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VOL. 13 NO. 31 MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2006 MUHARRAM 29, 1427 A. H. N80

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STAR FEATURE
Mararrabar Rido: Inside the world of miners

 Pages 22 & 35

Indeed: Progress is the Activity of Today and the Promise of Tomorrow
 Courtesy: GOMBE PROGRESSIVES PAVILLION

 Alh. Muhammad Danjuma Goje

I was not arrested

Former national chairman of the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Chief Audu Ogbeh declared yesterday that he was neither arrested nor invited for interrogation by any security apparatus.

By Ahmed Shekarau, Hammeed M. Bello & Emmanuel Bello

shortly after his return to his residence in Asokoro District of Abuja yesterday, Chief Ogbeh maintained that earlier reports about his arrest and interrogation were only calculated to tarnish his image.

The PDP chieftain was reportedly arrested on Friday in Abuja by security operatives. But in an interview with the BBC Hausa service

He stated that he only traveled to his cashew farm

where his cell phones were not working, and because some people could not reach him they concluded that he might have been picked up by security agents.

According to him, this calculation perfectly fits the imagination of his opponents, especially those in his former

party, the ruling PDP. Although he did not mention names, Chief Ogbeh stressed that those opponents of his quickly linked his alleged arrest and interrogation with the Economic and financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to score a cheap political point of associating him

— Ogbekh

with a fraud. Meanwhile, news of his release was confirmed to Daily Trust by a source close

to government and was corroborated by a source close to Ogbeh's family who said

Cont. on Pg. 2

3rd term: Lobbyists bribe legislatures - Bugaje alleges

Chairman Foreign Affairs Committee at the House of Representatives Dr. Usman Bugaje has alleged that lobbyists of president Obasanjo's third term are promising bribes of N100 million and choice plots in Abuja to members of the House to support their agenda.

From Sani Babadoko, Bureau Chief (Kaduna)

Bugaje said that the electorates have the right to stop such thing from happening by using their power of recall on their representatives who are supporting the third term bid.

Other promises being made to the lawmakers by the third term campaigners, according to Bugaje are a promise of re-election.


The representatives he said are in the National Assembly because there are people who have voted for them and not on their own volition, saying "we don't have our own views other than the views of our con-

Speaking with newsmen in Kaduna at the weekend, Dr.

Cont. on Pg. 2



From left - National Population Commission (NPC) Chairman, Chief Sumuila Danko Makama, Executive Secretary, National Nomadic Education Commission, Dr. Nafisatu Dahiru Muhammed and Federal Commissioner NPC (FCT), Dr. Dotun Oduneye during the National Population Commission (NPC) interactive session with representatives of nomadic associations held in Abuja... yesterday. Pic: Felix Onigbindo.

COUNT DOWN TO CENSUS 2006
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 Courtesy: National Population Commission

36 perish in Jigawa auto crash

Thirty six people, most of them women and children attending a wedding, perished in a road accident on the outskirts of Birnin-Kudu, Jigawa State.

From Musa Umar Kazaure, Regional Editor (Kano)

The accident occurred at about 8 p.m on Saturday at Kwanar Zagga village, five

kilometers from Birnin-Kudu. Witnesses said a Hiace bus with registration number XA369 going to Gombe, collided with another bus reg. No. XA308 SRA, heading for

Birnin-Kudu. According to a witness, the Hiace bus, model F, was conveying over 25 passengers going for a wedding ceremony.

Cont. on Pg. 2

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News

Onitsha refugees: JNI appeals for relief materials

Ogbeh *Cont. from pg. 1*

the former PDP chairman was in touch with his family throughout his detention.

The chief was yet to arrive his home located on No 50, Ali Akilu street, near the Presidential Villa Abuja, when visited at about 5:15 pm yesterday by *Daily Trust*.

As at yesterday evening, there were conflicting news as to which agency of government arrested him. While sources close to government claim the State Security Services (SSS) arrested Ogbeh, a source close to his family told *Daily Trust* that it was the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) that arrested him.

But the EFCC Chairman, Malam Nuhu Ribadu, is reported to have denied that his commission carried out the arrest.

The source said he was with a top government functionary yesterday evening when Ogbeh called to say he has been released and the family source whose initial comment on the whereabouts of Ogbeh was "no cause for alarm," confirmed that they had information he would be released yesterday.

According to findings, Ogbeh was arrested and quizzed in connection with the funding of the newly registered political party, Advanced Congress of Democrats (ACD).

Ogbeh's alleged arrest, it was gathered, is to compel him to disclose those behind the party and those funding it.

A close confidant of Ogbeh had insisted that the SSS arrested Ogbeh.

On how he was arrested, the source said security operatives suspected to be SSS officials, visited Ogbeh's home on Friday in his absence with a message to pick him up.

They were said to have left a cell phone number which Ogbeh called when he returned. Ogbeh was advised on phone to report at the SSS office, although he was assured of being treated with respect.

Ogbeh was said to have reported personally to the security agency's headquarters in Abuja whereupon he was detained.

When contacted, the People's Democratic Party (PDP), said it has no connection with the arrest because the party does not intervene in matters of security.

The national publicity secretary of the PDP, Mr. John Odey, said any suspicions that the party is connected with the arrest is baseless.

It would be recalled that the national secretary of the PDP, Chief Ojo Maduekwe, had at a recent press conference, accused the ACD of making inflammatory statements which paint the PDP in bad light.

Meanwhile chairman, media and publicity of ACD, Lai Mohammed, said that the PDP is jittery of the ACD. According to him, the ruling party is confronted by the growing acceptance of the ACD by Nigerians.

"They are clearly afraid of us and our expansion. I can tell you that our party has some interesting selling points. The biggest is that it is a party consisting of all those who matter in the defunct SDP and NRC. Heavy weights of these political parties have now found a home in the party.

"We are getting more members and among them are politicians who have been in the game in the last 40 years. The party is obviously giving the PDP a serious cause for worry.

He said the arrest of ACD leaders follow a familiar pattern and that the present arrest was a calculated attempt to witch-hunt politicians dissatisfied with the PDP.

A top member of the ACD who spoke on condition of anonymity said that the party will meet today (Monday) to articulate a common position on the "persecution of our members. I'm surprised that this is happening in Nigeria. But we are politicians and are ready for all these troubles."

Auto crash *Cont. from pg. 1*

emony in Gombe.

The two vehicles, according to the witness, met at a curve and immediately burst into flames on impact.

Efforts by rescuers who arrived the scene shortly after was thwarted by the intensity of the flame.

Another witness, Muhammed Abubakar, said "we heard the screaming and wailing of women and children but there was nothing we could do to help them as the entire vehicles were engulfed by fire."

The 36 persons were burnt beyond recognition and were given a mass burial at Dagaji village close to Birnin-Kudu.

Confirming the accident, the Birnin-Kudu divisional police officer, Alhaji Awwal Bebeji, said five people who survived the accident are now in critical condition at Birnin Kudu Federal Medical Center.

"It was a tragic accident. We could not know who was a man or a woman, a child or an infant. Most of them were burnt to ashes. It was a horrible scene," he said.

Birnin Kudu local government officials, members of the Federal Road Safety Corps as well as the Jigawa state government representatives visited the scene of the accident yesterday.

Efforts to contact relatives of the dead is proving difficult because all personal effects and luggages of the passengers were burnt to ashes.

The Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI), has appealed for relief materials donations for the over 100,000 Muslims displaced in Anambra and Delta states.

The appeal made by JNI secretary-general, Justice Abdulkadir Orire, in Kaduna yesterday, urged Muslims and people of goodwill to make their donations in cash or kind.

Justice Orire said majority of those who fled Onitsha and are now taking refuge in Asaba are desperately in need of relief materials particularly food and medicine.

The JNI has been receiving telephone calls and personal visits from Muslims in the South-East on the pathetic situation of those who are rendered homeless and are now refugees in Asaba from Onitsha.

The statement added that, "our zonal coordinators in these areas headed by Alhaji Lawal Abdulrazak, in collaboration with heads of Hausa communities in those areas

From Sani Bahadoko,
Bureau Chief (Kaduna)

are asking for all kinds of assistance for these people.

He said donations can be sent to its headquarters in

Kaduna or directly to the JNI coordinators in Asaba headed by Alhaji Lawal Abdulrazak or anybody considered trustworthy in their communities.

Hundreds of people, especially of northern extrac-

tion, were displaced last week while fleeing from the sectarian violence in Onitsha in Anambra State when rumours of Igbo/Christian killings and burning of churches and shops in Maiduguri, the Borno State capital, reached the town.



The Minister of Information, Mr. Frank Nweke (Jnr.) and Mr. John Oluwagbemiga the Festival Director Zuma Film Festival 2006, (left) during the presentation of award to President Obasanjo held at the State House, Abuja... recently. Pic: Joe Oroye.

Presidential c'ttee to raise N50bn for agric

By Anas A. Galadima,
Asst. Business Editor

The federal government plans to mobilize N50 billion to fund a massive expansion in the agricultural sector to enhance food production for both consumption and export.

The initiative which is expected to come on stream during the 2006 planting season, is to be implemented by the recently inaugurated Presidential Committee on Fi-

3rd term *Cont. from pg. 1*

stituents.

"It is our responsibility to do what our constituents want and if what we are doing is contrary, they have to rise against all of us... This is the kind of thing that is going to put pressure on those people who are still nursing ambition, knowing that they will not be able to go back to their constituencies."

Bugaje argued that most of the campaigners for third term in the National Assembly are imposed candidates who did not win elections and therefore will not be confident to go back to their constituencies to seek re-election.

"Some of them are just imposed candidates and they know that they don't stand a chance except if they go through this kind of process the president is trying

to create; that is a breach of the process that will impose

them on the people.

"The people who are canvassing for this at the National Assembly are making promises. One of them is a return ticket. It doesn't matter the party. They will make sure you return to the National Assembly.

"They will make sure that you have a choice plot of land in Abuja with N100 million that you will now build a villa of your choice. If you choose not to go back to your constituency, you can stay in Abuja and enjoy the rest of your life." These are the kind of things they are telling them.

It is important that the wider Nigerian public appreciate that if they allow such a thing to happen, they are condemned forever. I don't see how they can address the multitude of their problems.

"Graduates have come out of schools without jobs;

government.

Speaking at the end of the second meeting of the body in Abuja weekend, Dr. Okonjo-Iweala said the inauguration of the committee is a demonstration of government's determination to ensure that the agriculture sector continues to grow and contribute more to the nation's GDP beyond the current seven percent growth.

"What we are trying to do here in this committee which has representatives of all the stakeholders, is to fast track access to about N50 billion for both large and small scale farmers starting from this planting season," the minister was quoted as saying.

Women farmers across the country will get a minimum of between five and ten percent of the fund in order to encourage them, the statement said.

According to the minister, disbursement should commence by March this year in order to take maximum advantage of the planting season.

The statement said that "a proposal for states and Farmers' Associations to act as joint guarantors for farmers seeking to benefit from the N50 billion agriculture funds has been canvassed by the Presidential Committee on Financing for Agriculture. This proposal, if adopted, would make the common practice of using landed property as collateral unnecessary and help boost the growth of the agriculture sector and food production in the country."

Nwabuikwu quoted the minister as saying that "if state governments can back people of integrity among the farmers to access loans which can assist them to improve their processes and their yield, it would really help the farmers and the country."

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News

Nigeria bans poultry movement

The federal government has given a legal backing to the restriction on the movement of live poultry in the country as the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Adamu Bello, Friday, signed into law, the regulation restricting the movement of poultry and poultry products in the country. Information Minister, Frank Nweke Jr., said in Abuja that the law is in accordance with the powers conferred on the minister by the Animal Diseases (Control) Act No. 10 of 1988.

The law captures specific guidelines on the movement of poultry in the affected, exposed and free zones in the country respectively, and is part of Nigeria's response to the spread of bird flu to the country.

Meanwhile, Nweke said the federal government has continued to work with international organisations and donor agencies to contain the avian flu.

"As a consequence, the federal government has taken delivery of 10,000 doses of the drug *Tamiflu* from the World Health Organisation (WHO). This is a precautionary measure since there has been no reported case of bird flu in human beings in Nigeria," he said.

"Similarly, 1,000 pieces of personal protective equipment have been handed

over to the Federal Ministry of Agriculture by the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), for distribution to the affected states to aid in culling and decontamination activities.

Another consignment of 7,000 pieces of personal protective equipment was also received Friday, from the WHO," the minister added.

Nweke said further that the World Bank is finalising the release of \$50 million as a special emergency fund to meet Nigeria's urgent needs to address the Flu crisis.

"Of that amount, \$7 million is to be released immediately. Of this amount \$5 million will be spent to address urgent needs of the agricultural sector while \$2 million will go to the health sector," he added.

Nweke also confirmed that the inter-ministerial committee on Avian Influenza has received the report of the multi-agency teams comprising officials of the Federal Ministries of Health and Agriculture, World Health Organisation (WHO), Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and the US Centre for Diseases Control (CDC), which were sent to the states affected by the bird flu in Nigeria.

The teams, in their reports, identified the successes recorded and areas requiring review in the management of

the crisis.

Giving highlights of the report, he said: "In recognition of the importance of reaching the grassroots effectively, the teams recommended heightened public awareness, especially in the rural areas where people keep birds in their homes. Special enlightenment programmes were advocated for farmers and community leaders. The multi-agency teams also recommended the establishment of task forces in all states of the federation. Veterinary officers are to work with the state task forces."

"The inter-ministerial committee has directed that all states of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory

(FCT) be issued personal protective equipment (PPE), immediately to aid the culling of birds and decontamination

exercise in states affected by the flu and to strengthen the preparedness of other states," he added.

Bird flu: Where the aids are coming from

Since the outbreak of avian influenza known as bird flu, some countries and international organizations have pledged assistance to Nigeria in one way or the other.

Some of them are:

- Ukraine: Technical support
- World Bank: \$50 million (N6.5billion)
- European Union: 30 million Euros (about N5billion)
- United States: \$25million (about N3 billion) and control system.

The FAO has allocated about \$1 million to support surveillance and control activities in Nigeria, Egypt and Niger Republic.

Constitution review panel not for 3rd term - Senator Opara

By Hammeed M Bello

The Deputy Chairman of the National Assembly Committee for the review of the 1999 constitution, Hon Austin Opara has denied that the committee is pro-third term.

He denied also that the on-going exercise for the amendment of the constitution is to achieve a third term for political office holders including the president and the governors. The Deputy Senate President, Alh Ibrahim Mantu is chairman of the committee.

Opara, who is also the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, made the denial in a statement in Abuja yesterday signed by his Special Assistant on Media Relations, Mr Austin Ugawa.

According to the statement, Opara "urged Nigerians not to perceive the exercise as one designed to elongate the tenure of elected political office holders but to review 103 clauses in the constitution, to strengthen democracy the polity and the rule of law.

"The committee has no hidden agenda and let it be known that we are not being teleguided," Opara said, adding that it is their statutory responsibility to review the constitution.

Opara's denial of a hidden agenda by his committee is coming on the heels of the rejection by Nigerians of a third term for the Obasanjo government. The prevailing tempo at the just concluded public hearings in the six zones of the country, according to reports, suggests opposition against any extension of tenure.

"The essence of the public hearings is to get a feedback from the people. The aggregate opinions, views of the people is what will come out in the final report," the statement quoted Opara as saying.

He assured the people that their presentations, yearnings and aspirations would be reflected in the final report which the committee

the best interest of Nigerians and urged them not to be sceptical.

Other principal officers of the House of Representatives who are members of the constitution review panel include the House Leader, Hon Abdul Ningi, the House Whip, Hon Bawa Bwari and

the leader of the Alliance for Democracy (AD), Hon Wunmi Bewaji.

Bewaji also doubles as a member of the 2007 Movement, a group of Senators and members of the House opposed to the third term agenda while Senator Uche Chukwumerije heads the group.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

CNPP commend Nigerians for opposing 3rd term

The Conference of Nigerian Political Parties (CNPP), has described the "now open third term agenda" as the "greatest threat to national security," just as it expresses satisfaction for the rejection of third term during the public hearing by Nigerians.

A statement signed by its national public secretary, Mr. Osita Okechukwu, added that "it is unfortunate that

By Isa Sanusi
Asst. Head, Home News

third term is no longer a hidden agenda since it was smuggled into the Joint Constitution Review Committee report of the National Assembly. It is now a monster, the greatest threat to national security which generates unwarranted tension."

CNPP also thanked Nigerians "for the national consensus and patriotic solidarity against third term and its fascist tendencies."

On the recent riots in some parts of the country, CNPP called for the setting-up of a judicial inquiry to facilitate the prosecution of all the culprits and compensation for the victims.

"CNPP salutes Afenifere, Yoruba Council of Elders, Arewa Consultative Forum, Ijaw National Congress, South-South People's Assembly, ASUU and other civil society organisations for the formidable defend.



Senator Nasir Mantu



Portraits of the nine foreign oil workers held hostage by militant in Niger Delta.

News



Prof. Samson Olatunji Ales the Director General of National Mathematical Centre, receiving Dr. Kwame Nkrumah Africa Leadership Award from Mr Felix Okonkwo, the Abuja Bureau Chief of West Africa International Magazine.

Dirty environment responsible for hostility in Nigeria - Prof. Mahdi

The Vice chancellor of Gombe State University, Professor Abdullahi Mahdi, has attributed the hostility of Nigerians towards each other to the dirty environment they live in. He said Nigeria being one of the dirtiest countries in the world provides the breeding ground for such attitudes.

Professor Mahdi, speaking at the first matriculation ceremony of the university at the weekend, said "people brought up in a dirty and filthy environment are most likely to possess dirty minds, be less civil and easily agitated."

"Lake Chad has virtually dried up, our rivers and streams are being choked up with sand. Desert conditions have reached the southern coastal areas. All these are results in environmental degradation," observed Professor Mahdi.

He said Gombe state university will provide its students a clean environment and encourage them to be in the vanguard of environmental protection.

"Our students are lucky because they will receive their education in the cleanest, neatest, healthiest and most beautiful university in Nigeria. We'll create sprawling plantations, orchards, biological and horticultural gardens and a mini zoo to achieve intellectual stimulation, aesthetic imagery and tranquility," he promised.

He blamed the elites in Nigeria for abandoning the environment and accused

From Muhammad Abubakar
Correspondent, Gombe

them of exploiting the nation's wealth but warned that unless measures are taken to address the situation, it will get out of hand.

NEMA disburses relief materials to crises victims

From Abdulwahab Ajikobi

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), has commenced the distribution of relief materials to Bauchi, Onitsha, Asaba and Maiduguri for the alleviation of the sufferings of victims of religious crises in the country.

This is sequel to President Obasanjo's, mandate to NEMA to commence the delivery of relief materials to the displaced victims.

According to NEMA information office, "there will be direct distribution of materials to victims in conjunction with states officials, red cross society and voluntary organizations."

The statement signed by Ibrahim Farinloye, said NEMA has commenced the loading of assorted relief materials like medicaments, rice, beans, maize, beverages, mattresses, blankets among others.

Liberian President delivers Yar'Adua memorial lecture

Liberian President, Mrs Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is to deliver this year's Shehu Musa Yar'Adua annual memorial lecture slated for Saturday.

The Board of Trustees of the Centre announced this weekend in Abuja in a statement.

"The address is one of the highlights of the annual commemoration of the late Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, former Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters, (1976-1979) and politician who died in Abakaliki prison in 1998 where he was being held by the former military ruler, late General Sani Abacha".

According to the one-page statement, "President Johnson-Sirleaf, Africa's first female president, was elected in December 24 after a protracted civil war. Her address will feature the theme, "The Hope and Promise of Liberia."

"The presentation is expected to draw on her wealth of experience resulting in her election as the President of Africa's first independent nation. Mrs. Johnson-Sirleaf is scheduled to arrive Nigeria on Friday".

The statement recalled that the annual programme of commemoration was instituted by the Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation which was established by "friends, family and associates of the

From Sufuyan Ojeifo
(Special Correspondent)

late statesman, soldier and politician to sustain his legacy of social justice, democracy and national development".

According to the board, the programme will attract distinguished guest speakers such as President Nelson Mandela of South Africa, Benazir Bhutto, former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Presi-

dent John Kuffour of Ghana, President Joachim Chissano of Mozambique and Ambassador Andrew Young, former Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations.

Blind people threaten to boycott census

From Hamza Idris
(Correspondent Yola)

The National Association of the Blind (NAB), have threatened to boycott the forthcoming National Population and Housing Census unless they are told what they stand to gain after the exercise.

The association alleged that even though its members alongside the deaf, the

dumb, the crippled and other physically impaired people constitute a significant percentage of the nation's population, they are often ignored when it comes to national planning and policy implementation.

Chairman of the associa-

tion in Adamawa state, Mr. Haruna Kurkyibuki, who threat the last week in Yola, argued that if the census was meant to facilitate effective social, economic and political policies, then there is the need for the disabled to know their fate.

More often than not, government at all levels tend to ignore us when it comes to employment opportunities, political appointments and other good things which life offers," he said.

Mr. Kurkyibuki added that non of his members aspires to remain a beggar roaming the streets in search of livelihood and called on the national and State Houses of Assembly to enact enabling legislations to include the physically impaired persons in the country in terms of admissions into schools and job opportunities by the private and public sectors.

He further reaffirmed that the National Association of the Blind in Adamawa state has resolved to quit begging by its members before the end of 2007 and therefore urged government to assist them in that direction

Clerics advise Muslims, Christians against arms

Christians and Muslim clerics at the weekend in Lokoja, appealed to adherents to refrain from taking up arms against each other.

The call became necessary after bloody clashes and reprisal attacks over some religious issues in some states.

Bishop of the Lokoja Catholic Diocese, Rev. Martin Olorunmolu, urged Nigerians to embrace dialogue to resolve any differences.

He told newsmen in Lokoja that the recent violence in the country sparked off by a newspaper cartoon in Denmark, was most unfortunate adding that there were no good reasons to unleash mayhem on the nation.

The Grand Khadi of Kogi State, Justice Suleiman Olorunfemi, also appealed for calm among Muslims and Christians.

Olorunfemi reminded Muslims that Islam is a religion of peace and called on them to resist being used to perpetrate violence.

The Chief Judge of Kogi State, Justice Umaru Eri, also appealed to the Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI), to pray for the continued peaceful co-existence of the country.

Eri made the appeal at the High court complex, Lokoja, at the weekend when a delegation of members of the association from Okunland paid him a courtesy visit.

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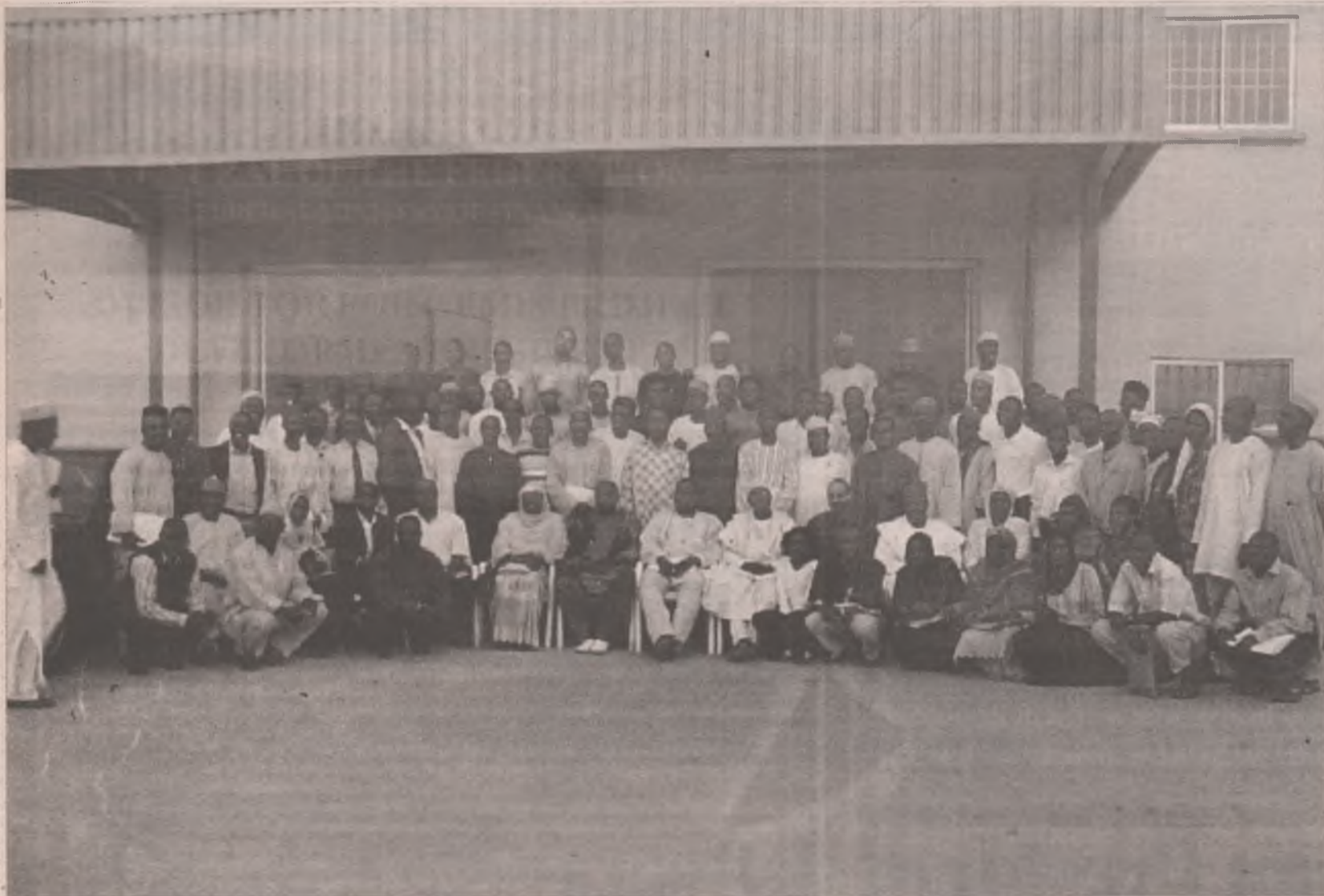


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News



Media Trust staff pose for a group photograph after the first Media Trust Editorial conference held in Abuja on Saturday.

ILO adopts new maritime labour convention

The International Labour Organization (ILO), has adopted a comprehensive new labour standard for the global maritime industry. The ILO Director-General, Mr. Juan Somavia, in a statement in Abuja, described the new convention as a landmark development.

The new Maritime Labour Convention, 2006, according to a statement from the ILO office, was adopted by a vote of 314 for, with no votes against and four abstentions at the 94th International Labour Conference (Maritime), held in Geneva, Switzerland between February 7 and February 23.

The vote marked an overwhelming support by delegates from more than 100 countries representing seafarers, ship owners and governments.

"We have made maritime labour history today. We have adopted a convention that spans continents and oceans, providing a comprehensive labour charter for the world's 1.2 million or more seafarers and addressing the evolving realities and needs of a sector that handles 90 per cent of the world's trade.

"What's more, we have established a socio-economic floor to global competition in the maritime sector. This initiative can also provide the impetus and support for similarly innovative and balanced approaches to addressing the need to make globalization fair

By Abdullahi M. Gulloma,
Reporter

in other sectors of the world of work," the statement quoted Mr. Somavia as saying.

According to the statement, the new convention is designed to encourage compliance by operators and owners of ships and strengthen enforcement of standards at all levels, including provisions for onboard and onshore complaint.

The statement said also that the convention sets minimum requirements for seafarers to work on a ship and contains provisions on conditions of employment, hours of work and rest, accommodation, recreational facilities, food and catering, health protection, medical care, welfare and social security protection.

"Under the new convention, ships that are larger than 500 GT and engaged in international voyages or voyages between foreign ports will be required to carry a Maritime Labour Certificate and a Declaration of Maritime Labour Compliance.

The Declaration sets out Ship owners' plans for ensuring that applicable national laws, regulations or other measures required implementing the convention are complied with on an ongoing basis. Shipmasters will then be responsible for carrying out the ship-owners' stated plans and keeping proper

records to provide evidence of compliance with the convention.

500 Zamfara civil servants undergo training

Over 500 civil servants in Zamfara state have benefited from training and re-training in various trade and manpower development.

This was announced by the state's liaison officer of the Industrial Training Fund (ITF), Alhaji Abubakar S. Bungudu at the official opening of the in-house advance computer course in Gusau, the state capital.

Alhaji Abubakar, said the programme was the first in the state adding that it was also organized by the office of the state's Head of Service.

He said the office of the ITF in the state has developed a comprehensive training package required for computer operators for both the private and public sectors.

The training officer called on participants to be punctual at times through the duration of the programme so as to derive maximum benefits.

He expressed appreciation and gratitude to the state government for approving the programme as well as the funds set aside for the training of civil servants which is being deducted from the monthly cash allocation of all ministries and parastatals across the state. "As you can see it, the main objective of the whole programme is to

The flag state will review the ship owners' plans and verify and certify that they are

in place and being implemented. This will put pressure on ship owners that disregard the law, but will remove pressure from those that comply," the statement said.

From Salisu Zakari
Maradun, Correspondent
Gusau

enable you analyse the basic concept of computer technology, create and

produce high quality documents, performance data analysis and computation as well as the use of the internet for relevant and useful information among others.

Foreigners to watch solar eclipse

A team of international tourists numbering more than 117 from Madrid and Barcelona in Spain would be in Nigeria to watch the eclipse of the sun on March 29.

The eclipse is expected to partially occur in most states in the country while it is expected to be total in Katsina, Kwara, Niger, Oyo and Zamfara States.

The Director General, National Tourism

Development Corporation (NTDC), Dr Joseph Eboime, said that the tourists were coming on the heels of a renewed campaign by the corporation to market Nigeria globally.

Eboime, who spoke at a News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) forum in Abuja at the weekend, said that the corporation has already entered into strategic alliance with international tour operators to include Nigeria

on their travel agenda.

"The coming of the tourists to watch the eclipse in Nigeria is one of the dividends of the renewed partnership with international tour operators," he said adding that the tourists expected to watch the eclipse in Katsina would enter the country from Cameroon and move to Maiduguri before going to Katsina.

2-year compulsory primary school teaching for NCE graduates - Minister

Graduates of Nigerian colleges of education are to undertake a two-year compulsory teaching service in primary schools, the Minister of Education, Mrs Chinwe Obaji, has announced.

The minister said the programme would commence in the next few months, adding that "the federal government has earmarked N6 billion for this year's programme".

Speaking on Saturday at the 14th convocation ceremony of the Federal College of Education

(FCE), Okene, Kogi State, Obaji said the programme would be implemented under "the federal teachers' corps scheme".

She said that the "government is aware of the quality of graduates produced in our tertiary

institutions, and of much concern are the one's from our colleges of education".

