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Petitions, lobbying delay ministers' list

By Mohammed S. Shehu

THE list of new members to serve on the reconstituted Federal Executive Council [FEC] was being awaited by Senate President David Mark last night, but *Daily Trust* learnt that Acting President Goodluck Jonathan's pledge to accelerate the minis-

terial selection process was bogged down by petitions and intense lobbies.

Two days after he dissolved the FEC last Wednesday, Jonathan selected 20 of the former ministers for reappointment and sent their names to the State Security Service (SSS) for screening, prior to the submission of their names to the Senate confirma-

tion. However, the Presidency was still compiling the names of new ministers to replace the 22 old ones who were not returning to the Cabinet.

The process was however bogged down because ministerial hopefuls from all over the country flocked to the houses and offices of powerful figures that are thought to have

the Acting President's ear. A source close to the Presidential Advisory Council told *Daily Trust* last night that when the council's chairman, General T. Y. Danjuma, returned to the country at the weekend, he found hundreds of CVs deposited at his house by lobbyists. The former Defence Minister remarked that

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PHOTO: NAN

FORMER Head of State General Abdulsalami Abubakar leaving the State House after meeting with Acting President Goodluck Jonathan, yesterday.

Buhari-Atiku alliance stalls

By Suleiman M. Bisalla

THE political alliance of top opposition politicians made up of General Muhammadu Buhari, former Vice President Atiku Abubakar, former Sokoto State governor Attahiru Bafarawa and former Lagos State governor Bola Ahmed Tinubu may be heading for the rocks as a fresh dispute has emerged over the proposed new platform.

The alliance had proposed to adopt as its collective platform a modi-

fied Action Congress (AC) which was expected retain only its logo, the broom and lose other identities like the name, the headquarters building, the elected officials from the ward to the national levels and to have a new membership register.

However, a source said the last National Executive Committee meeting of the AC in Benin, Edo State, took an extreme position that will make it difficult for any member of the group, Buhari's Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) and Bafarawa's Democratic

Peoples Party (DPP) to agree to the merger.

A source at the meeting said AC pointedly said it will not subject itself to the changes being proposed. The proposal to adopt a 'modified AC' was said to have been reached after the party argued that it has two governors, several members of the National Assembly as well as dozens of state legislators who would be subjected to litigation should they move to another party.

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Seven Zamfara National Assembly members, 23 state lawmakers yesterday decamped to the PDP **50**

Ex-militants protest in Edo

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Ex-militants protest in Edo

From Vincent Egunyanga, Benin

EX-MILITANTS in Edo State yesterday staged a protest, disrupting economic activities in Benin for over seven hours. The militants blocked major streets in the state capital, burning tires and extorting money from motorists.

The former militants who also disrupted academic activi-

ties at the Federal Girl's College at Ugbowo in Benin City said they were protesting over their non documentation.

They said they were angry with Edo State Governor Adams Oshiomhole for allegedly telling the Federal Government that there were no militants in the state. The ex-militants who had sometimes last month protested

to the Government House over their non - documentation by the authorities charged with the implementation of the amnesty programme also blocked the busy Ugbowo road.

The protest led to heavy vehicular and human traffic in the area. Spokesman for the group, Eti Confidence, who said they were from the Lord Agbuke led Niger-

Delta freedom fighter group said they surrendered their weapons after the October 4th, 2009 deadline for the submission of arms and ammunitions by militants. Policemen led by Superintendent Bulus Avezand from the state Police Command were on hand to prevent the militants from getting violent. He however refused to speak on the protest.

But a member of the Niger-Delta Freedom Fighter group, who met the amnesty programme arms submission deadline said the protesting militants were fake and that they were only capitalizing on the success of the programme to seek recognition. He said the protesting militants failed to key into the Federal Government programme the right time.

PIC: AFOLABI SOTUNDE

PDP

postpones NEC meeting to save Ogbulafor

By Muideen Olaniyi

THURSDAY'S National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has been postponed to April 8, in what observers say may be a move to save the job of the party's National Chairman Prince Vincent Ogbulafor.

Daily Trust learnt that the meeting was put on hold during yesterday's emergency meeting of the National Working Committee (NWC) held at Ogbulafor's office.

Though the postponement theory was based on the likely inability of Acting President Goodluck Jonathan to attend, it was gathered that the move was aimed at getting the understanding and support of aggrieved NEC members on the observed shortcomings of the Ogbulafor-led NWC.



A laundry man in Nasarawa State on the eve of the celebration of the World Water Day celebration.

16 die in auto crash

From Mustafa Abubakar, Ilorin

ABOUT 16 people died in an auto crash involving an 18-seater Nissan bus and a truck along the Oloru-Oko-olowo-Jebba road Sunday. A witness said the 16 persons died on the spot.

Confirming the incident, the Kwara State Police Public Relation Officer Mr. Dabo Ezekiel said the crash was due to reckless driving.

He cautioned motorists to be careful to reduce road accidents. The zonal Commander of the Federal Road Safety Commission, Zone RS8 Mr. Augustine Aipoh who confirmed the incident yesterday in Ilorin said the bodies of the deceased had been deposited at the UITH, Ilorin.

Gunmen kidnap LG chairman's son

From Isa Liman, Zaria

UNKNOWN gunmen yesterday kidnapped the seven-year-old son of the Sabon Gari Local Government Chairman Alhaji Kasimu Lawal Abasco. According to a witness, the gunmen intercepted the bus conveying the chairman's children to school and abducted one of them at gun point.

"I was close to the scene of the incident, discussing with my friends when we noticed some gunmen approaching the bus. All of a sudden, we saw the gunmen, about four of them. They forced themselves into the bus and held

the occupants of the bus hostage. After a while, they brought one of the boys out of the car and zoomed off. The boy is the chairman's son and he is about seven years," he said.

When contacted on phone, Alhaji Kasimu Lawal Abasco confirmed the incident saying, "It is too early to hear from them (the kidnapers) but it is true that gunmen abducted one of my children."

The Kaduna State Commissioner of Police Tambari Yabo Muhammad also confirmed the incident, saying his men had commenced investigation.

NASS write Assembly over suspended LG bosses

From Muhammad Abubakar, Bauchi

THE National Assembly has written the Bauchi State House of Assembly asking it to do something about the suspended council chairmen in the state. The National Assembly in a letter from the office of the Clerk to the National Assembly, Oluwemi Ogunyomi, titled "Appointment of Local Government Caretaker Committees: a breach of section 7 of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999" noted that section 7 of the

Constitution guarantees a system of democratically elected leadership in local government councils contrary to what now obtains in the state where the councils are being headed by caretaker committee chairmen. NASS also

expressed concerns over the inability of state Independent Electoral Commissions to conduct elections into the councils, saying it was inimical to political development.

NASS then urged state governments and Houses of Assembly to adhere to the provisions of the Constitution.

Reacting to the letter, the Speaker of the Bauchi State House of Assembly Abubakar Ahmed Faggo, who spoke with newsmen on phone said though the letter was not directed at the Bauchi Assembly alone, the House after studying the reports submitted to it by the committees that probed the chairmen would make the recommendations public.

Fire guts Kano WAEC office

From Jaafar Jaafar, Kano

A mid night fire at the weekend gutted parts of the Kano zonal office of the West African Examination Council (WAEC) destroying documents, furniture, computers and other office equipment.

Our correspondent learnt

that the fire which started around 12:00am on Sunday, started from the Accounts Department and spread to the office of the Head of Schools and Examination. Confirming the incident, the Head of Operations at the Kano State Fire Service, Kasim Musa, said their personnel arrived the scene of the

fire shortly after they received a distress call. He said they arrived the scene six minutes after the call.

According to him, three offices were affected by the fire and that they battled the fire with three fire-fighting vehicles.

"We fought the fire with Commando 1A, Commando 1B and

Commando 13 until around 1:30am when we successfully put out the fire," he said.

He expressed concerns over the series of fire incidents in the state despite their safety campaigns. The head of the WAEC office, Mr Patrick Aregban, said the fire did not affect the section where vital

documents like results and certificates were stored. Kano State Commissioner for Education Alhaji Musa Salihu, who paid a visit to the office described the situation as unfortunate, saying government received the news with shock because of the importance of the office to the country.

Nigerian conman arrested in India

By Habeeb I. Pindiga, with agency report

A Nigerian man suspected to be part of a money doubling racket was arrested by the Indian police on Saturday, the daily *Times of India* reported yesterday.

Benson, aged about 30, was about to dupe a young man in the southern city of Tiruchi when the police arrested him, seizing a briefcase full of black papers cut

exactly to the size of currency notes.

Benson had told 32-year-old Sivaprakash that the papers were UK pounds and that the black tint would be removed to reveal the currency using a chemical.

But police found out that they were fake notes. "The case has been handed over to CB-CID," Tiruchi city commissioner K Vanniaperumal said. The Nigerian has been remanded to judi-

cial custody.

Police said Benson had come to the city claiming to represent a London-based hotel, to pay compensation to the Tiruchi man for promising a job for him and later retracting the offer.

Sivaprakash had paid a sum of nearly Rs11 lakh (about N3.6million) through a mediator for a catering job in the hotel, police said. However, the hotel later refused a job and agreed to

pay a compensation of Rs 1.25 crore (N39 million). In an alleged e-mail correspondence between Sivaprakash and the London-based hotel, the hotel administration had told him that they would send a person called Benson with the amount.

The Nigerian had arrived in Tiruchi on Saturday and was taken to Sivaprakash's house. There he applied a chemical on two notes from the wad from a

suitcase. "In moments the black paper turned in a UK 50 pound. He then claimed that he had run out of the chemical and wanted Rs 10,000 (N32,861) to buy it from Mumbai," Sivaprakash's brother Manikandan told the police.

Growing suspicious, Sivaprakash's family brought the Nigerian to a hotel in Tiruchi from where he attempted to flee around midnight and was caught.



SYMPATHISERS watch as a Black Maria conveys street hawkers who were arrested at Costain by members of the Lagos State KAI Brigade in Lagos yesterday.

PIC: NAN

NNPC: 50% of gas produced for power idle

By Hamisu Muhammad

ABOUT 400 million standard cubic feet (mmcf) representing 50 percent of the total gas produced in the country is unutilised daily by the power generating companies, an official said yesterday.

The Group Managing Director of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) Mohammed Sanusi Barkindo as much as 400mmcf/d of gas produced is left unused as the power stations that are supposed to use them are not yet completed.

Nigeria's gas demands as at 2009 stands at 1.4 billion standard cubic feet but the country gas production stabilised at about 800mmcf/d for the period.

Barkindo explained that though there were constraints in gas supply to some of the thermal power stations ranging from pipeline vandalism to security problems, the major challenge to effective power generation in the country was the non-availability of power stations to use up the stranded gas across various gas projects in the country.

About 32 independent power plants were licensed by the Nigeria Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) which most of them are yet to take off. The commission has been issuing license since 2007 for power generation but very little success was recorded.

The NNPC boss who spoke at opening of the conference in Lagos on the gas to power challenges gave details of the stranded gas to include 100mmcf/d out of a total 240mmcf produced from the Shell Okoloma Gas Plant in Rivers State, 120mmcf/d from the Total-operated Obite Gas Plant also in Rivers State, 80mmcf/d from Shell-operated Gbaran-Ubie Gas Plant, and the 100mmcf/d from Exxon Mobil swapped with the Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas (NLNG).

Government effort to generate more mega watts of electricity was frustrated by most of the contractors handling the National Independent Power Project (NIPP) spearheaded by the former President Olusegun Obasanjo.

2011 polls: Independent candidates to deposit N100m with INEC

By Nasidi A. Yahaya

INDEPENDENT candidates for 2011 presidential elections are to deposit N100million with the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), based on a recommendation of the House of Representatives ad-hoc committee on the review of the 1999 constitution.

The money will however be refunded if the candidate makes one third of the total vote cast during the election.

This represents 10% of the

maximum expenses for presidential election which the committee pegged at N1 billion, as against the sum of N500 million obtainable currently.

Daily Trust learnt that the cash deposit is part of stringent conditions for independent candidacy in future elections beginning from 2011.

The committee also recommends that for a candidate in a presidential election to qualify for election on the independent platform, he must be nominated by at least 50 registered voters in two-third of all the electoral wards in

Nigeria.

According to the committee, the independent candidacy will create a level playing field for all contestants, and that the tough conditions specified will curtail and control those who may want to take undue advantage of the provision to cause confusion in the electoral process.

The recommendations were part of the resolution of the committee adopted after completing review of the Electoral Act 2006 during a three day retreat in Makurdi, Benue State capital last

week.

The Reviewed Electoral Act is billed to be submitted to the House alongside the reviewed constitution this week.

In the case of governorship election, an independent candidate must be nominated by at least one hundred registered voters, and 150 registered voters for senatorial election. Others are 200 registered voters for House of Representatives election, 250 for State Assembly, 300 for local government chairmanship election, and 400 for councillorship election.

Jonathan receives report on 2009 Hajj

By Mohammed S. Shehu

ACTING President Goodluck Jonathan yesterday urged Nigerians to continue to pray for the country so as to attain their dreams in the shortest possible time.

Jonathan also said religious leaders have a major role to play in ensuring the peace and stability of the country.

He made this remark during

a presentation of the 2009 Hajj report by the committee led by the Amirul Hajj Senator Mahmud Kanti Bello (PDP, Katsina).

Jonathan expressed satisfaction with the report of the committee, which contained issues, challenges and recommendations on the way forward.

He promised that government will study the recommendations with the view to improving on subsequent conduct of the Hajj

operations in the country.

Bello said the committee wants a situation whereby Nigerian pilgrims will not be spending time unnecessarily in the holy land.

He enumerated the painstaking effort of his committee to ensure that recurrent problems such as uncertainty in flight schedules, accommodation, security and eligibility of intending pilgrims were duly addressed.

He noted that it was the first time Nigeria was able to commence the airlift of pilgrims and conclude the exercise ahead of the deadline for the conclusion of the exercise by the Saudi government.

He called on the federal government to impress upon the Hajj commission to exercise its regulatory powers which include the choice and allocation of air carriers to states and accommodation in the Holy land.

Court to adopt addresses on Jonathan's acting presidency May 27

By Atika Balal

AN Abuja Federal High Court has fixed May 27 for adoption of addresses in a suit filed by Alhaji Tanko Yakasai and two others seeking an order to stop Goodluck Jonathan from exercising the powers of the president.

Yakasai, a former aide to ex-President Shehu Shagari in the Second Republic, Sylvanus Ofoke and Prof. Sayeed Tunde Malik also want an injunction restraining Jonathan from discharging the functions of the office of the president pending the hearing and determination of the suit.

The suit is also challenging the resolution of the Senate and House of Representatives which made Jonathan acting president pending the return of President Umaru Musa Yar'adua from his medical leave in Saudi Arabia.

The three, through their counsel Yahaya Mahmood,

want the court to declare that the resolution passed by the National Assembly on February 9, that the Vice President shall act as President with the title of Acting President without a written letter from the President is in violation of Section 145 of the 1999 constitution.

They also seek the court to declare that the interpretation of the word 'transmit' given by the Senate and House of Representatives respectively, are not only contradictory but also amounts to usurpation of the exclusive powers of the Judiciary/Courts and therefore ultra vires Section 6 of the 1999 constitution.

Yakasai and co. equally want a declaration that the powers vested in the Executive Council of the Federation by virtue of Section 144 of the 1999 constitution cannot be enforced by an order of a court.

Joined in the suit are the National Assembly, Senate

President, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Attorney General of the Federation and the Executive Council of the Federation.

Yesterday counsel to the plaintiffs asked the court for an order directing parties in the suit to file written addresses in respect of both the preliminary objection and the substantive suit.

Though counsels to the 2nd 4th and 5th defendants objected, Justice Adamu Bello ordered that they file and exchange written addresses for and against the substantive suit and preliminary objection within the time granted by the court.

Meanwhile the 4th and 5th defendants through their Counsel Alex Izinyon (SAN) have challenged the jurisdiction of the court to entertain the matter and said they will file an application challenging the competence of the suit.

New cabinet: Jonathan dumps GNU

By Muideen Olaniyi & Abdulmutallib A. Abubakar

THERE was an indication yesterday that Acting President Goodluck Jonathan might have dumped the Government of National Unity (GNU) involving the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) and Progressive Peoples Alliance (PPA).

Jonathan sacked President Umaru Yar'adua cabinet which had representatives from ANPP and PPA last week.

ANPP had had former Minister of Women Affairs Hajia Salamatu Suleiman and former Minister of State for Defence Abdurrahman Adamu, while PPA had Minister of State for Federal Capital Territory Chuka Udom in the GNU formation.

Speaking with Daily Trust yesterday, PPA National Secretary Dahiru Musa Abdullahi stated that Acting President had refused to contact the party as member of GNU to submit its ministerial nominee.

Dahiru said the PPA will continue to cooperate with Jonathan-led administration pending the time he contacted them about their fate on the GNU, stating Jonathan should maintain what he has inherited from Yar'adua administration.

He expressed optimism that GNU would not be discarded by Jonathan, noting that he has the power and discretion to neglect it.

The PPA scribe expressed the party's support for the dissolution of the Executive Council of the Federation (EXCOF) since it was done in order to enhance the socio-economic and political development of the country.

He said the circumstance that made Jonathan to ascend presidency might have been responsible for the development.

When contacted on the development, ANPP National Chairman Chief Umeh Ezeoke expressed optimism that the government would not renege on the agreement that led to the formation of GNU, acknowledging that the party had not been contacted as well.



FROM left: Mr. Phillips Oduoza, GMD/CEO designate, UBA Plc, Mrs Faith Tuedor-Matthews, Deputy Managing Director, UBA Plc, Mr. Michael Dicks, Managing Director, Head of Global Economic Research, Barclays Bank, and Mr. Tony Elumelu, GMD/CEO, UBA plc at an interactive global economic review session, delivered by Mr. Dicks at UBA Head Office in Lagos at the weekend.

Nigerian in race for New York State Assembly

A 27-year-old Nigerian, Mr Okenfe Lebarty, has joined the race for a seat in the New York State Assembly election slated for September.

Lebarty, a political science graduate of the City University of New York, hails from Edo.

His platform is the Democratic Party and he is vying for a seat in Assembly District 31 in New York State.

Lebarty was a Regional Field Organiser and

Queen's County Volunteer Coordinator for 'Obama for America' during the U.S. presidential election in 2008.

"I am running for the State Assembly to make sure that there is fair and equal representation to everyone no matter the age, race, sex or religion," he told NAN on Sunday in New York.

"I will fight for good paying jobs, quality

education, affordable housing and common sense solutions to issues we care about," he said. With several candidates filing petitions to be on the ballot in September, Lebarty said he was targeting 5,000 signatures and not the stipulated 500 to qualify him for the polls.

"At present, there is no African in the New York State Assembly and I'm very optimistic to break the jinx," he said. (NAN)

TMG backs Agbakoba, Jega, Williams to succeed Iwu

By Abbas Jimoh

THE Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) yesterday said the appointment of any of Olisa Agbakoba (SAN), Prof. Attahiru Jega or Gen. Ishola Williams to replace Prof. Maurice Iwu at the expiration of his five-year tenure as INEC chairman will be a welcome development.

Olisa Agbakoba (SAN), former President of Nigeria Bar Association (NBA); Prof Attahiru Jega, former Academic Staff Union of Universi-

ties (ASUU) and Vice Chancellor of Bayero University Kano (BUK); and Gen. Ishola Williams (rtd) of the Transparency Initiative are being promoted by a group to succeed Prof. Maurice Iwu in the event his tenure is not renewed.

TMG chairman Comrade Mashood Erubami, however, told our reporter in Abuja yesterday that the problem is that he cannot be emphatic of the possibility of appointing any of them.

"If any of them is appointed, it would be a

progressive decision and a welcome development. It would show that the government is sincere and buying into the doctrine of business as usual. These men of integrity have the track record of sincerity, saying what they mean and matching action with their words," Erubami said.

"All the three are credible and we can work with them. The problem is that the ruling class has not been allowing people of integrity to get to the positions," he said.

Police explain transfer of officers from EFCC

By Misbahu Bashir

THE transfer and withdrawal of policemen from the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) is based on merit, Force Public Relations Officer ACP Emmanuel Ojukwu has said.

Ojukwu told *Daily Trust* Yesterday

that the Force has transferred some policemen from the EFCC to other police formations not based on sentiments but as "routine posting". He said the Inspector General of Police has the right to deploy or withdraw officers from anywhere and such actions can never be politicised.

He said there is no way the police can undermine the work of the commission through transfer of officers because they all fight crime.

EFCC chairman Farida Waziri has accused top politicians of plotting against her including her dismissal and undermining the Commission's work.



ACTING President Goodluck Jonathan (right) receiving the 2009 Hajj report from the Amirul Hajj, Senator Kanti Bello, in Abuja yesterday.

Buhari-Atiku alliance stalls

Continued from page 1

new party was jettisoned because the alliance said it did not want to be rubbished by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC). It cited as example of the length of time and the rigours that Buhari's allies took to get the CPC registered.

Only last week, General Muhammadu Buhari announced that he had formally joined the CPC and would accept to run for the presidency on its platform if the party gives him the chance. He also said on a BBC Hausa programme at the weekend that no politician who has a case to answer in court would be given the chance to contest in the party.

Further indications that the alliance is shaky came up yesterday when the trio of Buhari, Tinubu and Bafarawa were absent at a one day conference on Electoral Reform organised by the National Democratic Movement (NDM) in collaboration with the Coalition of Democrats for Electoral Reforms (CODER) and other civil society organisations at the Sheraton Hotel in Abuja.

Atiku Abubakar, who was expected to chair the event, arrived at the venue at 10 am prompt only to see that there were very few participants present and who did not include his co principals in the movement. He left shortly after he arrived at the venue.

However, the meeting was finally held with representatives of the leaders such as Alhaji Sule Yahaya Hama, Senator Lawal Shuaibu, Senator Olorunimbe Mamora and Dr. Usman Bugaje in attendance. They respectively represented Buhari, Bafarawa, Tinubu and Atiku.

When contacted, a source in the alliance who preferred not to be named dismissed suggestions that the NDM alliance was collapsing. He said the new mega party will emerge at the end of this month after the next meeting of the group at the Sheraton Hotel on March 30.

When asked why the top leaders boycotted yesterday's event, the source said General Buhari had sought special permission to be absent because he is billed to give out his niece's hand in marriage at his home town of Daura in Katsina State this Saturday.

On Bafarawa's absence, he said the former governor was in Kano on Sunday to commiserate with the victims of the fire that gutted the Kantin Kwari market. He said even though Bafarawa was billed to return to Abuja on Sunday in order to attend the NDM meeting on Monday morning, he was held up in Kano by his hosts and a Freedom Radio programme that he participated in.

"When he saw that it was late and considering the circumstances surrounding him, he decided to postpone the journey for reasons of his personal security," the source said, adding however that the former governor had called to express his apology.

Family: Sheikh Gumi in good health

By Abdulmutallib A. Abubakar

THE family of Sheikh Ahmad Gumi, who is being held by Saudi Arabian authorities, has had access to him and interacted with him from morning to afternoon, Nigerian envoy to Saudi Arabia has said.

Abdullahi Garba Aminchi Aminchi said he was informed

by the family that they were allowed by Saudi security operatives to stay with the Islamic preacher who has been arrested for close to a month now.

He said although the reason for the scholar's detention is yet to be disclosed by Saudi operatives, the case may not be grave "If the case is serious his family would not have been allowed to

interact with him from morning to afternoon" Aminchi told the BBC Hausa service.

"We hope the issue is simple that can be sorted out soon," he said adding that the sheikh's family informed him that he was in good health and was being provided with all the necessary things he needed.

The envoy said they have

requested to see Sheikh Gumi but that the request has not been granted yet because he is still in the custody of the special investigative officers in the Kingdom.

Aminchi said until Sheikh Gumi is transferred from the special security unit to the Saudi authority, seeing him may prove difficult.

Petitions, lobbying delay list

Continued from page 1

the country has changed drastically from the days when ministers were chosen by the rulers at small meetings.

Daily Trust also learnt yesterday that the list of reappointed ministers submitted for security screening also ran into problems because many petitions were submitted against some of the ministers.

While some petitions alleged corrupt deeds on the part of some of them, others alleged disloyalty, security threat and immorality.

A petition against one reappointed minister alleged that he bought a house worth N300 million in Abuja and questioned his source of income. The petition was said to have been sponsored by his state governor, who was opposed to his return to the cabinet.

Daily Trust also learnt that some state governors failed to submit a list of ministerial nominees to the Acting President as requested at the weekend. While some of them said they had not seen the letter inviting them to make nominations, others said they were unhappy at the manner in which the FEC was dissolved and Jonathan renominated many former ministers without consulting them.

Meanwhile, a former Head of State and four state governors separately met with the Acting President yesterday at the Presidential Villa, Abuja. Former military head of state Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar, Governors Aliyu Akwe Doma of Nasarawa State, Timipre Sylva of Bayelsa State, Ikedi Ohakim of Imo State and Segun Oni of Ekiti State all met Jonathan between 1 pm and 4pm. Sources in the presidency said all

the meetings were not be unconnected with the new list of ministers.

Ohakim, who spoke to reporters after his closed-door meetings with Jonathan, said governors should have the sole right to nominate ministers from their respective states.

He said it is only through such process that qualified people would be nominated and subsequently appointed to help move the country forward, saying the country has been trekking for long.

Doma, who was the first to arrive at about 1 pm, met with Jonathan for about 30 minutes. Shortly after he left, Oni drove into the State House at about 2pm and met with the acting president for an hour.

Gen Abdulsalami Abubakar also had a separate meeting with Jonathan for about an hour before

leaving at about 3:30pm. Shortly afterward, Gov Sylva went into another closed-door meeting with Jonathan for about 30 minutes.

Ohakim expressed optimism that Nigerians would be happy with the new list when it finally comes out. Asked whether he was at the State House to present his ministerial nominee, the governor said, "I am a governor of a state and I have the right to submit my ministerial list but that is not the reason why I am here. The acting president is pragmatic and is forward looking. He knows what to do. He knows the country has been trekking and we need to run fast forward. My mind tells me that come what may, he will look for key professionals, those who can run with the ball and give them responsibilities of driving the activities of this country because we can't wait forever."

Malaria: Nigeria received \$400m from world fund

THE Global Fund, an international funding establishment, has reportedly donated \$400 Million to Nigeria with the aim of effectively fighting AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria since 2003.

This was revealed by Marcela Rojo, a media officer of the fund, in a recent interview. She also informed that donor and receipt nation is all set for a meeting which is to take place in New York in October.

As has been revealed by her,

the meeting is important for achieving the deadline for the Millennium Development Goals, which is now less than half-a-decade away.

"We have approved \$800m worth of funding for Nigeria to fight the three diseases since 2003 and we have disbursed about half that amount to date (about \$400m)", said Ms. Rojo.

A document titled "Portfolio of grants-Nigeria and the Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuber-

culosis and malaria", which was recently publicly released, has managed to reveal that starting 2003, Nigeria had placed a request for \$669,596,261 to fight AIDS, and out of this, the agency approved \$229,946,468, while \$142,149,242 was disbursed.

In addition, \$502,603,078 was sought to fight malaria, and a request for \$63,740,481 was made for the battle against tuberculosis, both of which were approved. (topnews.us)

Dud cheque: Court clears Senator Obiorah

By John Chuks Azu

AN FCT High Court yesterday cleared and discharged the leave earlier granted the Inspector-General of Police to investigate Senator Ikechukwu Obiorah whom Folio Communications accused of issuing dud cheque to them and collecting properties.

In setting aside the leave, the presiding judge, Justice Lawan Gummi held that the purported grounds upon which the leave was granted were false and misleading and that it was found that no properties were delivered to Senator Obiorah as claimed by Folio Communications.

Also, the respondent who admitted to have made a cash payment of N100million and issued

the said cheque in good faith, withdrew same when he discovered that the said properties have been leased or sold to other buyers including Daily Times Nigeria PLC and Zenith Bank PLC.

Folio Communications brought an ex parte application in court to compel the investigation of Senator Obiorah for allegedly issuing a dud cheque of N80 million naira for the purchase of five houses located in different parts of the country valued at N760 million.

The court held that the applicants and their lead counsel, Barr Alex Iziyon, erred in their submissions and cleared the senator of any wrong doing, and awarded N20,000 in his favour for the embarrassment the allegation might have caused him.

PIC: NAN

Road safety, DTRS differ on number plate

By Misbahu Bashir

THE Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) yesterday faulted the seizure of vehicle registration number plates by the Directorate of Road Traffic Services (DTRS) in Abuja for wrong parking.

FRSC authorities in Abuja yesterday said it is illegal to seize the registration number plates of vehicles parked at unauthorized places or other offences.

But officials of the Directorate of Road Traffic Services (DTRS) said they have the right to do so.

Plates seized by the DTRS in Abuja are released to the owners after payment of fine ranging between N2000 and N15000.

FRSC Sector Commander in Abuja Nseobong Akabio said at a press briefing the United Nations Convention on road traffic makes it mandatory for road worthy vehicles to have registration plates as the only means of identification.

"It is therefore illegal for traffic authorities to seize plates as means of punishment because the vehicles will be driven without plates," he said.

But Director of DTRS Adamu Argungu said about 750,000 vehicles enter the capital city daily and mostly parked at illegal spaces thereby obstructing pedestrians and other motorists.

He said the measure has reduced illegal parking by motorists. "In fact a lawyer took us to court over the matter and we won, that indicated the legality or otherwise of the seizure," he said.

Meanwhile Akpabio said 6,787 people were arrested between January and March 2010 over 7,195 traffic offences in Abuja. The usage of mobile phone while driving is on the increase in which 294 people were arrested. Parents were urged to allow children under the age 12 to sit at the rear seat in their vehicles.



THE incoming Primate, Church of Nigeria Anglican Communion, Archbishop Nicholas Okoh (left) and the outgoing primate, Archbishop Peter Akinlola during the introduction of the new primate to newsmen in Abuja yesterday.

BNPP wants court to stop Peter Obi

By Atika Balal

CANDIDATE of the Better Nigeria Peoples Party (BNPP) in the 2007 Anambra State governorship election Valentine Onwugbufo has filed a suit before an Abuja Federal High Court seeking an order restraining Governor Peter Obi from presenting himself as the governor of Anambra.

Onwugbufo sued Obi alongside Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), Professor Maurice Iwu, Chief Judge of Anambra State, Dr. Chris Ngige, All Pro-

gressive Grand Alliance (APGA), Action Congress (AC) and 47 others.

He is asking for a court declaration that Prof. Iwu, Victor Chukwuani, Philip Umeadi and Mr. A. Shoyebi (all officials of INEC), are not competent to continue to carry out the functions and responsibilities of INEC.

He equally wants a declaration that INEC is not competent enough to organize and conduct any election in Nigeria and cannot declare or issue a certificate of return to Obi

as a result of the purported Anambra state gubernatorial election which held on February 6 2010.

Onwugbufo is seeking an order setting aside the purported Anambra State gubernatorial election conducted by INEC on February 6 2010, for being illegal, unconstitutional and of no effect.

He wants the court to direct INEC to conduct a fresh election in Anambra state with at least nine duly constituted memberships as envisaged by the provisions of Sections 153, 154, 155 and 156 of the

1999 constitution.

Yesterday Counsel to Onwugbufo, Kayode Ajulo, told the court that they have been unable to serve Peter Obi in Awka, Anambra State as his security operatives prevented them from doing so.

In a motion ex-parte, he asked the court to give an order for service to be effected on Obi by publishing the writ of summons in This Day and The Punch newspapers.

While granting the application, Justice Dan Abutu adjourned till April 15 for mention.

ECOWAS to meet on small-scale mining

By Aisha Umar Agaie

EXPERTS in artisanal and small scale mining (ASM) from ECOWAS countries are meeting in Bamako, Mali, this week to formulate a community development framework for the sub-sector during a consultative work-

shop which opens on Monday, March 22, 2010.

The three-day meeting of the experts comprising representatives of the public sector institutions, ECOWAS focal points on Community mineral resource development, resource persons on Women-in-Mining and ASM

in the community will undertake a comprehensive review that will inform the development of the ECOWAS Mineral Resource Development Policy.

The workshop will also update the existing information on the ASM sub-sector and gender involvement in mining in the

community.

A statement from ECOWAS commission added that the meeting derives from the framework of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty of 1993 mandating member states to harmonize and coordinate their policies and programmes in the field of natural resources.

Dust haze disrupts flights

From Nahimah Ajikanle Nurudeen, Lagos & Rakiya Mohammed, Sokoto

DUST haze in Lagos yesterday disrupted flight operations at the Murtala Muhammad Airport, Ikeja (MMA) Lagos. Most flights scheduled for yesterday were suspended due to the bad weather.

Some of the passengers who spoke to our correspondent said they were tired of waiting for the flight since they did not know the

time it would take off as the delay was due to natural causes. One of the passengers, Chief Bolajoko Bantate, said failure to make the trip as planned had caused him billion of naira. Some the passengers who could not wait left the airport while those who could not re-schedule their trips were seen hanging around, hoping for a change in the weather.

There were no flights from other parts of the country into

Lagos as well, until around 4pm when few operators resumed operations.

And in Sokoto State, the hazy weather also led to the cancellation of flights from the state. Our correspondent reports that since Friday, flight operations have been suspended due to the weather.

The Airport Manager at the Sultan Abubakar III International Airport in Sokoto, Alhaji Bello Giade, confirmed that there were

no flight operations yesterday and at the weekend due the poor weather. Some passengers said they had to travel by road to meet up with their various commitments.

Meanwhile, the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) has issued weather advisory to pilots and all the airline operators to ensure safe operations.

NCAA said all flight officers and pilots must ensure that

they received weather information before embarking on any trip.

The Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA) for its part said the nation's airspace was safe for flight operations, adding that pilots only needed to be patient.

According to NAMA, the harrattan haze is a natural thing which is not peculiar to Nigeria alone. It urged operators to strictly adhere to safety information before commencing any flight service.

Lokoja market: Traders urge govt on commissioning

From Isiaka Wakili, Lokoja

TRADERS in Kogi State yesterday urged Governor Ibrahim Idris to commission the newly constructed international market in Lokoja. The traders told our correspondent that the governor did not have to wait for Acting President Goodluck Jonathan to commission the market.

"We are suffering. The market was completed many months ago. It was supposed to have been commissioned by President Umaru Musa Yar'adua sometime last year before he fell sick and went to Saudi Arabia for treatment. Last Thursday too, we were told that Jonathan would commission it, but that failed to happen. The market is meant for the people of Kogi State. Why can't the governor commission it himself? Must the whole world know that he completed a project for the people?, asked Abdullah Yahaya, a trader.

Meanwhile, the Director of Press to the Governor, Richard Elesho, said the state decided to invite Jonathan to commission the market because of the interest it had generated over the years.

"Many people thought that the governor would never complete the project. Others criticised the size and location of the market. People have also been saying that the governor is not working because they have not heard anything about the project. Bringing an outsider to commission it is just an honour. It is such a gigantic project that should attract attention. Very soon, the Acting President will come and commission it", he said.



GOV. Ibrahim Idris



FROM left: National Coordinator, Coalition of Democrats for Electoral Reform (CODER), Mr. Ayo Opadokun, Executive Director, Alliance for Credible Election Emma Ezeazu, former Speaker House of Representatives Aminu Bello Masari and National Secretary, Action Congress Dr. Usman Bugaje, during a conference on electoral reform in Abuja yesterday.

Gani Adams flays Mark over Gaddafi

From Nahimah Ajikanle Nurudeen, Lagos

THE Co-ordinator of the Oodua Peoples' Congress (OPC) Otunba Gani Adams has flayed Senate President David Mark for calling Libyan President Muammar Gaddafi a mad man.

Speaking with airport correspondents yesterday in Lagos, Adams said it was unfortunate that such a statement could come from the country's number three citizen.

He said Gaddafi as a president and former African Union (AU) leader had a right to voice his opinion on any issue and should not be condemned.

He, however, said the country was sick and needed urgent attention from leaders and stakeholders, saying crises in the country were threatening its unity.

According to Adams, until those behind the crimes are brought to book, they will continue to unleash terrors on citizens.

"So, we should try to adjust and change the situation, not to verbally attack the man. He was exercising his opinion and did not say Nigeria must divide at all cost. He only said the solution to Nigeria's problem is for it to divide. So far, you can't link Gaddafi to any crisis in Nigeria," he said.

Adams added that the solution to crises in the country was for the government to call a conference of religious, ethnic, and political groups to address issues of interests.

USAID to revive reading culture in Kano

From Ruqayyah Yusuf Aliyu, Kano

THE United States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the International Educators for Africa (IEFA) is partnering the Kano State government to revive reading culture among students in the state. Speaking during a stakeholders meeting in Kano yesterday, the IEFA representative in Nigeria, Hajiya Nafisa Ado, said the project had so far distributed a total of 25,000 text books to schools in the state with a view to developing their reading culture.

Hajiya Nafisa said the IEFA project was also aimed at improving education in all aspects. She said development of improved teaching methodology, training of teaching staff in the area of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) were some of the aspects the project was working on. She said the IEFA project is also aimed at helping teachers and students meet challenges in the education sector. President of the project, Dr Julie Sullivan, said the whole idea of the project was to strengthen the education system in developing countries as well as ensure that every child is given a right to education.

The state's Commissioner for Higher Education Alhaji Dr. Mustapha Namadi commended the project for its efforts in boosting education in the state.

Hajj: Plateau begins preparations

From Ahmed Mohammed, Jos

THE Plateau State Muslims Pilgrims Welfare Board (MPWB) has commenced preparations for the 2010 hajj.

The Executive Secretary of the Board Alhaji Abubakar Abdullahi Dashe disclosed this yesterday in Jos while briefing newsmen.

He said the National Hajj Commission had directed state Muslims Pilgrims Welfare Boards to accept 80 percent of the deposits of the money for the exercise pending the approval of the actual number of seats allocated to Nigeria by the Saudi authorities. Dashe said people from the 17 local government areas of the state had started depositing their hajj seats money with the board, adding that next week, the officials would visit Saudi Arabia to book for accommodation for Plateau pilgrims.

He said they want to begin early to ensure a successful exercise. Dashe advised workers who intend to perform this year's hajj to inform their offices or boards officials so that they would be in the first batch to go and return.

Last year, 1,625 hajj seats were allocated to Plateau State.

Identity commission to register 100 million by 2012

By Francis Okeke

THE National Identity Management Commission yesterday said it had started the process of registering 100 million Nigerians in its database before the end of 2012 to help in the proper planning and management of resources in the country.

This was disclosed yesterday in Abuja by the chairman of the

governing board of the commission Prince Uche Secondus during its inauguration by the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF) Mahmud Yaya Ahmed.

