

Citizen

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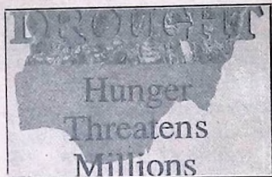


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Ghost of muda



A devastating drought ravages the far north and peasants are already recalling 1913 when village elders learnt, not by choice, to eat wild grasses and shrubs in order to survive.
Page 13.

CDS stews in own waste



Questionable financial dealings, nepotism, constitutional infringement and other undemocratic activities are gradually bringing the house down.
Page 26.

Talking peace, war

For three days, Paris played host to 32-European leaders. The theme was papering over the cracks in Europe's Security but one agenda managed to creep in: the Gulf crisis. Page 30.



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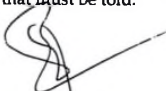
PREFACE

This year, rain came early enough in May but ceased soon after. By the time it resumed in late June or early July, most foliage on the farms in the northern parts of the country had wilted. The resumption revived only a little, thereby necessitating a second bout of planting in July. But by the beginning of September, rain had effectively ceased in most places.

Normal rain distribution is May to early October, give or take a few weeks. Since the drought of 1973, normal precipitation has of course not taken place. The spectre of another devastating drought has continued to hang over the entire area north of latitude 12. The fears today are that we are set to undergo all the horrors of 1973. The decreasing absolute quantity of rain water and the very abnormal distribution experienced during the 1990 rainy season have combined to make this inevitable.

From Sokoto through the northern parts of Katsina, Kano, Bauchi to Borno states all farmlands lie desolate. So far most farmers in the affected areas have only harvested sorrow and grief. Livestock patiently wait for mass death. Already human migrations have been reported in some states.

Principal Staff Correspondent Mahmud Jega and Executive Editor Adamu Adamu visited the affected states and saw things for themselves. They visited farms, talked to farmers, interviewed officials and collected the facts and figures that formed our Cover Story. It is a marvellous job even if the story's message is not a nice one. But it is one that must be told.



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Adamu Adamu goofed

In the *Citizen* edition of November 12, 1990, Adamu Adamu made a serious distortion of world history in his commemorative essay titled, "The United Nations". He insinuated that the Communist Revolution in Russia took place "a year later" than 1914 when the World War I began, which implied that the revolution occurred in 1915.

If Adamu had read his books well, he would have noted that when World War I (which was predominantly a European affair) broke out in 1914 and within the first three years of its execution, Russia was still being afflicted by underdevelopment and sundry forms of stagnation under the corrupt and inefficient government of Tsar Nicholas II. Even though the government was pitched against massive dissent among the multitudes it was not really the core Marxist movement that swept it away, just as Adamu obviously wanted us to believe. On the contrary, the monarchy was ousted by bored workers and peasants during the March Revolution in 1917. And during the next eight months the scramble for power oscillated between the Provisional Government of Prince Lvov and Comrade Kerensky, who was a kind of liberal socialist. But the actual communist revolution which Adamu referred to in his write-up, and which was not really responsible for the ouster of the monarchy, was the one executed on November 7, 1917 and led by Vladimir Ilyanov Lenin, leader of the Bolsheviks (the core marxist formation).
Ibrahim Sheme
Kaduna.

Saddam a hero!

I want to use these opportunity to salute Saddam for his bravery and his unyielding attitude on the annexation of Kuwait, not that I actually supported his expansionist policy, but that he has been able to stand up face to face with Americans despite the noise made, one would have imagine the whole scenerio to have ended within a week, but its getting closer to 4 months now.

It could be said that the greatest expectation of the Americans in the

Gulf is gradually turning into their greatest frustration. Despite the swift movements of their troops and war arsenals to the Gulf, nothing up till now signifies that the war will actually be fought, as most countries even among those that contribute troops to the multinational force are now seeking for peaceful solution.

With reference to your article on Gulf: when will the war begin? It seems it is undesirable, for America and her partner in crime, Britain to go it alone, less they suffer humiliation, it could be a war that no one can predict its outcome as there might be heavy casualties on both sides.

I must confess, therefore that SADM has today stood out in the face of aggression, against the machinery of oppression, exploitation, dehumanization, subjugation and Saddam has triumphed whether he dies or he lives. A lesson to the policeman of the world.
Izzy Mathew
Kaduna.



Unvail the truth

I think I.B.M Haruna's many pronouncements made an interesting readings, using many points to buttress what he believes in and using some other points to cover up serious issues that demands unveiling the truth.

I quite agree with him that societal pressures lead to corruption, but why is it that, its only in Nigeria that corrup-

tion has been institutionalised, in essence I.B.M. Haruna wants us to believe that societal pressures led him to the gross mismanagement of FESTAC fund's and his office.

I also agree with him that nobody is dominating anybody in Nigeria, but the fact is that anywhere the colonialist had been, they left an indelible mark of unequal development as seen in most countries that has witness the Yoke of colonialism. Hence the reason you see the different ethnic groups commanding the different heights of the economy.

But most importantly I will want I.B.M. Haruna to clear the air on whether Olusegun Obasanjo was involved in the coup that led to the death of Murtala Mohammed. He should therefore clear the air once and for all by unveiling the truth for posterity's sake. That certain things need not be uttered for the fear of disrupting peace is not accepted if we are to justify the nation's existence.
Toyin Gbadamosi
Kakuri Kaduna.

Introducing Platform is, by all standards, a wise decision. It's being used as a cover is however, by popular reasoning, not the wisest of decisions. Imagine how rich and irresistible the magazine would have been with the Platform and a diffent, powerful cover story.

Fortunately, platform's debut just managed to escape being given the other hidden headline: *The Misadventure of I.B.M. Haruna*. It remains a scandal why General Haruna was left ranting, uninterrupted or even cautioned while he went on an ego-trip, threatening to tear apart Nigeria's fragility, subtly though and in the process doing violence to both the country's history and the *dramatis personae* (in that historical drama).

But the scandalous part is that the setting of the records straight on the issue of Haruna and his stewardship as the coordinator of FESTAC was painfully deleted at the instance of your editors, of course.

Dangana Muhammad
Dutsean Kura
Minna
Niger State.

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Drought: Picking up the pieces

By now, it is clear that Nigeria's agriculture has suffered one of its biggest blows in a long time. The full impact of this year's drought has not yet been assessed by federal and state authorities, but already there is enough evidence to suggest that this may be the worst spell of drought to afflict the country since the incidence of 1973/74. Already, some farmers are likening it to the legendary famines of pre-colonial and colonial times. Some farmers have seen in it all the ghost of *muda*, the devastating famine of 1913. We all hope that nothing of the sort is in the offing, but the situation is desperate all the same.

It hardly needs to be said that a drought of this scale poses immense dangers for the survival and welfare of our people and for the cohesion of our society. Mass starvation has not yet been reported, but it may well be with us within the next few weeks or months. The death of livestock on a large scale is also to be expected, since there would not be any grass left to eat in weeks to come.

The signs of social dislocation are already apparent. For example, the Sokoto state government has already said that its people are migrating in search of greener pastures, literally speaking. Some traditional rulers and local government officials have also expressed fears that large-scale migrations by farmers will wreck the local government elections scheduled for December 8 and the census.

As always, this disaster places the federal government and the respective state governments in the eye of the storm. Unfortunately, this is a case, more than in most others, where government displayed commendable foresight by establishing the Nigerian Agricultural Insurance Scheme in December 1987. Despite much publicity and generous terms, however, precious few farmers insured their crops and livestock under the scheme. In the scheme's Katsina zone, for example, which includes Katsina, Kano and Sokoto states, which are among the ones ravaged by the drought, only some 10,000 farmers insured their crops this farming season. That leaves tens of millions who did not register. It is to be noted that most of the 10,000 farmers who did insure their crops were beneficiaries of bank loans, for

which insurance is a necessary condition.

The agricultural insurance scheme has even got a reserve fund of N200 million, meant to be held in reserve for an occasion when the scale of an agricultural disaster overwhelms the resources of the Nigerian Agricultural Insurance Company. Al-though there is now a lot of money in the fund, it is unlikely that it will be summoned for use, since most of the farmers who suffered losses in this year's drought are not insured.

This is a cruel situation indeed. But before anyone rushes to blame the farmers for not insuring under the scheme, let it be remembered that most of them are small-time, very poor and illiterate. Subsidy or no subsidy, most of them simply cannot pay any insurance premiums. Thus, commendable as this scheme is, its terms, organisational structure and mode of operations need to be urgently revised to see if they can be made to accommodate the many shortcomings of our economy and society. This is necessary because, generous as the NAIS' terms appear to be, when the chips are down, the objective has not been attained.

This takes us back, as always, to the matter of relief. Unless farmers and their families are to starve and die, there is no escaping massive relief supplies by the government. After all, these victims are in their millions and they are not entirely to blame for their situation. When the government does provide relief, it will do well to closely supervise its disbursement agents, since it is known in years past that crooked officials "close to the grassroots," including traditional rulers and local government officials, embezzled this relief money and material.

Finally, this year's drought affords us an opportunity to examine anew our precarious ecological situation. It is now clear for all to see that our Sahelian belt is sitting on a time bomb. Its scarce vegetation and poor climate is simply unable to provide the three F's—food, fodder and fuel—needed by the region's huge population of humans and animals. It is true that our ecological experts have already said a lot about this problem. Let them not despair; let them kindly say again what must be done, and let us now, for once, listen and act-fast.

NEPA Men: Rights and duties

It must have come as a pleasant surprise to the 11 NEPA senior employees and their families when President Ibrahim Babangida finally freed them from the shackles of a ten-year jail term that was clearly unjust. The men's journey to the jail house started on October 5, 1988 when they played the key roles in the decision of the Senior Staff Association of Statutory and State-Owned Companies to go on a strike. The result of their action was a nation-wide total blackout, the second in recent times.

The leaders of the association took the decision to use perhaps the most effective weapon in their hands to protest the unjust neglect of staff welfare, the need to raise tariffs and the right to use strike as a weapon to press for legitimate demands.

At the time the NEPA men decided to strike negotiations were on to resolve the issues, but there was a catch 22. The government was insisting that labour laws had specifically barred those on essential services from going on strike. The NEPA officers thought government was foot-dragging.

Neither the government nor the public was amused. The nation was caused enormous and grave grief. Business was paralysed and people lost their lives, some on the operating tables. The perpetrators were rounded up and arraigned before the Jos zone of the Miscellaneous Offences Tribunal on December 16, 1988. They were, for the first time in such cases, jailed for life. In sentencing them, the judge, Mr. Justice Mofoye Oyetunde, said 'To every right there is a duty. The duty of NEPA officials is not to put the nation in total blackout.'

The gravity of the sentence soon however caused an uproar. Some argued that it not only departed from the fundamental human rights posture of the government, but that it was punitive without being corrective. Besides giving an employer the opportunity to blatantly deny legitimate demands, it posed the danger of cowering workers from seeking redress on reason-

able issues.

When all the initial pleas fell on deaf ears, the Nigerian Labour Congress, NLC, changed tactics. It sent a mercy plea to President Ibrahim Babangida to release the jailed men and enjoined others to do so. In February 1988 a delegation from the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity, OATUU, called on the president to press for their release. The government in August relented slightly when it reduced the life jail term to ten years. It immediately offered a ray of hope for the NEPA men who had challenged the judgment of the tribunal.

Finally, Mr. Pascal Bafyau, the NLC president whose *modus operandi* is not, by his own admission, confrontational, led a delegation, for the second time to Dodan Barracks where he not only appealed to the humanness of the president, but reminded him that using his 'constitutional powers under Section 161 (1), he could pardon them.' The president obliged immediately.

In releasing them, President Babangida said he did so 'in pursuance of our human rights policy and appreciation of the constructive role of the NLC and the doggedness with which it pursued the campaign for their release.'

All told, the episode should serve as a lesson to the nation. Trade unions have a big responsibility to stand up for the rights of workers just as government has a duty to take actions in which the general good is always the ultimate objective. The punishment truly did not fit the crime, but something had to be done to make everyone understand the gravity of the offence.

In future trade unions leaders in seeking redress should feel the need for a truly tremendous grievance before they demand a tremendous sympathy from the nation.

The president's humanitarian gesture is commendable just as the tireless effort of the NLC. What will now be of enormous benefit to the nation is for both sides to fully develop a forum and attitude for constant dialogue and consultation.

The Ooni's choice

His royal highness the Ooni of Ife is not waiting until 1992. A fortnight ago when leaders of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) paid him a courtesy call in his palace at Ife, he made highly significant Political Statements, which might be interpreted to mean two things. The first is that he favours the SDP of the two parties. The second is that even in that party he wants a Yoruba man to be the presidential candidate.

The national executive of the SDP must have felt flattered when Oba Okunade Sijuade said: "I have not seen any thief among your fold. I do not believe you are seeking power in order to loot the treasury". Well, who is? Is this perhaps a royal guided missile? National Republican Convention (NRC) Executives are unlikely to jubilate about this one-sided endorsement from a father figure. They have not complained in the open yet, but the remarks must rankle with them, considering that they have not been able to pay their own courtesy call. Yet.

More troubling is the Ooni's "request" that the SDP should consider a Yoruba man as its flag-bearer. His Highness said his tribe have capable people who can serve the country as president. According to him, "the Yorubas who I am their leader, are good people and I assure you that they would not disappoint your party." The Ooni is right about the Yorubas, they are not only good but they are also capable. We have said in *Citizen* before (see Vol. 1 No. 11 SDP: *The Awolowo factor*) that the political machine created by Chief Awolowo in the West, is still

intact and a force to reckon with in national politics.

But precisely because of this advantage, the Yorubas do not need special concessions in the political contest for the Third Republic. They can stand their own. The democratic process itself, dictates the give and take that will ensure that power is shared, not by one, but by all the contending forces. There was a Yoruba head of state in Nigeria in the past and there will surely be another one in the future. Each group should play a direct role in the governance of this diverse country. But it should be with the consent and indeed active support of other groups in a winner-takes-some system.

It is not too much to hope that royal fathers, while aware of their duties to their tribes, should be at the fore-front of the struggle to strengthen our unity in diversity. Fortunately this is a big and complex country with several strong voices. Shortly after the Ooni received SDP, the Awujale of Ijebu-land, Oba Sikiru Adefona, hosted NRC executives at his palace. In a direct reference to the call for a Yoruba President, the Awujale cautioned that "selection on tribal basis may turn the President to wanting to see himself as a regional or tribal president, who owes its region or tribe a special obligation."

Traditional rules are after-all human, so they have their biases and sympathies. But their exalted station among their subjects, impose certain restrictions on them. One of which is the they should refrain from throwing their hats (or turbans) into the Political arena.

Thatcher: end of an era

Barely a year ago when British Prime Minister Mrs Margaret Thatcher celebrated her 10th year in power, she talked confidently of going on and on well into the 1990's. However, the events of the week, whereby her former Defence Secretary, Mr. Michael Heseltine, strongly

challenged her for the leadership of the Conservative Party, suggest she must have been over-confident about her staying power. The immediate cause of what seems to be her sudden decline was Sir Geoffrey Howe's recent resignation as her deputy. Apparently chaffed at her reluc-

tance to join Europe, among other things, he resigned and several days later gave a resignation speech in parliament which was a devastating indictment of her rather truculent leadership style. Between Howe's resignation and his speech, one of her junior ministers was overheard on the telephone angrily saying "if only that old cow would resign"! He was apparently reflecting the frustration of many of her cabinet colleagues at her dictatorial disposition.

