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COUNT DOWN TO CENSUS 2006

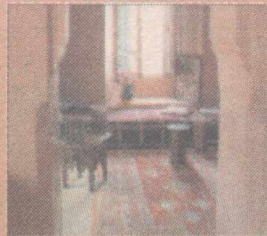
(21 - 25 March)

63 DAYS TO GO
MAKE SURE YOU ARE
COUNTED ONCE ONLY



STAR FEATURE

The imperial
cities of
Morocco



Pages 8 & 33

ZUMA FILM FESTIVAL
11th - 16th March, 2006
Abuja, NIGERIA.
Theme: **Ingenuity:**
The Harvest of our Creative Spirit

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THIRD TERM

Regime change necessary in democracy - Senate

By Habeeb I. Pindiga,
Assistant Political Editor

Speaking for the first time since the third term controversy came to be linked with the National Assembly, Senate President, Chief Ken Nnamani, yesterday assured that the Senate will "uphold the constitution" and work towards a "regime change" as an ingredient of democracy.

In what may be seen as distancing the upper chamber from President Olusegun Obasanjo's alleged third term bid, Nnamani said though government's economic reforms need to be sustained, this could be achieved under

different regimes if the necessary machinery was put in place. The Senate, he assured, will enact laws to sustain the reforms after this government vacates office in 2007.

Addressing senators yesterday in Abuja at the beginning of the second leg of the 2005/2006 legislative session, Nnamani said: "During the break, the agitations about the alleged third term agenda became feverish. Expectedly, the pendulum of suspicion swung towards the direction

of the National Assembly.

"We appreciate the right of Nigerians to contribute to the debates about the form of governance should take before and after 2007. We assure

Nigerian citizens that we will keep the faith and protect democratic rights.

"I appeal to our colleagues to focus on the challenges of ensuring that we

bequeath to Nigerians after 2007, institutions and culture of politics that guarantees continuity of these reform programmes that can transform the economic and social

conditions of ordinary Nigerian citizens. We are settled in our commitment to uphold the constitution.

"We remain unshaken in our devotion to the common good and will continue to press for the deepening of democratic politics and the respect for the rule of law by all public officers.

"Let me assure Nigerians

Cont. on Pg. 2

Hajj: 18 Nigerians confirmed dead in Saudi Arabia

The Nigerian Technical Committee on Hajj in Saudi Arabia has confirmed the death of 18 Nigerians so far during the 2006 Hajj.

Ten of the dead, according to the officials of the Nigerian Hajj mission in Makkah office, were crushed during the stampede that resulted in the death of over 350 pilgrims last week at the *jamrat*.

Confirming this figure to our reporter, Deputy Chairman of the TCH 2006, *Walin Ganye*, Alhaji Sadiq Suleiman, said seven of the dead are male while three are female.

According to statistics released to *Daily Trust*, those who died in the stampede were three pilgrims from Kano,

From Hassan A. Karofi,
in Makkah

two from Sokoto, three from Zamfara, one from the federal capital and one unidentified illegal immigrant.

The *Walin Ganye* also said that already, all the dead have been buried after all necessary confirmation by their various states' pilgrims boards.

He added that other vital information for the use of the families of the deceased pilgrims would be made available to their various state officials after the pilgrimage.

He said the eight others died of various illnesses in the holy land. Some of the death included the *amir* of the Abuja International Service

Cont. on Pg. 2



The First Lady of the United States of America, Mrs. Laura Bush (right), being presented with a bouquet of flowers by Jamila Ahmed from Capital School, Asokoro (left), on arrival at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja ... yesterday. Pic: Kennedy Egbonodje.

Rimi: Kano bizzman in police net

The Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG), Force CID, Abuja, Mr. O.O. Onovo, yesterday confirmed the arrest of a prominent businessman in Kano in connection with the murder of

From Jamilah Nuhu Musa & Yushau Adam Ibrahim, in Kano

Hajiya Sa'adatu Abubakar Rimi.

Speaking with newsmen

in Kano, Mr. Onovo however declined to mention the name of the businessman.

Daily Trust however gathered reliably that the detainee is also a prominent traditional title holder who lately was at loggerheads with the Kano emirate council.

He said the interrogation of 13 suspects arrested earlier was continuing.

Mr. Onovo revealed that several calls and text messages have been received from several sources which the police is trying to analyse. "We have already had con-

tact with the Global Service Mobile (GSM), to that effect."

The DIG stated also that blood samples have also been taken. He therefore stated that the police is waiting for forensic report to determine hair particles or even blood stains which may lead to necessary information gathering.

Mr. Onovo declared that the murder was committed by professionals.

He explained, "the way you could see the blood trail down the carpet raw on the

Cont. on Pg. 2

Dokubo defiant in court

Efforts by the leader of the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Alhaji Dokubo Asari, to compel Justice Peter Olayiwola of the federal high court, Abuja, to disqualify himself from the case failed as the judge insisted on

By Ruby Rabi, Senior Reporter

hearing the case.

Alhaji Dokubo Asari who was saddened by the judge's decision to continue with the case, flared up and rained

abuses on the judge in open court telling him that he was simply an instrument in the hands of President Obasanjo whom he said is determined to clampdown on all opposition.

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News

Third Term *Cont. fr. .pg. 1*

that this Senate is committed to the continuation of those reforms embarked upon by this government that can take Nigeria out of the woods of economic stagnation and pervasive poverty. Lessons from countries as diverse as South Korea, Singapore, Malaysia, the United States, China, etc persuade us that the key to continuity of beneficial reforms is essentially the institutionalisation of democratic practices that encourage implementation of rational policies.

"Our economic prosperity and social stability require policy continuity, not necessarily regime continuity. Indeed, regime change and periodic renewals of the peoples mandate are critical ingredients of democracy.

"The National Assembly will continue to enact laws that make it possible for some of these good policies to continue after the end of the tenure of this government".

Nnamani's statement, according to the Senate spokesman, Senator Victor Ndoma-Egba (SAN), was the position of the upper chamber.

Explaining the Senate's position to correspondents, Ndoma-Egba (SAN), who is also Chairman of the Committee on Media and Public Affairs, said democracy is built on institutions and not individuals.

"There is a clear distinction between persons and institutions. The Senate is concerned about institutions. We want to de-emphasise persons because individuals come and go but institutions endure," he said.

The chairman who addressed newsmen on the outcome of the Senate's closed door session, said the lawmakers reviewed the security situation in the country and were particularly alarmed by the recent murder of the wife of former Kano state governor, Alhaji Abubakar Rimi,

Rimi *Cont. from pg. 1*

floor without splashing or spreading and then there were no trace like in some cases where there will be traces of blood leading out. But there were none found. The blood just seeped in down into the rug. The cut was incised and deep," he said.

The DIG said that the police would also see if there were witnesses and that they would continue to look for the murderers.

Mr. Onovo confirmed that he has also discussed extensively with Alhaji Abubakar Rimi when he met with him last night for over three hours.

He called on the public to continue to offer useful information to enable the police hunt down the culprits.

Meanwhile, a competent source in Kano who preferred anonymity, disclosed that in the early hours of Saturday, a fax message was sent to Rimi's residence giving information relating to a meeting

which was held in connection with the murder.

Meanwhile, the son of President Olusegun Obasanjo, Gbenga and the Abia State governor, Dr. Orji Uzor Kalu, yesterday paid a condolence visit to the former Kano state governor, Alhaji Abubakar Rimi, over the death of his wife, Hajiya Sa'adatu.

Gbenga in company of the Abia state governor, Dr. Kalu, arrived Alhaji Abubakar Rimi's residence in the early hours of yesterday.

Condoling Rimi, Governor Kalu said he was personally touched when he heard the unfortunate incident.

He sympathized with the family of Alhaji Abubakar Rimi, expressing hope that the assassins would, by the Grace of God, be fished out for prosecution.

On his part, Mr. Gbenga Obasanjo expressed sympathy with the family of Rimi describing the incident as unfortunate.

Adulterated drink kills five in Kebbi

At least five people were confirmed dead while several others are receiving medical attention following the consumption of a liquor suspected to be adulterated in Bagudo local government area of Kebbi state.

Confirming the report, the state's Commissioner of Police, Alhaji Ibrahim Paiko, said the incident which occurred

From Kabir Dogon-Daji,
Correspondent Birnin-Kebbi

over the weekend left five people dead while over five were hospitalised among which includes two police officers attached to Bagudo outpost.

He explained that the locally brewed liquor (*Ogogoro*), was sold to the

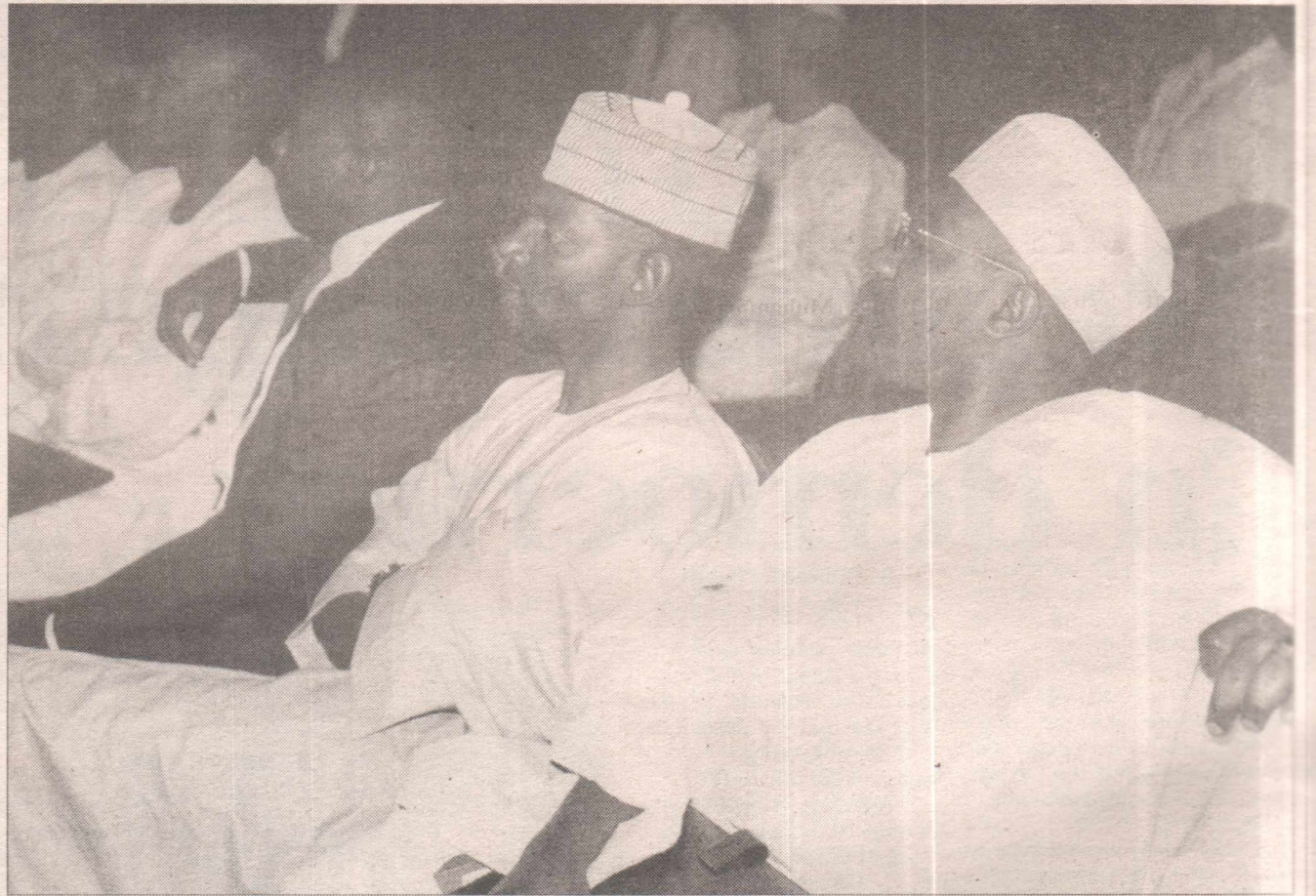
victims by one Igbo man (names withheld by the police), who operates an off license beer parlour at Bagudo town, the headquarters of Bagudo local government.

Alhaji Ibrahim Paiko added that when the owner of the beer parlour traveled to his home town for Christmas, he handed over the business to an indigene of Bagudo

town who is now suspected to have adulterated the substance.

According to him, three people have been arrested in connection with the incident while investigations are on to detect the cause and to avert further occurrence.

Similarly, he said the beer parlour owner has been arrested and is helping the police in their investigations.



A cross section of participants at the presidential stakeholders forum held at the banquet Hall, State House, Abuja... yesterday.

Pic: Joe Oroye.

Dokubo *Cont. from pg. 1*

Ruling on Dokubo's application that he should disqualify himself from the case because he was apprehensive that he would not get justice because of the various circumstances surrounding the case, Justice Peter Olayiwola said that it was a normal practice for the Chief Justice to

decide to assign any judge from any division to hear a particular case in the federal high court.

The Judge said, "I do not think that because a judge was transferred from one division to sit on any case is enough grounds for anyone to allege bias and since the

applicants are not saying that the Judge is biased and no facts has been tabled to that effect, this application is dismissed".

Festus Keyamo, counsel to the accused person had told the court that they would appeal the ruling.

Earlier, Alhaji Dokubo Asari had interrupted the court's proceedings asking for permission to address the court since he felt he was the subject matter of the litigation.

Dokubo said, "I want to oppose this act of injustice to me. What sort of a country is this?"

He screamed as the court felt silent. The court room grew quiet. "How can a judge send me to prison for two months without any sort of evidence against me. Without any proof of evidence, you are simply disgracing yourself and the judiciary," he said.

Then he turned to the Judge and addressed him squarely, "you are just an instrument of the president. That is why you cannot disqualify yourself. Can this kind of thing happen in the United States or in Britain?" he asked.

At this point, the judge called on the accused person's counsel to restrain his client from making defamatory statements which only fuelled Dokubo's anger as he retorted, "what do you want the lawyer to tell me? What else can you do to me. You can only kill me because

am already in prison."

He continued, "no one should tell me to keep quiet. Am the one that is in prison. The Attorney General is not even here. They cannot do me anything because they are not God," he said as he went on to make other disparaging remarks.

Keyamo pleaded with the court to be patient and said that such behaviour would not repeat itself again, although he told the court that he would file an application for the stay of proceedings pending their appeal at the Court of Appeal.

Justice Peter Olayiwola adjourned the case to March 14, for hearing.

At this point, Dokubo shouted at the Judge.

Another two months? I would not die. I will continue to fight."

He was escorted out of the court premises amidst tight security. On reaching the prison van he shouted "freedom!" and began chanting an Ijaw war song and danced before entering the vehicle.

Haji *Cont. from pg. 1*

Centre. The others are five males and two females from Niger, Jigawa, Borno, Benue, Sokoto and the federal capital territory.

Meanwhile, 4245 Nigerian pilgrims have so far been airlifted back to Nigeria by Kabo airline.

He said proper arrangements were being made to ensure prompt airlift of pilgrims back to Nigeria.

Ladoja moves to regain seat in Abuja High Court

Impeached governor of Oyo State, Chief Rashidi Ladoja, has filed a suit before a Federal High Court in Abuja in a bid to regain his seat.

Joined in the suit are the federal government, the Inspector General of Police, the Attorney General of Oyo State, the Oyo State House of Assembly, the new governor, Christopher Bayo Alao-Akala and the Acting Chief Judge of Oyo State.

The suit which was filed yesterday by Malam Yusuf Ali (SAN) is asking the court to declare that he remains the governor of Oyo State on the strength of the ruling delivered by Justice Bolaji Yusuf of the Oyo state High Court on Thursday.

It asked the court to restrain Akala from parading himself as the governor of the state.

It also sought an order restraining all the defendants from hindering him in performing his duties as the governor of Oyo State.

By Ruby Rabi, Senior
Reporter & Olumide
Bajulaiye, in Ibadan

Other declarations sought by Ladoja are: an order directing the Attorney General of the Federation and the Inspector General of Police to restore him to office as the constitutionally recognized governor of Oyo State.

An order setting aside the purported swearing-in of Akala as the governor of Oyo State by the Acting Chief Judge of the State.

An injunction restraining all the defendants from recognizing Akala as the state governor.

A declaration that the police and the federal government have no constitutional nor legal authority to recognize Akala as the constitutionally elected governor of Oyo State.

A declaration that having regards to the provisions of sections 6 and 188 of the 1999 constitution coupled with the ruling of Justice Bolaji Yusuf,

the administering of oath of office on Akala as the governor of Oyo State is illegal and unconstitutional.

He had already filed an *ex parte* application to serve the defendants by substituted service for speedy hearing.

The case has not been assigned.

Meanwhile, Ibadan, the capital city of Oyo state, was on Tuesday paralysed as members of the state's chapter of the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) withdrew commercial buses from major roads in the city.

The withdrawal of vehicles from the roads by the NURTW is coming on the heels of a call by the state's chapter of the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), on workers to stay at home pending the resolution of the political crisis rocking the state.

Apart from the NLC and the NURTW, teachers in the state have also been sending back students home to pro-

NEWS

Trust dialogue holds tomorrow

The third edition of the Trust Annual Dialogue organised by the Media Trust limited, publishers of "Daily Trust" and "Weekly Trust" will hold tomorrow at Ladi Kwali Hall, Sheraton Hotel, Abuja.

The book, "Reforming Nigeria: Which Model? is to be launched at the occasion. The 158 - page book contains proceedings of the previous dialogue papers presented by renown scholars in the field of economics.

Nigeria's leading econo-

By Isa Sanusi

mist, Professor Sam Aluko's paper, "Reforming Nigeria: The Economic Dimension," highlighted the importance of protecting the poor in stimulating economic growth. In his paper, Malam Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, buttressed the fact that no matter how good economic reforms are, they will only make impact if the implementers are not corrupt or self serving.

Special Assistant to the Vice President, Professor

Mike Kwanashie, in his speech, hinged economic development to political will on the part of government to make difficult choices that will hurt vested interests.

This year's dialogue explores: "Corruption, the trouble with Nigeria." With key speakers that include the chairman of the EFCC, Malam Nuhu Ribadu; chairman, Transparency in Nigeria, General Ishola Williams (rtd) and the Vice Chancellor, Bayero University, Kano Professor Attahiru Jega.

Failed banks owners are unforgivable -Obasanjo

President Olusegun Obasanjo yesterday said that owners of the insolvent banks that failed to meet the N25 billion recapitalisation deadline of December 31, 2005 have committed unforgivable sins.

His word: "the owners of the failed banks have committed an unforgivable sin."

The Central Bank of Nigeria, Monday, withdrew the licences of about 14 banks in the country as a result of their failure to meet the deadline issued by the apex bank.

Speaking at the bank's consolidation/stakeholders meeting held at Aso Villa, Obasanjo said however that the CBN owes no apology to the senate over the consolidation exercise provided that the law establishing the apex bank gave right for such restructuring exercise.

At the meeting, the Senate President in his message

By Hamisu Muhammad, Assistant IT Editor

to the president delivered by Senator Gbenga Ogguniye, said the senate was in doubt about the legality of the consolidation exercise and questioned 25 mega banks.

Obasanjo said if the exercise carried out by the CBN contradicts the law establishing the banks, he will apologise to the Senate on behalf of the apex bank that the exercise is meant for the goodness of Nigerians and would promote the economic stability of the country.

It will be recalled that the CBN Governor, Professor Charles C. Soludo, said in his speech while withdrawing the licence of the 14 failed banks that the exercise is in conformity with the powers conferred upon it by the Banks and Other Financial Institutions Act.

The president who also spoke on the cassava ini-

ative of his administration, gave July 1st this year as the deadline for all flour millers in the country to use 10 percent cassava or have their factories closed.

He said, the industrialists are not assisting the initiative at the grassroots level, the situation that brought about the delay in its take up.

He said the whole essence of a generate employment and create wealth for Nigerians, stating that the idea build a private/public partnership was to fight poverty.

The president said the meeting will be held every quarter to access the performance of the economy and to find out the contributions of each sector in the area of job creation.

The meeting, which is the first in the history of the Obasanjo administration, witnessed participants from the organized private sector, governors, non governmental organizations, among others.

DISCHARGING A Burden

Voices from the

2nd Trust Annual Dialogue



Reforming Nigeria: Which Model?



DAILY TRUST

50 lawmakers in averted air crashes

About fifty members of the House of Representatives and Senate Committee on Appropriation, on Sunday were aboard the averted air mishap involving an Abuja via Lagos ADC flight 072 and a Chanchangi Abuja-bound plane.

The lawmakers were returning from a retreat in Calabar, Cross River state, when the ADC airliner was said to have had engine problems few minutes after take off from the Calabar Airport, but the pilot manoeuvred to reach Murtala Mohammed International Airport, Lagos.

In Lagos, the legislators changed to a Chanchangi plane on 3.30pm scheduled flight to Abuja which also developed engine problems mid-air and spent about 80 minutes to arrive Abuja, a journey that normally takes fifty minutes.

Others on the plane were the Accountant General of the federation, Alhaji Ibrahim Dankwambo and officials of the finance ministry.

But Chanchangi airlines yesterday said no such problem occurred.

Two of the House members involved, Hons. Usman Balkore and Mohammed Kabir Umar, recounted to Daily Trust yesterday how the two aircrafts nearly crashed.

According to Balkore, "We boarded a 12.30 pm ADC plane to Abuja to stopover at Lagos. Sometimes after take off, the aircraft started making a loud noise. When we reached Ibadan, it lost altitude, then it regained altitude and started jerking. At a point, we flew at a

By Habeeb I. Pindiga & Mohammed S. Shehu

dangerously low altitude. In Lagos, where we were supposed to have a brief stopover, we spent a long time waiting. We saw that they opened the aircraft engine. They did not communicate with us, but we heard that something had burst in the engine. We were forced to leave that plane and patronise Chanchangi flight scheduled for 3.30pm.

"But it was like moving from frying pan to fire. This Chanchangi plane, when it came to Lisa (Ogun state), the engine started banging. They told us that they would go to 33, 000 feet above sea level but this was unusual for domestic flights. And they did not explain to us what was happening. They just said they were flying at that height. Now, before we got to Ibadan, the plane jerked five times. Soon they swit-

ched off the air conditioning system. And this too was an indication that something was seriously wrong. A colleague, an aviation expert, told me that when the air-conditioning system of a plane is switched off, it means the engine has developed problems. Somehow they managed to bring us to Abuja but after about one hour fifteen minutes, a journey of 50 minutes."

Umar confirmed this and said they were surprised that despite the action said to have been taken in the aviation industry, faulty aircrafts were still flying the nation's air space risking people's lives.

Chanchangi's sales manager in Abuja, Alhaji Yusuf Dan Hassan, claimed ignorance of the incident. He told Daily Trust that none of their planes was involved in any such incident on Sunday.

Buhari's tour shelved

By Isa Sanusi

The planned tour of the ANPP presidential candidate, General Muhammadu Buhari has been suspended. The tour which was scheduled to take up Monday from Kaduna to Lafiato and Makurdi, was to cover the nineteen northern states.

Kano State Commissioner of Information, Dr. Tijjani Naniya, who confirmed the suspension of the tour to Daily Trust Monday on phone, added that "the tour was called off because of the recent deaths and some other things."

A source, however,

attributed the suspension of the tour to the insistence of the ex-Head of State that adequate consultations has to be made before embarking on the tour. According to the source, "Buhari will prefer the tour to be nationwide and in consultation with all sections of the Buhari Organization"

The itinerary of the tour released by Kano State government indicated that the ex-military ruler will hold rallies in Maiduguri, Yola, Minna and Birnin Kebbi.

Rallies will also be held in Kano, Katsina, Jos, Bauchi and Gombe.



Asani Dokubo being led to the Federal High Court, Abuja, by prison officials, yesterday.

Asani Dokubo being led to the Federal High Court, Abuja, by prison officials, yesterday.

CRIME & PUNISHMENT

Al-Mustapha: Trial continues today

Further hearing in the five-year-old case preferred by the Lagos state government (LASG) against the former Chief of Army Staff (COAS), Lt. General Ishaya Rizi Bamaiyi and four others over the attempted murder of Mr. Alex Ibru, *The Guardian* publisher, has been adjourned to Wednesday.

The matter which was for cross-examination of the first prosecution witness (PW) by counsel to Mr. Mohammed Rabo Lawal on Monday, could not go on because neither was the lawyer (Akin Akanbi Esq) in court nor did he send any representation.

Lt. General Ishaya Bamaiyi (rtd), former Chief of Army Staff, James Danbaba, former Commissioner of Police, Lagos state, Hamza Al-Mustapha, former Chief Security Officer to late General Sani Abacha, Col. Jibrin Bala Yaku-

From Adelanwa Bamgboye,
Lagos

bu, former MILAD, Zamfara state and Mohammed Rabo Lawal then OC MOPOL, Aso Rock, are standing trial for allegedly playing prominent roles in the failed assassination attempt on *The Guardian* publisher, Mr. Alex Ibru, sometimes in 1996.

Bamaiyi and others were subsequently arraigned on a two count charge on January 11, 2000, before Justice Ade Alabi (as he then was, now the Chief Judge of Lagos state).

While adjourning further hearing to today, Justice Joseph Olubumi Oyewole said that if the lawyer to Rabo Lawal was not in court, the accused (Rabo Lawal) would have to cross examine the prosecution witness himself.

Armed robbers hijack bus in Abuja

Armed robbery victims were last Friday stripped naked and robbed of their money and other valuables at a bush path near PHCN installation opposite Aso Radio, Abuja.

A victim who wants to remain anonymous told this reporter on the *Daily Trust* hotline that himself and 12 other passengers boarded a commercial bus from Berger roundabout enroute Kubwa in the FCT at about 7.30 p.m. when the incident happened.

"As we got to the NEPA (PHCN) installations after tipper garage, one of the passengers in the 18 seater bus started hitting the roof of the motor saying 'MOPOL', 'MOPOL' (meaning Mobile police). Suddenly, the passenger on the front seat brought out a gun, pointed it at the driver and directed him to divert to a nearby bush and the driver complied.

"Almost immediately, another passenger sitting at the back seat shouted and we all turned back and saw him wielding a sharp cutlass. The one sitting next to the first one who shouted MOPOL, brought out a screw driver and threatened to use it on anyone that made any suspicious moves. There was serious fear and confusion. Personally, at first, I thought I was the only victim and everybody in the bus was a robber," he said.

He said when they got to a spot off the expressway, the four armed robbers directed the remaining nine passengers in the bus, the driver and the conductor to disembark.

He said the driver of the bus was the first to be severely beaten and all the money he had on him was carted away.

"They asked all of us to drop all we had on the ground and strip ourselves naked. We all stripped naked and dropped all we had including our clothes on the ground. The robbers searched everything and took away our money, handsets and a laptop computer.

"They beat us mercilessly. I was personally slapped twice and one of them dug his boot into my back. I am still feeling the pains as I

By Shehu Abubakar,
Reporter

am talking to you now. But from all indications, the driver was the one that received the worse beating. They left him bleeding through the nose," he said.

Our source said that after the robbers had finished with them, they collected the keys to the bus and attempted to drive away with it but it was stuck in a ditch. He recalled that the victims who were still naked were forced by the robbers to push the vehicle out of the ditch hall.

He said when the vehicle was free, the armed robbers ordered them to lie down in the bush face down while they drove the bus away. "I heard them telling the driver to go to Zuba and take his bus.

"When the robbery was going on, one of them was telling us that it was not their fault. He was blaming their predicament on the FCT minister, Malam Nasir el-Rufai, whom he said demolished their shops and sent them out of business. I think all that is rubbish. If one is displaced, he should go and fix himself up somewhere and not vent his anger on innocent people.

"The most funny part of it was when I finally got home. My wife told me that because I kept late that day, she called my line some minutes earlier (after the robbery) and some one answered and told her not to worry that I was on my way back home. Can you see what those stupid robbers can do?" he asked.

He told this reporter that though they were all asked to strip naked, the robbers did not take away their clothes. "We sorted out our clothes in the darkness, dressed up and proceeded to Maitama police division where we lodged a complaint."

At the police station, he said the policemen showed concern and contacted several police patrol teams and formations, alerting them about the movement of the suspected robbers and calling on all patrol teams to make efforts to track down the robbers.



The MASSOB leader, Ralph Uwazurike (middle) being led to the Federal High Court, Abuja for his trial...yesterday.

Pix: Felix Onigbinde

Akunyili: Police declare 7 wanted

By Ruby Rabi,
Senior Reporter

The Police has declared seven people wanted in connection with the December 26, 2003 attempt on the life of the Director General of the National Agency for Foods, Drugs, Administration and Control, Professor Dora Akunyili.

A statement signed by the Force Public Relations Officer, Mr. Haz Iwendi, said that the seven people are wanted by the police for fresh arraignment.

The suspects had earlier been tried for making an attempt to kill Akunyili at an Abuja High Court but were left off the hook on the grounds that Abuja was not the proper venue to try them.

The trial judge, Justice Ishaq Bello had said that the suspect should have been tried in Anambra state where the offence was allegedly committed.

The federal government has already filed an appeal to challenge the decision of the Abuja High Court discharging the seven accused persons.

The police asked members of the public to report the whereabouts of the suspects to the nearest police station.

The seven suspects are Emmanuel Nnamdi Nnakwe, (aka Aboy), Marcel Nnakwe, Emeka Orjiakor and Christopher Okoro Mbah (aka Persus).

Others are Olisaemeka Igbokwe, (aka Holy War), Jude Ugwu (aka Agada) and Francis Okoye.

The prosecutor, Mr. Seeni Okunloye, SAN, who filed the appeal at the Court of Appeal in Abuja, said that the trial judge was wrong to hold that he did not have the jurisdiction to try the suspects even when parts of the ingredients constituting the offences with which they were charged were committed in Abuja.

He stated that one of the accused persons, Emmanuel Nnadi Nnakwe, admitted that an attempt was made on Akunyili's life at the Federal Capital Territory, a fact he said was enough to confer jurisdiction on the court.

He said that the attempt on Akunyili's life in Anambra state was in furtherance of the earlier attempt made to kill her in Abuja.

He said, "given the facts and the circumstances of this case, the offence committed by the accused in this case is punishable under the laws of the FCT."

He argued that Akunyili who was the victim of the attempt resided in Abuja and the accused persons came to the FCT to kill her. All these, he concluded, should have conferred jurisdiction on the court.

He said that it was immaterial that the gunmen hired to kill Akunyili at her residence in Abuja did not meet her at home.

Justice Ishaq Bello had

on 24th September declined jurisdiction to try the suspects on the grounds that the proper venue to try them was Anambra State.

He set aside the fiat issued by the federal government for the prosecution of the suspects and discharged but did not acquit them.

The suspects attempted to escape even as security men tried to re-arrest them.

They were finally apprehended and taken to Kuje prison. The suspects were said to have agreed at different places in Abuja and Anambra State to do an illegal act to wit: cause the death of Dora Akunyili and thereby committed an

offence punishable under section 97 of the Penal Code.

The second charge read that if they had succeeded in killing Dora, they would have been guilty of culpable homicide punishable with death, an offence punishable under section 229 of the penal code.

In another charge, the suspects were said to have caused the death of one Emeka Onuekutu while attempting to kill Dora.

According to the charge, the gunshots aimed at Dora missed target but hit the deceased inside his Mitsubishi L3000 minibus.

The appeal has not been fixed for hearing.

Cook in court for stealing computer laptops

By Shehu Othman Shehu

One Nesto Bidibi, a cook, was yesterday arraigned before a senior magistrate court sitting at Wuse II, Abuja for alleged theft of computer laptop valued N300,000.

The prosecutor Corporal Ambi, in the suit filed before the court, said that on January 5, 2006, at about 8.30 p.m., one Tunde Adeboye of No. 3 Abanga Close Abuja, came to the Maitama police station and reported that on the same date at about 5.00 p.m., he discovered that one Nesto Bidibi, a cook of the said address stole, his computer laptop from his room, which is contrary to

section 287 of the penal code law.

The accused person, however pleaded not guilty to the offence.

However, the presiding magistrate Zainab B. Bashir, granted bail to the accused person in the sum of N50,000, with two sureties in like sum.

She added that the said sureties must be resident within the jurisdiction of the court and must swear to an affidavit of means.

The case have been adjourned to January 18, 2006 for further hearing.



MEDIA TRUST LTD.

Presents

3RD TRUST ANNUAL DIALOGUE

- Topic:** → CORRUPTION: The Trouble With Nigeria
- Speakers:** → Malam Nuhu Ribadu, Gen. Ishola Williams (rtd) and Professor Attahiru Jega
- Date:** → Thursday 19th January 2006
- Venue:** → Ladi Kwali Conference Centre, Abuja Sheraton Hotel & Towers, Abuja
- Time:** → 10:00 a.m. Prompt

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

1. 9.00-9.15 am - Participants and invited guests arrive
2. 9.15-9.25 am - Arrival of speakers, discussants, chairman of the occasion (Major Gen. Garba Ali Mohammed (Rtd) and chief launcher (Alhaji (Dr.) Aliko Dangote con.)
3. 9.30 am - Arrival of Royal father of the day (HRH Alhaji Sulu Gambari, *Emir of Ilorin*)
4. 9.40 am - Arrival of chief host, Chairman, Abuja Municipal Area Council (Hon. (Dr.) Zaphaniah B. Jisalo)
5. 9.50 am - Arrival of Special Guest of Honour, Chief Ken Nnamani, Senate President, Federal Republic of Nigeria
6. 9.55 am - Arrival of Speaker, Fed. House of Reps (Alh. Aminu Bello Masari) and All State Governors National Anthem
7. 10.00 am - Opening prayers
8. 10.10-10.20 am - Introduction of guests by MC
9. 10.20-10.30 am - Welcome address by the Chairman Board of Directors of Media Trust Limited
10. 10.30-10.40 am - Opening remarks by the chairman of the occasion
11. 10.40-10.50 am - Remarks by the Chief Host, Hon. (Dr.) Zaphaniah B. Jisalo
12. 10.50-11.00 am - Remarks by the Special Guest of Honour, Chief Ken Nnamani
13. 11.00-11.10 am - Book review by Abubakar Sanusi
14. 11.10-11.30 am - MC announces launching of book by the Chief Launcher, Alhaji Aliko Dangote & Co-launchers
15. 11.30-11.50 pm - MC announces book sale to audience
16. 11.50-12.10 pm - Presentation of first paper
17. 12.10-12.30 pm - Presentation of second paper
18. 12.30-12.50 pm - Presentation of third paper
19. 12.50-1.20 pm - Comments and Questions on the papers presented
20. 1.20-1.30 pm - Vote of thanks by Alhaji Isiaq A. Ajibola, Executive Director, Media Trust Limited
21. 1.30 pm - Closing prayers

THIS SERVES AS INVITATION TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

Signed:
Management
 09-5235787, 5236054,
 08033202211, 08033202210

Soliloquy

WITH
A. B. Ahmed
dahmedia@canada.com

After recapitalisation...

There can be no denying the fact that the target of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) when it set out to implement the policy of the Obasanjo Administration to strengthen the nation's banks by ordering them to establish a new capital base of 25 billion naira each, within one year, has now been satisfactorily and commendably achieved. Notwithstanding the initial alarm of many of the banks, the banks themselves, as well as the compassionate doubts and appeals of well-meaning Nigerians in other sectors of the nation's economy, the outcome of the recapitalisation exercise has proved that Nigerian banks and other financial institutions are, by and large, resilient

such areas as giving unsecured loans and advances to powerful politicians for campaign purposes, or to members of their own boards and management teams, in shameful insider deals. The happy thing about the recapitalisation exercise however is that it both exposed such unprofessional and often criminal practices, as well as punished banks which indulged in them by contributing largely to their inability to recapitalise on time. The logical next step for government to take now is to invoke existing legal sanctions against those whose deliberate and self-serving actions contributed so largely to the inability of the disqualified banks to make the grade and meet the recapitalisation deadline.

of the larger society, as represented by innocent depositors and other creditors of those banks which have now been forced to close shop. We cannot blame the apex bank for sticking to the rules of fair play by allowing all the commercial banks to play on a level field, right up to the end of their struggle to beat the deadline. Nor can we ask why the CBN did not give the banking public early warning about those of the banks which were having serious difficulties in finding merger partners or other means which would have enabled them to scale the capital-base hurdle before the deadline. Such action by the CBN would have triggered an unimaginable run on the troubled banks and caused unnecessary anxiety and chaos among their creditors and account holders, as well as made the efforts of the banks to make the mark useless, right from the beginning.

Now, however, that the deadline has come and gone, and we have seen which of the banks were unable to make the cut-off mark, the nation is still painfully saddled with the problem of investors, depositors and other credit or account holders in the unqualified and therefore disqualified banks. Quite a large number of such account holders are, unfortunately, small people and businesses that cannot afford to wait for months, before the CBN's much-reported safety-net of the Nigerian Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC) and other policy measures are brought in to mitigate their immediate suffering. And no amount of reassurance to the effect that no depositor will lose his/her money can adequately relieve the immediate liquidity needs of such account holders. It is to this category of the banking public which the apex bank's remedial attention and action should now be urgently addressed.

A situation in which "the new medicine worked wonderfully but the patient died nevertheless" must be avoided by all means. Given the somewhat already parlous state of the economy even before the introduction of the new banking capital base policy, there can be no doubt that the ordinary Nigerian citizen cannot afford to have his money (whether it be in the form of savings, income, interest, business capital or any other form of liquidity) tied up indefinitely in the vaults of banks which are no longer operational, or in the long drawn-out bureaucratic processes of the NDIC. The next challenge for the CBN and the federal government is how to minimise the distress of these needy depositors, and indeed all categories of bank customers, as soon as is humanly possible.

No public policy can be good for the people if it hastens their impoverishment and blights their already fragile hopes for succour instead of giving them immediate re-

"A situation in which "the new medicine worked wonderfully but the patient died nevertheless" must be avoided by all means. Given the somewhat already parlous state of the economy even before the introduction of the new banking capital base policy, there can be no doubt that the ordinary Nigerian citizen cannot afford to have his money (whether it be in the form of savings, income, interest, business capital or any other form of liquidity) tied up indefinitely in the vaults of banks which are no longer operational, or in the long drawn-out bureaucratic processes of the NDIC. The next challenge for the CBN and the federal government is how to minimise the distress of these needy depositors, and indeed all categories of bank customers, as soon as is humanly possible."

ient and strong enough to meet new challenges without necessarily folding up.

