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TRUST IS A BURDEN

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Man kills judge over court ruling



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Lady kills friend with razor blade

From Seun Joseph, Lagos

A 22 year old woman in Lagos, Ijeoma Ibezim, used a razor blade to kill her friend, a 25-year old salesgirl, by cutting her in the face following a quarrel over a bucket of water, the police in Lagos said yesterday.

“By cutting her in the face following a quarrel

They said the two ladies lived together with two other ladies in the same one-room apartment in the Ajegunle area of Apapa local government area of the state, and that they had been living together without problems until last Saturday, when a minor argument ensued between them.

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PHOTO: AFOLABI SOTUNDE

AN illegal fuel dump flourishes opposite the NNPC mega filling station in Abuja with a long fuel queue on the other side of the road.

Lar heads panel on Jos crises

By AbdulFattah Olajide

SECOND Republic governor of old Plateau State Chief Solomon Daushep Lar was last night appointed by the Federal Government to head a special 15-member committee to work out a way forward towards finding a lasting solution to the recurrent communal crises

in Jos, the Plateau State capital. Ambassador Yahaya Kwande was appointed as the committee's co-chairman.

The committee was set up by Vice President Goodluck Jonathan after he hosted a stakeholders' meeting on the Jos crises at the State House, Abuja yesterday. Other members of the committee are

Mrs Hannatu Chollom, Mr. John Samci, Prof. N. Gomwalk, Ibrahim Dasukj Nakande, former Plateau State governor Ambassador Fidelis Tappun and Senator John Ninzip Shagaya.

Former deputy Senate President Ibrahim Mantu, Mr. Leo Dilkon, Most Rev. I.A. Kaigama, Chief Imam of Jos Sheikh Balarabe

Dawud, Mrs Fati Kyari, retired Air Vice Marshal U. Abbas and Alhaji Saleh Hassan are also members of the committee.

The Committee was asked to, among other terms of reference, critically examine the issues surrounding the recurrent violence in Plateau State and work out how vari

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Shell shuts stations as militants attack pipeline

From Muhammad Bello, Port Harcourt

BARELY 24 hours after the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) re-issued a warning to commence attacks on oil installations in the Niger Delta, the Royal Anglo-Dutch Shell has shut three oil

flow stations in the region after a pipeline was sabotaged, causing some oil to spill into the creeks, a company spokeswoman has said.

Although no group has claimed responsibility for the recent attack, MEND had on Friday night asserted that it did not believe the government would restore control of resources to the

local people. The movement also demanded that residents be given a greater share of profits from oil resources and land, warning companies to prepare for what it called an all-out onslaught against installations and personnel.

Shell's spokesperson said Saturday's leak on the Trans Ramos oil pipeline in Southern

Ijaw, Bayelsa State, home of the majority of ex-militant leaders who traded their guns for federal amnesty last year, was said to have been caused by sabotage. The leak was later stopped.

In June, MEND sabotaged the same pipeline which connects to the Tunu, Opukusu and Ugbotubu pumping stations and

feeds crude oil to the Shell-operated Forcados export terminal.

In an email to our correspondent, MEND's spokesperson, Jomo Gbomo, said although the movement was not directly responsible for the attack, it was certainly a response to an order to resume hostilities by a freelance group.

Jos: Police invite PRTV boss over broadcast

From Andrew Agbese, Jos

GENERAL Manager of the Plateau Radio and Television Corporation (PRTVC) Pastor Yiljap Abraham has been invited to appear before the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) "D" Department over an alleged inciting broadcast during the recent crisis in Jos.

The invitation is contained in a letter requesting him to appear before the Deputy Commissioner of Police Abdullahi Yuguda in connection with the role the media house played during the crisis. The letter with reference No. CR 3000/X/FHQ/ABJ/VOL.T/1 signed by the Deputy Commissioner of Police Felix Damisa for the Deputy Inspector General of Police, 'D' Department dated January 29, 2010 and addressed to the state Commissioner of Information and Communication requested the release of the General Manager to appear before the Deputy Inspector General of Police, Force CID, Abuja through the Deputy Commissioner of Police DCP Yuguda Abdullahi. The letter reads in part: "This office is investigating a case of criminal conspiracy, inciting public disturbance, rioting, armed with dangerous weapons and culpable homicide in the current Jos crisis of January, 2010".

"As part of fact finding to proffer a lasting solution to the crisis, the contribution of the General Manager of the Plateau Radio and Television Corporation, PRTVC, Jos is imperative". The GM is expected to report at the Force CID "D" Department, Area 10 Garki Abuja February 2, 2010 at 10am.

Efforts to get the General Manager's comment on the development failed as he did not reply a text sent to him by our correspondent on the matter.



CROSS section of Plateau State elders at the Plateau State Special Consultative Forum with Vice President Goodluck Jonathan on the Jos Crisis in Abuja yesterday.

Man kills judge over court ruling

From Mustafa Abubakar, Ilorin

THE police in Ilorin, Kwara State, yesterday said an area court judge, Mallam Kazeem Zakari, was at the weekend beheaded by a Fulani herdsman in Yashikira, Baruten Local Government Area of the state after the court dissolved his marriage.

Our correspondent gathered that the herdsman who is now at large, killed the judge in his house shortly after the judge acceded to the request of the killer's wife for a summary termination of their marriage.

It was also gathered that the parents of the Fulani man's wife had instituted a divorce suit before

the area court in Yashikira over constant beating of their daughter by the husband who they described as a 'rascal'.

The judge after hearing and deliberation on the case, reportedly granted the parents' prayers to dissolve the marriage. The herdsman then resolved to personally deal with the judge, it was

also gathered. At the close of work on that day, when the court clerk and assistant took the late judge's books to his home, they met him dead. The head was severed from the body.

The command's Public Relations Officer ASP Dabo Ezekiel said the corpse had already been released for burial.

Trailer crushes 7 in Sokoto

From Rakiya A. Muhammad, Sokoto

A trailer yesterday in Sokoto crushed seven persons to death. They were in a Toyota Starlet car. The accident occurred

at about 10:30am along Bodinga-Sokoto road. The trailer driver was said to have fled the scene as soon as the accident occurred.

Our correspondent gathered that the car was heading

to Sokoto from Tambuwal Local Government while the trailer was heading to Bodinga from Sokoto. It was also learnt that the bodies of the deceased have been deposited at the Usmanu Danfodiyo University Teaching

Hospital (UDUTH). Sector Commander of the FRSC in Sokoto Mr. Christopher Ademoluti said FRSC officials were at the scene of the incident and assisted in conveying the corpses to UDUTH.

PIX: NAN

N3.6bn alleged fraud: Reps to probe sale of SAHCOL

By Nasidi A. Yahaya

THE House of Representatives Committee on Privatisation and Commercialisation yesterday said it would investigate an alleged fraud of N3.6bn in the sale of Sky Power Aviation Handling Company (SAHCOL).

The cargo handling company was sold at N5 billion on a willing buyer, willing seller basis by the Bureau for Public Enterprise (BPE) in spite of an earlier offer of

N9 billion by another firm.

Rep Abass Braimah, chairman of the committee, resolved to conduct an investigative hearing on matter, saying the Director-General of the Bureau of Public Enterprises was withholding information and document on the sales of government assets from it.

The committee many stakeholders will be invited to answer questions on grey areas in some of the privatisation transactions with the BPE at the investigative

hearing scheduled for Wednesday 3rd and Thursday 4th Feb. Rep Abbas Braimah said: "We are not satisfied with the attitude displayed by the DG of BPE and the way BPE is been run and managed under your leadership. It is unbecoming and least expected.

He added: "We have written letters asking for information on the sales of SACHOL, up till now, we have not received any thing and we heard that there was massive fraud of N3 billion in the bid-

ding process".

The committee is also interested in knowing the whereabouts of \$120 million which was meant to have been used for the dredging of the Imo River by the Imo River Dredging Company. The \$120 million was meant to have been set aside from the sale of the Aluminium Smelting Company of Nigeria (ALSCON) which was sold for \$250 million. The investor was to have used the amount for the dredging of the Imo River.

The Committee had asked the BPE to account for the fund saying that since the Imo River had not been dredged three years after the sale of ALSCON, the money should have been paid into the Federation account with interest.

The committee will also be investigating the privatisation of the Jos Rolling Mills particularly on issues that borders on ownership structure and the share purchase agreement which is a point of contention.

PIC: KENNEDY EGBONODJE



SENIOR Special Assistant to the President and National Coordinator of NAPEP Dr. Magnus Kpakol, at the Media Trust Corporate Head Office, Abuja, yesterday.

NAPEP: States should devote 5% budget to poverty eradication

By Sunday Williams

STATE governments should put 5 percent of their annual budgets into Commercial and Microfinance banks for onward lending to the poor people, National Coordinator of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) Dr. Magnus L. Kpakol has said.

Speaking yesterday in Abuja when he paid a courtesy visit to the Corporate Office of Media Trust, Kpakol said the arrangement is part of NAPEP's new strategy in fighting poverty this year.

He said the states should identify areas of comparative advantage which they want to pro-

mote like groundnut processing, cassava processing etc. and give directives to the financial institutions to lend the money in those areas.

He said: "We've decided to come up with a new strategy this year that will allow us fight poverty in a more visible manner. The primary view in Nigeria is that you should give money to the poor but that is not the essence. At best we should give credit to people through the commercial and microfinance banks to go and start businesses."

He said if the country is going to be successful in the fight, it has to involve the private sector to

operate effectively, adding that NAPEP will give motivation and encouragement to commercial and microfinance banks to lend to the people.

"We will use Federal government money and partner with the state and local governments to promote the creation of jobs, businesses and make sure that people save money to take care of their children's education and health needs," he said.

He said they are going to work with the states and local governments to cut the interest rates to make it affordable for the poor people, adding that they will monitor the activities of the financial

institutions to make sure that the loan disbursement reaches the target beneficiaries.

On Keke NAPEP, Kpakol said about 980 kekes have not been cleared by the supplier because of demurrage during the port congestion, adding that he has pleaded with the port Authority reduce the demurrage to the supplier.

He said they have successfully allocated the Keke to all the state government but some have not gone to take delivery of their own.

On the price of the Keke, Dr Kpakol said the actual price is N450, 000 per keke but they are giving it at a subsidised price.

'Those calling for Yar'adua's resignation are saboteurs'

By Suleiman Bisalla & Tosin Omoniyi

FORMER Deputy Senate President Ibrahim Mantu has said individuals and groups calling for the resignation of President Umaru Yar'adua are engaged in 'deliberate act of sabotage' to cause confusion and eventually derail the present administration.

Leading a group called Peoples Movement for a New Nigeria (PMNN) at a press conference at the Shehu Yar'adua centre in Abuja yesterday, Mantu said the utterances of many of those who hold this opinion suggest that they are not acting in the interest of the nation.

Flanked by the former Chaplain of the State House Rev. Yusuf Abaje, former Sports Minister Damishi Sango and a host of other politicians, Mantu also described the calls as unconstitutional, and not reflective of the wishes of responsible citizens.

"The Federal High Court under Justice Abutu has ruled that the Vice President can and must act as the Acting President. It is interesting to note that the Vice President has never abandoned his responsibility as the Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, who must carry out the duties of state in the absence of Mr. President," he said.

"The Vice President has continued to preside most effectively over the Federal Executive Council Meeting... The vice president has been receiving ambassadors and taking general salute and ordering the deployment of troops to troubled spots as commander in chief..." he said, stressing that there is no need to politicize the matter.

When asked about the call by former President Olusegun Obasanjo that Yar'adua should take the path of honour, Mantu who is also a member of the Board of Trustees of the PDP, said Obasanjo's comments were personal and they do not reflect the thinking of the BOT.

He, however, agreed that the 1999 constitution needed to be amended to address certain gaps in the document that have given room for people to exploit and cause confusion.

Britain to repatriate £43m stolen funds to Nigeria

By Misbahu Bashir

THE British Government will repatriate £43 million pounds siphoned by corrupt Nigerian government officials to off shore accounts, the liaison officer for West Africa of the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) Mr Michael Dockree has said.

SOCA is an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by, but operationally independent from, the Home Office of the United Kingdom.

Mr Dockree disclosed this when he visited the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC).

He said he was at the anti-corruption agency to discuss potential areas of cooperation between the ICPC and SOCA, particularly in the areas of education, public enlightenment, intelligence gathering and asset tracking.

He also emphasized his government's commitment and assistance to security agencies and

anti-corruption commissions.

ICPC Chairman Justice Emanuel Ayoola, who was represented by Dr Uriah Angulu, assured Mr Dockree of the commission's readiness to partner with stakeholders in the United Kingdom in all aspects of the anti-corruption campaign.

According to a statement

by Mike Sowe, ICPC's Head of Public Enlightenment Department, Dr Angulu said the activities of the Commission will be enhanced as soon as the National Assembly amends the Act establishing the commission which will make it more proactive in dealing with cases of corruption.

PIC: NAN



FROM left: Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad, Alhaji Lateef Adegbite, Secretary General, Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs and CAN President Archbishop John Onaiyekan during the special meeting on Plateau State crisis in Abuja yesterday.

Bank official's kidnappers seek N30m ransom

By Misbahu Bashir

THE kidnappers of a Skye Bank official, AbdulRahman Umar Sa'id, have demanded N30 million ransom, a family source told *Daily Trust* yesterday.

The source said the family has thrashed out issues regarding his release. The kidnappers were expected to free Sa'id yesterday.

Sa'id was abducted in his apartment in the Abuja on Saturday at about 11pm. Family sources said Sa'id lives alongside other occupants in the house where he was abducted, contradicting police information which earlier said he was living alone with his security guard.

The police said the matter was reported to them late on Sunday and they have commenced investigations on the matter and work on how to secure the victim. The matter which was reported at the Utako Divisional Police Station was later transferred to the Police Command Headquarters at Garki 2 Abuja. When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer SP Jimoh Moshood declined comment on the matter.

Group holds 3million man march for Yar'adua

By Muideen Olaniyi

A three million man march put together by Future Nigeria Group (FNG) to pray for President Umaru Musa Yar'adua will hold tomorrow at Eagle Square in Abuja.

National President of the Coalition of National Youth Leaders (CNYL) Emeka Okoroji told newsmen yesterday in Abuja that the group which is a coun-

cil member FNG would use the occasion to present their position paper to the National Assembly.

Flanked by his National Secretary Abdullahi Ali Kano, CNYL President, who said their members across the country had been adequately mobilized, urged Nigerians to remain steadfast and keep wary eyes on those disparaging the symbol of Nigeria's democracy to ensure that the hard-earned democracy was not

jeopardized.

Okoroji said "With the current state of health of Mr President, it is human for anybody who is mortal to be sick and also get well. We are confident that God will speedily restore President Yar'adua health to once again take over his responsibility.

"CNYL is very concerned and troubled the way and manner the health of Mr President has been politicized. Many of the critics

have unpatriotically over heated the polity and over flogged the issue to the detriment of national stability and unity. Their action has portrayed the country in a bad light nationally and internationally.

He said the President had not acted unconstitutionally by not transmitting vacation letter to the National Assembly, citing the ruling of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) High Court.

ANPP accuses PDP of planning to derail democracy

By Abbas Jimoh

THE All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) yesterday in Abuja accused the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) of plotting to derail the nascent democracy using the health crisis of President Umaru Yar'adua as alibi. National Secretary of the party Emma Eneukwu said Nigerians should be vigilant and not allow the PDP to derail the country's democracy.

"We are appalled by the unpatriotic behaviour of the PDP, both at the party level, the National Assembly and the Federal Executive Council (FEC), on this burning national dilemma; How can PDP pretend that all is well when Nigeria has had no President, and by extension, no government, for over seven weeks running? He insisted that what is happening is not by accident of history but a well designed plot by the leaders of PDP to derail the democracy.

Abuja car crash claims 5

By Misbahu Bashir

A speeding car yesterday crashed into Julius Berger Nigeria PLC construction site in Abuja killing five laborers and injuring one.

An eye witness, Mr. Pius Okafor, said the driver of the ash-coloured Peugeot 406 car with Registration Number Abuja FY 35 ABC lost control of his car and

suddenly ran into the laborers working at the site. Five of them died instantly while one was seriously injured.

An official of the Federal Road Safety Commission in Abuja Ohaeri Osondu said information gathered from the crash scene indicated that the driver was using a mobile phone and accelerating on a high speed before losing control of his vehicle.

The vehicle was said to have somersaulted after hitting the laborers. An ambulance belonging to Julius Berger conveyed the Corpses to the Julius Berger Clinic at Life Camp Abuja, while another ambulance belonging to the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) took the injured driver to Maitama General Hospital for medical attention.

Meanwhile the FRSC officials have stepped up special patrols in the Federal Capital Territory and environs to address the usage of mobile phones by motorists.

Osondu said mobile courts will be established for prompt trial of offenders and public are advised to contact FRSC emergency number 0700-22553772 to report any road crashes and motorists violating traffic rule.



SCHOOL children receiving immunisation dose at a school in Abuja.

PHOTO: AFOLABI SOTUNDE

UK to support Nigeria's deforestation effort

By Aisha Umar

THE British High Commission said it will support Nigeria's efforts to reduce deforestation in the country just as it initiated a paper recycling scheme.

In a statement issued yesterday in Abuja, the commission said it would recycle all of its waste paper as part of its efforts to become carbon neutral by 2012, adding that the country remained committed to promoting a low carbon, high growth global economy.

The scheme, which is being operated by a local company, Green Concept, provides a collection and recycling service. Director John Elijah said Green Concept is also collecting waste paper from the British Council and a number of other embassies have expressed an interest in the recycling service. The waste paper is converted into briquettes which the restaurants prefer using as they are cheaper and easier to use than firewood or charcoal.

Lady kills friend

Continued from page 1

Ijeoma was brought to the information department of the state police command in handcuffs yesterday, according to the police, she said in her confessional statement that Ada Okeke was a good friend of hers and that on Saturday, they were about to take their baths when a mild disagreement started over who should be the first to make use of their bathing bucket.

According to witnesses, the disagreement later degenerated into exchange of blows, and the two girls mercilessly exchanged blows until neighbours came out and separated them. The two girls then stopped the fight and dispersed.

However, the police said, Ada Okeke started doing other chores in the house without suspecting that her friend was still very bitter as a result of the teeth bite she sustained during the fight. They said Ijeoma quietly went into their room, armed herself with a new razor blade and attacked Ada, who was caught totally unawares. Superintendent Frank Mba told Daily Trust that the suspect grabbed her friend and cut her across the face with the new blade. The victim's nose and cheek were cut open, he said. She raised an alarm and was rushed immediately to a nearby hospital for urgent medical attention. However, Ada died after a few hours due to excessive bleeding.

Ijeoma told the police that she did not intend to kill her friend with the blade but only wanted to revenge because of the teeth bite she sustained during the fight. "My intention was just to also cut her face as she tried to disfigure my face. I did not plan to kill her with the razor blade. I am really sorry for everything that happened, please forgive me," she said. The police spokesman told our reporter that Ijeoma will be charged to court very soon for homicide.

Lar heads panel on Jos crises

Continued from page 1

ous institutions and levels of government can interact to ensure that the crisis is resolved once and for all. Meanwhile, at the stakeholders' meeting earlier yesterday, Plateau State Governor Jonah Jang accused unnamed leaders in the country of taking sides in the recent sectarian crisis in Jos where over 500 people were killed.

Governor Jang said that crisis has been recurring in his state because the nation's leaders usually make statements on the crises based on a one-sided account. He said, "I believe as the governor of Plateau State that one of the major problems we have as a nation is the fact that our leaders are not patient to wait and hear two sides of a story before they make statements that will either help solve the problem or help to inflame the problem itself. So I want to plead with our prominent citizens holding high positions that when a problem erupts in a place that there are people who want to justify the cause of their actions and they run to certain areas to go and give their own story and leaders start issuing statements without

knowing the background or what actually happened. I want to plead that we should seriously take note of that."

Jang also accused the Nigerian press of bastardizing and defaming the nation in their reportage of the Jos crisis and warned that "if this nation burns, it will burn all of us."

He added, "And again I also want to say that I have had the privilege as a Nigerian to travel to so many countries. As free as the press is in developed nations, they have the interest of their nations and there are certain things they don't just publish because they want to protect the interest and the integrity of their nation. But our press thinks the way to do journalism is to bastardize the whole country in the face of the whole world, calling leaders by all sorts of names, facts that they have not gone to investigate and they just write anything that will just help them sell their papers or promote their various media houses."

"So I want to take this opportunity to plead to the Nigerian press, this nation is our nation and we have no other nation,

whether we are pressmen, we are governors, or president, traditional rulers or we are whatsoever, we have no other nation. If this nation burns, it will burn all of us. And I think the press should play an important role in bringing unity to this nation and know that certain things should be discussed within us as a nation and not just selling it to the whole world because we want to say we are the freest press in the whole world. Free, as long as it doesn't set our own country free, then we are doing more harm to our own country", he added.

In his opening remarks at the meeting, Vice President Jonathan said he summoned "the informal meeting aimed at bringing the people of Plateau State, especially people around Jos back so that the good old days would continue." He said the recurring Jos crisis is an embarrassment that must be stopped. "So we called this meeting because whenever crisis happens, government sets up panels, commissions of enquiry and so on and we believe that while the panel and commission of enquiry will go on, we should come in this informal way to really talk to

ourselves and agree on what we must all do, the role that would be played by the federal government, the state government, and the ordinary residents and indigenes of Plateau to make sure that we don't get to this level again that is becoming a major embarrassment not to only the people of Plateau State but to the whole nation and of course it is part of the woes of the black man that we have to wake up and begin to massacre ourselves indiscriminately. We believe that Plateau State is too developed for that, it is too civilized for that and too important for that and we cannot allow Plateau to get to the level where some people want to push us. To that is the essence of this meeting. The talk is to discuss on the way forward to have a solid position so that such things don't happen again."

Present at the meeting were Sultan of Sokoto Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad, CAN president Archbishop John Onaiyekan, Governor Jang and his deputy Mrs Pauline Tallen, many former governors of Plateau State and several of the state's eminent Muslim and Christian community leaders.

Bauchi warns Plateau against expelling non-indigenes

By Abdulmutallib A. Abubakar

THE Bauchi State House of Assembly yesterday cautioned the Plateau State government against expelling non indigenes, saying other states might be forced to do the same for Plateau

State indigenes living in other states.

Speaker of Bauchi State Assembly Abubakar Ahmad Faggo told BBC Hausa Service they have condemned the recent Jos crisis.

He expressed dismay over

the crisis which compelled other states' indigenes to leave Plateau State, saying the state government has failed to secure the lives and property of its citizenry.

Plateau State commissioner for information Gregory Yanlong however said they are not expel-

ling any person from the state, adding that the issue of non indigenes is not being considered in Plateau State but that some people have been capitalizing on it.

He accused some of the Bauchi lawmakers of taking sides on the issue.

Yar'adua's absence akin to absconding — ASUU

From Rakiya A. Muhammad, Sokoto

THE Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) yesterday said the absence of President Umaru Yar'adua without following the constitutional requirement was akin to absconding from duty.

"As the Commander-in-Chief, his absence is akin to AWOL (Away Without Official Leave).

As a public servant, his absence without permission through due process (constitutionally based in this case) is akin to absconding from duty."

This was contained in the text of a press conference titled, "Whither the Nigerian State"

addressed by the President of ASUU Professor Ukachukwu Awuzie at the end of the National Executive Council meeting of the union held at Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto yesterday.

He said while the constitutional provisions in section 144 and 145 stipulate the steps to take in case of permanent incapacitation and absence of the president, the constitutional requirements had not been met, "Yet the ruling party claims to believe in the Rule of Law".

He however said Nigerians should be careful to avoid thinking that the major problem with the country was the current crisis

created by the president's absence.

"The core problems of our country are-poverty, joblessness, disease, homelessness, lack of education, misery all over" he said, adding that the 7-point agenda remained a journey to nowhere. The ASUU boss blamed the nation's problems on the ruling class and the party in power. "Whether it is Alhaji Musa Yar'adua or Dr. Goodluck Jonathan that is on seat in Aso Rock, the 7-point Agenda and unpromising agenda in which the people have no faith remains the illusion of the present.

We shall be therefore be careful not to give false expectations to

the people of Nigeria, the expectation that when Dr. Goodluck Jonathan is

in power, the people of Nigeria will be better off. It will be the same party, same programme, same forces that will continue to amass", he said. He stressed the need to go beyond the issue of Yar'adua and rally the suffering people of Nigeria to form and develop people's political organization towards building a truly democratic society. Prof. Awuzie also expressed ASUU's conviction that only the implementation of the Electoral Reform Committee's Report will ensure free and fair elections.

Edo PDP members allege plan to remove Speaker

From Vincent Egunyanga, Benin

MEMBERS of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the Edo State House of Assembly have alleged that moves were being made by some officials of the state government to induce them with money to decamp to the Action Congress (AC) and remove the Speaker of the state House of Assembly Zakawanu Garba.

Particularly, three members of the House, Blessing Agbelaka, Samuel Saiki and Sunday Ebosele, all PDP members, said they were contacted by the Special Adviser to the Governor on Legislative Matters Omo Izomo with an inducement of N50 million to decamp to AC and sign to remove the Speaker.

All the PDP members in the House who addressed a press conference in Benin yesterday said the press conference became necessary following the recent moves by the Action Congress leaders.

But reacting to the allegations, the former Secretary to the State Government who is one of the accused, Osagie Ize Iyamu, agreed that he led some Action Congress members to visit some members of the House of Assembly, especially Sunday Ebosele but never discussed impeachment of the Speaker Zakawanu Garba.

He said some PDP members of the state Assembly actually wanted to join the AC as a security for the 2011 election. He said everyone was free to join the AC but the party would never use money to induce anyone. The Edo State government in a reaction said the allegation was not only frivolous but baseless.

The Chief Press Secretary to the state governor, Peter Okhiria, said all members had the right to belong to, or cross over to any party of their choice.



CHILDREN displaced during the Jos crisis queuing for food at a relief camp in Boto, Bauchi State, yesterday.

Fashola denies conflict with Tinubu

From Femi Akinola, Lagos

LAGOS State Governor Babatunde Fashola has debunked speculations on a conflict between him and his predecessor, Ahmed Bola Tinubu, saying,

"A rally in my name to support me against Asiwaju is not called for because there is no contest or conflict. Those who want to beat drums of war should kindly do so outside our state".

Fashola yesterday in a broadcast to the people of the state urged those he said hide under text messages to desist from inciting the people. He called on all law abiding citizens to be more circumspect about those messages

and faceless media adverts.

"If we have achieved so much together, we must pause to reflect and realize that Tinubu is not certainly the villain some unscrupulous and faceless people are using the media to portray him as. Tinubu stood for Lagos, for you and for me when it mattered most. This is not the reward he deserves," Fashola said.

Rumours had spread across Lagos and beyond in the past couple of weeks that there was a misunderstanding regarding financial misappropriation against Fashola's administration from people who are loyal to his predecessor.

Leave Kano, police commissioner tells criminals

From Lawan Danjuma Adamu, Kano

CRIMINALS in Kano State have been advised to relocate to neighbouring countries as the state is no longer safe for them to continue with their nefarious acts. The new Commissioner of Police in the state Mohammed J. Gana gave the advice in his maiden press conference in Kano yesterday.

Gana said Kano would no longer be a fertile ground for criminals to commit offences as the police are

determined to fight crime to a standstill in the state, saying different crime fighting outfits had been set up at various points. The police boss also advised indigenes of the state to "get something doing so that they would not take to crime," while adding, "if you go round the state you will see that we have stationed mobile police at different points".

The commissioner then pleaded with members of the public to come forward with information that would assist the police, just as he assured them

of the protection of their identities. He said the force would not take it lightly with any of its officers who indulge in exposing the identities of people that provide police information.

While answering questions on the increasing cases of kidnapping in the state, Gana declared that with the new measures taken by the police, "unless the kidnappers will use helicopter, they would find it difficult to come through the roads and abduct somebody," saying all major roads to the state had been fortified by his men.

Meanwhile, the police command has paraded 19 suspected criminals who were arrested for committing various offences in the state.

Among those paraded were armed robbery suspects who allegedly carried out a robbery operation at Lamco Store late last year where one security guard was killed, while the other suspects robbed the chairmen of Tarauni and Garun Malam Local Governments and one Malam Maiyafa, all in Kano metropolis, the police said.

A 60-year-old, Abdullahi Mu'a-

zu, whom the police are accusing of defiling a three year-old baby, was also shown to journalists. However, when interviewed, the elderly man denied committing the said offence, saying he was only framed.

Also paraded was 25-year-old Aliyu Bashir of Dawakin Kudu Local Government who allegedly killed a six-and-a-half-year-old. Bashir confessed committing the offence, saying he killed the baby girl in order to escape the stigma associated with fathering a 'bastard'.

S/Court names 19 new SANs

By Sunday Ejike Benjamin

CHIEF Mike A. A. Ozekhome and 18 others will be sworn in as Senior Advocates of Nigeria (SAN) on April 12, 2010 following their conferment with the rank by the Legal Practitioners Privileges Committee of the Supreme Court.

Others to be sworn-in alongside Ozekhome are: Nella Andem-Ewa, Joseph A. Nwobika, Offiong

Effiong Bassey Offiong, Sylvia E. Shinaba, Dorothy Udeme Ufot and Francis Dike.

Others are, Chukwuma Uchenna Ekomaru, Arthur Obi Okafor, Etigwe Owa, Jadegoke Adebajo Badejo, Abiodun Ishola Layonu, Adekunle Babatunde Ogunba, George M. Oguntade, C. O. Toyin Pinheiro, Olusina R. Sofola, Samuel E. Mosugu, Andrew I. Chukwuemerie and

Fabian Ikenna Ajogwu.

The Chief Registrar of the Supreme Court, Usman Alhaji Musale, told Journalists yesterday that the newly appointed Senior Advocates of Nigeria for the year 2009 will be sworn-in at a special session of the apex court by Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN), Justice Alóysius Katsina-Alu who is the chairman of the Legal Practitioners Privileges Committee.

Musale who is also the secretary of the committee said: "A total of 126 Legal practitioners and academics applied for the rank, of these, 19 are Academic and 107 Legal practitioners. The Legal Practitioners Privileges Committee accepted the applications of 19 applicants, two of whom are academic as provided by the guidelines for the conferment of the rank of SAN".

It would be recalled that the conferment of the rank of SAN on legal practitioners by former CJN, Justice Idris Legbo Kutigi was not possible last year due to allegations by the National president of the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA), Chief Oluwarotimi Akereolu (SAN) that selection of SAN in the country has been politicised and based on god-fatherism.



PIC: AFP

LEBANESE flags flutter on the coast of Beirut near the site where an Ethiopian airliner crashed off Lebanon, in Beirut, yesterday, leaving 90 people presumed dead.

Terror: FG confirms arrest of 2 Nigerians in Malaysia

THE Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday confirmed the arrest of two Nigerians by Malaysian authorities with alleged links to Umar Farouk AbdulMutallab, who attempted to bomb a U.S. airliner on Dec. 25, 2009.

The two Nigerians were among 50 people arrested while attending a religious talk by a Syrian University lecturer on Jan. 21 in a home, near Kuala Lumpur. Forty were later released after interrogation.

Mr Ozo Nwobu, the ministry's spokesperson said in Abuja that the suspects were doctoral students in Malaysia.

"The Nigerian High Commissioner in Kuala Lumpur, Mr Peter Anegebe, has remained in touch with the ministry since the story broke as well as the Malaysian authorities," he said and assured that all would be done by the ministry to ascertain the veracity of information leading to their arrest. (NAN)

INEC is 100% prepared for Anambra polls- Iwu

By Abdul-Rahman Abubakar & Turaki Hassan

ALL preparations needed to ensure hitch free governorship election in Anambra State on Saturday have been concluded by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), the commission's chairman Professor Maurice Iwu has said.

Briefing members of the Senate Committee on INEC at the National Assembly yesterday, Professor Iwu said, "We have done all preparations concerning the election and a short while ago

we commence the deployment of personnel to Anambra state.

At the end of the exercise, we have Barrister Josiah Ewuzoronye as the Resident Electoral Commission, he will be the officer who will also serve as the returning officer for this election. The bulk will stop on his desk as far as the announcement of the election is concern."

We have also mobilized staff from 19 states of the commission that will be arriving Anambra State from the 4th and will be deployed immediately.

We have also brought in elec-

toral officers from five states that will replace existing EO in the 21 local governments in the state. We have also deployed 21 supervisors that will be from Abuja that will be able to supervise the conduct of the processes that are involved in all aspect of the election."

Iwu however, alleged that some bags are the ones threatening the conduct of free and fair elections in Anambra state. "We are under threat by some people who too much money."

Chairman of the Senate Committee on INEC, Senator Isiaka

Adetunji Adeleke (PDP, Osun West) charged the commission to be fair to all parties in the election saying, "Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) must not only be seen to be neutral, but must be impartial in the conduct of the Anambra Governorship election.

He said if there is any form of violence in any area, during the election, we want to advise that it should attract outright cancellation.

Nigerians expect that the Anambra election should form the basis for free and fair elections in 2011.

...as civil defence deploys 10,000 personnel

By Abdulkadir Badsha Mukhtar

THE Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) will deploy 10,000 of its personnels to monitor the upcoming gubernatorial election in Anambra State, the Corps' Commandant General Dr. Ade Abolurin said.

He said this is in line with their mandate in providing security of

lives and property and in an effort to forestall election violence, malpractice, hijacking of ballot boxes, and other criminal activities related to election and which are capable of disrupting the peaceful conduct of the election in the state all hand must be on dick.

Abolurin said the officers would not restrict themselves working only within Anambra

and its boundaries, but it will go beyond to the neighbouring communities, which he said, "may serve as hideout or base to electoral criminals who would stop at nothing to truncate the gubernatorial election."

Meanwhile, the Civil Defence has called on parents and guardians to caution their wards against been use as political dogs to cause

unrest during and after the election.

He enjoined political parties and the gubernatorial candidates to embrace the spirit of sportsmanship, where a winner must always emerge, and losers to go back to the drawing board to prepare for future context rather than causing chaos.

PLSG supports SERAP effort

By Abdulmutallib A. Abubakar

PLATEAU State government yesterday said it will support effort of the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project (SERAP) to ensure that those who orchestrated the crises that occurred in the state since 2008 are identified and face the wrath of the law.

SERAP had earlier petitioned the International Criminal Court (ICC) to investigate the unlawful killing of at least 326 people and perpetration of other crimes under international law during the recent violence in Jos, Plateau State.

Plateau State Commissioner for Information Gregory Yanlong told BBC Hausa Service that they are ready to cooperate with anybody to ensure that those behind the upheavals, no matter how influential and connected they may be, are prosecuted.

On past commissions of inquiry, the commissioner said after the 2008 crisis more than 300 suspects and faked soldiers who participated in the conflict were apprehended.

He however said that when the proceedings begun and they were taken to Abuja by the police, nothing has yet been done to them.

