

# DAILY TRUST

Trust Is A Burden

VOL. 1 NO. 50

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11, 2001

AL-MUHARRAM 17 1422 A.H.

N50

**RAKUD ENGINEERING LIMITED**  
 Your ultimate answer to electricity generator questions.  
 We are at: **Head Office:** No.9 France Road, Sabon Gari, P.O. Box 10443, Kano State Nigeria. Tel/Fax: 064-641408, 639712.  
**Kaduna Office:** X 16 Adamawa Road, P.O. Box 8565, Kaduna, Nigeria. Tel: 234-62-241256 Fax: 234-62-241262  
**Abuja Office:** Plot 466 Desmond Tutu Street, Asokoro Abuja - Nigeria. P.O. Box 2895, Abuja. Tel: 234-9-2342005. Fax: 234-9-3148033.

Wednesday Column  
**Mohammed Haruna on:  
 Resource Control:  
 The greed factor**  
 Pg. 5

Star Feature  
**The smiths of Bida**  
 Pg. 16

**LEMINGSWAY STORES**  
 A convenient spot for total shopping  
**Location:**  
 Leventis Close,  
 Central Area District, Abuja.  
 Tel: 09- 5239020

## KUTA REPORT

# Senate confirms Okadigbo, others guilty

The Senate has adopted the report of its harmonisation committee which upheld the Senator Idris Kuta report that indicted former Senate presidents Chuba Okadigbo, Evan Enwerem and other top members involved in the financial scam in the Senate.

**By Ibrahim Ndibbo and Reuben Yu.**  
 The committee headed by Senator Victor Oyofe was adopted by the Senate at its plenary session yesterday and has recommended that the criminal investigation aspect of the report of the Kuta panel be passed on to the appropriate federal agencies for action.

The committee agreed with all the submissions of the Kuta report which indicted Senators Chuba Okadigbo, Evan Enwerem,

Aluko, among others, maintaining that the Senators indicted and found culpable should be barred from any sensitive Senate position,

including chairmanship of the Oyofe harmonisation committee which began its assignment about five months ago, found former Senate president, Chuba

Okadigbo, wanting in not only "using anticipatory approval but a violation of procedure whereby anticipatory approvals were also accomplished." *contd. on pg 2*

### Forgers of VP's letter-head nabbed

A 32-year-old lawyer, Mohammed Suleiman, a computer analyst, Momodu Ishaka and two others, were arrested yesterday in Abuja for forging the letter-head of Vice President Atiku Abubakar.

Luck ran out on the four men when they tried to use the forged paper to secure a N30 million contract from the National Hospital in Abuja.

Speaking when the suspects were paraded at the villa, the Deputy Chief Press Secretary to the Vice President, Mr. *contd. on pg 2*

### Why I joined the ACF, by Gen. Gowon

Former Head of State, General Yakubu Gowon, has explained that he decided to join the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) and agreed to lead it because of his conviction in a united Nigeria.

Gowon who was Nigeria's head of state for

**From Dare Oyewole, Kaduna**  
 nine years, explained his decision to join the Pan-Arewa organisation while inaugurating the Advisory Council of the forum in Kaduna yesterday. He said the unity of the country which depended *contd. on pg 2*



**BEFORE:** Jamuna Shrestha, top, and her Siamese twin sister, Ganga, are pictured before the operation to separate them, in this undated family photo obtained Monday April 9, 2001. Pix: AP Photo.

**AFTER:** A 90-hour operation in Kathmandu hospital in Singapore separated Nepali twin girls joined at the head, on April 9, 2001. The Singapore General Hospital where the complicated and delicate procedure took place says 11-month-old Ganga and Jamuna Shrestha are in good condition after the lengthy operation. *PR: REUTERS*



### 'You are thieves,' Obasanjo tells LGs

President Olusegun Obasanjo has passed a vote of no confidence on the administrative style of most local government councils, saying their actions "leave much to be desired, in spite

**By Suleiman Mohammed**  
 of the increase in fiscal allocations."

The president lamented the corrupt nature of most local government councils saying that they had engen-

### Six killed in police, Fulani clash

No fewer than five Hanagamba Fulanis and a police Inspector have been confirmed dead in a clash between the Hanagambas and the police in Maiduguri yesterday.

**From Abdullahi Bego, Maiduguri**  
 teargas.

In a chat with journalists, *contd. on pg 2*

The clash which took place around Leventis area within Maiduguri metropolis, led to the closure of many businesses as people took to their heels due to the sound of gunfire and the smoke of

dered so much criticism that the Federal Government was being warned that "this may be a particularly difficult front for the war against corruption."

President Obasanjo voiced his anger yesterday over the non-performance of local government councils in delivering democracy dividends at the launching of the Global Campaign for Good Urban Governance in Nige- *contd. on pg 2*

### APOLOGY

Many readers have drawn our attention to persistent proof-reading errors in some of our editions. These have gone beyond the usual excuse of 'Printers Devil.' I want to personally apologise for these lapses and to assure our readers that even if these mistakes were caused by the devil himself, we will take decisive steps to weed them out. Once again, my sincere apologies. *-Editor-in-Chief.*

# NEWS

largely on the unity of all its component parts and peoples, was his paramount concern.

With specific reference to criticisms which trailed his appointment as the national leader of the forum, Gowon said: "all discerning political observers or commentators would attest to the truth that the unity of the various groups that make up Nigeria, the north inclusive, irrespective of their states of origin, is a critical factor for the unity of Nigeria as a whole."

General Gowon who is also the chairman of the forum's board of governors, stated that "among the many

lessons we continue to learn, cherish and employ as we develop into a true nation, was that of unity in diversity."

According to him, the bedrock of our existence in the country was the constant quest for peace and stability of our country.

"We, in the north, have the rare privilege of appreciating this by virtue of the remarkable atmosphere of brotherhood and solidarity witnessed in the years past, especially under the able leadership of our past leaders like the Sardauna of Sokoto, Sir Ahmadu Bello.

"As the first and only

premier of Northern Nigeria, the Sardauna bequeathed to us values, which are very much needed today as a result of glaring political disunity and discord prevalent amongst the people of the north with dire consequences," he said.

The former Head of State said that it was this conviction that informed his willingness to be identified with the laudable effort of bring together the people on the north under the auspices of the ACF in the overall quest for national unity and integration.

In his speech, the Kaduna State governor, Alhaji

Ahmed Mohammed Makarfi, who represented his 18 colleagues, extolled the virtues of the founding

fathers of the forum and advised the members not to allow their political and personal differences to

separate them.

The Advisory Council consists of 40 members with Alhaji Yahaya Gusau as chairman.

## ACF contd. from pg 1

## Six killed contd. from pg 1

the Borno State Commissioner of Police, Alhaji Uba Bala Ringim, said the clash followed an attempt by policemen from the Dandal police station to investigate a complaint of assault lodged by a Hanagamba Fulani.

According to Ringim, two policemen were sent to invite the Hanagamba Fulanis who allegedly assaulted the complainant to the station but the Hanagambas resisted and used bows and arrows to

attack the policemen, injuring one in the process.

The Commissioner of Police added that mobile policemen were later drafted to intervene but the Hanagambas again attacked them using bows and arrows and injuring three other policemen and killing a police inspector.

The Hanagambas are said to be a Fulani stock from the Republic whose main occupation is to provide

private security services to people.



Gov. Kachalla

Butrous Pemb, said that doubts on the authenticity of the paper started when the Chief Medical Director (CMD) of the hospital raised questions about a letter of introduction which Suleiman submitted to him.

In the letter, which bore a forged signature of the Vice President's Director of Protocol, Abubakar Zana, Suleiman was introduced as an employee in Abubakar's office and somebody with whom the hospital could do

business with.

Pemb, who said the same letter presented to Suleiman as an employee of the Vice President's office, explained that the CMD was not convinced with its content and, as such, got in touch with Abubakar's office and booked an appointment to see both the letter and Suleiman.

At the meeting, it was discovered that Suleiman was not from the Vice President's office and was arrested when

he could not identify or recognise any of the officers from that same office. Pemb said.

To forestall future occurrence, Pemb appealed to Nigerians to report the receipt of introductory letters from officials of the Vice President, saying that such acts have been banned.

On how the others got involved, Suleiman who hails from Jigawa State said the idea was floated by the computer analyst who showed

him samples of letter-heads that could be used for the deal.

According to him, the others, Niyi Adesoye and Adeyemi Faheli, were in police net for being the printers who reproduced the sample used to write the introductory letter to the National Hospital.

Speaking on why he took to such illegality, Suleiman, who said the graduated from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, explained that he was

pushed by the urge to raise money to pay the hospital bills of his sick mother.

Although Suleiman denied ever requesting for a N30 million contract, he claimed that he only requested for financial assistance based on the fake introductory letter he presented to the CMD on the National Hospital.

He expressed regret that the criminal engagement

would cost him his Law School Certificate, which he said, was still with the institution.

Items which include a computer monitor, a server, a key board and a locally-made printer, belonging to an Abuja-based Simbel Computer Investment Company, were seized from the suspects.

## Senate contd. from pg 1

panied by approval for payment of between 50% to 100% of the contract sum before seeking ratification of the approval which is contrary to a maximum payment of 25% which the regulation allowed."

The committee also observed that the contract on which N173 million was awarded for the linking up of the Senate building to the Eagle Square, must be considerably less than the N57 million which the Federal Capital Development Authority FCDA evaluated.

It also cited the case of N32 million for the purchase of eight additional cars which were not accounted for and reasoned that "if there are no cars, there must be the money."

According to the committee the former Senate President Dr. Chuba Okadigbo, collected N12.2 million for furnishing, over and above the N25 million provided for in the regulations and guidelines.

The committee which also indicted former Deputy Senate President, Haruna Abubakar, for allegedly offering inducement to panel members, said "we find him also unfit to hold an office of

Abubakar, apart from prevailing on the Director of Finance and Supply to insure vehicles with the Royal Exchange Assurance instead of NICON as stipulated, also pressurised the Senate President to approve the payment of N21 million to the Assurance Company.

The committee noted that Haruna was the initiator and the brain behind the welfare package of N22 million to the president of the Senate and N16 million to himself. The committee also wants the former Deputy Senate President to refund the N14 million he collected to furnish his official quarters or the furniture.

The committee also recommended that former Senate President Evan Ewerem be held to refund the N25 million collected by him for furniture or alternatively produce the said furniture.

The Oyofo committee also agreed with the Kuta panel on its findings on Senator Gbenga Aluko.

It said "we also find it reprehensible to himself and to companies owned by his wife and relatives. We studied his defence and could not find any merit in it to overturn the panel's report.

Girei wanting on the purchase of Sallah rams and cows and directed that the issue of consultants for the phase III project should still be investigated.

The committee also upheld the Kuta report on Senators Rowland Owie, Florence Ita Giwa, Salisu Matori and Mohammed Aruwa.

However, a member of the committee, Senator Danladi Bamaiyi, has dissociated himself from the reports of the committee.

Speaking moments before the presentation of the report, Bamaiyi told the Senate that he was sidelined by other members.

Said he: "Mr President, I am a member of that committee and I want to make a report. I was deliberately sidelined during the sittings of that committee. I therefore want to disassociate myself entirely from the report of the committee and to withdraw my membership of the committee."

However, Bamaiyi was overruled by the Senate President who noted that other members were in agreement. As a result, Senator Bamaiyi stormed out of the chambers.

He later told Daily Trust: "I will not be a party to it. I

committee. Nobody can use me to settle scores. I have a name to protect. I have a family name."

In his reaction, former Senate President, Dr. Chuba Okadigbo, described the whole episode as a charade because the Senate President disregarded all rules. His words: "The rules of Senate rule have been broken; rules 45, rule 73, 74, all these have been broken. I drew the attention of the Senate President but he completely overruled them."

He stressed that Senate rules could only be rescinded by two-third majority saying, the action was illegal and unparliamentary.

Also speaking, Gbenga Aluko, another Senator indicted in the report, said the report should have been sent to an independent body for harmonisation. According to him, the police and the office of the Attorney General would have handled the issue better.

"That was why we took the matter to court through an injunction. So, that a court can look at the issue dispassionately. "If we are not satisfied with the decision of the high court, we should head to the Appeal Court, up to

## You are thieves contd. from pg 1

ria. Aside corruption, he said, his administration is faced with many obstacles to good governance.

"It is my sincere hope that this campaign for good urban governance will activate the sense of duty and service that our elected officials owe to the citizens who trusted them with their votes," he declared.

According to him, some of the impending problems at the grassroots level include the lack of concern by local governments in economic prosperity, employment opportunities and the general social welfare of citizens in towns and cities.

"There is lack of effectively coordinated city-wide municipal administrative structures, especially involving the wards and the neighbourhoods; both human and material resources are often mismanaged, and corruptly dispensed," he noted.

President Obasanjo described as appalling, the over-dependence of local governments on fiscal support from the central government, adding that city dwellers, who are the stakeholders in urban governance are not generally consulted or encouraged to have a say in matters that affect their lives through decisions of the lo-

"These obstacles are challenges which must be met through collaboration among all tiers of government. We can only succeed if our policies and actions are based on the principles of justice, accountability, love and care," he declared.

While assuring of government's commitment to the welfare of all Nigerians, President Obasanjo said the drift from rural to urban centres has so far brought the figure of urban centres to 450, adding that by the year 2010, population at urban centres would surpass the number of people living in rural areas.

The occasion which was organised by the United Nations centre for human settlements (Habitat) at the instance of the Nigerian Government, was part of the advocacy approach to facilitate implementation of the habitat agenda focussing on good urban governance and secure tenure as goals for achieving adequate shelter for all.

The Director-General of the UN Centre for Human Settlements, Mrs. Anna Kajumulo Tibaijok, described Lagos as the sixth most populated urban centre in the world, adding that three cities, Kano, Enugu and Ibadan, have been chosen for

NEWS

# NNPC indicts Agip, Texaco, others for diversion

The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) has uncovered another diversion of petroleum products by 16 products marketing companies. This brings to two the cases of products diversion uncovered by the NNPC in recent times.

The corporation had early last month reported that 76 products marketing companies, comprising three majors and 73 independents diverted 164 truck-loads of petroleum products loaded from its Lagos and Port

By Ahmed Shekarau

Harcourt depots bound for the Suleja depot.

In yet another round of discoveries, the NNPC reported yesterday in Abuja that 16 marketers, made up of two majors and 14 independents have diverted 23 trucks of petrol loaded from its depots in Ibadan, Ejigbo, Warri and Kaduna, to be off-loaded at Gusau.

A statement issued by NNPC's manger, Group Public Affairs, Ndu Ughamadu, said "the products lifted between February 26

and March 19 this year," but were yet to be delivered more than 20 days after. The marketers are expected to deliver products loaded from any NNPC depot to any part of the country within three days.

The statement listed the names of the 16 marketers to include Agip and Texaco (major), which diverted four

and two trucks respectively. The list of 14 marketers include Sosco and Amajir, which diverted three and two trucks respectively, while the remaining 12 diverted one truck-load of petrol each.

Prominent among the other 12 independent marketers are: Kamba Oil, Maiturare, Sassand, Altine Oil, Dan Sule Susa, A.S.

Ahazza, Magawa and Marnawa oil.

The NNPC, which described as "unfortunate," the increasing fuel diversion and smuggling being recorded by marketers in spite of efforts to ensure regular supply of the products said "appropriate sanctions on companies found guilty."



Obaseki

## NECO registrar calls for more exam bodies

The registrar of the National Examinations Council (NECO), Prof. Dibu Ojerinde, has advocated the establishment of more examination bodies in the country for the conduct of the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examinations.

Ojerinde told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Ibadan, that the establishment of more examination bodies would further break the monopoly being enjoyed by the existing ones and effectively handle the increasing population of students sitting for the examinations.

He disclosed that this year alone, about 1.5 million candidates would be writing the SSC examination, adding that in the next five years, the population would have increased to about four million annually.

He declared: "going by the current enrolment into the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme within the next five to 10 years, Nigeria would be registering about four million candidates for the SSC examination." NECO or WAEC alone cannot continue to conduct examinations for four million candidates, he stressed.

He stated that in some part of the world, numerous bodies were involved in the conduct of examinations.

He cited South Africa as a country with 12 examination bodies and Britain where four to six examination bodies annually conducted examinations for only about 500,000 candidates.

"If by chance I become the minister of Education to-

morrow, I will make sure that at least there is a minimum of six examination bodies conducting the SSC examination"

Ojerinde said that NECO's activities had been computerised to enable the council to meet the enormity of its assignment.

The registrar also said that the certificates for the SSC examination conducted last year were ready, adding that the council had given schools up to May 15, to identify any discrepancy that might have occurred in the procedures adopted for the conduct of the examination.

He explained that there were instances where candidates either misspelt their names or registered for wrong subjects.

He said that if by May 15, no complaints were received from the schools, the council would start releasing the certificates.

## Senate passes vote of confidence in Anyim

The Senate yesterday passed a vote of confidence in the leadership of Pius Anyim despite allegations of inflation of contracts and other misdeeds levelled against him.

The confidence vote was the sequel to a motion moved by Senator Jonathan Zwingina who condemned the allegations, saying they were the handiwork of "our colleagues who are apparently dissatisfied with the committees they were assigned to."

The allegations which were contained in a document circulated to journalists accused the senate leadership of the award of contracts worth N917million for the purchase of Peugeot 406 and 607 cars the payment for which was made through an-

By Reuben Yunana



Anyim

tipatory approval.

According to the document, this violates the financial guidelines of the National Assembly which stipulates that all contracts worth N20 million and above should be approved by the body of principal officers.

Other allegations include the payment of allowances and cash advances to the

spouses of senate presiding officers and bogus sums paid to the Senate President and his aides as estacode and air tickets.

However, moving his motion yesterday, Senator Zwingina said "it is very sad and disheartening that our colleagues should manufacture such stories with intent to cause disaffection among senators, similarly ridiculing the senate in the eyes of the public and damaging the reputation of the senate."

He said it was irresponsible of the senators whom he did not name to "attempt to malign the Senate and its leadership," for decisions collectively and democratically taken.

He explained that the decision to purchase the cars was collectively taken while

the budget for the Calabar retreat, and several other expenditures were thoroughly discussed and agreed to by all senators.

He said the documents were aimed at intimidating the senate into abandoning the Kuta report, pointing out that senators indicted by the report were responsible.

Concluding, Zwingina urged the senate to:

- Condemn in its entity the activities of these few senators.
- Condemn the circulated documents to the press a fictitious anonymous and in bad faith,
- Affirm decisions democratically reached by the senate in both executive and open session,
- Pass a vote of confidence in the leadership of the senate,
- If that when this aspect of the motion is seconded take the vote by division, and
- Request the harmonisation committee on the Kuta report to complete its works.

Senators unanimously voted in support of the motion. When the disicion was taken, 84 senators voted yes, one abstained while 26 were absent.

## 10,000 policemen to be employed every quarter—Gana

The Federal Government has mandated the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) to recruit 10,000 policemen every quarter to boost security in the country, Information and National Orientation minister, Prof. Jerry Gana, has said.

Gana, who addressed information attaches in Lokoja,

said that recruitment had already begun nationwide. He said that apart from the recruitment, government had provided money in this year's budget for the provision of sophisticated security and communication gadgets to properly equip the police in fighting crime.

"We have budgeted heavily for defence and the

security sector to give them professional training," Gana stressed.

"All we are doing is to make sure that lives and property of Nigerians and visitors are secured," Gana said, adding that "we are making the country secure, thereby encouraging investors."

## Abuja High Court strikes out case on rights infringement

An Abuja High Court, presided over by Justice Mudasiru Oniyangi, yesterday struck out an infringement on fundamental human rights case instituted against the Attorney-General of the Federation by one Bala Garba and eight others.

Striking out the case, Oniyangi said that both counsels in the case were not in court and that they were also not represented.

He said, "the only reasonable deduction in the circumstance is that the applicants are no longer interested in the pursuance of the application."

Oniyangi said that at the last adjourned date, counsel to the applicant, Mr. Odey

Obole, and the respondent's counsel, Mr. Taiwo Osinlu, agreed to be in the court yesterday for resumption of the case.

Garba and his colleagues, all of whom were said to be in detention without trial at the Kuje Prisons near Abuja since 1994, challenged their ordeal in court, protesting the abuse of their human rights by the Attorney-General of the Federation.

They were arraigned before an Abuja chief magistrate court in 1996, for culpable homicide and were refused bail and ordered to be remanded in prison custody pending the commencement of their trial.



L-R: Paul Taylor, head, Urban Development branch, Global Division, Nairobi, Dr. (Mrs.) Anna Kajumulo, executive director, United Nations, Nairobi, Kenya, Mr. Garba Madaki Ali, Minister of Works and Housing and Ambassador Fidelis Tappun at the Global Campaign for Good Urban Governance in Nigeria, in Abuja, ... recently. Pix Kennedy Egbonodje

NEWS

# PDP council chairman removed for diverting cow

The chairman, People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Ohimini Local Government area of Benue State, Mr. Joseph Okodeje, has been removed from office for allegedly diverting a cow given to party supporters by the state governor, for his personal use.

This action which provoked the party supporters, made elders of the party call an emergency congress meeting where they deliberated on the matter with a resolution to pass a vote of no confidence on Mr. Okodege.

The removal of Mr. Okodege as chairman of the local government which has already received the blessing of Chief Barnabas Gemade, the party's national chairman, saw the immediate election and replacement of the former chairman by Chief Sule Elaigwu.

Apart from the cow, other reasons given by the party leaders for the chairman's removal include the alleged diversion to other uses, of the sum of N40,000 presented to the party as scholarship money by Rep.

By Ibrahim Modibbo

Olepo Adah Ejiga, a member representing Otukpo/Ohimini Federal Constituency of the state.

A press statement sent to *Daily Trust* and signed by Chief Sule Elaigwu of the Ohimini Consultative Forum accused the former chairman of manipulating contract awards to the detriment of other party members in the local government as well as

engaging only his blood relations in the Poverty Alleviation Programme of the government.

The chairman also called on law enforcement agents to arrest and prosecute Mr. Okodege for allegedly inciting his supporters to destroy the party's newly erected signboard and burning down both the national and party flags hoisted at the party's secretariat.

# Obasanjo approves distribution of grains to Plateau - Dariye

President Olusegun Obasanjo has approved the release of 17,000 bags of assorted grains for distribution to the 17 local government areas of Plateau State.

The state governor, Chief Joshua Dariye, who disclosed this while addressing the 23 districts conference of the Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA) last Friday in Jos, said that the grains would be released from the intervention of Federal Government reserve.

He said that the decision by the Federal Government

to release the grains was borne out of its desire to ameliorate the hardship being experienced by the people, particularly the common man, in purchasing the commodity as well as to stem the tide of high cost of food stuff in the country. Dariye used the occasion to appeal to the clergy for prayers against the devilish activities of men of the underworld and other negative acts by people who do not wish the state well.

Earlier, the chairman of the 23 districts, Rev. Banda Sambo, appealed to the state government to rehabilitate

The former military administrator of Bauchi and Sokoto States, Navy Captain Rasheed Raji, at the weekend, described as erroneous, the widely held belief that the Nigerian military destroyed the country.

Speaking as a guest of honour at the Ogun NUJ "Guest Nite" held at the Iwe-Ironyin Press Centre at Oke-Ilewo, Abeokuta, Raji declared that rather than castigating them, Nigerians should be grateful to the military for keeping the country united and ensuring its stability.

# Ex-administrator defends former military regimes

Raji emphasised that the various military administrations had contributed to the structural development of the country, adding that all the major infrastructure available in virtually all spheres of the Nigerian nation were the achievements of the military.

"The military achieved more than what the civilians did in the first and second republics. Also the civilians know the worth of the military. That is why they always run to them to come and salvage the situation whenever things are going wrong in the country," Raji said.

The former administrator however, ruled out the possibility of military intervention in the nation's polity in future, pointing out that people are more enlightened now than before and that civilians have recognised the need to make democracy work while the military too, want to stick to professionalism.

According to him, every

society, be it military or civilian, has bad eggs and the actions of a few should not be used as yardstick to judge



The late Gen. Sani Abacha

all.

The retired Navy Captain, who has joined the PDP in Ogun State disclosed that he is in politics as a mark of "esprit de corps" for President Olusegun Obasanjo, who is also a former military head of state.

He stressed that the president is determined to make the country a better place and surely deserves the support of all Nigerians to get to the promised land.

the road leading to the ECWA secondary school as well as provide it with social amenities.



Gov. Dariye

# FG declares Friday and Monday public holidays

The Federal Government has declared Friday, April 13 and Monday, April 16, 2001 as public holidays, to enable Christians to celebrate good Friday and Easter Monday.

A statement issued by the Minister of Internal Affairs in Abuja, enjoined all Nigerians, irrespective of their religious beliefs, to embrace peace and re-dedicate themselves in the cause of building a strong, united and vir-

ile nation. "The Minister of Internal Affairs, Chief Sunday Afolabi, on behalf of the Federal Government, sends sincere and warm greetings to Christians at home and abroad as well as foreign friends residing in the country," the statement said.

It also urged all Nigerians to support the administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo, so that the masses could benefit from the "laudable programmes of the administration."

# Nigeria condoles China on death of pilot

Nigeria has condoled China on the death of a Chinese pilot following the collision involving an American spy aircraft and a Chinese fighter jet last week.

The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Chief Dubem Onyia conveyed this

By Kevin Ebele Adinnu

not be allowed to happen again.

The Chinese ambassador earlier told the minister that the collision took place in

China's exclusive economic zone.

As Mr. Yin Zhu put it, the American spy plane "rammed and brought down a Chinese jet fighter, illegally entered into the Chinese air-

space and landed on the Chinese territory without permission."

He blamed the US for the incident, insisting that it should apologise to the Chinese government rather than making all kinds of "unreasonable demands."

"This fully reveals the United State's hegemonistic nature," he observed.

# 178 people die of measles in Sokoto

The Medical Director of the Sokoto State Ministry of Health, Dr. Abubakar Maishanu, has said that 178 people lost their lives to measles since the beginning of this year.

Disclosing this in an exclusive interview with *Daily Trust* in Sokoto recently, Dr. Maishanu explained that the figure was collected from all the 23 local government areas of the state. He also disclosed that 44 cases of cerebro-spinal meningitis (CSM) were reported within the same period, seven of which resulted to death of the victims.

The medical director said his ministry had planned an exclusive media and house-to-house campaign to en-

From Kabir Dogon Daji, Sokoto

According to Alhaji Maishanu, N5.8 million had already been earmarked for the enlightenment campaign and the procurement of drugs and vaccines as an interim measure in collaborative efforts between the state and local government areas.

He pointed out that the state government had donated N2.4 million while local governments had made good, their own commitment of N3.6 million. Dr. Maishanu said Shagari Local Government Area was worst hit, adding that donations had been received from national and international agencies, including the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the



Lamido

message while receiving in audience, the Chinese Ambassador to Nigeria, Mr. Liang Yiuzhu.

Chief Onyia said that the Nigerian government was still appraising the circum-



(L-R) National Secretary of the All People's Party (APP) Chief George N. Moghalu, Senator Lawan Shua'ibu, and Senator Ali Madu Sheriff.



## Kofi Annan's second term bid

**"I**f member states decide to offer me a second term as Secretary-General, I shall be deeply honoured to accept". This was how Kofi Annan announced his bid for another five-year term as Secretary-General characteristically tempering his ambition with diplomatic finesse.

It is a pleasant surprise and somewhat paradoxical, that the United States speedily endorsed Annan's heart's desire, especially when one remembers the tension and suspense that trailed the exit of Egyptian Boutros-Boutros Ghali, Annan's predecessor. The same US had wielded the big stick of its veto power to cut Ghali's ambition mid-stream.

When the caucus of African ambassadors at the United Nations raised the campaign for five more years for Kofi Annan last month, not a few chuckled knowing that Africa will have completed two five-year terms by end of Annan's first term.

