Farouk Adamu Aliyu.

Our reporter had yesterday spotted men of the commission in the state police headquarters were they were said to have secured the permission of the command who issued a warrant of arrest against the chairman before they swung into action.

Alhaji Sa'adu Ayuba, who is serving the local council for the third consecutive times on the platform of ANPP since it was created in early 70s, until lately a staunch member of the Peoples Democratic Party in the state.

### INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

COUNTRY: NIGERIA  
 NAME OF PROJECT: KEBBI HEALTH SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT PROJECT II  
 SECTOR: HEALTH  
 DESCRIPTION OF WORKS: CONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION OF PRIMARY HEALTH CENTRES  
 CREDIT NO: 3653-UN  
 CONTRACT/BID NO: KB/HSDPII/WK/001/ICB/2006  
 DATE: 24/02/06

The Kebbi State Government has received financing from the World Bank towards the cost of the Kebbi State Health System Development Project II, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds towards payments under the contract for construction and rehabilitation of primary health centers. The Kebbi State Health System Development Project II now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for construction and rehabilitation of

LOT	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	COMPLETION PERIOD
1.	PHC BAGUDO (HOSPITAL BUILDING)	BAGUDO	14 WEEKS
2.	PHC BAGUDO (PERIMETER WALL)	BAGUDO	8 WEEKS
3.	PHC BAGUDO (GEN HOUSE, STAFF QUARTERS & MORTUARY)	BAGUDO	14 WEEKS
4.	PHC SURU (HOSPITAL BUILDING)	SURU	14 WEEKS
5.	PHC SURU (STAFF QUARTERS, MORTUARY AND GENERATOR HOUSE)	SURU	14 WEEKS
6.	PHC SURU (PERIMETER WALL)	SURU	8 WEEKS
7.	PHC DANKO (HOSPITAL BUILDING)	DANKO	14 WEEKS
8.	PHC DANKO (PERIMETER WALL)	DANKO	8 WEEKS
9.	PHC DANKO (STAFF QUARTERS MORTUARY AND GEN. HOUSE)	DANKO	14 WEEKS

Bidding will be conducted through the international competitive bidding procedures as specified in the World Bank's *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits*, (current edition) and is open to all eligible bidders as defined in the guidelines.

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from and inspect the bidding documents from the Kebbi State Health System Development Project II at the address below during office hours 0900 to 1700 hours. A complete set of bidding documents in English Language may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of N10,000 (Ten thousand Naira Only) or 80US\$. The method of payment will be in cash or bank draft. The document will be sent by courier on request or may be collected by hand.

All bids must be accompanied by a bid security as specified in the IFB of the bidding document and be delivered to the address below by 12 Noon on 5<sup>th</sup> April, 2006. They will be opened immediately thereafter, in the presence of bidders or their representatives who choose to attend at the address below. Late bids will be rejected.

Kebbi State Health System Development Project II  
 Attn: Dr. MD Ango, The Project Manager  
 21 Emir Haruna Road,  
 Birnin Kebbi,  
 Kebbi State.  
 Tel: 234-68320968  
 08062477058

# News

## PUBLIC HEARING

### Plateau state absent

The public hearing on the review of the 1999 Constitution commenced in the North Central zone Wednesday in Lafia, with the Plateau State House of Assembly not in attendance.

The Plateau Assembly has however given condition for its participation.

In a reply to a letter from the National Assembly Joint Committee on the Review of the Constitution, the Plateau State House of Assembly stated that it was awaiting the role of the National Assembly as stipulated in section 9 (2) of the constitution of Nigeria, which empowers it to play a paramount role.

**From Rakiya A. Muhammad, in Jos**

The National Assembly Joint Committee on the Review of the 1999 Constitution had written the House to mobilise the public, as well as participate in the public hearings in Lafia, Nasarawa State.

In its reply, the state's House of Assembly assured that as soon as documents from the National Assembly are brought to the House, the members would act as provided for in the constitution.

It however expressed regrets

over its inability to attend or participate in the public hearing.



Governor Joshua Dariye

Former military administrator and civilian governor, Brigadier-General Samuel O. Ogbemudia (rtd.), has said that the Nigerian constitution need to be written in a language which majority of Nigerians can read and understand without legal interpretation.

"It does not augur well for Nigerians to expose their constitution to several legal interpretations which some do, to satisfy their selfish and personal urge," he said.

The ex-serviceman also called for the compulsory inclusion of the constitution into the school curriculum where students would be taught and examined at all

### Our constitution needs translation into local languages

— Ogbemudia

**From Muhammad Ajah, Correspondent (P/Harcourt)**

levels of education from SS1 so that it would also form an important aspect of interviews at places of employment throughout the country.

Ogbemudia, who was contributing to the proposed amendments in the 1999 Constitution in Port Harcourt, said the people of the South South believed that they will not have much to gain from a disintegrated Nigeria, rather they prefer to remain within a united indivisible and indissoluble nation even as they pray not to be

driven to the wall.

"No one can declare in good faith that the business of reversing or amending the 1999 Constitution is Chief Obasanjo's personal project. It is certainly not. Nigerians want to see their own made constitution since the last of such efforts was in 1958 at the Constitutional Conference in London."

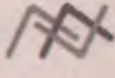
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# NEWS

## FCT sets up biomedical research c'ttee

To ensure the broadest possible coverage of protection for potential research participants and contribute to the highest attainable quality in the science and ethics of biomedical research, the FCT Administration (FCTA) has inaugurated a committee to that effect.

FCT Minister Nasir el-Rufai, who inaugurated the twelve-man committee in his office, said the purpose of the committee was to contribute to safeguarding the dignity, rights, safety, and well-being of potential research participants.

Represented by the FCDA Executive Secretary, Engr. Sani Alhassan, the minister

By Nasir Imam,  
Abuja Property Editor

told members of the committee that they would be responsible for carrying out the review of proposed research before the commencement of the research.

The committee, he said, would also need to ensure that there is regular evaluation of the ethics of ongoing studies that received a positive decision.

Mal. Nasir el-Rufai said there was therefore the need to take the principle of justice into consideration.

Earlier in an address of welcome, the Health and Human Services secretary in the territory, represented by the Director, Clinical Inspectorate Directorate, Hajia Nana A. Mahmoud, said the primary task of the committee lies in the review of research proposals and their supporting documents.

She said that special attention would be focused on informed consent process, documentation, suitability, and feasibility of the protocol.

In a related development, the FCTA has inaugurated a fifteen-member FCT Science & Technology Policy Formulation Committee with the Head of Science and Technology Unit, Mrs. Yelwa Fatima Baba-Ari, as the chairman.

The committee, which is charged with the responsibility of formulating policy on science and technology in the FCT, has three months to submit its report and has members drawn from various FCT parastatals, departments and agencies that are stakeholders in science and technology.

Responding on behalf of the committee, the chairman expressed gratitude to the present FCT Administration for the vision of upgrading the unit and assured the administration of timely delivery of a sound science and technology policy for the FCT.

The Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammadu Maccido, has called for the amendment of some sections of the Child Rights Act 2003.

Speaking at his palace when he received the Minister of Women's Affairs, Hajiya Inna Maryam Ciroma, the Sultan said some sections of the Act contradict the Islamic law and tradition of the people.

The Sultan therefore called on Northern governors and their respective state As-

## Sultan calls for amendment of Child Rights Act

From Sadeeq Aliyu,  
Senior Reporter (Sokoto)

semblies to amend sections of the Act that did not conform to the Islamic injunction and tradition.

He said, "We are not totally against the Act, but some few sections which need to

be amended, pointing out that discrimination against women takes many forms and "we will never support violence against them as our religion did not allow it."

The Sultan told the minister that the Sultanic Council had been doing its best on girl-child education to see that

not only female children but all eligible children are properly educated.

He said it was in view of this that an education summit on accelerating girl education in the north was convened in 2003.

This he said is in line with the philosophies of the founding fathers of the Sokoto Caliphate, adding that while Sheikh Usman Danfodiyo and his lieutenants were at the war-front during the jihad, his famous daughter Nana Asma'u and others were at home teaching the female gender.

Earlier, Hajiya Inna Ciroma had said she embarked on the advocacy visits to states to solicit for various initiatives aimed at empowering women and children to realize their full potential.

The minister, while acknowledging that discrimination against women varies from one country to another, state to state and society to society, however said the most glaring discrimination among women in Sokoto is the scourge of vesico vaginal fistulae (VVF).

## FG warns contractors on substandard fertilizer

The federal government has warned that it will not tolerate the practice of cutting corners by some contractors who supply substandard fertilizer while branding them as high quality ones.

The warning was given by the Minister of Agriculture,

and Rural Development, Mallam Adamu Bello, while receiving board members of the Federal Super-Phosphate Fertilizer Company (FSFC) in Abuja.

The minister, who described fertilizer as the most important inorganic agricultural input, said that the price, availability and quality were of great concern to the government and farmers.

According to him, the ministry will ensure that fertilizer is made available to farmers across the country before the beginning of the cropping season, and called on other stakeholders to join hands with the government to achieve the goal.

The minister also applauded the privatization of the Federal Super-Phosphate Fertilizer Company, saying that it will ensure the effective management and capacity utilization.

In his remarks, the chairman of the company, Godwin Ede, said that the total production target of the company for the year-2006 cropping season for both partially finished fertilizers and the ones from raw materials stands at 100,000 metric tones.

The implication of this, according to him, includes creation of about 1,500 jobs, savings in foreign exchange and availability of fertilizer of-

## FRSC approves enhanced drivers' licence

By Benjamin Auta,  
Reporter

The Corps Marshal and Chief Executive of the Federal Road Safety Commission, Major General Haldu A. Hananiya (rtd), has approved the commencement of physical capture option in the production of the enhanced national drivers' licence.