Aliero inaugurates c'ttee to investigate AGIS

By Nasir Imam

FCT Minister Senator Muhammad Adamu Aliero has constituted a Ministerial Committee to investigate the accounts of the Abuja Geographic Information Systems (AGIS) from January 2008 to December 2009.

This followed the alleged discovery that some staff of AGIS were found to be fraudulently

diverting revenue meant for the FCT Administration.

From the preliminary investigation, it was discovered that some finance staff attached to AGIS were suspected to be perpetrators of the alleged financial scam.

The committee is chaired by the Special Assistant to the Minister on Finance & Economic Matters, Mr. Samaila Salihu Bui

with Mrs. Ralia Abubakar, Ishaku Ismaila, Peter Timothy Manjuk, Peter Agbir, Barma Mohammed and Lamidu Abdullahi as members; while Baba Goni Mustapha is to serve as Secretary.

The Committee terms of reference include confirming all payments made by bank draft to AGIS between January 2008 to December 2009, confirming receipts issued by AGIS within

the period and lodgements into AGIS Accounts and examining the entire internal control associated with different type of payment-vis-a-vis the global financial practice.

Others include identifying and apprehending all staff directly or indirectly connected with the alleged fraud, examining the entire system with a view of identifying leakages

and blocking them, examining relationship between AGIS and bankers with a view to advising FCT Administration on strategies that must be adopted to stem the frequency of alleged fraudulent activities associated with the revenue collection in AGIS and possibly put an end to such sharp practices.

The Committee has four weeks to submit its reports.



MEMBERS of the National Peace Corps of Nigeria protesting over the sealing of their national headquarters at Gwarimpa, Abuja, yesterday.

PIC: NAN

5000 Nigerian troops serving in peacekeeping missions

By Benjamin Auta

THE Nigerian Armed Forces has 4,968 officers and men presently serving as peacekeepers in nine theatres of war worldwide, a recent publication of the Nigerian Army indicates.

The publication also revealed that the country has so far produced and provided 24 force commanders from 1960 to date serving in various United Nations and African Union peacekeeping operations.

A breakdown of the figures shows that Nigeria has a total of 1,609 all ranks in the United Nations Mission in Liberia; another 3,305 all ranks from staff officers to level 11 hospital personnel in United Nations Assistant Mission in Darfur; and 15 all ranks in United Nations Mission in Congo.

Others are one officer in AMISOM in Addis Ababa, one staff officer and seven other ranks in United Nations Mission in Sudan and 14 all ranks in United Nations Mission in Central African Republic and Chad.

The publication further said that five all ranks are serving in UN Mission in Western Sahara, 6 X Officers and six all ranks in both MILOBS-ONUCI and the Liberian Army.

The publication said Lieutenant General C.I. Obiakor who was appointed the Chief Military Adviser to United Nations Secretary General in 2008 is still serving.

Nigeria is the fourth highest provider of peacekeepers in the world and is the leading provider of peacekeepers in the continent of Africa. Apart from the African continent Nigeria has provided about 15 force commanders in various peacekeeping operations worldwide.

Court quashes EFCC charges against lawyer

By Sunday Ejike Benjamin

AN Abuja High Court sitting in Gudu has quashed charges levelled against an Abuja-based legal practitioner Nkere Uwem Udofia Akpan by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) for allegedly colluding with one Chioma Harriet Unaji to tamper with Access Bank Plc ATM cards.

The trial Judge, Justice Abubakar Talba, ruled that there is nothing to link the lawyer with the charges before the court.

"Having found that there is nothing in the proof of evidence linking Barrister N. U. Akpan with the alleged offence; accordingly, the charges against him are hereby quashed," Justice Talba ruled.

Akpan was arrested on Febru-

ary 12 of last year by officials of the EFCC when he went to negotiate the release of his client Chioma Harriet Unaji who was being held by two mobile police officers.

Chioma Unaji is the first accused person in the suit brought before the court by the anti-graft agency which is contending that Barrister Akpan's action is not within the line of duties of a lawyer.

Meanwhile, Barrister Akpan has approached the Court of Appeal Abuja Division with a suit seeking a public apology and compensation from the EFCC on the ground that Justice Talba erred in law when he failed to consider his prayers for an award of public apology and compensatory damages and thus denying him a fair hearing and due recompense on those issues.

Labour minister charges NANS on MDGs

By Benjamin Auta

MINISTER of Labour and Productivity Prince Adetokunbo Kayode said the developmental views of the National Association of Nigerian Students (NANS) can contribute to the nation's zeal to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Prince Kayode made the remarks in Abuja while receiving in audience the national executives of NANS who paid him a courtesy call in his office.

A press statement signed by Assistant Director (Press) in the ministry, Mr Samuel Oloowokere, said the minister commended "the unflinching patriotism and con-

cern of the apex student body for peace and stability in the country."

He stressed that the Federal Government holds NANS in high esteem as they are the future leaders of this great nation, and assured that government will continue to acknowledge the roles (NANS) play in national development.

Earlier in his opening remarks, the Acting President of NANS, Comrade Taofeeq Ayoola Amoo, said that the body was in the Ministry of Labour to intimate the minister with the programmes of the organization and used the medium to pledge their unalloyed support to the present administration and wish the President quick recovery.

Ghost workers: FG recovers N1.5b

By Hamisu Muhammad

THE Federal Government has recovered N1.52 billion said to have been paid to 'ghost workers' either as retired or retiring civil servants, Director of Pension Accounts in the Office of the Head of Service of the federation Dr Sani Shuaibu has said.

Speaking to journalists yesterday in Abuja, Dr Shuaibu said the recovery was made possible courtesy of a fiscal instrument software introduced by his office which can detect non-documentation or duplication of accounts and allied processes.

He said the Integrated Electronic Payment also "detects fraud in all ramifications," adding that through

the system, "we have been able to make lots of returns to the Federal Government through the Central Bank of Nigeria."

He gave the breakdown of how the money was recovered. "First, we were able to recover the sum of N475m and secondly we recovered the sum of N927m and thirdly we were also able to recover the sum of N105m through this innovative scheme that exposed the sharp practices that had for a long time been going on undetected."

While expressing determination to sustain the feat, Shuaibu attributed the success by his office to frustrate the 'cabal' to the cooperation of staff and the office of the Head of Service of the federation.

Nasarawa workers begin strike over new tax regime

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

WORKERS in Nasarawa State yesterday began a strike to protest government's planned implementation of a new tax regime which will increase their taxes.

The new income tax was announced to labour last week by the Secretary to the State Government (SSG) Timothy Anjide at a meeting which was deadlocked.

The decision to embark on the indefinite strike was taken during an emergency joint congress of the Nigerian Labour Congress

(NLC), the Trade Union Congress (TUC) and the Joint Public Service Negotiation Council in Lafia.

Led by labour leaders, members of the congress staged a peaceful rally in Lafia, the state capital, to sensitize workers on the strike.

The labour leaders also sent messages to workers in other local government areas of the state, teachers and workers in tertiary institutions to join the strike by today.

The strike has paralyzed government activities.

Secretary of the NLC in the state, Comrade Salihu Eladoga, told our correspondent after the rally, "We have planned a successful and total strike that will go on indefinitely. Tertiary institutions in the state including the Nasarawa State University, Keffi (NSUK), College of Agriculture and Nasarawa State Polytechnic have been communicated and are joining us tomorrow (today). Teachers and workers at the local government level as well as the Association of Resident Doctors are also joining us in the struggle

against exploitation".

He described the planned tax increase as satanic, saying the government of Governor Aliyu Akwe Doma was insensitive to the plight of workers from whose income over 600 percent deduction would be made through the new tax regime.

"We demanded an increase in wages because Nasarawa State workers are the least paid in the country. Rather than do that, the government went ahead and reviewed upward, the salaries and allowances of political office

holders, leaving workers. Now, government has announced it would increase taxation to some satanic heights. We can't accept that. We told government the grey areas must be addressed before any increment in deductions will be made. These grey areas are that government should make political office holders start paying taxes and if there is any increment in tax, it should attract good consultation. But what government has done is a violation of tax law", Comrade Eladoga added.

PDP alleges plan to alter zoning formula in Nasarawa

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

THE executive committee of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Nasarawa State has complained over an alleged plan by some members to alter the zoning formula in the state.

The party said in a statement that part of the alleged plot was to alter the zoning formula adopted in 1999 which made it possible for power to rotate within the three senatorial zones of Nasarawa-West, Nasarawa-South and Nasarawa-North.

The statement which was signed by the state's Publicity Secretary of the party Hassan Abubakar II expressed concern on a former deputy governor in

the old Plateau State, Halilu Bala Usman's recent comments in the media in which he was quoted to have said that the governorship seat in the state was not zoned to any section.

The statement said the executive was surprised that a chieftain of the party would support the plot to undermine PDP's efforts at building a strong and united Nasarawa State.

"The State Executive Committee of the PDP in Nasarawa State regards this pronouncement by Alhaji Usman as very unfortunate", the statement said, adding that the party was at a loss as to why Halilu chose this time to deny the existence of the zoning agreement.

Persons with disabilities seek cabinet appointments

From Sharafa Dauda, Maiduguri

THE Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD), an umbrella body of all associations of persons with disabilities has called on Governor Ali Modu Sheriff of Borno State to appoint its members in the state cabinet.

The call was made yesterday by the Chairman of the state chapter of the association, Umar Mohammed in an exclusive interview with our correspondent. "Since we wrote a letter conveying our appeal to have at least a member of our association appointed

into the cabinet some months ago, we would like him to have compassion. As the state governor, if he integrates us into his government, many people who are ignorant of our capabilities and are of the opinion that physically challenged persons are mere liabilities would come to understand that there is ability in disability", he said.

He urged the governor to assist the association like some of his counterparts in states like Bauchi, Adamawa, Taraba and Kano who appointed physically challenged persons as members of cabinet.

Gowon, Mogae, Sultan for North-east anti-graft launch

From Aliyu M. Hamagam, Gombe

FORMER President of Botswana Mr. Festus G. Mogae, former Head State retired General Yakubu Gowon and Sultan of Sokoto Alhaji Mohammad Sa'ad are among dignitaries expected to grace the North/East zonal launch of the Anti-Corruption Revolution (ANCOR) organized by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). ANCOR is a new phase in the fight against corruption in the country scheduled to be launched in Gombe tomorrow. The new crusade by EFCC is geared towards strengthening the call for all Nigerians to collectively fight corruption in the country.



TRADITIONAL artefacts on display during the inauguration of Lamorde Tourism and Sports Association in Mubi South local government area of Adamawa State yesterday.

Ondo lawyers worry over customary courts, rent tribunal

From Leye Adewumi, Akure

LAWYERS in Ondo State over have expressed concern over the state government's delay to reconstitute the customary courts and rent tribunal.

The Secretary, Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) Okitipupa branch Mr. Segun Lema and other lawyers, Mr. Dare Womitenren, Mr. Tayo Ogungbemi and Mr. Legbon Odusola, described the situation as an injustice and impediment to the judicial process.

They said no customary court and rent tribunal in state had been functioning since the inception of the present administration in Feb-

ruary 2009 and that no cogent reason had been given for the delay.

Lema and Womitenren said they might be compelled to institute legal action against the state government and Ministry of Justice if the tribunal is not constituted within two weeks.

For Ogungbemi and Odusola, the delay in the constitution of the customary courts and rent tribunal had impaired activities in the state and exposed the poor to unnecessary humiliation from the rich since the appropriate courts that would have served as their hope do not function.

The lawyers said that many celebrated marriages had crashed in different parts of the state in

the last one year without legal agreement on the upbringing and custody of children from the marriages while many tenants had suffered unwarranted ejections by their landlords. The state Attorney-General and Commissioner for Justice Mr. Eytayo Jegede could not be reached for comments but a senior official of Ministry of Justice who does not want his name published said arrangements were on to constitute the customary courts and rent tribunal at designated areas in the state. The official said the delay was not deliberate or political but to ensure that the positions are occupied by trusted and patriotic people.

PIC: NAN

Lagos Assembly to investigate Fashola

From Femi Akinola, Lagos

THE Lagos State House of Assembly yesterday said it would investigate allegations of financial recklessness levelled against Governor Babantunde Fashola.

Addressing a group of pro-Fashola protesters who were at the state House of Assembly to protest recent publications and utterances by the leadership of the House yesterday, Ikuforiji said the Assembly had decided to investigate the allegations in the reported publications and set up a committee to do justice to them. He said the House had to clear its image and that of the governor.

On his part, the Chairman of the Action Congress in the state Chief Henry Ajomale asked the people of Lagos to allow the House do its job. Ajomale added that what was hap-

pening in the state was not new. He urged them to have confidence in the House because they were representing the people of Lagos and would protect their interests.

From the Assembly, the pro-Fashola group moved to the governor's office. Fashola had to suspend the State Executive Council meeting to attend to them.

The group led by Bishop Abiodun Olugbenro accused the state Assembly and former Governor Bola Tinubu of being behind the anti-Fashola reports in some national dailies. Bishop Olugbenro berated the Assembly for setting up what he called a 'Kangaroo Committee' made up of members of the House to investigate the allegations against Fashola. He called for an independent committee to look into the financial recklessness

allegation, saying the House also needed to be investigated.

The group said they had watched with keen interest, the tussle between Governor Fashola and his predecessor, saying if people of the state failed to speak out now, the situation may degenerate.

Governor Fashola who admitted that a fifth columnist might be at work, said he was compelled to address members of the public about some publications making the rounds because they impinged on the reputation and integrity of his government. He however appealed to the people of Lagos to remain calm.

"Please, I appeal to all of you to remain calm. Let's understand that Lagos State House of Assembly members were elected as I was by you. I assure you that they are also

as concerned as you are. We must trust them," he said.

Our correspondent gathered that on Sunday evening, the Oba of Lagos Rilwanu Akiolu called Fashola and Tinubu for a meeting to settle the problem between the two, but that the meeting was deadlocked.

Early yesterday, in a broadcast to the state, Governor Fashola said, "Importantly, I am concerned that the information highway has been used to malign the person of Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu in a manner which I humbly think is undeserving. Whatever may be our personal opinions, I am certain that we will not disagree on one fact. That fact is, but for the grace of God, the courage of Tinubu and your votes, I would not have become a governor."

Shinkafi's aide replies Rep over unpaid contract fees

From Sadeeq Aliyu, Gusau

FOLLOWING threats by a member of the House of Representatives from Zamfara State, Abdulaziz Yari through his lawyer to take the state government to court over non payment of fees for a contract he executed, the Special Assistant the Governor on Media Sani M. Anka yesterday urged the member to go ahead with his threat.

In a statement issued in Gusau, he described the planned legal action as a welcome development, adding that the court would tell them who is supposed to pay who.

"He should know that the era of deception is over as people of the state can no longer be deceived with endless and empty promises by people who spent eight years mismanaging their resources," he said. About three weeks ago, a lawyer to Yari, Barrister Sani Katu, told journalists in Gusau that Yari would institute a legal action against the state government for the non payment of N401 million being his balance for the township road contract his company executed about two years ago.

Kogi spends N4bn on varsity

From Isiaka Wakili, Lokoja

THE Kogi State government has spent over N4 billion on the state university, Anyigba, within the past two years. Governor Ibrahim Idris disclosed this at the weekend while speaking at the third convocation ceremony of the university.

The governor who is the Visitor to the university said the Kogi State University which was hitherto regarded as a glorified secondary school owing to lack of essential facilities for the enhancement of learning and character development had been upgraded to meet present challenges.

Idris noted that with the financial commitment of his administration, the university had been able to achieve full academic accreditation for all its programmes.



MINISTER of Defence Major-General Godwin Abbey (left), Secretary to the Government of the Federation Alhaji Yayala Ahmed and Governor of Yobe State Alhaji Ibrahim Geidam (right) at the wedding of the daughter of Alhaji Abba Aji Goni, Permanent Secretary, Police Affairs, in Gashua, Yobe State, at the weekend.

NBTE decries dearth of technical teachers

From Ismail Mudashir, Kaduna

THE Executive Secretary of the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) Engineer Nuru Yakubu has decried the dearth of technical and vocational teachers in technical schools across the country, saying it was bad for the technological development of the country.

Engineer Nuru Yakubu who spoke yesterday at a capacity building workshop for technical teachers on pedagogical skills organized by the Federal Ministry of Education in partnership with the African Development Bank (ADB) in Kaduna said the greatest challenge facing technical education was lack of qualified teachers.

He called for a national summit to address the issue. "There is need for us to upgrade the standard of technical education in the country and we must also devise a means to make teaching in our technical schools more attractive if we are to make any headway," he said.

The NBTE boss while calling for regular training and re-training of teachers and lecturers, said teachers must possess modern skills in their various areas of specialization for them to be able to teach their students well. While reaffirming the commitment of the board to proffer solutions to all their problems, he said the board in collaboration with UNESCO had reviewed the curriculum of major courses in Nigerian polytechnics and technical colleges.

He said with the ongoing reforms in the nation's education sector there would be a need to split the NBTE into two. That is, National Commission for Polytechnics (NCP) and the National Commission for Vocation and Technical Education (NCVTE).

The Project Manager of the ADB-FME programme Dr. Ebelle Nwafor earlier in her address said ten institutions had been selected from across the country for the ADP-FME programme. She said the programme was conceived to alleviate poverty in the country through human resources development. Under the project, she said benefiting institutions would be equipped with books and solar power systems.

Saudi Consulate, NAHCON clear Plateau pilgrim of theft

From Ahmed Mohammed, Jos

THE National Hajj Commission of Nigeria (NAHCON) and the Saudi Consulate have cleared a pilgrim from Plateau State of an allegation of theft at the just concluded hajj exercise in Saudi Arabia.

Executive Secretary of the Plateau State Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board Alhaji Abubakar Abdullahi Dashe disclosed this yesterday in Jos while fielding questions from newsmen. He said the pilgrim was beaten by policemen in Saudi for theft, adding that when the pilgrims board heard about the matter, they took it to NAHCON and in collaboration with the Saudi Consulate in Jeddah, it was investigated.

He maintained that after the investigation, it was discovered that the allegation was false. The secretary commended the Plateau State government for releasing funds and adequate logistics to the board for the exercise, adding that they bought an ambulance which assisted them in conveying pilgrims to the hospital whenever the need arose.

Online Reactions

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ON www.dailytrust.com



Governors responsible for unrests – Minister

DR. Shetima, you have spoken the truth, though the Niger State governor said something similar earlier. These governors usually lis-

ten or act on security reports that may affect their personal agenda, not to protect lives and property of the common man. Most times,

crises, either religious or ethnic do not get to the GRA's. So they do not care.

Babayo El-Nafaty

babayoelnafaty@yahoo.com

Yes, I agree with your comments. But, my question is, since the gov-

ernment is aware of all these, what is it doing to prevent a reoccurrence?

Abubakar Chika Maru
abubakarsuleiman2009@yahoo.com



CAPTAIN of Egypt's national team Kamel Ahmed Hassan, with the cup.

It's Pharaohs' again!

EGYPT, what a history, how I wish it was Nigeria.

Mansur Ibrahim
almansur59@yahoo.com

Senate will not impeach Yar'adua

WE should forget about Yar'adua and 2011 for now. Let us pray for his health, when he returns and is medically okay

then, we can think of the next line of action.

Babayo El-Nafaty
babayoelnafaty@yahoo.com

No move to impeach Fashola, says AC

IMPEACHMENT of Gov. Fashola should not be contemplated because of his achievements so far. We should all pray for him to continue with the good work he is doing in Lagos State.

Mutawakkil Saliu
mutactoo@yahoo.com

It is no longer a rumour that

Tinubu and Fashola are no longer together, but I can assure you that if it continues, AC will lose out to the opposition. Tinubu laid the foundation that Fashola is building on now, let them join hands once again and shame the opposition.

Peters
ugochukwu.peter@yahoo.com

80 yr-old found dead on disputed land

WHEN will we learn that the things of the world will always be of the world. May the old man's soul rest in peace. The killers are ignorant of the fact that none of

them will take the land to the grave. What a Shame.

Prince of Ogoni
prince_akah@yahoo.com

CNPP tells Jonathan to dissolve cabinet

THAT is not the solution to the problem. Dissolving the cabinet will only worsen the problem. Our leaders do not fight for the

nation, rather they fight for their own interests. Looking at the situation that nation is in currently, I do not expect any credible Nige-

rian to seek the dissolution of the cabinet.

Abubakar Chika Maru
abubakarsuleiman2009@yahoo.com

A word for Jos warriors

THANKS Jega, you have really made my day. I have through this medium made comments here and there on the Jos warriors. By and large, you have hit the nail on the head. We only hope that the partisans in this unfortunate crisis will listen and act sincerely.

If you hear the complainant, listen to the accused, as the Hausas say. May we have the courage to follow through with the vice presidents' declaration.

Muhammad Na'ya
naiyamd@yahoo.com

This type of dispassionate writing is what we need. Please keep it up and other writers in Daily Trust should please take note.

Bello
datono@hotmail.com

Hold states, LGs responsible for crises –ACF

ACF should set up a committee to investigate the frequent ethno-religious crises in Plateau State and make recommendations to the Federal Government.

However let the ACF be mindful of the fact that majority of the indigenes do not believe that they are from the North, rather they believe they are from the Middle

belt region and this believe, is one of the factors responsible for crises in Jos.

Barrister SHUWA
alminshuwa65@yahoo.com

Jos: Onovo slams former CP

THIS, coming from the IGP will really douse tension. The former CP really goofed and fuelled the

crisis. We are waiting for the result of the investigation and possible prosecution of the perpetrators

of this inhumanity against man.

Jaafaru Othman
jaf.othman@yahoo.com

Assembly wants Plateau indigenes to leave Bauchi

THE fact that the Bauchi emirate extended into Plateau, does not mean that it will always remain so. It was an injustice that needed to be corrected. The people of Jos

have an identity that must now be recognised. It is not fair for a man to leave Jigawa (for instance) and go to Jos to rule the people there. Bauchi is ruled by Bauchi people,

likewise Kano, Enugu, Calabar, Ogbomoshos, etc. Why should Hausa man rule Jos?

Haruna
pirfa.penzin@yahoo.com

Son poisons father's food in Katsina

THIS is a great shock indeed and a challenge to parents, to know how to handle their children. Some parents do not care for their children and this could lead to hatred on the part of the children. May his soul rest in perfect peace.

Abubakar Chika Maru
abubakarsuleiman2009@yahoo.com

Buhari, (Braza) May your gentle soul rest in peace.

Aliyu Erena
seabull75@yahoo.com

The boy should not have acted in that manner. I do not think he was properly brought up.

Yusuf Abdullahi
yusufademola15@yahoo.com

That is the result of child abuse and I think it is time for us to change. Parents should endeavour to treat their chil-

dren well.
Kamaludeen Kabir
drkamalkb4u@yahoo.com

What is this world turning to? News from everywhere in Nigeria is disturbing. From kidnapped monarch, to sick president, to religious riots, to some one poisoning his father. May God help this generation.

Kehinde
kogunmoyede@gmail.com

PLSG flays calls for state of emergency

INSHA Allah very soon, those behind the Jos crisis will be exposed. Because you cannot shed the blood of children, the

young and the old just because you do not want them in your area. We are praying that Allah in his infinite mercy answers the

prayers of those who were treated unjustly.

Sadiq A
sadiqumhd@live.com



By Saleh Shehu Ashaka

Working for peace and understanding on the Plateau

What transpired in Plateau state in the recent past was most unfortunate.

The extent of the loss of lives and properties is regrettable. Disturbing also is the disruption to peace and mutual trust in this state otherwise known as the home of peace and tourism and the apprehension that has enveloped almost all parts of the state.

With these kinds of bloodletting, the ambience camaraderie and tranquillity naturally gives way to mutual suspicion, distrust and the urge to vengeance as the worst of evil emotions are inadvertently allowed to subsist, which atmosphere needless to say is a threat to peace and development.

But rather than the resort to blame and recriminations which has become the order of day after the cessation of violence, as humans we should, to my mind, be aware that what ever actions we choose to take now will determine the kind of future we are going to be faced with. Rather than create more problems for ourselves, we should be conscious of the fact that our actions and utterances would serve as the main

“The question is; why do we always allow the situation to get out of control before we realise the importance of dialogue?”

catalyst towards achieving a serene atmosphere for peace both now and in the future hence we should be under no illusions that someone from somewhere will somehow come and make the society better for us if we the residents, elders and stakeholders in the state do not rally round to put in pace the kind atmosphere we would want to live under in future. Simply put, it is what we sow that we shall reap.

The residents of Plateau state may Nigeria, no matter the religious or ethnic inclination should work for genuine peace as violence is like an ill wind that blows no one no good, no matter how tempting the urge to avenge might seem. We have witnessed such internecine crises in the past in Kano, Kaduna, and other parts of Nigeria but that such tendencies have waned in these places in the last couple of years is an indication that the people there have finally realised the inanity of violence and have now come to embrace dialogue.

Countries like Liberia, Sierra Leone, have come to realise that there is no gain in fighting after they have suffered so much loss and damage while countries like Sudan and Somalia are learning the hard way.

It is always better to jaw-jaw than to war-war and there is hardly any issue that cannot be resolved through dialogue. Plateau state for instance has experienced this when immediately after the 2004 crisis; the state govern-

ment invited all stakeholders across ethnic and religious divides and set up a peace committee which came up with various recommendations for lasting peace on the Plateau. The present administration has after the four days of carnage also invited stakeholders for a meeting with a view of finding lasting peace in this state which has suffered terribly from the consequences of violence. The question is; why do we always allow the situation to get out of control before we realise the importance of dialogue?

If we realise that we will at the end of the day come back to the round table and discuss why don't we then discuss and find solutions to our problems before allowing scores of souls to perish, million of naira worth of properties be destroyed and panic and grief created on our minds before coming back to talk?

As far as I know, the major religions practiced in this country all preach and encourage peaceful coexistence with one another. We should have no problem with living peaceably with one another then if we observe the tenets of our religion.

It is a shame that neighbours who have been living together for decades all of a sudden view themselves differently and turned the dagger upon each other with glee and celebrating the extent of damage they have inflicted on each other. In the last Jos crisis, you hear of people being hunted like wild animals and cornered and set ablaze alive or hacked in the most brutal manner.

Not even women and children are spared as houses were burnt and the occupants trapped in building to ensure that none escaped.

You hear of whole families being wiped out within a few hours and their entire lifetime efforts going up in smoke within no time. Pray what kind of good do we think can come out of such evil?

If for decades we have lived together, traded in goods and services with one another, shared common jokes and experiences, there is no reason why this should turn into morbid hatred overnight if do not allow emotions to becloud our senses of reasoning.

Let me use this opportunity to sympathise with all those who lost loved ones and properties in the present crisis. Only God can give them the fortitude to overcome the pain and agony and I pray that they overcome the grief in good time so that they can pick up the pieces of their lives once again.

Our leaders, both temporal and religious, should avoid acts and utterances that will inflict further damage on our worth by emphasizing only on those aspects that make mutual coexistence imperative in a multi ethnic and plural society like our rather than harping on what differentiates us.

Despite the killing and the maiming, the arson and destruction we can, with the proper resolve and honesty of purpose, still coexist and live happily with one another.

And the sooner we realise and put this into practice, the better for all us.

Ashaka wrote from Jos.



By Alinnor Arinze

Religion and Nigerians

Cont'd. from yesterday.

How well have we planned for elections starting from voters' registration to the actual balloting? How well have the candidates seeking victory prepared? Did they prepare for a life and death contest or fair contest that will produce the best candidate? We must reduce our appetite for the consumption of things we do not produce. We must start today by realizing first that there is no international competition for partying and we will never get a gold medal for hosting the most lavish parties. We must accept that sporting and indeed any form of excellence will come only from hundreds and thousands of hours of hard work through preparations and rehearsals. - Babatunde Raji Fashola, Gov of Lagos State.

After going through the quote above, I hope you may know why people are feeling the effect of governance in Lagos State. It was not God or spirits from Mars that decided to make things work. People can decide to make things work. I do know that many had been praying for our nation to have good leaders and many more are still fasting and praying in different places. But I do hope that they are not expecting God to get a voter's card in their ward. Many disenfranchised themselves by not even registering to have a voter's card but expect God to come and vote in "Godly men and women" with vision into office. God may one day sack everybody in Aso Rock and take over the corridors of power with His angels as ministers of different parastatals.

Many who are public office holders had not divorced religious sentiments in their

leadership style. They prefer conferring with the religious elite in decision making. For the fact that our people prefer to respect their religious and traditional leaders than the constitution, politicians capitalize on this and impoverish the people as long as the religious and traditional leaders are settled. Our religious and traditional leaders are like gods and are not accountable to anybody but themselves. Once they are cornered by those in power, the people are also cornered. When would we start questioning their stance, authority and activities? Many of them are about the richest citizens around and their subjects the 'best' peasants. But the truth remains that the people are not bothered. No wonder one of my mentors said that the average Nigerian is stupid.

Many are of the opinion that our problems would be half solved if we address some religious and traditional sentiments inherent in our orientation as a people. Many believe 'what will be, will be'. They refuse to plan towards anything or work towards any plan because someone somewhere had told them that whatever would be would be. They forget that if they failed to plan, they planned to fail. Through religion and tradition many had believed that life works on luck. They had lived with this belief and seen everything as based on luck. But life does not work on luck rather on work. The industrialized nations understand that it was not luck but work that made them what they are. We do few hours work but expect unimaginable output from luck. What an irony?

Concluded.

Arinze wrote from Lagos; he can be reached at (arinze198@gmail.com)

Trying to compel Nigerians: What next?

By Ahmed Haruna

Cont'd. from yesterday

The other truth, which is distracting, is that while the critical stakeholders including the president's cabinet, the National Assembly and Mr. President's close aides have remained completely separated from this whole charade, a bunch of feel-good redundants are making a killing, working for an assortment of the Government's enemies: dismissed Bank chief executives, out-of-work emergency power contractors, dis-organised oil & gas sector interests, illegal bunkering pay-masters of demobilised ex-militants, and generally dis-encharmed former influence peddlers who are no longer in the loop, as they were during the Obasanjo administration.

Dare I add that the recent change in gear by the Senate, and the call by a group of elder politicians, whom it may be recalled were initially responsible to a large extent for plunging Nigeria into its current mess for their selfish ends, appear to signal an impending convergence of opportunistic interests? While the media have been generally fair to the administration, recent developments have brought to the fore the lures of sensationalist reportage. Even hitherto fair-minded media outfits could not resist a bite at the opportunity presented by the combination of a media-friendly administration and the dearth of regular information updates on Mr. President's health.

The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has laid out, in clear terms, the procedure for the transfer of Presidential powers in any event, and the recent ruling by Justice Dan Abutu on the Vice President's eligibility to act on behalf of the President during the President's absence, was not an earth-shaking or landmark discovery. The declaration was, therefore, not enough to satiate the demands of the rather sectional SN. They have smelt blood and they are bolting for the jugular. From Abuja, they have moved their rallies to Lagos where they expect better audience, urging moral rectitude in their calls for Mr. President's resignation as if it was immoral or against the law for a President to be taken ill. The SN are struggling hard to compel Nigerians to see things from their perspective; but it does not seem to be working. A former president, who is also a co-sponsor of the SN, had himself been caught red-handed trying illegally to rewrite the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in the past, as well as having been indicted by his own son of committing adultery, both of which remain illegal and immoral in this country, has never, on either occasion been requested to resign.

It appears that the Federal Government has been too accommodating to vile abuse of the institution of the Presidency of late, in the name of freedom of speech.

Concluded.

Haruna contributed this piece from Abuja.



Your Letters

Is former NYSC boss Gen Akpan kidnap victim?

Although it is underreported, Akwa Ibom is the hot spot for high profile kidnapping activities. Most of them are not reported for fear of being the next target. Last Sunday January 31, 2010, right inside the Quo Iboe Church in Iwok, Nsit Atai LGA, near Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, the former NYSC Director-General, General Edet Akpan (Rtd), a PDP stalwart, was kidnapped in broad daylight. In the process, three persons were shot dead and few others

are in critical condition in the hospital with gunshot wounds. When we tried to reach him by 6pm today on his mobile phone a voice on the other end confirmed that Akpan was kidnapped in morning and that no contact had been established by the kidnapers.

In Akwa Ibom you have the dreaded AKPF, and not PDP, in power; almost all the officials of government in power are made to belong. Government officials claimed it was formed to ensure unity of Akwa Ibom people; but the outfit is being accused of harassing perceived opponents. In Abia State, Governor Orji who is battling to increase his N400million monthly security vote to N700million through the legislature is said to use his

in mainly sustaining the Bakassi Boys outfit that are like State Security Police; he inherited this from his predecessor. The Bayelsa governor whose monthly security vote is said to hover around N900million is being alleged to be servicing Egbesu Boys.

One thing that is baffling is that in spite of all the atrocities being attributed to some of these outfits, the media that are supposed to be seen as the last hope of the masses still find it en vogue giving unworthy awards to these government officials without proving what made them so outstanding. One needs to appeal to the media to put some restraints.

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Text us on 08 131 8000 30

Different stokes

DURING the Boko Haram crisis, powerful Northern leaders condemned it. During the Niger Delta crisis, genuine Niger Delta leaders condemned it. But in Plateau the government and legislature always take side with the indigenes, even when they are at fault, and that's why the crisis is persistent.

MOHAMMED Bello, Jos, 08039590170.

Who wishes ill for Plateau?

THOSE who want to see the downfall of Plateau State will never succeed.

08036276085.

About time

WE thank God that peace is returning after the Jos crisis. And for those heartless people who instigated and sustained the crisis, including the political leadership,

Allah's punishment awaits them. ABUBAKAR A A Dogo Zurmi, Zamfara State, 08069418920.

When you come to equity...

SOMEONE that has been accused of having affair with his daughter-in-law can't preach honour and morality. People like that, even if they happen to be former president, should learn to keep quiet. YUSUF, 08036924729.

Shine your eye

THESE politics of presidential fallacy, the Jos crisis, the Farouk terrorism hanky-panky, the amnesty-militancy drama, the boko haram unrest, the banking sector saga, the fuel scarcity, the deregulation intrigues, the rebranding brouhaha, the 41-man march to the National Assembly, the eminent elders' march to Aso Rock, the ACF expedition; you think they are isolated incidents?

Think again. These all could be attributed to inordinate plans by 'power elites' within Nigeria's body politic. Do not be deceived. M.M. El-thani, Minna, 07036951662.

Nigeria we hail thee

NO petrol, no light and no president. What a country. MUSA Kabiru, Abuja, 08033043555.

A stitch in time, Gov Saraki

THE governor should be reminded to see that Orisa Bridge along Omu Aran to Oro Ago Road is well constructed this year. This bridge is a danger to ORO AGO community and others that pass over it for many years. Please save these people from this narrow and dangerous bridge that was built since 1935. DAYO Ajiboye, No 6 Kwaifa Street, Nyanya, Abuja, 08034537534.