After the first flush of panic which rattled the banks when the policy decision was announced, and consequent upon the CBN's adamant refusal to bend under the tremendous pressure which that panic engendered, it soon became apparent that undercapitalised though they were, Nigerian banks possessed the innate capability to successfully fight for their own survival. By aggressively selling off their shares to the public, merging and cooperating in many other ways, they were able to ensure that most of them survived this sudden challenge to their institutional and professional skill and creativity, as well as their integrity and reputation. The nation has every cause to thank and be proud of both the commercial banks and the CBN for showing such a great determination to make the implementation of the new capital-base policy such a relatively painless success story.

This is, of course, not to ignore the fact that the exercise exposed many unprofes-

Having acknowledged these facts though, it is obvious that such a massive recapitalisation task could not have been carried out without quite a few of the banks sadly failing to make the grade before the deadline for recapitalisation came on December 31, 2005. As the old saying goes, it is impossible to make omelettes without breaking some eggs. For the odd one dozen or more banks which failed to meet the new capital base [although some of them were really pretty rotten eggs which could not have been used in making any edible omelette in any case], there is a compassionate effort underway already to try and rescue them, since many of them cannot readily fit into the mould of distressed or failed banks. They were simply not strong enough to boost their capital bases to 25 billion naira at such relatively short notice. That is undoubtedly what informs the CBN's ongoing effort to encourage the banks which succeeded to buy up those that did not.

By the very nature of the banking industry, the failure of the weaker banks to make

Opinion

Nigeria must not cease to exist

By Aliyu Umar

In spite of everything, Ghana refused to go. In fact, it is getting stronger thanks to people like former President Jerry Rawlings. Similarly, Nigeria must go on until the last day. Dear reader, excuse my starting this piece with its conclusion. I agree with the Chief of Army Staff that Nigeria must not go.

As an ex-service man, I consider myself as having a duty to defend Nigeria and its institutions. My colleagues serving in the then Ikorodu District Council, Lagos State, can testify to the fact that I served as a pioneer National Youth Service Corps member. When I returned home in 1974, my uncle asked me whether I secured a wife in Ikorodu. When I answered in the negative, my uncle jokingly threatened to recommend to the authorities that I should repeat the service year on account of this act of disservice to the nation.

I had no doubt then that my uncle was serious about his wanting me to marry from the Southern part of Nigeria where I served. So when I received another call-up letter from the NYSC Directorate in 1974 while attending the Nigerian Law School, it was my uncle's from-the-heart non-threat that came to my mind. Of course, I did not repeat the national service for the reason of not marrying a Southerner or for any other reason. My uncle's position is that, as a youth corps member, I ought to have used the opportunity to promote national unity by marrying a Southerner.

From all available evidence, promoting national unity, one of the fundamental objectives of the Nigerian State as enshrined in Chapter 2 of the Constitution, is no longer of concern to the military bred new breed in control of political power in Nigeria today. The palpable fear of losing power has transformed them into third terms, confederates, resource controllers, power rotators, not between the best of the North and the best of the South but between them. These beneficiaries of Nigerian military's corruption legacy are now telling us that we either allow them to continue enjoying their unjust, undemocratic and corrupt access to power and wealth or Nigeria must go.

In my book, *June 12 and the Cultured North*, I tried to state what I understand Nigeria to mean, and I will take the liberty of quoting extensively from the book: In the introductory chapter of the book, this is what I wrote under the sub-title: "The North—Putting all the Cards on the Table."

"It is important to quickly point out that the 'Nigeria Project' is not totally a Northern concern. In their self-delusion of grandeur, some Northerners think it is. They always forget there is the East and the West; and there is the rest of Africa. The Nigeria Project is not a Nigerian Project. It is an African Project. The survival of Nigeria as a democratic, peaceful, united and stable country is no longer a matter for the domestic politics of Nigeria. It is a matter for the domestic politics of all African countries.

Having made this point, I proceeded in the book to de-

Nigeria's domestic political complexion.

"Here the focus is on the North. But the East and the West, the other two vital parts of Nigeria, also played their roles. What accounts for the prevailing state of backwardness in Nigerian politics can, to a large extent, be traced directly to the refusal of political leaders in the East and the West to allow the politics of ideas to reign. In the West (excluding the Mid-West), it is *Afenifere* or nothing. In the East (plus the Mid-West), it is survival of the fittest as it is just muscle and money and everything can wait.

Therefore, to get a complete picture of Nigeria's political landscape, we must combine the multi-dimensional sophistication of the North with the parochialism of the West and the unprincipled violence of the East. This is the stark reality facing Nigeria today. This means to be able to build a Nigerian nation, this reality has to be reconstructed. The cultured North has provided the first re-building block—return to the politics of ideas. To put the first rebuilding blocks right, socialists in the North must link up with their Eastern and Western counterparts to form a strong socialist party. The same goes for the conservatives, communists, monarchists, liberals, liberal democrats, environmentalists, republicans, etc.

In the last chapter, I made this point under the last item subtitled, 'The Last Word.' Because of the relevance of the issues raised in this part of the book to the subject of this piece, its contents are reproduced here in full:

"On a final note, before we sing the song of the future, the new Nigerian leaders led by the President-elect, General Olusegun Obasanjo, the National Assembly and the Nigerian judiciary led by His Lordship, the Chief Justice, must venture out a new line as a matter of necessity. In 1979, the people of Kaduna and Kano states voted for change and a lot changed for the better within a space of a few years: In 1993, Nigerians, on a nation wide scale, voted for change. The change never came. As a result, Nigeria is today on the brink. In 1999, just out of prison, General Obasanjo was bankrolled into power by the same power block, which stood in the way of change in 1993."

Unfortunately, President Obasanjo's obsession with power and the past prevented him from even understanding the nature of the national survival tasks he assumed in 1999. Instead of freeing himself from the stranglehold of corrupt money power in the national interest and at any price, he simply set out to build his own greedy and corrupt resource controllers to replace the ones he inherited. According to President Obasanjo's son, it is these Obasanjo-bred resource controllers who are holding him hostage and are telling him to declare himself life President and wind up Nigeria.

Dr Gbenga Obasanjo should

his father these people are holding hostage, but the entire good people of Nigeria. Dr Gbenga should also understand that his father is a willing hostage and it is not too late for him to free himself by abandoning the self-destructive course he set for himself since the rigging of the 2003 general elections.

One of the clearest evidence that Obasanjo has abandoned Nigeria after the 2003 general elections is the appointment of Femi Fani-Kayode as a presidential aide. Before the appointment was made, the President ought to have known that Fani-Kayode does not believe there is Nigeria and he believes that Northerners are 'habitually lazy,' 'poverty-stricken' and 'barely educated' and have, all the same, succeeded in colonising the South and turning Southerners into 'perpetual slaves.' For all we know, there may be more people who share Fani-Kayode's views holding key positions in the federal government.

The good news for Nigeria is that because the Obasanjo-bred greedy elite can no longer afford to hide their matter-of-life-and-death desperation, even the least informed Nigerian has become aware of their determination to take Nigeria down with them and will, therefore, never agree to die for them. Furthermore, there are new evidence, which began to manifest themselves immediately after the 2003 general elections to strengthen the resolve of Nigerians opposed to the machinations of today's Nigeria-must-go campaigners.

We should remind ourselves that it is the same barefaced election riggers of 2003 that have transformed into false Yoruba nationalists, defenders of the interests of oil and gas communities, defenders of Northern and Southern interests and who are today telling Nigeria that it either allows them to rule her forever or they will throw her into the dustbin of history.

The people of Nigeria should also fully understand that the Obasanjo-bred are today desperately threatening to wind up the Nigerian state because they understand that, in the new world, there is no hiding place for those who breached the trust of their people particularly with the coming into force of the United Nations Anti-Corruption Treaty.

In response, Nigeria should tell these crooks in power that "the labour of our heroes past shall never be in vain" and that it would transform into "a nation where peace and justice shall reign." These corrupt third terms, resource controllers, confederates, power rotators, and enemies of Nigeria and Africa should also be told that there are millions of Nigerians who have pledged, without any reservations whatsoever, "to be faithful, loyal and honest" and "to serve Nigeria with all" their strength and "to defend her unity and uphold her honour and glory."

Finally, the Nigeria-must-go campaigners should be reminded that these millions of Nigerians have also sought God's intervention.

Aliyu Umaru Esq. resides at No. 18, Muhammadu Buhari

HAJJ

Mallam!
Every disappointment
is a blessing. God willing
You will make it next
year.

Hope Mantuwa
will not head the
team again



YOUR LETTERS

No sharp practices in FCT land sales

The Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) is constrained to issue this rejoinder to the claims in your front page story with the above caption published on Tuesday, January 10, 2006.

You claimed that dust is being raised by the activities of one Mr. Jimi Lawal who is allegedly a front for the Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Malam Nasir Ahmed el-Rufa'i in alleged land deals. Without appearing to be doing so, you cleverly made an inference to the publication by another national daily that a huge sum of money (about N1 billion) being proceeds from the sale of federal government houses has allegedly been pilfered by the consultant.

The overall picture your story created is that land administration in the FCT under the leadership of the current minister is still dogged by sharp practices and lacks transparency contrary to the tenets of transparency and accountability of this administration.

We wish to put the records straight, and to state unequivocally that the administration of the FCT under the leadership of Malam Nasir Ahmed el-Rufa'i is not involved in any sorts of deals, whether on land, or anything else.

Since his assumption of office, the previous corruption-ridden land administration has now been made transparent and computerized through the Abuja Geographic Information Systems (AGIS).

All available plots of land have now been captured in the data. Any interested applicant can fill application forms, even on line, accompanied by standard application fees at AGIS. Both rich and poor are now proud owners of plots of land.

Illegal ownership of plots has been dealt with as they have been revoked, while in order to ensure that forgery of Certificate of Occupancy (C of O) is eliminated, valid C of Os have been re-certified with the new embossed certificates.

AGIS had undertaken regular public announcements in the newspapers and the electronic media on the recertification and new allocation as part of the transparency initiative. So, there is nothing that is shrouded in secrecy concerning land transactions in the FCT.

As a matter of fact, so far 60,000 plots of land have been approved. Unlike in the past, where land administration in the FCT had been a resource drain due to large scale corruption, it

has now become a major revenue earner for the FCT as last year alone it generated N4 billion into the FCT treasury.

For your information, the FCT Minister under the law has discretion to approve allocation of plots of land to deserving organisations and individuals, and has not abused that privilege. Therefore, the claim that he needs "fronts" to cover for alleged "land deals" is totally ridiculous and infantile.

The said Jimi Lawal was only a consultant who was hired to handle some aspects of the sale of government houses, and his contract has since elapsed.

We also wish to state categorically that neither N1 billion nor any other sum of money has been stolen from the sales proceeds of the federal government houses. It is important you note that for all transactions, cash is not allowed.

All monies paid by prospective buyers are made out in bank drafts in favour of the federal government and remitted into dedicated

bank accounts. Besides, only the FCTA's directors and treasury and administration are the joint and sole signatories to the FCTA's bank accounts even the minister has no access. So far, N7.75 billion has been realised from the sales of government houses.

On the sale of the 32,000 federal government houses, as far as we know the process has been transparent and equitable, that the word "sleaze" in your story which is obviously an overkill cannot truthfully describe the exercise.

It is on record that out of the 32,000 housing units, 17,000 letters of offer to purchase (about 70 per cent) have been issued to civil servants, given this picture, can a petition by two civil servants that they have been purportedly denied their houses, represent any large scale manipulation of the process to short-change civil servants as you alluded?

Besides, just as the Special Assistant to the Minister on Economic Matters,

Dr. Abdu Mukhtar explained at a press briefing covered by your reporters, all complaints are routinely looked into. These ones will also be so treated and the findings made known as there has never been any attempt to push complaints under the carpet.

Your claim that the "FCTA has to flush out 25 members of the reconstituted verification sub-committee under the ad-hoc committee on the sale of houses for allegedly demanding sums ranging between N40,000 to N80,000 as bribe before issuing letters of offer for each house slated for sale" was also unprofessional.

At the briefing, Dr. Mukhtar clearly stated that the committee's secretariat was reconstituted "for the purpose of improving service delivery, and not on account of any sharp practices or bribery taking by any of the staff." So why did your reporters make the linkage between 25 staff being redeployed and the FCTA saying it did that because they were caught

taking bribes, when in fact, the FCTA never said so? This kind of gerrymandering by such a respected medium as the Daily Trust is really unfortunate.

It is also untrue that the Minister ordered that Jimi Lawal should be shown the door "unceremoniously", his contract as a consultant just like that of many others simply elapsed. Your claim that his whereabouts still remains a mystery on account of that is simply childish.

Given these checks and structure, it is impossible for Jimi Lawal or anyone else to defraud government over the sales proceeds. We wish to thank you for the opportunity to state our own side of the story, and to urge you to ensure that your medium should avail itself of the virtues of investigative journalism, and be more painstaking in searching for facts.

Amina Salihu, Special Assistant (Information & Strategy) to the FCT Minister, Abuja.

Re-BON's merger rip-off

Our attention has been drawn to a letter captioned above, purportedly written by one Ibrahim Isya Akpu of Akpu ward, Kano and published in the January 5, 2006 edition of Daily Trust newspaper.

The author of the letter insinuated that in spite of its contribution to the merger in the Unity Bank Group in terms of share-

holders' fund and assets, "Bank of the North Limited has no slot for any of its middle ranking management, as a condition to joining the Unity Bank Group, and has only two slots for non-executive directors."

Contrary to the foregoing, the Merger Implementation Agreement signed on December 21, 2005 between the Unity Bank Group and Bank of the

North Limited (BONL)/ New Africa Bank Plc (NAB) amongst other things, allow for a review of the organogram and representation at the Board and top Management levels of the Unity Bank Group on completion of our due diligence on Bank of the North Limited and New Africa Bank Plc. In the interim, Bank of the North Limited and New

Africa Bank Plc provided three representatives each in the Unity Bank Group Committee of Directors, the highest decision-making body in the group.

In fact, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has in its December 22, 2005 letter granting Approval-In-Principle for the merger reaffirmed the need for the view of the organogram and board representation.

Consequently, the insinuation captured in the said letter is baseless and unfounded. It is hoped that those who desire to air their views on the merger will seek to acquire credible and accurate information from the bank before going to press.

Baffa B. Muhammad Head, Corporate Affairs, BON Limited, No. 2, Zaria Road, Kano.

The imperial cities o

Always without formulating the concept, I had based my sense of being in the world, partly on an unreasoned conviction that certain areas of the earth's surface contained more magic than others."

These were the words of Paul Bowles, a long time resident of Tanger, and arguably Morocco's most celebrated expatriate, whose statement was said to have been inspired by his first glimpse of the North African country. Bowles had a visceral attraction to Morocco because of the adorable architecture of most of its towns, cities and villages. The Arab-Islamic interior decors of the Moroccan houses are no less attractive.

I drew the title of this piece from a book written in French by Ahmed Abou Basma, to de-

By Ahmed I. Shekarau, Deputy Editor, who was in Morocco

picture the monarchical structure of the North African country, the people's life style and their Arab-Islamic architecture.

The kingdom of Morocco holds a unique position in contemporary African history. Since 788, about a century after the Arab conquest of North Africa, successive Moorish dynasties began to rule in that country. This particularly gave rise to the imperial stature for which it is known today. There were, of course, several attempts to colonise Morocco, with the resistance to such European colonial ambitions, reputed to be fiercer than the experience in many other countries of the world. For instance, in the 16th century, the Sa'adi monarchy, particularly under

Ahmed Al-Mansouri (1578-1603), is said to have repelled the European invaders. However, in 1860, Spain successfully occupied part of northern Morocco (including the controversial posts of Septa and Melilla) and also captured a settlement in the far South of the country, called Villa Cisneros (now Dakhla) in 1884.

Indeed, due to its geographical location at the gateway of Africa and the junction of the Mediterranean Sea and Atlantic Ocean, several other conquests followed. For instance, Spain's occupation of the northern part of the country in 1860, was followed by almost half a century of trade rivalry among European powers, that saw Morocco's sovereignty steadily eroded. In 1912, the French imposed a protectorate over the country, while

Spain continued to expand its influence in other parts.

Recently, this reporter went on a five-day working visit to two of the beautiful cities in Morocco-Casablanca and Rabat-between November 28 and December 2, 2005. The tour was supposed to extend to Marrakech, said to be the most beautiful city and tourist centre in the North African country. But this was not possible due to time constraints.

But the spectacular scenery of the few tourist attractions visited, was very splendid and remarkable. Although the old but beautiful edifice of ancient Morocco is said to have already given way to the modern Arab-Islamic architecture, being developed over the past five decades, the country still has in some of its tourist attractions a lot of the rich architecture of the pre-colonial era. Today, Morocco is said to harbour "the richest and most remarkable urban architectural heritage" in that region of Africa.

This reporter gathered that all a first time visitor needs to

of the inner courtyards and their facades of ceramics, also bear witness to the splendour of the town houses of imperial Morocco. The interior decors are extremely beautiful, though less ostentatious, such that the poor in small towns and villages, by their own standards, tend to decorate their houses in similar fashion with those of the rich and affluent. Indeed, it is a matter of fashion in any Arab clime. And the Arab-Islamic style of architectural designs of the typical Moroccan house gives the most striking expression of a culture and a society that makes the private residence and its inner courtyard one of the most valued features of the town.

Daily Trust learnt that the layout and architectural styles

are similar to those of most Arabian houses. So also the floor plan of the typical family house. It is similar throughout the Maghreb, whether in a palace, an estate or a modest working-class home, a town house or rural dwelling. In such abodes, rooms lead off an inner courtyard or garden.

Apart from the traditional Arab structures, however, Moroccans today also live in French-designed and Spanish-designed art décor houses such as in Casablanca, Rabat and Tanger, or in the suburbs of these cities. (Casablanca is a city established by the Spanish, while Tanger is reputed to be an international town, also established several decades ago by 12 European colonialists).

As a contemporary of Nigeria, particularly independent nations, Morocco has infrastructural facilities that served as growth and development. It has a modern enhances movement of tourists in all regions today generates millions of dollars in foreign exchange for Morocco. The country covers a total area



geria's size. But the North African country is about one sixth of Nigeria with its population estimated as at July last year) as against an estimate of 128,771,988 at about the same time.



Opinion

Targets and Nigeria's banking sector

Undoubtedly, the Nigerian banking sector has come a long way since independence. In fact, it is one of the few examples of functionality in a society dominated by chaos. A number of factors have synergistically contributed towards this success. These would include; ambitious founders and bank personnel, consumers, regulatory authorities, readily available capital, and the adoption of appropriate technology. One thing all of these factors have in common is the fact that they all have a human element to them; either they are humans or they are driven by humans. It is therefore logical to state that the banking sector is dependent upon its people. It also follows that banks operating within the sector rely heavily on the intangible asset (human capital) to succeed. Although, I personally do not find Human Resources (HR) a fascinating subject, some happenings within our banking sector have propelled me to write this article.

Growing up with my mother, a woman for whom I have immense respect, exposed me to the life of a typical Nigerian banker at a very tender age. In other words, I have a clear picture of the ensuing discussion! She left home 6.30am in the morning and she didn't dare return before 8pm as the traffic on Third Mainland Bridge on Ikorodu road wouldn't permit. I admired my mother's energy despite being a child with a great deal of energy myself. I asked her many questions regarding the operations of a bank, from interest rates to her salary. I was however too young to understand her motivation and didn't pester her too much since I even had some of my own preconceived ideas. I admired her so much that I nursed my childhood dream of becoming a banker until it became a reality.

Indeed a stark reality it has become. I dreamt that one day I would become like Mummy, I would dress smartly in expensive suits, and earn a fat salary. God blessed me so much so that I was able to obtain highly relevant degrees from reputable institutions. For me there was no obstacle in the way. Getting into a leading bank was like natural progression. Today, I am a true daughter of my mother and expectedly, I can now see things through the bird's eye. A week in banking and I say to mummy, "what was your motivation?" She explained that it was my first proper job and it will take some time before I got used to it. Things would be much better one day after I settle in. That long awaited day never came as the state of affairs in the industry was not the way mummy imagined. The compass of my intellectual curiosity is now pointing in other directions, far away from banking. The reason for this simply put... unreasonable targets.

(Gooder, 1992) defines targets as imposed standards, intended as a means of encouraging change. Management by targets is a modern form of the famous Management by Objectives (MBO) which was popularised by Peter Drucker in 1954. The process involves joint identification of common goals by superior and subordinate managers, defining each individual's major area of responsibility in terms of the results expected, using these measures as guides for operating the unit and assessing the contribution of each of its members. It is easily deducible that targets are not an end in themselves but rather they are a means to an end. They are a tool for concentrating attention where it is

By Jameela Ichalla
jemila47@hotmail.com

needed. MBO is instructive and there is an emphasis in measuring results. MBO has been implemented with mixed results in various organisations across the globe. It is no surprise that various scholars and practitioners (Kelly, 1983, Deming, 1986, Tribus, Goldratt, Seddon, 2003) including Drucker himself have discounted its effectiveness. Edward Deming proposed 14 points of management which are commonly referred to as the ten commandments of management. Their proven effectiveness lay in the fact that they formed the basis for the transformation of post war Japan and the American industry. Deming explicitly states in points 10 & 11: "Eliminate slogans, exhortations, and targets for the work force asking for zero defects and new levels of productivity" and "Eliminate work standards (quotas), substitute leadership. Eliminate MBO, Eliminate Numerical goals, substitute leadership". Critics argue that MBO is analogous to driving a car

by the rear view mirror while targets are ubiquitous and capricious. They fulfil the bureaucratic requirements of reporting and are imposed with authority by people who are generally detached from the work. In an average Nigerian retail bank, management is responsible for setting these priorities.

Proponents of the use of targets argue that a great disservice has been done to this great tool of management with the ability to deliver breakthrough results. Whether targets are responsible for delivering breakthrough results in the banking sector, I can't say. I can only say what is backed up by evidence; the fact that banks are now compromising quality for quantity. A high degree of unprofessionalism is displayed by the so called "human capital". As Deming rightly put forth; "targets increase the possibility of making people focus on the wrong things". Bankers now place more emphasis on achieving their targets rather than upholding the values of their banks. They would even condescend to engaging in immoral acts in exchange for patronage. The

primary aim becomes to please the boss. Efforts are concentrated towards securing deposits of billions of naira; the imposed customer therefore becomes management. Professional ethics has been given a massive blow in the face. For clarity purposes, male bankers are as guilty as their female counterparts. At last, a world where gender equality prevails, it is a man's world everywhere but banking.

I personally support a shift in emphasis from the sole use of paper qualifications as the basis for career progression in Nigeria. A combination of factors should be used instead. Ideally, these should include; academic achievement, on-the-job performance, dedication to duty, alignment of individual goals to organisational goals, length of service etc. My view is in agreement with the concept of MBO to the extent that I have included performance as one of the criteria for employee appraisal. Like Drucker, I stress the need for participation, systemic appraisals and rewards tied to performance. The point where Drucker and I part is precisely where Deming and I agree; Performance Management Technique. I question the value of targets and can categorically state that they should not only be reduced (as the CBN recommends) but totally discontinued. In other words, to do less of a wrong thing is to change nothing at all. MBO is a sine qua non of all management; therefore there is nothing so unique about the existence of objectives that demand their use as the basis for management systems. In summary, objectives always exist and are always managed, why all the fuss?

"Organisations are often so consumed by the pressures to achieve their short term performance targets that taking the time to plan for the future is a luxury they can't afford" (Goldratt). This is not hear say, I heard this conversation with my own ears. A banker saying to a customer: "Oga please help me, I just need your money to stay in this bank till the 31st of December so I can meet my target". Such unfair pressure on professionals encourages the achievement of short term at the detriment of long term objectives. This is unthinkable in civilised societies and is indeed a strong justification of Deming's referral of MBO as management by fear. Exhortations only create adversarial relationships, thereby hindering cooperation and teamwork. Perhaps, overemphasis on achieving short term targets (acquiring new customers) is a plausible explanation of why marketing staff neglect a core principle of marketing (relationship marketing to existing customers). I join the likes of Charles Soludo to restore sanity to the sector. The likes of Jim Ovia, Tony Elumelu, and Cecilia Ibru should stop turning a blind eye to these happenings as the consequences of these actions are on the way. I agree that organisational prosperity should be the priority of every executive; nevertheless, I resent the method used in achieving this prosperity. Nigeria is the biggest potential market in Africa; aggressive marketing of financial products and not financial people would yield lasting results.

Ichalla, is with the Brighton Business School, UK.

Gbenga Obasanjo: I stand by my story

These are really interesting times in Nigeria. The entire nation is already inundated with reactions over a published conversation between Gbenga Obasanjo and I. This reaction would not dwell on individual, official and legal reactions to what is obviously a revealing story.

The interested public should note however that negative and threatening reactions to published stories that exhibit unbearable slant towards the power elite has become the hallmark of the Nigerian leadership. Whenever it suits them, they made journalists the scapegoat, sometimes going to the extent of assassinating them in their line of duty when other ways of intimidation fails.

Precisely on December 15th 2005, as I was engaging on the last leg of my trip to Nigeria. (This was so because of my 'adopted' mode of travel, which requires that I travel a certain route when visiting or leaving Nigeria). As I was leaving my hotel in Cotonou, I noticed there was a fellow dressed in *Kaftan* (popularly known as "Senegalese") also leaving the same time as me. This was a bulky fellow, who obviously was a Nigerian. I disregarded the person and hired a vehicle to take me to the Nigerian border, in tow with two of my friends who came down from Lagos to help with my travel.

Shortly after we left the car park at the NOVOTEL Hotel in Cotonou, I saw there was a car following behind us, also

apparently headed in the same direction. Though I was a bit curious, it didn't bother me too much. As we made to cross the border to the Nigerian side, a tout who pointed to an empty desk across from us stopped us. There, I saw a person in mufti with his legs conveniently crossed on the wooden table. He beckoned on us to come over. Since it is a regular occurrence with Nigerian officials to harass travelers for money at the border, I decided I was going to confront him and try to report my encounter with the Seme border officials. I went over to the desk and the officer asked where we were coming from, he started ranting about how he was upset that we didn't pay attention to his "man" - the tout.

He said this problem would have been solved if I had talked to his "man". I protested to him that I did not know how to relate to touts at the border. And since he too wasn't in uniform, I could not tell the difference. He got upset and said I should surrender my passport, I complied and he looked at it and said I should talk with him otherwise he was going to delay me for a while. Just as I continued protesting his attitude, the bulky fellow who was in the car that followed me from NOVOTEL Hotel showed up and started castigating my colleagues and me. I was upset because he did not care to listen to us. He looked at the officer and asks him to let us go. The officers were all falling over themselves to attend to him. He then signed an exercise book at

Omoyele Sowore

the border and handed his passport to the customs. They didn't look at it. They just gave him back his passport and also returned ours and ask us to go!

In curiosity, I looked at the book he signed and saw his last name: "Obasanjo". I greeted him as he made to turn away; I introduced myself and explained that I would love to speak with him. As soon as he knew who I was, he went off on me and complained about how he felt about our reports regarding his father's government and public officials in Nigeria.

Since I was always in interested in reporting the truth, I asked if he would like to share his views about our reports and Nigeria as a whole with me. He declined and walked away from us, saying he wished me luck and admonished us not to be emotional in our reports.

I left the scene and started on a journey into Lagos Nigeria by foot in search of a vehicle to take us to Lagos. His car passed us; it was a dark colored SUV with his driver, a police escort in mufti and another fellow on his left side (whom he later introduced to me as his cousin).

Suddenly he stopped, wound down his windows and asked if I would want a ride to Lagos. At first, I rejected the offer because I was unhappy with his paternalistic behavior at the border. Also I was a little concerned about my personal safety. On a second thought and

due to his persistence I accepted the offer simply because it would present an opportunity for me to ask him nagging questions some of which he already started talking about at the border post. So, I asked if we could talk on the way to Lagos and he said "sure".

In all fairness to him and what appears to me to be an act of kindness, he personally came down from his car and help load my bags into the trunk of his car. But then the car could not take all of us three- at which time he requested that he would only take me. I rejected that request and insisted that he at least allow one of my friends join in the car with me else, I had to turn down his offer for a ride. He looked into the back of the car and he found a spot for one of my friends. I quickly turned to the third fellow gave him some money, asked him to take the license plates of the car, and instructed him to call a number in case he doesn't hear from me in two days!

Going on with Gbenga to Lagos I did not mince words about my intentions; I sat sandwiched between him and his cousin. He was on my right side. I immediately started the conversation from where we stopped at the border. To my chagrin, Gbenga was very frank and candid, and in a way that "evinced some patriotism" as stated by his lawyer. He spoke fluently and eloquently about sundry issues as I put questions to him one after the other; I have reported the conversations in the

most accurate, matured and professional manner. I could not include so many unprintable things he said because I didn't find it necessary. It was a conversation solely undertaken between him and I, there was never a time when anyone else present in the car intervened, except when he turned to his cousin to buttress his point about his impending divorce.

He knew that I am not a 'wannabe' reporter; I introduced my trade to him and he could identify my style from our published reports. For those reasons, we didn't have any 'private' discussions, it was not necessary. It was a conversation that had far reaching political connotations and ramifications hence the weight of the output on the entire Nigerian society today!

We all know that the current regime brings their families and baggage into office in ruling Nigeria. The argument about the family's privacy is a convenient fallacy that is untenable, they should be reminded that they have consistently used the apparatus of government to defend their families as at when it suits them.

Anyone who knows Lagos traffic and the condition of Nigerian roads could tell that if you drove from Seme border to the car park of Sheraton Hotels in Ikeja, Lagos you would have quite a distance covered and a lot of time on your hands. Within this period, we never stopped conversing. His cousin, his police orderly, driver and my friend who sat at the back of his car

would attest to this, if they haven't been intimidated already! I could understand that Gbenga Obasanjo became lily-livered due to untold pressure brought to bear on him by his father's office and the decadent Nigeria political establishment since this story broke.

On my part, since I started news/report writing I do not miss an opportunity to bring truthful and undiluted information to Nigerians or the rest of the world even under the most inconvenient circumstances. Also, there are times when one has to choose between being frightened by professional hounds and scarecrows and the interest of a battered and helpless people, such as Nigerians of today.

I understand too well, that when public service of this proportion is offered one's nation state it is bound to have repercussions, there is always a scapegoat sought by the ruling class as evidenced by the frenzy of denials and pressure that since followed the release of this particular story. I urge Nigerians to look at the story from the substance contained in it and ignore the antics of lawyers; spin-doctors and paid public hirelings whose job is to scare the rest of us with their well-known semantics.

These reactions reveal to us, once again, that the current regime operates both a dysfunctional presidency as well as a dysfunctional family.

For the sake of history, truth, sacrifice and the love for my country, I stand by this story!

Thank you!

Omoyele Sowore, New York, USA.

Trust International

Africa

Liberian cabinet posts announced



President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia

Newly inaugurated Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has announced the first appointments to her government.

They include a former World Bank colleague in the key job of finance minister, and a rival presidential candidate at the Education Ministry.

Africa's first elected female leader is an economist and in political exile held jobs with the IMF and World Bank.

Bringing in Antoinette Sayeh to run the Finance Ministry has delighted international financial institutions.

The World Bank representative in Monrovia, Mats Karlsson, said Ms Sayeh was an excellent economist who would bring absolute probity

to the job of finance minister, and who understood the operations of the international community.

In her inaugural address, immediately after being sworn in as president, Mrs Johnson-Sirleaf pledged to fight corruption, and committed Liberia to a controversial economic plan, which will entail a high level of foreign supervision of its finances.

I am excited by the potential of what I represent - the aspirations and expectations of women in Liberia, African women and women all over the world

In that speech, she also urged her former opponents to join her in developing the country.

Now she has brought one of them, Joseph Korto, into her government as minister of education, a post for which he

is also qualified by a long career as an educator.

Other appointments include the human rights activist, Kofi Woods, who campaigned against the excesses of her predecessor, Charles Taylor, at labour, and a journalist turned businessman, Willis Knuckles, at public works.

Other appointments - including the foreign and home affairs ministers - will be announced later.

More Kenyans face food shortages

The number of Kenyans in need of food aid has nearly doubled to almost four million, Kenya's government has said.

Special Programmes Minister John Munyes told AFP news agency the figure has "shot up" by at least 1m because other areas were affected by the drought.

A UK minister has pledged a further \$5.3m in aid on a visit to the north-east, where many face hunger.

Meanwhile, aid agency Oxfam says "serious flaws" in food distribution networks are putting people at risk.

It says a lack of UN resources has led to the government setting up a parallel system to supply extra food.

"Instead of a united, efficient and co-ordinated response, we are left with a fractured, inefficient and wasteful system," Oxfam's Paul Smith-Lomas says.

Last week, the BBC reported that farmers in western Kenya were ignoring an order to sell their successful maize crop to the government to help the hungry in the drought-hit parts of the country.

In December, Kenya appealed for \$150m in aid to help save 2.5m threatened by the famine in the north-east.

We don't want Kenya to become another Niger, where in 2005 donation only increased when people started dying

British International Development Secretary Hilary Benn on a visit to Wajir, the area at the centre of the food shortages, announced an extra £3m (\$5.3m) in emergency relief, bringing the total amount of British help to £12.7m.

"What I have seen today in this hospital in Wajir convinces me that there are unacceptable levels of severe malnutrition in Kenya and urgent action is needed by all parties," Mr Benn said, calling on other donors to come forward.

Oxfam says that an average of one child a week dies

in Wajir's therapeutic feeding centre alone.

One third of the British funding will go towards transporting food, the other towards providing water.

The drought affecting Kenya has been declared a "national disaster" by President Mwai Kibaki.

The United Nations World Food Programme says aid agencies are short of cash to buy food from areas with surplus harvests.

"Without new donations, WFP will run out of food to distribute in drought affected areas by the end of February," WFP spokesman Peter Smerdon told AP news agency.

"Our previous warning and appeals have sadly received little response... we don't want Kenya to become another Niger, where in 2005 donation only increased when people started dying," he said.

The WFP has warned that 11 million people across the Horn of Africa now need food aid.

It said the number in need of urgent aid in southern Ethiopia had risen to 1.75m.

Africa warn on 'flying coffins'

African countries and airlines running unsafe planes face a crackdown from the African Civil Aviation Commission.

Nearly 400 people died last year in air accidents in Africa, which has a crash rate six times the world average.

At the same time, Nigeria has grounded a third domestic airline. Nigeria's president launched a task force on air safety after two major crashes in 2005.

AFCAC president Tshepo Pheege says they will name and shame airlines operating what he calls "flying coffins".

"One of the most important things in choosing an airline is how safe it is," he said. "You don't want to fly out as a passenger and come back as cargo."

Last year, 15 air accidents recorded in Africa killed almost 400 people.

Africa accounts for only 4% of global air traffic but 27% of all air crashes.

More than 200 died in two accidents in Nigeria last year

The AFCAC, a specialised agency of the African Union, will be following up on

whether their recommendations are being adhered to.

Mr Pheege said lack of transparency among many African states resulted in safety concerns being ignored.

On Monday, the Nigerian presidential task force created to improve aircraft safety grounded Executive Airline Services: the third Nigerian carrier to be targeted under new safety rules.

A spokesman for the company said the order related to administrative, rather than technical irregularities, and flights would soon resume.

Human rights group calls for former Senegalese PM's release

The Senegal-based African Rally for the Defence of Human Rights (RADDHO) on Monday called for the release of Senegal's former Prime Minister Idrissa Seck from detention.

"Former Prime Minister Idrissa Seck should be released on the ground of presumption of innocence because he was not found guilty. Otherwise his detention becomes unfair, arbitrary and unacceptable," RADDHO said.

More than 200 people were killed in two air disasters in Nigeria within a month last year.

Two airlines which had been ordered to stop flying have since had the restriction lifted.

These include Sosoliso, the owner of a plane which crashed in Port Harcourt in December, killing 117 people.

Aside from the Nigerian accidents, the biggest culprits in 2005 were Russian-built planes, Mr Pheege said.

In a statement issued in Dakar, its base, the NGO said that it did not understand why the President Abdoulaye Wade's government found the need to keep Seck in preventive custody on the grounds of "offences against national safety and defence" and malpractices in the building works in Thies (70 kms from Dakar), the country's second city.

Seck, who is mayor of Thies, his hometown, is also charged with writing letters

from his prison cell, an act considered as illegal.

According to RADDHO, Seck as a former premier, should absolutely benefit from the presumption of innocence as did all the other believed accomplices who were freed.

"It is hard to understand this unbalanced policy..." RADDHO noted.

Seck, who was tried before the High Court in the Thies building scandal, has been in custody in the Rebeuss jailhouse in Dakar since July 2004.

SA to seize 'corrupt' asset

The South African government is to attempt to seize assets worth more than \$3m from businessman Schabir Shaik.

The case will be heard before the Durban High Court on Wednesday.

Mr Shaik is on bail after being convicted in July last year of having a generally corrupt relationship with ex-deputy president Jacob Zuma.

Mr Shaik was found guilty of receiving money from the

French arms company, Thomson-CSF, to facilitate a deal worth more than \$4bn.

In the asset seizure case, the state is expected to argue that the assets in question were linked to Mr Shaik's corrupt relationship with the former deputy president.

Evidence aired in the Shaik trial prompted President Thabo Mbeki to dismiss Mr Zuma from his duties as deputy president.

Mr Zuma was subsequently charged with corruption.

Trust International

Middle East & Asia

Deputy expected to take over Saddam trial

The chief judge who resigned from Saddam Hussein's trial amid claims of government interference is expected to be replaced by his deputy, the top Iraqi investigator in the case said Tuesday.

Judge Raid Juhi, who investigated Saddam before his trial started but is not one of those trying the deposed Iraqi leader, said the court was set up under a law stipulating the chief judge's deputy would take over for him if needed. Saad al-Hamash is the second-ranking member of the five-judge tribunal headed by Rizgar Mohammed Amin.

