

Scandal rocks Nigeria's Peace Keeping Force

**TSM**  
*The Sunday Magazine*

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# NATIONAL GUARD

..The fears ahead

Centre Point  
Vs  
Securities Commission  
The inside story

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**COVER:** At the time when the transition is on course and the transition train is cruising forward without hope of derailing the political scene and democratic process is being militarised when in actual fact it should be demilitarised by the creation of National Guard.

The birth of National Guard in the peaceful political climate heightens Nigerians' apprehension on the sincerity of government to hand over to a democratically elected government on 27 August 1993.

Nigerians' apprehension and lack of faith in government's determination to hand over on August 27 is premised on the fact that the political scene and democratic process should be characterised by visible military disengagement rather than its increasing militarisation through the establishment of National Guard.

While Nigerians and indeed the international communities await whose interest the National Guard is meant to serve the question that throbs one's mind is, are they (National Guards) to kill or protect Nigerians? Whichever, events yet to unfold themselves will answer the nagging question.

The business marriage of Centre-Point Merchant Bank Limited and Nigerian Lamps Industries PLC which began on June 1990 hit the rock before the bank could groom the bride leaving a sad story for Centre-Point Merchant Bank Limited to tell.

The sad story is that Centre-Point Merchant Bank has been suspended from the capital market by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) for unprofessional and unfair conduct. This suspension has started having its negative impact because it has generated a cold war within the capital market which is capable of crumbling the capital market.

Although the suspension of Centre-Point Merchant Bank had been lifted, other issuing houses, are still nursing and leaking the wounds of SEC's sledge hammer on them.

This action has created crisis of confidence between lenders and borrowers in the capital market.

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Oshodi Market:



Abacha:



Asiodu: The untapped resource

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Sunna Dike

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We are taking a break this week from the goings-on in NRC and SDP to look at the National Guard. These past weeks, Nigerians have been so absorbed in keeping a tab on the two parties that nothing else seemed to have mattered much.

But lurking behind the goings-on in the parties is the intimidating image of the National Guard. This image has not been helped by the deliberate public relations job embarked upon, on behalf of the Guard by its Commander, Abdul Mumini Aminu, an army Colonel. And because Aminu is regarded as an "IBB boy", the impression is that the "National Guard has a hidden agenda."

This impression isn't new. Ever since 1988 when Ibrahim Babangida's regime mooted the idea of a National Guard, it has been met with strong criticisms. While many people saw it as a force set up to deliberately suffocate Nigerians, Human Rights Organisations saw it as an instrument of subverting the democratic process.

What they mean is that the Guard would be a dominant part of the cards on the regime's table of hidden agenda. The ultimate hidden agenda is the regime's alleged plan to perpetuate itself in power.

**Whatever the activities of the Guard will be are still shrouded in mystery. And so is the nature of members' training.**

None of these criticisms has deterred the IBB regime from midwifing the National Guard. And so, the Guard has run the **Mobile Police** out of job and allegedly sent regular soldiers out of the **Abacha Barracks Abuja**.

Whatever the activities of the Guard will be are still shrouded in mystery. And so is the nature of members' training.

But TSM's in-house detective, Steve Raymond Ohakwe, broke through the mystery this week and brought you all you never knew about the National Guard — the pains, the agony, the fears. It is a compelling read and forms our main cover story.

Our other cover story fell into our laps. While we were grappling with our National Guard story, we stumbled on this scandal involving, among others, Nigeria's contingent to the UN Peace Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in former Yugoslavia.

Aside from allegations of bribery and corruption, Nigerian troops have been accused of complicity with the Serb extremist guerrillas. The latter allegation culminated in a gun drama incident between Nigeria's Commander, a Brigadier-General, and Security Agents at Zagreb airport.

Nobody knows whether there is any truth in these allegations which have become the toast of the foreign media, or whether it is one of those ploys by the foreign media to present Nigeria in a bad light always.

This is the first time Nigeria's contingent to a peace keeping force (And Nigeria has been involved in quite a few) would be accused of bribery, corruption, illicit trafficking in currency and worse, complicity in the war.

It calls for a full scale investigation by the Federal Government, particularly the alleged gun-drama at the airport.

*Have a swell week.*

*Comfort Obi*

# Apocalypse<sup>®</sup>

by emkay

GONE ARE THE DAYS  
OF THE GOOD OLD  
TELEPHONE...



THESE DAYS, IT'S  
EITHER CELLULAR OR  
YOU'RE OUT OF  
BUSINESS.



APOCALYPSE  
FORESEES EVEN MORE  
ADVANCED PHONES!



## Universities grind to a halt

**FRESH** crisis rocked Nigerian universities last Monday, thus grinding all academic activities to a halt.

University teachers downed tools in a renewed industrial face-off with the government. They are protesting, among other things, the non-payment of about N3.46 billion meant for capital expenditure and stabilisation fund for the universities for 1992/93 session.

According to reports, "They consider the non-payment and the government's insistence that provisions of the last September agreement were not binding an indication that the government would renege on providing N10.2 billion agreed upon as the minimum amount needed to sustain the campuses in 1995.

The teachers also want a restoration of the Universities Academic Salary Scale (UASS), as distinct from the Elongated Universities Salary Structure (EUSS); a foundation of a three-year rolling plan for the university system as well as asking government to hands-off university administration in line with the autonomy provided for in the September accord.

## Ogonis, soldiers clash

**FOR** what it considers the excesses of the oil producing communities over agitation for better condition of living, the government has deployed soldiers to the Ogoni Community in Rivers State.

In a statement, the Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People (MOSOP) alleged that another violence was sparked off last weekend because of the presence of the soldiers during which they claimed, a mother of five children was hit by bullet on the chest. They also claim that seven others including a 16-year old were missing.

However, in a statement, Y. Braimah a major of Nigeria Army's 2 Amphibious Brigade, Boni Camp, Port Harcourt, said that the deployment of soldiers was to check "acts of provocation from the restless communities."

The incident took place at Biara in the Ogoni area, 45 kilometers South-East of Port Harcourt where an American oil pipeline company had allegedly destroyed freshly-planted crops belonging to the communities.

## TELL sues FG.

**T**ELL magazine which has been in a "running battle" with the Federal Government since the past three weeks has sued the Federal Government for N21.4 million over the seizure of copies of the magazine last Sunday.

Thousands of copies of the magazine which had on its cover "21 reasons why IBB will not hand-over" were seized at the *Academy Press*, Ilupeju Lagos, just after printing. As if that was not enough, about 10 armed security men swooped on the offices of the magazine in Ogba, Ikeja area of Lagos and carried out a two-hour search. At the end, the men arrested Ayo Akinkotun, a *senior Associate Editor*; Dayo Omotoso, *Assistant Editor* and Jude Igbani, *sales supervisor*.

However, earlier, *TELL* editors through a Lagos based lawyer, Gani Fawehinmi had filed a suit against the State Security Service, SSS, and the Attorney General of the Federation over the seizure of their magazines, the continued retention of the seized copies and a mandatory order compelling the SSS and the government to release the seized magazines.

## NEC clears Tofa, Abiola.

**HUMPHREY** Nwosu, NEC chairman said in Abuja last week that Bashir Tofa and M.K.O. Abiola, presidential candidates of NRC and SDP respectively have already been cleared by NEC.

Answering Reporters' questions in Abuja, Nwosu declared, "As far as NEC is concerned, the two candidates of the two political parties have been cleared." Nwosu also said that the commission would now concern itself with the screening of the NRC presidential running mate, Sylvester Ugo, only, since Baba Gana Kingibe, his SDP counterpart had already been cleared by NEC.

Nwosu, however, pointed out that the clearance of the candidates were provisional and could be invalidated if there are fresh allegations incriminating any of them.

## NANS unbanned.

**NIGERIAN** students in tertiary institutions had cause to smile last week when the Federal Government lifted the seven-year old ban

on the National Association of Nigerian Students, (NANS).

Announcing the cheering news in a press statement, Ben Nwabueze, Secretary for Education said that the Federal Government's decision to lift the ban followed agreements reached at the meeting between him and the students representatives on March 23, 1995.

## Audu ordered to restore Ejeih's privileges.

**PRINCE** Abubakar Audu, Kogi

State Governor has been ordered to restore the privileges of Hasan, Yakubu, a retired army colonel, and deposed Ejeih of Anka.

The Court of Appeal in Kaduna ordered the Governor to restore specific privileges befitting a first class traditional ruler pending the determination of an appeal before it.

Othman Mohammed, presiding judge, also ordered the Kogi State Commissioner of Police not to tamper with the present security arrangement around the deposed Ejeih's detention and to stop the frequent change of the Ejeih's body guards in the detention as such measure was unhealthy.

The case has been adjourned to May 12, 1993 for the hearing of the substantive appeal.



# Blackmailers called Journalists

By Comfort Obi

**T**his is depressing writing as I came back from Port Harcourt where I had gone to cover the National Convention, but somehow I couldn't. And that's not because I have enough courage to, but two things stopped me.

First, I was so angry with the behaviour of some Journalists at the convention that if I had written at the time, I'd have used a lot of unbecoming words. Second, I was so depressed by the whole episode that, as much as possible, I wanted to forget it.

But two incidents these past three weeks compel me to. First was the *Newswatch* story on the alleged plans to bribe some Media houses and Editors with a few thousands of Naira things. Second from writing certain took place in a friend's house last Sunday.

When the *Newswatch's* Reporter who was sent to interview me on the bribery story mentioned that one of the plans to shut some media houses up was to give Editors N50,000.00 each. I snapped, "But that's cheap. Why not N2 million if anybody was silly enough to think that Editors could be bought to look elsewhere while everything turned upside down."

Now, it was after, the Reporter left that it dawned on me how really insulting the whole thing was. My anger boiled over. Not with those allegedly planning to do the bribing but with some of us Journalists who have made ourselves so cheap that anybody could be thinking of buying an Editor off with a mere N50,000 and a Media house with a paltry N300,000 — some even much less.

You see, it is some of us Journalists who have cheapened ourselves and cheapened the profession. And so now, any irresponsible with a few thousands of Naira thinks all he has to do is to give a Journalist some money and he is mentioned in glowing terms via a write-up or better still, an interview.

And, let's be honest, that is what some Journalists do. It has gotten so bad that now when you need to interview somebody for a story, the person thinks "Ah, this guy wants some money off me." At times when you finish the interview, the person you interviewed feels quite uncomfortable not knowing whether to offer "something" or not.

So, that's how come a Governor's wife who I interviewed a couple of months ago dared give her aide N1,000.00 to give to me!

At the NRC convention in PH, it was so bad that politicians thought they could buy Journalists two for N1,000 while we were busy writing how aspirants bribed themselves through, we forgot to also write that some of us fought at the convention over money and went as far as blackmailing people into giving us.



In PH, a group of about five Journalists who claimed to be members of whatever association, and representing "Lagos Journalists" ripped portraits of thousands of Naira. It was disgraceful, particularly, when it

Continued on

## Governor Rufus Ada-George

afford the cut-throat prices of Airpro Taxis, all you have to do is to enter waiting comfortable RST bus for mere N25.00 and you're off.

During the NRC convention in Port Harcourt, everybody marvelled at what Ada-George did. The Civic Centre venue of the convention was so well put in place that for the first time, many people used public toilets with relish. Cleaners were always there, brush and Detol in hand, to clean as soon as anybody used the toilet. Toilet rolls were available.

When a few months ago a group of Journalists under the umbrella of a Lagos based company announced Rufus Ada-George the Governor of the year for among other things posting a budget surplus of N125.9 million, I thought it was most deserving but I also felt they missed the clincher.

Ada-George is the only Governor who has not travelled out of the country since he was sworn-in as a governor. This, in spite of the fact that most of his colleagues have travelled out at least two times. That should have been an important aspect of the award.

All hail Governor of the year!

**I** REALLY wasn't a fan of this guy when he was running for primaries on his way to Rivers Government House. And that's not because I had anything against him, but Journalists are not supposed to be a fan of any politician really, particularly during campaigns.

I remember I made some scathing remarks about him during the primaries, not because I caught him doing anything but because I saw a few of his supporters engage in a fight at the NRC secretariat, Port Harcourt with the supporters of an aspirant to same office.

The first time I saw him, I said to myself, "This guy looks too quiet to be a politician: He should go become a Reverend."

But Rufus Ada-George, Governor of Rivers State has surprised me beyond my wildest imaginations. It is not his modesty that has bowled me over but the much he has achieved since January 2, 1992 when he took over. Even his worst enemies attest to this.

The hitherto unnotable Port Harcourt roads are now motorable. The court roads are now motorable. The highway is now motorable. The court roads are now motorable. The highway is now motorable. The court roads are now motorable. The highway is now motorable.

# Science, Politics and the Economy: Agenda for Nigerian Development (1)

By Uma O. Eleazu M.A (Econs),  
M.A. (Pub. Admin) Ph.D

## The Nigerian Development Predicament.

**W**HEN we got our independence in the 60's, it was in vogue to have National Development Plans. We had one drawn up for us by the Colonial administration; its implementation stretched till 1962 when we produced our first Post-independence National Development Plan. I will submit that shorn of all economic jargons and verbiage, the development goals as indicated in all the four plan documents can be summarised as follows:

The acceleration of economic growth through a multidimensional process involving changes in structures, attitudes and institutions in the economy and society, thereby producing enough goods and services to go round and reduce or even eradicate poverty and other social inequities. The Fourth National Development Plan summarised it as follows:

- Increase in real income of the average citizen;
- More even distribution of income among individuals and social groups;
- Reduction in the level of unemployment and underdevelopment
- Increase in the supply of skilled manpower
- Reduction of the dependence of the economy on a narrow range of (economic) activities
- Balanced development — that is, the achievement of a balance in the development of different sectors of the economy, and the various geographical areas of the country;
- Increased participation by citizens in the ownership and management of productive enterprises
- Greater self-reliance — that is increased dependence on our own resources in seeking to achieve the various objectives of society. This also implies increased efforts to achieve optimum utilisation of the country's human and material resources;
- Development of Technology;
- Increased productivity; and
- The promotion of a new national orientation conducive to greater discipline, better attitude to work and a cleaner environment.

In other words, there was a certain ideal state of affairs envisaged for this nation which we would all have regarded as positive development, moving us away from a condition of life widely perceived as unsatisfactory and towards a situation that is qualitatively better in both material and spiritual terms.

A comparative commentary on each of the above ten national objectives indicate clearly that we missed the development boat long ago and have been steered into the



Eleazu....Disguised unemployment is rampant

- present predicament e.g.
1. **Increase in real income of the average citizen** Fifteen years ago when the minimum wage was N120.00, it could buy 1200 cups of garri, now even with a minimum wage of N400, this can only buy 560 cups of garri. All household expenditure has gone up while the quality of life has gone down.
  2. **More even distribution of income among individuals and social groups.** Income distribution is now more lopsided than in 1960's with majority of ruralites and urban working class people living below poverty line, while a new rentier class of millionaires has emerged.
  3. **Reduction in the level of unemployment and underemployment.** Since the late 80's we now have graduate unemployment in addition to thousands of unemployable school leavers. Disguised unemployment is rampant.
  4. **Increase in the supply of skilled manpower** The pool of skilled manpower may be increasing in absolute terms but specific critical skills are largely lacking. Universities and Polytechnics are producing unemployable graduates.
  5. **Reduction of the dependence of the economy on a narrow range of activities.** Before the sixties we depended largely on agriculture — cocoa, palm produce, groundnut etc. By the 60's and 70's a certain level of industrial production, reaching 8 - 10% of GDP was attained. Services sector contributed about 26 - 30%. Today the economy is dependent on one forex earner — oil. The rest have faded. If you exclude the petroleum sector the structure of the economy is still heavily based on Agriculture whose productivity and growth rate is below par.
  6. **Balanced development.** There is not only imbalance as between sectors, but also along geographical concentration of industrial development.

**7. Increased participation of citizens in the ownership and management of productive enterprises.** In spite of indigenisation and privatisation, the real productive sector (oil) is largely in foreign hands. Those who benefitted from indigenisation are losing hold in their industries due to inability to master the technology they have imported, while those who benefitted through privatisation have no effective control over the companies they have shares in for the same reason.

**8. Greater self-reliance on own resources, and material.** I will argue later that our inability to master science and technology means that we cannot achieve any appreciable degree of self reliance.

**9. Development of Technology:** We haven't even started matching words with action when it comes to understanding technology, let alone develop it. Although there is a lot of talk about indigenous technology, I think it is all hog wash and a flight from reality.

**10. Increased Productivity:** i.e. Getting more output from a given input. Due to a number of rigidities and inefficiencies in the system there is hardly any area in which we can increase our productivity.

In short, we are in a development trap. There is hardly any of our development objectives that we can say has been achieved or is being achieved. Instead what we have is retrogression in some areas and progressive decay of structures and institutions in others. One of the forebodings we have had is that a new generation of Nigerians might grow up thinking that this state of decay and retrogression has always been the case. They may not know that time was when Nigerian scientists, administrators, teachers were counted among the best in the commonwealth.

There is now a generation of Nigerians who don't know that once upon a time the Nigerian Railway was the most efficient transport system in the country. Any economy that cannot increase the production of basic life sustaining goods and services such as food, shelter, clothing, medication (health care), educational materials and all round protection and widen its distribution to members of society cannot be said to be developing. In this sense Nigeria is in a precarious situation. She cannot develop her agricul-

*Ezekwe...Doing a good job*



ture unless industry can supply the necessary inputs — implements and tools, fertilizer, pesticides and herbicides, — and post harvest preservation facilities. The industrial sector must in addition produce enough building materials educational needs such as books, paper, ink, chalk, laboratory equipment etc. In the health sector, hospital supplies and drugs must come from industry. There are other intra industry inputs and intermediate raw materials which are also products of industry. In effect, Nigeria is at that cross - road in her development, that unless the industrial sector is substantially developed to give support to the development effort, all other sectors will go rutting. And we cannot effort, all other sectors will go rutting. That will give us self reliance and self sustaining growth unless we develop an endogenous capacity for science and technology.

Nigeria got into this predicament because we did not provide the economy with internal engines of growth that lead to self reliant, self sustaining growth. Creating internal engines of growth involves four related factors:

1. The production, supply and use of factor inputs of domestic origin viz entrepreneurship, management, procurement, production, marketing and distribution, R & D, raw and intermediate materials, equipment, parts, tools and implement.
2. The development of a number of critical national capabilities (both human and institutional) for project identification, project development, project management, negotiating foreign direct participation, and capacity for influencing flow of those factor inputs. It also includes capacity for technology assessment, selection and development.
3. A large market capable of accommodating economies of scale essential for core industries and
4. Creation of linkages of identified core industries with strategic sectors such as agriculture, transport and communications, building and construction, mining, fuel and power, water supply and the chemical and engineering sectors. Look around and one finds that the missing links in our development revolve largely around 1 & 2 i.e. processes of technology choice and these are knowledge based, that is, based on science and technology in their widest sense and definition.

