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PHOTO: NAN

POLICEMEN from the Oyo State Police Command in Ibadan departing for Saturday's gubernatorial election in Anambra State yesterday.

Buhari to ANPP: I quit

By Abbas Jimoh & Abdulmutalib A. Abubakar

TWO-TIME presidential candidate of the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) General Muhammadu Buhari's slow-motion divorce from his party formally ended yesterday when he tendered his letter of resignation from the party. Although he did not say which party he would join, *Daily Trust* learnt that he will soon register with the Congress

● Moves to CPC

for Progressive Change (CPC), one of the three political parties recently registered by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). CPC is led by well-known Buhari supporter Senator

Rufai Hanga. Buhari's lawyer Chief Mike Ahamba and his close aide Engineer Buba Galadima also belong to CPC.

In a letter dated January 30, 2010 and addressed to ANPP's National Secretary,

Senator Saidu Kumo, Buhari described his exit from the party as painful. In the letter, titled 'Withdrawal of my membership of the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP)', the former military Head of State said his decision to quit ANPP was due to fundamental and irreconcilable ideological differences between himself and the party's leadership. The letter was submitted yesterday

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Airport screening: US may delist Nigeria

By Abdulmutalib A. Abubakar with Agency reports

THE United States will soon review the list of countries whose air travellers are

subject to tighter screening and could remove nations such as Nigeria if they are no longer deemed to be security threats, United States Assistant Secretary

of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson said in Accra, Ghana yesterday.

He said, "There is going to be a review soon and if it turns out that the warn-

ing is no longer applicable to Nigeria, it would be removed. The United States has nothing against the people and the government of Nigeria and we still

maintain good relationship with that country." He said the measure was designed to "create awareness" about possible threats.

Passengers travelling

from or through the 14 countries to the United States are subject to special pre-flight screening under the measure, including

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PIC: FELIX ONIGBINDE



MEMBERS of the Federation of Muslim Women in Nigeria during a rally on the Jos crisis at the National Assembly Complex in Abuja, yesterday.

Bank robbery suspects Boko Haram members - Police

From Lawal Ibrahim, Katsina

THE four armed robbers that recently attacked a bank in Bakori Local Government Area of Katsina State were members of the Boko Haram sect, Katsina State Police Commissioner Umaru Abubakar Manko said yesterday.

Briefing newsmen in his office, the commissioner said investigation into the case had established that the three dead and one surviving suspect of the robbery were students of the Boko Haram leader, late Muhammad Yusuf, and had indeed participated in the recent crisis in Maiduguri, Borno State.

On January 12, 2010, a four-man gang attacked the bank in Bakori where they killed three policemen and a security guard on duty and took away millions of naira before they were intercepted by the police. The surviving suspect, Jamilu Musa, who was paraded by the police, admitted being a student of the Boko Haram leader along with the other three, saying they were all based in Kaduna before they decided to embark on the failed bank robbery operation.

The commissioner of police also paraded two suspects that robbed and killed one person in Danmusa Local Government Area of the state as well as a gang of four that specialized in stealing cars and one Yahuza Mamman who vandalised and stole cables belonging to the Power holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN).

ACF tackles Yakassai on Yar'adua

From Ibraheem Musa, Kaduna

THE health of President Umaru Yar'adua and the emerging politics of succession were extensively discussed by both the National Working Committee (NWC) and the National Executive Council (NEC) meetings of December 15 and December 16, 2009 respectively, the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) said yesterday.

In a press statement issued in Kaduna, the forum reacted to Alhaji Tanko Yakassai's allegation that the ACF never discussed Yar'adua's health, let alone take a position on it as indicated in the last press statement. Yakassai who is an ACF Board Of Trustees (BOT) member, had not only dissociated himself from the forum's position which praised the Eminent Elders Group for calling on the president to hand over to Goodluck Jonathan as acting president, but also called for an emergency meeting to discuss why the statement was put out in the first place.

Yesterday, the ACF reminded the elder statesman that the forum had asked those who are responsible for managing the president's health to be forthcoming with information regarding his health status at the earlier NEC and NWC meetings.

Sheriff summons lawmakers over new emirates

From Isa Umar Gusau, Maiduguri

GOVERNOR Ali Modu Sheriff yesterday summoned members of the Borno State House of Assembly to the Government House in Maiduguri following the lawmakers' unanimous vote against a bill seeking powers to be conferred on him to create new emirates in the state.

Over 20 of the 28 members of the House had at a sitting presided over by the Speaker, Goni Ali Modu on Tuesday, voted to stop the bill (which was proposed by the governor) from going through a second reading. The House

reached a resolution that the bill be returned to the executive arm of government. Governor Sheriff had asked the Assembly to amend Section 68 of the state's Local Government Law 2000 for the enactment of Local Government (amendment) bill 2010 which should have in it "Powers to create additional emirates" and which should read that "The governor may, subject to ratification by a simple majority of members of the House of Assembly, by order, create additional emirates out of the existing ones".

The lawmakers sat and struck

out the bill on Tuesday while Sheriff was away to attend the North-east's anti corruption launch organised by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission in Gombe State.

On his return from Gombe, Sheriff yesterday invited the members for a meeting that was held behind closed doors in the council chambers. It was not clear whether the governor wanted the re-introduction of the bill.

Before the bill was quashed, some lawmakers who spoke in plenary observed that the governor's request to be given powers

to create new emirates was tantamount to usurping the functions of the legislature since the bill wasn't specific on which emirates were to be created while several others said there was need for caution in dealing with traditional institutions in the interest of peace in the state.

The lawmakers had been under intense pressure from top personalities including traditional rulers and other interest groups from within and outside the state to stop the bill from going further after passing the first reading last Thursday.

Akingbola wants court to dismiss EFCC's application

From Adelanwa Bamgboye, Lagos

TRIAL in the suit involving the former Managing Director of Intercontinental Bank Plc Dr. Erastus Akingbola and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) continued yesterday at a Federal High Court in Lagos with the former bank chief asking the court to dismiss the application for stay of proceedings brought by the commission.

Akingbola's lawyer, Chief Felix Fagbohunbe, said it would be unfair and unjust for the court to accede to the EFCC's request, having earlier misled the court into

making an order for temporary forfeiture of his assets and freezing of his accounts.

He added that the application for stay was a ploy to frustrate the hearing of his application, challenging the jurisdiction of the court to grant the mareva order of Dec 31, 2009 on which the commission was now acting to confiscate his assets. In his motion on notice before the court, the ex-bank chief is asking the court for an order setting aside all the orders granted by ex-parte, saying the decision of the court as contained in the ruling and the entire proceedings in

the suit was a nullity. Akingbola is also asking the court for an order staying the execution of the orders, pending the hearing and determination of his applications in the suit. Some of the grounds upon which his requests were premised included the fact that the present suit was not initiated by legal due process, the hearing of the motion ex-parte dated Dec 23, 2009 and the subsequent ruling on the issue were done in the judge's chambers and not in an open court and the assets of the applicant (both real and incorporeal) which were the subject matter of the orders granted

ex-parte were not the subject matter in any suit before the court. In a separate application, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) is asking the presiding judge, Justice Tijani Abubakar to stay further proceedings in the suit pending Akingbola's appearance before the court. The commission in an application before the court is also seeking for an order striking out Akingbola's application for a stay of execution and setting aside of the Mareva order of the court that was granted on Dec 31, 2009. The matter has been adjourned till February 10, 2010.

Police stray bullet kills Okada rider

From Abiqun Jimoh, Nahimah Ajikanle Nurudeen, Lagos

THERE was a stampede in Ikorodu, Lagos State, yesterday as an angry mob set ablaze a police patrol vehicle over the killing of a commercial motorcycle operator (Okada rider) by policemen.

The deceased, identified as Ramoni Balogun, was killed by

stray bullet from policemen who said they were chasing an armed robber along the road while the victim was riding his motorcycle.

The other okada riders overpowered the policemen to burn their vehicle while several other vehicles were barred from moving on both sides of the road in protest over the killing.

According to information gathered from the Area Commander of H Division in the area, they received a distress call from the Owode-Onirin police post that some people were attempting to molest his men, but the timely intervention of other policemen calmed the situation.

He noted that from the information he received, it was learnt

that the policemen were after a criminal who attempted to escape. He said the fire was not targeted at anyone other than the criminal who escaped.

Meanwhile, the body of the deceased has been deposited at the Ikorodu General Hospital for autopsy while the family members have threatened to take up the case.

FEC slashes Abuja land prices

By AbdulFattah Olajide

SEQUEL to the massive public outcry that greeted last year's hiking of land prices in Abuja by the Ministry of Federal Capital Territory, the Federal Executive Council (FEC) yesterday slashed land prices by at least 50% in the low density areas of the territory and restored the former prices in the high density areas.

FCT Minister, Senator Adamu Aliero and his Information and Communications counterpart, Professor Dora Akunyili announced the downward review of the land rates after yesterday's

FEC meeting.

With the downward review of Abuja land rates, a 1000sqm residential plot which hitherto cost N20 million in such high-brow areas of the city as Maitama, Asokoro, and Wuse 2 will now be sold for just N10 million, the rate per square metre having been reduced from N20,000 to N10,000 by FEC. A similar size of land in Garki land 2, Wuse 1, Jabi, Utako and Guzape areas will now be sold for N6 million instead of the former N15 million. In Katampe, Gwarinpa, Gudu, Mabushi, Wuye and Durumi districts, the same size

of land is now N5 million instead of the former N15 million. In satellite towns such as Kuje, Karshi, Karu, Bwari, Kwali, and Abaji, a 1000sqm residential plot is now N1 million.

Akunyili explained that Abuja land rate was hiked in July last year because of "the enormous infrastructural and social-economic challenges confronting the FCT administration in the face of dwindling revenue accruable to its in terms of budgetary provisions."

She noted that the price hike did not go down well with the public and attracted series

of negative comments from the National Assembly "in addition to difficulties allottees experience in settling bills." According to her, the FEC also noted that the land price hike "did not have recourse to the previous land rates in line with section 16 (a) of the Land use act of 1978.

Consequently, the percentage increase that reached a ceiling of 900% was not seen as being fair; the rates rather than accelerate development became counter-productive as most allottees sold to able buyers instead of developing the plots allotted to them; since government is encourag-

ing private sector participation in housing provision, the seeming astronomical development levy will have a multiplier effect on the cost of housing delivery and could exacerbate problems already being encountered, thereby working against "Housing for all" by 2020. This will ultimately translate to higher rental values in the city."

Professor Akunyili said further arguments were presented at the FEC meeting that since taxes are paid to government, infrastructure should be provided to allottees as part of government's responsibilities.

Amnesty programme is on course —FG

By AbdulFattah Olajide

THE Minister of Defence and Niger Delta Amnesty Implementation Committee Chairman, Major General Godwin Abe yesterday urged repentant militants to be patient with the government, saying the amnesty programme is on course.

General Abe made the call while briefing State House correspondents after emerging from a meeting with

Vice President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan.

While urging the Niger Delta ex-militants to exercise patience with the amnesty process, he said the perceived sluggishness in the implementation of the programme has, among other things, to do with the normal gestation period associated with such major projects.

Gen. Abe said the leadership of the key militant groups has coopted into the planning and execution stages of the amnesty process. According to him, their views are currently being harmonised with those of government, "and as soon as that process is complete, the programme would be fully up and running."



LAGOS State Governor Babatunde Fashola (second right) with his predecessor, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu (middle), First Lady, Mrs. Abimbola Fashola (right), Deputy Governor, Princess Adebisi Sarah Sosan (second left), Oba of Lagos, Oba Rilwan Akiolu I, during the handover of the rehabilitated City Hall, Lagos Island, on Tuesday.

Reps reject motion on Yar'adua's handover

By Nasidi A. Yahaya

THE House of Representatives yesterday threw out a motion seeking to ask President Umaru Musa Yar'adua to send a vacation letter to the National Assembly to enable Vice President Goodluck Jonathan act as president.

The House rejected the motion which aims at putting pressure on the president to comply with Section 145 of the 1999 Constitution.

Rep Muhammad Sani Abdu (ANPP, Bauchi State) had prayed that the House urge the Presi-

dent to transmit the letter to the national Assembly within two weeks, saying his absence has negatively affected running the affairs of the country.

But speaking against the motion, Rep Abdul Ningi (PDP, Bauchi State) said the House must be guided by the constitution which prescribes the powers of all arms of governments, saying the House lacks power to urge the president to transmit his vacation letter to the National Assembly in order for the Vice President to be the acting President.

Rep Mohammed Ali Ndume (ANPP, Borno State) said there is no need for the president to transmit the letter to the National Assembly, pointing out that the Federal Executive Council (FEC) which the VP presides over said the President is capable to rule the country.

Rep Aminu Waziri Tambuwal (PDP, Sokoto State) opined that since the Vice president is exercising all presidential powers, there is no need in asking him to transmit the letter to the National Assembly.

But Reps Femi Gbajabamila (AC, Lagos State), James Idachaba (PDP, Kogi State) and Henry Dickson (PDP, Bayelsa State) who spoke in favour of the motion, saying there is the need for the President to transmit the letter to the National Assembly.

However, when the vote was put by the Speaker Dimeji Bankole on whether the House should compel President Yar'adua to transmit the vacation letter to the national Assembly within two weeks, majority of the MPs voted against it.

Senate summons Abba Aji over Yar'adua's vacation letter

By Abdul-Rahman Abubakar & Turaki A. Hassan

SENATE has summoned the Special Adviser to President Umaru Musa Yar'adua on National Assembly Matters, Senator Mohammed Abba Aji to appear before it today and explain whether or not the president

wrote a letter of vacation before embarking on his medical leave.

A national daily had reported that President Yar'adua wrote a vacation letter in conformity with Section 145 of the 1999 Constitution before leaving the country but that Senator Abba Aji allegedly failed to deliver the letter to the National Assembly due to its impli-

cation. Senate President David Mark said yesterday that Senator Abba Aji has been invited to face the whole Senate today by noon.

Daily Trust gathered reliably that Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), Alhaji Mahmud Yayale Ahmed also gave indication during a closed door meeting with the Sen-

ate that President Yar'adua might have sent the letter.

Another Senator said "We got information that Mr. President sent the letter. I don't know why some people will put this country through all these troubles when the president tried to comply with the Constitution."

He said if the letter was found

to have been written at a date before Mr. President travelled out, heads will roll, "because I am sure that he (Abba Aji) did not act alone."

Senator Abba Aji however told *Daily Trust* in Dec. 2009 that he was not aware of any letter to the National Assembly by Mr. President before he travelled.

Nigerian couple in US faces 55 year jail term for enslaving widow

AN American federal jury found a Nigerian couple living in the United States guilty of compelling a Nigerian widow to work as their servant for nine years.

Emmanuel and Ngozi Nnaji each face up to 55 years in prison after their convictions on conspiracy, forced labor and other charges.

According to a Justice Department statement, trial evidence showed the Nigerian-born Nnajis lured the woman to the U.S. with promises of a salary and child support.

The evidence shows the couple seized the woman's passport, isolated her in their home and made her work long hours as their servant with no days off and little to no pay. They didn't provide support for the woman's six children in Nigeria and limited and monitored her contact with her family.

Emmanuel Nnaji also allegedly assaulted the victim sexually.

The woman had told investigators that she met Emmanuel Nnaji in 1996 while working as a nanny for his brother-in-law in Nigeria. Ngozi Nnaji's brother asked if she would go work for the couple in Texas, and she agreed.

Court documents show that he took her to the U.S. Embassy in Lagos and obtained a passport and visa for her as Comfort Nnaji, the name of Emmanuel Nnaji's mother.

The woman said she lived with the Nnajis first in their Irving apartment, then in their Arlington home, and cooked, cleaned and cared for their three children. According to testimony, the couple refused to let her attend church or have friends.

One day, the woman was able to hide in a closet and call her niece in Nigeria to tell her about her ordeal. Documents show that the niece told a Nigerian priest who lived in Texas and was back home on vacation. He gave the niece his cellphone number and asked her to pass it to her aunt.

The priest returned to Texas in February 2006, established contact with the woman and helped plan her escape. On Feb. 24, 2006, the priest drove to Arlington, where the woman met him on a street corner holding a bag and fled in his car. *Associated Press*

Reps revoke \$120m Imo River dredging contract

By Nasidi A. Yahaya

THE House of Representatives committee on Privatisation and Commercialisation has revoked the contract for the dredging of the Imo River over the failure of the contractor to carry out the exercise three years after the contract has been awarded.

The lawmakers also ordered the immediate repayment of the \$120 million, which was the contract sum, to the government with an accrued interest of 3 years.

The committee announced its position at the conclusion of the first leg of its 2-day investigative hearing into the privatisation of the Jos Steel Rolling Mill, Imo River Dredging (ALSCON) and Skypower Aviation Handling Company by the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE).

The \$120 million contract was given to UK-RUSAL the major investor in the Aluminium Smelting Company of Nigeria (ALSCON).

Christopher Anyawu, the Director General of the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE), agreed with the decision of the MPs, saying he has recommended the same action to the National Council on Privatisation.

"It has been three years, three months now and the dredging has not been done. We don't want to entertain more gimmicks," he said.

The dredging of the channel of the Imo River was considered an important aspect of the agreement as it was meant to allow big vessels navigate the river to allow delivery of raw materials and removal of commercial products.

However, the Managing Director of RUSAL-ALSCON, Andrey Terentyev said "We would like to mention that the obligation undertaken by UK-RUSAL is not limited by definite deadlines. There is an obligation that dredging works are supposed to be executed and that means that they will be performed."



CHAIRMAN, Senate Committee on Environment Senator (Dr.) Grace Folashade Bent, during the committee's visit to Media Trust Corporate Head Office, Abuja, yesterday.

Senate to partner media against global warming

By Turaki A. Hassan

SENATE Committee on Environment has urged the media to partner with it in the fight against the monster of global warming as well as creating awareness against environmentally-unfriendly practices to make Nigeria and the rest of the world more habitable.

The Committee Chairman Senator Grace Folashade Bent made the call yesterday when she led some members of the committee on a visit to Media Trust Corporate Head Office in Abuja.

She said the jurisdiction of the committee includes the control of air pollution, water pollution, erosion, desertification, oil spillage, industrial waste, environmental sanitation, among others.

According to her, the committee has the additional role of oversight functions on the executive to ensure that funds appropriated to it are judi-

ciously expended.

Senator Bent said the committee is visiting the Daily Trust for the role it is playing in creating awareness against unfriendly practices within the environment and called on the organization "to sustain the tempo and even aspire to do more."

"We want to educate the people at the grass root, the rural populace, like farmers, who may be ignorant of climate change but are affected by it, we will also educate them about unfriendly environmental practices like indiscriminate felling of trees," she said.

Other members of the Senate Committee on Environment that accompanied Senator Bent on the visit are: Senator Bukar Abba Ibrahim (ANPP, Yobe East), Senator Bala Mohammed (ANPP, Bauchi South), Senator Gyang Dalyop Datong (PDP, Plateau North) and Senator Adamu Garba Talba (PDP, Yobe South).



SPEAKER Bankole

Applicants seek review of suit against Yar'adua

By Atika Balal

APPLICANTS in a suit challenging the absence of President Umaru Musa Yar'adua have filed a motion exparte before an Abuja Federal High Court to enable them leave to apply for judicial review of the pur-

ported resolution of the respondents made on January 27, 2010.

The respondents are Attorney General of the Federation and the Executive Council of the Federation.

In the motion exparte, Farouk Adamu Aliyu and Sani Hussaini Garun Gabbas are seeking a court

declaration that the resolution purportedly passed by the respondents on January 27, 2010, declaring the President Umaru Musa Yar'adua capable of performing the functions of his office is unreasonable, irrational, unconstitutional and unlawful.

They want an order directing the respondents to within seven days consider, pass and publicize the resolution envisaged under section 144 of the 1999 constitution based upon verifiable medical evidence.

The court on Jan. 22 ordered the Executive Council of the Federation

to within 14 days consider, pass and publicize a resolution in accordance with provisions of Section 144 of the 1999 constitution declaring whether the absence of President Yar'adua on medical ground since November 23, 2009 makes him incapable of discharging the functions of his office.

US may delist Nigeria

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body pat-downs and carry-on luggage searches.

The 14 countries on Washington's list are Cuba, Iran, Syria, Sudan, Afghanistan, Algeria, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Somalia and Yemen.

Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and Algeria in particular voiced their displeasure at being included in the 14-country list, which the US Government unveiled last month after a botched Christmas Day attempt to blow up a US airliner by the Nigerian student Faruk Umar Abdulmutallab.

The Assistant Secretary is expected to arrive in Nigeria shortly in continuation of his African tour.

Police arrest journalists over fake naira notes

THE Police in Katsina have arrested two Abuja-based journalists for allegedly being in possession of fake naira notes.

The suspects, Ogbonna Okezie and Lekan Ayeni, who are in Katsina on the invitation of Gov. Ibrahim Shema, were arrested on Jan. 31 at the Police Inspectors' Mess, Sabon-Layi in Katsina metropolis.

The incident happened when the suspects allegedly presented a fake N500 note to pay for two bottles of soft drink purchased at a near-by shop.

The shop owner was said to have raised an alarm which led to the instant arrest and detention of the suspects at the GRA Police Station.

Reacting to the incident, the governor's Special Adviser on Media and Public Affairs, Alhaji Nasiru Abdul, said the suspects were in Katsina at the instance of the state government to do a documentary on education.

"We have secured the release of one of them while the other is still with the police because the case is a criminal offence," he said.

The Police Public Relations Officer, ASP Alhassan Kimba, said one of the suspects, Lekan Ayeni, had since been released because he did not know that his colleague had the fake money, while Okezie was still being held by the police.

He said that during investigations, seven pieces of fake N500 notes, amounting to N3,500, was discovered from Okezie.

He said investigation was still going on to ascertain the source of the notes which he claimed were given to him by somebody in Abuja. (NAN)



FROM left: Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi with his Foreign Affairs Minister Seyoum Mesfin (right) at the closing ceremony of the 14th African Union Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia yesterday.

Yar'adua: PDP pays homage to Jonathan

By Muideen Olaniyi

THE national leadership of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) on Tuesday night paid a solidarity visit to Vice President Goodluck Umaru Musa Yar'adua to transmit vacation letter to the National Assembly.

PDP National Chairman, Prince Vincent Ogbulafor, who led the National Working Com-

mittee (NWC) members to Jonathan, expressed happiness with the performance of the Vice President, insisting that there was no vacuum in the Presidency.

In a goodwill message he delivered, Ogbulafor reminded the Vice President that power belonged to God, quoting from the Holy Bible.

"We wish to place on record our deepest satisfaction with the manner you have steered

the ship of state in the absence of His Excellency, the President and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the FRN, Alhaji Umaru Yar'adua, GCFR.

"We are particularly delighted with the prompt manner you handled the crisis in Jos, Plateau State. We also wish to appreciate your response on behalf of the government of Nigeria to the tragedy in Haiti," he stated.

"You have discharged your

duties in the absence of Mr. President with distinction.

We are proud that you have refused to be distracted by needless debates and controversies originating from some of our opponents.

"We also join you in praying for the full recovery of Mr. President so that he can return and rejoin his team to realize the lofty goals he has set to achieve for our dear country," Ogbulafor added.

Buhari to ANPP: I quit

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(Wednesday) at the ANPP secretariat and was received by Kumo's Special Assistant, Malam Ahmed Umar.

Buhari said in the letter, "On 15th April in the year 2002 I joined the All Peoples Party (APP) which was later to transform into the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP). As at that time, the threat to the proper development of our nascent democracy as posed by the ruling party, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) had already become apparent. I therefore opted for the political party which presented to me the best avenue for making my modest input towards the development and sustenance of Democracy in our country Nigeria.

"In 2003 and 2007, I had the privilege of flying the Party's flag as its Presidential candidate in the two general elections. I am, and shall remain grateful to the Party for the confidence reposed in me by the opportunity to represent its interest on those occasions. The events of those electoral efforts are common knowledge to my fellow citizens of this great nation, and the international community.

"However, since 2007 there have emerged some fundamental and irreconcilable ideological differences between the leadership

of the Party and myself, as a result of which the vast majority of the membership have been sidelined in the scheme of things pertaining to the Party. This has substantially eroded my capacity to render any meaningful service to our country through the platform of the party.

It is as a result of the above that I have taken the painful decision of withdrawing my membership of the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) with effect from Monday the 1st day of February, 2010."

Indications that Buhari will quit ANPP emerged after the December 12, 2008 Supreme Court ruling on the 2007 presidential election, when he told journalists that his political future would be determined by his supporters and associates.

"Sincerely, I regret that I have to leave this party in which I have received and enjoyed tremendous love and support from many. But this decision has been taken in the greater interest of our fatherland. It is my desire that I and my friends and supporters in the ANPP continue to share that same love and friendship with the hope that we may still work together politically in the near future, to achieve that same patriotic objective of establishing internal democracy in our political parties, sustainable democracy in the polity, and restoring our dear

nation to its pride of place in the comity of nations," Buhari said.

Speaking on the Hausa service of the Voice of America (VOA) on why he delayed his resignation, Buhari said some party members such as leader of the Integrity Group and former Kebbi State deputy governor Alhaji Suleiman Muhammad Argungu wanted to make changes and are still in legal battle challenging the ANPP for participating in the Government of National Unity (GNU).

He said as a person who spent more than 50 months in court between 2003 to 2008, he has first hand information about the incredibility of the judiciary to handle the case before the 2011 general election, adding that none of his loyalists would be compelled to defect from ANPP. "Democracy is all about choice so whoever wants to join me is free to do so but democracy is about choice."

He further said he left ANPP because of constitutional violations such as withdrawing from court after the party compelled him to file a suit, embracing GNU, and party leaders allotting positions to themselves and their relatives. He cannot remain in a party that lacks ideology and focus, Buhari said.

Declining to mention the name of the party he will join,

Buhari said he will connect to one of the seven political parties that endorsed him as their presidential candidate in the 2007 election or any newly registered political party. His position will be known in the next one or two weeks, he said.

Buhari's political ally and former Minister of State for Petroleum Alhaji Umaru Dembo however said since Buhari has officially discarded ANPP, there is no reason for his supporters to be in a party that is not focused and principled in terms of ideology and respect for its constitution.

National Secretary of ANPP Senator Saidu Umar Kumo confirmed yesterday that General Buhari had quit the party. He said ANPP was not happy "because no reasonable political party would like to lose a member like General Buhari." He however said that the General has the right to leave the party, and he wished him good luck in his future political life.

Daily Trust learnt that the CPC was registered by Buhari's aides in The Buhari Organisation (TBO). It was also gathered that the party is the platform for the proposed Mega Party, whose membership includes Buhari's supporters as well as former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, Chief Olu Falae and former governor Alhaji Attahiru Bafarawa, among others.

Murder: NBA seeks security for judges

From Mustafa Abubakar, Ilorin

THE Nigeria Bar Association in Ilorin, Kwara State, has urged Governor Bukola Saraki to provide adequate security for judges in courts and their

residences.

The association in a press statement signed by its General Secretary R.O. Balogun yesterday condemned the killing of an Area Court judge in the state by a litigant who was dissatis-

fied with the judgment handed down by the deceased in a divorce suit.

"The dastardly act confirmed and re-echoed the urgent need to provide adequate security for our judicial officers of the lower

bench, both in the courtrooms and their residences.

We therefore urge the governor to look into the matter to forestall a re-occurrence", the NBA said.

The association appealed to

the state commissioner of police to ensure that those behind the act are brought to book.

The judge before his death was serving at the Area Court in Yashikira in Baruten Local Government Area of the state.

Kaduna gives water board customers 50% discount

From Ismail Mudashir, Kaduna

GOVERNOR Namadi Sambo of Kaduna State yesterday announced a 50 percent discount for all customers of the state Water Board on their outstanding debts. Our correspondent gathered that customers of the Water Board in the 23 local government areas of the state are owing the board over N4 billion accumulated over the years.

A statement by the Public Relations Manager of the state Water Board Alhaji Dalhatu Zubairu said the 50 percent discount was approved by Governor Sambo to help the people of Kaduna State. He said with the approval, customers were to pay only half of their outstanding debts.

"We are reassuring our teeming customers of our commitment to improve water supply and wish to call on them to take advantage of the opportunity to settle their outstanding debts," he said.

Meanwhile, there is water scarcity in some parts of the state. When our correspondent visited Kakuri, Nassarawa and Ungwar Mission, residents were seen in queues, struggling to get water from boreholes.

Group donates to displaced people in Bauchi

From Muhammad Abubakar, Bauchi

THE Fulbe Development Association of Nigeria (FULDAN), a Fulani socio-cultural organization, has donated relief materials to people displaced by the recent crisis in Jos now taking shelter in a primary school and a secondary school in Boto, Tafawa Balewa Local Government Area of Bauchi State.

Presenting the items including blankets, mats, slippers, soaps and pomades on Tuesday, the National Chairman of the association Ahmed Bello Torob said some of the materials were purchased by the group while others were obtained from donors.

He appealed to the over 3,000 displaced people to be patient and accept what happened to them in good faith and not take the law into their hands no matter the provocation they faced, assuring them that efforts were being made by relevant bodies to ensure that the perpetrators of the crisis were brought to book.



FROM left: Minister of Health Professor Babatunde Osotimehin, Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Mr. Michael Aondokaa, Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources, Dr Abba Sayyadi Ruma and Head of Civil Service, Mr Steve Oronsaye, at the Federal Executive Council meeting in Abuja yesterday.

Absence of witness stalls trial of Al-Mustapha

From Adelanwa Bamgboye, Lagos

THE trial of Major Hamza Al-Mustapha, the former Chief Security Officer to the late Head of State, Gen. Sani Abacha, over the attempted murder of Alex Ibru at the Lagos High Court, Ikeja, was yesterday stalled due to the absence of the ninth prosecution witness, AIG Felix Ogbaodu, who has just been posted to another zone by the police authorities.

According to the prosecutor, the witness was handed the directive by the Inspector Gen-

eral of Police to resume his new posting as the head of Cross-River and Rivers States zone, after the earlier order by the court for him to appear before it.

Al-Mustapha is standing trial alongside former Commissioner of Police in Lagos State James Danbaba, a former Military Administrator of Zamfara Jubrin Bala Yakubu and a Chief Superintendent of Police, Rabo Lawal.

The State counsel said he was constrained because he had to wait for the other officer to handover. He then asked the court

for an adjournment. Counsel to the defendant however opposed the request, saying the witness' evidence be closed so that other witnesses could be taken. Counsel to Al-Mustapha, Olalekan Ojo, said it was trite law that the court should not surrender its authority of being in full control of the course of proceedings to any party however eminent.

"We have reached a stage with the witness that it would be ridiculous for the court to indulge the state on account of the inexcusable absence of the witness. So I

urge the court to provisionally close his evidence subject to the evidence being recalled whenever he is ready," he said.

In addition, he applied that the adjournment being sought by the prosecution be refused or the case closed if there were no other witnesses.

Presiding judge Justice Olokooba said the court was not happy with the reasons given for the absence of the witness, adding that the new posting could have been delayed till further notice. The case has been adjourned till February 8, 2010.

5,000 almajirai to get formal education in Niger

From Ayegba Israel Ebije, Minna

ABOUT 5,000 Almajirai are to get formal education in Niger State, the Commissioner for Education Hajiya Asmau Yusuf has said.

Hajiya Yusuf who spoke at a news conference in Minna yesterday said the state government had concluded plans to ensure that Almajirai are formally educated. She added that about 15,899 malams were also to benefit from the program.

The commissioner said the programme was aimed at actu-

alizing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the "Education for All by 2015".

"There are too many children roaming the streets, if they are not utilized now that they are young and fully energized, they will become a social problem to the communities and state in the nearest future", she said.

She said a pilot scheme would cover only 150 schools, adding that six schools from each of the 25 local government areas would take part benefit in the first phase.

Niger begs workers on e-payment logjam

From Ayegba Israel Ebije, Minna

THE Niger State government has appealed to workers in the state on the logjam in the e-payment system as most of the workers have not received salaries since November last year.

The Commissioner for Finance Alhaji Muazu Bawa Mohammed who made the plea yesterday at a news conference in Minna blamed the e-payment problem on wrong entries of names of workers.

He said the e-payment of salaries recognized only names uploaded into the system, adding that any mistake would render the payee invalid.

"Very soon, salaries would be paid as we have already started making arrangements to commence payment in batches", he said.

The commissioner maintained that no matter how problematic the e-payment was, it was better than payment by hand as it was less stressful and safer.

Senate wants N/Assembly to host presidential inauguration

By Abdul-Rahman Abubakar & Turaki Hassan

A bill which seeks to empower the National Assembly to host the inauguration of the President and the Vice President passed second reading in the Senate yesterday.

Sponsored by Senator Jibril Aminu (PDP, Adamawa Central), the bill stipulated that the presidential inauguration shall be organized and executed by the National Assembly.

"The entire inauguration ceremony, apart from the actual administration of Oaths of office shall be conducted and officiated by members of the National Assembly," the bill reads in part.

Leading the debate on the general principles of the bill on the floor of the Senate yesterday, Senator Aminu said, "The Presidential inauguration always marks a renewal of faith in the Constitution and in democratic rule. All the three arms of the Realm therefore need to participate. In this

Bill, the Chief Executives are being sworn in by the Judiciary in a solemn ceremony organised and hosted by the Legislature which will be strengthened in this renewed cooperation among the three Arms of Government."

"Although the National Assembly is called only by the newly sworn in President, it should be remembered that the Assembly is dissolved only by an order signed by the new President, and the National Assembly thus outlasts the President in tenure.

Therefore hosting the inauguration of a new President becomes one of the last assignments of an outgoing National Assembly," Senator Aminu said.

Senate also read for a second time a bill seeking to repeal the workmen's compensation Act, 2004 and to make comprehensive provisions for compensation for any death, injury, disease or disability arising out of or in the course of employment and matters connected there with.

Osun State appoints 33 year old as SSG

By Turaki Hassan

ALHAJI Kazeem Ademola Adio, 33, was yesterday sworn in as the new Secretary to the Osun State Government (SSG) by Governor Olagunsoye Oyinlola.

Swearing in the new SSG at the Government House Osogbo, Governor Oyinlola said he was ushering in a new era of leadership in the state and charged the new SSG to live up to expectation.

"I urge you to be honest, dedicated and committed to the work before you and consult with your predecessors who will guide you." Oyinlola thanked the immediate past SSG Alhaji Akinbade Akinade who has declared his intention to contest the governorship seat of the state.

Before his appointment as SSG, Alhaji Adio was the commissioner in charge of the Environment Ministry in the Oyinlola cabinet. He is now the youngest SSG in Nigeria.

The new SSG is a 1998 graduate of Accounting from Bayero University Kano and holds a Masters in International Marketing from the University of East London, United Kingdom and Masters in Business Administration from University of Ilorin. He had lectured at Newham College of Further Education, London.

TMG insists on monitoring Anambra election

By Abbas Jimoh

THE Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) yesterday said it would monitor the Anambra State governorship election despite the refusal of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to accredit the group.

TMG chairman of the group Comrade Moshood Erubami told journalists yesterday in Abuja the group applied for accreditation on January 5, saying that INEC has no reason to deny the group accreditation if it has nothing to hide on the election.

He said the purported media report where the group faulted INEC's preparation for the election is not enough reason as the report is full of advice to ensure the success of the election and not undue criticism.



FROM left: Executive Vice Chairman, Nigeria Communications Commission (NCC), Mr. Ernest Ndukwe, NCC Executive Commissioner, Mr. Stephen Bello, Executive Commissioner (Technical Services), Dr. Bashir Gwandu and Dr. Mike Onyia at the NCC Forum in Abuja yesterday.

El-Rufai's attempt to stop arrest suffers set-back

By Sunday Ejike Benjamin

ATTEMPT by former Minister of the Federal Capital Territory Nasir el-Rufai to prevent the Inspector General of Police and the Attorney General of the Federation from arresting, detaining or prosecuting him suffered a set-back yesterday as a Federal High Court Abuja did not allow him to move his ex-parte application.

The trial Judge, Justice Gabriel Kolawole told the plaintiff through his counsel, Anthony Itedjere that he

cannot prevent the defendants from carrying out their statutory duties and instructed him to put the defendants on notice.

El-Rufai wants the court to prevent the defendants from acting on the recommendation of the joint Senate committee on FCT and Housing, adding that the defendants cannot arrest and prosecute him on the basis of that Senate recommendation which still remains subject of an ongoing judicial proceedings at the Federal High court

in suit number FHC/L/CS/4703/08.

The plaintiff further contended that the defendants are under a duty not to foist a situation of complete helplessness on the court and that he will suffer if he is made to go through a trial on the basis of facts which are still subject to adjudication.

