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The Guest Speaker, Alhaji Yusuf Maitama Sule delivering his address during the launching ceremony of the National Mosque Appeal Fund held at the Eagle Square, Abuja... yesterday. Pix: Joe Oroye.

## N2.5bn raised for national mosque rehabilitation

Over N2.5 billion out of the projected N5 billion was yesterday realised on the spot at the fund raising for the rehabilitation and completion of the national mosque, Abuja.

The chief launcher, Alhaji Aminu Alhassan Dantata made the single highest donation of N250 million.

President Obasanjo was in charge of proceedings yesterday, challenging Muslims and Christian faithfuls in the country to cultivate the virtue of love and good neighbourliness which he said are universal factors that promote the common good of humanity.

and their friends collectively donated N210 million. Kano state government donated N100 million, Zamfara state government and people N200 million while the governments of Bayelsa, Rivers Osun and Oyo collectively donated N80 million.

Addressing the mammoth crowd that turned out to witness the launch at the Eagle square, Obasanjo called on both Muslims and Christians to live together in peace while stressing that the national mosque is a national monument.

"I believe that love is a

President Obasanjo, Vice President Atiku Abubakar

Contd. on Pg 2

# Confab may seek referendum

## No-go areas to be discussed

Chairman of the national political reform conference, Justice Niki Tobi, said yesterday that the conference would ask for referendum on its recommendations, and that the 'no go' areas listed by President Olusegun Obasanjo will be

discussed. The president had in his inaugural speech to the conference on February 21, listed eight 'given' and 'minimum' areas which have widely been interpreted to mean ar-

reas that should not be discussed by the conference. Speaking yesterday at the end of the debate on the speech, Tobi said the aggregate opinion of delegates was that there were no 'no go' areas and that even if there were, the conference would discuss them.

During the debate that lasted nine days, delegates canvassed an open agenda for the conference and vowed not to respect the 'no go' areas.

Tobi said based on the debate, "delegates agreed that the speech did not contain 'no go' areas. And even if it contains 'no go' areas, this conference will go into

## - Tobi

such areas." He added: "The discussion was more in favour of federalism and presidentialism and members essentially agreed that there should be a referendum."

He described the debate as robust and said that the

delegates scored Obasanjo high. "Delegates scored Mr. President and I think it's a pass mark," the chairman said. At yesterday's session, delegates focused on reforming the electoral system, war against corruption and devis-

## PDP expels Ngige, Uba

The Anambra State Governor, Dr. Chris Ngige and his estranged political godfather, Chris Uba, have ceased to be members of the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), following their expulsion yesterday by the National Executive Committee (NEC).

Also, the board of trustees chairman, Chief Tony Rivers state.

The eight 'no go' areas listed by Obasanjo were "the oneness of Nigeria; federalism and federal system of government; presidentialism; multi-religiosity; federal character; popular participation; the fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy; and separation of powers."

## FG stops govts from deducting LG funds

The Bill for an Act to check "the continuing diversion of funds allocated to local governments from the federation account presented to the National Assembly by President Olusegun Obasanjo has been harmonised and is ready for

the president's assent to stop what the lawmakers described as widespread diversion of local government funds by state governments. Presenting the harmonised copy of the Bill to the Senate,

chairman of the conference committee, Senator Udoma Udo Udoma and his deputy, Hon. Alex Nwofe, said: "We are happy to report that, as a result of our common determination to ensure that we bring out a law as quickly as possible to check the con-

The PDP NEC meeting which was attended by President Obasanjo, Vice President Atiku Abubakar and many PDP governors, also resolved to probe Governor Joshua Dariye of Plateau State over allegations of money laundering. The probe panel is to be headed by Governor Donald Duke of Cross

## NUB may merge with FCMB

NUB International Bank Limited has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with First City Monument Bank (FCMB), signaling that the two banks may eventually merge if other conditions for the process are successfully concluded.

The Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of

NUB, Alhaji Mohammed Imam Yahaya, who disclosed this at the bank's Customers' Forum held in Lagos on Tuesday, stated however that the bank was still going ahead with its three-prong consoli-

dation strategy. Against this backdrop, therefore, NUB International Bank is still going ahead with its private placement, after which it will go to the capital market and open its initial public offer (IPO).

The bank's target in the IPO is to raise N15 billion which will enable it meet the

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# News

ing a cost-effective presidential system.

Retired Air Commodore Jonah Jang (Plateau), warned that if the political parties and the electoral system were not reformed, the nation's democracy will collapse.

He said the credibility of the electoral system was waning by the day, as he said, most of the present elected public officers rigged their way in.

Jang called for the institution of a unicameral legislature and constitutionally specified number of political appointments to cut the cost of governance and lamented that an unmentioned state governor once appointed over 200 advisers to help rig his way in the next elections.

Chief Olusola Oke (Ondo), also questioned the presidential system and suggested a

## Confab *Contd. from Pg 1*

hybridisation with the parliamentary system.

He also questioned the "lopsided" creation of states and local governments and an unfair revenue allocation, saying there were elements who wanted to maintain the status quo in the conference and vowed that they will be put to shame.

The campaign for resource control also persisted yesterday with Oke and Samson Agbaro saying that the Niger Delta agitation was misconstrued. They argued that the issue was environmental degradation which must be addressed through the channelling of more funds to the area.

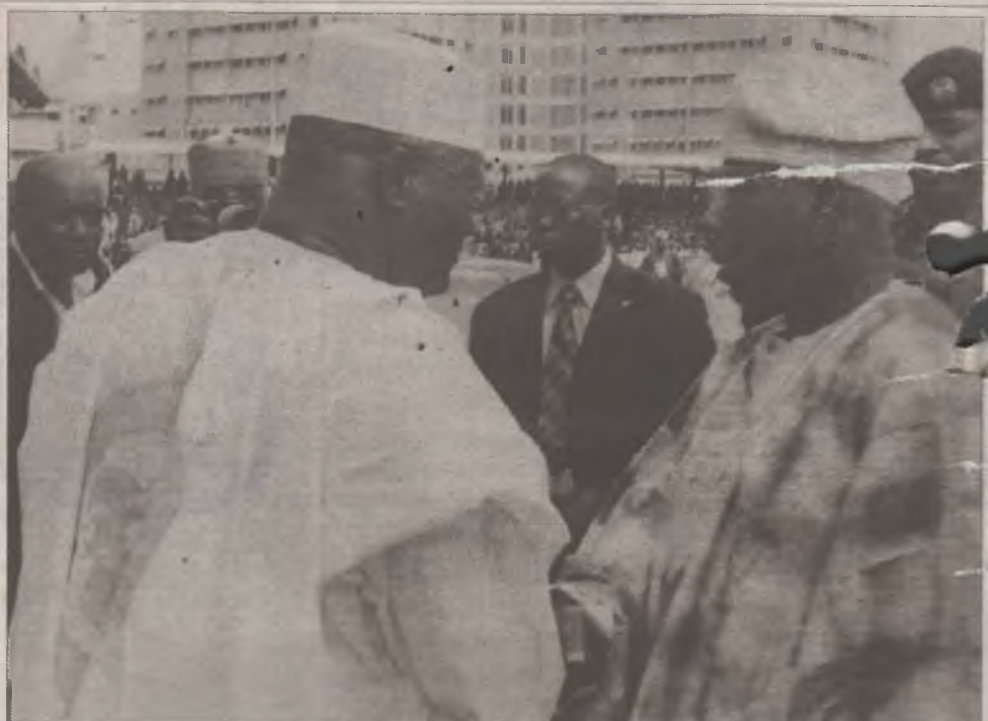
But Alhaji Aminu Ringim contended that the world was now looking elsewhere for development, saying that information technology rather

than minerals should be given priority as this was the global vogue.

Ringim also called for unrestricted debate where people like Chukwuemeka Odumegwu-Ojukwu, Wole Soyinka, Yusuf Bala Usman and Abubakar Rimi come and say their minds.

In his address, Idris Abdullahi frowned at how governments use public funds to sponsor pilgrims to Jerusalem and Saudi Arabia, saying this must stop as Nigeria was a secular state, while Mansur Sani harped on true federalism where powers would devolve to the federating units.

On his part, Saad Maiyaki criticised the N25 billion recapitalisation policy, lamenting that it would throw many people out of job.



President Olusegun Obasanjo exchanging greetings with his Vice Atiku Abubakar during the launching ceremony of the national mosque appeal fund held at the Eagle square, Abuja... yesterday.

Pix: Joe Oroye.

## National mosque *Contd. from Pg 1*

common universal factor. And if that is the case, then love means that you are involved in a common good. It is something that should concern all of us. We have to show good neighbourliness.

"The national mosque is a place of worship of the Almighty God. Nothing should be done to diminish or undermine that importance," he said, pointing out that everything will be done not only to rehabilitate the mosque but also complete the rest of the sections of the building which were abandoned due to paucity of funds," he promised.

Speaking before the official launching, *Danmasanin* Kano, Alhaji Yusuf Maitama Sule, said: "All religions teach the same moral values. The mode of worship is different but the objective is the same, the worship of one true God. Islam has come to corroborate other religions of God and not to destroy it. Let Muslims and friends of Mus-

lims contribute to this worthy cause. Here is an opportunity for Nigerians to show the world that we are one in spite of religious differences.

The Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammadu Maccido, said the debilitating condition in the nation cries for urgent attention.

Explaining that neglect has put the mosque in a terrible condition, he commended Obasanjo for his initiative.

In his welcome address, chairman of the fund raising committee and Nasarawa State governor, Alhaji Abdullahi Adamu, said the occasion offered a chance to rehabilitate the mosque and complete other remaining projects.

He described the mosque as a monument and a unifying edifice for Muslims, adding that the project which was completed in 1986 is yet to include a clinic, library and schools.

## FG *Contd. from Pg 1*

tinuing diversion of local government funds," adding that: "The mischief intended to be cured by this Act is the diversion of allocations meant for local governments."

When the Bill becomes law, each state government must render accounts of how each local government's allocations was spent on monthly basis to the Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC), default of which attracts surcharge in the state's next allocation from the federation account and shall be credited directly to the affected local government.

"Any person who acts in contravention of the provisions of above, commits an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine twice the amount altered, deducted or re-allocated illegally, or imprisonment for a term of five years or to both such fine and imprisonment."

The new law prohibits state governments from borrowing money from funds allocated to local government

councils while empowering the accountant general of the federation to scrutinise the monthly expenditure of every local government.

Membership of the Joint Local Government Account Allocation Committee for each state consists of: (a) the commissioner or any officer charged with the responsibility for local governments in the state who shall be chairman, (b) a commissioner of the Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation and Fiscal Commission provided that the commissioner shall not serve in his own state, (c) all chairmen of the local governments in the state (d) representative of the accountant general of the federation and the accountant general of the state.

The committee will among others: "monitor the payment and distribution of the funds allocated to local governments so as to ascertain the actual amount paid to each local government." Section 7, sub section 1 of the Act provides that: "It shall be unlawful for any organ, authority

## PDP *Contd. from Pg 1*

Anenih, will lead a nine-man committee to probe the National Working Committee (NWC), over allegations of misappropriation of party funds and their role in the Anambra crisis. Both Anenih and Duke's committees have been given one month each within which to turn in their reports.

The national secretary of the PDP, Chief Vincent Ogbulafor, who confirmed the decisions while fielding questions from newsmen shortly after the NEC meeting, said it was to reposition the party to shore up its prospects and to entrench discipline.

Although the meeting held behind closed doors, after the brief opening ceremony, the decisions were reached following recommendations of the report of the panel of inquiry into the political disturbances in Anambra state headed by Governor Olagunsoye Oyinlola of Osun State.

Before approving the expulsion, the national chairman of the party, Senator Ahmadu Ali, had in a memo, presented the opinion of the

NWC on the matter to NEC. "NEC is therefore invited to approve the expulsion of Dr. Chris Ngige and Chief Chris Uba having found them guilty of breach of Article 16 (II-XI) of the PDP constitution."

Ali however added that NEC may refer the recommendations of the panel regarding expulsion of Ngige and Uba to a separate committee for further investigations.

Ali informed NEC that the panel in its report, noted that the rift between Nige and Uba worsened the crisis in Anambra state, adding that both failed to come to terms with the agreements reached before, during and after the gubernatorial elections of April 19, 2003.

The panel, Ali said, reached the conclusion that Ngige discarded caution in entering all kinds of agreements in a bid to emerge governor, while Uba regarded his participation in the 2003 elections in Anambra "as an investment and therefore feels most unhappy that instead of reaping patronages from the Ngige-led government, he has been harvesting bruised ego and bad image."

The panel also observed that a major fallout of the crises is the non-conduct of the local government elections and recommended that the elections be conducted immediately.

Making clarifications on the resolution to probe Dariye, Chief Vincent Ogbulafor explained that it was to investigate the money laundering allegations and to examine the circumstances of his arrest by the Metropolitan police in London. The recommendations of the Governor Duke-led committee will determine the action of the PDP.

On the anticipated dissolution of the NWC, Ali's memo to NEC read in part: "However, NWC notes the recommendation of the panel for the dissolution of the NWC on the allegation that some NWC members benefited from the crisis (in Anambra). It was also alleged that NWC did not do enough to contain the crises."

But in a nutshell, NWC believes that those accused would have been given the opportunity of fair hearing.

## FG lifts sanctions on Togo

By Elkanah Chawai,  
Reporter (Foreign Desk)

The federal government has lifted sanctions imposed on Togo following the illegitimate rectification of the constitution that saw the ascension of Faure Gnassingbe as the president after late Gnassingbe Eyadema's death.

The new stand was revealed in a press statement made available to *Daily Trust* yesterday and signed by the president's spokesperson, Oluremi Oyo.

This is coming at the heels of a similar act by ECOWAS after Faune Gnassingbe bowed to international pressure to step down and the Togolese parliament reverted the constitution to the original before the death of Eyadema.

During the political impasse in Togo, Nigeria's relations with Togo became frosty after President Olusegun Obasanjo advance team plane was refused landing.

President Olusegun Obasanjo immediately recalled the Nigerian ambassador to Togo, Ambassador Thomas Aguyiyi-Ironsi, and frozen diplomatic relationship with Togo.

The statement said that Nigeria's ambassador will return to Lome and Nigerian airlines can resume flight operations to Lome.

## NUB *Contd. from Pg 1*

N25 billion recapitalisation requirement even before other procedures for the planned merger would be concluded.

Yahaya who expressed optimism that NUB will meet its target during the public offer, however reiterated that if its plans are stalled, the MOU with FCMB as well as other arrangements with other like-minded banks will save the day.

Speaking at the event graced by Mr Atedo Peterside of Investment Banking and Trust Company Limited (IBTC), Chief B. Evuluku, Chairman Travlex Nigeria, NUB Managing Director and Chief Operating Officer (COO), Mr. Danjuma Ocholi, Alhaji Mohammed Makarfi, a director of the bank and other captains of industry, he said the bank seeks to achieve N11.7 billion from its ongoing private placement, adding that its consolidation efforts should be completed by July 31, 2005.

FCMB has already commenced its public offer, having floated over four billion shares on the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE), for subscription by investors.

Mr. Peterside said the effort of NUB so far is commendable especially its strength in the northern part of the country, adding that its

achievements since its second coming are worthy of emulation.

In his contribution, the bank's COO, Mr. Ocholi, advised customers to support NUB's effort at this point in time, saying that any investment in the bank should be regarded as worthwhile, as it is a good buy.

Assessing the bank's performance, he stated that the bank made a profit before tax of N441.6 million in 2004, up from N151.6 million in 2003, adding that its post tax profit stood at N343.1 million against N144.6 million in the preceding year.

Earlier, the chairman had explained to the gathering that the ongoing efforts were initiated with the backing of the bank's shareholders and that the board and management were "propelled by the overwhelming opportunities that present themselves in our niche market."

"Another compelling factor that has given us the motivation and confidence to pursue the stand-alone option is our desire to provide a strong platform for the achievement and actualisation of the long elusive socio-economic development that is required to further draw the northern economy out of the woods", the chairman/CEO stressed.

# News

## Border Clash: Police deny complicity

The Bauchi State police command has absolved itself of blames over the violent border clash involving communities from Bauchi and Jigawa states. The conflict has claimed about 10 lives with the Jigawa state deputy governor, Alhaji Hassan Ibrahim, accusing the Bauchi state police command of aiding one of the warring factions.

Mr Ibiyinka Kayode, Commissioner of Police, Bauchi state, in an interview with *Daily Trust*, explained that: "When I got the report that there was tension there, I mobilised P.M.F [Police Mobile Force] from Bauchi to go to that place. Before we got there, all these things had happened and from Bauchi to Shira and then the spot which is a very far distance.

"So, are you now telling me

From Tashikalmah Hallah,  
Correspondent Bauchi

that Police in Bauchi killed people in Jigawa and people in Bauchi? The C.I.D has taken over the matter and they are on it".

Mr Kayode explained that he had visited the troubled area, and the Deputy Governor of Bauchi state has also paid a similar visit a day after the incident occur, and nobody has accused the police of any complicity.

"I was there yesterday. The Deputy Governor of Bauchi State had visited the scene a day after the incident and was able to calm the people of the area. As at now, it is calm. I addressed the policemen and asked them to work with the police in Jigawa state so that peace can prevail in the area".

Although, the Commissioner of Police denied knowledge of the number of casualties, however, said two people were confirmed death from the Bauchi side, adding that he has advised the governments of Jigawa and Bauchi states to work out modalities for lasting peace in the area.

## I will never abandon Buhari -Bafarawa

Governor Attahiru Bafarawa of Sokoto state has promised that he will never abandon the 2003 ANPP presidential flag bearer, General Muhammadu Buhari.

In an interview with *Daily Trust*, the ANPP stalwart revealed that he has never and would never stop supporting Buhari's ambition, adding that the ANPP 2003 presidential flag bearer emerged when he (Bafarawa), was heading the party.

"How can I head a party which elected General Buhari to lead us as our presidential candidate and turn my back on him?" he queried. According to Governor Attahiru Bafarawa, General Buhari has been a long time friend and partner and nothing will come in between them.

There are speculations that he was angling for former military president, General Ibrahim Babangida who is seen as one of the contestants for the 2007 presidential ticket.

Governor Bafarawa however suggested that the north should come together and support one candidate irrespective of party, ethnic or religious differences with a view to capture the presidential seat in the 2007 elections.

According to him, both General Buhari and General Babangida have been his allies and wondered why people identify him with Babangida alone and speak ill of him when talking about his relationship with Buhari.

"Both General Buhari and Babangida are my friends and partners and I would never support one and neglect the other. I am telling you to tell the world that I will never for once abandon Buhari and the ANPP forever and forever," he pledged.

The former ANPP caretaker

From Aminu Mohammed,  
Regional Editor, Sokoto

committee chairman said he has contested elections twice under the ANPP and won as a governor and wondered why he should be the same person to abandon such a party or work towards its destruction.

He said the ANPP first like any other party has its bad moments but was quick to assure the general public that all as well with the party. "The ANPP is now one family and so I would wonder how people would sit down and say we are still embedded with crisis after all the stakeholders of the party have sat down together and told the world that the party is now united."

On power shifting to the north, Governor Bafarawa said "it is not debatable because the south has its own share which Obasanjo is enjoying and so power must shift to the north come 2007."

## Ports concession: Nigerian firm wins Apapa terminal

ENL consortium, a combination of a Nigeria based public utility management company, ENL and Hastrup Line West Africa, has emerged preferred financial bidder of the two terminals (Terminal C and D), in Apapa Port, Lagos, offering the sum of \$13,585,981 and \$12,256,532 (about N12.2 billion) for the concession period of 10 years each.

In another financial bid for the Apapa container terminal, A.P Moller finance S.A, a Denmark-based company, has successfully become the preferred financial bid winner of the container terminal offering the sum of \$1,061,148,979 (about N141 billion) for the assets of the container



The Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammadu Maccido delivering his address during the launching ceremony of the National Mosque appeal fund held at Eagle Square Abuja

## Ex-gov, cleric, decry Obasanjo's attitude

Second republic Governor of Borno state, Alhaji Muhammadu Goni, has rebuked president Olusegun for rebuffing the leaders of the muslim community over what they regard as an imbalance in the number of delegates to the ongoing political reform conference.

Goni, a delegate to the conference from Borno state, observed in a chat with *Daily Trust* in Abuja on Thursday, that the president was not polite while addressing the muslim leaders on the issue, saying "even if he does not agree with them, he should have expressed that to them in a polite way."

The former governor reminded the president that those leaders did not meet

By Uthman Abubakar,  
Senior Reporter (Features)  
& Musa Umar Kazaure,  
Regional Editor Kano

him on their own accord but on behalf of the muslim community which had pressurised them to do so on an issue in which they feel they have been unjustly treated, "so he should have addressed them politely as leaders and representatives of the community."

Goni also share the view that there is an imbalance in the composition of the conference membership, saying that he had thought the president reserved the 50 members to correct any imbalance after the selections by the state, "but he did not

do so justly and accordingly."

A Kano-based Islamic leader and preacher Sheikh Ja'afar Adam, said Obasanjo's rebuff of the muslim leaders clearly proves that the president harbours a hidden agenda against Nigerian Muslims and wants to use the conference to create crisis in the country and have an excuse extend his tenure as president by invoking the relevant sections in the constitution.

Sheikh Ja'afar who particularly expressed disgust with the behaviour of the president for the manner they had been doing his bidding for the sake of peace in the country, added, "the ball now in the court of the muslim delegates to the conference."

My advise to them the way the president maltreated their leaders because even though they may claim that they are not representing religion at the conference, but the repercussion of what had just happened will affect them, their children and grandchildren in the long run."

The learned Islamic scholar stated that, the Nigerian Muslim communities are asking of fairness and proportional representation which should reflect the demographical realities on the ground we, challenge Obasanjo to release his source of statistics which shows muslims and christians in Nigeria at 50-50 ratio, adding that all past people figures have shown that the muslims are the majority in Nigeria.

## Bugaje replaces Yakasai as BON MD

From Musa Umar Kazaure,  
Regional Editor Kano

A 1981 graduate of business Administration from ABU Zaria, Alhaji Bashir Mohammed Bugaje also holds a Masters degree in Economics with specialisation in Money and Finance from the university of Jos 1993.

He is expected to take over

the affairs of the Bank of the North limited at the end of the month when the resignation of the former MD will take effect.

## Gov Akume's assailants to be named soon -IGP

From Hir Joseph,  
Correspondent (Makurdi)

Exactly one year after the gun attack on Benue state governor, Dr. George Akume in Nasarawa state, the acting Inspector General of Police, Sunday Ehindero who was in Makurdi yesterday, said investigations have been completed and assailants to be named soon.

Also, the acting IGP who paid a sympathy visit to the AIG Zone 4, Mr. Ben Oghomone who was injured in the Makurdi riots last week, disclosed that the victim was responding to treatment, even as he apologised to the Benue state people over what he described as "the overzealousness of some of my men." An overzealous police constable, Vincent Achukwu, now standing trial for culpable homicide, shot a commuter, bus driver, Mr. Godwin Anuke for refusing to give him N20, a development which sparked two days of violent protests.

The acting IGP who was in the state as part of his tour of police formations nationwide was journalists that the widespread feeling that his predecessor, Tafa Balogun, over-looked investigations into the gun attack on the Benue state governor was misplaced, saying that "investigations have been concluded.

Like his predecessor, Mr. Ehindero said investigations into such a delicate issue cannot be rushed, adding that the police authorities are doing their best to come out with a credible result from the investigations.

Although he said he will not be able to give details which include mentioning names, the police boss assured that the police will play its role effectively to ensure that the culprits are brought to book.

Governor Akume had expressed worry that the investigations was dragging too long with the police failing to give update on their findings. The governor had also waded off the theory of his attack by his Nasarawa state counterpart, Alhaji Abdullahi Adamu that the incidence was merely an armed robbery.

# News

## Atiku, Buhari, Shekarau, others condole *Weekly Trust* Editor

Vice President Atiku Abubakar, the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) presidential candidate, General Muhammadu Buhari (rtd), Kano and Adamawa states governors, Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau and Mr. Boni Haruna, are among some of the eminent Nigerians who have condoled the editor of *Weekly Trust* newspaper, Malam Garba Deen Muhammad, over the death of his mother, Hajija Rahinatu Mohammed and sister, Hajija Amina Sidi.

Vice president Atiku Abubakar yesterday condoled *Weekly Trust* editor, on the death of his mother, Hajija Rahinatu Muhammed.

Atiku said he received news of the death with shock and sadness.

In a letter to the bereaved editor, Atiku said: "I learnt of the death of your mother, Hajija Rahinatu Muhammad,

By Reuben Yunana, State House Correspondent

who passed away on Sunday the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 2005."

"I have also been informed that you also lost your sister the following day, 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2005. The loss of such dear ones in quick succession must indeed be a painful experience," Atiku said in a letter addressed to Malam Garba-deen yesterday.

He prayed Allah to give the souls of the departed eternal rest.

General Buhari, who condoled Malam Garba on telephone from London commiserated with the family of the two deceased and prayed for the repose of their souls.

In a condolence letter on behalf of himself, his family, the government and people of Kano state, Governor Shekarau prayed Allah in his infinite mercy, to grant the

souls of the two deceased eternal rest in *Aljannat Firdaus* and for the family, the fortitude to bear the loss.

Others who condoled the *Weekly Trust* editor are the chairman of *Media Trust*, Alhaji Abdulmumin Bello, the Managing Director and Editor-in-Chief, Malam Kabiru A. Yusuf, Hon. Lawal Garba of the House of Representatives, members of the board of *Media Trust* and Alhaji Isyaku Ibrahim.

Malam Muhammed Haruna, Alhaji Ibrahim Augie, the editor of *Daily Trust*, New Nigeria Newspaper and Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo, the Deputy Editor of *Weekly Trust*, Malam Garba Shehu, Malam Ujudud Sherif, Dr. Bashir Kurfi and members of the Da'awa committee, Bauchi state are also among those who commiserated with the *Weekly Trust* editor.

No fewer than fifty vessels are engaged in illegal bunkering, berthing ten miles away from the seaports, the minister of state in the Federal Ministry of Transport, Engineer Mohammed Inua Musa, has said.

The minister disclosed this yesterday at the Lagos Port Complex (LPC), Apapa during the official launching



Sunday Ehindero, IGP

## Over fifty vessels engage in bunkering - Minister

of a surveillance helicopter by the management of the Nigeria Ports Authority (NPA).

The launching of the surveillance helicopter is in keeping with the International Ship and Port facility Security Code (ISPS), code in Nigerian ports.

Disembarking from a surveillance helicopter after a test run, the minister lamented that the nation loses billion of dollars to illegal bunkering.

He added that the federal government will need more of the surveillance helicopters, saying that the \$5million used to hire one helicopter could not be compared to the huge amount being lost to illegal bunkerers.

"This helicopter will help

From Adelanwa Bamgboye, Correspondent (Lagos)

to monitor all our channels to ensure that they are free from illegal activities, potential dangers and any obstruction to the free flow of vessel traffic and trade between Nigeria and the rest of the world," Engineer Mohammed assured.

Earlier, Managing Director of the NPA, Chief Adebayo Sarumi, who was represented by Engr. Akani; executive director engineering services, said the helicopter will help in swift and effective coverage of the ports and decry the level of illegal bunkering in Nigeria while recognising the efforts of Caverton group.

## Indian hemp dealer makes brisk business in Kaduna suburb

An alleged Indian hemp dealer at Ogbeka close, Marafa area of the Kaduna metropolis is causing concern to residents of the area with his business.

According to one of the residents of the area who spoke to *Daily Trust* under anonymity, Usman has been arrested several times but always finds his way back to base soon afterwards.

The neighbour told *Daily Trust* that some of the hemp dealers patronisers are highly placed government officials who are supposedly un-

touchable in the state.

He said residents have complained to the police and the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), officials, but nothing has been done, adding that some of the hemp sellers patronisers included senior and junior security personnel. His connection is too powerful," he said.

He also said that the man has been selling Indian hemp in the area for several years, adding that those harbouring him are compounding the

problems in the area. "We are sick and tired of his activities and one of our greatest fears is that our children will end-up cultivating the habit of smoking such dangerous drugs," he declared.

When *Daily Trust* contacted the Kaduna state police public relations officer (PPRO), deputy superintendent of police (DSP), Sa'ad Yahaya, he said that the command was not aware of the activities of the hemp dealer, adding that all necessary action will be taken with a view to track down the culprit.

## Housing Fund: NNPC, CBN get ultimatum

By Zainab Alimi, Political Reporter

The House of Representatives Committee on Housing and Urban Development yesterday gave the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), 30-days to revert back to and conform with section 9(1) of the National Housing Fund Act 3 of 1992.

The committee also constituted sub-committees to investigate whether each of the corporations has been making contributions to the fund and will report back to the committee within two weeks.

The committee chaired by Hon. Osita Izunaso, is sitting through an investigative public hearing on corporations and individuals that have defaulted in the remittance of contributions to the National Housing Fund, which according to him, has culminated in an annual loss of N40 billion.

At its resumed hearing yesterday, the CBN Governor, Prof. Charles Soludo, told the panel that the CBN was not remitting money to the fund through the federal mortgage bank because the bank operates its own housing fund.

"The CBN has not complied with the National Housing Fund because we operate our own housing fund system which is more generous and better than what the National Housing Fund is offering," he explained.

Prof. Soludo added that although the Act which established the fund did not give rooms for the exemption of anybody from withholding contributions to the fund, the CBN Act also makes provision for staff welfare which includes provision of adequate housing.

He opined that since the objective of the Housing Fund Act was to ensure that workers are well provided for in respect of housing, the CBN's law which came as a latter law after the Housing Fund Act, provided a better option for its workers and met the same objectives. "In this respect, I do not think that we violated the law," he said.

He noted that since the law came into being 13 years ago, not all agencies have strictly complied with its provisions "and it is not an accident that not all its sections have been applied because this is one of the Acts that is long over-due for review. It is no longer practicable since the world has moved away from the regime of direct control to the era of liberalised banking."

He added that his position rested on grounds that the law is a tax on lending, is inconsistent with several provisions of other legislations and has clear differences which makes it difficult to

implement, hence it jeopardises the operations of the banking sector.

But the panel, while concurring with the point that the law needs to be reviewed, maintained that in as much as it has never been repealed, it subsists, adding that the scheme was not established to benefit only the staff of corporate organisations but the generality of Nigerians.

It therefore ordered the CBN to revert to the Act and set-up a five-man sub-committee to liaise with the CBN on provisions of the law and investigate whether the bank has been making contributions to the fund. They are to report back to the committee within two weeks.

## Zamfara women cry out over inadequate medicare in hospital

From Salisu Zakari Maradun, Correspondent (Gusau)

Women in Zamfara state for whom the "women and children only hospital" was established have cried over the inability of the state government to provide adequate medical services at the hospital.

Patients complained of lack of drugs which has compelled to now go about with different prescription papers written by the health personnel to go and purchase the drugs from commercial medicine stores, as against earlier promise by the government to provide free drugs to them.

The investigation also revealed that the drivers, who are shouldered with the responsibility of conveying the women to and from the hospital free of charge, have now put the vehicles to commercial use as no woman enters the bus without paying at least N20 per drop.

At the hospital premises, some patients alleged that no woman is admitted until she pays a fee which varies depending on the gravity of her illness.

Many among them (the women) who spoke with *Daily Trust* expressed their sadness over the development, describing it as deceitful by the authorities concerned.

Malama Ladi, a 70-year-old woman told our correspondent that for many times she visited the hospital since its establishment, she had never received free drugs.

"We have been told that we would get all the drugs free, but to our surprise these people are no longer helping the situation, especially we the common ones, who have nothing to feed ourselves let alone buy drugs," said one, Isah Hussaini, who at the time of the investigation had his wife on admission at the hospital.

When *Daily Trust* contacted Dr. Jamil Ibrahim Rauyya the principal medical officer of the hospital, he referred our reporter to the state commissioner for health saying that he could not comment on the situation.

The state commissioner for health, Alhaji (Dr.) Muhammad Bello Buzu explained that his ministry was not aware of the development.

Alhaji Buzu maintained that his ministry is ever ready to punish any person involved in such an inhumane activities, no matter his political or societal status in the state."

## FOCUS ON FURNITURE AND INTERIOR DECORATING COMPANIES IN NIGERIA

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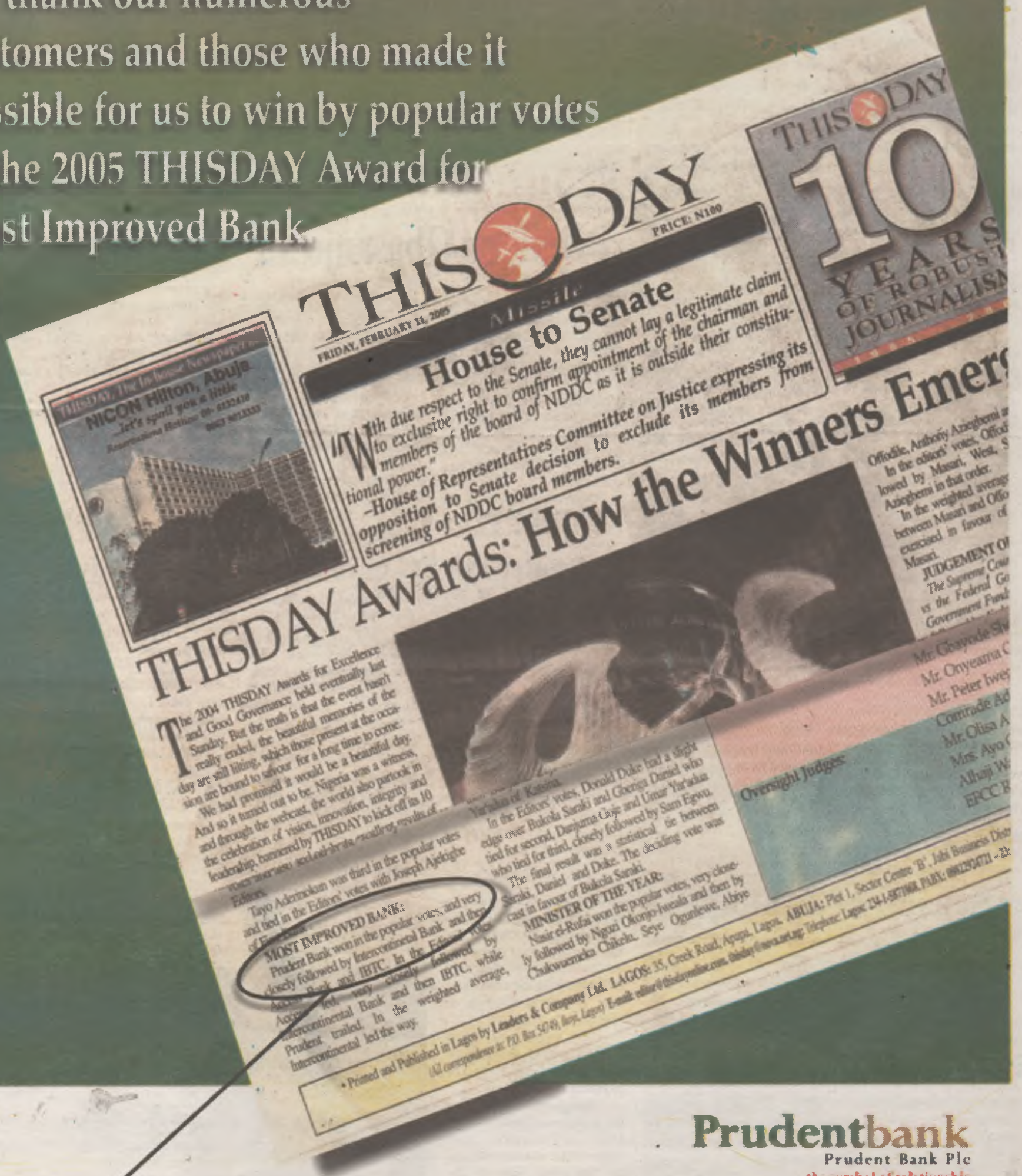
The date of publication is **Wednesday, March 23, 2005**, while deadline for submission of materials, the company's profile and artworks is three days to the publication date.

For participation and further enquiries, please contact the Special Projects Department on the following numbers: **080-32916731, 080-37038663, 080-42145839 or 09-6720346, 5235787 exts. 124 & 117**



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# News

## National confab...National confab...National confab

### TIT BITS

With Habib I. Pindiga

#### Extinguished delegates

They refer to themselves as distinguished delegates, but so many of them are *extinguished*. When they come to the floor to speak, they decide to embark on a soliloquy. They are so much afflicted by old age that while they are talking to themselves, you can be sure that if you drop a pin in the chamber, people will all turn to abuse you for creating too much noise.

#### Grey-haired youths?

Some delegates who parade themselves as representatives of Nigerian youths have defied any known definition of the term *youth*. Though one of them, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN) has his father in one of the state delegations, the man actually has quite a number of grey hairs. Another youth, son to a business magnate in the Northeast, not only grows thick grey hairs, the *gentleyouth* decided to shave his head to avoid appearing as old as Niki Tobi.

#### Jigawa demands ICT control

As the men in hats continue pushing home their advocacy for resource control, Alhaji Aminu Ringim from Jigawa state had an advice for them free of charge. Hear him: "All this talk about oil wealth and agricultural products is pure balderdash. The world has gone beyond this, the vogue now is wait for it-information and communication technology, embrace ICT and your state will be an utopia, just like Jigawa!"