One of the major draw backs in our development efforts, which is where we went wrong, is in this matter of approach to the choice of technology and attitude towards the development of Science and Technology.

During the Second and Third Development Plan periods, Nigeria had no specific policy on acquisition of Technology. In so far as science and technology was mentioned, it was as part of general and technical education. In fact, although lack of executive capacity was identified in the reviews of the Second plan as a major constraint, the Third plan merely provided for technical education for operatives. It stated, "In view of the determination to successfully execute the plan and to hasten the indigenisation of technology, government is committed to a system which while liberalising the expatriate quota allocation system, will at the same time ensure that Nigerians are exposed to advanced technology and will be in a position to take over the operations within a reasonable time period." (FGP 1974).

In the same plan document under objectives for NEPA, it was stated that policy objectives will aim at "extensive training programmes to provide specialised personnel capable of managing, operating and maintaining the new

plants and transmission systems," not to design or build them. This era in our National development saw a lot of "design, construct and commission" contracts awarded to foreigners in industry proper, in power generation and transmission, in mining and quarrying, in road construction, in constructing tall buildings, all established on a design and construct basis. As one study of the period by **NISER** states: "the decision situation (for the choice of technology normally) requires sometime for processing the relevant information and aspects of the problem. But in Nigeria where everything and every one seem to be in a hurry, decision situation seems to be generally short. This was particularly true of the military era when the time lag between the conception of a problem or a project and the decision to take a particular line of action to deal with the problem was generally short"... the ultimate policy making body was the Supreme Military Council (SMC)... once the SMC took a stand on an issue, there was no mechanism through which the standpoint of the SMC could be either reviewed or reversed. But the SMC was not an expert in civilian administration; their expertise was more military than civilian. The council therefore relied very heavily on the decisions made by bureaucrats who were mainly the permanent secretaries in the ministries" [who in turn depended on foreign consultants, contractors and machinery vendors for advice on choice of technology.] Igwe & Ndekwu 1983).

It must be mentioned that it was also during this period that on the suggestion and recommendations from **NISER** and the National Policy Development Centre (Think Tank) that the National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA) Decree was promulgated and established (1977). It is to the credit of the NSTDA for as long as it lasted that for the first time a group of Nigerian scientists were brought together to look at issues of Science and Technology. It was the NSTDA that for the first time provided some guidelines on principles governing choice of technology or even a coherent technology policy for Nigeria. For an institutional framework for the selection of foreign technology, the National Office of Industrial Property was established by decree in September 1979. When we prepared the brief for the present National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies, a second institute — the National Institute for Science and Technology was also envisaged. But that idea never came to fruition before the civilians came in and instead, a Federal Ministry of Science and Technology was set up to take over the functions of NSTDA and the National Council for Science and Technology.

*Continued from Page 7*

couldn't agree on how to share it amongst themselves and resorted to fighting and use of abusive words:

But that's not the most disgraceful. There was this so-called political correspondent from a soft-sell magazine who in an effort to get a little money from a presidential aspirant wanted an interview with him. When the aspirant refused to grant the interview, the Correspondent, in desperation, used a complimentary card to write thus, "It is a matter of life and death. I must see you. I don't have money for my air fare back."

Last Sunday, bored, I went to visit a

friend in the evening. There were four of us in the living room when the security men brought a visitor's form and a letter to my friend. The Nigerian Ivorian football match had just ended.

The boy who filled the form and wrote a letter identified himself as a Sports Writer in a reputable National Newspaper. My friend opened the letter, read and passed to us one after the other. The contents: "Our big brother, Greetings to you in God's name. We know you as a Sports lover and we love you. With the Eagles win today, we know you will be celebrating hence, we pray that you make us smile with you. Thanks. We are 3."

Now, all of us know that Nigeria lost



Anya....Celebrating brilliance

By the time the still-born Fourth National Development Plan 1981 - 85 was being put together, the importance of science and technology in development was sufficiently realised to give it a separate chapter. Two new bodies were planned to give it a separate Development Centre and a National Institute for Chemical Research) were planned but they never came to fruition. By 1985, the ministry had been merged with Education, and then demerged I think in 1988 and now split, with one part being National Agency for Science and Engineering Infrastructure (NASENI) and the other still staying with the Federal Ministry of Education. And in that short period between 1980 and 1990 it had been under five ministers and witnessed a high turnover among its directing staff.

\*Dr. Eleazu delivered this paper on Friday, April 30, 1990 at a National Seminar on Science, Politics and the Economy: *The agenda for Nigerian Development* in honour of Anya O. Anya, Prof. a Research Scientist and 1992 National Merit Award Winner.

1-2 to the Ivorians. How did this sports writer get his own result? I thought it was a fake and insisted that he be called in. My friend said he wasn't a fake and revealed, "That is how the fake and revealed. "That is how the come here all the time to dupe me. Even when my photograph appears during official outings they come to tell me they put me there." He named the media houses. I recognised the boy's face when he was called in. is indeed a sports writer.

Questions, are, for how long will this continue? What is the NUD doing about these associations who are reducing Journalism to an association of blackmailers? The whole thing is coming quite embarrassing.



# NATIONAL DIRECTORATE OF EMPLOYMENT

## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

# MASS AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMME (MAP)

The following points on the above programme are published for general information.

### 1. AIM:

To produce sufficient food for domestic and industrial consumption in order to curb inflation, conserve foreign exchange and reduce national dependence on oil revenue.

### 2. TARGET:

All practising peasant farmers: This means that an estimated total number of up to 25 million under-employed farmers will ultimately gain full self-employment when the programme becomes 100% operational.

### 3. NATURE OF JOBS:

Each farmer will clear 0.4 hectares (1 acre) of farmland. Necessary inputs will be supplied as loan by the National Directorate of Employment (N.D.E.). The value of inputs (estimated at one-third of value of harvest) will be recovered at harvest. In the case of fish-farmers, the size of each pond will be 0.1 hectre or 1000 sq. metres.

### 4. REQUIREMENT:

To qualify for N.D.E. assistance, participants are required to work in groups of 100 to 2500 farmers on a minimum of 100 acres (40 hectares) and a maximum of 2500 acres (1000 hectares) of contiguous farmlands. The groups may comprise members of Village Communi-

ties, Cooperative Societies, Social Clubs, Town Unions, Trade Unions, Better Life etc. Farmlands acquired according to local custom for one season at a time will be acceptable.

### 5. CROPS:

The following crops have been approved for the programme for the time being:

Maize	Sorghum/Millet
Cow-peas (Beans)	Cassava
Wheat	Cotton
Rice	Vegetables/Fruits
Beniseed	Soya Beans
Yams	Potatoes

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# Agony of Nigerian National Guard



Col. Abdulmuminu Aminu...The troops have been trained to restore normalcy without casualties.

By Steve Raymond Ohakwe

**T**HE sight of a swam of youngsters with clean-shaven heads, unkempt clothings, clustering along the road, as one approaches the Sani Abacha Barracks in Abuja quickly conjures the image of Lagos 'Area Boys,' who have volunteered to make life miserable for Lagosians in recent times. These "Abuja Boys," aged between 18 and 21 years old, swoop on

any vehicle that dares stop for a hike to town and sometimes refuse to pay commercial fares. And when they descend on a beer parlour or restaurant like a holocaust, the proprietor has to pray hard to whatever god that answers prayers, to recover the payments for consumed items. But these urchins are not really an advance party of the Lagos urban guerrillas. They are the idle graduands of IBB's latest security outfit — The National Guard.

When the Babangida administration mooted the idea of a National Guard in 1988, it drew sharp criticism from a section of the Nigerian public. In fact human rights organisations saw in the birth of the National Guard, the development of an instrument of subversion of the democratic process. They alleged that it was a dominant part of the cards on the regime's table of hidden agenda, the ultimate hidden agenda of course being to perpetuate itself in power. Other observers of the administration also were of the view that the idea of a National Guard is a period of political transition in counter to the spirit of civil democracy as it gives the impression of militarisation at a time the military should be fading into the background.

But in the face of the wide-spread destruction arising from civil riots



Senate President Ayu...It will be tragic if National Guard turns into instrument of oppression and suppression

year, the jolting experiences of unprecedented blood baths among the peoples of Zangon-Kataf, in Kaduna, the Tiv-Jukun in Taraba State and the helplessness of the police in each of these cases, the arguments of the human-rightists seemed to pale into insignificance. The case of government was made by those engaging in civil unrests and the police which could not control them. Thus seemingly justified, the administration went ahead with the programme. Recruitment began soon after Lagos was literally set ablaze by protesters last May. But that was also the last the public heard of the National Guard. Until recently.

Recently, someone it seems has been bent on foisting the idea once again on the nation's consciousness; putting it on the agenda of public discourse. Abdul Muminu Aminu, a colonel considered one of the "IBB boys" in military circles, was given the task of ensuring the birth of the force. Aminu is not known for his loudness. So when he began talking recently to both the National Assembly and the Press he naturally drew immediate attention. To some observers, there was the impression of a deliberate pre-planned publicity blitz. To others, it

was Aminu's way of slowly unveiling his Guard to the public.

Aminu told newsmen in Abuja Thursday April 15, 1993 that the national guard was not a veritable channel for coup plotters or elements wishing to destabilise government, but an independent security outfit to quell riots, carry out counter insurgency and counter acts of terrorism against the country.

The commander took time to explain that the security outfit, which would be "highly disciplined, well-organised and properly deployed, will in addition to its anti-riot activities assist in rescue operations and relief operational duties during natural or any type of hazards afflicting any community."

He further explained that when fully commissioned, the National Guard would have units at the borders, except at the coast where the Navy operated, ground intervention force and paratroopers, a Marine unit at Baga on the shores of Lake Chad and an air wing with light aircraft or helicopter services to facilitate the work of the force.

Allaying public apprehension of the force, Aminu assured that the public should have nothing to fear from the activities of the guard, adding that no

conflict in role was envisaged with any of the other uniform services, as only the President, in conjunction with the state governors, could order the deployment of the National Guard. He stressed that with the calibre of officers in the command hierarchy, the guard would leave up to public expectation, adding that it was not easy nurturing a new outfit hence the need for public support and cooperation.

On the reports of molestation of civilians by trainees of the force in Abuja, Aminu described it as mere incidents of over-zealousness which would fizzle out when the recruits were fully trained.

Perhaps, Abdulmuminu Aminu's outing was the nearest official public explanation the nation has ever received since the formation of the National Guard one year ago. Although its progress and activities have been shrouded in secrecy, TSM gathered that the first batch of recruits started training in Zaria in June 1992 and passed out in December 4, 1992. About 3,600 recruits passed out alongside 400 military and police officers who were called to Sani Abacha Barracks on April 6, 1993.

Unearthing information on the activities of the national guard in their barracks was like investigating the communist KGB or the Nazi Police. However some trainees who gave TSM a "low-down" of the nature of training they received revealed it was hard and energy-sapping. They disclosed that some of their colleagues died in training due to exhaustion.

On a typical day, the recruits wake up by 4.30 a.m for road march after which they go for breakfast. Master Parade follows breakfast after which they settle for the day's training course. TSM gathered their training concentrated in building up trainees endurance through strenuous physical exercises. These include trench jumping with sharp and dangerous objects inside, crawling across rolls of fully knit barb wires, physical combat instructions in martial arts and extensive weapons training ranging from AK 47 assault rifles, G3 rifles, to armoured vehicles, and mortars. Field training over, the recruits retire to the depot for lunch and siesta. The evening is taken up by a series of endurance games after which they relax for the night.

One trainee, who disclosed that a room mate died the day before their passing out, gave a graphic illustration of what he called "endurance" training when TSM sought to find out the cause of several wounds he had on his sha-

ven-head and other parts of the body. He said that for when the commandant fires a shot for a cross country exercise, a time limit is given within which you must cross the country exercising anything head minute late, you just submit your cross country beating with hands. He the instructor has in his close friend recalled a scene when his lamented that he could not help him while others marched on him as they ran and later he learnt that villagers had to pull him aside for first aid.

The intensive endurance training is ironically not complemented with good medical care. Another recruit revealed that most of his colleagues that died was as a result of lack of medical care. He said "The clinic has no drugs and whatever ailment you complain of when give you panadol. That was why I had a swollen bit me on the face and I had a swollen eye. I never cared to go for treatment. But if some were died because of lack of treatment. Many of the boys that died in the bush were because they were not medically fit for training." But if some were medically fit, how did they end up in a force as vigorous as the National guard?

Disclosing how he joined the National Guard, our source said he was recruited to train for the army and one that the government sent signal that there was no more training for the regular army as the military has decided to train a new outfit called the National Guard. "We went to Zaria, me and this my friend to train for the army. Later on, they said they are going to train National Guard, not army. They confused our minds that there is no more training for the army, and that it is better for us to join the National Guards if we go back home till they call us back. So our Major advised us not to go home because there is no difference between the National Guard and the Army. So, 400 soldiers joined us for the same training. They were in 'B' company. We had the same training because they were being converted. So from there, we started training for National Guard." So, what happened to those who did not want to be National Guards? He said "As soon as the slightest opportunity occurred they said we cannot write our names twice. You either write your name in National Guard or the army, because that would mean two numbers. So for those of us who had their names written initially,



Koshoni...Worked out modalities of National Guard.

there was no way we could revert to the Army. We have to take it like that." So now do you regret that decision? His reply "I believe we shall enjoy because many people rushed to join the National Guard and we heard that National Guard will train abroad. We have Commissioner of Police, officers from Navy and Airforce who have converted to National Guard."

A visit to the Sani Abacha Barracks, Abuja, showed that the first batch of recruits are already settling down to business. The barracks is one of the best in the country, with well laid out roads, pavements and grass lawns. In a block while the rank and file share 30 blocks of 11 apartments each. Each apartment has two bedrooms and a sitting room with two bed rooms and a kitchen and toilet. The officers' quarters has lawn tennis courts and other rank facilities and of course the games and file have same facilities for games. The barracks built by Julius Berger PLC with red bricks, has a mosque, two churches for Catholics and Protestants and a modern Mammy market on the adjacent left wing to the entrance of the barracks. Perched at the foot of an imposing rocky landscape, the scenic complex adorned by its exotic red brick building that had for years eluded good living that had for years eluded the decency and class that pervades the barracks is a sure testimony of the spirit of seriousness behind the business of National Guard.

There is no longer any question that the Federal Government has made up its mind on the National Guard. What

ever questions being raised now are therefore anchored on the critical analysis on the proposed functions of the guard and the modalities for its operations. But before the government can consider its task accomplished, must tidy up some loose ends.

TSM investigation reveals that with all talk and publicity, the decree which is the legal instrument for the establishment of the National Guard is yet to be gazetted for public use. At the Government Press in Lagos there was no sign of the Decree as of the last week of April. However on inquiries at the Federal Ministry of Justice, we were informed that the draft decree was awaiting approval at the presidency. A brief insight into the decree reveals that the National Guard has a 7-man board which will perform the following functions.

- Suppression of violent disturbances
- Dispersal and Control of violent crowd and the suppression of violent demonstrations.
- Regular patrol of all the national borders.
- Provision of assistance in cases of natural or artificial disasters.
- Low-level counter-insurgency operations.
- Joint operation with the military in an environment of low intensity conflict.
- Assistance to civil authorities during any form of emergency.

Analysts are quick to observe an implied overlapping of functions with the immigration department and the police. While these can easily be resolved administratively, a more serious problem is the constitutional question raised by the existence of a force for which no provision has been made in the 1989 constitution. It is believed that the Babangida administration may have to amend the 1989 constitution to include provisions for the National Guard. This they argue has become imperative because while Chapter VI Part II Supplement of the 1989 constitution sets out the functions and command structure of the Nigerian Police Force and Armed Forces, Section 212 of the constitution indicates the head of the Police, an Inspector General, who shall be appointed by the President. He either reports to the President directly, as in military rule, or the Minister of Police Affairs in civil democracy. The I.G. is a service chief in military regime. And the President is naturally the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and appoints a Minister of Defence, Chairman Joint Chiefs and Service Chiefs. The Ministry of Defence oversees the affairs of the Armed



Aliyu Mohammed...National Guard should maintain peace and security of lives

Forces.

The silence of the constitution on the establishment of the National Guard raises several questions one of which is the fundamental issue of where the force draws its legitimacy. Another is why the administration is establishing a force at the twilight stage of its stay in power, without consultation with the new President or members of the federal legislature. Perhaps it was in an effort to resolve these issues that Abdulmuminu Aminu, Commander of the National Guard, carried his campaign lobby to the National Assembly, a way of carrying them along in the quest for legitimacy and ensuring acceptance by the incoming civil administration.

The Senate Defence Committee, worried by the National Guard campaign has already called for a detailed briefing on the formation and operation of the security outfit.

Jubril Martins Kuye, Chairman of the committee observed in Abuja, Wednesday April 21, that although the concept of National Guard was to ensure effective security system in the country, its adoption in Africa was new and shrouded in misunderstanding and suspicion. He said "Our committee will, therefore, ask for detailed education and briefing on the inter-relationship among the armed forces, the police, the federal guard and the National Guard, with regard to the maintenance of National Security and the personal security of the incumbent head of state, particularly under a civilian dispensation."

The next day Thursday, April 22, the

Commander visited the Senate President, apparently to allay the fears of the legislature that the outfit was aimed at perpetrating dictatorship in the country. The Senate President, Iyorchia Ayu, advised the National Guard not to allow itself to be used to perpetuate dictatorship in the country, but should play the patriotic role of supporting and defending the interest of the people at all times. He said "The National Guard has the potential of making positive contribution to the society but it would be tragic if the outfit turns into an instrument of suppression and oppression against the people it is expected to protect." He urged the National Guard to emulate its American counterpart which assists the civil society, adding that "the fear expressed in many quarters about the establishment of the Guard is genuine given the tendency in some third world countries for such outfits to be used to perpetrate dictatorship."

The National Guard campaign train also pulled up at the office of Secretary to the Federal Government, Aliyu Mohammed, Friday April 24, 1993 at the Presidential Villa, Abuja, to solicit support and encouragement of all Nigerians, and assured that the new security body would carry out its activities prudently and would not let the country down. The secretary to government however outlined the priority of the National Guard as the maintenance of peace and security of lives and property of all Nigerians to create the atmosphere necessary to tap the nation's abundant human and natural re-

sources. He pointed out that meaningful development could be expected without a stable socio-political climate, adding that the para-military outfit should therefore enjoy the support of all right thinking Nigerians.