The backing of the United States and the decision by the Asian bloc not to present a competitor for the position, is no doubt a welcome news to the Annan campaign organisers.

However, no one has up till now read with certainly the mindset of other veto-wielding members of the UN Security Council whose votes can make or mar Annan's ambition. This is all the more important given that the temperature of international politics has been heated up since George W. Bush came to power in the United States. This has raised the spectre of a revival of the cold war.

On assuming office in 1997, Annan promised to transform the organisation from a behemoth bogged down by bureaucracy to one with unity of purpose and greater efficiency in responding to an increasingly dynamic and complex world situation.

Five years after, Annan is credited with successes that include restoring relative peace in East Timor and to the Ethiopian-Eritrean border war.

With the arrest of high-profile war crimes suspects from Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia under Annan's tenure, the International War Crime Tribunal now brims with respect. Annan received accolades from his diplomatic moves that averted military action and defused tension in the stand-off between Iraq and UN over the inspection of Iraqi weapons. Although it was the US that made his ascension to the top position possible, he boldly asked US to pay-up the world body its debt of \$1.3bn dollars without bruising neither himself nor the US. All these have been attributed to his diplomatic skill and moral authority.

Nevertheless, it has not been all roses for Annan in the past five years as Secretary-General. The UN could not stop NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) from bombing Kosovo. Iraq blocked UN inspection of suspected weapons sites in her territory. The United States and the United Kingdom embarked on a bombing campaign against Iraq in disregard of the UN. Sierra Leonean rebels, in 2000, captured UN soldiers on a peacekeeping mission there while Russia barred the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, from investigating alleged human rights abuses in Chechnya. Annan was forced to publicly apologise for UN's failure to prevent genocide in the Balkans and Rwanda.

All these notwithstanding, analysts believe Kofi Annan, now 62, is the most charismatic and most acceptable leader of the UN after Hammerskjold, the Swede-born Secretary-General, who died in a plane crash in 1961 in Africa.

Annan is the first Secretary-General of the UN to be elected from within the bureaucracy of the world body. Before his election, he was Under-Secretary general of the body, having served the body for over 30 years in various capacities.

Daily Trust believes the UN would be better for it with another five years of this pre-eminent diplomat as Secretary-General.

## WEDNESDAY COLUMN

# Resource control: The greed factor

By Mohammed Haruna

**C**all it what you will, but in plain language all the fancy talk about "Resource Control" is nothing but an epic battle over who controls one resource and one resource only - oil. Should it continue to be the federal government which has done so since oil business became serious business in the late sixties, or should it be the six oil-rich Southern States that have suffered enormous environmental degradation and benefited little from the exploitation of oil?

As in all ways, both sides have tried to dress their case with high-sounding principles. The federal side says what is at stake is the constitutionality of the demand by the oil-rich states. It does concede that there is a political dimension to it - Chief Bola Ige, the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice of the federation, has said the Supreme Court ruling will not be the final word - but the federal government insists the court's ruling is a necessary prelude to any political negotiations.

While the federal side hides behind the constitution, the oil-rich states say the heart of the matter is not just the constitution, which they believe is, in any case, on their side. To them, the heart of the matter is justice. Justice, they insist, demands that they should be the greatest, if not the sole, beneficiaries of the resources (for which read oil) under their soil.

The battle over resource control has, in other words, been reduced, in rather oversimplified terms, to one of constitutionality versus justice. But this is not the only oversimplification surrounding the issue. The *Policy* newsmagazine, for example, sees the issue in the usual perspective of North-South dichotomy. "Aso Rock and the Northern hawks" it said on its cover of March 19 - 25, "have teamed up against 'Southern Governors sharks' for what the magazine regarded as the 'biggest government championship belt'".

For Professor Omo Omoruyi, the perspective is even simpler. For him, it is of majority versus minority ethnic groups. "As I stated since 1980", the *Sunday Vanguard* of April 8 quotes him as arguing, "if oil were found in Kano or Enugu or Abeokuta, the ownership would not be in dispute".

Each of these three perspectives - Constitutionality versus Justice, South versus North, Majority versus Minority - has some degree of validity. The trouble with them, however, is that each of their canvassers believe only their own perspective is correct and every one else's is wrong. For clearly selfish reasons, each of the canvassers chooses to ignore the simple fact that in real life there are always several points of view to an issue and the only way to achieve a balanced point of view on any issue is to take as many of all the points of view as possible into consideration in the search for a solution.

Subjective as it may seem, the fact remains, however, that some points of view have

more validity than others. To me, of all the three perspectives I have mentioned, Omoruyi's sounds the most valid. The way the three majority ethnic groups in the country - the so-called Hausa-Fulani, the Igbo and the Yoruba - have dominated our politics, thanks presumably to their numbers, there is no doubt that there would have been no debate as to who owns oil, if it had been discovered under their lands.

Even then that does not make Omoruyi's perspective the only correct perspective. This perspective ignores at least two major factors. First, is the fact that the defence of the territorial integrity of Nigeria is the responsibility, not of each state, but of the federal government through the country's armed forces. What, therefore, is at stake here is not just the country's natural resources but human lives as well. Needless to say, blood is thicker than oil. As Alhaji Ismaila Isa, the president Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN), told *Thisday* the other day, the oil-rich states which now say oil must belong exclusively to them should remember that there is no price for the blood of hundreds of thousands of Nigerians from non-oil states shed during our civil war to keep Nigeria one.

There is, of course, nothing sacrosanct about Nigeria's unity. Like all the nations of the world, it is the creature of Man i.e. it is artificial. But in so far as its citizens agree to keep it as one, then we must share our resources. There may be disputes over the sharing formula, but there can be no dispute over the principle that we must share and share alike.

Second, is the unique nature of oil itself. Almost alone of all our natural and other material resources, its wealth is virtually unworked for. In a rather defensive interview with *Tempo* (March 22), Chief Bola Ige said even though he has taken the federal government case on resource control to the Supreme Court, he has sympathy for the oil-rich states in their demand for control over oil. "He who does not work," he said, "shall not eat, simple. And those who produce must eat a lot". This is a sentiment any fair-minded person will share. However, the trouble with oil is that it is not Nigerians who produce it.

As the *New Nigerian* pointed out nearly 27 years ago in an editorial I referred to last week, it is foreigners who employ their capital and skill (and technology it might as well have added) to exploit oil and all we do is to collect huge taxes and royalties. Because oil wealth, unlike say agricultural wealth, is virtually unworked for, it makes any exclusive claim to it on grounds of merely sitting on it rather dubious at best.

No doubt, a very strong case can be made for compensation due to environmental degradation, because such degradation does deprive the owners of the oil-rich lands and adjoining waters of their means of livelihood. But to stretch this point to exclusive ownership of oil is to push the deprivation

argument too far.

As I said a while ago, you may look at the resource control issue from any of the three perspectives I have outlined and you will be right up to a point. I have argued that the limiting factors include the exclusive responsibility of the Nigerian armed forces to defend the country's territorial integrity and the unique nature of oil wealth as easy wealth.

The second factor is the source of the danger that oil poses to the very existence of Nigeria. Oil has become a source of so much easy money that, majority and minority alike, our power elite is only too willing to use every subterfuge to control it. Stripped of all the pretensions about constitutionality, about justice, about national unity and the rest of it, greed, truth be told, has been the propelling factor in the battle over oil. But for the greed of our power-elite, even with the current revenue allocation formula, oil money would have gone a long way in eradicating the abject poverty most Nigerians suffer from.

It is indeed a great tragedy that greed is the real reason behind all this war over oil. It is tragic, because ultimately oil is not worth all that hassle. First, it is a wasting asset. With our daily production of 2.2 million barrels and with a current reserve of 22 billion, our oil will be gone in a little over 30 years. Of course, we could discover more oil and there is also the accompanying gas whose reserve is probably bigger than oil's. But no matter how big the reserve, it cannot be more useful to us than the land and soil beneath which it lies. Remember the Japanese and the Singaporeans, for example, have no oil, but they are among the richest in the world. The difference, of course, is that they have worked hard and continue to work hard for their wealth.

Second, not only is oil a wasting asset, it is obviously less important than food. Agriculture produces food so agriculture should get at least as much attention as oil since, despite its neglect and its consequent decline, its contribution to the Gross Domestic Product remains more than twice that of oil. It is also the sector on which nearly 2/3 of our population depend for their livelihood. This is such elementary economics, it is truly amazing how we have allowed

ourselves to become slaves to oil money.

The other day, for example, Chukwuma Nwokoh, who should know better as the news editor of *The Guardian on Sunday*, tried to ridicule my oft-stated argument about the relative importance of agriculture vis-à-vis oil by wondering where I got my statistics from. "Where he got his statistics", Nwokoh said, "must be from voodoo land given that one of the elemental (by which Nwokoh obviously meant elementary) knowledge about the Nigerian economy is that it is monocultural - depending on oil. Perhaps Haruna saw economic statistics of the late 1960s". (*The Guardian on Sunday*, April 18, 2000).

If Nwokoh had cared to check with our Central Bank and with such organizations as the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria, he would have discovered that, in spite of oil's contribution to our Current Account and to our annual budgets, among other things, Nigeria remains much more dependent on agriculture than on oil. Unfortunately, we have become so greedy for easy oil money nothing else seems to matter.

However, greed or no greed, the fact is that the federal government has control over too much oil money for the health of Nigeria as a federation. Through what clearly is the subterfuge of so-called First Charge Accounts - moneys that it deduct before the rest is shared between the three tiers of government - the federal government expenditure, according to the report of the Vision 2010 Committee, is 75% of total expenditure of all three tiers of government. Some say it is actually over 80%.

Whatever the eventual outcome of the resource control case before the Supreme Court, these figures are simply unacceptable in a federation. It is therefore imperative for at least some of the First Charge Accounts - Joint Venture Cash Calls, Natural Priority Projects, PTF (this one is gone), Ecological Fund, Education Tax Fund, External Debt Service, Foreign Reserve - to be abolished.

As Chief Ige has said, resource control is not merely a constitutional issue. It is political as well. Indeed, it is more political than constitutional. Therefore, the sooner we rein in our greed and allow political common sense to rule over the issue, the easier we can arrive at a win-win solution to the crisis.

### LETTER OF THE DAY

## Calling IBB

**K**indly allow me a space in your widely read newspaper (*Daily Trust*), to express the views of the entire youth of the North, South, West and East, and to adjust the understanding of all the entire people of the whole nation, particularly those who are seriously against the contest of IBB for a presidential candidate in his second round under civilian regime.

To the best of my knowledge IBB is an epitome of dedication, capability, honesty, free minded, hard working, loyalty, experience and a patriotic citizen.

Before I close let me call on IBB to think of coming back to serve his people in a civilian capacity.

Mohamed Lawal B. Yasha  
Access Bank Nig. Plc  
K/Wambai branch,  
Kano State, Nigeria.

## Opinion

## Enron: Heart of the matter

By Dominic Kidzu

Clearly, the Lagos Independent Power Project is of significance to the entire nation because its positive impact is bound to be nationwide. Steady power supply will bring down the cost of manufactured goods, a large percentage of which originates from Lagos.

With the Lagos IPP up and running, NEPA should have a little breathing space to improve its performance in other parts of the country.

The success of the Lagos venture will also, have a band-wagon effect on the nation. Already, many state governments have announced their intention to embark on their own IPPs, if Lagos succeeds. That will be a giant leap for the country. Above all, the success of the partnership company -ENRON -would encourage other serious investors abroad to come and do business in Nigeria.

In the light of the above, it is imperative that the major source of the controversies over the Lagos IPP, be clearly identified in order to avoid the same pitfalls in a future deregulated Nigerian economy, where inter-continental partnerships and collaboration will become the order of the day.

Recently, the Federal Government accused ENRON, the American Company handling the Lagos IPP of lacking financial and technical capability to handle the project and skewed the contract terms against the interest of Nigeria. NEPA is said to have consequently set up a management team to revisit certain aspects of the contract considered adverse to the interest of the government and people of Nigeria. The assignment was successfully concluded in June 2000 and an amended contract signed accordingly.

Significantly, the Federal Government announced December 2000 as the target date for completion and delivery of the first 90MW of power. By October last year when it was clear that it could not meet the scheduled dateline, ENRON resorted to blaming bureaucratic bottlenecks and NEPA's non-cooperation for its failures. It became apparent after December 2000 that part of ENRON's problem included its technical and financial capacity to execute the job. When ENRON now brought in AES, another American power company, it became a sure *fait accompli*.

Now the new dateline of March announced with fanfare by the Lagos State government has come and gone and once again accusing fingers are pointing at the direction of NEPA. I do not think that NEPA stands to gain anything by frustrating the project to which it is a partner. As NEPA's General Manager at Egbin thermal station pointed out recently, there are certain things that statutorily ought to be done before the project becomes a reality. These hurdles include the installation of meters for gas in-take, construction of gas insulator sub-station, communication equipment, protector facilities for the cables conveying power from ENRON's barge to NEPA's transmission station, installation of energy meter to determine the amount of power coming from ENRON into NEPA grid and synchronisation of NEPA -ENRON power facilities.

ENRON is still fabricating pipes that would convey gas from NEPA metering point to ENRON and a proposal for connecting the ENRON power into NEPA's grid is said to be yet to be submitted to the authority. Even if ENRON is able to meet the new target date of April 10, test-run is still crucial as troubleshooting would make it difficult to predict the time it would take to complete the commissioning.

I find it really difficult to believe the insinuations from Governor Bola Tinubu and his war-mongering commissioners that the Federal Government and particularly NEPA are not sold on the IPP in Lagos. If the same Federal Government and NEPA signed an agreement with ENRON to generate electricity, signed the power purchase agreement, provided them land at Egbin; where they are to operate from, then it will be really ridiculous to say that the same Federal Government and NEPA are working against the IPP.

The Federal Government in January tabled the issue of tax exemption and other concessions to the company at the Federal Executive Council meeting, which is said to have been approved by all council members at the meeting. The tax concessions cover customs duties, VAT, education tax, income tax, withholding and other deductible taxes from companies operating in the country, to help accelerate completion of the project.

Additionally, although the Lagos IPP is a novel venture, government has a duty to be careful as many more such ventures are coming in its wake. Already, the government of Akwa Ibom is planning something in the same direction, an American company is considering an IPP on the Mambilla Plateau, MOUs have been signed with some companies including Agip on power projects in Delta State while Asia Brown Boveri (ABB), is planning IPPs in Bonny and Abuja. It is said that in all, about 37 companies have indicated interest in working in Nigeria's power sector.

And the Nigerian government and NEPA have every right to be wary and scary. The story coming from India where ENRON has operated for years and is being dubbed as the East India Company of the 21st century" a reference to the British trading company that colonised key areas of the Indian economy in the 19th century is not cheery. ENRON is currently launching a press war in India to reverse its image as a profiteering multi-national. Angry with incessant increase of tariff by ENRON, the West India state of Maharashtra decided to review the tariff it pays the Texas-based company whose 2.2 billion dollar electricity generating plant at Dabhol is India's biggest single foreign investment.

Maharashtra's tariff has more than doubled since 1993 and is three times higher than that charged by other IPPs. The state also pays a controversial fixed capacity charge of 21 million dollars a month reflecting the huge project cost, irrespective of consumption.

ENRON has a good project going for Nigeria but that is not why we should all be so excited as to become careless. The four parties, I am sure, are keen on seeing the Lagos IPP work. The current spate of sabre-rattling by the politicians in Lagos is to say the least, needless.

Dominic Kidzu is of Plot 800, Blantyre Street, Wuse II -Abuja, FCT.

## Jigawa: Chasing shadows

By ABUBAKAR JIKA

In Jigawa state, the political logjam following the 1998 unprecedented defeat of Sule Lamido, Rimi's leading disciple, ally and political sidekick, widely acknowledged as strongman of Jigawa politics, threatened to upstage Dutse's political equation. Sule Lamido, a political giant even in Kano States contested under the platform of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). It was widely expected that he would course home to victory. PDP was quite popular and on his own he is popular in both Kano and Jigawa states. Sule Lamido, a veteran of Northern Nigerian grassroots politics, who cut his teeth during the PRP radical political hold on Kano and Kaduna states from 1978 to 1983, was expected to trounce Saminu Turaki.

Saminu Turaki, was a relative green-horn in Nigerian politics. He was an unknown "political quantity." He was contesting under APP, a relatively weaker party to PDP. Turaki himself was not known to have any major political base. He was not known as a grassroots mobilizer. Neither was he known for any ground-breaking political views. He was one of those taken for granted. Infact, nobody betted on him to create any political upsets or cause any major political upheavals.

But Saminu Turaki did indeed cause a major political upset. How could a political upstart trounce a political giant of the status of Sule Lamido? His victory was a political embarrassment to Rimi / Sule Lamido who are widely seen as having a firm grip of Kano/Jigawa political axis. His victory against Lamido, coupled with Kwankwaso running away with victory in PDP primaries against Ganduje, a Rimi protege threatened Rimi's political fortress in Kano/Jigawa states.

Political pundits went back to the drawing board to find out weather Turaki / Kwankwaso

victories in Dutse and Kano respectively were a "products of local political realignments that has nothing to do with the Rimi factor or one of those crazy political acts that have no meaning, a political puzzle." After assessments the results were indeed breath taking.

Both Lamido and Ganduje have their "political liabilities". Excess political baggage that those leaders blinded by the craze for personal loyalties invariably over look or ignore to their political-peril. Both may be loyal to Rimi, and Rimi may as well still have a strangle-hold on political jugulars of Kano/Jigawa states but both have antagonized sizable and significant political interests that cut across ideologies and hence can be "easy meat" even to weak political opponent.

Indeed, perhaps only Rimi or those close to him may not have realized how entrenched the opposition of Hadejia / Kazaure political axis was to a Lamido tenancy at Dutse. Many knew that Lamido did not sort out his political problems with Hadejia people and they are bent on politically disgracing him. Saminu Turaki only provided the means to that end. To worsen matters, Lamido's choice of a running mate did not help issues. Many analysts on a "political post-mortem" were of the view that a political rapprochement between Lamido and Hadejia and a pragmatic choice of a running mate could have helped Lamido's political equation. Perhaps Turaki could not have smelt the Government House, Dutse and Jigawa could have been saved its on-going political tragedy.

Let me put it on record. First, I do not belong to any political party. I have no political sympathy for any of the three political parties: PDP, APP, and AD. I also have no contacts or links with Rimi or Sule Lamido. Infact, I have not set my eyes

on Rimi or Sule Lamido for the past five years. None of them is in contact with me directly or indirectly. Nobody requested me or payed me any thing for this write up. Infact, I even made efforts to contact Jigawa state governor's Director of Press for their own side to my assessment to no avail. So nobody should rush to the press to call me names.

As noted earlier, that Saminu Turaki's victory was one of those "political freaks" occasioned by political oversight or ignorance. He could not have won a clear victory against Lamido but for sectional emotionalism, which usually becloud political judgments. What ever led to political disagreement between Hadejia and Sule Lamido appeared deep-seated, and politically irrational. Political egos took the front burner and both sides, with benefit of hindsight, have in the end lost.

Saminu Turaki could have recreated the political upsets of Saadu Birnin Kudu, the first civilian governor of Jigawa State. Saadu Birnin Kudu was also a political upstart then. Stories has it that Saadu's prime ambition was a scholarship to travel abroad for his masters degree in law after the much-expected victory of Sule Lamido then in 1991. Saadu Birnin Kudu was one of Sule Lamido's political foot soldiers in the S.D.P.

Saadu Birnin Kudu did dream for Jigawa. There was no doubt that he was a great achiever. A young man who was fortunate to see fate smile on him. He grasped the opportunity with two hands. He worked day and night and avoided frictions and factions.

Instead of spitting fire and working day and night to make a name, Saminu Turaki appears, in my humble opinion, to be chasing shadows and leaving the substance unattended. He appears to have surrounded himself with "political imbeciles" whose dreams do not appear beyond their villages or districts.

Political scores are to be settled, while the more grave issues of state yawns, waiting to be attended.

While other governors and the central government correctly read the economic realities of our time (government's less involvement in Business), Turaki appears to believe in the 1950's school of thought. He appears to believe that government should spearhead industrialization of the state, the result? Saminu Turaki has spent the better of the past one and a half years, almost half of his tenure globe-trotting, looking for expatriates to come and invest in collaboration with the state government for the industrialization of Jigawa state.

Jigawa state that was created at the same time with Taraba state is today 10 years behind. Civil servants still commute from Kano to Jigawa state. The state is more of an outreach area for the more cosmopolitan Kano. Instead of striving to provide infrastructures and boost education, Saminu Turaki is busy globe-trotting, wasting scarce foreign exchange, and chasing expatriates. So far we are yet to be told how many industries are established as a result of these efforts. No wonder, the House has banned him from further foreign travels.

Indeed, while Delta has set up a privatization committee to sell its ailing industries, just like Benue state has done, Saminu Turaki is running around looking for partners to set up industries in a backward state like Jigawa, whose state capital Dutse is more of a glorified village. Many, however, including his neighbor, Kwankwaso believe in providing conducive environment for businessmen while keeping themselves aloof from their affairs.

ABUBAKAR JIKA, is of the WRITERS' COLLECTIVE, Dept. of Mass, Communications, Bayero University, Kano.

## A model for pensions scheme

By Nnamdi K. Cos-Ukwuoma

Generally, government lives up to its calling by touching the lives of citizens, even in the remotest of regions, and ameliorating their lots -by making life easy and reducing the incidents of hunger, disease, poverty and frustration. The public service bureaucracy, which is the machinery on which the government depends to function well in its day-to-day business, should be made functional to pursue and realize the goals of government programmes without recourse to self-aggrandizement and roguery. A situation whereby the public officer after retirement waits endlessly for his gratuities and pension beats the imagination.

For our purpose here, pension as a right, guaranteed by law, has been defined as the continuation of the salary of an employee after he/she has left the service of the employer, while gratuity is meant to rehabilitate him/her accordingly. Put differently, gratuities/pension could be described as reward packets offered by an employer to an employee in appreciation of faithful service, depending on how long the employee served.

But the disturbing reality is that government pension schemes in most public service departments and agencies, have been practically woeful failures. Retirees go through harrowing experiences, and most often, some die soon after retirement due to the twin problems of hunger and frustration as they await gratuities and pension that may never come. It is the considered opinion of this writer that the best remedy against corruption

is a workable pension scheme, and conducive work conditions. We expect the government to make more efforts to return the public service totally to the path of honour and prestige. This will be possible when the officer can receive his gratuities, as he is retiring, followed up by timely and uninterrupted pension for those whose tenures are pensionable.

Of course, recent happenings show government's expressed will to correct the undesirable trend. The new Head of Service, Alhaji Yayale Ahmed, has proved that it is possible for retirees of the Federal Public Service to collect their retirement benefits as they are going. What happened at the first programme organized by the Head of Service where retirees received cheques for their benefits is instructive. It could be recalled that Pension Desk Officers and senior executives of Pension Departments of various federal ministries were absent.

Instructively, they do not like what is presently happening. It is therefore not inappropriate to say that Pension Desk Officers in the ministries and their cohorts have been the cause of pensioners' woes. Now that Nigerians know where the problem lies, there is hope for an enduring solution. It is noteworthy to say that somehow, the government has been vindicated. But we wish to know whether government really has the will to effect a lasting difference.

However, despite the failure of some pension offices in the country, commendable achieve-

ments have been taking place in the para-military (Customs, Immigration and Prisons) Pensions office. It has really distinguished itself from the rest. In support of the present efforts to revitalize pension management and administration in the ministries, we invite the government to this para-military pension office located at Gwagwalada, Abuja, with a view to adopting the method it has been applying to meet the demands on it by its pensioners.

Deriving from this, pension units of the ministries and parastatals could be made functional by detaching them from the ministries and constituting boards to run them more as an enterprise than as a bureaucracy. Pension units should be run in such a way that can impact well on client-service delivery and good inter-personal relationship between workers and retirees. This step will eliminate the possibility of diversion or misapplication of pension funds by ministry officials.

Having been rated as the best pension office in the country by different credible bodies and the Office of Establishment and Management Services, CIPPO has streamlined records and conducted an authentic actuarial valuation of both retired and serving para-military officers of the Customs, Immigration and Prisons. The office now has complete data of all serving and retired officers. This offers an accurate estimate of what could be needed to pay gratuities and pension at any point in time.

A lot more achievements are on the ground for physical

assessment, which present it as a veritable model for government to adopt for overhauling and revitalizing other pension units of Federal ministries and parastatals. We need a pragmatic approach to the persistent problem of pensioners at this point.

But Nigerians must be realistic in their processing of their pensions so as not to needlessly give pensions offices bad names. For instance, a retiree came to a pension office to collect his pension. Mid-way through, perhaps as an after-thought, he came with a letter from someone, requesting the pension office to merge the service he allegedly offered somewhere before he joined the immigration service, which he had not earlier included in his records. But anyone who is knowledgeable should know that calculating pension/gratuities is based on records available to them. It is the duty of the Office of Establishment and Management Services to merge services on request by officers concerned, and on the basis that such request has merit. The man merely died in the process of this clearly fruitless attempt to compel the pension office to do the impossible. This writer has taken pains to cite this incident because many more public officers are in crass ignorance of public Service rules on pension matters, as similar cases recur very often. Therefore, government should endeavour to enlighten and inform its employees, to save them from error and ignorance.

Nnamdi K. Cos-Ukwuoma, an author and social crusader, wrote in from No. 8, Pil-Gani Avenue, Gwagwalada, Abuja.

C  
A  
R  
T  
O  
O  
N



YOUR LETTERS

Policing the police

The Inspector-General of Police, Mr. Musiliu Adeola Kunbi Smith, came into lime-light in 1992 when he was posted to Kwara State as the state police commissioner. He built on the crime-free society he inherited from his predecessor and went ahead to carve a niche for himself

in the area of improved welfare for the rank and file. As a police boss in Kwara, Smith had the herculean task of using his men to quell the workers uprising that trailed the demand for 45 percent increase in workers salaries in 1993 during which a serving judicial

officer in the state attempted to use his force against the press. In the stalemate that greeted the reluctance of the Alhaji Muhammed Shaaba Lafiagi-led regime to implement the wage increase and its attendant industrial action, the top judicial officer had met with the workforce

in his parastatal with the hope of breaking the strike. Generally, the rank and file in Kwara still relish Smith's headship of the command, saluting him for inculcating discipline in officers and men, ensuring rapid promotion of rank and

file and generally improving the welfare of officers and men, which had a cheering effect on crime control. So when he was appointed the top cop by President Olusegun Obasanjo, the general feeling in the force was that of a physician being

assigned with the task of self-healing. Expectations from him were high among which were the stemming of crime wave and improving on the equipment of the force for the challenges ahead. Criminally-minded Nigerians, who were perhaps under tutelage under the defunct military administration, soon jumped out of their eerie to unleash a vein of terror, unprecedented in the history of the nation. They deployed for their use, superior massive guns which were believed to have been from the military armoury to brutalise fellow Nigerians, thus reducing the gain of the present democratic dispensation.