#### Katagum reclaims seat from Kukah

When Alhaji Sule Katagum, deputy chairman of the conference, inexplicably melted away on Tuesday, Rev Father Mathew Kukah took his seat, which is by Justice Niki Tobi's right hand side (imagine!). Some cynics swiftly started murmuring that the agile scribe had perfected a coup against his superior(?). But trust Katagum, twenty four hours later he bounced back and reclaimed his stool, to the consternation of his critics. He has since re-enacted his pensive posture, probably to emerge with stronger ideas and dazzle the delegates.

#### Talk the talk

After a grueling nine-day debate of Obasanjo's speech, Tobi announced yesterday that the segment was over. One of the consensus derived from the comments made, he said, was that there should be no-holds-barred debate on all issues within reach of Nigerian sunrises, i.e. the ostensible 'no go' areas are mere figments of some people's imaginations. So everybody is free to *talk the talk*. What some delegates were musing later was that they hope this *talk the talk* should not be *ala* MTel.

#### Season of apologies

This confab is turning into an Oputa panel of sorts. Instead of saying their minds on the president's inaugural speech, some delegates prefer to use the opportunity to offer apologies for wrongs they committed in the past. General Adeyinka Adebayo (rtd.) set the ball rolling when he said "sorry" to Nigerians for dragging the nation backwards through *coup d'etat*. Admiral Akin Aduwo followed suit and asked for forgiveness to the military for executing Tafawa Balewa and others. But for one delegate, all these apologies were neither here nor there because the whole thing is not about saying sorry, the apologists should go the whole hog and cough out all the billions they raked while in power. Indeed!

#### Beckoning at Ojukwu

Perhaps impressed by the venom some resource control apostles spit at the conference, a delegate suggested that ex-Biafran warlord; Dim Ojukwu should be invited as a resource person to the conference. He received a deafening applause. Looks like the honeymoon is over, fireworks are about to begin.



Dr. Shetima Mustapha, delegate from Borno, Chief Sunday Adewusi, Oyo State delegate and Chief Solomon Lar, Plateau State delegate at the National Political Conference in Abuja. Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje.

## Debate on Obasanjo's 3<sup>rd</sup> term ambition resurfaces

By Habeeb I. Pindiga,  
Political reporter

Despite Justice Niki Tobi's stopping of debate over the speculated plot by President Olusegun Obasanjo to remain in office beyond 2007, a delegate, Mr. Emmanuel Ugboajah, re-introduced the subject yesterday and urged the president to make his position known to the conference.

Ugboajah, who is on the labour delegation, said since Obasanjo told the conference

its inauguration that there was no hidden agenda; he should say what the open agenda was.

The delegate said the question was whether the president is interested in remaining in office beyond 2007 or not.

There were speculations that the conference was put together to ensure the president remains in office for

a third term.

"Since he said there is no hidden agenda in this conference, so what about 2007? We should know where we are heading to," he said.

Though Tobi interrupted Chief Ziggy Azuike on Monday from making similar comments, Ugboajah made his submissions yesterday without hindrance from the chairman.

Azuike, who is on the Imo state delegation, said that

since there was so much talk about a third term ambition and since so many people consider the confab a ploy to ensure the president remains in office beyond 2007, Obasanjo should have addressed the issue in his speech.

But before he could completed statement, Tobi interrupted, saying the man had no right to talk that way.

Azuike said: "The president should have assured us that he has no third term ambition as is being speculated. He must assure us that he is not a referee in his own match. In his speech he has not sufficiently convinced us of his impartiality..."

But Tobi cut in, warning the delegate to mind his language. "Watch your words. You have no right to speak that way. Restrain your language".

## Delegates ask FG to renegotiate foreign debt

By Habeeb I. Pindiga,  
Political reporter

Delegates at the national political reform conference have advised the federal government to engage its foreign creditors in talks for the renegotiation of Nigeria's debts.

They were speaking against the backdrop of the resolution on Tuesday by the House of Representatives asking the government to repudiate the debts and stop further repayment to its external creditors.

Contributing to the debate on President Olusegun Obasanjo's inaugural speech, Mr. Nduka Obaigbena who represents the Newspapers Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN), said the debt issue was a big challenge to Nigeria.

He suggested that Nigeria should authenticate and renegotiate terms of payment of the debts.

Obaigbena, who is also the Editor-in-Chief of *This Day* newspapers, said Argentina's example should be adopted where the creditors would reschedule payment and expect only authenticated debts.

He said though Nigeria owed \$19 billion in 1985, it has so far repaid \$30 billion and yet still owes \$34 billion.

Also speaking on the nation's huge external debt profile, Mr. Nobert Esenwa

generation and generations yet unborn. If the debt issue is not appropriately tackled, we don't have a future in this country."

On his part, Mr. Tanko Andani from Taraba state advised that the nation's

foreign reserve currently at \$18.4 billion be drawn and used to develop infrastructure.

He suggested that stashing the funds abroad was meaningless as the monies were merely idle to Nigeria but also servicing the economies of other nations.

## Conference creates 18 c'ttees

The national political reform conference yesterday set up 18 committees that would take up the various aspects of socio-economic and political issues slated for deliberations.

Announcing the development at yesterday's ses-

sion, chairman of the conference, Justice Niki Tobi, said the composition of the committee would be made next week.

To achieve this, delegates were asked to send in their curriculum vitae for the secretariat to know where best to place them.

The committees include those on the economy, human and social security, national security, social infrastructure for national development and integration, model and structure of government, power sharing, revenue allocation and fiscal federalism, the legislature and the executive.



A cross section of delegates

# News

National Confab ... National Confab ... National Confab ...

## Delegate alerts colleagues on dangers of resource control

A delegate at the ongoing national political reform conference (NPRC), Hon. Tanko Bobbo-Andimi, has alerted his colleagues on the dangers of calls for resource control.

Speaking to newsmen in Abuja, Bobbo-Andimi said that: "There was more to the quest for resource control by some sections of the country than meets the eye."

He explained that the "intense clamour was capable of dismembering the country if not handled with

extra caution".

According to him, those agitating for resource control have a hidden agenda that was inimical to national cohesion and progress.

"Instead of asking for resource control why won't they ask their respective leaders to account for all the allocations they collected from the federation account and the 15 per cent derivation fund" he queried.

Bobbo-Andimi advised the agitators to refocus and press home their demands

for transparency and accountability of the funds received by their leaders.

"They should also demand for environmental rehabilitation from the government and the major oil producing companies," he suggested.

He advised Nigerians to stop paying lip service to the crucial issue of national unity and ensure "a very honest, sincere, tolerant and patriotic ideals".

The delegate further alerted his Northern colleagues that if care was not taken the non-oil producing states would stop receiving oil revenue as statutory proceeds from the federation account by 2006.

He said that was the implication of the passing of the on-shore/off-shore dichotomy bill by the National Assembly and its consequent assent by President Olusegun Obasanjo, besides the ruling of the Supreme Court in favour of the resource control agitators.

Bobbo-Andimi explained that when the oil producing states started cornering the oil proceeds and major oil producing companies stopped exploiting at the off-shore, the non-oil producing states might experience substantial drop in revenue.

"This is because revenues realised from the non-oil sector were very insignificant, from the neglect of the agriculture and solid minerals sectors by various successive administrations in the country," he said.

He therefore advised Northern and other non-oil producing states to re-order their priorities by harnessing, developing and exploiting the resources nature has endowed them with before they are caught napping.



Chief Bayo Ojo, Nigerian Bar Association delegate (left) discussing with Vice Admiral Akin Aduwo, Ondo state delegate (r) during the sitting of the National Political Reform Conference in Abuja ... recently  
Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje

## Delegates canvass restitution

Delegates to the national conference yesterday in Abuja, advocated restitution on the part of corrupt leaders and contractors.

Contributing to the debate on the presidential inaugural address of the conference, various speakers said that indiscipline and corruption were the bane of the country's woes.

Mr. Emmanuel Ugboaja, an NLC delegate, said that it was not morally enough for military and civilian leaders to just offer apologies to

Nigerians for their acts of indiscipline and corruption.

"All past and present leaders that are consciously satisfied that their wealth were ill-gotten should return them to the nation's treasury or risk sanctions by the society," he suggested.

Ugboaja also recommended education, water, agriculture and other category of contractors found wanting should be made to refund public funds paid them for jobs not executed.

He urged fellow delegates to stop defending

interests or protecting the status that all corrupt and bad NEPA, road, health, quo, besides making sacrifices and compromises on issues that would move the country forward.

Similarly, Mr. Mike Nkwocha of the civil society, advocated discipline, sincerity of purpose and patriotism by all Nigerians for the benefit of the country.

Nkwocha implored the conference to address the issue of poverty to effectively combat indiscipline and corruption in the country.

## Titbits

With Emmanuel Bello

### Lawyers take over confab

More than one delegate has complained of the manner lawyers control proceedings at the conference. There are many Senior Advocates of Nigeria (SAN) and practicing lawyers in attendance. Even worse, is the "partiality" shown by justice Tobi who clearly Kowtow to his own persons in the scheme of things. "He has a nice way of obliging the lawyers" said one of the delegates. The chairman has since denied this charge.

### Father and son in conference

The great jurist, Babalakin is a state delegate. His son, a legal luminary and senior Advocate of the Nigeria (SAN) is also in attendance. He represents the youth. On the day he rose to speak, many conferees murmured, observing that Babalakin junior is not exactly any one's idea of a youth. He however clarified matters when he confessed he's only a youth-at-heart. Better be!

### Special case explained

One curious group at the confab goes by the tag "Special Cases." That's where you find the likes of Jerry Gana and Kanu Agabi. In case you're been wondering what they do, you're not alone.

Gana once told the press that the group is in the confab to explain government position and to "clarify issues." But for Adeola, a member of the group, his appointment into the special class happened "because the government didn't know where to put me." Now we know.

### Poor Jerry Gana

Unlike him, the quick to talk professor and special adviser to Mr. President is completely quiet at the confab. He doesn't contribute, but just sit there watching. This must have unnerved Paul Unongo, the Benue strong man, who called Gana a government spy. This was reported in some papers and Unongo has since denied the report. He said he never called the great talker a spy. While Unongo was busy defending himself, Jerry Gana just looked on. Silently. That got me nervous as well.

### Comedians-cum-delegates

Thank God for this bunch, life at the conference Centre would have been one boring hell for conferees. These set of delegates, who are not carried away by their self-importance often make fun of themselves. Justice Tobi leads this pack. The man is full of fun. Apart from his "I love you all" chants, often said when proceedings are getting dull, his pronunciations of certain names are comical. Half of the time, delegates have to correct this. The other comedian is a heavily built north central zone delegate who, instead of the court bow of the head, prefers to give the high table a military salute in obeisance.

### Walking stick and Nigerian unity

A delegate caused a small stir when he queried the announcement made by Rev. Father Kukah of a missing walking stick. The delegates are in the habit of losing personal effects: Dairies, bags, earrings, handset, car keys and caps. It's often Father Kukah's job to announce it, when such items are found. But for the aforementioned delegate, it was wrong for the secretary to trivialise the confab, by announcing the lost a walking stick. What do you think?

## NCWS tasks national confab on gender inequality

The National Council for Women Society (NCWS) has called on the National conference to address the issue of marginalisation of women in politics and governance.

Its national president, Dr Bolere Ketebu-Nwokefor, told newsmen in Port Harcourt on Wednesday that the opportunity provided by the conference should be used to redress all forms of unfair treatment against women in the nation's politics.

She stated that women in the country were

developed academically and socially, making their inputs to the development of the nation a necessity.

According to her, the women could only contribute such inputs when they were given the opportunity to do so.

"We need to be given equal opportunity as men, we want an end to the issue of gender discrimination," Ketebu-Nwokefor said.

She called on women in the country to endeavour to show love and care to the less privileged.

The NCWS president noted that showing love,

sympathy and care were primary responsibilities given to the woman by God.

"If you watch well, by our nature, we are made to take care of people, so let us not neglect this duty," she said.

Ketebu's presence in the state, which was part of activities of the Women's Day Celebration, featured visit to the Port Harcourt prison where she called on the inmates to imbibe the fear of God and exhibit same in their daily activities.

"As you await the hand of freedom, I urge you to make patience and loyalty your watch words," she prayed.



From right: Tunji Otebeye Ogun State delegate, and Delta state delegates, Prof. Omufume Onoge and Prof. Itse Sagay discussing during the sitting of the National Political Reform Conference in Abuja ... yesterday  
Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje

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# MALTIMA ARGUNGU FISHING FESTIVAL

Catch all the fun at the 2005

16th - 19th March, 2005

# Opinion

## Memo to the political reform conference

Now that the much talked about dialogue has taken off, it might just be about time to offer some advice or suggestions which the Abuja conference may find either useful or expedient as it wades through the deluge of memoranda with which it may have been inundated from all sections of the Nigerian state.

Having taken time to adequately study the nature of complaints from nearly every part of Nigeria concerning the present political structure of the country, the conference may not find it difficult to come to a conclusion similar to ours, that the problem of Nigeria is principally the elite.

A careful analysis of the personalities who are clamouring for political restructuring of the country reveals clearly that it is the same class that created the problem in the first place and is now crying for solutions which from all intent and purposes are self centered.

In the course of its deliberations the conference is most likely to be confronted with three key issues namely; Control of Political Power at the Centre, Resource Control and Religion. It is almost certain that every section of Nigeria will be interested in who produces the next president or Prime Minister as the case may be. For instance, will the North accept any arrangement that may seek to preserve or extend the present power arrangement with a South westerner at the helm beyond 2007 when the mandate of the serving Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Federal Government will have lapsed? This is surely a one million dollar question which the conference may find too hard to crack.

I assume strongly that the North is not likely to compromise on this score as the average Northern elite sees the control of Federal Government as the only effective weapon of reestablishing his or her political dominance and advancing his or her and economic interest in the country.

This, to me is what I see as the major agenda of the core North to the conference; how

By Muhammed Mubarak

to reclaim political power in 2007. Their sub-agenda is Shari'a. While the quest for political power remains at the front burner for the core Northern elite, the conference should prepare to square up to the clamor for a review of the sharing of the revenue formula which the South South elite will most likely present as a key issue.

It might surprise the conference that delegates from the South-South may not be too keen on who controls the Federal Government in 2007 as long as other sections of the country are willing to grant the Zone further concessions on the revenue sharing formula. Already the present arrangement is skewed in their favour with the 13% derivation which they currently enjoy in addition to the abrogation of the on shore/off shore dichotomy. I am informed that elite from this zone are ready to support or align with their colleagues from the core North to push through this demand even if it means dropping their clamour for political restructuring. What this means in effect, therefore is that the South-South may quietly settle for additional compensation in the area of appointment to key national political offices such as President of the Senate or Speaker of the House of Representatives and them Oil and Gas sector in 2007.

The conference may be amazed to discover that the South-West's main agenda is how to hang on to political power at the expense of all the other five regions beyond 2007. Delegates from this zone are most likely to rail their colleagues from other regions against the North on who controls the next Central Government so as to create enough confusion for the polity.

The South-West even with the almost eight years rule of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as President does not seem to exhibit any sign that it is satisfied as having had its fair share of Federal Power. Elite from this zone from their

comments and attitudes so far do not even appear to support the clamour for resource control, apparently because the South West is not known to harbour abundant petrol and gas which they too will have been too eager to corner for the use of their zone alone if they had. So, their position on resource control is neither here nor there. But if the South West elite finds out that they are not on a firm ground on this score, their next strategy may be to use religion to instigate the Northern Christian minority tribes, as they often do, to stir up confusion. While the elite from this zone are sure to kick against the introduction of Shari'a for Muslims in that part of Nigeria, in continuation of their own form of subjugating their Muslim brethren, they are most likely to stall any advantage that may come to the North by way of concessions from other regions for the control of Political Power in 2007 through the use of religious card to polarize the North against itself.

What is still not clear to us is whether the northern Christian minorities will fall for this bait, as religion appears to be the main agenda among the elite from this group.

This group believes that a strong connection exists between Political Power and religion and to them, Power in the hands of the Northern Elite means Shari'a all the way. With this mind set, it is easy to see why the Northern Christians minorities may continue to kick against return of Political Power and introduction of Shari'a in the North, as they see it as a weapon of subjugation by the Muslim majority.

The conference secretary, Rev. Father Hassan Kukah himself a Northern Minority, betrayed this emotions in a recent television interview. The question was how did the Rev. Father feel about complaints by Muslims concerning the preponderance of Christians, membership both in the body and leadership of the Confab?

Almost immediately, the Reverend's comportment changed to reveal the real emotions and the inner feelings

of people from his area, the Southern part of Kaduna on this issue. For those of us who are familiar with the situation in Kaduna State about religion, Father Kukah's emotions as he clearly betrayed them in his reply to the question was not unexpected. Hear him: "those of us who have lived in this part (Kaduna) and have taken the time to study the role of religion in the Political Power struggle in Northern Nigeria are aware that for many years both before and after independence that Muslims have dominated the Political and economic lives of the Northern peoples. I did my doctorate research in this field and I think I can sit at the table with the first three to debate on this..." As much as he tried to detach himself from these emotions by trying to assure that his being Christian had nothing to do with the opinion he holds on such issues he ended up exhibiting a feeling of anger against the so-called-Muslim leaders from the North for 'subjugating' his people all this while.

Another Christian minority from the state. Dr. Chris Abashiya, seem to tag along on this line of thinking. And this is quite natural. While contributing at the conference last week, he told fellow conferees that the return of political power to the North as presently constituted will mean the continued 'subjugation' of the minorities in that zone. His fears are that his people might never get the presidential gubernatorial slot on account of their being disadvantaged in terms of number and perhaps influence and clout. And I think too, that these are genuine fears. Take it or leave it if we are going to base election into political office as far as Kaduna State is presently constituted on the basis of popular majority votes, and I know that people in the area vote with religious sentiment, it might be till thine kingdom come before a Southern Kaduna man or woman becomes the governor of the State or even Speaker of the state House of Assembly. Those positions and many like them will always be dominated by the Hausa Muslim majority

in the State. Perhaps that is why Dr. Abashiya thinks access to power in the state should be on rotational arrangement. Whether this is democratic or not is irrelevant to people like him who nurse this belief. The conference may therefore need to look at these issues critically. So, with this kind of postulations from the Kukah's and Abashiya's, it is easy to gauge the feelings of the Northern Christian minorities on the issue of political power returning to the North in 2007, delegates from the South West will most certainly latch in on this since most of them are Christians, to further promote anti Hausa/Fulani sentiments firstly as a way of showing some solidarity with their Christian brethren from the North who must be 'emancipated' from slavery, but most importantly, as an opportunity to turn the North against itself with the hope of blocking attempts by the North from recapturing political power in 2007. I have a sneaky feeling that the average Christian minority as has been demonstrated so far tend to feel much more comfortable with political power residing in the hands of their Christian brothers from the South.

This may probably explain why the Northern Christian minorities will vote against political power returning to the north, until such a time when it is possible for one of theirs to get elected or selected into the office of the president or prime minister as the case may be.

And this is why I am worried that with this kind of scenario in place, it might just provide the South-Westerners with the political lacuna to make the extension of the present political leadership at the centre beyond 2007, a faith accompli. This might be an exaggerated feeling. And I hope it is.

As for delegates from the South-East, I am still wondering what agenda they will be pushing at this confab. I have looked critically at their case and seem not to be able to pin it down to something cogent. I do not expect them to start talking about Biafra which most people, except a few noise

makers in that region, see as a realizable dream. And I do not also see them joining in the clamour for resource control with the same passion as their colleagues from the Niger Delta do for the simple reason that the South East is not known to harbour natural resources like oil and gas that are currently being explored or exploited on a national scale. At end of the day it might not bother them much if the Federal Government continues to control resources. 'Biafra' as we have come to know, can only be meaningfully if it includes the Niger Delta area where the bulk of our oil and gas comes from. And now that it does not, why would these delegates waste their time and energies pursuing an unprofitable cause?

The only issue I presume they will be pushing is that of rotational presidency or some form of political arrangement that will allow for the emergence of an Ibo President or Vice President at worse, either in 2007 or some time in the future.

This is the only area where the South East can make meaningful impact at the conference. Of course I am not unaware of issues like the post Civil War Claims of reparation in terms of returning of landed properties confiscated from the Ibos during the War etc. These are issues though, but not key enough to determine the success or otherwise of the confab.

Of course, nearly all the regions will come up with other issues peculiar to their environment, like erosion and the neglect of Federal roads in the South East, environmental pollution in the South South, desertification in the North etc. These, to me are serious issues but, more, or less miscellaneous, and are not likely to determine or affect the direction at which the confab may be stirred.

For sure, this confab will have succeeded if it resolves the three key issues of Control of Political Power in 2007, Resource Control and Shari'a. *Alabi writes from Finlay Communications Plot 727, Kade Street, Wuse Abuja*

## The EFCC and Nigerian Politics

In recent times, it would seem that the commendable initiative symbolised by the EFCC is about to be dragged into the murky waters of Nigerian politics. The fear and the danger are clear and present. If the EFCC does get sucked into our peculiar brand of politics, it may not survive. For instance, following the arrest and subsequent judicial proceedings against Mr. Joshua Dariye for acts that could amount to financial crimes, Mr. Ribadu was widely quoted in the press as pronouncing the man guilty even before the trials began. He was even reported to have questioned the constitutional immunity which Mr. Dariye as an elected Governor of Plateau state ought to enjoy for as long as he is in office. More worrisome was the timing of Mr. Ribadu's utterance on the eve of the lifting of the Emergency Rule over Plateau State. The coincidence of those utterances and the actions associated with them and President Obasanjo's political actions on the Plateau matter would tempt many to see Ribadu's position as clandestinely political even if they were unintended.

Only recently, Mr. Ribadu was quoted as admitting that his commission has not found any thing that links former President Ibrahim Babangida with corrupt acts or any financial crimes. In spite of this, however, Ribadu proceeded to make

By Chidi Amuta

pronouncements that suggest a questioning of the eligibility of Babangida for the 2007 electoral contest. Mr. Ribadu has since said he was misquoted by the media. While he is perfectly entitled to his personal views as a Nigerian on any issue including political matters, the sensitive nature of his office dictates that he should make it clear, each time he pronounces on a public issue, whether or not he is speaking in an official capacity or merely expressing his personal views to which he is perfectly entitled as a Nigerian.

The Babangida matter presents an interesting perspective on what is emerging as typically Nigerian way of reasoning. It is one in which perceptions, misconceptions, rumours and *apriori* conclusions are used to manipulate public opinion to suit pre-determined political objectives. Ironically, the media which came into its present freedom and robustness as a result of Babangida's liberalisation reforms has made fortunes in copy sales from the industry of variously sensationalising and occasionally demonising Babangida for human rights abuses and for presiding over a corrupt administration. Yet, to date no one has come forward with any evidence to indicate that Babangida was engaged in any acts of financial malfeasance in his eight years in

power. And this is 12 years after he left office. This is after numerous inquiries, investigations, court proceedings with the benefit of government records and the entire intelligence apparatus at the disposal of successive administrations some of whom have been outright anti-Babangida.

In the absence of any documented evidence or facts to that effect, it seems downright illogical and in fact mischievous to declare a man guilty and unfit for future public office on the basis of a perception no matter how widely held and lavishly promoted. By his alleged pronouncement on Babangida's eligibility for future public office, Mr. Ribadu may have succumbed to the essentially gossip governed ethos of the Nigerian political elite. Even if he were voicing a personal political preference, the fact remains that he is not an ordinary citizen. Moreover, he occupies a public office where facts and figures ought to govern conclusions and actions. It is therefore an act of supreme indiscretion bordering on recklessness and even irresponsibility for Mr. Ribadu to have found himself in any situation where he could be misquoted on such a politically contentious issue.

It is not important whether the subject is Babangida and 2007 or indeed any other political issue, Mr. Ribadu and the EFCC

over which he presides occupy a rather sensitive place in the nation's political and social life today. Most Nigerians and indeed those in the international community to whom Nigerian means anything agree that corruption and financial crookedness represent major obstacles to the country's progress and development prospects. To that extent, any agency that is set up to deal with these aberrations must command a very high level of credibility in order to convince both Nigerians and the rest of the world that we mean business. One of the best ways to keep a public institution credible is to insulate it from politics and staff them with persons who are above political manipulation.

This is more so because the bane of our public institutions is their constant compromise for political ends. Therefore, an institution as sensitive and strategic as the EFCC must strive to maintain unimpeachable credibility at all times. If it fails this test, it gets caught in the irony of being part of the problem it was created to deal with.

Political manipulation, lethargy, excessive bureaucracy, legal obfuscation, loss of credibility and lack of thoroughness are some of the reasons why the Nigerian public lost faith in the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission

(ICPC) not to talk of its elaborate paraphernalia and suffocating enabling law. The central appeal of the EFCC, on the other hand, is that it has striven, in a relatively short time, to represent the opposite of these handicaps. Mr. Ribadu must stand up to claim credit for this on behalf of his boss, the President. But in doing so, he must strive to rise above the fray of partisan compromise. It is understandable that given his relative youth, a certain level of exuberance is bound to manifest in his utterances and actions. Also, a certain generational idealism is part of his entitlement.

But the position he occupies demands a higher degree of candour, caution and objectivity especially in matters of a political nature than he has exhibited so far. And there lies the mortal danger to the health and credibility of the EFCC. It will even be sadder if Mr. Ribadu were to create the impression that he may be doing the political bidding of a hidden hand. Unfortunately, some of his actions and utterances in recent times are leading tragically to this nasty conclusion.

The trouble with tainting public institutions with politics is that the interests of politicians are short term and narrow. National institutions are designed, in the best traditions of public service, to serve the long term interests of the nation. Politics

deploys murky means to achieve ends that are narrow and self serving. For politicians, everything and everybody has a use value, a dispensability that can be quite astounding. Even nastier is the Nigerian variant of politics. It thrives on manipulation, multiple speak, shifting positions, deal making, blackmail and even murder. Inside this brackish water, there is neither morality nor decency, neither qualms nor discernible rules except those of the jungle. In the graft and gluttony of Nigerian politics, only one law prevails: eat, eat and eat until you are dead! Or be eaten in the process.

Public officers who insist on playing politics with their positions must mind the thorns. The machinery of Nigerian politics is a moving train, a very untidy and brutal contraption. It demolishes individuals, institutions and reputations with callous and devastating impunity. If officials like Mr. Ribadu want to play politics, they have a decent option: quit now, join a party, canvass your views and ideas, win an election and prosecute your unique agenda. But a situation in which officials exploit the visibility of major national institutions to smuggle their petty political agenda is not only unacceptable. It is cheap, opportunistic and mischievous.

*Amuta, the Editor-in-Chief of Nigeria Review writes from Abuja.*



**YOUR LETTERS**

**Agenda for the new BPE leadership**

The change of guards at BPE over the weekend saw the removal of the erstwhile Director-General Dr. Julius Bala out of office, paved the way for Mrs. Irene Chigbue as the new Director-General.

Media speculations had it that the reasons for the removal of Dr. Bala is the 'snail speed' of the privatisation processes of many of government enterprises, which NAFCON is one. BPE has not been able to conclude on NAFCON's privatisation for the past five years despite the fact that all the preliminaries have been carried out.

My expectation as one of the stakeholders of NAFCON is that Mrs Chigbue expedite action and conclude on the privatisation of the company so that whatever proceeds is realised therefrom could be used to off-set the debts of the moribund company, principal of which is staff salary arrears, pension contributions and terminal benefits.

privatisation of NAFCON, the feat achieved so far, at least when you were the Director, Industry and Manufacturing. You have been probably aware of the many equipment/spares and properties of NAFCON, which could boost its purchase price.

As a matter of reminder, I wish to bring to the

attention of the new D-G what the staff of the company are passing through because of what I would call lukewarm attitude of BPE management over the years, towards speeding up the privatisation of NAFCON so that workers could be paid their salary arrears, pension contributions and terminal

benefits. Recall also that BPE set up a Debt Review Committee, which sat in Port Harcourt and reviewed downwards, all the debts of NAFCON. The reports are there at the BPE for your perusal. Therefore, the excuse by BPE that no investor would want to buy NAFCON at a price not

covering its debts is myopic. In the light of the above it is expected that you take NAFCON's matter as one of your priority assignments so that you conclude on everything on/or before the end of the second quarter of the year. By so doing, you would have brought happiness and joy to many

homes of the staff of NAFCON because, such families are scattered because the bread-winners could neither pay rent nor settle children's school fees. More grease to your elbows while waiting to seeing you in action soonest. *Yakubu Afenoko No. 71/77 Jagunmolu Street, Bariga, Lagos.*

**Abakwa: When measles struck**

It should have been a daily routine for every government of the day to watch the plight happenings of its citizens from federal, state down to local level, but due to other responsibilities, this doesn't happen.

I am calling the attention of Kaduna State government and Kaduna North local government to come to our aid/rescue because measles has taken away our beloved sons and daughters, our future hopes and the leaders of tomorrow.

These little promising offspring of our lives were lost to the spread of the epidemic which claimed more than ninety children between February and March, 2005.

toddlers from the age of 0 to 4 years. It has takes as much as it can now and some others are on the waiting list. Our grave yard is now as busy like a market place where you find people at every given time.

Corpses are brought within the shortest time you can think of. Some people even decided to stay put in the grave yard because of the stress of going and coming back. I am using this medium to call the attention of the appropriate authorities to, as a matter of urgency come to our aid not because they heard and refused to act or because they have neglected us but this is to serve as a reminder on the need to improve on our living standard.

should be checked to prevent this epidemic from spreading.

The people of Kaduna state should please accept

this as my condolence and prayer for Allah's protection to prevent us from the disaster called the bomb blast. May He protect us and

protect our families and properties. *Adam Idris (Prince), No. 3 Mai'anguwa Idi Road, Abakwa, Kgduna*

**Re: North is marginalised**

The interview with Shehu Sani in the Daily Trust edition of March 9, 2005 made an interesting reading. It is also important to decode his postulations, especially the contradictory Rosture he is now maintaining.

Generally, Shehu Sani should first apologise to the North, for blasting its leaders on the Lagos/Ibadan media, for supporting fuel price increase at a time Northerners condemned it;

North is glaringly short-changed; for shedding crocodile tears at the eleventh hour. While he is entitled to his views on any issue to do with this nation, I disagree with the timing, which is like putting the cat before the horse (suddenly speaking for the North before apologizing to its

traditional and religious leaders he attacked in the media). It is only hoped that Shehu would reflect seriously on his latest style ad the initial records he has set for himself.

**Mohammed Umar Keana**  
Department of Political science Ahmadu Bello University, Samaru, Zaria.

*Reactions to articles published in this paper may be directed to the editor via the email address:*

# Opinion

## Yar'Adua: A true democrat

Late General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua was so many things to so many people. A friend to many, he was the very embodiment of loyalty and devotion. As a man, he was the symbol of tolerance and mirth. As a leader, he was the epitome of humane and liberal personality. Ever since I began to associate closely with him, I never knew him to be angry even once, or speak ill of any man.

Yar'Adua was a hero cherished and admired by many across ethnic and religious divide.

March 9, would stand out as a significant memorial for the Late Chief of Staff Supreme Headquarters, Major General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua who died in the Abakaliki prison on December 8, 1997. It was on this day in 1995 during the National Constitutional Conference that he was arrested on the orders of late Head of State, General Sani Abacha on the allegation of coup plotting. Also arrested on the same allegation of a phantom coup was the President, General Olusegun Obasanjo.

As a retired military officer turned democrat, his main offence was not unconnected with the motion he and his associates sponsored at the conference that the administration of late General Abacha should not stay in office later than October 1, 1995. Since then, he became a man marked and was eventually arrested, tried and sentenced to death, a judgment that was later commuted to life imprisonment. He was first taken to Enugu prison and later sent to Abakaliki prison in Ebonyi State, where he died.

Gen. Shehu Yar'Adua could be described as a socialist proselyte of our generation. He abhorred violence no matter the merit of its objective. He held the view that anything obtained through violence or bloodshed would not endure. Yar'Adua trained to be a soldier, but his upbringing afforded him the instincts of a democrat and a politician. His distaste for the two coups of 1966 led him to conclude that no organised or disciplined regime could easily emerge from a takeover that was either bloody or contested. The perfect execution of the 1975 coup was widely praised and held up as an indication of the new maturity of the Nigerian army and its emerging officer corps.

Writing in its Editorial page, *New Nigerian* of August 1, 1975 said, "... The latest change has however, been very different from the two previous bloody upheavals. It was swift, precise, and totally bloodless. There was minimal disturbance to the daily lives of the people because the Armed Forces behaved with commendable restraint and discipline. The swiftness of the latest change in our government gives us all cause to be proud, Nigerians have demonstrated that they are a mature nation whose Armed Forces have recovered completely from the divisions of late 1966 and its aftermath..."

Yar'Adua also realised that the meticulous planning and extraordinary personal risks associated with the coup could only be justified by a clearly determined purpose and plan for the new government. He and his colleagues believed that efforts to restore the honour of the army and put the country back on the path to genuine peace and

By Alhaji Yazid Ibrahim  
political stability would depend on two elements.

First, the new regime must make a clear and unambiguous commitment to a deadline by which it would hand over power to civilians, indicating precisely the programme and time table according to which the transition would take place. Second, in tacit recognition of fears of the political class, it should adopt a "corrective strategy," which would leave an effective incoming civilian administration well placed to consolidate democracy.

In ensuring his dreams for a democratic Nigeria came true, Yar'Adua did not allow the assassination of the leader of the Supreme Military Command, Murtala Muhammed to deflect him from the political process begun under his direction. The target of October 1979 set for the return to civilian rule was adhered to; so was the time-table for preparing the new constitution, the establishment of a new system of states, and the holding of local government elections.

As a principal player in the Supreme Military Council, Yar'Adua refused to try to impose any ideology on the country. He said in his July 29, 1976 address that it was not right for a 'corrective regime' to attempt to do so since it would relinquish power after another three years. "Our policy, he said, is Nigeria first in anything. So if you are insisting that we must have an ideology, you can call it Nigerianism"

His desire to carry everybody along in all his undertakings was not in doubt. Opening a national debate on the Chief Rotimi Williams committee on Draft Constitution on October 7, 1976, Yar'Adua emphasised, "we feel it is the responsibility of government to ensure that the adoption and modification of the draft constitution is freely done by the generality of people of this country."

After his retirement, General Yar'Adua ventured into many spheres of human endeavour, where he played leading roles. He was a newspaper publisher; a farmer and above all a politician of repute, known to many people as a master strategist and a bridge builder. It was his credit that he nurtured the formation several political groups, some of which are still existing.

He participated actively in the presidential primaries of his party, SDP, which saw the election of late Chief Moshood Abiola as the presidential flag bearer of SDP. The incumbent Vice President, Atiku Abubakar came third, while the running mate to Abiola, Ambassador Baba Gana Kingibe was second. All is now history on the circumstance that befell June 12, 1993 presidential election. But suffice it to say that, the resolution to democratize Nigeria again using the framework of the constitutional conference eventually led to his arrest, detention and death on December 8, 1997.

In a letter he wrote to the former American President, Jimmy Carter from prison shortly before his death, Shehu described his incarceration and ordeal in the hands of General Abacha "as the sacrifice some of us must make for our country to be free". In the letter, he

appealed to Carter and other civil right leaders to help ensure that Nigeria is democratized. But unfortunately, Nigeria is democratized, but he was not alive to see the fruits of his labour. Though, he is dead, his spirit and political machine are still, very much alive and active.

It is to the credit of General Yar'Adua turned a democrat that the Peoples Democratic Movement (PDM) was formed after the ban on SDP and NRC. He and his associates formed the PDM with the hope of wresting power from the military government of late General Sani Abacha. Abacha is dead, but the PDM has outlived him. Many people believe that Obasanjo rode to power on the crest of the PDM in the PDP.

Indubitably, PDM became a veritable forerunner to the emergence of the ruling PDP today. PDM is seen as the dominant force in the present administration. Most of the major pillars in the PDP and influential members of Obasanjo's administration have their roots in the PDM. For instance, the vice president, Atiku Abubakar, the Chairman of the PDP Trustee, Chief Tony Anineh, the former minister of industries, Dr. Iyorchia Ayu, Chief Yomi Edu, Chief Titi Ajanaku, former Special Adviser to the president on Women Affairs; former Senate President, late Dr. Chuba Okadigbo, among others trace their political roots to the PDM.

It is also to the credit of the PDM that Obasanjo was persuaded to contest the presidential election. Many believe that, if Yar'Adua were alive today, he could have been the vice president to Obasanjo, since he held the same position between 1976 and 1979 when Obasanjo was military Head of State, and Shehu was his Deputy.

Vice President, Atiku Abubakar remembered Shehu Yar'Adua as a great strategist, who reached out across the country for the purposes of democratizing Nigeria without discrimination. The former Senate President, late Dr. Chuba Okadigbo spoke of Yar'Adua as a person who had the will power to get things solved.

His wife, Binta whom he married in 1969, said in the documentary "A life of service" that her late husband as "a loving and caring father and husband". General Yar'Adua was a former minister of transport in the government of late General Murtala Muhammed, where he gave a sense of direction to the sector. It is important to note that it was during his tenure as Minister of Transport that the famous port congestion of the Vice President, Atiku Abubakar in 1970 was addressed.