Secondus assured the SGF that the board would "work tirelessly to achieve the objective of creating a National Identity Database" and would also support the management of the NIMC to ensure

that "the target coverage of the citizen registration exercise of 100 million enrolments is achieved within 30 months."

He added that the "Citizen Identity Verification Infrastructure will begin to function before the end of 2010."

The SGF, represented by the Permanent Secretary, General Services Office, Suleiman Kassim, charged the newly inaugurated

board to reposition and chart a new course for the commission.

The board is made up of representatives of 14 Federal Government agencies and three other persons knowledgeable in information and communication technology and identity management.

Kassim said the "NIMC has the statutory responsibility of creating, operating and manag-

ing the national database, register individuals and legal residents, assign unique national identification number as well as introduce general multipurpose cards."

He urged the governing board to be proactive in setting out NIMC's operational programmes and targets in line with the overall objectives of government's policy directives as provided for by the commission's enabling act.



FEDERAL Road Safety Commission FCT Sector Commander, Mr. Nseobong Akpabio (right) with FRSC FCT Deputy Corps Commander, Sector Head of Operations, Mr. Sunclay Ajayi at a press conference on first quarter call for stakeholders collaboration toward road accident reduction in FCT, yesterday.

... as supervisor gets 6 month jail term over fraud

By Boco Edet

A supervisor in the Department of National-Identity Management Commission in Ondo State has been sentenced to six months imprisonment by the Ondo State High Court for misappropriating funds meant for the distribution of National Identity Cards in 2006.

Josephine Iboronke Osanyintuyi was arraigned by the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) on a six count charge bordering on falsification of returns.

According to ICPC, in March 2006 at Ifedore Local Government Area Josephine furnished false

return in respect of the sum of N525,000 by representing that the said sum of money was fully expended in engaging 150 persons as ad-hoc staff for the distribution of the National Identity Cards when in fact she engaged only 140 persons as ad-hoc staff and added ten fictitious names to the list which she presented to the Ondo State Coordinator of the Department of the National Civic Registration.

Justice N. S. Adeyanju while delivering judgement said the accused was guilty of the offence and as such, was convicted to serve a jail term of six months with option of fine of N50,000.

TUC flays police over murder of NNPC staff

By Francis Okeke

TRADE Union Congress (TUC) yesterday urged the Federal Government to sack members of the police and other security officials who fail to unravel murder cases within a given period of time.

TUC President-General Comrade Peter Esele made the call in response

to the murder of two staff of Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) who were kidnapped in Delta State and later found dead in the bush.

Esele, in a signed statement he issued yesterday in Abuja, also called for a full scale investigation into the murder.

Abubakar A. Malabu

and Bashir Danjuma were kidnapped on March 13 and their corpses discovered on 20th in the bush in Delta State.

He said "We demand that police and other security officers who fail to unravel murder cases within their jurisdiction within a given period should be retired forthwith. It is high time

people are held responsible for failures to perform assigned duties and responsibilities."

Esele said the union "expressed deep shock and grief over the gruesome murder of two of our comrades and members of one of our strong affiliates Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGAS-

Women group solicit support for the blind

By Akor Ojoma

A group of foreign women married to Nigerians has solicited the support of all and sundry towards the success of their national project targeted towards helping people with visual impairment in the country.

National President of Nigerwives, a Non Governmental Organization (NGO), Dr Roseboard Nwafor made the call over the weekend during its annual general meeting and gala night in Abuja.

She said the association plays such roles as aiding the needy through charitable programmes especially to the disabled children, providing solutions to the various problems facing members in

the country and fostering unity and peaceful coexistence within the Nigerian society.

She said the association supports the Braille centre in Lagos which takes care of services for the blind, like provision of text books and services like training computer operators and skills acquisition generally.

She said the NGO will be in its 31st year of existence this year and has about three hundred members from different countries of the world.

Earlier, president of its FCT chapter, Hajjiya Maryam Tahan said it is the tradition of the association to gather members from different parts of the country annually for a gala night with their husbands and other family members.

NERC fraud: Court adjourns hearing to April 27

By John Chuks Azu

A Federal Capital Territory High Court hearing the case of fraudulent embezzlement of funds against the Chairman and commissioners of the National Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) has adjourned the matter till April 27, 2010.

While granting the plea for adjournment by

the prosecuting counsels led by Chief Godwin Obla to enable them respond to the motion on notice from the counsel to sixth and seventh accused persons, Justice Salisu Garba stated that the Defence counsel failed to comply with the 14 day directive of 23 February, 2010 for submission of written addresses.

Counsel to the sixth and seventh accused persons has brought before

the court a motion supported by an affidavit seeking to amend some sections of paragraph 4b by attaching the word 'sixth' and 'seventh' before the word 'accused' and 'applicants' wherever they may occur in the original application.

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) on April 7, 2009 arraigned the chairman of the NERC,

Dr Ransome Owan, Malam AbdulRahman Ado, Prof Onwuamaeze Iloeje, Dr Abdulrazaq Alimi, Engr Muhammed Bunu, Mr Abimbola Odunbiyi and Dr Grace Eyoma on charges of criminal conspiracy, fixture of money in commercial banks, salary overpayment, housing allowance grant, inflation of estacode and award of fictitious contracts.

Nigeria spends N17 billion on polio

From Ayegba Israel Ebije, Minna

THE Senior Special Assistant to the President on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Hajiya Amina Az-Zubair says Nigeria has spent about N17bn on polio eradication. She made the disclosure in Minna yesterday at a two day Expert Review Committee (ERC) meeting.

Hajiya Amina said contributions from government at all levels had also helped in the eradication of Polio in the country. She said the money which was made available by the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) and the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) would be used to support pro-child survival initiatives through routine immuniza-

tion and supplementary campaigns. She said the MDGs had gone beyond preventing Polio through vaccinations, but to also ensure that midwives are available in every part of the country.

"As we are all aware, Nigeria in the last few years has faced enormous challenges in the area of vaccine preventable diseases. It is gratifying to note that we are beginning to witness returns on the huge investment as manifested by the recent over 50 per cent reduction in total wild polio virus reported in 2009 when compared to 2008", she said.

Niger State Governor Babangida Aliyu said the state government had established a primary health care development agency to complement Federal Government's effort towards eradicating Polio in the country. The governor who spoke through the

state Head of Service Alhaji Abdullahi Umar Dan-Yahaya said, "We have taken steps to criminalize refusal to accept immunization services in Niger State. We took that decision to demonstrate our commitment to the health of our children", he said.

He added that the Northern Governor's Forum (NGF) was also working hard to eradicate polio in the region.

"We must appreciate the fact that to achieve our collective aspiration for the health sector, we need effective collaborations between and among all the critical stakeholders, especially with government at all levels. It is in recognition of this, that in the Northern Governors Forum which I have the privilege to lead, we decided to come together to find common grounds for addressing the common problems facing us", he said.

Nine jostle for Olofa's stool

From Mustafa Abubakar, Ilorin

ABOUT nine people are jostling for the position of the Olofa of Offa in Offa Local Government Area of Kwara State following the death of the former Olofa, Oba Mustapha Olanipekun Ariwajoye II who died last weekend.

A source close to the family of the late monarch told our correspondent yesterday that about nine people from the two ruling houses have indicated interest in the position.

Some of the aspirants according to the sources include the eldest son of the immediate past Oba and a medical practitioner, Dr. Abdul-Aziz Olanipekun, a

legal practitioner, Bashiru Oladipo, former Chief of Naval Staff retired Vice-Admiral Abdul-Ganiyu Adekeye, former acting rector of the Kwara State Polytechnic, Dr. Banji Oyeleke and Alhaji Mututau Gbadamosi, all from the Alelelerin ruling house.

The other contestants from the second ruling house of Adegoye include a professor of statistics and former National President of the Statistical Association of Nigeria, Professor S.O. Adegoye, the former Managing Director of the Nigerian Steel Industry Itope, Engr. Abdullateef Adegoye, Olayiwola Fatai Adegoye and a retired school principal, Alhaji Ibikunle Rasaki.

Kaduna govt taken to court over land

From Ibraheem Musa, Kaduna

THE Kaduna State government has been taken to court over its alleged decision to re-allocate the plots of land around the International Trade Fair layouts to the Petroleum Technical Development Fund (PTDF) without officially acquiring or revoking the said plots.

In a writ of summons made available to Daily Trust, the plaintiffs in a joint statement said they had been paying ground rents and had developed the plots.

The plaintiffs include Mr Ushe Uba, Alhaji Isa Ismail, Lydia H Nkoms, Lirwanu Mahmud, Alhaji Aliyu S Aliyu and Amina A Suleiman. Others are Abubakar Abdulmumin, Ramalan Ibrahim Giwa, Mrs Tani Malachy Tyezi and Malam Ya'u Mohammed

Rabiu as well as retired Lt Col John N Swantang.

According to them, PTDF trespassed into their land sometime last year and destroyed some parts of it. The plaintiffs added that their respective plots had not been officially acquired or revoked. The plaintiffs want the court to declare that the entry, destruction and development of the plaintiff's property by the PTDF were without their consent.

They also want the court to declare the governor and the Ministry of Lands purported allocation of their plots without recourse to them as unlawful, illegal and null and void. In addition, the plaintiffs want an order of perpetual injunction restraining the defendants, especially the PTDF from laying claims to and or trespassing into their property.



FROM left: Representative of Zain Communications, Mr. Wole Abu, representative of GOC 82 Division, Nigerian Army, Lt.-Colonel Samuel Oghonnaya and Mr. Mathew Idu, Enugu State Commissioner of Sports, during Zain Day at the ongoing 21st Enugu International Trade Fair in Enugu yesterday.

Students, pupils mistake World Water Day celebration for protest

From Muhammad Abubakar, Bauchi

THOUSANDS of primary school pupils and secondary school students in Bauchi State yesterday mistook the World Water Day celebration for a protest rally as they besieged the Government House demanding for improved learning conditions.

The Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the state Governor on Millennium Development Goals MDGs in collaboration with the Water Aid International and Challenge Your Disability Initiative had told the children to form queues in line with the theme of the celebration, 'the longest toilet queue'.

The Senior Special Assistant on MDGs to the state Governor Hajia Hajara Yakubu Wanka told our correspondent that the idea of using students was to promote sanitation through the provision of enough public toilets, especially in schools, adding that her office had so far constructed 600 toilets across the state.

However, the children mis understood the message and ended up at the gate of the state Government House. The state Deputy Governor Garba Gamawa, who attended to them, demanded to know from their leader what the problem was and could not get any clear response as none of the students said he was the leader after which he left them. The students were later dispersed by the police.

Open varsity to establish study centre for militants

From Ismail Mudashir, Kaduna

THE National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) is making arrangements to establish a study centre on the sea for youths in the Niger Delta region to tackle youths restiveness in the area, the Vice-Chancellor of the university Professor Olugbemiro Jegede said yesterday in Kaduna.

Speaking at the commissioning of the NOUN special study centre at the Nigerian Air Force (NAF) base in Kaduna, he said the centre would provide all services offered in other centers

of the university across the country, adding that it would be a complete study centre in a ship.

He said staff of the university would be stationed in the ship to offer services to the students and that it would be furnished with computers, DSTV, communication gadgets and internet services.

"We have identified the ship that was used in the 70s by Commander Jeffrey Sips in River State for the centre. The name of the ship is SS Isibiri and it has been redundant for almost 25 years. The centre is going to be a floating one and it would be for the people of the riverine areas in the South-South. The people

in the area must be educated like others. Education belongs to everyone. For the past two years, we have been making efforts to get the ship, but our efforts is yet to yield results. We have written the Chief of Naval Staff and the River State government to release the ship to us. If the ship is released to us today, in the next six months, we will start the centre. We are ready for it", he said.

The Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal Oluseyi Petinrin said the Nigerian Air Force placed high premium on education and reiterated its commitment to the upgrade of education facilities in all its formations.

Legislators accuse council boss of misappropriation of funds

From Isa Umar Gusau, Maiduguri

MEMBERS of the Legislative Council in Maiduguri Metropolitan Council (MMC), Borno State have accused the council chairman Alhaji Bakari Ali Kotoko of financial misappropriation.

In a letter titled, "Notice of

Allegations of Gross Misconduct" which was signed by 14 legislators and forwarded to the chairman and the state House of Assembly by the Council Leader, Jidda Tom Hassan, the lawmakers demanded explanations on series of withdrawals of funds and expenditures which they claimed was to

the tune of about N100 million. They alleged that the withdrawals were made without due approvals. The legislators also accused the chairman of abusing his office

"The chairman secured an over-draft of N56 million sometimes in 2008 without the approval of the council which was revealed

by a committee of the Borno State House of Assembly and Auditor General of the Local Government Audit Department. Another N2 million was also taken as loan by the chairman without approval. The chairman, despite allocations received, has never executed any project in the area", they said.

The chairman, Bakari Ali Kotoko, confirmed the receipt of the letter, but told our correspondent that the allegations were false, saying the accusation was because of delays in the payment of the legislators' allowances which he said were being processed.

Gunmen kill varsity lecturer

From Kehinde Akinyemi, Abeokuta

A lecturer at the Tai Solarin University of Education (TASUED) Ijagun, near Ijebu Ode in Ogun State has been killed by unknown gunmen. Last week, the son of a former local government chairman was also killed at his Sagamu family residence. The lecturer, Surakatu Adewale Adufe,

was said to have been accosted by the men on his way to his house which is off Ilese road, Ijebu-ode on Saturday night and was shot. The late Head of the Department of Education reportedly died before he could be rushed to the hospital.

The Police Public Relations Officer Muyiwa Adejobi confirmed the killing, saying the police had commenced investigation.

Edo crisis: Elders laud Reps on resolution

THE Speaker of the House of Representatives Dimeji Bankole and members of the House were yesterday commended by the Edo Elders Consultative Forum (EECF) on the resolution asking the Governor Adams Oshiomhole-led administration in Edo State to reinstate the former Speaker Mr. Garba Zakawanu. They alleged that that the process through which he was impeached was

unconstitutional and out of tune with current democratic tenets.

Rising from an emergency meeting in Abuja which lasted for five hours, the EECF led by its National Coordinator, Mr. Monday Okpebholo, said last week's court ruling in Benin City to restore the seized vehicles and all paraphernalia of office to the former Speaker Zakawanu was a welcomed development.

Sheik Adamu dies in Mangu

By Abbas Jimoh

PROMINENT Muslim cleric and Chairman of the Jamatu Nasirul Islam (JNI) in Mangu Local Government Area of Plateau State, Sheik Hassan Adamu, has died after a brief illness.

Aged 65, Sheik Adamu, until his death was a member of the Security Council of Mangu, the Chief Imam of Gindiri Central Mosque and the chief education instructor of the Government Secondary School in Bwalbwang, Gindiri. Sheik Adamu has since been buried in Gindiri according to Islamic rites.

He is survived by 28 children, 60 grand children and six great grand children.



OMO N'OBA EREDIAUWA UKU AKPOLOKPOLO,
OBA OF BENIN.



UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

BENIN CITY, NIGERIA

Goodwill Message

Warm felicitation from the Governing Council, Senate, Students and entire members of the University of Benin Community to his Royal Majesty, Omo N'Oba N'Edo, Uku-Akpolokpolo, Oba Erediauwa CFR. The Oba of Benin, as he celebrates the 31st Anniversary of his ascension to the exalted throne of his forebears.

Oba gha to Kpere, Ise.

Signed:
Professor O.G. Oshodin
Vice-Chancellor



Online Reactions

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ON www.dailytrust.com



Yar'adua returns to work next week - Associates

I pray he really comes back. He has done it before when he was Katsina State governor after disappearing for six months. If he could come back and finish his tenure, the polity will be stabilized. I am almost certain he won't go for second term so he should organize a free and fair election to wipe off his sins of being a president forced on Nigerians.

Mustash
almustash@yahoo.com

I hope you'll fully recover so that you can come back and all the political crises will stop. Wish you a quick recovery Mr. president

Auwai
asmsycoo@yahoo.com

Many things went on during his absence. I hope that Yar'adua will learn some lessons, realize how much he was used and understand that he is a human and could never satisfy those guys (the elites) and should instead stand firm in his bid to satisfy Nigerians for they are the ones that will stand by him whenever he needs them and this is evident considering the case of Gen. Buhari who after doing good to Nigerians is now being paid back with loyalty. Since it is too late for Yar'adua to achieve any tangible infrastructural growth, he should try and pass the unedited version of the electoral reform and implement it just like Obama stood and passed the health care reform bill.

Usman Ahmed Danbaba



PRESIDENT Umaru Yar'adua

danbaba1986@yahoo.com

I think this is funny. The president is walking around with birds and animals and playing with them while people need to see him but cannot have the access.

Paul
paulisonic@yahoo.com

What is the ailing president coming for? He is just being used by those governors who don't want to submit their ministerial lists.

Kelvin
kelvinbarrak@yahoo.com

While I pray for Yar'adua's recovery, he should be silent forever. For him to speak to us on Radio or Television is belated. He should not come out to disturb us but remain silent as he has been since his so-

called return to the country.

Wole Wale
wolewale2000@yahoo.com

I can authoritatively tell you that Yar'adua will never come back to that seat again. His present state of health will not permit it. His presidency got terminated in November 2009 - the day he chose to go on AWOL without informing Nigerians.

Sani Shehu
Shehu231@yahoo.com

Enough of these blatant lies and gimmicks. The dissolution fever has broken them (the cabal/kitchen cabinet of the ailing President) to their bones. They threatened suing Goodluck to court for this unannounced dissolution, and now they are releasing this fictitious article to mete psychological intimidation on the acting President. Goodluck, even if Yar'adua is resuming office tomorrow, achieve what you have to achieve today since he has acknowledged you as the Acting President. The cabal is just buying time for their devilish schemes against the apex office in Nigeria. Keep buying time and right under your nose a new cabinet will be constituted and everything will go on un-derailed. God bless Nigeria.

Eli
eli_fimin@yahoo.ca

No need to be worried. If Yar'adua is getting well, then when

he comes back he can take back the people loyal to him. But I think it is unfair for any country to be without a president for so long. It cannot happen anywhere. But Jonathan needs people he can trust around him, so he did the right thing. We should all be careful not to do things that will lead to the break-up of this country.

Adamu Musa
adamumusa@yahoo.com

The political atmosphere will certainly be shrouded with uncertainty if Yar'adua resumes office. Only time can tell the likely events that will unfold.

Abubakar Yahya Gumel
gumelson1984@yahoo.com

I think the speculation that Mr. President Yar'adua will appear is just like a toothless bull dog, it can bark but not bite. If it is true, let him appear and address Nigerians even for once. This is only a rumor that is being spreading by his Cabal.

Zanna Baruwa Gashua
bukar.zanna@yahoo.com

If Yar'adua is resuming next week, it is good. We all have been praying for his recovery. However Nigerians are not happy with the way his aides have handled the situation so far. It brings to question whether they have the interest of the nation at heart.

Babyku
popd2004@yahoo.com

Two kidnapped NNPC staff found dead

THIS is a dangerous trend. God save Nigeria.

Jude
judedng38@gmail.com

I spoke to Bardardin, as he is known to family and friends, some months ago. We planned to back pack around Africa as soon as we can arrange it. Unfortunately that is never going to be. Yesterday morning I called a mutual friend on another issue and he informed me that Barbardin's decapitated body was found in the bush. From Allah

(SWT) we come... to him we shall return. Let's remember that every soul will taste death. May Allah (SWT) forgive him and grant him Aljannah firdaus. Ameen.

S M Dikwa
smdikwa@yahoo.com

Malabu and Danjuma, are both people I know. Malabu, what a great loss to the oil and gas industry. I pray God gives your wife the fortitude to bear the irreplaceable loss!

Ariyo Ayodele
faultseal_2004@yahoo.com

I think we are not advanced enough to do that, unless the Iwu-led INEC wants to extend its irregularities for the entire world to know what is happening in our country.

Abubkr Badru Jkamshi
damurna@yahoo.com

March on Prof M. Iwu, we are right behind you. Thanks for the good works you are doing to our country's political terrain. Don't be distracted by the Labor Union and AC.

Muhammad Guiwa
dunguza3@hotmail.com

You have a good plan but where are the good Nigerians/experts to count their vote rightly for them? Such a system can only materialize if and only if we are using electronic means of voting and the programmer that will programmed it will be a committed and God fearing person.

Olawale Olajubaje
rufusolawale@yahoo.com

2011: INEC plans 'Diaspora voting' in 4 countries

20 ex-ministers to bounce back

IF 20 out of the sacked ministers will return to the cabinet what is the essence of sacking them? Mr. Acting President should know that those people are sacred cows and I don't think they will make any impact towards the development of our dear country. Once more, Goodluck kindly inject new

blood into your cabinet.

Abubkr Badru Jkamshi
damurna@yahoo.com

Thanks for this revelation. It is a case of Goodluck and Yar'adua camps. Goodluck, it is not by your power that you are acting today as president but destiny. If bring-

ing these so called pro-Goodluck people is not in the interest of this nation, but rather to help execute your plan to become substantive president, then note that whatever your plans are God the master planner. Why these people, does this mean that out of the 150 million people of this great nation,

these few individuals are the only good ones? Haba! Goodluck, let your words be your bond for God sake. I thought you said that the dissolution is to inject fresh hands into the system, why the sudden change?

Ndanusa Babakatcha
nbabakatcha@yahoo.com



EFCC boss Farida Waziri

Farida: Some politicians plotting my sack

THE EFCC chairman should do what she is there for... to fight corruption and not going around 'feeling threatened' that politicians are plotting against her.

Rabiu Muhammad
muhammadrabiu09@yahoo.com

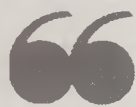
Police officer shoots lover to death

HOW can a police man who has just done the opposite of what his constitutional role is and who is being paid with taxpayers money, shoot someone and the police high command claims accidental discharge?

Rabiu Muhammad
muhammadrabiu09@yahoo.com

Justice should be done. The police officer should not go unpunished. There is nothing like accidental discharge... it was done on purpose. The Police spokesman is just trying to help his fellow officer out of this crime. He should be sentenced to life imprisonment or to death. If it was a common Nigerian, the police will torture him kill and him.

That is my own opinion.
Eunice
eunnycare@yahoo.com



By Toni Wakiki Akuneme

Do we need 42 ministers?

With the recent widely expected dissolution of the Federal Executive Council by Acting President Dr. Ebele Goodluck Jonathan, a deep reflection into the composition and workings of our government mechanisms is called for. This is with a view to ascertaining the utility of draining scarce resources in servicing of personnel costs and overheads with a record forty two ministers, each with no less than ten to fifteen aides and hundreds of hangers-on.

In fashioning a clear 3 point Agenda for the (Acting) President, namely electoral reforms, cultural reorientation (rebranding of attitude) and steady electricity, his Advisers should insist on reducing the ministerial slots to what is rational and not what is 'politically expedient'. Nigerians are not difficult to govern; it is the elite that always obstruct good policies that will favour the people once it may not guarantee their own continued relevance and pecuniary sustenance.

It is easy to argue that unemployment can be abated by having forty two ministers so that if each has about twenty aides (both the official ones in Abuja and the retinue of support staff

“Why can't the police join the other services like Immigration, Prisons and Civil Defence under the Interior ministry as is found in other societies?”

and hangers-on) that comes to about eight hundred and forty families who are literarily 'guaranteed' of stable food and provisions for the period their *oga's* tenure lasts. But I still think that it is a narrow, short term and defeatist perspective, because if we do things the proper way and each ministry or minister passionately and patriotically puts in a mere 60% of genuine and honest work, as Mr Odom tried to exemplify, our country will be well on the way to economic and socio-political stability and that to me is more secure, purposeful and long lasting for the greater number of Nigerians than just a mere 840 families in a country of about 140 million.

My point is clear, albeit it may sound un-Nigerian, for a direct beneficiary of a system to speak against that (warped) system. We don't need more than fifteen ministries as against the present twenty eight ministries which are at best conduit pipes for draining our resources through bogus contracts that are either shabbily done or not done at all. And if about fifteen ministries under the present arrangement have been operating without ministers of state, then we might as well scrap that concept of minister of state, which in any case is laden with unimaginable struggles for space and relevance with the senior ministers often seeing them as a little more than just aides.

For avoidance of doubt, the following ministries had only one minister in the last dispensation; Justice, Aviation, Power, Sports, science/Tech, Defence, Environment, Labour, Mines, National Planning, Police Affairs Transport, and Woman Affairs.

So if these ministries can stand with only one minister, why do we need to create confusion and the shameful battle for turfs between ministers and their ministers of state? With a good breed of permanent secretaries and directors, any seasoned technocrat or Administrator can comfortably man one ministry and give Nigerians results within the next fifteen months.

And in point of fact, we also need to close down some ministries or better still merge them with other related ones to avoid duplication and or over lapping of schedules. For instance, if our ministry of Works and Housing is really effective under a development-crazy patriot like Mallam Nasir El-Rufai, we may not need to have a separate ministry for Abuja or Niger Delta. And for crying out loud, did we honestly need to waste time and resources convening another talk-shop in Warri on the same amnesty issue for which the Ledum Mitee committee has already turned in useful and broad based solutions? I guess that was the message the MEND guys were trying to pass across, that all they want to see in the region henceforth are Julius Berger bulldozers and caterpillars. Its time really to stop these seminars and give people like Prof Pat Utomi the chance to make the Singaporean change he has cried so much about!

Who has ever heard of a minister of London or Washington? It is the ineptitude of existing structures and the lack of political will on the part of past leaders that keep making them talk of creation of new ministries and agencies and commissions right from the time of Willinsk.

Why can't the police join the other services like Immigration, Prisons and Civil Defence under the Interior ministry as is found in other societies?

What is special about a Special Duties ministry? Why would women, with all their claims to equality with men, allow themselves to be treated as if they are physically or mentally challenged, by awarding them a separate ministry? They should be asking why there is no ministry for men. For that is the stuff true women's liberation should be made of. Women affairs can better still be part of culture, Tourism and social Development. Why can't we have a ministry of transport that coordinates Air, Land and Sea activities instead of another separate ministry for Aviation that asks for 63 billion naira just to expand a runway?

Youth and sports Development are complementary and can be handled very well by a seasoned entrepreneurial administrator

Like Prof Pat Utomi, (have you noticed how most sports administrators are sit tight dictators? - Amos Adamu, Isa Hayatou, Sepp Blatter and even Dr. Rafiu Ladipo of supporters club fame)

Akuneme was an aide to former Minister Julius Chika Odom.



By Ahmad Sojah

This is Nigeria: A great nation indeed!

I read Ishaq Modibbo Kawu's piece requesting for a briefing as he returned from his trip to the Western Sahara. Welcome back my dear brother but do you really need any briefing on the state of the nation? The nation is as you left it. A great nation made of good people. Yes, I mean it. Which nation is greater than the one whose leaders have done everything to destroy but it remained solid (Even if disintegrating in piecemeal as opined by you)? In fact not only are we great but we are the most loved by God. No earthquake, no mudslide, no tsunami, no flood and no drought as well. Though the commitment of government to agriculture is at best feeble, we still end up with good harvests or at least enough to enable our people subsist. Our only affliction is a morally bankrupt ruling elite and a degenerate leadership that is essentially concerned with primitive accumulation of wealth and flagrantly flaunting it in the face of abject poverty and squalor all around.

I want to start by reminding you of a letter I wrote to you sometimes ago which you published in the Trust newspaper. In it, I said this nation was in the vice grip of a cabal. The Nigerian Institute of Public Relations of which I am State Chairman felt bad about it and reported me to the minister of re-brand-

“In fact not only are we great but we are the most loved by God. No earthquake, no mudslide, no tsunami, no flood and no drought as well”

ing. Well, I have been laughing my head off since madam herself confirmed my statement. The Hausa will say “*a dade anayi sai gaskiya*”

As for the state of the nation, please note that we have a President that cannot be seen because he is too sick and an Acting President that needs a committee to cheer him before he can act. We also have a cabinet that cannot sit because this is an acting period and its better done not seated. (Should we not transfer leadership to Nollywood? They are better actors.) But let me tell you one thing that all the ACTORS in government have agreed to do. They are committed to squandering the excess crude which accrued to the nation on all matters other than the good of the people. None of the money so shared was used for promoting real sectors such as education, health care, broken down infrastructure such as roads and railways. And what of power supply? Well we now have less than 2500MW which is to serve all 140,000,000 of us. If there were fairness in Nigeria and it has to be shared equally, I wonder what my share would have been. So you see I am contented with the two hours in two weeks I manage to get. It still gives me advantage over a vast majority of my compatriots.

In order to ensure that the monies so shared go round, most state govern-

ments have used it to settle arrears of allowances of civil servants.

Lucky them, at least it should close their mouth for now so even when 'ogas' share the bulk of the money in preparation for political campaigns or as security after leaving office, the vocal segment of the impoverished society will keep quiet. What a good way to share loot.

One other thing, please note that Nigeria is looking for saviours. Of late the search has gone to a very critical level. This is where the good people of a great nation come in handy. We have a *Save Nigeria Group* that cannot save Nigeria because it is made up of a group of people who have not told each other the truth about what they want let alone the rest of us. And there is the *Save Nigeria Coalition* that is apparently on a collision course with the truth about what they want. But both groups are lucky because Nigeria is full of good people who are so impoverished that they can easily be rented for a Rally with just a promise of a free ride to the city center, a free lunch of 'bole' and groundnuts with sachet water and at times a T-Shirt as a bonus.

Have you seen their paid advertorials? I am sure most Nigerian Newspapers benefited from those paid adverts. Please help me scout for who will sponsor my own advertorial. I want to save Nigeria too especially if the process will help me save myself from the harsh conditions afflicting me. For two months now the arithmetic of daily existence has refused to add up.

Also while you were absent the Senate spent over one hour debating matters of public interest emanating from a Story in one of the Nigerian Newspapers. Although the story turned out to be incorrect and the event did not occur at the time stated, the incident brought out one sad fact about life in today's Nigeria. It was the story of some innocent passengers who were crushed to death at a site of a Robbery Incident. In the end, when all the hot air was blown, the Inspector General of Police delivered the honest verdict, that the Nigeria Police is ill prepared and ill equipped to face Robbers on our highways. Need any body say more?

Anyway that home truth had earlier been made known to me a few days after the IGP's verdict. The road to my village is less than 15 kilometres from Mubi town and there are not less than five police roadblocks on the road on any day serving as tolls for the collection of N20 from motorcycle riders. The death of a prominent Community leader in my village prompted a visit by other prominent persons for the third day prayers. On that fateful day armed robbers waylaid the prominent persons on their way back at around 8.30am.

All were molested and not even the turbans on the heads of the titled ones among them could spare them the molestation. Surprisingly, not one police patrol team was on site to confront the robbers. The statement by the IGP put paid to all expectations of any form of confrontations between the robbers and the police.

Sajoh is of Adamawa State University, Mubi.



Your Letters

Re: Ghaddafi: The making of a false hero

The *Daily Trust* of Monday, March 22, 2010 page 14 carried the above headline, in which Comrade Issa Aremu, the *Daily Trust* columnist tried to crucify Muammar Ghaddafi, the Libyan president, for expressing his opinion. Sincerely speaking Ghaddafi has every right to comment on international issues. So, I see no reason why, he should be crucified.

If I may ask, where comrade was and the Nigerian government when sometime last year the United States of America said, Nigeria will disintegrate before 2015.

Also what of the recent comment by the united state of Ameri-

can secretary of state

Mrs. Hillary Clinton on the recent carnage in Jos, the Plateau state capital where she called on the federal government of Nigeria to investigate the killings of Christian in Jos, but the United States did not condemn the act like it did in the recent attack to that of the previous one especially that of January this year.

Haba!

In line with our discussion, I was not happy the way President of the Senate called Ghaddafi a mad man; also the F.G recall of Nigerian ambassador to Libya for just some one expresses his opinion. Why did F.G take any measure on U.S. when those comments were passed by U.S.A? We should not kill justice in the table of selfishness and we should treat equal equally, and treat unequal differently. Please we should live

Ghaddafi alone and face reality. Jos conflicts were socio-political and economic in nature not religion per se! And they are all attributed by poor leadership.

To this end, I give applause to Comrade Issa Aremu for admitting Ghaddafi's rascality as he calls it, that Ghaddafi is rudely reminding Nigerians (Leaders especially) to wake up to the challenge of good governance. Yes!, a great challenge of free and fair elections, health care delivery, qualitative and free education, employment opportunities, security, good roads, potable water, steady electricity and freedom of expression among others. May God guide us aright, help, unite, protect and bless Nigeria as a whole.

Adamu Muhammad Usman
Kafin-Hausa, Jigawa State
(adammusman@yahoo.com)

Text us on 08 131 8000 30

'Diaspora voting'

I was angry when I came across this header in your report yesterday that INEC planned to conduct this form of voting in four countries in the 2011 elections. How can INEC that could not hold credible electing for Nigerians that are physically on ground, start thinking of conducting electing to some ghost voters outside the country? Iwu and his advisers should be cautioned.

MOHAMMED Umar, Abuja,
080364170892.

Begging for answers

WHY did Jonathan send out the pro-Yar'adua ministers from the federal cabinet? Does he want only loyalists of his own to be around him?

AUWAL Aliyu Barau,
08034380624.

Not in our name

WHEN sentiment, ignorance and narrow mindedness becloud one's sense of reasoning, he can openly and shamelessly call white black and belligerently defend his view. This is a similitude of Mangwen's view on *Daily Trust* (text message, March 21).

MUHAMMAD Tukur Mujaya,
Sokoto, 08035327329.

Well done *Daily Trust!*

DAILY Trust is a news paper that captures the whole nation, neither anti- nor pro-any tribe or religion; it encourages, educates and satisfies its numerous readers.

SULE Ibrahim Madugu Dutse,
08035053070.

Blasphemy

I listened with great dismay the speech made by Zamfara House

of Assembly speaker during the decamping of our Federal and State legislators, held in Gusau yesterday where he called the PDP bandwagon the ARK of PROPHET NOAH which to me is entirely bad. Mr Speaker sir, I urge you to recant so as to attain the love of ALLAH.

RUF'A'I Salihu, Tudun Wada,
Gusau, 080036087847.

Clean sweep

THE Acting president and the senate should ensure nominations and appointments of credible candidates, honest and people of integrity, who are ready to serve the nation not people who are eager to loot public treasury to accomplish their selfish interests.

HARUN A.imam, Malali
Kaduna, 08038226335.



By Tony Odiadi

Legislative term-limit and 2011 election

An indefinite tenure for legislators is, by definition, undemocratic and should be discouraged. This is because it puts too much of the collective resources in the hands of a few individuals; confers undue electoral advantage on the perpetrators; limits the opportunities for service by others and reduces possibilities in the legislature of new perspectives on issues from fresh hands since complacency impacts negatively on the quality of legislative output. This is the thrust of a movement that is spreading across the country now, focused on political growth and seeking an increased opportunity for more people to serve their constituencies. No doubt, opening up of the legislature, is likely to be one of the key issues and challenges that will be thrown up as the country moves forward to 2011 elections and the danger is there that if it is not effectively addressed, it could lead to serious disaffection and instability in several constituencies.

After over a decade in civil governance, Nigerians are convinced that legislative term limit must be made integral to our current democracy to avoid the danger of long term careerism in political office, power monopoly through electoral process abuse and systemic cornering and accumulation of national resources by a handful of citizens. There are several reasons why legislative term limit is imperative for our political development (as will be shown later in this discussion) if we are to achieve a good measure of entrenching the culture of service, power diffusion and enlarged participation by removing the possibility of the perpetual legislator in our emerging governance system. If the Executive is limited by term, and we have put limits to the terms of Permanent Secretaries, Directors, etc in the public service as well as bank MDs in the corporate sector, why not the Legislator?

What is being recommended, in effect, is a two-term limit for any legislative position in Nigeria (those currently on third term should be treated as aberrant cases). Therefore, no person who has served either for two or three terms would be eligible for election again in that capacity in 2011. It must be stated early on that after an opportunity of service for one or two terms as a legislator, such persons, if they are public spirited can still serve their constituencies or political parties in other capacities and term limit will therefore not constitute a terminus to a productive public service. Moreover, such persons can with fulfilment return to their erstwhile professional calling, or vocation, if any.

The perennial cycle of instability in the Nigerian polity is often a product of unregulated and unenforced control of power ambition and proclivity to power retention by certain persons and a section of the political class. Nowhere else is this beginning to rear its ugly head than in the legislative arm of government where some of the members are allegedly determined to perpetuate themselves in office, by using the position and resources accumulated through the years to manipulate the political process and continue to remain in the national or state legislature.

To be sure, it was the basic understanding, as people sought offices in 1999, that legislative term limit, just like executive term limit, should constitute the essential ground rules for political office holding in Nigeria. Just out of years of combat with the military to wrest power and enthrone democratic governance and rule of law in the affairs of the nation, Nigerians were particularly eager to banish forever in their polity, any tendency towards dictatorship, power monopoly, or self-perpetuation in office by anyone, section, group of persons. With that understanding, came the concept of power rotation, zoning of offices, etc, which were in place when the second cycle of elections preparations began in 2003 wherein several legislators at state and national levels were made to step down for others.

General Obasanjo's overarching and unconstitutional ambition to extend his tenure to a third term in 2007 brought about all manners of political horse trading, additional third term rewards to loyalist, etc thus injected into the polity a situation in which several persons who were due to vacate their legislative offices after serving for two terms of eight years in 2007 were foisted once again on their constituents.

The Obasanjo third term project failed to materialize but some of the serious political distortions it engendered, e.g. the curious prospect of *legislative oligarchy*- are still there which needs urgent and immediate correction as we begin to prepare for the 2011 elections.

Odiadi, a solicitor, wrote from 52/54 Murtala Mohammed Way, Ebute-Metta, Lagos

DAILY TRUST

EDITORIAL

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Egyptian doctors' saga in Yobe

Dr. Mohsen El-Asran, the Egyptian doctor whose appointment was terminated by the Yobe state government recently, has gone to court to contest the action. Employed by the government as a consultant radiologist, El-Asran's grouse with his employers started when he claimed that ten of his colleagues, engaged by Yobe state were unqualified because they had lower certificates than the degrees in branches of medicine that they claimed, and had earlier been banned from the Sani Abacha Specialist Hospital, where he too worked before getting embroiled in the controversy.

According to the Yobe state commissioner for health, Alhaji Idriss Machinama, the termination of Dr El-Asran's appointment became necessary because his allegations were found to be 'false and mind-boggling.' Machinama also said that a committee set up by the Yobe state governor, Alhaji Ibrahim Gaidam, to investigate the doctor's allegations had found his claims to be 'false and unfounded.' In an interview with Weekly Trust recently, the commissioner said that all the doctors recruited from Egypt had a minimum qualification of an MBBS (Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery), which is the first degree for medical doctors.