Long before Howe's speech however, the signs were already clear that the British public had just about had enough of her and probably her party for now. Among the earlier signs was the violent riots at London's Trafalgar Square early this year against her introduction of Poll tax. The more recent signs were the by-elections in which her party was trounced by the opposition.

With time it became pretty obvious that the Iron Lady had become a disability to her party and she had to be got rid of if the party was to have any hope of winning the next general election. And so enter Mr Michael Heseltine, who left her cabinet four years ago less over policy differences than on style. Known to nurse ambitions of succeeding Mrs Thatcher, he apparently bid his time warming the backbenches for just an opportunity like the one that offered itself in the wake of Howe's resignation speech which was a thinly veiled call for a change of leadership of the conservative party.

Not surprisingly Heseltine gave Mrs Thatcher good run for her money in last Tuesday's contest for the party leadership. The Prime Minister polled the majority of the party's members of Parliament, but she did not poll enough to win outright. Her first reaction was to say she would fight on. However as the signs that she may face humiliation of the second ballot became increasingly obvious, she decided to step down as party leader on Thursday

and as Prime Minister as soon as a new party leaders was elected. Tomorrow's ballot would now see Douglas Hold the Foreign Secretary and John Major the chancellor of the Exchequer contesting along with Heseltine.

Thus has come the end to an era in which Mrs Thatcher straddled not only over British politics but European politics as well. It was an era which she sought to roll back the welfare state and enthrone individualism at home, while she fought, communism abroad.

For Africa the implication of her obsession with the communist bogey, was that more than any other world leader she gave succour to Apartheid South Africa by standing alone in the world against the imposition of economic sanctions on Pretoria. Always her argument was that such sanctions do not work and that at any rate it would hurt the blacks that it was supposed to help, most. It speaks volumes of her sincerity in this matter of sanctions that she has since been in the fore-front of arguing for its imposition on Iraq following its invasion of Kuwait.

At home if is doubtful that she has succeeded in changing the face of British society. She did successfully take-on the all-powerful trade unions and reduce them to the shadows of their former selves, but as recent report by a British non-profit institute, the Social and Community Planning Research, shows she could not banish peoples' faith in collective rather than individualistic solutions to society's problems. This is food for thought as the privatisation of our political economy continues apace.

As for Africa it is needless to say that the resignation of Mrs Thatcher can only be good news, if only because apartheid would have lost its staunchest and strongest ally. It is hard to imagine whoever succeeds her, much less a labour government, adopting the implacable position she consistently took on South Africa. ©

ADAMU ADAMU

On being strangers I



When we arrived in Abidjan most people were off the streets. There was no one to

ask and we didn't know where to go, but experience in other countries we visited had taught us that gregarious Nigerians were everywhere. They normally kept to their own quarters and had their leaders who decided issues between them, and to whom strangers could go in times of distress. So we tried to find our way to the Nigerian quarters. No luck: no landmark showed the way. We stopped, to ask someone. No luck: the first we met spoke only French which we didn't understand; we spoke a total of four languages none of which he understood. We passed.

Later we decided to park our car by the roadside and ask all passers-by until we found someone who could help. As we stopped we caught sight of a man tinkering with a car's engine in the dimming light. Aminu Baba — we were three, the other is Aminu Mohammed — went up to him. Luck: the man turned out to be a Nigerian. Luck soon turned sour: he spoke only French! Seeing his countrymen, the man desperately wanted to help — he ran helter skelter from one shed to the other looking for an interpreter. He found none. He came back and stood in front of us where upon Aminu saw the unmistakable marks on the cheeks. Too good to be true, but the man turned out to be a Yoruba man.

"E ka san," Aminu began — that being the only phrase I can recall. And off they rattled. Aminu Baba speaks Yoruba with annoying fluency. He speaks like what the Hausa man may call "jakin Ibadan". Quickly he asked the man the way to the residence of the chief of Nigerians. The man dashed into his shed, came out with a small bucket, washed and

changed and jumped into the car and began issuing orders. To the left, a little to the right, straight on, u-turn, a little to the left. All this of course in Yoruba. Thirty minutes later, he asked us to park in front of a none-descript building on a deserted lane. Here, he pointed, is the house of *kabiyesi*. We took the steps and joined others in a large hall that served as the waiting room of his royal highness. He patiently waited with us for the good part of an hour. If there was anything all the three of us hated, it was waiting. Especially waiting without end, and more especially when we could continue driving. That way, each moment would bring us closer to Nigeria which was by then as alluring as a bride to each of us. But one look at Ade — our guide — drove the thought of the road out of my mind. Such readiness, such selfless sacrifice of time and work for the sake of total strangers was hospitality unheard of and such instantaneous kindness that we dared not disappoint him. We waited. At length *kabiyesi* came out. We didn't know him, but when all others stood we looked at Ade. Ramrod. We shot up and followed suit. The man, holding a cellular telephone receiver, passed the whole lot of us wearing a surly, unwelcome look. My God!

He began seeing people — beginning with those who had come first — perhaps. Or with those very familiar to him. At last it came our turn. Ade went to explain. The explaining took longer than necessary, and we became apprehensive. We turned to ask Aminu what the matter was because all the talk was in Yoruba. Aminu was nowhere to be found. He had gone out.

Asiru Hassan — that's the name of the chief — was shouting now and Ade was trying to lie down in obeisance to pray for forgiveness for having committed what must have been such a heinous crime. But what could that be? When I heard the word *gambari* mentioned rather too many times I held my breath. I looked around for Aminu. Had he gone out to cool his

great and rising temper as a result of what he heard? He came back later and even before I could ask, he said, "The man is abusing Ade, he said, ing us here. He was asking why he didn't take us to the chief of *gambaris* — the Hausas. Please let's go." I pressed his hand to suggest caution.

"Please think of Ade. Let him succeed in helping us," I said. "At least let's talk to the *kabiyesi* before we find our way to the *gambari* chief."

The only help we really wanted was the way to the house of a friend in Abidjan who had been expecting us for the previous three months. And since he was a prominent Nigerian we thought the chief of Nigerians would know his address or telephone number. We had lost both in Liberia. Congratulations to us, it was not our lives that we lost.

Kabiyesi somehow changed a bit when he found we were neither going to ask for money or accommodation — probably what most strangers asked for, and which we thought a chief, in any case, should have supplied with pleasure. The first thing he did after asking questions appeared to me rather stupid. "What's your friend's name?" he asked. I told him. "Where does he work?" I told him and said he was the director of the place. Immediately I finished, he grabbed a calendar of Nigerian prominent personalities in Abidjan and asked me to point the man out! I thought it was stupid because anyone could point that out since everyone on a calendar had his name written below his picture. I told *Kabiyesi* so and as I lifted my finger to point at the picture he snatched the calendar away. He then dialled a number and spoke in English — to my friend's wife. He gave me another line and I spoke to her while he listened. Thinking that he probably understood no Hausa, seeing the antipathy he had for its speakers, I spoke to the woman in English so that he would not hold his receiver in vain.



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Drought

Ghost of *muda*

A devastating drought ravages the far North, and peasants are already recalling 1913.



Scorched farm products.

Normally, the month of November is the favourite season for the tens of millions of farmers and livestock rearers in Northern Nigeria. This is the blessed season of *kaka*, to which every one looks forward with hope and pride. By November, rich harvests of

sorghum, millet and rice should have been home, and bumper harvests of guinea corn, maize, cowpeas and groundnuts would be on their way to join them. Granaries are full, it is the season of abundance, and the lowland farms are being cleared for the cultivation of dry season crops, such as wheat, potatoes and vegetables. It is

time, at *kaka*, to give thanks to God and to unleash a rich tradition of songs and plays composed over many generations to welcome the favourite season.

This year, God is still thanked, to be sure, but not many songs are being sang. The scale of the drought that has visited the region is still to be reliably computed by Federal, state and local



Farmer-victims in their drought affected farms.

authorities, but its harsh reality has already unsettled millions of farmers, mildly stated. Granaries are still empty at this time, and one can only visualise what will happen by March or May next year, when there will be nothing left to speak of.

As always, the most badly hit areas are the areas lying within the Sahelian zone. These include the northern most parts of Borno, Kano, Katsina, Sokoto and Bauchi states. Some parts of northern Gongola and Plateau states have also felt the impact of the drought brought about by the late arrival of the rains in late May or June and their sudden cessation in September. Within that short period too, long, dry spells ensued, a situation that added up to overwhelm the crops and vegetation of the region.

In all the far northern areas, the disaster is painfully apparent. Sorghum, which should have been home and dry, so to speak, a long time ago, is still standing in many dusty fields in Borno, Kano, Katsina and Sokoto states. In many of these fields, the stalks never attained more than a few feet in height and never got round to producing any grain, but got severely wilted, and then dried, at that level. In many other farms, the stalks did sprout a head, which in its turn either never got round to producing grain, or did so scantily.

Also to be seen in the fields are completely dried up crops of maize, guinea

corn, cowpeas and groundnuts. The majority of farmers in the region appear to have simply abandoned the dried crops to their fate, where they stand unharvested. Many others, however, gravely set to work harvesting what was there to salvage.

In Jibia, Katsina State, one of the areas worst hit by the drought, Malam Idris of Nassarawa village told *Citizen*, "The drought? It is good. We thank God. Last year, he gave us 150 bundles of sorghum on this farm but this year he gave us only four. We thank God." Behind Malam Idris' stoic-

cism was a grim desperation. All around him were long, dry, grainless stalks of sorghum, which he studiously ignored as he went about salvaging what he could of his ravaged crop of cowpeas. Having worked for three days, he managed to fill two calabashes with the legumes many containing no seeds at all. "This will be sold," Malam Idris told *Citizen*, "to meet some obligations".

Equally desperate was Malam Ahmadu Kurliya of Tudun Doki, in northern Sokoto State. It appears that his village has largely adjusted to perennial drought, and expects good harvests only during the wettest years. Still, this year's drought came as one of the worst in a long time. "We haven't salvaged anything", Malam Ahmadu told *Citizen*, pointing to the dry stalks still standing in his dusty farm. "We will have to remove the stalks for use as fodder and fuel, but as you can see they are hardly of use even for those purposes".

The situation was not any more hopeful at Dorayi Babba, outside Kano city. Here, a wizened old farmer, Malam Abdu, told *Citizen* that although he has no farm of his own, having lost the land to the permanent campus of the Bayero University, he annually cultivates a small plot of land generously leased to him, free of charge, by a medical practitioner in Kano. This year, however, the generosity hardly



The waste of drought in the background.



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helped. "We retrieved next to nothing", Malam Audu told *Citizen* as he busily chopped off a tree. "With no farming to do, I have now turned to selling firewood. That way, I will be able to purchase maize".

In Bauchi State the effect of drought is visible in almost all the state's local governments, but the most seriously affected are in the northern-most area. Though the state's agriculture ministry has not finished compiling local government figures, it is known that the worst losses are recorded in Katagum, Gamawa, Itas-Gudau local governments. According to the Bauchi State Commissioner of Agriculture, Mr. Samaila Hassan his ministry expects a total grain loss of N31 million as a result of the drought. Experts have also estimated a N25 million loss in livestock resources.

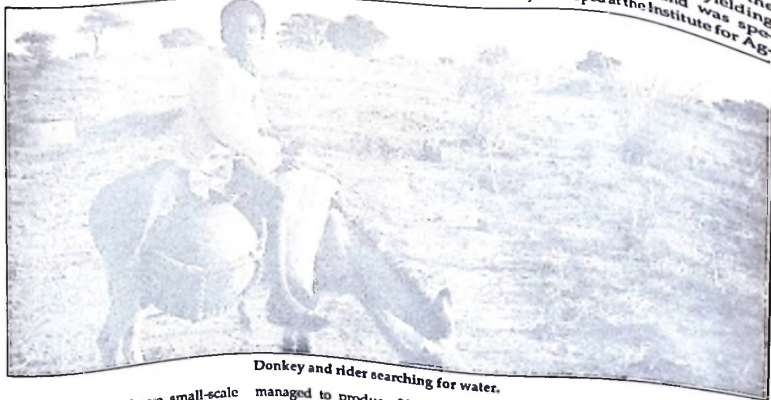
any prize.

The flagship of his agricultural enterprises, a 140 hectare farm about 5 kilometres outside Daura, was ghostly when *Citizen* visited it in mid-November. Authorities in Katsina State appear to recognise it as epitomising the drought; it was recently visited by the state's deputy governor, Alhaji Aminu Zayyad, who was touring drought-hit areas.

Large parts of the Sarkin Noma Alhaji Maikusa's farm has not been harvested, but the completely dried up stalks of sorghum were still standing. They mostly bore only a sprinkling of grain each; this, what the farmers call *bici*, may prove more than its worth in money to harvest. Sarkin Noma Maikusa told *Citizen* that his farm which produced 5,000 bundles of price-winning sorghum last year, has this year

Maikusa has grimly fenced the chaff; as he explained to *Citizen* "I also rear livestock for them to eat". Lying alongside the heaps of sorghum chaff were those the cowpeas from other farms. "we produced 100 bags of cowpeas. This year we got 4".

The disaster that befell the farms of Sarkin Noma Maikusa would have been even worse if it were not for the special variety of sorghum seed he used. According to Alhaji Rabe Usman Kaita, the Quality Control Officer of the State Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (KTARDA) for the zone, this seed variety, SE 2124, otherwise known as "Samaru early", is drought and drought resistant, and was specially developed at the Institute for Ag-



Donkey and rider searching for water.

If the drought drove small-scale farmers down under, it did not spare large-scale farmers either. One of the heaviest losers was Alhaji Lawan Maikusa of Daura, Katsina State, a prize-winning farmer who cultivates many farms along Daura - Zongo road. His farms have regularly won agricultural shows staged by the Katsina State Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (KTARDA). This year, however, it is doubtful if he will win

managed to produce 80 bundles of much inferior grain size. "This is roughly the equivalent of what we planted", Maikusa said. Some tracts of the farm have been harvested and threshed in one location on the farm. The threshing site itself was a ghostly sight; most of what goes into the machines emerges on the side of the chaff, not the grain. The result is that there are already several heaps of the chaff but only a few bags of grain. Alhaji

ricultural Research, Zaria precisely for drought-prone areas. On Sarkin Noma Maikusa's farm, Alhaji Rabe pointed out, the seed sprouted early and grew fast, but then the rains ceased very early and disenabled it from producing grain. Still, some stalks made it even under those impossible conditions. "If it weren't for this seed variety", the Seed Quality Officer told *Citizen*, "there wouldn't have been anything on this farm".

Despite special seeds, however, Katsina and other states have been ravaged by drought this year. Even at this early stage, the consequences have already become manifest in many areas. The Chairman of the Caretaker Council of the Daura Local Government in Katsina State, Alhaji Muhammadu Sani Kankara, told *Citizen*, "this drought is much worse than you imagine. This is supposed to be the period when the prices of grain are at their lowest. Yesterday I tried to buy some grains. The price is exactly what it was at the peak of rainy season, which is traditionally the highest for the year. Where will we be by next year?"

There were also reports that some farmers simply packed up and deserted their villages. The Sokoto State Government confirmed these reports in a special government house statement earlier this month. The statement noted that apart from the drought, pests, such as grasshoppers, armyworms and quela birds had joined for the kill in the ravaged farms, thus making peasant losses almost complete. In this situation, many saw no alternative but to depart early for *cinrani*, the traditional dry season migration to the cities in search of odd jobs. This time, however, many may be gone for good.