Not all agree. A defence analyst who pleaded anonymity picks holes with the government's reasons for setting up the Guard. First he argues, its establishment was based on faulty assumptions: that riots are often the contrivances of crooked minds, social misfits and subversives and that the moment civil unrest is noticed, the most effective approach is to put it down as quickly as possible so that stability would be ensured.

According to him, there is no proof that countries operating the Guard have better success at controlling civil disorders than those without it or that the former have fewer unrests than later. He disclosed that the United States, often cited as the progenitor of the Guard system — developed the idea for a wholly different reason. The Guard in U.S. he said, was the outgrowth of the volunteer militia which was founded in 1792. It later became what is today known as volunteer reserve group of USA Army and Airforce, which can sometimes be 700,000 strong. They are usually drafted to boost the strength of regular army in time of war as in Operation Desert Storm. The expert stated that "in most countries with the Guard, it came into being at periods of threat to their national sovereignty. It was never formed merely to put down civil unrest or patrol the borders."

Arthur Nwankwo, a social critic and author, in his latest book titled "NIGERIA: The Political Transition and Future Democracy" treats the issue of National Guard in a chapter. He observes that while the emergent picture about its organic structure is still blurred and hazy, the impression so far created is that the bulk of the guard will be stationed at the presidency in Abuja, while its detachments and units will be spread evenly all over the country in order that consistency, rapidity of intervention and simultaneous actions could be taken when required. This approach, he further observe, may be necessary since the stated policy notion is that the National Guard will oversee all types of civil obedience and social harmony, and for it to effectively fulfil its obligation, it must be based in cantonments, barracks, detachments etc all over the country or at least in sensitive industrial, commercial areas.

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the political and security implications of establishing — the National Guard at this period of transition. His argument is that if the National Guard is really intended for the security of the Third Republic, the new government has to, first of all consider its existence necessary, and secondly set about establishing it through an act of National Assembly. But he contended that "there is no justifiable reason why a new president and a new government will accept or inherit a structure it knows little or nothing about, did not originate or promulgate, has been heavily briefed by a departing ruling formation, and has loyalty probably to the sponsoring configuration that saw to its emergence."

Nwankwo also expresses the fear in political circles that the Guard is being hastily established to ensure the military is not probed by the civilian administration. "As an organ of coercion and terror, the National Guard could serve the purpose of holding hostage and to ransom the new civilian president who comes under the departing military through it and ensures that the civilians take no step to either probe the corrupt military or compromise the basic foundation of its previous governance. Furthermore, the National Guard becomes another means of subverting the new polity, exists as the watch dog of the military formation, and a ready tool for its return and adventure on the nation's political scene."

TSM gathered that the fear of critics of National Guard is anchored on what some notorious leaders have done with the Guard system in their countries. The case of President Saddam Hussein of Iraq readily comes to mind in the abuse of national guard. When Saddam Hussein came to power through a palace coup in the 1970s, Saddam set out to build a new security outfit from the core of the military and para-military loyalists that saw him to power. The result, according to sources, is the National Revolutionary Guards that have since ensured that his stay in power is virtually unchallenged and that when such challenges do occur, they are met with astonishing defeat. Intensely loyal to Saddam himself and patriotic on the basis of Saddam's definition of patriotism, the National Revolutionary Guard has succeeded in ensuring for him a secure place on the Iraqi throne and have performed acts of valour and supreme sacrifice unprecedented in the history of Iraq, which the regulars cannot perform.

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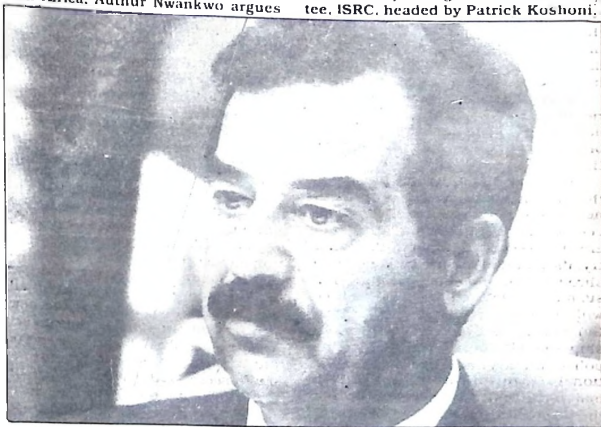
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During the gulf war in 1991, the National Revolutionary Guards offered the stiffest resistance against the allied forces and retreated strategically when the war became hopeless to avoid being destroyed completely and exposing Saddam Hussein to an uncertain fate. But most importantly, sources revealed, the National Revolutionary Guards have kept Saddam in power, despite his defeat in the Gulf War and large scale destruction of his country and discontent of his people. "That Saddam Hussein has survived several coup attempts throughout his rule and particularly after the Gulf War, is due mainly to the loyalty and commitment of members of the National Revolutionary Guards" said the defence strategist.

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The modalities of the Nigerian National Guard, according to ISRC sources, were worked out by the Internal Security Reorganisation Committee, ISRC, headed by Patrick Koshoni.



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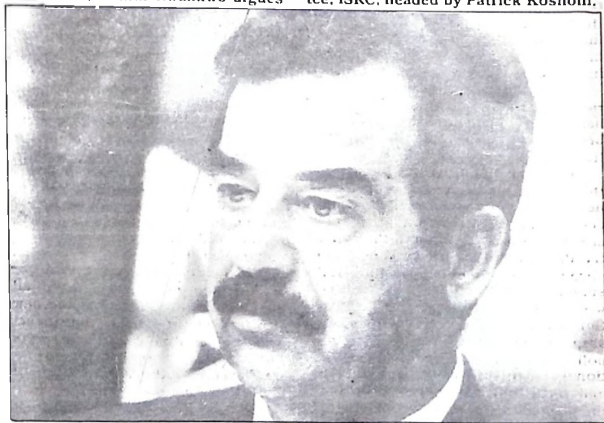
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Arthur Nwankwo...The National Guard could hold the new civilian President hostage

50, now a retired Vice Admiral and Anthony Ukpo, 45, then a colonel and principal staff officer to the President as Secretary of the Committee. According to security sources, the national guard was born out of serious lapses in the nation's internal security. It was conceived as an agency that will draw its core personnel from the police and the military who will thereby undergo necessary training that is best suited to fulfil this new security venture. For the police personnel the training will involve the exposure to a new and sophisticated weapons system, and other basic combat drills not originally learnt at the police college, while for the military personnel the retraining has to be in the areas of gradual lowering of combat effectiveness and aggressive instinct in view of the civilian nature of their assignment.

The hybridization of the institutional setting of national guard, experts say, will provide the future basis of a new security arrangement for the country as the military will never have to be called to quell civil disobedience no matter its scope, dimension and character (especially religious unrest) and the police will be deployed permanently to their regular beats and will never be called upon to perform a task their training and experience inadequately prepare them to undertake. The National Guard is intended to be a permanently stationed rapid intervention force, highly mobile and adequately mechanised.

Police sources however contend that if it is to function as it is being envisaged, then it will need more men than those organising its affairs suspect.

For effective deployment of men in 30 states of the federation, at a minimum of 1,000 guardsmen per state, Nigeria will need 30,000 guardsmen for a take-off. Given this picture one could therefore argue that the current 3,600 recruits may be inadequate for the venture. ISV was unable to confirm if there was immediate plan for such large scale recruitment.

One major fear expressed by the police is the security implication of putting the Guard under the presidency. They argue that in most federal systems including U.S. state governors have power to call out law enforcement agents such as the police before federal troops are invited in a state. In the United States, they argue the National Guard take dual oaths both to the state and federal government. But in the Nigerian federal system, power is centralised. A president will now have control over the police, National Guard and Armed forces as well as other paramilitary groups such as the Customs and Immigration. This, they stressed, is "not only unhealthy to the federation, but a danger to it."

Already state governors and federal government functionaries have begun raising discordant voices on what the role of the National Guard should be in the Third Republic, perhaps a pointer to future confusion. Cross River State governor, Clement Ebrri while defending the formation of the National Guard says it was not the evil that critics envisaged. The governor whose state borders with Nigeria's southern neighbour, Cameroun, suggests the deployment of men of the Guard to border towns to check incur-

sions into the country. But Bukar Abba Ibrahim, Yobe State governor suggests that the Guard should be mandated to foil coup attempts in the country. He argues that since the Guard was formed to check a threat to public peace in the nation, the forestalling of coup attempts should be included in its schedule of duties. According to him, coups, whether against a military or civilian administration would always remain "political, disaster" capable of disrupting the political process and should be discouraged.

Only last week, Lagos Island local government council chairman Adeniji Adele called for the National Guards to fight his urban guerillas — the Area Boys. And for the Secretary to Federal Government, Aliyu Mohammed, the immediate priority of the National Guard should be the maintenance of peace and security of lives and property of all Nigerians, to create the atmosphere necessary to tap the nation's abundant human and natural resources.

All things considered, it would appear that there has been a gradual meeting of minds on the need for a National Guard. However, the contentious issue is the quality and nature of guard Nigeria will get. Says a defence strategist, "if the government remains convinced the Guard is a good investment, the least it can do is give this federation a good Guard by creating a sober relationship between federal government and other services on the one hand and the state governors on the other hand. There should be more to the Guard than its license to kill which is the aspect everyone is worried about. The federal government must make up its mind on what shape of Guard it wants now and in future before commissioning it."

Meanwhile the commander continues his march down the blitz train. He has disclosed that four state capitals, Kano, Bauchi, Akure and Umuahia have been picked as zonal headquarters of the National Guard, and that green-and-orange uniform has been adopted for them.

He revealed that all the pioneer recruits who underwent special training last year in Zaria Depot were recruited from civilian population, pointing out that they would receive more training. He said, "our priority is to have capability of dealing with situations in a very professional manner and I can assure that the troops have been trained to handle such situations with modern equipment that would disperse crowds and restore normalcy without casualties."

# Baba Kingibe bounces back

...after a month of dithering, SDP presidential flagbearer settles for his arch-rival in the primaries, Kingibe in the interest of party unity

By Yusuph Olaniyonu

**I**N 1991, when it was the rule for the National Electoral Commission, NEC, to summon the chairmen of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC) for periodic briefing, Moshood Kashimawo Abiola and Baba Gana Kingibe made their debut public political appearance together.

That day, political correspondents who had gone to the 2, King George V Road, Onikan, office of NEC to hunt for stories stumbled on Abiola, then non partisan, and Kingibe, then SDP chairman discussing together. The duo jokingly dismissed reporters enquiries about "what is up" by saying they came there for different purposes and saw no crime in two Nigerians exchanging views.

But last Saturday, it was no longer a joke that the two men have a joint partisan fate awaiting them. A press statement last weekend announcing Kingibe as Abiola's running mate in the June 12 presidential elections on the platform of the SDP saw to this. The statement also ended a month of frenzied and mind boggling speculation which has taunted the SDP since the Jos Convention ended on March 29.

Since the discussion at NEC office, the relationship between Abiola and Kingibe had traversed different planes. The two were the most prominent presidential aspirants thrown up by the Option A4 selection process of evolving a presidential candidate in the SDP. Events preceding and during the Jos National Convention portrayed the two as transforming from political opponents into political enemies as they and their supporters engaged in fierce battle of words, wits and whims.

But now they have emerged to be the pair that will attempt to capture power

at the federal level for the SDP. It has however not been easy for the SDP ticket to fully evolve. The emergence of Abiola, a muslim from the South West zone, as the presidential flagbearer had created a problem of choice of running mate for the newspaper baron. The coalition of forces that aided his victory in Jos further complicated the issue.

Abiola who won in Jos with the merger of supports of the Yar'Adua group, and the Rimi — Balarabe — Falae PSP group found it extremely difficult deciding what line to toe in the contradictory preferences of the various groups concerning who the number two man should be.

The Yar'Adua group which is once again in control of the party machinery wanted a Hausa-Fulani muslim running mate. Specifically, the group's choice is Abubakar Atiku who stepped down, supposedly, for Abiola, at the final ballot of the convention. Meanwhile some party elders insisted on the presidential convention of achieving religious, geographical and regional balance as the prime consideration in the choice of the number two man.

At a point, many theories had come on why Abiola should pick certain

names which cropped up in the meddening period of decision on the vice presidential choice. Such theories are as varied as the interest groups. In fact, Abiola himself disclosed at *Niteshift Club* gathering that he perused a file consisting 450 names under consideration for the post. He also explained in Abuja last week that he attended 64 meetings for the same purpose.

The Yar'Adua group which wanted a muslim argued that key officers of the national assembly like Senate President, Iyorchia Ayu, his deputy, Albert Legogie, majority leader, Wande Abimbola, minority leader, Benneth Birabi, House of Representatives Speaker, Agunwa Anackwe and House Chief whip, Wale Oshun are all christians, tilting the balance in favour of christians. The group further extended the argument that the Hausa-Fulanis of the North have been marginalised in office sharing in the SDP and therefore should be compensated with the vice slot. It is reasoned that after occupying the topmost post for 20 years, the Hausa-Fulani will radically revolt against a sudden exclusion from the presidential villa. The Yar'Adua group predicated its support for Abiola in the



Kingibe, Abiola—ready to face the electorate.



Government will be a christian like the leadership of the national assembly.

Whether these points will be able to neutralise the serious attacks already being mounted by NRC chieftains on Abiola's religious stance and the insensitivity of the SDP to religious balance is another question.

TSM however know that there are plans by some politicians to inflame and inspire CAN leaders to campaign against the Abiola — Kingibe ticket.

**THE V.P:** Kingibe was born on June 25, 1943 to a salaried courier man for the old native Borno Emirate in Maiduguri. He was educated at the University of Sussex in England where he bagged a Bachelor's degree in International Relations. He also trained as a broadcaster with the BBC Television Training School in London. He studied for a master degree at the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva. He first worked as a lecturer at the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, between 1969 and 1970 from where he left to head the Current Affairs and Features department of the Northern Nigeria Broadcasting Corporation (now FRCN). He later joined the foreign service in 1970. In 1975, he was appointed senior counsellor to the Nigerian High Commission in London from where he was recalled to be the principal political secretary at the Supreme Military Headquarters during the Obasanjo administration in 1976. By 1981, he became Nigeria's ambassador to Greece with concurrent accreditation to duty as the secretary of the constituent assembly in 1988 where he met the present corps of Nigeria politicians.

Kingibe will definitely bring his oratorical skill, his public service experience, intellectual sauvity and mass appeal to the Abiola ticket.

With this choice, Abiola has rekindled the situation in America in the 1980 elections when after a tough battle between Ronald Reagan and George Bush, the republican candidate, Reagan, was later persuaded to pick his archrival, Bush as the running mate after the two had behaved as if they could not work together. The pair later ruled for two terms and Bush even served a one term presidency. The same situation prevailed in the American Democratic Party in the 1960 elections between John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Baines Johnson.

Whether the Abiola — Kingibe ticket will end up like these American examples is a question Nigerian voters will answer come June 12.

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# Not good enough, but okay

*A CLO report on the national conventions of the two parties picked flaws in the occurrences but told the federal government to take responsibilities for the inadequacies.*

By Yusuph Olaniyonu

**T**HE national conventions of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the National Republican Convention (NRC) which produced the parties presidential flagbearers and national officers have come and gone. But a report recently released by the Civil Liberties Organisation (CLO) converted the conventions into indices through which the political and electoral process now being operated in Nigeria came under serious scrutiny.

In a 42-page report compiled by two of its members at the convention venues, the body dissected occurrences at the convention venues and made a submission that all was not well with the option A4 method of evolving candidates. Similarly, the report expressed serious reservations on the efficacy of the Modified Open Ballot system which the nation's electoral body, National Electoral Commission (NEC), intends to adopt in the June 12 presidential election.

The independent report compiled as part of the body's election monitoring project submitted that the conventions were characterised by "irregularities, lapses and malpractices."

While reaffirming the wide acclaim that the Option A4 system proved to be straight forward and conclusive in producing presidential candidates for the parties, the report gave a caveat. "The results of elections conducted during the conventions of the two parties can be described as a triumph of money politics and ethnic sentiments" it concluded. And to substantiate this

charge, a quantum of evidence with all necessary particulars were included in the report.

The conventions, in the estimation of the CLO, also lacked the universal characteristic of being an avenue to fashion out programmes which the party would present to the electorate. The organisation of the conventions did not allow the aspirants for various offices to address concrete issues.

Another fault identified with the convention is excessive militarisation reprobated by the imposing presence of security agents. While it acknowledged that this contributed to the peaceful resolution of the convention agenda, the report warned that there is an implicit message that the two parties themselves may not be able to conduct the internal affairs democratically.

Other negative symptoms exhibited at the conventions are the tedious mode of vote counting and sorting, erosion of the element of secrecy associated in elections, unhealthy partisanship displayed by governors who employed extra legal means to ensure their wishes prevailed, clog in the accreditation method and the insufficient time allocated to the conduct of the conventions.

All these accusations were amply proved by examples of several incidents.

*Agbakoba....Triumph of money politics*

dents that pervaded the convention.

By like an objective critic, the CLO noted that the conventions brought to the fore certain positive developments in the transition programme. In an unprecedented manner, the elections were orderly and peaceful, just like defeated candidates gracefully accepted defeat in good faith.

Conclusively, the CLO warned that the contents of the report are "not meant to provide the military government with evidence of gross malpractices... to justify another cancellation of the primaries and a further extension of the transition programme." In fact, the human rights body categorically declared its aversion to cancellation of the primaries and a further extension of military rule.

The report which is aimed at assisting the civil society in rectifying the "present defective military imposed electoral and political dispensation" made six recommendations in that direction.

Part of its suggestions include replacement of modified open ballot with absolute secret ballot system, adoption of a less cumbersome and time saving procedure for sorting and counting of votes and adoption of multi party system. Independence of the parties in total organisation of the convention was also recommended.

With the CLO report, Nigerians who are not in Port-Harcourt and Jos now have more information to form opinions on what went wrong and what went right at the conventions of the two parties.





The World

# Scandal rocks UN Peace Keeping Force

well as corruption and complicity with the Serb paramilitaries.

But the allegations against the Russian troops sound more serious than those of their Nigerian counterparts even though all the incidents tend to question the moral authority of UNPROFOR.

The Russian battalion of 864 troops, deployed in the highly sensitive disputed territory between Serbia and Croatia, according to *Evening Standard*, a London based Newspaper, has attracted charges of corruption, collusion and instances of infamous al-

liance with the Serb forces.