By Adamu Bungudu

Politics of Shinkafi administration

It is now a year since Governor Mahmud Shinkafi stepped out to make a historic political move that remains a reference point in leadership intervention in Nigeria. By dumping the ANPP under whose ticket he was elected and embracing the ruling PDP which was hard sell in Zamfara State for years, Governor Mahmud Shinkafi was biting the bullet of unconventional response to sudden exigency. Events since then have proved that the governor's initiative was well calculated to be in the best long-term interest of the people of Zamfara State. It has also effectively redefined the state's political dynamics away from the personality-driven *Yarima* era by enthroning party-based politics of development.

The most important achievement of Governor Shinkafi is the successful blending of the bitterly divided people of Zamfara into one consolidated movement focused on the quest for political and economic progress and development. Nothing could be more beneficial to the generality of the people and by this singular scoop; Governor Shinkafi superseded Ahmed Sani *Yariman Bakura* as the de-facto leader of all the people of the state, rather than leader of a segment of the population. The governor's principled focus on initiating meaningful development projects across the state was a welcome departure that exposed the bankruptcy of *Yarima's* dubious "human development" spending spree. He has the tail-end of his first term to complete the projects and reassure the masses on his commitment to moving the state out of the undeveloped league.

Considering the fact that Governor Shinkafi is for most of the time in the background of these remarkable political events, it is not surprising that the duo of Ibrahim Mallaha and Musa Zubairu, now PDP chairman and secretary respectively regularly take all the flak from the displaced, the disappointed and the defeated politicians in the state. By the same token, the strengthened bond of comradeship and the tacit support which he gives his two most strategic aides is a confirmation of the shared vision and mission among Zamfara State's leading triumvirate. Significantly, neither Musa Zubairu nor Ibrahim Mallaha has ever lost any sleep over the torrents of criticism and blackmail that target them daily for somehow keeping Governor Shinkafi away from the reach of desperate politicians with mostly personal agenda. This combination of Shinkafi's diplomatic low profile and an unapologetic display of loyalty and thick skin to critics and detractors by his two top aides has become the talisman of toughness of the Shinkafi administration.

It is Musa Zubairu who is on the hit-list of most of the critics. His earlier role as Chief of Staff made him strategically unavoidable for any meaningful contact or interaction with the governor and thus he became the most envied of all Shinkafi aides. The competent manner in which he coordinates the most politically sensitive aspects of Governor Shinkafi's strategies, programmes and policies has been attributed to his military intelligence background. But the crux of the matter is his unflinching loyalty to his boss, especially in the way he remains unperturbed even when accused of "dominating" the governor. For someone who has been an old friend of Governor Shinkafi, who stood stoically with him through 8 years of virtual exile as *Yarima's* deputy, and again as chief strategist since 2007, Musa Zubairu just cannot be different from what he is.

Despite the high exposure to critics, it is noteworthy that Musa Zubairu has not been accused of embezzlement or contract scam which could have proved very fatal to his political stature. Despite his formidable political foes, it is incredible that Musa Zubairu has rallied all respected popular political leaders in the state as well as the most politically potent youth groups and grassroots gurus into the ever-expanding support base of Governor Shinkafi. It should not be surprising either that despite the "notoriety" of Musa Zubairu he is the most popular of all Shinkafi aides among the majority of common people in the state who have appreciated and embraced the governor's new agenda politics.

The first year of Governor Shinkafi's pragmatism of consolidating under PDP has now dovetailed into the commencement of the 2011 re-election bid and there is no opposition worth the name on the Zamfara horizon. Even *Yarima* is reportedly finding the least embarrassing entrance into the PDP, having belatedly accepted the reality of a consolidated and unified constituency under Shinkafi in Zamfara State. He has good reasons to be in the background of the hustle and bustle of politics with the likes of his two aides as his pillars of political supremacy.

Adamu Bungudu writes from Gusau.

DAILY TRUST

EDITORIAL

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Curtailing the spread of H1N1 virus

The Federal Ministry of Health on Monday January 18, 2010, confirmed the first Nigerian to die from the H1N1 virus, or swine flu. The case involved a 38-year-old female in Lagos who tested positive to the virus. The lady who had a history of travel to the United States three months earlier developed a respiratory tract infection six weeks after returning to Nigeria and died on Tuesday January 5, 2010 at a hospital on Victoria Island, Lagos. So far, about twenty-seven countries have been hit by swine flu.

In its latest update, the Federal Ministry of Health reported eleven laboratory-confirmed cases of H1N1 influenza, including the January 5 fatality. Following the death of the female patient, a total of 52 samples of swabs from those who had close contact with the deceased were taken to the laboratory. Eight out of the forty-six tested positive to the virus. The death recorded from the disease and the statistics of laboratory-confirmed cases indicate that swine flu is finally here in Nigeria. It is not unlikely that the rate of fatality and infection is higher than the figures officially released by the Federal Ministry of Health considering the fact that the country at present lacks adequate testing facilities and limited access of many Nigerians to healthcare. Many could have also died from the disease without being diagnosed of the virus owing to the widespread ignorance about symptoms of the influenza not only among the general population, but also by some community health workers, particularly at the primary level of the healthcare delivery system in the country.

While it was proper for the Honourable Minister of Health, Professor Babatunde Osotimehin, to urge Nigerians who present symptoms of the disease to report at the healthcare delivery centre nearest to them for proper medical attention, we observe that this can only be done if people to whom the message is directed have the knowledge of what the symptoms are. The first case of fatality was diagnosed with some of the suspect symptoms and others including pneumonia, shortness of breath and respiratory distress. The profusion of these symptoms and their variability both call for extensive public enlightenment on the common warning signs of the disease to look out for, and the preventive measures.

Although we appreciate the recent release of money by the Federal Ministry of Health to combat the spread of the disease, the latest death and the spate of infection among Nigerians could have been averted, or managed better, if such funds were made available for the same purpose when the first case of the influenza was recorded last year involving a 9-year-old American resident in Lagos. Those entrusted with responsibility of managing the funds should apply them judiciously by immediately acquiring vaccines and not wait until we are confronted with an epidemic in the country. Public enlightenment should focus on the rural populace among whom health education is low.

We recommend increase in the number of testing facilities and centres to make them widely available across the country. The services could be extended to major airports in the country for prompt screening and testing of visitors coming from swine flu-prone countries. Nigerians returning from such areas should be thoroughly screened and closely monitored until their status is confirmed. We urge government to generally increase access of Nigerians to healthcare delivery in the country and encourage awareness of health risks among citizens.

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The NFF's 'golden' bronze

The solid truth I espoused on these pages in the past several years finally came back to haunt all Nigerians in the past two weeks. Nigeria almost missed qualifying for the World Cup in South Africa, but, somehow, Tunisia contrived to hand us the ticket at the final huddle. Last week a youthful Zambian team ran Nigeria ragged for over a hundred and twenty minutes of attacking football. In the end, only divine intervention qualified the team to face Ghana in the first semi-final, which we promptly lost.

The Ghanaians, also parading most of their under-20 side, scored as early as the twentieth minute of the first half. We had more than enough time to rescue the game, but could not achieve it. We lacked the technical bench to achieve it. The minutes ticked by and the apology we had for a coach twitched and chewed endlessly on his gum as if it was about to run out of fashion. He looked every inch like a stranded whale, completely devoid of the antidote to crack the well-organized Ghanaian defence.

We may have outplayed the Ghanaians on the night, but the gulf in class between the two coaches could not have been clearer from the quality of Amodu's substitutions. He confounded all, except himself, by pulling off Osaze Odenwingie for the aged and unfit Yakubu Ayegbeni, who subsequently laboured across the field like a pregnant cow. That the same player promptly missed a sitter a more alert and in-form striker would have buried with gusto, surprised only Amodu perhaps, but not million of ardent followers of the English Premiership worldwide. Ayegbeni had played little football for his club all season.

It did not surprise me, when, Osaze, all but called the coach an idiot after the match. Interviewed after the defeat to Ghana, he said the team suffered because it lacked tactical variation – a clear and present indictment of Amodu, if he is smart enough to get the message, that is. He queried the deployment of only one striker, and the 4-3-3 formation Amodu employed regardless of the opposition.

But should Nigerians be surprised? Regular readers of this column will easily acknowledge that our humiliation was, in fact, a tale foretold. For years, those directly in charge of our sports stubbornly refused to acknowledge the fundamental facts on the performance of the team under local and foreign coaches and the damning statistics they disgorge.

Nigeria finished on the podium for the first time at an AFCON tournament in 1976 when the Slav, Father Tiko, coached the team to win bronze in Ghana. Under the late Brazilian Otto Gloria, we were champions in 1980. We won the cup again under the Dutchman Clemens Westerhof at the edition hosted by Tunisia, in 1994, the same year we also qualified for the FIFA World Cup for the first time in our history.

In 1996, another Dutchman, Johannes Bonfrere, led the team to win the Olympic Gold medal at the

Muhammad Al-Ghazali

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Atlanta 1996 games. Throughout those years, the same continental rivals that beat us black and blue today knew they were on damage limitation exercise whenever they played us. The Super Eagles were that good. We were the scourge of the continent, and, only the political decision to withdraw from the AFCON tournament held in South Africa in 1996 denied us a third continental title.

The foreign coaches had something our local coaches desperately lacked. They invited players on merit. They were indifferent to ethnic sentiments and sectional

organised the Ghanaian side to frustrate Nigeria packed with so much individual talent but little teamwork. The difference in class between Amodu and the other coaches preparing for South Africa is guaranteed to get even wider at the World Cup, unless the authorities summon the courage and will to act decisively.

The NFF must be told in clear terms that a sixth bronze medal in ten years of AFCON is unacceptable for a nation of our status, resources, and abundant talents. It is a monumental embarrassment and evidence of stunted growth. A bronze medal, may be acceptable to a third rate coach like Amodu and the NFF, but it is certainly not for me, and millions of soccer loving Nigerians going by their reaction.

Those who argue that our local coaches are condemned to fail because they do not always receive the same cooperation from authori-

“ We had more than enough time to rescue the game, but could not achieve it. We lacked the technical bench to achieve it ”

machinations of the sporting press. Their teams were better organized. They were disciplined on, and off the field of play. Above everything else, they had superior tactical depth, and were honest with themselves. And the results vindicated them.

Our local coaches on the other hand are not only fetish, they routinely shift the blame whenever the Eagles lose, or fail to perform credibly. They claim maximum credit for rare successes but quickly shun responsibility for frequent failures. Today, it is obvious to all, except the blind, that the Eagles are 'super' in name only. Two years of Shuaibu Amodu has left an indelible mark on the Eagles.

Once a flamboyant team, with abundant flair only the Brazilians could surpass, the way the team plays these days depict the image of the man the NFF is prepared to swim and sink with: dour, colourless, unimaginative, pedestrian, and horrendously predictable. Under Amodu, Nigeria is now the joke of the entire continent.

When I urged the authorities to engage a competent foreign coach before the last round of World Cup qualifiers, I feared that Amodu would be unable to resist the urge to field unfit players. The outcome of the AFCON tournament in Angola has clearly justified those fears. We are fair game to even the smallest nations on the continent. The team has been left at the mercy of a tactical illiterate. The wonder, of course, is that the NFF expected so much from Amodu when was abundantly clear he was incapable of giving what was beyond him. How can a featherweight survive in a class reserved for heavyweights?

Sentiments aside, Amodu is definitely not in the same class as even the Egyptian coach. In Angola, we saw how another competent coach

ties like their foreign counterparts cannot do so this time. Amodu was on a fat contract. For every dollar the players earned in match bonuses, Amodu also earned twice as much. For qualifying for the semi-finals alone, he pocketed over sixty thousand dollars. He is sure to have received another hefty bonus for winning what he shamelessly referred to as a golden bronze medal after the match against Algeria.

The Presidential Task Force did a perfect job of mobilizing funds for the team but received insults in return. When we picked the 2010 World Cup through the back door, Amodu even received a brand new Sports Utility Vehicle as a gift! Therefore, clearly, his problem cannot be that of poor motivation or inadequate support. It is simply a case of sheer incompetence compounded by the acute lack of technical expertise.

The way I see it, the Sports Ministry must call the bluff of the NFF cabal by cleaning the rot preventing the team from fulfilling its undoubted potentials. It is not too late. Government must not submit to primitive blackmail. It is equally entitled to protect its investments in the team. Success for the Super Eagles is just about the only thing that gives Nigerians temporary relief in their sea of unprecedented misery.

We have more than four months before the 2010 World Cup in South Africa. With the pool of young and talented players at our disposal, it is more than enough time for a good foreign coach to bring discipline and sanity to the team. Disbanding the team is not an option because it is unheard of in international football. Only the aged and unproductive players should make way for vibrant and talented new players.

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Obituary



The Nigerian Navy regrets to announce the untimely death of 3 of its officers and a rating which occurred in a helicopter crash at Isiokpo, near Port Harcourt International Airport, on Tuesday 26 January 2010. These were fine, well trained and seasoned professionals who dedicated their lives to service and died in the course of national duties.



Lieutenant Commander
Yusuf Mailafiya Ibrahim
11/11/1974 - 26/01/2010



Lieutenant Commander
Ahmed Tijjani Yusuf
14/11/1975 - 26/01/2010



Lieutenant Commander
Ahmadu Yahaya Shuaibu
30/03/1978 - 26/01/2010



Seaman
Uyhili Iliya Danjuma
14/11/1975 - 26/01/2010

The Chief of the Naval Staff, on behalf of the entire officers, ratings and civilian staff of the Nigerian Navy commiserates with their families and loved ones. We pray that the Almighty God will grant them the strength and fortitude to bear this painful and irreparable loss.

May the souls of these our dear departed colleagues find peaceful repose in the bosom of our Lord.

Director of Information
for Chief of the Naval Staff

END OF THE ROAD FOR FRIVOLOUS AGITATION OVER MR PRESIDENT'S ABSENCE

Last Friday's judgment of the Federal High Court declaring that President Umaru Musa Yar'adua has not violated the Constitution by not sending a letter to the National Assembly before proceeding to Saudi Arabia for medical attention and that the President cannot be compelled to do so is the last straw in the series of frantic and inordinate schemes disguised as patriotic statesmanship all aimed at callously removing a recuperating President from office. The most significant element of the verdict is that it was the simple unambiguous interpretation of the relevant section 145 of the Constitution which, ab initio, does not require any legal expedition to understand. As Hon. Justice Daniel Abutu, Chief Judge of the Federal High Court, observed in his judgment, the court has no power to amend the constitution or change its wording because, its responsibility is to state the law as it is and not what it ought to be. For the avoidance of doubt, section 145 states: **WHENEVER THE PRESIDENT TRANSMITS TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES A WRITTEN DECLARATION THAT HE IS PROCEEDING ON VACATION OR THAT HE IS OTHERWISE UNABLE TO DISCHARGE THE FUNCTIONS OF HIS OFFICE, UNTIL HE TRANSMITS TO THEM A WRITTEN DECLARATION TO THE CONTRARY SUCH FUNCTIONS SHALL BE DISCHARGED BY THE VICE-PRESIDENT AS ACTING PRESIDENT.** Even a sound secondary school student can grasp the simple fact that the entire provision depends on "whenever" the President writes to the two heads of the National Assembly, which is what Justice Abutu upheld by declaring that the President's decision to write the said letter is "discretionary and not mandatory." Yet it was not a group of secondary school students but the supposedly learned Incorporated Trustees of the Nigerian Bar Association that filed such a frivolous suit that brazenly seeks to recruit the judiciary into the clumsy conspiracy to oust President Umaru Musa Yar'adua from office by unconstitutional means. To further nail the coffin of the frivolous litigants, Justice Abutu also declared that the court cannot issue an order of necessity to enable the VP to act for the President when he is already exercising powers and carrying out functions delegated to him by the President. He declared that the office of the President is not in abeyance, relying on the common Oxford dictionary to debunk the contrived contention of the "learned" NBA plaintiffs claiming that the President's absence had stopped the functions of his office. All these are logical findings drawing from the true and ordinary meaning of the relevant sections of the constitution cited in the suits. The Executive Council of the Federation which has the closest working relationship with President Yar'adua has since fulfilled its constitutional obligation by endorsing the President's capacity to perform his duties, in a riposte that disappointed the rabble-rousers.

THE ULTERIOR MOTIVES

It is now quite obvious that the much-touted patriotism and statesmanship was just a hypocritical smokescreen to conceal the ulterior motives of the NBA and the cliques of collaborators drawn from the hitherto respected ranks of "elder statesmen and former leaders" among other extinguished personalities and rabble-rousing mercenaries from civil society. The entire charade of trivial law suits which have all come crashing down on the plaintiffs was just meant to raise the political temperature in Nigeria to a new high, after the circus of street protests and futile calls for civil disobedience failed to make Nigeria "ungovernable" as they planned. The recourse to sending delegations of displaced and desperate political deadwood, with no recognized mandate or **locus standi**, to the Senate and the House of Representatives was no less ridiculous, given the resolute stand of the two chambers to respect their own constitutional limitations, regardless of the orchestrated "pressure" to join the fray. The late enlistment of General Gowon, presiding over a bizarre meeting of the strangest political bedfellows was an appalling example of the bandwagon effect that calls for a review of the pre-qualification for

statesmanship. The verbal diarrhoea spewed by former President Obasanjo on this matter makes this review an urgent national assignment. By contrast the Nigerian masses continue to pray for the full recovery of President Yar'adua so that he can come back and continue serving Nigeria because they know that health, nay life itself comes from God, and should not be turned into a weapon of political destruction. They have also seen that President Yar'adua's sober, sincere and down-to-earth devotion to resolving lingering national problems is yielding better results and setting better examples in leadership than was witnessed during the tenures of his "healthier" predecessors whose collective legacies of failure were handed over to President Yar'adua. He is definitely the most educated, intellectual and insightful Nigerian leader with proletarian antecedents to occupy Aso Villa and these inform his leadership style.

REJECT THE CLIQUE CONSPIRACY

Nigerians must now be ready to rise to the challenge of defending our nascent democracy from the threat of cliques of self-serving renegades who mischievously don the garb of elders, statesmen, activists, lawyers, groups and other sundry appellations in order to seek back-door access to political power. The shameful politicization of the health challenge of President Yar'adua has just shown to what lengths these masquerades can go to create "crisis and tension" where none exists so that perchance an opportunity will come for them to impose themselves on the people. Even civil disobedience is not ruled out by these anarchists! A cursory glance at the leading characters in the charade of "power vacuum" shows that they all have expired political mandates, vaulting presidential/political ambition, elitist attitude to national issues, disregard for the genuine feeling of Nigerians and a lack-lustre record of performance in previous outings. This is why they have abandoned the recognized democratic platforms and institutions which many of them actually belong to only for them to congregate in emergency caucuses of personal/group convenience and advantage to make untenable claims to represent public or national interests whenever they see an opportunity to exploit. This is why they are all weeping more than Vice President Goodluck Jonathan whose ascension to the Presidency they purport to be agitating for, but who has rejected their crocodile tears. This is why they were desperately trying to blackmail the National Assembly into arbitrary action that the constitution did not empower them to take. This is why when their agenda of instigation, provocation and propaganda failed they called for civil disobedience. This is why they deliberately ignored the glaring constitutional obstacles to their obnoxious objectives and resorted to frivolous legal action just to heat up the polity. These are the very reasons that also permanently disqualify them from ever earning the confidence of Nigerians in their selfish quest to take control of the reins of government whereas they have become board-room politicians whose political ambitions have been held in abeyance by sheer lack of popular support even in their local communities.

Now that they have exposed themselves and their sinister anti-Yar'adua agenda and denied the legal and constitutional justification they purported to have, these cliques of ex-this, ex-that and their hired mercenaries masquerading as elder statesmen, leaders of thought, defenders of democracy and saviours of Nigeria, among other bogus identities, should please retreat into the socio-political irrelevance that they deserve and keep their nuisance value to themselves.

BY THE GRACE OF GOD, PRESIDENT YARADUA WILL RECOVER, RETURN AND RESUME THE RESCUE OPERATION HE IS DESTINED TO EMBARK ON FOR PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT OF NIGERIANS AND NIGERIA.

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INTERNATIONAL

Mogadishu shelling kills 12 civilians

HEAVY mortar fire between African Union peacekeepers and Islamist insurgents killed at least 12 civilians and left scores wounded in the Somali capital, officials and medics said yesterday.

AU forces fired several mortars into areas of north Mogadishu in retaliation for artillery attacks by the rebels late Sunday, killing civilians who have borne the brunt of the relentless attacks between the two sides. "Our team collected eight bodies of civilians who were killed in the shelling and 55 others who were injured,

some of them seriously," said Ali Musa, the head of the war-ravaged city's ambulance service.

Witness Abdulahi Nure said four other civilians were killed by the artillery fire in another neighbourhood. A police official accused the radical insurgents of using the civilian population as human shields.

"They (rebels) fired mortar shells from the civilian populated areas using them as human shields," the official told AFP on condition of anonymity.

"The terrorist fighters fired mortar shells at the palace and

the African Union peacekeepers responded targeting where those mortars were coming from," he added. One witness, Moahmed Aban Ilbir, said around 20 heavy artillery shells hit his district of Suqaholaha.

"We are still shocked at this indiscriminate shelling," he said. The Al Qaeda-inspired Shebab rebels and Hezb al-Islam, another hardline Islamist militia, have repeatedly attacked Somali government forces and the AU peacekeepers since launching an offensive last May. With much of Mogadishu under insurgent con-

trol, retaliation by the AU troops have often ended up killing civilians among whom the rebels live.

The rebels have vowed to topple the internationally-backed government of President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed and drive out the AU troops whom they accuse of occupying the lawless country.

On Friday, at least 10 people were killed when the Shebab militants fired a barrage of mortar shells at a ceremony to mark Sharif's first year in office. Since their onslaught last year, the hardline rebels have massively reduced the government's control of the

war-torn Mogadishu.

The embattled government holds sway in a few streets with the help of the AU troops, whose strength still falls far short of the intended 8,000 troops.

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon ruled out any deployment of UN peacekeepers in Somalia until the end of the country's years of civil war.

"Practically and realistically it is not possible at this time to deploy a UN peacekeeping force in Somalia," he told reporters in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa on Saturday.

Somali regions urged to battle Islamist militia

A six-nation east African regional bloc yesterday urged Somalia's two breakaway regions of Puntland and Somaliland to jointly battle Islamist militia which it said had extended to the areas.

The Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) "noted in particular that the terrorist groups have recently expanded their acts of terrorism to the relatively stable regions of Somaliland and Puntland." The group was referring to the Al-Qaeda-inspired Shebab militia and its Hezb al-Islam allies who have waged fierce battles against Somalia's internationally backed government.

It "called upon the authorities in Somaliland and Puntland to coordinate their response and also work closely with the (Somali government) to overcome the common threat that they are facing from the Shebab and Hezb al-Islam."

Three policemen were killed on January 25 in a bomb explosion triggered by unknown attackers in Las Anod, a town which lies in the disputed border area between Somaliland and Puntland.

Also last month, Somaliland authorities said that they had thwarted an attack on a mosque in Hargeysa, the state's capital, whose imam had criticised suicide bombings carried out by the Shebab.

The Shebab, engaged in an offensive to topple the internationally recognised government in Mogadishu, are mainly active in southern and central Somalia but several of its key figures are originally from Somaliland.

Ivory Coast faces mounting election pressure



IVORY Coast President Laurent Gbagbo (L) speaks with his election campaign director at the Presidential Palace in Abidjan.

THE international community is upping the pressure on Ivory Coast in West Africa to hold a presidential election and end a political and security crisis that began seven years ago with a failed coup. The United Nations Security Council last week called for an election to be held by May 31, before mandates for a UN force with nearly 8,000 personnel and a French 1,800-troop deployment in the country run out.

It urged "the relevant Ivorian stakeholders to ensure the publication of the final voters list, to announce the official date of the first round of the presidential elections and to meet their commitments in full."

France's UN Ambassador Gerard Araud told reporters after the vote that the UN would begin lifting sanctions once the elections take place. "We have been waiting for elections in Ivory Coast for years. Ivorian democracy must function and we will not wait indefinitely," he warned.

His US counterpart Susan Rice said the country's move towards national reconciliation "has been stalled" by delays in holding the election.

United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon reiterated the point Sunday, telling a summit of the African Union in Ethiopia: "I urge the parties to overcome the outstanding issues and set a

definite date for the elections." He suggested that they should be held before the end of March.

The poll is aimed at ending a crisis that began with an attempted coup against President Laurent Gbagbo in September 2002, which left the country split between the rebel-held north and a government-controlled south.

Ivory Coast is a former French colony, with a population of 20 million. The election has already been delayed six times since 2005, when Gbagbo's mandate ran out. And now a fresh scandal is threatening to delay the vote yet again.

Interior Minister Desire Tagro earlier this month said he would ask prosecutors to open

an inquiry into a possible case of voter list fraud by the country's electoral commission after a local press report. He said the information was "of extreme seriousness."

The Independent Electoral Commission, or CEI under its French-language acronym, refutes allegations of fraud but has acknowledged major problems in managing voter lists. The scandal is seriously affecting preparations for the crucial election.

Prime Minister Guillaume Soro, former leader of the New Forces rebel movement, has ordered a full re-examination of the CEI's work. "We're stalling," a Western diplomatic source told AFP on condition of anonymity.

International

China pledges more support for rural poor

CHINA will boost spending in rural areas and let more farmers migrate to urban areas in a bid to close the widening income gap between villages and cities, government officials said yesterday.

China's leaders are worried about lagging rural areas, where thousands of protests a year over living conditions and perceived government indifference threaten to undermine social stability.

An exact figure has

yet to be announced but Chen Xiwen, director of the Central Rural Work Leading Group, a government advisory body, said the increase in spending on agriculture and rural areas would be proportionally much higher than the central government's overall budget increase this year. A text of the policy released Sunday said the measures were intended to help "expand rural demand as a key step in stimulating domestic demand."

Beijing is trying to encourage its consumers to spend more to reduce reliance on investment and weak exports to drive economic growth.

This will mark the sixth consecutive year that China has boosted its budget for rural areas, Chen said. Last year, the government spent 764.1 billion yuan (\$111.8 billion), up 120 billion yuan from the previous year.

"One thing is for sure: the increase in fiscal spending in rural areas will

be much higher than the overall increase in China's fiscal input this year," Chen told a news conference. The exact amount is to be announced at the annual meeting of China's legislature in March, he said.

Chen said new investment, loans, training programs and subsidies would be part of a package of measures designed to help farming villages, where incomes have grown but failed to keep pace with urban income growth.



THE Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini waves to supporters in Tehran in February 1979 after his return from 15 years of exile.

Iran remembers Khomeini amid political tensions

SCHOOL bells rang out as trains and ships throughout Iran sounded their horns yesterday, marking the 1979 return from exile of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who triggered a revolution that spawned an Islamic state now mired in a political crisis.

Reformist ex-president Mohammad Khatami, now a strong backer of anti-government protesters, urged his supporters to join the February 11 march that marks the toppling of the US-backed shah 31 years ago.

Yesterday's nationwide clamour, at precisely 9:33 am (0603 GMT), marked the moment Khomeini's chartered Air France 747 touched down at Tehran's Mehrabad airport on February 1, 1979.

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and other senior officials paid homage to the cleric at his gold-domed mausoleum in southern Tehran.

The celebrations that began yesterday will climax on February 11, the anniversary of the fall of shah who had ruled Iran for nearly four decades, but who fled two weeks before

Khomeini's return.

The charismatic cleric assumed the role of the Islamic republic's supreme leader, a post he held until his death in 1989.

During his conservative rule, Iran became embroiled in a brutal conflict with Saddam Hussein's neighbouring Iraq. More than a million people were killed on both sides during the war. Khomeini backed Islamist students who stormed the American embassy in the capital in November 1979 and took its personnel hostage for 444 days, prompting Washington -- branded the "Great Satan" by Iran -- to sever ties with Tehran.

Relations between Iran and the United States have slid steadily downhill during the rule of hardliner Ahmadinejad, who was controversially re-elected last June in an election the opposition claims was massively rigged.

Tension has also peaked between Iran and the West over Tehran's nuclear programme, which world powers believe is masking an atomic weapons programme despite repeated denials by Iranian leaders.

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Entrance examination: 5 June 2010

INFORMATION SESSIONS

Location: Lagos

Date: 20 February & 17 April 2010

Time: 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Venue: Lagos Business School

Km 22, Lekki-Epe Expressway, Ajah, Lagos.

Location: Abuja

Date: 13 March 2010

Time: 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. - Information session

1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. - Individual meeting and interviews for candidates with GMAT scores

Venue: Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Centre

1 Memorial Drive, Central Business District, FCT, Abuja.

Location: Port-Harcourt

Date: 27 March 2010

Time: 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. - Information session

1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. - Individual meeting and interviews for candidates with GMAT scores

Venue: Genesis Place Hotel

Plot 198/199 Rumuogba Estate, off Aba Road, Port-Harcourt.

Register for an information session online at www.lbs.edu.ng

Attendance is free but attendees should register to receive confirmation for a seat at the event



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THE FAMILY OF LATE A. AHMED USMAN BICHI

(INNA LILLAHI WA INNA ILAIHIR RAJIUN)

MESSAGE OF APPRECIATION

With gratitude and complete submission to the will of ALLAH (S.W.T) we wish to use this medium to express our profound appreciation to our numerous brothers, sisters, friends, sympathizers, and associates who stood firmly behind us during our moment of grief (through various means of condolences) as a result of the sudden death of our illustrious brother and father – HAMZA AHMED BICHI exactly two months ago.

In particular, we wish to express our sincere thanks, gratitude and appreciation to the followings:

His Excellency, Engineer A.T. Abdullahi Gwarzo - Deputy Governor Kano state.
 Alh. Abdulkarim Hassan - Secretary to Kano State Government.
 Alh. Rabi'u Zakaria - Head of Civil Service Kano State.
 Alh. Ahmed Ibrahim Yakasai - Hon. Commissioner Min. of Commerce, Industry, Coop. and Tourism, Kano.
 Alh. Musa Ilyasu Kwankwaso - Hon. Commissioner, Min. of Rural and Community, Development, Kano.
 Dr. Bashir Shehu Galadanchi - Hon. Commissioner Min. of Science and Technology Kano.
 Alh. Muhammad Abubakar Rimi - First Civilian Governor, Kano State.
 Dr. Rabi'u Musa Kwankwaso - Former Civilian Governor, Kano State.
 Alh. Tijjani Hashim - Galadiman Kano.
 Alh. Idris Bayero - Barden Kano, District Head of Bichi.
 Alh. Sama'ila Mohd - Sarkin Karshi (FCT).
 Alh. Abubakar Abdullahi - District Head Kuraye (Katsina State).
 Alh. Lawan Shehu - Chairman Bichi Local Govt.
 Alh. Ado Umar Mohd - Special Adviser to H. E. Governor Kano state.
 Alh. Mahmoud Baba Bichi - Former Member representing Bichi in the (National Assembly).
 Alh. Suleiman Mohd (Late) - Magayaki Zazzau.
 Alh. Mohd Dankwano - Wamban Jahun.
 Alh. Bashir Othman Tofa - Chairman Elder's forum ANPP Kano.
 Alh. Ammani Inuwa - Deputy Chairman Elder's forum ANPP Kano.
 Alh. Bello Hayatu - Senator representing Kano North (National Assembly).
 Alh. Ibrahim Mu'azzam Bichi - Member representing Bichi (National Assembly).
 Alh. Sani Hashim Hotoro - Chairman ANPP Kano.
 Alh. Farouk Lawan - Member representing Shanono and Bagwai (National Assembly)

Alh. Farouk Iya - Chairman PDP Kano.
 Major General Aminu Maitama Bichi - Commander Infantry Corps, Nigerian Army.
 Colonel Ibrahim Adamu (rtd).
 Alh. Mudi Speaking - An Elder statesman and prominent politician.
 Alh. Lili Gabari - prominent Kano Businessman and politician.
 Alh. Abubakar Ahmed - Chief Imam Bichi.
 Alh. Kabiru Sani Kwangila - Prominent Kano Businessman.
 Alh. Lawan Bichi - MD/CEO - ASASCO Nig. Ltd.
 Aliyu Aminu Ringim - Chairman/CEO Dan Durgu Air Travels Kano.
 Alh. Auwalu Mukhtar Bichi - MD/CEO Finsurance Abuja
 Alh. Bashir Ahmed - Retired Grand Khadi Kano State
 Alh. Datti Ahmed - Retired PS and Imam Galadanchi Mosque Kano City.
 Alh. Salihi Ahmed Bichi - Retired PS Kano.
 Alh. Mukhtar Ahmad - Retired Bank Executive Kano.
 Alh. Aliyu Mahmoud Galadanchi - Leading Businessman Kano.
 Alh. Zubairu Mahmoud Galadanchi - Retired PS Kano.
 Professor Ibrahim Umar - BUK Kano.
 Professor Muhd Yahaya Bichi - Provost College of Education Kano.
 Professor Kabiru Ahmed Bichi - Deputy Vice Chancellor BUK.
 Professor Abdu Yahaya Bichi - BUK.
 Dr. Kabiru Abubakar - Chief Medical Director Dala Orthopedic Hospital.

The cream of Permanent Secretaries, Managing Directors, Directors and other top Government Officials and functionaries Kano state, leading Ulama's, Politicians, Civil Servants, Businessmen, Students etc too numerous to mention individually.

Last, but not the least we wish to thank all those whose names could not be mentioned due to lack of space who in various ways expressed their condolences and prayers. May the ALMIGHTY ALLAH bless and reward you ALL abundantly - Amin!

SIGNED

DAHIRU AHMED BICHI
FOR THE FAMILY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

GOMBE TEACHERS COLLEGE OLD STUDENTS ASSOCIATION (GOMOSA)

INVITES ALL MEMBERS TO ITS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:

DATE: 6TH FEBRUARY, 2010

TIME: 10:00AM PROMPT

VENUE: GOMBE STATE UNIVERSITY
GENERAL PURPOSE HALL

Note: Election Year!!!

Signed:
NATIONAL PUBLICITY SECRETARY
08038936498
08060551274



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INVITATION TO TENDER

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- Tenders must be submitted using the standard tender form including the tender dossier whose format and instructions must be strictly observed.
- Completed dossier are to be submitted and delivered by hand or registered mail.

To:
The Honourable Commissioner,
Ministry of Rural and Community Development,
No 2 Dr. Bala Muhd Road, by Sokoto Road, Kano State

Attention: Secretary Special Ministerial Tenders Board.

The application MUST reach him within one week from the date of this advertisement. Please NOTE that the Ministry reserves the right to accept or reject any application.

Signed:
Director Planning

International



THE professional head of the armed forces, Air Chief Marshal Jock Stirrup

Military 'was ill-prepared for Iraq invasion'

BRITAIN'S military "simply didn't have enough time" to source all the equipment needed for the 2003 Iraq invasion, the professional head of the armed forces said yesterday at an inquiry into the war.

Air Chief Marshal Jock Stirrup said it would have made a "significant difference" to Britain's effort if the military had the full six months required to prepare, as opposed to just four.

"The problem of course was that we simply didn't have enough time, as it turned out, to do everything we needed to do before the operation started," said Stirrup, who was then in a top role dealing with military equipment.

Asked if an extra two months to prepare would have helped, he said: "I think it would have made a significant difference. That's 50 percent additional time."