A 15-paragraph affidavit in support of the application accused politicians and some government agents of leveling all sorts of allegations against

the former FCT Minister leading to an investigation by the Senate which recommended that El-Rufai should not hold public office in Nigeria and should account for funds collected by the FCT Administration during his tenure.

The plaintiff is now challenging the decision of the joint Senate committee on FCT and Housing in the Federal High Court.

The case was adjourned till February 8, 2010 for mention.

FOMWAN wants perpetrators of Jos crisis punished

By Abdul-Rahman Abubakar, Nasidi A. Yahaya & Turaki A. Hassan

MEMBERS of the Federation of Muslim Women's Association in Nigeria (FOMWAN) yesterday stormed the National Assembly requesting that perpetrators of the recent sectarian crisis in Jos, Plateau State capital and its environs be punished.

In a position paper pre-

sented to the Senate President David Mark and Speaker of the House of Representatives Dimeji Bankole which was signed by the national President Mrs Maryam Idris Othman, the women condemned "in strong terms these repeated violence against citizens of this country and called on the federal government to enforce the freedom of each citizen to reside in any part of Nigeria without fear

of persecution as enshrined in our constitution".

The FOMWAN also called on the authorities to investigate the cause of the violence with the view to forestall the possibility of its spread to other parts of the country.

The paper reads in part: "We are suggesting that the security agencies fish out, identify and prosecute the perpetrators of

this carnage whoever they are or wherever they may be."

The association decried that most of the victims of such crises are women and children, pointing out that that does no good to a country like Nigeria.

Senate President David Mark said "The Federal Government has set up a panel; we don't want to duplicate this panel. We will make sure that all the perpetra-

tors are brought to book. We don't want to pre-judge. Those who are directly involved will be punished. The situation in Plateau is more than what we see on the surface. Government will make the report a public document."

He advised parents to always be watchful of their children in order to check any excesses on their part or being hijacked by hoodlums.

'Borno yet to sign for deployment of midwives'

From Yahaya Ibrahim, Maiduguri

BORNO is the only state in the North that is yet to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Federal Government for the deployment of midwives to states under the Federal Government Mid Wives Service Scheme (MSS) to tackle maternal mortality.

The Executive Director of National Primary Health Care Agency (NPHCDA) Dr. Aliyu

Muhammed Pate disclosed this yesterday during a campaign on polio eradication and interaction with the people of Bama and Gwoza Local Government Areas of Borno State.

Dr. Pate said the Federal Government had in the last few months posted 2,500 midwives to 653 primary health care centres across the country to tackle maternal mortality. He added that 33 states including the Federal Capital Territory had so far signed the

memorandum of understanding with the Federal Government on how to tackle the problem.

Pate appealed to the state government to sign the agreement so that midwives could be posted to primary health care centres in the state in order to save women from dying as a result of child birth.

"The Federal Government took the decision last year to intervene through MSS because thousand of women lose their lives as a result of child birth. We hope the

Borno government will sign the MOU and save many women from childbirth death in the state. There are a lot of other issues to focus on if the issue of polio and immunization and maternal mortality are tackled," he added.

At the Pulka primary health centre in Gwoza, a health worker, Amina Suleiman, lamented the non-availability of equipment and health personnel. According to her, she is the only one carrying out antenatal care at the health

centre. The Executive Director while responding, promised to assist the center to procure equipment.

Under the agreement, the Federal Government pays the salaries of midwives for two years while the states take over the funding later. On polio eradication, the Executive Director said Nigeria had recorded significant growth in its effort to eradicate the disease. According to him, 388 cases were recorded in 2009.

Strike: Nasarawa govt, labour talks deadlock

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

THE indefinite strike by organized labour in Nasarawa State to fight increase in workers' salaries through the Pay as You Earn (PAYE) tax will continue as talks between the state government and the striking workers was deadlocked yesterday.

The strike entered its third day yesterday, compelling the state government to resume talks with the workers led by the state chapter of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC).

But the negotiations did not yield any result as both parties refused to yield. While the state government insisted on its planned deduction of more money from workers' salaries which will increase the income tax from 5 percent to 10 percent, labour leaders insisted that the workers would not take anything less from their existing salaries.

The government wants more revenue from tax to fund development projects in view of the paucity of funds which it blamed on shortfall in monthly subvention. But labour is asking the government to point at any project completed since 2007 to justify more funds for development.

The meeting which ended in disagreement lasted over four hours. It was presided over by the state Deputy Governor John Michael Abdul with key officials of the state government and those of organized labour in attendance. The Trade Union chairman in the state Comrade Gabriel Agbashi told newsmen that the state government never followed due process including discussing the planned tax deduction with labour until last Tuesday when the strike decision was initiated.

Gabriel said government breached the procedure for the implementation of the tax, and had visited untold hardship on workers with its action. He said labour would not compromise its position until the deduction plans were set aside and a competent committee set up to look into the matter.



FROM left: Rafiu Abdusalam (in white dress), Tunde Odekunle and Kassim Lamidi, members of a suspected gang of fraudsters arrested for duping a woman in Ibadan and paraded by the Oyo State Police Command in Ibadan yesterday.

Mark not scheming for Acting President – Group

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

SOME youths of Idoma extraction have distanced Senate President David Mark from any scheme to become Acting President if President Umaru Yar'adua can no longer continue.

The Idoma Youths Progressive Forum (IYPF) whose statement was signed by its National President Comrade Ekeh Melvin James yesterday, said insinuations that the Senate President had an ambition for the Presidency in the prevailing circumstance of Yar'adua's health was mischievous.

Comrade James' statement was in reaction to a report credited to an ethnic group known as Odua Youths for Good Governance which alleged high schem-

ing by Mark to emerge Acting President.

The Idoma youth leader said such allegations smacked of mischief targeted to rubbish Mark, adding that the intention of the Odua youth group was to build suspicion against Mark to create hatred for him.

"Nigeria is too complex for one man to wake up with the ambition to become president, how? What IYPF is saying is that if it was possible for anybody to embark on such schemes and succeed it, the Senate would not have been talking of the constitution. The Co-coordinator of Odua youth group should know this and stop exposing itself and its sponsors as ignorant", the statement added.

Youths surrender arms in Kogi

From Isiaka Wakili, Lokoja

MORE than 50 restive youths from Okene Local Government Area of Kogi State Tuesday surrendered 66 guns including three AK 47 rifles to the state government. Governor Ibrahim Idris, who received the arms at the Government House in Lokoja, commended the youths for their readiness to allow peace to reign in the Central Senatorial District of the state, stressing that there could be no development in any community without peace.

"I feel so bad with the level of destruction of lives and property in Okene in the past. I am happy that the youths in the area have realised that there is no need fighting one another all the time for nothing. It is unreasonable and there is a need for a change of heart", the governor said.

As part of his efforts to empower youths in the area, the governor announced the appointment of two Ebira youth leaders as his Special Assistants and assured that his administration would create more employment opportunities to address the problem of youth unrest in the area.

The Chairman of the local government area, Yahaya Karaku, lauded the governor's move to arrest the unemployment which he said was responsible for the frequent crises that had engulfed the area.

Earlier, the leader of the Ebira Youth Initiative Movement, Adams King, promised that his members would work hard to restore normalcy to the area.

Jos: Christian youths support ban on Okada

From Mahmud Lalo, Jos

THE youth wing of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) Pankshin chapter in Plateau State yesterday said it was in support of the ban on commercial motorcycles (Okada) in Jos and Bukuru, following the recent crisis in Jos. The Chairman of the group Jerry Dim-

long made their position known in a statement issued in Jos yesterday.

The group which also condemned the redeployment of the state Commissioner of Police Mr. Greg Ayating to Abuja, decried the transfer of and delay in the prosecution of the more than 365 suspects and mercenaries arrested by the police, saying, "One week after

the arrests, no case file has been brought to the Plateau State Ministry of Justice. Our conclusion is that they were arrested to be protected. We also do not agree with the claim that the Federal Government will not interfere with the present investigations".

The group called on the Plateau government to alleviate the

sufferings of the masses by acquiring tricycles and taxis to replace the motorcycles.

Meanwhile, a Non-Governmental Organization known as the Community Action for Popular Participation (CAPP) has called on the government to establish a mobile court to prosecute all violators of the ban on motorcycles.

CAPP said this in a statement signed by its Chairperson in Plateau State Chris Kwaja.

The group also called on human rights organizations and civil society groups to monitor and track cases of human rights abuse by security agents and report to the appropriate authorities for necessary action.

10 jostle for Batta throne

From Ibrahim Muhammad, Yola

BARELY 25 days after the former paramount ruler of Batta Chiefdom in Adamawa State, Hamma Batta Saul Jerom Swade, died about 10 people, including a PDP factional leader in the state, Chief Medan Teneke, have begun to jostle for the position. In Demsa, the administrative headquarters of Batta traditional council, there is anxiety and uncertainty over the next occupant of the throne. A kingmaker who preferred anonymity told our correspondent that they would follow tradition in the selection.

"Demsa is a place where a prince is born and not selected. It is not some places where you can be king, only if you have what it takes to be king. So we are going to follow due process in the selection of the new Hamma Batta," he said.

After kingmakers make their nominations, the state government is expected to make the announcement. The late Hamma Batta, Saul Jerome Swade, who died January 11, 2010 after a brief illness is survived by a wife, five children and many relations. He has since been buried according to Batta traditional rites.

Sokoto to boost dry season farming

From Rakiya A. Muhammad, Sokoto

THE Sokoto State government says measures have been put in place to boost dry season farming in the state to enhance food production. Governor Aliyu Wamakko said this yesterday while commissioning and inspecting projects executed by his government in Tureta Local Government Area of the state. He said the state government's efforts towards boosting irrigation activities were part of its efforts to cushion the effect of drought experienced last year.

Among the measures, Wamakko, said was the procurement of 20,000 water-pump machines for dry season farming. He said the state government executed projects worth over N500 million in Tureta Local Government Area.

Among projects commissioned were the Tureta abattoir, a court and judges' residence.

Others are rural water schemes at Gidan Yausi Kamfanin Ala, Garin Bugaje and Bimasa.



INSPECTOR General of Police Ogbonna Onovo cutting the tape to inaugurate four vehicles fitted with modern communication gadgets donated by the Delta State Government to the State Police Command in Asaba yesterday.

Rail tracks' rehabilitation begins

From Adelanwa Bamgboye, Lagos

THE rehabilitation of Nigerian Railway Corporation's rail tracks has commenced.

The contractors of the 488km Lagos-Jebba phase of the rehabilitation, China Civil Engineering Construction Company are presently on site with their engineers and technicians. As a result, terminal destinations and take-off points of all Mass Transit Trains (MTT) within Lagos metropolis has been temporarily

shifted to the Ebute-Metta Junction Station (EBJ) at Alagomeji. The contractors handling the 640km Jebba - Kano phase of the rehabilitation, Messrs Costain West Africa Plc., are also on site.

So far, over 3,000 people have been engaged for the job. It would be recalled that the Federal Government awarded the rehabilitation contract to CCECC on the November 3, 2009 at N12.13billion and on December 29, 2009, the Jebba - Kano rehabilitation contract

was awarded to Costain West Africa Plc at N12.2billion. The rehabilitation is expected to be completed within 10 months.

Meanwhile, the Permanent Secretary in the Federal Ministry of Transport Mr. Adefemi Olayisade has said that considering the huge amount of money already invested in the resuscitation of the Nigerian Railway by the Federal Government and the relevance of rail transport to socio-economic growth and national integration, the nation must get it right this time. Mr.

Adeyemi said this during a facility tour of the sites. He advised the management and workers of the corporation and the contractors to move at the same pace. He said the Eastern line from Maiduguri to Port Harcourt would also be looked into this year. Engr. Elijah Oradiogwu, the Director of Civil Engineering who represented the Managing Director of the Nigerian Railway Corporation Engr. Adeseyi Sijuwade, said the corporation would not fail in its supervisory and monitoring roles.

US based Nigerian produces new movie

From Andrew Agbese, Jos

THE new movie, 'IJE', a 35mm cine production by a US based Nigerian, Chineze Anyaene, has arrived Nigeria and was previewed in Jos yesterday. The film which featured two of Nigeria's best female actors, Genevieve Nnaji and Omotola

Ekehinde, drew a large crowd of film enthusiasts to the screening room of the National Film Institute, Jos, venue of the preview.

Anyaene, the producer of the film said she was grateful to the Nigerian Film Corporation for the assistance given to her during the film shoot, adding that the support

was overwhelming. Managing Director of the NFC Afolabi Adesanya said the film was great and urged other film producers in the country to make films that would portray the country positively. Film makers, especially Nigerian film makers in the Diaspora, she said, had been following the suc-

cess recorded within the Nigerian film industry. This, she said explained why film makers around the world were now eager to partner Nigerian film makers from script-to-screen.

'IJE', a film on the fight for legal freedom from an alleged murder charge was shot in the United

Joint Senate c'ttee concludes report on Petroleum Bill

By Hamisu Muhammad

THE Joint Senate committee has concluded its report on the Petroleum Industry Bill and will soon submit it for consideration, the committee chairman, Senator Lee Maeba has said. He revealed this during the 2010 budget defence session organized by the Senate Committee on Petroleum Resources (Upstream) for the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation, NNPC.

"Our committee report on the PIB is ready. In the next two weeks, it will be submitted to the plenary," Senator Maeba assured oil and gas industry chieftains who were present at the session.

He explained that members of the committee considered all the concerns expressed by various stakeholders in compiling the report, adding that the law that will eventually emerge would protect the interests of the nation, investors as well as those of oil

producing communities.

"The tax regime recommended in the report is investor-friendly. It is not the highest in the world, it is not the lowest," he stated.

He said the budget defence was to allow his committee to review the difficulties in the implementation of the 2009 budget, adding that his committee would like to know the challenges faced by operators in the upstream sector of the oil and gas industry with a view to finding a way forward

with respect to budgetary allocations to projects in the sector in the 2010 budget.

While giving insight to developments in the sector, the Group Managing Director of NNPC, Dr Mohammed Sanusi Barkindo explained that the proposals in the 2010 budget were predicated on the key role oil plays in the sustenance of the Nigerian economy and the need to guarantee further investments in the sector.

He gave the total amount pro-

posed for the industry in the 2010 budget as \$10.726 billion, adding that the figure is \$3.505 billion higher than last year's budget.

He said if the money was not appropriated the organization will not be able to meet Joint Venture cash calls resulting in failure to arrest declining production as well as inability to increase gas supply to the National Integrated Power Projects (NIPP) to meet national power production aspiration.

PIC: OLADIPUPO ODUNEWU



LAGOSIANS celebrating Fanti carnival during the commissioning of Campus Square mini-stadium in Lagos yesterday.

'Examination malpractice a major challenge in education'

By Maureen Onochie

THE National President of the Nigerian Academy of Education (NAE), Professor Otonti Nduka has identified examination malpractice as a major challenge facing the future of the teaching profession.

Prof. Nduka made the remark at the 2010 induction ceremony of B.ED and PGDE graduates of the university of Ibadan stressing that every teacher across the country at every stage of life should protect the high standards of academic excellence and shun every form of political rigging and corrupt practices.

The Registrar and Chief Executive of Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), Professor Addison Mark Wokocha listed the prerequisites for achiev-

ing a successful education development plan using teacher education and professionalism as paradigm.

He added that the regulatory regime is committed to a legacy of hope, a tradition of camaraderie from the stakeholders to the teacher regulatory agency, transparency, honesty and pride in the Nigerian education students as well as a conducive operational environment for Nigerian teachers and an updated national teacher educational policy and laws.

According to him "to achieve a successful education development plan, the idea of having all manner of people who knows how to read and write irrespective of training employed as teachers and without restriction deployed to teach in our classrooms must stop with utmost immediacy."

FG inaugurates committee on rural feeder roads

By Tina A. Hassan

THE Federal Government yesterday inaugurated a committee that would oversee the execution of the much awaited Rural Access Mobility Program (RAMP).

Inaugurating the committee in Abuja, Agriculture Minister, Sayyadi Abba Ruma said the rural feeder roads projects are constituency projects included in the budget of the ministry.

Represented by the acting Permanent Secretary of the Ministry Usman Abdullahi, the minister said the delay in executing the projects has brought on complains from the

beneficiaries, adding however that the delay was not deliberate.

He gave the terms of reference of the committee to include the publishing of the list of all rural feeder roads, their allocations and construction, to indicate the cost of each contract and the level of performance of the contractor among other terms.

Under the World Bank funded project, 67 roads are to be worked upon as contained in the project and five other link roads under the ministry would also be covered in the exercise. The committee has two weeks to complete its assignment.

NEMA to partner experts on collapsed houses

By Abdulkadir Badsha Mukhtar

THE National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has said it will collaborate with professionals to bring a lasting solution to incidents of collapsed buildings in FCT.

FCT Zonal Operations Officer of NEMA Mr. Ishaya Ishah Chonoko disclosed this yesterday

in Abuja. He said the agency was ready to collaborate with the Nigerian Institute of Architects (NIA), Nigerian Society of Engineers (NSE), Nigerian Institute of Builders (NIB), Nigerian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (NIQS), and the Nigerian Town Planners.

According to him, FCT alone recorded two major collapsed buildings in 2008 and 2009 and

which claimed many lives and properties.

He however blamed the use of substandard materials during the constructions as largely responsible for collapsed buildings.

Chonoko said NEMA has taken possession of some advanced emergency equipments against flooding, collapse buildings, and fire outbreaks in FCT.

Nigeria telecoms operators, consumers discuss way forward

By Yunus Abdulhamid

TELECOMMUNICATIONS operators and consumers in Nigeria yesterday in Abuja said there was much to be done in the sector to meet the challenges of the modern times especially in the area of improved internet services.

Speaking at the 54th edition of Telecoms Consumers Parliament organised by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Executive Vice Chairman of the commission, Engr. Ernest Ndukwe said

recent statistics indicate that only eight percent of Africa's population was connected to internet.

Speaking on the theme; "Internet Service Delivery in Nigeria: the prospects and challenges", Ndukwe said only about 10% (14 million) of Nigeria population is connected to the internet, describing it as unimpressive as the internet platform has become the biggest library in the world today.

He said the parliament has over the years changed the behaviours of Nigeria consumers who seldom complain about the qual-

ity of services rendered by companies, to a vibrant and enlightened audience of consumers.

Many of the complains centre on high cost of internet access, slow speed and virtual lack of network and link for access among others.

The major telecoms operators available to respond to queries included MTN, Globacom, Zain, Multilink, Etisalat, and Suburban among others.

The Technical manager of Etisalat, Mr Muiyideen Haruna blamed the major con-

straint of internet providers in the country was poor infrastructure especially in the area of low bandwidth, calling for localisation of international internet domains with local content which would promote inter network interaction to be monitored by the NCC.

Regional Technical Manager of Globacom, Mr Dayo Ogburede gave assurance that by the end of March the Glo submarine cable would have commenced commercial services which would help reduce cost of internet access and improve speed.

Online Reactions

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ON www.dailytrust.com



Assembly strikes out Sheriff's request for new emirates

I really appreciate the Borno State House of Assembly members for killing the bill on the creation of

new emirates. Borno citizens are not fools. Enough of this misrule in the Home of Peace.

Babagana Boso
babaganaboso@yahoo.com

Well done law makers. I wish you will continue to consider motions that affect the life of

the ordinary man.
MBukar
bukarmohammed2@yahoo.com

Senate rejects pension for former Senate leaders

SENATORS Ahmed Ibrahim and Anyim have displayed the highest sense of maturity by rejecting that unpopular move for pension for ex Senate leaders. The senate president should also be commended for not supporting it. We should concentrate on making laws that will move Nigeria forward and do away with sentiments.

Maikudi Abdulkadir
maikudi_umar@yahoo.com

For this to be the last Jos communal crisis

HELLO, Mr. Mathias, I love your article, I am a Yoruba man living in Jos and I can as a matter of fact tell you that there are seven councillors of Hausa Fulani origin of Jos North Local Govt Area. They have a representative in both the state House of Assembly and the House of Representatives. So, it is not about indigene ship, but a well planned attempt to subjugate the indigenes. You are an intelligent man, read between the lines.

Yoruba man in Jos
rotex@doctor.com

Bauchi Assembly denies recommending sack of Plateau indigenes

NOW, who is lying? It is either your fault for reporting an unconfirmed statement or Aminu Tukur is denying the statement. Whatever is the case, statements like that can fuel crises. Some of them out of fear have started returning to Jos. Better decisions should be taken please and this one, is not one of them.

Usman Abdullahi
evesdon4u@yahoo.co.uk



BAUCHI State Governor Isa Yuguda

Bride, 26 others perish in crash

MAY Allah have mercy on their souls. Ameen

Sufyan
sufey1@yahoo.com

Mark: Yar'adua must hand over

TO be sincere, if I was the one in Yar'adua's position, I would resign and face my health.

Mohd
mohdjibrin@yahoo.com

You should all leave him alone, everyday you speak on the pages of newspapers, but no action has been taken. He is fit to be the president of Nigeria. President Umaru Yar'adua did not purposely fall ill, it can happen to anyone as no one can predict what is going to happen in future. We just pray for him to get well soon. They are always talking about the constitution, who among the politicians follows the constitution? Leave our president alone.

Ahmed Salim Bawa
hafnaf2004@yahoo.co.uk

Rule of law, where art thou? I recall the standing ovation given to Yar'adua by the NBA when he said he would follow the rule of law. Unfortunately, it has turned out to be a mere rhetoric. David



SENATE President David Mark

Mark's pronouncements are not enough, lets see it accompanied with action. Or is it true that he is afraid of losing his position if Jonathan takes over? Why should

the PDP refuse one of its own? And if nature intervenes today, they will all rush to Jonathan to pledge their loyalty.
Abdallah

abd.amin34@yahoo.com

Thanks to the Senate, that is what we expect you to do. To do what will stabilise our country and to discuss anything that will move Nigeria forward.

Salihi Muhammad
giwane@yahoo.com

The issue of impeaching the president or his vice does not arise because neither the president nor the vice president breached the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Secondly, those agitating for impeachment or resignation are doing it because they want to cause problem in the country. They are not patriotic citizens, they want to destabilise the nation and sabotage the effort of the government in promoting peace and stability.

May the Lord heal Malam Umaru Yar'adua in good time and may He also help Nigeria.

Muhammad Kasim Nadab
mknadabo01@yahoo.com

Jos: Police invite PRTV boss over broadcast

THIS is the only way to stop crises in Jos. Whoever is thought to have aided and abetted the crisis in anyway should be called and if found guilty, should bear the consequences of his or her action.

Farouk Usman
usmanfarouk@gmail.com

They will pay, one after the other.

Sanusi
dsan4u2nv@yahoo.com

Here we go again, why is he being invited to Abuja, rather than Jos, where the 'offence' was committed?

Bassey
binyang@lgc.com

The role played by the General Manager should not only stop at

the questioning level, but should be investigated. If found guilty, he should be punished because he did not act in accordance with his religious injunctions.

Naibi Zubairu
naibizubairu@yahoo.com

The incitement of Jos people by the manager of the Plateau Radio and Television Authority should be thoroughly investigated. The transmission should be screened and justice should take its course to deter others.

Binta Fati Danladi
bintadanladi@yahoo.com

Is a very good move by the Nigerian police. Keep it up. Let him pay for what he has done.

Rawahilu
rawahil@yahoo.com



INSPECTOR-GENERAL of Police Ogbonna Onovo

Recent court rulings in rights abuse cases

JUSTICE is not cheap. The cost of litigation may be deterring many from the courts to seek justice. Secondly, I am curious to know whether the fact that Ms Okeke's beating was in the public glare had any bearing on its outcome. Please educate me, what

is the fate of the Naval man who brutally shot an 'Okada' rider who bumped into his 'Mercedes' in Lagos?

It would be a great day for democracy when all Nigerians, regardless of status, gender or creed can have equal access to

our courts to seek redress. To this end therefore, 'Legal Aid' must be available and accessible to those unable to afford the services of an attorney. Until then, these are just flashes in a pan

Owoicho Okpe
ookpe@ccm.ac.uk

A word for Jos warriors

THE issue of rebuilding was argued, but some of the radical Muslim youths took that opportunity and went to a church and attacked people who were attending Sunday morning service. You did not include that.

Martina
maokeyomi@yahoo.com

Good afternoon, Mahmud Jega, you are a man of integrity, honesty and a good citizen. I, Idris agree with all that you have said, but you forgot something, the unprofessional comment made by the police commissioner that Muslim youths attacked Christian worshippers contributed to the problem. You deserve to be part of the Federal Government committee of enquiry. Thank you and God bless you.

Idris Damagum
elidris2007@yahoo.com

FUT Minna axes 3 students for rape

SCHOOL authorities should watch the kind of students they give admission to.

Stella
ammy2lovem@yahoo.com

The school authorities took the right decision by expelling the students. They should however be arrested for further punishment.

Umar Mohammed
doctoronline20@yahoo.com

Idang Alibi

idangalibi@dailytrust.com; 08036938729

Haiti needs spiritual deliverance

When our editorial board met three weeks ago, one of the many issues that came up for consideration for possible editorials to be done on them was the earthquake that devastated the nation of Haiti and the humanitarian disaster that it brought in its wake. Over 200,000 souls were said to have perished in that earthquake which also struck the presidential mansion of that woe-begotten country. Like millions of people on earth, the overwhelming response from members of our board was the need for a massive humanitarian aid to the people of Haiti.

Well, this is the normal, natural or reasonable thing to say in an editorial on an issue like that but I decided to offer a suggestion that I knew very well will not be accepted as an input that should be reflected in the final editorial by whoever was going to be assigned to do the draft. My humble suggestion was that the editorial should say, among other things, that perhaps one of the greatest things the people of Haiti need is spiritual deliverance from the spiritual pollution of their country. I offered that humble suggestion because I think that the series of calamities that befall that country is not ordinary.

My plea is that if Haiti does not ultimately want to suffer the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah

Haiti is continually visited by one calamity after another. If Haiti is not heard about because of flood disaster, it is for hurricane. If it is not hurricane, it is earthquake. If it is not for hurricane, it is about some riot or some epidemic. Remember also that Haiti is described as the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

This dubious distinction should worry some of us who sympathise with that country to urge them to do something unusual about their fate as a people for it seems disasters will continue to befall that nation forever unless something unique or extraordinary is done. And for me, that unique thing that needs to be done is for the people of Haiti to seek spiritual solution to their problem. The unending disasters that visit Haiti have reached such a level that some are even suggesting that the land which the largely black ex-slaves are occupying is an evil land which devours its inhabitants so our brethren there be brought back and resettled in some part of the African homeland.

The board politely decided that I should keep my spiritual deliverance solution to myself. What will be said is that Nigeria should lead the world in coming to the aid of that island nation especially as it is a largely black country. I was not surprised by the stance. I knew that the board will not accept my input because we tend to believe that since we live in a scientific and technological

age, there is no room for spiritual matters. Many are extremely cynical about, and dismissive of, anything about the intervention of the supernatural in our affairs. Some feel it is even shameful for a serious national newspaper to write an editorial advocating for the spiritual cleansing of a country!

Our modern society has one standard response to natural disasters: we call for food, clothing, money and medicines for victims. It is very rare to hear any voice ask the victim-countries to search themselves to see whether they have offended God and there is therefore need for them to seek reconciliation in order to avert any similar future calamity. When you talk like that many will laugh you to scorn. They will say you are a superstitious man who attributes 'natural' disasters to God or the spirits. They will say God is a good God who does not bring evil upon his creation. They fail to understand that some nations engage in activities that make God remove his covering upon them; they therefore become vulnerable to 'natural disasters' like earthquake, flood or hurricane.

What we fail to realize is that a nation is both a physical and a spiritual entity. It is not only a physical or geographical entity. It is in fact first a spiritual being before it becomes physical. No matter how sophisticated a nation may be and whether it came into being through wars, conquests or voluntary association of the peoples, it must not forget that it owes its existence to God and is therefore bound to obey the rules and regulations of God if it wants to dwell in safety and security. My hunch about Haiti is that it is suffering because that nation has elevated witchcraft to the status of a national religion and God is not happy about this, hence its unending woes. My plea is that if Haiti does not ultimately want to suffer the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, it must retrace its step and begin to worship the One true God.

I may not have food, cloths or money to send to the people of Haiti but the only gift I have for that country is to open the minds of their leaders to this possible understanding of what may be at the root of their national problem. Haiti needs a spiritual revival, a return to the worship of God Almighty.

There is too much voodoo in Haiti. Haitians take too much delight in idolatry. From the lowest to the highest in Haiti, witchcraft is a national religion. Their two famous ex-presidents, Papa Doc and Baby Doc, were known occult practitioners. Is Haiti the only sinning nation on earth? Certainly not. Why then do I think that God is punishing them for a sin that other nations are also guilty of? That one, I do not know but what I do know is that the devastation of the Presidential Mansion in the capital Port-au-Prince in the latest tragedy is a warning symbol of the impending overthrow of the whole society of Haiti.

Rwanda brought a powerful man of God Dick Warren to help the country repent of the mindless blood shed and pollution of 1994 and other atrocities committed against the land of Rwanda. That country is now witnessing peace and steady progress.

By Matthew Hassan Kukah

Southern Kaduna and crisis of development (I)

Development is all that makes a person whole. By themselves, physical structures can become evidence of development but only to the extent that they help the human people realize his or her full potentials. For us in Southern Kaduna, the temptation has been to refer to our communities as not being developed simply because we believe we lack roads, highways, electricity and other physical infrastructure. Despite the lack of these, there are others who believe that we have a future nonetheless.

I recall an incident in 1988 when I returned from the United Kingdom to do my field research in the course of my Doctoral programme with the University of London. I had travelled all the way to Nsukka to see if I could speak with the famous Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe. I was lucky or unlucky that I arrived on the occasion of his 80th birthday I think. Though it was difficult, I did manage to see him. He ushered me in when he heard I was a Catholic priest and he faintly recollected my name (from my writings and contributions to Nigeria, he said) to my greatest shock. In his presence, I introduced myself again and he asked if it was true that I hailed from Benue State. I told him I hailed from Kaduna State. Are

The sentiments are understandable and they can be appreciated

you from Southern Kaduna, he asked? When I nodded, his face immediately lit up. *Come here, my son, Come, Sit here*, as he gestured and beckoned me, tapping his lap. To my shock, he beckoned me to his lap and asked me to sit down. I was in shock due to his age, but consoled that my small frame would do him no immediate harm. *Bring his food, he told the stewards. Southern Zaria has a special place in my heart. I know your people have suffered, but that is where the future of Nigeria lies.*

And, lo and behold, there I was perched on the right thigh of one of the greatest sons of Africa. Sadly, that was before the mobile phones made photography so easy. Then as now, I asked myself, is it really the case that we represent the face of the future of Nigeria? In what way, I asked myself. Given our tendency to wallow in self pity, this was indeed a salutary statement.

Today, a Culture of cynicism, a sense of personal and collective pity, a negative sense of being oppressed and rejected seems to have formed a cloud over the elites of Southern Kaduna. Today, when we speak of Southern Kaduna, people seem to sound rather despondent and helpless. The feeling of a deep Culture of oppression has sunk into our system. The years of violence

have taken their toll on our people generally in the State. The tragic crisis of Zangon Kataf left a pall that has continued to hang in the air. Many would argue that that incident furthered widened the gulf between the North and Southern part of the State and heightened tensions between Muslims and Christians, to use the popular but unhelpful label.

There have been anxieties among the people that despite all the hard work, the system has not rewarded them adequately. To the majority of people, getting their hands on the levers of political power is all that matters. For a society where the State has been and remains the only domain of appropriation and distribution of the loot of state, one can understand why these sentiments have such a powerful hold on our people. The general feelings are captured by the following observations: We have never produced a Governor. *We don't have a single Industry. There is a genuine feeling that the Federal and State Governments have abandoned us. The only solution we have to redeem ourselves is to look for the nearest Exit. Enter State creation as the solution!*

Like tens of other communities across the country, our people are saying, we want to exit by way of having a State of our own. The sentiments are understandable and they can be appreciated. After all, only last year, it was here that Hon Dimeji Bankole, the Speaker of the Federal House of Representatives announced to a similar gathering that there was hope for a State and all that was required was hard work, unity and dedication. Fine talk. But as a scholar, I want to provoke you by asking you to begin to think beyond the borders of *State-as-solution* mentality. Do not get me wrong. I will celebrate any day this dream comes true. But before then, I feel I have a duty to prepare your minds to other challenges that should occupy our minds while we wait for the goose to lay the golden egg of a new Kaduna State. A state will not be a cure for the Aids of our collective conditions. What we need is to acquire the tools that we require to function effectively and efficiently within a new Kaduna State or within the existing borders.

The Nigerian elite across the board remains obsessed with the balkanization of the country into their various spheres of influence and power. Thus, the creation of new States, Local Government Areas, and Chiefdoms has been pursued as a solution. At a theoretical level, we should be asking ourselves, what are the endless agitations for states symptomatic of? At a time when we are witnessing the emergence of globalisation and global citizenship, how and why should our people be seeking independence through the reduction of space?

To be Cont'd.

Rev. Monsignor Kukah, Vicar General of the Catholic Archdiocese of Kaduna, made these (excerpted) remarks on "Culture and Development: Southern Kaduna's struggle for national integration" at Afan Day Festival of Kagoro Chiefdom of Kaduna, on New Year's Day



Your Letters

Between Tinubu and Fashola: Eko don bajé!

I hate to read this aspect of Tinubu-Fashola's political development in Lagos. Those of us, especially from the North, who always want to point at the Lagos State's success story in terms of political mentoring and giving the mentored political leadership free hand to

discharge its responsibilities are about to be disappointed. Both Tinubu and Fashola should please save us

from this embarrassing political situation. They should note that in Nigeria there would always be the willing pro-Tinubu and pro-Fashola rallies and groups. We don't need any soothsayer to tell us that the foundation laid by Tinubu and consolidated by Fashola, has made Lagos to be a very unique State in Nigeria. Truly,

even for a non-Yoruba speaker like me, Eko don

bajé! Both Tinubu and Fashola should note that Lagos is greater than any one of them and for those of us their ardent admirers, we can not afford to take this simmering political crisis from them! Abdulrahman Mohammed Alfa, Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration

Greenhill, P.O. Box AH 50, Achimota-Accra.

Text us on 08 131 8000 30

Gwagwalada-Kuje road

IT is over 5 months since we were promised that the Gwagwalada-Kuje road would be completed in 6 months time; yet work is practically yet to commence. The human and capital resources of the contractor are yet to be deployed. One wonders if the rains are still here. Or is it part of the Nigerian culture to make empty promises that can never be fulfilled? The way things are it is doubtful if the contractor has the capability and resources to deliver. It should prove sceptics wrong by mobilising fully to site and commencing work immediately.

YUSUF Julde, Kuje, 08026819515.

Placing Buhari

IT would be a great move if Buhari left the ANPP. Perhaps with the leadership of the country in such a flux, joining the PDP would not be a bad idea at all. In fact, he could become president on it plat-

form. That'll be the day!

ADAMU Liman Abba, Potiskum, Yobe State, 08038727587.

Who gains, who loses?

WHAT does Yar'adua stand to lose if he temporarily relinquished power? I honestly think he should do so, if nothing but to ease the pressure on him.

SULEIMAN Kuliya Usman, 08053430388.

More states out of Kano

MORE than seventy percent of our secondary school students are deprived of tertiary education annually. Deprivation of education means perpetual domination by the retrogressive people; their children are studying abroad! We wish for more states; we yearn for them and we want them. It is for the greatness of the whole and not that of any class.

UBALE Bompai, Rano, Kano, 08033246464.

Jerry Boy can't be serious

THE reported remarks of Useini

seeking suspension of the Abisoye panel into Jos crisis are highly disappointing. It seems some people have hidden agenda or/are afraid of Abisoye panel. But why should they be? Let the panel conclude its sitting, the culprits identified along with the recent one.

IBRAHIM Ahoko, 08036212829.

Maryam Babangida, truly unforgettable

HON Abike Dabiri-Erewa's tribute to the former first lady was moving. Thanks for sharing that wonderful experience with us. We need more of such women in Nigeria, though it's a pity that some of the so-called first ladies refused to follow her footsteps; instead they turn themselves into demigods. I was a victim of a former wife of the vice president who asked her guide to lock me up because I didn't stand on my feet when I heard she was coming; it was that bad. Maryam Babangida came, saw and conquered; she is indeed a mother. 08033115317.



By Obiora Obeagu

Anambra politicians as obstacles to credible election

The desire for free and fair elections is the top priority of every Nigerian voter. However, elections alone do not make a democracy. There is a general understanding that the processes leading up to the election ranging from selection of candidates by parties to the actual conduct of the election are important components of the electoral processes that eventually impact on the final outcome of the election.