A press statement made available to Daily Trust said the approval was in accordance with the decision of the joint tax board.

The statement added that the physical capture option will take effect from March 1, 2006, and is intended to address some of the malpractices in its production.

The commission urged applicants of the enhanced drivers' licence to approach the various centres for their licence to avoid touts.

The commanding officers of the commission were also enjoined to sanitize and educate members of the public within their command on the new strategy.

## reshuffles five secretaries

The FCT Administration has reshuffled the secretaries in its five secretariats.

The Special Assistant to the FCT minister on Information and Strategy, Hajiya Amina Salihu, who made the revelation at a recent FCTA post-exco briefing, said already some secretaries had commenced the process of handing over.

She said that the Education Secretary, Dr. Auwalu Anwar, has moved to the Agriculture and Rural Development Secretariat, while the former Agriculture Secretary, Engr. Waziri Ahmadu, is now the new Health and Human Services Secretary.

The former Health and Human Services Secretary, Hajia Amina Bala Zakari, she said, is now the new Secretary, Social Development Secretariat, while the former Secretary, Social Development Secretariat is the new Secretary, Education Secretariat.

Hajiya Amina Salihu said the Transport Secretary would however retain his post in the Transport Secretariat.

## Blind corps member gets automatic employment

A blind man who served in the 2005/2006 batch of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC), Mr. Kalu Eke, has been offered automatic employment and a cash award of N50,000 by the Ministry of Education.

The gesture was in appreciation of Mr. Eke's donation

By Abdullahi M. Gulloma,  
Reporter

of brailled and bound copies of the National Policy on Education (NPE) to the ministry.

The Minister of State for Education, Mrs. Grace Ogwuche, who announced this in Abuja, commended Mr. Eke for his foresight in the transcription of the policy.

"I take exceptional interests in the presentation because it is the first time we are witnessing the transcription of the document from print to braille," she said.

Responding, Mr. Kalu said that he transcribed the document into braille as his community development project for the benefit of the blind.

In tomorrow's  
**Weekly Trust**  
...Pick of the Week!  
**Fall out of public hearings**  
**Reps ready for battle**  
● **How govs were divided**  
**Leaders clinging to power is bad for Africa -Ali Mazrui**  
**How impostor duped lover of N43m**  
**And Al-Bint is back!**

# News



The Emir of Birnin-Gwari, Alhaji Zubairu Jibriel Mai-Gwari II, left, with Emir of Jama'a, Alhaji Muhammadu Isa, at the commissioning ceremony of Doka central mosque, Kano road Kaduna... recently

## Minister urges Nigerians to embrace peace

Nigerians have been advised to shun acts of violence in the practice of their faith for peaceful co-existence among the various religious groups in the country.

Minister of Information and National Orientation, Mr. Frank Nweke (jnr) stated this while briefing State House journalists after the weekly Federal Executive Council meeting.

Commenting on the recent happenings in some parts of the country, he said government was highly

From Joe Oroye

disturbed by the development and urged all Nigerians to live peacefully with one another.

"As far as the two religions preach peace, there is no reason why Nigerians should be killing one another," he stated.

The minister called on *Ulamas* and other religious leaders to "speak up to their followers on how to be tolerant and live together as we used to be."

He said the federal

government had awarded various contracts in different parts of the country, which include the contracts awarded are, the Atameri River bridge at a cost of N798 million and the National-West African road project, at N9.4 billion linking Lagos-Otta- Benin Republic.

Others include the construction of Agaie Lapai Dam in Niger State awarded at the cost of N1.5bn; Gadan Baruye dam in Katsina state, at N100.8m; construction of Senate building at the permanent site of the

University of Port Harcourt at N632.8m; erosion control work at Katsina Ala, N152.8m and the procurement of health materials worth N1.6bn.

## 2007: Group makes case for south-south president

The Federated Igbo Congress South-South branch has called on President Obasanjo to drop the idea of a third term, expressing their support for a candidate from the South-South or the South-East for the Presidency in 2007.

Speaking in Port Harcourt, the president General of the organisation, Mr Cosmas Enweluzo, said the best the president can give to Nigeria is a smooth transition from one civilian government to another in 2007.

"While we acknowledge the dividends of the present democratic government in Nigeria through economic reforms, and commended President Olusegun Obasanjo for a job well done, we wish to state that an

From Ikenna Emeka Okpani, Bureau Chief, Port Harcourt

agenda that would continue to denigrate the sensibilities of the people of Nigeria and continue to sow the evil seed of discord and suspicion should be avoided at all cost.

"What President Obasanjo



President Obasanjo

can give Nigerians, which we demand of him, is a smooth transition from one civilian government to another in 2007," the group said.

The group observed that there were many qualified candidates for the Presidency, both in the South-South and the South-East, and called on the southern forum to look beyond the occupants of political positions in the search for candidates from the zone.

The group said it supports the review of the constitution to correct the defects in the existing constitution but called for the retention of two terms for political office-holders and the entrenchment of rotational presidency in the Nigerian Constitution.

## Taraba 2007: Wukari Federation eyes governorship

The Wukari Federation Forum (WUFFO) wants the governorship of Taraba State zoned to the southern part of the state in 2007.

Speaking with *Daily Trust*, the chairman of the forum, Mr Jerome Dan Amadu, said the organization was committed to the cultural political revitalisation of the Wukari federation, comprising over ten ethnic groups.

He said the coalescing of the resources of the southern part of the state would ensure that it grabs the number one slot in 2007.

Mr. Amadu said Taraba state is suffering leadership crises.

"We are out to restore peace and stability for the purpose of good governance in our area. All WUFFO is doing now is to ensure that we from the southern part of the state can rule and


By Emmanuel Bello,  
Political Editor

harness the resources of the state for south," he said.

On the spate of arrest effected by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in Taraba State, he said it was a welcome development as financial probity is gradually returning to the state.

"We need EFCC in the state and we applauding its activities, because compared to the federal allocation we get from Abuja, there isn't much to show for it. The EFCC has made our leaders sit up and it is an efficient mechanism to check the drift," he said.

He said the southern parts of the state and home to Lt. Gen. Theophilus Danjuma (rtd.), has a number of individuals who can become governor if given the opportunity, observing that the zone was determined to uniting in achieving the goal.



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SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION (WASSCE)**

The West African Examinations Council (WAEC) wishes to inform all schools registering candidates for the May/June 2006 West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE), that the closing date for the normal entry period for the examination is Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2006.

However, late entries for the examination will be received from Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> till Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2006. Additional late entry fee of N500.00 per candidate will be charged from 16<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> February, while N1,000.00 per candidate will be charged from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2006.

Schools are advised to adhere strictly to the closing dates as uploading of entries on the website has been programmed in accordance with these dates. The website will be shut down at midnight on the last day of registration, Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2006 which is the closing date for the uploading of late entries.

DR. S.O. Adeyegbe,  
Head of National Office

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# NEWS

## Canadian coy to construct rail system in Abuja

In line with federal government's desire to introduce a new transportation system in the city, a Canadian firm, Transcom, has begun talks with the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) for the construction of a light rail system for Abuja.

Authorities of the FCTA and Transcom which is specialized in the Private Public Participation initiative of Nigeria is expected to develop a concrete design that would ensure the completion of the project before the end of 2007. The

By Nasir Inyang, *Abuja Property Editor*

project is said to be capital intensive and would be executed in different phases.

Dr. Wilson Odunbaku, Secretary of Transport Secretariat of the FCT, who disclosed this recently in Abuja, said work under the arrangement with the company would involve the selection of corridors for the first phase which is also expected to expand into the planned Abuja metro line system. According to him, the decision for the light rail

system has become necessary following the continued traffic congestion in the city.

The African Development Bank (ADB) has already been contacted by the administration to avail the opportunity of fast tracking the process of completing the

work on a possible metro line system. The light rail system would have the capacity of 15,000 passengers while the metro line would take about 45,000 passengers and had undergone.

Meanwhile a total of 150 buses expected for the take-off of the Abuja mass trans-

port scheme have arrived the Apapa Port in Lagos. The consignment which has been given duty waiver by the federal government will be released early next month for commissioning by the president. The buses which have been built to specification have the capacity of

83 and 90 passengers and would be playing designated routes in the city.

The secretary of transport said the second batch of the buses would arrive the country in the first week of April this year. The planned Abuja mass transport system was first started in 2003 and is targeted at creating a standard transport system that is comparable to any in the world. Already, the London taxi and the Peugeot models which are part of the scheme have since commenced operation in the city.

Competent FCT sources said the arrival of the first and second batches of the mass transport buses would speed up the decision to chase out all motorcycles and other private buses plying in the city to other satellite areas.

## UniAbuja to host musical concert for blood donors

A non-governmental association (NGO), MOMO, is planning a musical concert in Abuja in order to raise awareness and funds towards aiding the less-privileged children in the territory.

By Mustafa Abubakar

Nigerian Rhythm and Blues musician, Jazzman Olofin, Weird M.C., StylPlus, and Blackky.

She said that MOMO would pay N800 per blood donor and the proceeds channelled to the welfare of children at the Abuja Children's Home, Kaituma.

The Group Marketing Manager of MOMO, Edina Otunokun, who spoke to newsmen in Abuja over the upcoming event slated for Tuesday, February 28 at the University of Abuja, Gwagwalada, said the event would help educate Nigerians on the need to be regular blood donors.

