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TRUST IS A BURDEN

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Yar'adua not here

By Atika Balal & Sharafa Dauda

FORTY days since President Umaru Yar'adua left the country to seek medical attention abroad, more mystery was added to the story yesterday when an official of the King Faisal Hospital and Research Centre in Jeddah told the British Broadcasting Corporation [BBC] that Yar'adua was not in the hospital. Sources in the Nigerian Consulate in Jeddah however denied the claim to *Daily Trust*, saying Yar'adua was still in

— Hospital says

the hospital.

The BBC Hausa service programme quoted an unnamed hospital official as telling their correspondent that Yar'adua, who has been receiving medical attention

there since he left this country, is no longer with them. The hospital official also refused to say whether the president was at the hospital earlier. He referred the BBC reporters to the Nigerian embassy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia,

But phone calls made by its reporters to the office of the Nigerian ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Abdullahi Garba Aminchi, were not answered, the BBC said.

Efforts by *Daily Trust* to obtain a comment from some government officials were rebuffed last night. Several calls placed to Ambassador Aminchi's telephones were also not answered. Yar'adua's Special Adviser of Communication Olusegun Adeniyi also did not answer text messages sent to him. However, Information

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PHOTO: AFP

KENYAN commuters hang onto an overloaded train in Nairobi yesterday, after public transport was paralysed in the main Kenyan cities as minibus drivers went on a three-day strike following claims of extortion and corruption by Kenya police.

Senate gives US ultimatum on searches

By Abdul-Rahman Aqubakar

THE Senate yesterday issued an ultimatum to the

United States of America to delist Nigeria from its list of countries that are of special "interest" in terrorism mat-

ters or face possible counter action when the legislature resumes next week.

Briefing newsmen on

the listing of Nigeria as one of 14 countries from where travellers to the US will face thorough screening, Chair-

man Senate Committee on Information and Media said the decision of the US government was "hasty"

and "unacceptable."

Senator Eze said, "I am referring specifically

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Violence erupts in Katsina-Ala over Rep seat

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

A weekend of violent clashes between two political groups in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State has claimed three lives including a police officer sent to quell the uprising. A bridge across River Yooyo where the gunfight was said to have begun, was destroyed in the incident. Fighting broke out between two rival political groups over the Ukum/Katsina-Ala/Logo Federal Constituency seat otherwise known as Sankera in the House of Representatives, when supporters loyal to Rep Mzenda Iho (PDP) who is seeking a second term allegedly clashed with supporters loyal to Chief Abu King Shuluwa and Atoza Hindan.

Our correspondent gathered

that both Shuluwa and Hindan are against Iho's second term aspiration in 2011, a development which united them against the incumbent to the advantage of Barrister Emmanuel Udende (also of the PDP) who is one of the contenders in the race.

Only a month ago, Udende was stopped from visiting Tor-Donga, Iho's native home town, by gunshots allegedly from supporters of the incumbent.

The weekend gunfight broke out in Yooyo, adjoining Tor-Donga. The Benue State Police Commissioner Ibrahim Mohammed did not pick his calls for official confirmation, but the command's spokesman, ASP Richard Dauda, told *Daily Trust* on phone that there was violence in the area. Dauda however declined to give

details, saying he was yet to get full reports on the violence, except that he had an informal briefing from the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) in charge of Katsina-Ala when he later visited the command headquarters in Makurdi on the matter, yesterday. The spokesman said units of armed policemen had since been deployed to the area to restore normalcy and make arrests. He refused to confirm any deaths, saying he was yet to be briefed.

But King Shuluwa who spoke to *Daily Trust* on the phone said there were reports of skirmishes between political supporters in the area, but added that he had no connection. He described allegations that the skirmishes were from high political manoeuvring involving him and another politi-

cal leader - Hindan, as "mere politics", saying "it is true I am not supporting Mzenda Iho; one because he is from the Shitile axis, and two, because his performance is zero, but I have not teamed up with any other political leader and the fight in Yooyo can not be linked to me".

Shuluwa however confirmed political animosity between him and Iho, saying it arose from the fact that "Iho has no performance record, and he is sponsoring militia in Katsina-Ala".

He said he has since given his blessing for Ukum axis of the constituency to produce Iho's successor in 2011 because by 2011, the Shitile people would have clocked 12 years on seat, denying other areas of the constituency the opportunity. Governor Gabriel Suswam, a Shitile, represented

Sankera for two terms and was succeeded by Iho, of the same ruling house. Atoza Hindan refused to speak to *Daily Trust* on phone. But he did not deny that the crisis has connection with the political scheming ahead of 2011.

Emmanuel Udende who said he received reports of the crisis, refused to agree that it was politically motivated. According to him, "one of Mzenda Iho's boys nicknamed Ghana, has been naming armed robbery suspects for police arrest. I understand the police have arrested about 12 of them, all of which are Mzenda Iho's boys. This sparked up the gunfight. It has nothing to do with my political aspiration". The federal lawmaker - Mzenda Iho could not be reached for comments as his phone was unreachable.



FROM left: Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chief Ojo Maduekwe, briefing newsmen on the terrorism attack on the U.S. Plane, in Abuja yesterday. With him are Senior Special Adviser to the President on Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Thaddeus Hart, and a director in the minister's office, Mr Humphrey Orjiako.

PIC: NAN

Suspected ritualists kill 5 women in Delta

From Monday Osayande, Asaba

FIVE women have been killed in their farms by people suspected to be ritualists in Ibusa, a town near Asaba and its environs in Oshimili North Local Government of Delta State.

Their private parts and breasts were removed, although police confirmed that only two persons were killed.

Our correspondent learnt that those who dare to go to farm in the locality (Ibusa) especially non natives, are accompanied by armed men while the killing of an indigene by the assailants recently ignited protests. Because the killings were usually carried out in farms or farm roads, several farmers were said to have abandoned their farms for fear of being attacked while some relocated to other villages.

Several protests sponsored by the youths of the community have compelled the monarch of the community Obi (Prof.) Luis Nwaboshi to lead a delegation to the police to seek protection for women farmers as according to him, "the attack is mostly on women". Confirming the incidents yesterday, the state's Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) Charles Muka who described the development as pathetic and unfortunate, said the command was working closely with the community's vigilante group to monitor and arrest the situation. Muka added that the police were yet to make any arrest in connection with the killings.

Obasanjo brokers peace in Togo

From Kehinde Akinyemi, Abèokuta

THE crisis in Togo may soon end with former President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, expected to broker a truce, our correspondent

gathered. The development came as the Asantehene of Asante in Ghana, Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, described Obasanjo as the guardian light of Africa who should be appreciated and loved by his fel-

low countrymen and women.

Togo has been enmeshed in political crises in the past few months occasioned by the sharp division in the government of Faure Gnassingbé.

His half brother, Kpatcha, a member of the parliament, representing Kozah district, had been in detention since April 2009 over an alleged attempt to impeach Faure.

Bauchi students protest scholarship verification

THE National Union of Bauchi State Students (NUBASS) yesterday embarked on a protest against a policy requiring its members to appear for verification before they could be paid their scholarship.

The union is made up of

46,000 students studying in various tertiary institutions in the country. The protesting students besieged the Bauchi State Scholarship Board along Wunti street, where they mobilised their colleagues for the action.

The student leaders addressed

their colleagues on the development where they agreed to formally present their complaint to the Emir of Bauchi, Alhaji Suleman Adamu. They were carrying leaves and placards with various inscriptions such as "All the 46,000 students cannot come to

Bauchi", "Pay us our scholarship before verification", "Bala Jibrin has killed education in Bauchi", among others.

The students pushed the grounded vehicle of the union from the board to the emir's palace, chanting songs.

EFCC seals Akingbola's Ikoyi home

By Boco Edet

OPERATIVES of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) sealed the Lagos home of sacked Managing Director of Intercontinental Bank Erastus Akingbola located in Ikoyi yesterday.

A Federal High Court in Lagos ordered the freezing of some of his bank accounts and also granted EFCC permission for interim forfeitures of properties traced to the ex-MD.

EFCC's Spokesman Femi Babafemi said operatives also seized 15 exotic cars parked in the house and that the exercise would continue today.

Other houses to be temporarily forfeited by Akingbola include the Amazing Grace Plaza on Ligali Ayorinde Street, Victoria Island and No 2, Bedwell Street, Ikoyi, all in Lagos.

The court also granted an order of *mareva* injunction, restraining Akingbola, his wife, Anthonia, their children, his associates, companies and agents from "removing, alienating, disposing of, dealing with or diminishing the value of his assets, whether held directly or indirectly or for his benefit within the jurisdiction of this court."

Akingbola, his family members, lawyers and associates are restrained from giving instruction "for the withdrawal from, transfer out of, alienating, disposing of, dealing with, or diminishing the value of the money kept in all his bank accounts in Nigeria".

He is also restrained from giving instruction for the sale or transfer of the shares and other forms of securities being held at the Central Security Clearing Systems (CSCS) or any custodian, stockbroker or registrar.

EFCC is also to serve Akingbola court papers at No 26, Chester Terrace, London, England NW14ND, through substituted means by using courier service.

CBN justifies mass sack in banks

By Jibrin Abubakar & Idris Ahmed

THE Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) yesterday justified the mass retrenchment going on in some Nigerian banks but said it did not authorize it.

This is coming against the backdrop of the directive by Labour Minister Adetokunbo Kayode asking banks to stop forthwith the mass sacking of staff in the sector.

CBN Governor Sanusi Lamido Sanusi told the press after the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting in Abuja that the apex bank "will not support a situation in which we direct an institution to continue to live on a cost profile that is not consistent with its revenue profile."

Thousands of banks staff have been laid off following the ongoing reforms in the banking sector. Eight banks had their managing directors sacked last year because of bad loans they could not recover and weakness in corporate governance in some of the banks.

Some of the banks that have retrenched their workers include: Intercontinental bank 1,364; Oceanic Bank 1,500; United Bank for

Africa 46; Union Bank 50; Spring Bank 200; Wema Bank 500, First Bank 500; and FinBank 500.

The Association of Senior Staff of Banks, Insurance and Financial Institutions (ASSBIFI) and the National Union of Banks, Insurance and Other Financial Institutions' Employees (NUBIFE) have both threatened to shut banks over the mass sack.

Sanusi said the allegations that CBN directed banks to sack workers were false because banks are private companies which can take decisions on the engagement and disengagement of workers based on business imperatives.

He said, "A bank like Oceanic bank was spending about N4 billion a month on salaries. Intercontinental was spending over N4 billion a month on salaries. There are no performing loans earning money. The banks had paid huge interest on it, paid interest on depositors fund and they have cost on running their branches. They have to survive."

He said the N620 billion injected into the banks that had problem was not given to them to retain workers. "We gave you the money

so that you don't lose your money." According to Sanusi, "If a bank is making losses and it continues running the overhead, it is taking depositors funds to fund its operations and further eroding your money and placing it at greater risk."

He said the banks have looked at their numbers and decided that there was problem.

"I will give you some numbers. Oceanic banks had a staff strength of about 19,000. A substantial number of those staff were recruited for branches that have not been opened. Contracts have been given. The company that supplies staff to the bank was owned by the managing director of the bank, on what basis should we retain those staff?" he asked.

He said: "It is very sad that people are losing their jobs, it is very sad that people are on the street. Unfortunately, everywhere in the world where banks are reducing costs, they have to let workers go. They do it everywhere, in America, in Europe and Asia. It is not unique to Nigeria."

"What we are trying to do is by solving the toxic assets problem,

by solving the capital problems and getting those banks back on their feet and those banks will now begin to employ people.

Yesterday's MPC meeting was the first time all members of the committee were in attendance. New members were selected mostly from the academia to attend the meeting. It was also the first time that the meeting was held for two days.

Among the decisions taken at the MPC meeting was to leave interest rate unchanged at 6 percent. It also extended all the guarantee on all interbank transactions up till December 31, 2010.

The MPC said that inflationary rate as at November 2009 was 12.4%. It said that inflation outlook for 2010 remains uncertain.

The MPC said: "Fat a combination of both domestic and international economic developments, namely the planned impact of the full deregulation of petroleum products prices, the expansionary fiscal outlay, the quantitative easing measures undertaken by the Bank, the resolution costs associated with the banking sectors reforms."



GOVERNOR of Central Bank of Nigeria Sanusi Lamido Sanusi at the Monetary Policy Committee meeting in Abuja yesterday.

Obasanjo invests in Ethiopia, buys 20,000sqm of land

FORMER Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo joined President of Djibouti and the Ethio-Saudi Sheik Mohamed Al Amoudi by acquiring large plots of land in Ethiopia.

The former Nigerian Presi-

dent is also to invest in Hotel and tourism sector of Ethiopia and has since secured a 20,000 square meter of land near Bishoftu (Debre Zeit) town of Oromia Region called Ada, according to Capital Ethiopia

newspaper.

The story was also reported on the www.newbusinessethiopia.com.

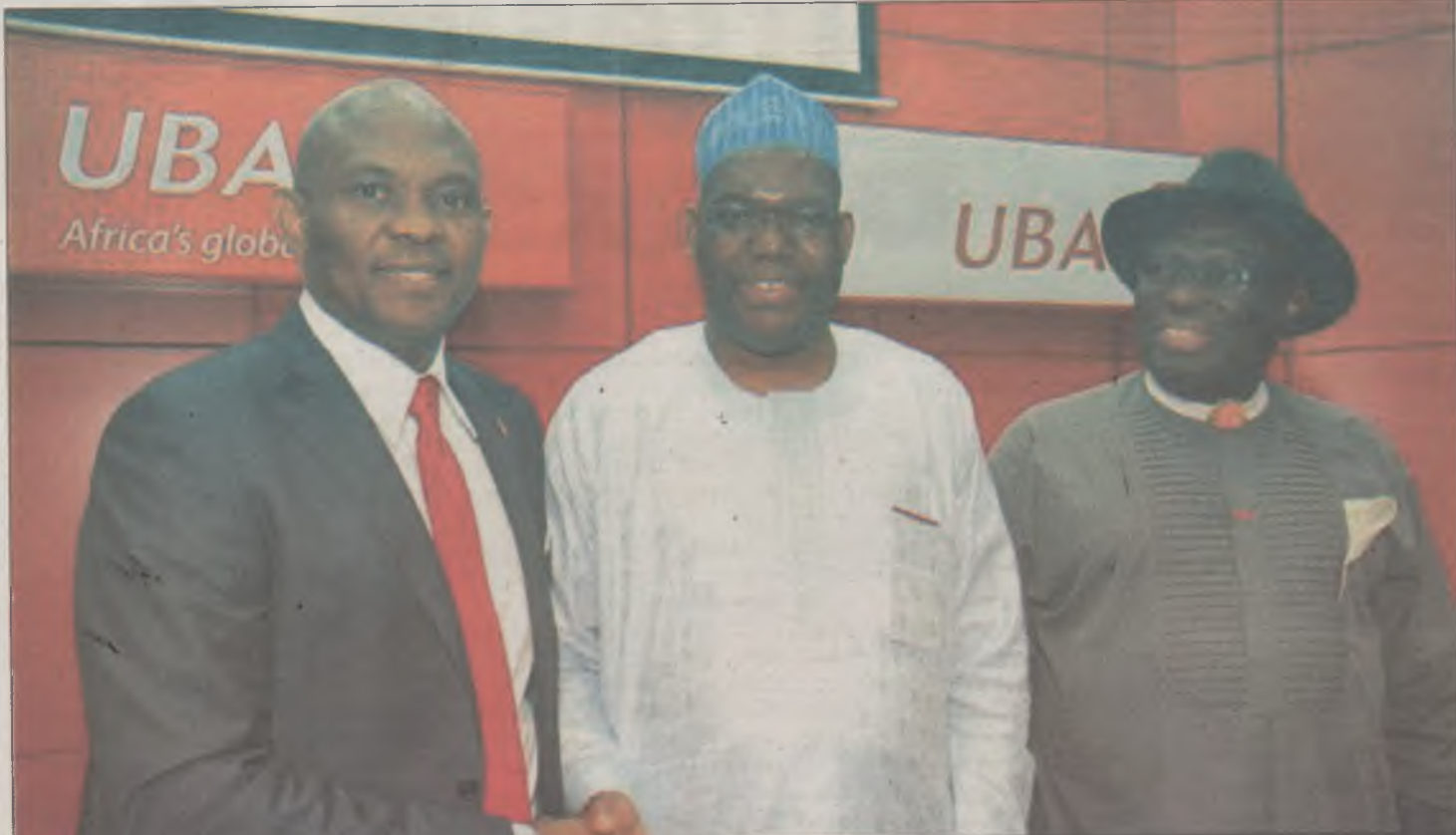
Obasanjo's intention to invest in Bishoftu has come following the footsteps of Dji-

bouti's president, Ismael Omar Guelleh, who took 10,000 square meters of land last year to build holiday home in Bishoftu and also bought 3,000 square meters of land for agriculture in Bale, Oromia Region

of the country.

After Bishoftu town's administration approved a new master plan last year, many investors are now investing in the town, which is known for its eight unique lakes.

PIC: NAN



FROM left: Mr Tony Elumelu, Group Managing Director Chief Executive Officer, UBA Plc, Abdulahi Shehu, Director General, GIABA, Senegal and Chief Ferdinand Alabraba, Chairman, UBA Plc, at a seminar on payments within ECOWAS and anti money laundering issues held at the UBA House, Marina, Lagos on Monday.

Mutallab's arrest a temporary setback to Nigeria – NIPR

NIGERIAN Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) yesterday said the alleged attempt by Umar Faruk Abdulmutallab to blow up a Delta Airliner is "a temporal setback" to Nigeria's contributions to world peace.

The NIPR said this in a statement by its National President Alhaji Muhammed Abdullahi in Bauchi.

"The incident should not be used to pass negative judgment on Nigerians, but rather be seen as an isolated scenario which manifests itself in the manipulation of a young Nigerian who may not understand the gravity of the action he was made to undertake.

"The action of Umar Faruk should be seen as a misguided conduct reflective of external influence on a fertile mind of a near adolescent young man," NIPR boss said.

The institute described the unfortunate incident as an "exception not the norm in the behaviour of Nigerians within the realm of international relations".

"It is an indisputable fact that many Nigerians have projected positive images of honesty, hard work and innovation.

The body however stressed the need for a reassessment of our traditional value system to engender national development through societal re-orientation toward uplifting our entrenched norms to create a sustainable society.

Ill health: N/Assembly has no case against Yar'adua-Senate

By Abdul-Rahman Abubakar

AFTER spending 43 days outside the country on medical grounds, President Umaru Musa Yar'adua has not committed any act in breach of the Constitution to warrant action by the National Assembly, Senate said yesterday.

Briefing newsmen on the President's absence from the country, Chairman Senate Committee on Information and Media, Senator Ayogu Eze said there is no Section of the Constitution that has been abused by the president.

He said "The Constitution as it is now did not specify the number

of days that the president must not stay out of the country. There is not part of the Constitution that made such pronouncement.

Constitution has not and I repeat has not specified a section or any pronouncement on the situation in which we are in today. There is no such section in the constitution which says the President cannot be out of his seat away somewhere, the constitution is quite silent on it. And if we do anything outside what the constitution says we will be committing an illegality."

Senator Eze said information available to the Senate indicates

that Mr. President's health has improved saying "We have gotten assurances that Mr. President is doing very well and he is on his way back. Why don't we give him the benefit of doubt, time has a way of healing things like this because there are things that you cannot heal by running your adrenaline and I believe that time will heal this problem.

Those who have seen him have assured us that he has done a tremendous recovery and we have no reason to doubt that he has not recovered and that he is on his way back. We have no reason to doubt that."

On the issue of the president transmitting a letter to the National Assembly before embarking on his trip, Senator Eze said the matter is discretionary and not mandatory.

"If the President chose to transmit a letter saying that he was going away on leave or he was going on medical checkup, then somebody will act in his position. And it doesn't give us any lee way to compel him to do that," he said.

Eze added that resorting to other constitutional provisions to deal with the matter could be harmful to the nascent democracy in the country.

FG wants Nigeria out of US 'terrorism-prone nations' list

By Aisha Umar

FOREIGN Affairs Minister Ojo Maduekwe has urged the U.S. government to reconsider its stand and remove Nigeria from the list of terrorism-prone nations.

Maduekwe made the request through the U.S. ambassador to Nigeria Robin Renee Sanders.

Speaking yesterday during a press briefing after a close-door

meeting with the US envoy, the minister said Nigerian will not accept to be treated at U.S airports alongside countries described as prone to terrorism. "Nigeria will not accept being put on terrorism-prone nations' list because Nigeria is not a terrorist country and does not train terrorist and Nigeria government is not in support of terrorist", he stated.

Justice Minister Michael Aon-

doaka also said that Nigeria will appeal to the United States to remove it from a terrorism flight watchlist drawn up in the wake of a failed plot to blow up a US airliner.

Aondoaka told reporters he believed the US "will rescind that decision because Nigeria is not a terrorist country and a single incident that involves a Nigerian cannot criminalise all Nigerians".

The minister said Robin

Sanders has promised to deliver the message to U.S. government and get back to Federal Government on U.S. response to Nigeria request.

He said Umar Faruk Mutallab, the alleged terror suspect, left Nigeria at the age of 13 and allegedly committed the act at the age of 23, which is a clear prove that he was not groomed on terrorism in Nigeria, therefore "150 million

Nigerians travelling to U.S should not be treated like citizens on terrorism-prone nations' list."

He said the Nigerian government condemned the act and promised to support U.S on its investigation.

He added that the entire religious crisis in Nigeria has never been linked with terrorism and 70 million Nigeria Muslims are law abiding and friendly to the West.

Ezekwesili says corruption bane of Nigeria's growth

By Beatrice Onuchukwu, Awka

WORLD Bank Vice President Oby Ezekwesili has described corruption as the cancer that erodes growth opportunity and effective value change in Nigeria's civil service.

Speaking as a Guest Lecturer at the 5th Anambra State Public Lecture, Dr. Ezekwesili who is the Vice President of World Bank (African Region) stressed the need for character, competence and commitment among the workers.

Also speaking, Anambra State Governor Peter Obi said that such interaction and consultations between his administration and civil servants have helped promote efficiency and higher productivity.

Obi urged the workers to shun quest for materialism, and vote for leaders with strong character not politicians who in a quest to acquire power by all means make bogus promises they cannot fulfil.

He said civil servants are

the engine of his administration and have the potentials to contribute in the present efforts to sustain good governance and save the state from sliding back to days of unpaid salaries, violence and exploitation.



A scene of an accident where a high tension power line was knocked down along Augustus Aikhomu Street, Utako District, Abuja, yesterday.

PHOTO: KENNEDY EGBONODJE

Senate gives US ultimatum on searchers

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issue of America in listing Nigeria as one of the 14 countries to be placed under watch and I am speaking on behalf of the Senate and the Senate President to say categorically that we are very unhappy about the development and that when we resume, we are going to take this matter very seriously if America has not taken Nigeria off from that list. We also want to advise America that it is in their own interest to ensure that they conduct this matter very well in a manner that will not resolve into a diplomatic row between Nigeria and America."

He said the action of the US government towards resolving the matter in the next few days shall determine whether or not Nigeria will continue to have diplomatic ties with it.

"This is not how diplomacy is conducted and we are going to engage all our diplomatic gears to ensure that we either have a relationship with America or we do not. And I think that it is most unfair given the kind of relationship that has existed between Nigeria and America, for them to jump to this type of conclusion without even adequate consultations with all the authorities in Nigeria. This not acceptable to us and we are going to do whatever we can as a nation to prove to America that we will not take this," Senator Eze said.

He blamed the US government and security outfits for laxity in the Christmas Day attempted bombing by a Nigerian, saying "the American President has himself clearly admitted that this is a failure of the system and the manpower of America and I do not see where Nigeria comes in here. We have also watched with keen interest several other breaches that have taken place since this boy's attempt. There was an uninvited guest who went to the White House, he and his wife were found, that was not a Nigerian. America should look inward and search their souls. Something is wrong with their system and they should not punish ordinary Nigerians who are law abiding and good international citizens for the failure and irresponsibility of the American operatives. Nigeria will not take that."

He said the Senate could be forced to take a drastic decision on the bi-lateral relations between the two countries should US refuse to delist Nigeria from the terror list adding, "If the situation is still there, it is going to be one of the major issues we are going to tackle and the Senate President has told me categorically that he is very unhappy about it on behalf of the leadership of the Senate, and being the Chairman of the National Assembly, it means also the National Assembly."

Twenty three year old Nigerian Umaru Faruk Abdulmutallab was alleged on Christmas Day to have attempted to bomb an airliner over the American city of Detroit.

Gov Gaidam condoles with IBB

GOVERNOR Ibrahim Gaidam of Yobe State has condoled with General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida in Minna yesterday over the death of his wife, Maryam Babangida.

The governor, who led a delegation of senior government offi-

cial from Yobe State including State Assembly Speaker, Usman Adamu and ANPP chairman, Sani Inuwa Nguru, described the late Maryam as a mother and philanthropist whose humanitarian services benefitted many in the country. 'She was an embodiment

of kindness, humility and service and the many humanitarian services she rendered especially to the poor will always be remembered,' Gaidam said.

The governor also prayed the Almighty to accept the humanitarian services that the late Mar-

yam rendered and to grant her al-Jannat Firdaus.

Gaidam was received at the Minna residence of the Babangidas by General Babangida, who expressed appreciation to the government and people of Yobe State for the condolence visit.

Yar'adua not here

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and Communications Minister Professor Dora Akunyili, told *Daily Trust* that she did not know anything about the report which claimed Yar'adua was no longer in the Saudi hospital. She said, "I don't know the report you are talking about. Where did you see it? Do you believe it?"

Meanwhile, an Abuja Federal High Court yesterday fixed January 14 to hear three suits challenging the absence of President Umaru Musa Yar'adua from office on health grounds since November 2009.

The Nigeria Bar Association (NBA) is insisting that President Umaru Yar'adua who has been on a medical trip to Saudi Arabia since November 23 2009, hands over to Vice President Goodluck Jonathan.

The NBA is asking the court to compel the Federal Executive

Council (FEC) to begin the process of handing over to the Vice President.

A similar suit brought before the court by Femi Falana is asking that decisions reached by the FEC during Yar'adua's absence be annulled. Falana is asking the defendant in the matter, Attorney General of the Federation, to answer whether the resolution of the Executive Council of the Federation adopted at its meeting of December 2, 2009 to the effect that President Umaru Yar'adua is capable of discharging the functions of his office was based on any medical report.

He is also asking to see a medical report on the current health condition of the President showing that he is not incapacitated as to be unable to discharge the functions of his office and a date when the President will resume duties in his office.

The Attorney General has

however filed a preliminary objection against Falana's suit, saying the plaintiff lacks the locus standi to institute the action and the suit disclosed no reasonable cause of action.

Yet another suit filed by former House of Representatives member Farouk Adamu Aliyu and Sani Hussani Garun Gabbas against the AGF and FEC asked the same court to determine whether the absence of President Umaru Yar'adua from Nigeria and from his constitutional and statutory duties for medical treatment since November 23 2009 at a Saudi Arabia hospital without being on vacation does not constitute permanent incapacity within the meaning and general intention of section 146 of the Nigerian constitution 1999.

They want the court to determine whether having regard to the fact that the President who has been undergoing treatment

in Saudi Arabia, the Executive Council of the Federation ought not to be compelled to pass and publicize a resolution as to whether or not the President is incapable of discharging the functions of his office.

They also want the court to give an order directing the Vice President to begin to perform the functions of office of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria or an order directing the Executive Council of the Federation to consider and if thought fit pass a resolution declaring whether the absence of the President since November 23 2009 constitutes incapacity within the meaning and intendment of section 146 of the Nigerian constitution 1999.

All three suits have the Attorney General of the Federation (AGF), Michael Aondoakaa (SAN), as a defendant. The parties in the suits have agreed that the suits be consolidated on the

'Terror suspect raised no suspicion in Amsterdam'

DUTCH investigators said yesterday they found no evidence that a Nigerian suspected of trying to blow up a U.S.-bound airliner contacted accomplices at Amsterdam's airport, and that he already had the explosives on him when he arrived on a connecting flight.

Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab flew to Schiphol Airport from

Lagos, Nigeria, before boarding a Northwest Airlines flight to Detroit on Christmas Day. He allegedly tried to blow up the plane by injecting chemicals into a package of pentrite explosive concealed in his underwear.

The failed attack caused popping sounds and flames that passengers and crew rushed to extinguish.

Abdulmutallab is in U.S. custody, charged with trying to blow up the Northwest flight.

Investigators checking more than 200 hours of security camera footage from Schiphol's shopping mall in the transfer area and departure gate say Abdulmutallab underwent a security interview and check and did nothing unusual in

his three-hour stopover. Earlier, authorities said the suspect went through a routine baggage check and scan by a metal detector before boarding. "Investigations so far have uncovered no indication that the suspect contacted possible accomplices at Schiphol, left the transfer area or behaved suspiciously," the National Prosecutor's Office said.

£128m: Union Bank wants court to set aside order

By Sunday Ejike Benjamin

UNION Bank of Nigeria Plc yesterday approached a High Court of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) with an application asking the Court to set aside its order that restrained it from tampering with the fixed deposit of £128,235,054.38 belonging to Global Fleet Oil and Gas Limited.

The Presiding vacation Judge, Justice Othman Musa had on December 22, 2009 granted an

ex parte motion filed by Global Fleet Oil and Gas Limited which is owned by Barrister Jimoh Ibrahim seeking the Court to stop the bank from selling his fixed deposit account kept with the Union Bank plc.

The Court also granted Jimoh the leverage to serve the writ of summons and other court processes in the suit for service out of jurisdiction of the court and serving same on the bank's head office in Lagos which is outside

the jurisdiction of the FCT High Court.

Union Bank, in its affidavit in support of the Preliminary Objection filed by its Counsel, Oseni Sefiulahi challenged the jurisdiction of the FCT high Court on the ground that the dispute in the case arose from an account domiciled with the Bank's office in Victoria Island, Lagos.

It said the subject matter and the action is within the bracket

of the justiciable powers of the court and that the jurisdiction of the court has been incompetently and in effectively invoked.

Reacting to the objection, counsel representing Ibrahim Jimoh, Onyilokwu Aboje told the court that "Such order will constrain the bank from illegally deducting any amount from the said figure", saying that the Defendant only came up with the Preliminary Objection to waste the time of the

court as the Counsel representing the bank knows that the Court has jurisdiction to entertain the matter.

The presiding vacation Judge of the FCT High court Othman A. Musa ruled that both parties maintain status quo ante pending the determination of the Preliminary Objection challenging the jurisdiction of the court.

The matter was adjourned further hearing in the application till February 25, 2010.

Nigeria's position on terrorism must be respected, says envoy

NIGERIA'S Permanent Representative to the UN, Prof Joy Ogwu, has asked the U.S. government to respect Nigeria's position on terrorism.

Ogwu was responding to the designating of Nigeria as one of the "countries of interest", on the latest terrorism intelligence.

"The country cannot be adjudged a terrorist country because of the misdeed of one man, the person in question did not receive his training in Nigeria, nor did he grow up in the country.

"Terrorism is alien to our culture and I can't even find a word for it in my own native language," she told NAN on Tuesday in New York.

Ogwu said the country's media and by extension the government had a lot of work to do to counter the unfortunate, but misleading negative concept about the country.

She said the Nigeria was still a force to reckon with in the comity of nations and very relevant in fostering of international peace and security.

The envoy said the Nigeria's prominence in international politics would come to fore in 2010 as it takes her seat as one of the newly elected five non-permanent members of the 15-member UN Security Council. (NAN).



Governor Ibrahim Gaidam of Yobe State (left) and former Governor of Cross River State Donald Duke (middle) pay condolence visit to General Ibrahim Babangida in Minna, Niger State over the death of his wife, Maryam, yesterday.

Nigeria deserves support, not sanctions from US - AC

By Muideen Olaniyi

THE Action Congress yesterday said that Nigeria did not deserve any sanction from the United States government as a result of failed attempt by a Nigerian, Farouk Umar Abdulmutalib, to blow up an aircraft on Christmas Day in the US.

AC National Publicity Secretary, Alhaji Lai Mohammed, said what Nigeria needed was the understanding and assistance of

its international partners to stem the tide of extremists in its midst.

The US government on Monday added Nigeria among the countries on its terror screening list.

The party, in its reaction to the development, however urged the Federal Government to ensure that the country was unattractive for global terrorism sponsors, who are seeking to recruit willing folks to swell their ranks.

AC said: "Nigerians, most of

whom are law abiding and decent citizens, are now facing a double jeopardy - first from the misguided but few religious extremists among them and now from the US and other members of the international community seemingly intent on punishing all Nigerians for the sin of a few.

"If Nigeria is emerging as a recruiting ground for terrorists, it is because over the years, the government has not taken up the gauntlet of putting an end to

the incessant religious crisis perpetrated by religious bigots and extremists - starting from the Maitatsine riots in the 1980s to Boko Haram and Kala Kato in 2009," the party added.

AC attributed government's inability to stop the incessant sectarian violence to support given to the groups by most of those in power, noting that most of those who are recruited for the violence are from the army of the unemployed in the country.

SSS Director dies after meeting

By Boco Edet

STATE Security Service (SSS) Director in the FCT, Mohammed Al Nasir slumped and died after a meeting with the Director General Afakriya Gadzama on Monday.