No deregulation for now

Successive governments tried to deregulate the oil sector by increasing the fuel price right from when it was 20k per litre, then later increased to 70k, N5.00, N3.25k, N11.00, N20.00 and then it was N22.00 per litre due to the nation wide protest by NLC and entire Nigerian masses. All these increases never solved the problem of fuel shortage, smuggling, and diversion of the product to the black markets. Top government officials and wealthy individuals are guilty of these problems. No wonder the present administration is finding it difficult to solve the problem of fuel

shortage in the country. The president himself told us during one of the presidential media chats that someone will buy petrol at N17.00 per litre in the depot and sell it at N27.00 per litre just outside the gate. And again the Group Managing Director of NNPC was quoted as saying that those people responsible for the present fuel crisis are high and powerful individuals in the country. So if the government knows about them, why are they not arresting the situation or are they afraid of them? These brings me to the present face-off between NLC and the Federal Government on the deregulation is-

sue. I have gone through the minority report of the NLC and I quite agree with the NLC position on the matter. The government is the sole owner of the crude we have in Nigeria and if they sell to NNPC at \$9.50 per barrel, they still get profit because NNPC spends \$4.00 to produce and the government is left with \$5.50 as profit and for every 300 000 barrel set aside for local consumption, the government makes \$1.6m apart from the tax government charges before it gets to the final consumer and not as the government claims that it has to sell to NNPC at \$25 per barrel to conform with international price. If the gov-

ernment should go ahead with that price and without improving the living standard of Nigerians and also providing social amenities, then all the masses in this country will be in trouble. The NLC is also right about government not subsidizing the fuel we consume because you cannot subsidize what you get profit on and at the same time charge tax on it. So in this respect, the president is telling us that the government spends over N200billion annually on subsidy. The government should know that the IMF and the World Bank are trying to mislead into running the country down and, making us slave in

our fathers land. The advice I will give to the government is to stop this deregulation in the name of price increase and concentrate its effort in finding lasting solutions to the issue of diversion, smuggling of the product and also keep all our refineries in shape by repairing the existing ones, and also build new ones to meet up our local demand thereby stopping the importation of the product into the country. Government should take seriously the issue of turn around maintenance of our refineries too. Ahmed Alkasim Shehu, Khemsafe Computers and Communications Ltd., Kaduna.

Hired killers, successful armed robbery operations and upsurge of militant ethnic militias, in quick succession took, the centre-stage in national life, dwarfing Smith's track record as an experienced cop. As a means of asserting his control and reducing crime waves in some states, the police boss had recommended the deployment of some police commissioners from their original states to new ends. He has also endorsed the redeployment of some officers to ensure a better crime control and management. The decision has been successful as criminal activities in hitherto notorious areas have been reduced, save for high brow areas like Abuja and Lagos. As the inspector-General basks in his national honour, he should strive to justify the added confidence reposed in him by the government and people of Nigeria. The police under him should be made to be alive to the realities of the moment. Officers plus and rank and file should be encouraged and motivated to fish out the criminals in our midst. Tunde Akanbi, Offa Road, Ilorin.

Only Sharia can ensure justice in Nigeria

A persistent argument of the sharia critics is that the full application of sharia would amount to the islamisation of Nigeria. It is for the same reason that the critics (mostly southern press) interpret the Zamfara sharia initiative as a declaration of an Islamic state despite Governor Ahmed Sani's explanation that all he did was provided for in the constitution and that he was not declaring Zamfara state an Islamic state. Another misconception of the sharia issue is the impression created especially by the media and sadly encouraged by some religious leaders, that sharia is being foisted on all Nigerians regardless of their religious persuasions. The persistent declaration by the

Muslims that sharia would not apply to non-Muslims has fallen on deaf ears. Prostitution is now a dignified commerce as Nigerian women offer their bodies for easy fortune at home and abroad. Nigerian prostitutes abroad are being deported almost every week from Europe. For Gods sake, what is wrong with the prohibition of prostitution, with the increasing spread of AIDS and similar sexually-transmitted diseases? Just as slavery was abolished and sale and consumption of hard drugs are severely punished, so would it be correct to place a ban on goods and activities likely to impair the health or well-being of the society. Public officers, high and low, are notorious for abusing public trust by looting the

treasury and carting away the national wealth to foreign lands now hold sway. Corruption has become the order of the day. Black market is on the increase as smugglers smuggle our petroleum products out of the country everyday at the expense of ordinary citizens of this country. Alcoholism, injustice, extortion, exploitation, tyranny, the list is endless, are all over the country. No amount of Western criminal justice system can eradicate the existing vices in our society but sharia. Since the existing system has failed, let's give sharia a trial, please, for the sake of the future of Nigeria and our children. Lawal Musa Jnr., P.O. Box 25, Gombe.

Well done, Kwankwaso but...

Allow me space in your credible newspaper, Daily Trust to express my views on the achievements recorded under the leadership of Governor Rabi'u Musa Kwankwaso of Kano State. In fact, only an anti-democratic person will not appreciate the work this administration has put in place, such as roads construction, rehabilitation, electrification of towns and villages, rehabilitation of hospitals and schools etc. I commend you for that. However, my concern is my immediate communities, Yakasai and Kofar Nasarawa. We really appreciate the works that are going on in these areas, especially construction of link roads. But the Kofar Nasarawa/Festival Stadium link road

has become a source of concern to the residents of these areas. The road has claimed two (2) lives recently because of its sharp bend. May I appeal to your Excellency to as a matter of urgency, consider the reconstruction of this road with the aim of doing away with the bend. It will equally be wise, if the road will be link with the one behind Kano Radio Corporation which is presently under construction. I will also suggest that drainages be constructed side by side these roads to avoid flooding. Provision for street lights should also be made as that will help in curtailing the activities of men of the underworld. Mustapha Sani Yakasai, No. 1141B Yakasai Quarters, Municipal local government area, Kano state.

has become a source of concern to the residents of these areas. The road has claimed two (2) lives recently because of its sharp bend. May I appeal to your Excellency to as a matter of urgency, consider the reconstruction of this road with the aim of doing away with the bend. It will equally be wise, if the road will be link with the one behind Kano Radio Corporation which is presently under construction. I will also suggest that drainages be constructed side by side these roads to avoid flooding. Provision for street lights should also be made as that will help in curtailing the activities of men of the underworld. Mustapha Sani Yakasai, No. 1141B Yakasai Quarters, Municipal local government area, Kano state.

# *Salute to a great Hero*



## **YAR'ADUA**

*As we fondly commemorate your sudden demise that was least expected, General Shehu Musa Yar 'Adua (1934-1997), we take consolation in the legacy you left behind and your outstanding contribution to the restoration of democracy in Nigeria.*

*Your disposition to the younger generation still lingers on. May your ever warm, gentle and loving soul continue to rest in perfect peace, Ameen.*

**His Excellency  
BONI HARUNA**

*Governor, Adamawa State*

TRUST INTERNATIONAL

Foreign & Diplomatic

# Mediation is more satisfying -expert

Thursday last week, the Deputy Senior Counsel for Dispute Resolution in the US Department of Justice, Mr. Jeffrey Senger shared his experiences in resolving disputes through mediation with Nigerian lawyers and judicial officials. He spoke to Daily Trust on Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR).

**You presented a wonderful paper on ADP (Alternative Dispute Resolution). What is it about?**

ADR is a process by which people can work with another professional to resolve their dispute rather than a court where the judge decides what the answer will be and what the parties will do when they finish their dispute. So mediation gets the parties to control their own situation rather than have a court decide for them.

**What attracted you to ADR as an alternative to the judicial process?**

That's interesting. I was a trial lawyer myself when I started my career after law school. I was a litigator. I represented clients in lawsuits and I found it unsatisfying. I was frustrated. I was spending a lot of my time fighting and handling petty disputes, over the rules of court procedures and arguing all the time. And I found that even when I won, it took a long time and costs a lot of many and people were so upset after the case was

By Kevin Ebele Adinnu

over. So, I enjoy the prospect of finding a better way of solving disputes and I've been happier, personally, in the mediation field for that reason.

**The United States has been using this alternative method for quite some time. How successful has it been?**

Mediation has been successful in the United States and has been growing because it's been working so well. More and more cases are going to mediation and more and more cases have been settled in mediation.

**Can you give us statistics?**

In the Justice Department which is the agency where I work, in 1995 we had 500 cases that went to mediation and in the year 2000, there were 2500 cases going to mediation. So, there has been five times as many cases that have been mediated over the past five years.

**What makes you think it will succeed in Nigeria?**

I think people in Nigeria are interested in ADR from the discussions and what I heard from people today. They also agreed that there are cheaper and quicker and better ways of settling disputes.

Again, in your paper you talked about

certification of mediators. Does it really matter being certified if I can resolve a dispute between my neighbours?

In the United States, we have found that it is good not to require that somebody be certified in order to be a mediator. While we

require that somebody be licensed in order to be a doctor, we don't require that you be licensed in order to be a mediator. But we do encourage voluntary certification meaning that if somebody wants to, he can get certified by the government and they can advertise to the public that they are certified mediators. So if somebody from the public wants a certified mediator, they can have somebody like that. Probably, it will cost more but they have a better idea of what they are getting.

For people like yourself, if you think you can resolve a dispute without certification, you are free to do that also.



Senger



(L-R) Prof. Gidado Tahir, Executive Secretary, Nomadic Education; Dr. Anthonia Adindu, President, Chevening Scholars, Nigeria; and Deputy British High Commissioner, Mr. Roger French at the inauguration.



Prof Gidado Tahir (l) congratulating Dr. Adindu

Pix: Felix Onighinde

## Chevening: Bridging the link

By Abubakar Ibrahim

Two heads, they say, are better than one.

True to this statement, teamwork is always advocated in pursuance of a set objective. Candidly, cross fertilisation of ideas pools together knowledge backgrounded by different cultures, orientations and creeds.

The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office initiated a prestigious scholarship scheme implemented by the British Council, which grants annual British government scholarship to professionals in 150 countries especially from Commonwealth member nations.

In Nigeria, the Chevening Scholarship Scheme (named after Chevening House in Kent, official residence of the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs) started in 1984 and so far 630 Nigerians have received scholarship. The annual cost of the scheme is approximately N113 million (770,000 pounds).

An average of 40 scholarships are awarded to talented Nigerians each year to study in Britain in different disciplines ranging from Sciences, Engineering, Technology, Social Sciences and other fields at the Masters degree level with minimum qualification being first degree.

To coordinate and harmonise the gains of this laudable scheme, the Nigerian beneficiaries of the programme have decided on a forum to integrate themselves by forming the Chevening Scholars Nigeria, an association aimed at effective avenue for networking scholars and mentoring of talented youths in order to promote professionalism, excellence and ethical standards.

The inauguration of Chevening Scholars Nigeria last Thursday at the Chelsea Hotel, Abuja on April 5, 2001 was a result of painstaking efforts originating from a reception held by the immediate past British High

Commissioner, Sir Graham Burton for returning and other Chevening Scholars at his residence on January 25, 2001.

The idea of the alumni association was kicked off on January 26, 2001 with an all-night meeting over tea, made successful by the likes of Deputy High Commissioner, Roger French; Deputy Director, British Council, Simon Kaye; John Hamilton and a host of others.

The newly elected exco members of Chevening Scholars Nigeria are Dr. Anthonia Adindu, President; Rev. Ralph Opoko, Deputy President; Pastor Pete Ujomv, General Secretary; Mr. Victor Okwunwa, Assistant Secretary and Mr. Michael Akporwa, Publicity Secretary.

Others are Mrs. Rahemat Momodu, Treasurer; Barrister Ibrahim Ndikum, Legal Adviser and Barrister Ojobo Atuluku, Auditor.

In her address at the occasion, Dr. Adindu said "the grave concern we share is the prevailing circumstance in the educational system, great effort is required to change the trend and government cannot do it alone. We shall put our resources and skills to assist government and young men and women with potential for excellence."

She stressed, "we shall immediately draw our plan in consultation with the Honourable Minister of Education, the British Council and the British High Commission", adding that the association's thrust was to find effective means of communicating with each other to find ways of assisting "others who have not benefited like us."

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alhaji Sule Lamido, through his representative, Alhaji Abubakar Hassan Fulata, told the alumni to see themselves not only as scholars but ambassadors of the country. "Ambassadors have tenures but yours is forever," he said.

## TRUST INTERNATIONAL

AFRICA &amp; THE MIDDLE EAST

# Liberia's former minister disappears

The whereabouts of Liberia's former deputy minister of information, Milton Teahjay, remain a mystery following his disappearance on Friday, according to media and humanitarian sources.

One of a number of opposition politicians President Charles Taylor had drafted into his cabinet, Teahjay had been a vocal advocate of the government in international capitals, a humanitarian source told IRIN. However, he lost his post last year and was appointed media consultant to Taylor.

In March he organised

demonstrations in his home county, Sinoe, against a logging company, which residents of the southeastern county have accused of neglecting its development while stripping its forests, the humanitarian source said.

When the demonstrations led to similar protests in neighbouring Grand Gedeh and Nimba counties, Teahjay was dismissed as media consultant to the president for "acts inimical to state security", the source added. He tried to leave the country in the company of his brother but was turned back by immigration officials. His brother said they

returned to Monrovia and went separate ways. Since then neither he nor Teahjay's wife has seen the former minister.

Doubts about his fate have been fuelled by apparently conflicting information from the state. According to the humanitarian source, Taylor said on Friday on his return home from a trip to Taiwan that he had learnt that someone who had been causing problems for the government had been arrested, and that more details would be given later. However, police chief Paul Mulbah said later that Teahjay had not been arrested and that he was not wanted by the authorities.

## Nujoma accuses US of creating HIV

HIV-AIDS was created by the Americans as part of a biological warfare programme during the Vietnam war, says President Sam Nujoma.

The President made this claim, as well as a host of others, at his farm Etunda in the Otavi area during an informal get-together with a group of commercial farmers, people from the financial sector and local farmers.

HIV-AIDS, the Namibian media - "reactionary" and mostly lying, in the President's view - and even the churches all received Presidential attention during the four-hour long meeting.

The gathering was held at the request of Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Paul Smit.

While on the topic of HIV-AIDS, one of the people who had come to meet the Head of State rose to hand the President a small gift in

the form of a spiritual book.

The writer, he explained, was an American who is the driving force behind a spiritual renewal movement who is due to visit Namibia soon, also to talk about the problem of HIV-AIDS.

Nujoma made short shrift of this information.

He would not be able to

agree with whatever the American might have to say, the President said, before blurting out: "I know who produced HIV-AIDS - the Americans."

"During the Vietnam war, Nujoma charged, the United States created the killer virus and disease as part of a biological warfare programme.

## Kenyan students face murder charge

Two secondary school pupils in Kenya have appeared in court charged with 67 counts of murder, in connection with a fire at their school last month.

Fire swept through an overcrowded dormitory at the Kyanguli Secondary School in Machakos and 67 boys died after being trapped inside.

Survivors believe the blaze was started by boys who were angry because

their final exam results had been annulled and because they had been called on to pay outstanding school fees.

The school's headmaster and deputy headmaster also appeared in court, charged with failing to prevent a felony.

It took the court clerk three minutes to read out the names of all the victims.

The victims were trapped because one of two doors to the dormitory where they were sleeping was locked and the windows had bars on them.

King Abdullah of Jordan will try to convince the United States to re-engage in the Middle East peace process at a meeting with President George W Bush on Tuesday. He will be the second Arab leader to carry this message to the president after Hosni Mubarak of Egypt.

Egypt and Jordan are the only two Arab countries that have peace treaties with Israel and oppose efforts by the new US administration to step back from the peace process.

The visit follows another day of violence in the Palestinian territories, with street demonstrations and a mortar attack on a Jewish settlement in the Gaza Strip.

King Abdullah will stress the importance of the US mediation role during the meeting.

The young monarch and the Egyptian President,

## Jordan pressures Bush on Middle East

Hosni Mubarak, believe only Washington can persuade Israel to make the kinds of concessions they think are needed for a settlement with the Palestinians.

King Abdullah will probably raise an Egyptian/Jordanian proposal for restarting talks apparently rejected by Israel.

It is expected that President Bush will also want to discuss

US proposals to modify sanctions on Iraq, essentially to cut down on rampant smuggling by lifting restrictions on civilian goods while strictly enforcing the embargo on military-related items.

For that Washington will need Jordan's support but the King does not want to tighten border controls unless other front-line states do the same.

## Cabinet reshuffle in Chad

The President of Chad, Idriss Deby, has reshuffled his cabinet, removing all members of the National Union for Development and Renewal party — or UNDR.

No official reason was given for the move, which was made by presidential decree.

Among those to lose his job was the leader of the UNDR, Saleh Kebzabo.

He was Agriculture Minister and regarded as second only to the prime minister in the governing coalition.

But last week, Mr Kebzabo announced he'd be standing for president in next month's election, in which Mr Deby will be seeking another five-year term.

## Zambia mine collapse kills 10

Ten people have been buried alive in a major landslide at an open-pit copper mine in Zambia, witnesses and the pit's owners have said.

With the ground still moving, rescue efforts were on hold as experts tried to assess the safety risk.

"At this point nothing is happening. We have experts on site waiting to start the rescue mission, to retrieve bodies and get the equipment out, but none of these two tasks will start before late afternoon," a mine safety official said.

The Nchanga mine in Chingola, 300km (180 miles)

## Lusophone summit holds after nine years

Heads of state from the five Portuguese-speaking — or Lusophone — countries in Africa are beginning their first summit since 1992 in the Angolan capital, Luanda.

Ahead of the meeting, the Angolan foreign minis-

ter, Joao Miranda, said a key task would be to improve the cultural links between the five — Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, Sao-Tome and Cape Verde.

During the summit, the heads of state are expected to approve a mechanism for holding such meetings more regularly.

Chipasha Kondolo, a spokeswoman for Konkola Copper Mines - the company that runs the mine - said rescue operations had not yet started as there was still some earth movement.

"The earth is still moving and there is a lot of water down there. We have massive mining equipment buried as well," she said

"The huge volumes of water are a major concern," she added.

Geological and technical experts assessed the situation early on Monday and were due to issue their report later.

A Zambian army team was also on standby to help with rescue operations if needed.

The families of those buried by the landslide have been told to presume that the missing miners were dead and to wait at their homes for further news.

"The families are very understanding. No shelter is being prepared for them because the task of recovering bodies is enormous, and given that earth movements have not entirely stopped, they must remain in their homes," said Mine Workers of Zambia president Andrew Mwanza.

Witnesses said that after the accident workers at the mine had huddled in small groups discussing the tragedy, with many weeping.

## Officials deny Fahd's death

Officials in Saudi Arabia have moved swiftly to scotch rumours that King Fahd Ibn Abdul Aziz, who has ruled the country since 1982, is dead.

The rumours appear to have first emerged in Kuwait, where the Russian news agency Tass said it had been told by unnamed diplomatic sources that the king had died after "a long and serious" illness.

The sources told Tass to expect an official statement

confirming the death at 1300 GMT. No such statement was made, but that did not stop oil prices moving on the "news".

"The rumours about King Fahd are false, we are very surprised at this," a senior Saudi official was quoted as saying by the AFP news agency. "He is alive and well."

Rumours about the health of the Saudi monarch have periodically surfaced since he suffered a stroke in 1995. Far from being on his

death bed, the official Saudi Press Agency later reported that the king had received the ambassadors of Brunei, Gabon, Ethiopia and Ghana at his palace in the Red Sea port city of Jeddah.

On Sunday, he met new ambassadors from the UK, Canada, Iran, Mexico, Pakistan and Venezuela, as well as Saudi sports officials and a football team, the agency said.

State television has shown the monarch in a wheelchair meeting the sportsmen.



Red Cross workers in Machakos, Kenya, carrying coffins of 58 schoolboys for mass burial last week. They were victims of arson.

TRUST INTERNATIONAL

World Report

Spy plane row: China rejects US stance

China has again demanded a US apology for last week's collision between an American spy plane and a Chinese fighter jet.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao said US statements to date on the incident were "unacceptable", and that the Chinese people remained "dissatisfied".

"We ask the United States to take responsibility for this incident in a clear and active way by apologising to the Chinese people," he said at a news conference during

President Jiang Zemin's visit to Argentina.

Earlier, US President George W Bush had said that relations with China could be damaged unless the spy plane's crew was soon freed.

The 24 crew members of the American EP-3 surveillance plane have been in custody since they were forced to perform an emergency landing on Hainan Island.

US diplomats who held a fourth meeting with the crew on Monday said they were in "extremely high spirits".

The US embassy in Beijing

said diplomats were allowed to meet all 24 of the crew, in contrast to their meeting on Sunday, when they were given access to only eight of them.

Despite US insistence that it has no plans to apologise, Secretary of State Colin Powell appeared to make a concession on Sunday - he used the word "sorry" when referring to the loss of the Chinese fighter pilot, Wang Wei, whose plane crashed into the sea following the collision and has yet to be found.

In what has been described by Washington as a humanitarian gesture, President Bush sent a personal letter to the wife of the pilot, who is missing presumed dead.

But on Monday, Mr Bush signalled Washington's growing impatience, renewing his call for the crew to be released.

"Every day that goes by increases the potential that our relations with China will be damaged," Mr Bush told reporters.

As the stand-off continues, the BBC's Washington correspondent Stephen Sackur says US legislators are now openly referring to the 24 crew members as "hostages".

Republicans in particular are taking an increasingly tough line, arguing that a link should be made between China's actions and two key bilateral issues - the question of new US arms sales to Taiwan and the status of China's trade relations with Washington.

Singapore separates siamese twins

Surgeons have succeeded in their marathon operation to separate the conjoined twin girls from Nepal, a hospital spokeswoman in Singapore has announced.

The operation lasted more than 80 hours and was carried out by teams of surgeons working in shifts.

Both 11-month-old babies were said to be in a stable condition and receiving attention from plastic surgeons.

The twins, Ganga and Jamuna Shrestha, were joined at the top of their heads and shared the same brain cavity, causing them to face away from each other.

But this meant they also shared some blood vessels - all of which had to be traced and separated.

They had to be split to survive and have the chance of a normal life.

The two teams of doctors involved in the operation began their work at 1600 local time (0800 GMT) on Friday.

According to the BBC it was often an agonising wait for the family, with little news from the operating theatre for hours.

The paediatric neurosurgeon in charge of the separation, Keith Goh, said only four operations of this kind

had been performed before - and only one of them successfully.

In this case, however, he said there was good potential for recovery.

A hospital statement said the complex interconnection of blood vessels required "a meticulous and paced disconnection, in order to allow time for the brains to adapt".

Since the twins arrived in Singapore from Nepal last October, doctors have been rehearsing the procedure by performing virtual surgery with the aid of computer technology.

During the operation, surgeons had to determine which part of the brain belonged to which girl to ensure they identified the correct speech and logic centres.

Bush appoints gay adviser

US President George W Bush has named an openly gay man to lead the Office of National Aids Policy.

Scott Evertz will be the first openly gay person to be appointed to such a level by a Republican president.

In the first few weeks of his administration, it was said by normally reliable sources that President Bush would abolish the office.

That was swiftly denied

by the White House.

But criticism of Mr Bush's policy towards Aids continued when it was claimed that he would not seek budget increases for various programmes that work to tackle the disease.

The announcement that an openly gay man will run the Aids policy office was applauded by America's largest gay political group, the Human Rights Campaign.

The lawyer for Tranda Wecker, the birth mother of the so-called internet twins, has said that he expects her to win custody of the children.

The battle for custody of the twin girls - adopted over the internet by Britons Alan and Judith Kilshaw - will return to the United States, after a judge ruled the children should not remain in their care.

Mr and Mrs Kilshaw, from Buckley, north Wales, are considering whether to appeal against a High Court ruling that the twins should be returned to Missouri, where they were born.

Missouri's state court will decide the final home of the nine-month-old twins - who have been cared for by Flintshire Social Services since January - but it is thought the process may take up to a year.

Ms Wecker's lawyer said her client was very happy when she heard the judgement from London.

He said she had been without the children for four months and was looking forward to the joy of being re-

Mother expects custody of internet twins united.

As the care giver and primary custodian, he said Ms Wecker stood a good chance of regaining custody of the twins.

Other lawyers have cast doubt over Ms Wecker's chances of winning custody.

It has been suggested that she deceived a court in Arkansas, where the adoption

by Alan and Judith Kilshaw took place.

Vickie Allen, one half of a Californian couple who first adopted the twins, has said they may also try for custody.

But her husband Richard is facing allegations of child abuse, and it is thought this may wreck their chances of custody.

Dutch parliament approves mercy killing

The upper house of the Dutch parliament yesterday passed landmark bill to allow euthanasia under strict guidelines.

Netherlands hence becomes the first country in the world to legalise mercy killing. The practice been tolerated in the Netherlands for many years.

The approval is widely seen as a formality after the lower house overwhelmingly approved the bill last November.

A clear majority of the Dutch people favours the

legalisation, but there are some vocal opponents who called on senators to reject the law and "leave matters of life and death in God's hands".

"(The legislation) will codify a practice which has a very broad consensus, and we will even remain on the conservative side of that consensus," Diana de Wolff of the Green Party told the upper house during a debate on the new law on Monday.

But Yvonne Timmerman of the Christian Democrats (CDA) argued that caring for the sick should be the government's main priority.



Presidential candidate Alejandro Toledo waving after voting in a school in Lima, Peru on Sunday.

Peru election ends in run-off

- as candidate withdraws

One of the three leading candidates in Peru's presidential election has formally conceded defeat, clearing the way for a run-off vote between the front-runner, Alejandro Toledo, and the former President, Alan Garcia.

With almost three-quarters of the vote counted, conservative Lourdes Flores was two points behind left-winger Mr Garcia's 26% - a gap she acknowledged she could not close.

Ms Flores admitted she had lost at a news conference late on Monday.

"The people have spoken", she said, "They've made their decision."

Mr Toledo has 36% of the vote - some distance from the 51% needed to avoid a run-off.

A BBC correspondent in Lima says that although Mr Toledo is now the favourite to win, the result represents a stunning comeback for Mr Garcia.

A decade ago he was the most reviled man in Peruvian politics. As president through much of the 1980s, he plunged the country into a disastrous period of hyperinflation, daily food queues and violent guerrilla uprisings.

Our correspondent says it may also reflect the public disgust with the current crop of political leaders, many of whom have been caught up in the cloud of corruption that swirled around the disgraced former President Alberto Fujimori.

And although Mr Toledo is still the favourite to win the presidency, much now depends on who, if anyone, Mr Flores chooses to endorse.

The losing candidate is in a strong position to trade her support for a key position in government and if she backs Mr Garcia, he could still pull off a remarkable political comeback.

Mr Toledo - who was hoping to attract at least 43% of the vote - said he was disappointed not to have won outright, but vowed to fight on.

He told a crowd of supporters: "All we need now is one final step to start a new history of Peru."

"We have won in votes and in democracy, even if we did not achieve the 51%."



Warriors from Brazil. Their tribes were rediscovered in the Amazon over the weekend.

## FEDERAL MEDICAL CENTRE, GUSAU ZAMFARA STATE STAFF VACANCIES

The Board of management of Federal Medical Centre, Gusau has approved the Basic Man-Power Development Plan of the Centre. Accordingly, applications are hereby invited to fill the under listed vacancies:-

### 1.A. CONSULTANT MEDICAL DOCTORS - SALARY HAPPS 15-17

- I) General Surgery
- II) Orthopaedic Surgery
- III) Obstetrics & Gynaecology
- IV) Paediatrics
- V) Internal Medicine (Physician)
- VI) Ophthalmology
- VII) Radiology

### 1.B. NON-CONSULTANT MEDICAL DOCTORS - SALARY HAPPS 12 - 14

- i) Senior Registrar
- ii) Registrar
- iii) Senior House Officer

#### QUALIFICATION:

For I. (A) Consultants and I.(B) Non-Consultants qualification are as required by Medical & Dental Council of Nigeria and the Post Graduate Medical College for entry into such post plus relevant cognate professional experience, and satisfactory reference from referees to include that of current place of work where applicable. Demonstrable evidence of working in tertiary care hospital and or interest in future Residency Training for candidates 1(B) will be an advantage.

### 2. NURSING STAFF - SALARY HATISS 7-8

- i) Nursing Officer I
- ii) Nursing Officer II

#### QUALIFICATIONS

For 2(I) and (II) qualifications are as required by Nursing & Midwifery Council of Nigeria More emphasis for Nursing Staff with specialization in Anaesthesia, Peri-operatives, Paediatrics, Accident, and Emergency, Intensive Care Nursing, Orthopedics, Ophthalmology, etc.

