

# DAILY TRUST

Trust Is A Burden

Visit us at://www.dailytrust.com

VOL. 10 NO. 34 THURSDAY, JANUARY 6, 2005 DHUL QIDA 26, 1425 A.H. N80

**THE Nigerian STOCK EXCHANGE**

ABUJA AREA OFFICE  
ELECTRONIC TRADING FLOOR  
Library/NSITE, House (4th floor)  
CBD, Garki - Abuja.  
Tel: 09-2349368, 09-2349150.

www.nigerianst-exchange.com

**STAR FEATURE**

## Recalling a visit to the pearl of tourism



Pages 20 & 21

**ABUJA GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM**  
Re-Certification & Re-issuance of FCT Certificate of Occupancy made easy at

**CB**  
Intercity Bank Plc  
Your can pay your fees in any of our Branches Nationwide

## Football: FG scraps Decree 101

The federal government yesterday yielded to the world soccer governing body, FIFA, over the controversial Decree 101 when the Federal Executive Council approved the scrapping of the law which compromised the independence of the Nigeria Football Association (NFA).

Sports Minister Musa Mohammed told newsmen at the end of Wednesday's cabinet meeting in Abuja that government had approved a bill for Decree 101 of 1992 to be repealed by the National Assembly.

"The bill approved by government gives the chairman of the Nigeria Football Association (NFA), which will then be known as the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF), the power to appoint the secretary-general of the association. It also gives the chairman executive powers."

By Ismaila Umaru Lere, Group Sports Editor

Mohammed said. Under the abolished decree, the sports ministry would have appointed the secretary-general, who is also the chief executive officer of Nigerian football, while the NFA chairman would not have had any executive powers.

"These changes are for the betterment of Nigerian football and they are in line with what FIFA wants."

FIFA had demanded that Nigeria reforms the laws governing the administration of the sport by ensuring the football association is independent of government control.

The government's decision came on the heels of a power tussle raging between the sports ministry and the chairman executive powers."



From left are the Sports Minister, Col. Musa Mohammed, the Minister of Integration in Africa, Alhaji Lawan Gana Guba and the Minister of State Works, Alhaji Saleh Shehu, during the FEC meeting held at the State House, Abuja...yesterday. Pic: Joe Oroye.

# MISSING SHIP

## Tribunal dismisses 2 Admirals

Two Rear Admirals who were found guilty and convicted over their complicity in the disappearance of the oil tanker, 'MT African Pride', were yesterday dismissed from the Nigerian Navy by a general court marshal sitting in Lagos after

From Adelanwa Bamgboye, Correspondent, Lagos

34 years of service. The decision is however subject to confirmation by superior authorities.

The dismissed Rear Admirals are Rear Admiral Samuel

A. Kolawole; the former Flag Officer Commanding (FOC) Western Naval Command, and Rear Admiral Francis A. Agbiti, Chief of Training at the Naval headquarters whose rank was also reduced to Commodore.

However, the third suspect, Rear Admiral Antonio Bob-Manuel, was discharged and acquitted on all the four count criminal charges proffered against him.

While discharging Rear Admiral Bob-Manuel, the tribunal held that no where was he linked with the offence of conspiracy as the missing ship remained under custody at the Western Naval Command till 6th July 2004, when he left as the FOC, west.

In the decision of the tribunal, Bob-Manuel was discharged on charges of negligence of duty and disobedience for failure to hand over the arrested vessel to the police.

According to Joseph Ajayi, the President of the tribunal, Bob-Manuel ob-

eyed all orders from the Naval headquarters, even the order that the crew of the 'African Pride' be handed over to the police.

The tribunal also exonerated him on the charge of negligence of duty on his failure to protect the N10 billion crude oil contents on board the vessel, saying that part of the oil was stolen, while some quantity was adulterated during his tenure.

On Rear Admiral Samuel Kolawole, the tribunal found him guilty on all the charges,



Dr Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso

including conspiracy. The tribunal noted that Kolawole conspired with some officials from the Russian Embassy who visited 'MT African Pride' without the permission of the chief of Naval Staff (CNS), and that five days after the visit, the ship got

missing. Kolawole, whose sentence was dismissal from service on all the six counts, was found guilty of alteration of service document.

The tribunal found that he, Kolawole, altered the

Conid. on Pg 2

## Ngige, Uba suspension diversionary - CNPP

The Conference of Nigeria Political Parties (CNPP) has condemned Tuesday's suspension from the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) of the Anambra State Governor, Dr Chris Ngige, and his estranged godfather, Chris Uba, describing it as a laughable resolution aimed at papering over the party's collective misdeeds.

CNPP also said the PDP's directive to the Inspector General of Police to probe Ngige and Uba confirmed that the police were doing the biddings of the party.

By Isa Sanusi & Habeeb I. Pindiga, Political Reporters

The PDP's National Executive Committee (NEC) in an emergency meeting in Abuja on Tuesday suspended the governor and his godfather from the party, following allegations that the duo had confessed to rigging the Anambra gubernatorial poll in 2003.

In a statement in Abuja yesterday, signed by its Secretary General, Maxi Okwu, CNPP said, "It is clear that by announcing the

Conid. on Pg 2

## Doctors' strike: Corpses fill-up Abuja mortuary

20,000 deaths so far nationwide

Mortuaries in government hospitals in Abuja no longer have spaces for corpses as they are all filled to the brim, a News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) investigation has shown.

A NAN correspondent, who visited mortuaries in the FCT hospitals at Asokoro and Maitama districts; Area 8 in Garki district, and the National Hospital, reported that all the four were no longer receiving corpses.

Mortuary attendants at

Asokoro, Maitama and Area 8 hospitals said that they noticed an increase in the number of corpses being brought to the morgues since Resident Doctors started their nationwide strike on December 6, 2004.

At the Maitama hospital mortuary, which has the highest capacity for 30 corpses, an attendant said that the compartment for 19 corpses had packed up and that only the one for 11 corpses was functional. He

Conid. on Pg 2

# News

## Tribunal *Contd. from Pg 1*

original comment "treat" on the letter authorising the Russians' visit, but was altered to read "take note" while awaiting CNS's directive.

He was also found guilty of conduct amounting to negligence to take proper security of 'MT African Pride' as the FOC West during the disappearance of the ship in spite of intelligence warning that he should not allow the Russians' visit.

Kolawole was further found guilty of the loss of 'MT African Pride', a prized ship property of the Federal Government of Nigeria valued N308 million, equivalent to \$2.2 million.

In its decision, the tribunal stated that it found evidence of conspiracy against Rear Admiral Agbitti, but added that such evidence was not sufficient to find him guilty for conspiracy.

The tribunal however found Agbitti guilty on all other charges and recommended his dismissal and reduction to the rank of Commodore.

According to the tribunal, the sentences are to run concurrently and subject to confirmation from superior authorities.

The president of the tribunal explained that through out the trial, the sus-

suspension for 30 days of the two 'armed robbers' of the sovereign mandate of Anambra people in 2003, the PDP is engaged in an expensive joke with the lives and destiny of the people of Anambra State in particular and Nigerians in general."

Okwu recalled that Uba had in July 2003, in the wake of the abduction of Ngige by a detachment of policemen, been suspended from the PDP, saying the latest suspension was a hoax.

"Till date, we are not aware that the suspension has been lifted. Rather, since then, Chris Uba has grown from strength to strength. This culminated in his grand re-entry at the PDP national secretariat late last year during the swearing-in of his Anambra State PDP chairmanship nominee, Mr Uche Emord, in wanton disregard of a subsisting court order," he added.

Flaying the directive to investigate the protracted crisis, Okwu said it was unacceptable for a political party to be controlling the police boss.

"The directive by the PDP to the Inspector General of Police, Tafa Balogun, to investigate the duo of Ngige and Uba has finally confirmed our previously held view that the police are virtually Peoples Democratic Party. It is totally unacceptable to the CNPP that one of the political parties is ordering the IG to

pects were accepted as being subject to military laws.

The tribunal, before pronouncing the judgment, noted that without reliable armed forces led by Rear Admirals and Generals, various reforms to tackle corruption will be a pipe dream.

According to Joseph Ajayi, focus must be on professionalism within the armed forces in all what they do.

"We shall be failing in our duty if we just take the disappearance of 'MT African Pride'. No matter how painful the judgement, irresponsibility must have no place in our armed forces," Joseph Ajayi said.

Earlier in their plea for mercy, lawyers to the two convicted rear admirals had begged the tribunal to temper justice with mercy, saying that the duo had less than ten months to retirement.

The lawyer to Kolawole told the court that he (Kolawole) had lost his wife recently and that he had a meritorious service for 34 years in the NN, adding that in the spirit of Xmas and New Year, the punishment should be mitigated.

Similarly, Agbitti's lawyer said that it was never possible for him to establish absolute truth, but only relative truth.

## Ngige *Contd. from Pg 1*

do his job. It may be recalled that the PDP allegedly used the police, including other security agencies, to massively rig the 2003 general elections.

"We call on General Obasanjo to order the immediate arrest of Mr Chris Uba for subsequent prosecution.

"We re-state our call on Chris Ngige to proceed to the election petition tribunal and withdraw his defence and concede victory to Mr Peter Obi of APGA," CNPP said.

Meanwhile, the Chairman, Senate Committee on Information, Senator Tawar Umbi Wada, (PDP/Gombe south), yesterday said the decision of the PDP on the protracted Anambra crisis would not affect the resolve of the Senate to tackle the issue.

He maintained that the decision taken by the party on the matter at its Tuesday's National Executive Committee meeting would go a long way in bringing stability into the polity.

Two committees of the Senate have so far submitted reports on investigation into the Anambra crisis even though none of the reports has been deliberated upon.

The Senate has, before adjourning for the end of the year recess, assured that latest report of investigation carried out will be considered when it resumes on Tuesday, 12 January 2005.

## Football

NFA board over the sweeping changes instituted by the minister in both the NFA secretariat and the board.

The minister fired the NFA management team as well as dropped all non-elected members of NFA

board. However, FIFA has asked the government to reverse the recent sacking of the management team and non-elected members on the board before tomorrow (Friday) or the country would face international ban.



Police armoured tank stationed at PDP National Secretariat with Mobile Policemen combat ready to fight journalists during PDP NEC meeting held in Abuja...Tuesday. Pic: Kennedy Egbonodje.

## FG lifts embargo on export grant

By Hamisu Muhammad, Reporter (Business)

The suspension placed on the Export Expansion Grant (EEG) has been lifted by the federal government. The new measure took effect from January 1, 2005.

A statement from the office of the Minister of State

for Finance, Mrs. Nenadi Esther Usman, said that 'the action is based on the approval of the Federal Executive Council (FEC) which considered the report of the presi-

dential committee set up under the chairmanship of the secretary to the government of the federation to work out a consensus proposal on the review of industrial incentives to manufacturers'.

Government had earlier announced the suspension in order to check abuses, but assured that the reintroduction of the EEG would be improved and updated.

Late last year, the federal government suspended the EEG due to the alleged sharp practices made by some of the beneficiaries. EEG is an incentive scheme designed by the government to promote and expand the non-oil exports and enhance foreign exchange earnings from non-oil sectors.

The alleged abuses by some beneficiaries include failure of some beneficiaries to use the grant for intended purposes, such as the upgrading and expansion of factories; failure of some of the beneficiaries to repatriate foreign exchange earnings, and the activities of some beneficiaries who were fraudulently benefiting from more than one such incentive scheme.

Based on the report, the federal government initiated a review of the scheme to streamline the programme 'in order to make monitoring and evaluation more effective and plug all possible loopholes'. Several committees are said to be working on this and they have finally completed the process.

The minister of state noted that the federal government expects 'all stakeholders of this important scheme to keep to the terms of the updated guidelines in the interest of a stronger economy'.

## Corpses

Contd. from Pg 1

could have caused the latest development.

Sadiq also confirmed that the hospital would not accept new corpses, pending when the ones already in the morgue had been removed.

He also said that facilities at the hospital had been overstretched since the strike started, as there had been a surge in the number of patients coming for treatment.

NARD chapter at the National Hospital is not part of the strike, on grounds that they had received all the entitlements which formed the basis for the face-off between the association and government.

Investigations showed that one other reason for the congestion in mortuaries is the delay in removing corpses deposited.

At the National Hospital, NAN learnt that some people allowed corpses to remain in the morgue for as long as one year, thereby creating problems for others who might want to make use of the facility.

Meanwhile, the President of National Association of Resident Doctors (NARD), Dr Jerry Oguzie, had told NAN on Tuesday in Abuja that information from state chapters as at last Saturday showed that more than 20,000 deaths had been recorded since the strike started.

He said that 6,000 of the people died as a result of injuries sustained in motor accidents that occurred during the Christmas period.

It was gathered that a man who came to deposit a corpse on Tuesday was referred to the mortuary at Area 8 hospital which had been confirmed to be full.

At the National Hospital, the Chief Public Relations Officer, Yahaya Sadiq, confirmed that the mortuary, which has capacity for a little more than 20 corpses, was full.

He said that it was not the first time the hospital was going through such an experience, even though the strike by Resident Doctors

The Senate spokesman further said that, more than ever before, "the Senate would as from this year focus more attention on those issues affecting the corporate existence of Nigeria as a nation as well as work on bills that would encourage good governance."

Senator Wada said that the nation's image would only improve if all the negative traits in the Nigerian polity were removed, adding that greater efforts would be made on improvement as the cordial relationship between the National Assembly and the executive arm, pointing out that confrontations between the two arms of government would not augur well for the nation.

"As such, we will not fail in the Senate to tackle those problems hampering the good image and good governance in the country. This is how the Senate plans to improve on the living standards of our people this year," Wada said.

He expressed satisfaction over what he called improved conduct of affairs in the Senate, adding that it was due to the relative peace witnessed since the inception of the Wabara leadership. He however declared: "If any situation arose requiring that we do some kind of soul searching in the Senate, we will not shy away from doing just that."

The Senate had early last year set up a committee led by Senator David Mark to investigate the Anambra crisis, but the report of the committee has not been considered by the Senate due to what was described as judicial intricacies.

# News

## Nas' death, a loss to W/Africa

**T**wo former military heads of state, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida and General Abdulsalam Abubakar, have described the death of Alhaji Wada Nas as not only a national tragedy but a serious loss to the entire West African sub-region.

Speaking briefly to newsmen at the deceased's residence in Funtua shortly after condoling the families of the former minister, General Babangida said West Africa had lost a hero who cannot be easily replaced. General Ibrahim Babangida further described Alhaji Wada Nas as a great patriot that stands out bold on truth no matter whose ox is gored. "He has greater concern in the emancipation of the north and the downtrodden people in the country," he said.

He urged Nigerians to continue to offer prayers for the repose of the soul Alhaji Wada Nas. The two former heads of state were accompanied by friends and well-wishers, including AVM Hamza Abdullahi, Alhaji Habu Fari, Alhaji Saleh Jambo, among others.

Also, Hajjiya Naja'atu Mohammed, a renowned female political activist who described Nas as a father, said the country had lost some one who throughout his life tried to channel the democratic process to the right way.

—*IBB, Abdulsalami, APLP*

**From Lawal Ibrahim, Correspondent (Katsina) & Allya Haruna Correspondent (Kaduna)**

She described the loss as not only to his immediate family, but the north.

"I do not know of anybody right now in this part of the country that has the passion that he had for not only the downtrodden, but for the ideals upon which the north has been viewed," she said.

Also, the Human Rights Monitor, a Kaduna based non-governmental organisation (NGO), has expressed its condolence to the family, friends and associates of the late former minister of special duties. According to statement made available to *Daily Trust* in Kaduna, signed by Festus Okoye, the Executive Director of the NGO, the death of Wada Nas at this time of the nation's struggle for revival was very tragic, saying that he had remained a consistent critic of policies and practices of the Obasanjo administration.

The statement declared that Wada Nas had principles and believed in the power and potency of his conviction and fought doggedly for their actualisation.

In a similar tribute, the All Peoples Liberation Party (APLP) yesterday described the death of Alhaji Wada Nas

as a great loss to the country.

The national Secretary of the party, Alhaji A. Shehu Nafuntua, said Nigeria has lost an honest, principled and committed democrat whose position can hardly be replaced.

"His death is a great loss to the country, and the political terrain in particular. Alhaji Wada has been consistent in his thought and belief. All we can do is to pray for his soul to rest in perfect peace," Alhaji Nafuntua said.

**A** pilgrim from Isa local government area of Sokoto State, Abubakar Isa, was yesterday arrested by Saudi security operatives in Medina for "indecent dressing".

A NAN correspondent covering the 2005 hajj in Saudi Arabia reports that Abubakar was whisked away by Saudi security operatives on his way to the Mosque in Medina.

"He dressed rough and we do not tolerate this kind of dressing in the Holy Land," NAN correspondent quoted the police as saying.

A member of the Sokoto

## Saudi security arrests pilgrim over indecent dressing

State Hajj Committee, Alhaji Isa Danbaba, confirmed the arrest of the pilgrim and said that everything was being done to secure his release.

Danbaba, however, warned other intending pilgrims from the state who are yet to be airlifted to the Holy Land to dress decently so as to avoid molestation and arrest by the Saudi security.

"Abubakar's arrest is un-

fortunate. That was why we had provided all our pilgrims with decent uniforms," Danbaba said.

Meanwhile, traffic is fast picking up in Medina with over 10,000 Nigerian pilgrims already in the city.

More than 2,000 pilgrims from Bauchi State had safely arrived at Medina, the state's Amiral Haji, Alhaji Umaru Dahiru, told NAN.

## Mantu promises hitch free hajj

**T**he Amiral Haji for the 2005 pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia, Deputy Senate President Ibrahim Mantu, has promised to make a difference in this year's religious rites. Speaking to newsmen at the flagging-off ceremony of the airlift of Niger State pilgrims in Minna, the Amiral haji said the unnecessary delay and report of lost luggage experienced in the past would not be repeated.

He said his committee had put in place measures to minimise the general hardships usually encountered by pilgrims. Alhaji Mantu, who inspected facilities at the Minna Hajj Camp, described the preparation of the state government as the best so far.

The Amiral haji urged other states to emulate Niger State by establishing similar first class facilities at their camp sites to enhance the welfare of intending pilgrims to the Holy Land.



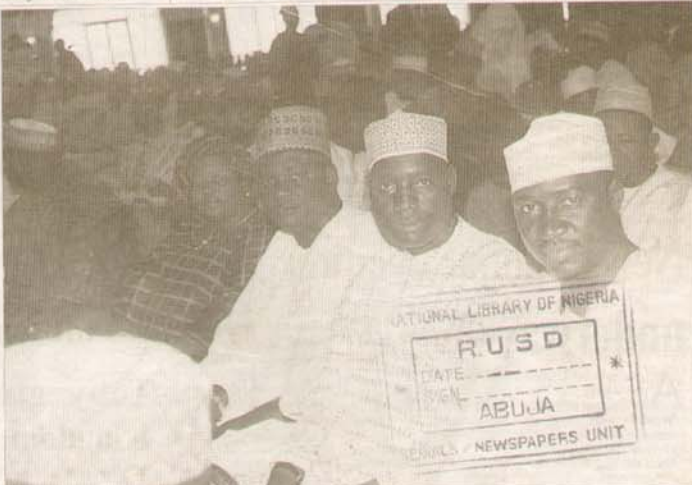
Alhaji Mantu

**From Kashim Sule, Stringer in Minna**

Responding to the Governor of the state, Engineer Abdul-Kadiri Kure, declared that the occasion was historic as the first airlift from Minna began during his administration.

The state chief executive explained that the state government had every reason to establish the hajj camp as service to the people and Almighty Allah.

In his own remarks, the Chairman of the Niger State Traditional Council, the Etsu Nupe, Alhaji Yahaya Abubakar, warned intending pilgrims to steer clear from bad practices that will earn the country bad name.



Across section of local government chairmen at a meeting with President Olusegun Obasanjo at the State House, Abuja... yesterday. Pic: Joe Oroye.

## Court dismisses SSS suit against Damagun, others

**A** High Court sitting in Kano has dismissed the charges of conspiracy and abduction proffered against one of the directors of Media Trust, Alhaji Muhammed Bello Damagun, and two others by the State Security Service (SSS). In his ruling yesterday, Justice Mohammed Sadi Mato

**From Jamilah Nuhu Musa, Correspondent (Kano)**

granted all the three prayers sought for by the applicants.

Justice Mohammed Mato held that the charges of conspiracy and abduction against the applicants Alhaji Muhammed Bello Damagun, Mallam Nazifi Mohammed Inuwa and

Mu'awiya Babayaro under sections 9 and 273 of the penal code are hereby dismissed. He said that the attorney general of Kano State had no power and authority to delegate his constitutional powers in section 211 (1) to anyone other than a staff of his department within the meaning of section 211 (2) of the 1999 Constitution.

The court also restrained the SSS from harassing, intimidating and prosecuting the applicants on the basis of the charges which have been dismissed by the court.

The judgement was anchored on the action of the attorney-general of Kano State, which issued a legal fiat to the Department of the State Security Service empowering it to prosecute the applicants on behalf of the attorney general.

Consequent upon this, the applicants filed a motion on notice and declared that the charges against them were tantamount to an act of prosecution.

The motion on notice also prayed for an order of court quashing the two charges of conspiracy and abduction under section 97 and 273 of the penal code.

They also sought for an order of injunction restraining the State Security Service from harassing, intimidating or prosecuting the applicants on the basis of the documents filed dated 18<sup>th</sup> October, 2004.

The judge therefore considered the provisions of section 211 (2) of the 1999 Constitution as well as section 7 of the criminal proceeding code of Kano State.

He also reviewed the submissions of the counsel to the applicant, Ja'afaru Abbas Ibrahim, and the respondent, Christopher Otum, and held further that the construction of the constitutional provisions; the general principles of interpretation of statutes are properly applicable, while it must also be given its natural and ordinary meaning.

## AU council discusses regional conflicts Jan 10

**T**he Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU) will meet in the Gabonese capital of Libreville on January 10. The meeting is to discuss the conflicts in Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the western Darfur region of Sudan.

Television *Ivoirienne* reported Tuesday.

The meeting, which was originally scheduled for December 10 last year in

Ethiopia's capital of Addis Ababa, is aimed at seeking new solutions to help resume peace and security, and prevent ceasefire violations in the three countries.

At the meeting, Alpha Oumar Konare, the Chairperson of the AU council, will present a report on the situation in the three countries while the AU mediator and South African President Thabo Mbeki will report on Cote d'Ivoire's crisis and

his mediation efforts.

Cote d'Ivoire President Laurent Gbagbo and his counterpart from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Joseph Kabila, have been invited to attend the meeting.

Cote d'Ivoirean officials however said Gbagbo will not attend the meeting and instead, State Minister of African Integration Theodore Mel Eg will be there.

# NEWS

## MRA condemns police brutality on journalists

**M**edia Rights Agenda (MRA) yesterday condemned the brutalities meted out to about eleven journalists who went to cover the National Executive Council (NEC) meeting of the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Abuja on Tuesday.

The journalists who went to cover the PDP meeting were ordered by Mr. Lawrence Abibi, Commissioner of Police (Operations), to leave the vicinity of the PDP Secretariat. The arrival of the governor of Anambra State Dr. Chris Ngige and the rousing ovation he got seemed to have triggered Mr. Abibi's anger. He ordered his men to push the journalists away, thus leading to the extreme brutalities on the journalists, whose "offence" was that they were carrying out their duties.

The policemen, supervised by Mr. Abibi, according to MRA

**By Suleiman Mohammed**  
(Associate Editor)

descended on the journalists hitting them with gun butts, batons, police boots and horse whips, while Mr. Yekini Jimoh, an Assistant Inspector General of Police looked on from where he was standing. Journalists were injured, some had their cameras damaged and others lost personal valuables including mobile phones.

The Abuja Bureau Chief of The Punch newspapers, Mr. Yomi Odunuga and a correspondent of Nigerian Tribune newspapers, Segun Jacob Olatunji were injured as a result. Other journalists who suffered the police brutalities include Gbenga Abiodun, a photojournalist with Daily Independent newspapers; Abayomi Fayese, a photojournalist with The Guardian newspapers; Kennedy Eghonodje of Daily Trust newspapers; Ibrahim Samaila

of The Punch, Francis Ojo of Daily Champion newspapers, and Akin Orimolade and Sunday Adah, both of TELL magazine.

In addition, Innocent Okafor of ThisDay newspapers, Monday Emoni of The Comet newspapers, and George Edemevughe of Channels Television had their cameras damaged.

Segun Olatunji of Tribune who was severely beaten was rushed to a hospital by his colleagues as a result of the serious injuries he sustained from the battery.

MRA in a statement in Lagos condemned the arbitrary, inhuman and unjustifiable attacks on the journalists especially under a supposedly democratic government.

"MRA reminds the nation's security apparatus, especially the Nigerian Police, that the Constitution places obligations on journalists to uphold the fundamental objectives

contained in it as well as "the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people", it said.

"These are in addition to their duties of informing, educating and entertaining their readers, most importantly Nigerians. Journalists cannot carry out these responsibilities if they are constantly at the receiving

end of the brutalities of security agencies. They must therefore be allowed to freely carry out their professional responsibilities without harassment."

The MRA called on the Inspector General of Police, Mr. Tafa Balogun to investigate the acts of bestiality of his men and punish those responsible.

It also demanded an apology for the brutalities,

pay the medical expenses of Mr. Olatunji and compensate him and other journalists for the injuries they suffered and damages to their equipment.

MRA also called on the police authorities to educate their men on the tenets of democracy and the rule of law with a view to stemming this ugly trend that is rearing its head in their midst.



Gov Saminu Turaki of Jigawa state commissioning the European Union prime office constructed by the Kebbi State Government assisted by Governor Adamu Alero of Kebbi State (left) -recently.

## New national aviation policy

### underway -Yuguda

**A** new national aviation policy is to be formulated this year to regulate and enhance air transportation in the country, Aviation Minister Isa Yuguda has said.

"A new bill incorporating the new national policy on aviation has been drafted and presented to the Federal Executive Council (FEC) for consideration," he said.

Yuguda said that the bill, which had already received FEC's approval on Dec. 21, last year, would among other things, codify all national laws and domesticate all international conventions ratified by the country.

He said that the policy would spell out the responsibilities and powers of the six aviation agencies, namely the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) and the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA).