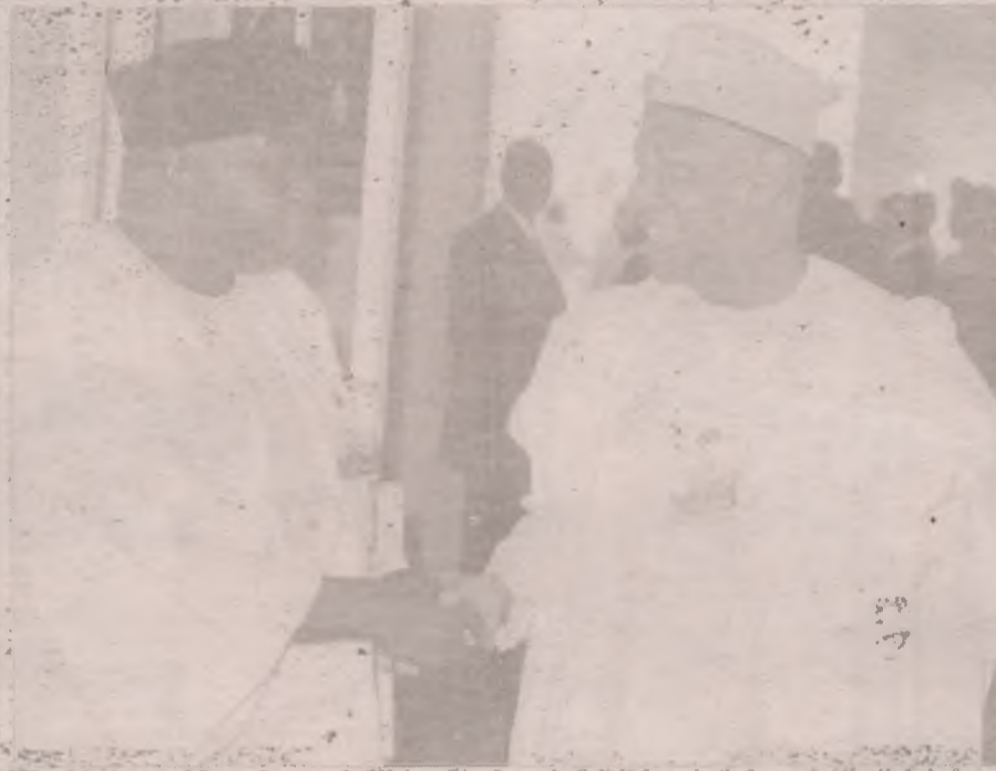
A U.S. medical practitioner, Dr. Stephen Field, who also spoke at the briefing, said all the blood samples collected during the concert would be analysed for HIV and other diseases.

She said that the aim of the concert is to encourage a safe lifestyle, a love for those less fortunate and the passion for music and dance among youths.

Edina Otunokun said the theme of the concert is "Save a Life, Dance for Life" and is expected to feature musical artists such as Dare, a young

Dr. Field, who said that every human being has about eight pints of blood in his or her body, said red blood cells take six weeks to replace donated blood.

He said MOMO was organising the concert in partnership with USAID and the Federal Ministry of Health.



The Minister of State, Internal Affairs, Dr. Joseph Odidi Iqtoah (left) and Alhaji Ja'afaru Faki the Special Adviser to President Obasanjo on Petroleum, during the inauguration ceremony of the Nigerian Nuclear Regulatory Authority held at the State House, Abuja recently.

## Third term: Group urges Adamawa gov not to succumb to pressure

Turaki Vanguard, an organization reading for the presidency of President Atiku Abubakar has urged the Adamawa State Governor, Mr. Boni Haruna, not to succumb to pressure to be part of the third term band-wagon.

By Sufiyan Ojefo, *Special Correspondent*

of democratic culture in our country. General Muhammadu Buhari (rtd), who recently mentioned you alongside the governor of Abia, Niger and Lagos States as those who have defended our constitution and the human rights of the people."

In a February 20, 2006 letter to Governor Haruna, signed by its National Director of Media Affairs and Public Communication, Chief Ezechukwuemeka Eze, the organisation said "we are urging you to continue to hold tenaciously to your democratic beliefs and resolve to give Nigerians a true democratic president in 2007 in the person of Vice-President Atiku Abubakar."

The organisation, which claimed that Governor Haruna had "deystified the act of governance in Adamawa State through his vision-ary and focused leadership style," said it took note of the development projects that the administration has put in place in the state, that "have direct bearing on the living standards of Adamawa people."

The organisation pleaded with Haruna not to "succumb to the pressure being exerted by globalised bidders and enemies of democracy and urge other politicians to emulate your exemplary and pragmatic best commitment and loyalty to the cause of our people. Vice President Atiku Abubakar, paragonary now for the political arena, will all ways, ingrate, back-lobbers and opponents."

The letter, a copy of which was made available to Daily Trust, reads in part: "Your Excellency, it may interest you to note, in line with our principle and customary where we hold our National Executive Committee (NEXCOM) meeting, we use a Say no to and examine the records of democracy, democracy, in progressive states that genuine democrats find sway and are at the

## FG rejects bids for sale of CVU Properties

The federal government has put up for sale its Conference Visitors Centre (CVU) properties in Kano, Kaduna and Enugu in line with its privatization programme.

By Nasir Inyang, *Abuja Property Editor*

At the opening of bids yesterday in Abuja, Mr. Funshe of the Abuja Investment and Property Development Company (APIPC) coordinated the process. He quoted the reserved prices of the properties as N64.3 million for Enugu, N64.3 million for Kaduna and N64.3 million for Kano. He stated that the government mandated the

FCT administration to sell the federal properties, but regretted that all the seven companies, which include Alhaji Bello Maisudan, Chita and Alliances & Associates, Ganak Nig. Ltd and Frankarz Ventures Limited among others that bid to take over the ownership of the properties quoted below the reserved prices and were subsequently rejected.

Mr. Funshe further advised them to make a firm expression of interest to match the reserved prices latest Friday or the whole exercise would be thrown to the public once again.

## 200 hernia patients get free medication in Jigawa

From Hassan A. Karofi, *Dutse*

Two hundred hernia patients have been chosen for a free medication exercise initiated by Honourable Inuwa Udi Ringim, member representing Ringim constituency at the Jigawa State House of Assembly.

Flagging the exercise in his hometown, the lawmaker said the free operation is part of his annual community enhancement scheme initiated since 2003.

He said since election into the House over 2000 people have benefited from free healthcare, education, and poverty alleviation initiatives.

He said two patients have been chosen from each of the 20 polling units in his constituency.

Honourable Inuwa Udi added that each of the patient will get N55,000 as operation fees and rehabilitation payment.

While expressing his continued commitment towards improving on their wellbeing, he assured other patients, that another scheme will soon be flagged off to include other people with peculiar problems.

Daily Trust report that the scheme will consume N2.5 million for the 200 hernia patients.

Responding one of the beneficiaries, Auwal Sani Gamel commended the lawmaker and called on other politicians in the area to evaluate his gesture.

## NEWS

## NANS president impeached

The President and the Senate President of the National Association of Nigeria Students (NANS) have been impeached.

According to the communiqué, of the 63 Senate meeting held in Owerri made available to *Daily Trust*, NANS President Mr. Kenneth Orleuma Hembe, was removed based on allegations of his involvement in cultism and cult related violence.

The communiqué also alleged that Mr. Hembe tempered and manipulated the NANS constitution and charter of demands without recourse to constitution.

It also said that the NANS president has not embarked on any struggle on campuses

By Benjamin Auta, Reporter

to salvage and protect the interest the Nigerian students.

While the Senate President, Mr. Umelo Uzodimma, was removed based on his inability to summon the Senate in the last 11 months since his election into office.

The communiqué also said that Mr. Umelo supported the purported manipulation and the tempering of the NANS constitution.

However, the vice president, national affairs and deputy senate president have been vested with the functions, power and privileges to act until the next NANS convention.

## BEARS Foundation offers free medical services

The Body Enhancement Armed Reconstructive Surgery (BEARS) Foundation has completed an arrangement to offer free medical services to Nigerians in the northern and southern parts of the country.

The free medical services are scheduled to commence from October 1, 2006 to November 6, 2006.

BEARS Foundation, a non-government organisation founded in Nigeria, is dedicated to using plastic surgery and specialties in medicine to treat and correct deformities of less privileged Africans regardless of age, race, religion or gender; educating the public about the causes and prevention of both congenital and developmental deformities; creating awareness about HIV/AIDS epidemic, etc.

BEARS Foundation for some years has achieved surgical programmes, such as baring hope to Nigerian

By Mustafa Abubakar, Abuja

children suffering from birth defects through plastic surgery and the transformation of victims of the 2001 contaminated kerosene explosions in Edo State.

The 2006 free national medical mission in Nigeria is prepared to benefit all less privileged Nigerians by creating accessibility to BEARS Foundation's medical teams for indigent people coming from different areas of the country, to take the advantage of the free medical programme.

Statement from the organisers indicated that the comprehensive free medical programme will start from the northern part of the country with its activities covering 1<sup>st</sup> October to ending, followed by a break of one week between 16 and 22. That of the southern part of the country will commence from October 23 to end on November 6, 2006.

## Niger-Delta: NLC calls for release of hostages

The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) yesterday appealed for the release of the nine oil workers held in captivity since last Saturday by members of Movement for the Emancipation of Niger Delta.

President of the NLC, Comrade Adams Aliyu Oshiomhole, who made the call in Abuja, also appealed that no harm should be done to any of the detained oil workers.

By Abdullahi M. Gulloma, Reporter

He said that the oil workers, irrespective of their nationalities, are not responsible for the situation in the Niger Delta region.

"The NLC recognises that the political marginalisation and colossal injustices suffered by our compatriots in the Niger Delta area are real, legitimate and require to be addressed urgently.

However, hostage taking as a political strategy tends to devalue political causes and at the end of the day, alienate popular forces from local and global support.

"While we endorse the strategy of negotiation adopted by the federal government, it bears emphasis that redressing the injustices requires fundamental political, welfarist and constitutional solutions," he said.