### 3. PHARMACISTS - SALARY HATISS 7-8

- i) Pharmacists 1 & II

#### QUALIFICATIONS:

As required by the Pharmacy Council of Nigeria plus cognate professional experience preferably in Hospital Pharmacy practice.

### 4. RADIOGRAPHERS - SALARY HATISS 7-9

- i) Radiographer

#### QUALIFICATIONS:

As required by the Radiographers Registration Board of Nigeria plus relevant cognate Clinical radiography service in preferably Tertiary Care Hospital. A versatile Training experience in Ultra-sound practice will be a real advantage.

### 5. PHYSIOTHERAPIST SALARY HATISS :9

- i. Senior Physiotherapist

#### QUALIFICATIONS:

As required by the Medical Rehabilitation Therapist Board of Nigeria plus relevant cognate clinical service experience of 4-5 years preferably in Tertiary Care Hospital will be an advantage.

### 6. ADMIN DEPARTMENT - SALARY HATISS 7-13

Chief Admin Officer.

#### QUALIFICATIONS:

Candidates must possess BSC/HND in any of the social science courses or its equivalent, with at least 8 years experience in relevant field or Hospital Administration MPA or any other relevant professional qualifications will be an additional advantage.

#### METHOD OF APPLICATION:

Applicants should forward copies of their hand written applications, credentials, curriculum vitae to the Medical Director, Federal Medical Centre, Gusau, Sani Abacha Way. P.M.B. 1008, Gusau, Zamfara State Nigeria not later than 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2001.

Those that applied before need not to re-apply. Applications to reach this office on or before 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2001. Short listed names for interview will be published in the National Dailies.

Sign: **ASST. DIRECTOR ADMIN.**  
FOR: **MEDICAL DIRECTOR**



## NIGERIA POSTAL SERVICE

### INVITATION TO TENDER FOR THE SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF A MAIL X-RAY MACHINE

The Nigerian Postal Service hereby invites **TENDERS** from reputable companies for the supply and installation of Mail X-Ray Machine with the following standard and additional features:-

- Dual 17" Colour Monitor
- 1 meter entry/exit conveyors
- Remote console controls
- Tunnel Opening 1.5m (59.1") wide/1.65m (65.0) high
- Variable conveyors speeds 8.2m/27-12.2m (40) per minute.
- 3000kg (6.600.lbs) conveyors capacity
- Voltage Stabilizer.

#### STANDARD FEATURE

- Variable gamma
- Pseudo colour
- Automatic threat alert
- Zoom 2x and 4x
- Edge trace
- High penetration
- Reverse Monochrome
- Suspicious Luggage alert
- Area threshold alert
- E-scan material discrimination
- Organic stripping

#### ADDITIONAL APPLICATION FEATURES

- CE COMPLIANCE KIT
- Treat Image Projection (TIP)
- Operator assist (OA)
- Image archiving (IA)

In addition to the supply and installation of the machine, the Contractor is expected to provide Post installation maintenance and training of operators of the machine.

All interested companies are to collect bidding documents at the office of the Secretary Tenders Board, Room 005 NIPOST Corporate Headquarters, Abuja after the payment of N10,000.00 non-refundable fees at NIPOST Cash Office, Abuja.

The following documents shall also be submitted along with the completed bidding documents.

- A. A copy of Company's Certificate of Registration or incorporation.
- B. A copy of Company's Current Tax Clearance
- C. Any other relevant document.

\***NOTE** NIPOST is not bound to accept the lowest tender.

Completed bidding documents should be sealed and marked "TENDER FOR SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF MAIL X-RAY MACHINE, and dropped in the box at the office of the Secretary Tenders Board, Room 005 NIPOST Corporate Headquarters, Abuja two weeks from the date of this publication.

Signed:  
Sec./Legal Adviser

# BUSINESS DAY

**E**mbattled workers of the Nigeria Airways have accused the Vice President Atiku Abubakar and the Director General of Bureau of Public Enterprises, Mallam Nasir El-Rufai of plotting to buy the Nigeria Airways.

The workers who staged a peaceful demonstration at the Presidential Wing of Murtala Mohammed Airport at the weekend, on hearing that the Vice President Atiku Abubakar aircraft was positioned at the lounge matched down in

## Airways workers accuse Atiku, El-Rufai

From Shakirat Abdulmajeed, in Lagos

their thousands hoping to confront the Vice President.

They were however disappointed as the Vice President was yet to arrive the premises from where he went to commission a project.

Engineer Cyril Obuah spokesperson of the workers also offered negative prayers

## over ploy to buy off NAL

such as "God send the fire of heaven to destroy all those planning to sell and suffer Airways workers".

When the Vice President eventually arrived amidst tight security, he immediately moved to his waiting jet

after a brief stop to watch the cultural dance that performed to honour him.

The Chairman of the National Union of Air Transport Employees (NUATE), Comrade Salau Johnson told newsmen after the protest

that the airways staff had the strong conviction that Atiku Abubakar has an interest in buying the airways.

"If he knows that he is not interested, he should come up and tell Nigerians the truth." "he has been hid-

ing under BPE and BPE has been using the opportunity to tell Nigerians different types of lies."

The National Treasurer of National Association of Aircraft pilots and Engineers (NAAPE), Prince Ihemerende told *Business Day* that his union has written the president on their position on IFC's recommendation on Nigeria Airways but they are yet to receive feedback. "The Nigeria Airways staff are tired of government's pranks in the planned privatisation of the airline," he added.

## Chevron committed to workers' safety

**M**anaging Director, Chevron Nigeria Limited, Mr. Raymond Wilcox has stressed his determination to ensure zero-incidence safety for the company's workforce.

Mr. Wilcox who stated this in *Chevron news* said safety was his first priority on the agenda for Chevron. "I can tell you that the first thing you have to do is to protect people. You want them to know that they can come to work in a safe environment with safe equipment".

Commenting on Chevron safety record since he assumed office a year ago, the MD observed that they had very few incidents and recorded just one Lost Time Accident and no employee fatalities.

From Rakiya A. Muhammad, in Lagos

While lamenting the only very serious helicopter accident recorded, Mr. Wilcox stressed that they have to improve "because anything less than perfection is not what we are looking for."

He also spoke on environment, which he said is a second priority that will not be compromised.

According to him, putting out the flares in the swamp was a major priority, adding that the EG P-2 completion was a priority.

Mr. Wilcox who stated that it was not 100 per cent complete yet, however said that they have started up the Abiteye and Olero Creek compressors, which is putting out flares in these locations.



Vice-President Atiku Abubakar (second from right) listening to a brief during his recent visit to the Aluminium Smelter Company of Nigeria's (ALSCON) Plant at Ikot Abasi, Akwa Ibom State. To the VP's right is Senator Udoma Udo Udoma, while governor Victor Attar of Akwa Ibom State is to the VP's left.

## FG to pay Jebba Mill workers soon - Industry Minister

By Ahmed Shekarau

**T**he Minister of Industry, Chief Kolawole Jamodu has assured workers of the Nigeria Paper Mill Limited, Jebba that the Federal Government will soon settle their outstanding salary arrears owed them since 1996.

The Paper Mill has been out of production since 1996 and thus, the company's workers had remained without salaries since then.

Jamodu who went on a familiarisation visit to the Mill urged the workers not to go on rampage, noting that "reactivation of the Mill is being addressed." Though the Minister was not specific on when the workers will be paid their salaries, he however enjoined them to exercise "patience".

On the issue of privatisation, he said the company is in the process of being privatised, but noted that the government will make sure the Mill gets a credible investor who would not dispose-off the workers without regard to their conditions.

Earlier, the Acting Man-

agement Director of the Paper Mill, Dr. H.K. Abdulkareem gave the Minister a list of problems facing the company which include inability to pay N35 million to retrenched staff, as well as N1.8 billion working capital to refurbish the Plant's machinery.

Meanwhile, the Industry Minister had earlier on paid a similar visit to the Nigerian Sugar Company (NISUCO), Bacita.

The Minister who inspected the 5,600 hectares of sugar cane plantation, as well as other facilities at Bacita challenged the management of the company to show transparency and accountability in their jobs.

Jamodu explained that the Federal Government is currently making efforts to ensure that the African Development Bank (ADB) lifts its sanction on NISUCO and release the balance of its loan to the company.

He also asked that the FG would speed up the reactivation of the company.

Gana expressed delight that an industrialist (Jamodu) is appointed to supervise the ministry. He expressed optimism that Bacita would record "more successes" under the present civilian administration.



President Olusegun Obasanjo

grant the company approval to employ the services of local consultants in place of the services rendered by the ADB.

The Managing Director of Bacita, Dr. I. J. Gana had earlier appealed to the FG to

## NAPIMS boss warns against sharp practices

**S**takeholders in the Nigeria Oil Industry have been charged to come up with a strategy that will check the unethical practices now engulfing the industry during tendering process.

Group General Manager, Nigerian National Petroleum Investment Management Services, (NAPIMS), Engr. S.A. Adetunji gave the charge in Lagos.

According to him such practices which include "clandestine sourcing of classified information during tendering process" has made the image of the Nigerian oil industry outside suffer severe damage.

"The common detrimental comment on the Nigerian oil industry contracting process these days is that you either.

Also speaking at the occasion, the Corporate Connecting Manager, Mr. David

From Rakiya A. Muhammad, in Lagos

Green, while giving an overview of procurement in the Shell Group said the procurement revolution was underway and that everything from tender process to payment was being affected.

He maintained that Internet technology offers great opportunities for Nigerian business.



Jackson Gaius-Obaseki, NNPC GMD.

## ABC, Scotia Capital in \$90m loan for UAE's Oasis

**A**rab Banking Corp (ABC) said on Monday, it had been mandated together with Scotia Capital to arrange a 90 million dollars loan for Abu Dhabi-based aircraft leasing firm Oasis International Leasing Co. (AL-Waha).

"ABC and Scotia Capital are pleased to announce that they have been mandated to arrange a 90 million dollars secured debt facility on behalf of Oasis."

It said the facility had been fully underwritten by ABC and Scotia Capital. The loan is being used to finance the acquisition of a 1998 Boeing B777-200 leased to Malaysian airline.

The arrangers will shortly be syndicating the facility to a select group of regional and international banks, an ABC official said.

Oasis, established in 1997 in the United Arab Emirates capital as a public joint company, has 11 aircraft on lease to seven international airlines.

# BUSINESS DAY

## Shell budgets \$2.3bn for 2001 operations

Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Limited (SPDC) is to spend 2.3 billion dollars this year for its operations in the country. Last year the company expended two billion dollars.

Disclosing this at the second contractors' conference in Lagos was SPDC's development director, John Barry.

Mr. Barry said that the company had an upturn in its business in the year 2000 with production increasing by more than 10 percent up to 800,000 bpd, while unit cost dropped.

The development director who said that exploration successes added 300 million barrels to the portfolio, also stated that 12 major facilities received the internationally recognized ISO 14000 environmental certification.

Said he: "We now start to look forward to contract strategies which will allow us to execute optimally the new oil and gas projects needed to supply further phases of the Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG), which seem more likely to crystallise every day".

Mr. Barry also said that Shell was exploring ways by which host communities where it operates can also benefit in a sustainable way from its presence.

A safety specialist in SPDC, Mr. Arinze Oduah who gave an overview of the company's HSE performance said though there were very few cases of road fatali-

Rakiya A Muhammad  
in Lagos

ties recorded, "Contractors provide 80 percent of works and services for SPDC and therefore, account for about 80 million man-hours of exposure annually, but despite efforts to improve safety awareness, we still get casu-

alties", the safety specialist lamented.

He stressed the imperativeness to refocus on efforts to eliminate fatalities, adding, "apart from the loss of priceless human lives, direct and collateral cost of these accidents run into tens of millions of naira".

## NITEL meets MTN, ECONET over GSM take-off

The Nigeria Telecommunications Limited (NITEL), and major stakeholders in the nation's telecommunication industry are to start series of talks aimed at ironing out issues concerning operations in the industry.

Specifically, NITEL is billed to meet with MTN and Econet Wireless, two GSM licence holders to discuss how the three of them can cooperate to ensure the smooth take-off of GSM operations with minimal hitches in the country.

Similarly, it is expected to meet with MSI, its new technical partner, to work out modalities and agreement on how to operate NITEL's owned GSM network.

The talks will also cover technical, commercial and legal aspects of telephone operation agreement as required by the National Policy on Telecommunications.

Osborne Adi jnr.

Of major concern to Private Telecommunications Operators (PTOs) is the vexed issue of congestion in the national network which



Mohammed Arzika, Communications Minister is responsible for the poor quality of service being experienced in many territories across the country.

Also, MTN and Econet are expected to agree in concrete terms with NITEL over

## Islamic Bank to aid Palestine with \$180m

Islamic Development Bank (IDB) said on Monday it would release the first instalment of a \$180 million grant to support the Palestinian Authority.

The Saudi-based IDB said in a statement it would

begin transferring to the Palestinian Authority, as of Monday, \$30 million per month for six months in additional urgent aid to support the authority's budget.

It said the move was in line with a decision taken at an Arab summit in the Jordanian capital Amman last month to allocate the \$180 million, which is in addition to two Arab funds approved in October.

An Arab summit held in Cairo in October set up an \$800 million fund to "retain the Arab and Islamic character of Arab East Jerusalem".

It also approved a \$200 million fund to support families of Palestinians killed or wounded in clashes with Israeli forces.

The two funds are managed by a body composed

of finance ministers of donor countries and paid out through the IDB which has observer status.

The IDB said the Pal-



Yassar Arafat, Palestinian Leader

estianian Authority had already received a total of \$30 million out of \$60 million approved earlier by the Arab funds.

At least 370 Palestinians, 71 Israelis and 13 Israeli-Arabs have been killed since the uprising erupted in late September.

inter-connectivity, routing of traffic, traffic level and service quality.

Although NITEL has commenced re-routing in the network in its bid to resolve the congestion problem, PTOs are still apprehensive over the situation which is capable of jeopardizing telephone services if a long-term solution was not found.

However, Mallam Bala Abdulkadir, NITEL's deputy spokesman who confirmed the meetings told *Daily Trust*



Former President, General Ibrahim Babangida (second right) listening to PAN Managing Director, Mr. Phillippe Beudet who conducted the guests round during the commissioning ceremony of Madunka Motors in Kaduna recently.

## Dariye raises committee on Jos Inland Port

The Plateau governor, Chief Joshua Dariye, has approved the



Gov. Dariye of Plateau State

constitution of an 11-member high-powered implementation committee on the proposed Jos inland container port terminal.

The committee which was saddled with the task of fashioning out appropriate modalities and strategies for the construction of the port terminal, was also mandated to ensure that the objective of the project was realized for the socio-economic benefit of the states within the North East zone.

The committee has the state commissioner for commerce and industry, Alhaji Saidu Musa, as the chairman while other members were drawn from the private and government organizations.

It will be recalled that Dariye, while on a visit to the proposed site of the Jos inland container port terminal at Heipang in February, announced the state government's contribution of 50 million naira toward the smooth take-off of the project.

### Exchange rates for World currencies against the US dollar as at April 9

	CURRENT	HIGH	LOW
Euro	0.9015	0.9047	0.8993
Japanese Yen	125.24	125.47	124.04
British Pound	1.4436	1.4471	1.4384
Swiss Franc	1.6961	1.6999	1.6913
Austrian Schilling	15.2604	15.2977	15.2115
Belgian Franc	44.738	4.847	44.594
Danish Crown	8.279	8.2975	8.2505
Dutch Guilder	2.444	2.4499	2.4361
Finnish Markka	6.5939	6.61	6.5728
French Franc	7.2747	7.2925	7.2513
German Mark	2.169	2.1744	2.1621
Greek Drachma	377.9	378.82	376.69
Irish Punt	1.1447	1.1486	1.1421
Italian Lire	2147.35	2152.61	2140.47
Norwegian Crown	9.0236	9.043	8.9902
Portuguese Escudo	222.34	222.88	221.63
Spanish Peseta	184.52	184.98	183.93
Swedish Crown	10.081	10.1084	10.056
Australian Dollar	0.4944	0.4998	0.4924
Brazilian Real	2.163	2.163	2.164
Canadian Dollar	1.5623	1.5446	1.5623
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7987	7.7989	7.7988
Mexican Peso	9.37	9.4	9.38
Russian Rouble	28.806	28.85	28.82
Singapore Dollar	1.8158	1.8192	1.8115
South African Rand	8.05	8.0715	8.0375

# BUSINESS DAY

## Iran to cut oil exports

Several Gulf OPEC members are expected to inform buyers this week of term crude allocations for May, which will provide some indications on whether producers are trimming back supplies under the latest round of cuts.

A senior Iranian oil official said on Monday that

Tehran was aiming to cut exports across the board to comply fully with OPEC's new quotas

"We are trying to have equal cut for everybody—based on the OPEC resolution," a senior National Iranian Oil Company official

told Reuters. "We want to comply 100 percent with our OPEC quota."

Near term oil price direction will likely come from the weekly U.S. stocks report from the American Petroleum

Institute, which releases data after the close of business each Tuesday.

Last week's inventor report showed a fall in gasoline tank levels for the sixth straight week and left a 10 million barrel year-on year

deficit.

Dwindling stocks have been attributed to low national refinery output because of routine maintenance and of all in imports because of higher overseas prices.

Analysts fear that U.S. refineries will have difficulties

rebuilding supplies ahead of the summer, when American motorists take to the roads for vacations.

Last year, U.S. pump prices hit the record high of more than \$2 a gallon because gasoline inventories proved insufficient to meet peak demand.

## Oil prices surge by 18cents

Oil prices edged higher on Monday, awaiting new date on the state of U.S. fuel stockpiles and for clues as to whether the OPEC producers carter is making good a pledge to cut production.

North Sea bell whether Brent crude gained 18 cents to \$25.355 a barrel, while U.S. benchmark light added 34 cents to \$27.40.s

Crude has found support from worries of a summer gasoline supply crunch in the States because of lean inventories, at lower levels for alt least 17 years.

The rally has been capped though by concerns about weakness in the U.S. economy and by doubts that OPEC members are sticking to reduced production quotas.

The energy information Administration the statistical arm of the U.S. Department of Energy forecast on Friday that OPEC would exceed output limits by almost one million barrels per day by mid-summer. The organisation of the Petroleum Ex-

porting Countries has cut output twice this year by total 2.5 million bpd, with the most recent cut of one million bpd going into effect on April 1.

A Reuters survey last week indicated that production by the OPEC 10 sanctions-bound Iraq is excluded from the group's quota sys-



Dr. Rilwanu Lukman, Presidential Adviser on Petroleum & Energy.

tem exceeded the output target by 470,000 bpd in March, almost one-third of OPEC's first output cut of 1.5 million bpd which came into effect on February 1.

OPEC President Chakib

Khelil on Sunday played down reports of poor discipline among member states and said it would take time to reach full compliance.

"I think that we have to

wait a little bit more for OPEC members to implement fully the cuts because they need time between when the decision was made and its effective implemen-

tation," Khelil, who also serves as Algeria's energy and mining minister, told Reuters.

Kuwait said it had reduced output to its new quota

level of 1.941 million bdp.

"We are on quota and have brought down our production to the agreed level." Oil Minister Adel al-Subain said on Monday.

## Rivers poised to dump NEPA

The Rivers State government has kept hope alive in its bid to dump the services of NEPA, with an assurance that the Eleme gas turbine project will start its test runs in a few days time.

The state governor, Dr. Peter Odili, made the announcement in Port Harcourt while addressing a cross-section of elders in the state.

"I am happy to announce that the Eleme gas turbine will start test runs by the middle of April," he told the gathering, who responded with applause.

"By the end of April the whole Eleme, Khana, Gokana, Tal And Okrika local government areas will enjoy electricity from that station," Odili said.

The governor said that installation of the Trans-Amadi gas turbine, one of three such projects in the state, was on course, saying that the project would be completed next month.

"It is expected that before the end of May part of Port Harcourt, Obio Akpor,

Eleme, Khana, Gokana, Tal and Obigbo Local government areas will be enjoying electricity from this station," he said.

Rivers, rich in oil and gas resorted to the gas turbine following what it described as the annoying and dismal performance of the National Electrical Power Authority (NEPA) in the state.

A year ago, Odili vowed

that the state would disengage from NEPA, saying that the organisation was ruining businesses in the state, the industrial hub of the nation.

The governor also spoke on efforts being made by his administration to improve learning in secondary schools in the state, saying that 100 schools had been renovated.

He said that 44,000 desks

had been supplied to the schools, and that a network of roads had been built in the state.

Odili said that new roads were being built to link the riverine communities of Opobo and Andoni to the upland areas of the state.

"Rivers state has become the envy of many. The state where Nigerians and non-Nigerians will like to come and live," he stated.

## Odili pledges support for Savannah Bank

The governor of Rivers State, Dr. Peter Odili, has pledged that the state government would give necessary assistance to Savannah Bank plc to enable the Bank tackle its problems.

Odili, who gave the assurance in Port Harcourt when the management of the bank paid him a courtesy visit, said that the state government would collaborate with the bank to make it recover faster from its difficult past.

Odili said that Rivers would use the advantage of its Shareholdings in the bank to work closely with management to put the bank back on track.

The governor said that his administration would also take advantage of the bank's micro-credit scheme to tackle the pervading poverty in the state.

Odili urged the bank to participate in the state's housing programme, saying that he was satisfied with the new management of the bank for their effort in turning around the fortunes of the bank.

Managing Director of the bank, Mr. Herbert Stetzenmeyer, gave his assurances that the bank would eventually pay all the outstanding arrears of dividends due to the state for its investment in the bank.

He lauded the state government for its effort to engender the development of the state, saying that the bank was willing to be a partner in progress.

Stetzenmeyer said that he was happy about the bank's ability to rekindle what he termed the healthy relationship between the state and the bank.



A Peugeot 504 car that runs on Compressed Natural Gas (CNG).

## NEPC pays N3bn export benefits to 1,087 companies

The Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC) paid out about N3 billion as export benefits to 1,087 companies between 1989 and last year, the Chairman of the Board, Alhaji Isiaka Adeleke, has said.

Speaking with newsmen in Abuja, Adeleke said the amount was paid under the NEPC's policy of Duty Drawback Scheme (DDS) and export expansion grant aimed at encouraging export drive.

The former Governor of Osun State said that N2.3 billion was paid to 822 companies as their export expansion grants benefit while

N695 million was paid to 265 companies as their duty drawback incentive.

He said that a lot of companies were not benefiting from the enormous incentives the council had provided, and that the Council would embark on massive campaign to enlighten exporters on the various benefits available to them.

According to Adeleke, the Council recorded a total proceeds of N2 billion from export last year alone, an indication that a lot of companies were not aware of the benefits the Council had made available to them.

He said that the Council was planning to establish

export warehouses abroad and resuscitate the nation's commercial desks in countries where they existed before.

Adeleke appealed to government to ensure that all NEPC's entitlements were duly handed over to it.

Adeleke, whose Board was recently inaugurated by the Minister of Commerce, Engr. Mustafa Bello had pledged to reinvigorate the Council to further promote the manufacturing of export-oriented products in the country.

He said the country has enormous potentials, which remain abandoned and untapped, adding that the

NEPC Board will harness local products through the encouragement of small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs) to achieve the government's objectives.



Mustafa Bello, Commerce Minister.

# The smiths

Mallam Ndanbaba Abdullahi, 35, has a forge very close to that of Mallam Mohammed who bade us farewell with a fairly mischievous smile and a wave. The former has about eight workers under him and he stated quite proudly that interest in Brass and its products runs in his family. He added that his father and other relations had been smiths in the area as far back as the 1920s. In response to a question posed he said all persons keen on becoming smiths should not be rude, and they should be responsible persons. He mentioned that they should be capable of generating a strong inner capacity to

By Tadaferua Ujorha

concentrate. They should also be emotionally stable persons, he added. Finally, he said that children at the age of ten years could be exposed to the art of the smith, which is learnt, by patient observation and practice. Just as it was in Mallam Mohammed's forge, there was a fire at Ndanbaba's forge and the workers were carrying out various tasks.

The next smith to be encountered was Mallam Mohammed Baba Kuka Tswata

Muku, 26. He began work as a smith twenty years ago, and he stated that he is able to support himself from the resources accruing from his job. Thus, he says he does not have to bother his father for monies to purchase one or two items. He mentioned that six persons work under him, and that he buys sheet metal, which is brass, from companies in the vicinity. These are then taken to the factory or forge where they are either melted or cut into various sizes and shapes, depending on



Beautiful glass beads on display.



Hajiya Fati (right) consults a friend.



Brass items, with aluminium products in the foreground.

what is desired. Mallam Mohammed Baba also seems to have achieved great fame in the course of his work. He moulds elaborate and lofty designs on his products, and sometimes, upon request, he has skilfully inscribed names of customers upon his products. This has made him popular and many customers return to him bringing their friends who now make numerous orders.

Women do not work as smiths, but they participate at the level of the sale of the products. Hajiya Fati is an example of such and she began to sell products some fifteen years ago. She mentioned that she

was once married to a smith who used to give her his products to sell, and the interest deriving from the sales was used to support the family. Upon her table she had aluminium spoons of varying lengths.

Some shone brightly, while some were of a dull aspect. Some were long, while some were dwarf spoons. She said that spoons and other objects made of Brass, are the traditional wedding gifts for the bride in the Nupe speaking

*"He mentioned that they should be capable of generating a strong inner capacity to concentrate. They should be emotionally stable persons, he added."*

Feature

# of Bida (II)



Pictures by Felix Onigbinde

twenty different groups working with glass in the Masaga area. Also the glass workers have a leader, the 'Masaga' whose full names are Alhaji Yahaya Masaga. Our source also mentioned that there are glass beads for the royals and also glass beads for the ordinary people. He showed us a multi-coloured necklace, which he presents to

Etsu Nupe, once each year. The necklace has a mixture of green, brown and white, and appeared very lovely in the early morning sunshine. Thus, Bida has a galaxy of artisans who are located in various parts of the city. These are men who are actively participating in a tradition which the ancients had mastered aeons ago. The smiths of Bida are located at the

two principal sites of Tswata Muku and Musaga, and these almost share a common territory.

In the course of relations with the various smiths it became apparent that the smiths had received a fair level of exposure. For instance they are usually invited to Trade Fairs within the country. Most of the smiths, referred to the various fairs they had attended with some nostalgia. They also revealed that the road racing through Tswata Muku, the central location of Brass smiths, was tarred not too long ago, and this has improved mobility within the area.

The art of smiting has produced a complex of titled men. Thus there are leaders of the various guilds together with accompanying praise names. Mallam Mohammed Tswata Muku is referred to as *Mukun*, which means 'leader' in Nupe.

At Bida, the smiths work at the forge with a compelling passion. Bida is the cultural capital of the Nupe speaking people. The smiths soften many substances, and purify countless elements. They mould and recreate with skill, under the genial influence of fires.



Malam Ndanbaba Abdullahi makes a point

...as.  
Masaga is an area of Bida where another corpus of smiths work. These smiths produce glass beads and related products. The smith we met there had been producing glass beads for the past twenty-five years. He mentioned that he normally sources broken bottles from places as distant as Kano. These broken bottles are then taken to a factory where they are melted down, and then the substance formed would be moulded into

countless varieties and shapes. The smith mentioned that the moment of the greatest sales throughout his twenty-five year career as a smith was during the regime of late General Murtala Mohammed, when it seemed there was a special focus on local products. He added that today, things are radically different, and there has been a general decline in sales, with just one or two enthusiastic buyers appearing from time to time. He mentioned that people have been producing glass in the Masaga area of Bida for the past one hundred years. He also said that there are at least



Note aluminium spoons at the background, and also the immediate foreground

## News Focus

# Extending help to the youths

Wife of the Niger State governor and motivator of the Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES), Hajiya Zainab Kure, is in a dilemma. She is in a fix as to whether to be happy that the federal government has chosen to acknowledge her initiative by renaming its Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) as Youth Employment Scheme (YES). In another dimension, is she to be sad that the federal government had chosen to hijack her pet project, using the federal might.