With the death of General Murtala Mohammed in 1976, he was appointed the Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters and subsequently promoted to the rank of major-general. Yar'Adua's historic promotion, catapulting him from brigadier, was awarded to enable him to command authority commensurate to colleagues previously senior to him in rank; thus making him the youngest two Star General at 36 years in the history of the country. He held that position until October 1, 1979, when he and General Obasanjo handed over the reins of government to Alhaji Shehu Shagari, as elected President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Ibrahim writes from Kaduna

## Case for a solid minerals commission

By Magaji K. Lawan

Once there was, a communications sector in Nigeria where frustration reigned supreme. The Nigerian Telecommunications, vested with the day-to-day management of the sector, was overwhelmed by the challenges of attaining efficiency in the sector. But things turned around when President Olusegun Obasanjo deregulated the sector, established a commission to oversee the sector, while the ministry of communications reclined basically to formulating and administering policies for the sector. Today the story of the communications sector is a huge success story, to the extent that, Nigeria's communications sector has been adjudged one of the fastest growing in the world. Just when the general belief was that nothing good could come from the communications sector, President Obasanjo in an unprecedented move changed this belief.

Similarly, Mr. President in 1999 did declare that one of the priority sectors that falls within his plan to revamp the Nation's economy is the solid minerals sector. He noted the potentials of the sector while regretting the neglect the sector had suffered in the hands of successive governments. Accordingly, some attempts have been made to activate operations in this sector, but the impact is still afar cry from what the sector has to offer the country. It is pertinent therefore to consider applying the parameters that made the communications sector the success story that it is today. And interestingly, there is a Bill presently before the National Assembly seeking to establish the Nigerian Solid Minerals Development Commission charged with the responsibility of managing the Nation's solid minerals resources.

It is point of fact that Nigeria is endowed with vast deposits of diverse solid mineral resources cutting across every State, and indeed every Local Government Area of the Federation. The occurrence of 33 different types of Solid Mineral commodities has already been established in well over 450 locations nation-wide.

As a matter of fact, Nigeria had been a net exporter of Solid Mineral commodities such as tin, columbite, lead and zinc from the colonial era until the early 1970s. Nigeria was then rated as the world's largest producer of columbite and among the largest producers of tin. Sad enough, this crucial sector has been neglected since the oil boom years, leading to our needless heavy "dependence on crude oil as the mainstay of the National economy. Today, solid minerals contributes an average of a paltry 0.2% of the GDP at current factor cost.

A very pressing imperative to revamp Nigeria's Solid Minerals potential is by far the socio-economic considerations, keeping in mind that every State in the Federation has a variety of Solid Minerals. This arguably constitutes the most practicable and equitable means of addressing the vexed issues of resource control. This makes it possible for each and indeed every State to be very rich, and contribute its quota to the nation's economy, through the exploitation of the solid minerals occurring therein.

Even the South-South with its abundant reserves of crude oil and gas, is not left out of the Solid Minerals heritage. It is therefore most disheartening to note that in spite of the enormous potentials of the Solid Minerals sector, what obtains all over Nigeria is crude and precarious artisanal mining, often illegally prosecuted. Illegal mining is very counter-productive, leading to the loss of several billions of Naira in revenue, environmental degradation/devastation and loss of farmlands, as well as constituting a grave danger to lives and property.

Solid Minerals constitute vital raw material inputs in most modern industries including, but not restricted to chemical, pharmaceutical, agro-allied, petroleum, metallurgical as well as building and construction. The crude mineral is usually processed prior to industrial utilization.

Despite its abundant endowment in diverse Solid Mineral Resources, Nigeria is scandalously a net importer of Solid Minerals - based industrial inputs, even in the face of scarcity of foreign exchange. It goes without saying therefore, that various raw materials would be readily available to most of our local industries, following the optimal exploitation of our Solid Minerals potentials. Nigeria's annual import bill for some minerals, which are available across the country, is as follows:≤

1. Barytes- US \$29.9 Million
2. Phosphate- US \$11.7 Million
3. Gypsum- US \$9 Million
4. Kaolin - US \$13.5 Million
5. Marble- US \$75 Million
6. Coal - US \$30 Million

The current annual demand for cement in Nigeria is 9 million tons, while local production is 2 million tons with the shortfall of 7 million tons imported. Development of the proven reserves of limestone which constitutes more than 90% of cement can however meet the entire current national demand and even leave some for export.

Needless to state the obvious, that employment generation from the nation's solid minerals exploration and exploitation, for about 6 million Nigerians would have a net multiplier effect on close to 30 million more Nigerians, in view of our extended family system. This would not doubt, go a long way in taking potential trouble-makers and miscreants off the streets as a veritable means of diffusing tension in various trouble spots, which is more often than not, the result of abject poverty and joblessness.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Nigerian Solid Minerals Development Commission is not advocated to rival or depose the existing Ministry. It only seeks to augment the Ministry in areas where it has under performed, "presumably due to scarcity of funds and possibly due to "bureaucratic and political interference", (apologies to the Makarfi Committee). Besides, there are so very many different Commissions in place, for virtually every sector of our economy, which have not been proven to clash with relevant Ministries. Examples include the Police, which have a Police Service Commission, in addition to the Police Affairs Ministry and the Office of the

IGP. The educational sector is also replete with such Commissions as the National Universities Commission and the Teachers Service Commission, to name a few.

For the records, several attempts have been made since independence to develop some of the mineral deposits especially iron ore and industrial minerals for local industries. For these purposes the Nigerian Mining Corporation (NMC) has taken extensive areas estimated at about 463,000 sq km (covering half the entire surface area of Nigeria) under license for precious, base or radioactive metals. NMC oversees the operations of eight wholly owned subsidiary companies, loss making producers of gold, tin, construction and industrial minerals, and has varying equity positions in approximately 22 joint ventures (all small operations, in the exploitation of gold, lead/zinc, barites, kaolin, dolomite, magesite, etc).

In its report, the Presidential Committee on solid minerals development (7 year action plan) also recommended inter alia: *with very generous incentives such as a 3-years tax holiday, deferred royalty payments, etc. the Government may not earn much in terms of revenue unless it partakes in profit through joint ventures as it is done in the oil sector through the NNPC. With the NMC early moribund and given the current structures on ground, one can say with a high degree of certainty that no serious investor, (individual or corporate) would be willing to commit the huge financial resources that this sector requires.*

Therefore a more viable alternative holding agency for government's equity in perspective joint ventures in a liberalized solid minerals sector is arguably the proposed Nigerian Solid Minerals Development Commission. It is also pertinent to note that a Bill for a new Minerals and Mining Act is currently before the House, all the provisions of which are in absolute agreement with the kernel of the NSMDC Bill, which is the optimal exploitation for our solid minerals endowment, with the private sector playing the active role. Notable areas of concurrence include the following:≤

1. **Nimex:** The proposed Minerals and Mining Act (MMA) actually gave legal backing to the establishment of a Metals and Minerals Exchange for Nigeria, which is one of the agencies, envisaged to be run between the proposed NSMDC and the private sector.

2. **Solid Minerals Development:** The proposed MMA seeks to establish a Solid Minerals Development Fund (SMDF) under the Ministry. The functions of the SMDF are clearly delineated and have to do with the development of SMEs in the sector, in clear distinction to the propose NSMDC, which apart from being operated in the Presidency is, strictly speaking, restricted to large-scale mechanized mining and allied industries nation wide.

The realization of the noble objective of optimal utilization of our solid minerals endowment could best be achieved by a full-fledged Nigeria Solid Minerals Development Commissions. The time to act is now.

Lawan writes from Ladi Akintola Boulevard Garki II, Abuja.

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Foreign & Diplomatic

## Italy's dilemma in Iraq

By Scott Taylor

After Italian intelligence operatives had secured her release from Iraqi insurgents, journalist Giuliana Sgrena was admittedly elated, celebrating her new lease on life after a month-long hostage ordeal.

That was before US soldiers opened fire on the vehicle which carried Sgrena and her rescuers towards the Baghdad airport.

One Italian secret service agent, Nicola Calipari, was killed, while Sgrena and another intelligence official were wounded in the American fusillade.

In the immediate aftermath of the tragedy, Pentagon officials said the Italian vehicle had been speeding towards their checkpoint and that the driver had failed to obey US soldiers' signals.

Following her evacuation from Iraq to Italy, veteran reporter Sgrena disputed the American version of events, stating that the vehicle that carried her to freedom was travelling at "regular speed" and that the only "signal" issued by the US troops was a burst of machine gun fire.

Writing in her own newspaper *Il Manifesto*, Sgrena sparked a flurry of conspiracy theories that quickly circulated around the globe.

She said prior to her release her captors warned her "to be careful, because the Americans don't want you to return" and that she should not reveal her presence to anyone because "the Americans might intervene".

There can be little doubt that the US authorities and the interim Iraqi government would be displeased over the fact that Sgrena's release was secured through a reported ransom payment of \$6-8 million.

However, it is unfathomable to think that the Pentagon would have ordered a deliberate assassination of a Western reporter under such high-profile circumstances.

While the idea of the Italian government funding the insurgency and further supporting the new cottage industry of kidnapping runs counter to US policy in Iraq, in this instance the money had apparently already been paid.

There was nothing to be gained by attacking the Italian rescue vehicle.

In other words, there was nothing to be gained by attacking the Italian rescue vehicle.

And as events have proven, in terms of public relations and international politics, the Americans stood to lose everything by doing so since Italy is one of the few European members of US President George Bush's "coalition of the willing" with a tangible troop commitment of some 3000 soldiers in Iraq.

The attack against Sgrena has only re-ignited the strong anti-war and anti-American sentiments which existed in Italy, and Prime Minister Berlusconi will be hard-pressed by public protests to bring home the Italian

contingent.

In anticipation of such a damaging blow, the US neo-cons have gone into full attack mode in a desperate attempt to discredit Sgrena's version of events.

The fact that *Il Manifesto* is a "communist" newspaper is reported by these Republican Party cheerleaders as though this automatically discredits the source and implies something far more sinister.

One of the most ridiculous spins on the incident is being put forward by none other than David Frum, Bush's former speech writer, who claims credit for coining the phrase "axis of evil".

Frum's take on the tragedy is that Sgrena's professional negligence (ie getting captured while trying to report an independent perspective on the war in Iraq) led to the unfortunate death of Nicola Calipari, a "heroic" ally of the US.

It also appears to irk Frum that the Italian government "went behind the Americans' backs" to negotiate for Sgrena's successful release.

What Frum and his colleagues fail to accept is the fact that the US has completely lost control of the security situation in Iraq and,

as a result, allied governments have no choice but to take matters into their own hands to protect their nationals.

Thus far, after two years of insurgency and violence, the American military has yet to mount a single successful hostage rescue. Even the much publicised commando raid to free Private Jessica Lynch was quickly debunked as an elaborate hoax.

In an effort to cast further suspicion on Sgrena's ordeal, Jim Bartlett, a US historian and military affairs correspondent, is circulating a letter among internet bloggers asking: "What was [the Italians'] hurry?"

However, instead of

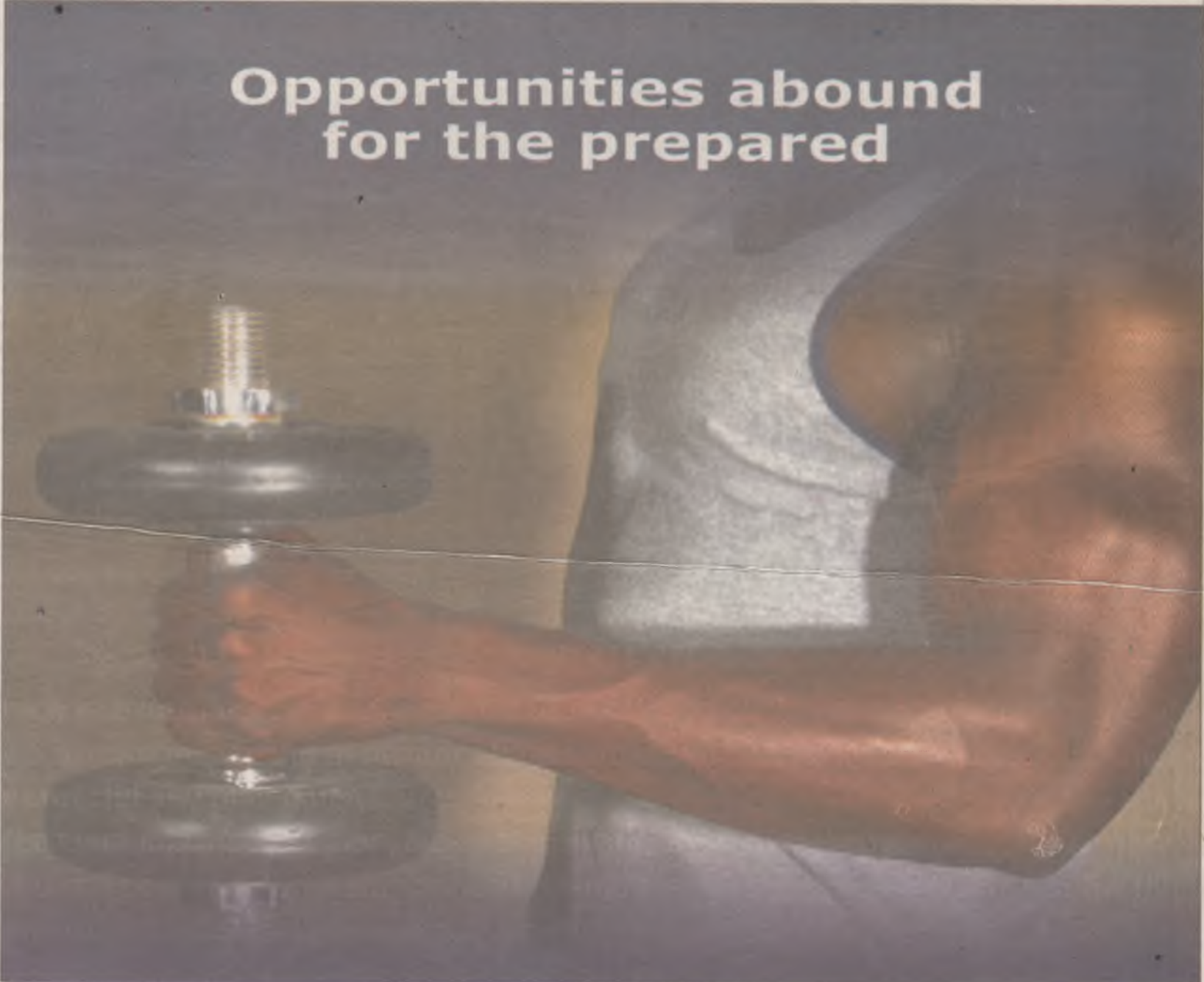
insinuating something dastardly, Bartlett appears to answer his own question by asking: "After a month in captivity, in the hands of the Iraqi insurgents, [the Italians] were trying to fly her to Rome the same day she was released" Having endured my own hostage ordeal for five days last September, I can assure Mr Bartlett and his fellow doubters that despite my injuries and trauma I had no desire to report to the American authorities for a "physical", as he suggests Ms Sgrena should have done. Like her, my only wish was to return home as quickly as possible.

The other "question"

raised by Bartlett actually provides the only real insight into this regrettable tragedy. "In all the times that I have been on the Baghdad airport road," writes Bartlett, "I cannot imagine what that [Italian] intelligence officer was thinking taking that road at night."

The reason for this is that, in the wake of recent suicide bombings against coalition forces and Iraqi police, the Americans have once again modified their rules of engagement. All that is necessary now for US troops to legally employ deadly force is that they feel threatened in any given circumstance.

*Aljazeera*



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# Trust International

Africa

## Darfur: AU seeks solutions to human rights violation

The chairman of the African Union, President Olusegun Obasanjo said Wednesday, that the Union is still seeking an acceptable means of bringing the culprits in violation of human rights in Darfur region of Sudan to book.

A statement signed by presidential spoke person Mrs. Oluremi Oyo said bringing all human rights violators in the region to book would achieve justice and reconciliation in Sudan's Western region.

She said, "President Obasanjo also wishes to state that no consensus has been reached in the African Union with the government of Sudan on the matter and that there has been no agreement with the United Nations Security Council on it."

"Although president Obasanjo had consultations on the issue of Darfur with president Mohammed Omar el-Bashir of Sudan and the Sudanese First Vice President, el-Hady Osman Mohammed Taha on separate

By Reuben Yunana (State House correspondent)

occasions in Abuja recently, nothing has so far been agreed and the African Unions search for an acceptable arrangements to bring the culprits to justice goes on" the statement said.

According to Oyo's statement, "President Obasanjo affirms that when a position is adopted as the African union position, it would be harmonised with the views of the Security Council."



Tony Blair, British PM

## Blair's African commission creates road map

Prime Minister Tony Blair's commission on Africa has come up with a road map to recovery for the continent, but countries must now cooperate and focus on priorities if the project is to succeed, the only American member of the task force said.

Former US Senator Nancy

Kassebaum Baker said on Tuesday she was optimistic the commission's report, due to be published Friday, would give fresh momentum to tackling the continent's crippling problems of health, poverty and conflict.

"There is a road map here, we can make priorities of what we can accomplish and do it right," she told *The Associated Press*. "We are not going to solve this overnight. The key is whether there is going to be a willingness to stick with it."

Blair created the 17-member commission last February to find ways of helping the continent, which is ravaged by civil wars, crippled by debt and HIV/AIDS.

He hopes the commission's findings will spur international action and has made helping Africa a key priority for Britain's presidencies of both the G-8 group of wealthy nations and the European Union this year.

The report calls for an immediate doubling of annual international aid to Africa to \$50 billion, the removal of trade barriers that keep poor countries from getting their goods into Western markets, debt forgiveness and action to tackle poor governance, corruption and war in Africa.

According to an official familiar with the work of the commission, half of whose members are African, its 400-page final report also recommends that the debts of poor countries in sub-Saharan Africa to the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and African Development Bank be written off, but stresses that recipients must be committed to good governance, and use the money to deliver "development, economic growth and the reduction of

poverty."

The commission calls on African governments to reform, and ratify the U.N. Convention against Corruption in 2005. But the report also stresses that governments, corporations and banks in rich countries also have a duty to tackle corruption.

"It is not enough to say Africa is corrupt," Commissioner Anna Tibaijuka told reporters in London last month. "We have to ask ourselves who is corrupting Africa. It is not enough to say Africa has stolen money. We have to ask who is banking the money."

Baker, a Republican senator for Kansas from 1979 to 1997 and former chair of the Subcommittee on African Affairs, said past efforts to help Africa had been hampered by a fragmented approach.

## Observers, journalists to pay for Zimbabwean elections

The executive director of the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA), Denis Kadima, expressed his surprise at the Zimbabwean government's attempt to make money out of those few election observers it is allowing in.

Speaking on Tuesday in Maputo, on the second day of a post-election workshop organised by EISA, Kadima said that observers are being charged 100 US dollars each, and journalists 150 dollars each.

He said that EISA was ready to deploy 40 observers to witness the forthcoming Zimbabwean parliamentary election, but has so far received no invitation from the Zimbabwean authorities, according to the EISA executive director.

The chances of EISA

## 'Sudan needs \$7.8 billion for reconstruction over 2 years'

Sudan needs some \$7.8 billion over the next 2 years for emergency reconstruction now that a 21-year civil war in the south has ended, government officials and former rebels said in a joint appeal Wednesday.

The money will finance a recovery and development program for southern and northern Sudan. The plan, however, does not cover the troubled Darfur region of western Sudan, where a campaign of violence by pro-government militia rebels has forced an estimated two million people to flee their homes.

Darfur needs another \$2 billion a year for operations to secure the region and meet its humanitarian needs, said Ishac Diwan, the World Bank director for Sudan and Ethiopia.

Sudan's government and southern rebels signed a peace agreement on Jan. 9 to end Africa's longest-running civil war. The treaty sets out power-and wealth-sharing rules. After six years, the deal says, the south will hold a referendum on whether to remain part of Africa's largest country.

Government and rebel officials agreed that Sudan will provide \$5.14 billion, or 65.9 per cent of the money needed to rebuild the country, from July 2005 to 2007, Sudanese officials and former rebels from the Sudan People's Liberation Army said in a joint statement.

Sudan is seeking \$2.66 billion, or 34 per cent of the funds, from the international community. The plan will be presented at the first postwar international donors'

pledging conference on April 11-12 in Oslo, Norway, officials said.

The north-south war pitted Islamic-dominated Khartoum against rebels seeking greater autonomy and a greater share of the country's wealth for the Christian and animist south. The conflict is blamed for more than two million deaths, primarily from war-induced famine and disease.

## IGAD task AU on Somali peace mission

Central African defence officials from the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) meeting in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, on Tuesday asked the African Union (AU) for further details about the proposed peace mission to Somalia.

"We need guidance from members of the AU [African Union] Commission to throw more light on what was discussed and agreed on in Abuja as far as the peace mission for Somalia is concerned," Aronda Nyakairima, Uganda's army commander, said at the official opening of the conference of IGAD defence experts.

"There are some issues which are not very clear to us and they include the following: troops contributing countries, mandate of the mission, size of the mission [and] its funding and logistics," he added.

In February, the AU authorized IGAD - which comprises Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda - to prepare to send a peace mission to Somalia. Its purpose would be to help the country's transitional federal government (TFG) get a foothold there when it relocates from Nairobi, Kenya.

A fact-finding trip to Somalia was recently undertaken by IGAD and AU officials, who were charged with looking into the logistics of the peacekeeping mission. Nyakairima said that the fact-finding party's report would be handed over to IGAD defence ministers participating in the meeting later in the week.

Although the TFG itself requested the peacekeeping force, strong opposition has been reported in Somalia to troops from the country's immediate neighbours.

The international community, including the United States and the think-tank, International Crisis Group, has also expressed concerns about including troops from neighbouring countries without the approval of the Somali people.

## Earthquake hits

### S/Africa

One man was killed and four injured when an earthquake trapped a group of goldminers in an underground shaft south-west of Johannesburg.

Rescuers battled for 12 hours to free the men, trapped at a depth of 2.4km beneath the surface.

The earthquake, measuring five on the Richter scale, struck on Wednesday morning, trapping 40 men underground.

By late Wednesday, all but one of the gold miners had been traced and was being treated by medics in the shaft.

"One employee is still unaccounted for. Regrettably one is a fatality, the other 14 we have. Four of these are injured," a spokesman for mining firm DRDGold told the BBC News website.

James Duncan said that a team of more than 100 people, including many miners who had volunteered as well as specialised medics, were taking part in the rescue operation.

Medics were working underground to treat the men before bringing them to the surface, he said.

Four of the group of trapped men were injured during the quake, which struck near the town of Stilfontein, 155km south-west of Johannesburg.

"They will be short of water - it will be hot, humid and extremely uncomfortable down there. Re-hydration is a major focus of the paramedics," Mr Duncan said.

The company had about 3,158 miners in the area affected by the quake most of whom have already been brought to the surface.

Some 227 remaining men, DRDGold said, are in the process of being evacuated.

Large earthquakes are not common in South Africa and one seismologist said it could have been triggered by underground mining operations.

"This is most probably a mining-induced event... it is a gold mining area," said Council for Geoscience seismologist Eldridge Kgaswane.

He said that mine work triggered small earthquakes on an almost daily basis.

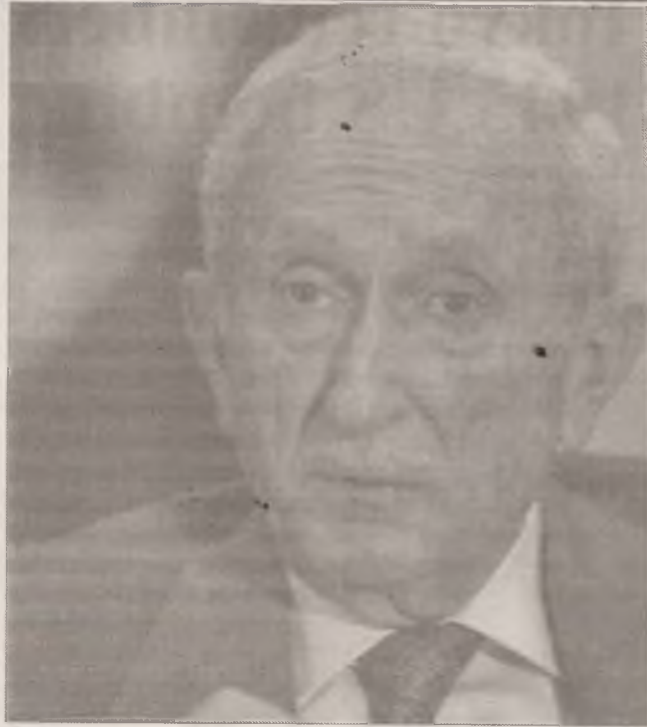
A block of flats for elderly people in the town of Klefksdorp, near the epicentre, had to be evacuated after the earthquake left it "unfit for human habitation", the emergency services said.

Pupils at two schools in the town were also sent home after walls were damaged.

Police spokesman Louis Jacobs said about 40 people had been slightly injured and many shop windows broken in the two towns.

# Trust International

## Middle East & Asia



Reappointed Lebanese Prime Minister, Omar Karami

### Israeli troops kill Palestinian activist

Israeli troops have killed an Islamic Jihad activist in a raid on a village near the West Bank town of Jenin, the army said.

Family members identified the dead man as Muhammad Abu Haznah, 28, a member of the Islamic Jihad group.

Israeli security officials said the man was behind the recent Tel Aviv bombing that killed five Israelis.

They said he was part of a cell that had also built a car bomb the Israelis disarmed last week and was planning further attacks.

*Aljazeera's* correspondent in Jenin reported that Israeli forces entered the village of al-Nazla al-Wista in northern Tulkaram yesterday morning.

After surrounding Haznah's house, the troops sent a dog in to flush him out, the army said.

The Israeli army said the activist shot and killed the dog, then opened fire on the soldiers. The troops then destroyed the building, killing the Haznah inside.

All the other residents left the building before it was demolished.

In searches of the rubble the soldiers found the Haznah's body and a pistol, the military said.

At a summit last month in which Israeli and Palestinian leaders declared a halt to the violence, Israel said it would not target Palestinian activists unless they were about to carry out an attack.

Relations between Israelis and Palestinians are already tense because of an impasse over Israel's transfer of West Bank towns to Palestinian control.

The killing could deepen the discord because Palestinian activists have conditioned halting violence on Israel's ending its hunts for Palestinian wanted men.

"We believe that the Israelis have committed to stop violence against Palestinians anywhere; these

actions are only adding fuel to fire," Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erakat said.

"Israel should let the Palestinian security forces do their job in these areas."

A spat over the transfer of the quiet town of Jericho to Palestinian security control was already threatening to undermine the month-old truce.

Israel has refused to take down its roadblocks north and south of the ancient town, as the Palestinians have demanded.

Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas and Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz failed to settle the disagreement in talks on Tuesday, and two meetings of security commanders on Wednesday were no more successful.

### Gunmen kill Baghdad police chief

Gunmen shot dead a police chief and two other people in a drive-by shooting in the Iraqi capital yesterday, one day after authorities said they'd found dozens of corpses — some bullet-riddled, others beheaded — at two different sites.

Gunmen in two cars opened fire on a pickup truck carrying Col. Ahmed Abeis, the head of a police station in central Baghdad, killing him, his driver and a guard, police Col. Khazim Abbas said.

The white truck could be seen on the side of a road in Baghdad's southwestern Saidiyah neighborhood, its windows shattered and bullet-ridden. Weeping, a brother of Abeis picked up an empty shoe from the back of the blood-smeared vehicle. The bodies were taken to the morgue at Yarmouk hospital, officials and witnesses there said.

It was not known who shot the men, but Iraqi police and army troops as well as top Iraqi politicians are frequently targeted by insurgents who see them as collaborators

### Lebanon parliament reappoints PM

A majority of Lebanon's parliamentarians have nominated anew Umar Karami to form a new government, political sources said.

A total of 69 deputies from the 128-member chamber on Wednesday chose Karami, a favourite of Syria, in consultations with President Emile Lahud, the sources said in Beirut.

The president, also close to Damascus, was now bound to appoint Karami, who resigned last week under popular and opposition pressure, as prime minister-designate.

Opposition MPs did not nominate anyone to lead the government, handing Lahud a list of their demands instead.

They included calls for the resignation of the country's security chiefs and a demand for the authorities to reveal who was behind the 14 February assassination of former prime minister Rafiq al-Hariri.

Karami will have the task of forming a government of national unity, bringing in a number of opposition figures, the sources said. The previous government, which quit last week, comprised only pro-Syrian ministers.

Meanwhile, Syria's ambassador to the United States said his country's troops would be out of Lebanon by May, when legislative elections are to be held.

"They are actually being withdrawn today," Imad Mustafa told *CNN* television on Tuesday. "We will do this as soon as possible, even long before May."

### ...30 Iraqi bodies found near Syria

Thirty people were found shot dead in a known trouble spot on the Iraq-Syrian border, while a suicide truck bomb attack on Baghdad's agriculture ministry and a hotel occupied by US contractors killed four and wounded 40. Also in Baghdad, Iraq's outgoing Planning Minister Mahdi al-Hafidh escaped Wednesday an assassination attempt that killed two of his guards and wounded one, an Iraqi official told *AFP*.

The attack happened near the Saudi embassy in the upscale Mansur area on the capital's west side, undersecretary of culture Maysun al-Damluji said.

In the latest episode of gruesome violence, Iraqi security forces retrieved the bodies of at least 30 people,

The comment followed a fresh call by US President George Bush for Syria's military and intelligence forces to be out of Lebanon before the elections.

Lebanon's caretaker Defence Minister Abd al-Rahim Murad said the redeployment of 6000 Syrian troops towards the eastern Bekaa Valley had begun on

Tuesday and would take a week to 10 days.

The withdrawal would also cover Syrian intelligence personnel, including their headquarters in Beirut, a senior Lebanese military official said.

Syrian President Bashar al-Asad on Monday pledged to pull back his country's remaining 14,000 troops in

Lebanon towards the Bekaa, where most of the troops are already based, by the end of March.

But he stopped short of announcing a full withdrawal.

Under the 1989 Taif Accord that ended the 1975-1990 civil war in Lebanon, the Syrian and Lebanese governments are to decide the strength of the Syrian force remaining in the Bekaa and when they would be withdrawn completely.

### Hong Kong's leader resigns

Hong Kong's leader Tung Chee-hwa has announced his resignation as chief executive of the former British colony.

He told a news conference that he was stepping down after eight years because of declining health.

However, many observers in Hong Kong believe that he was in fact sacked by the Chinese leadership.

He had faced growing unpopularity over failed plans for an anti-subversion bill and his continued support for Beijing in limiting democratic reforms.

It is the first leadership change since Hong Kong returned to Chinese rule in 1997.

Mr Tung told a news conference that he had tendered his resignation as Hong Kong's chief executive an hour earlier, two years before his term was due to end.

He denied that he had been sacked and said he was leaving to become vice-chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in Beijing after a period of rest.

He said working long hours had taken a toll on his health and he could no longer work what he described as a "punishing schedule".

He said doctors had told him he had to change the way he worked and lived.

"The work is very heavy, the responsibility is huge and of course, I feel a tremendous sense of responsibility," he

added.

Mr Tung looked back on his time in charge of Hong Kong, saying that he and the territory's people had "embarked on a road never before travelled" when he was appointed eight years ago.

"During this time, we have successfully implemented the one country, two systems principle. For the first time in history, Hong Kong citizens began to take charge of their own affairs," he said.

Rumours of Mr Tung's impending departure began circulating last Monday after details of the 62-year-old former shipping magnate's new job emerged - a move some saw as a way of easing him out of office in Hong Kong.

Mr Tung's deputy, Donald

Tsang - a veteran of the British civil service - is to take over from him as acting chief executive.

Factors that have helped induce Mr Tung's unpopularity since he took over his job in 1997 include his successive crises over the economy and SARS; his ill-fated attempt to push through a draconian security law that sparked mass protests in 2003; and his continued support for China's efforts to limit democratic reforms in the territory.

Under the Basic Law, Hong Kong's mini-constitution, the Beijing-appointed 800-strong committee which chooses Hong Kong's leader must hold an election within six months.

### 'Tibet can be part of China' - Dalai Lama

The Dalai Lama, seen by Beijing as a symbol of Tibetan separatism, said on yesterday he and his followers were ready to accept that the region remains a part of China.

"I once again want to reassure the Chinese authorities that as long as I am responsible for the affairs of Tibet we remain fully committed to the Middle Way Approach of not seeking independence for Tibet and are willing to remain within the People's Republic of China," the Tibetan spiritual leader said.

The Dalai Lama, who fled to

India in 1959 after a failed uprising against Chinese rule, made the comments in an annual statement on the 46th anniversary of the revolt.

The Nobel laureate, who has headed a Tibetan government-in-exile in Dharamsala in Himachal Pradesh, has maintained that he only wants greater autonomy for the Tibetan people.

Analysts said his comments underlined a further softening towards China and were a fresh overture to help Beijing address the issue of Tibet.

"The Dalai Lama wants to give China a respectable way out of the Tibet problem where China has landed itself as a colonial master," said Vijay Kranti, a New Delhi-based expert on Tibetan affairs.

"But Chinese leaders failed to understand such overtures in the past. I doubt if they will respond positively now."

The exiled leader, who has said China's image has been tarnished by its human rights record in Tibet, called for more understanding of Chinese concerns over the region.

"Now that our elected (exiled) political leadership is shouldering more responsibility in Tibetan affairs, I have advised them to look into the issues raised by the Chinese side...and to take steps to address or clarify them as needed."

In September last year, Lodi Gyari, a top envoy of the Dalai Lama, met Chinese officials in Beijing and said both sides had serious and extensive talks.

# Trust International

## World Report

### Italy disputes US hostage account

Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi has said the car carrying an Italian agent killed by US fire had stopped as soon as it was signalled.

His statement contradicts US accounts of the incident in Iraq in which Nicola Calipari was shot taking freed hostage Giuliana Sgrena to Baghdad airport.

Mr Berlusconi said the US must accept responsibility to restore relations.

He said his government had demanded "maximum co-operation" from the US, and a joint inquiry had been promised.

The US military in Iraq has begun an investigation led by Brig Gen Peter Vangjel into Friday's shooting. It is expected to take up to four weeks to complete.

Relations between the US and Italy have been strained by the incident.

Speaking to the Italian Senate, Mr Berlusconi said: "Only a frank and reciprocal recognition of eventual responsibility is the condition for closure of the incident, which was so irrational and caused so much sorrow."

The prime minister said the US military had authorised the Italian journey to the airport.

An agent travelling in the car with Mr. Calipari had

given an account of events which conflicted with the version given by the US military, he added.

"A light was flashed at the vehicle from 10m away," Mr Berlusconi said. "The driver at this point stopped the car immediately and at the same time there was gunfire for about 10 or 15 seconds."

Mr Berlusconi said he had spoken to US President George W Bush, who had



Italian president, Silvio Berlusconi

promised to co-operate in finding out who was responsible.

He said the idea that Mr Calipari had been killed by friendly fire was "painful" but added he was certain the US "has no intention of evading the truth".

### Kosovo ex-PM surrenders to UN court

Former Kosovo prime minister and guerrilla fighter Ramush Haradinaj has arrived at the UN war crimes court at The Hague after surrendering at Pristina airport, Kosovo.

Haradinaj, who resigned a day earlier as prime minister of Kosovo, arrived at the airport accompanied by his wife and surrounded by well-wishers, before boarding a special flight to The Hague.

He is facing charges over his role in Kosovo's 1998-1999 war against Serbian aggression from the former Yugoslavia.

Officials said Haradinaj was indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for

People in Tokyo have been marking the 60th anniversary of a massive US night-time bombing raid which destroyed much of the city in 1945.

Several memorial services have been held across the city to remember the more than 100,000 people who died.

The raid was part of an American strategy to try to wear down Japanese morale ahead of a possible invasion.

It has remained controversial because of the death

### Tokyo remembers 1945 US bombing

toll, but a ceremony expressed little anger towards the US.

At 1000, Buddhist monks began the mournful service of remembrance in a special memorial hall built in Tokyo's Sumida-ku Ward, which was in the centre of the firestorm caused by the US bombing raid 60 years ago.

The low-key service was attended by Prince Akishino, second son of the current emperor, and grandson of Emperor Hirohito who led Japan into the Second World War.

More than 2,000 mainly elderly residents also crowded into the hall, laying bouquets of flowers and lighting incense.

Many still have vivid memories of the B-29 bombers flying low overhead dropping the incendiary bombs which turned the neighbourhood into an inferno.

They recall hellish scenes of people being incinerated as they tried to run, or dying when they threw themselves into the boiling River Sumida.

Survivors show no bitterness, only a longing for peace.

The speeches at the service were restrained, apportioning no blame, and referring to the appalling death toll as a tragedy brought on by war.

There was little anger expressed towards the Americans by the survivors either.

### Odd World Behold! Siblings living with dead parent

Police on Tuesday questioned three siblings after it was discovered they had been living with the decomposed corpse of their father for nearly a decade, an official said.

Police found the body of Kyujiro Kanaoka lying on a futon bed at the family's home in Itami city in Hyogo prefecture in western Japan, said a prefectural police spokesman, who declined to be identified.