The tribunal said Amin wanted to quit for "personal reasons" and not because of government pressure. His resignation was not expected to prevent the trial from resuming Jan. 24 as scheduled.

Also Tuesday, violence flared in Baghdad and in the northern city of Kirkuk, with gunmen killing at least eight Iraqis, including a senior army commander and his brother.

Col. Hussein Shiaa, commander of the 2nd Battalion of the Iraqi Army's 4th Brigade, and his brother were abducted Sunday when they

were leaving their base in Mahmoudiya, about 20 miles south of Baghdad, said army intelligence officer Capt. Ibrahim Abdullah. Their bodies were found riddled with bullets Tuesday in western Baghdad's dangerous al-Baiyaa district.

A police lieutenant also was gunned down in his car while driving through al-Baiyaa on Tuesday, Lt. Mutaz Salahuddin said. Two hours later, gunmen shot and killed three more men — including an auto mechanic and his son — in the same area.

In Kirkuk, masked gunmen killed two people and wounded three in attacks on the regional headquarters of Iraq's anti-corruption Integrity Commission and the nearby offices of the Kurdistan People's Party, said police Capt. Farhad al-Talabani. Police suspect the attacks were linked.

Kirkuk is a hotbed of ethnic tensions claimed by Arabs, Kurds and Turkomen.

Two policewomen were abducted in eastern Baghdad's Sadr City while waiting for a bus, said police Lt. Laith Abdul Al said.

In comments aimed at

curbing the violence, President Jalal Talabani predicted Iraq's most prominent Sunni Arab political group would form part of a national unity government once results of the December 15 election are announced. No date has been set for the release of the results.

He was speaking about the Sunni Arab Iraqi Accordance Front, whose leaders have been in talks on forming a national unity government with Talabani's Kurdish coalition and the Shiite United Iraqi Alliance, the religious bloc with that preliminary results show has a strong lead in the elections.

"We are keen that the government does not only include Kurds and Shiites but also the Accordance Front and other blocs," Talabani said at a news conference.

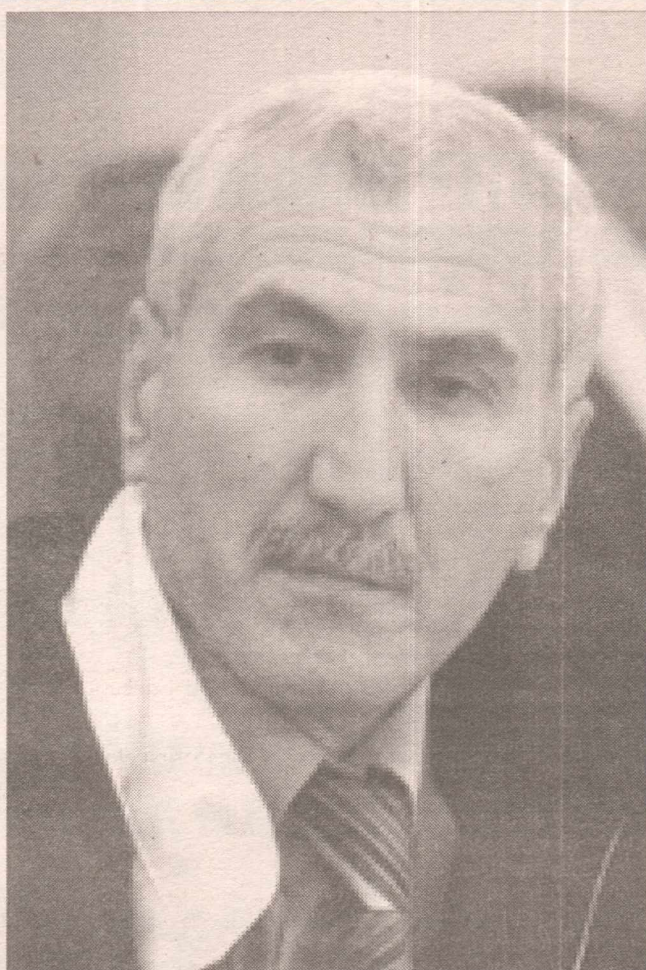
Sunni Arabs form the backbone of Iraq's rampant insurgency, and including them in the political process is seen as a way to try to defuse the violence. Shiite leaders need to form a coalition to be able to control the parliament.

The US military said its troops Monday shot and killed two Iraqis who failed to stop a tractor they were driving close to a checkpoint near Samarra. Lt. Col. Ed Loomis said the shootings happened after soldiers saw what appeared to be gunfire flashes coming from the vehicle.

In southern Iraq, the governor of Basra accused Iranian naval forces of killing one Iraqi sailor and capturing nine others during a skirmish Saturday near the Shatt al-Arab waterway, or Arvand River.

Gov. Mohammed al-Waeli said the clash occurred after an Iraqi navy ship spotted a suspicious merchant vessel flying an Iraqi flag and carrying smuggled Iraqi diesel. Al-Waeli claimed the merchant ship radioed Iranian forces for help and an Iranian navy ship attacked the Iraqi patrol.

"We denounce this aggression by the Iranian navy against our vessels inside Iraqi waters and we are making contacts with the Iranians to ensure the release of those who were captured," al-Waeli said.



Rizkar Mohammed Amin, the presiding judge of a five-judge tribunal overseeing the Saddam Hussein trial...

Iran 'detains' Iraqi coastguards

At least eight Iraqi coastguards have been detained by Iran after a clash on the Shatt al-Arab waterway which marks the Iran-Iraq border, officials say.

Basra Governor Muhammad al-Waili said the Iranian Navy had attacked the coastguards after they boarded a ship believed to be smuggling oil.

Mr Waili said one Iraqi coastguard was killed, but this was not confirmed by other Iraqi officials.

The Shatt al-Arab has long been a source of tension.

The commander of the Iraqi regional border force, Brig-Gen Abbas Musawi, called on Iran to free the men immediately.

"We call on the Iranian authorities to free the coastguards who were captured while conducting legitimate work on the Iraqi side of the

Shatt al-Arab," he told the AFP news agency.

The clash occurred when Iraqi coastguards boarded an Iranian boat, called Nur 1, smuggling oil 45km (27 miles) south of Basra, Gen Musawi said.

"When the guards mounted the boat, they saw that the captain was an Iranian. He alerted the Iranian forces by radio," he said.

Iranian navy speedboats then engaged the coastguards, he added.

Gen Musawi was unable to confirm the Basra governor's claim that one of the Iraqis had been killed.

Formed by the confluence of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, the Shatt al-Arab is Iraq's main access to the Gulf.

The exact line of the border in the Shatt al-Arab is disputed, and was one of the causes of the Iran-Iraq War in the 1980s.

The two countries signed the Algiers Accord in 1975, which established the border along the thalweg, or line following the deepest part of the river bed.

But, in September 1980 Saddam Hussein abrogated the treaty and invaded its neighbour.

Iran detained eight British servicemen for three days in 2004 after they allegedly strayed over the maritime border. The UK claimed the men were "forcibly escorted" into Iranian territorial waters.

Pakistan, India in talks over Kashmir

Top foreign ministry officials from India and Pakistan have begun a fresh round of talks in Delhi on the long-running Kashmir dispute.

The talks will review the progress of improving ties, particularly across the Line of Control (LoC) which divides Kashmir between the two nuclear rivals.

They are part of a peace process that began two years ago but has slowed down since then.

Little progress has been made on Kashmir which is claimed by both.

Pakistani Foreign Secretary Riaz Mohammed Khan said ahead of his meeting with his Indian counterpart, Shyam Saran, that he expected the talks to be positive.

"I don't want to prejudge the outcome of discussions at this stage," he told journalists in Delhi.

An Indian foreign ministry spokesman said that apart from Kashmir, confidence building measures (CBMs) and nuclear issues will also be taken up for discussion.

"During their discussion on Jammu and Kashmir, they will assess the progress of the confidence building measures across the LoC," the spokesman, Navtej Sarna, said.

Other things on the agenda include:

Despite steadily improving ties, India and Pakistan have failed to make any headway on resolving the Kashmir dispute.

Earlier this month, Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf called for a pull-out of Indian army troops from three cities in Indian-administered Kashmir.

While the proposal received some support in Kashmir, it was rejected by India which says it needs the troops to fight armed militants.

There has also been a sharp exchange between both countries over ongoing unrest in the Pakistani province of Balochistan.

India said it was worried about "spiralling violence" in gas-rich Balochistan, where Pakistani forces are battling armed tribal militants.

The comments evoked a strong response from Pakistan which asked Delhi to back off while simultaneously accusing India of supporting the militants.

India has denied the charge.

N. Korea's leader in Beijing

North Korean leader Kim Jong Il arrived in Beijing on Tuesday for talks with President Hu Jintao on resuming six-nation talks aimed at ending the North's nuclear development, South Korean media reported.

A 40-car convoy believed to be carrying the North Korean leader arrived Tuesday morning at a government guesthouse in Beijing, the Yonhap News Agency reported, citing unidentified witnesses and diplomatic sources.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan said he couldn't confirm whether Kim was in the country, though he said Hu planned to meet with at least one foreign leader over the next two days.

China usually announces visits by the secretive Kim only after he is on his way home.

Kim, who rarely ventures abroad, is believed to have crossed into China a week ago, with foreign reporters pursuing him every step of the way. It was his first known trip to his regime's only major ally since 2004. He also made a pair of visits to China in 2001.

Kim spent nearly a week in the heart of China's booming south, touring high-tech companies in a possible search for ideas to revive his country's laggard economy, according to South Korean and Hong Kong media.

Pro-Beijing newspapers in Hong Kong reported Monday that Kim's armored train left the southern city of Shenzhen near Hong Kong late Sunday for Beijing and a meeting with Hu.

According to Yonhap, Kim's train stopped at a station outside Beijing and he was driven into the capital.

The United States has urged Beijing to use its influence to convince Pyongyang to return to the six-party talks. They began in 2003 after the North admitted having nuclear weapons.

The talks have been stalled since November, with Pyongyang accusing the United States of a hostile attitude. The talks also include Russia, Japan and South Korea.

Israelis kill Palestinian militant

Israeli troops have killed a Palestinian militant during a clash in the West Bank town of Tulkarm.

An Israeli spokeswoman said the soldiers had first tried to arrest him, and he was killed only after he had fired at the troops.

The militant, 24-year-old Thabet Ayyadeh, was the leader of the Hamas military wing in Tulkarm.

A local Hamas political leader accused Israel of seeking to provoke bloodshed and said Hamas would not remain silent.

A self-imposed truce by some Palestinian militant groups expired this month, but correspondents say attacks have been kept largely in check ahead of Palestinian legislative elections on 25 January.

Hamas is expected to emerge from the election as a major power in the Palestinian parliament. The group's political leader in Tulkarm said there would be retaliation.

"This crime was committed while Hamas is abiding by the state of calm.

"The aim is to torpedo the calm. We won't remain silent," Rafat Nasif told the Reuters news agency.



The Presidency



NATIONAL SUMMIT ON

DISASTER MANAGEMENT & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS IN NIGERIA

THEME:

LEGISLATING FOR EFFECTIVE DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND PREVENTION IN NIGERIA

Organised by

The Presidency

&

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Committee on Disaster Management & Emergency Preparedness

■ Banquet Hall, Presidential Villa, Abuja

■ 24 - 27 January 2006

Overview of Summit

Nigeria has witnessed various types of disaster recently and the recurrence and magnitude of these calamities has become an issue of serious national concern. Disasters such as aircraft accidents, floods, landslides, tidal waves, coastal erosion, sand-storms, dust-storms, locust/Insect infestations, oil spillage and other man-made disasters have claimed many lives in Nigeria and rendered many homeless while dislocating economic activities. In spite of its vulnerability, Nigeria lacks a functional integrated national disaster management strategy and a comprehensive body of disaster management legislation. There is, therefore, an urgent need to develop a national strategy for effective emergency management and disaster preparedness.

The Summit is a national forum for capacity building targeted at policy makers, legislators, administrators, disaster/emergency managers and other stakeholders. The Summit will also provide occasion to develop a national disaster framework that incorporates the participation of all spheres of government as well as the involvement of the private sector, non-governmental organizations and communities in disaster management in accordance with the Hyogo Framework for Action for disaster reduction.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SUMMIT

The Summit will provide leaders of government at all levels, legislators, policy makers, administrators, members of civil society, disaster practitioners, members of the international donor community and stakeholders opportunity to:

- Appraise the disaster and emergency preparedness and capabilities of federal, state and local governments as well private sector, communities, security agencies, health services providers in Nigeria and role players
- Draw up a disaster and emergency management policy and institutional framework covering the whole country
- To develop new disaster management legislative framework which will bring about a uniform approach to disaster management and which seeks to address legislative shortcomings.
- Make input into the proposed 'Nigeria Disaster and Emergency Management Act' which shall provide for a national integrated and co-ordinated disaster management framework that provides for preventing or reducing the risk of disaster, mitigating the severity of disaster, emergency preparedness, rapid and effective response to disasters and post disaster recovery, and for the establishment of national, state, local government corporate organizations disaster management contingency plans and capabilities.

PROGRAMME OF SUMMIT SESSIONS

Day One: Policy Framework & Regulatory Environment

- Institutional and Policy Framework for Disaster Management in Nigeria**
Presentation by: **Ahaji S. S. Makarfi**, DG, NEMA. **Discussants:** **Rosemary Kadura**, Deputy Country Manager, OXFAM, **Dr. John Emaimo**, Management Resource Consultant Centre
- Effective Management of Lake Nyoos & Lagdo Dam Threat to Nigeria: Challenges and Action Plan.**
Presentation by: **Engr. (Dr.) A. Talabi**, Chairman Technical Committee on Lake Nyoos. **Discussants:** **Dr. E. A. Adanu**, Deputy Director, (Dams & Reservoir Operations), Federal Min. of Water Resources.
- Disaster Risk Reduction and Development.**
Presentation by: **Dr. Feng Min Kan**, UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, Geneva, Switzerland. **Discussants:** **Dr. Norearisa Rakotonandriana**, UNEP, Geneva, Switzerland, **Yakubu Tanko**, CODERO, Kaduna.
- Air Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management in Nigeria: Challenges and Strategies**
Presentation by: **Angus I. Ozoka**, Director Accident Investigation Bureau, Federal Ministry of Aviation. **Discussants:** **Group Captain N. S. Kamwal**, Director S&R, NEMA, **Chief L. E. Akeh**, DG NIMET.
- Integrating Disaster Risk Management into National Development Planning**
Presentation by: **Prof. Osita Ogbu**, Economic Adviser to the President. **Discussants:** **Prof. Bola Ayeni**, DRR Expert, **Prof. Adefolalu**, FUT, Minna, **Mr. Maiwada Omar**, Fed. Min. of Env.

Day Two: Institutional Roles and Contingency Planning

- Contingency Plan for Managing Maritime Disasters in Nigeria**
Presentation by: **Engr. Festus Ugwu**, DG, National Maritime Authority. **Discussants:** **Engr. Rabiu D. Abubakar**, DG Inland Waterways Authority, **Dr. B. I. O. Ezenwa**, Director, NIOMR, Rep. of Bayelsa Min. of Transport.
- Managing Nigeria Ecological Disasters: Challenges and Framework For Action**
Presentation by: **Prof. K. O. Ologe**, OOH Impact Consult. **Discussants:** **T. A. Ajayi**, NEMA, **Dr. Sani A. Mashi**, University of Abuja.
- The Role of the Security Agencies in Disaster Management and Rehabilitation in Nigeria**
Presentation by: **Chief of Naval Staff**. **Discussants:** **DG, NIA**, **DG, SSS**, **IG of Police**, **Sunday Ehindero**, DCPS, Defence Headquarters, **Representatives of All Security Agencies**.
- Contingency Plan for Oil Spill Disaster Response and Rehabilitation in Nigeria**
Presentation by: **Engr. Tony Chukwueke**, Director, DPR. **Discussants:** **Ninmo Bassey**, ERA, **Dr. O Ajakaiye**, DG, National Oil Spill Detection & Response Agency, **Dr. Victor Fedake**, Fed. Min. of Env.
- Disaster Preparedness and Management Capabilities of Oil Producing Companies in Nigeria**
Presentation by: **Representatives of All Major Oil and Gas Companies**, **Chief (Barr.) Orono Douglas**. **Discussants:** **T. A. Ajayi**, NEMA, **Dr. O. Ajakaiye**, D3, NODRA.

- Enhanced Management of Refugees in Nigeria**
Presentation by: **Mrs. Moremi Soyinka Onijata**, Special Asst to President on Migration and Humanitarian Affairs. **Discussants:** **Dr. Johnson B. Falade**, UN-Habitat Programme, **Mr. Vincent Aquah**, Exe. Sec., Cross River SEMA, **Mr. Adikpo Agbatse**, Executive Sec., Benue SEMA, **UNHCR Resident Representatives**.

Day Three: Institutional Capacity and Repositioning

- Effective Positioning of the Health Sector for Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management in Nigeria**
Presentation by: **Dr. A. Nasidi**, Director Special Project FMCH. **Discussants:** **Dr. Grace Akinniyi**, HEPCORN, **A. daniyi Olaleye**, Association for Reproductive and Family Health, **Dr. I. Falope**, Nat Orthopaedic Hosp. Igbobi, Lagos, **Resident Rep. Medecin San Frontiers**.
- The Role of NGOs in Disaster Recovery and Reconstruction in Nigeria**
Presentation by: **Abiodun Orebiyi**, Nigeria Red Cross Society. **Discussants:** **Grace Olobaya**, Nigeria Network of NGOs, **Resident Rep.**, OXFAM, **Resident Rep.**, Catholic Relief Organisation.
- Repositioning Nigeria Media for Effective Role in Disaster Management**
Presentation by: **Dr. Reuben Abati**, The Guardian. **Discussants:** **Dr. Ahmed El Bashir Ibrahim**, UNICEF, **Eniola Bello**, THISDAY.
- Developing State and Local Government Capacity for Effective Disaster Preparedness and Management**
Presentation by: **Mr. R. A. Fajulugbe**, Director, R&R, NEMA. **Discussants:** **Hyacinth U. Ote**, Ebonyi State SEMA, **Executive Sec.**, **Mr. Adikpo Agbatse**, Executive Sec., Benue SEMA, **Mr. A. T. Ahmed**, Perm. Sec., Niger State Govt, **Vincent Aquah**.

Day Four: International Agencies, Multilateral Cooperation and Financing

- Legal and Regulatory Framework for Disaster and Emergency Management in Nigeria**
Presentation by: **Tunji Abayomi**, Human Rights Africa. **Discussants:** **Barr. Agbo J. Madaki**, **Dewald Van Nierkerk**, NorthWest Univ. of Potchefstroom, SA, **Barr. S. Imhanobe**.
- UNDP Support to Institutional and Legislative Systems for Disaster Risk Management**
Presentation by: **Teggenetwork Gattu**, UNDP Country Representative, Nigeria.
- The Role of National & International Financial Institutions in Disaster Risk Management**
Presentation by: **Prof. Femi Olokesusi**, NISER. **Discussants:** **MD, NICON Insurance**, **Engr. E. O. Mejule**, GM, Urban Dev. Bank.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

- Executive Governors of States
- Honourable Ministers
- Hon. State Commissioners of Health
- Members of SEMA / SEMCs
- Local Government Council Chairmen
- Executives of Nig Refugees Commission
- Academics & Researchers
- Search & Rescue Vendors
- Organised Private Sector
- Executives of Oil Producing Companies
- Honourable Members of Federal and State legislatures
- Executives of National & International Finance Institutions
- Embassies & Members of the Diplomatic Corps
- Communication Officers
- Maritime Safety Officers
- Executives of Airline Companies
- Executives of NGOs
- Policy Makers and Stakeholders
- Executives of Environmental Agencies
- Members of the Security agencies

Summit Registration

Registration commences at Nicon Hilton [Delegates] and Committee Room 19, National Assembly [NASS Members] from 8:00am on Monday 23rd January, 2006.

Hon. Tunde Safau
Chairman, Organising Committee,
Room 1.063 Annex II, Nat. Assembly,
Abuja.
Tel: 08033225969

Dr. Zanna Muhamad
National Emergency Management Agency,
Plot 439, Ademola Adetokunbo Crescent,
Maifama, Abuja.
Tel: 08037878535

Trust International

World Report

Ex-President

Ford in hospital

Former US President Gerald Ford has been taken to hospital in California, suffering from pneumonia.

The 92-year old was admitted to the Eisenhower Medical Center on Saturday, according to his spokeswoman.

"He is doing well and resting comfortably," Penny Circle said in a statement on Monday, adding that he could be allowed home on Wednesday.

It is the second time in as many months that the former

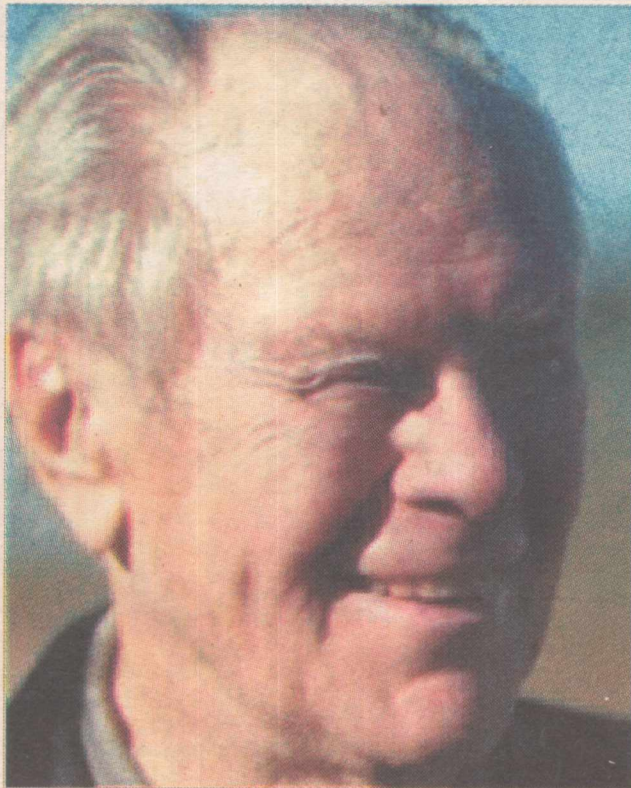
president has been admitted to hospital.

In December, he was taken to the same hospital to be treated for a bad cold.

As Vice-President, Gerald Ford became president in 1974 when Richard Nixon resigned because of the Watergate affair.

But he failed to win a full term in the 1976 presidential election, losing to Democrat Jimmy Carter.

Mr Ford remains the only US president never to have contested a national election before entering office.



Former President Gerald Ford Hospitalized

Russia, China urge for caution over Iran

Russian president, Mr Putin has warned against "abrupt, erroneous steps" against Iran insisting that sanctions are not the best or the only way to persuade Iran to take notice of international concerns about its nuclear programme.

Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey Lavrov said a compromise offer was still on the table which could see Iran sending uranium to Russia for enrichment.

China has also urged all parties to resume negotiations.

The UK, France and Germany are calling for an urgent meeting next month of the UN nuclear watchdog, the IAEA.

Iran says its nuclear programme is for civilian energy use only.

It sparked a crisis last week by breaking international seals on three of its nuclear research sites.

At a meeting in London on Monday that included Russian, Chinese and US officials, world powers failed to reach full agreement on how to proceed.

The IAEA could refer the issue to the UN Security Council which could in turn decide to impose sanctions, but Russia and China appear wary of imposing an embargo.

The BBC's Steven Rosenberg in Moscow says Russia is concerned that sanctions would damage trade with Iran.

And China said it would do everything to achieve a diplomatic solution.

"The Chinese side believes resolving the issue through peaceful diplomatic means is the best choice, benefiting all parties," said foreign ministry spokesman Kong Quan.

Mr Lavrov said: "The question of sanctions against Iran puts the cart before the horse. Sanctions are in no way the best, or the only, way to solve the problem."

Mr Lavrov said he supported a resumption of Teh-

ran's talks with the UK, Germany and France, but that this could only happen if it returned to its moratorium on uranium enrichment.

Iran should help the IAEA collect the maximum amount of information, he added.

"Certain progress has been achieved in clarifying

dark spots, but more is required of Iran," he said.

Iran's ambassador to Moscow, Gholamreza Ansari, said on Monday that Tehran was still considering the offer to move Iran's uranium enrichment programme to Russia.

Mr Lavrov said the two countries would further discuss that possibility in talks on 16 February.

Israel's acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said his

country could not allow a nation with hostile intentions towards it to own weapons of mass destruction.

"I believe that there is a way to prevent non-conventional weapons coming into the hands of those who pose a danger to the entire world," he said, speaking as an Israeli delegation headed for Moscow for talks.

Israel is believed to be the only Middle Eastern country that has a nuclear arsenal.

Britain remains convinced Iran should be brought before the UN Security Council over its nuclear program, a senior foreign office official said Tuesday.

Iran on Monday praised a proposal by Russian President Vladimir Putin to conduct Iranian uranium enrichment in Russia, which would allow greater international oversight of Tehran's nuclear program.

But British officials questioned Tehran's sincerity and said Tuesday that London maintained its stance on the need for Security Council action.

"Our own assessment is the Iranians are playing with the Russian proposal for tactical reasons," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the delicacy of the negotiations.

Under increasing international pressure over its nuclear ambitions, Iran has relied on Moscow and Beijing opposition to referral at past board meetings.

Both Russia and China are IAEA board opinion leaders whose voice counts with other nations. And both are veto-packing members of the Security Council that could vote down harsh action against Tehran — including economic sanctions, an option backed by America.

"China believes that under the current situation, all relevant sides should remain restrained and stick to solving the Iranian nuclear issue through negotiations," the ministry said in a statement Monday.

The wording of the text was sure to change before it is submitted to the IAEA's 35-nation board February 2. Still the fact that it was calling on the council to send Iran's nuclear file back to the IAEA ap-

US alliance with Pakistan strained

The pre-dawn airstrike purportedly aimed at Osama bin Laden's deputy has strained ties with a key US ally in the war on terror and could provoke more anti-American fanaticism in Pakistan, analysts said Monday.

Friday's alleged CIA mission in the Bajur tribal region, which Pakistani officials say missed its target and killed 17 people including women and children, also undermined the fragile goodwill cultivated in Pakistan by generous US relief in the wake of October's earthquake that killed over 80,000 people.

"This will consolidate anti-American sentiment," said Talat Masood, a retired Pakistani general and political analyst.

Thousands rallied across Pakistan over the weekend against the United States and Pakistani President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, who walks a political tightrope by maintaining close ties with Washington in an Islamic country where the US-led wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have been extremely unpopular.

Pakistan's The News newspaper warned in a Monday editorial that the missile strike could stir more extremism — particularly in tribal areas near the Afghan border, long a recruiting ground for jihadists.

"Episodes such as the Bajur tragedy, for a province where the situation is already delicate, can supply an excellent new cause to the fanatics," it said.

The attack was the third suspected US strike in less than two months inside Pakistan, which says it does not allow American forces based in Afghanistan to cross the border in the hunt for members of the Taliban and al-Qaida.

Pakistani intelligence officials described the latest CIA attack, probably carried out by missiles from a drone aircraft.

Pakistani intelligence officials say 12 militants may have been killed, but a US counterterrorism official said it's unclear whether Ayman al-Zawahri, al-Qaida's No. 2 leader, was among the dead.

But Pakistan clearly feels the attack was a step too far. It lodged a diplomatic protest over the incident Saturday, calling it a "loss of innocent civilian lives." The Pakistani government previously issued a protest after tribal leaders claimed US helicopters opened fire on a cleric's home in North Waziristan on Jan. 7, killing eight people.

On Tuesday, Prime Minister Shaukat Aziz said Pakistan "cannot accept any action within our country" like the US missile attack, but stressed he would press ahead with an official visit to Washington later Tuesday.

"The relationship with the US is important, it is growing. But at the same time such ac-

tions cannot be condoned," Aziz said at a joint news conference in Islamabad with former President George H.W. Bush.

In a speech shown Sunday on state-run Pakistan Television, Musharraf did not address the airstrike directly, but he warned his countrymen not to harbor militants, saying it would only increase violence inside Pakistan.

Bitter cold in Moscow leaves two dead

Two people died of exposure and 14 more were hospitalized in a single day as temperatures plunged in the Russian capital, city emergency medical authorities said Tuesday. Temperatures dropped from about freezing Monday afternoon to minus-28 Celsius (minus-18 Fahrenheit) overnight as a cold wave hit after inflicting record-low temperatures across Siberia.

Electricity monopoly RAO Unified Energy System of Russia said Tuesday that the sharp drop in temperature had caused no supply disruptions in Moscow. But NTV television reported that power was cut off to nearly 30 towns and villages in Ryazan region southwest of Moscow, and that there were also problems in the Volga River region of Samara.

Chief executive Anatoly Chubais has threatened to reduce supplies to nonessential points if temperatures stay below minus-25 C (minus-13 F) for three days or more. NTV reported that in Moscow, the first items to be shut off if necessary would be electric-lit advertising billboards.

The national meteorological office RosHydroMet has forecast the current cold front to keep temperatures at or below present levels at least until Friday.

Russian media reported that police were under orders to make an exception to their usual practice of evicting homeless people from the subway, building entrances and other shelters.

The Interfax news agency reported that 107 people had died of exposure in Moscow since October.

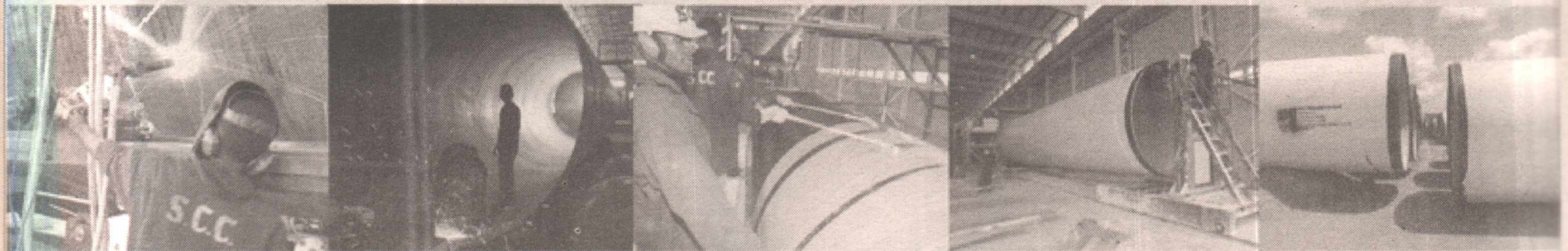
Prosecutors opened a criminal investigation into alleged negligence by prison officials in the Russian Far East village of Takhtamygda, where the heating system broke down and the more than 800 inmates had to use makeshift wood-burning stoves to keep warm for more than a week, the ITAR-Tass news agency reported Tuesday.

Investigators said prison officials had failed to obey instructions to keep a backup pump engine for the heating plant.

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His Excellency Chief Olusegun Obasanjo GCFR
President and Commander-in-Chief of the
Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

Date: 20 JANUARY 2006

Time: 9.30am

Venue: SCC STEEL PIPE FACTORY, USHAFA, FCT

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Business Trust

International

Iran nuclear crisis touches world economy

World commodity prices have been boosted by concerns over Iran's nuclear programme, with gold and other precious metals surging to new highs. Also underpinning the search for "investment havens" are worries about the state of the US economy and dollar.

The price of gold surged as far as \$564.30 an ounce, its highest since 1981, before trimming gains. Platinum had earlier hit a record of \$1,049 and silver also gained. Crude oil prices climbed amid supply worries.

Analysts are now predicting that more gains may be on the cards, although the short term could bring a price correction and pause for breath.

"The background noise of geopolitical tensions, rising oil prices and investor diversification will continue to provide good support in coming sessions," said James Moore of The BullionDesk.com.

The problem facing many investors is deciding just how concerned they should be.

Iran, the world's fourth-biggest producer of crude and the second-largest producer in the Opec cartel, is under fire over plans to re-start its nuclear programme, with the threat of sanctions lurking in the background.

Any drop in Iranian production would have a significant effect on crude prices, pushing them up quickly and to levels that investors say are difficult to predict.

While this worst-case scenario is some way off, many investors are already looking to protect themselves at a time when short-term trading aimed at tapping into the gold surge also is helping to buoy prices.

The metal is up almost 8% this year, after adding more than 17% in 2005. "Gold is seen as a fireball asset and the funds are switching money into it," said Peter Hillyard of ANZ Investment Bank. However, the rapid gains made some profit-taking inevitable, traders said on Tuesday.

Spot gold for immediate delivery fell in London after hitting the high, and was trading at close to \$560 an ounce.

Platinum also dipped back, trading at \$1,042.50. Silver climbed to a 19-year high, while copper and aluminium hovered near records. New York light crude oil, the US benchmark, cost \$64.95 a barrel, near a three-month high. London's main contract, Brent crude, rose 0.7% to \$63.60.

In a report on Tuesday, the International Energy Agency said that demand for crude oil was likely to increase by 2.2% this year, driven by China and a rebound in the US.

The comments signal that the slide in demand that many analysts have highlighted, and which has been evident in recent months, may be about to end.

Some Opec members have been advocating a cut in output after the group had to boost supplies last year, to meet surging demand.

New investor takes over Kaduna fertiliser coy

Heiko consortium has assumed ownership of the Federal Superphosphate Fertiliser Company FSFC in Kaduna following the formal hand over of the company by the Bureau for Public Enterprises (BPE).

Director general of the BPE, Mrs Irene Chigbue stated yesterday in Kaduna that the handing over was the last stage in the privatisation of FSFC, as Heiko Consortium had acquired 90% equity holdings in the company for N750 million.

"Heiko consortium emerged the core investor of the company with an equity holding of 90%. With the financial backing of Oceanic Bank Plc, the expertise of technical partners Arice International Inc. of USA and good managerial capability, they will be able to build the company to 70% capacity production in the next two years from this current 20% capacity production."

"Heiko bided with other intending investors in a transparent process but had their offer of N750m, which is the best accepted to ensure they are the new owners of the fertiliser company," she said.

Mrs Chigbue added that the plant which was established in 1973 was designed to produce 100,000 tonnes of superphosphate per annum from its 42,000 tonnes per annum acid plant fertiliser. Though an additional plant with a capacity of 30,000 tonnes per annum of Aluminium sulphate was added in 1990.

The new owners

From Abdulraheem Aodu, Correspondent Kaduna

promised to improve the production and efficiency of the company as well as increase the work force by employing 500 people immediately. "Our post acquisition plan is in two phases which are revamping and consolidation with expansion. The revamping

adapted direct labour thus generating about 500 employment opportunity with 2,500 other opportunities, our production target for 2006 is 40,000 tonnes of superphosphate and 100,000 tonnes of alum, this is expected to generate N6 billion in the economy. We also plan to establish a 300

tonnes per day sulphuric acid plant for which we wish to appeal to the state government to help us allocate a land outside Kaduna metropolis for the project." The chairman of Heiko consortium, Engr. Godwin Ede said.

The state government promised to provide the land for them whenever they are

ready while Governor Ahmed Makarfi also promised to rehabilitate the road that links the company to the Kaduna by-pass dual carriageway.

Makarfi noted that fertiliser is very vital to farmers and people of the state while adding that the state will always encourage investors who are ready to develop the state.



Traders move plantain at the Yaba market in Lagos. Business has started in earnest after the holidays.

NMA tasks shippers on cabotage vessels registration

The National Maritime Authority (NMA) has urged indigenous Nigerian ship owners to embrace the cabotage vessels registration scheme of the authority. The call was made

From Adenlanwa Bamgboye, Correspondent, Lagos

by the director-general, National Maritime Authority, NMA, Engr. Festus Ugwu while reviewing progress on

cabotage since take-off at the just concluded inaugural Lagos Business School Maritime Conference.

Represented by the director, planning, research and statistics, Chief Adejare

Shobayo, the NMA boss explained that the cabotage law provides for cabotage vessels registration, distinct from flag registration of vessels. The NMA maintains a ship registry for purposes of flag registration and cabotage vessels registration. Ugwu stressed that the authority targets automating cabotage operations in future to ensure that stakeholders access cabotage on-line services.

He maintained that the NMA would continue to dialogue with stakeholders on the need to establish a formidable cabotage register as stipulated by the law, adding that the Authority wishes to partner stakeholders in building a virile information database.

Ugwu pledged the authority's appreciation to the Marine Industrial Services Consultative Organisation (MISCO) for its recent pledge to assist the NMA in the collection of two-percent cabotage levy on cabotage contracts. The NMA boss stated that the NMA targets 2010 to achieve 80 per cent manning capacity of cabotage vessels, as stipulated by the cabotage law. He opined that the NMA would continue to review progress made on the cabotage regime annually.

"We shall continue to review our implementation approaches to ensure results, cabotage success is a national project," Ugwu said.

Aviation taskforce to investigate agencies

The presidential task force on Aviation is to investigate the finances of the various agencies in the sub-sector with a view to eliminating the inefficiencies and corruption in the industry. The chairman, sub committee on aviation financing of the presidential task force, Mr. Tony Elumelu, who disclosed this in a press briefing in Lagos Monday said the sub-committee wants to carry out a quick review of the finances of the agencies.

According to Elunemlu who sat alongside top personalities in the industry, namely FAAN CEO, Engr O.O Shittu, captain Roland Iyayi of NAMA, Chief M.E. Ake of NCAA etc, said the investigation would focus on existing budgeting processes and financial control, contract awards and other things in order to ascertain the financial position of the agencies.

Towards, this end, the sub-committee directed the agencies concerned to forward to its list of board members, management committee for the past one year, polity procedures, authority matrix

From Bright Ewulu, Deputy Business Editor, Lagos

and most recent bank reconciliation withdrawals.

Also demanded include monthly and yearly management accounts for the past three years, lists of debtors and creditors, list of Capital commitments, schedule of all outstanding loans and other documents.

Chairman of the subcommittee, however said, "the task force will if found necessary appoint auditors to carry out the needed reviews

adding that the information being demanded from the agencies are needed in order to expedite action.

In their contributions Dr. Demurin and Captain Iyaye posited the need to bring back sanity in the industry, saying that operators who can not meet up with safety standards will be henceforth grounded.

According to them the problem with the aviation

industry owes to the debase of values in society which have invariably affected standards in various areas of life. Demurin said Boeing and other top aircraft manufacturers are in the country and are helping out on the need to resolve the issue of old aircraft that are still in the system, stressing that in due course that issue should be eliminated.