Whatever it is, the two programmes, geared towards alleviating the suffering of the youths, should complement each other. The two programmes to all intents and purposes are aimed at uplifting the jobless youths from the position of job seekers to job creators.

Niger State governor, Engineer Abdulkadir Kure, while receiving in audience the leaders of Alliance for Democracy (AD) in the state, expressed optimism that the Youth Employment Scheme (YES) of the federal government "will now genuinely address the plight of the unemployed youths unlike what we have under PAP".

He went further to assure that unlike what obtained during PAP, the new federal government's YES project would go right into properly addressing the problem facing the youths, especially as it relates to employment and job creation.

In a similar manner, Mrs. Kure's YES evolved after a careful study of the plight of the youths in the state. According to a report on her pet project, it was discovered that the youths

From Akinade Adeniji,  
in Minna

are those that need the most support and assistance "because they are the engine that propels development in any society, yet they are the most neglected"

Aimless wandering, idleness, gang-compelled behaviours as well as the famous drop-out syndrome and frustration have become visible among the youths, many of whom take to illegal fuel hawking or engage in meaningless trades.

Unlike the federal government that first experimented with PAP, Mrs. Kure's YES is from the beginning, a registered non-governmental organization (NGO) which aimed at guiding the youths to take both their destiny and that of their society in their own hands. It came through a vision of stimulating an enabling environment for the youths to explore their potentials and also of a vision seeking to create a youth cadre in Niger State that is mobilized for the task of self and societal development.

Speaking during the formal inauguration of the YES committee on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> April, 2000, Mrs. Zainab Kure gave the committee which comprised seasoned professionals in education, technology, youth development, psychology, electronic and print media, health and law, a marching order "to plan and develop the blue print" and also "package a programme to be implemented for the positive development of the youths".

The Poverty Alleviation Programme (PAP) of the federal government which is the forebear of the present Youth Employment Scheme (YES) cannot be

said to be a complete failure. Though it might not have achieved the level of success, which its founding fathers had anticipated.

For example, about the time beneficiaries of Mrs.

said.

The various trade and vocation sections of the project include computer skills acquisition, hair dressing and barbing, tailoring and fashion design,

as, take-off grant to establish their businesses. They are expected to pay back 50 percent of the cost of the equipment, spread over a year with a moratorium period of three months. The committee will continue to monitor them until such a time that it is satisfied of their independence.

A breakdown of the graduates show that 160 beneficiaries graduated from the computer skills literacy training. At the beginning of this programme, most of the beneficiaries hardly knew what a computer is, but today all of them are fully computer literate.

Having acquired computer skills, the committee decided to further assist some of them who have little deficiencies in their SSCE/GCE or NECO results. To this end, arrangements were made towards assisting them to make up their papers. 120 of them have been registered to re-take their SSCE/NECO and JAMB examinations. With extra mural classes being arranged at the Youth Centre. 49 of the beneficiaries in the computer skill literacy programme have post-secondary school qualifications. The project has awarded scholarships amounting to N 1.9 million so far to 157 beneficiaries in the Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education, Schools of Nursing, Schools of Health Technology and secondary schools while no fewer than 61 beneficiaries out of the 573 registered in the vocational skills acquisition programme have successfully completed their exercise.

Since the federal government's YES is coming after Mrs. Kure's YES and the two are geared to-

wards the same direction, it will not be out of place to advise facilitators of the federal government's YES to take a cue from Niger's YES strategies, that is, screen and register the beneficiaries into their chosen skills training, provide them with guidance and counselling sessions to re-orient and change unwanted characteristics. Invite professionals to talk to the youths on issues ranging from personal hygiene and health, drug abuse, career choice, etiquette, road safety, first aid, community service, religion, just to mention a few.

One is at liberty to say that these counselling sessions at Mrs. Kure's YES project are successfully changing the character of the beneficiaries and are making fine young gentlemen and ladies out of them. The federal government should provide beneficiaries with stipends and allowances to offset the economic pressures they may face. They should be provided with tools of their trades, monitor the beneficiaries at regular periods and continue to link up with them to counsel them further.

The expected results of Hajiya Kure's Youth Empowerment Scheme is to change unwanted modes of behaviour through counselling, aimed at restoring hope to the hopeless, providing alternative methods towards economic independence and wealth creation.

This sense of co-operation and complementarity, rather than bickering on who is copying what idea, should be the target of the two YES programmes.

Mr. Akinade Adeniji writes from Minna.



Mrs. Titi Atiku Abubakar, wife of the Vice-President

Kure's YES were commencing their training at the Abdulsalami Abubakar Youth Centre in Minna, beneficiaries of PAP were receiving wheel-barrows in local government headquarters across the state.

Even though Governor Kure challenged those in charge of his wife's YES project "to counsel, train and engage 500 youths in meaningful trades", the ambitious YES project under the leadership of Mrs. Vicky Olumudi, General Manager, Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), Minna, took off with no fewer than 730 beneficiaries drawn up from all parts of the state and registered in various skills acquisition programmes.

"We have decided to concentrate our training activities in Minna, first, on a trial basis and secondly because it is the state capital which houses people from different parts of the state. The beneficiaries were thoroughly screened by the project implementation committee and were assigned into various trades and vocations based on their choice, interest and competence." Project Implementation Committee chairperson, Mrs. Olumudi

catering, soap production, shoe making, electrical skills acquisition, mechanic skills acquisition, fine arts, photography, aluminum and ceramic, pottery, and knitting.

Out of the 730 beneficiaries, 298 were trained at the Abdulsalami Abubakar Youth Centre while 275 were assigned for training to master trainers within the state. 157 beneficiaries are benefiting from Mrs. Kure's YES education development programme, through scholarships and enrolment into schools offering extra-mural classes.

The project to a large extent, has succeeded in assembling young volatile men, and engaged them in worthwhile and meaningful ventures, thus, preventing them from sitting idly or wandering aimlessly or engaging in negative anti-social activities.

It has succeeded in graduating a total of 221 beneficiaries under the Short-Term Skills Acquisition Programme. Unlike other programmes, Mrs. Kure's YES did not leave its beneficiaries to go empty-handed. After training it provided them with facilities, materials, equipment and the tools of their trades

**"The various trade and vocation sections of the project include computer skills acquisition, hair dressing and barbing, tailoring and fashion design, catering, soap production, shoe making, electrical skills acquisition, mechanic skills acquisition, fine arts, photography, aluminum and ceramic, pottery, and knitting."**

**"In a similar manner, Mrs. Kure's YES evolved after a careful study of the plight of the youths in the state. According to a report on her pet project, it was discovered that the youths are those that need the most support and assistance "because they are the engine that propels development in any society, yet they are the most neglected"**

# NEWS

## Ambassador flays flogging of juveniles

**A** former Nigerian Ambassador to Algeria, Alhaji Lamidi Maliki, has called for a stop to flogging as punishment for juveniles.

According to the ambassador, flogging is a cruel and degrading treatment, which violates international standards and the nation's constitution.

Speaking in Lagos at the media presentation of the book: **Juvenile justice administration in Nigeria: philosophy and practice**, published by the Centre for Law Enforcement Education

**From Adelanwa Bamgboye, Lagos**

(CLEEN), the ambassador said that the law should prohibit detention of young offenders in remand homes for long periods.

He said that the penal practice ran counter to prevailing philosophy as emphasis is on punishment.

"Thus, while officials are enjoined to act in the best interest of the child, the dispositions prescribed are preponderantly primitive," he said.

According to Ambassador Maliki, the defective

philosophical and legal platforms give rise to several problems in the administration of juvenile justice in Nigeria.

Areas of inadequacy revealed in the book include lack of coherent and sustained programmes of correction, reformation and rehabilitation.

Others include gross under-funding and mismanagement of resources, inadequate protection against the violation of the rights of juvenile offenders and grossly inadequate provision of food and nutrition, sanitation and health care services.



Vice-President, Atiku Abubakar (middle) with Senate President, Chief Anyim Pius Anyims, Senate President (left) and Deputy Senate President, Senator Ibrahim Mantu, at the NICON Hilton Hotel, Abuja, during the memorial lecture for the Late Major General Shehu Musa 'Yar' Adua... Saturday

Pix Kennedy Egbonodje

## Haruna reconstitutes new boards

**G**overnor Boni Haruna of Adamawa state has reconstituted almost all the state boards and parastatals and approved the appointments of new government officials.

Top on the list of new political appointees is Alhaji Ahmed Abbah, the former chairman of Gombi local government who was appointed as a special adviser on security.

A statement signed by the secretary to state government, Mr. John Manassa, revealed the names of the chairmen and members of the 13 re-constituted boards and parastatals in the state.

Dr. Martin Bimba, a former permanent secretary in the state ministry of health, is the new chairman of the health management board which has six other board members with Amina Kabir as the secretary. The six-member post primary management board has Mr. Newton Yah'aida as its new chairman with Mr. Vandi Gamba as secretary.

The release also showed that Alhaji Dattijo Yerima, formerly of the state civil service commission, will now head the local government service commission with three other people as members.

The governing council of Adamawa state polytechnic has got Dr. A.L. Tukur as its new chairman with seven other members.

Alhaji Umar Janengold is the new chairman of the state college of education, Hong.

**From Abdullahi Abubakar, Yola**

which has eight other council members.

The statement further disclosed that veteran politician, Mr. Donald Alahira, has been appointed as the chairman of the governing council of the state college of Agriculture, Mubi with 15 other council members.

The former chairman of the state primary education board, Mr. Sylvester Wada, has now become the new chairman of the eight-member state library board.

Barrister Umar Bubar Mubi emerged as the chairman of the scholarship board with Abubakar Hassan as the secretary and three other members.

The re-constituted state arts council has Mr. Wafalola Mark as its new chairman and seven other members with Francis Gobara as secretary.

Engr. Eugene Karka is the new chairman of the state urban planning commission which has six other members.

A veteran woman activist and former chairperson of the state branch of National Council of Women Societies (NCWS), Mr. Fibi Noada, has become the new chairperson of the agency for mass education in the state with 12 other members.

The state water board has Mr. G.T. Malgwi as its new chairman with six other board members.

**T**he Director of engineering and two other officers of the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) have been sent on compulsory retirement by the Federal Government over the fire that gutted the domestic terminal of the Murtala Mohammed International Airport, on May 10 last year.

Daily Trust gathered that the retirement of the three officers was based on the recommendations of the Justice Ajana commission of enquiry into the fire incident that razed terminal one building at the Lagos airport.

Other officers retired are the General Manager, (fire) of the Airport and a security officer who was said to be sleeping when the incident occurred.

Daily Trust learnt that

## Lagos airport fire: three FAAN officers removed

**From Shakirat Abdulwayeed, Lagos**

some officials of the Nigeria Airways were equally indicted in the report submitted.



Mrs. Kema Chikwe testified by Justice Ajana on the fire incident.

The commission, Daily

Trust learnt, specifically noted that the official who was said to have used boiling ring before the fire outbreak should be punished by the Nigeria Airways management.

Already, retirement letters were reportedly distributed to the affected FAAN officials at the weekend even as FAAN spokesman, Sylvester Oputa declared that he was yet to be briefed on the development.

The Director of Engineering who confirmed his retirement, told Daily Trust that he would need some time to wind up, adding that he could not leave immediately as he ran a big office, "but the earlier the better," he said.

## Correspondents challenge withdrawal of colleague from govt

### house press crew

**From Yinka Oladoyinbo, in Ibadan**

**N**igeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), correspondents chapel in Oyo state has given the Oyo state government a seven-day ultimatum to withdraw the letter of discreditation written to the correspondent of Comet Newspaper in the state.

The state government had last week in a letter written to the Comet bureau chief in Oyo state, Dayi Moots declaring him *persona non-grata* and consequently withdrawing his accreditation in the state.

Reacting to the incident in a letter signed by the chapel chairman, Oladele Ogunsola and secretary, Ayokunle Ewuoso, the chapel noted that the withdrawal of the accreditation of the Comet correspondent in the governor's

press crew was done in bad faith without formal or informal protest to the chapel.

The chapel further expressed surprise that a democratically elected government could act in such a way, "we would like to say at this juncture that the letter from the Oyo state government portrayed that the press is yet to be free from oppression and repression from the powers that be," the letter said.

The chapel also said that the press in the state has been performing its duty what any coloration as part of its efforts to contribute to the development of the state, since the inception of the present administration, adding that the chapel therefore wants the withdrawal of the

Comet correspondent within seven days.

It was noted that the step became necessary because government action had endangered the life of the correspondent, "the chapel is indeed surprised that such an action is coming from a democratically elected government in Nigeria of 21<sup>st</sup> century," the chapel added.

The Oyo state government, through the office of the state Commissioner for Information, Youth, Sports and Culture, withdrew the accreditation from Mr. Omotoso without accusing him of any wrong-doing.

Daily Trust however, gathered that Mr. Omotoso's offence may not be unconnected with a story he wrote on the treatment meted out to the wife of the Vice-President, Mrs. Titi Atiku Abubakar during the wedding of the Oyo state governor's son.

## No subsidy on fertilizer – Obasanjo

**By Suleiman Mohammed**

**D**espite repeated agitations for fertilizer subsidy, the Federal Government has insisted that its decision to remove subsidy on the product will remain in force.

President Olusegun Obasanjo who made the disclosure at a meeting with major fertilizer importers and blenders at State House, Abuja, said the decision was based on government's conviction that "Nigeria has the resources and wherewithal to achieve self-sufficiency in fertilizer production."

"I will not subsidise imported fertilizer. There has to be value added here," he declared, pointing out that government's recent pronouncement that it would subsidise fertilizer produced by the National Fertilizer Company (NAFCON), Onne and the Kaduna superphosphate plant, would embrace

before the end of the current planting season, our farmers will be getting something from it," President Obasanjo said.

"The intention of



President Obasanjo

government is that Nigeria should become self-sufficient in fertilizer production and we will do whatever it takes to achieve this. This is why NAFCON is being rehabilitated and

was stinking, assuring that everything possible would be done to ratify the problem.

He said food was an item of security, saying that because of that, agricultural

production would always engage government attention, even though it has declared that it would promote a private sector led market economy.

President Obasanjo who seized the opportunity to assert that the quantity of fertilizers that can be supplied by private local blenders was sufficient for the current farming season, commended the establishment of blending plants by most northern states.

Earlier, the leader of the group, Alhaji Aminu Dantata, former chairman of NAFCON, told the meeting that with its installed capacity, the company could produce enough urea and ammonia to feed all local blenders once it resumes production.

The group also sought government assistance in making the commodity available for local farmers for this year's planting season.

# NEWS

## PTA chairman calls for adequate water supply in schools

The chairman, Katsina State Parent-Teacher Association, Alhaji Balan Gwaggo has called for the restoration of adequate water supply in secondary schools to alleviate difficulties being faced by students.

He was speaking at a party organised to send-off Hajija Hyadiza Ahmed, principal, government girls Arabic college Dutsi-ma. He said that lack of potable water in schools is seriously affecting the educational system in the state.

He therefore called on the state government to provide water systems in the boarding schools so that the perennial shortages could be solved.

The PTA Chairman commended the outgoing

From Hassan A. Karofi, Katsina.  
principal for improving the academic performance and encouraging peace and cordial



Gov. Yar'Adua of Katsina.

relationship among teachers and parents of the school. He urged the new principal to improve on these records.

The new principal, Hajija Gambo Rumah, noted that her work has been made easier by her predecessor who had entrenched discipline in the school.

On her part, the outgoing principal, Hajija Hadiza Ahmed, said her success was made possible by the support she received from both teacher, students and parents and urged them to extend the same to the new principal.

She noted that loyalty and commitment as well as fairness and firmness are ingredients for successful leadership. She was presented with gifts for her outstanding performance by the incoming principal.

Governors of the 19 Northern states of the Federation rose from a one-day meeting in Kaduna on Monday, calling on the federal government to suspend the issuance of licences to mining companies because of ecological problems.

"We request the federal government to suspend the issuance of mining licences and revoke all existing licences because of devastating effects on the ecology and environmental degradation," ... the governors resolved.

In a communiqué read by the governor of Zamfara state, Alhaji Ahmad Sani, they said that the forum discussed the devastating effects of desertification and deforestation in the region and urged the government to take action.

On the participation of

## Northern governors urge FG to suspend issuance of licence to mining coys

From Dare Oyewole, Kaduna, with agency reports

the states in the privatization exercise, the governors tasked their various state investment companies to fully utilize all allotments made for their states.

The forum, which was presided over by Sani, Also set up a committee to recom-

mend ways of improving Hajj operations in view of the poor handling of previous exercises in the country.

The meeting discussed regional and national issues, especially those related to the regional joint ventures such as the northern Nigeria Development Company (NNDC) and the bank of the north.

## Community urges Abiola's family to resuscitate his farm

The Dakka Community in Bali Kocal Government Area of Taraba State, has urged the family of Late chief Moshood Abiola to reactivate the abandoned multi-million naira ultra mod-

ern Abiola farms located in the area.

A spokesman for the community and a member of the state House of Assembly, Alhaji Yahaya Mohammed, made the appeal on Monday in an interview with newsmen in Dakka.



Rev. Jolly Nyame, Taraba State Governor.

He said the farm, which was established in 1986 to produce and process maize as well as engage in other agro-allied activities, was becoming moribund with the death of the businessman.

He suggested that either the Federal Government or Taraba State government should buy over the farm to boost agricultural activities in the Country, if the Abiola family was no longer interested in the "huge" investment.

Mohammed said that in the alternative, private investors should acquire the farm and take necessary steps to revamp it.

The legislator explained that the farm was serving as the community's food basket as well as a source of employment opportunity, training facilities and rural development.

NAN reports that a visit to the 10kms radius farm located at some 85kms away from Jalingo, the state capital, showed that several brands of new tractors, an aircraft, assorted vehicles, farm inputs, a workshop, staff quarters, crop storage facilities and a warehouse were wasting away there.

## Akwa Ibom gets new agric commissioner

Following last month's resignation of former Akwa Ibom Agriculture Commissioner, Prof. Eno Udo, a new commissioner has been appointed.

The new appointment was sequel to the resignation of Udo, an academic, who left his duty post for personal reasons.

Swearing in the new commissioner, Dr. Dominic

Udoh who was the former rector, Akwa Ibom State college of Agriculture Obio Akpa, Gov. Victor Attah charged him to show creativity and be pragmatic on issues that would promote the growth of agriculture in the area. Attah stated that he resolved to restore agriculture to its pride of place in the economic life of people of the state and the nation. The state government is committed to forging ahead and rejuvenating the agricultural sector in order to increase its wealth-creating capacity as well as positively impact on the living standards of the people. The governor said his administration would strive at all times to overcome the bottle-necks in its policy implementation.

Attah reminded the new commissioner of the need to be hardworking and to strive to achieve excellence.



Chief Victor Attah, Akwa Ibom State Governor.

## Obasanjo advised to pay railway pensioners

By Austine Odo

President Olusegun Obasanjo has been advised to order the immediate payment of all arrears of pensions of Nigerian Railway Corporation (NRC) pensioners before Easter.

The chairman, House Committee on Rules and Business, Hon. Idris Yahuza Yakubu gave the advice in Abuja yesterday.

He recalled that the NRC pensioners, most of whom have not received their monthly entitlement from June 2000 to date, had celebrated nearly all religious festivals since May 1999 without their pensions.

Hon. Yakubu who represents Wamba/Akwanga/Nasarawa Eggon federal constituency of Nasarawa state, lamented that the pensioners received their May 2000 pensions only in January this year and have received nothing since then.

According to Honourable Yakubu, the excuse of existence of ghost workers (retirees) that was advanced by the Federal Ministry of Transport as the cause of delay of payment was not tenable as it is unfair and unjustifiable to punish retirees who served their fatherland tirelessly at their prime age for a crime they did not commit.



Minister of Works & Housing, Chief Tony Anenih, right, discussing a point of interest with Internal Affairs Minister, Alhaji Mohammed Shatta, at the Shehu Musa Yar'Adua memorial lecture in Abuja ... Saturday.

## Exam ethics project launches campaign for conference on education ethics

Committed in its efforts to restore character and learning in the education sector, the exam ethics project (EEP) has launched a campaign for the hosting of the fifth national conference on ethics in the education system.

The 2001 conference holding in Owerri, Imo State between April 25 and 28, with the theme "Education for character and learning" would involve all stakeholders including planners and administrators in the education sector.

The secretary General of the project, Mr Sunday Ode, told the new agency of Nigeria

(NAN) in Lagos at the weekend that the participants would chart a new course for eradicating fraud and criminal values.

It would be the first major forum in Nigeria's latest democratic experiment for leaders of education committees in the various legislative houses in the country to rub minds with education ministry strategists at all levels, school system administrators and parents.

He said the conference would touch on at least 21 issues including forgery, admissions and grades racketeering, the handout and sandwich programmes scourge,

school accreditation fraud, the controversial satellite campuses rip-off and the booming market in the sale of campuses rip-off and the booming market in the sale of honorary doctorate degrees.



Prof. Babatunde Borinshade, Education Minister.

# PARLIAMENT

## No mafia in the Senate - Zwingina

By Ibrahim Modibbo,  
Political Editor

Senator Jonathan Silas Zwingina comes from a humble background to achieve an enviable status of chairman, Senate Committee on Publicity. He is an academician of repute, an accomplished administrator and a mobilizer per excellence. His power of oratory and good human relations has endeared him to both friends and foes. Senator Zwingina spoke to **IBRAHIM MODIBBO** our Political Editor. Excerpts: *Two years after its inception, how has the National Assembly fared so far.*

I think I can say that we have fared with mixed blessings. Mixed in the sense that we started on a hopeful step only to run into problems soon after. We ran into problems within the Senate, we ran into problems with our presiding officer in the person of Senator Evan Enwerem. Lots of allegations on his paper qualification as brought forward by his political opponents. Others have also accused him of perhaps getting too close to the executive. And those that were defeated by Senator Enwerem did not let go such an opportunity in their struggle. In the House of Representatives we also had problems with former speaker, Salisu Buhari, as allegations bordering on his credentials became a burning issue. In the full course of events, Senator Enwerem had to lose his seat by virtue of an impeachment, consequent upon declining integrity as the presiding officer of the Senate. Honourable Salisu Buhari also lost his seat, consequent upon conclusive evidence that he had actually been found wanting on the true position of his age. So, the National Assembly as a whole actually had casualties with respect to the first presiding officers. In the Senate we had Senator Chuba Okadigbo as presiding officer who took over with overwhelming majority in the Senate that we were all very hopeful that he would steer the ship of leadership without problems, but that was not the case as we also had problems, some of which were personal handling of matters, others were on the handling of contracts and some were on his poor management and constitution of Senate Committees, where he appeared to have been vindictive to those who supported Senator Enwerem in the first election. The whole issue brought so many scandals to the Senate that at the end it was more of a purification exercise where the removal of Senator Okadigbo, Haruna Abubakar and other principal officers of the Senate appeared to have put that to rest. We now have Senator Anyim Pius Anyim, who has now come with perhaps a very good wind, that is blowing across the Senate with a lot of calm and restoration of normalcy.

I am not saying that absolutely everybody is happy but I can say over 90 percent of Senators are very satisfied with the performance of Anyim Pius Anyim. In the House, since Ghali Umar Na'Abba took over, he has been having a lot of support from

say that the National Assembly has now settled down to the proper business of law making, monitoring the activities of the executive, legislation and proper business of relating to similar organisations worldwide. I think we have come out of the woods and are ready for the challenges ahead of us.

*There is this general feeling that changing three Senate Presidents in barely one year or so is not healthy for our nascent democracy. Why the urgency in these changes?*

Perhaps, I would say that the changes were healthy for democracy to thrive in this country, based on the fact that we needed to establish in the Senate a certain principle which is that, the changes must adhere to the rules of the procedure of the Senate. All the changes conformed with the laid down rules of the Senate. A presiding officer that is changed at the Senate is one that is totally out of favour. You don't change a presiding officer, unless you have a motion brought before the Senate and it has support of Two-third of the Senate. So, for any presiding officer to lose the support and confidence of over 74 senators he does not deserve to be there. Therefore, you do not blame the senators but the presiding officer. Let me quickly point out that a presiding officer of the Senate is not a Chief Executive, just like the other one changed tried to be. One is just a presiding officer, one among equals. I must say that we have used our learning process to learn fast enough. We have now graduated with probably a masters or Phd in terms of how to run the affairs of the Senate. We have tremendously improved rather than losing out; as Senate President Anyim Pius Anyim conducts business of the Senate with utmost impartiality and transparency by carrying all the people along. With the benefit of hindsight, I must quickly add that we changed the leadership of the Senate because they did not lead us well, and the present one is learning from the previous experiences of the former presidents. It would have been very terrible to have a presiding officer that is totally unpopular and yet remained, just because we do not want to change a Senate President.

*Is it true that you belong to an "inner caucus" or "mafia" that specialises in hatching plans for the removal of Senate Presidents?*

Thank you. I want to say that there is no mafia in the Senate, and the only mafia I can say is that every member of the Senate belongs to the plenary session as well as committees of the Senate and that is the only extent to which one can say that the Senate belongs to a mafia. There are no mafia or cliques in the Senate and it is true that I belong to one of the groups and I even led it, but all that, is now in the past. We have all sunk our differences and decided to come together through the leadership of Senator Anyim Pius Anyim and Senator Ibrahim Mantu. I must admit that we had about three groups, but right now there is only one group in the Senate. There may be one or two people who are not happy and may have

understandable, but the truth of the matter is that they are not in the majority and I don't think they are desirous to change the leadership of the Senate. Right now, the group that may not be happy does not have the majority to even command a reasonable motion, let alone pass a motion that would threaten the tenure of the Senate President. I would, therefore, say I don't belong to any faction but chairman of the



Senator Zwingina

committee on information, which is serving all of the Senate as a group.

*In the early days of this administration there was gross misunderstanding between the legislature and the executive arms of government. The collusion was almost getting to the point of crisis, but today, the story seems to have changed. How did this happen?*

It is true that when we started there were misunderstanding between the executive and the National Assembly, at two levels. The first misunderstanding arose at the level of the press, which read any differences in approach, either by the executive or the National Assembly as a conflict, confrontation and of course misunderstanding, which was not necessarily the case. The constitution itself anticipated differences between these organs of government and that is why it provided mitigating clauses in the constitution, for resolving crisis. For example, the constitution provided using two-third majority in the National Assembly to override the veto of the President, because it anticipated a situation where the President may refuse to sign a bill that is popular with the National Assembly. That cannot be a state of conflict but a procedure. The constitution also anticipated that the executive

misunderstanding arose in the media for their total inability to read the normal functioning of democracy as a normal process of agreement and disagreement and sometimes agreement to disagree, and saw it as conflict. They thought that all governments should be like the military governments where there is total monolithic orderliness as if by way of fiat. The second level of

disagreement arose with our conception of the constitution. Some elements in the executive who were used to the military and who even served under the military were very comfortable operating like ministers under the military and always gave the President the advise to ignore constitutional requirement in dealing with the National Assembly. These set of ministers, some of them advised the President to keep the budget as sacrosanct and all we were required to do is just to pass it as he brought it. We had very embarrassing comments where the National Assembly, will comply with the constitution by adjusting the budget as we wanted and the Minister would have the arrogance to say that his budget was fiddled with, that the National Assembly tampered with his budget. The budget is the handiwork of the National Assembly which is supposed to be critically examined in details before it is passed. So, at that level I would say yes, that there were people who deliberately encouraged the President to flout constitutional requirement in order to satisfy selfish desires of some ministers that wanted things to be done the old way and not according to the constitutional requirements as prescribed in a democracy. Under Senator Anyim Pius Anyim, we have what we call the new spirit

and this is a philosophy to foster a new relationship within the National Assembly, not just the Senate, because that new spirit is also infecting the House of Representatives. The elements of the new spirit include consultations among ourselves, between the Senate and the House and of course between the National Assembly and the Executive. We try to conduct quasi-judicial

of the day. We now have a situation where we have consulted vigorously with the President, and committees that have problems raised with the president and if we had disagreements we discuss them over dinner or breakfast. I have attended several consultation fora like that with candour. At times a situation abound where the President would flare up and we would allow him to calm down and we continue. At the end of the day we would reach an agreement. So, this operation new spirit is working. Under the new spirit, I can say we have achieved over 80 percent of the objectives of the National Assembly. The President himself has seen the wisdom of this new spirit and has actually opened up and indeed has actually admitted that, it is a better way to approach it than the previous confrontation. We feel that unless we cooperate with each other, the masses are those who will suffer, because the constitution requires us to cooperate, otherwise the masses of this country would suffer. We have already spent two years and I must admit that we have not really satisfied the yearnings of Nigerians. Many Nigerians thought that with democracy their problems would disappear within at least one year, but with two years gone and not much has been achieved we cannot afford to bicker around. Thanks to the Senate President who has co-opted the Speaker and the President into this new spirit.