Political parties occupy a special place in our democratic equation today as they have exclusive right to present candidates. However, a key aspect of Nigeria's electoral process that has generated so much controversy is lack of internal party democracy. Past experiences in Nigeria show that it is pointless to expect parties to become democratic on their own except through court interventions and judicial pronouncements nullifying autocratic and inequitable party actions.

The truncation of democratic elections in Nigeria begins with undemocratic imposition or selection of candidates by political parties. Many recent conflicts in the political environment are triggered by grievances over exclusionary party practices. We have witnessed and are still witnessing some shameful undemocratic practices by our political parties. For instance, intra-party conflicts rocked most party primaries through which candidates emerged for 2007 elections as most of the candidates were hand-picked through undemocratic imposition rather than transparent elections. In many cases, chosen candidates were illegally substituted by autocratic party leadership. Currently, the build up to the Anambra 2010 election have been marred by deep-seated intra and inter party wrangling and widespread violence instigated by those who feel aggrieved by the outcome of the primaries and those bent on grabbing power by do-or-die means.

The bitterness arising from undemocratic primaries, and the imposition of candidates, heat up the polity as disenchanted members resort to legal battles, sometimes with the aim of redressing perceived injustices and sometimes as a means of frustrating what they regard as unfair electoral process. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with seeking redress in court. However, current realities from our political experiences show that our politicians now largely see the court as a short cut to truncate the democratic process by reckless and irresistible corruption of the judiciary. Unfortunately too, some of our judges are now willing tools in the hands of these unscrupulous political elements. During one of my exams in my University days at Faculty of Law, Enugu campus, I was required to analyze the statement that "Justice is blind..." I remember writing clearly that though Justice is blind and cannot see, it is often led by Judges who have eyes and the tendencies to lead it on the pathway of injustice.

Based on Nigeria's past experiences, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has taken steps to initiate its electoral reforms as stop-gap measures for the wider reforms. The Commission has said it is determined to conduct credible, free and fair election in Anambra State. But the critical stakes and threats that may mar or undermine the smooth conduct of the Anambra Governorship election is the revelation by the Inspector General of Police, Ogbonna Onovo, that he had uncovered plans by politicians to wreck havoc and rig the election. There is so much yearning for electoral reform by way of amending the Constitution and the Electoral Act, but whereas such is necessary, I do not see how the amendments will change the present realities of our political environment. Do the present constitution and electoral act authorize the importation of arms and recruitment of thugs for election violence? Do they permit the corruption of election officials and security agencies by corrupt political actors? The looming problems from the desperation of parties and candidates who are engaged in intra and inter-party fights, importation of arms, sowing of police and army uniforms, recruitment of thugs and war veterans from Aguleri, Umuleri and the Niger Delta militants have raised questions about whether this coming Saturday's election could be free, fair and credible. More worrisome is the fact that Despite IG's revelation, no culprit has been arrested so far and no stockpiled arms have been confiscated. Could it be the result of security lapses and inefficiency on the part of the police? The danger in this is that these unscrupulous politicians will continue to unleash violence and undermine free and fair elections in the polity.

Obeagu, a lawyer, write from Abuja.

DAILY TRUST

EDITORIAL

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The Marshal's timely warning

The Chief of Defence Staff, Air Vice-Marshal Paul Dike recently had a useful word of advice directed mainly at politicians, but with other groups in society equally in mind. In a statement, Dike warned politicians not to drag the military into the on-going constitutional logjam in the country. He spoke against the backdrop of the debate over the absence of President Umaru Musa Yar'adua on health grounds, and attempts to bypass constitutional provisions in addressing the issue. The Air Force chief reminded politicians to always find ways of resolving issues.

Air Vice-Marshal Dike was not speaking out of a hat; there had been some chatter about rumours that a coup d'état was widely and openly being discussed as a possibility should the politicians failed to untangle the apparent impasse among them. His comments also came on the heels of reports alleging that movement of top military officers had been restricted. Dismissing the notion of a military coup to supplant the current order, AVM Dike assured the nation of the military's commitment to its constitutional role of defending the nation's territorial integrity and preserving the unity of the country.

The Chief of Defence Staff made a fundamental statement by clarifying that the military will keep to its constitutional role and will not again intervene in the governance of the country under any political guise. Democracy can only develop and mature in Nigerian if the military understands its role in it, and continually subordinate itself to political authority. Military intervention in purely political bickering cannot be part of it. As the nation experiences hiccups in the practice of democracy (after a prolonged period of military administrations, it should be remembered), politicians, and civil society generally, must learn from mistakes and be the wiser the next time. Moreover, military rule is an unwarranted aberration because of its unsuitability to civil administration. By training the military uses instruments of coercion to achieve results, processes that are anathema to democracy, which essentially involves disagreement, sometimes acrimonious, consultation, consensus and compromise. Dialogue is an instrument of reaching agreement in democratic dispensation. That is where we are now.

Politicians must learn to imbibe the notion of the spirit of national interest, as against personal interest, when they engage themselves in issues that border on national stability. Politics is about service to the people and not for personal gains or self-enrichment. Essentially it is concerned with the state and of the conditions basic to its existence and development.

Politicians must play politics according to the rules. Politicians must also be sensitive to our peculiar environment when they play their politics, otherwise there always is the danger that their conduct may lead to political violence instability. The supreme law, the 1999 constitution, provides for addressing every aspect of our political life; it should be consulted in times of uncertainty, like now, and not look beyond it to bring about an unconstitutional order.

The military deserves our commendation for rightly keeping out of the constitutional crisis that we find ourselves in, due to the unusually long absence of a head of state. Democracy is the worldwide norm, giving citizens opportunity to choose leaders who will rule them. Nigerians for now have settled for that. Politicians who were reported to have called for military intervention because of the current crisis should be identified; they are not fit to hold public office.

Any regime change through coup d'état is unacceptable, and that is the message that must continually be sent out. We praise Dike for being the lightning rod.

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Jos, Jang and genocide

'Conscience is an open wound; only the truth can heal it'
-- Usman Danfodjo

The cardinal principles of journalism require that accuracy, fairness and objectivity prevail when reporting the news. However when the two sides involved in a conflict make it quite difficult to know who started the aggression, the journalist is faced with an even more difficult task of abiding by the professional code of ethics. The crisis that erupted again in Jos still remains an unfolding tragedy as those affected counted their losses in lives put at over 1000, property worth billions of naira, the injured and the displaced are about 40,000. The anatomy of the crisis was provided by a colleague who monitored it. The violence broke out when a Hausa man, Malam Kabiru of Dutse Uku in Jos North Local Government was reconstructing his house which was destroyed two years ago. Some Birom citizens who felt that the Hausas should not be allowed to rebuild destroyed houses nor return to where ever they had been expelled during previous crisis started stoning the workers. A fight broke out among them. Elders in the town were invited to mediate and the issue seemed to have been contained. There was no incident on the second day but the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Gregory Atainyang went on AIT television and said some Muslim Youth went and attacked worshippers in their church and started destruction unprovoked. AIT then interviewed four Birom activists who supported the Commissioner's account. That ignited the violence and added a religious dimension to what started as a clash between some Hausa and Birom men. The Commissioner of Police has been posted out of the state for inciting the genocide that followed his interview.

On the third day, the Birom mobilised and surrounded Hausa settlements in Unguwa Uku in Bukuru, a suburb of Jos. At first the two groups were engaged in stone throwing until arms were procured by the Birom side and the shooting began. All the houses in Bukuru Gyel inhabited by the Hausas were burnt down. In Gyero village adjacent to Bukuru, they killed an Imam and his people. The destruction was carefully planned to drive out the Hausa and indeed all Muslims irrespective of their ethnic affiliation. The reporter was particularly disturbed 'that the mining camps and settlement from the colonial era where the Hausa miners' descendants have lived for over 120 years were destroyed by the Birom. They laid siege on the six camps mainly Sabon Gidan Kanar, Gyero, Bisichi, Dogon Na Hauwa, Rayfield Maidiko, Rafin Bauna, and razed them to the ground. They slaughtered 47 people, most of them old men who could not run away. Other Hausa and Muslim areas within Kuru Karama, Kuru Babba

Civil Society Watch

By Hajiya Bilkisu (mni)

and Kuru Janata were not spared. None of the houses were left standing. In Kuru Karama, the killing was blood chilling. The Birom surrounded their victims, shot about 200 hundred people and dumped 150 of them in wells. The recovery of the bodies was covered by the some media houses and many people saw it on *Aljazeera* television. The reporter pointed accusing fingers at the Governor Jang who refused to act on security reports that indicated that there were plans to ignite the crisis. When the crisis broke, there was failure

vented were the Muslim women in Nigeria who converged on Abuja led by their umbrella organisation, the Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN). One hundred and twenty of us went in to the National Assembly in Abuja to protest the genocide in Jos.

We carried placards that read: 'End the genocide', 'The guilty must be punished'; 'Stop the killings and destruction', 'Let peace reign on the Plateau'; 'This is man's inhumanity to man', and 'Indict Jang'.

They echoed the demands of some civil society organisations on the crisis. They called on all Nigerian to embrace peace, respect one another and resist the manipulation of our lives by the politicians and the ruling class who use religious and ethnic

*'Stop the killings and destruction',
'Let peace reign on the Plateau';
'This is man's inhumanity to man',
and 'Indict Jang'.*

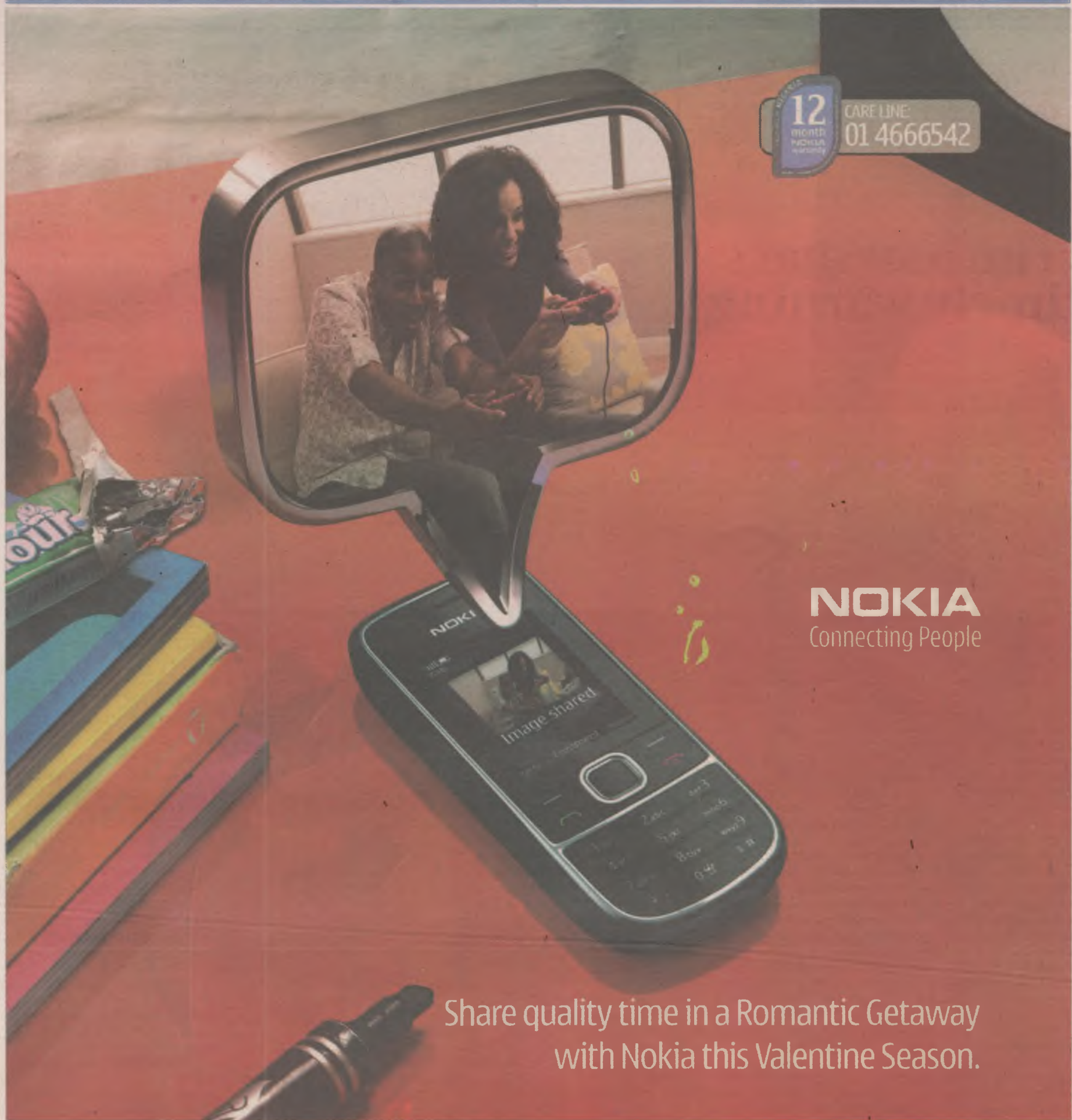
of leadership. Jang made no effort to mobilise for security protection and showed no remorse. The BBC carried news of a video tape that showed security men killing people they rounded up. The reporter alleged that the Jang administration has completed plans to continue displacement of the Hausas through demolition of most markets where the majority of the owners are Hausas under the pretence of implementing the Greater Jos Plan that he designed.

The Birom version came from a reverend father who told us that 'the Hausas who were working on the house that was being rebuilt numbered 200 and they attacked the worshippers in their church on Sunday, dispersed them, wrote 'Islam Only' on the wall and also burnt a church in another part of town. He said the crisis is not ethnic but religious and 'it is a continuation of the jihad the Muslims are always waging against the Christians'. Radio France monitored in Abuja said the Chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria CAN in Plateau State and Catholic Archbishop of Jos, Reverend Ignatius Kaigama debunked this. He said in a meeting of Religious Leaders and stakeholders which met with the Vice President in Abuja yesterday that he drove to the church and the church leaders told him that nothing like that happened and they were never attacked in their church during service.

As the dust settled, the women in Jos across ethnic and religious divide fasted and prayed for three days and planned a protest march to register their condemnation of the wanton destruction of lives and property in their once peaceful city. They were prevented from carrying out their protest by the government. Those who could not be pre-

sentiments to cover up their failure to provide good governance and guarantee the fundamental rights of all. Like most citizens, the women have lost faith in the government panels that are set up to investigate the causes of various crises and their numerous reports that are never implemented. The women and the Centre called for the prosecution of the perpetrators of the mayhem and international investigation and action in the case. They also demanded that

- leaders should be held accountable for crisis that occur during their tenure
- the government should also investigate and prosecute those responsible for the killing over one thousand (1000) people during the violence
- the media must eschew partisanship and provide balanced and unbiased reports to avoid the escalation of the crisis
- government must compensate all the victims who lost their family members and properties as a result of the tragedy
- all the previous reports of inquiries set up to investigate the various crises be made public and those behind the violence should be prosecuted no matter how highly placed
- the government of Plateau state must realise that the discrimination against non-indigenes in its territory is a time-bomb that must not be allowed to explode again. It has responsibility to protect all the people living in the state, irrespective of their religious and ethnic group.
- the Federal government should ensure that its security forces exercise restraint and comply with international standards on the use of force in responding inter-communal violence.



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THE BURDEN OF "SUBSIDY": 2006 - 2009



S/NO	STATES	NO OF LGS	2006 census Population (Millions)	Subsidy Paid (N Billions)	Subsidy Outstanding (N Billions)	Total Subsidy (N Billions)	
1	AKWA IBOM	31	3.92	79.13	43.24	122.37	
2	RIVERS	23	5.19	72.94	39.86	112.80	
3	DELTA	25	4.10	69.83	38.16	108.00	
4	BAYELSA	8	1.70	35.59	19.45	55.05	
5	KANO	44	9.38	32.55	17.79	50.34	
6	ONDO	18	3.44	27.86	15.22	43.08	
7	LAGOS	20	9.01	24.48	13.38	37.86	
8	KATSINA	34	5.79	24.27	13.26	37.53	
9	OYO	33	5.59	23.37	12.77	36.14	
10	KADUNA	23	6.07	22.84	12.48	35.31	
11	BORNO	27	4.15	22.38	12.23	34.61	
12	IMO	27	3.93	22.37	12.23	34.59	
13	NIGER	25	3.95	21.53	11.77	33.29	
14	BAUCHI	20	4.68	20.68	11.30	31.98	
15	JIGAWA	27	4.35	20.59	11.25	31.85	
16	BENUE	23	4.22	19.90	10.88	30.78	
17	EDO	18	3.22	19.73	10.78	30.51	
18	SOKOTO	23	3.70	18.84	10.30	29.14	
19	OSUN	30	3.42	18.41	10.06	28.47	
20	ABIA	17	2.83	18.33	10.02	28.34	
21	KOGI	21	3.28	17.93	9.80	27.73	
22	ANAMBRA	21	4.18	17.85	9.76	27.61	
23	ADAMAWA	21	3.17	17.82	9.74	27.55	
24	KEBBI	21	3.24	17.68	9.66	27.34	
25	OGUN	20	3.73	17.06	9.32	26.38	
26	TARABA	16	2.30	16.58	9.06	25.65	
27	PLATEAU	17	3.18	16.52	9.03	25.55	
28	YOBE	17	2.32	16.31	8.91	25.22	
29	ZAMFARA	14	3.26	15.94	8.71	24.66	
30	CROSS RIVER	18	2.89	15.90	8.69	24.59	
31	ENUGU	17	3.26	15.72	8.59	24.32	
32	KWARA	16	2.37	15.22	8.32	23.53	
33	EKITI	16	2.38	13.67	7.47	21.14	
34	GOMBE	11	2.35	13.47	7.36	20.83	
35	NASSARAWA	13	1.86	13.43	7.34	20.78	
36	EBONYI	13	2.17	12.94	7.07	20.02	
37	F.C.T. ABUJA	6	1.41	2.57	1.41	3.98	
Total States & LG Portion				872.23	476.68	1,348.92	
FGN Portion				738.00	403.32	1,141.31	
Total				140	1,610.23	880.00	2,490.23



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF FINANCE ABUJA

INTERNATIONAL

Genocide charge now possible for Sudan's al-Bashir

THE International Criminal Court was wrong when it decided that Sudan's leader can't be charged with genocide in Darfur, appeals judges said yesterday — an unprecedented ruling that could lead to President Omar al-Bashir's indictment with humanity's worst crime.

The appeals ruling also put other leaders around the world on notice that the court will not balk at charging them with genocide if they persecute their own people.

The standard of proof the court used last year to dismiss three counts of genocide against al-Bashir "was higher and more demanding than what is required" in its statutes, appellate judge Erkki Kourula of Finland said yesterday.

Activists welcomed the groundbreaking decision, which helps define just how much evidence prosecutors need before judges at the world's first permanent war crimes tribunal will issue an indictment.

"Today's ruling is hugely significant, as it could lead to the inclusion of charges of genocide by ICC judges for a sitting head of state and for the first time in the history of the court," said William R. Pace of the Coalition for the ICC, a nongovernment group that supports the court.

The five-judge appeals chamber said the International Criminal Court wrongly concluded in March that there was insufficient evidence to charge al-Bashir with three counts of genocide for allegedly attempting to wipe out entire ethnic groups in the war-ravaged province of Darfur.

Instead, the court charged him with seven counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity for allegedly orchestrating a campaign of murder, torture, rape and forced expulsions in Darfur.

Al-Bashir, the first sitting head of state indicted by the world's first permanent war crimes tribunal, refuses to recognize the court's jurisdiction and has vowed never to surrender.

Rabie Abdel-Attie, a Sudan government spokesman, said the decision yesterday reflected its

increasing isolation from reality on the ground in Sudan.

He said the decision will not affect al-Bashir's bid to run again for presidency at elections expected in April.

"The government doesn't give the court any consideration and doesn't care much for it. This is a

matter of principle," he told The Associated Press from Khartoum. "The court is heading in one direction and we in the other."

Al-Bashir's indictment in March further isolated his hard-line regime.

Since the charges were issued, the Sudanese leader has traveled

to friendly countries but called off trips to nations where he fears he could be arrested and sent to *The Hague*.

Moreno Ocampo said part of the alleged genocide was a campaign of rape to drive women into the desert, where they die of starvation.



SUDANESE President Omar al-Bashir.

...Sudan kicks at appeals court decision

KHARTOUM accused the International Criminal Court yesterday of trying to affect peace talks with Darfur rebels and reform in Sudan after an appeals chamber ordered a review of the dropping of genocide charges against President Omar al-Bashir.

"The ICC wants to impact the political process in Sudan and the ongoing negotiations in Doha," Kamal Obeid, state minister for information, told AFP, referring to consultations with Darfur rebels in Qatar. "If you look to the time of this process, it shows that the ICC wants to stop the political development in Sudan, but I believe it will help Sudanese to be more committed to the democratic transformation," he said.

The appeals chamber of the

ICC ordered the pre-trial chamber to reconsider its decision to drop three charges of genocide when it issued an arrest warrant for Bashir in March last year on five counts of crimes against humanity and two of war crimes committed in Darfur.

The judges said that the standard of proof on which the pre-trial chamber rejected the genocide charges was too demanding. They directed it to issue "a new decision using the correct standard of proof."

The decision came as Bashir briefly visited Doha to meet Qatari Emir Hamad Ben Khalifa al-Thani for talks that dealt with the Darfur peace process. ICC decision important for Darfur victims: prosecutor

The Justice and Equality Movement has held two rounds of talks with Sudanese government officials. A JEM official welcomed the appeal court's decision as a victory for "the population of Darfur and justice" but added that his group was still committed to the peace talks. Other rebel groups have boycotted them.

A Sudanese official said on Sunday that Khartoum wanted the talks to conclude before a general election expected in April -- Sudan's first since 1986.

The United Nations says up to 300,000 people have died and 2.7 million fled their homes since the ethnic minority rebels in Darfur first rose up against the Arab-dominated Sudan government in February 2003.

Guinea's new PM says elections may take time

GUINEA'S new prime minister says a presidential election meant to bring civilian rule may not be held within six months.

A breakthrough agreement reached last month had called for a vote to take place within that timeframe. But Jean-Marie Dore, a long-time opposition leader, told Guineans yesterday that it will take time to appoint competent ministers to a transitional unity government.

Guinea's military leader Capt. Moussa "Dadis" Camara, who seized power in a December 2008 coup, agreed last month not to return to the West African country. He is recuperating in Burkina Faso after surviving an assassination attempt.

Africa's priorities food, transport, energy - AU head

NEW African Union president Bingu wa Mutharika said yesterday that food security, transport infrastructure and energy will be his priorities as leader of the pan-African body.

"This year we'll focus on three issues: first food security to make sure Africa is able to feed Africa within five years.

Second on transport infrastructures... to connect Africa, and third on energy because we must have enough power to run our industries," said the Malawian president.

Mutharika replaces Libyan leader Moammer Gaddafi. The 53-member AU will hold its next summit in Kampala in July.

INNA LILLAHI WA INNA ILAIHI RAAJI'UN!

40 Days IN MIND

On behalf of my humble self, members of my family and the entire good people of Moriki emirate, wish to convey our deepest condolence to the family of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida (GCFR) over the sorrowful departure of the former Nigerian first lady Dr. (Mrs) Maryam Babangida.

Dr. (Mrs) Maryam Babangida was indeed a great icon, a woman whose virtue were really extolled by many, the limelight of her society, the pride of Nigerian women, second to none.

Yes, she lived a life full of rare achievements, determination for self actualization, a life worthy of emulation and basically, the restoration of her gender pride. She has been the heroine of our time.

May Allah in His infinite mercy answer our prayers for the repose of her gentle soul and reward her with Jannatul Firdausi as her final abode and the family, the fortitude to bear this irreparable loss.

**ALLAH YA JIKANTA YA GAFARTA
MATA (AMEEN).**

Signed:

Alh. Hanafi Musa Moriki
(Turakin Moriki)



International

Fatah leader visits Gaza in goodwill trip

A senior Fatah leader is visiting Gaza for the first time since the territory was seized by Fatah's Islamic militant Hamas rivals in 2007.

Nabil Shaath, a Gaza native, said yesterday that his three-day trip is meant to improve the atmosphere between the two factions.

Repeated attempts at reconciliation have failed.

Shaath handed his passport to Hamas

border guards for registration, in a symbolic recognition of Hamas authority. Shaath says the trip has the blessing of Fatah's leader, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

Shaath plans to meet Hamas leaders, but says he won't begin reconciliation talks while in the territory.

A member of Shaath's group, West Bank businessman Munib al-Masri, met with Gaza's Hamas prime minister.



JALALUDDIN Haqqani, former Taliban Army Supreme Commander.

Pakistan could be key to Taliban reconciliation

PAKISTAN'S links with Taliban leaders believed based in the country could prove vital to the Afghan government's renewed push to make peace with the insurgents, a potential benefit from relationships that have been relentlessly criticized by the US.

But experts warn that even Pakistan, which armed and funded the Taliban in the 1990s, is limited in its ability to push through a deal since Afghanistan, the US and the Taliban itself are likely to be suspicious of what Islamabad wants in exchange. Pakistan could also act as a spoiler in the process if it believes its interests are not being served.

US officials have expressed skepticism of reconciling with high-level Taliban leaders, preferring instead to focus on persuading junior fighters to switch sides by offering them homes and jobs, along with relatively moderate higher-level members of the regime toppled by the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan. American reluctance is driven by hostility toward senior Taliban figures, many of whom have links with al-Qaida and the belief they will be unwilling to cut a deal until their battlefield momentum is reversed.

But there has been a flurry of recent activity related to reconciliation, includ-

ing Afghan President Hamid Karzai's announcement last week of a planned peace conference that he hoped would include Taliban members.

The president traveled to Saudi Arabia yesterday in an attempt to enlist the support of the country, which also has historic links to the Afghan Taliban.

Karzai has said he is willing to welcome back any militants who renounce violence and recognize the Afghan constitution.

However, the Taliban have always set the withdrawal of international troops as a precondition for any negotiations — a demand that Karzai has called unrealistic.

Karzai has also called on Pakistan to help with reconciliation, acknowledging the country's unique position to influence the process because of its links with the Taliban and their decision to flee to Pakistan following the 2001 U.S.-led invasion.

"Just about any significant commander network involved in the insurgency has got an address in Pakistan, so Pakistan really does have the ability to be a real positive force," said Michael Semple, a former European diplomat whom Karzai expelled from Afghanistan two years ago for supposedly unauthorized contacts with the Taliban.



AANI

NOTICE OF 30TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the 30th Annual General Meeting of the Alumni Association of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, Kuru (AANI) will hold from 10 am on Saturday 6th March 2010 at the Atiku Abubakar Auditorium of the Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Centre, Abuja.

Agenda for the Meeting is as follows:

1. Minutes of Last Meeting.
2. Matters Arising from Minutes of Last Meeting.
3. The Annual Report of the Secretary-General.
4. The Report of the Accounts of the Previous Year.
5. Appointment of Auditors and their Remuneration.
6. Amendment of the Constitution.
7. Any Other Business.

Any member who wishes to place an item on the afore-stated Agenda may do so, provided he/she gives a written notice to the Secretary-General not later than 20th February 2010.

AAN

1st February 2010

Abuja, Nigeria

O.U. EMELE, mni
Commodore
Secretary-General

www.aani.org

International



US citizens arrested for their involvement in a suspected illegal adoption scheme, talk to a journalist at a holding cell at the judicial police station in Port-au-Prince.

Haitian judge questions detained Americans

A group of US Baptist missionaries arrested trying to leave Haiti with a busload of children faced more questioning by a local judge, while an orphanage director said many of the children had parents.

The investigating magistrate was to meet with the five men yesterday, a day after he questioned the five women for several hours at judicial police headquarters, where they are jailed, according to Haiti's communications minister. No lawyers were present. Minister

Marie-Laurence Jocelyn Lassegue said the evidence from the judge will be presented to a Haitian district attorney who will decide whether to file criminal charges against the 10 Americans.

The Baptists from Idaho say they were only trying to help orphans survive the earthquake. But legal experts say taking children across a border without documents or government permission can be considered child trafficking.

At the SOS Children's Village orphanage where authorities are protecting the 33 children, regional director Patricia Vargas said none who are old enough and willing to talk said they are parentless: "Up until now we have not encountered any who say they are an orphan."

Vargas said most of the children are between 3 and 6 years old, and unable to provide phone numbers or any other details about their origins.

US, Russia nearing nuclear arms control agreement

THE first major US Russian nuclear arms control treaty in nearly two decades should be ready for signing by the end of March, a senior Russian legislator said yesterday.

President Barack Obama's top arms control official, US undersecretary of State Ellen Tauscher, said the talks toward a successor agreement to the now-expired 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty are "in the endgame."

US and Russian officials said last year that they would sign a new treaty by the end of December, but talks have dragged on.

Moscow and Washington both want to reach a new accord as quickly as possible to give credibility to their efforts to persuade Iran and North Korea to abandon their nuclear programs.

START required each country to cut nuclear warheads by about one-fourth to about 6,000 and implement procedures for verifying the reductions.

President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev agreed in July to cut the number of nuclear warheads each country has to between 1,500 and 1,675 under a new treaty.

One of the hang-ups has been including missile defense issues in a new accord.

If completed, the new deal may arguably be the farthest-reaching arms control treaty since the original 1991 agreement. An interim deal reached in 2002 did not include its own rules on verifying nuclear reductions.

Speaking to The Associated Press during a nuclear disarmament conference in Paris, Mikhail Margelov, the Kremlin-connected head of the foreign affairs committee in Russia's upper house of parliament, said Obama and Medvedev would sign a new treaty "by the end-of the first quarter."

"This is not a political question, it is a technical question," he said. "We are fine-tuning and polishing details."

In Moscow, Medvedev's foreign policy advisor Sergei Prikhodko said "March or April is a realistic target," according to Russian news agencies.

Both sides say they will abide by the old START treaty, which expired Dec. 5, until a new one is signed. Tauscher showed no sign of readiness to abandon the US nuclear deterrent.



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TENDER NOTICE

CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA



NIGERIAN TREASURY BILLS

Notice is hereby given by the Central Bank of Nigeria that the Federal Government of Nigeria Treasury Bills of 91, 182 and 364-day tenors amounting to N5,110,449,000, N30,000,000,000 and N30,000,000,000 respectively would be issued by Dutch auction on Thursday, 11/02/2010.

All Money Market Dealers should submit bids through the CBN TEMENOS INTERNET BANKING between 9:00 am and 11:00 am on Wednesday, 10/02/2010.

Each bid must be in multiple of N1,000 subject to a minimum of N10,000. Authorized Money Market Dealers are allowed to submit multiple bids. A bid may be for authorized Money Market Dealers own account, Non-Money Market Dealers or interested members of the public. The result of the auction would be announced by 11:30 am on Wednesday, 10/02/2010. The Bank reserves the right to reject any bid.

Allotment letters would be issued for successful bids on Thursday, 11/02/2010, while payment for the successful bids should be made to your account with Central Bank of Nigeria not later than 11:00 am on Thursday, 11/02/2010.

The Bank reserves the right to vary the amount on offer in line with market realities prevailing as at the period of auction of the Nigerian Treasury Bills.

ISSUES OFFICE
CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA
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LAGOS

International

AU: Gaddafi's tenure and the spirit of Haiti

By Is'haq Modibbo Kawu

THE 14th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union (AU), opened in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on Sunday, January 31. The theme of the 14th Summit was "Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in Africa: Challenges and Prospects for Development".

A most important platform for African development, no doubts; but what became an issue at the commencement of the Assembly, was the bid by the Libyan leader, Muammar Gaddafi to stay on for an extra year, as the Chairman of the AU.

Gaddafi failed in the bid, because the effort would have been contrary to the statutes of the organization. In his place, Malawi's President Bingu wa Mutharika was selected to lead the AU for the next one year.

But trust that Gaddafi will not leave the stage without some hoopla! The Libyan strong man used his farewell address to tell the pan-African organization that it is wasting time and failing to meet global challenges and urged the African leaders to begin the process of political unification.

That has been the central theme of his year-long chairmanship of the AU, and we might infact add that it has been the major issue of his political career: Gaddafi has attempted, albeit unsuccessfully in the past, unity projects with neighbouring Arab states before turning to the African continent with the same message of finding unity.

The AU, he told his colleagues was "tiring" him with long meetings and making declarations and reports without asking him.

Gaddafi was reported to have further told his colleagues that "it was like we were building a new atomic bomb or something", referring to meetings which had lasted long into the night and which he characterized as "useless".

"The world's engine is turning into 7 or 10 countries and we are not aware of that. The EU is becoming one country and we are not aware of it. We have to get united to be united. Let's be united today", Gaddafi told his peers.

Even though an African unity government is one of the goals enshrined in the AU's founding charter, many members, such as South Africa, Nigeria and Ethiopia, have long been wary of Gaddafi's seeming over-effusive push for the achievement of the unity of the continent.

Many of the strongmen in the African countries cannot agree to let go of the sovereignty of their nations. Gaddafi has the support of a few of the African leaders such as Senegal's Abdoulaye Wade, who believe that union is the only way to achieve the development that will not be depend-

ent on Western dictates.

The new AU Chairman, Bingu wa Mutharika stayed within more conventional frames in his address. "Africa is not a poor continent but the people of Africa are poor. Achieving food security at the African level should be able to address the problem", said Mutharika, whose country, Malawi, has achieved bumper harvests in recent years following a regime of fertilizer and seeds subsidies.

President Mutharika asked African leaders to "reflect that Europe and much of the western world developed using minerals, timber, wood, meat and fish from Africa. But Europe and the Western world did not develop through resolutions and declarations; they took action; concrete action".

The press release from the AU on 31st January had noted that 2010 will be a year of many challenges on the continent, noting that there has been a reduction in the number of conflicts in recent years, due to collective continental efforts; however, "far too many African countries remain trapped in a vicious cycle of conflict with its attendant deadly consequences".

The release reminded that armed conflicts kill thousands of people every year; they create humanitarian disasters; wipe out the livelihoods of ordinary people and they make sustainable development impossible. "There is also a more profound loss: the destruction of hope for a better future". So while there was a fight over who the chairman was to be, there seemed to be agreement that the transitional governments in Somalia, Guinea and Sudan be supported.

AU Commission Chairman, Jean Ping, warned of unspecified consequences for the parties in the Malagasy political debacle that decide to go it alone, outside of the frame of the AU mediatory effort to resolve the year-long political crisis. The parties got a 15 day timeline to respond to the African Union's power-sharing proposals.

ON the eve of this year's AU meeting, the Caribbean Republic of Haiti had been hit by a devastating earth quake which killed an estimated 200,000 people and destroyed most of the capital, Port-Au-Prince.

Haiti is regarded as the poorest country in the Western hemisphere, yet it has very old links with Africa; and as the first republic to throw off the yoke of slavery in 1804, its history was a major anti-colonial inspiration on the African continent. It was against the backdrop of its history as well as the devastation of the earthquake, that Senegalese President, Abdoulaye Wade, on the eve of the AU Summit, asked African countries to encourage Haitians to



NEW AU chairman and Malawian President, Mr Bingu wa Mutharika

return to Africa and be provided land to re-settle on the continent.

The AU agreed to consider Senegal's proposal "to resettle Haiti's earthquake homeless and possibly create a state for them in Africa". According to AU Commission Chairman, Jean Ping, the AU had opened an account for Haiti with the African Development Bank.

"It is out of a sense of duty and memory and solidarity that we can further the proposal of Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade to create in Africa the conditions for the return of Haitians who wish to return after the effect of the disaster that ravaged Haiti", Ping said.

Significantly, on the eve of the Summit, the AU also for the first time, expressed grati-

tude to African scientists by giving two of them awards for excellence. It was to stimulate scientific research at national, regional and continental levels, according to a pre-Summit press release.

The winners were Professor Jan Hiderbrand of the University of Witwatersrand in South Africa, for his work in the Basic Science and Innovation category as well as Doctor Patrick George Ericsson from the University of Pretoria also in South Africa, who got recognition for his work in the Earth and Life Sciences category. Each of them received a sum of \$100,000.

As part of the background to the Summit, the African Union also unveiled its new flag at the 14th Ordinary Session of the

Assembly of Heads of State and Government. It was unfurled by outgoing Chairman of the AU, Libya's Muammar Gaddafi, against the backdrop of the strains of the AU anthem.

The press statement announcing the new flag reminded that "during the 8th African Union Summit ... (in) 2007, (it was) decided to launch a competition for the selection of a new flag for the Union. They prescribed a green background for the flag symbolizing hope of Africa and stars to represent member states".