"In order to meet up to the challenges and fully realise the gains of the Millennium Development

Goals (MDGs), this administration is introducing

the federal teachers' corps scheme," she said.

Obaji said that the programme planned to deploy fresh NCE graduates from the colleges of education to undergo a two-year compulsory service, in primary schools upon graduation.

"The objective is to ensure the provision of well-trained and qualified teachers for the primary and junior secondary schools, in the light of a large shortfall in teachers for the success of the UBE scheme," she added.

FG targets 10% GDP growth in 2006

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), has disclosed federal government's plans to achieve Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 10 per cent in 2006 up from the 8.2 per cent growth achieved in 2005.

The CBN which communicated this in its monetary policy committee, said the federal government is still committed to attaining a single digit headline inflation rate this year.

The statement from the committee signed by the Director, Monetary Policy Department, Mr. James Olekah among other things, said it targets bound money (money in circulation) growth of 17 per cent bank credit to the private sector of about 30 percent and a flexible exchange rate regime to ensure macro economic environment.

Going further, the statement maintained that it will tag along with its 2005 policy of zero ways and means advances to government. In the extreme circumstances however, the bank could allow the government to borrow up to 5 percent of last year's actual revenue at the interest rate of 14 per cent which must be retrieved in the quarter in which the advance is given," it stated.

CRIME & PUNISHMENT



The Federal high court located within OAU quarters, Maitama, Abuja.

Kontagora LG chairman sued over litigation fees

The chairman of Kontagora local government, Alhaji Harumi Buhari, has been sued for allegedly refusing to pay N7.5 million fees in connection with the 2003 local government elections.

According to a sworn affidavit, deposed to at the Niger State high court, Minna, the chairman was refused his certificate of return after winning the Kontagora local government election on the platform of the Peoples Redemption Party (PRP).

The chairman contacted Mr. Ahmed Uwais, a legal practitioner, to file a petition to the local government election tribunal sitting in Minna on his behalf.

The affidavit also stated

By Benjamin Auta, Reporter

that the respondent lost the case at the tribunal and not satisfied with the judgement, appealed to the High Court which upheld his election.

The plaintiff claims that he informed the chairman that his professional fees at the election tribunal was N5 million but if the judgement is not in his favour, the respondent will pay him N3 million as professional fees.

He said that the professional fees agreement was between him and the respondent before he appealed the tribunal's judgement at the sum of N5 million which brought the total to N8 million.

He avers that after obtain-

ing judgement in favour of the respondent, he was only given the sum of N0.5 million while the sum of N7.5 million is pending.

The plaintiff said a reminder was written to the respondent, informing him of the outstanding N7.5 million but that the chairman refused to pay or even respond to the letter.

In his response, the chairman denied the facts contained in the plaintiff's affidavit.

He said that he was the one that filed the matter before the local government council tribunal at Minna in 2004 and did not engage the services of any legal counsel, including the plaintiff. He denied ever briefing the plain-

tiff on the matter.

The respondent said that he never agreed to pay the plaintiff any amount for the first matter at the election tribunal since he did not engage

him.

He added that he only engaged the plaintiff to prosecute the appeal at the High court and that they both agreed on the sum of N1 mil-

lion.

The respondent averred that he ran into financial problems and could not settle the bill as agreed but paid the plaintiff the sum of N100,000.

Police, toothless bulldogs, say Gov Mu'azu

Governor Adamu Mu'azu of Bauchi state has described the police as a toothless bulldog in need of funds to be functional so as to provide security for the public.

The governor who called for the immediate restructuring of the Nigeria Police, said insecurity in the country has reached its peak.

Mu'azu made the appeal

By Ruby Rabi, Senior Reporter, with agency report

at the weekend in Bauchi when he received the presidential task force on police reform, during a courtesy call.

He said the police was not always available when needed most, adding that critical attention must be paid to funding, welfare, lo-

gistics, accommodation and training.

The taskforce was led by the chairman, Alhaji Muhammad Dan-Madami, a former Deputy Inspector General of Police.

Responding, Alhaji Muhammad Dan-Madami told the governor that they are on tour of the six geo-political zones to collate opinion on how best to make the police efficient.

CRIME & PUNISHMENT

UBE discovers illegal transfer of fund

The UBE special monitoring team has discovered the illegal transfer of funds from the UBE Intervention Fund to other projects in six states.

Authoritative sources at the Universal Basic Education Commission made this known to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), in Abuja at the weekend.

The sources, however, did not name the states involved in the illegal transfer of the UBE funds.

The sources said that the UBE monitoring team found that the funds were transferred as loans to state governments.

"The funds were also transferred to state governments for the payment of leave and transport grants to civil servants," the sources said.

According to the sources, three states which are involved in the programme failed last year to open all the relevant books of account for auditing.

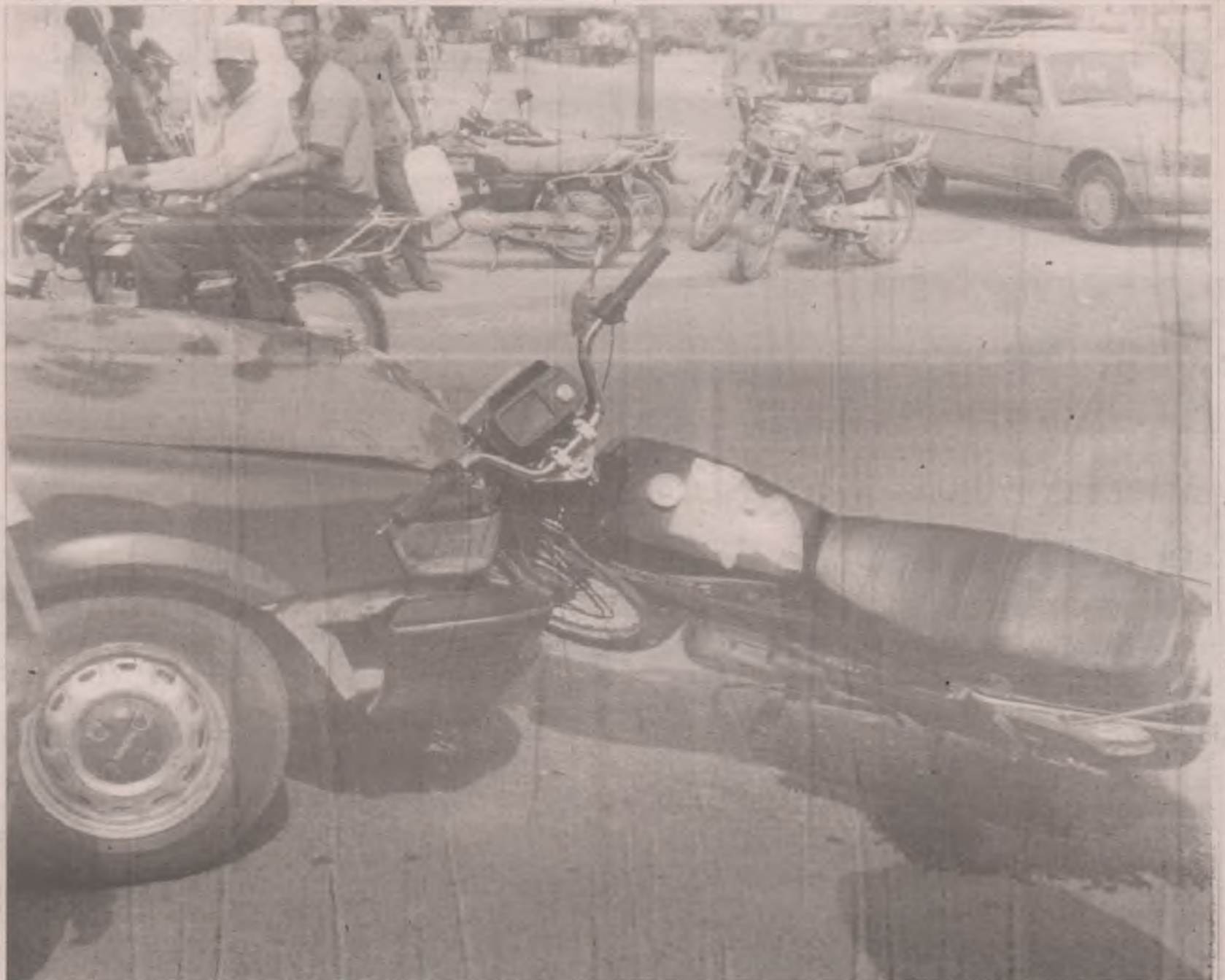
NAN similarly learnt that six states are yet to comply with the UBE directive on appropriate signatures to UBE Intervention Fund.

The sources said the monitoring revealed that four states incurred expenditures which were not allowed from the Federal Government-UBE Intervention Fund Account.

"Four states did not provide the correct counterpart fund as provided for in the conditions for accessing the UBE matching grant," the sources added.



Dr. Chinwe Obaji, Education minister



An accident scene at Wuse Zone 4 ...recently.

Movement calls for inquiry into killings

A non-governmental organisation, Movement for National Regeneration (MNR), has called for a judicial panel of inquiry into the recent killings in some parts of the country.

The call was contained in a statement issued at the end of MNR's National Executive Council (NEC) emergency meeting held in Abuja at the weekend.

The statement said: "We express our deep disgust and sympathy over recent political upheavals, wanton killings and destruction of properties in some parts of the country".

"MNR also wishes to use this medium to condole the bereaved families and strongly call on the federal government to set up a judicial panel of inquiry to thoroughly investigate the incidence."

The statement called on eminent persons, traditional,

religious and political leaders to speak to their subjects in order to douse tension and restore stability in the country.

"The continued manifestation of the breach of peace at any slightest provocation in the country, as we have always witnessed, does not augur well for our collective image as a nation," it said.

The statement, signed by the President, Mr Mainassara Ibrahim, Secretary General, Ibrahim Aliyu and the Director of Public Relations, Chief J. W. Gadzama, also said that geo-political zones should be discarded from the nation's discourse.

"Geo-political zone is a terminology not enshrined in our constitution. It should be discarded in national discourse since it is only a PDP terminology of convenience.

"This, we believe, will go a long way to restore our federal values as a united entity,"

it said.

In another development, the Association of Local Governments of Nigeria (ALGON), has condemned the ethno-religious violence in some parts of the country.

The association expressed concern in a communique issued at the end of its executive council meeting held in Kaduna at the weekend.

The communique, read by the National President of ALGON, Dr Bayer Dzeremo, urged the federal government and the affected states to hasten action to restore law and order.

The association noted with concern, the increasing cases of social uprising by militant groups in the Niger-Delta and called on the federal government to find a lasting solution to the problems.

It commended the efforts of the federal government and some states to check the spread of the crises.

POLICE COMMISSIONERS TELEPHONE NUMBERS

1. Abia State	088-222868, 088-220073
2. Adamawa State	075-674012, 624012
3. Akwa Ibom State	085-200008, 201711
4. Anambra State	048-550022
5. Bauchi State	077-6542621
6. Bayelsa State	089-490060, 490132
7. Benue State	044-532962, 044-553015
8. Borno State	076-232915, 232043
9. Cross River State	087-231101, 230663
10. Delta State	956-281485, 280441
11. Ebonyi State	043-25134, 20325
12. Edo State	052-253798, 253520
13. Ekiti State	030-250000, 250709
14. Enugu State	042-250335, 042-256257
15. Gombe State	072-223135, 221158
16. Imo State	083-233343, 083-2307113
17. Jigawa State	064-721138, 721128
18. Kaduna State	062-249762, 062-245653
19. Kano State	064-645862, 646469
20. Katsina State	065-431703, 430914
21. Kebbi State	068-321585, 320254
22. Kogi State	058-220999, 250709
23. Kwara State	031-221612
24. Lagos State	01-4960200, 4962157
25. Nasarawa State	047-221349
26. Niger State	066-221496, 066-221903
27. Ogun State	039-241500, 243117
28. Ondo State	034-240109
29. Osun State	035-243363, 240330
30. Oyo State	02-2412824, 2412322
31. Plateau State	073-457969, 073-451968
32. Rivers State	084-23347, 236471
33. Sokoto State	060-232896, 2335375 080-34228561
34. Taraba State	079-222550, 223124
35. Yobe State	076-522141, 522145
36. Zamfara State	063-202603
37. FCT Abuja	09-2341800



INDEPENDENT CORRUPT PRACTICES AND OTHER RELATED OFFENCES COMMISSION

REGISTRATION OF ANTI-CORRUPTION NGOS INTO THE NATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION COALITION

The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) announces formation of National Anti - Corruption Coalition to be made up of NGOs and Civil Society groups in the country.

The Coalition which is the national organ for co-ordinating and strengthening efforts and activities in the anti-corruption crusade is designed to bring together all NGOs and Civil Society groups engaged in the anti-corruption crusade nation-wide and institutionalize the strategic partnership between the ICPC and Civil Society.

Membership of the Coalition is open to all relevant NGOs and Civil Society groups consisting of professional bodies, trade groups, religious organizations, voluntary agencies engaged in the anti-corruption crusade. Individual membership is not permitted.

All NGOs, including those already working with the Commission, are required to register as members of the Coalition by submitting Membership Forms and Data Questionnaire to be obtained from the Commission.

Registration in the Coalition confers status on the registered NGO as a recognized and credible NGO in the anti-corruption community and entitles the NGO to partner with the Commission, with all the benefits accruing from certification by and collaboration with the Commission.

All NGOs in the anti-corruption community should write to or contact the Education Department of the ICPC Headquarters at the following address for registration.

**Education Department,
ICPC Headquarters,
Plot 802 Constitution Avenue,
Zone A9 Central Area,
P.M.B. 535, Garki, Abuja.**



The Nigerian Society of Engineers

2006 NSE GRADUATESHIP EXAMINATIONS

The Graduateship Examinations of the Nigerian Society of Engineers will hold from 4th to 8th September 2006 at Enugu, Kaduna and Lagos Centres.

Application forms are available at the National Engineering Centre, 1 Engineering Close, Victoria Island, Lagos and the NSE Liaison Office at No. 10 Damaturu Close, Opposite No. 92, 3rd Avenue Road, Gwarimpa FMW&H Estate, Abuja. The cost is ₦10,100 for Part I and ₦10,000 for Part II examination.

2.0 BASIC INFORMATION

The cost of the application covers syllabus, Student Membership Form and Explorer (Questions and solutions to past examination questions and examiners' comments on candidates' performances).

The Examinations will be conducted in two Parts (I & II).

Part I consists of two general papers and two core courses each for candidates of Agriculture, Chemical, Civil, Electrical, Mechanical and Structural Engineering.

Part II comprises the electives, three courses for Agricultural, Civil and Mechanical engineering and four for Electrical engineering as contained in the syllabus.

A candidate must complete Part I before proceeding to Part II. Candidates are not allowed to combine the two Parts under any circumstance except a carryover.

3.0 FOR WHOM

Prospective candidates must be holders of the Higher National Diploma (HND) from Engineering programmes accredited by both COREN and the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) or B.Sc Physics or any other qualifications approved by the Council of Nigerian Society of Engineers (NSE) plus a minimum of two years post qualification experience. The syllabus has been approved by the Council for the Regulation of Engineering in Nigeria (COREN) as having met the basic academic standards for Technologists wishing to become registered Engineers and for those wishing to pursue Masters Degree Programmes in the Universities.

Graduates from Universities whose courses have not been accredited by COREN are required to sit for Part II of the examinations as a prerequisite for registration with NSE. Prospective candidates should please contact the Society to clarify the status of their universities.

4.0 EXAMINATION FEES

i.	Part I	₦7,500
ii.	Part II	₦8,500
iii.	Carry-over	₦3,000
iv.	Resit fee for 2 papers in Part I	₦5,000
v.	Resit fee for one paper in Part II	₦4,000
vi.	Resit fee for two papers in Part II	₦6,000

5.0 METHOD OF APPLICATION

Interested candidates should call at these NSE offices: National Engineering Centre, Lagos and the Liaison Office, Abuja and other NSE Branches nationwide.

6.0 COMPLETED FORMS

Payments should be in certified bank drafts or to the NSE Afribank on-line Account No. 1420202215613 and forwarded along with 3 Nos. self addressed and stamped envelopes (10 x 23cm) and photocopies of credentials to:

The Executive Secretary
Nigerian Society of Engineers
National Engineering Centre
1, Engineering Close,
P. O. Box 72667,
Victoria Island, Lagos.
Tel: 01-4750099, 2617315
E-mail: nsehq@infoweb.abs.net

7.0 Closing Date: 31st July, 2006

Late entries will attract additional fee of ₦1,500



Honour
to
reborn due...

Alhaji Mukhtar Shagari

(Honourable Minister of Water Resources)

We heartily rejoice with you on the occasion of your conferment with the **Golden Jubilee Honours Award 2006** by the **Nigeria Union of Journalist**.

This is in recognition of your achievements and immense contributions to the growth and development of the country.

We wish you good health, Long Life and Prosperity as you continue your selfless service to the Nation.

Congratulations

Gilmor

Engineering (Nigeria) Limited

No 7 Usuma Street, Maitama - Abuja

P. O. Box 8841 Wuse

Tel: 234-9-4138456, 4138807-9.

Fax: 234-9-4138459

e-mail: gilmor@gilmornig.com

Golden Age for Gov Kure Celebrating Golden Excellence

By Mahmud Abdullahi, Minna

Some are born great, some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them.

For Engineer Abdulkhadir Abdullahi Kure, the Governor of Niger State, who turns 50 years today, greatness had always dogged his path and this is not because he is blue blooded.

If drums are not rolled out to celebrate this attainment of the golden age, it is not because Engineer Kure is undeserving of such lavish celebration, but because he is one man on which both friends and foes have come to agree, regarding his level of humility. While friends will tell you that he is humble to a fault, his foes would tell you he has taken humility to the level of absurdity.

If Governor Kure were to be your run on the mill person or simply put, your typical Nigerian, nothing would have been spared in telling the world that the man has indeed arrived.

Engineer Kure however comes by and as a man of extra-ordinary physiology, one not given to sentiments.

But who is Abdulkhadir Kure?

Abdulkhadir Abdullahi Kure was born on 26th February, 1956 to the family of Mallam Salihu Ranin Lapai and Ya Hauwa Kulu, in Lapai, Niger State. His parents were devout Muslims who instilled in the young Abdulkhadir the time-worn virtues of humility, honesty, hardwork and devotion to God and humanity.

As a child, he was very precocious and his father was forced to enrol him in school at a very tender age for that period. In 1968, he gained admission to the highly competitive Sardauna Memorial College, Kaduna. He was a brilliant scholar and instead of the usual five years of Secondary School, Abdulkhadir Kure barely spent four. His superior academic

credentials and admirable character saw him jumping a couple of classes.

By 1972, he was done with Secondary School and in 1973, he gained admission into the School of Basic Studies Zaria and later Ahmadu Bello University Zaria where he read Engineering. Graduating in 1977 with a Second Class Upper Degree, he was offered automatic employment as Assistant Lecturer in the Department. He was barely 21.

But unfortunately, like most bright students, Abdulkhadir Kure wasn't so eager to be a teacher. Instead he went to Makurdi. And between 1977 and 1978 during his Youth Service, he was partly responsible for opening up some vital roads in Makurdi.

Shortly after his service he took up job in the Niger State Ministry of Works, to continue what he had been doing so well in Makurdi - building roads and drainages. As Resident Engineer, he took charge of the construction of the Paiko - Lapai road, which remains one of the best roads in the State. Eventually, he was to bring his experience to bear in the construction of Minna Township Roads, and as Principal Resident Engineer and Projects Liaison Engineer.

In 1981, Kure went for post graduate studies at the University of New Castle Upon Tyne, United Kingdom.

Graduating with a brilliant result, Abdulkhadir Kure was exempted from any further examinations and made an automatic member of the Geological Society of London.

Returning from London, Kure remained with the Niger State Ministry of Works rising to become coordinating Engineer/Deputy Chief Civil Engineer until August 1985 when he transferred his services to the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA). He was the first Manager of the Lower Usuma Dam.

Indeed, the tremendous accomplishments of Kure at the FCDA, the sheer volume of jobs that were done during his tenure remains the most enduring testimony of his hardwork, brilliant engineering skills and innovativeness. He went through the ladder at a dizzying space becoming Chief Resident Engineer, Chief Engineer, Assistant Director, Acting Director and Director of Engineering Services.

His period at the Engineering Section of the Federal Capital Development Authority witnessed a flurry of activities. There is hardly any major

work in the FCT during the ten years he spent there that does not bear his huge imprint. His reputation as the man of quality, creative innovations and iron-cast integrity was largely made during his decade at the FCDA, where he became the Director of Engineering Services at the very young age of 30.

By this time, he has seen to the construction of the major roads, bridges, drainages, sewers, electrical works that we see today in Garki, Asokoro, Maitama, Wuse, and Central Area Districts.

Indeed, the Presidential Complex, Aso Villa, the International Wing of the Nnamdi Azikiwe Airport and the Presidential Lounge of the Airport were all done under his supervision. He also supervised the extension of substantial engineering services to Gwarinpa and the Satellite towns of Kubwa, Nyanya, Karu, Karshi, Bwari, Dutse, Gwagwa, Karmo, Kuje, Gwagwalada, Kwali, Abaji and Ruboshi.

It is not mere coincidence that since he left the service in 1995, apart from the Abuja Stadium and some expansion work on the Airport, no major government project had taken place in the FCDA.

He had never been a man who waited for jobs to come to him. He was constantly brimming with very practical ideas and was frequently invited to Executive Council meeting of the Federal Government to defend his proposals. The sheer brilliance of his ideas and the ingenuity of their practical realizations made it almost impossible to fault his Engineering skills.

But nothing lasts forever. In 1995, exactly ten years since he first went to work in the FCDA, Abdulkhadir Kure, one of the most accomplished engineers ever to work in the FCDA was retired.

He became a Director of ABU-TURAB INVESTMENT LIMITED, a Limited Liability Company which runs a Primary School, and has three large scale farms at Lapai, Sonfada and Gbakugi, a rice mill at Minna and a poultry farm.

When the Military finally decided that it was legal to discuss politics, Engr. Abdulkhadir Kure hearkened to the call of his people and joined the DPN. Later when that political train went off the rails, Engr. Kure joined the PDP under which he won the governorship of Niger State.

In four years, this humble, God-fearing and successful Engineer has transformed Niger State enormously. This is not the place nor the time to begin to recount his achievements as governor, but suffice it to say that no governor in the history of that State has been able to achieve half of what Kure has done in all spheres.



Virtually every area of the state has witnessed transformation from the educational and health sectors, to the provision of basic infrastructures like road, electricity and water supply.

As a returning Governor, Engr. Abdulkhadir Kure has tremendously improved on his previous performance. He has gained more experience and his understanding of politics, including the shady aspect of the game has given him added impetus.

So far he has begun his second term with greater focus on history. A man of formidable and intimidating credentials, he is poised to leave a legacy of hardwork, commitment to the people of Niger State and obedience to the wishes of the Almighty.

He is not a man to keep grudges. Already he has made efforts to ensure that the wounds inflicted by the last elections are healed. As a leader, he is determined to set the right example, to forgive all those who unfairly lampooned him just to disparage his character. His only objective now is to avoid being derailed or sidetracked in his efforts to bring democratic dividends to Nigerlites.

At 50, Governor Abdulkhadir Kure has his future ahead of him. Already there are calls on him to enter the national stage and play a more active role in the larger polity. His supporters increase by the day and all kinds of groups are jostling to have him in their midst.

But Governor Kure is not a man to take on new assignments before he finishes the job at hand. He has said consistently that being the governor of a growing state like Niger is a full time occupation and he has no time to think of any new job until his tenure ends. He believes the future belongs to Almighty Allah and he would embrace his fate when that time comes.

Always humble, always unpretentious, this God fearing leader likes to keep things simple and uncomplicated. A straight talking man, he hates pretence and gossip and double-speaks. He likes to be a man of his words.

As he celebrates his birthday, all Nigerlites are grateful to Allah for the life of this man who has done so much to uplift their lives.

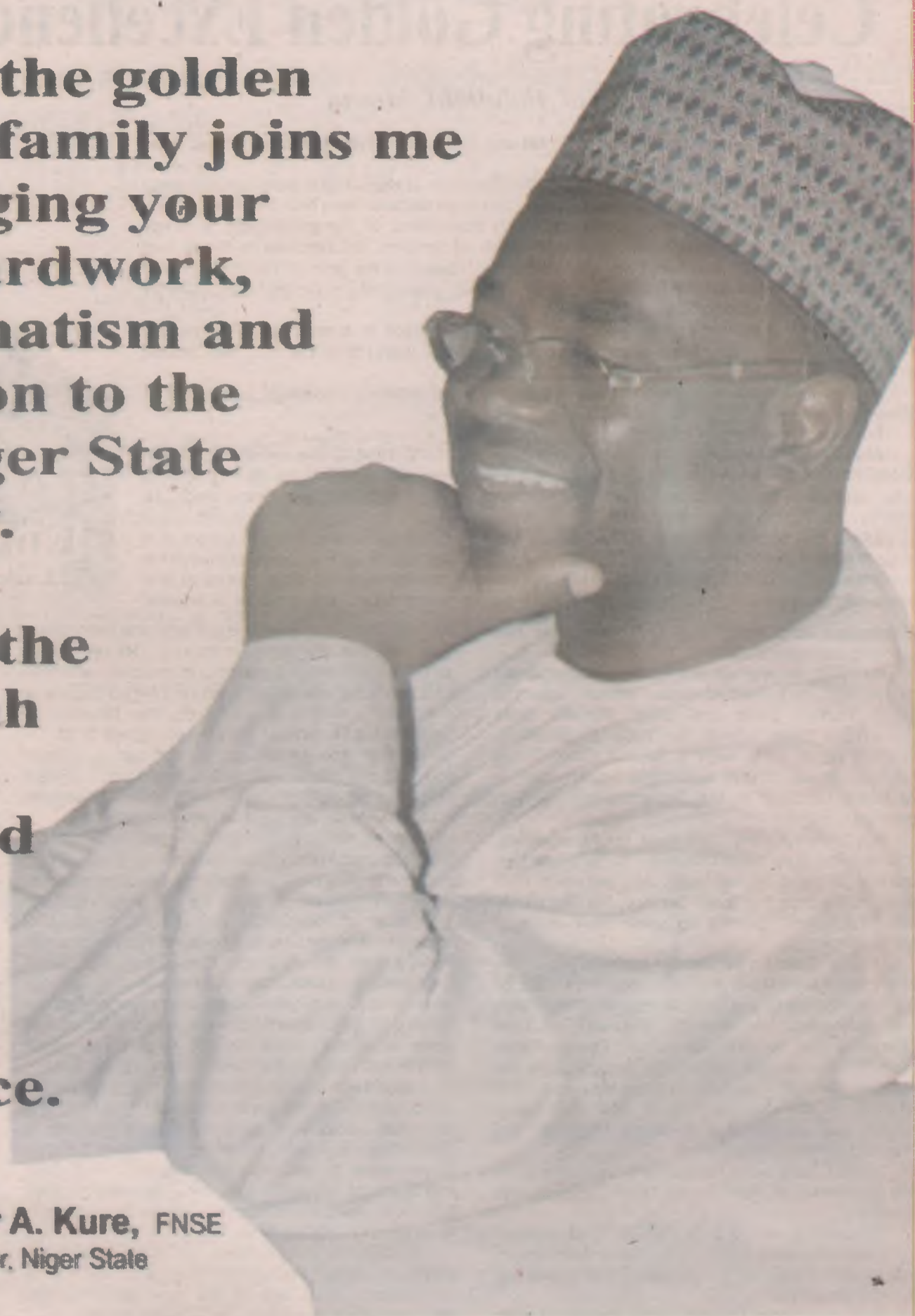
Engr. Abdulkhadir Kure is married to Hajiya Zainab Kure and they have six children, 4 boys and 2 girls.

Happy Birthday, Sir.

Felicitation at 50

As you attain the golden age of 50, my family joins me in acknowledging your qualities of hardwork, loyalty, pragmatism and total dedication to the service of Niger State and humanity.

We pray that the Almighty Allah (SWT) will grant you good health and wisdom to grow in the spirit of service.



Engr. Abdulkhadir A. Kure, FNSE
Executive Governor, Niger State

Happy Birthday

General I B Babangida

General I B Babangida, GCFR
For: THE ENTIRE FAMILY

REFLECTIONS

By ISSA AREMU

A debating society

"It sometimes seems to me that our days are poisoned with too many words. Words said and not meant... Words divorced from feeling... Dead words"—Ben Okri

Nigeria is a debating society, which is distinct from a performing society, and that, is official! With well over 10 written constitutions from 1954 (America retains same constitution as proclaimed in 1788 with a few amendments in 1791!) Nigeria goes down as the country that is tall on written rules but miserably short on rules of behaviour. Nigeria is better defined not as an oil-producing country but as a constitution-contrived nation! Paradoxically, it is a country of constitutions without constitutionalism! A new round of debate has been hurriedly conducted during the weekend and true to expectation, it was not about the economy, failed industry, power failure (have you seen Power Holding apology?), collapsed infrastructure, the current vicious cycles of addictive mass killings across the country, development in general or say bird flu, but another round of constitutional amendments! For a country that is donor-dependent to cope with the challenges of any epidemic, as much as N800 million was reported to have been set aside for another round of debate. It is however debatable (yes, debatable!) if the tax-payers and citizens will ever have value for this new round of political indulgence. A critical look at the little details around the new constitution-making process so far confirms Ben Okri's literary insight about "words said and not meant."

Senator Ibrahim Mantu, the chairman, National Assembly Joint Committee on the Review of the 1999 Constitution, told the South-East zone audience that the new exercise was to produce a document for which Nigerians would proudly claim "we the people" have produced. But in an earlier breath, he had been

reportedly quoted as saying that constitution-making was not for farmers but the elite. Mantu's playing to the gallery in Abakaliki with his strange rendition of *pedagogy of the people* contrasts sharply with his earlier disdain for the farmers and the masses in constitution-making. George Orwell would not have envisaged that the despicable *double-speak* that once characterised soviet dictatorship and even ruined the empire would be re-enacted live in "democratic" Nigeria in 2006! The new legitimising assumption for a new constitutional review is that the 1999 constitution is military-made and that the new dispensation offers a better opportunity to "fashion" out (sounds like a fad!) an "enduring" document by "the people." As alluring as this pro-constitution-review promo advert is, it fails to realise that what made the military bad in constitution-making is not because the military authors the document as such, but that the militaristic methods deployed were often manipulative, top-down, exclusivist and almost contemptuous of the people's wish. How the ongoing exercise in constitution-making fundamentally differs from the old manipulative, top-down approach of the military era is not clear for those who have memory in this age of memory deficit. For instance, what on earth would make Osogbo more significant for a "people's constitution-making" than Lagos as the centre for South-West public hearing beats the imagination! Why Katsina and not Kaduna for North-West? It is bad enough that the hearing was zone-based (states and NOT zones are known to the constitution!), but it is certainly intolerable and clearly manipulative to conduct hearings on the margins as distinct from the mainstream of some unconstitutional marginal zonal arrangements! Also,

why would anybody review a constitution on the eve of transitional elections (which the 2007 elections are)? The so-called The Patriots with the late Rotimi Williams had produced a constitutional amendment of some five-year singular tenure in early 2003. While some found The Patriots' proposal then was attractive, it was randomly condemned on the account of its timing - the eve of 2003 elections! In fact, many, including this federal government with the able articulation by Minister Jerry Gana, saw The Patriots' proposal as an exercise in mischief by a collection of unelectable chiefs on the eve of the 2003 elections. What then makes this new far-reaching bagful of amendments (116 amendments actually amount to rewriting the constitution!) less sinister given its timing? If in the last three years (and indeed seven years!), we have been complacent to see a review through, why the immediate effect to bulldoze it now, and now?