A senior official said he showed no signs of ill health during the day until his sudden death in the evening at the close of the meeting. He told Daily Trust Al Nasir was initially rushed to Aso Clinic but his body has since been moved to Katsina for burial yesterday afternoon.

"He was hale and hearty in the morning and showed no signs of illness. It was a sudden death. He died after the meeting." The source described Al Nasir as a hardworking person who was able to assist in security matters in the FCT.

40 die in crises during Xmas, New Year - Police

THE Nigeria Police Headquarters on Tuesday confirmed that 38 persons died in the recent crisis in Bauchi.

The police also said that two persons, including one police officer, lost their lives in a communal crisis that occurred in Obudu, Cross River, during the festive period.

Mr Emmanuel Ojukwu, an Assistant Commissioner of Police

and the Public Relations Officer of the Nigeria Police, disclosed this in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Abuja.

Ojukwu, however, described the crime rate during the Christmas and New Year celebrations as minimal.

"We did not record many major incidents except for the incident in Bauchi that involved some religion misunderstanding and a case in

Cross River, in Obudu area, which involved some communal clashes.

"Apart from these two, there were no other major incidents during the Christmas and New Year.

"In the two crises put together, 40 persons lost their lives. In Bauchi, 38 persons died and in Obudu, we lost two Nigerians, including one policeman," he said.

(NAN)

Court to hear bail application on Akingbola associates today

From Adelanwa Bamgboye, Lagos

JUSTICE Tijani Abubakar of the Federal High Court, Lagos will today entertain arguments on the bail application of six associates of the sacked Managing Director of Intercontinental Bank Plc Dr. Erastus Akingbola who are presently at the Okotie Eboh Ikoyi detention camp of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commis-

sion (EFCC).

The accused persons include Mr. Akinkunmi Solomon Fabunmi (Financial Controller, Intercontinental Bank), Mrs. Toyin Odesile (Head, Domestic Operations) and Mrs. Ayoola Ayinde Olabisi (Head, Foreign Exchange). The others are, Mrs. OluwaToyin Oyelade (Head, Corporate Treasury) Ayodele Thomas (General Manager, Interconti-

ental Capital Market Limited) and Bayo Dada (General Manager, Tropics Securities Ltd.)

They were accused of alleged involvement in criminal conspiracy, fraudulent withdrawal, fraudulent conversion and illegal transfers of the bank's funds estimated at about N27 billion, offences they allegedly committed between March and June last year.

Also charged with them were

five companies in which the directors including Akingbola allegedly have interests and with which the accused persons purportedly siphoned the said funds from the bank.

The companies are, Regal Investment Limited, Tropics Securities Ltd, Tropics Properties Ltd, Tropics Finance and Investment Ltd and Bankinson Nigeria Ltd.

Fabunmi, Ayoola, Bada, Odusile and Akingbola were alleged to have on May 11, 2009 withdrawn N10 billion depositor's funds from the Time Deposit General Ledger account no 211000002 of the bank under the guise of buying shares for it, but allegedly used same to defray liabilities of Tropics Securities, Tropics Properties and Bankinson.



ERASTUS Akingbola

Minister to sanction low performing school principals

From Ayegba Israel Ebije, Minna

FOLLOWING the poor performance of secondary schools across the country in last year's NECO and WAEC examinations, the Minister of Education Dr. Sam Egwu has said that principals of Unity schools with high failure rates would be sanctioned.

The minister who spoke in Minna yesterday at a meeting of principals of unity schools in the

country decried the decline in academic performances.

"We have concluded that schools with highest rates of failure in the immediate past NECO and WAEC examinations will be dealt with and there is no going back on that so that it will serve as a deterrent to others.

We will not tolerate a situation where students of unity schools cannot get results that will qualify them for admission

into universities because they are expected to set standards for other schools", he said.

Governor of Niger State Dr Babangida Aliyu also decried the failure rate in the state, saying only five percent of the 20, 000 students who sat for the examination passed.

He charged principals of secondary schools in the state to give their best and ensure academic excellence.

4-year-old gets help on hole in heart

From Adelanwa Bamgboye, Lagos

LAGOS Channel Management Limited (LCM) and its sister firm, Landfall Transport & Towage Services have jointly helped a four-year old boy by sponsoring his treatment for a life-threatening heart affliction.

Abdulumuyis Mohammed, the son of one Umar Jatto, Captain of MV Ogidi, a tug boat owned by Landfall, had a hole in his heart, a disease known as Ventricular Septal Defect.

The surgical operation to correct the defect took place successfully last month in Israel and the patient, together with his mother who accompanied him on the trip, returned home a few days back. During a thank-you visit to the Managing Director of LCM, Umar Jatto

expressed the appreciation of his family for the company's effort. Jatto said his family had almost given up hope since they could not afford the cost of performing the surgery and the cost of travels to Israel until the companies intervened. Managing Director of Lagos Channel Management, Mr. Danny Fuchs said; "The father of the boy approached us to ask if we could help him so I sat down with the General Manager of Landfall, Mr. Kalusky, and we approached the Embassy of Israel and then contacted the doctor. We collected all the relevant information, made the relevant arrangements and picked up the bill for the travels and their stay in Israel through the duration of the operation and the boy's recovery".

Displaced traders accuse govt officials of fraud

From Femi Akinola, Lagos

SOME traders who were displaced from the Tejuosho market in Lagos following a fire incident at the market in 2007 have alleged that some government officials defrauded them of millions of naira.

The traders were among the 500 who took part in a five-day verification exercise for shop allocation when the renovation work at the market was completed. Mrs. Adebisi Aina, one of the traders, said some state government officials had a meeting with the Tejuosho Marketers Association some months ago and asked them to buy application forms at the cost of N1,500 and pay a deposit of N230,000 each.

"The government officials came to meet us and said they were from Alausa. In my own case, I paid my deposit at the First Bank

at Motorway. They came here and said if we have the money we could pay, which I did, but when I got to this place, they said they did not know anything about the money. It is pathetic and I think Governor Fashola must hear this and intervene", she said. Another woman, Mrs. Agnes Okechukwu, noted that she wanted to find out if there was a different account from the yet to be identified government worker who collected money from them. "What is going to happen to my N300, 000 that I paid at the bank?" Mrs. Okechukwu said.

Reacting to the allegation, the Senior Special Adviser to Governor Babatunde Fashola on the State Emergency Management Agency (LASEMA) Mr. Michael Akindele denied it, saying, "The allegation by the affected traders cannot be true because the state government has not taken a kobo from any of the traders.



INFRASTRUCTURE CONCESSION REGULATORY COMMISSION (ICRC)
The Public Private Partnership (PPP) Project

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
Rehabilitation of Lagos - Kano and Port Harcourt - Jos Rail Lines
Railway Extensions: Apapa - Tin Can Island and Port Harcourt - Onne

ADDENDUM

ICRC/ ADDENDUM/01/2010 dated January 04, 2010

"The Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Commission (ICRC) hereby issue this addendum to inform all interested consultants that the deadline for submission of Expressions of Interest for the above assignment is **January 18, 2010** and not January 05, 2010 as appeared in the Daily Trust and Thisday of January 4, 2010.

We regret any inconvenience this might have caused to interested bidders.

Engr. Mansur Ahmed
Director General
ICRC

PIC: NAN



STUDENTS of Bauchi State protesting against verification and delay in payment of scholarshipS in Bauchi, yesterday.

Aliero wants foundation for ex-service men

By Nasir Imam

FCT Minister Senator Muhammad Adamu Aliero has challenged the Nigerian Legion to establish a foundation that would cater for the welfare of the ex-service men in the country.

The Minister gave this challenge yesterday in Abuja when he was decorated with the Emblem of the 2010 Armed Forces Remembrance Day in his office in Garki District, Abuja.

Senator Aliero reiterated that though it is an annual national ritual, the Remembrance Day should go beyond constantly soliciting for funds or any form of assistance for the well being of the ex-service men who have suffered any form of deformity.

According to him, the society should do more for those who have sacrificed their lives, some by paying the supreme price for the unity and peaceful co-existence of the nation.

"They have done a lot for this country and they are still doing which no doubt, deserves recognition for all and sundry".

He called for the fast tracking of the process of payment of retirement benefits to the ex-service men to spur those still in service to sacrifice more to the nation building.

The Minister pledged a donation of an undisclosed amount of money towards the celebration of this year's Armed Forces Remembrance Day expected to be climaxed on January 15, 2010.

He directed the Federal Capital Development Authority to renovate and decorate the venue of the event thereby taking such expenses off coffers of the Nigerian Legion.

Speaking earlier, Brigadier-General John Kwabe remarked that they were in the Minister's office to decorate him in compliance with the directive of the Federal Executive Council.

PDP govts to finance Soludo's campaign in Anambra

By Muideen Olaniyi

THE Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) governors may have started making series of efforts to finance the gubernatorial campaign of Prof. Chukwuma Soludo, PDP candidate in Anambra State.

Daily Trust gathered yesterday that a fundraising dinner which has Governor Isa Yuguda of Bauchi State as the Finance Committee Chairman has been slated for Tuesday next week in Abuja.

A statement by the Red Carpet Protocol, the consultant to the PDP finance committee which was signed by Osaro Onaiwo said Vice President Goodluck Jonathan is expected to be the Special Guest of Honour.

The dinner which is to hold at Sheraton Hotel and Towers Abuja would have PDP National Chairman, Prince Vincent Ogbulafor as the guest of honour.

Other dignitaries at the occasion are a renowned oil tycoon and a son of Anambra state Sir Emeka Offor who will act as Chairman while Prince Arthur Eze is going to be the Chief Launcher.

Daily Trust learnt that the party leadership was backing the fundraising dinner which was aimed at ensuring PDP victory in Anambra State come February 6, 2010.

Minister plans youth conducts monitoring

MINISTER of Youth Development Akinlabi Olasunkanmi has said that the ministry will collaborate with the nation's missions abroad to monitor and nurture the Nigerian youth.

Olasunkanmi made the declaration in a statement signed by his Special Assistant, Mr Olawale Rasheed. He said the measure would ensure a dynamic youth data base in the various Diaspora community associations for their counseling.

He said that the ministry would also collaborate with the Diaspora committee of the House of Representatives to put the programme on stream, adding that the House had done a good job of liaising with Diaspora communities to sensitise the youth abroad.

The minister appealed to the international community not to use the case of a Nigerian who allegedly attempted to bomb a U.S. plane to "negatively judge and stigmatise the Nigerian youth."

"Our youths are contributing significantly and positively to the development of humanity across the globe," he said. (NAN)

Two land racketeers nabbed in Abuja

By Misbahu Bashir

POLICEMEN acting on a tip-off yesterday arrested two persons in Abuja for allegedly selling lands to people illegally.

The suspects, Isa Mohammed of Angwan Sarki Kaduna and Zahradeen Bello, were arrested by detectives from the Garki 2 Divisional Police Headquarters while negotiating the price of a land with a man.

The Divisional Police Officer CSP Tony Olofu said the men and other members of their syndicate have been forging land papers in Abuja for some time and were put on the list of wanted people by the police.

He said the syndicate has facilities for forging all land allocation papers including cloning certificates of occupancy.

The police officer said the suspects agreed to the offence for which they were arrested for and have sold illegal lands for millions of Naira.

The suspects have vital facts on the Abuja Geographic Information System (AGIS). "They were found with two laptop computers containing information on government agencies including AGIS. Other items include 2 cloned rights of occupancy certificates, 2 computer discs and few other items," the DPO said.

The suspects will be charged to court as soon as police closed their investigation.

One of the suspects, Mohammed said they were lured into illegal business by one Barrister Maxwell Steven who obtained facts from land authorities including AGIS. He said they recently sold an illegal plot of land in Jahi District of Abuja to a man for the sum of N4.7million out of which the payment of N2.4million has been recovered. He said Steven has ran away with the money. He said they were arrested while trying to collect negotiating a land with their customer.

Bello said he is a graduate of computer science from a Malaysian institution and was only called by the syndicate to do some few computer work.

Only 3% of Nigerian youths are in varsities – Ex-ASUU boss

ONLY three per cent of Nigerian youths are currently placed in universities in the country as against the 20 per cent prescribed by the UN, a former ASUU president said.

Dr Abdullahi Sule-Kano said in Sokoto on Tuesday that "Nigerian youths make up about 40 per cent of the nation's estimated population of over 150 million people."

He cited the 2008/2009 academic session when more than 1.2 million youths passed the matriculation examination but only 220,000 were admitted by the universities due to the lack of space.

Sule-Kano said 40 per cent of the youth, far above the UN standard, should be placed in universities "as the country badly needs more adequately trained manpower to achieve the current administration's Seven-Point Agenda".

On the proliferation of state and private universities, he said: "It is not bad because education is on the concurrent list of the 1999 Constitution."

The former ASUU president, however, said that the new universities must be adequately funded.

"Some of the state universities have been politicised, while some do not know what a university is or how it should be," he said.

Sule-Kano said more Nigerian youths needed to access higher education for them to contribute to national development.

He applauded the recent ruling by the Supreme Court ordering the reinstatement of the sacked 49 lecturers of the University of Ilorin, three of whom are deceased. (NAN)

Police dismiss 3 over Ilorin shooting

From Mustafa Abubakar, Ilorin

THE Kwara State Police Command has dismissed three of its men who were allegedly responsible for the death of a cab passenger in Ilorin Sunday.

The command said the dismissed officers would be arraigned in court today.

They are Sergeant Sunday Balogun, Corporal Adams Akeem and Constable Olatunji Tajudeen who allegedly pulled the trigger.

Meanwhile, the 8 month-old boy whose mother was killed in the incident is in hospital receiving treatment. The Police Public Relations Officer in Ilorin Ezekiel Dabo yesterday said, "The boy

is still alive. The police got report late last night that the boy did not die. The driver of the taxi is also still in the hospital responding to treatment".

Dabo said the fourth police man who was the driver during the operation was speared because he was found not to be culpable.

He advised policemen to be careful with their arms and ensure that they do not use them in unauthorized and illegal ways.

He said the arms were meant for the protection of citizens and not to kill them. Dabo also urged drivers to always stop at checkpoints when asked to do so. Meanwhile, police have arrested

two suspected members of a syndicate of Advanced Fee-Fraud who allegedly defrauded a man of money and other valuables.

The command also arrested two armed robbery suspects who allegedly robbed travellers along the Gbugbu-Ilorin Road. The police spokesman said the cases were still being investigated.

Group condemns delay on FOI bill

From Leye Adewumi, Akure

A group, the Coalition for Transparency (CT) yesterday condemned the delay in the passage of the Freedom of Information (FOI) bill by the National Assembly.

The group in a statement signed by its secretary, Tayo Oloba in Akure yesterday described the non-passage of the bill as an anathema which must be condemned. According to the group, the fundamental objectives and principles of the Constitution declared Nigeria as a state based on the principles of democracy and social justice.

"It is therefore the inalienable right of every Nigerian to have full access to information regarding the affairs of government, official acts and policies of those who represent them. Access by everyone to public records promotes transparency and accountability of public bodies. It is a fundamental obligation of government to operate openly", the statement said.

The group alleged that the lawmakers were not interested in the war against corruption because of their attitude towards the passage of the bill.

It said the two anti-graft bodies, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission [EFCC] and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission were formed because federal lawmakers shirked in their constitutional responsibilities.

NCWD to immortalize Maryam

From Ayegba Israel Ebije, Minna

THE National Centre for Women Development has concluded plans to immortalize late Maryam Babangida, the Chairman of the Governing Council of the NCWD Hajiya Habiba Salman-Saidu has said.

Mrs. Salman-Saidu said this in Minna yesterday when she paid a condolence visit to former President Ibrahim Babangida.

"The National Centre for Women Development will certainly immortalize Maryam Babangida for her commitment towards enhancing the life of women in Nigeria through her Better Life for Rural Women program. She was the first person who initiated moves to establish the NCWD", she said.



LAGOS State Governor Babatunde Fashola (middle) acknowledging cheers from market men and women during an inspection tour of the 601-shop Kayero market extension under construction at Oshodi yesterday.

'Tertiary institutions dying due to poor budget implementation'

From Aliyu Machika, Katsina

TERTIARY institutions in Katsina State are at the verge of dying due to poor budget implementation, says the All Nigeria Peoples Party in Katsina.

The members of the party in the state House of Assembly while commenting on the 2009 budget said poor implementation of the budget had affected tertiary institutions in the state.

Speaking on their behalf, a member representing Funtua Constituency in the House Garba Usman said the opposition was concerned about the failure to implement the sector's budget.

According to him, the level of implementation was not enough to boost education in the state, adding that government's neglect of the education sector was capable of taking the state backward.

Giving the break down he said, the aggregate implementation for the Ministry of Education was 57 percent. "Yar'adua University with only 24.3%, Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic with only 3%, Isah Kaita College of Education 11% and the Bala Usman College of Legal Studies 33%. Unfortunately, we are talking of improving education in Katsina State. I wonder how the governor intends to improve education in the state if he cannot implement the budget fully," he said.

The opposition members also berated the governor on other sectors, saying, "When you look at the Ministry of Health which is another critical sector, you will find out that the budgetary provisions made for it was not fully implemented. Even though he was able to improve as compared to the previous year, the 47% implementation is far below the United Nations (UN) and World Health Organisation (WHO) benchmark".

The areas they said the budget was fully implemented include the Government House where he was said to have spent N61 million, Katsina State House of Assembly and roads through the Ministry of Works.

Niger prison inmates get relief materials

From Ayegba Israel Ebije, Minna

THE Central Bank of Nigeria led by its Minna branch manager Alhaji Mohammed Kabiru Dangusau has made material donations to inmates in Minna prisons. He said prisoners were part of the society and needed the love and care of all, maintaining that government alone could not carter for them.

"The CBN has a habit of extending a helping hand to the less privileged as part of our social responsibilities. Our objective here is to give the inmates a sense of belonging. I want to call on privileged people in the society to come to the aid of prisoners to ensure that they are rehabilitated and reformed at the end of the day", he said.

Earlier, ASP Baba- Musa Adamu who is in

charge of the Chanchaga prison while receiving the items said he would ensure that the items get to the inmates.

"We promise to use what you have brought judiciously. We also appreciate your assistance and call on organisations and individuals to help pay fine for inmates with option of fines as most of them have shown considerable signs of change", he said.

3-year-old girl dies in Plateau inferno

From Ahmed Mohammed, Jos

THREE year old Serah Jonah yesterday died in a fire incident in Sabon Bariki Village in Jos South Local Government Area of Plateau State.

A witness, Mr Samuel Bashit,

told our correspondent that the incident occurred in the early hours of the day, adding that due to confusion, people who came to assist could not easily find the little baby. "Sympathizers searched everywhere, we went in through the window but we could not

locate the little girl until she died", the witness said.

A fire service official, Samuel Musa Nzwak, said the incident was reported to them around 6am and when they attempted to rush to the scene, their vehicle broke down but they mobilized

the fire unit of the Government House and moved to the scene but before their arrival the little had died. He said the father of the deceased, Mr Jonahs Usman, told them that the fire was caused by candle light and appealed to the general public to always report

fire incidents in good time in order to save lives and property.

He gave the distress call numbers within Jos and Bukuru as 08036141592 for Bukuru Unit, 08068129854 for Jos unit and 08039732721 for Government House Rayfield.

Ondo A-G solicits workers' support

From Leye Adewumi, Akure

THE Ondo State Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice Mr. Eytayo Jegede has solicited the support of workers of the ministry.

Jegede while speaking during a prayer and interactive session organized by the ministry in Akure yesterday said the workers' assistance became necessary to enable the Governor Olusegun Mimiko-led administration achieve its objectives. The commissioner who said the door of his administration was open to all, urged them to not to hesitate to give him useful advice. While condemning indolence and pride among workers, he advised them to be hard working and steadfast in prayers to God:

He said the meeting which was attended by all workers of the ministry was called to appreciate God for his providence throughout last year.

Responding on behalf of the workers, the Director of Civil Litigation Mr. Cyril Akinrinsola expressed gratitude to the commissioner for giving them good leadership. He pledged unflinching support of the workers, adding that the workers would not let him down.

Board seizes pornographic CDs in Gusau

From Sadeeq Aliyu, Gusau

THE Zamfara State Censorship Board has confiscated about 500 pornographic compact discs within Gusau metropolis.

Chairman of the board Malam Bashir Sanda Gusau who displayed the discs before newsmen in his office yesterday said the pornographic materials were seized from their vendors on a tip-off. He said staff of the board along with policemen raided six centres where the materials were found but none of the vendors was arrested.

Malam Sanda however said in subsequent operations, sellers of such materials would also be arrested. He said it was a clear violation of the law and the board was mandated to regulate the sale and circulation of all audio-visual materials.



THE usual chaotic traffic situation in some parts of Lagos State is back again as workers return to work after the Christmas and New Year holidays at Ikeja yesterday.

PIC: OLADIPUPO ODUNEWU

Stakeholders decry encroachment on Kano walls

From Halima Musa, Kano

THE construction of structures on the areas around the Kano city walls and other related historic sites has been described as illegal and unpatriotic, the Director General, National Commission for Museums and Monuments, Alhaji Yusuf Abdullahi has noted.

Abdullahi who made the remark yesterday



GOV. Ibrahim Shekarau

while declaring open the third meeting of stakeholders on Kano City Walls and Associated Sites said building of structures on such sites could lead to the phasing out of historical sites in Kano.

He said preservation of historic and cultural sites in Kano was a collective responsibility of all, and allowing such sites to become extinct was unpardonable. He said the essence of the meeting was to sensitize members on the need to ensure that cultural heritages such as city walls, hills and related sites were safeguarded and protected against demolition or encroachment.

"We are organising this stakeholders meeting with a view to sensitizing members on the need to ensure the protection and sustenance of our cultural heritage. We have brought together all the stakeholders; the traditional rulers, the History and Culture Bureau, the Media among others who are expected to carry the message to the larger society," he said.

In his remarks, the Emir of Kano, who was represented by the District Head of Dala Alhaji Aminu Ado Bayero urged people to notify the appropriate authorities of any move to encroach on such sites.

NEMA seeks cooperation on road crashes

From Yahaya Ibrahim, Maiduguri

NORTH East Zonal Coordinator of National Emergency Management Authority (NEMA) Aliyu Baffale Sambo has sought the support of individuals and corporate organizations on efforts to prevent road accidents.

The coordinator made this call during a joint patrol by the agency and the Federal Road Safety Commission with support from Police Federal Highway Patrol Unit in Maiduguri.

The call was contained in a release signed by the Information Officer of the agency Ibrahim Farinloye.

"Everyone must have suffered the pains of road crashes because either a family relation, friend or colleague in the office would have been affected. Therefore, we need to pull all our resources to check the menace", the statement said.

He said the agency was spearheading the joint operations to support the FRSC to curtail road crashes. According to him, the operations will cover the four major highways in the zone especially in Borno State.

Imo hands-over schools to missionaries

From Johnkennedy Uzoma, Owerri

GOVERNOR Ikedi Ohakim of Imo State has announced the hand-over of 44 schools in the state to missionaries. He said yesterday in Owerri that government would be responsible for the teachers' salaries for the first two years while the missionaries would be responsible for the

day-to-day management of the schools.

Ohakim said the government had formulated a policy which would be implemented in three phases. Phase one is the hand-over to missionaries, phase two; hand-over to communities and phase three; handover to individuals.

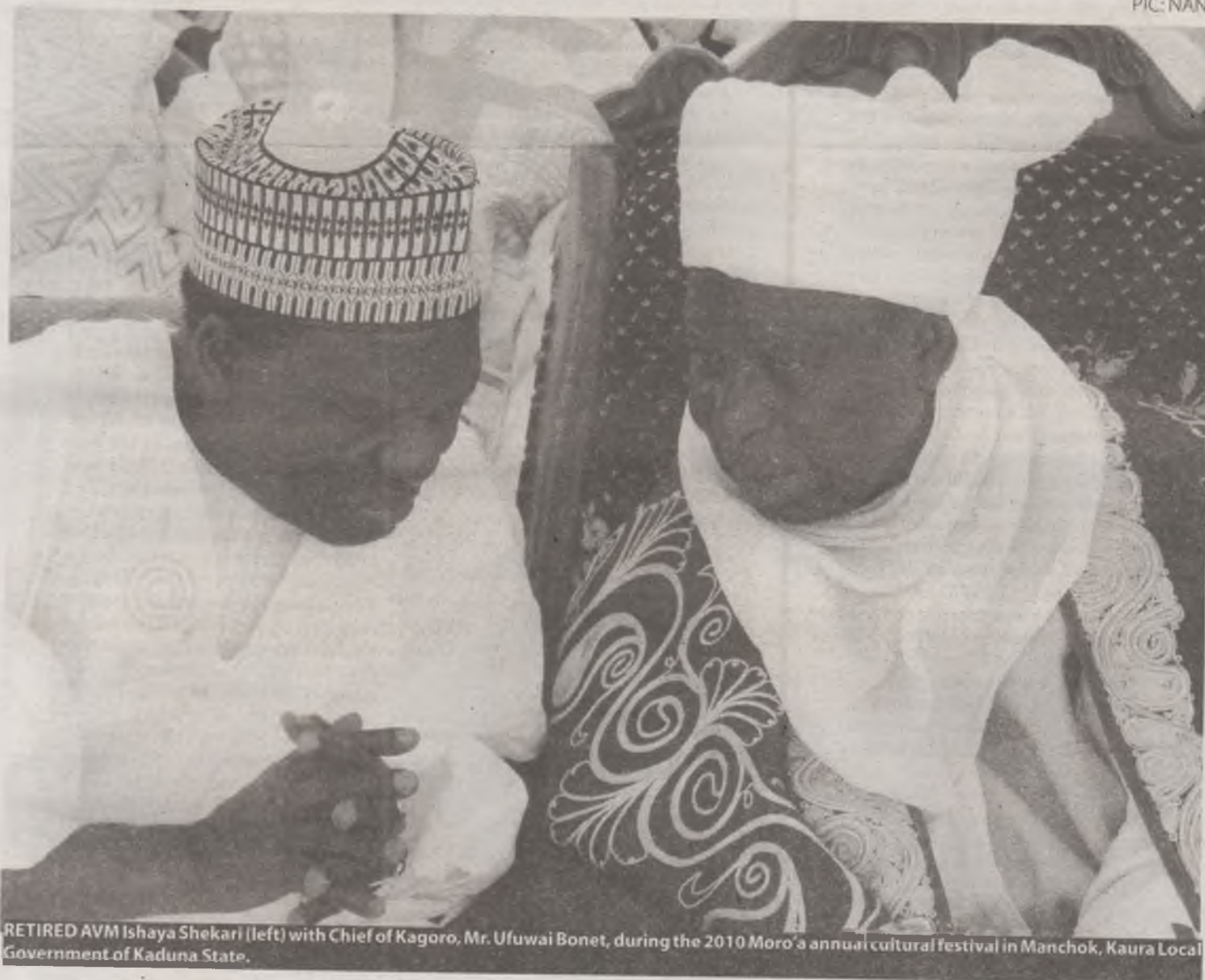
He said the plan was aimed

at producing quality graduates. Some of the schools include the St. Augustine Grammar School Nkwere which was returned to the Anglican Diocese of Orlu, Bishop Shanaham College Orlu returned to the Catholic Diocese of Orlu and the Boys High School Ihube to the Methodist Church Owerri. In a related development, Governor Ohakim said about

ten of the 311 secondary schools with inadequate facilities and low population in Imo State are to be merged.

He said schools with better facilities would absorb those with inadequate facilities. One of the affected schools is the Comprehensive Secondary School Emekuku which is to be merged with the Community Secondary

School Emekuku in Owerri North Local Government Area. Ohakim said the government would formulate a policy on disarticulation and re-articulation of junior and senior secondary schools in the state to reduce costs. He said 15 schools with student population of 1000 and above would remain disarticulated while the others would be re-articulated.



RETIREED AVM Ishaya Shekari (left) with Chief of Kagoro, Mr. Ufuwai Bonet, during the 2010 Moro's annual cultural festival in Manchok, Kaura Local Government of Kaduna State.

Benin Republic Consul mourns Maryam

From Auwalu Umar, Kano

BENIN Republic Consul in Kano Alhaji Muntari Ali Daura has described the death of Nigeria's former first lady, Mrs Maryam Babangida, as "a monumental loss" as she died championing the cause of the oppressed.

In a statement yesterday, Daura said Maryam was a distinguished figure whose life was never influenced by the trappings of power. "The former first lady's main concern was what affected the oppressed and the down-trodden. And of course her posture of simplicity was what endeared her to the masses", he said. The diplomat said the deceased carved an enviable niche by enhancing the living condition of rural dwellers through her Better Life programme and that rural dwellers would have been pushed to the lower rung if the programme she introduced had not been a reality.

"Maryam has fought a good fight and left an indelible mark on the sands of time. All that she contributed in propelling the nation to greater heights will never be forgotten. She was an iconic figure and her good attributes would remain indelible", he said. He called for her immortalization for posterity. Daura prayed to God to forgive her the sins she committed while alive and give the family the fortitude to bear the loss.

Rivers halts foreign medical trip sponsorship

From Muhammad Bello, Port Harcourt

The Rivers State government says it has stopped the financing of medical treatment abroad for citizens of the state.

Governor Chibuike Rotimi Amaechi who disclosed this during a media parley in Port Harcourt said the decision was with effect from January this year.

Governor Amaechi explained that the foreign medical trips was costing the state government huge sums of money, noting that such funds would rather be channelled to equipping hospitals to take care of the health needs of the greater number of people.

The governor said analysis of beneficiaries of the medical treatment abroad showed that only the rich and influential people in society were gaining from such government gesture, as the common people hardly had access to government officials to push their cases.

He noted that the state government was aware of the enormous pressure on the Braithwaite Memorial Specialist Hospital (BMH), Port Harcourt, which is the only functional Secondary Health Institution in Port Harcourt, and assured that the new Kelsey Harrison Niger Hospital completed recently would be

equipped this year.

Amaechi also said 23 general hospitals in the local government areas would be renovated to complement the newly built primary health centres across the state and advised residents to them, especially those with minor ailments, to reduce pressure on available hospitals.

He said the completed health centres are fully equipped with at least a medical doctor, trained midwives and nurses to take care of the health needs of the people.

According to him, the current situation where all patients rush to BMH for medical cases has resulted in the over crowding in

the hospital, and cited a situation where a doctor attends to about 100 patients in a day, adding that such arrangement would lead to diminishing returns on the part of the medical officer.



GOV. Rotimi Amaechi

Ohakim rates Imo senators low

From Johnkennedy Uzoma, Owerri

GOVERNOR Ikedi Ohakim of Imo State has rated the performance of two senators from the state, Senator Chris Anyanwu and Senator Sylvester Anyanwu low. At the third annual Orlu cultural ceremony held by Senator Osita Izunaso at his Ohapku home in Oru West Local Government Council, Governor Ohakim commended Izunaso for his "excellent representation" at the Senate while expressing disappointment over the other two senators from the state.



By Muhammad Sagagi

The Mutallabs: Modibbo Kawu's unkind cut

Who is safe from Modibbo Kawu's caustic language? His hatred of the ruling class is legendary. So is the penchant to insult and discredit all those who dare to succeed in business and accumulate wealth. To Kawu, every public office holder in Nigeria is a thief. The ruling elite are busy stealing Nigeria blind and every wealthy business man must be a crony of the ruling class. He spent nine years insulting OBJ 'the despot', Andy Uba 'the fraud', the Dangotes, the Otedolas etc, 'the parasites'. Only recently, Kawu launched an unprovoked attack on a successful, retiring permanent secretary, accusing him of manipulating the 2007 elections in favour of the PDP. Now the Mutallabs, even in their moments of grief, are not spared by Kawu.

Writing in the *Daily Trust* newspaper Thursday Column of Dec 31 Kawu, the

“His is not the picture of someone who abandons parental responsibilities”

self-styled socio-psychologist 'dissected' Faruk Mutallab and concluded that for becoming an operative of the terrorist organization al-Qaeda, his grieving family, and by extension the ruling elite and their propensity to abandon their parental responsibilities... carry a large slice of the problem. Faruk's parents are apparently to blame for sending him to a British school in Lome, then to 'the very prestigious' University of London and for giving him shelter in a 'two-million pound flat in the most expensive suburbs of London.

These 'privileges' apparently had 'social and psychological' impact on Faruk because they confused and alienated him from 'his Northern Nigerian Culture'. By inference, Kawu seeks to suggest that Farouq's parents are to blame for doing precisely what every parent ought to do: providing good education, decent shelter and for caring. What, in Kawu's estimation, should Mutallab have done to insulate Farouq from 'all manners of negative influences? Send him to Government Secondary School Funtua, then to any of these newly set-up state universities in the North to study Hausa, sociology, government or law? And probably shelter him in Nyanya?

How did Kawu reach his conclusions of Faruk being 'confused and torn from his Northern culture'? He read little Faruk's postings from an Islamic website. Reading *Thisday* newspaper which reproduced the postings turned Kawu into an instant socio-psychologist! Yet many people would consider these as no more than ordinary expressions from a cultured, properly tutored adolescent determined to remain steadfast in his Deen. Consider these: Faruk refuses to have friends for fear that they will influence him to 'do bad things'; and he struggles to control his 'natural sexual drive'

because he is not married. His dilemma 'between liberalism and extremism' needs not portray any deviation from a 'northern culture': our youths in the university often face such a dilemma—whether to engage the university authorities in constructive dialogue over, say, school fees or vandalize already broken down facilities. One does not have to read an al-Qaeda bulletin to realise that the world today is ruled by the 'worst of people, tyrants'—as the Hadith quoted by Farouq prophesized. Kawu has himself preached that for decades! Should we rush to conclude that Kawu's communist-leaning ideas which he expresses openly will ultimately lead 'to the journey to his recruitment' by, perhaps the KGB for 'action' in Chechnya?