...commends Osubi airstrip at Warri

The chairman presidential Task Force on Aviation industry in Nigeria, Air Vice Marshal Paul Dike has said that the task fore was very pleased with its visit to Osubi airstrip in Warri, Delta state.

He stressed further, that Osubi airstrip should serve as a yardstick for other airports to emulate Nation wide.

Air Vice Marshall Dike made the commendations at the end of inspection of facilities at Osubi airstrip.

He disclosed that members of staff of the airstrip should be proud of themselves for a job well done. He emphasized that all the inadequacies at the airstrip have been noted and recommendations would be made to the appropriate authorities.

Among the facilities inspected by the Task Force are the Control Tower, Power House, Perimeter Fencing, Runway, Fire Department and Terminal Buildings.



Babalola Borishade, Aviation minister

Business Trust

'Abuja commodities Exchange takes-off soon'

The director-general of Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Mr. Musa Al-Faki has disclosed that Abuja Securities and Commodities Exchange will take-off within the next 90-days, adding that it has set up a unit with the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) for capital market surveillance.

The SEC helmsman who aired the above in his first quarter press briefing in Lagos yesterday maintained its readiness to tackle incidents of fraud in the nation's capital market.

According to him "I hasten to add that any operator found wanting stands the risk of being banned from the market activities for a minimum of 5-years. This is in addition to other sanctions as may be prescribed by law.

"Operators are therefore enjoined to imbibe the culture of honesty, fairness and transparency in all their dealings. Let your words continue to be your bounds," he said.

Going further, he stressed that SEC is currently carrying out a review of the capital market, saying that the essence of the review was to reduce the cost of doing business in the market.

Also, he volunteered the fact that the commission was strengthening its monitoring capacity in readiness for the expected heavy turnover in the market as a result of the pension fund and the heavily capitalised banks in the system.

As he said, the commission will in the interim focus its monitoring and surveillance on the consolidated banks to ensure smooth take-off of their operation, adding that forth coming insurance sector consolidation mandates the need to keep already of the sector.

Al-Faki who was flanked by his top executives declared that SEC now owns a befitting office in Abuja and that the commissioning ceremony will be done by President Olusegun Obasanjo in the first quarter of the year. On the indices of the market in 2005, the SEC director general stated that in the privacy market segment of the capital market a total of 51 companies raised funds totalling N299.8

Saudi King to visit China to discuss oil

Saudi King Abdullah will visit China and is expected to discuss possible cooperation in oil and energy security, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said Tuesday. Next week's visit will be the first to China by a Saudi ruler since the two countries formed diplomatic relations in 1990, said Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan.

Abdullah will meet with President Hu Jintao, Kong said. The spokesman said he didn't know whether the king would be accompanied by the Saudi oil minister or other officials on the two-day visit

From Bright Ewulu, Lagos

billion out of which the commission cleared N270.8 billion. "Of the 51 companies that raised funds 36 were banks. The banks raised the sum of N282.3 billion, out of which the commission and the CBN cleared allotment to write N254.4 billion.

"On the mergers side, a total of 18 applications involving 57 banks were treated and cleared by the commission. The merger resulted into 18 banks.

In the secondary market he posited that a total of 27 billion shares worth N260 billion exchanged hands. Equity listings on the exchange grew from 207 in 2004 to 214 in 2005 showing a percentage rise of 3.4%. "While debt listing grew from 70 in 2004 to 74 in 2004 representing a 5.7% rise. This brings the total listings (both debt and equity) to 2005 to 288 compared to 277 in 2004 which represents a 4.0% rise," he said.



Japanese Internet company Livedoor Co. President Takafumi Horie speaks during his press conference in Tokyo following an all-night raid by prosecutors on his company...yesterday.

Raid on internet coy rattles Japan stock market

A raid by prosecutors on Internet company Livedoor Co. on suspected securities violations rattled Japan's stock market Tuesday, sending the benchmark index down nearly 3 percent.

The overnight search on the Tokyo startup company spooked investors who rushed to dump Livedoor shares and other Internet-related issues, including Softbank Corp., Rakuten Inc. and Yahoo Japan. But traders also said investors had been waiting for an excuse to sell stocks and lock in profits after the Tokyo Stock Exchange's extended rally. "The Livedoor incident triggered this correction," said Masayoshi Yano, senior market analyst at Tokai Tokyo Research Center.

The Nikkei 225 index plunged 462.08 points, or 2.8 percent, to close at 15,805.95 points, marking the biggest single-day drop since May 10, 2004, when the index lost 554.12 points, or 4.8 percent.

Within an hour after trading began, Livedoor shares fell 14.4 percent to their lowest allowed price for the day of 596 yen (\$5.18). The price was frozen there all day as sell orders of 255 million shares overwhelmed buy orders of just 2.9 million.

The Tokyo prosecutors' office, which raided Livedoor's offices Monday evening, said the company is suspected of violating securities laws in spreading false information, but refused to elaborate.

Livedoor offers various Internet services, including consulting, telecommunications, mobile sites and software development. It also has also bought up chunks of other companies and managed to raise money by offering more of its own stock. The company's 33-year-old chief executive, Takafumi Horie, a celebrity in Japan for his iconoclastic

and frequent television appearances denied wrongdoing.

"We are cooperating with prosecutors in their investigation," Horie said at a nationally televised news conference early Tuesday. "We are continuing our efforts to expand our operations and conduct business as normal." Horie has become a star in Japan for challenging the stodgy business culture with his attempts to buy media conglomerates. Favoring T-shirts over business suits, he often appears on TV shows and runs a widely read blog.

A dropout of the prestigious University of Tokyo, Horie shot to fame with the Japanese public in 2004 when he tried unsuccessfully to buy an ailing professional baseball team.

He also made an unsuccessful hostile takeover bid for Fuji Television Network Inc. and ran in parliamentary elections last year as an independent supported by the ruling Liberal Democratic Party but did not get elected.

Kyodo News agency reported that Value Click Japan Inc., the predecessor of a Livedoor subsidiary, carried out illegal stock swaps with Japanese publisher Money Life in 2004. Value Click, now Livedoor Marketing Co., also inflated profit figures in its financial statement released the next month to improperly raise its stock prices, Kyodo said. News of the raid made banner headlines in all of Japan's major newspapers Tuesday, and TV talk shows also were abuzz about the news.

The immediate public perception seemed to be that authorities were attempting to clamp down on wayward entrepreneurs testing new territory in stock trading and acquisitions — but also that

line.

"Rules were ignored," the Sankei Shimbun's headlines said. "A money game was played out." "Investors and politicians alike had been in awe of (Horie's) money-making wizardry, but it seems a hidden pitfall has now

appeared," the Asahi newspaper said in a commentary, adding that behind the probe lies stock trading that resembled "gambling." The case also highlights the need for clearer regulations in such areas as Japan struggles to shift to a

Western-style free market economy after decades of government protection.

Finance Minister Sadakazu Tanigaki said if the reported allegations are true, the case shows a need for greater transparency in the Japanese market.



NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE CORPS DIRECTORATE HEADQUARTERS

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ADVERTISEMENT STAFF VACANCIES

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for appointment to the following posts in the National Youth Service Corps Scheme:

A) CORPS WELFARE AND INSPECTORATE DEPARTMENT

Post: Inspector II - GL 08
Inspector I - GL 09
Senior Inspector - GL 10

Inspector II - GL 08
Requirement: A degree in any of the disciplines obtained from recognized University

Inspector I - GL 09
Requirement: Same as above in addition to minimum of 3 years Post-graduate experience.

Senior Inspector - GL 10
Requirement: Same as above in addition to minimum of 6 years Post-graduate experience

B) ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

Post: Executive Officer - GL 07

Requirements: A Higher National Diploma in Business/Administration or Public Administration from a recognized Institution or Ordinary National Diploma from a recognized Institution plus at least 2 years post graduate cognate experience.

C) PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

Post: Public Relations Officers

Requirements: First Degree in Arts, Journalism, English or Mass Communication from a recognized institution of Higher learning.

1. SALARIES

i) Inspector II - GL 08
ii) Inspector I - GL 09
iii) Senior Inspector/SPRO - GL 10
iv) Executive Officer - GL 07
v) Higher Executive Officer - GL 09

2. CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

Appointments are permanent and pensionable and other conditions of service are the same as obtainable in the Federal Public Service.

3. METHOD OF APPLICATION

Interested candidates should obtain employment forms from any office of the Head of Service of their respective state of origin, or, those not able to secure the forms from the office of the Head of Service are hereby advised to submit their applications with curriculum vitae and photocopies of credentials within six (6) weeks of this publication to the NYSC Secretariat in their state.

4. All applications from the Head of Service are to be channeled through NYSC State Secretariat for onward submission to the Directorate Headquarters, Abuja, along with those filed at the secretariats.

Names of short-listed applicants would be displayed at the Office of the Head of Service and the NYSC State Secretariats respectively.

6. The extension of time for the submission of applications in this advertisement supersedes the previous one.

The Director-General,
National Youth Service Corps Scheme,
15 JS Tarka Street/Festival Road,
Area 3,
P.M.B. 128, Garki, Abuja.

Business Trust

Analysis

Can banks sustain the consolidation tempo?

When the Central Bank of Nigeria on July 6, 2004 announced a reform programme for the nation's banking industry, many wondered what would eventually become of many of the 89 deposit money banks then in the system as to their ability to raise their capital base to the minimum N25 billion recapitalization requirement.

After several discussions among various banks under different groups in respect of mergers and acquisition arrangements, accessing the capital market to raise fresh funds either to meet the required capital alone or meet the set target of the consolidation groups in line with agreements and private placements and right issues, 25 banks emerged at the close of the first phase of the consolidation programme on December 31, 2005, having met the minimum capitalization requirement.

The successful banks according to CBN governor, Prof Charles Chukwuma Soludo, account for about 93.5 percent of the deposit liabilities of the banking system, after the banks raised a total of N406.4 billion from the capital market, out of which N360 billion was verified and accepted by the CBN.

Business Trust gathered that the first phase of the consolidation process led to the inflow of Foreign Direct Investment of \$652 million

By Austine Odo,
Business Editor

banks and ownership of the banks has been diluted.

"A bank recently received \$250 million from two foreign banks-this is unprecedented, the dilution

their customers.

But as observed by the managing director of former Citizens International Bank, Mazi Okechukwu C.K. Unegbu, corporate governance in post consolidation banking is an

newsmen in Abuja on Monday that these challenges were to be expected, and as a result, the CBN had put in place, measures intended to address such concerns.

According to him, in

agenda for a stakeholders forum before finalizing it.

Soludo said the apex bank would closely monitor the banks to ensure that the provisions of the merger scheme documents were complied with.

screened to ensure that no non-performing debtor is left on the boards of the 25 banks. Zero tolerance regarding infractions, misreporting, non-transparency, etc. This was one of the 13 points in the reform programme which we intend to strictly apply now that the first phase of the programme has been concluded", Soludo said.

As observed by Mr S.O. Alashi, the director, Field Examination Department of the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC), the challenges of banking supervision will remain in the post consolidation era as banks become large and more sophisticated, and therefore more susceptible to risk of failure.

To address this, the prudential supervision arm of the CBN according to Soludo, is migrating to a risk-based approach to supervision, a framework for which has been released and implementation close to launch.

He said the capacity of supervisors was being enhanced through training, especially in risk management.

It becomes obvious therefore, that the Nigerian banking public would now begin to go to sleep with their mind off their savings or investments in fragile banks.



Prof. Charles Soludo, CBN Governor



Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Finance Minister

of bank ownership will in no small way tame the monster of insider and corporate governance abuse", Soludo said.

Speaking with newsmen in Calabar recently, the CBN director in charge of banking supervision, Mr Ignatius Imala noted that in view of the fact that almost all the banks are now publicly quoted, there would be more

issue that requires serious attention. According to him, the practice of good corporate governance through the activities of independent boards and adequate board monitoring will give capital providers the confidence to enter the market and stay invested.

"Without confidence in corporate governance, the investors that do come are

order to address corporate governance and integration issues in the consolidated banks, a new draft code of corporate governance has been issued to the banking industry in the spirit of transparency and constructive consultation. This he said, would form an

Already, he pointed out, the CBN maintains a black book of discredited practitioners in the system, and this black book is being automated for easy identification of persons on the list.

"Meanwhile, the list of debtors of banks is being

"Meanwhile, the list of debtors of banks is being screened to ensure that no non-performing debtor is left on the boards of the 25 banks. Zero tolerance regarding infractions, misreporting, non-transparency."

and 162,000 pounds sterling.

Besides the heavy capital inflow, experts believe that the liquidity engendered by the inflow of funds into the banks has induced interest rate to fall drastically while a huge increase has been recorded in lending to the real sector, and with a higher single obligor limit, the banks now have greater potential to finance big ticket transactions.

According to the CBN governor, already, more banks now have access to credit lines from foreign

regulatory oversight as the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Nigeria Stock Exchange (NSE) would focus their resources on fewer and more stable banks. He noted also, that depositor confidence is bound to be greater and interest rate on deposit would be lower due to "safety and bigness" perception by depositors.

Imala said the banks would begin to enjoy economies of scale and pass on the benefit in the form of reduced bank charges to

gamblers {hot money will always be available at a price}, and gamblers never stay for long as they are not investors but quick profit takers", Unegbu said.

Also, Mr. Emeka Onwuka of Diamond Bank Plc identified robust regulation and strict supervision as challenges of good governance in the post consolidation era in order to cope with the identified risks, and avoid sectoral meltdown.

But the CBN governor Charles Soludo told



**THE CENTRE FOR GENDER SECURITY STUDIES AND
ADVANCEMENT (CeGSSAd)
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FCT-ABUJA, NIGERIA.**

The above-named Centre announces the commencement of its Academic Programme in the following Areas:

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- iii) Short Courses may last from 2 weeks to six months, depending on the Curriculum/Training needs.

Entry Qualifications:

- 1) For Diploma-3 credits and above
- 2) For Certificate- 2 credits and above
- 3) For short Courses-Qualification varies depending on the course in question

Application Forms can be obtained from the Bank of the North, Area 3, Garki and Oceanic Bank, Plot 266 Cadastral Zone A.O; Central Area, Garki at the cost of N3, 000 Interested Applicants should contact:

**The Director
CeGSSAd
Plot 13 Sheda Close
Area 8 Garki
Abuja**

Tel: 08033312050

E-mail: centreprotection@yahoo.com

**Registrar
University of Abuja**

Business Trust

1ST-TIER SECURITIES

THE NIGERIAN STOCK EXCHANGE

REPORT AS AT TUESDAY, JANUARY 17 2006

Company Name	No of Deals	Quotation(N)	Quantity Traded	Value of Shares
CUTIX PLC	3	3.10	49,300	149,930.00
Sector Totals	3		49,300	149,930.00
AGRICULTURE/AGRO-ALLIED				
LIVESTOCK FEEDS PLC.	1	2.44	15,000	36,600.00
THE OKOMU OIL PALM COMPANY PLC	14	18.60	39,360	732,004.80
PRISCO PLC.	15	11.40	71,670	822,392.50
Sector Totals	30		126,030	1,590,997.30
AUTOMOBILE & TYRE				
DUNLOP NIGERIA PLC.	23	2.60	103,829	277,663.68
R. T. BRISCOAE PLC.	17	6.00	85,721	521,062.44
Sector Totals	40		189,550	798,726.12
BANKING				
ACCESS BANK PLC	207	2.97	17,072,260	50,236,849.18
AFRIBANK NIGERIA PLC.	23	9.10	1,106,659	10,070,596.90
COOPERATIVE BANK PLC.	1	1.92	2,000	3,840.00
DIAMOND BANK PLC	12	7.75	28,500	220,875.00
EIB INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	15	2.26	2,366,728	5,348,805.28
FIRST CITY MONUMENT BANK PLC	7	5.11	139,000	710,290.00
FIDELITY BANK PLC	4	2.93	851,500	2,494,895.00
FIRST BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	353	32.00	9,127,618	292,083,776.00
FSB INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	3	1.14	19,388	22,102.32
GTBANK PLC.	363	12.82	6,264,206	79,910,213.71
HALLMARK BANK PLC	1	1.81	35,000	63,350.00
INVESTMENT BANKING	10	4.57	206,068	941,730.76
INTERCONTINENTAL BANK PLC.	152	8.70	2,473,405	21,376,160.13
NAL BANK PLC.	14	2.80	1,062,738	2,975,666.40
OCEANIC BANK PLC	92	5.86	2,602,218	15,347,092.64
OMEGA BANK (NIGERIA) PLC	1	1.91	50,342	96,153.22
	4	2.60	15,700	40,820.00
	2	0.37	399	147.63
TRANS INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	148	12.60	1,359,918	17,315,461.65
UNITED BANK FOR AFRICA PLC.	64	25.48	576,724	14,694,927.52
UNION BANK NIGERIA PLC.	1	0.72	2,509	1,806.48
UNIVERSAL TRUST BANK PLC	28	3.74	3,613,875	13,515,892.50
WEMA BANK PLC.	32	19.64	128,784	2,529,317.76
ZENITH BANK PLC		1.537	49,105,539	530,000,770.08
Sector Totals				
BREWRIES				
GUINNESS NIGERIA PLC.	137	97.00	712,033	69,834,937.03
NIGERIAN BREWERIES PLC.	359	38.45	1,190,609	45,766,276.90
Sector Totals	496		1,902,642	115,601,213.93
BUILDING MATERIALS				
ASHAKA CEMENT PLC.	106	33.60	1,309,160	44,058,304.03
BENUE CEMENT COMPANY PLC.	9	6.50	181,275	1,178,287.50
CEMENT COMPANY OF NORTHERN NIG. PLC	11	7.52	52,236	385,874.40
WEST AFRICAN PORTLAND CEMENT CO. PLC.	131	16.53	1,636,576	27,662,506.40
Sector Totals			3,179,247	73,284,972.33
CHEMICAL & PAINTS				
BERGER PAINTS PLC.	26	4.01	227,234	922,441.84
CAP PLC.	8	9.31	57,628	544,740.20
D. N. MEYER PLC.	5	4.10	19,500	79,950.00
NIGERIA-GERMAN CHEMICALS PLC.	10	4.30	86,463	364,267.70
Sector Totals	49		390,825	1,911,399.74
CONGLOMERATES				
A. G. LEVENTIS NIGERIA PLC.	10	1.26	126,169	152,969.36
C F A O NIGERIA PLC.	5	3.60	26,072	93,859.20
CHELLARAMS PLC.	1	0.83	430	356.90
JOHN HOLT PLC.	7	1.47	4,441	6,528.27
P. Z. INDUSTRIES PLC.	54	16.20	261,062	4,229,204.40
U.A.C. NIGERIA PLC.	97	16.52	952,799	16,376,612.95
UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC	189	20.70	971,159	20,729,868.74
U.T.C. NIGERIA PLC.	8	0.84	130,000	113,200.00
Sector Totals	371		2,472,132	41,702,599.82
CONSTRUCTION				
COSTAIN (W.A.) PLC.	4	1.04	1,111	1,155.44
JULIUS BERGER NIGERIA PLC.	11	22.00	58,000	1,276,262.85
Sector Totals	15		59,111	1,277,418.29
FOOD/BEVERAGES & TOBACCO				
7-UP BOTTLING COMPANY PLC	49	26.01	209,246	5,447,810.32
CADBURY NIGERIA PLC.	172	65.45	314,771	20,429,838.67
FLOUR MILLS NIGERIA PLC.	110	25.82	1,040,152	27,323,710.18
NIGERIA BOTTLING COMPANY PLC.	74	63.70	110,127	6,979,042.46
NESTLE FOODS NIGERIA PLC.	80	190.00	204,653	38,914,270.70
NORTHERN NIGERIA FLOUR MILLS PLC.	1	14.05	299	4,200.95
Sector Totals	486		1,879,248	99,098,873.28
FOOTWEAR				
FOOTWEAR & ACCESSORIES MAN. PLC.	1	0.29	8,965	2,599.85
Sector Totals	1		8,965	2,599.85
HEALTHCARE				
GLAXOSMITHKLINE CONSUMER NIGERIA PLC	31	10.40	234,943	2,456,303.29
NEIMETH INTERNATIONAL PHARM. PLC.	13	3.23	102,399	330,748.77
.PHARMA-DEKO PLC.	6	4.55	29,950	136,272.50
Sector Totals			367,292	2,923,324.56
INDUSTRIAL/DOMESTIC PRODUCTS				
B.O.C. GASES PLC	1	3.10	4,000	12,400.00
FIRST ALUMINIUM NIGERIA PLC.	1	0.80	4,000	3,200.00
VITAFOAM NIGERIA PLC.	37	4.93	834,181	4,078,891.72
VONO PRODUCTS PLC.	2	1.52	7,000	10,640.00
Sector Totals	41		849,181	4,105,131.72
INSURANCE				
ACEN INSURANCE COMPANY PLC	1	0.50	200,000	100,000.00
AIICO INSURANCE PLC.	10	1.81	300,323	545,776.63
CORNERSTONE INSURANCE CO. PLC.	14	1.55	643,075	975,551.50
CRUSADER INSURANCE PLC.	12	1.72	326,778	539,473.68
GREAT NIGERIA INSURANCE PLC	1	1.38	500	690.00
LAW UNION AND ROCK INSURANCE PLC.	7	1.16	179,000	207,640.00
NIGER INSURANCE CO. PLC.	38	2.89	1,000,403	2,702,967.67
PRESTIGE ASSURANCE PLC.	3	2.02	350,000	707,500.00
ROYAL EXCHANGE ASSURANCE PLC.	5	3.04	183,416	557,584.64
STANDARD ALLIANCE INSURANCE	8	1.40	192,000	265,120.00
UNIC INSURANCE PLC.	16	1.30	662,690	861,093.26
WEST AFRICAN PROV. INS. COY. PLC.	13	3.43	731,798	2,301,907.78
Sector Totals	128		4,769,983	9,765,305.16
MANAGED FUNDS				
C & I LEASING PLC	10	1.33	247,270	319,997.30
Sector Totals	10		247,270	319,997.30
MARITIME				
JAPUL OIL & MARITIME SERVICES PLC	25	2.00	657,950	1,346,977.00
Sector Totals	25		657,950	1,346,977.00
PACKAGING				
AVON CROWNCAPS & CONTAINERS PLC.	3	1.12	49,094	54,185.28
Sector Totals	3		49,094	54,185.28
PETROLEUM(MARKETING)				
AFROIL PLC.	3	0.48	24,000	11,480.00
AFRICAN PETROLEUM PLC.	212	49.70	750,545	37,483,111.56
CONOIL PLC	74	93.20	64,439	5,960,815.99
ETERNA OIL & GAS PLC.	23	3.05	139,752	428,509.03
MOBIL OIL NIGERIA PLC.	33	160.00	39,199	6,209,657.08
ONDO PLC				
	184	96.50	314,105	30,217,936.26
TEXACO (NIGERIA) PLC.	50	112.40	38,741	4,376,765.25
TOTAL NIGERIA PLC	42	187.00	36,283	6,855,074.97
Sector Totals	621		1,407,064	91,543,350.14
PRINTING & PUBLISHING				
LONGMAN NIGERIA PLC.	5	3.02	75,000	226,500.00
UNIVERSITY PRESS PLC.	1	1.52	20,000	30,400.00
Sector Totals	6		95,000	256,900.00
REAL ESTATE				
UACN PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT PLC.	47	9.00	496,900	4,564,797.22
Sector Totals	47		496,900	4,564,797.22
TEXTILES				
ABA TEXTILE MILLS PLC.	1	0.91	2,400	2,184.00
APPRINT NIGERIA PLC.	13	0.38	6,611,260	2,572,295.00
UNITED NIGERIA TEXTILES PLC.	2	2.28	90,000	206,000.00
Sector Totals	16		6,703,650	2720,459.00

TOP 10 TRADES YESTERDAY

SYMBOL	VOLUME	VALUE	TRADES
UBA	1,359,918.00	17,315,461.65	148
WAPCO	1,636,576.00	27,662,506.40	131
EKOBANK	2,366,728.00	5,348,805.28	15
INTERCONT	2,473,405.00	21,376,160.13	152
OCEANIC	2,602,218.00	15,347,092.64	92
WEMABANK	3,613,875.00	13,515,892.50	28
GUARANTY	6,264,206.00	79,910,213.71	363
AEPRINT	6,611,250.00	2,512,275.00	13
FIRSTBANK	9,127,618.00	292,083,776.00	353
ACCESS	17,072,260.00	50,236,849.18	207

TOP 10 GAINERS

SYMBOL	LASTCLOSE	YESTERDAY'SCLOSE	CHANGE
NESTLE	185.00	190.00	+5.00
ASHAKACEM	33.12	33.60	+0.48
VITAFOAM	4.70	4.93	+0.23
GUARANTY	12.59	12.82	+0.23
WAPIC	3.27	3.43	+0.16
NIGERINS	2.76	2.89	+0.13
UNITYBANK	2.50	2.62	+0.12
ETERNAOIL	2.94	3.05	+0.11
NIG-GERMAN	4.20	4.30	+0.10
CRUSADER	1.64	1.72	+0.08

TOP 10 LOSERS

SYMBOL	LASTCLOSE	YESTERDAY'SCLOSE	CHANGE
TOTAL	189.50	187.00	-2.50
MOBIL	162.00	160.00	-2.00
GUINNESS	98.55	97.00	-1.55
TEXACO	113.50	112.00	-1.50
FLOURMILL	27.05	25.82	-1.23
UNILEVER	21.78	20.70	-1.08
UACN	17.35	16.52	-0.83
NB	39.00	38.45	-0.55
CAP	9.80	9.31	-0.49
CONOIL	93.69	93.20	-0.49

Iran, Niger Delta crises push up oil prices

Crude-oil prices spiked past \$65 a barrel Tuesday as Iran's nuclear ambitions and an attack on an oil platform in Nigeria kept traders edgy over potential supply snags. Natural gas and heating oil also rose despite plentiful supplies and warm weather in the United States, the world's largest energy market. Light, sweet crude for February delivery rose \$1.38 to \$65.30 a barrel by afternoon in Europe in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The front-month contract on Friday had dropped 2 cents to settle at \$63.92 a barrel. The market was closed Monday for the Martin Luther King Day holiday.

March Brent crude on the ICE Futures exchange rose 74 cents to \$63.92 a barrel. Heating oil gained 5.27 cents to \$1.7677 a gallon while gasoline advanced 3.49 cents to \$1.7660 a gallon. Natural gas rose 5.9 cents to \$8.8500 per 1,000 cubic feet.

Analysts said energy futures jumped on concerns that the U.N. Security Council will consider sanctions against Iran because of its nuclear program, and after Iran's warning that any sanctions imposed could send oil prices even higher.

"The Iranian nuclear issue is driving the market. Traders are short-covering because they know if something happens in Iran the market would be in confusion," said Tetsu Emori, chief commodities strategist at Mitsui Bussan Futures in Tokyo. "The issue poses a threat of supply disruption in a major oil-producing country."

Russia and China on Monday joined the U.S. and its European allies in demanding that Iran fully abandon its nuclear program. The powers called for an emergency board meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency on Feb. 2-3 to discuss the issue.

The West fears Iran intends to build an atomic bomb, but Iran claims its program is peaceful, intended only to produce electricity. Iran is the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries' second-largest producer and sanctions targeting its oil and gas exports could disrupt the world's energy markets. Analysts also said another attack on an oil platform in Nigeria was supporting crude's rise.

Heavily armed fighters attacked Royal Dutch Shell PLC's Benise oil platform in the Niger Delta at dawn on Sunday, damaging the facility and killing at least one person in the third assault on its facilities in less than a week.

Shell says recent violence has caused its consortium to cut 106,000 barrels in daily crude production. Nigeria is Africa's leading oil exporter and the fifth-biggest source of U.S. oil imports. The country produces about 2.5 million barrels a day.

KANO TRUST

FG urged to probe death of Rimi's wife

Federal government has been advised to, as a matter of urgency, set up a committee of inquiry to investigate and fish out those behind the recent assassination of Hajiya Sa'adatu, wife of the former governor of the old Kano State.

A Non-Governmental Organisation, Royal Rights Protection Association of Nigeria (RORPAN) which made the appeal, through its national vice chairman, Mallam Sidi

From Mustapha Isah Kwaru, Correspondent (Kano)

Abba Sheriff said such move becomes imperative in view of the fact that the assassination was alleged to have links with politics.

Briefing newsmen on the killing of Rimi's wife, the association expressed dismay that series of such cases bedevilled several parts of the country, but police and other security operatives failed to fish out the perpetrators.

Mallam Sheriff, who was visibly piqued by the growing spate of political thugs and killings as well as armed robbery incidents across the country, observed that unless such menace is wiped out, federal government efforts to woo foreign investors would not yield fruitful result.

His words: "former power and steel minister, Chief Bola Ige, ANPP Chieftain, chief Harry Marshal, former Akwa-Ibom state chairman of the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA), and many innocent Nigerians were all killed either by armed robbers or hired assassins, but in spite of the federal governments repeated directives to the police to unravel the culprits, there was nothing to write home about."

The NGO warned that unless timely and drastic measures were taken to checkmate the political assassinations, people would lose confidence in the police and would therefore take law into their hands.

Mallam Sheriff implored the police force to revisit its crime prevention strategies so that people could sleep and move safely without fear.

He called on the federal government to initiate special logistics for all security operatives, especially police so that they would redouble their efforts towards curbing crimes in the country.

Kano NLC condoles Rimi

Kano state council of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC), has condoled former governor of state, Alhaji Abubakar Rimi over the gruesome murder of his wife Hajiya Sa'adatu saying it received the death with shock and disbelief.

Statement signed by state secretary of NLC Aminu Suleiman and made available to *Kano Trust* said it was shocked by the assassination of Rimi's wife particularly the manner it occurred.

The statement lamented the level of the general insecurity in the land, and a "now culture of callous, barbaric, attitudes in conflict with our customs and religious beliefs."

The statement also said "while sympathising with you and many of us that were

From Aliyu S. Machika, Correspondent (Kano)

privileged to associate with her good ideas, we urge all relevant authorities to do everything possible and in good-time too in order to fish out the perpetrators and bring them to justice."

NLC said workers of Kano State insist that this should not join other profile murders that were swept under the carpet. They thus urged the federal and state governments to redouble efforts towards ensuring the general security of lives and property of the citizens.

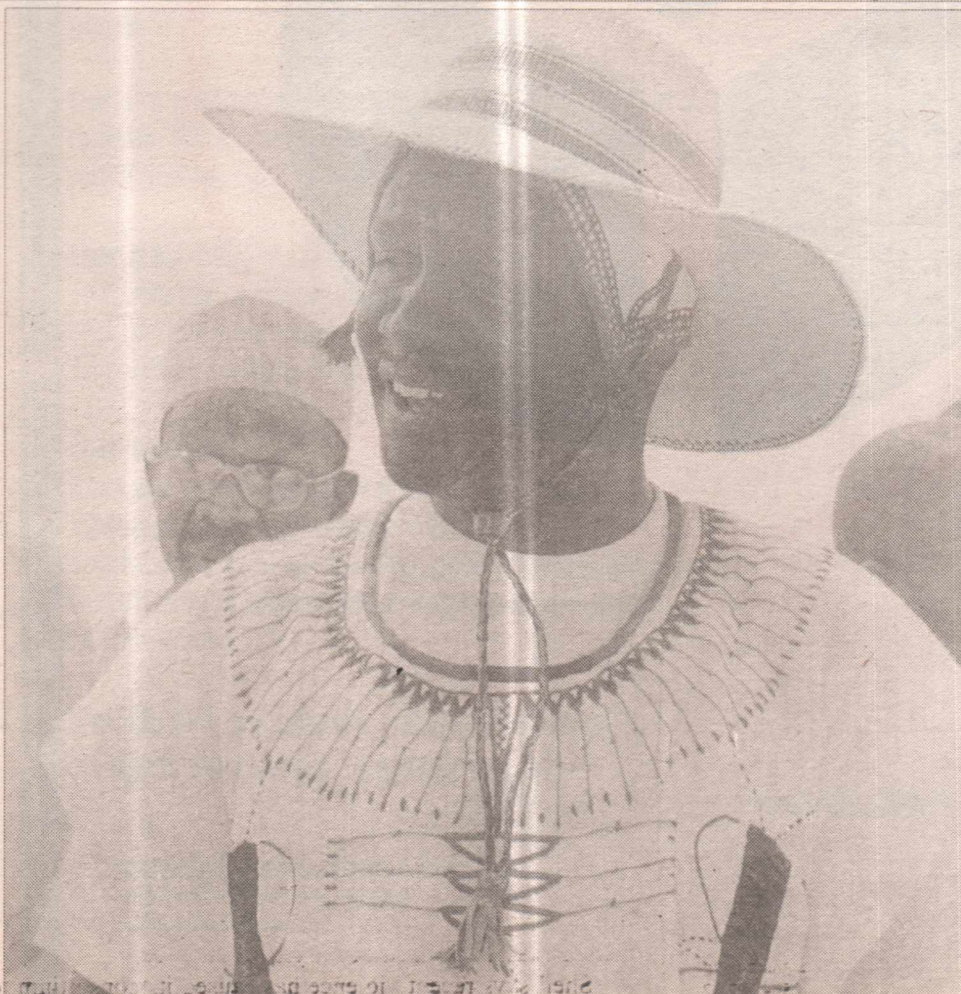
"In conclusion, we pray Allah (SWT), to grant Hajiya Sa'adatu eternal rest in *Firdausi* and your Excellency, and the entire family the fortitude to bear this irreparable loss," the statement added.



13-year old Mustafa from Yobe state reciting Qur'an at a competition in Kano recently



Motorcycles and refrigerators donated by state government to winners of 20th Qur'anic recitation competition

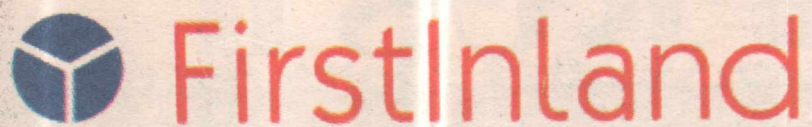


Gov. Shekarau admiring a maize cob at the KNARDA demonstration farm in Bagadawa, Dawakin Tofa LG Pix: Yusha'u Adumu



10-year old participant from Edo state at the just concluded National Qur'anic recitation competition

ADSTRAT



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Our Vision

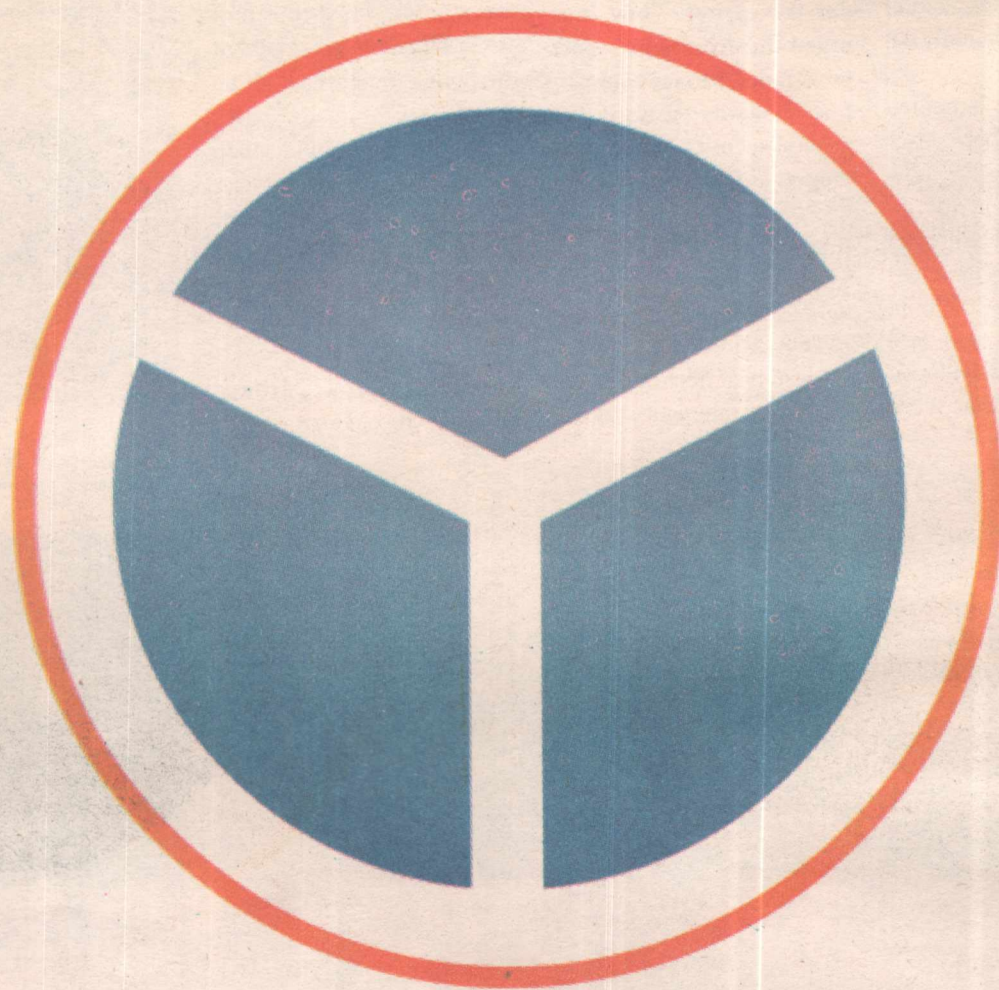
To be first and distinctive in all aspects of our business.

Our Mission

To delight our customers and other stakeholders through the application of the very best in people, technology and practices.

Our Pay-off

-you're welcome



FIRST INLAND BANK PLC

REG. 112878

-you're welcome

4/6, Adetokunbo Ademola Street, Victoria Island, Lagos.
Tel: (01) 2622472-80 Fax: (01) 2622497.
www.firstinlandbankplc.net



Our brand signature

Our brand colours are red and blue.

The combination of colours create a perfect blend of our ideologies as it concerns the satisfaction of customers.

The blue reflects a stability brought on by the strength in diversity typified by our brand.

It also mirrors the royal treatment open to our customers.