*Some Nigerians are criticizing the Senate for passing only eleven bills in two years, how can you defend this?*

This National Assembly has done more than all previous National Assemblies put together, because of the number of bills passed. I must also say that in the first and second republics there was no passage of a private member's bill, but in this republic which is only 22 months old, there have been passages of private member's bills and I think this is a record. Secondly, the number of bills that are in works between the first reading and the third reading and are ten times more than every other bill that has passed through any parliament in this country, in the last 40 years. I think that those making such assessment, either do not understand what happened in the last parliament or just simply want to be seen as joining the train of legislative bashing or have not cared to look at the legislative data between the previous and the present parliament. I want to place on record that all the executive bills brought to the Senate have been passed after thorough and proper debate. And I must say also that most of the private amendments and bills brought either from outside the National Assembly or by members of the Assembly are being treated with excellent care and judicious fitness. So that when they are passed, they stand the test of time. I must also say that almost all the bills that came from the executive had defects and it was members of the National Assembly that corrected them. The National Assembly is doing more than law making. We monitor the performance of the executive, we try to conduct quasi-judicial

properly and also to expose corruption. We approve some executive appointments and approve executive actions like the declaration of war and so on. So, we are actually a National Assembly, not only a legislative assembly. I think in two years we should be commended for the job we have so far done.

*As an insider, what is happening to Senator Kuta's report?*

I think Senator Kuta's report has been handled almost conclusively. And that is to say, the report has been passed on to a harmonization committee to harmonize it for a final verdict. That is what is happening. We don't want the report to be discussed until it has reached that final verdict. We want it to be fair to those it is assessing and I believe that in the nearest future the harmonization committee would bring its final verdict for us to pass. But, let me tell you that the second objective of the Kuta's report was to sanitize the Senate and since this was achieved by way of changing the rules of procedure, dispensing with the contract awarding procedure that are inimical to our collective will and we even removed the leaders that had something to do with those irregularities, as we have got a new leadership, a new sense of direction and even a new spirit. So, to the extent that the major objective has been achieved, I think that the main substance of the Kuta's report has been achieved and concluded.

*Members of the National Assembly, especially the Senate are said to be developing cold feet towards attending plenary sessions these days and critics associate it with poverty of leadership. Is it true?*

I must tell you that I am very happy that you raised this question, because I read it in papers and I have been very sad, especially when I saw some newspapers elevating it to their editorials. Let me tell Nigerians that the Senate in this country as well as those found in any part of the world, have never found it possible to have a 100 percent attendance because it never was intended for a 100 per cent attendance. This is the reason why the issue of quorum comes up. This means that Senators could be legitimately absent from seating either on foreign trips in pursuit of committee work or monitoring activities internally, or some may have personal problems like attending to their health needs. There are so many factors that can inhibit the full attendance of the Senate, so we resort to the issue of quorum. As long as there is quorum, the Senate is properly constituted. The Senate is not a debating club but a discussion area that works through committees. We have always formed a quorum and the only problem sometimes is that at the point of entry of the presiding officer, a quorum may not be formed at that point because many Senators may be at the corridor or may be coming in from their offices, because if the presiding officer is coming in, some Senators may also be on their way to the chambers and may take five to ten minutes to settle down. Now, I found Nigerian journalists so keen to talk about quorum within that ten minutes. No presiding officer would sit down and start a

## What are the imperatives for sustainable economic development in Nigeria?

Find out at the

### 4TH BGL NATIONAL SEMINAR

THEME:  
ECONOMIC AGENDA FOR A DEMOCRATIC NIGERIA (2):

SPECIAL GUEST OF HONOUR  
His Excellency, Atiku Abubakar, GCON  
Vice President, Federal Republic of Nigeria

VENUE:  
Abuja Sheraton Hotel & Towers

DATE:  
Thursday, April 19, 2001  
and  
Friday, April 20, 2001

TIME:  
9 am.

	TOPICS	CHAIRMAN OF SESSION	SPEAKERS	DISCUSSANTS
First Paper	Outstanding Macro-economic Issues for Accelerated Economic Development	Senator Jubril Martins-Kuye <i>Minister of State for finance</i>	Mr. Jonathan Dunn <i>Deputy Resident Representative, IMF</i>	Mr. David Edevbie Mallam Mouftah Baba-Ahmed Senator John Mbata Dr. Kalu I. Kalu
Second Paper	An Optimal Transportation Scheme for Nigeria (Rail, Road, Coastal Shipping, Air & Communication)	Mr. Ike Nwabuoku <i>MD, Continental Trust Bank</i>	Olorogun Moses Taiga, <i>Executive Chairman, Execon Holdings Limited</i>	Mr. Sule Ozenua Mr. Sim Ugwu Mallam Waziri Mohammed Mr. Opeyemi Agbaje
Third Paper	Core Issues in the Enabling Environment for Increased Economic Development (investments, privatisation, domestic security, legal framework, essential basic infrastructure, governance)	Mr. Tony Elumelu <i>MD Standard Trust Bank</i>	Alhaji Abba Gana <i>Former Managing Director African Petroleum Plc.</i> Mr Akin Kekere Ekun <i>MD/CEO, Habib Nigeria Bank Ltd.</i>	Chief John Nwodo (Jnr) Brig-Gen. Mohammed Buba Marwa (Rtd) Mallam Suleyman Ndanusa Mr. Sam Anani Mr. O'tega Emerhor Dr. Wale Babalakin Mr. Chuka Onwuchekwa
Fourth Paper	Re-engineering the Nigerian Electricity Infrastructure: Restructuring Privatisation & Growth	Alhaji Mohammed Bulama <i>MD, Bank of the North</i>	Senator Liyel Imoke <i>Executive Chairman, Technical Board, National Electric Power Authority</i>	Mr. C. Onyemelukwe Mr. Wale Edun Chief I. B. Ochonogor Mallam Tijani Abdullahi

#### Co-sponsors:

Continental Trust Bank Limited, Execon Holdings Limited, Senforce Insurance Brokers, National Clearing & Forwarding Agency, Corporate & Financial, Odogwu Group of Companies, Adama Group of Companies, C & I Leasing Plc, Standard Trust Bank Limited, Equitorial Trust Bank Limited, Oceanic International Bank (Nigeria) Limited and Savannah Bank of Nigeria Plc. Delta State Government, Sokoto State Government, Plateau State Government, Lagos State Government, Bayelsa State Government and Cross River State Government.

for further information, please contact:  
Victor Obire or Ebi Brisibe

**BGL Limited**

Plot 1061 Abaobon Close, Off Ologun Agbaje Street, Victoria Island Lagos.  
Tel: 01-2623141, 2623257, 2672759, 2672820, Fax: 01 2623258

# Lady's Line

For women of today

## 10 rules for elevating your life

We've all been there. Our life journey is moving smoothly. Then suddenly, we're down. We lose our job. We're swallowed by grief. Our faith gets shaken. We have two choices when that happens: Claim survival or suffering. It's what option we embrace that determines whether we soar or stay on the ground.

That's the humbling decision Les Brown faced when he discovered in 1997 that he had prostate cancer. He had no symptoms or pain. Instead, the motivational speaker and former radio host decided to get screened and encourage listeners to take the test. When the physician found that Brown was a cancer victim, he told him that by trying to save the lives of others, Brown might have saved his own life.

"I had to determine that I would not allow myself to panic or surrender," says Brown, author of *Live Your Dreams and It's Not Over Until You Win*. "My life was on the line. I decided that I might have cancer, but it would not have me."

When you're faced with a bad situation, what do you do? Do you give up and cry or do you scrap and fight? This year, become one of the fighters.

### 1. Uncover your calling

We're put here for a reason. Finding our purpose can take a lifetime. But Dr. Grace Cornish, author of *10 Good Choices that Empower Black Women's Lives*, advises people to start today by going on a journey of self-discovery. For 15 minutes each morning, she says, write down where you want to go in life. What would you like to be? How would you like to live? Throw away all of those expectations about what your family or society wants you to do. Instead, be true to yourself.

"Create the highest, grandest vision for your life because you become what you believe," Oprah Winfrey once told a group of college graduates.

Once you uncover your calling, think about how you can use it to meet a "pressing public need," Brown says. Each person must remember to reach back and enrich others. That could mean becoming a mentor to children in need or becoming a mentor to your own kids.

"Success means nothing without a successor," says Bishop T.D. Jakes. "If you have children be sure that you try to pass on your wisdom and inner strength to them. Giving them things is not as important as giving them you."

### 2. Get Started.

To achieve your destiny, you have to get moving. Don't just dream; take some steps to accomplish your desire. "A lot of people fail before they attempt something," says Dr. Cornish. "People look at the end picture and say, 'That's so much: But the pyramids [in Egypt] were built one brick at a time. Have a three-month, six-month and one year plan. Get out of the I-can't-do-it mode and give it a try."

It may not always be easy. You will have disappointments and set-backs, says Brown. "The great people realize that they may experience a great deal of failure in their lives," he says. "They fail their way to success."

### 3. Let your fears energize you.

We all have fears, and there's nothing wrong with having fears. It all depends on how you use them. "People allow their fear of failure to undermine their potential to succeed," says Brown. "They procrastinate by saying, 'I don't have the money'; 'I don't have the education'; 'I've never done that before.' They come up with excuses to justify [their] mediocrity.

But those people who succeed, feel the fear but [but are not deterred and] do it anyway. Fears can either immobilize you or activate you."

The worst fear, experts say, is to live with the knowledge that you never tried. "Courage is the most important of all the virtues, because without courage you can't practice any other virtue consistently," Maya Angelou has said. "You can practice any virtue erratically, but nothing consistently without courage."

Oprah says, "...the true test of courage is to be afraid and to go ahead and to do it anyway. To be scared, to have your knees knocking, but to walk on in there anyway."

"Don't stunt your growth with needless fears and inhibitions..." says Bishop Jakes. "Don't be intimidated, read books, get directions; but whatever you do, don't spend another year just doing the same things you did for the last 10 years of your life."

### 4. Turn your challenges into triumphs.

Dr. Cornish calls it turning stumbling blocks into stepping-stones. Look at something bad in your life and figure out how you can transform it into something good. What did you learn from the experience? How has it made you stronger? "You have to look at it as an opportunity to show your faith," says Brown. "Our race has a legacy of resilience, he says. 'We are the children of the ones who... did survive the trip across the Atlantic. I think our faith is the only reason why we're still here.'"

"Turn your wounds into wisdom," Oprah told graduates of Wellesley College in her 1997 commencement speech. "Everyone makes mistakes. They are just God's way of telling you you're moving in the wrong direction."

### 5. Rally a cheering squad.

Choose thoughts, friends and situations that will empower your life, says Dr. Cornish. "For every negative thing in your life, feed your mind positive things," she says.

"Surround yourself with people that stimulate you," adds Bishop Jakes. "Your environment directly affects your development."

You can accomplish this by organizing an army of allies, Brown says. Choose 5-10 people who are positive, high-energy partners who can feed your spirit, he says. "When life catches you on the blind side," Brown says, "these people can help walk you through."

### 6. Lose the baggage.

To succeed in life, you have to halt negative patterns. Stop doing hurtful things to yourself and others. Learn to manage your fears. Find ways to heal your pain. End destructive associations. You have to love friends from a distance sometimes, Dr. Cornish says. "They could be

wonderful, well-meaning friends," she says. "But sometimes we outgrow each other. If people are negative, get away from them."

### 7. Simplify life.

We live mired in clutter-old clothes, strewn paper, other people's expectations, our own doubts. Begin to clean out the disorder in your life. Decide to be happy.

On her Web site, Iyanla Vanzant tells people they can find simplicity by living one day at a time: "Take time to be still," she writes on <http://linnervisionsworldwide.com>. "Take time to pray. Make time to laugh. Never be too busy or in too much of a hurry to make contact with the instant you are in, because it is only time that matters."

### 8. Make your health a priority.

Some illnesses are genetic. But many diseases develop because of lifestyle. African-Americans lead the numbers in many life-threatening ailments-from heart disease and diabetes to some cancers.

Doctors advise people to get regular checkups, eat right and take steps to lower their stress. You should also exercise regularly after getting the OK from your doctor.

"Remember your body is a temple, a haven and a sanctuary," Jakes says. "If you will take care of it, you greatly increase your ability to give and receive love, life and success, both spiritually and personally."

### 9. Build a financial legacy.

Many of us struggle because of mismanaging our money. When it's time to go to the barbershop or the salon, or on a luxury vacation, we always find the cash. So why are so many of us in debt?

"Finances require a plan to get them and a plan to maintain them," says Bishop Jakes, author of *The Great Investment: Faith, Family and Finance*. "If you have no plan, there will be no lasting success."

Make a budget and stick to it. Devise a regular plan of saving and investing. Leave something for future generations. "Remember that finance without purpose is like gas without a car," says Jakes. "You are only 'filled full' or 'fulfilled' when you have grounded your goals in a significant purpose."

### 10. Be grateful.

You didn't get here on your own. Maybe a teacher encouraged you. Or a friend persuaded you not to quit. Perhaps a minister or parent held you up when you felt weak. No matter who you are, someone helped you and gave you hope.

We should take time to remember these blessings. "Keep a journal of the things you are thankful for," Oprah says. "It will keep you focused on the abundance of life."

Culled from *Ebony*

## 5-Minute Fiction

With Ms. Farouq

## Just to let you know

Husna walked quietly towards the baby cot and gently put her infant son inside. She straightened up and walked towards the incense burner, picking it up and continuing into her adjoining bathroom to keep it there.

Returning into the room, she looked around the tastefully furnished bedroom-sweet-smelling from a fresh dose of frankincense - and felt a wave of joy and contentment run through her.

Yes, this is the time to write to Sister Noor, Husna thought to herself. She has been postponing this till the right moment and today seems to be just it. Her baby is fast asleep, all the relations who came after he was born have left, except one maternal aunt who will stay a little longer till Husna can cope alone.

She moved to the writing table in the sitting-room, brought out her pen and writing-pad and began to write.

Dear Sister Noor,  
Assalamu alaikum,

How are you and your family? Hope everyone is fine, *Alhamdulillah*. I have been meaning to write you since my baby was born but I had no idea being a new mother can be so demanding.

Thank you very much for your thoughtful gift and the special prayer for the baby. I understand very well why you can't come and see me now. When I travel home after my confinement is over, I will make time to see you *insha Allah*. I hope to save you the trouble of coming here.

But there is something I just wish to let you know. In the one and a half years that I have been married, I have been a very happy person. I have found love, happiness and contentment in a relationship which I entered with the greatest misgivings. I know that I have Almighty God to thank for sending you to me as a guardian angel; but I still remember vividly the conversation we had at our office which helped me make up my mind towards the journey that brought me here.

You had seemed quite busy at your work that day until you lifted your head and said "If I didn't know you as a single, young woman, I'd say you have a great family problem on your hands." And I had looked up and asked "Why did you say so?"

"Because you have been sighing so continuously since you sat here that I just can't help wondering what's eating you."

"I'm sorry but it is a family problem. Even single girls do have them."

"Is there anything I can do to help?"

"I'm not sure but...."

And I had told you all about my problem. My parents believed that after over five years of graduation, I had no excuse not to get married. I had argued that all my suitors were married men and that I was still hoping a single man would come along and ask for my hand. But that day they had stood their ground and said that they were tired of my excuses and that I either present a choice or they will choose one for me. They couldn't stand being the laughing stock of the entire clan, with a daughter like me at home. I had been given one week to decide. My main worry since I arrived at work was how I could sacrifice my dream of life with a single man just to please my parents, but your response to my story had been:

"Look Husna, you can't always get what you want. Sometimes the best you can do is to make others happy. You are lucky your two parents are alive, it is a great heavenly investment on your part to try to make them happy. Use this one week to study your suitors and then make a choice. Pray the *istikhara*, seek divine help in making your choice then leave the rest to God. We have no idea what the future holds for us, the choice you will make at the end of this week might be the best thing that ever happened to you."

"But I've always dreamt of being somebody's first wife, having his first child, living just the two of us. With these guys, I can only join a full house."

"I know, but sometimes we just have to forget our dreams and face our reality. These are the only guys interested in marrying you now. You can't continue to wait for Mr Right when time is not even on your side. You've told me that you have younger sisters who are also eligible enough for marriage, they can't wait for you. And there is the ticking away of the proverbial biological clock, it's a reality because with each passing day, you are not getting any younger. So, take my advice and sincerely study these men, which of them is virtuous enough, which of them is kind enough and likely to make you happy, then after the *istikhara* announce your choice to your parents."

"Surprisingly, while you were talking now, the one person who fits that description is the guy with two wives. You see, two have a wife each and one has two wives. Though I can't imagine myself being wife number three, he really is the nicest of them."

"And why can't you be wife number three if he can take good care of you all? Sometimes you'll just have to lower your standards in order to do what is right. Have a frank discussion with him. Find out just how he intends to take care of you in addition to the rest of the family and if you are satisfied with the arrangement he intends to make, go for it. The very fact that you are doing this for your parents, will earn you Almighty God's blessings. Think less of yourself, think of them."

I had followed your advice to the letter and ended up as third wife to Muhammad Awwal. Each of us has an apartment to herself and we live really independent of one another. We often come together for one reason or the other but are basically on our own most times. Those of us who work (the first wife and I) have adequate arrangements to take care of the rest of the family while we are away. Second wife is into self-employment, Awwal believes in woman's empowerment, at least that's what it seems. The kids (six in all) are generally well-behaved. As for Awwal himself he is simply all I'd ever ask for in a Romeo (except for the excess luggage). He's kind, considerate sensitive and affectionate. I get to see him everyday because he goes round to ask how we are doing daily, even though we host him only a few days each week.

I have had friends who got married to single men but I am yet to see one who gets the sort of attention we get from him, despite our number.

Once again I thank you very much. May Almighty God grant us His protection always.

Bissalam  
Husna.

## Cook's corner

with Halima Yakubu

### RICE PANCAKE

#### Recipes

One cup of Rice flour  
Four very ripe bananas  
100g of sugar  
Grated nut meg  
Ground-nut oil for frying  
Water for mixing

#### METHOD

1. Peel bananas and smash with a fork in a bowl
2. Add the rice flour and water by degrees, mixing with a spoon to blend. Add sugar and nut meg.
3. When the flour has been mixed up, add more water if necessary. Leave for 20 minutes in a cool place.
4. Prove the frying pan. Heat sufficient oil to fry all the mixture and pour it out into a cup or bowl, leaving only a little in the pan.
5. Heat the pan and pour mixture in spoonfuls. The mixture should flow and spread out like pancake. When one side is fried, turn the other side and fry.
6. Drain and serve hot or cold.

## ENVIRONMENT

Desertification in Nigeria:  
Myth and reality

By Sani A. Mashi

Nigeria is a country with two or three contrasting environments. In the Southern part, rains are received for most times of the year such that the dry season lasts for a very short period of time. In the central part, the dry season is longer, but shorter than the rainy season. In the Northern part of the country, especially towards the extreme North, the dry season is very long, sometimes reaching up to three quarter of the total months in a year.

Rainfall controls largely the economics of most Nigerians, since over 70 percent of the nation's populace reside in rural areas where the economy depends heavily upon agricultural practices. As such, once a set back is witnessed in agricultural practices, the entire economy faces some major set backs.

In an agricultural sense, prolonged deficiency of rainfall creates a condition referred to as drought. This is a natural process with a very subtle beginning but having an insidious progression and with some consequences whose impact can be greatly altered by man. A good thing about drought is that it occurs more or less on a non-continuous basis. For instance, an area can only witness same after an interval of some years. Despite this, whenever it occurs, it leaves behind some serious effects on the social and economic conditions of an area. For instance, during the drought of 1973/1974 in Nigeria, food production deficit in Borno and Sokoto States was said to be as high as 60 - 70 percent for some crops such as sorghum and millet. This is to say that only about 30 - 40 percent of the normal crop output was realised in those areas as a result of the drought. On a national basis, some other estimates gave figures of between 12 - 40 percent, as the yield of crops obtained during the period.

In the former Northeastern state of Nigeria, one other estimate provided an alarming figure of 300,000 animals being the number of livestock that were lost during the same drought. Fishing activity was also said to have been seriously affected as only about one-third of the potential fish yield in the Lake Chad, for instance, was caught during the same period.

When in 1984 another drought was experienced in Northern Nigeria, estimates as contained in *New Nigerian* newspaper of 12<sup>th</sup> January, 1988, indicated that up to 5 million metric tonnes of grains valued at about N4 billion were lost. In Kano State of that time (now Jigawa and Kano) crop yield was only about 56 percent to 75 percent of the expected annual total. Though the reliability of such estimates cannot always go without questioning, it is nonetheless reasonable to argue that drought

has been having some disastrous consequences on the social and economic lives of the people in Northern Nigeria.

Drought is only an aspect of the larger environmental problems the people of Northern Nigeria are facing. In fact, the area is more known for the problem of desertification which unlike drought is a continuous process affecting the entire ecological system of the region. There has been some controversies on what exactly desertification is, and in fact, several people have been making efforts to put forward some reasons to argue that the problems is after all not as serious as it is or that it is not even occurring.

In 1992, the world met at Rio de Janeiro (Brazil) under the auspices of the World Conference on Environment and Development. The major objective of the conference was to deliberate upon and reach a consensus on how serious environmental problems are, who is responsible for what and what should be done to prevent what. Despite some major disagreements on a number of issues, a compromise was reached on what desertification is essentially about. As a result of the conference, an internationally negotiated definition was agreed upon for desertification as follows:

"Desertification is land degradation in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid ecosystems resulting from various causes including human influences and climatic change."

Despite this consensus that was reached on what desertification is, many, especially in Europe still believe that it is either not occurring or that its severity is being exaggerated deliberately by the UN and the affected areas (such as Nigeria) for political reasons or to attract sympathy and aid. In fact, many European countries are still apprehensive of offering aid to the affected countries towards combating the problem. Instead, many articles in newspapers and magazines over the last eight years have appeared in western countries with the following titles or captions:

"Encroaching deserts are a myth"

"The myth of the marching desert"

"Sandstorm in a tea cup?"

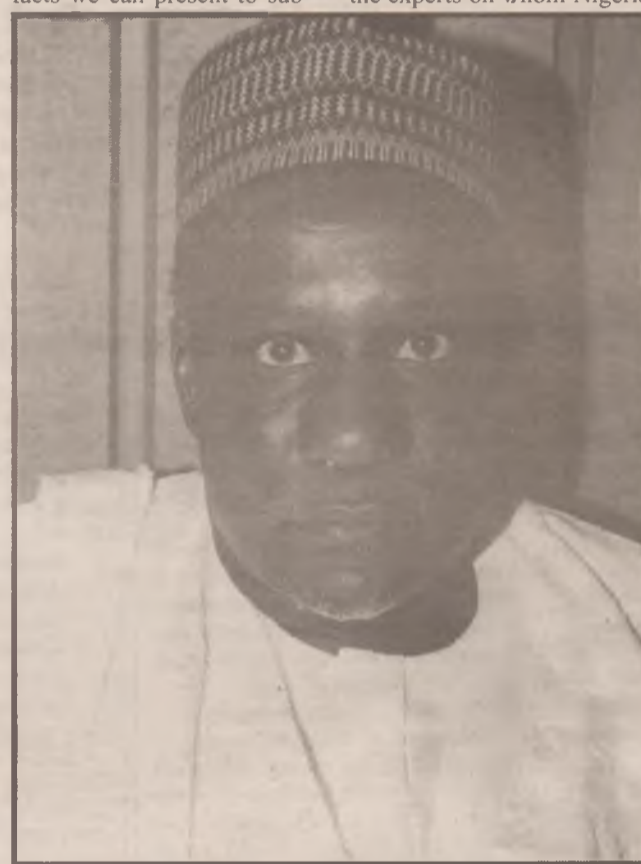
"Deserting dogma."

Some wonder if we are really serious that desertification is occurring or it is not irreversible. Others wonder why we cannot try and

shoulder the responsibility of solving a problem we have inflicted on ourselves. Yet some simply conclude that desertification is after all a myth. If this is so, are there facts we can present to sub-

stantiate our argument that desertification is a reality.

In Nigeria, there are no empirically determined facts to substantiate this argument. The only ones available are on estimates of the total area we feel is under the influence of desertification. For long, official government policies on the problem are based on estimates prepared by government officials who are not necessarily armed with empirically determined statistics of the actual area or extent of the affected areas, and for each area how much of the land has been degraded, what is the extent of degradation, and what is the prospect for rehabilitation or reversibility. In 1978, at the launching of the Arid Zone Afforestation Programme in Sokoto, the then Head of State, General Olusegun Obasanjo, made the following remarks about the seriousness of desertification problem in the country:



Alhaji Kabir Saidu Minister of Environment

"Our total land mass seriously threatened by encroachment of the Sahara desert stands today at approximately 125,000 square kilometres (about 12 percent of the total land area of the country). In Sokoto State, desert conditions now extend for about 240 kilometers south of the Nigerian border. This has rendered about 17,000 square kilometres of farmlands almost barren. Similar situations exist in extreme northern parts of Kaduna, Kano, Bauchi and

Borno States." Made over 20 years ago, these statements by Nigeria's then Head of State, which were apparently based on statistics given to him by the experts on whom Nigeria

depend to know its problems, deserved critical appraisal before we could say whether desertification as a myth or fact exist to support an argument that it is occurring in Nigeria. In the first place, the Semi-arid and dry sub-humid regions of the country which are the main areas where land degradation, based upon which desertification can be assessed, is to be indexed in the country to cover about 500,000 square kilometres. If as far back as 20 years ago up to about 30 percent of this region was affected by desertification, then it is reasonable to argue that by now substantial parts of the region is affected by land degradation, and hence desertification. This is reasonable because over the past twenty years livestock and human population of the region have increased by over 60 percent (at the rate of about 3 percent per annum). As such population increases, more pressure is exerted on the

land with the consequence that more of it is subjected to degradation. In 1995, the federal government obtained a loan from the World Bank on land degradation mapping in Nigeria. Though the report of the work which this loan was used to initiate is yet to be officially released, there is little basis to expect that a contrary observation is going to be made. In fact, any simple observation on landscape in any of the states that constitute the Semi-arid and dry sub-humid regions of Nigeria (namely Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara, Northern Niger, Northern Kaduna, Katsina, Bauchi, Kano, Jigawa, Borno and Northern Adamawa and Gombe) will reveal wide devastation of the landscape by several factors of land degradation (cultivation, grazing, increased dryness etc). On this basis, one could argue that desertification is really occurring but the extent of its seriousness has not been empirically quantified.