In any event, these postings—assuming they are authentic—tell only one part of the story of the boy and his family. Read Adamu's white paper on Mutallab's family (*Daily Trust*, January 1): 'a humble, decent, private man of easy manners and peaceful mien.... the epitome of hard work and civility... who believes in sweating it out to earn an honest day's living'. His is not the picture of someone who 'abandons parental responsibilities'. Faruk's friends speak of a decent young man, who neither smokes nor drinks alcohol. He wasn't a spoiled brat: but a humble fellow who 'never bragged about his family's wealth' which is stupendous. His friends denied he was lonely, but cheerful and sociable; he 'stood out for his strong religious views, praying five times a day' and as 'guy that never broke the rules' whose friends 'all looked to him as (their) moral compass'. (*Daily Trust*, January 1 p44) Is this the picture of a confused fellow or of someone who lacked parental care?

I find curious the attempt by several columnists and commentators of northern extraction 'to wash the north clean' of this 'extremist culture' exhibited by Faruk. They become all too apologetic about Farouq's alleged act of terror and are at pains to convince the world that the North has a certain 'culture' which Faruk's action does not portray. They all wish to disown him as if they represent or live among the Angels. Yet, little Farouq is one of us and lives in virtually every home in the North! Which 'Northern Nigerian culture' are we referring to: culture of indolence and dependence? Culture of *almajirci*? Or culture of want and deprivation? Yes, what he attempted was despicable: but he didn't say he tried it on behalf of the north or of the ruling class. No point therefore rushing to dissociate the north from the act! Yes, for us it may be an 'alien' culture to blow up an aero-plane mid-air. But perhaps that is only because air planes don't abound in the north. If the truth be told though, it is no longer alien to our culture for young men of Farouq's age and below to be recruited and manipulated to kill and maim. All over the north we have dare-devil kids being used by *gardawa*—the *kala kato*, *boko haram*—and politicians—the sara suka in Bauchi and kallare in Gombe—to advance causes as evil as al-Qaeda's.

Sagagi wrote from No 5b, St. Louis Avenue, Bompai, Kano (drmuhammadsagagi@yahoo.com)



By Tunde Asaju

Faruk - an encounter

Ever since it was born and named by Lugard's girlfriend, Nigeria has been in search of global relevance. Heroic feats will not come easy if you are named by a mistress. In search of proofs Nigeria fought a gruelling 30-month civil war but ended with no victor, no vanquished. Nigeria raised generals for this purpose but most of them tuned out to be pepper soup generals. They back down from good fights. On this score Olusegun Obasanjo sticks out like a sore thumb. When he had the unique opportunity of proving that he earned his rank; he chickened out of the geriatric fight with Paul Biya who never even enrolled in the Cameroonian Gendarmerie. For a huff, Obj ceded Bakassi to Cameroun.

A nation in search of heroes found one and disowned him. He came in the name of Umar Faruk Mutallab. With a Christmas cracker, Farouk has put superpowers to flight and put Nigeria on the global map. The British and the Americans are flexing their muscles in the safety of their bunkers. The other day, two Nigerians merely introduced themselves on a train in London causing all British citizens on board to scamper from platform helter to station skelter. And you think those people are brave? Nonsense.

“Farouk is the most popular search word on Google for the past two weeks, prompting me to go and do a one-on-one with him”

The last time Umaru Musa Yar'Adua went to London, he did not feature on BBC's *Focus on Africa* programme. Farouk is the most popular search word on Google for the past two weeks, prompting me to go and do a one-on-one with him. No sooner had an immigration officer opened my green passport than he threw it down and ran simply because I told him that Farouk and Yar'Adua are cousins. Instead of getting a bloody nose from Obama, imagine what Akunyili could have achieved by threatening the west that *Naija* would deal ruthlessly with any country caught profiling its citizens abroad.

For long we were known as a nation of religious and ethnic riots, kidnapping, militancy and 419. The list is growing thanks but no thanks to an engineering graduate suffering from a bizarre sleep disorder. My encounter with Farouk the syringe bomber was brief. As brief as David Edey's meeting

with Umaru Musa Yar'Adua at the King Fahd Hospital with a copy of the Supplementary Appropriation Bill. Who could have organised such a pericarditic feat and authenticated it better than Mike Aondoakaa? But Farouk was real. He told me that he had slept throughout the flight and was dreaming about Christmas in Katsina with his peers shooting knockouts in a somnambulist feat. He was swearing by al-Qaeda that his knockout would make the loudest noise and to prove it struck his match only to be woken up with a deep sting on the thigh. When he woke up, the plane was nose-diving and European film makers were on him. He had thought that knockouts would disobey the law of gravity. He wondered what all the fuss was about; after all he was merely sleep-walking into history. Imagine his shock that the entire globe is agog with his name while Yemen wants to give him a perpetual citizenship. He brought them into Nigerian limelight.

I told him that for his sake, Nigeria would never remain the same. He was shocked that Akunyili could believe all that was concocted against him even before trial. He told me it was against superpower diplomacy to accept guilt before it is proven. He had two examples, Richard Reid and Akmal Shaikh. One was born to a Jamaican father who lived his life in jail and another was called a Brit even though the hair on his head is Asian. In both cases, their Britishness was never denied. In Shaikh's case, Britain even played the insanity card and queried an ambassador. Farouk wondered why somnambulism is not a case for him.

I had no answer but I related the problems that his encounter would cause to a travelling nation. For one, Nigerian children suffering from diaper rash would no longer have the soothing effect of dusting powder—on long-haul flights. Powder resembles PETN, it is combustible and prohibited. Two; those who use shaving powder must make sure they have enough hair on their chin or on their armpits and be ready to test its efficacy before disembarking from flights. Three; those who use *agunmu jedijedi* (local pile medicine) must be ready to subject themselves to specially built pit latrines to prove that their waste is not combustible on contact with water! For now: no toilets for Nigerians on long-haul flights.

Farouk was seriously remorseful when I narrated the above scenario to him before taking an Alamiye-seigha flight back to Abuja. And to those of you, who think that because I don't have a valid US visa, I could not have gone to Detroit for this unique encounter; well ask Aondoakaa to convince you that a man in coma signed the nation's supplementary budget!

(tundeasaju@yahoo.co.uk)

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Your Letters

Who'll take responsibility for the Faruk Mutallab saga?

It's obvious to understand that since the September 11th episode of 2001, the United States and other Western media are trying all they can to manufacture proof for their stand that terrorism is the activity of Islam and Muslims. We should wake up to the reality Western media are linking terrorism and extremism with Islam and Muslims directly or indirectly. Whenever a Western journalist is reporting on a suspect (terrorist) he depicts prominent signs of Islam like mosque, Qur'an and showing Islamic school pupils reciting the Qur'an to show that the suspect in question is being influenced by Islamic teachings. It's on record the

US uses power of proliferation to demonise its enemies whenever they want to invade a country or act on somebody. Before Iraq's invasion in 2003, we were told by American intelligence agencies that Saddam Hussein was developing weapon of mass destruction (WMD) and assisting Al-Qaida. What followed after the invasion is enough to justify the opposite side. For the past few years America has been looking for the pretext to fix Yemen, but they couldn't find genuine reason to do that, but fortunately they were given report that a Nigerian youth is missing in Yemen attending al-Qaida training. The circumstances that surround the Mutallab's episode are questionable to agree that U.S intelligent agencies do not act on the information given to them. They knew about Mutallab; he had been on their watch-list. Could they have followed him to and from Nigeria? Even if he escaped from security system in Nigeria, what about the more efficient sys-

tem at Amsterdam's Schipol airport, was he possibly walking in to a prepared net? The agility with which someone sitting closely behind him jumped over other passengers and wrestled him to the floor was more than coincidental. Who was the expert Good Samaritan? "They took him out and it was really quick". A CIA officer on duty? Within an hour, the white House had been informed and a statement was issued with President Obama's authority. There are other questions and angles to this story that are not yet in the public domain. We need to find answers to them, and quickly too.

Moreover, another coalition is being organized by Mr. Gordon Brown on Yemen which vividly exposes the whole affair is to dominate Yemen, and Mutallab was used systematically as a tool (alibi) to achieve the impending invasion of Yemen or something terrible to that effect.

Ahmad Adamu Dukku
(aagdukku@yahoo.com)

Text us on 08 131 8000 30

Full body scanners?

THIS is a hasty decision; we need to address the issues of health, ethics and privacy. Even the Ghanaians decided to look at these issues before taking any decision. **ABUBAKAR Yusufu, Abuja, 08069614000.**

...It is very unfortunate

...THAT Nigerian air travellers are now to be subjected to various forms of harassments and embarrassment in airports across the globe, all in the name of security, and worse of all Nigeria is described by the US as state that sponsors terrorism. Nigeria is not

a terrorist country.

AUDU Mai Umar Nguru, 08137403209.

...Go tit-for-tat

NIGERIA should subject all those coming from America to the same treatment. It's a simple case. **08036152748.**

Why, Saraki, why?

THE pardon given to dangerous and convicted criminals and murderers by the governor of Kwara state does not augur well for our collective political well-being.

ELISHA Maikarfi, 07087182476.

No, Ahmad

... Buhari is not the solution to Nigeria's problem. He had the opportunity of solving the problems (1983-1985); what did he do?

YUSUF Nuhu, ATBU, Bauchi, 08036924729.

Tackling corruption...

...THE Chinese way. I suggest we need to introduce death penalty to all those who embezzle money with value of fifty million naira and above. Otherwise we will never make any headway.

A. Mohammed, 07035218214.



By Todd Moss

View from abroad

After the plane bomber, where in the world is Nigeria's president?

Amid all the media frenzy around the Nigerian underwear bomber and how America should have stopped him before he tried to blow up a passenger plane on Christmas Day, a critical piece to the counter-terrorism puzzle seems to have been missed: where in the world is the Nigerian President? Normally, after such a horrific incident, President Obama would be on the phone with his counterpart, discussing what went wrong and agreeing on ways to work better in the future to prevent such attacks. But this couldn't happen because Nigeria's President Umaru Yar'Adua left his country for medical treatment in Saudi Arabia on November 23rd and hasn't been seen or heard from since.

Yes, you read that right: the whereabouts of the leader of Nigeria—America's most important strategic ally in Africa, the fifth largest source of U.S. oil imports, and home to 150 million people—are unknown. It is also not clear if he is alive or dead.

The situation is so uncertain that Nigeria's parliament is openly considering sending a delegation to Saudi Arabia to find out the truth. A major opposition party yesterday demanded, quite reasonably, some "proof of life".

The mystery over Yar'Adua is so bizarre as to be comical—if the consequences weren't so severe. His absence has thrust the country into an immediate constitutional crisis. The President failed to delegate authority to his deputy before travelling, effectively leaving no one in charge. This 43-days-and-counting power vacuum is being swiftly filled by an insular cabal bent on exploiting the situation for their own gain.

Complicating matters, the vice president—ironically named Goodluck Jonathan—is a Christian and an Ijaw, part of a minority group from the southern Niger Delta region and far from the power centers of the northern Muslim elites who expect one of their own to run the country. There is much speculation that insiders are scheming now of ways to keep Jonathan from ever assuming power. In an ominous sign, a new chief justice was quickly (and possibly illegally) sworn in last week. These developments all put Nigeria's future at great risk. A decade of constitutional democracy is threatened by the specter of mass violence and a possible military coup.

The failed terrorist attack by Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab on Northwest Flight 253 highlights that Nigeria's power void is dangerous for the U.S. as well. The foundation of a counter-terrorism strategy is to build cooperative partnerships with friendly nations. This means sharing information and helping to build security capacity in places like Yemen, Afghanistan, and Nigeria.

But we cannot have a partnership if there is no one on the other end of the line. Nigeria cannot be a reliable ally if it is consumed by its own corruption and political machinations. In this way, Nigeria is rapidly becoming more like Somalia—a failed state with no real government to cooperate with—than a real partner.

What can the United States do? First, it should insist on an immediate public declaration of President Yar'Adua's health and fitness to govern. If the President's staff refuse to oblige, then the U.S. should encourage the national assembly to assert its constitutional responsibilities when it reconvenes on January 12. Second, if, as seems likely, Yar'Adua is in fact incapacitated, the U.S. must demand that the constitution be followed and power transferred to the vice president. The long-term security of Nigeria depends on entrenching the rule of law and this must supersede any palace intrigue or political bargaining.

Third, it is clear that whatever the outcome over the next few weeks, Nigeria will remain on a knife's edge until elections in 2011. Any hope for a more stable country hinges on a credible election next year. Yar'Adua came to power in a deeply flawed poll in April 2007 and almost no steps have since been taken to fix the broken system. The U.S. is in a unique position to push for and help deliver a better election that would strengthen the authority and legitimacy of the next government. Last, the U.S. can support Nigeria's vibrant civil society that is clearly fed up and is increasingly demanding change.

The case of the missing Nigerian President is a wake up call to the United States about the vulnerability of many of our global partners. How we respond is not only crucial to the future of an important ally, but a critical test of our strategy for building partnerships in troubled places to combat the global ills of our time.

Culled from the January 5, 2010 issue of *cgd.org newsletter* (Center for Global Development)

DAILY TRUST

EDITORIAL

No. 20 P.O.W. Mafemi Crescent, Off Solomon Lar Way,
Utako District, Abuja
09-6726241, 6715364

The violence in Bauchi

News of a fresh outbreak of crisis in Bauchi jolted Nigerians just as 2009 was about to come to an end. The skirmish, in which several people died, many were displaced and a yet-to-be-estimated amount of property destroyed, was limited to Zango, a suburb of Bauchi city. It started when members of a fringe Islamic sect, known locally as Kala Kato engaged in a fight with other locals who protested what they considered a heretic sermon preached by the sect's leaders.

This led to riots, which security forces were called in to quell. Rather than listen to reason, the leaders of the sect reportedly abducted and killed two. Reinforcement of the security forces helped put down the riots. This latest crisis is the fourth in Bauchi in twelve months.

Although calm has since returned to Zango and its environs, this frequent outbreak of crisis in the area is hardly good for the socio-economic development of that part of Nigeria. Indeed, neighbouring states have increased surveillance to ensure that the crisis does not spread to their areas.

Conflagrations like this, coming from any part of Nigeria, are not good for the corporate image of the country. It is painful that in spite of the fact that a common thread runs through most of these skirmishes, the security agencies have so far proved incapable of devising a good method of forestalling them. Ostensibly, this is attributable to a lacuna in the intelligence gathering capacity of our security agencies, whose responsibility it is to protect the country against local and external aggression.

The prevalence of youths of school age among the casualties in this and other riots is troubling, and raises the question of the tactics employed in addressing the problem by the security agencies. Pictures of those mauled down depicted the victims clutching plastic bowls traditionally associated with Quranic pupils, commonly known as *almajirai*. What kind of threat did they present to the security agencies to deserve being killed in that manner? This also brings the issue of these pupils to mind.

Parents simply leave their children to the Quranic teachers who take them away to unfamiliar territories, where they are subjected not only to unorthodox teachings, and are sometimes physically, mentally and psychologically abused. They are then used as canon fodder in any resultant confrontation with security forces whenever their doctrines are challenged. It is the bounden duty of every responsible parent to ensure that they raise the children that they can properly cater for. The era of indiscriminate reproduction, which served primordial Nigeria thriving mainly on subsistent agriculture, has long given way to an environment where parents must ensure the social and educational upkeep of their children. Religious leaders should educate followers on the injunctions which puts the responsibility of clothing, educating and generally providing for the wellbeing of their children squarely on the parent. Parents need to learn that they cannot shirk away from that responsibility.

Fanaticism breeds on the lives and limbs of impressionable children some of whom may have lost contact with their natural parents. This attitude is antithetical to the true teachings and tenets of Islam and should not be allowed to continue.

Intelligence units must intensify efforts to control riots with less casualty and bring to justice trigger-happy ones in their midst for killing innocent children armed with nothing but plastic plates. It would also serve if government at local, state and other levels act up and implement the various recommendations of commissions of enquiries into past crises. The failure to bring indicted people to book for past crimes helps foster a culture of impunity, and acts as impetus for those bent on fomenting trouble to move from a hot spot to breed fanatics in another area. We hope that this would be the last crisis of its nature from any part of northern Nigeria.

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A parent's anguish

Timawus Mathias

timmathias@yahoo.com

All of a sudden, Nigeria has hit a brand new lime-light. The man who tried to blow himself up and go down with an international flight carrying about 300 passengers over Detroit Michigan has turned out to be a Nigerian in his early 20s who claimed to have been on a mission for Al-Qaeda. Now in the eyes of the storm is a prominent Nigerian, a one-time minister, chairman and managing director United Bank for Africa, and also chairman of First Bank, Alhaji Umaru Mutallab, who is the lad's father. It must have come as a relief to all those who know the Mutallabs, that the principled father had formally raised alarms with all appropriate Nigerian and American Authorities when his son's behaviour suggested to the father of many wonderful children what this disturbed young man was capable of doing.

The incident has been roundly condemned by Nigerians and it would not be fair to stigmatize Nigerian travelers and subject them beyond necessary security screening at airports. In any case, if the American and Nigerian authority had acted on Mutallab's earlier warning, the threat could have been nipped in the bud. Now reports have it that the Mutallabs are making plans to attend the trial, commencing in the US soon.

It is what any good parent would do. Today, our hearts must go to the Mutallabs, in sympathy with them in this hour of anguish. Umaru Mutallab is a first class citizen of Nigeria, a devout Muslim and a committed patriot, a man well groomed in business with multi ethnic and multi faith clients and *unscrupulous. He is detribalized and free from prejudices based on religion. He has remained aloof of Nigeria's dirty politics, keeping a low profile on public matters. On retirement from active business, he became Chairman of Jaiz Bank, Nigeria's first Islamic bank as well as many*

other high net worth companies. It is an irony that such a background could produce the diabolical Faruk. One can imagine the pain and the despair with which Umaru walked into the American embassy to literally surrender his offspring!

The relief that Umaru Mutallab had earlier reported his fears to appropriate authorities was expectedly short-lived. The nightmare

In a parents' anguish questions that agitate the mind are; what did we do wrong? What should we have done that we did not do? How could our son get involved in this? How does he get out of it now? What can we do to help?

In America where Faruk is standing face-to-face with the law, he is a Nigerian man. But for us in Nigeria, the young man is a son, with great inheritance, and whose best friends in this hour, are his parents. As long as she lives, Faruk's mother would love to cuddle him and stroke his hair. There is no killing a father's affection for his offspring. You never grow up to

How could our son get involved in this? How does he get out of it now? What can we do to help?

of the scrutiny of anti terrorist security network has only just begun. This will go on and on while the media focus would contain truths and lies and all of a sudden the once reserved life of Malam Umaru Mutallab will become public property.

For this family, this is a time of anguish and pain. Every parent has an idea of the anguish of the Mutallabs. There is a child with potential for or outright extreme tendencies in almost every home. Parents suffer torment in silence with rebellious children addicted to mischief, crime, hard drugs and now, *alleged terrorism. This is indeed more akin to parents who have struggled well to attain a status of prominence only to end up with the name being dragged through the mud by a child who does not give a hoot about the hard-earned pedigree into which he has been brought.*

your parents.

The Mutallabs should remember their son Faruk was obviously well raised hence his early attachment to his religion Islam. The young Faruk Abdulmutallab has benefited from the best education any parents can give any child, graduating from the University of London with a degree in Engineering.

Pity is that at a place in time, in the absence of mindful and protective parents, someone exploited the vulnerability of the young lad, and indoctrinated him enough to hate the world *outside his own, and thus see nothing wrong with blowing himself up as he is alleged to have attempted to do.*

When and how did Faruk establish links with the extremists? Are recruitment cells operational in Nigeria? What did those mind manipulators drill into Faruk to so drastically erase all that was instilled in many years of parental affection, care, guidance and particularly indoctrination in Hausa cultural tenets of family and community love and cohesion? I am assuming there was as there should have been.

The courageous stand of the Mutallabs in this ordeal is admirable, and they do not stand alone in this painful saga. Other parents should share the pain and the anguish and pray for spiritual strength through the nightmare.

Today, our hearts must go to the Mutallabs, in sympathy with them in this hour of anguish. Umaru Mutallab is a first class citizen of Nigeria



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CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION, ABUJA

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SERVICES FIBRE-BASED E1 INTER-OFFICE TRANSMISSION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

The Corporate Affairs Commission is embarking on the upgrading of its inter-office network transmission using fibre-based E1 terrestrial connectivity. This will facilitate the full deployment of its online workflow in the affected state offices so that full registration activities can be conducted there.

As a pilot scheme, the following five offices will be connected to the Abuja Data Centres using 2Mbps links each. The offices are:

Enugu
Kaduna
Kano
Lagos (Oregun)
Lagos (Yaba)

Interested network consultants are hereby invited to submit proposal for the provision of a cost-effective solution that will ensure low maintenance cost, excellent throughput and low bandwidth rates.

The scope of work covers:

- Site survey design including path loss
- the supply and installation of relevant equipment required at the 5 premises of the Commission including integrating routers, cross connect equipment and others;
- interfacing with the optical fibre transmission backbone of the appropriate bandwidth provider;
- LAN/ WAN integration for effective inter-office data transmission;
- Implementation of last mile;
- Engineering, installation and Commissioning of the entire solution
- 1 Year Maintenance / Support

- Training

Thus the proposal should include but not be limited to:

- Details of 'last mile' solution for each office;
- List of end-user equipment;
- Clear network topology;
- One-off installation cost component;
- Recurrent annual cost implication (including bandwidth charges)

The full addresses of the Commission's offices in the five locations are as follows:

Enugu Office: Plot 31B Okpara Avenue, Enugu

Kaduna Office: No. 1 Yakubu Avenue, Behind Luggard Hall, Kaduna

Kano Office: No. 52 Unity Road, Kano

Lagos (Oregun) Office: No. 16 Billing Way, Atop British Visa Office, Oregun – Ikeja

Lagos (Yaba) Office: No. 17 Aje Street, Sabo – Yaba, Lagos

For additional information please contact the undersigned.

Proposals should be submitted by Friday, 15th January, 2010 and addressed to:

*The Registrar General,
Corporate Affairs Commission,
420 Tigris Crescent, Off Aguiyi Ironsi Street,
Maitama Abuja*

Signed,

Dr. Muhtar H. Alhassan
Director, Information Management Services

INTERNATIONAL

S/Africa sees progress in slow Zimbabwe talks

ZIMBABWE'S political rivals have agreed some outstanding issues of a power-sharing deal, but the pace of negotiations is slow, a South African official mediating in the talks said yesterday.

President Robert Mugabe and long-time rival Morgan Tsvangirai, now prime minister, formed a unity government last year in February after disputed elections, but the coalition has been hobbled by

disputes over power-sharing.

Lindiwe Zulu, international relations advisor to South African President Jacob Zuma, said while South Africa was not happy with the pace of talks, there was progress on some issues.

"I don't think that we should be talking of escalating conflict at this point in time. We are not saying that we are happy with the speed at which they are working

but we think there are a number of things they've agreed upon," Zulu told South African Talk Radio 702. South Africa is mediating in the Zimbabwe negotiations and Zimbabwean media reports say Africa's biggest economy wants all outstanding issues resolved before it hosts the soccer World Cup in June. Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in October "disengaged" from

cabinet meetings with Mugabe's ZANU-PF party, accusing it of being an "unreliable partner" but rejoined after mediation by the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

Mugabe and Tsvangirai are haggling over the appointment of provincial governors and the veteran leader's refusal to swear in Tsvangirai ally Roy Bennett as deputy agriculture minis-

ter. The 85-year-old president has also refused to sack allies he appointed as central bank governor and attorney general without consulting Tsvangirai.

Mugabe says the MDC should call off Western sanctions against his party and ask its backers in the West to shut down what he calls pirate radio stations broadcasting into Zimbabwe from the United States and Britain.

UN cuts Somalia food relief over Islamist threat

THE UN food agency said yesterday it had been forced to suspend food aid to a million hungry people in southern Somalia after months of attacks and extortion by Al Qaeda-linked rebels.

"Rising threats and attacks on humanitarian operations, as well as the imposition of a string of unacceptable demands from armed groups, have made it virtually impossible for the World Food Programme (WFP) to continue reaching up to one million people in need in southern Somalia," it said in a statement.

"WFP's humanitarian operations in southern Somalia have been under escalating attacks from armed groups, leading to this virtual suspension of humanitarian food distribution in much of southern Somalia," it said.

Mired in almost uninterrupted civil conflict since the 1991 ouster of president Mohamed Siad Barre and plagued by recurring natural disasters, Somalia is often described as one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

In the areas they control, the Shebab have also imposed strict conditions on foreign humanitarian organisations, effectively stopping them from operating.

Chinese foreign minister begins Africa tour



CHINESE Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi.

By Charles Onunaju with Agency reports

CHINESE Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi yesterday launched a major tour of Africa, officials said, as Beijing seeks to reinforce ties with a traditionally friendly continent.

Yang, who headed to the

Maldives yesterday, was also due to make stops in Kenya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Algeria and Morocco, foreign ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu told reporters.

The minister -- who traditionally begins the year with a trip to Africa -- was to visit Saudi Arabia

before heading home to China on January 13, she said.

China has built up trade and economic ties with Africa in recent years, prompting critics to accuse it of taking a "neo-colonialist" attitude.

In November, at a meeting of China-Africa leaders in Egypt,

Beijing pledged 10 billion dollars in concessional loans to African countries.

Commerce Minister Chen Deming said China was "committed to ... going all-out to assist African countries in improving their agricultural production and infrastructure".

South Sudan vote could lead to war, says top adviser

SOUTH Sudan's vote on independence next year will lead to a new war unless key questions of the north-south border, nationality and external debts are resolved, a senior presidential adviser said.

Ghazi Salahuddin from President Omar Hassan al-Bashir's National Congress Party (NCP) criticized the law governing the 2011 referendum passed in December after months of wran-

gling, saying it lacked any deadline to address outstanding problems.

"Imagine if we had the referendum and separation happened and we had not yet agreed on the borders? This is war," he told the small state-owned Blue Nile television, according to a transcript seen by Reuters yesterday.

Most of Sudan's oil fields traverse the north-south border

which has yet to be demarcated. Sudan's external debt is about \$30 billion. Salahuddin said hundreds of thousands of southerners in the north and northerners living in the south would be left in limbo if their nationalities were not defined.

He also warned of regional problems over what international agreements would be respected by a separate south, giving the

example of an agreement over Nile waters with Egypt:

"The government cannot go ahead with this referendum until some of these issues have been discussed," he said.

"It is (now) possible that the ... southerners could vote for separation without us having settled the issues of the border, nationality and international agreements and this is a prescription for war," he

said. The southern former rebel Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), which signed a 2005 north-south agreement sharing wealth and power, called Salahuddin hostile and said he wanted to rewrite the peace deal.

"If you make these things conditions for the referendum then it will never come," Atem Garang, the SPLM's deputy speaker of parliament, told Reuters.

International



PALESTINIAN women chant Islamic slogans during a rally organized by Islamic Jihad marking the first anniversary of Gaza war, in Gaza city.

War crimes fears force Israelis to cancel UK trip

A group of Israeli military officers called off an official visit to Britain last week, fearing they could face possible arrest on war crimes charges, officials said yesterday.

The four unidentified officers, holding ranks from major to colonel, are the latest in a string of Israeli politicians and military officials to be forced to call off travel to Britain because of fear of legal prosecution.

Britain is one of the European pioneers of universal jurisdiction, a broad legal concept that empowers judges to issue arrest warrants for nearly any visitor accused of

committing war crimes anywhere in the world.

Pro-Palestinian activists have sought to use this concept to press charges against Israelis involved in military operations in Palestinian territories, particularly since last year's Israeli offensive in the Gaza Strip. British officials have vowed to change the law, which has severely strained relations with Israel.

The Israeli delegation had been invited to visit by the British army.

But officials said they were forced to call off the trip after

their British counterparts could not guarantee that they would not be arrested.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because the matter has become a sore point in relations with Britain. Neither the Israeli military nor the British government would comment.

Yesterday's announcement came as Britain's attorney general, Patricia Janet Scotland, was in Israel on a private visit. Scotland was scheduled to deliver a lecture at an Israeli university later yesterday, though it was not clear if she would address the war

crimes issue.

The British government has pledged to reform its war crimes law so its judges could no longer issue secret arrest warrants against Israeli officials or military officers. But no change has yet been put into effect.

Israel's deputy foreign minister, Danny Ayalon, raised the issue in a meeting with Scotland yesterday. In a statement released after the meeting, Ayalon said he made it clear that the situation is "intolerable," and said "this makes normal relations between the two countries difficult."

Iran accepts Clinton non-deadline on nuclear talks

IRAN said yesterday it welcomes Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's comments that there is no hard-and-fast deadline for starting nuclear dialogue.

On Monday, Clinton said the Obama administration remained open to negotiating with Iran over its nuclear program, though it will move toward tougher sanctions if Iran does not respond positively. She stressed there was no hard-and-fast deadline for Iran. Responding yesterday, Iran's foreign ministry welcomed the comments.

"We share the same idea with her. Deadlines are meaningless.

We hope other countries return to their natural path, too," said Ramin Mehmanparast, a foreign ministry spokesman.

The remarks were a rare positive response by the Iranians to U.S. comments on its nuclear program.

The U.S. and other Western allies accuse Iran of working to develop nuclear weapons. Iran denies the charge and says its program is for peaceful purposes.

The West is primarily concerned about high levels of uranium enrichment, which can be used to make an atomic bomb. At lower levels, enriched uranium is

used in the production of fuel for nuclear power plants.

Iran has dismissed an end-of-2009 deadline imposed by the Obama administration and its international partners to accept a U.N.-drafted deal to swap most of its enriched uranium for nuclear fuel. The deal would reduce Iran's stockpile of low-enriched uranium, limiting, at least temporarily, its capability to make nuclear weapons.

In her comments Monday, Clinton also said the administration was appalled by the Iranian government's crackdowns on street protests — which she

described as "mounting signs of ruthless repression."

At least eight people died in clashes between security forces and opposition supporters across Iran late last month, including a nephew of opposition leader Mir Hossein Mousavi. It was the worst bloodshed since the height of the unrest immediately after the contested June re-election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Mehmanparast rejected these Clinton remarks.

Iran regularly accuses western countries — mostly the United States and Britain — of supporting unrest in Tehran.

Yemen shows frictions with US over terror fight

YEMEN is showing signs of friction with the United States over the fight against al-Qaida, insisting it has the terror group under control.

As the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a reopened its doors yesterday after a two-day closure, the Interior Minister has suggested the shutdown was not needed.

It said in a statement that security in the capital "is good and there is no fear for the lives of any foreigner or foreign embassy."

The statement is the latest by Yemeni officials complaining that the government is being wrongly depicted as unable to fight al-Qaida.

Over the weekend, the head of the National Security Agency played down the terror threat, insisting, "Yemen is not a refuge for al-Qaida, as some claim. These are exaggerations."

Israel approves east Jerusalem building project

ISRAEL has approved construction of four new apartment buildings in disputed east Jerusalem, officials said yesterday, fueling tensions with the Palestinians at a time when the U.S. is laboring to get peace talks moving again.

The Palestinians claim east Jerusalem for a future capital and demand all construction there stop before negotiations resume. The 24-unit project is being developed in an Arab neighborhood by Irving Moskowitz, an American Jew who has generously funded Jewish settlers determined to cement Israel's hold on contested areas of the holy city.

Jerusalem is the most explosive issue between Israel and the Palestinians, and the new buildings would be located in one of its most volatile sites, just outside the walled Old City with its Christian, Muslim and Jewish shrines.

Stephan Miller, spokesman for Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat, confirmed that Jerusalem's local planning committee approved the project on Monday, clearing the way for construction to begin.

Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat condemned the move "in the strongest possible terms." He said if Israel wants to resume peace talks, "they must announce a total cessation of settlement activities" in east Jerusalem and the West Bank.

Israel committed to a full settlement freeze in 2003 under an internationally backed peace plan.

International

Philippine massacre suspect pleads not guilty

THE prime suspect in the massacre of 57 people in the volatile southern Philippines last year pleaded not guilty yesterday to multiple counts of murder.

The case against Andal Ampatuan Jr., a local mayor and a leader of a powerful clan, has thrown the spotlight on the nation's corruption-plagued political and justice systems.

More than 30 heavily-armed police escorts took Ampatuan to a special court inside the national police headquarters for his arraignment and a bail hearing, the first steps in judicial proceedings that many fear could drag on for years.

"Not guilty," Ampatuan Jr.'s lawyer Sigfrid Fortun told the court when asked to enter a plea as his client stood beside him.

The judge adjourned the hearing until January 13 after the prosecution asked to present over a dozen witnesses to block Ampatuan's application for bail.

Ampatuan Jr. allegedly led 100 of his men in stopping a convoy carrying supporters of a political rival and journalists in the southern province of Maguindanao on November 23.

The victims were systematically murdered and buried in shallow pits or dumped in grasslands near a highway in Maguindanao, where Ampatuan Jr.'s father and namesake was governor.