Still on the people; I observed that in all the televised shows, there was no single minute silence in honour of the people that were wantonly murdered in Maiduguri, Onitsha, Enugu and Bauchi on the eve and during these public hearings for God-knows-what reason? What manner of public hearing is characterised by such senseless carnage and criminal *public-on-public violence* and yet we moved on as if it was normal that constitution-review was footnoted with bloodbaths? Bad enough that there was governance failure which led to mayhem in some states minus Kaduna State where Governor Ahmed Makarf remains commendably on duty! But it is definitely intolerable that we cannot pause or even suspend for a day a public "hearing" in sympathy with members of the public being mowed down by murderers. With all its imperfections, the 1999 constitution which is now under attack, stresses that the essence of federal, state and local government authorities is the protection of lives and properties. Pray, if we cannot implement this minimum provision (or is this provision also debatable?), then what confidence can any right-thinking person place on the official sincerity of purpose with respect to the new debating exercise? *Words divorced from feeling!*

"Pray, if we cannot implement this minimum provision (or is this provision also debatable?), then what confidence can any right-thinking person place on the official sincerity of purpose with respect to the new debating exercise? Words divorced from feeling!"

Opinion

Maiduguri: Mending a shattered peace

By Abba Gana Shettima
agshettima@yahoo.co.uk

I was in Bauchi when the February 18th, 2006 civil disturbances broke out in Maiduguri. When I left for Bauchi on the 13th, I had no sense of premonition that such dastardly carnage and devastation would be visited on my peaceful city. Thus, when the news reached me, I became terribly sad, so sad that I immediately lost my sense of composure. I called my family on the university campus several times and my wife reassured me again and again that as far as the campus was concerned, all was well and peaceful. I then called several friends in town, and every one of them gave me the bad news I didn't want to hear: the city was burning, and several Churches and shops belonging to Christians had been razed; and many people had been killed. Why Maiduguri? Why? I could not sleep for a greater part of the night, my sleep having been stolen by anguish. Violence of the scale witnessed on that day was indeed strange to Maiduguri—perhaps in its entire 100-year history, and I stand to be corrected.

I was told that Muslims, having applied for police permission and obtained it, had announced on Friday the 17th in several mosques, as well as the electronic media, that there would be a peaceful demonstration and prayers against the publication of the irresponsible and satanic cartoon by a Danish newspaper. Early on the appointed date, tens of thousands of Muslims gathered on the expansive Ramat Square, venue of the protest and prayers. Everything appeared to be going well, when all of a sudden, some over-exuberant policemen allegedly threw teargas canisters into the crowd, causing commotion and panic, and scattering a sea of people in all directions. The young and even the not-so-young, already emotionally-charged and agitated, melted away into different parts of the city from the Ramat Square with tales of having been 'barred from prayers' against the Danish cartoon. In a spontaneous manner, hoodlums and looters took over the city in all directions—looting and grabbing what they could, torching shops and churches. Another account holds that the police dispersal of the crowd had nothing to do with the mayhem that followed, because, according to those who canvass this view, the carnage and destruction were premeditated. Which was why, they contend, within so short a time, so many shops and churches were razed in different parts of the city. Well, I think those who hold this view also need to consider how combustible the city is, with hundreds of litres of jerrycans of petrol everywhere on the streets within the easy grab of jobless and rootless youth, idling away all over the place and especially in the high-density areas. However, since I was not a witness to the terrible incident, I can only bundle both of these explanations in the realm of hypothesis; and it is the responsibility of the security agencies and the high-powered commission of inquiry set up by the state government to unearth the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

The Danish cartoon was indeed provocative and irresponsible to the core, and Muslims all over the world have shown their anger against it; and responsible Christians including the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) have equally condemned it in unequivocal terms. Ordinarily, there was nothing fundamentally wrong for Nigerian Muslims to peacefully demonstrate against the cartoon. However, Nigeria, with its complex combinations

and permutations of deep-seated cleavages and animosities is often the wrong place to contemplate on demonstrations of any sort particularly on sensitive issues, because more often than not, emotions are likely to boil over in such circumstances. This is especially so under situations of extreme deprivation and a polity already polarised and overheated by irresponsible and self-serving politicians bent on perpetual rule. The whole social, political and economic milieu is dangerously charged and ready to explode with the slightest ignition.

I am certain that if those who organised the peaceful demonstration had known, they wouldn't have gone ahead with it; and the authorities too wouldn't have allowed it in the first instance. But *ifs* belong only to the domain of the unknown. The worst has already happened and we can only commiserate with the victims, assiduously work to mend the shattered peace and prevent the future reoccurrence of such horrible violence. In this direction, I sincerely think that His Excellency, the governor of Borno State, Dr Ali Modu Sheriff has taken the first bold step by promptly setting up an all-inclusive high-powered committee to investigate the crisis and make appropriate recommendations, including the payment of appropriate compensation. I implore the victims of the crisis to cooperate with the government committee and fully participate in all its deliberations. The government on its part should be bold enough to implement all the recommendations of the committee when it had completed its work. There should be no sacred cows, as the governor has given his word.

We Muslims often preach that Islam is peace, which is true in essence. But the time has come when in relating and living with our neighbours, particularly the Christians; we need to move beyond *preaching to action*. Many of those who witnessed the mayhem confirmed that the hoodlums were teenagers—perhaps part of the truckloads of rootless and rudderless ruffians daily brought and dumped onto the streets of Maiduguri. But where were the adults to stop them? There were without doubt many Muslims who risked their lives during the crisis to save Christian lives and properties and they should be acknowledged and commended; however, on the whole, we ought to have done better by taking every step possible in all nooks and crannies of the city to prevent the hoodlums from causing so much death and destruction. As for the security agencies, I think they have woefully failed but their failure may not be unconnected with poor training and equipment, and above all, lack of motivation.

Certainly, those who burnt Churches and property belonging to Igbo and other Christians in the name of Islam, chanting Allah's Holy Name in the process, had committed a most blasphemous, disgraceful, and totally condemnable act. They have defaced the religion of Islam and brought dishonour and shame to themselves and the whole of the Muslim community. If Muslims read the Qur'an and understand its spirit, they should be the last people on earth to kill innocent lives, burn places of worship or destroy other peoples' resources. Is the Qur'anic injunction "There is no compulsion in religion" not enough for Muslims to guide their lives with peoples of other faiths? What about the tolerant, forgiving

and exemplary life of the noble Prophet? As Khaalid Muhammad Khaalid wrote in his inspiring book *Men Around The Messenger*, "when all the enemies of his (the prophet's) faith put down their weapons and bowed down their heads waiting for him to pass judgment, and while the 10,000 swords of the Muslims were glittering on the Day of Conquest over the hills of Makkah, he merely said to his enemies, "Disperse, you are free!" Furthermore, if the gullible teenagers had been brainwashed by some quack scholars into thinking that it is *jihad* to kill innocent people and destroy their places of worship and property, then we have a formidable task before us indeed!

I have observed, as far back as May 2003 in a memorandum submitted to the Borno State Transition Committee, "the traditional *Sangaya* (Qur'anic) system of education needs to be thoroughly reformed to reflect changes in the social, demographic, political and economic environment. The present circumstances are no longer suitable for the sustenance of the age-old practice whereby very young children are brought from all over the Northern parts of the country as well as from neighbouring countries like Niger and Chad republics to the state and virtually abandoned to their own devices as Islamic pupils or *Almajiri*, without parental care and control. Under the present circumstances, such children cannot learn properly and also constitute a potential source of recruitment into the urban army of the frustrated unemployed". What is more, in the recent past, we have also witnessed many of these children falling victim to ritual murderers and human traffickers. It is time to act on this matter.

Have we also realised even for once that we are a people without an economy? Most of our basic economic needs are provided by the hard work and creative enterprise of those we have visited with unnecessary mayhem. Consider the hardworking and enterprising Igbo. What have they done to warrant so much havoc on their lives and properties every time there is a crisis? Have they committed any crime by investing so much of their resources in our local economies—providing almost everything that we need, from spare parts and building materials to life-saving drugs? Have many of them not made Maiduguri their abode, living peacefully with their neighbours and preoccupied only with their businesses? And are they not paying taxes to our state and local authorities, and rent to our Muslim brethren for the shops and houses razed? Who, indeed, is the ultimate loser in this maddening conflagration? I am being blunt on this matter, which is what Islam teaches, and if some people out there think that I am being apologetic, so be it.

At a wider level, we must also take note of some structural issues, foremost of which is the discontent among the youth. At the moment, millions of Nigerian youths are jobless and angry—angry against the state, against their communities, immediate families and anyone standing in their way. All over the country, they are angry and restless and speaking loudly and often violently against oppression and injustice.

The time has come to say enough is enough and we are determined to stop anybody who is bent on ruining our long-standing legacy of peace.

A. G. Shettima is of the Department of Sociology, University of Maiduguri.



YOUR LETTERS

Need for sounder welfare package for police

The Nigeria Police has been accused severally over the years as corrupt, inefficient and dangerous. But recently when the strike threat was rife, I decided to make some enquiries about police welfare. I was shocked when I got information that the take-home pay of a constable is a mere N7,000.

Just then, I realised why policemen engage in all sorts of crime to keep them going in a highly materialistic society such as Nigeria.

Tell me, how can a constable with wife and children manage on a salary of seven thousand naira, considering the present very high inflation rate in Nigeria?

In fact, to say the least, it is disgusting that a policeman with

such a salary, trained in the art of using a gun, is sent on patrol and guarding sensitive public buildings like banks, NITEL, PHCN, CBN and also serving as bodyguards to our big men.

With the threat of police strike over, I think the federal government should urgently

adjust the salary of a constable so that it can at least be up to N20,000 a month. The government should also provide good accommodation for them in all the nooks and crannies of Nigeria.

In order for the services of the police to be further improved,

the government should equip them with modern communication gadgets and sophisticated weapons, which they can use to fight crime. All dead woods and illiterates among them should be sent to police farms or workshops instead of on premature retirement.

Henceforth, the minimum qualification should be Higher School Certificate or NCE. I read in a magazine recently that a Nigerian policeman is one of the best in the world and that they are well-behaved when they are involved in foreign assignments.

If this is so, then what remains is that the federal government should immediately set up a powerful committee to implement an enviable welfare package including insurance scheme for the Nigeria Police Force.

Prince Patrick Nnaji, Yakwo Street, Barnawa, Kaduna.

Crisis in Ebira land: When will we learn?

It's unfortunate that at this civilised stage when representatives of the people from other communities, towns, villages and districts, etc., are working very hard on how to influence government policies in bringing development through the provision of social amenities such as schools,

hospitals, electricity, pipe-borne water, reduce unemployment among the youth, our own representatives are getting specialised in providing sophisticated weapons such as guns of various categories, grenades, acid, daggers and petrol for the destruction of lives and properties of their own people.

It has been a rotational system in the five local government areas in the land among the youths who are supposed to be the leaders of tomorrow being used as tools by the so-called leaders. Instead of them to engage the youths in healthy and patriotic deal, they rather use them as thugs for the elimination of their perceived opponents, while using the wealth that is meant for all in sending their own children to schools abroad. They have succeeded in dividing the people of Ebira land into different clannish groups. In those days when our fallen heroes were alive, as long as you were an Ebira man or woman, they regarded you as one. But today, the reverse is the case. Everybody wants to know which clan you belong to before they will agree to help you if you're in need.

Our people have forgotten that we are brothers and sisters. Anytime you kill, the person you kill is your brother, sister, father, mother, uncle, nephew, etc. Why do we have to kill one another?

I was at home after the Obcibal Oboroke (Ihima) mayhem. I was shocked at what I saw, that is, the level of destruction and the number of people that lost their lives in that incident. It was the same period that another trouble broke out in Ozuja/Ohuda (Okengwe) and Ozuwayallnizngo (Okene). In short, I had to cut short my trip and leave home the following day, because what happened in those areas was an eyesore. How can the children of one family be so brutal among each other? I still remember that in those days, people from neighbouring communities used to regard us as blessed people. If an Ebira man or woman was in a vehicle with other tribes, those ones would be happy and heave a sigh of relief that a person of luck was in their midst. But today, we have brought bad luck on ourselves.

In addition, what I think should be our focus and priority is how to relinquish political power from Igala people who since the creation of Kogi State have been ruling us. These two issues should be handled in a democratic way without resorting to violence. I want to let our people to know that there is nowhere in the world that development can be achieved through violence.

Some people have said that all the crises in our land are the handiwork of Igala people

because they don't want peace among us so that we will not think of relinquishing power from them. While others traced our frequent crises to the people of Ilorin in Kwara State whom they said we offended during the time we were in Kwara. To me, all these are flimsy excuses. If a man is able to identify his problem, I believe that the problem would be solved. The problem is from our leaders, particularly the political leaders. Let them check themselves very well.

Finally, let me suggest the following solutions if they bother to read this.

-There should be a massive search and complete overhaul of each house to retrieve all these dangerous weapons. In doing this, there should be heavy presence of combined military and mobile policemen with helicopter hovering in the air throughout the exercise.

-Whoever is found having weapons in his possession should be arrested and prosecuted.

-Our dreaded festivals that have claimed lives should be

banned. They include the following: Echuechi, Echiane, Okchi and the rest. They're the avenue through which our actors test and display their new discoveries.

-All these leaders in our land should be invited by the authorities concerned to tell us the end to this crisis.

There should be special prayers among all the sons and daughters of Ebira and with three days of fasting for both Muslims and Christians.

There should be monthly meeting between the youths, i.e. representatives from the youth and the political leaders so that we can know what they really want.

Lastly, let us begin to help one another most especially those in positions who should try and provide jobs for these jobless youths, because idleness is the major cause of their restlessness. All these should be done before the 2007 general elections.

Suleiman Ononiyami
Mohammed Flat 5, Block Er
Bauchi Court, Gaduwa Estate,
Abuja.

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

Well done, Governor Danjuma Goje

I say many special thanks to you, the executive governor of Gombe State, Alhaji Muhammed Danjuma Goje (Sarkin Yakin Gombe). There have been a lot of developments in the state since you came to power in 2003.

Before the coming of the present administration, the people of Gombe State were experiencing acute shortage of water supply. But the problem of water shortage in the state is now history. The Dadin-Kowa Dam has been upgraded to take care of water supply in the state.

Your Excellency, you had done a very good job in the area of electricity supply during your tenure as the Minister of Power and Steel, and now that you are the governor. All the local government headquarters in the state are now fully electrified.

A lot has been done in the area of education in Gombe State. All primary and secondary schools in the state are fully renovated. And some new schools have been built by the present administration. In the area of

teachers, the present administration has recruited qualified teachers, both in the primary and secondary schools. The governor has also established a university in the state, including a School of Nursing.

In the area of roads construction, the state governor has done very well. Before the coming of this administration, the roads in the state were terribly bad until the coming of the present government of Alhaji Muhammed Danjuma Goje. All the local governments in the state are being taken care of too, which has contributed to the socio-economic development of the state.

The government of Danjuma Goje has performed remarkably well in the provisions of basic amenities.

We therefore commend Goje and ask him to run for the second term come 2007.

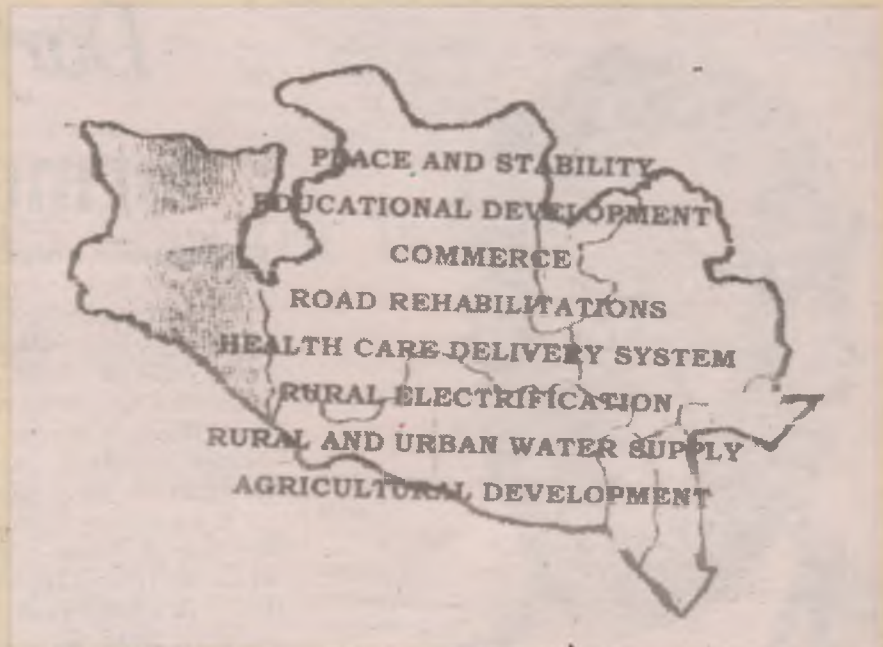
Umar Abdullahi Gombe,
Federal Judicial Service
Commission, P.M.B 484,
Abuja.

A MAN OF GREATNESS CELEBRATES DOUBLE BIRTHDAY

GOVERNOR KURE IS 50 TODAY, NIGER STATE IS AT 30 ALL IN FEBRUARY



Engr. Abdulkadir Y. Kure
Executive Governor, Niger State.



Map of Niger State carrying the Eight Emirate Councils and expressing the success of Governor Kure's Administration. As a man of greatness, Nigerlites salute your remarkable achievements towards ensuring peace, stability and progress of our growing state.



Alhaji (Dr) Umar Ahmed Bakai
(Garkuwan Minna)



Alhaji (Dr) Abubakar Magaji
(Ndejiri Lapai)

ALHAJI (DR) UMAR AHMED BAKAI GARKUWAN MINNA AND ALHAJI (DR) ABUBAKAR MAGAJI THE NDEJIN LAPAI join our Great Leaders:

- * General Ibrahim Babangida
- * General Abdulsalami Abubakar
- * General Mohammed Inuwa Wushishi
- * Our Royal fathers
- * Other stake holders, very numerous to mention here, millions of Nigerlites, as well as wishers/friends from allover the globe, to congratulate our Governor His Excellency Engineer Abdulkadir Kure, On the occasion of his 50th Birthday celebration which falls in the same month as the state was created. Niger State is 30 years since its creation on the 4th February 1976. While we wish our Governor good health to continue with his challenging assignments, we pray onto Allah (SWT) to ensure peace and progress of our State. May Allah (SWT) continue to guide us onto the right path Amin.

Trust International

Africa

Darfur Talks: Nigeria's revenue formula urged for wealth sharing



Chief Mediator of Darfur Talks in Abuja, Dr Salim Ahmed Salim

Somali assembly opens first session

Somalia's interim parliament opened its first session on home soil yesterday, and its first since one held in Kenya last year ended in brawling and chair throwing.

Prime Minister Mohamed Ali Gedi flew in escorted by heavily armed militiamen, joining President Abdullahi Yusuf and speaker Sharif Hassan Sheikh Adan at the meeting aimed at ending a rift that has paralysed their government for more than a year.

"Today is an historic day. The government formed in Kenya has finally met inside the country after some differences.

The session is now open," Hassan said in the south-central city of Baidoa, seen as a neutral site by both government factions.

Of 275 members, 205 were present. However, a coterie of powerful Mogadishu warlords, including National Security Minister Mohamed Qanyare, were not.

They lead the faction, fronted by Hassan, that wants the government based in the lawless capital and does not want foreign peacekeepers in the Horn of Africa country.

Yusuf, Gedi and their allies have based the government in the provincial town

of Jowhar, 90 km (56 miles) north of Mogadishu, and say they cannot move there until thousands of militiamen are pacified.

They want foreign peacekeepers to help do the job.

Those disagreements and other political intrigues have left the two sides deeply divided, but MPs plan to tackle those problems in a meeting they say is the last best hope to rejuvenate the faltering administration.

Formed in late 2004 in Kenya, this government is the 14th attempt to restore central authority to a country whose last national president was ousted in 1991.

ECOWAS defence chiefs to meet in Niger

ECOWAS chiefs of Defence Staff are to consider the status of implementation of the road map for the creation of regional standby force (ESF) during next week's meeting in Niamey, Niger.

This was disclosed in a press statement made available to *Daily Trust* by ECOWAS secretariat, saying that the 6,500 strong force, comprising units contributed by member states, will equip the region to respond to crisis in West Africa, including humanitarian crisis. The force

The Head of Delegation of the Sudanese government in the Seventh Round of the Inter-Sudanese Peace Talks on Darfur, Dr Magzoub al Khalifa has proposed Nigeria's revenue allocation formula as criteria for wealth sharing in Sudan.

In a statement signed by the Foreign Affairs Chief Press Secretary, Bernard Udeh, Dr Khalifa made the statement during his visit to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Oluyemi Adeniji, to brief his on the progress made so far in Darfur talks taking place in Abuja.

Dr Khalifa, who is also the Adviser to the Sudanese president on the talks, said that the talks have reached a point where intervention is needed to move negotiations forward through grey areas. He said the areas of discussion include power sharing, energy sharing, security arrangements and revenue formula.

For thousands of displaced people, he said that a compensation committee has been set up to look into the claims of refugees, adding that Sudan is hoping to model its Truth and Compensation Committee after those of South Africa or Sierra Leone or both.

Ambassador Adeniji expressed satisfaction with the progress made in the talks and called for a quick Comprehensive Agreement on all the issues that will benefit all the parties in the talks.

By Aisha Umar,
Reporter Foreign Desk

is expected to become operational by 2010 and will constitute part of the standby force for the Africa Union.

The statement stated that the 15th Defence and security commission (DSC) meeting in Niamey will be briefed, among other things, on the staffing situation and the status of the logistic base in Freetown, one of the two depots being established by the region to service the force. The second depot, the humanitarian depot, is located in Mali.

By Elkanah Chawai,
Foreign Desk Reporter

He encouraged better co-operation and co-ordination with the Chief Mediator, Dr Salim Ahmed Salim, to make more progress in the talks.

The foreign affairs minister said the outcome of the

next African Union's meeting in Addis Ababa would give impetus for further progress in the Abuja talks and requested for time to consult with other parties to know how much they are willing to give in the negotiations.

The seventh round,

which began last year, has not produced an agreement in any of the issues discussed and has been drawn back by the skirmishes and continued killings in Darfur.

Meanwhile, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission in the Sudan, Ambassador Baba Kingibe, said that the African Union Mission in Sudan would be handing over operations to the United Nations.

In a statement signed by Noureddine Mezni for AU, Ambassador Kingibe explained that the UN which was already handling humanitarian activities in Darfur would take over the Security aspects of the mission, while the political responsibility including the Abuja Peace Process and implementation of an eventual peace Agreement, would remain with the African Union.

He said that the handing over is in line with the operation of peace keeping, in Africa saying that "AU Peace Support Operations whether in Burundi or elsewhere had always been predicated on the clear knowledge that, eventually, there would be a transition to the UN, as the Security Council has the primary responsibility to maintain global peace and security, and the UN has the expertise, resources and capacities for such operations."

Uganda's Museveni wins election

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has been re-elected for a third term by a clear margin, official figures show.

Mr Museveni won 59 percent of the vote while main rival Kizza Besigye took 37 percent, the Electoral Commission said. Dr Besigye, who alleges fraud, rejected the result. Riot police fired tear gas to disperse opposition supporters in Kampala.

Uganda's first multi-party vote in 25 years is seen as a test of its democratic credentials. In general elections the government did less well.

Police clashed with opposition activists outside the party headquarters of Dr Besigye's Forum for Democratic Change.

But no injuries were reported and there have been no major scenes of violence so far, prompting relief among those who recall fierce clashes during 2001 polls.

Mr Museveni won 4,078,911 votes in the presidential election, compared with Dr Besigye's 2,570,603, Electoral Commission chairman Badru Kiggundu said.

"The commission is satisfied that the missing results will not change the result."

He said 99 percent of the nearly 20,000 polling stations had reported. Three other candidates had shared just over 3 percent of ballots cast.

Turnout in Thursday's vote was about 68 percent, the commission said, despite interruptions from heavy rain at outdoor polling stations.

Dr Besigye said his Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) believed there had been massive fraud in the vote count, which he called "illegal".

"The FDC has taken a decision to reject the results," he told reporters in Kampala, urging supporters to remain calm.

"There is a big variation in the results coming out of our tallying centre from what

the Electoral Commission is announcing."

The ruling party denies allegations of fraud. Ofwono Opondo, spokesman for the ruling National Resistance Movement, called the opposition "bad losers".

"It is up to the population of Uganda to decide."

The FDC has cited several irregularities in the conduct of the polls, including the deployment of soldiers near voting booths, allegedly to intimidate its supporters.

The party also alleged that many FDC supporters had been unable to vote because their names were not included on electoral rolls.

EU observers noted problems with the campaign despite improvements overall.

Chief EU observer Max van den Berg recommended Uganda should reinstate a law limiting a president to two terms. As well as choosing between five presidential candidates, the electorate of 10.4 million voted for 284 new members of parliament. Several ministers in Mr Museveni's government lost their seats.

Tunisia releases 70 Islamist prisoners

The Tunisian government has freed 70 Islamist prisoners, including journalist Hamadi Jebali after 15 years in jail, an official source and rights activists said yesterday.

The release came under an amnesty for some 1,600 detainees by President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali to mark next month's 50th anniversary of independence from France, the official source said. Rights activists said the release included Jebali, editor of the weekly newspaper *Al Fajr*, and six men jailed for expressing their religious and political views on the Internet.

They said most of the 70

were senior officials or members of the outlawed Islamist Nahda party.

Tunisia is North Africa's most stable and prosperous country but rights groups say it is also one of the most repressive.

The government insists it has no political prisoners and that no one has been jailed for expressing opinions.

All detainees have been jailed for apparently criminal offences — many for "terrorist" crimes, including Jebali.

Human rights groups say about 400 people are still in jail for their religious or political opinions, most of them members of Nahda.



NIGERIA UNION OF TEACHERS

54TH (3RD QUADRENNIAL) NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF DELEGATES AND COMMISSIONING OF THE NATIONAL TEACHERS' HOUSE, ABUJA.

**SPECIAL GUEST OF HONOUR
HIS EXCELLENCY
CHIEF OLUSEGUN OBASANJO (GCFR)
PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

**GUEST OF HONOUR
Mrs. Chinwe Nora Obaji
Hon. Minister of Education.**



Chief Olusegun Obasanjo
President of Nigeria



Teachers' House



Mrs. Chinwe Nora Obaji
Hon. Minister of Education

DATE: FEBRUARY 28TH - 2ND MARCH, 2006
TIME: 10.00AM
VENUE: National Teachers' House, Sabon- Lugbe, Abuja.

THEME: "EDUCATION FOR ALL BY 2015: MYTH OR REALITY IN NIGERIA?"

Guest Speaker: Prof. Attahiru M. Jega, Vice Chancellor, Bayero University, Kano.

EVENTS

1. 28th February 2006: Opening Ceremony and formal Commissioning of National Teachers' House, Sabon- Lugbe, Abuja.
2. 1st - 2nd March, 2006: National Conference of Delegates Plenary Sessions.

Signed:

Mallam Abdulwahed Ibrahim Omar
National President NUT
Chief Host

Obong I.J. Obong
Secretary General NUT
Host

Hosea Ayagwa,
NUT National Publicity Secretary.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO A VISIONARY LEADER

CONGRATULATION @

50



Engineer (Dr.) Abdulkadir Abdullahi Kure

Engineer (Dr.) Abdulkadir Abdullahi Kure

On behalf of my family, I, Alhaji Sani Bello Mustapha, (Basket) chairman & Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Usmanu Pipes & Plastics Ltd, Bosa, Minna, (producers of all sorts of PVC pipes and all types of nylon such as shopping bags and pure water bottles) join millions of other well-wishers in congratulating His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Niger State, Engineer (Dr.) Abdulkadir Abdullahi Kure (FNSE) Ramu Lapai, as you celebrate the golden age of 50. We wish Mr. Governor many more years of service to our state, nation, and humanity in general.

On behalf of my family, I, Alhaji Umaru Ragada join millions of other well-wishers in celebrating with your Excellency, the Executive Governor of Niger State, Engineer (Dr.) Abdulkadir Abdullahi Kure (FNSE) Ramu Lapai as you celebrate the golden age of 50.

Certainly, fifty years of life that is celebrated this day is a number of perfection. May you enjoy more days of perfection, good health, peace, more strength, prosperity and the wisdom to do more for humanity. May you live long to celebrate more years of distinction in your selfless service to the people.

Mr. Governor, your selfless and exemplary service to humanity has endeared you to the people, whose lives you have positively influenced.

May you continue to excel as we wish you many more years of service to our state, nation and humanity in general.

May you enjoy more years of distinction, good health, peace of mind, more strength, prosperity and the wisdom to do more for our people.

Congratulations and Happy Birthday.

Happy Birthday, Mr. Governor

SIGNED:

Signed:



SANI BELLO MUSTAPHA (BASKET)

UMARU RAGADA

Honourable Commissioner, Ministry of Information/Culture, Niger State.

Trust International

World Report



Paul O'Neil, father of Aaron who died of his father's brutality

British father gets life for baby murder

A father who battered and burnt his son to death has been given a life sentence after being convicted of murder.

Paul O'Neil, 33, from Newcastle in the United Kingdom, held the face of his three-month-old son Aaron against a gas fire and later fractured his skull with a head blow.

O'Neil, of Banbury Road, Kenton, was told he must serve at least 22 years.

An independent report criti-

cized agencies involved, saying information sharing was insufficient and procedures were not always followed.

Aaron's mother Jodie Taylor, 21, was sentenced to three-and-a-half years after admitting cruelty by failing to provide adequate medical attention.

O'Neil was also given sentences of 14 years for causing grievous bodily harm and five years for cruelty, with all the sentences to be served concurrently.