Take the case of the Russian Colonel who defected to the Serb extremist guerillas. Viktor Loginov is his name. And until he defected to the Serbs, he was a member of the Soviet army elite. Loginov was posted to a United Nations Command in Serb-occupied Croatia. Foreign Newspaper describe him as a charismatic paratrooper and a hero of the Afghanistan war.

In brief, he was among the best Russia could send to UNPROFOR and he was expected to perform up to that billing and come back with laurels.

**\*Nigerian, Russian troops in bribery and corruption scandal.**

**\*Nigerian. Commander in Gun drama episode at the airport**

By Comfort Obi

**T**HE United Nations, UN, may not shout it to high heavens. But the world body must be feeling embarrassed by the allegations being levelled against members of some of its contingents in the United Nations Protection Force, UNPROFOR, in Yugoslavia.

The allegations stink. Nigerian and Russian troops in UNPROFOR have particularly come under strong criticisms by the Foreign press in the last few weeks.

The allegations against them range from bribery, corruption to sabotage. And the results: The UN doesn't know what to believe.

When the body sent out the peace keeping force, it expected much, but definitely not what is staring before it now.

While the Russians have been accused of corruption and defection to the extremist Serbs, Nigerians have been accused of illicit dealings in hard currency, UN fuel and hardware, as



Loginov...defected

Of course, Loginov did perform except that the UN is covering its face in shame over his performance. The charismatic paratrooper has just taken a lucrative job with Serb extremist guerrilla — the very people he was asked to control.

According to the *Evening Standard* "The Russians were posted to the Southern half of Sector East; a Belgian battalion was posted to the north. Colonel Loginov and the Russian commander, Colonel Alexander Khromchenko worked out of UN headquarters in Erdut airfield at Klisa 10 miles away.

"Loginov swiftly established contact with the local Serbian warlords, the men whose chetnik bands — self-styled "special police." — were engaged in the ethnic cleansing and atrocities against non-Serbs. Pre-eminent among these gang leaders was Zeljko Ranznjakovic, a small time crook from Belgrade who under his *nom de guerre*, Arkan, features high on the United Nations' list of alleged war criminals."

Arkan's men were the real powers that — be in the sector. Loginov was supposed to have challenged them. But he surprised both the local non-Serbs and the UN protection force command by not challenging them. The reason was soon known.

Arkan had given Loginov a white Mercedes Benz car which Loginov began to drive around. But more was that Loginov and Khromchenko began partying frequently with Arkan and his henchmen. The parties were lavish affairs where girls were brought in from Belgrade. This went contrary to all the rules of normal social duties undertaken by senior UN officers.

While everybody became suspicious of Loginov's activities, he confirmed it by dramatically leaving the Russian army last year. He is now an adviser to Arkan, training his guerrilla band. Paul Malherbe, a colonel and formerly second in command of the Belgian battalion was one of those shocked by Loginov's behaviour. Malherbe a career soldier who retired recently revealed that he had some reservations when he served alongside Loginov. He said, "it was clear from day one that it was not going to work with the Russians. Their sentiments are pro-Serbian; they consider the Serbs allies and part of a Slav brotherhood. When they arrived they would not even recognise that the territory was part of Croatia."

"Our job as a UN force was to be neutral and to look neutral. The Russians

did neither. If there was a ceasefire violation they would blame the Croats. The contacts went far beyond anything that was acceptable."

Not many people found in surprising that the Russians aligned themselves with the Serbs. They had language problem and could communicate only with the Serbs. They shared same Slav background and similar military systems. The Russians felt isolated among the Europeans who made up the majority of the UN personnel. And according to *Evening Standard*, "The Russians and the Serb guerrillas shared another important trait — a predilection for graft. It is now a commonplace among UN personnel that the Russians were suborned with gifts and bribes by the Serbs in Sector East." The most visible symptom of these was Loginov's white Mercedes.

The fast growing belief that the Russians are doing a great damage to the UN's role in former Yugoslavia has greatly embarrassed the UN and has put a question mark on the UN's future as a neutral agent for intervention.

But then, these weaknesses are not the exclusive of the Russians. There are equally serious complaints lodged against other nationalities. These complaints allege corruption, dereliction of duty and complicity with the Serb para-militaries.

Nigeria is among those who have featured most in these allegations. According to the reports, Nigeria's contingent based in Glina, South of Zagreb, in the Sector North protected zone, has been the subject of lots of complaints about illicit dealings in hard currency, UN fuel and hardware. Nigerians, like Russians, have been

accused of working with the Serbs and receiving bribes from them.

Although these charges have continually been denied by the UNPROFOR command an incident a few weeks ago caused the UN an agonizing embarrassment.

According to the *Evening Standard*, "Nigeria's Brigadier-General X (real names withheld by *TSN*) the Commander of Sector North, was about to catch a flight from Zagreb Airport on March 26 when security men on an X-ray machine spotted something odd at the bottom of his luggage. They asked him to open his bag and found, tucked away among some crockery, a new M48 Winchester hunting rifle.

"When he was questioned about the rifle Brigadier-General X said he had bought it for 485 dollars and wanted to take it home to Nigeria. His story brought a smile to the lips of the police who were questioning him. The Brigadier-General clearly did not realise that the small brass plaque set into the rifle stock, engraved with Cyrillic script, was an inscription declaring the gun a gift from the Serbian people...Such incidents sap the moral authority of UNPROFOR."

This damning evidence gives the impression that there have been some complicity with the Serb para-militaries.

If these allegations are true, then that'll be unfortunate because in all the peace keeping forces Nigeria has contributed to, this will be the first time our troops will be indicted in any form of corruption and bribery. Nigerian troops have always been given a clean bill.

Speculation is that this may be part of the usual foreign propaganda to present Nigeria in a bad light.

Fred Chijuka, a colonel and Army Public Relations Director told *TSN* when contacted that he never read or heard about the story before now. He promised to contact the general concerned.

Last week, Sani Abacha, an Army General and Nigeria's Secretary for Defence gave Nigerians a breather. Speaking at a reception he held in honour of Paul David Miller, an Admiral and Commander-in-Chief of the United States Atlantic Command, Abacha announced that Nigeria is to withdraw from UNPROFOR.

Nobody knows whether it is in connection with the alleged scandal but Abacha announced that it was to enable Nigeria cope more effectively with its leading role in the West African Peace Keeping Force, ECOMOG.



Abacha....Nigeria is withdrawing

# In search of a lasting peace

*Threats by NATO allies for military intervention, and renewed economic sanctions designed to enforce a ceasefire and the Vance-Owen peace plan, skewered the Bosnian Serbs on the ropes. But can this stop the slaughter?*

By Joseph Umunegbu

**T**HE carnage in the former Yugoslavia was at the brink of another breaking point last weekend. Before the Serb's Bosnian delegates signed the United Nations (UN) backed peace plan at the Athens Conference, in Greece, the United States (US) and its North Atlantic Treaty Organisations (NATO) allies pondered on breath-taking military strikes, after having embarked on a package of confused hard hitting sanctions.

Some members of the international community are uncertain about what to do and why. But most of them label the Serbs as the aggressors — and as such insisted that Serbs should bear the brunt of western fury. The U.S. wanted air strikes and safe havens to protect Bosnian muslim enclaves. This solution is similar to their "cowboyism" approach in Iraq. But European nations such as Britain hope to avoid sailing their hands. They prefer lifting the arms embargo to enable muslims defend themselves — and watch the resultant gory blood bath from a vantage point.

General Colin Powell, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, arrived in Brussels on April 26 to coordinate plans for airstrikes with U.S. NATO allies. But Britain told America to go back to the UN for a more specific mandate. Then the US ambassador to the UN, Madelaine Albright, insisted that the U.S. has the legal authority it requires.

The allies are prepared to enforce the peace plan through military strikes, if they don't get their way. Washington says, even if the rebel Bos-



*Janjovic.* "The crisis in Yugoslavia cannot be understood by merely watching CNN.

nian Serb parliament agree on the peace plan, they must back this up by "concrete action" on the ground. This means that the Serbs are required to respect the ceasefire and give up parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina, under their control. Already the French has 14 warplanes on standby, in Italy. And Britain is keeping four squadrons of Royal Airforce (RAF) Tornados in Germany. These preparations are in line with consultations made between the White House and its European allies in NATO, under UN command, for a combined air operation in Bosnia.

**ASSESSMENT OF UN'S MILITARY OPTIONS:** A few weeks ago the western media outlined a variety of military options for UN forces in Bosnia. The first exercise is to bomb the Bosnian Serb's supply route. Since the UN's basic mandate is to ensure food and medicinal deliveries and to employ all necessary means for doing so, the West believe that blocking of humanitarian aid convoys depends on spare parts, ammunition and oil from Serbia. Disrupting the Bosnian Serbs' supply lines is supposed to reduce Serbian military viability. But it was noted

that this would fail to shake the Bosnian Serbs grip, since a serious short sources is unlikely, and in case there will be a high risk of hitting civilians, when bombing bridges.

Another UN mandate also includes blasting Serbian artillery positions to weaken the siege in Sarajevo. Srebica and all other muslim enclaves. But it is difficult to hit artillery targets offer hidden in woods. And the Western fear mishits and triggering Serbian action against UN Protection Force (UN-PROFOR) troops.

The UN is also considering setting up safe havens to protect muslim enclaves. But this requires new resolution and redefinition of UN's military role, since huge UN ground forces is needed while those already in the former Yugoslavia would be endangered. And in any case it would undermine the Vance-Owen map which wants to avoid dividing Bosnia along ethnic lines.

Then a final option is to lift the arms embargo to allow muslims defend themselves. This would avoid western military intervention and placate Islamic countries. But other factions will also increase their arms and spark off a new Balkan arms race, resulting in more bloodshed and thwarting UN's humanitarian mission.

**ECONOMIC SANCTIONS:** For the past year Yugoslav citizens were forced to endure one of the highest inflation rates in the world. Low wages are largely eroded by hyperinflation, but the people are said to have survived by relying on the extended family and the old communist welfare system. The situation in Montenegro and Serbia is equally traumatic. The Serbs — who inhabit the republics of Yugoslavia, Montenegro and Serbia appear tired of making sacrifices for their Bosnian brothers.

Though the Serbs believe that the peace plan does not favour their Bosnian counterparts, they are now worried about their own economic misery and being dragged into a war. Their leaders, including Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia, pressured Rodovan Karadzic, leader of the Bosnian Serbs, to accept the UN peace plan, which the latter signed, last weekend. But the renewed economic sanctions, passed by the UN on April 17, will continue until peace on the ground is implemented. The new sanctions include a twelve mile maritime exclusion zone, barring ships from Yugoslav waters and freezing Yugoslav financial assets overseas. Cyprus kicked off its sanction against

Yugoslavs by freezing Serbian assets. No sooner had it done so, it unfroze them for no apparent reason. Hiccups such as these seem likely to set a pattern for the next few weeks as a world divided over its Balkan policy struggles with inadequate machinery to use sanctions more effectively than hitherto. Some could not agree when the measures should come into force. Britain said 6 p.m. on April 27. Germany wanted April 28, and France said, with immediate effect.

In a press statement, Yugoslav's prime minister Radoje Kortic appealed to the UN to review their positions on the sanctions issue because it was hurting innocent Serbs and children. "International law does not know of any instance, where a country is turned into a kind of concentration camp as Resolution 820 provides," he said. He added that since the beginning of the crisis in the former Yugoslavia, the country had always pressed for a peaceful solution to the conflicts - especially the one in Bosnia. Kortic wanted the UN to end the injustice against Yugoslavia and prevent the tragic consequences of sanctions, including the loss of innocent lives and renewed suffering which was threatening an escalation of war in the region. A session of the Bosnian Serb parliament also condemned the new sanctions as unjust, genocidal and anti Serb.

To achieve a just and lasting peace, it is clear that the Cyrus Vance - David Owen Peace Plan requires readjustments. During exhaustive discussions between leaders of the Serb republics and David Owen, the co-chairman of the Peace talks, they agreed that a three member presidency, representing Bosnia, will be nominated by the ethnic groups in the war torn country. They will establish rules or procedures for a transitional government. And after the peace plan is signed an exclusive UN Force will patrol non Serbian territories inhabited by Serbs - guaranteeing their personal security. They also discussed the possibilities of providing changes on the proposed map, designed by Vance Owen, to the satisfaction of Croats, Serbs and muslims in Bosnia. And that it was

better to negotiate these outstanding issues rather than rejecting them all together. In this way, further bloodshed and confrontations would be avoided. The Serb leaders claimed that they would secure 45 percent of Bosnia, as discussed with Owen, and eliminated Serb fears of being partitioned and divided. Owen also wanted



the creation of a corridor, to link the proposed Serb provinces of West and East Bosnia, and all of them with Yugoslavia. After discussions with Milosevic he hinted that this area will be demilitarised and come under UN control. The Bosnian Serb province of Babuka may be linked with Serbia and the corridor would be demilitarised, five kilometers on either side of the road.

Owen also warned that the peace plan should not be enforced as this was not the best way to guarantee peace. The Yugoslavian ambassador to Nigeria, Ilija Jankovic also agreed that the peace agreement should not be signed under duress. "It should not be an ultimatum, but a tool to stimulate negotiations. All parties must be satisfied with the plan, otherwise once the peace enforcers go the region will flare up again" he said. He added that the crucial stage is for the Bosnian Serb parliament to sign the peace plan, because they feel the pulse of the war in Bosnia than most. It is their men who are fighting in the battlefield. But Jankovic asserted that Serbs would prefer the bombings rather than the uncertainties of the future. "You cannot impose the peace by war and I believe the international community will not accept these steps otherwise there will be disaster," he said. But Jankovic was confident of a meeting point in the future, by the three groups in Bosnia. "I believe a process of reintegration will take place because we have similar language, and culture." But he felt that the U.S. was not analysing the Yugoslav crisis in a proper critical manner. "The U.S. looks at the issues in too much of a classical view, without analysing the history and the background of Yugoslavian peoples. The ethnic groups are not like in the US where the various races entered the country from

outside. The people of Yugoslavia have always lived in the region," he stated, adding: "The Yugoslav crisis cannot be understood by merely watching CNN. One must balance the views and read books on the subject in order to appreciate the conflict in its proper historical perspective".

So the issues at stake in Bosnia must be carefully weighed and balanced, before subjecting innocent civilians to further hardship. Since the Vance-Owen peace map is one of the central bones of contention in the imbroglio (it called for Serbs, Muslims and Croats to live together in Bosnia), which must accept the plan, while the later refused. The war was sparked off when the majority muslims declared that Bosnia will be an Islamic state. And The West failed to address this issue. It did not give the Serbs or even the Croats a sense of belonging. It erupted a chain of reaction, resulting in the Bosnian Serbs launching a vicious campaign to grab territories which they claimed to be historically theirs in the first place. The muslim influence in Yugoslavia was brought about by the invasion of the Ottoman turks against the Serbs. During the Second World War, Croats who sided Nazi Germany, wiped out many Serbs and seized their territories. The brutal war was halted by Tito. Though a Croat, he fought on the side of the communists, against Nazism. After victory, Tito became leader and united all the factions under one Yugoslavia. On the death of Tito and the collapse of communism, old animosities erupted with a vengeance.

So the Vance-Owen peace plan in the former Yugoslavia suffers from severe structural defects, and the international community should remodel it to suit all parties concerned. Then a lasting peace can be achieved.

# May Day massacre

*Uprising in violence world wide, marred this year's Workers' Day celebrations, claiming the lives of Sri Lanka's President and others.*

By Joseph Umunegbu

**M**AY 1st is generally regarded around the world as Workers' Day. In recent years May Day celebrations have been rather subdued. The harsh economic realities tend to stifle peaceful Workers' Day celebrations. But this year's May Day witnessed an upsurge of violence and deaths.

In Russia, part of the former Soviet Union — a nation ideologically regarded as the land of the workers — witnessed an organised grisly and probably politically motivated violence. Possibly, the "Workers" (or should we say Communists) were bemoaning the loss of their dictatorship. In France an unemployed man was said to have immolated himself because he could not find work. In Nigeria, some workers chained themselves, as a sign of their economic bondage.

But nowhere in the world were the demonstrations more sad than in Sri Lanka. Ratnasinghe Premadasa, the Sri Lankan President was assassinated by a massive bomb blast. Premadasa, 68, was said to have been killed by a teenage suicide bomber. Sri Lankan police stated that the attacker strapped himself with explosives and drove a cycle into the ruling United National Party (UNP) rally where Premadasa was leading the May Day procession, through the heart of a Colombo commercial district. During the ensuing explosion, 17 people were killed, while 60 more were wounded. Among those dead were the president's body guards.

A nation-wide curfew was imposed at the wake of the assassination and was lifted Sunday morning. The nation was in mourning until last Thursday when the President was given a state funeral. Premadasa, who was Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, was given the state funeral with full

military honours.

India blamed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eulem (LTTE) for the assassination and the Sri Lankan police formally accused LTTE who are the most formidable separatist group in the country. Even before the killings, Sri Lanka's security forces had already complained the LTTE suicide synods may try to infiltrate the crowds during the May Day celebrations. But the LTTE denied responsibility for the suicide bomb attack. The Tamil Tigers are involved in a bitter secessionist war in the North and Eastern parts of Sri Lanka.

The death came a week after a gun man shot dead opposition leader Lalith

Athulathmudali, while he was addressing an electoral meeting in Colombo. So it appeared that a concerned and planned effort was being made to destabilise the country.

Premadasa was chairman of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) until last month. The region includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Premadasa passed on the rotational chairmanship of SAARC to Bangladesh at the organisation's annual summit in Dhaka. The slain president was said to have expressed interests in finding a solution to the Tamil rebellion in Sri Lanka where thousands of people have died.

India's former Prime Minister, Rajiv Ghandi, was also killed by a suicide bomb attack in May 1991. The Tigers were blamed for this similar death, which equally occurred during a political rally.



A Tamil rebellion in Sri Lanka ...Tamil tigers were blamed for the May Day massacre in Colombo.

# Epidemic Looms!

*A good number of Nigerians have never been respecters of basic food hygiene. But with the deteriorating economy, this aspect of human life is swiftly taking a turn for the worse in Nigeria.*

from this waste. When it rains the place is a sight for sore eyes.

Greenish water flows all over the rail line and the ground is slimy, making the whole area impassable. A reasonable patch of land on this rail line has been taken over by beggars where a kind of colony has developed. These beggars have ailments ranging from rashes, leprosy to coughs of various degrees and intensity.

What is very alarming and somewhat repulsive is the thriving food market right in the midst of all this scum. Food of all sorts like pepper, tomatoes, fish, vegetables and fruits are sold here at affordable prices. The attitude of the traders to the food is another thing entirely. Most of them spread out these food stuffs on polythene materials right on top of the slimy floors. That's about all the effort they make at achieving "hygiene."