Others are the Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA), Nigeria Meteorological Agency (NIMET) and Nigerian College of Aviation Technology (NCAT).

According to him, "the new civil aviation bill incorporates the

regulatory Act of the NCAA and introduces penalties for various offences such as dangerous flying, noise pollution and control of emission, among others".

"Another significant characteristics of the civil aviation bill is that henceforth Nigeria will pay the same premium to international insurance companies

"Draw equal compensation therefrom, unlike in the past when we paid higher premium and drew lower compensation due to our inability to codify our civil aviation law," the minister noted.

Yuguda said that with the development, Nigeria has moved closer to the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and IASA Category 1 certification.

## Lagos begins road repairs

**T**he Lagos state government yesterday set up an Ad hoc committee made up of members of the State executive council to oversee its massive road rehabilitation programme tagged '90 by 1000 by 2005, as it apologized to road users for the poor state of the roads. The State Government said that it was willing to expend N2.5 billion on the rehabilitation project already started on January 1, 2005 coordinated by the state ministry of Works and Infrastructure in conjunction with the public works corporation to fully utilize the dry season.

The methods to be employed for the rehabilitation work include the direct labour approach on one hand and the retainership method on the other.

In a joint press conference held in Alausa, the Commissioner for Works and

Infrastructure, Mr. Rauf Aregbesola, commissioner for Transport, Mr. Muiz Banire and their counterpart in the ministry for Physical Planning and Urban Development, Mr. Hakeem Gbajabiamila, revealed that the deadline given for the road rehabilitation project was 1,000 roads in 90 days. Aregbesola said, "In a bid to rid the roads of potholes to enhance free movement of vehicles, I am pleased to inform you that the Lagos State Government with the express approval of His Excellency Asiwaju Bola Tinubu, has set up an Adhoc group to aggressively combat the potholes in Lagos State until April 2005 when it is envisaged that another rainy season would begin.

"In order to ensure that we get maximum value for the resources deployed, all State executive council members

**From Olumide Bajulaiye,**  
(Correspondent Lagos)

have been charged to personally monitor their respective local government areas/ constituencies for the effective performance of the task force". Shedding light on the task force he said, the state had been divided into 10 zones each to be headed by a director and each zone would also have a three road maintenance gangs and three roving gangs charged with the responsibility to repair damaged drainage structures and clear silted or blocked drains. Aregbesola said also that 10 qualified contractors had been assigned to each of the 10 zones, "Similarly, in order to have an all year road maintenance culture by the State Government, the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure introduced the Road Maintenance Management on Zonal basis, which is expected to ensure an all year round maintenance of at least 500 roads" on retainership basis.

he assured.

## Toby gives recipe for Opobo Kingdom development

**R**ivers State Deputy Governor, Sir Gabriel Toby has said that the people of Opobo kingdom have an economic blueprint and a strong political will to achieve set goals.

Sir Toby said this yesterday at the first

**From Muhammad Ajah**  
(Correspondent (PHC))

anniversary of the coronation of the Amanyanabo of Opobo kingdom, King Dandeson Douglas Jaja at Jaja's Court in Opobo.

The deputy governor said the people had a proud history which would serve as a catalyst to the growth anticipated in the kingdom.

According to him, "if we achieve the target of having a blueprint for socio-economic and political development and awareness and sensitize our people not to sit down complaining but to move about and brace up the challenges that crops up, the kingdom will be better".

He said the task of moving the kingdom forward was a herculean duty and thanked God that the Amanyanabo has shown enough determination to

surmount the challenges and advised that the people must work with the leadership of the kingdom and make sacrifices in the process.

Sir Toby cautioned that those who sit down mourning the past will never move forward and urged them to keep the path of righteousness and justice, as it was the responsibility of each and every citizen to bring progress to the kingdom.

While imploring them to embrace the development for conscience sake, he lauded the king and the council of Atapu for the cultural revival in the kingdom, noting that it was a positive development that the people had decided to go back to their proud past to assure rebirth in mind and strength.

He used the opportunity to reassure the people of the kingdom that the state government was determined to commence work on the road linking the kingdom and asked them to remain peaceful and productive.

Earlier in his address, the Amanyanabo of Opobo, King Dandeson Douglas Jaja said that the anniversary was monumental for the kingdom as it would lay the foundation for necessary centers of energy to propel the kingdom ahead.

He, however hinted on plans aimed at the cultural renaissance in the kingdom and urged the people to join hands in making the kingdom more fruitful and the toast of the Niger Delta and Africa.

He announced the constitution of three structures, the Opobo Kingdom Think Tank, the People's Assembly and the Opobo Kingdom Awards Management Committee to propel the development agenda for the kingdom.

# News

## Aide to governor's wife commits suicide over failed marriage

Information officer, Clement Ejebong, attached to the wife of the Cross River State governor, Mrs. Onari Duke, has reportedly committed suicide. Ejebong, who was in his 30s, was said to have hanged himself from a tree in his village at Wankade in Yala council area of Cross River on the eve of the New Year.

Though he did not leave any suicide note, it is suspected that his inability to consummate his marriage to Mrs. Onari Duke since October 27, 2003 had him to take his life.

Ejebong had fixed his wedding date and distributed invitation cards, but took ill and was taken to the Psychiatric Hospital, Calabar.

When he recovered from the illness, his family members advised Ejebong to put off the marriage until he was fully well, but this did not go down well with him and his wife-to-be.

Confirming the incident, one of Ejebong's mentors and Vice Chairman of the Cross River Planning Commission, Mr. Julius

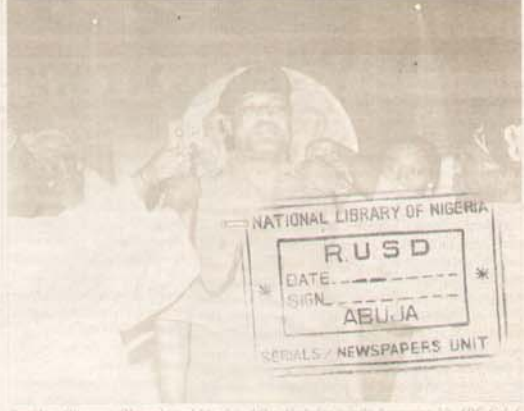
Okputu, told NAN by telephone that the incident was "not ordinary".

Okputu, the immediate past chairman of Cross River Civil Service Commission, said some forces could have perpetrated the young man to take his life. He, however, said there was no history of such suicide in the village and added that Ejebong had since been buried.

Okputu was listed as one of the sponsors of Ejebong's wedding, which did not take place either.

Sources said the family members had suspected Ejebong's movement and had positioned some young men to monitor him but when the monitors slept off in the early hours of the day, Ejebong escaped and hanged himself.

When the news was broken in Calabar, friends and colleagues of Ejebong were dumbfounded, wondering what could have pushed a young man savouring the thrills of government house to commit suicide.



President Olusegun Obasanjo and Vice President Atiku Abubakar jointly decorating an AOC Col. 1 Lusitania with his new rank at the State House Abuja... recently. *By Joe Uwaga*

## Niger police arrest car snatchers

Two car snatchers in Niger State were apprehended by the state's police command, even as fourteen cars were traced in their possession. Briefing newsmen, the state's Commissioner of Police, Mr. Ernest Ikhare, said that one of the robbers, Yusuf Sani, had earlier been arrested with a Toyota Starlet suspected to have been stolen.

He said a superintendent of police, Hussam Saleman, was later led by the suspect for the arrest of his accomplice, Salihu Ibrahim. The suspects later confessed that they had snatched many cars, while one Yahaya provided forged documents to cover up. The commissioner further stated that when his men got to the suspects' hide-out, cars were discovered among other loots belonging to their victims.

In another incident, seven suspected robbers have been arrested by the police. The seven suspects, led by Ibrahim Musa, used to mount road-blocks on roads at nights where they engage in their nefarious activities by forcefully dispossessing commuters' belongings, until luck ran against them.

According to the police commissioner, they were arrested when they were dispossessing commuters of their GSM phones, money, as well as raping a little girl. However, further investigation by the police



Tafa Balogun, IGP

From Kashim Sule, *Stranger in Minna*

revealed that the suspects belonged to another deadly gang operating in Kaduna. The police commissioner also disclosed that all the suspects would soon appear in court and warned the general public to be vigilant for strange faces in their areas.

## Red Cross advocates permanent disaster management mechanism

The Nigeria Red Cross Society yesterday called on government to develop the appropriate capacity to manage and cope with both high and low profile national and man-made disasters. The society noted, in a statement signed by its Secretary General, Abiodun Orebijin in Abuja, that Nigeria is not an exception to the emergence of disaster.

"The Nigeria Red Cross wishes to use this opportunity to remind those who are expressing doubt over the possibility of Nigeria experiencing a Tsunami type of calamity to note that the country had been witnessing serious tidal waves in the coastal regions for some time now."

It noted that tidal waves had been occurring in parts of Nigeria, especially Lagos and some coastal areas. "Some land mass had even been washed away unnoticed by the people in remote coastal areas," it added.

The society however commended the Nigerian government for efforts so far made in addressing disasters, but asked for concerted efforts to putting in place permanent disaster control mechanism to curtail occurrence.

While commending the media for giving adequate publicity to the activities of the society, the Red Cross

society's clarion call for support to the Tsunami victims.

The statement further appealed to the government and Nigerian people to promote the position of the country in the world and establish solidarity with the rest of humanity by showing interest in the Tsunami disaster.

## NEMA tasks stakeholders on disasters

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has declared that disaster/emergency management is the responsibility of every individual, corporate organisation and all tiers of government, saying their activities lead to occurrence of disasters in one way or the other.

While imploring Nigerians to join hands with stakeholders in disaster management in the country, Alhaji Satibhu Shuaibu Makarfi, the Director General of NEMA, said that safe environment would ensure growth and economic advancement of every Nigerian as resources that are spent on mitigating disasters will be diverted to developmental projects.

Alhaji Makarfi made the call in view of the anticipated activities of school children as they return to schools from vacation and firms' preparations toward this

## Haji: Borno pilgrims airlift uncertain

Scarcely one week to the end of airlift of pilgrims to the Holy Land, the Borno State Pilgrims' Board is yet to commence airlift of pilgrims from the state. Speaking in an exclusive interview with *Daily Trust*, the executive secretary of the state's Pilgrims' Welfare Board said IRS Airline was scheduled to airlift the pilgrims. He said there was no information from the Directorate of

From Isa Umar Gusan, *Correspondent (Minabaguri) and Abdulsalam Adeboyn (Ilorin)*

Pilgrims' Affairs, Abuja, since the banning of IRS Airline by NCA.

"As preparations for hajj exercise are concerned, we in Borno State Pilgrims' Welfare Board are well prepared, but we are waiting for the certainty of the airline that will convey pilgrims to the Holy Land. The passports, visa, accommodation in Mecca and Medina as well as sensitisation and medical team are fully ready," the secretary declared.

Reacting to speculations that Kabo Airline had been short listed to replace IRS for the airlift of the pilgrims from the Borno zone, comprising Borno and Yola States, Alhaji Imams said he was not aware of such development.

"As I am talking to you, what we have as our official airline is IRS, but we await information from Abuja, because IRS is yet to commence operation in Borno zone," the executive secretary said.

Alhaji Kalli Imam disclosed that decisive steps had been taken by the board to address problems that might arise during the exercise in order not to repeat past mistakes.

He said problems arising from the stampede during *Jamral* rituals would be addressed as the state's pilgrims have set up committees to handle such problems and ensure security for pilgrims.

Commenting on problems of illness arising from cold which affected Borno State pilgrims last year, the secretary said apart from sponsoring medical personnel, the board would procure enough drugs in Saudi Arabia to take care of pilgrims.

Meanwhile, after four days of waiting game, the third batch of intending pilgrims from Ilorin zone comprising about 490 left the Ilorin International Airport at about 2pm for Saudi Arabia.

The Zonal Coordinator, Directorate of Pilgrims'

Alhaji, Alhaji Aliyu Olorungbe, blamed the delay of the third batch of pilgrims on Bank of the North, Ilorin, for its inability to procure the travellers' cheques for the pilgrims on time.

According to him, neither the state's pilgrims' board nor the Kabo Airline was to blame but the Bank of the North which ran out of travellers' cheques for the pilgrims only to source for more from the Kano branch.

Alhaji Olorungbe said the fourth batch of pilgrims would leave for the Holy Land latest Friday with the pilgrims' BTA now secured.

The Chairman of the pilgrims' board, Alhaji Abdullahi Abduhameed, assured that the next hajj exercise would be a departure from the present situation where only Bank of the North enjoyed the privilege to issue BTA to pilgrims.

He said about four banks would now be employed to serve the board in the issuance of BTA to pilgrims.

The Airport Manager of the Ilorin International Airport, Alhaji Muazu Ringim, who observed an improvement of hajj arrangement over that of 2004, said crowd control had been effective this year with the cooperation of stakeholders.

Alhaji Ringim, who said it was his first experience in Ilorin having been posted from Sokoto, explained that "from what I have seen so far, there is a lot of improvement here in Ilorin zone".

An intending pilgrim who spoke to *Daily Trust* on the four days' delay, Hun. Abdulmimuni Kaitib, urged the state's pilgrims' board to decentralise the procurement of travellers' cheques for pilgrims and involve other reputable banks to avoid future occurrence.

*Daily Trust* correspondent who was at the airport to witness the arrival and take-off of the Kabo Airline registration no: 5N-PDP reports that the anxious intending pilgrims who had been waiting for four days ranting heaved a sigh of relief on sighting the plane.

# Opinion

## What is wrong with Taraba?

Like Ikemefuna in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* Taraba suffers from ill-fate. Just like Ikemefuna, it cannot speak for itself because of tribal chauvinism and political opportunism.

Taraba which shares borders with Adamawa state to the North, Gombe and Plateau state to the West, Benue state to the South and Republic of Cameroon to the East, today remains the same Taraba thirteen years after its creation with nothing to show or justify its creation. The dreams of its founding fathers have remained unrealized.

With all the endowments of nature Taraba remains the wretched of the earth in terms of development. Certainly, anyone who has lived in Taraba since inception thirteen years ago does not need any consultation to understand that its chronic under-development is predicated on tribal rivalry, a leadership that lacks focus and egoistic tendencies of indigenous politicians.

Tribal rivalry manifests itself in one group struggling to shake off domination and relegation by others that are reluctant to give their

By Kazong S. A. Lissam

privileges. And because both interests cannot be reconciled, this has developed a kind of "cold war" relationship between the Jukun/Chanba and the Kutebs, Jukuns and the Tivs, Mumuyes and Fulanis, Karimjos and the Fulanis, Membilas and the Kakas or Fulanis, Ndoros and the Itchens or Tigons.

Taraba State was born into crises. The state was created when the Jukuns and the Tivs were engaged in upheavals in Jalingo. The dust had hardly settled when the Jukun/Chambas took up arms against the Kutebs in Takum and Ussa. The fire of war soon moved round the state giving no room for any development.

The Takum, Muri and Mambila Chieftaincy issue has remained a thorn in the flesh of government and the entire citizens of the state.

The development factors scare investors. In spite of the state's abundant human and natural resources, infrastructural facilities are hard to come by the state is

the most neglected in the federation. Only four of the 16 local government areas are partially connected to the national grid. The roads are eyesores, communication facilities are lacking, federal presence cannot be felt even in the state capital. Every week the federal executive council would approve one project or another. Nobody can say if Taraba state is still part of this great nation. Yet politicians need their votes.

Some say it was the fault of highly placed indigenes that have seen nothing good in bringing development to the state. Why the tong neglect in providing amenities to Taraba by the central government? These and many other questions need answers the federal government.

Surely Taraba state has suffered from numerous wars. While Taraba state found itself in this saga its politicians have thrown principles to the winds for material gains. Neither the state's legislators nor the executive are interested in fulfilling their electioneering promises to the people. With flamboyant manifestoes, they

solicited and got the votes of the people.

And no sooner did they enter the corridors of power as members of house of assembly, commissioners, secretaries, ministers, ambassadors and a host of others than they began to despise the hand that fed them.

They became self-centered and tribalistic. The politicians became remote from the problem of Taraba State. Thus, for thirteen years running the government cannot lay claims to any achievement, politicians have all the power at their disposal to effect development in Taraba State, but they rather settle for self-aggrandizement. Here lies another actor in Taraba's under development.

Since the under development of Taraba State is man-made, it can be reversed if the indigenes come to grip with realities. Tribal chauvinism is enemy of progress; it breeds sheer selfishness, division, cliquism, egocentrism and

conflict. Therefore, if Taraba would witness any development, there must come to pass a mental revolution on the part of its indigenes. And out of this revolution must emerge mutual recognition and understanding, tolerance and respect for one another.

To be specific Jukuns have to recognize that there are other ethnic groups such as Kutebs, Tivs, Membilas, Kakas, Warkums, Jenjos, Jibus, Fulanis, Itchens, Nduros, Tigons, Mungas, Bandawas, Kakas, Mumuyes and host of others in the state with their distinct cultures which have to be preserved and respected.

In like manner, the Kutebs, Kamus have to accord recognition to the Jukuns, Charnbas and others. Just as an Ibo man can never be a Yoruba, the problem in Taraba is that of identity and oppression or suppression by one group against the other. There has to be unity in diversity above all.

Unlike Ikemefuna who was struck down with a note of finality, it is hoped that Taraba, though pinned-down by the same ill-fate shall rise again. This can be observed in the unprecedented realization that we would retrace our steps. Indigenes within and without must look toward Taraba unity. They must borrow a leaf from Adamawa, Gombe and Yobe states where indigenes have returned home to help develop their states. For instance, there exists Adamawa Development Association (an association made up of indigenes in all walks of life) interested in developing the state.

Adamawa state University has been born. There is also Adamawa education endowment fund which provides scholarships to indigenes to further their studies. This organization assists government in developing the educational sector. These are laudable organs that have helped in improving the lots of the citizenry. We must see ourselves as one big family, endeavour to sink our tribal differences and join hands for peace unity and development.

Kazong S. A. Lissam  
NABTEB Zonal office  
Maiduguri.

## Quest for newage journalism

The mass media in the modern industrial and even post industrial society undoubtedly play a very vital and critical role in the development of the society.

The press is many things to many people and serves a variety of functions, depending on the interest and needs of specific individuals. The press in our modern sophisticated world is no longer an option but a necessity for any society that feels it has a common cause or goal to foster.

A newspaper maybe perceived by some to be solely for the rich or to be inclined toward the poor or particular ethnic group. Some buy it for its news content, some for particular columnist some for its feature stories, political point of views etc. Others buy it for the combination of all or some of the above factors. The most important thing here is that a newspaper should always meet the needs and aspirations of the readers and must respect these needs and must all air cost.

Whatever, interest or needs the newspaper serve, a responsible newspaper should not merely be in the community but should be part of that community. A

By Adamu Talba Lawan

newspaper serves as lubricant in the gearbox of the society in which it finds itself. It does this by helping the society to adjust to the changes in the world through alerting people concerning new issues by offering as a platform for all views on issues. It sets, goals for the society; it can make or mar the society.

The growth and expansion of any newspaper is not only determined in terms of higher production and circulation but partly by the talented writers it can keep, brilliant staff writers, contributors and reporters who have the spirit of interpretative and investigative journalism.

The primary objective or function of any responsible newspapers in the modern world is to monitor the process of governance and surveillance of the environment in which governance take place. To be relevant to the society, if newspaper must not only be purveyors of news and opinions that are directed at their audience but also carry feedback from their audience to the government, thereby serving as a bridge between the government and the

governed. Newspapers in developing societies like ours must also assist or help strengthen the economic, social and political fabric of the nation. They assist in setting an agenda of priority in the social, cultural political and economic development of a society or nation.

Schram, (1973) posit that the press always takes on the form and coloration of 'the social and political structures within which it operates. It is imperative to underline the fact that the ownership pattern of the media has largely been responsible for what is

selected as news, what items are ignored and what issues are left at the top burner of discourse in a capitalist media like ours.

What I have so far highlighted here is that the unfolding events of contemporary Nigeria have proved conclusively that media power cannot be ignored and the ownership pattern available today in Nigeria is anti-masses in conception, definition and even intention. I make bold to vehemently argue that unless there is a concerted efforts by the dominated

and oppressed class in terms of massive rejection of media coverage of events, then we must forget any hope of having a balance story in the media.

Ideally news is suppose to be something out of the ordinary, but I what we see, hear and read is often what somebody said. Very often television, radio and newspapers report what the President, Governor or local government chairman does by commissioning a given project.

Contemporary international issues and

***"Instead of serving as an impartial processor and communicator of values the press in Nigeria is largely an agent of a one way ideological indoctrination meant to re-enforce existing pattern of relations. The feed back process is either non-existent or ineffective."***

politics revolve around the desperate search for lethal weapons of the mass media to fashion out community-oriented policies and to help the policy makers. To do that, we need a free, responsible objective and honest press. The muzzling by media owners must cease to exist. The journalist must be given free hand to select, decide what is to be ignored. We have to expand the 'profession' to include the opinion of the oppressed.

Journalism is a noble profession and is one of the vehicles through which one can, and should contribute to the peace, happiness and progress of our people. But in Nigeria, because of the urban bias of the Nigerian press, it has been very difficult to have the interest and aspirations of the masses effectively sufficiently reflected and represented. Instead of serving as an impartial processor and communicator of values the press in Nigeria is largely an agent of a one way ideological indoctrination meant to re-enforce existing pattern of relations.

The feed back process is either non-existent or ineffective. The media are expected to serve as avenue, market place for ideas.

Talba writes from  
University of Maiduguri.



## YOUR LETTERS

### Re: Gombe in the grip of a clique

**B**ashir Abdullahi's piece of opinion in the *Daily Trust* of December 30, 2004 leaves a lot of issues unresolved. It seems the writer is a faceless person who is interested in casting the image of Alhaji Danjuma Goje led Gombe state without enough proof.

He made a claim that Gombe state has been turned to a state where thuggery and political intimidation exist. One cannot doubt the fact that where ever there is freedom especially in democracy some minor abnormalities occur from time to time, which may not necessarily be associated with the leadership. It is like the popular saying, where a mosquito bites an opponent he associates the calamity to the person in power.

Let nobody be left in doubt that governor Goje was the secretary for Gombe state creation. It is difficult for Goje that helped in the struggle for the creation of the state to turn round and start intimidating his subjects.

The second issue raised in Abdullahi's opinion is the arrest of Hajjiya Bibiya Sadiq. Certainly some thing of that nature has occurred but not as he put it. There was a mild drama between somebody who went to Hajjiya Bibiy's residence to collect his money for a

handset he sold to one of her supporters on credit where Hajjiya Bibiy was the guarantor. Unfortunately, instead of the money to be paid on the agreed date to the owner of the handset, the said person was forcefully asked to leave.

Hajjiya Bibiy, was not honourable enough to stand as a guarantor hence the owner of the handset became infuriated and lost his temper. There after there was a mild drama resulting into a comic tragedy then the owner of the handset was thoroughly beaten by people said to be loyal to Hajjiya Bibiy which led to her arrest, based on the complaint of the owner of the handset. The owner of the handset, went and lodged a complaint to the police and the matter was taken to court on FIR where Hajjiya Bibiy was granted bail the matter is still in court.

Talking about falling apart with Governor Goje, it has to do with Hajjiya Bibiy's inordinate ambition to be imposed as a candidate of her local government against the popular candidate who is the present chairman of Kaltungo local government council. The governor refused to impose any candidate against the wishes of the people despite the fact that she was a special adviser to the

governor on poverty alleviation. She got annoyed and resigned her appointment on her own and has since remained on the opposition.

One wonders where Bashir was living during the tenure of the former administration where there was even no functional television station in the state but now the likes of Bashiru has the guts to say the state is skillfully shut from the outer world.

The cordial relationship that is existing between the media and the state governor under the headship of Alh. Mohammed Danjuma Goje is rock solid and Bashiru can not put a stain on it through his imaginary write ups.

Bashir's contentions that not more than five persons run the state has made a fallacy of the secretary to the state government office, state executive, legislature and Judiciary.

Thank God, the year 2005 budget speech of Alh. Danjuma Goje's administration has introduced due process in awards of contracts to allow participation of all interested and qualified bidders.

There is always a need for objective opinion before going to the press. If Bashir doesn't know what happens there is no need for beating

about the bush.

We are democrats and the price of leadership is sacrifice. That is why Bashir and his pay-masters can sit and write a cock and bull story. No wonder even family quarrels or misunderstanding in Gombe state is attributed to Goje. I would not be surprised if next time Bashir attributes failure and misfortune in life to Goje.

**Abdullahi Jalo**  
**Bolari West Gombe.**

### Re: Katsina joint account system

**I** feel duty-bound to react to the advertorial carried on Page 30 of *Weekly Trust* of January 1-7, 2005 written by one Alhaji Abdullah Garba Garus, who said he is chairman of the state chapter of the National Youth Council of Nigeria (NYCN).

From the content of the advertorial, the writer clearly shows that he was acting out someone's script.

Otherwise, how could someone who wants the world to believe him as the leader of an NGO that is expected, going by its name, to serve as watchdog for Nigerian youths, be seen to be singing the praises of executors of an unpopular policy?

By this, Mallam Garus has revealed his true identity as being partisan to the detriment of the NGO he claims to head and the nation's youth. Perhaps,

### Still on Muazu, Rimi and Bauchi roads

**W**ith due respect sir, I wish to comment on the above write-up which appeared on your Friday column on the last day of 2004.

However, on the above subject, I beg to disagree, from experience in the course of my educational career I have held positions right from Primary, secondary and tertiary institutions I was able to decipher that

leadership in such situations could be so telling and demanding.

Since in the mid 90s when I was the president SUG Fed Poly Bauchi and recently when I visited the state I was actually not amused but frightened with the staggering proportion of immense development in the state. Right from Jos, the Plateau state Capital to Bauchi city time and space could not allow me mention the appalling achievement of this great leader. All social services have been improved upon. I mean all.

Adamu Adamu why are you drifting away? Have you ever held a position of leadership in your community, village or state or in the pursuit of your academic career? If you had then you will appreciate what Ahmadu Adamu Muazu is doing to your state and stop acting like a spoilt child whose parents are alive and wealthy and he never feels the menace of hunger for even a single day. I hope you will ask your mentor, the General his opinion about the governor.