"We were finding that in a number of cases we were getting 100 percent delivery about a month or two after the operation started. So I think that the six-month assumption wasn't a bad one."

Stirrup added that

military chiefs had told ministers of the problems, although the inquiry has already heard of high-level concerns that military preparations in public could hamper diplomatic moves against Iraq.

"We made it absolutely clear to ministers that if we were not allowed to engage with industry... we could take these (preparations) no further and that there was a serious risk that they would not all be delivered by the assumed start of operations," Stirrup added.

Former Prime Minister Tony Blair appeared before the public inquiry in the war Friday, notably failing to apologise for the war in which 179 British troops were killed.

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UN chief offers support for Cyprus peace talks

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon praised Cyprus' rival leaders yesterday for their efforts to reunify the ethnically divided island, expressing confidence that a decades-old deadlock can be broken.

On a trip meant to revitalize the process before Turkish Cypriot elections and dispel public gloom, Ban said a deal was within reach. "I wanted to be here now because I recognize how important it is to continue to build momentum on what the leaders have achieved now," he said at a news conference with the two leaders that was held near crumbling buildings in Nicosia's U.N.-controlled buffer zone.

Greek Cypriot President Dimitris Christofias and Turkish Cypriot leader Mehmet Ali Talat have achieved only marginal progress in 17 months of negotiations.

The secretary general praised the two leaders for making progress this month on a proposal to share power in a federal system. He spoke in the U.N. controlled buffer zone that cuts the island — and the city of Nicosia — in two.

"No one is under any illusion that any of this will be easy," said Ban. "But the time is ripe to push ahead. I am convinced that these two leaders can achieve a mutually beneficial solution."

Cyprus was divided into a Greek Cypriot south and a breakaway Turkish Cypriot north in 1974, when Turkey invaded after a short-lived coup by supporters of union with Greece.

The Greek Cypriot government is internationally recognized. The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is recognized only by Turkey, which keeps 35,000 troops there.

Christofias and Talat remain far apart on most major issues — including how to treat property seized during the war and Turkey's right to intervene militarily.

"We are faced with an ironic situation where we all agree there are two leaders fully committed and working hard to continue negotiations, but there is nothing to show for it in the eye of public opinion," said Turkish Cypriot lawyer and analyst Emine Erk.

Both leaders repeated a shared determination yesterday to see the process through to a successful end. "I am ready to shoulder my responsibility until the end," said Talat. A sense that the talks haven't gained traction has fueled fears Talat could lose an election April 18 to hardline rival Dervis Eroglu.

The two leaders agreed to continue negotiating through February and March contrary to speculation there would be a break for campaigning.



ULAMA /ELDERS COUNCIL

PLATEAU STATE

C/o Jos Central Mosque,
Jos, Plateau State - Nigeria.
Co-ordinator / Secretary
09033454219 09037005936

OUR STAND ON THE RECENT GENOCIDE IN PLATEAU STATE

We are compelled against our wish, but in response to the unfortunate Ethno - Religious crisis that re- enacted in Plateau State from the 17th to 20th January 2010, to state our position on the events from the beginning of the crisis to date.

THE BEGINNING OF THE CRISES

The genesis of the crises as confirmed reports indicated was the illegal forceful attempt by Christians from some local communities in Dutse Uku area of Jos to stop one Kabiru Muhammad, a Muslim from re - building his house which was demolished during the November 2008 crisis, on the ground that the area has now become an exclusive Christian enclave having been rid of its Muslim inhabitants in the 2008 crisis.

What started from a small area almost engulfed the whole city, but for the timely intervention of leaders of various communities and Religious groups which, along with the efforts of the security agencies, the Army in particular, helped to bring the situation under control.

Later in the evening of same day, the media reported the Plateau State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Gregory Ayanting, as saying that the crisis started as a result of an unprovoked attack on Christian worshippers in a church by Muslim youths.

As if working from a script, the local media, particularly the PRTV, FM RADIO, kept repeating the CPs irresponsible remarks in its news "tit-bits" throughout the following day. The following Tuesday morning 19th January 2010, the Radio arm of the PRTV carried a highly provocative news analyses on the Sunday crisis, after the 6:30am news.

Unknowns to us, this was a wake up call on Christians to carry their arms and embark on mass slaughter of innocent Muslims in Jos North and other parts of Plateau State.

By the morning of Tuesday 19th January 2010, Christians responded to the clarion call and launched offensive attack against Muslims in Nasarawa Gwong, Duala junction, Rikkos, Rusau, Abattoir, Dogon Karfe, Anglo Jos, Bukuru, Kuru Karama, Foron and Rayfield areas of Jos North and Jos South LGAs.

By the following morning of Wednesday 20th January 2010, twenty - six (26) Muslim communities spread across the State were massively attacked by the well armed youths in a well organized manner.

By the time the Military was able to restore order, over six hundreds (600) Muslims had lost their lives, while properties in Hundreds of millions had been looted, burnt or destroyed.

In one of the most horrific cases of man's inhumanity to man ever seen in the world, hundreds of Muslims, were rounded off in the Village of Kuru Karama in Jos South and brutally murdered, using various cruel method such as gun shots, machetes and even spraying petrol on some of them and burning them to death.

In this bizarre act, not even pregnant women, children and infants were spared. The gory details are unspeakable.

As has always been the case in crisis of this nature in Plateau State, the state government's response was unbecoming, careless and insensitive to such kind of situation.

Muslims were neglected by the government in the provision of relief materials, while no attempt was made at all by the government of Governor Jonah Jang to reach out to the Muslims in this trying period.

Added to that were the usual provocative remarks by government functionaries, traditional rulers and Christians Religious leaders which did not portray a mature attitude at such a critical period.

THE AFTERMATH

In the wake of the crisis, the Jang Administration has now taken steps aimed at punishing the defenseless and powerless Muslims, as its own response to the onslaught of its Christian armed gangs

on them (Muslim).

The government has imposed a ban on commercial motorcyclist in Jos and Bukuru, which are the commercial nerve centers populated by Muslims, as well as the banning of hawking in such areas, simply because most of these category of people are Muslims yet this is a State where Muslim communities are being denied basic necessities of life especially water, for a long period of time.

We wonder whether this is also part of the much touted agenda of stifle life out of Muslims though some sinister means as is being rumored.

All these coming from a government that claims to be working for peace and reconciliation, Habal

REACTIONS TO THE POGROM

We note with regret the position taken by the Plateau State House of Assembly on the crisis and other issues that have direct bearing on members of the Muslim community in the State. We condemn its open endorsement of the Governor's actions aimed at further crippling Muslims socially and economically.

We thought that as an independent arm of government the legislature would provide the needed balance, objectivity and fairness, which the executive arm of government clearly lacks, in order to bring the State out of the precipice which the reckless leadership of Governor Jang has put it into.

We know why the House of Assembly kept mum when some of its Muslim members were attacked and their homes burnt in the 2008 crisis.

To the Plateau State House of Assembly, Muslims are not equal citizens with Christians and do not therefore deserve a fair treatment.

We now look forward to the next line of action, possibly legislating Islam and Muslims out of existence on the Plateau, as indicated by the Honourable Speaker of the House.

THE SENATE

In the same vein we wish to express our dismay with the upper chamber of our National Assembly, the Senate, under the leadership of Senator David Mark has been treating the perennial Jos crisis with levity and glaring partisanship.

The failure of the Senate leadership to commission its committee on the 2008 Jos crisis to work, as well as the seeming collaboration to cover up Jang in his latest heinous crime against Muslims, in the name of middle belt solidarity is noted.

We are therefore appealing to progressive minded members of the Senate to rise up to the challenge and redeem its image in this matter of service to humanity and do the right thing to uphold the constitution they swore to protect.

We reject the assertion by the Senate that only the implementation of reports of previous panels on the Plateau crises would bring a solution to the continuous marginalization, discrimination and denial of the constitutional rights of Muslims in Plateau State.

It is a well known fact that none of such reports had ever addressed the underlying issues that bring about such conflicts. Rather they always maintain the status quo.

CAN AND PENTECOSTAL FELLOWSHIP OF NIGERIA.

We recall that on the 26th December 2009, the PFN addressed a press conference in Jos in which it alleged that there was a plan in the pipeline to start another crisis in Jos, with the aim of killing Christians. It went further to call on Christians to arm themselves well and be alert. We have now seen what they meant by that.

We note that most of the issues raised in that press statement are exactly what the Plateau State Government is now doing; what a coincidence?

We therefore call on the security agencies and all other investigative bodies to begin the search for the masterminds of the latest Jos "GENOCIDE" from the leadership of PFN and CAN.

We shall throw more light on this at the appropriate

time.

NVRI VOM AND NITR

We feel it is important at this juncture to comment on the ignoble role played by the Executive Director NVRI Vom in condoning and promoting attacks on Muslim members of staff of the institute by fellow Christian staff aided and abetted by Christian hoodlums from the area, in the government owned staff quarters.

We wonder if, by this action, the Director has now declared NVRI out of reach for Muslims in Nigeria.

We hereby call on the Federal Government to take note of this ugly trend and remedy the situation.

THE MEDIA

It is disheartening to recall the ignoble role some sections of the media, especially PRTV (TV and Radio), NTA, AIT, The Nation and LEADERSHIP, have played and are still playing in their biased reporting of Jos crisis. The PRTV in particular played the leading role in orchestrating the crisis, supported by NTA and AIT. They also contributed to the escalation of the crisis by dishing out one sided stories. The management of PRTV in particular should be thoroughly investigated to ascertain its role in instigating the Tuesday attacked on Muslims, in Jos and other areas of the state.

We call on the relevant regulatory bodies to sanction these media appropriately.

THE SECURITY AGENCIES

We have in the latest incident again seen the usual murderous hands of the Nigeria Police Force and its conspiratorial leadership in the murder of innocent Muslims in Plateau State. They killed us massively 2008, which was reported world wide but went away scot-free.

We call on the Federal Government to carry out a thorough investigation into the role played by CP Ayanting and his officers to precipitate the "GENOCIDE" against Muslims.

We commend the Military for its timely intervention without which Muslims would have been massacred in thousands, against the hundreds slaughtered now.

We note with appreciation, the concern of the International Community, the UN, Human Right Groups, NGOs and the media whose timely exposition of the carnage at kuru and other places helped to draw global attention to the pogrom. We appeal to them to remain ever vigilant on the situation in Plateau as a way of assisting the beleaguered Muslim community there.

We commend the Federal Government for the demonstrated concern to the Plateau situation and urge it to commission a thorough investigation to identify the culprits and bring them to book.

In conclusion, we appeal to Muslims to remain calm and law abiding and give the Government all the cooperation it needs to identify the underlying issues and address them appropriately. In the same manner all perpetrators and their sponsors should be fished out and made to face the full wrath of the law.

Similarly, we wish to re-iterate to all concerned, especially Governor Jang, his murderous Berom tribal army and the cabals around him that we shall remain unyielding to their nefarious attempts to exterminate us. We shall commit ourselves to fighting for our rights and seek for justice through ALL LAWFUL channels available, until justice is done to our cause.

Finally, we appeal to Governments, NGOs, Local and International Humanitarian Organizations to assist thousands of displaced Muslims so as to mitigate their hardship. Of particular concern is the condition of widows and orphans scattered all across without homes.

We call on the Federal Government to put in place the necessary machinery for the resettlement of displaced persons pending when final assessment of losses is made and compensation duly paid.

Alhaji Danjuma Khalid M.
Coordinato

M. Lawai Ishaq
Secretary



LADOKE AKINTOLA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, OGBOMOSO

INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION ON ETF PROJECTS

The Governing Council of Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho, invites interested and qualified Contractors for pre-qualification on the following projects:

- a) Procurement of Science Equipment for Chemistry Laboratory: ETF Project No. UNIV/OGBOMOSO/ETF/06-08/01-LOT I
- b) Procurement of Science Equipment for Biology Laboratory: ETF Project No. UNIV/OGBOMOSO/ETF/06-08/02-LOT II
- c) Procurement of Clinical Science Laboratory Equipment: ETF Project No. UNIV/OGBOMOSO/ETF/06-08/03-LOT III
- d) Procurement of 250 No. (P(IV) HP Dx6120 3.0MMX 80GB HDD, 17" Monitor Flat Screen, Branded Computers: ETF Project No. UNIV/OGBOMOSO/ETF/06-08/04-LOT IV
- e) Provision of 250 No. Wireless Networking Access Points: ETF Project No. UNIV/OGBOMOSO/ETF/06-08/05 and provision of outdoor and Indoor networking materials and mast: ETF Project No. UNIV/OGBOMOSO/ETF/06-08/06-LOT V
- f) Procurement of 8 Nos. 20KVA Motorized Stabilizers: ETF Project No. UNIV/OGBOMOSO/ETF/06-08/07-Lot VI
- g) Procurement of 4 Nos. 4500 Lumens Projectors: ETF Project No. UNIV/OGBOMOSO/ETF/06-08/08 and procurement of Automatic Screen: ETF Project No. UNIV/OGBOMOSO/ETF/06-08/09-LOT VII
- h) Procurement of 502 Computer Table and Chairs: ETF Project No. UNIV/OGBOMOSO/ETF/06-08/10-LOT VIII
- i) Procurement of 3 Nos. HP Prolian Server: ETF Project No. UNIV/OGBOMOSO/ETF/06-08/11-LOT IX

PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Evidence of incorporation or Business name registration.

2. Registration with LAUTECH in relevant category.
3. Company Audited Account for 3 years.
4. Evidence of Tax Clearance Certificate for 3 years.
5. Evidence of payment of Education Tax (as applicable).
6. Evidence of Financial Capability and Banking Support.
7. Experiences/Technical qualification and experience of key personnel.
8. Similar verifiable projects executed and evidence of knowledge of the industry.
9. Equipment and Technology capacity.
10. Annual Turnover.
11. VAT Registration and evidence of past VAT remittances.
12. Evidence of payment of pre-qualification fee of N100,000.00 per LOT. FOR categories I-IV above, while other LOTS are N50,000.00 per LOT, through Bank Draft in favour of LADOKE AKINTOLA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, OGBOMOSO, to be exchanged for University Official Receipt at the Bursary Department.

SUBMISSION OF PR-QUALIFICATION DOCUMENTS

- a) The Pre-qualification documents must be submitted in a binder of two copies per LOT in a wax-sealed envelope to be addressed to the Vice-Chancellor, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho. The envelope will be marked "Pre-Qualification" with the appropriate project/LOT name of the contract boldly written on the top of the envelope and to be dropped in a tender box in the office of the REGISTRAR, not later than two weeks from the date of this publication.
- b) Names of pre-qualified Contractors will be published on the Notice Board of the University.
- c) Only pre-qualified Companies will be invited for technical and commercial bidding.

Submission closes two weeks from the date of this advertisement by 12.00 noon. Late submissions will not be accepted. Only successful pre-qualified Companies will be contacted for the submission of Technical and Commercial bids.

Signed:
Rev. O.O. Ojo
Acting Registrar.

BUSINESS

0805 1000 536

Nigeria's revenue totals N38tr in 10yrs

• Budgets N22trn

By Idris Ahmed

A cumulative revenue of about N38 trillion was realised by the Nigerian government in the last decade.

From June 1999 to December 2009, federal government budgeted and spent over N22 trillion.

The bulk of the revenue realised for the period came from the oil sector.

For instance, the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) remitted N19.4 trillion while the Department for Petroleum Resources (DPR) contributed about N3.5 trillion.

Other revenue generating agencies like the Nigerian Customs Service and the Federal Inland Revenue Services remitted about N1.8 trillion and N9.6 trillion respectively into the federation account.

In 2009 alone, about N4 trillion was shared by the federal government, states and local government councils from the federation account.

In June 1999, the new government signed a special/ supplementary budgeted of N60.5 billion.

From this sum, the subsequent budgets for the decade progressively increased from N745 billion in 2000 to N1 trillion in 2001.

In 2002 and 2003, government budgeted 2.2 trillion and N2.4 trillion respectively. N3.1 trillion and N2.2 trillion was budgeted and spent in 2004 and 2005 respectively.

In 2006 and 2007, N1.8 trillion and N2.3 trillion was budgeted and spent by the government, while 3.2 trillion and N3.4 trillion was spent in 2008 and 2009 respectively.

For all these years, government budgeted more money for the recurrent expenditure than for the capital project.

Government's implementation of budgets was low.

For instance, the average total budget implementation for the 2008 budget was put at 45 percent by the National Assembly.

The federal government put the average budget implementation of the 2009 budget as at third quarter of that year at about 50 percent.

Nigerians say the budgets have not translated in the development of the country.



MINISTER of National Planning Dr. Shamsudeen Usman

Shell shuts flow stations in Nigeria

ROYAL Dutch Shell has shut three oil flow stations in Nigeria's Niger Delta region after a pipeline was sabotaged, a company spokeswoman has said. She said Saturday's leak on the Trans Ramos oil pipeline was confirmed "to have been caused by sabotage". The leak was later stopped. No group has so far claimed responsibility for the attack. It came shortly after Nigeria's militant group Mend said it was ending the truce it declared last October.

Mend (Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta) said it was not "directly responsible" for the attack, reports the Reuters news agency. But an e-mailed statement said: "It was certainly a response to our order to resume hostilities by one of the various freelance groups we endorse." Nigeria is one of the world's major oil producers but output has been cut by years of unrest in the Niger Delta - the source of its oil.

A Mend spokesman said the group did not believe the government would restore control of resources to local people. Mend has demanded that local residents be given a greater share in profits from the oil produced by the region. But much of the violence in the region has been carried out by criminal gangs.

Mend warned oil companies to prepare for an "all-out onslaught" against installations and personnel. Analysts later said it was not immediately clear if this statement came from the whole of Mend or just a faction that did not accept the offer of an amnesty from Nigerian President Umaru Yar'Adua.

Under the amnesty, thousands of fighters handed in their weapons last year. But correspondents say the peace accord has been jeopardised by Mr Yar'Adua's absence for the past two months - he is being treated for a heart problem in Saudi Arabia. BBC.

Trust Index

Inflation	→ 12%
GDP	→ 6.90%
Budget	→ N3.1tr
External Reserves Acct	→ \$42.47bn
Excess Crude Acct	→ \$6.7bn
Poverty Ratio	→ 54.4%
Interest Ratio	→ 6%
Banks	→ 24
Oil Price	→ \$74 a barrel
Power Supply	→ 3,700MW
Oil output per day	→ 1.9mbd

CBN EXCHANGE RATES				BUREAU DE CHANGE RATES	
	Buying (NGN)	Central (NGN)	Selling (NGN)		
CFA	0.2996	0.3096	0.3196	BUYING	
DANISH KRONER	27.9142	28.0088	28.1033	DOLLAR.....	N151
EURO	207.9073	208.6115	209.3156	EURO.....	N208
POUNDS STERLING	237.9648	238.7708	239.5767	POUNDS.....	N249
RIYAL	39.368	39.5014	39.6347	SELLING	
SDR	230.3072	231.0873	231.8673	DOLLAR.....	N152
SWISS FRANC	141.2322	141.7105	142.1888	EURO.....	N210
US DOLLAR	147.63	148.13	148.63	POUNDS.....	N252
WAUA	229.9356	230.7144	231.4931	Source: S&P Bureau de Change, West Zone 4, Abuja.	
YEN	1.6456	1.6512	1.6568		

Stock Market Index	
Date:	Monday, February 1, 2010
Index:	22,594.90
Deal:	6,086
Volume:	403,657,158
Value:	N2,870,116,871.40
Cap.:	N5,441,587,631,842.03

Business/Commerce

Who owns Kaduna trade fair complex?

From Ismail Mudashir, Kaduna

THIRTEEN years after the upgrading of the Kaduna trade fair complex to an international standard for the hosting of the All Africa Trade Fair, controversies have continued to trail the multi billion naira complex with both the federal government and Kaduna Chamber of commerce claiming to own it.

In 1997, when Nigeria got the hosting right of the All African trade and tourism fair tagged AU-AEC fair, the then Head of state late General Sani Abacha mandated the then Military Administrator of Kaduna state Colonel Hameed Ali to look for a suitable land for the building of the fair.

The Kaduna chamber of commerce annually organise a trade fair at the Murtala Ramat Mohammed Square but shortly before the AU-AEC fair it moved to Zaria road. Business Trust gathered that when Colonel Hameed Ali was mandated to source for a site for the fair, he approached the Kaduna chamber of commerce for their new trade fair complex.

Giving the position of the chamber, the Director General of the KADCIMA, Alhaji Usman G. Saulawa said the complex belongs to the chamber and that the certificate of ownership of the land is still with them.

He said in recognition of the role, the chamber was playing in the promotion of trade in the northern part and the country as whole, the New Nigeria Development Company (NNDC) and the Northern states government gave the land to them for the building of a permanent trade fair complex during the era of President Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida.

"It was General Babangida that asked us in the chamber to look for a befitting place for the complex in appreciation of the investment promotion of the chamber and assured us that he was going to assist us in building it for us to consolidate on the successes we were recording in stimulating trade in the country," he said.

During the foundation laying of the permanent site, he said General Babangida who graced the occasion assisted the chamber with 100 million naira but that he gave condition for them to access the fund.

"General Babangida said that for us to access the money, we must agree to use local contractors, local materials and that the money would be given to us in phases. He also said that the money will be channel through Kaduna State government."

In trying to develop the complex, he said the chamber approached exhibitors for permanent stand, stressing that the chamber work hard and collaborated with some state government



KADUNA trade fair complex

in a bid to have a befitting complex.

Furtherance to their quest of building the complex, the KADCIMA Director General said the chamber organised a fund raising during the tenure of Late Alhaji Dabo Lere and that well wishers and cooperate bodies, local and international donated heavily. He said all the monies realised at the fund raising were used for the development of the site.

"When the idea of the AU-AEC fair came up, the Head of State General Sani Abacha saw the need to upgrade the facilities on ground. The chamber was approached to hand over the complex to the Federal Government through the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF). They promised that complex will be returned back to us after the fair and we decided to give it to them," he added.

The proposal submitted by the chamber for the complex to the federal government, according to the DG was for all-year-round activities with a five-star hotel, Cinema, amusement park. He recalled that there was a ceremony for the handing over and that the upgrading was done under three months.

After the hosting of the fair, he said they were surprised that the federal government reneged the earlier agreement of returning the complex to them. He said

the complex was given to a facility manager and that the chamber was informed of the development via a letter.

In the letter, he said they said that the PTF owns 40 percent, federal government 20 percent, Kaduna State government 20 percent and chamber of commerce 20 percent.

"Initially, they said they will give us the management of the complex and that we are going to pay back their investment but suddenly they changed everything. Nothing is too much to promote investment especially as it affects local investors."

He called for the implementation of the agreement reached between the chamber and the federal government on the shearing of ownership of the complex. Adding that "we want the implementation of the agreement we reached in 2007 that gave 45 percent stake of the project to the federal government, 35 to chamber and 20 to Kaduna State government."

Saulawa raised alarm over the continued dilapidation of the structures of the complex, saying if not check the structures on ground would soon become something else.

Giving their own side, the facility manager of the complex, Malam Bashir Tukur said the federal government following the

inability of the chamber to manage the premises well revoked the complex. "After the federal government revoked it, they now through the PTF invested heavily for the OAU-AEC trade fair and after the fair, they gave it to integrated facility which I am representing now here."

He said there was no any agreement that the federal government would return the complex back to the chamber saying they are just stakeholder with small percentage of the complex. He said the project is still ongoing but that since the scrapping of the PTF, the work have been put to a hold.

"We are managing it, repair it and generate revenue for the payment of salaries and other contingencies, they are just crying fowl because they thought they can just get the place since PTF had been scrapped. The ways they are conducting their activities, they cannot manage it and you cannot expect the federal government to dash them the billion naira investment," he said.

The man at the middle of the drama, Colonel Hameed Ali (RTD) in his comment said the complex belong to the federal government, the state and the chamber.

"I was to eject them out of the complex and I was to revoke the certificate of ownership but I did not because I wanted them to grow

because, they did not do anything to show that they were equal to task. But I left them because of compromise," he said.

The ownership of the complex was a tripartite with the federal government having the largest share.

"FG invested heavily, Kaduna State has share because it is located in their domain while KADCIMA was just a junior partner."

"You know KADCIMA owned very small part of the land that made up the present complex; the remaining one belonged to other states of the country. But when the issue of the fair came up, the states were asked to relinquish their stake to the federal government for the fair and that was what happened," he said.

He said he was not aware of any agreement that the fair would be returned to KADCIMA after the fair adding, "If they have any problem let them settle among themselves but I know the ownership pattern of the fair was tripartite before I left and I doubt if it has changed."

When contacted spokesman of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry Mr. Emeka Omeihe said the federal government owns the trade fair complex and others in the country. He said funds are provided in the annual budget for their management.

Business

Dangote launches multivitamins spaghetti

From Mohammed Shosanya, Lagos

DANGOTE Pasta Limited, a subsidiary of Dangote Industries has introduced multivitamin spaghetti into the market.

The introduction of the new product, according to the Managing Director, Palati Saiprakash, stems from the need to

serve Nigerians with durable, qualitative and innovative version of spaghetti which would add value to their lives.

Saiprakash, who spoke yesterday at the launch of the new product in Lagos said the company would continually bring more value-laden products into the tables of Nigerians.

"Today marks the beginning of a new phase in our plan to continue to improve on our product offerings in order to give our esteemed customers and consumers' value for money.

"As the company is approaching its tenth-year anniversary of continuous production of qual-

ity products sometime within the year, we want to assure our stakeholders of valuable innovations on all our product lines as witnessed today on our standard spaghetti.

"As a market leader in our area of business, we are pioneering the introduction of multivitamins into our prod-

ucts through a special process [ACTILEASE] that ensures complete absorption of these additions into the body system".

Also speaking at the launch, the company's Head, Supply Chain, Sam Oti, said the new product bears no additional cost to consumers and still maintains previous quantity.

Conservative Values...



Dynamic Nature

Our values, though conservative, do not limit us.

They enable us to support you as you travel through life with ease.

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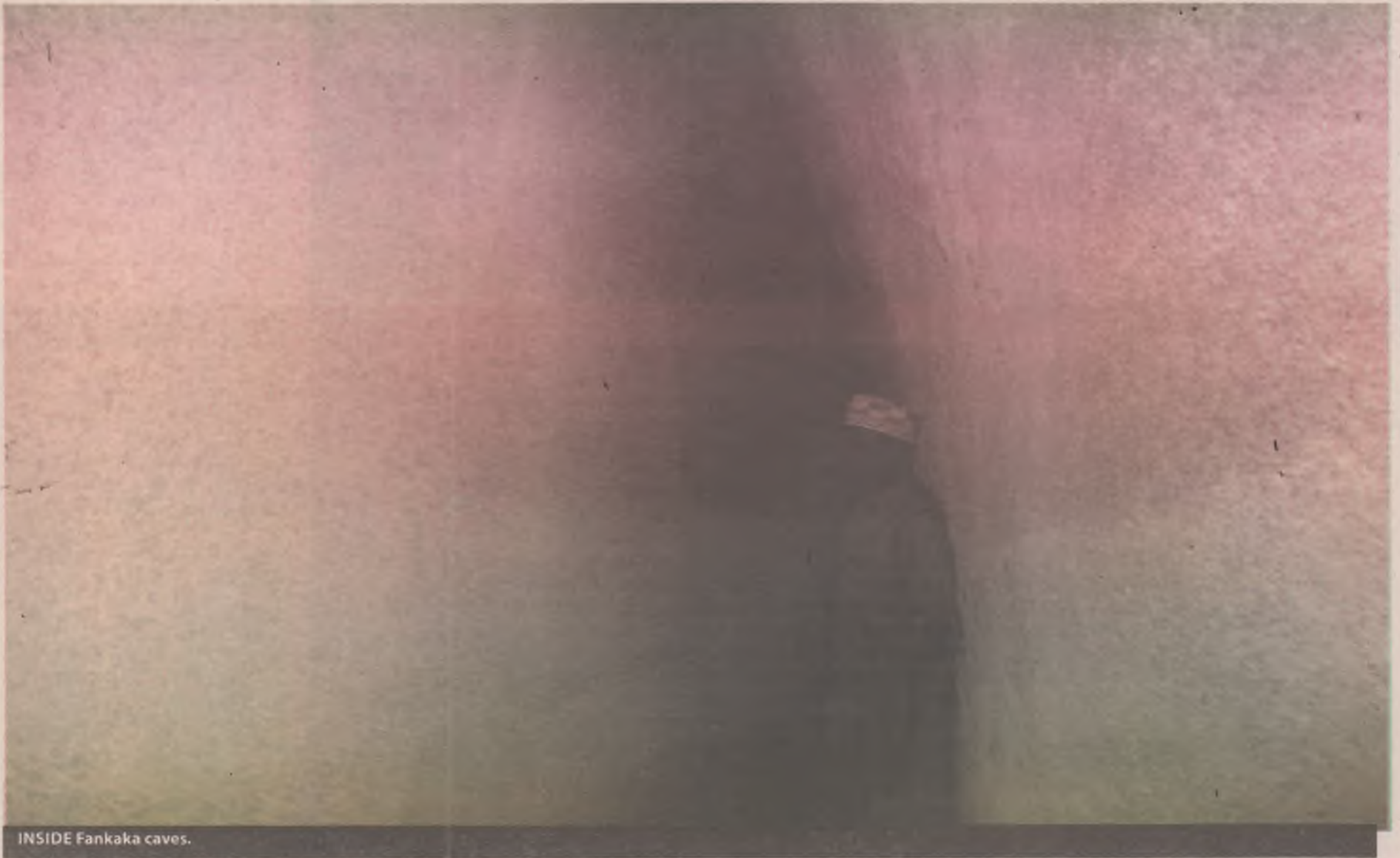


LEADWAY
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Star Feature

Inside Fankaka rock caves

The historic Fankaka caves are located in Kawu village of the FCT. Our reporter made a trip there. His report:



INSIDE Fankaka caves.

By Misbahu Bashir

THE historic Dutsen Fankaka, otherwise known as Fankaka rock, is located about half a kilometre to the south eastern part of Kawu village in Bwari Abuja. It is about 130 metres above sea level, and covers a vast area of land. It contains caves which are large enough for human habitation, as well as hollows that could hold enough water during the rainy season. The people living around the rock cannot explain how such large caves were formed in the rock, but believe that there were traces in them indicating earliest human habitation. The rock caves were not man made, but could be said to have been formed by agents of weathering due to expansion and contraction of the aggregate of mineral particles over a long period of time. The people also used the caves as a sanctuary during the inter tribal wars of the 18th, and some parts of the 19th centuries. To the extreme west of the rock there was a site for masquerade ceremonies

in the past, where animals were slaughtered by followers of traditional religion. The religious site is the highest part of the rock, with a giant tree extending its roots within.

Malam Abdullahi said the religious site was very prominent in the pre-Islamic period and even after. People used to sacrifice animals there to appease their gods, ask for blessings and protection, and sought for bountiful farming seasons. Few people however refused to accept Islam, and continued to practice the ancient religious practices at the sacred site of the rock.

Abdullahi said there were evidences of preliterate cultures in caves which indicated that ancient man had lived in them. These evidences included traces of walls, stone tools and a fireplace, which indicated that before Homo sapiens took over the area, his ancestors once lived there. While some caves in Fankaka are small rock side openings, others consist of large chambers and inter-connecting

tunnels and mazes. Openings to the surface are both large gaping holes and small crevices. There is enough air circulating within the hollows of the rock, and at one of largest hollows, there were rock boulders carefully arranged as seats. The rock caves are fireproof, noise proof, warm in winter, and cool in summer. Some of the connecting tunnels are

“ Abdullahi said in the past, if dwellers might have built hollers years ago, they turned them time to time to perform some



OTHER part of the Fankaka Caves.

dark due to insufficient sunlight, and adult humans can only pass through them by crawling. There are few openings to the caves which are so narrow that oversized people cannot fit in, and those who could pass through them must stretch their hands and walk by the side.

Abdullahi said in the past, it was believed that the after the cave dwellers might have built homes and left the caves, hundred of years ago, they turned them to sacred places where they go from time to time to perform some religious rites. That was during the prehistoric times before the coming of Islam. The caves also served as hiding places for the people from the slave raiders who abducted able bodied people, and sold them as slaves to the Europeans. During the period of slave trade, many sheltered in the caves, especially when news of the arrival of slave raiders filtered into the villages.

Gambo lives around the rock but can neither read nor write, and has no knowledge of his age. He roughly estimated his age at slightly above 70. According to him, during the wars in the past the rock caves served as sanctuary for the injured, women, children, and those who for one reason or the other could not take part. The caves have entrances from the top and sides, and each entrance is hidden in such a way that people who are not familiar with it, wouldn't suspect the presence of the massive caves. Gambo said history has it that people who sought refuge there have never been spotted by the enemies, even when some wars were fought at the foot of the rock.

was believed that the after the cave dwellers might have built homes and left the caves, hundred of years ago, they turned them to sacred places where they go from time to time to perform some religious rites.

He said during the wars, not everyone could take shelter in the caves unless those identified as weak and vulnerable. He said people do not want the idea of hiding in the cave but fighting the enemy, as the only way of attaining the title of a warrior. It was believed that people, who sheltered in the caves during the wars, got absolute protection and had never been identified by the enemies. This is one reason why villagers around Fankaka hold it so dearly.

But after the period of inter-tribal wars, the Fankaka rock caves were deserted and eventually abandoned. The hollows were taken over by cave dwelling bats, Gambo said. According to him, the bats were generally seen in the caves throughout the year, but most commonly during the harmattan season. He said the bats were gentle, intelligent creatures that rarely interact with humans. However, the bats were killed for meat by the Gbagyi in large numbers, to the extent that the remaining bats were forced to migrate, leaving the caves empty. Gambo said the residents of Kawu do not eat bat meat and prevent vandals from going to the caves to kill the bats. Yet the Gbagyi hunters came at unusual periods to kill them. Now, the caves have no bats, apart from few insects sheltering there.

There are also caves to the southern side of the rock with a slender entrance not wide enough for human shelter. There is a wide platform just in front of the entrance with big boulders at the embankment. Gambo said livestock which include goats and sheep belonging to the villagers live in that part of Fankaka. They are not confined but allowed to wander during the day. While at night they all go there until the next morning, no matter how large their numbers may be. Ironically, the villagers can identify their animals and can catch them if they wish, Gambo said the practice in which livestock are allowed to live in Fankaka, which began with the founders of the village, has not been abandoned, and that no one has ever complained of having his animal stolen. He said the animals don't enter caves where humans lived. The people too always avoid going close to the animal caves unless when they want to catch one, with each maintaining their portion of the caves. Gambo said the earliest cave

dwellers began domesticating wild animals in the narrow caves, and since then they lived side by side until when they built homes and abandon cave life.

Some residents of Kawu said their ancestors chose the location of the town near Fankaka, so that the rocks and other surroundings, could serve as protection from invaders. Where there were gaps between the rocks, walls were erected for security. The remains of the town walls indicated that an ancient civilization once flourished there.