The statement also argued that in Sokoto State, over 240 km of distance from the Nigerian border has been affected by desertification. The longest distance within the desertification-prone region of Nigeria from the Nigerian border is only about 380 km, as at 1978 about 240 km (approximately 80 percent) of this distance had desert-like conditions, then it is expected that today the conditions should have extended to even beyond the 380 km margin. This cannot obviously be substantiated because even in Sokoto State today, there are certain areas where one can find landscapes which in many respect resemble those of more humid areas of the central region of the country. It is apparent thus, that the problem of desertification in Nigerian is not whether it is occurring but what is the extent of the area affected or how serious is it.

Controversy about desertification is more about the rate at which it is occurring. In fact, it is because of the conflicting nature of the various estimates available that some people are expressing doubt about what exactly we

are talking about. As far back as 1975, Thomas Lamprey gave a concrete figure of 5.5 km per year as the average rate of desertification. In 1991, Professor N.M. Gadzama of University of Maiduguri quoted figures of about 10 km per year as estimates given by some researchers though he himself expressed some doubts about such estimates. In 1984, UNEP estimated that about 35 percent of the earth's surface is being affected by the problem and that desertification-prone areas are desertifying at an annual average rates of about 7.3 km per year. In the absence of reliable, empirically-derived estimates in Nigeria, it is extremely difficult for a firm statement to be made on the exact total land area actually affected by desertification.

Desertification in Nigeria can, therefore, be described as being both a myth and a fact. The fact is that agents causing land degradation abound in, especially the desertification-prone states of the country. Many studies have shown that cultivation is done on a continuous basis on marginal lands in those states; vegetation cover is under frequent and ruthless attack, the areas have increasingly become arid, especially since the last forty years and the landscape is increasingly becoming bare. The myth of desertification in Nigeria is about its seriousness and how much of the areas are affected. If any of the governors of the states in the affected area were to be asked how serious the problem is, his response can certainly be predicted - that almost all the lands in his state are affected and that the problem is a very serious one. Such pessimistic approach to describing the seriousness of desertification in Nigeria certainly cannot carry us anywhere. While we may consider it as a viable way of attracting sympathy and foreign aid, we would no doubt do ourselves good if we invest our little resources in empirically quantifying how serious the problem is rather than making speculative statements about it. We should as a matter of seriousness start doing things that will make others to take us serious. So long as we can't do that, desertification will always remain to be more of a myth than a fact in Nigeria

Dr. Sani A. Mashi wrote in from Department of Geography, University of Abuja, Abuja.

**"Controversy about desertification is more about the rate at which it is occurring. In fact, it is because of the conflicting nature of the various estimates available that some people are expressing doubt about what exactly we are talking about. As far back as 1975, Thomas Lamprey gave a concrete figure of 5.5 km per year as the average rate of desertification."**

Arts & Entertainment

The Story of the New Nigerian Part XIII

'I started the Candido Column'

In the last account, General Ironsi's regime is ousted and we saw General Yakubu Gowon serving as Head of State. Today, General Gowon welcomes Chief Obafemi Awolowo when the latter is released from the Calabar prison. Slowly the country descends into war, and the New Nigerian gets its first editor in the person of Mallam Adamu Ciroma.

The following day the paper published the news of Chief Awolowo's release from prison with flourish. In an astute political move the new Head of State set free most of the political prisoners especially the associates of Chief Awolowo who had been imprisoned with him after their treasonable felony conviction in 1963. Gowon also endeared himself to Yorubas by going out to Ikeja airport to welcome Chief Awolowo from Calabar. Gowon told Awo: "we shall need your wealth of experience." This was a good move as Gowon was meeting resistance from the East. Colonel Ojukwu would not recognise Colonel Gowon as the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces.

The *New Nigerian* welcomed the release of Awolowo from jail in an editorial entitled "Releasing goodwill through the prison gates." It stated that the release of Chief Awolowo and Chief Anthony Enahoro and their associates should be welcome by every Nigerian:

"Their confinement provided a cause and a reason for discord and differences between Nigerians of varying political beliefs."

"By freeing the two men, the Government has contributed considerably to establishing a calmer climate of opinion. One potential cause for bitterness has been removed and men, who would have violently disagreed over this issue, should now be able and prepared to sit down together to work for future progress."

That was easier said than done because the next few weeks was anything but easy for the new leader. Although he stabilised the West by releasing Awolowo from prison his authority was being challenged bitterly by Colonel Ojukwu. Ojukwu asked for the explanation of General Ironsi's whereabouts. Ironsi had been reported kidnapped with his host, Colonel Fajuyi, from Government House, Ibadan. Secondly Ojukwu claimed that even if General Ironsi was no longer alive, Gowon was not the next most senior officer in the army. There were at least seven others ahead of him including Ojukwu himself.

On 10th August the *New Nigerian* came out with an editorial giving full support to a return to Federalism announced the previous day by Gowon's government. "The decision is wise and sane. He has our full support. Federalism is so accepted in this country that any further attempt to tamper with the system will only aggravate the present situation."

"The people of this country have much in common and at stake. We can survive the strains and stresses of a lasting existence if only we return to a constitution that allows each and every component section of the Republic to go at its own pace and turn its affairs in its own manner and light."

The dam broke in September. On 12 September Lagos talks attended by delegates from all over the country had been addressed by Yakubu Gowon. Even the East sent representatives although they had no power to negotiate. The talks adjourned after a few days. It never concluded anything. Towards the end of the month riots broke out again in the North - this time on a bigger scale than the May riots. Igbos were again the target. The riots were a response to news broadcast on Radio Kaduna, which was quoting Radio Cotonou that Northerners were being killed in the East. These riots were a watershed in Nigerian affairs. From this point on, the differences between the East and the rest of the country deteriorated until Ojukwu declared his secession on 30th May 1967 and the civil war began in earnest.

Books

Lt. Col. Yakubu Gowon is certainly moving in the right direction.

However Col. Ojukwu and his advisers did not think Gowon was moving in the right direction. There was a lot of tension in the country. It was a time of rumours and disinformation. It was also a time of movement. Most of the Ibo Army Officers who survived the May 29th coup were finding their way to the East. Also many of the senior and middle rank Federal Civil Servants were fleeing Lagos to go to the East.

The ordinary Igbo civilians - not only from the North but from all over the country - were East bound. It was also a time of propaganda. The Eastern Nigerian Broadcasting Services and the Nigerian *Outlook* were busy pouring invectives on the North and its leaders. Radio Kaduna tried to answer in kind but in no way came to match the virulence of Eastern propaganda. The *New Nigerian* on the other hand, used its editorial columns and its news pages to appeal for calm and co-operation with the government of the day.

The dam broke in September. On 12 September Lagos talks attended by delegates from all over the country had been addressed by Yakubu Gowon. Even the East sent representatives although they had no power to negotiate. The talks adjourned after a few days. It never concluded anything. Towards the end of the month riots broke out again in the North - this time on a bigger scale than the May riots. Igbos were again the target. The riots were a response to news broadcast on Radio Kaduna, which was quoting Radio Cotonou that Northerners were being killed in the East. These riots were a watershed in Nigerian affairs. From this point on, the differences between the East and the rest of the country deteriorated until Ojukwu declared his secession on 30th May 1967 and the civil war began in earnest.

How many Nigerians died in the two coups, the two riots and the skirmishes? The *New Nigerian* never gave any estimate. It also played down the September riots. It did not print stories and pictures of the riots and did not publish blank pages to show that it had been censored. This was a case of internal censorship in view of the massive nature of the riots.

About this time too the *New Nigerian* got its first substantive editor, Malam Adamu Ciroma. The paper since its inception had an acting editor, Malam Rasak Aremu, "a Journalist of many years experience. He was well regarded as a particularly competent sub-editor, skilled in page-make-up and

design. "He was to be M. Adamu Ciroma's guide in the technical aspect of newspaper production since M. Adamu was a non-journalist".

M. Adamu Ciroma was appointed editor by the Government without consultation with Mr. Sharp. Alhaji Ahmed Joda who was responsible for the appointment said "between me and Alhaji Ali Akilu, the Secretary to the Government, we agreed not to appoint a journalist. Rather the candidate must be well educated and a good mixer. We came up with two names: the late Yaya Abubakar who was with us in the Northern Civil Service in Kaduna and Adamu Ciroma who was in the Federal Civil Service in Lagos. We decided to talk to both of them. I first talked to Yaya Abubakar. He was more interested in remaining in the civil service. Then I flew to Lagos and talked to Adamu Ciroma. He had no difficulty in accepting.

"On my return to Kaduna, I called a board meeting of the company to ratify his appointment. Present at the meeting held in my office on 9th September 1966 were (Chairman) M. Muhammed Lawan, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, M. Ahmed Talib, Permanent Secretary Ministry of Finance, Alhaji Umaru Jimada, Government Printer, and myself. The meeting took only a few minutes and Adamu Ciroma's appointment was approved. Mr. Ian Macgregor, the Company Secretary was in attendance.

"I did not consult Mr. Sharp, the Managing Director. Rather I decided to take him by surprise. I am happy Adamu Ciroma proved himself".

Until Adamu Ciroma's arrival on the scene, Mr. Charles Sharp was, for all intents and purposes, the editor of the paper and was responsible for the newspaper's comments and its editorial judgements. His credo was always: "Whatever you do, write with a clear conscience and in good taste."

The last editorial under Mr. Sharp before Adamu Ciroma took over editorial responsibility was on the subject of the July Riots and published in the edition of 30th September, 1966:

"Peace - We MUST find an answer As this newspaper goes to press, there are many reports - some confirmed others as yet unsubstantiated - of further outbreaks of violence in some parts of the country. The nation trembles on the brink of anarchy and despair.

The despair springs from a sense of utter hopelessness. Those very institutions which we had previously regarded as the bastions of our national stability have been rendered impotent and worse by tribal and regional loyalties.

Emotions have often been inflamed to a point where no-one now knows how to cool them down. A full-scale civil war of the most awful kind is a prospect that must be feared and avoided at all costs.

The country faces a catastrophe.

Are the heads still to remain buried in the sand?

In the meantime the *New Nigerian* itself the product of a new age, beseeches everyone to do everything in their power to keep calm, not to aggravate the situation; in other words to stop this nation from stepping backwards into history by half a century or more - and thus bring "I-told-You-so" smiles of satisfaction to the smug faces of those critics who always claimed we weren't ready to manage our own affairs.

We suggest that the Supreme Commander should immediately call a meeting of all the Regional Governors to discuss how best, law and order could be maintained in all parts of the country.

The *New Nigerian's* reputation at the time of Adamu Ciroma's appointment was hinged on its accuracy in reporting events especially in its catchment area and for publishing the truth. It performed creditably as a newspaper on the spot, by reporting objectively what was happening in the North. But its editorials were not strong and consistent. It followed faithfully the mood and assertions of the government of the day, always appealing to the public to keep calm, to accept government's decisions in good faith and not to rock the boat.

The daily circulation of the *New Nigerian* at that point in time was 15,000 to 20,000. But at the time of a big news break it could go over 50,000.

M. Adamu Ciroma, a non-journalist, was a Federal Civil Servant at the time of his appointment. The *New Nigerian* news story of his appointment included the following:

"Born in Potiskum, M. Ciroma who is 34, was educated at Government College Zaria, (the Barewa College), and Ibadan University, where he took a history degree.

"Prior to his employment as Senior Assistant Secretary of the Ministry of Mines and Power, Lagos, he worked in the Northern Civil Service, both as an administrative officer in the Provinces

and as an assistant Secretary in the Premier's office."

While researching for this book, I asked M. Adamu Ciroma how he became the editor of the *New Nigerian*.

"I was contacted in Lagos about early August, 1966. I

had no real experience of newspaper production. I had been transferred to the Federal Civil Service from the Northern Nigeria Civil Service as Senior Assistant Secretary. Technically, I was transferred back from Federal to Northern Regional Civil Service from where I was seconded to the Northern Nigerian Newspapers Ltd. The paper work for my transfer was done quickly. I was introduced to

Mr. Sharp by Alhaji Ahmed Joda, the Permanent Secretary of the Northern Nigeria Ministry of Information, Kaduna.

Mr. Sharp took me to the editorial department. The department was a bedlam as most newspaper editorial offices would likely be. There was no office for the editor, only for the editorial adviser. Mr. Charles Sharp left me in the middle of the confusion after introducing me to the staff.

"There were tables littered with old newspapers and unused reports. I cleared a corner of the tables and pulled a chair and sat on. That was how I began my work - no office, no table etc., no house. It would appear that the appointment of an editor was not a priority. He was not part of the plan and so was not provided for. Only the expatriate staff occupied company houses and had offices. I began to search for a house to live in.

"I had no experience in newspaper production or editing. As a Senior Civil Servant, I knew how to manage people. Before going to Lagos I had served as an Assistant Secretary in the Premier's Office and as an administrative officer in the field. My last posting in the North was a District Officer in Ganye, the Southern part of Sardauna Province.

"Before leaving me to my devices Mr. Sharp said "Now that you are here you may wish to write a weekly column." That is how I started the Candido Column.

I coined the title. I was put through newspaper production by Mr. Rasak Aremu and his colleagues. The paper had an expatriate editorial adviser but he was then on leave. I was willing to learn and soon settled down.

"This was a time of crisis. I assumed total editorial control and freedom. The expatriate management were sympathetic to the Northern cause. However in a political, constitutional and later civil war situation, being generally sympathetic was not good enough. Unalloyed

commitment to the Northern - and Nigerian - cause was required generally. I think that must have informed the search for a Nigerian editor. The Northern Nigerian Government wanted better support for its cause and that of the Federal Government from the excellent facilities of the *New Nigerian*.

"I wrote the editorials and the candido column without any guideline or anybody breathing down my neck. I did not have to clear writings with anybody including the expatriate managing Director, Mr. Charles Sharp.

To be continued.



Mr. Charles Sharp



Mallam Adamu Ciroma



# **NIGERIAN PORTS AUTHORITY**

## **PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT**

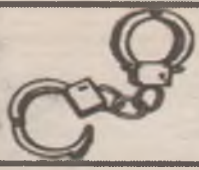
### **TO ALL REGISTERED DOCK LABOUR EMPLOYERS**

The Nigerian Ports Authority hereby inform all registered Dock Labour Employers that the exercise for their consideration for appointments as Stevedoring Contractors will be carried out only after the forth-coming general election of the Maritime Workers Union of Nigeria.

Furthermore, the Nigerian Ports Authority will in due course, duly advertise the commencement of such an exercise and stipulate appropriate requirements and conditions for any such appointments.

All registered Dock Labour Employers are by this advertisement advised to restrain themselves from making incessant inquiries from Nigerian Ports Authority as to when and how they are to be allocated berths or appointed as stevedoring contractors.

MANAGEMENT  
NIGERIAN PORTS AUTHORITY



# Crime & Punishment



## Chyzob sues Pfizer, claims N26 million as damages

There seems to be no respite for Pfizer Specialties over its running battle with Chyzob Pharmacy as the latter has filed claims for N26 million from the Viagra makers as aggravated damages for a raid by Pfizer's lawyers.

Pfizer Specialties had earlier sued Chyzob Pharmacy over an alleged parallel importation of Viagra at a Federal High Court in La-

From Adelanwa Bamgboye, in Lagos

gos which ordered a search on Chyzob Pharmacy and Supermarket on November 25 last year.

But Justice E. O Sango Olu later struck out the initial suit (Suit No. FHC/CS/L/1318/99) on February 13, 2001 after ruling that Pfizer did not disclose a reasonable course of action and indeed

lacked the locus standi to sue Chyzob.

In a 16-paragraph statement of claim, Chyzob is asking the court to award it N25 million as damages and another one million naira as costs of solicitors' fees incurred in contesting Pfizer's claim in the dismissed suit.

Following the High Court's ruling of November 25, 1999, Pfizer's lawyer and three armed policemen

had reportedly stormed Chyzob's pharmacy and supermarket and conducted a vigorous 45-minute search of all products on display in the presence of Chyzob's customers and onlookers.

Upon enquiry by Chyzob's Managing Director, Mrs. Ngozi Ugoji, Pfizer's lawyer handed her a copy of the court's order in suit No. FHC/CS/L/1318/99.

Chyzob stated that as a



Prof. A.B.C. Nwosu, Health Minister.

result of the search, it suffered considerable damage of goodwill and reputation which it had with its valued customers and the general public.

It stated further that it had also suffered loss of patronage and dwindling sales since the November 25, 1999 incident.

## Police arrest 15 bandits

The Yobe State police command has apprehended 15 persons in various operations against bandits and criminals in different parts of the state.

During the operations, the police seized different makes of guns including a

From Abdullahi Bego, in Damaturu

rifle and a revolver, bows and arrows, drugs, marijuana and other substances from the bandits.

Parading the alleged criminals before newsmen in Damaturu, the state Commissioner of Police, Mr. Azubuko Udah, said the police have adopted new strategies which include the use of criminal intelligence gathering, assemblage of a special crack squad and the deployment of mounted troops along rural roads to track down criminals.

The commissioner of police also said that the highway patrols throughout the state had been reorganized and re-energised to enable them respond more rapidly "whenever a distress call

comes through the radio".

Speaking on the suspected criminals paraded before newsmen, the commissioner said the police engaged some of them in spirited gun-battles before overpowering them and that many of them confessed to the crimes they were suspected of.

The commissioner commended the people of Yobe State for assisting the police with valuable information, saying, "we caught some of them through tips supplied by the communities".

Mr. Udah said his command would build on the goodwill the police were enjoying from the public by treating all information provided "with due seriousness and dispatch and in the strictest confidence".



Mr. Musiliu Smith, Inspector-General of Police.

## Customs seize 76 smuggled cars

The smuggling of second-hand cars into Nigeria from neighbouring countries is continuing despite a government ban on importation of vehicles through land borders.

The Area Controller of the Nigeria Customs Service in Idiroko, Alhaji Hassan Kila, told journalists at the weekend that 76 assorted vehicles were seized from smugglers by his officers within the first two months of the ban.

The Federal Government order banning importation of vehicles and containerised goods through the nation's land borders became effective last February.

According to Kila, the Tokunbo vehicle smugglers have become more daring, engaging law enforcement agents in running battles in

the bushes with sophisticated weapons and acid.

The Area Controller disclosed that three of his officers were critically injured last Thursday when the patrol jeep in which they were pursuing a vehicle being smuggled into the country somersaulted on a bush-path at Ihunbo near the border.

"The injured officers were rushed to the Ogun State University Teaching Hospital at Sagamu in critical condition," Kila said, adding: "We thank God that they are responding to treatment."

The damaged white Land Rover vehicle with registration number CS 074 FO1 and the Toyota Corolla car it was pursuing, which also had accident, were shown to journalists at the Idiroko Police Station.

According to Kila, the customs at Idiroko, which lost five of its officers to smugglers' attacks last year, face a lot of logistic problems as it was now left with a single rickety Land Rover Jeep, for the patrols of the long border of mostly swampy terrain.

"We need a minimum of

12 Land Rover Jeeps for effective patrol of the border around Idiroko and hope-



Alhaji A. A. Mustapha Comptroller-General of Customs. fully, the customs headquarters in Abuja would respond to our request in due course," the CAC said.

## Lack of infrastructure hampers court decongestion in FCT

Lack of basic infrastructure is militating against the decongestion of the courts in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), the Chief Registrar of the FCT judiciary, Mr. Balami Nwada, has said.

He told *Daily Trust* in Abuja that it was sad that six magistrates were making use of a two bedroom bungalow as a court hall and two chambers.

The Chief Registrar said, the High Court had constructed many court buildings in the FCT but could not put them to use because of lack of access roads, water and electricity.

Mr. Nwada cited the completion of a High court complex in Gwagwalada but which could not be put to use because of the absence of basic infrastructure.

Mr. Nwada said the FCT Judiciary had appealed to the

By Uwem Umo

Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) to provide access roads and other relevant requirements in the completed buildings.

The Chief Registrar also cited the completion of magistrate court buildings in Life Camp, Gwagwalada, Karimu, Kubwa, Nyanya and Karu.

He disclosed that the FCT judiciary would also build many courts throughout the FCT to take care of the increasing population.



A completed court complex in Gwagwalada that needs to be connected with light, water and an access road.

## Pastor charged for theft

From Adelanwa Bamgboye, in Lagos

Pastor Israel Udoh, of the Zion Deliverance Ministry, has been arraigned before a Lagos magistrate for theft.

Charged along with the pastor is one Prophet Samuel Friday (22) also of the Zion Deliverance Ministry.

According to the prosecutor, police sergeant Nicholas Atumonye, the two and another member of the church now at large, stole N25,000 belonging to the church from Mr. Jerry Akpan of 58A Diya Street, Gbagada Lagos, by accusing him of witchcraft.

They were also charged with conspiring on December 14 last year, to commit the theft and of committing the actual theft on February 28, this year.

They pleaded not guilty to the three charges and magistrate Hakeem Fashola adjourned hearing to May 1, 2001, while they were granted bail in the sum of N300,000 with two sureties each.

# Abuja News

## FCT corps members storm Abuja with "Kill the Ghost"

National Youth Service Corps members in Federal Capital Territory at the weekend livened the "socially slumbering" town with a one-hour comedy, titled "Kill the Ghost" at the Abuja Council for Arts and Culture.

"Kill the Ghost" portrays how society has turned death into an economic venture, using "the death" of a Senate President, Nnam Thomas Nnam.

Friends and relations, rather than give the death a befitting burial, fought to inherit Nnam's estate, using all forms of tricks and intrigues.

While the body was still lying in state, Nnam's uncle, Diokpa, inherited his wife and planned how to force the deceased's daughter into marriage with an older man in the community.

The play satirises different facets of the Nigerian society, as religious leaders, legislators, market women, professional mourners, women liberators, educationists and relations try to outwit each other for the gifts sent in by foreign governments.

The play reaches a climax when the Senate President rises and explains that he feigned death to test the integrity of his friends and relations.

However, in spite of Nnam's rising from the

dead, the people insist on "killing the ghost" but are arrested by security operatives.

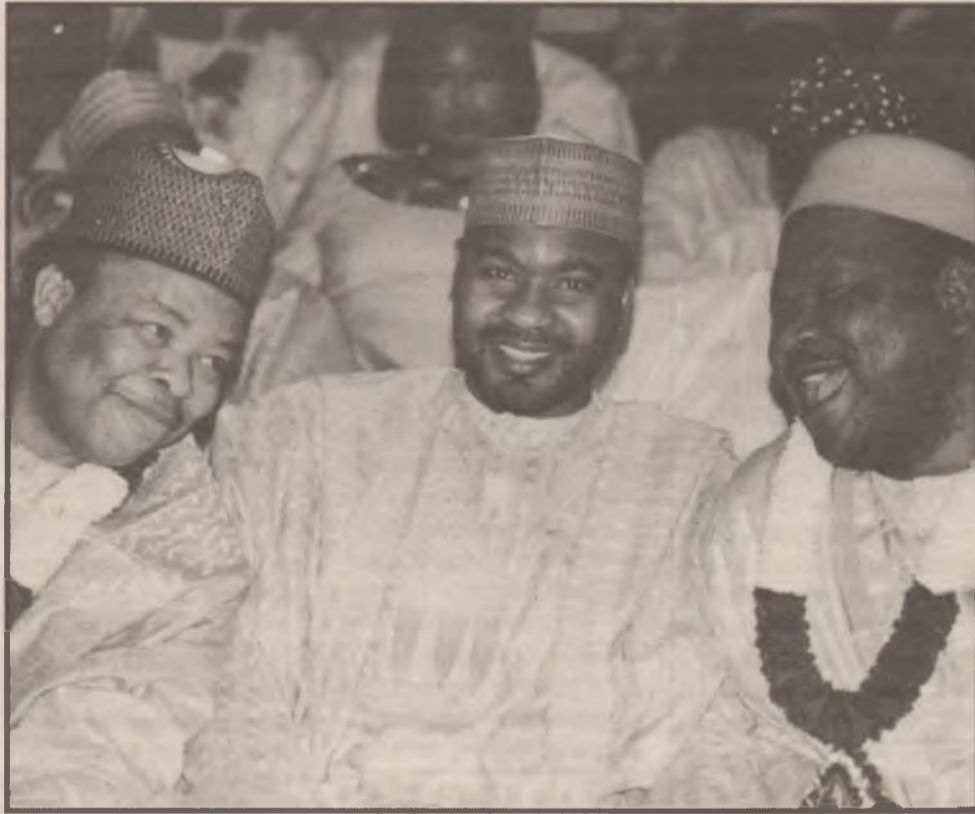
The playwright and director, Mr. Gaius Nwoko, said "the play was deliberately structured to expose the extreme reality of corruption in our society and how it has eaten deep into the various aspects of our lives.

"A performance of this nature affords us the opportunity to mirror ourselves and change," Nwoko said.

The Deputy Director of

British Council, Dr. Simon Kay, said that the drama was "full of humour and it took a swipe at every body."

"It was current and relevant. It gives a penetrating account of the disturbing social reality in the country and the acting was excellent. It is a new form of theatre we should explore for cultural and social change," added Kim Kay, the deputy directors wife.



R-L: Senate President, Anyim Pius Anyim, Hon. Mohammed Wakil and Senator Ibrahim Mantu, Deputy Senate President, at Shehu Yar'Adua Memorial lecture... Saturday Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje

## Man loses wife for converting to Christianity

A 45-year-old businesswoman, Taibat Adedeji, asked an Abuja Upper Area court to dissolve her 12-year-old marriage with Murtala Adedeji because he converted to Christianity.

She told the court that Murtala, who had been jobless throughout the marriage, renounced Islam for Christianity last year and became a member of the Celestial Church of Christ.

Taibat, who said she had five children for Murtala, told the court she vehemently refused to convert to Christianity because they were married under the Islamic legal system.

She prayed the court to help her retrieve the car she bought for Murtala and to grant her custody of their two youngest children.

She also asked the court to formally dissolve the marriage saying, that Murtala's

new pastor had accused her of being responsible for his joblessness.

Murtala, who was present in court, did not contest the charges, but said in response to a question "I will never return to Islam or remarry."

He said that he had no

reason to marry again since he had been blessed with five children, which was one major reason for the marriage.

Alhaji Aliyu Abdulrahman, who presided over the case, ordered the court registrar to investigate the status of the said

property and report back to the court.

He however, adjourned the case to April 18 for ruling.



Supreme Court Building Complex, Abuja.

## Sales boy remanded in custody for stealing

A 25-year-old salesboy with a private commercial firm in Abuja, Maduka

Ofonagoro, who allegedly stole N1.6 million has appeared before an Abuja Chief Magistrate's court.

His employer, Chief Charles Egwuonwu, Managing Director of CC Egwuonwu and Sons Ltd, Abuja, told the court that Ofonagoro absconded with the amount and later used it to set up his private business.

He said that Ofonagoro took the money without completing the agreed number of years he was supposed to serve "before he could be settled."

Egwuonwu said that a search by the police resulted in the discovery of the accused person in a village in

Anambra State after which "Ofonagoro's father ordered him to return to his master and give account of the sales he made without issuing receipts."

The suspect, however, refused.

Although Ofonagoro pleaded not guilty to the charges, the police prosecutor, Insp. John Udeh, objected to the accused person's bail application, saying "investigation is still in progress and there is the likelihood that the crime might be repeated by him considering the amount of money involved."

## Blind corps member undertakes N120,000 project in Abuja

blind-man, he finds joy in extending christian love to fellow Nigerians.

He, however, expressed concern that he was not getting the necessary financial support from the host community, saying that it would slow down the pace of work on the project. The corps member said that the price of a bundle of zinc which

sold for N3,500 a few months ago, now sells for N4,500, while a 5-inch block that was sold for N25 five months ago now cost N35.