Wife of Kebbi State Governor and member of National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) batch 'A' Hajiya Zainab Adamu Aliero (second from left) flagged by her colleagues addressing VVF patients at Birnin Kebbi VVF centre during a visit recently.

## Feeding: Yobe to weigh pupils

Yobe State government will soon embark on weighing scales on pupils in primary and junior secondary schools, with a view to assessing the pupils levels of feeding, in order to score the success of the home grown school feeding programme in the state.

The state Commissioner for education, Mohammed Goni Umar, stated this yesterday while on unscheduled visits to some primary and secondary schools in the state to assess the level of implementation of the home grown feeding and Universal Basic Education programme in Yobe State.

From Isa Umar Gusau, Damaturu

The commissioner said that weighing the students will clearly indicate the impacts of the feeding on the students, even though it was evident during the visits, that more students have been enrolled into the 181 junior secondary schools and 953 primary schools identified to benefit from the programme.

Goni Umar revealed that 208,333 pupils across primary and secondary school, presently benefit from the home grown school feeding programme costing the state about N56 million per month, at a unit price of N13 per meal for each pupil.

He said that the programme aims at fighting hunger among pupils, as the strategy has long been proved effective in advanced nations, with Yobe state also, beginning to feel the impacts of the initiative.

The commissioner said that 11 local government areas in Yobe State, were selected in the first phase of the programme, with three from each of the three senatorial districts in the state.

He noted that Gujba, Tamuwa, Fune, Yunusari, Nangere, Karashwa, Machina, Fika, Yusufari, were among the local government areas

benefiting.

During the assessment visits, our correspondent reports that rapid increase in the enrolment figure of students was observed across various schools undergoing the home grown school feeding programme.

Mohammed Goni Umar said that the feeding was part of the steps adopted by Yobe State, like others in the nation, to improve the basic education of its citizens.

The commissioner said apart from that, his ministry will soon embark on integrated training of teachers across the state, nothing that with the continuous rise of students, there is urgent need for quality teachers to meet educational standards.



Governor Bukar Abba Ibrahim

Goni Umar, also during the visit, inspected the construction works of classroom blocks, being funded through the Universal Basic Education programme, where he called on contractors to hasten up the work to tackle the shortage of classrooms, while he also called on the need to construct classrooms that are within specifications and standard, noting that the state Ministry of Education will not accept projects that fall below standard, for all the 129 classroom blocks.

He also announced that the state has started taking delivery of some 563,000 text books through the UBE programme that will soon be distributed to schools in the state.

Conducting media men around the stock of the text books, Goni Umar said, that the books are meant for primary one to six pupils, and also for junior secondary schools 1 to 3, saying that by next week there would be completion of delivery after which the books will be publicly handed over to schools, through appropriate officers.

The commissioner for education also announced that 400 units of classroom furniture would also be provided to classrooms across schools in the state, to provide room for enhanced learning.

# Inside Politics

## Remembering Nuhu Bamali

**A** rare breed who walked and went the way of all mortals, would be remembered for his selfless service to humanity and submission to the will of Allah. His life was characterized by meritorious service to his country and exemplary leadership. Son to Mallam Yero Auta, and a grandson of Mallam Musa the first Fulani Emir of Zazzau and flag bearer of the Legend Shehu Usman Danfodio 1804-21, Nuhu Bamali was destined for great heights.

Until his death he remained the leader of the Magajin ruling dynasty of Zazzau, as well as the undisputed political leaders of the People of Zazzau Emir, a position yet to be filled since his demise in 2001.

He was a highly respected elder statesman that was able to have the listening ears of the entire citizens of the present Kaduna State.

He was a detribalized person, which was why he carried everybody when the movement for the creation of present Kaduna State was on.

Mallam Nuhu Bamali (BOBA 213) was among the first generation of northerners to attend that religious college - Barewa College in Katsina between 1930-35. As a border his house was called "North compound."

His notable classmates were Mallam Yahaya Gusau, Aliyu Bisallah Madakin Suleja, Abdulrahman Okene and his cousin late Jumare Zaria father of Dr. Mohammed Jumare.

Among the first northerners to work in the Northern Literature Bureau (NORLA) which later metamorphosed to Gaskiya Corp, the astute statesman was a case study in hard work and his colleagues late Abubakar Imani, late Ahmadu Ingawa and Abu Usawa. At the junior level he worked under Nuhu Bamali later in Gaskiya. He rose to the position of Editor in Books section taking over from Mrs. Rima and Abubakar Imani became the Editor of the newspaper tak-

By Emmanuel Bello,  
Political Editor

ing over from Dr. East.

He was among the Northern elites that first went into politics by forming associations that later turned into the political party that ruled the country, the NPC. His political peers were late Sa'adu Abacha, late Tafawa Balewa, late Aminu Kano, Shehu Shagari, late Dr. R. A. B. Dikko, Maitama Sule etc.

He rose to the position of National Organizing Secretary of the NPC.

John Paden and Trevor Clark confirmed the role played by Nuhu Bamali i.e. He played a lead role at the NPC 10th convention in which he ensured Ahmadu Bello became the leader of the NPC.

He was the first and last Prince of the royal court of Zazzau till today elected to the federal house of Representatives in 1954 and also remained the only prince of Zazzau till today that became a senator in 1958-60.

He was the first from Zaria to be appointed a federal minister on 1<sup>st</sup> October 1960 as Minister of State in the foreign affairs ministry, with Balewa as both Prime Minister and Foreign Minister.

One very important role he achieved that will remain indelible in Nigerian's history is the famous debate on the Northern Cameroun Plebiscite Sardauna Province that he won the debate and was brought back to Nigeria. This earned him an award of CFR October 1965 with late Teslim Elias by Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa.

He was appointed Ambassador to Pakistan by General Ironsi but he declined the offer.

He was appointed commissioner by Governor Kyari and served in 3 ministries, Agric, Works & Animal Husbandry.

He became first executive chairman of newly created Kaduna local government. In this capacity he served both as chairman in traditional ruler of Kaduna. He was responsible for dividing Kaduna into 5 dis-

tricts, Kawa, T/Wada, Makera, Ang, Rimi and Doka of which he personally appointed the first district heads. He brought royal authority into Kaduna in full

grandson of Mallam Musa Bamali the first emir of Zazzau flag bearer of Shehu Usman Danfodio.

He was the only Prince in council as Magajin Garin



Alhaji Nuhu Bamali

force. This was missing for over 10 years after the demise of his brother Muhammadu Sambo Magajin Garin Zazzau that died in 1961.

Appointed chairman Kaduna local government service board. He remained here until when he was sacked along with late Isa Kaita by Governor Usman Jibrin and Obasanjo for Nuhu Bamachi leading Zazzau Emirate agitating for the creation of present Kaduna State and Isa Kaita leading the Katsina people to get Katsina State.

He led the Movement for the creation of Kaduna State from 1967-1987 with his deputies like late Victor Gwani Dailatun Zazzau Hayatdeen, Ja'afaru Makari, Gidado Idris, Umar Dikko and many others.

He was the most prominent prince of Zazzau emirate and leading contender to the coveted throne in 1975. Nuhu Bamali is a direct

Zazzau and second most senior princely title of the emirate next to Madaki between 1985 - his death in 2001.

He was the first indigeneous chairman of Leventis Group. He brought fame and glory to the company during his tenure.

He influenced the citing of the Dogon Dawa Agric School in Kaduna State through the Leventis foundation.

He also influenced the citing of agricultural seeds Ltd in Zaria of which many young graduates gained employment and the new hybrid maize seeds was introduced to the Northern farmers through the company.

Nuhu Bamali was among the most influential and vocal foreign affairs ministers during his time - Maitama Sule in 2001 at the funeral of Bamali.

He was honoured in the republic of Senegal, and Mauritania with national awards. See CV

He was a member of the Lancaster House Constitutional conference 1953.

He was appointed by General Murtala to be among the 50 wise men to draft the 1979 constitution. He served in both drafting committee and the Assembly.

He translated the 1979 constitution from English to Hausa language. This is the book being used in most courts and establishment in the North.

Honoured at ABU with doctor of Letters honoris causa - 1990

Kaduna State Polytechnic named after him shortly after his death in 2001 by the state government.

Primary schools/streets named after him in both Zaria and Kaduna.

### Family

Survived by 2 wives, 10 children, 16 grand children.

Amongst the children are - Ahmed Nuhu Bamali - present magajin Gabir Zazzau, and senior manager with FSB Intl. Bank Plc Abuja.

Muazu Nuhu Bamali - Manager with NAL Bank, Lagos

Mansur Nuhu Bamali of Foreign Affairs Ministry.

**Behold this heavy CV**  
Alhaji Nuhu Bamali, C.F.R., D Litt, Magajin Garin Zazzau

Born in 1917. Father, Alhaji Yero, attended Zaria Primary School in 1924 and the middle school from 1928-30. Katsina Higher College 1931-35. Joined the Zaria Native Administration 1935-37. Government Literature Bureau as Government Translator, Assistant Secretary to the Chiefs Conference 1938-45. Joined Gaskiya Corporation on incorporation of the Literature Bureau to the Corporation 1945-1953. Principal Organising Secretary of the Northern Peoples Congress (N.P.C) Became Member for Zaria in the Federal Parliament 1954.