He had admitted cruelty, but denied murder and five GBH charges, between November 2004 and February 2005.

The jury heard how Aaron was beaten and burned so badly that he died 92 days after he was born.

They returned a guilty verdict on the charges of murder and of inflicting the burns to Aaron's face and hands.

The court heard Taylor was "trapped" in a relationship with the domineering O'Neil and was afraid to report what he had done.

Following Aaron's death, the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) commissioned independent expert Catherine Weightman to investigate the case.

Her findings were published on Friday and found information sharing was insufficient to provide a full picture of the family history and risk to the child.

Details were held by health and social services which identified the father as a violent individual who presented a risk to women and children.

Taylor was sentenced to three-and-a-half years.

Agencies were aware of the mother's history of childhood abuse and recent offending history.

The report said: "Collectively, these records should have provided all professionals working with these parents with a clear profile of potential risk, parenting capacity and ability to protect a child."

The report said analysis of risk was limited across agencies, engagement of professionals was not strongly maintained and the parents' co-operation was superficial or, in the case of the father, non-existent.

It said this led to a withdrawal of the social worker and to a 'lack of persistence' in the health visitor's attempts to see the child.

Newcastle City Council executive director of children's services and the chair of the LSCB Catherine Fitt said: "We cannot be inside people's homes 24 hours a day, seven days a week, but we must take responsibility for doing everything in our power to ensure that children in Newcastle are safe."

Baghdad attacks kill 16

A barrage of mortar attacks in southern Baghdad has killed at least 16 Iraqis and injured more than 40.

A police source told the BBC that a total of eight mortars had been fired into the mainly Shiite area of Doura.

The attacks come after days of sectarian tensions that have left at least 165 dead since Wednesday.

Political and militia leaders say they have made progress in talks to curb the violence that was sparked by the bombing of a major Shiite shrine.

However, an explosion hit a Shiite shrine in the southern city of Basra yesterday.

But the bomb, placed in the building's toilets, caused little damage and there were no serious injuries.

The mortar rounds were fired into the neighbourhood of Doura - first into residential streets and then at a fruit market.

A daytime curfew in Baghdad, imposed to try to contain the spiralling violence, has been lifted but a 24-hour ban on road traffic remains in place.

Two people are killed and six others were wounded when gunmen open fire on a group of people playing football near Baquba, 60km (36 miles) north-east of Baghdad.

At least two people are killed in a blast in a bus station in Hilla, south of Baghdad.

Salah al-Mutluq, who

heads the Iraqi Front for National Dialogue, told the BBC a new security plan had been worked out by Sunni and Shiite leaders that could help relieve tensions.

It involved removing Shiite-dominated interior ministry forces, including police, from sensitive Sunni areas.

Instead, these districts would be patrolled by the Iraqi army and multinational troops, he said.

Interior ministry police have been implicated in a number of "death squad" killings of Sunnis.

Residents of Abu Ghraib in western Baghdad told BBC yesterday that the Iraqi army appeared already to have taken over street patrols from interior ministry forces.

The bombing of the al-Askari shrine in the city of Samarra, one of the country's holiest Shiite sites, has led to fears that Iraq may descend into civil war.

Iran, Russia reach nuclear deal

Iran said it has reached an initial agreement with Russia on a joint venture to enrich uranium and will continue talks on the issue in coming days.

"Regarding this joint venture, we have reached a basic agreement," Iran's nuclear chief Gholamreza Aghazadeh said in the southern Iranian port of Bushehr yesterday.

Russia has offered to enrich uranium for Iran to ease world concerns over Tehran's nuclear programme, but the latest round of talks in Moscow last week brought no visible progress.

The Russian proposal, backed by the US and the European Union, is intended to assuage concerns that enrichment conducted in Iran could produce material for atomic weapons.

Sergey Lavrov, the Rus-

sian foreign minister, said yesterday that Moscow will continue its efforts to help resolve the Iranian nuclear crisis until a planned meeting of the UN's nuclear watchdog agency in just over a week.

The 6 March meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency could start a process leading to punishment by the UN Security Council, which has the authority to impose sanctions on Iran.

"Contacts will continue until the IAEA board meeting on 6 March," Lavrov said in televised remarks.

Iran said it is pursuing peaceful nuclear energy, but Western nations fear it is seeking an atomic weapon.

Yesterday's announcement came as Russia's top nuclear official, Sergei Kiriyenko, visited the construction site of

an atomic-power plant his country has been building for Iran in the Gulf coast city of Bushehr.

According to the *Itar-Tass* Russian News Agency, Kiriyenko was also to discuss delivery schedules of Russian fuel bound for the Bushehr plant.

On Saturday, Kiriyenko expressed confidence that the IAEA could still resolve a standoff over Iran's programme that may lead to Security Council sanctions against the Islamic republic.

Also yesterday, Iran played down a secret nuclear project that US intelligence has linked to warhead design, saying it would offer information on it to the IAEA.

"We will discuss the issue, and the rumors surrounding it, with the agency. It is not very sensitive or ambiguous," Hamid Reza Asefi, Iranian's Foreign Ministry spokesman, said when asked about the secret project known as Green Salt.

Asefi confirmed that an IAEA team was in Tehran to discuss the country's nuclear programme.

Public mention of the Green Salt Project first surfaced in an IAEA report drawn up earlier this month for a meeting of the agency's 35-nation board of governors.

Hamas gives condition for Israel recognition

The Palestinian prime minister-designate says Hamas is ready to recognise Israel if it gives the Palestinian people their full rights and a state in lands occupied since 1967, including the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

Hamas chose Ismail Haniya, a 43-year-old Gaza viewed by many Palestinians as a pragmatist, as the new prime minister after sweeping elections on 25 January. The group hopes to complete forming a Palestinian government within two weeks.

"If Israel declares that it will give the Palestinian people a state and give them back all their rights, then we are ready to recognise them," Haniya told the *Washington Post* in an interview posted on its website on Saturday.

Haniya did not say what form the recognition would take.

Israel on Sunday cautiously welcomed Haniya's statement. Meir Sheerit, a cabinet minister, told Israel's *Army Radio*: "I wish they would change their positions.... They (Hamas) may be starting to speak another language."

If Hamas were to accept Israel's conditions to recognise Israel and renounce violence, "we won't have any trouble speaking to Hamas, and to reach a settlement", Sheerit said.

Earlier, the Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas had warned he could resign from office if he felt too many constraints under a Hamas government.

"We could reach a point where I cannot perform my duty," Mr Abbas said in an interview with *ITV*.

Hamas, whose charter calls

for Israel's destruction, has rejected talks with the Jewish state as a waste of time but it has said lately it could respect some aspects of interim peace deals from the 1990s that it had rejected outright in the past.

Haniya also said Hamas was ready to consider talks with Israel if the Jewish state withdrew from the West Bank and East Jerusalem and recognised the "right of return" for Palestinian refugees who fled in the 1948 war and their descendants.

"Let Israel say it will recognise a Palestinian state along the 1967 borders, release the prisoners and recognise the rights of the refugees to return to Israel. Hamas will have a position if this occurs," Haniya said.

Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip in September after a 38-year occupation but has vowed to hold onto East Jerusalem and major West Bank settlements and never allow millions of Palestinians abroad to flood into Israel.

"If Israel withdraws to the 1967 borders, then we will establish a peace in stages," Haniya said. "We will establish a situation of stability and calm, which will bring safety for our people."

Asked whether Hamas would abide by interim agreements signed between Israel and the Palestinians, Haniya said: "We will review all agreements and abide by those that are in the interest of the Palestinian people."

"The ones that will guarantee the establishment of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital with 1967 borders."

Her findings were published on Friday and found information sharing was insufficient to provide a full picture of the family history and risk to the child.

Details were held by health and social services which identified the father as a violent individual who presented a risk to women and children.

Taylor was sentenced to three-and-a-half years.

Agencies were aware of the mother's history of childhood abuse and recent offending history.

The report said: "Collectively, these records should have provided all professionals working with these parents with a clear profile of potential risk, parenting capacity and ability to protect a child."

The report said analysis of risk was limited across agencies, engagement of professionals was not strongly maintained and the parents' co-operation was superficial or, in the case of the father, non-existent.

It said this led to a withdrawal of the social worker and to a 'lack of persistence' in the health visitor's attempts to see the child.

Newcastle City Council executive director of children's services and the chair of the LSCB Catherine Fitt said: "We cannot be inside people's homes 24 hours a day, seven days a week, but we must take responsibility for doing everything in our power to ensure that children in Newcastle are safe."

Spain: Thousands march against separatist talks

Tens of thousands of people have marched through Madrid urging the Spanish government not to negotiate a peace deal with Basque separatists Eta.

Many were from groups supporting victims of Eta, and brandished placards reading "Not in my name" and photos of those killed in attacks.

Socialist Prime Minister Jose Luis Zapatero has said he is ready to talk to Eta if they lay down their arms.

But many protesters said Eta should be defeated through robust police action.

Eta has been blamed for the deaths of more than 800 people during a 40-year campaign for an independent Basque state in northern Spain.

The interior ministry esti-

mated the number of marchers to be 100,000, while the march organisers said it was closer to 1.4 million.

"We want to make sure that [the government] does not negotiate with murderers and that terrorism is not seen as a way to achieve a political end," said Irene Villa, 27, who lost both her legs in an Eta bombing 15 years ago.

Eta has not killed anyone since May 2003 but has continued its bombing campaign.

With no signs of an Eta ceasefire, the opposition Popular Party said the government is playing into the hands of the separatists.

He said a significant number back Mr Zapatero and believe the only way to achieve peace is to hold talks with Eta if they definitively give up violence.



Putin, Russian President



Niger State Government Happy Birthday Mr. Governor



Engr. Abdulkhadir A. Kure, FNSE
Executive Governor, Niger State

**To measure greatness, is not about age, position or academics alone.
It is mainly about the people, their lives are touched positively by
positive actions.**

**His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Niger State,
Engr. Abdulkhadir A. Kure FNSE, the entire members of the
State Executive Council are saying today that you are source
of pride and inspiration to us all.**

Happy 50th Birthday Anniversary

Signed:

**Comrade Moh'd Adams Erena
Secretary to the State Government**



BIDA LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL



Engr. Abdulkhadir A. Kure, FNSE
Executive Governor, Niger State

Signed:



Malam Umaru Edota Mustapha
Chairman, Bida LGC

On behalf of Bida Local Government Area of Niger State, I Congratulates our Governor, Engr. Abdulkhadir A. Kure, FNSE who is celebrating his 50th Birthday today!

We prayed to Almighty Allah to enriched his knowledge so as to lead us alright in all ramification.

Once again, Congratulations.

Mararrabar Rido: Inside the world

Mararrabar Rido is a place in Kaduna State where miners engage in digging activities in the search for precious stones. These stones are then sold to willing buyers, and the men may strike great wealth in the process. Mining is dangerous, but also a sweet activity. There is a thin line between danger and wealth in this case. The walls may cave in while the men dig. On the other hand the men may emerge into the sunlight as bearers of great wealth. The men burrow into the earth like rodents, and they may well be called 'rodents' of a kind. At Mararrabar Rido, there are many signs of continuous digging, with vast holes gaping out of the earth, and parts of the rock showing signs of mining activity.

These human "rodents" burrow deep beneath the surface of the earth, in search of precious stones and metals, and other valuables deep in the womb of the earth such as tantalite, gold, aquamarine, silver, gypsum, barite, anhydrite, calcite, colmanite, kainite, asbestos, talc, graphite, bauxite, emerald, marble, dolomite, topaz, citrine, kunzite and pyrope garnet, among other metallic and non-metallic minerals.

These valuable mineral resources found within the borders of this country, are of great quality and importance, and are

By Abdullahi M. Gulloma, Reporter

needed in the market. Tantalite for instance, is a hot commodity, because it is used in producing electronic equipment like televisions, radios and mobile phones, among other things. Aquamarine on the other hand is used for rings worn by women, and necklaces, and so on and so forth.

The unlicensed miners, numerous at one of such mineral-rich locations called Damishi at Mararrabar Rido, on the outskirts of Kaduna metropolis, are already used to staying dishevelled and dusty, because they crawl into the depths every now and then, in search of mineral resources. They are not legal miners themselves, but obtain legal security from authorised miners to whom they supply their find. The authorised miners take 50 per cent of the amount the find is sold at, while the remaining 50 percent goes to the real miners.

As the real miners dig far into the earth, they suffer deep insecurity and uncertainty on hitting any find, as frequently as they dig for it. Whenever any miner, hits a find, which occurs after an uncertain length of time, he sells it for millions of naira, and disappears from the site, for a while, going into the society to find his fortune.

The miners operate in

groups. The search for the wealth of the earth must be team work, to expedite and enhance the chances of a find. Whoever hits a find in any group, shares his earnings with all other members of the group, except if he finds it without the notice of the others. Every member of the group, in one way or the other, benefits from the luck of his colleague or colleagues, as the case may be.

Two miners, who identified themselves as Mohammed Buhari and Victor Amos, claimed to be the leaders of the two separate mining groups at the Damishi site. They spoke extensively on the various aspects of the mining activities, and on the miners themselves. According to them, all the miners in their groups are from different parts of Kaduna state, and are within the age range of 23 and 45. Usually the miners pick their tools, and begin to crawl into the depths by 7 am, digging, pecking and raking with their fingers, and other tools for about 11 hours. By 4 pm or 5 pm, whoever is still in the depths begins to climb to the surface. Most days, depending on the amount of work before a group, work usually stops by 6 pm.

Buhari and Amos admitted that the miners seen by this reporter at the site, are not legal miners, but enjoy legality under authorised miners, to whom

they sell their finds. These "illegal" miners and the buyers of the find, therefore work in collaboration with each other. The actual miners dig into the depths to provide the precious items, while the authorised or licensed miners, provide the cash, and cover up in case the Police or other security agents visit the site.

Their relationship has to be such, because some of the authorised/licensed miners are not wealthy enough, or they pretend to be so, to employ the service of the actual "earth worms" who burrow into the depth for the find. So, a group locates the find, a group provides the cash, and the business is made. Whoever is lucky to strike a precious stone realises between N20 million and N30 million, depending on the type and weight of the stone. A small piece of precious stone could earn its finder between N100,000 and N200,000.

The buyers of the find often comb the bush, running after the miners from one site to the other, to grab their find and pay. An immediate payment depends on the weight of a find. For example, a find that costs millions of naira cannot be paid for immediately by the buyer right there in the bush. The owner of the find will have to accompany the buyer to the town to enable the buyer raise the money for the payment. A

find that costs between N100,000 and N500,000 can be paid for there and then by the buyer.

By law taxes are to be paid on the find, depending on the item, its significance and weight. However, the real miners (those in the fields mining) do not actually pay any tax. Alhaji Tasi'u Hussaini Kubau, Alhaji Abbas Nata'ala, Alhaji Ibrahim Kanam and Alhaji Nafi'u Shu'aibu are licensed miners, who buy the find from the real people involved in the mining business. They claimed that all registered miners pay royalty tax of N20 per milligram to the government, through the Min-

istry of Solid Minerals, depending on the mineral resources. The royalty tax for precious stones range between N30 and N100 naira, depending on the usage and market demand of the products.

The entire mining business is not without its own hazards. The actual earth burrowers are always faced with occupational and health hazards. According to Baba Karami, Bala Idris and Garba Yunus, while they are deep beneath, the earth could cave in on them, and they could sustain serious injuries or even lose their lives, depending on the gravity of the accident. Great difficulty will normally be

Dauda Nagari and Hassan Musa are of others have made it, they too can make length of time or period. The miners see well to their homes and settled in the village to return home until they hit the jackpot or metals which they believe could change better. Infact, some of them have been at months. Most of them left their families their parents or relations. For instance, a father of three children, and resident of South local government, said that he left his children at home, and will return to them, if he get a precious stone that will fetch him millions. Kamal Nuhu is of the view that "as a back home if we succeed in our business"



Some of the miners at work.

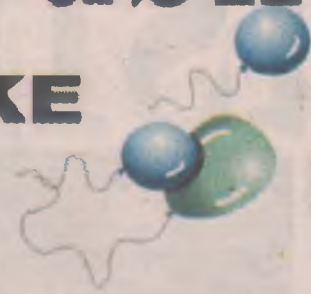


Some children searching for the precious stones too.



Steps that lead deep into the mining

Happy Golden Jubilee TO MY NAMESAKE



Signed:



Master Abdulkhadir Isah

Engr. Abdulkhadir A. Kure, ISSI
Executive Governor Niger State

**On behalf of my father, Hon. Shaba Bello Isah,
Chairman, Katcha LGA and our entire family
join millions in rejoicing with my Namesake, the
Governor of Niger State, Engr. Abdulkhadir A. Kure
on your Golden Jubilee.**

**We pray Almighty Allah to continue to give
you wisdom in your service to humanity.**

Business Trust

Currencies

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

Parallel Market

Average	
Dollar	144 145
Pounds	261 175

Flight schedule

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

Bellview Airlines

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

Saturday & Sunday

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

IRS Airlines

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

Weekend

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



The Managing Director of Premium Pension Ltd, Mr. Aliyu Dikko with Alhaji Baba Ahmed (right), at the presentation of licenses to Pension fund administrators and custodians held in Abuja...recently.

INSIDE

Coping with stress

...P25

Stock market Report

...P27



NITT to train 100

...P27

Customs seize N600m textiles

The Federal Government warehouse in Ikeja Lagos is now full to the brim as the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) Federal Operations Unit (FOU) zone 'A' has seized prohibited textile materials valued at N600 million from Saki town in Oyo State.

From Adelanwa Bamgboye, Correspondent Lagos

Addressing newsmen last week in Lagos, Comptroller of the F.O.U, Umar M. Daura said that the space constraints in the government warehouse would not deter his men from further seizures.

According to him, "the signal for the manner of our anti-smuggling operations this year is very clear. The

smugglers should rather choose the path of honour and save themselves the risks inherent in smuggling."

He explained that following a tip-off on Thursday Feb. 16th, 2006, officers from NCS FOU zone 'A' struck at a smuggling site at Saki town in Oyo axis.

"On arrival at the point by the officers, the smugglers, on sighting the intimidating number of officers, fully armed approaching, jumped over the nearby wall of Saki town stadium still under construction and disappeared, abandoning hundreds of bales

of textile materials."

Comptroller Umar said further that initial evacuation of part of the seizures to the government warehouse at Ikeja on Friday 17th February 2006 recorded 1,390 bales valued at N200m.

He said that the last batch of the seizure was brought in five long trailer trucks and four short trucks which are yet to be off-loaded and counted to ascertain the quantity and value.

He disclosed that the operation was led by (DC) deputy comptroller Sambo, assisted by Assitant Comptroller (A/C) Victor Dimka, 18 and patrol teams, a

unit of mobile policemen and other officers including some police personnel.

Lamenting that there was as no space to store the textile materials, he said that fortunately there were some empty containers in the government warehouse into which the textile materials were being stored.

Premium Pension assures of reliable service

Managing Director Premium Pension Limited (PPL) Mr. Aliyu Dikko has assured workers in the country that the licensed Pension Fund Administrators (PFAs) and custodians would create a viable industry that would compete with other pension schemes in the world.

challenge before now was apathy, but added that such apathy was beginning to change with enlightenment from the operators.

The former MD/CEO of United Bank for Africa Plc (UBA) said the new scheme would be transparent, compared with what was obtainable in the industry in the past, while contributors would now be sure that they have something to fall back on after retirement.

Mr. Dikko gave the assurance during the presentation of licenses by President Olusegun Obasanjo to PPL and 11 other PFAs as well as pension fund custodians in Abuja, saying that with the present contributory pension scheme, Nigeria was on its way to providing a viable pension industry.

The PPL managing director stated that the

He pointed out that the PPL, on its own would not fail in delivering effective and efficient services to contributors, adding that the company had, in response to this came up with products that would satisfy and cater for the interest of contributors.

Besides, he explained that

his management team consists of those who have good and excellent track records in the banking and pension industry, while the company has acquired facilities and other resources that would make it one of the best in the world.

Mr. Dikko said: "I believe that history is being made in the country and I am pleased to be part of history. We are all committed to creating an industry which can compete with any other pension scheme in the world.

"The challenges, as you have heard from various presenters was apathy. Most of the workers were not sure whether this would work, but this is beginning to change with enlightenment from the operators and the regulators," he said.

FIRS to generate N3.6bn in 2007

The Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) has set a target of N3.6 trillion as internally generated revenue to be collected in 2007, its executive chairman, Ms. Ifueko Omoigui has disclosed.

From Sani Babadoko, Bureau Chief, Kaduna

Addressing a joint workshop by the FIRS and the Kaduna State government on tax compliance by local governments, Ms. Omoigui said the FIRS hopes to achieve this target by strengthening investigation and intelligence and automating revenue collection.

She said a whistleblower anti-corruption unit has been set up which reports directly to him and called on local governments and the general public to report any act of corruption by FIRS officials and their collaborators.

"What these reforms mean is that the taxpayer should expect a more convenient and convince environment," he said.

To achieve this, the FIRS boss said integrated tax offices nationwide will now issue treasury receipts to taxpayers within 24 hours of receipt of manifests from collecting centres and credit notes, tax certificates within two weeks and respond to tax payers' requests within seven days.

She said another strategy in the reform package is project FACT which is to ensure the safety of whatever monies are contributed as tax by the public through a new computerised collection system.

"This system would enable us promptly capture all monies paid into our collecting banks and ultimately eliminate the problems that the service has continued to experience with non-remittance of those funds, some of which are in banks currently battling with liquidity problems," she said.

Kaduna State governor, Ahmed Mohammed Makarfi said at the occasion that Kaduna State will always take the lead in tax remission pointing out that he has personally asked for evidence of tax remission to the FIRS with the first two weeks of every month.

She promised directing the ministry of local governments to ensure that all the 24 local governments in the state remitted their tax collection within the stipulated period.

BUSINESS TRUST

Management Tips

Coping with stress

By Dr. Hans Selye

It is different things to different people. To a mountaineer it is the challenge of pushing physical resources to the limit by striving to achieve a demanding goal. To the homeward bound motorist it can be the hassles of heavy traffic and obnoxious exhaust fumes. To the student it can be exam pressure.

Take a piece of paper and write the word stress at the top. Now write down all the words and images that come to your mind as you think about this word.

Most people respond to the word stress in negative ways.

They see it as a destructive, debilitating force. However, not all stress is negative. The word eustress has been coined to describe positive stress. Eustress results from exhilarating experiences. It is the type of stress you are likely to experience when you inherit a large amount of money or receive an unexpected promotion or reward. Eustress is the stress of winning and achieving.

Negative stress is distress. It is the stress of losing, failing, overworking and not coping. Distress affects people in a negative often harmful manner. We all experience distress from time to time. It is a normal, unavoidable part of living.

Stressors Cause Stress

Stress results from failure to adequately cope with stressors. Stressors could be loud noise, uncomfortable air-conditioning, debts, ringing telephones, broken relationships, unrealistic deadlines, discouragement, fear, pain and thousands of other things that impact upon us in the normal course of life.

It is impossible to avoid stressors. The only totally stress-free state is death! Stressors will always be there because we live in an imperfect and unpredictable world which is going to cause us to frequently get stressed. We experience stress as the body adjusts to the external demands placed upon it. Our body constantly seeks to maintain stability and stress is usually sensed as the body readjusts to too much pressure.

Scientists use the term HOMEOSTASIS (homeo = the same; stasis = standing) to define the physiological limits in which the body functions efficiently and comfortably. Stress disturbs homeostasis by creating a state of imbalance. The source of stress may be outside the body or it may originate from within the body in the form of blood pressure, pain, tumours, distressing events or disturbing thoughts.

We need to assist our bodies to cope with being stressed because our natural biological stress-adjustors are not ideally suited to the demands of modern living. Our bodies are well suited to cope with the distressing events faced by our primitive ancestors. The stressors faced by humans conditioned to a nomadic hunter-gatherer lifestyle are obviously different to the distressing lifestyle of today. Our distant ancestors needed chemical responses to stress to enable them to trigger physical flight or fight responses to the perils and pleasures of hunting. These types of responses are inappropriate today. If you physically ran away from your workplace

whenever things got on top of you then this would not enhance your standing in the Organisation. Conversely if you punch the boss on the nose when he/she gives you a tough time then the resulting dismissal and assault charges will generate considerably greater levels of distress. Consequently we need to develop special skills to deal with special stressors.

We are all very aware of specific distressing circumstances

that affect us. As already discussed these assume many shapes and forms. In addition to the specific stressors there are also back-ground stressors that can have a more subtle but equally damaging impact on us.

The Consequences of Stress

One of the pioneers of stress research, Dr. Hans Selye wrote that "... stress is essentially reflected by the rate of all the wear and tear caused by life."

His research convinced him that the body has only a finite reserve of adaptation energy to

apply to the stressors of life. Selye likened this reserve to a bank account upon which we can make withdrawals from time to time but into which we cannot make deposits. It is a non-renewable reserve of energy which we draw on throughout life until eventually it is consumed and death results. Some people squander their reserves and experience premature ageing as a result; others exercise more discretion and so they maintain a supply over a longer period of time.

Over a long period of time

the stress response begins to take a toll on the body. One of the prime targets affected is the thymus gland (a mysterious pale grey gland that sits behind the breastbone, above the heart) which plays a key role in the body's immune system. The thymus gland pumps out millions of lymphocytes each day to patrol throughout the body and to kill off bacterial invaders. Killer cells called macrophages literally eat invading bacteria. They operate in all parts of the body and we depend on them for our survival. Macrophages are

weakened by a steroid called cortisol which is released by the adrenal gland when we experience stress. A weakened immune system makes us vulnerable to infection and this is why people under stress often experience regular attacks of colds and flu.

Psychological stress does have physical ramifications. We can do ourselves a great deal of harm by stressful thinking. We can flood our body with stress hormones and this can create a vicious cycle making us more and more stressful.

Culled from Forbes.com

KADUNA BUSINESS SCHOOL

Presents

The Management Programme In ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND NEW VENTURE CREATION

Kaduna | Business | School
Executive Education

WORLD BANK - [BDS] ASSISTED PROGRAMME

It is significant to note that wealth and a vast majority of jobs are frequently created by entrepreneurially skilled individuals who nurture businesses into great empires.

This programme presents a pragmatic way of discovering the concepts of entrepreneurship and the competencies that are sufficient to pursue different business opportunities.

In line with the on-going reforms, this programme is currently being linked to various financial institutions who will need to audit the entrepreneurial acumen of their customers before granting them loans.

PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

- Learn to identify and recognize business opportunities
- Understand entrepreneurship process/business plan
- Improve financial literacy
- Manage the growth strategies for new businesses
- Identify market potentials for new products and ideas

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

- Business Owners
- Fresh Unemployed Graduates
- Those who want to start a retirement venture programme.
- National Youth Service Corps members.
- Entrepreneurs who want to strengthen their entrepreneurial capacities.

• Anybody who wants to start a new venture

DURATION:

5-Weeks: 4.00pm to 8.00pm on Fridays and 8.00am to 8.00pm on Saturdays over 5 weekends. Students should prepare their minds for active participation in take home exercises, simulations and syndicate work.

COURSE FEE

N15,260.00 to cover application form, tuition, examination, and business plan supervision.

VENUE

Kaduna Business School, 13b Ohikere Street, Off Inuwa Wada Road, Ungwar Rimi G.R.A., Kaduna



Drucker Centre of Management for ENTREPRENEURS

BATCH 2: 10TH MARCH - 8TH APRIL, 2006

Hotline - 062370836; Kenny - 08023638631; Mohammed - 08025011200; website: www.kbs-edu.net
 Ralph - 08065322133; Bukky - 08036158256; e-mail - kbs@wwlkad.com, marketing@kbs-edu.net



TAFALocal Government Council

Happy 50th Birthday



Engr. Abdulkhadir A. Kure, FNSE
Executive Governor, Niger State

I, the Chairman of
Bosso Local Government Council
on behalf of the good people of the area
congratulate
Governor Abdulkhadir A. Kure, FNSE
on his 50th Birthday.

We wish him many more
prosperous years in the
service of this great nation.