The annual gathering of the AU can be likened to the stomach of an African elephant: it will contain a lot of items of interest; but the issue is that there is never time to digest all these laudable items to find answers relevant to the problems of our continent.

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S/N	PROGRAMME/WORKSHOP/TITLE	COURSE CONTENT	DATE	VENUE	FEE
1.	Effective Maintenance of Engineering Mechanisms & Infrastructures	Repair/Maintenance of Lifts, Tractors, Pumps, Ladders, Excavators & Compacting Machines and Plants.	17 th - 19 th March, 2010	BAUCHI STATE	N20,000
2.	Building Infrastructures and Utilities Installation, Maintenance and Services	Building Services Maintenance and Repair of P&A Plumbing Services Electrical Installation, Carpentry, Domestic/Industrial Safety	12 th - 14 th May, 2010	NAPC HQ ABUJA	N15,000
3.	Workshop on Computer Aided Design (CAD) Using Auto Cad Software IN COLLABORATION WITH NEDDI	Using Drawing and modelling tools efficiently, Navigate Auto Cad interface with relative ease. Draw simple and complex 2-D objects/wires, 3-D Home Architect etc.	23 rd - 25 th June, 2010	NASENI ABUJA	N20,000
4.	BASIC AUTOMOBILE MAINTENANCE WORKSHOP	Systems Maintenance of Petrol, Diesel Engines, Plants, Pumps and Automobile Electricity	14 th - 16 th July, 2010	LAGOS STATE	N20,000
5.	Fire Fighting/General Safety Workshop (Building, Industries etc)	Fire Fighting, Fire Prevention and Control/General Safety in Building, Industries etc	6 th - 6 th August, 2010	KATSINA STATE	N20,000
6.	SPECIALIST WORKSHOP ON CASTING TECHNOLOGY AND PRACTICE	Casting Process Planning, Mould and Pattern Preparation, Nature of Sand Moulds and Cores, Sand Moulding Methods, Mould Materials and their characteristics, Melting of Metals for Casting, Quality Control in Cast Metal Production.	1 st - 2 nd September 2010	KOS, PLATEAU STATE	N20,000

EDU STATE MOVEMENT

OUR CASE FOR CREATION OF EDU STATE FROM THE PRESENT NIGER AND KWARA STATES

HISTORY:

Niger State is the only state in northern Nigeria that has remained intact as one state since 1976. Sokoto is now Sokoto, Zamfara and Kebbi States; Kano is now Kano and Jigawa states; Borno is now Borno and Yobe states; Plateau is now Plateau and Nasarawa states; Benue is now Benue and Kogi states; Bauchi is now Bauchi and Gombe states; Gongola is now Adamawa and Taraba states; Oyo is now Oyo and Osun states; Cross River is now Cross River and Akwa Ibom states; Bendel is now Edo and Delta states, Rivers state is now Rivers and Bayelsa states; Ondo is now Ondo and Ekiti states; Imo is now Imo and Abia states; Anambra is now Anambra, Enugu and Ebonyi states.

LAND MASS:

Niger has the largest land area in the entire country, 76,000 sq km. In fact, Niger State is almost equal in size to the entire South West geo political zone and even larger in land area than the entire South East geo-political zone put together. The new state would have a land area equivalent to states such as Sokoto, Gombe, Kebbi, Katsina, Jigawa and Kano.

POPULATION:

The new state will have a robust population of over 1,832,196 (2006 census).

ECONOMIC VIABILITY

i. AGRICULTURE

The single most important resource base of the proposed state is its great fertile land resources, with tremendous potential for crops and cereals production.

A total of approximately 700,000 hectares of excellent agricultural land resources is available for farming. These fertile lands can be used to cultivate food crops such as rice; maize, soya beans; groundnuts, yam, cassava, and industrial crops such as sugar cane and jatropha.

On the south bank in the present Kwara state there is additional 200,000 hectares of excellent agricultural land. In addition, substantial portions of Borgu emirate have very fertile agricultural land resources.

Indeed, if the new state were to focus on rice production alone, which has huge national demand, the estimated revenue that will flow into the new will be over N140 billion annually. This would save the country substantial amount in foreign exchange that is now being expended on rice importation.

The Niger Dams Authority which was created to harness the waters of river Niger for hydro-electricity and irrigation project has opened up over 300,000 hectares of arable land between Jebba in Mokwa Local Government Area and Baro in Agaie Local Government Area along the north bank alone. Baro is potentially the biggest inland port in the country. The proposed state already has three sugar plantations viz:

Sunti, Bachita and Lafiagi. The plantations in Bacita and Lafiagi are also being resuscitated by other investors.

ii. INDUSTRIES

These plantations are already attracting huge investments. For instance the former Sunti Sugar Company Limited has been taken over by Supertek Nigeria Ltd which in partnership with Flour Mills of Nigeria is investing substantial resources to expand the sugar plantation and build sugar processing factory in the area.

These projects along with many others which are expected to be attracted to the area will create employment opportunities and generate substantial revenue for the new state.

In view of the fact that Nigeria currently imports over 90% of our national demand for sugar, other plantations and sugar plants are expected to spring up at a faster rate when the proposed state is created.

iii. OIL AND GAS

Current estimates of Nigeria's Proven Oil Reserves is 32 billion barrels. It is on record that the Federal Government plans to raise this reserve to 40 billion barrels in a not distant future. The search for the new reserves is to be conducted in seven basins. These are:

- Anambra Basin - Anambra State
- Chad Basin - Borno State
- Benue Basin/trough - Benue State
- Benin Basin - Edo State
- **BIDA BASIN-Niger State**
- Sokoto Basin - Sokoto State
- Niger Delta Basin - Many States

The creation of the new state shall bring about the needed concentration of developmental efforts to the area under consideration.

COMPATIBILITY/CULTURAL AFFINITY

The new state is made up of compatible people with common history, ancestry and culture. In spite of the tribal and religious diversities, the people of the area of the proposed state have lived together peacefully for many centuries.

OUR DEMAND

Our quest is a just, constitutional and legitimate aspiration of the people of Bida, Lapai, Agaie, Lavun, Gbako, Katcha, and Edati, Local Government areas of Niger State; Pategi, Edu Local Government areas of Kwara State. The creation of the proposed state would also guarantee the exploitation of the vast human and natural resources in the area which has remained largely untapped for decades.

Prof. Jerry Gana, CON
Chairman, Central Working Committee, Edu State
Movement

Engr. Y.Y Sani
Chairman, Publicity and Media Committee



SURVEYORS COUNCIL OF NIGERIA (SURCON)

PAYMENT OF 2010 ANNUAL PRACTICING FEES & RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION OF ENLISTED SURVEY COMPANIES

TAKE NOTICE that the payment of 2010 Annual Practicing Fees has commenced from 1st January, 2010. Moreover the renewal of Registration of Enlisted Survey Companies and fresh registration of all companies that produce Surveying information are ongoing.

These Companies include those in Sectors like Agriculture, Forestry, Transport & Aviation, Petroleum Resources, Geology and Planning Environment, Security, Tourism, Health, Communications, Construction and Information.

The Bank approved to collect the annual practicing fees is:

Stanbic IBTC Bank Plc
Account No.: 1110142241

The payment can be made in all branches of the Bank mentioned across the nation.

SCHEDULE OF FEES:-		=N=
a)	Principal Surveyor	5,000
b)	Non Principal Surveyor	2,500
c)	Pupil Surveyor Subscription	2,000
d)	Survey Technologist	1,500
e)	Survey Technician Subs.	1,000
f)	Company Enlistment	
Registration Fee: indigenous		20,000
foreign		50,000
Form		2,000
Renewal indigenous		2,000
Foreign		25,000

It is instructive to note that due payment in consonance with council decision is on or before the 1st March, 2010.

Any member who fails or neglects to pay the subscribed annual practicing fees before the end of February in each year shall as long as he/she remains in default, have no right:

- To practice
- To prepare authenticate or use any Survey document or information
- A failure or neglect to pay the Annual Practicing fees, as and when due, shall be deemed to be an act of Professional Misconduct

Companies that fail to enlist themselves and do necessary Registration with SURCON should note that their staff can be prosecuted for impersonation.

For further enquiries please contact:
SURCON Address:

SURVEYORS COUNCIL OF NIGERIA (SURCON)
10 Yawuri Street
Garki II Abuja

- ❖ Alna-08033454469
- ❖ Martin-08023813900
- ❖ Olugbemiro-08023944447
- ❖ Tobun - 08023369342

DATED THE 22ND DAY OF JANUARY 2010

Surv. W. A. Ayeni
Registrar
SURVEYORS COUNCIL OF NIGERIA (SURCON)

SURVEYORS COUNCIL OF NIGERIA (SURCON)

(ESTABLISHED BY CAP 425 L.F.N 1990)



SEPTEMBER 2010 PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATIONS

The Professional Examinations of the Council have been scheduled to take place from 20th to 24th September, 2010. Entry forms are now available at the following centres:-

- Council's Secretariat, 10 Yawuri Street, off Jere Street, Garki II, Abuja
- SURCON Zonal Offices in Lagos, Enugu, Kaduna and Gombe.
- Offices of all Surveyors-General in all the States of the Federation; and
- Office of the Director of Planning and Surveys, Federal Capital Development Authority, Abuja.

A) Professional Examinations and Interviews for Pupil Surveyors seeking full registration as qualified Surveyors.

Candidates seeking to undergo this examination must have been **enrolled as Pupil Surveyors by the Council for at least two years** and must have at least two years' practical experience in an approved office.

Duly completed application form and synopsis of projects to be included in the folio are expected to reach the Secretariat in Abuja, not later than Thursday 1st April, 2010. The examination fee of N37,500.00 in Bank Draft issued in favour of the Surveyors Council of Nigeria must accompany the completed form and synopsis of projects. So also is the letter from project supervisor(s).

Submission of folios (In approved format) containing approved projects to be effected not later than Friday 16th July 2010 in **hard and soft copies**.

Candidates must ensure that the Supervisors of their projects are current on the payment of practice fees and annual subscriptions/levies of SURCON and NIS respectively. Supervisors are warned not to endorse for candidates, projects which were not carried out under their direct supervision as false attestation shall attract outright disqualification of the candidate and appropriate sanctions will be instituted against such Supervisors.

B) Direct Professional Examinations for Survey Technologists seeking to be upgraded to Pupil Surveyors' Status.

Candidates are required to submit to the Council's Secretariat, their duly completed examination forms together with a non-refundable examination fee of N15,000.00 in Bank Draft issued in favour of the Surveyors Council of Nigeria, not later than Friday 16th July 2010.

C) Preparatory Workshop for Professional Examination Candidates.

A **compulsory 2-day workshop** to assist Pupil Surveyors to have a better understanding of Rules and Regulations governing folio submission and professional examinations will take place on Friday 5th & Saturday 6th March 2010. The aim is to enhance the general performance of candidates in the forthcoming examinations. Examination Guidelines will be available for sale at the centres and at the Council's secretariat. Preparatory workshop for Technologists will be announced soon.

The Centres for the workshop are:

- Yaba College of Technology, Lagos.
- University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus, Enugu.
- Kaduna Polytechnic, Kaduna.

The Co-ordinators for the centres are

- Surv. (Prof.) O. O. Ayeni, fnis (Lagos) Tel:08023045582
- Surv. (Prof.) N. K. Ndukwe, fnis (Enugu) * 08136365727; 08037107505
- Surv. S. A. Gatah (Kaduna) * 08069776097

Interested candidates are requested to enrol with the Co-ordinators of their centre of choice on or before Friday 26th February 2010. Enrolment fee is N5,000.00 per candidate in Bank Draft made payable to SURCON. Payments made less than a week before the workshop will attract a fee of N7,500.00.

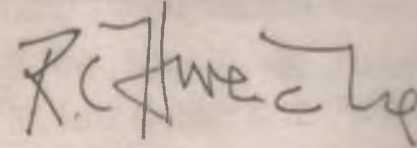
D) All payments can also be made in favour of SURCON into Stanbic IBTC Acc. No. 1110142241 and tellers sent to surconmails@yahoo.com.

Signed:
SURV. WINSTON . A. AYENI
REGISTRAR

THE POSITION OF *Ndigbo* ON THE STATE OF THE NATION

The Executive Committee of *Ohanaeze Ndigbo* in a special session held on Saturday, 30th January 2010 at her Head Office, No. 7 Park Avenue, G.R.A., Enugu, after deliberating on the continued absence of Mr. President and its impact on the state of the Nation, resolved on behalf of *Ndigbo* as follows:-

1. *Ndigbo* are unrelenting in our prayers for the good health of Mr. President, Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'Adua *GCFR*. We wish him quick recovery and early return to his duties.
2. *Ndigbo* are happy and satisfied with the deep sense of responsibility and patriotism with which His Excellency, Vice President Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan *GCON* has continued to keep Nigeria at peace in spite of the long absence of the President and the obvious turbulence the absence has continued to create. We commend Mr. Vice President for this maturity and his love for Nigeria.
3. *Ndigbo* are not satisfied and totally disagree with the current situation in which the President is seriously ill and receiving treatment abroad for over two (2) months, and the Vice President is not bestowed with the status of Acting President. *Ndigbo* consider it inappropriate and unhelpful on the side of the President for not transmitting his long absence to the National Assembly and making provision for the Vice President to assume full responsibility as Acting President. We urge Mr. President to immediately rectify this unacceptable situation. *Ndigbo* stand by the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
4. We commend the action of the Senate in asking the President to transmit a medical vacation letter to the Senate and urge them to pursue this to its logical conclusion. We urge the Distinguished Senators of the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Honourable Members of the House of Representatives to take-up their responsibility and set in motion the process for bestowing on the Vice President the status of Acting President without further delay pending the return of the President.
5. *Ndigbo* call on all Nigerians to realize that the way and manner the issue of the President's absence in relation to the status of the Vice President is currently being handled puts the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria into jeopardy. *Ndigbo* urge all Nigerians to note that whatever puts the Constitution in jeopardy puts the Nation in jeopardy. All steps must now be urgently taken to put an end to this machination at putting the Constitution and the integrity of the nation in jeopardy. We urge all Nigerians to step forward now and make sure that the position and prestige of the Vice President as provided in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is not diminished or undermined.



Amb. Raph Uwechue OFR
President-General
Ohanaeze Ndigbo

BUSINESS

0805 1000 536



Revenue Mobilization, allocation and Fiscal Commission's (RMAFC) head office in Abuja

RMAFC queries lawmakers over budget defence

By Idris Ahmed

THE Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) has said that it is unconstitutional for the lawmakers to subject individual ministries, departments and agencies of government to a budget defence after the annual budget has been prepared by the executive.

The Commission also said in a circular addressed to the Senate President, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Principal Secretaries to the President and Vice President, Ministers of Finance, National Planning and Federal Capital Territory that the legislature has no power to increase budget beyond revenue and expenditure estimates submitted by the executive.

The circular was copied to the 36 state governors, Speakers, State Houses of Assembly, Chairmen, Code of Conduct Bureau, Federal Character Commission, Federal Civil Service Commission, Independent National Electoral Commission and National Population Commission. Daily Trust obtained a copy of the

circular.

Lawmakers have made it a tradition to ask MDAs to defend their annual budget before them, and they, sometimes, review upward budget appropriation submitted to it by the president. The Commission said that such operation is against the law.

The Commission said the practice of increasing budget allocations or adjusting revenue framework is generating controversy amounting to "double or repetitive budget preparation and contravention of the principles of separation of powers."

Citing relevant sections of the constitution, the Commission said that there is no provision for the legislative arm to negotiate with individual MDAs with a view to review provision made for the MDAs by the Executive arm of the government.

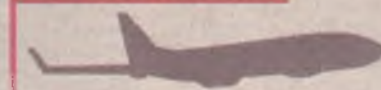
"Since the Executive at both the Federal and State levels through its specialized institutions and agencies are the managers of the economy, they are better placed in terms of access to data, revenue projections and expenditure programming", it said.

The Commission also said that lawmakers both at the national and state levels should through their accounting officers present and defend their budget before the Minister or Commissioner of Finance like other agencies to show "commitment to the principle of checks and balance."

The Commission said that Nigeria should return to the era of strategic and policy of national planning to ensure a cohesive, consistent and focused budgeting process.

It said that there is a need to review the current operation of the Federation Account, because "if the current practices of operating the Federation Account are to continue in 2010 and the nation continues to depend on crude oil revenue which is over 80%, then all beneficiaries must be alerted to the fact that such funds may not be available to provide even for minimum governance commitments."

FLIGHT SCHEDULE



Arik Air
 PH-Abuja: 08.45, 12.12.50, 17.00 (Mon-Fri), 08.45, 17.30 (Sat), 14.40, 17.30 (Sun); Abuja-PH: 07.15, 11.20, 15.30 (Mon-Fri), 07.15, 16.00 (Sat) 14.40, 17.30 (Sun); Lagos-Kano: 12.20pm (Mon-Fri/Sun)
 Kano-Lagos: 02.35pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Abuja-Kano: 03.35pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Kano-Abuja: 05:20pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Abuja-Gombe: 11:10am (Mon, Wed, Fri, Sun); Gombe-Abuja: 12.30pm (Mon, Wed, Fri, Sun); Lagos-Yola: Lag-Abj 04:50pm, via Abj-Yola 06:45pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Yola-Lagos: Yola-Abj 08:40am, Abj-Lagos 10:20am (Mon-Fri/Sat); Lagos-Maid: Lag-Abj 03:50pm, via Abj-Maid 06:00pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Maid-Lagos: Miud-Abj 07:30am, via Abj-Lag 09:15am (Mon-Fri/Sat); Abuja-Sokoto: 11:10am (Mon-Fri); Sokoto-Abuja: 12:50pm (Mon-Fri)
 Abuja-Akure 02:10pm (Mon, Wed and Fri); Akure-Abuja: 08:50am (Mon, Wed and Fri); Lagos-Kwara: 07:30am, (Mon-Fri) 07.30, 03:50pm Sat 08:00am, 11:45am Sun; Kwara-Lagos: 4:10pm (Mon-Fri), 01:10pm, 05:30pm Sat 09:45am, 05:00pm Sun
 Abuja-Kwara: 03:25pm (Mon-Fri); Kwara-Abuja 01.30pm (Mon-Fri); Lagos-Jos: 09:05am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); Jos-Lagos: 11.00am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
 ABV-QOW 02:30pm (Mon-Fri), 11:30am Sat 03:20pm Sun; Lagos-Kaduna: 10:20am, 04:10pm (Mon-Fri), 10.20 (Sat/Sun); Kaduna-Lagos: 12:10pm, 06:00pm (Mon-Fri), 12.10 (Sat/Sun); Lagos-Warr: 07:30am (Mon-Fri) 07:30am, 03:50pm (Sat), 08:00am, and 11:45am (Sun)
Aero Contractors
 Lagos-Kad: 08.00am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
 Kad-Lagos: 09.40am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
 Lagos-Jos: 11.15am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
 Jos-Lagos: 13.15pm (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
 Lagos-Abj: 06.50; 13.30; 16.30; 19.45 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); 12.30 (Sun) 16.45 (Sat) Abj-Lagos: 07.30; 13.30; 19.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat); 10.30, 14.30; 19.30 (Sun) 18.30 (Sat); Lagos-Ben: 07:45; 11:00; 15.30; (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun) 12.30; (Sun); 15.30 (Sat).

Trust Index

Inflation	→	12%
GDP	→	6.90%
Budget	→	N3.1tr
External Reserves Acct	→	\$42.47bn
Excess Crude Acct	→	\$6.7bn
Poverty Ratio	→	54.4%
Interest Ratio	→	6%
Banks	→	24
Oil Price	→	\$75. a barrel
Power Supply	→	3,700MW
Oil output per day	→	1.9mbd

CBN	CBN EXCHANGE RATES			BUREAU DE CHANGE RATES		
	Buying (NGN)	Central (NGN)	Selling (NGN)	BUYING		
26/1/2009				DOLLAR.....	N151	
				EURO.....	N210	
				POUNDS.....	N249	
				SELLING		
				DOLLAR.....	N152	
				EURO.....	N213	
				POUNDS.....	N252	
				Source: S&I Bureau de Change, Wuse Zone 4, Abuja.		

Stock Market Index	
Date:	Wednesday, February 3, 2010
Index:	23,096.17
Deal:	7,899
Volume:	888,621,336
Value:	N 5,187,423,333.34
Cap.:	N 5,562,309,104,003.86

Business/International

UK 'could face power shortages'

THE UK could face power shortages in the years ahead, according to the energy regulator Ofgem.

The regulator also warned that a significant number of consumers may not be able to afford the higher energy prices they would have to face.

Ofgem said there was "reasonable doubt" about whether the UK's energy market would be able to deliver sustainable supplies in the coming decade.

In a final report, which took a year to complete, Ofgem said the UK's open competitive energy market could fail to deliver secure, sustainable supplies in the coming decade.

Ofgem's vision of the coming decade is indeed bleak. And its proposals to encourage the necessary £200bn investment - which involve increasing levels of government intervention - amount to a reversal of more than two decades of liberalisation in the UK's energy market.

The core finding that the current market arrangements may not deliver secure and sustainable supplies simply reflects the growing consensus that something has to change.

What's astonishing - given the timescales outlined by Ofgem - is the level of disagreement in the sector over what



GORDON Brown, British PM

exactly needs to happen. The big electricity producers don't even agree on one of Ofgem's more modest proposals - setting a minimum price of carbon. And the Government is at

odds with its own regulator - it denies there is any risk to security of supply in the coming decade.

The regulator said the industry needed £200bn of invest-

ment by 2020 but the energy companies may need stronger incentives before committing that level of funds.

It would also have a knock-on effect on prices, leaving an increasing number of consumers unable to afford the energy they would normally use.

Previously, Ofgem had suggested the average household annual gas and electricity bill would rise by up to 25% to £2,000 or so by 2020.

Chief executive Alistair Buchanan told BBC News: "Given the scale of investment, our bills are going to have to take some of the heat on that."

"Faced with the unprecedented challenge of carbon prices, the unprecedented challenge of the credit crunch and the unprecedented challenge of maintaining international supplies, we are looking at new solutions to protect security of supply."

The regulator suggested a series of solutions that should be considered by the government owing to the uncertainty.

The most eye-catching was a move away from competitive markets, which to some extent would reverse the privatisation of the energy market as there could be a centralised energy buyer that could be government owned or regulated. BBC.

Tanzania to complete national fibre-optic link in June

TANZANIA expects to finish building a 300 million dollars fibre-optic network linking its major urban centres in June, its communications minister said on Tuesday.

Peter Msolla said the project would benefit several of the east African nation's landlocked neighbours like Zambia, Malawi and Burundi, which can access broadband from across the border. Tanzania itself is connected to an undersea cable, SEACOM.

"We are determined to become an ICT hub within the region," the minister told Reuters on the sidelines of an African Union summit in Ethiopia focused on the ICT sector.

The project is funded by the government and a soft loan of 170 million dollars from China. Its second phase, costing about 100 million dollars, will take broadband connectivity to villages in a country with a mobile phone penetration rate of 33 per cent. "It will have a lot of impact in terms of easy access to communications and it will be a lot cheaper compared to the satellite which has been used so far. "We believe it (costs) will come down by about 80 per cent," Msolla said. The move will help many parts of the economy, he said, adding it would have a particularly profound impact on education. (Reuters/NAN).

OPEC says oil supply increase 'worrying'

OIL producers' cartel Opec has told the BBC that compliance with production targets fell to 55-56% last month compared with 80% a year ago.

Secretary General Abdalla Salem El-Badri told the BBC's Business Daily programme the move was "worrying".

"The risk is you see a lot of oil in the market and no one is buying it. Then the price will come down."

At its last meeting in Angola, Opec decided not to change the amount of oil being produced by its members.

Oil prices have doubled from their lows of December 2008, but are way down on the record \$147 a barrel reached in July 2008. US light, sweet crude is trading at about \$78 a barrel - its highest level in two weeks.

Mr El-Badri said: "We need a price where we can invest in new

capacity, new supply and also cater for the wealth of our people. Anything below \$70 will not permit us to invest."

He also said that while the global recovery was "still fragile", Opec was experiencing growing demand from China, India and the Middle East.

Opec countries produce about 40% of the world's oil supply and have nearly 80% of the world's crude reserves. BBC.

Pace of private sector job losses slows

THE pace of job losses in the private sector slowed in January as employers reported the smallest payroll decline in nearly two years while demand for home loans hit a six-week high last week, data showed on Wednesday.

A report by ADP Employer Services showed the United States lost 22,000 private sector jobs last month, smaller than the 61,000 jobs lost in December and economists' forecasts for a 30,000 loss in January. December's decline was first reported at 84,000.

January's tally was the lowest since February of 2008, according to the ADP report, developed jointly with Macroeconomic Advisers LLC.

"The trend continues to get less worse. This is consistent with job growth returning in the United States," said Dave Sloan, senior economist at 4Cast Ltd in New York. "I do believe the U.S. economy is now strong enough to create jobs."

The ADP data comes two days before the government releases its more comprehensive nonfarm payrolls report, which is expected to show the economy added 5,000 jobs in January after shedding 85,000 the prior month.

In a separate report, the Mortgage Bankers Association said its mortgage index jumped 21 percent last week to a six-week high as borrowers moved to lock in rates before an expected push higher this year.

The 30-year mortgage rate dipped 0.1 percentage point to 5.01 percent, though that was still 0.40 percentage points above the record low set in March.

"The trend continues to get less worse. This is consistent with job growth returning in the United States," said Dave Sloan, senior economist at 4Cast Ltd in New York. "I do believe the U.S. economy is now strong enough to create jobs."

Greece to face European Commission economic scrutiny

GREECE will face the most stringent monitoring of any European Union country as it attempts to balance its finances over the next few years.

The news came as the European Commission confirmed its support of Greece's plans to reduce its deficit.

EU economic commissioner Joaquin Almunia also launched an infringement procedure to ensure Greek authorities report reliable budgetary statistics.

The concern in Brussels is not just that Greece might need to be bailed out, but also that financial markets' nervousness about Greece might spread to other euro-economies in trouble.

So the commission is recommending acceptance of Greece's plan to cut its deficit - but also the most extensive intrusion into a member state's economy that the EU has known.

Few in Brussels appear to believe that the Greek government will hold to its promises to slash the deficit unless it is being pushed hard by euro partners.

And after long years of dodgy statistics from the Greek authorities, the EU is insisting on a direct role in the monitoring of Greece's recovery plan.

He said: "We consider that the programme is ambitious, and that the programme in terms of targets is achievable."

"We are endorsing the Greek programme. But at the same time we know that the implementation of the programme is not easy. It is difficult. This deserves support."

However, Mr Almunia acknowledged that tackling the debt was difficult politically and complex technically.

He said that EU officials would monitor carefully the efforts of the Greek programme and would demand extra action if it was not on track to meet the deficit goals.

EU economic ministers will next meet on 16 February. Provided they accept the commission's recommendations, new deadlines will be set for Greece to review progress with officials. BBC.

Business

Ecobank gets \$6m from Gates Foundation

FROM Kayode Ekundayo, Lagos

ECOBANK said it has received a \$6 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to promote low-cost savings accounts in rural and poor neighbourhoods in Africa.

The bank said the grant was part of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's Financial Services for the poor

initiative.

"It will enable Ecobank to expand its banking services to a broader group of people with the goal of reaching 10 million savers in the long-term."

The bank stated that the project would start off with a three-year pilot in Ghana and Liberia, two of the 30 countries in Africa where Ecobank has a presence. "Ecobank

will utilize multiple channels, including point-of-sale devices, cards products, retailers and third party agents. The unbanked poor and low-income customers will now be able to open savings accounts with Ecobank, make payments and also withdraw funds remotely thus minimizing the need for them to visit a physical branch."

The grant underscores both

organisations' commitment to alleviate poverty in Africa.

"This landmark project has a huge potential for promoting a savings culture among Africa's neglected unbanked population," says Ecobank Group Chief Executive Officer Arnold Ekpe.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works with a wide range of public and private partners to har-

ness technology and innovation in order to bring quality, affordable savings accounts and other financial services to the doorsteps of the poor in developing countries.

The Foundation believes that setting aside small sums in a safe place allows people to guard against risks, build assets, and provide opportunities for the next generation.

Engineers task oil companies on local content

By Sunday Williams

THE President of the Nigerian Society of Engineers, Engr. Olu-muyiwa Ajibola has asked Oil Companies in Nigeria to adhere to local content stipulations in their operations to allow opportunity for addition of value and acquisition of technology and associated skills by indigenous professionals especially engineers, a statement from the Society said.

The NSE President who was speaking in Eket, Akwa Ibom State when he paid a visit to the Exxon-Mobil Joint Venture Operations Manager, Mr Ron Romere, said the

local content requirements for oil companies has the force of law and therefore should be complied with.

He said the Nigerian Society of Engineers was ready to partner with oil companies to explore areas where the need for Nigerian engineers would be higher as such will help both the Joint venture Operations and the country. He said such a partnership will specify areas that engineers were needed most and the requisite skills they require to fill such gaps.

"This will help us at all levels because it breaks our heart to hear that there are gaps between training and needed capacity and I think

they is need for us to meet and work this out" he said.

Engr Ajibola also called on the company to encourage engineers in their employ to register with the Nigerian Society of Engineers saying belonging to the professional body would only strengthen their service delivery in terms of commitment, discipline and professionalism.

Speaking earlier, the Joint Venture Operations Manager, Mr Ron Romere said it was a misnomer to call companies in oil sector 'oil companies' as they were really engineering companies and should be referred to as such.

NMLA, ISAN map areas of common interest

From Adelanwa Bamgboye, Lagos

THE Nigerian Maritime Law Association (NMLA) has agreed to work alongside the Indigenous Ship Owners Association of Nigeria (ISAN) in its efforts towards promoting a strong and vibrant indigenous merchant marine for Nigeria.

This was disclosed during a courtesy call by the Executive of ISAN on the leadership of the NMLA in Lagos.

The President of the Indigenous Ship Owners Association, Chief Isaac Jolapamo, said the

body is committed to continue its advocacy towards the development of indigenous ship ownership, with a strategy that has seen it consulting and collaborating with key organizations like NIMASA, NNPC, the Central Bank of Nigeria, NPA and the NMLA.

He stressed that increased interest and involvement by the NMLA in the activities of ISAN will be of tremendous value to both organizations and urged the lawyers' body to assist in the campaign to achieve the goals of ISAN.



PROF. E.N. SOKOMBA, FPSN, FPC Pharm
Chairman, Governing Council of Pharmacists
Council of Nigeria

Congratulations

We the committee of friends in Pharmaceutical business in Suleja, Niger State heartily rejoice and congratulate you on your appointment as the Chairman, Governing Council of the PCN.

Pharm. Prof. E.N. Sokomba, Chairman, the position speaks of your immeasurable contributions to the health development in the country and we sincerely associate with your laudable achievements and wish you long life and good health.

Signed:

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Star Feature

Lokoja: The other face of a capital city

What could have propelled the Kogi State House of Assembly to adopt a motion calling on the Ministry of Environment and Physical Development to set up a taskforce to check the indiscriminate disposal of waste in the state? They might be lending a voice to the growing concern over the filthy condition of Lokoja, the state capital.

From Isiaka Wakili, Lokoja

LORD Lugard Street, along which the State Police Command, the Magistrate Court and the Museum are situated, is nothing but a filthy sight. Also, Ganaja road, along which the State House of Assembly Quarters and the Commissioners' Quarters are located, is a rough scene. Other popular areas like Adankolo, Army Signal and the State Secretariat are also defaced with waste.

Muhideen AbdulRasheed, an indigene of Kogi State, lived in Lagos State for almost two decades before he became homesick. He eventually arrived Lokoja three years ago. Embittered by the bedraggled condition of the city, he concludes that Lokoja is an environmental nuisance.

"It beats my imagination that Lokoja could be as dirty as this. It is even hard to believe that it is a state capital. If you go round the nooks and crannies of the city, you would see refuse all over the place. A state capital should be a neat and decent environment", he reasoned.

Mallam Kabiru Muhammed, a resident, laments that the indiscriminate disposal of waste is constituting a huge health hazard. He observes that Lokoja is in dire need of a thorough "environmental rescue operation", and wants the government to quickly swing into action.

"The way people dispose waste has become a very big problem. If you are passing along the streets, you have to stop breathing in because of the stench of waste. Even when you are inside your house, you also feel troubled. This is responsible for the outbreak of avoidable diseases. Waste breeds mosquitoes. We also know how many people have suffered from cholera as a result of our dirty environment. The health care delivery programme of the state government would be an exercise in futility, if urgent measures are not put in place to check this ugly trend", he contended.

Adebayo Akano, a property consultant, has no apology for slamming the government's alleged inability to fix the state environment. He wonders why a general environmental sanitation day

is not set aside to tackle the problem.

"I have been in some other states. They are not as dirty as Kogi State. It is worrisome that we cannot boast of a clean and decent capital city. I feel embarrassed each time my friends visit from their respective states. If possible, an environmental sanitation exercise should be observed twice a month in Lokoja. This would go a long way to show that the government is committed to keeping the capital city clean. I think it is high time the present administration focused its attention on this", he suggested.

In her opinion, Mrs Comfort Ademola, a civil servant, believes that environmental sanitation cannot salvage Lokoja. She recommends a state of emergency to evolve a decent-looking capital city. This, she reasons, would engender public enlightenment, which in turn would change people's attitude towards the environment for better.

"A state of emergency will help a lot. For me, the problem of indiscriminate disposal of wastes in Lokoja is beyond observance of a sanitation exercise. It has to do with ignorance. Most residents don't know the implication of dumping refuse anyhow. You see people dropping pure water bags and other dirty objects in the streets. Not only do they have to be educated about the danger of this unhealthy attitude, they should also be enlightened on the benefits of keeping a clean environment", she submitted.

None of these measures would help arrest the situation unless



'If you go round the nooks and crannies of the city, you w

the authority employs the service of sanitary inspectors, Jo David, an accountant, says. These sanitary inspectors, he says, be going round the city, to regularly hunt for people who indulge in the unwholesome act of indiscriminate waste disposal.

"It is natural that people misbehave in the absence of laws. We are people that would not do the right thing except they are punished for doing the wrong thing. Most of them litter our environment with waste because the shameful act is not monitored. And that is why we are free to throw waste anyhow. It just appears as if we don't care. Sanitation and waste management officials in the state are very crucial to play in keeping our capital city clean. They should be going round the city to arrest whoever is making

“ Mallam Kabiru Muhammed, a resident, laments that the indiscriminate disposal of waste is constituting a huge health hazard. He observes that Lokoja is in dire need of a thorough "environmental rescue operation", and wants the government to quickly swing into action.



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clean environment in the state capital. Instead of allowing people to litter Lokoja with waste like before, we are now asking them to put them together, and we send the waste disposal officials of the Ministry to repack them in order to reduce pollution. We have constructed dump sites with concretes for people to dump their waste from where we remove them. We will continue to work in all the corners of the streets. We are also working towards getting to all other parts of the state. We only need to keep counselling our people”, he affirmed.

According to the commissioner, it costs the government huge amounts of money to keep Lokoja clean.

“The State Sanitation and Waste Management Board has over 200 workers who are involved in cleaning offices and Lokoja city alone. Apart from paying them, the cost of such activities and that of the maintenance of vehicles and equipment are also taken care of by the state government, through certain subventions to the Board, and the contribution from the Ministry. We don't really earmark any specific amount for the exercise every month. But by the time we put the salaries of the staff and the cost of running the exercise together, it is a whole lot of money. Most residents used to see it as a burden to carry their wastes to our dump sites within the city. But now, with the awareness campaign all over the place, they are embracing the concept of cleanliness”.

The Chief Press Secretary to the governor, Mr Richard Elesho confirms that there are conscious efforts by the government to keep Lokoja clean, and asserts that setting aside a day for environmental sanitation, would be akin to trivializing an otherwise important issue.

“Some dump sites have been constructed in strategic areas, and many of those in charge of office cleaning have been redeployed to the streets to take care waste disposal. We don't set aside any day for environmental sanitation, because we see sanitation as an all time affair. The environment should be cleaned on a daily basis. If a day, out of 30 days, is set aside for sanitation, we would be trivializing an otherwise important issue. People would think they are free to be reckless in using the environment”, Elesho explained.

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environment filthy. By the time people start paying for this reckless act, they would begin to know the wisdom in complying with the order of keeping the environment clean. Nonsense!” he exclaimed.

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There are residents who blame Lokoja's filthy aspect on the nonchalant attitude of public servants. They argue that many of these public figures residing in government quarters, do not take care of their environment, but rather they expect the government to send labourers to keep their surroundings clean.