He said that the increase in the price of building materials would affect his plan to handover the completed project by the end of this year.

## Minister solicits support for construction of justice ministry headquarters

The Minister of State for Justice, Alhaji Musa Elayo, has solicited the support and cooperation of the National Assembly in the construction of its headquarters building in Abuja and renovation of the campuses of the law schools in Enugu, Kano and Lagos.

Speaking in Abuja during the week when he visited the House of Representatives Committee on Justice, Human Rights and Legal Matters, the minister decried the lack of office accommodation and other vital facilities that are militating against the smooth functions of his ministry.

Elayo, who was a member of the House of Representatives before his appointment, stressed the need for harmonious working relationship between the executive and legislature to solve the problems facing his ministry.

He noted that Obasanjo's administration

attached importance to issues pertaining to human rights, adding that effectively, if it is underfunded and lacks basic facilities, like office accommodation.

He told members of the committee that the ministry of justice would soon establish a unit to study all private member's bills that would be sent to the National Assembly.

Speaking earlier, chairman of the committee, Ibrahim Zelani described the minister's visit as a milestone in the history of the relationship between the executive and legislature, adding that it is the first time since May 29 that a minister would visit a committee in the house.

He commended President Obasanjo for appointing Elayo as minister, noting that the appointment would go a long way in charting a new course of mutual cooperation and understanding between the committee and the ministry of justice.

# Abuja News

## FCT minister canvasses moral upbringing of children

The Minister of Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Engr. Muhammed Abba-Gana, has stressed the need for parents and teachers to join hands towards better training and moral upbringing of children.



Engr. Abba-Gana

He spoke when the executive members of the National Parents Teachers Association of Nigeria (NAPTAN) led by their national president, Alhaji Alade Babs Animashaun, paid him a courtesy call at the weekend. He maintained that for the sound education of children, a parents and the teachers must complement each other.

The minister told NAPTAN to assist the government in the implementation of its policy on education. He praised NAPTAN for its steering role in advancing educational development in the country through cooperation with government, parents and school authorities.

On the association's request for a plot of land in Abuja to build its national secretariat, the minister said he would approve the allocation of a suitable plot for them once the necessary processes have been fulfilled.

He added, "we have been inviting different categories of investors to come and invest in Abuja. It is part of our own incentive to provide you with land so that you will

build your befitting office in the nation's capital".

Engr. Abba-Gana said the FCT administration under him would continue to accord education at all levels the priority it deserves. He assured the NAPTAN executives that his doors would always remain open to welcome useful advice on ways of improving the standard of education in the country.

## Jabi housing scheme: workers report contractor to minister

Contractors handling the construction work at Jabi Resettlement Housing Scheme, Abuja may be in for trouble following the recent workers' complaint to the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Engr. Mohammed Abba-Gana, that the contractors have not been paying them their salaries.

The workers complained

to the minister when he visited the Jabi resettlement site recently.

The minister, who was visibly angry, instructed the project supervising officer, Engr. Abdulkadir Maina, to invite all the contractors to see him this week in respect of the workers' complaints.

Abba-Gana said that the contractors were mobilised by government and that no single contractor had any ex-

cuse for not paying their workers.

The minister pointed out that the non-payment of workers by contractors was one of the factors delaying the completion of the first phase of the project.

"No contractor will escape the claws of the law if I discover that they are owing their field workers needlessly. We will make sure that the law takes its due course," he stated.

Abba-Gana also warned that any contractor who failed to complete his job on scheduled would have his contract revoked and would refund the mobilisation fee paid to him.

He also warned that shoddy work would attract government sanction and any attempt to ask for variation of contract fee would not be entertained.

The minister advised that any contractor who thought he could not beat the completion deadline should hand his project back to government with the advance fee for reward to a competent firm that would complete it on schedule.

## Deregulation: sale of fuel shifts to bus stops

Following the recent moves by the federal government to deregulate the oil sector, the sale of petroleum products in Abuja has shifted from filling stations to bus stops.

Daily Trust investigations revealed that fuel hawkers have resorted to displaying their products at bus stops for sale at exorbitant prices.

Daily Trust gathered that a 20-litre gallon of fuel costs between 1,800 and 2,000 naira.

Daily Trust further learnt

that the recent scarcity of petroleum products in Abuja and other parts of the country is not unconnected with the proposed deregulation of the oil sector with the pump price of petrol expected to hit 40 naira per litre.

It will be recalled that President Obasanjo, in a phone-in programme last month urged Nigerians to support the deregulation of the oil sector, noting that "a subsidy of 200 billion naira per year on petroleum products at the expense of other social services, which would benefit more Nigerians, did not agree with the tenets of the Kuru declaration."

The president insisted that deregulation would facilitate investment in the downstream oil sector and increase competition in the sector with better services and greater choices for consumers.

Vice-President Atiku Abubakar, while commenting on deregulation recently at Murtala Muhammed Inter-national Airport (MMIA), Ikeja, on his way to Abeokuta, said that government was yet to take a final decision on the issue.

He said that government has thrown the issue to public debate to sample public opinion on the issue before a final decision would be taken.

## Cleric warns FG over deregulation

Alhaji Adeyemo Fouad, chief missionary of the Abuja branch of Ansar-ud-Deen Society of Nigeria, has warned the federal government against taking dictations from the IMF and World Bank which, he said, were behind government's plan to deregulate the oil sector.

Fouad said in a sermon delivered at the weekend in Abuja that government should realise that the international organisations and their backers could not love Nigeria more than Nigerians.

He stressed that those in government must always remember that Nigerians put their trust in them and that they were accountable, first to the masses, before the international organisations.

The Chief Missioner also admonished that those voted into power to run the country

should bear in mind that God instructed them not to betray the trust put in their hands by the electorate.

"The deregulation of the oil sector would lead to untold hardship and betrayal of the trust put in the leaders by the electorate," Fouad said.

He argued that it was disheartening that already impoverished Nigerians would be made to pay more for fuel that was gotten from their natural endowment.

The Chief Missioner debunked government's claim that deregulation would end losses it had sustained in the name of subsidy.

He argued that statistics released by the NLC showed that government was making a profit of 1.8 million dollars daily on the 300,000 barrels of crude oil it sold to the NNPC for domestic

consumption.

Fouad also recalled that the NLC had told the public that government was making an additional profit of 10 naira per litre of fuel sold to consumers.

Government, he said, had not contested NLC's claims, which made nonsense of its claim of subsidising the oil sector.

He said it was unfortunate that kerosene, which was required by "even the commonest of the common man", had become unaffordable as it was not sold at the official rate anywhere in the country.

He enjoined government to retrace its steps and execute only programmes that would bring succour to the vast majority of Nigerians.

## Two million Nigerians benefit from NDE says acting DG

Not less than two million Nigerians have benefited from the programmes of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) since its inception in 1987, the acting director general of the directorate, Mr. Samuel Adelodun, has said.

Adelodun told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Abuja at the weekend that the beneficiaries were in all parts

of the country and in all sectors of the economy, particularly the informal sector.

"Most of these people who are self-employed are some of our products, especially carpenters, bricklayers, mechanics, vulcanisers and fashion designers," he said.

The acting director-general explained that the NDE had been actively involved in programmes aimed at

creating jobs for Nigerians, adding that beneficiaries of such programmes were closely monitored to ensure that credit facilities given to them were well utilised.

He said that although about 50 percent of the loans given by the directorate were yet to be repaid, it was satisfying to note that most of the beneficiaries were now settled in their own businesses and had become employers of labour.



### TENDER NOTICE CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA NIGERIAN TREASURY BILLS

Notice is hereby given by the Central Bank of Nigeria that 91-day Federal Government of Nigeria Treasury Bills amounting to N25,378.130 million will be issued by an auction-based system on Thursday, 19/04/2001.

Interested Authorized Dealers (Commercial/Merchant Banks, Designated Discount Houses and Brokers) are invited to submit tenders to reach the Public Debt Office, Central Bank of Nigeria, Lagos, not later than 1.30 p.m on Tuesday, 17/04/2001.

Each tender must be in multiple of N1,000, subject to a maximum of N10,000 per tender. Authorized Dealers are allowed to submit multiple bids and quote multiple rates. A tender may be for own account of Authorised Dealers or made on behalf of interested members of the public, who are advised to apply to their banks or Brokers for the Bills.

Tenders for the Bills should be submitted on the prescribed printed forms in duplicate and in sealed envelopes clearly marked "TENDER FOR BILLS". The result of the tender will be announced before the close of business on Tuesday, 17/04/2001. The Bank reserves the right to reject any tender in part or in full.

Allotment letters will be issued to successful tenderers on Wednesday, 18/04/2001. Payment in full for the amounts of the accepted tenders must be made to the Central Bank of Nigeria not later than 1.30p. m on the issue date 19/04/2001. This will normally be effected by direct debit to the accounts of the affected Authorized Dealers which should ensure that their accounts with the Bank are adequately funded for this purpose.

PUBLIC DEBT OFFICE  
CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA  
TINUBU SQUARE  
LAGOS.



## Latin American Round-Up

**A**rgentina's Boca Juniors beat rival River Plate 3-0 in the biggest derby at the weekend.

Former Brazil coach Wanderley Luxemburgo led Conrinthians to their seventh successive win when they beat Portuguesa 5-2. Uruguay's Penarol beat Rentistas 2-0 to top groups B in the qualifying stage of the complex championship.

Wanderers are still top in Chile after 1-1 draw with Ranges but Santiago a big three have closed the gap.

### Argentina

**P**laymaker Juan Roman Riquelme was the inspiration as Boca Juniors forgot a mediocre campaign to beat championship leaders River Plate 3-0, all the goals coming in an 11-minute spell.

River saw their lead over San Lorenzo cut to two points and their miserable afternoon was completed when leading scorer Marin Cardetti was sent off.

After a dull first half ended goalless, River briefly took control shortly after the break.

But Boca went in front when right-back Hugo Ibarra picked up a loosed ball on the edge of the penalty area and scored with a left-foot shot in the 67th minute.

Riquelme and Gustavo Barros Scheloto converted penalties to seal Boca a 62nd win in 168 matches against their old rivals.

San Lorenzo beat Colon 3-1 to move within two points of River, while Talleres are a further point behind the leaders after beating Independents 1-0.

### Brazil

**T**he Paulista (Sao Paulo state) championship produced a goal feast with Santos winning 5-4 at Matonense and Uniao Sao Joao overcoming Sao Paulo 4-3.

Corinthians, under former Brazil coach Wanderley Luxemburgo, won their seventh game in a row - five in the Paulists and two in the Copa Brazil - as they thrashed Portuguesa 5-2.

This moved them into the top four in the table and put them on course for a place in the semi-finals.

Botafogo-Ribeirao Preto won a penalty shootout (2-1) for the fourth time after their 1-1 draw with Mogi Mirim. Drawn games end in penalty shootouts with the winners taking an extra point.

### Bolivia

**B**oliver's 4-1 win over Union Central kept them top of the Apertura, the first stage of the championship. They are top points clear of Real Potosi, who beat Blooming 4-0 at home. Champions Wilstermann were held to a 2-2 draw by Real Santa Cruz.

### Uruguay

**P**enarol, knocked out of the South American Libertadores Cup in the group stage last week, beat Rentistas 2-0 to go top of group 2 in the qualifying stage of the complex championship.

Guillermo Giacomazzi and Luis Romero scored in the first half.

Champions Nacional ended a run of draws when they beat Racing 2-0 to stay top of group 1.

### Mexico

**G**uadalajara continued their revival under former Argentina captain Oscar Ruggeri with a 4-0 win over Toluca.

But their improved form, which began when Ruggeri took over last months, has come too late to give them any chance of making the quarter-finals of the Verano (summer) championship.

Cruz Azul, who now top group one, produced the surprise of the day with a 4-0 win over group three leaders Santos Laguna.

### Ecuador

**E**spoli, a club owned by the police force, lead the first stage, despite being held to a 1-1 draw by Barcelona. A Raul Noriega own goal salvaged a point and kept them three ahead of army team El Nacional.

Barcelona, the country's biggest club, continued to struggle and are ninth in the ten-team contest.

### Chile

**V**alparaiso-based Wanderers are still top but now have Santiago's big three breathing down their necks after a 1-1 draw with Rangers.

Universidad de Chile, Colo Colo, Universidad Catolica and Union Espanola all won at the weekend to close the gap on Wanderers to one point.

Undersided de Chile beat Audax Italiano 3-2 thanks to a goal by Brazilian Arilson in the fourth minute of injury time.

Universidad Catolica also needed a last-gasp goal to overcome Huachipato 2-1.

Colo Colo beat Palestino 2-0 with goals by Sebastian Rozental and Hector Tapia and Union Espanola scored the only goal against Coquimbo.

### Peru

**S**poring Cristal beat Melgar 3-0 away, with the help of two own goals, to go top of the first stage. Humberto Delgado and Carlos Duenas both put the ball past their own goalkeeper before Brazilian-born Julinho added the third.

Cristal lead on goal difference from arch-rivals Alianza Lima, who drew 1-1 at newly promoted Coopsol.

# Woods aims to sweep rest of 2001 majors

## Golf

**T**he world's greatest sportsman is a firm believer in freedom of speech.

But now that Tiger Woods has satisfied his immediate mission with victory in the Masters, he would like nothing more than to silence the debate over what constitutes a grand slam by going out and winning the rest of the seasons.

The remarkable 25-year-old became the first ever to bring all four of professional golf's most prized trophies under one roof in this case the one that hangs over his exclusive home outside Orlando, Florida.

"I'm just thinking about winning the Masters. That's a pretty cool feeling," Woods said after vanquishing rivals David Duval and Phil Mickelson in a Masters showdown on Sunday.

Woods have earned the pleasure of putting his feet up to admire his US Open, PGA

Championship and Masters hardware. His next tournament is expected to be in five weeks at the Byron Nelson Classic.

Woods said his idol Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, Gary Player and many others were entitled to their opinions that a grand slam must be accomplished in a single season rather than in the way he achieved the feat.

He said he respected their views, but reserved the right to differ.

Victory in the Masters gave Woods three tournament wins in a row as he won Bay Hill and The Players Championship before coming to Augusta.

The Masters gave him five of the last six majors as he also captured the 1999 PGA in a Sunday duel against Sergio Garcia.

Asked about his streak, Woods said: "Hopefully it is the

start."

Bobby Jones swept the major championships of his day in 1930 when he won the US and British Amateurs and US and British Opens in what was hailed as a grand slam.

No ones questions the greatness of Jones, but it might be noted that as an amateur he did not compete in the major professional tournament in the PGA Championship, which was won that year by Tommy Armour over Gene Sarazen.

Woods waited eight months to complete his unprecedented monopoly of titles, but he will only need to wait two months before taking step two in what could become a thrilling 2001 golf odyssey.

Next up on golf a major agenda is the US Open at Southern Hills in Tulsa, Oklahoma. That is followed by the British Open at Royal Lyth, with the last of the season's Majors is the



Tiger Woods

PGA Championship at Atlanta Club.

That takes care of a short term goal.

Long term, Woods have made no secret of his aim to overtake Nicklaus and his mighty, total of 18 major championships.

Woods, in taking his second Masters title, boosted his collection of majors to six. But age 25, Nicklaus had amassed four.

The sites and nature of the triumphs in his streak gave Woods additional pleasure as he reflected on his success.

"The first two I won, probably could not have happened on too better sites than those two for those two events. It's not too often you get to play Pebble beach (US Open) and St. Andrews (British Open).

"Pebble Beach is probably the greatest course we have over here and St Andrews is probably the greatest course in the world.

"And to win at Valhalla under those conditions, having to birdie after birdie, jut to hang in there, that was tough," he said of his playoff victory over Bob May.

"And then to do it here, which is probably again, one of the most historic sites in all of the world, it's pretty neat."

## Grimandi backs Frenchman Vieira for top English award

**F**renchman Gilles Grimandi on Monday called for countryman Patrick Vieira to be named English Footballer of the Year after turning his season around.

Vieira, the World Cup-winning midfielder, scored once and produced a man-of-the-match display as Arsenal beat Tottenham Hotspur 2-1 in the FA Cup semifinals on Sunday.

Afterwards, Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger - another of Highbury's French connections - said Vieira should be voted Player of the Year by his fellow professionals.

The praise heading Vieira's way is in stark contrast to the criticism he suffered at the start of the season, when he was sent off against Sunderland and Liv-

erpool in the opening two premier league matches.

Arsenal defender Grimandi said on his personal website at icons.com: "Vieira must be Player of the Year this season.

"He's been the heart and soul of the team all seasons and is strong, skilful and consistent.

"In fact, he's been fantastic in all games but seems to thrive especially in the big games, like Sunday's semi-final.

"I would argue that he's the greatest midfielder in the world.

"It's all a far cry from the opening week of this season when he was sent off twice and people were saying he was finished in England.

"After Euro 2000 it became clear that Patrick is the best so opposition players knew that the

only way they could get him was to kick him and try to upset him.

"So it was important for Patrick to keep calm. Now he has more confidence in himself, he can see these tactics of opponents for what they are - an admission by his premiership opponents that they just can't cope with his talent.

"I think he has managed to keep his head better since he realised that."

The Professional Footballers Association (PFA) Player of the Year award is voted for by professional players in English football.

Only three players from outside the British Isles have claimed the honour - Dutchman Dennis Bergkamp in 1998 and Frenchmen Eric Cantona in 1994 and David Ginola in 1999.

## Roma face tough Serie A run-in

**S**erie A leader Roma have the tougher run-in to the Italian league championship with a derby against title holders Lazio on April 29 followed by the crunch clash with Juventus in Turin a week later.

Roma are six points ahead of Juventus with a game in hand - their visit to striker Gabriel Batistuta's former club Fiorentina on Monday afternoon.

Should Fabio Capello's team trip up in those games,

their last three home matches - against Atalanta, AC Milan and Parma - take on huge import and none of them are easy with all three rivals push for Champions League berths.

Before they host Roma,

Juventus must ensure they keep in tough and they will have a far from easy ride in their upcoming games at home to Inter Milan and away to Parma.

Fixtures (note: some dates may be changed due to television demands).

### AS Roma

April 9: Fiorentina (away)

April 14: Perugia (home)

April 22: Udinese (a)

April 29: Lazio (h)

May 6: Juventus (a)

May 13: Atalanta (h)

May 20: Bari (a)

May 27: AC Milan (h)

June 10: Napoli (a)

June 17: Parma (h)

### Juventus

April 14: Inter Milan (h)

April 21: Parma (a)

April 29: Lecce (h)

May 6: Roma (h)

May 13: Fiorentina (a)

May 20: Bologna (a)

May 27: Perugia (h)

June 10: Vicenza (a)

June 17: Atalanta (h)



Talented ... Juan Riquelme inspired Boca Juniors to record a thrilling 3-0 victory over rivals River Plate ... on Sunday



## Bill to abrogate Decree 101 underway

A bill that will seek to abrogate the obnoxious Decree 101, said to have hindered the smooth running of football as a business venture in the country, is to be presented to the National Assembly this

week. The bill, which is already being processed is at the instance of the House of Representatives Committee on Sports and is expected to be table for debate before the Easter.



Shehu Mohammed of Gray's International (right) vies with Kebbi Links Shuaibu Yakubu during an amateur league game in Kaduna. Gray's emerged winners of 2001 Challenge Cup in Kaduna State.

### FG to construct mini stadia for African fiesta

The federal government is to award contract for the construction of a mini stadium in Area 3 Abuja and to upgrade facilities at the Old Parade Ground, Area 10 in preparation for the 8th All Africa Games.

The two facilities are to serve as back up to the Abuja National Stadium currently under construction in preparation for the African Olympic bills for Nigeria in 2003.

The construction of the mini stadium is intended to reduce stress on the National Stadium and to serve as alternative venues for the various contingents to train during the continental fiesta.

The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Director of Sports, Col. Boma Kachim (rtd) confirmed yesterday stating that government has responded to the call to construct and upgrade facilities in Areas 3 and 10 to shore up facilities at the National Stadium, the main venue for the African Games.

Trustsports learnt that the National Assembly was already favourably disposed to the project so as to provide adequate facilities for athletes to train in. consequently, series of meetings have been held with the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA), particu-

larly the Engineering and Public Building Departments and the FCT Sports Council.

Trustsports gathered that these meeting were held at least four times in the last one month where the Appropriation Committees of the National Assembly were briefed on the money needed to meet these projects.

The projects, we also learnt, were budgeted for the Ministry of Federal Capital Territory. Though the budget was not approved, but current negotiations and government favourable disposition may engender the approval.

Col. Kachim, who confirmed government moves to upgrade facilities in Area 10, however said he was not in the picture of the construction of the mini stadium in Area 3, saying such project was capital intensive and outside the purvey of the FCT Sports Council.

He agreed that without additional facilities in Abuja the 8th All Africa Games may be threatened by inadequate facilities particularly for teams who may want to train when not having any event at the national stadium.

He lamented the gross lack of recreational facilities in Abuja even as he berated some government officials for being lackadaisical over the provision of such facilities.

Stories by Patrick Andrew

A member of the House of Representatives, Alhaji Isah Matori disclosed that the House of Representatives Committee on Sports was worried by the lack of enterprise in the running of football in the country and has consequently decided to seek ways of legally creating the necessary vista for this to come to pass.

The former board member of the Nigerian Football Association (NFA) in spite of being a money spinning venture, football was still being run as a social service, stressing that all avenues ought to be sought to disengage government from continued funding of football.

The former member of the NFA board sympathised with the pathetic financial situation of the Glass House, stating that its continued tie to the aprong string of the sports ministry was detrimental and should be legally discouraged to give respite to the association.

Alhaji Matori said, "we are thinking of looking into

Decree 101 and also areas where we feel something ought to be done to give the necessary financial support to sports."

He explained that the legislators were concerned that sports, a significant unifying factor in the country was fast decaying, adding amendment or outright abrogation of Decree 101 would ensure that sports, football in particular, would be run by the private sector and not the government.

"The decree needs panel beating. Some of us feel that sports in fact football, ought to be run as a profit making venture. It should be run as a business. There should be little or no government participation in football except in the provision of basic facilities.

"Politics has permeated sports and that is why standard is falling in this all important unifying factor in the country and we as legislators cannot allow that to continue especially if the one factor capitalised on is legally mendable," Alhaji Isah Matori said.

## Upset galore at states FA Cup finals

No fewer than three upsets were recorded last weekend in the states Challenge Cup finals. The most shocking was the defeats of proleague elite division super four ticket contenders, Edo Insurance by non-starters Igbino Babes. The match ended 1-0.

In Sokoto, traditional winners Customs FC were dethroned by Shagari United who recorded a marginal victory, while Gray International overran NUB 1-0 to lift the Kaduna state trophy.

In Enugu, Rangers had

to deploy all the forces in their arsenal to conquer fledglings Relaxers FC much to the manner Yobe State fought to subdue Guilani 3-1.

But the match in Lokoja was stalemated according to report when Babanawa FC who played against Kogi United disrupted proceedings. The resultant fracas forces the state Governor and his contingents to flee the arena.

Meanwhile the finals in Lagos, Bauchi and Anambra will be played on April 28, 12 and 15 respectively.

### Other results

Jigawa 1	Super Rocks 0
NEPA 1	Court of Appeal 0
Sharks 1	Dolphin 0
El-Kanemi Warriors 2	El-Kanemi Babes 1
Zamfara United 1	A.S. Yarima Babes 0
Enyimba 3	Enyimba Babes 1
Pillars 3	Wambai 2
Lobi 5	BCC 4
3SC 4	Nihort FC 2
Plateau United 1	JUTH 0
Gombe United 2	Black Stars 0
Leonard of Calabar 0	Anantigha Warriors 1

## Fans disrupt Kogi FA Cup final

The Kogi State Challenge Cup final between Kogi United and Babanawa last Saturday ended in a stalemate no thanks to irate spectators who engaged in a free for all fight, despite the presence of the deputy governor, Mr. Patrick Adaba.

### Katsina Utd outshines Nasara FC

From Hassan Karofi, in Katsina

A 31st minute strike by former Super Eagles striker, Abubakar Balarabe was all Katsina United needed to see off stubborn Nasara FC at the Katsina FA Cup final on Sunday.

The ex-international, who is now making a heralded return to the country's soccer scene after long professional stint in the Middle East, ensured victory for the Katsina giants when he outfoxed the opposition defence and unleashed a shot that sailed into the Nasara net.

Both sides exhibited scintillating, free-flowing football that put the spectators at the edge of their seats throughout the tension soaked encounter.

After conceding the goal, Nasara changed their pattern of play with good coordination and effective passes which nearly paid off on several occasions. But the experience displayed by United's midfielders and defenders prevented them from levelling the scores.

From Mamma Akpena, in Lokoja

The trouble began when the centre referee, Dr. E.I. Esun awarded a spot kick in favour of Kogi United in the 87th minutes which did not go down well with Babanawa technical crew, who decided to protest by withdrawing the team from the field of play.

The Babanawa officials action drew the attention of their supporters, who encroached into the pitch. Even the presence of some police-

men could not prevent the angry mob from forcing their way into the VIP stand. An attempt by FA officials and security agents to stop them from gaining access to the VIP proved abortive. The Babanawa fans action irked the Kogi United supporters, who embarked on similar rampage with both groups trying to out do each other.

Iron chairs, planks and tables were thrown at the VIP stand, chasing out of the stadium the dignitaries, who came to watch the heated encounter.

The hooligans took advantage of the security levity in the stadium to unleash terror and untold damage to public property. The stadium's entrance gate was destroyed and seven vehicles including that of the state chairman of referee association, Mr. Mustapha Alade were vandalised.

The Kogi state director of sports, Mr. Mohammed Emeje said he could not ascertain how much was destroyed in monetary terms, but blamed the entire fracas on the police lukewarm attitude.



Lagos Machine and Kaduna Kakuri players observing the official toast of coin by Vice President Atiku Abubakar before their Majekodunmi Cup clash at the Lagos Polo tournament. . Last February.

Performance Built Bricks for today's building  
**Durable and Affordable**



**KANO KILN LIMITED**  
 Plot 7, BB 9, Sharada Ind. Area, Phase I Kano  
 Tel: 064 - 667763 Fax: 064 - 639539

# DAILY TRUST

## Sports Illustrated

**This space is for sale**

# Reps debate national sports policy

Public hearing is being arranged by the House of Representatives on the dwindling sports fortunes in the country.

The public hearing precludes a motion which will address the general administration and funding of sports in the country. The motion which is already in the works will soon be presented before the National Assembly for debate.

The deputy chairman, House of Reps Committee on Sports, Alhaji Isah Matori disclosed to *Trustsports* that members of the legislature were uncomfortable with the recent poor performances of Nigerian sports personalities noting that it was disheartening that

By Reuben Yunana & Patrick Andrew



Ishaya Mark Aku, Sports Minister small countries were now humiliating Nigeria in major tournaments.

He said the arranged public hearing which would bring together all stakeholders will be tilted towards a functional sports policy for the country with a view to giving a new lease of life to the sector.

The former NFA board member said that the public hearing will afford the stakeholders avenue to specify how

they want sports to be generally administered and funded. He said memoranda and other position papers will be accepted and thoroughly exposed.

The deputy chairman said a sports policy was inevitable to create a distinct roles and functions for all practitioners and general administrators, stressing that without such distinct roles sports administration will continue to suffer all sorts of setbacks.

After the hearing, he noted, the National Assembly will be in position to evolve "a motion which would look into the general sports administration in Nigeria, with a view to giving it a better legislative teeth, policy wise and we believe this is part of our responsibilities."



Detroit's Grant Hill is struggling to push Pistons into a play-off position in the NBA Eastern Conference.



Allyu Abdullahi of Zaria Golf Club displaying his Armstrade Venture trophy won last Sunday in Kaduna.

### Professor Nomau's travails, written & illustrated by Bulama Mustapha