Happy Birthday Sir

Signed:



Albaji Abdul Tafa
Chairman, Tafa LGC

Business Trust

1ST-TIER SECURITIES

THE NIGERIAN STOCK EXCHANGE

REPORT AS AT FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2006

Company Name	No of Deals	Quotation(N)	Quantity Traded	Value of Shares
ADSWITCH PLC.	1	1.55	305,957	474,233.35
CAPITAL OIL PLC	1	0.34	1,600	544.00
Sector Totals	2		307,557	474,777.35
AGRICULTURE/AGRO-ALLIED				
THE OKOMU OIL PALM COMPANY PLC	2	18.50	6,500	119,750.00
PRESCO PLC.	3	11.40	10,500	119,700.00
Sector Totals	5		17,000	239,450.00
AUTOMOBILE & TYRE				
DUNLOP NIGERIA PLC.	9	2.55	23,650	60,625.50
R. T BRISCOAE PLC.	5	5.28	13,810	69,786.50
Sector Totals	14		37,460	130,412.00
BANKING				
ACCESS BANK PLC	54	2.69	786,574	2,099,652.44
EIB INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	2	2.26	102,400	231,424.00
FIRST CITY MONUMENT BANK PLC	1	5.11	8,000	40,880.00
FIDELITY BANK PLC	1	2.93	349,440	1,023,859.20
FIRST BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	196	36.20	427,057	15,398,407.34
GT BANK PLC.	78	13.70	413,634	5,674,113.55
INVESTMENT BANKING	4	4.57	321,500	1,469,255.00
INTERCONTINENTAL BANK PLC.	22	10.10	350,045	3,541,873.50
NAL BANK PLC.	1	2.80	100,000	280,000.00
OCEANIC BANK PLC	21	5.80	124,980	724,694.00
PLATINUM BANK PLC	2	2.60	200,400	521,040.00
UNITED BANK FOR AFRICA PLC.	38	11.70	76,382	884,389.22
UNION BANK NIGERIA PLC.	61	25.48	203,378	5,182,071.44
WEMA BANK PLC.	10	3.74	127,379	476,397.46
ZENITH BANK PLC	4	19.64	9,300	182,652.00
Sector Totals	495		3,600,469	37,730,709.15
BREWERIES				
GUINNESS NIGERIA PLC.	10	103.00	4,169	433,649.00
NIGERIAN BREWERIES PLC.	105	35.19	346,035	12,168,457.64
Sector Totals	115		350,204	12,602,106.64
BUILDING MATERIALS				
ASHAKA CEMENT PLC.	24	33.21	96,646	3,214,167.81
BENUE CEMENT COMPANY PLC.	6	6.50	43,200	280,800.00
CEMENT COMPANY OF NORTHERN NIG. PLC	1	6.60	45,560	300,696.00
WEST AFRICAN PORTLAND CEMENT CO. PLC.	28	18.03	259,156	4,676,500.24
Sector Totals	59		444,562	8,472,164.05
CHEMICAL & PAINTS				
BERGER PAINTS PLC.	9	3.60	14,263	50,978.91
CAP PLC.	7	8.51	24,100	205,091.00
D. N. MEYER PLC.	2	3.60	6,000	21,600.00
NIGERIA-GERMAN CHEMICALS PLC.	9	4.00	315,530	1,268,673.00
Sector Totals	27		359,893	1,546,342.91
CONGLOMERATES				
A. G. LEVENTIS NIGERIA PLC.	3	1.18	25,000	29,500.00
JOHN HOLT PLC.	1	1.27	34,238	43,482.26
P. Z. INDUSTRIES PLC.	16	16.20	89,766	1,454,209.20
S.C.O.A NIGERIA PLC.	3	0.93	24,229	22,532.97
U.A.C NIGERIA PLC	32	16.65	58,784	976,556.10
UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC	52	20.01	94,253	1,892,577.05
U.T.C. NIGERIA PLC.	1	0.74	1,500	1,110.00
Sector Totals	108		327,770	4,419,967.58
CONSTRUCTION				
COSTAIN (W.A.) PLC.	2	0.99	8,637	8,550.63
JULIUS BERGER NIGERIA PLC.	1	21.51	200	4,302.00
Sector Totals	3		8,837	12,852.63
FOOD/BEVERAGES & TOBACCO				
7-UP BOTTLING COMPANY PLC	17	29.50	8,632	258,477.00
CADBURY NIGERIA PLC	39	55.45	68,444	3,791,736.52
FLOUR MILLS NIGERIA PLC.	33	26.99	101,717	2,717,948.20
NIGERIA BOTTLING COMPANY PLC.	44	61.00	101,289	6,141,044.00
NESTLE FOODS NIGERIA PLC	5	193.00	1,306	252,840.04
NORTHERN NIGERIA FLOUR MILLS PLC.	3	15.00	1,000	15,000.00
Sector Totals	141		282,388	13,177,045.76
HEALTHCARE				
EVANS MEDICAL PLC.	3	2.38	64,900	154,462.00
GLAXOSMITHKLINE CONSUMER NIGERIA PLC	28	16.00	166,751	1,670,310.00
MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC	2	5.36	8,000	42,880.00
NEIMEITH INTERNATIONAL PHARM PLC	1	3.23	1,636	5,284.28
Sector Totals	34		241,287	1,872,936.28
INDUSTRIAL/DOMESTIC PRODUCTS				
B.O.C GASES PLC	2	2.40	2,000	4,800.00
FIRST ALUMINIUM NIGERIA PLC.	1	0.71	5,000	3,550.00
VITAFAM NIGERIA PLC.	11	3.26	127,802	419,034.52
Sector Totals	14		134,802	427,384.52
INSURANCE				
CORNERSTONE INSURANCE CO. PLC.	16	1.28	445,000	574,184.32
LAW UNION AND ROCK INSURANCE PLC.	1	0.80	1,000	800.00
NIGER INSURANCE CO. PLC.	2	3.26	1,683	5,486.58
PRESTIGE ASSURANCE PLC.	1	2.38	2,000	4,760.00
ROYAL EXCHANGE ASSURANCE PLC	2	2.80	16,000	44,800.00
WEST AFRICAN PROV. INS. COY. PLC.	3	3.05	15,218	46,214.90
Sector Totals	25		480,901	676,245.80
MANAGED FUNDS				
C & I LEASING PLC	1	1.10	5,000	5,500.00
Sector Totals	1		5,000	5,500.00
PACKAGING				
NAMPAK NIGERIA PLC	1	1.65	1,564	2,580.60
Sector Totals	1		1,564	2,580.60
PETROLEUM(MARKETING)				
AFRICAN PETROLEUM PLC.	17	38.99	6,546	255,265.18
CONOIL PLC	17	83.00	4,368	362,548.83
ETERNA OIL & GAS PLC.	4	2.65	5,751	15,240.15
MOBIL OIL NIGERIA PLC.	21	162.03	22,783	3,711,539.39
OANDO PLC	19	90.50	13,916	1,253,122.00
TEXACO (NIGERIA) PLC.	13	104.05	6,945	722,627.25
TOTAL NIGERIA PLC	11	183.50	3,632	664,442.50
Sector Totals	102		63,941	6,984,785.30
PRINTING & PUBLISHING				
LONGMAN NIGERIA PLC.	3	4.23	28,650	121,189.50
Sector Totals	3		28,650	121,189.50
REAL ESTATE				
UACN PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT PLC.	4	8.76	5,100	45,015.00
Sector Totals	4		5,100	45,015.00
TEXTILES				
UNITED NIGERIA TEXTILES PLC.	1	1.83	3,000	5,490.00
Sector Totals	1		3,000	5,490.00
Overall Totals	1,154		6,700,385	88,946,955.07

TOP 10 TRADES AS YESTERDAY

SYMBOL	VOLUME	VALUE	TRAD
IBTC	321,500.00	1,469,255.00	4
FIDELITYBK	349,440.00	1,023,859.20	1
GUARANTY	425,400.00	5,835,307.75	81
NB	444,154.00	15,606,149.44	12
CORNERST	453,884.00	585,555.84	18
INTERCONT	470,055.00	4,753,022.60	29
PZ	691,478.00	11,201,943.60	19
ACCESS	808,874.00	2,159,639.44	58
UBN	1,224,249.00	31,193,864.52	69
FIRSTBANK	1,330,952.00	48,059,176.14	23

TOP 10 GAINERS

SYMBOL	LASTCLOSE	YESTERDAY'SCLOSE	CHANG
MOBIL	162.00	165.00	+3.00
CONOIL	83.00	84.00	+1.00
OKOMUOIL	18.00	18.50	+0.50
FLOURMILL	26.60	26.99	+0.39
RTBRISCOE	5.03	5.28	+0.25
UBA	11.46	11.70	+0.24
LONGMAN	4.03	4.23	+0.20
EVANSMED	2.27	2.38	+0.11
FIRSTBANK	36.01	36.10	+0.09
NAMPAK	1.58	1.65	+0.07

TOP 10 LOSERS

SYMBOL	LASTCLOSE	YESTERDAY'SCLOSE	CHANGE
NESTLE	197.00	187.50	-9.50
GUINNESS	105.95	104.00	-1.95
7UP	30.00	29.50	-0.50
NBC	61.00	60.50	-0.50
CAP	8.51	8.09	-0.42
UAC-PROP	9.20	8.80	-0.40
GUARANTY	13.90	13.50	-0.40
INTERCONT	10.40	10.10	-0.30
NB	35.50	35.35	-0.15
ROYALEX	2.94	2.80	-0.14

NITT to train 100 on transport, logistics

From AbdulRaheem Aodu, Correspondent (Kaduna)

Nigerian Institute of Transport Technology (NITT) Zaria is set to train 100 participants in its long term programmes for this academic session.

The participants who were drawn from various private and public organisations will study for diploma, advanced professional diploma and masters degree in transport and logistics according to the director general of the Institute, Dr. Ibrahim Vandu-Chikolo, who was speaking at the Transport Day of the just concluded Kaduna International Trade Fair. Dr. Vandu-Chikolo said the Institute has expanded its short term training programme from 32 to 48 in order to meet the growing demand and provide more quality services to its clients and students.

"Apart from our long and short term programmes, we are poised to run in-plant training programme for establishments that cannot release their staff to train outside their organisation. Our cyber library has been completed and set for opening once commissioned, it will assist both staff and student in accessing current materials and information for research and education as it will be networked with other digital libraries across the globe," he said.

He said the institute has been working with University of Pretoria South Africa on its masters programme and Transport Research Laboratory of UK for the actualisation of its transport ecology centre.

"The contract for the transport technology centre has been awarded and it is due for completion in two years. When completed, the centre which will be equipped with state of the art technology will enable us to simulate good practice in transport and logistic operations and to facilitate teaching and research," he said.

Dr. Vandu-Chikolo said though the Institute has the wherewithal to do better but has been constrained financially while the transport operators not quite aware of its existence or the need to train and consult for expert advice. He however added that they would continue to work harder in order to attain the goal of being a university of transport



MARIGA LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL



**On behalf of Mariga
Local Government,
I congratulate
His Excellency,
Governor of Niger State,
Engr. Abdulkhadir A. Kure, FNSE
as he clocks 50 today.
We wish him many more
prosperous years
in the service of this
great nation.**

Engr. Abdulkhadir A. Kure, FNSE
Executive Governor, Niger State

Signed:

Happy Birthday

Signed:

Alhaji Moh'd Gulbin Boka
Chairman, Mariga Local Government



Alhaji Moh'd Gulbin Boka
Chairman, Mariga LGC



MASHEGU LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL



Engr. Abdulkhadir A. Kure, FNSE
Executive Governor, Niger State

**Mashegu Local Government
Chairman and members felicitate with
His Excellency,
Governor Abdulkhadir A. Kure, FNSE on
his 50th Birthday Anniversary.
Keep on with the good work and
do not rest on your oars.
May Allah continue to bless you.**

Happy Birthday

Signed:



Alhaji Haruna Usman Dangajere
Chairman, Mashegu LGC



NIGERIAN PORTS AUTHORITY

PUBLIC NOTICE NO: 3588

PRIVATE TERMINAL OPERATORS TO TAKE OVER NPA TERMINALS FROM MARCH 1ST 2006

With the successful completion of negotiations on the severance benefits of the staff of Nigerian Ports Authority, all Stakeholders and Port Users are hereby notified that effective March 1st 2006, Private Terminal Operators that won the bids will start taking over their respective Terminals of Operations.

They will be responsible for all the Plants and Equipment in their terminals including spare parts management and the maintenance of quay aprons, stacking areas, sheds, lighting, roads and sidings in their various terminals.

Contractors handling on-going projects in the concessioned terminals are hereby advised to ensure a speedy completion of such projects and hand over relevant documents to the Executive Director of either the Western or Eastern Ports, as the case may be.

This also serves to inform our numerous Port Users and the General Public that as from March 1st 2006, Nigerian Ports Authority will progressively disengage from Terminal Operations functions.

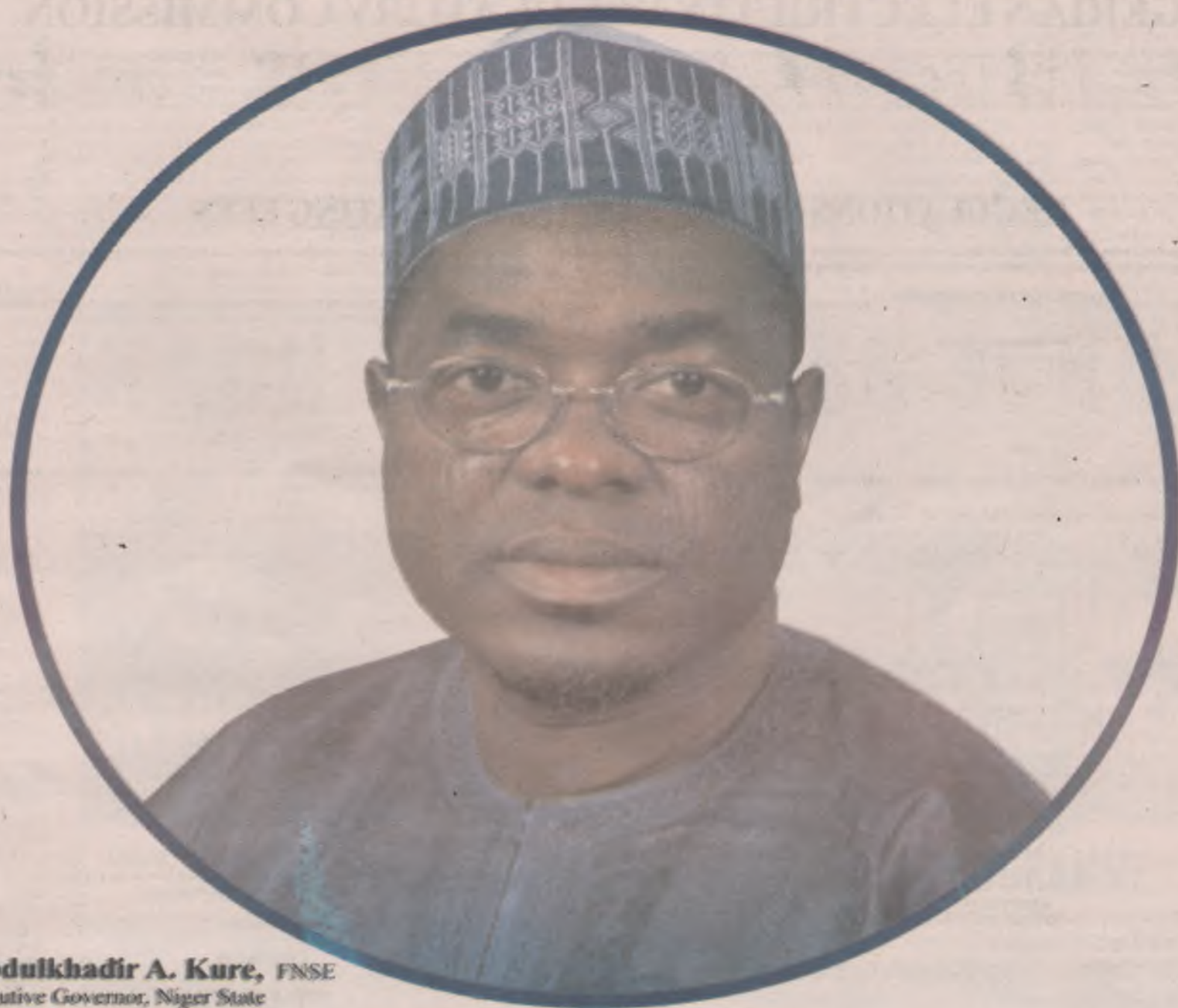
Thank you.

**Public Affairs Department
NIGERIAN PORTS AUTHORITY**

M-Gold
00000124



SULEJA LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL



Engr. Abdulkhadir A. Kure, FNSE
Executive Governor, Niger State

**On behalf of the people of
Suleja Local Government Area of Niger State,
I, the Council Chairman rejoice with
Governor Abdulkhadir A. Kure, FNSE
on his 50th Birthday Anniversary.**

Signed:



Alhaji Abdullahi Sulaiman
Chairman, Suleja LGC

**More greese to your elbow.
Happy Birthday to you and more blessing from
ALLAH (SWT)..**

Happy Birthday



NERC-N-206-03

NIGERIAN ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION

PUBLIC NOTICE

OF

REGULATIONS ON LICENCE AND OPERATING FEES

In exercise of the powers conferred under Section 96(2)(b) of the Electric Power Sector Reform Act, the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission has approved the following **Regulations on Licence and Operating Fees**.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION

Dr. Ransome E. Owan
Chairman/CEO

REGULATION NO: NERC - R - 0206

NIGERIAN ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION

LICENCE AND OPERATING FEES REGULATION

In exercise of the powers conferred under Section 96(2)(h) of the Electric Power Sector Reform Act, 2005 (Act no. 6 of 2005), the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission hereby makes the following Regulations for Licence and Operating Fees.

Arrangement of Clauses

CHAPTER I GENERAL

1. Short Title and Commencement.
2. Definitions and Interpretation.

CHAPTER II LICENCE FEES

3. Application Fees.
4. Licence Fees.
5. Amendment and Renewal Fees.

CHAPTER III OPERATING FEES

6. Annual Operating Fees.

CHAPTER IV MISCELLANEOUS

7. Amendment
8. Inherent Powers of the Commission.

CHAPTER I GENERAL

1. Short Title and Commencement

(1) These Regulations may be cited as the **Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (Licence and Operating Fees) Regulations, 2006**.

(2) These Regulations shall come into force on the date determined by the Commission.

(3) These Regulations shall be signed by the Chairman who shall also cause the seal of the Commission to be affixed thereon.

2. Definitions and Interpretation:

(1) In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires:

"Act" means the Electric Power Sector Reform Act, 2005.

"Commission" means the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission.

"Applicant" means a person who has applied to the Commission for a licence.

"Fees" means fees mentioned in the Schedule.

"Licensee" means the holder of a licence issued by the Commission.

"Person" includes an individual, company, partnership, or any association of individuals whether incorporated or not.

"Regulations" means the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (Licence and Operating Fees) Regulations, 2006.

"Schedule" refers to the "Schedule of Licences, Validity Period, Fees & Other Charges" annexed to these Regulations.

(2) Words and expressions used and not defined in the Regulations but defined in the Act shall have the meanings assigned to them in the Act.

(3) In the interpretation of these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires:

(a) Words importing any one gender includes the other gender and the singular includes the plural and vice versa.

(b) References herein to the "Regulation" shall be construed as a reference to these Regulations as amended or modified by the Commission from time to time in accordance with the applicable laws in force.

(c) The headings are inserted for convenience and may not be taken into account for the purpose of interpretation of these Regulations.

(d) References to statutes, regulations or guidelines shall be construed as including all provisions consolidating, amending or replacing such statutes, regulations or guidelines, as the case may be.

CHAPTER II

LICENCE FEES

3. Application Fees

(1) Every application for a licence made to the Commission shall be accompanied by the Application Fees as specified in the Schedule.

(2) The Fees payable under these Regulations shall be paid by means of bank draft or cheque drawn in favour of the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission.

(3) All Fees received by the Commission under these Regulations shall be acknowledged by the issuance of the Commission's official receipt.

(4) The Application fee paid under these Regulations shall be non-refundable.

4. Fees Payable on Grant of Licence

(1) Upon approval by the Commission of an application for a licence, the Commission shall inform the applicant of such approval and be informed of the licence fee required to be paid by the applicant for the grant of a licence.

(2) The licence fee to be paid shall be as specified in the Schedule.

(3) Where the Licence fee is not paid within the time specified in the terms and conditions of the Licence, a surcharge will be payable on the amount due at the rate of 1% per week up to a maximum period of 12 (twelve) weeks after which period the grant of a licence shall lapse.

5. Amendment / Renewal Fees

(1) Every application for the Amendment or Renewal of an existing Licence by a licensee shall be accompanied by the Amendment/Renewal Fee as specified in the Schedule.

(2) The Amendment/Renewal Fee shall be non-refundable.

CHAPTER III

OPERATING FEES

6. Annual Operating Fees

(1) Licensees shall pay Annual Operating Fees.

(2) The Annual Operating Fee payable shall be charged in accordance with the rates specified in the Schedule.

(3) Where the Operating Fee is not paid within the time specified in the terms and conditions of the licence, surcharge shall be payable on the amount due at the rate of 1% per week up to a maximum period of 12 (twelve) weeks after which period the Commission shall apply appropriate penalties in accordance with the terms and conditions of the licence.

CHAPTER IV

MISCELLANEOUS

7. Amendment

(1) The Commission may from time to time amend or repeal the provisions of these Regulations.

(2) The Commission may from time to time, by Order, add, amend, alter or vary the amounts of Fees payable as provided in Schedule.

8. Inherent Powers of the Commission

(1) Nothing in these Regulations shall be deemed to limit or otherwise affect the power of the Commission to make such orders as may be in the public interest.

(2) Nothing in these Regulations shall bar the Commission from adopting in conformity with provisions of the Act, a procedure which is at variance with any of the provisions of these Regulations, if the Commission, in view of the special circumstances of a matter or a class of matters and for reasons to be recorded in writing, deems it just or expedient for deciding such matter or class of matters.

THE COMMON SEAL OF
NIGERIAN ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION
was affixed pursuant to the ORDER OF THE COMMISSION
on 14th February, 2006.

DR. RANSOME OWAN
CHAIRMAN/CEO

SCHEDULE OF LICENCES & FEES**A. Grid-Connected Operations:**

S/N	Licence Category	Validity Period (Years)	Application Fees	Licence Fees	Licence Amendment Application Fees	Annual Operating Levies
1.	Generation*: a. Above 1MW – 10MW b. Above 10MW – 100MW c. Above 101MW – 250MW d. Above 251MW – 500MW e. Above 501MW – 1000MW f. Above 1000MW	10	N 50,000.00 N 100,000.00 N 200,000.00 N 300,000.00 N 400,000.00 N 500,000.00	US\$ 2,500.00 US\$ 25,000.00 US\$ 50,000.00 US\$ 75,000.00 US\$ 100,000.00 US\$ 200,000.00	N 50,000.00 N 100,000.00 N 200,000.00 N 300,000.00 N 400,000.00 N 500,000.00	1.5% of Licensee's Charges/kWh " " " " "
2.	Transmission**	10	N1, 000,000.00	US\$ 250,000.00	N1, 000,000.00	"
3.	System Operations**	10	N1, 000,000.00	US\$ 250,000.00	N1, 000,000.00	"
4.	Distribution	10	N1, 000,000.00	US\$ 50,000.00	N1, 000,000.00	"

* Generation capacity is the nearest integral value.

** The Licence and fees for Transmission and System Operations apply to PHCN or its Successor Companies only.

B. Off-Grid Operations:

S/N	Generator Capacity(MW)	Validity Period (Years)	Application Fees (N)	Licence Fees(\$)	Licence Amendment Application Fees (\$)	Annual Operating Levies
1.	Above 1 – 10	1	10,000.00	1,000.00	500.00	None
2.	11 – 20		10,000.00	2,000.00	1,000.00	
3.	21 – 30		10,000.00	2,500.00	1,250.00	
4.	31 – 40		10,000.00	3,000.00	1,500.00	
5.	41 – 50		10,000.00	3,500.00	1,750.00	
6.	51 – 100		20,000.00	5,000.00	2,500.00	
7.	Above 100		50,000.00	6,000.00	3,000.00	
8.	Distribution	10	100,000.00	10,000.00	5,000.00	1.5% of Tariff Charge/kWh

- Initial Generator Licence is unit and location specific
- Any material change in the generator unit or location shall require an amendment to the Licence
- A Distribution Licence is location specific
- Validity period cannot be pro-rated for less than a year
- *Generator capacity is the nearest integral value

C. Electrical Installation/Wiring:

S/N	Licence Category	Validity Period(Years)	Application Fees	Licence Fees	Licence Amendment Application Fees	Annual Operating Levies
1.	Category A (330/132kV)	5	N 100,000.00	N 5,000,000.00	N 100,000.00	N 500,000.00
2.	Category B (33/11kV)	5	N 50,000.00	N 500,000.00	N 50,000.00	N 50,000.00
3.	Category C (450V)	5	N 2,000.00	N 10,000.00		



NERC-N-206-02

NIGERIAN ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION (NERC)

PUBLIC NOTICE

APPLICATION FOR LICENCES

In exercise of the powers conferred under Sections 62 & 70 of the Electric Power Sector Reform Act ("the Act"), the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission hereby notifies all existing and intending operators in the Electricity Sector that every operator* is required under the Act to obtain a licence from the Commission in order to legally engage in any of the following businesses:

- Electricity Generation;
- Electricity Transmission;
- System Operation;
- Electricity Distribution; and
- Trading in Electricity;

Consequently, **NOTICE** is hereby given to all affected persons to immediately apply for licences from the Commission. Application forms may be obtained from the Commission's office at the following address:

Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission
No. 26 Mediterranean Street, Off Shehu Shagari Way, Imani Estate
Maitama, Abuja.

* Operators generating electricity not exceeding 1 Megawatt in aggregate at a site or an undertaking for distribution for electricity with a capacity not exceeding 100 Kilowatts in aggregate in a site are exempt from licence requirements.

Note: Only Power Holding Company of Nigeria Plc. (PHCN) or its Successor Companies can apply for Transmission, System Operations and Trading Licences until further notice.

BY ORDER OF THE COMMISSION,

Dr. Ransome E. Owan
Chairman/CEO

HYUNDAI H-1



The Ultimate Luxury MiniBus in Nigeria

Experience uncompromised comfort in the new Hyundai H-1. No matter the version you decide on you'll enjoy the smooth performance and marvel at the comfort and fuel economy.



- Available in:**
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 - ▶ 7-Seater Luxury Bus
 - ▶ 9-Seater Luxury Bus
 - ▶ 12-Seater Luxury Bus
 - ▶ H-1 Ambulance



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HOTLINES: 08057767474, 01-8520012, 04-8520006, 01-8520009

The HYUNDAI ADVANTAGE
3Years Warranty

Victoria Island

- 270A, AJOSE ADEOGUN STREET
01-8520009, 01-8520012,
01-8520774, 01-8520775.
Fax: 01-4618954
- PLOT 1114A, ADEOLA ODEKU STREET
01-8520006, 01-8529777, 01-2701877
- AKIN ADESOLA/180 KOFO ABAYOMI STREET
01-8520007, 01-8520012,
01-8529444, 08034799999
- Fax: 01-4616278

Gbagada:
PLOT 1 BLOCK B GBAGADA IND. EST. LAGOS
08054599999, 01-8520204, 01-8522040,
01-8522661-2, 08057767456

Abuja: 0805 4099999, 0803 4099999, 0803 4077777
Port-Harcourt: 0805 4299999, 0803 4299999, 0803 4277777

Kano: 0803 3264552, 064 640862, 0805 4399999

Kaduna: 062 247810, 0803 7040138

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d of miners

encountered in digging out the victim of such an accident. Threats are heightened by the fact that the miners violate mining rules of ensuring safety, because site managers do not usually carry out routine supervision at such sites, to enforce the application of the required safety measures.

Abubakar Nuhu, Gabriel Dogo and Tanimu Bako, said that miners are always sickened by deep uncertainty on any find. According to them, they dig deep down and scratch all sides of the holes, but there is never any guarantee that they can succeed in getting any piece of precious item later,

the view that since it, regardless of the m to have bid farewell, vowing never of precious stones e their lives for the the mining site for under the care of Naziru Mohammed, Kakuri in Kaduna- his wife and chil- only if he is able to fortune. Similarly, bachelor I can only go

however hard they search for it. They also said that they are usually driven by a weakly founded hope of getting "something" as they scratch into the depths.

It appears that the miners are driven by fantasies of a life of affluence with earnings of a find, which they may not secure as quickly and successfully as they hope. One of the miners, who identified himself as Yahuza Ismaila, said that the mining business is about luck, that is why they are determined to continue mining until they are lucky to get one or two large precious stones, that could change their lives for the better. Dauda Nagari and Hassan Musa are of the view that since others have made it, they too can make it, regardless of the length of time or period.

The miners seem to have bid farewell to their homes and settled in the village, vowing never to return home until they hit the jackpot of precious stones or metals, which they believe could change their lives for the better. Infact, some of them have been at the mining site for months. Most of them left their families under the care of their parents or relations. For instance, Naziru Mohammed, a father of three children, and resident of Kakuri in Kaduna-South local government, said that he left his wife and children at home, and will return to



Samples of the precious stones

them, only if he is able to get a precious stone that will fetch him a fortune. Similarly, Kamal Nuhu is of the view that "as a bachelor I can only go back home if we succeed in our business."

One of the prominent registered miners is Alhaji Tasi'u Hussaini Kubau. He has been in the mining business for 25 years now, and is reputed to be well-known in Kaduna state. Alhaji Kubau is the Chairman of Kubau Investment Limited, and director of Operations at

Lafia Mining. He is also a director of Administration at Warri Mining Syndicate. His main sites of mining activity are Kaduna, Oyo, Kogi and Ibadan.

Alhaji Kubau is deeply concerned with the slow pace of mining and its business in Nigeria, an industry which he claimed has the potential to address the problems of unemployment in the country.

He said that the mining industry can absorb all the teeming unemployed youths in the country, and enable them to be

useful to themselves and to the community as well. He therefore appealed to government to provide miners with state-of-the-art tools, to ease the mining process at the sites spread all over the country. He also called on the government and wealthy individuals to invest heavily in the mining sector, because it has the potentials of not only being the most reliable revenue earner for the country, but providing employment to a large section of its population.

An estimated 500, 000 Ni-

gerians across the country, are said to be engaged in mining activities and businesses at the present. This means a significant percentage of this number derive their livelihood from these activities, although solid minerals mining is still not fully developed and organised, as one of the statutory revenue earners for the country.

For now, driven by fantasies of life after a "jackpot" these miners hazard all dangers, suffer every difficulty, and brave every tedious process, to burrow deep into the earth.



A miner searching for the precious stones.



Victor, one of the miners, fetching water out of the hole



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IT WORLD



Dutch police arrest 12 Nigerians over Internet scam

Dutch police said they had arrested 12 Nigerians in connection with an Internet scam in which emails were sent to Americans tricking them into investing in non-existent schemes.

The Nigerians were detained on suspicion of committing fraud or involvement in fraud in the scheme, which earn them a total two million dollars (1.7 million euros).

They were arrested Tuesday after raids on premises

in Amsterdam and the central city of Zaandam, during which police seized 25,000 euros in cash, computers and fake travel documents.

Most of the victims of the scam were US citizens. Four of the men detained were arrested on the request of US authorities, who cooperated in the investigation.

The gang has posted some 100,000 emails to potential victims, police said.

Computer users across the world are regularly bom-

barded by emails from Nigerian crooks seeking to trick them into handing over bank details or making advance payments on non-existent money-making schemes.

Experts say the so-called 419 fraudsters named after the relevant section in Nigeria's criminal code steal hundreds of millions of dollars every year from unsuspecting targets.

Mobile network equipment giant Ericsson has filed suit against mobile phone maker Samsung Electronics Co. Ltd alleging patent infringement, Ericsson said on Friday.

"We have filed a lawsuit against Samsung for patent infringement in the US, UK, Germany and the Netherlands," said Ericsson spokeswoman Ase Lindskog.

"The reason is that we have had extensive negotiations with Samsung over a renewal of licences because their agreement with us expired on December 31 last year," she

Ericsson files suit against Samsung over patent

added. "They are using mobile phone patents which no longer have licences."

A spokeswoman for Samsung in Seoul declined to comment.

Patent infringement and other legal battles can be quite common in the tech sector, where companies spend heavily on research and development.

Ericsson was among companies which last year

complained to the European Union about Qualcomm Inc which they said was stifling competition in the mobile phone chip market. Qualcomm later filed a GSM patent suit against Nokia Oyj

"This is an unfortunate action but we must protect our shareholders and investors as we have invested large amounts in research and development over the years," she said.

Nokia must be alert to acquisitions, says CEO

The world's top mobile phone maker Nokia Oyj must keep an eye out for possible acquisitions, the company's incoming Chief Executive Olli-Pekka Kallasvuo was reported as saying on Friday.

"Nokia has to consider acquisitions and cooperation scenarios pragmatically also in the future," Kallasvuo said on the Web site of Finnish business magazine Talouselama.

Earlier this month, Nokia completed its acquisition of US wireless messaging and e-mail company Intellisync, and said it had agreed to form a

CDMA mobile phone joint venture with Japan's Sanyo Electric Company.