**Haruna Adamu Chip**  
**acchip2003@yahoo.com**

Reactions to articles published in this paper may be directed to the editor via the email address: [editor@dailytrust.com](mailto:editor@dailytrust.com)

# Opinion

## Where are the President's men?

I was very sad after reading about the assassination attempt on the life of the Governor of Anambra state, Chris Ngige. And as President Obasanjo is wont to say, here is a moral dilemma, but whose?

When we had the conspiracy rule in Plateau, the President said it was a moral question for Justice Daryle to go back to office and yet again with consistent violence in Anambra, the one is on the moral question. But I beg to opine that this moral dilemma is none other than President Obasanjo's.

The situation in Plateau is no different from that of Anambra, both are a direct result of "irresponsible leadership" at the state as well as the federal levels of government. In Plateau, the state executive proved to be ineffective and utterly corrupt. Lots of lives were lost due to a bad crisis management. I am one of those Nigerians that have written extensively on the need to restructure the Nigerian police force and to create state departments of police fully trained and equipped to combat urban violence. Because the federal government has refused to follow this path of honor and the states have not been proactive in getting what they want, they both share the responsibility in the ensuing violence.

In the case of Anambra, the state governor has not

yet been accused of corruption but of not playing ball to established interests. The irony in both cases, Plateau and Anambra is that the average Nigerian has continued to suffer in the hands of corrupt leadership.

Nigerians are not just suffering materially, they are losing their lives to the process. Countless numbers of lives were lost in Plateau and in Anambra as well. The crux of the matter here is, where are the President's men? I mean, where are his advisers? Is the President fully aware of the situation in the country today?

What does the President know and if he doesn't, why is he in the dark? It is fundamentally necessary to understand the frame of mind of this President in order to come to terms with the situation on the ground in Nigeria today. Or if I might add, has the Presidency been hijacked by powerful interests beyond Obasanjo? And of which he is a victim of the system not the perpetrator.

But if he is undetermined in such a way that he cannot continue to protect the Nigerian people, wouldn't it be better for the President to resign or take action against these forces?

Mr. President, I am writing to you once again as a pretty indignant Nigerian,

you don't need me to tell you that there is crushing poverty and hunger in the land, there is a lack of security among the Nigerian people and it shouldn't be news to you that the per capita income of the average citizen is at an all time low of 260 dollars!

So why does all these relate to one another, poverty, insecurity and all kinds of social problems are intertwined in the Nigerian experience. The logical answer to the President's moral question will be for him to let the affairs of government be more transparent and the will of the people to be paramount. If Gov. Justice Daryle has stolen public funds, he needs to be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. If this President is to be remembered for anything honorable, then he needs to start acting like one, the integrity clause that prevents government prosecutors from prosecuting elected officials should be removed. And who better to lead its fight but President Obasanjo himself, he needs to send a bill to the National Assembly to remove that piece of legislation.

In the same vein, if Chris Uba is the one factor against peace and harmony in Anambra state, then he ought to be brought to justice, in this and many other social problems facing our nation today, the path towards a solution is clear

but the will is lacking. Government should have a monopoly of means of violence and the ways to deliver them. No individual or group should hold the rest of the nation to ransom, the Nigerian police force should be restructured to be a crime preventing organization with oversight functions towards state and local departments of police that will eventually be created.

Corrupt public officials should not only be documented by the federal anti-graft commission but local, state and federal prosecutors should be able to prosecute and seek jail terms for their erring officials.

This democracy may be at its infancy but the people at the helm of affairs are not ignorant people. Most are men and women that have studied in the best colleges in the land, so to whom much is given, much is expected. Western Europe may have taken centuries to get to where it is today, Nigeria and other emerging democracies do not have that much time. We have to follow in the path of Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and of recent China, nay other people oriented economies.

If I were a social critic, I will definitely have a field day in Nigeria with so many characters to poke fun at. What with corrupt government officials, bribe taking police officers, on the

take judges, insubordinate military, lawless private sector, unfair employment practices and unequal distribution of national wealth, the list is endless.

But that is not my job, in fact, my present vocation is as a result of the situation so many Nigerians like myself have found themselves, though not living in Nigeria anymore, we are at pains to see what is going on in the motherland. So my job as a critic is one that I have embraced involuntarily but one in which I cherish tremendously because through me perhaps many a Nigerian may have found a voice.

I will conclude by telling the President and those in power with him, that the Nigerian people through their time tested resilience have continued to survive not because of any good the government has done but despite its shortcomings. For

how long will the people tolerate this malaise is one thing I do not claim to have an answer to but one thing is certain, everyone will have their day of reckoning. Napoleon never reached and the French people revolted, Russians threw out the Tsar and subsequently dominated communism after 70 years. Hitler was defeated by the allied forces at horrendously and for every tyrannical group of people, the majority will always triumph.

So fellow Nigerians as you welcome in the New Year 2005, go about your normal duties, stay out of trouble, establish more community vigilantes since the government wouldn't protect you and carry on as you normally do as if everything is okay because surely you the people will have your own day soon.

Afu writes from Indianapolis, USA.

**"There is a lack of security among the Nigerian people and it shouldn't be news to you that the per capita income of the average citizen is at an all time low of 260 dollars!"**

## A nation at siege with itself

There are four identified levels of violence and frequent threat to peace in today's Nigeria. For the purpose of this analysis, they are at the political, economic and cultural levels among others. Based on empirical data and field observation, no work passes over that there is no reported case of a state violence and threatened power. The conventional explanation given for this disturbing phenomenon is that the unfolding state of violence and lawlessness is occasioned by one form of selective killings of some targeted leaders, political brigandage, armed gangsterism and communal clashes of disturbing proportion and frequency. The story of this state of anomic bordering on anarchy has been the same in different parts of the country. We shall illustrate with a few typical selected samples.

Recently in Okene and the adjoining neighbouring communities of Lokoja the State capital, particularly towards the Ojara, Shokoshoko, Ganaja,

By Habibu A. Sani

Ajokata and Kabba axes of the linking highways, incidents of rampant armed robbery attacks have been witnessed by innocent citizens. The latest reported case occurred in the night of Wednesday, 3rd November, 2004 and the early morning of Thursday 4th November, 2004. This was between Okene and Lokoja on the Abaji Lokoja highway. Armed bandits have made this important route relatively unsafe for motorists usually for every day of the week at the last five years.

The ugly incident can be reverse less replicated in other parts of the country where commuters and the people live and work in perpetual fear of their lives. This is at the economic and social levels. At the political level, the scenario of disturbed peace and needless threat to law and order is not different.

It is indeed worse than that of armed robbery attacks. Political rallies have been turned in many cases to that of warfare between two opposing forces. At most of

these rallies, thugs and political hoodlums arm themselves to the teeth with lethal weapons.

The latest ugly incident of this vitriol violence was enacted recently at a public rally to receive detaching members from one political party to the other of Imo State in Aburi Local Government of Kogi State. At this ceremony which was expected to be with pomp and pageantry, gun with power and potency that sounded like single artillery guns were used in disrupting the rally when violence suddenly erupted. What made the incident most repulsive and certainly reprehensible, was that it took place in the very glory of their Excellencies, the State Governor Abasi Ekeanibi, his Deputy Chief Phillips Omelwa Sadow and key PDP party executives from both the national and state headquarters of the party.

The reports on the shameful incident had it that their Excellencies had to flee the area for dear life when the political macabre was unleashed on the unsuspecting crowd. Similar ugly political incidents have

been reported at different times within this period in other parts of the country.

The fundamental question to ask is to what extent shall we as a people continue to tolerate this undemocratic and uncivilised behaviour? To what extent shall we continue to rationalise it as a learning process in our search for a civilised democratic culture under the robust principle of the rule of law?

To what extent have the perpetrators of this heinous and sad barbaric leadership which have become a re-occurring decimal in our political party system, been identified, tried and punished under the rule of law in Nigeria as a deterrent? And a supposedly democratic party, the ruling PDP, allowed this shameful incident to take place in the full glare of its key leaders.

What punitive measure should be taken against the instigators of this disgraceful act? Many and more of this type of questions can be asked if we must provide solutions to our political and social endemic maladies, and in the process produce genuine

leaders as opposed to political charlatans, opportunists and sheer exploiters.

At the cultural level, Nigerian society of today has seen and suffered from the needless pains of intra and inter-communal clashes. Efforts to check this hydra-headed monster that has eaten deep into our national fabric have not yielded the desired result. From one geographical zone of our country to the other, emerging degrees, Nigerians have been badly traumatised by this reality.

In some cases the clashes and violence have unwittingly scared foreign investors. Included in this category is the seemingly endless life-threatening communal clashes in the South West geopolitical zone. The Warri case in the Niger Delta, the Middle Belt cases on the Plateau, Nasarawa, Okene and Kaduna Southern Zaria, among others in the country are some of the well-known ethnic, intra and inter-communal clashes of violent and sometimes terrorist proportions.

The present and past efforts to solve this hydra-

headed problem have been too feeble and have not been far-reaching enough.

To what extent do we need a more radical and revolutionary panacea to this seemingly intractable problem? Perhaps, in my opinion, this is one of the numerous national problems and challenges to include in the agenda for an over-riding national conference. This is a conference that we must convene as quickly as this and other long-pending tasks and our country as a third world country are to be addressed.

There are other crucial factors limiting the entries of violence. Namely high level of corruption that has led to the rating of Nigeria as the third most corrupt country in the world, multi-digit rate of unemployment; externally imposed IMF World Bank economic policies and demonstration effect of the negative side of technology and faceless Western Zionist capitalism of our parasitic population that is eager to get rich quickly.

Dr. Sani, is a Public Policy Analyst in Okene, Kogi state.

# Trust International

## Tsunami tragedy and the Aceh-Indonesian face off

There are growing signs that the Indonesian military (TNI) is exploiting the current catastrophe in northern Sumatra to crush the separatist Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and establish its unchallenged control over the resource-rich province of Aceh.

So far the death toll from the earthquake and tsunami that devastated Aceh on December 26 is more than 100,000 and is likely to rise much higher. From Lhokseumawe on the east coast through the provincial capital Banda Aceh near Sumatra's northern tip to Meulaboh on the west coast, cities and towns have been obliterated.

Transport and other infrastructure have been torn apart. Hundreds of thousands are desperately in need of water, food, clothing, shelter and medical attention. There is now a serious risk that further lives will be lost through disease and hunger.

Yet, rather than concentrating resources on emergency relief efforts, the Indonesian armed forces, with the approval of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, are preoccupied with their counterinsurgency operations against GAM fighters. While refugees are desperate for supplies and relief workers for transport, the TNI has launched offensives against GAM in various locations across the province.

When the tsunami hit, the military already had 40,000 troops and paramilitary police in Aceh as a result of its ongoing campaign to wipe out GAM. The current offensive, initiated in May 2003, under former president Megawati Sukarnoputri, included armour and artillery as well as air and naval support and was billed as Indonesia's own version of the US "shock and awe" methods in Iraq.

Despite a state of emergency and a media blackout in Aceh over the last year, human rights organisations have reported gross and widespread abuse of local Acehnese by the military, including arbitrary detention, torture and summary execution. Yudhoyono, a former general, was Megawati's top security minister and played a crucial role in planning and overseeing the offensive until he resigned last March to contest the presidency.

In the aftermath of the December 26 tsunami, the TNI's response by dispatching an additional 15,000 troops to Aceh, ostensibly to carry out humanitarian relief work. But far from the well-oiled machine that swung into action against GAM the previous year, the military's emergency assistance in the

province has been marked by disorganisation, delays and disinterest.

On December 27, TNI chief General Endriatono indicated that the military would respond in kind to a unilateral ceasefire declared by exiled GAM leaders in Sweden to allow relief efforts to go ahead. It soon became clear, however, that the TNI

centres were being interrogated by the military.

Bakhtiar told the British-based Guardian: "The reports we received are that they are moving in more troops under the guise of relief operations. We know that they are trying to track down GAM fighters



Acehnese recover at a hospital in the tsunami-hit city of Banda Aceh, on the Indonesian island of Sumatra yesterday.

had no intention of passing up the opportunity to inflict a defeat on GAM, which had suffered losses during the tsunami and earthquake.

The first media reports related to a particular incident. On Thursday, a GAM spokesman announced that Indonesian troops had killed two GAM members in the Peurelak area of East Aceh, including the local commander Afrizal bin Abdul Manaf. He said TNI troops had also set fire to a house in the village of Idi Reayek. A TNI spokesman acknowledged the clash, but blamed GAM rebels for provoking the incident by ambushing a convoy of military trucks carrying relief supplies.

Sweden-based GAM spokesman Bakhtiar Abdulah strenuously denied that GAM fighters had attacked a convoy. In turn, he accused the military of harassing and torturing suspected GAM sympathisers in refugee camps. The TNI's abuse of refugees was also reported to the Aceh Referendum Information Centre by volunteers working in Banda Aceh. They alleged that refugees on the way to relief

in the area. We have given strict orders to maintain a ceasefire and hoped that the Indonesian military would respect that ceasefire and refrain from military action."

As it turned out, the clash was not an isolated incident. The Jakarta Post this week reported that the TNI had launched operations against GAM hideouts in Teupin, Bate, Seunebok Langa, Gampung Jalan, Kuburan Cina, Buket Linteung and Buket Jok areas of East Aceh. In north Aceh, army attacks were underway in Makmur, Gandapura and Peusangan.

The TNI not only confirmed that the operations were taking place, but was completely unapologetic about them. In comments cited in the Guardian, Colonel Ahmad Yani Basuki declared: "We have to maintain security operations to prevent the rebels from attacking vital installations and relief operations." According to Basuki, only one third of TNI troops were involved in military operations and the remainder had been assigned to relief work. He provided no evidence, however, for any of his assertions.

Lieutenant-Colonel D.J. Nachrowi told the Jakarta Post that the TNI was "now carrying out two duties: humanitarian work and the security operation." He put forward a different argument, maintaining that the military was obliged by the state of emergency to attack GAM. "The raids to quell the secessionist movement in

the TNI's actions, saying: "The government is still maintaining the civil emergency and continuing on with military operations in Aceh despite the fact that the death toll is now close to 100,000. Is the government not yet satisfied with the killing? Are Acehnese not citizens of Indonesia?"



United States military personnel and Indonesian soldier carry an Indonesian man to medical facilities at Banda Aceh airport

Aceh will continue unless the president issues a decree to lift the civil emergency and assign us to merely play a humanitarian role in Aceh," he said.

Yudhoyono has shown no intention of lifting the civil emergency in Aceh or of reaching a temporary truce with GAM. Instead, in an appeal for national unity, the president has called on the separatist fighters to lay down their weapons, in other words surrender, to facilitate relief operations. The military, of course, would remain armed to the teeth.

Various human rights groups have confirmed that military operations are continuing in Aceh. A spokesman for the British-based Tapol organisation, Paul Barber, told the Inter Press Service News Agency: "Under the civil emergency, the Indonesian military continue to play a leading role and there has been no cutback in the level of military operations in most of the territory."

Nasruddin Abubakar, president of the Aceh Referendum Information Centre, angrily condemned

the disinterest of the Indonesian military in the plight of Acehnese is most graphically revealed by the inexplicable delay in surveying the extent of the disaster on the west coast, which lay in the direct path of the tsunami. It took four days for the Indonesian air force to send a flight over Meulaboh, which one journalist likened to the scene after the Hiroshima atomic bomb.

Highly publicised relief operations are now underway by US and Australian military, which are providing key logistical support. US military helicopters flew the first significant supplies of aid into Meulaboh last weekend. The Australian military teams are in Banda Aceh providing clean water and other assistance. All criticism of the TNI and its appalling human rights has been shelved as these efforts are hailed in the media as ushering in a new period of cooperation.

These joint operations have very little to do with any genuine concern the victims of the December 26 disaster. Both Australian and the US have been seeking to re-establish working relations with the Indonesian military since the fall of the Suharto dictatorship in 1998. The relief efforts provide an ideal opportunity not only to work closely with the TNI but potentially to establish a foothold in Aceh—a key region with significant oil and reserves adjacent to the strategic Strait of Malacca.

As for the TNI, the support provided by the US and Australian military for relief efforts allows the diversion of additional Indonesian military forces into its operations against GAM. There is every indication that the Indonesian military has the tacit support of Washington and Canberra, which, unlike in the case of East Timor, have maintained a complete silence on Jakarta's dirty war in Aceh over the last 18 months.

US military establishment thinking was revealed in a recent comment by the US-based Stratfor Global Intelligence thinktank. It noted that the tsunami disaster might prove to be a boon for the military's campaign against GAM. "Yudhoyono will send more troops into the province to rebuild and clean up... If GAM does not agree to settle the problem peacefully, Yudhoyono will have more troops on hand to clean them out," it noted.

What is emerging in embryo in Aceh is a return to the relations that existed prior to 1998, when the US, Australia and other major powers relied on the ruthless Suharto dictatorship to safeguard their economic and strategic interests in Indonesia and the region.

US military establishment thinking was revealed in a recent comment by the US-based Stratfor Global Intelligence thinktank. It noted that the tsunami disaster might prove to be a boon for the military's campaign against GAM. "Yudhoyono will send more troops into the province to rebuild and clean up... If GAM does not agree to settle the problem peacefully, Yudhoyono will have more troops on hand to clean them out," it noted.

What is emerging in embryo in Aceh is a return to the relations that existed prior to 1998, when the US, Australia and other major powers relied on the ruthless Suharto dictatorship to safeguard their economic and strategic interests in Indonesia and the region.

US military establishment thinking was revealed in a recent comment by the US-based Stratfor Global Intelligence thinktank. It noted that the tsunami disaster might prove to be a boon for the military's campaign against GAM. "Yudhoyono will send more troops into the province to rebuild and clean up... If GAM does not agree to settle the problem peacefully, Yudhoyono will have more troops on hand to clean them out," it noted.

US military establishment thinking was revealed in a recent comment by the US-based Stratfor Global Intelligence thinktank. It noted that the tsunami disaster might prove to be a boon for the military's campaign against GAM. "Yudhoyono will send more troops into the province to rebuild and clean up... If GAM does not agree to settle the problem peacefully, Yudhoyono will have more troops on hand to clean them out," it noted.

US military establishment thinking was revealed in a recent comment by the US-based Stratfor Global Intelligence thinktank. It noted that the tsunami disaster might prove to be a boon for the military's campaign against GAM. "Yudhoyono will send more troops into the province to rebuild and clean up... If GAM does not agree to settle the problem peacefully, Yudhoyono will have more troops on hand to clean them out," it noted.

HWS

## Trust International

### Egypt holds talk over Saudi, Libya row

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak visited Saudi Arabia on a brief trip which Egyptian officials said was aimed at easing strained ties between Riyadh and Libya over an alleged plot by Tripoli to kill the kingdom's de facto leader.

Mubarak held talks with Saudi Crown Prince and de facto ruler Abdullah bin AbdulAziz which "centred on clearing the Arab atmosphere," Egypt's

ambassador Mohammad Abdul Hamid Kassem told AFP in an implicit reference to the Saudi-Libyan row.

Officials in Cairo earlier said Mubarak would hold talks with Crown Prince Abdullah in a bid to defuse tensions between Riyadh and Tripoli over an alleged Libyan plot to assassinate Abdullah.

"The two sides stressed their keenness on clearing the Arab atmosphere ahead of

the Arab summit" due to be held in Algeria in March, Kassem said, adding that discussions covered the Israel-Palestinian conflict and Iraq.

The official SPA news agency said Mubarak held meetings with both King Fahd and Crown Prince Abdullah during which they discussed "developments on the Arab, Islamic and international scenes, chiefly the situation in Iraq, developments pertaining to the Palestinian issue, and ways of boosting cooperation between the two brotherly countries."

Mubarak was accompanied by Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Abul Gheit, intelligence chief Omar Suleiman and his political adviser Osama al-Baz.

His visit came just a week after Suleiman held "urgent" talks in Saudi Arabia following the kingdom's decision to expel Libya's ambassador over the purported murder plot.

The crown prince was allegedly the target of a Libyan assassination plot in 2003 that Tripoli has strongly denied. Egypt maintains good relations with both Riyadh and Tripoli.

Riyadh's decision sparked a war of words with Tripoli, with the Libyan press denouncing Saudi Arabia as "The Kingdom of the Black Comedy."

Details of the purported plot came to light last year when an American Muslim activist pleaded guilty to illegal financial dealings with Libya and testified that he had been involved in a Libyan plan to kill the Saudi prince.

### IAEA finds secret nuclear programme in Egypt

The UN atomic watchdog agency has found evidence of secret nuclear experiments in Egypt that could be used in weapons programs, diplomats said Tuesday.

The diplomats told The AP that most of the work was carried out in the 1980s and 1990s but said the International Atomic Energy Agency also was looking at evidence suggesting some work was performed as recently as a year ago.

Egypt's government rejected claims it is or has been pursuing a weapons program, saying its nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes.

"A few months ago we denied these kinds of claims and we do so again," Egyptian government spokesman Magdy Rady said. "Nothing about our nuclear program is secret and there is nothing that is not known to the IAEA."

But one of the diplomats said the Egyptians "tried to produce various components of uranium" without declaring it to the IAEA, as they were bound to under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Uranium metal can be processed into plutonium, while uranium hexafluoride can be enriched into weapons-grade uranium — both for use in the core of nuclear warheads.

The diplomat said the Vienna-based IAEA had not yet drawn a conclusion about the scope and purpose of the experiments. But the work appeared to have been sporadic, involved small amounts of material and lacked a particular focus, the diplomat said.

That, he said, indicated that the work was not directly geared toward creating a full-scale programme to make nuclear weapons.

The diplomat said that Egypt's programme was not "cohesive."

"It's not like Iran, where there was a clear plan to produce" uranium hexafluoride,

the gas that turns into enriched uranium when spun in centrifuges, he said.

He also warned against comparisons to South Korea, which conducted larger-scale plutonium and uranium experiments in 1982 and 2000 without reporting them to the agency.

In Vienna, IAEA spokesman Mark Gwozdecky said the agency would not comment on the revelations about Egypt.

"We've seen the reports and I don't think we have anything to offer at this point except what we've said all along, which is, we expect all nations to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency," White House spokesman Scott McClellan said. "We're sure they will look into this matter and I would just point out that Egypt is a signatory to the nonproliferation treaty."

### Malawian party leaders face charges

Three senior members of Malawi's ruling party have been arrested for carrying guns to a meeting with the president.

The three politicians were arrested as they entered the presidential palace.

The talks were about a growing rift between President Bingu wa Mutharika and United Democratic Front leaders over an anti-corruption drive.

Deputy transport minister Roy Cumsay, Harry Thomson and MP Alfred Mwechumu have been charged with breach of the peace and released on bail.

One of the politicians said he always carried a gun for his personal security.

The BBC's correspondent said that President Mutharika's relationship with the ruling party has been deteriorating since his election last May.

Several top UDF leaders

have been arrested in connection with corruption and fraud scandals.

The meeting on 3 January, which was also being attended by former president Bakili Muluzi, was intended to end the rift but was abandoned after the weapons were discovered.

### Poland, Libya forge economic ties

Polish Prime Minister Marek Belka arrived in Tripoli for a two-day visit that will include talks on cooperation in the oil sector and a meeting with Libyan leader Moamer.

Poland is anxious to re-establish the close economic ties it had with Libya when the Communist Party was in power in Warsaw in the 1970s and 1980s.

In those two decades, some 130,000 Poles worked in Libya on road and rail development projects and many Libyans pursued their studies in Poland, according



Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak (L) meets with King Fahd of Saudi Arabia in Riyadh.

### Moroccan King calls for religious tolerance

Jibrin Abubakar, Reporter (Forcing)

The King of Morocco, Mohammed VI has called on religion's leaders and their followership to enhance tolerance and fraternity in their dealings.

Addressing the first world congress "one hundred Imam and Rabbis" held in Brussel at the initiative of the Swiss Foundation, the King said: "The divine message to humanity throughout the centuries, in general and during Abraham era, in particular, has been one of mercy, tolerance and fraternity."

He said divine message is aimed at developing the perception of human beings and at sharpening their capabilities in order to qualify them to grasp the global process.

In a copy of his speech made available to Daily Trust by the Charge d' Affairs of the Moroccan embassy in Abuja, Mr. Abdellah Bouchtaoui, the King said the inter-religious meeting marked the beginning of a serious and

constructive dialogue between Islam and Judaism for the sake of advancement of humanity.

Indeed in their religious life, human beings have been faced with situations that have threatened to upset this religious life, at times, and have served to strengthen it at other times," he said.

In a separate development, the King used the opportunity to condole the victims of the Tsunami

tragedy in Asia and Africa, while praying for the deceased souls to rest in peace.

"This disaster shows how fragile we are. It should induce us to show greater humanity, wisdom and clear mindedness so that we may realise at last, that our short existence on earth must be used to foster brotherhood and resist any inclination towards discord and division," he added.

### Rebel groups form single army in Burundi

Burundi's largest armed groups have formed a single national army after more than a decade of war.

All but one of the Hutu rebel groups and the Tutsi dominated government army were brought together.

The move is a major step in the long process to end the crisis in Burundi that has claimed more than 300,000

lives during an 11 year civil war.

But a BBC reporter said it will take at least four years before the process of forming the new army is complete.

Presidential spokesman Panance Cimpaye said that in theory all armed fighters in Burundi were now the responsibility of the government, which would feed, clothe and pay them.

President Domitien Ndayizeye signed two laws on Friday setting up the new army and a new police force.

The Burundi Armed Forces will now be known as the National Defence Force.

The BBC's correspondent in Bujumbura said that from now on the term rebel will only apply to the National Liberation Forces (FNL).

The rebel movement led by Agathon Rwasa are still active on the outskirts of Bujumbura.

Reform of the army was one of the key demands of Hutu rebels, and the peace deal specified that there should not be more than 50% of Hutus or Tutsis in the army.

# Trust International

## US death toll in Iraq hits 1,300 - Report

It has been some time since the grim milestone of 1,000 US military deaths in Iraq was passed.

The Pentagon's latest figures underline that an equally telling price is being paid in the number of US military personnel who have been wounded.

The death toll is now more than 1,300, and the number of wounded is 10,200.