Those killed in the worst political murders in the Philippines included pregnant women and about 30 journalists. Ampatuan Jr. pleaded not guilty to 41 counts of murder yesterday, but is expected to be charged with 57 counts when final death certificates are processed. Ampatuan Sr. and several other clan members were arrested after martial law was imposed in Maguindanao and charged with rebellion. No date for their court appearance has been set.

Ramon Casiple, an analyst with the Institute for Political and



POLICE officers escort Andal Ampatuan Jr. (right), the prime suspect in the country's worst political massacre, inside a court in Manila.

Economic Reform, said the public must monitor the trial "every step of the way." "What we are fac-

ing here is a very strong clan with very strong political connections and the capability to intimidate or

even kill witnesses," he told AFP. "This puts the justice system to a test, because past cases with

heavy political overtones have never been satisfactorily concluded."

1,000 people homeless on Solomons after tsunami

LANDSLIDES and a tsunami destroyed the homes of about one-third of the population on a Solomon Island, but lives were likely spared as residents with memories of previous disasters fled quickly to higher ground, officials said yesterday.

From the air, extensive damage could be seen on a remote western island after a 7.2-magnitude temblor triggered the landslides in the Pacific Solomon Islands on Monday, said disaster management office director Loti Yates.

No injuries have been reported some 30 hours after the biggest in a series of quakes churned a tsunami wave that was up to 10 feet (3 meters) high as it plowed into the coast, officials said.

However, more than 1,000 people have been affected after

some 200 houses were destroyed on Rendova, an island some 190 miles (300 kilometers) from the capital Honiara. Only 3,600 people live on Rendova.

Photographs taken from police helicopters Tuesday showed debris lining the shore and damaged houses on the coasts of Rendova and Tetepare, as well as deep scars on hills and cliffs caused by landslides.

Hillsides crashed down and the tsunami inundated homes Monday, but residents' memories of earlier disasters probably helped prevent any casualties, officials and residents said.

In April 2007, an 8.1 temblor unleashed a tsunami that killed more than 50 people. A quake-churned tsunami that killed more than 200 on nearby Samoa and Tonga in September was another

reminder, locals said.

"People are very sensitive, as a quake conjures up memories, and people immediately begin going to higher ground," police commissioner Peter Marshall told The Associated Press.

"The fact it was daylight, the isolated nature of the wave and that the landslides were in a relatively sparsely populated area" also helped, he said.

The largest quake — magnitude 7.2 — happened about 9:30 a.m. local time Monday and caused the tsunami to hit the coast a short time later. At least nine other quakes greater than magnitude 5.0 have rocked the earthquake-prone region since, including three yesterday night.

One measured magnitude 6.9 and generated a tsunami about an inch high.

Pakistan highlights West's failure in Afghanistan

PAKISTAN'S prime minister said yesterday that his country has been more successful at battling a Taliban-led insurgency than Western forces in Afghanistan, a bold criticism at a time when the U.S. is pushing Islamabad for more help.

The comments could be particularly aggravating to the Obama administration, which is frustrated that Pakistan has not done more to target Taliban militants launching cross-border attacks on U.S. and NATO troops in Afghanistan. Such help is deemed critical to the Western coalition's success.

"The success of our efforts stands out in sharp contrast to what the coalition forces in neighboring Afghanistan have been able to achieve over the past nine years," said Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani while presiding over a

meeting of senior military personnel and politicians who deal with defense issues.

Gilani pointed to recent anti-Taliban military operations in the country's northwest near the Afghan border as evidence of Pakistan's success. "Over the recent months, we have registered considerable success against terrorists and militants," said Gilani. "Law enforcement actions in Swat, Malakand, FATA and most notably in South Waziristan have been executed with precision and in record time."

South Waziristan is located in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Area and was the Pakistani Taliban's main stronghold in the country before the army launched a major ground offensive in mid-October.

International

Colombia extradites
alleged pyramid
scammer to US

A man convicted of bilking Colombians out of hundreds of millions of dollars in a pyramid scheme has been extradited to the United States. David Murcia faces indictments on money laundering and conspiracy charges in a New York federal court. Colombian officials handed him over to U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency agents yesterday and he was being flown to New York.

A Colombian court already has sentenced Murcia to more than 30 years in prison for money laundering through a company that drew investors with promises of fantastic interest rates. It collapsed in late 2008. The judge says Murcia took in US\$2 billion, and only returned some US\$100 million to investors.

Bomber who hit CIA base was triple agent

A suicide bomber who killed eight people at a CIA base in Afghanistan was an Al-Qaeda triple agent who duped Western intelligence services for months before turning on his handlers, jihadist websites boasted yesterday.

The Jordanian intelligence services, believing the bomber to be their double agent, brought him to eastern Afghanistan with the mission of finding Al-Qaeda number two, Ayman al-Zawahiri, the websites and Western intelligence agents cited by US media said.

But instead he blew himself up at Forward Operating Base Chap-

man in Khost province near the Pakistani border, killing seven CIA agents and his Jordanian handler, a top intelligence officer and member of the royal family.

The deaths of the seven agents marked the US Central Intelligence Agency's worst single loss of life since the bombing of the US Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983.

Jordanian media gave no details of how Captain Ali bin Zeid died even though King Abdullah II, Queen Rania and virtually the whole royal family turned up at his funeral.

The slain officer's family said that Bin Zeid had been in Afghan-

istan for 20 days and had been due to return home on December 30, the day he was killed. But even on Monday, officials continued to deny any Jordanian involvement in the international coalition there.

Both jihadist websites and Western intelligence agents cited by US network NBC News identified the bomber as Humam Khalil Abu Mulal al-Balawi alias Abu Dujana al-Khorasani.

Balawi was arrested in late 2007 and then recruited as a double agent by the Jordanian intelligence services but in reality continued to work for Al-Qaeda,

they said.

He ran a blog, <http://abudjanakharasani.maktoobblog.com/>, on which he posted calls for jihad -- holy war -- and martyrdom, that the Jordanian authorities presumably regarded as cover for the role of double agent. The blog was still available on Monday but was inaccessible yesterday.

"He spent months travelling between Afghanistan and Pakistan and fed the Americans the information that the Mujahedeen (jihadists) wanted them to receive," the Ana Muslim ("I am a Muslim" in Arabic) website boasted.

Spain slams Cuba for expelling politician

SPAIN'S foreign minister criticized Cuba yesterday for denying entry to a Spanish politician who has promoted ties with opposition figures on the Caribbean island.

But Miguel Angel Moratinos said such snags were to be expected as Madrid and the rest of Europe nudge Havana's government toward reform. Moratinos said Spain wants to use its turn as EU president, which began on Jan. 1, to improve relations with Cuba and encourage dialogue to move the country toward improved respect for human rights and democracy.

The politician who was not allowed to enter Cuba, European Parliament member Luis Yanez, is known to be critical of the Cuban government, but this does not justify Havana's decision, Moratinos said.

Cuban authorities held him and his wife at the airport upon arriving in Havana and sent them on the first plane back to Spain on Monday.

"This is not good news. I think the Cubans made a mistake with this expulsion," Moratinos told reporters.

"But a relationship with Cuba is not a thing of just a day or two. It is a relationship that needs strategic depth and time to advance," the minister said.

The Cuban ambassador to Madrid was summoned to the Foreign Ministry yesterday to explain the expulsion.

Cuban ambassador Alejandro Gonzalez Galiano explained that the decision stemmed from "application of Cuban domestic laws," the foreign ministry said in a three-paragraph statement after the meeting. It did not elaborate.



US President Barack Obama at the White House in Washington, yesterday.

Obama to announce new airline safety measures

PRESIDENT Barack Obama is announcing new measures yesterday to beef up airline security after an alleged terrorist attempt to destroy a Detroit-bound US airliner on Christmas Day.

Fresh off a Hawaiian vacation dominated by news of the incident, Obama scheduled a meeting yesterday afternoon

with high-ranking government officials charged with carrying out two reviews he ordered after the botched attack — on screening for airline passengers and on the US terror watch-list system.

After the meeting, to which 20 officials were invited, Obama will talk to the public about his findings, as well as a series of

new steps to improve the watch lists and thwart future terrorist attacks, the White House said.

The Transportation Security Administration already has directed airlines, effective Monday, to give full-body, pat-down searches to US-bound travellers from Yemen, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and 11 other countries.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Defense Secretary Robert Gates, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, CIA Director Leon Panetta and FBI Director Robert Mueller were among those expected to meet with Obama in the White House Situation Room.

International

Prominent Bulgarian crime journalist shot dead

BULGARIAN police say gunmen have shot dead a prominent crime journalist and critically injured two other men in a busy part of the capital, Sofia.

A police statement says the

gangland-style execution took place shortly after noon yesterday as Bobbie Tsankov, a popular radio show host, was entering an apartment block with the other two men.

The two gunmen escaped on foot.

Tsankov, who frequently reported on organized crime in Bulgaria, died at the scene. His companions were hospitalized in

critical condition.

In a similar attack in downtown Sofia two years ago, gunmen shot dead writer Georgi Stoev, the author of several books on organized crime in Bulgaria.

UK: Iraq inquiry restarts as Blair appearance looms



A protestor sets fire to a mask of the face of former premier Tony Blair outside the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in London.

THE public inquiry into the Iraq war resumed yesterday after the Christmas break, as questions grew about the looming appearance by Tony Blair, who led the country into the controversial conflict.

Blair is expected to give evidence to the inquiry in the second half of January or early February, while his former communications chief and close ally Alastair Campbell will appear next week, on January 12.

Labour figures are reportedly worried Blair's appearance could cause problems for the ruling party as struggling Prime Minister Gordon Brown starts campaigning in earnest for the general election, to be held by June.

Meanwhile, an Internet campaign has been launched for Blair to face tough questions about why he took Britain into the unpopu-

lar war, amid criticisms the probe, led by a retired top civil servant, has gone too easy on some witnesses.

"When it comes to Tony Blair, we can't let this happen," said activist group 38 Degrees, which is inviting people to submit questions they want the inquiry to put to the ex-premier.

"Blair made the decision to commit us to a war in Iraq. We deserve to know the real reasons he went ahead."

Blair stood shoulder-to-shoulder with then US president George W. Bush over the 2003 invasion, but faced a major backlash in Britain over the decision. He resigned in 2007 despite having led his Labour party to three election wins.

Britain justified the invasion at the time by arguing that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction

(WMDs) but these were never found.

Blair insisted last month he would have supported the war, which did not gain explicit United Nations approval, even if he had known there were no Iraqi WMDs.

He said Saddam was a "threat to the region" who "used chemical weapons on his own people".

The appearance of Campbell could also cause a headache for Labour, which is battling to claw back the Tories' double-digit lead in the opinion polls before the election.

In 2003, he strongly denied a BBC report that he "sexed up" a dossier claiming Iraq had WMDs and could launch a chemical or biological strike within 45 minutes. An official inquiry also exonerated him.

In July that year, Ministry of

Defence (MoD) weapons expert Dr. David Kelly was found dead near his home with slashed wrists.

Kelly faced intense pressure after claims he was the source of the BBC's story about the "sexed up" dossier.

Officials had confirmed Kelly's name to some reporters during the furor. Campbell resigned from his job in August 2003, insisting he wanted to quit the previous year. The inquiry has fought back against claims Blair and others might not face rigorous questioning.

Chairman John Chilcot said last month that it was "not here to provide public sport or entertainment" but "to get to the facts." A spokesman insisted Blair will be "appearing very much in public", despite fears some of his evidence could be heard privately for national security reasons.

Switzerland avalanche death toll reaches 7

THE bodies of three skiers missing after an avalanche in central Switzerland were found yesterday, raising to seven the death toll in the country's worst avalanche disaster in more than a decade, rescue officials said.

The bodies of a Swiss woman, a Swiss man and a German man were found in the Diemtig Valley, 25 miles (40 kilometers) south of the capital, Bern, said Theo Maurer, chief instructor of the Swiss air rescue service Rega. No other people have been reported missing.

The victims were part of a group of off-piste skiers who were hit by an avalanche shortly before midday Sunday, burying two. A second avalanche about half an hour later hit the rescuers who arrived to help the skiers.

An emergency operation involving eight helicopters and 100 rescuers was able to pull nine people from the snow. One man was already dead. Three others died in the hospital of their injuries.

The earlier victims were identified as a German and three Swiss, one of whom was a rescue doctor who had flown in to help.

Rescuers were unable to search for the remaining skiers Monday because fog and snow prevented them from safely accessing the mountainous area by air or on foot. Experts held out little hope the missing three would be found alive.

Man held after jokes about terrorism

A German man was temporarily detained at Stuttgart airport yesterday after he repeatedly told security personnel that he had explosives in his underwear, police said. The 42-year-old man apparently was joking about the failed attempt by a Nigerian man to blow up a jetliner bound for Detroit on Christmas Day by igniting explosives concealed in his underwear.

Police said a full body search of the German man did not turn up any explosives. However, Tuifly airline refused to let the man, his wife and daughter board the plane to Egypt, where they planned a vacation.

The police said in a statement that the family would not be refunded for the cost of their canceled trip and could "expect a fine of up to euro 1,000 (\$1,444) ... and possible costs for the police operation." The names of the man, his wife and daughter were withheld in accordance with German privacy laws.



**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR COLLEGES OF EDUCATION
ABUJA**

**INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION
ETF ASSISTED ICT TRAINING FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS
IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION**

The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCCE), Abuja is desirous of engaging consultants to provide the underlisted services for its ETF Assisted projects and hereby invites suitably qualified contractors for pre-qualification bid.

1.
 - (a) Training of 200 Teacher Educators on the use of ICT in teaching and learning in the North-West Zone.
 - (b) Training of 200 Teacher Educators on the use of ICT in teaching and learning in the North-East Zone.
 - (c) Training of 200 Teacher Educators on the use of ICT in teaching and learning in the North-Central Zone.
 - (d) Training of 200 Teacher Educators on the use of ICT in teaching and learning in the South-West Zone.
 - (e) Training of 200 Teacher Educators on the use of ICT in teaching and learning in the South-East Zone.
 - (f) Training of 200 Teacher Educators on the use of ICT in teaching and learning in the South-South Zone.
 - (g) Biometrics of 600 Teacher Educators drawn from NCE Awarding Institutions.
2. **PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**
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 - (iii) Evidence of Tax Clearance Certificate for three years
 - (iv) Evidence of Financial Capability and Bank Support
 - (v) Professional and Technical Qualifications to carry out the particular contract.
 - (vi) Similar Projects executed within the last three years with evidence
 - (vii) VAT Registration and Evidence of past VAT remittances
 - (viii) Evidence of adequate qualified personnel to perform the contract obligation.
 - (ix) Bidders must not be in receivership
 - (x) Must not have any Director who has been "convicted in any country for any Criminal Offence relating to fraud or financial impropriety".
 - (xi) Bidders should accompany every bid with a disclosure whether any officer of NCCCE is a former or present Director Shareholder or has any pecuniary interest in the company.

3. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

This advert shall not be a commitment on the part of the NCCCE to award any form of contract to a respondent nor shall it entitle any company submitting any documents to claim indemnity from the Commission.

All relevant information i.e. GSM No. and E-mail Address must accompany the bids.

4. **SUBMISSION OF PRE-QUALIFICATION DOCUMENTS**

The Pre-qualification documents should be sealed and marked "Pre-qualification for the Respective Projects" and submitted in duplicate to:

*The Executive Secretary
National Commission for Colleges of Education
P.M.B. 0394, Garki - Abuja*

To reach him on or before 12noon on Friday, 29th January 2010. Late submission will be rejected. Only shortlisted companies shall be invited to tender.

**SIGNED
MANAGEMENT**

APOLOGY

I MOHD ABUBAKAR DO
HEREBY TENDER MY
APOLOGY TO BASHIR
ISYAKU BASHIR OF
HORIZON HOTEL,
BAMPAI KANO FOR THE
BODILY AND MORAL
INJURIES MY ACTION
HAS CAUSED HIM.

I AM DEEPLY SORRY FOR
MY ACTION AND I HOPE
YOU WILL HAVE THE
BENEVOLENT HEART TO
FORGIVE ME.

SIGNED

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OF NO 1 KALANBAINA
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250,000 vacancies available in insurance sector soon – NAICOM

From Chris Agabi, Lagos

WHEN fully established, the Market Development and Research Initiative (MDRI) will create at least 250,000 jobs in the insurance industry, the commissioner for insurance Fola Daniel has said.

According to him, it is the implementation of the compulsory insurance, the Insurance agency system, and fight against fake insurance certificates and risk base supervision that would create the most jobs.

Industry observers said the target is laudable especially now that most companies are retrenching but advised that the initiative should be backed with action to make it succeed.

They observed that insurance industry across the globe provides jobs more than other sub-sectors in the financial industry. It is believed that the introduction and effective implementation of the agency system which would allow people of different discipline sell insurance products, would drive MDRI project.

The MDRI project was structured as a medium term plan to run between 2009 and 2012. It is designed to install the first phase of the industry's reforms in the area of industry capacity, market efficiency and consumer protection.

With effective, implementation of the project, it would by year 2012 increase the industry contribution to the nation's Gross Premium Income (GPI) from N164.50bn to N1.10 trillion. Direct project revenue would amount to N8000 million, lowered insurance gap from its current 94.0 per cent to about 70 per cent, increase consumer trust and confidence, increase GDP from 0.72 to over 3.0 per cent, insurance premium per capita from N1,200 to N7,500 and consolidate the industry to about 50 per cent. "For these reasons, NAICOM attaches great importance to the pursuit of the actualisation of the project, Daniel said.

Meanwhile, the operators have been urged to develop affordable products to drive the initiative.



FOLA Daniel, NAICOM boss

The Director General, Nigerian Insurers Association, Mr. Ezekiel O. Chiejina, said the success of the initiative hinges on the ability of the masses to purchase products that meet their needs. "Products should be designed to mitigate risk of the low income earners, for this segment of our population live in more risky environ-

ment, and are exposed to numerous perils including illness, accidental death and disability, loss of property due to theft or fire, agricultural losses, and disasters - both the natural and man-made varieties. They have less access to clean potable water, nourishing food and medical care," he said.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE



Arik Air

PH-Abuja: 08.45, 1212.50, 17.00 (Mon-Fri), 08.45, 17.30 (Sat), 14.40, 17.30 (Sun); Abuja-PH: 07.15, 11.20, 15.30 (Mon-Fri), 07.15, 16.00 (Sat) 14.40, 17.30 (Sun); Lagos-Kano: 12.20pm (Mon-Fri/Sun)
Kano-Lagos: 02.35pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Abuja-Kano: 03:35pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Kano-Abuja: 05:20pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Abuja-Gombe: 11:10am (Mon, Wed, Fri, Sun); Gombe-Abuja: 12.30pm (Mon, Wed, Fri, Sun); Lagos-Yola: Lag-Abj 04:50pm, via Abj-Yola 06:45pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Yola-Lagos: Yola-Abj 08:40am, Abj-Lagos 10:20am (Mon-Fri/Sat); Lagos-Maid: Lag-Abj 03:50pm, via Abj-Maid 06:00pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Maid-Lagos: Miud-Abj 07:30am, via Abj-Lag 09:15am (Mon-Fri/Sat); Abuja-Sokoto: 11:10am (Mon-Fri); Sokoto-Abuja: 12:50pm (Mon-Fri) Abuja-Akure 02:10pm (Mon, Wed and Fri); Akure-Abuja: 08:50am (Mon, Wed and Fri); Lagos-Kwara: 07:30am, (Mon-Fri) 07.30, 03:50pm Sat 08:00am, 11:45am Sun; Kwara-Lagos: 4:10pm (Mon-Fri), 01:10pm, 05:30pm Sat 09:45am, 05:00pm Sun Abuja-Kwara: 03:25pm (Mon-Fri); Kwara-Abuja 01.30pm (Mon-Fri); Lagos-Jos: 09:05am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); Jos-Lagos: 11.00am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun) ABV²QOW 02:30pm (Mon-Fri), 11:30am Sat 03:20pm Sun; Lagos-Kaduna: 10:20am, 04:10pm (Mon-Fri), 10.20 (Sat/Sun); Kaduna-Lagos: 12:10pm, 06:00pm (Mon-Fri), 12.10 (Sat/Sun); Lagos-Warr: 07:30am (Mon-Fri) 07:30am, 03:50pm (Sat), 08:00am, and 11:45am (Sun)

Aero Contractors

Lagos-Kad: 08.00am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Kad-Lagos: 09.40am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Lagos-Jos: 11.15am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Jos-Lagos: 13.15pm (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Lagos-Abj: 06.50; 13.30; 16.30; 19.45 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); 12.30 (Sun) 16.45 (Sat). Abj-Lagos: 07.30; 13.30; 19.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat); 10.30, 14.30; 19.30 (Sun) 18.30 (Sat); Lagos-Ben: 07.45; 11.00; 15.30; (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun) 12.30; (Sun); 15.30 (Sat).
Ben-Lagos: 09.15; 12.30; 17.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); 17.00 (Sat); 14.00 (Sun); Lagos-Cala: 13.15; (Mon-Fri/Sat); 08.30; 19.00 (Sun); Cala-Lagos: 14.45; (Mon-Fri/Sat); 10.30 (Sun); Lagos-Enu: 09.30; (Mon-Fri/Sat); 15.00 (Sun); Enu-Lagos: 09.30; (Mon-Fri/Sat) 16.45 (Sun)

Chanchangi Airlines

Lagos-Abj: 07.15, 10.00, 13.10, 15.30, 17.30
Abj-Lagos: 08.00, 11.45, 13.40, 15.30, 17.00
Lagos-Kad: 10.45, (on Fri), 17.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
Kad-Lagos: 07.30 (Mon-Fri), 08.00 (Sat/Sun)
Nigerian Eagles Airlines (Virgin Nigeria)
Abj-Kano: 18.40 (Mon-Fri)/Sun
Kano-Abj: 08.35 (Mon-Fri) /Sat
Abj-Soko: 09:35, (Mon), 10:10 (Fri), 11:20 (Wed/Sun)
Soko-Abj: 11.35 (Mon), 12.00 (Fri), 13:20 (Wed/Sun)
Lagos-Abj: 07.15, 11.40, 14.00, 16.30, 17.00, 17.20; 18.30 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun), 8.00; 12.40; 13.10; 20:00 (Fri)
Abj-Lagos: 07.00, 09.30, 10.30, 11.15, 16.15; 19.15, 19.25, 19:35 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); 14:55; 15:15; 20:45 (Fri); 19:45 (Sun); 11:25, 13:35, 16:25 (Mon)
Lagos-PHC: 07.40, 09.30, 10.00, 12.20, 13.30, 14.00, 16.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); PHC-Lagos: 10.50, 11.20,

CBN EXCHANGE RATES				BUREAU DE CHANGE RATES	
31/12/2009					
	Buying (NGN)	Central (NGN)	Selling (NGN)		
CFA	0.3048	0.3148	0.3248	BUYING	
DANISH KRONER	28.4713	28.5681	28.6649	DOLLAR.....	N153
EURO	211.9711	212.6916	213.4121	EURO.....	N220
POUNDS STERLING	238.3167	239.1268	239.9368	POUNDS.....	N255
RIYAL	39.2267	39.36	39.4933	SELLING	
SDR	230.6087	231.3926	232.1764	DOLLAR.....	N154
SWISS FRANC	144.1592	144.6492	145.1392	EURO.....	N222
US DOLLAR	147.1	147.6	148.1	POUNDS.....	N258
WAUA	230.0676	230.8496	231.6316	Source: S&P Bureau de Change, Wuse Zone 4, Abuja.	
YEN	1.5916	1.5971	1.6025		

Stock Market Index	
Date:	Tuesday, January 5, 2010
Index:	20,838.90
Deals:	6,102
Volume:	248,064,766
Value:	N 1,370,926,739.64
Cap.:	N 4,992,193,976,766.50

Business

Borno will compete with giant companies for federal projects- Liberty

Alhaji Shehu Mustapha Liberty, is one time Chairman of Maiduguri Metropolitan Council and an academic with numerous years of teaching experience as Senior Lecturer with the Department of Political Science, University of Maiduguri. Liberty who was recently appointed by Governor Ali Modu Sheriff of Borno State as his Special Adviser on Information and Media paid a visit to Maiduguri office of *Daily Trust* during which he bares his mind on some industrial issues.

From Isa Umar Gusau and Sharafa Dauda, Maiduguri

ONE of the problems facing Borno State is lack of industries. The industries in Borno are dormant at the moment – the shoe factory, the plastic company-BOPLAST and a couple of others. Many had anticipated that as someone who was coming from the construction industry, Governor Ali Modu Sheriff was going to fix the industries, what is actually the problem? Why is it that up till now, these factories have not been made functional?

I think their expectation is right. If you look at the governor's blueprint, Industrialization is one of the very important issues that he has outlined. The problem now is the need for the environment that will speed up industrialization and in this regard there is the problem of electricity, without power, you cannot talk of industrialization and as we all know is the exclusive responsibility of the federal government to provide electricity. The state government can, may be, engage in Independent Power Project but the cost of the project is so big. The governor wants to industrialize the state but there is no power and that is why the governor has focused attention on other sectors like education, health, poverty alleviation and many others which he can do without really waiting for power. But as soon as power improves you will see wonders.

Few weeks ago, the Minister of Works, Dr. Hassan Mohammed Lawan, was here to commission some heavy duty construction equipment in Maiduguri for the Borno State Road Maintenance Agency. What does the state stand to gain from the agency?

Actually, that is a climax in the great achievements of Senator Ali Modu Sheriff since he assumed the mantle of leadership about six and half years ago. As you rightly said, these equipments were procured by the state government to enhance road construction and maintenance in the state. The governor in his wisdom had decided

to create an agency known as the Borno State Road Maintenance Agency, which is in line with what have at the federal level. This agency is actually a creation of law. There is a law, which the Borno State House of Assembly passed. Right now, the law is there. The aim is construction of roads across rural and urban areas. As you are aware in the past, road projects contracts were awarded to private companies because the state had no wherewithal and equipments to execute the projects, billions of naira have been spent in the construction and maintenance of roads. But with these equipments now, the government has repositioned Borno not only to carry out road projects and maintenance within the state but to also go out and look for jobs, including that of the federal government and even other state governments. Because as you are aware, the Minister of Works said it clearly, that he has never seen any state in the federation that has the kind of equipments that we saw at the commissioning. He said that it is only Julius Berger, in his words, that can boast of some of these equipments. So, you can see from here that if one of the parameters or criteria that the federal and state governments use in the award of contracts, particularly when it comes to roads, is capacity to execute projects, Borno State has the capacity. So it is very easy for us to bid for contracts, and this means that the agency will continuously be involved in construction and maintenance of roads within the state, which the state government will assign to it and also do some jobs because it is going to be a kind of revenue generation agency for the state. It is great vision, a welcome development, and I think it is within the interest of the people of the state.

You will agree with me that most government establishments such as this do not really stand the test of time, probably because of the lackadaisical attitude of those who are manning them. They see it as government property. This is the era of privatization, where everything government is going into private manage-



ALHAJI Shehu Mustapha Liberty, Sheriff's Special Adviser on Information and Media.

ment; don't you see this as a project that cannot really stand the test of time?

Well, no! His Excellency made that observation in his remarks during the commissioning. He observed with dismay this general attitude of public servants, where people look at government property as nobody's property. They are mishandled. They are stolen. So, nobody cares about them. I think it has to do with the general attitude of all of us, and particularly public servants. So he has observed that and he is aware of this attitude. And this is why the law establishing the agency is very stringent. In fact it will challenge all those that will work in this agency, both the boards that would be established and the civil servants that will work in that agency. Because the law has made it very clear that who ever sabotages government in any way will bag jail term, the law is very stringent; I think there would be close supervision because the governor has listened to the advice of the Minister of Works, Housing and Urban Development who commissioned the equipments. He gave him lots of good advice. And one of them is that he should ensure that those that he is going to employ or those that would be reassigned or brought out from the ministries should be people who are committed, people who have integrity, people who are brought out on their merit, not cousins, not uncles, not relations, which is what happens in Nigeria today. So, His Excellency has listened to this very wise counsel and I want to assure you that before the agency is put in place, you will see that all these things have been put in place and the agency would be challenged to ensure that it meets its mandate, so on the issue of sustainability, it would be sustained given the laws put in place and the good people that would be carefully selected to do the work.

Some of these equipments were believed to have been bought about three to four years back. They were parked at the Trailers Park and some have to be refurbished before they were commissioned. Accusing fingers are being pointed at your governor for having the attitude of spending public funds to either construct houses, etc but refusing to use them for public purpose. What is the reason?

That has to do with the issue of government business. You see government business is entirely different from what takes place in the private sector. One of the things that people have against bureaucracy generally is its slow nature. And this is precisely because of the long delays in doing things. But if you look at it, on the other side, in fact, bureaucracy in place of businesses in governments are actually slow, because: one, caution is needed because you are dealing with public funds and resources. Two, transparency and accountability are required. Since you are dealing with public funds and public resources, you must be transparent and you must be accountable. Let us pick the issue of this heavy duty equipment. These were equipment that were bought and imported. When they came, they had to be cleared at the port and there is also the issue of transporting them. They are very heavy and moving 133 of them from abroad is not easy. The last batch of the equipment came just few weeks to the commissioning. So people see these equipments but they didn't know they were 133 in number. People saw some 10, 20, 30, and 40 and thought that was the end. But in actual sense, they were 133. If the governor had come with 132 to the commissioning ground, and he had said oh one of them is coming, it is you the journalists that would start saying where is that one? Why is it not here? So, he was been care-

ful. He was cautious to ensure that all these equipments arrived before their commissioning. I think this explains why there was this delay. But I assure you that the delay was not deliberate because it was actually because of some certain exigencies that must be met and some processes and procedures that must be met. That was why it was delayed.

There is also the issue of the Trailer Park, which was officially commissioned by the president, but till date, it has not been put to use. In the 777 Housing Units particularly some 4 bedrooms are yet to be allocated. What is the explanation for this?

You see when these houses are allocated to people and they do not occupy it that does not mean they have not been allocated. As I am talking to you, I know somebody who just occupied his house last week. He was allocated the house when the allocation took place, but he came to occupy the house just last week. His letter of allocation was given to him at the time the allocation took place. So it is not true that some of these houses have not been occupied. Almost all of them have been allocated. Those that are not occupied now, when you follow it up, you see that they have been allocated.

And then the ones in the local governments, you see, those ones are the projects of the local governments. The only thing is that they need to inform the governor if they want him to come for commissioning and what have you. But there are some observed defects in some of them; I think they are trying to put some finishing touches. But some local governments have already allocated their own. There are others who are in the process of allocating. So I think for the houses, this is exactly what is happening.

Business

Why we're sacking, by Intercontinental bank

From Kayode Ekundayo, Lagos

The need to perfect the Intercontinental Bank Plc Project Transformation and preserve value for shareholders informed the recent staff rationalisation in which 1,346 staff of the bank were disengaged, its Managing Director, Mahmoud Lai Alabi, has said.

Reacting to the gale of sack in the banking industry and the outcry by the organised labour, Alabi disclosed in a statement yesterday that the Bank's action was specific to Intercontinental Bank and not generally a response to a directive from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) as being speculated in some quarters.

The Intercontinental Bank boss noted: "Though there was a letter specifically written by the Banking Supervision Department of the CBN in response to the financial report submitted by the bank and was not sent to any other bank as been misrepresented by some people. The letter only advised the bank on what to do on the way forward and not a directive from the CBN to all banks.

"The advice from the Banking Supervision Department, which does not necessarily require the approval of the CBN management, however, coincided with our plans to cut cost under our new Project Transformation",

he said

He said while the exercise was being executed, the various unions in the bank as well as other stakeholders were engaged and carried along in order to save the bank for future generations, given the financial position of the institution.

"The staff, they were all paid their 13th month salaries, December salaries, salary in lieu of disengagement and also severance packages. All these were done to give the disengagement exercise a human face," Alabi said.

The Intercontinental boss assured that as the bank's financials improve, some of the disengaged staff would be recalled.

"As a matter of fact, we have advised all the affected staff to leave their forwarding addresses with the Human Resources Department for possible recall as the need arises.

"I must also add that both management and staff of Intercontinental Bank have made sacrifices on all generous and outrageous bonuses, all of which has since been suspended," he said.

He also assured that going forward; none of the core staff of the bank would be disengaged.

However, he said that the non-core staff would be repositioned and properly aligned into the bank's outsourcing workforce without any reduction in their benefits.

CBN had on Monday reiterated that it did not

order banks to embark on mass sack of workers.

In a statement signed by its Head of Corporate Affairs, Muhammed Abdullahi, the CBN said the layoff of workers were the internal decisions of the banks and was not in any way authorised by the CBN.

The CBN said as private enterprises, the decision to engage or disengage staff is best left to the management and board of each financial institution.

It added that the decision to sack workers was taken on the basis of business imperative of each bank.

All banks according to the CBN are however, expected to follow due process in honouring all terms of appointment of their employees and any collective agreements signed with Workers' Unions.

"The CBN does not consider it appropriate to encourage loss-making banks to further erode depositors' funds and capital through inefficiencies in cost management," the statement said, adding that the reserve bank did not also direct banks to rationalise branches.

"The CBN noted with dismay, several untrue reports in the media alleging that it ordered the mass sack and rationalisation of their branches. The public and all stakeholders should therefore disregard the allegation in its entirety" the apex bank said.

Yobe to spend N418m on fisheries

From Hamza Idris, Damaturu

AS part of efforts to encourage fisheries and livestock businesses, Yobe State government has earmarked N418,100,000 in its 2010 budget for the development of infrastructure and new method of production.