Kanaoka's three elderly children, all in their 70s or older, told police they thought their father was still alive but that one of them recently had consulted a relative about the possibility that he might be dead, the spokesman said.

Police were investigating the cause of Kanaoka's death. Judging from the condition of his decomposed body, Kanaoka may have died as long as 10 years ago, the spokesman said.

Had he been alive, the man would be 107 years old. Hyogo prefecture had registered Kanaoka as its oldest living resident, public broad-

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# Business Trust

## Commissioner leads protest march to NEPA office

Faced by what they called "discriminatory power supply to our area", the Zamfara environment commissioner on Wednesday led Gusau residents on a protest march to the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) office.

Alhaji Garba Dauran, who led the residents of Mortgage area of the Gusau metropolis, said they were at the NEPA office to protest the epileptic power supplied to the area in spite of the improved power supply in the state.

"We felt it necessary to come and represent other residents of Mortgage area because most of them have exhausted their patience," he said.

Dauran said the people of the area had made several visits to the NEPA office to no avail, adding that the area had been thrown into darkness for the past few weeks.

According to him, "whenever the so-called light is available we prefer putting on lanterns and candles as they are brighter."

Dauran appealed to the NEPA district manager to do something urgently before the situation degenerated

because the impression people had was that they were being discriminated against.

Responding, the District

Manager, Mr A.J. Chiroma, appealed to the people to exercise patience as the authority would do everything possible to rectify

the problem.

He promised to ensure that appropriate action was taken to restore normal power supply to the area.

## BPE warns speculative bidders

By Ahmed I. Shekarau, Group Business Editor

The Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) has the number of bids harvested for NITEL to five from 21. The Bureau however assures those who have expressed

interest in NITEL that although work has commenced on the evaluation of the expression of interests (EOIs), the process is yet to be completed.

A statement signed by Adesoji Adesugba, head of communications and marketing of the BPE said, prospective bidders are advised to disregard spurious media reports caused to be published by either mischief-makers and or some unscrupulous prospective bidders, whose strategy is to use their contacts to orchestrate such sensational reports with a view to discrediting the on-going NITEL core investor sale transaction process.

"Their game plan is to create doubt in the minds of unwary prospective bidders, who will be discouraged and consequently withdraw from the process, thus weakening the field of potential competitors to their advantage," it said.

"The reports tend to suggest that the Bureau has concluded the evaluation of the EOIs received from prospective investors and pre-qualified a particular number of consortia; and that certain consortia/firms have made a firm offer to the Bureau on the sale price for NITEL.

"The Bureau is however, committed to implementing a thorough and transparent privatization process," the statement said.

## Four banks settle in WorldCom case

Four foreign investment banks agreed to pay \$428.4 million and became the latest banks to settle the class-action lawsuit by investors accusing them of hiding risks at WorldCom before its collapse, the New York state comptroller said on Wednesday.

In a statement, comptroller Alan Hevesi said ABN AMRO Inc. (AAH.AS) will pay \$278.4 million, Mitsubishi Securities International (8306.T) will pay \$75 million, and BNP Paribas Securities Corp. (BNPP.PA) and Mizuho International (8411.T) will pay \$37.5 million each.

The lawsuit was filed on behalf of hundreds of thousands of investors who bought WorldCom stock and bonds before the phone company sought bankruptcy protection in July 2002.

The investors accuse the banks of helping WorldCom sell bonds when they should have known the company was lying about its finances.

Hevesi, who oversees the New York State Common Retirement Fund and is the lead plaintiff, said the new settlements bring the total amount recovered by the plaintiffs to \$3.56 billion, which

if approved by a judge would be the largest recovery in an investor lawsuit.

Hevesi said the four banks agreed to higher payouts, relative to the amount of bonds they underwrote, than the previous six banks. This suggests that the banks that have not settled might ultimately be forced to pay more and might feel more pressure to settle.

These include JPMorgan Chase & Company and the

German bank Deutsche Bank AG (DBKGn.DE). A trial is scheduled to begin on March 17.

ABN AMRO is Dutch, the Mitsubishi and Mizuho banks are Japanese, and BNP Paribas is French.

"I assume whatever agreement was reached by the foreign banks will be similar to the agreement that will be imposed on JPMorgan," said Punk, Ziegel & Co. analyst Richard Bove.

## IMF wants OPEC to raise production

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) says it will urge OPEC to more than double its excess production capacity when it publishes its six-monthly report on the outlook for the world economy in a month's time.

The current amount of excess production capacity held by members of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries was inadequate and should be increased to 3.0-5.0 million barrels per day or to 3.5-5.5 percent of daily world oil demand to improve protection for supplies, the *Financial Times* newspaper reported yesterday.

The IMF held that the oil was exposed to a "significant upside price risk" and was extremely vulnerable to a crisis, given that surplus production capacity was not enough to cope with an

eventual shock, either on the supply or demand side.

The IMF held that the oil market would remain tight until 2010 and that demand for OPEC oil would rise progressively. Supply and demand would remain roughly in balance from 2005 to 2010.

But OPEC, which currently supplied about 40 percent of world crude, would gain influence from 2010 because reserves in a number of non-OPEC countries would begin to decline.

The margin of surplus OPEC capacity was estimated to be 1.5 million barrels per day, having been built up in the last eight months, having fallen to 0.5-1.2 million barrels per day in July. At the beginning of 2002, the surplus margin was 7.0 million barrels per day.

### Today's flight schedule

#### Albarka Air

Lagos - Abuja	07:20
	15:15
	13:00
Abuja - Lagos	8:45a.m.
	11:00
	13:15
	17:00
Maiduguri - Abuja	06:50
Abuja - Maid	17:00
Lagos - Yola	1:00 p.m.
Abuja - Yola	14:30
Yola - Abuja	15.30
Yola - Lagos	4:00 p.m.

#### Chanchangi Airlines

Lagos - Abuj	8:15a.m.
	11:00a.m.
	12:10p.m.
	4:45p.m.
Kaduna - Lagos	8:30a.m.
P/H - Lagos	9:00a.m.
	4:30p.m.
Abuja - Kaduna	2:30p.m.
Kaduna - Abuja	1:30p.m.

#### IRS Airlines

CBQ - Abuja	8.00 a.m.
Abuja - Lagos	9:45a.m.
Lagos - Kaduna	9:30a.m.
Kano - Lagos	7:30p.m.
Lagos - Kano	11:15a.m.
Kaduna - Lagos	11:00a.m.
Lagos - Abu/MM	2:30p.m.
Abuja - MM	1:45p.m.
MM - Abuja	3:45p.m.
Abuja - CB	5:15p.m.
Kano - Abuja	1:15p.m.
Abuja - Kano	2:30p.m.
Kano - Lagos	3:45p.m.
Lagos - Kano	6:00p.m.

#### EAS Airlines

Lagos - Abuja	8:15p.m.
	11:45a.m.
	5:45p.m.
Abuja - Lagos	10:15a.m.
	7:15p.m.
Lagos - Jos	11:45a.m.
Jos - Lagos	2:30pm.

#### Dasab Airlines

Auja - Lagos	8:30 a.m.
Lagos - PHC	10:30 a.m.
PHC - Lagos	12:30 a.m.
Lagos - Kano	2:30 p.m.
Kano - Lagos	4:30 p.m.
Lagos - Abuja	6:30pm.

#### ADC Airline

Lagos - Abuja	7:15 a.m.
	12:45 p.m.
Abuja - Lagos	8:55 a.m.
Lagos - Calabar	11:15 a.m.
Calabar - Lagos	7:20 a.m.
P/H - Lagos	9:45 a.m.
Lagos - Sokoto	8:55a.m.
Sokoto - Lagos	11:55a.m.

Most airlines operate the same flight schedule on week days.



Diamond Bank's Sokoto branch, won the 2004 Bankers' Committee Award for "Most-MICR Compliant" Bank in the Sokoto Clearing Region. Picture shows: Suleiman Ismaila, Branch Manager Diamond Bank Sokoto (l), receiving the award from CBN Branch Controller, Sokoto, Alh. Ahmed Mohammed Misau (r). Middle is Senior Manager at the CBN, Alh. Mainasara

## Briefs

### ACB

The Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer of ACB International Bank, Mr. John Udeka has assured subscribers of fast profitable return on investment.

A statement signed by ACB's Head, Corporate Communications, Mr. Igwe Igwe, said while speaking at an Investors Forum organized by the bank on Thursday in Lagos, Udeka assured prospective investors that any amount spent on the bank's shares would yield fruitful returns.

According to him, the fixing of the share price at 80 kobo per share was a deliberate act to ensure that it is open to everyone and that the investor would get his money back in a short while.

Also speaking at the forum, the President of Aka Ikenga, Chief Chris Asoluka described the low selling price of ACB shares as an outright attempt to democratise shares. "Every Nigerian can participate in this offer. This offer cannot be beaten by any other. Aka Ikenga will take up the challenge of marketing ACB's shares," chief Asoluka declared.

## Chartered Bank

Some members of the Port Harcourt business community were at the Hotel Presidential to witness the presentation of Chartered Banks Public Offer of 2.49 million ordinary shares of 50k at N3.40 per share.

According to a release from the bank, the bank's Managing Director, Mr. Moses Adedoyin gave the investor an insight into the story behind the Banks success over the years. He explained that the bank belongs to the elite league of banks with consistent and sustainable performance and that it was in recognition of the strategic role and contribution of the Bank to the growth and development of the Nigerian economy that it was adjudged the best bank in real sector financing as well as the overall best bank in real sector and export financing.

He promised that the bank will continue with its pioneering role as far as the development of innovative and consumer friendly products are concerned

# Business Trust

## BRIEFS

### Panasonic

**M**atsushita Electrical, Industrial Company, manufacturers of Panasonic air-conditioners has announced the invention of a new product - Alleru Buster.

According to a release from the company, the new air-conditioner, was built to compliment world wide search for healthy living.

"The air-conditioner is fitted with special filters that work to make sure we breathe clean air always by inactivating harmful allergens. This is why it is called super alleru-Buster with superioniser," the statement said.

### Vmobile

**V**mobile Nigeria has launched two new products Vactive and Voffice which offer bouquets of value-added content and business solution services.

The new products which were launched in Lagos run on SMS (short message service), CSD (circuit switched data) and GPRS (general packet radio service) and are supported by platforms such as multimedia messaging service (MMS) and WAP (wireless application protocol).

A statement from the company said, while Vactive offers a variety of multiple entertainment and information options to suit the individual needs, preferences and lifestyles of Vmobile subscribers, Voffice provides internet browsing, fax, email and remote network access for enterprises and corporate executives.

The new services, according to J. J. Botha, Vmobile's chief sales officer, "are part of the company's vision to add more value to its subscribers and take telephony beyond just calls and SMS."

Botha stated that the two brands, Vactive and Voffice, "have their own clear target markets, adding that Vactive focuses attention on personalisation, thereby making a statement on the personality of the subscriber."

He added that "Voffice, on the other hand, answers the call of enterprises and corporate organisations whose business efficiencies are enhanced through provision of timely and useful data."

### Turkish investors

**V**ice President Atiku Abubakar has called on Turkish business organisations to take advantage of the boundless opportunities in Nigeria.

The vice president who spoke at State House while receiving the new Turkish Ambassador to Nigeria, Mr Hakan Okcal, asked Turkish companies to invest in Nigeria. "President Olusegun Obasanjo has shown much interest in Turkey by visiting Ankara about four years ago. He came back and spoke well about the economic and technological strides of Turkey".

In a statement signed by assistant chief information officer of the vice president, Adebayo Thomas said Atiku disclosed that "Nigeria wants to do business with Turkey because Turkey is an industrialised country. It is a bridge between Africa and Europe," Atiku said.

Earlier, the Turkish ambassador, commended the Obasanjo/Atiku administration on the ongoing reforms, which he noted, "has greatly encouraged the Turkish business community."

### Top airlines wage snack war

**O**reos and Cheese Nips are the latest bait that airlines are using to lure passengers, as money-losing US carriers stop serving meals on domestic flights.

Delta Air Lines said on Wednesday it would replace its in-flight food sales in April with an expanded snack selection. Rival Southwest Airlines was quick to issue a press release saying that "while other airlines are offering less than peanuts," it serves a full menu of snacks.

Delta, the struggling No. 3 US carrier, promised that first-class travellers on all flights and economy class travellers on flights of 1-1/2 hours or more will receive such snacks as SunChips, honey-roasted peanuts and animal crackers.

Economy class travellers on flights of 3-1/2 hours or more will get a snack pack of crackers, cheese, Oreo cookies and Sun-Maid raisins. Delta said it will continue to offer complimentary meal service to first-class passengers on flights longer than 3-1/2 hours.

"Our customers asked for more choice, consistency and convenience, and we are responding," said Paul Matsen, Delta's chief marketing

officer, in a statement.

But Delta said it would remove pillows from domestic flights within the 48 contiguous states, Bermuda, Canada and Central American and Caribbean destinations. The carrier also will raise the cost for alcoholic beverages to \$5 from \$4.

Not to be outdone in the snack wars, Southwest, the No. 6 US carrier, said that in April it will add Cheese Nips to the free peanuts and pretzels it serves on every flight. The airline said it believes the cheese-flavoured crackers will appeal to customers looking for "smarter ways of snacking."

On longer flights, travellers receive more comprehensive snack packs.

The airline industry has been hammered in recent years by soaring fuel costs, weak revenue and competition from lower-cost rivals. As a result, airlines have left no stone unturned in the quest for savings. Several carriers have cut back on food service and pillows.

Northwest Airlines earlier this month replaced complimentary meals with a \$3 "smart snacks" snack box on flights from its hubs to the West Coast, and replaced meals for sale with the snack boxes on 220 other flights.

**T**he federal executive council Wednesday approved the construction of a 100 percent private sector funded Roll-on-Roll-off (RoRo) port at Tin Can Island, Lagos at a cost of the \$62 million.

Briefing State House correspondents on the outcome of Wednesday's meeting, Transport Minister, Dr Abiyi Sekibo said an Italian firm, Grimaldi reputed to be the world's second largest RoRo port operator is the facilitator of the project.

Grimaldi he said, has a 25-

year concession under the build-operate-transfer (BOT) arrangement.

He said the port was a brand new facility, a departure from the existing RoRo port, stressing that this was in line with the federal government's policy on ports concessioning.

Dr Sekibo explained that the facility was a major break-

through in the efforts to get the private sector assist in the development of the nation's sea ports.

The port, he said, would not only generate revenue but also create jobs while it is expected that government would achieve its vision of

making Nigeria the maritime hub for West and Central Africa.

Under the new system, he said, the promoters would be responsible for the annual dredging of the port, power generation as well as the construction of terminal buildings.

"We want to create competition in the port industry. Unfortunately we have an under developed port industry and the present policies of government are geared towards ensuring that we develop the industry," he stated.

The minister noted that the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) only employs 12,000 workers, pointing out that if the sector was fully developed, Lagos ports alone could employ more than 60,000 workers.

He said president Obasanjo had ordered the shut down of all illegal jetties in the country as well as the closure of licensed jetties which were being used for illegal activities.

He disclosed that a particular jetty being built in the centre of water channel in Port Harcourt may be stopped because it was capable of disrupting the operators of the major port.

## Another RoRo port for Tin Can Island

By Reuben Yunana,  
Senior State House Reporter

## Waziri leads trade mission to China

By Hamisu Muhammad,  
Business Reporter

**C**ommerce Minister, Ambassador A. D. Idris Waziri will this month lead a Nigerian trade delegation to China as part of efforts to strengthen further the bilateral trade relationship between the two countries.

Disclosing this to newsmen in Abuja Tuesday while receiving the executive

members of the Enugu Chamber of Commerce and Industry in his office, Ambassador Waziri said the delegation will comprise of the ministers of finance, communications, industry and agriculture as well as members of the organised private sector.

According to Waziri, the aim of the trip is to explore the abundant opportunities in trade and commerce between Nigeria and China. The trip will also improve in the implementation of the previous bilateral agreements signed by the two countries.

It could be recalled that the chairman of the Congress of the People's Republic of China, Mr Wubang Guo visited Nigeria late last year and promised that a number of opportunities would be derived.

Earlier, the leader of the Enugu Chamber of Commerce delegation who is also the president of the chamber, Chief Gabriel O. Akochukwu commended the minister for engaging the organised private sector in trips for selling Nigeria abroad.

## Kupolokun warns NNPC staff against corruption

By Anas A. Galadima,  
Business Reporter

**T**he Group Managing Director of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Engineer Funsho Kupolokun, has warned members of staff of the corporation and other stakeholders against indulging in corrupt practices.

Engineer Kupolokun who spoke during the launching of the NNPC business and ethics and integrity policy documents yesterday in Abuja, said all stakeholders of the corporation must conduct their businesses ethically to avoid jeopardising the future of the organisation.

The business ethics document is aimed at guiding the conduct of business with all stakeholders of the corporation while the integrity policy provides a channel for members of staff of the corporation to bring cases of corrupt practices to the NNPC anti-corruption committee for investigation.

He urged members of staff of the corporation to imbibe the spirit of honesty and integrity in discharging their duties stressing that no one in the NNPC has the authority to make exceptions of these policies.

His words: "regardless of how much difficulty we encounter or pressure we face in performing our jobs, no situation can justify wilful violation. Breach of any of these principles therefore, will not only attract necessary sanctions but the outcome will be publicised and made visible in order to serve as a deterrent."

In his speech, the chairman of the Independent and Corrupt Practices and other related offences Commission (ICPC), Justice Mustapha Akanbi who was represented by Senator Adejo Ogiri commended the GMD for taking steps towards curbing corruption.



## Association of National Accountants of Nigeria

(Founded in 1979 and chartered by Act 76 of 1993)

### ORIENTATION AND INDUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

It is hereby announced for the benefit of prospective members of the Association that the orientation and induction programme for new members will hold as follows:

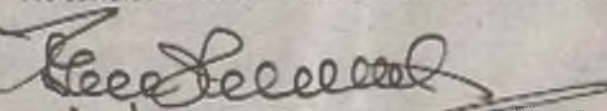
VENUE: Mainland Hotel Oyingbo, Lagos

DATE: 15th March, 2005

TIME: 11:00 a.m

Attendance is strictly by invitation. Invited candidates must bring with them the ORIGINALS of their Degree or HND certificate, NYSC and post Graduate Professional Diploma in Accounting issued by the Association or evidence of having passed ANAN'S professional examination at the Nigerian College of Accountancy, Jos.

No candidate without letter of invitation will be allowed to participate.

  
Sir, Peter C. Ibekwe B.Sc (Hons) FCSA, FIMC  
Registrar/Chief Executive

3rd March, 2005

# Business Trust

## Finance

### Nigeria spends 40% of forex on food imports

The Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Professor Charles Soludo has lamented the huge amount of foreign exchange (Forex) Nigeria spends on importation of food, just as he disclosed that it will soon review the micro-finance policy to give agriculture a big boost and better the economy.

According to him this is imperative to ensure that Nigeria reverses the ugly trend whereby it expends 40 percent of its foreign exchange on food importation.

Speaking during a condolence visit by the Kwara state governor, Dr Bukola Saraki in Abuja, Professor Soludo praised the Kwara state government's agricultural policy which he said is positive.

A statement signed by the CBN's Deputy Director, Corporate Affairs, Mr Tony Ede said, he described the state government's rice production method as an unfolding revolution and assured the governor of the bank's commitment to the state.

The visit, the statement posited was to condole the CBN on the death of two

From Bright Ewulu,  
Deputy Business Editor (Lagos)

officers of the bank who were on an official assignment in the state.

According to it: "the two CBN staff Messrs S O Adoye Obiseran, a manager and Christopher Agwu, an assistant manager, along with two officers of First Bank of Nigeria Plc, Mr Emma Ehajaiye and Alhaji Abdul Ahmed as well as two officials of Kwara state government, Messrs Ganiyu Bakare and John Oyedun died in a ghastly motor accident" last month.

Governor Saraki according to the statement had brief the CBN top slots present, who included deputy governors, Dr Shamsuddeen Usman, Messrs Ernest Ebi and Tunde Lemo as well as some departmental directors on how this state is planting and producing rice in two seasons, including dry season.

He said as a result of the double cropping the state has increased the production of rice from one to two hectares to two to five hectares a year.

Going further, he had urged the CBN governor not

to allow the death of the officers to discontinue the assistance the bank is rendering to Kwara state, claiming the deceased were on a mission to explore how additional credit support could be given to rice farmers in order to improve their output.

It should be recalled that some white Zimbabwean farmers who left that country as a result of political brouhaha with the regime led by Rev Robert Mugabe is currently domiciled in Kwara state.

### CBN directs banks to support real sector

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has pointed out the need for banks to support the real sector of the economy for the overall benefit of the nation, even as it has placed embargo on new bank branch approvals during the consolidation period.

CBN which made this plain through its deputy governor (financial sector surveillance), Mr Tunde Lemo at a seminar organised in Kaduna recently maintained that banks should focus on regenerating our economy by making credits available to the productive sector.

To this effect, he stressed that in this era of consolidation that banks should optimally deploy their wide branch network for the benefit of the economy at large, adding that banks should evolve measures to gain adequate knowledge about unfamiliar sectors in order to efficiently extend credits.

It should be recalled that the clarion call among financial analysts has been that our banks are ineffective because of their incapacity in the efficient delivery of credit to the production sector.

Speaking in Kaduna Mr G. A. Oladejobi, CBN deputy director (Banking Supervision) who represented Lemo pointed out that to effectively serve their purpose that banks should use the consolidation to ensure adequate coverage notionally instead of clustering around few locations.

He stated that the embargo on new bank branches approvals by CBN is to ensure that banks concerned does not incur fresh capital expenditure that will indepthly change the structure of their assets.

Also, he said this is to avoid a situation whereby the costs of the new branches will deplete their shareholders' funds in the consolidation period and affect the banks negatively.

Nevertheless, this policy

Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) cash dispensed from all UBA ATMs between 22nd of July, 2003 when the service commenced, and 18th of February 2005 have crossed the N1 billion mark. This indicates a strong customer acceptance of self service banking via UBA's electronic channels

According to a statement signed by its head brand mass/corporate affairs, Ogie Eboiybe UBA Plc may have by this result emerged the first Nigerian bank to attain the billion naira ATM cash dispensing for debit cards.

While the initial roll-out of UBA ATMs started in Lagos, UBA has since extended ATMs to Port Harcourt,

### UBA ATM cash withdrawals hit N1bn

Abuja and Kaduna with an ongoing roll-out to other cities to bring ATM services closer to the vast majority of customers.

Prior to this accomplishment, UBA had recorded several other feats and notable achievements within the Nigerian debit card space; in cardholder size, usage and transaction volumes, such as: the first Nigerian bank to be certified live on the InterSwitch network (September 2003) and One of the first two Nigerian banks to perform real-time inter-bank debit card transactions (October 2003).

UBA's existing ATMs are accessed using UBA ATM/Debit Card, a multi-channel card that is accepted on ATMs as well as over a wide variety of Point of Sale (PoS) Terminals currently being deployed nationwide to shops, petrol stations, hotels, restaurants and other merchant locations.

In addition, UBA ATM/Debit Cards are also accepted for use on the Web for internet purchases and on GSM Mobile Phones for Mobile Banking. Customers

need not carry a separate card or PIN for each channel and the Nigerian public can finally be rest assured with UBA that their funds will be safe while their transactions are processed with the highest degree of confidentiality and reliability.

Today, Mobile Banking using the UBA Debit Card offers such ground breaking level of customer convenience and security that it recently received recognition from international operators and is certain to change the way Mobile Banking services are offered in Nigeria.

As a leading shareholder in national payment organizations such as InterSwitch Limited, ATM Consortium Limited and ValuCard Pic, UBA will continue to leverage best-in-class infrastructure that would deliver value to our esteemed customers.

By supporting multiple channel banking, our customers now have access 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to services which hitherto were provided solely by human tellers at the bank branches.

### 'N25bn capitalisation may stall Islamic Bank'

Advocates of the proposed Islamic Bank in Nigeria have blamed the slow pace in the take-off of the project on the new financial policy slammed by the Central Bank of Nigeria.

In the policy, the CBN raised the capital base of all banks in the country to N25 billion which has led to the merging of several banks in the country.

At the investors' forum held in Ikeja on Monday, the promoters of the bank said the bank would have come on board having met nearly all the guidelines guiding the establishment of banks in the country but has fallen short of the capital base.

The bank's management revealed that it has deposited N2.5 billion with the CBN

already the Managing Director of Jaiz, a sister company to the bank, Mr. Mohammed Bintube said that the bank had applied for license since 1999 and over N3 billion was collected through the capital market from would be investors with N2.5 billion deposited with the CBN.

He told agitated shareholders who are troubled over the slow take-off of the bank that their monies were in safe hands, with the CBN and was yielding interest.

According to him, the bank had so far met all the requirement of the CBN and was now pursuing the Approval in Principle and on raising the capital base to meet the new N25 billion policy.

### Oceanic Bank rewards customers

A religious denomination, the Mountain of Fire & Miracle Ministry, Abuja topped the list of 170 customers of Oceanic Bank International Plc who clinched various prizes for being loyal patrons of four key products of the bank.

Statement from the bank said, the four product categories are the Oceanic Pearl Account (OPA),

Executive Savings Account (ESA), Premium Thrift Account (PTA) and Quality Education Plan.

Winners in the various categories smiled home with their prizes at the bank's post Annual General Meeting luncheon in Lagos over the weekend.

Overall, there were 10 winners in the Oceanic Pearl Account category; 70 each in the Executive Savings Account and Premium Thrift Account categories and 20 in the Quality Education Account class.

Winners in the first category were rewarded with a return ticket to Europe and annual subscription of any magazine of their choice, while those in the second category received free Valucard loaded with NS, 000. Those who won in the Premium Thrift Account got Oceanic Bank branded bags and GSM recharge cards while winners in the Quality Education Plan Account got scholarship awards.



## Association of National Accountants of Nigeria

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### NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

NOTICE is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Association will hold on Saturday, 30th of April 2005 at 4:00 pm at the Hill Station Hotel, Jos.

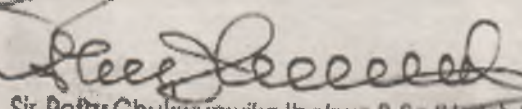
#### AGENDA

1. To adopt the minutes of AGM 2004.
2. To receive the Report of Council and the Audited Financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2004.
3. To be informed of the Council Members of the year 2005
4. To authorise the Council to appoint Auditors and fix their remuneration

Messrs Oni Oni & Co. are willing to stand for re-appointment.

5. Handing-over Ceremony
6. Other General Business

By order of Council

  
Sir, Peter Chukwunwike Ibokwe B.Sc (HONS), FCMA, FIMC  
Registrar/Chief Executive  
248, Herbert Macaulay Street  
Ibeju-Lekki, Lagos

Dated: 24th February, 2005

# Business Trust

## International

### Bank of England retains 4.75% rates

The Bank of England has left interest rates unchanged at 4.75% for the seventh month in a row.

This news is coming at a time when the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in its monthly report for January 2005 says bank lending rates in Nigeria hovers between 18 to 20 percent.

Last month, the monetary policy committee (MPC) of the Bank of England said a rate rise "might be warranted in due course" if the economy followed its forecasts.

The decision to hold fire this month was widely expected, with a Reuters poll of 50 economists unanimous on the view that there would be no change.

Business leaders welcomed the decision, warning the economy was still fragile.

While it welcomed the decision, the British Chamber of Commerce (BCC) also sounded a note of caution, warning that manufacturing was still facing hard challenges.

On Wednesday, official figures showed the UK's trade gap was widening, while last month's retail sales were stagnating.

The BCC warned that against such a background, along with modest wage growth and slowing house price rises, any rates increase could put the economy at risk of running out of steam.

"We are very concerned by the more hawkish tone signalled by recent MPC comments, and by the sharp turnaround in MPC sentiment since December, even though the fundamental economic circumstances have not changed," said BCC director general David Frost.

Meanwhile, manufacturers organisation the EEF said the Bank had been "right to ignore premature calls for an rise in rates".

"Seven months without changes in rates have provided business with stability during a period of growing uncertainty," EEF chief economist Steve Radley said.

By Ahmed I. Shekarau,  
Group Business Editor, with agency report

However experts and the Bank have warned rates could rise in coming months.

At the start of this month some commentators said homeowners should expect a further rate rise, after new data indicated house prices may be picking up again, and the strongest mortgage demand since the summer.

Graeme Leach, chief economist at the Institute of Directors, ruled out any possible rise until the summer.

"If the Monetary Policy Committee doesn't want to change interest rates during an election campaign, it will have to wait until June," he said.

He said no rise could be expected in April before people headed to the polls for the general election.



Harry Stonecipher, ex-Boeing CEO.

### Boeing investigates Stonecipher's affair

Boeing Corporation is investigating the activities of the female executive whose affair with then-CEO, Harry Stonecipher led to his ouster and could take action against her, the company said Wednesday.

Spokesman John Dern said the company has no timetable for completing the investigation and declined to provide any other specifics. But a posting on Boeing's internal employee Web site acknowledged that "many employees have asked" why the woman who was involved in a personal relationship with Stonecipher remains with the company while he was asked to resign.

"General Counsel Doug Bain said that while the investigation of Stonecipher is complete, the investigation of the female executive's actions surrounding the matter is still in process," said the posting, obtained by The Associated Press. "If the facts of the completed investigation indicate that action

is warranted, it will be taken, Bain said."

A Boeing source with knowledge of the investigation who asked not to be identified, said management is examining the woman's recent travel, expenses on her company credit card and any other areas where inappropriate conduct might have occurred.

The woman was identified Tuesday night by *BusinessWeek* Online, citing anonymous sources, as Debra Peabody, a 48-year-old

divorced executive who reportedly first met Stonecipher in January at Boeing's annual executive retreat in Palm Desert, Calif. The Wall Street Journal and The New York Times also named Peabody on Wednesday, citing unidentified sources.

Peabody, who manages office operations for Boeing in Washington and worked earlier for the company in Chicago, did not return telephone calls Wednesday. Boeing declined to confirm or deny she was the female executive involved.

### Singapore tops tech economy table

Singapore has toppled the US from top spot in a ranking of world economies that make the best use of information and communication technology (ICT).

The US has been outpaced by the advance of other nations, rather than any slow down in its own performance.

The annual World Economic Forum (WEF) index placed Singapore, Iceland, Finland and Denmark above the US, with the UK up three places in 12th spot.

The WEF said ICT is playing a "central role" in growth and competitiveness.

Singapore was found to be the best performer in a number of categories, including quality of maths and science education, affordability of telephone connection charges and internet access, and government policy on ICT.

"It is clear that information and communications technologies will continue to play a growing role in boosting the efficiency of the increasing integrated global economy," said the report's co-editor Augusto Lopez-Claros.

He said that in turn enabled countries to "improve resource allocation and boost growth prospects".

The use of technology in 104 economies was assessed, while the report's Networked Readiness Index (NRI) meas-

### Oil prices hit \$54.36

World oil prices fell but remained in sight of record high points in New York and London after surging on speculative buying the previous day.

New York's main contract, light sweet crude for delivery in April, lost 41 cents to \$54.36 a barrel in electronic dealing.

It almost touched last October's record high of 55.67 dollars before retreating in New York Wednesday.

In London, the price of Brent North Sea crude oil for delivery in April shed 21 cents to 53.18 dollars a barrel on yesterday.

Brent crude rocketed 1.21 dollars to a new record of 54.05 dollars a barrel at 1730 GMT in London Wednesday exceeding the previous high of 53.36.

Dealers said prices had fallen as a reaction to the speculative push higher, helped by a rise in US weekly crude oil stocks reported Wednesday.

The US Department of Energy (DoE) said in its weekly report on Wednesday that the country's crude oil stocks had risen 3.2 million barrels to 302.6 million in the week ended March 4.

Reserves of distillates, which include heating oil and diesel fuel, dropped 800,000 barrels to 109.2 million, the DoE said, as a cold wave boosted demand.

Meanwhile, European stock markets also fell in early deals, following an overnight hammering on Wall Street amid the surge in crude prices.

Analysts said investors

were becoming increasingly anxious about rising oil and other commodity prices that could spark higher inflation.

### Asia's biggest airline to cut 5,900 jobs

Asia's biggest airline Japan Airlines (JAL) announced a new business plan under which it will cut 5,900 jobs and appoint a new chief executive officer, while warning of a sharp fall in profits due to rising fuel costs.

Under the new plan, some 5,900 jobs excluding pilots and flight attendants would be cut by the end of March 2008 out of 43,800 as of April 2002. JAL did not disclose its current ground services workforce.

Previously the company had set a target for 4,500 job cuts by March 2007.

JAL also said president Toshiyuki Shinmachi, 62, would replace Isao Kaneko, 67, as chief executive officer, as part of the company's efforts to "renew its business structure." Kaneko would remain as chairman.

"At this difficult juncture, JAL group will build a business structure that can produce profits in any environment," JAL said in a statement.

JAL also said it had raised its net profit forecast to 27 billion yen (257 million dollars) for the year to March 2005 from its earlier estimate of 23 billion yen as the effects of cost-cutting offset lower revenues.

The company revised down its sales forecast to 2.12 trillion yen from 2.13 trillion yen.

"Because of stagnant demand, our sales forecast is now lower than our earlier estimate ... but a cut in costs outpaced the sales decline," it said.

However, JAL said it now expected its year to March 2006 net profit to be down 37 percent to 17 billion yen in the face of soaring oil prices.

Current chief executive Kaneko told a news conference that the carrier would focus on its international routes in Asia, particularly in China, for growth.

"In the international passenger business, we will expand our operations in China and other Asian countries," he said, adding it would also concentrate on cargo services in China.

On Monday, JAL said it would expand flights and connections to China, Japan's biggest trading partner, through code-sharing agreements with Chinese carriers.

JAL said its network would grow to 237 weekly flights to 20 cities in China, 13 of them direct.

Thursday's announcement, which had been widely anticipated, came shortly after the Tokyo Stock Exchange closed. JAL shares fell one yen or 0.31 percent to end at 320 yen.



Dr (Mrs) Cecilia Ibru, MD/CEO Oceanic Bank Plc (right) with Engineer Bunu Sheriff Musa, Nigeria's former Ambassador to France and Mr Simpson Okoro, both directors of the bank at its annual general meeting (AGM) held at the Golden Gate Restaurant, Lagos ...recently.