But Dr El-Asran, who is now recuperating at the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital after being beaten up, allegedly by those colleagues he accused of being unqualified, has insisted on the veracity of his allegation. He plans to ask the court to order the constitution of an independent panel, with senior medical professionals and representatives of professional bodies as well as Yobe state government officials, to assess the credentials of all the 23 doctors recruited, including himself.

The matter is of such national significance that we believe there is need for such a panel; but the authorities do not have to wait for the court's say-so to set one up. Recruitment of doctors or any other professionals from abroad used to be the responsibility of the Nigerian ministry of education usually verifying the qualification of the professionals and naming their equivalence in Nigerian terms. It is not clear how this particular case was done; perhaps it was handled entirely between the Yobe government and the Egyptian doctors, which could have led to the present controversy. Ideally the Nigerian Medical Association should have a role in the recruitment process, by conducting relevant tests to verify any foreign doctor's qualifications. We advocate the involvement of the Yobe State chapter of the NMA in any further investigation in the case of the Egyptian doctors.

We also consider it premature that the Yobe government should take a hard line against Dr El-Asran before exhaustively investigating the substance of his allegations. He has claimed that his colleagues lacked the capacity to diagnose diseases, and that was how he claimed to have discovered that they did not possess the requisite qualification to practice medicine. To buttress his claims, he wrote to the Yobe state government, expressing his fears on the issue. He copied his letter to the EFCC and the Egyptian Embassy. In response, the allegedly unqualified doctors did not try to defend themselves in like manner, but allegedly resorted to physically attacking Dr El-Asran at work and beating him up.

This action of the Egyptian doctors leaves a lot to be desired as it is directly against the ethics of their profession and the Nigerian law. As medical professionals they claim to be, it is unthinkable that they should team up and beat one of their own, in a matter they could have settled in writing. Whatever the case may be, a thorough investigation, whether ordered by the court in the case between Dr Mohsen El-Asran and the government of Yobe state, or by an independent body, should unravel the mystery behind this unfortunate episode. This specific case should also be a cautionary tale to Nigerian authorities who are often enthralled with foreign qualification even as there is the denigration of local alternatives. Due process should be thoroughly followed to ensure that possible quacks do not come into Nigeria to wreak havoc in the profession they practice.

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Jonathan: The final gamble

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

-- William Shakespeare (Twelfth Night, Act 2, Scene 5)

A few days can be a long time in the life of anyone's presidency, talk less of someone assuming the position in an acting capacity on the strength of a contested legal authority, and without any special grooming for the thankless job of leading one of the most complicated nations in modern history.

But Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan's luck appears to have held, so far. By the end of the week, he would have spent one month in Office as de-facto President while the incumbent recuperates from his ailments. Since those early days when he seemed overwhelmed by the task, Dr. Jonathan has apparently had a successful 'liver transplant' to cope with the rigors of the job.

He flexed muscle when he summarily fired the former National Security Adviser General Sarki Muktar. He showed the same grit when the Federal Executive Council (FEC) was sent packing last week. And if the grapevine is anything to be believed, new Service Chiefs may also be appointed soon, along with a new Chief of Staff!

But the obvious coup - de-grace, in my humble opinion, was the sacking of the FEC last week, pregnant, as it were, with far reaching implications for the polity. The desolution has obviously given the acting President a 'golden opportunity' to reconstitute the new cabinet in his own image, or his sponsors whether they live in Ota, the Niger Delta Creeks, or within the Presidential Advisory Council and the presidency itself.

What makes the unfolding events so intriguing is that all the interest intent on shaping the destiny of the nation have motives that are mutually exclusive. They also remain deeply suspicious of each other. The appointment of General Aliyu Mohammed Gusau may be viewed by some as a major stabilizing factor, but his interest in the presidency is also well known.

To the best of my knowledge, General Gusau is yet to foreclose his candidature for the presidency in the next elections. I also doubt very much if he has forgiven Obasanjo for denying him the ticket in 2007, even if there is the view the NSA's resurgence may have been the result of a compromise from the Obasanjo camp, intent on keeping IBB at bay.

Those who subscribe to the latter school of thought reasoned that the widely rumoured chummy relationship between Gusau, and IBB, had actually waned with the passage of time. On the other hand, the frosty relationship between Obasanjo and General T. Y. Danjuma, the Chairman of the Presidential Committee is well documented and has not abated.

And yet, all things considered, these trojans in the power equa-

Muhammad Al-Ghazali

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tion are expected to have a say in the composition of the new cabinet expected to be named this week!

That explains why I agree with those who posited that only Jonathan can explain the exact reasons for the sacking of the cabinet so close to the next elections. The way I see it, the only reason for the move was to appoint characters who can do the bidding of Dr. Jonathan.

The final proof, of course, will be evident if the new cabinet proceeds to invoke the extant provisions of section 144 of the Constitution on the subject of the President's incapacitation.

That may seem the easier thing to do, since the NASS will still have a decisive role to play in the equa-

inet, a new Chairman of the EFCC with Ribadu-like stubbornness and tenacity can do Dr. Jonathan no harm at all in the present dispensation. And in any case, Farida Waziri must have seen the handwriting on the wall when her kinsman Michael Aondoaka was relieved of his plum job weeks ago.

As we all know, for the Governors, in the days of Obasanjo, the fear of the EFCC was the beginning of wisdom. Dr. Jonathan must have picked up some useful lessons somewhere! A new and 'active' Chairman of the EFCC, like the stubborn retired military brass suggested will force the Governors to eat humble pie. It will force them to the negotiation table.

If the Governors know the first thing about survival, they would be mending fences with their representatives in the NASS at this precise moment. And I say so because even if the FEC declares Yar'adua an invalid tomorrow, and the acting President proceeds to name a new Chairman for the EFCC, he will still require the concurrence or confirmation of the NASS in

It was not for nothing that the EFCC Chair, Farida Waziri, alledged that a plot conceived by faceless politicians against her was already in the offing

tion. But then, power has always had its way with people, no matter how lilly-livered they may seem on the surface.

When power stares irresponsibly at us, we tend to take leave of our senses. We become ordinary pawns in the game of chance or dealers in hope, like Napoleone Bonaparte succinctly put it. If it were not so, the late Shah Reza Palavi would not have stared down the Iranian revolution, and Jean Bokassa would not have likened himself to God.

From a somewhat timid beginning, it is increasing clear that Dr. Jonathan is beginning to acquire the appetite and lust for power, regardless of where it leads him in the short time he has to ride the crest of the present administration.

If he had concentrated solely on electoral reforms, the energy problem and the Niger Delta peace process, which should be dear to his heart, his motives would have been less suspect, for sure.

But nothing he has done so far can convince anyone that he has suddenly 'acquired' a pre-determined Agenda, if not from himself, but definitely from somewhere!

It was not for nothing that the EFCC Chair, Farida Waziri, alledged that a plot conceived by faceless politicians against her was already in the offing. A few weeks ago when Dora Akunyili raged against her peers in the cabinet, it seemed only a matter of time before Yar'adua was kicked out of office. Only the strong opposition of the Governors halted the momentum.

Like the consitution of a new cab-

both cases.

You see, the acting Prsident buoyed by whoever, might be tempted to believe he can get away with just about anything presently, but the forces massing to confront the emergence of another tyraant for selfish or patriotic reasons have not entirely lost the capacity to frustrate him by forcing a stalemate.

That is why, in my opinion, Dr. Jonathan Good is taking a big gamble in the manner he has tucked to his task presently. In my view he has veered sharply from the path to greatness destiny has so graciously opened up for him and risks becoming a pawn in the hands of more cunning and sophisticated power brokers.

From the way things are shaping up, ordinary Nigerians are set to become the biggest losers yet again. From the near-total militarization of the private sector in the oil, banking sectors, we now have a near absolute emasculation of our democratic processes as well due to the intemperate selfishness of the political brass. The naming of military brass as the new Chief of Staff to the President and Chairman of the EFCC will compound, rather than reverse the process.

But of course, all these moves will come to naught if a certain broad-nosed and unassuming individual were to gate-crash into the Council Chambers as the new cabinet is set to be inaugurated. I will hate to be in some shoes at that time, of course.



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INTERNATIONAL

Senegal army clashes with separatist rebels



SENEGALESE soldiers patrol in the jungle of the Casamance.

THE Senegalese army and suspected separatist rebels clashed yesterday in the country's restive southern Casamance province, according to a military source.

"This morning, they (the military) learned of the presence of armed elements in the area. Soldiers in place in Sareyoba went to the area to check," the source added on condition of anonymity.

"The people (rebels) opened fire on them and they responded. There was an exchange of fire but

calm quickly returned."

The incident happened 30 kilometres (about 20 miles) south of Kolda, a town to the east of Ziguinchor and near the border with Guinea-Bissau.

No casualties were immediately reported. The army's public relations service was not available to comment.

Since Thursday, three soldiers have been killed and nine injured during operations against the rebels in the south of Ziguinchor,

the biggest city in Casamance, which is separated from the rest of Senegal by the Gambia.

The poor region has been ravaged by conflict between government forces and separatist rebels since 1982. A peace accord signed in 2004 eased tensions, but clashes have increased in the past six months leading to both military and civilian deaths.

The Senegalese army has been conducting operations for several days to clear out rebel bases.

Top Somali judge asks for help after judge deaths

ABOUT 10 judges have been killed in the last four years because of violence in Somalia or as a direct result of their jobs, the country's chief justice said.

Somalia's court system is being undermined by a lack of security, irregular financing and interference from top politicians, Mohamud Omar Farah told The Associated Press in a recent interview.

"Somalia needs an effective judicial system more than any time before to sort out the mess left behind by nearly two decades of conflict," said Farah, who took office as Somalia's chief justice in December. "We need the assistance of everyone.

We have to turn a decayed system around, and to do so we need a money that we don't have right now." Farah served as attorney general in the last central government in Somalia, which disintegrated in 1991. The current transitional government has been struggling to assert its control over the country since its formation in 2004.

Islamist insurgents control much of southern and central Somalia, including large swaths of the capital, Mogadishu.

The militants have a rough system of justice based on a conservative interpretation of Shariah law. The Islamists consider officials of the U.N.-backed government as legitimate targets because — they argue — they are part of a secular government.

The problems facing the approximately 70 judges who operate in the capital do not only come from Islamist rebels, but also from disgruntled civilians who sometimes take the law onto their own hands and attack judges, Farah said.

Several months ago, for example, a judge ruled in a land dispute case and was attacked afterward, he said. "After delivering the verdict, the judges — because they don't have official cars to take them to their homes or money to buy their own cars — use public vehicles with, perhaps, angry relatives of a convicted person," Farah said.

Benedict Goderiaux, a researcher with the advocacy group Amnesty International, said Farah's appeal for help merits support from the international community to restore the rule of law.

"The need for a proper justice system in Somalia cannot be underestimated. It is of immense importance. A lot of human rights abuses have been committed in Somalia. Impunity is rampant and perpetrators are not punished," she said. Farah has accused some Somali ministers of interfering with the work of the courts and trying to turn judges pro-government.

Seven Angolan policemen convicted of deadly shooting

SEVEN Angolan police officers were convicted yesterday of killing eight innocent youths execution style in a Luanda slum, in a rare case of security forces being held to account in court.

Judge Salomao Filipe said the seven would each receive "the maximum sentence of 24 years in prison", after being found guilty of "homicide while exercising their duties." The interior ministry was also ordered to pay 1.5 million kwanzas (16,500 dollars, 12,250 euros) in damages to the family of each victim.

On February 23, 2008, plain-clothes police arrived in the crime-ridden Sambizanga slum in an unmarked vehicle, responding to a tip that suspects were in the area.

Eight young men, aged 19 to 24, were talking and drinking beer when the police ordered them against a wall, hands in the air, and opened fire at close range. Five of the men, all found later to be innocent, died immediately and the other three en route to the hospital. But before dying one of them identified two of the police involved in the shooting.

International

Japan: Bringing succour to rural communities in Nigeria

By Charles Onunaiju

JEUN Madaki is a rural sleepy community in Karu local government council of Nassarawa State. As with many other rural communities in Nigeria, it is deprived of any basic life-supporting amenities. Its predominantly Gbaygi indigenous people eke out a living in very rudimentary form like most of their counterparts across the largely forgotten divide of many, if not all rural communities in Nigeria.

They walk some seven kilometres to draw water from the village river that dries up with the coming of the dry season. Apart from the few strangers that live in their midst and a handful of their sons and daughters who have sojourned in the city that start up electricity generating sets in some of the nights, they didn't have an idea of electric bulbs.

The primary school that exists in the community is poorly ventilated, with pupils squatting on the floor to take lessons from obviously demoralized teachers.

For all the physical proximity that exist between this community and buzzy city life, some twenty kilometres away to the nation's capital of Abuja, they are not in the picture of the grandstanding and high pitch politics of the nation's political elite especially when they announce, multi-million dollars infrastructure projects.

The Jeun community for all their deprivations occasionally receives a local government visitor. A revenue collector who wades through the bush path in a punishing rigmarole to ask for levies. The indigenous people, who didn't need much cash for their daily subsistence, take part of their farm produce to the local central market in Masaka town to sell to enable them keep some cash for the unsmiling local government revenue collector.

Somehow, this community where radio is ubiquitous learnt that the government of Japan through their embassy in Nigeria is helping out rural communities to put up some life-supporting amenities across Nigeria.

According to their leader, Chief Tanimu Zheun, they quickly reactivated their local organization, the Jeun Survival Initiative, through which they have tried to help themselves by voluntary community work.

Deciding that electrification of the community would easily generate high productive and economic activities aside from transforming social life and expanding their worldview, Jeun Survival Initiative headed to the embassy of Japan in Abuja to ask the Japanese to come to their rescue.



AMBASSADOR of Japan to Nigeria, Mr Uesawa signing agreement with a leader of the NGOs for Japan's grant assistance programme.

With the procedures done and subsequent inspection of the project site in the village of Jeun Madaki by a young official of the embassy, on the 18th of March, the Japanese government doled out the princely sum of fifty thousand, four hundred and sixty four U.S dollars (\$52,464.80) for the construction and installation of 500 KVA/11/0.415KV transformer in the community.

As at the time of writing, the community is yet to come to terms with their fortunes. Tears of joys still rolls from their eyes. A young man in the community who seem to know how Nigeria political institutions function in the opposite direction of their publicly declared aims asked this reporter, if they can choose the Japanese for their representative in state and national parliament.

However, the rural electrification project in Jeun Madaki is just one among over 106 projects with a total amount of about six million US dollars that has been implemented across Nigeria since 1998 under the Japanese Grant Assistance for grassroots Human Security Project (GGP).

Under this scheme, the Japan government through its embassy in Nigeria aims at "meeting the diverse needs and bringing a direct impact on the well-being of grassroots communities, as the programme is "designed to provide non-refundable financial assistance to nonprofit organi-

zation implementing life-supporting projects at the grassroots level. The essential focus of the programme is education, water and sanitation, rural electrification etc. At the signing ceremony for the grant assistance to three non governmental organization last week, which among them was Jeun Survival Initiative, the Japan's ambassador to Nigeria, Mr. Toshitsugu Uesawa said with emphasis that "the true of the Japanese assistance should not be estimated in the amount of the money supplied or by the number of project it implements.

The value of it lies largely in its principles and idea, and the ultimate idea of the Japanese aid is to support Nigerian friends to develop their own country by their own hands," stressing that his opinion is that "development begins with the people and ends with people."

He charged the beneficiary NGOs to complete construction work on schedule and informed them that "Japan has invested in local NGOs through GGP, in the belief that they are the best development partner to directly contribute to promoting the well-being of grassroots communities."

In the broader context of Japan's development assistance to Nigeria, it has amounted to about 4.2 billion U.S dollars since independence, approximately 600 billion naira.

Throughout most of Nigeria's

largely deprived rural communities, the Japanese people through their government and embassy in Nigeria is providing clean water, building new classrooms, which in the words of the ambassador "will help a lot to enable underprivileged people and children to gain access to clean and safe water, enjoy power supply without generators and to cultivate their talents in new classrooms at school."

This might not be a typical high-pitch diplomatic sound bites that is digested in the foreign ministry bureaucracy or institutes of international affairs tink tanks, but would resonate quiet well with the ordinary people, with whom Japan's plain and pro-poor development assistance policy touches and improves their lives.

The Japan that might be familiar to the Nigerian small elite, may be that of hi-tech gadgets and exotic cars, orchestrated by the corporate community of the world's second richest nation, but in Nigeria's diverse rural communities, ordinary people are becoming more acquainted with the Japanese flag and the good heart of its people than any symbol of authority in their local government headquarters and state capitals.

While American and European diplomats bestrode five star hotel galleries to urge the largely sterile rhetoric for Nigerian government to be more transparent and accountable in public govern-

ance, their Japanese counterparts beat the bush paths of several difficult-to-access rural communities to fix broken classrooms or built one, where non exist, install boreholes and wire the communities to the national electric grid.

Ironically while the agency of rural electrification in Nigeria is mired in corruption, with its officials and some members of the national parliament, standing trial for pocketing the agency's fund to the staggering sum of 5.2 billion naira, the Japan's government is filling the gap. Surely, Tokyo is wired to the high pitch global politics.

After all as a leading giver of development assistant aid all over the world, it deserved both a voice and seat at the top table. However, its power diplomacy has been shy because of the events both in the after and before the Second World War.

But Tokyo cannot remain in the shadows of the United States of America forever, and that is why, late last year the people plucked in for the fresh face of the democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), ending the nearly 50 year strangle hood of the Japan's formerly ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). As Japan strives for bolder steps on the global arena, its choice of the poor and weak in Africa for allies, is in the right direction as the moral force of humanity is emerging as a decisive lever in global affairs.

International

Hamas should be part of Mideast peace talks - Lula

A negotiated Middle East peace will only be possible if Iran, the Islamist Hamas movement and the Shiite Hezbollah military group are part of the dialogue, Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said yesterday.

In his weekly "Coffee with the President" broadcast, Lula advocated "dialogue with the Iranians, with the Syrians, with Israel,

with the Palestinians, with Hamas and with Hezbollah." He said ignoring any of these interlocutors would leave a "void" at the negotiating table. The Islamic Hamas movement is listed by the European Union and the United States as a terror organization, while Hezbollah is a longtime adversary of Israel's. Lula's remarks here echoed com-

ments made during travels last week in the Middle East, where he met with Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian leaders -- the first visit to the region by a Brazilian head of state.

He offered his government's services in helping to resolve the Middle East impasse, but added that his country would only play a role if "invited" to do so.



BRAZILIAN President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva delivers a speech during a visit to the headquarters of the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank city of Ramallah.

The answer to CBN's N10 Million Naira question

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Sarkozy strategizes after French election rebuff

PRESIDENT Nicolas Sarkozy considered a Cabinet shake-up yesterday after leftists walloped his conservatives in France's regional elections — exposing his vulnerability to potential challengers and his inability to convince the public of the need for economic reforms.

The blowout Sunday could hand a new opening to Sarkozy's potential presidential rivals — from IMF chief Dominique Strauss-Kahn in the Socialist camp to former prime minister Dominique de Villepin on the right. It also puts the onus on Sarkozy to lift public fortunes before the next presidential race in 2012.

"Overall, these elections are a serious warning for Nicolas Sarkozy ahead of the presidential elections," said Emmanuel Riviere, a pollster at TNS Sofres. "When you lose the mid-term election, you lose either the next presidential or parliamentary election."

The election leaves Sarkozy weakened as he heads off on two important trips — to an EU summit in Brussels on Thursday and Friday and a U.S. visit to New York and Washington next week.

France and Germany have been at odds over how to handle the Greek debt crisis, with France preferring a European Union solution.



UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE, ABEOKUTA

ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESUMPTION FOR THE 2009/2010 ACADEMIC SESSION

The University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (UNAAB) announces resumption for the 2009/2010 Academic Session as follows:

- Arrival and Registration of Fresh Students: - Tuesday, April 6, 2010
 Arrival and Registration of Returning Students: - Thursday, April 8, 2010
 Commencement of Lectures: - Monday, April 12, 2010

Fresh Candidates are to check the UNAAB website - www.unaa.edu.ng for details on their admission status.

Parents, Guardians and Students are to please note the Charges payable by Students for the 2009/2010 Academic Session.

UNDERGRADUATE

TABLE 1: Charges for Fresh and Returning Students

| S/N | Item | Charges (₦) | |
|------|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | Fresh | Returning |
| 1. | Games | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| 2. | Registration Fee | 2,500 | 1,250 |
| 3. | Examination Fee | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| 4. | Student ID card | 350 | - |
| 5. | Undergraduate Prospectus | 1,000 | - |
| 6. | Examination Verification Fee | 1,500 | - |
| 7. | Library Fee | 1,000 | 500 |
| 8. | Medical Examination Fee | 2,500 | - |
| 9. | Medical Referral Fee | 500 | - |
| 10. | Medical Services Fee | 2,000 | 750 |
| 11. | Matriculation Fee | 1,000 | - |
| 12. | ICT Development Fee | 2,000 | - |
| 13. | Utilities | 1,500 | 1,500 |
| *14. | Late Registration | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| 15. | Access Code | 500 | 500 |
| *16. | Student Union Due | 500 | 300 |
| 17. | Campus Mobile Messaging | 630 | 630 |
| 18. | Life Insurance | 825 | 825 |
| 19. | Development Levy | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| 20. | Laboratory Charges | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| 21. | Special Levy (Engineering & Veterinary Medicine) | 10,000 | 10,000 |
| | Total | 25,805 | 13,955 |
| | Total for Engineering & Veterinary Medicine | (35,805) | (23,955) |

*Excluded from the total sum

POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

TABLE 2: Postgraduate Fees for Fresh and Returning Students

| S/N | Item | Fees (₦) | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| | | Fresh | Returning |
| a. Tuition: | | | |
| 1. | Full-Time PG | 20,000 | 20,000 |
| 2. | Part-Time PG | 30,000 | 30,000 |
| 3. | MEMP/M.Sc | 40,000 | 40,000 |
| 4. | MBA | 70,000 | 70,000 |
| 5. | PGD (Computer, PRS, TQM) | 45,000 | 45,000 |
| 6. | MICT | 118,000 | 115,000 |
| b. Other Fees: | | | |
| 1. | Acceptance | 2,000 | - |
| 2. | Registration | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| 3. | Games | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| 4. | Result Verification | - | - |
| 5. | Library | 2,000 | 2,000 |
| 6. | Examination | 2,000 | 2,000 |
| 7. | Student ID | 350 | - |
| 8. | Medical Examination | 1,500 | - |
| 9. | Medical Services | 2,000 | 2,000 |
| 10. | Bench Fee: VET | 25,000 | 25,000 |
| | Medicine | 20,000 | 20,000 |
| | Others | | |
| 11. | Thesis/Dissertation | 25,000 | 25,000 |
| 12. | ICT Development | 2,500 | 2,500 |
| 13. | Development Levy | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| 14. | Life Insurance | 825 | 825 |
| 15. | Postgraduate Prospectus | 1,500 | - |
| | Sub-Total (Other Fees) | 66,675 | 61,325 |
| | Sub Total for Vet. Medicine | 71,675 | 66,325 |

FOREIGN STUDENTS

| S/N | Item | Undergraduate | | | Postgraduate | | |
|-----|---------------------------|------------------|---------|---------|--------------|---------|---------|
| | | Agric. | Science | Eng/Vet | Agric. | Science | Eng/Vet |
| | | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ | \$ |
| 1. | Tuition Fee | 2,000 | 2,500 | 3,000 | 2,500 | 3,500 | 4,000 |
| 2. | Accommodation (optional) | 700 | 700 | 700 | 800 | 800 | 800 |
| 3. | Identity Card | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| 4. | Course Registration | 100 | 100 | 100 | 200 | 200 | 200 |
| 5. | Bench Fee | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 6. | Thesis/Dissertation | | | | 150 | 150 | 150 |
| a. | Defense | | | | | 150 | 200 |
| b. | Postgraduate Diploma | | | | 200 | 200 | 200 |
| c. | Academic Masters | | | | 200 | 200 | 250 |
| d. | Professional Masters Ph.D | | | | 250 | 250 | |
| 7. | Medical Examination Fee | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 | 150 |
| 8. | Medical Service Fee | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 |
| 9. | Games Fee | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| 10. | ICT Development | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 |
| 11. | Postgraduate Prospectus | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 |
| A | Subsistence Allowance | 5,000 | | | | | |
| B | Books | 3,000 (Estimate) | | | | | |

HOSTEL ACCOMMODATION

Hostel Accommodations (optional) and charges are as follows:

| Item | Undergraduate | | Postgraduate |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | Old Hostel | New Hostel | |
| | ₦ | ₦ | |
| Maintenance Fee | 18,000.00 | 25,000.00 | 35,000.00 |
| Bed Space | 90 | 90 | 90 |
| Total | 18,090.00 | 25,090.00 | 35,090.00 |

METHOD OF PAYMENT OF FEES AND REGISTRATION PROCEDURES FOR FRESH AND RETURNING STUDENTS:

Step I: On Presentation of Receipt of Payment of Acceptance Fee (Fresh Students) Or Student Identity Card (Returning Students), the Bank Official would issue the Student an Acceptance Access Code (AAC) Slip to enable him/her pay the prescribed Fees.

The Bank Teller with which the payment is made should convey the following details:

- i. Student's Full Name;
- ii. College/Department;
- iii. Course of Study; and
- iv. Present Level.
- v. Registration Access Code.

The student is required to present a copy of the teller at the UNAAB Cash Office, for issuance of an Official Receipt.

Step II: On receiving payment of the prescribed Fees, the Bank Official would issue the Student a Registration Access Code (RAC) Slip to enable him/her, have access to the Registration Form on the Internet.

Step III: To register, the Student would visit any cybercafé with his/her AAC & RAC slips and log on to the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta web site www.unaab.edu.ng and click on UNAAB edu-portal (e-portal) and then proceed as required.

The particulars of the designated Banks and the University's Current Accounts are as follows:

| S/N | BANK | STUDENTS FEES ACCOUNT NO |
|-----|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. | Guaranty Trust Bank PLC | 421/421805/114 |
| 2. | UNAAB Microfinance Bank Ltd | 2080080100480 |

OTHER REQUIREMENTS FOR 2009/2010 REGISTRATION OF FRESH STUDENTS

Candidates who have been offered admission should present the original and four Photostat copies each of their credentials including Birth Certificate/Sworn Declaration of Age. Each candidate will be required to submit his/her Letter of Admission later.

All students are advised to adhere strictly to Registration Procedures.

Signed

Adeleke Adeboye
For: Registrar



FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION POST BASIC PROJECT
(STEP-B PROJECT)

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, MINNA
CREDIT NO. 4304-UN
DATE OF ISSUE: 23TH March, 2010
Procurement and Installation of Fibre Optic Cable (OFC) at
Gidan Kwano campus
IFB No. FUTM/GDS/NCB/02/10

1. This invitation for Bid follows the General Procurement Notice for this Project that appeared in Development Business, issue No. 591 of 2nd July 2007.

2. The Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has received a credit from the International Development Association toward the cost of Science and Technology Education Post Basic Project, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payments under the Contract for the Procurement and installation of Fibre Optic Cable (OFC) at the Federal university of Technology, Minna.

3. Federal University of Technology, Minna STEP-B now invites sealed bids from eligible and qualified bidders for the procurement and installation of the following:

| LOT NO | ITEM DESCRIPTION | QUANTITY | BID SECURITY | DELIVERY PERIOD | LOCATION |
|--------|---|----------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1 | PROCUREMENT AND INSTALLATION OF FIBRE OPTIC CABLE (OFC) BACKONE | VARIOUS | 2.5% OF BID PRICE | 90 DAYS | GIDAN KWANO, FUT MINNA |

4. Bidding will be conducted through the National Competitive Bidding (NCB), a procedure specified in the World Bank's Guidelines: Procure under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits, and is opened to all bidders from Eligible Source Countries as defined in the Guidelines.

5. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from FUT MINNA, Science and Technology Education Post Basic project (STEP) at the address below and inspect the Bidding document from 8:00am 4:pm Mondays to Fridays. (Excluding Public Holiday).

6. Qualification requirements include:

- Evidence of previous project executed involving similar equipment proposed for the last 5 years.
- Audited Financial Statements for the last 3 years to demonstrate the financial capacity of the Bidder in term of Profitability and adequate working capital.

A margin of preference for eligible national contractors shall not be applied; Additional details are provided in the Bidding Documents.

7. A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written Application to the address below and upon payment of non refundable fee of Ten Thousand Naira (N10,000.00) only. The method of payment will be Bank Draft in favor of Science and Technology Post Basic Project, Federal University of Technology, Minna. The Bidding Documents will be collected by the representative of Bidder or by courier service on request.

8. Bids must be delivered to the address below at or before 2:00pm on Wednesday 28th April, 2010. Electronic bidding will not be permitted. Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders's representatives, who choose to attend in person at the address below at 2:00pm on 28th April, 2010. All bids, must be accompanied by Bid Security of 2.5% of Bid price in a freely convertible currency or bank draft from a reputable Nigeria commercial bank.

9. The address referred to above is:

The Project Manager,
STEP-B Project Office,
UBR Office, Main Campus (Gidan Kwano),
Federal University of Technology,
P.M.B. 65,
Minna, Niger State,
Nigeria.
e-mail: damuazu@futminna.edu.ng

GSM 08029043710(PM) 08051540378 (TO), 08089165356 (CO) 08033789875 (PO)
08037024610(M&E)

Signed: Project Manager

International



SUPPORTERS of deposed Thai premier Thaksin Shinawatra shout slogans as they parade during an anti-government protest in Bangkok.

Thai 'Red Shirts' vow to shut down Bangkok with new rally

THAILAND'S red-shirted protesters vowed to "shut down" Bangkok with an anti-government rally Saturday, defying the government which had raised the stakes with new security measures.

The "Red Shirt" supporters of deposed prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra are in their second week of rolling demonstrations, demanding snap elections to replace a government they say is illegitimate and backed only by the nation's elite.

Their numbers, which had peaked at more than 100,000 people, had begun to wane but the movement's spirits were revived with a carnival-style parade last Saturday that drew around 65,000.

"On Saturday we will shut down Bangkok and rally at provincial halls across the country," said Jatuporn Prompan, a leader of the Reds, who have used their own blood to splatter the prime minister's house and offices.

Jatuporn did not give details but said the event would be bigger than last weekend's noisy but peaceful procession, which saw a convoy of protesters in cars, trucks and motorbikes snake through the capital's teeming streets. Authorities escalated their response Monday, saying personnel guarding key sites would be armed because the government was "very concerned" after several minor grenade attacks.



UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE, ABEOKUTA (UNAAB)

ACADEMIC CALENDAR FOR 2009/2010 SESSION

| | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Arrival and Registration (Fresh Students) | Tuesday, April 6, 2010 |
| Arrival and Registration (Returning Undergraduates) | Thursday, April 8, 2010 |
| Orientation Programmes | Tues. April 6 – Thur. April 8, 2010 |
| First Semester Lectures Begin | Monday, April 12, 2010 |
| COLNAS Inaugural Lecture | Wednesday, April 21, 2010 |
| Late Registration with Penalty Begins | Monday, April 26, 2010 |
| Late Registration with Penalty Ends | Monday, May 3, 2010 |
| MATRICULATION | Wednesday, May 12, 2010 |
| COLVET Inaugural Lecture | Wednesday, June 23, 2010 |
| First Semester Lectures End | Saturday, June 19, 2010 |
| First Semester Examination Begins | Monday, June 28, 2010 |
| First Semester Examination Ends | Saturday, July 10, 2010 |
| Senate to consider First Semester | |
| Examination Results | Thursday, July 29, 2010 |
| Second Semester Lectures Begin | Monday, July 19, 2010 |
| COLERM Inaugural Lecture | Wednesday, August 4, 2010 |
| COLAMRUD Inaugural Lecture | Wednesday, September 22, 2010 |
| Second Semester Lectures End | Saturday, September 25, 2010 |
| Second Semester Examination Begins | Monday, October 4, 2010 |
| Second Semester Examination Ends | Saturday, October 16, 2010 |
| Senate to consider Second Semester | |
| Examination Results and End of Session | Thursday, October 28, 2010 |

Signed

Adeleke Adeboye
For: Registrar

MATTERS ARISING

Issues of Jurisdiction

The ruling of the Federal High Court, Lagos Judicial Division, which nullified the election of Alhaji Aliko Dangote as the President of the Nigerian Stock Exchange fills me with grave concerns from a legal standpoint.

In spite of the avowed desire of the court to maintain the sanctity and integrity of the judiciary as the third arm of the government, nullifying the election of Aliko Dangote as the President of the Nigerian Stock Exchange by the court's ruling of March 12, 2010 was made in clear violation of well settled legal principles.

From the facts gleaned in this matter, I understand that Aliko Dangote and the Nigerian Stock Exchange filed Preliminary objections on grounds of lack of jurisdiction and lack of locus standi on the part of the Plaintiffs.

It is a position of law that a judge should not exercise judicial powers of adjudication in which his competence to do so in the matter before him is being challenged and that where there is such a challenge to his jurisdiction the judge's jurisdiction at that stage is restricted to the exercise of ascertaining whether or not the court has jurisdiction to entertain the matter.

Besides the Plaintiffs may not even have the locus standi in this matter as the matter involves election of persons into the management position in a private company. In a private company only the members of the private company have rights to challenge any irregularity done in the affairs of the company.

It would appear the ruling was made in violation of the rule in *Foss v. Habottle*, which has been codified in Section 299 of The Companies and Allied Matters Act 1990 which states that:

subject to the provisions of this Act, where irregularity has been committed in the course of a Company's affairs or any wrong has been done to the company, only the company can sue to remedy that wrong and only the company can ratify the irregular conduct.

The Supreme Court has also considered this provision in the case of *Abubakri v. Smith* (1976) 6SC24.

One wonders why the court did not hear the preliminary objections challenging the jurisdiction of the court and the issue of locus standi raised by the Respondents which are very fundamental in this matter before making an order. In my opinion, we are now faced with a situation in which orders are made, without knowing whether or not the Plaintiffs has the right to sue and whether the court has the jurisdiction to entertain the matter. It is pertinent to point out that if the court eventually finds that it has no jurisdiction in the matter or the Plaintiffs have no locus standi in the matter, a great damage would have been done to some of the Respondents.

More so, the court order which the court held was breached and which resulted to the ruling of 12th March 2010 may be a nullity on the ground that it was a step taken in relation to a matter in which the court lacks jurisdiction (*NIGERIAN COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION VS. MTN (NIG) COMMUNICATION LTD*).

In any case since Alhaji Aliko Dangote has filed a Notice of Appeal and a Stay of Execution of the order of the Court pending Appeal, Alhaji Aliko Dangote can still function as the President of the Nigerian Stock Exchange and will act in that capacity until the Appeal is heard and determined. He stated that Alhaji Aliko Dangote also has the right to approach the Court of Appeal to grant him a stay of execution of the order of the court made on the 12th March 2010, if the pending application for stay of execution is refused by the Federal High Court.

Alhaji Aliko Dangote cannot be said to be in contempt of the court order if he continues to function as the President of the Nigerian Stock Exchange as he has taken positive steps by filing an Appeal against the ruling of the court and an application for stay of execution of the court order of the 12th March 2010. Besides, the Federal High Court is not the final court in Nigeria, Alhaji Aliko Dangote has the right to appeal on the matter to the Court of Appeal and subsequently to the Supreme Court of Nigeria.

The Supreme Court has held in a plethora of cases that where a party is appealing against a matter or order in which an order has been made against him and is asking for stay of execution pending the determination of the appeal, he would not be liable in contempt merely because he had not obeyed the order which he is appealing against or which he wants stayed pending the appeal. This is because the exercise of the right to apply for a stay by a party whom an order is made against pending his appeal is not treated as a disobedience to the order he is appealing against (*Mobil oil Nig. Ltd vs Assan*) and (*FATB vs Ezegebu*).

In *Odogwu v. Odogwu* the Supreme Court held that the common law rule precluding persons in disobedience permits of an exception where the order disobeyed was made without jurisdiction or where the party in disobedience is challenging the validity of the order.

In conclusion, given the circumstances Alhaji Aliko Dangote will still function as the President of the Nigerian Stock Exchange until otherwise ordered by the Court of Appeal as he had filed a Notice of Appeal and an application for Stay of Execution of the orders made by the court on the 12th March 2010.

Signed

Mr. T. Taiwo

Legal Practitioner, former Secretary and former 2nd Vice President of the Nigerian Bar Association Lagos Branch

S. A. TANKO YAKASAI OFR

NO.45 SAGIR KUMASHI STREET OFF HADEJIA ROAD, YANKABA, KANO.
08067779280

His Excellency,
The Senate President,
Senator David Mark GCON,
National Assembly,
Three Arms Zone,
Abuja.

March 22nd, 2010.

Your Excellency,

ILLEGAL DISSOLUTION OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE FEDERATION AND OTHER ILLEGAL ACTS OF 'ACTING PRESIDENT' GOODLUCK JONATHAN

I write to convey to Your Excellency my concern over recent happenings in our country with particular reference to a number of actions taken by His Excellency acting President Dr. Goodluck Jonathan which I consider illegal and unconstitutional. Such actions include the replacement of the National Security Adviser and the dissolution of the Executive Council of the Federation. It is my firm believe that these actions are capable of raising tension and exacerbating the present political challenges facing the country. Besides, they can have a substantially destabilising impact in a diverse, multi-ethnic and multi-religious society such as ours. My concern arose from the fact that I happened to be one of the few remaining Nigerians who fought for freedom, independence and democracy for the country. It may interest Your Excellency to know that I have put in some sixty years in that fight and I would not like to see that endeavour destroyed by people who least contributed towards its realisation.

2. On Wednesday, March 17, 2010, the Acting President Goodluck Jonathan purportedly dissolved the Executive Council of the Federation put together by President Umaru Musa Yar'adua. From the short statement made by the former Minister of Information and Communications, Professor Dora Akunyili, after the council meeting, no reason was given for this extraordinary decision. Going by newspaper reports, it is apparently clear that that decision was not taken with full consultation and consent of the major stakeholders such as your good self. Indeed, some reports stated that you cautioned against this move as it could disrupt the nation's political stability.

3. Moreover, it will be recalled that in your statement to the media after the Senate passed the resolution conferring on the Vice-President Goodluck Jonathan, the status of 'Acting President', you indicated the limit of his temporary mandate pending when President Yar'adua resumes duty. You declared that that Dr Jonathan will oversee the affairs of the nation and administer the Presidency until the President resumes duty. The senate did not confer on Dr Jonathan the status of a substantive president and neither did it mandate him to liquidate the political and administrative infrastructure of that presidency. Dr. Jonathan Goodluck has not been sworn in as President of the country. The oath of office administered to him was that of the Vice President and it is the only subsisting oath of office which is supposed to guide the actions of the Vice President. A copy of that statement ascribed to you as reported in the media which has never been refuted is attached for ease of reference.