Governor Ibrahim Gaidam who stated this while presenting the 2010 budget proposal to the state House of Assembly says the aim is to consolidate the position of Yobe State which produces livestock and fish, in large quantity.

According to him, "The money will be used in the procurement and distribution of vaccines as well as construction of veterinary clinics and loading ramps", the governor said.

Gaidam said cattle fattening and small ruminant breeding will also be improved in order to create job opportunities for youths and women. "To this end, attention will be given to the Gujba cattle range and Nguru Livestock Investigation and Breeding Centre (NLIBC)".

He said in the area of fisheries development "we

shall procure high protein content fish feeds, reactivate the fish hatchery at Gashua and award contract for the construction of new fish ponds for research and demonstration", the governor said.

Gaidam said the state government will also encourage foreign expertise to expand their activities in the state. "We shall continue to fulfil our obligation by paying the counterpart funds in respect of ECOWAS loan on Accelerated Artisanal Fish Production Project (AAFPP).



LEADERSHIP (4)

It is easy to wax lyrical about leadership. How many leaders do we really have out there? Leaders conceive and articulate goals that lift people out of their petty preoccupations and unite them in pursuit of objectives worthy of their best effort.

Leading with a whip is a huge mistake. Attempt leading with a dream and help people reach it. After all, most of the successes today started with just a dream, an idea. In one of our pre-definitions of leadership, we said leadership is causing people to take effective action.

If you are a leader, you must have people you are leading. Over the past weeks, I have harped on the importance of leadership and how everyone is steeled for the job if only that person would build on principles like discipline, persistence and people management.

People management! I cannot emphasize that enough. What good is your vision, doggedness and persistence if you do not have people to lead?

Leadership not only involves knowing where you are going but also how to effectively work with people. I am still sticking to the workplace.

The loyalty of your team is priceless. It cannot be bought with favours. You simply cannot realize your goals alone. Loyalty is only given by your team when they think their leader is worthy of it.

Here are some ways to gain and hold the loyalty of people to ensure and maintain a high level of productivity.

1. Help people be successful in their jobs. Give and do everything possible to help them achieve their goals.

2. Provide training. Encourage extra courses and study. Send your team to seminars. Focus on "continuous improvement" rather than "static perfection"

3. Provide the best working environment. Environment determines attitude. Attitude as they say determines altitude. The better the surroundings, the better they will feel about their work and themselves.

4. Resolve minor complaints or conflicts before they become major. As a leader you must look after the needs of your team. Alfred Pine sums it up appropriately "What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us. What we do for others and the world remains and it's immortal".

5. Learn to confide in people you trust. An individual feels important and special when information is shared, needless to say it would work wonders for his or her performance ratings.

6. Recognize and show appreciation for all the team, not just the high performers but those who also give their best. They need encouragement to do even better. Give them credit for their successes.

7. Be patient. Do not give up on a person until ample opportunity has been given for improvement

8. Reward performance. Give credit to your people. It makes them feel good and stimulates them to work even harder.

Effective leaders who score high marks in people management never say "I". They don't think "I", they think as a team. They think "we". They think "team".

When "we" gets the credit, it creates trust and gets the job done all the time. Be sincere in helping them succeed as a team and as individuals.

Skye High is also on Radio presently:

RADIO STATIONS	TIME
• Ray Power Network	6:15am [Mon - Fri]
• Rhythm FM Lagos	9:00am [Mon - Fri]
• Rhythm FM Abuja	6:30am [Mon - Fri]
• Love FM Port Harcourt	8:25am [Mon] & 8:00am [Tue - Fri]
• Kiss FM 99.9 Abuja	6:30am [Mon - Fri]

RADIO STATIONS	TIME
• Radio Continental Lagos	6:35am [Mon - Fri]
• Inspiration FM Lagos	8:00am [Mon - Fri]
• Edo Broad Svc [EBS]	7:55am [Mon - Fri]
• Cosmo FM Enugu	6:20am [Mon - Fri]
• Pyramid FM Kano	6:55am [Mon - Fri]

E-mail: skyehigh@skyebank.com or SMS 07030000255



Star Feature

'Dem don forget us for here': Inside Nyanya Police Barracks

Should a barracks resemble a ghetto? The Nyanya police barracks eloquently answers this question.

By Nathaniel Jonah

THE stench oozing from the dirty drainages that litter the environment is nauseating, while the array of dilapidated houses paints a picture of an abandoned refugee camp. As you saunter through the dingy neighbourhood, your nostrils are assailed by the unmistakable stench of Indian hemp. A quick glance around reveals a cluster of youths who mill around aimlessly. The distorted nature of the buildings actually allows you to enter through the open entrance of a building, only to burst out in the privacy of someone else's courtyard. The people appear hopeless, as they may have accepted it as their fate. The entire length and breadth of the expansive landscape wallows in grime, a clear indication that sanitation may have become an anomaly within this environment. A cluster of water vendors also known in local parlance as *Mai ruwa* suggests to you that residents of this area do not have access to portable water. Welcome to a settlement known as Nyanya police barracks on the fringes of Nigeria's capital city, Abuja. Sharing close proximity with the barracks is the Nyanya relief market, but unlike what its name suggests, the sprawling slum serves as a residential area for those who could not afford to live in the high brow areas of Maitama and Asokoro.

The piteous condition of the barracks aptly confirms the fear of an average police officer that the society does not care about him.

A walk through the barracks reveals that the sleepy neighbourhood might not be populated by policemen alone, as the ramshackle structures bear an informal inscription on the walls, informing you that it also houses officials of the Nigerian immigration service, and other civilians. Ahmed

Bilyaminu who resides in one of the shacks, explains further "actually, this place is known as Mopol barracks, but it also accommodates other civil servants like the immigration officials and other civilian residents."

THE first encounter that any visitor has is at the entrance to the barracks. Here, hawkers of different sizes, some with wheel-barrows and others carrying their wares on their heads, cut the picture of a market square. But more is in the offing. In another corner, the sight of women clad in tardy attires shouting at the top of their voices 'customer come buy from me', captures the attention of passers-by and the menacing manoeuvre of motor bike riders, commonly called Okada men, makes the traffic situation alarming. Block F, the first line of the many buildings that dot the Barracks, paints the picture of total abandonment and disorderliness. Most of the buildings on this line have given way to ruins and rot, as most of the roofing sheets have caved in.

The situation is made grimmer by the many children that populate the entire stretch, oblivious of the squalid environment and its likely effect on their health. As they are seen playing table tennis in the dirt around the filthy drainages, they confirm their state of innocence without prompting.

AT night, the barracks wears a completely new look, as ladies of easy virtue, could be seen indicating their trade in the brothels that dot the settlement.

Over time, this settlement has metamorphosed into a huge slum where atrocities are carried out on a daily basis. According to Fidelis Njoku, who resides in the area, "although, this place is supposed to be a police barracks, I



"HOW can people living in this kind of squalor protect lives and property?"

can tell you that with the kinds of things that take place here every day, it can pass for an ordinary civilian settlement." Corroborating Njoku's position is Dele Ajayi, a businessman who operates boutique at the Wuse market. In his words, "Only last week, a man was caught attempting to steal his neighbour's pot of soup. It took the intervention of other residents to prevent him from being lynched." But in spite of the unpleasant events that occur there, Njoku and Ajayi seem to have developed thick skins and adapted well. "The beauty of this kind of place is that houses are cheap here. For instance, you can get a room apartment for as low as sixty thousand naira, while a two room apartment goes for

“Over time, this settlement has metamorphosed into a huge slum where atrocities are carried out on a daily basis. According to Fidelis Njoku, who resides in the area, “although, this place is supposed to be a police barracks, I can tell you that with the kinds of things that take place here every day, it can pass for an ordinary civilian settlement.” Corroborating Njoku's position is Dele Ajayi, a businessman who operates a female boutique at the Wuse market. In his words, “Only last week, a man was caught attempting to steal his neighbour's pot of soup.”



“ A policeman who spoke with this medium on condition of anonymity, said that that they had accepted living in squalor as their fate, stressing that they cannot act to the contrary, because the police authorities have left them to die in ruins. “My brother, we no go fit do otherwise as dem don forget us for here. Where you want make we get money to rent house for this Abuja? We don leave everything to God, if we die for inside this dirty, na only God go help us. Na so we see am,” he lamented.

who resides in the barracks explained “it appears that the government has neglected the policemen. The issue of providing a befitting accommodation for them has continued to dominate the sphere of public discussion, but regrettably, nothing meaningful has been done to salvage the situation.”

Recently the Police Reform Committee constituted by the Federal Government under the chairmanship of former Inspector General of Police Alhaji M.D Yusuf gave an account on the state of police accommodation. According to the Committee reports which featured in some national dailies, the Committee discovered that only eight percent of policemen across the country, are accommodated in the dilapidating houses, otherwise known as Barracks.

as low as 120,000 naira. Compared to what obtains in town, I think it is affordable. That is why you see a lot of people here”, Njoku explained.

A policeman who spoke with this medium on condition of anonymity, said that that they had accepted living in squalor as their fate, stressing that they cannot act to the contrary, because the police authorities have left them to die in ruins. “My brother, we no go fit do otherwise as dem don forget us for here. Where you want make we get money to rent house for this Abuja? We don leave everything to God, if we die for inside this dirty, na only God go help us. Na so we see am,” he lamented.

A relative of one of the policemen in the barracks who gave his name as Tola Ibiyemi, told this medium “Help us tell government that our health and that of our children are in serious danger. You see that child (pointing to a baby playing) she is not aware that she can get infected with disease, while playing with that rubbish. My brother’s baby who has never taken ill before, is everyday going in and out of the hospital,” he lamented.

Veronica Akpan, a resident, describes the living standard at the Barracks as the height of insensitivity of the police authorities on the plight of their offic-

ers and men. “How can people living in this kind of squalor protect lives and property, when they are not protected on their own? This is the reason police officers deal with civilians mercilessly. Some of them even kill in the process.

While speaking with *Daily Trust*, Bello Farouk, a teacher



A typical street in the barracks.

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Rule your world

Business

NSE begins 2010 on optimistic note



DIRECTOR General of the Nigeria Stock Exchange Professor Ndi Okereke-Onyuike

THE 2010 equity transactions on the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) opened on Monday on an optimistic note as investors anxiously awaited the establishment of the proposed asset management company (AMC).

Stockbrokers expected a major overhaul in the AMC bill to accommodate the 30 per cent toxic assets of capital market operators.

The general market direction, however, looked brighter.

At the end of transactions, the all-share index grew marginally by 0.1 per cent to close at 20,838.90 points, compared with the 20,827.17 points recorded at the close of activities in 2009.

Ecobank led the price losers' chart, shedding 53k to close at N10.10 per share.

IBTC Stanbic Bank lost 31k to close at N7.16 per share, while Vitafoam dipped by 28k to close at N5.37 per share.

Earlier, Northern Nigeria Flour Mill led the gainers' pack, chalking up N1.09 to close at N22.94 per share.

The Nigerian Bottling Company share price also appreciated by N1.07 to close at N22.49 per share, while the Cement Company of Northern Nigeria gained 54k to close at N13 per share.

The sub-sector performance shows that investors' continued to position themselves in the banking sub-sector by committing N532.19 million in the first trading day on 68.09 million shares in 1,662 deals.

A further breakdown of activities in the banking sub-sector shows that GT Bank accounted for the bulk of transactions with 12.51 million shares valued at N194.59 million traded in 251 deals.

The Insurance sub-sector followed with 17.95 million shares valued at N11.64 million in 209 deals.

The Mortgage companies sub-sector accounted for N5.71 million staked on 11.05 million shares in 38 deals.

In all, investors bought 129.76 million shares worth N700 million which were traded in 3,802 deals. (NAN).

Telecoms subscribers seek fast tracking of fraudulent calls

TELECOMS operators have been urged to device better means for subscribers to report SIM numbers from where fraudulent messages emanate.

Chief Deolu Ogunbanjo, President, National Association of Telecoms Subscribers (NATCOMS), made the call on Tuesday in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Lagos.

Ogunbanjo who said that fraudulent messages were some of the challenges that telecoms consumers faced in 2009, stressed that "It became so rampant in 2009 and so many subscribers fell prey to it".

The NATCOMS chief said that operators had tried to alert the subscribers to ignore such messages as no operator would ask them to pay any money in order to claim their prizes.

He said that the service providers had also advised their customers to report any number that sent them fraud-

ulent messages.

Ogunbanjo said the numbers to call and report the case to are always difficult to get through.

He advised the operators to make available the numbers that subscribers can send text messages to report the numbers of the fraudsters.

The president telecoms subscribers said high tariff was another challenge that the consumers faced.

He said that the new interconnect rate approved by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) did not affect any considerable reduction in the tariff as the consumers expected.

The NATCOMS president said that subscribers were faced with the problem of poor quality service in the past years.

Ogunbanjo said that quality of service improved in November and December as subscribers were able to make calls and text messages delivered promptly. (NAN).

Aviation experts laud installation of body imaging scanner at airports

AVIATION experts on Tuesday commended the Federal Government for installing the Total Body Imaging Scanning System at some of the nations airports.

The experts said that the scanners would not only improve security at the airports, but also help to check acts of terrorism.

Mr Chris Azu-Aligbe, an aviation consultant, told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Lagos that the installation of the equipment was not an indication of security lapses in the country, but a demonstration of Nigeria's commitment to fighting terrorism.

He urged the U.S. not to stigmatise Nigerians over the Dec. 25 attempt to blow up a Northwestern Airline flight from Amsterdam to Detroit in the U.S., by a 23-year-old Nigerian, Umar Faruk AbdulMutallab.

Azu-Aligbe said that although the U.S. had a good reason to protect its citizens, the act of a single person should not be used to stigmatise Nigeria.

He said that the act of terrorism exhibited by Abdul-

Mutallab was "a brand new case" because it was not detected at the point of embarkation.

"The fact that the suspect only stayed 30 minutes in Lagos after flying in from Ghana before travelling to Amsterdam shows that his mission was almost concluded," he said.

Another consultant, Mr Taiwo Adenekan, also applauded the government for upgrading security screening at the nation's airports.

He, however, advised Nigerian passengers on international flights to be more security conscious and carry less baggage.

"For the next few months until we are de-listed, Nigerian travellers to the U.S. and other parts of the Europe should be ready for hard times.

Adenekan described as "unfortunate" the American government's categorisation of Nigeria as one of the countries whose citizens would be subjected to enhanced screening on arrival in the U.S.

The screening will include body scans, pat-downs and a thorough search of carry-on luggage. (NAN).

Industrialist decries high duty on juice materials

THE National Chairman, Juice Manufacturers Association, Mr Emmanuel Adeyemi, on Tuesday in Lagos decried the high import duty on materials for packaging juice.

Adeyemi, Managing Director, Fumman Agricultural Products Industries, Lagos said the duty on aluminum foils was between 40 and 50 per cent.

He said this would affect the growth of the sector.

"Aluminum foils may be produced in Nigeria, but not the type that can hold fruit juice to a temperature of 85 degree without the products disintegrating," he said.

He said the government was wrongly advised to increase the duty on aluminum foils and other packaging items to encourage local production.

"The local firms are not producing enough and quality standard packaging materials for juice long shelves life," he said.

Adeyemi called for a cross-border duty on laminated carton of juice packaging to encourage healthy competition among manufacturers.

"The tariff should accommodate all users of laminated cartons either in roll or any other form," the association chairman said.

He listed other major challenges facing the sector as high cost of refrigeration because of the poor power situation, packaging and disparity of tariff in favour of big firms.

The association chairman listed packaging items to include cans, plastics, laminated cartons, glass and among others.

Adeyemi urged government to implement policies that would encourage commercial farming.

"The absence of citrus plantations and the low quality of citrus resulted to low-capacity utilisation in factories," he said.

He estimated the demand of juice in the country to be about 260 million litres and a growth rate of between 25 and 30 per cent per annum.

"The huge demand for concentrates in Nigeria is creating employment and revenue for the producing countries in Europe, America, Asia and South Africa," he said.

He urged research institutes to use small-scale technology to process juice in remote areas to reduce the huge rotten fruits found in dump sites in local communities.

Adeyemi said it cost about N500 million to establish medium crushing facilities that could process 10 tons of fruits per hour.

He said that Funman Company had commenced efforts to tackle the lingering shortage of raw materials by establishing the Nucleus Estate Initiative (NEI) programme to boost production.

He said the programme entailed partnership with farmers who were provided with all the needed input for planting at subsidised prices.

According to him, Funman has decided to set up a concentrate plant with installed capacity of 150 tones of pineapple fruits daily.

He said such effort would improve planting of fruits through the NEI, increase fruits productivity as well benefit the farmers and processors. (NAN).

Business/International



GOOGLE phone

Speculation rife on Google phone

THE web is awash with gossip and rumour about the imminent arrival of a Google-branded phone. THE search firm is widely expected to unveil the Nexus One phone at a press conference scheduled for 5 January at its California HQ.

It is believed Google will sell the gadget directly to customers and that it will also be available, subsidised, from mobile operators.

Photos of the Nexus One have appeared online at gadget sites such as Gizmodo, Engadget and many others. The first look at the slim phone reveals that it is built by HTC, has a 9.3cm (3.7in) screen, five megapixel camera and runs version 2.1 of Google's Android operating system.

Early reviews were underwhelming, with Engadget declaring that it was "really not very different" from existing Android phones such as Motorola's Droid.

Engadget said the phone shifted quickly between different applications but lacked what might be thought of as standard features for comparable smartphones such as a multi-touch screen.

Gizmodo said leaked documents showed that the phone will cost more than \$500 (£308) unlocked, ie not tethered to a network, or \$180 (£111) with a two-year contract from T-Mobile.

No information has yet been revealed about when, and if, the phone will be available outside the US.

Google has kept secret the

exact details of what will be unveiled on 5 January. Media organisations are limited to sending one correspondent to the press conference. A spokesman for the company would only say the announcement was "significant".

"All eyes are on the Nexus One," said analyst Rob Enderle of Silicon Valley-based Enderle Group.

"It looks like Google is moving to see if they can do the Apple thing," he added.

The Nexus One is widely believed to have been tested out inside Google when the search giant issued the device to many of its employees.

"For Google to go into the business of selling phones just doesn't make a whole lot of sense," said Van Baker, an analyst with market research firm Gartner.

Before now Google has been content for established phone makers, such as Sony-Ericsson, to make the phones that run its Android operating system.

Chatter about the Nexus One sets the stage for the Consumer Electronics Show that takes place in Las Vegas from 7-10 January.

The giant gadget shindig will see more than 110,000 people stroll through halls in which they will find more than 20,000 new products.

This year the show is likely to see the unveiling of many netbooks, e-book readers and tablet computers. The conference officially opens on 6 January with an evening keynote from Steve Ballmer, Microsoft chief executive. BBC



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Oil rises towards \$82, cold weather supports

OIL edged up toward \$82 a barrel on Tuesday, rising for the ninth straight session, as cold snaps in key consumers the United States and Europe boosted demand for heating fuel.

Investors awaited U.S. oil inventory data from the American Petroleum Institute (API) later on Tuesday and the Energy Information Administration (EIA) on Wednesday, expected to show a drop in distillate stocks but steady crude inventories.

U.S. crude for February delivery was up 14 cents to \$81.65 a barrel by 1034 GMT, off an earlier high of \$81.99, a cent below the October 2009 high, and after settling up \$2.15 at \$81.51 on Monday, its highest close since October 9, 2008.

"The extreme cold weather, spreading as far as China, is supportive today," said Rob Montefusco, oil trader at Sudden Financial.

"The (inventory) data will give us some direction, there should be a draw in crude and distillates," Montefusco added.

Industry data from the API, due at 1930 GMT, is forecast to show a 1.9 million barrel drawdown last week in distillate stocks, which include heating oil and diesel fuel, while crude stocks were seen unchanged and gasoline supplies higher.

U.S. crude futures would reach the highest point since October 14 2008 if they push above \$82 and some analysts said it was the anticipation that prices would rise above this psychological point that was boosting oil on Tuesday.

"The price rise is not supported by fundamentals today it is investment driven," Eugen Weinberg, oil analyst at Commerzbank said on Tuesday.

"There is a lot of speculative demand given the fact that we are close to \$82, which was the intra-day high last year."

Frigid temperatures in the U.S. were expected to boost the country's heating demand to 21 percent above normal, with consumption in the U.S. northeast -- the largest heating oil market -- seen 11 percent above average levels.

Unusually cold weather in Britain is expected to continue into the second half of January after the coldest December since 1995, while lower temperatures in Europe were seen gradually spreading from the northeast to the southwest during the next few days. Heavy snow and biting cold also hit parts of Asia on Monday, with unusually harsh winter weather snarling transport across north China, South Korea and India.

Investors were watching for any further developments between Russia and Belarus, after an oil dispute saw Russia briefly cut off supplies to the eastern European nation. Russia on Monday said it had resumed supplies to refineries in Belarus, but tension still simmers.

U.S. economic data, including November factory orders later on Tuesday and key jobless claims and employment numbers later in the week -- will offer clues on the health of the economy and oil demand outlook from the world's top oil consumer.

At 1500 GMT, the Commerce Department will release November factory orders, which are expected to rise 0.5 percent compared with a 0.6 percent gain in the previous month. Reuters.

Iceland plans vote on bank payout

ICELAND'S president has announced plans to hold a referendum on the payment of compensation resulting from the collapse of the country's banks.

President Olafur Ragnar Grimsson said he would not sign a controversial bill to repay \$5bn lost by UK and Dutch savers in Icesave accounts.

The Landsbanki bank, which ran the Icesave accounts, collapsed at the height of the banking crisis in 2008.

The money would have gone to the UK and Dutch governments who compensated Icesave holders following the collapse.

The bill gained parliamentary approval in December, but public opposition in Iceland has grown.

On Monday, the president received a petition against it that had been signed by a quarter of the country's population.

Announcing the decision to hold a referendum on the bill, President Grimsson said that the Icelandic public had the right to choose.

"It is the job of the president of Iceland to make sure the nation's will is answered," he said.

"I have decided... to take the new law to the nation. The referendum will take place as quickly as possible."

BBC Europe business reporter Nigel Cassidy said it was an astonishing decision.

"It really plunges Iceland into a constitutional crisis," he said.

He pointed out that Iceland has to borrow the \$5bn needed for the compensation.

"They are having to borrow it from the IMF to shore up not just this loan but all kinds of other things, so it puts everything up in the air - not just this but further loans from the IMF and even Iceland's chances of joining the European Union." BBC.

Vacancies

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates to fill the following positions in the locations listed below:

Lagos, Ibadan, Ijebu, Calabar, Port Harcourt, Owerri, Onitsha, Kano, Kaduna, Maiduguri, Katsina, Abuja, Minna, Kwara, Benue and Kogi.

1. Field Officers

Role summary:

- Select partners - Co-operatives, NGOs and Trade Associations
- Manage deserving micro entrepreneurs
- Support capacity building in sales, distribution and marketing
- Drive the achievement of sales targets
- Manage Stakeholders
- Provide periodic reports

Qualifications and experience:

- Graduates with a minimum of 3 years experience in sales, distribution and marketing management. Experience in accounting or bookkeeping is desirable

2. Administrative and Logistics Officers

Role summary:

- Provide administrative and logistics functions for the branch/location
- Manage the warehouse by tracking the inward and outward movement of goods
- Provide periodic reports

Qualifications and experience:

- Graduates with a minimum of 3 years experience in administration, logistics and warehouse management. Experience in accounting or bookkeeping is desirable



Interested applicants should send their CVs to enquiries@dangote-group.com

Also send hard copies to
**Dangote Foundation, 1 Alfred Rewane Road, Falomo,
Ikoyi, Lagos**

Application closes on 22 January, 2010. Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted



CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA

INVITATION FOR THE SUBMISSION OF QUOTATIONS FOR THE SUPPLY OF ONE MOTORISED FIRE FIGHTING LADDER AND THREE WATER TENDING FIRE FIGHTING MACHINES TO LAGOS, KANO, IBADAN AND PORT HARCOURT BRANCHES.

The Central Bank of Nigeria requires the supply of **ONE UNIT OF MOTORISED FIRE FIGHTING LADDER AND THREE UNITS WATER TENDING FIRE FIGHTING MACHINES** under the 2009 budget.

Consequently, the Bank wishes to invite reputable and competent companies to submit quotations for the supply of the items as follows:

- 1) One Fire fighting aerial platform (Motorized ladder) for Lagos (ref. no.CBNMOT2009/01)
- 2) Three Water tending fire fighting machines for Kano, Ibadan & Port Harcourt (ref. no.CBNMOT2009/02)

MOTORIZED LADDER SPECIFICATIONS (CARRIER: BENZ GERMANY)

Main Technical Data in Travel Configuration

- Dimension: Overall length of 15060mm, height of 400mm and width of 2500mm.
- Weight: Total vehicle weight 48200kg
- Travel Performance max. travel speed 85/km/h; min turning diameter $\leq 24\%$.

Main Technical Data for Operation

- Main performance: Rated working height 68m, rated working depth 13m, rated load on platform 400kg, max working radius 23m, outrigger span (longitudinal X lateral) 7635x7000mm.
- Working speed: Boom deploying time ≤ 200 seconds.
- Outrigger extending time ≤ 30 seconds
- Fire fighting performance: fire pump rated flow 60L/s; fire pumprated outlet pressure 1.7 MPa; water monitor rated pressure ≤ 0.8 L/s, foam monitor rated pressure ≤ 0.8 M/Pa; Nozzle travel range- $135^\circ \sim 0^\circ / \pm 170^\circ$.

WATER TENDING MACHINES SPECIFICATIONS (BENZ GERMANY)

Main Technical Data in Travel Configuration

- Dimension: Overall length of 12170mm, height of 3940mm and width of 2500mm: front axle 2035mm and Rear axle 1804mm.
- Weight: Water 4900/3000kg; Foam 4900/3000, Total vehicle curb weight 23950kg, total vehicle weight 32000.
- Travel performance" max. Travel speed ≤ 20 , approach angle 19° , departure angle 9° and max. grade ability $\leq 25\%$, Banking distance (at 30km/h) ≤ 10 m, min. ground clearance 290mm.

Main Technical Data for Operation

- Main Performance: rated working height 42m, max working radius 19m, outrigger span (longitudinal x lateral) 6.0x5.4m, elevating range $-3 \sim 80^\circ$.
- Working Speed: Boom deploying time ≤ 110 seconds, slewing speed $0 \sim 2$ r/min: Outrigger extending time ≤ 30 seconds.
- Fire Fighting performance: fire pump rated flow 60 L/s; fire pump rated outlet pressure 1.7 Mpa; water monitor rated pressure

≤ 0.8 L/s, foam monitor rated pressure ≤ 0.8 M/Pa; Nozzle travel range- $135^\circ \sim 0^\circ / \pm 170^\circ$.

SCOPE OF WORK

Provision of **MOTORISED FIRE FIGHTING LADDER AND THREE WATER TENDING FIRE FIGHTING MACHINES** listed above.

GENERAL REQUIREMENT

Interested and competent contractors wishing to carry out the above job shall submit the following documents for verification:-

- a.) Evidence of registration with Corporate Affairs Commission
- b.) Evidence of payment of tax for the last three (3) years as and when due.
- c.) Comprehensive company profile including registered address, functional contact email address, GSM phone number(s), facsimile number(s).
- d.) Verifiable evidence of similar jobs successfully executed in the past (Certificate of Completion).
- e.) Reference letter from bank stating financial ability to carry out such project(s).
- f.) Current company's audited statement of accounts.
- g.) Evidence of employees Retirement Savings Accounts (RSA) with a pension Fund Administrator.
- h.) Evidence of remitting employer and employee pension contributions to the appropriate pension fund custodian.
- i.) Evidence of transferring all Pension Funds and Assets prior to the commencement of the pension Reform Act to licensed pension operators.

SUBMISSION

Quotations should be forwarded in a sealed waxed envelope boldly marked at the top left corner:

" Quotation for the supply of **MOTORISED FIRE FIGHTING LADDER AND THREE WATER TENDING FIRE FIGHTING MACHINES** to the Central Bank of Nigeria"

And address to :-

The Secretary, Major Contracts Tenders Committee,
Procurement & Support Services Department 2nd Floor, Wing C, CBN Head Office Complex
Central Business District,
Abuja, FCT Nigeria

CLOSING DATE

All submission must be received .ot the above Address on or before **16.00 hours two weeks from the date of this publication.**

Signed:
MANAGEMENT



NATIONAL INLAND WATERWAYS AUTHORITY

COMPLETION OF LOKOJA RIVER PORT AND SUPPLY/INSTALLATION OF CARGO HANDLING EQUIPMENT

This Public Notice is to announce the names of contractors screened under Selective Tendering Procedure with respect to the above project.

LIST OF QUALIFIED CONTRACTORS

1. Borini Prono & company (Nig.) Ltd;
2. Reynolds Construction Company (Nig.) Ltd.
3. Van Oord Nigeria Ltd.

BID DOCUMENTS

The above named pre-qualified contractors are required to collect the Tender Documents from the Office of the Head, Procurement, NIWA Headquarters, Lokoja upon tendering evidence of payment of Tender Fee of **N50,000.00** from 21st December, 2009.

SUBMISSION

Completed Bid documents should be written in English Language; signed, sealed and marked "CONFIDENTIAL" with the title FINANCIAL BID DOCUMENT at the Top Left Corner of the envelope and addressed to:

The Managing Director,
National Inland Waterways Authority (Hqs.)
Adankolo New Layout,
Lokoja, Kogi State.

The documents must be submitted not later than 12.00 noon, Wednesday January 18, 2010 into a specially made box Marked "Tender Box" at Block D, NIWA Headquarters, Lokoja

OPENING OF BID DOCUMENTS

The Bid of the Companies listed above shall be publicly opened at 2.00pm on January 18, 2010, at the Conference Room, NIWA Headquarters, Lokoja.

**SIGNED
MANAGEMENT**



KATSINA STATE COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES (KOHESKATI), 49, HASSAN USMAN ROAD (ADJACENT TO WTC), KATSINA.

SALES OF APPLICATION FORMS FOR ADMISSION INTO THE BASIC MIDWIFERY PROGRAMME 2010.

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for entry into the three-year Basic Midwifery programme offered by the College at the School of Midwifery, Malumfashi.

Applicants must have **five credits** in their SSCE from **English, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology** (combination NECO and WEAC is not entertained) obtained at not more than two sittings.

Application for Admission Forms are obtainable from all branches of the First Bank of Nigeria Plc in Katsina State at the cost of one thousand one hundred Naira only {N1,100.00}.

Completed forms are to be returned to any of the College's satellite Schools [the School of Midwifery, Malumfashi, Schools of Health Technology Daura and Kankia, and the School of Nursing, Katsina] **on or before 12th February 2010.**

All qualified candidates must sit for an **Entrance Exams** scheduled for **17th February 2010** at the School of Nursing, Katsina and School of Midwifery, Malumfashi.

Sani T. Ahmed
Registrar.

INVITATION FOR BIDS

ZUMA WORLD SHOPPING CENTER PROJECT, THE BIGGEST AND LARGEST SHOPPING CENTER IN THE WORLD

Ngo-Martins Nigeria Limited is building the largest Ultra-Modern, State of the art market in the world known as Zuma World Shopping Center, Suleja.

Five (5) Specialized Malls, consisting of four thousand (4,000) Lock-Up Shops in each mall; totaling twenty thousand (20,000) Lock-up Shops.

Fifteen (15) Bank Buildings; Big Warehouses; Fire Service Station; Auditoriums for conferences; Creche; Mosque; Church; Clinic; Police Post; 240 room Chalet for International traders; Public Toilets and Restaurants.

We invite contractors in the following areas to bid for jobs:

- (A) Building Contractors
- (B) Civil Engineering Contractors
- (C) Air Conditioning Contractors
- (D) Bore hole Contractors
- (E) Painting Contractors
- (F) Carpenters
- (G) Welders
- (H) Tilers
- (I) Plumbers
- (J) Electricians

We also invite bids from bidders for the supply of the following:

- (A) Generators, Transformers and Cables
- (B) Earth moving equipment, caterpillars, Excavators, Graders and Rollers.
- (C) Building Equipment-Block Molding Machines, Concrete Mixer and Dumper.
- (D) Doors, Burglary Proofs, Fire Detecting Equipment, Fire fighting Equipment, Hydrants and Security Gadgets.
- (E) Cements, Iron Rods, Blocks Wood and Tiles.
- (F) Electrical Appliances, Wires, Switches and Lightings.
- (G) Plumbing Materials.
- (H) Sand and Granite.

All interested applicants should collect the bidding documents from any branch of **Skye Bank**; A/c Name: **Ngo-Martins Nigeria Ltd.** A/c no: **3181760000503**, on payment of a non-refundable application fee of **N25,000** only.

Enquires: Project Office: 8, Tijani Zubairu Crescent,
Off Hassan Sule Gegu Street,
Behind Badegi Motors, Off Minna Road, Suleja, Niger, State.
Tel: 07040199919, 08023505410

DIGEST

Tiny cushion that sits in your spine to cure back pain

A mini cushion implanted in the spine could be an effective new way to cure back pain.

New research shows the polyester-covered device reduces pain by nearly three-quarters, and also improves movement by more than 60 per cent.

The implant is designed for those with damaged discs and has a silicon core which will act as a shock absorber to reduce stress on the surrounding vertebrae.

In trials, all patients showed improved symptoms, and in 92 per cent of cases the results were rated as excellent or good.