# Business Trust

## 1ST-TIER SECURITIES

## THE NIGERIAN STOCK EXCHANGE

REPORT AS AT THURSDAY, MARCH 10, 2005

COMPANY NAME	NO OF DEALS	QUOTATION(N)	QUANTITY TRADED	VALUE OF SHARES
ADSWITCH PLC.	1	0.43	3,000	1,290.00
CUTIX PLC	3	1.24	2,000,000	2,480,000.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>2,003,000</b>	<b>2,481,290.00</b>
<b>AGRICULTURE/AGRO-ALLIED</b>				
OKITIPUPA OIL PALM PLC.	1	0.81	5,000	4,050.00
THE OKOMU OIL PALM COMPANY PLC	5	17.85	12,600	224,910.00
PRESCO PLC.	18	8.51	174,125	1,482,482.50
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>24</b>		<b>191,725</b>	<b>1,711,442.50</b>
<b>AIRLINES</b>				
AVIATION DEVELOPMENT COMPANY PLC.	1	1.00	1,400	1,400.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1,400</b>	<b>1,400.00</b>
<b>AUTOMOBILE &amp; TYRE</b>				
DUNLOP NIGERIA PLC.	18	1.85	680,050	1,258,972.50
INCAR NIGERIA APLC.	1	1.30	500	650.00
R. T. BRISCOAE PLC.	1	4.81	15,000	72,150.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>20</b>		<b>695,550</b>	<b>1,331,772.50</b>
<b>BANKING</b>				
ACCESS BANK PLC	9	3.42	24,272	83,010.24
AFRIBANK NIGERIA PLC.	26	6.63	146,721	972,760.23
FIRST ATLANTIC BANK PLC	3	3.41	112,050	382,090.50
COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT BANK PLC.	1	0.75	3,250	2,437.50
EIB INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	1	2.26	1,200	2,712.00
FIRST BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	491	22.55	1,565,564	35,858,516.57
FSB INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	11	1.14	73,255	83,510.70
GUARANTY TRUST BANK PLC.	266	9.20	2,071,124	19,055,948.36
GULF BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	13	0.42	398,000	167,160.00
INTERNATIONAL MERCHANT BANK PLC.	12	0.57	527,583	296,583.98
INLAND BANK (NIGERIA) PLC.	14	1.38	837,250	1,153,303.88
INTERCONTINENTAL BANK PLC.	6	7.81	27,800	217,118.00
LION BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	4	0.59	9,410	5,551.90
MANUFACTURERS BANK NIGERIA PLC.	15	1.20	431,115	514,746.00
NAL BANK PLC.	1	2.80	1,687	4,723.60
OCEANIC BANK PLC	8	4.69	28,400	133,196.00
OMEGA BANK (NIGERIA) PLC.	2	1.50	5,825	8,737.50
STANDARD TRUST BANK PLC	7	7.41	100,072,955	741,540,596.55
TRANS INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	2	1.59	4,500	7,155.00
TRADE BANK PLC.	1	1.35	8,000	10,800.00
UNITED BANK FOR AFRICA PLC.	15	10.00	133,864	1,338,640.00
UNION BANK NIGERIA PLC.	333	19.20	968,314	18,622,609.21
UNIVERSAL TRUST BANK PLC	7	0.70	203,040	142,128.00
WEMA BANK PLC.	7	3.93	152,263	598,393.59
ZENITH BANK PLC	174	13.50	1,340,172	17,802,007.40
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>1,429</b>		<b>109,147,614</b>	<b>839,004,436.71</b>
<b>BREWERIES</b>				
GUINNESS NIGERIA PLC.	183	78.51	588,842	45,979,604.35
NIGERIAN BREWERIES PLC.	352	36.15	851,737	30,672,174.23
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>535</b>		<b>1,440,579</b>	<b>76,651,778.58</b>
<b>BUILDING MATERIALS</b>				
ASHAKA CEMENT PLC.	63	22.29	152,330	3,392,027.85
CEMENT CO. OF NORTHERN NIG. PLC	10	6.75	126,267	877,124.30
WEST AFR. PORTLAND CEMENT CO. PLC.	45	10.35	651,116	6,537,861.80
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>118</b>		<b>929,713</b>	<b>10,807,013.95</b>
<b>CHEMICAL &amp; PAINTS</b>				
BERGER PAINTS PLC.	19	4.66	68,485	325,129.30
CAP PLC.	4	6.32	1,609	10,168.88
D. N. MEYER PLC.	10	4.80	100,545	482,540.88
IPWA PLC.	1	0.50	250	125.00
NIGERIA-GERMAN CHEMICALS PLC.	7	3.80	3,567	12,889.60
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>41</b>		<b>174,456</b>	<b>830,853.66</b>
<b>COMPUTER &amp; OFFICE EQUIPMENT</b>				
NCR (NIGERIA) PLC.	2	1.30	1,329	1,727.70
THOMAS WYATT NIGERIA PLC.	1	0.38	11,538	4,384.44
TRIPPLE GEE AND COMPANY PLC.	1	0.87	639	555.93
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>13,506</b>	<b>6,668.07</b>
<b>CONGLOMERATES</b>				
A. G. LEVENTIS NIGERIA PLC.	4	1.00	94,186	94,186.00
JOHN HOLT PLC.	3	0.67	110,000	75,500.00
UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC.	189	15.57	771,684	12,185,825.81
P. Z. INDUSTRIES PLC.	96	10.70	645,228	6,875,299.06
S. C. O. A NIGERIA PLC.	1	1.09	2,881	3,140.29
U.A.C. NIGERIA PLC.	75	14.17	1,043,447	14,785,643.99
U.T.C. NIGERIA PLC.	6	0.92	54,200	49,872.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>374</b>		<b>2,721,626</b>	<b>34,069,467.15</b>
<b>CONSTRUCTION</b>				
COSTAIN (W.A.) PLC.	3	0.94	5,580	5,465.20
JULIUS BERGER NIGERIA PLC.	7	15.61	27,066	425,096.68
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>32,646</b>	<b>430,561.88</b>
<b>ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY</b>				
NIGERIAN WIRE AND CABLE PLC.	3	0.67	20,360	13,952.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>20,360</b>	<b>13,952.00</b>
<b>FOOD/BEVERAGES &amp; TOBACCO</b>				
7-UP BOTTLING COMPANY PLC	39	22.00	75,634	1,672,927.02
CADBURY NIGERIA PLC.	179	49.99	226,454	11,321,808.60
FLOUR MILLS NIGERIA PLC.	25	16.61	28,539	474,032.79
NIGERIA BOTTLING COMPANY PLC.	57	50.86	73,023	3,731,614.02
NESTLE FOODS NIGERIA PLC.	61	136.00	89,679	12,684,867.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>361</b>		<b>493,329</b>	<b>29,885,249.43</b>
<b>FOOTWEAR</b>				
FOOTWEAR & ACCESSORIES MAN. PLC.	2	0.33	21,819	7,200.27
LENNARDS (NIGERIA) PLC.	1	0.77	5,000	3,850.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>26,819</b>	<b>11,050.27</b>
<b>HEALTHCARE</b>				
CHRISTLIEB PLC.	2	0.56	1,066	596.96
EKOCORP PLC.	5	0.78	52,626	41,048.28
EVANS MEDICAL PLC.	3	2.71	6,150	16,640.00
MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC.	1	4.85	10,000	48,500.00
NEIMETH INTERNATIONAL PHARM. PLC.	16	3.13	20,900	64,367.00
PHARMA-DEKO PLC.	1	4.09	30,570	125,031.30
GLAXOSMITHKLINE CONSUMER NIG. PLC	24	7.85	107,276	855,055.35
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>52</b>		<b>228,588</b>	<b>1,151,238.89</b>
<b>INDUSTRIAL/DOMESTIC PRODUCTS</b>				
FIRST ALUMINIUM NIGERIA PLC.	1	1.03	40,000	41,200.00
B.O.C. GASES PLC.	4	2.94	46,766	137,037.04
VITAFOAM NIGERIA PLC.	22	2.91	265,914	797,853.72
VONO PRODUCTS PLC.	1	1.90	853	1,620.70
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>28</b>		<b>353,533</b>	<b>977,711.46</b>
<b>INSURANCE</b>				
AICO INSURANCE PLC.	7	1.74	17,813	30,761.34
CORNERSTONE INSURANCE CO. PLC.	2	1.45	18,381	26,604.45
NIGER INSURANCE CO. PLC.	3	3.00	26,250	78,775.00
ROYAL EXCHANGE ASSURANCE PLC.	3	2.91	3,051	8,779.96
STANDARD ALLIANCE INSURANCE	1	0.64	100,000	64,000.00
UNIC INSURANCE PLC.	14	0.86	253,221	217,770.06
WEST AFRICAN PROV. INS. COY. PLC.	8	2.55	69,408	174,685.76
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>38</b>		<b>488,124</b>	<b>601,376.57</b>
<b>MACHINERY(MARKETING)</b>				
BLACKWOOD HODGE (NIGERIA) PLC.	1	0.61	22,600	13,786.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>22,600</b>	<b>13,786.00</b>
<b>MANAGED FUNDS</b>				
C & I LEASING PLC.	11	1.38	132,880	187,167.08
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>11</b>		<b>132,880</b>	<b>187,167.08</b>
<b>PACKAGING</b>				
AVON CROWNCAPS & CONTAINERS PLC.	2	1.10	617,089	679,022.90
BETA GLASS COMPANY PLC.	4	3.87	6,500	25,145.00
POLY PRODUCTS (NIGERIA) PLC.	1	0.91	1,805	1,642.55
STUDIO PRESS (NIGERIA) PLC.	6	1.62	236,900	383,778.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>13</b>		<b>862,294</b>	<b>1,089,588.45</b>
<b>PETROLEUM(MARKETING)</b>				
AFROIL PLC.	8	0.78	118,155	89,381.25
AFRICAN PETROLEUM PLC.	76	52.81	193,835	9,988,265.05
ETERNA OIL & GAS PLC.	12	2.04	62,240	126,969.60
MOBIL OIL NIGERIA PLC.	41	168.99	12,391	2,069,656.07
CONOIL PLC.	60	102.01	69,757	7,310,562.76
TEXACO (NIGERIA) PLC.	20	155.00	21,369	3,264,649.92
TOTAL NIGERIA PLC	48	173.00	108,241	18,409,053.55
OANDO PLC.	208	90.01	476,958	42,476,156.84
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>473</b>		<b>1,062,946</b>	<b>83,734,695.04</b>
<b>REAL ESTATE</b>				
UACN PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT PLC.	29	8.50	212,872	1,805,739.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>29</b>		<b>212,872</b>	<b>1,805,739.00</b>
<b>TEXTILES</b>				
UNITED NIGERIA TEXTILES PLC.	2	2.10	1,868	3,922.80
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>1,868</b>	<b>3,922.80</b>
<b>Overall Totals</b>	<b>3,974</b>		<b>121,298,028</b>	<b>1,086,802,161.99</b>

### TOP 10 TRADES YESTERDAY

SYMBOL	VOLUME	VALUE	TRADES
LEVBROS	771,684.00	12,185,825.81	189
INLANDBANK	837,250.00	1,153,303.88	14
NB	851,737.00	30,672,174.23	352
UBN	968,314.00	18,622,609.21	333
UACN	1,043,447.00	14,785,643.99	75
ZENITHBANK	1,340,172.00	17,802,007.40	174
FIRSTBANK	1,565,564.00	35,858,516.57	491
CUTIX	2,000,000.00	2,480,000.00	3
GUARANTY	2,071,124.00	19,055,948.36	266
STB	100,072,955.00	741,540,596.55	7

### TOP 10 GAINERS

SYMBOL	LASTCLOSE	YESTERDAYSCLOSE	CHANGE
TOTAL	165.00	173.00	+8.00
MOBIL	166.03	168.99	+2.96
AP	50.30	52.81	+2.51
OKOMUOIL	17.00	17.85	+0.85
UNIPETROL	89.55	90.01	+0.46
WAPCO	9.97	10.35	+0.38
PZ	10.45	10.70	+0.25
KGL	2.80	2.94	+0.14
PFIZER	2.99	3.13	+0.14
EVANSMED	2.59	2.71	+0.12

### TOP 10 LOSERS

SYMBOL	LASTCLOSE	YESTERDAYSCLOSE	CHANGE
NOLCHEM	105.50	102.01	-3.49
TEXACO	157.10	155.00	-2.10
GUINNESS	79.94	78.51	-1.43
NESTLE	137.00	136.00	-1.00
TUP	22.55	22.00	-0.55
PRESCO	8.93	8.51	-0.42
FIRSTBANK	22.91	22.55	-0.36
CCNN	7.10	6.75	-0.35
SKBEECHAM	8.20	7.85	-0.35
RTBRISCOE	5.06	4.81	-0.25

## Dollar nears 9-week Euro low

The dollar neared a nine-week low point against the euro ahead of US trade data to be published today. The greenback also slumped after Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said his country would consider diversifying reserves away from the US currency.

The euro rose yesterday to 1.3427 dollars from 1.3391 overnight in New York. It had earlier reached 1.3456 dollars, its highest level since January 4.

The dollar stood at 104.07 yen from 104.05 on Wednesday. Surging prices of oil and other commodities have also taken a toll on the greenback, which dropped sharply against the yen and euro on Wednesday as concerns resurfaced over the US current account and the budget deficits ahead of Friday's US trade report. "Given current market sentiment, a further fall in the dollar is on the cards," said Michael Klawitter, currency strategist at WestLB.

Comments from Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi, who told a Japanese Parliamentary Committee that "diversification is necessary", also sparked a bout of renewed dollar selling. "It is likely that (Koizumi) was thinking of asset class rather than currency composition but this kind of subtlety is lost at present," said Steve Pearson, currency strategist at HBOS.

The dollar was in the doldrums for much of last year on concerns over the US twin deficits combined with talk that many central banks will move currency reserves away from the US unit.

Meanwhile, analysts' forecasts pointed to a slight narrowing in the US trade deficit from December's 56.40 billion dollars and the record 59.3 billion dollars recorded the previous month.

Others believe the yawning trade gap, a thorn in the dollar's side for some time, could widen in January. "With few data releases this week the focus of the foreign exchange market has been on the January trade report to be released tomorrow and the Treasury International Capital (TIC) data released next Tuesday," said Derek Halpenny, analysts with the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi.

# Motor park life: How wives deceive husbands

**K**aru motor park is just about a quarter of Jabi Motor park. It, therefore, accommodates about a quarter of the vehicles and other structures of the larger park some thirty kilometers away. It mainly serves travelers to the northeastern and north central states. Operatives there also commented on motor park life.

Ibrahim Adamu is a bus driver there. "Here passengers' sitting arrangement has never been a problem to us. We are unperturbed by their sitting preferences and how they sit. We admit that passenger is king, but we also know that they will have to enter and sit before the vehicle moves, which means the vehicle will not move until passengers are adequately seated in it as required of them. So if they stand outside they are only wasting their own time." Adamu went further, "I personally believe that if they won't enter the vehicle as and when they should as gentlemen and ladies they shouldn't cluster around the vehicle because they create the impression in more serious passengers that the vehicle is full, whereas it is actually not."

The young driver does not believe anyone earning his or her livelihood in the motor park can constitute any nuisance to the other. He does not, therefore, see hawkers and beggars as constituting any nuisance in the motor park. "Hawkers and beggars have never been

**By Utman Abubakar**  
*Senior Reporter (Feature)*

any problem to us here. We believe that whenever they attempt wasting anybody's time they are only wasting their own time." He endorses the operation of hawkers in motor parks. "But I can vouch-safe for hawkers. We see them as partners in progress. They satisfy the needs of passengers who are our only customers, so they help us sustain their comfort. Without us the passengers won't come, which means hawkers won't see them around to buy their items, and we believe without them many of the passengers will not be so comfortable that they will enjoy coming into the park to board our vehicles. So both of us are partners in progress in any motor park in the country."

Adamu acknowledged the trustworthiness of load carriers in the motor park. "We have never received complaints of theft by load carriers." Talking on ticketing and manifest systems, he believed passengers should dutifully comply with them. "The ticket and the manifest are good documents because they are reliable evidences that a particular passenger has boarded a particular vehicle, and in the event of any accident or a passenger forgets his property in the vehicle he has boarded, it will be easy to locate him or his relations or, in the case of the load, it will be easy for us to confirm that he is the owner because

his possession of the ticket and his particulars in the manifest will help him to give a statement that accords with the circumstances in which the property was forgotten or lost and found."

For Adamu Yobi, a passenger traveling to Jos, "Passengers know why they chose

as he is concerned, hawkers and beggars are no nuisance to passengers "because sometimes passengers call them before they come."

However, Sama'ila Kabo, a driver, holds a different view on passenger welfare than his fellow driver, Ibrahim Adamu. He sees passenger's choice of

time. The vehicle may be filled and ready to move, but an ensuing argument between two passengers over who wants to sit where may delay it, and that is a problem because it is infringing on the rights of the other passengers."

Kabo dismissed as baseless the passengers' calcula-

no wisdom in that thinking because accidents will happen if they are destined to, how they are destined and affect whoever they are destined to."

Kabo also departed widely from his colleagues on the advantages and reliability of the manifest system, maintaining that dishonest passengers give



The busy area one motor park

seats and prefer, or even insist on sitting there. It is a matter of both comfort and idiosyncrasy. So there is nothing anybody can do about it." As far

seat as a problem to the drivers and the union operatives. "Passenger sitting preference constitute a problem to us because sometimes it wastes our

tion that by sitting on their choice positions they would either not be affected at all or, at least, not seriously in the event of accidents. "There is

misleading information. "Dishonest people don't give correct information about themselves. This is especially married women brought by their



Hustle and hustle at the Karu motor park.



Vehicles awaiting passengers at the Karu park.

# KADUNA STATE UNIVERSITY, KADUNA

## OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR

# VACANCIES

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for vacant positions of Professors, Senior Lecturers, Lecturers I & II, and Assistant Lecturers in the following Departments of the university:

### **A. FACULTY OF SOCIAL AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES**

- i. Department of Accounting
- ii. Department of Business Administration
- iii. Department of Mass Communication
- iv. Department of Economics
- v. Department of Political Science
- vi. Department of Sociology

### **B. FACULTY OF ARTS**

- i. Department of English and Drama:
- ii. Department of Nigerian Languages and Linguistics:
- iii. Department of Religious Studies
- iv. Department of Arabic
- v. Department of French
- vi. Department of History

### **C. FACULTY OF SCIENCE**

- i. Department of Biological Sciences:
- ii. Department of Chemistry
- iii. Department of Microbiology:
- iv. Department of Biochemistry
- v. Department of Mathematical Sciences (Mathematics, Computer Science/Statistics)
- vi. Department of Physics
- vii. Department of Geography

### **D. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

#### **i. PROFESSOR**

Candidates should possess a Ph.D degree from recognized Institution in their areas of specialization plus at least 15 years of experience in teaching and research. They should be able to initiate and develop new academic programmes/conduct independent research and have proven academic supervisory and administrative capabilities. They must show evidence of scholarly publications in reputable journals. computer literacy is also an essential requirement.

#### **ii. SENIOR LECTURER**

Candidates should possess a Ph-D degree with specialization in any of the areas noted above from a recognized institution with at least 9 years cognate experience in teaching and research and show evidence of good record of publications. Computer literacy is also an essential requirement.

#### **iii. LECTURER I**

Candidates should have a Master's degree plus at least 6 years post qualification experience and should demonstrate the ability to carry out research in areas of competence. Possession of a doctorate degree is an added advantage. Computer literacy is essential.

#### **iv. LECTURER II**

Candidates should have a Master's degree plus at least 4 years post qualification experience and should demonstrate ability to carry out

research in areas of competence. Possession of a doctorate degree is an added advantage. Computer literacy is essential.

#### **v. ASSISTANT LECTURER**

Candidates should have a Master's degree plus at least 3 years post qualification experience.

**N.B. All Applicants must have at least a 2.2. class in their first degree.**

#### **SALARIES**

Professor	-	UASS 7 (N502,811 - N724,562 P.A.)
Senior Lecturer	-	UASS 5 (N403,903 - N620,695 P.A.)
Lecturer I	-	UASS 4 (N322,211 - N421,643 P.A.)
lecturer II	-	UASS 3 (N257,984 - N313,690 P.A.)
Assistant lecturer	-	UASS 2 (N220,093 - N270,759 P.A.)

#### **b. Allowances and Fringe Benefits**

Allowances and fringe benefits are as obtainable in the Nigerian university system.

#### **CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**

Conditions of service are as spelt out in Kaduna State University condition of service.

#### **METHOD OF APPLICATION**

Interested candidates should forward ten copies of their detailed current curriculum vitae: name, age, nationality, marital status, state, local government, educational institutions attended with dates, qualifications, working experience, indicating post held, duration and salary.

Applicants are advised to request their referees (3) to send their reports early under confidential cover.

The applications should be addressed to:

The Registrar,  
Kaduna State University,  
Main Campus,  
Tafawa Balewa way,  
Kaduna.

This should reach this office not later than two weeks from the date of this publication.

Only applications of those to be interviewed will be acknowledged.

**DR. SAIDU GOJE,**  
Registrar.

talk all the way on  
**Abuja - Kano**  
**express road**  
on your **0805** network.

You can call family, friends and business associates around  
and rest of the world. We tower above others wherever w

nd the country  
e glo.

glo with pride



ad  
no



**RAW MATERIALS RESEARCH AND  
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL [RMRDC]**  
(FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY)

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**TRAINING WORKSHOP AND  
INVESTORS FORUM ON  
KILISHI PRODUCTION**

This is to inform the general public especially Kilishi producers and investors that RMRDC in collaboration with the Universities of Benin (Nigeria), Wilberforce (USA) and USAID has developed an Improved Technology for Kilishi Production.

In order to promote the adoption of this new technology and encourage investors to produce kilishi for the export market, RMRDC is organizing the above programme.

**Dates:** Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2005 (Training Begins)

Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2005 (Investors Forum)

**Time:** 8.00 a.m. daily

**Venue:** RMRDC Auditorium,  
427 Aguiyi Ironsi Street,  
Maitama District,  
Abuja.

*For Further Enquiries, please contact:*

Dr. D B. Ayo  
Director, Technology Development (09-4137424)  
or Public Affairs (09-4131226).

Sgd  
Director-General/CEO  
RMRDC



# THE SENATE

**FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA  
Committee on Information**

*National Assembly Complex  
Three-arms Zone,  
P. M. B. 141, Garki,  
Abuja, Nigeria.*

**CALL FOR MEMORANDA AND  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING  
ON**

A BILL FOR AN ACT TO MAKE PUBLIC RECORDS AND INFORMATION MORE FREELY AVAILABLE, PROVIDE FOR PUBLIC ACCESS TO PUBLIC RECORDS AND INFORMATIONS, PROJECT PUBLIC RECORDS AND INFORMATION TO THE EXTENT CONSISTENT WITH THE PUBLIC INTEREST AND THE PROTECTION OF PERSONAL PRIVACY, PROTECT SERVING PUBLIC OFFICERS FROM ADVERSE CONSEQUENCES FOR DISCLOSING CERTAIN KINDS OFFICIAL INFORMATION WITHOUT AUTHORITY AND ESTABLISH PROCEDURES FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THOSE PURPOSES AND RELATED THEREOF, 2005.

The Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria recently referred to its committee on Information the above stated Bill.

The Bill seek to promote Free Access to Information.

The Senate Committee on Information would conduct a public hearing on the said Bill. Members of the Public and Stakeholders are hereby invited to submit written Memoranda on the Bill through:

**The Secretary,  
Senate Committee on Information, on or before  
17<sup>th</sup> March, 2005.  
Senate Committee Room 23, (1<sup>st</sup> Floor),  
National Assembly Complex, Abuja.**

Interested members of the public also can appear in person at the Public Hearing.

**Date:** Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2005  
**Time:** 12 noon  
**Venue:** Senate Hearing Room 1

SIGNED  
**Senator Tawar Umbi Wada**  
*Chairman, Senate Committee on Information*

## bands there

bands to the park to travel, only plan to mislead the bands on where they want to go. A married woman who doesn't want her husband to know where she actually wants to go, even if he escorts her to the motor park, will either give him false information instantly, if he is not watching her, or give him the right information on the location of where she told him she wants to go, only to change it as he leaves her there and the vehicle moves. If he is the one who filled the manifest for her she can even give him a different information to mislead her travelling to the destination for which she did not seek the permission of the band." He said in this case, if they discover that she is not giving the correct information, the drivers and the union operatives can not do anything about it because she is already in the motor park as a passenger, like any other.

Life, however, said it is useful because it helps them to locate the owners of forgotten property, in the event of the death of a passenger in an accident, to settle his relations. But "some passengers give us headache because of giving correct information."

Kabo did not talk well about hawkers and beggars. "They are as big a problem to them because we always tell them to get out of the loading vehicle and stop disturbing passengers. We are only tolerat-

ing them." But he said they are not a complete nuisance because they help in the weekly sanitation exercise in the park. "Every weekend all of us the drivers and hawkers gather to sweep the motor park together. In this regard they are helpful to us. They also help us in keeping vigil on the park by watching the movement of people within the park and, therefore, detect thieves because they know that if anybody loses anything within the park we may hold them responsible."

Zakari Habibu Keffi Yelwa, another driver, complains of the impatience of some passengers, especially those traveling to long distances. "Passengers traveling to Jos, Yola or Maiduguri should be patient enough until the vehicle is full. But the impatience of most of them drives them to board vehicles outside, which is very risky." Yelwa listed the advantages of boarding vehicles within the park, saying that it affords the passenger the opportunity of pleading for concession or even outright exemption from the payment of the fare in the event that he or she does not have enough to pay the full fare or he or she does not have money at all. Another advantage, according to him, is that every vehicle loading in the park has a manifest which helps in locating the destination of passengers in the event of accident or death. Any vehicle which does not



Road transport union officials who assist in organising activities at the Karu park.

load from the motor park will not have the manifest. So whatever happens to its passengers nobody will know the relations to be contacted. "This is the problem, and that is why there are many corpses in the mortuaries." Yelwa claimed that private commercial vehicles, though charging higher fares, have better arrangements for passengers than government commercial vehicles, saying that, for instance, in the event of a fault on the way and can not, therefore, continue the journey, the passengers are refunded some money that will be enough for them to pay the fare to complete the journey

"but government vehicles leave the passengers stranded because the whole money is usually left at the motor park."

Auwalu Aminu is a personnel of the inter-state wing of the NURTW at the Area I motor park, which has now been reduced to just a small fraction of its area because roads and other infrastructure constructions there. He said they have a slightly different passenger sitting arrangement in their motor park.

"Normally the front seat is for the first passenger to come. But we are also prepared to alter this arrangement so that if the last passenger to come is too fat we give him the front

seat. This means, most of the time we reserve the front seat for fat passengers or anyone who insists on sitting there."

Yusuf Danladi, a driver there, complained of a usual problem in the passenger flow in all motor parks in the country. "Most of the time you are waiting for only one passenger to fill your vehicle and that is when passengers will not come in singles but in pairs or even bigger groups. You are waiting for only one passenger but two or three may come at once. They will proceed to the next vehicle to load behind you. In this way the next loading vehicle can have its full load and move, leaving you,

the first to load, still waiting for one passenger."

In Area I motor park, the drivers and union operatives do not complain about the activities of hawkers, beggars and load carriers.

"I don't like traveling far distances in kabu-kabu (five-sitter) cars", a passenger, who would not mention his name, offered "it is a riskier thing to do because they have insufficient space and they are involved in more road accidents. If I will board a vehicle then it should either be a bus or taxi (Peugeot 504 seven-sitter car)."

Who sits in the front seat is the main interesting feature in the operation of the Area I motor park.



Karu motor park at the height of business in the morning.

# THE HOME FRONT

## Fragments

By Safiya I. Dantiye, Woman Editor

### Why are women so passionate?

I am sure many people will think I am referring to passion in terms of love, they can't be far from the truth, besides I don't think women express passion in love because they are reticent. Therefore the passion I am talking about is expressing strong emotion in another way.

As a woman, I know that women have an irritating and embarrassing habit of being carried away in expressing themselves in public, especially in talking about being marginalised or demanding their rights.

Some women delegates at the current national conference are doing just that and it is not helping matters. In fact rather than make them more acceptable, they are alienating themselves.

A man told me that he watched one such delegate who was so fervent in her fury that she was shaking her fists in emphasis.

He added: "We that are supporters of women will be put off by such unbecoming attitude. These women have husbands and brothers, do they shout at them if they talk to them too?"

**"At any rate, women are not men and no matter how strong they feel about certain issues, they should present their case in a normal voice, not screaming as if speaking to high heavens, or kamar da aradu, as the Hausas would say. I am afraid this passionate nature may become our undoing if we don't check it."**

I also wonder why women should disgrace themselves in public and all women generally, because inevitably their behavior is taken to be the behavior of us all.

It also puts a question mark on the leadership of women, for instance if we have a woman president, will she go and scream at people at council meetings? This is really a shame.

Because of these agitations another man dismissed such so called women leaders, according to him they are non productive, and that the real productive women are the rural women. That these women just raise their voices and have their photographs taken.

It is an unfair categorization because some women have genuine causes, and voice the problems of the grassroots women who have no direct access to the authorities or agencies that care. Anyway, it is the very nature of their aggressive presentation of issues that had made the man to see them as opportunists.

This has made me to recall similar instances with women Islamic scholars in Kano. Recently, at weddings, these women scholars are invited to preach at *walima*, especially on marriage life.

Even though some perform their preaching in an encouraging and persuasive manner, to my dismay and many other women's, some are quiet aggressive, emitting fire and brimstone, as they say. As a result many women don't like the preaching feeling as if the preachers are abusing them, after all in Islam it is said even if a person is doing something bad, you should talk to him in a kind way to stop it, but not in a harsh way or else he may go from bad to worse.

This is really a sad case of overzealousness, as if women are trying to prove themselves at all costs. And it is really costing us friends and supporters alike.

Watching the proceedings of the national conference, I observed that some men too are so passionate in proving their points as if the conference is a battle field, of words of course. But then since men are excused almost everything, from serious things like extra marital affairs to the mundane like rinsing a tea cup, nobody takes their behavior as unusual.

At any rate, women are not men and no matter how strong they feel about certain issues, they should present their case in a normal voice, not screaming as if speaking to high heavens, or *kamar da aradu*, as the Hausas would say. I am afraid this passionate nature may become our undoing if we don't check it.



Mrs. Ada Agina-Ude (l), director, gender and development action, addressing a rally on Tuesday (8-3-05) in Lagos, to mark the international women's day. Middle is Ms. Abiola Afolabi, director, women advocates' research and documentation centre while right is Mrs. Toro Oladapo, President, National Association of Women Journalist (NAWOJ).

## Declare international women's day public holiday - NWC chairperson urges FG

The chairperson of National Women Commission (NWC) of the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), Comrade Ladi Iliya, has called on the federal government to declare the International Women's Day a national holiday.

Comrade Iliya who disclosed this at the occasion of the celebration of this year's International Women's Day in Abuja, said, 'government should declare the International Women's Day a national holiday as a mark of respect and appreciation of the contributions of Nigerian women to development and stability of the country.'

She said that the objective

By Abdullahi M. Gulloma,  
Labour Reporter

of this year's celebration was to reflect on the significance and history of International Women's Day, and promote the campaign of mainstream gender in the workplace.

Comrade Iliya also condemned the non-inclusion of women by the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and some state governments to the on-

going national political reform conference.

'It is now very clear that those who have always argued that Nigerian women are being marginalised have been proved right, and those who do not see the marginalisation can now wake up.

'The national confab has shown that Nigeria, the giant of Africa, has been dwarfed, as about 50 per cent of the

population being women is not adequately represented. The governors who were unable to get women to represent their state have forgotten that the majority of those who voted for them are women,' she said.

She said that it was disheartening to note that women have been openly marginalised and deprived of their right to contribute to the on-going political reform conference.

## Gombe assists women with N10m

The government of Gombe state has

expended about N10m

in the last two years for

the empowerment of women in the

From Mohammed Abubakar,  
Correspondent (Gombe)

state though various programmes.

The state commissioner of women affairs, social welfare and youth development, Mrs. Emily Joshua Maina disclosed this at a press briefing to flag off the 2005 international women's day celebration in the state.

She said the state government had spent about N5m for the procurement and installation of photocopiers, binding, tailoring and knitting machines as well as another N2m to assist women under difficult circumstances.

The women development centre, said the commissioner, had also concluded a training programme on various trades in December last year for a total of 53 women trainees.

According to the

commissioner, the wife of the state governor has shown genuine concern towards polio eradication where she toured the eleven local governments in state to mobilize and sensitise them on the importance of immunization against the six killer childhood diseases and the misconception over polio vaccines.

Activities lined up for the week long occasion include a sensitization forum for women on 2005 census and a symposium on health and governance while there would also be prayers in mosques and churches.

This year's event which has the theme "thirty years of UN's effort to promote gender equity" coincided with the 5<sup>th</sup> World Conference on women tagged "Beijing + 10" currently being organised under the aegis of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York city.

## 300 women to be empowered

300 women selected from six rural communities in the country will be provided with adult literacy training, skill acquisition for income generation and micro credits before the end of 2005.

This was revealed by the president of Community Life Advancement Project (CL-AP), Dr. Remi Obinatu, last week during a launch of the organisation's 2005 Action plan calendar.

Dr. Obinatu, said that many communities in the FCT, Kaduna and Ebonyi states have access to health care, clean environment, clean drinking water, they also send their children to school and generate more income for themselves.

He also said that a centre was being built in Gui in the FCT, which would render free treatment of diseases of women and children, free antenatal care and deliveries pre-

By Benjamin Auta, Crime Reporter

vention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS, community health education and the treatment of opportunistic infections among people living with AIDS (PLWA).

Dr. Obinatu further said that the organisation was soliciting for assistance from individuals and corporate organisation, government agencies, civil societies and development partners towards the execution of vital projects.

Dr. Obinatu, also said "there could be no real growth without population, no sustainable development without tackling disease and poverty and no hope for the spread of freedom, democracy and human dignity unless we treat poor people as a basic human right."

# THE HOME FRONT

## The significance of women's day

The 8<sup>th</sup> of March was set aside for the celebration of women's day, and that though the observance of the day could be traced to United States of America, when it was first marked as a National Women's Day in 1909, it was not until 1945, when the charter of the United Nations was signed in San Francisco that the first international agreement was reached to proclaim gender equality as a fundamental human right.

In spite of the importance that should be given to the day, many people don't know why it is celebrated. The Home Front asked people's views and opinions about this special day.

Some blamed the government for not celebrating the day in a spectacular way, so that people should be aware of it, while some commended the day, as according to them it brought up women's problems for discussions and therefore to proffer solutions. Excerpts:

Paul Ibekae said that the day was worth celebrating since it has been set aside to create awareness about the flight of women and to improve different aspects of their life.

He said "though in Nige-

ria government and civil society have been giving attention to women but a lot need to be done to assist them especially those women at the rural areas."

Donald said "women have contributed a lot to the economic development of the country, so setting aside a day to commemorate them is a welcome development."

He also noted that though men have done a lot but chance should be given to women to contribute their quota and feel a sense of belonging.

But Mrs. Eto Emos said that the celebration has been a good development considering the bad condition of women world wide.

She said "it is a good

event in the sense that women world wide are facing tremendous problems and the day being set aside by United Nation is to highlight these problems globally. And to come up with strategies in which they can use to solve

nobody noticed women's day, because it was not taken seriously, women were not seen as important in the country she cited an example of workers' day which was celebrated where T-shirts and caps were distributed.

She emphasized that,

**"She added that the government could organize a programme to make women feel it was their day and allow them to have their ways in all areas of life, for instance, the president should step down and allow a woman to rule for 24 hours."**

She added that why couldn't women's day be celebrated in that form and distribute even Nigerian wax? She therefore called on the president to look at women and do something for women because they were suffering.

Mrs. Aluko, a staff of Federal Ministry of Industry, said it was a special day set aside for women. But the problem was that it was not different from any other day and there was nothing spectacular about the day. The government has not set special programmes for the day, like helping girl child, less privileged etc.

She added that the government could organize a programme to make women feel it was their day and allow them to have their ways in all areas of life, for instance, the president should step down and allow a woman to rule for 24 hours.

Also Mrs. Vicky Dauda a staff of immigration believed it was a special day for women and that now unlike before woman are holding high positions in the civil service. With the look of things in the nearest future a woman will become a president, she observed.

Mrs. Felicia O. Hassan of

federal ministry of industry said, women's day was a day women were being noted in their role and women were recognized in the society.

She said women's day created awareness for women to know that they were not just to stay in the kitchen, but to put in their effort in the development of the society.

According to one woman who pleaded anonymity, women should be given a chance to come together and discuss their problems maintaining that they could find solutions if they come together depending on how and who they present our problems to.

Mrs. Ngozi Okpa, a staff of JAMB said "it is a day set aside to recognize and honour women all over the world, a day to deliberate on women's problems and prospects and also a day to recognize women that have contributed positively to the growth of the national and the world at large."

She also noted that it served as a moral booster to women and therefore encouraged them to leave-up to expectation, and that it was a day women were given the chance to present their problems.

## On discrimination against women

In her statement to media chief executives and gender reporters on the outcome of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> session of the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) the Honourable Minister for Women Affairs Obong Rita Akpan spoke at length on the importance of media towards accomplishment of her ministry's tasks.

Particularly, Mrs. Rita Akpan made a four point recommendation to the media. She said they should develop approaches and train experts to apply gender analysis with regard to media programmes, promote the squeal sharing of family responsibilities through media campaigns that emphasise gender equality and non stereotyped gender roles of women, and men within the family and disseminate information aimed at eliminating spousal child abuse and all forms of violence against women. Produce media materials on women leaders as leaders who bring to their position of leadership many different experiences, including but not limited to their experiences in balancing women and family responsibilities as mothers, as professionals, as managers and as entrepreneurs to provide this models particularly to young women.

Lastly the honourable minister implored the media to focus more attention on social relationships towards creating gender sensitization in the society. She also recommends that issues relating to the twelve critical areas of Beijing declaration and platform for action should be

discussed extensively in the media to reduce gender bias such as health education and proper legislation.

Speaking in a similar tone the acting permanent secretary federal ministry of women affairs, Mrs. Bola Imiauan enjoined the media to accept and promote a world in which every Nigerian woman, youth and child is free to develop his/her own full potentials. She says it is paramount for us to demonstrate a new commitment to the nature to inspire a new generation of women and men egalitarian society.

In her own contribution the secretary general, Women's Right Advancement and Protection Alternative (WRAPA) Saudatu Mahdi spoke on the CEDAW treaty and summary of its articles. There is one area of the articles that captures my attention that is article 7 rights to public and political life.

Article 7 requires registered political parties to eliminate discrimination in public and political life. Women must vote and be eligible for election on equal terms with men, to participate in the formulation of government policy and hold public office.

The same equality of opportunity in governance is envisaged for women in non-governmental organizations, public and political associations such as trade unions and professional associations. The general global pattern of women's low representation in politics is particularly severe in Africa with an average of only 5% women among elected represen-



Mrs. Rita Akpan, Minister, Women Affairs

tatives. If women are to increase their political voice there is a need to understand the underlining causes of this situation and its location within the structure of gender inequality. Examination of the causes of 'discrimination' in public and political life reveals that these assertions are based on inadequate analysis of the problem.

In addition to the practical realities of a woman's world, we need to understand the belief system that explains and justifies the social word. Women are brought up to believe in the rightness of the world of male domination, and to accept their subordinate position. When women complain against male domination of the home it is usually against the excesses of male authority, and against the misuse

and abuse of male authority, such limited forms of rebellion are premised on the acceptance of male authority. Such rebellion does not question the principle of male authority, but only the misuse of this authority.

A woman in the home is not in a position to challenge the system of male domination. Even, in the unlikely event that a woman successfully challenges the system of male domination within her individual home she has done little or nothing to challenge the social system of male domination which exists in almost all other homes, and in the wider society. To challenge the social system would entail the political mobilization of her mates and public action.

If a woman accepts that

the man is the head of the household in her own home, then how can she put herself forward for a public political position? If men are the heads of households, should they not also be at the heads of local and national governments? How can a woman contribute to decision making in the local government council, if she cannot contribute to decision making in her own home?