4. Yet, by the way and manner he is proceeding, Acting President Jonathan is behaving as if he has a full mandate that comes with winning an election and taking the oath of office as Nigeria's substantive president. He began by constituting a Presidential Advisory Council, a body unknown to the constitution, and whose operation is illegally financed from the fund appropriated by the National Assembly. He followed this up with the setting up of a Contract Review committee, another extra-constitutional body that is now discharging the duties of the Public Appropriation Agency, a body established by an act of the National Assembly to supervise due process, contracts review, price monitoring and intelligence and contracts certification functions. This is not all. He removed from office President Yar'adua's National security Adviser, General Sarki Mukhtar (rt) and replaced him with General Aliyu Gusau (rt) for yet to be explained reasons. He has now dissolved the Executive Council of the Federation set up by President Umaru Yar'adua.

Another key pointer to this is Acting President Jonathan's predilection towards appointing into key positions those who are known to be vehemently opposed to President Yar'adua or those who President Yar'adua relieved of their duties who are likely to nurse ill will towards him. It is a common knowledge that though a friend to President Yar'adua's late senior brother, General Aliyu Gusau contested against him in the PDP presidential primaries; it is on record that General T. Y. Danjuma in a Guardian interview of February 17th and 24th, 2008 called President Yar'adua unprintable names, and apparently holds him in utmost contempt; Colonel Kayode Are who was removed by President Yar'adua as the Director-General of the State Security Services (SSS) and who Dr Jonathan has brought in as General Gusau's Chief of Staff/Director of Operations and the much talked about possibility of General Azazi who President Yar'adua removed as Chief of Defence Staff, as Dr Jonathan's possible Minister of Defence. You would wonder why the Vice-president is hobnobbing with people known to be at odds with the President. It is reported in the media that a move has been made to replace the Chief Security Officer of the President and his ADC without his expressed approval or requesting for such a change. One begins to wonder what the Vice President plans to achieve by surrounding himself with President Yar'adua's seeming opponents and those who may not wish him well. Besides, why taking steps that will make the President vulnerable and expose him to dangers at this critical juncture?

5. It is pertinently obvious that Acting President Jonathan, his key advisers and handlers are ready to do whatever possible to declare President Yar'adua's presidency dead, and have embarked upon a new presidency without any mandate and sovereign powers and authority from the Nigerian electorate. Yet, President Yar'adua still remains the democratically elected President of this country. He has neither resigned nor has he been removed from that office in accordance with any of the four conditions stipulated in our constitution. The most important unanswered question is **WHY THE HURRY and WHY THE DESPERATION?** I therefore call on Your Excellency to determine if this is so, and if the resolution the Senate reached under your leadership on the basis of the 'doctrine of necessity' that confers on the Vice-President Jonathan the status of Acting President extends to terminating the presidency of Alhaji Umaru Yar'adua.

6. Information making round is that on Tuesday, March 23rd 2010, Acting President Jonathan will submit the list of the first batch of six ministerial nominees for screening and confirmation by the Senate. On that list will be the name of General Azazi (rt) who he intends to assign the portfolio of Ministry of Defence. It is believed that upon confirmation, General Azazi will quickly ask all the service chiefs appointed by President Yar'adua to submit their letters of resignation whereupon they will be removed from office. These officers include the Chief of Defence Staff, Chief of Army Staff, Chief of Air Staff and the Chief of Naval Staff.

7. Information circulating is that Acting President Jonathan will immediately appoint a Muslim Chief of Army Staff in place of General Abdurahman Dambazau on a temporary basis, in order to maybe assuage the possible concern that his acting position is pursued along a narrow, sectional line but this temporary Muslim Chief of Army Staff will be replaced by a general from the home state of the Vice President at a later date. All this scheming is being orchestrated to get rid of the Army Chief of Staff General Abdurahman Dambazau who has been the subject of campaign of calumny on the

grounds of his religion, nor more nor less. Historically, the place of origin of the Chief of Army staff and the other service chiefs has never been subject of controversy except in the case of General Dambazau. It is on record that since 1999 the following Chiefs of Army Staffs who have been Christians have served their fatherland diligently and no Moslem raised any issue on their religious and other background. The officers in question are General Victor Malu, General Agwai, General Azazi and the late General Lukah. They, just like the current Chief of Army Staff, and the entire Service Chiefs were not appointed because of their ethnic status, state of origin or religion but because they are highly trained professional men who discharge their duties and responsibilities competently, efficiently and effectively and who attained their respective positions on merit.

8. In the bid to grab total presidential power, Acting President Jonathan is being goaded on a path that may draw and suck in the nation's armed forces into the volatile political situation of the moment. This will be a dangerous path to tread; a path whose consequences nobody can predict. Suspicious also will be any move to tamper with the position of the commander of the Presidential Brigade of Guards at this point in time. This will be seen as the first step in the complete dismantling of the military and security infrastructure put together for the protection of President Yar'adua. I always warned on the dangers potent in the politicization of our armed forces and other security agencies.

9. I am writing to draw your attention to these troubling developments because the Senate under your leadership passed the resolution that conferred on Dr Jonathan the status of acting President. The action of the Senate was probably guided by best of intention to provide for smooth administration of the federation. I am not aware of any law or constitutional provisions that would make it possible for Dr. Jonathan to have unlimited powers to dismantle President Yar'adua's presidency; indeed to render his presidency dead.

10. His Excellency may wonder why I take pain to highlight my concern over the actions of the Acting President. I am a Nigerian who is in his mid eighties who can leave this world any time. While I do not wish to go away at any time, but I know I cannot have another eighty four years ahead. But I have children and grand children whom I would like to be proud citizens of Nigeria and who would cherish it as their country. It will be a very painful thing for me to see someone taking steps that will put the stability of this country at risk. I believe there are millions of parents and grandparents like me who would have the same feelings. I urge you as the Senate President of the senate and number three citizen of our great country to do whatever is in your power not to allow anybody to do anything that will jeopardize the stability and progress of this great nation. May the Almighty Allah give you and your colleagues the wisdom and courage to do the right thing. Ameen.

I extend to Your Excellency and other distinguished senators as always, the assurances of my deepest respect, consideration and high esteem. God bless.
Sincerely,

S.A. Tanko Yakasai OFR

Cc: The Speaker of the House of Representatives,
His Excellency, Honourable Dimeji Bankole CFR
Principal Officers of the Senate
Distinguished Senators
Principal Officers of the House of Representatives



*Office of Head Service,
Kwara State, Ilorin.*

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

**FOR KWARA STATE CIVIL SERVANTS, TEACHERS, PENSIONERS
AND POLITICAL/PUBLIC OFFICE HOLDERS**

All Political/Public Office Holders, Civil Servants, Teachers and Pensioners who are yet to be audited are advised to avail themselves with another opportunity for screening.

It is important to note that failure to seize this opportunity may lead to considering such a person as ghost worker.

Venue:

- (A) Office of Accountant General*
i-Civil servants
ii-Teachers
iii-Political /Public office holders
(B) Pension Office
Pensioner Only

Date:

Monday 22nd to Friday 27th March, 2010.

Time:

8:00 a.m. To 4:00 p.m. (Everyday)

Signed

ALHAJI DABARAKO MOHAMMED
Head of Service



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF FINANCE

HEADQUARTERS, ABUJA

INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION AND TENDER

A. The first phase of the head Office Building of the Federal Ministry of Finance presently under rehabilitation is nearing completion. As such, the Ministry is now commencing tendering procedure for the **general furnishing of the Office Complex.**

B. Interested reputable firms are hereby requested to submit the following Pre-qualification documents for consideration:-

1. Certificate of Incorporation;
2. Company Audited Account for the Past Three Years Prepared by a Registered Accounting Firm;
3. Evidence of payment of Company Income Tax for the past Three years;
4. VAT Registration Certificate and Evidence of past VAT Remittances;
5. Evidence of Financial Capability:
 - a. Bank Reference Letter;
 - b. Bank Statement or Evidence of financial backing from Bank.
6. List of Similar Projects handled in the past stating contract sums evidence of award and completion;
7. List and verifiable details of Plants and Equipment together with age and location where applicable;
8. Company Profile including evidence of key professionally qualified production personnel and experience;
9. Evidence of an existing Factory, Showroom, Art Gallery, and verifiable quality finished products, all of which must be of export quality with a proof of International Standard Compliance.

C. All pre-qualification and tender documents should be sent in a sealed envelope marked at the top

right hand corner.

"PRE-QUALIFICATION AND TENDER FOR GENERAL FURNISHING OF FMF HEADQUARTERS OFFICE COMPLEX PHASE I, ABUJA" and should reach the following address not later than 10 a.m. **19th April, 2010.**

The Secretary,

Ministerial Tenders Board,
Federal Ministry of Finance,
Headquarters,
Phase II,
Room 040,
Abuja.

Note:

- (i) Tender documents can be collected from the above address between the hours of 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. On Monday 5th April, 2010 to Friday 9th April, 2010;
- (ii) Tender will close by 10 a.m. on 19th April, 2010 and no Tender will be entertained after this time;
- (iii) Tenders will be opened by 12 noon on the same day at the 4th Floor Conference Room on the Phase II Office Complex;
- (iv) Incorrectly addressed, incomplete or late submission will be rejected;
- (v) The Federal Ministry of Finance is not obliged to include any Company in the bid or to make final award to any Company.

Signed
Permanent Secretary,
Federal Ministry of Finance

BUSINESS

0805 1000 536



MANAGING Director of Aso Savings and Loans Hassan Usman (second right), Salma Mohammed, head of human capital Aso Savings, Joseph Allin, Chairman of the occasion and Mr. Olanrewaju Samson, MD of FHA Homes at the ground breaking ceremony of the Luvu Madaki Housing Project in Masaka, Nasarawa State on Thursday.

'Islamic banking is the answer'

From Chris Agabi, Lagos

ISLAMIC banking is the answer to Nigeria's economy because it "promotes infrastructural development which Nigeria critically needs," says Mrs. Hajara Adeola, the managing director and chief executive officer of Lotus Capital Limited. She said the establishment of Islamic financing in Nigeria is rife following the plan by the CBN to discontinue universal banking for specialised banks. The Jaiz International Bank has not been able to take off due to the N25 billion compulsory capitalisation benchmark for banks. She said it is possible to have Islamic banking with the CBN relaxing the capitalisation base for banks. She said banks categorisation will: "bring banks nearer to the people and offering specialised service. Not all banks are international banks everywhere in the world" she said. Adeola spoke yesterday at the five-day training workshop on Islamic finance and investment products put together by Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN) and Lotus Capital Limited.

BPE Deputy Directors kick at 'irregular' appointments

By Yunus Abdulhamid

DEPUTY Directors at the nation's privatisation agency, the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) have petitioned Acting President Goodluck Jonathan over what they described as "unusual appointment of acting directors" by suspended Director General, Dr Christopher Anyanwu.

The petition letter which was exclusively obtained by Daily Trust was dated February 27, 2010 and addressed to the Acting President with a caption: "Petition over recent appointment of acting Directors in the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE)."

They are asking Jonathan to intervene by insisting on the provisions of the law as "these appointments have greatly dampened staff morale and further exacerbate the already polarised situation in the BPE. No known intervention had come from the presidency as at the time of filing this report. It was forwarded to the Presidency a week before Anyanwu got his suspension, fuelling speculations that it may have also

played a role in his removal paving the way for Ms Bolanle Onagoruwa to assume DG in acting capacity as the most senior director then.

Bolanle was however due for retirement since last week, March 18 following the revised public service rule which took effect late last year for attaining up to eight years as director. The petition was signed by 12 out of the 20 Deputy Directors at the BPE.

It reads in part: "Contrary to the provisions of the Public Service Regulations and extant provisions of the approved BPE manual, where only management committee of BPE is vested with powers to recommend to the National Council on Privatisation matters of promotion and acting appointments of management staff cadre, the (then) DG BPE has unilaterally and without consultation, appointed four acting directors, three of which are relatively junior deputy directors, superseding their much more senior colleagues, without any competing justification for that, either on grounds of competence, exceptional accomplishment and similar considerations."

The Deputy Directors also accused Anyanwu of ignoring regional balance and federal character. The situation, *Daily Trust* investigations showed that in the nine directorate positions, the South East has three directors, North-Central, three, South-South represented by one who is considered to be very junior, having been employed as Assistant Director in 2008 and promoted to Deputy Director in March 2009. And the South-West would have no director when Mrs. Onagoruwa leaves. *Daily Trust* learnt there are qualified and competent deputy directors from that region at the BPE.

Beneficiaries of the 'lopsided' appointments are: Mr Chigbo Anichebe who hails from Enugu and was formerly the head of Public Communications, now in charge of Electrical Power Department, Mohammed Baba, from Kogi State, in charge of Mines and Steel, Dr Akpotaire Vincent from Delta State heading the Facilities and Agricultural Department and Mr. Omotayo Adido, in charge of Post privatisation.

Stock Market Index

| | |
|----------|------------------------|
| Date : | Monday, March 22, 2010 |
| Index : | 24,673.55 |
| Deals : | 7,279 |
| Volume : | 423,102,860 |
| Value : | N 4,534,446,830.90 |
| Cap. : | N 5,962,531,496,983.29 |

Trust Index

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|----------------|
| Inflation | → | 12.3% |
| GDP | → | 6.90% |
| Budget | → | N3.1tr |
| External Reserves Acct | → | \$41.5bn |
| Excess Crude Acct | → | \$3.2bn |
| Poverty Ratio | → | 54.4% |
| Monetary Policy Rate | → | 6% |
| Banks | → | 24 |
| Oil Price | → | \$77 a barrel |
| Power Supply | → | 2,500MW |
| Oil output per day | → | 2.5mbd |
| Broad Money Supply | → | N10,796,734.5m |
| Credit to Private Sector | → | N10,018,035.3m |
| Inter-Bank Rate | → | 1.1600% |
| Treasury Bills | → | 2.02% |
| Deposit Rate | → | 12.28% |
| Prime Lending Rate | → | 18.38% |

| CBN EXCHANGE RATES | | | | BUREAU DE CHANGE RATES | |
|--------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---|------|
| | Buying (NGN) | Central (NGN) | Selling (NGN) | | |
| CFA | 0.29 | 0.3 | 0.31 | BUYING | |
| DANISH KRONER | 26.8195 | 26.9105 | 27.0015 | DOLLAR..... | N150 |
| EURO | 199.6533 | 200.3306 | 201.0078 | EURO..... | N205 |
| POUNDS STERLING | 223.1489 | 223.9059 | 224.6628 | POUNDS..... | N231 |
| RIYAL | 39.3067 | 39.44 | 39.5733 | SELLING | |
| SDR | 225.2714 | 226.0356 | 226.7997 | DOLLAR..... | N152 |
| SWISS FRANC | 138.991 | 139.4625 | 139.934 | EURO..... | N207 |
| US DOLLAR | 147.4 | 147.9 | 148.4 | POUNDS..... | N233 |
| WALUA | 225.6026 | 226.3679 | 227.1331 | Source: S&J Bureau de Change, Wuse Zone 4, Abuja. | |
| YEN | 1.6246 | 1.6301 | 1.6356 | | |

Business

Power generation now 4,000MW, NNPC says

From Mohammed Shosanya, Lagos

NIGERIA'S power generation has peaked between 3,000 mega watts and 4,000 mega watts due to the improved gas supply, the Group Managing Director of Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Dr. Sanusi Mohammed Barkindo has said.

Barkindo, who spoke yesterday in Lagos at a stakeholders' forum on gas to power, entitled, "Achieving alignment for delivering gas power in Nigeria," also said the improved gas supply is due to current peace in the Niger Delta following the recent amnesty deal the Federal Government struck with the militant groups in the region.

He therefore assured Nigerians of constants power supply in the country.

According to him, the gas industry was beset with myriad of challenges, which incapacitated his company and other joint venture partners not to meet the set target of the gas supply to the domestic users Nigeria for the past two year.

The GMD said that the country had commenced gas supply to the West African Gas Pipeline (WAGP).

Recanting that the efforts of the Federal Government in the amnesty programmes had pocket militants' attacked on its gas pipelines, Barkindo said the NNPC had disbursed N11 billion to repairs of vandalised gas pipelines.

In his words: "One of the major challenges which we have faced, in the last two years, is the inability to meet our domestic gas supply of 1.2 billion standard cubic feet,

which we have agreed with between the industry and government, and fund to make available in the financial year of 2008 and 2009.

"Two factors have militated against the target of 1.2 billion standard cubic feet of gas. One is security. Thank God for the wisdom of government as well as the collaboration and support of ex-militants. We have started seeing the benefits of the amnesty programme. We are hoping that we will be able to sustain the amnesty programme.

"The number two is what we called operational challenges. The 1.2 billion standard cubic feet of gas was distributed among joint venture companies and NNPC. In each of these companies there have been internal challenges.

"This meeting, which we have conveyed, is going to give us the opportunity to jointly review and address the challenges and come out with a joint programme of action that is realistic, flexible and that will enable us achieve the set target of 1.2 billion standard cubic feet and bring forward the projects that are funded in the vision 20: 2020.

"For the first time, we have started supplying West African Gas Pipeline (WAGP), which we had shut down to be able to supply for domestic gas utilisation because production has started going up.

"We have also started generating 3,000 to 4,000 mega watts. Hopefully, this figure will rise and this has also made us to supply to West African Gas Pipeline. We need your support because without this problem being solved the 20: 2020 will be a mirage," he stressed.



CBN Governor Sanusi Lamido Sanusi

CBN sells \$171m forex

By Idris Ahmed

THE Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) yesterday sold \$171 million at N148.31 to the dollar at its bi-weekly forex auction.

Traders demanded for \$182 million from the CBN's initial offer of \$200 million but only got \$171 million, showing \$11 million short of demand.

CBN sold \$200 million at N148.40 per dollar at its previous auction on Wednesday, last week. Traders demanded for \$268 million at that auction.

On Monday 15, CBN sold \$200 million at the auction where traders demanded for \$278 million.

A week earlier, traders made no demand in the CBN's of \$250 million offer. \$174 million was later sold at the forex auction. Only 17 banks participated in the auction.

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Business/International

British Airways strike cancels dozens of flights



BRITISH Airways has cancelled more than 1000 flights after its cabin crew launched a three-day strike, wreaking havoc on the plans of tens of thousands of passengers just before the busy spring holiday season.

DOZENS of British Airways flights have so far been cancelled on the third day of strike action by cabin crew.

Heathrow has seen the greatest disruption, with BA's website showing 56 cancellations out of 120 departures scheduled before 1200 GMT on Monday.

The joint general secretary of Unite, Tony Woodley, said the strike was "costing the company a fortune", with "hundreds of planes grounded".

But BA said large numbers of cabin crew had reported for work.

Disruption at other airports appears to be less, with Gatwick reporting five cancellations out of 32 scheduled departures on Monday morning.

Manchester has seen four cancellations out of 14 departures, while Glasgow has cancelled five out of 14.

The in-flight crew were mostly staffed from pilots, who did a fantastic job and we saw no difference in the service.

It is not clear what effect the strike has had on Monday's arrivals, or how many more flights have been delayed.

BA and Unite also dispute the numbers of staff who have reported for work since the strike began on Saturday.

The Unite union says only 300 of the 2,200 cabin crew scheduled to work during the weekend turned up.

But BA says nearly 98% of staff reported for work at Gatwick and more than half showed up at Heathrow.

In a video posted on BA's website and on YouTube, chief executive Willie Walsh said the atmosphere at Terminal 5 on Sunday was "very positive", with "very good numbers" of cabin crew turning up for work.

The airline said more than 60% of customers flew on Sunday.

But the strike is still expected to cost the airline millions in lost revenues as a result of cancelled flights and lower passenger numbers.

Speaking to union members later, Unite leader Tony Woodley said a fresh offer recently put forward by British Airways had been rejected as "not good enough" for cabin crew, but said the union was still willing to negotiate.

He also confirmed that he had been talking to Gordon Brown about the strike and was grateful for his attempts to encourage the two sides to reach a negotiated settlement.

BA aims to fly 65% of passengers during the first three-day strike.

The strike action is the latest episode in a long-running dispute over changes to pay and conditions by BA that Unite claims are being unfairly imposed on its members.

Workers are particularly angry that last November BA reduced the number of crew on long-haul flights and is introducing a two-year pay freeze from 2010.

The airline also proposed new contracts with lower pay for fresh recruits.

BA suffered a loss before tax of £342m for the nine months to the end of December 2009 and says it needs to cut costs in order to survive. *BBC.*

Lufthansa pilots plan a new strike

PILOTS at Europe's biggest airline, Lufthansa, will stage a new four-day strike from 13 April, following the breakdown of talks with management.

Pilot union, Vereinigung Cockpit, says it cannot accept a proposed pay freeze unless bosses stick to what it says was an "agreed deal" on job security. A similar strike in late February was called off after one day after both sides agreed to new negotiations.

That strike was set to cost the airline around \$25m a day. The Cockpit union said Lufthansa was offering a 21-month

pay freeze combined with worsening conditions.

It said in a statement: "We can only agree to a pay freeze or even reducing salaries if Lufthansa sticks to an already-agreed deal on safeguarding jobs."

It means Lufthansa pilots will join colleagues at the carrier's Germanwings affiliate and Lufthansa Cargo in striking to press for more job security.

The pilots say they will wait until after the Easter holiday to minimise disruption to passengers.

The German airline said in a statement that its latest offer was "compatible with the company's situation and economic conditions".

Like other carriers, Lufthansa is trying to push through cost-cutting plans in the face of the global financial crisis, soaring fuel costs and competition from low-cost rivals.

The new problems at Lufthansa come as cabin crew at rival British Airways continue their strike over pay and conditions, now in its third day. *BBC.*

Germany 'to impose banking levy'

GERMANY'S coalition government is reportedly planning a banking levy to protect taxpayers from the costs of bank bail-outs.

Leading conservative politician Volker Kauder said the money would stop banks from relying on state-funded rescues.

The levy would raise "billions of euros" from the financial sector, he has predicted. The move has been approved in principle by the coalition, he told German TV station ZDF.

Mr Kauder, the parliamentary leader of Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservative bloc, said coalition leaders agreed that banks "cannot in future gamble at the taxpayer's expense".

"Provisions must be made so that they - if it gets difficult - pay for things themselves," he added.

The German government dug deep into its treasury coffers to provide a €500 billion (\$679 billion) rescue package to shore up the banking system late in 2008.

The new proposal seems to be designed to dissuade banks from taking risks in future which would see them begging for more government hand-outs.

Mr Kauder said that the size of the levy would vary depending upon the amount of systemic risk carried by a bank, with savings banks and co-operative banks paying less than banks that carried

out more speculative activities.

Mrs Merkel said Germany's Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble would present proposals before Easter.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has been asked by the G20 group of wealthiest countries to examine how banks can best contribute to the costs of insuring themselves against failure.

But so far countries have adopted a piecemeal approach to the issue.

In January, US President Barack Obama said Wall Street must repay \$117bn (£72bn) to taxpayers and criticised banks for "massive profits and obscene bonuses". *BBC.*

Shell, PetroChina ready to pay \$4.3bn for Arrow

ROYAL Dutch Shell and PetroChina have had an improved 3.44bn Australian dollars (\$3.14bn, £2.1bn) takeover bid for Australia's Arrow Energy accepted.

Shell and PetroChina's new joint bid is up from their \$2.96bn offer made earlier this month.

It now needs approval by Australian authorities and Arrow shareholders.

The deal would give the bidders a foothold in Australia's emerging coal seam gas industry, which looks set to become a big exporter for the country.

Arrow's largest asset

includes Australia's biggest holding of methane gas.

"This transaction crystallises the value of more mature assets that have been built in Arrow's Queensland business through the rigorous execution of our business strategy," said Arrow chairman John Reynolds.

"In addition, we are creating an exciting opportunity for Arrow Energy shareholders to continue to participate in a portfolio of earlier-stage development assets in Australia and the broader Asian region."

China's interest in Australia's energy assets is

being closed watched.

PetroChina in August bought \$41bn of LNG from Gorgon, underlining fast-developing China's appetite for natural resources.

In December China's Yanzhou Coal secured a \$3.2bn buyout of Felix Resources, while miner Rio Tinto rejected Chinalco's \$19.5 billion cash injection in June.

But relations between Australia and China have been strained over the trial in Shanghai of four employees of Rio accused of bribery and industrial espionage during iron ore contract negotiations. *BBC.*

Star Interview

400,000 babies are b - UNAIDS boss

The Executive Director of UNAIDS (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS), Mr Michel Sidibe, was in the country recently, to drum up support at the highest level of government for the fight against HIV/AIDS. In this interview with **Ruby Rabi**, among other issues, he states that the prevention of mother to child transmission (PMTCT) should be the next focus of African governments. Excerpts:

WHAT exactly is your mission in Africa?

Let me start by saying that during the last few years we have made tremendous progress in our fight against HIV/AIDS. Though the challenges have been quite enormous. There was a 70% prediction on new infection in the world, with 400,000 of those new infections discovered in Africa alone. But thankfully in the last few years we have seen great success being recorded in the area of treatment in Africa. Previously we had only about 60,000 people on treatment, but today we have more than 3.5 million people on treatment, which has drastically reduced mortality. In some countries we have already seen a decline in mortality by 60%, like Botswana, where they operate the Universal Access.

One of my mission statements is to make societal problems, my top priority, so that it helps us tackle social injustice, distribution of resources, gender issues among others.

My greatest concern is to succeed in the elimination of HIV virus, especially in the area of prevention of mother to child transmission. I hope to ensure that we have a new generation of new babies without HIV/AIDS, but unfortunately more than a thousand babies

born every year in Africa are still infected.

In what areas do you think Nigeria can actively participate?

That is why I am in Nigeria, I personally think we will never win the fight against HIV/AIDS, if we don't have Universal Access in Nigeria. In Nigeria alone we have a population of about 150 million people with over 3 million people infected. We have more than 1,000 new infections every day, it will be almost impossible to really stop this epidemic and win, if Nigerian is not taking its part seriously.

One of the reasons I am in Nigeria is to make sure that the commitment made by member states during the Abuja Global Conference a few years ago, which encouraged all governments to spend at least 15% of their budget on health, is followed through.

This visit will also provide an avenue to perfect monitoring strategies and share best experiences. Abuja has been for us a reference point for so many things, the creation of a Global Fund to fight HIV, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Are you impressed with the Nigerian government's commitment to the fight against HIV/AIDS?

AIDS?

I think Nigeria is not Lesotho or Botswana. We are talking about a country that is advanced in several things, and a country with 774 local governments.

It is so complex that you need to have a different health delivery system to reach the people out there. So far, the programme has been producing results. Few years ago, we had less than 200,000 people on treatment. Now we are talking of support to over 3 million people on treatment. It's not enough though, we need to reach people who are not on the ART treatment. We have been able to build a movement with the civil society, and also meet with some members of the private sector, to partner with us

in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

More than that, what was really interesting for me, was my visit to Kaduna. I went to Kaduna and I had the chance, not just to meet with the governor, but with the deputy governor too. I went to Pampaida village (a partnership with UNAIDS, aiming to stop all new infections among children) and I found out that in Pampaida village there are people coming together to integrate community cooperation. Is that not wonderful, revolution in practice. The Millennium Village Project experience there has been very good, because I saw that they were reducing infant mortality, and the level of poverty with whatever they were doing there.

Our meeting with the Acting President, Goodluck Jonathan was, because I remembered that his commitment to HIV/AIDS did not happen now. When he was Governor of Bayelsa State, he introduced one of the best social insurance programmes on the continent, which ensured that monthly allowance of 10,000 naira was given to people living with HIV.

He told me that we must do everything possible to make sure that we don't have babies born with HIV, and also try to keep our mothers alive.

DO you think that African Governments have kept their promise?

I think some part of the

promises has been fulfilled. I just came from Botswana where they are having almost 40% of their budget, allocated to health. Just yesterday I got out a press release about South Africa. They mentioned the new budget; 1.1 billion dollars for HIV...I think the call from Abuja has been perfectly internalized by many governments.

But from my point of view our greatest challenge is how we treat today, the marginal group, the vulnerable group, the people without voices, and thus ensure that those people who are in the third world, part of an effective health service delivery system. For me that is the challenge.

Today one witnesses a growing epidemic which

“No, I am not satisfied. I have to be very honest with you. We don't have any more babies born in other parts of the world living with HIV. It is not acceptable that we have 400,000 babies born every year in this continent with the disease, and we know that we can stop it.”

born with HIV yearly



MICHEL Sidibe, Executive Director, UNAIDS

expanded from one level to another for example among young people. What I am seeing today is a 70% rise in infections in discordant couples. The husband is affected, and the wife is not, the wife is, and the husband is not. So how do we deal with these conditions. These issues need to be at the forefront of our new prevention programme. We have made great efforts in Africa, and moved forward since the Abuja Declaration in 2006. But unfortunately anytime we put two people on treatment we

really find more get infected. So if we don't emphasise on prevention we are not going to make it. So it is prevention, prevention and prevention.

Are you satisfied with the way funds meant for Prevention are disbursed in Africa?

I don't think so. I think for me, we need more transfer mechanism, we need more accountability, we need to make sure that resources are reaching people at the grassroots.

In many parts of the continent we have been able to mobilize huge resources. And in most cases, resources

are not disbursed properly, because people want to steal the resources, and if it is not guided it will be diverted.

We need to have a proper financial system which can help disburse flexible money from the central level to the village level.

Are you saying there is no monitoring mechanism to check the movement of funds?

We are monitoring. We are coming out with a report which will serve as an important score card, showing which country is meeting which set of progress.

Any monitoring mechanism must foster public accountability which is an integral part of our work plan. We are working with various Parliamentarians; we are working with African Parliamentarians and with the press like you, to make sure that the population could be more aware of the investments which are made in their respective country.

Are you satisfied with PMTCT, intervention in Africa?

No, I am not satisfied. I have to be very honest with you. We don't have any more babies born in other parts of the world living with HIV. It is not acceptable that we have 400,000 babies born every year in this continent with the disease, and we know that we can stop it. We know that, for example 50% of those babies will die before their first anniversary. And the remaining children will spend 40 years, 50 years on drugs. We must not also forget the 400,000 women who we must protect from transmitting the disease to their children, or women who also die because they are not on treatment.

So the issue is what must we do to have a continental vision, so that we can have a declaration in the African Union with all the leaders on HIV/AIDS.

Though we have been approaching many of the leaders in the region including President of Burkina Faso, Blaisé Compaoré and

today, the Acting President of Nigeria, Goodluck Jonathan and that of South Africa, Jacob Zuma. I think what we need is a continental Declaration by saying that we don't want to continue with this scourge of HIV in this continent, and we want to see a free generation of the HIV status. That will be the beginning of the end of the epidemic.

THE fight against HIV/AIDS for sometime now has hit a brick-wall, the federal government, some individuals and indeed some non-governmental organization are concentrating more on other diseases. There are more diseases killing Africans than HIV/AIDS, for instance malaria has killed more Africans than all the wars in the continent combined. For them they want to now focus on what is killing the people faster, is this a problem for you?

I think what we need to do is not to say that someone died from malaria, because resources are given to HIV. What we need to focus on is that all persons are entitled to live whether they are suffering from malaria or HIV, all have the same constitutional right to be alive, to live, to be able to contribute to the society.

We should have a resolute decision to invest in all these areas. I wish to say that we have almost 2million people dying of HIV/AIDS every year, and we have more people dying at an age where countries need these individuals' energy to develop. Malaria followed by HIV is the number one killer of people in our continent.

The issue of cure, where are we now in research and development?

I think this is a very good question. You will never be able to stop or stem the spread of any disease like that, without a vaccine. We have hope, we are still experimenting, but we are still far from having a vaccine. We need to continue to push on the global world to invest in research.

Business

As Nigeria going nuclear

...Nigeria turns to Nuclear Energy for electricity, but leaves a few questions unanswered as Fidelis Mac-Leva finds in this analysis.

NIGERIA'S ambition of becoming one of the world's leading 20 economies by 2020 appears heavy on rhetoric but dismally thin in the critical area of power. And there lies Nigeria's biggest hurdle to economic development, next to corruption.

But that is all about to change, at least so says the Nigeria Atomic Energy Commission, NAEC, a government agency saddled with the task of exploring the use of nuclear energy as a possible alternative to Nigeria's current reliance on water and gas for electric power generation.

The NAEC says it is ready to commence the implementation of the 10-year strategic plan that is expected to fix Nigeria's broken power generation system to enable it fire its march to its Vision 2020 economic goal.

While inaugurating the board of NAEC President Umaru Musa Yar'adua charged the Commission to develop a roadmap for the deployment of nuclear power plants to generate electricity for Nigeria in the next ten years.

After five years of hard work, the Commission produced what it described as "the technical framework for deploying nuclear power plants for electricity generation in the country in the next ten years."

It's a three-pronged idea to be in three phases with specific timelines. The framework since received the government's imprimatur.

The plan, according to NAEC, is to use the nuclear power plants to generate, at least 1000MW of electricity and feed it into Nigeria's national grid, all by the year 2017 and then ramp it up to 4000MW another 10 years later.

Attractive as the idea of using nuclear energy to generate electricity may be, it is not without its peculiar set of challenges especially in an environment like Nigeria.

First, there is the current falling level of power generation in the country, which means that short-term, rather than long-term planning gains more urgency. This undermines, in a rather fundamental way, the realisation of the objectives of the National Power Project. Although the total installed capacity of the Power Holding Company of Nigeria, PHCN, is put at 6000MW, only less than 4,000MW is said to be available at any time.

This grid capacity which is built around hydro, gas and oil in the proportion of 31 percent [hydro], 37percent [gas] and



Ag President Goodluck Jonathan

32 percent [oil] is grossly inadequate for the nation's energy demand; especially in the face of dwindling gas supplies.

At the current level, the centralized per capita electricity generation in the country is said to be less than 30W which is not even enough to light a standard electric bulb.

Recent studies have also indicated that the projected energy demand based on current energy usage with an expected 10 percent industrial growth rate and population growth rate of 2.3 per cent is estimated at 28,360MW to 31,240MW by 2015. With Nigeria's population of about 150million, experts say these estimates appear to underestimate these needs, more so that the suppressed demand may not have been appropriately accounted

for in the models.

Based on the findings of the studies, and the estimation that only 3,000MW to 5000MW additional capacity can be harnessed from the maximum pool of 11,000MW of hydro-electricity sources in the country within the specified time frame, the country would be confronted with a possible national shortfall of 13,000MW to 18,000MW.

It is against the backdrop of these challenges that power generation through the proposed power plant, though believed to be capable of offering one of the most viable options to make up for the country's current shortfall in power generation, is seen to be a daunting task.

According to NAEC, an effective and dedicated implementation of the strategic plan

for the National Nuclear Programme would introduce, at the very least, 1000MW into the national grid in ten years and by 2027, nuclear energy would have contributed another 4000MW into the country's national generation base.

At a recent workshop by NAEC as part of efforts at implementing the strategic plan of the National Nuclear Programme, the Director General of the Sheda Science and Technology Complex [SHESTCO], Professor Sunday Thomas, reiterated government's commitment to the successful implementation of the nuclear programme. He, however, stressed the need for an efficient workforce as well as infrastructure needed to establish the Nuclear Power Plant in Nigeria.

Speaking in the same vein the Director General of NAEC thanked the IAEA for their continued support towards the implementation of Nigeria's Nuclear Energy Programme. He expressed the hope that the targeted mandate of NAEC by 2020 would be actualised.

The National Security Adviser and the Director General of NEMA who are critical stakeholders in the proposed Nuclear Plant Project also stressed the need for security awareness, high ethical standards as well as a high level of emergency preparedness as pre-conditions for the take off of the proposed Nuclear Power Plant in Nigeria.

The workshop which was organized in collaboration with the International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA, was aimed at enhancing decision making in the planning, development, implementation and sustenance of the requisite workforce for the national nuclear power programme. In attendance were leading professionals, senior academics, researchers and core stakeholder institutions from all over the country.

But beyond the endorsement of the attainment of the primary phase by the Agency Energy experts and other stakeholders have raised concerns over other critical considerations to be made prior to the launch of a Nuclear Plant.

Managing Director and chief executive of the Power

Holding Company of Nigeria, PHCN, Engineer Hussein Labo, while welcoming the idea of a Nuclear Power Plant in Nigeria, expressed concerns over the technical manpower to manage the plant.

"A Nuclear Power Plant would, no doubt, serve as a good alternative source of power in Nigeria but what of the experts that would operate the plant? If we can get them to come and operate the plant then fine", Labo said.

By its nature, according to IAEA, a nuclear power programme involves issues associated with nuclear material, ionizing radiation and the related challenges. "This is a major undertaking requiring careful planning, preparation and investment in a sustainable infrastructure that provides, legal, regulatory, technological, human and industrial support to ensure that the nuclear material is used exclusively for peaceful purposes and in a safe and secure manner..." states the IAEA in a booklet titled 'Considerations to launch a Nuclear Power Programme.'

Apart from assessment of possibilities for regional and international cooperation, concerns have also been raised over the essential task to assess the implications of installing an NPP in the national grid network, recognizing that normally, as prescribed by IAEA, no single nuclear unit should account for more than 10% of the installed capacity of the entire network.

Dr. Eberhard Grauf, an expert and consultant to the IAEA who was in Nigeria recently expressed the Agency's continuous commitment to assisting developing countries in their quest to introduce nuclear power into their energy mix.

NAEC also assured that an effective and dedicated implementation of the strategic plan for the National Nuclear Programme would introduce at least 1000MW into the national grid in ten years and by 2027, nuclear energy would have contributed at least some 4000MW into the country's national generation base.

But beyond these assurances, the key issues being raised by experts with respect to the implementation of the national nuclear power project in Nigeria are hinged on the fundamental question of obligations and commitments of Nigeria both at the national and international level.

As one expert sums up the issues rhetorically: "Has Nigeria developed a comprehensive legal framework covering all aspects of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy such as: safety, security, safeguards and liability, in addition to the commercial aspects related to the use of nuclear material?"

Based on the findings of the studies, and the estimation that only 3,000MW to 5000MW additional capacity can be harnessed from the maximum pool of 11,000MW of hydro-electricity sources in the country within the specified time frame, the country would be confronted with a possible national shortfall of 13,000MW to 18,000MW.

Business

Economy: 'Pension fund would occupy the driver's seat soon'

By Miris Ahmed

HOW has the pension scheme affected the economy positively?

The scheme has done a lot in the growth of the economy. As you have seen or heard in the various publications coming from the Pension Commission (PENCOM), assets under the scheme have grown to more than N trillion now and there is also a projection that in the next five years or so it will triple. You can imagine the impact of an asset of N1 trillion going into the economy. It has made a lot of impact especially in the government securities where we invested a lot of money which is helping in project development initiated by the government.