The red represents an unquenchable passion to chart new vistas in financial services. It represents a driving force easily noticeable in our people and processes.

Our logo [The Confluence]

The First Inland confluence as seen in our logo represents the strength of the Nigerian nation. It's a celebration of the successful integration of banks with strong presence in the North and South to create a Mega Banking institution with a national presence.

The perimetre of our brand logo, combining the confluence and circle reflects a strong Nigerian bank with a global reach.

This creatively reflects the even spread of absolute professionalism and a clearly defined vision to ensure a welcome atmosphere for the customer and his diverse needs.

Our's is a name logo [typeface] that reflects an urbane outlook. It's a case in simplicity that will ensure easy recall and recognition.

Our pay-off [-you're welcome]

This reflects our promise to you the customer- a warm and friendly banking disposition at all times. This will come to bear at all our touch points.

Our spread

We have a network of 146 business offices in 72 towns across 31 states in Nigeria.

The focus is to bring banking closest to the customer.

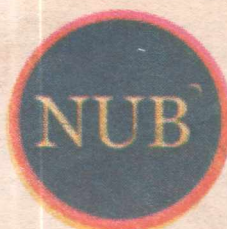
Our offering is universal banking based on global best practices.

Our target -the ultimate satisfied customer.

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EKO TRUST

Police arrest two Beninoise over child trafficking

The police in Lagos last week rescued 14 girls and a boy suspected to be victims of child trafficking from a building on Ijeh Road, Isolo.

● Children defend suspects

Stories by Olumide Bajulaiye, Correspondent (Lagos)

years were trafficked into Lagos from the Republic of Benin by two suspects currently in police net.

Our correspondent learnt that neighbours who noticed the children's presence inside the building alerted police officers at Isolo.

The children currently in the custody of the police said they were transported into the country from Benin with the consent of their parents.

successful as at press time.

The Police Public Relations Officer, Lagos State Command, Mr. Olubode Ojajuni, on Monday said the command had commenced moves to charge the two suspects to court.

Ojajuni, a deputy superintendent of police, said the command was concerned that such a number of children could be kept in a building "when it is not even a school."

...Smash bureau de change robbers

Police have smashed an armed robbery gang that specialises in raiding Bureau de Change operators in Lagos. Following a tip-off, a team of anti-robbery police officers from Itire Division arrested a member of the gang, who identified himself as Uzorchukwu Igwe, when he and his colleagues invaded Kia Motors Limited premises on Apapa-Oshodi Expressway, Lagos. But during preliminary investigation, the suspect made a confessional statement, which led to the arrest of three others, who earlier escaped arrest. Briefing reporters on the arrest of the suspects, the Lagos State

Police Public Relations Officer, DSP Olubode Ojajuni, confirmed that Igwe led others to attack on a Bureau de Change. He added that the timely response of a team of anti-robbery operatives from Itire Division dislodged the gang and arrested the leader of the robbery suspects, while others escaped.

He said the statement made by the ringleader to the investigating police team led to the arrest of three other suspects at their hideout in the city.

Ojajuni, however, gave the name of the three other suspects as Femi Fadairo, Rasaki Jamiu and Jekun Edozie.

The suspects, the police image-maker noted, have made useful statements that would be useful to police investigations.

A team of police officers deployed to the scene arrested two Beninoise namely Sunday Asoba and Dauo Oshe said to have masterminded the illicit business.

While wondering why the police should arrest them, the children said they were in the country to work.

Efforts to speak with the suspects were, however, un-

Lawmaker refutes plot to impeach Gov Tinubu

The majority Leader of the Lagos State House of Assembly Hon. Babajide Omoworare has said that the removal of the ex-Speaker of the Lagos State House of Assembly, Jokotola Pelumi, was not to pave way for the impeachment of Governor Bola Tinubu.

Omoworare, disclosed this at the finals of the sixth Omoworare Cup held in Ifako, Lagos.

He refuted insinuations in certain quarters that Pelumi's ouster was a grand design by the House to hunt or facilitate Tinubu's removal, adding that there is no iota of truth in the speculation.

According to him, the House has not seen any reason to remove or deal with the governor; hence the impeachment of the Speaker had nothing to do with Tinubu.

He explained that the relationship between the executive and the legislative arms of government is intact, adding that they are still working together to move the state forward.

He also dispelled the notion that the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has penetrated the House and is influencing the relationship between it and the governor. He

said one out of the 40 members of the House is a representative of the PDP.

"Since the governor of Lagos State was elected in 1999 and revalidated his mandate in 2003, he has done nothing to warrant his removal. We have been cooperating and collaborating in everything, any development witnessed in the state today is the efforts of both arms of government. We are not fighting with the governor; the impeachment of the Speaker has nothing to do with functions of the executive.

"Let me also tell you that the PDP has not made any incursion into the House," he said.

Pelumi was impeached on December 29, 2005 after 32 out of the 40 members signed his impeachment letter on the floor of the House.

The lawmakers, however, claimed that he was impeached for incompetence in handling affairs of the House.

They added that his ouster was to reposition Assembly. But speculations were that since he was close to the governor before he was impeached, the lawmakers would begin to find faults in the administration of Tinubu, which may lead to his removal.



It is in the habit of some people to carry out their business activities in a dirty environment as recorded at Ogba Lagos...recently
Pix: Oladipupo Odunewu

LASG spends N64m on street lights

The Lagos State Government has so far spent N64million on the provision and installation of streetlight in different parts of the State.

The State Commissioner for Works & Infrastructure, Engr. Rauf Aregbesola disclosed this while answering questions from reporters in his office.

He further disclosed that during the course of the year, streetlights would be installed at Adesope Street, Ijede, Yaya Abatan, Ogba and Mustapha Uraka Street, Epe.

The Commissioner pointed out that in a renewed effort aimed at further enhancing the emergency response capabilities of men of the Lagos State Fire Service as well as making them effective, government has commenced rehabilitation work on the Fire station at Ikeja.

Engr. Rauf Aregbesola noted that already, the engine of the generators at the station has been overhauled in addition to the reactivation of the two generator's alternator.

He added that the surface pump that services the station has similarly been reactivated while a new submersible pump has also been installed to further give strength to the fire-fighting capabilities of the men of the Lagos State Fire Service.

Engr. Aregbesola regretted that efforts by the state government to supply additional 540mw of electric power from Morogbo, Agbara have been frustrated by the federal Government, stressing that the state government is determined to contribute its quota towards putting an end to the problem of erratic power supply in the State.

Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN), the Commissioner hoped that the unbundling of the sector will make Nigeria attain uninterrupted power supply.

He further disclosed that government has commenced discussions with a private investor Dom-Electric (Nig) to provide electricity to industrial and commercial outfits, adding that a Memorandum of Understanding to be endorsed between the government and the Company is being worked out by the State Ministry of Justice.

Meanwhile, the Onilogbo of Ilogbo-Eremi in the Badagry Local Government of Lagos State, Oba Moses Ayinde Olaleye has hailed the state government for what he called its on-going efforts at providing basic infrastructure

which was contained in a letter from the monarch to the State Commissioner for Works and Infrastructure. Engr. Rauf Aregbesola noted "the promptness", with which the state government provided light for his community.

He recalled that prior to the provision of the streetlights within his community, social miscreants usually take advantage of darkness to perpetrate criminal activities, adding that since the provision of the street lamp, "such nefarious activities are now outdated".

While expressing his community's desire to make judicious use of it as well as protect it against vandals, Oba Olaleye further urged the state government not to relent in its efforts at providing basic and functional social infrastructure in the State.

Inside Politics

Gbenga Obasanjo's revelations: Presidency's moral burden

"This only is denied to God: the power to change the past". (Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, VI)

The controversial interview granted to former University of Lagos Students Union President, Omoyele Sowore, who was until penultimate week with the *elendureport.com*, a website where sleazy deals by corrupt Nigerian officials are reported upon investigations, by the son of President Olusegun Obasanjo, Dr. Gbenga Obasanjo and which was published in the last edition of *The News* magazine, has introduced a curious dimension to the incident of lingering political conflict between Obasanjo and his Vice President, Atiku Abubakar. Whether wittingly or unwittingly, Gbenga has stirred the hornets' nest by revealing (more than alleging) all manner of scam perpetrated by Mallam Nasir el-Rufai, former Director-General of the Bureau for Public Enterprises (BPE), who is now a Minister in the Presidency and Chairman of the Board of the Federal Capital Territory Authority (FCTA).

The swipe at Atiku
He had also taken more than a swipe at the Vice President, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, whom he claimed should be blamed for the pressure being mounted on his father to run for third term as, according to him, in response to a question as to why he (Obasanjo) cannot shut up top players in the private sector who are urging him on, "...The only reason why they are asking Baba (referring to the President) to stay is because they are afraid of Atiku. They know he will come and take over everything they have built with his unquenchable greed". Before this attack on the character of the Vice President, he had also accused the Vice President and the press of using the third term as blackmail against his father, saying "Atiku thinks the Presidency is his birthright and as such, it should be delivered to him pronto! Otherwise, who among my father's close friends is campaigning openly for his third term in office?"

He did not stop at that on the Vice President. He proceeded to concern himself with certain specifics: "...On Atiku, I think people get it wrong thinking that Baba is working against him. Atiku just thinks that the Presidency is his birthright. Look at AP and the privatization process. They just sold the entire country to themselves... Go to the Corporate Affairs Commission and see those who own Pentascope. You will see the fraud perpetrated against Nigeria. But the press will never report these things; they like to paint him nice even when the facts about these misdeeds are public knowledge". Prodded

By Sufuyan Ojeifo
(Special Correspondent)

further on el-Rufai being his father's favourite, Gbenga fired back: "That doesn't make him clean. Look at what he did with Jimi Lawal through the BPE. They paid him back all the money he looted from Alpha Merchant Bank. With interest! He was rehabilitated by el-Rufai and he made him a consultant, selling land in Abuja. He is el-Rufai shadow man in Abuja. We know that all these things are still going on. So, forget these people. It is all a sham". The explosive statements are all in the print media; they can no longer be withdrawn; they have been read and digested by Nigerians and cannot be taken out of the people's consciousness.

Deconstructing Obasanjo's regrets

Surprisingly, Gbenga is not getting the full dose of the stings for stirring the hornets' nest. When the interview went into circulation penultimate Sunday, the President, through his spokesperson, Senior Special Assistant on Media and Publicity, Mrs. Oluremi Oyo, said Gbenga was on his own, that the contents of the interview were his personal views and had nothing to do with the government. According to a statement signed by Oyo, "The attention of The Presidency has been drawn to the current edition of *The News* magazine whose cover story is an interview with Dr. Gbenga Obasanjo, one of the sons of President Olusegun Obasanjo. The Presidency wishes to state emphatically that the statements credited to Dr. Gbenga Obasanjo are embarrassing, unfortunate and regrettable. It must therefore be emphasized that they do not reflect the views of Mr. President and his government."

"The President does not bring any member of his family directly or indirectly into his political relationship with individuals or groups of people. To the best of Mr. President's knowledge and understanding, none of his other children, in any way, shares the views of Dr. Gbenga Obasanjo's alleged views as reflected in the magazine. As an adult, Dr. Gbenga Obasanjo is in the final analysis, responsible for his statements and actions". This is the crux of the Presidency's reaction: that as an adult, Gbenga is responsible for his statements and actions. This is the point analysts contend should be explored to know the motives that drove him to say that much in an interview, which he has now come out to say, was a private discussion, (perhaps) not meant to be an interview for publication. Even if it was a private

discussion, could he not have known, as intelligent as he claimed to be, the dangers in making those statements to another Nigerian who could spread them to others at larger inter-personal discussions? The view in some quarters is that Gbenga's vituperations could be a part of a grand plot to set the stage for el-Rufai's inquisition, in the calculations that once el-Rufai is

President's sons. If the idea is that he should replicate the Vice President's son as the appropriate person to respond. The V.P. doesn't belong to a culture in which children trade words with elders. Young men who attack men old enough to be their father are dismissed as rude and uncultured. This boy will not be glorified with a response. Let the mask come off the face



Gbenga Obasanjo: Stirring the hornets' nest.

"docked", there is no way he will not bring the Vice President into the picture. It is believed that it is the continuation of the smear campaign to break the will of the Vice President and get him to lose the moral high ground to seek to contest the 2007 presidency. Ask former Military Administrator of Lagos State and until December last year, a frontline presidential aspirant, Brigadier-General Buba Marwa, who spent eleven days in the custody of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in connection with some Abacha loot that was allegedly traced to his account somewhere!

Atiku's measured reaction

But in a swift, yet measured reaction that was indeed pregnant, an aide of the Vice President and his former Special Assistant (Media and Publicity), Mallam Garba Shehu, said "The Vice President is on Sallah break in Yola. Even if he is in town, it is unlikely that he will take issues with the President's son. What is the young man's platform? He is neither a politician nor a public office holder. The Vice President is not Gbenga Obasanjo's age mate. As a fact, the Vice President has a son who may be as old, and perhaps a better achiever than Gbenga. So that young man's only qualification to speak and be quoted in the media is that he is one of the

of the masquerade and we shall face each other. It is for me to add that the flow of communication on matters on all BPE approvals is that they begin with the Director General to the Vice President, then to Council, and finally to the President. The Vice President is not an approving authority. We are not aware that the procedure has changed. On the specific case of Pentascope, it was very much the same procedure".

el-Rufai in Catch-22 situation

While the Vice President and his men are seemingly prepared for a fight on the issue, a specific reference to: "...the mask come off the face of the masquerade and we shall face each other.", el-Rufai would appear to be in some Catch-22 situation: how does he react in the circumstance to Obasanjo's son without overdoing it? Would it not amount to an over-kill as a member of the Presidency to still go ahead to talk after the Presidency had issued a statement on the matter, even though inherent in the statement was the caveat that Gbenga as an adult is responsible for his statements and actions? In fact, el-Rufai, who is brilliant and intelligent enough to handle difficult situations as this, should have taken the gauntlet to defend himself as an adult on the specific charges of corruption. What is the Presidency up to? By saying that

Gbenga is on his own, is the Presidency (read Obasanjo) declaring to the world that it has or has not taken notice of the allegations of corrupt practices leveled against his Vice President and a minister in the Presidency who is an influential member of his economic team? Or, is it that the Presidency is playing some game, which is aimed at the systematic undermining of the Vice President and el-Rufai until such a time considered auspicious enough to deal the fatal blow on them in his characteristic manner of savaging friends and loyalists after using them to achieve set-objectives? Could it be true as it is being speculated that el-Rufai has fallen out with some more influential power brokers in the Presidency over some land deals in the FCT, which were meant to be allocated as compensations to those who worked to realize Obasanjo's re-election and which packages were allegedly diverted by el-Rufai to his friends?

No matter what, Gbenga's revelation has upped the ante for imminent investigation of the privatization deals under el-Rufai and the land allocation as well as sale of federal government houses under his administration at the FCTA. Aides of el-Rufai's - Dr. Abdu Mukhtar (Special Assistant on Economic Matters) and Hajia Amina Salihu (Special Assistant on Information and Strategy) - had cleared the air on the alleged absconding of Jimi Lawal with about N1 billion of the proceeds from the sale of the houses, but there are feelers that forces within and outside government are pushing for a probe of the exercise, against the backdrop of el-Rufai's sanctimonious and incorruptible posture. The calculations, as learned, are that if he is not impeached in the privatization deals, he might be in the land and sale of houses deal. And, of course, some forces in the Presidency are said to be desperate to impeach the character of the Vice President for obvious political reason: 2007 presidency, which Gbenga talked about at length in his interview.

Gbenga's revelations Versus clarifications of context

Although, Gbenga had, through his lawyers, S.O. Ajayi & Co., clarified that what he had with Sowore was a private discussion. Conference of Nigerian Political Parties (CNPP) has called on the Federal Government to institute an independent investigation into the revelations, otherwise it would go to court for an order of mandamus to compel such investigation. In a statement in Abuja signed by its National Publicity Secretary, Mr. Osita Okechukwu, CNPP commended Dr. Obasanjo for his candid view and patriotic exposition of the scam called privatization.

According to the CNPP, "Dr. Obasanjo, we could recall had sometimes volunteered similar statement, gazetting the monumental corruption that characterised his father's regime. CNPP's understanding is that the buck stops at the President's table and all Bureau for Public Enterprises (BPE's) approvals end with the President. We agree with Dr. Obasanjo in his assessment of the anti-corruption of the regime, that only unintelligent public officials or rather disloyal ones are caught; so, the intelligent corrupt officials and their collaborators are allowed to go scot-free. CNPP had, for the umpteenth time, alerted Nigerians that the auctioning of public assets by the regime is fraught and bedeviled with fraudulent monies, stolen from public coffer with little or no foreign investment". It commended Dr. Obasanjo for "exposing to the nation the phobia of Obasanjo regime to hand over, which is because of shady transactions. CNPP, consequently, calls for an independent investigation, failing which we institute order for mandamus".

Bolstering a script: will Presidency dance naked?

Unknown to the CNPP, its genuine and sincere call for investigation, as gathered, fits appropriately into the script by the masterminds of the plot to impeach the character of the Vice President, by first getting at el-Rufai, who according to feelers from sources close to the Presidency, would have been dispensed with in December last year, but had to be left for strategic reason, which is now unfolding. Nigerians now know that the President (as confirmed by a dear son of his, Gbenga) knows of the privatization scam, the land deals, the sale of Federal Government houses deal and the Jimi Lawal connection. Nigerians expect that the Presidency (Obasanjo) must rise to the occasion, in response to CNPP's call for investigation, to look into these issues. This is Presidency's collective moral burden. After all, Gbenga is the President's son while Atiku Abubakar as Vice President and el-Rufai as a Minister in the Presidency are part of the Presidency. But the question that is being asked against the backdrop of the subtle threat by the Vice President and his men that the mask should be allowed to come off the face of the masquerade so that they could face each other is this: since Obasanjo is the final approving authority in all of these matters, more especially, BPE privatization process, will he be ready to dance naked with others when the drum of equity is being beaten? Those who want to come to equity must come with clean hands. Will this be the dilemma if the Presidency chooses to go the whole hog to shed the humongous moral burden? Nigerians watch with bated breath the unfolding political development.

Inside Politics

Who said what at Sarduana's 40th anniversary?

The recently held 40th anniversary of the sarduana's death was an avenue for the North's leadership to engage in self examination and reflect on the late premier's virtues which appear to be inimitable by the clan of the present crop of politicians. Although it was heart warming to hear the *Aro* of Mopa and ACF's chairman saying that the Sarduana is replicated today in political office holders such as the governors and local government chairmen of the 19 northern states, it is however disheartening to observe that some members of these class may not have properly emulated the attributes of selflessness, patience, compassion, humility. Pious ness, sacrifice and the cache of sterling qualities easily associated with Alhaji, Sir, Ahmadu Bello.

Some speakers at the occasion made similar observations. They said that it is not enough to eulogise the revered leader without plans to put to practice the lessons he taught. They contend that unless this was done, the rhetoric will not in any way justify the memory of the great man. Governor Ahmed Makarfi of Kaduna state challenged those gathered to find a pragmatic way of copying the Sarduana's approach to leadership. In a tone suggestive of a rebuke he said that the late Premier did not engage in discrimination on tribal or religious line unlike the present realities in the region where such differentiation are still a challenge.

Magaji Dambatta

According to Alhaji Dambatta, the real problem is to locate where the north has derailed in learning from the Premier's legacy. "The question to ask ourselves is what did Sarduana did rightly to achieve all the successes and how we are doing it differently to have been derailed from his legacy" he said.

He then outlined the attributes of Sir. Ahmadu Bello and described him as a man of peace, harmony, humility and integrity. He said that "the late Sarduana of Sokoto read and appraises what is going on in the minds of people around him", observing that it will be wrong to assume that, though gone, the late premier is not watching and assessing today's

By Emmanuel Bello,
Political Editor;
Abdulraheem Aodu,
Reporter

leaders. He mentioned his contributions as monumental in the areas of education,



Vice President Atiku Abubakar



Adamu Ciroma

industry, trade, agriculture, water resources, health, sports, rural and urban development. "He epitomises simplicity, eats with bare hands with his drivers and servants in the same bowl, sits on the floor on his parlour. He left a mud house in Sokoto and a ravaged farm in Bakura"

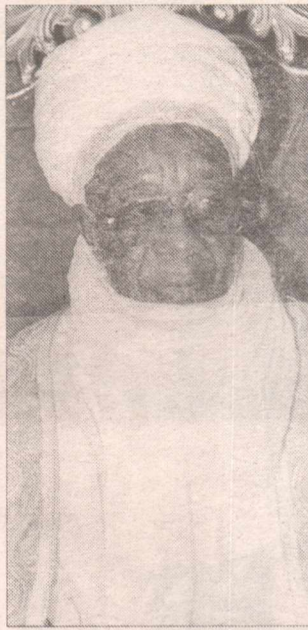
Adamu Ciroma

The former minister of finance's contribution was an exercise in History as he brought his discipline to bear on the subject. He pointed out that the premier's death marked the end of an epoch in the historical development of Nigeria, noting that the late Sarduana was a stickler for hard work: "He normally takes home many files in the evening and they will be returned, treated, in the morning."

Shehu Musa

In his own submission,

former National Population Commission chairman and mathematician of repute said the Sarduana was the real deal when the issue was transparency. He said that compared with the current



Sultan of Sokoto Muhammadu Maccido



Umar Shinkafi

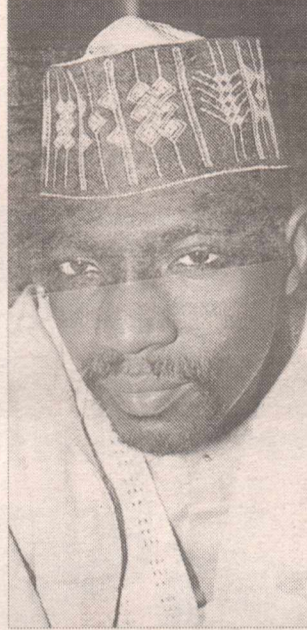
war on corruption, the late premier did a better job of fighting the menace and that he truly denounced dishonesty.

Ahmed Joda

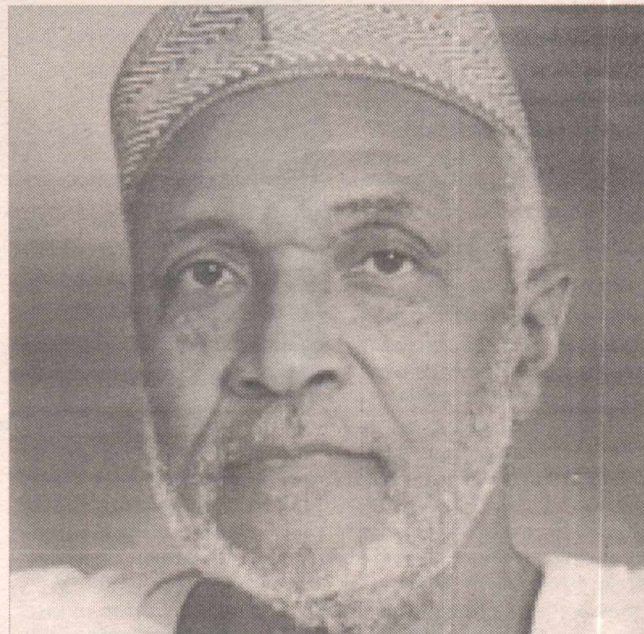
The renowned super perm. sec remembers Sir. Ahmadu Bello as a powerful man who finds time to mingle with the weak in the

society, thus making him a very humble man. Compared to present leaders, the Sarduana's meekness is one which rebukes the haughtiness of many today.

Umaru Shinkafi



Ahmed Makarfi



MD Yusufu

The Premier was also a passionate family man who, unlike some public office holders, ensured that he was available to his household. Shinkafi recounted an encounter with one of his grandsons. "one of his grandson Ahmadu Bello, the magajin Garin sokoto used to joke that were the

sarduana alive, he (magajin Gari) being the senior in rank, would have been sir. Ahmadu Bello's senior, but I quickly told him that if alive today the Sarduana would have been the sultan



Ahmed Joda

Justice Mamman Nasir

Challenging his audience to go beyond praising the Sarduana, Justice Nasir urged everyone present to find something worth emulating in the Premier. He also called for the unity of the North, pointing out that the

region could only become great in doing so. He suggested that a foundation in honour of the premier should be established to enable the region learn more of the leadership style of the late premier. He made this observation: "for forty years we have been remembering him. Forty years on we are still here. Forty years we need to know who we are, where we are going and where we need to be."

MD Yusuf

The former Inspector-General of police chided the congregation for singing the premier praises without bothering to visit his grave to pray for him, even as he reminded everyone present that the Sarduana's tomb was only 25 minutes walk away from the hall of meeting.

Sultan Maccido

His royal highness's presentation went straight the heart of the issue and said that while good leaders will be forever favourably remembered, the bad will be forever condemned by history, adding that the premier was a hard worker who sought consensus by dialoguing matters with others.

Governor Ahmed Makarfi.

The governor admonished leaders to retrace their step and find ways of emulating the Sarduana. He said that religious tolerance is paramount and that the premier symbolised this, observing that people should watch their language when talking about people of other faith. He said the word *kaffir* is wrong in describing a non Muslim and will deepen animosity among people.

Atiku Abubakar

The Vice President said he was not too young not to recollect the coming of the Sarduana to his part of the country. He said the issue was the plebiscite in which parts of the Northeast was asked to choose where to go between Nigeria and the Cameroon. He said that his people requested for three things: hospital, school, and a road. The Sarduana promised them these and fulfilled them. According to the VP these remain the only government edifices in his area till today.

**"He made this observation:
"for forty years we have been remembering him. Forty years on we are still here. Forty years we need to know who we are, where we are going and where we need to be."**

NEWS

Katsina NYSC to hold next orientation at permanent site

The second batch of the Nigeria Youth Service Corp (NYSC) members to be posted to Katsina state next August are to hold their orientation exercise at the ongoing multi-purpose/NYSC orientation camp project awarded by the state government at the cost of N324 million.

The state Commissioner for Social Development,

From Lawal Ibrahim, Katsina

Youth Affairs and Rural Development, Engineer Muttaqha Rabe Darma who disclosed this to newsmen while inspecting the project site in Katsina said government will provide all the necessary facilities for the proper take-off of the centre within the second quarter of this year.

The commissioner who inspected about six blocks of hostels, recruitment facilities, administrative blocks, some classrooms, VIP lodge and other infrastructural facilities which were about 80 per cent completed, said the centre will accommodate all corp members posted to the state while water electricity, football pitch etc would be provided before the

expiration of the contractual term of February 28, 2005.

He said, the ministry is currently tasking the local governments to participate in the orientation exercise and ensure accommodation and welfare of the corp members posted to their areas.

The State Director of the NYSC, Mr. Zacky Helwa, who accompanied the commissioner on the inspecting tour said, but for the interruption, the NYSC would have conducted its forthcoming exercise with about 1000 corp members at the newly constructed orientation camp.

Ex-commissioner gets chieftaincy title in Nasarawa

By Mustafa Abubakar, Abuja

The *Osana of Keana*, Senator Emmanuel Elayo, has appointed Mr. Mike Omeri as the new *Obowu of Keana*, the shade or *Inuwan Keana*.

He was installed at a ceremony in his palace as part of activities to mark the New Year. This was disclosed by the *Osana of Keana*, Senator Emmanuel Elayo, in a statement sent to *Daily Trust* recently.

Osana of Keana, said Mr. Omeri's appointment alongside with four others who bagged various titles at the occasion was in recognition of their numerous and outstanding contributions to the development of the Keana

chieftdom and Nasarawa state over the years.

Omeri, one time Commissioner for Works and Housing in Nasarawa state and a policy consultant at the Gulf of Guinea Consulting Firm in Abuja has held various media related appointments in the country. He is also a member of professional institutes such as the Federation of African Public Relations Association (FAPRA) and NIPR.

Others honoured by the *Osana* along Mr. Omeri are Justice MB Garba (rtd), Prince Mark Elayo and Eladoga Akyana.

...Civil defence recruits 215

The Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), has so far recruited two hundred and fifteen officers and men for the Katsina state branch even as it appeals for more facilities from the state and the federal government.

The Acting Commandant, Katsina state, Haruna Balarabe who disclosed this while receiving a list of another 45 new recruits from the Minister of Internal Affairs, Ambassador Magaji Mohammed said, all the recruits are indigenes from various local government areas of the state engaged from December 2005 to January 2006.

He said, the recruits are to assist in the maintenance of peace and order towards defending the defenceless, mobilise the polity against natural and man-made disasters as well as surveillance over government infrastructure, crowd control and the

arrest and handover of criminals to the police across the state.

Haruna, who however requested for vehicles and permanent office accommodation within the city among other things considered the outfit as a complement to the effort of other security agencies in the country.

The Minister of Internal Affairs, Ambassador Magaji Mohammed, whom was represented by his special assistant, Alhaji Ali Sani Mohammed, urged indigenes who did not make the list of new recruits not to be discouraged as recruitment is on the pipeline and tasked those recruited to rededicate themselves to the service of their fatherland.

The new recruits consist of regular members entitled to salary and pension among other retirement benefits while a significant number are volunteers who receive only allowances.

Service delivery to be monitored - Ekaette

The Secretary to Government of the Federation (SFG), Chief Ufot Ekaette, has said that the service delivery of all federal establishments will henceforth be monitored and assessed.

He said today in Badagry, near Lagos, that efforts would be made to collect and analyse performance information as the basis for policy intervention and change management.

Ekaette made the statement while declaring open a training workshop on service delivery.

The event was organized for officers of SERVICOM units of ministries, departments and parastatal agencies.

He reiterated government's commitment to ensure the provision of quality and honest services that would improve the citizens' lives compelled it to set up the SERVICOM programme.

"The purpose of service delivery is to meet the expectations of the public through effective, speedy and efficient delivery of services.

"This involves putting the citizens at the heart of service provision, enabling

them to monitor and discipline service providers and increasing their voice in policy making," he said.

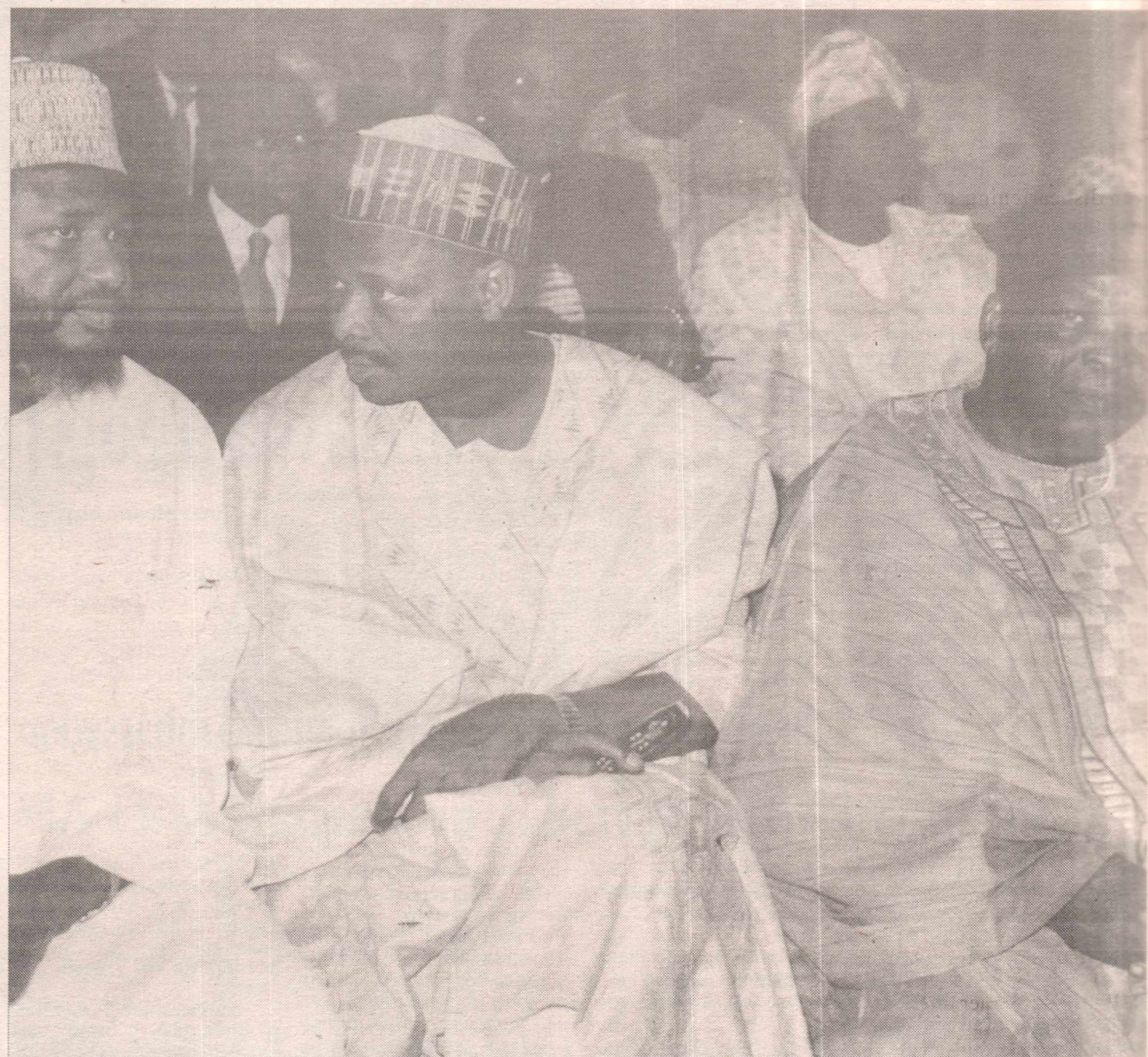
Ekaette, who was represented by Mr. Joseph Adeyemi, Permanent Secretary (Political Affairs) in the Office of the SGF, also stressed that people should be able to expect that the services would be easy-to-obtain and flexible.

The service providers should accept the principle that those, who use their services had a right to information and a right to complain, he added.

He said the Ministerial SERVICOM Units (MSUs) were expected to drive the initiative in their respective organizations with a view to developing a virile, vibrant and efficient public service.

He said the workshop was an appropriate investment in the officers of the MSUs as they constituted the driving force in the service delivery initiative.

Ekaette said the Public Awareness Campaign, aimed at making the public to demand for their rights from public agencies, would soon be launched.



From left are Governor Sani Yarima of Zamfara State, Dr. Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso, Defence Minister and the Minister of State, Internal Affairs, Dr. Joseph Odidi Itotoh, during the presidential stakeholders forum held at the State House, Abuja ...yesterday. Pix: Joe Oroye.

Group cautions minister over alleged falsehood

The Minister of Communications, Chief Cornelius Adebayo, has been criticised for making remarks based on falsehood to misinform the public and discredit the administration of Governor Bukola Saraki of Kwara state.

From Abdulrazaq Adebayo, Correspondent (Ilorin)

Bukola Success Movement (BUKOSM), in a statement signed by the state coordinator and secretary, Mr. Busari Abdul Hameed and Abdul Ganiyu Waliy respectively, said it was rather

unfortunate that a former governor of the state and statesman like Chief Adebayo would make such public remarks to discredit Dr. Saraki's government.

"Dr. Saraki-led administration has recorded visible and roundly acknowledged achievement in the socio-

economic and political development of the state," the group stated.

The movement appealed to the Kwara South political stakeholders and opinion leaders to call Chief Adebayo to order and caution him to desist from his unpatriotic and unpopular crusade which he has undertaken to achieve political interest.

Chief Adebayo has been receiving knock since his criticism of the Dr. Saraki-led administration at his year get together for his associates at his home Oke-Onigbin, making political watchers to whether he has given up his ambition in 2007.

Ajayi Crowther University opens today

The Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo, has announced today as resumption date for its pioneer students.

A statement by the institution's Registrar, Dr. Josephine Oyebanji, urged the students to report at the

campus for commencement of academic work.

The statement, given to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Ibadan yesterday, said 500 students from the six geographical zones of the country were expected on campus as freshmen.

The university is the baby of the Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion, and has its campus in Oyo, Oyo State.

The foundation students are expected to take courses in the sciences, humanities and the social sciences.

NEWS

Sultan calls for more industries in Sokoto

The Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammadu Maccido, has called on prominent indigenes of Sokoto state to set up viable industries in order to tap the economic potential in the state.

He made the call at the end of the fifth meeting of the Sokoto State Educational Development Fund (SSEDF), which was held at the state capital Monday.

The Sultan, appealed to the well to do to establish different viable business ventures with a view to attract market for the state, which has been lacking in industrial development.

According to him, the state has a lot to offer to the nation and the world as well but frowned at the attitude of wealthy individuals in the state who have not been forth coming in the area of industrial development.

Sultan Muhammadu Maccido, therefore urged all sons and daughters of the state to put heads together by lifting the name of the state which has played a vital role in the political development of Nigeria and beyond.

He stated, that the aim of the Sokoto educational development fund was to uplift the educational standard of the state which was once tagged as one of the educationally disadvantaged in the country.