If a woman accepts male domination as right and accepts gender discrimination as normal then presumably she would be very reluctant to go into politics. If she accepts that men are the decision makers, and that women should follow male decisions then by the same token, she must believe that it is not her place to go into politics.

There is the need for proper identification and analysis of the problem of discrimination against women. Women need to face up to the actual nature of the problem if they are to make progress in the political field.

Women constitute about 50% of the electorates in Nigeria but account for less than 5% of the seats in parliament. A study of the data on women holding public political positions between 1995 and 2003 shows that the percentage of women in decision-making positions in public and political life range from 12% in 1992 to 134% in 1999. Out of 44 cabinet ministers only six (or 13,4%) are women. Out of 36 speakers in the states House of Assembly, only one is a female. She eventually resigned, due to political pressure from

her male counterparts. There are no female governors, and only one female deputy governor, in Lagos state. Nine (or 12%) out of 774 IGWA chairpersons are women 143 (or 16%) are women out of 5,800 councilors, and three for 28%) out of 105 senators, with 12 for 3.3%) female members out of 360 members in the case in the House of Representatives. It is not as if women (though of little percentage) have not presented themselves for election but their fellow females have not been voting for them. Who now discriminates against who?

From this point of view, there should be an increase in availability of information so as to enable women to recognize the need for political action to push for equal rights. There is an increasing sense of grievance among women of all levels of education that male domination of the political system is undemocratic and not serving the female interest in peace, family security and prosperity.

Efforts of the federal ministry of women affairs and the child right information Bureau of the Federal Ministry of Information and National Orientation are highly commendable. However more need to be done because there is a necessity of a virile platform for dialogue, advocacy and collaboration with a view to strengthening the work of existing organizations with interests in promotion of women's interests in Nigeria.

Gbemiga Bamidele writes from National Secretariat Nigeria Union of Journalists, Abuja.

# THE HOME FRONT

## Women have something to offer — Hajo Sani

**H**ajo Sani is the former minister of women affairs from Adamawa state. An educationist by profession, she taught at one of the oldest secondary schools in Abuja, government girls' secondary school Dutse. Later she was promoted to the position of head of English department, then she served as the vice principal for twelve years before her appointment as the minister of women affairs and social development.

After her tenure as the minister, Hajo Sani wrote a book entitled: *Women and National Development* and at the same time formed a non-governmental organisation (NGO) also having the same name with the book and she is now awaiting the defence of her Ph.D project in University of Abuja.

In this interview with Safiya I. Dantiye and Abubakar Haruna, Hajo Sani talked on her project of promoting girl child education and the challenges, how she mobilised her friends to teach adults voluntarily, the poor representation of women at the on-going national conference, the Beijing conference in New York, among others. Excerpts:



Hajo Sani

impact non governmental organisations have particularly on women and children in our society. You don't really have to use your personal savings there certain strategies you can develop to generate funds and solicit for assistance from any angle. When you are in position there is a level you reach people will not see you as a beggar but you can make a plea or lobby for the sake of other people in the society that need such help. For me this is my life and this is a position I found myself and I am happy for what I am doing and I have good people around me and well meaning Nigerians that are contributing to my non governmental organisation.

**What challenges do you face, judging that you are promoting girl child education in some communities that are hostile to it?**

Many challenges, sometimes we don't look at it as if it is not appreciated but we look at the economic situation of the community generally.

Another challenge is that most parents see girl child education as something where girls will be exposed to corrupt life and different moral vices. Therefore they won't allow them to have access to education and they will be comfortable whereby most of the teachers are female. That is why parents want to send their children to single educational system rather than co-educational system particularly in the north.

And we need to have role models for the benefits of girls child education; tell people your life experience, tell them your benefit as a result of education.

**Do you think Nigerian women are being marginalized, especially judging by the recent nomination of delegates to the ongoing national conference?**

**How do you experience life after living office as minister of women affairs?**

The only difference is that when you are in power or position to do a lot of things, you contribute and impact on people's life at a very higher level and equally to be on highest decision making but when you are out it is a different world on its own. The world where you find yourself in a wider spectrum where you can still make an impact, you can equally contribute meaningfully as

done or more than just to sit down like that? That's why I came up with my book on Women and National Development which is the contribution of women in all aspects of national development and that is to tell the world that women have something to offer even though women's work has been relegated to the background in contribution to just domestic work, in taking care of family, reproduction and other community challenges. All these tasks are

project in Dutse, in FCT. We realised that the level of girl child education was very low in that area because most of the parents were sending their male children to school rather than girl child. I was able to offer scholarship to about 10 students and some of them now become like members of my family. Some have even graduated. That has really touched me I have another project of Adult education. I mobilised my colleagues who are interested in women education, about six of us, we go almost once in a month to talk and educate these women on basic knowledge and at the same time we offer counseling to the girls that dropped out from school due to one reason or another and those that have completed secondary school but couldn't make good result and therefore cannot go further. We try to assist them and see what kind of help they need for them to be economically empowered. I do these programmes from the proceeds of my book.

**Apart from the proceeds from your book, do you have other source of funding like donor agencies?**

We have our annual dues for the members, some of them are members of board of trustees, though I see it as a voluntary service because sometimes I see the issues of women education as part of my life, and I cannot see myself living with women without having something to offer for their empowerment. You know this kind of thing the saddest part of it is that we are in a society where the effort of NGOs are not being appreciated, people don't get to really understand the

not actually included in the national statistic to say women are contributing 20% or 50% and all other contributions leading to the development of the society at large.

**What motivated you to form a non-governmental organisation (NGO) and what are the main objectives?**

As I said earlier I came up with this book women and national development not just to publish a book or make money but rather I felt it would contribute for the development of the society. So after the launching of the book I set up of an NGO in 2002 called Women and National Development (WAND) which have been targeting towards education for greater participation.

That is we believe that the higher the number of women educated the higher the position and contribution to the national development. So that is why my NGO is specifically focusing on education of women and girl child. So far I have a small

### PERSONALITY INTERVIEW

when you were there and change people's life.

I think that was what actually motivated me soon after I left office to form a pet project. I just saw myself as somebody that still have something to offer somewhere as far as women's life is concerned in this country. Having gathered such experience, working in a secondary school of young girls where I watched the development of young future women leaders in this country. I also found myself in a position where the destiny so to say, of Nigerian women was resting on my shoulders whereby I was faced with the responsibility of seeing specifically to the empowerment of women.

So I see these two challenges and I felt there was need for one to sit down and document things. They are quite exciting experiences and one needs to sit down and look at them in which way can people inform the world or in which way can people really see you as somebody that can equally do what you have

**parallel national conference organised by women group in Lagos?**

I am not really in support of it because I think even in our struggle for women empowerment the rhetoric of women issue is over a long time immediately after the declaration of women in 1975, what we are looking for is gender perspective to mainstream in all aspects of national development. So I am not support of women to come up with a parallel conference, to discourse what? All that are supposed to be discussed in the conference are to do with men and women, it is not only men issue, even if it is only male conference why are we protesting that women should be part of the conference then now women are coming to have a parallel conference to discuss what? So what is the significance? I even heard Mr. President's speech, he was really emphasising on the issue of one nation, the issue of unity, so if the theme of the conference is on these issues I think we can equally see if from that perspective.

**What is your comment on the ongoing world conference on women and how well do you think of the Nigerian delegation?**

It is not about presenting entirely new things, but rather the conference in New York is the post Beijing conference it is like a conference bringing all nations, women from all the countries that are designatories to the convention of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) and all the countries that participated in the Beijing conference to come and give report. Ten years after the Beijing your country has agreed to look at the violence against women, to promote girl child education, what have been done in terms of participation of women in politics etc. And the country will give account on what they have achieved in these areas.

**Are you in support of the**

**“Another challenge is that most parents see girl child education as something where girls will be exposed to corrupt life and different moral vices. Therefore they won't allow them to have access to education and they will be comfortable whereby most of the teachers are female. That is why parents want to send their children to single educational system rather than co-educational system particularly in the north.”**

# ABUJA TRUST

## SCHOOL FEES INCREMENT

# FCT parents grumble

Parents in the Federal Capital Territory FCT are groaning and grumbling under the new school fees introduced by the Education Secretariat of the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) in its public schools.

Many of the parents complained that the increment in the fees paid in public schools in the FCT is so high. They expressed that they would not be complaining if it were just slight upward adjustment. According to them the 100 percent increase in fees is unacceptable and planned to keep their children out of school since many of them have more than one ward in one school or the other.

The daily influx of people into the FCT has definitely increased the demand for services, which of course include education, and this has led to massive overstretching of its educational facilities, meaning existing ones are grossly inadequate.

"City classrooms now record an average of 100 children per class and some do not have basic classroom furniture or school buses," FCT minister, Mallam Nasir el-Rufai, had said.

But does this actually justify the sharp increase in fees paid in public schools in the FCT?

Many parents say no, Mrs. Bola Kofoworola, whose child attends Government Secondary Wuse, said that school fees increase in January this year threw her off-guard.

She said "I don't understand this increase, there is disparity in the school fees being paid in FCT schools, my other child in GSS Tudun Wada pays N7, 000 per term, while we pay N9, 000 per term for our other child at GSS Wuse, so this increase I don't understand it, they've not communicated to me that there would be any increase.

Another parent, Mr. Linus Kanwai, who has three children at the government secondary school, Wuse, however, said that the increase in school fees is minimal and urged parents not to complain.

"I pay N11, 000 per session for each child at the Government Secondary School, Wuse, but to register a new student takes only N7, 500," Mr. Kanwai said.

Investigation at the education secretariat by *Abuja Trust* revealed that new in-



el-Rufai, FCT minister

By Onah L. Iduh, *Abuja Trust* Editor & Nasir Imam, *Property & Environment Editor*

School (JSS) I are expected to pay N7, 500, regular students would pay N4, 200 while boarding students are expected to pay N4, 000 only.

A breakdown of the N7, 500 school fees for registration of new students, shows that exercise books are to cost N1, 500, while badge, identity card, result sheet and student cumulative card cost N300, N250, N250, and N150 respectively.

Also included in the N7, 500 are a pair of school uniform at N2, 500, cardigan at N1, 000, sports wear at N1, 000 and beret at N550.

The education secretariat however said that parents could negotiate with school principals to pay such fees instalmentally.

For regular students, who are expected to pay N4, 200, this would comprise first, second term exam fees and promotion exam fees each at N1, 000 while extra lesson fee is pegged at N500.

The N4, 200 also includes school equipment at N250, vocational equipment at N300, sports equipment at N150, security deposit of N500, medical fee of N300, while house and closing dues are N100 each.

Chairman of the newly established FCT Secondary Education Board, Hajia Asma'u Usman, who spoke to *Abuja Trust*, however said that parents have been sensitised about the school fees increase through radio jingles, which should have

Hajiya Usman recalled that in the past three years there was no budgetary allocation from government; as such most of the schools were struggling to survive.

"That is why this year we asked parents to donate and participate actively in the running of our schools, so for that reasons some of the little school charges had to be increased," Hajia Asma'u said.

She said there will be management committees to consist of a chairman from the immediate local community, someone who has obvious interest in education, someone who is active, and a parent, plus teachers and parents.

Hajia Asma'u said the management committees would assist in the collection of all the funds and disbursement of some "to ensure that our schools are up to the standard that we actually want them to be.

"This is Abuja; you'll still come and meet a secondary school looking like those rural secondary schools we left in our villages before coming



Prof. Osuji, Education minister

over here.

"And even when you compare what we are charging with what obtains in private schools, it is very meagre and we're not even charging beyond what federal government colleges are collecting."

"We felt we should do what our mother ministry (Federal Ministry of Education), did. They decided to collect this money from their students, so why can't we emulate them?"

The chairman said that in fact when it comes to performance and maintenance of schools, there can't be comparison between "our schools with federal government colleges - we're better off."

She said while public schools charge between N3, 000 to N9, 000 per term, some private schools charge about N40, 000 or more per term.

Hajia Asma'u Usman said that government is not shying away from its responsibility but what it wants is community participation, "let ev-

ery parent donate for the development of the children."

While some parent's acknowledge that the fees increment may be needed to take care of the infrastructure decay in the secondary schools, they emphasise that doubling it is too much a burden for many of them with multiple children in both FCT and private schools.

According to a parent, Barrister Atta, who said he has three children in different FCT schools, what the FCT authorities did amounts to doubling the fees they were paying before the beginning of the current school session.

Barrister Atta said he was paying about four thousand naira per student prior to the increment but was surprised that the fees were jumped to seven thousand, five hundred naira. "That is 100 percent increment. It is too high for many of the parents in FCT who are civil servants, artisans and petty traders.

"Let me tell you, majority of students in FCT schools are children of junior civil servants some of which have more than two or three in some of these schools, so how would they manage to cope with the current exorbitant charges?" Atta queried.

Another parent, a junior civil servant with the Ministry of Finance who pleaded anonymity, told *Abuja Trust* that the increment came as a surprise. He said that with this development he might be forced to withdraw one of his children from school.

According to the civil servant, FCT schools were considered by most lower cadre civil servants to be government's recognition of their status as they could not afford to pay the high fees charged by most private schools. "With this increase, am sure most of us may withdraw our children from school. I have two children in Government Secondary School Karu and it has been difficult for me paying their fees when it was not increased so how can I afford it now that the fees have been doubled?," the man asked.

He revealed that in the past parents through the PTA were taxed to pay some fees per student for infrastructure development in Government Secondary School, Karu. He said he was therefore surprised that the Education Secretariat hinged it reason for increment "on so-called decay in facilities when it has been our efforts that have kept this schools all along."

A visit to many of the schools within the city however show that although many parents paid the new fees as school authorities confirm that there was even a fundamental increment in the number of student intakes as against last year. Some officials of in some of the schools told our correspondent that although the fees were paid, most parents did so amidst complaints and tears.

**"While some parent's acknowledge that the fees increment may be needed to take care of the infrastructure decay in the secondary schools, they emphasise that doubling it is too much a burden for many of them with multiple children in both FCT and private schools. According to a parent, Barrister Atta, who said he has three children in different FCT schools, what the FCT authorities did amounts to doubling the fees they were paying before the beginning of the current school session."**

# Abuja Trust

## Bush burning responsible for Abuja heat waves –AEPB official

Indiscriminate bush burning in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) has been described as one of the major factors contributing to the increasing level of heat waves prevailing in the metropolis.

The representative of Abuja Environmental Protection Board (AEPB), Mrs. Aisha Adebayo, made the assertion on Tuesday at Bassa Village, a rural settlement near Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja.

Mrs. Adebayo while speaking at a forum organised by Fire Disaster Prevention and Safety Awareness Association of Nigeria, a non-governmental organisation (NGO), explained that widespread bush burning contributes to the destruction of the protecting ozone layer of the atmosphere that leads to unprecedented hot weather condition as high as 43°C.

The general manager of the airport, Engineer Saleh Dunama, while flagging off the programme expresses his displeasure over continuous loss of valuable aviation installations and airport equipment to indiscriminate bush burning.

Engr. Saleh, while appealing to inhabitants of settlements and communities close to airports across the country to desist from bush

By Abbas Abdullah, NYSC

burning, said that except for few that are located in the heart of cities, most airports are located in sub-urban areas.

The Area One Shopping Centre Traders' Association (AOSCTA) in Garki, Abuja has appealed to the Abuja Municipal area council (AMAC) to reconsider its decision to demolish the shopping centre.

The secretary of the association, Mr. Udenunwu Barnabas, made the appeal in an interview with the *News Agency of Nigeria (NAN)* in Abuja on Wednesday.

Barnabas said that members of the association

In his own address, the national co-ordinator of the NGO, Mr. Ahmed Badanga, said that the organisation is the first of its kind in complementing government efforts at combating the hazards of bush

burning.

Head of fire service of the airport, Mr. Benson Ekajeh enumerated ignorance, carelessness and accident as the three major factors contributing to bush burning

fire disaster; while Mr. Idoko Inalegwu of Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA) said that bush burning blurs the airspace and impairs visual contact of the control tower

operator and the pilots.

Also at the occasion, the paramount chief of Bassa Village, Alhaji Hashidu Shekade, assured the NGO and the airport authority of the community's support.

## Area one traders appeal for restraint

had been given a 21-day ultimatum to vacate their shops to allow for the construction of a modern shopping mall.

He appealed to the Abuja Municipal area council (AMAC) to give them the shopping centre to build their stalls as was given to traders who were evicted from the Bakassi or New Market.

"They compiled a list of all the traders at the Bakassi Market, allocated space to them at Dei-Dei and gave them

samples of three types of stalls they are to build," he said.

Barnabas said the traders were not questioning AMAC's right to demolish and build malls.

"All we are asking for is to be given the opportunity to do the building of the stalls

ourselves because we stand a better chance of retaining our positions in the market than if the council does the rebuilding itself," he said.

According to him, AMAC's decision to revoke the traders' allocation papers was not favourable to them.

He urged the council to reconsider its stand and allow individual traders to build their stalls in accordance with the specified plans.

All efforts to get AMAC's chairman, Mr. Zephaniah Jisalo, to comment on the issue proved abortive as he was said to be attending a meeting each time *NAN* called at his office.

## FRSC appoints 127 special marshals

The FCT sector command of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) has appointed 127 additional persons into its Special Marshal Unit (SMU), the sector commander, Mr. Jonas Agwu, has said.

Agwu told the *News Agency of Nigeria (NAN)* that the move was aimed at beefing up the unit, which assists the command in ensuring safety on the roads.

He said that more than

300 people applied for the voluntary job, but that after a series of screening and interviews only 127 were successful.

He called on all applicants to check the SMU unit of the FRSC for the list of the successful candidates and any other information related to the appointment.

The SMU was established to coordinate the activities of the commission's volunteers known as special marshal who assist in ensuring that motorists comply with road traffic regulations.



A typical Gbagyi settlement in Abuja.

## Congratulations

We rejoice with you today Alhaji Abdulmumini Mohammad Kundak as you are conferred with the title of AJIYAN DUGURI, by the district head of Duguri, Malam Y.M Baba (O.O.N) which takes place today 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2005, by 10:30 a.m at District Head's Palace, Yelwan Duguri.

Once again, Congratulations

Signed.

Gbenga Olawepo  
 Senator Garba Illah Gada  
 Hon. Dattijo Aliyu  
 Chief Taiwo Akeju  
 Chief Okey Ezenwa  
 Dr. Bitrus Pogu  
 Prince Enerst Okojie  
 For: Committee of friends



ALHAJI ABDULMUMINI MOHAMMAD KUNDAK,  
 AJIYAN DUGURI,

# KANO TRUST

## Over 4000 deportees arrive Kano, recount experience in Saudi

**M**assive deportation of illegal aliens from Saudi Arabia has now become an annual routine of the Saudi government. Every year the Saudi authority volunteers at least 3 to 4 aircraft for the deportation exercise. The exercise that normally started immediately after hajj operation is aimed at addressing the unruly behaviors exhibited by many nationalities particularly those from the West African sub-region.

This year's deportation exercise which started on February 1, 2005 brings to fore the embarrassing practice of some Nigerians who go to lesser hajj (*Umrah*) but hide until the duration of the hajj before they make themselves public for the Saudi officials to arrest them and deport them home.

*Kano Trust* investigation revealed that even though the unofficial figure of the deportees is over 10 thousand nationals of various West African countries, but official figures released by the Nigerian Immigration Service in Kano insist the number so far deported through Mallam Aminu Kano International Airport (MAKIA) is 4,335.

*Kano Trust* also reliably gathered that Kobo Air alone, one of the three chosen airlines for the deportees was allocated 14,000 people that were to be deported back to Nigeria under the exercise. Apart from Kobo, Saudi and Sudan airlines were also involved in the deportation exercise. The Saudi Arabian Airlines according to a reliable source at MAKIA was assigned to carry the deportee's luggage while Sudan and Kobo airlines are to airlift the deportees to Nigeria.

Even though the illegal aliens were deported to Nigeria as Nigerians, *Kano Trust* discovered that most of them are not Nigerians but have in their possession Nigerian passports and visas. Investigation by our correspondent further revealed that some of

By Yusha'u Adamu Ibrahim,  
Correspondent (Kano)

the deportees are from neighboring countries such as Ghana, Cameroon, Chad, Sudan and Niger republics. However, due to the unpatriotic behavior of some officers responsible for issuing passports, nationals of such countries could have Nigerian passports for travels to Saudi Arabia.

According to *Kano Trust* investigation, some of the unruly behaviors exhibited in the holy land by the illegal aliens which forced the Saudi government to deport them include theft, prostitution, smuggling, human and drug trafficking as well as street begging among others. Such actions apart from tarnishing their own personal image are also destroying the image of their country in addition to the deviation from the main purpose for traveling to Saudi Arabia, which in most cases are religious obligations.

When our Correspondent visited Mallam Aminu Kano International Airport (MAKIA), he discovered that the airport has become so busy as it was during hajj exercise due to the arrival of the deportees particularly at the weekend days. *Kano Trust* also discovered that since the commencement of exercise commercial activities such as foreign exchange black markets, food and pure water hawking as well as commercial motorists and *achaba* riders have moved to MAKIA making brisk business.

Our Correspondent also observed that the deportees consist of all classes of people ranging from old, middle, and young men and women. It was also discovered that most of the middle and under-aged women are the champions of both prostitutions, smuggling and trafficking in human and drugs to the holy land while old men and women are for streets begging in addition to

other immoral behaviors exhibited by the illegal aliens while in holy land.

Also at MAKIA, *Kano Trust* observed that while the deportees are busy clearing their goods, relatives and well-wishers could be seen moving around the arrival hall looking for their relatives while FAAN and other security officials including men of SSS, Nigerian Immigration Service and Nigerian Custom Service are busy clearing both the deportees and their goods.

It was also observed that due to the availability of foreign exchange black marketers at the airport the deportees could easily change their Saudi currencies and charter vehicles that could take them and their luggage to their destinations within and outside Kano. Laborers however can be listed among the people making brisk business during this exercise as they could be seen carrying luggage either on their heads or by using wheelbarrows.

However for those that have less luggage, the popular commercial *achaba* riders are also available at the airport to convey them to various destinations of their choice across the state in addition those who were privileged to have their relatives with private vehicles to take them back home.

Some of the deportees interviewed by our correspondent at MAKIA expressed dismay with the way they were treated at Jeddah, the Saudi Arabian capital by both the Saudi and Nigerian immigrations. They said they suffered lots of harassment and violation of human rights.

Alhaji Sabitu, who simply identified himself as an indigene of Sumaila local government of Kano State, said he travelled to Saudi Arabia since October 2004 during lesser hajj with the intention to perform both lesser hajj and hajj exercise and he succeeded. He explained that he did not intend to come back to Nigeria now if not because he was deported. He stated that his ambition was to remain there for at least eight years.

When asked why he wanted to stay there, he replied to earn a living, stressing that most of the illegal aliens that are illegally staying in the holy land are purposely doing so for economic reasons. He noted further that at least one could have three square meals daily apart from some extra money that he or she can save.

Another deportee, Alhaji Abdurraheem Saleh, who also spoke to *Kano Trust* said that even though the deportation exercise is conducted

ment but some Nigerian immigration officials at the Nigerian Embassy in Saudi Arabia are collecting between 150 to 200 Saudi riyals from the deportees before they were able to get a seat in any available aircraft for deporting the illegal aliens to Nigeria.

Alhaji Saleh explained that some people even lost their lives as a result of motor accidents while trying to es-

situation."

Before going to Saudi Arabia, Yalwa added, she thought it was a free and genuine business where one could earn his or her incomes without litigations or molestation from the authority but when she experienced the situation, she now totally hates the system and preferred to come back to Nigeria to continue with the small business she abandoned.

asked.

When contacted, immigration's public relation officer in Kano State command, Mr. Maurice Theman, debunked the allegations that passports were issued to non-Nigerians, saying that all the deportees are Nigerians. "We are doing our best as mandated by the Nigerian constitution to ensure that only Nigerians are using our passports."



A cross section of the deportees engaged in negotiations with commercial motorists at Aminu Kano International Airport, Kano.



One of the deportees carrying his luggage.

Pix: Yusha'u Adamu Ibrahim

**"According to *Kano Trust* investigation, some of the unruly behaviors exhibited in the holy land by the illegal aliens which forced the Saudi government to deport them include theft, prostitution, smuggling, human and drug trafficking as well as street begging among others. Such actions apart from tarnishing their own personal image are also destroying the image of their country in addition to the deviation from the main purpose for traveling to Saudi Arabia, which in most cases are religious obligations."**

cape Saudi Police's (*Askar*) arrest. He added that many women gave birth to babies at the camp where they were detained, adding that if not because of the intervention of Saudi immigration officials who realised that something sinister was being employed at the camp, the number of deportees so far repatriated to Nigeria could not have been as many as was deported.

Hajia Yalwa who was also among the deportees told our Correspondent that she is no longer interested in going back to Saudi Arabia except for religious obligations. She said: "I know about three women who gave birth to their babies at the camp. I felt

She explained that "it is true that most of the immoral behaviors levelled against the deportees could be found practically exhibited at various places in the holy land", adding that serious measures should be taken to address the menace.

Speaking also to *Kano Trust*, one of the deportees' relatives who pleaded anonymity blamed Nigerian Immigration Service for issuing passports to non-Nigerians, an act that he described as bane of all the irregularities. He said "I wonder why our officers are now becoming unpatriotic, because no Nigerian can be allowed to use other country's passport to travel

The image maker of the command also disclosed that so far a total of 4,335 deportees have been deported to Nigeria from Saudi Arabia since the exercise started on February 1, 2005. Even though he said NIS does not have the actual number of deportees that were to be deported this year, but there are still more to be deported back to Nigeria.

But when asked on how to tackle the menace, he said Nigerian Immigration Service should be provided with modern facilities to enable them to keep records including pictures of such deportees. This he said would assist them in detecting any person who was ear-

# EKO TRUST

## Withheld LG Funds: LASG debunks Bode George's claim

The Lagos State government has debunked claims made by a chieftain of the Peoples Democracy Party (PDP) that the Supreme Court in its landmark ruling called for a reversion to the original 20 local government councils.

The commissioner for Information and Strategy, Mr. Dele Alake, in a statement in Alausa on Wednesday, stressed that at no time had the apex court directed the federal government to lodge the money with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN).

Alake said that the statement credited to PDP's national vice chairman, Southwest, Chief Bode George, on Tuesday exhibited his ignorance of the constitution and moral issues involved in the illegal seizure of the funds.

According to Alake, "Nowhere in its landmark judgment did the Supreme Court ask the Lagos State government to revert to 20 local government councils as claimed by Commodore George.

"It is equally false that the Supreme Court directed the federal government to lodge the money with the Central Bank where the local government chairmen will go

**Olumide Bajulaiye,**  
Correspondent (Lagos)

and collect it".

He said that there is a constitutional provision for the allocation of monies from the federation account and that the federal government had failed to comply.

"The constitution is very clear that the funds can only be paid into the Joint State/Local Government Account for distribution to the local government councils as decide by the state House of Assembly.

He said contrary to the claims of the PDP Chieftain the apex court was unequivocal in declaring that the seizure of the funds is illegal and the funds be released immediately to the state government.

He said: "We urge the discerning public to discountenance Commodore George's brazenly false claim that the 20 old local governments in the state listed in the constitution have been abrogated.

"The truth is that 37 new councils were created in addition to and not in replacement of the 20 previously existing councils. Those 20 local governments still exist as legal entities, distinct from the 37 new ones".



Some of the Kia vehicles donated to Lagos magistrates by Governor Tinubu...recently.

## Women's Day: Reduce prices of Kerosene, cooking gas, FG urged

Federal government on Wednesday was urged to review downwards the pump price of kerosene and cooking gas to make the

products easily available for the ordinary citizens in the state.

Lagos State commissioner for Women Affairs and Poverty Alleviation, Mrs. Joke Orelope-Adefulire, gave the call while speaking at the Women's Rally and Exhibition to commemorate this year's International Women's Day.

Adefulire was of the opinion that if the products were made available by reviewing the prices downward it would enable women to feed their families better.

Challenging women on

the need to keep their family by instilling discipline in their children and supporting their husbands, the commissioner emphasized that the home front must be generally kept intact despite their participation in various nation building.

While advising on the need to abolish all forms of discriminating laws against women such as early marriages, harmful widow rites, female genital mutilation, child trafficking among others, Adefulire added that these laws possessed the

potency to deprive women from attaining her full potentials.

Her words; "I believe that gender inequalities and other forms of abuse that relegate women aspiration in socio-economic circumstances when examined critically, are borne out of socio-cultural environment, hence the need to abolish them," she said.

According to her, "without the positive socio-economic and political contributions from women that form 60 percent of most population, the world community cannot tackle its array of problems and challenges".

Stressing that her ministry would continue to intensify efforts at making women become self-reliant through self employment activities, that would increase their financial muscle.

She said with 6,000 beneficiaries of the state's Vocational training for empowering women and poverty alleviation, the government has enhanced the living standard of women, just as she stated that women all over the world have contributed positively to the socio-economic and political growths of their country. The commissioner however admonished women not to be blinded to the continued need to sustain the family as the most important unit of socialisation.

## ...signs light rail contract with US coy

The Lagos State government on Tuesday signed a multi-billion naira contractual agreement for the execution of it light rail project with an American company, LEMNA International Incorporated.

Signing the contract on behalf of the state, the Lagos State governor, Bola Tinubu, said Lagos is the only mega city in the world without mass rail transit and the mistake has to be corrected now.

According to him, transport economy is not encouraged in the country adding that it remains the only solution to the incessant increase in prices of petroleum products in the country.

He said, "fuel consumption in this country would have dropped drastically because a light rail system will take what a hundred danfo buses will take at a go and the system will transform the landscape itself".

Governor Tinubu noted that the military intervention changed the attempt to introduce metro line system in the state in the 1980's saying for the unnecessary

coups, light rail mass transit system would have been a reality in Lagos by now.

He described the signing of the contract with LEMNA as an accomplishment, which his government had been dreaming about in the past years.

"We have arrived at a terminus of hope today and with LEMNA taking up this project, we've been vindicated on our struggle for and beliefs in foreign investment in our economy", he said.

Urging that the political risk is less than usually peddled, Tinubu assured the representatives of the company that there is no other economy that can provide returns like investment on light rail system anywhere in Nigeria.

Governor Tinubu added that he is confident that the foreign company will not regret investing in the project saying the economic prosperity of Lagosians relates directly to an efficient transportation system. Thus, he urged the American investor not to entertain any form of fear. "Nigeria is the emerging market across the

world".

In his remark, the leader of the company's representative, Mr. Viet Ngo noted that his company's involvement in the project would allow the state to reap the benefit of an accelerated economy "with quicker pace of development".



An Igbo dance group at the International Women's Day celebration in Lagos...Tuesday  
Pic: Oladipupo Odunewu.

# News

## Railway concessioning: FG inaugurates committee

Following the federal government's determination to sell the Nigerian Railways, the minister of transport, Dr Abiye Sekibo, recently inaugurated a Steering Committee in Abuja to concession the country's railways. Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, the minister stressed the importance of an effective railways system in the socio-economic development of the country, adding that the Steering Committee was set up to implement the recommendations of the earlier committee on the railways which submitted its report to the president last year.

According to Dr Sekibo, the committee was mandated to ensure that the concessioning of the Nigerian Railways was in-line with the recommendations of the presidential committee on the concessioning of the Nigerian Railways Corporation (NRC) not later than December 31, 2005.

Other terms of reference include monitoring of the railways in a segmental pattern to two operators who will handle the existing Lagos-Kano route and the Port-Harcourt-Maiduguri route, including Itakpe-Ajaokuta-Warri standard gauge line. While the joint use of the

By Sunday Ejike Benjamin

Kafanchan junction would be determined by the operators.

The committee will also maintain the Itakpe-Ajaokuta-Warri rail line on standard gauge and evolve a mechanism of integrating it with the existing narrow gauge system in other parts of the country. It will also work out the concessioning of the railways for a term of 25 years in the first instance, with the first five years dedicated to the rehabilitation of the existing system through a collaborative effort between the government and the concessionaries, while the remaining 20 years will be the actual operation of the concession. •

Dr. Sekibo said the

committee was expected to fashion out strategies for the retention of the existing narrow gauge system of the railways connectivity to neighbouring countries; work out details for the completion of the Itakpe-Ajaokuta Warri line; work out the implementation of the 25 years railways development programme, and will also assess what should be paid on work done at the Itakpe-Ajaokuta-Warri line and recommend payment schedule.

The minister urged members of the committee to be committed to the achievement of the terms of reference, so as to bring the assignment to a speedy completion. He also noted that government wants to effect the sale of the railways before the end of this year.

## Police declare three councillors, scribe wanted in Osun

Three former councillors and ex-secretary of Ilesa west local government council of Osun state have been declared wanted for conspiracy, attempted murder, malicious damage and stealing at the council's secretariat by the state police command. According to a statement by the state police command, signed and circulated by the police public

From Bisi Taiwo,  
Stringer Oshogbo

relations officer (PPRO), Mr. Joshua Olayemi, the suspects were declared wanted for their alleged involvement in the lingering crisis rocking Ilesa west local government council.

The suspects included Messrs Edward Kesinro; an ex-supervisor for education, Jide Owolabi; an ex-supervisor for agriculture, Arewa Sasa; also an ex-supervisor for agriculture and former secretary of the council, Gbenga Fowowe.

The statement implored anyone with useful information on the whereabouts of the suspects to contact the state commissioner of police or the nearest police station since warrant of arrest against them has been issued by a Magistrate Court in Osogbo on March 9, 2005.

It could be recalled that some hoodlums last week invaded the Ilesa west local government council's secretariat, leaving many people injured with property worth millions of naira damaged.

The Education Tax Fund (ETF) has held a two-day senior executive training programme inline with the administration's public sector reform agenda to reposition the organisation for more efficient and effective service delivery.

Speaking at the workshop, the executive secretary of ETF, Mallam Mustapha Abba Jaji, said that the workshop which was organised for 24 top management executives was aimed at achieving greater performance and output from staff that would enhance the overall performance of the organisation.

Mallam Jaji said the workshop tagged: 'leadership and effectiveness seminar,' which was held at the ETF corporate headquarters in Abuja yesterday, was a fall-out of the retreat organised for ETF board members during which the achievements recorded were assessed, weaknesses examined and the challenges facing the fund identified, while strategies to achieve set goals were mapped out.

## ETF challenges staff on service delivery

By Henry Omuonu, Senior reporter (Education)

He said that the workshop was in line with the public sector reform programme of the federal government, adding that 'we cannot be an island and we have to be part of the government's reform agenda. We must be seen to be performing to the expectations of not only the government, but also to the expectations of our primary constituency which are the benefiting institutions.'

According to the executive secretary, when the staff of ETF exhibits a high-level of personal effectiveness, their efforts would result in the effectiveness of the entire organisation to deliver on its mandate.

He informed the top management participants at the workshop that the ETF takes the reform programme of the government very seriously, adding 'we must consider the total package of service delivery and how ETF

can deliver services to our beneficiaries because we must be seen to deliver services.'

Also, speaking, the director-general of the Kaduna Business School, Mallam Dahiru Sani, who was the resource person at the workshop, said the exercise would enhance professionalism amongst senior management staff and change the orientation in the conduct of government business.

Mallam Sani said it had become imperative for the ETF to recharge its operations to ensure they deliver service, adding that 'top management staff must be conscious and aware of the need to be effective and efficient in the discharge of their duties and utilisation of resources available to them.'

## Alfa counsels PDP members to embrace Ali

A former Chief of Air Staff, Vice Marshal Isaac Alfa (rtd) has appealed to the PDP members to rally round the newly elected national chairman of the party, Senator Ahmadu

From Ahmed Tahir Ajobe,  
Correspondent (Lokoja)

Ali, to move the party forward.

Speaking in a telephone interview with *Daily Trust*

correspondent in Lokoja, Vice Marshal Alfa expressed confidence in the ability of Senator Ahmadu Ali to strengthen the unity of the party and to ensure discipline in the party.

'With his experience, Senator Ahmadu Ali will not only move the party forward, but also would enhance the unity of the party. He must be supported by the PDP members to achieve a lasting legacy as the new national chairman of the party,' he said.

While congratulating Senator Ahmadu Ali for his election, Vice Marshal Isaac Alfa also urged him to carry along all members of the party in the decision making process to promote a feeling of belonging.

He also appealed to all those who contested with him to see his victory as the wish of Allah and to cooperate with him.

## Don't disconnect military formations - Kwankwaso urges NEPA

The minister of defence, Engineer Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso, has appealed to the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA) not to disconnect military formations as plans are underway to offset their bills. He said that the ministry was having some difficulties due to some short falls in their budget.

Kwankwaso while fielding questions from pressmen at his office said that the ministry was presently negotiating with the Ministry of Finance for more funds to pay off the debt.

By Ruby Rabin, Defence Correspondent

'I am aware that the ministry owes NEPA about N1 billion because of the large number of barracks across the country, but they should consider the sensitive nature of the barracks and the importance of light to some operators and consider giving us some time to enable us meet up our responsibilities,' he said. Adding, 'I know NEPA will consider the security implication of disconnecting military formations and allow us some time to settle the difficulties we have.'

## MOPOL commander withdraws Anambra's Deputy Speakers Orderly

The Anambra state deputy speaker in the state House of Assembly, Hon. Ozo Ughanmadu, has lost the services of his police orderly. The legislator described it as a violent swoop on his car by a group of mobile police men in Awka.