“Go to the Commissioners' Quarters. You will be surprised at the level of dirt there. It is the same thing at the House of Assembly Quarters. These are where many of our public figures live. Waste is littered all over the place. What does it take these public officers to hire labourers who would clean their compounds for them? We should not just blame the ordinary man in the street. I think, our public servants too should change their attitude towards the environment”, said Babajide Ahmed, a resident.

Confirming the dirty state of Lokoja the acting General Manager of the Kogi State Sanitation and Waste Management Board, Mrs Florence Joseph, regrets that efforts to rid Lokoja of its filth is often thwarted by residents who have a lukewarm attitude towards the environment.

The authority, according to her, has done a lot to ensure a neat environment in the city. The most appealing step to her is the construction of refuse dumps in various places within Lokoja. She says the story of Lokoja would have been a different one, if residents had complied with the order of using these refuse dumps.

“Most people don't believe that it is the responsibility of everybody to keep Lokoja clean. We have refuse dumps all over the place. They were constructed and provided by the government, and nobody is asked to pay for them. These dumps are there for people to use, so that the officials of the Board would go and pack them to the final disposal sites. We have two compacted trucks and two refuse vans which are daily used for this purpose. People don't use these refuse dumps. There are people who go out in the night to dump wastes anyhow. They should desist from dropping empty pure water bags on the roadside”, she appealed.

The Commissioner for Environment and Physical Development, Architect Muhammed Sule, does not leave anyone in doubt that the government is committed to making Lokoja one of the cleanest cities in the country.

“Waste management is one of the environmental issues we are sorting out in Kogi State. We are trying to evolve an absolutely

There are residents who blame Lokoja's filthy aspect on the nonchalant attitude of public servants. They argue that many of these public figures residing in government quarters, do not take care of their environment, but rather they expect the government to send labourers to keep their surroundings clean.

Business

Chamber urges Nigerian businessmen to document trade with China

THE Nigerian-Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Lagos yesterday urged Nigerian businessmen to channel their trade relations with China through the normal processes.

In an interview in Lagos, the President of the chamber, Mr Elvis Emecheta, wondered why most Nigerians would not document their trade.

"Trade should be reciprocal and not a one-sided show, especially when the

countries involved have the opportunity to benefit from each another," he said.

"Emecheta said the Nigerian businessmen had not been proactive in terms of taking advantage of the trade benefits between Nigeria and China.

According to him, with the high penetration of the Chinese activities in the country, the reverse is the case with the country at the moment.

The chamber president

urged the Federal Government to take adequate measures to check the trend and strengthen its trade relations with China.

"For years, Chinese products have over-flooded the Nigerian market and they are still doing well but our products to that country are not adequately documented.

"Our businessmen prefer to go through the back door to transact their business and all efforts to

correct the anomaly have proved abortive," Emecheta said.

He said at the moment, there were no specific data to show the trade ties between the two countries and this had been going on for long. "The government should be proactive in this regard; the Chinese know how to make money and they are persistent in their business skills," he said.

(NAN)

1.7m heads of livestock die of extreme winter

By Tina A. Hassan

THE Food and Agriculture organization (FAO) has reported that at least 1.7million heads of livestock have been killed by extreme winter due to falling temperatures of -50 degree Centigrade in Mongolia.

The report said more than 21,000 herder families are now at risk of hunger unless they get assistance toward arresting the threat.

Rapid needs assessment carried out by the body shows an urgent need for help in the next two to three

months to avert the disaster and enable the affected families survive the winter.

The body is therefore calling for \$6 million assistance toward helping out after a spell of intense cold and falling temperature hit the area immediately after a long and dry summer leaving farmers with insufficient fodder to feed the animals at winter.

With one-third of the population in Mongolia livestock farmers, it is feared that more animals may perish from cold and starvation if the needed assistance fail.

P/Harcourt radar begins operation

From Nahimah Ajikanle Nurudeen, Lagos

THE Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA) has announced that the newly installed Radar at Port Harcourt international airport has commenced operation, bringing it to three radar sites that are fully completed by the contractor handling the multi-billion naira project.

The Public Affairs of Manager of the agency Mr. Supo Atobatele said in a statement in Lagos that air traffic controllers started venturing into the traffic from the Radar site, since Friday last week with NOTAM [Notice -To -Air -Men] already issued by NAMA to the airline operators.

He hinted that Lagos and Abuja sites have been in operation since last year while that of Kano is expected to be completed by the end of this month.

The operation of this Radar services, according to the managing director of Nigerian Airspace Management Agency [NAMA] Alhaji Ibrahim Auyo, "will greatly enhance efficiency and safety of flights within the airport and the adjacent airports of Owerri, Calabar, Enugu, Eket, and Escravos which are to be adequately covered by the new Radar".

Radar coverage from the Port Harcourt axis will also ensure safety of the increased Helicopter operations within the Niger Delta Area, control of aircraft for now, pending the certification of the equipment by NCAA.

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Business



WORLD Bank Task Team Leader Mr Pierre Pozzo di Borgo (left) and the Managing Director, Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria, Mr Richard Aisuebgogun during a meeting with FAAN officials in Lagos, recently

Coy introduces new tools for upstream operation

From Mohammed Shosanya, Lagos

NATIONAL Oilwell Varco, a global upstream service firm, at the weekend in Lagos introduced a suite of drilling tools to the nation's oil and gas industry.

The company said besides showcasing the new tools to the industry operators, it wanted to boost local content as the oil firms wouldn't have to go abroad for such tools.

Speaking at the weekend in Lagos, the company's Operations Manager (Nigeria) Mr. Bala Zakka said the company has tools for land, shallow water and deepwater operations.

He said: "National Oilwell Varco is a multinational oil

servicing company based in the state of Texas, United States. In Nigeria, we are represented by different local companies. One of them is called Dakaka Nigeria Limited. We render upstream tools and services to the oil and gas industry.

"The tools are used for drilling activities on land, shallow water and deepwater, so we have tools for all the services but depending on the sophistication of the activities, we apply sophisticated tools, which go with the challenges and costs.

Some of the tools we use on land may not be used on shallow water, and some used in shallow water may not be used in deepwater operations. But we have a broad range of tools that you can use for all your operations."

Brokers urge traders to mitigate fire losses

From Chris Agabi, Lagos

THE Nigerian Council of Registered Insurance Brokers has urged market associations and their members to embrace insurance as a way of mitigating losses due to rampant cases of fire incidents across the country.

President of the NCRIB, Dr Teslim Sanusi spoke in Lagos against the background of incessant monumental losses recorded by marketers due to fire incidents across the country in recent times.

Specifically basing his counsel on the Onitsha fire incident that reportedly claimed the lives of two people and destroyed four vehicles and goods worth several millions of naira, Sanusi said such losses could have been mitigated if the victims had one form of insurance or the other in place.

"My heart and that of the entire members of the Council goes after the victims of the fire incidence that occurred at Upper Iweka, Anambra State, even though my weight of

consolation would have been less if the victims had some forms of insurance policies in place", he said.

Sanusi who recounted similar inferno in Aleshinloye, Ilorin and Lokoja, urged the populace to take advantage of insurance by patronizing registered insurance brokers.

He said: "Since traders are particularly prone to perils of fire, it makes good sense for them to make insurance a top priority in order to protect their fortunes or return them back to their initial posi-

tion before the loss. Insurance brokers are all over the country to educate the public and educate them on how to take maximum advantage of their various policies."

The Onitsha fire incident was reported to have started when a tanker conveying diesel collided with a Volkswagen Golf beside the Abuja Park in Onitsha and exploded after which the fire extended to the Mimera and other closeby shops destroying goods worth millions of naira.

'Nigeria's economy is on recovery path'

EX-MINISTER of Communication, Chief Emmanuel Adiele, has expressed hope that the country's ailing economy was on the recovery track.

Adiele, an economist, said the economic policies of the present administration would turn the economy round.

He said that the economy would recover faster if all the measures put in place to salvage the various sectors of the economy were religiously implemented.

He identified the rehabilitation of the rail system, dredging of the River Niger and rehabilitation of road network nationwide as some steps that would boost transportation which the economy required to grow.

On energy, he said that the

country needed to fast-track the execution of all projects aimed at boosting power generation, transmission and distribution as steady power supply was critical to industrialisation.

He emphasised that only steady power supply could guarantee low cost of production which would translate into low prices of locally manufactured goods and less importation.

Adiele stressed the need for the establishment of more refineries in the country.

He said that the current importation of petroleum products was not in the interest of the country.

The economist commended the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) for the current reforms in the banking sector, saying that they had yielded positive results. (NAN)

Marketing institute set to exterminate quacks

By Romoke W. Ahmad

NATIONAL Institute of Marketing of Nigeria (NIMN), Abuja chapter has set to exterminate quacks who have been parading themselves as professionals thereby giving the profession a bad name in the society.

Chairman of NIMN Mr. Fredrick Hayes said this yesterday during a courtesy call to the management of Ultimate Health Management Services, a subsidiary of the Health Maintenance Organisation in other to familiarize the executives of the institute with cooperate bodies in Abuja.

He said: "The visit is to sensitise the coy and marketing publics, individuals and corporate institutions in Abuja about the institute's activities such as promoting marketing education, regulation of its practices as well as building of marketing professionals through her examinations which normally takes place in June and October of every year with a view to exterminate

quacks in the profession."

He also added that the institute as the regulatory body of marketing profession will set guidelines for institutions employing marketers on task expected of their marketing officer and failure to adhere to that will tantamount to withdrawal of such officers.

Also speaking during the visit, Mr. Fasasi Olakunle, the chairman training and learning committee of the institute said they will be organizing series of training, workshops, conferences and seminars for organizations and its staff while urging the management of ultimate health management services to take advantage of such programmes.

Earlier, Mr. Lekan Ewenla, MD/CEO of ultimate health management service commended the team while describing marketing as the engine room of any organization. He said his company will make it mandatory for all the employees of the marketing department to be active member.

Skye Bank, British Council train entrepreneurs

From Kayode Ekundayo, Lagos

SKYE bank Plc said at the weekend that its strategic partnership with the British Council in the area of human capital and manpower development was meant to develop the skills and competences needed for nation building and economic empowerment.

As a result of this, the first lecture series under the Skye Bank-British Council management express programme will hold between February 2 and 4 in Enugu, Lagos and Abuja.

According to a statement from the bank, a renowned management expert, Prof. Timothy Barry, Head of Systems Management and Strategy at the University of Greenwich Business School, will be the Guest Speaker at the three centres.

Key subject areas to be addressed include "Navigating uncertainty, strategic positioning and predicting future trends in Business" and Survival Tools for Businesses in a competitive Market."

The bank said management express makes it possible for young entrepreneurs and professionals to meet and share

thoughts and ideas on business, management, among others, as well as enrich and increase their knowledge and expertise with a view to solving some of the challenging obstacles to development.

Under the partnership, Skye Bank will support the British Council's Management Express programme, a quarterly human capital development and networking event of young and mid level career professionals and entrepreneurs who meet quarterly to discuss contemporary management issues and network with peers and experts.

Business

Bank crisis should not justify mass sack — Group

From Mohammed Shosanya, Lagos

THE mass sack of workers in the nation's banking sector is worrying the Campaign For Democratic and Workers' Rights.

Specifically, the pressure group said the fact that the banking sector is currently embroiled in crisis should not justify the mass sack of workers in the sector.

A statement jointly signed by the Chairman and Secretary of the group, Rufus Olusesan and Mr. Victor Osakwe said it is difficult to justify this 'brutal attack' on workers at a time when over N600 billion public funds were illegally used to bail out these banks.

They said that the downsizing in the financial sector has clearly shown the anti-workers nature of the Lamido Sanusi-Led CBN reform.

The group said: "Workers are being made to pay for the corruption and extravagant lifestyle of the bank chiefs and their collaborators. The justification by the CBN and banks that the sack is meant to enable the banks cut cost is not tenable.

"While sacking workers and cutting pays of workers the newly appointed chief executives of the ailing banks have continued to enjoy outrageous pays.

"For instance, most of them are going around in bullet jeeps with other expensive cars in their fleet. The Intercontinental Bank which sacked 1,500 workers has equally granted N31.134 billion debt waiver to 15 of its privileged customers who jointly owed the bank N59.709 billion. No doubt, this bailout for the rich is being paid for by the sacked workers.

"All this has shown that workers are sacked in order for the bank chiefs and their business partners to preserve their privileges and extravagant life expenses at the expense of depositors' funds. CBN's argument that the banks are overstaffed is equally faulty since these workers in question were never idle and work longer hours than necessary."

The CDWR also opposed the setting up of Asset Management Company by the Central Bank of Nigeria, adding that the development is meant to legalise the periodic use of public funds to bail out bank chiefs, accommodate their corrupt and extravagant lifestyle and unwarrantedly grant a privileged few debt forgiveness.



EXECUTIVE Secretary, Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC), Engr. Mustafa Bello presenting a copy of Nigeria's investment guide to the Chief Executive Officer of CP group from Thailand, Piasil Damrongchietanon when they visited NIPC in Abuja, recently.

Group launches enlightenment campaign for MFBs

THE National Association of Microfinance Banks (NAMB) said in Lagos yesterday that it would embark on aggressive enlightenment campaign this year to erode majority of Nigerians' ignorance about the sector.

Mr Mathias Umeh, an official of NAMB and Managing Director of Nwangu Microfinance Bank, Enugu, made this known to newsmen. He said that the ignorance of most Nigerians about the sector was worrisome and the association's members had met to check the trend.

According to him, a lot of people, including journalists have not come to terms with the actual role and functions of microfinance banks and other microfinance institutions in the country.

"The image of microfinance banks is not sagging rather a lot of people, including some journalists have not come to terms with the role of microfinance institutions. You can see that First Bank, United Bank for Africa (UBA) and other mega banks are embracing microfinance banking. If there are very many applications awaiting Approval in Principle (AIP), the image of microfinance banks cannot be said to be failing," Umeh said.

Umeh said that it was unfortunate that Nigerians are comparing microfinance banks with commercial banks in terms of operations and services.

He stressed that the association intended to collaborate with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to achieve that aim. (NAN)

FG to harmonise foreign aid

By Sunday Williams

MINISTER of Commerce and Industry Achike Udenwa has said that his ministry will streamline the technical assistance activities of development partners in the country to avoid duplication of efforts and resources.

He made the remarks in Abuja Tuesday at a meeting with development partners, convened by the ministry on support to trade promotion and facilitation in the country.

He was represented by the Ministry's Permanent Secretary Dr. Abubakar Mohammad. He said the ministry is focused to realize the objectives of donors' aid for trade programmes and ensure effective use of resources provided by the development partners.

The minister urged development partners to address specific areas such as

designing of regular agricultural and industrial entrepreneurial capacity building programmes for private sector organizations particularly, the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). He urged them to also organise regular management training through private sector participation for SMEs and strengthen the Nigeria Export Promotion Council towards export development in new non-traditional export sectors.

In his remarks, the Nigeria Ambassador to world Trade Organization (WTO) Mr. Fred Agah said that donor agencies are doing different kinds of things without synergy and coordination. He said that efforts should be made to structure donor's activities in order to key into all the sectors of the Ministries.

Earlier the representative of United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mr. Ron Greenper said that dialogue with government has been lacking. He applauded the initiatives of the ministry.

Falcon Petroleum, UNTL sign pact on gas

From Mohammed Shosanya, Lagos

FALCON Petroleum Limited has signed a Gas Supply and Purchase Agreement (GSPA) with United Nigeria Textiles Limited (UNTL) to boost distribution of natural gas to Ikorodu industrial zone in Lagos.

Speaking at the signing cere-

mony, the Falcon Managing Director Professor Joseph Ezigbo, said that the signing of the agreement was in line with the company's commitment to the development of the full potential for gas distribution within the Ikorodu franchise zone.

Chief Ebenezer Fabiyi, Director of UNTL also explained that the signing

of the GSPA with Falcon Petroleum was very timely and strategic given the challenges besetting the textile industry.

According to him, the challenges of power, which constitutes a major overhead in terms of both cost and reliability of supply, make it imperative for any forward thinking industry to switch over to natural gas as an

alternative fuel. He commended Falcon's commitment to seeing to the actualization of the project.

The extension of natural gas supply infrastructure to UNTL will involve construction of an 18-kilometre pipeline network to Ikorodu axis, as well as a major capacity upgrade of the Falcon Petroleum

Gas City Gate at Odogunyan, Ikorodu to accommodate the gas volumes required by UNTL.

Executive Director Commercial Operations Mrs. Audrey Ezigbo, said the pipeline is also expected to feed gas supplies to Dangote Food Industries, Ikorodu and other pockets of industrial development.

Business/Finance

Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE)

Wednesday, February 3, 2009

COMPANY Name	No of Deals	Quot. (N)	Quantity Traded	Value of Shares (N)
2ND-TIER SECURITIES				
CAPITAL OIL PLC	7	0.50	262,000	131,000.00
SECTOR Totals	7		262,000	131,000.00
AGRICULTURE				
AFFRINT NIGERIA PLC	1	0.86	2,700	2,322.00
FTN COCOA PROCES. PLC	28	0.81	3,821,291	2,975,295.71
LIVESTOCK FEEDS PLC	13	0.74	123,935	92,956.10
OKOMU OIL PALM COY PLC	6	22.75	38,369	829,537.78
PRESCO PLC	4	4.36	25,720	117,540.40
SECTOR Totals	52		4,012,015	4,017,651.99
AIR SERVICES				
AIRL. SERV. AND LOG. PLC	8	3.00	400,000	1,209,250.00
NIG. AIR HAND. COY PLC	211	8.73	2,321,246	20,375,796.03
SECTOR Totals	219	2,721,246		21,585,046.03
AUTOMOBILE & TYRE				
DN TYRE & RUBBER PLC	9	0.50	235,223	117,611.50
R. I. BRISCOE (NIG.) PLC	20	5.24	98,126	592,314.05
SECTOR Totals	29		333,349	709,925.56
BANKING				
ACCESS BANK PLC	207	9.24	19,479,020	178,351,144.98
AFRIBANK NIGERIA PLC	142	3.00	5,659,235	17,101,541.91
DIAMOND BANK PLC	157	9.48	10,743,820	99,175,389.60
ECOBANK NIGERIA PLC	71	7.44	1,433,137	10,662,539.28
FIRST CITY MON. BANK PLC	73	9.00	18,632,976	166,029,221.20
FIDELITY BANK PLC	250	2.78	25,306,116	69,910,926.82
FIRST BANK OF NIG. PLC	1,072	15.80	23,225,482	363,965,583.64
FINBANK PLC	190	0.82	26,424,452	21,196,636.90
GTBANK PLC	499	19.20	13,051,663	245,932,082.25
STANBIC IBTC BANK PLC	52	8.99	1,186,781	10,371,204.09
INTERCONT. BANK PLC.	167	2.30	5,457,446	12,270,143.97
OCEANIC BANK INT. PLC	189	2.31	10,662,921	25,227,582.92
BANK PHB PLC	102	2.26	7,432,098	16,797,347.49
SKYE BANK PLC.	173	7.71	14,304,378	109,310,814.37
SPRING BANK PLC	11	1.28	148,485	190,060.80
STERLING BANK PLC	77	1.58	6,092,161	10,023,472.22
UNT. BANK FOR AFR. PLC.	374	13.95	28,825,406	389,038,041.62
UNION BANK OF NIG. PLC	198	6.20	6,676,674	41,109,769.98
UNITYBANK PLC	63	1.01	6,786,510	6,839,417.40
WEMA BANK PLC	67	1.26	4,358,287	5,509,054.51
ZENITH BANK PLC	290	15.68	18,011,747	282,190,575.86
SECTOR Totals	4,424		253,898,795	2,081,202,551.31
BUILDING MATERIALS				
ASHAKA CEMENT PLC	126	15.80	4,351,145	69,273,579.04
BENUE CEMENT COY PLC	50	50.00	1,334,220	66,752,039.39
CEMENT CO. OF N/NIG. PLC	56	16.00	2,182,995	34,480,546.21
LAFARGE WAPCO PLC	63	35.03	795,804	27,881,342.20
SECTOR Totals	295		8,664,164	198,387,506.84
CHEMICAL & PAINTS				
BERGER PAINTS NIG. PLC	7	3.36	24,110	84,867.20
DN MEYER PLC	2	4.88	1,380	6,403.20
SECTOR Totals	9		25,490	91,270.40
COMMERCIAL/SERVICES				
AFROMEDIA PLC	20	0.71	771,730	547,928.30
COURTVILLE INVEST. PLC	2	0.50	51,000	25,500.00
RED STAR EXPRESS PLC	20	2.64	1,054,545	2,719,191.68
SECTOR Totals	42		1,877,275	3,292,619.98
COMP. & OFFICE EQUIP.				
NCR (NIGERIA) PLC.	1	8.13	2,348	18,150.04
OMATEK VENTURES PLC	7	0.69	181,300	125,121.00
SECTOR Totals	8		183,648	143,271.04
CONGLOMERATES				
A. G. LEVENTIS (NIG.) PLC	20	2.95	252,500	740,723.00
JOHN HOLT PLC	1	9.28	720	6,350.40
PZ CUSSONS NIG. PLC	45	26.00	744,503	19,344,008.72
TRANS. CORP. OF NIG. PLC	15	0.50	406,354	203,177.00
UAC OF NIGERIA PLC	82	43.00	1,871,244	78,568,336.13
UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC	91	24.44	1,484,702	35,937,293.99
SECTOR Totals	254		4,760,023	134,799,889.24
CONSTRUCTION				
COSTAIN (WA) PLC	47	5.63	437,885	2,425,291.57
JUL/BERGER NIG. PLC	47	28.50	364,925	10,255,922.50
MILITARY SERVICES PLC	9	0.50	454,560	227,280.00
ROADS NIGERIA PLC	2	3.46	25,333	91,958.79
SECTOR Totals	105		1,282,703	13,000,452.86
ENGINEERING TECH.				
CUTIX PLC	4	3.28	33,619	104,891.28
NIG. WIRE AND CABLE PLC.	3	0.94	7,850	7,379.00
SECTOR Totals	7		41,469	112,270.28
FOOD/BEVERAGES & TOB.				
7-UP BOTTLING CO. PLC	15	30.60	14,458	463,758.38
BIG TREAT PLC	23	0.78	1,695,000	1,316,600.00
GADBURY NIGERIA PLC	101	15.20	1,371,645	20,632,242.62
DANGOTE FLOUR MILLS PLC	245	13.10	5,116,263	66,818,622.20
DANGOTE SUGAR REF. PLC	106	16.56	2,938,558	48,007,416.89
FLOUR MILLS NIGERIA PLC	78	41.55	622,575	25,766,418.68
H/WELL FLOUR MILL PLC	8	7.39	127,770	944,220.30
NAT. SALT COY NIGERIA PLC	82	7.00	2,733,059	18,892,527.48
NIG. BOTTLING COY PLC	22	28.00	64,610	1,847,964.98
NESTLE NIGERIA PLC	45	270.00	764,393	206,833,723.26

NORTH NIG. FLOUR MILLS PLC	3	21.80	3,000	650,204.00
TANTALIZERS PLC	22	0.88	943,005	830,824.90
UTC NIGERIA PLC	9	0.86	149,816	128,841.76
SECTOR Totals	759		16,572,552	393,133,455.45
HEALTHCARE				
EVANS MEDICAL PLC.	22	1.11	2,191,807	2,503,058.05
FIDSON HEALTHCARE PLC	28	2.19	1,406,182	3,034,424.04
GLAXOSM. CONS. NIG. PLC	32	26.00	301,120	7,935,249.40
MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC	18	5.23	808,000	4,163,580.00
MORISON INDUSTRIES PLC.	1	12.28	42,420	495,041.40
NEIMETH INT. PHARM. PLC	15	1.62	202,649	334,775.80
UN/DIAG. & CLIN. SERV. PLC	4	0.63	66,500	43,890.00
SECTOR Totals	120		4,110,311	14,975,000.00
HOTEL & TOURISM				
CAPITAL HOTEL PLC	7	2.27	1,430,000	3,246,100.00
IKEJA HOTEL PLC	12	1.03	2,049,005	2,100,444.95
SECTOR Totals	19		3,479,005	5,346,544.95
IND./DOMESTIC PROD.				
ALUMACO PLC	1	19.38	50,010	969,193.80
B. O. C. GASES NIGERIA PLC	1			843.00
NIG. ENAMELWARE PLC	2	52.85	36,000	1,807,560.00
VITAFOAM NIGERIA PLC	39	5.11	720,121	3,780,134.69
VONO PRODUCTS PLC	5	0.63	121,251	76,388.13
SECTOR Totals	49		927,682	6,637,119.62
INF. & COMMUNIC. TECH.				
CHAMS PLC	46	0.75	2,517,400	1,825,663.97
E-TRANZACT INT PLC	1	5.23	1,000	4,970.00
IHS NIGERIA PLC	20	4.03	488,636,615	1,969,205,558.45
MASS TEL. INNOV. NIG. PLC	4	0.50	52,000	26,000.00
STARCOMMS PLC	30	2.12	3,435,328	7,271,403.37
SECTOR Totals	101		494,642,343	1,978,333,595.79
INSURANCE				
AIICO INSURANCE PLC.	138	1.03	7,899,422	8,067,316.76
CONTINENTAL REINS. PLC	21	0.97	4,337,158	4,115,605.78
CORNERSTONE INS. CO. PLC	20	0.57	1,003,000	579,520.00
CUST. AND ALLIED INS. PLC	30	2.94	5,762,423	16,929,005.34
EQUITY ASSURANCE PLC	3	0.50	204,057	102,028.50
GREAT NIG. INS. COY PLC	2	0.50	100,000	50,000.00
GOLDLINK INSURANCE PLC	28	0.56	5,692,250	3,065,425.00
GUARANTY TRUST ASS. PLC	47	2.20	9,777,454	21,320,359.03
GUINEA INSURANCE PLC.	4	0.50	105,000	52,500.00
CONS. HALLMARK INS. PLC	1	0.50	8,000	4,000.00
INT. ENERGY INS. COY PLC	25	0.61	1,730,147	1,060,106.17
LASACO ASSURANCE PLC.	41	0.54	4,652,647	2,527,591.28
L/UNION & ROCK INS. PLC.	16	0.57	2,949,600	1,574,412.00
LINKAGE ASSURANCE PLC	6	0.50	10,000	5,000.00
MUTUAL BENEFITS ASS. PLC	3	0.64	50,900	32,576.00
N.E.M. INS. CO. (NIG.) PLC.	14	0.53	1,941,663	1,029,081.39
NIGER INSURANCE CO. PLC.	13	0.85	482,640	419,593.20
OASIS INSURANCE PLC	1	1.49	1,000	1,420.00
PRESTIGE ASSURANCE PLC.	8	3.61	114,276	391,966.68
SOV. TRUST INSURANCE PLC	4	0.50	315,000	157,500.00
STACO INSURANCE PLC	3	0.91	68,275	62,130.25
STAND. ALLIANCE INS. PLC	37	0.63	3,329,900	2,046,557.00
UNIC INSURANCE PLC.	29	0.84	3,038,880	2,491,865.84
UNITY CAPITAL ASSUR. PLC	3	1.51	400,000	610,000.00
UNIVERSAL INS. COY PLC	10	0.50	243,876	121,938.00
INTERCONT. WAPIC INS. PLC	21	0.95	383,500	367,892.48
SECTOR Totals	528		54,601,068	67,191,390.70
MORTGAGE COMPANIES				
ASO SAVINGS & LOANS PLC	34	0.68	14,132,920	8,942,782.15
RESORT SAV. & LOANS PLC	6	0.50	89,000	44,500.00
UN/HOMES SAV. & LOANS PLC	36	1.03	2,265,600	2,322,028.55
SECTOR Totals	76		16,487,520	11,309,310.70
OTHER FINANC. INST.				
CRUSADER NIGERIA PLC.	14	1.10	864,601	934,117.17
ROYAL EXCHANGE PLC	4	0.56	526,500	294,840.00
SECTOR Totals	18		1,391,101	1,228,957.17
PETROLEUM (MARKETING)				
AFRICAN PETROLEUM PLC.	53	36.40	268,616	9,756,981.97
BECO PETROL. PROD. PLC	2	1.98	1,200	2,268.00
CHEVRON OIL NIGERIA PLC	10	69.79	2,292	167,238.84
CONOIL PLC	13	31.90	170,884	5,457,140.56
ETERNA OIL & GAS PLC.	22	6.00	147,508	872,419.40
MOBIL OIL NIGERIA PLC.	18	97.50	113,961	11,126,860.58
OANDO PLC	9	93.99	3,863	363,083.37
TOTAL NIGERIA PLC	24	150.00	255,324	38,175,041.95
SECTOR Totals	151		963,648	65,921,034.67
PRINTING & PUBLISHING				
ACADEMY PRESS PLC.	1	7.21	32,400	221,940.00
LONGMAN NIGERIA PLC	1	9.76	45,360	420,940.80
UNIVERSITY PRESS PLC	2	5.41	3,720	19,120.80
SECTOR Totals	4		81,480	662,001.60
REAL ESTATE				
UACN PROP. DEV. CO. PLC	19	21.00	172,740	3,681,019.80
SECTOR Totals	19		172,740	3,681,019.80
THE FOREIGN LISTINGS				
ECOBANK TRANSN. INCORP	33	15.01	446,393	6,716,932.35
SECTOR Totals	33		446,393	6,716,932.35
OVERALL Totals	78		23,333.34	

What is Convertible Security

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

Google

GAINERS		
NESTLE		5.00
NB		2.76
UNILEVER		1.11
UACN		1.02

LOSERS		
MOBIL		2.45
CONOIL		1.67
ALUMACO		1.02
ECOBANK		0.39

NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES INSTITUTE,

Mando Road, P.M.B. 2309, Kaduna, Nigeria



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The National Water Resources Institute, Kaduna, a parastatal of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, hereby invites applications from suitably qualified candidates to fill in some senior and junior vacant positions.

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A. ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE DEPARTMENT:

1. **PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTANT: CONTISS 11**
Holder of a good honours degree or HND in Accountancy/Finance or equivalent professional Accountancy qualification(s) with at least 9 years post-qualification working experience at an educational tertiary institution, research institute, training institute or any such organization as well as Registration with a recognized professional accounting body like ICAN or ANAN will be an added advantage.
2. **SENIOR STORE OFFICER: CONTISS 08**
Holder of a good honours degree or HND in Business Studies/Purchasing and Supply with at least 3 years post-qualification working experience in Stores, OR ND in Business Studies or Intermediate Certificate of NICA/ICMA with 9 years working experience in the Store.

B. TRAINING DEPARTMENT/RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT:

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Holder of Ph.D. in Hydraulic or Wastewater/Environmental or Irrigation Engineering with at least 12 years of teaching/applied research/relevant industrial work experience in modelling water resources systems. Candidate must be registered with COREN or equivalent professional body and must have published a number of articles in both national and international journals and/or contributed in standard textbooks. He/She must have attended national and international seminars and conferences. At this high level, proven ability in academic and administrative leadership is necessary.
2. **PRINCIPAL LECTURER: CONTISS 13**
Holder of Ph.D. in Hydrology or Irrigation/Drainage Engineering with at least 9 years experience in teaching/applied research/relevant industrial work experience OR holder of Masters Degree in the fields above with at least 12 years cognate experience. Candidate must be registered with COREN or equivalent professional body and must have published a number of articles in reputable journals and contributed in standard textbooks. In addition, he/she must have presented quality seminar and conference papers.
3. **SENIOR LECTURERS: CONTISS 12 (2 POSITIONS)**
Holder of Ph.D. in any of the following specializations:
(a) Economics/ Agricultural Economics, and
(b) Water Resources; or Environmental Engineering

Applicants should have at least 6 years cognate experience in teaching/applied research/relevant industrial work OR holder of a Masters Degree in the fields above with at least 9 years cognate experience. Holders of only First Degree need not apply. Candidate must have published a number of journal articles, chapter contributions and must also have presented conference and seminar papers.

4. **LECTURERS I: CONTISS 11 (4 POSITIONS)**
Areas of specialization required for this rank are as follows:
(a) Electrical Engineering (with experience in Motors and Panel Systems);
(b) Rural Sociology;
(c) Soil and Water Engineering; and
(d) Hydrogeology;

Applicant must be a holder of a Ph.D. in the relevant field with at least 3 years teaching/applied research/industrial work experience OR holder of Masters Degree in any of the fields above with at least 6 years cognate experience OR holder of a good honours degree from a recognized institution of higher learning with at least 8 years cognate experience. In addition, applicant must have articles in reputable journals to his credit as well as papers presented at conferences/seminars. Professional registration is a pre-requisite.

5. **PRINCIPAL TECHNOLOGIST: CONTISS 11**
Holder of Full Technological Certificate (FTC) or Equivalent with 12

years post-qualification cognate working experience OR HND in Science Laboratory Technology with at least 9 years cognate working experience. Applicants' experience must be in **Physico-Chemical Analysis and/or Treatment Plant Operation**. Membership of NIST is an added advantage.

6. PRINCIPAL TECHNICAL OFFICERS: CONTISS 11 (2 POSITIONS)

- (a) In Sewage Plant Management and;
- (b) In Soil Mechanics;
Holder of HND or equivalent qualification with at least 9 years relevant experience in the areas above.
Holder of Full Technological Certificate (FTC) with at least 12 years cognate working experience.

7. LECTURERS II: CONTISS 09 (2 POSITIONS)

- Holder of a Ph.D. in:
- (a) Extension Service; and
 - (b) Library Science
Holder of a Masters Degree in the areas specified above with at least 3 years of teaching/research/industrial work experience OR holder of a good Bachelor's Degree with a minimum of 6 years cognate experience. In addition, applicant must have published one journal article and presented at least 2 seminar/conference papers.

8. SENIOR COMPUTER OFFICER: CONTISS 09

Holder of a Master's Degree in Computer Science from a recognized institution of higher learning with at least 3 years cognate experience OR holder of a good honours degree in Computer Science with a minimum of at least 6 years cognate experience. Experience in data processing and information management is highly desirable.

9. SENIOR TECHNICAL OFFICER (ELECTRICAL): CONTISS 08

Holder of HND with good grade in Electrical Engineering or equivalent qualification with a minimum workshop experience of 3 years OR holder of Full Technologist Certificate/City and Guilds Full Technological Certificate with at least 6 years cognate experience. Applicants' experience must cover the handling of electric motors and panel systems

10. ASSISTANT TECHNICIANS: CONTISS 05 (2 POSITIONS)

- (a) in Plumbing Technology; and
- (b) in Borehole Drilling.
Holder of National Diploma in Laboratory Technology or its equivalent.

11. SENIOR CRAFTSMEN: CONTISS 04

Holder of Secondary School Certificate plus Government Trade Test Class or certificate in:
Hydrological Measurement; with a minimum of 5 years experience in hydrological activities.

METHOD OF APPLICATION:

Interested applicants should forward their applications along with 12 copies of their Curriculum Vitae to which 3 sets of photocopies of all cited certificates/documents should be attached. The CV should highlight the following, among others: Name (surname first), post applied for, current employment and salary, date and place of birth, State and Local Government of origin, marital status, postal address, telephone number, educational institutions attended, qualifications obtained with dates, membership of professional bodies, publications (academic staff), other professional/scholarly achievements (academic staff), working experience with dates and schedules handled, names and addresses of 3 referees.

All submissions should be in sealed envelopes with clear indication of post applied for at the top left corner of the envelope and addressed to:

The Secretary to the Institute,
National Water Resources Institute,
P.M.B. 2309,
Mando Road, Kaduna.

Applicants should request their referees to send confidential reports on them directly to The Secretary To The Institute.

All applications must reach the address above within six (6) weeks from the date of this publication.

SECRETARY TO THE INSTITUTE

JOS CRISIS: MATTERS ARISING

Since the outbreak of violence in Jos on January 17, 2009, a number of northern based newspapers notably the Daily Trust and the New Nigerian have virtually turned themselves into propaganda instruments of one of the warring sides. Every passing day, unwary readers are inundated with lies; half-truths and disinformation about the Jos crisis; its columnist and writers scribble outrageous libel and smear against personages and people of Plateau State.

It started with the rabid fanatic, Mohammed Haruna, a man who has justified in his weekly column every act of religious terrorism from 9/11 al-Qaeda attack on US to Boko Haram bloody uprising in Borno State last year to the attempted bombing of an American airliner by a Nigerian, Farouk Umar Mutallab. Two days after the crisis in Jos begun he treated his readers to yet another of his superfluous ad hominem. Like he did in 2008, he labeled the crisis genocide, a remit already adopted by almost all other Daily Trust writers and columnists. And as he did on the previous occasion, he places responsibility for this genocide on Governor Jonah Jang with a peevish argument that he (the governor) harbors pathological hatred for the Muslim Hausa Fulani's.