Most of them have to keep trying unsuccessfully to wade off an army of house flies trying ceaselessly to have a taste of their wares.

TSM accosted one of the buyers, who identified himself as a technician. This is what he had to say, "it's not as if I like buying or eating food stuff got from here but then there is hardly anything I can do. Anyway how do you really prove that it is dangerous. Is it not

ket. This market place is a baby of SAP. It sprang up years ago when the going (economy-wise) began to get tough. It is situated right on the railway lines of Oshodi, an area in Lagos. All efforts by officials of the Nigerian Railway PLC and local government council officials to evacuate these traders have not yielded any fruits. The traders have refused to budge.

However, this is not the story which prompted TSM to pay a visit to the place. The story is that the market has been reduced to scum and filth. Hygiene has been murdered here. The better part of the rail line has been taken over by refuse dump.

This is a fall-out of the more than one month old strike of Lagos State Refuse and Waste Disposal Board personnel last year. Terrible smell emits



Life & Style



Felicia Oamen

**I**f you've ever visited any of the popular food markets in Lagos, then the picture we are about to paint might come very vivid. But then, if you've not really had an opportunity to do so, you need not worry. You'll still get the gist of the story as you read along.

Our first port of call is Oshodi mar-



Filth, slime and food all rolled in one.

people who have been eating it before?"

If you think Oshodi market is nauseating then you need to see Idi-Oro, Mushin and Mile 12 market places. In the case of Idi-Oro a part of it where gari sellers sell is like a refuse dumping ground. Once it starts to rain, it is hard differentiating it from a gutter.

Ibbalukholo Paul a house wife told TSM that she got ringworms on her feet last year during one of her visits to the place for shopping.

An official of Lagos State Refuse and Waste Disposal Board informed TSM that the case of Oshodi market place in particular is a fault on the part of Nigerian Railway PLC.

"These traders pay money to Nigerian Railway to stay on the rail line. But the corporation does not pay us to clean this place. So we can not, even though we know how terrible and dangerous the place has got."

We looked into the health books and found that foods exposed to this situation are prone to diseases. Eating them could lead to diseases like dysentery, diarrhoea, typhoid, worms and tuberculosis.

Apart from market places, hawkers of food stuff are not blameless either. All over Lagos, all kinds of food are sold under very poor conditions.

The new trend in the sale of bread is that it is first exposed to air and dirt until interested customers come along before they are packaged in polythene bags. Starting off a "puff-puff, chin chin" business does not need much effort these days. A cart-like shop which consists of a stove and enough space for display are all one needs. These carts are parked anywhere there is a little available space. And usually it's beside gutters, refuse dumping ground and other unimaginable places. The sale of water is another case entirely. Water sellers use the same drinking cup for about 50 customers out of which some might be infected with one disease or the other. Thanks to imagination and innovation this custom is fast giving way to a more acceptable one of selling water in polythene bags. Nevertheless, the source from which this water is got is another question. The fact that it is put in buckets of which cleanliness is not certain and which are exposed to dirt all day is not really encouraging either.

Some months ago, a water seller in Mushin area of Lagos was thoroughly beaten up when it was discovered that she had been selling water collected from a burst water pipe nearby.

The attitude of consumers is a

source of concern also. The "what can we do" approach to this problem is not helping matters. Every one TSM spoke with expressed helplessness of the

situation. Nobody seems prepared to pay a price for the change that is needed. This is an issue which the Health Ministry must look into.

## A big plus for artificial insemination

...As a set of twins was delivered recently at a Lagos hospital through the method.

By Ngozi Abanobi



...tube babies and artificial insemination happened abroad only at

London's Harley Street, or only in the more technologically advanced countries of the world? You now have reason to begin to set your sight closer home as some of our home-based hospitals could now perform such feats.

At the last annual general meeting of the Nigerian Medical Association, John Esangbedo, a gynaecologist and infertility specialist relayed to the body the news of the birth of a set of twins, a boy and a girl in his hospital by artificial insemination.

Esangbedo told the Nigerian Medical



wonder babies: Life here we come.

Association that the parents of the twins had been married for 3 years without any pregnancies.

TSM sought out Esangbedo in his hospital in the Surulere area of Lagos. The doctor who specializes in assisted reproductive procedure said that the physician who counselled by another ment to them. They signed papers and agreed to try artificial insemination before they came to him.

Esangbedo who would not give out the names of the couples because of ethical reasons, said it was not the first time such a method had been used successfully in his hospital. He had been carrying out the procedure since 1982, especially with single pregnancies but the last case was the first time he was having twin births.

According to Esangbedo who became a doctor in 1970, after studying in Glasgow, Scotland and specialized in gynaecology in 1974. Artificial insemination has been in clinical use for more than 100 years. In Nigeria, he said, the practice has been in practise since the mid sixties. So how come awareness is still low here considering the high premium Africans place on the child. Why would a lot of barren couples not take to this treatment, and instead resort to unorthodox practices or go to spiritualists? Could the cost of the treatment be a factor?

The doctor whose forte is assisted reproductive technologies told TSM that only few physicians in the country have the resources to treat infertility problems and even out of these only a few can offer the expertise to carry out artificial insemination.

Another factor, Esangbedo delineated is that a majority of Nigerians do not always know where they can get the best treatment for any particular ailment. This is not peculiar to Nigerians however, he pointed out. He told TSM that the best persons who can tell others where to go for the best treatment for any particular ailment are other physicians. Also, other patients who may have benefited from a particular physician can refer other patients.

Esangbedo however contends that doctors are a better source of referral. Patients may not have the relevant information vocabulary and may be sentimental about it.

Cultural factors are also culprit. A lot of people still believe on the efficacy of traditional medical practices. So he said, it may not be surprising that "a patient who needs highly technologically scientific treatment would go to a traditional medicine man to drink a

concoction or to a prayer house."

The issue of cost is also deterring factor, the average Nigerian. Esangbedo said believes that a clinic would probably charge more than a traditional medical doctor.

Yet aside from these mentioned facts, the average Nigerian still nurses some scepticism over the modern methods of conception. But Esangbedo thinks differently. He said that the percentage of Nigerians who will resent these methods is quite small because "when the chips are down, most couples will try anything." He also agrees that some Nigerians still nurse misconceptions that a test-tube baby would not come out right, or harbour worries about what neighbours would say.

The Specialist allays fears and assures people that test-tube babies are the biological offsprings of the parents. For the artificial insemination by donor method, Esangbedo says it is easy to understand a little bit of doubt and ambivalence on the part of the

couple together, or individually, especially with the male patient.

Artificial Insemination by Donor (AID) is the method of involving the use of semen donated by a third party, unknown to the recipient and her husband. This procedure is recommended where the husband's semen parameters are excessively low. When the husband semen is used, the technique is called Artificial Insemination by Husband (AIH).

Other procedures are the In-Vitro Fertilization (IVF commonly known as Test-tube baby and Gamete Intra-Fallopian Transfer (GIFT).

The last time a doctor in one of the Eastern states said he delivered a test-tube baby in his hospital, it raised a mountain of controversy that caused the Nigerian Medical Council to take up the case.

When TSM accosted Esangbedo on that, he would rather not talk much instead he referred TSM to the Medical council.

## LIFE LINES

"THE secret of managing money is to live as economically the day after pay day as you did the day before."

— Buck Taba

"I DIDN'T choose myself. People are just being sentimental. I've got it, that's why I was crowned."

— Janet Lopez (Mrs. Physical on throne dis-paraging her)

"LOOK at a day when you are supremely satisfied at the end. It's not a day when you lounge around doing nothing. It's when you've had everything to do, and you've done it".

— Margaret Thatcher

"ANY experienced editor, any radio or TV producer, will tell you that as a rule, good news is never as exciting as bad."

— Peterborough



Esangbedo: Nigerian doctors can do it.

# Flatten that flabby Tummy!

—With this 5 minutes a day work-out

**D**oes your heart miss a bit any time a tape measure comes near your waist. Are you worried that you never look good in fashionable waist-hugging outfits?

Stop looking like you are in your early stage of pregnancy and follow this simple work-out routine from an expert. See for yourself the pleasant results 6 weeks after.



**1 WAIST AWAY:** Stand with your feet shoulder wide apart and your knees bent.

Keeping a straight back, clasp your hands behind your head with elbows pointed out.

Now exhale deeply and bend sideways to the right from your waist as far as possible, keeping your stomach muscles tight.

Return to the center and inhale. Now repeat the movement, this time bending to the left.

Return to center and inhale. Continue bending from side to side for a full minute, keeping your breath regular and even.



**2 TUMMY TIGHTENER:** Lie down on your back with knees bent and left foot on the floor. Place your right ankle on your left knee. Clasp your hands behind your head, keeping elbows back.

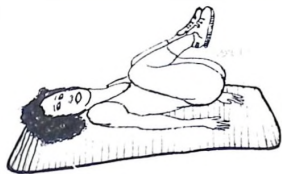
Bring your head and shoulders slowly off the floor three or four inches, using your tummy muscles only. Hold the position for a count of 10. Then slowly lower yourself to the floor. Switch legs and repeat the exercise. Do two times on each side.



**3 SIDE SLIMMER:** Lie on your back with your right ankle resting on your left thigh.

Place your left hand behind your head. Slowly raise your head and shoulders from the floor and twist to the right from the waist. Hold for a count of three. Then gently lower head and shoulders.

Switch sides and repeat. Do sequence five times.



**4 ROCKABY TUMMY:** Lie on your back, knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Keep arms at your sides, palms down.

Now bring your knees up and in to your chest, bringing your buttocks off the floor. Let your stomach muscles do all the work. Continue to raise and lower buttocks 10 times, pulling your knees as close to your chest as possible.



**5 TOTAL TUMMY TONER:** Lie on your back, bring your left knee in to your chest and keep the small of your back on the floor.

Grasp your knee with both hands and extend your right leg straight out two inches or so from the floor. Keep head and shoulders off the floor as high as you can while tensing your stomach muscles. Switch legs, bending the right and extending the left. Alternate legs for 60 seconds.

## Promotions At UTB

**F**IVE Senior Managers of Universal Trust Bank of Nigeria were recently promoted to the rank of Principal Managers.

The new Principal Managers include Mr. S.E. Ozolua, who now heads the Network Operations/Procedures Department. Mr. Ozolua was up till December last year, the JTB Apapa Branch Manager.

Others include Mr. D. Saleh, Ikeja Branch Manager, Mr. U.S. Umego, Head, Network Credits, Mr. N.E. Umoh, Head, Treasury Department and Mr. B.A. Sanda, Head of Accounting Department.

Mr. O.T. Bada of the Foreign Operations Department was also promoted to the rank of Senior Manager. He now heads the Foreign Operations Department. Pix S.E. Ozolua, P&N Network.



## Prima Garnet' 1st AGM

**P**RIMA Garnet Advertising held its first Annual General meeting recently at the company's premises. Pix shows Alex Bamghola, chairman, in a tete-a tete with fellow Board members, Kola Fashogbon and the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer, Lotu Akinwunmi.

## Maternal Mortality A Way Out

**I**N collaboration with the Department of obstetrics and Gynaecology of the College of Medicine of LUTH, Duff Resources and Conferences Ltd., recently organised a two-day National Workshop on Maternal mortality. The venue was at the Lagos Sheraton Hotel.

Several papers were presented at the workshop during which factors responsible for the high death rate of child bearing women were examined.

Among the dignitaries present was Rebecca Aikhonu, wife of the vice president who was the special Guest of Honour. Here, Rebecca Aikhonu in a chat with Giwa Osagie, a professor and of LUTH.



## More 7UP Nairamania Winners

**M**ORE winners are emerging daily from

all over Nigeria in the life-changing 7UP Nairamania consumer promotion.

Recently lucky Samuel Onyiah joined a host of others by winning the 7UP UBA cheque of N200,000. It's really great!





## The Queen Amina Prize For Womanhood

**T**HE recipients of the 1993 Queen Amina Prize for Womanhood was announced on Monday May 3, in the lecture Theatre of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs

(NIIA) Lagos.

The three distinguished Nigerian women selected as recipients of this year's award are: Hajija Gambo Sawaba, a fearless, ebullient and vocal crusader for the emancipation of the down trodden who was voted the winner of the 1993 Queen Amina Prize in the category of Government and Politics, Grace

Alele Williams, a professor in Mathematics and former Vice Chancellor of University of Benin bagged the Prize in the category of Education while Emily Aig-Imoukhuede (Mrs.), received the Prize in the category of Humanitarian Services.

## Celebrating Anya O. Anya

**A** National Seminar on Science Politics And the Economy: The Agenda for Nigeria Development was held on Friday 30, 1993 at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos in honour of Anya O. Anya, a professor, a Research Scientist and the 1992 Merit Award Winner. The event also doubled as the launch for Anya's book Science, Development and the African Economic crisis. The event had General Ibrahim Babangida, President and Commander-in-Chief of the Nigerian Armed Forces as the Special Guest of Honour. He was represented by Admiral Augustus Aikhomu, Vice President.

Here Admiral Augustus Aikhomu chatting with Professor Anya O. Anya.



## ELF - Safety & Environment

**E**LF Petroleum Nigeria Limited, penultimate Monday organised a lecture Corporate Director of Environmental Affairs — ELF Aquitaine and Premiere of the film ELF Petroleum Nigeria Ltd. This was at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA). It was indeed a great event as people barred their minds on various issues affecting the oil industries in particular and the company in general.

Here's the MD of the company and other personalities at the occasion.



Compiled by Grace Onyegbula

# Chris Okotie returns to music

With a superlative performance, Okotie talks music again.

By Zik Okafor

**N**IGERIAN music wonderboy! The singing lawyer! Glamour boy of christendom! And 21st century Pastor. All rolled into one to sing the tune of an unfolding destiny. a catwalking history that leaves creat-

ing curiosity and sometimes controversy. We are announcing the return (to music) of Chris Okotie, a reverend gentleman and pastor of Household of God church. It happened at the nation's undisputed soul music final place *Niteshift*. It was the Governor's *Celebrity Show*. Case and Okotie was the man on the hot seat. Date was Wednesday, April 28.

Okotie had sneaked with the filled club unannounced. He was not in company of his cute wife Tyna. Alone and alone he sat at the *Gold Card* sector. Seeing us, a glowing smile illuminated his face. "I have come to sing" he said laughingly. "I will sing and sing. You'd see, a performance and then give me your judgement at the end;" he requested. We thought, the dandified pastor was only joking. By 12 midnight however, Chris Okotie took the stage and brought years of nostalgia to an end. Nostalgia of many Nigerians fans who had clung to his music, gluttonously longing for more. Decked in black suit with a patched pink. Colour carrying a sketched picture of a blissful lady with blood red lips you could have sworn it was his wife! Okotie released his voice. And the songs began to roll out, one after the other. For two and a half hours, Okotie re-enacted the histrionics of his almost for gotten days. As he got to the climax of the superlative performance, he threw away his jacket and became more dynamic on stage. *Niteshifts* stood tall: its audience stood still. It was a night among nights.

But that was music with a new lyrical coating. Okotie sang love, but it was of the divine variety not carnal love. He did soul tunes reggae, rhythm and blues. Yet, the echoes of his calling manifested in every track of the night: "it will be impossible to find another Okotie," screamed an ecstatic fan.

Then came the question time. They revolved around his ministry, the dainty dames that are *Household* members, their sartorial tastes and sometimes worrying skimpy shifts. Okotie answered the question like a lawyers with all cogency. But the height of the question session was when a young man begged the pastor to sing *Need Someone*, the hit track of his terrific debut. "No way man! Don't you know I am a pastor,



Okotie....Still a showbiz genius

men I can't sing that," the Abrika-born preacher replied with a boisterous laugh. Then he paused; head thrown backwards and the words rang, "In my mind I am gone. to Carolina..." and the song went on, cheers for a queened nostalgia followed. Still within Carolina, the pastor brought in the name above name — Jesus. It was another wonderful night for Niteshift audience a fulfilled dream for Ken-Calebs Olumese who was hell bent on having the charismatic reverend singer at his club and indeed a special night for Okotie who for sure won more souls for God that night.

# The sound of Sikulu

The South African ensemble re-enacted the Stuff they were made of and re-vitalized memories of Ipi Tombl

BY Zik Okafor.

## B

ERTHA

Sgnos and Gail Lakier have done it again. Remember whose names? Sgnos is the mother of Lakier. *Ipi Tombl* was conceived, devised and produced by Bertha Egnos, who also wrote the music. But it was her daughter Lakier who penned the lyrics. When *Ipi Tombl* made its debut performance in Johannesburg early 1974, even the South Africans stood stunned by their own dances stylized to suit international tastes. Yet their stories are always about the rustic folks of South Africa. In *Ipi Tombl* these bucolic folks sacrificed their unsophisticated but dignified life to embrace western civilization whose traces were filtering into the country side. In the city, however, they are disillusioned as they discovered that their fellow blacks were mere willing slaves of the white gold miners. The story of Sgnos and Lakier's second coming through *Sikulu* was not too different. The dances also have certain basic patterns that are typically South African.

## SELAH BROADCASTING NETWORK

Pastor Okotie spoke exclusively to TSM on his future plans. He has the ambition to sing again. In his he's been singing in the church, he's now planning to record an album. He is already watching the studios and will choose the best. "Let me know how you feel about some of tracks to night. That will help my plans," he requested during our discussion.

Beyond recording elpees, the wonderboy is daring the broadcasting industry as another fact of his sizzling life opens. He has already applied for a private television licence, he re-

But *Sikulu* surely is a radiant and befitting successor of *Ipi Tombl*. What we saw is another story of a people under political oppression, a people whose culture is being eclipsed with the advent of Westernization. It was a story told with eloquent dance, song and music. A young man robust and masculine in every bit had gone to the search of his father. But his hope was shattered when he learnt that his father was in prison for political activism. Having bribed the cop in charge of the prisoners, his greyed father was brought out for a brief chat. Their meeting was the height of the flow of emotion. The dad, aware of imperial adventurism, asked him to go back home and reclaim their land and hold to it. The discussion was too brief to quench the thirst for the embrace of a lost dad.

Beyond the story however is the sophistication of South African art most flawlessly *Sikulu* depicted. Almost 70% of the songs were lip-synched yet they were so loud and clear and totally unnoticed. Most of the dancers tied microphones to their heads just a little below the skull with filters tied to their waists. The emerging sounds are thus sharp, piercing and clear.