We have also invested in some states securities which are helping in infrastructural development of the states. We have also supported the banks by ways of placement of deposit which has helped the banks in no small measure. We have also boosted the growth of the capital market especially in the early days of the scheme.

The market is now picking up with the various initiatives coming from the government and I believe the pension fund administrators will continue to invest in the capital market.

I would say so far the scheme has been a major driver in the development of the economy and if we can borrow from what we have seen, it would help further. In Chile the same scheme we are operating has helped in no small means in being the bedrock of the Chilean's economy and I believe it will do the same in Nigeria. Give it ten years you would realise that pension fund would be the bedrock of the economy. Right now the asset is growing and in no time you would realise that there is huge pension asset looking for where to invest in.

Can you provide us with the background of the Premium Pension Limited?

A few professional colleagues of mine came up with the proposal in 2003 after the establishment of the Pension Reform Act. They wanted us to come together and establish a pension fund administra-

In the next five or more years, assets from the pension funds would drive Nigeria's economy, Chief Executive Officer of Premium Pension Limited Malam Aliyu Dikko says. He says the current N1 trillion assets of the pension fund is projected to triple in the next few years.

tor that will be the leading pension fund administrator in the country. We came together and incorporated a company which we called the First Premium Asset but on the advice of the National Pension Commission (PENCOM) we changed the name to Premium Pension Limited.

We set up the company with a vision to be the leading pension fund administrator in Nigeria and among the leading pension fund administrators in the world. I believe the journey so far has seen us working towards achieving our vision. As at today, our company is one of the leading fund administrators in Nigeria. In terms of asset under management and in terms of customer care and customer service and also in terms of return on investment, we are one of the leading PFAs in Nigeria.

How much is the asset base of the company?

For reasons of competition I may not wish to tell you the total asset base as at now, but if you are counting one, two PFAs in Nigeria today, we are one of the two with the highest asset.

What of investment?

If we go by the audited accounts which have been published and made public as at December 2008, our returns on investment is one of the highest in the industry. Again if you are counting in numbers, we are among the top two in terms of return on investment.

In terms of prompt payment of pension benefits to retirees, how far have you gone in that area?

Again our record in that direction is enviable in the industry. We have done extremely well in terms of retiree payments. So far, we have paid more than N10 billion to our retirees. We made it a policy that any retiree who retires and who has his account with us will be able to receive his retirement benefits within a month of submission of all his documents.

If he is able to submit all

the required documents, he should be able to receive his retirement benefits within one month of submission of his documents.

How many pensioners have benefitted so far?

So far we have paid more than 3,000 retirees in various institutions. As a retiree you don't have to come to our office. Once you submit your documents, give us your account number, get your account number confirmed from your bank, we would process and credit your account.

The global financial meltdown is gradually easing out, to what extent did it affect pension sector, especially the Premium Pension Limited?

As you said, it was a global financial crisis which meant that no country or industry was an exception to the crisis. However, for the pension industry in Nigeria due to the initial policy from the PENCOM limiting the total amount of asset that could be invested in the capital market, the meltdown had a minimal effect to the pension asset because the PENCOM allowed only 25 percent of the pension assets to go to the capital market. A number of PFAs including our own did not even go up to that limit in terms of investment in the capital market.

And for our company in particular, when we saw the sign of the crisis in the capital market some times in 2008 we decided to slow down our investment in the capital market as result of which at the peak of the crisis, our exposure to the capital market was less than 10 percent of our asset. So the crisis has a minimal effect to the pension industry in Nigeria and in particular to our company.

Readers would like to know which areas of the economy you invest the pension fund?

Broadly, all pension fund administrators are allowed to be invested in government securities, bonds, treasury bills, state government securities and also in

the capital market. Other areas where the asset could be invested include the money market, placement with banks and corporate bonds and real estates where you have real estate quoted on the Nigerian stock exchange.

For Premium Pension we have limited out investment to these asset classes but we place emphasis more on government securities because of our policy of ensuring security of our asset. Government securities are the most secured investment you can found around. We have invested more on government securities than in any other asset class.

What role has PENCOM played in ensuring the growth of the industry?



MALAM Aliyu Dikko

PENCOM is the regulator. They were established by the government to supervise the industry. So far I would say they have done well.

Whenever there are issues affecting the retirees, we work together with PENCOM to the benefit of the major stakeholders in the RSA holders.

VACANCY! VACANCY!! VACANCY!!!

The following vacancies exist in a proposed Micro Finance Bank to be located in Maitama Area of Abuja. They are for self-motivated and result oriented individuals who can work minimum supervision and ability to deliver results.

1. MANAGING DIRECTOR/CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Qualification & Experience

The successful candidate will be responsible for the day to day management of the Micro Finance Bank MFB in relevant discipline;

Must possess a minimum of first Degree in relevant discipline and/or professional qualification from a recognized higher institution

- Must possess at least seven years post qualification experience in Banking or related industry
- Must be computer literate
- Must be a team player
- Must have good communication skills
- Possession of Higher Degree will be an advantage

2. MANAGER OPERATION/ RISK MANAGEMENT

3. MANAGER (ADMINISTRATION)

QUALIFICATION & EXPERIENCE

The successful candidate for any of the Position above will report to the MD/CEO.

- Must possess a minimum of first degree in relevant discipline and/or professional qualification.
- Must possess at least five years post qualification experience in banking or related industry must be computer literate
- Possession of higher degree in the relevant discipline will be of advantage.

4. ACCOUNTANT

- Must possess a minimum of first degree in Accountancy and or professional qualification
- Must possess at least four years post qualification experience in banking or relevant Industry
- Must be computer literate

Interested candidates that satisfy the above requirements should please direct their hand written application and other relevant documents with 2 passport photographs within two weeks to:

The General Secretary
P.O. Box 6210
Area 10 Post Office
Abuja

Business/Finance

Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE)

Monday, March 22, 2010

| COMPANY Name | No of Deals | Quot. (N) | Quantity Traded | Value of Shares (N) |
|----------------------------------|--------------|-----------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 2ND-TIER SECURITIES | | | | |
| CAPITAL OIL PLC | 5 | 0.52 | 18,000 | 9,360.00 |
| SECTOR Totals | 5 | | 18,000 | 9,360.00 |
| AGRICULTURE | | | | |
| FTN COCOA PROC. PLC | 6 | 0.91 | 165,062 | 149,505.80 |
| LIVESTOCK FEEDS PLC | 51 | 0.67 | 3,649,480 | 2,534,707.71 |
| PRESKO PLC | 9 | 5.31 | 144,200 | 751,126.00 |
| SECTOR Totals | 66 | | 3,958,742 | 3,435,339.51 |
| AIR SERVICES | | | | |
| AIRL. SERV. & LOG. PLC | 3 | 2.77 | 15,500 | 44,300.00 |
| NIG. AV. HAND. COY PLC | 173 | 9.08 | 1,571,275 | 14,172,303.13 |
| SECTOR Totals | 176 | | 1,586,775 | 14,216,603.13 |
| AUTOMOBILE & TYRE | | | | |
| DN TYRE & RUBBER PLC | 1 | 0.50 | 2,500 | 1,250.00 |
| R. T. BRISCOE (NIG.) PLC | 8 | 5.48 | 54,972 | 298,763.56 |
| SECTOR Totals | 9 | | 57,472 | 300,013.56 |
| BANKING | | | | |
| ACCESS BANK PLC | 196 | 9.93 | 11,433,161 | 113,771,870.53 |
| AFRIBANK NIGERIA PLC | 109 | 2.83 | 6,765,766 | 18,488,560.91 |
| DIAMOND BANK PLC | 150 | 9.51 | 11,382,977 | 108,258,968.58 |
| ECOBANK NIGERIA PLC | 98 | 7.10 | 3,565,030 | 24,401,780.52 |
| F/CITY MON. BANK PLC | 95 | 9.00 | 12,058,413 | 107,650,262.66 |
| FIDELITY BANK PLC | 204 | 3.25 | 11,761,343 | 37,521,908.72 |
| FIRST BANK OF NIG. PLC | 723 | 15.65 | 14,765,086 | 232,682,249.06 |
| FINBANK PLC | 79 | 0.72 | 13,744,173 | 9,495,886.79 |
| GTBANK PLC | 507 | 19.99 | 13,273,103 | 263,077,205.84 |
| STANBIC IBTC BANK PLC | 85 | 10.50 | 3,312,704 | 33,644,615.92 |
| INTERC. BANK PLC | 60 | 2.17 | 1,780,529 | 3,798,873.22 |
| OCEANIC BANK INT. PLC | 122 | 2.19 | 4,720,185 | 10,201,732.86 |
| BANK PHB PLC | 96 | 1.93 | 5,723,407 | 11,256,328.53 |
| SKYE BANK PLC | 191 | 8.10 | 8,522,624 | 68,838,741.81 |
| SPRING BANK PLC | 15 | 1.03 | 400,670 | 409,600.18 |
| STERLING BANK PLC | 73 | 2.04 | 4,128,381 | 8,663,686.48 |
| UNT. B. FOR AFRICA PLC | 268 | 14.61 | 39,024,818 | 567,875,546.43 |
| UN/BANK OF NIG. PLC | 193 | 6.14 | 10,648,092 | 64,185,938.41 |
| UNITY BANK PLC | 26 | 1.10 | 632,142 | 679,422.57 |
| WEMA BANK PLC | 40 | 1.11 | 1,499,803 | 1,673,077.94 |
| ZENITH BANK PLC | 399 | 18.00 | 29,262,324 | 519,553,245.25 |
| SECTOR Totals | 3,729 | | 208,404,731 | 2,206,129,503.21 |
| BUILDING MATERIALS | | | | |
| ASHAKA CEMENT PLC | 112 | 16.80 | 5,547,212 | 98,855,503.75 |
| BEN. CEMENT COY PLC | 84 | 58.40 | 1,297,888 | 75,968,079.30 |
| CEM. CO. OF N/NIG. PLC | 38 | 18.51 | 1,454,080 | 26,885,065.34 |
| NIGERIAN ROPES PLC | 1 | 9.14 | 100 | 869.00 |
| LAFARGE WAPCO PLC | 31 | 31.80 | 318,588 | 10,319,490.27 |
| SECTOR Totals | 266 | | 8,617,868 | 212,029,007.66 |
| CHEMICAL & PAINTS | | | | |
| BERG/PAINTS NIG. PLC | 12 | 4.47 | 44,287 | 204,802.03 |
| CHEM. & ALL. PROD. PLC | 2 | 29.67 | 2,190 | 64,957.30 |
| DN MEYER PLC | 2 | 3.24 | 4,261 | 13,805.64 |
| NIG.-GERMAN CHEM. PLC | 1 | 14.29 | 130,500 | 1,864,845.00 |
| SECTOR Totals | 17 | | 181,238 | 2,148,409.97 |
| COMMERCIAL/SERV. | | | | |
| AFROMEDIA PLC | 1 | 0.51 | 1,000 | 510.00 |
| COURTVILLE INV. PLC | 1 | 0.50 | 100,000 | 50,000.00 |
| RED STAR EXPRESS PLC | 19 | 2.77 | 583,800 | 1,595,290.00 |
| SECTOR Totals | 21 | | 684,800 | 1,645,800.00 |
| COMP. & OFFICE EQUIP. | | | | |
| NCR (NIGERIA) PLC | 2 | 8.13 | 5,533 | 44,983.29 |
| OMATEK VENT. PLC | 11 | 0.52 | 985,652 | 510,682.52 |
| SECTOR Totals | 13 | | 991,185 | 555,665.81 |
| CONGLOMERATES | | | | |
| A. G. LEVENTIS (NIG.) PLC | 17 | 3.00 | 117,806 | 348,095.80 |
| PZ CUSONS NIG. PLC | 61 | 28.52 | 416,785 | 11,916,255.44 |
| TRANS. CORP. OF NIG. PLC | 23 | 0.54 | 793,169 | 417,365.40 |
| UAC OF NIGERIA PLC | 53 | 47.95 | 1,782,621 | 84,188,281.22 |
| UNILEVER NIG. PLC | 66 | 25.75 | 755,289 | 19,464,783.93 |
| SECTOR Totals | 220 | | 3,865,670 | 116,334,781.79 |
| CONSTRUCTION | | | | |
| COSTAIN (WA) PLC | 36 | 5.23 | 665,796 | 3,480,898.59 |
| JULIUS BERGER NIG. PLC | 38 | 30.34 | 126,747 | 3,726,037.06 |
| MULTIVERSE RES. PLC | 2 | 0.50 | 102,000 | 51,000.00 |
| SECTOR Totals | 76 | | 894,543 | 7,257,935.65 |
| ENGINEERING TECH. | | | | |
| CUTIX PLC | 15 | 2.83 | 105,610 | 313,661.70 |
| SECTOR Totals | 15 | | 105,610 | 313,661.70 |
| FOOD/BEV. & TOBACCO | | | | |
| 7-UP BOTTLING CO. PLC | 10 | 30.60 | 18,703 | 600,927.39 |
| BIG TREAT PLC | 19 | 0.83 | 557,612 | 456,713.90 |
| CADBURY NIGERIA PLC | 85 | 18.98 | 1,037,059 | 19,704,977.65 |
| DANGOTE FLOUR MILLS PLC | 263 | 16.82 | 5,102,940 | 86,079,913.36 |
| DANGOTE SUGAR REF. PLC | 94 | 17.55 | 2,959,025 | 52,955,352.54 |
| FLOUR MILLS NIGERIA PLC | 149 | 50.51 | 5,518,576 | 288,974,888.26 |
| H/WELL FLOUR MILL PLC | 44 | 8.92 | 841,175 | 7,516,536.00 |
| NAT. SALT COY NIGERIA PLC | 70 | 6.87 | 3,709,095 | 25,281,351.14 |
| NIG. BOTTLING COY PLC | 28 | 26.90 | 281,590 | 7,707,670.31 |
| NESTLE NIGERIA PLC | 102 | 270.00 | 281,643 | 76,405,207.52 |
| N/NIG. FLOUR MILLS PLC | 7 | 26.61 | 72,500 | 2,025,650.00 |
| TANTALIZERS PLC | 45 | 1.01 | 2,468,698 | 2,587,524.20 |
| SECTOR Totals | 1,000 | | 30,000,000 | 300,000,000.00 |
| HEALTHCARE | | | | |
| EVANS MEDICAL PLC | 14 | 1.02 | 241,113 | 246,048.39 |
| FIDSON HEALTHCARE PLC | 25 | 2.83 | 336,352 | 956,514.28 |
| GLAXOS. CONS. NIG. PLC | 26 | 30.97 | 1,262,753 | 38,879,383.26 |
| MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC | 23 | 5.05 | 998,629 | 5,001,250.75 |
| NEIMETH INT. PHARM. PLC | 13 | 1.43 | 255,518 | 352,075.12 |
| UN/DIAG. & CLIN. SERV. PLC | 22 | 0.65 | 1,546,800 | 994,590.00 |
| SECTOR Totals | 123 | | 4,641,165 | 46,429,861.80 |
| HOTEL & TOURISM | | | | |
| CAPITAL HOTEL PLC | 4 | 3.04 | 540,000 | 1,643,600.00 |
| IKEJA HOTEL PLC | 7 | 1.64 | 450,000 | 738,000.00 |
| SECTOR Totals | 11 | | 990,000 | 2,381,600.00 |
| IND./DOMESTIC PRODUCTS | | | | |
| ALUM. EXTRUSION IND. PLC | 1 | 13.04 | 4,750 | 58,852.50 |
| ALUMACO PLC | 1 | 12.24 | 1,000 | 11,630.00 |
| B. O. C. GASES NIGERIA PLC | 5 | 10.37 | 7,390 | 73,007.50 |
| NIG. ENAMELWARE PLC | 2 | 50.21 | 65,000 | 3,263,650.00 |
| VITAFOAM NIGERIA PLC | 20 | 5.09 | 372,662 | 1,925,756.16 |
| SECTOR Totals | 29 | | 450,802 | 5,332,896.16 |
| INF. & COMM. TECH. | | | | |
| CHAMS PLC | 28 | 0.67 | 2,210,165 | 1,411,605.23 |
| MASS TEL. INNOV. NIG. PLC | 1 | 0.50 | 1,000 | 500.00 |
| STARCOMMS PLC | 33 | 2.09 | 3,434,051 | 7,166,947.61 |
| SECTOR Totals | 62 | | 5,645,216 | 8,579,052.84 |
| INSURANCE | | | | |
| AIICO INSURANCE PLC | 186 | 1.06 | 2,231,534 | 2,368,556.51 |
| CONTINENTAL REINS. PLC | 6 | 0.95 | 3,492,606 | 3,314,109.70 |
| C. STONE INSUR. CO. PLC | 10 | 0.52 | 841,430 | 438,342.20 |
| CUST. AND ALLIED INS. PLC | 81 | 3.80 | 20,865,822 | 77,582,801.54 |
| EQUITY ASSURANCE PLC | 3 | 0.50 | 16,000 | 8,000.00 |
| G/NIGERIA INS. COY PLC | 1 | 0.50 | 1,000 | 500.00 |
| GOLDLINK INSURANCE PLC | 6 | 0.59 | 823,650 | 485,953.50 |
| GUAR/TRUST ASSUR. PLC | 48 | 2.88 | 4,978,605 | 14,055,417.40 |
| GUINEA INSURANCE PLC | 1 | 0.50 | 2,000 | 1,000.00 |
| CONS. HALLMARK INS. PLC | 3 | 0.50 | 315,000 | 157,500.00 |
| INT. ENERGY INS. COY PLC | 33 | 0.51 | 6,843,978 | 3,662,188.78 |
| LASACO ASSURANCE PLC | 21 | 0.50 | 1,119,882 | 560,669.00 |
| L/UNION & ROCK INS. PLC | 11 | 0.53 | 27,273,080 | 13,664,255.76 |
| LINKAGE ASSURANCE PLC | 2 | 0.50 | 144,000 | 72,000.00 |
| MUT/BENEFITS ASSUR. PLC | 7 | 0.64 | 216,167 | 138,346.88 |
| N.E.M. INS. CO. (NIG.) PLC | 16 | 0.54 | 2,110,125 | 1,139,467.50 |
| NIGER INSURANCE CO. PLC | 9 | 0.66 | 490,500 | 341,360.65 |
| OASIS INSURANCE PLC | 2 | 1.07 | 20,800 | 21,216.00 |
| PRESTIGE ASSURANCE PLC | 8 | 2.97 | 183,311 | 544,433.67 |
| STACO INSURANCE PLC | 4 | 0.58 | 41,000 | 22,960.00 |
| STAND. ALLIANCE INS. PLC | 16 | 0.50 | 994,700 | 497,350.00 |
| UNIC INSURANCE PLC | 15 | 0.73 | 6,311,847 | 4,444,401.56 |
| UN/KAPITAL ASSUR. PLC | 9 | 0.64 | 3,603,500 | 2,306,240.00 |
| UNIV. INSURANCE COY PLC | 3 | 0.50 | 25,178,000 | 12,589,000.00 |
| INTERC. WAPIC INSUR. PLC | 22 | 0.84 | 981,968 | 831,573.12 |
| SECTOR Totals | 523 | | 109,080,505 | 139,247,643.77 |
| MORTGAGE COMPANIES | | | | |
| ASO SAVINGS & LOANS PLC | 18 | 0.62 | 572,089 | 358,310.18 |
| UN/HOMES SAV.&LOANS PLC | 25 | 0.88 | 2,084,140 | 1,891,372.60 |
| SECTOR Totals | 43 | | 2,656,229 | 2,209,682.78 |
| OTHER FINANCIAL INST. | | | | |
| CRUSADER NIGERIA PLC | 23 | 1.00 | 7,214,028 | 7,364,428.00 |
| ROYAL EXCHANGE PLC | 15 | 0.57 | 7,228,663 | 4,249,310.57 |
| SECTOR Totals | 38 | | 14,442,691 | 11,613,738.57 |
| PACKAGING | | | | |
| NIG. BAG MANUF. COY PLC | 112 | 2.84 | 4,080,378 | 11,573,489.65 |
| BETA GLASS CO. PLC | 13 | 13.65 | 122,728 | 1,656,972.68 |
| STUDIO PRESS (NIG.) PLC | 1 | 2.92 | 100 | 278.00 |
| SECTOR Totals | 126 | | 4,203,206 | 13,230,740.33 |
| PETROLEUM(MARK.) | | | | |
| AFRICAN PETROLEUM PLC | 40 | 45.40 | 80,290 | 3,462,907.70 |
| BECO PETROL. PROD. PLC | 28 | 1.99 | 617,925 | 1,286,665.20 |
| MRS OIL NIGERIA PLC | 13 | 69.79 | 24,366 | 1,704,166.14 |
| CONOIL PLC | 26 | 38.00 | 1,010,640 | 38,592,640.82 |
| ETERNA OIL & GAS PLC | 35 | 7.00 | 434,492 | 3,072,356.98 |
| MOBIL OIL NIGERIA PLC | 19 | 107.64 | 3,622 | 379,741.64 |
| OANDO PLC | 161 | 79.20 | 12,872,314 | 1,016,771,889.72 |
| TOTAL NIGERIA PLC | 13 | 149.62 | 42,528 | 6,531,550.85 |
| SECTOR Totals | 335 | | 15,086,177 | 1,071,801,919.05 |
| PRINTING & PUBLISHING | | | | |
| ACADEMY PRESS PLC | 2 | 6.85 | 832 | 5,416.32 |
| LONGMAN NIGERIA PLC | 30 | 9.10 | 412,485 | 3,601,144.48 |
| UNIVERSITY PRESS PLC | 31 | 6.18 | 597,020 | 3,550,496.10 |
| SECTOR Totals | 63 | | 1,010,337 | 7,157,056.90 |
| TEXTILES | | | | |
| UNITED NIGERIA TEXT. PLC | 1 | 1.42 | 9,578 | 12,930.30 |
| SECTOR Totals | 1 | | 9,578 | 12,930.30 |
| THE FOREIGN LISTINGS | | | | |
| ECOBANK TRANS. INCORP. | 14 | 17.45 | 543,810 | 9,486,305.50 |
| SECTOR Totals | 14 | | 543,810 | 9,486,305.50 |
| OVERALL Totals | 7,279 | | 423,102,860 | 4,534,446,830.90 |

What is a Strike Price?

This is a stated price per share for which the underlying security may be purchased in the case of a call, or sold in the case of a put, by the option holder upon exercise of the option contract.

Google

GAINERS

| | |
|------------|------|
| UACN | 1.95 |
| GLAXOSMITH | 1.47 |
| JBERGER | 1.44 |
| BETAGLAS | 0.65 |

LOSERS

| | |
|----------|------|
| BCC | 2.98 |
| ENAMELWA | 2.64 |
| CONOIL | 2.00 |
| WAPCO | 1.38 |

INNALILLAH WA INNA ILAIHI RAJ'UN



ALI BUKAR SASTAWA

February 11, 1974 - February 24, 2010



SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

Plot 272 Samuel Adesujo Ademulegun street
Central Business District Abuja
e-mail: sec@sec.gov.ng
website: www.sec.gov.ng

With submission to the will of the Almighty Allah, we announce with regrets the passage of a dear friend and colleague, who died after a brief illness.

Until his death, he was a staff of Maiduguri branch of the Securities and Exchange Commission and has since been buried according to Islamic rites.

He is survived by a wife, child, siblings and aged mother.

The entire management and staff of the Commission express our deepest sympathies with his family.

May his gentle soul rest in perfect peace.

Signed
Management



NIGERIAN DEFENCE ACADEMY, KADUNA



INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION AND TENDER FOR EDUCATIONAL TRUST FUND (ETF) SPECIAL INTERVENTION PROJECTS

The Federal Government through the ETF is embarking on a Special Intervention Project for the purpose of improving the facilities of the Nigerian Defence Academy Postgraduate School (PGS). Interested and reputable contractors and suppliers with relevant experience and evidence of performance are invited for pre-qualification and purchase of tender document on the following projects:

| S/No | LOT No | Project Description |
|------|--------|--|
| 1. | 1 | Rehabilitation of Academic complex (Offices and Lecture Halls). |
| 2.. | 2 | Procurement and Installation of Furniture and Office Equipment in Admin Blocks. |
| 3. | 3 | Rehabilitation of LCC Block (ICT Centre). |
| 4. | 4 | Procurement and Installation of Furniture and Office Equipment in the ICT Centre. |
| 5. | 5A | Procurement and Installation of Laboratory Equipment for Electronics/Communication. |
| 6. | 5B | Procurement and Installation of Equipment for Electrical Engineering |
| 7. | 5C | Supply and Installation of Electrical Power Equipment and Machines for Faculty of Engineering. |
| 8. | 5D | Supply and Installation of Laboratory Equipment for Civil Engineering. |
| 9. | 5E | Supply and Installation of Workshop Equipment for Civil Engineering. |
| 10. | 5F | Procurement and Installation of Laboratory Equipment for Mathematics and Computer Science. |
| 11. | 5G | Supply and Installation of Equipment for Physics Laboratory. |
| 12. | 5H | Procurement and Installation of Biological Science Laboratory Equipment. |
| 13. | 6 | Rehabilitation of Existing Laboratory Blocks A-C. |
| 14. | 7 | Procurement and Installation of Furniture and Office Equipment for Laboratories Block A-C. |
| 15. | 8 | Procurement and Installation of ICT Equipment in ICT Centre and Establishment of an E-Learning and Research Centre. |
| 16. | 9A | Procurement of Library Books, Library Furniture, 3MBI and B2 Automated Tattle Tapes Insertion into the Books, Labeling and Complete Preparation. |
| 17. | 9B | Procurement and Installation of Library Security Systems, Implementation of End to End Virtual Library Solution and Content Uploading with Staff Training. |
| 18. | 10 | Rehabilitation of Engineering Workshop Block A-B. |
| 19. | 11 | Rehabilitation of FASS Building. |
| 20. | 12 | Procurement of Furniture and Equipment for FASS Building. |
| 21. | 13 | Rehabilitation and Furnishing of Ribadu Lecture Hall. |
| 22. | 15 | Rehabilitation of Library Blocks. |
| 23. | 16 | Procurement of Office Furniture for Workshops. |
| 24. | 17A | Procurement of Utility Vehicles. |
| 25. | 17B | Power Backup (Generators). |
| 26. | 18 | Provision and Installation of Instructional Simulator. |
| 27. | 19 | Production and Installation of Printed Circuit Board. |
| 28. | 20 | Procurement and Installation of Solar Street Light. |

PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENT

Reputable and interested contractors and suppliers are required to submit their application with the following documents:

- Evidence of Incorporation/Registration with Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC).
- Evidence of Company Tax Clearance Certificate in the last three (3) years (2007-2009).
- Evidence of VAT Registration and remittances in the last three (3) years (2007-2009).

(d) Evidence of Company Audited Annual Financial report for the last three (3) years certified by a chartered accountant/auditor.

(e) Company Profile which should include names, qualification and experiences of key personnel, list of similar verifiable projects executed within the last three years (2007 – 2009), with photographs, contract values, and locations, evidence of award and actual completion of projects. The clients names, contact address, GSM number(s) and e-mail addresses of the firm if available should also be provided.

(f) Evidence of Financial capability to handle the chosen project, credit worthiness and readiness to obtain financial cover/liability and instruct bankers to supply correct financial information as may be required.

(g) Original documents should be available for sighting on demand during or after the opening of prequalification documents.

COLLECTION AND SUBMISSION OF PRE-QUALIFICATION AND TENDER DOCUMENTS

Both Pre-qualification and Tender documents are to be collected and submitted at the office of the Academy Registrar, Headquarters Academic Branch, Airport Road, Mando, Kaduna. Documents should be submitted in a sealed envelope with "pre-qualification and Tender document written at the top left-hand corner. The interested lot bid for should be written overleaf the envelope. All document should be submitted not later than 10.00 am, Thursday 8 April 2010.

COLLECTION OF PRE-QUALIFICATION AND TENDER DOCUMENTS

Intended Contractors and Suppliers will be required to pay non-refundable fee as follows:

| S/No | LOT No | Fees |
|------|---|-------------|
| 1. | 3, 5F, 7, 10 & 16 | ₦20,000.00 |
| 2. | 4, 12 and 20 | ₦30,000.00 |
| 3. | 5C, 5D, 5E, 5G, 5H, 6 15, 17B and 19 | ₦50,000.00 |
| 4. | 1, 2, 5A, 5B, 11, 13, 17A and 18 | ₦100,000.00 |
| 5. | 8, 9A and 9B | ₦250,000.00 |

OPENING OF PRE-QUALIFICATION AND TENDER DOCUMENTS

Pre-qualification and Tender document will be opened on Thursday, 8 April 2010 by 12.00 noon. All interested and intended contractors and suppliers are hereby invited.

NOTIFICATION TO BIDDERS/TENDERERS

(a) Submission of Pre-qualification and Tender document to the Nigerian Defence Academy is not a commitment or an obligation to award any contract to any Supplier or Contractor.

(b) Advertisement for Invitation to pre-qualification and tender should not be seen as a commitment on the part of Nigerian Defence Academy or shall it entitle any Contractor or Supplier to make any claims whatsoever or seek any indemnity from Nigerian Defence Academy.

(c) Contractors must indicate the project Title overleaf the envelope otherwise the document will not be opened.

(d) Any discrepancies and mis-information found would automatically disqualified the Contractor or Supplier.

Signed
AT JIBRIN
Brigadier General
Registrar

DIGEST

'Man with the golden arm' saves 2million babies in half a century of donating rare type of blood



Mr Harrison, dubbed 'the man with the golden arm', is still donating every few weeks at the age of 74. He is thought to have saved 2.2million babies

AN Australian man who has been donating his extremely rare kind of blood for 56 years has saved the lives of more than two million babies.

James Harrison, 74, has an antibody in his plasma that stops babies dying from Rhesus disease, a form of severe anaemia. He has enabled countless mothers to give birth to healthy babies, including his own daughter, Tracey, who had a healthy son thanks to her father's blood.

Mr Harrison has been giving blood every few weeks since he was 18 years old

and has now racked up a total of 984 donations.

When he started donating, his blood was deemed so special his life was insured for one million Australian dollars.

He was also nicknamed the 'man with the golden arm' or the 'man in two million'. His blood has since led to the development of a vaccine called Anti-D.

He said: 'I've never thought about stopping. Never.' He made a pledge to be a donor aged 14 after undergoing major chest surgery in which he needed 13 litres

of blood.

'I was in hospital for three months,' he said. 'The blood I received saved my life so I made a pledge to give blood when I was 18.'

Just after he started donating he was found to have the rare and life-saving antibody in his blood.

At the time, thousands of babies in Australia were dying each year of Rhesus disease. Other newborns suffered permanent brain damage because of the condition.

The disease creates an incompatibility between the mother's blood and her unborn baby's blood. It stems from one having Rh-positive blood and the other Rh-negative.

After his blood type was discovered, Mr Harrison volunteered to undergo a series of tests to help develop the Anti-D vaccine.

'They insured me for a million dollars so I knew my wife Barbara would be taken care of,' he said.

'I wasn't scared. I was glad to help. I had to sign every form going and basically sign my life away.'

Mr Harrison is Rh-negative and was given injections of Rh-positive blood.

It was found his plasma could treat the condition and since then it has been given to hundreds of thousands of women.

It has also been given to babies after they are born to stop them developing the disease.

It is estimated he has helped save 2.2 million babies so far.

One of the mothers he has helped is Joy Barnes, who works at the Red Cross Blood Bank in Sydney.

She has known Mr Harrison for 23

“ He has enabled countless mothers to give birth to healthy babies, including his own daughter, Tracey

years but has only just told him she is one of the countless mothers he has helped.

Ms Barnes, who miscarried at four and five months before having treatment, said: 'Without him I would never have been able to have a healthy baby.'

Speaking to Mr Harrison on an Australian TV show, she said: 'I don't know how to thank you enough.'

His own daughter, Tracey, also had to have the Anti-D injection after the birth of her first son.

She said she was 'proud' of her dad for continuing to give blood, even after the death of her mother after 56 years of marriage.

Mr Harrison said: 'I was back in hospital giving blood a week after Barbara passed away.'

'It was sad but life marches on and we have to continue doing what we do. She's up there looking down, so I carry on.'

Mr Harrison is expected to reach the 1,000 donation milestone in September this year.

How a lonely life can lead to high blood pressure

LONELY people are more prone to developing high blood pressure in later life, say researchers.

They found chronic feelings of loneliness push up blood pressure over time, causing a marked increase after four years in people aged over 50.

A new study is the first to show a direct link between loneliness and high blood pressure, known as hypertension, which raises the risk of heart attack and stroke.

U.S. researchers considered whether depression and stress were pushing up blood pressure but found they were only partly responsible.

Dr Louise Hawkey, of the research team from Chicago University, said 'Loneliness behaved as though it is a unique health-risk

factor in its own right.'

She said living alone did not necessarily mean people were lonely - some people appeared to have busy lives and a good social network but still felt lonely, which puts them at risk.

Previous research has suggested that individuals who feel alone are twice as likely to develop Alzheimer's disease as those who experienced little loneliness.

The latest research involved 229 people aged 50 to 68 who were part of a long-term study on ageing.

Members of the group were asked a series of questions to determine if they perceived themselves as lonely. They were asked to rate connections with others through a series of topics, such as 'I have a lot in common with the people around

me,' 'My social relationships are superficial' and 'I can find companionship when I want it.'

During the five-year study, Dr Hawkey found a clear connection between feelings of loneliness reported at the beginning of the study and rising blood pressure over that period.

She said 'The increase associated with loneliness wasn't observable until two years into the study, but then continued to increase until four years later.'

Even people with modest levels of loneliness were affected, says a report in the journal *Psychology and Aging* (sic).

Among all the people in the sample, the loneliest people saw their blood pressure go up by 14.4 mm more than the blood pressure

of their most socially contented counterparts over the four-year study period. Hypertension affects 16 million Britons and is a major risk factor for heart disease, stroke, and kidney failure.

A high blood pressure reading is one that exceeds 140/90 millimetres of mercury.

The first figure, the systolic pressure, corresponds to the 'surge' that occurs with each heart beat. The second, diastolic, reading is the pressure during the 'resting' stage between beats.

Dr Hawkey, senior research scientist with the Center for Cognitive and Social Neuroscience, said people who have many friends and a social network can feel lonely if they find their relationships unsatisfying.

Conversely, people who live rather solitary lives may not be lonely if their few relationships are meaningful and rewarding.

She said for some people the emotional costs of making and keeping friends appear to outweigh the benefits, which may contribute the blood pressure increase.

She said 'Loneliness is characterized by a motivational impulse to connect with others but also a fear of negative evaluation, rejection and disappointment.'

'We hypothesise that threats to one's sense of safety and security with others are toxic components of loneliness, and that hyper-vigilance for social threat may contribute to alterations in physiological functioning, including elevated blood pressure' she added.

Sign Language



In short don't take photos!
Photo location: Manila, India, by Richard Townley
Culled from www.signspotting.com

EASY CROSSWORDS

16

ACROSS

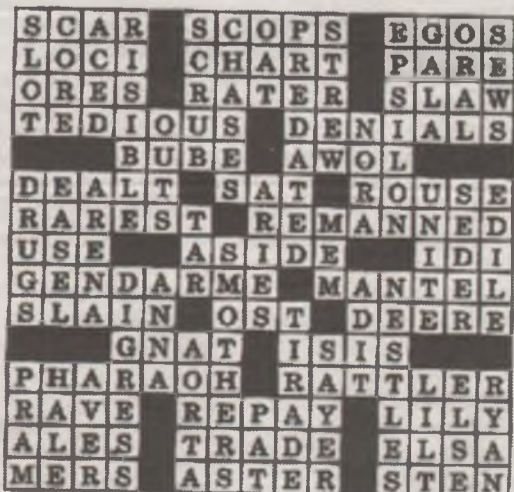
1. Check
5. Show joy
9. See 5-Across
13. Pen point
16. Shout in scorn
17. Behindhand
18. Tennis
19. All right: hyph. wd.
20. Ballerina Pevlova
21. Stars of a page?
23. Trunk insert
24. Spiritual nonconformity
26. Carol of "Taxi"
27. Diner offerings
29. Wee creature
30. Floor: slang
31. Term of endearment
32. Atlas feature
35. Playground cry
36. Be the fifth wheel: 2 wds
40. Black: French
41. Great discovery
42. Park devious
43. Ms. Zadora
44. Make a slip
45. Raines of film
46. Reads (over)
47. Dough division
48. Responded to pollutants
50. Greasy gatherings
51. First Fermat prime
52. Mormon district
53. Poetrd
54. Solo for Renee Fleming
55. Post Frank
57. Went for
58. Piece of Pataak?
61. Ar's flat end
62. Singer Frankie
63. Novelist Stoker
64. Hot feeling
65. The off
66. — St. Marie, Michigan
67. Impress greatly: slang
68. Cooking instruction
69. Talented bunch
71. College team
72. Irmer's target
73. Move furtively
74. Whit
75. Letter opener?
76. Least output
79. Studio setup
80. Better
84. Touch
85. Form of societal restraint: 2 wds.
88. Tel —
89. Function
90. Barryard proclamation
91. Ship's frame
92. Future determiner?
93. Shamon of music
94. "Friends" friend
95. Pinbar Hershaer
96. Son of Seth
98. Time for a break from the cubicle?
99. Tarnish path
100. Far from hot
101. Crews impatient
102. Specific restraint
103. Diamond crowd?
104. Swinging portal

DOWN

1. Herring relative
2. B&B's Braxton
3. Acknowledges
4. — cast
5. Hypothalamus, e.g.
6. Endure
7. Baseball iam
8. Pleasure stretch, for many
9. Verge
10. Adroitness
11. Synagogus enclosure
12. They may be teased
13. Ibsenian heroine
14. Writer Dinesen
15. Ward on a door
19. Great toughness
22. Anthropologist's interest
25. Ver: slang
28. Park City device hyph. wd.
30. Merrill of "Desk Set"
31. Catches many eggs
32. AAA recommendation
55. Bee's charge
56. Jagged peak
57. Puttylike substance
58. Animal's stomach
59. Composer Satie
60. Count
62. Quebec's peninsula
63. — Ranton Ellis
66. Socky staff
67. One of Minnie Marx's boys
68. Prolonged attack
70. Puff up
71. Slumber spots
72. In: slang
74. Rough coverings
75. Be of poor quality
76. Deep orange-red stone
77. Tube with keys
78. Insignificant
79. Nadia's score
80. Unproductive
81. Pizzeria am
82. Drink for Mario
83. Preholiday nights
86. Spanish waterway
87. Nostro

Solution to Easy Crosswords

15



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.