### ... 'Abu Ghraib did not stop abuse' - report

Sexual and physical abuse of Iraqi prisoners continued at least three months after the Abu Ghraib scandal was revealed, according to accounts by alleged victims in the latest issue of Vanity Fair.

Iraqi inmates were sexually assaulted, beaten, administered electric shocks and kept in cages or crates, the magazine said, based on 60 hours of interviews with 10 former inmates, including a 15-year-old boy.

Writer Donovan Webster quotes an inmate saying he was hung naked from handcuffs in a frigid room while soldiers threw buckets of ice water on him.

Webster added that several of the people he interviewed said their mistreatment took place in July, three months after the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse scandal broke in late April.

The article said the former detainees interviewed are suing two American companies that provided translators and interrogators to forces in Iraq and that their firsthand accounts comprised "hundreds, if not thousands, of separate Geneva Convention violations".

In one example cited in the article, a 15-year-old boy said he had been forced to crouch in a wooden crate for 11 days, wearing handcuffs and blacked-out ski goggles.

"Those who raise a hand against a soldier, or a police officer or a security officer ... we will act against him with all our might," he said.

He said he was again sexually assaulted two days later in the prison north of Baghdad but let go later in the day when a soldier apologised to him for being illegally detained and gave him \$50.

The magazine said the accounts of abuses were impossible to independently verify.

It quoted a US military spokesman for detainee operations in Iraq as dismissing the assertions that prisoners were held illegally, kept in wooden boxes, handcuffed and blindfolded, and subjected to sexual threats, abuse and assault.

Nearly half of the wounded have been able to return to duty, but more than 5,000 have not.

Advances in military medicine and body armour mean that many have survived wounds that they would not have done in previous conflicts.

But the corollary of that and the fact that a major threat in Iraq has been the blast effects of roadside bombs - is that many are left with serious injuries such as lost limbs and sight.

Meanwhile, a car bomb exploded outside a police academy south of Baghdad

Wednesday during a graduation ceremony, killing at least 20 people, a police official said.

The bomb exploded outside a gate of the academy in Hillah, about 60 miles south of Baghdad, said police Capt. Hady Hatif.

Twenty people were killed and an unspecified number were injured, he said.

It was the latest in a string of attacks against Iraqi police ahead of Jan. 30 elections which insurgents are trying to disrupt.

## German police raises fresh concern over al-Qaeda

Some 70,000 people received weapons training and religious instruction in al-Qaeda camps, German police suspected.

The claim came at the retrial of Mounir al-Motassadek, a Moroccan man accused of involvement in the 9/11 attacks, which were partly planned in Germany.

A German police officer told the court recruits at the camps were taught they had

a duty to kill US citizens.

Mr Motassadek said he received training in Afghanistan and knew some of the 9/11 hijackers - but not of their plot.

Although initially convicted of involvement in the attacks, he is now facing a retrial. The case against him collapsed last year when a judge ruled that US authorities' refusal to allow lawyers access to a key witness in their custody had prejudiced proceedings.

Giving evidence at the retrial, an officer from the German police body that co-ordinates the fight against terrorism said new al-Qaeda recruits were being stripped of their passports and taken to safe houses.

They also received a new name before being taken to al-Qaeda camps, most of which were located in Afghanistan.

An estimated 3,000 people died when al-Qaeda militants hijacked US passenger airliners and ploughed them into targets in New York and Washington on 11 September 2001.

Several key hijackers had lived in the German city of Hamburg and were referred to by investigators as the "Hamburg cell".

Al-Qaeda's training facilities in Afghanistan are believed to have largely been destroyed by a US-led invasion in late 2001.



US Marines from Lima Company, 3rd Battalion patrol inside the Sunni Muslim bastion of Fallujah, some 50 kilometres east of Baghdad. The last six months of 2004 proved the deadliest period for US forces in Iraq despite the formal end of the US-led occupation in June.

## Israel warns settlers over evacuations

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon yesterday warned opponents of his plan to withdraw from the Gaza Strip that Israel will use "all our might" to prevent them from thwarting the evacuation.

Speaking to soldiers, Sharon said he was disturbed by the violent scenes this week of Jewish settlers resisting evacuation from an illegal settler outpost in the West Bank.

"Those who raise a hand against a soldier, or a police officer or a security officer ... we will act against him with all our might," he said.

Jewish settlers have threatened to prevent the dismantling of settlements and army installations in the Gaza Strip that Sharon plans for this summer. The settlers have rallied a large campaign against the withdrawal in recent months.

As part of Sharon's "disengagement plan," 8,800 Jewish settlers are to be removed from the Gaza Strip and four settlements in the West Bank.

In another development, Israeli tanks have killed eight Palestinians in Bait Lahya in the Gaza Strip, medics and

security sources said.

Aljazeera's correspondent in Gaza, Wael al-Daliduh, cited Israeli sources as saying the Israeli army fired three shells at Palestinian fighters on Tuesday.

Palestinian witnesses said Israeli tanks fired into Bait Lahya shortly after mortars crashed into the nearby Jewish Nissanit settlement, wounding two people.

Israeli sources said they had fired at a group of nine masked Palestinians who were seen with rocket launchers.

But Palestinian citizens said they were shocked when a tank fired at an agricultural area where troops should have been able to distinguish between resistance fighters and citizens who work in the area.

Palestinian security sources said the Israeli shelling targeted a group of farmers.

The correspondent said most of the casualties were young Palestinian men and boys, four from one family alone.

He added that six people had been injured, including four seriously.

A number of victims were

children although their identities were not immediately known, confirmed Mahmud al-Assali, director of the Kamal Edwane hospital.

Israeli medics said Palestinian mortar bombs landed near an Israeli bus carrying school students in the Nissanit settlement area, injuring the driver and a student.

The violence erupted just one day after Israel said it had ended an armoured incursion into Bait Hanun and Jabalya in northern Gaza in what Tel Aviv said was another effort to eliminate rocket and mortar squads who target illegal settlements.

But witnesses and Aljazeera's correspondent said Israeli troops had not withdrawn completely and were still in some areas in Bait Hanun and in southeastern Bait Lahya.

About 20 Palestinians have been killed since Israeli forces began the latest military operations in the area last week.

The latest deaths brought the overall toll since the September 2000 start of the intifada to 3624 Palestinians and 970 Israelis.

## Gas explosion claim four in Iran

A massive gas explosion ripped through drilling operations in Afsariyeh in southern Tehran Tuesday night, claiming four lives and leaving many people injured.

Qasimollah Ashrafi, head of the regional gas company, told IRNA gas leak was reported to his office by water and sewage (Abfa) officials and his men were immediately dispatched to the area.

He added Hashem Amari, an employee of the gas company, was killed on the spot and his colleague Massoud Heidari was badly injured following a huge explosion.

The company's experts are studying the event, said Ashrafi, adding that the reason behind the explosion will be announced later.

Colonel Ebrahim Ardeshir, the district sheriff, said two Abfa personnel and a local person were killed and four of the wounded are in critical conditions.

"Akbar Shadi, Ebrahim Karimi, and Asghar Nikcheh were the trio, who lost their lives on the spot," added the colonel.

He said some 50 houses and 10 shops received serious damage and the glasses, one km off the place, were shattered.

## Syrian files case against US general

A Syrian who worked as a driver in Iraq has filed a lawsuit in Paris for maltreatment and torture against a US general who commanded a marine offensive in Falluja.

Muhammad al-Jundi said in the complaint on Tuesday he was held by US marines for nine days and mistreated in November.

Al-Jundi was taken captive by an Iraqi group when he was working as a driver for the French journalists Christian Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot who were taken

hostage in August.

Al-Jundi now lives in France. His lawyers said the civil suit was directed against General John Sattler, who was commanding the marines in Falluja at the time.

He was eventually released by being deposited on a roadside without shoes or identity papers.

The lawyers said al-Jundi had little hope of success with his suit because French justice cannot investigate a complaint brought by a foreigner concerning an event that occurred abroad.

# Trust International

## Thousands protest presidential election in Croatia

Up to 2000 people have gathered at a protest organised by Croatian independent presidential candidate Boris Miksic who said there were irregularities in the weekend election. Miksic is now demanding a new vote count.

Sunday's vote was a "fraud and a slap in Croatian people's face", Miksic told the crowd that gathered briefly at the main Ban Josip Jelačić square. A wealthy US-Croatian businessman, Miksic said he should have finished second in the election and be the one to face incumbent President Stipe Mesić in the run-off on 16 January.

A Euro-sceptic outsider on Croatia's political scene, he was the biggest surprise of the elections, placing third with 17.8% of the vote.

Centrist Mesić won 48.9% of the votes, and is to face Deputy Prime Minister Jadranka Kosor of the ruling conservative Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) in the run-off.

Kosor garnered 20.3% of the votes, according to results from the nearly all polling stations on Monday.

But Miksic complained he was not allowed to have his own observers within the electoral commission counting the votes.

He stressed exit polls had put him ahead of Kosor. But the electoral commission threw out his complaint.

In several other Croatian towns, Miksic's supporters gathered peacefully to protest against the election results, national radio reported.

Some thirty gathered in the Adriatic towns of Split and Zadar respectively, and several dozens in the northern town of Čakovec as well as in the eastern town of Slavonski Brod.

There were no incidents reported during the protests. Miksic said he would file a complaint with the constitutional court.



Boris Miksic, Croatian independent presidential candidate

## Fresh crisis claims 150 rebels in Nepal

Some 150 Maoist guerrillas were killed in a fierce battle with security forces in Nepal's remote southwest yesterday, a top army official said.

"In a clash with the security forces, at least 150 rebels were killed and over 30 others injured" in Kailali district in the far southwest, the senior army official, who did not wish to be



Kofi Annan and other world leaders are to discuss reconstruction efforts in Jakarta

## Tsunami: World leaders in Jakarta for talks

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan and other world leaders arrived in Jakarta yesterday to try to deal with Asia's tsunami crisis and a \$2.3 billion humanitarian relief operation, the biggest since World War II.

As aid workers struggle to feed and shelter millions of survivors who are still burying their dead 10 days after a tsunami killed 150,000 people, world leaders will meet today to seek an answer for the question - how can the world prevent such a catastrophe ever occurring again?

Indonesia, the worst-hit nation with almost two-thirds of the dead, hopes the one-day summit will agree to set up a regional tsunami warning system, which experts say could have saved many lives.

Leaders from 26 nations and humanitarian organizations will also look at the massive reconstruction needed to rebuild the shattered lives of millions of people in six Indian Ocean nations.

"This conference is not only for Indonesia but for all countries that have suffered from the earthquake," said Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. "And of course we do hope that tomorrow there will be a concrete result in the mechanism of how to assist countries that are to be assisted."

Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said coordinating the aid effort was a key agenda item.

"This will make a major contribution to ensuring there is a better coordinated

effort and there are stronger contributions than might be the case without a summit."

The world has pledged \$2.278 billion in aid as hundreds of tons of emergency supplies of medicines, food, clean water and shelter floods into tsunami-hit areas by air, sea and road.

Annan is expected to announce a major U.N. tsunami appeal at the Jakarta conference, which will also discuss the possibility of an immediate freeze of debt payments by affected countries.

But some analysts opined that concrete long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction plans depend on detailed assessments difficult to make at a time when thousands of the dead are not yet buried and some isolated areas have only just been reached.

## Europe observe three-minute silence for victims

Millions of people across the UK and Europe have observed a three-minute silence yesterday to remember the 150,000 killed by the Asian tsunami.

The silence started in Britain at 1200 GMT, but was held across Europe one hour earlier.

Tony Blair has predicted the British Government will eventually give "hundreds of millions" of pounds in aid to countries hit by the tsunami. It was his first public comment since returning from his holiday in Egypt.

Mr Blair told BBC Radio 4's Today programme that he had been "intimately involved" in "all decisions at all times" despite being abroad.

Across Europe, people paid

The International Monetary Fund has said calculating the economic impact of the disaster would have to wait until immediate humanitarian needs are met.

The relief effort has faced enormous hurdles. The giant waves destroyed hospitals, damaged airports and washed away roads and bridges. And the sheer number of aid organisations flooding into Asia, big and small, has posed coordination problems and created bottlenecks.

"I think what we really want to do is make sure the money that has been pledged and the resources that are on the way are properly and appropriately distributed to deal with the need," Secretary of State Colin Powell said on Tuesday after he arrived in Jakarta.

## Odd World

### Man survives 8 days floating on sea

An Indonesian man has been found floating on tree branches in the Indian Ocean, eight days after a devastating tsunami struck the region. Rizal Shuhputra, 23, said he was initially swept out to sea with other survivors and family members, but that one by one they drowned. He was rescued on Monday by a passing container vessel.

He was taken to Malaysia where officials said he was in good condition - he survived eating floating coconuts. Rizal said he was cleaning a mosque in Banda Aceh on the northern tip of Sumatra on 26 December when the tsunami struck. Children ran in to warn him, but he was swept out to sea, along with several other people.

"At first, there were some friends with me," Rizal told reporters. "After a few days, they were gone... I saw bodies left and right." Rizal said at least one ship sailed by without noticing him before the MV Durban Bridge spotted him, 160km from Banda Aceh. Huang Wen Feng, a crew member of the ship, said he was "very, very surprised" to see Rizal standing on his wood debris on Monday. "He was shouting at us. I couldn't believe it," he said. The Japanese-owned ship, which was returning to Malaysia from South Africa, took Rizal to the Malaysian port of Port Klang, where he arrived on Wednesday.

He was taken to hospital, weak and in shock, and having sustained some cuts to his legs. His survival follows that of a woman, also from Aceh, who was found in the sea on Friday. She had fish bites to her legs, and had survived on fruit from the palm tree she was clinging to.

### Behold! A man with long toe nails

A cleric, Abu Hamza al-Mauri failed to appear before a British court Tuesday, complaining his toe nails were too long and he could not walk.

Abu Hamza, who is also wanted by the United States over 11 alleged offences, was charged by British police last year on 16 counts including one terror-related offence. He had been due to make an appearance via video-link from the high-security Belmarsh jail in London where he is being held.

"Hamza has physical difficulties. He is unable to walk. He has been paralyzing himself around the prison," said defense lawyer Peter Hynes. Prosecutor Adria Eikel added: "He is complaining that his toe nails are too long."

Britain accuses Hamza - who lost an eye and both hands in Afghanistan fighting Soviet forces - of 10 charges of using public meetings to incite his followers to kill non-Muslims.

Four of the charges said he urged the killing of Jews. He is also charged with using threatening, abusive or insulting behaviour with intent to stir up racial hatred, one offence of possessing threatening, abusive or insulting sound recordings, and one charge of possessing a "terrorist" document. Judge Peter Beaumont adjourned Tuesday's hearing for two weeks and set the trial date for July 4.

The Egyptian-born cleric, a former nightclub security guard, was already being held in a top security jail after being arrested on a U.S. extradition warrant. Tight legal restrictions mean details of the U.S. charges cannot be given.

Abu Hamza was stripped of his British citizenship in 2003 and he was banned from speaking at his Finsbury Park mosque in north London although he continued to preach in the road outside until his arrest.

### Group urges Jimmy Carter to quit fishing

A prominent U.S.-based animal rights group urged former President Jimmy Carter on Monday to give up fishing on the grounds that the activity was inconsistent with the Nobel peace laureate's humanitarian efforts.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals made its appeal in a letter faxed to Carter's non-profit Carter Centre on Monday. The group said the letter was prompted by Carter's recent appearance on The Tonight Show with Jay Leno.

Carter, who served as president from 1977 to 1981 and won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002, told Leno of the pain he suffered when he accidentally hooked himself through the face on a fishing trip.

"We're asking President Carter to think this through and to grant fish peace by leaving them in the water where they belong," PETA President Ingrid Newkirk said in a press release. A Carter Centre spokesman said the centre does not comment on Carter's private correspondence.

### Gunman passes out drunk to end standoff

A western New York man said to be grieving the death of a family member took a bartender hostage Monday and opened fire on police during a four-hour standoff that ended only after he passed out drunk, authorities said.

Dale Covert was facing a charge of attempted murder after firing a single round at a Gowanda police officer, State Police Maj. Michael Manning said.

Police responded to the Palm Gardens restaurant lounge 30 miles south of Buffalo around 3 p.m. after receiving a report of a man brandishing a gun inside the establishment, where Covert was holding a female bartender.

Gowanda police, upon being fired upon, called the Erie County Sheriff's Department and State Police for backup. SWAT teams from those agencies then cordoned off the lounge and closed the street to traffic. As the standoff dragged into the evening, Covert watched the saga unfold on the television news until service inside the bar was cut. Shortly after 6:30 p.m., the bartender emerged from the bar, unharmed. Covert, who was drinking heavily, then passed out, Manning said.

Michael Luffred, who called himself a longtime acquaintance of Covert, described him as a hard worker who was distressed

# Business Trust

## Today's flight schedule

<b>Albarka Air</b>	
Lagos - Abuja	07:20
	10:30
	15:15
	13:00
Abuja - Lagos	8:45a.m.
	11:00
	13:15
	17:00
Maiduguri - Abuja	06:50
Abuja - Maid.	17:00
Abuja - PHC	9:00a.m.
PHC - Abuja	11:00a.m.
Lagos - Yola	1:00 p.m.
Abuja - Yola	14:30
Yola - Abuja	15:30
Yola - Lagos	4:00 p.m.
<b>Chanchangi Airlines</b>	
Lagos - Abuja	8:15a.m.
	11:00a.m.
	12:10p.m.
	4:45p.m.
Kaduna - Lagos	8:30a.m.
P/H - Lagos	9:00a.m.
	4:30p.m.
Abuja - Kaduna	2:30p.m.
Kaduna - Abuja	1:30p.m.
<b>IRS Airlines</b>	
CBQ - Abuja	8:00 a.m.
Abuja - Lagos	9:45a.m.
Lagos - Kaduna	9:30a.m.
Kano - Lagos	7:30p.m.
Lagos - Kano	11:15a.m.
Kaduna - Lagos	11:00a.m.
Lagos - Abu/MM	2:30p.m.
Abuja - MM	1:45p.m.
MM - Abuja	3:45p.m.
Abuja - CBQ	5:15p.m.
Kano - Abuja	1:15p.m.
Abuja - Kano	2:30p.m.
Kano - Lagos	3:45p.m.
Lagos - Kano	6:00p.m.
<b>EAS Airlines</b>	
Lagos - Abuja	8:15p.m.
	11:45a.m.
	5:45p.m.
Abuja - Lagos	10:15a.m.
	7:15p.m.
Lagos - Jos	11:45a.m.
Jos - Lagos	7:30pm.
<b>Dasab Airlines</b>	
Auja - Lagos	8:30 a.m.
Lagos - PHC	10:30 a.m.
PHC - Lagos	12:30 a.m.
Lagos - Kano	2:30 p.m.
Kano - Lagos	4:30 p.m.
Lagos - Abuja	6:30pm.
<b>ADC Airline</b>	
Lagos - Abuja	7:15 a.m.
	12:45 p.m.
Abuja - Lagos	8:55 a.m.
Lagos - Calabar	11:15 a.m.
Calabar - Lagos	7:20 a.m.
P/H - Lagos	9:45 a.m.
<i>Most airlines operate the same flight schedule on week days</i>	

## NUB targets N9.3bn from private placement

**N**UB International Bank Limited said it has embarked on a private placement exercise (PPE) aimed at raising N9.3 billion equity funds as a first step towards the actualization of its strategic plan to meet the N25 billion new capital base requirement.

A statement issued by the company said under the exercise, which has Investment Banking and Trust Company Limited (IBTC) and BGL Securities Limited as the joint issuing houses, NUB is offering 12,500,000 ordinary shares of 50 kobo each at 75 kobo per share payable in full on application.

Already, the bank is said to have dispatched confidential investment letters and copies of its private placement memorandum to prospective investors across the country in an attempt to achieve its target before the February 2005 deadline.

Sources close to the bank

**By Ahmed I. Shekaru,**  
*Group Business Editor*

disclosed that proceeds of the exercise would be applied for rapid expansion of domestic branch network as well as the establishment of foreign branches.

The bank said that part of the funds would be utilized for the enhancement of information and communications technology, revitalization of corporate brand and provision of additional working capital that will enable it take full advantage of the emerging opportunities in the growth sectors of the economy.

Upon completion of the private placement, it is expected that NUB International Bank will embark on an initial public offering (IPO) that would lead to its quotation on the Nigeria Stock Exchange (NSE).

Sources said that proceeds of the IPO will place NUB above the N25 billion mini-

mum recapitalisation stipulated by the CBN, notwithstanding the bilateral Memorandum Of Understanding it signed recently with a foremost erstwhile merchant banking institution in the country.

NUB International Bank

Limited, which commenced operations in June 2001, rose steadily with an impressive record of performance. The bank recorded a profit after tax of N343.1 million in the financial year ended, April 30, 2004 representing a growth of 137 per cent over the previous year, while its

total assets grew from N8.06 billion to N11.56 billion within the same period.

The bank projected for the three years that would follow its successful recapitalization, profits after tax of N667 million, N6.2 billion and N8.4 billion respectively.

## HSBC, Standard Chartered vie for Korea First Bank

**G**lobal banking giant HSBC's efforts to buy Korea First Bank have run up against a late bid by Standard Chartered PLC apparently raising the price tag, a banking source says.

US equity fund Newbridge Capital was set to announce the sale of its entire 48.56 percent stake in Korea First Bank (KFB) to HSBC Holdings PLC on December 24.

However, the announcement was put on hold, sparking speculation that Newbridge had failed to agree a sale price with HSBC.

"The competition to acquire KFB is not a single-horse race. There is another competitor as well," a senior official at KFB said.

E-daily, an Internet financial news service, said that HSBC had been asked to meet a revised sale price of 18,000 won per share.

HSBC initially offered 16,000 won but cut the price to 13,000 won per share fol-

lowing a due diligence study last year.

Then Standard Chartered raised its offer to at least 15,000 won, E-daily said, quoting a highly placed banking source.

With its hand strengthened, Newbridge Capital went back to HSBC with a new asking price of 18,000 won per share, a figure that the British-based bank is reluctant to meet.

"The highest authorities at HSBC responded very negatively to the new price offered by Newbridge Capital," E-daily quoted the official as saying.

The eventual buyer will get the Newbridge Stake plus a 48.49 percent stake in KFB currently held by the state-run Korea Deposit Insurance Corporation (KDIC) in a deal which would be worth some 3.5 trillion won (3.34 billion dollars) in all.

Newbridge purchased its KFB stake at 5,000 won per share in 1999 following the

Asian financial crisis which devastated the South Korean banking industry.

Newbridge will ask the KDIC to sell its stake to HSBC because the 1999 contract stipulates KDIC must sell if Newbridge make such a request, the source said.

The sale of KFB, the largest ever foreign investment in South Korea financial industry, will put the buyer in competition with US giant Citigroup in the South Korea banking sector.

Citigroup acquired KorAm Bank, the country's sixth largest lender, in April.

Emerging from the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis, troubled financial institutions here were bailed out with state money and then sold on to foreign investors.

US fund Lonestar acquired Korea Exchange Bank in October last year and its two-year lock-up period expires in November 2005, enabling it to divest then if it so wishes.

## SEC issues new directives on IPOs

**F**ollowing widespread allegations that some financial institutions engage in sharp practices in order to raise the N25 billion re-capitalisation fund as required by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has announced the suspension of rule 64 (4) of the commission's rules and regulations, and the prohibition of unapproved advertisements.

**Anas A. Galadima,**  
*Reporter (Business)*

Others have been accused of not clearly stating the amount required to be raised in order to give room for absorption of over-subscribed shares all in a bid to desperately raise the N25 billion recapitalization fund as required by the CBN.

In a statement issued by the management of SEC, the commission stated that henceforth, all issuing companies who want to make public offers of their securities should note that they must state the specific amount they require in their prospectus.

Also, "the commission will no longer allow the absorption of excess proceeds on any offer. Over-subscription must therefore be returned after allotment," the statement added.

The commission further warned that "all advertisements and marketing materials in respect to public offers for both local and foreign media must be submitted to, and approved by the commissioner before release to the public.

It would be recalled that some of banks that have made public offerings of their shares for subscription have been accused of withholding money for the over-subscribed shares for some time, only to refund such monies months later after they must have yielded bank interests.

## Market Indicators

### Nigerian Inter-Bank Offered Rate (NIBOR)

Quotes as of: 04/01/2005.

7 Days	12.8750
30 Days	15.3750
60 Days	16.1667
90 Days	16.7917
180 Days	16.7417
270 Days	0.0000
365 Days	16.2083

### Nigerian Inter Bank Foreign Exchange (NIFEX) Rates

Quotes as of: 04/01/2005

Bid(\$/N=)	Offer(\$/N=)	
Spot Fixing	132.95	
	133.25	
Tenor (Days)	Swap Points	Forward Fixing
30	1.4292 / 1.4324	134.3792 / 134.6824
60	2.8525 / 2.8589	135.8025 / 136.1089
90	4.2701 / 4.2797	137.2201 / 137.5297
180	8.4885 / 8.5076	141.4385 / 141.7576

Source: MMAN.

### Naira official exchange rates as of: 29/12/2004

Currency	Buying	Selling	Central
US DOLLAR	131.85	132.85	132.35
POUND STERLING	255.433	257.3703	256.40165
EURO	179.7116	181.0746	180.3931
SWISS FRANCS	0	0	0
JAPANESE YEN	1.2755	1.2852	1.28035
CFA FRANCS	0.2651	0.2751	0.2701
WAUA	203.7152	205.2603	204.48775
SAUDI RIYAL	35.1638	35.4304	35.2971

### Minimum Rediscount Rate and Export Proceeds

Rates	Change
Minimum Rediscount Rate	15 0.00
Export Proceeds Per \$	-1 0.00

Rates as of 29/12/2004

### Bureau De Change rates as of: 21/12/2004

Location	Dollar		Pounds
	Buying	Selling	
Lagos	137.50	138.50	256.00
Ikeja	137.00	138.00	256.00
Airport	138.00	139.00	257.50

# Business Trust

## Industry

### FOU, Ikeja impounds N210m contraband

The Federal Operations Unit (Zone "A") Ikeja, impounded smuggled goods worth N210 million in the last two weeks of 2004, its controller, Alhaji Umar Daura, has disclosed.