Hon. Ughanmadu who said he was disturbed by the incident which occurred on Monday evening also alleged that the MOPOL 29 Commander, Mr. Evans Ebbe, who led the attack on him, must be after his life.

'I believe there is a plot, my life is in danger but if anything happens to me, there will definitely be crisis because my Awka constituency will not take it kindly with the police in Anambra state,' Hon. Ughanmadu warned.

Narrating his experience, the legislator representing Awka south constituency alleged that he had branched off at a block moulding industry near Quatta area, Awka, on his way from Onitsha when Ebbe led a group of armed MOPOL personnel to cordon off the premises and blocked his car in which he was ridding in company of his police security man, a sergeant.

Ughanmadu further stated that Ebbe ordered his men to arrest the sergeant, Ebbe and some 10 to 12

From Beatrice  
Onuchukwu, in Awka

mobile police men stormed the premises of a block industry where I packed my car. They cordoned off the Enugu-Onitsha expressway, and Ebbe ordered his men to disarm and arrest the sergeant who was my orderly,' he said. And pointing out that the sergeant resisted because he was guarding him.

Ughanmadu who condemned Mr Ebbe's behaviour wondered why he took the sudden decision to withdraw his security aide, advising that the MOPOL officer could have followed a civilised way to execute his plot. Adding that 'Ebbe's action is a disgrace to the police force'.

He maintained that his office merits the service of police security, more so when he did not usurp the services of the policeman who was properly posted to him, adding that he had reported the matter to the MOPOL Unit Commander.

Reacting to the incident, Mr Ebbe argued that the police orderly attached to Hon.

Ughanmadu was not properly dressed which runs counter to the directive from the force headquarters, Abuja. He also denied allegation of the plot to assassinate the deputy speaker.



Miss Fausat Yusuf of Maidugura International School displaying plaque she won in the NAFDAC schools' competition which took place at NICON Hilton Hotel, Abuja...recently. Extreme left is Senator Ben Obi and others at the award ceremony.

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**Chief J. O. Omuya**

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# News Focus

## That Saminaka food tragedy



Dr. Dora Akunyili, NAFDAC boss

Friday, February, 25, 2005 was a tragedy day for the people of Saminaka, headquarters of Lere local government of Kaduna State, when the whole town was thrown into confusion, as a result of the 'pilgrimage' to the Saminaka General Hospital by students of government college Saminaka, after well over 427 of them complained of stomach ache, some few minutes after taking "beans" cooked for them by the school authority for lunch.

As a result, the Kaduna State House of Assembly in a plenary session on March 1, 2005 mandated its committee on education headed by honourable Simon Mathew Gwaza, representing Zangon Kataf constituency to investigate the cause of the unfortunate incident.

The principal of the college, Alhaji Aliyu Shekarau, who spoke with our correspondent, said that on the fateful day, he was just back from the mosque at about 2.40pm when some students came and complained of stomach ache to him.

Alhaji Shekarau said that he immediately rushed the students to the hospital for treatment.

According to him, on his return, he realised that the situation had assumed an alarming proportion with more students complaining of similar ailment.

The principal said that due to the cordial relationship between the school and residents of Saminaka town, many volunteers assisted the school authority in conveying the sick students to the hospital.

He disclosed that those that volunteered included

From Aliyu Haruna, Correspondent (Kaduna)

drivers and private car owners.

One of the Okada-riders who volunteered, Mallam Abubakar Musa, said what the people of Saminaka demonstrated was a sense of oneness and solidarity to students of the college.

But the question that has been bothering people most is, why should students fall sick after having lunch? Is it due to poor hygiene in the school or is it that the bean was cooked before its due date of consumption after it had been preserved with preservative chemicals?

The principal of the college said that the security agencies, the National Agency for Food Drug and Administration and Control (NAFDAC) are yet to ascertain the substance that is contained in the beans consumed by the students.

The principal of the college, Mallam Aliyu Shekarau told the visiting assembly committee members on education that the school authority is unable to buy foodstuff required to feed students at the right time.

According to him, the school spends only N2,500 in buying food stuff for the 750 students per term, due to the fact that the governor Ahmad Muhammad Makarfi-led administration has removed food subsidy to boarding students, adding that such money is not even collected at once as most parents cannot pay the school fees at the same time.

Mallam Shekarau said that due to inadequacy of the fee, he could not cater properly for the students needs; further-



Gov Mohammed Makarfi

cal used in preserving the beans is not the one people in the area are conversant with. The odour of the one in use could as well not be perceived to ascertain that the chemical is still active.

When the committee members questioned some staff who were on duty that fateful day which include Mrs. Abigail Chum, the Kitchen Mistress, Mallam Sadau Garba, Duty Teacher, Mr. Kababa M. Chiroma, the store officer, on whether the beans was properly washed before it was cooked, they told the committee that it was washed adding that they did not perceive any odour.

They also disclosed that the State Security Service (SSS) and the Nigeria police force in the local government have confiscated all the remaining beans.

One of the cooks in the school, Mallam Muhammad Sani, who has been a staff of the school for 28 years told *Daily Trust* that only 4 cooks are available to service the 750 boarding students in the school, two, he said, are on morning duty while two others work afternoon shift, so how would anyone expects quality service, he retorted.

None of the 427 students that fell ill is still in hospital bed. According to the medical director of the Saminaka general hospital Dr. Samuel Kure, out of 427 students 26 were critically ill, 130 were moderately affected, while the rest were mildly affected.

The medical director who commended the efforts of the Saminaka community declared that, what members of the community demonstrated indicate the unity among them, adding that despite the

hospital were exhausted on that fateful day, chemists in the town also helped with drugs to help the situation.

The chairman of Lere local government area, Alhaji Ibrahim Lawal Nuhu said that the council responded immediately the incident occurred.

Alhaji Lawal said that the



Prof. Eytayo Lambo, Health Minister

medical bills of the affected students have been paid, while the council has started providing portable drinking water for the school.

*Daily Trust* findings showed that the college which was established in 1973 is dilapidated, as most classrooms do not have the

required furniture, while the laboratories are without equipment.

The Kaduna State government is faced with the challenge of overhauling the feeding arrangement in all schools by ensuring that adequate funding is provided to prevent reoccurrence.

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# News

## Muslim, Christians must live together - Archbishop

Dr. David L. Windibiri, former Archbishop of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria [LCCN], has said it was a divine purpose that God has created Nigeria with multiple religious and ethnic groups, and that the country should utilise the diversity for its socio-economic, political and religious development.

Dr. Windibiri, who is also the president of the Christian, Muslim Mutual Relationship group, a Non-governmental Association that seeks the promotion of peace among the two dominant religious groups, said during a visit to Bauchi state that some countries are jealous of the diversities inherent in the country.

According to him, the Christian-Muslim mutual relationship group has in the past seven years engaged in the study of how to promote peace amongst the followers of Islam and Christianity and has visited several countries including Indonesia, Denmark, Malaysia and host of other African Countries.

The former Archbishop said that bringing peace to the doors of the followers of both

From Tashikalmah Hallah,  
Correspondent Bauchi

Islam and Christianity is the main objective of the group, stressing that the world needs peace, and it behoves on the leaders and followers of the two religions to promote them.

Dr. Windibiri, who was accompanied by the Chief Imam of the Copenhagen Central Mosque, Denmark, and other members drawn from the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and FOMWAN he also explained that they have visited some states that adopted Sharia legal system, and "we have been asking the people how do they live under the new legal system".

"Your Excellency, we have been to Indonesia, Malaysia, Denmark and other African countries trying to see how these people are living together, so that we can apply it in this country. We have visited so many states that have adopted Sharia, and we have been to Zamfara, and we have been asking people how they have been living under a Sharia State".

"We need peace for our development, and I believe both the leaders and followers of the two religions should come together for the country to

develop and for the development of mankind", the archbishop added.

Responding, Alhaji Ahmadu Adamu Mu'azu, the governor of Bauchi state explained that the visit was timely as it coincides with the state initiative to form inter-religious council to advise government on issues relating to mutual and harmonious relationship between the followers of the two religions.

According to him, Bauchi has witnessed tremendous peace between the followers of the two religions and advised the leaders of the two religions to always have dialogue among themselves, saying that it was only through this that they can arrest whatever differences that may be.

Alhaji Mu'azu, while promising the state government's assistance to the group, however, urged them to visit other states and sensitize the people on the importance of having peace in the county.

Governor Mu'azu stressed that it does not speak well for the image of the country if there were crises emanating from religious difference, saying both Prophet Muhammad (saw) and Jesus Christ lived and died preaching peace.



Governors of Bauchi state, Alhaji Amadu Adamu Muazu and his Taraba counterpart, Rev. Jolly Nyame at the launching of phase II of National Immunisation Programme in Bauchi recently

## Court orders medical attention for Brazilian bank fraud suspect

Former director, Union Bank of Nigeria Plc, Mr. Emmanuel Nwude, who is standing trial over an alleged \$242million US dollars scam in a Brazilian Bank was yesterday ordered to be taken to Radmed medical diagnosis centre for proper diagnosis of his illness.

An Ikeja High Court handed down the order Wednesday to the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and prisons officials in an attempt to forestall the untimely death of the accused person who was said to have been vomiting and urinating blood.

It would be recalled that a number of awaiting trial inmates (ATI) including a lawmaker Mr. Moris Ibekwe have been sent to their untimely grave while awaiting trial.

Specifically, Emmanuel Nwude, Mrs. Amaka Anajemba, Mr. Nzeribe Okoli and three other companies owned by the first accused person Emmanuel Nwude were alleged to have conspired together to defraud a Brazilian Bank to the sum of \$242million.

At the resumed hearing of the case Wednesday, the court restated its earlier order that the first accused person should be immediately taken for proper diagnosis by the EFCC and prison officials to Radmed medical centre on plot 1 Ligali Ayorinde Street Victoria Island.

It was further ordered that

From Adelanwa Bamgboye,  
Correspondent Lagos

Mr. Nwude should be further treated at the Lagos University Technology Hospital LUTH. Where medical doctors were already betting to save his life.

The trial judge also adjourned further hearing till 18th March 2005 in the hope that the accused person would respond well to medical treatment.

Earlier, Mr. Rotimi Jacobs, who led the team of prosecutors informed the court that he had tried all he could to get the suspect to receive proper medical diagnosis in compliance with court earlier orders but did not receive necessary corporation from the defence council.

He informed the court of the letters the prosecutors exchanged with lawyer to the first accused person chief

G.O.K Ajayi SAN, but stressed that the defence counsel were not co-operating with the prosecutors.

In his reply, Chief G.O.K. Ajayi, told the court that it was not right for EFCC and other parties to the case including the (IPO) investigating police officers to fix a time when the first accused person would be taken to medical diagnosis centre ahead of the defence counsel.

"There ought to be consultation and mutual agreement. Even when Rotimi Jacobs came into the matter, he did the same thing the EFCC did. He fixed a time and date and to make things worse he fixed a delay which was totally not a working day (Saturday). I find that totally unacceptable as you can't tell me and my staff to come to work when we ought not" G.O.K Ajayi said.

## Hamani Tijjani: court fixes April 8 for trial

From Adelanwa Bamgboye,  
Correspondent Lagos

Lagos high Court has fixed April 8th this year for trial in the case involving the trans-border robbery King-pin, Hamani Tijjani, who has been charged with armed robbery at the Ikeja Division of the Lagos High Court of Justice.

Hamani Tijjani was alleged to have stolen a Toyota Hilux van with registration number 916 FM which was snatched at gun point June 4, 2003 at Ojodu in Lagos and taken to Cotunou in the Republic of Benin.

But lawyer to the accused person Dr. Tijjani Abayomi, challenged the competence of the Ikeja High Court to entertain the matter.

According to him, the court lacked jurisdiction to hear the case because the accused trans-boarder robbery King-pin, Hamani Tijjan, bought the car from the Republic of Benin.

However, Jehili Sani, state counsel argued that since Ojodu where the vehicle was snatched at gun-point is under the Ikeja magistrate district, the court has power to entertain the matter.

In its ruling Tuesday, the trial judge, Doris Oluwayemi, held that the Ikeja division of the Lagos high court of justice was competent to try the case.

"The court has jurisdiction to try the accused person since the initial crime committed occurred in Ojodu", the court ruled.

## Police nab NURTW members over Iwo crisis

Eight members of National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) are now in police net over their alleged roles in the breakdown of law and order in Iwo Township in Iwo local area of Osun state.

Briefing the press in Osogbo on Wednesday, the commissioner of police Alhaji Audu Abubakar, who also doubles as acting Assistance Inspector General of Police zone eleven, said six persons were seriously wounded in the crisis involving members of NURTW and Road Transport Employers Association of Nigeria (RTEAN) in the ancient town.

The CP explained that members of the two unions engaged themselves on fruitless agitation on the absolute right for use of motors parks in Iwo.

According to Abubakar: "efforts by NURTW members to change the existing system of loading from 1:1 to 2:00 resulted into a breakdown of law and order".

He hinted that all efforts of the traditional rulers of the town, the Oluwo of Iwo to make peace between the two unions failed, adding that the police could not fold its hand and watch disgruntled elements disrupt existing peace in any part of the state.

He said, "the suspects who are NURTW members were arrested for taking the law into their hands by attacking RTEAN members", adding that they would soon be arraigned assault, occasioning arms and riotous act at the

From Bisi Taiwo,  
Stringer Osogbo

The commissioner who said five vehicles were destroyed and buildings destroyed during the mayhem advised hoodlums to have a change mind as police would not allow them to realise their ulterior ambition in any part of the state.

"All the motor unions should desist from taking the law into their own hands. The police will not fold its hands and watch some disgruntled elements destroying the peace of the state in the name of unionism.

The suspects are Mukaila Akande, Alhaji Ganiyu Alabi, Rasaki Ishola, Isiaka Ade, Abdulateef Amubiaya Sule, among others.

## Registration: Oyo gives school teachers 3 months ultimatum

All primary school teachers in Oyo state have been given three months ultimatum by the State Primary Education Board (SPEB) to show evidence of registration with the Teachers Registration Council (TRC) or get sanctioned.

The Teachers Registration Council is the only body established by law for the registration of teachers in Nigeria.

At a press conference in Ibadan on Wednesday, the Executive Chairman of Oyo-SPEB, Prof. Taoheed Adedoja, declared that the board would do everything possible to support the on-going moves to profession-

From Dele Ogunyemi,  
Stringer Ibadan

registration as a member of the Teachers Registration Council (TRC) will be a necessary condition for employment of primary school teachers yet to register with the TRC are advised to do so".

Continuing, he stressed the need for the teaching profession to attract the same ethics and standardization as enjoyed by doctors, nurses, engineers, accountants, lawyers and architects with implications for teachers welfare, professional development and discipline.

In this regard, Professor Adedoja stated, all the 5,000 additional teachers, to be appointed into the state public primary schools are to "un-

## Yobe emulates military over law officers welfare

Although the Yobe state government under the leadership of Governor Bukar Abba Ibrahim though critical of past military governments in the state, depends on the decision of past military governments in the state over the welfare of law officers and judicial officers.

According to a press release signed by the state's commissioner for Home Affairs, Information and Culture,

From Isa Umar Gusau,  
Correspondent Maiduguri

Alhaji Dawa Maigari, on the outcome of the 6th executive council meeting in 2005, the release indicated that the state's executive council, had in 1996, during the regime of the late general Sani Abacha, approved harmonisation of law officers salary structure, which the governor Bukar's administration had now adopted.

The council approved as follows, (1) harmonisation of salaries structure for both law officers and judicial officers in the state with entry point sataric grade level 12(2) as earlier approved by the then Yobe State Executive Council in 1996" the release said.

The council according to the statement had also agreed upon the provision of various allowances such as research, prosecution, judicial, electricity, along with N50,000 as furniture allowance per annum, while the law officers would also enjoy the provision of 30% of their basic salaries per annum as inducement allowance.

The statement said that the decision was based "on the need for the harmonisation, general improvement and enhancement of salaries and condition of service of law officers and judicial officers in the state" promising that

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# News

## PDP chieftain condemns destruction of Sokoto FM station

**A** People's Democratic Party (PDP) Chieftain in Sokoto state, Alhaji Ismaila Mohammed Gobir, has condemned the destruction of the federal government established FM radio studios located in the premises of the Rima River Basin Development Authority in the state capital by Governor Attahiru Bafarawa.

Alhaji Ismaila Gobir who picked quarrel with what he called the 'governor's bellyaching' accused the governor of being responsible for the pulling down of the building which houses the FM studios, simply because of the governor's anger against the decision of the water resources minister to allocate a parcel of land within the Rima River Authority when it became clear that the various attempts to get a land for the FM radio from the state government had been unduly sabotaged by the governor.

Addressing the press in Abuja over the weekend, the PDP chieftain explained that it was when it became clear that the Bafarawa government was unwilling to allocate a land for the FM radio that the water resources minister ordered the Rima River Authority to lease out a land out of its expanse of land to the Radio station.

According to him, the opposition, which the Sokoto governor is known to harbour against the FM station and the open antagonism which he had against it and which were widely known, accounted for the insecurity which the FM station had to contend with, 'which ultimately led to it being destroyed by forces sympathetic to Bafarawa's anti-FM antics.'

Alhaji Ismaila Gobir stated that the people of Sokoto state will cost a lot as a result of the arson committed, and expressed deep regrets that while every state of the federation is enjoying the services of the new FM stations in their states, the people of Sokoto have been denied a competitive choice in a democratic environment. He called for an immediate probe into the circumstances that led to the action and that anybody found to have

By Abdul-Azeez Suleiman,  
News Editor (Weekly Trust)

contributed no matter how remotely should be dealt with accordingly.

Alhaji Gobir was also crossed with the calibre of those chosen by the governor to represent the state at the ongoing political reforms conference, saying that the state has produced illustrious sons and daughters capable of holding out against any body. 'I wonder what the governor intends to achieve by sending nitwits when you have an array of tested, competent and experienced technocrats, ambassadors, politicians, retired military officers and the likes, with only exception of Ambassador Hamza

Ahmadu, whom I know is competent.'

He said that 'any state that has the likes of Alhaji Abubakar Alhaji, Ambassador Shehu Malami Sarkin Sudan, Alhaji Mohammed Arzika Taambuwal, Engr. Bello Suleiman; former minister of power and steel, Engr. Bala Sardaunan Gobir, Senator Ilah Gada, and so many others like them, cannot afford to make do with upstarts, when other states have enlisted their heavy weights to a confab that is as serious as the one taking place in Abuja now. He called for seriousness in matters to do with serious issues so that the state is not short changed in any type of reform that is going to take place in the country.

## Nasarawa woos developers to Karu

**I**n a bid to help ease the pressure on the city centre of Abuja, the Nasarawa state government is wooing private developers and other investors to Karu local government which shares border with the FCT, with offer of generous land concessions to them.

According to a press statement signed by the special assistance (media) to the Nasarawa state governor, Victoria N. Ikeano, the state government in its determination to maximise the benefits of its proximity to Nigeria's seat of power, is giving some special attention to the Karu area with the establishment of the Karu Area Planning and Development Authority (KAPDA) chaired by Dr. Salihu Karshi with Barrister Anthony Akika as managing director.

It had enacted a law creating the greater Karu urban area which spans 40 kilometres from the FCT border towards Keffi, KAPDA's mandate is to transform the area into a modern, well developed settlement in accordance with its master plan as a corridor of Abuja.

Nasarawa state is the nearest neighbour to the FCT and about two thirds of the FCT border zone lie in the state. The

state government had also signed a memorandum of understanding with the then FCT minister now chairman of the Federal Capital Development Authority, Mallam Nasir el-Rufai, for an orderly development of the satellite town.

The former US president, Bill Clinton, and head of the commonwealth, Queen Elizabeth II, were hosted by the Nasarawa state government in Karu local government when they visited Nigeria. According to Governor Abdullahi Adamu, Karu 'should be what Virginia is to Washington D.C.'

The World Bank is undertaking an urban renewal project in the area while the state government has also put up a number of social facilities to cater to the needs of the growing population of Karu. These include an international market, specialist hospital and international model school while an international cultural centre and golf course are in the pipeline.

The state government is also asking for special attention from the federal authorities to enable it meet the rising demands of the Karu area which is rated by the World Bank as one of the fastest growing settlements in the world, with a yearly population growth rate of 40 per cent.

## NOA boss hinges development on utilisation of youth's potentials

**T**he director-general of the National Orientation Agency, Alhaji Idi Mohammed Faruk, has hinged the political and socio-economic development of any country on effective harnessing and utilisation of the potentials of its youths.

Alhaji Faruk made this remark recently in Abuja on the occasion of the award ceremony organised by the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) for national and zonal winners of the agency's consumer safety club competition. He described the youths as the pilot around which development and positive changes resolves.

According to Alhaji Faruk,

By Sunday Ejike Benjamin,  
Health Reporter

the country has lost both material and human resources as a result of the problems of fake and adulterated drugs, stressing the need for concerted efforts to save Nigerians, especially the youth from further harm.

He charged Nigerian youths to desist from using ill-gotten wealth as a yardstick for measuring human achievement in life, pointing out that, 'human achievements should be judged by moral values like contributions to knowledge, human development and legitimate acquisition of wealth for the benefit of the country.'

The NOA boss further advised the youths to cosy only good ways of life from the current players in the polity and economy of the country, and called on them (youths) to always uphold the tenets of good work ethics and moral uprightness in public and private life.

Youths in higher institutions of learning, he noted, should through coordinated and responsible union and clubs activities, develop nationalist and democratic principles of focus, professionalism, openness and probity in dealing with national and other issues rather than engaging in cultism and other vices on campus.

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# Inside Politics

## THE PLACE OF MORALITY IN POLITICAL REFORMS:

### Morality And Quest For An Enduring Political Culture In Nigeria

Response To President Obasanjo Address At The Inauguration Of The National Political Reform Conference On The 21st February 2005

#### Introduction

The opportunity we have today in this conference is a rare one in the political evolution of our nation. The world itself is witnessing this epochal making event in this great country of ours. As members and participants in this threshold of history therefore, we are accountable not only to the Almighty God but also to our fellow Nigerians who put their trust and faith in our ability to come out with solutions that would strengthen bonds of unity, consolidate democracy, promote good governance and responsive leadership.

#### Good times of political morality

Historically speaking, high-level morality laden with constructive ethics and productive value system was inherent in the leadership personality of the first republic. Late Sardama Ahmadu Bello, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Chief Nnamdi Azikiwe, Alh. Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Alh. Raji Abdallah, Alh. Abdulmaleek Atta etc. are few examples of those whose conduct of political morality was legend, instructive and inspiring, that explain in part why they could work together, formed developmental alliances, trained the then younger generation and gave position of trust and responsibility to wider spectrum of the social system with little consideration to ethnic and religious background.

For this very productive principle, the first generation was able to achieve in terms of human and leadership development, communal economic and material accumulation, positive socio-cultural habitation and wide-scale political networking.

These achievements were both cultural and physical. They held power, authority and influence as trust from the people (old, young, sick, handicapped, minority and majority). This was despite the fact that they were in different political parties and in some cases had diametrically opposed ideological callings. Yet, they bequeathed high level of political morality to those who took over the political landscape.

#### Decline of political morality

Several factors are responsible for the lost of morality in politics and the body polity of Nigeria. Several years of excruciating military rules, most of who were tyrannical and demonic has impeded the flourishing moral values of all facets of the Nigerian system. Also, emphasis on money and material well being over social

By Engr. Yusuf Ahmed Onogoh

engineering as basis of social relation and political relevance helped to desecrate the societal morals. In addition, majoritarian overrule of the polity. This last one impoverished the minority rights, eroded social liberties and created poverty. Thus the mass people of Nigeria are driven into frustration and the resultant social tension, youth restiveness and general insecurity.

#### Bad times for political morality

It is saddening that the old generation refused, failed and was unable to pass to the younger generation an enduring moral value system and attitudinal requirements needed to move our country to greatness, and all legacies bequeathed to them were completely destroyed in the pursuit of inordinate, personal and selfish economic and political interests. If you permit me Mr. chairman to aggregate the level of our moral value content now, the unfortunate truth is that we have twenty percent moral value content that is what is handed down to the present generation.

Paradoxically, the current political leaders have thrown away these moral fibres to the winds. We cannot see morality in their conduct of political and socio-economic affairs. The mainstream political leadership, I am sorry to say is avaricious, greedy and ethnicised. The



Engr. Yusuf Ahmed Onogoh

scheme of things exclusively at the expense of others. Today, Ladies and Gentlemen, we are inundated with self-styled leaders who divert opportunities meant for their constituencies to themselves first, then their wives, then their children, then their in-laws and their kinsmen in that order, irrespective of merits, appropriate qualifications and communal considerations. In this kind of situation, an otherwise meaningful enterprise and indeed energies are diverted to achieve highly selfish, diabolical and grossly perverted interest.

#### Political morality and the president speech

is not essential for nations to possess vast areas of economic and political prosperity, if it is not accompanied with the necessary attitudinal prerequisites, thus if the morality of a nation becomes corrupt, that nation will eventually vanish.

Whatever political reforms this conference may eventually come out with will require a corresponding moral and attitudinal reform of the people to work it successfully. Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. President via this gathering of eminent Nigerians has provided us the opportunity to dialogue, discuss and discourse on the sensitive issue of morality in

conceive, organize structure and practice politics in our country on the basis of enduring principles". Certainly Mr. President as a father of the nation who is well known to be concerned with the people and affairs of the country, know too well that enduring principles of politics can only be achieved by exhibiting and upholding high level of political moral credentials. Mr. President adduced to this in the page (17) of his address when he urged the delegate to "build and uplift, enhance and strengthen, nurture and cultivate the best, most enduring, most ideal and lasting values that are central to our national growth, development and progress".

#### Political morality and the new Nigeria

There is nothing fundamentally wrong with our political system albeit there is need for some adjustments to suit the peculiarity of our nature and exigencies of the global political socio-economic trends; it is lack of the basic moral and attitudinal will-power to work it and be faithful to its tenets that make it seem unworkable and a corrupt system.

To succeed as a nation the psyche and attitudinal orientation of the people needs complete overhauling, reprogramming, rejuvenation and redirection. There is need therefore to embark on intensive and holistic attitudinal reforms peripersona with political reforms.

In line with the above, the delegates should set high moral principles of politics in the country. It is now or

peaceful, harmonious and prosperous future for every Nigerian"? The choice is theirs; my generation has chosen that of the image of Mr. President.

#### Creation of political morality sub-committee

Chairman and distinguished delegates, in discussing the issues of constitutionalism and constitutional reforms, political activism and political party reforms, responsible and focused leadership, credible elections, separation of power between the various tiers of government and those of nationality and citizenship, identity and social obligation, freedom and liberties, gender equality and youth empowerment, we should be guided by the larger than life principle of morality ethics and standard of action. This important conference must saddle a section of itself sub-committee with the responsibility of properly articulating and designing both the philosophy and application of morality in our political system and beyond.

#### Entrenchment of political morality in new Nigeria

We would have laid a solid legacy in our national polity for future generation if we boldly entrench political morality in all facets of our national life.

1: This noble crusade first offensive attack should be launched and targeted at youths, political morality and nationalism should be taught at post primary and tertiary institutions in the country.

2: The principle of political morality should be entrenched in the fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy in the constitution.

3: All political parties should have political morality entrenched in various forms in their ideological documents, policy formulation mechanisms, objectives, regulations and manifestoes etc.

4: There should exist some forms of legal, political and social sanctions for non compliance with this principle there should also exist in some symbolic form a reward system to encourage the faithful adherents of this principle.

5: In all our political institutions, political morality committee should be established to cultivate, nurture and propagate this crusade, necessarily such committee should have some form legal sanctioning powers to deal with erring members, this is very important in political parties structures to discourage party members from thuggery, money politics, dubious manipulations, electoral frauds etc. Thank you.

Engr. Yusuf Ahmed Onogoh  
Delegate  
Kogi State and Nigeria  
Youth Organisation

**"It is not essential for nations to possess vast areas of economic and political prosperity, if it is not accompanied with the necessary attitudinal prerequisites, thus if the morality of a nation becomes corrupt, that nation will eventually vanish.**

**Whatever political reforms this conference may eventually come out with will require a corresponding moral and attitudinal reform of the people to work it successfully. Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. President via this gathering of eminent Nigerians has provided us the opportunity to dialogue, discuss and discourse on the sensitive issue of morality in party formation and ownership~ campaign and elections and public affairs. This conference should insist on the minimum standards of morality in politicking"**

current leaders may not bequeath anything to the incoming generation except insidious manipulation, selfish aggrandizement, and kleptomonic debauchery. They have introduced deep and grandiose thuggery, political assassinations, corrosive money politics etc. all because they must be relevant in the power equation and political

There is a vital theme in the president's speech and that is POLITICAL MORALITY and ATTITUDINAL REFORMS. You will agree with me Mr. Chairman that if the members of a society anywhere lack good morals and attitudes, they will be unable to reach excellence regardless of how much freedom, economic and political rights they enjoy. It

party formation and ownership~ campaign and elections and public affairs. This conference should insist on the minimum standards of morality in politicking. Mr. President is well intended when he stated on page 17 of his address of 21st February 2005 that the conference "is designed to consolidate, solidify, and give more life to how we

never. The elder statesmen among our fathers and us should reflect on what kind of Nigeria they would want to leave behind to the incoming generation. Is it the type that would glorify thuggery, political assassination, dubious manipulation, and Ghana must go politics, or a country in which Mr. President envisaged "a state,

# Inside Politics

## 2007: I am not fronting for anybody - Marwa

Although he has not publicly declared what he actually wants, General Buba Marwa leaves no one in doubt that he has his eyes set on something big. In this interview with our Kaduna Zonal Editor, Sani Babadoko, the former military governor of Borno and Lagos States, Brigadier General Muhammadu Buba Marwa (rtd.) spoke on several national issues especially his much-talked about presidential ambition come 2007. Excerpts.

**C**an you debunk the allegation making the rounds that you are just flying a kite over your speculated presidential ambition?

Flying a kite, how? As I have said I have been moving around the country holding consultations to see and hear for myself, how Nigerians truly feel, what they believe in. I could not be doing that publicly: if I do not believe in what I was doing. At my age and my background and pedigree it is completely out of the question to think at this point in my life I will be a tool to someone else. I hope that answers the question.

**Civilians have been grumbling that the military is still trying to monopolise power. That aside what can we place, presently as Marwa's Political ideology?**

It must be very clear that Nigeria belong to all of us. The constitution, surely does not ban any professional, not those in active service, as far as the armed forces is concerned from politics. We all can contest for public offices. Whether, we are engineers, lawyers doctors, journalists or former service personnel. Whoever is in service is intrinsically a civilian because no body serves forever. First, you are a civilian then you join the service and after the service you go back but you carry along with you the ingredients that you are nurtured with throughout the service, in our case we were once in service. In other words, in addition to whatever else, you do it as a human being, you take along you first, the Leadership qualities that is part of your training and your life in the military, as an officer, you take along the discipline, you take along with you the patriotism. There is no profession throughout history of mankind that stood out in sacrifice and mobility as the military. If you go out through history you discover it is the military that has ultimately been the guarantor of state security. All the invasions and wars over time, the preservation of the state, the family system, the villages, the hamlets, your wives, your children, go to school go to the market then do the normal thing, the military has been that arm of

the state that has been protecting those core values of life and existence of the state. And it is for this reason that in other civilized societies, its becomes a problem if you are seeking higher political office of the type we are talking about and your background is not military.

Look at for instance, the British monarchy, the princes, they put them first in military service. There is no profession known to man in which a fellow human being like yourself with one head, two eyes and two limbs, will issue a command to you to go and face fire and you know that you may not come back alive but you turn in that direction and actually face it. So, we must recognize these things and give the due to the military. And so, if you served your bit, and in retirement you are capable of, or you've been requested to serve in a higher capacity, you have the moral right to stand up and take the challenge. That is one angle to it. Add to it, a retired military who has in fact been tested in public service, in other words, he is not coming in fresh, but has actually done it before and creditably and you can further add to it the intellectual dimension. Where for instance, I personally, read Public Administration in probably the best place you could ever read it. The Kenne School of Government, of Harvard University you cannot point to an institution better than it on earth. If we put all these together and look at it properly you will find out there is merit in the military. So, it is not a usurpation. It is the right thing to do.

**Where then do you place Marwa's political ideology?**

In terms of rulership, governance... Whatever attributes I may possess, whatever thoughts I would have on governance, definitely they would be shaped by my inner self. And that is really the bottom line. It is the person. The question was asked of me in one of the interactive sessions, about the military. And I said now, I run an airline, if I pick any of you and give you a uniform of a captain, the cap and the wing and you are dressed as a pilot to Albarka Airline and I tell you fly the plane. You



Gen. Buba Marwa (rtd.)

cannot is not it? It is' the person and you will find out that is what shows through, in public service. And the constitution spelt out the purpose of governance which is, in a nutshell to facilitate, public welfare and essentially to make people happy. People have a right to be happy, which 'ever way you define happiness. And the role of government is to facilitate that. And that is how I looked at it also. It is for this reason that even; when I served in the public office, when we were not bound solely by the constitution I still put that in the forefront of my dealings, which is to make the people happy.

How do you make them happy? By providing for their welfare. How do you provide for their welfare, by doing things you are supposed to do in terms of their existence facilitate their livelihood, the health care, schooling, the infrastructure, sanitation, all aspects of their well being. That will continue to be the way I will look at the future.

**You were once governor of Lagos and Borno states, and you held other public positions too. Today people are clamoring for you to take a shot at the presidency. With all the problems facing the nation today do you think you can make the difference if you become the president in 2007?**

The President is laying a solid foundation. It has not been easy and it will never be easy.

When you meet a wall painted white and that is darkened, it will require several coats of paints for it to begin to shine through. That is exactly the situation that we are in. It is a tough foundation, he said it himself but it is not easy, but it can be done. And I am saying that, in answering your question, all it takes is for a sincere and committed patriot who has the fear of God and a strong sense of

justice, fair-play and equity to get the job done. Yes, it can be done. That is my answer.

**The military seems to have taken over the polity by way of producing the leadership under a democratic setting and even the President, today seemed not to be performing and Nigerians are not happy. What is your reaction?**

Obasanjo of today is not the same as Obasanjo of yesterday. Yesterday he was in military President, unelected and so, he was a dictator then, as we all were. I was not elected to serve in Lagos. So, that appellation will apply to me also. But, today he is a democrat.

That is the fact of the matter. He didn't just walk into the villa. Now, to the question of happiness. That is another issue altogether.

**Are they happy with the situation on ground?**

I would not say Nigerians are unhappy. There are people among them who are happy. And I would not say all Nigerian's are 'happy because there are those that are unhappy the only thing I discovered and I will continue to say is the need for patience and they should pray for our leaders.

**You have reigned so much**

**praise on the military as if it was not under them that some of the most horrendous crimes took place which led to the collapse of the nation's economy..**

First of all get what I said, I did not say the military should spearhead... but I said they are qualified without question. I did not also say they are not human beings, and there are no perfect human beings. When I went to. Benue, I went with a gentleman called Colonel Maka, he was a military administrator then. It was acclamation everywhere. He was a military man; when I went to Kogi, I went with Colonel Zegu Lasa Afakriya; it was also acclamation everywhere. When I went to Akwa Ibom, I went with Colonel Bako, it was acclamation everywhere. So, I am not saying that we don't have in society those who did not do well and at the same time we had those who did extremely well. So, if I tell you to go to Lagos, where I served to bring out the horrendous things that I did there, I can challenge you, you will have difficulty finding one. So, we are saying that the refineries, power stations, express ways, flyovers, international

airports, the sea ports, Tin Can and so on is the handiwork of the military. The creation of states, local governments and so on. I am not saying that the military has not done some of those things, but they did some good things.

For now, you have some bigwigs coming out for the 2007 presidency. People like General Babangida, Atiku and others. Are you scared facing these people in political contest?

No, I am not. Am I supposed to be? Even though we read in the papers of the interests of several Nigerians, I am not because we all know that ultimately it is the Almighty God that will place the person He desires. You know President Obasanjo, even for people who worship- stones and idols, they know, that there was an unseen hand, looking at how he emerged through the prison... and at the gallows actually, because it was firing squad initially, then: it kept changing to life sentence, then some years after pardon and then he became President, so, anybody who has his faith and trust in the Almighty God will not be afraid.



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# Sports

## Champions League shows changing face of English game

Manchester United claimed a Champions League-led treble in 1999 and Arsenal went unbeaten in the Premier League last season.

Yet it is Chelsea and Liverpool who carry English hopes into the Champions League last eight, not the two clubs who have won the league title for the past nine seasons.

The balance of power has shifted perceptibly this season with Arsenal unable to impose their free-flowing game on Europe and United failing to recapture their former glories as they rebuild.

Chelsea, with the League Cup under their belt and eight points clear in the Premier League, have shown money can buy success. They are the new kings of English soccer.

United were undone by AC Milan over two legs to whimper out 2-0 on aggregate on Tuesday as Chelsea were wowing Europe with a breathless victory after a 5-4 aggregate duel with Barcelona.

Liverpool sauntered past Bayer Leverkusen 6-2 on aggregate while Arsenal again failed to work out the Champions League puzzle and bowed out 3-2 overall to Bayern Munich.