Some residents of Kawu said their ancestors chose the location of the town near Fankaka, so that the rocks and other surroundings, could serve as protection from invaders. Where there were gaps between the rocks, walls were erected for security. The remains of the town walls indicated that an ancient civilization once flourished there.

Business

'Kogi int'l market to boost business activities'

From Isiaka Wakili, Lokoja

THE acting Managing Director of the Kogi Savings and Loans Limited Mr. Ahmed Usman has assured that business activities will boom at the state international market when it becomes operational.

Usman gave this assurance yesterday in a media chat with our

correspondent in Lokoja, the state capital, on the level of preparation for the commencement of normal business activities at the market.

He noted that the on-going dredging of the River Niger would attract business merchants to the state, and by extension to the market which would make it a beehive of activities.

Usman stressed that the management of the market would ensure standards as obtained in other major markets in the country, adding that before the end of February 2010, the market will be commissioned.

According to him, the market, which is made up of over 200,000 shops, has been provided with

such facilities as banking halls, restaurants, warehouses and different categories of open shops.

The Managing Director, therefore, urged members of the business community to take advantage of the on-going sales of application forms at the office of the Kogi Savings and Loans Ltd which he said would be completed at the end of the month.



GOVERNOR Ibrahim Idris of Kogi State

Kaduna cooperatives get N200m tries

From Ismail Mudashir, Kaduna

OVER 200 million naira have so far been given to cooperative societies in Kaduna State as part of efforts to stimulate small and medium scale investment, the project manager of the state Agricultural Development Programme, Dr. Abdulkadir Kassim has said.

The project is being executed by the Kaduna State government in

partnership with the United States Africa Development Foundation (USADF) with the sole aim of enhancing small and medium scale agro-allied companies in the state.

Speaking during the signing of agreement on Saturday, Dr. Kassim said a total of 20 cooperatives societies have so far benefited from the programme.

He reiterated the readiness of the state government to continue to part-

ner with organization that would assist in reducing poverty among the people of the state.

In his address, the president of the USADF Lloyd Pierson expressed satisfaction with the usage of the fund invested by his foundation.

"We continue to help Nigerians to get employed through agro-allied ventures and I am happy to tell you that we are satisfied with what we have seen so far," he said.

... To establish 110 small, medium scale industries

From Isiaka Wakili, Lokoja

THE Kogi State government is making efforts to create 110 small and medium scale industries in the state.

The Commissioner for Commerce and Industry Dr. Abubakar AbdulKareem, yesterday told our correspondent this in Lokoja, the state capital.

He said the government was planning to do this having realised that it was not gigantic industries alone that could propel the industrialisation of the state.

"It is the small and medium scale industries that aggregate into a robust industrial framework of any community and that is why we are now thinking of having 110 small and medium scale industries across the state. Each of the 21 local government areas of the state would have at least four," the commissioner said.

He noted that the government, in conjunction with the Bank of Industries (BOI), was willing to attract beneficiaries of these small and medium scale industries from coop-

erative organisations that would be given the mandate to manage them. AbdulKareem stressed that all this was aimed not only at increasing the number of industries, but also at increasing the number of entrepreneurs in the state.

"We must consciously empower the people of the state to be able to take risk and manage industries. As it is, a number of people are not aware of the opportunities that are littered all around the art of managing small and medium scale industries.



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Business

Billions of naira idle in NERFUND

By Ahmad Salkida

THE National Economic Reconstruction Fund was established by the Federal Government in 1989 as an apex institution to provide financing to small and medium scale production enterprises.

According to the NERFUND website, the main objectives of the fund is to enhance the quantum of goods and services available for local consumption and export, provide needed employment, expand the country's production base and add value to the Nigerian economy.

But in more than a decade, NERFUND went into a deep slumber. The fund's apparently worn-out members of staff attributed their plight to failed banks that trapped NERFUND resources and the protracted reform of Development Finance Institutions in the country, which culminated in the merger of Nigeria Industrial Development Bank (NIDB) and Nigerian Bank for Commerce and Industry (NBCI) to form the Bank of Industry (BOI).

The managing director/CEO of NERFUND Baba Maina Gimba, in an interview with Daily Trust said since he came on board NERFUND has never granted a single facility.

"The institution has been comatose for long," he said.

He commended the federal government's magnanimity in providing some 2 billion naira under the 2009 supplementary budget, calling on "eligible members of the investing public who have bankable proposals for the establishment of Micro, Small and Medium Scale Enterprises to come forward for consideration and possible funding," he said.

NERFUND also stated that they have already concluded partnership agreement with the SMEDAN, the NDE and equally seeks to reach out to local government areas to access more indigent Nigerians to promote the culture of entrepreneurship, which in turn, may alleviate the wide spread poverty and unemployment in the country.

The financial institution stressed

that following the conclusion of that merger, the Federal Government has reversed the stalemate and starting from last month (January), they have commenced the receipt of applications and disbursement of funds to support the establishment of Micro, Small and Medium scale Manufacturing Enterprises (MSMEs) and rapidly setup MSMEs in all the nook and crannies of the country.

"Hold on, let us not be quick in giving credit to a scheme just because it did well in the past, the environment we are now is so different" said Umar Tela, a lecturer with the department of Finance, Federal Polytechnic Nasarawa and a PHD student with an American University, writing on development finance, added that "the level of inflation, corruption, insecurity and power supply in Nigeria was far better at the inception of NERFUND."

However, Tela argued that in today's Nigeria, virtually nothing works "to give a facility to a company without first resolving the problems of power supply is like deliberately lending money to someone who cannot pay, so why give the loan in the first place" Tela stressed and queried government's attempt in trying to make the unemployed to become stuck in debts and then punish them, for failing. Instead of them to be provided with the enabling environment to make them self-reliant," he said.

Recently, some Nigerians have expressed concern about NERFUND's capacity to move on with the same make-up, on account of the recent injection of funds. They argue that the institution had put its feet up for over a decade. Some of the concerns also alleged the ineffective monitoring mechanism and scheming procedures for beneficiaries to acquire loans in the past that resulted to several bad debts till date.

When confronted, Gimba was swift to argue to the contrary, "NERFUND learns through the mechanism of commercial and Merchant banks" that recommend the people, therefore, the responsibility of monitoring lies more in the banks than with NER-

FUND, Gimba's compelling position reminded our reporter with the words of President Umar Musa Yar'adua that the fund "is not another cake-sharing exercise." Instead, "it is designed to aid in the cake-baking process, and as such, fund disbursements by the NERFUND will be based on competitive efficiency."

However, some critics cited the apex institution's inability to sell or manage one of its properties, the NERFUND house formally (Doyin house) at Wuse zone 4 as a vulnerable spot for the management to effectively and prudently manage the recent resources available to it. Investigations by our reporter revealed that the institution acquired two properties in Lagos and Abuja. The Abuja property is said to be weight down with Court cases between tenants and the new caretaker, a neighbour to the estate confirmed.

Every attempt to speak to the tenants were futile however this reporter learnt that the new estate manager that took over the management of the property on behalf of NERFUND could not agree with some of the tenants on the mode and manner of payment, the tenants also decried the "bigheaded approach" on the property and also, the poor maintenance of the estate despite paying service charges etc, Daily Trust gathered reliably.

A source within the Ministry of Finance in Abuja hinted that he does not believe the failure to sell off the houses is linked to any double dealing by the management. He however said that NERFUND is supposed to venture into estate management.

"It should either sell it to its members of staff or the general public," said the source.

However Gimba said, "Doyin house which is now NERFUND house was not acquired through a loan either granted to Doyin or the bank in question from which we took over from," said Gimba, adding that they got money from a bank (repayment) and instead of keeping the money in a current account and earn nothing, they decided to keep it in a



FINANCE Minister Mansur Muhtar

savings account in a bank to attract interest because, "NERFUND does not receive any allocation, it is a self-financing agency. Unfortunately, the bank got into trouble and couldn't pay our money, so we went to court and got a court order."

"The bank in question approached our lawyers with a proposal that it had a property and the owner of the property happens to be the chairman of the bank. Therefore, we had two options, either to take the house or leave it to be liquidated by NDIC." The institution opted for the former "and I appointed an estate agent to manage it because we are not into estate business," Gimba frantically explained and challenged anyone to come forward with any evidence of

imprudence on the part of the management. "I can show you the account where the estate agent remits money," accruing from the property.

Gimba however said he wonders why the NERFUND property which offers the cheapest rent within the FCT, considering its location will be bothered by its tenants. "Very soon we shall sell off the property" he concluded.

For some observers, the only way to translate the recent funds allotted to NERFUND to boost entrepreneurship in Nigeria is to first of all resolve the following problems: Corruption, lack of identity management program for the country and most importantly, the non-availability of electricity.

FMBN retirees give 14-day ultimatum for pension increase

By Maureen Onochie

THE retirees of the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria have issued a 14-day ultimatum to the Bank to affect increase in their pensions in accordance with the existing pension law.

This warning was handed down by the Executives and Zonal Representatives of the Nigeria Union of Pensioners (NUP) to the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria (FMBN) at the end of its meeting in Abuja. The Union also called on the Federal Government to intervene in the lingering 'dehumanizing' treatment of the pensioners by the FMBN Management, saying the members have already ran out of patience and are battle-ready for the next line of action.

This was contained in a communiqué at the weekend in Abuja, jointly signed by the National President of the Union, Chief Ladipo Ani and eight others including the Vice-President of the Union Alhaji Dahiru Abubakar, Comrade Yemisi Aluko-Olokun, Secretary, Comrade V. A. Ladipo, Treasurer and South West Coordinator, Comrade Lola Ladigbolu, Financial Secretary, Alhaji I.A. Yusuf, Coordinator, Comrade Maxwell Mbah, Coordinator South East, Comrade A.A. Joshua, Coordinator South-South and Comrade J.O. Sekoni, Coordinator Lagos.

The Union described it as inhuman for the fact that some of its members are paid N300 as monthly pension in the present day economic reality in Nigeria. This is in spite of various representations made to both the Federal Government and the FMBN management without positive response.

NITEL salaries: Liquidator makes u-turn

By Yunus Abdulhamid

TWO months after agreeing to pay five months salaries out of over 18 months owed staff of the Nigerian Telecommunications Limited (NITEL), the Liquidator Otunba Olusola Adekanola yesterday said he could no longer go ahead with the arrangements.

This could mean that the over 3,000 workers of NITEL and M-TEL are in for more financial difficulties after spending the last two years without pay due to failed privatisation attempts by the federal government of the former lone national carrier.

A statement issued by Otunba Olusola said unless "NITEL and Transcorp Plc managements return the title documents of the assets belonging to NITEL/MTEL Staff Pension Fund (In Liquidation), in

their possession," he has no choice but to discontinue the five months' salary arrears for the staff having paid one month in December, last year.

He explained: "My reluctance to make full advances for the purposes of paying NITEL staff salaries was based on the fact that taking money out of the liquidation account is not just a simple matter of writing cheques. The monies left in the liquidation account are from the sale of assets whose ownership is being contested by Transcorp, which has refused to hand over the title documents, even though these assets clearly belong to the NITEL/MTEL Staff Pension Fund (in liquidation)."

The terms of engagement legally and professionally did not give me the freedom to distribute proceeds of assets whose sale had not been concluded, as doing so might jeopardise

the interest of the new owners of the assets and may lead to litigations, he reckoned.

Otunba said he had already drawn the attention of the NCP and BPE to it that the funds in the liquidation account were "encumbered" to the members of the public who had paid for properties but were yet to receive the title documents due to the refusal of Transcorp and NITEL managements "who have confiscated the C of O and other titles of these properties" to release them. He revealed that the liquidation currently has series of requests for refunds, with compensatory interest claims from these bidders.

BPE spokesman, Mr Chigho Anichebe told *Daily Trust* yesterday that he (liquidator) would be "held accountable to government for the afterthought" reaction.

Business

How we're creating employment — NDE

In this interview, our reporter who is currently in Turkey with a delegation of National Directorate of Employment officials asks the leader of the delegation, NDE's Director of Small and Medium Scale Enterprises, **Alhaji Isma'ila Umar**, on the necessity of the trip and what Nigerians should expect from NDE in terms of performance. The team, which is on study tour left Nigeria on January 23 and is expected back home on the 5th of February.

From Francis Okeke, Turkey

You have been in Turkey for almost a week with a delegation of NDE state coordinators on a study tour. How has it been so far?

To begin with, I can say it has been most exciting because there have been experiences and sharp contrasts in some cases compared to what we know back home and even some similarities here and there. It is completely a new experience and I would say it has been wonderful.

A lot of Nigerians would say every year public officials travel out of the country for one reason or the other and they don't see any changes in their lives or that of the nation. Some even call such trips a jamboree.

I would like to believe that, to me, even the number of people that is on this trip makes a stark difference; it is not a jamboree because from the choice of participants, you know that these are the people who are the key implementers of the NDE programmes in all the 37 states. Here, I mean the 36 states and Abuja. Right from the beginning the intention is very clear. It is not just a favour for one; two or three people to go on a jamboree to come back but everybody directly involved in the implementation are the people here. They felt that one, two or three people to see and come and explain to them will not be enough; that is why all of them have been sent here. The second point is even before we left Abuja, you could see we identified the things we would be coming here to look for. We divided ourselves into three groups, some of us would take a look at things we can directly copy and implement, those that we can pick, modify and adjust before implementation and then seek areas of collaboration. It is clear we have a mission even before we left Nigeria.

Looking at your activities so far

how would NDE's potential targets, especially women, children and the disabled benefit from the study tour?

You are a member of this entourage, you also know that NDE back home in Nigeria is responsible for empowering the unemployed and there is no discrimination; it is for everybody, old and young, man and woman and everything we have been doing in Nigeria involves this group of people. You can see there are outfits which are entirely for women; for example the last visit which we just had this afternoon where a particular training point was producing essentially female manpower for the textile industry. You can see if we copy this, it is going to empower women directly.

We went to a place where women were invited to come like we do in Nigeria to learn skills but the system here recognises that these are women who have children; so they created alongside the women programmes, a formal school for the children. So, a mother comes to learn a skill and she is confident and happy, she drops her child to learn. In this case, women and children are beneficiaries. We have been to other places where it is fairly the men who are in these kinds of businesses. Every unemployed Nigerian has hope.

It is evident that in all the lectures you have had and in all the centres you have visited, you keep hearing of government sponsoring all their activities. Do you think Nigeria's government has the will-power to empower the beneficiaries of NDE?

Let me be frank with you, most of the things we have seen, believe me are things we either have had back home or practised to some point. This government involvement you are talking about, for instance, either we hear it is the government that



FEMALE mechanics in action.

pays the trainers or gives stipends to people, in my 23 years in the NDE, all these things have been done by Nigeria. To date, all the trainers in the NDE programme and I would dare say that even in some other programmes are being paid by government. In some cases, there are some of the trainees who are still getting stipends. The difference is that here in Turkey, ever training point is owned by government unlike in Nigeria where it is the private sector that we are partnering with; they are the trainers and the training takes place in their own place. Here, government build training centres and then they are used and you find out that the trainers here are more or less formal teachers unlike in Nigeria where it is the practitioners of these trades that are chosen. The two approaches are both right; this one may be a professional or doesn't practice but he teaches, the other one a professional who learns on the job and becomes a teacher. In setting up the NDE, people looked at the two alternatives and settled that most of the people you want to teach skills are people who you will say did not fare very well in formal education; either primary or secondary schools dropouts, people who are not gifted in that line. Why do you want to waste their time in theoretical or things like that? Put them where they could do things with their hands if the ability to read and understand is a problem, you find that for most of them, the ability to do it with their hands is not a problem. That is why we deliberately chose this style. I think this group will submit a well defined and explicit report which the government will be free to look at and decide on the next step.

Looking at the number of officials on this study tour, 36 state coordinators and that of the FCT as well as some officials from the national headquarters, how have they conducted themselves so far?

In my capacity as the leader of the group, it was my idea way back

in Nigeria to divide these people into groups. When we came here, with the experience of hindsight, I said you are now in three groups but I recognised like in any other thing that there would be people who would be committed, those in between and those with a nonchalant attitude. I told them I was not going to accept nonchalance; everybody must take note at every place we go and when we return every day, each group would hold a meeting and agree on what they saw and understood, interpret it and take a decision as a group. We agreed that every night, one person would serve as a secretary and would produce a report. This means that each person is involved; I did not give them the chance to be either inefficient or nonchalant. So far, everybody is involved in the work that brought us here.

For most people on this trip, this is their first visit to Turkey, how do you assess the reception by the people here and even the food and weather?

I think it is the first time for all of us in Turkey. Some of us have been to other countries before but for some, this is their first time outside Nigeria. As Nigerians and Africans, the weather is too cold for us; you can see our funny way of dressing trying to save ourselves from it. It is an experience. For the food, as they say east or west, north or south, home is the best. When we started it was grumbling but with time we decided to select those that are close to what we are used to. When you look at especially the breakfast table, there are things we never touch because we don't know what they are. As for the hospitality of the people, I think it is unparalleled; very friendly people. Everybody who sees you wants to talk to you; wants to shake you and know where you are coming from. We are having a very good time; the people are friendly, very hospitable.

After this trip, what should Nigerians expect from the NDE in terms of performance?

At my level here, I have been asked to come and find out. I assure you that the best we can do as a group is to present a very explicit report. Why I am very confident is that it is not at our prompting that we are here, it is the management of the NDE that decided to send us here; ab initio there is an intention for improvement on the part of the management. Ours is to produce the report and then give it to the management and I am sure that if management which in the first instance sent us here finds our report good, it won't hesitate in implementing it. From this scenario, it is most apparent that the operations of the NDE is going to change for the better; there would be improvement and this will show clear creation of job opportunities for the benefit of the unemployed in Nigeria.

Do you have any final words for Nigerians reading this interview?

First of all, I would like to express my appreciation to the management of the NDE for having the foresight to send such a group of people because in my own working experience, this is the first time I have ever seen such a large group sent overseas at one time. So many chief executives of organisations would go on tour and come back, you don't hear anything. But you can see our own came on tour, saw something and he said no matter how much he would try to explain it, it won't sink down so he said he must find a way to make sure people come and see it for themselves. He made it possible for this trip and that is very commendable. Another thing is that the commitment shown by this group here is another thing that is commendable. Back in Nigeria, I would want people to give the NDE a chance. We are the pioneer directorate created by government to empower the unemployed and generate employment opportunities. So far, we have kept the lead and we have become the pace setters. I think this time around, we are going to redouble our efforts in this direction.

“ We went to a place where women were invited to come like we do in Nigeria to learn skills but the system here recognises that these are women who have children; so they created alongside the women programmes, a formal school for the children. So, a mother comes to learn a skill and she is confident and happy, she drops her child to learn. In this case, women and children are beneficiaries. We have been to other places where it is fairly the men who are in these kinds of businesses. Every unemployed Nigerian has hope.

Business/Finance

Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE)

Monday, February 2, 2009

COMPANY Name	No of Deals	Quot. (N)	Quantity Traded	Value of Shares (N)
2ND-TIER SECURITIES				
CAPITAL OIL PLC	2	0.50	204,048	102,024.00
SECTOR Totals	2		204,048	102,024.00
AGRICULTURE				
FTN COCOA PROCES. PLC	15	0.75	1,419,070	1,055,731.10
LIVESTOCK FEEDS PLC	20	0.73	1,830,833	1,275,118.91
OKOMU OIL PALM COY PLC	1	22.75	200	4,324.00
PRESCO PLC	21	4.16	585,000	2,475,935.00
SECTOR Totals	57		3,835,103	4,811,109.01
AIR SERVICES				
AIRL/SERV. AND LOG. PLC	4	3.05	15,213	44,546.08
NIG. AV. HANDLING COY PLC	128	9.00	932,014	8,478,846.51
SECTOR Totals	132		947,227	8,523,392.59
AUTOMOBILE & TYRE				
DN TYRE & RUBBER PLC	3	0.50	33,662	16,831.00
R. T. BRISCOE (NIG.) PLC	24	6.53	265,735	1,657,457.17
SECTOR Totals	27		299,397	1,674,288.17
BANKING				
ACCESS BANK PLC	213	8.62	13,386,801	113,478,462.39
AFRIBANK NIG. PLC	81	2.96	5,650,084	16,494,507.99
DIAMOND BANK PLC	80	8.79	8,046,912	69,368,501.36
ECOBANK NIGERIA PLC	52	7.83	2,450,366	19,186,365.78
F/CITY MON. BANK PLC	88	8.80	7,860,938	69,012,305.96
FIDELITY BANK PLC	158	2.53	20,892,923	52,287,616.02
FIRST BANK OF NIG. PLC	798	15.00	19,076,724	282,770,891.26
FINBANK PLC	187	0.76	85,447,607	65,127,256.95
GTBANK PLC	382	17.81	28,007,203	498,532,257.82
STANBIC IBTC BANK PLC	31	8.40	688,321	5,826,752.70
INTERCONT. BANK PLC.	106	2.38	1,805,940	4,282,537.61
OCEANIC BANK INT. PLC	125	2.40	3,619,156	8,695,765.84
BANK PHB PLC	60	2.26	3,075,911	6,901,501.47
SKYE BANK PLC.	161	7.00	7,735,122	53,817,638.47
SPRING BANK PLC	13	1.17	342,485	400,707.45
STERLING BANK PLC	88	1.70	4,650,088	7,942,017.58
U/BANK FOR AFRICA PLC.	310	13.00	17,686,368	230,236,301.30
UNION BANK OF NIG. PLC	194	6.30	7,106,829	45,213,446.64
UNITYBANK PLC	26	1.05	1,444,505	1,514,850.66
WEMA BANK PLC	58	1.17	3,707,734	4,367,516.92
ZENITH BANK PLC	218	15.60	17,453,579	268,993,281.95
SECTOR Totals	3,429		260,135,596	1,824,450,484.12
BUILDING MATERIALS				
ASHAKA CEMENT PLC	114	15.50	3,389,260	52,469,416.50
BENUCE CEMENT COY PLC	34	50.00	440,889	22,022,986.34
CEMENT CO. OF N/NIG. PLC	70	15.07	2,012,429	30,424,995.52
LAFARGE WAPCO PLC	67	34.90	1,423,841	49,340,728.68
SECTOR Totals	285		7,266,419	154,258,127.04
CHEMICAL & PAINTS				
BERGER PAINTS NIG. PLC	5	3.36	4,435	15,611.20
DN MEYER PLC	1	4.88	50,000	244,000.00
P/LAND PAINTS & PROD. NIG. PLC	1	5.67	103	555.17
SECTOR Totals	7		54,538	260,166.37
COMMERCIAL/SERVICES				
AFROMEDIA PLC	5	0.65	295,880	182,922.00
COURTVILLE INV. PLC	1	0.50	20,000	10,000.00
RED STAR EXPRESS PLC	9	2.50	362,500	909,174.00
SECTOR Totals	15		678,380	1,102,096.00
COMPUTER & OFFICE EQ.				
NCR (NIGERIA) PLC.	13	8.13	12,136	98,665.68
OMATEK VENTURES PLC	14	0.70	1,498,400	1,024,713.00
SECTOR Totals	27		1,510,536	1,123,378.68
CONGLOMERATES				
A. G. LEVENTIS (NIG.) PLC	8	2.81	93,245	275,072.75
PZ CUSSONS NIGERIA PLC	31	26.00	152,324	3,948,304.00
TRANS. CORP. OF NIG. PLC	24	0.50	3,127,080	1,563,840.00
UAC OF NIGERIA PLC	44	41.50	1,408,605	56,500,065.16
UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC	67	23.56	1,047,462	24,587,421.11
SECTOR Totals	174		5,828,716	86,874,703.02
CONSTRUCTION				
COSTAIN (WA) PLC	41	5.12	552,299	2,810,034.40
JUL/BERGER NIG. PLC	35	28.50	521,026	14,163,667.28
MULTIVERSE RES. PLC	9	0.50	41,602,558	20,801,279.00
SECTOR Totals	85		42,675,883	37,774,980.68
ENGINEERING TECH.				
CUTIX PLC	7	3.28	147,240	472,164.80
SECTOR Totals	7		147,240	472,164.80
FOOD/BEV. & TOBACCO				
7-UP BOTTLING CO. PLC	17	30.60	30,255	933,526.53
BIG TREAT PLC	22	0.78	1,452,950	1,144,677.00
CADBURY NIGERIA PLC	58	15.58	1,063,266	16,620,559.50
DANGOTE FLOUR MILLS PLC	130	13.00	1,051,801	13,675,313.01
DANGOTE SUGAR REF. PLC	78	15.75	3,657,097	55,699,509.80
FLOUR MILLS NIGERIA PLC	69	40.78	822,812	32,459,237.83
H/WELL FLOUR MILL PLC	2	7.77	5,000	39,000.00
NATIONAL SALT COY NIG. PLC	57	6.66	2,755,231	18,487,201.86
NIG. BOTTLING COY PLC	23	28.00	87,131	2,445,758.17
NESTLE NIGERIA PLC	51	260.00	422,113	109,564,265.40
TANTALIZERS PLC	22	0.95	729,235	710,509.01
UNION DICON SALT PLC	2	5.71	58,000	314,940.00
UTC NIGERIA PLC	3	0.90	10,000	9,000.00

What is Convertible Security

A security of an issuer (for example - bonds, debentures, or preferred shares) that may be converted into other securities of that issuer, in accordance with the terms of the conversion feature. The conversion usually occurs at the option of the holder of the securities, but it may occur at the option of the issuer.

Google

SECTOR Totals	534			
HEALTHCARE				
EVANS MEDICAL PLC.	10	1.10	102,536	117,122.40
FIDSON HEALTHCARE PLC	21	2.09	930,950	1,944,665.50
GLAXOSM. CONS. NIG. PLC	11	26.00	163,850	4,252,150.00
MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC.	8	5.23	83,736	438,209.28
NEIMETH INT. PHARM. PLC	5	1.70	7,749	13,353.38
UN/DIAGN. & CLIN. SERV. PLC	19	0.65	1,809,120	1,189,922.80
SECTOR Totals	74		3,097,991	7,955,423.36
HOTEL & TOURISM				
CAPITAL HOTEL PLC		2.07	969,000	2,005,830.00
IKEJA HOTEL PLC	9	0.99	114,200	116,048.00
SECTOR Totals	14		1,083,200	2,121,878.00
IND/DOMESTIC PROD.				
ALUM. EXTR. INDUSTRIES PLC	1	13.04	3,000	37,170.00
ALUMACO PLC	12	20.40	80,100	1,634,040.00
FIRST ALUM. NIGERIA PC	4	0.50	51,080	25,540.00
VITAFOAM NIGERIA PLC	22	5.30	507,984	2,701,177.28
VONO PRODUCTS PLC	2	0.66	157,707	102,931.62
SECTOR Totals	41		799,871	4,500,858.90
INF. & COMMUN. TECH.				
CHAMS PLC	39	0.74	1,826,229	1,354,790.53
E-TRANZACT INTERN. PLC	1	5.23	500,000	2,615,000.00
IHS NIGERIA PLC	1	4.24	3,500	14,105.00
MASS TEL. INNOV. NIG. PLC	1	0.50	34,000	17,000.00
STARCOMMS PLC	24	1.95	1,350,461	2,701,738.39
SECTOR Totals	66		3,714,190	6,702,633.92
INSURANCE				
AFRICAN ALLIANCE INS. PLC	1	0.70	20,000	13,400.00
AIICO INSURANCE PLC.	62	0.98	4,764,985	4,545,919.50
CONT. REINSURANCE PLC	5	0.91	389,000	353,990.00
C/STONE INSUR. CO. PLC.	13	0.55	1,697,115	963,356.40
CUST. AND ALL. INSUR. PLC	27	2.80	1,521,540	4,333,498.00
EQUITY ASSURANCE PLC	6	0.50	432,614	216,307.00
GREAT NIGERIA INS. COY PLC	1	0.50	100,000	50,000.00
GOLDLINK INSURANCE PLC	24	0.52	3,685,000	1,943,590.00
GUARANTY TRUST ASS. PLC	27	2.20	7,249,985	16,078,341.40
GUINEA INSURANCE PLC.	3	0.50	105,000	52,500.00
CONS. HALLMARK INS. PLC	1	0.50	6,500	3,250.00
INT. ENERGY INS. COY PLC	51	0.61	9,195,496	5,564,076.22
LASACO ASSURANCE PLC.	42	0.55	4,260,035	2,323,767.25
L/UNION & ROCK INS. PLC.	12	0.53	298,915	158,424.95
LINKAGE ASSURANCE PLC	4	0.50	510,000	255,000.00
MUTUAL BEN. ASS. PLC	8	0.64	81,018	51,851.52
N.E.M. INS. CO. (NIG.) PLC.	34	0.53	4,170,377	2,271,599.58
NIGER INSURANCE CO. PLC.	7	0.88	110,328	97,288.64
SOVEREIGN TRUST INS. PLC	2	0.50	19,000	9,500.00
STACO INSURANCE PLC	2	0.99	70,000	66,500.00
STAND. ALLIANCE INS. PLC	12	0.64	646,725	416,784.00
UNIC INSURANCE PLC.	12	0.77	664,560	511,711.20
UNIV. INSURANCE COY PLC	5	0.50	129,000	64,500.00
INTERC. WAPIC INSUR. PLC	9	1.00	210,748	211,048.00
SECTOR Totals	370		40,337,981	40,556,203.66
LEASING				
C&I LEASING PLC	19	2.70	756,600	2,028,830.00
SECTOR Totals	19		756,600	2,028,830.00
MARITIME				
JAP/OIL & MARIT. SERV. PLC	111	1.29	3,859,254	4,983,490.96
SECTOR Totals	111		3,859,254	4,983,490.96
MEDIA				
DAAR COMMUNIC. PLC	14	0.60	221,500	132,900.00
SECTOR Totals	14		221,500	132,900.00
OTHER FINANCIAL INST.				
CRUSADER NIGERIA PLC.	14	1.07	837,415	896,407.49
D/CAP. MANAG. & TRUST PLC	4	2.02	64,700	130,694.00
ROYAL EXCHANGE PLC	2	0.60	42,000	26,010.00
SECTOR Totals	20		944,115	1,053,111.49
PETROLEUM(MARKETING)				
AFRICAN PETROLEUM PLC.	35	36.40	109,366	3,855,076.64
BECO PETROL. PROD. PLC	4	2.08	12,000	23,760.00
CHEVRON OIL NIGERIA PLC	5	69.79	1,787	130,933.49
CONOIL PLC	21	33.57	30,637	988,839.66
ETERNA OIL & GAS PLC.	29	6.00	580,628	3,446,951.07
MOBIL OIL NIGERIA PLC.	9	99.95	17,719	1,736,725.50
OANDO PLC	11	93.99	3,130,865	294,270,001.35
TOTAL NIGERIA PLC	16	150.00	13,082	1,962,480.08
SECTOR Totals	130		3,896,084	306,414,767.79
PRINTING & PUBLISHING				
UNIVERSITY PRESS PLC	14	5.69	598,200	3,248,384.00
SECTOR Totals	14		598,200	3,248,384.00
REAL ESTATE				
UACN PROP. DEV. CO. PLC	15	20.00	83,155	1,597,564.00
SECTOR Totals	15		83,155	1,597,564.00
ROAD TRANSPORTATION				
ASSOCIATED BUS COY PLC	2	1.10	30,000	31,500.00
SECTOR Totals	2		30,000	31,500.00
THE FOREIGN LISTINGS				
ECOBANK TRANS. INCORP.	35	14.84	2,067,573	30,526,400.05
SECTOR Totals	35		2,067,573	30,526,400.05
OVERALL Totals	6,086		403,657,158	2,870,116,871.40

GAINERS

NESTLE	8.00
FLOURMILL	1.93
UACN	1.49
WAPCO	0.90

LOSERS

ALUMACO	1.07
CADBURY	0.81
GLAXOSMITH	0.74
ECOBANK	0.41



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

OJO MADUEKWE DID NOT SPEND N2.7 BN ON FOREIGN TRAVEL

The Ministry's attention has been drawn to recent publications on the proceedings in the National Assembly and subsequent news report that the Foreign Ministry is to be probed for spending N2.5 billion on what was described as "frivolous travels" by Minister and officials of the Ministry. To avoid misperception which the news item might have caused in the public, it has become necessary to make the following clarification.

The Minister did not spend N2.7 Billion on foreign trips. He decided not to respond to this misinformation because he believes that public officials should not always react to every misconception of their good intentions and service to the country. Yet he has been long enough in public service to appreciate the ever present danger of misrepresentation and misinformation. He would have continued in this position except that this misinformation is now being retailed by very credible persons.

The amount in question is essentially a budgetary allocation which covers Local and International travels of the Ministry. As a Ministry responsible for Nigeria's relations with the rest of the world as well as countless International Organizations, it is clear that the three Ministers and officials of the Ministry must undertake numerous official assignments abroad. These trips include, amongst others International Meetings, Conferences as well as other Bilateral engagements that Nigeria is involved with. In addition to the travels and tours, the budgetary allocation in question also covers payment of passages of the various Ambassadors who were appointed and officers of the Ministry who were posted to and from our Missions abroad in 2009.

The Public may wish to note that more than half of the allocation (N1.4 Billion) was spent to bring back Ambassadors and Foreign Service Officers who were returning from posting and for transportation and other logistics for new Ambassadors and Foreign Service Officers posted to Foreign Missions. Ambassadors and High Commissioners are representatives of Mr. President. They are appointed by Mr. President and they are ultimately answerable to him. They protect the interests of

our citizens outside Nigeria. It is clearly in the National interest to accord them at least the barest comfort and make available the logistics for them and their family to relocate to the countries of posting and back to Nigeria after their service. That is what every Nation does.

The remaining N700 million of the appropriated N2.5 billion includes N241 million spent to monitor and evaluate the performance of the missions abroad, and about N446 million Naira spent for travels related to United Nations, ECOWAS and other Regional meetings.

It is important to note that even the limited amount spent on travels by the three Ministers in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also includes costs of tickets and official allowances for other Public Officials (and private Nigerians in some cases) who travel on foreign policy related events on the bill of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Obviously, it is not Ojo Maduekwe who spent N1.8 billion out of N2.5 billion for Foreign travels.

Indeed hardly can the various meetings be described as frivolous, given the role Nigeria plays or is expected to play in the International arena. Nigeria's election into the Security Council on the wings of the 64th Session of the United Nations General Assembly in October 2009 as well as election of some Nigerians into the Presidency of International Organizations is indication of the impact of the Diplomatic initiatives undertaken by the Ministry in exercise of its functions.

It may be instructive to inform the public that Diplomacy is certainly not a cheap business. There are numerous countries that for reasons of the activist Foreign Policy which they pursue devote reasonable part of their Annual Budget to the pursuit of their Foreign Policy. So much devolve on Nigeria in the International arena and the Ministry has been making this point for some time now. This was the point being made by the Minister during his appearance in the National Assembly. We hope the Media will also help to educate the public accordingly.

Signed:

AHMED ADAMU

Chief Press Secretary

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abuja.

February 2, 2010

DIGEST

Why a woman has the last (and longest) laugh



Women enjoy a joke more... once they get it

IF you tell a woman a joke and get a blank look, don't immediately despair.