No reliable estimates as yet exist of the scale of migrations. The Caretaker Chairman of Wurno Local Government Council in Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammadu Sarki Kigo, told *Citizen*, "We are still compiling our report on the drought for onward transmission to the state government. It is disastrous indeed, and we have received reports that people are migrating. Until our investigations are completed, we cannot say just how many people may have emigrated". The situation was already worrying enough to invite the attention of the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki. On a visit to the Governor of Sokoto State, Colonel Bashir Magashi on 30th October, the Sultan openly expressed fears that an exodus of people from the drought hit areas would mar the census protest exercise, then still to hold. Government officials in Kano told *Citizen* that the December elections into Local Government

Councils, too, could be marred by the drought.

Several other aspects of rural life, always precarious, are now expected to be worsened by the drought. Water

supply is clearly one of such. Already, many streams and ponds that hold water until well into the dry season have dried up this year, forcing villagers to trek even longer distances in

A salvation army-in-waiting

The disaster comes as a vindication of sorts for the Nigerian Agricultural Insurance Company.

President Ibrahim Babangida showed commendable foresight when he launched the Nigerian Agricultural Insurance Scheme on 15th December, 1987, three full years before disaster struck. The Scheme's main objective is to offer protection to farmers from the effects of natural disasters and to ensure payment of appropriate compensation that is sufficient to keep the farmer in business after suffering loss. It is also meant to minimise the need for emergency assistance that the government provides during periods of agricultural disasters.

The evolution of the scheme follows the realisation that agriculture is one of the riskiest of businesses. Risks and uncertainties stalk input supply and prices, yield, post-harvest losses and product prices, not to mention natural vagaries including the weather, pests, diseases, flood and fire. Agricultural insurance is meant to stabilise income, employment, prices and supplies of agricultural products by means of regular and deliberate savings and accumulation of funds in small installments by many farmers in favourable time periods to defend some or a few of the participants in bad periods. It also involves research and development in order to generate innovations which reduce risks due to disease and pests.

Agricultural insurance began in Europe over 100 years ago as crop hail insurance. Now universal in the developed world, it is also well advanced in Mexico, India, Brazil, Zambia, Egypt, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka among third world countries. In Nigeria, the scheme is run by the Nigerian Agricultural Insurance Company, which has five zonal of-

ices in Owerri, Abeokuta, Minna, Katsina and Bauchi as well as state offices. It also operates a system of state co-ordinating committees. These committees advise the NAIC on the operations of the scheme and Local Government Agricultural Insurance committees are responsible for loss assessment and the settlement of claims.

The scope of the scheme is already wide and constantly expanding. Top priority goes to ensuring food crops and livestock, whose premium payment is 50% subsidised by the government. Food crops so far covered by the scheme are rice, millet, guinea corn, groundnuts, maize, yams, cassava and eight others. Livestock so far covered are cattle, poultry, pigs, sheep and goats. Nomadic livestock are included in the scheme but they must be tagged for purposes of identification. Cash crops as well as horses and dogs are also covered at commercial, that is to say unsubsidised, rates. Also covered at commercial rates are tangible fixed assets such as farm buildings and machinery. Farmers, farm labour and their dependants may also be covered. Soon to be covered by the scheme will be fish and forests, for which modalities are still being worked out.

A farmer who subscribes to the scheme is expected to meet "good crop or livestock husbandry practices" in order to qualify for payment in the event of a loss. This sounds like the notorious loopholes of insurance policies, but Malam Mukhtar Tambuwal, Zonal manager of the NAIC in Katsina, denies this. "What this means is that our staff go round to ensure compliance with good agricultural and husbandry practices. For example, a farmer may fail to weed his farmfield, or a livestock rearer may fail

COVER STORY

search of water. The drought is also a disaster for livestock rearing. As it were, the drought-hit areas also hold most of the country's cattle, sheep and goats. Since the drought destroyed not

only cultivated crops but the wild grasses and shrubs that serve as fodder for livestock, the herds are already in danger. When *Citizen's* reporters toured the affected areas, livestock

to invite a veterinary officer to attend to his sick animals since they are insured. Actually, one of the benefits of agricultural insurance is that experts come round to your farm to offer free advice."

The NAIC's premium rates vary according to "agro-ecological zones" in the country. Malam Mukhtar Tambuwal, the NAIC's zonal manager in Katsina, explained that "this is a kind of risk levels, since the five agro-ecological zones in Nigeria differ with respect to climate, rainfall, pests etc. Premiums differ not just with zones but with crops as well."

The scheme's conditions also state that a farmer must not expose his insured crops or livestock to "inevitable risks". Malam Mukhtar Tambuwal explained that "the drought that has now visited the far North is not regarded as an inevitable risk. The risky nature of agriculture in this zone is already covered by higher premium rates. This drought meets the conditions for the settlement of claims. Only that, we must still go out and assess any claims brought by an insured farmer."

The scheme has also reckoned with the possibility that a large-scale regional agricultural disaster may overwhelm its regular resources from premium payments. For this reason, a special Reserve Fund of N200 million

was established. The money is to be contributed by the Federal and state governments, the Central Bank, commercial banks and oil companies according to their strength. According to Malam Mukhtar Tambuwal, of the



Tambuwal: zonal manager, NAIC.

four states in Katsina zone, Sokoto, Kano and Katsina have fully paid their share of N1 million each, while Kaduna state will complete payment this month. All the banks in the zone, including Habib, Gajji and Commercial Trust, have also fully paid their dues.

The NAIC zonal manager's big regret is that most farmers have so far shunned the scheme despite its subsidised nature. "Only about 10,000 farmers were registered in this zone for this cropping season. Most of them were farmers who took loans from banks, for whom insurance is compulsory. We expect, however, that this year's drought will help to popularise agricultural insurance".

By Mahmud Jega

were seen foraging in already clean fields. This is because farmers left little of stalks of guinea corn and is later cleaned by the Umaru Isa of Kukar State, told *Citizen's* that mal fodder to become a year. We are therefore, thing we can, so that we it for grain later in the

In Borno State desolation where. Starting right side it extends all the horizon. Only the giant stand in utter defiance of All else has been laid low, the worst affected local areas of Monguno and north and north-east. and Bade local governments, recorded in particular are even bigger than in affected local governments. 80% and 85% to the drought.

Figures for losses in Borno State have been compiled upto the end of the 10th month. Loss of grains from all the 10 local governments came to a total value of 1,301,884 tons and a total value of N1.66 billion. It has been estimated, according to Alhaji Isa Geidam, the state Agriculture Commissioner, that the total loss by the end of December will be N2 billion. This is a loss of more than 35%. Normal grain production is more than 3.6 million tons with a market value of more than N5.6 billion.

While Borno State expects the federal government to come to its aid it is not lying idly by. "We are trying to arrest the effect of the drought of course," Alhaji Isa said. "But we are even trying to stop it having any impact in future." To achieve this, the commissioner said the government has been urging farmers to shift to short-duration variety crops. A campaign has been on for sometime. As a result of the introduction of a 40-day millet variety, the state was able to escape heavy losses in its millet harvest. Except for Kukawa and Monguno local governments where recorded millet losses went up to 80% and 95% the general losses were comparatively mild.

Another campaign aimed at arresting the effect of drought is designed to

make farmers revert to the traditional firgi soil system of cultivation. The firgi, which goes with the technical name of vertosol soil, employs the rich clayey soil of Borno to build ridges and embankments to collect and trap the little rain water that falls. This way the distribution of water is made even and irrespective of whether rain continues to fall throughout the rainy season enough is retained by the firgi system to see plants through. The campaign will kick off with a pilot scheme of 1000 demonstration hectares.

While these two measures may be long-term, a more immediate remedy that Borno State and others similarly affected by the drought hope to utilise is the cultivation of wheat by irrigation. "We will use the wheat programme to compensate for the loss we sustain in the drought," Alhaji Isa said. "All our effort is now geared toward cultivating 100,000 hectares." Last year, the Chad Basin Development Authority cultivated 15,000 hectares while Borno farmers cultivated only 5,000. Making the farmers multiply their production sixteen times doesn't seem to deter officialdom. The commissioner says he is confident the only problems responsible for the low participation of people is the lack of effective harvesting techniques and the difficulties encountered in marketing the produce.

So the state ordered portable threshers to help with the harvesting, and has posted a guaranteed minimum price of N400 per bag of wheat. In addition, the Borno State Agricultural Development Project has commissioned a state wide feasibility soil study. While this will be ready only next season, a preliminary report has indicated that more than 500,000 hectares of land is available and suitable for wheat cultivation in Borno State.

The desperate survival measures being adopted in the worst hit areas remind elderly persons in the villages of the great famines of this century, all of which have been suitably celebrated in traditional songs, stories and legends. The worst of them all was devastating famine of 1913, popularly known as *Yunwar Muda*. Its close companions were *Yunwar shago* and *Yun-*

war Kurjan, which wrought havoc in the 1930's and 1940's. Village elders recount stories of how they learnt to eat wild grasses and shrubs in order to survive the famine; one popular song at length extols the virtues of *lafesa*, a wild legume normally shunned even by livestock, which however rose to become the human staple in the dark days of *muda*.

Official tabulations of the scale of this year's disaster are not yet complete. The Minister of Agriculture, Alhaji Shettima Mustapha, told *Citizen* in his office in Abuja last week that he cannot as yet comment authoritatively on the drought. Sources at the Agricultural Projects Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (APMEU) of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture in Kaduna however, told *Citizen* that the minister has asked

tee comprising agricultural experts, local government officials, relief agency officials and traditional rulers to make a full assessment of the scale of the drought. Their report, he said, would be ready in ten days from November 3, the day they started. *Citizen* found that some local governments in Katsina State were far ahead of others in the assessment work. For example, in Daura, the chairman of the local council, Alhaji Muhammadu Sani Kankara, showed our reporters the list of affected persons in all three districts of the local government, already being typed. The list contained the names of farmers as well as their villages and the type of crops they lost. In Jibia, however, the Secretary of the Local Government Council, Alhaji Umaru Malumfashi, told *Citizen* that

"In many of these fields, the stalks never attained more than a few feet in height and never got round to producing any grain, but got severely wilted, and then dried, at that level. In many other farms, the stalks did sprout a head, which in its turn either never got round to producing grain, or did so scantily."

the unit to undertake investigations of the drought affair. The unit has identified seven states — Borno, Kano, Katsina, Sokoto, Bauchi, Plateau and Gongola as being moderately to severely hit, and has sent a team of experts to each of these states to assess the damage. Our sources said APMEU hopes to submit a comprehensive report to the minister before the end of November.

Many state governments in the affected region were also yet to finish compiling their reports on the scale of the drought. In Katsina, the Director General for Agriculture and Natural Resources, Alhaji Mohammed Sirajo, said his ministry has set up a commit-

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the council was awaiting reports from village heads, since "they live with the people and are better placed to assess losses". In Kano and Bauchi states, senior officials of the Ministry of Agriculture also said they were still compiling reports. The matter was not made any easier by the fact that losses were highly uneven in any state, or for that matter in any local government area. In Kano State, for example, although the drought-hit areas range from the state's northern margins all the way to the south of Kano City, our reporters saw luxuriant farms of guinea corn, maize and vegetables in the rich *fadama lands* around Kazaure and Dam-

batta. In Katsina State, too, badama lands in Mashi, Kaita and Mani local governments by and large escaped the general desolation.

In Sokoto State, a Government House statement on the drought said 19 local government areas out of the total 37 in the state were affected. Worst hit were Isa, Sabon Birni, Wurmo, Silame and Tangaza, where losses of rice and cowpeas were estimated at 80%. These local government areas also lost 70% of their sorghum and 45 to 60% of their projected millet yield. On the whole, the statement said Sokoto State lost one million tonnes of grain, representing 50% of the projected grain produce for this year. The government statement said further that this will lead to a shortfall of 750,000 tonnes of the quantity of grain required to feed the state's population.

Will relief be forthcoming? All the farmers our reporters spoke to said no one has mentioned it to them yet. Alhaji Lawan Maikusa of Daura, the former prize-winning farmer, told *Citizen*, "No one has yet mentioned relief, but we pray for it. All our heavy investment has disappeared. Now, it is a big struggle just to survive". The Sokoto State Government's official statement also did not promise relief; instead, it urged the Federal Government to do something in this regard. Some farmers in Gwadabawa, Sokoto State, became cynical when the subject of relief came up, recalling that a district head in the area was removed by the government in 1974 over the handling of relief materials following the great drought of 1973 - 1974.

Some Federal Government officials expressed anger at the subject of relief supply. They reminded our reporters that, three years ago, the Federal Government created the Nigerian Agricultural Insurance Company with the sole purpose of operating a scheme to insure agricultural produce and livestock against losses such as this. But despite the elaborate arrangements made by the scheme since President Babangida inaugurated it on 15th October, 1987, few farmers bothered to insure their crops, livestock or machinery. This was despite the fact that premiums paid for insuring food crops are heavily subsidised under the

scheme (see box). The Zonal Manager of the Nigerian Agricultural Insurance Company in Katsina, Malam Mukhtar Tambuwal, whose zone (comprising Katsina, Kano, Sokoto and Kaduna), is the most severely hit by the drought, told *Citizen*, "Almost all our customers this year were those who took loans

from banks, for whom agricultural insurance is compulsory under the borrowing regulations. But once this disaster struck, many farmers rushed forward to insure crops that were already destroyed. This is pretty much like coming to insure your car after a major accident. All we could do was to

So far 'normal'

In a market survey conducted in Kaduna metropolis, the prices of grains at the Central Market reflected, with little or no difference, what has always obtained at the change of seasons.

GRAINS

	CURRENT PRICES PER BAG	PRICES A FEW MONTHS AGO
Millet (giant bag)	N230	N250
Millet (medium Bag)	N200	N230
Abakaliki rice	N300	N350 and above
Niger rice (50kg)	N280	N350
Niger rice (40kg)	N250	N300
Caroline Rice	N500	N500
Thailand Rice	N455	N455
Beans (Big seeds)	N480	N550
Beans (Small Seeds)	N460	N500
Maize	N145	N160

	CURRENT PRICES IN LOCAL MEASURES	PRICES A FEW MONTHS AGO
Maize (one standard mudu)	N2.00	N2.50 (at the peak of the rainy season)
Beans (one standard mudu)	N7.00	N8.00
Beans (one medium mudu)	N5.00	N6.00
Abakaliki Rice (one standard mudu)	N10.00	N12.00
Abakaliki Rice (one medium mudu)	N7.00	N9.00
Maize (One medium mudu)	N1.40	N2.00

Some of the traders disclosed that the present price fluctuation is normal, giving the usual fall in prices of grains between November and mid-December each year when the harvest would have been completed. A gradual rise in price is noticeable from the last week in December which is partly attributable to the festive period, they further explained.

Some others, however, found the current fall in prices unimpressive. Insufficient rainfall this year, and the inability of farmers to get fertilizer were given as reasons for the level in price-change. This group of traders predicted a higher rise in prices of grains from January next year, perhaps, a little higher than normal. In Kaduna state, nonetheless, the traders generally agreed that seasonal variances and consequent price differences this year could be regarded as normal.

By Delia Nzekwu.

Several other aspects of rural life, always precarious, are now expected to be worsened by the drought. Water supply is clearly one of such. Already, many streams and ponds that hold water until well into the dry season have dried up this year, forcing villages to trek even longer distances in search of water.

urge them to come back and insure early next year."