He also lamented on the attitude of individuals who made pledges long ago to contribute to the development of the fund but

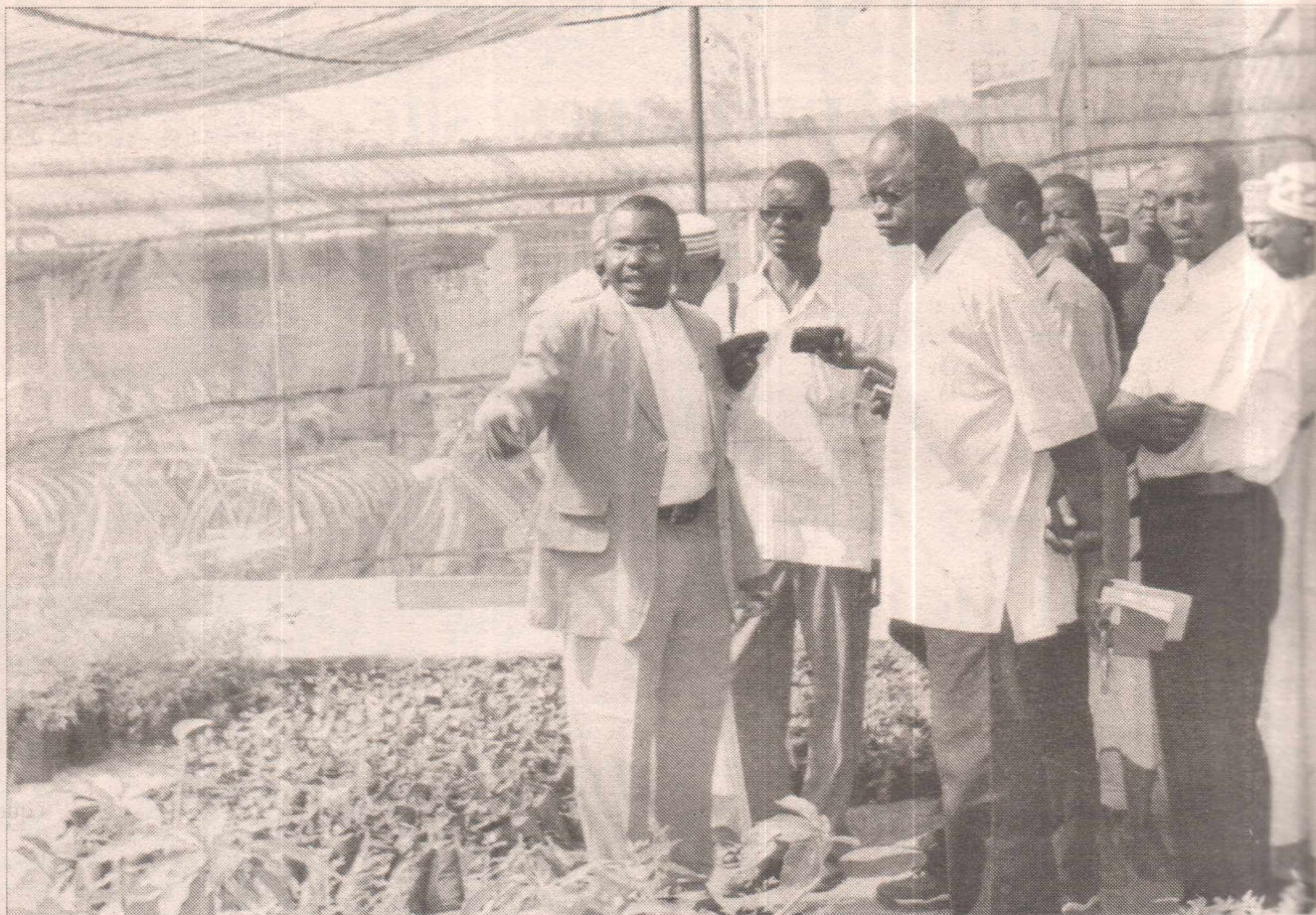
From Aminu Mohammed, Regional Editor, Sokoto

were yet to fulfill such promises.

The Sultan, therefore, appealed to all those who pledged to support the fund either in cash or in kind to fulfill their promises adding that "contributing to the education of our children is laying a solid foundation for our state".

In his remarks during the meeting, the chairman of the Sokoto Educational Development Fund former president Shehu Shagari also advised all those who pledged to donate to the fund during the last meeting in 2005 to hasten in fulfilling their pledges and called on other prominent sons and daughters of the state to contribute to the educational fund.

Among those who attended the meeting were senators, members of the House of Representatives from the state, top government functionaries, business tycoons and academics.



Executive Director of Ahmiral Environmental Care Limited, Mr. Shodrack Madlion, first left, explaining a point to press, during the press conference and facility tour of the company in Kaduna...weekend. Pix: Shehu K. Goro.

Adamawa agog for Atiku weddings

Yola, the Adamawa State capital is taking a new shape following massive refurbishing of roads and infrastructures in the sunshine city and its environs as part of the preparations to hosting

From Hamza Idris, Correspondent Yola

politicians and businessmen of Nigeria and beyond for the wedding ceremony of the Atiku daughters, Ahmatu and Aishatu, weekend.

The two weddings which observers christened "eye opener of the year" have transformed the state capital Yola into a sort of 'Broad street in London' going by the series of activities going on which have not been seen in recent times.

Daily Trust, investigations revealed that the German based construction magnet, Julius Berger, have resurfaced in full force and carrying out various road projects abandoned for years.

Other areas that have received clinical attention are the roundabouts at Galadima Way, which is the gateway to the state capital from the airport; Police roundabout situated at the heart of the city; and the Muhammadu

Mustapha Way main roundabout. Daily Trust findings revealed that apart from the fact that most of the roundabouts have been relieved from the posters of desperate political hopefuls, the beautifully designed roadmaps are now neatly painted and clothed with banners which remind every one who cares to look that something spectacular is in the pipeline.

Mallam Umar Mai Takalmi, a street hawker told this reporter that he was impressed with the sudden transformation of the town "am actually happy. I pray that more of such weddings would come up soon so that people like me would find it easy while trekking the streets in search of livelihood".

Obasanjo receives outgoing Spanish Ambassador

By Benjamin Auta, Reporter

Nigeria will continue to welcome genuine Spanish investors in keeping with terms of agreements signed during his visit to Madrid.

President Obasanjo, commended the outgoing ambassador for his efforts to enhance cooperation between Nigeria and Spain during his four years tenure and wish him well in future

endeavours.

In his remark, the outgoing Spanish Ambassador, Mr. Alfonso Portabales, thanked President Obasanjo for the support extended to him by the federal government as he further commended the president for his leadership of Nigeria and Africa.

Ambassador Portabales, further added, Spain was "delighted with its strategic partnership with Nigeria."

President Olusegun Obasanjo said that bilateral relations between Nigeria and Spain would continue to be strengthened for the mutual benefit of citizens of both countries.

In a press release made available to Daily Trust yesterday, the president who granted audience to the outgoing Spanish Ambassador to Nigeria, said that



From left: Governor Chris Ngige of Anambra State, Governor Achike Udenwa of Imo State and Mrs. Dipe Adelaja, during the presidential stakeholders forum held at the State House, Abuja...yesterday. Pix: Joe Oroye.

Tsav seeks support for MUP against 3rd term

From Hir Joseph, Correspondent (Makurdi)

A member of the newly formed Movement for Unity and Progress (MUP), Alhaji Abubakar Tsav, has called on Nigerians to team up with the anti-third term movement to truncate President Olusegun Obasanjo's speculated plans to extend his tenure beyond 2007. The former Lagos state police boss in a chat with Daily Trust expressed anger that at the time majority of Nigerians are finding it difficult to live a comfortable life without killers, armed robbers and sundry ills, a clique is busy working to transform Obasanjo into a life president.

Describing the Col. Abubakar Dangiwa Umar led MUP as a movement out to fight what he called Nigeria's biggest problem of the moment, Tsav urged

Nigerians to begin the anti-third term struggle from state governors whom he accused of being gripped by the fear of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), due to their alleged fraud in office.

He also urged them to face the National Assembly and fight the ongoing process to amend the constitution in favour of the speculated third term for Obasanjo, saying without giving them a good fight, the lawmakers would mortgage the future of Nigerians.

Tsav also said that both governors and the lawmakers were in agreement with the third term bid because they must repay the cooperation they received during the rigged 2003 elections.

News



Minister of Defence, Dr. Rabiu M. Kwankwaso (right) decorating promoted Cadet Brigade Commander, NDA, Major-General Joseph Agboola (centre), being assisted by NDA Commandant, Major-General A. Akale (left) in Kaduna recently.

We won't recognize Akala as Oyo governor - TMG

The Transition Monitoring Group (TMG), said it would not recognize Chief Alao Akala as Oyo State governor, saying the impeachment of Governor Rasheed Ladoja was carried out without due constitutional process.

It condemned the impeachment of Governor Rasheed Ladoja, adding that it would not accept disregard of the Nigerian constitution

By Sa'adatu Ovosi, Abuja

by forces bent on removing the governor.

In a statement made available to the *Daily Trust* in Abuja yesterday, TMG condemned the role played by the acting Chief Judge of Oyo State, Justice Afolabi Adeniran in the impeachment process, nothing that he failed in his duty as the last hope of the people by being

trons.

"The 'Politics' going on in Oyo State, calls to question the anti corruption stance of the federal government, and have grave implications for the consolidation of democracy," the statement said.

The group further warned that the frequent use of law enforcement agencies such as the police to perpetuate illegality, mayhem and lawlessness across Nigeria is dangerous for the survival of democracy in Nigeria.

It called on all citizens of Oyo State to remain calm and refrain from being used by anti democratic forces masquerading as politicians in Oyo State, saying the struggle to enthrone genuine democracy in Nigeria continues.

Hajj: Rep condemns diversion of feeding money

A member of the House of Representative Committee on Foreign Affairs and Chairman Hajj Sub-Committee, Hon. Tata Omar Saki, has condemned the reported diversion of money meant for the feeding of pilgrims in Saudi Arabia describing it as immoral and irresponsible.

Reacting to the exclusive story published in the *Daily Trust* last week that about N12 million naira given by Kano state government for the feeding of its pilgrims in the holy land was diverted, the sub-committee chairman on hajj affairs told *Daily Trust* in an interview in Abuja that he was personally shocked because as a special adviser to Bauchi State governor, he pioneered the government effort to feed pilgrims in Saudi

By Charles Onunaju, Reporter

Arabia.

Hon. Tata Omar, said that usually the contingent that arranged for the feeding of pilgrims contracted out the arrangement to a reputable food company in advance. The food is thus prepared and distributed to pilgrims in take away kits enabling each pilgrims to decide when and how to eat his or her meal.

He criticized the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Alhaji Abubakar Tanko and the Director of the Pilgrims Board, Professor Gwandu for the terrible lapses witnessed in this year's hajj operation where over 14,000 intending pilgrims could not make it to Mecca.

Hon. Tata Omar further told *Daily Trust* that the

committee on foreign affairs have earlier raised questions on some of the airlines contracted for the hajj especially the Trans-Saharan airlines, that has outstanding problems with the Saudi aviation authorities. According to him, both the minister and the director of the pilgrims board claimed that everything was on course, until the crises of stranded pilgrims exploded before the nation adding that the best way the two can please Nigerians over the incident is to resign.

Hon. Tata Omar, urged that Malaysia and Indonesia that usually airlift large numbers of intending pilgrims without hassles should be emulated while sympathizing with thousands of intending pilgrims he urged them to keep alive their desire to perform the sacred injunction of Islam.

Journalists make case for democracy

The Nigeria Union of Journalists, has said that the press is mandated by law to monitor and assess the activities of all elected officials in line with their oath of office in order to ensure that they meet up with the wishes and aspirations of the electorate.

This was disclosed by the NUJ chairman in Adamawa State, Mr. Solomom Kumangar, when he led the project monitoring team of the union to Yola North local government headquarters yesterday.

Mr. Kumangar, who quotes succinctly, chapter 2 sub section 22 of the 1999 constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria which empowers the press and by extension journalists to serve as watchdogs over persons in positions of leadership stated that his team was at the local government area to see for themselves what the council has delivered to the people in the last six years.

According to him "as representatives closest to the people at the grassroots, your performance is the greatest asset in the hands of the

From Hamza Idris, Correspondent (Yola)

electorate to measure the achievement of the entire democratic process". He therefore called on the council to brace up for more challenges, adding that much is expected from them in the forthcoming population and housing census.

Responding, the Deputy Chairman of the Council, Mr. Ishaya Adamu Bassey, told the project monitoring team that the incumbent administration has transformed the local government positively to the envy of their contemporaries. He said, that so far, the council have constructed a maternity health center in Jimeta at the cost of N10.5m. This is in addition to 8 clinics and 11 boreholes spread across the 11 wards across the local government.

The Deputy Chairman added that the council has purchased 40 water pumps at the cost of N9m which were distributed to farmers in the area free of charge under the Poverty Reduction Programme of the local government.

Niger-Delta: Obasanjo sets up committee on release of hostages

President Olusegun Obasanjo yesterday set up a committee to ensure the prompt release of the oil workers who were recently seized by militants in the Niger-Delta region.

This was contained in a press released made available to *Daily Trust*, yesterday.

According to the release, the president established the committee after a high level meeting with

By Benjamin Auta, Reporter

senior government officials and security chiefs.

The president who appealed to those responsible for kidnapping of the oil workers and the vandalism of oil installations called on them "not to do anything that might result in the loss of lives."

The governor of Bayelsa, Delta, Rivers and Ondo states participated in the meeting.

Three snatchers of cell phones nabbed in Akwa Ibom

Three people suspected to be snatchers of cell phones (GSM) were picked yesterday by Akwa Ibom State police command.

The suspects are Ini Mark Udoh, Bassey Sunday Bassey and Victor Etim David.

Parading the suspects yesterday at the state police headquarters, the Police Public Relation Officer, Mr. Chafar said the police swung into action following a complaint by one Emmanuel Apetage that his cell phone was snatched during

From Edet Ekanem, Correspondent (Uyo)

the burial mass of the late elder brother to the governor of Akwa Ibom State, late Dr. Anthony Bassey Attah on Saturday.

Mr. Chafar, said, detectives arrested one Ini Mark Udoh from whom three cell phones were recovered from him, he could not satisfactorily establish the ownership.

On interrogation, the suspect revealed that he snatched the cell phones during the burial mass at

Sacred Heart Church, Aka Road at the weekend and named one Alhaji Baba of No 15 Udo Street, Uyo as the receiver.

He also named Bassey Sunday Bassey and Victor Etim David as gang members.

Mr. Chafar, said, further that based on the information, the Special Armed Robbery Squad (SARS) raided their hideouts and recovered two (2) more cell phones.

They claimed they have strong network in Lagos and Abuja where they dispatch stolen phones for sales.

NEWS

Kabo enforces strict excess baggage policy in Jeddah

Hundreds of airlifted pilgrims from Saudi Arabia had to throwaway their excess luggages at King Abdulaziz International Airport, Jeddah, following strict enforcement of hand luggage policy by Kabo air, the main airline carrier for this year's hajj.

Expensive luggages, velvet blankets, clothings, perfume and many other items meant for gifts by the pilgrims were dumped at the checking-in-point for Nigerian pilgrims even as airport

From Musa Umar Kazaure,
in Jeddah

officials contemplated sending them to the trash for disposal. The pilgrims were forced by Kabo air officials at the airport to respect the agreement entered into between state pilgrims welfare board and the airline that hand luggage should not exceed one bag and a five gallon of Zam-Zam water.

Daily Trust reporter and pilgrims from Sokoto and Kebbi states watched

helplessly as their baggages loaded with gift items were thrown into the trash bins at the airport.

The action by Kabo air also sent fears into other state pilgrims awaiting airlift to cut down on the sizes and number of their luggages, even as Kebbi and Sokoto state pilgrim officials made preparations to pick up the excess luggages from the airport trash dump and send them through cargo to minimise the loss of the pilgrims.

An official of Kabo Air at Jeddah airport, Malam Shauibu, told Daily Trust that the pilgrims had been warned severally at home and in Saudi Arabia of the impending enforcement of the luggage policy. He added that only 40 kilograms was allowed for checked-in baggage while 10 kilograms for hand luggage, saying Kabo went further to offer a free five gallon of Zam-Zam carriage for each pilgrim to this year's hajj.

Alhaji Shuaibu noted that

pilgrims are only advised to choose any luggage of their choice among the excesses they brought and the rest is discarded right before them. He said some officials of the state government affected are already making plans to send the dumped luggages through cargo.

Some of the affected pilgrims who spoke to Daily Trust at Jeddah airport, said it was unfair for Kabo not to provide an alternative for them like a cargo service at the airport. Alhaji Ibrahim Abubakar said, "If such service were available at the check-in counter, it would have given the pilgrims the opportunity and choice to either pay for the excess or let them go. But in this situation, you have only one choice, accept to forfeit your luggage or miss your flight."

An official of Kebbi state pilgrims board, Alhaji

Abubakar Hassan Suru, said the state government is already making arrangement to ship the pilgrims excess luggages through cargo airplanes, adding "we will not allow our pilgrims to lose their goods like that."

Efforts to get Kano and Sokoto state officials to comment on the plights of the pilgrim failed but competent sources with Kano pilgrims board hinted this reporter that Kano may also tow the Kebbi way but added, the pilgrims are at fault. We told them severally that Kabo will not take excess luggages but they refused to heed our advise. So they are to blame for whatever befalls them at Jeddah airport.

Meanwhile, the return airlift operation by Kabo air continued Monday with the airlift of Abuja, Kebbi, Nasarawa and Kano states pilgrims.



L-R: The Zonal Coordinator (North-West) of National Blood Transfusion Service, Dr. Ifeoma Ogbue, Medical Director of NBTS, Dr. Aminu Sirajo and the Editor of New Nigeria newspaper, Alhaji Muhumud Jega, at the interactive session with media executive "for the importance of regulated blood service in the provision of safe blood supply to the community," held in Kaduna ...recently. Pix: Shehu K. Goro.

NIPOST marks Pan Africa Post Day today

By Hamisu Muhammad,
Assistant IT Editor

The Nigerian Postal Service (NIPOST), will today join 42 other postal administrations in Africa to celebrate the 2006 Pan African Post Day.

The celebration, which will be held at the Abuja Sheraton Hotels and Towers, will witness a grand reception and award to Nigerian literary icons, which include, Nobel laureate, Professor Wole Soyinka, Doyen of African literature, Professor Chinua Achebe, and late Abubakar Iman.

Others include, renowned scientist, Professor Gabriel Oyibo, Professor Philip Emeagwali, and the inventor of Autonav, late Professor Ayo-

dele Awojobi.

Meanwhile, the agency yesterday honoured its retirees who served for the minimum of 35 years or having attained the mandatory 60 years of age.

Speaking at the event held at NIPOST corporate headquarters, the Acting Post Master General, Mr. Omoniyi H. Ogunyankin, said the honouring of the retirees will help the organisation's corporate objectives by encouraging and fostering the spirit of healthy competition in the industry.

He said, the gesture will go a long way in stimulating productivity consciousness in the entire workforce of NIPOST.

He also stated that, NIPOST management attaches great importance to the issue of quality service.

The total number of retirees, according to him, were 148 who were outstanding during their service and deserved to be honoured.

2007: I will contest against Buhari – Kalu

Governor Orji Uzor Kalu of Abia state has stated that he is ready to face General Muhammadu Buhari in a presidential battle come 2007, even as he condemned the recent impeachments in the country.

Speaking at the home of the ex-head of state General Buhari yesterday, Kalu, who came to commiserate with him over the death of his ex-wife, Safinatu, said he is not deterred by the alleged third term ambition of President Olusegun Obasanjo as it is not possible.

Kalu, who was in Kaduna with Obasanjo's son, Dr. Gbenga Obasanjo, said: The presidency in 2007 is for Orji Uzor Kalu, "because we are ready to fight for fairness, equity and justice. I will contest against General Muhammadu Buhari come 2007, if he decides to run for the presidential election. If President Obasanjo wants to

From AbdulRaheem Aodu,
Correspondent (Kaduna)

run for the presidency in 2007, I am prepared to give him a run for his money because I can never dodge away from my civil rights like others did.

"However, the president has not told me he is going to run for another term, so the third term issue is not possible. I have respect for Mr. President and his office but I don't have respect for any Nigerian who breaks the law and the constitution.

"We want constitutional democracy that would have respect for the judgement of the Supreme Court and the High Courts. It is because governors have refused to co-operate, speak out and stand-up to defend their rights and democracy that is the reason for the impeachments (in Bayelsa and Oyo states), but that cannot happen in Abia state or any

other Ibo state because we will stand up and fight it," he said.

Though, Dr. Gbenga refused to utter a word throughout the duration of the interaction. Governor Kalu explained his presence in his entourage thus: "Gbenga is been my friend for a long time even before I became governor and his father was aware that he is very close to me. I know he will support me to run for the presidency."

He had earlier commiserated with General Buhari "on behalf of himself and the people of Abia state and the entire South" while praying God give the family the fortitude to bear the loss, and bless those whom she left behind.

General Buhari thanked the governor for coming and to condole him on the death of his former wife, he described the visit as one that cannot be forgotten and commended Kalu for his

efforts in building bridge of reconciliation, love and unity in order for Nigeria to remain one.

He said, his ex-wife left

behind five children, four of which are females. The youngest of the females, he said, currently is studying in United Kingdom.

Duke worries over poor performance in SSCE

From Bassey Ita, Calabar

Governor Donald Duke of Cross River state has expressed worry over the poor performances recorded by schools in the state in the last Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSCE) and stressed the need to overhaul the educational system to achieve academic excellence.

Duke, who was addressing principals of public secondary schools recently noted that the overhauling process would reverse the deplorable records in the educational system especially of results of the senior secondary certificate examination.

The governor also urged the school heads to instil discipline in their teaching staff saying, that as a

governor and stakeholder in the future of the state, he was worried about the deplorable state of education in the country despite government's huge financial commitment to the sector.

According to him, four schools namely, the West African Peoples Institute (WAPI), Army Day Secondary School, Government Secondary School and NYSC Secondary School performed woefully in the 2004 SSCE, adding that white WAPI registered 82 students for the examination only four passed with five credits with none in English and Mathematics.

At the Government Secondary School, the governor noted that only five out of 130

students had five credits while those who passed had either English or Mathematics.

Three out of 126 students of the NYSC school had five credits with none in English and Mathematics.

Duke, described the result as embarrassing and pledged that government will endeavour to reverse the situation.

According to him, for a student to be promoted from Senior Secondary Class II (SS II) to Senior Secondary Class III (SS III), such a student must pass at least six subjects at credit level including English and Mathematics adding that an average of 55 percent must be recorded while in the junior secondary school examination.

ABUJA PROPERTY

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ABUJA LANDMARK



The SCC Headquarters complex: The SCC (Nig) Ltd headquarters complex is a tastefully designed structure situated within the Utako district of Abuja FCT.

The construction firms heed office complex, constructed on severed floor with an excellent internal and external finishing in marble and glass. The SCC water pipe factory in Bwari will be inaugurated Friday by President Olusegun Obasanjo.

Complaints galore over sale of FCT houses

Litany of complaints mounts over sales of FCT houses

The general public, including career civil servants in Abuja have begun mounting litany of complaints over sales of FCT houses by the Federal Capital Territory Authority (FCTA) in the face of FCT minister, Mallam Nasir El-Rufai's assurance of his government's focus on transparency in the sale of government houses.

The minister gave the assurance in a speech he delivered through his special assistant on economic matters, Dr. Abdu Mukhtar at a ceremony to conclude run-off bids for the properties.

A press release signed by the minister's special assistant on information and strategy, Hajia Amina Saliyu, made available to *Abuja Property* said that the run-off bid exercise which was conducted in the open at the FCT Administration's conference room was in accordance with the

By Mustafa Abubakar, Abuja

guidelines set out after discovering that different bids are typed on the winning bid price on three properties after the initial bid process late last year.

On the legal case instituted by the Messer Wale Babalakin & Co which initially posted the purported winning bid for N140million for a property at 1, Katsina-Ala Street, the FCT minister explained that it would be against the guidelines to allow that as an initial mix-up in the address of the property allowed the bid to be won in error. After its re-advertisement with corrected address from its previously advertised No. 30 to 1, Katsina-Ala Street, Equinox Oil & Gas Ltd turned out a higher bidder of N160million.

The failure of Messer Wale Babalakin & Co to turn-up at the run-off made the Equinox Oil & Gas Ltd the winner with N160million against 140million of Wale Babalakin & Co.

Another case explained was the property at block B, flat 2 Euphrates Street, Pantasoft Ltd which upped its fresh bid to a combined total of N11,110,000 finally won ahead of Mr. Shehu Anka whose additional bid to a final total of N10.8 million gave him a lower bid.

Abuja property gathered that staff of the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) may lose out in the current sale of residential houses by the federal government because of the rules of the sales which did not accommodate them due to the non-payment of government's monetization benefits in the agency.

A two-page report received by *Abuja property* indicated that, like any other civil servant, the workers were expected to pay 10% of the cost of their houses within a stipulated period and the balance in 90 days, majority of the workers are still grappling with loans for the settlement of the first 10%, and the agency charged with the sales is bent on keeping

It further explained that Mallam Nasir El-Rufai, who is in charge of the sales said all aspects of the programme would go on as planned and will be concluded this year, adding that banks reluctant to grant loans to the workers due to their merger, will soon be over.

At various times he had advised concerned civil servants to source for funds to pay for their houses rather than living ostentatious lives. "I have advised them to sell their cars and pay for the houses and asked, is it not better to own a house than drive a car and lose your house?" the statement said.

The statement added that the monetization benefits in the parastatals were issues outside the schedule of duties of his ministry and would not affect his programme, noting that monetization benefits had been implemented in core ministries while the parastatal workers are still waiting.

Quite different from the ministry's position at the onset of the house sales last year

programme was driven by monetization in the FCT and by commercialization in Lagos", the statement informed.

The case of Mr. David Udosen, a principal clerk at the Nigeria Agricultural Insurance Corporation (NAIC), the government parastatal on Independence Avenue, Central Business District, Abuja which has taken over centre space of the parastatal is an unfortunate case.

In a three page release titled *Monetization: foul play at the Nigeria Agricultural Insurance Corporation* made available to *Abuja Property* indicated that after years of faithful service, Udosen was in May 1992 allocated block 176 FHA Phase 1 in Karu as his official quarters but is about to be thrown out by the management of the corporation, in defiance to the federal executive council directive that occupants of official government quarters be given a right of first refusal before their quarters can be offered to another

ABUJA PROPERTY NEWS

Obasanjo to inaugurate SCC water pipe factory

President Olusegun Obasanjo would on Friday formally inaugurate the SCC steel pipe manufacturing factory located in Bwari Area Council, FCT which was commissioned in 2003.

General Manager of SCC, Mr Yuval Levy, who disclosed this to journalists last week, said that against all external pressure, the SCC steel pipe factory is the only one of its type in the entire West African sub region,

recognised and certified by the International Standard Organisation (ISO) and the American Petroleum Institute (API).

Mr. Levy said the decision to set up the factory in 2001 was in response to the vision of the federal government to promote the development of local industries specifically to meet the ever expanding demands for seriously needed steel pipes and fitting to serve the water, petroleum, oil and gas

sector.

The SCC factory, he said capable of processing one hundred tons of steel annually, boast of estate of the art equipment and used for important mechanical application, including pilling and structural steel fabrication.

Mr. Levy said the factory set out to provide steel pipes, which were (and remain) a major requirement for the Gurara conveyance pipe lines project, and the production of

the steel pipes of various diameters, to feed other projects across Nigeria.

The SCC boss however lamented on the sad fact that despite the presence of SCC factory in the country, Nigeria is still importing all its required quantities of Ductile Iron and/or steel pipes for the water, gas and petrochemical industry.

"This phenomenon translates rather painfully, to hundreds of thousands of tons annually, imported into the Nigerian market. This also

simply means capital flight, because millions of dollars in foreign exchange are expended thereby, to the detriment of local pioneers like SCC Nigeria."

Complaints galore over sale of FCT houses

Contd from Page 29

Rather being offered such right to Mr. Udosen, the management of the parastatal preferred to offer the six quarters to the Federal Housing Authority who allocated the corporation quarters in Phase 1, Karu to their cronies, defeating the purpose of the verification exercise, to the utter detriment of their legitimate occupants. Tenants of the other five quarters had earlier been taken for a ride through a new policy that was hatched overnight with the sole purpose of defeating the federal government's good intention to house public servants in their official quarters on an owner-occupier basis.

Summarily retired with a letter signed at the close of work of 30th November 2005, which took effect from 1st December 2005, Udosen was allegedly checked out of his room in NAIC HOUSE, and barely allowed to empty his drawer of personal effects, in the event leaving him and his family of six without having where to lay their heads. The committee however issued questionable letter of offer to a colleague of his, based in the South East Zone of the country, who had no prior knowledge of the existence of the quarters.

The real issue which Udosen will like to know is whether or not he was duly accorded his right of first refusal and if offered now, can he still afford to foot the bill.

The ministry of Agriculture quarters in Zone 4 and 2, Wuse, Abuja were also cases in question, where seniority gets the owner-occupier rather than being a staff and confirmed payment of at least six months rent to the government purse and even put aside the relationship that exist between two or more families sharing a flat.

A tenant who spoke anonymously to *Abuja Property* recently said "a brother of mine and many staff of the ministry staying in these quarters had no shelter to cover themselves as they were made to loose their right of first refusal due to their inability to pay the 10 percent due to their merger salary which is not in the case of the senior staff who paid the first and the second installment and automatically won the right of occupier of such flat." Where is justice in this case, she asked.

She however emphasized "somebody who has been in a house for more than ten years and over night lost it due to somebody able to get the money before him. El-Rufai should do some thing to this and many other cases related to this issue of owner-occupier as claimed by his administration before it is too late".

Abuja property also received a two pages petition titled *sales of government houses in FCT Re: legal occupants in share apartments (expression of interest for the purchase of government house)* jointly signed by O. Okosor of Blk C, flat 12, Esther Ibeawuchi of Blk B, flat 5 and O. A. Ajiboso of Blk G, flat 22 of patnasonic estate (both staff of ministry of works), A. J. Ajayi of Blk F, flat 27 patnasonic estate (staff of water resources), located at Uruguay street, Maitama Abuja and Abdul Olusheshi of former federal ministry of works and housing wuse II, Abuja and was sent to *Abuja property* indicated that as a way of expressing their individual minds, they appeal for the sharing formula to be revisited to ensure fair treatment for all career civil servants.

It further expressed that despite the government loud statement of protesting the interest of the civil servants, "the seniority clause imposed on shared apartments has denied vast majority of civil servants who are in shared apartments, the opportunity of first offer of refusal in the apartment they occupy, whereas most of the people would have been interested in availing themselves of this opportunity to own a house in the FCT. It could be recall that most of these people in shared apartments, including us have been losing rent subsidy on this shared apartment. The idea of giving the most senior person in these shared apartments, the first offer of refusal to buy the apartments, while others being subjected to public bidding process, be re-visited. Please you may recall that we are all core civil servant and should be treated equally."

"Our interest is to avail ourselves of the opportunity to own a house in the FCT, since this is where we work and live with our respectable family, we therefore appeal, we should be given an offer commensurate with middle class civil servants in our present locality or within the FCT Municipal", the statement added.

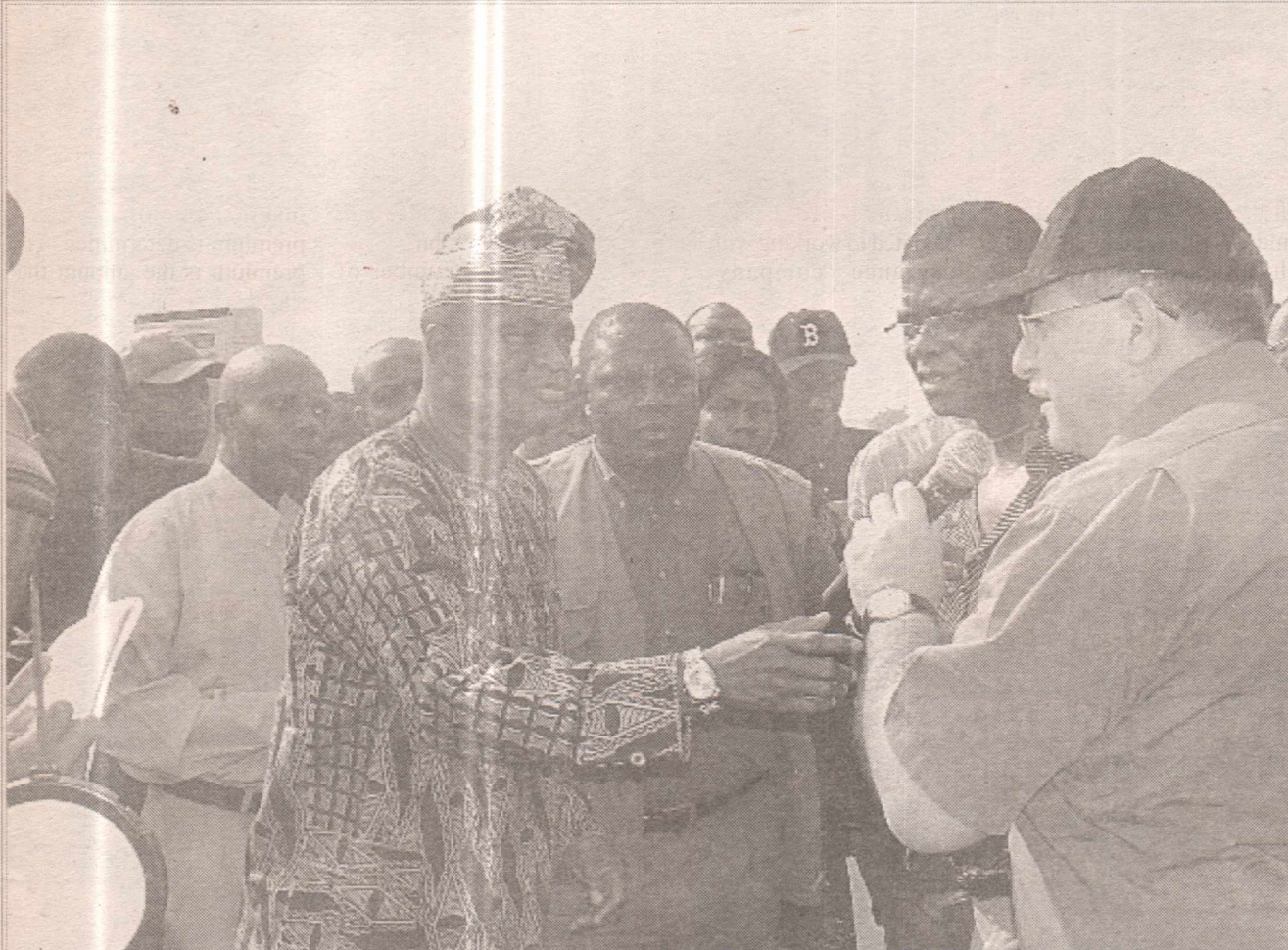
Our reporter equally gathered that it however pertinent to note that during the bidding exercise, the house of head of service of the federation, Alhaji Yayale Ahmad was even included in the houses to be bid for and quit unfortunate the house was bid for by another person whose bidding was higher than that of the head of service of the federation, Alhaji Yayale Ahmad, which mean the head of service of the federation, Alhaji Yayale Ahmad will loose the house going by the rule of the game.

Also a messenger in the same office of head of service of the federation, sold his house at Gwarimpa which was valued at N4 million at the rate of N12million, paid the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) 4million, pocketed N8million and became a millionaire overnight.

Another career civil servant who spoke to our reporter anonymously said "cases of losing of offers by genuine civil servants wasn't out of not being able to meet up with the payment of the 10% only, but it was also due to some transferred staff who have already allocated some of these houses before now, having their certificate of offer with them and quickly came to claim such houses when the government commenced the sale of houses in Abuja and left most of us into the hands of either agreeing with them or outright loss of the house and what could come out to our side as our financial gain as they've already gotten the right of first refusal through the back door before we know. So this is the situation my brother," she affirmed.

Despite these ugly situations created which has successfully paved way for value of houses beyond occupants and could not give them the opportunity for the right of first refusal in the purchases as such made some to sell their houses to outsiders who has the means to do so in order to meet up with the deadline of the FCDA.

Nevertheless, in continuation of the sales thus, the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) office in charge of sale has fixed January 18th 2006 for the third place bidding for interested career civil servants and the general public.



The minister of works, Senator Adeseye Ogunlewe, Director Federal Highways, Engr. David Jime with Setraco Managing Director, Mr. Bassam Hadad during the inspection of Abuja-Nyanya-Keffi road...recently.

Ogunlewe wants alternative road funding sources

The works minister, Senator Adeseye Ogunlewe has reiterated the need for a designate source of funds for roads maintenance at rural and state levels of the country. He stated this in his office while receiving the new president of the Nigerian Society of Engineers (NSE), Engineer Emeka Muoma Ezech along with members of the Ghana Institute of Engineers (GIE) who are in the country for a workshop on making all Nigerian roads motorable, he said in Abuja.

In a statement by the chief press secretary to the minister Lawrence Ojabo, expressed the minister's observation that most agricultural activities and agro-related industries in the country were based in the rural areas with deplorable roads.

"The administration of President Olusegun Obasanjo was determined to reverse the trend and ensure good roads at all levels of Government, particularly in the Niger Delta region which produced the bulk of the nation's foreign exchange."

He called to mind the historical and administrative antecedents between Nigeria and Ghana, and expressed the hope that Engineers from the two countries could work

together on the implementation of the proposed Road Funds in Nigeria and revealed that Nigerians consumed 38 million litres of petrol daily because of the huge number of vehicles on Nigerian roads.

With increasing vandalisation of oil pipelines in the Niger Delta, he said there was a need to find alternative sources to fund road maintenance instead of the present reliance on budgetary allocation, derived

mainly from crude oil exports revenue.

Speaking earlier, the President of the Nigerian Society of Engineers, Engineer Emeka Muoma Ezech observed that the challenge before Engineers and Nigerians is to make people accept the fact that good roads must be paid for adding that "the political undertones inherent in it must be recognized and addressed".

He added that the

responsibility of Engineers is to provide the technical information that would enable politicians to take the right decisions. "The truth is that there is no free lunch anywhere. If you want good roads, somebody has got to pay for it, and the way to pay for it is to ensure that there is a regular source of income."

However, the fear of all Nigerians is how to ensure that the funds set aside are judiciously and transparently used."

whatever amount realized will be used judiciously, hence, the need for a legal framework for a strong board".

In his remark, the permanent secretary in the ministry, Dr. Hakeem Baba-Ahmed also said that "Nigeria is in a threshold for a kind of road transformation" and urged Nigerians to borrow leave from the Ghana's 20 years old Road Fund which its implementation commenced immediately then with a little sacrifice and now Ghana's roads have changed for good today.

"For Nigeria to come out of its deplorable condition of roads there must be a little sacrifice which will go a long way touching the lives of Nigerians," he stressed.

..... says road funds will make Nigerian roads motorable

The Minister of Works, Senator Adeseye Ogunlewe has said that is only the effective implementation of the National Road Fund (NRF) that can make Nigerian roads motorable at all times.

He declared this while workshop organized by the Nigerian Society of Engineers (NSE) in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Works held in Abuja recently.