Assistant Development Secretary Zaria Native Authority 1956. Member of the E.C.N Board of Directors 1957. Administrative Secretary Zaria City Administration and Assistant District Head 1958, Member of the

Nigerian Upper House of Parliament (the Senate) 1959. Appointed Minister of State and a Member of the Federal Cabinet on 1st October 1960. Appointed Magajin Gari of Zaria (District Head Status) 1961. Awarded C.F.R. on 1st October, 1965. Appointed Nigeria's Minister of External Affairs 1965, awarded Order National Republic Senegal 1962 and awarded Order Nationale Republic of Mauritania 1961. Appointed a Civil Commissioner in the North Central State Cabinet 1967. Appointed Commissioner for Agricultural Resources and Co-Operatives, North Central State in April 1968. Commissioner of Works 1969-73, Chairman Kaduna Local Authority 1973-76, chairman Local Government Services Board 1976-77, Chairman Lagos University Teaching Hospital 1977-80, Chairman AG Leventis Nigeria Limited 1980-90, Chairman C & C Nigeria Limited 1980-90, Chairman Adrian Volker Civil Engineering, Chairman W. Biney & Co: 1981, Chairman Poly Products Nigeria Limited 1985-90, Director J & P Civil Engineering Limited 1983-90, Director Leventis Foundation Agric. School, 1987-90 Chairman J. N. I Kaduna State, Chairman Gambo Sawaba Hospital Friends, Chairman League of Hospital Friends ABUTH, Patron Anwarul Islamic School Zaria 1969-2001. Street named after him in Kaduna and Zaria, Member Zaria emirate council 1985-2001, Honorary degree by Ahmedu Bello University Zaria 1991, Kaduna State Polytechnic named after him 2001 (Nuhu Bamali Polytechnic Zaria).

### Literary works

1. Bala Da Babiyu 1945
  2. Abdulazeez Bn'Sa'ud 1945.
  3. Abdulkari Saladin 1948.
  4. Karanta Ka Rabuta Co. author with Jean Boyd.
  5. Edited the Compilation of the works, of Emir of Zazzau Aliyu Dan Sidi.
- Translated the 1979 Nigerian Constitution to Hausa Language 1979-80.

# Inside Politics



From right, Chairman Constitutional Review Committee, Senator Ibrahim Mantu, the committee deputy chairman, Hon. Austine Okpara, House of Representatives Leader, Hon. Abdul Ningi and House Chief Whip, Hon. Abubakar Bwari during the constitutional review committee's press conference on the forthcoming zonal 1999 constitution review, held at National Assembly... recently.

Pic: Felix Onigbinde.

## Apply martial law on Malu - Obasanjo Forum

A non-governmental organisation (NGO), the Obasanjo Solidarity Forum, (OSF) has called for the application of martial law on Gen. Victor Malu (rtd.) over the statement credited to him that he regretted not overthrowing President Obasanjo's government when he (Malu) was in service.

National Co-ordinator of OSF, Arc. Dauda Ibrahim, who addressed a press conference in Abuja on Thursday, said that martial law, which is applicable to retired military personnel, should be applied to Malu, whose statement is a betrayal of his state of mind as a disloyal and unpatriotic Nigerian.

The OSF National Co-ordinator said it is common knowledge that the essence of military training is to instil discipline and unquestioning loyalty, therefore it is unfortunate and worrisome that such statement came from a person who has held the highest post in the Army.

In his words "if the retired soldier thought he could be testing the waters for any sinister move, he must be prepared for the very end of his game. We are asking Malu to tender an unreserved apology (after a thorough combing by security agencies) to Nigerians for the mental torture and insult to our psyche occasioned by the horror of knowing that Nigeria still harbours those who nurse the primitive instinct of military misadventure."

On the proposed constitutional amendment, a move he said that started since 1999, Arc. Dauda Ibrahim said that OSF considers the call as desirable, wise and timely.

On corruption, OSF said detractors have even gone ahead to allege that President Obasanjo had given 100 million Naira each to the Senators and 70 million each to members of the House of Representatives, and described the allegations as bizarre.

Arc. Dauda Ibrahim further queried "does Obasanjo look like somebody who can give somebody N1 million, talk less of 100 million Naira. How come that the same Obasanjo is being accused of giving out as much as N138

By Nasir Imam, Abuja  
Property Editor

million to each legislator?"

The OSF, he added, has always viewed as a very dangerous development in our polity, a situation in which attention seekers raise the temperature of political discourse, and alienate the Nigerian people one from another along regional, ethnic or religious divides.

The OSF National Co-ordinator said President Obasanjo had made it emphatically clear that he would not extend his tenure beyond the constitutional limit, which, to a large

extent, goes to show that he has no other interest than to move Nigeria forward.

Arc. Dauda Ibrahim said even right at the cradle of presidential democracy, the Americans made similar calls on George Washington at the early stage of their democratic development and his was elected four times until the man said enough was enough.

"It took us 20 years after 1979 to beg President Obasanjo to return in 1999 to continue where he had stopped, even with major setbacks. We shouldn't wait for another 20 years after 2007. It will be too late."

## 2007: Kontagora's emergence splits PDP LG, Ward chairmen

For presenting Gen. Mamman Kontagora as a Presidential aspirant for the 2007 elections to the Kontagora LG PDP chairman, the Kudu ward chairman of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) has been indefinitely suspended by the party.

Addressing journalist recently, the suspended PDP Kudu ward chairman in Kontagora local government, Alh. Yusuf Isa Halilu, said that on February 5 members of his ward presented Gen. Mamman Kontagora (rtd.) to the local government chapter of the party as a presidential aspirant of the party from the ward after giving them adequate notice.

On that appointed date, Alh. Halilu said the state PDP chairman, Alh. Audu Babaye and his Secretary, Alh. Garba Danladi said they could not attend because of an INEC meeting slated for the same day but instead sent in a representative, one Alh. Sule Fodio.

Surprisingly, Alh. Yusuf Isa Halilu said that on the 8<sup>th</sup> February he received a notice of suspension signed by the Chairman

and the Secretary of the party in Kontagora Local Government.

The suspension, the letter stated, was premised upon a preliminary report of a seven man disciplinary committee set up by the LGA Executive Committee of PDP requesting for same to enable it investigate fully the alleged offences.

The vice-chairman of the party in the ward, Alhaji Danjuma Dangaladima was appointed to act as chairman of the PDP Kudu ward.

However, Alh. Halilu said that while the suspension letter further stated that the decision to suspend him was reached at a meeting of the Kontagora LGA Executive Committee of the party, no such meeting was held and that only the two signatories took the decision to suspend him, which he said rendered the suspension unconstitutional.

He denied any knowledge that the suspension might be at the instance of the Governor of Niger State, Alhaji Abdulkadir Kure or Senator Nuhu Aliyu, the PDP Senator representing Zone C constituency in the Senate.



## THE SENATE

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA  
Committee on Science and Technology  
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY COMPLEX  
THREE-ARMS ZONE,  
P.M.B. 141, GARKI  
ABUJA, NIGERIA.

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND SUBMISSION OF MEMORANDUM ON THE NATIONAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY BILL

Information Technology stakeholders and the general public (including Non-Governmental Organizations and the media) are invited to the Public Hearing on the Bill for an Act to establish a National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) and Matters Related Therewith scheduled to hold as follows:

Date: Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2006

Time: 10:00am

Venue: Senate Hearing Room 1, National Assembly Complex, Three Arms Zone, Abuja.

Presentation will be as follows:

1. Federal Ministry of Science and Technology
2. Federal Ministry of Information
3. Nigerian Communications Commission
4. Nigerian Broadcasting Commission
5. Nigerian Cyber Crime Working Group
6. Computer Professionals Registration Council
7. Nigerian Computer Society
8. Nigeria Internet Group
9. Internet Service Providers Association of Nigeria
10. Institute of Software Practitioners of Nigeria
11. Joint Action Committee for ICT Awareness and Development
12. Other groups and the general public

**N/B:** Interested stakeholders and the general public may make written presentation on the Bill. Electronic and hard copies of memoranda should be forwarded to any of the following:

1. Chairman, Senate Committee on Science and Technology, Room 227, Second Floor, Senate Wing, National Assembly Main Complex, Abuja.
2. Secretary to the Senate Committee on Science and Technology, Room S108, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Senate Wing, National Assembly Complex (08037038545)

Hard copies of the Bill may be obtained from any of the above named offices.

**SIGNED:**

**SENATOR SAIDU MOHAMMED DANS**  
(08037313575 or 08033117340)

Chairman, Senate Committee on Science and

# Sports

## Stakeholders reject FIFA verdict

The Nigeria Football stakeholders yesterday rejected in its entirety FIFA verdict upholding the re-election of Alhaji Ibrahim Galadima as the NFA Chairman but resolved not to adopt confrontational stance against the world soccer ruling body.

The stakeholders, which was attended by 68 delegates comprising 25 states football associations, 16 Premier league clubs and two from the players

By Patrick Andrew,  
Assist. Head Sports Desk

union, hinged its rejection of the verdict on what it termed "for failing to uphold FIFA's policy of fair play by denying a fair hearing to the major complainants."

Instead of being confrontational, members who before the meeting had threatened brimstone and hell fire, decided to simmer down and represent

the evidence against the December 29 elections in Kano to FIFA.

The world soccer ruling body had demanded presentation of facts against the Kano elections after the initial verbal evidence was made at the CAF Congress in Cairo, Egypt before the commencement of the African Nations Cup.

The stakeholders, which was presided over by the Imo State FA chairman, Amanze

Uchegbunam, re-affirmed its resolutions of January 6th which declared the Kano elections illegal, null and void and accordingly resolved not to "recognize the Ibrahim Galadima-led board and therefore resolved not to have any contact or relations with either him or the board."

They urged the government to suspend all support and funding to the board, as well as direct all the 37 state football

associations, professional, amateur and female clubs to boycott all activities and programmes organized by the board.

Besides, the eight-point communiqué also indicated that the stakeholders have called on all sponsors and marketers of the NFA to suspend further contractual dealings with the board and condemned the penchant for "rushing local football matters which can be

resolved by the congress to FIFA and called for a stop to such act"

Meanwhile, the stakeholders have appointed six zonal co-ordinators who are to bridge the communication gap between them and their respective zones. Uchegbunam said the co-ordinators would neither replace the board nor function as the NFA secretariat but essentially link between them and the zones.