Kallasvuo, who is Nokia's chief operating officer and will take over as CEO from Jorma Ollila on June 1, said the company's Multimedia and Enterprise Solutions units were investing heavily in innovative products. "In mobile phone operations we aim for leadership in everything. If you aren't the leader in each sector and segment, you will easily lose out. You cannot be strong in one area and just take part in another," Kallasvuo said.

CNN, Multichoice to host journalist awards

CNN and Multichoice Africa are to host the 'African Journalist 2006 Awards' in Mozambique. Mr. Collins Khumalo, the general manager of Multichoice Nigeria has said, adding that the winners of the prestigious annual award, now in its 11th year of honouring African journalism, will be recognised at a gala ceremony to be held at The Polana Hotel, Mozambique on 15 July 2006.

Speaking at a press conference in Lagos last week, Mr. Khumalo said the awards show the commitment by CNN and Multichoice Africa to developing journalism in Africa and growing this truly pan-African competition. He said: "It is very exciting to be partnering with CNN once again to celebrate and

From Zakariyya Adaramola, Lagos

recognise excellence in African journalism. Holding the event in Mozambique this year will reflect the diversity of our business on the continent and our commitment to the development and growth of an open and free media in Africa."

The competition according to the multichoice GM comprises 15 categories, adding that in the year there is a new Award, the Henry, J. Kaiser Family Foundation Award for HIV/AIDS Journalism. "This will recognise outstanding reporting on HIV/AIDS in Africa and specifically the broad impact of the epidemic across different sectors of society, on individual, communities and nations, and the resilience of the African response to the epidemic," said Mr. Khumalo.

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Malam Isa Abba Adamu
Regional Executive Editor
Africa and Middle East
BBC World Service

We congratulate our dear friend and colleague on the occasion of his appointment to the exalted position of Regional Executive Editor, Africa and Middle East by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) U.K.

This is a great achievement worthy of commendation.

One of the many Nigerians in Diaspora, shining example to others and a good will ambassador to the country.

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KANO TRUST

Dress code: BUK to sanction violators

In order to curb the menace of indecency among students, Bayero University, Kano has taken the bull by the horn by announcing the decision to sanction any student that violated the newly introduced dress-code within the university's environment.

The Vice Chancellor of the University, Professor Attahiru Jega, made the announcement during the official launch of students' dress-code by the university management at the new campus.

Prof. Attahiru Jega explained that both Islam and Christian religions admonished for sanctity by way of proper dressing; therefore students should as a matter of obligation respect the dress-code introduced, otherwise they meet the disciplinary action by the authorities.

The vice chancellor, who also explained that "proper dressing is an important aspect of one's character", however urged students to comply with the new dress-code, which would serve as a defence against any abuse or harassment.

Jega, while addressing hundreds of the university's students at the occasion, said that "The university is not only a citadel for academic pursuit but also an avenue for moulding sound and moral character that is in conformity with both religious and cultural values."

By Ahmed Abubakar,
Correspondent (Kano)

Speaking also at the occasion, Rev. Father Cannon S.K Akobe admonished students to dress properly as enjoined by both Qur'an and the Bible, stressing that proactive dressing could be injurious to one or offensive to others, which may lead to sexual harassment.

The Reverend pointed out that "It is not a good reflection of oneself or society to dress indecently as the dress people wear explained what they are in the society."

The Students' Union president of the university, Malam Abdulrashid Hamisu Kofar Mata, said the students' governments had whole heartedly accepted the new dress-code. He said that, "after a careful scrutiny of the new dress-code, we observed that it is in no way harmful to the pursuit of our academics and therefore endorsed it on behalf of all the students."

He called on his colleagues to oblige and dress according to the new code, which he said would portray a good image of the school to the outside society.

PHCN explains epileptic power supply

The Power Holding Company of Nigeria Plc (PHCN), Kano distribution zone, has blamed the prevailing shortfall in the supply of electricity in the zone that comprises Katsina and Jigawa states on the recent vandalization of pipelines supplying gas to the Afam, Egbin and Sapele power stations by militants in the restive Niger Delta region.

This was contained in a press statement made available to *Kano Trust* and signed by the principal manager, public affairs of the company, Malam Muktar Baffa Usman, of the Kano distribution zone.

It could be recalled that part of Kano metropolis has been experiencing epileptic supply of electricity, which has affected business activi-

By Ahmed Abubakar,
Correspondent (Kano)

ties of those that depend on power for day-to-day activities.

According to the statement, coupled with other constraints, including the isolation of one unit by Okapi Independent Power Producers, one of the IPPS producing and selling electricity to the PHCN, as well as low water level at the hydro stations, were the causes of limitations of power generation in the country.

The statement further stated that as at early this week, generation had dropped by 850mw, making the PHCN to do more of load shedding of the meagre electricity power generated nationwide.

...students demonstrate over electricity, water shortage

Hundreds of Bayero University Student, Kano, amidst anger and frustration demonstrated against water scarcity and insufficient electricity that has bedevilled the students on the campus.

The angry students walked through the streets of the old university campus, chanting slogans condemning the university authorities for showing lack of concern in tackling the age-long water scarcity problem on the campus.

Kano Trust investigation revealed that tyres were set ablaze on the main entrance of BUK gate while motorists plying the route were forced to divert their moves to alternative routes to avoid confrontations with the mob.

One of the rioting students Kenneth who said he

By Ahmed Abubakar,
Correspondent (Kano)

was a level 400 student in the Faculty of Law told *Kano Trust* that "We were forced to pay heavy school fees and yet the school could not provide us with electricity to read in the evening and at nights."

Kenneth also said, "The authorities have been showing preferential treatment to post graduate, school where there is always light even when they are not around."

Another level three hundred female student of Biological Science Department who spoke on anonymity said "the students had been swallowing every bitter pill given to us by the school without complain, but this time around, we will show them (the authorities) the stuff we are made of."

She said, "We are here to study and the school authorities are not ready to give us the necessary enabling environment to do so. In the day, we wrestle with our lectures but during the night when one is supposed to be either reviewing his books or resting, one is confronted with searching for water."

Kano Trust reliably gathered that the students later marched to the dean, Students Affairs in the BUK quarters to express their grievance over the nonchalant attitude of the university authorities towards addressing the water/electricity problems.

The dean in his response to the students assured them that necessary actions would be taken to provide the campuses with electricity and water, as according to him water/electricity are very vital in the lives of serious minded students.

The former Lagos State police commissioner, Alhaji Abubakar Tsav, has expressed dismay over the series of neglect and sufferings suffered by the Nigeria Police, just as he advocated for the payment of N50, 000.00 as minimum monthly salary for a police constable.

Alhaji Tsav, who presented a paper at the ongoing nationwide public hearing of the Presidential Committee on Police Reform held in Kano, averred that the rank and file of the police were subjected to untold hardships, which ranged from non-payment of allowances,

TSAV recommends N50, 000 salary for police constables

delay of salary payment, and insufficient working facilities, among others.

The former police commissioner argued that the meagre amount paid to the police as salary could not effectively shoulder their families' responsibilities.

According to him, police are the bedrock for protecting lives and property of the people as well as ensure peace. However, he said the federal

By Mustapha Isah Kwaru,
Correspondent (Kano)

government failed to unveil viable modalities for their general well-being.

Alhaji Tsav opined that the lingering corruption alleged to have pervaded the nation's force would not be unconnected with negligence they were subjected to.

In his remarks, the *Danmasanin* Kano, Alhaji Yusuf Maitama Sule, explained that the setting up of committee for the police reform was timely due to the problems bedevilling the force.

He advised the federal government to consider the risk of the police in determining their minimum salary.

He advocated for the construction and renovation of police barracks, provision of modern equipment, as well as revamping their welfare.



FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY YOLA

THIRD INAUGURAL LECTURE

Federal University of Technology, Yola hereby announces its Third Inaugural Lecture, which will take place on Thursday 2nd March, 2006.

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TOPIC: PROTECTION OF FOREST BENEFITS AND THE ENVIRONMENT: CHALLENGES FOR THIS GENERATION.

VENUE: Convocation Square

TIME: 4.00pm

Members of the University Community, including staff and students and the general public is cordially invited.

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EKO TRUST

Speaker wants review of constitution in 2007

Speaker of the Lagos State House of Assembly, Hon. Adeyemi Ikuforiji, has said that the Review of the 1999 Constitution should be conducted after the 2007 general elections.

Ikuforiji said this at the South-West zonal public hearing on the review of the constitution organised by the National Assembly inside the Chamber of Osun State House of Assembly, Osogbo.

The speaker explained that, while the House of Assembly believed in the democratization of the review of the constitution, it would be illegal to extend the tenure of the present public office-holders in the middle of their term.

It is in view of this that Hon. Ikuforiji insisted that, Section 137(b) which provides that "a person shall not be qualified for election to the office of the president if he has been elected to

Stories by Olumide Bajulaiye, Correspondent, (Lagos)

such office at any two previous elections," should be retained.

Hon. Ikuforiji, who presented the position of the state at the event, also said Lagos State would be interested in the emergence of two tiers of government, federal and State governments, on the legislative list, stating that local governments should be excluded from the list.

He stressed that there should also be two exclusive legislative lists in the constitution, namely the federal and state executive legislative lists, including Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

In the recommendation, it was the belief of the people of the state that the office of an Accountant-General of the federation account should be created to manage the federation account as a

separate and distinct office from that of the Accountant-General of the federal government.

The state also believed that the Independent National Electoral Commission

(INEC) membership should be constituted by members representing each of the registered political parties in the country, while the chairman and other principal officers of the electoral body should

be elected by the members of the commission. On the fate of the Federal Character Commission, National Judiciary Council and Nigeria Police Council should be deleted from Section 153 of

the constitution. Also recommended to be deleted are sections 157 which refers to these commission and 162(7) concerning allocation of revenue to the local governments.

School fees trigger unrest at LASU

There was apprehension last week among Law graduates of the Lagos State University (LASU), Ojo that Law School attendance may elude them next month.

The university was shut indefinitely on Monday following students unrest triggered by school fee increment.

Although the graduates have obtained the Law School forms, they could not submit them to the Dean of Faculty of Law's office before the school was closed down.

Those who have earlier obtained the forms after

paying the prescribed fees to the faculty were mandated to submit them on Tuesday.

However, when they got to the university gate, they were denied entry into the campus.

Their repeat visit to the institution last Thursday yielded no result as they were not allowed in by security men.

After staying at the gate for about four hours and no official of the university was on hand to collect the completed forms from them, they were dispersed by the po-

lice.

The students' fear stemmed from the fact that the last opportunity for Law School admission which should qualify them to be called to the bar may elude them.

"We are appealing to the university authority to please make arrangement for the submission of our completed Law School forms to enable us join our counterparts from other universities in March which is barely one week from now," one of the students pleaded.

The LASU Law Faculty

has gained a reputation for breeding egg heads for the Law School where they have also won laurels.

Indeed, the Law Faculty products have also become its ambassadors in the Bar and Bench where they shine.

The bone of contention between the students and authority was the increment of fees to N65,000 and N55,000 for fresh intakes and returning students. However, the fees have been slashed to N25,000 and N15,000.

LASG inaugurates NIREC

As part of measures to forestall the spread of the ongoing religious riots in some parts of the country to Lagos, the state government Thursday inaugurated the Lagos Chapter of the Nigeria Inter-Religious Council (NIREC).

The council, which is being chaired by the state Commissioner for Home Affairs and Culture, Babatunde Balogun, is to among other things work to further consolidate on the existing harmonious relationship between various religious groups in the state, especially Islam and Christianity. It consists of representatives of all faiths.

Earlier at a meeting with religious leaders in the state, the governor, Bola Ahmed Tinubu, condemned the crises that have engulfed parts of the country in reaction to a cartoon in a Danish media, noting that it was uncalled for. Tinubu described the "offensive" cartoon as the handiwork of the enemies.

He admonished Moslems to realize that they have enemies around the world who would want to continually portray Islam as a religion of violence and reactionary people. "These foreign political leaders have started losing popularity in their countries and are now using religion to cause trou-

ble in the world. The man who drew the cartoon may have been deliberately used to justify the belief that Islam is a violent religion. But by ignoring them, victory will be that of Islam. Moslems must learn to see things beyond the ordinary," Tinubu said.

The governor called on Christian and Moslem leaders in the state to ignore the riots in other parts of Nigeria and continue to work together and co-exist as brothers as sisters.

Representative of Anthony Okogie of the Lagos Catholic Arch. Diocese, John Aniagwu as well as the representative of the Anglican Communion, E. B. Dahunsi, condemned the killings and praised the proactive measure of the Lagos government.

The Sarki Hausawa of Lagos, Kabiru Garuba, who also commended the initiative of the state government, decried the destruction of lives and properties. He blamed governors of affected states for the poor manner they have handled the crises, pointing out that if similar proactive measure had been taken, the crises could have been averted.

A communiqué issued at the end of the meeting and signed by representatives of both religions resolved that Lagos should remain a

beacon and role model for peaceful co-existence among religions for the rest of the world to learn from.

In another development, the Conference of Islamic Organizations (CIO) at a press conference held at Nigerian Union of Journalist house, Lagos State chapter, condemned the spate of unwarranted killings in Northern Nigeria by those protesting the blasphemous cartoon published against Prophet Muhammad in Denmark and the reprisal attack that followed it in eastern Nigeria.

It however called on Muslim faithful to sheath their swords in the interest of peace.

The representative of the CIO, Mallam Shuaib Abdullah who addressed the conference, stressed that there was no need to fight for Allah or his Prophet using arms and ammunition.

Shuaib, who stated that CIO is an organization of various Islamic associations, central mosques, Islamic schools, societies and body of Ulama across the country, however, condemned the actions of the police officers who were drafted to monitor the protesters in Maiduguri and Bauchi for opening teargas on them at the point where they were to deliver their letter of protest.



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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND SUBMISSION OF MEMORANDUM ON THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY BILL

Sequel to the advertisement of the Committee which appeared on page 43 of *Daily Trust* of Friday, February 24, 2006, we wish to make the following clarifications:

The proposed Public Hearing is not in respect of a Bill for an Act to establish a National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA), but rather a one-day Public Hearing on the Information Technology Bill, sponsored by Senator Iya Abubakar, being a Bill for an Act to establish a legal framework for Information Technology, the National Information Technology Commission and the National Information Technology Development Fund.

Every other Information contained in the said advert remain unchanged.

The general Public and concerned Stakeholders are invited to take note and kindly attend.

Signed:

Senator Saidu Mohammed Dansadau
Committee Chairman

News

NLC moves to correct gender imbalance

The Nigeria labour Congress (NLC) has declared its readiness to correct the nation's growing gender imbalance as part of its efforts to promote women's participation in trade union activities in the country.

General Secretary of the NLC, Comrade John Odah made this known at a three-day workshop on "Developing organised strategies for Mainstreaming Gender in Trade Unions" organised in Abuja. He said that the congress has put in place educational programmes to sensitise trade unionists on the need to have more women in trade unions, especially at the leadership level.

"The issue of mainstreaming gender into the trade union and the wider society had continue to be a problem because it has to do with power relation. Men who top echelon of most trade unions would not willingly relinquish power to women," he said.

The NLC scribe said also that a gender equity policy and National women's Commission were established by the congress to encourage more participation of women in trade union activities in the

By Abdullahi M. Gulloma,
Reporter

country.

He said, however, that some trade unions are yet to implement the gender equity policy mechanism which includes reservation of at least 30 percent of leadership

position at all levels for women.

He therefore called on leadership of trade unions in the country to support women, saying that "if trade unions are able to integrate women fully, the trade union movement would emerge stronger."

Don't hike tariffs, TUC urges PHCN

The Trade Union Congress of Nigeria (TUC) has called on the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) to halt its plan to hike electricity tariffs by over 60 per cent.

Mr John Kolawole, the General Secretary of the TUC made the call in a statement issued in Lagos at the weekend.

"The Congress believes that this is not the right time to add more to the burden of Nigerians who have already been pauperized with payment of huge bills and taxes," Kolawole said in the statement.

The TUC in the statement which was copied to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) also called on the federal government to quickly

reject the proposed hike.

"The PHCN has not lived up to expectations despite the enormous resources pumped into the sector as the economy is still mainly generator-diesel driven," it added.

Kolawole explained that the reason adduced for the proposed increase in the price of gas, payment of License fees of N210 million and 3 per cent of monthly billing to the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission was untenable.

"The TUC wants the PHCN to justify the huge sums of money that has been spent on re-furbishing and rehabilitating its installations for effective service delivery.

"We believe that the frequent hike in the tariffs

Governor Chris Ngige of Anambra has set up a relief committee to resettle over 5,000 displaced persons currently taking refuge at the Army Barracks in Onitsha.

The governor announced at the weekend in Onitsha that a commission of enquiry would be set up by the government to examine the causes of the recent crisis, and the extent of damage.

The committee would make appropriate recommendations to the government, he said during a visit to sym-

Anambra gets relief committee for displaced persons

pathise with the displaced persons.

According to him, members of the committee are the principal secretary to the governor, the special adviser on local government and chieftaincy matters, state accountant-general, the special adviser on security and intelligence and members of the state's Emergency Management Agency.

Similarly, Ngige assured the acting Comptroller-General of Prison, Mr Uche Kalu, who accompanied him on a visit to the Onitsha prison, that the state government would reconstruct the

damaged prison immediately.

He directed the commissioner for works, Chief Emeka Ejikeme, to assess the damage to the prison's administrative blocks and report back to him.

The governor also assured eight inmates of the prison who did not participate in the jail break, that the government would grant them pardon soon.

"For those eight people who never left the prison, their sentences will be revisited and they will soon get their freedom, because they have shown reformed behaviour," he announced.

Sultan tasks Muslims on new moon

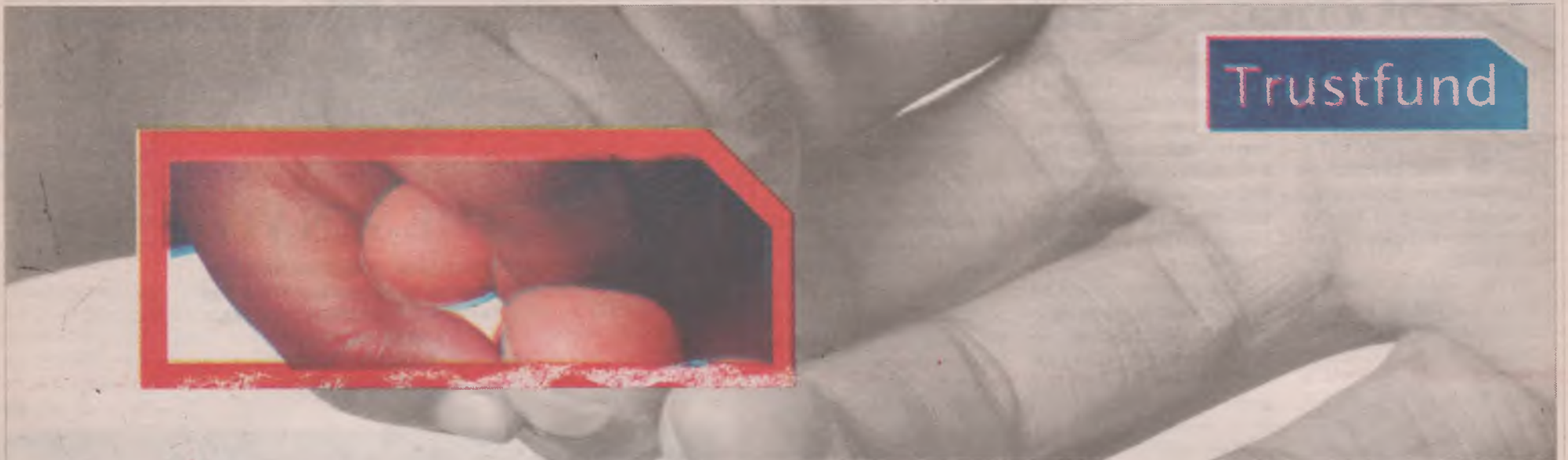
The Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammadu Maccido, has called on Muslims to start looking for the new moon of *Safar* from today, February 27, 2006.

The Sultan said that Muslims with useful information on sighting of the moon should report to their district or village head for onward communication to

By Abdullahi M. Gulloma,
Reporter

the Sultanate Council of Sokoto.

The Sultan, who spoke through Alhaji Babuga Dange, said that Monday February 27, 2006, represents 29th day of Al-Muharram 1427, hence the need to start looking for the new moon.



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Cordially invites all Stakeholders in the Cocoa Industry and the general public to the

2ND NATIONAL COCOA DAY EVENTS

(Theme: INCREASED LOCAL CONSUMPTION OF COCOA)

Which will hold at Calabar, Cross River State from
March 9-10, 2006.

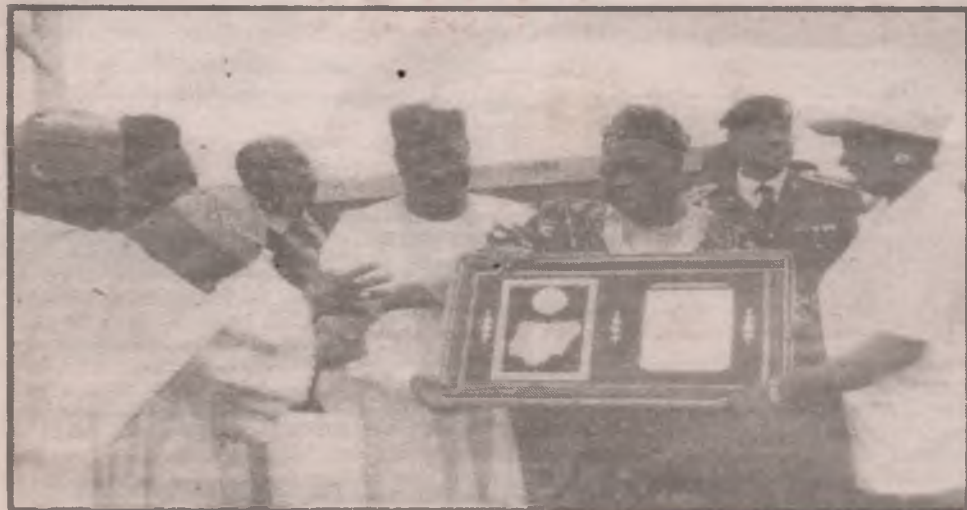
The Events are as follows:

Date	Event	Venue	Time
Thursday, 9 th March 2006	Exhibition	U.J.Esuene Stadium, Calabar	9.00am- 6.00pm
	Symposium	Channel View Hotel, Calabar	3.00pm
Friday, 10 th March, 2006	Exhibition/Presidential Inspection	U.J.Esuene Stadium, Calabar	9.00am- 6.00pm

**Chief Host: Mr. Donald Duke, Executive
Governor, Cross River State**

**Guests of Honour: Executive Governors of the
14 Cocoa Producing States.**

Special Guest of Honour: Chief Olusegun
Obasanjo, GCFR
President, Federal Republic of Nigeria.



President Obasanjo receiving an award for his contribution to the revival of cocoa

industry in Nigeria at the 2005. Cocoa Rebirth and 1st National Cocoa Day Event at Ibadan. With him are Agric. & Rural Development Minister, Mallam Adamu Bello, and Erelu Olusola Obada, Deputy Governor of Osun State and Chairman, Cocoa Day Organizing Committee.

INVITATION TO EXHIBITION ON COCOA

Producers of Cocoa products and providers of farm inputs, machinery, agro-chemicals, financial institutions, and other services are hereby invited to exhibit their products and services at the 2-Day Exhibition of Cocoa at the 2nd National Cocoa Day Programme holding at the U.J. Esuene, Stadium, Calabar, Cross River State from the 9th to 10th March 2006.

Interested exhibitors are invited to contact:

Dr. Akinwale Ojo,
Cocoa Association of Nigeria (CAN),
Benin Ilesha Road,
Akure.

Tel: 080-34072237

Each Exhibitor is expected to pay the sum of
N20, 000.00 at the venue.

SIGNED:

Ama Pepple, OON

**Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of
Agriculture and Rural Development, Abuja.**



AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA PRESS RELEASE

2005/2006 SESSION LONG VOCATION TERM COURSES

1. Application forms are on sale for admission into the Following Long Vacation Term Courses leading to the award of the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.), B.Sc. (ED) and Bachelor of Library and Information Science (B.L.I.S.) degrees. The LVT Programme will run from July to October 2006.

The following programmes are available:≤

- | | | |
|--------------|---|---|
| 1. B.A Ed | - | English |
| 2. B.A Ed | - | Hausa |
| 3. B.Sc Ed. | - | Physics, Biology, Chemistry and Geography |
| 4. B.Sc. | - | Physical and Health Education |
| 5. B.Sc | - | Agricultural Education |
| 6. B.Ed | - | Guidance & Counselling |
| 7. B. ED | - | Social Studies |
| 8. B.ED | - | Educational Administration & Planning |
| 9. B. ED | - | Language Arts |
| 10. B.Ed | - | Creative Arts |
| 11. B.ED | - | Christian Religious Studies |
| 12. B.ED | - | Islamic Religious Studies |
| 13. B.Sc. ED | - | Integrated Science |
| 14. B. ED | - | Mathematics |
| 15. B.ED | - | Home Economics |
| 16. B.B. ED | - | Business Education |
| 17. B.L.I.S | - | Library and Information Science |

Some Postgraduate courses are also available:

- Postgraduate Diploma in Education
- Postgraduate Diploma in Counselling and Human Development

2. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Candidates must be NCE holders with a minimum of Merit "C" Credit, "B" or Distinction "A" in Education in their Main Teaching subject. All candidates must possess one or more of the Following qualifications:≤

- a. The school certificate with Credit in at least five subjects obtained at not more than two sittings.
- b. The General Certificate of Education, ordinary level, with passes at Credit level in at least five subjects obtained at not more than two sittings.
- c. The Teachers' Grade II Certificate with Credit/Merit in at least five subjects obtained at not more than two sittings.
- d. Please note that while the B.Ed. courses are to last for five contact sessions, BLIS will last for six LVT contact sessions for completion

3. SALES OF FORM

Qualified candidates should purchase forms from the Bank of the North (any Branch) and A. B. U. Community Bank, Main campus, Ahmadu Bello University, Samaru Zaria. Sales of forms commence 20th February, 2006 at N1,350.00 only.

4. CLOSING DATE

Completed application forms must be returned to the bank of purchase not later than 2nd June, 2006. For further information please contact Dean's Office, Faculty of Education, A.B.U., Zaria.

Signed:
Faculty of Education.

TRUST CLASSIFIED

KOMADUGU-YOBE BASIN WETLANDS DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

The general public is hereby informed that the above named organisation has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration under part 'C' of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 1990.

The Trustees are:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Dr. Ahmed Ibrahim Lawan | 2. Hajija Jummai Bappah |
| 3. Alh. Goni Ali Sherif | 4. Alh. Umaru Hassan |
| 5. Sarkin Ruwan Wudil Mohammed | 6. Dr. Usman Maiduguri |

Aims and Objectives:

1. To develop infrastructure to address critical problems in the wetlands.
2. To manage and develop the infrastructure effectively to sustain improvement in flooding and flows of water in the wetlands.
3. To build capacity of wetlands communities.
4. To establish and make regular use of a network with other concerned organisation, including media, to support the activities of Komadugu-Yobe Basin Wetlands Development Initiatives.

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar - General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Plot 565, Ndola Square, Wuse Zone 5, P.M.B. 189, Abuja, within twenty-eight (28) days of this publication.

SIGNED:
S. S. Mshellia & Co.
Barristers & Solicitors
No. 8 Amurie Omanze Street
Garki II, Abuja.

AHIL FOUNDATION

The general public is hereby informed that the above named Organisation has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration under part 'C' of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 1990.

The Trustees are:

1. A. A. Machika Esq., pnm.
2. Sheikh Muhammad Hadi Balarabe
3. Alh. Ibrahim Liti
4. Alh. Lawal Rufa'i

Aims and Objectives:

1. Betterment of the society through education, information technology, and modern medicare system.
2. Promotion of scholarship and intellectual development.
3. General welfare of the community as provided under the Islamic system.
4. Integration of Islamic and Western Systems of education

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar - General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Plot 565, Ndola Square, Wuse Zone 5, P.M.B. 189, Abuja, within twenty-eight (28) days of this publication.

SIGNED:
A. A. Machika Esq., pnm.
Pp. A. A. Machika & Co,
(Attorneys & Legal Consultants),
No. 33 Yahaya Madaki Way, Katsina
Katsina State.

MISSING LETTER OF OFFER

I, Lamoni Bako of House 2 flat 3 Garki, Abuja hereby declare that my letter of offer for Plot No. AT/936 Bearing Madaki Gajere Bwari at action Area layout Bwari measuring about 660 sqm2 is missing. Please contact 08046129503, 08059833256 or Bwari Area Council for any information relating to the said plot as request for replacement is been processed.

LOSS OF DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public that the original revenue receipt issued by FCDA with No. 000652861 and Acknowledgment receipt in respect of payment for land processing fees, belonging to Ibrahim Hassan Gusau is declared missing. All effort made to trace the missing document proved abortive

Signed:
Ibrahim Hassan

CHANGE OF NAMES

1. HAJJA GANA WALI, wish to be called MRS. HAJJA GANA WALI IBRAHIM. All former documents remain valid. Unimaid and NYSC take note

I, formerly known as AMINA LAWAL, now wish to be called as MRS. AMINA ESTHER MONDAY EKELE. All former documents remain valid. Federal Ministry of Health and general public to note.

Formerly known as SANI UMAR TORO, now wish to be known as AHMAD MUHAMMAD TORO. All former documents remain valid. Toro Local Govt. Council and the general public to note.

Formerly MISS CHRISTIANA ASABE YISA wish to be known as MRS. CHRISTIE ASABE ANYEBE. Former documents remain valid. Pharmacist council of Nigeria and general public should please note.

I, PRISCILLA IFEOMA OGU, now wish to be addressed as MRS. PRISCILLA IFEOMA AGONTA. All documents remain valid. The Presidency, NEMA and public note.

I, formerly known as MISS IYABO ARIFAYO, now wish to be known as MRS. ADEYEMI VICTORIA IYABO. All former documents remain valid. National Assembly Abuja and the public to note.

I, formerly known as MISS GLORIA CHIKAODI EKE, now wish to be known as MRS. GLORIA CHIKAODI UCHE-JOSEPH. All former documents remain valid. FCDA and the public to note.

THE ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL BUCHTERS, LAGOS.

The general public is hereby informed that the above named body has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration under part 'C' of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 1990.