Some farmers, however, told *Citizen* that they had never heard of agricultural insurance. Sarkin Noma Lawan Maikusa of Daura however, told our reporter, "they came to us several months ago and asked us to organise ourselves in readiness for agricultural insurance. We did, but we never saw them again".

While drought has been around for a long time and its effect has been having increasing devastation on the lives of

millions, it is surprising that there has not been any effective attempt to stamp it out at the national level. Disparate attempts have been made by disparate states affected by it. These have been disjointed, and lacking the comprehensive back up of a national effort, they have sometimes even been dysfunctional.

As afforestation schemes limply take off in one part of one state, bush-burning rages down another. Meanwhile, no follow up takes place on afforestation. Dams

have also been built without adequate study and consultation. The result has been abundant water in a particular location making irrigation and fishing possible. On the other hand, displacement of human settlements, reduced water flow and even aridity in areas downstream have resulted. Dams, according to Professor Gadzama, may not be to blame. "It is the management of dams and embankment that is the problem", he said.

More ominously, it is the river basins in Nigeria's Sahel region that are at the gravest risk. According to Professor Gadzama there have been confirmed reports of Cameroon not only unilaterally damming rivers shared by Nigeria but they have "emptied" some of them to create flood plains for their rice cultivation. The practice is achieved by cutting off the whole of one bank so that all the water flows away into the plain. The result of course is that no water comes into Nigeria — not one drop. Efforts to even understand what is happening have been only haphazard.

The Centre for Arid Zone Studies was established "to provide a long term coordinated effort in tackling the challenges posed by drought, aridity and the southward movement of the Sahara Desert." So far, as indeed its name implies, the centre is only for studies. It is the only one of its kind, and while its objective, given the funds available to it, may sound too ambitious, it has a lot of promise.

In the same Borno State there are two other schemes — the NEAZDP earlier mentioned and the Japan-assisted Drought and Desertification Control Programme. But neither approximates the ambition or promise of the centre. "The centre is a young one but our problems are so enormous. That we have to start something — even if it means simply documenting the information of our own erosion in the arid zone." But with six extensive divisions requiring out-stations, computers and data processing linkages, early warning systems, seed variety development for the whole length of the Sahel Zone, funding the centre by University of Maiduguri may sound an unrealistic proposition. As the director himself confirmed, many who came across the centre and



Minister of Agriculture Shettima Mustapha: cannot comment authoritatively on the drought issue.

Several other aspects of rural life, always precarious, are now expected to be worsened by the drought. Water supply is clearly one of such. Already, many streams and ponds that hold water until well into the dry season have dried up this year, forcing villages to trek even longer distances in search of water.

urge them to come back and insure early next year."

Some farmers, however, told *Citizen* that they had never heard of agricultural insurance. Sarkin Noma Lawan Maikusa of Daura however, told our reporter, "they came to us several months ago and asked us to organise ourselves in readiness for agricultural insurance. We did, but we never saw them again".

While drought has been around for a longtime and its effect has been having increasing devastation on the lives of

millions, it is surprising that there has not been any effective attempt to stamp it out at the national level. Desperate attempts have been made by desperate states affected by it. These have been disjointed, and lacking the comprehensive back up of a national effort, they have sometimes even been dysfunctional.

As afforestation schemes limply take off in one part of one state, bush-burning rages down another. Meanwhile, no follow up takes place on afforestation. Dams

have also been built without adequate study and consultation. The result has been abundant water in a particular location making irrigation and fishing possible. On the other hand, displacement of human settlements, reduced water flow and even aridity in areas downstream have resulted. Dams, according to Professor Gadzama, may not be to blame. "It is the management of dams and embankment that is the problem", he said.

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Magashi (left) and Marwa: Their states are the worst ravaged.

the work it is doing become convinced that only the Federal Government can fund it. However, whether doing this will prove possible is not easy to say.

Jens H. Christensen, the programme manager of the North East Arid Zone Development Programme (NEAZDP) in Gashua, Borno State also is of the opinion that it is the distribution rather than the amount of rainfall that is the problem. Experts at the Borno State ministry of agriculture's metrological section have compiled a month-by-month record of the rainfall distribution by local government for 1989 and 1990 up to the month of October. There was no significant difference between the two. Total for 1989 came to 18,826mm; for 1990 it was 18,809mm.

The NEAZDP is a five-year EEC assisted programme for the development of a selected portion of Borno's Sahel region.

It is estimated to cost N320 million per annum for all the five years. It is renewable for another five year period or more. "For it to be a permanent change, I think it requires more than 5 years, perhaps 10 or more," Christensen said.

A number of projects are already working and positive results are expected to begin showing early in 1991. The programme comes in to assist in any development effort the community chooses. The idea according to Christensen, is to help in the all-round development of the community — human beings, livestock and vegetation. Providing such a support is necessary and is what makes the effort difficult and yet worthwhile. "If we didn't have to worry about human beings and livestock, we could cover the place with vegetation in three years," the programme manager said.

The director of University of Maiduguri's Centre for Arid Zone Studies, Professor N.M. Gadzama shares the view that the drought this year is more as a result of uneven precipitation than lack of it. "It is true that the difficulty we are having today is more to do with distribution," Professor Gadzama said. "It is not so much the quantity as the distribution." Take for example, in 1987, in May the rains were not good. Then end of June, July particularly — May (the rain) forgot it just came down in torrents. This not the type of rain we are interested in. We are more interested in rain falling gently in May, then June, July, August, September and the first week of October," the director said. But that has not been the case for a long time. "From 1970 up to now, there has been what you call normal precipitation in northern parts of Nigeria particularly north of the 12th latitude the director added. "This is very serious because in the past droughts used to come in a cycle of ten years. Just that this is the most severe but it is a duration that worries one. For the past 70 years this is the longest drought far. Now the question is, "Is this continuing? Have we now had a permanent change in our climate a weather, or is it going to go bad. Nobody knows."

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By Mahmud J.
and Adamu Adam



Omoruyi: bogged down by problems

CDS stews in own waste

Questionable financial dealings, nepotism, constitutional infringement, other undemocratic activities alleged.

Two scenarios were enacted in the evening of November 14 at different locations in the premises of the Centre for Democratic studies in sleepy Bwari, some 20-minutes drive from the nascent Federal Capital, Abuja. In the office of the Director-General on the first floor of the administration block, were seated in a semi-circle the DG, Professor Omo Omoruyi, his Director of Finance and Administration, Allkaji Mohammed Bahjatu Saleh on his right Professor J.A.A. Ayoade, Director of Studies and on his left facing the DG and backing the side entrance was his Director of Special Services, Dr. Adesina Sambo. Completing the semi-circle were relatively nondescript subordinates later introduced by the DG as "my information officers." The two were presented as members of the CDS team, but from the nervous glances of one of them and the way he stuttered there was no doubt that they were being 'court-marshalled' for some grievous offence. Later *Citizen* was able to find out that their 'crime' was that they had shown their lips too readily for the press to read about goings-on at the

centre.

Meanwhile at House No 13, adjacent to the red-bricked research building, Dr Umaru Hussaini, dropped Director of Finance and Administration, was holding court, flanked on both sides by few other senior staff, who saw themselves as having been "marginalised and made irrelevant" by the authorities "because we come from the wrong place." This "wrong place" happens to be the northern states. Dr. Hussaini, easily the most senior of them, was playing the role of a war commander presiding over a meeting that would work out strategies to deal with "the long drawn-out campaign of denigration" being waged against him and his colleagues.

What caused this frenzy of activities on Tuesday November 14, which would have passed off quietly like all other days before it was a normal telephone call by *Citizen* to the residence of Professor Omoruyi in the ministerial quarters of the town the previous Monday evening. The DG was not in but an aide took the call. Obviously, he exaggerated the import of the message when the professor returned home but

it helped all the same to get an interview for me at 7.30 am the next day. From this point on events moved rather unusually fast and every body caught up in there was just as excited.

The plot of the story began with a memorandum which some aggrieved officers of the CDS sent on April 20 to the secretary to the federal government alleging a breach of the constitutional requirement that employment in federal bodies reflect the federal character of the country, victimisation of people considered to be "outsiders," financial mismanagement, intrigues and other activities "unbecoming of a centre" that was set up to promote democratic behaviour. The petitioners warned in another memo dated October 10 that the CDS had deteriorated into a "centre for destructive studies or a centre for the promotion of anti-democratic attitudes. The leadership has reduced its objectives to outright victimisation, marginalisation, promotion of ethnic and religious divisions..."

The petitions alleged unfair treatment of the north in staffing; 70% of the senior staff are said to have come from



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Bendel State, incidentally the home State of the Director-General. 20 per cent came from Ogun and Oyo states while the rest, including the 11 northern states share the remaining 10%. Facts on the ground, which *Citizen* was able to see did bear out this skewed employment pattern in the centre. Out of five Directors, including the DG, who make up the management, only one, Alhaji Mohammed Bahjatu Saleh, is a northerner, from Bauchi state. The others are all southerners. But even so those who are not, have been long-standing acquaintances of the DG. This he admitted in an interview he granted *Citizen* at his residence.

Professor Omoruyi claimed that it was President Ibrahim Babangida who appointed the Director, not he. But certainly he recommended those officers whom he wanted to work with! Yes, but "on the basis of competence and ability to lead," he said. In the case of Professor Ayoade, what impressed the Director-General was the presidency of the Nigerian Political Science Association, NPSA which he holds. "We know him as the leader of a profession; he brings prestige to (CDS)' programmes," the DG said.

About Dr. Nwabuzor, he has this to say: "There is nobody as competent as he is in research in this country today." To him, Alhaji Mohammed Bahjatu Saleh, the only northerner in his management team, "is a first rate administrator." Dr Sambo, whom he taught in 1970/71 "is a first rate scholar" whereas Dr. Hussaini, dropped as Director of Finance and Administration in August, is simply "a young scholar" who "does not want to learn."

As far as Professor Omoruyi is concerned, he has more than made up for the 'unfair' treatment of the north in the recruitment of senior staff by taking more intermediate and junior staff from this part of the country. "Since we moved to Bwari," he said. Alhaji Mohammed Bahjatu, the Director of Finance and Administration, considered the DG's rubberstamp, agreed with him. "Between August (when he assumed his post at the centre) and now (November)," he said, "over 100 northerners were employed by me."

Dr. Hussaini, a pioneer officer of the CDS, seconded from Usman Dan Fodio University, Sokoto, where he was senior Lecturer

in Political Science, finds it difficult to believe that any 'balancing' has taken place. "It is very hard to convince me," he told *Citizen*, "that you have established a balance when you have five in the management board, the highest decision-making body, coming from the southern part of the country." To him you can't make up for the imbalance at that level "by recruiting cleaners and messengers from around here." He considers the situation at CDS absurd, moreso that it "is a very, very sensitive agency in the transition programme and I think it is not good for the centre and the transition..."

was to have begun last Monday, but it did not because, as he put it, "there are too many problems about who these candidates are. NEC has not cleared them. There are so many court injunctions." So it would appear that since August 4 when the workshop for the executives of the SDP and NRC took place in Abuja nothing else had been done. The botched workshop for party candidates would have been the first serious training programme since August 4. Yet the Authorities are claiming that "millions of Naira" have gone into training.

On research, Professor Omoruyi



Bahjatu Saleh: a rubber stamp?

He said that he was speaking out against "certain misdeeds which we think are giving this centre a bad name," as a matter of principle. "No personal motive propelled any one of us to write petitions," he said. "We are motivated by the purest of patriotic motives."

The outcome of this face-off between the leadership of the centre and aggrieved staff has been to divert attention from its stated goals as a research and training institute to that of management of self-induced crisis. However, the Director-General thinks things are as fine as ever. Training is proceeding well. A trainers' training programme ended in the second week of November in preparation for the local government elections on December 8. The training of party candidates

claimed that a lot of ground had been covered but he declined to say how much the volume of finished research works was available and at what cost. A sum of N1.6 million has been much touted but he denied it, saying all that the centre got for research projects was N1 million. The only research project which he specifically mentioned was the on-going one on the voter's profile. This is expected to be finished next month.

But the fact of the matter is that the centre has submitted to the presidency a list of research projects it claimed to have sponsored since September 1990; which would be completed in two years. These are political psychology of Nigerianism - national character study, given to University of Jos. This is to cost N1.5 million and will run

from September 1990-September 1991. Political evaluation of effecting of political transition programmes is given to Professor Amoda of University of Lagos at another N1.5 million. Usman Dan Fodio University is said to have been commissioned to do a study on religion and politics at a cost of N1.6 million. It will run for two years. Altogether these will be nine commissioned works distributed among six universities-Lagos, Sokoto, Benin, Ibadan and Jos-at a total cost of N10.79 million. Part-payment of N850,000 has already been made in this last quarter of 1990.

This N10.79 million apparently is part of the over N10 million which the centre is believed to have given some universities to carry out some research projects for it. Professor Omoruyi however denied that such money was ever given out. "Where is the money coming from?" he retorted when asked whether it was indeed true that he had commissioned some research projects at such a fantastic cost. "Have we even got that kind of money, even

Professor Omoruyi himself. He supposedly is directing three projects on political behaviour. For the three projects, N300,000 has been set aside. Other directing staff were reported to have collected already various sums ranging from N80,000 to N100,000 to N130,000. But some of them have denied this. For instance, Dr. Dan Mou, from Benue State, listed to have been given N120,000 for a project on military rule and the development of democratic culture in Nigeria and another N100,000 for leadership, political tolerance and democratic politics told *Citizen* in Abuja that he had not been given a single kobo. Some other directing staff have not yet assumed duty at the centre but they are also listed to have been paid money.

A hint of misuse of the centre's facilities is also seen. For instance, a director of the centre lodged a sister of his at Nicon Noga Hilton Hotel, on August 4, 1990 but passed her for a resource person employed by the centre. Her bill of N1,651 was charged to CDS account No. 1479. Also a friend

of his trusted staff. All the questions that have been raised about his running of the centre have been answered to the satisfaction of the secretary to the federal government, he told *Citizen*. Has the train been pulled back on the rail? Yes, Professor Omoruyi says.

But Dr. Hussaini does not think so. "Things have never been normal," he said. Except one could talk about deterioration of things. So what can be done to remedy the already bad situation? He just hopes that "the people who set up this place should know best what is to be done. We have put on the table before them the list of problems that are affecting this place and giving it a bad name. We do hope that the government takes proper steps to get things aright here. Things have de-railed."

Meanwhile, the toll is beginning to be felt by way of the exit of staff and number of offers already rejected. According to a source, qualified staff and resource persons, mainly from the north, though already given letters of appointment "are reluctant to come over because of the discriminatory policy of the centre." Resource persons who helped out the centre with the preparation of its first modules have been so frustrated that they have not bothered to come over again. Staff morale is downright low. For instance, the so-called dissident staff have been harassed through threats of eviction from our official residences and seizure of official cars." Malam Mohammed Ahmed Abdullahi, press officer still recuperating from a fatal accident last August, was told November 1 that he had up to December 1 to vacate the house he is living in and move into another one. But the fact is that no new one has been given him. Dr. Hussaini in another memo dated November 5, 1990, was threatened with "appropriate disciplinary measure" if he did not turn in the official vehicle allocated to him earlier in the year.

The conclusion of an outside source that the centre has been turned into one of "destructive studies" may be too alarmist but certainly, as another source said, "an arena of crisis" does exist and only "those who set it up all know how best to put things aright."