She's just taking her time to understand it.

But if the punchline does eventually make her laugh it will be worth the wait.

Scientists have found that while women are slower than men at getting jokes, they enjoy them more when the penny does drop.

Research shows that women use their brain more than men to process quips and have less expectation that they will be funny.

When a joke does hit the right note, however, they derive more pleasure from it.

Scientists asked ten men and ten women to look at dozens of black and white cartoons and rate them on a 'funniness scale'.

During the process they underwent sophisticated scans that mapped which parts of their brain were lighting up and timed how long it took them to respond to a joke.

Although the scans were largely similar, the women tended to use certain parts of their brain more than the men. These included the pre-frontal cortex, which helps us decode language and screen out irrelevancies.

Researcher Professor Allan Reiss said: 'Our findings fit the stereotype of how men and women react to humour. We found greater activity in the pre-frontal cortex in women, indicating women are processing stimuli that involve language areas of the brain.'

'The interpretation of that finding is that women tend to respond more to narrative and wordplay than slapstick.'

Analysis of a 'feelgood' brain region called the nucleus accumbens also revealed that men and women have different attitudes to humour. Professor Reiss, of Stanford University in California, said: 'Women appeared to have less expectation of a reward, which in this case was the punchline of the cartoon. So when they got the joke's punchline, they were more pleased about it.'

The funnier the cartoon, the more the women's nucleus accumbens lit up. This was not the case for men, who seemed to expect the cartoons to be funny from the start.

The women took slightly longer than the men to react to jokes that were funny - but were quicker to spot duds.

Professor Reiss is now carrying out similar tests on children to determine whether the gender differences can be explained by biology or by upbringing.

His work is part of a growing body of research into what makes us laugh.

Canadian research has shown that men and women use humour for different ends.

Men are more likely to use 'hostile' humour to criticise each other and establish dominance, while women employ humour to maintain relationships and put each other at ease.

'His and hers' jealousy makes women more forgiving than men

IT is a fierce and sometimes deadly emotion. But the feelings that jealousy arouse are very different in men and women, it seems.

Researchers studying adulterous relationships have uncovered 'his 'n' hers' versions of the emotions felt when a partner cheats.

Women are more likely than men to give their cheating partners a second chance

The differences can be traced back to evolutionary instincts and mean that a woman is more likely to forgive a cheating man out of a need for security than the other way round.

Psychologists found that when a man is caught cheating, it is not the sex that upsets the woman but that he might form an emotional attachment with the other woman.

Their anger is at the prospect of losing the relationship that ensures security and safety for themselves and their children.

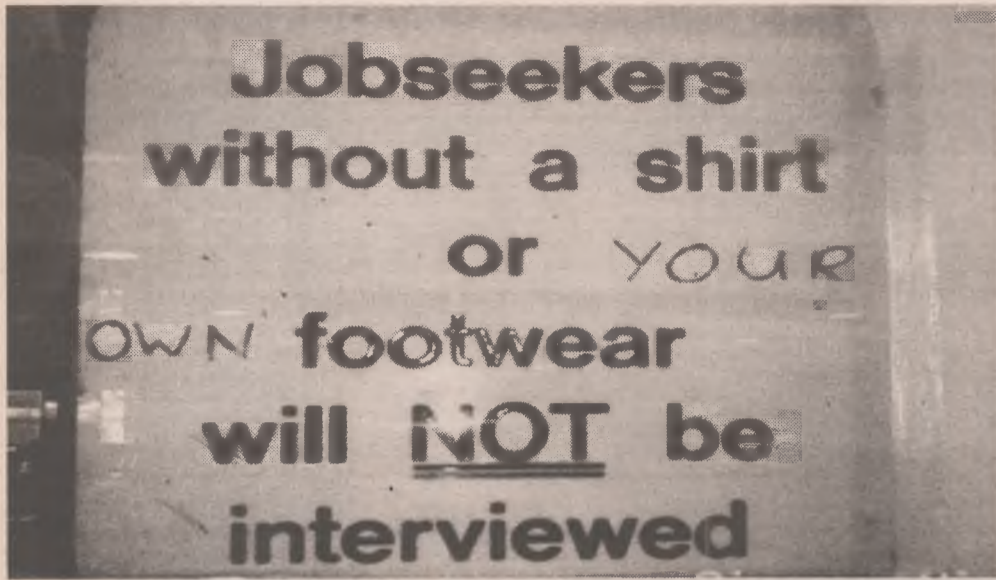
But when a woman is caught cheating, it is the sex that upsets the man, not the fact that she might fall in love with her new partner. They do not want children of other men diluting the gene pool. The study, in journal *Psychological Science*, said: 'Men learned over eons to be hyper-vigilant about sex because they can never be absolutely certain they are the father of a child, while women are more concerned about having a partner who is committed to raising a family.'

But it added a growing number of men are becoming more reliant on secure relationships.



WOMEN are more likely than men to give their cheating partners a second chance

Sign Language



Borrow the items if you need the job
Photo location: Canberra, Australia, by Michalle Grayson
Culled from www.signspotting.com

SUDOKU

The Sudoku puzzle consists of a 9x9 square grid made up of smaller 3x3 square grids (regions). The numbers already present within the puzzle are "given" - these are there to start you off. The aim is to complete the puzzle by filling the empty cells. Every digit from 1-9 needs to fit in each row, column and region of 9 squares. Each row, column and region must contain just one instance of each number, 1-9.

77

			5	1			4		
		6		2					
2		5	8				3	7	6
		7	9						
		8		3		9			
						4	1		
5	6	3				8	7		1
						5		6	
		5				6	1		

EASY CROSSWORDS

ACROSS

1. Daughters' counter-parts
5. Tree output
8. Whit
12. Commandment word
13. Ace
14. Wine valley
15. Me, myself, ___ (2 wds.)
16. Lost island
18. Index of names
20. Adjust a watch
21. Minister
24. Rice ___ (side dish)
27. Demands
32. "Miss ___ Regrets"

DOWN

1. Chief actor
2. Cry of dismay (2 wds.)
3. Signals consent
4. Piece of luggage
5. Show mercy
6. Gallery offering
7. Gdansk's locale (abbr.)
8. British princess
9. Creates edging
10. Sheriff Taylor's boy
11. Marina sight
17. Circle parts

65

ACROSS

33. Ga.'s neighbor
34. Castle's ditch
35. Perfume
37. Desert stopover
38. Yielding
40. Davis of "Hero"
44. Governs
48. Brightness
51. Finger feature
52. "Terrible" czar
53. Pierre's refusal
54. Jazz singer Fitzgerald
55. Car dealer's model
56. Female sheep

DOWN

19. Keebler "baker"
22. Provoked anger
23. ___ tizzy (2 wds.)
24. Edgar Allan ___
25. That thing's
26. Fleur-de-___
28. Played make-believe
29. Titanic msg.
30. Skater
31. Rds.
33. Crack aviator
36. March Madness sponsor (abbr.)
37. Singleton boy
39. "Goodnight ___"
40. Boxed chart
41. Roof overhang
42. Cheese from Holland
43. El ___ (weather phenomenon)
45. Actor Gordon
46. Pharaoh's river
47. Rebuff
49. Compass point (abbr.)
50. Milk provider

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13				14		
15				16				17		
18				19				20		
21				22	23			24		
25				26				27		
28				29				30		
31				32				33		
34				35				36		
37				38				39		
40	41	42	43	44				45	46	47
48				49	50			51		
52				53				54		
55				56				57		

Solution to Easy Crosswords

64

W	O	E	S		C	O	R	E		C	E	L			
I	N	T	O		O	N	Y	X		A	M	I			
S	E	A	L		L	A	D	E		R	U	E			
C	A	L	I	C	O		E	C	H	O					
					D	O	N	O	R		A	L	O	T	
G	A	B			H	E	R			I	L	I	K	E	
I	R	A			A	L	L	A	N		N	A	T		
F	L	Y	N	N		O	L	D		A	Y	E			
T	O	B	E		A	N	D	E	S						
					E	G	G	S		E	X	C	E	P	T
V	C	R			I	T	O	N		O	C	H	O		
P	E	R			L	E	F	T		T	R	I	O		
S	O	Y			A	R	T	E		S	U	L	K		

Solution to Sudoku 76

3	2	4	5	8	1	6	7	9
6	1	5	9	7	3	8	2	4
8	9	7	6	2	4	3	5	1
4	3	2	7	5	9	1	6	8
1	5	8	2	3	6	9	4	7
9	7	6	4	1	8	5	3	2
5	8	3	1	4	2	7	9	6
2	6	1	3	9	7	4	8	5
7	4	9	8	6	5	2	1	3

**NIGERIAN ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION****DISCLAIMER****Engr. Alex Amakom**

The attention of the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) has been drawn to an interview granted by Engr. Alex Amakom on Channels Television Programme – “Dateline Abuja” of 16th January, 2010.

The Public is hereby informed that Engr. Amakom whose picture appears above ceased to be the Assistant Administrator and a staff of the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission since July 17th, 2009. All views expressed are his personal opinion and not the position of the Commission.

We advise the public to please take note.

MANAGEMENT



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
ABUJA

Cordially invites
Stakeholders, Civil Society Organizations, Professional Bodies and
the General Public to the

PUBLIC HEARING

ON

A BILL FOR AN ACT TO AMEND THE FEDERAL INLAND REVENUE SERVICE (ESTABLISHMENT) ACT, No. 13, 2007 TO EMPOWER THE ACCOUNTANT-GENERAL OF THE FEDERATION, TO ENFORCE REMITTANCE OF REVENUES TO THE FEDERATION ACCOUNT, PROVIDE FOR PENALTIES AND FOR MATTERS CONNECTED THEREWITH.

AND

A BILL FOR AN ACT TO AMEND TAXES AND LEVIES (APPROVED LIST FOR COLLECTION) ACT, 2004.

Date: Tuesday, 9th February, 2010

Venue: Conference Room 231, House of Representatives, New Wing, A National Assembly Complex, Abuja.

Time: 10.00am

All Stakeholders, Interest Groups and Individuals wishing to submit Memoranda and to make Presentations should forward ten (10) copies of their submissions on or before 8th February, 2010 to:

THE CLERK,
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE,
ROOM 17 (1st FLOOR), WHITE HOUSE,
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY COMPLEX, ABUJA

Hon. John Owan Enoh
Chairman



FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION POST
BASIC PROJECT (STEP-B PROJECT)

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COLLEGE, IKOM, CROSS-RIVER STATE

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

IDA CREDIT No. 4304-UNI

PROCUREMENT OF SCIENCE EQUIPMENT, CHEMICALS,
TEXTBOOKS AND ELECTRONIC SMART BOARDS.

(IFB No. STEP-B/FGC/IKOM/NCB/G/01/2010)

1. This Invitation for Bids follows the General Procurement Notice for this Project that appeared in Development Business, issue no. 591 of 2nd July, 2007.
2. The Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) toward the cost of Science and Technology Education Post Basic Project, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payments under the Contract for the Supply of Science Equipment, Chemicals Textbooks and Electronic Smart Boards at Federal Government College, Ikom, Cross River State. (IFB No. STEP-B/FGC/IKOM/NCB/G/01/2010)
3. The STEP-B Project Federal Government College Ikom, Cross River State now invites sealed bids from eligible and qualified bidders for the Procurement of the following:

Item No.	Description of item.	Lot No.	Quantity	Bid Security	Delivery Period (Max)	Delivery Location
1.	Procurement of Science Equipment and Chemical.	1	Various.	2.5% Bid Price	90 days	FGC, Ikom, Cross River State, Nigeria
2	Textbooks	2	170.	2.5% Bid Price	90 days	ditto
3	Electronic Smart Boards.	3	3	2.5% Bid Price	90 days	ditto

4. Bidding will be conducted through the National Competitive Bidding (NCB), a procedure specified in the World Bank's Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits, and is open to all bidders from Eligible Source Countries as defined in the Guidelines.
 5. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from the Project Office, Step-B Federal Government College, Ikom Cross River State and inspect the bidding documents at the address given below, between the hours of 8.00 am to 4.00pm Mondays to Fridays, excluding public holidays.
 6. Qualifications requirements include:
 - Evidence of previous supply (sale) of similar items proposed for the last 5 years.
 - Audited Financial Statements for the last 3 years to demonstrate the financial capability of the Bidder in terms of Profitability and adequate working capital.
- A margin of preference for eligible national contractors shall not be applied; Additional details are provided in the Bidding Documents.
7. A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written Application to the address below and upon payment of a non refundable fee of Ten Thousand Naira (N10,000.00) only in Bank Draft in favour of Step-B Project, Federal Government College Ikom, Cross River State. The Bidding Documents will be collected by the representative of the Bidder or by courier services on request.
 8. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before Monday 8th March, 2010 at 2.00 pm. Electronic bidding will not be permitted. Late bids will not be accepted. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives, who choose to attend in person at the address below on Monday 8th March, 2010 at 2.00 pm. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of 2.5% of bid price in a freely convertible currency or bank draft from a reputable Nigeria commercial bank.

9. The address referred to above is:

The Project Manager,
Science and Technology Education Post Basic Project (STEP-B),
Federal Government College,
Ikom,
Cross River State,
Nigeria

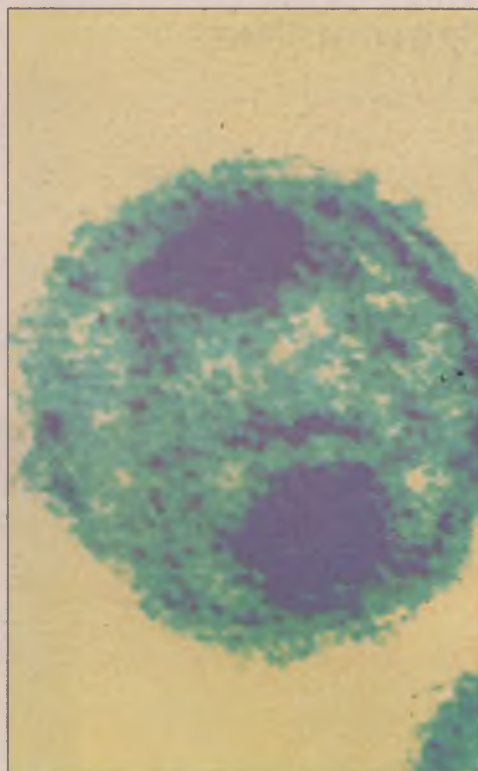
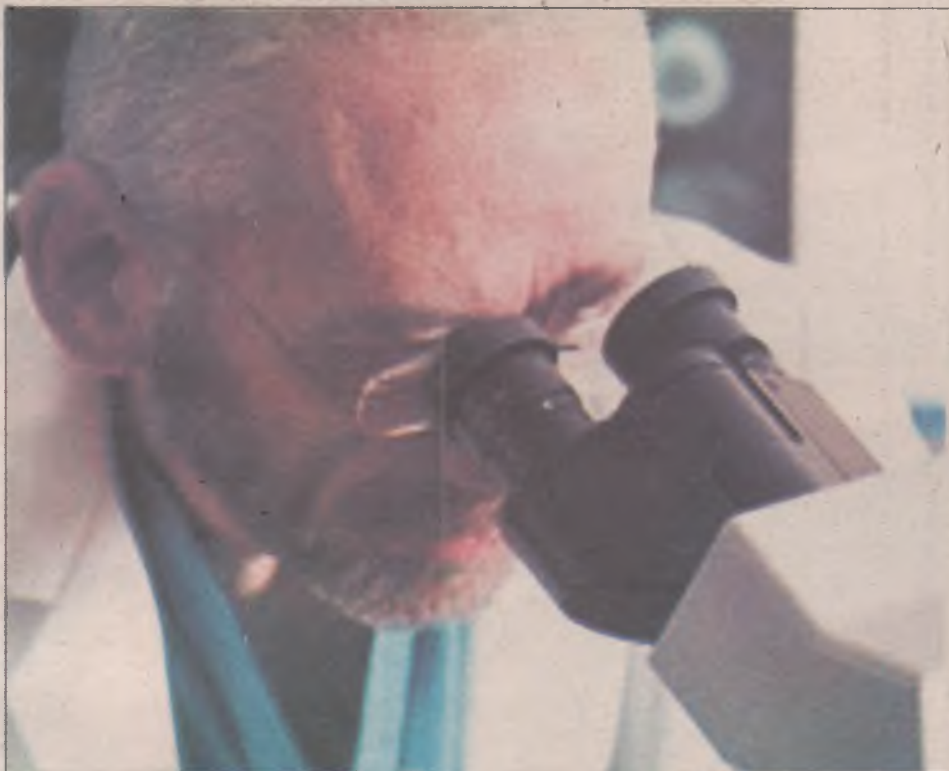
0703-112-7420, 0806-572-4525 and 0806-613-3603.

E-mail: stepbfgcikom@yahoo.com

Signed
Project Manager.

News Extra

Scientists crack 20-year AIDS puzzle that could revolutionise latest HIV medicines



SCIENTISTS performed more than 40,000 trials before they came up with a high-quality crystal of enzyme integrase. It is found in viruses like HIV (right)

Scientists say they have solved a crucial puzzle about the AIDS virus after 20 years of research and that their findings could lead to better treatments for HIV.

British and U.S. researchers said they have grown a crystal that enabled them to see the structure of an enzyme called integrase. The enzyme is found in retroviruses like HIV and is a target for some of the newest HIV medicines.

It took more than 40,000 trials for them to come up with one crystal of sufficiently high quality to allow them to see the three-dimensional structure.

'Despite initially painstakingly slow progress and very many failed attempts, we did not give up and our effort was finally rewarded,' said co-researcher Peter Cherepanov of Imperial College London.

Scientists from Imperial and Harvard university said that having the integrase structure means researchers can begin fully to understand how integrase inhibitor drugs work, how they might be improved, and how to stop HIV developing resistance to them.

When the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infects someone, it uses the integrase enzyme to paste a copy of its genetic information into their DNA.

Some new drugs for HIV - like Isentress from Merck & Co - work by blocking integrase, but scientists are not clear exactly how they work or how to improve them.

The only way to find out was

to obtain high-quality crystals - a project that had defeated scientists for many years.

'We went back to square one and started by looking for a better model of HIV integrase which could be more amenable for crystallization,' Cherepanov said.

United Nations data for 2008 show that 33.4 million people had HIV and 2 million people died of AIDS

The researchers grew a crystal using a version of integrase borrowed from another retrovirus very similar to its HIV counterpart.

They tested the Merck and experimental Gilead drugs on the crystals, and were able to see for the first time how the medicines bind to, and block, integrase.

An estimated 63,500 adults aged over 15 were living with HIV

in the UK by the end of 2005. Of these, one third did not know they were infected.

Nature journal Sunday.

How HIV and AIDS developed



US President Ronald Reagan, pictured here in 1984, did not mention AIDS publicly until 1986. He apologised for neglecting the epidemic in 1990

Worldwide almost 60 million people have been infected with HIV and 25 million have died of HIV-related causes since the beginning of the AIDS epidemic. There is no cure and no vaccine, although drug cocktails can keep patients healthy.

United Nations data for 2008 show that 33.4 million people had HIV and 2 million people died of AIDS. The worst-affected region is sub-Saharan Africa, accounting for 67 percent of all people living with HIV.

The study was published in the

1884-1924: HIV transfers to humans from chimps in Africa

1966: HIV reaches Haiti

Mid 1970s: AIDS enters America

1981: First official cases are diagnosed in the U.S. among five gay men

1982: The name 'AIDS' is created. Illness is reported in several European countries

Terry Higgins dies at St Thomas' Hospital in the UK. The Terry Higgins Trust is set up

1983: French scientists find the virus HIV. AIDS is reported

among non-drug using women and children

1985: An HIV test is licensed for screening blood supplies

1986: President Reagan mentions AIDS in public for the first time

The World Health Organisation (WHO) launches its global AIDS strategy

1987: AZT is the first drug approved for treating AIDS

1988: Health ministers meet to discuss AIDS and establish World Aid's Day

1990: Around eight million people are living with AIDS.

1991: Freddie Mercury, lead singer of Queen, dies of an AIDS-related illness

1993: AZT is shown to be of no benefit to those in the early stages of HIV infection

1994: AZT is shown to reduce the risk of mother to child transmission of HIV

1995-6: Combination antiretroviral treatment is shown to be highly effective against HIV

1997: Around 22 million people living with AIDS.

Aids deaths begin to decline in developed countries, due to the new drugs. In developing countries only a minority can access drugs.

2001: UK government launches the first national strategy for sexual health and HIV.

2002: The Global Fund is established to boost the response to AIDS, TB and malaria.

Globally HIV is leading cause of death of those aged 15-59

AIDS drugs become more affordable for developing countries.

2003: The first AIDS vaccine candidate to undergo a major trial is found to be ineffective.

T-20 (Fuzeon), the first in a new class of anti-HIV drugs called "fusion inhibitors" is licensed for use in advanced HIV in Europe and the USA.

2004: THT opens an HIV testing clinic in London that offers test results in one hour

Truvada, a once-daily combination tablet containing two anti-HIV drugs, is licensed in the EU.

The FDA in the U.S approves a saliva-based AIDS test. Results within 20 minutes are over 99% accurate. Introduced in UK in 2009.

2006: Circumcision is shown to reduce HIV infection among heterosexual men.

2007: Another major HIV vaccine trial is halted after preliminary results show no benefit.

First one pill a day HIV medication Atripla is approved by EU.

2008: Around 33 million people are living with AIDS.

News Extra

The greatest scientific advances from the Muslim world

From the elephant clock to the camera obscura, here are six amazing inventions from between the 9th and 15th centuries

BY Jim Al-Khalili

There is no such thing as Islamic science – for science is the most universal of human activities. But the means to facilitating scientific advances have always been dictated by culture, political will and economic wealth. What is only now becoming clear (to many in the West) is that during the dark ages of medieval Europe, incredible scientific advances were made in the Muslim world.

Geniuses in Baghdad, Cairo, Damascus and Cordoba took on the scholarly works of ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia, Greece, India and China, developing what we would call “modern” science. New disciplines emerged – algebra, trigonometry and chemistry as well as major advances in medicine, astronomy, engineering and agriculture. Arabic texts replaced Greek as the fonts of wisdom, helping to shape the scientific revolution of the Renaissance.

What the medieval scientists of the Muslim world articulated so brilliantly is that science is universal, the common language of the human race. The 1001 Inventions exhibition at London’s Science Museum tells some of the stories of this forgotten age. Here are my top six exhibits...

1 The elephant clock

This centrepiece of the exhibition is a three-metre high replica of an early 13th-century water clock and one of the engineering marvels of the medieval world. It was built by al-Jazari, and gives physical form to the concept of multiculturalism. It features an Indian elephant, Chinese dragons, a Greek water mechanism, an Egyptian phoenix, and wooden robots in traditional Arabian attire. The timing mechanism is

based on a water-filled bucket hidden inside the elephant.

2 The camera obscura

The greatest scientist of the medieval world was a 10th century Arab by the name of Ibn al-Haytham. Among his many contributions to optics was the first correct explanation of how vision works. He used the Chinese invention of the camera obscura (or pinhole camera) to show how light travels in straight lines from the object to form an inverted image on the retina.

3 Al-Idrisi’s world map

This three-metre reproduction of the famous 12th-century map by the Andalusian cartographer, Al-Idrisi (1100-1166), was produced in Sicily and is regarded as the most elaborate and complete description of the world made in medieval times. It was used extensively by travellers for several centuries and contained detailed descriptions of the Christian north as well as the Islamic world, Africa and the Far East.

4 The Banu Musa brothers’ “ingenious devices”

These three brothers were celebrated mathematicians and engineers in ninth-century Baghdad. Their Book of Ingenious Devices, published in 850, was a large illustrated work on mechanical devices that included automata, puzzles and magic tricks as well as what we would today refer to as “executive toys”.

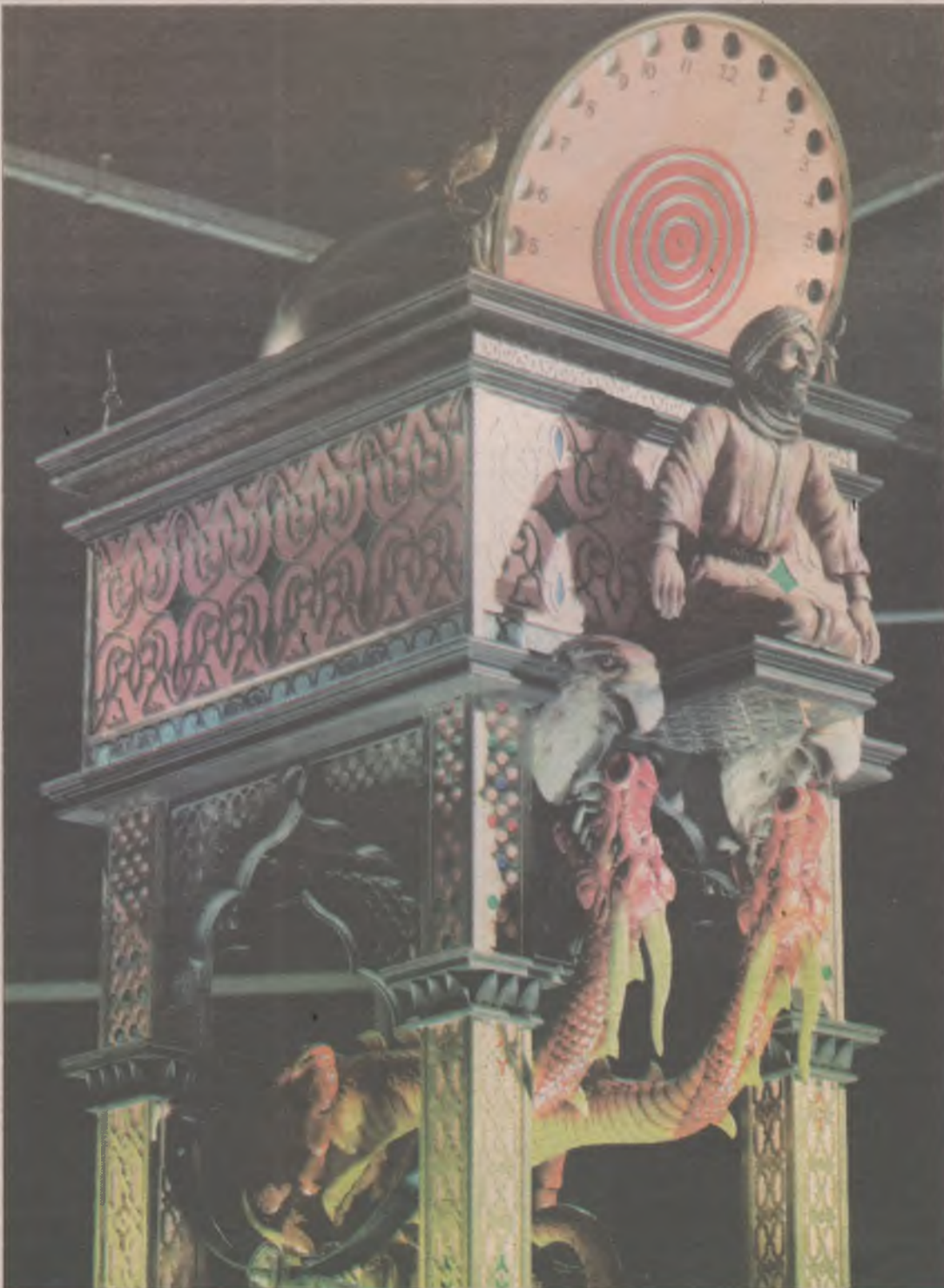
5 Al-Zahrawi’s surgical instruments

This array of weird and wonderful devices shows the sort of instruments being used by the 10th-century surgeon al-Zahrawi, who practised in Cordoba. His work was hugely influential in Europe and many of his instruments are still in use today. Among his best-known inventions were the syringe, the forceps, the surgical hook and needle, the bone saw and the lithotomy scalpel.

6 Ibn Firnas’ flying contrap-



IBN Firnas’ flying contraption.



A replica of a 13th Century elephant clock displayed at a science museum in central London.

tion

Abbas Ibn Firnas was a legendary ninth-century inventor and the Da Vinci of the Islamic world. He is honoured on Arabic postage stamps and has a crater on the moon named after him. He made

his famous attempt at controlled flight when, aged 65, he built a rudimentary hang glider and launched himself from the side of a mountain. Some accounts claim he remained airborne for several minutes before landing badly and

hurting his back.

Jim Al-Khalili is an author and broadcaster. He is professor of physics and of the public engagement in science at the University of Surrey.

Culled from the guardian.co.uk

News Extra

Jacob Zuma is father for 20th time, but not by one of his three wives



PRESIDENT Jacob Zuma of South Africa

Zuma, the polygamous president of South Africa, has been accused of undermining the fight against AIDS by reportedly fathering his 20th child – with a woman who is not one of his three wives.

Zuma, 67, allegedly had unprotected sex with the daughter of a friend who is one of the principal organisers of this year's football World Cup, according to South Africa's *Sunday Times*.

The newspaper reported that 39-year-old divorcee Sonono Khoza, the daughter of a football official, Irvin Khoza, gave birth to Zuma's daughter in October. The president, who recently married for the fifth time, already has 19 children.

The claim, which was not denied by Zuma's office, prompted fierce criticism from the opposition Democratic Alliance. Its leader, Helen Zille, said: "President Jacob Zuma's behaviour directly contradicts the government's campaign against multiple sexual partners, and the inherent Aids risk in having unprotected sex."

Zille said a current government advertising campaign promotes safe sex, the use of condoms and attitudes that diminish the chance of having unprotected sex with multiple partners. "It sits in stark contrast to the behaviour, and it would appear attitude, of the president."

She added: "There are some people who may argue that Jacob Zuma's sex life is a matter of private morality or 'culture', but this is not so. His personal behaviour has profound public consequences, and he acknowledged as much by apologising to the nation for having unprotected sex, following his

He dismissed the idea that polygamy was inherently unfair to women

rape trial [in 2006], and by undertaking to change his ways." Zuma was acquitted of rape.

The president's 20th child has been registered with the name of Thandekile Matina Zuma, the



MRS JACOB ZUMA

THOBEKA Madiba-Zuma - married, January 2010 (above)
NOMPUMELELO Ntuli - married, January 2008
SIZAKELE Khumalo - married, 1973
HOME Affairs Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma - divorced, 1998
KATE Mantsho Zuma - died, 2000

Sunday Times said.

According to a family friend quoted by the paper, a delegation visited the Khoza family in Soweto, near Johannesburg,

last December on Zuma's behalf to discuss the customary Zulu payment (inhlawulo) due when a child is born out of wedlock. Zuma later discussed the issue

with Sonono and her mother, Matina, in Soweto in January.

Irvin Khoza, who is chairman of the World Cup local organising committee and owner of the Orlando Pirates club, is said to have told family friends that he felt betrayed by Zuma's relationship with Sonono, as he considered him a friend.

During a panel discussion at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, last week, Zuma was asked if he loved all

His personal behaviour has profound public consequences

his wives equally. "Absolutely," he said. He said polygamy was part of his culture and did not negate any of his beliefs, including his belief in "the equality of women".

He dismissed the idea that polygamy was inherently unfair to women, saying: "It depends what culture you come from. People interpret cultures in different ways. Some think that their culture is superior to others. That's a problem we have in the world."

"That's my culture. It does not take anything from me, from my political beliefs and everything, including the belief in the equality of women."

Culled from theguardian.co.uk



PRESIDENT Zuma dancing during his marriage to Thobeka Madiba-Zuma January 2010.

HEALTH REPORT

Trovan test compensation: False claimants make DNA tests inevitable

By Onimisi Alao

TRUSTEES asked to advance financial compensation to 200 Kano residents who suffered disability or death in a failed 1996 Trovan clinical study by Pfizer have before them a tough task: namely, how to sieve the genuine 200 from a list of 600 claimants.

Following an out-of-court settlement between the pharmaceutical giant Pfizer and the Kano State Government in July last year, Pfizer agreed to pay N26 million to each family of the victims who can prove affliction by the test.

The Federal and Kano State governments had gone to court accusing Pfizer of experimenting its product, Trovafloxacin Mesylate (Trovan) on about 200 out of over 150,000 children afflicted during a severe meningitis outbreak. The 200 treated allegedly developed deafness, muteness, paralysis, brain damage, loss of sight, slurred speech or death.

All through the years that the controversial case lasted in the courts, it was clear there would be compensation. When it was finally

resolved, the settlement money attracted certain individuals who got the idea that they could perhaps crash in and help themselves to the money, hence the bloated 600 applications for money meant for 200.

The multiplicity of false claimants suggests the possibility that some people who have no honest reason to demand compensation may get it and deprive some genuine claimants what should go to them. This disturbs both Pfizer which is giving the compensation money and government which fought for it.

In moves to forestall the suspected foul play, Pfizer has assembled documents of the Trovan test victims that it could get. Pfizer's counsel Anthony Idigbe said the company had files on the medical records and photos which will help in verifying the identities of people who participated in the tests. A statement by Pfizer Media Representative, Emeka Ozumba, confirmed that the company included the files and records of the 200 patients in the documents accompanying the compensation package it handed over to the trustees of

the Meningitis Trust Fund (MTF) on January 19, 2010. The MTF is the body charged with responsibility of discharging the compensation money.

In another statement further exploring the compensation logjam, Emeka underlines the necessity of DNA tests for surer results. He says the handover of records of the 200 patients in the Trovan clinical study by Pfizer is significant in many ways, among them being that it buttresses Pfizer's insistence that it has basic information on all the study participants.

"Secondly," Emeka adds, "revelations at the (compensation handing-over) event re-enforces the value of DNA testing to determine the final list for compensation. To ensure that the compensation funds get only to the real study participants who had the misfortune of losing their lives or survived with incapacitation, there is need to separate the 200 genuine claimants from the 600 applicants for the funds. Surely, Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) testing is the best option open to the Trust Fund amongst other criteria it has set for the verification of the applicants."

Saraki signs Safe Maternity Bill

From Mustafa Abubakar Ilorin

KWARA state Governor, Dr. Bukola Saraki has signed into law the state Safe Maternity Bill with the explanation that it would make it difficult for quack doctors to operate in the state. The governor disclosed that 50 medical doctors, 300 nurses and midwives, 40 laboratory technicians and 100 ward attendants were to be recruited as part of efforts to strengthen the law.

"This occasion represents important landmark in ealthcare delivery and will provide legal backing for safe motherhood" the governor said

Also speaking during the ceremony, the governor's wife who facilitated the bill, Barrister Oluwatoyin saraki, said she was dedicating the law to safe motherhood in the state.

Shifaah foundation treats thousands

By Yunus Abdulhamid

ABOUT 2,000 patients have benefited from free medical services rendered by Shifaah Foundation, an NGO based in Auchi, Edo State. The foundation acted in collaboration with the Edo/Delta Area Unit of the Muslim Students' Society of Nigeria (MSSN).