The attempt to rope Governor Jang in on a crime of genocide is part on an orchestrated ploy by the aggressors in Jos to get their pound of flesh for the failure they suffer whenever they embark on their ill-advised jihad against the inhabitants of Plateau State. Apparently, the Harunas and other authors of the genocide theory are undoubtedly inspired by the post-war arraignment of the Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic for genocide against Bosnian and Albanian Muslims by guilt laden Western powers.

None of the Daily Trust writers has ever established however flimsy any link between the governor and the violence in the city. In the 2008 crisis, Haruna tried to justify his accusation on the basis of a report by Eric Guttschuss of the Human Rights Watch (HRW) which accused soldiers of mass killing during efforts to quell the riots. For unknown reasons Haruna took this as proof of the governor's complicity. But as every Nigerian knows no state governor controls or issues order to soldiers or policemen for that matter. So it is hard to see how he could take responsibility for the alleged action of the soldiers. His allegations were specious if not downright irresponsible.

Repeating these allegations again after January 2010 crisis only confirms the columnist reckless disposition. But he appears to be inspiring a hoard of nincompoops who are behind a so-called petition to the International Criminal Court at The Hague. One of such is the one titled *Prosecute Jonah Jang for inciting genocide in Plateau state petition* created by one Umar Hamza his accusation: "Governor Jonah Jang has deliberately incited genocide by making false allegations and unguarded utterances that have caused the lives of thousands of innocent people and displaced hundreds of thousands for the crime of being of a different ethnic group." What are these "unguarded utterances"? Like Haruna, he provides none.

Since the whole issue has been turned into a religious affair, it was only a matter of time before the Chief Imam of Daily Trust, Sheikh Adamu Adamu would pen one of his laborious articles on the subject. He did so on January 29, 2010.

Apparently frustrated that no one has so far come up with any concrete proof of personal responsibility for genocide against Jang, Adamu resorted to history, albeit a distorted one. Deluded as usual that Nigerians have short memories of events and more so if the event occurred in places with such a remote name as Tigno Waduku - he could bamboozle Nigerians with lies and half-truths. It was Tigno Waduku 1988, Adamu alleges, that Jang as the Governor of the now defunct Gongola State "fomented a mini-genocide against the Hausa Fulani when he set the Bachama against them".

In truth there is no place as Tigno - Waduku; there is Tigno and there is Waduku as separate towns about five to eight kilometers apart. Yes, there were troubles involving the indigenous Bachama and the settler Hausa Fulani's over control of resources and religious differences in these towns as have been the case in almost every crises in the northern part of this country, e.g. Kafanchan - Kaduna crises (1987 - 1999), Zangon - Kataf (1992) and Tafawa Balewa (1991, 1995, 2000). (This is excluding the out rightly religious

clashes in Kaduna, Kano Bauchi Borno, Niger and Plateau State).

Adefemi Isumonah captured the essence of this crisis in his article "Migration Land Tenure, Citizenship and Communal Conflicts in Africa" (published in Nationalism and Ethnic Politics, Vol. 9, issue 1, March 2003). The abstract to the articles states:

"All land - cum citizenship based communal conflicts in Africa have been explained in terms of a quest for political autonomy by subjugated groups, struggle over the traditional stool and as consequences of competition for scarce resources or state economic adjustment programmes. By contrast, this article expounds the way in which the land lecture of first settlers or groups affects the assimilation or dissociation of later settlers or ethnies with critical implications for their citizenship rights and intercommunal relations. It argues that land tenure is a critical element of culture of the agrarian society that determines nationality and citizenship of later immigrants irrespective of shared language and culture."

Indeed, the Muslim Hausa Fulani wrote a petition to the Federal Government alleging "collaboration between government and CAN to kill and maim Muslims at Tigno and Waduku" Any observer of the Nigerian scenario is aware of such scenarios whereby perpetrators of sectarian violence are the same ones that turn round to cry wolf. It is part of the unending drama we are witnessing today to which the likes of Adamu and columnists of the Daily Trust are enlisted to perform.

Whether this was the reason for Governor Jang removal or not, the allegation has never been proven. It should be pointed out that this allegation was vigorously challenged by the leadership of Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) under the indefatigable Rev. Wilson Sabiya, of blessed memories, who insisted on a probe by the succeeding governor to clear CAN of complicity as alleged.

Part of the letter to the incoming Muslim governor read thus: "the silence of your Government on this tells a lot about your mission here. Your silence on the accusation is tacit acceptance on your part that the Government under Governor Jang collaborated with CAN to kill and maim Muslims in Tigno and Waduku. Since the Government has tacitly accepted the accusation we have no alternative but to take an appropriate action to clear the name of CAN."

This was how the conspiracy was woven but Rev. Sabiya did not only successfully challenged this fabrication, he went on to win many court battles against the hopelessly derailed Governor Isa Mohammed and penchant of committing public funds for Islamic religious projects and activities whenever he sobered up enough to stagger into Government House.

But the most fundamental flaw in the accusation by Adamu Adamu is the fact that the tension between the Bachamas and the Hausa Fulanis has not abated over 20 years after Jang left the scene. Since 2000, there have been no less than four major clashes involving Bachamas and the Hausa Fulanis, leading to the dethronement of the Hama Bachama by the powers - that - be in Abuja. In the same way, there have been many conflicts involving the indigenes of Jos and Hausa Fulani on the Plateau (1994, 2001 and 2004) long before Jang became the Governor of the state. In fact, the first recorded history of violent conflict in Jos was in 1945 involving the igbos and Hausa Fulanis.

The question one of your readers posted to one of your columnists last week was poignant. He asks: why is it that anytime there is ethno religious fight in this country, the Hausa Fulanis are involved? These same sentiments were expressed by the late Shehu of Borno after the 1999 violent religious clashes in Maiduguri. Without mincing words or trying to sound politically correct, the royal father pointedly blamed the settler Hausa community in the town for fomenting the crisis.

Rather than always looking for scapegoats for their villainy in violent conflict everywhere in the country. Hausa Fulani elites as Adamu Adamu should begin some soul-searching. No one is impressed by Adamu's boast of the "leadership and command" qualities of the Hausa Fulanis. If the majority of the Hausa and Fulani live in such unpardonable squalor and poverty with many of them roaming the streets of urban cities in Nigeria as beggars, these attributes are indeed debatable. Neither should Adamu suffer any illusion of envy; as many as they are the

Hausa Fulani have yet to produce any exceptional world-acclaimed individual in any field of human endeavor (both in the Western and Oriental sense). It should be of concern that apart from political trickery and horse-trading - a situation that has left Nigeria without a leader for the past three or so months - they have brought very little to the table.

Having said all these, it bears restating what is already known about the Jos crisis. The Crisis started, as far as the first information report (FIR) by the police commissioner is concerned, from an unprovoked attack by Muslim youths on Christian worshippers. No amount of disinformation mounted by the editors and columnist will change this fact. The question of the appropriateness of the police commissioner announcing it publicly is another matter entirely.

But before this honest Nigerian is lynched for his candour the public may as well consider his predicament. In November 2008 violent conflict broke out in Jos, over 300 suspects were arrested over the incident. Case files were prepared by the police after investigation and forwarded to the Director of Public Prosecution for prosecution but one year after they have not been returned. Similarly, 26 men were intercepted during the 2008 crisis armed to the teeth with sophisticated weapons and fake army and police uniforms during curfew hours by soldiers. They were handed over to the police command for investigation and prosecution. Once again, Abuja intervened; the suspects were once more whisked off to Headquarters and one year after nothing has been heard about them.

The question many right thinking Nigerians have been asking is: Who are behind these violent crises? And who are those in authority shielding the identity of the perpetrators and the identity of their sponsors? Remember how Mohammed Yusuf, the leader of the Boko Haram, was captured alive after a week of bloody riots in Maiduguri but was killed under police custody?

Adamu says in his aforementioned article:

"Perpetrators of past mayhems have generally gone unpunished. No doubt punishing the guilty will go a long way in stopping the recurrence of communal violence. But the crises in Jos, especially that of November 2008 and the current one, are unique in the sense that they are not the usual clash between Christian and Muslims. As Sam Nda Isaiah said in his piece Jos is becoming Embarrassing, if there is a murder, there must be a murderer; but he forgot to add that, if justice is to be done, investigation in all instances must be able to separate willful murderers from those who killed in self-defence."

Perpetrators of Jos crisis have gone unpunished because they are being shielded by powerful vested interests. Unfortunately, the likes of Adamu who feign concern over the recurrence of crisis in Jos have ~~never~~ asked the authorities why they keeping away criminal suspects from investigation and prosecution. As to the matter of people "who killed in self-defence" (a reference, no doubt, to Adamu's favored Hausa Fulani settlers), it is the courts and the courts alone that have the constitutional power to determine culpability or otherwise of suspects and not some "big men" (well-known to all) in Abuja.

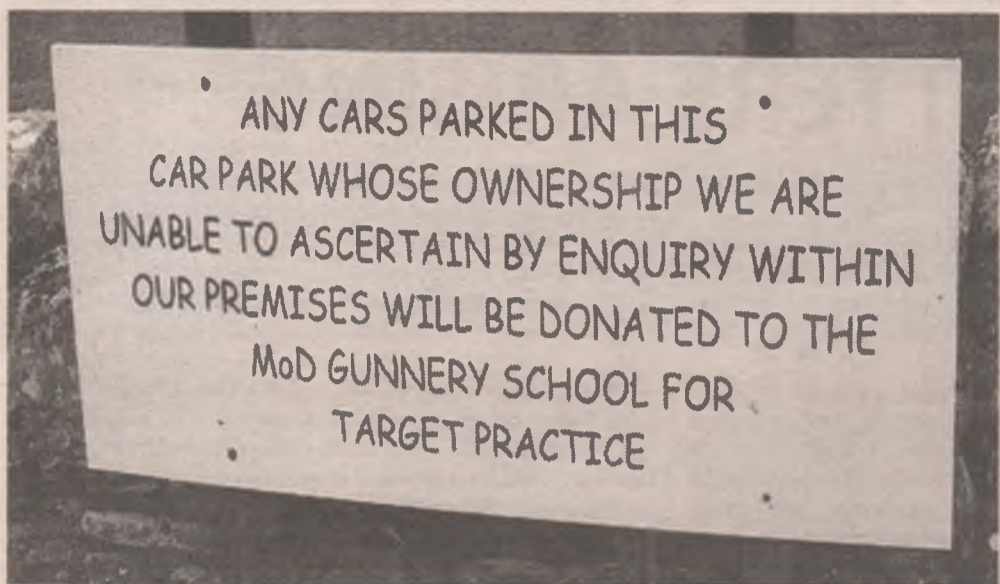
The commissioner of police has done Nigeria and the international community a great service in revealing the true identity of the culprits of the Jos crisis before another Abuja intervention. His fate has already been determined in a swift manner by the powers - that - be but he will long be remembered by posterity. Just as posterity still remembers other gallant police officers who before him were punished for insisting of what is right in dealing with the crises in Jos: innocent Ilozuike, Joseph Apapa, Kevin Okpoko, Richard Chime and Kayode Ibrinke.

In conclusion, we wish to add that if anybody is to be tried for genocide it is the shadowy characters that hide behind façade of power in Abuja and elsewhere to perpetrated mayhem in Plateau State.

Signed:

Hon. John Lamis Yakubu
No. 18 Thomas Didel Drive
Liberty Boulevard, Jos
Plateau State.

Sign Language

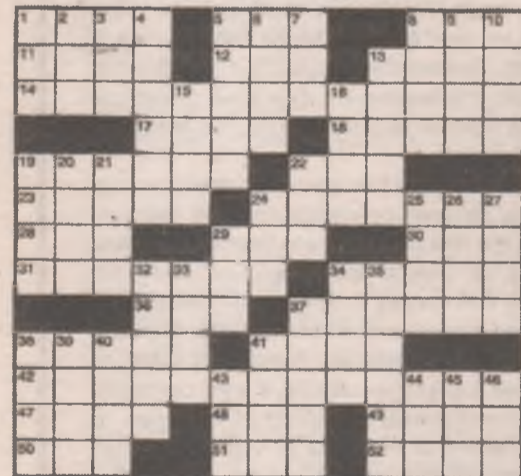


If you love your car the message is clear
Photo location: Kimmeridge, Dorset, by Derek Washington
Culled from the telegraph.co.uk

EASY CROSSWORDS

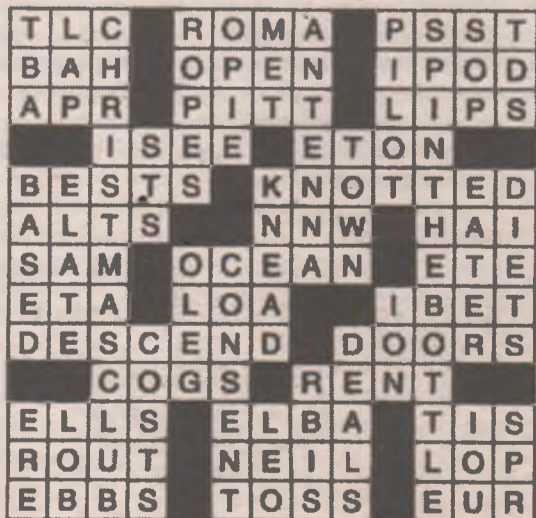
- ACROSS**
- Robert _____
 - Leonard _____
 - Sponge (up)
 - Touch lightly
 - Unhook
 - Ledger examiner (abbr.)
 - Walking support
 - 1999 Reese Witherspoon film (3 wds.)
 - Actress Skye
 - Buenos _____, Argentina
 - Defensive coverings
 - Wrestling move
 - "Zorba" actor Anthony
 - Manhattan locale
 - Ship letters
 - Republican party's initials
 - Deception
 - Brought into harmony
 - Reagan appointee
 - _____ diem
 - Washed out suds
 - Circus figure
 - Clark of the "Daily Planet"
 - Steer markers (2 wds.)
 - Tuxedo button
 - "Me," to Miss Piggy
 - Jacob's twin
 - 23rd Greek letter
 - Liquid measures (abbr.)
 - Cable option
 - Mayberry youth
 - Beatnik's home
 - Carson's predecessor
 - _____ Boleyn
 - Dick Tracy's wife
 - Actor Eastwood
 - Desolate
 - Reimbursed
 - Greenish blue
 - Oxidize
 - Fine rain
 - Domino spot
 - "The _____ Squad"
 - Bullfight cheers
 - Like a sage
 - Want
 - Where Berlin is (abbr.)
 - Tip a barrel
 - Social misfit
 - Knee-exposing skirt
 - Salisbury steak, e.g.
 - Morning host Philbin
 - Spice amt.
 - Humanities
 - Hawaiian island
 - Granny _____
 - Little demon
 - WWII org.
 - Sleep briefly
 - Earth's star

67



Solution to Easy Crosswords

66



SUDOKU

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

79

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

Solution to Sudoku 78

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

EDUCATION

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FG to improve reading culture among Nigerians

By Abdullahi M. Gulloma

MINISTER of Education Dr Sam Egwu said Federal Government is determined to improve the reading habit amongst Nigerians at all levels and the development of technical education to ensure the provision of middle-level manpower that will drive national development.

The minister stated this at the commissioning of the Imo State

branch of the Prototype Building of the National Library.

The minister expressed satisfaction with the efforts of the National Library of Nigeria, and called on state governments to partner with the National Library to provide many libraries as pillars for educational development.

According to him, library is relevant at all levels of education and fits into the education roadmap designed by the Federal Min-

istry of Education which is presently at the implementation stage.

"The Roadmap which has a four-point agenda of access and equity, standards and quality assurance, technical and vocational education and training, and funding and resource utilisation, when fully implemented will take the education sector to a higher level," he said.

Earlier, Chairman of the National Library Board, Alhaji Zannah Mus-

tapha said the commissioning of Imo State branch brings to 22 the number of branches of the National Library in the federation.

He said the board intends to establish branches all over the 36 states of the federation by the year 2015.

In his remarks, Chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Education Rep Faruk Lawan commended the efforts of Dr Egwu in improving

the education sector and pledged the support of National Assembly towards completion of all education projects.

While noting that no nation can progress without a reading culture, Rep Lawan said that the National Assembly will continue to support the building of libraries and encourage students and the society to sustain reading in order to reverse the trend of low interest in reading.

...Promises to address impediments to quality education

MINISTER of Education Dr Sam Egwu said the Federal Government will do everything possible to address all impediments and challenges to quality education service delivery in the country.

Speaking at the 2009 ministerial press briefing in Abuja, Dr Egwu said "the Road Map developed by the ministry has given the sector better focus and therefore, considerable progress is being made in the delivery of the ministry's mandate."

He said it is clear that there are still lingering challenges to expanding access, enhancing education service delivery and ensuring quality learning outcomes at all levels in the country.

"There is danger and unpleasant possibility that our dear nation, Nigeria, may not meet the Education for All (EFA) targets and serious implications for the attainment of our national development goals and objectives. This has serious implications for the attainment of our national development goals and objectives, the capacity of the education system to deliver is the key-determining-success factor in the achievement of seven-point agenda and vision 20:2020," he said.

He said government is determined to upgrade the education system to provide the needed momentum and competently anchor Nigeria's envisioned positioning among the 20 top most economies of the world come year 2020, adding that the challenges of education was a collective responsibility of all education stakeholders in the country.

In her remarks, Minister of Information and Communications Professor Dora Akunyili said education was on the concurrent list.

She urged the officials of the Ministry of Education to ensure quality education for citizens, saying "without education people would behave like animals."

Earlier in her address of welcome, Minister of State for Education Hajiya Aishatu Dukku said the mission of the ministry was to facilitate a balance national institution through quality development and management compliance.

"The time has come for all of us to put hands on deck to facilitate quality education in the country," she said.



EXECUTIVE Secretary of National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) Dr. Nuru Yakubu and the National Librarian Dr. Linus Ikpaahindi at the 2009 ministerial press briefing by the Education Minister in Abuja yesterday.

500 students get free JAMB forms

By Akor Ojoma

500 students from different local governments in Benue state were given free JAMB forms to enable them register for the 2010 Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination coming up in April by the Moses Oriri Foundation.

Speaking while distributing the forms to the students, chairman and founder of the foundation, Ambassador Moses Oriri, who is also the United Nations Ambassador of Peace in Nigeria, said the foundation decided to give out the forms to enable the less privileged who cannot afford the forms participate in the examination.

He said the large turnout of students despite the late awareness created to mobilize the students shows the level of poverty prevailing against their quest to study further in school adding that the gesture is to further strengthen the activities of government for students in the state.

He described Benue students as hardworking, brilliant and obedient but that some of them are handicapped by inadequate funds, lack of goodwill and negative attitude and intolerance to the plight of fellow brothers and sisters by those in position to lend helping hand to them.

He advised the students to remain focused and dedicated to their studies if eventually admitted into universities or polytechnics.

Professor Sofoluwe is new UNILAG VC

From Kayode Ekundayo, Lagos.

THE University of Lagos Governing Council has approved the appointment of Professor Adetokunbo Babatunde Sofoluwe as the new Vice Chancellor for a non-renewable tenure of five years effective from January 30, 2010.

According to a statement from the university, the appointment was in pursuance to Section 3 of the 1993 (Universities Miscellaneous) Provision Act as amended in 2003.

Professor Tolu Odugbemi, the immediate past Vice-Chancellor turns 65 years on Saturday, January 30, 2010 and retired from the institution.

"The Governing Council wishes him happy birthday and blissful retirement while congratulating Professor A. B. Sofoluwe and wishing him a successful tenure. The Governing Council acknowledges the cooperation of Senate, congregation

and the entire staff and wishes the entire university community continued success in living up to the reputation of the University of Lagos as the University of First Choice and the Nation's Pride," the statement said.

Sofoluwe, 59, is of the Department of Computer Science and was until his appointment the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Management Services).

Meanwhile, the Institute of Security of Nigeria has called on administrators of the nation's university system to work harder at enhancing the security of the campuses of the nation's higher institutions.

The ISN Secretary, Mr. Adebayo Akinade, who spoke against the backdrop of the forthcoming 5th Annual Security Conference of the ISN scheduled for between February 17 and 18 at the University of Lagos, said that the call became imperative because youths formed the largest percentage of those involved in criminal activities in the country.

DAILY TRUST
EDUCATION

Nine-year curriculum will boost basic education – NERCD scribe

Professor Godwill Obioma is the Executive Secretary of Nigerian Education Research and Development Council.(NERDC). In this interview with **Abdullahi M. Gulloma**, he spoke about the curriculum development and research undertakings by the council.



PROFESSOR Godwill Obioma

YOU have been at the helm of affairs at NERDC for a couple years now, how has leading the council being and what would you say is your greatest challenge?

When I got to the council on my first day as the chief accounting officer, I was greeted from the express to the council by dust because the road was not tarred. I met just one rickety building standing; rickety in the sense that there were leaking roofs, the air conditioners were not working, no power supply at all from what was then NEPA and now PHCN and the environment itself was not welcoming. It was not reflective of what is called a research institute because it didn't have an ambiance of research.

There were conference centre that was outgrown with weeds and scores of chalet or rooms, all not used and abandoned in desolation. I looked around and saw abandoned vehicles littered around. I moved over to the staff quarters where we have the primary school, it was in a very desolate shape. In fact, some staff of the council were looking worn-out because from the clothes they were putting on, you could hardly think they were public servants of any sort.

That was what I met the first day, and so, I told myself that there would be a need to re-engineer the place and put a life into the environment and also look at the mandate of the council again and see what the problems were and

what went wrong along the line. I thought we should create a mission and a vision and that became a challenge because as a public entity we need to have a vision as per where we want to be at a certain stage, and a mission, that is how to get to where we want to be. Since then, we've been able to turn around the fortunes of the council and make it a force to be reckoned with as far as education research and development is concerned.

From your explanation, would you say that NERDC was simply abandoned or it was lack of seriousness on the part of government or leadership failure on the part of NERDC officials?

It wasn't lack of seriousness because when I came in 2005, government was thinking seriously of reform of the education and other sectors. You will recall that NEEDS was established in 2004, which was our local response to global reforms. If you look at the NEEDS document, it captured education sector, and so, I wouldn't say it was lack of seriousness. Again, I wouldn't say there was leadership failure because I am not in a position to assess my predecessors. I know that the lady I took over from is a renowned professor and the person that stayed there is also a professor and I can count about three professors that headed the place before me.

My assessment from literature before me pointed to lack of funds

and greater difficulties to create avenues for bringing in funds. I will also say that the activities of the council tended to be so narrow. For instance, curriculum efforts were going on at very, very low ebb.

So, I think was so much of a narrow conception of what the mandates of the council are. Even in book development, I saw in the literature that in 2004 the council made efforts to review the book policy but in a very narrow sense because there was a draft book policy existing but the problem is that it was looked at from the basic education perspective, it didn't link up with publishers. So, it was difficult, difficulty to create windows of opportunity in which we could attract funds.

To what extent has your research undertakings been able to influence policies aimed at improving the standards and quality of basic education?

There are reform strategies that are very well articulated. For instance in the last three or four years, we had policies of the nine year basic curriculum, policies of the new book development strategy in gendering the fairness into education, reducing poverty, recreating educating into entrepreneur level and so on. These are good policies but I felt the problem was to map out a good strategy of implementation and to put these strategies in coherent form.

The issue of nine-year basic education curriculum was described by the Education Minister as a "curriculum revolution." It is going to be a nine-year thing starting from primary one, two, three and we will phase out, in a systematic and gradual form, the old content. In the process, we will train teachers, provide resources and so on.

It is a systematic thing, this is the difference, take for instance, what will happen in 2011 as it affects the new Senior Secondary Schools, it is a curriculum innovation. We have planned that curriculum last year and this year, we have finished it, what is going to engage us now is to prepare the resources to implement the curriculum including teachers handbook and provision of text books. The SSS curriculum will start in September this year but the nine-year basic education curriculum started in September 2008 and it will take six to four years. The junior secondary school component will take three years. This

means that those who are going through the primary school now will take six years to complete the new second term and three more years to complete the junior secondary school. You can imagine the gradual process.

How does it affect a proprietor who owns only junior secondary school?

What the nine-year basic education curriculum is saying is that knowledge is systematic. The policy says education will be free and compulsory for nine years, and it means from primary school to junior secondary school. It explains that no extraneous condition should prevent a child from completing junior secondary school. Our specific term on Education for All (EFA) in Nigeria means you must complete primary school and junior secondary school. So, you go to your village and do primary school and we expect that nothing should prevent you from getting into junior secondary school.

Are you saying that this time around, we are going to have a curriculum for national development?

Yes. The nine-year programme provides a basis for entrepreneurship, it provides a basis for higher education, it provides a basis for second language as French because language is very important in national development. What we do now is link to work an industry. Even at the senior secondary school level, the new curriculum that is going to be implemented next year makes it possible for every child to study a trade which means that if you come out of school you should have something to fall back on. At the same time, if you have to go for higher education, you must be well-prepared for the higher education.

In fact, the nine-year basic curriculum has been adjudged as having the best tactics in African perspective at the International Bureau for Education in Geneva. There is no doubt that the nine-year basic education curriculum will boost education in the country and make our children self-reliant.

Are the council's research programmes for development or mere jamboree?

Really, our research is for

national development, and I will give you two examples. Let me start with the issue of admission into Nigerian universities and reduction of examination malpractice. We conducted a research on how WAEC, NECO and NAPTEB examinations and JAMB affects good performance in the university because there was a quarrel on the type of students found in the university. Majority of the students come in with six credits and above but they cannot perform. Our concern as a research agency was to provide evident-based information to say this is where the problem lies. The idea of post-UME came from our research, and we said there was the need to put in quality assurance mechanism to save the good ones because WAEC and NECO were not good predictors. Therefore, even if students go through WAEC and NECO there are variables which we will use to save the good from the bad into university education.

The other aspect is, the one we launched last year, and it was tagged Opportunity for Increasing Education in Nigeria. It was conceptualised to provide opportunities of what is available in increasing education to ensure greater access that has engendered the policy on gender education and the policy on special education. This enabled us to translate the nine-year basic education curriculum into 3,000 sign languages for those who are visually impaired, we have also brailled it. We didn't have a nationally brailled curriculum before and we say if you are in special education, if you are visually impaired, your handicap and physical challenge shouldn't be an impediment.

When we conducted the researches in the north, we have the issues of girl-child drop out and so on. In Lagos, we have the issue of street children. It was a big research and it cost us way over N30 million because we got about 10 consultants from the university, civil society, workers and teachers who helped us distribute the instrument. It was also publicly launched.

But researches such as predictive study of WAEC and NECO examinations for university consumed just about N5 million. You cannot say this is the amount you have for research; it is when you design the research that the framework will determine the amount to be used to carry out

CAMPUS ROUNDUP

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How Jos crisis crippled varsity students

From Musliudeen Adebayo, UNIJOS

THE saying that when two elephants are fighting, it is the grass that suffers is neither an understatement nor overstatement, especially in the context of the recent crisis that engulfed Jos, the Plateau State capital. It really captures the loss, trauma and anxiety the students and some staff of the University of Jos went through during the crisis.

It remains a tragedy that students and other members of the university community often face untold hardship whenever there is a crisis on the Plateau because they often become victims of such dastardly acts. It is also worrisome that directly or indirectly students have continue form the large casualties or victims of the socio-political unrest in the city, which is fast becoming unfavourable for academic activities due to persistent attacks by hoodlums whenever there is a crisis.

Plateau State was initially known as the most peaceful state in the country but it has retrogressively being turned into a hell for it dwellers, particularly students. In most cases, innocent students are caught unaware whenever there is a crisis between the so-

“ It is also worrisome that directly or indirectly students have continue form the large casualties or victims of the socio-political unrest in the city, which is fast becoming unfavourable for academic activities due to persistent attacks by hoodlums whenever there is a crisis.



GOVERNOR Jonah Jang of Plateau State



DR. Sam Egwu, Education Minister

called indigenes and settlers, which often lead to massive loss of lives and properties.

Many students were killed during the 2008 unrest including Omosehin Olusegun Samuel, a 200 level Accounting student and Rabi Muhammad, a 400 level Accounting student, among others. The students were killed at Congo Russia, Katak Junction, Yantrailer, Tudun Wada and Rik-kos. Like in other crisis, students are still counting their losses in the recent crisis.

Although at the time of writing this report the actual number of students affected directly or indirectly has not been ascertained but five students were confirmed dead and more than 10 houses where students reside were burnt to ashes at Angwa Rukuba, Tina, Yantrailer and Congo Russia, among others. Valuables lost to the crisis by the students include laptops, electronics, mattresses, shoes, certificates, clothes, textbooks, notebooks and other reading materials. Emile, a 200 level student of History and International Relations told our reporter that her house at Nas-

sarawa was burnt so also Olatunde Deso, Adekunle Saliu, Ibojo Kehide, Babalola Ruben and Olatunde Olatunde.

Apart from loss of properties, examinations which began before the crisis was cancelled by the Vice Chancellor of the university Professor Sonni Tyoden in a statement he issued in Jos. Professor Tyoden also urged the students to remain in their various hostels and those who stay in town should ensure that they don't go to the crisis rea.

On his part, president of SUG Rider Pwajock appealed to the students to be calm and be mindful of where they go and be prayerful, assuring that the “Man O War” in collaboration with SUG and the management of the university was in control.

Some of the students, who spoke to our reporter on campus, condemned the crisis, saying they cannot afford to witness any crisis in the town again. They called on the parties involved to always settle their differences amicably.

The Muslim Students Society of Nigeria (MSSN) of University of Jos through its spokesman

Lukman Yussuf, a 400 l student of Accounting said the entire Muslim Ummah is against violence. He said people should find an amicable way of solving their differences instead of turning it to crisis.

He also called on politicians and religious leaders not to use youth to instigate any form of crisis in the country. “We want religious leaders to preach about peaceful coexistence among people irrespective of their religion, political social, cultural and economic differences,” he said.

The National Association of Odua Students, through its president Seyi Omimakinde Emmanuel, a 400 level student of law, also condemned the crisis. He said more than two Yoruba students lost their lives during in the 2008 crisis while many were rendered homeless. “They burnt our properties in town and more than two of our members including Mr Rabi Muhammad and Olusegun Omosehin Samuel were affected,” he said. He also appealed to the school authority to build more hostels to accommodate more students, and appeal to the people of Jos to tolerate each other

and always settle their differences amicably.

Meanwhile, it is expected that as soon as peace returns, students will continue their examinations without break as they are eager to finish the 2008/2009 academic session that started in May, 2009.

“ The Muslim Students Society of Nigeria (MSSN) of University of Jos through its spokesman Lukman Yussuf, a 400 level student of Accounting said the entire Muslim Ummah is against violence.

INTERNATIONAL

Genocide charge now possible for Sudan's al-Bashir

THE International Criminal Court was wrong when it decided that Sudan's leader can't be charged with genocide in Darfur, appeals judges said yesterday — an unprecedented ruling that could lead to President Omar al-Bashir's indictment with humanity's worst crime.

The appeals ruling also put other leaders around the world on notice that the court will not balk at charging them with genocide if they persecute their own people.

The standard of proof the court used last year to dismiss three counts of genocide against al-Bashir "was higher and more demanding than what is required" in its statutes, appellate judge Erkki Kourula of Finland said yesterday.

Activists welcomed the groundbreaking decision, which helps define just how much evidence prosecutors need before judges at the world's first permanent war crimes tribunal will issue an indictment.

"Today's ruling is hugely significant, as it could lead to the inclusion of charges of genocide by ICC judges for a sitting head of state and for the first time in the history of the court," said William R. Pace of the Coalition for the ICC, a nongovernment group that supports the court.

The five-judge appeals chamber said the International Criminal Court wrongly concluded in March that there was insufficient evidence to charge al-Bashir with three counts of genocide for allegedly attempting to wipe out entire ethnic groups in the war-ravaged province of Darfur.

Instead, the court charged him with seven counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity for allegedly orchestrating a campaign of murder, torture, rape and forced expulsions in Darfur.

Al-Bashir, the first sitting head of state indicted by the world's first permanent war crimes tribunal, refuses to recognize the court's jurisdiction and has vowed never to surrender.

Rabie Abdel-Attie, a Sudan government spokesman, said the decision yesterday reflected its

increasing isolation from reality on the ground in Sudan.

He said the decision will not affect al-Bashir's bid to run again for presidency at elections expected in April.

"The government doesn't give the court any consideration and doesn't care much for it. This is a

matter of principle," he told The Associated Press from Khartoum. "The court is heading in one direction and we in the other."

Al-Bashir's indictment in March further isolated his hard-line regime.

Since the charges were issued, the Sudanese leader has traveled

to friendly countries but called off trips to nations where he fears he could be arrested and sent to *The Hague*.

Moreno Ocampo said part of the alleged genocide was a campaign of rape to drive women into the desert, where they die of starvation.



SUDANESE President Omar al-Bashir.

...Sudan kicks at appeals court decision

KHARTOUM accused the International Criminal Court yesterday of trying to affect peace talks with Darfur rebels and reform in Sudan after an appeals chamber ordered a review of the dropping of genocide charges against President Omar al-Bashir.

"The ICC wants to impact the political process in Sudan and the ongoing negotiations in Doha," Kamal Obeid, state minister for information, told AFP, referring to consultations with Darfur rebels in Qatar. "If you look to the time of this process, it shows that the ICC wants to stop the political development in Sudan, but I believe it will help Sudanese to be more committed to the democratic transformation," he said.

The appeals chamber of the

ICC ordered the pre-trial chamber to reconsider its decision to drop three charges of genocide when it issued an arrest warrant for Bashir in March last year on five counts of crimes against humanity and two of war crimes committed in Darfur.

The judges said that the standard of proof on which the pre-trial chamber rejected the genocide charges was too demanding. They directed it to issue "a new decision using the correct standard of proof."

The decision came as Bashir briefly visited Doha to meet Qatari Emir Hamad Ben Khalifa al-Thani for talks that dealt with the Darfur peace process. ICC decision important for Darfur victims: prosecutor

The Justice and Equality Movement has held two rounds of talks with Sudanese government officials. A JEM official welcomed the appeal court's decision as a victory for "the population of Darfur and justice" but added that his group was still committed to the peace talks. Other rebel groups have boycotted them.

A Sudanese official said on Sunday that Khartoum wanted the talks to conclude before a general election expected in April — Sudan's first since 1986.

The United Nations says up to 300,000 people have died and 2.7 million fled their homes since the ethnic minority rebels in Darfur first rose up against the Arab-dominated Sudan government in February 2003.

Guinea's new PM says elections may take time

GUINEA'S new prime minister says a presidential election meant to bring civilian rule may not be held within six months.

A breakthrough agreement reached last month had called for a vote to take place within that timeframe. But Jean-Marie Dore, a long-time opposition leader, told Guineans yesterday that it will take time to appoint competent ministers to a transitional unity government.

Guinea's military leader Capt. Moussa "Dadis" Camara, who seized power in a December 2008 coup, agreed last month not to return to the West African country. He is recuperating in Burkina Faso after surviving an assassination attempt.

Africa's priorities food, transport, energy - AU head

NEW African Union president Bingu wa Mutharika said yesterday that food security, transport infrastructure and energy will be his priorities as leader of the pan-African body.

"This year we'll focus on three issues: first food security to make sure Africa is able to feed Africa within five years.

Second on transport infrastructures... to connect Africa, and third on energy because we must have enough power to run our industries," said the Malawian president.

Mutharika replaces Libyan leader Moammer Gaddafi. The 53-member AU will hold its next summit in Kampala in July.

News Extra

Detroit bomb accused talking to FBI

The Nigerian man accused of trying to blow up a U.S. airliner on Christmas Day has provided "useful, actionable" intelligence to U.S. authorities after the FBI flew his relatives to the United States to urge him to cooperate, U.S. officials said on Tuesday.

And top U.S. intelligence officials, testifying on Capitol Hill about the attempted bombing and other security threats, said al Qaeda and its allies were "certain" to try to attack U.S. territory again within the next six months.

The bombing suspect, Umar Farouk Abdul Mutallab, 23, started talking again after FBI agents brought family members from Nigeria to help convince him to provide information on how the botched December 25 bomb plot was arranged and whether further attacks were in the works, a senior U.S. official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

He is alleged to have mounted the attack with help from a Yemen-based al Qaeda branch.

"I'm confident he's going to continue to cooperate," the official said, although he declined to say whether Abdul Mutallab had been offered a plea deal or leniency in exchange for answering questions again.