"Since the smugglers and other economic saboteurs would not end their nefarious activities, we would continue to fight and arrest them and their contraband wherever we find them," Daura said while displaying the seized goods before newsmen at the weekend.

The controller maintained that even in the face of death which, he described, as "part of the hazards of customs job", the officers would not relent in pursuing smugglers.

It would be recalled that five customs officers on anti-bunkering patrol were burnt to death by petroleum products smugglers at Ibado, Lagos early in December, while another was shot dead on the Badagry highway a week earlier.

The seized goods included 2,076 cartons of assorted wine, 1,355 pieces of lace material, 4,800 headties and 208 rolls of damask

textile.

The others were 36,750 dozens of ladies' undies, 180 bales of second hand clothings and a 40-foot container loaded with various electronics.

Daura disclosed that though no arrests were made with the seizures, investigations were on to identify the

brains behind them through the registration numbers of the five trucks in which the contraband were being conveyed.

"These trucks in our custody were registered by traceable individuals and companies, we shall find them and ask questions," the controller added.

### Kaduna govt plans Ceramic industry

Proposed to explore available raw materials in the state, the Kaduna state government is proposing a Ceramic factory in Attakar, Kaura Local government.

Also being proposed, according to Mr. David Avong, a member of the state House of Assembly, is a juice factory to be sited in Kagoro.

Avong told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Kaduna that the Ceramic industry being planned under the auspices of the ministry of women affairs was aimed at exploiting available raw materials.

According to him, the raw materials for both firms were in abundance and had continued to waste over the years.

Avong lamented that local pot moulding by women in the area had barely scratched the avail bale raw resources, saying that such efforts were even "too crude" for any meaningful

impact on the economy. He explained that the juice industry being proposed for Kagoro was to process abundant resources like mango, orange and guava.

When completed, Avong said that the two firms would provide jobs for the youth, enhance resource management and improve the living conditions of the rural dwellers.

Avong listed other on-going projects towards improving the lives of people in his area to include the multi-million Bondong bridge to end the age-old drowning of Moroa people.

Also being executed is the Fadan-Attakar-Mifi-Zangang 4.5 kilometre road as well as the Tachira-Asu electrification project.

Also being electrified, he said, are Malagum, Zangang, Tsoneje and Zunuruk villages.

Avong said that the "horrible" Mabushi-Jankasa-Manchok-Randiyan road would

The Organised Private Sector (OPS) has called for a healthy industrial base in 2005 that will create more employment, reduce import dependence and raise the general standard of living through improved income.

In its 2005 pre-budget memorandum, the OPS also submitted that for the industrial sector to be revived, the provision of an enabling environment was imperative.

The OPS comprises the

soon be rehabilitated, while the Kukum Gida-Kukum Daji road project was being pushed into the 2005 budget.

On water, he said that the area had received 10 borehole projects which were shared among its three chiefdoms.

According to him, four went to Kagoro, with three each for the Attakar and Moroa chiefdoms.

He said that efforts were being made to source water from the Attakar water spring whose external force could lead to Kachia from the hill.

The law maker lauded efforts to provide facilities by Kaduna governor Ahmed Makarfi and described him as "God-sent" to deliver the rural dwellers from the shackles of poverty.

Avong called for patience from the Nigerian people as elected and appointed politicians strive towards providing democracy dividends.

### OPS calls for healthy industrial base

Nigerian Employers' Consultative Association (NECA); the Nigerian Association of Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Agriculture (NACCIMA) and the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN).

It called for private initiative and participation in the provision of infrastructure, using the Build-Operate-and-Transfer (BOT); Rehabilitate-Operate-and-Transfer (ROT) and concessioning policies.

In its views as contained in the latest "NACCIMA News" publication, the OPS further called for the hastening of the privatization process of the power sector and the unbundling of NEPA to guarantee constant and quality supply of electricity.

Towards effective diversification of the productive base of the economy, the OPS suggested that the government should reinvest the funds from the sale of crude oil surplus to favour the manufacturing sector.

According to it, the move will improve capacity utilisation, reduce the cost of sourcing funds and empower the manufacturing sector to assume its role as the engine of growth.

It also called for the establishment of an integrated petrochemical plant and a continuation of the ongoing process of retooling the manufacturing sector through the Bank of Industry, the Banks Equity Scheme and the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN).

"Government should adequately explore the patronage of locally-made products in raw materials sourcing to curb excessive foreign exchange cost of production by giving adequate incentives to those companies through tax holiday, tariff holiday, tariff protection, etc", it said.

The Anti-Dumping Committee was also called upon to work out a "modus operandi" to effectively curb the menace of dumping and massive smuggling, influx of fake and adulterated products and high level of "pass-off" activities.

This, it said, would ensure improvement in capacity utilisation in industries.

Reviewing the performance of the economy in 2004, the OPS noted that there was no significant improvement.

# CAVEAT EMPTOR

## PROPERTIES OF SOJECT NIGERIA LIMITED

The general public is hereby notified that ORIGINAL CERTIFICATES OF OCCUPANCY over the under listed PROPERTIES OF SOJECT NIGERIA LIMITED are HELD by FSB International Bank Plc as securities for banking facilities granted by the Bank and secured by Soject Nigeria Limited, which facilities have remained unpaid.

At present, there are pending court cases in respect of the transaction and the properties could be liable to sale at the instance of the Bank.

**THE GENERAL PUBLIC IS HEREBY WARNED** that any person that seeks to acquire the properties or deal with the properties in any manner whatsoever does so at his/her own peril.

### PARTICULARS OF PROPERTIES

1. Housing estate comprising 3 blocks of flats. Each block has 6 units of 3 bedroom flat and is located at Plot No. 2384 Ndola Street, Off Michael Opara Street, Wuse Zone 5, Abuja (otherwise known as Plot No. 2384 within A2, Wuse I District), covered by Certificate Of Occupancy No. FCT/ABU/MISC.13769 registered as No FC63 at Page 63 in Volume 63 (Certificate Of Occupancy) in the Lands Administration Lands Registry Office Abuja.
2. Plot No. 3 Mpape District, Abuja covered by Certificate Of Occupancy No. FCT/ABU/MISC.5796 registered as No FC65 at Page 65 in Volume 67 (Certificate Of Occupancy) in the Lands Administration Lands Registry Office Abuja.

FSB International Bank plc



# Business Trust NEEDS is an unrealistic project

**Alhaji (Dr.) Lawan Maigoroma, is the Yobe state Commissioner for finance and economic development. In this interview with our Borno zone Correspondent, Maigoroma described the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) being championed by the federal government as an unrealistic project given its "un-Nigerian touch". Maigoroma also spoke on other issues concerning Yobe state.**

**Commissioner, not long ago you were among those that travelled to Argentina, which people link with the NEEDS, that is the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy being championed by the federal government. What is your view on the NEEDS programme?**

Like you said I was in Argentina. You see, that country faced serious economic problems; so much that there were cases of political instability arising from repeated changes of the country's president within an incredible short period of time. So Argentina was a case study for so many other reasons. "Now talking about this NEEDS, it is no doubt that it is a well packaged programme. But I see it as programme that is not realistic. It is full of forecasts without taking cognisance of the Nigerian social structure. Things such as our individual economic conditions, average income, literacy level, social perception and public analyses were not well noted. It is not realistic in present day Nigeria. It is a programme for a developed economy, with already attained development, but here we have lots of poverty and low educational level. NEEDS as it were, intends to empower our people. But I think we need a more practical approach than theoretical ways that seem tailored by international financial institutions, such as the World Bank and IMF." Perhaps some of those manning our economy today, happen to be products of international financial institutions.

**But Hon. Commissioner, during the 2005 Budget presentation of Yobe state, your governor, Bukar Abba Ibrahim announced the establishment of a State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS) for Yobe state economic activities. Do you still uphold that this is not realistic?**

It is like a business environment. Some times you use a popular trade mark to sell a product which may have a different package. It is just like saying Dangote Supermarket, which may not be owned in anyway by Dangote or which may have a different agenda. So for us in Yobe, the SEEDS announced by our governor, is just a re-enforcement of our economic programme of human development, rural transformation and economic corporate building for our people. We intend to employ or effect our SEEDS on a practical platform as Governor Bukar Ibrahim has since commenced even before the crea-

tion of NEEDS and SEEDS. To quote from the budget, our governor had stated that "under the SEEDS approach, efforts will be geared to empower as many people as possible, through such avenues like issuance of loans under animals traction scheme, small ruminant fattening, vegetable growing, promotion of handicrafts like artisans, masonry, carpentry, plumbing, tailoring, balkanising, iron bending, black-smithing, battery charging, auto mechanic repairs," and lots more.

So ours is just to give it another name as a boost. And do not forget that educating the people is still a form of economic empowerment. In this regard, the 2005 Budget as presented by the governor, has as usual accorded so much concern to education. In fact the largest part of allocations went to education, which received N5.74 billion, for continuance of our free education policy to our people, activities of schools, and a successful establishment of Yobe state University, which has already been planned carefully with facilities identified. So education will play a key role as part of Yobe SEEDS.

**Sometime in September, the Yobe state government released the sum of N2.8 billion as capital release to ministries which according to the state governor, was to be used for three months. How would you describe the use of the money?**

You see, that money was used to enhance continuity of on-going projects, such as road construction, housing, water supply, education, and what have you. And you will agree with me that the ministry of finance had distributed copies of various allocations to different ministries and parastatals to press members, including *Daily Trust* (yourself). We made allocations based on deliberations and submissions from ministries and parastatals. I am sure you are aware that every Wednesday we carry out a weekly executive council meeting chaired by His Excellency (the governor), and before the meetings all pressmen listen to the agenda, they ask questions, and questions are entertained.

So these allocations have been put to use by the various ministries, and I am sure commissioners of ministries would entertain questions. People can also testify, and press men can also visit project sites to see for themselves.

So I may not conclude that the money has been fully utilised within three months or not. Because development is in stages, and a continuous

process. A ministry, for instance, may not deem it necessary to fully release funds to an ongoing project unless it gets to a certain stage, depending on the commitment of the contractors, or even the immediate or routine needs of the project. For instances hospital offices may use all the released for drugs at once, perhaps for better preservation of drugs or other medical expedients.

**But commissioner what was the source of the money? Was it sourced or borrowed or was it an oil windfall from the federal government?**

Well, I am sure you know that the federal government is to start releasing money from the excess crude oil this year, 2005. So we haven't received any. The N2.8 billion capital release was borrowed from the capital market, and we have since commenced payment. We would complete payment by April or so this year.

**Why the need for loans from the capital market, especially as we see on the part of the federal government we suffer from loans?**

Ours is not such as that of the federal government. That of the federal government was collected and invested and definitely those who gave it may have projected their interests in terms of allocation. Now, depending on the target, loans play key roles in economic development. This was the target of Yobe state. The idea of a loan is to set the ball rolling for projects. So it makes your budgetary allocations already committed. So by the time the money comes it is used to pay back some loan. And you will note that there will be proper use of allocations, since a project is already on. Besides, in financial management, loans are more properly used than other funds. Loans are properly managed and committed to projects. So loans sometimes act as checks to financial managers.

**So what is the debt profile of Yobe state?**

Ah, very negligible. We are always careful with loans. We also pay back loans promptly. So far the major loan was the N2.8 billion capital release, which will be fully paid by April this year.

**Back to the issue of the 2005 Budget, how would you describe the Yobe budget?**

Like the title reflects, it is a "budget of economic transformation and poverty alleviation." It is a budget that targets at continuing in our drive to meet the social expectations of our people.

The budget estimated at N33.1 billion, took cognizance of all aspects of social needs in Yobe state. Logical

allocations were made to all sectors with none left out to ensure good governance.

**Now, on politics. Some people believe you are being nursed by Governor Bukar Abba Ibrahim for 2007 as governor of Yobe state? What is your comment on that?**

You see, politics is now being misunderstood in Nigeria. People have employed all means, including inhuman ways to destroy my image for politics. But you see, I have never in my life discussed with anybody at all over any ambition towards gubernatorial position in Yobe state.

The governor they are talking about has never discussed anything with me over 2007. As a Muslim, we must expect death as something comes at any time. So my focus is to consolidate and discharge the responsibility. I now have as a commissioner.

Some people see your continuous stay as commissioner for finance for years, as a possible tip to your 2007 candidacy, nursed by the governor.


In as much as change is considered a good bridge between growth and development, continuity is also a key factor in sustainable develop-

ment. His Excellency, Governor Bukar Abba Ibrahim is a very talented administrator. I believe as the state's chief executive he knows exactly what he is doing. He is intelligent and open minded, no



Lawan Maigoroma, Yobe state finance commissioner

doubt about that. And I believe he holds the development of Yobe dear to his heart. So people should allow the governor and wish Yobe government well, while we avoid insinuations, bitter politics and all rumours.



## KATSINA STATE POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

### PROGRAMME ADVISORY UNIT (PAU) MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH WELFARE CLINIC

KOFAR-KAURA,  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH, KATSINA-KATSINA STATE.  
PHONE: 065-433682, 08033110339 AND 0803311037

---

**PROGRAMME ADVISORY UNIT'S SECRETARY**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Under the direct supervision of Programme Adviser in Katsina State

The Secretary shall perform the following:

1. Provide Secretarial Services primarily to the Programme Advisory Unit of the State Programme, (and the other components projects when the need arises);
2. Receive, screen, log and distribute correspondence, attaching necessary background information and maintain follow-up systems;
3. Arrange appointments and maintain supervisor's calendar.
4. Place and receive telephone calls and answer queries with discretion;
5. Take dictation using shorthand, and transcribe on computer
6. Maintain files of the State Programme Advisory Unit;
7. Arrange meetings with high ranking officials as necessary;
8. Receive visitors and organize official functions meetings/workshops;
9. Draft replies to routine correspondence and enquiries;
10. Search for information and prepare briefing materials for supervisor;
11. Maintain lists of names, addresses and telephone numbers of those associated with the implementation of the State Programme;
12. Make travel arrangements for supervisor, perform liaison duties with Federal, State Ministries and International Organizations, and
13. Perform any other duties as may be assigned by the Katsina Government, the State Programme Adviser or the UNFPA.

**QUALIFICATION**  
HND holder in Secretarial Studies with at least 5 years cognate experience. Must be Computer Literate with knowledge of WP 5.1, 6.0, Microsoft Office/Excel, Power Point Presentation and Lotus 1-2-3. **Must be an indigene of Katsina State.**

**TYPE AND DURATION OF CONTRACT**  
**Fixed Term:** One year in the first instance with possibility of renewal depending on satisfactory performance.

**REMUNERATION:** In accordance with United Nations stipulated salary scale for Project Staff.

Interested candidates should forward their application including CV to the address above within two weeks of this publication. All application should be addressed to "The Programme Adviser"



## Business Trust

### Energy



An electrical and thermal power energy station at Moldova.

## Benue to build electric power plant

**B**enue government is set to build an independent electric power plant this year, Gov. George Akume has said.

Submitting the 2005 budget proposal to the state legislature in Makurdi, Akume said N250 million had been allocated for work to begin on the power plant.

The governor said the need for an alternative energy source, to be known as the Katsina-Ala hydro-electric power project, was based on "the inability of NEPA to meet its obligation of power supply" to the state.

According to him, "the epileptic power supply to the state, with its attendant negative impact on our development efforts, has been a source of concern to this administration." The introduction of this power source is to improve on the existing

situation."

Akume expressed his hope that "when the plant becomes functional, the state will be in a position to extend supply to neighbouring states which are also suffering from the same dilemma".

Extension of power to nearby states, he said, would generate more revenue for the state and thereby lessen its over-dependence on the federation account.

Meanwhile, Akume has also announced plans by his government to improve the flow of traffic in Makurdi by putting up street and traffic control lights at the cost of N400 million this year.

About N250 million had been set aside for electrification of rural areas, he said, adding that the North Bank area of Makurdi had a special allocation of N20 million "for it to be properly hooked up to NEPA supply".

## Oil prices fall ahead of US inventory data

**W**orld oil prices fell as traders geared up for the latest weekly snapshot of US commercial crude inventories.

New York's main

contract, light sweet crude for delivery in February, fell 25 cents to 43.66 dollars a barrel, after closing up 1.79 dollars on Tuesday.

In London, the price of Brent North Sea crude oil for delivery in February lost 31 cents to 40.73 dollars a barrel, having finished 67 cents higher on Tuesday.

Crude oil prices had risen sharply a day earlier on forecasts of colder weather in the United States following a mild spell.

Predicted changes in temperatures raised concerns about low supplies of heating fuel during the northern hemisphere winter.

Analysts were forecasting a rise in stockpiles of US distillates, which include winter heating fuel, when the US government publishes its latest weekly crude oil inventory report later Wednesday.

"Even if there is a build (in stocks), I expect it won't be very big," said Eswaran Ramasamy, the Singapore-based director for energy information provider Platts.

The US government's last petroleum stock report showed that distillates — mostly heating fuel and diesel — fell 800,000 barrels to 119.1 million.

Heating fuel stockpiles alone dropped 1.0 million barrels to 48.9 million.

## Shell saves \$500,000 a month on ramp barge

**W**ith the introduction of a modified

Double Ramp barge used for work over operations of wells, the Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC) says it saves about \$500,000 a month.

The Ramp barge is used to re-enter a well to carry out repairs which occur over time as wells produce.

Senior Drilling Engineer, SPDC, Mr. Sam Ikuku explained to newsmen in Lagos on Tuesday that "instead of the conventional lift barge used for such operations, the Ramp Barge is now in use".

"We deployed the barge for workover campaigns for five wells in Egwa field and it was very successful," he said.

Ikuku pointed out that the five wells at Egwa field were completed years ago, but needed to have safety valves

re-installed with gas lift mandrels.

"The project involved the use of a hydraulic workover unit and lift barge," he said.

He said that the model of the Ramp barge acquired by SPDC was modified to suit the wells and its environs.

The Drilling Manager further explained that the exercise involved "killing of the wells, removing the Christmas tree and pulling the old tubings".

"In some cases, old perforations were squeezed off and new sand perforated, new tubings are then run and Christmas Tree installed," he added.

According to him, the savings were enormous and the new Ramp barge have been deployed to Jones Creek field for a similar operation.



## NVRI 80th Anniversary

### Thank You Message

The Director, Management and Staff of the National Veterinary Research Institute (NVRI) Vom, in gratitude to God for a successful celebration of 80 years of Veterinary Research and Vaccine Production in Nigeria, wish to thank His Excellency, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR, President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Federal Republic of Nigeria for his magnanimity and more than passing interest in NVRI which made the Celebrations of the 80th anniversary of the Institute a huge success.

We are particularly happy with the able representation of His Excellency by the Special Adviser to the President on Agriculture and Chairman, Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Chief Audu Ogbe, MFR, who also chaired the official Opening Ceremony of the Anniversary.

Our gratitude go in no small measure to the Chief Host and Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Mallam Adamu Bello, *Dan Iyan Adamawa*; the Governors of Plateau and Nasarawa States, their Excellencies Chief Joshua Chibi Dariye and Alhaji (Dr) Abdullahi Adamu (*Sarkin Yakin Keffi*), and the representative of the Adamawa State Governor, the Honourable Commissioner of Agriculture, Adamawa State, Mr. Kobis for their personal participation in the events marking the Opening Ceremony.

The presence of Distinguished Senators, Chairman House Committee on Agriculture, Honourable (Dr) A. Lawan, and other Honourable Members of the House of Representatives, the former Governor of Plateau State and a Chieflain of the Peoples Democratic Party, Chief Solomon Daushep Lar, Plateau State PDP Chairman; the Speaker Plateau State House of Assembly, Honourable Simon Lalong and Members of the Plateau State House of Assembly, is highly acknowledged.

Mention too must be made of His Royal Majesty, the *Gbong Gwom* Jos Da Victor Pam, His Royal Highness Oba (Dr) K. A. O. Sansi, *Obelu of Esure*; the *Emir of Yauri*, His Royal Highness Alhaji (Prof) Zayyanu Abdullahi and many other traditional rulers who came from far and near to grace the occasion.

Our special thanks to Prof. S. U. Abdullahi, Vice Chancellor, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria for his scintillating Keynote Address as well as the various speakers, discussants, renowned scientists and all the distinguished participants in the Plenary Session and the Symposium held during the week. Our thanks also go to the Vice-Chancellor Adamawa State University, Mubi, Prof. Abdulrahman Ghaji.

We acknowledge the presence of the South African team from Onderstepoort Biological Products Ltd, Onderstepoort, South Africa, who communed with the Institute all through the week, and actively participated in all our activities.

Although our distinguished guests from all over the country and beyond are too numerous to mention, we must find space to say thank you to the following who graciously participated in the events: Pa (Dr) R. O. A. Shonekan, the first Principal of Laboratory Technology Training School, Vom, the Director-General of the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS) Kuru, Major-General Martin Chukwudi Osahor, the President and Members of the Nigerian Veterinary Medical Association (NVMA), the President and Members of the Veterinary Council of Nigeria, Directors of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and those from other Research Institutes and the President Poultry Association of Nigeria, Chief T. Badmus.

Special thanks too go to the following who came out with all their outfits/products to ensure the success of the Anniversary namely: the Integrated Dairy Farm (IDF), producers of Farm Fresh Products, Katchey Nig. Ltd. Lagos, Zayo Nig. Ltd., Grand Cereals and Oil Mills Ltd. Zawan, Spring Waters (Nig) Ltd. Jos, Turner Wright Nig. Ltd, Animal Care Ltd Lagos, Jos International Breweries, Adamore Nig. Ltd, Nigerian Bottling Co. Jos and all the various Companies that exhibited their products.

The contributions made by the Host Communities (Vwango, Turu and Kuru), the Nigerian Media and the general public will remain evergreen in our memory. While appreciating contributions made by all our well wishers in all forms to the progress of the Institute, we wish to assure the nation that we are poised to justify the confidence reposed in the Institute.

Thank you and God Bless.