The weeklong free medical services took place at the Health Centre of the St John's College, Fugar, during the MSSN's annual Islamic Vacation Course (IVC) held at the same venue. Beneficiaries were mainly indigent members of Fugar community in Etsako Central Local Government Area of the state suffering from Diabetics, Hypertension, Arthritis, Malaria, Typhoid Fever, as well as Urinary Tract and Respiratory Tract infections.

Speaking to *Daily Trust*, Dr Tijani Oseni who is the coordinator of the Foundation said the NGO was born out of the need to alleviate the sufferings of the less privileged. Also speaking, the Amir of the Muslim Students' Society of Nigeria, Edo/Delta Area Unit, Mallam Harun Umar said the MSSN decided to collaborate with Shifaah Foundation consider-

Fake drug detection made easy

By Ruby Rabi

ONCE was when the process of making out genuine drugs from faked ones was long and time-consuming. The journey from pharmacy shops across the country to labouratories established by the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) took days or weeks. Or even months, arising from time-wasting factors such as the distance between where drugs are selected for testing and the nearest NAFDAC laboratory.

It is not so anymore. In November last year NAFDAC took delivery of handheld scanners used for on-the-spot examination of tablets, capsules and liquid drugs.

NAFDAC's Ahura TruScan, named after Ahura Scientific, its United States manufacturer, is a device for chemical identification, putting accurate and traditionally lab-based instruments in portable systems designed for field use, able to distinguish between genuine and counterfeit medicines in seconds or at most a

couple of minutes, depending on the composition of the substance being tested.

For a while now NAFDAC's regulatory officials have been out in the streets across the country visiting randomly selected pharmacies and medicine shops using the lightweight counterfeits detection scanning machine. The machine has found quite a number of drugs to be fake, in which case NAFDAC seizes such drugs and invites to its office both the seller or distributor and manufacturer of the counterfeit drug for questioning.

The versatile device has adjustable parts that identify the contents of foods and drugs in solid, powder, and liquid forms. It is typically used by top pharmaceutical manufacturing companies for quality control purposes, and by regulatory agents at border posts to stop importation of fake products.

Director General of NAFDAC, Dr Paul Orhii who takes much pride in the acquisition of the instrument says it is an accomplishment of his promise to raise

NAFDAC's performance indices.

"When I assumed duty a year ago I met a tradition of high performance," Orhii told the Senate Committee on Health when its members visited him last week. He went on, "I promised I would introduce international best practices. The TruScan we now have and use is a part fulfilment of that promise."

TruScan has enhanced the efficiency of NADAC and raised the convenience of food and drug sellers, as a stakeholder in the Nigerian drug market has noted. Analyst Roxy Nader of the Business Monitor International, a body which has just published its latest quarterly report on the Nigerian pharmaceutical market, commended the acquisition of the TruScan as a worthy initiative.

She said, "Unless there is an actual means of testing for fake medicines on the spot (like the drug scanner), then a simple suspicion is not enough to shut down a pharmacy and confiscate the drugs, particularly if those are essential medicines for which there is no alternative."



ENVIRONMENT

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Thugs hijack sanitation exercise at Bwari

By Hussein Yahaya

FOUR sanitation officers and other para-military officials that monitored last Saturday's monthly sanitation exercise at Bwari narrowly escaped being lynched by some alleged thugs following the arrest of some of their gang's members for violating various environmental laws.

The affected officers ran

to the Council's secretariat for safety while the thugs forcefully released those arrested and their motorcycles.

The sanitation officers had earlier arrested about 50 okader riders for operating during the sanitation hours as well as some water vendors.

In an interview with our reporter shortly after the exercise, the representative of the

Abuja Environmental Protection Board (AEPB), Saka Umoru, said the officers were waiting for the mobile court to try the arrested offenders when the thugs mobilised and attacked them.

"They were throwing stones and other dangerous weapons at us. We just have to run to the Area council secretariat for our safety and in the process they released almost all the people

we arrested," he narrated.

Saka appealed for more security men in the next exercise to avoid the recurrence of such unfortunate incident, adding that the two policemen attached to them for the exercise were not enough to adequately provide the needed security in the whole of Bwari town.

Answering another question, Saka said apart from the unfortu-

nate incident, residents of Bwari adequately participated in the exercise as people came out voluntarily to tidy up their surroundings while the commercial vehicles also keep off the road during the exercise.

He appealed to the residents to always co-operate with the sanitation officers, adding that there is no alternative to good and healthy living.

FG earmarks N400m for desert control in Yobe

From Hamza Idris, Damaturu

THE federal government will spend over N400 million in Yobe State for addressing serious ecological problems including drought, desertification, sand dunes manifestations and erosion.

Minister of Environment Mr. John Odey, who stated this recently at the North East Arid Zone Development Programme (NEAZDP) headquarters in Garin Alkali, Bade local government area of Yobe State, said the federal government has evolved new measures aimed at addressing environmental challenges as a way of alleviating poverty in desert prone areas of Yobe this year.

"The ministry of environment has concluded contract procedures for implementation of some drought and desertification control and poverty alleviation in Yobe this year", the minister said.

Mr. Odey said the measures include drought amelioration

project, Cactus Opuntia plantation and rehabilitation of oases in eight local government areas seriously threatened by desertification.

He said the federal government has also approved the establishment of integrated model village development programme, sand dunes fixation, establishment of rangeland, rain water harvesting and various afforestation programmes in Yobe and other frontline states this year. Mr Odey challenged Yobe government to partner with the local communities for effective solutions to desertification, climate change and other environmental problems.

Odey however observed that the effort of the federal government was "complementary in nature" and urged state governments in arid zone regions not to keep on lamenting their predicaments but to exploit the opportunities available in the regions for income generation, job creation and food security.

"The ministry of environment has concluded contract procedures for implementation of some drought and desertification control and poverty alleviation in Yobe this year"



AN ice climber makes his way up a frozen waterfall of the Sapuenerbach near Langwies in the Region of Schanfigg, Switzerland

Copenhagen's climate finance: 'Key question breeds mistrust'

By Nasir Imam, with agency report

Unanswered questions threaten to breed mistrust in the promises of climate-change funding that governments made in the Copenhagen Accord at December's UN summit, says a paper published yesterday by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).

A statement from Press officer, London's International Institute for Environment and Development, Mike Shanahan, said the Copenhagen Accord developed countries pledged US\$30 billion

over the three years from 2010 to 2013 and US\$100 billion a year from 2020, for developing countries to tackle climate change

"However, it is far from clear where the funding will come from, if it is genuinely new and additional, and how it will be allocated and channelled?" says co-author Saleemul Huq, a senior fellow in IIED's climate change group. "The paper raises six key questions that will need to be answered."

Huq's co-authors are Timmons Roberts, who is Director of Environmental Studies at Brown University in the United States, and

Martin Stadelmann, a researcher at the Center for International and Comparative Studies, ETH and University of Zurich, Switzerland.

"Critics are claiming that much of the promise made at Copenhagen will be met with 'recycled aid,' says Roberts.

"Too many treaties have faltered as promises go unmet, and we cannot afford this to happen with climate change," he adds. "To meet these critics there needs to be much broader discussion of what should count as climate finance, and how it will be monitored and tracked."

Dry season forces Fulani herdsmen to migrate

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

THE prevailing dry season has forced Fulani herdsmen who are currently moving down south of the country with their herds, searching for greener grazing fields.

Nasarawa State, a major route, is currently witnessing groups of herdsmen moving through to the

greener fields of Southern Nigeria. The movement began earlier in the year, but it has heightened in the last two weeks, with unending herds of cattle trudging with luggage of their owners on the backs. A major part of the luggage, according to further observation, is the mat with which the cow boys use in sleeping in the open.

The movement is observed mostly around communities lying along the Jos-Akwanga-Lafia-Makurdi Road which links Nasarawa with Kaduna and Benue States.

Our correspondent observed that the Fulani cow boys move alongside their women who are seeing with large calabashes or other

containers with boiled milk called Nono, selling as they move along.

One of them who stopped to speak to Daily Trust along Lafia-Makurdi Road said moving down south at this time of the year is a yearly practice, explaining that "so that our cattle can graze upon fresh fields." He said up north, the fields are dry by this time, forcing them

into the migration to Southern Nigeria.

A grazing route that will run through four neighbouring states - Nasarawa, Plateau, Benue and Ebonyi is on the way for Fulani herdsmen as part of federal government's efforts to tackle the incessant conflicts between the herders and farmers.

ENVIRONMENT

Convert wastes in dumps to wealth - Expert

From Sharafa Dauda, Maiduguri

THE Borno State Government should exploit materials in the dumps scattered all over the state to produce fertilizer and energy, while conserving forests, creating employment and maintaining a healthy and lean environment,

said Yahaya Adamu Uba of the Borno State National Directorate of Employment (NDE) yesterday.

In his paper titled, "Starting a Small-scale Recycling Business", the environmentalist said, "Recycling business plays a vital role in conserving energy, environment and in directing resources for

increased utilization and creates wealth.

Recycling of some materials like polymers, iron can play an important role in conserving the environment and generating wealth because polymer materials play important role in the plastic industry while the steel industry

recycles iron sheets that are used in the automobile industry."

In addition, Yahaya Uba said that animal droppings and kitchen wastes can be utilized to produce farmyard manures to keep and conserve the environment, noting that "waste materials like horns and bones from abat-

toir which are in abundant supply in the state could be used to make bangles, earrings, for women and household decorative, while paper wastes and polythene materials can be used to make polythene bags and water sachets", which at the moment are in high demand across the country.

PIC: SANI MAIKATANGA



THE Tarauni burial ground in Kano, razed by fire recently.

150 Plateau women to sweep in each LG

From Ahmed Mohammed, Jos

150 women has been engaged by the Plateau State government to sweep the streets in all the 17 local government areas in the state in its effort to improve environmental sanitation in the state

Plateau State Commissioner of Women Affairs, Mrs Serah Yusuf, told newsmen yesterday in Jos that majority of these women are widows who lost their husbands and they were employed as clean-

ers by the government because of the high regard for women by the administration.

The commissioner said government discourages women breaking stones in all the 17 local governments and advised them to leave these odd jobs and look for something that government will help them to do adding that "these stones and rocks added beauty to the town we don't want to remove these rocks and mountains that beautify our environment and makes our state what it is today"

She said government accorded priority to the plight of women in Plateau as a good number of them were given political appointments and over 127 were trained on different vocational skill and presently there were 94 undergoing various training and will graduate soon.

The commission encouraged the women to go back to farm and engaged in agriculture in other to get the required food that will feed the state and the nation at large.

LG urged to adopt climate deal

By Misbahu Bashir

LOCAL Government authorities in Nigeria have been urged to mobilize local people towards reducing carbon emission.

A participant in the recent climate change meeting in Copenhagen and Consultant to National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA), Dr. Vincent Okechi made the remarks weekend at a press briefing on the effects of global warming organised by Christabel International limited in Abuja.

He said local government authorities must consistently enlighten local populace to reduce certain practices such as bush burning, overgrazing as well as embrace sustainable agriculture so as to reduce carbon emission. "The Copenhagen deal on climate change which enjoin countries to reduce carbon emission should be replicated by the local authorities,"

He said carbon emissions from deforestation far outstrip damage caused by planes and automobiles and factories. He said deforestation pump more Carbon dioxide (CO2) into the atmosphere, a factor that can alter the energy balance. He said the local government authorities need to enlighten the local communities on factors contributing to global warming and how to mitigate them.

He said another human activity that contribute to the increase in global warming is bush burning and burning of fossil fuel. When fossil fuel, such as petroleum which compose almost entirely of carbon and other toxic substances burn, they emit greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere which serve as blanket and trap more heat. They can cause diseases such as asthma and cancer when they are inhaled and contribute to the increase of temperature resulting in the melting of the ice caps and increase sea level!

Desert warriors' expedition flags-off in Lagos

From Femi Akinola, Lagos

A one week expedition to Niger Republic by a 40 member Desert Warriors led by Dr. Newton Jibunoh has been flagged-off in Lagos.

The warriors who were drawn from all walks of life gathered in Lagos yesterday for the journey to Agadesh in Niger Republic so as to check likelihood of food shortage in Nigeria as a result of desertification.

Briefing Governor Babatunde Fashola before the flag-off, Jibunoh who had embarked on similar journey on three occasion said the 40 warriors drawn from Banking sector, Lawyers, journalists and other professionals will be in Agadesh in Niger Republic next week after which 15 among the number will embark on

similar journey to London in March. He said the warriors embarked on the journey as part of their contribution to sensitize Nigerians about the negative impact of Climate Change. He said 670 people across the country have shown interest in taking part in the expedition but scaled to 40 for effective management. According to him, with the fast desertification of some areas in the northern part of the country, by 2015 larger part of Nigeria will become dessert thus the Dessert Warrior reality show to combat climate change and global warming.

Jibunoh added that the warriors will call at the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja as well as Kano where the Emir of Kano, Alhaji Ado Bayero will also flag-off the expedition before the warriors will eventually cross Nigerian border to Niger Republic.

Bwari council boss wants grazing reserve to accommodate herdsmen

THE Chairman Bwari Area Council, Mr Isa Dara has appealed to those people living within Kawu grazing reserve as a matter of tolerance to accommodate Fulani herdsmen that would move to the area as they normally do in such cases without molestation.

Dara stated this on Friday during peace and security meeting at

the council secretariat adding that only where there is peace progress and development is achieve.

He urged people to be law abiding as government is ready to deal with any person who try to foment trouble.

"Those who are coming should also follow the rules and guidelines of that area so that

peace and tranquility will prevail," he added.

"We are praying that the incidence in Jos will stop and will not occur again and it will not spread to FCT," he prayed.

He tasked the people in the area to live in peace and to report if there is any misunderstanding, to elders who would help to resolve it

before it goes out of hand.

Contributing, AbdulMurnin Khalid, Imam of the Badr Mosque and AbdulRahim Yahaya, Chief Imam all in Kubwa called on the area council to be convening such kind of meetings once three or four months to discuss issues that would be important to the council.

Rev. Timothy Damisa, Chris-

tian Association of Nigeria (CAN) Chairman of Kubwa and Rev Joseph Kaima of Faith Mission Bwari called on the council chairman to extend to higher authority that youths should be gainfully employed as they constitute some of the problems and also called on politicians to accept defeat as there should be one leader at a time. (NAN)



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF FINANCE

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
P.M.B. GARKI-ABUJA

PUBLIC NOTICE

TAX APPEAL TRIBUNAL

REPLACEMENT OF BODY OF APPEAL COMMISSIONERS (BAC) AND VALUE ADDED TAX TRIBUNAL (VAT-T) WITH THE TAX APPEAL TRIBUNAL (TAT)

This is to inform taxpayers and the general public that the Body of Appeal Commissioners (BAC) and the Value Added Tax Tribunal (VAT-T) have been abolished and no longer exist.

The BAC was created by virtue of Section 71 of the Companies Income Tax Act (CITA) Cap C21 LFN 2004 to hear and determine matters wherein taxpayers appealed against any FIRS's Notice of Refusal to amend a tax assessment.

The VAT Tribunal was created by virtue of Section 20 and the Second Schedule of the VAT Act Cap V1 LFN 2004 wherein tax payers aggrieved by a VAT assessment may appeal to the VAT Tribunal and also where any tax, penalty or interest which remains unpaid after a period specified for payment may be recoverable by the FIRS Board through proceedings in the VAT Tribunal.

However, by the promulgation of the Federal Inland Revenue Service (Establishment) Act No. 13 2007 (FIRSEA) particularly Section 59 thereof, the two bodies (BAC and VAT-T) have been abolished and hereinafter replaced by a body known as the Tax Appeal Tribunal (TAT) which shall have powers to settle disputes arising from the operations of the FIRSEA.

The TAT shall have powers to adjudicate on disputes and controversies arising from the following tax laws:

- (i) Companies Income Tax Act
- (ii) Personal Income Tax Act
- (iii) Petroleum Profits Tax Act
- (iv) Value Added Tax Act
- (v) Capital Gains Tax Act
- (vi) Any other law contained in the First schedule of the FIRSEA or other laws made or to be made from time to time by the National Assembly
- (vii) Stamp Duty Act
- (viii) Taxes and Levies (Approved List for Collection) Act
- (ix) All regulations, proclamations, government notices or rules issued in terms of these legislations
- (x) Any other law for the assessment, collection and accounting of revenue accruable to the Government of the Federation as may be made by the National Assembly from time to time or regulations incidental to those laws, conferring any power, duty and obligation on the Service
- (xi) Enactments or Laws imposing Taxes and Levies within

the Federal Capital Territory

- (xii) Enactments or Laws imposing collection of taxes, fees and levies collected by other government agencies and companies including signature bonus, pipeline fees, penalty for gas flared, deport levies and licences, fees for Oil Exploration Licence (OEL), Oil Mining Licence (OML), Oil Production Licence (OPL), royalties, rents (productive and non-productive), fees for licences to operate drilling rigs, fees for oil pipeline licences, haulage fees and all such fees prevalent in the oil industry but not limited to the above listed.

Paragraph 2 of the fifth schedule of the FIRSEA states: "The Minister may by notice in the Federal Gazette specify the number of zones, matters and places in relation to which the Tribunal may exercise jurisdiction".

The locations as listed under Gazette No. 77, Vol.96 of 2nd December, 2009 are as follows:

ZONE	LOCATION
North East	Bauchi – B.336, Wenti Street, Bauchi
North West	Kaduna – Plot 4, Road BC Ahmed Rufai Close,
North Central	Jos – 2, Yakubu Gowon Rd, Secretariat,
South West	Ibadan – 54, Adebajo Street, Kongi, New
South East	Enugu – 23, Igboje Street, Independence
South South	Benin – 59, Airport Road, Benin City
Lagos	Lagos – 17B Awolowo Road, Ikoyi, Lagos
FCT	Abuja - ETF Building, (First Floor), Plot 433 Zambezi Crescent, Off Aguiyi Ronsi, Maitama Abuja.

All correspondence should be directed to:

The Secretary
Tax Appeal Tribunal
'Zone'
'Location'

Taxpayers and the general public are hereby advised to take note and be informed accordingly.

Dr. Mansur Muhtar
Honourable Minister of Finance



ABUJA SECURITIES AND COMMODITY EXCHANGE Plc (ASCE)

397, Muhammadu Buhari Way, Central Business District, Abuja

2010 THREE-DAY FOUNDATION TRAINING PROGRAMME ON COMMODITY EXCHANGE OPERATIONS

The Abuja Securities and Commodity Exchange, ASCE, is organizing yet another Foundation Training Programme for its members and other players in the Nigerian commodity market who are yet to take part in the introductory course.

The Three-day Training Programme is basically meant for securities dealers and commodity market operators such as commodity exporters, commodity merchants, assaying companies, warehouse operators/collateral managers as well as operators in the financial sector.

The Programme shall provide participants the required theoretical and practical exposure in the following areas:

- Law of Contract
- Spot Market Operations
- Commodity Exchange Structure
- Risk Management and Surveillance Techniques
- Sales of Goods Act
- Pre-licensing Criteria
- Introduction to Dispute Resolution through Arbitration
- Quality Certification (Physical)
- Trading Rules and Regulation
- Primary Market (Equity & Debt)
- Initial Public Offering (IPO)
- Fixed Income Securities
- Introduction to Warehousing

The training shall hold as follows:

Venue: Abuja Securities and Commodity Exchange, Spot Market, Kano Co-operative Building No. 1, Zaria Road, Kano

Date: 16th -18th February 2010.

Fees: N45,000.00 in Cash or Bank draft in favour of Abuja Securities and Commodity Exchange Plc

Time: 8.00 am daily

For further information, please contact us on:

Tel: 08088811889, 08066800004, 064-4890540

09-6715681, 09-6710828, 09-6714904

Email: md@abujacomex.com,

Visit us at: www.abujacomex.com

Signed:
Management

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA

UPPER BENUE RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

MBAMBA-FUFORE ROAD, P.M.B. 2086, YOLA, ADAMAWA STATE.

EMAIL: upperbenue@yahoo.com



INVITATION FOR TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL PROPOSALS FOR THE
CONSTRUCTION OF AN INFILTRATION GALLERY AT NAFADA TOWN, NAFADA LGA,
GOMBE STATE IN 2009 APPROPRIATION UNDER UPPER BENUE RIVER BASIN
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY P.M.B 2086, YOLA ADAMAWA STATE.

1. The Upper Benue River Basin Development Authority (U.B.R.B.D.A) is desirous of constructing an infiltration gallery at Nafada Town, Nafada LGA, Gombe State in the FY2009 Appropriation and therefore invites submissions for Technical and Financial proposals from qualified and reputable contractors with proven competence in the fields of Engineering for the Engineering work:

2. ENGINEERING WORKS:

Construction of infiltration gallery

3. SCOPE OF WORKS:

The scope of work for the projects include;

- i. Infiltration gallery civil works;
- ii. Package treatment plant;
- iii. Electromechanical works; and
- iv. Plant operator's house.

4. REQUIREMENTS

The minimum technical and responsive requirements are as follows:

- i. Evidence of Incorporation with Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) of Nigeria, including Articles and Memorandum of Association and up-to date Returns with the CAC.
 - ii. Evidence of Income Tax Clearance Certificate and payment of taxes for the last three years 2006, 2007 and 2008.
 - iii. Evidence of VAT Registration, FIRS PIN Number, and receipts of payment.
 - iv. Possession of experience as a Prime Contractor on at least Three (3) projects of similar nature and complexity within the last 5 years (to comply with this requirement, works quoted should be at least 70% physically completed).
 - v. Verifiable evidence of at least 3 Nos. completed similar projects in the last 3 years of value not less than N200million with relevant award letters and completion certificates.
 - vi. Verifiable evidence of Personnel capabilities, including list of key Professionals, Project Managers and CV's of key staff to be engaged in the project.
 - vii. Verifiable list of available Equipments and facilities necessary to undertake the project.
 - viii. Profile of the Company and Auditors Report for last 3 years.
 - ix. Satisfactory evidence of financial capability from a reputable Bank.
 - x. Possession of satisfactory Quality Assurances/Quality Control Manuals.
- Bidders are to provide a Bid Security as follows: N5 million (Five Million Naira) to their bids.
Non compliance will lead to disqualification.

5. COLLECTION OF TENDER DOCUMENTS

Competent companies shall on application collect (Standard Bidding Documents Technical and Financial), from Tuesday, February 2nd, 2010 from

THE PROCUREMENT UNIT,
UPPER BENUE RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY,
MBAMBA FUTURE ROAD, P.M.B.2086, YOLA,
ADAMAWA STATE.

Upon the presentation of evidence of payment of non-refundable tender fee of N150,000.00 into the UBRBDA's account as follows:

Account Name:	Upper Benue River Basin Development Authority Revenue Account
Account Number:	067110000015
Bank:	Bank PHB, Yola

6. SUBMISSION OF BIDS.

Completed Technical and Financial bids (Two sets of hard copy and One Electronic copy in compact disk and Microsoft office) shall be submitted in two different sealed envelopes and labeled "Technical Bid" and "Financial Bid" and both sealed in a third envelope marked "Project Name" at the top right hand corner and addressed to

THE PROCUREMENT OFFICER,
UPPER BENUE RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY,
MBAMBA FUTURE ROAD, P.M.B.2086, YOLA,
ADAMAWA STATE.

to reach him on or before 12noon, Monday, February 15th, 2010.

Technical bids will be opened same day at 1.00p.m. at the Conference Room of Upper Benue River Basin Dev. Authority, Yola.

Only firms whose technical bids fulfill the minimum requirements would have their financial bids considered.

7. ENQUIRIES:

All enquiries on this advertisement are to be directed to:

THE MANAGING DIRECTOR,
UPPER BENUE RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY,
MBAMBA FUTURE ROAD, P.M.B.2086, YOLA,
ADAMAWA STATE.

SIGNED

Engr. Peter Y. Manjuk
Ag. Executive Director (Operations)

CITY NEWS



HOTLINES: 0803-3493-462 & 0703-8927-513
email: citynews@dailytrust.com
News about your capital city

Apo 32 criticise minister for flouting court's order

By Abubakar Yakubu & Abbas Jimoh

PIC: ABUBAKAR YAKUBU

THE FCT Minister, Senator Adamu Aliero was yesterday accused of flouting the order of a federal high court by re-allocating land meant for the Old Mechanic Village at Apo to Beyedu Construction Limited.

The accusation was made yesterday at a pressing briefing in Abuja by 32 persons, who instituted a case against the FCT Administration, claiming they were rightfully allocated the disputed land.

Secretary of the group, Eruada Steven accused the FCT minister of disobeying a court order granted by Justice Salisu Garba on November 5, 2009 that restrained the FCT minister or his agents from mapping out the land for the purpose of mass housing scheme adjustment or for any other purpose until the hearing and final determination of the substantive suit brought about by the 32 applicants.

He said the same order also restrained the minister from granting or conveying titles or titles over the plots to third parties, corporate bodies or institutions until the hearing and final determination of the suit.

The group said despite the court order with suit number FCT/HC/M/5761/2009, the minister allocated the same land under contention in court to an estate developer, who began massive movement of earth moving machines and equipment into the land.

"But for the prompt intervention of the police, whom we alerted and were quick to stop them, the developer would have been working on the land," the secretary said.

He accused the minister of refusing to adhere to all the advice



SECRETARY of Apo 32, Eruada Steven addressing the press in Abuja yesterday.

given by the group's solicitor on the attendant consequences of disobeying court orders, adding that the group is confused as to why the minister decided to carry out this action during the absence of the president.

The group also said the minister once criticised Mallam Nasir el-Rufai when he disobeyed court order and pledged their allegiance to the rule of law, saying that as

law abiding citizens they have faith in the ability of the court to grant justice to them.

"We will continue to pray for the quick recovery of our dear president, while at the same time await the judgement of the court," the secretary added.

Documents collected from the Abuja Geographic Information Systems shows that the estate developer, Beyedu Construction

Limited sent in an application for the land on October 27, 2009 and their application was acknowledged same day with a statutory right of occupancy bill awarded to the firm on January 18, 2010.

Chairman of the group of Apo 32, Mr Innocent Odika, said the contractor boasted that nobody can stop him from working on the land as he paid over N200 million to secure the land.

The group said the disputed land was given to them in 1992 by the FCT administration of General Gado Nasco, under Ibrahim Babangida's regime.

"We are surprised that the land marked as technology village has now been re-marked as mass housing residential quarters, even without the provision of alternative plots to us," he lamented.

...As police seal Peace Corps office despite court's order

By Abubakar Yakubu

THE police yesterday refused members of the Peace Corps of Nigeria from entering their corporate headquarters despite a high court's order directing the State Security Services to return all seized property back to the organisation.

Justice Muhammad Umar of the Federal High Court, Abuja, had also declared that the Peace Corps does not

pose a security risk and was duly registered to operate in the country.

Yesterday, when members of the organisation went to their headquarters to resume work, a large number of armed policemen had sealed up the premises and warned people to keep off.

An attempt by journalists to speak to the leader of the police team was rebuffed as they were asked to go to FCT Police Command to see

their spokesperson.

However, the Peace Corps has resolved to go back to court to file a contempt charge against the police for flouting the court's order.

The organisation's lawyer advised Peace Corps members to hold their peace as they are going back to court in order to enforce the court's order.

Our reporter observed a large number of Peace Corps officials hanging in structures close to their sealed office.

Monarch pledges support for polio eradication

By Abubakar Sadiq Isah

THE Etsu of Karu in Nasarawa State, Pharmacist Luka Panya Baba, has pledged his continued support to government for the eradication of polio diseases in the country.

He made the pledge on Friday during the flag off of this year's immunization day at Karmo village, Nasarawa State and assured that he will mobilize people across various communities to participate in the polio eradication exercise.

According to him, government has over the years taken various measures

in order to address polio diseases that mostly affect children and the youth, saying with the support of traditional rulers, polio diseases can completely be eradicated within the next six months.

Earlier in his welcome address, Chairman of Toto Local Government, Alhaji Ibrahim Isyaku Opkanaki, noted that the decision to flag off this year's immunization day was timely and effective.

He observed that the flag off of the polio eradication is the first of its kind in the council and pledged his determination to support the programme.

Motorist denies causing lady's death

By Hussein Yahaya & Ibraheem A. Fatai

A 32-year-old motorist recently denied causing the death of a pedestrian called Mercy Liedigu of Kubwa village, Abuja.

The accused, Amos Ishaku of NDLEA, Gwagwalada, Abuja, was alleged to have caused the lady's death on January 11, 2010 along Nnamdi Azikiwe expressway, Maitama, Abuja.

Police prosecutor, Monday Akor, had earlier told the court that on January 11, 2010, the accused drove a Toyota Hilux van with registration number FG380TO2 in a

dangerous manner and without regards for other road users.

"The accused drove the vehicle in a dangerous manner along Mabushi and knocked down Mercy Liedigu of Kubwa, thereby committing an offence punishable under Section 27(1) CAP 548 of the Road Traffic Act," the prosecutor added.

He went further to state that as a result of the accident, the pedestrian sustained serious injuries and was immediately rushed to the Maitama Hospital, where she later died.

When the charge was read to

the accused, he denied it, saying he was not responsible for the pedestrian's death.

Based on his plea, the prosecutor who did not object to his bail asked the court for a date for hearing.

In her ruling, Magistrate Hadiza Dodo granted the accused bail in the sum of N100,000 with a reliable surety in like sum, who must reside within the court's jurisdiction and swear to an affidavit to produce the accused on the adjourned date.

The case was adjourned to February 22 for hearing.

Guards, electrician arraigned over stolen generator part

By Hussein Yahaya & Ibraheem A. Fatai

TWO security guards and an electrician were on Wednesday arraigned before an Abuja magistrate court for allegedly stealing generator parts belonging to their employer.

The accused persons, Obi-aha Ngozi Rawlings (a generator operator), Yusuf and Busy Asi Amba, both security guards, were reported to have committed the offence on January 25, 2010.

Police prosecutor, Umoh Inah, told the court that on January 25, one Onwukwe Okwuonwa, the Chief Security Officer of Grand Square, reported to the police that when he reported for duty, he was told that the company's generat-

ing sets had been vandalised.

"One voltage regulator was removed from each of the three generating sets, while three of the accused persons were on duty on the day of the incident, thereby committing offences punishable under Sections 79, 287 and 196," the prosecutor added.

When the charges were read to the accused persons, they denied the allegations, saying they knew nothing about the missing generator parts.

Chief Magistrate Josephine Obannor granted each of the accused persons bail in the sum of N100,000 with a reliable surety in like sum, who must reside within the court's jurisdiction.

The case was adjourned to February 18 for hearing.



CHURCHILL House receiving their trophy at Capital Science Academy's inter-house sports event at Kuje Saturday.

Erratic power supply hits Bwari

By Hussein Yahaya

MANY residents of Bwari, a satellite town of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) have described the current power supply to the community by the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) as the worst ever witnessed in recent times.

The residents complained that no part of the community can boast of three hours power supply in two days as electricity supply to the entire community is now being rationed daily.

A public servant, Mr. Saka Musa, wondered what the management of PHCN is doing with the exorbitant monthly electricity bills being charged customers for services not provided.

A policeman who craved anonymity, called for an improvement of PHCN's services in the area.

"Imagine, at the end of every month, these people will distribute bills to every household to collect money for the services they did not render and if for one reason or the other one fails to pay, they will disconnect you and ask you to pay N1,000 for reconnection. Is that not bad enough?" he asked.

Mr John Abu described the areas badly affected by power outages as 16-16 community, across the River, Chikin Gwari, SCC road, Area one and most parts of Sabongeri.

Officers of the PHCN, Bwari distribution office were not available when our reporter visited the office for comments but a technical staff with the company confirmed the erratic power supply to the community, blaming it on insufficient transformers in the town.

Capital Science Academy holds inter-house sports

By Usman A. Bello & Lami Sadiq

CAPITAL Science Academy, Kuje, at the weekend organised its first inter-house sports competition with Churchill House emerging the overall winner of the event.

Churchill House won by 117, followed by Ghandi House with 81 points.

The third and fourth posi-

tions went to Mandela House and Kennedy House respectively.

The school's principal, Mrs Rachel Borlar, said they intend to promote sports in the school, saying such is an important part of education.

She said what is important to her as a principal is to discover talents in children which include sports, adding that when the stu-

dents have healthy bodies and minds, they will perform very well in the classrooms.

Mrs Borlar called on the students to be serious with their academics, adding that other events like science quiz, debates and lectures are underway.

She said she has a focus to instil total discipline in the students because as discipline improves,

academic standard of the school will also improve too.

Meanwhile, a director of the school, Aliyu Dikko, said learning without physical training will not make up the total child, hence they decided to organize annual inter-house events, adding that with the performance exhibited by the students, the objective of the event has been achieved.



PIC: HUSSEIN YAHAYA

PARENTS and teachers during a PTA seminar organised by Oasis International School, Kado, Abuja.



PUPILS' election campaign posters at Tender Years Preparatory School, Wuse 11, Friday.



LUCKY Monday, a primary five pupil, who was brought to the Karu Children's Home by his sister on Friday.



**FEDERAL ROADS MAINTENANCE AGENCY (FERMA)
HEADQUARTERS ABUJA**

**RE: FERMA'S MAINTAIN, OPERATE & TRANSFER
PROGRAMME BIDDERS' CONFERENCE**

The following Consortiums/Investor/prospective Concessionaire

- 1 Nairanet Technologies Ltd
- 2 Western Corridor Consortium
- 3 Rosehill Group Ltd
- 4 Cwell Ltd
- 5 Philko Abuja-Kaduna Toll Road Ltd
- 6 A.I.L Infrastructures Ltd
- 7 Triacta Concessionaire Ltd
- 8 Fung Tai - JNC Consortium
- 9 Roads Nigeria Plc
- 10 Pelican Bay Ltd
- 11 Megaforce Consortium Nig Ltd
- 12 Quartzlink Resources Limited
- 13 All Works Commercial Company Ltd
- 14 Africa Finance Corporation
- 15 Hapel (Nigeria) Ltd
- 16 Teleview International Nig Ltd
- 17 Percasa Limited
- 18 Marsellis - Warner Const. (WA) Ltd.
- 19 JD Capital Ltd
- 20 Ferotex Construction Company
- 21 Dirham Infrastructure Ltd
- 22 Monier Const. Co. Nig. Ltd.
- 23 Bulletine Const. Company Limited
- 24 Ginger A. Construction Limited
- 25 Obioma Enterprises (Nig) Ltd
- 26 La - Ann Engineering Limited

who have reaffirmed a sustained interest in the Agency's **Maintain, Operate and Transfer (Maintenance Concession)** programme, and have thus collected Request for Proposal (RFP) from the Agency are by this notice invited to a Bidders conference that will hold as follows:

DATE: Wednesday, February 03, 2010.
VENUE: Rockview (Royale) Hotel.
TIME: 12:00 noon

Signed
Management



THANK YOU



Prof. Attahiru B. Jega
Vice Chancellor, BUK

The Vice Chancellor on behalf of staff and members of the University Council of Bayero University Kano express our gratitude to all the participating teams, WAUG Executives, sponsors, supporters, partners, donors and everyone who contributed in making the 3RD WEST AFRICA UNIVERSITY GAMES, FOOTBALL AND HOCKEY CHAMPIONSHIP held from January 20 to 31, 2010 a colourful and successful event.