'It has changed my life,' says Rebecca Morgan, one of the first patients in the UK to have the implant. 'As a result, I have finally said goodbye to all the prescription drugs I used to take, and gone back to the gym.'

Around 16 million people in the UK suffer with back pain and the NHS spends about £480 million a year on the condition. One of the most common causes of pain in the back is degenerative disc disease, where pain is caused by a damaged disc.

At birth, the discs are about 80 per cent water, but with age or disease, they dry out, losing some of their height, which brings the vertebrae closer together. As a result, the discs do not absorb shocks so well, particularly when walking, running or jumping.

And because there is very little blood supply to the disc, once it is injured it cannot repair itself and degeneration sets in.

This not only causes back pain, but may also cause tingling or numbness in the legs or buttocks, or difficulty walking. The pain can radiate out to the legs.

Discs can also herniate — bulge or slip out of place — and put pressure on surrounding nerves, causing pain.

The new implant, called the Device for Intervertebral Assisted Motion, is H-shaped and made from a soft gel.

It is implanted between the spinous processes — the vertebrae that protrude from the back of the spine and create the bumps you can feel if you run your finger up and down your back — around the damaged disc.

Insertion involves an incision a few centimetres in length along the spine. The surgeon prepares the area for the implant by removing a minimum amount of soft and bony tissue. Once in place, it is fastened to the adjacent vertebrae.

Research shows that not only does the implant work as a shock absorber, but it restores the natural working of the joint and eases pain. Indeed, results from a new study involving 68 patients aged 23 to 75 show considerable benefits.

Movement improved by 64 per cent on average, and pain was reduced by 71 per cent. All the patients showed improvements.

The results were not significantly affected by age, and none of the patients had any recurrence of disc herniation, which the



AN implanted cushion could provide the answer to chronic back pain

manufacturer, Medtronic, says is proof of the device's effectiveness.

Rebecca's back pain started several years ago, but became significantly worse after she had children. 'I started to find everyday activities difficult — even sitting down for any length of time

was painful,' says the mother of two from Bristol.

'The thought of having to lift my son in and out of the bath would sometimes drive me to tears. I was eventually referred to a spinal specialist at the Spire Hospital in Bristol. An X-Ray

and an MRI scan showed I had a collapsed disc and because of the reduced disc height, the nearby joints were inflamed and rubbing together.

'The specialist suggested minimally invasive surgery to insert this new device between the joints.

Music made me deaf, as iPods and concerts harm...



PHILLIPA Faulks's hearing has improved thanks to digital aids

TWENTY-TWO years ago as I left the house to go to see Motorhead - dubbed the loudest band in the world - my mother's words followed me out of the door: 'You'll ruin your hearing one day!'

At the time, I rolled my eyes dramatically, as every self-respecting 19-year-old should, and proceeded to assault my senses with 140 decibels of noise, which I now know is ten decibels above the sound of a jet plane taking off.

The sound levels at the gig were too much for most of the fans; people were leav-

ing in droves, but I stayed on. That night, I left the venue with my ears ringing and it took more than a week for the ringing to diminish.

At the age of 41, my mother's spurned warning now rings as loud as the tinnitus I suffer from, for I have indeed ruined my hearing and wear two relatively innocuous but still definitely very uncool hearing aids.

My penchant for live bands and clubs has caused irreversible damage to my ears, meaning that the sound vibrations nor-

mally heard in everyday life are not being passed through the intricate network of nerves to my brain.

And it seems I'm part of a trend. According to the World Health Organisation, four million Britons risk serious damage to their ears by exposure to loud music - with 75 per cent of under-55s experiencing difficulty with their hearing. Hours spent listening to music on MP3 players and at concerts are to blame. I look at my daughter listening to her iPod and pray she learns from my mistakes.

Sign Language



May be thinking of new inventions

Photo location: New York City, by Janie Repasky

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.

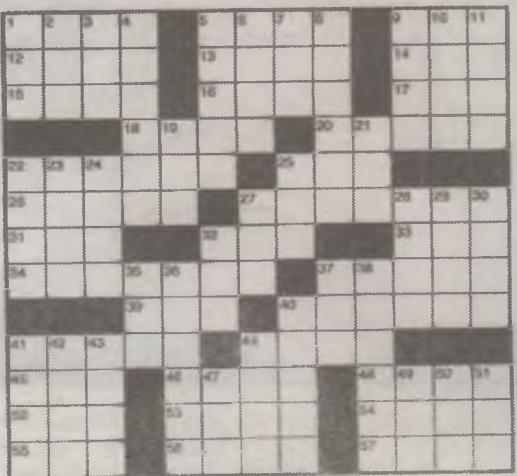
58

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

EASY CROSSWORDS

- ACROSS**
1. "___ Man" (1984 film)
 5. "Trinity" author Leon
 9. Public television letters
 12. Lion's home
 13. Audition tape
 14. "Are you a man ___ mouse?" (2 wds.)
 15. Musical of baseball
 16. "Let's Make a ___"
 17. Like Capp's Abner
 18. Scored 100%
 20. Put up
 22. Car hirer
 25. "Managed care" inits.
 26. Surpass
 27. Idea
 31. Ram's sound
 32. Puppy
 33. Bronx attraction
 34. Best Picture of 1984
 37. More exposed
 39. Artist Yoko
 40. Couch ___ (TV addict)
 41. More bashful
 44. Colorless
 45. Title for a judge (abbr.)
 46. The Buckeye State
- DOWN**
1. "Kidnapped" author's inits.
 2. Dine
 3. Entertainer Zadora
 4. Excessively decorated
 5. Cow part
 6. Bulrush
 7. "___ Man" (2 wds.)
 8. Unsmiling
 9. Firehouse slider
 10. ___-a-brac
 11. Pepper's companion
 19. Animation unit
 21. Mythical bird
 22. Country singer McEntire
 23. Checkup
 24. College sports gp.
 25. ___-heaven
 27. Comic Bill's nickname
 28. Bible book
 29. Verse writer
 30. Bull, in Spain
 32. Twosome
 35. Gentle animal
 36. Sign up
 37. Diva's scarf
 38. Socrates' city
 40. Plans
 41. Fancy pillow covering
 42. Car beeper
 43. Facts, informally
 44. Harry Crosby, popularly
 47. Hurry
 49. Uncle or cousin (abbr.)
 50. "___ Blue?" (2 wds.)
 51. Tippler

46



Solution to Easy Crosswords 45

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

Solution to Sudoku 57

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

News Extra

Jacob Zuma takes a tumble during solo dance at wedding

South African president slips and falls during solo dance after marrying Tobeka Madiba in traditional Zulu ceremony.

President Jacob Zuma of South Africa, married his third wife on Monday in a traditional Zulu ceremony – but not without a hitch. Zuma, 67, reportedly slipped and fell during a traditional solo dance at the wedding at his homestead in Nkandla, KwaZulu-Natal province.

Zuma and Tobeka Madiba, the republic's third first lady, were presented to society as husband and wife for the first time during their ceremony, South Africa's *Eyewitness News* reported.

Accompanied by an entourage of men dressed in leopard skins, Zuma sang and danced, the network said. Madiba was then presented with her own entourage of young Zulu men and women.

The president did a solo traditional dance but slipped and fell backwards in the process, according to *Eyewitness News*. There was no indication that he had been hurt.

The Madiba family presented Zuma with a chest of drawers as a wedding gift.

Overcast skies in Nkandla failed to dull the spirits of villagers – dressed in animal skins and African prints – who walked along muddy trails to the Zulu ceremony, known as *udwendwe*.

The media were kept away from the proceedings, but buses transporting the guests were seen outside Zuma's house, where three big tents were erected. Several sheep, goats and cows were slaughtered for the wedding feast.

The Zulu tribe, the biggest ethnic group in South Africa, practises polygamy by tradition. Zuma once told an interviewer: "There are plenty of politicians who have mistresses and children that they hide so as to pretend they're monogamous. I prefer to be open. I love my wives and I'm proud of my children."

Madiba joins Sizakele Khumalo-Zuma, whom Zuma has known for 50 years and married in 1973, and Nompumelelo Ntuli-Zuma, whom he married two years ago.

There were two further wives. He divorced Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, now home affairs minister, in 1998. Kate Mantsho Zuma killed herself in 2000, after describing her marriage to him as "24 years of hell".

Zuma is said to have more than 10 children, and possibly as many as 19. Zuma has paid lobolo (bride price) to the family of Madiba, described as a socialite from Durban, as custom demands. She has attended official events with the president but it appears the wedding had been postponed until now because of Zuma's work commitments. He was elected president in April.

Zuma is also reportedly preparing for a sixth wedding. Gloria Bongi Ngema is understood to have presented umbondo (gifts) to the Zuma family last week, customarily a precursor to marriage. Originally from Durban, Ngema works for IBM in Johannesburg and has a son with Zuma named Sinqumo.

Zuma has also been linked to a Swazi princess, but has given no clear indication that he plans to wed her.

South African law recognises multiple marriages, although fewer young South Africans are entering into them because they are seen as expensive and old-fashioned. The cultural practices of Zulus and other groups are protected by the constitution.

Zuma played up his Zulu heritage during the election campaign and spent Christmas at his homestead in Nkandla. He relaxed by shooting birds with a sling-shot, drinking umqombothi (traditional beer) and taking part in a chess tournament. It emerged this month that a reported R65m (£5.3m) expansion of the Nkandla residence is under way with new houses being built to accommodate Zuma's three wives.

Jeremy Gordin, Zuma's biographer, said he was surprised how little attention Zuma's latest wedding had received. "I find it interesting that there were all kinds of people making belligerent comments on his polygamy, but that died down after the election."

He added: "Zuma is adamant about polygamy. It's his right as a Zulu. But he only took one wife to Italy to meet the pope."



JACOB Zuma doing a solo dance at the function.



JACOB Zuma and Tobeka Madiba on floor



TOBEKA Madiba arrives with her bridesmaids

News Extra

The world's tallest skyscraper opens in a blaze of glory



BESIDES an observation deck on its 124th floor affording 360-degree views of the entire city, Burj Khalifa is home to the world's first Armani Hotel, luxury offices and residences

A TALL STORY

It is the first time the Arab world has opened the tallest building on the planet. The tower's opening is expected to boost the price of oil to \$120.

HOW THEY COMPARE

Building	Height (ft)
Empire State Building	1,454
101 World Trade Center	1,367
Shanghai Tower	1,289
Abraj Al-Basmali	1,249
Lotus Temple	1,210
Bank of China Tower	1,167
Shanghai World Financial Center	1,137
Prayer Tower	1,100
Prayer Tower	1,080
Prayer Tower	1,060
Prayer Tower	1,040
Prayer Tower	1,020
Prayer Tower	1,000

THE CONSTRUCTION

The tower has been built using eight million cubic feet of concrete, 2,000 tons of reinforcing steel, 107,000 sq ft of stainless steel cladding, and 1.5 million sq ft of double-glazing.

The tapered concrete core of the tower forms all of its 37 lifts. It is supported at three wings, arranged in a 'Y' shape to distribute its weight, making it more stable.

THE HEIGHT

The tower's spire is visible from 40 miles away and you can see it from the 124th-floor observation deck which is open to the public.

Burj Khalifa is so tall that the temperature at the top is 12° cooler than at the bottom.

THE INTERIOR

The restaurant is on the 122nd floor, the gym on the 123rd and a nightclub on the 143rd floor. There are plans for a mosque on the 150th.

The air conditioning is the equivalent of freezing 12,000 tons of ice a day. The water system will supply 200,000 gallons of recycled water per day.

THE LIFTS

64 sets of double-deck lifts carry visitors to the tower's observation deck, on the 124th floor.

67 sets of lifts for staff down, there are 2,000 stairs from bottom to top.

THE STRUCTURE

The tower is so big it has already sunk 2.4 inches into the ground. Its foundations are 100 ft deep.

It has been designed to sway up to 60 ft in high winds. The top's steel makes it lean as much as 10° in the north-south and east-west.

The rods that reinforce the structure weigh 37,000 tons. Load and to say they would stretch more than a quarter of the way around the world.

At the external surface is the size of 17 football fields.

Dubai opened the world's tallest skyscraper in a glitzy ceremony Monday evening that was meant to put a brave face on crushing debt woes. The \$1 billion (about \$240bn) tower reaches 2,717 ft, 200 storeys into the sky, exceeding the next highest structure by some 1,000 ft.

Dubai's ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al-Maktoum renamed the tower Burj Khalifa after the president of the United Arab Emirates and the ruler of the neighbouring emirate of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed al-Nahayan.

Abu Dhabi has facilitated \$25 billion in bailout funds for Dubai in the past year, fuelling expectations that Dubai will make concessions or cede some of its commercial power to its wealthier neighbour.

Concerns about Dubai's \$100-billion debt pile, which has made Dubai's stock exchange one of the world's worst performing, overshadowed both the ceremony and boasts by the builder, Emaar Property, that the Burj heralds a new dawn.

"The worry for Dubai is that the event will be remembered as a second bout of hubris," said David Butter, regional director for Middle East and North Africa at Economist Intelligence Unit.

The first bout was in November, 2008, two months after the collapse of Lehman Bros, when Dubai spent \$24 million on the opening ceremony of the Atlantis Hotel, an event that did more to highlight a taste for extravagance than assuage fears that the economic crisis was not being taken seriously.

Emaar says property prices have now stabilised, confounding wider expectations for stress in the sector.

"You have to ask, 'why are we building all this?' To bring quality of life and a smile to people and I think we should continue to do that," said Mohamed Alabbar, chairman of Emaar, the Arab world's largest listed developer.

"Crises come and go," Alabbar said. "We build for years to come... We must have hope and optimism."

The complex of apartments, offices, shops, restaurants, a mosque, gym, nightclub and Giorgio Armani-designed hotel, was designed to the brief that residents need never leave.

Everything they could possibly need is supposedly provided.

The hotel takes up the first eight floors with suites on the 38th and 39th. Residential apartments go up to the 108th floor - at about 1,300 feet.

A number of the higher floors - up to the 160th - have been designated as office space, while there is a restaurant on the 122nd floor and a gym, with an indoor and outdoor swimming pool, on the 123rd floor - some 1,440 feet off the ground.

On the 124th floor is the world's highest observation deck. The Burj Dubai is also intending to host the world's highest nightclub - on the 143rd floor.

Officials insist the tower is no white elephant. It is still the 'jewel in the gulf,' a spokesman said.

"It is the tallest building in the world and the first of its kind," he said. "From inside it looks like a Porsche if you want to talk about luxury."

Thousands are said to have been rushed in over the weekend in a desperate push to complete the job.

And in response to the increasing terrorist threat throughout the world - such as those on the World Trade Center, the bombings in London and the attempted detonation of an explosive on a plane in Detroit on Christmas Day - the Burj has in-built 'refuge floors', situated at 25 to 30 storey intervals that are more fire resistant and have separate air supplies in case of emergency.

Greg Sang, Emaar's director of projects, said: "It's a lot more robust. A plane won't be able to slice through the Burj like it did through the steel columns of the World Trade Center."

In a sign Dubai is trying to meet its obligations, DP World, a subsidiary of state-owned holding company Dubai World, said it had paid obligations tied to a sukuk and a bond issue on time.

Dubai sent shockwaves through global markets on November 25 when it said it would request a standstill on billions of dollars of debts linked to state-held holding firm Dubai World and its property units Limitless and Nakheel, developer of three palm-shaped islands.

Dubai World is expected to pitch a formal standstill proposal on its debt payments to creditors this month, while it comes up with a restructuring plan.

News Extra

Being Obama's brother

By George Obama

In November 2008, I stood in a bar in Kenya watching Barack Obama give his victory speech. From the wild cheering of the crowd on TV, and his repeated appeals to them personally—"You said," "You heard," "You called"—I felt as if the people of America knew this man far better than I, even though we shared the same father. If there was a leading light in the Obama clan, he was it; and if there was a shadowed place that no one liked to talk about, then that, I guess, was me.

After a relatively privileged childhood, I crashed and burned in my teenage years. I had migrated from the plush suburbs of Nairobi, Kenya, to the wild chaos of the ghetto. I lost myself in drink and drugs and became a gun-toting gangster. In my early 20s, I spent a year in a Nairobi prison on robbery charges. My imprisonment included a starvation diet and 24/7 lockdowns in overcrowded, airless cells. But I came out a different man, resolved to turn my life around and find a different path.

Along with some fellow slum dwellers, I set up a youth group for ghetto kids. My passion was football (soccer), which is followed religiously throughout Africa. When we first established the Huruma Centre Football Club, none of our kids had so much as a pair of football boots, let alone any uniform. Some were so hungry when they turned up that they had no energy to play. At other times, the team had to trek for miles to matches because we couldn't afford any transportation. In spite of all that, our players were passionate, and we started winning. Then, as my brother's profile grew in America and around the world, the media came looking for his African relatives.

Eventually the press found me in my slum. My new notoriety was a blessing and a curse. Many people presume I have a direct line to the White House, but I don't. I've only met my big brother twice and have spoken to him just once since the election, to say congratulations. Still, because of our connection, I managed to pull in funds from philanthropists to support the work of the youth



GEORGE Obama sits in front of his home in a slum in Nairobi, Kenya

group. I raised enough money to buy the team gold and green uniforms—with their own numbers on the back. Last fall, Obama's Champs won the Nairobi Super League—a feat that, just a couple of years back, would have been unthinkable for a team from the slums. With the sponsorship I've attracted because of my last name, we can now afford to take buses all across Kenya for matches.

I still live in one of Africa's biggest slums, along with some 4.5 million others. We have little or no access to health care, no welfare, and no free schooling. The average income is less than \$5 a day—and that's for those who find work as servants, taxi drivers, or garbage collectors. For the rest, there is nothing. My brother has risen to be the leader of the most powerful country in the world. In Kenya I hope to be a leader among the poorest, most powerless people on earth—the people of the ghetto.

Hope—it's an idea my brother talked about a lot. But it was only recently that I learned again what it means to feel the true spirit of that word. Here, a little goes a long way.

Obama's memoir, *Homeland*, was co-written with Damien Lewis.

Culled from *Newsweek.com*

Joint Steering Committee Policy Analysis and Research Project "PARP" National Assembly on Parliamentary Exchange visit at the parliament of Brazil in pictures. Dec, 2009



Deputy Speaker Hon. Usman Nafada Bayero discusses with Mr. Marconi



Deputy Speaker Nafada receives gift from Mr. Marconi Perilla, Vice President of the Senate Brazilian Parliament



Mr. Marconi Perilla, Vice President of the Senate Brazilian Parliament receives gift from Hon. Usman Bayero Nafada



Cross section of the JSC delegation at a round discussion Table with the president of Brazilian House of Representatives



Project Coordinator PARP Dr. Ladi Hamalai MFR takes her turn in Executive hand shake with Acting President Parliament of Brazil



Cross section of JSC Delegation and their Brazilian counterpart holding talks



President, House of Representatives, Brazil being introduced to members of the Joint Steering Committee of Policy Analysis and Research Project (PARP) National Assembly, during Later's Study tour of the Brazilian parliament (Dec. 1-3, 2009)



Hon. Ibn Na-Allah being introduced to the president of Brazilian parliament



Deputy Speaker of House of Representatives, Nigeria, Hon. Usman Bayero Nafada (Right) introduces members of JSC to acting President of the Brazilian parliament Mr. PERILLA MARCONI

Inna lillahi Wa Inna Ilaihi Raaji'un

CONDOLENCE

On behalf of myself, family and entire people of Nasarawa West Senatorial District, I wish to express our deepest condolence to the family of General Ibrahim Babangida over the death of his wife, the Former First Lady of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Mrs. (Dr) Maryam Babangida.

Dr Maryam Babangida indeed lived a fulfilled life packed with rare vision, grace, candour and unyielding determination for self actualization. To her eternal glory were her many initiatives (both as public and private figure) that brought about redefinition of womanhood, thereby making the Nigerian woman more convinced in her self-worth and the ability to mobilise her self

May the Almighty Allah (SWT) grant her Aljannatul Firdausi and give the family and all of us the fortitude to bear this irreparable loss.

Allah Ya gafarta mata Ameen.



Signed:

Sanator Abubakar Danso Sodangi
(Dan Malikin Nasarawa/Jarman Lere)
Nasarawa West Senatorial Districts

PROPERTY

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'84m Nigerians do not have homes'

By Nasir Imam

MORTGAGE Bankers in Nigeria have raised alarm that the housing deficit in Nigeria is rapidly growing and home ownership currently stands at less than 25 percent of the total population, which translates into about 84 million people that either do not have homes or that

are in poor shelters.

The revelation was made in a communiqué issued at the end of the Chief Executive Officers 9th Annual Retreat on the theme Liquidity Facility as Strategic Tool for a Viable Housing Finance Sector in Nigeria organised by the Mortgage Banking Association of Nigeria (MBAN) in the Federal

Capital Territory, Abuja recently.

The communiqué endorsed by MBAN President, Mr. Abimbola Olayinka and Executive Secretary, Mr. Kayode Omotoso aligns with the "Affordable Housing" policy agenda of the government as reflected in the report of the Vision 20:2020 committee set up by the Presidency.

They further recommended the restructuring of the National Housing Fund (NHF) to include amongst others, the responsibility for collection of monthly contributions from the various NHF contributors by PMIs and an immediate change by the Federal Government in the supervisory ministry of FMBN from the Federal Min-

istry of Housing to the Federal Ministry of Finance.

They, however, expressed concern on the recent World Bank Report which shows Nigeria ranked number 173 out of 178 countries in the World and 46 out of 46 Countries surveyed in Africa, with respect to the ease of registration of property titles.

Tsangaya schools to get solar lights in Yobe

From Hamza Idris, Damaturu

GOVERNOR Ibrahim Gaidam of Yobe State says informal schools also known as Tsangaya or Makarantar Allo where children are taught how to recite the Holy Qur'an will be provided with solar lights.

The governor said the ministry of religious affairs will get N100,000,000 and N92,990,000 for its capital and recurrent expenditures respectively this year.

According to him "the ministry of religious affairs will continue to evolve a policy where large Tsangayas, which are faraway from the sources of electricity supply will be provided with solar lights, shades, classes and other support services", the governor said.

Our correspondent reports that there are hundreds of informal schools spread across the state with some having over 2,000 pupils

who learn knowledge of the Quran under the tutelage of an Arabic teacher.

Governor Gaidam said the intervention is to give the schools sense of belonging and provide conducive atmosphere for learning.

"Similarly, the ministry will continue with mobilization for Da'awa (sensitization) activities, regulation of preaching to forestall the emergence of miscreants like the Boko Haram as well as monitoring the implementation of Sharia in the state", the governor added.

He said the state will not relent towards full implementation of the Sharia system. "As a complete way of life, Sharia is all about peace, orderliness in society, unity and harmony where the followers of other religions are allowed to practise their religion without hindrance in the spirit of tolerance and respect", the governor assured.



GOVERNOR Ibrahim Gaidam

Similarly, the ministry will continue with mobilization for Da'awa (sensitization) activities, regulation of preaching to forestall the emergence of miscreants like the Boko Haram



EXECUTIVE Chairman, ENL Consortium, Prince Adesuyi Hastrup (left) and Managing Director, Federal Housing Authority (FHA), Arc. Terver Gemade at the ground breaking of FHA/ENL Estate, Paradise Hills, Apo, Abuja

Kuje council awards N80m borehole contract

By Abubakar Sadiq Isah

THE authorities of Kuje Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), in collaboration with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), have awarded a eighty million naira contract for drilling of three bore-holes at Monu village, of the council.

Chairman of the council, Mr. Danladi Etsu Zhin, who disclosed this over the weekend, said the decision is aimed to cushion the effect of perennial water scarcity facing the people of Rubochi town and other neighboring villages.

He said after completion of drilling of the three bore-holes, it will be channeled to Rubochi town as water pipes will be extended to various houses in order to facilitate problem of water scarcity in the area.

According to him, Rubochi town is located on a geographical area which makes it difficult for the people of the area to get portable drinking water, saying women woke up from their beds as early as 4:30 am and trek a far distance to search of water for their house-hold.

He stated that Rubochi community has been facing problem

of water scarcity for several years without alternative ways by previous government in tackling the situation, which he said his administration on assumption in office immediately purchase three water tankers for the community.

"Infact there was a bore-hole which is to be sank by the previous administration to the tune of N9 million. Immediately I assumed office, I asked the contractor handling the project to pack his equipments and leave because of the shoddy job and lack of proper survey before embarking on sinking of the bore-hole" he said.

Building material dealers condemn FG's inconsistent policies

From Chris Agabi, Lagos

INCONSISTENCY in government policies is crippling building materials business in the country, Agric-Coker Building and Plumbing Materials Dealers Association (ACBPMDA) has alleged.

The association therefore called on the government to take traders into consideration when

making policies that affect them.

Speaking in Lagos during the Manifesto/Election of the association, the Secretary, Nigerian Merchant Business traders Association (NMBTA) in Lagos, the Chairman, Board of Trustee of ACBPMDA, Mr. Chris Okpala, said that incessant changes in policies of the government have never been favourable to the traders.

"Due to instability in policies, some of our people have closed shop because they could not meet up again," he stressed.

The policies he said hinged more on ban and tariff adding that it has continued to create business insecurity for the traders as it usually meet them unaware and thus make them lose a lot of money.

Speaking on the demolition in

Lagos Metropolis, Okpala stated that they lost some of their members who could not absorb the shock.

"Before a demolition of such magnitude is carried out, i think what a sensitive government should have done is to provide an alternative place for the relocation of the traders. but this was not the case. Although he Lagos State government have prom-

ised to make provision of land at Mowe for the affected traders but the handing over is not yet done.

But we got to know that some government officials assigned to handle it want to hijack the land and sell it to their cronies and this is what has been delaying the smooth handover of it. To this effect, we have written a petition to the governor.

Property

EYE ON ABUJA

WITH Umar Shuaibu
umarshuaibu1@yahoo.com

Quest for immortalizing late Abubakar Koko

WHEN Alhaji Lawal Idris delegated me to represent him and also launch the book, titled "With All My Strength" in commemoration of Late Abubakar Koko which took place at the Yaradua Center a fortnight ago, I was aware that even if there were no other reasons, being the first Chief Executive Officer to be shouldered with the development of Abuja, the occasion is definitely going to be attended by cream of personalities, and shall be an occasion any columnist that is writing on Abuja should not miss, more so that a former President of the Federal Republic is to chair the occasion as announced and which he did not fail. Indeed the occasion witnessed many more personalities that I had earlier expected. To us the younger generations that arrived the scene of Abuja development after Late Koko's tenure, but interested in knowing about the legacies of our past leaders, haven't learnt about him from those he worked with much earlier, I was not in the least surprised when it was mentioned as written in the book, that as the Chief Executive Officer of FCDA he did not allocate a plot of land to himself, because of his strong moral conviction. A man with such qualities is worthy of emulation, but are there any of his role model around today?

Traces of those that tow such honourable path could still be found in the system. Those that believe in the fact that God has a way of rewarding ones honesty even if people don't, according to the believe of Late Koko as narrated by his eldest son Basheer A. Koko. But the sad thing about it is that they are usually not allowed to last, as against the real rotten eggs that unfortunately become celebrities after selfishly reaping from the toil and services of our self-sacrificing past leaders. Not only do these fake celebrities amass as many of the city plots for themselves, family members and friends, but also cruelly traded with the public asset for their selfish benefits.

According to Alhaji Idris Koko, a former Minister in the second republic, in "With All My Strength", "At the time Abubakar Koko was given the assignment, people were not sure whether Abuja would succeed. To go into that area (FCT), which was like a wilderness to build a Federal Capital was very challenging. He worked extremely hard to make Abuja a reality. He displayed a great sense of sacrifice, selfless service and no doubt made a name there, he was widely known. He made a most judicious use of the meager resources available to them".

Despite the widely expounded explanation on the reason for the creation of Abuja by the Murtala

regime, there were statements by some critics that the original concept of Abuja as a capital of Nigeria had been shifted towards portraying a Northern outlook. In response to such criticism, Koko asserted "It is just as Lagos was southernised if you can call it so. If southernising Lagos was bad then northernising Abuja if that was true must be accepted as bad. But I do not think so. In fact, in reality, Lagos as Nigeria's headquarters was not declared by the British. It was declared by Tafawa Balewa. That was when he created Lagos Federal Capital Territory. The whole time the British rule this country Lagos was there as headquarters by default. There was no formal declaration of Lagos as capital. It was a northerner who made Lagos headquarters. Many people have easily forgotten that the need to move the capital out of Lagos had been canvassed for so many years even before the advent of the Murtala/Obasanjo regime. As a matter of fact the urge to move out of Lagos commenced right from the colonial administration of Lord Lugard. The view was also expressed in a write up by Professor Gandonu, and in another book on the amalgamation of Nigeria by Mr. A. H. M. Kirk-Green".

What the late Koko expounded above is a part of an extensive research work that traced the imperative for a new national capital for Nigeria since the colonial era and not from the Murtala regime that made it a law. More of the product of that research work are contained in our edition of 25th April and 2nd May 2007 titled "FCT the Genesis of its Creation I and II" respectively. "Furthermore", as late Koko further explained, "to say that the concept of Abuja had changed is an understatement or a miseducation of the people. We all knew the purpose of Abuja: it was to find a neutral place, as near as possible to the center of the country. This was what Justice Aguda's term of reference was. His own job was to find that place which he did and we respected him for that, and the place he founded is there today as the headquarters. The rest was referred to the Federal Capital Development Authority, of which I was largely the chief executive".

The Abuja master plan is a product of team work in which the Late Koko was the head and right from the on set he was a strong advocate of its preservation against any derailment. Unfortunately for a person that made this tremendous sacrifice we cannot remember any major street or monument in the city named after him, if there is it must be obscure.

Bayelsa govt to construct 2,000 housing units

AS part of measures aimed at making houses affordable for Bayelsans, the state government has concluded arrangements to construct 2,000 housing units in Yenagoa, the state capital, this fiscal year.

The state's Commissioner for Housing and Urban Development, Chief Ayakeme Whisky, disclosed this in Yenagoa while receiving members of the Great Sagbama House who visited him.

He said the present administration in the state attached great

importance to the provision of shelter to her subjects because conducive accommodation was one of the basic necessities of life.

The commissioner said already a prototype of the houses was on the way in Yenagoa, but lamented paucity of funds as one hindrance facing his ministry.

Responding to the call by the Great Sagbama House for him to be its patron, Whisky said "all I have seen today is like a miracle because it is a spontaneous visit by members of the House

led by its President, Mr. Francis Kolokolo."

Whisky, however, commended members of the Great Sagbama House and called for unity among people of the area, saying "my vision of leadership is for people to come together to improve on the local economy."

In his remarks, the Commissioner in Bayelsa Local Government Service Commission, Mr. Okubo Ombu, described Whisky as a hard working man that the group would continue to emulate.



THE Chairman of Kuje Area Council, Mr Danladi Etsu Zhi (centre), cutting the tape to commission his campaign office at Kulo Village, donated by youth of the community, last Saturday

Nasarawa budgets N3.4b for housing, urban dev

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

NASARAWA State government has proposed the sum of N3.4 billion for housing, environment and urban development sub sector, with specific plans to complete on going housing estates as well as provide for infrastructural development at such estates.

Governor Aliyu Akwe Doma's 'Budget of Reality' which is still before the state house of assembly where it is awaiting deliberations and passage, states that this proposal is "in keeping with the policy of this administration to provide qualitative and affordable housing for our people".

The budget which outlines four specific areas of coverage says in part that government

will "embark on the provision of infrastructures at the Peninsula and Koroduma housing estates at Karu".

There is also the 500 housing units for civil servants at Lafia, which the budget says "shall be completed and similar housing schemes shall be embarked upon in partnership with the Local Government Councils at their headquarters."

Located along Doma Road, a little at the outskirts of Lafia, the housing unit which first phase has made progress was initiated to ease the hardship faced by civil servants in the state. But it is now abandoned as the state government could not provide the infrastructure agreed upon in the Public Private Partnership contract.

Governor Aliyu Akwe Doma's spokesman, Ibrahim Addra told Daily Trust the project is close to his boss' heart considering the relief it will bring to workers whose yearning for decent and affordable shelter informed the governor's decision for initiating it.

“There is also the 500 housing units for civil servants at Lafia, which the budget says

PROPERTY

Landlords, tenants trade words over increased rent

By Nasir Imam

TENANTS in Abuja, and indeed all over the country have raised alarm over the arbitrary increase in rents paid by landlords for what many described as frivolous reasons.

The end of every year is usually a period when landlords routinely increase their rents.

A tenant in Jabi district, Abuja, Ernest Ogbulue, told Daily Trust that he received a letter from his estate agent stating that "I have been directed to inform you that your tenancy rent has been increased from N800,000 to N1.5 million at the expiration of your present tenancy for a further one year term, this is due to the present economic situation in the

country." Mr. Ogbulue, who said he was paying N550,000 in 2008, said that he is left with no other option but to move out and look for alternative accommodation in, according to him, "the satellite towns".

However, a landlord with four block of flats in Kubwa, Nnamdi Okello, said tenants should not blame landlords for increase in

rents. "It is simply a question of the economic principles of demand and supply. People are daily trooping to Abuja looking for accommodation and places to establish their businesses."

"These people can't afford the high rents being charged by big time estate developers, so in actual fact we are rendering a service. Besides, the increase in building materials is

increasing annually, therefore since it is the landlords responsibility to carry out repairs, we have to recoup same by way of increase in rent."