By Tawey Zakka

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Apart from these commissioned works, projects undertaken by staff of the centre were costed at another N3,962,000. This sum covered a "party democracy project," "local government election study," "national think Tank on New democratic charter and research mission" and "specialist research seminar on profile of party leaders." The eight researchers who would work on the first two would be paid N40,000 each as transport and accommodation allowances while each state research coordinator would collect N60,000 for 21 nights. Stationery purchase and publication of findings would cost N120,000.

For the rest of the year (October-December), N1,833,000 is said to be the cost of 23 research projects involving the centre's academic staff, including

of the same director stayed in the Hotel on August 4th and 5th incurring a bill of N3,413.50. Expectedly, of course, the official denied this irregularity. The director of finance, Alhaji Mohammed Bahjatu, claimed he did not know about it but assured that he would look into it. For the time being, this director keeps his post and the privileges that go with it. But another officer, a conference officer, has had his rank and salary reduced from EUSS 13 to 8 for committing similar irregularities and claiming a false qualification. His case perhaps is clear because he was found out and he owned up. Besides he was discovered to have been "over rated," his academic qualification being only the Interim Joint Matriculation Board (IJMB) examination pass result issued by Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Professor Omoruyi thinks there has been no misdemeanour on the part

Remembering Tukur

Leading radicals and academics gather in Zaria to remember their great leader.

The gathering was a radicals' who's who. Organising the memorial were the Ahmadu Bello University's fiery radicals in the Mahmud Tukur Memorial Committee (MTMC), led by Dr. Tanimu Abubakar of the department of English and Bashir Usman Kurfi of the department of Business Administration. The MTMC had snatched the memorial from the ABU's huge Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS); three months before Dr. Mahmud Tukur's death on November 15th, 1988 he had been elected the dean of FASS in a hotly contested election. FASS wanted to remember him on 15th November, this year, but the current dean, Professor Dalhatu Mohamed, said he was glad to leave things in the hands of the MTMC.

Presiding over the occasion was professor Saror, the deputy vice Chancellor (academics) of the ABU, who tried to calm the atmosphere by thanking the government for its "good gesture" in lifting the ban on ASUU last August. He then urged the nation's academics to accept the "golden opportunity" and work "constructively" for the good of the country.

Not many in the large gathering seemed to agree with professor Saror. The guest speech was delivered by Professor Toye Olorode of the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, who only a week before was reinstated to his academic position by a court order, having been compulsorily retired by the Federal Government. Professor Olorode and Dr. Idowu Awopetu, also of the OAU, had spent three months in detention soon after the abortive April 22 coup, for alleged incitement. None of these bitter experiences has mellowed Professor Olorode. He argued in his speech that the crisis engulfing Nigeria today has nothing to do with lack of ideas, which flow abundantly. The nation's academics, he said, must engage in discussing correct and usable solutions to

problems. Academic criticism does not even carry the responsibility to offer a suggestion, Olorode said, although he noted that most academic criticism in Nigeria does offer suggestions anyway. He praised the late Dr. Tukur for taking ASUU into the NLC, "thereby cementing the alliance of workers and intellectuals which this regime had to dissolve by decree."

Also speaking at the occasion was Mr. Alao Aka-Bashorun, radical lawyer and former president of the Nigeria Bar Association (NBA). The essence



Tukur: a martyr

of Dr. Mahmud Tukur, he said, was his correct perception of the value of developing intellectual resources over all else. Germany and Japan, Mr. Aka-Bashorun said, achieved their current superpower status despite the paucity of material resources, only because of their unusually high investment in developing human resources. Dr. Tukur, he said, knew this and fought to achieve the freest atmosphere in the Universities, which is necessary in order to develop human resources to the fullest. "The nation must also accommodate the Universities' mistakes," the lawyer said, "since these form an integral part of the develop-

ment process."
Dr. Beko Ransome-Kuti, president of the Committee for the Defence of Human Rights (CDHR), was also present at the occasion. In his brief speech, he said no one must thank the government for lifting the ban on ASUU. "You may thank a person for extending to you a privilege," Ransome-Kuti said, "but not for a right. No one gives rights. No one must deny our freedoms to associate."

The current President of ASUU, Dr. Attahiru Jega, in a brief speech, also recalled the great legacy bequeathed to ASUU by its late leader, and promised that the Union will continue to be guided by it. One of the fairest speeches at the occasion was delivered by Dr. Shehu Umar Abdullahi of Bayero University, Kano. The lecturer

condemned academics who engaged in a "conspiracy of silence" to cover up for the "pro-American, pro-Zionist Babangida regime." When the Chairperson, Professor Saror, intervened to say, Professor Saror, Dr. Abdullahi retorted that "God appreciates fighting America more than ordinary praying."

To round up the occasion, a book, "The Essential Mahmud," containing the major works of the late academician and unionist, was launched by Mr. Aka-Bashorun. It is already on sale at the cost of N58 per copy.

By Mahmud Jega

Journalists, Police flex muscles

Newsman and the police in Kaduna are on the war path, which in itself is not surprising. Traditionally, the policeman and the news reporter have not been the best of friends. In Kaduna, however, the two professions have been careful not to let things go sour between them. For years that tenuous relationship had held. It was not uncommon to find journalists and police officers sharing drinks and jokes. But last week the police broke the undeclared truce, bundling into detention three journalists in the daily *Democrat*.

The paper had carried a story on November 2 about nurses at Ahmadu Bello University Teaching Hospital in Kaduna who protested the presence of armed policemen on the grounds of the hospital. Apparently the law enforcement agents had gone over there to investigate an alleged misdemeanor by a nurse who gave an injection to a child patient. Somehow something went wrong with the treatment and the small girl became paralysed in her lower limbs. The father of the girl happened to be a security guard in the residence of an in-law of President Ibrahim Babangida's, Chief Sonny Okogwu.

The police and the president's brother-in-law sent rejoinders to the newspaper denying what role the story might have imputed to them. Later the police followed up with the arrest of *The Democrat's* acting editor, a reporter and photographer. *Citizen*, which published the story a week later, had its Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Hajija Bilkiisu Yusuf taken away and quizzed by security agents for two days. But on each of those two days she was interrogated for few hours and let go.

The reaction of the local branch of the Nigeria Union of Journalists, NUJ, was to use the only 'weapon' at its disposal: a boycott of the police. A statement which the union's local secretary, Adamu Marshal, gave out last week asked journalists to "boycott forthwith and until further notice all police activities in the state. It complained about "the indiscriminate arrests, intimidation and detention of its (NUJ) members while performing their legitimate duties." The union said that it believed in the need for "mutual working relationship between the police and journalists" but it warned that the "brazen violation of... freedom of expression" of its members



Hajiji Aliyu Attah,
Inspector General of Police

was unacceptable.

The boycott order was followed with a threat to withdraw "professional privileges" from any journalist who broke the sanction access to facilities in the NUJ's clubhouse, including coverage of press conferences. In the past such threats had been given but they all had been ineffectual. A journalist's loyalty, first and foremost, is to his employers. And if they say to go ahead and cover the police, it is clear who he will listen to: his employers, not the union.

By Tawey Zakka

NIGERIA-IN-BRIEF

Bendel: A study on children carried out by the Civil Liberties Organisation, (CLO), in Benin Bendel State, indicate that there is a growing number of children with mental illness. With in the last few years it has increased by 375% due to the harsh economic climate. Although the CLO admits that the report may not be accurate for lack of statistical data in Benin, other projections made by the World Health Organisation (WHO) suggest that such an increase is possible. The CLO said that the average of four children registered monthly for mental treatment at the University of Benin Teaching Hospital (UBTH), a few years ago has now risen to fifteen.

Sokoto: The Usman Dan Fodio University, Sokoto, is increasingly being abandoned by its lecturers. Investiga-

tions carried out by some media organisation revealed that virtually all departments of the University are affected by staff exodus. The report also stated that this development is severely affecting the performance of the students, especially at the law school. No reason has yet been given for the exodus.

Lagos: Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the renowned anti-apartheid activist and president of All-African Conference of Churches will arrive Nigeria on Saturday on a five-day visit to the country. While in the country he will pay a courtesy call on President Babangida besides other pastoral activities he shall perform.

* The Chief of Army Staff, Lieutenant General Salihu Ibrahim has accused some officers and men of the Nigerian

Army of aiding armed robbers and smugglers. Addressing troops of the 9 mechanised quarters at the Ikeja cantonment, he said that some army personnel loan out their uniforms to armed robbers and help outsiders keep goods, especially vehicles, in the barracks. General Salihu also said that all civilians resident in the barracks would be flushed out as they have made the army barracks unduly populated.

Plateau: Plateau State has been declared the highest debtor State in the federation with a mountainous debt of N4.6 billion. Speaking on the Plateau Radio and Television Corporation, the State Finance Commissioner, Hajiji Safiyanu Alkalikayi said that the creditors included, external creditors, local banks, and contractors.

AFRICA

Niger goes democracy !

The people's voice has triumphed after a prolonged wave of violent protests.

The wave of multi-party democracy which has been drifting across West-African countries this year has extended to Niger Republic. Two weeks ago, President Ali Seibou declared his support for the adoption of a multi-party system in his country. While now allowing for the emergence of an opposition Party to his National Movement for Society and Democracy, the sole party in the country, he said that opting against the extant one party system arose from the fact that the existence of other parties would beget a better manifestation and representation of diverse opinions. President Ali Seibou's capitulation came only after a prolonged wave of violent protests by students and student unionists in which some people lost their lives. The unrests led to the closure of the University of Niamey for several weeks and a threatened general strike by the country's trade unions.

Backing his choice in an address to government and parliament members in Niamey, the country's capital, General Seibou disclosed that following the set-up of new political parties a national conference would be organ-

ised to deliberate on the political future of the country. The President, who was handed a new draft constitution prepared by a social committee headed by Niger's Minister of Justice spoke of the need to politick in good faith. He, therefore, warned that a multi-party system should not herald incidents of inter-group violence.

The president's warning may be evaluated as apt for a country that has alternated between democratic and military regimes, or that also termed 'military-democracy'. Niger republic experienced a civilian government for 14 years when, abiding by its November 1960 constitution which provides

President. Like his predecessor, he governed Niger under the guise of a civilian and through a state that was now largely defined as a one party system, giving the existence of the NMSD.

Niger has thus, thrived in this complex fashion since 1974, that is, appearing like a one-party civilian system while it is actually being ruled by the military. The country's fairly intricate status was compounded by a general election held last year in which General Seibou was declared president, vying under the NMSD party.

For a nation that has been governed by the military for over 16 years, the

Although no specific dates were given for the new political option, observers wonder too what the president's declaration portends for Niger whose general elections are due in 1994.

for Universal Suffrage, Hamani Diori became the nation's first president. He was ousted in a coup that brought in Seyni Kountche in 1974. On assuming office, Kountche banned all parties in existence in Niger at that time. His 12 year military rule came to an end in 1987 when he died of brain tumour at the age of 54 years.

During his regime, however, Kountche who addressed himself as President created the National Movement for Society and Democracy (NMSD). He ruled through the Supreme Military Council, and the NMSD which cannot be described as a genuine political party. Following his death, General Ali Seibou, the incumbent president, was elected by the supreme Military Council to take on the role of

proposed multi-party democracy is best regarded as a remarkable change pregnant with questions. To begin with, some political analysts think President Seibou's pronouncement should only be taken seriously when indeed opposing political parties emerge. Although no specific dates were given for the new political option, observers wonder too what the president's declaration portends for Niger whose general elections are due in 1994. Is a multi-party system to come before 1994 or would the next general elections introduce the system? Would the present government sincerely pave way for fair elections, bearing in mind what has obtained in countries like Liberia, Togo and Guinea Bissau where military Heads of State also turned around to become Presidents in supposedly civilian regimes?

Whatever it turns out to be, General Seibou's support for, and his willingness to entrench a multi-party democracy in Niger is another signal of the increasing agitation of West African countries to abrogate a one-party system.

By Delia Nzekwu



Seibou: democratising Niger Republic

South Africa:

Dousing the fire?

Mandela and F.W. de Klerk have agreed to meet over black on black violence that has so far claimed several lives.

After months of foot dragging, the South African government finally announced that President F.W. de Klerk and the African National Congress (ANC) deputy leader, Nelson Mandela would meet this week to discuss the differences over their interpretations of the cease fire agreement reached between the government and the ANC to suspend violence which may yet put the peace negotiation between them on a course.

The cease-fire agreement had been a bone of contention between the government and the ANC leaders. Nelson Mandela had consistently accused the government security forces of aiding supporters of *Inkatha Freedom Party* to kill and maim ANC supporters. Irked by the government complicity the ANC leader said although his organisation had suspended armed struggle, it would step up its campaign to end apartheid through other means including boycotts, strikes and demonstrations. The speech came after another demonstration in Johannesburg in which two men died and twenty others were injured during a violent confrontation between the police and the protesters.

The fighting between the Inkatha and the ANC groups which began in the Natal province and had spread to other parts of the townships recorded the highest death toll of some eight hundred people who were hacked to death in townships around Johannesburg between August and September.

The meeting this week between President F.W. de Klerk and the ANC deputy leader, Nelson Mandela beside the discussion on the cease fire agreement is also expected to explore further avenues to hasten the complete dismantling of apartheid. Some of the issues likely to be discussed are the abolition of the Land Act which since 1913 had given 87% of most of the fertile lands in the Transvaal and Orange Free states exclusively to white farmers, leaving the rest 13%, mainly arid for the blacks most of who are squatters on the farms owned by the

whites and as a result faced eviction anytime.

Another area that may be discussed is the constitutional framework under which all the people of South Africa will have equal right of representation. At the moment the electoral right is guaranteed to whites, the Indians and the coloureds who between them operate bi-cameral parliamentary system. The blacks who number about 24 million have no rights to vote. The whites legislate for the interests of the blacks or rather for the interests of the whites only. The government of de Klerk took the interest to heart when it proposed poll reform that would reserve minority rights for the whites but will give a semblance of voting rights to the majority of the blacks.

Mandela has opposed any constitutional reform that would give minority rights to the whites saying that his organisation would not use apartheid to end apartheid. To him therefore, it is one man, one vote. But it is feared that the whites are not yet ready to accept the idea of one man one vote that would see them losing political power to the majority blacks who by their numerical strength would win outrightly.

It is this inability of de Klerk government to come to terms with ANC political proposal that have made Mr Mandela to accuse it of duplicity saying that it talked about reforms but had no desire to relinquish whites' political and economic power. The outcome of the summit will show how much ground the government would give since their last meeting. Both parties met twice previously, in May and in August, where the ANC made a major concession by agreeing to suspend its armed struggle. The concession has been seen as a boost towards a full realisation of constitutional talks for a new South Africa.

The government on its part had agreed to free some political prisoners some of whom had been set free since then. It has also abrogated some of the security laws that had been the corner



Mandela: (top) de Klerk meeting for peace

stone of apartheid for years. For example the Separate Amenities Act was repealed. It desegregated the beaches, swimming pools and public parks and opened them up to all the races. But this reform had not met with the expectation of the blacks. Some of the city councils had priced these public places out of reach of most of the blacks who are very poor, while laws were made to guide the use of the swimming pools, parks etc by the blacks. Observers say, the government must do more than repealing the act; it must see to the implementation of the new reform, if the blacks must benefit from it.