Chelsea always looked most likely to achieve Champions League success under new coach Jose Mourinho, who took Porto to the trophy in Gelsenkirchen last May.

The London sides were well set to reach last season's final before some bizarre substitutions by former manager Claudio Ranieri in the semi-final with Monaco.

Buoyed by Russian billionaire Roman Abramovich's spending,

Chelsea had already dispatched city rivals Arsenal in the quarters, the furthest Arsene Wenger's side have progressed in the Champions League.

The key to Arsenal's superb run of 49 league games unbeaten was an unflinching backline of keeper Jens Lehmann and defenders Sol Campbell, Kolo Toure, Ashley Cole and Lauren.

However, injury to England centre back Campbell has rocked the team and his absence led to Toure making uncharacteristic mistakes in the 3-1 first leg defeat in Munich.

The midfield has also been disrupted badly by injury but too many of Arsenal's players have gone off the boil and they rely too heavily on striker Thierry Henry for goals and inspiration.

Wenger's decision to rotate Lehmann and Spaniard Manuel Almunia has added to the spluttering and goalkeeping dilemmas have also been central to United's struggles this term.

Alex Ferguson stuck by Roy Carroll after a number of blunders but lost patience when he gifted Milan's on-loan Chelsea striker Hernan Crespo the only goal in the first leg.

"It was always going to be a difficult game, that goal at Old Trafford was a killer for us," Ferguson said after the second match in Milan.

United's semi-final defeat to Leverkusen in 2002 is their best return for their Champions League exertions since winning the trophy six years ago.

Ferguson said before the San Siro clash that his current crop was better than 1999's treble winners but until Wayne Rooney and Cristiano Ronaldo contribute regularly on the big European

occasions, United may continue to struggle.

"I think the difference between us was the greater experience of AC Milan," Ferguson conceded.

Chelsea by contrast bought proven class rather than potential when they recruited striker

Didier Drogba, and winger Arjen Robben from under United's nose at PSV Eindhoven.

They are now poised for their first title in 50 years.

Liverpool are far adrift in the Premier League and a one-man show from Steven Gerrard against Olympiakos in the group

stage put Rafael Benitez's side into the last 16 before they easily overcame an average Leverkusen side.

The four-times European champions' progress this season in the Champions League has been achieved without cup-tied former Real Madrid striker

Fernando Morientes and injured midfielder Xabi Alonso.

Benitez's blend of Spanish guile with English heart is still at the mixing stage and against better opponents they may be found wanting.

However, unlike United and Arsenal, they are through.

## Wenger faces rebuilding task at Arsenal

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger may have little option other than to overhaul his squad after their latest demoralising Champions League exit.

Despite a decade of unprecedented achievements in domestic soccer, the London side have never progressed beyond the quarter-finals of Europe's elite

competition and this year failed to clear the last 16 after their 3-2 aggregate defeat by Bayern Munich.

The unpalatable truth for the English champions is that their world class French players, captain Patrick Vieira, striker Thierry Henry and midfielder Robert Pires, have proved unable to compensate for the team's

defensive weaknesses in Europe.

Asked if he felt the need to rebuild after Wednesday's 1-0 Highbury win over the Germans proved insufficient to overturn a 3-1 first leg deficit, Wenger looked nonplussed.

"It's difficult to say now," the Frenchman said. "I would not like to criticise my players because over the years they have

performed consistently.

"We are not good enough to win the European Cup. I can't say it's not true because we have never won it.

"Do you really think there is a secret? At this club we have never won it but if you look across Europe, Barcelona is a massive club but they only won it once in their history.

"We have some good ingredients but that does not mean we have a perfect team at the moment to win the Champions League."

Arsenal will be immensely disappointed that Saturday's FA Cup quarter-final at Bolton Wanderers now represents their only realistic chance of silverware this season.

"I am not in the seat here to come out of every season and not win trophies," said Wenger. "It is always a big disappointment not to win a trophy but even the championship is not over mathematically."

Third-placed Arsenal are 10 points adrift of Chelsea with only nine games left to Chelsea's 10.

Bayern Munich, the most recent of whose four European Cup wins came in 2001, have no such worries.

The ruthlessness they displayed over the two legs against Arsenal suggests they could go all the way and coach Felix Magath knows it.

"A team who beats Arsenal can beat anyone in Europe," he said. "We can win the Champions League. Let's see who we play against next.

"A few real big boys have been knocked out already so the situation this year is quite favourable."



Arsenal's captain Dennis Bergkamp, right, tackles Bayern Munich's Hasan Salihamidzic during their second leg Champions League match at the Highbury in London.

## Capello goes wild with delight

Juventus coach Fabio Capello raced to the tunnel screaming with delight after his team overturned a 1-0 deficit to knock Real Madrid out of the Champions League 2-1 on aggregate on Wednesday.

A second half strike from David Trezeguet took the game into extra-time and four minutes from the end Uruguayan Marcelo Zalayeta pounced on a loose ball to fire home the winner.

Capello is normally one of the most reserved coaches in Serie A but the win against his former club, which took Juventus into the quarter-finals, saw him wildly celebrating as he charged to the dressing room.

"It is never an easy business defeating Real Madrid and so that was a special feeling," said Capello. "I think it is the first time I have celebrated like that but now I've done it, I'd like to try it again."

"It was a very tough game for both teams. We played well and gave them very few chances. It was really an excellent performance from us. We gave away little and were also dangerous, which hasn't always been the case of late," added the Juve coach.

"It's a great result for us, to come back from a 1-0 defeat in Madrid and turn it around here was always going to be difficult. But we played with intelligence,

spirit and quality."

Capello gave particular credit to Gianluca Pessotto, standing in for the injured Pavel Nedved on the left and Zalayeta who started in place of Trezeguet, who was returning from illness.

"They are important players for the team because they work hard and seriously in training so that when they are called upon they are always ready," he said.

Real coach Vanderlei Luxemburgo said there had been little to choose between the teams. "It was tight throughout and it was the kind of match that we could have won and gone through," he said.

However Capello said that Juve had posed problems for Real with their direct approach.

"They were up against a team that didn't let them play as they wanted to. When we got the ball we got it forward as quickly as possible and that is what caused them problems," he said.

Luxemburgo defended his decision to take off Zinedine Zidane late in the second half, leaving Real without the former Juve man who had been their main threat.

"Zidane had a problem at the start of the game and it got progressively worse but it was a tactical decision," said Luxemburgo who brought Guti on shortly before Trezeguet's goal.

## Lyon raise ambitions, eye European glory

Hard work, patience and the incredibly good fortune of being in the right place at the right time is paying off for Olympique Lyon who are transforming their image of European also-rans this season.

As well as re-writing the record books in France where they are on course for a fourth successive title, they are also setting new standards in the Champions League and their 10-2 aggregate victory over Werder Bremen in the first knockout stage has given them the highest scoring average in the competition's history.

Their 27 goals in their eight matches to date works out at an average of 3.38 per match — and it is no exaggeration to say that none of Europe's traditional, powerful clubs want to be paired with them when the quarter-finals draw is made on March 18.

Their 7-2 second leg victory over the German champions on Tuesday was the second highest in the

competition's history and was their sixth win in the eight games they have played.

"The match against Bremen was certainly the best we have ever played in the Champions League," said club chairman Jean-Michel Aulas afterwards.

"The team was simply outstanding. The players were fast, smart and efficient. Many other teams came make it to the final but I think that we have an advantage over the others: we have never won this tournament.

"It will give us some extra-motivation and it will help us to do our best when we need it."

Goalkeeper Gregory Coupet was similarly upbeat: "It was Werder Bremen we beat, not a second rank team. We scored 10 goals against the German champions and this means something to me."

Impressive on the European stage, Lyon are however in a class of their own in the French championship.

As well as benefiting from

Champions League revenue, what Lyon are also now experiencing is the outcome of a long and slow process ignited when Aulas, backed by Olympique Marseille's former boss Bernard Tapie, was named chairman of the club in 1987. Aulas, 55, the CEO of a French leading software company of 3,000 employees, has run Olympique Lyon like a business.

He first guided them out of the second division in 1989 and worked tirelessly over a decade towards a single aim — the domestic title.

After finishing third in 1999 and 2000 and second in 2001, Lyon were eventually crowned champions in 2002 for the first time in their relatively short 52-year history.

It was a turning point. Aulas decided however to replace departing coach Jacques Santini with Le Guen, a shrewd decision.

Le Guen, who was only 38 at the time, had learned the job for three seasons at Stade Rennes and had extensive experience both of the Euro-

pean and French league scenes.

A player with Brest, Nantes, and Paris St Germain, he helped PSG win the French title in 1994, the European Cup Winners' Cup in 1996 and three French cups in 1993, 1995 and 1998.

He also earned 17 caps for France between 1993 and 1995 and just 10 years on from his last international appearance, is now enjoying great success as arguably France's top domestic coach.

Since his appointment in 2002 Lyon have won the 2003 and 2004 titles with the club's budget increasing to 100 million euros, and apart from the acquisition of several high profile foreigners like Brazilians Juninho Pernambucano and Cris, Ghanian Mickael Essien and Malian Mahamadou Diarra, the bulk of the team is now French.

France's national team of course dominated the world and European stages for many years but no French team has ever established itself as a dominant force in European soccer.

# Sports

## Stoudemire shines as Suns eclipse Spurs

A mare Stoudemire poured in 44 points and Shawn Marion added 18 points and 17 rebounds to help the Phoenix Suns defeat the San Antonio Spurs 107-101 in a battle of the NBA's two best teams Wednesday.

Steve Nash contributed 11 points and 15 assists as the Suns delighted the home crowd by moving into a tie with the Spurs at the top of the standings with identical 47-14 records.

Tony Parker grabbed a season-high 30 points for the Spurs, who were missing All-Stars Tim Duncan and Manu Ginobili because of injury.

San Antonio provided the Suns with a stern test, though, closing to 103-98 with 1:20 to play.

In Boston, Antoine Walker picked up 15 points and nine rebounds to guide the Celtics to a 95-91 win over his former team, the Atlanta Hawks.

Walker, acquired at the trade deadline from last-place Atlanta, also made two important defensive plays late in the game as the

Hawks suffered their 23rd consecutive road defeat.

Paul Pierce led the Celtics in scoring with 27 points and 10 rebounds and Ricky Davis added 21 points.

In Auburn Hills, Tayshaun Prince and Antonio McDyess each notched 20 points and Ben

Wallace collected 16 rebounds as the NBA champion Detroit Pistons overcame the Golden State Warriors 92-88 to snap a three-game losing skid.

Baron Davis had 21 points for the Warriors.

In New Orleans, Jason Kidd hit a driving lay-up and a free

throw with three seconds overtime to lift the New York Nets to an 86-85 victory over the Hornets.

Kidd finished the night with 15 points, nine assists and seven rebounds while Vince Carter claimed 24 points and 10 rebounds as the Nets ended a three-game losing streak.

In Toronto, the Raptors had seven players in double figures led by a 15-point, 15-rebound performance from Chris Bosh to ease past the Orlando Magic 106-96.

Morris Peterson and Rafer Alston contributed 16 points each to Toronto's balanced attack.

Steve Francis had a game-high 27 points for the Magic. Hedo Turkoglu added 21 and rookie Dwight Howard chipped in with 17 points and 20 rebounds.

## 2012 Olympics: Paris under the microscope

Olympic inspectors met Paris city officials on Wednesday to begin assessing the French capital's bid to host the 2012 Games with transport a key issue ahead of strikes on Thursday expected to cause travel chaos.

"It was a long day," Paris Mayor Bertrand Delanoë said after the meeting on the first day of the inspectors' four-day visit. "It was an intelligent, rigorous

exchange." The International Olympic Committee's 13-strong evaluation commission has already visited Paris's rivals Madrid, London and New York and will visit Moscow next week.

Of the five contenders, Paris is widely regarded as the favourite to host the Games, but strikes planned for Thursday were set to highlight France's restive streak.

"We would have preferred a better advertisement for the candidacy. Obviously," Sports Minister Jean-Francois Lamour said in an interview to run in Thursday's Le Figaro newspaper.

All the leading unions have called for a day of strikes and demonstrations throughout the country to demand pay rises and to protest against changes to the 35-hour working week.

But Paris campaigners say

demonstrations will not spoil the city's image because their bid's main strength is the fact that up to 90 percent of the infrastructure, stadiums, public transport and buildings is already in place.

Organisers have spent the last few weeks decorating hundreds of buses, buildings and lamp-posts with Paris's "Love of the Games" logo. Dozens of volunteers are ready to help organise the inspectors' visit.

Paris was unsuccessful in bidding for the 1992 and 2008 Olympics and has not hosted the Games since 1924.

If successful this time round, officials anticipate the creation of 50,000 jobs and an injection of some 35 billion euros (\$46.82 billion) into the economy between 2005 and 2012.

The IOC will announce the winning city on July 6 at its session in Singapore.

## Trust Classified

### LOSS OF DOCUMENTS

This is to inform the general public that the document belonging to O. O. Olayinka of Plot No. C73 of about 1020m2 at Nyanya Phase IV Commercial Layout got missing. Please if found, return to AMAC Zonal planning Office Area 10 Garki Abuja.

Signed  
John Ishaya

### LOSS OF DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public that the Original Certificate of Occupancy/Allocation Letter of House No. 38, 13 Cerscent Phase II Kado Estate allocated to Mohammed Bashir is declared missing. All effort to trace the above document proved abortive. If found please contact Mohammed life Camp Police Station or the said House.

Signed  
Bashir Mohammed

### LOSS OF CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY

This is to inform the general public that the Certificate of Occupancy No. FCT/ABU/DT: 670 issued by the Ministry of Federal Capital Territory in favour of IGNATIUS IGBOANUA is missing. If found please contact the undersigned or AGIS Office at plot 416 Kumasi Crescent Wuse II, Abuja.

Signed  
Emeka Okpala Esq.  
SOLICITOR  
MISKOM PUEPET & CO  
Suites 2/3 Silla Zeka Plaza, Plot 444 Utako District, Abuja

### FIRE INCIDENT. LOSS OF PROPERTY AND DOCUMENTS

This is to inform the general public that in October 19<sup>th</sup> 2004 there was a fire out brake which destroyed our family house which resulted in the loss of the Original Certificates of Occupancy of the following: Plot 225 Wuse Zone 6 Abuja with File No. FCT/54, No.22 Kashim Ibrahim Road old GRA Makurdi, No 50 Bank Road Makurdi and Rahama Hotel Complex No. 3 Peter Achimugu Avenue, Makurdi, Benue State issued by Ministry of FCT and Ministry of Lands and Survey, Makurdi, Benue State respectively.

This publication is also to enable me apply to FCDA/AGIS and Ministry of Lands & Survey Makurdi, Benue State for a re-issuance of Certified True Copy. The above mentioned organisations should please note.

Signed  
Abubakar Hassan Nalaraba

### LOSS OF ALLOCATION LETTER

This is to inform the general public that the Original Copy of Allocation Letter of Plot No. MFCT/ZC (AMAC) LUE/3937, Plot No. 3937 of about 1,200m2 at Lugbe 1 Extension, Abuja, belonging to Mr. Rabiu D. Daura 'M' Health Department Abuja, Municipal Area Council Abuja got missing. All effort to trace the said document proved abortive. If found contact Rabiu D. Daura, or Tijjani Ado Abuja Municipal Area Council, Health Dept. 08055241615.

Signed  
Rebi'u Daura

### LOSS OF CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY

This is to inform the general public that the Original Certificate of Occupancy, No. FCT/ABU/BA 1024, of Plot No. 1638, Cadastral Zone A4 Asokoro Abuja, belonging to Alhaji Abdulkadir Ahmed, whose address is Central Bank of Nigeria, P.M.B 12194, Tinubu Square, Lagos. If found please contact Alhaji Abdulkadir Ahmed,

Signed  
A. A. Ahmed  
24B Yahaya Road Kaduna  
08034528573

### GOD'S PRESENCE BIBLE MINISTRIES, ASABA, DELTA STATE

This is to inform the general public that the above named CHURCH has applied for registration to the Corporate Affairs commission under part 'C' of the companies and allied matters Decree of 1990.

The Trustees are:

1. Pastor David Ajodo
2. Pastor Samuel Egwuemi
3. Deacon Mathew Ubalu
4. Sister Janet Ajodo

Any objection to this registration should be forwarded to the Registrar General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse zone 5, Abuja. Within 28 days of this publication.

Signed  
Okui. Ogaji & Associates  
Plot 487, Adetokunbo Ademola Crescent, Wuse II, Abuja

### AFRICAN UNITED SOCIAL CLUB OF NIGERIA

This is to inform the general public that the above named CLUB has applied for registration to the Corporate Affairs commission under part 'C' of the companies and allied matters Decree of 1990.

The Trustees are:

1. Alh. Tijjani Baba
2. Alh. Saidu Usman Hassan
3. Alh. Abubakar Bilal Musa
4. Alh. Suleiman Ahmed

Any objection to this registration should be forwarded to the Registrar General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse zone 5, Abuja. Within 28 days of this publication.

Signed  
SECRETARY

### WORLD ACTION ON HEALTH CARE DEV. IN AFRICA

This is to inform the general public that the above named BODY has applied for registration to the Corporate Affairs commission under part 'C' of the companies and allied matters Decree of 1990.

The Trustees are:

1. Abdulrazaq Salihu
2. Hussaina Danjuma
3. Ayuba Dauda
4. Abdulfatah Salihu

Any objection to this registration should be forwarded to the Registrar General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse zone 5, Abuja. Within 28 days of this publication.

Signed  
SECRETARY

### HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION FOR PREGNANT WOMEN

This is to inform the general public that the above named BODY has applied for registration to the Corporate Affairs commission under part 'C' of the companies and allied matters Decree of 1990.

The Trustees are:

1. Aisha Naidi
2. Mrs. Irene Oforah
3. Mallam Ahmad Shehu Sani
4. Barrister Bernard Oru Nnandi
5. Mr. Zack Awa Kekong
6. Mrs. Bridget Ene Oru
7. Dr. Mrs Fatima Yusuf

Any objection to this registration should be forwarded to the Registrar General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse zone 5, Abuja. Within 28 days of this publication.

Signed  
SECRETARY

### CHANGE OF NAMES

I, formerly known as LAWAL ALIYU MOHAMMED, now wish to be addressed as LAWAL ADAMU. All former documents remain valid. General public to note.

I, formerly known as LAWALA. MAILAFIYA, now wish to be called ISYAKU AHMAD MAILAFIYA. Kaduna South Local Govt. to note. All former documents remain valid.

I, formerly known as MISS JUMMAI YAHAYA ABDULLAHI, now wish to be addressed as MRS AISHA HUSSAINI IBRAHIM. All former documents remain valid. General public to note.

I, formerly known as SADIQ ABUBAKAR BIU, now wish to be called ABUBAKAR YUNUSA ZARMA. All former documents remain valid. Nigeria Airways Ltd Yola Airport to note.

I, formerly known as SANI AHMED, wish to be called SANI HAMISU. 81 Division Hospital Dodan Barracks and general public to note.

I, formerly known as GAUSM BAKO ABUBAKAR, now wish to be called NATHAN ABUBAKAR. All former documents remain valid. Nigerian Army and general public to note.

I, formerly known and addressed as DEBORAH SHUAIBU, now wish to be called and addressed as ZAINAB SHUAIBU. Ministry of Science and Technical Education, Zamfara State and the public to note.

I, formerly known as MAIGWANDU MU'AZU, now wish to be called Abdullahi MAIGWANDU MU'AZU. Muslim Foundation, Gusau and the general public to note.

I, formerly known as MISS AZUBUIKE IHUAKU ODOCHI, now wish to be known as MRS OGBONNA IHUAKU ODOCHI. Former documents remain valid. University of Calabar to note.

# Sports

## Flying Eagles confident of overcoming Brazil

Members of the African Junior champions, the Flying Eagles exude confidence of overcoming any hurdle in the dreaded group F of the FIFA Youth World Youth Championship where they are drawn to meet three time winner of the Championship, Brazil.

Speaking to nigeriasports.com on phone, Isreal-based member of the team that conquered Africa, Olubayo Adefemi said Nigerians should not dwell

so much in the past but should believe that today will always be better.

"We know that Brazil is good but for crying out loud we should not dwell in scaring ourselves with such knowledge. All that need to be done is to prepare well and hope for the best".

"When we went to Benin Republic for the African Youth Championship, nobody gave us a chance but we survived. So, anything can happen. Let the authorities wake up to the

challenge and give us the necessary preparations and



Sisiu, Eagles coach

let us see what happens".

"We have a good side no doubt but early and well programmed preparation will bring out the best in us. Africa will do well in this edition of the championship with Nigeria leading the way".

Also speaking, the Flying Eagles assistant captain, Ambruse Vanzekin said there is nothing in name pointing out that Nigeria equally has a name that is capable of sending fears to her opponents.

"We are not afraid of the

Brazilians. They worked hard to achieve that greatness and all we need to do is to work hard and equally achieve something. They are big names and Nigeria is also a big name in the football circle no matter how you look at it".

"The Brazilians too will not go to sleep with both eyes closed because they know we have something to offer too".

Nigeria is in Group F of the Championship to be held in Netherlands latter this year alongside Brasil, South Korea and Switzerland.

## Eaglets draw South Africa

Nigeria's U-17 soccer team, the Golden Eaglets have been drawn to play one of the tournament favourites South Africa at the 6th edition of the African U-17 Championship in Gambia in May.

At the draw for the final tournament conducted Thursday morning at CAF's headquarters in Cairo, former champions Nigeria were drawn in Group B alongside South Africa, Cote d'Ivoire and Zimbabwe.

South Africa are expected to give Nigeria a run for their money after virtually steamrolling their way through the campaign with comprehensive defeats of Mozambique and Sudan.

The Amajimbos, as SA's cadet side are known, scored a record 16 goals during the qualifiers and are already tipped to do well at the fiesta.

Nigeria on the other hand will try to go one better than the last edition in Swaziland where they managed to pick the bronze medal. The Eaglets were champions in 2001.

## Lawal battle ready for Gabon

Santa Clara of Portugal midfielder Garba Lawal has assured Nigerians of his readiness to lace boots for the Super

Eagles when they take on Gabon for the crucial World Cup qualifying game on March 26 in Port Harcourt. Lawal will be heading for his

third World Cup finals if Nigeria eventually qualify, having also featured at France '98 and Korea-Japan in 2002.

The utility player, who made Christian Chukwu's 22-man, hit squad for the Gabon encounter, told KICK OFF from his base that in spite of the potentially explosive nature of the impending game he had implicit confidence in the present team.

"I am ready for the match. I have a game for my club on the 20th against Alverca, after that I should be on my way to Nigeria. We are based on an island which is about two and a half hours from Lisbon, and there's no way

for me to go to Lisbon by car, so I must go by air.

"It's not going to be an easy match because any country playing against us will want make history, but with the kind of squad we have now, we shall beat Gabon, and Nigeria will qualify for the World Cup in 2006. We just need prayers from all Nigerians."

"Chindo" also refuted media reports that he had been sidelined by injury. "It's a big lie. There was no time I was injured. I am fit," he told KICK OFF.



Juventus attacker Marcelo Zalayeta celebrates winning goal against Real Madrid during their Champions League tie at the Delle Alpi stadium in Turin, Italy on Wednesday.

## Rivers govt rescues NFA

The Rivers State Government has come to the rescue of the cash-strapped NFA by agreeing to shoulder the cost of accommodation and transportation of the Super Eagles for their World Cup

match against The Panthers of Gabon scheduled for Port Harcourt 26 March.

This is in addition to the Liberation Stadium match venue the government is providing free of charge for the Eagles.

NFA chairman Ibrahim Galadima told KICK OFF: "We in the FA are quite appreciative of the Rivers State Government's gesture in agreeing to lighten our financial burden for the game by agreeing to take care of the players and their officials' accommodation and feeding. In addition they will provide transportation for the national team during their stay in the state capital."

He further thanked the Rivers Government for always coming to the rescue of the national team whenever this assistance was needed and described the state "as a real home of the national team".

Galadima also told KICK OFF: "The budget for the players and their officials bonuses have been forwarded to the Sports Ministry and we hope that funds will be released in time for the game against Gabon."

The FA chief further said: "The proposal includes the usual match winning bonus of 5 000 US dollars per player as well as their ticket refund." Galadima also noted that some work need to be done at the Liberation Stadium and the Rivers State Government has been notified of those areas.

"The state government has assured us that the stadium will be put in place to meet all FIFA requirements

## Ranchers boss resigns for assaulting FA official

Mohammed Abdulazeez, board member of the Nigeria Football League who was alleged to have manhandled a top Kaduna State football official, has resigned his membership of the NFL security committee.

He said his resignation was based "on moral

ground". Abdulazeez was alleged to have rough handled the chairman of the state Football Association, Shehu Adamu, after a pro-league division One match between Ranch Bees and Kaduna United FC at the Ahmadu Bello Stadium kaduna at the week end.

The Bees managed by the NFL board member, lost the match 2-1 to its local rivals thereby igniting high tension at the stadium.

Abdulazeez, in a remorseful mood, also apologised to the "teeming soccer fans, NFL and the Kaduna football association" over the incident.

"It was out of provocation but I ought not to have done so. It was unfortunate, therefore on moral ground, I am resigning my membership of the security committee," he said.

He told news men that Shehu was his closest friend, adding that both of them planned to float a soccer team

## NFL dangles hammer over six clubs

The NFL has ordered six debtor clubs to pay up the debts owed their former players and coaches before next Wednesday or face ban from the league.

Premier League sides El-Kanemi Warriors, Wikki Tourists and their Professional League counterparts, Sunshine Stars, Bayelsa United, Plateau United and Calabar Rovers were all found guilty of owing their former staff various sums of money by the arbitration committee.

By Abdul-Rahman Aoda, Sport Reporter

met to discuss cases of indebtedness to players and coaches discovered that decisions taken last season were not executed by the erring clubs. It thus gave the clubs a week's grace to redeem their debt or face NFL wrath.

Wikki was asked to pay former coach Segun Oluwoleji N700,000, as well as Mustapha Sambo. El Kanemi was ordered to

coach George Essien or face the ban. Plateau United and Calabar Rovers were also ordered to pay up their debts to Shehu Aliyu and Frank Edeh respectively.

Sunshine Stars was ordered to cough out the sum of N2m within a week to retain its league status. The Ondo State team is to pay former Coach Alabi Aisien N750,000 while the remaining money is to be paid to Segun Ademola and Rasaq Omotola Fayoshe.

Bayelsa United was also found guilty of owing Coach

amount of money which it was asked to pay within a week.

Meanwhile, NPAFC team manager, Mike Idoko has been asked to pay one of the club's former players, Martins Inalegwu the sum of N120,000 before April 9. The decision was arrived at by the Players Status and Welfare Committee following its investigation into a case, which committee, chairman, Ade Ojekere refused to delve into because of the sordid



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# DAILY TRUST

FRIDAY COLUMN

Friday, March 11, 2005

## Confab: Adding insult to insult

By Adamu Adamu

There are many people who believe with all sincerity and with all their heart that the National Political Reform Conference is an exercise in utter futility. I am one of them. It is ill-conceived, ill-planned, ill-convened and, from the look of the look of things, especially its procedure and the disposition of its leadership, it may well be ill-executed. There is the fear that at its conclusion, we will probably be worse off than we were at its beginning.

The conference is therefore looked at here not so much as an adventure worth our while but as an event in which the good faith of Nigeria's current leadership is being tested. As well as their ability to admit mistakes made and have the courage to correct itself.

Whatever explanation Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, Professor Jerry Gana, Reverend Mathew Hassan Kukah and others like them may give now, by way of explanation or after-thought, the fact remains that the composition of delegates to the conference constitutes a triple-barrelled insult to Muslims—an insult to their intelligence, an insult to their persons and an insult even to their future.

No Muslims head of state could have dared or wished to do this to Christians, and if any were to have done so, Gana and Kukah would have been the first to cry out—quoting the constitution here, opening up with some historical anecdote or parable. It is indeed a pity if their concern for injustice is only when it is done to them or their faith.

And it was quite unhelpful stating, as some, people including Obasanjo, do today, that at one time the nation had a tolerated a Muslim-Muslim ticket at a presidential election. I have never been able to see what purpose that example is supposed to serve.

If by that they wanted to show that Christians didn't say a word about it, that would not by itself prove anything except that Chief M.K.O. Abiola and Alhaji Babagana Kingibe were such good, dependable, personable and trustworthy Nigerian Muslims to whom even non-Muslims felt safe and comfortable to entrust the leadership of the country. Nobody stopped Christians from crying foul then; but they themselves chose not to.

It is also a pity that nobody has told Obasanjo that he doesn't project that kind of personable image. But the point really is that he shouldn't invoke the Abiola-Kingibe ticket to justify his own manifest and indefensible lopsidedness in choosing delegates to the conference. It is very unfortunate and regrettable that none of the Christian leaders has so far spoken about this clear injustice. Is it because the injustice is to their benefit? How indeed unfortunate, if it is! Long-term interfaith harmony requires that we have religious leaders who will stand up for justice, whoever it is for or against.

But Muslims should know that their quarrel is not with Christians. Their grouse is with a government that is being cynical and deliberately insensitive and employing calculated inequity in order to elicit a reaction that, had it come, would have been exploited.

The strategy seemed to be to provoke Muslim-Christian tension as a way of drumming up support for a government that had lost what little support it had. After giving an edge of 73 persons in favour of Christians, everyone would expect that Muslims would be up in arms protesting, and showering insults on Christians, rehearsing the well-known lamentations about real imbalances, especially those created or made worse by the Obasanjo administration. The nature of the attack and the manner in which Muslims will launch it, will send Christians into Obasanjo's arm; and they will forget about failures in NEPA, about lack of water, about inflation and the general deterioration on the standards of living.

If this was the ploy, it failed woefully. Muslims correctly decided to refuse to turn against Christians for the very simple and straight forward reason that they didn't give themselves this lopsidedness. It was not their fault that they were 233 out of 393 delegates at the confab.

While many people view the confab as an exercise in futility, to be fair, there are many other more positive ways of looking at it. The trouble is that probably all of them are wrong.

First, there are those who think that, with precious few choices facing the nation, it is better to make good of a very situation and make worthwhile an otherwise useless endeavour. These people think we should give Obasanjo benefit of the doubt; but the trouble is that doubt has no benefit.

Second, there are those who suspect a hidden agenda but who, nevertheless, urge that we should attend the conference and defeat the hidden agenda. The truth here is that the hidden agenda of a determined government in present-day Nigeria is un-defeatable, at least in the short term. It is, however, good to bear in mind that long-term

damage is almost always done in the short term.

Third, others feel that Nigerians should disregard the hidden agenda and go to the conference with their own open agenda to build bridges among delegates across religious, ethnic and regional divides. Unfortunately, you can't build bridges of understanding and trust in an atmosphere of misunderstanding and distrust.

Fourth, yet others think people should go to the conference and make the nation united in debate, or in expectation of its outcome. But unity is unlikely to be realised in a debate predicated on opposite, unyielding, winner-takes-all stand points. Positions have already hardened even before they are taken.

In this fashion the nation went to the conference, despite the reservations of almost all Muslims, including those in the conference. That is why the current forceful showing by the Muslim leadership that Obasanjo rubbished should have come to many as a surprise. Why did the Supreme Council and the Emirs wait almost three weeks before taking matters seriously? Why and how could Obasanjo ever feel comfortable and confident doing this to Muslims if he thought they had leaders who would stand up and speak for them?

But it was quite late in the day when Muslim leaders work up to the fact that they had been short-changed. They had already let the initiative slip from their hand. They were not quick on the draw, nor forceful enough when making their case. It was as if they had sold their clout.

And they came looking for an apology from the person who created the mess. Instead of apology Muslim leaders received a litany of even more intolerable insults. First, he called the carefully selected and vetted representative body of Muslim leaders a bothersome crowd by way of other respectful insult to His Eminence the Sultan, "with all due respect, Sir." Someone should have protested this disrespect.

Next, he decided who and who among the Muslim leaders could see him, and rejected those he thought too radical and liable to say anything.

Next, he faulted the carefully gathered statistics of marginalisation that the Muslim leaders had marshalled to convince him, but he didn't produce any evidence to back up his stance.

Next, he said that he didn't know that the nation's religious character mattered or that it must be reflected in appointments. Next, he wouldn't even allow those billed to speak to him to do so.

Lastly, he walked out on them, adding thereby to his list of conquests, the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs and all the redoubtable emirs of the North and Obasanjo of the South.

It was bad enough that the injured party had to come to receive a supposed apology. They needed an explanation, an apology and a redress. They came from all over the country. Perhaps it should have been the other way round. The Muslim leaders should have assembled in Ibadan or Kaduna, and Obasanjo should have gone to them to offer it. But he had no intention of offering anything to them even after they had come to him.

And even when they came, all he could give them was a dressing down and a humiliating rebuff and a go-to-hell-if-you-like treatment.

Now the Supreme Council had already met in Kaduna to decide the nature of threat it would give Obasanjo if he should reject its entreaties. It should have called on Muslims to boycott the conference; and it would have done a great service to this nation.

But not everyone may respect the call by the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, but that should not have stopped the boycott order being issued. When the issue is an insult and the question about integrity, a stand must be taken whether it will have the desired effect or not.

Of course there are some people who regards attendance at the conference as the most valuable item on their C.V. They are status-seekers who have at last found status. They must therefore stay at it to look for "quo."

There are others who believe that in Nigeria all subsequent politics springs from the ashes of the latest conference. They may wish, in spite of the Supreme Council, to stay and form their political parties.

There are those who, disregarding the call of conscience and the force of logic, fear antagonising an all-powerful, vindictive president by boycotting the conference. They have good reason for fear; for, he is our local George Bush. You

are either for him, or you are against him. If you disagree with him he may declare a local war on terror.

There are some delegates for whom life is currently hard-o! Any source of income is therefore welcome. And there is the probability that they may be given even more to produce the desired recommendations.

There are those who believe that the confab is a battleground for ethnic supremacy; and their own political identity and relevance is hinged on ethnicity, so it will be difficult to expect them to surrender in cold blood. Old soldiers must remain on the battlefield, because they never die.

But whatever these classes of Muslims do, the net result is that a sufficient number of them will boycott the conference to make it untenable. If this conference collapses for any reason, it will not adversely affect interfaith relations, even though it seemed to have been designed to fail on that score. It is indeed when it goes to its conclusion that it will surely do great damage to these relations, especially because of the controversy these very conclusions will generate, not necessarily due to a lack of merit in the arguments, but because of the lopsidedness with which the conference itself was composed.

This lopsidedness could certainly not be explained by any logic; and if all that a visit by the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, led by its president-general, would be a dismissive rebuff, it should feel outraged enough to issue its threat that Muslims would be called to boycott the conference.

What many Muslims were saying now is that the injury was too deep and the insult beyond endure. If Muslim leaders took it lying low, then they must know that they had misread the situation, because the followership was even angrier than the leaders. Therefore, when they took the insult, they were not representing Muslims, because many said they would never have taken this manner of insult, whoever it was by.

What was even more intolerable was the fact that he could look Muslim leaders—the Sultan and all Their Highnesses, top-ranking *ulama*, imams, qadis preachers and other category of leaders—in the face, call them a crowd and tell them that he never knew or thought that he had to reflect the religious character of this nation in making his appointments? If he really thought religion didn't matter and that the balancing was only ethnic or regional, why did he himself bring the example of Abiola and Kingibe being a Muslim-Muslim ticket that the nation took very well?

Here is a leader who would think of, and attempt to balance, gender differences and provide for the handicapped but said he regarded religion as of no consequence. Obasanjo behaves as if he is the only adult in the world. I think it is an obligation on the Muslim leadership to show him that they are not children. But they can not do this successfully by continuing to keep quiet.

It would indeed have been a tragedy if the eminence of the Sultan, the courage of His Highness the Emir of Gwandu and the prestige of the turban of His Highness the Emir of Kano would all prove unable to make this government that it made a mistake and right a wrong so manifest. It had been said that but for the flaring up of the Emir of Gwandu and his prodding the Sultan to say what brought the "crowd" to Aso Rock, they would have gone without Obasanjo becoming any wiser about the seriousness of the mission. But even if the Emir of Gwandu had attempted to save the day for them, it didn't in any sense mean that the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs and the body of Emirs were not in trouble. I think they are.

Emirs must search their souls to find out how it is that matters are what they have become and are where they are. If the Supreme Council couldn't stand up to argue in support of such a clear case of injustice against Muslim, what on earth was it there for? If the Emirs would keep mute in the face of these insults, when would they ever speak out? Have they forgotten that the best Islam in this case is not prayer or fasting; it is speaking words of truth to a power that is tending towards tyranny?

Perhaps the defence of Islam is really beyond the current ability of the Emirs. To be sure, defending Islam requires expertise in, or even good general grasp of the knowledge of, the *deen*, maturity, courage, sense of sacrifice and awareness of the times. These qualities are not shared by all the Emirs or even by most of them. Indeed, for a long time the debate has been raging as to whether the Supreme Council is of any concrete benefit to the Muslim Ummah besides its moon-sighting function. The failure to speak out in defence of Muslims and the singular failure of this most eminent body to represent the Muslims and present their interest in front of Obasanjo may indeed fuel the debate and prove a turning point, because it will almost certainly strengthen the hands of those who want to see changes made.