*Ipi Tombl* - set the pace for *Sikulu*.



vealed. If the licence is approved, the pastor will be sitting over *Selah Broadcasting Network (SEN)*. "But I will not be in a hurry to produce my programmes," he continued. "I will watch the scene and see what others have got to offer." Then I will follow. Are you surprised, he questioned with a smile.

But we were not surprised. Not at all. For us Okotie is history; a history book. Nigerians are yet to read his chapters. It is a continuous revelation. Yet one thing seems clear that *Sikulu* is a factual case of divine inspiration and manifestation.

The lighting was great and similar to what Duro Oni of Centre for Cultural Studies, University of Lagos could do. Every mood of the story was set with height though never dominating the force of the dance story. The fire effect in particular was a delight to behold. Still one cannot but appreciate the genius of the costume designer. It reflected in its entirety the elegance of *Ipi Tombl* reminding one of the vintage of *Ipi Tombl* with which dancers change costumes of festac 77. Still amazing is the speed of steps, simultaneity of actions, exploring of levels and facial expressions all bespoke professional dancers on stage highlighted depth of the choreographers as the dancers never bump on one another through the performance. Besides the grace case and flow in the dance show a total dedication to a production which cording to Chabelli Andy the main choreographer, was rehearsed for four

Above all is the dance. The harmony of steps, simultaneity of actions, exploring of levels and facial expressions all bespoke professional dancers on stage highlighted depth of the choreographers as the dancers never bump on one another through the performance. Besides the grace case and flow in the dance show a total dedication to a production which cording to Chabelli Andy the main choreographer, was rehearsed for four

The group which has toured Europe, Andy revealed, would return to South Africa to prepare for a tour of United State.

# Aka visits Didi at ten:



TEN years ago, Chief Newton Jibunoh opened his house to a small crowd of art lovers and connoisseurs. The new centre was named Didi museum, after his only sister, Edith, who died at thirteen. This noble attempt at promoting the contemporary art of Nigeria grew speedily that by 1989 it already had over four thousand art pieces in its collections.

The Jibunohs could not contend with the growing visitors to their home museum. In 1990, a separate building to house the art was opened. It is ten years now since the Didi museum was established. It has hosted several Nigerian artists and an Ethiopian artist.

To mark its tenth anniversary, the museum has lined up series of activities. Amongst these are: Cultural night for 9th May and lecture for 10th May.

Perhaps, the most significant of their activities is the Aka group of artists' exhibition which will open on the 11th May. This is so for two reasons: Didi Museum has been reputed to exhibit the best and most profound of art in Nigeria. Secondly, Aka, which has been in existence for eight years consists of the most seasoned artists in Nigeria. Besides the international exposure of all the artists in the group, each artist has created his niche in his own medium. Because of their continuous experiment, they have often surprised their audience at every annual exhibition with the best art pieces.

With thirteen artists in the group, art enthusiasts are offered various dimensions of art — from the plastic ceramic, the solid metal and wood, to the fluid water colours and oil paintings. Tayo Adenike, the fluid water Glourist will be exhibiting fire water colours — paintings. Perhaps his most enchanting piece is the "Desolorte Landscape" for it shows the draughtmanship in Adenike. Nsikap Essien's "Easter Procession" is an abstract rendition with captivating colours. The surrealist, Boniface Okafor's "Dawn" is a sensuous philosophical commentary.

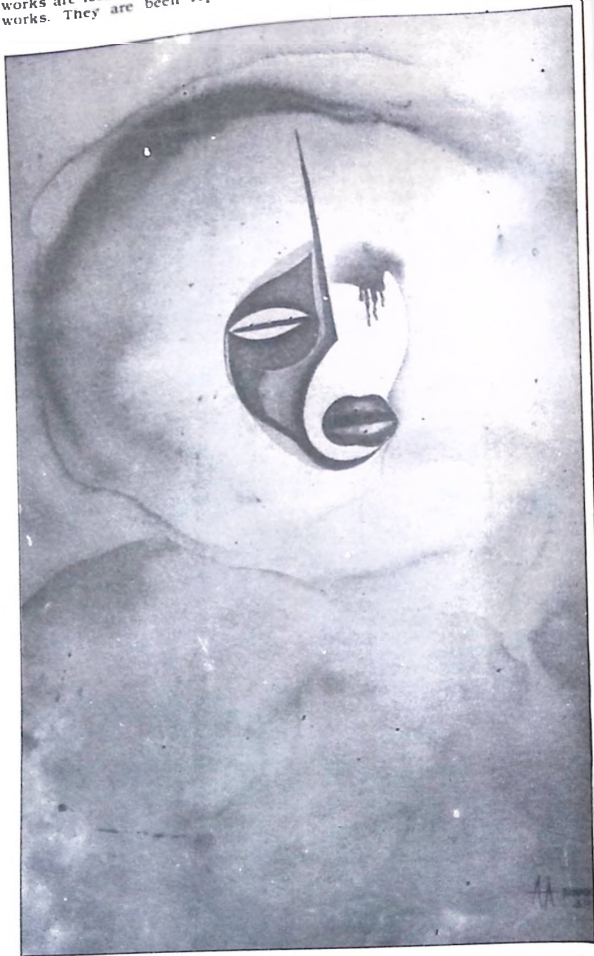
Since his last solo entry year at the Lekki Peninsula, Chris Afuba has continued to thrill his audience with his metal reliefs. Bona Ezendu's appears to be saying I have conquered the medium of oil. What else? This explains why he is experimenting with metal. With the return of Chris Echola to the group, after two years exit, the

audience will again have ceramic art to behold.

From the Nsukka axis, Obiora Udechukwu's experimentation is a continuous thing. The lines in his past works are less noticeable in his new works. They are been replaced by

planes with sharp edges. Chike Anikor's rendition of mass human figures are not new. But their political commentaries are becoming audacious and trenchant.

No doubt, the audience will have a great visual feast when the Aka works are exhibited on the 11th May to commemorate the 10th anniversary of Didi Museum. The only such private enterprise in Nigeria.

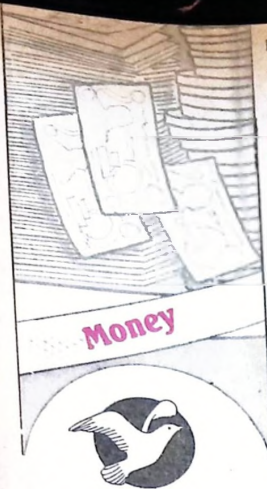




By Tino Olatipo

# SAP Interlude

# SEC terrorises Centre-Point



marriage of Centre-Point Merchant Bank Limited and Nigerian Lamps Industries PLC began in June 1990. But sadly enough, the business marriage has hit the rock before the bank could groom the bride. And Centre-Point Merchant Bank Ltd., now has had a sad story to tell.

TSM learnt on good authority that the sad episode which led to the suspension of the bank from the capital market by the Securities and Exchange

Commission (SEC) for alleged "unprofessional and unfair conduct" has generated a cold war in the capital market, which may lead to the collapse of the capital market. Although the suspension of Centre-Point Merchant Bank has been lifted, three other issuing houses, are still leaking the wounds of SEC's sledge hammer on them and that has created crisis of confidence between lenders and borrowers in the capital market.

*The Current rash of suspension of Issuing Houses in the capital market has set a danger signal that may adversely affect public and international confidence in the Nigerian capital market, which facilitates the transfer of funds between lenders and borrowers, a function that is of vital importance to nation's economic development.*

**Steve Raymond Ohakwe**

**I**t all started like any other normal business deal in the capital market, where companies approach banks or finance houses to canvass for funds to shore up their capital base. Of course, that has been the trend in the wake of current government privatisation and commercialisation policy, which means that a company sells shares to the public, raises more capitals for investments to join the league of Public Liability Companies, PLC. And that was how the business



*Dennis Odife...We have done nothing unprofessional*

The Managing Director of Centre Point Merchant Bank Ltd, Dennis Odife, had to take time off the busy stock market on Tuesday May 4, 1993 to explain the embarrassing situation the SEC has put his finance house by the suspension which he decried as "unfair and unjust" and has tarnished the image of the finance outfit, which is rated among the foremost in the capital market.

The background to the dispute that led to suspension of Centre-Point Merchant Bank Ltd., which was widely publicised by SEC, according to Odife, was that the Nigerian Lamps Industries PLC on June 1990 appointed Centre-Point Merchant Bank Ltd and Nationwide Merchant Bank Ltd as joint Issuing House to assist the company in raising money from the market. It was then established that the company needed a bridging loan of N35 million to become operational before the proposed shares and debenture stock could be sold to the public.

This bridging loan, TSM gathered, was syndicated by the company's principal banker, Union Bank of Nigeria PLC, who are also the Registrars responsible for the issue. But the syndicate of banks insisted that the loan be underwritten by the Issuing House to be repaid from the products of the loan. In April 1991, the board of directors approved a bridging loan of N5 million to the Nigerian Lamps Industries PLC secured on the proceeds of the proposed Public Issue Rights Issue. And following the plea of Union Bank of Nigeria PLC, Centre-Point made the funds available to them for transmission to the client (Nigerian Lamps Industries PLC), even though it had not met the conditions precedent to the loan. In fact, Union Bank, according to sources, had in a letter signed by Messrs O.O. Bisi, a manager and A.O. Talabi, Analyst on May 24, 1991 appreciated the commitment of Centre-Point to participate in the N35 million multiple credit facility to the company up to N5 million as bridging loan, adding "at the request of the customer, we enquire whether you are favourably disposed to effect disbursement pending completion of documentation and approval of the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) for the underwriting of the public issue." And the bank subsequently disbursed the N5 million being the bridging loan through the lead bank, Union Bank PLC on May 28, 1991 through CBN cheque No. 00704.0011500141 for N3 million.

On further enquiring, TSM discovered that the prospectus for the offer



Abdulkadir Ahmed....Centre-Point flew to his patronage

of Sale of Shares, which was approved by the SEC confirmed that the loans and overdrafts were provided by Nationwide Merchant Bank Ltd., and Union Bank of Nigeria PLC up to December 31 1990, and additional facilities were provided by Centre Point Merchant Bank Ltd, Societe Generale Bank Nigeria Ltd., and United Bank for Africa PLC during the year ending December 31, 1991. Arrangements were also completed to consolidate the bank loans and overdrafts provided by Union Bank of Nigeria PLC, Centre — Point Merchant Bank Ltd., Societe Generale Bank, and UBA with facilities to be obtained from Merchant Bank of Commerce Ltd. into syndicated facilities of N35 million.

The prospects further disclosed that the syndicated facilities which be in the form of a bridging loan of N25 million and an over draft of N10 million shall be secured respectively by a lien over the proceeds of the public rights issue and by fixed and floating charges over the assets of company while the facility from Nationwide Merchant Bank Ltd. is also to repayable from the proceeds of the public offer of shares and debenture.

Sources at the bank revealed that apart from the initial payment of only

N100,000 made by Nigerian Lamps Industries PLC, the Issuing Houses financed the issue and bore all the issue expenses till the end of the issues, a period of nearly three years. The regulatory authorities, according to the sources received their own fees up front, and until the conclusion of the issue, Nigerian Lamp Industries did not even pay interests on the loan.

The Management of the bank, in a letter to the Governor of Central Bank date April 21, 1993, noted that financing the issues is an essential aspect of capital market development, and that the client agreed to set off the expenses from the proceeds and the regulatory authorities did not impede the process. Investigations revealed that SEC, in fact confirmed its acceptance of the set-off arrangement in letter Reference No. CF/2654/SUR/INV/ACM/92/Vol. 1 dated February 5, 1993. The letter, which was signed by N.C. Odumade for the Director General, a copy to all parties reminded the ban of "the decision in the meeting held January 27, 1993 that indebtedness of Nigerian Lamp Industries to Nationwide Merchant Bank Limited should be settled by February 10, 1993 out of the net proceeds of the issue, after deduction of the bridging loan and cost of issue."

It was on this basis that Centre-Point Merchant Bank reconciled the account of the company and posted a cheque of (N5,142,278.75) five million, two hundred and seventy two thousand, and seventy five kobo on Guaranty Trust Bank Ltd., cheque No. 00247 of March 19, 1993 representing the balance on the underwritten commitment after deducting the balance on the outstanding in its favour in respect of its loan. The total amount was N10,583,133.76 from which the bank deducted its loan of sd N5,440,855.01

However, the matter took a dramatic turn on March 31, 1991 when the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) summoned the management of Centre-Point Merchant Bank to answer charges at an Administrative hearing that:

(a) "The Issuing Houses" continued failure and refusal to release all the proceeds of the public issue to the Registrar Receiving Bankers and their unilateral deductions of their respective loan facilities granted in the normal banking business to the Insurer from the proceeds of the offer, amount to unprofessional and unfair conduct, contrary to the provisions of Section 6(c) and (d) of the SEC Act 1988."

Vivian Igbokwe, Company Secretary and Legal Adviser of Centre-Point Merchant Bank Ltd told TSM Tuesday May 4, 1993 that the Commission held its administrative hearing on the allegation nearly two weeks after the payment has been made to Nigerian Lamp Industries and not only did the Commission refuse to take cognizances of this payment, it insisted that the entire amount including the loan portion be paid over to Union Bank of Nigeria as Registrars and not deducted from source. Vivian alleged that the committee refused to entertain any arguments to the contrary or recognize the SEC letter endorsing the set-off arrangement. Dennis Odife, Managing Director collaborated her statement, saying "We were accompanied by our solicitors but the SEC was not willing to abide by normal judicial procedure and it refused to accept our right to deduct — our loan from our underwriting commitment and even repudiated its own earlier letter of authorisation."

However, SEC's Administrative Committee ordered on April 14, 1993 that Centre-Point Merchant Bank Ltd and Nationwide Merchant Bank Ltd,

comply immediately by honouring their obligations under the prospectus and the underwriting agreement filed with the commission in connection with the public offer of Nigerian Lamps Industries Securities by paying all monies collected from the said issue including their respective underwritten commitment to Union Bank of Nigeria PLC, the Registrar to the issue, who shall disburse the total proceeds in accordance with the provisions of the prospectus. The Committee also ordered immediately that "Centre-Point and Nationwide Merchant banks are hereby suspended from acting as Issuing Houses and underwriters from the date of this decision." The suspension contained in this order, it stated, "shall continue to remain in force until compliance by the banks with order One above."

We know that our image has been tarnished and, we have a duty to the public, even after the order has been lifted to bring out all the records and to show you evidence.

The company secretary told newsmen in Lagos that when the Administrative Committee determined that the Issuing Houses must not exercise the right of set-off, Centre Point Merchant Bank then paid back the balance of the underwriting obligations, which it had earlier deducted, to the Union Bank of Nigeria PLC on Ecobank Cheque No. 47420 for N5,440,885.01 dated April 15, 1993 as directed by the SEC with a copy to the commission.

On same day April 15, 1993, the Security and Exchange Commission in letter Reference No. SEC AH 93 1 signed by LI Akoh, Secretary of SEC Administrative Hearing Committee and addressed to the Managing Director of Centre-Point and Nationwide Merchant banks observed that after hearing the testimonies of all parties to the matter between the Nigerian Lamps Industries PLC and the Issuing Houses and the review of all facts and documents made available before it on March 31, 1993, SEC has made the following findings and decisions:

1. That the public offer of Nigerian Lamps Industries PLC Securities closed October 1992 after three weeks extension and the proceeds of the issue plus the underwriting commitment were to be paid to the Union Bank, the Registrar and Receiving Bank to the public issue for appropriate disbursement in accordance with provisions of the prospectus, within six weeks of closure of public offer as provided by SEC guidelines.

2. That the issue was undersubscribed and consequently the underwriting obligation of the two Issuing Houses amounted to, N10,583,133.89 each which amount was to be paid along with the proceeds from the Issue directly to Union Bank, which was responsible for disbursing the proceeds of the issue (including the underwritten sum) with respect to satisfying the Issuer's loans obligations to the Issuing Houses and others.

3. The Issuing Houses failed to comply with the directives of the allotment committee of the Commission made on December 8, 1992 to the effect that all proceeds of the public offer be paid to the Receiving Bankers by December 11, 1992 and the directive was not carried out up to the time of the hearing of this matter.

4. That the Issuing Houses' continued failure and refusal to release all the proceeds of public issue to the Registrar Receiving Bankers and their unilateral deductions of their respective loan facilities granted in the normal banking business to the Issuer's Securities amount to unprofessional and unfair conduct contrary to the provisions of Sections 6(c) and (d) of SEC Act 1988.

He then declared "it is therefore the commission's decision that your registration as Issuing House and underwriter be and are hereby suspended with immediate effect until you have paid in full to Union Bank, the Registrar and Receiving Banker to the Issue, your underwritten Commitment and all monies collected by you in respect of the public offer of Nigerian Lamp Industries PLC's Securities made between August and October 1992."

Centre-Point Merchant Bank acknowledged receipt of the suspension order by 2.30 p.m on April 16, 1993 and ran back with another evidence of payment to SEC and yet on April 19, 1993, SEC issued a press release, signed by Sylvester Akele,

Senior Corporate Affairs Manager, giving the same reasons given by the Issuing Houses, adding that "members of the public are hereby warned that the two merchant banks now cease to be issuing houses and underwriters until further notice."

Vivian Igbojoke told newsmen that the board of directors of the bank had reviewed all the events leading to the suspensions of Centre-Point Merchant Bank Ltd., and "is convinced that if the SEC had all the information at its disposal, the Commission would probably have reached a different decision in place of the suspension order which kill a fly with a sledge hammer."

Vivian, who spoke at length on behalf of the Board, protested strongly that the bank never contravened the sub-outlined duties and functions of the commission and argued rather that "it is only SEC which can be found wanlig under Section 6 of the Act. Section 6(c) and (d) of the Act. Section Commission shall notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the companies and Allied Matters Act or the Nigerian Enterprises Promotions Act

be charge with the duty of...

(c) Maintaining surveillance over the securities market to ensure orderly, fair and equitable dealings in securities.

(d) Registering stock exchanges or their branches, registrars, investment advisers, security dealers and their agents and controlling and supervising their activities with a view to maintaining proper standards of conduct and professionalism in the securities business."

At the time of the Administrative Hearing, she disclosed that Centre-Point had already paid the sum of N5,142,278.75 to the Receiving Bankers, Union Bank PLC. The basic issue for resolution, according to her, therefore was the right of set-off affecting the balance of N5,440,855.01 retained by Centre-Point, and the Board felt that there was no professional misconduct or ethical question involved in the light of the clear statement in the prospectus and the SEC letter of approval which it disregarded at the hearing.