On the whole, observers are of the opinion that real peace in South Africa may be a long way for now in so far as the blacks continue their factional fighting while the anti apartheid groups refuse to come together to present a common front against apartheid, such a decision would suit apostles of apartheid and have them beat their chests with the satisfying feeling that blacks can never manage themselves.

By Abu Mommoth.

Citizen

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WORLD

Europe:

Talking peace, war

Thirty-two heads of state and governments converged in Paris to paper over the cracks in Europe's Security wall, they also talked of war in other parts of the world especially in the Gulf.

The three-day European Security Conference which ended in Paris last Wednesday has been dubbed, significantly, the "opening of a new era for Europe". France's President Francois Mitterand, speaking on the last day of the conference, said the 32 European countries, the U.S. and Canada, which took part in it "share a heritage of common values". On the surface, its greatest achievement would seem to be the Paris charter or "New Europe" charter, a 21-page document declaring human rights to be the first responsibility of governments. Specifically it upholds free speech, political pluralism, free market economy and rule of law. More than this, it effectively ends the cold war between East and West, which death knell, in any case, had long been tolled by the Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, when he accepted the unification of the two old Germanys last September. Rightly, he stole much of the show from the other three big players: President George Bush, President Francois Mitterand and Chancellor Helmut Kohl. All three dropped their pride to concede to Gorbachev the singular achievement of setting off the tornado of political pluralism that swept away decadent and totalitarian communist regimes of Eastern Europe, first in Poland, then Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Romania. And now even within the Soviet Union, Gorbachev's *perestroika* and *glasnost* have ignited waves of political agitations in the various republics that make up the union.

The conference had earlier on Monday signed a treaty on reduction of conventional forces in Europe (CFE), which took 20 months to prepare. Twenty-two nations were involved in

the talks, aimed at substantially reducing the arsenals amassed during the cold war years. Under the treaty, the

good decision-maker with 40 years of experience."

Even the Paris charter, which confer-



Gorbachev: stole the show from the other players.

Soviet Union will have to destroy 90,000 pieces of military hardware, and NATO 10,000 in 40 months. It sets a ceiling for both East and West of 20,000 tanks, 20,000 pieces of artillery, 30,000 armed combat vehicles, 6,800 fighter aircraft and 2,000 helicopters.

Politicians are shaking hands and beating their chests for making this break-through but their military commanders do not appear to share their enthusiasm. Treaties, NATO's military commander, General John Calvin, has been quoted as saying, are mere pieces of paper and that it takes structures, not just something "signed on paper in order to keep the peace in the future". He is making a case for retaining the 16-member western military alliance. This is what he has to say: "CSCE is a good forum for communications ... and confidence building steps. But NATO is a tremendously

ence participants hailed as having gone further than any previous international agreement, including the 15-year-old Helsinki accord, in its commitment to "free speech, free elections, free market economy", does have its defects. After all, as one European commentator said, it is not binding on governments. It is no more than a declaration of intent, and so it will remain! The smallest of the 34 countries that took part in the conference did not show the same satisfaction as did their more developed partners. If anything they left Paris fearing that the old political and military divisions have been levelled only to be replaced just as immediately by economic divisions.

Though the theme of the conference was security of Europe, even before it got under way, it was clear that leaders like President Bush of the United

States were there for something else. The American leader managed to push the Gulf crisis to the top of the agenda and during the deliberation it easily overshadowed what had been meant to be the conference theme. He wanted to press for an agreement on the military option which he felt was what has to be used to force Iraqi president Saddam Hussein to take his forces out of Kuwait, occupied since August 2.

Before the conference President Bush sent his Secretary of State, Mr. James Baker on a diplomatic shuttle to 15 countries to sound them out on the possible use of force. The Americans did manage to get France and the Soviet Union, two major European nations suspected to be rather soft on Hussein, to "agree conceptually" on the need to take a firmer stand on Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. That was how far they went with Gorbachev and Mitterand. Moscow said it wanted further consultations on how to make the previous 10 United Nations Security Council resolutions on the Gulf Crisis more effective. It urged "extreme caution" on the military option.

The United States is to hand over to Yemen, a traditional Iraqi ally, the presidency of the Security Council in two weeks' time. Before it does that President Bush wants to secure a reso-



Bush: schemed out the main theme.



Mitterand: under the shadow of Gorbachev.

lution setting a definite deadline for Iraqi withdrawal and a threat to use force after that. If he had succeeded in taking Gorbachev along, that would have boosted his position, made clear by last week's announcement that the US was increasing the multi-national force in the Gulf by 250,000 troops. The force now stands at 370,000, with the US alone providing 230,000 of them. In quick response, Iraq said too that it would deploy 250,000 more troops to bolster its armies in occupied Kuwait. The Iraqi News Agency reported that

the new deployment would increase Iraqi "superiority to its required level and leaves no room for others to try to match".

The European Security Conference provided another forum for the Americans to try to isolate Iraq the more. But they did not fare as well as they did at the UN, which they found easier to bully. Moscow's rebuff should more than drum in the lesson that Uncle Sam cannot have it all his way!

By Tawey Zakka.

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Gulf:

No war, no peace

George Bush tours the Middle East, but there is more uncertainty regarding what he will do in the Gulf crisis.

Fresh from the Paris summit of the 34 leaders of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe last week, President George Bush flew to the Middle East to see what he could do with the biggest thorn in his presidential flesh. The Paris summit may have formally ended the cold war, but it had not done much to contain the war threatening to engulf the Persian gulf.

In Saudi Arabia, the main staging area for the massive anti-Saddam military effort, Mr Bush discussed with King Fahd the possibility of an offensive campaign to oust the Iraqis from Kuwait. Mr Bush also met with Sheikh Jaber as-Sabah Ibn Abdullah, the exiled Emir of Kuwait, who now has little say in the matter. The Saudis, who have a lot of say, have become less eager for a war in recent weeks. Two weeks ago, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud met in Damascus with his Syrian and Egyptian counterparts, at the end of which the three main Arab nations in the anti-Saddam front issued a statement insisting upon a peaceful resolution of the Gulf crisis. The three nations, however, could not agree with an initiative in the same direction sponsored by Moroccan King Hassan. King Hassan had two weeks ago called for an emergency Arab summit to work out a peaceful resolution of the crisis. Iraqi President Saddam Hussein said he will agree to the summit idea only if it will agree to abrogate the decisions of the Arab summit of last August, which authorised the despatch of troops to Saudi Arabia to defend it against a possible Iraqi invasion. Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia dismissed the Iraqi demand, and said any summit will be a "waste of time" unless Iraq agrees in advance to "respect all the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council".

President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, who visited Syria two weeks ago to

discuss the Gulf crisis with President Hafez al-Assad, compounded the general uncertainty when he afterwards called on President Bush not to go to war against Iraq for another three months. The ostensible reason for the grace period was to allow Saddam time to agree to pull out of Kuwait. Many observers noted, however, that three months is the time needed by the United States to deploy an extra 150,000 troops in the Gulf and to obtain another security council resolution authorising the use of force in the

Gulf. February is also the time of the year when the weather in the northern Gulf is most appropriate for large-scale military operations.

It was by no means certain last week that Mr Bush will fight even after those 3 months. For one, American military strategists now admit that the Iraqi army is much stronger than they originally thought; even with another 150,000 troops to supplement the current multinational force of some 300,000, the anti-Saddam alliance falls far short of the three-to-one numerical advantage traditionally required for offensive military action. Some experts at the American Institute of Strategic Studies predict that a war against Saddam will last 6 months and cost up to 40,000 American casualties. To worsen matters, the Iraqis have now ordered the reinforcement of their occupation army in Kuwait by 250,000 men.

The spectre of a long and costly war has already aroused the US Congress up in arms against President Bush.



Saddam Hussein: becoming a thorn in Bush's skin.

Many congressmen are clamouring for an emergency session of the Congress, now on recess, to debate Gulf policy. At issue was whether the president could commit US troops to a major war without congressional sanction under the constitution and the War Powers Act of 1973. Last week, 100 congressmen led by California Democrat Richard Dellums filed a suit in court seeking an order to compel the President to seek a congressional declaration of war before commencing any action against Iraq. Mr Dellums said that the power to commit the country to war must not be vested in just one person. From Paris, Mr Bush described the suit as "unnecessary" and repeated that he has not decided yet to launch a war.

When President Bush met with his troops in Saudi Arabia last week, he told them that they will remain there until the Iraqis pull out of Kuwait. It is possible that meant the troops will remain right where they now are.

By Mahmud Jega.



KABIRU YUSUF

The squandering of riches (II)

A 27-year-old man got married recently. Before he was born his father had died in a tragic motor crash. His grandfather, a well-known socialist and a political chieftain, more or less, brought him up. He too did in 1987, leaving the then law student doubly orphaned. But do not weep for Segun Awolowo, because last week, when he took a wife, strappy-eyed society reporters described him as, "Nigeria's most eligible bachelor". They compared the wedding carnival which took place in two towns (Ijebu-Ode and Ikenne) with that of Prince Charles and Lady Diana of Britain in 1982. It was easier, from the newspaper reports, to single out the names of the men of "timber and calibre" and the women of silk and sapphire, who did not attend the wedding, than to mention those who died. In short it was high society as its loudest, complete with the throbbing tunes of Shina Peters, Sunny Ade and Ebenezer Obey.

Since *Citizen* was not invited to the grand occasion, I am forced to rely on second hand reports. The splash done by our colleagues at *Classique* seemed comprehensive. Going by their claims, it was also the most authoritative since the editor said in the preface, that "Segun (Awolowo) kept me in-

formed, from time to time, about his wedding plans". This is more than most society reporters can say.

So according to this reliable source, the wedding between Chief Awolowo's eldest and best known grandson and his cousin Bola Fowora on Saturday November 10, cost "about N2.5 million." Dont say SAP! yet. The report said Chief Awolowo's widow, Mrs H.I.D. Awolowo "bankrolled" the whole wedding. This included the cost of wedding apparels, shopping sprees abroad and food and drinks served. The bride's gown alone cost about N150,000 excluding the flight ticket and (other expenses) to Philliphines where it was sown after two trips. Segun Awolowo's suit was bought in London at a princely sum of N6,000, his shoes for N3,750. His best man, Sola Braithwaite, wore the same attire and during the course of the two-day ceremony, the bride and groom changed dresses six times!

Among the various gifts received by the couple, was an all-expense paid honeymoon in Geneva from an uncle, which is estimated to cost N200,000 (A room at the Geneva Noga Hilton, you see, sets you back by N5,000 a night).

There were various cash gifts and the Ooni of Ife gave them gold

cutlery sets. After the honeymoon, Segun said he plans to buy a lambourghini Countache. "Thats my dream car... It will cost about £160,000". (You can multiply that by a modest 15 if you care to calculate the naira value).

Why the interest in the wedding of a 27 year old chap? Well, for one, ordinary people are always curious about the rich. But in some ways also, Segun Awolowo's wedding has political undertones. All the Yoruba chiefs were either present or they sent representatives. Chief Awolowo's old lieutenants were also there. So was Tom Ikimi, NRC chairman, and Baba Gana Kingibe, SDP chairman. The Grandson of one of Nigeria's most enduring political leaders was getting wed. There is a lot of expectation that the young man may someday step into the shoes of the late chief.

When Prince Charles married Lady Diana, there were complaints in the British Press and Parliament about the sheer waste of the royal wedding. To be sure Segun and his family are private citizens. But still, an important political family in Nigeria, should not blow away millions of Naira to wed its siblings, without a whimper from anywhere. May be someone can come up with a new script.

Citizen

SOCIETY

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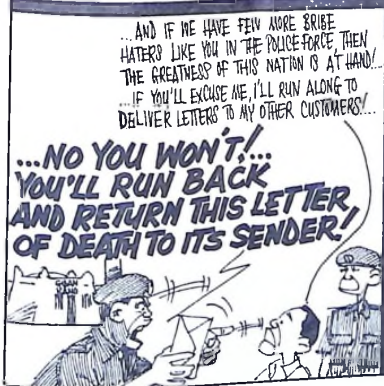
Stationery Stores triumphed over Rangers at the just concluded FA Cup final.

TAR TAR



Citizenship

By Dakun Abloye



Mohammed Aliyu

ADAMU ADAMU S

DEFINITIONS
IN HUMOUR

Ma-great

I had just returned from a journey late Thursday when someone ran up to break the news to me — Margaret Thatcher had resigned. Great Hoofs! What of it? I was expecting it anyway. When you were taking so many important decisions and always so self-righteously (that is with soft and even likable arrogance) and you went on to fail to get a two-third of your parliament with you, why? There is only one road to take — the highway to resignation. Maggie must be congratulated for not waiting long enough to be bloodied, defeated and dumped. Thank her too for the admirable display of sagacity in abandoning her earlier pledge — to fight to the end, to fight to win and to stay in No. 10 Downing Street for a long time to come. She will stay there for a long time to come, no doubt — if she doesn't her picture at least will. Or where is the gallery of the great?

Now, of course she will lighten her account with the angels. Remember their backward reading and the domination that I predicted? I was wrong. The *iron lady* — oops, *butler lady* now — will not have any Arab blood on her hands. But — you must be wondering also — will Bush? Now, who was that clapping that Maggie was gone? Wait till you see who comes. I for one doff — well I have no cap on, so what do I doff? Okay, I doff my off to the greatest British Prime Minister.

She might have snatched the milk from toddlers but she taught their

parents not to expect anything for nothing. I wish we could learn this lesson, too. She brought efficiency to British industry. She fought two wars one in Falklands, the other in Brixton; and she won them both.

She discovered the North Sea Oil. If she didn't, she at least made good use of it in the fight against OPEC. Better give her her due credit for the death — or coma — of the cartel. She was honest. On South Africa she openly spoke and did what others only wished they could do or did so in the dark. She did all the great things. The only thing she didn't do was to make Britain independent of America. But why should she? It would have been stupid if she undid her own h. What is good for Britain is not necessarily good for me of course, but it is certainly not necessarily the worst, or it is? Who among her predecessors has accomplished what she has done for Britain — minus its underclass, that is.

Winston Churchill? — Made great by war, made small by peace.

Clement Atlee — *A sheep in sheep's clothing.* Ha! ha! I didn't say that. It was Churchill who did.

Harold Wilson — The congenial old man. The other day I thought of writing a book on espionage — **The Spycat**, I wanted to title it, I would take off where Peter Wright left off. Wilson of course will *wright* the preface for me. He will not refuse.

Edward Heath? — What a turncoat? When Maggie was sending the boys, bombardiers and bombs to Riyadh, Ted took a cageful of doves to Saddam. What a betrayal!

No, Maggie beats them all. What of the

successors?

Michael Hazy-tine? — His vision, as his name shows, will be *hazy*, his domestic politics *hazier*, and his foreign policy *haziest* of all.

Douglas Hard? — There are three types of people you must avoid — the mean, the *hard* and the heartless.

John Major? — The Major problem with John is that he is the major problem

Geoffery Howe? — How the mighty are scared!

Margaret Thatcher — For once let's call her as the majority of English Tory will wish to remember her — *Ma-great* Thatcher. And Dennis has only *sined*.

But what does that mean? Perhaps it means resigned.

Back Home

Akapa — Someone asked me what I thought of Akapa. I didn't tell him anything because I hadn't thought of Akapa. But even without thinking I can say "a car park" journalism is not an honourable variant of my profession.

Liberia — When you criticised past Soviet systems, they sent you to Si-beria. Now you might go to Liberia. Liberia can also be written as *Liberia* and defined as the place where lies are told — in or about.