**Dr. (Mrs) Lami H. Lombin, (MFR)**  
Director/Chief Executive,  
National Veterinary Research Institute,  
Vom.

# Business Trust

## 1ST-TIER SECURITIES

## THE NIGERIAN STOCK EXCHANGE

REPORT AS AT WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2005

COMPANY NAME	NO OF DEALS	QUOTATION(N)	QUANTITY TRADED	VALUE OF SHARES
AGRICULTURE/AGRO-ALLIED				
OKITIPUPA OIL PALM PLC	3	0.75	4,500	3,375.00
THE OKOMU OIL PALM COMPANY PLC	9	15.00	29,133	436,995.00
FRESKO PLC	22	10.69	136,282	1,447,050.30
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>34</b>		<b>169,915</b>	<b>1,887,420.30</b>
AUTOMOBILE & TYRE				
DUNLOP NIGERIA PLC	17	2.00	110,704	244,388.32
R. T. BRISCOAL PLC	2	7.22	27,000	194,940.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>19</b>		<b>143,704</b>	<b>439,328.32</b>
BANKING				
ACCESS BANK PLC	7	3.42	51,800	177,156.00
AFRIBANK NIGERIA PLC	7	6.43	15,373	101,925.99
FIRST ATLANTIC BANK PLC	46	3.25	10,717,593	34,854,677.25
CHARTERED BANK PLC	33	3.34	23,600,912	9,221,446.60
COOPERATIVE BANK PLC	23	1.00	490,000	486,000.00
EIB INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC	8	2.26	219,079	495,118.54
FIRST BANK OF NIGERIA PLC	435	24.00	2,163,769	51,942,138.91
FNB INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC	8	1.45	361,824	523,953.67
GUARANTY TRUST BANK PLC	101	11.69	1,473,750	17,238,137.50
GULF BANK OF NIGERIA PLC	11	0.93	911,000	843,920.00
HALL MARK BANK PLC	10	2.10	140,000	292,400.00
INTERNATIONAL MERCHANT BANK PLC	10	0.80	2,663,338	1,398,002.80
INLAND BANK (NIGERIA) PLC	3	1.07	16,250	17,387.50
INTERCONTINENTAL BANK PLC	8	7.81	1,284	412,633.54
LEON BANKING NIGERIA PLC	4	0.95	6,321	5,991.62
MANUFACTURERS BANK NIGERIA PLC	39	1.01	212,200	214,322.00
NAL BANK PLC	39	1.84	1,670,970	3,057,909.80
OCEANIC BANK PLC	6	6.30	43,309	273,413.70
OMEGA BANK (NIGERIA) PLC	12	1.47	22,147	32,464.69
STANDARD TRUST BANK PLC	4	7.41	7,000	570,570.00
TRANS INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC	49	1.30	331,966	416,078.53
UNITED BANK FOR AFRICA PLC	88	9.40	1,688,751	16,031,866.47
UNION BANK NIGERIA PLC	310	21.00	18,841,544	39,012,319.62
UNIVERSAL TRUST BANK PLC	27	0.85	25,944,560	21,344,476.00
WEMA BANK PLC	7	3.93	77,176	303,301.68
ZENTH BANK PLC	22	15.69	474,911	7,451,353.59
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>1,284</b>		<b>54,388,971</b>	<b>206,897,978.88</b>
BREWERIES				
CHAMPION BREWERIES PLC	4	4.78	462,899	2,198,222.22
GUINNESS NIGERIA PLC	158	115.00	181,986	55,355,998.05
NIGERIAN BREWERIES PLC	343	41.81	674,035	28,283,016.29
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>505</b>		<b>1,318,920</b>	<b>84,416,671.56</b>
BUILDING MATERIALS				
ASHAKA CEMENT PLC	58	24.15	409,587	9,862,690.99
BEULU CEMENT COMPANY PLC	3	4.10	30,131	123,537.10
CEMENT COMPANY OF NORTHERN NIG. PLC	10	7.00	165,874	1,190,860.56
WEST AFR. PORTLAND CEMENT CO. PLC	39	11.86	154,445	2,089,050.62
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>110</b>		<b>779,837</b>	<b>13,266,139.27</b>
CHEMICAL & PAINTS				
BERGER PAINTS PLC	9	4.56	33,727	154,229.80
CAP PLC	10	7.15	31,930	228,299.50
D. N. MEYER PLC	10	5.18	152,878	791,976.60
NIGERIA-GERMAN CHEMICALS PLC	65	3.51	7,364	25,829.55
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>33</b>		<b>225,900</b>	<b>1,200,335.45</b>
COMPUTER & OFFICE EQUIPMENT				
THOMAS WYATT NIGERIA PLC	5	0.39	56,544	21,968.18
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>5</b>		<b>56,544</b>	<b>21,968.18</b>
CONGLOMERATES				
A. G. LEVENTIS NIGERIA PLC	1	1.29	444	572.76
C F O NIGERIA PLC	11	4.70	37,260	174,840.18
JOHN HOLT PLC	5	0.95	14,606	13,875.70
UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC	166	15.88	79,866.32	12,019,866.32
P. Z. INDUSTRIES PLC	65	12.01	182,728	1,960,501.46
S C O NIGERIA PLC	5	1.19	21,683	25,802.77
U.A.C. NIGERIA PLC	52	14.17	282,700	2,872,599.00
U.T.C. NIGERIA PLC	3	1.20	191,250	233,940.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>313</b>		<b>1,385,921</b>	<b>17,301,958.19</b>
CONSTRUCTION				
COSTAIN (W.A.) PLC	4	0.96	12,437	11,939.52
JULIUS BERGER NIGERIA PLC	3	16.40	2,560	41,984.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>14,997</b>	<b>53,923.52</b>
ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY				
NIGERIAN WIRE AND CABLE PLC	1	0.90	2,000	1,800.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>2,000</b>	<b>1,800.00</b>
FOOD/BEVERAGES & TOBACCO				
T-UP BOTTLING COMPANY PLC	37	23.00	100,916	2,344,457.02
CADBURY NIGERIA PLC	170	59.01	258,572	15,285,074.94
FLOUR MILLS NIGERIA PLC	15	16.61	27,330	453,951.30
NIGERIA BOTTLING COMPANY PLC	102	59.99	187,045	11,136,821.49
NESTLE FOODS NIGERIA PLC	7	15.00	10,000	18,706,192.82
NORTHERN NIGERIA FLOUR MILLS PLC	2	15.82	2,500	39,350.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>398</b>		<b>697,104</b>	<b>47,476,147.57</b>
HEALTHCARE				
EKOCOR PLC	1	1.25	10,000	12,500.00
EVANS MEDICAL PLC	30	3.05	1,339,336	4,123,773.68
MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC	5	5.40	81,411	45,794.70
MORISON INDUSTRIES PLC	4	1.17	50,000	58,500.00
NEIMETH INTERNATIONAL PHARM. PLC	14	2.98	67,390	200,000.00
PHARMA-DEKO PLC	1	15.00	15,000	73,500.00
GLAXOSMITHKLINE CONSUMER NIG. PLC	19	8.00	81,283	656,433.36
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>76</b>		<b>1,571,719</b>	<b>4,171,201.37</b>
INDUSTRIAL/DOMESTIC PRODUCTS				
NIGERIA ENAMELWARE COMPANY PLC	2	3.25	15,150	49,215.00
FIRST ALUMINIUM NIGERIA PLC	12	1.02	377,000	385,140.00
B.O.C. GASES PLC	23	3.00	234,345	703,284.44
VITAFORM NIGERIA PLC	24	3.49	63,338	217,994.56
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>61</b>		<b>680,834</b>	<b>1,385,899.00</b>
INSURANCE				
ACEN INSURANCE COMPANY PLC	4	0.60	61,250	36,750.00
AIICO INSURANCE PLC	5	1.67	100,000	167,000.00
CORNERSTONE INSURANCE CO. PLC	29	1.26	474,905	1,409,565.55
CRESADER INSURANCE PLC	2	0.70	3,397	2,377.90
MUTUAL BENEFITS ASSURANCE PLC	5	0.93	140,000	130,900.00
N.E.M. INSURANCE CO. (NIG.) PLC	3	0.79	100,000	79,000.00
NIGER INSURANCE CO. PLC	1	4.04	3,000	12,120.00
PRESTIGE ASSURANCE PLC	1	1.97	31,618	144,751.68
ROYAL EXCHANGE ASSURANCE PLC	1	4.53	37,131	52,560.52
UNIK INSURANCE PLC	2	2.50	65,973	1,708,087.20
WEST AFRICAN PROV. INS. COY. PLC	14	1.49	1,064,089	2,139,745.73
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>73</b>		<b>2,088,784.76</b>	<b>208,784.76</b>
MANAGED FUNDS				
C & I LEASING PLC	9	1.49	140,134	208,784.76
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>9</b>		<b>140,134</b>	<b>208,784.76</b>
PACKAGING				
AVON CROWNCAPS & CONTAINERS PLC	4	0.66	11,769	7,767.54
NAMPAK NIGERIA PLC	4	1.10	3,995	4,357.35
BETA GLASS COMPANY PLC	7	4.90	20,000	97,882.55
POLY PRODUCTS (NIGERIA) PLC	6	0.46	43,141	19,948.06
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>21</b>		<b>79,125</b>	<b>129,953.50</b>
PETROLEUM(MARKETING)				
AFROIL PLC	10	0.70	562,000	393,400.00
AFRICAN PETROLEUM PLC	103	68.05	219,827	14,990,692.95
PTERNA OIL & GAS PLC	5	2.18	32,000	68,400.00
MOBIL OIL NIGERIA PLC	53	178.12	178,245	2,000,334.56
CONOIL PLC	76	127.05	39,570	7,561,338.64
TENAXO (NIGERIA) PLC	23	169.00	13,224	2,225,562.24
TOTAL NIGERIA PLC	37	185.10	26,884	4,983,402.02
DANFO PLC	190	108.00	154,149	16,669,944.74
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>479</b>		<b>1,083,899</b>	<b>49,793,275.15</b>
PRINTING & PUBLISHING				
LONGMAN NIGERIA PLC	1	2.22	9,321	20,692.62
UNIVERSITY PRESS PLC	1	1.37	15,000	20,540.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>34,321</b>	<b>41,232.62</b>
REAL ESTATE				
UACN PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT PLC	26	8.90	175,000	1,516,486.80
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>26</b>		<b>175,000</b>	<b>1,516,486.80</b>
TEXTILES				
UNITED NIGERIA TEXTILES PLC	7	1.99	11,480	22,817.30
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>7</b>		<b>11,480</b>	<b>22,817.30</b>
<b>Overall Totals</b>			<b>64,622,374</b>	<b>430,352,777.47</b>

## TOP 10 TRADES YESTERDAY

SYMBOL	VOLUME	VALUE	TRADES
Symbol	Volume	Value	Trades
EVANSMED	1,339,336.00	4,125,977.68	30
GUARANTY	1,473,750.00	17,228,137.50	101
NAL	1,670,970.00	3,057,909.80	39
UBA	1,688,751.00	16,031,166.47	88
UBN	1,841,544.00	39,011,319.62	310
FIRSTBANK	2,163,769.00	51,942,138.91	435
IMB	2,663,338.00	1,598,002.80	30
CHARTERED	2,760,912.00	9,221,446.60	33
ATLANTICBK	10,717,593.00	34,854,677.25	46
UTB	25,944,560.00	21,344,476.00	27

## TOP 10 GAINERS

SYMBOL	LASTCLOSE	YESTERDAYSCLOSE	CHANGE
ASHAKACEM	23.00	24.15	+1.15
NEC	59.40	59.99	+0.59
PRESCO	10.19	10.69	+0.50
UAC-PROP	8.60	8.90	+0.30
VITAFOAM	3.33	3.49	+0.16
ENAMELWA	3.10	3.25	+0.15
CHARTERED	3.19	3.34	+0.15
DELTAAS	4.75	4.90	+0.15
CFAO	4.59	4.70	+0.11
LEVIROS	15.70	15.81	+0.11

## TOP 10 LOSERS

SYMBOL	LASTCLOSE	YESTERDAYSCLOSE	CHANGE
MOBIL	184.00	178.12	-5.88
TUP	24.00	23.00	-1.00
UNIPETROL	109.00	108.00	-1.00
UBN	21.49	21.00	-0.49
NB	42.20	41.81	-0.39
NESTLE	150.45	150.10	-0.35
PHARMDEKO	5.15	4.90	-0.25
NOLCHEM	127.30	127.05	-0.25
BERGER	4.80	4.56	-0.24
ROYALEX	4.76	4.53	-0.23

## Morgan Stanley cuts

### Thailand's growth forecast

US investment bank, Morgan Stanley has lowered Thailand's economic growth forecast this year to 5.7 percent from 6.0 percent due to the impact of the tsunami disaster on the country's tourism industry.

While the affected Thai provinces account for only 2.7 percent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), the damage to the tourism sector could have a "multiplier effect" on the entire economy, Morgan Stanley said in a report on late Tuesday.

Nearly one-third of foreign tourists arriving into Thailand visit resorts in the affected provinces, it noted.

"We think Thailand risks achieving only 75-80 percent of the official 13.4 million tourist arrivals forecast for 2005," said the report by Morgan Stanley's chief Southeast Asia economist, Daniel Lian.

The bulk of the impact is expected to be felt in the first quarter this year.

The report said, however, that the strength of the rest of the Thai economy and an expected pick-up in domestic investment should mitigate the effect of any sharp decline in tourist arrivals.

"We have thus downgraded our Thai GDP growth estimate for 2005 by a moderate 0.3 (percentage points) from 6.0 percent to 5.7 percent," it said.

"While there are further downside risks to our revised 2005 forecast if tourist arrivals, receipts and the multiplier effect (are less) than anticipated in the coming months, we believe the Thai authorities can leverage its fiscal and domestic investment strength if necessary."

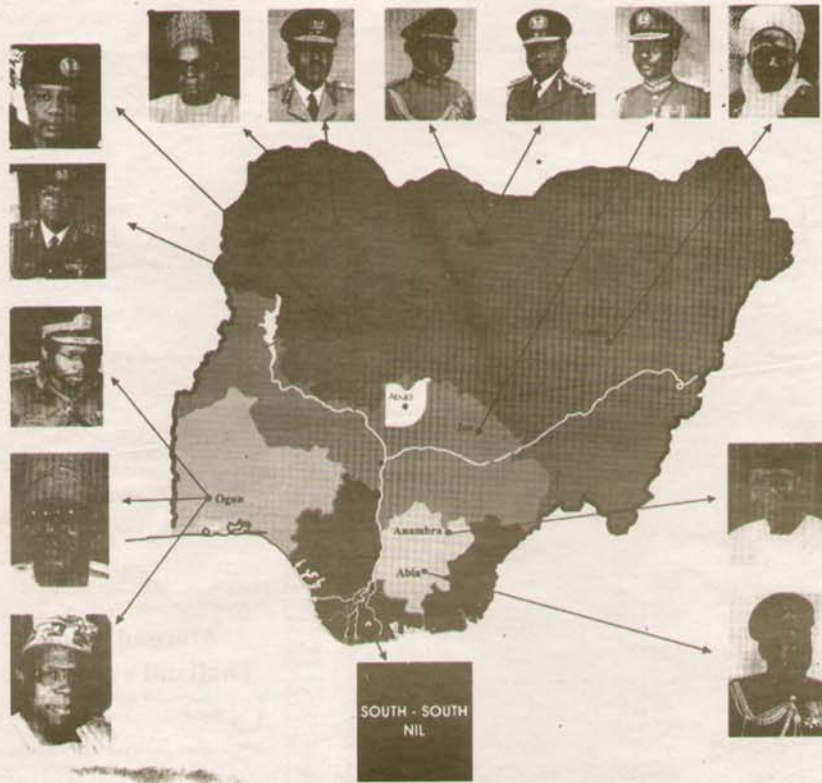
Morgan Stanley maintained its 4.5 percent GDP growth forecast for Indonesia as the tsunami damage has been largely confined to the province of Aceh, nearest to the epicentre of the December 26 earthquake that triggered the massive waves.

"Given that the energy (mainly oil and natural gas) production facilities in Aceh or Northern Sumatra have survived the tsunami, the overall damage to Indonesia's economy appears to be minimal," it said.

It also noted that the impact on Malaysia is minimal and maintained its growth forecast for the country at 4.8 percent.

## OUR PAST LEADERS & THEIR GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN

### THE FACT OF THE MATTER



- |   |                      |   |  |
|---|----------------------|---|--|
| 1 | <b>NORTH WEST</b>    | → Alhaji Shehu Shagari<br>Gen Murtala Muhammed<br>Gen. Muhammadu Buhari<br>Gen. Sani Abacha | (Oct 1, 1979-Dec 31, 1983)<br>(July 29, 1975-Feb 13, 1976)<br>(Dec 31, 1983-Aug. 27 1985)<br>(Nov 17, 1993-June 8, 1998) |
| 2 | <b>NORTH EAST</b>    | → Alhaji Tafawa Balewa<br>(Prime Minister)  | (Oct 1, 1960-Jan 15, 1966)   |
| 3 | <b>NORTH CENTRAL</b> | → Gen. Yakubu Gowon<br>Gen. Ibrahim Babangida<br>Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar                  | (July 29, 1966-July 29, 1975)<br>(Aug 27, 1985-Aug 26, 1993)<br>(June 9, 1998-May 29, 1999)                              |
| 4 | <b>SOUTH EAST</b>    | → Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe<br>(President)<br>Gen. Aguiyi Ironsi                                   | (Oct 1, 1960-Jan 15, 1966)<br>(Jan 15, 1966-July 29, 1966)   |
| 5 | <b>SOUTH WEST</b>    | → Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo<br>Chief Ernest Shonekan<br>Chief Olusegun Obasanjo                | (Feb 14, 1976-Oct 1, 1979)<br>(Aug 29, 1993-Nov 17, 1993)<br>(May 29, 1999-Date)   |
| 6 | <b>SOUTH SOUTH</b>   | → NIL   | (1960-DATE)  |



## RECRUITMENT OF RATINGS INTO THE NIGERIAN NAVY NNBSTS BATCH 2

1. The Nigerian Navy wishes to inform the general public that there will be a nationwide recruitment exercise of able bodied young men and women into the Service from 21-26 March 2005.
2. All interested persons are required to purchase the application forms in any of the following centres:
  - a. All Branches of Standard Trust Bank - Nationwide
  - b. Nigerian Navy Engineering College, Sapele.
  - c. NNS DELTA, Naval Base, Warri.
  - d. Naval Unit, Mogadishu Cantonment, Abuja.
  - e. NNS PATHFINDER, Naval Base, Port Harcourt.
  - f. Nigerian Navy Secondary School Borokiri, Port Harcourt.
  - g. NNS VICTORY, Naval Base, Calabar.
  - h. Nigerian Navy Finance and Logistics School, Owerri.
  - i. NNS WEY, Ojo Lagos.
3. Prospective candidates for the exercise are to report at the zonal recruitment centres chosen for their respective states of origin as shown below.

S/No	Zone	State	Zonal Recruitment Centres
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
1.	Zone A	Lagos, Ogun	NNSS Navy Town Ojo
2.	Zone B	Oyo, Osun	Govt. Tech. College Okefa-Oshogbo, Osun State
3.	Zone C	Ondo, Ekiti	State Stadium, Akure, Ondo State
4.	Zone D	Edo, Delta	NNEC Ogorode, Sapele
5.	Zone E	Imo, Abia	Artillery Battalion, Owerri, Imo State
6.	Zone F	Rivers, Bayelsa	NNBSTs Akaso, Onne, P/Harcourt, River State
7.	Zone G	Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi	82 Div. Abakpa, Enugu State
8.	Zone H	Benue, Nassarawa	Nassarawa State Polytechnic Lafia N/State
9.	Zone I	Plateau, Bauchi, Gombe	33 Field Artillery Brigade, Bauchi
10.	Zone J	Kaduna, Niger, FCT	TRADOC Minna, Niger State.
11.	Zone K	Borno, Yobe	Army Children Sch. Maimalari Cant. Maiduguri
12.	Zone L	Taraba, Adamawa	State Stadium, Jalingo Taraba State
13.	Zone M	Kano, Katsina, Jigawa	NAF Base Kano
14.	Zone N	Cross River, Akwa Ibom	State Stadium, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State
15.	Zone O	Kwara, Kogi	State Stadium, Loran, Kwara State
16.	Zone P	Sokoto, Zamfara, Kebbi	26 Motorised Battalion Sokoto, Sokoto State

**EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

4. The educational requirements for recruitment into the Nigerian Navy was recently reviewed. Please find below details of requirements for various categories.

- a. **Category A - Artificers:** OND in Marine, Mechanical, Electrical/Electronics Engineering and must also possess SSCE/Equivalent with credits in Mathematics, Physics, English Language and 2 passes in any other subjects.
- b. **Category B1 - Electrical/Engine Room Mechanics and Technicians** OND in Marine, Electrical/Electronics Engineering and must also possess SSCE/Equivalent with credits in Mathematics, Physics and passes in any 2 subjects including English Language. Intermediate City and Guild or Trade Test II could be considered.
- c. **Category B2 - Project Technicians:** OND in relevant discipline such as Architecture, Quantity Surveying, Civil / Structural Building Technology, Electrical/Mechanical Installation, Urban and regional Planning, Estate Management and Land Economy.
- d. **Category C1 - Communications:** SSCE/Equivalent with 3 credits in English Language, Physics and Mathematics and passes in any 2 other subjects.
- e. **Category C2 - Computer:** Candidates must possess at least 3 credits in WASC/GCE 'O' Level including Maths and English Language. Candidates with OND in Computer Programming or recognized Diploma/Certificate in Programming or City and Guilds in relevant field will be considered.
- f. **Category D1 - Seaman:** SSCE/Equivalent with 3 credits including English Language, Mathematics and passes in any 2 other subjects.
- g. **Category D2 - Survey Recorders:** OND in Land Survey and SSCE/Equivalent with 3 credits in Physics, Mathematics and Geography/Technical Drawing and 2 passes in any other subjects including English Language.
- h. **Category D3 - Physical Training Instructors:** SSCE / Equivalent with 3 credits in English Language, Health Education, Biology/Health Science and 2 passes in any other subjects. Main emphasis are interest and proven talents in sports, at least at State Championship.
- i. **Category D4 - Christian Religious Affairs:** Church Assistant must have 3 credits in SSCE/Equivalent including CRK, English Language and 2 passes in any other subjects.
- j. **Category D5 - Islamic Affairs:** The Mosque Assistants must have 2 credits in GCE/SSCE in Arabic and Islamic Studies and a pass in English Language.
- k. **Category E1 - Writers:** SSCE/Equivalent with credits in English Language, Mathematics, Account/Economics and 2 passes in any other subjects.
- l. **Category E2 - Store Assistants:** SSCE/Equivalent with 3 credits in English Language, Economics and Mathematics, 2 passes in any other subjects.
- m. **Category E3 - Cooks:** SSCE/Equivalent with 2 credits and 2 Passes including English Language and Home Economics or Food Nutrition. Other catering qualification is an added advantage.
- n. **Category E4 - Stewards:** SSCE/Equivalent with 2 passes including English Language and Home Economics or Food Nutrition. Water qualification and proven steward experience in 3 Star Hotel is an added advantage.
- o. **Category F1 - Medical Assistant:** SSCE / Equivalent with 3 credits in English Language, Chemistry and Biology/Health Science. A pass in Mathematics will be an advantage.
- p. **Category F2 - Medical Records/Occupational Therapy:** OND/Professional Qualification in addition to SSCE/Equivalent with 3 credits in English Language, Mathematics, Biology / Health Science.
- q. **Category F3 - Physiotherapy/Public Health/Dental Therapy/Dental Lab Assistant:** OND/Professional Qualifications in addition to SSCE/Equivalent with 3 credits in English Language, Chemistry, Biology, or Health Science. A pass in Mathematics will be an advantage.
- r. **Category G - Bandman:** SSCE/Equivalent with 2 credits including English Language and passes in any other two subjects. Certificate in Royal School of Music and proficiency in any musical instruments will be an added advantage.
- s. **Category H - Drivers:** SSCE/Equivalent with 3 passes including English Language, and a current Driving License.
- t. **Category J - Journalists:** OND in Mass Communication, Journalism, Photography, Printing technology, library and information science, Public Relations, Graphic Arts, Film Making and Cinematography. Candidates must also have 3 credits in SSCE/Equivalent including English Language and Mathematics.
- u. **Category K - Nurses:** Single/Double qualification in any of the professional examinations i.e. RM, RN, including Credits in English Language, Mathematics and Biology/Health Science in GCE/SSCE.
- v. **Category N - Education:** NCE in Science/Art/ Technical subjects.

In addition to the academic and professional qualifications each candidate must meet the following requirements.

- a. must be of Nigerian origin by birth
- b. must be between 18-22 years and maximum of 26 years for candidate with higher qualification
- c. (Nurses, NCE, OND, holders and drivers etc. must be medically fit and must not be less than 1.68m tall for males and 1.65m for females
- d. must be free from any previous conviction by a court of law on criminal grounds.

**Signed**  
**Navy secretary**  
**for Chief of the Naval Staff**



# Recalling a visit to the pear

The shift by the Central Bank of Nigeria of its 2004 seminar for Business Editors and correspondents from Zamfara State to Bauchi state deflated the joy and excitement of witnessing the practice of the sharia legal system by its currently acclaimed arrow head.

But the fact that Bauchi state and its governor, Alhaji Ahmadu Adamu Mu'azu have been in the news of late for some positive developments was enough modification as one set off from Lagos with gusto. The excitement shifted from witnessing the practice of sharia in Zamfara to assessing the much trumpeted miracles of Mu'azu, whether they are real or just on the pages of newspapers.

For most of us in that journey all the airport procedures after landing in Jos, Plateau state was just perfunctory as our coaster bus set off towards our destination without much ado.

We drove from the airport at Hympang past the rocky, uneven Plateaus of Jos, at a steady speed until we reached Jos East Local Government Area before we entered Toro in Tudun Wada Toro Local Government Area in Bauchi state, just after the Plateau-Bauchi State border.

From our observation after the Panshau bridge and passing through the Panshau mountains, which stretched from Plateau to

**Bright Ewulu, Deputy Business Editor (Lagos)**

Bauchi, it was obvious that the two states share a lot in terms of topography. No wonder, the country side of Bauchi roads are smoother than most all over the country. Perhaps, if the Eastern parts of Nigeria need to import roads Bauchi could be the place to come.

We soon reached Zaranda Hotel at the outskirts of Bauchi town. One was beginning to think that although Bauchi is more of a rural state, it could compete favourably with Plateau state, considering developments in the areas of tourism and of course, peace, which is why Bauchi's is described as the pearl of tourism. However, Zaranda is not as magnificent as one expected.

Soon after arrival, therefore, we strolled into town in search of the its hospitality potentials. Our search took us to Awalah Hotel, ibyn Maiduguri/Ningi road, and then to the new G.R.A, where we saw Hazibal suites and Polycon Guest Inn, which were small out fits already fully booked.

The state Hotel in Tafawa Balewa road and others could serve our purpose until we got to Ohuna Royal Hotel. Apparently, the search enabled us to crisscross the capital and sample what it had to offer. It was obvious that Mu'azu's achievement in

terms of road network was okay and also indicated that he has real work to do if he is serious about turning the state into a tourist haven. Altogether, one was aware of the well paved roads, but felt that the hype over the government's record in what appears a rural area was not realistic.

My doubt was, however, erased the following day by no other person than the CBN governor, Professor Charles Soludo who declared that what the state government has achieved in this dispensation is nothing short of a revolution, considering the situation of Bauchi in the past. I was a first time visitor in the state and I was comparing it with other places in the north that I know.

On that breezy harmattan day of November 30, the CBN spokesman, Mr Tony Ede, announced to the participants at the seminar on the on-going consolidation efforts of the apex bank that in order to make the event more eventful they would be embarking on a visit to the famous Yankari Games reserve. One never knew how exciting the visit could be, and never paid attention to Mr Ede's warnings severally, that it had to be early if we were to actually see the various animals of the park in the wild.

He also warned the ladies on the entourage that they should stay close to men be-



CBN Governor, Prof. Charles Soludo (standing) flanked by his Deputies Mr. Tunde Lemo and Dr. Shamsi at the recent CBN seminar in Bauchi State.

cause baboons are known to abduct ladies but I didn't believe him.

December 2, 2004, we set off for Yankari. The "sights" on our way were mainly mud huts in some places in lone-some fields, in others in clusters. In the main landscape on your way to Alkaleri local government area where the topography was, generally flat and one could see miles ahead, but for the occasional

rocks and boulders, we by passed farmers in the Alkaleri country side busy on their farms. As our bus passed some of the locations some of the farmers would rise and simply stare at us. Some would wave at us, while others just stood at hands akimbo with expressionless faces. The Fulani herdsmen we encountered and their young ones, strangely, were mainly dark skinned with their hats and trade mark "duba" like cloths. The wonder, however, was that most of the cows that grazed in the fields were white skinned.

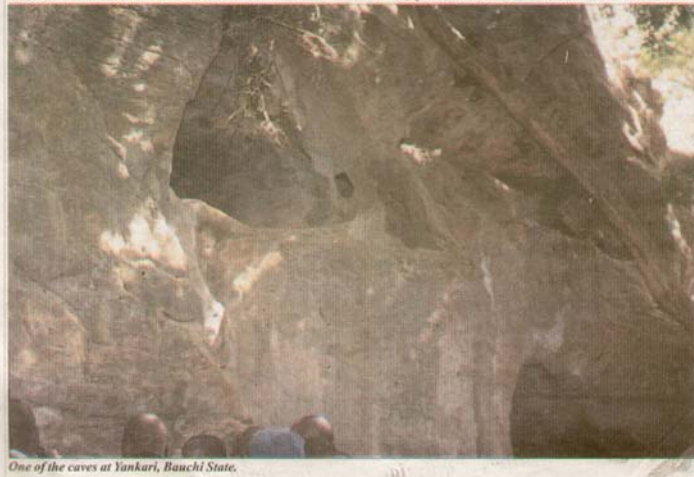
Despite the evident wonderful work by the state governor around the capital and his electrification of the rural areas of Bauchi the road to Yankari has quite a good number of bumps, which jolted and rocked our buss severally as fellow journalists on the journey argued over the length of time that should be expended on the tour. Some of them wanted to return to their bases that day.

On reaching River Dindima near Wikki camp, we discovered that it had dried up as a result of the hermittan. The camp was 43km to our destination. Soon, we arrived Maraba Gate, which had a round bungalow beside it. A guard

handed a tally to our driver who informed us that the road was worse from that point onwards? We found that our bus was forced to slow down. From that point, nonetheless, the forest became thicker and a signboard warned all visitors who cared to read it that "animals have right of way." Also the air became cooler.