Not many will agree with this theory. A cross section of those interviewed called on the federal government to, as a matter of urgency, create enabling laws to check the arbitrary increase in rents by property owners.

S/General stresses importance of digitalization in surveying, mapping

From Mustafa Abubakar, Ilorin

THE Kwara State Surveyor-General, Surveyor Lamidi Oyeboode, has disclosed that the digitalization of the Office of the Kwara State Surveyor-General was a recognition of the importance of surveying and mapping in the

physical, social and economic life of the state and the nation at large.

The Surveyor-General revealed this during the send-off ceremony of sixteen retiring staff of the office in Ilorin.

Alhaji Oyeboode gave kudos to the state's present administration for upgrading the office

of the Surveyor General into an extra-ministerial status and digital compliant, which can rival its counterpart worldwide.

Surveyor Oyeboode commended all the retirees for serving the state meritoriously in various capacities, wishing them God's guidance in their private life and

future endeavour.

In his remarks, the state Commissioner for Housing and Urban Developments, Dr Abubakar Adebayo Ishola, urged them not to hesitate in rising to its call whenever the need arises and congratulated them for successful completion of their services to

the state. Responding on behalf of all the retirees, the outgoing Deputy Surveyor-General, Surveyor Ezekiel Ajiboye, thanked the state government and Surveyor-General's office for the honour done them pledging their support for Governor Saraki-led administration at all time.

2 years after Yar'adua's commissioning ... Borno projects remain idle

From Isa Umar Gusau, Maiduguri

ALMOST two years since President Umaru Musa Yar'adua visited Borno state on the invitation of Governor Ali Modu Sheriff, some of the projects commissioned by the President including a trailer park, thousands of motorcycles and housing units have remained unused.

Daily Trust reports that Yar'adua was in Maiduguri on Thursday, February 21, 2008 on the invitation of Sheriff to commission projects executed by his administration, some of which were completed in 2005 and 2006 but left unused because former President Olusegun Obasanjo turned down series of invitations to commission the projects until he left office in 2007.

Our correspondent who went round some of the projects commissioned by President Yar'adua in 2008 reports that the ultra modern trailer park built in Pompomari, Maiduguri, for parking of trailers has remained unused since the commissioning whereas trailers continue to park along Bulunkutu and Damboa roads causing traffic jam and constituting security threats as some accidents have often been recorded especially involving teenagers who run out of streets to cross the road without taking note

of upcoming vehicles often due to views impaired by trailers parked by the road side. While the Borno State House of Assembly has since passed a law making it compulsory for trucks to be parked only within the commissioned trailer park the truck drivers have continued to park by the road side because the park hasn't been put to use by the state government rather it is being guarded by security men who only provide access to visiting personalities who are often led on guarded inspection of some of the projects to showcase government's achievements.

Similarly, the twenty housing units built by the Maiduguri Metropolitan Council, MMC also located in Pompomari, which was equally commissioned by President Yar'adua has also not been put to use. While the President's commissioning was meant to offi-



GOV. Ali Modu Sheriff

cially lunch the 20 housing units built by each of the rest 26 local government areas, many councils have equally not put the houses to use as they are said to be awaiting another commissioning by gov-

ernor Sheriff or clearance to allocate the houses. Our correspondent gathered that some councils including Biu local government were waiting for another commissioning by Sheriff different from that of the President in 2008.

The Chairman, Maiduguri Metropolitan Council, MMC, who sounded very brief on phone, told our correspondent yesterday that the houses built by his council since 2005, which were commissioned by Yar'adua in 2008, will be allocated "very soon" in 2010.

Governor Sheriff's Special Adviser on Information and Media, Shehu Mustapha Liberty absolved the governor of any blame on the delay of utilizing projects commissioned by the President.

"You see, these are the projects of the local governments. The only thing is that they may need to inform the governor if they want him to come for commissioning and what have you.

There are some defects observed in some of them; I think they (councils) are trying to put some finishing touches. But some local governments have already allocated there own. There are others who are in the process of allocating. So I think for the houses, this is exactly what is happening" Liberty told our correspondent.

Some houses, especially some four bed-room flats in the 777 housing units and thousands of motorcycles and tractors also commissioned by the President have remained idle in the cases of the houses or parked in the case of the motorcycles, tricycles and tractors with many of them already rusting since they have been lying under the hot sun and rainfall between 2005 and 2006.

Again, Sheriff's spokesman, Liberty said, virtually all the house were allocated but that some beneficiaries have refused to park in. "You see when these houses are allocated to people and they do not occupy it, that does not mean they have not been allocated. As I am talking to you, I know somebody who just occupied his house last week. He was allocated the house when the allocation took place, but he came to occupy the house just last week. His letter of allocation was given to him at the time the allocation took place. So it is not true that some of these houses have not been occupied. Almost all of them have been allocated", he said. Liberty also said some technicalities and due process slowed down the use of the trailer park and allocation of motorcycles, citing that Sheriff had only few months ago, distributed thousands of motor cycles to some beneficiaries.

Similarly, the twenty housing units built by the Maiduguri Metropolitan Council, MMC also located in Pompomari, which was equally commissioned by President Yar'adua has also not been put to use.

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Gang war claims one at Area 1

By Abdulmutallib A. Abubakar, Lami Sadiq, Usman Bello & Bunmi Omolehin

ONE person was confirmed dead and another set ablaze in a gang war that began Monday night and spilled over to yesterday morning.

Our reporter learnt that the fight between the Yan Gwoza and Yan Bola groups at Area 1, Abuja claimed the life of one Jonathan, while Danjummai received severe burns.

An eye witness, Iliyasu Musa, said at about 6 am yesterday, members of Yan Gwoza group received information that the

Yan Bola group invaded their den over the night and killed one of their members, leaving others injured.

"The Yan Gwoza reorganized themselves and went in search of the other group, which later culminated into a fight under the bridge at Area 1," the witness said.

He said substance suspected to be fuel was poured on a member of Yan Bola group and the victim set ablaze.

"The victim, Danjummai, ran to the police clinic and was later referred to a General Hospital because of the seriousness of the burns.

Reacting, FCT Police Command's Spokesperson, Mr Jimoh Moshood, a deputy superintendent, disclosed that the incident was reported to the Garki Police Station in the early hours of Tuesday and the police immediately rushed to the scene and recovered the corpse.

Mr Moshood explained further that the corpse was rushed to a general hospital for post mortem examination, while some policemen rushed to rescue another person who was set ablaze by suspected members of the other faction.

He said the rescued man sustained some degrees of burns and

is receiving treatment at a general hospital, while enough intelligence reports have already been gathered for arrests to be made.

According to the spokesperson, 'although the factions are non-criminal gangs but scavengers, the police force has the logistics to deal with such notoriety and members of the public should assist by giving vital information on their activities in order to check a recurrence of the clash.'

He warned members of the gang to take note that nobody has monopoly of violence, adding that the police will deal decisively with any trouble maker.

Vice-Chairman of Yan Gwoza

group, Alhaji Ali Turkwa Aka Shata, said two members of his group were attacked on Monday night by members of Yan Bola group, which led to the death of one Jonathan after he was stabbed to death.

He said one Abuti escaped with physical injuries, adding that a report was made at Garki Police Station, where policemen accompanied them to recover the corpse and take the injured victim to the hospital.

The vice-chairman also confirmed that he received reports of a reprisal attack by his gang on a Yan Bola member, who was set ablaze.

Abuja residents pray for late Maryam Babangida

By Benjamin Auta

RESIDENTS of Abuja at the weekend organised prayer sessions for the repose of the soul of late Maryam Babangida and other Nigerians that have died.

Speaking at the event, United Nation's youth ambassador of peace in Nigeria, Ambassador Moses Oriri, sued for peace among youths in the country in the New Year.

He said the nation cannot continue to witness great personalities die everyday with their high characters that are needed to mould the youths, adding that the entire nations should pray for General Ibrahim Babangida and his family over the great loss.

The youth ambassador also prayed that God avert such disaster in the New Year and urged the youths to be peaceful in order to achieve economic as well as social development.

He described the year 2009 as very hard in the face of global economic meltdown.



FUN seekers at Millennium Park, Abuja, yesterday.

Residents of Nyanya Gwandara get electricity after 4 months

By Benjamin Auta

RESIDENTS of Nyanya Gwandara and Masaka had their electricity restored Monday after four months of power outage.

Some residents spoken to said they were surprised when electricity came as they have forgotten about it and are used to generators.

Uche, a trader, described the restoration of electricity at Nyanya Gwandara as a miracle.

"This is more of a miracle to me because we have been staying without electricity for about four months, if not more," he said.

He said officials of the Power Holding of Nigeria (PHCN) had earlier informed residents of a major fault they were trying to

rectify that will take over two months to repair.

"PHCN officials said there was a major fault in either the transformer or transmission line and it will take them over two months but thank God we have finally seen electricity," he rejoiced.

Another resident from Masaka, Joseph Ibrahim, said he expects PHCN to allow electricity to con-

tinue without hindrance as most businesses were seriously affected during the blackout period.

"We know that electricity is not stable and hope it will be better to save us cost from running generators," he said.

Joseph, a barber, called on the PHCN to improve on its electricity supply as promised by the federal government.

Spare part dealers to get special license

By Abubakar Yakubu & Usman A. Bello

IN a bid to stop the sale of fake spare parts in the Federal Capital Territory, all spare parts dealers are to be given special trade license.

This was disclosed recently by the FCT Director of the Directorate of Road Traffic Services (DRTS), retired Major Adamu Arugungu, who said the license will ensure that only genuine spare parts are sold in the market.

The DRTS boss disclosed further that the directorate has been given the mandate to oversee and regulate the activities of motor

mechanics, mechanic workshops and spare part dealers to reduce sales of sub-standard parts.

Argungu revealed that the DRTS will in this New Year use e-enforcement scheme that involves the use of an electronic device to detect motorists driving with fake and expired papers.

He said with such device, traffic congestions that normally occur due to motorists being intercepted by traffic officers will be reduced.

"According to him, only defaulters that ply the roads will be detected and apprehended, while the innovation would also

improve on DRTS operational efficiency as well as effectiveness by eliminating queues or delays associated with manual handling of activities.

Argungu informed commercial buses and 'Keke Napep' operators that it is mandatory for them to have side numbers on the body of their vehicles this month, adding that the measure is meant to provide security for commuters boarding such vehicles as well as to check on the excesses on the operators.

He announced that the DRTS in collaboration with the agency for mass education have

designed a schools' curriculum for operators of driving schools in the FCT.

"The driving school operators are required to obtain operational licenses that will enable them to run fleet of vehicles," the DRTS boss stated.

He said 48,498 vehicles were registered by the directorate in 2009 that comprised of 40,508 private, 7,990 commercials and 738 motorcycles.

The DRTS lamented that 276 vehicle were involved in an accident, out of which 59 persons died, while 88 received various degrees of injuries.

Bizman challenges tenancy termination in court

By Sunday Ejike Benjamin

THE Chief Executive Officer of Salem Exploration Nigeria Limited, Mr. Ademola Ifabiye has challenged the judgement of an Abuja Chief District Court which terminated his tenancy of a twin duplex apartment owned by the Group Managing Director/Chief Executive of United Bank for Africa Plc (UBA), Mr. Tony Elumelu.

In a statement of fact supporting an application filed by his counsel, Ibrahim Idaye, Ifabiye at an Abuja High Court, the chief executive officer said he on behalf of Salem Exploration Nigeria Limited entered into tenancy relationship with Elumelu on January 2006 as a yearly tenant.

According to him, he was offered an option to purchase the premises and in agreement with the landlord made extensive improvements on the place.

He said a cheque for the renewal of his tenancy in January 2009 was issued and the landlord rejected the cheque on the ground that he had increased the rent from N3 million to N16 million, adding that in spite of his plea with the landlord to soft-pedal on the increase, he was given six months quit notice with a seven-day notice of owner's intention to recover possession.

Ifabiye stated further that the landlord's lawyer, Mr. Ikechukwu Okoroafor went to a district court sitting at Life Camp to obtain a judgement which terminated his tenancy.

He lamented that his company was not served with the originating processes, certificate of judgement or any court process from the Life Camp District Court and argued that the chief district court has no power or jurisdiction over the matter because the relief sought by the defendant was for the possession of the premises, which the rental value is over and above the jurisdiction of the court.

He submitted that it is a strange occurrence that a judgement purportedly delivered on December 15, 2009 could have its warrant of possession signed by Mr. Lamido Kabir the next day, directing the execution of the judgment on December 31, 2009 without giving room for an appeal.

The trial judge, Justice. Othman Musa said: "Having perused the application brought before him, the court is of the conclusion that the application has merit and will be given the room to be tested."

The case was adjourned till February 26, 2010 for further hearing.



DEMOLISHED structures at Kagini Village yesterday.

DPP aspirants vow to eradicate poverty in Abuja

By Abdulmutallib A. Abubakar & Bunmi Omolehin

CHAIRMANSHIP aspirants under the Democratic Peoples Party (DPP) for the area councils in the FCT yesterday said they have fashioned out strategic plans to save impoverished residents from abject poverty.

The aspirants, Iliya Isiah Kaffoi, Abdullahi Suleiman Sabo and Alhaji Ibrahim Aliyu, who are contesting at Bwari, Kuje and AMAC area councils respectively, promised to deliver democratic dividends to the electorates if elected.

They lamented that the present leaders in the council

have left people in abject poverty, without qualitative education that will accelerate human development.

In his remark, the DPP FCT Chairman, Alhaji Mamuda Yahaya Halilu, informed that the party has collectively elected popular and credible aspirants in Abuja Municipal, Bwari and Kuje

Area Councils, who can give any political party a tough fight during the elections.

He said as part of their civic responsibility, the party has embarked on massive political education and public enlightenment on the qualities of leaders that the electorate should vote for public offices.

Man commits suicide at Dei Dei

By Maureen Onochie

A middle-aged man, Cyril Onah, yesterday morning committed suicide inside his room at Dei Dei in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

The man was believed to have drunk mixed shaving powder, as the substance was found by his body.

The deceased person's friend, Aina Tade, said he was asleep when Cyril's girlfriend, Cecilia called him very early in the morning to tell him that her boyfriend was dead.

He said he rushed to Cyril's compound and met a crowd and Cecilia, who showed him a text that Cyril sent to her in the wee hours of the morning, stating that it will be the last time she will hear from him as he was calling off their relationship forever.

"Cecilia told me that she rushed to

her boyfriend's apartment the following morning and met people weeping loudly," he added.

Cyril's girlfriend said they had already broken down the door of the room, when she got there to see a crowd wailing outside and her boyfriend's corpse beside a container of mixed shaving powder.

Mr Tade said the deceased had a lengthy conversation with him during the normal MTN mid night call that morning and complained that he was indebted to a lot of people.

"He said the problem was affecting him and he does not know what to do and I told him not to bother that I will assist him with some money to pay some of the debts."

At the Dei Dei Police Station, a policeman said as soon as the matter is reported, investigation will commence.



AN HIV/AIDS awareness session at Karshi in the FCT recently.

Two escape unhurt in auto crash

By Yunus Abdulhamid & Maureen Onochie

TWO drivers narrowly escaped unhurt yesterday evening when two vehicles collided with each other along Augustus Aikhomu way, in Utako District.

Our reporters learnt that the accident involved a Toyota Corolla car with registration number MV 243 KJA and a Mitsubishi

car, whose number read BB 713 APP.

Witness, Tony Ezekiel, said the Mitsubishi car was negotiating a U-turn by an intersection in Wuse, when a lady in a Toyota car from Wuse market axis rammed into the vehicle.

Traffic policemen condoned the accident spot and were seen taking measurement of the roads

to investigate the cause.

The impact of the collision sent both badly dented cars into different direction with the Toyota hitting a nearby electric pole and bringing it down in the process.

The road was made inaccessible by sprawling electric wires and the police had to direct other motorists to pass through an access road.

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Inside Politics

We've failed Nasarawa State, says lawmaker

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

LEADING opposition member of the Nasarawa State House of Assembly (NSHA) Innocent Lagi (LP, Wamba Constituency) has said that the state legislature has failed woefully in the discharge of its constitutional responsibility.

"We have woefully failed in our responsibilities as a legislature. Ours is a legislature without focus, no direction. We have failed the people of Nasarawa State in a manner that we no more deserve the name legislators," Lagi of the Labour Party who spoke to newsmen yesterday said.

Lagi particularly slammed the house for lack of capacity; an aspect of the alleged failure which he said has completely crippled the constitutional duties of members. "There is no capacity in the legislature and it has no focus which is why it is weak in taking firm decisions," he said.

The opposition member reviewed the

performance of the house in the last three years and concluded that the weakness of the house is a function of lack of leadership. He accused the Musa Ahmed Mohammed led house of subjecting House to the whims and caprices of the executive.

The member who recently declared his intention to contest the 2011 governorship election against Governor Aliyu Doma said the attitude of the legislature has resulted in complete absence of checks and balances needed to ensure effective governance in the state.

He recalled with dismay that the house undertook a tour of the local government areas of the state as part of its oversight function, failed to look the way of the state government with the same oversight.

"There is no reason to go after the local government and development areas because there are legislators at that level who are charged with such responsibilities," he said.



GOVERNOR Aliyu Doma

PDP youths want Jang for second term

By Andrew Agbese, Jos

PDP youths from Plateau north senatorial zone have asked Governor Jonah Jang to run for a second term, saying Jang has demonstrated that he is the right person to govern the state until 2015.

The youths led by the Plateau PDP leader form the Northern zone, Chung Pam who spoke with newsmen in Jos said as a first step they would want the state governor to assure them that he will re-contest in line with the popular wish of the people.

"The assurance is necessary to assuage the teeming number of people in the state who want the him to return in 2011," he stated.

Pam said as youth leader, several groups of people have come to inquire from him whether the governor intends to consolidate on the good work he has done for the people of the state in his first tenure.

It is in the light of this, he said, that the youths came out to address the media to urge the governor not be distracted but to concentrate on pursuing a second term so that the people will be rest assured that their future is secured.

He enjoined Plateau State residents to support the return bid of the governor, saying that is the only way the state can be transformed for the benefit of present and future generations.

FCT: Etsu Karu's son eyes Rep in 2011

By Muideen Olaniyi

NUHU Danladi Chesi, an indigene of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and son of Etsu Karu yesterday expressed his readiness to vie for the House of Representatives seat under the umbrella of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

AMAC/Bwari Federal Constituency of the FCT is at present being represented in the House by Philip Aduda, another PDP member, but the seat is expected to be open for fresh contest later this year.

Speaking with *Daily Trust* on why he wanted to contest for the seat, Chesi noted that since the beginning of the current democratic dispensation, his constituency has been represented by those whom he thought do not fully understand the needs of his people.

He said he deemed it necessary to contest because of the need for good and quality representation of the people of his constituency whom he said are yet to get all the necessary social facilities needed, citing the sorry state of areas like Nyanya,

Karu and Bwari, among others.

He said: "The positions in the FCT are for all of us but nobody can know the pains of the indigenes more than they (the indigenes) can know. I am son of the soil. An indigene became a member of the House once. Between 1999 and 2003, our Constituency was represented by Nicholas Ukachukwu.

"All the people that have represented us in the past have contributed their best but I believe it is time for the new hands especially the youths to change the face of politics positively. We are the future and the future belongs to us.

"When your people keep on telling you to come and contribute your own quota to the growth and progress of your areas, you cannot refuse the call because they know you have something to offer especially when they know the genuineness of your intention. So I believe that I have something to offer to my people," he stated.

He said his family's high level contacts, both locally and internationally will complement the

efforts of the FCT Administration in attracting sustainable developmental investment and creating employments opportunities, security and safety of lives and properties, which remains the primary responsibility of any responsible government.

On the call by G-53 on President Umaru Yar'adua to resign because of his ill health, Chesi described it as unnecessary, saying Vice President Goodluck Jonathan is fully in charge of governance in this country.

He said: "The issue of resignation must be handled with caution considering the history of our democracy. Everything is working. There is what we call delegated authorities in governance. The President is not the only person that should perform all the duties because governance is not a one-man show.

"We have Ministers and Director Generals in Ministries, Departments and Agencies who are performing their responsibilities. We must be sincere to ourselves. The Vice President has been in charge and has been very active," he added.

Group slams Bankole's reaction to call on him to resign

From Mahmud Lalo, Jos

A group known as Peace and Development Projects (PEDP) has condemned comments made by Speaker of the House of Representatives Dimeji Bankole when he was asked to resign over the way the National Assembly was handling constitutional issues surrounding President Umaru Musa Yar'adua's ill-health.

PEDP in a statement signed by its Director Francis Abayomi said the comments by Bankole's Special Adviser on Media and Publicity, Ebomhiana Musa is "highly disappointing as it smacks lack of understanding of the basic role of a parliament in a democratic setting."

The group had in a statement last week asked Bankole and the Senate President, David Mark, to resign their posts or act immediately to "save the nation from a looming national political calamity", a call which the speaker's media aide described as un-patriotic saying, "it was not his

duty to force the president to observe the constitution."

Abayomi said that for Principal Officers of the National Assembly to say that the legislature cannot force the president to observe the constitution is gross dereliction of duty.

"Even elementary students of constitutional democracy know what a parliament is supposed to do when the president breaches the constitution. It is sad that the Speaker, rather than apologise for the inaction of the National Assembly which has held this nation down for 42 days, has opted for verbal dribbling of Nigerians," he stressed.

The group also expressed its concern over what it described as "disturbing silence about the continued breach of the constitution and serial acts of illegalities being perpetrated by both elected and unelected public office holders" adding that "the National Assembly Principal Officers have betrayed the trust reposed on them and as such should quit."

Anambra 2010: Nwosu, ADC fault rating on candidates

THE candidate of the African Democratic Congress (ADC) in the Anambra gubernatorial poll, Chief Okey Nwosu, yesterday described as politically motivated, the opinion poll recently conducted on the election.

According to the poll conducted by Holler Africa and published on Monday, former CBN Governor Chukwuma Soludo is the favourite of most prospective voters. The election is billed for Feb. 6.

Holler Africa claimed it interviewed 9,000 likely voters in the state from December 23 to December 26 last year.

It said it focused on seven candidates: Peter Obi (APGA), Chris Ngige (AC), Soludo (PDP), Andy Uba (LP), Uche Ekwunife (PPA), Nicholas Ukachukwu (HDP) and Nwosu.

At a news conference in Lagos, Nwosu said the poll did not reflect the political realities in Anambra. (NAN)

Inside Politics

Why I left AC for PDP – Kumalia

ALHAJI Umara Kumalia was one time minority leader of the House of Representatives. He was elected to the House in 1999 and 2003 on the platform of the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) to represent Maiduguri Metropolitan Federal Constituency. He was a close confidant of Governor Ali Modu Sheriff until they fell apart in the build up to the 2007 election. The former lawmaker sought to fly the PDP guber ticket in 2007 but was denied participation in the primaries so he moved over and picked the ticket of the AC. Recently, Kumalia returned to PDP. In this interview, he explains his many strides in politics. Excerpts:

From Yahaya Ibrahim, Maiduguri

YOU identified with a number of political parties since 1999. What informed the change from one party to another, don't you think that will affect your political credibility?

No, you see most of the decisions are not taken by one person. They are decisions of a group. As a leader, there is no way you can take a decision without your people. When you do that, you are on your own. If you take a decision independent of your people, then you are not a leader anymore. As a leader, you must listen to what your followers say. Of course you do not have the monopoly of wisdom so you cannot be telling them what to do all the time.

And then, credibility is one thing and honesty is another. In Nigeria you hear people talk about anti party activities, this is a situation where somebody who has been cheated or manipulated in a particular process would decide to remain in the party but work against its interest. He may campaign against the candidates of his party. To me that is dishonesty; that is lack of credibility. I am a free man and as much as I can, I try to be as honest as possible. You can always tell where I stand, you do not make a mistake about where Kumalia is.

If I'm with you, I'm with you. If I'm not with you, I won't stay with you. So I'm sure you are better off with somebody like me than somebody who will be pretending that he is with you when in actual sense he is not and he always tries to undermine what you are doing. I would not want to work with such person; I would rather nowhere you stand with me on issues. I'm a frank and honest person; I do not hide my feelings. If am bitter, you will know when you see me. I do not pretend and that to me is credibility; that to me honesty and integrity.

It is not my making that our political process lacks maturity. I cannot help it. The political process in Nigeria is still developing. Right now, there is what they call the Mega Summit movement that is being sponsored by some

heavy weights in the polity who feel alienated or disenchanted with the system. I was in AC, what brought about the creation of AC? It was the deliberate alienation of key members of PDP that necessitate the creation of AC in the first place. AC was created out of a circumstance that was foisted on members of the PDP by the PDP itself. Therefore those that were alienated had to find solace because this country belongs to everybody. It does not belong to a single political party and therefore if people want to express themselves they must look for a political platform to do so.

BUT there was a press briefing by the youth leader of your campaign organisation during which he alleged that you are not straightforward...

If you look at the contents of that press briefing and look at the personality behind it, you will know that it not something worth responding to by somebody like me. They said they were former members of my party but today they said they are strong supporters and loyalists of Ali Modu Sherrif.

Now, what is their business with me? I'm not in the same political party with them and I'm not going into their political party. They are in ANPP and they are supporters of Ali Modu Sherrif. I was in AC and moving to PDP, so what is their business with me? They claimed that they left me about two years ago. If that is the case, what is your business with what I do?

If you look at the contents of the press briefing, it was more or less some kind of eulogy for the achievement of the incumbent administration, which to me is below average. Therefore, we had better concentrate on more important issues that will inspire the people than this.

YOU earlier joined the PDP and left it for some reasons. How sincere do you think is the reconciliation that made you to return to the PDP, don't you think you are still going to face the same situation

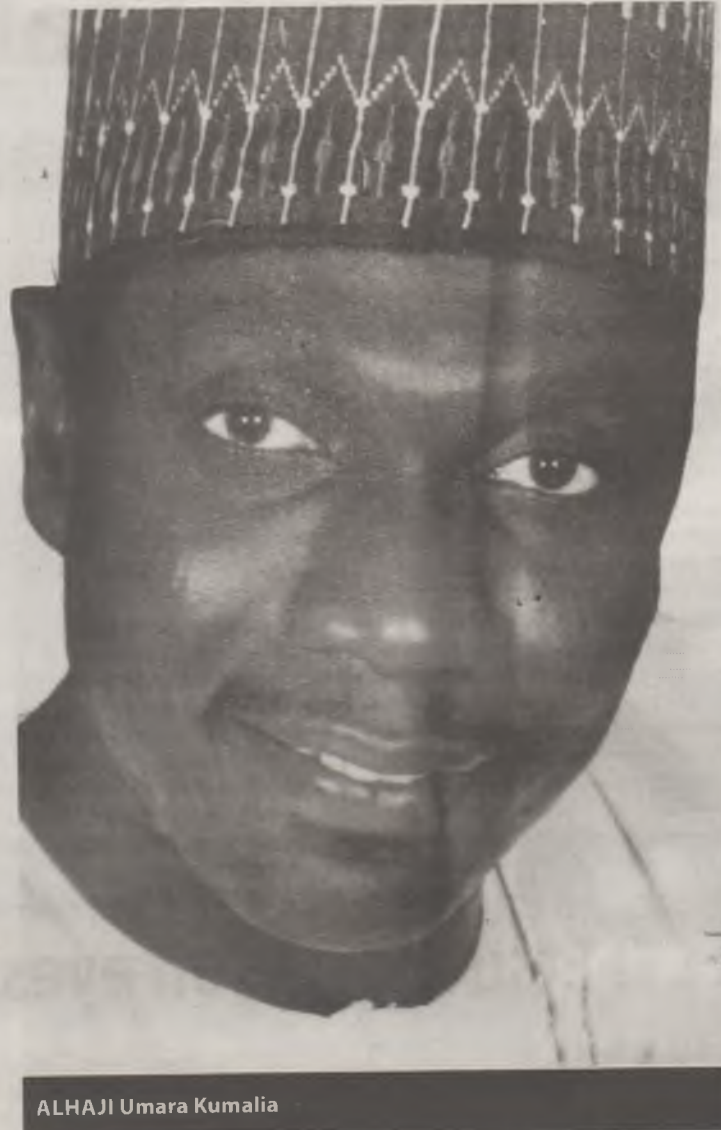
that forced you out three years ago?

Of course that is not my hope. I want to believe we have learnt our lessons enough. Like I said during my address, you can continue to grandstand and bully people but that does not give you power. It is God that determines who gets power and when. So you can do whatever you want to do but at the end of the day God may decide to give it to someone else.

Therefore, it is not really a function strategy but knowing God and being fair. What is fair is fair. Some people complained that the government of Olusegun Obasanjo single handily gave power to Ali Modu Sheriff who is not even a member of PDP; there was no election. It could be true and I believe so too. But imagine what happened within the PDP. As a contestant for the governorship ticket, I went round spending my energy, money and time for about a year but at the end of the day I was barred from contesting the primary election. What is good for the goose is also good for the gander. So if you complain that they gave power to Ali Modu Sheriff and it wasn't fair, then they have to admit that what they did to Kumalia in PDP is not fair.

I want to believe that this message has gone deep into the minds of everybody. And I hope that everybody has learnt enough. I have learnt a few things from my experience and I am going to use that to deploy myself in the best possible way that will avert future occurrence of what happened in the past.

“ In Nigeria you hear people talk about anti party activities, this is a situation where somebody who has been cheated or manipulated in a particular process would decide to remain in the party but work against its interest... I am a free man and as much as I can, I try to be as honest as possible. You can always tell where I stand, you do not make a mistake about where Kumalia is.



ALHAJI Umara Kumalia

I have had serious discussions with most of the leaders of the PDP and a lot of them are extremely happy that I and my people have come back to the party. But of course that does not mean that we have been accepted hundred percent. There are still people out there that would not accept me; people whose ambition will conflict with mind. I may want to be a councillor and they too may want to be counsellors. I am a young man and a politician, so I will always be a threat to certain people. But to me the most important thing is for PDP to capture power in Borno State. Whoever becomes governor is not the issue; the issue is let PDP win the governorship election in Borno State. That is my ambition and that is what I am going to work for.

HOW do you see the chances of the PDP in Borno State in 2011 against the incumbent ANPP government?

The Borno State PDP has always had a chance which has been mismanaged. But coming together now is going to reinvigorate the often wasted chances. It is a function of how we manage whatever strength we have and how we can deploy our strength effectively using the best possible strategies in order to capture power. The race for power is like a chess game. I talked about unity when I spoke at the ceremony. Unity is key and fundamental, in fact it is the foundation, and it is the first step in our march towards victory.

TRUST CLASSIFIED

INSTITUTE FOR SECURITY STUDIES (ISS), ABUJA

NOTICE is hereby given to the general public that the above named institute has applied to the CAC for registration under part C of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 2004.

- THE TRUSTEES ARE:**
- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| i. A.A GADZAMA mni (OFR) | ii. Uzoma AKOMA osh, fwc |
| iii. A.S.K SALAMI mni | iv. W TAKANLE mni |
| v. D.E JOHN osh, fwc | vi. N.DABBO mni |
| vii. O.A ODUGBEMI fwc | viii. Y.M BACHI fwc |
| ix. M.B SEYEFAMNI | x. S.C.O AZODO |
| xi. M.A AGON Esq | |

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES
 The Institute has the following objectives:
 i. To be one of the leading centres in the provision of competence and enhanced training for managers of security/continued education so as to advance the best practices of Conflict Prevention, Resolution, Peace Studies and Co-operation;
 ii. To provide a unique and valuable contribution to the promotion of Inter-Service and Inter-Agency Co-operation among the Intelligence and Law Enforcement Agencies within and outside the country to achieve overall National Security, Regional and Global Peace;
 iii. To provide for quality training, particularly in the implementation of National Security Policies and Development;
 iv. To provide senior level security/intelligence officers with the requisite skills for Strategic Management Positions;
 v. To provide security, strategic and critical training for key officials of Ministries, Parastatals, and Agencies for the country or requesting foreign Nations; and
 vi. To award fellow of Security Institute (fSI) to its Executive Intelligence Management Course (EIMC) graduates.
 Any objection thereto should be addressed to the Registrar-General, Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) Maitama, Abuja, within 28 days of this publication.
Signed: Bina Chambers
 Suite 305, NCWS Building
 Area 11, Garki, Abuja FCT

GATEWAY PENTECOSTAL CHRISTIAN TABERNACLE

This is to inform the general public that the above named organization has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for Registration under Part 'C' of the Companies and Allied Matters Act 1 of 1990.

The Trustees are:

1. Bishop Bayode Abiodun Adewale (Dr)
2. Evangelist Adewale Kikelomo
3. Mr Ugboja John
4. Barr. Adesina Agbade

Aims and objectives

1. Evangelising the gospel of Jesus Christ
2. To assist in improving the living conditions of indigent persons
3. To encourage and assist the less privilege persons
4. To impact people with the knowledge of Christ and draw them closer to God
5. To empower the youths and motivate them to success
6. To organize lectures, seminars, workshops, radio and Tiv programmes in attaining the said objectives.

Any objection to this registration should be forwarded to the Registrar-General Corporate Affairs Commission, Plot 420 Tigris Crescent, Maitama District Abuja with 28 days of this publication.
Signed: Agbade Adesina (Esq)
 Agbade A. Adesina & Co., Suite 27, Abuja Shopping Complex
 Area 3, Garki, Abuja. 08033607000

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known and addressed as **FOLAKE RUKAYAT SHITTU**, now wish to be known and addressed as **FOLAKE RUKAYAT BELLO**. All other documents and credentials still remain valid.