112

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 2 | 9 | | | 8 | 4 | | |
| | | | | | | | | 3 | |
| 6 | | | 8 | 5 | 2 | | | | |
| 9 | 7 | | | | | | | | |
| | | 2 | 6 | | 9 | | 4 | 7 | |
| | | | | | | | | 8 | 5 |
| | | | | 6 | 4 | 8 | | | 9 |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| | | 9 | 8 | | | 1 | 6 | | |

Solution to Sudoku 111

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 8 | 9 |
| 3 | 1 | 4 | 9 | 8 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 2 |
| 5 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| 9 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 6 |
| 8 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 1 | 5 |
| 6 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 8 | 9 | 7 |
| 1 | 7 | 5 | 8 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 4 |
| 2 | 9 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 7 | 8 |
| 4 | 6 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 9 | 5 | 3 |

News Extra

'This is what change looks like'

... Victory for Obama as historic healthcare reform bill is passed

- Vote is compared to civil rights legislation of 50s and 60s • Reform leaves nation polarised as backlash begins
- Democrats set to pay price in November mid-term elections • Final tally is 219 to 212

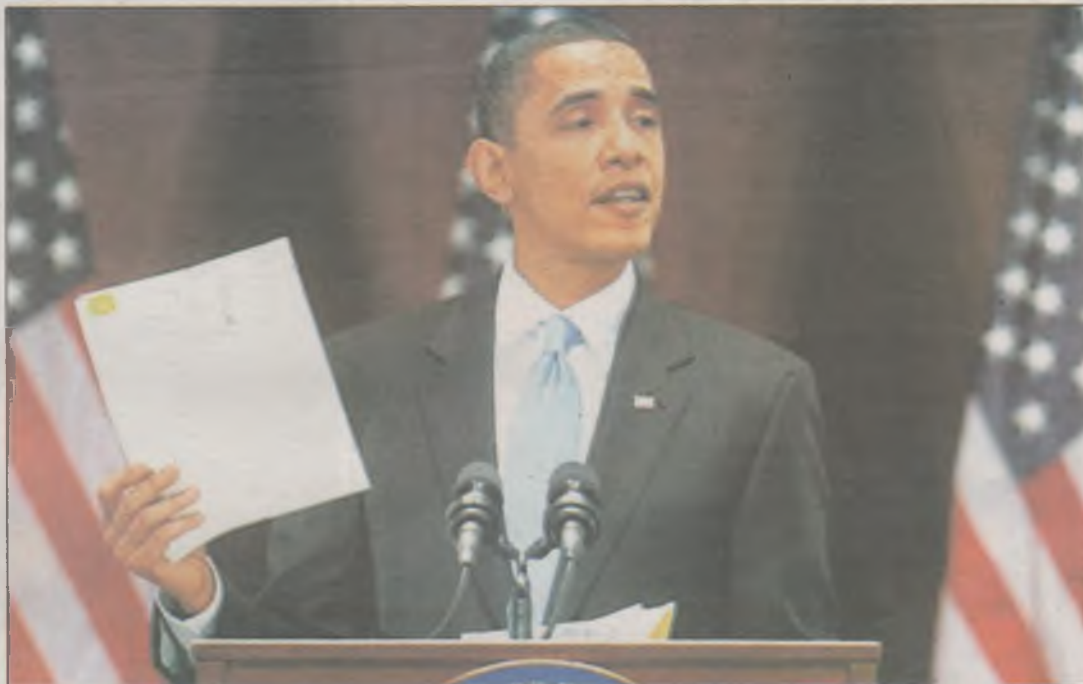
Barack Obama hailed the passing of his historic healthcare overhaul Sunday night, declaring: 'This is what change looks like.'

The jubilant president was preparing to sign his £600-billion plan into law after the House of Representatives passed the bill in a cliffhanger vote - a victory that U.S. presidents have been trying to achieve for nearly 100 years.

Many are already comparing the vote to just a rung below the enactment of civil rights legislation in the 1950s and 1960s.

But with the nation polarised by the healthcare debate, many are wondering if Mr Obama has made a historic mistake.

The cost to his party and him-



'DO it for the American people': President Obama holds a letter from someone in need of health insurance as he addresses the House Democratic caucus

The president staked his domestic agenda on healthcare last summer. His stand generated the grassroots 'Tea Party' movement, sparked angry town hall meetings across the nation, and saw his poll numbers plunge to below 50 per cent in some places.

The political stakes are enormous. But Mr Obama spoke only of victory Sunday night.

Speaking from the White House at midnight in Washington, he celebrated his triumph in ushering through major reforms 'after nearly 100 years of talk and frustration, after decades of trying and a year of sustained effort and debate.'

He added: 'It's a victory for the American people and it's a victory for common sense.'

A huge cheer went up from House Democrats as the vote

reached the 216 mark required to pass the reforms already adopted by the U.S. Senate.



PASSED: An autographed copy of the healthcare bill after it was passed into law by Congress

The final tally was 219 to 212.

A short time later, Democrats also drove through a package of amendments by 220 votes to 211 that were agreed to make the bill more palatable for some rank-and-file members.

After going back to the Senate for approval the 'fixes' will be combined into the final legislation.

The rocky passage of the bill, coming after a thwarted mutiny by some Democrats, was seen in Washington as one of the most significant legislative triumphs in

decades.

'Today's vote answers the prayers of every American who has hoped deeply for something to be done about a healthcare system that works for insurance companies but not for ordinary people,' Mr Obama said.

'We proved that we are still a people capable of big things.'

'We answered the call of history as so many generations of Americans have before us,' he added.

'When faced with crisis, we did not shrink from our challenge, we overcame it. We did not avoid our responsibility, we embraced it. We did not fear our future, we shaped it.'

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi paid tribute to the 'extraordinary leadership and vision' of the president.

'It is with great humility and great pride that tonight we will make history for this country,' she said minutes before the vote.

'This is an American proposal that honours the traditions of this country,' she added.

It wasn't until the morning of the vote that Democrat whips in the House of Representatives finally nailed down the votes they needed in the 435-member chamber to prevent a defeat that would have rocked the Obama administration.

The president cancelled his planned trip to Australia and Indonesia to lead the arm-twisting and cajoling that carried on right up until the rare make-or-break Sunday congressional session.

Eventually, a key group of

Democrats who opposed the bill because they claimed it could open the way for state-funded abortions relented and agreed to

Cont'd on page 38

UGLY SCENES AT CAPITOL

America's healthcare debate turned ugly Sunday night when protesters screamed hate slurs at black and gay lawmakers outside the U.S. Capitol building.

Opponents of President Obama's health reforms shouted the n-word at Congressman John Lewis, a civil rights icon who was nearly beaten to death during a march for equality in the 1960s.

They also shouted insults at members of the Congressional Black Caucus.



'They were shouting, sort of harassing,' said Mr Lewis (pictured above beside Nancy Pelosi, the Speaker of the House).

'But it's okay, I've faced this before. It reminded me of the 60s. It was a lot of downright hate and anger and people being downright mean.'

Congressman Andre Carson said some among the crowd chanted 'the n-word, the n-word, fifteen times.'

Demonstrators also harangued Congressman Barney Frank, an openly gay lawmaker, calling him abusive names.

'I'm disappointed with the unwillingness to be civil,' he said.

'I was surprised by the rancour. People out there today, on the whole, were really hateful. The leaders of this movement have a responsibility to speak out more.'

The so-called 'Tea Party' protesters were part of a growing grass roots campaign formed by conservative hardliners opposed to the Obama administration and, in particular, to the president's healthcare overhaul.

The reform

is likely to be

judged along-

side the boldest

acts of presi-

dents and U.S.

Congress

self could be crippling, analysts have warned. America is heading into mid-term congressional elections in November - and many are now worried that the Democrats are set to pay a high price for healthcare.

The damage to Mr Obama and his party is already considerable.

Q&A

WHY IS THE VOTE IMPORTANT TO OBAMA?

President Obama has staked his reputation on overhauling America's health care system and to fail would leave a major question mark over his ability to keep his promises to make changes.

WHAT CHANGES ARE BEING PROPOSED?

The bill favours tougher regulations on insurers, makes it mandatory for individuals to have health cover, offers subsidies for the less well-paid, cuts waste and creates state-based insurance exchanges where those who do not have cover from their employers can compare and shop for plans.

WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION?

There is no universal healthcare coverage and it is generally up to individuals to get health insurance, either by themselves or through their employers. But there are federally funded programmes for the elderly and the poor.

WHY IS IT SUCH A BIG DEAL?

The £1.3 trillion U.S. health care industry accounts

for one-sixth of the country's gross domestic product. A centrepiece of the president's argument for reform is that rising costs must be controlled because they risk destroying the economy. Democrats say the overhaul would cost about £600 billion over ten years, but cut the deficit by more than £90 billion over the same period.

WHY DO REPUBLICANS OPPOSE REFORM?

They resent government intervention in the private insurance dominated system, reflecting the suspicions many Americans have of public health care. Republicans say the president's reforms will make health care 'more bureaucratic and expensive'.

WHY DID SOME DEMOCRATS OBJECT?

Most Democrat rebels represent more conservative areas and fear that if they back the bill their constituents will vote them out in November's mid-term elections. Some object on religious grounds because they believe the bill could open the door for the government to fund abortions, although Mr Obama says that would not be the case.

News Extra

Multi-millionaire gives away his N112bn fortune

... To fulfil his promise to God



THE tycoon Albert Gubay said he would give half his money away if he became a millionaire

As a penniless young man, Albert Gubay made a promise - if God helped him become a millionaire, He could have half the money.

Decades later, he has gone even better, donating almost his entire wealth to charity.

Thanks to the success of Kwik Save supermarkets and the Total Fitness gym chain, Mr Gubay - a Roman Catholic - is worth almost £500million (about N112bn).

And at the age of 82, he is determined to double that in his lifetime before turning over an annual income estimated at £20million to good causes - half connected to the Catholic Church.

He has already put £480million into a charitable trust, leaving him a 'mere' £10million to get by on.

On Sunday, Mr Gubay said: 'I want to carry on supporting good causes, but my whole focus in the next few years is to work as hard as I can to meet my target of a £1 billion charity. Every penny wasted or lost reduces the pot available to the charity.'

Born in North Wales to a Jew-

ish Iraqi refugee father and an Irish Catholic mother, the young Mr Gubay cut his entrepreneurial teeth selling sweets.

He launched the first Kwik Save discount store in Prestatyn in 1965 and sold the chain eight years later for £14million.

The proceeds were invested in property, and he became a familiar presence on his developments - even helping out as a labourer, earning him the nickname of 'Britain's richest navy'.

"I borrowed £100 and made the pact with God: make me a millionaire - and you can have half of my money"

Mr Gubay settled in a luxury estate on the Isle of Man, and later, while recovering from a back injury, set up what became the Total Fitness network of gyms - he sold this in 2004 for £70million.

In a 1997 television documentary, he said: 'After the war I came out of the Royal Navy with a demob suit and £80.

I borrowed £100 and made the pact with God: make me a millionaire - and you can have half of my money.'

He added: 'My belief in a day of reckoning keeps me on the straight and narrow.'

Mr Gubay, who lives with his second wife, Carmel, will continue running his companies until he dies, maximising profits for the Albert Gubay Charitable Foundation - which now owns them.

Half the income must be spent on projects connected with the Catholic Church with the rest distributed at the discretion of the trustees, chaired by John Nugent.

Mr Nugent said yesterday: 'Albert is a very frugal man and has dedicated his life to good causes.'

'His priority now is to maximise the asset base of the company.'



OPPOSITION: A few protesters stay outside the Capitol late in the evening as they chant 'Kill the Bill'

'This is what change looks like'

Cont'd from page 37

vote in favour.

Congressman Bart Stupak, the leader of the rebel faction, voted for the legislation after being promised that Mr Obama would issue an executive order affirming a ban on government cash being used for abortions except in cases of rape, incest or to save the life of the mother.

The reform is likely to be judged alongside the boldest acts of presidents and U.S. Congress in domestic affairs.

While national healthcare has long been the goal of presidents stretching back decades, it has proved elusive in part because self-reliance and suspicion of government intervention remain strong across America. When Mr Obama signs the hefty new bill into law it will usher in sweeping changes to the £1.5 trillion U.S. health system, including expanding coverage to as many as 32million Americans who are currently uninsured and barring insurance companies from denying coverage in cases where patients have a pre-existing condition.

It will also require most Americans to have insurance, give subsidies to help some pay for coverage and create state-based exchanges where the uninsured can compare and shop for plans.

While smiles replaced the

tense frowns of House Democrats after corraling their majority votes, thousands of protesters chanted 'kill the bill' outside the Capitol, a clear sign of the considerable opposition to the plan.

With all attempts at bipartisanship out of the window, Republicans contend the bill amounts to a government takeover of healthcare that will lead to higher deficits and taxes.

And they warned Democrat lawmakers they will pay the price at the mid-term elections in November.

Former Republican House Speaker Newt Gingrich told the *Washington Post* Sunday: 'They will have destroyed their party much as Lyndon Johnson shattered the Democratic Party for

The political stakes are enormous. But Mr Obama spoke only of victory Sunday night

40 years' with the enactment of civil rights legislation in the 1960s.

Bill Clinton's failed attempt to reform healthcare in 1994 'took a full decade for the Democratic Party to undo and reverse,' William Galston, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution and a domestic policy adviser in the Clinton White House, also told the *Post*.

THE MORAL MAJORITY IN ANAMBRA Why SOLUDO LOST



February 6, 2010 has become a watershed in the development of electoral politics in Nigeria. It was a day Anambra people rose to be counted as an irrepressible lot and a bastion of republican sentiments in Nigeria - no kings to lord over the people, no professor speaking 'long grammar' instead of the language of the people, the upstaging of the godfathers and the elevation of the local clergy and the Church as the quintessential grassroots mobilizers. It was like the 'Return of the Saints'!

On Anambra Election Day 2010, the vast Anambra State PDP machinery, devoid of its grandmasters - the Ubas, the Ukachukwus, the Joy Emodis, the Chuma Nzeribes, the Myke Nwakalors, the Tony Nwoyes, the Annie Okonkwos etc., was reduced to a mere participant in the conduct of a state election. These strong party men wield enormous election-day machinery, deep pockets and, of course, large grassroots following. They are feared and revered across the land. But the failed and rancorous PDP Governorship primary process that threw up Prof. Soludo, with little or no local party support, made these grandmasters, in pragmatic dissent, distance themselves from the PDP ticket, and the campaign. In fact, Professor Soludo was a marked man, and his candidature doomed to fail.

It has become imperative to shed light on certain factors as to why the PDP Governorship candidate, Professor Chukwuma Soludo, a man of letters, big ego and ideas but little street wisdom, lost the February 6, 2010 Governorship election in Anambra State to Governor Peter Obi, a suave and unassuming man with no local political organization, a weakened APGA party structure due to endless internal squabbles caused primarily by PDP chieftains in Abuja. It could have been avoided had Soludo listened more than he spoke, applied commonsense to common problems rather than endless recourse to social theories and big idea solutions. Primarily the so called 'Soludo Solution' was a feeble attempt to rail road the common man into complex economic and political theories and thought process that, literally speaking, puts nothing on his dinner table. As this contradiction was playing out in PDP circles, Gov. Peter Obi packed community leaders, the Clergy and Town Union President-Generals into buses and headed for MDG and State Road reconstruction project locations across the state. To drive home the point, in November 2009 he released the sum of N6.0 Million to each of the 177 Autonomous Communities in Anambra State to commence the building of classroom blocks at locations they so desired and promised to do same each other year until he leaves office. It was a masterstroke!

A devout Catholic, with some younger siblings as ordained Rev. Sisters, he headed for the early morning Masses in urban and obscure locations across the state soliciting for the huge grassroots support base of the Catholic Church in Anambra State. Within a short period of time, this seemingly hapless Governor with an innocent feminine voice stole the hearts and conscience of the local communities. The Catholic Church directed its army of Clergymen to mount the pulpit every morning and at Sunday Masses to carry the cross for 'saint' Peter Obi, the amiable but 'helpless' man the Abuja moneybags wanted to run out of the Government House, Awka. On February 6, 2010, Professor Charles Chukwuma Soludo ran out of options and succumbed to the superior forces party machinery and contradictions within his own ranks. The result was astonishing. Gov. Peter Obi won in 15 LGAs of the state including his home LGA of Aniocha and whitewashed Soludo in his homestead, Aguata LGA.

Expectedly, and in deference to the huge grassroots network of the estranged PDP chieftains who backed him, Gov. Peter Obi also won the two Orumba North and South LGAs where former Vice President of Nigeria and PDP Board of Trustee Chairman Dr. Alex Ekwueme comes from. The seemingly OAU [Old Aguata Union Aguata, Orunba North & Orunba South LGAs] stronghold of the PDP had fallen from its crusading principals. Ihiala, Ekwusigo and Ogbaru LGAs, the ever loyal PDP controlled Orashi enclave where PDP supremo, Hon. Chuma Nzeribe hails from, also fell.

But significantly, Soludo failed to win in 19 out of the 21 LGAs of the state. He lost in the entire 7 LGAs of his Anambra South senatorial zone with Gov. Obi winning in Ihiala, Ekwusigo, Aguata, Orumba North and Orumba South LGAs while Dr. Ngige won in Nnewi North LGA where Senator Ikechukwu Obiora and one of Soludo's major financier Chief Cletus Ibeto comes from. Prince Nick Ukachukwu won in his homestead of Nnewi South LGA. Soludo also lost in the entire seven [7] LGAs of Anambra Central Senatorial zone with Gov. Peter Obi winning in Aniocha, Njikoka, Awka North & Awka South LGAs while Dr. Chris Ngige of the Action Congress party won in his homestead of Idemili North, Idemili South LGAs and in Dunkofia LGA where Soludo's principal financier Prince Arthur Eze hails from. It was a humiliating defeat for Prince Arthur Eze who put in everything to promote Soludo's doomed candidature. In the Anambra North senatorial zone, PDP only managed to win narrowly in Anambra East LGA where Soludo's running mate, former Senator Emma Anosike hails from after much horse-trading with his kinsmen and in Oyi LGA stronghold of Chief Myke Nwakalor. As the Latin maxim goes, "... Res Ipsa Loquitur" The facts speak for itself!

Many reasons and innuendoes have been adduced by his campaign organisation and other analysts over the fate that befell him. However, some grey areas need to be made public to enable Nigerians situate the emerging political trend in the country and how it can impact on the messy national leadership question in the presidency currently eating up our body politic and the huge expectations of Nigerians from our current efforts at electoral reform before the 2011 general elections.

Firstly, the first and costly move of Prof. Soludo after he was chosen as the PDP candidate was to put forward his close friend as caretaker Committee Chairman of Anambra State PDP, Dr. Ogbu who hails from Nsukka in Enugu State and his successor as Economic Adviser to President Obasanjo. This bizarre choice meant that he did not see anybody from Anambra State that he can trust, yet he wants the people to trust him with their vote and mandate. As a non-indigene, he was unable to rally round the grassroots to support the party's candidate. Apathy and disillusion held down numerous PDP faithful and adversely affect her fortunes at the election. Secondly, at the PDP Governorship primary election in late 2009, about 50 candidates sought for nomination, paying a whopping sum of N5.250 Million for the party forms plus an average of N5.0 Million paid by each of the 50 candidates to purchase PDP Delegate Forms sold before now for N100.00 but for which Gov. Gabriel Suswam skyrocketed to N10,000.00 each. The Ward election was conducted in a free and fair manner and in substantial compliance with PDP Statute and the Electoral Act 2006 but the outcome was manipulated. Immediately after the Ward elections, in which the eminent professor could only win a paltry 19 delegates out of the 978 Delegate electable from the 326 Electoral Wards of the State, he sought for and obtained an Anambra High Court Order restraining further conduct of the election. Instead of a re-run, the party bigwigs in Abuja curiously forwarded his name to INEC as PDP candidate.

This did not go down well with most Nigerians and Anambrians in particular, especially Soludo's hapless co-contestants who saw through his opportunism, deep pockets, and greed. Many sought the nomination of other political parties essentially to 'deal' with him at the polls. Equally rich Dr. Andy Uba, Prince Nicholas Ukachukwu and Hon. [Mrs.] Uche Ekwunife, supported by the Senator Annie Okonkwo political structures entered the race on other parties' platforms. Hon. Chuma Nzeribe, who ran a highly secretive but effective campaign in the PDP governorship primary, garnering many delegates with the active support of the highly popular Comrade Tony Nwoye and Anambra North political heavyweight Chief Myke Nwakalor, all laid an ambush within the PDP. The eminent Senator Joy Emodi, who hails from the same homestead as Gov. Peter Obi, but married to Onitsha in Anambra North Senatorial Zone, was also in no mood to tolerate the conniving professor and even upbraided him at the PDP National Executive Committee [NEC] meeting the highest policy-making organ of the party, convened to muster support for Prof. Soludo.

Soludo has also over the past 10 years, championed the attempt to carve up his Isuofia homestead into more autonomous towns to the annoyance of the

WHY PROFESSOR CHUKWUMA SOLUDO LOST

greater majority of his kinsmen. He has relentlessly funded the numerous court cases arising from this dispute and in fact, the other court cases by proponents of autonomous communities against the people and Government of Anambra State. This is the reason why all the town unions and traditional institutions in Anambra State refused to work for his election. He is seen therefore, as a very divisive factor rather than a builder and could not be trusted with the office of Governor of Anambra State.

Hence, the plot against his candidature was complete, and the stage set for major political re-alignment across the state. At this stage, therefore, his candidature was headed for the doldrums and set to be swallowed up by the same internal contradictions that threw him up in the first place. The PDP family in Anambra State was factionalized and lacked internal cohesion to be effective on election day 2010. What you saw before the February 6th election was what you got on the election day and the subsequent result. Soludo was a political orphan and he was lost in the whirlwind in the middle of the ocean with nobody willing to rescue him. And he had no life boats. Besides, with the conclusion of the selection, instead of election, process for the party's nomination, no attempt was made to refund the other 49 aspirants the huge sum of N5.250 Million spent in purchase of forms for the ill-fated PDP primary election as a way of calming down the aggrieved aspirants.

Professor Soludo ran his election campaign alone without any recourse to the local PDP structures in Anambra State and virtually all those who know the Anambra political terrain well. He trusted no one and ran the campaign with very close family members reminding people of the nepotic Dr. Mbadinuju tenure as governor. Prof. Soludo chose not to get committed to any of the dominant political groups in the Anambra State PDP and wielded absolute power in his campaign. He was not prepared to share the platform and the expected reins of power and office when it comes with anyone. He, instead, choose to hobnob, with Tony Aneneih who had been eclipsed at home by labour leader & activist Edo State Gov. Adams Oshimole, Alhaji Manga the billionaire friend of ailing President Yar'Adua, Prince Vin Ogbulafor and the members of PDP NWC in Abuja. This weakened, in the process, the resolve of Anambra PDP party members to win back the state to take care of her teeming grassroots membership who have been without of any government patronage for a sustained long period from the days of Dr. Chris Ngige who was constantly in conflict with the central government in Abuja and also for the period that APGA's Gov Peter Obi has been in Government in the state after the failed impeachment saga that was quashed by the Supreme Court.

Soludo campaign organization lacked the vision, capacity and political sagacity to properly and positively sell the credentials of her candidate to Anambra people. The Director-General of the campaign is Rt. Hon. Agunwa Anakwe, a returnee Action Congress stalwart who has not been involved in any form of meaningful political activity over the last 10 years while the campaign Chairman is Hon. Okey Aroh, himself also a returnee Action Congress stalwart. Even Senator Emma Anosike, Soludo's running mate is himself a returnee from the Action Congress. They could not therefore energize the core PDP grassroots base who took exception to their headship of the campaign. This organization was put together by the eminent professor without recourse to known political wisdom in the state. He brought people with irreconcilable differences, local communal biases and even poor knowledge of local political trends to man his campaign across the state. He aligned with more money bags than party activists in virtually every community in the state. Words soon leaked out from his close confidants early in the campaign that he had the mindset of not returning the State and National Assembly members of PDP extraction in the forthcoming 2011 general election. He would prefer to work with professors, World Bank & IMF interns and top flight bankers and businessmen whom he had associated with all his elite life. The state assembly even tabled a Motion to condemn his candidature over a scathing remark he made against them bordering on their educational qualifications and relationship with the APGA-led State Government to a national newspaper but was restrained by the party leadership. They called his African Dubai Taiwan campaign platform 'utopic', senseless and unrealisable. They questioned the rationale behind the 'dream' of making Anambra, currently without drinking water, good health facilities etc. look like Dubai and Taiwan in few years when the 'dreamer' is looking for a four [4] year tenure as governor. Besides, his campaign slogans added to the claims of arrogance, being uncaring and self-centred. The result was a lack of enthusiasm by known party men to publicly support his campaign and platform.

It is said that even when you approach him over a local political problem he would prefer to lecture you than to listen to your complaints or point of view. He perceived his governorship ambition as a right due to his lofty ideas, professorship and tenure as CBN Governor, and not as a collective platform for others to also realize their own ambitions. He felt he was God sent to deliver Anambra State people instead of being their servant. This short-sightedness in managing local people and problems and properly situating the real challenges of winning an election in a politically sensitive state like Anambra was to be his Achilles heels in convincing the populace to accept and vote him as one of them. Even the entire PDP Governors' Forum, especially all the southeast Governors, and to a large extent, the Presidency, could not connect with him due to his large ego, vaulting ambition and huge capacity to manipulate the system to his advantage as was manifested in the PDP selection process. He was therefore left alone as a lone ranger. On three occasions, red carpets were rolled out to receive Ag. President Jonathan Goodluck and twenty-eight [28] PDP Governors

whom he had openly boasted were coming to campaign for him, and on these three occasions none of them turned up to grace his function. Anambra people saw this as a sign of rejection even by his own party.

Prof. Soludo and his campaign could also not manage his age-long family feud with his in-laws especially the national icon and former Information & Communications Minister, Professor Dora Akunyili.

We also wish to state for the avoidance of doubts and contradictions that the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria made no provision for individual or private candidate and it is explicitly clear that a political party must sponsor you as a candidate for any elective position. When therefore Soludo chose to run outside and against the PDP Anambra party platform, he was doomed to fail. And he did!

It is equally shocking to note that the Soludo campaign team made no effort to solicit the support of even INEC staff in Awka and was said to have boasted in beer parlours that at the appropriate time the presidency would compel INEC Abuja to favour him in the election. Many people in Anambra State including the ordinary INEC staff, teachers and market women openly derided the dubious manner he got nominated as the PDP flag-bearer and had vowed not to vote for or assist him in any way during the election. His campaign vehicle drivers would threaten to report ordinary policemen on road blocks to their 'Oga'. Hence, they are routinely 'parked' and punished for their boastful nature and for not being able to always 'drop' something for the boys. Who then was with this eminent professor and banking turnaround artist and the Soludo campaign organization on election day, 2010?

It is instructive here to properly evaluate the nature and strength of character of a man who just moments after losing an election, and without any prompting from anybody congratulated Gov. Peter Obi and after one week has chosen to go to Court to challenge the same election. As if that is not enough confusion, Soludo, a failed governorship candidate who has never won any election in his life, has embarked on a futile attempt to appropriate the state party structure claiming that he is party leader. Even the once very powerful President Obasanjo, while in office, and also President Yar'Adua, has refused the appellation of 'party leader' as it is NOT contained in the PDP Constitution. When Dr. Andy Uba, shortly after he left office as Governor, embarked on a similar and pedantic move to seize the state party structure, he was equally shot-down as it is not in the constitution of the PDP. This move enabled the party embrace new membership and calm frayed nerves. Precedence had been set and cannot be easily wished away. Soludo had no strategy to win over even local INEC staff to work for him, his party was not willing to assist him, and he had no access to police and intelligence and succumbed to the superior strategy of those he sought to sideline.

Methinks, what is the character worth of a man who after congratulating Gov. Peter Obi for his resounding victory on February 6, 2010 will turn around, after two weeks, to challenge the same election result in the tribunal...! Anyway, the last date to file an action has come and gone and the eminent professor has chickened out of the court option using instead a surrogate to file an action. But that is Prof. Chukwuma Soludo for you, my brethren!

Anambra State PDP members need not lose sleep over the shameful performance of their party flag-bearer. He did not understand the terrain and the people he sought to lead. He is a professor of economics but lacks native intelligence to rule over Anambra State. He was not quintessential PDP!

Signed
ENGR. EMEKA NDUANYA



PROFESSOR CHUKWUMA SOLUDO

ENVIRONMENT environment@dailytrust.com HOTLINE: 07041632079

Harmattan: Airports cancel many flights

THE harmattan haze, which re-appeared on Friday forced airlines to cancel their flights to parts of the country, especially the north.

Passengers travelling to Ilorin from Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport failed to leave the airport because of the haze which impaired visibility.

The airport on Saturday that Arik Air refunded pas-

sengers' fares after waiting for more than an hour to fly.

Mr Jerome Ogbeche, the Passenger Service Agent for the company, said the passengers showed understanding because the situation had to do with the weather.

"The passengers waited for about one hour and when the weather condition did not improve, the airline refunded their money, we explained to the passengers and

they understood.

"The flight was for the afternoon and I believe if the weather improves, we will continue as usual," Ogbeche said.

Mr Tukur Gwar, the Station Manager of I.R.S Airlines, said for the past three days, airlines which operated flights to Kano, Sokoto and Maidugiri cancelled their flights because of the weather. (NAN)

Environmental offences: FCTA prosecutes 123 persons

By Nasir Imam

THE FCT Administration has prosecuted 123 persons in the Federal Capital City over various environmental offences from the February 11-March 17, 2010.

The FCT Permanent Secretary, Dr. Goke Adegoroye made this revelation on Monday after the monthly FCT Operations Briefing Session in Gwarinpa I District (Life-Camp), Abuja.

The Permanent Secretary further revealed that those prosecuted were out of the 233 persons Court summons were served on.

Dr. Adegoroye disclosed that 116 beggars and 18 lunatics were also arrested during the period under review.

He remarked that abatement notices were served on two companies for non-compliance with Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) while twenty companies were also served abatement notices over non-compliance with Environmental Audit (EA).

According to him, three companies were prosecuted while five companies were monitored for air, noise and water pollution in the Federal Capital Territory.

The Permanent Secretary also disclosed that the FCT Administration has received additional 10 compacting trucks from Ukraine and that they would soon be leased out to the Abuja cleaning contractors to ensure that the Federal Capital Territory remain clean.



MIGRATING animals run down the riverbank into the Mara River in The Masai Mara National Reserve in Kenya

Don tasks Nigerians on energy conservation

From Mohammed Shosanya, Lagos

A university don, Prof. Ike Mowete, has charged Nigerians to inculcate the habit of conserving energy

Mowete, a Professor of Electrical and Electronics Engineering, dropped this advice weekend at a 2-day workshop organised by the National Centre for Energy Efficiency and Conservation (NCEE) for energy correspondents in Lagos.

According to him, the act of

conserving energy would go a long way to show the nation can make efficient use of energy.

He expressed concerns that often time most Nigerians switch on their electric appliances even when they are not available at home.

He said that the nation must invest heavily in education; research and development in order to be part of the global contribution and to give its young people the opportunity to prove their

capabilities.

Delivering the welcome address by the chairman, Mr Ayodele Omowunmi, said that the workshop is aimed at providing the media with basic understanding of energy issues, as it relate to its overall use and their effects on our day-to-day activities.

Omowunmi said that the National Centre of Energy efficiency and Conservation seeks to promote effective energy use amongst Nigerians both residen-

tial and commercial.

Mr Sam Onyemachi, Assistant Commandant-General Zonal Commander, Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corp, Zone 'A' Lagos in his paper presentation titled "Energy Efficiency and Conservation on the way forward to security challenges in Nigeria said that the energy sector in the country in the last 49 years has been a matter of concern to both national and international communities.

NESREA urges CITES to lift suspension on Nigeria

By Mustapha Suleiman

THE Director General of the National Environmental Standards and

Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA), Dr. (Mrs) Ngeri S. Benebo, has reiterated the urgent need for the lifting of suspension on Nigeria by the Parties of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

She made this call in an address to the Standing Committee of CITES currently meeting in Doha, Qatar recently. She informed the Conference that the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria is determined to pursue the rule of law, re-engineer and rebrand Nigeria, and fulfil Nigeria's obligation and deliver on its international commitment has taken giant steps to change the embarrassing

situation and to fully re-integrate Nigeria into the CITES process.

Nigeria was suspended from any manner of international trade in flora and fauna classified as endangered species threatened by extinction, in July 2005. The nation became a notorious transit route for illegal smuggling of ivory from elephants brutally killed by poachers, as well as other rare species of flora and fauna.

The Parties to the Convention were pleased with the progress made by Nigeria and mandated the Secretariat of the Convention to monitor events and in particular, the promulgation of Regulations to enforce the Endangered Species Act and thereafter, further progress preparatory to the lifting of the suspension before the next Standing Committee meeting in year 2011.



Earthquake: NASDRA to release geo-hazard map

DR Seidu Mohammed, Director General, National Space Research and Development Agency (NASRDA), says the agency will soon release a geo-hazard map on areas vulnerable to earthquake.

He said in Abuja on Sunday that the map would help people to understand how vulnerable the country was to earthquake.

Mohammed explained that one of the agency's centres, the Centre for Geodesy and Geodynamic, Toro, Bauchi State, was working with other experts to prepare the map.

"During the recent tremor in Ibadan, several publications and releases were made and that should be a guide,"

the director-general said.

Mohammed said that experts in geodynamics would address major issues in terms of tremors and the need to further establish more stations for the agency to predict accurately in the event of problems.

He said NASRDA was providing various information on the soil map of Nigeria to help experts to monitor any quake.

Mohammed said the map would show geologic maps, drainage pattern and density, as well as vegetation cover over the Nigerian territory.

He said the map would also show locations of hospitals, roads and tertiary institutions in the country, using

globally positioned system.

He explained that NASRDA had in 009, completed two thirds of Nigeria's land cover mapping at the scale of 1:100000.

Mohammed said the remaining mapping process would be completed this year to enable the country to have information about its resources in terms of total land cropped vis-a-vis desert encroachment.

He said the agency had so far covered North Central, South West, North East and North West.

"And, once funds are made available to the agency, that of South East and South South would be completed this year," he said. (NAN)



PIC. SANI MAIKATANGA

PEOPLE cover their faces to tackle the dust haze in Kano

'Nigeria has 500m incandescent lamps'

From Mohammed Shosanya, Lagos

NIGERIA has an estimated 500million incandescent lamps, Director General of Energy Commission of Nigeria [ECN], Prof. Abubakar Sambo has said.

Incandescent lamps are lamps that emit light due to the glowing of the heated material especially the common device in which the tungsten filament enclosed within an evacuated glass bulb is rendered illuminous by the passage of an electric current through it.

He disclosed this in his address at the official commissioning and the foundation laying ceremony of the National Centre for Energy Efficiency and Conservation at the University of Lagos.

According to the Director General, the development reveals that there is a market potential for Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs) in the country.

He said the Energy Commission of Nigeria visit to Cuba recently propelled to initiate a joint programme for replacement of incandescent lamps.

He said the plan was to replace one million incandescent lamps with Compact Fluorescent Lamps under the ECN/ECOWAS/Cuban government collaboration.

Speaking, Director of the centre, Prof. Oluwole Adegbenro stressed the importance of energy conservation in the country. He emphasized that the nation must invest heavily in education, research and development in order to be part of the global contribution and to give its young people the opportunity to prove their capabilities.

Residents battle dust haze in Jigawa

From Yusha'u A Ibrahim, Dutse

HEAVY dust has forced residents in Dutse, the capital of Jigawa State, to use masks just as motorists turn on lights in day hours to prevent accident.

Motorists could not sight coming vehicles from one kilometre distance owing to heavy dust, hence, resolved to the use of light for easy notification.

A private motorist, Alhaji Ibrahim Ahmad told Daily Trust that, "without turning my lights on, no one could sight my vehicle from one kilometre distance and this can easily cause accident. Therefore in order to avoid it,

I resolve to use the light even in the day hours."

Alhaji Ibrahim explained that, some motorists particularly women have completely abandoned driving in the last four days in fear of causing accident along major streets in the state capital.

Another motorist, Bello Adamu, told our reporter that, as a result of the heavy dust, he could only drive between the speedometer of 30 and 40 within the state capital and 80 to 90 while driving outside the capital.

Bello also said that, "I can only drive with all my lights on. I would never drive without light in these days because it could easily cause accident"

In a related development, residents of the area including commercial motorcyclists were embarked on massive usage of mask in an attempt to battle the heavy dust that invaded the capital in last four days.

A commercial motorcyclist, Haruna Muhammad said, the business is becoming difficult to them owing to the heavy dust, which according to him is preventing them from spending more time conducting their business.

Haruna added that, "even the passengers are not patronizing our business like before. In fact the situation is making things harder not only to us the riders, but also to the passengers."

'55 % of Nigerians lack safe water'

By Tina A. Hassan

AN estimated 77 million people in Nigeria are not able to have access to clean and healthy water says WaterAid.

Speaking at a media briefing organized in Abuja ahead of the 2010 World Water Day, Acting Country Representative of WaterAid in Nigeria Dr. Orji Ogbureke said only 45 percent of Nigerians are able to access clean water but the larger population in the rural areas not able to do so.

He said the problem of water sanitation is a serious health issue facing Nigeria and this has exposed many

people especially the rural poor to water born diseases.

According to him, 2.6 people all over the world are suffering from poor access to safe water and this has a multiplier effect on the people by causing various health complications.

In his words, "the focus of this year's World Water Day is on the quality of the water we take and I am saying this because of the alarming statistics we have of people that do not have access to safe water both in Nigeria and globally."

What we have on ground in our own nation is also

alarming in terms of the target of the Millennium Development (MDGs) of 2015 and if we are going at this rate, we have a serious challenge and we have to ask ourselves if we are going to be able to achieve the target of 75 percent coverage of drinking water and 63 percent coverage for basic sanitation by 2015."

Also speaking, Juanita During from Water Aid said clean water and sanitation tops the agenda of this year's World Water Day, safe water availability needs to be complimented by good hygiene management because "it is the tripod stand" of clean water.



Group wants use of cooking gas

From Chris Agabi, Lagos

FRIENDS of the Environment (FOTE) a nongovernmental organization, has made a case for the need to popularize the use of liquefied petroleum gas (cooking gas) in Nigerian households as a precursor towards the mitigation of possible environmental hazard.

According to Engr. Joanna Maduka, Chairperson of FOTE, the initiative for the adoption of LPG will help curb the impact of vulnerability of the global climate change problems facing Nigeria.

She disclosed this at the second in the series of the awareness creation and policy on climate change: "The Need to popularize the use of LPG (cooking gas) in Nigerian Households", held in Lagos recently, making a call on government at all level to focus its attention on women and energy means.

"In furtherance to its environmental protection activities, FOTE came up with initiative on how the use of LPG (cooking gas) would be popularized amongst Nigerian households.

"The initiative is being driven by our realization that our continued use of fuel wood for domestic purpose will exac-

erbate the global climate change problems facing Nigeria. Some recent studies revealed that improving access to sustainable and efficient energy services for Nigerian women is most important," she stated.