The Trustees are:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Alh. Sallau Jibrin Kibiya | - Chairman |
| 2. Alh. Nasiri Yargaya | |
| 3. Alh. Dado Guru | |
| 4. Alh. Sale Idi Garko | |
| 5. Mall. Ismaila Dan Kaduna | |
| 6. Mall. Ayuba Umar | - Secretary |
| 7. Alh. Liti Zaria | |

Aims and Objectives:

1. To promote peace, harmony and unity among members.
2. To build members capacity in advancing the trade.
3. To create a forum of interaction among members.

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar - General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Plot 565, Ndola Square, Wuse Zone 5, P.M.B. 189, Abuja, within twenty-eight (28) days of this publication.

SIGNED:
Secretary.

AL-IHSAN FOUNDATION

The general public is hereby informed that the above named Organisation has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration under part 'C' of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 1990.

The Trustees are:

1. Alh. Bala Abdullahi, MFR.
2. Alh. Ibrahim Isa
3. Imam Sa'idu Musa
4. Justice M. D. Abubakar
5. Dr. Mai-Wada Abba
6. Alh. Muazu Isa
7. Mallam Mansur Sodangi

Aims and Objectives:

1. General welfare of the community as provided under the Islamic System.
2. Integration of Islamic and Western Systems of education.
3. Promotion of Scholarship and Intellectual development.

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar - General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Plot 565, Ndola Square, Wuse Zone 5, P.M.B. 189, Abuja, within twenty-eight (28) days of this publication.

SIGNED:
A. A. Machika Esq., pnm.
Pp. A. A. Machika & Co,
(Attorneys & Legal Consultants),
U. B. A. BUILDING KATSINA ROAD, FUNTUA,
Katsina State.

News

Arts and culture can earn forex for Nigeria - Obasanjo

President Olusegun Obasanjo has said that art and culture was not only a means of wealth creation and poverty reduction, but could earn foreign exchange for the country.

The president was speaking to a delegation from the Nike Research Centre for Arts and Culture, Abuja, at state House, Thursday.

He told Mrs. Nike Okundaye, Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of the Centre that, "I share your enthusiasm, optimism, hope and

aspirations for art and culture in the country and I am glad that you have already taken the right steps to get your centre functioning."

President Obasanjo said the idea of establishing a centre for art and culture in the Federal Capital Territory was good, though what you are trying to do will require support from the basic tourism infrastructure we already have."

The president directed the minister of culture and

tourism to visit the centre and submit a report on his findings.

Earlier, Mrs. Nike Okundaye briefed the president about the centre and its activities, including plans to expand facilities and train students in art and culture. She also spoke about the tourism potential of the centre, as well as her current role in offering industrial attachment facilities to Nigerian university students of textile arts in her centre at Oshogbo, Osun State.

Abuja Enterprise Agency was officially launched by the Minister of FCT, Malam Nasir el-Rufa'i, to boost business activities in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

The minister also commissioned the office of the agency and launched the maiden edition of its newsletter. He also inaugurated the board of the agency. Other activities, which took place at the event, included the showcasing of the agency's service by its Chief executive, Alhaji Tunde Popoola. The first batch of beneficiaries of its micro-credit would also be issued their cheques subsequently. The Director-General of the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) delivered

el-Rufa'I launches Abuja enterprise agency

a speech on the "Role of SMEDAN in promoting small and medium enterprises in Nigeria." The country coordinator of the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) also delivered goodwill messages.

Dignitaries at the programme included ministers, heads of government parastatals, donor agencies, heads of international organizations and managing directors of banks.

"Abuja Enterprise Agency is established by the Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) and Small

and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN) with the support of the state and local government programme of the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID). Its mandate is to promote entrepreneurship and assist people who are already in business or are interested in setting up their own businesses in the Federal Capital Territory. Its vision is to be a major vehicle in championing the basic goals of FCT Economic Empowerment Development Strategy (FEEDS) in poverty reduction, employment generation, wealth creation and value re-orientation." Alhaji Tunde Popoola explained.

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Abuja: Plot 100, Colaba Tower, 24 Central Business District, Abuja, Nigeria. Tel: 09-4760535
e-mail: info@pensionsalliance.com website: www.pensionsalliance.com

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SEMINAR

DR. SILAS YISA, Director-General, National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), cordially invites stakeholders in the electronic media (radio and television) to a seminar on "PREPARING FOR THE DIGITAL FUTURE IN BROADCASTING"

ADDRESS AND OPENING
BY

MR. FRANK NWEKE JNR.,
HON. MINISTER OF INFORMATION
& NATIONAL ORIENTATION.

DATE: MONDAY 27TH & TUESDAY 28TH FEBRUARY, 2006.

TIME: 09.00AM-4.30PM DAILY

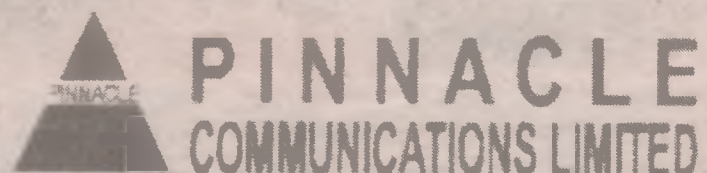
VENUE: OGUN/NASARAWA HALL
TRANSCORP HILTON HOTEL
ABUJA.

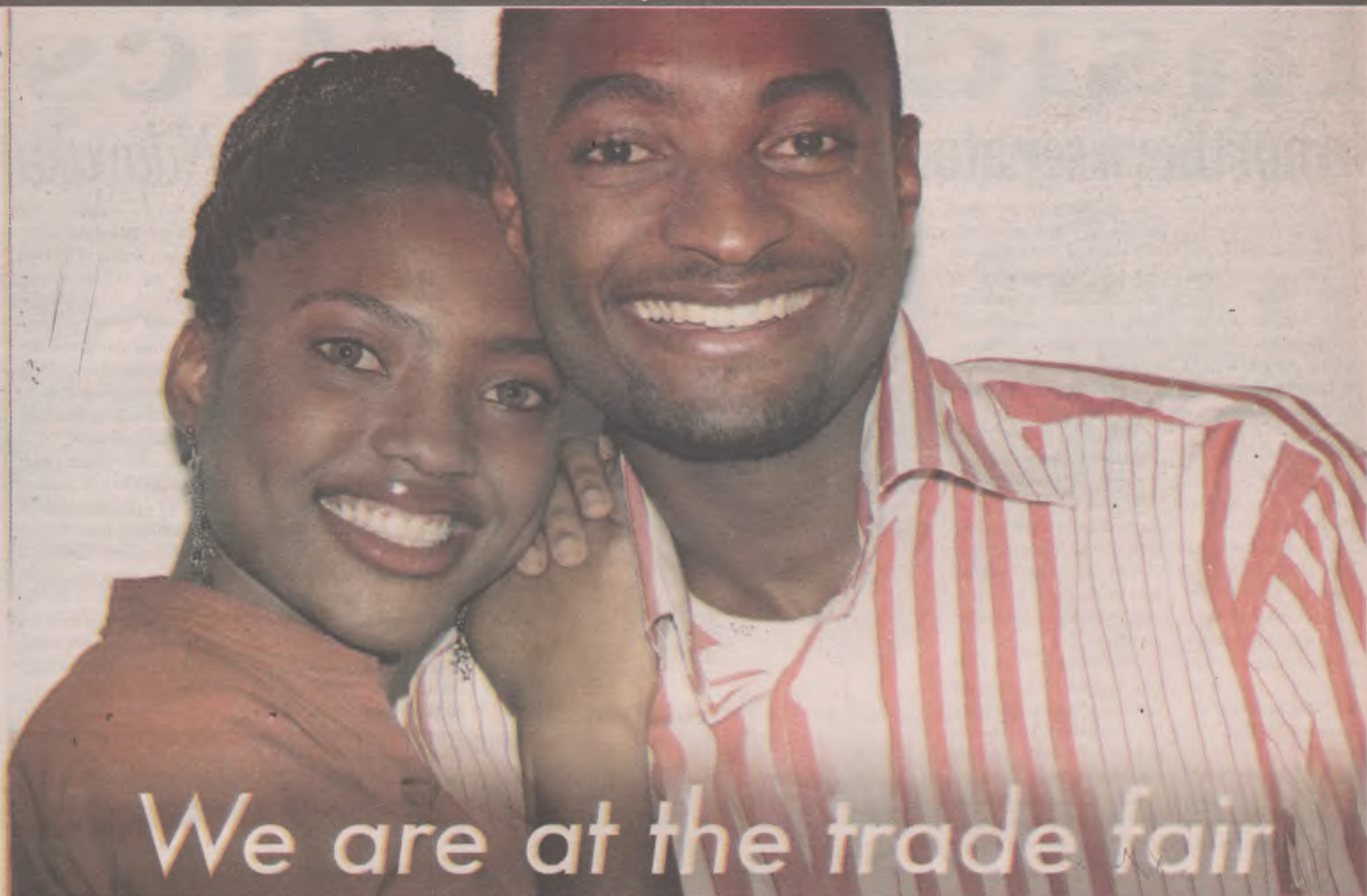
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT,

FRIDAY UKWELA
09-3147527, 08033728400

OLUSEGUN JAMES
09-2345022, 08027458535

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The logo for Harris Corporation, featuring the word "HARRIS" in a bold, italicized, sans-serif font. A stylized, thin, curved line or "swoosh" underlines the letters, starting from the left and ending under the 'S'.The logo for Pinnacle Communications Limited, featuring a stylized pyramid or triangle shape on the left. The word "PINNACLE" is written in a small font across the top of the pyramid. To the right of the pyramid, the words "PINNACLE" and "COMMUNICATIONS LIMITED" are stacked vertically in a bold, sans-serif font.



We are at the trade fair

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Kaduna International Trade Fair.

Theme: Consolidating The Impact of Reforms in
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Date: 17th February - 26th February 2006.

Venue:
Kaduna International Trade & Investment Centre.
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Inside Politics

No northern senator will vote third term – Senator Ndayako

As the third term battle drifts back to the National Assembly this week, a former senator from Niger state, Dangana Ndayako takes a look at the issue and concludes that the bid will be defeated on the floor of the nation's apex legislative body.

Predicting that the proponents of third term are about to experience a "sunset", the law maker from the Bida aristocracy flayed the just concluded public hearings held in six venues across the country. Senator Ndayako who was at the Lafia venue gives an appraisal of what transpired. He spoke with Political Editor, Emmanuel Bello.

Excerpt.

You were at the North Central Venue of the just concluded public hearings, what is your thought on the event?

The fact of the matter is that the decision reached during the public hearings is that Nigerians have unanimously rejected third term. If anyone says this was not the case, he is joking. This rejection is an indication that Nigerians are averse to the issue. Those talking about constitutional amendment should realize that nobody is saying that there are no areas needing changes in the document, but there is no adequate time for that. You can't rush it as this government is trying to do.

If you were at any of the venue, you would have seen the heavy presence of the military. You have to find your way to get in there. You would sense the urgency and desperation on the part of the third termers. But there is no time, like I said, for such a review. The government only wants to force its own agenda because of its failure in the last seven years.

I was at the Nasarawa state, Lafia venue of the hearing. I'm from Niger state, but I went there as a free citizen of Nigeria to observe the proceeding. You should have seen the governor of Nasarawa state, and his behavior was unbecoming of his office. You need to see his commitment to the whole event and he gave the impres-

sion of being an unserious person. He clearly gave himself away as part and parcel of the third term agenda. I can say this of him because I know him very much and if he knows what is ahead of him, he would not be doing this. I know him well enough and his background.

But that is not the issue. The most important thing is that even in Nasarawa state, there is a condemnation of the third term. I challenge him to mention 20 people in support of the matter from his own state. He is only hassling everyone with this third term issue.

And he has no good manners in doing this. A Major General who was a governor for three different states was asked to shut up by Abdullahi Adamu. This happened at the hearings in Lafia. We didn't want trouble there, but the governor would have known what it means to harass a general like that. Chris Garuba was a governor in Benue, Kwara and Kano. All these states are bigger and more vibrant than the state Adamu Abdullahi claims he leads. This is a governor of questionable mandate in Nasarawa state and he is quoted to have said that other governors who stayed away from the hearings have done disservice to their people. How can he say thing like that? It is rather unfortunate.

The governors who stayed away did so on principles and decided that they should not be represented. Those who were there were on their own, not representing the governors. Niger, Benue and Plateau were all away from the North-Central zone. They don't believe in the third term agenda. He who believe in it, think that the other governors are doing a disservice. The Niger state deputy governor was in Lafia, but did he say anything? He was there as an opinion leader.

The governor of Niger state said that the people are not interested in third term and are boycotting. We only went there as opinion leaders. No citizen, no lawmaker believes in it. The only one in Niger state who believes in third term is probably Pro-

fessor Jerry Gana. Same thing for Plateau state. Did you see anyone from there?

meaning.

Forget about this road show of a university and the



Senator Dangana Ndayako

Why do you think Governor Adamu Abdullahi, like you pointed out, supports third term, when it is evident that the north-central zone may not benefit from such a project?

I'm also challenging the governor to show me what he has benefited in the last seven years of democracy from the federal government. Where is even one project embarked on by the federal government? Let him mention three key areas either in appointment or federal presence. There is no drinking water in Lafia. No road, schools, or hospital. What does he want in the third term bid? Is he trying to cover up for all evident lack of achievement?

Or may he believe in the president?

Why won't he believe in Obasanjo? They belong to the same group. I was discussing with one very serious minded person the other day, and he told me that the relationship between Obasanjo and Abdullahi Adamu is the reason why the latter is pushing the agenda. He said that they all want to cover their non-performance. If you look at Nasarawa state, you can not point to any achievement that makes

caricature of convocation. Where is the money? They said it is up to three billion, where is the money? 78% of the students there are not even from Nasarawa state. The state has no money to run the university. Infact, no state in Nigeria can truly run a university and most of the money used in running them were meant for other things. Money meant for developmental purposes, diverted. No state can sustain state universities.

But sir, you are aware that when it comes to third term issue, other governors apart from the Nasarawa state's, like Governor Bukar Abba of Yobe, who said he supports third term on the grounds that "the devil you know..."

(Cuts in). Oga, the devil you know? Well, it takes one devil to know another. Only devils know each other. These people have nothing to offer this country. They

have run this country in the last seven years and what have they achieved in their various states? That is why they are running helter-skelter and the federal government has not given this nation a sense of leadership. And in last eight months, the F.G has nothing but discussed the third term.

Abdullahi Adamu, I keep coming back to him because I was in Lafia, has collected 90 billion naira from the federation account. N90b and nothing to show for it. Go over there and show the result of 90 billion naira in the state. Of course, such a man wants third term. But they would not succeed.

When the matter goes to the National Assembly, no northern Senator, from Mantu down to Dalhatu Tafida will support it.

They would not because they are from a constituency, and they are responsible men.

MAJLISUL SHURA OF TIJJANIYYA KANO

Communiqué of the annual Zikr conducted at the palace of His Royal Highness, the Emir of Kano. By the consultative council of Tariqa Tijjaniyya Kano. All praise is due to Allah the Lord of all creations, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad the seal of all prophets.

The consultative council of Tariqa Tijjaniyya under the chairmanship of Khalifa Ishaq Rabi'u congratulates and rejoices with all Muslims on the occasion of Islamic New Year and prays that the New Year will be a blessing to all Muslims the world over.

As usual the council at the end of this year's Friday Zikr that took place at the Kano Emir's Palace under the leadership of His Royal Highness, the Emir of Kano, Alhaji Dr. Ado Bayero, urges all Muslims to note the following:

1. The importance of unity among Muslims and adherence to their faith as commanded by Allah (S.W.T.) in the Holy Qur'an
2. The council urges Muslim preachers to avoid utterances that may cause disunity and discord among Muslims.
3. Muslims should endeavor to acquire Islamic Knowledge so as to practice their religion accordingly.
4. Muslims should respect one another, be tolerant and mutual understanding among themselves.
5. The council protested and condemned in strong terms, the Danish blasphemous attitude towards Islam and Prophet Muhammad, and urges all Muslims to boycott all goods produces from Denmark and Norway.
6. The council urges Muslims to participate and be counted in the forth-coming census exercise in order to ascertain our large population and exercise our civil rights.
7. Muslims should ponder deeply over 2007 election so as to elect responsible persons that will serve public interest and respect our Islamic beliefs.

Finally, we express our special gratitude to His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Kano State, Malam Ibrahim Shekarau for his unflinching support especially during the celebration of the Sheikh Ibrahim Inyas week and the annual Friday Zikr of the years 2004 and 2005.

We also express our profound gratitude to His Royal Highness, the Emir of Kano, Alh. Dr. Ado Bayero, for his able leadership and fatherly support. May Allah reward him abundantly.

We wish all Muslims happy Islamic New Year.
May Allah grant us peace and prosperity.

Signed:
Barr. Habibu Dan Almajiri
Secretary.

**BORNO STATE FADAMA DEVELOPMENT OFFICE
OF
BORNO STATE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
P.M.B. 1452, SHEHU LAMINU WAY, MAIDUGURI**

**INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR
THE PROVISION OF ADVISORY SERVICES**

The Federal Government of Nigeria has received a credit from the African Development Bank (ADB) towards the cost of the Second National Fadama Development Project, part of which proceeds has been on-lent on the Borno State Government.

The Borno State Government has allocated a part of the credit and her own funds for implementing community level sub-projects and activities in ten Local Government Areas of Hawul, Bayo, Damboa, Bama, Konduga, Jere, Ngala, Monguno, Mobar and Abadam. It is intended that these funds will be applied to eligible payment under contracts to be given out by the Fadama Community Associations (FCAs).

2. It is expected that several Advisory Service Activities (ASAs) at the community level will be implemented in Borno State this year.

3. Selection of Advisory Service Providers (ASPs) will be done by the respective communities on the basis of competitive bidding. To facilitate adequate competition by competent parties, the Borno State Fadama Development Office (SFDO), overseeing the implementation of the project, now invites sealed letters of interest from eligible and competent private and public service providers; on the following activities:-

1. Service providers for training, training materials and linkages.
2. Food crop production, commercial seed production.
3. Specialized Horticultural crops and fruit tree production, seedlings production.
4. Crop protection, Integrated Pest Management (IPM).
5. Livestock production, veterinary care, livestock feed formulation.
6. Fish production (aquaculture), fingerlings production and fish feed formulation.
7. Special production: wildlife domestication, beekeeping, cheese making etc.
8. Agro forestry production (Seedling production).
9. Soil and water conservation,
10. Irrigation, water management, water conveyance systems.
11. Input supply linkages/machinery/equipment
12. Credit supply linkages.

13. Marketing (Marketing information/prices).
14. Business management (record keeping & accounting).
15. Savings and credit supply linkages.
16. Nutritional health.
17. Storage and processing.
18. Management and leadership of groups.
19. Service providers for rural infrastructure (e.g. Feeder Roads, Culverts & Drilling).
20. Enterprise Development.
21. Others.

4. For inclusion in the list, letters of interest, with the document providing evidence of the suitability of the firm, person or agency to be listed for the assignment should be delivered to the office of the **State Project Co-ordinator**

(for the attention of the State Advisory Services Officer) two weeks from the date of this advertisement.

Registration and selection of a Service Provider will be in accordance with the procedures set out in the ADB guidelines.

Public agencies may obtain further information from the office of the **State Advisory Services Officer** in the address below between hours of 8.00am to 4.00pm Mondays to Fridays:

BORNO STATE FADAMA DEVELOPMENT OFFICE, P.M.B. 1452,
Borno State Agricultural Development Programme,
Shehu Laminu Way,
Maiduguri, Borno State.

Attention:

Abubakar S. Ibrahim Birma
State Advisory Service Officer.

SIGNED:

**SABO MOHAMMED
STATE PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR.**

UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT CHOKA, NIGERIA

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Telegrams: University of Port Harcourt
Email: unipor@phca.lnkserve.com



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INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ADVERTISEMENT

VACANCY FOR THE POST OF DIRECTOR OF REVENUE BUREAU

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for the post of Director of Revenue Bureau, University of Port Harcourt.

QUALIFICATION

Candidates must possess:

1. A good honour degree or HND in relevant fields such as Accounting or Finance and Banking plus possession of a professional Accounting qualification (ANAN, ACA, ACCA or ACMA).
2. Must have at least 14 years post-qualification cognate experience.

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

These are as applicable in the Federal Public Service and as appropriate in the Nigerian University system.

SALARY SCALE:

HATISS 15, STEP 1-9

METHOD OF APPLICATION

Interested applicants are requested to forward 10 copies each of their application, with detailed, Curriculum Vitae, including names and addresses of three referees and photocopies of Certificates and relevant Credentials to:

The Registrar
University of Port Harcourt
P.M.B. 5323
Port Harcourt.

The envelope should be marked "confidential and for the attention of the Registrar". Candidates should also request their referees to forward references on their behalf directly to the Registrar.

CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS:

Applications should reach the Registrar not later than one month from the date of publication.

SIGNED:
Messiah Onyige
Registrar

UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT CHOKA, NIGERIA

Telephone: 084-2306090-9
Telegrams: University of Port Harcourt
Email: unipor@phca.lnkserve.com



EAST WEST ROAD
CHOKA
P.M.B. 5323
PORT HARCOURT
NIGERIA

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ADVERTISEMENT

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for the post of Master 11 in the areas of English Language, Mathematics, Science and Computer Science in the University Demonstration Primary School (UDPS).

QUALIFICATIONS:

Candidates must possess:

1. A good honours degree in Primary Education or HND with PGDE plus NYSC Discharge / Exemption Certificate.
2. NCE plus 3 years teaching experience.

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE:

These are as applicable in the Federal public Service and as appropriate in the Nigerian University system.

SALARY SCALE: HATISS 7, Step 1 - 15

METHOD OF APPLICATION

Interested applicants are requested to forward 10 copies each of their application, with detailed, Curriculum Vitae, including names and addresses of three referees and photocopies of Certificates and relevant Credentials to:

The Registrar
University of Port Harcourt
P.M.B. 5323
Port Harcourt.

The envelope should be marked "confidential and for the attention of the Registrar". Candidates should also request their referees to forward references on their behalf directly to the Registrar.

CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS:

Applications should reach the Registrar not later than six weeks from the date of publication.

SIGNED:
Messiah Onyige
Registrar



OFFICE OF THE ACCOUNTANT- GENERAL OF THE FEDERATION

FEDERAL MINISTRY OF FINANCE

ADVISOR TOR FOR GFMIS PROJECT DEVELOPMENT RESIDENT

The Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (GFRN) obtained financing from the International Development Association (IDA) toward the cost of Economic reform and Governance Project, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds toward the implementation of Government Financial Management Information System (GFIMIS), involving acquisition of GFMIS hardware and software and their deployment to government ministries, departments and agencies. GFMIS is aimed at improving the acquisition, allocation, utilization, conservation and accountability for public financial resources through the use of automated, integrated, effective, efficient and economic information systems.

In order to implement the GFMIS, the GFRN wishes to invite applications from eligible applicants for the position of the GFMIS DEVELOPMENT RESIDENT ADVISOR. This position is for an initial contract period of two years and will be located in Abuja, Nigeria. The deadline for submission of application is 18th April, 2006 at 16:00 hours.

The specific terms of reference are:

1. Provide advice and support to the Office of the Accountant General and the GFMIS Project Team on GFMIS implementation.
2. Review and recommend improvements in the existing government financial management system:
 - (i) Review and advise on required changes in financial procedures within GFRN with the objective of accelerating the processing of transactions in line with current international best practice.
 - (ii) Assess both the staff capacity to manage and the users' ability to use the financial management information system which is to be implemented, and advise on requisite training.
 - (iii) Prepare an action plan for improving financial procedures and staff capacity. The action plan will include time frame and cost.
 - (iv) Recommend improved treasury and cash management systems and procedures in line with current international best practice.
 - (v) Advise and assist in the development of appropriate Accounting Policies, bases and procedures and regulations for this process and other training material.
 - (vi) Review and advise on financial procedures within GFRN with the objective of accelerating the processing of transactions in line with current international best practice.
3. Development of GFMIS implementation plan.
Together with the GFMIS Project Team, prepare an implementation plan for introducing GFMIS that can be adjusted to any emerging conditions as implementation begins. This detailed activities, time-frame and cost.
4. Implementation Support.
 - (i) Review and finalize the overall GFMIS implementation strategy (including the rollout Implementation strategy and chart of accounts)
 - (ii) Assess and specify any related managerial, human resources, legal or technical requirements which the GFRN must address during and after implementation of GFMIS
 - (iii) Provide advice and support in the process of acquiring GFMIS hardware and software in line with current best practices.
 - (iv) Assist in the supervision of GFMIS hardware and software Supplier in the implementation of GFMIS.
 - (v) Advise and assist in development of appropriate legal and regulatory framework (financial procedures and regulations) required as a result of implementing GFMIS.
 - (vi) Regularly provide briefing to and document outcomes of routine GFMIS project monitoring missions.
5. Plan and implement a knowledge transfer to the assigned staff in the OAGF on the tasks assigned to the consultant
6. Advice to the OAGF on how the GFMIS would be sustained after IDA Credit has closed, especially as it relates to funding of GFMIS maintenance
7. Carry out any such other duties that were assigned to him by the Accountant General in line with the improvement of the financial management for the GFRN.

The Advisor should have the following specific qualifications and experience:

- 1) Be a graduate professional accountant specializing in public finance and accounting, with at least fifteen years post qualification experience of working in the field of Public Sector Finance and Accounting.
- 2) Have substantial experience of information technology, and the design, implementation, management and operation of Government Accounting and Financial Management Systems in a Ministry of Finance or Government of a Developing Country.
- 3) Have considerable knowledge of government planning & budgeting systems as well as treasury management and their relationship with accounting and other financial systems in a developing country environment.
- 4) Have substantial experience in advising and assisting with the implementation of Government Financial Management Information Systems in a Developing Country
- 5) Would have been involved in the acquisition, implementation and transition management of an Integrated Financial Management Information Systems
- 6) The applicant will also need to have excellent communication skills, both oral and written and should preferably have experience of working in a developing country.

The consultant will work closely with Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation and the GFMIS Project Team.

Time and Residence Requirement: The contract is for an initial period of 2 years. The consultant will be expected to reside in Abuja during the period of the contract.

Signed:
Chief A.O. Oni, JP
Director Treasury Service,
For: Accountant-General of the Federation.

UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT CHOKA, NIGERIA

Telephone: 084-2303090-9
Telegrams: University of Port Harcourt
Email: unport@phslinkserve.com



EAST WEST ROAD
CHOKA
P.M.B. 5323
PORT HARCOURT
NIGERIA

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ADVERTISEMENT

VACANCY FOR THE POST OF DIRECTOR OF ACADEMIC PLANNING

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for the post of Director of Academic Planning, University of Port Harcourt.

QUALIFICATION

Candidates must possess:

An honours degree from a recognized university, in the field of Educational Management and Planning / Business Administration / Mathematics / Accounting / Statistics / Economics / Computer
Higher degrees in the relevant areas will be an advantage.

SALARY SCALE

HATISS 15, STEP 1-9

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

These are as applicable in the Federal Public Service and as appropriate in the Nigerian University system.

METHOD OF APPLICATION

Interested applicants are requested to forward 10 copies each of their applications, with detailed curriculum vitae, including names and addresses of three referees and photocopies of certificates and relevant Credentials to:

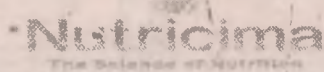
The Registrar
University of Port Harcourt
P.M.B. 5323
Port Harcourt.

The envelope should be marked "confidential and for the attention of the Registrar". Candidates should also request their referees to forward references on their behalf directly to the Registrar.

CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS:

Applications should reach the Registrar not later than six weeks from the date of publication.

SIGNED:
Messiah Onyige
Registrar



VACANCIES FOR EXCEPTIONAL CANDIDATES

We are a new Company that has been recently set up to raise the standards in quality food production. Our Company is affiliated with a major Global food company and is part of a larger multinational Group of companies. A rare opportunity exists to join and be part of a highly exceptional team. We are seeking skilled individuals who have drive, ambition and the desire to give quality professional support service to the Company's operations.

1. BRAND MANAGER: BM/NUT

The Job:

The suitable candidate will:

- ❖ Manage some dairy brands to achieve suitable brand equity.
- ❖ Develop and implement appropriate marketing strategies.
- ❖ Formulate and implement strategic business plans.
- ❖ Set marketing plans for the achievement of annual sales budget.
- ❖ Identify market opportunities and develop appropriate products.
- ❖ Manage, motivate and train subordinate marketing team.

PERSON SPECIFICATION:

The right candidate must:

- Possess a B.Sc degree in Social Sciences or related discipline from a reputable University. An MBA will be an added advantage.
- Have at least 5 years brand management experience in blue chip FMCG Company.
- Possess very good analytical and presentation skills.
- Possess excellent communication and outstanding leadership skills.
- Be adept at advertising, promotion, distribution and marketing research.
- Be organized, energetic and self-motivated.
- Be computer literate with good interpersonal skills.
- Be between 31- 37 years of age.

2. CONSUMER MARKETING MANAGER: CMM/NUT

The Job:

The suitable candidate will:

- ❖ Develop and implement appropriate marketing strategies for the dairy and non-dairy products.
- ❖ Set marketing plans for the achievement of the annual sales budget.
- ❖ Identify market opportunities and develop appropriate products.
- ❖ Manage, motivate and train subordinate marketing team.

PERSON SPECIFICATION:

The right candidate must:

- Possess a B.Sc degree in Social Sciences or related discipline from a reputable University.
- Have at least 5 years brand management experience in blue chip FMCG Company.
- Possess very good analytical and presentation skills.
- Be organized and self-motivated.
- Be computer literate with good interpersonal skills.
- Be between 31 - 37 years of age.

3. TRADE MARKETING MANAGER: TMM/NUT

The Job:

The suitable candidate will:

- ❖ Provide marketing and logistics support to the trade.
- ❖ Monitor competitors' activities.
- ❖ Liaise with the sales team to determine the best route to the market.
- ❖ Co-ordinate all below-the-line promotional activity.

PERSON SPECIFICATION:

The right candidate must:

- Possess a B.Sc degree in Social Sciences or related discipline from a reputable University.
- Have at least 5 years cognate experience in Marketing/ Sales or Logistics.
- Possess very good analytical and presentation skills.
- Possess excellent communication and outstanding leadership skills.
- Be organized, energetic and self-motivated.
- Be computer literate with good interpersonal skills.
- Be between 31 - 37 years of age.

4. FINANCIAL ANALYST: FA/NUT

The Job:

The successful candidate will:

Provide financial report, analysis and project evaluation to meet the development needs of a fast growing manufacturing/selling organization. In addition the candidate will be responsible for capturing, analyzing, interpreting and reporting financial situation to the Managing Director and various heads of units. He will be responsible for forecasting, monitoring, and advising on key areas of the business.