She pointed out that the proceeds from the issue were never held in custody of the Issuing Houses and as

such, it was deliberately misleading to claim that they persistently "refused to release all the proceeds of the public issue to the Registrar/Receiving Bankers." It was learnt that the proceeds were kept by Union Bank of Nigeria PLC, a fact that was made known to the SEC by a letter written from Union Bank to the Director-General of SEC on December 31, 1992 and signed by F.O. Kusoro (Mrs.) which read in part "we state that the application monies have all along been kept with us in an office account which is not an interest yielding account as we are not a branch." And when SEC imposed penalty for delays in paying the proceeds, the penalty was paid by Union Bank of Nigeria PLC. A letter from Union Bank of Nigeria PLC to SEC dated Match 4, 1993 titled "NIGERIAN LAMPS INDUSTRIES PLC PUBLIC ISSUES (ORDINARY & DEBENTURE RIGHTS) PENALTY OF LATE RETURNS" and signed by F.O. Kusoro, sub Manager, (Registration) disclosed in part "...and enclosed here with our BP2 cheque No. 36070027019C for N66,793.77 being the total penalty charged on the late Return as analysed on the attached three separate lists (Ordinary and Debenture Rights)."



Odije...Our image has been tarnished

Another point made by Vivian Igboke was that Centre-Point never granted the "bridging loan in its normal banking business with the issuer," as Centre-Point had no banking relationship with the company before this transaction.

Dennis Odife, the Managing Director of Centre-Point disclosed in an interview, Tuesday May 4, 1993, that "our Board is convinced that had SEC looked at all the evidence as thoroughly as we have looked at the evidence, it can only come by one decision and that is that we have not acted in unprofessional manner. It is a matter of disagreement as to the timing of certain events, etc. But when you said that I refused to hand over the proceeds of the issue, which are not in my possession, surely you have not looked at the facts, and all these facts are there. The Registrars are there. And when penalty was imposed they paid it. So it is not for me to give more evidence than I have supplied. During the hearing, for example, the SEC letter was tendered and SEC refused to look through its own letter and refused to mention it in the minutes. So we have given all the evidence but at that hearing SEC was not willing to listen to reasoned explanation. And the man who signed the letter sat on the panel. He could have said I signed that letter, maybe he made a mistake. But at least he signed that letter. He should have said so. And when you look at all the evidence, you wonder what is going on, why could they reach the kind of conclusion they reached? We have studied the evidence and feel we have done nothing unprofessional. If you ask anybody who is familiar with banking practice he will tell you what we have done is normal in banking practice."

On whether the SEC gave Centre-Point a time limit to pay back the deduction he said "Frankly it would have been very reasonable if they said 'look, we have looked at this matter, we still refuse, you must pay by this time.' Nothing like that. Their judgement was entered from the minutes we saw on April 14, 1993, their letter was issued to us on April 15. About the April 14, on our own market intelligence, we reviewed in-house and said this people don't appear to listen to reason, and since we are very active House in this market, we have many issues and we are dealing with them on daily basis, we said let's clear this hurdle on our part, let us send them the payment. And as soon as the cheque was delivered to Union Bank on morning of April 16, 1993, a copy was delivered to the SEC.



*Aiite....Stock Exchange is vital to economic development*

And so when we saw the press release on Tuesday April 19, we were very embarrassed. We thought that having paid, at least that matter would have closed. Then we reminded them that we have paid, they wanted evidence from our bank statement that the money had been deducted, and we gave all the evidence. And so the following week the suspension was vacated. Our feeling is that the order was unfair in the first instance, and should never have taken place. Secondly, having taken place and having been vacated, there is a duty to the public, to go back and say this suspension order has been vacated. But we got a letter here saying that they (SEC) don't intend under any circumstance to announce that it has been vacated."

TSM enquiring on the matter revealed that on April 28, 1993, Vivian Igboke wrote to the SEC to inform them that the bank had received "a copy of an unsigned press release which we understand you wish to publish. Our Directors have deliberated on it and rejected it in its entirety. The document is hereby returned to you." In his reply on April 30, 1993, I.I. Akoh, wrote back "we wish to state that the commission had no intention of making or communicating any press release to your bank or anybody whatsoever on the lifting of the suspension order on Centre-Point Merchant Bank Ltd, as the vacation order has been officially communicated to you vide our letter of April 23, 1993."

The letter of discharge of suspension order dated April 23, 1993 and signed by same I.I. Akoh and addressed to the Managing Director of Centre-Point Merchant Bank Ltd, read "The Commission, after considering the evidence of payment of your underwriting in the Nigerian Lamps Industries PLC issue as furnished by you, has decided to discharge its earlier order of April 15, 1993 suspending you from acting as an Issuing House and underwriter."

Odife, however, contended that it was not just enough to inform him that the suspension had been lifted, but since the SEC press release "warned members of the public that Centre-Point Merchant Bank Ltd, now ceases to be Issuing House and underwriter until further notice," he believes it is only fair for the SEC to come back and tell the public that they had given that notice. "Now we are surprised that they are not willing to do so, and that's why you are here for us to tell you and show you the evidence. It's for you now to tell the public that it has been vacated, and may be the public would still wonder why did SEC not say it themselves?"

Reacting to the enormous loss the bank has suffered as a result of the SEC suspension order, Odife said "we think that when statements which were untrue are made about any financial institution, it can have some damaging effect. Obviously, we know that our image has been tarnished and that is why our Board said we have a duty to the public, even after the order has been lifted to bring out all the records and to show you evidence. We have taken very many years to build our name. And the name means a lot to us and we don't expect to see it tarnished without cause."

# Cheap bread still a mirage

No man is rich whose expenditure exceeds his means; and no one is poor whose incomings exceed his outgoings.

Anonymous  
By Obinna Nwachukwu

**I**N October last year, something unexpected happened. It was like a bolt out of the blues. The federal government announced the lifting of the age-long ban on the importation of wheat into the country. The government's action was explained as a means of alleviating the sufferings of millions of Nigerians caused by high cost of foodstuff amongst which was bread. Explaining the reasons behind the move, the then minister for Agriculture, Abubakar Hashidu, identified scarcity resulting from the depletion of the government strategic reserves as well as the fear of imminent drought as the prime factors.

Government's thinking, Hashidu stressed, was that a temporary lifting of the ban on wheat importation would make the commodity available in our markets and equally reduce its price as well as bring down the prices of her food items manufactured from wheat. And since bread has for long been bachelors and the not-well-to-dos, government thought that its decision to flood the market with wheat would lead to a fall in the price of bread.

The government followed this up with pleas to Bakers to reciprocate government's gesture by effecting corresponding decrease in the price of their products. A meeting of federal government representatives led by secretary to the Federal Government, Aiyu Mohammed with Master Bakers and Flour Millers Association said they must among other things "find solutions to the problems affecting the millers and bakers, as well as take decisions on how to solve the problem relating to high cost of bread in the country." The meeting also agreed that henceforth, efforts would be made to wrap all loaves of bread for hygienic reasons and prices of loaves and baker's names should be indicated on the labels. That was **Stage one**.

**Stage two:** As if they have hearkened to the federal government's directive, the Association of Master Bakers and Caterers of Nigeria and the Flour Milling Association rose from a meeting with a heart-warming news. It proclaimed as follows: Bread prices were to be slashed by some 30 per cent, effective

from March 8, 1993. The new price list was given: the 240 gramme size was to sell for N3 instead of the former N5; 450 gramme N8 instead of N12; 650 gramme N10 as against N15 and 1,200 gramme N17 from former N25.

However, this is yet to be implemented. Prices of bread have either remained static in some places or risen in other places. In some areas, bread disappeared from sellers' stands soon after the announcement resurfacing a few days later at former retail prices. Flour millers, bakers, vendors, and all those connected in the sale of bread rather than addressing the issue at stake, engaged in buck-passing. This situation had somehow engendered a kind of cold war between the key parties. While Flour Millers blame the Bakers for refusing to play ball according to the rules of the game, the Bakers themselves have persistently taken a defensive position. Worst still is that among the Bakers, there seems to be no love lost as two factions now contend for supremacy with claims of representing all the Bakers in the country.

Take this for example. Abiodun Ogunyanwo, President of the Association of Master Bakers and Caterers, Lagos said that his members have effected the 30 per cent reduction which they promised in February this year. However, he was quick to explain that his association does not represent all Bakers in Lagos. "As you all know, not all bakers are members of the association. Therefore, we cannot force such bakers to comply", he said, adding that

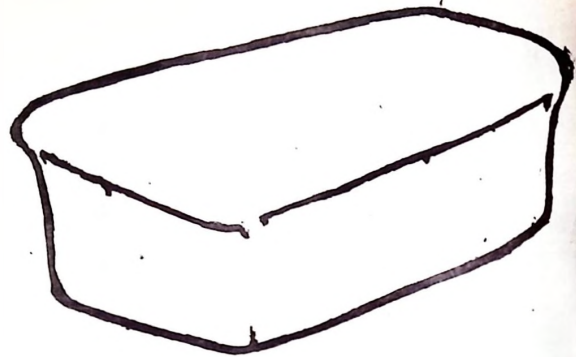


only six of the more than 600 bakeries had effected the price reduction. Six bakeries have also done the same in Ogun State, four in Osun, five in Oyo, two in Benue and only one in Rivers State. Nothing has been heard from other states of the federation.

However, in a paid advertisement which appeared on page 19 of the *National Concord* of Wednesday, April 21, a group of people who described themselves as "Concerned Bakers" refuted the claim of Ogonyanwo's association. According to the release jointly signed by S.B. Owoeye, N.O. Adewusi, A.A. Ariyo, O. Oke and Jide Adeniyi, the concerned bakers berated what they described as "series and persistent calumnistic releases, interviews and articles", by the "siamese twins" of Flour Millers and AMBC in both the electronic and print media. Absolving itself of blame on the rising price of bread, the "concerned bakers" decried what it called a situation where "enemies of progress" who are increasing the prices of flour monthly, should not pass the buck of escalating prices on bakers who themselves are "experiencing the harsh problems of the economy." Said the bakers "we abhor a situation where the Flour Milling Association of Nigeria will in an effort to smokescreen itself, select a handful of opportunistic bakers and lackeys who, as a matter of fact, are not the true representatives of bakers nationwide, to deceive both the government and the masses about the true position of bread in Nigeria today."

Accusing the Flour Mills Apapa of corruption and shady dealings in the sale of flour to bakers, the concerned bakers in the release described their experiences in the hands of officials of the Apapa Flour Mills as harder than the biblical camel passing through the eyes of the needle. Said the bakers: "At the Flour Mills Apapa, besides the official company fixed price of (now) N585 per 50 kg bag, extra "dough" cash routinely greased a lot of palms. The more the grease, the faster the Bakers' flour moves from the sites to the collecting vehicle. Furthermore, more deliveries pass through the channel of "management request", by express handling than deliveries to bakers which usually take more than a week after payment, forcing bakers to regularly patronize open market at extra cost of about N50 per bag of flour."

The bakers said they would want both the government and the public to know that in as much as they have tried to cut down the prices of bread, their efforts are still being bedevilled



*Loaves of bread! who's selling and who's buying?*

by incessant monthly increase in the cost of flour and escalating cost of all other inputs.

But contrary to these allegations, James Fagbemi, a chief and Managing Director of Flour Mills of Nigeria, Apapa denied these allegations describing them as baseless and unfounded. He also dismissed claims by most Bakers about rising cost of other inputs as not enough excuse for high cost of bread, since according to him "flour constitutes about 80 per cent of input in bread production." His words: "All the excuses being given by Bakers from high cost of sugar, margarine, fuel, labour, activities of vendors and so on are lies, plain nonsense that should hardly be listened to." Fagbemi said that the 30 percent price decline being demanded of Bakers is far below the about 50 percent reduction in price of flour effected by millers since revocation of the wheat ban and which they should have no difficulty in adhering to if they so wished. "The bakers have constituted themselves into a cartel which has the final say over price of bread," he said explaining that the flour millers sell flour directly to the bakers. "Within 48 hours after submitting an application, any registered baker is allocated as many bags of flour as he wishes which automatically eliminates the effect of middlemen," he emphasised.

With the above scenario, who is really responsible for the continued hike in the prices of bread and related prod-

ucts? Isn't there the possibility that the hands Nigerians see are those of Esau while the voice is that of Jacob? Perhaps, the authorities will know better.

It will be recalled that the first known Bakery ovens for baking flat bread of wheat or barley was in 7,000 BC in the Middle East at the city of Jericho, around the Jordan Valley. Wheat, which is a recognized source of modern day bread making was first imported into the country in the early 1920's. In the northern parts of Nigeria, wheat is being grown during the harmattan season. Local wheat is being used for local varieties as well.

But the popularity of bread itself in Nigeria started in the late 40's when Western education was being spread. It blossomed further due to the advent of the oil boom in the 1970's when most people abandoned farming and manual labour to seek for white collar jobs in urban cities. This evolution propelled the high demands for wheat and rice in Nigeria. About 400 million dollars was being spent on wheat importation yearly before the 1987 ban.

Regretably, despite huge sums of money being pumped into wheat importation as well as its production in Nigeria, prices of bread and its related products continue to soar. A situation which has robbed teeming helpless and mangled "wretched of the earth" in Nigeria to regard eating bread as eating rice which comes once in a blue moon.



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## Money Briefs

### Anambra plans a business guide

**I**n pursuance of the "Think Home Policy" of the Anambra State Government, the first-ever annual business reference volume for the state is now in the pipeline. The volume aptly titled: *The 1994 Anambra State Year Book* will serve as a reference volume for business, organisations, community and cultural groups within the state, Nigeria and beyond. Being packaged by AD & C Limited (a public relations outfit), on behalf of Anambra State Information and Culture Department, the book which has as its objectives, accelerating the state government's efforts at encouraging investments at home, and providing the foreign investor with a handy guidebook rich with economic, political, historical and cultural information on the state, as well as marketing Anambra State and its rich potentials to the world, is expected to contain among others: Business names, premises, types and levels, mineral resources found in the state, investment opportunities, community groups and their contributions and the development of the state, as well as financial assistance and incentives available to investors in the young state.

These and many more, according to Carol Ugochukwu, Director General in charge of the state's department of Information and Culture, is hoped "to boost national awareness which would trigger off even faster development."

In the same vein, Obiageli Vivian Ezekwesili, General manager of Modern Finance Nigeria Limited, Lagos, the sponsors of the Book explained that her company decided to bankroll the N2.5 million business guide as a philanthropic gesture.

### NERFUND customers to smile soon

**A** BRIGHT future for small and medium scale enterprises seems to be near when the (SMES) begins to enjoy fixed exchange rate on foreign currency component of credit facility. The federal government and the management of the National Economic Reconstruction Fund (NERFUND) are now

poised to fashion out the modalities of achieving this proposal which is expected to boost the development of this vital sector of the economy.

NERFUND scheme, which was set up in 1989 to provide long term loans to SMES, is currently being funded from the federal government's N300 million grant and the \$130 million loan facility from the African Development Bank (ADB).

### UTB's gross earnings up by 109%

**U**NIVERSAL Trust Bank of Nigeria Limited has declared a 109 per cent increase in her gross earnings in the 1992 financial year. This was made known by UTB's Chairman, Lt. General Theophilus Danjuma (rtd) at the Bank's 7th Annual General Meeting held in the Corporate Headquarters, 4 S Ajose Adeogun Street, Victoria Island. UTB recorded N409.5 million in gross earnings in the 1992 financial year. The corresponding figure in 1991 was N195.8 million.

The Chairman attributed the remarkable increase to the Bank's foresight, active stance, product inno-

vation and high standards of professionalism. General Danjuma also revealed that positive returns were generated from the Bank's trail-blazing era - the UTB Bonanza.

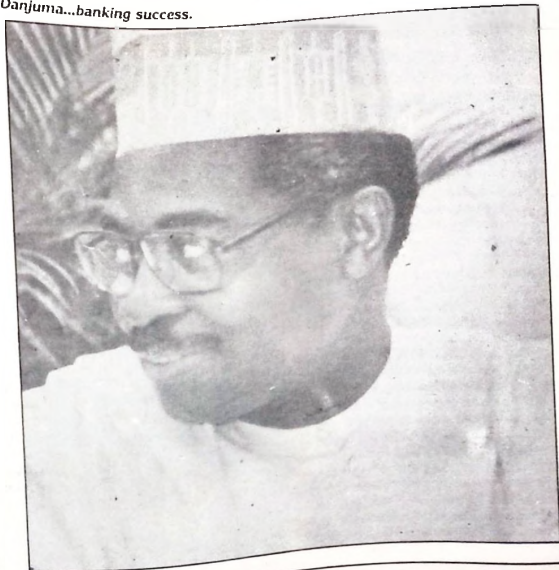
In addition, the shareholders were informed about the Bank's resilience in cushioning the negative impact of the dynamic changes in the market place. These together with the Bank's network expansion and organisational restructuring helped to improve the 1992 result.

The shareholders approved a bonus issue of two million Naira which translates to one share to every 25 shares held. Other high points of the Annual General Meeting were the declaration of an increase in the deposits generated from N1.1 billion in 1991 to N1.3 billion in 1992. The shareholders were also informed of the expansion in the credit portfolio by 60 per cent, from N146 million to N233 million in the corresponding periods.

Profit before loan loss provision shot up by 85 per cent from N30.9 million in 1991 to N57.3 million in 1992. The Bank's asset base also increased from N1.4 billion to almost N2 billion.

UTB's Managing Director Chief Klaus Philipp and other directors were in attendance.

Danjuma...banking success.





*It's a resource that is capable of fetching the nation millions of dollars in foreign exchange. But the Federal Government does not appear moving fast enough to explore it. Why?*

By Ademola Adedoyin

**B**ETWEEN Ore and Okitipupa in Ondo State lies an obscure village by an equally obscure name — Agbabu. But if Agbabu, has been an obscure village for ages, it is now warming up to go from obscurity to prominence. It is going to achieve that status via a resource buried by nature beneath its land. The resource is bitumen. And Agbabu may be warming up to become what Oloibiri is to the nation's crude oil discovery.

But what is bitumen. In a layman's language, it's a black, sticky substance which if mixed with gravel or crushed rock can be used for making road surface. No nation is said to be fully developed unless it has a network of tarred roads. And that is where bitumen becomes relevant. And Agbabu too.

As far back as early this century, it's been discovered that a black, sticky substance oozes out of the earth in Agbabu and its environs. Villagers who have no economic use for this strange

## BITUMEN:

# A hidden treasure... waiting to be tapped

substance only use it to paint their pots, calabashes, etc. just simply to beautify them.