The Obama administration has been criticized by Republicans and Democrats because Abdul Mutallab was interviewed by FBI agents for about an hour before he stopped cooperating and he was then read his so-called Miranda rights, providing him full U.S. constitutional legal protections.

They questioned if that prevented getting intelligence.

Prosecutors charged Abdul Mutallab with trying to blow up the flight from Amsterdam to Detroit with a bomb sewn into his underwear, drawing further criticism from some lawmakers who said he should face a special military tribunal instead and questioning by intelligence operatives instead of the FBI.

Abdul Mutallab is talking and has been talking since last week providing useful, actionable and current intelligence that we've been actively following up on," a U.S. law enforcement official said, declining to be named because the investigation is ongoing.

If convicted, Abdul Mutallab could spend the rest of his life in prison, a fate that may provide an incentive for him to cooperate with FBI investigators interrogating him with support from CIA agents.

'FULLY APPRISED'

President Barack Obama was kept "fully apprised" on Abdul



UMAR Farouk Abdul Mutallab

Mutallab's change of heart, the senior U.S. official said. Obama, who has ordered reforms to prevent future security lapses such as those that occurred in this incident, had faced criticism from Republicans for waiting three days during a Hawaii vacation to comment on the attempted bombing.

In the days following the attempted bombing, two FBI

agents flew to Nigeria and gained help from Abdul Mutallab's family members who then proved "instrumental" in winning his cooperation, the senior administration official said.

He declined to say whether Abdul Mutallab's father, who warned U.S. officials in Lagos before the failed attack that his son had been radicalized,

was among the relatives who agreed to fly to the United States on January 17.

Senator Christopher Bond, the top Republican on the Senate Intelligence Committee, argued that giving Abdul Mutallab legal rights still gave anti-American militants time to cover their tracks. "We will never know what life saving information on co-conspirators and future plots we

missed out on," he said.

Director of National Intelligence Dennis Blair told lawmakers there should be flexibility to make decisions on a case-by-case basis about whether such suspects go through a civilian or military legal process.

Before Abdul Mutallab stopped talking, administration officials have said he initially provided useful information.

That included telling investigators that he had received training as well as the explosive device from militants

If convicted, Abdul Mutallab could spend the rest of his life in prison

in Yemen affiliated with al Qaeda.

The Yemen-based al Qaeda group has become a significant concern to U.S. intelligence agencies that are monitoring its capabilities, intentions and recruitment of Westerners, Blair told the Senate Intelligence Committee.

Blair also said he believed gaps had been fixed since the December 25 incident.

"I'm confident that someone who left the trail that Umar Abdul Mutallab did would now be found," Blair said. "What I can't tell is even with these improvements we would be able to catch someone who took more care."

Asked about the likelihood of an attempted attack by al Qaeda on U.S. soil in the next three to six months, Blair said an attempt was "certain." Other intelligence officials agreed.

In an audiotape aired recently on Al Jazeera television, a man purporting to be al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden praised Abdul Mutallab and vowed more strikes at the United States.



PRESIDENT Barack Obama

News Extra



YOUNG couples are trying to find ways around Egypt's conservative attitudes to sex before marriage

The perils of young Egyptians' secret marriages

In the leafy grounds of Cairo University there are many dating couples among the crowds of students. Some sit close together in shady corners and hold hands.

Religious customs and ideas of social propriety in Egypt do not permit them to take their relationships much further.

However there is a way of bending the rules - urfi marriage.

Young Egyptians are said to be opting for these informal marriages in record numbers, often as a way of getting around religious strictures against premarital sex.

"It's a secret marriage between a boy and girl which even their parents don't know about," explains a 20-year-old archaeology student, "They don't announce it publicly."

"From what I hear there are a lot of students in this university who have urfi marriages," adds his companion, Dina.

Urfi marriage is literally a "traditional" or "customary" marriage which does not need an official contract. Some students sign a hand-written document or come to a verbal agreement.

Others buy an unofficial marriage contract for about US \$20 and sign it in front of two witnesses to try to meet Islamic requirements of a public declaration.

'Legitimate cover'

Usually they carry on living at home and stay quiet about their arrangement.

"The young couple sees a urfi marriage as a pragmatic solution,"

riage and the obligations that go with it are one reason why experts believe more young Egyptians are making urfi arrangements.

"It's a cultural thing," Dr Safty observes.

have a fancy wedding which can be quite expensive."

Pregnancies

Although they may be cheap, many urfi marriages do not end happily.

involve pregnancies.

"Maybe they have a baby, then [the woman] will become responsible for the child. There are some husbands who deny their marriages so the woman is forced to launch a lawsuit to prove paternity. A DNA test has to be done."

"She has a lot of hassles and difficulties," she says.

"It will also affect her reputation because as a woman in Middle Eastern culture she cannot marry another man."

'Excuses'

It is difficult to get young women who have had bad experiences of urfi marriages to speak about them but one told us her story through a lawyer.

She explained she had never had a boyfriend before she went to university but met a fellow student on campus and fell in love.

He gave her many reasons why they could not formally marry but persuaded her to sign a urfi marriage contract.

They consummated their union at her house when her parents were out at work.

However the woman became nervous after her mother confronted her about blood on her bed sheets.

"Really I was afraid so I called the guy I married and told him he needed to come over and ask for my hand officially," she recalls.

"Straight away he found a lot of excuses why he could not come and we had an argument.

"He broke up with me and tore up our urfi marriage contract."

Eventually the student revealed to her family what had happened and they tried reporting the case to the police.

However as she had consented to sex she had no comeback. She



FAWZIYA Abdullal
EGYPTIAN Centre for Women's Rights

says sociologist, Madiha Safty from the American University in Cairo.

"It's quite a conservative society. There's no premarital or extramarital sex, so they believe this gives a legitimate cover to the relationship."

The costs of a regular mar-

"[With regular marriages] the groom is supposed to give a gift of jewellery upon engagement, he has to pay a sum for his fiancée to prepare for her life in marriage and find a place to live.

"At the same time she's supposed to provide the furniture. Of course people would also like to



YOUNG couples see urfi marriages as a way of avoiding expensive weddings

A telephone hotline at the Egyptian Centre for Women's Rights receives regular calls from young women confused about the legal and religious status of their marriages or seeking help when things have gone wrong.

Legal advisor, Fawziya Abdullal, says the most serious cases

said she felt humiliated.

Politicians and religious officials have recently called for campaigns to warn women of the dangers of urfi marriages.

There have also been suggestions of new laws to make the practice illegal.

Culled from bbc.co.uk

News Extra

'Baby Doc' Duvalier's family can reclaim N693m in Swiss bank, court rules

• Court reverses ruling money should go to Haiti charities • Ministry works on law to block payout to ex-dictator's family

The family of former Haitian dictator Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier can reclaim at least £2.9m (about N693 million) in Swiss bank accounts that had previously been awarded to aid groups, Switzerland's highest court said yesterday. The federal supreme court

Many Haitians accuse Duvalier and his entourage of robbing millions from public funds



JEAN-CLAUDE 'Baby Doc' Duvalier in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, in 1975.

reversed a lower court's ruling that the money should have gone to charities working in the impoverished nation. The decision was reached hours before Haiti's dev-

astating earthquake on 12 January, but was only published yesterday.

Such delays are common in Switzerland's legal system.

The decision cannot be appealed against, but the Swiss

foreign ministry said it would try to keep the money blocked while it works on a new law for dealing with assets of "criminal origin". It said the money actually totalled \$5.7m. The reason for the discrepancy was unclear.

The government "wants to avoid the Swiss financial centre serving as a haven for illegally acquired assets," it said in a statement, adding that a law to work retrospectively could be ready this month.

Many Haitians accuse Duvalier and his entourage of robbing millions from public funds before he was ousted in 1986. Duvalier is believed to be living in exile in France and has always denied wrongdoing.

The court said the alleged crimes in the case fell outside the statute of limitations, reversing a decision in August by a lower court that found the Duvalier family had essentially acted as a "criminal organisation" by diverting public funds through a Liechtenstein foundation to accounts in Swiss bank UBS.

The supreme court said it was unhappy about the ruling but its hands were tied because the statute of limitations expired in 2001. It urged lawmakers to make it easier for assets belonging to deposed dictators to be repatriated to national governments.

Haiti made its first request for the money in 1986, shortly after Duvalier was overthrown.

It has been frozen ever since, but Switzerland has refused to give it back to Haiti because the Haitian government was not charging Duvalier with any crimes in its own justice system.

As a way out, the Swiss government had proposed to give the money to aid groups working in Haiti.

Culled from guardian.co.uk



A woman and her injured baby are seen at a makeshift field hospital in Port-au-Prince



A woman caught in the rubble of a collapsed building in Port-au-Prince just after the initial earthquake

ENVIRONMENT

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Environmental group assess rural projects

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

A team of experts from the Building Nigeria's Response to Climate Change (BNRCC), is on tour of pilot projects initiated by one of the implementing partners - Greenwatch Initiative in two rural areas of Daudu and Falgore in Benue and Kano states, respectively.

The three man-team comprising the project's adviser on pilot projects, Mrs. Ellen Woodley, John Ajigo of Nigerian Environmental

Study/Action Team (NEST), and Samson Ogallah who is NEST's Programme Officer for Communication, Outreach and Network, were led, yesterday to communities in Daudu by Greenwatch's Executive Director, Emmanuel Tembe.

Communities around this area are dependent on rain-fed agriculture, according to Tembe who added that the increasing negative effect of climate change has brought the communities to experience increasing water scarcity, flash

floods and severe erosion, forcing the people off their economic mainstay.

Through GI's pilot project - "Promoting Climate Change Adaptation Best Practices", community members are however taking action to respond positively to climate change to introduce strategies that will address the devastating effects as well as end such practices that encourage the change in the climate condition. The cost of the project, according to Tembe, is

N13.8 million with CIDA sinking N11.5 million.

The Ellen Woodley-led team came face to face with the devastating effect of climate change with the increasing incidence of environmental disasters and the attendant consequences on the livelihood of the people.

Mrs. Woodley told Daily Trust she was impressed with the pilot project, saying "it was successful day in Daudu." She said the two pilot projects she visited so far - mass tree

planting and dam project initiated by Greenwatch to address deforestation and water scarcity as well as aid irrigation practice, respectively, are good initiatives especially that the project have attracted community participation.

She expressed optimism that the community-participation aspect of the project would address the problems associated with traditional knowledge and by extension, sustains it towards addressing the effects of climate change.



LAKE Bogoria, Kenya, So shallow is the earth's crust in this sinister landscape that the surface looks like a giant witch's cauldron, with scorching springs and geysers. Rich in sodium salts and minerals, the lake has no life bar the blue-green algae, eagles flying overhead and the incredible number of flamingos that feed here.

The world's most polluted places (9)

FROM lead in the soil to toxins in the water and radioactive fallout in the air, The Blacksmith Institute has created a list of the world's worst ecological disaster areas

Kabwe, Zambia

Number of people potentially affected: 255,000

Type of pollutant: Lead and cadmium

Source of pollution: Lead mining and processing

When rich deposits of lead were discovered near Kabwe in 1902, Zambia was a British colony called Northern Rhodesia, and little concern was given for the impact that the toxic metal might have on native Zambians. Sadly, there's been almost no improvement in the decades since, and though the mines and smelter are no longer operating, lead levels in Kabwe are astronomical. On average, lead concentrations in children are five to 10 times the permissible U.S. Environmental Protection Agency levels, and can even be high enough to kill. "We did blood tests on some of these kids, and they literally broke our machines," says Fuller. "There is a long, nasty history here." But there's also a bit of hope: the World Bank has recently allocated \$40 million for a clean-up project.

Tanzania to host climate confab Feb 24-26

By Nasir Imam

CLIMATE-CHANGE experts from around the world meet for the 4th International Conference on Community-based Adaptation to Climate Change in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania on 24-26 February, Dar es Salaam to share the latest knowledge about how communities can reduce their vulnerability, and how government poli-

cies can help make this happen.

They will be sharing information about ways communities can adapt to impacts of climate change using approaches such as water harvesting, alternative farming practices, and strategies to reduce the risk from disasters.

The meeting is being organized by the International Institute for Environment and Development, Environmental Protection

Management Services (EPMS, Tanzania), the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS), and the Ring Alliance. Special sessions will focus on how communities in urban areas or rural drylands can adapt to climate change impacts such as heat-waves, floods and droughts.

"Climate change is a global problem but its impacts are always local and that means the solutions

need to be too," says Dr. Hannah Reid, Senior Researcher at the International Institute for Environment and Development.

The conference aims to identify good strategies for sharing information within and between vulnerable communities, and will promote the integration of community-based adaptation into national policies and international development programmes.

Oil spillage: PPMC appeals to NOSDRA for patience

THE Pipeline and Petroleum Products Marketing Company (PPMC) has appealed to the National Oil Spill and Detection Agency (NOSDRA) for patience over the oil spill in Oke-Warri in Delta.

PPMC's Spokesman, Mr Ralph Ugwu, told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on Thursday in Lagos that PPMC would pay the N1 million fine to Oke-Warri Community immediately it concluded its investigations.

"We are aware that NOSDRA has directed PPMC to pay N1 million as

damages to the affected community but PPMC is investigating the cause of the spillage.

"Until we conclude our investigation to authenticate the cause of the spillage and, we agree on what to do, I cannot tell you the position of the PPMC on the matter," Ugwu said.

He regretted the cause of the spillage, adding that the PPMC would communicate its findings to NOSDRA as soon it was through with the investigation.

Mr Henshaw Ogubike, Head, Public Affairs Dept, NOSDRA had told NAN

that PPMC had failed to respond to it directive to pay a fine of N1 million for failing to clean up the oil spill in Oke-Warri.

Ogubike said that at the moment NOSDRA was not sure that the PPMC had paid the fine.

He said that the directive was ordered after a joint investigation visit (JIV) by all the parties, including PPMC, on June 9, 2009.

"NOSDRA in line with the provision of its enabling Act directed the PPMC to immediately contain, recover and clean

up the impacted sites in the area.

"But the company failed to clean up the sites within a reasonable time, which is a contravention of Section 6(3) of the NOSDRA Act, hence NOSDRA penalised PPMC.

"The fine was supposed to be paid within 14 days from the date of the receipt of its letter but till now PPMC had not responded," he said.

NOSDRA urged the PPMC to exhibit the highest ethical standard expected of it as an establishment during its operations. (NAN)

Environment



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Rainstorm renders 100 homeless in Eket

OVER 100 people in Eket, Akwa Ibom were rendered homeless following a windstorm which accompanied the first rain on Friday night.

The rainstorm also destroyed electric poles in various parts of Eket, throwing the entire metropolis into darkness.

The rain which lasted for about thirty minutes destroyed properties worth millions of Naira.

Some of the victims of the disaster appealed to the federal and state governments to come to their aid.

"It is unfortunate that this thing happened and we are left without a roof over our head.

Worst hit areas are Hospital Road, Afaha Eket, Atabong, Idua and Okon Eket areas of Eket metropolis.

Two communications masts were

pulled down by the rainstorm. They in turn damaged some houses in the neighbourhood.

At the School of Nursing, Eket, the female hostel had its roof blown off while beds and books belonging to the students were soaked by the rain.

Inspecting the affected areas, Eket Council Chairman, Mr Emmanuel Udoh on Saturday morning commiserated with

the victims and pledged to offer relief.

"The local government is concerned and we sympathise with you.

"The magnitude of the damage is beyond the capacity of the council and we shall report to the state and federal government agencies to assist our people," Udoh said.

He urged the victims to thank God for sparing their lives. (NAN)

Kogi commissioner tasks residents on sanitation

From Isiaka Wakili, Lokoja

THE Kogi State Commissioner for Environment and Physical Development, Architect Muhammed Sule, has appealed to the people of the state to cultivate the habit of environmental cleanliness.

The commissioner made the appeal yesterday when he led the ministry's officials and heads of parastatals to the State House of Assembly for the defence of the 2010 budget for the ministry.

Sule noted that environmental pollution had become a global concern, pointing out that the ministry was planning to partner with a private company to convert waste products to wealth.

While commending the governor for the prompt release of funds for the control of erosion, environmental pollution and beautification of Lokoja metropolis, the commissioner disclosed that the state was putting measures in place to reduce the effect of climate change.

Meanwhile, the chairman of the House Committee on Environment, Mr Funsho Oni had reiterated the committee's resolve to give necessary legislative support to the Ministry of Environment and all the parastatals under its supervision.



HOW the Earth really looks from a satellite image

A climate of opportunities: Domestic actions now

By Uloma Onuma

NOW is the time for Nigeria to act on climate change. In the light of the outcomes of the climate change conference held in December 2009, governments at all levels must plan for and implement mitigation actions. Mitigation actions are steps that are needed to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases that result in changes in the global climate. The 'Copenhagen Accord', reached by over one hundred world leaders in Denmark did not lead to legally binding emission reduction targets. Therefore, domestic actions in Nigeria must be prioritized, now more than ever.

Climate change is strongly linked to the challenges of development and poverty reduction in Nigeria. Rising atmospheric temperatures, leading to global warming, has in Nigeria exacerbated desertification, drought, sea level rise, health, food and energy security.

Very often mitigation actions are seen as strategies to reduce emissions of green house gases alone. However, in Nigeria sev-

eral of the actions needed to reduce these harmful gases are the same that would be needed to generate more electricity, create more jobs and reduce local environmental problems. The benefits of greenhouse gas emissions reductions becomes an added bonus.

Nigeria's best opportunity to reduce these gases is from ending gas flaring. Latest available statistics show that gas flaring accounts for 31.4 percent of a total 54.9 percent of emissions from Nigeria's energy sector. Making this currently flared gas available for electricity production will be the needed tonic for solving our current power crisis. Also, investments in abundant sources of renewable energy, stipulated in the Renewable Energy Master Plan would assist in addressing energy security. These will help industries create new jobs and help government end the current environmental crisis in the Niger Delta. According to a 2009 study by the International Centre for Energy Environment and Development and the Global Climate Network, over 600,000 new jobs can be created in the short to medium term, from gas and small hydro tech-



ULOMA Onuma

nologies.

These and other strategies for reforestation, energy efficiency, and population growth control present valid win-win policy options that can be implemented now.

In addition to the various benefits that mitigation can bring, it provides access to the carbon market for Nigeria. In 2009 alone, World Bank estimates showed that of the primary and secondary carbon markets— a market where developing countries are allowed

to trade their emission was about USD\$33.5 billion. Nigeria currently has only three projects that have received financing from this market. Continued use of the clean development mechanism makes many projects in Nigeria potential beneficiaries for this financing opportunity.

Domestic unilateral actions to mitigate climate change present a crucial step in these mitigation actions. Many countries such as Brazil, China, India and South Africa have already seen the benefit of reaching their national development objectives by investing in low carbon technologies. Developing a nationally appropriate mitigation plan of action is therefore imperative in reaching the goals of the Vision 2020. This plan would detail next steps and help mainstream climate change related issues into developmental plans, a link that has so far been missing.

For plans to be effective, they must be backed by proactive legislation that can be enforced and implemented. Unlocking the potentials for domestic gas use, lies in the effective implementation of the Gas Master Plan. The Renewable Energy Master Plan presents

a framework to increase the use of clean energy. However, consolidating and updating policies that aid market creation in these green technologies is important. Developing a Clean Energy Law that builds upon these existing legislations is therefore vital.

The Gas Flare Out Policy must also be passed and enforced to ensure more effective domestic utilization of gas in Nigeria. Contrary to views in some quarters that prohibiting gas flaring will endanger access to the carbon market, ending gas flaring is perhaps the singular most important step in jumpstarting the Nigerian economy and reducing emissions of these harmful gases.

Taking action now can be quite painless, if the proper next steps and policy actions are taken. It is a win-win for all, including job creation opportunities, energy security and creating an avenue for addressing the environmental concerns of the Niger Delta. In addition, we simply reduce our greenhouse gas emissions as an added bonus.

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Top 10 deadliest earthquakes (2)

1976: Tangshan, China

China has the misfortune to have had the second deadliest earthquake on record, the 1976 Great Tangshan Earthquake, which struck in the country's northeast. It'd be more accurate to call this

a binary quake: an aftershock that struck 16 hours after the initial temblor measured an identical 7.8 on the Richter scale and was equally destructive. Death estimates are hard to pin down — initial reports placed the toll at nearly

700,000, but those have since been revised down to some 250,000. Compounding the massive casualty count was the decision by the Chinese government to accept no international aid in the aftermath of the quakes.



EARTHQUAKE scene at Tangshan, China in 1976



AN irrigation system in the northern Mexican municipality of Delicias. Is this Uganda's future?

Uganda draws up national irrigation strategy

THE Ugandan government is in the advanced stages of developing and promoting irrigation throughout the country in a bid to respond to droughts that have dented the country's food security.

For generations, Ugandan farmers have relied, and thrived, on rainfall to water the land, with irrigation mostly associated with large-scale schemes for crops like rice or sugar canes or flowers for export. But the climate is changing and droughts are becoming more fre-

quent; a government meteorologist recently said that Uganda had suffered at least eight serious droughts in the last 40 years, compared with only three in 60 years leading up to 1970. The Teso region, in which Katine falls, has been hit by food shortages after much of the area's harvests failed due to drought in the middle of last year.

Last year, government officials say the cabinet directed the ministries of water and environment and of agriculture to develop a national 25-year master plan on irrigation. The plan

should spell out the feasibility, the approach and the cost of irrigation schemes throughout the country.

According to the commissioner for water for production in the Ministry of Water and Environment, Richard Cong, the master plan should be submitted to cabinet this month. Uganda's minister for water and environment, Maria Mutagamba, says that cabinet will debate the draft plan and send it to parliament for debate and approval.

C'River targets N30bn revenue from carbon credit

CROSS River State Commissioner for Environment, Mr. Julius Okputu, on Tuesday said the state government had mapped out strategies to generate over N30bn from carbon credit market in 2012.

He noted that with over 45 per cent of Nigerian forest located in the state, it had potential to compete with other

countries in carbon credit generation.

An online magazine, Rediff India Abroad, referred to carbon credit or emissions trading as an administrative approach used to control pollution by providing economic incentives for achieving reduction in the emissions of pollutants.

It said that in 2008, the global carbon credit trading was estimated at \$5bn, with India's contribution at around \$1bn.

India is one of the countries that have 'credits' for emitting less carbon.

Therefore, Okputu, at a media briefing organised by the Nigerian Union of Journalists in

Calabar, said as part of strategies to benefit from carbon credit, the state had started taking stock of its biodiversity assets.

He added that part of the tactics was to plant five million trees in the state annually.

Other approaches, according to him, will include establishing a green city and embarking

on a city capping project.

He said the government had already placed two-year moratorium on logging and had suspended all revenues accruing from wood in the state.

He said that the measures were adopted to regulate felling of trees and wood harvesting.

Bauchi State spends N1.2b on boreholes

THE Bauchi State Government has spent over N1.2 billion on the execution of various rural water supply projects in the last two years.

Alhaji Sanusi Muhammad, the Special Assistant to Gov. Isa Yuguda on Media, who made the statement in Bauchi on Wednesday during an interview, said that the amount was spent on the construction of boreholes as part of efforts to provide potable water to rural communities in the 20 local government areas of the state.

He explained that N1 billion of the amount was part of the Conditional Grant Scheme from the Federal Government under the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on water.

The official said that under the scheme, more than 100 solar-powered boreholes were drilled in different parts of the state.

He said that the state government had also released N200 million as its counter-part fund for the drilling of 200 additional hand pump operated boreholes across the state.

Muhammad reiterated the commitment of the government toward the attainment of the MDGs on safe and clean drinking water through the systematic execution of water projects in all parts of the state.

He appealed to the beneficiaries of the water supply schemes to assist in protecting the facilities.

"The Gov. Yuguda administration is irrevocably committed to the provision of physical infrastructure and other social amenities to the people of the state," he said.

Muhammad called on the people of the state to support the government and to live in peace, considering that no meaningful development could take place without peace.

"We should not allow ourselves to be misguided into acts capable of breaching the peace under any guise," the official said. (NAN)

CITY NEWS



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News about your capital city

Ladies use veil to steal at Nyanya

By Abubakar Yakubu

SOME ladies with the connivance of commercial cyclists now steal from shops at Nyanya using cloak to hide the stolen item.

At Nyanya Phase IV, in the Federal Capital Territory, a lady wearing veil alighted from a motorcycle and went into a provision store to buy sweets.

The owner of the store said the lady asked for sweets at the shop entrance and when she entered to collect it from the shelf, the lady had entered inside the shop.

"I was shocked to see her at the centre of my shop and had to tell her to go out so that I could attend to customers at the shop entrance," the lady said.

The shop owner, Mary, said she never knew that the lady had picked her handbag and used the veil to cover it as she kept on demanding for items of little amount in order to confuse her.

"After buying sweets of N20, the lady dipped her hand into the covered bag, removed money, paid and immediately headed for the waiting bike at the same time that I became conscious that my bag had been stolen," she said.

The shop owner said she dived on the lady just as the bike was about to move and dragged her off, before raising an alarm that attracted people.

She said the stolen bag and another suspected stolen bag fell from the ladies body.

According to her, the bike man started begging from a distance, while the woman instantly started to speak in vernacular and saying that because she does not understand English language, the she is being maltreated.

Mary said people around then appealed to her to free the lady, which she did.

At Area 'C' Nyanya Market, a woman, dressed in similar manner was recently beaten by a stall owner, when she stole the trader's purse and hid it inside the veil and attempted to climb the bike that brought her to the market.

Reacting, Assistant Public Relations Officer of the Abuja Muslim Forum, Ustaz Yunus Salahudeen, said those behind such theft might not be Muslims as every Muslim lady knows that the Qu'ran frowns seriously at stealing.

At the Nyanya Police Station, a policeman said such an incident has not been reported to the station.



THE accident scene where six Peoples Democratic Party members lost their lives at Awawa village, along Abuja-Lokoja highway Monday.

One burnt to death in auto crash

By Abubakar Sadiq Isah

ONE person was consumed by fire which broke out after a car crash, while three others sustained various degrees of burns Monday night at Kwaita village, along the Abuja-Lokoja highway.

An eyewitness said the accident occurred when a speeding Peugeot J5 bus with registration number XL 795 LSR lost control and crashed into a tree, before catching fire and burning one person instantly to death.

Yangoji Unit Commander of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), Abdullahi Umar, while confirming the accident, attributed it to speed violation, adding that the corpse has been deposited at the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital's morgue; while the injured are receiving treatment at Kwali General Hospital.

He further disclosed that 25 persons were seriously injured on the same day in another accident that occurred at Kwaita

village when a J5 Peugeot bus with registration number XB 569KMC crashed into a Toyota Hiace bus with registration number XA 707 SNN.

The unit commander said the 25 injured passengers, which included two female adults were conveyed to Kwali General Hospital for treatment.

Similarly, an unidentified man was on Sunday night crushed by a DAF truck opposite the gate of Government Girls Secondary School (GGSS), Abaji.

Our reporter learnt that the middle-aged man was riding on a motorcycle without head light when the truck with registration number YC 678 KJA that was coming from Toto end at top speed collided with the motorcycle, killing the rider instantly.

FRSC Abaji unit Commander, Mr. Joseph Ojerinde, who confirmed the accident, said the battered body of the victim which was later identified has been handed over to relations for burial.

Fuel crises: Residents decry government's insensitivity

By Hussein Yahaya

AS the lingering fuel crisis in the country continues unabated, residents of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) have condemned the manner in which the government and other stakeholders are handling the problem.

In a survey conducted by City News yesterday, many respondents condemned government's insensitivity to the plight of motorists, saying that government at all levels and other stake-

holders in the industry have practically failed the nation.

A Cleric, Pastor Josuha Adibayo, wondered why it has been so difficult for the government to control the situation that started late November, 2009, adding that policy makers should always consider the Citizens' plights while making decisions on sensitive issues like that of the petroleum industry.

"We should all know that policies made on either production or distribution of petroleum

products are crucial to the economy, both at the micro and macro levels because such policy will affect even the poor man in the street," he said.

Hamza Ibrahim, a civil servant, observed that the fuel crisis has not only adversely affected the cost of transport within the territory, but also the cost of various food stuffs and other essential commodities sold in the markets.

"Imagine the same government that is not keen on addressing the problems in the oil sector

because of its proposed deregulation policy is also not interested in increasing its workers' monthly take home wages despite the problems caused by the crises in the sector," he noted.

Mrs. Ngozi, a market woman, said she has long lost confidence in the people piloting the affairs of the country, adding that many of them do not have the interest of the common man in mind.

"What do you want me to say about a government that cannot provide jobs for its teeming

graduates and cannot even operate on the principle of fairness? Despite the abundant deposit of petroleum in Nigeria, it is amazing that our leaders cannot effectively manage these resources for the benefit of the citizenry," she reasoned.

Our reporter who went round the Abuja metropolis yesterday, reports that there were queues at all filing stations that had petrol, while commercial transporters increased fares by more than 50 percent.

Indomie workers protest non-payment of entitlements

By Usman A. Bello & Lami Sadiq

WORKERS of Indomie noodles in Abuja yesterday protested at their office premises in the central business district of the city, over alleged non payment of their entitlements.

Our reporters learnt that indomie's management refused to pay the workers their entitlements after terminating the appointment of the company's contractor called 'Expertise' and transferring the workers to another contractor to handle their affairs.

One of the protesting workers, Chidi Nnaji, said they decided to down tools due to management's

refusal to pay their entitlement safter working for the company for several years, adding that some have worked for a period of between one and three years.

"When they employed us, they told us that a certain contractor called Expertise will handle our affairs but we were surprised when the management called us for a meeting yesterday to tell us that they have terminated expertise's contract and are transferring us to another person called Yamoke," he stressed.

He said when the workers asked of their entitlements for the period they worked with the expertise, the management asked

them to leave the company, saying they are not entitled to any benefit and that they will employ more workers.

Nnaji stated further that workers of the company have reported the matter to the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) for intervention, saying all that they are asking for is that Indomie should pay them their entitlement before they will take a decision on whether to work with the new body or not.

The workers also alleged that they do not observe public holidays and that any of the drivers who is involved in an accident with the company's vehicle, suffer deduction in his salaries every

month in order to get money to repair the car.

NLC representative, Comrade Nuhu Toro, while addressing the workers on the agreement reached by labour and the company's management after a meeting, disclosed that the management has agreed to pay N5,000 as entitlement to workers who have worked for a period of three years while those above three years are entitled to one month salary.

He said the issue was a minor misunderstanding and that it has been resolved.

The management of Indomie declined comments when our reporters sought their reaction.

Evangelist, others charged with assault

By Hussein Yahaya & Ibraheem A. Fatai

THE police yesterday arraigned a 24-year-old evangelist and two others before an Abuja magistrate court for alleged conspiracy, criminal force, assault and causing hurt.

The accused persons, Emmanuel N.D., an evangelist residing at Lugbe Zone 9, Abuja, Joy K.C.F., 31, a stylist residing at Lugbe Zone 7 and Peace Effiong, 22, a hairdresser residing at Zone 7, Lugbe, were reported to have committed the offences on January 18, 2010.

Police prosecutor, Elijah Jeremiah, told the court that on January 18, one Olayinka Adebayo of Giri village, Abuja, reported to the police that he boarded the same bus from Julius Berger junction to Lugbe with the accused persons.

"While on the way, the accused persons started exchanging abusive words with the complainant and in the process, they started beating her to the point that she lost her jewellery valued at N25,000," the prosecutor added.

He went further to state that the complainant sustained a neck injury, adding that the accused persons committed offences punishable under Sections 97, 265 and 246 of the Penal Code Law.

When the charges were read to the accused persons, they pleaded not guilty and applied for bail, which was not objected by the prosecutor.

In his ruling, Magistrate Bashar Attahiru Alkali granted each of the accused persons bail in the sums of N50,000 each with reliable sureties in like sums, who must reside within the court's jurisdiction and swear to affidavits to produce the accused persons in court on the adjourned date.

The case was adjourned to February 9 for hearing.

PIC: LAMI SADIQ



INDOMIE workers protesting in front of their office in Abuja yesterday.

Muslim women urged to always seek knowledge

By Romoke W. Ahmad

MUSLIM women have been urged to always search for knowledge because of their pivotal role in community relations and what God has ordained them to do.

The call was made at the weekend in a lecture titled

'Community Relations and Muslim Women,' organised by the Movement for Islamic Culture and Awareness (MICA) for women at the Abuja National Mosque.

Guest speaker at the occasion, Mrs. Jummai Umar Ajjola, citizenship programme manager of Microsoft Anglophone West Africa, said Muslim women

should stand up to their responsibilities through continuous learning in order to meet up with the challenges ahead.

According to her, "women are the bedrock of the society and since so much hope now falls on them, they must continue to seek knowledge in order to impact on their community positively."

While condemning the popu-

lar dictum that a woman's education ends in the kitchen, child bearing and upbringing, Mrs Ajjola urged Muslim women to go beyond these stages.

She then urged every Muslim woman to regard herself as the number one nation builder because of their impact on children and the entire community.

Earlier, the Amirah of MICA,

Sister Fawzah Alimi-Aladejana, in her welcome address, said the lecture aims at educating Muslim women on what is expected of them in the society.

Other Muslim Women Association like Women in Dawah, Criterion, and the Abuja Muslim Forum were also in attendance to solicit for more members among the women participants.

PIC: NASIR IMAM & ABUBAKAR YAKUBU



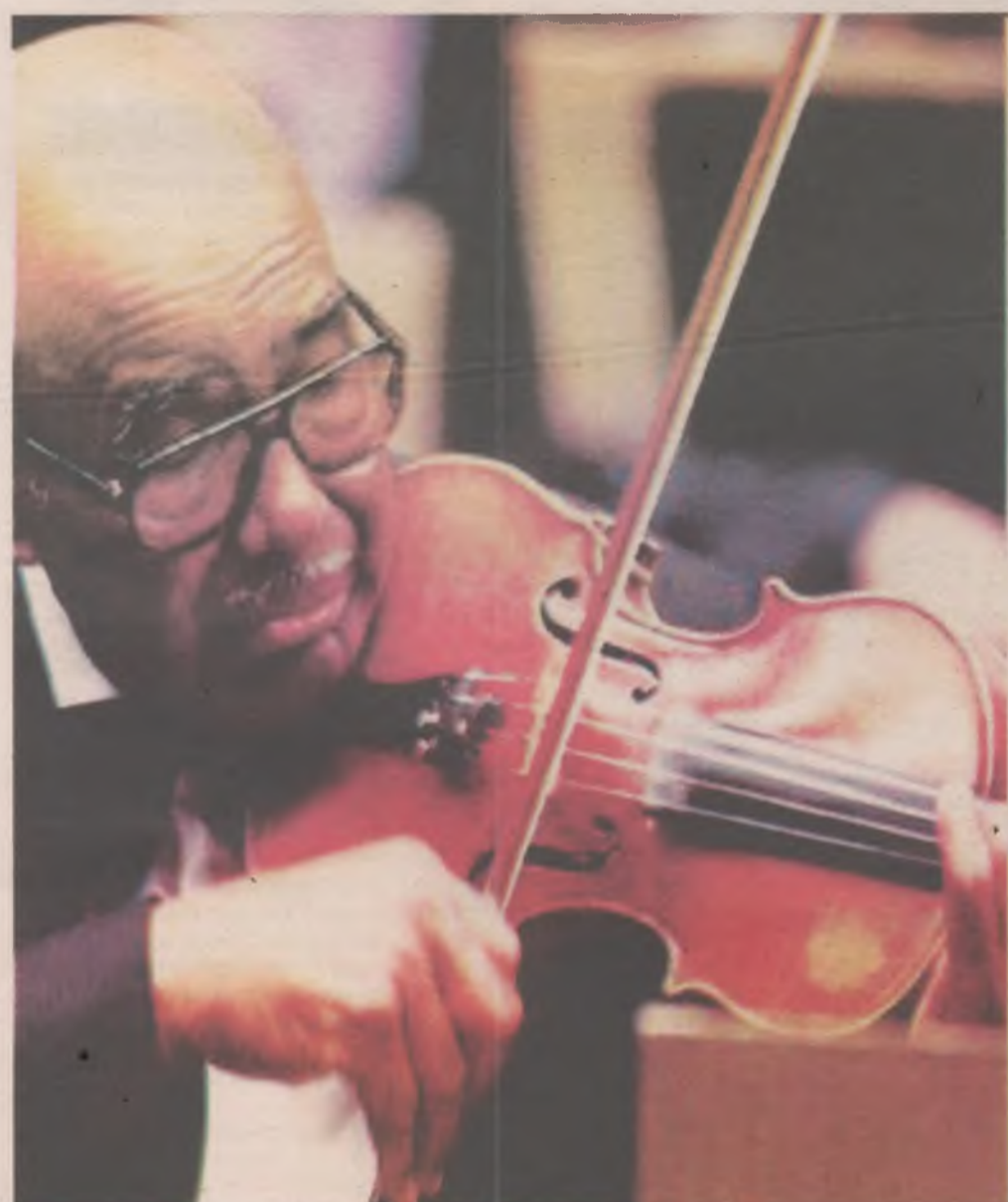
AN accident scene at Wuse, Abuja recently.