KANO 2010

JANUARY 20-31, 2010

Inside Politics

Anambra 2010: Contest between PPA and APGA – Kalu

FORMER governor of Abia State and chairman Board of Trustees (BOT) of the Progressive Peoples Alliance (PPA) Orji Uzo Kalu in this interview with a group of journalists in Abuja warns that anything short of a free and fair election in Anambra this Saturday will be resisted. Kalu who has since relocated to Awka says Anambra is a 'straight fight' between Uche Ekwunife and Governor Peter Obi. Excerpts:

By Suleiman M. Bisalla

THE Senate and the Federal Executive Council (FEC) took opposing positions on President Umaru Yar'adua recently. While the Senate urged the President to transmit a notice to the National Assembly on his medical vacation, FEC said Yar'adua is fit to continue in office. What is your reaction?

I am one of those who are of the opinion that Jonathan needs no letter from anybody to do his job. Also, he does not need the intervention of the National Assembly before he could act as president. Jonathan and Yar'adua were elected concurrently and sworn in as president and vice president. As far as I am concerned, it was Yar'adua/Jonathan ticket and the mandate is a joint one. Therefore if Yar'adua is not available, what happens?

By the way hasn't Jonathan been performing the role of the commander-in-chief in the absence of the President? He ordered deployment of soldiers to Jos. If he had maintained close ties with the ministers, nobody would have even known that Yar'adua is not available. So, I will put the blame on communication gap between the ministers and the Vice President.

So as far as I am concerned, Jonathan should take over immediately without any paper from anybody. If there is war between Nigeria and Chad or Benin Republic, will Jonathan not deploy troops there? Will they allow Chad, or Benin Republic or Cameroun to overrun us?

He has also been presiding at the weekly meeting of the Federal Executive Council and other meetings; so he needs no other power. He has the power to give order to any minister. He was sworn in from the very first day as Vice President and vice chairman of National Security Council as well as vice chairman of Federal Executive Council. So, if he is vice chairman of National Security Council as specified by the constitution, it means that if there is no commander-in-chief, or he is not around, he steps in automatically as the commander-in-chief. Some people are just playing politics with this matter and leaving the serious matters of the economic and social wellbeing of the citizens.

Are you saying that in spite of his illness Yar'adua should continue in office as President as long as he is alive while the Vice President

continues to act?

You cannot force a president who has done no wrong to quit until he dies. Unless the president personally decides to resign, there is nothing you can do. And if I were Yar'adua, to be honest with you, I will not resign. No one among those Nigerians calling on him to resign would resign if they were in his shoes. If given the chance, some of them would want life presidency like Obasanjo wanted third term in 2007.

If they had given it to you [pointing at reporters], would you resign? I'm sure you will not resign. So, those who are blaming Yar'adua are missing the point. Yar'adua should not be blamed. Rather the PDP should be blamed for its inability to manage the crisis.

Some analysts say we are inching towards constitutional crisis since the constitution is clear about transmitting a letter to the National Assembly?

The PDP has plunged the country into an unnecessary constitutional crisis because if this problem was well managed, there would have been no controversy at all. This crisis is needless because the job description is very clear. Is there any other person that Yar'adua would transmit this power to? Is he going to give it to a minister? The answer is no. He can only delegate it to the vice president.

So, it should have been a collective effort to support Jonathan to continue with the policies and programmes of Yar'adua/Jonathan presidency. If I were in his position, nobody will know that Yar'adua is sick because Jonathan is in a position to suspend or even drop a minister.

The House of Assembly in Imo state recently invited you to make certain clarifications about allegations you were said to have made against the governor of that state, Chief Ikedi Ohakim. Can you speak on that?

I never made any allegations against the governor and I was surprised that that Honourable House could pass a resolution like that because I wasn't a commissioner in the state; I wasn't Governor Udenwa; I wasn't Deputy Governor Udeagu; I wasn't commissioner Chuka (Odom), I wasn't anything. And I don't live in Imo state, neither have I petitioned the Imo State House of Assembly against the governor.

If the governor disagrees with

what I wrote in my column, he can go to a court of competent jurisdiction. What the House of Assembly in Imo state has done is to abuse the rule of procedure of the House which everybody agrees with.

The Anambra governorship election is only few days away. How would you review the campaigns so far, particularly by your party's candidate, Uche Ekwunife?

Our candidate has shown ability so far by taking the campaign to a different level based on issues of the moment. The issues include access to roads, medical facilities, social and infrastructural development of Anambra State. The woman is focused in her belief that what a man can do, a woman can do better. I am very optimistic that her efforts will yield the desired result which is victory for the PPA on Saturday, February 6.

I perceive Ekwunife's candidature as another golden opportunity for women, who constitute about 50 per cent of the population to take their rightful place in the politics and development of the country. They have always been crying that men are marginalizing them. Now power is within their reach to be able to prove that they can do it even better.

The support she is getting from all the people is unprecedented, from women, men, youth, the elderly, workers and all. They are supporting Ekwunife because they see this election as a rare opportunity to work towards gender parity in politics and national development. So, her emergence is a product of direct intervention by God. I must confess to you that the money the woman is spending on daily basis was freely donated by her teeming supporters. The other day, traders in Anambra State brought to her over N300 million as their contribution to her campaigns.



ORJI UZO KALU

Are you aware that some are claiming that there are godfathers who are bent on imposing a governor they can control state belongs to them and that they must impose and control the governor?

Nobody owns anybody, nobody owns the state. The election will boil down to a contest of popularity. Mark my word, this election is a straight fight between two political parties – PPA [Ekwunife] and APGA [Obi]. The Anambra people will reject PDP; they will reject Labour Party; they will reject AC. They are going to see it as a regional affair. We have met with the traders, the truck pushers and the Okada riders and they have resolved that they would vote for PPA, at worst case scenario, APGA.

But Dr. Chris Ngige and Chukwuma Soludo are seen as potentials winners...?

As for Ngige, he is seen as a very popular candidate with no vehicle to carry him. The Anambra traders told me in confidence, 'leave him to come and pull all the crowd but we are going to follow PPA'. They said that if they support Ngige, they will be blocking another chance of an Igbo man to raise his voice at the national arena; that (Bola) Tinubu is not going to speak for Igbo people when the chips are down, that AC is not going to speak for Igbo people. Every people within the Nigeria nation need a vehicle to speak for them. To quote the traders correctly, 'that vehicle will either be APGA or PPA'.

If Ngige were in PPA or APGA, this issue would have been foreclosed. In the case of Soludo, he is a very good professor, a good academician but he is not popular in Anambra State. Nobody knows him; the traders don't know him. The traders see him more as a man who put in place bad policies because Sanusi (Lamido) has unearthed things which are not supposed to be there. So, most of them see Soludo as an extension of Obasanjo, the same way they see Andy Uba as a continuation of Obasanjo. Therefore this fight is between us (PPA) and APGA.

The main thing APGA has going for it is the Ojukwu factor because some of the people see him as our leader, but then Ojukwu belongs to yesterday's generation. I am the leader that represents the present and the future for our people. They look at Ojukwu as the past and they look at Orji Kalu as the future.

Why was the PPA candidate absent at last week's debate among the governorship candidates ahead of the election?

The National Executive Committee of our party took the decision that she should not participate based on some cogent reasons. One, the PDP has not provided the people light to watch television. Two, as far as we are concerned our candidate had some more important engagements in the campaign field. And mind you, the debate was fixed for 10am when people are not likely to be at home, instead of say 8pm or 9 pm when people would be at home to watch or listen to the debate. Our core supporters are the productive class in the field, in the markets and shops, and they were working hard to earn their living at that time.

Ahead the election, there have been reports of alleged plots to perpetrate violence. Aren't you worried that your candidate, being a woman, may be overwhelmed?

No, no; we will not be overwhelmed. We are with the women; we are with the youths. Seventy five percent of all the students in Anambra state are supporting us and they dare not use the Police or thugs to harass anybody. We will respond within minutes if they try anything. But we want the first option which is free, peaceful and fair election.

Inside Politics



KANO State Governor Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau (middle), the State Deputy Governor Eng. Abdullahi Muhammed Gwarzo (right) and Nassarawa Local Government Chairman, Nasir Yusuf Gawuna at the ANPP state congress recently.

2011: There won't be guber polls in Kaduna – Sha'aban

From Ismail Mudashir, Kaduna

GUBERNATORIAL candidate of the All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP) in Kaduna State during the 2007 general election Alhaji Sani Sha'aban has said that there would not be governorship election in Kaduna State come 2011. He advised aspirants to bury their ambitions.

Speaking in an interview with newsmen in Kaduna shortly after he paid condolence visit to the family of the late Kaduna ANPP women leader, Hajiya Adama Umaru, who died last week, however, said elections will be conducted

for other positions except the governorship position.

"There would not be governorship election in Kaduna state because before 2011, I will be declared the winner and I will take over from those who are occupying the position illegally. I am the rightful winner, out of the 23 local government areas, I won 20, the records are there for you," he said.

He said his party is very much confident with the judiciary emphasizing that justice would soon prevail in his case with Governor Mohammed Namadi Sambo.

Sha'aban recently

applied to the court of appeal to revisit his case with Governor Sambo. The court had fixed February 10th, this year for it.

"We are preparing to assume duty soon and as soon as we get there, we are going to look at how the resources of the state were spent during this trying period. We are very much aware of the deception going on in the state presently. We are committed to our course and we are going to follow it to the fullest," he said.

He urged the people of the state and his supporters to remain calm saying the suffering and the deception would soon be over.

Niger Delta women want Yar'adua to handover

By Abdul-Rahman Abubakar

THE Niger Delta Women Forum has called on the National Assembly to invoke relevant sections of the Constitution to compel President Umaru Musa Yar'adua to handover to Vice President Goodluck Jonathan to act as president.

A statement by the forum

signed by its National Coordinator/President, Mrs. Esther Uduehi said the legislature must eschew sentiments in the matter to allow the vice president assume duties as acting president.

According to the forum "The National Assembly should put partisan politics aside and rise to save the democratic existence

of Nigeria by invoking the various sections of the Constitution and taking immediate action to transfer power to the Vice President by ordering the swearing in of the Vice President as Acting President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Commander in Chief of the Armed forces."

The Niger Delta women won-

dered how a simple matter of transmitting power between the president and his vice has resulted into a political crisis.

"An ordinarily routine matter of a Leader handing over to his deputy to take charge of affairs in his absence has been turned into a National issue and debate and allowed to degenerate to the level

of political crisis."

The long absence of the President due, unfortunately, to his ill health with no transfer of authority to the Vice President to act, as provided for in the constitution, has created a vacuum which is being exploited by some self-seeking individuals and politicians," the forum said.

Yar'adua: AC backs Arewa Consultative Forum

By Muideen Olaniyi

THE Action Congress (AC) yesterday expressed its support for the position of the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) over the position of the Federal Executive Council (FEC) on ailing President Umaru Musa Yar'adua.

FEC had said that Yar'adua can still exercise executive power in spite of his health challenges but ACF voiced worry over this position in view of the continued absence of the President.

AC National Publicity Secretary, Alhaji Lai Mohammed, said ACF's stand on the issue was in tandem with its earlier belief the FEC lacked patriotic and selfless people who can put the interest of the nation over and above their own narrow and self-serving interests.

Mohammed said had FEC acted patriotically, and in accordance with Section 144 of the Constitution, the raging controversy would have been checked in the interest of the good people of Nigeria.

He said apart from the constitutional provision, the need for the President to legally transfer power to his deputy while on a sick bed was a moral and political issue, which did not have to wait for court rulings.

"Who is it among the Ministers who will be a shareholder in a firm and will not be concerned when the CEO of that firm suddenly disappears, for upwards of 70 days, without delegating authority to any of his

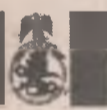
assistants?" he queried.

The party also warned that the series of appeals from prominent Nigerians to President Yar'adua to hand over to Vice President Goodluck Jonathan, while his medical treatment lasts, may be setting a bad precedent and giving the impression that the Constitution can be flouted or ignored at will.

"Those who wrote our Constitution know that the President, not being a super-human being, can take ill anytime, hence the need for Section 145 that requires the President to write the National Assembly as a precursor to transferring power to his deputy so he can act in the President's absence.

"But when the President, for whatever reasons, chooses to ignore that relevant section and instead resorts to time-buying tactics, even as the country is left rudderless for over two months now, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and the cabal who have been holding 150 million Nigerians hostage should not be in doubt that history will not be kind to them.

"If we are not sure, we only need to look at how this issue would have been handled in other countries that also practice Constitutional democracy. For example, did former US President Ronald Reagan have to be prodded by ex-American Presidents and prominent US citizens to hand over to his deputy when he had to undergo surgery while in office?" the party further queried.



National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA)

PUBLIC AUCTION

The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) hereby notify the general public that it will sell by Public Auction vehicles, motorcycles, and sundry properties forfeited by the Federal High Court to the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Pursuant to Regulation 7 of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (Disposal of forfeited Assets and Properties) Regulations made pursuant to section 38(4) of CAP N30 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004, the NDLEA hereby invites interested government licenced auctioneers to apply for the conduct of the public auction.

All interested government licenced auctioneers should submit their application(s) for screening and selection to:

**The Director General/secretary,
NDLEA,
NHQ, 4 Shaw Road,
Ikoyi, Lagos.
Attention: Auction Panel.**

All application(s) must be forwarded within one (1) week from the date of this publication.

**Signed
MANAGEMENT**

SPORT

Odemwingie
named in
African X1
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NFF wants Shehata

HASSAN Shehata claims he has been offered the chance to lead Nigeria at the FIFA World Cup™ after guiding Egypt to the CAF Africa Cup of Nations title.

The Pharaohs coach, who has been in charge of the north Africans since 2004, is highly regarded on the continent and a 1-0 victory over Ghana in yesterday's final further increased his status. The win in Angola was a third in succession and with the Egyptians having failed to qualify for the global showpiece in South Africa, it could offer Shehata further possibilities.

"They expressed an interest in hiring me to take charge of their team during the World Cup," the 60-year-old told television station Modern Sport.

Under-fire Shaibu Amodu is currently in charge of the Super Eagles, who finished third at the Cup of Nations. However reports are rife in Nigeria that he could relinquish the position before the FIFA World Cup, where his side are pooled in Group B alongside Argentina, Korea Republic and Greece.

Shehata added that if he does take charge it will be on a temporary basis, but conceded the ultimate decision lay with his current employers. He added: "It will be a great honour for me to work in the World Cup. But the Egyptian FA will have the final word on whether I could work with Nigeria on a temporary basis."

Egypt narrowly missed out on a place at the FIFA World Cup after losing 1-0 to Algeria in a play-off in Sudan after both sides finished level on points and goal difference during regular qualifying.



EGYPT'S coach Hassan Shehata dishing out instructions to his team. The NFF have offered him the chance to lead Super Eagles to the 2010 World Cup in South Africa.

Toro kicks against Herve Renard

By Orkula Shaagee

FORMER Secretary General in the Nigeria Football Federation, Alhaji Sani Ahmed Toro yesterday said the decision to go for current Zambia national team Head Coach, Herve Renard as the next Super Eagles coach was wrong.

Media reports yesterday indicate that the Nigeria Football Federation officials led by its President Alhaji Sani Lulu Abdullahi and Head of Tech-

nical Committee Taiwo Ogunjobi met with Renard, with a view to the Frenchman leading the Eagles to the World Cup in South Africa in June this year.

Toro, who was also commissioner of sports in Bauchi State, told Trustsports in a telephone interview that what the country need at the moment is to engage a foreigner who has full knowledge of African football to lead the Eagles to South Africa 2010 World Cup.

Aside from that, Toro urged

those saddled with task of recruiting a foreign coach for Nigeria to consider the achievements recorded by the incoming coach in his previous place of work and the time spent with such a team.

Consequently, the former federal lawmaker warned that the Nigeria Football Federation should not consider the Zambian coach simply because his side gave them a tough fight in the quarter final of the 2010 African Cup of Nations.

"Now that we have known the performance of Amodu and his ability, following his performances in Angola, it is clear that we need a foreign Technical Adviser but it should not just be anybody with a white skin.

"We need a tested foreign coach who knows African football very well. So, Renard is not the right person for the job, we should not go for him simply because Zambia gave us tough time in the quarter final in Angola", Toro stated.

Speaking further, Toro explained that there is enough time for a good coach to raise a World Cup-winning team for the country, considering the huge number of quality players that abound in the country.

He also suggested that a quality foreign coach can work with equally good indigenous coaches like Sunday Oliseh to produce good results for the country at the coming World Cup fiesta in South Africa.

Royal tumble

Prince Harry falls head-first from his horse during charity polo match, and hurls his mallet in disgust

THIS is the moment England's Prince Harry took a heart-stopping, head-first tumble from his polo pony during a charity match in the Caribbean yesterday.

The third in line to the throne was thrown from his mount as he attempted a sharp turn close to the goal mouth, causing the animal to lose its footing and slide across the ground in a cloud of dust and grass.

Fortunately the 25-year-old prince managed to dive forwards and execute an athletic roll, breaking the impact of his fall on the rock-hard field in Barbados.

Seconds later he picked himself up unharmed but was clearly upset at the blunder as he threw his mallet to the ground in disgust, ripped off his helmet and punched it. The pony was unhurt.

Harry's team went on to win the inaugural Sentebale Polo Cup, with the prince scoring one of their six goals.

But the moment evoked memories of the incident in which his father, Prince Charles, was knocked

unconscious while playing the game and swallowed his tongue.

He was taken to hospital suffering concussion after the 2001 accident.

Speaking about the fall afterwards, Harry said: "I'm a bit sore but it was all for a good cause so it was worthwhile in the end."

"Basically the horse slipped from underneath me, which does happen occasionally and is a bit unfortunate."

"It probably looks very dramatic because I was trying to throw myself clear of the horse. I'm a bit sore but the horse is ok though."

The Prince explained that he hadn't thrown down his mallet in anger at getting thrown but was furious that he may have lost Sentebale a sizeable donation.

He explained: "The reason why I was throwing my mallet down was because I met this nice businessman at dinner last night who offered me \$50,000 for Sentebale if I fell off my horse today."

"His wife turned round and said

'that's a bit harsh, you should give him \$100,000 if he stays on.' And he agreed to seal the deal on that."

"So when I fell off, I threw down my mallet and shouted: 'What a waste of \$100,000!' I was furious with myself."

"Fortunately this extremely generous gentleman has already been in touch and told us that it was the clear that the horse fell over, rather than I fell off it, so he was happy to honour the \$100,000. What a star!"

Harry was playing at the exclusive Apes Hill Polo Club in Barbados to raise money for Sentebale, the charity he co-founded in memory of his late mother to help vulnerable Aids orphans in the African kingdom of Lesotho.

The 1,200 ticket match was a complete sell out and is expected to raise more than £100,000. Harry hopes to make the Sentebale Polo Cup an annual event.

Lesotho is one of the world's poorest nations and has been devastated by an HIV pandemic.



JOHN Terry, England captain

Terry's future as England captain still unclear

ENGLAND coach Fabio Capello alone will decide on whether John Terry keeps his job as captain of the national team.

The Football Association said Monday that Capello had spoken with the body's chairman and chief executive and been given free reign to decide whether to stick with Terry in the wake of allegations about his private life.

"Fabio is fully up to speed with developments regarding John Terry," the FA said in a statement. "He spoke with our chairman Lord (David) Triesman and chief executive Ian Watmore today, who both backed him to make the best decision for England on footballing grounds."

"Fabio is dealing with the matter in his own way using his extensive experience as a football manager."

Terry's future has been under scrutiny since last week when allegations surfaced of an affair between the married Chelsea defender and the partner of England teammate Wayne Bridge.

The allegations may be about to get even more lurid after publicist Max Clifford said the woman at the center of the furor was considering speaking publicly.

Clifford is now representing Bridge's ex-partner. He said the woman, Vanessa Perroncel, had been offered 250,000 pounds (\$398,400) by a media outlet for

exclusive rights to her story.

Clifford did not say who had offered the money.

"The 250,000-pound offer is just the latest bid," Clifford told Sky News. "I am in negotiations on her behalf."

"It's a story that everyone's talking about and it's a story that obviously all the papers and the television networks are very, very keen to get to the bottom of and find out what the truth is."

But Capello's decision is most likely to hinge on whether Terry's England teammates are happy for him to continue as the team's leader, particularly since Bridge could still make the World Cup squad.

Capello, an Italian, is known as a strict disciplinarian.

Bridge has been backup to Ashley Cole at left back for the past few seasons, but British media reported over the weekend that he may retire from international football because of the situation.

Bridge released a statement saying his only concern is for the welfare of the child he had with his ex-partner, but several of his Manchester City teammates offered support Sunday when they wore T-shirts under their team shirts bearing the phrase "Team Bridge."

Capello is likely to be questioned on the subject at Sunday's draw in Warsaw for the 2012 European Championship.



PRINCE Harry is thrown from his horse during a charity polo match in Barbados



HE hurls his mallet in disgust

... then stomps off the pitch

CORRIGENDUM

KANO STATE GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCE.
RE-INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION

This is to inform the general public that in the Daily Trust of Thursday 26th January, 2010 edition, it was erroneously published 'Pre-Qualification for Contractors for the supply of assorted fertilizer for 101 Agricultural season' instead of 'PRE-QUALIFY CONTRACTORS FOR THE SUPPLY OF ASSORTED FERTILIZER FOR 2010 AGRICULTURAL SEASON'. The error is highly regretted.

SIGNED
Baffa Bello
Permanent Secretary
For: Hon. Commissioner

New stars emerge in Angola

WHILE Egypt's lifting of their third consecutive CAF Africa Cup of Nations trophy surprised few, there were plenty of revelations at the biennial tournament in Angola. Particularly notable was the emergence of a handful of players that have now planted themselves firmly on world football's radar.

This was not a tournament in which established stars dominated, with the likes of Samuel Eto'o and Didier Drogba never really hitting form. However, a new generation of players emerged to pick up the slack, providing countless memorable moments. Ahmed Hassan was surely an exception, winning the tournament's best player award in his fourth successful continental campaign, but it was the emergence of super-sub Mohamed 'Gedo' Nagui that was the biggest bonus for Egyptian supporters.

And while Nigeria's Peter Odemwingie, Mali's Seydou Keita and Côte d'Ivoire's Gervinho confirmed their places among the best on the continent, a clutch of unheralded players also caught the eye at this latest Cup of Nations.

Mohamed Nagui, Egypt

The breakout star of the tournament with five goals in as many substitute appearances, the Al Ittihad striker known as Gedo scored a goal for every 35 minutes he was on the pitch. And they were almost all top-class finishes, with his quick-thinking volley against Mozambique in the group stage arguably the best of the lot. His finish in the 85th minute of the final as Egypt beat Ghana 1-0 was every bit as classy though, and even better was his run and full-speed combination play with Mohamed Zidan that set up the chance with extra time looming.

Samuel Inkoom, Ghana

A strong and balanced right back with a knack for finding himself in the middle of attacking action up the other end, Inkoom proved himself to be a good crosser of the ball as well as a solid defender. The 20-year-old Basel youngster was one of six players from the team that won the U-20 World Cup last October, and the only difficult choice for watchers was which of the composed young



DEDO of Egypt



RISING star... Dede Ayew, the son of Black Stars legend Abedi Pele, and Egypt's Sayed Moawad during the Africa Cup of Nations final in Luanda on Sunday

Ghanaian defenders were best as Isaac Vorsah, 21, and Lee Addy, 19, also enjoyed top-drawer tournaments.

Jonathan Pitroipa, Burkina Faso

The speedy winger was about as impressive as could be for a player whose team didn't score any goals in the event. The 23-year-old was often left to cover great distances for his side up front, and he in turn showed great acceleration and skill with both feet as his team drew 0-0 with Côte d'Ivoire before falling to Ghana 1-0. It was a measure of his heart against the Black Stars that even though he spent the match taking on more than one defender at a time, he earned praise from Ghana coach Milovan Rajevac and his backline after the match. At the other end, defender Saidou Panandetiguir, 25, was the best of back for the Burkinabe.

Emmanuel Mbola, Zambia

Aged just 16 years and eight



ASAMOAH of Ghana

months, the left-back was a strong part of the Zambian team that performed so well in reaching the quarter-finals in Angola. The Armenian-based player impressed with his physical defending and attacking instincts. He was one of the side's best players in the last eight defeat to Nigeria on penalties and has already earned 20 caps for the Chipolopolo. The youngest player in the tournament, he is the second player under 17 to play at a Cup of Nations (after Gabonese striker Nzighou Chiva).

Mabina, Angola

While Flavio, Manucho and Gilberto drew most of the headlines for the hosts, little-known right-sided player Mabina also turned a lot of heads. He was a reserve coming into the event, but the Angola-based player was a tireless threat down the flank in Group A before being stymied along with the rest of his team in the quarter-finals by Ghana. Many are now describing him as the next Gilberto, referring to the 27-year-old winger who stars for Al Ahly in Egypt.

Andre Ayew, Ghana

The son of Black Stars legend Abedi Pele, Ayew has seemed to have little problem adjusting to such lofty comparisons so far in his fledgling career. Also a member of the world champion U-20 Ghana team, the 20-year-old was a confident, positive presence in midfield for the injury-hit Black Stars in Angola. The Marseille player was very comfortable on the ball and excelled in running at opposition defences. He kept his concentration to head home the only goal against Burkina Faso in Group B, which sent his team into the knockout rounds.

Victor Nsofor Obinna, Nigeria

After coming on as a substitute in each of his country's first five Cup of Nations matches and impressing with his rangy agility and dangerous running, Nsofor finally started a match in the third-place contest against Algeria. And the player, who is on loan at Malaga from Inter Milan, did not disappoint. The 22-year-old scored the game's only goal with a tremendous burst of pace through the middle of Les Fenecs' defence before finishing well with his left foot. It was one of the best moments of the tournament for the bronze-medal winners.

Kwadwo Asamoah, Ghana

The 21-year-old Udinese midfielder had one of the sweetest touches in the Cup of Nations, justifying his wearing of the No 10 shirt at such a young age. It was his corner kick that curled perfectly onto the head of Asamoah Gyan, who scored the all-important goal in the semi-final against Nigeria. He also showed great skill in the Group B encounter against Côte d'Ivoire with speed and a fine shot that forced the best from goalkeeper Boubacar Barry.

Didier Ovono, Gabon

The goalkeeper, who turned 27 during the tournament, was the hero of the Black Panthers' shock 1-0 victory over Cameroon to open the tournament. And though the team went out at the group stage based on goals scored, the Le Mans player continued to make an impact with his leadership of the backline and quick reflexes. Ovono only saw his goal breached twice at the CAN, both by Zambia in their third match. Talented young defender Bruno Ecuele Manga also impressed for the Gabonese.

Odemwingie named in African X1

NIGERIA'S striker Osaze Odemwingie is one of the top 11 players selected by the Confederation of Africa Football (CAF) Technical Committee as the most outstanding players at the Nations Cup.

The six-man committee headed by CAF Technical Director, Hussein Abdel Moneim, made the selection of the 11 players and 12 substitutes after several hours of deliberation before Sunday's final game between Ghana and Egypt in Luanda.

A news item on cafonline.com showed that five Egyptians are on the 11-man squad, hosts Angola two, while Nigeria, Ghana, Algeria and Cameroon has one each.

The Egyptians on the list are Essam El Hadary, Wael Gomaa, Ahmed Fathi, Ahmed Hassan and Mohamed Zidan.

Others are Madjid Bougherra (Algeria), Alexandre Song (Cameroon), Mabina and Flavio (Angola), Odemwingie (Nigeria) and Asamoah Gyan (Ghana).

Nigeria was not left out of the 12-man substitute list as Ogbuke Obasi also made the list.

Mohamed Nagy Gedo, scorer of Egypt's winning goal is also on the substitute list, which has Ghana's goalkeeper Richard Kingson, Zambia's Emmanuel Mbola, Achille Emana of Cameroon and Mali's Seydou Keita.

The others are Kwadwo Asamoah and Andre Ayew (Ghana), Karim Ziani (Algeria), Gabon's Eric Mouloungui, Jacob Mulenga of Zambia and Salomon Kalou of Côte d'Ivoire.

The CAF technical committee members are Ben Kouffie, Adegboye Onigbinde,

Anthony Baffoe, Noser Fathy and Maalouch Belhasan.



ODEMWINGIE

THE TUESDAY COLUMN

Sanusi Abubakar

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Obama: Perhaps a year is not long enough

On the eve of the last American Presidential election I wrote a piece titled "What if McCain wins? Preparing for the unexpected" which was published in this paper on 4th November, 2008 cautioning greater realism in our expectations of both the outcome of that election, and our overblown expectations of what an Obama victory would mean for Africa. Let me extract some of what I said:

"The world is in agreement about the need for a multi-lateral America that will focus on peace and peace building, engage other nations with respect; not one that would raise a posse after any and all real or imaginary enemies, even on concocted grounds like the search for non-existent weapons of mass destruction, which in any case it possesses more than anyone else... It is this unending cycle of endless wars, senseless deaths and collateral damages that the world want to see ended. Obama offers hope for greater dialogue and more diplomacy."

"Other reasons for preferring Obama (to McCain) include his willingness to see the UN as a force for good, his better understanding of climate change, better grasp of Cuba, Venezuela, Russia and other issues. For Africa, there is the assumption that he would do more for the continent. And yes, there is the tribal issue too: he is black. Without doubt, having a black president in the White House would be a historic morale booster for all the marginalised, the deprived and the discriminated of this world."

"But what if Obama loses today's vote? What if the polls are wrong? What if race becomes a factor we have underestimated?"

"It would be painful yes, but not fatal. The sun will rise. The world will not end."

"Africa's expectations are unrealistic anyway. Obama and McCain are running for the presidency of the USA and not the United States of Africa, despite the similarity in abbreviation. Both will pursue their nation's interest first. Africa could still expect more assistance on HIV/AIDS, malaria and polio. AGOA, or some variant of that, would probably be revamped. The US Africa command would be functional, as the oil in Nigeria, Angola and Gabon continues to supplement America's energy needs. We would still need a visa to the USA, perhaps with less humiliation if Obama wins. Obama promised to raise assistance for MDG to 50 billion and to adopt them as America's own. McCain said he would focus on legal reforms and pressing African leaders on the importance of good governance."

Looking back at Obama's first one year in office, it is clear that nothing much has changed in US-Africa relations. However, as we insisted over a year ago, Africa's hopes were unrealistic to begin with. Also, despite several fine, well meaning speeches, the expectations of many in Latin America and the Middle East would be dashed. His administration is not making any significant moves to end the imperial disdain for Cuba, despite positive overtures from that unjustifiably victimised island. Nor is it treating the South Americans as people with the rights to shape their destinies. As for the Palestinians, a group that also had high expectations of an Obama presidency, they still suffer Israeli aggression and occupation, with Gaza still a prison, and forced evictions and new settlements are daily occurrences. That the Jews suffered in the last World Wars does not jus-

tify America's continuing endorsement of every one of Israel's crimes and its arrogant impudence. Can Obama help to make America an honest arbiter? That is yet to be seen.

We Africans were victims of much more heinous crimes including enslavement, colonial occupation and exploitation, cold war destabilisation and the west's support for the most corrupt rulers, not to mention the tens of millions who died in the middle passage, yet all we get for our silence are regular lectures on good governance, ending corruption and sticking to free market policies which are not working for the vast majority. The least we expect is for Obama to use his good office to give us more say in the World Bank, IMF and the UN Security Council which are presently dominated by the biggest imperial powers and arms manufacturers, who insist on telling us all how we should live our lives.

But, ultimately, Obama is a President for Americans not a global village chief. To survive and succeed he must come to terms with his internal constituency. There are forces in

the US opposed to Cuba, to a different South America, to any Palestinian president not approved by Israel. On top of that, his bailout of banks and automobile manufactures as well as the growing deficit financing of his reforms are all becoming problematic. They are sparking a rebellion that could threaten his administration and he is increasingly looking like a one-term President. But perhaps his second year would be more positive.

Besides the certainty that AFRICOM will be headquartered somewhere near the Gulf of Guinea to protect their source of oil, I still do not expect much for Africa from this US administration. Occasional visits to

lecture us or snubbing some countries do not constitute foreign policy. But at least the Bush era of war mongering, arrogance and fundamentalist rhetoric is over, even if it is for a while. We thank God for this.

Last week's error

In my column last Tuesday I made a stupid mistake which I honestly don't know how it came about. I referred to the late Dr. Eric Williams as a onetime Prime Minister of Jamaica. He was not. He led his country, Trinidad and Tobago, and even the anecdote I cited was recounted to me by my first friend from Trinidad, the late John La Rose, (died 28 February 2006), a political and cultural activist, poet, writer, publisher, and Chairman of the George Padmore Institute and founder, with Sarah White, of New Beacon Books.

I could hide behind several excuses. That I last read Williams' Capitalism and Slavery over 30 years ago; that most of last week's piece was written on the road to Dutse, in Jigawa State; or that I have been listening, too frequently perhaps, to Marlon Asher's songs, trying to place his country T&T on the world reggae map. But I won't hide behind these. I was careless, and I apologise; especially to my Trinidadian friend Len Duncan, and to Okello Oculi and Modibbo Kawu, who pointed out the error very early that morning via text messages. And to think that I intend to apply for a visa to T&T very soon; what am I thinking?



But, ultimately, Obama is a President for Americans not a global village chief. To survive and succeed he must come to terms with his internal constituency. There are forces in the US opposed to Cuba, to a different South America, to any Palestinian president not approved by Israel

SPORTS REPORT



MOHAMMED Gedo

Gedo admires Al Ahli rather than Europe

Egypt's star man in the Africa Cup of Nations tournament, Mohamed Nagy 'Gedo', has said that he admires Egyptian club Al Ahli.

The Ittihad ace stole the limelight in the 2010 African Cup by hitting five goals in six games, including the decisive winner against Ghana, to help Egypt retain their title in Angola. He came on as a sub in all of the matches, and his

goals were decisive.

With some European clubs reportedly interested, Gedo would love to play abroad but hopes to wear the red shirt otherwise.

"Of course I hope to play in Europe, it would be a good move for my career," the 26-year-old forward was quoted as saying in Filgoal.com.

"But in Egypt I prefer Ahli because I have been a fan since my childhood."



VICTOR Moses

Moses signs for Wigan

Victor Moses' agent announced on Sunday that the Crystal Palace teenager has put pen to paper on a £2.5 million move to Wigan Athletic.

Tony Finnegan told Sky Sports News the player had signed a three-and-a-half-year deal at Wigan after passing a medical and agreeing personal terms.

The striker had been heavily linked with a number of clubs before and during the January transfer window, with Championship promotion-chasers Newcastle United, West Bromwich Albion and Nottingham Forest all tabling bids.

However, the offer of immediate Premier League football has allowed Wigan to jump the queue for the highly rated Nigerian-born 19-year-old.