Maduka who said that despite the numerous advantages of LPG over other forms of energy being consumed in Nigerian homes, its wide adoption from acceptance to safe usage faces a number of problems like the cost of cylinders and its accessories, safety, and availability, stated that all stakeholders, especially in government and development experts should figure out ways to overcome the barriers as stated.

Health officers tasked on enforcement

By Mustapha Suleiman

THE Environmental Health Officers Registration Council of Nigeria (EHORECON) has been urged to ensure that all practitioners register and all unacceptable sharp practices stopped by ensuring vigorous standard enforcement similar to what obtains in other regulatory bodies, in order to maintain sanity in environmental health.

This call was made by the Permanent Secretary Ministry of Health, Dr. Biodun Olorunfemi at the induction ceremony of the Environmental Health Service Providers in Nigeria organised by EHORECON in Abuja on Thursday. Dr. Olorunfemi called on employers of labour to engage only companies duly registered by the Council to encourage the growth of the sector and adhere to the applicable laws of the land.

"Nigerians are equally enjoined to ensure that companies providing Environmental Health Services in their neighbourhoods are supported by prompt payment of service charges to enable them meet their costs. I also call on the Council to make proposals that can assist the service providers access funds from financial institutions that my Ministry can support so that service providers can access funds to expand their businesses," he said.

The Permanent Secretary congratulated the companies inducted as Environmental Health Service Providers, urging them to adhere strictly to the oath of allegiance they have taken and for the Council not to relent in her efforts to bring sanity to the profession.

Also speaking, Chairman Environmental Health Officers Registration Council of Nigeria, Dr. Yunua Muhamadu Danyaya, Emir of Ningi called on the inductees to dedicate 10 percent of their yearly profit to research and develop their business of waste management.

"Today we shall witness the taking of Oath of allegiance to the environmental Health Profession by the representatives of the firms that have not met the minimum requirements as set by the Council. The Oath shall spell out in details the Dos and Don'ts of the Environmental Health Practices, failing to observe which shall attract sanctions. I wish to inform you that these minimum requirements will be reviewed from time to time as need arise," he urged the inductees



A man who fell from the sixth floor of a building in Guilin, China, survived by landing on some high voltage cables attached to the second floor. Luckily the wires were not live, enabling fire-fighters to rescue him.

Climate change: The role of NGOs in addressing the challenges

By Murtala Adogi Mohammed

IT is now well accepted that climate are changing and that man must of necessity lives by it. In today's world, it is the poor who are bearing the brunt of climate change. Tomorrow, it will be humanity as a whole that faces the risks that come with global warming. The rapid buildup of greenhouse gases in the earth's atmosphere is fundamentally changing the climate forecast for the future generations. We are edging towards 'tipping point' these are unpredictable and non-linear events that could open the door to ecological catastrophes. Therefore, this essay intends to identify the areas in which Non-governmental organization would contribute in addressing the challenges of climate change.

First, Advocacy to Stakeholders on Climate Issues: Advocacy is a tool used to promote improved performance, shift priorities and highlight areas of concern by NGO activist, experts and civil society. NGOs often need to address issues of concern to them and integrate these concern in their Programmes. This approach involves organization having their own activities in which specific advocacy priorities are built in and are incorporated in the planning and implantation stages. For effective advocacy on development issues NGOs need to undertake research, analysis, information dissemination, dialogues, media campaigns, seminars and awareness in the policy arena. Therefore NGOs can participate actively in the areas of educating people in human activities that caused climate change, and advocating for the poor people that farming is there major sources of their income, but are directly or indirectly been affected by the impact of comate change. A good example is that of Coalition of Environmental NGOs

in Bangladesh where they actively participated in addressing the challenges of flood in 1987 and 1988 under the World Bank Coordinated Flood Action Plan (FAP). NGOs interact closely with he local communities, government and political agencies and also in the global policy process, for example, the NGOs in Bangladesh highlighted the rights and vulnerability of the poor in the climate change process. In Bangladesh scientists involved in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) succeeded in incorporating indigenous and local literature in the global scientific review processes and also worked to ensure equity and fairness issues in the climate change debate."

Secondly, awareness Creation on Climate Change Issues: Most of government, most especially in developing countries pay lip services towards educating their citizen on most of the international convention and treaties, concerning environmental issues therefore, NGOs are left with the option of educating people and create awareness on conventions such as, United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Kyoto Protocol, United Nation Conference on Environment and Development, Agenda 21, and other conventions related to promoting sustainable environment. A good example of Network of NGOs that succeed in the area of awareness creation in climate change is Climate Action Network of Southern Asian (CANSAs). The network despite many difficulties continued to produce its newsletter called "climate Asian" also published reading materials in their local languages to educate the populace on man activities in related to effect climate change.

Thirdly, Research and Analysis on Climate Change Issues: Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1992)

defines research as methodical investigation into a subject in order to discover facts, to establish or revise a theory, or to develop a plan of action based on the facts discovered. NGOs try to bridge the gap between government and communities by sensitizing policy planners and communities on the impact of climate change on humankind. But NGOs can only be able to do that effectively by conducting a realistic research with factual information (data) obtain from the affected communities, and analyze it in the ways that the stakeholders will get the clear picture of the issues at stake also in the way that will stimulate informed debate, generate knowledge and influence policy making through a multi-stakeholder participatory process.

Fourthly Policy, Planning and Participation: In past decades, development projects and programme were generally conceived and planned by national bureaucrats and their donors with little direct linkage with community based Organizations and NGOs, who really understand the reality on the ground. Therefore, NGOs play a significant role in addressing the challenges of climate change, if they are involved in the planning, implanting and evaluating stages of any climate change policy. Many NGOs, committed to people's participation, began to challenge the old paradigm of "top-down planning" and introduced people-centered participatory, bottom-up planning. "Bottom-up" approach promotes sustainability and ownership of the project by community members.

Murtala Adogi Mohammed is of the Department of Biology, Federal College of Education (Tech) Bichi, Kano State and Co-lead Coordinator Greenland Project of (CELDE) Kano, mamurtala@gmail.com

HEALTH REPORT

Health tips

Counterfeit medicines are the major cause of death and disability

WHO estimates that the circulation of counterfeit medicines comprises 6% of the world pharmaceutical market.

Counterfeit drugs are any non-authentic medicines that have packaging that appears like the genuine product.

They are forgery of the originals and harmful to the consumer.

They include; products with no active ingredients, resulting in treatment failure.

Products not registered by local regulatory authority.

Products with ingredients that is possibly toxic and harmful to patients.

Products with altered expiry date, or re-use of discarded packaging of the genuine products.

Where can they be found?

Mostly at illegitimate outlets like

A convenience store, open market place, hawkers and unregistered pharmacy.

Unregistered patent medicines stores, unregistered chemical sellers

Unregistered hospitals and medical centers

Unregistered manufacturing plants and internet purchases.

Effects of the counterfeit drugs

Result in unnecessary deaths

May cause kidney and liver failure

Disabilities

Loss of money

Drug resistance

Increased medical cost due to prolonged treatment

How to identify a counterfeit drug

Look out for:

Tampered batch number, expiry or manufacture date

Spelling errors on packaging or accompanying information leaflet

Crumbled tablets

Odour

Poor liquid viscosity (thickness)

Poor color blend of tablets

Uneven tablet surface/ edges

Smudged products packages

Poorly printed patient's information leaflet and package.

Maternal mortality: FG must redouble its efforts

By Ruby Rabi

THOUGH significant reduction has been noticed in the high rates of maternal mortality across the country, the White Ribbon Alliance, a nongovernmental organization has urged the federal government not to relent in its efforts of ensuring that no woman dies from child birth.

Holding its national stakeholders meeting in Abuja at the weekend, the national coordinator of Burkina Faso, Mr Jeremie Zoungrana said a lot still needs to be done because women in their hundreds still die from child birth complications saying that deliberate policies and strategies must be put in place to save guard the lives of women and their babies.

Speaking on the importance of implementing reproductive health policies, Zoungrana said, 'every minute around the world, 380 women become pregnant, 190 pregnancies are unplanned, 110 women experience pregnancy related complications while 40 women have unsafe abortion, unfortunately some die alongside their newborns.'

According to him advocacy must be made at the highest level of governance by all stakeholders, at the grass root and urban areas, so that the terrifying figures will be slashed by half, if not reduced to the barest minimum.

Earlier the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) executive director, Dr Muhammed Ali Pate said the agency is working assiduously to ensure that all health care facility across the country has a midwife to offer emergency obstetric and neonatal care services to all pregnant women. Pate said if the plan is implemented and state government absorbs the midwives as part of its workforce then maternal mortality will be a thing of the past.

According to him the scheme is simply to provide an emergency stop gap to the human resources shortage of skilled attendance at the primary health care centres



TRADITIONAL birth attendant comforts a woman preparing to have her baby at a clinic

'Reduction of malaria, TB, HIV possible by 2015'

By Ruby Rabi

A report released by the global fund on its innovation and impact has revealed that virtual elimination or drastic reduction of the three deadly killer diseases namely, AIDS, Tuberculosis and malaria is possible by 2015.

Professor Michel Kazatchkine, the executive director of the global fund said the projections made so far has shown that virtual elimination of mother to child HIV transmission by 2015 is now within reach.

His words, 'a world where no children are born with HIV is truly possible by 2015, it is possible now to imagine a world with no more malaria deaths, with an increasing number of countries reporting a reduction in malaria deaths of more than 50%.

'no other area of development has seen such a direct

and rapid impact as these investments in fighting AIDS, TB and malaria.

The report also revealed that over five million persons have been saved from these three killer diseases in 2009 with the help of interventions from global fund supported programmes.

The executive director of UNAIDS, Michel Sidibe has however called for greater support for the global fund from partners saying that such contributions would ensure universal access for the treatment, care and support as well as facilitate the prevention of HIV and also prevent mother to child transmission.

The global fund was established in 2002 as a public private partnership to mobilize and intensify international response to the three global epidemics and help achieve the MDGs by 2015.

Kwara commits N5m for immunisation

From Mustafa Abubakar, Ilorin

THE Kwara State Commissioner for Health Alhaji Ladi Hassan disclosed that the state government has committed over N3 billion on every National Immunization Plus Days (NIPDS) exercise conducted in the state.

The Commissioner stated this while addressing the Agbeyangi Community in Ilorin East Local Government Area at the on-going National Immunization plus Days exercise on Saturday.

Hassan said that with the huge amount of money spent on the exercise by both the federal and state governments what was required of Nigerians was to ensure that their children received the vaccine as and when due.

He maintained that the benefits of the exercise could not be over emphasized as it would ensure that children

are free from deadly diseases and poliomyelitis.

The commissioner also admonished Kwara to visit the state health facilities for routine immunization after the exercise adding that "the vaccination does not in any way have side effect as being rumoured by some people.

Hassan stressed that it was the intention of the government to have a health society and since the children were the future of the country, they should be adequately taken care of his words, 'the only way their future can be secure is to protect them against deadly diseases' the commissioner said.

Speaking, the Director of Immunization, National Primary Health Care Development Agency (PHCDA), Dr. Emmanuel Abanida said that with the seriousness attached to the pro-

grammed by the government, soon the country would be free from child killer diseases and poliomyelitis.

Abanida, who explained that he was in the state to monitor the exercise and see the level of progress made in the exercise, thanked the state government for his efforts in collaborating with the Federal Government to secure the future of the Nigerian child.

Also speaking, the Chairperson, Ilorin East Local Government Hajia Aminat Funmilayo Ishola enjoined the community to always welcome vaccinators into their midst, saying that a child could take as many doses as possible as it is without any side effect. Ishola affirmed that her administration would always support the state government to provide healthcare delivery to the indigene of the Local Government and Kwara.

CITY NEWS



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PIC: ABUBAKAR SADIQ ISAH

SCENE of an accident at Abaji at the weekend.

Motorist crushes cyclist at Abaji

By Abubakar Sadiq Isah

AN unidentified commercial motorcyclist was last Thursday afternoon crushed to death by a motorist along the Abuja-Lokoja highway, at Abaji town.

An eyewitness said the accident happened when a Toyota Corolla car with registration number BP 142 KWL lost control while on top speed and hit the cyclist, killing him instantly.

Our reporter learnt that the cyclist was moving into the next lane to pick a passenger, when the car crushed him.

Abaji Unit Commander of the

Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), Mr. Joseph Ojerinde, said the corpse was later identified and handed over to their relatives for burial.

Similarly, one person also died, while another sustained serious injuries in an accident that occurred Saturday evening at Omoko village.

The FRSC unit commander said the accident happened at 5.12 pm and involved a Volkswagen Gulf car with registration number BK 425-KUJ that had a burst tyre, before losing control and crashing into a ditch, where one female passenger died.

According to him, the corpse is at the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital, while the injured driver is at Abaji General Hospital.

He further disclosed that five persons were also injured on Sunday evening in a multiple accident that occurred at Manderegi village, near Abaji town.

He said the accident involved four vehicles.

In another development, the new FRSC Unit Commander at Gwagwalada, Abubakar Hammed Atako, has called on the media to educate members of the public on the dangers of accident.

Atako, who gave the advice

yesterday in his office, said such enlightenment will help reduce accidents on the highways.

He disclosed that his command is presently collaborating with the Motorcycle Transport Union and the National Union of Road Transport Workers to curtail road crashes within the metropolis of the council and Abuja-Lokoja road, adding that most accidents were caused by impatience.

The unit commander urged the contractors handling the dualization project along the Abuja-Lokoja highway to hasten its completion in order to reduce carnages on the road.

Police arrest journalist

By Abubakar Yakubu

ARMED policemen numbering about five at the weekend invaded the office of Parliament International, an Abuja based magazine and arrested the publisher, Mr. Gowon Usman Egbunu at 6 pm.

The policemen, who were led by one Ayeni Oluwadare, a deputy superintendent, claimed that they were acting on the orders of the Kogi State police commissioner.

According to a witness, the armed policemen stormed the media outfit located at Wuse II Abuja at about 1pm and attempted to break into the office to effect the abduction of the publisher.

The policemen prevented television cameramen from shooting pictures of their action and later whisked away the publisher at about 6 pm in a red Gulf car with registration number CU 856 ABJ.

Managing Editor of Parliament International, Mr. Richard Odeh, said it is strongly suspected that the arrest was in connection with a story published by the magazine over the Kogi State governorship succession tussle.

He said the abducted journalist, who is believed to be held in Lokoja is yet to be charged to court more than 24 hours after his abduction.

Council polls: Group calls for re-election of Kuje chairman

By Nasir Imam

A group under the aegis of Integrated Support for Democracy (ISD) at the weekend called on Kuje residents to re-elect Danladi Etsu Zhin as chairman of Kuje Area Council.

The group's Coordinator, Usman Sunday Okpe, while addressing journalists in Abuja, said the incumbent chairman has made remarkable development and transformation to the council within a short time.

"Opposition forces in Kuje cannot stand the achievements of Etsu Zhin, who cannot afford to let his people down because in barely three years in office, the chairman has touched people's lives in various spheres of human endeavours, such as education, rural electrification, construction of roads, health care delivery and youth empowerment," the group's leader stated.

Okpe praised the chairman for connecting Kuje to the airport power line as well as constructing classrooms in various village across the council.

Three accused of impersonating council officials

By Hussein Yahaya & Ibraheem A. Fatai

THE police recently arraigned three suspected impersonators before an Abuja magistrate court for alleged criminal conspiracy and forgery.

Those arranged were Ebere Nwokocha, Abdul Mohammed and Kola Abiodun and they were accused of parading themselves as consultants/agents working for Abaji Area Council on revenue generation.

They were also accused of

jointly printing demand notices/permits, 2,000 stickers and using the council's letterhead papers.

Police prosecutor, Inspector Danjuma Etubi told the court that on December 16, 2008, a letter of complaint was received by the Assistant Inspector-General of Police (AIG) Zone 7 Headquarters, Abuja, alleging that the accused persons were impersonating Abaji Area Council officials.

"During police investigations, 50 copies of clearance certificates, 50 copies of mobile environmen-

tal sanitation clearances, two Abaji Area Council revenue receipts and three bundles of the council's documents were recovered from the accused persons," the prosecutor added.

He stated further that 102 pieces of loading and offloading clearance certificates were also recovered, while the accused persons committed offences punishable under Sections 97, 364, 366 and 132 of the Penal Code Law.

When the four-count charge was read to the accused persons, they

denied them and requested for bail.

Chief Magistrate Binta Mohammed granted each of the accused persons bail in the sum of N100,000 each with two reliable sureties in like sums, who must reside within the court's jurisdiction.

She also ruled that one of the sureties must be a civil servant of not below grade level 09, adding that the two must swear to affidavits to produce the accused persons in court on the adjourned date.

The case was adjourned to April 29 for hearing.

Two accused of stealing master's N3.5m

By Hussein Yahaya & Ibraheem A. Fatai

THE police yesterday arraigned two sales assistants before an Abuja magistrate court for allegedly stealing N3.5 million belonging to their employer.

The sales boys, Yahaya Lamido, 24, and Sagiru Mohammed, 20, were accused of stealing the said money in March 12.

Prosecutor Mustapha Mohammed stated in court that on March 12, one Alhaji Yusuf Ibrahim reported to the police that the accused persons jointly stole N3.5 million from his shop at Wuse Market, where they were employed to work.

"During police investigations, Yahaya Lamido admitted he stole N500,000 from the shop, while Sagiru Mohammed said he took N30,000," the prosecutor added.

He further stated that the offences committed by the accused persons are punishable under Sections 79 and 289 of the Penal Code Law.

When the two-count charge was read to the accused persons, they pleaded not guilty and requested for bail.

Magistrate Rosemary Kanyip granted each of the accused persons bail in the sum of N50,000 with reliable sureties in like sums, who must be civil servants of not below Grade Level 03 and residents within the court's jurisdiction.

The case was adjourned to April 4 for hearing.

Penalty coming for non-use of fire extinguisher

By Ogechi Ohalee

MOTORISTS of building owners without fire extinguishers will soon be penalised.

This was disclosed yesterday in Abuja by the spokesman of the Federal Fire Service, who said there will soon be a code in the country that will prescribe penalty for anybody without extinguishers in their vehicles, houses and offices.

Engr. Olisaemeka Machie disclosed that the code will soon be released to the members of the public in order for them for them to be properly informed of what to do.

He advised the general public to keep fire extinguishers in handy places in case of any eventuality, adding that people should raise alarms during fire incidents.

Engr. Machie explained that many fire extinguishers will work on combinations of fire classes, adding that there is the need to decide on what type of fire as well as ensure the extinguisher is compatible with the fire to be extinguished. "Almost all the fire extinguishers have a safety pin in the handle and ensure you are familiar with how it works," he advised members of the public.

Christian pilgrims to use e-passport

By Nasir Imam

THE FCT Christian Pilgrims will this year commence the use of e-passports to reduce the cases of absconding during the holy pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Israel.

FCT Permanent Secretary, Dr.

Goke Adegroye, who made this disclosure on Monday in Abuja, said its introduction would go a long way to effectively monitor their movement to and from the holy pilgrimage as well as boost the country's image.

Dr. Adegroye stated that the

FCT Muslim Pilgrims have commenced the use of e-passport, which drastically improved the hajj operations to Saudi Arabia.

He revealed that the FCT would commence the airlift of its pilgrims to Rome, Greece and Israel by October 23, 2010.

According to him, the final payment and remittances to the Nigeria Christian Pilgrims Commission (NCPC) will be by October 5, 2010 and the airlift would be completed by December 23, 2010 to ensure that the entire operation is maintained within this year.

PIC: ABUBAKAR YAKUBU



MOTHERS marching during 'Mothers Day' celebration at Nyanya on Sunday.

Suspected army impersonator arraigned in court

By Bunmi Omolehin

A middle-aged man was recently arraigned before an Abuja Upper Area Court for allegedly claiming to be the chief clerk of the Nigeria Army Headquarters, Abuja.

The court was told that the accused, Usman Monday of no fixed address was arrested and

handed over to the police by one Captain Soloitoin of the Army Headquarters.

Prosecutor Abiola told the court that sometime in 2009, the accused and one Mike (now at large) informed Sgt Arikpo Ekpeyong of 22 Brigade Provost Defence Headquarters that they are the chief clerks of Army Headquarters in

charge of training and operations.

He said the accused deceived the sergeant to pay N25,000 into his United Bank for Africa's account to facilitate his peace keeping ambition.

"During police investigations, it was discovered that the accused withdrew the said money and was never enlisted into the Nige-

rian Army, thereby committing offences punishable under Sections 97, 133 and 322 of the Penal Code Law. The accused pleaded not guilty to the charges and requested for bail.

Judge Umar Kagarko granted the accused bail and adjourned the case to April 15 for further hearing.

Culture: FCTA to partner with Catwalkhollywood

By Abbas Jimoh

THE FCTA's Social Development Secretariat Thursday formalised agreement with the Nigerian Chamber of Commerce (in the USA) on the proposed Catwalkhollywood Nigeria talent hunt reality show that would be coming up in the FCT.

Secretary of the secretariat, Hajia Habiba Sani Kalgo, who stated this at a press conference, said FCTA is poised to collaborate with the organisers of the event to exploit a common melting point of Nigerian cultures into foreign ones.

"The project has been given a ministerial blessing as it will help

us marry foreign culture into our local culture as the youths believe so much in foreign culture," she stated.

Hajia Kalgo also disclosed that the project will showcase HIV/AIDS victims as participants in the reality show.

She assured that the event has been scrutinised and that the issue

of immodesty, immorality or misconception has been taken care of.

Chairman of the Nigerian Chamber of Commerce (USA), Christian Iheanacho, said the essence of the show is to help promote and showcase Nigerian culture abroad at the same time creating employment opportunities for Nigerian youths.

PIX: ABUBAKAR SADIQ ISAH



ACTION Congress rally at Abaji recently.



DIGNITARIES at AfriHub's matriculation ceremony in Abuja on Saturday.



KUJE Area Council Chairman, Danladi Etsu Zhin, during a press briefing at Kuje recently.



OFFICE OF THE ACCOUNTANT-GENERAL OF THE FEDERATION

ISSUANCE OF RECEIPTS TO OIL COMPANIES

This is to notify all Oil Producing Companies that have paid Royalties, Gas Flared Penalties and Concession Rentals into the Federation Account and are yet to collect receipts, that the receipts are now ready for collection at the Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation.

All accredited representatives of the Companies are therefore requested to come to the Office of the Director, Revenue & Investment Department; Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation, Treasury House, Garki II, Abuja with the following documents for the collection of the receipts:

- i. Letter of Introduction from their respective Organizations,
- ii. Personal Identity Card,
- iii. Schedule of Payments for which receipts are to be issued.
- iv. Any other relevant documents that would facilitate the collection of their receipts.

Signed

Director Revenue & Investment

For: Accountant-General of the Federation



COMMUNIQUE ISSUED DURING CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR NON-STATE ACTORS IN BAUCHI STATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF BAUCHI STATE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY LAWS.

Preamble

The Public Procurement (PF- Fiscal Responsibility laws (FRL) were established by the Bauchi State House of Assembly in March 2008. PPL/FRL provide for prudent management of Bauchi state resources, ensure long-term macro economic stability of the economy, and secure greater accountability and transparency in fiscal operations within a medium term fiscal policy framework, have been passed into law since March 2008, the effective implementation of these laws has been hindered by lack of capacity within the procurement units of the various MDAs.

The Development Exchange Centre (DEC) is implementing a capacity building project on "Strengthening Non-State Actors Capacity in Bauchi State in the Implementation of Bauchi State Public Procurement and Fiscal Responsibility Laws" with financial support provided by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The project aims at increasing knowledge and skill in the implementation of the Bauchi State Public Procurement and Fiscal Responsibility laws amongst citizens in Bauchi State.

A two-day training workshop was conducted for Civil Society Organizations in Bauchi State on January 7-8, 2010 and for Procurement Officers of Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) on January 27-28, 2010.

Observations

Participants at the training workshops observed that even though, ifae Public Procurement and Fiscal Responsibility laws have been passed into law since March 2008, the effective implementation of these laws has been hindered by lack of capacity within the Procurement Units of various MDAs. Participants further observed as follows:

- 1. The appointment of the Governing Council which is expected to include - society and private sector representatives is yet to be effected fully.
- 2. Staffing of the Budget Monitoring, Price Intelligence and Public Procurement Unit is inadequate and available staff have not received any special training on procurement.
- 3. The Procurement Unit is inadequately funded to effectively carry out its mandate such as

public enlightenment

- 4. Local Government Councils are yet to establish Procurement Planning Committees. Also, Tender Boards and Technical Evaluation Committees at the LGA levels are yet to familiarize themselves with the laws
- 5. Inadequate qualified personnel such as professional accountants to effectively implement the Fiscal Responsibility law in the MDAs and Local Government Councils.
- 6. There is huge performance gap in the human resources and public finance management in Bauchi State.

Recommendations

- Participants at the workshop recommended as follows:
- 1. Bauchi State Government to fully inaugurate the Governing Councils with representatives of the Civil Society
 - 2. State Government to establish a well equipped central Public Procurement Unit and individual units at the procurement entities (MDAs) and the Local Governments
 - 3. Intensify capacity building and training workshops, seminars and courses for its personnel
 - 4. Create more awareness among the general public on the provisions of the laws
 - 5. Boost civil society capacity to engage in the procurement process

Signed for and on behalf of Bauchi State Civil Society Network on Public Procurement

- 1. Jibilliya Mayaka Health Education and Mibilization Agency (MAHEMA)
- 2. Musa Gindaus Women Development Association for Self Sustenance (WODASS)
- 3. Halima Ibrahim Jibo Bauchi chamber of commerce, industries, mines and Agriculture (BACCIMA)
- 4. Pharm Ibrahim Jibo federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN)
- 5. Mariya Alkasim Sidi Development Exchange Centre (DEC)



KADUNA STATE BOARD OF INTERNAL REVENUE TAX PAYER ENLIGHTENMENT CAMPAIGN

Under the Sponsorship of
KADUNA STATE GOVERNMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECT CR. 4084UNI

NOTICE TO ALL TAXPAYERS

GUIDELINES FOR PAYMENT OF TAX 2010

1. INTRODUCTION

The Kaduna State Board of Internal Revenue wishes to bring to the attention of all taxpayers in the State, the guidelines for payment of taxes and fees for 2010. The guidelines are meant to educate and enlighten taxpayers and the public in order to improve transparency and simplicity in the administration of taxes so that taxpayers can discharge their responsibilities with ease.

2. GUIDE TO EMPLOYERS OF LABOUR

Employers of labour include corporate organizations, and all other business entities that have employees under them and resident in Kaduna State. Employers of labour who have not registered for the operation of Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) are hereby invited to do so immediately. Both registered and unregistered employers are hereby requested to visit the tax office nearest to them and conclude the following procedures:

- Collect tax return forms for all your employees and ensure that they complete the forms with the relevant information and return the same to the Revenue Office and collect Tax Deduction Cards. Alternatively you may submit the salary structure of your employees for preparation of a customized tax table by the Board.
- Payment of employee tax is expected to be made on or before the 10th day of the month preceding the month of deductions.
- Employers of labour should note that penalty of 10 percent and interest at the prevailing commercial rate will be charged on any amount of tax unpaid after the due date of payment.
- Employers of labour are required to collect, complete and return Annual Tax Return Form (rev 9) to the tax office every January (visit tax office for details)

3. GUIDE TO SELF EMPLOYED PERSONS

The self employed include but not limited to: Professionals (Lawyers, Architects, Accountants, Surveyors, Consultants etc), Contractors, Politicians, Mechanics, Traders, Welders, Vulcanizers, Farmers, Carpenters, Tailors, Butchers, Hair Dressers, Bricklayers, Dyers etc resident in Kaduna State.

These categories of people who are already paying tax can be assessed under the newly introduced self-assessment method and unregistered persons can be registered and assessed in any tax office nearest to them as follows:

- Collect Self Assessment Form or Tax Assessment Forms, from the Area Revenue Office nearest to you and complete the form honestly, indicating your actual income for the relevant years of assessment.
- Indicate the correct tax you should pay based on the approved self assessment tax table as below and proceed to the bank for payment, or return Form to the Tax Office (in case you completed the normal Tax Return Form) and collect notice of assessment.

4. GUIDE TO DEDUCTION AND PAYMENT OF WITHHOLDING TAXES (WHT)

All organizations registered for the operation of PAYE are also required to deduct WHT from payments made for Contracts/Supplies, Dividends, Director's fees, rent, Consultancy, and Commissions at the time the payment becomes due (within 30 days from the date the payment was made). Please find below the rates chargeable for various categories of WHT payments.

Any payment in respect of WHT should be accompanied with a schedule containing the following details:

- ✓ Name and address of taxpayer (the Contractor, Landlord, Director, Depositor, Shareholder etc) etc
- ✓ Source of income
- ✓ The Gross amount paid
- ✓ Rate of deduction
- ✓ Amount deducted as WHT
- ✓ Period covered

PROCEDURE FOR TAX PAYMENT

- Payment of tax can be made into our Bank Account in any Bank in Nigeria (except Diamond Bank)
- Ensure you collect an e-ticket and copy of bank teller from the Bank instantly as evidence of payment
- Submit e-ticket and list of staff who contributed the tax (In case of PAYE) or list of persons who suffered deductions of WHT to the tax office and collect revenue receipt. Receipt will be issued after one day in case of payments made in cash and Bank Drafts, and after three days in case of cheque payments.

5. BENEFITS OF THE NEW SYSTEMS TO TAXPAYERS

The self assessment scheme and paydirect system of payment have the following benefits:

Self assessment

- ✓ It is very convenient.
- ✓ It allows taxpayers to assess themselves based on their true earnings.
- ✓ Gives tax officials more time to serve taxpayers better
- ✓ Reduces cost of compliance to taxpayers
- ✓ Eliminates collusion between taxpayers and tax officers.

Paydirect

- ✓ Saves time taxpayers spend in making payments.
- ✓ Effective and efficient system where taxpayers can discharge their responsibilities with ease
- ✓ Brings transparency into the system.
- ✓ Blocks leakages and ensure that all payments go into government coffers.

Please note especially, the statutory tax reliefs and allowances that may be enjoyed by taxpayers

For further information, please visit the Tax Office nearest to you or the Board of Internal Revenue Head Office at Obasanjo House, Yakubu Gowon way Kaduna or the following phone numbers: 08033342663, 08034504201, 08036648211

SELF ASSESSMENT TAX COMPUTATION

| INCOME PER ANNUM N | RELIEFS (A) N | TAXABLE INCOME (B) N | TAX DUE PER ANNUM (C) N |
|--------------------|---------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 400,000 | 99,000 | 301,000 | 57,250.00 |
| 500,000 | 119,000 | 381,000 | 77,250.00 |
| 1,000,000 | 219,000 | 781,000 | 177,250.00 |
| 1,500,000 | 319,000 | 1,181,000 | 277,250.00 |
| 2,000,000 | 419,000 | 1,581,000 | 377,250.00 |
| 3,000,000 | 619,000 | 2,381,000 | 577,250.00 |
| 4,000,000 | 819,000 | 3,181,000 | 777,250.00 |
| 5,000,000 | 1,019,000 | 3,981,000 | 977,250.00 |
| 10,000,000 | 2,019,000 | 7,981,000 | 1,977,250.00 |
| 15,000,000 | 3,019,000 | 11,981,000 | 2,977,250.00 |
| 20,000,000 | 4,019,000 | 15,981,000 | 3,977,250.00 |
| 25,000,000 | 5,019,000 | 19,981,000 | 4,977,250.00 |
| 30,000,000 | 6,019,000 | 23,981,000 | 5,977,250.00 |

TAX RELIEFS / ALLOWANCES

| Type of Allowance | Rate |
|--|---|
| I Personal Allowance | 20% of Earned Income + N50,000.00 |
| II Children Allowance | N2,500 per child, subject to a maximum of 4 children |
| III Dependent Relative Allowance | N20,000.00 per Dependant, subject to maximum of 2 dependant i.e. N4,000 |
| IV Additional Personal Allowance for Disable Persons | N3,000 Or 20% of Earned Income; whichever is higher |
| V Housing Allowance | Restricted to N150,000.00 |
| VI Transport Allowance | Restricted to N20,000.00 |
| VII Utility Allowance | Actual or N10,000.00 whichever is lower |
| VIII Entertainment Allowance | Actual or N6,000.00 whichever is lower |
| IX National Housing Fund (NHF) where appliance | 2.5% Annual Basic Salary |
| X Life Assurance Premium | Actual premium paid |
| XI Subscription to Professional Bodies | Actual Subscription paid |

| Type of Payment or Service | Withholding Tax Rate applicable to individuals and non limited liability Companies (payable to State Boards of Internal Revenue) | Withholding Tax Rate applicable to limited liability companies (payable to Federal - Inland Revenue Service) |
|---|--|--|
| I Dividends, Bank Interest, Rent and Royalties | 10% | 10% |
| II Commissions | 10% | 10% |
| III Director's fees | 10% | 10% |
| IV Consultancy Technical Services and Management Fees | 5% | 5% |
| V Building Construction and related Services | 5% | 5% |
| VI Contract / Supplies | 5% | 5% |

TAX RATES AND BANDS

| CHARGEABLE INCOME | TAXRATE |
|-------------------|---------|
| First N30,000.00 | 5% |
| Next N30,000.00 | 10% |
| Next N50,000.00 | 15% |
| Next N50,000.00 | 20% |
| Above N160,00.00 | 25% |

PENSION INCOME

Pension payable to employees who retire from private sector is tax free, but subject to a limit of N1, 800,000.00 per annum, and any payment above this limit is subject to tax while pension of public office holders is exempt from tax by the constitution of the Federal republic of Nigeria.



INDEPENDENT NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION

Zambezi Crescent, Maitama District, P.M.B. 0184, Garki-Abuja
Federal Capital Territory

PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

This is to inform members of the general public that the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) has extended the deadline for submission of applications in respect of its advertised vacancies which expired on Thursday March 18, 2010. The new deadline now is April 19, 2010.

The extension has been necessitated by an observation from the Federal Character Commission to the effect the advert ought to have been on for six weeks instead of ten days.

Prospective candidates who are yet to respond to our earlier advertisement should please do so and attach to their applications the following documents.

- (i) Curriculum Vitae;
- (ii) Photocopies of certificates; and
- (iii) Two (2) passport photographs.

All applications which must be addressed to the Secretary, INEC, Zambezi Crescent Maitama - Abuja, should be deposited in a mail box at INEC State Office where the applicant resides or submitted on-line via INEC website which address is www-inec.nigeria.org.

ABDULLAHI A. KAUGAWA
SECRETARY INEC.

Inside Politics

2011: Leaving ANPP is bad for Albishir, says Rep

From Isa Umar Gusau, Maiduguri

FOUNDING father of the ruling All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) in Yobe State, Senator Usman Albishir will be making a mistake if he finalises current moves to decamp from the ANPP to contest the governorship seat on the platform of another party," a member of House of Representatives from Yobe, Goni Bukar Lawan has said.

Lawan, a renowned supporter of Albishir who spoke to *Daily Trust* at the weekend in Maiduguri urged Albishir to strive to be

a political hero by forgetting the issue of his substitution in 2007. The lawmaker enjoined Albishir to align with Governor Ibrahim Gaidam ahead of the 2011 elections rather than leave the ANPP he helped to build from inception.

Recalling what happened in 1999, Rep Lawan said: "Malam Garba Maidugu, current special adviser on special duties to Gaidam, was believed by many people to have won the APP's governorship primaries in 1999. And it was thought that Albishir did

what he did at the top and Maidugu lost the seat to our former governor, Bukar Abba Ibrahim. This is all politics anyway, but rather than fighting Bukar and the APP, Maidugu mobilised support for Bukar, he even spent his money and ensured Bukar's victory, he didn't go to court.

"The same thing happened to Albishir in 2007, we can't say he did any wrong by going to court since he exercised his right, but since the court has ruled in Gaidam's favour, I think Albishir should emulate Maidugu's cour-

age and remain in the party. In fact, Albishir should remember that he begged Maidugu to return and accept appointment under Bukar, which Maidugu did.

"Virtually all of us that were with him are not leaving the ANPP because unlike his predecessor, the governor has opened doors for reconciliation, Albishir is not likely to succeed and we don't wish to see the day we will all climb the podium and speak against Albishir in political rallies. As an elderly person he should

swallow his pride and remain in the party because should he go ahead and contest in another party, he risks losing the elections and losing his place as a godfather in Yobe politics."

The lawmaker, who is a member of a reconciliation committee set by Gaidam last week, added that every member in the ANPP respects Albishir and recognises him as a founding father of the party in the state and would wish him to be in the fold ahead of the 2011.



FROM left: Nasarawa State Deputy Governor, Mr. John Michael Abdul; Chairman House Committee on Local Government, Adedeji Emmanuel and Chairman Nassarawa Local Government, Dr. Nasir Yuasuf Gawuna during the local government chairmen's meeting in Abuja yesterday.

Zamfara: 7 N/Assembly members, 23 state lawmakers received in PDP

From Sadeeq Aliyu, Gusau

ONLY former Governor of Zamfara State Senator Ahmed Yarima and two members of the House of Representatives yesterday failed to join other lawmakers in the state who formally decamped to PDP in Gusau.

At a ceremony attended by all the decampers, Senator Yarima, Alhaji Bello Mutawalle representing Maradun/Bakura Federal constituency and Abdulaziz Yari representing Anka/Mafara were conspicuously

absent and no mention of them was made throughout the ceremony.

23 members of the state House of Assembly who recently left the ANPP to PDP were also presented with the party's registration cards and flags, signifying their formal entry into the party.

In his address at the occasion, Governor Mahmud Shinkafi explained that the exodus of almost all the ANPP stalwarts in the state to the PDP indicated that the people of the state are bound by a common

political destiny and have agreed to work together and move Zamfara state forward.

"The ANPP of today cannot provide a credible platform for the actualization of our collective dream of moving our state and the nation forward. In the 21st century Nigeria, a dream party should be one that has a national outlook in terms of its membership and structures as well as articulated agenda for development and progress," the governor said in his speech.

He assured the

decampers that his administration will henceforth work with them towards fortifying democracy and rallying people towards winning the 2011 general elections. He called on other politicians that "remain in the sinking boat of ANPP" to join "the ark of salvation" which is the PDP."

The Senate President Senator David Mark who was billed to attend the ceremony could not make it as hazy weather stopped his flight but was represented by Senator Umar Tafida.

2011: Arewa group says plot against Ogbulafor targeted at North

By Nasir Imam

THE Arewa Youth Forum (AYF) has raised alarm that the attack on the leadership of the Peoples Democratic Party as personified by its National Chairman, Prince Vincent Ogbulafor, is a subterfuge as the real intention is to stop the North from completing its eight-year term presidency.