The Senior Information Officer, Mrs. Janet McDickson in a statement quoted the minister as saying that President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo is determined to make Nigerian roads motorable and urged the participants to deliberate

well to come out with an acceptable suggestions for National Fund on roads. He added that the funds will be divided between the Federal, State and Local Government as good roads improve agriculture, reduces cost of living, accidents, and expand economy and intra/extra transportation.

Ogunlewe disclosed that "the Ministry's projection annually is N36billion and believes that only the introduction of National Road Fund can make the dream of making Nigerian roads good all the time, as there were so many other pressing needs to be taken care of in the nation's budget. The fund will be managed properly, so that

ABUJA PROPERTY

Home insurance in Nigeria

Nigerians' perception on some things makes one think that they are generally superstitious people. To some Nigerians, acquiring home insurance seems to imply that the home will burn down, be burgled or otherwise be damaged in some way. This, of course is hardly the case. It is just the same way like carrying an umbrella when one goes out does not mean one is asking for a rainy day, obtaining an insurance policy is not asking for disaster. Insurance of any kind is simply a precautionary measure, much like vaccinating a baby.

Home insurance may be described as a guarantee of compensation for loss, damage or any other negative incident to the home provided by a company or organization. The type of home insurance to buy depends on whom the property belongs to.

In Nigeria, the person who legally owns a home may acquire a Home Owner Comprehensive policy which insures the dwelling as well as the possessions or personal property within the house against fire, burglary and even natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes. In addition, such a person could get a Public Liability policy. A Public Liability policy covers

Giving an insurance cover for houses, especially the ones built in cities and towns is very important. Such cover could be against fire or any other form of damages that may occur while the house remains under cover. Insuring a house is all about an agreement by which one party promises to pay the other party money in the advent of loss or damage to property covered by an insurance policy. Assistant Editor, Abuja Property, Sunday Ejike Benjamin, takes a brisk look at home insurance in Nigeria

accidents that happen to other people on your property for which you may be held responsible, such as a neighbor tripping on broken steps on your property.

A tenant on the other hand is usually advised to buy a House Holder Comprehensive policy. This insures the possessions or personal property within the house against fire, burglary and natural disasters. The main difference between House Owner and House Holder policies is that with the House Holder policy, only the possessions are insured as opposed to the House Owner policy where the dwelling as well as its possessions is insured.

Insurance companies sometimes talk in terms of actual value and replacement value. A home insurance policy coverage for the

replacement value of a home means that if a claim is made, the client will be paid back the amount for which he initially insured the property. For example, if a house was insured for N3million in 2003 and a claim is made in 2006, the insurance company pays N3million despite the fact that the house may now be worth a lot more than that. On the other hand, getting home insurance coverage for the actual value of the property means that if a claim is made, the current value of that property, and not the value it was when it was insured, will be paid. The most obvious drawback to using a home insurance policy for the actual value is that they

usually entail paying higher premiums. Choosing the right insurance company

One of the best ways to choose the right insurance company is to ask friends and relatives for recommendations. Another way is to consult an Insurance Broker. An insurance broker's job is to determine the best insurance company with which to place a client's premium such that the client's interest is protected. Unlike an insurance agent who works for a specific company, an insurance broker is not restricted to working with any insurance company in particular. However, it is important to note that a broker is a professional and charges fees for consultation. In addition, insurance companies in Nigeria are required to be registered with the National Insurance Commission (NAICOM), looking out for insurance companies that are licensed by NAICOM to operate is a good idea. It is important to find out as much as possible

about an insurance company or underwriter before settling on one. For example, in Nigeria, insurance companies licensed to practice as life insurance companies are required to have a capital base of at least N150m, non-life insurance companies, N250m and composite insurance companies (those licensed as both life and non-life insurance companies) are required to have a capital base of at least N350m. However, the Federal Government of Nigeria may soon enforce a law making it compulsory for all insurance companies to have a capital base of at least N2bn.

There are a number of questions that need to be answered before choosing an insurance company. Such questions border on: How much expertise does the insurance company have? Who are the company's key officers? How quickly are your enquiries attended to? How much capital base does the company have? What is the insurance company's claims payment record? What happens after choosing an

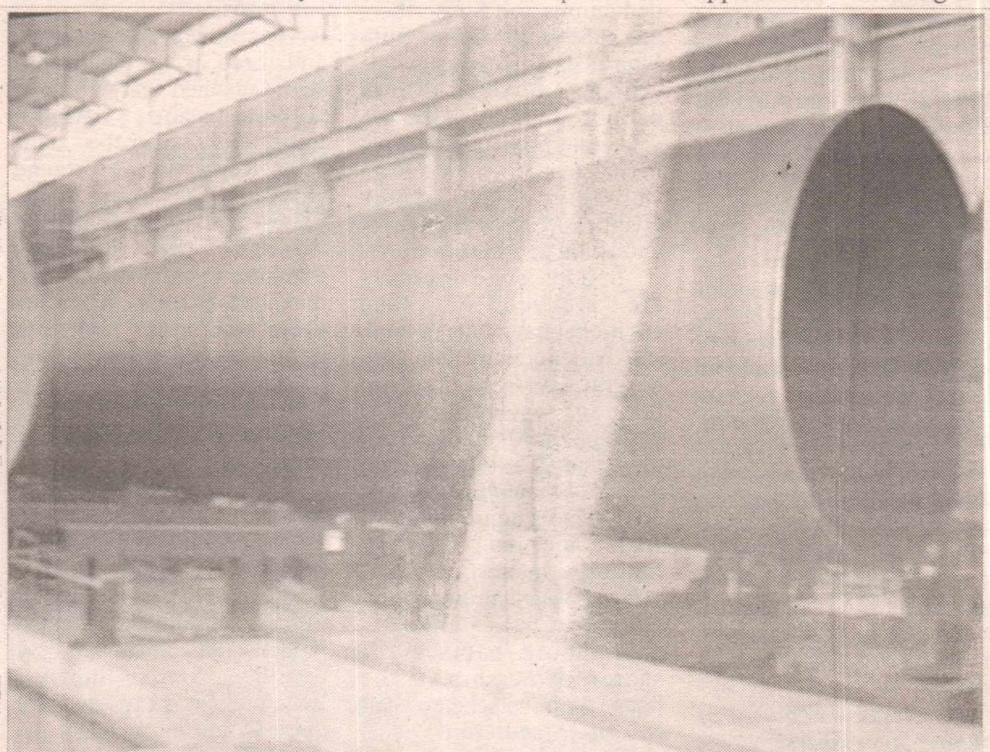
insurance company?

The procedure for buying insurance having chosen one, varies between organisations but generally, after preliminary discussions to determine the exact requirements of the client, the insurance company gives the client a proposal form and asks that he prepare a document indicating the type of property to be insured and also list the possessions within the house as well as their values. The property and possessions are viewed by a representative of the insurance company and a premium is determined. The premium is the amount that the client pays for the insurance policy he has chosen.

As a general rule, insurance policies are written as 1-year long contract. This means that the contract has to be renewed each year (if the client wishes to continue with the policy or indeed, the company). Usually, the premium increases each year as the policy holder accumulates more personal property or the possessions increase in value or the house itself increases in value.

The most significant factor in determining the premium which a client would pay is the location of the property. For example, in Abuja, a 3-bedroom apartment in Nyanya would not attract as high a premium as similar accommodation in Maitama.

Home insurance is probably one of the most sensible things to do once you have a home. However, it is important to read insurance policies carefully or better still, have your lawyer read them before signing any document. Nobody hopes to have cause to need insurance but wouldn't you sleep better at night knowing your home was protected?



Pix shows giant steel water pipes produced at the factory site of SCC (Nig) Ltd Bwari Area, Council FCT, expected to be Olusegun Obasanjo, on Friday.

AIPDC to auction Wuse Market shops

About 1,381 shops at the Wuse market, Abuja, FCT are to be sold to present occupants and members of the public through public auction by way of competitive bidding.

Managing Director of Abuja Investment Property Development Company (AIPDC), Mallam Tijjani Abdullahi, who stated this in a press conference yesterday, said that application forms would be available from Aso Savings loans branches and that bids would close on 3rd February 2006.

The managing director however said that allottees (tenants of FCEDA) who have been occupying their shops as traders for a minimum of two years will be given a concession to purchase the shops they're occupying at the reserved prices and as approved by the Federal Executive Council (FEC).

Consequently, he said, allottees who have been confirmed to be trading in shops allocated to them will be given a provisional letter of offer subject to the satisfactory verification of letter of allocation, not later than January 25.

Other documents to be verified, the AIPDC boss stated, include tenancy

By Nasir Imam, Editor, Abuja Property

December 2005, payment of service charge from February 2005 to December 2005, and an Wuse Market Operative identity card issued by Abuja Markets Management Limited (AMMC).

Mallam Tijjani Abdullahi said that tenants/occupants provisional offers shall be withdrawn where the names on documents differ from one another, where the date of allocation is below the two year period, where the documents submitted are not consistent with existing records, and where documents are submitted beyond January 25, 2006.

He said duly completed forms must be submitted with a bank draft from a reputable bank, equal to 10% of bid value, and that bids would be opened on February 4, 2006.

Malam Abdullahi said the highest bidder shall automatically be declared the preferred bidder along with the second highest bidder as reserve bidder. "Where the highest bid price is above the bid of the trader in occupation, the trade to exercise the right to match by effecting the payment of the difference, failure of which

Expert advises Abuja Landlords against rent increase

An Abuja based Estate Surveyor and Valuers, Mr. Obafemi Peter Ilori has called on Landlords in the Federal Capital Territory to soft-pedal in their threat to increase rents on their properties in Abuja.

Speaking with Abuja Property in the wake of the threat by Abuja Landlords to hike rents, the estate manager pointed out that the issue of increase on property calls for agreement between landlords and tenants.

He said there was no need for increase in rents because there was high demand for houses following the demolition of illegal structures by the FCT administration, saying also that, "effective demand is

By Sunday Ejike Benjamin, Assistant Editor, Abuja Property

actually looking for the accommodation to pay".

The relatively high demands for houses in the satellite towns in Abuja because of the on-going demolition, he noted should not be used as an excuse by landlords to start contemplating increasing the rents on their properties.

According to the property expert, any attempt to increase rent on houses would bring untold hardship on the already stretched Abuja residents whose business premises and place of abode may have been demolished by Federal Capital Development

remarkable improvements or renovations on properties, landlords have no right to hike rent, just as he reminded that both landlords and tenants are under the protection of the law of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, stressing that unnecessary increase in rents can be challenged in the court of law by tenants.

Mr. Ilori observed that government's monetisation policy has helped in making rents on properties relatively stable in Abuja. A 2 bedroom flat in developed areas like Wuse II, Maitama and Asokoro, he said, "now go within the region of about N450,000 to N500,000, unlike those days when they were

because those that cannot afford to stay in the house being provided them by their employers have moved to areas where they can afford to pay", he explained, saying that it however depends on the nature of houses because there are some houses that their prices had actually dropped because the demand for them is low.

He said there are houses with fluctuating rents because of the high demand for them. Such houses he noted are the 2 bedroom, one bedroom and one room self contain. According to him, most people find it difficult to pay the rents for duplexes and as such "the big houses in the high brow areas of Abuja have started giving way for

ABUJA PROPERTY

Army housing scheme'll solve accommodation problem - Army Director

What do you mean by PHD (A) and (PHL) PHD (A) means Post-Service Housing Directorate (Army) solely responsible for implementation of the Scheme at present. The primary role of PHD (A) is to enable officers and soldiers acquire houses into which they can retire without being distracted from their Jobs. While (PHL) represents the proposed housing finance and Development Company, which is expected to mobilize non-subscription funds for the scheme and improve its housing development capacity. The company is to have a Primary Mortgage Institution (PMI) as its subsidiary with requisite Mortgage License to enable it carries out mortgage business called Post-Service Savings & Loans (PSL)

When and why was the scheme established?

The hardship faced by officers and soldiers in securing a house after retiring or discharging from service has been a source of concern to the Nigerian Army (NA). Existing housing schemes are unable to provide most officers and soldiers with homes into which they can retire. The NA Housing Scheme (NAHS) was therefore established as a welfare scheme with the primary objective of providing houses or plots of land to which officers and soldiers can retire to. The scheme is not intended to replace other already existing housing schemes; rather, it has been established to be an effective complement. The Nigerian Army Housing Scheme (NAHS) was established by authority of Army Council Memorandum in March 1996 and it is registered as a limited liability company by guarantee under the Companies and Allied Matters, Act, 1990. The Scheme's registration number RC369672, along side with approved rules and regulation issued directly to each applicant is circulated to all NA units. It also has an organizational structure of three part structure comprising the Board of Directors, Post-Service Housing Directorate (Army) PHD (A) and Post-Service Homes Limited (PHL). The board, made up of eight members, comprise of representatives of Army Headquarters, which gives policy direction and monitors implementation of the scheme.

How can one become a member?

Our membership procedures start with application categorized into stages. We have Nigerian Army Personnel procedure for serving Army Personnel applying to the scheme and this involves application form obtained from AHQ. Completed application form is then submitted to PHD (A) who confirms it and after confirmation, it then forwards acceptance letter directly to the applicant. The list of applicants for each month is forwarded to the pay points for commencement of monthly deductions from

Brigadier General Tunde Reis is the Director, National Post Service Housing Scheme Directorate, Army (PHD) A. A graduate of architecture, Brig-Gen. Reis is also a fellow of the Nigeria Institute of Architect (NIA) In this interview with Abuja Property reporter, Mustafa Abubakar, he spoke on some of the achievements and the activities of the scheme since the past nine years in a scheme set up to properly accommodate retired soldiers in the country. Excerpts



President Olusegun Obasanjo

up to 3 months because of administrative processes.

We also have that of other services and retired military personnel. This is a way of attending to Personnel of other services, retired Military Personnel and their widows who may also apply for form or outright purchase option only. In order not to recreate the typical barracks environment within the estates, the Army council directed that (30%) of available houses are to be allocated to civilians under the outright purchase option. This means that civilians will apply on form that would be forwarded to PHD (A) on completion, with a covering letter from their employers.

Eligible subscribers to the Scheme cut across various sectors like serving Army officers and soldiers retired NA Personnel, widows of deceased NA Personnel, other public servants and civilians from the private sector.

Are there categories of eligible subscribers?

Yes, there are three categories of subscribers to the Scheme. These are applicants who are voluntarily registered for the Scheme, but have not yet been allocated houses, we also have beneficiaries who have been allocated houses by the Scheme and have already taken possession of their houses, but are still making repayments for the cost of the houses and owners are those who have received houses from the Scheme and have completed payment for the house.

What are the options available for subscription?

The available options to subscribers are Long Term Mortgage Option meant for serving Army Personnel only on the conditions that applicants yet to be allocated houses contribute approximately 10-15% of total of his or her monthly salary. Beneficiaries who have been

between 20 - 25% of their total take-home pay, contributions are deducted directly from the subscribers' salaries at the pay points and remitted to PHD (A), and the monthly deductions for Subscribers are subject to review with future salary increments. The scheme however allows deduction rates with ten years minimum contribution period to the scheme from monthly salary which qualifies one to be eligible for allocation of a house.

In addition, subscribers are allowed to make additional payments in lump sum with not more than 50% of gratuity to be paid on leaving service towards outstanding balance, and not more than 25% of pension to be paid as monthly repayment until cost of house is repaid with accrued interest, Mortgage Interest, which is 10% per year at present, shall equally be paid on outstanding balance, or shared ownership of the house with the scheme shall be in place until full repayment is achieved.

Outright Purchase is another Option available for subscribers which required to make payment in one lump sum or in installments by providing 30% of estimated cost of dwelling type to be paid in lump sum on application or offer of a house, 40% of the cost to be paid within 3 months of being granted an offer which does not specify particular dwelling, balance to be paid before taking possession, but not later than 3 months, before completion of the house and interest of 3% per quarter is chargeable on any outstanding balance at the end of each quarter. This also include deposit made to the PHD (A) finance officer or to the project coordinating officer on any PHD(A) site with official receipt issued by the PHD(A) Finance Officer for all payments.

Is there arrangement for additional payment?

Yes. The procedure for making additional payments under Long Term Mortgage Option or Outright Purchase payments is that the applicant shall raise a bank draft in the desired amount payable to the Nigerian Army Housing Scheme, all payments are to be made to the PHD (A) Finance Officer

Regulations which indicated that a contributor to the Scheme who is retiring from service but has not been allocated a house or land, shall have the option of having his entire contribution refunded with interest at the prevailing rates for contributions under the National Housing Fund



Brigadier General Tunde Reis, Director, National Post Service Housing Scheme Directorate, Army

or to the Project Coordinating Officer on any PHD (A) site, official receipt shall be issued by the PHD (A) Finance Officer for any payment made.

What type of houses do you provide?

The Scheme allocates two and three or four bedroom semi-detached bungalows to soldiers and officers respectively under the Long-Term Repayment Mortgage Option. Other house types which are only available through the Outright Purchase Option, include the three or four bedroom terrace units and four bedroom detached bungalows. The houses are simple in design with potentials for progressive improvement and expansion in some cases.

How do you develop your estates?

Estates are initially being developed in state capitals where the greatest number of officers and soldiers indicated in their applications that they would want houses. Eventually, it is expected that there would be at least one estate in every town or Local Government Area chosen by a minimum of one hundred (100) officers and soldiers.

What happens in a situation where an officer/member withdraws from the scheme?

There are procedures and classifications of withdrawing from the scheme. This include giving three months notice of your withdrawal to the scheme, obtain a withdrawal form and forwarding completed forms through applicant's units to PHD(A) for processing. After which, acceptance name of the applicant shall be forwarded to the respective pay point for stoppage of monthly deduction from salary, upon which applicant withdrawing shall be paid the total amount contributed as at the last statement of account. Classifying withdrawals could be either through Retirement or Discharge according to section 41 of the Rules and

Regulations which indicated that a contributor to the Scheme who is retiring from service but has not been allocated a house or land, shall have the option of having his entire contribution refunded with interest at the prevailing rates for contributions under the National Housing Fund

Scheme. In the early years of the scheme, allocation of houses was made strictly in line with a list generated by public ballot. Those who did not benefit at the first instance were thereafter transferred to the waiting list from where subsequent allocations would be made but new allocation is made on first come, first serve basis to outright purchase applicants. This however has its procedures which include submission of completed Post-Service Housing Scheme application form to PHD (A) which approves and acknowledges acceptance of the applicant to the Scheme as well as notifies the applicant of batch number in the state of choice, monthly deductions are also made from salary of Mortgage option applicants, while Outright Purchase Option applicants are to make deposits as indicated in their offer letters. The applicant is required to notify PHD (A) on receipt of official notification of disengagement from service.

After allocation, in line with the above stated policy, the beneficiaries will have to complete the acceptance portion of the allocation letter, handing and taking-over form, letting mandate form where applicable.

On land allocation, the procedure under the scheme indicated that the application for such is made to PHD(A) to the scheme only through letter, stating the desired location, size of plot and type of development after which PHD(A) will issue an offer letter where land is available in the desired location with specific information on Size of plot, Cost of infrastructure and other charges, offer letter is forwarded in duplicate to applicant, applicant signs the duplicate copy to indicate his acceptance of the offer and returns same to PHD(A) with down payment for the land. On completion of payment, a letter of allocation with plot and block numbers as well as the survey plan showing the plot are produced and forwarded to the allottee.

Can one own more than one house or land?

Any military personnel can own more than one house within a PHD (A) estate by purchasing first house or Plot of Land at military rate under Mortgage Option or Outright Purchase. Subsequent purchase within the same Estate must be by Outright Purchase at civilian private sector rate while military personnel may purchase one house or plot of land at military rate in different locations by Outright Purchase.

Can beneficiaries rent out their houses?

Beneficiaries who are still in service have the option to give PHD (A) a mandate to rent out the houses on their behalf. 50% of the rent received is paid to the beneficiary, whilst the balance is used to partly offset the outstanding cost of the house. Beneficiaries, who opt to live in their houses, are to pay 50% of what should have been received as rent towards their repayment.

f Morocco

For instance, the residence of one of a renowned French colonialist who resided in Tanger-La Montagne – is believed to possess an enduring charm. And today, it has been turned into one of the tourist locations in southern Morocco. There are several other tourist attractions spread across both the northern and southern part of the country. With a majority Arab-Berber population (99.1 percent) which are predominantly Muslims, the kingdom of Morocco, known in local parlance as Al-Mamlakah Al-maghribiyah (in short, Al-Maghrib) has 14 administrative divisions. These divisions are made of its major cities which are closely knit. These include Grand Casablanca, Chaonia-Onardigha, Doukkala-Abda,

y in terms of age as built much more catalyst for its speedy railway system that ions. Thus, tourism reign exchange for a of 446,500 square s land, while 250sq ompared to Nigeria 3,000sq km is land eo is about half Ni- ntry's population is 25,847 people (esti- Nigeria's population e period.

Fes-Boulemane, Gharb-Chrarda-Beni Hssen, Guelmin-Essmara, and Marrakech-Tensift-AlHaouz. Others are Meknes-Tafilalet, Oriental, Rabat-Zemmour-Zaer, Souss-Massa-Draa, Tadla-Azilal, Tangier-Tetouan, Taza-Al Hoceima-Taounate.

For instance, the country's capital city of Rabat is separated from Saleh, only by a small bridge at a point that is within trekking distance; though there is a river demarcation at another, and through which people crisscross to the two cities by boat. However, yours sincerely was unable to make a journey across this plain.

One of the sites visited by this reporter is the Mausoleum Mohammed V which was first built by Sultan Yaquob Al-Mansour in the 12th century. It was destroyed by an earthquake in 1775 but rebuilt with a tower measuring 45 metres. This mausoleum, which also houses a magnificent mosque (Hassan II Mosque) and the graves of Mohammed V, Hassan II and Mullah Abdullah (a Prince of the royal family), is today a Makkah for tourists, especially from various parts of Europe.

Also in Rabat is the ancient Villa of the first Romans to settle in Morocco, which was also used as a fortress by the first Sultan from the Merinides Dynasty, Moulla Ismail. This is also a tourist resort. In the

south of the country is the Palmeraie Marrakech, a date oasis of about 150 square kilometre size not far from Marrakech city, which is increasingly built up with luxury villas for foreigners and Moroccans.

As a contemporary of Nigeria, particularly in terms of age as independent nations, Morocco has built much more infrastructural facilities that served as catalyst for its speedy growth and development. It has a modern railway system that enhances movement of tourists in all regions. Thus, tourism today generates millions of dollars in foreign exchange for Morocco.

The country covers a total area of 446,500 square kilometres, out of which 446,300sq km is land, while 250sq km is covered by water. This could be compared to Nigeria's total area of 923,768sq km from which 13,000sq km is land area. In relative terms, therefore, Morocco is about half Nigeria's size. But the North African country's population is about one sixth of Nigeria with its 32,725,847 people (estimated as at July last year) as against Nigeria's population estimate of 128,771,988 at about the same period.

This is given further impetus by the stable political atmosphere in the Kingdom, whose government is run through a constitutional monarchy.



Magnificent doorway in Marrakech



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ALL NIGERIAN PEOPLES PARTY

No. 46, Kiyawa Road, Dutse, Jigawa State.



BEING PRESS STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE ALL NIGERIAN PEOPLES PARTY JIGAWA STATE CHAPTER AT A WORLD PRESS CONFERENCE HELD IN DUTSE, JIGAWA STATE CAPITAL ON MONDAY 16/01/06

Ladies and Gentlemen of the press, as you are aware the National Chairman of the All Nigerian Peoples Party, Chief Don Etiebet, announced recently that he has approved the offer by His Excellency, Alhaji Ibarhim Saminu Turaki, Governor of Jigawa State to host the next National Executive Committee meeting of our great party (ANPP) in Dutse, the Jigawa State capital.

The All Nigerian Peoples Party, Jigawa State chapter wishes to dissociate itself from the National Chairman's decision and strongly oppose any plan or arrangement to host the said NEC meeting by the Jigawa State Governor, His Excellency, Alhaji Ibrahim Saminu Turaki, for the following reasons:-

- His Excellency Alhaji Ibrahim Saminu Turaki registered with the P.D.P with card No. 148, at Unguwar Gabas ward, Kazaure, Jigawa State, in the just concluded re-registration exercise of the P.D.P.
- The Governor also directed all members of his cabinet, Special Advisers, Special Assistants, Members of the state House of Assembly and Members of National Assembly to defect from the ANPP to the P.D.P.
- Following the above, the Governor sought to have control of the leadership of the P.D.P in Jigawa State by attempting to make some of his commissioners state party Executives, but when he lost out to a more stronger faction of the P.D.P, he is now struggling to make a detour to the ANPP, through the National Chairman.

The Jigawa State chapter of the ANPP hereby suspends His Excellency, Alhaji Ibrahim Saminu Turaki, from the party. A six man panel has also been constituted by the party under the chairmanship of Alhaji Garba Gumel, Chairman Elders Committee with the following members:-

- Alhaji Müdi Sarkin Makera Kazaure
- Alhaji Usaini Gariko
- Alhaji Muhammadu Atini
- Ibrahim Sani Maigatari
- Alhaji Ado A. Maitama Gwaram - Secretary

The committee is charged with the responsibility of recommending to the party whether or not further disciplinary action ought to be taken against the Governor.

Finally for the avoidance of any doubt, the Jigawa State chapter of the ANPP hereby specifically and unequivocally call on the National leadership to reconsider the National Chairman's decision. Such an act will amount to rewarding the anti-party activity of the Governor which ought call for disciplinary action and condemnation

Thank you.

Signed:
Barrister Sani Hussaini Garun Gabbas,
State Secretary, ANPP.



ADAMAWA STATE UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION BOARD, YOLA

INVITATION FOR BIDS

UBEC/ADSUBEB 2ND QUARTER 2005 MATCHING GRANT

CONSTRUCTIONS AND REHABILITATIONS OF CLASSROOM BLOCKS

IFB No. UBEC/ADSUBEB/11/2006

- This invitation for Bids follows the receipt of matching grant from the Adamawa State Government and the Universal Basic Education Commission.
- The Grants are to be applied partly for the payment of contract for the construction and rehabilitation of classroom blocks in Primary and Junior Secondary Schools in 10 of the 21 LGA of the State.
- The Adamawa State Universal Basic Education Board now invites Contractors of proven experience, fully registered and incorporated to operate in Nigeria to Bid for the underlisted works in the 10 LGAs of the State as listed below;

PRE-PRIMARY/PRIMARY COMPONENT:

S/N	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	NATURE OF WORK	No. OF LOCATION
1	DEMSA	-Construction of a block of 2Cls -Rehabilitations	TWO ONE
2	GANYE	-Construction of a block of 2Cls -Rehabilitations	TWO TWO
3	GUYUK	-Construction of a block of 2Cls -Rehabilitations	TWO TWO
4	JADA	-Construction of a block of 2Cls -Construction of Computer Centre -Rehabilitations	TWO ONE ONE
5	LAMURDE	-Construction of a block of 2Cls -Rehabilitation	TWO ONE
6	MAYO-BELWA	-Construction of a block of 2Cls -Rehabilitations	THREE ONE
7	NUMAN	-Construction of a block of 2Cls -Construction of Computer Centre -Rehabilitations	ONE ONE ONE
8	SHELLENG	-Construction of a block of 2Cls -Rehabilitations	— TWO
9	TOUNGO	-Construction of a block of 2Cls -Rehabilitations	ONE —
10	YOLA-SOUTH	-Construction of a block of 2Cls -Construction of storey building -Rehabilitations	ONE ONE TWO

JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL COMPONENT:

S/N	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	NATURE OF WORK	No. OF LOCATION
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2	GANYE	-Construction of 2Cls	TWO
3	GUYUK	-Construction of 2Cls	TWO
4	JADA	-Construction of 2Cls	TWO
5	LAMURDE	-Construction of 2Cls	TWO
6	MAYO-BELWA	-Construction of 2Cls	FOUR
7	NUMAN	-Construction of 2Cls	TWO
8	SHELLENG	-Construction of 2Cls	ONE
9	TOUNGO	-FURNITURE	TWO
10	YOLA-SOUTH	-Construction of 2Cls	FOUR

- Bid documents may be obtained from the Adamawa State Universal Basic Education Board, 26 Ahmadu Bello Way, Jimeta - Yola, Adamawa State on the payment of non-refundable deposit of N10,000.00

- Completed Bid documents shall be delivered to Ag. Director, Directorate of Planning Research and Statistics, Adamawa State Universal Basic Education Board, 26 Ahmadu Bello Way, Jimeta-Yola, Adamawa State.

On or before 1st February, 2006.

Signed
Alh. Moh'd Lawandi Yusuf
Ag. Director,
ADSUBEB, 22 Ahmadu Bello Way,
P.M.B. 2030, J/Yola.



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20.	15cm x 6	6 x 6	72,000	82,000	-	105,000
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22.	15cm x 4	6 x 4	58,000	66,000	-	98,000
23.	15cm x 3	6 x 3	38,000	40,000	-	54,000
24.	15cm x 2	6 x 2	30,000	35,000	-	45,000
25.	14cm x 6	5 x 6	68,000	78,000	-	100,000
26.	14cm x 5	5 x 5	60,000	70,000	-	99,000
27.	14cm x 4	5 x 4	55,000	63,000	-	95,000
28.	13cm x 3	5 x 3	35,000	38,000	-	51,000
29.	13cm x 2	5 x 2	27,000	30,000	-	41,000
30.	13cm x 6	4 x 6	65,000	70,000	-	95,000
31.	10cm x 5	4 x 5	56,000	64,000	-	90,000
32.	10cm x 4	4 x 4	50,000	58,000	-	91,000
33.	10cm x 3	4 x 3	30,000	35,000	-	46,000
34.	10cm x 2	4 x 2	25,000	27,000	-	38,000
35.	7.5cm x 2	3 x 2	15,000	17,000	-	25,000
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SPORTS

COUNTDOWN TO EGYPT 2006 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP

Wealth of African talent descends on Egypt

Fans at the African Nations Cup will get a chance to see some of Europe's top club strikers in

action when players such as Didier Drogba, Samuel Eto'o and Obafemi Martins open hostilities in Egypt.

Despite the absence of Africa's most expensive footballer, Chelsea's 38-million-euro Ghana midfielder Michael Essien, crowds at the tournament which starts on Friday will watch the most accomplished gathering of African players ever seen.

Essien's absence due to an ankle injury is more than compensated for by a bevy of world-class talent, notably his Chelsea team mate, Drogba.

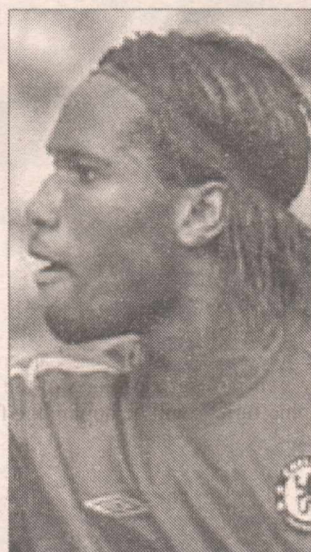
It will be a first Nations Cup finals appearance for the 27-year-old striker, who has a prolific strike record for Ivory Coast with 17 goals in 22 appearances.

His efforts in a Chelsea shirt helped the big-spending club to win the Premier League title and League Cup last season and they are well on their way to a second championship with a commanding lead at the top of the table.

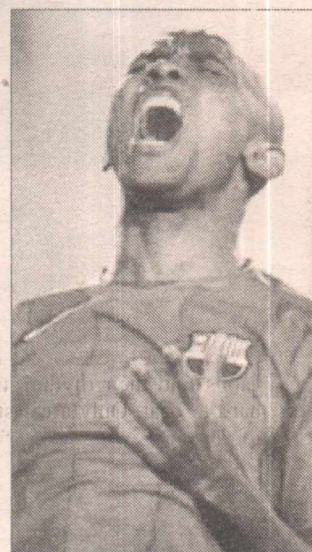
Drogba is also a candidate for the 2005 African Footballer of the Year award, due to be announced next month.

One of his rivals for that award is Cameroon's Eto'o, who has won it the last time and last month finished third in FIFA's World Footballer of the Year poll.

Eto'o has also won the Nations Cup twice before with his country and the Barcelona striker, who has been in top form in Spain this season, is likely to be the architect of another assault on the title by



Drogba



Eto'o



Mido

the Indomitable Lions.

Other countries are also pinning their Cup hopes on their best-known forwards, a mantle of responsibility worn by El Hadji Diouf for Senegal, Emmanuel Adebayor for Togo, Benni McCarthy of South Africa and particularly Mido for Egypt.

Mido, who has been through a myriad of clubs in Europe, has set aside a sometimes controversial past to find form in the English Pre-

mier League with Tottenham Hotspur and will be under extra pressure before the crowds of the host nation.

However, the precocious talent of Nigeria's Obafemi Martins, another player making his Nations Cup debut, could overshadow this formidable array of strikers.

Nine goals in 10 games for his country have already established the 21-year-old as key to Nigeria's chances of regaining some much-needed

credibility after failing to qualify for the World Cup.

Martins's powerful running and sharp finishing have already been on display in Serie A and the Champions League this season for his club, Inter Milan.

Supported by the wily experience of captain Jay-Jay Okocha, player of the tournament at the 2004 Nations Cup in Tunisia, the Super Eagles have a real chance of soaring again.



Mikel Obi...Nigeria's new sensation

African football shows healthy bank balance

The Confederation of African Football (CAF) is set to announce a healthy balance

sheet to its membership, with cash assets of over \$24 million and an annual income of just under half of that.

The organisation's financial report, released ahead of this week's CAF Congress in Cairo, shows it earned \$5.5 million from its annual competitions last year and received just under \$4.6 million in a grant from FIFA.

A total annual income of \$12.3 million is a record for the organisation, which made a surplus last year after costs of almost \$8.9 million.

CAF finance committee chairman Suketu Patel warned in the report, however, that wise investment of the organisation's resources was vital to the future of the game on the continent.

"CAF will not be able to sustain current levels of investment in development programmes if we cannot make African football attractive enough to allow more resources to flow into our confederation," he said.

Meetings and travel accounted for just under half of expenses, while \$1.55 million was spent on development programmes.

CAF continues to earn

the majority of its money from the sale of television and marketing rights of the African Nations Cup and African Champions League.

The French company Sport Five pays \$5 million annually for Champions League rights and \$5.5 million every two years for the African Nations Cup. Its current contract runs until 2008.

FIFA's annual grant, instituted since Sepp Blatter became president, has come close to doubling the organisation's revenue and allowed the traditionally frugal CAF more expansive ideas in recent years.

CAF had hoped to build development centres in five countries as regional training venues but the plans were abandoned last year after being criticised by committee members as potential "white elephants".

CAF now plans to give annual grants to member countries, who already receive \$250,000 each annually from FIFA.

CAF said in its financial report that its resources had grown to \$26.4 million from \$3.6 million over the last decade.

France sends biggest contingent

French clubs are still the biggest providers of players for the African Nations Cup though the spread of employers of Africa's talent now reaches eastern Europe.

Sixty-six African internationals from 32 French clubs will be on duty at the tournament in Egypt, which starts on Friday, the largest contingent from a single country.

Though France has traditionally been hardest hit by the exodus, clubs from across Europe will be without key players for several weeks as the Nations

Cup, which ends on Feb. 10, clashes with a crucial juncture in many domestic seasons.

In total, 121 of the 368 players at the 2006 Nations Cup are drawn from clubs in 19 European countries, increasingly more in eastern Europe.

Less than a decade ago, an African playing at a club in eastern Europe would have been a rarity.

Now they are commonplace in countries such as Russia, Bulgaria and Ukraine, and in some cases are highly successful like Chidi Odiah of Nigeria, who

earned a UEFA Cup winners medal with CSKA Moscow in May.

South Africa is also a growing destination of choice, seen by many players from other African countries as a stepping stone between home and a potential move to a club in Europe.

There are 39 players from South Africa's Premier League, plus two more from lower-division clubs, among the 23-man squads from 16 nations at the finals.

English clubs provide 26 players, all but four of them from

the Premier League.

Bolton Wanderers have lost four to the tournament and struggling Portsmouth three, including their new Zimbabwean signing Benjani Mwaruwari, who wants to travel back and forth between his country's assignments and those of his new club.

Libya's Al Ittihad and Al Ahli of Egypt each have 11 of their players at the tournament — the clubs with the biggest representation here. The Libyans have the biggest home-based contingent in their squad.

There are eight players from four countries who play at South African league front-runners Orlando Pirates.

In Europe, Olympique Marseille and St Etienne of France give up five players each for the tournament.

The timing of the Nations Cup continues to irritate managers across Europe but Africa's ruling confederation (CAF) have made it clear they have no intention of changing it for the foreseeable future.

As the Nations Cup is a continental championship, clubs are obliged by FIFA rules to give up players 14 days before the start of the tournament.

Milla hoping to lift Cameroon

Cameroon President Paul Biya has called on former international Roger Milla to boost team morale for the African Nations Cup.

Milla met Sports Minister Philippe Mbarga Mboa on Monday in the capital Yaounde and said he would travel to Egypt with the squad to help raise spirits dampened by the team's failure to qualify for this year's World Cup finals.

Morale has also been hit by a dispute over non-payment of coaching salaries.

"The president requested me

to restore order in the national team," Milla told reporters. "I have been designated to be part of the official delegation to Egypt to help boost the morale of our players."

Milla said despite the World Cup setback, Cameroon still had a chance of carrying home the continental trophy after the biennial tournament kicks off on Friday.

Cameroon have won the African Nations Cup four times, a record they share with hosts Egypt and Ghana. They open their campaign against Angola in

Cairo on Saturday.

"Eliminated from the World Cup, the team is going through delicate moments, but I don't think there is fire in the Indomitable Lions' den," said Milla.

Milla, a roving ambassador for his country and various sporting and humanitarian organisations who is sometimes referred to in his homeland as "The Old Lion", was twice named African Footballer of the Year.

He first won the award in 1976 and again in 1990, when he led Cameroon to the quarter-finals of the World Cup in Italy.

Sports

COUNTDOWN TO EGYPT 2006 AFRICAN NATIONS CUP



Group B: Wounded Lions seek revenge

Cameroon

Despite the cataclysmic blow to morale inflicted by their failure to qualify for the World Cup, Cameroon remain highly-fancied to challenge for the Nations Cup title.