Sawyer — In Chicago they recently had their *Uncle Tom Sawyer*. Who are we having in Monrovia?

Disengaged — I wish to tell readers the bad news that I have been disengaged by the Editorial Board of *Citizen* from writing Definitions in Humour. Since I haven't retired I'll see you next week!

PRIVATE EYE

Statues of oppression

Any tourist to the United States of America, God's own country will get to hear about the statue of liberty standing tall in the New York harbour to welcome visitors to the "land of freedom." It is the symbol of American celebration of the liberty they found in the "new land" to which the early migrants went. Ironically that liberty was abused when the whites exterminated the aborigines of America - the red Indians - into near extinction. The very few survivors of this racist tyranny are now confined to red Indian reserves in the so-called heart land of freedom, human rights and democracy.

I can now tell you that another Statue of "Liberty" - no relation of the American one - reared its head in our own dear country. But then you may wonder what's in a statue?

There is nowhere this question is very relevant in the past month than in the sunshine state of Lamido where a four-metre high statue weighing about ten tons disappeared without a trace. And for avoiding the thought of what has happened to this public property my scouts told me is the beginning of wisdom for officials in this multi-ethnic state.

Not long ago the very radical and outspoken governor who once administered the state thought of how to beautify the cities and towns. Memos

went up and down cabinets. In the end the governor decided that statues would not be offensive to anyone. So he went out and invited sculptors who did a very good job of their assignment.

They erected statues which they believed had historical significance to the



state, cows, cattle rearers and what have you. One of such statues was that of a charging warrior on horseback which adorned a very prominent roundabout in the city which is so popular for its Savannah brown sugar. A replica of the statue still welcomes every visitor to the state capital.

The statue was indeed an artist's delight and worth the 45,000 Naira pre-SFEM cost, but my scouts told me this statue has not made an impression on the indigenes of the town throughout its existence. To them, I am told, it evoked memories of inter-tribal wars which created the ancient empires and

made slaves of the vanquished.

What irked them is not that slaves were made of them. No. They were not actually conquered before the white man came.

The resentment, I can now tell you is over the imposition of the statue of a warrior against whom they parted equally in past clashes. But they have not missed any opportunity to point out the indiscretion by officials who could insult them in this way.

So the statue was left there staring at the indigenes like a Frankenstein until late last month when some indigenes found a final and hopefully a permanent solution to its obnoxious presence.

One early morning, indigenes woke up and found to their relief that their statue had disappeared. Into the thin air you might say? But my ever busy scouts said the immobile statue neither developed wings nor suddenly became mobile. It was uprooted and transported and thrown into the belly of the River Benue which is now its final resting place?

The police are still looking for the persons who so cruelly defaced public property to be charged with whatever it was that those who throw offending statues are charged with.

My scouts however say no offender might be found and I agree entirely. Think of the emotions this could further evoke and add that to the numerous communal clashes that had claimed so many lives and property this year alone and you can see why even the police would this time around let sleeping dogs lie.

The Barons

Baron Madauri: It is feasible. The other side is also thinking along similar lines. Yesterday I had an interesting discussion with Baron Nabadun (of Ibadan) and Baron Na-Anugu (of Enugu) and we all agreed to initiate discussion on bringing the leaders of the political parties together - here in the prison yard.

Baron Nababa: Did you say here? It is a bit foolhardy to engage in such pursuit with all the security surrounding us. You know, I was once minister of internal affairs, in charge of prisons etc.

Baron Nagogo: We, Hausas, have a saying - *In zaka gina ramin mugunta, ka gina gajere* - While digging a hole intended for an opponent or enemy, make it shallow in case you are pushed into it! Now here is an ex-

minister in charge of prisons being a prisoner himself!

Baron Nababa: Shut up. I am not the only ex-internal affairs minister who is confined in this prison. My immediate successor, Baron Na-Alkali is also here. The irony of it is that our principal advisers - the permanent secretaries have not been subjected to any maltreatment - although a few have been retired from service by the military junta; others have been retained or even promoted.

Baron Na-Alkali: What happened to our common Permsec, Baron Nababa? He travelled overseas just before the military take-over. Where is he now?

Baron Nababa: Honestly I do not know.

Baron Maiyasin: Let us not digress from the main issue - unity talk. Madauri had already got some feelers from our former opponents - for we are now comrades - we should capi-

talise on this. I suggest, after the Isha prayers we should meet the other group who are in Kirikiri. Our decision will be communicated to our colleagues confined in other prisons.

Baron Maiseja: Baron Nababa warned us to be extra-careful especially now that the military boys are getting tougher. Some ex-civilian governors have been tried and sentenced to many years in jail. Our colleague in Kano had been jailed to a total of 200 years. This is madness.

Baron Nakawu: No! It is better to languish in jail than to be executed by firing squad. I was reliably informed by my brother an army officer, that the young turks in the military wanted all of us to be shot after a trial in a Kangaroo court but the senior military officers managed to persuade them to settle for long sentences, at least 22 calendar years for each offence. The ex-governor of Kano must have at least 10 so-called criminal charges against him to bag a prison sentence of over 200 years!

EATING OUT

Howzat Edikangikong?

The taste of the pudding is in the eating.

Lagos is one city I will never get used to. I frequent it more than I like and on my last trip there to attend a conference I added a little more to my garment's knowledge of the country's restaurants Eating Out is a novelty for me only when it is convenient for my rather nomadic schedule. Conference over, I took leave of delegates and headed to the airport with a stop over at the Citizen office in Ikeja. Traffic was rather heavy and using the shortest route it took us one hour twenty minutes to reach the office.

Kabiru Yusuf, the executive editor (south), a versatile person has acclimated to the hustle and bustle of Lagos. By the time we had completed discussions on the routine issues that keep Citizen alive adverts, cover stories etc. the afternoon was already older by hours and he suggested eating out before catching my late afternoon flight back to Kaduna. We made our way to Allen Avenue, the choice and lively business district in hitherto serene Ikeja. "I am taking you to a place that serves good food although it is not exactly Sheraton." He kept the name of the restaurant to himself until we arrived at a three storey building on Allen Avenue. We went up three flights of stairs, stopped at the corridor of the well lit top floor to inspect some magazines on display alongside a show case of Akwete fabrics all for sale. A saloon and gift shop occupy half of the floor. We turned to the left and entered a rather quiet restaurant called *The Kitchen*, where we were welcomed by a waiter in a wine coloured uniform.

We found a corner seat with the help of a cheerful waitress service was promptly rendered by a heavily built waiter whom Kabiru jokingly suggested would have made a fantastic bouncer in a night club. We scan the menu to make our selection. The list of hot starters did not make a hit with me but in the end I settled for shrimps cocktail, a cold starter. Kabiru omitted it, convinced perhaps that he required no starters to prop up his already sharp appetite.

We moved to the main course which was short and realistic. For clients with a taste for continental dishes you had chicken, vegetables and potatoes

served with white sauce. The alternative were the usual Nigerian dishes, Pounded Yam or Eba served with Okro, Spinach, Idikan ikong with assorted meat. Aha! this is an opportunity for me to try this edikangikong, reputed to be the richest and nutritious vegetable soup from Cross Rivers, I thought. I asked the waiter whether they include perinkles in the ingredients. I couldn't stand the thought of eating (am told they are eaten with a sucking tongue action) small untreated snails, cooked shell and all. Just the sight of the slimy creatures would have ruined the sharpest appetite I might have. "No perinkles madam" was the waiter's relieving response to my inquiries. I asked Kabiru whether he had tried it before, "Well, I did, you try it too then you'll be able to judge but 'am having okro in-

It tasted flat. It lacked the flavour of meat or fish you get from a vegetable soup.

stead." So we ordered pounded yam with edikangikong for me and okro for Kabiru. We sat back to wait for our meal sipping our bitter lemon. *The Kitchen* is a small restaurant with soft coloured interior decor. The painted cane bar was stylishly furnished. We were discussing the incredible prices of items in the exclusive shops on Allen Avenue and wondering when the civil servants will ever be able to walk into them not to window shop but to actually buy when the waiter returned. "Madam sorry pounded yam is finished but if you don't mind waiting for thirty minutes, it will soon be ready." I looked at my watch and decided I didn't want to wait that long. The snack with eating in restaurants is having to wait almost for ever before your food arrives I thought. So I asked him to substitute eba for the pounded yam. The waiter nodded in appreciation, rubbing his palms. "That will soon be ready" he said disappearing quickly on to return with my shrimps cocktail. At first sight it looked like ice-cream because it was served in a very narrow stainless steel goblet. I de-

voured it gently, savouring the creamy taste of the mayonaise generously splashed over the vegetables and shrimps.

Then a trolley laden with our order rolled in and the lady asked "you ordered Edikangikong sir?" "No that is for her" was Kabiru's reply. She quickly placed the okro soup and eba on the table along with a bowl of clean water. She moved to myside served me and left with a parting courtesy "enjoy your meal." I looked disappointingly at the dark, dull green plate of shredded mass of vegetable and the steaming eba. I was hoping the taste would make up for the unappetising look. Kabiru thought his okro was too dark to be the real thing, "I expect something green and fresh," he said stirring it "Ah I can see they've mixed it with a leafy vegetable. Maybe it's bitter leaf to make it tastier." I offered an explanation for the absent Kitchen Cook. He tasted it and liked the meal. I did the same with my Edikangikong and my first reaction would have been to push it away. It tasted flat. It lacked the flavour of meat or fish you get from a vegetable soup. This can't be the soup people praise so lavishly. This tastes like spinach soup prepared with only water and palm oil, lacking even the basic ingredients. Well, I can't be a good judge of a soup I don't know. After all it is not *taushe*, *kuka* or *lalo*, those 'am familiar with. But I still know and appreciate a good soup when I taste one. The Kitchen's Edikangikong was far from it, I rounded up my thoughts and courageously swallowed a few morsels of eba with the dry stuff of a soup.

That ordeal over, I asked for the dessert. I love those too well because they do nothing to my pencil thin frames. The ice cream was served as Kabiru was finishing his main course, he saw no health wisdom in eating sugary dessert so he continued with his drink. The fluffy feel of ice-cream was replaced by the sharp, tingy taste of icicles that took longer to melt in the mouth freezing your tongue in the process. I ate two spoonfuls and gave up. Kabiru settled the bill which he didn't show me. But I thought saw 146 Naira including service charge, tax and all. "So how did you find it?" he asked "Well I enjoyed my shrimps cocktail" I replied. "What I didn't say aloud was that it would have been a fiasco if that too had turned out like another Edikangikong. But I made a resolution to try Edikangikong at another restaurant, far away from Allen Avenue where apparently the recipe is different from everywhere else.

By Bilkiu Yusuf

RECIPE CORNER

The African Pot

ATIEKE

Ivory Coast

Ingredients	Metric
Cassava grains (white garri, bought ready-made)	450 g

Vegetables Sauce

Beef or mutton, diced	1 kg
Ripe tomatoes	4
Medium carrots	4
Onion	1
Tomato purée	125 g
Medium turnips	2
Aubergine (eggplant)	1
Cauliflower	1/2
Carbage	1/2
Small swede (rutabaga)	1
Green beans	1 lb
Parsley sprigs	2
Garlic clove, crushed	1
Cayenne pepper	1 tsp
Cooking oil	200 ml

Bring the meat to the boil with half the onion, salt and garlic. Simmer it while you heat the oil in a large heavy pan. Fry the rest of the onion, tomatoes, tomato purée and seasoning. Cook for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Wash clean and chop the rest of the vegetables and stir them in with the rest of the ingredients and the meat. Cover and cook gently for 45 minutes to an hour, until the sauce is thick and the meat tender.

Mix the cassava grains with a little cold water into soft granules. Stir in a dash of salt and serve with the vegetable sauce. The dish is a cassava variation of the Senegalese couscous.

Note that garri has not been steamed at all, unlike couscous. An alternative to the couscous sauce is pepper sauce with lots of sliced onion and sliced fresh tomatoes. Add 2 dozen/50 g/1/4 cup of crushed corned beef to the pepper sauce.

MEAT GRAVY

Kenya

Ingredients	Metric
Beef or mutton, diced	1kg
kimbo (butter)	1tbsp
Large onion, sliced	1
Tomato purée	1tbsp

White pepper	1tsp
Pinch of mixed herbs	
Salt to taste	

Boil meat with salt, two slices of onion, and mixed herbs. Melt the kimbo in a saucepan and lightly fry the onion, add the meat and stock and the rest of the ingredients. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes. Serve with irio.

BANANA CAKE

Liberia

Ingredients	Metric
Mashed bananas	6
Eggs	3
Sugar	150 g
Butter	100 g
Buttermilk	200ml
Salt	1 tsp
Plain flour	450 g
Baking powder	2 tsp
Bicarbonate of soda	2 tsp
Salt	1 tsp
Mixed dried fruit (currants, raisins, sultanas)	50 g

Set oven at 350 °F/180 °C/Gas Mark 4. Sift flour, baking powder, salt and soda together and add the sugar. Mix in the butter, half the buttermilk and the mashed bananas. Mix in the rest of the buttermilk and the dried fruit. Grease and lightly flour 10 in./25 cm cake tin. Turn the cake mixture into the tin and bake in the centre of the oven for 45 minutes or until cooked, using a toothpick to test. Turn onto a rack to cool.

LE COUSCOUS D'ARABIE

Morocco

Ingredients	Metric
Couscous	450 g
Roasting chicken portions	6
Chicken giblets minced	100 g
Mutton, minced	50 g
Chick peas, soaked overnight	100 g
Carrots	2
Small turnips, diced	2
Onion	1
Celery sticks	2
Leeks	2
Small cauliflower	1
Small cabbage	1



Swede (rutabaga)	1/2
Tomato purée	4 tbsp
Eggs	2
Mixed spice	1 tsp
Cooking oil	6 tbsp
Salted butter	50 g
Sweet red pepper, chopped	1
Potatoes	4

For best results, use a couscoussier to prepare this meal (or its equivalent which is a three-piece steamer consisting of a saucepan with a steamer and lid). In the pot, heat the cooking oil and brown the chicken. Mix the minced mutton and giblets with the eggs and spices, mould into small meatballs and place them in the chicken pot. Fry until brown.

Add the onion, pepper and tomato purée and stir gently. Add the salt, two glasses of water and the washed chick peas. Cover pot and simmer for about 20 minutes. Wash and dice the vegetables and stir into the sauce. Dampen the couscous with a little cold water, mix gently and pour into the steamer. Place the steamer over the saucepan and cover with the lid. Leave both the sauce and the couscous to turn couscous into a large mixing bowl. Sprinkle with a little cold water and, with a wooden spoon, break any lumps in couscous to get a grain-like looseness. Turn back into the steamer and return to the pot. Cover and steam for some 20 minutes more. Turn the couscous into a large serving dish, gently stir in the salted butter with a pinch of cinnamon and a sprinkling of warm water to moisten it. With a spatula, tease the couscous into a mound pour the vegetable sauce over it and garnish with the chicken and meatballs. Serve warm.

POETS' NEST

Wisdom in faith

God's presence is felt in all spheres of life. Our poets this week marvel at the concept of creation. They muse, pray and extol us to reckon with the creator of our Universe, the Omnipotent and Beneficent God. The Lord of all the worlds.

If you should take a peep

If you should take a peep
At the pleasure of paradise
You would pray
and pray and pray
And go on praying
And you would never stop
Prayer . . .

And if you should take a peep
At the pain and horrors of hell
You would pray
And pray and pray
And go on praying
And you would never stop
Praying . . .
If you should take a peep
You would never stop praying.