One of us started a dis-

ussion federal be ash road, b the deq road m erately no a fe told lat could wild at cross t advan could t



One of the caves at Yankari, Bauchi State.



A Bird's Eye view of a part of Yankari, s

## Paradise of tourism



Dr. Shamsudeen Usman during

discussion by saying that the federal government should be ashamed of the rough road, but another opined that the deplorable state of the road might have been deliberately ignored to give tourists a feel of the wild. We were told later that a smooth road could lead to the death of wild animals which at times cross the road unaware of advancing vehicles that could run them down. Actu-

ally, Maraba serves as the point where the reserve was separated from the other parts of the state.

At a point, one of the journalists urged the driver to stop for him to urinate. The driver refused and pleaded with him to endure a while, to which he replied that he couldn't do so any longer. A loud laughter erupted in the coaster bus after which others agreed that he was free to do it in the bus. Another round of laughter rent the air as the driver raised speed, pretending he did not hear.

The immediate gate to Yankari was non-descript apart from a large green signboard with the inscription "welcome to Yankari game reserve" before which stood about three electric poles on the either side of the road, the enclosure which serve as the abode for the staff. The enclosure also has some chalets for tourists, a primary school, a museum, restaurant and a few other amenities. Nevertheless, with the noise being made about the reserve currently and even in the last several years the infrastructure in Yankari leaves much to be desired.

According to the camp commandant, Yohanna Saidu, who took us to the reserves museum, it was founded and demarcated in 1956 by Robert Cuthart, but was officially opened in 1962 after Nigeria's independence. It became a national park in

1991. Apart from housing a range of animals in the wild, the reserve has a cave, four warm springs namely Wikki warm spring (31oc), Gwana (33oc), Dimil (35oc), Mawulgo (29-30oc) and Tungan Matiki cold spring.

Yankari games reserves has a land mass of 2244,105 sq km. It is located in the Savannah zone with riverine areas and thick forest. The cave at the games reserve was discovered in 1980 by Ahmadu Maka who pointed it out to the leader of the team of archaeologist on tour of the reserve then, Mr. P. J. Marshall.

From the records at the reserve the highest recorded number of tourists, visit to the reserve was in 1985 when 34,948 tourists came calling. The lowest recorded was in 1998 when the total was 9,454. It rose to 34,054 in 2001.

It could be recalled that 1985 was the last year of General Mohammadu Bahari's regime and the resumption of General Ibrahim Babangida as the head of state. The flow of tourists to Yankari seemed to have slowed down during the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) years and worsened during General Sani Abacha and General Abdulsalami Abubakar's regimes, a period widely known as the June 12 era. The flow from the figures in Yankari, rose in 2001 after the inception of democracy and went



Two Baboons at the Yankari Games Reserve, Bauchi State.

down again last year 2003 with the worsening communal conflicts in the middle belt, far-north and Niger Delta.

After our visit to the museum most of us, who had left their hotel rooms around 6.30am invaded the reserves bar for refreshment before climbing back into the archaic truck waiting in the sun. Others climbed back to their buses. We then moved

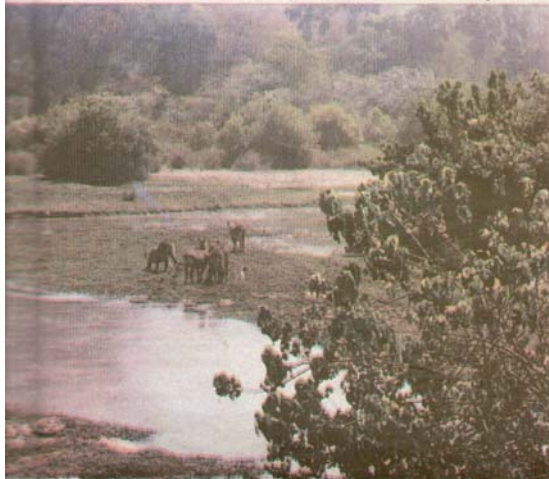
in different directions in search of the games of the wild.

We arrived Yankari at around 11am and the sun was already high up. That was why we could see many animals. I saw a giant monkey run across our path. The sights of Baboon, water-bug, crocodile, and antelope made my year. Apart from sighting these animals on television and at Enugu zoo many years

ago, the visit to Yankari afforded me the opportunity of doing so.

Wherever the CBN annual seminar for business editors and correspondents holds, you can observe that the state governor there is a performer. This is far outside the realms of politics.

All possibilities point to the fact that the next seminar may hold in Calabar the capital of Cross River State.



Yankari, showing some animals in their habitat.

*From the records at the reserve the highest recorded number of tourists, visit to the reserve was in 1985 when 34,948 tourists came calling. The lowest recorded was in 1998 when the total was 9,454. It rose to 34,054 in 2001. It could be recalled that 1985 was the last year of General Mohammadu Bahari's regime and the resumption of General Ibrahim Babangida as the head of state. The flow of tourists to Yankari seemed to have slowed down during the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) years and worsened during General Sani Abacha and General Abdulsalami Abubakar's regimes a period widely known as the June 12 era. The flow from the figures in Yankari, rose in 2001 after the inception of democracy and went down again last year 2003 with the worsening communal conflicts in the middle belt, far-north and Niger Delta.*

# Science & Education



The Chancellor of the Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA), who is also the Emir of Lafija, Alhaji Isa Agwai II congratulating Governor Bukar Abba Ibrahim of Yobe State after the conferment on him of an honorary doctor degree in Environmental Technology by the University, Akure.

## University distributes motor-cycles to staff

Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki (EBSU), has distributed 72 motor cycles, valued at N7.92 million to staff, to alleviate their transportation The Vice

Chancellor of the University, Prof. Fidelis Ogah, distributed the motor cycles on Thursday in Abakaliki.

Ogah said the project was a major step, aimed at

reducing lateness and increasing productivity.

He explained that with the acquisition of the motor cycles it was expected that workers would be more punctual, efficient and dedicated to their duties.

Ogah said the motor cycle project was meant to enhance staff welfare, adding that beneficiaries, under the first phase, would each pay 77 per cent, representing N85,000, while the university would pay a subsidy of 23 per cent representing N25,000. He called on the beneficiaries to reciprocate the gesture by being cooperative and dedicated to duties.

In a remark, the University Registrar, Mr Christian Ezech, noted that the beneficiaries of the scheme were staff, who had earlier indicated interest in the project. Ezech said the compilation of list for the second batch had begun.

One of the beneficiaries, Mr Patrick Igboke, commended the university management for its initiative and gave the assurance that the gesture would enhance their productivity.



A scientist performing an experiment in a laboratory

## Higher Education This Week

By Dr. Isaac N. Obasi, zikobasi@yahoo.com

### Great expectations for 2005

It is normal to have expectations or hopes in a New Year. The year 2005 would not be an exception. As the first specialized *Higher Education regular column* in Nigeria for almost two years now (for which we give God the Glory), our expectations from those managing our higher education sub-sector would continue to grow higher and higher. Since this is not the time for agenda setting (as the 2005 budget has already been prepared), it is therefore a time for great expectations from what has already been proposed for execution in the year 2005. But before we proceed further, it is perhaps important to observe that the higher education sub-sector ended the year 2004 on a cheering note. We would therefore want the gains made in 2004 consolidated and this can be done if the authorities remain focused by accomplishing the things already proposed for this year.

The year 2004 ended without the usual national strike by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). We nevertheless had pockets of local strikes by lecturers and protests by the students in some institutions. The case of the Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife particularly comes to mind. It was a very regrettable situation given the fact that its Vice-chancellor as we all know is a very straight forward man who in our humble opinion (and we hope we are right) runs an honest, open and transparent administration. But as we all know, doing this is not enough when funds are inadequate to take care of prevailing needs of staff and students. Based on the experience of OAU, we hope that the federal government would continue to make up for the shortfalls of what all the higher institutions need during the year.

Consequently, one of our great expectations is that both the government and the unions (academic and non academic) would work very hard to make the year 2005 a strike-free year. Efforts should start now to nip in the bud problems that may bring about a national strike again. We pray that constructive dialogue would continue to prevail while the values underpinning or sustaining it, be widely accepted and respected. One sure way to achieve this is for the Honourable Minister of Education, Prof. Fabian Osuji is to be actively pro-active in taking confidence-building initiatives. Confidence building among the major stakeholders in the sub-sector is necessary for constructive engagements to flourish. This is because it is during 'peace-time' period that efforts should be intensified to cultivate deeper, the spirit of trust-building necessary for a continued industrial harmony within the sub-sector.

The extent to which the higher education sub-sector, can operate without a national strike this year, would depend largely on the level of trust and cooperation among all the stakeholders. And if this can be achieved this year (not in the manner of a graveyard peace we hope), then we would have started a journey of opening a new chapter in the history of the 25 years of the cycle of strikes in higher education in Nigeria (1978-2003). This is the greatest expectation of this column in the year 2005. We want history to be made and this column would continue to promote the spirit of constructive engagements between the government and the major stakeholders in this sub-sector in order to achieve this major goal.

Given the fact that the Honourable Minister of Education has promised the completion of abandoned projects in all higher institutions in the next two years, one expects that the year 2005 would provide the necessary evidence that the government means business. This year should in addition to laying solid foundation towards the realization of this goal, provide also concrete and effective monitoring measures towards making the target date a reality. Put differently, the extent to which this goal can be realized within the specified period is a function of the level of suc-

cess achieved in this year's budget. We therefore hope that the government would ensure that the higher institutions put their hands on desk in this regard. Any attempt at corrupt embezzlement must be seriously monitored to prevent the recurrence of project abandonment this time around. One hopes that the Federal Government's Due Process mechanism would continue to serve as an effective check on how well the completion of the abandoned projects is progressing.

The federal government announced last year its plans to take over the Alvan Ikoko College of Education, Owerri, which is the only one in its category yet to be taken over. It was also disclosed that it is establishing a federal university in Delta State. Furthermore, it has approved four new Polytechnics for Bayelsa, Jigawa, Kebbi and Taraba States where federal institutions in such category are absent. We commend these initiatives and hope that the year 2005 would see concrete measures on the ground as evidence of government seriousness in this respect. The likely beneficial multiplier effects of these initiatives cannot be over-emphasized especially in terms of graduate employment.

We have high expectation regarding the expected government white paper on the Visitation panels. In one of our earlier write-ups on the Visitation panels, we commended the courage of the panelists against the background of our earlier expressed pessimism on the issue. It is therefore expected that the government should take effective actions towards stopping the re-occurrence of the administrative mess identified in the reports.

We commend the *e-education* project of the Honourable Minister of Education and hope that it would be made effective through the provision of the necessary IT infrastructure required for its operation. Consequently, we invite the Honourable Minister of Education and the Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission (NUC) to the University of Botswana for an inspection of how the effective collaboration of the IT Department and the Education Technology Support Unit combine to make the monthly running of *e-learning* workshops for staff a good insurance for the survival and sustainability of *e-education*. We invite them to come and inspect the IT facilities in the library and in the faculties. Learning about the nitty-gritty of the successes so far, and the challenges in the running and maintenance of these facilities in an African country, would also serve a useful purpose. We expect that the year 2005 would strengthen the facilities on the ground for the *e-learning* project of the NUC.

We commend the on-going rehabilitation of roads in higher institutions against the background of the quality of work carried out at the University of Ibadan. We therefore expect that during this year the pilot schemes in selected institutions such as the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, and the University of Port Harcourt, would be implemented as planned and also extended to all levels of tertiary institutions.

Last but not the least we commend the NUC for some of its innovative projects such as the recently organized first Nigerian Universities Research and Development Fair (NURESDEF). We expect more from it in the year 2005.

Once again, we wish all our readers a Happy and Prosperous New Year, 2005.

Dr. Obasi writes from the Department of Political and Administrative Studies, University of Botswana, Gaborone, Southern Africa

# Science & Education

## VC insists on adherence to academic regulations

**D**etermined to promote and sustain academic excellence, University of Abuja Vice-Chancellor Nuhu Yaqub has enjoined staff and students to adhere strictly to academic regulations.

The vice chancellor handed down the injunction at a forum with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) at the weekend in Abuja.

Yaqub, who assumed office in June last year, said that his administration had initiated measures to improve on the existing academic standard of the institution.

He said it was disheartening to observe cases of truancy and laxity toward the institution's commitment to learning and scholarship by lecturers and students.

He warned that the authorities would not take cases of indiscipline and other negative attitude to learning lightly.

"As part of measures to ensure attendance at lectures we now monitor both

the lecturers and students. A student must attend a minimum of 75 per cent of the classes to qualify for the sessional examinations.

"Lecturers have been directed to record attendance to lectures by students. The lecturers would be held responsible for any discrepancies in such record of attendance.

To ensure fairness and balanced monitoring, "students too would be given the opportunity to assess the performance of their lecturers," he added.

Stressing that these measures were already yielding positive results, Yaqub said: "I can beat my chest that there are no more sharp practices either in the area of sale of hand-outs, examination malpractice or admission racketeering on this institution."

"The present management of the university, more than ever before, encourages lecturers to regularly teach their students and to also ensure that the students are always attending classes and doing their assignments, among other things.

"Also, the lecturers are encouraged to write quality textbooks, which must go through proper scrutiny and must not be forced on students," he said.

The vice-chancellor said the university's management had already banned the compulsory sale of handouts, books and journals to students.

"It is unethical in any university system for lecturers to sell handouts to students, so we are curtailing such excesses before it spoils the system," he added.

Yaqub said that the university's senate had set up a committee to monitor such illegalities and report back to it on quarterly basis, noting that erring lecturers, staff and students would risk various sanctions if found wanting.

He appealed to members of the university community to extend their hands of fellowship and cooperation to enable him translate his vi-

sion for the university into reality.

"I am determined to improve on the foundation already laid for the development of the institution, but I need the support and co-operation of the staff and students as there is nothing I can do alone, it is a collective responsibility," he added.

The vice-chancellor promised to enhance staff and student welfare and development to boost learning culture and strengthen due process mechanisms in all spheres of the university's conduct in order to attain world-class standard.

He, however, said that the university was suffering from physical limitations

due to inadequate funds and urged the federal government to redress the situation. "The physical structures need to be rehabilitated, while more lecture rooms, laboratories and other facilities need to be put in place, so as to achieve a wholesome development of the university," Yaqub averred.

## NGO institutes scholarship scheme

**A** non-governmental organisation, Lifeson Foundation, is to award scholarships worth N5 million to five primary school pupils and five secondary school students in Lagos this year. The President of the foundation, Mr John Festus told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Lagos at the weekend that the scholarship scheme restricted to recipients in public schools would be an annual event.

Festus said that arrangements had been concluded for the take off of the

scheme, adding that beneficiaries who must be indigent but brilliant, would be selected through tests and "lucky dip".

"We are working in collaboration with several public schools' administrators and principals on the mode of operation, in order to achieve maximum results," the president said.

Festus said that the foundation had already spent more than N3 million in providing books and other teaching and learning materials to some schools in other parts of the country.

According to him, schools that benefited from the assistance include, Anglican Girls Grammar School, Surulere, St. Joseph's Primary School, Apapa, and Lagos State University, Ojo. Others are, the Nigerian French Language Village, Badagry, Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School, Ojuelegba, Surulere; and Ire-Akari Estate Model Primary School, Isolo.

He said that the locally funded foundation would extend its assistance to schools and students in other parts of the country.

## Education Sector in 2004

By Ijeoma Popoola, News Agency of Nigeria (NAN)

**I**t is no longer in doubt that the level of educational development of any country determines the rate of development of the society. Given the above, therefore, most countries of the world make education a cardinal issue and vote huge sums of money for the development of the sector annually.

In line with this, Nigeria also, has over the years shown considerable interest in the development of the sector. But such interest does not seem to have been supported with adequate financial commitment by various administrations, in their efforts to tackle myriad of problems bedevilling the sector.

Indeed, the five years of President Olusegun Obasanjo's administration has witnessed a significant interest in the development of education, having consistently given higher budgetary allocation to that sector.

For instance, the administration allocated N90 billion, out of a national budget of N1.2 trillion in 2004, as against a budget of N63.2 billion in 2003. But this is still far below the United Nations recommended 26 per cent of any country's total budget.

The increased, though not adequate, funding of

the educational sector this year has reflected in the activities of the sector, especially in the tertiary education sub-sector, hitherto characterised by instability. Government had, early in the year, released over N300 million to federal universities, while subsequent releases were later made to tackle problems in public universities.

This probably was towards partial implementation of an agreement, which government reached with university lecturers in 2001.

The non-implementation of the agreement has however resulted in several ASUU strikes including, a four-month strike that started in December 2002. Thus, the university sector and indeed the entire tertiary education sub-sector recorded no strikes.

They also recorded, generally, less contention in 2004 than in the past, even though "inadequate infrastructure still persists, while government's face-off with ASUU remains unresolved".

The conflict with ASUU has to do with government's partial implementation of the 2001 agreement. The face-off is compounded



Fabian Osuji, Education Minister

into law in spite of wide rejection by various groups in the university system. Both ASUU and the Committee of Vice-Chancellors say the bill, as drafted, is the opposite of what an autonomy bill should be. They therefore insist that they be allowed to make inputs into the bill.

The chairman of the committee of Vice-Chancellors, Prof Oye Ihidapo-Obe of the university of Lagos, says it will be in the interest

of ideal university autonomy for the bill to incorporate the views of the committee.

At the secondary education level, particularly in Lagos State, dilapidated infrastructure, insufficient facilities and late payment of teachers' salaries still characterise the sector though they are yet to culminate into an industrial unrest.

However, less privileged students remain grateful to the Gov. Bola Tinubu's administration for retaining its free secondary education policy, which gives them access to secondary education, no matter how poor the quality may be.

The policy is in its fifth year. The successful preliminary packaging of the Universal Basic Education strategic programme this year mark a milestone for the primary education sub-sector.

The appointments of Prof. Gidado Tahir and Prof. Charles Onocha as the executive secretary and deputy executive secretary of the UBE, respectively, is an indication that full implementation of the scheme is at the corner.

All told however, it is important to note that the free

primary education policy of the nation has not been able to arrest the high school drop-out rate.

Many children of primary school age are still out in the street hawking during school hours. Many of them are believed to be victims of child labour, while others are merely ignorant.

This no doubt calls for effective implementation of legislation on child abuse, according to the President of the national Parent-Teacher Association of Nigeria (NAPTAN), Chief Babs Animasaun.

Commenting on the development of education in the country, Chief Animasaun commends government's efforts so far. He, however, says it is necessary for government to meet the United Nations' recommended budgetary allocation to the sector, in view of the many problems of the sector.

Also commenting, former Minister of Education, Prof. Babs Fafunwa, advises that more attention be given to basic education.

Fafunwa points out that training more teachers for the UBE is necessary to ensure full implementation and realisation of the target objective.

NAN

# Science & Education

## NAPS calls for swift passage of bill

The National Association of Polytechnic Students (NAPS) had expressed a passionate plea to the National Assembly to expedite the passage of the bill establishing the National Commission for Polytechnics.

The plea is sequel to the announcement by the Minister of Education, Professor Fabian Osuji, at a recent interview on the Nigeria Television Authority (NTA) that the bill had been sent to the fed-

eral parliament for the passage.

According to a press statement issued by the association in Abuja, Tuesday - January 4, the establishment of the commission was necessitated by the need to save polytechnic educations from marginalisation and set polytechnics at par with universities and colleges of education, which have separate monitoring bodies, in terms of government recognition and treatment.

The association believed the establishment of the commission would emancipate polytechnic education "from the shackles and manacles of oppression, sentiments and discriminations," as well as save it from its current second class rating.

## NUJ flays state of education in Jigawa

Jigawa council of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) has petitioned Gov. Saminu Turaki against what it calls the poor state of education in his state. In a six-point petition, signed by the Jigawa NUJ secretary, Mr Mustapha Gide, the union blamed government for its inability to pay students' allowances in the past 12 months.

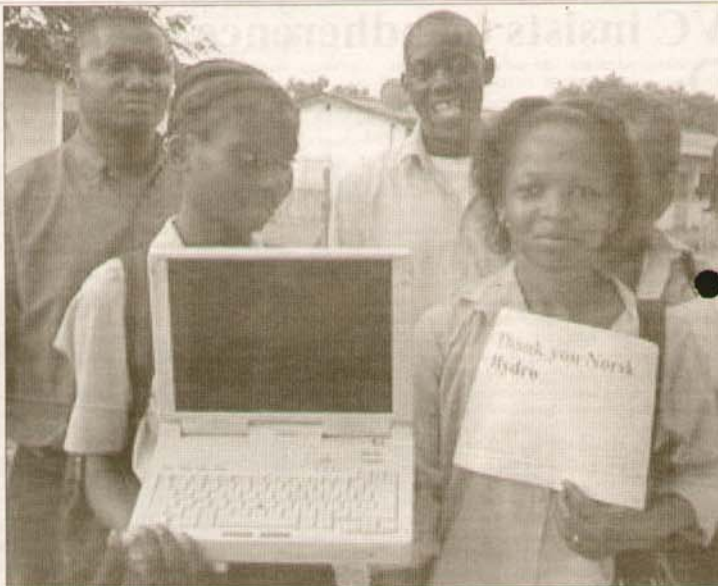
It also accused government of cancelling the common entrance and junior secondary school examinations.

According to the union, "the action has deprived students of their rights to quality education." In fact, it has reduced the scope of student enrolment from the state to other schools across the country.

The NUJ urged government "to settle NECO and WAEC examination fees for students in its secondary schools".

NAPS also wanted government to harmonise the entry points and ceiling between polytechnics and universities, stop the employment of B.Sc holders as lecturers in polytechnics and instead create opportunities for HND holders to become lecturers in their institutions, as well as recruit fresh staff for the NCP, when established, rather than transfer to it the "moribund" people in the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE).

The association, in the statement signed by its Senate President, Agboola O. Rahman, warned the government to meet its demands before its national convention scheduled for January 28 to 30 in Bida, Niger State, failing which the polytechnic students would embark on a nationwide public protest.



Students and teachers at a school thanking the IS Partners for the gift of laptop computers.

## Niger deputy governor commends ETF

Niger State education sector has received fair treatment from the Education Trust Fund, the state deputy governor, Dr Zagbayi has said.

Dr Shem Zagbayi stated this at the commissioning of the multi million naira block of four class-rooms at the Niger State college of education, Minna.

The deputy governor, who represented the governor, Engineer Abdulkadir Kure, at the occasion, stated that the fund had ear-

Kashim Sule, Stringer (Minna)

infrastructural facilities and it would allow the accrediting authorities to rate the institution high.

The deputy governor maintained that the emergence of the proposed university will not stop the college of education from functioning.

Earlier the provost of the college, Professor Ibrahim Adamu Kolo, told journalists that his desire to make the college a better place.

He commended the state government for continuous assistance it renders the institution as it prepares to metamorphose into a university.

He further said that other factors considered for

choosing the three banks handling the accounts of the institutions were relationship with treasury office in the Central Bank and the volume of clearing house activities.

The chairman of the occasion, the Vice Chancellor of the Federal University of Technology, Minna Professor Sa'ad Tukur described the Central Bank as the hub of economic activities in any given environment.

The don further reminded the businessmen at the occasion that the financial regulations by the government was to strengthen the economy, that investors should invest to create employment for the unemployed in the country.

## Commission harps on nomadic education through radio

Nomadic education teachers need to properly implement Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) to be effective. Dr Nafisatu Dahiru, Executive Secretary of the National Commission for Nomadic Education, made this point in Zaria, Kaduna State.

Addressing a workshop for nomadic teachers on IRI, under the UBE, she said the aim was "to update teachers' skills on the use of radio for classroom education".

According to her, "relevant training programmes will also expose the teachers to innovative, child-centred

methods of teaching to improve their performance.

"One way of ensuring an unfettered access to basic education for nomads is the use of Interactive Radio Instruction.

"It is an inexpensive and universal means of redressing educational problems worldwide "IRI decreases gaps between boys and girls; it is accessible to literates and non-literates alike and is more versatile than television.

"That was why the commission decided to embark on a school-based radio education programme," she added.



A teacher with some of the students after classroom.



**KEBBI STATE  
TENDERS BOARD**  
*Office of the Governor  
Birnin Kebbi*

**INVITATION TO TENDER FOR THE  
ENGINEERING DESIGN OF BUNZA-  
ZOGIRMA-MAKERA-NAYELWA-  
GULMA-LAILABA ROAD  
JUNCTION (90KM):**

The Kebbi State Government intends to embark on the Construction of **BUNZA-ZOGIRMA-MAKERA-NAYELWA-GULMA-LAILABA ROAD JUNCTION (90KM)**, hence the general public are hereby invited to bid for the Engineering Designing of this Road.

All interested Organisation will be required to pay non-refundable Tender Registration and Processing Fees, and should have the following requirements:-

- a. Certificate of Incorporation
- b. Coren Registration
- c. NSE Registration
- d. Previous Experience in Consultancy Services
- e. Staff strength
- f. Tax Clearance for three (3) years

The Proposal and the Cost for the Engineering Design Services should reach the Office of the Secretary, Kebbi State Tenders Board, Cabinet Office B/ Kebbi, latest by 10th January, 2005.

**Signed**  
**Abdullahi T. Yeldu**  
*Secretary*

**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR  
THE PROVISION OF HOTEL  
MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

Expressions of interest are hereby invited from reputable Hotel Managers in the Hospitality Industry to manage a five (5) star hotel located in a vantage area of Bauchi, Bauchi State. The Hotel has 184 rooms comprising of:

- |     |   |                       |
|-----|---|-----------------------|
| 1   | - | Presidential Suite;   |
| 5   | - | Diplomatic Suites;    |
| 4   | - | Executive Suites; and |
| 174 | - | Double Rooms.         |

It has a Conference Center with capacity for 300 persons and 2 Committee Rooms with capacity for 40 persons each. Other available facilities include a Restaurant; Coffee shop; cocktail lounge and pub; laundry; 800 KVA stand-by Generating set; Concession shops; Olympic size swimming pool; Garden Rest areas and ample parking space.

The services to be provided and consideration shall be in accordance with the conditions of engagement on Management or Lease basis. Applicants must possess proven track record of successful management of facilities within the hospitality industry with not less than Five (5) years experiences in the ownership of a Hotel Management Company.