I, formerly **YUSUF ABDULKAREEM OLADELE** now to be called **YUSUF OLADELE ADESINA**. All former documents remain valid. First Alliance Pension and public to note.

I, formerly known as **MISS TEMITAYO OYANIYI**, now **MRS TEMITAYO IDACHABA**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

I, formerly known and addressed as **DR. FOLAKE AYO**, now wish to be known and addressed as **DR FOLAKE ADEMOLA-MAJE KODUNMI**. All former documents remain valid. Federal Ministry of Health and the general public to take note.

I, formerly **MISS IFEYINWA FLORENCE UZOR**, now **MRS IFEYINWA FLORENCE MBACHU**. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

I, formerly known as **MISS OLAMIDE SUNDAY**, now wish to be known as **MRS OLAMIDE VICTORIA JAMES**. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

I, formerly known as **MISS IDOKO JUSTINA OTINI**, now wish to be addressed as **MRS EZE JUSTINA OTINI**. All former documents remain valid. NYSC and general public take note.

I, formerly known as **STEPHANIE AEREN KWEN**, now wish to be called **STEPHANIE AEREN STEPHEN ORYIMAN IGBUR**. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

I, **MISS MARIA MAYOWA OBIDOYIN** now wish to be known and called, **MRS MARIA MAYOWA WAREBEBE**. Former documents remain valid. Public note.

I, formerly **OLOKUNNIYI OLUWABUKOLA TITILAYO** now **MRS OMOYINMI OLUWABUKOLA TITILAYO**. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

I, formerly **MISS GRACE AJUME**, now **MRS GRACE DOMINIC IORAPUU TSAGA**. All former documents remain valid. National Institute for Cultural Orientation (NICO) and the general public note.

I, formerly **MISS DADA BUKOLA**, now **MRS BUKOLA ROBERT AKANWA**. All former documents remain valid. Universal Basic Education Board, Stanbic IBTC Pensions, First Bank and general public take note.

I, formerly known as **Sabitu Olaide R.** now wish to be known as **Mrs. Ayinla Olaide R.** All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

I formerly **RUKAYYA BUHARI ISAH**, now wish to be called as **AMINA UBA ISAH**. All former Documents remain valid public should take note.

I formerly known as **HARUNA DAUDA**, now wish to be called as **HARUNA DAUDA ABUBAKAR**. All former documents remain valid. Gunduma Health System Jigawa State and general public to note.

I, formerly known as **PATRICK AGWAZIAM OKOCHA**, now wish to be called **OMU STEPHEN LAWRENCE ISIOMA**. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

I formerly known as **MISS ATTAH MARY ENE**, is legally married to **MR CHRISTIAN LAWRENCE**, now wish to be called **MRS MARY LAWRENCE**. All former documents remain valid. General public to take note.

I FORMERLY KNOWN AND ADDRESSED AS **MISS KEHINDE JUMMAI SAKA**, NOW WISH TO BE ADDRESSED AS **MRS KEHINDE ABDULLATEEF ADEWALE**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM (NIHOTOUR) AND GENERAL PUBLIC TAKE NOTE.

SYBIL PHILIPS FOUNDATION

This is to inform the general public that the above named foundation has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for Registration under Part 'C' of the Companies and Allied Matters Act 1 of 1990.

- The trustees are:**
1. Phillips Sybil
 2. Praise Kelly
 3. Mrs. Mabel Usifoh

Aims and Objectives

1. To assist the less privileged in the society and issues relating to child trafficking.
2. To promote positive value and good moral lifestyle among youths and women.
3. To undertake skill acquisition programmes/sensitization campaigns on child caring.
4. To mentor youths/children, and making them aware of the need to be patriotic and upright citizens.
5. To empower the youths and motivate them to success.
6. To organize lectures, seminars, workshops, radio and Tiv programmes in attaining the said objectives

Any objection to this registration should be forwarded to the Registrar-General Corporate Affairs Commission, Plot 420 Tigris Crescent, Maitama District Abuja with 28 days of this publication.
Signed: Agbade Adesina (Esq), Agbade A. Adesina & Co., Suite 27, Abuja Shopping Complex, Area 3, Garki, Abuja. 08033607000

PEOPLES RIGHTS AND ADVANCEMENT CENTRE

This is to inform the general public that the above named organization has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for Registration under Part 'C' of the Companies and Allied Matters Act 1 of 1990.

- The Trustees are**
1. Barrister Ukpai Ukairo
 2. Barrister N. J. Kalu
 3. Barrister M.N. Esowe

Aims and Objectives

1. Fighting Corruption through media outreach and seminars
2. Advancement of human rights through public lectures

Any objection to this registration should be forwarded to the Registrar-General Corporate Affairs Commission, Plot 420 Tigris Crescent, Maitama District Abuja with 28 days of this publication.
Signed: BARRISTER M.N ESOWE
 08034066276

ASMAU FOUNDATION FOR ORPHANS AND LESS PRIVILEGE.

This is to inform the general public that the above named foundation has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for Registration under Part 'C' of the Companies and Allied Matters Act 1 of 1990.

- THE TRUSTEES ARE:**
1. Aih. Abubakar Sanusi
 2. Aih. Ahmed Umar
 3. Aih. Momoh Bello
 4. Aih. Latif Bello
 5. Aih. Abduganiyu Yusuf
 6. Hajia Sa'adat Abubakar Sanusi
 7. Abdulmalik Suleiman

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES ARE

1. To aid and support the orphans and the less privileged in the society.
2. To provide Assistance to the poor and needy by empowering them to be economically independent.
3. To render medical assistance to the people concerned.

Any objection to this registration should be forwarded to the Registrar-General Corporate Affairs Commission, Plot 420 Tigris Crescent, Maitama District Abuja with 28 days of this publication.
Signed: Hajia Sa'adat Abubakar
 (Legal Adviser)

HEZIDOC FOUNDATION

This is to inform the general public that the above named organization has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for Registration under Part 'C' of the Companies and Allied Matters Act 1 of 1990.

- THE TRUSTEES ARE:**
1. Mrs. Bosede Adebimpe Awesu
 2. Barr. Olusegun Kayode Awesu
 3. Dr. (Mrs) Sidikat Lenti Ajayi
 4. Barr. Damilola Awesu
 5. Miss Bolu Awesu
 6. Miss Bomi Awesu

THE OBJECTIVES ARE:

1. To promote the social, economic and political interests of women, children, persons with disabilities, the elderly and other vulnerable groups.
2. To embark upon programmes, projects and other activities to empower widows, vulnerable children and other under privileged groups either alone or in collaboration with development partners, government and its agencies or any other organizations in Nigeria and the world over.
3. To promote and conduct research

Any objection to this registration should be forwarded to the Registrar-General Corporate Affairs Commission, Plot 420 Tigris Crescent, Maitama District Abuja with 28 days of this publication.
Signed: Miss Bomi Awesu
 Block 18, Mombassa Street, Wuse Zone 5 Abuja.

EDEN'S COUPLE MINISTRY

This is to inform the general public that the above named Ministry has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for Registration under Part 'C' of the Companies and Allied Matters Act 1 of 1990.

- The Trustees are:**
1. Pastor Jerry Omoruyi Iyoha
 2. Pastor (Mrs) Irene Jerry Iyoha
 3. Deaconess Tina Ederaka
 4. Barr. Ehimen Almiebenomon Ogbeide

Aims and Objectives

1. As couples to make heaven
2. To counsel as many as possible to make their marriage work
3. To counsel singles before marriage, during and after marriage
4. To pray for broken homes and marriages
5. To restore broken home (marriage) by the Holy Spirit

Any objection to this registration should be forwarded to the Registrar-General Corporate Affairs Commission, Plot 420 Tigris Crescent, Maitama District Abuja with 28 days of this publication.
Signed:
 Barr. Ehimen Almiebenomon Ogbeide

FAITHFULNESS AND HOLINESS MISSION

This is to notify the general public that the above named ministry has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission, for registration under part C of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, of 1990.

- THE TRUSTEES ARE:**
- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Pastor Larry Ukpa | Founder/General Overseer |
| 2. Bro. Abraham Onjeide | Secretary |
| 3. Pastor (Mrs.) Charity Ukpa | |
| 4. Bro. Ignatius Ukpa | |
| 5. Barr. Dan Amadi | |
| 6. Bro. Kingsley Ben Ekele | |
| 7. Bro. Israel Ukpa | |

AIMS & OBJECTIVES:

1. To make disciples of believers.
2. To spread the salvation message of our Lord, Jesus Christ.
3. To deliver the oppressed, the captives and healing the sick.

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar-General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Plot 420, Tigris Crescent, off Aguiyi Ironsi Str, Maitama, Abuja within 28 days of this publication.
Signed: Barr. Dan Amadi
 Solicitor

LOSS OF DOCUMENT

The general public is hereby notified that an envelope containing offer of the Terms Grant/Conveyanced of Approval of Plot No. DA172 of about 500sqm in Dutse Alhaji (DA) Hill side Extension has been declared missing. Belonging to **Saidu D. Mohammed**. If found please contact nearest police station or under-signed.
 This publication will help the owner to obtain a replacement from the Authority concern. Federal Capital Territory Administration and general public take note.
Signed: SAIDU D. MOHAMMED
 No. 146 Zone 1 Dutse Alhaji

LOSS OF DOCUMENT

THIS IS TO INFORM THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT I MR OLOKPO A UDU OF NATIONAL BUREAU FOR STATISTIC LOSS THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT LETTER WITH FILE NO NG 1123 DATED 02/03/2007 AND THE OFFER OF TERM OF GRANT/ CONVEYANCE OF PROVISIONAL APPROVAL WITH REF NO: MFCT/LA/NG/1123 DATED 30/09/1996 BEARING MR MA'AZU IBRAHIM IN RESPECT OF PLOT NO 829 OF ABOUT 900M' SITUATED AT KATAMPE DISTRICT FCT, ABUJA. ALL EFFORTS MADE TO TRACE THE MISSING VITAL DOCUMENT PROVED FUTILE. IF FOUND PLEASE CONTACT THE NEAREST POLICE STATION OR THIS TELEPHONE NUMBER: -08037877924

SPORT

Eagles suffer
Odemwingie
injury blow

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Amodu was right to drop Eneramo - Oliha

By David Ngobua

FORMER Super Eagles midfielder Thompson Oliha has urged critics to leave Shuaibu Amodu alone as he has the right to drop any player.

Oliha was reacting to criticisms in some quarters over the dropping of Michael Eneramo for the Africa Cup of Nations in Angola.

Speaking to Trustsports yesterday, the former Eagles midfielder said as far as he is concerned, the Edo born soccer tactician is the technical adviser of the team and should have the final say as far as players' selection is concerned.

He said both Eneramo and Obasi are good players and if the coach has chosen to go with the Hoffenheim striker, he certainly knows what he wants to get.

Oliha who was a member of the Eagles team to Tunisia 1994 and USA '94 said Nigerians should stop the habit of trying to impose players on the coach as he maintained that the coach in the end is the one who takes the blame for any failure.

"I want to call on Nigerians to leave Amodu alone. As far as team selection is concerned, he should have the final say. BOBasi and Eneramo are good players and if the coach in his wisdom chose Obasi ahead of Eneramo, I don't see any reason why somebody should raise eye brows.

"My reason is simple - in the end, he will take responsibility for



ESPERANCE striker Mike Eneramo, right, will not be part of Super Eagles squad for 2010 African Cup of Nations in Angola.

the success or failure of the team. If he chooses Eneramo and he fails to click at the championship, the blame will be on him and if Obasi that he has chosen fails, he will still take the blame. Therefore, I feel he should be allowed to make his choices."

Oliha maintained that even those players who have been left out of the squad to Angola still

have more opportunities in future as he said at the end of the Africa Nations Cup, the need to beef up the squad to South Africa may arise and that would be opportunity for such players to stake a claim for one of the shirts.

"It is not only the Africa Nations Cup that we have. South Africa 2010 is around the corner and those players who have been

dropped can be given another chance. If they do not play today, they may play tomorrow. I therefore, do not see why there is so much hues and cries about Amodu's decision to drop Eneramo," he stressed.

Oliha instead called on Nigerians to give the coach a chance to succeed in Angola.

He said it is only when the

coach and the players are made to believe in themselves that they will be able to live up to the country's expectations.

"Let us give Amodu and the players a chance. Nobody should write off the coach simply because certain players have been dropped. Eagles need our total support to succeed," he stated.

Disu tips Eagles for semi final

From Abiodun Jimoh, Lagos

STARING at the strength of the present crop of players that will be featuring for the country at the forthcoming African Cup of Nations in Angola, Tunde Disu has admitted that the team would reach the semifinal stage of the competition.

The former national U-20 youth team coach expressed in a chat with Trustsports in Lagos that the team is as good as qualifying for the last four of

the event, adding that this record would surpass what was obtained at the 2008 edition held in Ghana when the team lost in the crucial quarterfinal encounter against the host nation.

Coach Disu averred that sky would be their limit if they can able to reach this stage as Nigerians are expecting nothing less than trophy from the team having recorded three consecutive bronze from 2002 in Mali, Tunisia 2004 and in Egypt 2006 only to faded out at the Ghana edition.

While given reason for tipping the team for this stage, the ex Flying Eagles coach stated that reaching this level of the event is not a bad omen as he believed that one step has to be taken before thinking of another in which he opined that the players would do more on reaching the stage, also added that once the team got to the last four what would always be at the back of their mind is to advance to the final and eventually win the trophy in which I am praying for as well.

"The Nigerian team and other

countries have good players in their respective teams, but I am quite sure of what our players can do if they eventually reach the semifinal because all other teams that will be playing at the competition are equally good as Nigeria to lift the cup. So I am tipping the eagles for this stage first and then possibly win the event," he said.

"I know very well that they will do well at the stage by moving to the final because what happened at the Ghana edition will

not want to be repeated at this time. The whole Nigerians will be waiting for good outing and the cup from the team, I believe that they will not disappoint the whole nation," he stated.

He however implored the players and the technical crew to work in harmony so that their objectives in the oil rich country would be achievable as well as perfecting strategies that could make the team formidable for this year World Cup in South Africa in June.

FIBA wild card would've worsened Nigeria basketball - Morrison

By David Ngobua

ALTHOUGH most Nigerian basketball stakeholders are still unhappy that the country was not given one of the four wild cards by FIBA to be part of the World Championship in Turkey, former international player, Pastor Skambo Morrison has said he did not consider it as a serious issue that should give anyone sleepless nights.

Speaking to Trustsports yesterday in Abuja, the former captain of Nigeria junior basketball team said he does not believe in having things on a platter of gold so the idea of depending on wild cards to qualify for championships should be discarded completely.

He said Nigeria should be ready to work harder by harnessing her potentials in the game and be ready to fight on the court and win tickets to participate in international competitions.

Morrison noted that even when most Nigerians were eagerly waiting and praying fervently for the country to be handed one of the wild cards, it never crossed his mind because it is an idea that he abhors.

"I did not lose any sleep when Nigeria was not given one of the wild cards by FIBA. At this level of the game and the materials available, we should not be praying for any wild card to be part of any championship. Our teams should be able to win on the field of play.

He maintained that if given the wild card, Nigerian basketball would have been the worse for it because some of the measures which the present leadership of the NBB will take henceforth could have been taken for granted.

His word, "As much as I would have loved to turn on my Televi-



D'Tigers' Sanni Azeez in action. Nigeria failed to earn a FIBA wild card for the World Basketball championship in Turkey.

son and see the national colour of Nigeria at the Championship in Turkey, I did not feel terribly disappointed when Nigeria was not handed one of the wild cards because if given, it would have made things worse for us. It is capable of making us go to sleep. This is a wake up call".

Speaking on why D'Tigers failed to qualify for the World Championship in Turkey, the former international said the team paid too much attention to Angola.

He said in as much as it would have amounted to a major break

through beating Angola in Libya, the team shouldn't have made the mistake of ignoring the threat posed by the lesser countries like Cape Verde who eventually nailed the team's coffin.

According to Morrison, D'Tigers needed to have given commensurate attention to the likes of Cameroon and Cape Verde pending when they would meet the Angolans but once that was not done; the country lost the opportunity to be in Turkey.

He therefore said, "Angola is not the problem but how to get to where Angola is. Last time in

Libya, everything was about how to beat Angola. But I advised them to leave Angola alone. I said they should first beat the little countries before Angola. Angola is going to be in the finals so beat the other countries first. The team got careless and was beaten by countries like Cameroon and Cape Verde.

Morrison, however said under the present leadership of Tijani Umar, the future of Nigerian basketball is looking bright but if the president of the federation is not given the necessary support, nothing much would be achieved.

Nigeria, Zambia clash today

NIGERIA'S Super Eagles and Zambia's Chipolopolo have reached an agreement to play a friendly ahead of the African Nations Cup starting next week in Angola.

The game will be played today at the Absa Stadium in Durban, but will be played behind closed doors, as both sides look to fine-tune tactics for the competition.

Super Eagles media officer Idah Peterside and Football Association of Zambia President Kalusha Bwalya both confirmed the development late on Monday night, following a long meeting between both parties.

"We had a meeting and both sides have agreed to play the match," Peterside said.

"The game will be played behind closed doors at 4pm South African time in Durban. But both teams agreed that it will be behind closed doors."

Bwalya said that his side were excited about the prospect of playing the Super Eagles.

"Yes, it's correct that we have come to an agreement about the friendly match. Chipolopolo are looking forward to Wednesday," he said.

Nigeria defeated Zambia, captained by Bwalya, in 1994 to lift the Africa Cup of Nations.

NFF drops U-17s from home-based Eagles

By Orkula Shaagee

FIVE members of the 2009 FIFA U-17 World Cup silver winning Golden Eaglets team who were invited to the home-based Eagles camp in Abuja in preparation for the second edition of the African Nations Championship have been dropped.

Their former Coach, Sam John Obuh who disclosed this in a chat with reporters at the NFF Glass House secretariat in Abuja, explained that the decision was to allow the players rise through the ranks to the senior national team.

According to Obuh, he would invite some of the boys to the Flying Eagles, where they would face higher challenges at the African Youths Championship than playing in the newly introduced African Nations Championship made for home-based national team players.

"I would prefer that the boys were invited to the Flying Eagles and not the home-based Eagles because what we are going to play is higher than what the home-based Eagles will play", Obuh stated.

He also revealed that in the next one month he would tour the country to watch most of the league matches as part of measures to assemble a strong and new Flying Eagles team that will soon begin the campaign for the African and world title chase.

Lasisi worried at state of table tennis

THE threat to Nigeria's continued dominance of table tennis in Africa is real, says Kasali Lasisi, former African men's singles champion.

Lasisi, said in Lagos yesterday that decline may set in unless urgent steps were taken to reverse the situation.

He said Egypt, Tunisia, Congo Brazzaville and other African countries were catching up with Nigeria in the sport.

Lasisi attributed the decline that had set in on the game in Nigeria to lack of development programmes, particularly the absence of competitions at state and national levels.

The former African champion, who is the national coach

of Congo Brazzaville, blamed the parlous state of the sport in Nigeria on governments and corporate bodies for the poor funding.

He stressed the importance of funds for sports development as adequate financial backing would help in the organisation and participation in competitions.

"The local, state and federal governments did not provide funds for players to take part in national as well as attend international championships.

"It is at such competitions that they gain experience and exposure.

"The corporate bodies are no longer interested in sponsor-

ship of competitions. There were competitions almost throughout the year in our playing days but one could hardly get three competitions in a year now.

"How do you expect the players to get the exposure?"

The 1978 All Africa Games gold medallist said state coaches and organising secretaries had persistently failed to organise competitions at the grassroots for the discovery of budding talents.

Lasisi declared: "Apart from Lagos, how many states organise competitions?"

The states are supposed to be the bedrock for the discovery of talents.

"The coaches and secretaries in the states are not doing enough

at their level," he added.

Lasisi, who won his African title in Benin Republic in 1976, said he was willing to contribute to the development of the game in the country.

"Although I am on contract with Congolese Table Tennis Federation, I am a Nigerian willing to offer my services to the country if they were needed.

"What I have been able to do in Congo with fewer talents and less resources, I believe I can do better for Nigeria, if given the opportunity," Lasisi said.

The Nigeria Table Tennis Federation (NTTF) has had no national coach since the retirement of Babatunde Obisanya in 2009.

Man. City v Man. Utd Cup semi-final postponed

THE Carling Cup semi-final first leg between Manchester City and Manchester United at Eastlands tonight has been postponed because of the bad weather.

The Manchester region saw heavy snowfall this morning and the game was called off yesterday in order to avoid confusion on the match day. The tie will now take place on 19 January, which was

originally the date for the second leg. That match will now take place on Wednesday, 27 January.

United had been hoping to bounce back from their FA Cup defeat against Leeds United on Sunday but Sir Alex Ferguson will now have to wait until Saturday's game against Birmingham City at St Andrew's to see whether his players can regroup and keep the

pressure on the Premier League leaders, Chelsea.

Manchester City's next game - and Roberto Mancini's fourth in charge - will now be against Blackburn Rovers at Eastlands on Monday. The club were today forced to close their ticket office and city centre shop due to the adverse conditions. The first Carling Cup semi-final first leg between Black-

burn and Aston Villa was called off earlier today, the hosts saying: "Whilst the Ewood Park pitch is playable we believe it would be unadvisable to expect fans, staff etc to attempt to get to the match. Even if fans are able to get to Ewood Park we would not like to speculate on what type of journey home they may face at 10.00pm tonight when temperatures will be sub-zero."



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2010 AFRICAN CUP OF NATIONS

African Cup set to impact Premier League

By Julian Guyer (AFP)

THE African Nations Cup is due to have a major impact upon events at both ends of the English Premier League table.

Leaders Chelsea have seen Ivory Coast forwards Didier Drogba and Salomon Kalou as well as Ghana midfielder Michael Essien and Nigeria's John Obi-Mikel, all depart for Angola where the 2010 competition starts on Sunday. Related article: African football feast.

Chelsea's Italian boss Carlo Ancelotti already has one of the best-equipped squads in England's lucrative top flight and, if needed, can ask the Blues' billionaire owner Roman Abramovich to bankroll some new signings during the January transfer window.

However, after overseeing holders Chelsea's 5-0 FA Cup win over Watford, which featured two goals from 20-year-old striker Daniel Sturridge, his first for the London club since a pre-season move from Manchester City, Ancelotti said: "I think that we can do a good January, good performances without the African players."

There have been seasons where Arsenal, now four points off top spot, would have had as many players on African Nations Cup duty as London rivals Chelsea.

This time around the Gunners will only be without Ivory Coast defender Emmanuel Eboué and Cameroon midfielder Alex Song.

Even so, with Robin van Persie and Johan Djorgou both long-term injuries, Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger would rather his squad was not disrupted by a tournament which, unlike the World Cup or European Championships, takes place while the English season is in progress.

"On occasions, the players come back affected by a negative experience," Wenger said.

However, Wenger reduced his African Nations Cup worries with the pre-season sale of both the Ivory Coast's Kolo Toure and Togo's Emmanuel Adebayor to Premier League big-spenders Manchester City.



YAYA Toure, right, during a training session in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. Toure was named Ivorian footballer of the year for 2009 ahead of Didier Drogba after a referendum organised by local newspaper Supersport.

"They play the African Nations Cup every two years and I believe that when you have too many players who go in January, it is a big problem," Arsenal's French manager explained.

If any Premier League side is likely to be adversely affected by the tournament, it is basement club Portsmouth.

The cash-strapped south coast side are four points adrift at the bottom of the table and such

is their dire financial position, Portsmouth have had a transfer embargo slapped upon them by the Premier League.

In the midst of all their other problems, Pompey are set to lose four players to the African Nations Cup in Ivory Coast international Aruna Dindane, Algeria duo Nadir Belhadj and Hassan Yebda and Nigeria veteran Kanu.

Frustrated Portsmouth boss Avram Grant, said: "I don't know

why FIFA allow this. I don't know why they have the African Cup of Nations in January.

"The players go two weeks before and need one or two weeks afterwards to recover," the Israeli added.

"We pay a lot of money, especially the big teams, to players who are not with us for two months," the former Chelsea manager insisted. "I think FIFA need to think about this."

Cote d'Ivoire tipped as favourites

AN African football feast begins in Angola on Sunday with the 2010 Nations Cup serving as a tempting starter ahead of the World Cup main course in South Africa in June.

Only hosts South Africa of the six World Cup qualifiers from Africa will be missing and Algeria, Cameroon, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria are expected to make the Nations Cup knockout phase.

Add defending champions Egypt and hosts Angola and the list of likely African champions is complete for the first Nations Cup to be staged in a Portuguese-speaking country since its inception 53 years ago.

Didier Drogba-inspired Cote d'Ivoire are the darlings of the media and for the second consecutive tournament carry the favourites tag into a 22-day extravaganza scheduled for capital Luanda plus Benguela, Cabinda and Lubango.

After trampling all before them two years ago in Ghana the Ivorians came horribly unstuck in the semi-finals against title holders Egyptians, who won 4-1 with Amr Zaki scoring twice.

Bosnian coach Vahid Halilhodzic has been busy lately dampening Ivory Coast expectations, warning that while his star-sprinkled squad makes for impressive reading, the total impact is often less than the sum of the parts.

Drogba, who has hinted that Angola will be his Nations Cup swansong, says the arrogance and complacency of the 2008 squad must be eradicated if the Ivorians are to win the tournament a second time. Related article: Angola to exploit home advantage

"We will treat every opponent with respect, humility and seriousness. There is no room for complacency like in Ghana. No game is won in advance," warned the 31-year-old Chelsea goal machine.

Ivory Coast are in an all-west Africa Group B with Ghana, Burkina Faso and Togo and it would be a shock if the two World Cup qualifiers failed to stamp their authority. Facts: ACN rules

Without a Nations Cup title since 1982, Ghana have been ravaged by injuries with central defenders John Pantsil and John Mensah and midfielders Stephen Appiah and Laryea Kingston ruled out.

And Serb coach Milovan Rajevac axed midfielder Sulley Muntari for ill discipline so the always demanding workload for box-to-box Chelsea workaholic Michael Essien just got a few kilograms heavier.

Togo boast Manchester City striker Emmanuel Adebayor and the pick of the Burkina Faso lineup is Moumouni Daganou, a Qatar-based striker and leading scorer in the qualifying competition with 12 goals.

Saadane will not quit, says Algeria FA

ALGERIA'S football federation has denied local media reports that coach Rabah Saadane is about to resign, it said in an official statement yesterday.

The federation said it was surprised by the provocative tone in Algerian media reports of strained relations between Saadane and his

squad at a training camp in France, where they are preparing for this month's African Nations Cup finals.

"There is no foundation to these allegations and we wonder what is the real goal of this disinformation," said the statement on the federation website (www.faf.org.dz).

"We are anxious to reassure

the public that an excellent mood reigns in the squad. No dissension exists between the coach and the players," it added.

Saadane steered Algeria to a surprise World Cup finals place with a playoff win over Egypt in November. He was also coach when Algeria last played at the World Cup in

Mexico in 1986.

Algeria were drawn with England, Slovenia and the United States at this year's tournament in South Africa.

At the Nations Cup they are grouped with hosts Angola, Mali and Malawi. Their opening match is against Malawi on Monday.

THE WEDNESDAY COLUMN

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The lesson of America's "War on Terror"

For a long time the failed (mercifully) attempt of 23 year-old Umar Faruk Abdul Mutallab, to blow up the aircraft he was travelling to the US in on its soil will continue to grab the headlines of the global media if only because his is the first by a non-Arab, non-Asian Muslim. His being young, Nigerian, well educated and from a wealthy family background has only added to the terrifying novelty. Nigerians, young and old, have, of course, long established a dubious reputation for drug peddling, advance fee fraud, credit card scam, etc. But suicide bombing? It simply beggared belief.

What, a perplexed world has been asking, would drive such a man widely described as shy, obedient and generally virtuous into wanting to blow himself and other apparently innocent passengers up just to get even with America for its war against so-called Islamic terrorism? All sorts of theories have been advanced as explanation, from the seemingly sensible (e.g. parental neglect) to the ridiculous (Islam, Faruk's religion, is an inherently violent, reactionary religion). None of these theories, however, have dwelt on the source of Faruk's seemingly irrational behaviour, obvious as this source is.

This source is Big Business, more specifically Big Western Business. And before you scoff at what I have just said as outmoded Marxist rubbish, consider the following remarks by some of the West's own leading lights in politics and the media.

In its June 28, 2003 edition, *The Economist*, arguably the West's most pre-eminent mouthpiece ran a survey on capitalism and democracy entitled "Radical thoughts on our 160th birthday." In that survey, the magazine accused Western governments of being too devoted to business as against their devotion to market forces.

"In the more liberal era of the past 20 years," the magazine said, "governments have often been accused of being too devoted to markets. Actually, a more telling accusation is that they have been too devoted to business." In other words, the State in the West, as in much of the world, has become a captive

of Big Business with its ethos of greed, corruption and such vices. As the award winning investigative American journalist, Greg Palast, said in his 2002 book, *The Best Democracy Money Can Buy*, "The corporations don't have to lobby government anymore. They ARE the government."

The leader in this corporate capture of the State is Big Oil, petroleum – and its associated gas – having become central to life in the modern age as the cheapest, if not the most efficient, source of energy.

Shorn of all its pretences, the two American invasions of Iraq under the presidency of the two Bushes, who are big oil men, were all about oil, something nature decided to locate mostly in the predominantly Muslim Middle East. The pretences that they were there, first to stop the Iraqi leader, Saddam Hussein, from acquiring the nuclear bomb, and when that was exposed as a lie, the pretence that they wanted to rid Iraq of his tyranny, were just that – pretences.

Naturally this war was bound to assume a religious dimension since the invaders were of a different faith. It was also bound to be seen by the victims as an unjust war.

No one, I think, has captured this better than Boris Johnson, a former editor at the *London Spectator* and now the mayor of London. Writing in *The Telegraph* of London (December 26, 2002), he said, "If I had an illegal revolver in my house, I could hardly object, if the police decided to burst in and put it beyond use... But I think I might feel hard done by if the police decided that, in order to accomplish this end, it was necessary to blow up my house, and kill me and many of my relatives. That sense of injustice would be all the greater if they had no real proof that I had the wretched revolver in the first place."

The fact is that the subservience of Western governments to the interests of Big Business in formulating their foreign policies has led to a feeling of injustice and hopelessness among victims of those policies. This, of course, cannot justify suicide bombing by any one, especially when it is carried out by non-Arabs like Faruk as an act of religious solidarity. It does, however, explain it.

"Nine Eleven" was not really the cause of Bush Jnr's invasion of Iraq. Long before 9/11 he has decided on the invasion, urged on by the neo-conservatives who had captured the American State beginning with Ronald Reagan's presidency in 1980. 9/11 merely provided an excuse. This was why Bush decided to treat it as an act of war rather than the act of crime that it was.

The Iraqi invasion could never have been, and now the Afghanistan invasion which President Barack Obama has decided to describe as "a just war" can never be, the key to preventing another 9/11.

As one, John Merasheimer, said writing in last year's *Newsweek* Special Issue, "The real key to preventing another 9/11, however, is for the United States to work closely with other governments to monitor Al Qaeda and round up terrorists before they strike. Timely intelligence and

sound police work are the main reasons why there has not been another attack on the U.S. homeland. The war in Afghanistan has done little to make Americans safer at home, and prolonging it won't either. It's been a bad war from the start and will be to the bitter end."

That Faruk failed to succeed in his terrible mission was clearly no thanks to the intelligence services of both his home country and of the U.S. In the case of Nigeria it was obviously a case of incompetence for which heads should have rolled since if only there was effective leadership in the country.

As for the Americans there is every chance that someone may have chosen to let Faruk succeed to provide an excuse for the ramping up of the so-called war on Islamic terror.

Mercifully Faruk failed. Hopefully the lessons of his near success have been learnt by all.

That Faruk failed to succeed in his terrible mission was clearly no thanks to the intelligence services of both his home country and of the U.S.



UMAR Faruk Abdul Mutallab

SPORTS REPORT



PATRICK Vieira

Vieira to leave Inter, says Mourinho

French midfield veteran Patrick Vieira is set to leave Inter Milan within days, amid reports of interest from Manchester City, coach Jose Mourinho said Tuesday.

Asked what the chances were of the 33-year-old staying on, Mourinho told reporters "I think they are very slim."

Earlier, the Times

newspaper had reported that City were in talks over a move for Vieira, who has also had the rule run over him by Lyon.

Vieira, who has had a shaky past three seasons at Inter Milan, is desperate to play for France at the World Cup and is looking to play regular first team football, denied him in Italy with stiff competition for starting places at Inter.



OSAZE Odemwingie

Eagles suffer Odemwingie injury blow

Nigeria are sweating on the fitness of Locomotiv Moscow striker Peter Odemwingie after he suffered a foot injury in a warm-up match at the weekend.

Odemwingie stayed away from training on Monday after he got injured in the Super Eagles 1-0 win over South African club Thanda Royal Zulu on Sunday.

"I don't think it's a serious injury. I only have to rest the leg for another day or so and I will be fine," said Odemwingie.

The striker is now likely to miss a proposed friendly against Zambia on Wednesday.

The Eagles, who are drawn in Group C of the 2010 Nations Cup along with defending champions Egypt, Mozambique and Benin, are billed to depart Durban, South Africa, on Friday.