PERSON SPECIFICATION:

- The right candidate should possess a minimum qualification of B.Sc. Finance or Accounting from a reputable university.
- Must also possess professional qualification from ICAN / ICMA.
- The suitable candidate must possess at least 7 years post qualification experience as an accountant / financial analyst.
- Experience in manufacturing industry preferably in FMCG though not essential, will be an added advantage.
- Applicants should possess good working knowledge of MFG pro.
- He must be self-motivated, innovative and capable of working without supervision.
- Must have the capability to communicate effectively with all levels of top management.
- Must be computer literate and well grounded in PC based financial modeling/budgeting.
- Applicants should be between 31 - 37 years of age.

5. MAINTENANCE ENGINEER: ME/NUT

The Job:

The candidate will be in charge of all factory machine maintenance and equipment services. He will report to the Technical Manager and will be required to develop a planned maintenance system including formation of accurate Assets Life Plans. In addition the right candidate will develop a critical spares listing and devise a system for their procurement and storage.

PERSON SPECIFICATION:

Ideal candidate must:

- Have a minimum qualification of B.Sc. Electrical/Electronic Engineering from a reputable university.
- Possess at least 5 years cognate experience in a manufacturing company.
- Possess good experience in operation, maintenance and management of PLC, HVAC, electrical power systems, steam, water, compressed air etc.
- Possess good communication and leadership skills, and must be computer literate.
- Be male, prepared to work extra hours & be willing to do shift.
- Applicants should be between 28 - 30 years of age.

HOW TO APPLY

Qualified applicants should forward their applications and comprehensive C.Vs in the format specified below, stating the relevant reference number to:

The Recruitment Manager

P.M.B 21132 Ikeja - Lagos

or

E-mail: recruitment@nutricima.com

C.V. FORMAT:

Name (surname first), state of origin, date of birth, gender, schools attended with dates, qualifications /discipline with dates, class of degree, previous work experience with date(s), special attainment (if any), contact address (not P.O.Box), functional e-mail address & telephone numbers.

This advert closes two (2) weeks after publication. Only short listed candidates will be contacted.

SPORTS



Wigan Athletic's Leighton Baines, left, challenges Manchester United's Wayne Rooney for the ball during their League Cup final match at the Millennium Stadium, Cardiff, yesterday. United won 2 - 0.

Super Eagles coach, Augustine Eguavoen, has been given a vote of confidence by football fans to lead the national team to the 2010 World Cup.

Though he won the last two games of the 2006 World Cup/Africa Nations Cup qualifiers after he took charge of the Eagles from Christian Chukwu, Eguavoen was not able to qualify Nigeria for the Germany fiesta in June.

The former Eagles captain was also only able to fetch

Fans back Eguavoen for 2010

Nigeria yet another bronze at the Africa Nations Cup in Egypt in February.

However, football fans have voted for Eguavoen to continue in the Eagles job for the next four years when the World Cup would be staged

in Africa.

In a poll conducted by Nigeriansportsonline.com, 80 percent of respondents were for the youthful former General Manager of Insurance of Benin to lead Nigeria's charge for a first World Cup triumph in 2010.

The question, which was run on the home page of Nigeriansportsonline.com was: Six hundred and sixty eight visitors to the website answered in the affirmative while just 147 said no. Twenty eight respondents sat on the

fence, voting that they could not say if Eguavoen should continue to coach the Eagles or not.

After less than six months on the job Eguavoen believes

he is building an Eagles team for the future and had told Nigeriansportsonline.com that his target was to make the semi-finals of the 2010 World Cup in South Africa.

Minister of Sports and Social Development, Dr.

Saidu Sambawa also told Nigeriansportsonline.com that the future of Eguavoen as Eagles coach can only be determined by the Nigeria Football Association, NFA, after the current crisis in the football body is resolved.

Kanu seeks survival with WBA

Striker Nwankwo Kanu has said he is determined to help West Brom avoid the drop from the English Premiership.

"I haven't set myself any goal targets but I'm aiming to keep West Brom up and we are in a better position than we were 12 months ago.

"I hope to take out my disappointment [at not winning the Nations Cup] in the Premiership but the most important thing is that I contribute and so do the other players."

Kanu left his side to play for Nigeria at the Nations Cup, where they won the bronze medal for the third successive time.

"We were disappointed to finish third and the Nigerian fans were also not

happy because they wanted to win the competition.

"But it's gone now, I am refreshed after being given a break with my family by the manager and I want to play my part in helping West Brom climb up the Premiership table."

Although Kanu has recovered from a head injury, he has been warned he will be scarred should it reoccur and lead to further surgery.

"When I went to the Nations Cup, I had to wait a month before I was fully involved.

"I trained but had to be careful with my head. I was on the bench and only started the last game.

"I've been told I will have a scar if anything happens again. But everything is fine now."



Eguavoen

STRANDED SUPPORTERS

First batch arrive home

The first batch of 35 members of the 170 stranded Nigeria Football Supporters Club on Saturday returned home, 14 days after the African Cup of Nations ended in Cairo, Egypt.

They were in Egypt to support the National team, the Super Eagles, which won a bronze medal at the bi-annual soccer fiesta.

The airport correspondent of the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the supporters returned aboard the Ethiopian Airline that touched down at 12 noon at the Murtala Mohammed Airport Ikeja.

The supporters claimed that the Nigerian Embassy in Egypt paid for their return to the country.

According to them, another batch would arrive in the country on Sunday on any airline they manage to secure

seats. Beaming with smiles as they came out of the arrival hall of the airport, they were immediately sandwiched by scores of friends, relatives and protocol staff.

The returnees were among the supporters stranded in the Egyptian capital following a failed arrangement by Bellview Airlines to fly them

home as part of the contractual arrangement with the airline.

However, the airline's public relations officer, Mohammed Habib claimed in an interview with NAN that Bellview did not honour the agreement because the supporters failed to complete payment to enable them despatch an aircraft to ferry them back.

RESULTS

SERIE A

Juventus	3.	Lecce	1
Palermo	0.	Milan	2
Siena	1.	Sampdoria	0
Inter	3.	Udinese	1
Ascoli	1.	Messina	0
Cagliari	2.	Chievo	2
Empoli	1.	Treviso	1

Sports

Eriksson: I can't wait to find new job

England manager Sven-Goran Eriksson insisted he cannot hang around until after the World Cup to find himself a new job in time for next season.

The Swede, quitting as England boss after the tournament ends in July after reaching a deal with the Football Association (FA), is actively seeking a new challenge.

He was adamant he would be prepared work with an English club despite a storm of newspaper stories prying into his private life that have dogged his tenure as the England boss.

He also admitted he "couldn't care less" who replaces him in the England hotseat.

Eriksson said: "If I want to have another football job from August, I cannot leave it until the middle of July because by then all the national teams and all clubs have a new manager.

"I'm without a job from August 1 so why should I rule anything out?"

"I have had no offers. But it's not important if I live in China or Sweden or England. The most important thing is the team I have.

"It depends on whether it's a club or a team with ambitions to win. Do they have right organisation and money to compete with the best?"

Eriksson revealed his intentions as he announced his squad for Wednesday's friendly with Uruguay at Liverpool's Anfield stadium, one of three matches lined up before leaving for the World Cup in Germany, which kicks off on June 9.

There were few surprises in the 23-man group, though Manchester United defender Wes Brown was recalled, having not played for England since the pre-season tour to the United States.

Players missing out have few

chances to change Eriksson's mind before the Swede enters his final tournament at the England helm.

England face Sweden, Paraguay and Trinidad and Tobago in the competition and the Uruguay match gives Eriksson a chance to test his players against South American opposition.

Eriksson has an agreement with the FA, allowing him to talk to potential employers about a new job, between now and the end of the domestic season.

But, as soon as England's World Cup preparations move up a gear in May, he has promised to put his job-hunting on hold and focus all his energies on trying to win football's ultimate

prize.

Eriksson said: "I'm looking forward to the World Cup very much. It is the biggest scene you can be on and we're all dreaming about an extremely good World Cup."

The Swede wants no role in choosing his successor in the England hotseat and his only advice to the new man will be to brace himself for life under the microscope.

Eriksson said: "It's totally up to the FA. I couldn't care less. The speculation means I'm not on the first page.

"If he wants to talk about the job and the press I will tell him a lot. My advice would be to win every game. That's a good start.

"I've loved the job and I still love it and have always been very proud to have it. I'm sorry it will end.

"The job itself has not been harder than I expected but what I didn't know about was the press who are not writing about football.

"The football writers are very good. They criticise very hard when we lose. It's the same in Italy and Portugal and that's fair as long as it's football criticism.

"I didn't know about the other, that you are obsessed with private things.

"I don't think that's a picture of the English people because the English people are very educated.

"Any manager from another country would find this very difficult to understand.

"It would not stop me managing in England again. I'm very stubborn and I don't care very much about what people are writing about me."

Stuart Pearce, Alan Curbishley and Sam Allardyce are the leading English contenders to replace Eriksson after the World

Cup.

Northern Irishman Martin O'Neill and Dutchman Guus Hiddink also mooted to be in the frame.

The FA board will discuss the matter at a meeting on Monday but three coaches identified to work closely with Eriksson when he arrived five years ago seem to have slipped out of contention.

Eriksson said: "I was asked to work with Steve McClaren, Peter Taylor and Sammy Lee

and the reason was because maybe one of them one day could take the job.

"I was very happy with that and said as long as I could have Tord Grip with me that was no problem.

"I don't know if that will happen. I think it was a good idea to have three good young English coaches. They have many internationals between them now."



Eriksson is looking for a new job

Eto'o tries to leave pitch after racist abuse

Barcelona's Cameroon striker Samuel Eto'o threatened to leave the pitch during their 2-0 Primera Liga win at Real Zaragoza on Saturday after being racially abused by the home fans.

Referee Victor Esquinas Torres stopped the game in the second half to ask for an announcement over the public address system to call a halt to the abuse and Eto'o tried to leave the pitch, appearing to say he had had enough of the insults.

The three times African Player of the Year was persuaded to continue by his teammates and Barca coach Frank Rijkaard and the match resumed soon after.

"It was a shame," Rijkaard told a news conference after the match. "Samuel is a human being and he felt bad on the pitch, but I was pleased with the attitude of his teammates who told him to continue.

"He proved he was able to overcome the circumstances and he made a valuable contribution to our victory. It's a real shame that things like this happen as it is thanks to players like Samuel that the fans come to the stadium to be entertained.

"I would also like to say

that the referee acted very well."

Zaragoza's Brazilian striker Ewerthon said he was ashamed of the action of the home fans.

"I'm black too," the former Borussia Dortmund player told the Onda Cero radio station. "I'm a Zaragoza player and totally opposed to the fans who did this. I've been abused too at other grounds in Spain but we need to rise above this.

"The Spanish Federation have to start taking proper measures and we as black players also have to act. We are here to work and if things carry on like this it will be impossible."

Zaragoza were fined 600 euros (\$713.6) by the Spanish Football Federation (RFEF) last season after a section of their fans directed similar abuse against Eto'o.

Earlier this month the club was fined a similar amount after some of their fans directed racist insults at Real Betis's Brazilian forward Robert.

In November Messina's Ivory Coast defender Zoro threatened to halt a Serie A game in Italy after suffering racial abuse from travelling Inter Milan supporters.

Utaka hat-trick hands Lyon shock defeat

Nigerian striker John Utaka scored a hat-trick for Stade Rennes to hand Olympique Lyon a shock 4-1 home defeat on Saturday.

It was Ligue 1 leaders Lyon's first defeat since they bowed to Lille at home in their last game before the winter break in December and only their second of the season.

Second-placed Girondins Bordeaux failed to take a full advantage as they were held to a 3-3 draw on their home ground by bottom side Metz. Bordeaux are six points behind Lyon.

Visibly tired after their 1-0 success at PSV Eindhoven in the Champions League on Tuesday, Lyon lacked pace and inspiration from the start.

Utaka, who had already hit a hat-trick in the 4-1 thrashing of Racing Lens last week, headed home a corner by midfielder Yohan Gourcuff in the 19th minute.

Gourcuff made it 2-0 on the half hour when he beat French international goalkeeper Gregory Coupet after a swift counter-attack led by Youssouf Hadji.

Lyon playmaker Juninho pulled a goal back for the hosts from the penalty spot in the 37th but Utaka slotted

a powerful strike under the crossbar after the break.

The Nigerian put the issue beyond doubt with a 72nd-minute volley to complete his hat-trick.

"Rennes have had the whole week to prepare themselves for this match," said

Lyon coach Gerard Houllier. "Too many things didn't work out tonight. The guys looked a bit tired.

"It's a defeat but I'd rather suffer a good beating like tonight's than lose four times, 1-0," Houllier said.

"We could hardly have expected such a match," said

Coupet. "It's the first time I have suffered such a blow with Lyon. Now, we mustn't get too worried."

Bordeaux could have shortened Lyon's lead to four points.

Instead, having conceded

only one goal in their previous nine league games, they needed Alejandro Alonso's equaliser 20 minutes from time, the only goal of the second half, to salvage one point.

Metz went in front thanks to Souleymane Youla but midfielder Marouane Chamakh scored two goals in two minutes to give the hosts a brief lead.

The visitors equalised when goalkeeper Frederic Roux deflected the ball into his own net before Roy Contout put them back in the driving seat in the 43rd.

"We lost a chance to come back to within four points of Lyon," said Bordeaux midfielder Rio Mavuba. "We were a bit too shaky in the first half."

Metz, who tamed Olympique Marseille 1-0 last week, are still bottom but they kept

their hopes alive of avoiding relegation with 10 matches to go.

AJ Auxerre moved up to third with a 2-0 victory over Toulouse while fourth-placed Lille are at Monaco on Sunday.



Utaka



Eto'o has threatened to leave the pitch following racial abuse at Zaragoza.

Sports



Udinese goalkeeper Morgan De Sanctis, right, fouls Inter Milan's Nigerian striker Obafemi Martins causing the referee to give a penalty in his favour during an Italian league game...yesterday

Burning Issues

with
Patrick Andrew

Dilemma

Mixed reactions have continued to trail FIFA verdict on the lingering impasse in Nigeria football especially following the insistence of some Nigeria Football Stakeholders that they would have nothing to do with the Alhaji Ibrahim Galadima - led board while the latter vowed to execute its mandate to logical conclusion.

Depending on which divide one chooses to pitch tent with the diverse posturing have been gloated upon without due consideration to the aftermath of the sustained impasse on the complexion of Nigeria football. The Stakeholders Congress which succeeded in forming a quorum took decisions which if properly implemented could have profound effect on the country's oasis of peace.

Sadly, many have not seen the detrimental effect FIFA's visionless verdict would have considering that the game rightly or wrongly is under the control of the government that FIFA apparently wants to humiliate. While it might seem pleasant to clampdown on the seemingly unbearable influence of the government in the administration of the game, but employing external force to effect it will certainly be counterproductive. Even then, the state has, unlike in the past when it imposed its candidates without as much as a hoot from any meaningful authority, refrained from acting by fiat in the issue of the NFA executive committee.

One would have thought FIFA National Federations Committee given the diverse negative impact the verdict would have on Nigeria football rather sought for a more subtle means of resolving the impasse without brushing the ego of all sides. Or better still handle in a manner that all would go home with minimal brushes.

I thought FIFA should have under taken to directly supervise another round of elections where all aspirants would be allowed to participate fairly, equitably and at a neutral venue. This is because in fairness to the contenders the operational instrument employed in the conduct of the elections in Kano was grossly violated. The Abuja congress on January 6 also has its own flaws. So, if indeed FIFA wanted to exhibit what many have known it to be, the least expected was for Zurich to, as the judicious arbiter, sought ways of unifying rather than further put a knife in the bowel of the Nigeria football family.

The reasons are clear. The game does not enjoy corporate support as it is in Europe. The state funds the game almost 100per cent. What little comes in from the private sector is barely enough to organize domestic friendly match and often one and far in between.

Inevitably then, the state cannot afford to appropriate funds without having a say in who manages the fund, for what purpose and under what condition. If the NFA is autonomous it must of course not be only when individuals are elected but also in the issue of generation of funds from the private sector.

Even this is an uphill task because sponsors must derive some forms of rebate from the state for doling out funds in support of sports programmes. This is where the elements if FIFA failed to reckon with the peculiar situation of African countries. Every corporate organ identifying with a programme does so in the hope of getting some forms of relief by way of rebate.

The argument that FIFA decided to close its eyes on several abuses of its statutes in order not set undue precedence is not only hollow but begs sound reasoning. It is said that FIFA does not want reoccurrence of the situation where every person who fails to win an election or is aggrieved after an election rushes to call a congress to invalidate the result. But I thought the statutes says that the congress is supreme and has the powers to decide on matters provided the basic provisions not the least quorum are met.

No, it was a political decision taken in bad faith. Perhaps in response to the uncouth manner someone was alleged to spoken to a prominent member of the committee.

Imagine what would become of Nigeria football if indeed the premier and professional leagues fail to have anything to do with the board. Again, what marketer would want to associate with a pariah body? It would seem that the board has authority but devoid of power to function.

As the stakeholders consigned its appeal to FIFA for reconsideration, one expects FIFA not to give vent to anger on the basis of assumed verbal attack on one of its officials. Instead, the overall interest of Nigeria football not the personnel at the centre of the controversy should claim prior attention. The issue of decree 101, should not be raised because it would call to question the validity of the existing statutes even as it would demean what little credibility the Kano elections might have had.

C'wealth Games: NOC probes visa denial

The Nigeria Olympic Committee (NOC) has begun investigation into the refusal of the Australian Government to issue travelling documents to two Nigerian athletes to participate in the forthcoming Commonwealth Games in Melbourne, Australia, next month.

Director of Sports Development, Dr Amos Adamu, disclosed that the NOC has taken up the matter with the Australian Government with a view to

By Patrick Andrew, Asst. Head, Sports Desk

unearthing reasons for the refusal to grant both Chinedu Oriala and Gloria Kemasuode visas to enter Australia to participate in the Games.

Both athletes had been dropped from the list of athletes called up by the technical committee of the Athletics Federation of Nigeria (AFN) ahead of the Games. Though, they made the minimum requirement for invitation to the camp, they were

excluded because they were said to have violated certain rules that compelled the Australian government to clear them personnel non-grants.

Chinedu had placed third with a time of 10.34seconds, while Gloria won the women 100m event with the time of 11.13seconds at the recently concluded 17th Mobile Track and Field Championship held in Abuja.

Adamu said the ministry had been briefed on the development

adding that the NOC has accordingly begun investigation into the matter.

"The NOC has been directed to take up the matter with the Australian authority. We don't know what the problem is but we won't accept denial of Nigeria any chance of winning medals at the Games," he said.

The director, who assured that all athletes invited to camp are entitled to equal allowance, said that the ministry had made provisions for training grants to deserving athletes noting that cognisance was taken into the comprehensive training packages of the respective athletes before disbursement could be made.

He expressed satisfaction with the pre-tournament performances of athletes stressing that all Melbourne bound athletes have intensified efforts to make the final list that would make the contingent to the Games.

"Technical reports from the various camps have indicated steady progress and given us hope of medals at the Games. You know that boxers are in camp so also tennis, special sports which is our strong hold, basketball and athletics have been in for awhile now. So we are on course for the Games whether we have had foreign training tours or not."

The director said that though embarking on foreign tour was desirable but unattainable now, he is confident that the athletes who training at home would benefit as much as they could if they had gone for the foreign tour.

GATEWAY GAMES

Ministry exonerates self from use of pros

The Sports Ministry has distanced itself from the decision making the 15th National Sports Festival: Gateway Games, all-comer's affair.

The organizers of the Gateway Games have thrown open participation thus enabling professionals to feature in the Games.

The Director of Sports Development, Dr Amos Adamu, exonerated the ministry from blame in the decision which have generated controversy noting that it was the decision of states commissioners of sports, who felt that the inclusion of professionals, would raise not only the standard of the games but also enliven participation.

The director said since it was the decision of the commissioners from the various states, who resolved to have established athletes feature at the games, the ministry had no reason to counter them.

He confirmed that the initial concept of the Games was to generate grassroots talents but doubted that the new approach would sustain the original intention.

"You see it depends on what you want to achieve. Gateway is an all-comer's affair because that is what the organizers want. If the intension of organising the Games is to generate fresh talents then allowing professionals

to participate defeats that purpose.

"The ministry has little or no say in this because the commissioners, who administer the sports at the state levels, believe that throwing it open would be the best approach to raise the desired standard of the Games."

The organizers of the Games which is scheduled to hold from April 6 want the doors thrown open to allow a limited number of established athletes to participate at the Games. Accordingly, it was resolved at a recent meeting that each state is entitled to 11 professionals including five

footballers and that only three of such professionals could be used per game.

However, the Edo State Director of Sports, Brown Ebewele, said the decision was not unanimous, stressing that it would negate the original intension of using the Games to generate fresh talents. Though he said his state, which has consistently won the festival was not at a disadvantage, Ebewele argued that several states would be cheated.

Besides, some states have accused Ogun State of undue commercialization of the grassroots fiesta originally meant to galvanize youths from the various sections of the country for social integration.

Hamilton cautions over 2008 Nations Cup

Former Super Eagles coach Paul Ebie Hamilton has been reacting to Nigeria's placing in the Nations Cup 2008 qualifiers.

He has warned the Eagles not to underrate Lesotho, Uganda and Niger Republic, Nigeria's opponents in group 3.

The former coach of the Eagles told Brilafm.net that this will be at Nigeria's peril.

He also said all hands

must be on deck to do the right thing at the right time before it is too late.

He blamed soccer administrators for the woes of Nigeria in football while hinting they must live up to expectation this time round.

On the imbroglio rocking the house of football in Nigeria, he sees FIFA's action as

undue interference, stating the situation is not beyond Nigeria to handle.

"This is purely an internal issue that can be perfectly taken care off by Nigerians. I'm now calling on all Nigerians to put hands on deck to ensure the crisis is resolved amicably," he said.



DAILY TRUST

MONDAY COLUMN

Monday, February 27, 2006

EDITORIAL

Obasanjo and continuity of reforms

President Olusegun Obasanjo's passion for his administration's reforms was once again in public glare penultimate week when he spoke at the 10th Murtala Muhammed Memorial Lecture on the imperatives of sustaining those reforms upon which he hinged the growth of the economy, and of democracy. Alluding to what he said the Singaporean leader, Mr Lee Kwan Yew told him personally of that country's development process, President Obasanjo, stressed that his government's reforms were already yielding fruits.

"The issues raised (by Straw) which border on corruption, good governance and transparency must be worked on concurrently and continuously. Like happened in Singapore, it is not about a miracle; we did a few things right. We will continue to do them right. We here in Nigeria are doing certain things right. The world has acknowledged it that we have been so committed almost to a point of naivety," President Obasanjo said. The British foreign secretary who was the guest lecturer at the Murtala lecture had earlier listed 10 key challenges facing African countries to include tackling corruption, conflicts, terrorism and illegal migration, as well as ensuring good governance, transparency and accountability.

While the imperative of sustaining government policies is indisputable, President Obasanjo's passionate assertions about continuity came at an inauspicious moment when an alleged bid to elongate the tenure of political office-holders in the country, especially that of the president, has heated up the polity. It is therefore no surprise that a cross-section of Nigerians view the president's assertion with suspicion. However, in assessing the ongoing reforms of the Obasanjo administration vis-à-vis the desire to sustain them, it is pertinent to situate them in the context of whether they have enhanced good governance, and impacted positively on the lives of Nigerians. It is clear from the efforts of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission's (EFCC) that the government's anti-corruption drive is yielding sour results. But this battle against corruption and other aspects of the economic reforms of the administration can hardly stand the test of time, because it can only succeed within a comprehensive framework that could enhance the growth and development of the human and capital resources of the country. It is sad to say that at present such a framework is non-existent.

It is pertinent to note that a sustained fight against economic and financial crimes may fail in a nation where the president himself has consistently refused to implement budgets approved by the parliament. Proper implementation of budgets, undoubtedly, should be the take-off point of any serious economic reforms.

No matter how well the government's economic policies are packaged, the chances of success are whittled by the whimsical manner in which it treats the remunerations of its workers, including those who are law-enforcers. The nation just survived police strike scare that would have been the second in the country's history, all under the same Obasanjo administration.

Turning to other aspects of the reforms like the bid to create 70,000 jobs through the instrumentality of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) blue print, the banking reforms, the mass retrenchment and the monetisation policy in the public service, and a host of others are largely hurriedly conceived and handed down to stakeholders without consensus of a broad spectrum of the nation's populace. This is even more so when some sectors which are critical to the overall development of any nation such as the railways, electricity supply, and security of lives and properties receive scant attention from the same government that preaches reforms.

This is certainly not the way any responsive government should put up its reform policies, particularly under a civilian dispensation that hopes to nurture and sustain a democratic culture. The president also needs to be reminded that no reform policy that is built on popular consensus would be truncated by any incoming administration. After all, government is conceived to be a continuous process, which is why the tenure of civil servants is made permanent to carry on with policies of any political leadership whose term of office lapses.

OBJ can't run, won't run

By Tunde Asaju

I have just finished reading an epic written by a living legend - Nelson Mandela. It is called *Long Walk to Freedom*. As I pored through that voluminous book, I was looking out for a reference to Nigeria. It finally came in the dying chapters where Mandela was talking about the fast-tracking of his long walk to freedom. There, Mandela wrote about the role of General Olusegun Obasanjo as a member of the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group. He wrote about how General Obasanjo rallied other members of that influential group to stifle apartheid and starve its supporters thereby making the ground smooth for the eventual release of Mandela.

Now, let the critics draw their swords, but there are a lot of similarities between Mandela and Baba. Both men were prisoners of conscience - Mandela for his dogged fight against injustice and Obasanjo for daring the institution that made him. Both men have at different times ruled very big countries. Obasanjo campaigned for Mandela's release and Mandela equally campaigned for Obasanjo's release. I guess that proves the dictum - be kind to those you meet on your way to the top, for you might need them on your way down.

Coming across that passage in the book, something gave inside me. First, I became happy - happy to be a Nigerian,



President Olusegun Obasanjo.

happy to be an African; happy to know several elder statesmen; happy to be a student of history and a watcher of it; happy to note that in sometimes unbelievable chronicle of history, there are identifiable icons and living legends.

For it is not difficult to see how writers of contemporary history edited 400 years of slavery, the extermination of over 18 million Africans from the books and elevated the equally ignoble act of the holocaust. Mandela literally moved from prison to the Presidency just like Obasanjo. Mandela was in prison for nearly three decades while Obasanjo had a taste of his own medicine; he was seen in his circle as trying to sabotage a system that spruced him up.

The comparison does not end there. Both men won popular mandates. Obasanjo, for fear of the consequences of the unknown handed over power in 1979. Mandela, knowing that leadership, like acting, is best quit when the ovation is loudest decided to throw in the towel (pardon the pun on Mandela the pugilist). On the other hand, Obasanjo chose to seek a second term - why? Well, because in summing up the totality of what he had seen in four years of governance, he summed it up and got the word decay!

Nothing stirs in the true messiah than the sight of decay. Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was born like any Arab, but he saw decay and allowed Allah to prompt him. Jesus Christ was born to a mere carpenter and ought to have enjoyed his life as a villager but he also answered the messianic call. Fidel Castro was born to a privileged bourgeois and chose to commit class suicide. Jerry Rawlings was born half-Scot, half-Ghanaian; he could have taken the first visa to Glasgow, but caught the messianic bug. He paraded all his predecessors and despatched them (timely or untimely) to their Maker.

OBJ did not have a messianic motive. In fact, in all his writings, he has hardly ever introduced us to the circumstances of his birth or the heroic feats of his progenitors. He had no money to go to secondary school and like Jerry Useni, he answered the call of the army. Murtala it was whose death propped Obasanjo into public limelight; he would have retired an inconsequential general (and there are scores of them), unsung except in the military. In trying to preserve the Murtala legacy, OBJ transformed from a common general into a nationalist - overnight. And for that, he is eternally grateful - grateful to Dimka for a costly adventure.

That is enough to imbue in any man a messianic motive. And say what you may about Baba, he is passionate about this country. He is passionate about the decay and the need to clean the Aegean stable. He also knows like Charles Swindoll that God never tied the latches of any man's shoe - he gave them hands to do it. Since Israel in the beginning of creation asked for a king like other nations, God has retired from ruling any people. He sends them messiahs - OBJ knows that. You and I know that.

When messiahs die, they live proselytes. The Prophet of Islam left his; Jesus left his 12 disciples; Sardauna left Gamji and Yar'Adua left PDM. When OBJ left in 1979, he handed over to a retired teacher. Today, there are too many retired teachers to make rational choices. Baba, like Nigeria, is in a dilemma. He has not built a Gamji; he is not even trusted by his ethnic group and some Christians vow he is too close to the fraternities to be a good disciple - Nigerians!

Baba has come to a bad junction in his political troubadour. Those who are asking him to commit Nelson-cide are very unfair. Mandela had an Mbeki to hand over to - who does Baba hand over to? Nigerians are looking at his miserable retirement and imputing sacrilegious motives. I know that Baba won't run. He can't run and it has nothing to do with radiculopathy! Far from it. He still plays squash till the wee hours of the morning every day of the week and there is no distraction - Stella is truly dead. But I warn you all, there is nobody who'll miss Baba in Otta OFN (Obasanjo Fools Nigeria). Reason - bird flu. Bird flu is ravaging Nigeria and having made Sambawa jobless post-2007, its next port of call is Otta. Don't ask me how I know.

Baba is a man of passion, but unfortunately one man's passion is manure for another man's greed. This explains why Baba's passion is not shared by most even within his own cabinet. The economy, if you ask cynics, continue its slide in spite of the magic wand waved by Okonjo-Iweala; there is escalation of social insecurity in spite of the yearly 40,000 increment to the police force, the sacking of two IGs and all the benevolence of Baba to the police (don't mind the NUP). That explains why it took five years to sanitise (really?) the banking industry. That explains why after several budgeted billions, poverty has immunised itself against every attempt to curb it. That explains why Nigeria does not have a national electricity average for electricity compared to Ghana which is not a giant, and has neither petrol nor abundant natural gas to feed its power stations. That explains why a country as small as Egypt has a civil service that is almost three times that of Nigeria and is not retrenching while we are. Look, the list is endless and I hate whining.

What bothers me is that some enemies of these landslide victories think that Baba of Africa wants a third term. So far, Baba has never nursed any such ambition. It has never entered the mind of Baba to stay a day longer than May 29, 2007 - bird flu inclusive. Forget the dance of Nasir Mantu - he is grandstanding. Baba's statement is here as evidence - he will do nothing to flout the constitution. Now, how many of you have read the constitution? It was written by Hausa people and inside it is an anagram - *tazarrce*. Nobody who has no white beard can read it. But if you insist that Baba must leave, wipe out bird flu and bring back Stella! Simple.

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