The Imo FA boss said that it was the resolve of the congress not to do anything that would further hurt the game in country noting that all stakeholders are poised to redress the present impasse by working assiduously, for the amicable resolution of the problem.

He said that the stakeholders might take the case to the Court of Arbitration for Sports in Lusanne, Switzerland because of "obvious abuse of the Statutes that guide football and failure to exhibit fair play in deciding the case."

### STAKEHOLDERS HIT BY IN-FIGHTING

## Gara-Gombe resigns

Erstwhile front line member of the Nigeria Football Stakeholders, Alhaji Shuaibu Ahmed Gara-Gombe has resigned his position as secretary of the body.

The Gombe FA chairman said the decision was in compliance with the wishes of his family who are uncomfortable with deep involvement in the crises.

"I get insults particularly from the acting secretary general of NFA who destroyed every single thing we did and no one is talking; no one is saying anything. I took exceptionally the gang up particularly between Chief Obaseki and Fanny Amun against my person, which I consider it geographically sentimental," he said.

Gara-Gombe also added the altercation between him and some members of the stakeholders is another reason for his decision to take the back seat

in the struggle to lay solid foundation for sound administration of football.

"I would also like to say that some stakeholders are benefiting from the crises which has beclouded their

sense of judgement and took a holiday from thinking and resolved to embarrass and called me names"

He regretted that the sacrifices he has made even to neglect of his business, co-

nstituency, and family were not being appreciated instead he said he has received insults from certain quarters. He however insisted that the resignation was without prejudice

Gara-Gombe admonished all stakeholders to be courageous, bold and forthright in the struggle to better the lot of the game in the country.

### Toro warns stakeholders

As the stakeholders committee converge on Abuja yesterday to deliberate on the World football governing body FIFA's verdict on the disputed Kano election, and the proclamation from Zurich upholding the polls, a former NFA scribe, Alhaji Sanni Ahmed Toro has warned the stakeholders committee not to contemplate kicking against FIFA's decision.

He said that the consequences will be grave for Nigerian football.

The Bauchi state born administrator, who is now a member of the National Assembly, argued that FIFA is competent to mediate on the matter, and also counseled Alhaji Ibrahim Galadima to find a way of settling his differences with the ministry.

"I think Galadima should find a way of settling his differences with the sports ministry so that everything can go well with football in his country" he stated in a chat with brilafm.net.



Barcelona's Samuel Eto'o, left, scores against Chelsea during a Champions League game at Stamford Bridge in London on Wednesday.

## Erico blasts Togo over Keshi's sack

Nigerians have come out to condemn in strong terms the sacking of former skipper of the Super Eagles Stephen Okechukwu Keshi as the chief coach of the Hawks of Togo.

While reacting angrily to the development former assistant coach of the Super Eagles Joe Erico, declared that it is the problem of inferiority complex with the African race which believes that a coloured skin cannot achieve at the big stage, like the World Cup.

Erico, who together with the sacked Keshi and Shuaibu Amodu qualified the

Super Eagles to Japan/Korea 2002 World Cup but were shown the exit door by the Nigeria Football Association, completely questioned the qualification of Otto-Pfister the man who has been given the mandate to take Togo to the World Cup in Germany.

While declaring that no expatriate has won the World Cup outside the country of his origin, Erico calls for prayers for the Hawks of Togo as they prepare to hit Germany for the Mundial come June.

Similarly, sports writers have joined voices in condemning the attitude of the Togolese Football Association.

Emeka Odikpo, a sports presenter, has declared that there was no basis in sacking Keshi as he met with the entire mandate given to him

to qualifier Togo for the Cup of Nations and the World Cup.

"Keshi met up to the mandate, he needed to work on the Togolese team gradu-

ally, so you see there was no basis for his sack, the Togolese Football Association have been too harsh in their decision" he said in a chat with brilafm.net.

## Badminton family mourns

The news of his death hit the Nigerian sports family like a thunderbolt, the scribe of the Badminton Federation of Nigeria of Nigeria, Olumide Bamiduro has described the death of the federation's president, Alhaji Shuaibu Sabon Birni as a terrible setback for the sport.

He said that they were in camp preparing for a championship in Mauritius when the news hit them and all the players and officials were rudely shocked.

He described the late Sabon Birni as a passionate lover of Badminton who committed his time and

money to advance the sport and that was why he was elected the president of African Badminton Federation.

Olumide Bamiduro was saddened by how life was snuffed out of the Director in the Ministry of International Affairs by dare devil armed robbers between Sokoto and Gusau.

# TRUST CLASSIFIED

## GLORY TEMPLE MINISTRIES

The general public is hereby informed that the above named Ministry has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration under part 'C' of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 1990.

**The Trustees are:**

1. Pastor Paul Akoh
2. Mrs. Adenike Akoh
3. Mr. Richard Ogbechie
4. Mrs. Emmanuella Thomas
5. Pastor Bernard Banny

**Aims and Objectives:**

1. To release God's glory in God people by God word.
2. To teach, tend and disciple with excellence a growing number of people all over the world.

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar - General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Plot 565, Ndola Square, Wuse Zone 5, P.M.B. 189, Abuja, within twenty-eight (28) days of this publication.

**SIGNED:**  
Pastor Bernard Banny

## INFORMATION SYETEMS AUDITORS & CONTROLLERS ASSOCIATION

The general public is hereby informed that the above named Association has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration under part 'C' of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 1990.

**The Trustees are:**

1. Mr. Ikechukwu Charles Eke - President
2. Olarewaju Saliu Olawale - Vice President
3. John Odekina Itaha - Secretary
4. Adeyinka Olutungase - Treasurer

**Aims and Objectives:**

1. To promote the education of, and help expand the knowledge and skills of its members in the interrelated fields of auditing, quality assurance, security, and IS audit and control;
2. To encourage a free exchange of IS audit and control, quality assurance, and security techniques, approaches, and problem solving by its members;
3. To communicate to management, auditors, tertiary institutions, and to IS professionals the importance of establishing controls necessary to ensure the effective organization and utilisation of IT resources.

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar - General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Plot 565, Ndola Square, Wuse Zone 5, P.M.B. 189, Abuja, within twenty-eight (28) days of this publication.

**SIGNED:**  
Mr. Ikechukwu Charles Eke  
President

## DAWN OF LIFE FOUNDATION

The general public is hereby informed that the above named Foundation has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration under part 'C' of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 1990.

**The Trustees are:**

1. Engr. Ikechukwu Maduka Akoma
2. Deacon Obinna Abanogu Atunwu
3. Mrs. Uloma Gift Akoma

**Aims and Objectives:**

1. To enable poor people improve their income, health, environment and education.
2. To develop an effective advocacy programme and inspire anti-poverty initiatives.
3. To encourage entrepreneurship, facilitating innovative use of local resources, skills and technologies.
4. To support community driven initiatives, and expand access to infrastructures and information.
5. To promote peace building, anti-corruption and transparency activities.
6. To build organisational capacity in the delivery of effective development services.

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar - General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Plot 565, Ndola Square, Wuse Zone 5, P.M.B. 189, Abuja, within twenty-eight (28) days of this publication.

**SIGNED:**  
Godfrey Ekuna, Esq.  
Solicitor.

## LANSAN NIG. LTD.

### DISCLAIMER NOTICE



MR. JESSE PAMA

This is to inform the general public that Jesse Pama, formerly with Lansan Nig. Ltd, Abuja whose passport photograph appears above is no longer in the employment of the Lansan Nig. Ltd.

Members of the public are hereby warned not to transact any business with him on behalf of the management of Lansan Nig. Ltd, Abuja as the management will not be held liable to any of such transaction.

**Signed:**  
Safiya Abdullahi

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Tel: 08022234100, 09-6721174, 09-2731572, 01-7747160, 08052414793, 08023619245  
Email: [talon@talonagro.com](mailto:talon@talonagro.com).

## LOSS OF DOCUMENT

A 'C of O' belonging to Air Vice Marshal Mouktar Mohammed (rt'd) in respect of Plot No. 996 Cadastral Zone A05 and dated 09/24/92 has been declared missing. If found please return to undersigned or the nearest Police Station.

**Signed:**  
Iliyasu Hassan Yola  
Plot 807 Uyo Crescent, Area 11  
Garki-Abuja.

## LOSS OF DOCUMENT

The general public is hereby informed that the original Revenue Receipt issued by FCDA with No. EN 1144 in respect of Land Application Form belonging to Mr. Nwodo Bonaventure of NTA Quarters, Kubwa has been declared missing. All efforts made to trace the missing document proved abortive.

**Signed:**  
Mr. Nwodo Bonaventure  
NTA Headquarters, Abuja.

## LOSS OF CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY

Members of the general public are hereby notified that the Certificate of Occupancy LKN/RES/RC/84/172 situated at Myogaung Road in the Nasarawa Local Government Area of Kano State belonging to Alhaji Abdullahi Maikano Umar of No. 1 Ibrahim Natsugun Road, Kano is declared missing. Any objection to the issuance of a certified True Copy should be forwarded to the Ministry of Lands & Physical Planning Kano before 21 days of this publication.

**Signed:**  
H.S. JAMBO & CO.  
Solicitors.

## LOSS OF DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public that original A.G.I.S Acknowledgement for the collection of C of O, No. FCT/ABU/OS514, Plot No. 239 Cadastral Zone B6, belonging to Prof. Odejide Olabisi Adebayo is declared missing. All effort to trace the missing document proved abortive. If found please return to A.G.I.S or the nearest police station.