Make no mistake, Cameroon will always be Cameroon.

With four African titles to their name, the Indomitable Lions are a side accustomed to life at the top.

The bitter taste of World Cup failure is bound to galvanise everyone connected with this team but they know that a fifth triumph is by no means a foregone conclusion.

They have the talent, the strength in depth, the individual brilliance in key areas and the mental strength required to win Africa's premier tournament.

They may have awesome attacking firepower with players like Samuel Eto'o and Achille Webo, but it is the enormous physique of their players that intimidates opponents.

Key players: One thing is certain: Cameroon possess one of the world's deadliest strikers in Samuel Eto'o.

The Barcelona forward's eye for goal makes him one of the few exceptions to the saying that nobody is indispensable.

Cameroon also have one of the most reliable goalkeepers in Idris Kameni who plays for Espanyol in Spain's La Liga.

Elsewhere, Geremi Njitap is the fulcrum of Cameroon's midfield. Often left

on the bench by Chelsea, Cameroon will hope he can shake off the rustiness and help his team to a fifth Nations Cup title.

Verdict: Although the luck of the draw favoured Cameroon, their Portuguese coach Artur Jorge has been around long enough not to view Group B through rose-tinted glasses.

Failure would represent another nightmare for Cameroon football followers. The Indomitable Lions are, therefore, unlikely to take anything for granted.

Always a threat, if the Indomitable Lions find their rhythm, they will be hard to beat. Only a catastrophic turn of events can prevent them from advancing to the second round.

The Indomitable Lions should fight their way all the way to the final, and at worst finish among the top four.

Togo

Once upon a time everyone knew what to expect from Togo's national team.

The Hawks were always doing their utmost to hang on and avoid humiliating cricket score-line defeats.

So who are these impostors not only on their way to the World Cup in Germany but also making a stop-over in Egypt?

The Hawks have undergone something of a revolution and the tenure of Stephen Keshi as coach has seen them squeeze out enough results to reach their first World Cup finals.

If you had told Togo's players at the start of the qualifiers that they would be going to Egypt, let alone Germany, they would have done cartwheels down the main street in Lome.

Having missed the last finals in 2004, they made it to Egypt 2006 by winning

a tough pool which also included Senegal.

Togo's mean defenders conceded just eight goals in 10 qualifying matches but they will be severely tested when Nigerian Keshi leads them into battle in Egypt.

It is somewhat ironic that in three of the four African titles Cameroon have won, Nigeria were the beaten finalists, with Keshi playing a role either as captain or assistant coach.

However, Keshi might take inspiration from his Togolese players. The Hawks beat Cameroon 1-0 during the group stages of the 2000 finals and he will be hoping the feat can be repeated once more.

Key players: New blood and fresh ideas have been introduced by Keshi over the past year or so as he looks to transform Togolese football.

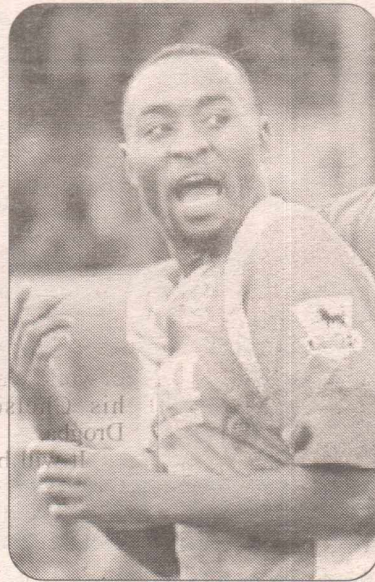
The predatory instincts of France-based Emmanuel Adebayor means that the Hawks can no longer be dismissed as easy pickings.

The 21-year-old forward finished the qualifying campaign with 10 goals - two more than his nearest challenger.

Cherif Mamam Toure and Abdel Coubadja were outstanding in qualifying and should pose a few problems for the opposition.

Verdict: There is little reason to suspect that Togo will win the biggest prize in African football but there is also no reason to think that they cannot dent a few reputations in Egypt.

Togo may be a lightweight football nation but they certainly hit their World Cup/Nations qualifying group with the power of a heavyweight.



DR Congo

Okay, the then Zaire won the Nations Cup in 1968 and 1974, and the Congolese have qualified for their share of Nations Cups down the years.

But many people today are most likely to identify the vast country with civil war and corruption.

Since their last triumph in 1974, the Simbas have struggled to remain within the African elite but it says something about them that they have not missed out on a Nations Cup party since 1992.

It will not be easy for the Congolese to survive this group, let alone progress further in the tournament, but this is a side with pretty much nothing to lose.

In their favour is that their opening game is against Togo. Win that and they will go into the Angola fixture full of confidence.

Key players: Captain Lomana LuaLua is one of the most colourful characters in African football and is undoubtedly the DR Congo's driving force.

Shabani Nonda has never been the same player since suffering an horrific knee injury which ruled him out of the last Nations Cup.

However, he remains a key player for the Simbas and is expected to share the workload with LuaLua.

Verdict: A DR Congo supporter would have to be an outrageously optimistic soul to believe that the Simbas have any chance of winning the Nations Cup.

The last time they impressed in the finals was in 1998, finishing third and beating Cameroon along the way.

The more probable outcome this time around is a first-round exit for Claude LeRoy's team.

Luanda

anced squad capable of coping with the demands of the three-week tournament.

Key players: While team-work is the key to Angola's success, Fabrice Akwa is a particular favourite with the crowd, thanks to a goalscoring touch that never seems to desert him.

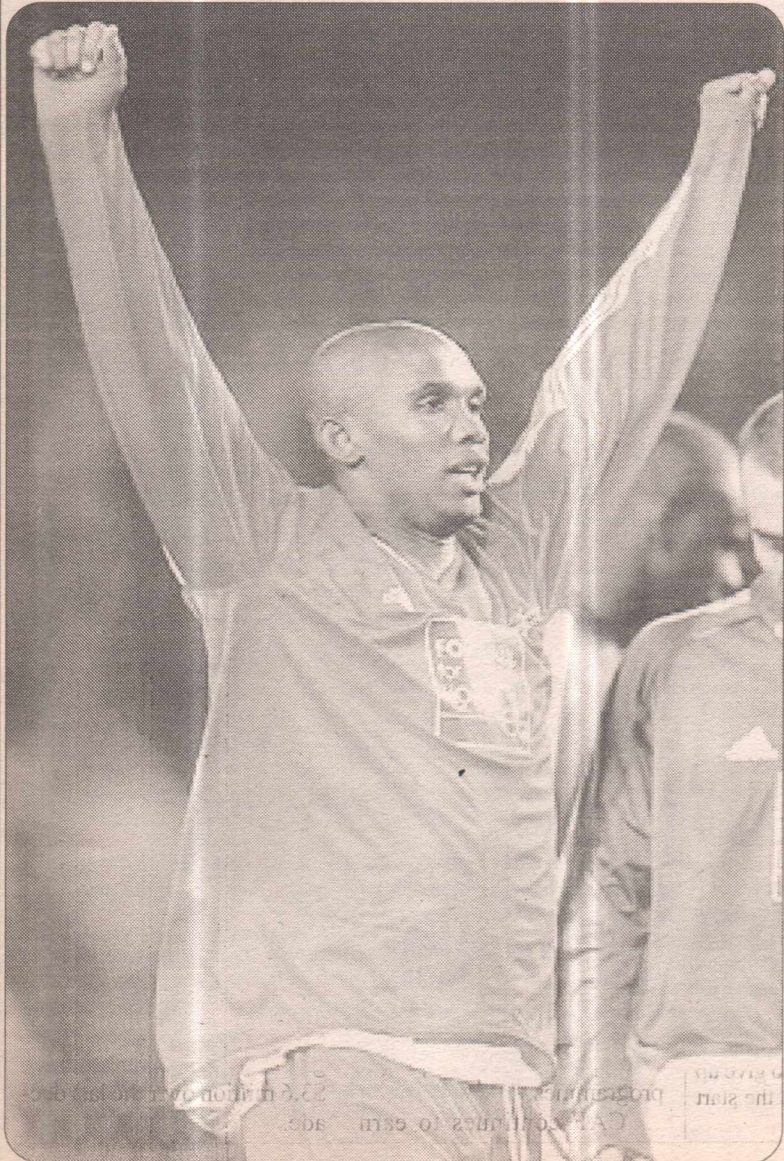
The powerfully-built striker has scored 31 goals in 67 international appearances.

Paulo Figueiredo is hardly a spring chicken at 33, but the Portuguese second division player was outstanding in the qualifying campaign.

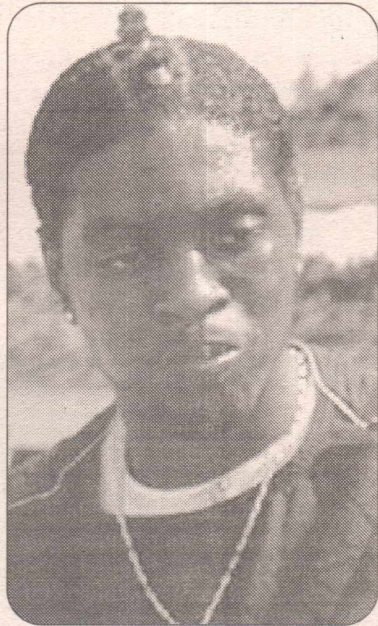
Pedro Mantorras has been plagued by injury for a while now but will be a handful for any defence if fully fit.

Verdict: Having qualified for the World Cup at Nigeria's expense, the Palancas Negras have given the Angolan people high expectations for Egypt 2006.

They will certainly not win the Nations Cup but they may well make it difficult for others who do fancy their chances.



Eto'o



Adebayor

Angola

Although football is the main sport in Angola, it gets a good run for its money from basketball.

But while the Palancas Negras never win anything, the national basketball team does.

So Egypt 2006 is not just about showing the world that there is more to Angola than diamonds and war - it is also an opportunity for football to show why it should remain Angola's number one sport.

Given their abysmal record over the years, no one could have anticipated Angola finishing top of a qualifying group containing Nigeria.

But that is just what the Palancas Negras did, and they approach the Nations Cup in quietly confident mood.

Perhaps for the first time in many years, they have assembled a well-bal-



Akwa

Sports

Hingis, Federer start with a bang in Melbourne

Martina Hingis marked her return to grand slam action with a thumping victory and Swiss compatriot Roger Federer was almost as impressive at the Australian Open on Tuesday.

Hingis beat Russia's 30th seed Vera Zvonareva 6-1 6-2 in the first round. The former world number one showed no sign of nerves in her first grand slam match since 2002, wrapping up a surprisingly one-sided victory that left her opponent in tears.

"It was beautiful to walk in there. There were so many memories coming back. This stadium has been so great to me," 25-year-old Hingis told reporters. She won the

Australian Open in 1997, 1998 and 1999.

"This was the best match I've played since I came back. I wouldn't necessarily say that it was easy, I just played really well."

Federer, a strong favourite for the men's title, also made the perfect start to his campaign when he won in brilliant fashion and his main rivals all struggled.

The world number one hardly broke sweat as he brushed aside little-known Denis Istomin of Uzbekistan 6-2 6-3 6-2 while Australian Leyton Hewitt, Argentine Guillermo Coria and Russian Nikolay Davydenko were all pushed to five sets.

Last year's losing finalist Hewitt needed all his

fighting spirit to scrape past Czech Robin Vik 6-4 2-6 5-7 7-6 6-3 while sixth seed Coria overcame the distraction of a leg injury to wear down Romanian Victor Hanescu 6-4 1-6 4-6 6-2 6-1.

Fifth seed Davydenko also needed the maximum number of sets to blunt the massive serve of Croat Ivo Karlovic, eventually grinding out a 7-5 4-6 3-6 7-5 6-3 victory.

The leading women had few problems following Venus Williams's shock defeat on the Monday, although third seed Amelie Mauresmo had to come from a set down to beat China's Sun Tiantian 4-6 6-2 6-2.

Fifth seed Mary Pierce brushed past Australian

Nicole Pratt 6-1 6-1 and Belgian Kim Clijsters crushed Korea's Cho Yoon-Jeong 6-3 6-0 despite needing painkillers just to get on court after injuring her hip in Sydney last week.

"It got worse towards the end but I got through, so that's the most important thing," second seed Clijsters said.

Six seeds lost on Tuesday, taking the total of first round casualties to 14. Three of the seeds were French: Richard Gasquet, Gael Monfils and Nathalie Dechy, a semi-finalist last year.

Chilean ninth seed Fernando Gonzalez lost in five sets while Italian Filippo Volandri retired after losing the first two sets against Nathan Healey,

prompting the Australian wildcard to cheekily question his commitment.

"I felt like I was well on top of him. I think a heart muscle was pulled," Healey said.

Istomin, ranked 195th in the world, blasted two aces past Federer in his opening service game but the world number one dominated the rest of the match to comfortably close out victory in 83 minutes.

"I won comfortably. That's what counts most," said Federer.

Hewitt was at his combative best as 58th-ranked Vik wilted under the pressure when serving for the match in the fourth set, allowing the third seed to square the match before

running away with the final set.

"He was taking it to me the whole time out there," Hewitt said. "It was a matter of just hanging in there and waiting for the opportunities."

Hewitt's win sets up an intriguing encounter with the equally feisty Juan Ignacio Chela, one of the strong Argentine men's contingent.

Chela, who cruised to a straight sets win over Briton Andy Murray, was fined after spitting in Hewitt's direction during a fiery third round match in Melbourne last year and there are no signs the pair are ready to kiss and make up.

"I wouldn't call him my mate," Hewitt said.

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Kunle Fatoberu Esq.
Solicitor.

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Signed:
Mr. Steve Anyebe

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Signed:
Alh. Bashar Mansur Bello

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Signed:
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(Barrister & Solicitor)

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Signed:
Secretary.

CHANGE OF NAMES

I, formerly known and addressed as MISS UMMA BELLO, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS UMMA BELLO. All former documents remain valid. General public and NYSC to take note.

I, formerly known as Miss Onyenma Kalu Amogu, now wish to be called Mrs. Gift Onyenma Agwu Chiori. All former documents remain valid. The general public and FCT Judiciary Customary Court of Appeal, Abuja should please take note.

I, formerly known as MISS ISABELLA ANANTI, now wish to be called MRS. ISABELLA ISRAEL. Former documents remain valid. NYSC, ESUT and general public to note

Formerly known as AMINU ABUBAKAR NUHU, now AMINU A. ABUBAKAR. Former documents remain valid. Local Government Service Board Kaduna State take note.

I, formerly ANNAH YANTA MALGWI, is now ANNAH MAHMUDALFA. General public note.

I, formerly SARAH SUMDI TYODEN, is now SARAH SUMDI AYUBA MARKUS KADALA. General public please note.

I, formerly GLORIA ELISHA, is now GLORIA MUSA BALAT. General public please note.

I, formerly OGECHUKWU AKAZUE, is now OGECHUKWU OSUJI. First Inland Bank and general public please note.

I, formerly known and called AYUBA MARKUS KADAFU, wish to be henceforth known and called AYUBA HAMIDU MOH. KADAFU. All former documents remain valid. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the general public to note.

Formerly known as YA'U MUSA ALIYU, now wish to be called AMINU MUSA ALIYU. F.G.C Kiyawa take note.

I, formerly called MURTALA GARBA, now wish to be called MURTALA ABUBAKAR. All former documents remain valid. Usman Danfodio University Sokoto and public to note.

Sports

Siasia gives 'password' for Eagles victory

Super Eagles assistant coach, Samson Siasia has needled-out some of the basic ingredients he feels, could form the 'passwords' for result-oriented outings for the national teams - in suc. international championships of the Nations Cup magnitude.

Siasia, who like most Nigerians, was unhappy over the nation's inability to nick a Germany 2006 World Cup ticket, said that, some of the ways forward for such milestones to be reached, included; early camping, morale boost and respect for the players.

"There are no other ways than early invitations being extended to players, information about the team's programmes and educating them on the need to adhere

strictly to the laid-down rules and regulations in terms of arrival dates and stuffs like that," the handler of the Nigerian globe-stunning Under-20 team at last year's FIFA Youth World Cup Finals in Holland, counted on his fingers.

On teams' confidence building, the WYC silver medal 'lining' coach disclosed that, players should be told in clear terms that, "whatever they needed to excel in a competition, is at their disposal. Let them go ahead and play their game, no matter what happens there, the coaches are solidly behind them.

"You know these guys, they do their trade in Europe and money is not their problem. Theirs' is how well those concerned treat them," he emphasized, adding that whenever they, the players, heed to a national call, the authorities just have to treat them well by respecting them and watch them perform better."

"Nigerians should learn to take the bull by the horn, instead of sitting on the fence at all times, when things have to be done. There must be something like a revolution if, things have to be done the right way. Nigerians should learn to tell the truth, when things go wrong and not

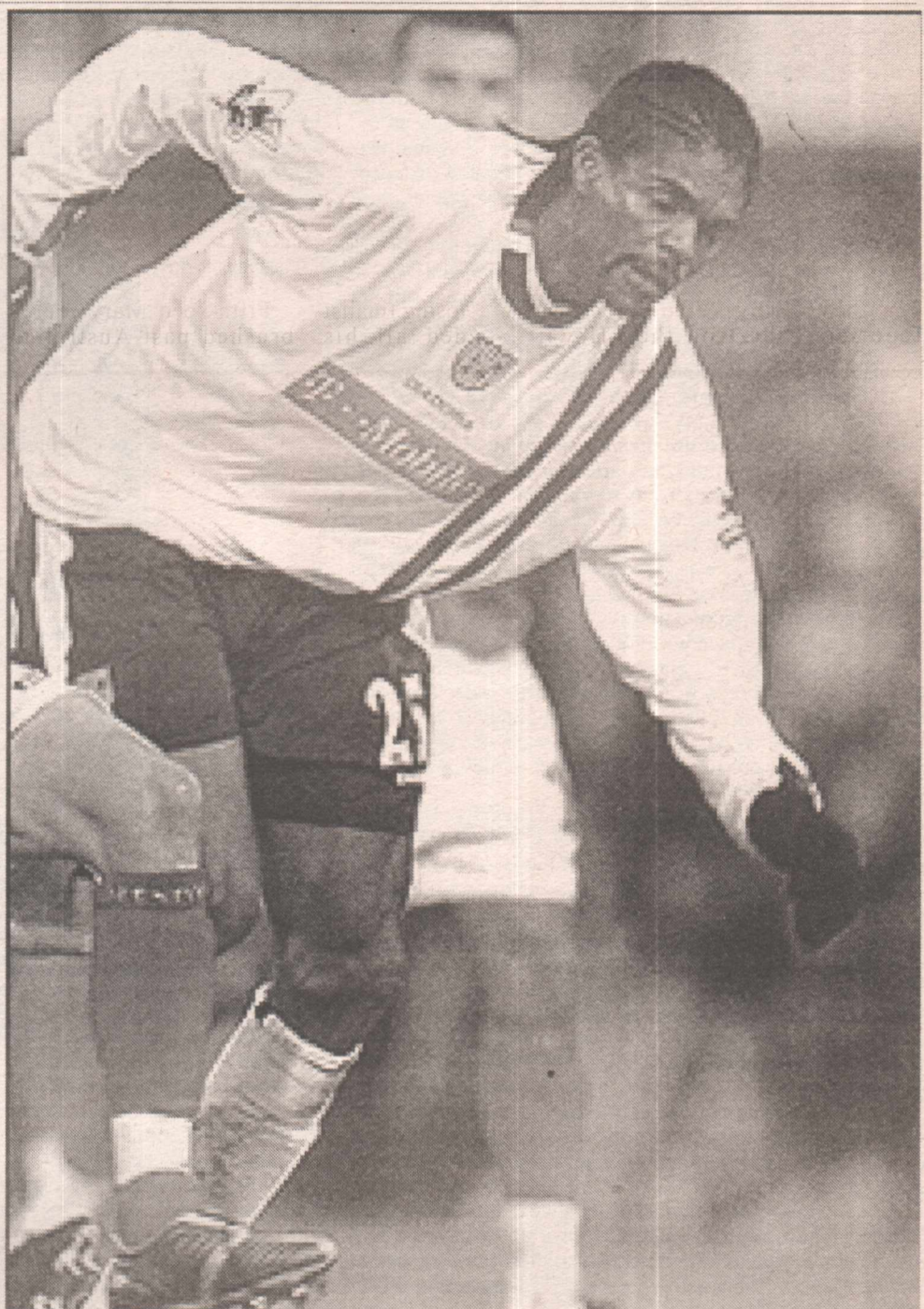
"Yes Sir" all the time.

The Bayelsa-born coach was not done - he continued: "Those fans, who really love the game should be able to face the authorities and tell them

that, what they are doing, is not right. They should not chicken-out in times of crisis.

Football should not, he pointed out, "be left in the hands of the FA and the Sports Ministry alone to handle."

He argued that, "we did not make it to the World Cup Finals, not only because the team lost, but because we left some things to be done, undone," Siasia submitted on a final note.



Super Eagles forward Nwankwo Kanu arrived the Ria Park Hotel camp in Faro, Portugal alongside defender Joseph Yobo Monday night to end a long wait for the English Premiership stars.

Mastroudes warns Ministry, Galadima

Reactions are still coming in over the ongoing face-off in Nigerian football.

As the fireworks between the disputed chairman of the Nigeria Football Association and the sports ministry over the soul of Nigerian football continues, former chairman of the defunct Leventis United football Club, John Mastroudes, has warned both parties not to allow the feud to affect the Super Eagles

in Cairo.

In an interview with brila fm.net he declared, "they should know better than use our football for political gains"

While taking a look at Nigeria's chances at the Nations Cup Mastroudes believes the failure to qualify for the World Cup will spur the boys to excel in Egypt.

If there is one thing that excites the seasoned football

administrator, it is the current composition of the Super Eagles, which he describes as a team for the future.

Mastroudes has still not gotten over the shock of exit from the World Cup.

He lambasted the players for lack of seriousness, which he said cost the nation the ticket to the World Cup.

He assured that the present crop of Super Eagles would do the Nation proud in Egypt.

Eagles'll beat Ghana -Erico

Former Super Eagles assistant coach and presently the coach of NEPA FC of Abuja Joe Erico has declared loudly that the Super Eagles has more than enough in their arsenal to beat the Black Stars of Ghana when both sides meet on January 23 in their opening group game.

Erico said that with the present serenity and calmness which has characterised the Eagles preparation and the calibre of players they have in camp, the Black Stars of Ghana would find it difficult not to receive a beating from the Eagles.

"Preparation in the last one week has been in top gear and the team's camp has been in a relaxed mood. I believe with this serenity and calmness around the side would go into their opening game against Ghana and do very well.

"I don't see the Ghanaians escaping a defeat in the hands of the Eagles, with the calibre of players we have honestly with all due respect to the Ghanaians they would surely bow to the Eagles," Erico boasted.

Asked what approach the Eagles should adopt against the Black Stars when the both meet on Monday January 23 in Port Said, Egypt considering he was an assistant with the Eagles at Mali 2002 when the Eagles beat the Black Stars 1-0 in the quarter-finals of the Nations Cup then?

Erico said, "the setting and atmosphere is different now. What manner of approach we adopted then would definitely not work now if adopted

again, but what matters is for the team to be focused and determined and they would triumph.

"Honestly, we have a very strong squad and our manner of preparation especially in the last week or so has been calm and relaxed compared to what we had en-route Mali 2002.

"With our rowdy preparation we still managed to edge out the Ghanaians, I believe this time around we are even much stronger and with some

measure of professionalism and luck we would surely triumph over the Ghanaians," Erico, popularly called 'jogo bonito' for his brand of football philosophy said to Nigeriansportsonline.com on Monday.

The Super Eagles start their Nations Cup campaign with an opening group game against the Black Stars of Ghana on Monday January 23 in Port Said, and then face Senegal and Zimbabwe in their other group games.

NFL postpones elections indefinitely

Elections into the board of the Nigeria Football League fixed for January 28 has been postponed indefinitely while February 25 will be the kick off date of the

By Patrick Andrew, Asst. Head Sports Desk

2006 league season.

Chairman of the Interim Management Committee,

Chief Oyiki Obaseki, confirmed yesterday that the elections were postponed indefinitely because of Nigeria's participation in the 25th edition of the Africa Cup of

Nations that begins on Friday, January 20 in Cairo, Egypt.

Obaseki said that the postponement was necessary because some likely contestants and the voters will be in

Egypt to cheer the Super Eagles which have a match that same day, adding that it was this that compelled them to consider the request to shift forwards the date of the elections.

As a result of the development, the inauguration of the electoral panel headed by Hon. Ahmed Sani Toro could not hold at the League house as scheduled.

Meanwhile, the Secretariat of the NFL has released the fixtures for the commencement of the season.

The season that is to start next month will end on July 8, 2006, while the draw for the fixtures is to hold in the second week of February.

The release indicated that collection of forms and return of same, inspection of the stadia among other pre-league assignments are fixed completion by

Galadima: CAF petitions Sambawa

Following the report that Egyptian embassy in the country refused to issue visa to the chairman of Nigeria Football Association, NFA to travel to Egypt and attend the two-day CAF Congress in Cairo, FIFA and CAF have expressed disappointment and shock that the visa was not granted to the NFA boss while it is a known fact that he will represent Nigeria in the Cairo Congress officially.

It was gathered that CAF dispatched to the NFA boss a covering letter inviting him to attend the Congress as well as air ticket for the journey and that, the documents were routed through the secretariat of the Association at Zon 7 Wuse, Abuja.

time of filing this report, they were not delivered to him.

CAF have even gone ahead to petition the Ministry for foreign Affairs on the Galadima incident.

A close aide of Galadima revealed that CAF informed the Kano born sports administrator that he should be in Cairo for the congress apart from the traveling documents CAF sent to him.

The two bodies expressed shock that both the traveling documents and the visa, which he applied for on personal basis, were not issued to him.

A source close to Galadima disclosed yesterday: "When it was confirmed that the traveling documents sent from CAF

delivered to Galadima which he sensed as a hidden agenda of government, he (Galadima) decided to make his own private arrangement to travel to Egypt based on the information he received from both CAF and FIFA officials that he was officially invited to the congress as chairman of the NFA."

According to the NFA chairman's aide, when CAF and FIFA got the information that despite the private arrangement the NFA boss made for the journey and issuance of visa to him was stopped, the two bodies said another dimension was introduced to the December 29, NFA board election, which took place in Kano describing it as unhealthy to

The aide said CAF had promised to petition the foreign affairs ministry in Nigeria on the visa matter saying Galadima was to represent Nigeria in the CAF congress which holds Wednesday and Thursday in Cairo and that he was not going there in his personal capacity.

When contacted on the report Tuesday in Kano Galadima confirmed that the Egyptian embassy refused him visa and that it was true that both CAF and FIFA had officially confirmed to him that should attend the CAF congress in Cairo, Egypt.

He said the visa matter was unfortunate and that he was still studying the situation but refused to make further comments on the

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WEDNESDAY COLUMN

Wednesday, January 18, 2006

The president's Samson solution

By Mohammed Haruna

I am tempted this morning by two major events of the last several weeks to reproduce the speech President Olusegun Obasanjo gave at the closing ceremony of the Presidential Retreat on the Electoral Process and Violence on February 10, 2002 and juxtapose that speech with two articles I wrote on these pages about the gap between the president's words and his deeds. The first article, titled "Obasanjo's Samson option," was published on October 9, 2002 and was in reaction to an interview he gave to a selected group of newspapers in the heat of perhaps the most serious attempt by the National Assembly to impeach him.

The second article titled "Obasanjo as a danger to our democracy", was published on October 15, 2003 and was in response to his October 8 speech which read like a riot act against all opposition to the government's whopping increase of the prices of oil products at that time. That speech is arguably his most bellicose so far.

The two major events that have reminded me of the President's speech and my two articles are first, the recent Southern Leadership Forum meeting in Enugu along with its other subsequent meetings, in particular that of January 12 held at the Yar'Adua Centre in Abuja. The second event is last week's impeachment of Alhaji Rashidi Ladoja as the Governor of Oyo State, following the long running battle between the governor and his estranged political godfather, Alhaji Lamidi Adedibu, the inventor of *amala* politics and recently a self-declared supporter of a lifetime presidency for Obasanjo.

Needless to say, space will not allow me the reproduction of neither the president's speech nor my two articles. I will, however, quote liberally from the President's speech because it is hard to beat as an illustration of his inclination to say one thing and do another, an inclination with grave implications for the growth of our nascent democracy and even the very existence of our country.

In that speech of February 10, 2002, the President lamented the hold that ethnic, sectional and sectional sentiments seemed to have on our politicians. "What does it say about us as politicians today," he asked, "where since May 1999, we have more and stronger socio-cultural organisations which are so powerful that no political party can compare to or match them in terms of their appeal and mobilisation capacities? Why are many key members of the political elite more willing to pitch their tents with parochial, ethnic-based, sub-national organisations than with our mainstream political institutions? Indeed why is it easy for the same members of the political elite to play active roles in sub-national organizations which detract attention and energy away from efforts to build national values and unity, and at the same time maintain key positions in our political parties and other political institutions?"

"I am not suggesting that as leaders we should not belong to these so-called cultural organisations, but we should recognize them for what they are, first of all they are evidence of our failure as politicians to aggregate, articulate and represent all major political strands."

As a criticism of the style and substance of our politicians, the President couldn't have been more accurate. Yet at the first sign of trouble about seven months later, the President's first resort was to these same vices he had condemned in others. For, in late September, he gave an interview to a select group of newspapers in which he alleged for the first time that back in 1998, the Northern caucus of the PDP wanted all candidates for its presidential ticket which had been zoned to the South, to sign a deal that reserved most, if not all, the plum cabinet posts for the North. He also alleged that the caucus wanted the putative president to serve only one term of four years.

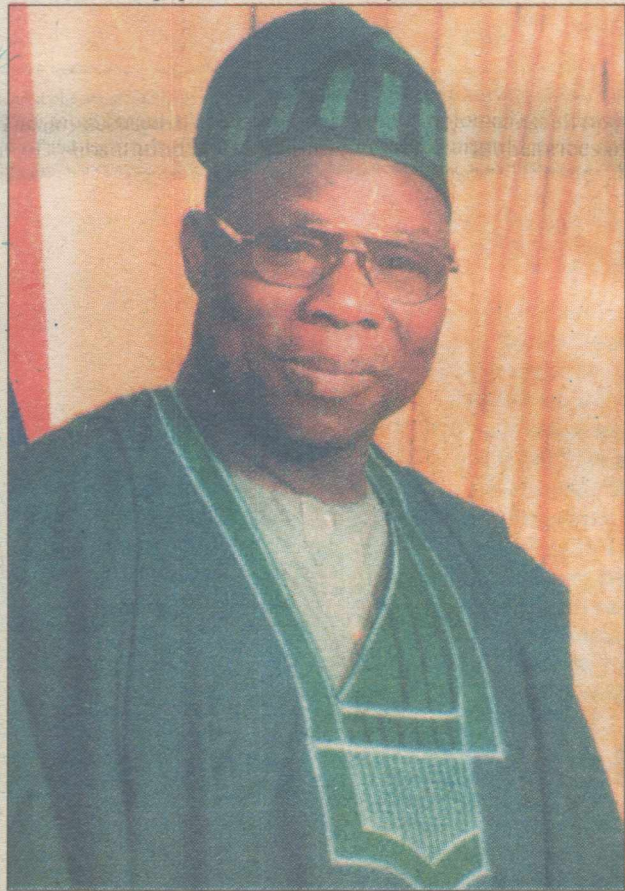
"Anybody who signed that deal," the *Sunday Vanguard* of September 29, 2002, one of the select newspapers at the interview quoted him as saying, "would be a figure-head President. And there is no way I would sign that document. I didn't."

That interview was clearly orchestrated by the president to portray the Northern caucus of the PDP, in particular, and Northern politicians in general, as a greedy lot. It was also a thinly veiled accusation by the President that the region's leaders were behind the serious impeachment move by the National Assembly. The Northern leaders, he said, were angry with him not only because he refused to sign their supposedly nefarious deal back in 1998, but also because his reforms had put paid to government's "business as usual" as a source of their unearned extravagant life-style.

That the interview was orchestrated was clear from the fact that none of the newspapers invited – and there were half a dozen or so – was from outside the Lagos - Ibadan axis; not even the *New Nigerian* based in Kaduna, which the govern-

ment itself owned 100 per cent was invited. Actually, its editor was invited initially but before the interview could hold, he was told that his invitation was in error.

If the interview was orchestrated to break the unified front of the National Assembly along the North/South divide, it succeeded beyond the President's wildest imagination. For, soon after the interview, which was published by all the selected newspapers on the same day, the National Assem-



President Olusegun Obasanjo

bly split right down the middle along ethnic and regional lines. These divisions contributed in no small measure in diverting public attention from the merit or otherwise of the charges against the President.

Not for the last time the President was to resort to the same divide and rule strategy in the run-up to the general elections of 2003 when he seemed to have lost his party's presidential ticket to his deputy, Atiku Abubakar. The strategy had the same telling effect on our national unity.

And so to the litany of the President's February 10, 2002 questions about why our politicians seem to prefer ethnic and regional organizations to political parties in playing politics, one can say the simple answer is that those who should lead the way invariably say one thing only to do the exact opposite at the first sign of trouble.

Nothing underscores the accuracy of this simple answer than the recent meeting of the Southern Leadership Forum and last week's impeachment of the Oyo State governor, Alhaji Rashidi Ladoja.

There is of course nothing wrong with the SLF meeting in itself. The problem is first, the very bellicose threats it served Nigerians over power rotation, so-called restructuring of Nigeria and resource control, etc; and second, the uneven manner in which the presidency has handled such regional meetings.

In its lead story on January 15, the *Leadership* newspaper accused the President of directly funding the SLF. "A powerful force inside Aso Rock," it said, "is now working to make Olusegun Obasanjo the last President of a united Nigeria - *Leadership* can authoritatively reveal." The newspaper charged that a "gang" of those who wanted to extend the President's tenure beyond 2007 were now working on a sovereign national conference having failed to get the recent National Political Reform Conference to endorse a third term for their man.

More specifically, the newspaper repeated speculations that each member of the House of Representatives had been offered 70 million naira and each senator 100 million naira to support a third term for the President. It also said the President funded the Southern Leadership Forum meeting with N150 million naira "delivered directly from Ota," the

President's home-town.

These speculations may well be unfounded but the now open secret that the President personally intervened to scuttle a similar meeting of Speakers of Northern Houses of Assembly in Minna, Niger State, in December, while apparently turning at least a blind eye on the Southern Leadership Forum, suggests a sinister move by the presidency to divide the country along regional lines.

Cont. on page 8

And Minna was not the only case where the presidency intervened to scuttle a meeting it did not like. Only last Thursday it surreptitiously tried to stop the meeting of the Movement for Unity and Progress, whose interim chairman is retired Colonel Dangiwa Umar, a foremost critic of the president. The president's rather loquacious spokesman, Femi Fani-Kayode, who *Thisday* accused of appropriating "Ikimi's diplomatic copy-right" of "substituting abuse and insolence for argument" in its editorial of January 4, titled "Echoes of Abacha's Days", has rejected the charge as so much rubbish. In doing so, however, he could not explain why the management of the Yar'Adua Centre allowed the South Leadership Forum to use the very hall that the MUP had paid for well in advance of the SLF. He could also not explain why the Dangiwa group was denied the use of other halls, which were empty. Though supposedly independent, the Yaradua Center has strong links with the federal authorities.

The most recent manifestation of the president's inclination to say one thing and do another was the impeachment of Ladoja as the governor of Oyo State. Once again permit me, dear reader, to quote from our president's fine February 10, 2002 speech.

"We cannot", he said, "provide good government when Chairmen of Local Governments and Governors are barely on speaking terms, when members of the same party in the executive and the legislature can barely tolerate each other, and where every action by members of one party or one arm of government is automatically and instinctively opposed, not on principles, but because of other considerations that are so parochial and petty that they should not find expression in the political process. Let us disarm, lower the tensions and behave as politicians and statesmen, to whom no problem is without solutions."

These, once again, were very fine words and a very accurate analysis of, and prescription for the problems of, our politics from the president. However, when it came to putting those fine words into practice as in Oyo State, those words rang hollow.

In his Sallah message on January 9 the president once more reaffirmed his commitment to upholding the nation's Constitution. "I seize the opportunity of this occasion", he said, "to reaffirm this administration's total commitment to upholding and protecting our Constitution and to nurturing and fully entrenching democratic institutions in our polity."

Two days later the *Nigerian Tribune* warned in an editorial that men of goodwill, including presumably the president, must intervene to stop the impeachment of Ladoja. The impeachment it said was "not about principle. It is about profit". The paper showed that the pro-impeachment camp led by the all-mighty Adedibu had violated almost every rule of procedure in impeaching a governor. In any case, a court had ruled against the proceedings as null and void.

In spite of the president's fine words of February 10, 2002 that politicians should rise up as statesmen to dowse tensions whenever they arose; despite his equally fine commitment of January 9 to constitutionality, he did nothing to dissuade Adedibu from proceeding down his reckless path. On the contrary, the president seemed to urge him on by singing his praises as the strongman of Ibadan and Oyo politics.

Over three years ago when I said that the president, not unlike the Biblical Samson, would rather bring down the whole house upon all its occupants, including himself, than suffer the humiliation of impeachment, I never imagined that after overcoming the move, he will still raise the stakes to the same level in an apparent bid to perpetuate himself in office.

Now it does seem to me that when I said on these same pages on October 15, 2003 that our president posed "the most dangerous threat to our democracy", I grossly underestimated his tyrannical tendency. Today, the danger this tendency poses is not merely to our democracy. It is to the very survival of our nation because I do not see how Nigeria will survive as the most populous nation in Africa and of the black race, if the South Leadership Forum, with the apparent complicity, if not outright promptings, of the presidency, carries out its threats of boycotting the next elections if its demands for power to remain in the South, for restructuring and for resource control, among other demands, are not met.

It is indeed sad and tragic that a president in whom Nigerians had such high hopes barely seven years ago may well turn out to be the president under whose watch the nation disintegrated, not because of issues of principles, but, to quote his own words once again, because of "considerations that are so parochial and petty, that they should not find expression in the political process."