In the press release signed on behalf of the group by its National President, Gambo Ibrahim Gujunju, the AYF absolved Ogbulafor of any corruption charges, saying the PDP boss' problem started when he proclaimed that the party would maintain its zoning arrangement such that power remains in the north till 2015, a patriotic statement which it claimed automatically sta-

bilized the nation.

The AYF berated those they claimed took advantage of the ill-health of President Umaru Musa Yar'adua to foment trouble by creating credibility problem for the PDP and praised Ogbulafor for navigating Nigeria out of the pit dug for it by those who toiled to see the disintegration of the country, through his (Ogbulafor) matured style of leadership.

The group stated that those who naively thought and went ahead to gossip that the Ogbulafor statement on power staying in the north till 2015 was an affront to Acting president Goodluck Jonathan missed the point as according to it, the courageous stand by Ogbulafor saved the PDP and by extension, Nigeria from implosion.

Shekarau's successor: 'ANPP goes for consensus candidate'

From Auwalu Umar, Kano

KANO State chapter of All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) will go for primaries as the last option to pick its candidate for the 2011 governorship election only when such candidate fails to emerge through the consensus arrangement, according to ANPP chairman for the state Alhaji Sani Hashim Hotoro.

Speaking at the Nigeria Union of Journalists' (NUJ) Guest Forum in Kano, the two-term chairman of the ruling party in the state said consensus arrangement was part of the party's guidelines.

"We don't want to go for primaries to pick our candidate for the 2011 governorship race except it is necessary. We first want to try consensus and if it fails we go for primary elections to get our candidate," he said.

Reacting to insinuations that the state Commissioner of Science and Technology Dr Bashir Shehu Galadanchi was Governor Shekarau's favoured person for the 2011 governorship race, Hotoro said the party could not hand-pick a person as its candidate when there were many others who also wanted to take a shot at the governorship contest.

Inside Politics

Yuguda not behind Sen Moh'd's recall move – Kundak

From Muhammad Abubakar, Bauchi

BAUCHI State governor Isa Yuguda has no hand in the move to recall the senator representing Bauchi South, Senator Bala Muhammad, he rather still sees him as his 'political son', Special Adviser to the governor on Assembly Matters, Abdulmumini Muhammad Kundak has said.

Kundak, who was reacting to a report credited to the senator who accused Governor Yuguda of having a hand in the recall saga, told our correspondent in Bauchi in a chat on yesterday that it was entirely wrong of Mohammed to assume Yuguda would stoop so low as to plan the recall of somebody he still considers his boy.

"I wonder what gave him that idea. Kaura's problem is not Malam but the people of his constituency who accuse him of poor representation. In fact Governor Yuguda still sees the Senator as his political godson. Let me tell you that there are blood brothers serving under Yuguda as Special Assistants, Personal Assistants and even a chairman of one of the



GOVERNOR Isa Yuguda

most powerful agencies in the state."

The former Deputy Speaker said even governor Yuguda will be very happy to see Senator Muhammad out of his present travails, 'Yuguda was instrumental to the emergence of Kaura as Senator and he will definitely not want to see him recalled.'

Also reacting to the report, chairman of Concerned Citizens of Bauchi South Senatorial Forum, who are compiling signatures for the recall of the

Senator, Alhaji Al'amin Sani Mohammed, described statements credited to the lawmaker as the 'ranting of a sinking politician.'

"We are not surprised that Kaura is making wild and baseless allegations. He is a drowning man and can hold on to even a knife. We from his constituency are not going back on our decision to recall him because he has since lost touch with us. He has become an Abuja politician and we will show we are the ones who sent him there."

Bayelsa AC expresses fear over LG election

THE Action Congress (AC) on Sunday expressed fear about the possibility of the Bayelsa Local Government elections holding as scheduled on April 3.

A statement in Yenagoa by Mr Ebikibina Miriki, the Acting Chairman of the Bayelsa chapter of the party, said the AC was in doubt about the ability of the State Independent Electoral Commission (BYSIEC) to conduct "a credible election".

"This is owing to the fact that with less than two weeks, neither the state government nor BYSIEC had yet to show visible prepara-

tion towards conducting a credible local government election.

"Voters registers and polling stations are yet to be displayed or identified; no stakeholders meetings have been convened by the commission and there has been no sensitisation or enlightenment programmes put in place by BYSIEC," the statement.

It also said that the security situations and quality control of the whole exercise were neither here nor there.

The statement noted that the over 35 political parties for the exercise had

yet to receive their statutory grants for the exercise, while ad hoc staff had yet to be trained.

"All these bother on a hallmark for credible election," it said.

The statement said that it was worrisome that inadequate funding for the exercise by the state government was short of expectation at "a critical time like this".

It requested that the state government and BYSIEC should be sincere with the people and place the interest and development of the state, "far and above every individual interest". (NAN)

Southeast PDP moves against plot to remove Ogbulafor

By Muideen Olaniyi

PEOPLES Democratic Party (PDP) in the Southeast geo-political zone yesterday dismissed the reported plot to oust the party's National Chairman Prince Vincent Ogbulafor for alleged weak leadership during the forthcoming midterm national convention of the party.

Plot to remove Ogbulafor thickened following his alleged poor handling of the issues surrounding ailing President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, the emergence of Goodluck Jonathan as Acting President and his alleged corruption related activities with governors and other party members.

Daily Trust gathered that the NWC meeting held at the National Chairman's office yesterday may have some connections with the report of plot to remove Ogbulafor.

Speaking in Abuja, PDP National Vice Chairman (South East), Chief Olisa Metuh, said coming midterm convention was not meant to effect change in the Ogbulafor-led National Working Committee (NWC).

Metuh, who denied report of a strained relationship between the Acting President and the PDP leadership, said Jonathan had confidence in Ogbulafor, adding that there was no need for him (Ogbulafor) to publicize all his contacts with Jonathan.

He said the midterm national convention was a mere conference going by the provisions of the PDP constitution, pointing out that Southeast PDP state governors and state party chairmen would not be pleased with Ogbulafor's removal as the party's National Chairman.

He said: "As the National Vice Chair-

man (South East), I am in touch with all our governors, with our leaders in the National Assembly and other state chairmen and there is no issue of any replacement or the issue of the National Chairman leaving.

"The party in the South East has full confidence in him and we are not thinking of any member from our zone replacing him. Anybody thinking of that is not a full member of the party at the zonal level. We are working with our national chairman and we are talking about preparations for 2011 election and how to reposition the party," he further stated.

Metu, who appealed to those calling for a change of leadership to support the Acting President, noted that only their backing would prevent people like Colonel Muammar Gaddafi from disparaging Nigeria.



INTERNAL/EXTERNAL VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT



The United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) Nigeria announces the following vacancy:

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Post Title: | Local Security Assistant (LSA) |
| Level of post: | G6 |
| Type of contract: | Fixed Term Appointment |
| Location: | Kaduna, Kaduna State |
| Duration: | One Year (with possibility of renewal) |
| Closing date: | 3 April 2010 |

For further details on the job description and application process, please visit <http://jobs.undp.org/> and submit applications.

UNDP is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender, nationality and culture. Individuals from minority groups, indigenous groups and persons with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply. Qualified women are encouraged to apply.

All applications will be treated with the strictest confidence.

Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted

SPORT

NFF goes on counter attack

■ lambasts 'disco' critics

By Ismaila Lere

THE Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) has lashed out at critics who give the impression that Nigeria football is in turmoil.

Deputy General Secretary (General Services), Barrister Musa Amadu said yesterday that those who go to the market daily hawk-

ing the story that Nigeria football is headed for the morgue are doing serious harm to the game. He called them 'disco critics'.

"We are not averse to criticisms. In fact, some constructive criticisms have helped in no small way to shape our programmes and policies, and also the way we see and approach matters.

"However, there is a section of the media that feels it can only sell if it sees only the negative. So, you discover that they are always critical of everything, and see nothing good in anything. That is unfortunate.

"Football, like any other sport, is about scorecard. With every sense of humility, we make bold to say that on the pitch and in the board-

Don't neglect bench-warming Eagles - Dosu

Page 53



GETTING set for Niger... Home-based Eagles defender Chibuzor Okonkwo during a training session in Abuja recently.

Nigeria in the race for 2018 C'wealth Games

By Orkula Shaagee

NIGERIA'S desire to host the Commonwealth Games is still alive, as the Director General in the National Sports Commission Chief Patrick Ekeji has revealed that the country is in the race for the 2018 Commonwealth Games hosting rights.

He said the country plans to use the facilities that were

“The country is in the race for the 2018 Commonwealth Games hosting rights.”

prepared for the 2014 edition of the games to stage the best ever Commonwealth Games in 2018.

"After the country's futile attempt to win the bid to host the 2014 Commonwealth Games, we are in pursuance to host the 2018 edition, and we would approach it with vigour", Ekeji stated.

He informed that as part of measures to enhance human capacity development in the nation's sports sector, the National Institute for Sports would be fully relocated to the Federal Capital Territory Abuja.

Ekeji also assured that the African Junior Tennis Championship scheduled to hold in Abuja would go ahead as planned.

room, the present NFF administration has achieved more than any before it.

"We have worked hard to return Nigeria to the FIFA World Cup, with the support of all, established youth programmes such as the U-13 project from which players will graduate into higher levels, re-structured the NFF administrative set-up, worked in close collaboration with all superior and affiliate bodies and stakeholders, and won trophies and medals from international competitions of repute.

"Among other steps, we are working with the Nigeria Premier League to improve the domestic game, have greatly improved our revenue base through sponsorship and lobbied hard for larger grants from Government, to take care of the multiple of national teams and the competitions they take part in.

"The present administration has improved the bonuses and allowances of all levels of national teams, instituted a committee to discuss welfare scheme for ex-internationals and sponsored several seminars and workshops for our Coaches and Referees at home and abroad.

"There is transparency in the way we run football business now as all our contracts are advertised in the media before award, we have completed the FIFA Technical Centre and Football Turf and initiated the construction of a modern Secretariat. Also, we have insurance in place for our players, have purchased world-class standard buses for the senior teams and insisted that football, at all levels, must run in accordance with FIFA Statutes and standards," he said.

Britain to deport disabled gold medallist

A disabled weightlifter who has won five gold medals for Britain is facing deportation back to Nigeria, the UK Border Agency said yesterday.

Vincent Onwubiko, 43, who suffers from polio and uses a wheelchair, could be flown from London to Lagos as early as Monday evening, The Independent newspaper said.

Onwubiko came to Britain in 1994. He represented Britain at

the 1995 and 1997 World Wheelchair Games. He was selected for the 1996 Paralympics in Atlanta, but could not attend.

He claims that he could be dead within weeks if sent back to Nigeria.

"The government has given me three months of painkillers for my return to Nigeria and told me to get on with it. But I need proper care," Onwubiko told the paper.

"Sending me back is a death sentence."

He was sentenced to five months in prison for driving while disqualified after twice being convicted of careless driving. Immigrants who commit serious criminal offences are subject to automatic deportation once their sentences end.

Onwubiko is being held at the Colnbrook Immigration Removal Centre, close to London

Heathrow Airport.

"In light of a number of criminal convictions, Vincent Onwubiko was notified on November 13, 2007 of a decision to make a deportation order against him," said David Wood, the head of criminality and detentions at the United Kingdom Border Agency.

"Full consideration was given to his case and the decision was reviewed and upheld by an immigration judge.

"His judicial review claim was found by the judge to be totally without merit.

"The UK Border Agency has not been presented with a European Court of Human Rights injunction preventing his removal and there are therefore no legal barriers to his removal from the UK."

Onwubiko has written to Prime Minister Gordon Brown asking him to look into his case.

Don't neglect bench-warming Eagles - Dosu

By Ibraheem A. Fatai

EX-INTERNATIONAL, Joseph Dosu, has advised Lars Lagerback to rebuke the calls for him to drop some key members of the Super Eagles who are not playing regularly for their clubs.

Giving this advice yesterday in an interview with Trustsport, former Julius Berger shot stopper said it will be very unfair to some of the bench-warming Eagles not to be invited to camp to prove their worth.

Dosu maintained that some of the bench-warmers could be a surprise when invited to camp.

"The fact that a player is not playing regularly does not mean that he is not good material for the World Cup.

"There are many reasons as to why a player may not be playing regularly for his club, which may not even have anything to do with the quality of that player and what he is capable of doing on the pitch. For example, a good player may not be in the good book of his coach, a relationship that is capable of keeping him on the bench.

"Can we say that all the play-

ers playing regularly for their clubs are better than those warming the bench? For instance, some of our players, like Danny Shittu and Yobo Joseph, are not playing regularly for their clubs. But, that does not mean that they cannot impress the coach if invited. In the last Nations Cup, Shittu impressed at the back line up of

Some of our players, like Danny Shittu and Yobo Joseph, are not playing regularly for their clubs

the Eagles, but back in his club, he was relegated to the bench," Dosu reasoned.

The Atlanta Olympics gold medallist, however, suggested that the coach extend call up to those players who are very regular for their clubs and those who

are managing to play once in a blue moon.


"Players invited to camp by Lagerback should be given a chance prove to the coach what they have something to offer the country in South Africa. The performance of such players should be a yardstick for determining who among them will be selected to play for Nigeria in the World Cup, not the regularity or otherwise of the players in their club engagements," former Eagles goalkeeper stated.

While describing the semi-final target set for the Swede by the NFF as daunting, Dosu said the football tactician is capable of bringing home some appreciable results from the Rainbow Nations if necessary support is given to the team by his employer and the players show more commitment and dedication.

"With early preparation, support from the administrators and, most importantly, dedication and commitment of the players to the World Cup assignment, Eagles may not be a huge disappointment as being predicted by some Nigerians," he noted.



FORMER Eagles keeper Joseph Dosu begs Lagerback not to neglect bench-warmers



EXIMAB INTEGRATED LINK LIMITED

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EXIMAB-NATIONAL ASSEMBLY STAFF OWNER-OCCUPIER HOUSING SCHEME


INVITATION TO SUB-CONTRACTORS

All sub-contractors for the above stated project are hereby invited for a meeting with the developer, Eximab Integrated Link Limited. The meeting is scheduled as follows:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| DATE: | Thursday 8 th April, 2010 |
| TIME: | 11:00am prompt |
| VENUE: | Sinoni Restaurant & Chinese Cuisine, Zeto Court, opposite Nikon Luxury Hotel, Area 11, Garki, Abuja. |

All invitees should bring along with them the original copies of their award letters and any other incidental documents.

SIGNED:
MANAGEMENT





LANCASTER UNIVERSITY

STUDY IN THE UK

Located in the North West of England, Lancaster University is the first choice for Nigerian students and offers:

- ❖ Scholarships and bursaries
- ❖ Guaranteed accommodation
- ❖ Excellent library services (open 24 hours a day)
- ❖ Research excellence
- ❖ World ranked, triple accredited Management School.

Subject areas include: Arts, Social Sciences and Law, Business and Management, Health and Medicine, Science and Technology including Environmental Science, Computer Science/IT.

Jamie Vegad and Dr Valentine Ururuka of Lancaster University will be visiting Nigeria in March 2010 and will be holding presentations and student interviews at the following locations:

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>ABUJA Wednesday 24 March, 2010 Dave Abion Consulting Suite 206 (Second Floor) JINIFA PLAZA (opposite Securities & Exchange Commission Office) Muhammadu Burhari Way, Central Business Districts, Abuja F.C.T. Contact: Mary or Tola Tel: 09-8729252, 07094023031 Mobile: 08068559860, 08085246888, 0805835774 E-mail: daveabionabj@yahoo.com</p> | <p>LAGOS (IKEJA) Saturday 27 March 2010 Dave Abion Consulting 6th floor, (wing F) Elephant Cement House, Alausa Ikeja, Lagos. Contact: Tara or Ify Tel: 01-7379959, 7379960, 7746088 Mobile: 08062700622, 07055177000 07087757986 E-mail: daveabion@yahoo.com</p> |
| <p>LAGOS (VICTORIA ISLAND) Friday 26 March 2010 Dave Abion Consulting 2nd Floor, Nurses House 43, Afribank Street, Victoria Island, Lagos. Contact: Vivianne or Henry Tel: 01-4627838 Mobile: 07033383220 e-mail: daveabion_vi@yahoo.co.uk</p> |  |

All students attending the interviews should bring along documentary proof of relevant academic qualifications and work experience plus evidence of adequate financial support for UK studies.

If you would like to find out about the excellent opportunities for undergraduate, postgraduate and research studies with this world class university, please contact Dave Abion Consulting on the above telephone or email details in advance to make an appointment.

Kano gears up for Nigeria/Niger cracker

THE Kano state government has already approved and made arrangements for the necessary logistics and support towards the smooth hosting of the Nigeria/Niger match scheduled for Kano on Sunday.

Alhaji Ahmad Muhammad, Special Adviser to the Kano State Governor on Sports Development, said yesterday in Abuja that all was set for the match.

"In terms of organization of the match, all is set and the whole of Kano is ready for the match," he said.

The match between the home-based Super Eagles against their Nigerian counterparts is the second leg match of their 2011 African Nations Championship (CHAN) first qualifying round pairing.

The match against the Nigerian side known as The Menas is billed for the Sani Abacha Stadium in Kano on Sunday, March 28, 2010.

The visitors are holding a 2-0 advantage from the first leg match played in Niamey about 10 days ago.

Muhammad said the Super Eagles who are expected to lodge at Tahir Guest Palace are also expected to train at the main-bowl of the Sani Abacha Stadium in order to acclimatise before the

66 From the blast of the whistle to the end of the match, we must continue to cheer the Eagles.

crucial match.

"We are expecting members of the Super Eagles Team B to arrive Kano on Tuesday, and all arrangements have been made for them to be comfortable in terms of accommodation.

"They are staying in the best hotel in town, and will train on the best facilities in order to feel at home and be in the best shape ahead of the match," he said.

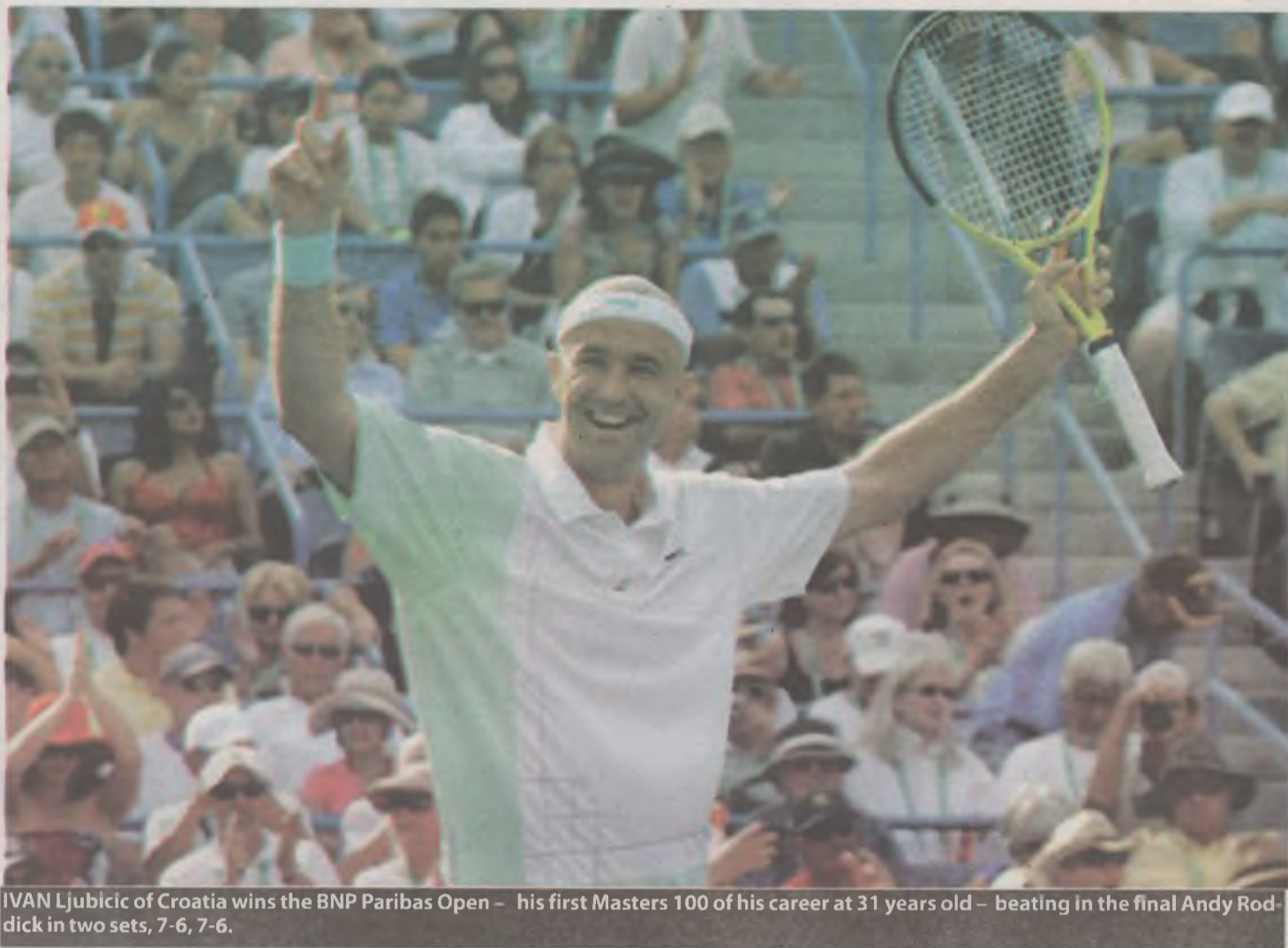
The Special Adviser said also that all necessary arrangements ahead of the match are in top gear toward the success of the game.

"We are now calling on all Nigerians to continue to assist the team with prayers in order to cancel the 2-0 loss they suffered in Niamey, Niger Republic in the first leg match," he said.

Muhammad whose office is overseeing the match in conjunction with the Kano State Football Association (FA), led by its chairman, Alhaji Sharu Inuwa, called on football supporters to support the Nigerian team.

"The total support becomes necessary in order to ensure the Eagles beat Niger. From the blast of the whistle to the end of the match, we must continue to cheer the Eagles.

"Our mission in Kano is not only to host the match but also to ensure total victory for Nigeria. This will greatly assist and motivate the players.



IVAN Ljubicic of Croatia wins the BNP Paribas Open – his first Masters 100 of his career at 31 years old – beating in the final Andy Roddick in two sets, 7-6, 7-6.

MAYHEM IN MINNA

Referee 'psychologically damaged' after assault

REFEREE Gabriel Adigwe and his assistants were violently assaulted by fans of Niger Tornadoes after their 0-0 home draw against Bayelsa United and the referee has told KickOffNigeria.com that he fears he has been 'psychologically damaged'.

According to Adigwe, the fans invaded the pitch after the game and set upon the officials, with no protection from the police.

"Immediately after the final whistle, fans rushed into the field and attacked us. There were policemen around but they were not

effective. I was viciously punched a number of times on the back of my neck, close to my ears.

"I almost collapsed, but I was afraid that if I fell down, they would trample me. My hands are swollen from trying to cover my face from the blows.

"The AR2 was also punched twice in his back and stomach," Adigwe said.

When the police finally decided to intervene, it was only a feeble effort.

"After the police fired tear gas, they fled and started throwing

stones at us. It met one person on the head. He was seriously bleeding; the blood gushed out of his head and poured on my shirt."

The officials finally found their way into the dressing room, but had to wait there for nearly another hour before they could leave the stadium.

"We waited for about 40 minutes in the dressing room before we left the stadium.

"The fans said they have to beat me up to teach me a lesson because I don't help them in their home games. They say that every time

I come to their home games, they always play draw. I am seriously damaged psychologically and I don't know if I can do any match after this without the fear of being beaten again."

Over the past two seasons, Adigwe has handled three other Tornadoes home games. They drew 0-0 against Zamfara United and beat Warri Wolves 2-0 last season.

This season, they have drawn at home against Ranchers Bees with Adigwe at the centre before this weekend's result against Bayelsa United.

...NPL imposes N1.4m fine on Tornadoes

NIGERIA Premier League (NPL) yesterday in Abuja imposed a N1.4 million fine on the Niger Tornadoes' Football Club of Minna.

This is part of the punitive measures taken by the League against the team over the alleged assault on match officials on March 20 in Minna.

Tunji Babalola, NPL's Head of Competition Department, who announced this in Abuja, also said that two fans of the club had been banned.

Besides, he said the team would play their subsequent home matches behind closed doors for now.

The incident occurred after Tornadoes' Week 25 Premier League home match against Bayelsa United FC at the Bako Kontagora Stadium.

"It was an unpleasant incident we are very dissatisfied with, in which the centre referee, G. I. Adigwe and the assistant referees were attacked immediately after the match by Tornadoes' fans.

"We are particularly disturbed about the behaviour of one Alhaji Ahmed Ibrahim who is the Niger Tornadoes' FC Supporters' Club chairman.

"Also, a certain Abdulrasheed Yusuf, who is equally a member of the supporters' club, was

involved. They are reported to have initiated the attack on the match officials," Babalola said.

He said the NPL consequently decided to impose the preliminary punitive measures to forestall a future occurrence, pending the decision of the Disciplinary Committee of the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF).

"Tornadoes have been fined a total sum of N1.4 million. They are to pay N1 million as a regular fine before their next home match in Week 27 against Gateway FC of Abeokuta.

"They are also to pay N400,000 fine for allowing their fans to attack the match officials,"

he said.

Babalola said the club would also play its subsequent home matches behind closed doors until the NFF Disciplinary Committee met to decide on further measures.

He said that the two fans - Ibrahim and Yusuf had also been placed on indefinite suspension for bringing the game into disrepute.

"The Tornadoes' management is further directed to identify the other perpetrators of the assault," the NPL official said.

The Tornadoes/Bayelsa United match had ended goalless.

Messi carries Barcelona as his stature grows

NEXT up for the Lionel Messi show — Osasuna. Messi has been a one-man scoring act with his second hat trick inside eight days keeping Barcelona in the Spanish league race as the defending champions kept pace with Real Madrid on top of the standings with 68 points.

Messi leads Spain with 25 league goals and has 34 in all competitions after notching his fifth career hat trick in Sunday's 4-2 win at Zaragoza. His form has inspired suggestions that the 22-year-old is on course to becoming one of the all-time greats, alongside the likes of his Argentina coach Diego Maradona.

Coach Pep Guardiola said he'd run out of superlatives to describe Messi.

"He's so good that it's impossible for him not to be so involved in so much of the play," Guardiola said. "He's been one of the chosen ones for some time now."

The biggest question for Wednesday's opponent Osasuna is how to stop Messi after his dominating performance at La Romareda, where even the home fans were out of their seats.

Messi tormented Zaragoza's defense with a combination of close dribbling, strength and deadly finishing. He headed home Pedro Rodriguez's cross in the fifth minute, but it was his 66th-minute strike that will be added to his lengthening list of great goals. He stole possession near halfway, bursting past one player before his quick feet left defender Matteo Contini on the turf. Contini could only clutch at his opponent's shorts as Messi beat goalkeeper Roberto Jimenez with a low shot.

He followed that up with a curled shot in the 78th to beat Jimenez and complete his hat trick.

"I have no doubt that you can compare him (to Maradona) and that he's even better. He's so young and he has a fabulous future ahead," defender Daniel Alves said. "Let's hope he keeps on like this."

Barcelona president Joan Laporta called Messi the best player in the history of football, even if Messi hasn't been able to carry over that form into international play with Argentina.

"I don't know what the secret with Messi here is," Guardiola said. "I know that at Barca he's comfortable and that he's also the one who most wants to triumph with Argentina."

While Barcelona shines with Messi, the form of Madrid with Cristiano Ronaldo appears less inspired.

Madrid had to rally to beat Sporting Gijon 3-1 on Saturday.

Ronaldo has scored 15 league goals but the team is out of the Champions League and the league title is its only focus. It next plays in a derby match against Spanish capital neighbor Getafe on Thursday.

Santos putting on a show reminiscent of Pele era

THE new Santos is looking a lot like the old Santos—the one made famous by Pele in the 1960s.

Led by Robinho and a group of talented youngsters, Santos is putting on a show nearly every time it gets on the field, just like it did when Pele was its biggest star.

The latest performance was a 9-1 trashing of Ituano on Sunday in the traditional Sao Paulo state championship, a competition it comfortably leads. The entertaining victory came only 10 days after Santos trounced Naviraiense 10-0 in the first round of the Brazilian Cup.

"It's getting hard to keep track of all the goals," 23-year-old Santos midfielder Madson said.

Santos has scored 60 goals in 18 matches so far this season, an average of 3.3 goals per match. It has won 14 of those games, drawing twice and losing two.

With Pele, Santos was nearly unbeatable in the 1960s.

Other impressive victories this season include a 5-0 result against Gremio Prudente, a 6-3 win over Bragantino, and a 4-0 thrashing of Remo. Santos won 10 in a row earlier this year.

"It's nice to be able to play like this, always thinking about attacking, we are not overly concerned with defense right now," coach Dorival Junior said.

With Pele, Santos was nearly unbeatable in the 1960s. It was used to routing opponents and easily winning competitions.

The only other time Santos impressed as much was in the early 2000s, when Robinho was a youngster along with Diego—now with Juventus in Italy—to lead the club to the Brazilian league titles in 2002 and 2004.

Robinho, now one of the team's oldest players at 26, returned on a six-month loan from Manchester City, but he is not Santos' only star.



NEYMAR... Another Brazilian wonderkid in Santos colours.



ROBINHO

Eighteen-year-old Neymar—known as the new Robinho—is attracting just as much attention. Arguably as skillful as his teammate, Neymar quickly made his way through the Santos youth teams and was an established starter at 17.

There have been calls—from Pele among others—for him to be called up to the national team. Pele was 16 when he made his national team debut.

"These players know they are really good," Pele told local media recently.

In addition to Robinho and Neymar, there is also 20-year-old

Paulo Henrique Ganso, 19-year-old left back Wesley and 19-year-old striker Andre, who scored three of Santos' goals against Ituano.

In addition to scoring plenty of goals the young group has another trademark — choreographed celebrations which have been pleasing fans and even getting other teams to follow suit.

The victory on Sunday—the biggest in the tournament in 46 years—came despite the absence of Robinho and Neymar. Robinho is nursing a minor thigh injury and Neymar was suspended after a red card in the last match.

Ituano played a man down from the 27th minute and had two other players sent off in the final minutes.

Santos reached 35 points from 15 matches in the Sao Paulo tournament and has all-but-secured a spot in the semifinals, which begin next month. It is trying to win the competition for the first time since back-to-back titles in 2006 and 2007. It was runner up to Corinthians last year.

A Santos team featuring second-stringers fell to the New York Red Bulls in a friendly Saturday that opened the Red Bull Arena.

Van Gaal relishing make-or-break run

BAYERN Munich can either move closer to three titles or miss out on them completely in the coming "weeks of truth", their coach Louis van Gaal said yesterday.

Bayern, still top of the Bundesliga table despite their shock 2-1 loss to Eintracht Frankfurt on Saturday, are playing second-placed Schalke 04 on Wednesday in the German Cup semi-finals before facing in-form VfB Stuttgart in the league.

They then meet Manchester United in the Champions League quarter-final first leg

before playing Schalke again in the league, the second leg in Manchester and third-placed Bayer Leverkusen.

"This is the best that can happen to us, the best for any player and it is also wonderful for a coach," the Dutchman told reporters.

"Either we get gladiolas or we will be dead," Van Gaal said.

"We are top of the Bundesliga, we are in the German Cup semi-finals, we are in the Champions League quarter-finals, who else in Europe can boast of such a record?" he said.

Van Gaal said his team were still favourites to win the league title. "We know we can stomach a defeat because the others cannot deal with the pressure," he said, after both Leverkusen and Schalke failed to win and go top over the weekend. "We have seen how difficult it is to go top of the table."

"I think for Bayern the championship title is the biggest goal but every player wants to win the German Cup and the Champions League. As for me I want to win all three titles," he said.



VAN GAAL

THE TUESDAY COLUMN

Sanusi Abubakar

sanusiabubakar@dailytrust.com

Beyond the NECO disaster

What can anyone say? We all knew it would come to this, we just did not realise it would be this soon. Now that the proverbial shit has hit the fan, we may be forced to seriously consider how to clean up this mess.

That is if we care to pay attention at all.

While the nation remains focused on the "hide and seek" between Yar'adua's people and an anxious citizenry, on the genocide-mess in Jos and its environs, or even on the colossal losses in Kano, Maiduguri and Bauchi recent market fires, all flaring up within some 48 hours, which destroyed over N10 billion worth of merchandise, details of yet another disaster, with much longer lasting consequences, were being released, this time by the Minna based National Examination Council, NECO. No one seems to be paying attention.

Of the 245,157 who registered for its' November/December 2009 Senior Secondary Certificate Exam, NECO said 234,682 actually sat and only 4,223 or 1.8% passed, meaning they got credits in at least five subjects including English and Mathematics. (About half of those who passed are from two states only; Ogun and Lagos.) To think that after 12 years of educational instructions over 98 percent of our kids would still fail the final exams is, to say the least, very frightening indeed. But that is exactly what NECO is telling a nation which seems preoccupied with other issues. We need to pay attention. Something serious is happening to our kids and their future.

Not long ago, the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) exams were more difficult and NECO was very cheap. Thus, when that body released the results of the November/December 2009 West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) (External), with only 31% passes out of 342,443 candidates, and withheld results of 57,792 (or 16.87%) because of malpractices, we were worried but not surprised. We were reassured by WAEC that things were not that bad. When all the SSCE results for 2009 are combined, Nigeria's performance in that year was 25%, which is said to be the best among the WAEC member countries, which include Ghana, Sierra Leone, and The Gambia. But then, of the 1,200,765 candidates who registered for the May/June NECO examinations, only 126,500 (or 10.7%) secured five credits, including English and Mathematics. So clearly, all was not well and we have no reason to remain complacent.

So what really is wrong? Let us start by eliminating some confusion. Even if we are ignoring English and Mathematics and prefer to consider anyone who has at least five credits, the picture is still gloomy. For NECO May/June exams 24.5% of the candidates came out with five credits irrespective of subjects. For the November/December exams the figure is 5.20%. So, even if we prefer to excuse them because there are insufficient Mathematics and/or English teachers, the situation is still dire. Are these kids being taught? Did NECO administer the tests and marked the scripts correctly? We don't know, but there are even more serious issues.

It is now clear that we are living a lie. Our education has collapsed and things are not improving. Resources allocated to the educational sector may be insufficient, but even the little that is supposed to be invested is actually stolen. But that for now may even be the least of our worries. The truth is that there are no teachers. They are neither sufficient, nor trained and certainly not motivated. And we are ignoring this issue to our peril. This really first struck me during some official assignment to the Federal College of Education (Technical) Potiskum, Yobe State. We met a school with enough structures, more than adequate

equipment but clearly bound to produce only mediocre, unmotivated teachers ready on graduation to pounce on any available job anywhere but in teaching. And we all knew this was bound to happen. We encourage the best students to aim for the universities, preferably to pursue professional careers with better financial prospects. Those not lucky enough would try for a polytechnic diploma. Those without any other choice reluctantly accept a place in colleges of education, always nursing hopes of escaping to some other line as soon as they see an opening. Now, how do you seriously hope to produce well trained teachers when the base from which you are recruiting is that narrow? How can you ever hope for motivated teachers from those who themselves almost hate the profession? And why should they like it when society itself neither recognises their role nor reward their contribution adequately? This approach cannot but produce this type of massive failures we are witnessing, who inevitably end up in the universities, polytechnics and teacher training colleges, in that order of preference, and we continue to pretend that this same vicious cycle would produce the teachers to remedy the mess.

We must be ready to pay teacher better. However, even as we agree with ASUU when it argues that "if you pay teachers peanut, you end up with monkeys" the extension of that is no matter how much water and fertilizer you feed weeds they remain weeds, and would not yield any edible crop. They must be weeded out if the system is to progress.

But even the failure rate is nothing compared to another more sinister trend; the mainstreaming of corruption and exam malpractice. All the papers quoted NECO Registrar Promise Okpalla's figure of 236,613 being the number of those involved in exam malpractice during the November/December exams under reference. But he also told us that 234,682 candidates sat for the exam, a figure lower than those involved in malpractices. (Even going online did not resolve this confusion.) Even if the figure is about 50% as in previous exams conducted by the same council, it is a disaster of very serious magnitude. The implications are shocking. If more than half of our future generation is willing to resort to criminal and dishonest means to get a fake certificate then we must ask what their parents, relations, friends and teachers (yes even teachers!) are telling them. This winning "at any costs" syndrome must be addressed.

The other side of the coin is institutional corruption. Tens of thousands of mushroom "coaching centres" and even some private schools have emerged whose main promise is guaranteeing candidates they could help them pass by "assisting" them with exam questions in advance, and "preparing" them to beat the system. This is so rampant and must be with the connivance of some NECO/WAEC staff, and is obviously very rewarding.

Come to think of it, we once had only GCE or WASC. Now parents have to pay for at least three exams after SS3, i.e. NECO, WAEC and JAMB (and, to add insult to injury, some fraud called "post-JAMB"! And you have to buy scratch cards to see your result!! Some even go for London GCE. The system is so commercialised and most of those involved are only interested in milking the parents and the candidates.

But then again, why do we need NECO? Won't WAEC be enough? We don't know what to teach the kids, or how. Now we are not sure if we can even assess them. For my part I would prefer one exam at the end of the SSS years, as well as well equipped schools that actually teach something. Is that asking for too much?

How can you ever hope for motivated teachers from those who themselves almost hate the profession?

SPORTS REPORT



ALEXANDRE Pato

Pato set for extended spell out

AC Milan striker Alexandre Pato is likely to be out for several more weeks after tests on Monday showed the Brazilian had torn his thigh muscle.

The 20-year-old, who has barely played this year as injury-hit Milan mount a bid for the Serie A title, made his latest comeback

from thigh trouble in Sunday's 1-1 draw with Napoli but limped off after 15 minutes.

"Tests have shown a tear. Pato will undergo further checks in the coming days," a club statement said, increasing the likelihood the forward will again be overlooked by Brazil coach Dunga when he names his squad for June's World Cup.



ARSENAL defender Thomas Vermaelen

Arsenal appeal against Vermaelen red card

Arsenal have appealed against the red card shown to defender Thomas Vermaelen in Saturday's match against West Ham, it was announced yesterday.

Vermaelen was sent-off shortly before half-time for bringing down the Hammers' Guillermo Franco inside the penalty area.

Arsenal were leading 1-0 and went on to win 2-0, with West Ham's Alessandro Diamanti missing the penalty which followed Vermaelen's red card.

A statement from the Football Association on Arsenal's website said: "The FA has received a claim for wrongful dismissal from Arsenal defender Thomas Vermaelen.