**Signed:**  
Prof. Odejide O. Adebayo

## LOSS OF LAND DOCUMENT

The Original Right of Occupancy (R-of-O) and receipt of payment (Bank Teller) for land allocation by FCDA belonging to ACS House Limited of No. 8 (Plot 747A) Alexandria Crescent, Off Aminu Kano Crescent, Wuse 2-Abuja with file number 80515 has been reported missing. FCDA and AGIS to note. If found please contact the nearest Police Station or the above address.

## CHANGE OF NAMES

I, formerly known as MISS JALIJA JUSTINA NAOMI, now wish to be known as MRS. OLAFISOYE JUSTINA NAOMI. All former documents remain valid. NYSC and the general public to note.

I, formerly known as JEFFREY ADEKUNLE FAMOJURO, now wish to be known as JEFFREY ADEKUNLE ADEBOYE. All former documents remain valid. General public to note.

I, formerly known as MISS PRECIOUS ESEOGHENE ONOJEGHUO, now wish to be known as MRS. PRECIOUS ESEOGHENE ADEBOYE. All former documents remain valid. NYSC and general public to note.

I, formerly MRS. OLUWASHOLA BARBARA IYABODE as published by *Weekend Herald* of January 4<sup>th</sup>, 1994, wish to be known as MRS. OLUWASHOLA BEATRICE IYABODE. Former documents remain valid. Federal Inland Revenue Service please note.

I, MISS ADEBISI OLABIMPE BLESSING, now wish to be called MRS. IGBINIDU OLABIMPE BLESSING. All former documents remain valid. Ilesa Grammar School, WAEC, FUTA Akure and public to note.

I, formerly known as DORIS MESUA AKEKUE, now wish to be known as DORETTE MESUANYEBARI AKEKUE. Former documents remain valid. Public to note.

Formerly CECILIA OLUCHI IWUOHA, now wish to be MRS. OLUCHI IWUOHA OKEKE. Former documents remain valid. Public to note.

I, formerly known as NGOZI MILLICENT ISHNIUGUZO, now wish to be called NGOZI MILLICENT ONYEBUCHI. Federal Civil Service Commission, Head of Service, NAPEP, general public take note.

I, formerly known as MRS. KOFOWOROLA OLAYINKA SHODIPO, now KOFOWOROLA OLAYINKA FASHINA (NEE). All former documents remain valid. Nigeria Customs and public to note.

LALAH J. formerly known and addressed as MISS APOLLONIAN LAMI PATRICIALALAH, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS. APOLLONIAN LAMI PATRICIA IDRIS IBRAHIM. All former documents remain valid. NCAS and the general public please take note.

I, formerly known as ELIZABETH NKEMDILIM ONYEKWELU, now MRS. ELIZABETH NKEMDILIM CHUKWUANI. All documents remain valid. General public and NYSC to note.

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Goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon reacts after the final whistle in the UEFA Champions League match against Werder Bremen on Wednesday.



Alessandro Del Piero could not believe Bremen's sensational comeback.



# Micoud rises to give Bremen thrilling victory over Juventus

An injury-time header from Michaël Micoud gave Werder Bremen a sensational 3-2 victory over Juventus which leaves the Italian giants with work to do in the second leg of their Champions League round of 16 match.

## over Juventus

When Tim Borowski put the German side level in the 87th minute of a pulsating match, a 2-2 draw looked likely. But two minutes into injury-time, Micoud popped up with a header from a corner which rebounded in off Alessandro Del Piero on the goaline, sending the

because we were firing. "But it is a sign of our team that they always come back. And to create that many chances against a team like Juventus shows the quality of our play." Werder arguably deserved their victory after dominating the first half. Schulz converted their early superiority into a goal on 39 minutes when the defender found the net for the first time this season after the

Juve defence repeatedly failed to clear the ball following Ivan Klasnic's clever backheel. But former European Footballer of the Year Nedved ended an otherwise anonymous performance when the Czech collected a superb pass from Patrick Vieira to shoot high into the net on 73 minutes. Werder were rocked and from unpromising beginnings, Del Piero's cross bobbed off Werder's Brazilian defender Naldo and was headed in by the unmarked Trezeguet with 82 minutes gone.

# Mesmerising Messi helps Barca put the boot into Chelsea

In a sensational performance from Argentinian teenager Lionel Messi, Barcelona put a 2-

1 win over their Chelsea in another Stamford Bridge Champions League thriller. The victory sealed by

Cameroon striker Samuel Eto'o's header after Thiago Motta and John Terry had both scored own goals, leaves Barca as strong favourites to progress to the last eight after the second leg at the Camp Nou and claim revenge for their defeat in last season's fractious encounter between the two clubs.

Although Chelsea will protest bitterly over the first-half sending off of Asier del Horno, they could scarcely complain about the outcome. The Spaniards had been dominant since being sent before the onslaught of the Spanish full-back.

He was the third Chelsea footballer to be sent off in a 4-0 victory. Liverpool defender Fabio Coentrão had been sent off and Didier Drogba had been sent off in the first half.

Messi however was keen on sending a different message from the outset. It was clear del Horno was in for a tortuous evening courtesy

of the little Argentinian's dancing feet.

Skippering inside his marker, it was Messi who unleashed Barca's first strike on goal, a low effort which Peter Cech needed two attempts to gather.

Another surge into the box teed up Ronaldinho, who uncharacteristically hesitated when presented with a site of goal, allowing the Chelsea back four to snuff out the opening.

The worthy player of the year did better with a goal from the right-back (Drogba) by first-time slotting past Cech into the net in the 11th.

At the other end, Chelsea had been restricted at some promising early play that failed to generate any clear chances. And the home team's prospects of altering the one-sided pattern suffered a serious setback ten minutes from half-time.

Having once again got away from del Horno, Messi arrived inside Arjen Robben

only to be floored by a crude body-check from the Spain left-back.

Del Horno suffered as badly as Messi in the collision but that did not spare him a red card once the Norwegian referee, Terje Hauge, had consulted his linesman.

There can be few teams better equipped to make a numerical advantage count than Rijkaard's Barcelona, but it was Chelsea who led the second half more resolutely.

The penalty also came in the 10th as a result of Messi's dribble. The Argentine's dribbling effort and he with Chelsea's Roman and Hossa, were unable to defend. A 1-1 Chelsea counter had been down, a Ronaldinho surge out of his own half left their back four in trouble. The equaliser and the 1-1 were unchallenged as he rose to nod in Marquess's clip from the left-hand corner of the penalty area.

But the Germans were not dead, as Borowski nipped in front of Lilian Thuram to poke the ball past Gianluigi Buffon for the equaliser before

Micoud's late 73rd goal. Werder's realistic chance of reaching the last eight.

The home side could only have scored three times in a highly strung first half.

On 25 minutes a volley from the unmarked forward, Frimpong, had forced around the post by Buffon, who had no fault to find with his save from the Argentine's header.

Joseph M'Baye was on his third when he was sent off. When he was sent off, the Argentine's goal was raised as he had to defend. The Argentine's goal was raised as he had to defend.



Messi has been a thorn in the flesh of Chelsea defenders in Stamford Bridge.

# Sports

## AFTERMATH OF STAMFORD BRIDGE CRACKER

# Barcelona turns tables on Chelsea



UEFA  
CHAMPIONS  
LEAGUE

Del Horat

Barcelona will play Chelsea next month, secure in the knowledge that only a huge Champions League upset will deny them the quarter-final place. The 2-1 win at Stamford Bridge on Monday was a home advantage knock-out on Monday night.

Principal referee Terje Hauge made his decision, took much of the gloss off the match, however. Chelsea manager Jose Mourinho, who felt the referee's decision were wrong, was seen with a look of anger.

That match apart, the Premier League leaders Chelsea have a sorry Champions League away record, having lost all three away games at Stamford Bridge in March.

and Liverpool and suffered a surprise defeat in this season's group stage at Real Betis. Cuspo, who suffered the disappointment last year with AC Milan of losing the final on penalties to Liverpool after going 3-0 up.

managed some optimism, suggesting that with all against it Chelsea would have a chance to show their quality. "We have a great team and we will show it at the New Camp. Anything can happen," he said.



Miroslav Klose, left, and Bremen's match winner Tobias Micoud celebrate their victory over Juventus.

not be say about relying on our strengths. We have to go

Milan's 1-1 draw with Bayern Munich on Tuesday.

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# DAILY TRUST

FRIDAY COLUMN

Friday, February 24, 2006

## Mayhem in the name of God

By Adamu Adamu

Twenty years after the Kafanchan riots and a little over a decade after the last major eruption in Kaduna, the horde has launched another round of senseless slaughter in Maiduguri. Slaughter of human beings for whatever reasons is bad enough, but slaughter of human beings in the name of Islam is unacceptable. Both to the victims and, especially, to Muslims whose religion is being embarrassed and disfigured beyond recognition.

We were in faraway Qatar that cold Sunday morning when the call came through. A friend from Nigeria had rung to tell us that there were reports of crisis brewing in Maiduguri and Katsina. I almost did the *sajda al-shukr*, because I imagined that Nigerians, tired and fed up with the lack of representation by their "elected" members of the National Assembly, had decided to pour onto the streets and challenge the third term agenda where it would matter. Therefore, at the top of the hour, I quickly rushed back to the hotel room and switched to CNN to get the latest on what was happening.

What I heard almost made me die of grief. The reports said Muslims were demonstrating their distaste in the cartoon controversy in Nigeria, which was to be expected, but some churches had been burnt in Maiduguri, which was just too unfortunate. What had churches got to do with it? The Christian Association of Nigeria, even ahead of Muslim organizations in the country, had condemned the cartoons. His Holiness Pope Benedict VI had expressed solidarity with Muslims. Why should anyone attack churches or anything for that matter?

Of course, even at that time some people were suggesting that perhaps the authorities might have done this in order to change the agenda, which was said to be the third term. It all sounded to me as if the authorities were being accorded wisdom they did not possess. Yet even if this explanation were true, Muslims could not escape blame.