This 'strange substance' was soon to attract the attention of experts. A team of geologists led by O.S. Adegoke a professor of geology of the Obafemi Awolowo University discovered that what was oozing out of Agbabu was bitumen and that it was available not only in Agbabu but in a belt of about five kilometres breadth and several hundreds kilometres width of land across Ondo, Ogun and Edo States. The bulk of the deposits is in Ondo State. That is not all. They found out that in quality and quantity it could compare with any bitumen in the world. That the quality of the bitumen here is as high as that anywhere in the world was confirmed when in the 50s, it was used to tar some kilometres of road from Ore to Ondo. The raw bitumen worked like it was a processed one.

Now, a resource of this magnitude

and potential foreign exchange earner is not something that can be left to the state alone. The attention of the federal authorities was called to it.

And in fact, Mohammedu Buhari, retired Major General and former Head of State visited Agbabu when he was Nigeria's chief executive officer. March 10, 1992. Jibril Aminu, a professor and the then Federal Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources also visited Agbabu and declared that bitumen is a peculiar type of oil and would be handled as such.

Earlier, in June 1989, a Presidential Committee on the Implementation of the Bitumen Project (CIBP) was inaugurated "to carry out the specific assignment of facilitating development and exploitation of bitumen."

According to Chu Okongwu, in his highly confidential handing over note as Petroleum and Mineral Resources Minister, he told the President that — "The committee at the initial stages of its existence concentrated on gather-



Asiodu...what's his ministry doing.

ing all available data on exploration of bitumen in Nigeria. Concerted efforts were made to get investors interested in the project. Of all the companies that initially showed interest on the bitumen project only two of them are ready to take leases for the development and exploitation of the mineral.

In 1992, while Aminu was still in the Ministry, he commissioned a firm of consultants to review the activities of CIBP. The consultants, according to Okongwu "have recently submitted their reports. The Ministry is yet to take decision on their recommendations."

And up till now, according to sources close to CIBP offices in Akure, the ministry is yet to take an action on the consultants' recommendations. But CIBP is going on with its own assignment "of facilitating development and exploitation of bitumen."

What CIBP has done now is to block out the bitumen areas into acreages where prospective explorers can bid and explore for bitumen. Olusegun Agagu, a doctor of Geology and Deputy Governor of Ondo State informed TSM last week that CIBP has recommended some prospective investors to the Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources. "As at last week when I spoke with the chairman of the committee, it [the committee] is yet to receive any response from the ministry."

It is this seemingly foot-dragging attitude on the part of the ministry that has informed the view in certain quarters that the Federal Government is not moving fast enough on this project.

True, bitumen is not what geologists regard as a conventional resource and exploring for it requires a special-ized technology, but with billions of tons of bitumen beneath the lands of these states which could rake in mil-

lions of dollars for the nation, the view in many circles, is that this is one venture the Federal Government cannot afford to move at snail's speed.

Ondo State government is showing more than a passing interest in the project because it has come to see it as a resource that can change its fortune for good. Now, it's not leaving everything to the Federal Agency. As at now, the government is engaging African Development Bank to finance a feasibility report to further encourage potential investors. The job will cost a million dollar.

Certainly no expenses or time or energy can be too much to spare for this project. With Venezuela making a kill and raking in millions of dollars from its bitumen, the only thing left for Nigeria is to take a cue from Venezuela and queue behind that oil producing country as an exporter of bitumen.

# We are committed to the Bitumen project

— Agagu

*Olusegun Agagu, a geologists and deputy governor of Ondo State says the state government is leaving no stone unturned in the execution of multi-billion naira Bitumen project.*

By Ademola Adedoyin



Agagu....Bitumen project, a must. he was one of the consultants commissioned to explore for shallow bitumen deposits that can be cheaply exploited. The consultants have since submitted their reports and Agagu has since become the Deputy Governor of Ondo

State, the state that has the bulk of the bitumen deposits.

As the number two man in that state, Agagu has taken more than a passing interest in the Bitumen project. Currently, he and others knowledgeable in matters like this have prepared a proposal to the African Development Bank for the bank to consider financing a comprehensive feasibility report on the deposits. By the time you are reading this, the proposal should be on its way to ADB headquarters.

Although quite a number of watchers feel that by now the project should have gone very far, in this interview, Agagu tells why the exploration of the bitumen has not gone beyond the state it is now, the progress made and the hope of the state on the project.

Read Agagu and get yourself informed about the multi-billion naira venture that is waiting to be executed.

Sir, a belt of about five kilometres breadth and hundreds of kilometres width of bitumen running across Ondo, Ogun, and Edo states, with the bulk of it in Ondo State, has been reportedly discovered. As a geologist, can you tell us the quality and quantity of this bitumen, and how commercially viable this bitumen is?

It is like you are almost a geologist. From the little bit of investigation we have carried out the bitumen here is one of the best naturally occurring deposit in the world. For a number of reasons, as way back as 1953 or there about some bitumen was extracted there in its raw form and it was used to tar a stretch of the road between Ore and Ondo.

That is the one at Agbabu?

Yes, it was used to tar a stretch of

**OLUSEGUN**  
Agagu, a doctor of geology and the deputy governor of Ondo State is not a stranger to the Bitumen project. As a university teacher, he taught quite a number of students about bitumen and its potentials. And he had been involved in the bitumen deposits found in a long stretch of land across Ondo, Ogun and Edo states. In fact in 1991.

the road, just in its raw form and it stayed just as good as processed one. There is no way to know it is good other than that. Use it for the road purpose, you want to use it and you find out that it was good. Ever since then, in our investigation we have done a lot of laboratory tests and we have been able to confirm that it's a very high quality bitumen. For quantity, the indications are bright, because of the broad belt, and because of the fact that the thickness of sections in the ground is very large. We have a very expansive mineral there. Several billions of tons of naturally occurring bitumen.

So in essence it is commercially viable?

That is...Let's put it this way, in terms of quality, quantity, it is attractive. In terms of commercial viability, we can say all the questions have not been answered. And this is what I mean. Mining of bitumen is not a conventional technology. It is not as simple as exploring for oil in the Niger Delta. It is a specialised technology and there are only very few part of the world where natural bitumen is being mined commercially because for you to be commercially viable, you have to have the pre-requisite technology that will ensure that the money you used to produce the material is not as much as the money you are going to use to sell the material, that is the definition of commercial viability. So the technology is the factor in question.

Over the last two years, it appears that, we might be making one major breakthrough. That is what I mean, I do not think that we will be doing very well or as much as we would want to do if all we want to do in the bitumen belt here is use it to tar Nigerian roads. The amount of income we might get from that might not justify what we are thinking about.

We must be able to produce it, transport it in such a way that we can get foreign market for it. That is where the big profit is. And like I said, over the last few years, Venezuela has been able to make a breakthrough in its bitumen deposit which is similar to the one we have. They now export to Europe and there appears to be a lot of market for it. We are hoping to leach on their technology to see how we can also do the same.

We were made to understand that the two major problems the venture is facing are partnership and the right technology. How far have you gone in solving these problems?

The Federal Government has been made to be aware through our efforts here, they've been made to be aware of



Aminu...visited Agbaju during his tenure.

the enormity of the resources we have here and as a result of the pressure we have put on them, they set up what is known as a Bitumen Implementation Committee and luckily for us the headquarters is in Akure here. And this committee has been saddled with the responsibility of shopping around for technical partners and actually putting the frame-work in place for the complete implementation of the project.

But we are still trying to give as much encouragement as possible to the committee, we've given them land around Agbaju there to build their camp, they are asking for another land to build a laboratory in Akure here which we are in the process of giving to them. We as state government had hitherto no plan to go on, all we planned to do was to encourage the Federal agencies to facilitate the process of the project as much as possible, until when we began to take a second look and found out that one of the ways to make the project see fruition and fast was to try to get on the beat ourselves. We are now in the process of embarking on looking for a technical partner and forming a company to be jointly owned by Ondo State government and that partner, so we can now go as a company to explore and exploit bitumen in that area.

So you are now looking for a technical partner?

Yes.

From our findings, the Federal Government in June 1989 inaugurated a presidential Committee on the Implementation of Bitumen to carry out the specific assignment of facilitating development and exploitation of bitumen. How far would you

say CIBP has gone on this assignment? Has the committee been moving fast enough?

There is no doubt in my mind that the committee has taken shape now it's well grounded, they have a functioning office, they have functioning staff I happen to know that they have been doing some work, they've been doing investigation on the deposits, as well as trying to attract investors to the project. I happen to know that they've been able to identify three or four organisations that have shown interest. They are in the process of screening them to ensure that these are actually genuine people who are willing to participate in the prosecution of the project.

They've made some of the achievements, because as a son of this state, as a leader in this state, I would want that the thing is commissioned tomorrow morning. So I think there is room for improvements. They can move faster than they are moving now.

Sir, you have just said that the state will look for partner to do the business with, I think if I am right, that is also one of the things the committee is supposed to do. Don't you envisage a clash. Supposing the committee comes up with a partner and the state comes out with another. How does it work out?

Let me explain it. Like you said, there is a land of about 5 kilometre running, hundreds of kilometres across from just across Edo State all the way to Ogun State from here. So the land having bitumen is very large and in my discussion with members of the implementation committee, there appears to be an agreement now that perhaps one of the best ways to prosecute the project is to block out the entire area having bitumen into acreages, leases and invite as many people as possible and to come and bid just like we do for exploration. And any company that is interested can come and bid for a parcel of land there.

So what we want to do is to form a company with a partner and we would go as a company to the Bitumen Implementation Committee to bid for one of the blocks. So there is no cause for clash at all.

We were made to understand that some companies like Abimbola Gbolade and co and Apollin applied for leases. Have they been granted the leases by CIBP?

So far no.

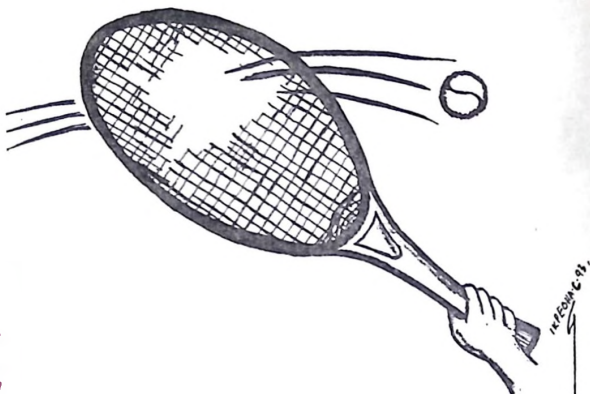
Why?

I think CIBP feel on their own, they cannot give out licences to prospective investors. What I know they have done was to recommend, they have recommended to the Federal Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources, the fol-





## Davis Cup blues



*...Though the Nigerian team lost 1-4 to Romania, there were signs that they could have done better.*

By Isodi Dike

**O**N paper Nigeria did not have even an outside chance against Romania in the Davis Cup Euro African group II tie. But here, both countries were, at the tennis complex of the National stadium, Lagos (from April 30 - May 2nd, 1993.) pitched against each other.

The chips were down that weekend when the Romanians came and the odds went out, but only for a brief moment. Then patriotic Nigerians forgot that though Romania started playing the Davis cup in 1922, Nigeria started just in 1974: that whilst they have chucked up about 50 Davis cup wins, we have so far managed eight; that the visitors have played three times in the elite world group, whilst Nigeria is yet to reach that stage.

Most importantly, on the current form of the players, Romania boasted Pescariu Dinu, ranked 251 and Sabau Razvan the fourth best junior player in the world today. On the other hand, Nigeria's foremost lawn tennis player, Nduka Odizor, is ranked closed to the 500 - bracket and Ganiyu Adenekan,

Godwin Omuta and George Elawure were not ranked at all. Adenekan though, just came in from the Asian circuits where he won the Sri Lankan version.

No matter, these impressive credentials of Romania were on paper. The Davis cup is not based on paper alone. As pointed out by Odizor himself, the Davis cup is more than that. It involves patriotism, it brings out the best in an individual and there is something stimulating about the cup donated by Dwight Filley Davis, then a student at Harvard University in 1900.

ITF sources attest to this, that "one of the great appeals of the Davis cup is that, whatever the strength of a particular tennis nation, it offers every player the opportunity to strive for higher standards, especially when there is keen rivalry for team places."

These observations showed clearly when the game started. Odizor playing the first singles match with Razvan, had everything rapped up but miraculously gave it away. (7-5; 2-6; 4-6; 2-6), that is, he lost the match 3-1. Ganiyu did not do any better. He lost 0-3 in

the second singles. During the doubles the next day, they both lost 0-3 to the pair of Cosac George and Burumb Keeper.

All these while, it was clear, that it only Odizor and Ganiyu could hold on a little, the Romanians will crumble. Our reporter saw that the Romanians had no answer to Odizor's boom shots or to Ganiyu's super aces, when both decided to play the game. Odizor even came back to prove tennis observers right, when he overwhelmed Pescariu Dinu 2-0 in the first reverse singles match.

But it was Ganiyu, who gave them something to cheer about. With a couple of aces, he silenced the vociferous Romanian supporters led by a little boy of about 8 years old and then almost frustrated the much-touted fourth best junior player, Razvan. They in fact, played rubber and Ganiyu lost because he lacked that extra thing or you could even say, to luck.

"The last match was excellent. You saw two young players at each other, both not wanting to loose" said Richard Lumb, the British referee "it

sums up the Davis cup. Personal pride and patriotism was involved."

Above all, it showed too that the Romanians could have been beaten here if the Nigerian team prepared well for the tie, after all, the Kenyans beat them last year.

K Fidelis is the retired Brigadier-General who heads the Nigerian Lawn Tennis Association. He admitted they could have prepared better but his association was recently appointed and barely after inauguration the Davis cup was hanging over their neck like the sword of Damocles.

"The better team won. Given all the necessary support we will be ready next time" he said "support from the corporations, individuals and from the sporting press."

It will be recalled that Nigeria lost last year's Davis cup, 0 5 to Morocco. With this year's defeat by Romania the country will meet Algeria which lost to Monaco in July 1993, the loser of that tie will be relegated to Group III in 1994.

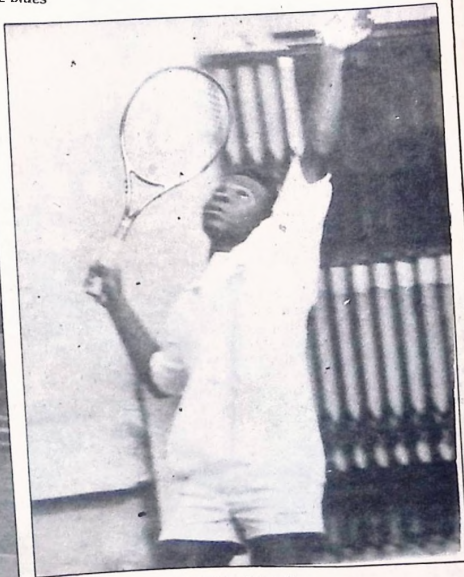
The winner between Romania and Monaco will be promoted to zone I in 1994.



Odizer...singing the blues



A Romanian player shows his stuff



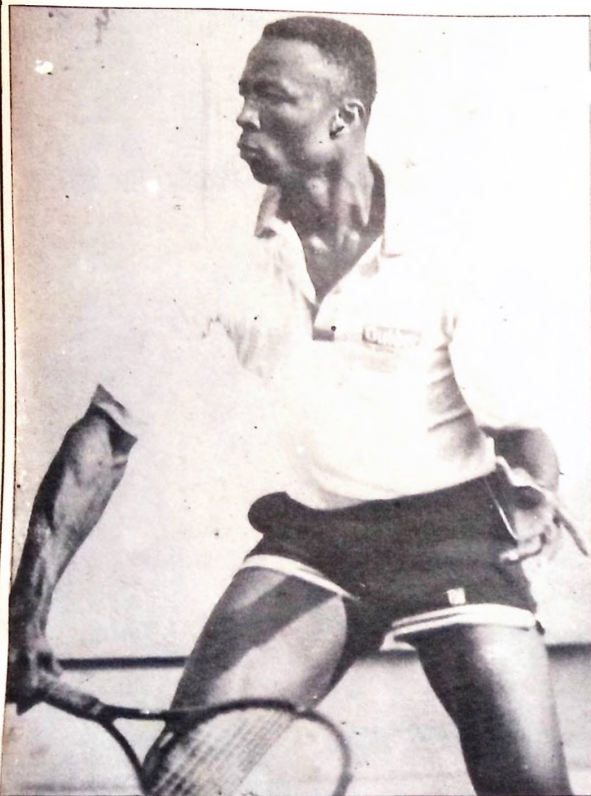
Ganiyu...looking for a better future?

# Haba Nwokedi!

*...Would this tennis player have made any difference at the Davis cup tie? He believes so but officials say No.*

*By Isodi Dike*

**H** E IS ONE  
lawn tennis player that surprised observers when he won the All Nigerian Open championship in 1991. He was to repeat the feat a year later and in some other tournaments in the country.



*Nwokedi...where did he go wrong?*

Surprise because he was just one of the crop of young players being groomed for the future. But Kyrian Nwokedi has always been headstrong. Or rather he did not know how to talk to the administrators or the press, or when to talk.

Recently Nwokedi came plotting net with his racket but with his mouth. This was in the heat of the Davis cup preparation against Romania. He had opened his mouth to a section of the sporting press and kicked wilfully against the administrators of the game. His quarrel was with the selection of Nduka Odizor, Ganiyu Adenekan, Godwin Omuta and George Elawure.

Nwokedi, they alleged claimed he should have been called up for the tournament. Should he? K. Fidelis, the retired Brigadier General in charge of lawn tennis Association was furious when reporters broached the issue with him.

"Nwokedi is a bloody nuisance" he stated. According to him, Nwokedi was never invited to camp because he was nowhere to be found."

The chairman continued that when his association was appointed sometime in March he looked for Nwokedi to no avail. It was only later he gathered that the boy had gotten into London, with the help of somebody. "And then he came in unannounced, carrying several trophies he claimed to have won while in Britain. And then he added that Odizor asked him in London to come and pair him for the Davis cup doubles event. I asked Odizor who said he had not seen Nwokedi uptill that moment, do you now understand what I am talking about?"

"The truth" he stated, "is that Kyrian Nwokedi is not in form and he is also a bloody liar. The people he is complaining about have beaten him. You were all here when Elhirim beat him 3-0. And Adenekan too has beaten him so why is he complaining?"

Fidelis used the opportunity to speak on the team selection stating that he used the best materials he had. "I must confess though that Adenekan dissappointed me but you saw he picked up later and he tried his best. I intend to hang on to these young boys. We shall intensify training and I'll be very much involved this time around. At least now we know those to put in camp."

On his part, Nwokedi still believed that there could have been an improvement on the general performance, if he had been invited to play.

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