Ibrahim Sheme

Prayer for our enemies

For those who want us to be hungry
God, provide them with food.
For those who want us to be homeless
God provide them with mansions.
for those who who want us to be thirsty
God, provide them with water.
For those who want us to be sleepless
God, let them have a sound sleep.
For those who want us to be poor
God, provide them with wealth.
For those who want us to trek
God, provide them with transports.
For those who want us to be in rags
God, provide them with new clothes.
For those who want us have constipation
God, teach us how to pray for them!
For those who want us to die now
God, make them live for many more years.
Whenever there is hate, that we may bring love.

Where there is offence, that we may bring pardon.
Where there is discord, that we may bring union.
Where there is doubt, that we may bring faith.
Where there is despair, that we may bring light.
Where there is sadness, that we may bring joy.
Oh! God, make us not so much to be consoled, as to console:
Not so much to love, as to be loved,
Not so much to be understood, as to understand.
For it is in giving, that one receives...

S.A. Jegede

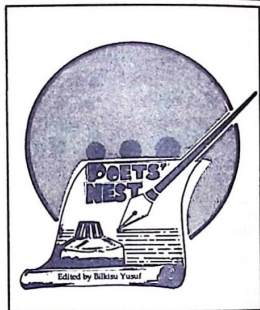
Space

A scarce commodity for us;
An abundant commodity for others,
And God Has provided for ALL:
In the sky,
On earth,
In the homes,
In Offices,
On the farms,
In the automobiles,
And yet others have a monopoly,
The super-powers monopolize space
in the sky,
The rich and wealthy monopolize the earth,
The upperclass and middleclass monopolize the farms,
The 'bosses' and managers monopolize the offices,
All monopolize the space in factories,
homes, roads, automobiles, etc.
For us, it is living within a confined and limited space,
Choked-up improvised and makeshift.

Have you seen their G.R.A?
Have you seen their factories?
Have you seen their airports?
Have you seen their offices
Have you seen their farms?
They occupy space meant for hundreds!

And we have only limited, choked and airless space,
And God provided FOR ALL,
Isn't it? Or Is it??

Mohammed Garba Wala



Lachrymal blessing

So at last did it come zooming
That waiters rose, their voices booming
Thinking that relatives have come home merrily
But only with its landing did it land men a sorrying
So great to Hades were the heads
A carnage by this winged metal with tail
That dear ones to the eyes could not be read
What! Do you worship technology?
Believe me it can fail.
Up above the control tower aloud
We are flight so and so from Saud
Please grant us permission to descend
But God knew their souls would ascend.
I became a quivering mass of disordered nerves
furious and doming over the plane made by knives
I felt sorry for the dead and myself
And for everyone with some regard for the "self".
For those whose bodies were dead
I wish them a place in Heaven
For those whose hearts are full of secret blights
I wish us illumination from the Magnificent Light.

This poem is written in memory of all returning pilgrims whose plane crashed at the Malam Aminu Kano International Airport, Kano, in 1971.
Bomoi Mohammed

GUIDE — LINE

Hey, Kids

Just before you go
to sleep tonight,
check this list:
Did you get up on time?
Did you make your bed?
Did you eat
a good breakfast?
Did you read something
interesting?
Did you learn something?
Were you polite?
Did you help a friend?
Did you do some work
around the house?
Did you try to earn
some money to help
pay for your clothes?
Did you think about
your future?
Did you read a
newspaper or watch
a newscast?
Did you brush
your teeth?
Twice?
Did you tell your
parents how much you
appreciate them?
Imagine how good
you'll feel about
yourself if you can
say "yes" to
these questions,
today,
and every day.

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SPORTS

F.A. Cup final:

A celebration of mediocrity

If the performance of the four teams that reached the semi-finals and the finals of the F.A. cup is the best we can offer then Nigeria is still in the woods.

The whirlwind of overwhelming joy that hit Lagos last Wednesday following the victory of Stationery Stores in this years challenge cup final is a simple demonstration of the importance attach to the competition as the biggest football event in Nigeria. You need to be at the scene of the match to capture the colourful contrast of the spirit of the competition; the rapturous mood of the winners and the grimacing spectacle of the losers.

For Stationery Stores who last won the prestigious Football Association (F.A) trophy in 1981, the orgy of celebration was tumultuous; the players and the officials went mad with tickling sensation of triumph as the newly crowned kings of the

nation's football for the next one year.

But amidst the palpable sweet aroma of victory and joyous mood of cup winners and their mammoth Lagos crowd, was the harrowing spectacle of defeat and mission unfulfilled personified by Rangers International of Enugu, whose dream of winning the cup for a record sixth time could not be realised. The Players crumbled in frustration, sobbing dejectedly with long faces of agony. Emman Okocha was the unfortunate instrument that fate used to seal Rangers fortune. His stuffing of his vital penalty kick blew to ashes the coal city boys chance of holding sway in the palace of glory of Nigeria football.

Yes, the challenge cup is all that

important. Apart from being the most important soccer prize for clubs of substance in the land, it gives its winners that important ticket to represent the country in Africa cup winners cup competition.

That explains the strong passion displayed for the competition annually by the creams of Nigeria clubs and players. The obvious thing therefore is to use the competition especially at the semi-finals and final stages as the measuring scale of the standard of our football. More so, when the winners usually carry the country to continental championship every year. In this light therefore challenge cup should be the ultimate of excellence in our football tradition.



Artless performance

But surprisingly, and sadly, too, the much glorified F.A. cup with all its pride, glamour, colour, and exciting sensation is fast declining to a celebration of a mediocre football culture, with its threatening disastrous implication for the future of our football.

Last Wednesday's replay of the challenge cup final was a dimax of disgusting display of artless, lack lustre game that started manifesting with the semi-final matches decided in Lagos. If the two semi-finals rated far below what is expected of the best four clubs in Nigeria the way the two clubs fought themselves in the replay match for the prized trophy is a bad commentary on our football. The colourless performance of the two teams in their first goless encounter of the previous Saturday that earned them low rating from the critical Lagos audience was replayed in grander and bizare scale to the distress and annoyance of the fans on Wednesday. It is even more baffling that the games duration and the 30 minutes extra time could not for some

brief moments produce that thrilling skills, that inspiration moves, that flashes of beautiful positional creativity, imaginative ball sense and those highly admired criss-crossing light-

ening and terrifying shots that usually bring the fans spontaneously to their feet in anticipation of a beautiful accomplishment that leaves long lasting impression on the memory

they yearned and yearned in vain to be served the best sumptuous soccer dishes by the two clubs regarded as the best of the 21 clubs that featured in the race for the challenge cup this year.

Perhaps the game turned out so drab, and unexciting because goal scoring, the ultimate in football—that thrilling bird that tickles the fancy of game followers and raises their appreciation of a match to a higher pedestal each time it flies into the net—was never for once witnessed throughout the game until the inevitable hypertensive penalty shoot-outs. It was a funny drama that both clubs who rate so high in our professional football league could not produce good strikers who could convert set pieces to goals. It is also a big indictment on the coaches of the two clubs because it showed that they left their jobs half done and were banking on lucky breaks to sail to victory.

The replay would have been comfortably wrapped up within the regulation time by one of the two teams if stationary stores coach Augustine Ofoukwu and his Rangers colleague

WAFU's Trouble

The announcement by the minister of youth and sport Air Commodore Tony Ikazobor

(rid) that Nigeria is withdrawing from all West Africa Football Union (WAFU) organised competitions is timely going by the recent crisis that has turned the subregional sporting body into a bickering house of confusion.

The genesis of the crisis that is threatening to snuff life out of the union started when WAFU cup defending champion Ranchers Bees of Nigeria were manoeuvred out of the semi-final match against Joliba of Mali.

The grand design was the handy work of the sacked union secretary general Patrice Nuama of Cote D'Ivoire with the tacit approval of his francophone countries. The crisis deepened when the secretary general went abroad to uphold the walk over despite the upturning by the disciplinary committee. To further compound the crisis, the secretary general who was sacked over allegations of indiscipline and financial misappropriation went ahead to organise the competition's semi-final and final when the Eyadema cup was and still is in the hand of Ranchers Bees.

The West African football Union, a sporting arm of Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) was meant to foster unity through sports among the sub regional countries. But unfortunately our French speaking sister countries have come to see the association as an avenue to humiliate our nationals through some unor-

thodox means. Their attitude grows out of uncontrollable envy and pathological hatred. Nigeria to them is that larger than life country which plans to dominate all sporting activities in Africa and to them, they must gang up to deal with us. What they fail to achieve in a fair sporting competition they must wrest by means of unholy gang up. This attitude of these countries within WAFU who also see themselves in a silent war with their English speaking colleagues, have made some of our innocent citizens victims of unprovoked aggression. This has also negated the principle behind the existence of the union. There can never be any, peaceful coexistence or any ground to breed peaceful atmosphere when one group is proffering the olive branch while the other group is threatening with war songs.

If however, WAFU dies or becomes a myopic factionalised organisation, it will be easy to know who unleashed the fatal blow. Intransigent Patrice Nuama and those who gave him tacit backing will go down in the history books as men or countries who destroyed what some people had taken so much pain to build.

Concerning our withdrawal as announced by the minister, it should be total. It will be very wrong and unfair to the tax payers of the country to continue to fulfil our financial obligation to an association non of our citizen is benefiting any thing from. The minister said we will continue to pay our due to run the union. This should not be the case. We should have nothing to do with the body until the crisis has been finally resolved.

and sweet taste on the palate.

Rather, the hapless fans who parted with their hard earned money sat through a boring session of mediocre game with long faces;



Super Stores Skipper Obiator holding aloft the prize of a mediocre performance

Mathias Obianika had taught their squads hour to play good football and score goals. For instance, Rangers came into the match with a whirlwind of attacking blitz which badly stretched their opponents for the first six minutes of the game they had the match in firm grip. Within that time they won four free kicks, three of them on the edge of 15 meters line. Clever and more refined footballers could have converted at least one of such chances. Most unpardonable of all was the careless manner Hillary Azodo, Rangers acclaimed best striker, and perhaps the only man they were banking on to pull the magic wand, frittered away goal chances. Dotun Alatishe, though had a brief beautiful moment and once in the early minutes of the second half released a thunderous shot that rebounded from the crossbar, could have utilised those fruitless run down the flanks to more purposeful approach. The same goes for the unfortunate Emman Okocha who looked depressed throughout the game like a man under the influence of some mysterious spell. A more observant coach with better sense of human psychology would not have allowed him to partake in that penalty-kicks.

Stationery Stores attackers were not better either. Demola Johnson lost touch with his usual fast breaks and had to be replaced in the second half. Rotimi Raufu, Felix Alave Sanni and attacking mid-fielder Dele Bob Manuel played like amateur footballers who knew nothing about the tricks of striking at goal with precision. There was little or nothing to cheer in the efforts of the players of both teams in the midfield, even though the game was concentrated in that area for most part of the match. Creative or imaginative approach was lacking; faulty passes were the order of the day and that explain why the mid-fielder could not establish good coordination with their forward lines.

Rangers coach Mathias Obianika admitted in a regretful tone that he had problem with his striker. He said he felt let down by his forwards who shied away when they had chances to put the ball into the net. Obianika, who once captained Rangers to a challenge cup victory in his playing day, said if he had another chance to play the challenge cup over again, he would use a dare devil strike force. He also admitted that Nigerian clubs lack skillful and intelligent strikers.

Coach Augustine Ofoukwu also

admitted that his team lack sensible finishers. But like a doctor caught in the web of knowing the cause of an ailment but lacking the curative knowledge, coach Ofoukwu attributed his boys inability to convert scoring chances to their youthfulness. Ofoukwu who was in the stationery stores challenge cup winning squads of 1967 and 1968 and has just bagged a job with the senior national team, believes only experience can make good strikers out of the players. He was however quick to say that the clubs will recruit good strikers in readiness for their cup winners cup campaign next year.

If the standard of the challenge cup, nay that of the the country football has been tumbling badly of recent, it can only be as a result of lack of dedication to hard work on the part of our players and the rusty coaching techniques they are imbibing from some coaches who still live and revel in 1960's and 1970's coaching courses they were trained with. It should not be much of a surprise if we remain relegated to the back ground of African clubs competitions by clubs from other countries who wean their players on rigorous system of hard work and modern coaching technique. The challenge cup has come and gone all right, but the challenges it poses for our players and coaches still are what we should grapple with.

Stores should dance and celebrate their lucky victory, Rangers too should go on bewailing their ill luck. But both team will do well to remember that they are many steps behind the culture of excellence that their predecessors left behind. Ofoukwu and Obianika who once captained Rangers to win the challenge cup had been part of that culture. They will be doing the nation a great disservice if they make their players believe that what they played on Wednesday and some of their previous matches can stand on the same pedestal with the favour and glamour of the challenge cup tradition of their days.

WBC boxing crown:

Anyamene hot favourite

Boxing is one sport where Nigeria showed early promise of a potentially strong sporting nation. Dick Tiger and Hogan kid Bassey put Nigeria in



Anyamene: favourite

world boxing map as early as 1950's and early 1960's when they won world boxing titles and put up such brilliance and glamour that their names still dominated the greats of the roped square in the categories long after they had quit active boxing. The euphoria however paled out with the exit of these two great prize fighters as non from Nigeria has been able to get close to achieving something similar to their feats. Many did try like Davidson Andy Obisia Nwakpa, Jerry Okorodudu and Joe Lasisi.

On Friday November 30, another Nigerian prize fighter Godwin Anyamene will step into the main bowl of the national stadium Lagos in search of a world boxing title. He will trade punches with Miguel Mosna of Argentina for the vacant world Boxing Council (WBC) junior super middle

weight title.

Godwin Anyamene who fought last, two years ago is however being tipped to win decisively against Mosna. Apart from home advantage the Nigerian side has been doing every thing possible to prepare very well for the fight. One of the top boxing trainer Ghanaian Godwin Akwei Azumah Nelson's handler has been drafted in to the country to put Anyamene in shape for the encounter. According to the fight promoters Starishas International who doubled as Anyamene manager the trainer was brought in to make assurance of victory double sure for the Nigerian.

The Ghanaian trainer who arrived the country about three weeks ago said after a brief assessment of the boxer that he was discipline and hard working and should be able to punch the South American boxer to submission in front of his home crowd. Since the arrival of Akwei, Anyamene has intensified his training for the fight, perfecting his footwork, fast jabs and other boxing technique that help his quest for a world boxing crown.

Speaking on the fight Kaduna State senior boxing coach Yahaya Ali who once trained Joe Lasisi, tipped the Nigerian fighter to win the fight probably within the distance. The boxing coach based his conviction of an outright victory for Anyamene on his hard work and

determination—two vital attributes that make the difference between winners and losers.

Hunter Clay current African confederation Boxing (ABC) middle weight champion is also putting his money on Anyamene. "I'm giving one hundred percent chance to him to beat Mosna. With home support and with the level of preparation that Godwin has put into this title fight I have firm believe that he will completely overwhelmed his opponent on Friday."

When the Chips are down however Anyamene may not find the Argentinian a kid glove boxer. He will do well than not to allow himself be carried away by the optimism of his country men. Miguel Mosna 28 years, is rated as a very hard puncher. Reports have it that the boxer has been working very hard for this title bout and is likely to give his Nigerian opponent a tough due.

By Joe Olajuwon



Minister of Sports Ikhazoboh

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