First, this was not the first time that Muslims had done this. Second, if it is not their agenda, why should they allow anybody to hide under the umbrella of Islam to perpetrate such a dastardly act in its name? Why should organized Islam always allow hooligans to set the agenda of dialogue with Christianity such that it is always confrontation, and the nation is always left busy trying to resolve conflicts? And failing? Why can't Muslims organize and pull off a successful demonstration like everybody is doing all over the world, without someone hijacking it? What on earth can they then do with success?

Third, the fact that Islam is a religion of peace does not mean that Muslims, especially in the context of these crises, have been peaceful. Therefore it cannot come in the nature of defence for Muslims to show that the etymology of the very name of their religion means peace.

Fourth, Muslim leadership has been painfully slow in condemning this crime, and meaning it. It sometimes seems as if the leadership of Muslims is so frightened of its followership that it can't even offer a condemnation, which is a good indication that the agenda is no longer under its control.

The happenings in Maiduguri are symptomatic of the failure of the Muslim Collective and its leadership in this country—or, more correctly, at least in the North—and it requires an urgent solution. From the Muslim Student Society, MSS, whose activists haven't yet imbibed the virtues of Muslim-Christian dialogue, the *ulama* who have, with few exceptions, retired to a corner of the *madrasah* while Islam is looking for their guidance in the marketplace, in the townships and in the arena where violence is unleashed and the traditional rulers who have washed their hands of the affair, and look on as their people kill each other because it is no longer their constitutional responsibility to keep the peace.

But we must ask what has happened to traditional and religious leadership in the North. Maiduguri has today become a flashpoint but 40 years ago, the then *Mai* of Borno, Shehu Umar el-Amin el-Kanemi became a hero for Islamic good neighbourliness when he protected all the Igbo people in his domain. What stops the emirs today from doing the same? Is it because they have no constitutional role?

But perhaps it is unfair to hold the true *ulama* and the emirs responsible for what is happening, because it can be argued that they don't have that constitutional responsibility for security. But the people who still listen to the emirs and the *ulama* do so and know that it is not because of the constitution that the emirs got their initial authority and prestige. And it is an abandonment of responsibility to allow matters to deteriorate to this level simply because they have no constitutional responsibility.

This, no doubt, is part of the reason why our crisis continues. In the North, those modernists who spearheaded the local government reforms tried to break the power of the emirs; and they succeeded, but they never put anything in their place. And with them went the effective security network that would have forestalled most of the crises bedeviling the nation today.

If there is another good reason why religious crises never seem to end in Nigeria, it is because no one has been punished for his involvement in any of the riots that have taken place and led to unnecessary loss of lives. That is why this time, if the government is serious and wishes to disabuse the minds of skeptics who wish to see its hands in the latest crisis, it must immediately identify and apprehend all the culprits involved and swiftly bring them to justice.

If they are found guilty, they should, by way of example to the public, be hanged in Maiduguri public square until they be dead.

As to the reprisals going on in Onitsha, Muslims in the North should perhaps not be surprised, considering what happened in Kano during the Plateau crisis of last year. Dying is the price these hapless souls had to pay for the stupidity of their brethren-in-faith. But all the same, it is wrong and unacceptable. Killing a Muslim or a Hausa man because another Muslim or Hausa man somewhere had committed murder is the height of madness and illogic, because there can never be vicarious liability for murder—or for any crime. The perpetrators of these killings must also be punished; otherwise this land will continue stumbling from one crisis to another.

Muslims must on their part answer the question: Who speaks on behalf of Islam? In other words, the *ulama*, the true and qualified representatives of Islam must rise up and begin to speak on behalf of the religion. However, if they choose to leave things in the hands of the pseudo-*ulama*, the mere turban-wearers, they should blame no one but



Victim of bullet wound being rushed to hospital in Katsina by Hizbah member.

themselves if we are all consumed by the inferno in which they will, sure as hell, land all of us. It is time for real soul-searching. And a time for being honest with ourselves.

Since 1967 when the first major spate of killings of non-Muslims occurred in the North, and of late when they have occurred with such frightening regularity, Muslims have always responded with a single refrain: Islam is the religion of peace. If today my Christian colleagues ask me whether this peace includes the killing of non-Muslims, I will not know what answer to give them.

And if they ask whether the government is also in agreement with what is happening, seeing that no one has ever been adequately punished for all the blood that has been spilt, I will not know what answer to give them.

Isn't it heart-rending for Muslims that their compatriots who live in their midst cannot expect plain good neighbourliness, justice and the doing of good for which this religion is so famous? As Colonel Abubakar Dangiwa Umar said 20 years ago, one would feel ashamed to be bracketed as belonging to the same religion with these murderers. If today one were to die of grief, no one should blame him.

I bow my head in shame and put up my hands in penitence and condolence to *Ndigo* and to all those non-Muslims who have had to suffer loss as a result of the stupid acts of those who, without knowing Islam, have become its vanguard.

All this scrawny, unkempt appearance, all this lack of compassion and all this hardness of heart, all this ignorance and lack of sophistication, is that the image that Islam has asked them to project? All this superficiality, all their literalist dogmatism, is this all there is to religion

for them?

They say Islam is the religion of knowledge. Where is the knowledge or its effect on their lives? They are always quick to say the Qur'anic revelation itself began with the word "Read," indicating that the basis of the religion is knowledge, as indeed it is. But what have they read? If they shun Western education, is Islamic knowledge also to be shunned?

They say they are the new revivalists and the new champions of the *Shariah*, yet if the true *Shariah* were to come today, don't they know that it would summarily trample them underfoot, and protectively embrace the Christians they are killing without just cause?

Agreed, Islam is the religion of peace, but this is not supposed to be some piece of theory to be quoted crisis after crisis. It is supposed to mean that you are *at peace* with God for having submitted to His Will, and *at peace* with God's creatures for having given them their rights as ordained by that Will, and *at peace* with yourself for discharging (or for having faithfully tried to discharge) your obligations. No doubt, Islam is the religion of peace, truth and justice; and Muslims are not permitted to deviate from these values under all circumstances, whatever the provocation. We have seen heroes rise in contexts similar to our own.

In 1947 as the partition fever bit hard between the emerging nation-states of India and Pakistan, a major conflict erupted between Muslims and Hindus over the disputed ownership of a piece of land as recently happened at Ayodhya; and bloody riots raged for several weeks. No solution appeared in sight.

With thousands killed on both sides, British colonialists, on the point of despair, called leaders of the two sides. First, they asked the Muslims whether they knew of any Hindu whom they trusted and on whose word they could depend to end the crisis. The Muslims said they didn't know of any such Hindu.

They then asked the Hindus if they knew a Muslim trustworthy enough to tell the truth under any circumstances and whose word could, in the circumstance, be relied upon as final. The Hindu leaders said they knew of only one Muslim *shaykh* who would fit the description, but they also knew that he would probably never wish to involve himself in such matters.

The British sent for him but he declined to come, saying that he had vowed never to set eyes on a white-man. They said he needn't have to see them but as a man of God, he should be anxious to help stop the carnage.

Later, after much prodding and in view of the blood that was being shed, he accepted to come. And he arrived blindfolded; and after taking off his blindfolds to see the exact perimeter of the piece of land in question, he declared that if this was the land in question on account of which thousands had been killed, it belonged to the Hindus.

A hush fell upon all those present, and a deafening silence descended upon the whole Indian sub-continent. The Hindus were disarmed and Muslims were shamed by the truth; and the conflict promptly stopped. Thousands of Hindus came to the *shaykh* in tears and embraced Islam that day.

Many said they did not know anything in their life or religion that could have so strengthened them to the extent that they could let down Hinduism in the manner the *shaykh* had let down Islam in its hour of need. "Whatever the Muslims would say, let them," he said. "The land belongs to the Hindus!" And he blindfolded himself and went home.

This is the type of Islam and perhaps the type of Christianity that is absent in this land. It will be difficult if there is any from the two religions who will "let it down" his side thus.

But taking a stand for justice and keeping the word of truth is something Muslims were taught quite early in the history of Islam long before its completion. Muslims had been taught to stand by their word when they gave it, and to be on the side of justice, whoever it is for or against.

In the second year after *Hijrah*, an invading force of Quraysh polytheists that had come to crush Islam was met by the Prophet [SAW] and his small band of believers outnumbered by the Quraysh more than three to one. That was Islam's most decisive day. But before hostilities commenced, some Muslims went to a nearby stream to quench their thirst and replenish supplies, and they were caught by a Quraysh reconnaissance team that threatened to kill them. Later, they allowed the Muslims to go after they had promised not to help the Prophet [SAW] in the fight.

The Muslims drank and filled their water skins. When they went back to the Prophet [SAW], they narrated what happened. They said they had to promise the Quraysh that they would not help him. He looked at them and said, "Surely today is the day Muhammad [SAW] needs help, but since you have given the Quraysh your word, you must never render any kind of help to us." The Prophet [SAW] excused them and told them to go back to Medina; and he would not even allow the Muslim troops to drink the water that they had brought.

This is the Islam that we wish to emulate in our lives and defend. Not the Islam of those who would commit murder in its name; not the Islam of those whose only contribution to the great religion is to embarrass it at every turn; not the Islam of those who hold the *Ummah* hostage on account of their foolishness; not the Islam of those Arabic-speaking idiots whose rhetoric laid the foundation of Christian-Muslim conflict in this land and who have set Muslim against Muslim, and who must not be allowed to set the agenda for Muslims; not the Islam of those state governors who play partisan politics with the *Shariah* of God, who cut off hands instead of filling them with food and provisions; people who will not recognise the *Shariah* when they meet it, but are today held up as its enforcers—persons, the entirety of whose lives runs in total opposition to the provisions of the *Shariah*—betrayers of trust and embezzlers of public funds.

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