ITEMS made by rural women from FCT area councils on display during the FCT rural week in Abuja recently.



MEMBERS of FCT cultural group during an event at Arts and Craft Village in Abuja recently.





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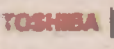







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Inside Politics

'Anambra polls will be peaceful only if..'

The National President of MONACCO, a social group, Architect Okechukwu Chukwuemeka Okechukwu, has said that notwithstanding the over 20 people contesting the governorship election in Anambra State, the election will be peaceful if INEC officials and security agencies maintain some level of transparency. Excerpts:

By Shehu Abubakar

MONACCO is in the news recently as one of the groups mobilizing its members to monitor Saturday's election in Anambra state. Which of the candidates is MONACCO supporting?

MONACCO is not a political group. It is only a social group that promotes peace, unity and the rule of law among the people. Yes, we are mobilizing our members to monitor the governorship election in Anambra State as we did during the recent bye election in Etsako Central local government of Edo State that took place on January 24, 2010. That election in Etsako was one of the freest and fairest elections conducted by INEC in recent times. That rerun election is a clear testimony that we can conduct a free and transparent election in this country if there is the commitment to do so. All parties in that election declared it as perfect. It was also devoid of any form of violence. You heard the governor of the state saying with a courageous Police Force and a determined INEC, we can rid the country of the shame we

have harboured in the past years. So MONACCO is only advocating for a peaceful, free and transparent election where the votes of the people shall be allowed to determine the winner. We are confident that the Anambra polls shall be very peaceful if only INEC and all the security agencies involved shall be truthful and fair in their dealings.

If you notice abnormalities in the election, what are you going to do?

If it is the type that requires police intervention, we immediately invite the police. But if it is the type that requires voters' education, we will take note of it and educate the voters against next time just as we are doing now. We have since noted that most voters in this country require more knowledge of their rights as voters and as a people. Political violence are either perpetrated by people from the affected communities or with the active connivance of people from the community. It is actually difficult for anybody to go to a community he is not known and succeed in causing trouble. So, we are also educating communities to learn how to

eschew their political differences rather than allow such to degenerate into crisis.

When each community sees itself as people from one family background, the rate of crisis will drastically reduce. We are therefore paying much emphasis to educating the people basically on how to vote their candidate of choice and shun money bags. That is why MONACCO is advocating a democracy that provides government through elected representatives.

Anambra has high rate of political violence. How do you think the situation can be addressed?

The principles of democracy must be applied to enthrone good leadership in order to sustain the dividends of good governance. In the prevailing situation, an elected leader can be better focused to determine and dispose off any inherited errors. This is our advocacy for Anambra and the rest of Nigeria; that the electorate be allowed to discharge exercise their civic right to guarantee continuity of the landmark strides achieved and also to make up some adequacies. When there is free and fair



ARCH Okechukwu Chukwuemeka Okechukwu

election, economic growth is also assured. It is a fact that the average Nigerian believes in the ballot and we in MONACCO also believe it

is the ballot that will certify good leadership and provide dividends of democracy. This, we canvass seriously.

Anambra: Soludo raises alarm over calumny campaign

By Muideen Olaniyi

PEOPLES Democratic Party (PDP) governorship candidate in Saturday's election in Anambra State, Prof. Chukwuma Soludo, has raised alarm over alleged plot by some of the political parties contesting Saturday's governorship election to release unsubstantiated allegations to smear his reputation.

Soludo, in a statement through his Media Assistant Bonaventure Melah, said that huge sums of money had been budgeted and deployed for the 'dirty job', saying however that such strategies would not prevent him from winning the election.

"We have uncovered plots by some of the parties' candidates in the Saturday's election to use the media against Soludo. On Sunday

for example while Soludo and his wife Nonye were in the church seeking God's face and favour over the election, a particular candidate was in Abuja making desperate arrangements for dirty media attack on Soludo and he is not alone.

"We have evidence of similar arrangements to use some sections of the media against the PDP candidate and from our findings, they have planned to begin the publication of those lies this election week hoping that there would be no time for Soludo to reply to them before Saturday," the statement read in part.

Melah said Soludo has been the subject of envy by some of the governorship candidates because of his intimidating profile in terms of academic records, service record, transparency and huge

international contacts.

He said with the results of the all opinion polls and the support of all well meaning people in the state, Soludo would emerge victorious in the coming election.

"Every evil plot against Soludo will fail because God is with him. No decent Nigerian, in fact no Nigerian would give any publication against the reputation of Soludo by this time any attention. Soludo's life from childhood has been and is still worthy of emulation. He has served Nigeria and humanity in the most transparent manner and without a stain on his name.

"They can go ahead with all their evil plots and strategies, but they all will not work, not this time. Anambra people have made up their minds who to vote for on Saturday," he said.

Nupe leaders visit N/Assembly for Edu state

By Turaki Hassan

THE Etsu Nupe Alhaji Yahaya Abubakar, frontline politician and member of the Board of Trustees of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) Professor Jerry Gana are expected to lead a delegation to the National Assembly to formally present their memorandum demanding for the creation of Edu state from the present Niger and Kwara states.

A letter addressed to the chairman of the central working committee of the Edu State Movement, Professor Gana by the Director of Protocol to the Senate President, Arthur Ndiwe said that the group will be received by Senate President David Mark at 1pm today.

The proposed Edu State is expected to draw its territorial

boundaries from Bida, Lapai, Agaie, Lavun, Gbako, Katcha, Edati, Borgu Agwara local government areas of Niger State as well as Pategi and Edu local government areas of Kwara State.

Professor Gana said in a statement yesterday that the creation of Edu state is long overdue taking into consideration the population and land mass of the area.

"Niger has the largest land area in the entire country, 76,000sq km. In fact, Niger State is almost equal in size to the entire South-West geo-political zone and even larger in land area than the entire South-East geo-political zone put together. The proposed state would have a land area equivalent to states such as Sokoto, Gombe, Kebbi, Katsina, Jigawa and Kano," he said.

Nasiha dismisses removal as Kebbi PDP chairman

By Shehu Abubakar

ALHAJI Suleiman Nasiha yesterday insisted that he remains the original state chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Kebbi State.

Nasiha told Aviation Correspondents at the Nnamdi Azikwe

International Airport Abuja that the purported dissolution of the Kebbi State executive of the PDP was null and void.

The Nasiha-led executive was allegedly dissolved by Governor Saidu Nasamu Dakingari and a new one under the leadership of Alhaji Haruna Jada Jega put in

place. Nasiha is seen as an ally of ex-Governor of Kebbi State and FCT minister Adamu Aliero.

According to Nasiha, the National Chairman of the PDP Prince Vincent Ogbulafor had in a letter addressed to the party executives of the state under Jega that due process was not followed in the

removal from office of the Nasiha-led executive.

He also said executive members of the party from the 21 local governments of the state told a news conference that they were opposed to the decision of the National secretariat and insist that they pledged their allegiance to the

Nasiha-led executive.

The party's spokesperson in the state, Alhaji Muhammad Riskuna Dakingari, had earlier said that the Jega-led executive was duly elected with the blessing of the state governor and the executive members of the party from all the 21 local governments of the state.

Inside Politics

Anambra: Obi, Ngige, Soludo, Uba, Ekwunife in final battle

From Johnkennedy Uzoma, Awka

IN two days to come, the people of Anambra State will be going to the polls to elect their governor. The election has attracted local and international attention in view of the calibre of contestants as well as the controversies that trailed the election's process since last year. So far, there are 25 candidates vying for the plum job on the platform of various political parties. As expected, in the last few days, the more serious candidates among the contestants have been demonstrating their political skills, making desperate efforts to win over the voters.

As they round up their campaigns in the last few days, the atmosphere all across the state is charged with rallies, songs and slogans seeking to portray the various candidates in the best of light before the voters. Conversely, in view of the volatile nature of the state, security has been beefed-up in readiness for any break down of law and order.

All candidates participating in the polls are expected to round up their campaign tomorrow and many of the forerunners appear to have full assurances of winning the day. However, until Saturday, none of the candidates, not even observers can say for sure who will carry the day.

Daily Trust has been on the ground monitoring the campaign and assessing the chances of the candidates, taking into cognisance feelers from the electorate. For now, many analysts have narrowed down the contest to five serious contenders. They include incumbent governor, Peter Obi of the All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) who is seeking for a second term, Prof. Chukwuma Soludo of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Dr. Chris Ngige of the Action Congress (AC), Andy Uba of the Labour Party (LP) and Uche Ekwunife of the Progressive Peoples Alliance (PPA).

However, another candidate is being described as a serious joker though some political pundits described him as fringe. Chief Nicholas Ukachukwu had ditched the PDP after he failed to secure the Party's gubernatorial ticket despite his popularity and financial influence. He is contesting on the platform of the Hope Democratic Party (HDP).

Many of the contenders outside the above six are said in some quarters to be working for political patronage. It is believed that some of them may ask their supporters to vote any of the powerful candidates at the last moment.

Barely few days to the election, political commentators are of the view that each of the perceived



PETER Obi

front-runners carries with him certain baggage which may pose an albatross on their efforts to occupy the plum office.

Peter Obi

He is the incumbent governor and is believed to have the advantage of incumbency. His perceived prudence and fiscal discipline which is assumed to have translated into massive multi-sectoral development of the state since his assumption of office has pitched him against so many political leaders and godfathers of the state. Therefore he is certainly not unmindful of the fact that he is unpopular among many godfathers.

According to political pundits Obi's troubled All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) is a serious minus to him. The divisions and acrimony that bedevil the party's national leadership between is not an issue to be wished away. Chekwas Okorie is still in court battling to rescue his leadership of the party he rallied round to form. The Court of Appeal recently upheld his expulsion from the party.

However, shortly before the deadline for substitution of candidates at the electoral commission (INEC), some executive members of the party still loyal to Okorie had applied to the commission seeking the substitution of Obi. It is believed that even if he wins Saturday's election, many pre-election cases may trail his second term.

Also, opponents of Obi within APGA have vowed to abort his re-election bid arguing that four more years of Governor Obi's government would inexplicably dovetail into four more years of lack of patronage to them.

However, there seems to be a



DR. Chris Ngige

general feeling is that in the event that the Anambra election turns out to be free and fair, and if good governance is the antidote in electing a governor, the incumbent governor will have no problem in his second tenure ambition.

Dr. Chris Ngige

Ngige is one of the most popular and highly respected politicians in Anambra State. A "devout" Catholic, Ngige is a master political strategist with money bag friends across the globe.

He was sworn in as governor of Anambra State on May 29th, 2003, a position he held till 2006 when the court invalidated his mandate. During his two and a half years tenure, Ngige was reckoned with the construction of many roads across the state and other development projects.

However, the state remained in perpetually political instability and tension. Jungle justice was in thing then and these are believed to be his greatest albatross as Anambrians may be skeptical of a possible repeat of those days.

Also, knowing the way he came to power in 2003, Ngige is perceived as a desperate politician, one who can go the extra-mile to acquire power even if it is at the expense of decency and morality.

Moreso, his then signing of several pre-dated resignation letters, the patronage of Infamous Okija Shrine, according to pundits, translated to desecrating the exalted office of governor and thus a minus to his renewed bid to stage a comeback.

There is also the issue of the platform on which he is running. The Action Congress (AC) is perceived as a South-West-dominated party. More so the AC is patently



UCHE Ekwunife

weak in the South East and especially Anambra state as it is known to lack structure and grass root support.

Prof. Charles Chukwuma Soludo

Soludo in all standard is an intellectual icon with positive historical administrative antecedents. His campaign structure - Soludo Solution - justifies his track records of achievement as the immediate past Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria. However, he is described locally as the candidate of the courts not that of the majority of the members of PDP in Anambra State. His emergence as PDP candidate was shrouded with controversy but the man is intellectually sound with age in his favour.

Political pundits in the state insisted that his draw backs as regards his governorship ambition are multifaceted. Apart from being a green horn in politics, he is too decent for the turbulence associated with Anambra Politics.

Chief Andy Uba

Dr. Andy Uba is a dogged but controversial politician who ruled the state for 17 days (i.e. May 29th, 2007 - June 14th, 2007) before the Supreme Court upturned his mandate on June 14th 2007 on the ground that there was no vacancy when he was purportedly elected on the April 14, 2007.

He is an acclaimed maverick politician known for his stupendous wealth and political sagacity. He is also philanthropy personified.

The perceived minus of the Labour Party candidate has to do with his family's name and image. For some time now, the Uba family have been associated with notoriety considering the antecedent



PROF. Charles Soludo

of he and his immediate younger brother - Chris Uba.

More so Labour Party is relatively unknown in Anambra State without visible structure and fellowship. He is also known to have fallen out with so many of his political supporters including his brother.

Uche Ekwunife

Ekwunife who is the more powerful of the two women in the race is a serving member of the Federal House of Representatives. She dumped the troubled PDP and joined Chief Orji Uzor Kalu's Peoples Progressive Alliance (PPA) to actualise her ambition.

At the controversial PPA Primaries, Ekwunife, against all odds, wrestled the party ticket from other most favoured male opponents including money bag Mr. Emeka Etiaba, son of the incumbent Deputy Governor of the State, Dame Virgy Etiaba. She is said to be largely counting on the votes of women who believe that one of theirs will better serve their interest. But some observers also say that her gender is one of her weakness in the election because the political godfathers will hardly sit and watch her emerge as governor. It is also doubtful if she has the kind of money the other candidates have to pull through. In any case, many say this is politics where anything can happen.

By and large, the role of INEC and security agents in this election is fundamental in ensuring that the ethics of the electoral processes are strictly adhered to in other to have the choice of the people emerge as governor after the election. This is why observers say that the Anambra election is a litmus test to justify for what to expect in the 2011 general polls.



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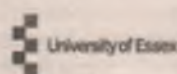
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Okocha calls for a change in NFF

From Abiodun Jimoh, Lagos

FORMER Super Eagles captain, Austin Okocha, has called for a change in the administration of football in the country.

Speaking after the meeting of Nigeria Football Stakeholders Forum in Lagos yesterday, Okocha, who is a member of the Presidential Task Force (PTF) for the 2010 World Cup, said that the recent experience has shown that those that had played the game at the highest level for clubs and country must desist from sitting on the sidelines and allowing the administration of the sport to career civil servants and politicians.

The ex-Bolton Wanderer FC of England utility midfielder noted that he and other ex-players decided to voice out with millions of Nigerians in and outside the country to affirm and spread the message "Enough is enough" of the maladministration and rot in Nigeria football and that without any gainsaying: "The Time For Change Is Now".

He remarked that the last two weeks have been the most traumatic of his entire life in the round leather game because of Super Eagles shambolic performance at the just concluded Angola 2010 African Nations Cup.

Speaking further, Okocha noted that whenever he traveled to other parts of the world he marveled at the incredible abundance of talents abound in Nigeria.

He declared, "It is high time to begin to treat the football with seri-

ousness and decency it deserved as a veritable socio-economic weapon.

"All over the world, football is the easiest way for poor man to aspire to a decent life. And the story of most of us of course myself inclusive should inspire our leaders to begin to seriously exploit this opportunity. What will help stem the negative tide is a holistic look at all the components especially the human resources that is most important of all." He stressed that The Presidency must evolve ways of making the invaluable knowledge, exposure and experience gathered by dozens of the nation's successful professional footballers count in national football management. "Ex-international players must be encouraged to take up the reins of leadership in our football and inject the knowledge of how the game is being administered in Europe and advanced countries into our game as in vital sectors of the nation life like oil," he added.

He appealed to Nigerians to look beyond the Angola trauma and work hard towards ensuring a good outing at the South 2010 Africa World Cup holding in June.

"From coaches to administrators, fans and corporate organisations, we are guilty of bringing our football into present state. It is therefore time to come together with a view of taking it to the highest expected of giant in the game. It is only after we have done this that we can finish it with the flurry of publicity and promotions that come during competitions," he concluded.



OKOCHA wants former internationals to take a more active role in the administration of football in Nigeria.

Gombe to Kanu: Retire before Nigerians stone you

By David Ngobua

FORMER Chairman of Gombe State Football Association, Alhaji Ahmed Shaibu Gara-Gombe has called on the team's captain, Kanu Nwankwo to bow out honourably because the ovation for him is fast dying down.

Speaking to Trustsports on Eagles' performance in Angola and the need to overhaul the team, the football administrator said even a blind man can feel the need for the team to be over-

hauled if disaster at the forthcoming World Cup is to be avoided.

He said that beginning from the team's captain Kanu, the oldies in the team should not wait for anyone to tell them to quit the stage now that Nigerians are still waiting on them to take the path of honour.

Gombe said players like Seyi Olofinjana, Yakubu Aiyegbeni, John Utaka and Kanu Nwankwo should pave way for the younger players to take over from them adding that they had passed their prime and since the law of dimin-

ishing return has caught up with them, there is nothing they can do about it.

He maintained that a player like Kanu has contributed so much to Nigerian football but if he insists on staying on longer than is necessary, one day he will get the biggest humiliation of his life because Nigerians would not mind stoning him with sachets of pure water.

"I want to advise Kanu Nwankwo who has paid his dues as far as Nigerian football is concerned to honourably retire from

international football. If Jay-Jay Okocha who does not have any history of serious injuries could quit the stage when the ovation for him was loudest, I wonder what is keeping his compatriot Kanu from doing the same.

"If he refuses to retire, one day he will be disgraced because Nigerians will stone him with sachet water. And considering his enormous contributions to Nigerian football, that will not be funny at all. He has done so much for this country but he can not play forever. If he does not retire, he

is looking for serious trouble," Gombe said.

Gombe suggested that the captain should lead by example by asking his contemporaries in the team to leave at the same time with him so that they also will escape the impending wrath from Nigerians.

He said players like Kanu Nwankwo and Seyi Olofinjana should be invited and used during exhibition matches only as he insisted that they can no longer withstand the rigours of competitive football.

Magistrate's indisposition stalls NFF's theft case

HEARING could not resume on Tuesday in Abuja in the case of the missing 236,000 dollars (about N34.5 million) at the Nigeria Football Federation's (NFF) Secretariat.

The hearing was stalled due to the indisposition of Chief Magistrate David Ochimana who had been handling the case.

Five men have been standing trial in the case, following the arraignment of 12 suspects since May 5, 2009 at the Wuse Zone Two Magistrate's Court after the theft was discovered.

Ochimana had in December 2009 at the last hearing fixed February 2 to February 4, 2010 for the resumed hearing.

However, when the case came up for hearing on Tuesday, Ochimana craved the indulgence of the court to rise for about 10 minutes.

He said he was on drugs as recommended by a doctor and as such would need a short break to put himself together.

"I want to seek the permission of the court to rise for 10 minutes. I will be back after the time to continue with the defence," Ochimana said. He, however, asked the counsel if they were ready to go on with the case.

Mr Joel Ogbaise, Counsel to the second accused, Lukman Ajiboye, however, said he was ready to go on as he had brought two of his witnesses to the court.

Before the magistrate could return to the court, Ogbaise and the other counsel however, resolved with Ochimana in his chamber for the case to be adjourned till Wednesday, considering his ill-health.

The money was declared missing from the NFF's Secretariat on March 19, 2009 and the case has since then suffered many postponements.

After preliminary investigations, police had arrested 12 suspects and arraigned them on May 5, with seven of them discharged on Sept. 23, 2009.

Ochimana had ruled then that the prosecution had failed to make a prima facie case against them.

The remaining accused, John Adelowo, Lukman Ajiboye, Abutu Ogaji, Isaac Baba and Yakubu Bawa are however, facing trial before the court.

Nigeria improves on FIFA ranking

NIGERIA yesterday made a huge leap on the monthly FIFA ranking, jumping seven steps to occupy the 15th position from the previous 22.

It is one of Nigeria's most improved standings on the world stage in recent years since the country's best in 1994, following

It is one of Nigeria's most improved standings on the world stage

an impressive showing at the FIFA World Cup fiesta in US 1994.

Nigeria achieved the highest position by an African nation when it ranked 5th in April 1994. It also made the top 10 in 2006.

The latest ranking achieved by the country was as a result of its bronze medal victory at the 2010 African Cup of Nations in Angola

last month; while runner-up Ghana climbed seven to 27.

Egypt, which occupied the same position in January 2009, becomes Africa's highest ranked country, lifting it 14 places and knocking Croatia down to number 11 to become the tenth country in the world.

Cameroon fell nine places to number 20, and Ivory Coast dropped six to 22 after both lost at the quarter final stage.

Globally, Spain kept the top spot in FIFA's world rankings released Wednesday, and Africa Cup of Nations winner Egypt surged into the top 10.

The United States was unchanged at 14, leading the CONCACAF nations. Mexico followed at 17.

European champion Spain is followed by Brazil and Netherlands. World champion Italy is fourth and Portugal is fifth.

The top nine was unchanged after only 8 Argentina played in the past month, beating Costa Rica 3-2 in a friendly match.

Australia is the top Asian nation at 23, a fall of two places, and 40 Japan rose three.

New Zealand, the World Cup qualifier from Oceania, climbed three spots to 79.



SHAIBU Amodu, Super Eagles' embattled coach

Eagles foreign coach to be named soon - Ogunjobi

A foreign coach for the Super Eagles ahead of the World Cup will be named very soon, Chairman, Technical Committee of the Nigerian Football Federation (NFF), Taiwo Ogunjobi has said.

"Time is not on our side, we are going to do it as soon as possible because the World Cup is around the corner, Ogunjobi said in Johannesburg on Tuesday night.

"We will fortify the technical crew and its going to be a foreign coach," the NFF big wig said, adding that the position had already been discussed with Coach Shuaib Amodu and his assistants.

"We met Amodu and his assistants we discussed this and they all agreed with us so we are

going to beef up the technical crew," he said.

Ogunjobi however said that his committee had not approached the Egyptian Coach, Hassan Sehato as is being speculated, but gave an assurance that the new coach would be named shortly.

"Maybe he is interested, we have not approached him from our own end, I read it just the way you read it too.

"For the world cup, we will make sure we prepare well," Ogunjobi said, noting that Nigerians and the whole world were expecting a better performance from the Super Eagles.

"I want to assure everybody that we are coming to South Africa with a better team that will

do the country proud and make everybody happy at the end of the tournament," he stressed.

NFF President, Sani Lulu Abdullahi, said that he had given the technical committee the mandate to give the way forward for the Nigerian soccer team.

"I have a technical committee and have given them the mandate to advise us on what to do as quickly as possible and they are doing it.

"I am sure in the next few days, we will certainly start hearing their result," he said, adding that a foreign coach might be part of the overhaul once the technical committee believed in it.

He restated that a total overhaul was the only way to move the

team forward and make Nigeria proud at the World Cup.

"Our ambition is to go all out to represent this great country in the world cup with a very strong team that will give us the desired result that Nigerians will be happy about," he said.

Abdullahi, Ogunjobi and some other members of the NFF were on a stop-over in Johannesburg to see recuperating Yusuf Mohammed who was operated upon in a clinic in Johannesburg after an injury in the Orange Africa Cup of Nations in Angola.

They were also hosted to a dinner by Nigeria's Consular-General, Mr Okey Emuchay at his Johannesburg residence before they departed for Nigeria.

...NFF shortlists four coaches

NIGERIA Football Federation (NFF) has shortlisted four coaches who have led a team to the World Cup to replace Shuaibu Amodu as the country's coach to the football finals in South Africa in June.

The successful of these shortlisted coaches will sign a short-term contract that will cover only the World Cup after which Nigeria will shop for a less famous foreign coach, and of course cheaper expatriate, who will bag a

long-term deal that will ensure a proper development of the game right from the grassroots.

It is planned that a special committee from within the board will be given the task of hiring a 'World Cup' coach before the end of this month.

"We need a coach who is very experienced and who has been involved at the World Cup," a top NFF official said.

The NFF had earlier listed as many as eight top foreign coaches to

lead the Eagles to the World Cup in South Africa before this number was pruned to four.

In the last few weeks, several foreigners have been linked with the Nigeria job including Mart Nooij of Mozambique, Zambia coach Herve Renard and record-making coach of Egypt, Hassan Shehata.

But it now appears the NFF will be ready to part with a little fortune to get a higher profile tactician.

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Sport Briefs....

Henin given wild card into Indian Wells

AUSTRALIAN Open runner-up Justine Henin has been given a wild-card entry into the BNP Paribas Open next month. The former No. 1 and seven-time major champion won the tournament in 2004. It will be her first appearance in Indian Wells since 2006. Henin has played two events since returning to the WTA Tour in January after retiring in May 2008. She reached the final at Brisbane and the Australian Open, where she lost in three sets to Serena Williams.



JUSTINE Henin

Terry gets backing from Capello's assistant

STUART Pearce has become the first member of England manager Fabio Capello's coaching team to back captain John Terry in the wake of his sex scandal. Terry's future as captain has come under scrutiny since it was alleged the married father-of-two had a relationship with England teammate Wayne Bridge's former partner. Terry is set to meet with Capello later in the week to discuss the captaincy. Pearce criticized the story as a "witch hunt," telling Sky Sports on Wednesday that Terry is a "selfless professional" and a "fantastic captain, in footballing terms on and off the pitch."

Hornets' Paul set for knee surgery



CHRIS Paul

NEW Orleans point guard Chris Paul will have knee surgery and likely miss the All-Star game. Hornets coach Jeff Bower said Paul will have surgery Thursday to repair a torn meniscus in his left knee. The All-Star weekend is Feb. 12-14 in Dallas. Although Paul is likely to be sidelined for up to a month, Bower wouldn't give a timetable for his return.

NHF to carry out massive talent hunt

ALHAJI Yusuf Dauda, President, Nigeria Handball Federation (NHF), says the federation will embark on aggressive grassroots developmental programmes to check the declining state of the sport in Nigeria. Dauda said yesterday in Lagos that this would involve massive talent hunt to change the face of the sport. He said that quarterly zonal championships would also be organised for months to sharpen their skills. "There is the need to decentralise championships. I believe there are so many hidden talents waiting to be discovered," Dauda said.

Ekeji wants AU to resolve CAF, Togo impasse

By Orkula Shaagee

NATIONAL Sports Commission's Director General, Chief Patrick Ekeji yesterday urged the African Union (AU) Department of Social Affairs to convene a meeting of Conference of African Sports Ministers of Sports (CAMS) to decide the way forward on the decision of CAF to hand two Nations Cup ban to Togo for boycotting last month's African Cup of Nations in Angola.

CAF last week announced a two Cup of Nations ban on Togo following the country's withdrawal from the 2010 Nations Cup in Angola over attack on their team bus in Cabinda which left an assistant coach and media officer dead.

The African football governing body says the decision to pull the team out amounted to governmental interference in the sport.

"The players publicly expressed their willingness to return to the Nations Cup to compete, but the Togo government decided to call back their national team," CAF explained in its statement.

It added that "The decision by political authorities contravenes CAF and African Nations Cup regulations".

Ekeji, in a letter addressed to the Honourable Commissioner Department of Social Affairs in the African Union Commission, described the decision as "the highest degree of insensitivity on the part of the Confederation of African Football (CAF)".

Ekeji, in the letter dated 1st February, 2009 condemned the decision of CAF to suspend an African country from participating in its activities over interference by government.

According to Ekeji, what is most disturbing is the fact that CAF is aware of the fact that governments of African countries have the responsibility of



EKEJI wants the quick intervention of African Union on Togo ban

protecting their citizens when it is obvious that they are exposed to danger.

"The decision, to say the least smirks of the highest degree of insensitivity on the part of the Confederation of African Football. The Confederation of African Football cannot pretend to be oblivious of the fact that in Africa football is seen and accorded the highest level of attention by the Governments in Africa in terms of policies and, of course gov-

ernments has the responsibility of protecting its citizens when they are exposed to danger", Ekeji stated.

Consequently, he said the Togolese Government is at liberty to take the decision to withdraw its national team from the just concluded Nations Cup after its citizens were gun down in cold blood; adding that the sanctity of life and respect for the dead should take precedence over Article 78 of CAF's Constitution.

'Hayatou doesn't deserve to head CAF'

TOGO national team coach Hubert Velud has expressed shock and anger at CAF's decision to ban the West African country for four years and also fine them \$50,000 for pulling out of the African Cup of Nations due to "government interference" following the machine gun attack that left three of their delegation killed and others injured.

"It's a scandal. This decision shocked us. I wonder on what logical basis such a decision was taken. Everyone knows that the morale of the players hit rock bottom after seeing death in Cabinda. It was impossible for them to play a football match,"

he explained.

When asked whether he was frustrated with CAF, Velud went a step further: "No not with CAF, with [Issa] Hayatou because I realized that he's an opportunist who serves his personal interests in the name of football. I'm more frustrated than you can imagine."

"Issa Hayatou should have taken into consideration the sentiments of the Togolese people before such a decision was taken. Hayatou proved that he's not capable of running CAF, he should review himself. I also realized that even if he's Cameroonian, he's not part of the African continent to which he does great harm."

The trainer was also asked

whether or not he was waiting for from a reaction from FIFA and made it clear that, sadly, he did not expect them to respond.

"If FIFA opted to keep silent about the aggression on the Algerian delegation in Cairo and haven't taken a decision on it until now then how do you want them to take one about our situation? I'm waiting for severe sanctions against Egypt in that affair. And if it doesn't happen then you can talk about a crime against sport in general and against football in particular," he fumed.

"It's shameful to have these doubles standards for the people of the same continent."

THE THURSDAY COLUMN

Is'haq Modibbo Kawu

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Jos killings and the roots of our national crises

"On the surface, the recurrent violence is driven by the crisis of citizenship and the constitutional dichotomy between 'indigenes' and 'settlers'. But it is a dichotomy made real by the 'politics of difference' deliberately fomented by elites on both sides of the divide.... However, beyond the surface appearance, the recurrent violence in Jos, as in other parts of Nigeria, must be recognized as the consequence of the failure of development which, in the last four decades is driven by a neo-liberal agenda that placed faith of deprived majority in the 'invisible hands' of the market and the retreat of the state from development. The endemic culture of corruption, the absence of statecraft and the absence of 'safety nets' have created conditions under which ethnic and religious consciousness becomes the driving force in people's behaviour and the identification of the relevant 'Others'"

-- Nigerian Political Science Association (NPSA)

A few issues have made me return to the tragic killings in Jos, today. First was the story from survivors at Kuru Karama that a pastor attempted to stop the killings of Muslim villagers. He was tied to a tree by the mob and the killings proceeded. Then last week, Segun Odegbami, Nigeria's ex-international footballer, wrote an emotional piece about Jos, recounting close-knit relationships between peoples of different ethnic and religious backgrounds when he was growing up there. It was no surprise that Jos gave Nigeria some of its most talented football players, starting with Sam Garba, arguably the greatest footballer Nigeria ever produced! Jos was cosmopolitan and drawing people from all backgrounds, ensured that it was at the frontline of innovation and modernity, unequalled by any other city in Northern Nigeria. Which Northerner of my generation didn't feel proud about the exploits of the Mighty Jets football club of Jos? I cried when they lost the challenge cup in 1972! Then there was an interview given to SUN newspaper last Friday, by veteran labour leader, Alhaji Ali Ciroma and last but not the least, the quotation at the head of this piece from the Nigerian Political Science Association.

In the past few years, I have tried to draw attention to the deepening crises occasioned by the choices made by the Nigerian ruling class. The emergence of neo-liberal policies can be traced to the Economic Stabilization Act of the Shagari period in 1981. Nigerians did not seem to perceive that we were undergoing fundamental philosophical re-orientation of development that will impact upon our lives into the future. But it was after Shagari, starting with the introduction of Structural Adjustment Policies (SAP) in the mid-1980s that we entered the full rot; the eight years of Obasanjo supplied the nails for the coffin of the national public space in our country. The withdrawal of the state from the development space left the vast majority of the Nigerian people on the margins: jobs disappeared; social security became absent; schools, health care and other indices of development were decimated as the ruling elite "privatized" the state as fiefs of corrupt enrichment.

When the state retreated, non-state actors took over and identity became the laagers people retreated into: mainly ethno-religious identities which seemed to find legitimacy only in the context of the profiling of the OTHER, as the NPSA noted in our quotation. When politics lost all sense of ideological direction and people are unable to see the dividends of the mandates given to or stolen by ruling elites, it made sense to a lot of people, when they are told it is because of the OTHER: that other in Nigeria is the other

religion or the other ethnic group. These are very powerful emotional platforms of mobilization and it takes more than courage for people to rise above the guilt of their own side of these often vicious and violent divides! My side is right and the other is wrong, with people unable to find a median point of decent engagement. When this goes on regularly, the crisis can consume an entire country.

Unfortunately in Jos, the recurrence of killings over the past few years illustrate this tragic point forcefully. The bitterness has deepened on both sides of the divide and in the recent killings, it has spilled over, with the angry but unnecessary resolution from the Bauchi State House of Assembly further underscoring how dangerous the situation is. Yet, the political elite on the Plateau has failed singularly to develop the once beautiful state, especially in these years of civilian administration; a period which seems to have corresponded with the most tragic phases of killings. Jos is now lost in a time warp of underdevelopment and elites that failed the people miserably in the provision of development have mobilized frenzies of killings and destruction on the basis that some people are "indigenes" while others are "settlers". So the poor and the victims of absence of governance and the outright theft of resources meant to provide basic decencies of life are then set against themselves in mob killings which reduce the humanity of all the sides to these gory killings!

“But more poignantly, is the faulty leadership recruitment pattern that Nigeria has also suffered from: all through our history, but which has reached tragic proportions in the past decade. With utmost respect, but why will a nation allow someone like Jonah Jang to become a governor

With utmost respect, but why will a nation allow someone like Jonah Jang to become a governor, given his well-known hatred for a section of the people he leads? His speech early this week, when the Vice President inaugurated a 15-member committee headed by Chief Solomon Lar, to find "a lasting solution to the recurrent crises in Jos", did not have the necessary measure of restraint expected from a leader whose people have suffered so much death and destruction. There was far too much implicitly bellicose tone than fits the occasion. Identity is not what we can do anything about. The Muslim will remain a Muslim and the Christian will also hold on to his faith. Similarly, no one can choose the ethnic group he is born into. But we can build our country together on the basis of mutual acceptance of our diversities and the fact that we have to share the Nigerian space together.

There have always been strains and tensions in the building of human society. But if Jos was the source of beauty in the past, it is because there were factors of development which allowed peoples of all backgrounds to flower and the rich tapestry woven by the inclusiveness of people. That inclusiveness has been torn asunder by the narrow-minded chauvinism now reigning on the Plateau and the nature of political economy choices which Nigeria's ruling class made. When the state gradually withdrew from the development process for "market forces" to take over, people retreated into ethno-religious laagers and our country is incrementally being killed by the chauvinism which the corrupt, *prebendalist* politics of the ruling class stokes, like veldt fire. Nigeria's worst enemy is its ruling class; they make the Jos killings almost inevitable! "Every man's death diminishes me, for I am involved in mankind", said the Poet John Donne. "So ask not for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee".

SPORTS REPORT



SULLEY Muntari

Muntari apologises to Ghana coach

Ghana international midfielder Sulley Muntari has finally apologised for his actions that forced him out of the squad for the recently ended African Cup of Nations in Angola.

Coach Milovan Rajevac has disclosed that all issues with the Inter ace have now been resolved.

The left-footer was dropped from the Ghana squad following his absence from camp without permission ahead of an international friendly against Angola last December. The Serbian tactician followed up with hint in his Italian base but Muntari failed to meet his boss to clarify the issue.



GUUS Hiddink

Hiddink vows to see out Russia contract

Russia head coach Guus Hiddink moved to quell speculation about a possible short-term contract to coach the Super Eagles at 2010 World Cup yesterday by saying that he intends to see out his contract with the Russian Football Union (RFU).

The Dutchman announced his decision after arriving in the Russian capital to meet newly installed RFU chief Sergei Fursenko.

"I'm happy to be back here," Hiddink said. "I will stay in Moscow for several days before attending the draw ceremony for the 2012 European Championship in Poland. After that we will start our preparations for the friendly with Hungary."

Hiddink added that he was set to meet Fursenko on Thursday to discuss his future with the national side.

"My contract expires in July. Let's wait and see what happens after that," he said.

"In December I took a small vacation to rehabilitate after our failure in the (2010 World Cup) qualifying campaign. Now the time for a comeback has arrived."

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