To qualify for consideration, applicants are required to submit the following:≤

**i. Company profile** - providing details of legal status; shareholding; history; general structure and organization; and Technical support Agreements;

**ii. Experience** - evidence of ownership of Hotel Management Company, verifiable details of profitable management of hotels over the last five (5) years; Management and key personnel (CV's) and resources to be deployed for effective and efficient management;

**iii. Financial Statements** - Budgets and Audited accounts of Company and managed Companies for the last three years (2001, 2002, 2003); tax clearance certificates; and revenue/cost structures and other projections for the proposed management undertaking.

**iv. General** - any other information and references that may enhance the chances of the company securing the management.

Applications must be accompanied with a non-refundable application fees of N150,000.00 (One hundred and Fifty Thousand Naira only) in bank draft or certified cheque drawn in favour of Bauchi Hotels Limited, and submitted in ten (10) copies in a sealed enveloped clearly marked "Expression of Interest for the provision of Hotel Management". The envelope should be addressed and delivered not later than twenty-one (21) days from the date of this publication at the address shown below

**The Chairman,  
Bauchi Hotels Limited,  
Care of Ministry of Commerce and Industry  
Abubakar Umar Secretariat,  
Bauchi.**

Only short listed applicants will be contacted to proceed to the next stage.

Please note that this notice shall not be construed as a commitment on the part of Bauchi Hotels Limited nor shall it entitle any company to make a claim whatsoever and/or seek indemnity from Bauchi Hotels Limited and or any of its shareholders. Furthermore Bauchi Hotels Limited shall not be obligated to any company in regard to any response made to this notice.



# ABUJA TRUST

## Wuse new market relocates to Dei-Dei Jan 31

The chairman traders union of the Wuse new market Alhaji Aminu Musa yesterday confirmed to our reporter that Wuse new market popularly known as Bakassi market will be relocated to Dei-Dei on 31 January 2005.

He said, "we wrote a letter

### Motorists fight task force officials over tax

There was a fracas yesterday at Lugbe, Abuja, between some motorists and officials of the Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) task force on outdoor advertisement.

The trouble started at about 8 a.m. when the task force officials impounded about 12 vehicles belonging to various companies, for conducting out door advertising without paying tax.

NAN gathered that some of the drivers were aggrieved by the action of the task force officials who fined each of the impounded vehicle owners N5,500.

The number plates of all the vehicles were removed by the task force while the charge sheets were placed on the vehicles' wind screen.

NAN reports that the arrival of a police patrol team at the scene enabled the task force to remove the number plates.

Some of the motorists accused the task force of cheating, saying: "we are not aware of the existence of such a task force in the territory."

But NAN reports that members of the task force wore yellow jackets with AMAC inscription on them.

to the federal government on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2004, on the extension of the relocation date after a meeting held with the director development control Jumai Kwanashie, but up till now there is no positive response."

He called on the federal government to provide social amenities particularly electricity water supply and road in Dei Dei before the relocation date because that could motivate the customers to go there and buy goods.

"Some of the businesses cannot function without light especially those who sell ice fish and those who rely on electricity likewise tailoring. Therefore, we are pleading to the federal government to help us and provide our needs," said Alhaji Aminu.

In another development, the chairman also expressed his gratitude on the construction of Wuse market. He said people are very interested in Wuse market as soon as the company complete the building the traders will start trouping; the contract was awarded since and is almost coming to an end.



Armed mobile policemen blocking the entrance to PDP National Secretariat to prevent journalists from coverage of the party's NEC meeting held in Abuja last Tuesday. *Pic: Kennedy Eghonode*

## Residents return after Xmas/New year break

Some Abuja residents, who travelled to their various country homes to celebrate Christmas and New Year festivals have been coming back to resume work in the territory.

Some of the passengers who landed at the Jabi motor parks told *Abuja Trust* that the festival break which they

By Abdulwahab Deji Ajikobi, IT intern (Abuja)

went to celebrate Christmas and New Year had ended and that they had to come back to attend to their daily businesses.

According to them, we came from various destinations as some boarded their vehicles from

Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Imo, River, Kaduna, and Plateau States.

Speaking on the Christmas and New Year fans, one Mathew Ajibola who is an indigene of Abeokuta, Ogun State, told *Abuja Trust* that he felt so happy when he rejoiced with his relations who came home from various states to celebrate the festival.

Ajibola who said that his

family is not living with him said he preferred to go home during the season to have Christmas fun with them instead of doing it alone in the territory.

Many cultural festivals, he said, had been celebrated by the different native groups during the same period of the Christmas and New Year season. According to him, some groups, after coming back from the church service, played with masquerades to tour round some villages to extend season greetings to the entire people. Following these activities, he said, people from various states would come home in order not to miss cultural exhibitions highlighted for the season.

## Number of FCT internet café's rise

The rapid development of internet café's in Abuja creates job opportunity for the youths, it reduces the number of young graduates rooming in the street.

According to one of the staff who engaged in the business in Abuja, it is quite obvious that internet had transformed their lives and made them to become self reliant.

By Shuaibu Abubakar, IT intern (Abuja)

He said the business is booming and the patronage is okay because every day not less than 200 hundred people come to browse and the charges are affordable.

When our reporter visited one of the cyber café's in Kano area in Abuja it was confirmed by one of the staff know as Sadiq that the business keeps them busy

and people come to while away time, he complained of not having much customers but effort have been put in place to persuade them to come.

On the other hand, customers expressed their views concerning the services, one Shehu Umar a regular customer said "I like visiting cyber café but my problem is the slowness of cyber sometimes." In the same vein another customer shared the same view.

Despite that, some cyber café staff explained the reason for sluggishness of the cyber he said the problem is from the internet service provider but sometimes over load could lead to such problem.

In addition to that, Emeka who works in a Gwarinpa Internet café says he has never experienced the slowness of the cyber, because the connectivity was perfectly done, and people come to brows daily.

However, some of the internet café's in Abuja operates only in the day time; but in some places they provide overnight browsing

so as to meet up the demand of their numerous customers.

*Daily Trust* investigate the reason for not providing services at night but there was no positive response to it, some said that is the directive given by the owner of the café, while others said they cannot work up to 10pm.

### ...activities yet to fully pick up in FCT

Five days into the New Year, activities are yet to fully pick up in most parts of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

A News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) check shows that workers in most federal ministries and parastatals agencies are yet to resume work while commercial activities are moving at a slow pace.

Parts of the city that is normally busy with commercial activities like the markets and bus stops have few people attending to their businesses.

NAN spoke with some residents who attributed the situation to the declaration of Monday, Jan. 3, a public holiday by the federal government.

Mr Kolawole Ademolu, a civil servant, said: "The New Year break was a long one following the Monday public holiday."

"Most people used the opportunity to travel out of town while others went to relax after a year well spent," he added.

According to Mr Chukwuemeka Okwor, a bus driver, "the availability of fuel made movement very easy for people this year, although the holiday is over it may take a whole week for activities to resume in full."

NAN also gathered that another reason for the slow pace of activities in the FCT, is the pilgrimage to the Holy Lands of Mecca and Jerusalem, which a lot of Abuja residents are partaking in this year.



The ever-busy Zaria Abacha way to Wuse market also observed the public holiday in Abuja yesterday. *Pic: Joe Orons*

# Abuja Trust

## C'ttee to get additional aircraft for Hajj operation - Acting chairman

The National Committee on Hajj (NCH) 2005 is making effort to get additional aircraft to speed up the transportation of pilgrims to Saudi Arabia, the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports.

Dr Badmus Yusuf, Chairman of the NCH Aviation sub-committee and Acting NCH

Chairman, disclosed this in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Abuja recently.

Yusuf said that the action which was coming about eight days to the end of the exercise "is aimed at meeting the target date of Jan. 12."

Yusuf said about 17,000 Nigerian pilgrims out of the 56,000 expected to perform the Hajj had so far been transported to Saudi Arabia since the exercise began on Dec. 27, last year.

NAN recalls that since the exercise began only Kabo Airline, out of the two airlines contracted to transport pilgrims to the holy land, had been operating as the second contractor, IRS Airline had not been given the green light by the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority to operate.

IRS has not been able to participate in the operation because according to the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), it was yet to carry out the required checks on its aircraft.

Yusuf, however, said that IRS could still participate in the Hajj operation if it met NCAA requirements.

"We are encouraging IRS to position its aircraft. Anytime it is able to do so it can still transport pilgrims to the holy land," he said.

Yusuf told NAN that everything was all right with Nigerians already in Saudi Arabia.

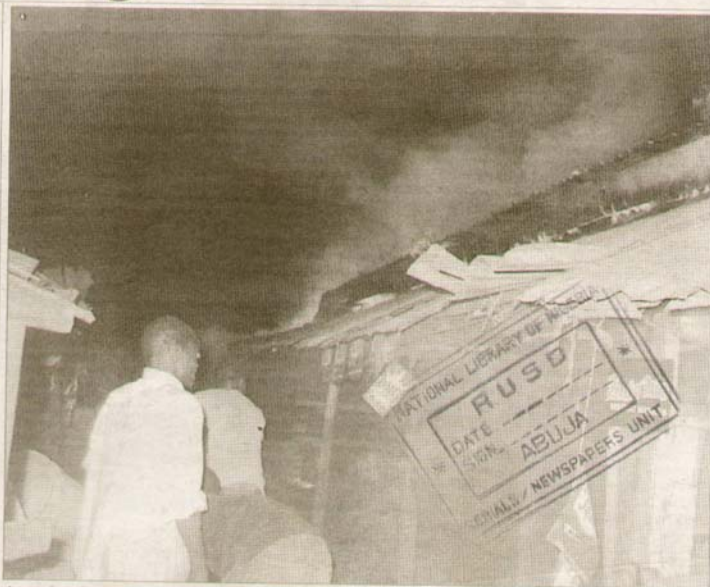
Unlike last year, he said that a greater number of Nigerian pilgrims would be able to visit Medina before Arafat day which is the climax of the Hajj.

"This will go a long way in assisting us to plan the homeward journey as more pilgrims will be available in Makka for the journey," he said.

Yusuf, however, said NCH's concern was with the worsening weather condition in some parts of the country.

"Barring unforeseen impediment, we are hopeful that we will have a smooth operation from Kano, Abuja, Sokoto, Yola and Port Harcourt zones," he said.

The aviation sub-committee chairman said that the maiden flight from the newly created Minna zone would depart Minna for Saudi Arabia in the evening tomorrow.



A scene from the fire that gutted shops at the Gwagwu market...recently.

## NASS recommends special funds for FCT water project

The National Assembly has recommended a special fund for the speedy completion of the Gurara-Usuma water transfer project to ease current water

scarcity in the FCT.

The Chairman, House Committee on Water Resources, Mr Abayomi Collins, made this known to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in

Abuja last weekend.

Collins said the recommendation was necessary considering the perennial hardship faced by the FCT residents due to water shortage.

He told NAN that his committee had inspected the site of the project and discovered that the contractors were not doing enough due to inadequate funding.

Collins said that what was budgeted for the project in the next financial year was inadequate for its completion.

"We have made representation to the president and also raised the issue on the floor of the House, and it was recommended that special funds should be made available for the project," he said.

He said that although 60 per cent level of work had been attained, the process of supplying water to Usuma Dam to feed the FCT had continued to pose a major problem.

The chairman said that if

nothing was done, by the middle of next year, Abuja would experience another pathetic water and sanitation problem which could lead to outbreak of diseases.

Collins said that the Usuma Dam construction was among the priority projects of the present administration, which, he noted, posed a challenge to the government.

"The National Assembly has taken it up at the legislative level to ensure that the problem is solved once and for all," he said.

The committee chairman, however, expressed optimism that the president would honour the recommendation of the House as it was in line with government vision of 80 per cent water supply for all by the year 2007.

## NGO hails Rochas, Kogi gov over developmental projects

Youths in the FCT have said the struggle to combat HIV/AIDS still needs the effort of one who has the fear of his creator, the feelings of the poor masses and youths and one who is in every respect a true democrat.

The youth group known as Peer Educator's Trainers on Adolescence Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS made this declaration in an article made available to Abuja Trust recently.

"These are the qualities

history and time has revealed in a man we know as Owella Rochas Okorocho, whose life style has always affected religion, cultural, social and economic lives of many able, disable, privileged and less privilege Nigerians positively regardless of ethnicity," the youth group said adding that people should stop pretending that HIV/AIDS does not exist in Nigeria.

"No strategy to reduce the spread of the killer disease can be effective unless people with good heartbeat for

the future of the young generation intervene; the youth group stated that this is what informed the calling on Chief Owelle. He is a man who respects people's feelings, religion, culture and enthusiasm," the body declared.

Meanwhile the youth group also lauded Ibrahim Idris, executive governor of Kogi State for putting smiles on workers, pensioners faces by prompt payment of their salaries and gradual clearing of back log of arrears of their salaries.

## Centre begins Joint Higher Degree Programme March 2005

The National Mathematical Centre (NMC) in Abuja has admitted 70 students into its Joint Higher Degree Programme (JHDP), expected to commence by March 2005.

The Director-General, Prof Sam Ale, disclosed this in Abuja at a forum with Education Correspondents.

Ale said the centre was collaborating with six Nigerian universities to introduce courses in "core functional mathematical sciences, not obtainable currently in Nigerian universities.

The courses include Mathematics in Biomedicine, Mathematical Ecology, Financial Mathematics, Modelling and Simulation of Engineering Systems.

Others are Communication Technology and Informa-

tion Theory, Mathematics Education in Information Communication Technology and Mathematical Modelling in Maritime Technology.

Some of the universities, involved in the programme, are the University of Jos, University of Ilorin, Obafemi Awolowo University and Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University.

According to him, the centre has already developed and designed curricula and academic programmes leading to the award of post-graduate diplomas, Masters and Doctorate degrees in the various courses.

It was only awaiting a formal approval by the National Universities Commission (NUC) for the courses to take off, he said.

Ale said 57 professors

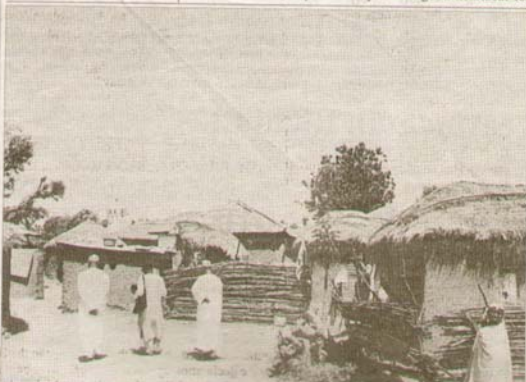
from other parts of the world had been enlisted to participate in running the JHDP.

He said the programme could help "to shape major scientific research programmes of practical relevance to national development.

"I want to assure you that the programme we are running, we are saying only very brilliant professors will be allowed to teach in our programme," he said.

He said the centre had received support from some organisations, including the National Maritime Authority, which gave N10 million.

The FCT minister, Malam Nasir El-Rufai, promised to sink a borehole, set up a water reticulation project, construct roads to the campus as well as build a library.



Some of the shanty dwellings earmarked by the MFCT development control department along Airport road

# KANO TRUST

## Students to enjoy prompt payments of allowances

Students of tertiary institutions in Kano State will begin to enjoy prompt payment of their scholarship allowances and other entitlements in the state, the state governor, Malam Ibrahim Shekarau has disclosed.

Speaking at an award night organised by the National Association of Kano State Students (NAKSS), Shekarau said the gesture will boost the morale of the students and alleviate some hardship facing them in the course of their studies.

The governor, represented by his deputy, Engineer, Magaji Abdullahi called on the students to report any unpleasant act concerning their payments to

## 13-man c'ttee on census set up

A 13-man committee has been set up in Warawa local government to enlighten people in the area about the forthcoming national census.

The chairman of Warawa, Alhaji Ado Abdullahi Yar Tofa enjoined the committee members to see the assignment as a national one and show commitment to it.

Alhaji Ado Abdullahi Yar tofa expressed the need for the people to be enlightened in order to understand the significance of the project.

He noted that people in the whole country need to be educated on the census to ensure effective exercise.

The council chairman then called on the people to give the census committee in Warawa the necessary support for them to carry out the assignment.

The chairman however called on the federal government to make efficient preparations towards the exercise to avoid its failure. According to him, it was high time government learned from past lessons to ensure that all contradictions encountered were dealt with.



Prof. Iyechia Aya, Internal Affairs Minister

By Yusha'u Adamu Ibrahim, Correspondent (Kano)  
the appropriate authority for further action.

Shekarau encouraged the students to form more associations in their various schools as according to him, this will enable them to become politicians in future.

He however called on them to reciprocate the gesture by facing their studies with all seriousness.

Earlier in his speech, the speaker, Kano State House of Assembly, Alhaji Balarabe Sa'idu Gani commended the association for organising the occasion and said that

this will demonstrate the state government's efforts towards moving the education sector forward.

Hon. Gani charged the students to always be law abiding citizens as government is making all necessary effort to resolve problems associated with their studies.



Management of Bank of the North paying homage to the Emir of Kano Dr. Ado Bayero during a courtesy visit...recently. Pic: Musa Kazure.

## Kano LGs employ 4,400 workers

The entire 44 local government areas in Kano State have been directed to employ 100 workers each, as a proactive strategy to quell the menace of unemployment particularly among youths.

The state chairman of the Nigeria union of local government employees, (NULGE), Alhaji Abdullahi Tijjani, disclosed this to newsmen after a closed-door meeting held between

By Mustapha Isah Kwaru, Correspondent (Kano)

Governor Ibrahim Shekarau and the union executives.

He pointed out that, it was in the course of the meeting that the governor directed the council chairmen to employ the jobless youths so as quell unemployment rate which causes crimes and social vices among youth.

The NULGE chairman stated that all the local

government chairmen had unanimously welcomed the idea, saying unemployed youths who roam about streets will not get legal sources of livelihood.

Alhaji Tijjani explained that the men also canvassed for the review of local governments Act 2002, and the employment of appropriate measures to eradicate the predicaments halting the effective performance of the councils.

Other recommendations reached at the meeting also included establishment of skills acquisition centre to empower women so as to be self reliant and do away with hunger, poverty and hawking among young children.

It was resolved that the chairman will expedite prompt action for the success of Shariah implementation which will be actualised through promoting the activities of Hisbah groups.

## 500 received free eye treatment in Bichi LG

No fewer than 500 people with various eye-related ailments have received free-treatment sponsored by Bichi local government area of Kano State.

Speaking at the commencement of the treatment, the council chairman, Alhaji Lawan Shehu said the gesture was not unconnected with his zeal and determination to manage the spread of eye-

related diseases.

He noted that the beneficiaries of the treatment spent several years with the eye problem but due to financial predicament they were unable to undergo medical surgery.

Alhaji Shehu declared that no stone will be left unturned in his crusade against disease spread in the area saying however that additional strategies are underway to quell the

problem once and for all.

He said the council since its inception has accorded appropriate priority to health sector, saying this has facilitated the resolution to engage the services of medical experts in the treatment of eye disease such as hernia, cancer as well as to assist women who confront difficulties during pregnancy delivery.

The local government boss who described such

effort as a collective responsibility implored stakeholders and wealthy individuals to make meaningful contribution to actualise the set goals.

In his remarks the supervisor councillor of health, Alhaji Abubakar Mu'azu said the assistance to the patients is among the series of the local government's concern for the health sector saying this will motivate others to emulate the good works.

## N1.3m Zakat to be distributed to 13 wards

By Jamilah Nuhu Musa, Correspondent (Kano)

that there were many people in the society who needed assistance for the improvement of their livelihood and called on well meaning individuals in the society to come to their aid.

Alhaji Maje Ahmed Gwangwazo said that Allah also blesses those who assist the needy and reiterated that they will be rewarded in the hereafter.

He then said that the money would be given to the Zakat committee of the council for distribution to the beneficiaries in the thirteen wards.

He called on the people in the area to continue to pray for the progress of the council.

## Abandoned Islamiyya schools to be renovated

Abandoned Islamiyya schools in Takai local government of Kano State are to be completed by the council the chairman, Alhaji Inusa Dambazau has said.

The chairman made the disclosure while addressing new converts in the area.

Alhaji Inusa Dambazau said that the council was committed to upholding the status of Islam in conjunction with the Shariah implementation strategy of the present administration.

Towards this end, he said that all abandoned Islamic schools in the area would be renovated and given a face lift.

He enjoined the new converts to seek more knowledge in order to strengthen their faith, adding that they could always rely on the Muslim Ummah to give them necessary assistance.

On the part of the council, Alhaji Inusa Dambazau said that the welfare of converts would be taken care of as clothing, water vessels, beads and such other items were to be distributed to them. While the Islamiyya schools to be reconstructed would further improve their knowledge of Islam.

Responding, the converts said that they believe that the religion of Islam would guide them to the hereafter, and expressed gratitude to the chairman and the people of Takai for their brotherly love.

# EKO TRUST

## Defaulting dredgers to pay N10m fine

Lagos State Government has stated that henceforth dredger operating in the state that contravenes the existing environmental laws is liable to pay damages to the tune of N10million.

Speaking with our correspondent on Tuesday, the public relations officer of the Lagos State Environmental Protection Agency, Mr. Nosa Okunbor said the agency observed that dredgers after working on a particular site, usually they degrade such sites.

Okunbor explained that most of the dredgers are in the habit of working for some-times at a particular site leave and abandoned it without any restitution.

He said, "It is pertinent to draw your attention to the law regulating the dredging activity vis-à-vis Environmental Impact Assessment decree 88 of 1992 now an act of National Assembly which states that before commencement of any project an EIA must be carried out."

"It also states further that after decommissioning of the project, a post impact assessment report must be rendered and the environment must be

resorted to its original state through remediation".

According to him, many of these dredgers are those that do not possess the required license to operate in the state, adding that they have nothing to loose.

He explained further that such acts pose danger to the environmental status of the state, saying such illegal activities have gone on the state unchecked for many years.

"Now that the state government is conscious of the dwindling state of its environment, it has decided to make any dredger contravening the state environmental law pay a fine of N10million."

Explaining the prerequisite dredgers have to meet in the state before operation, he said first they have to pay a registration fee which will register their presence in dredging/developmental operations in the state.

Preparation of EIA after relevant administrative fees to do so have been paid to LASEPA, EA prepared by accredited LASEPA Consultant, Post Impact Assessment, Remediation, if any, Environmental Management Plan.

## Police recover suicide victim's body

The body of a young mechanic who committed suicide last week Monday in Ilesamaja area of Lagos has been recovered by the police.

The late mechanic identified as Niyi was said to have hung himself with rope at their house located plot 4 Bell Street, Ilesamaja.

Eko Trust learnt that Niyi did not leave a suicide note and nobody could say exactly what led to the action.

Neighbors were said to have got suspicious after they did not see him for about two days which promoted them to force open the door of his one room apartment.

He was found hung from the ceiling with a rope tied to

From Bola Ojuola, Sringer, (Lagos)

his neck. Policemen from Ilesamaja police station who were later called in has since removed the corpse to the public mortuary for autopsy.

In a related development, a five years old girl identified as Sewu was also said to have died under "mysterious circumstances in Dopemu area."

The corpse of the young girl was said to have been found on the floor last Wednesday at about 3pm in her parents home located at plot 12 Bello Street, Depemu.

The Lagos State Police Relation Officer, Mr. Emmanuel Igbodalo confirmed the incident.



Sen: Mohammed Ohiari (left), Chairman, Senate Committee on Navy discussing with Mr. Femi Pedro, Deputy Gov. Lagos State, during a courtesy call to Alausa Secretariat...recently. pic: Oladipupo Odunwu.

## Tinubu, Adebayo want better welfare for Nigerians

The Lagos State Governor, Bola Tinubu and the General Overseer of the Redeemed Christian Church of God, Mr. Enoch Adebayo have called for better welfare services for citizens of the country in 2005.

Speaking at the sixth Annual Thanksgiving Service organized by the State Government at the State House, Marina, on Sunday night, Tinubu urged state authorities nationwide to work harder and show more dedication to the service of the people to attain a swifter improvement in the welfare of citizens of the country.

In a statement made available to our correspondent on Monday, the state governor called on citizens of the state to ensure continued prayers were offered on behalf of the state and nation so that the year 2005 will be a year of "open doors and great expectations".

The Governor said, "The Annual Thanksgiving Service is held yearly to thank God for his great mercies and the

Stories by Oluamide Bajalaye, Correspondent, (Lagos)

wonderful things he has done for us. We thank God for preserving our lives, for providing for us, for giving us victory in every aspect of our lives".

Tinubu said he was especially grateful to God for sparing his life in 2004 from the hands of assassins, which he said almost, claimed the life of the state's bomb disposal expert, Mr. Fatope

Olufemi.

While delivering his sermon, the General Overseer of the RCCG, Adebayo, called on governors and chief judges of state to do everything in their power to free awaiting trial persons from the nation's prisons.

According to him, several visits made by him revealed that over 75 per cent of inmates in prisons were awaiting trial and many were youths.

Reasoning that most of the inmates awaiting trial had spent the time they would have spent if convicted, Adebayo urged the authorities to save the youths from wasting their life in detention.

Present at the occasion were Leader of the Methodist Church, Dr. Sunday Mbang, the Anglican Church, Mr. Paul Adefarasin, Dr. Wilson Badejo, Revd. Adebola Ademowo, Mr. and Mrs. Odukoya among several others.

## FG turns down request for pedestrian bridges

The Lagos State Commissioner for Works,

and Infrastructures, Alhaji Rauf Aregbesola has stated that all attempts by the state government to convince the federal government through its officials at the federal ministry of Works on the need to build nine pedestrian bridges across some expressway in the state were turned down.

Aregbesola stated this during an interview in a television programmes monitored in Lagos on Monday.

According to him, necessary proposal, design and technical details about the projects were forwarded to the office of the minister, Chief Adeseye Ogunlewe in Abuja by the state government.

"I even, personally went to his office on about 10 occasions to discuss the issue after I had written six letters

to him. It was during my last visit that he declared to me that the ministry was not favorably disposed to the idea."

Aregbesola noted that lack of pedestrian bridges in some busy areas along the expressway in the state accounted for most carnage being recorded on our roads.

In a swift reaction to the development in an interview with our correspondent in his office, the federal Controller of Works in the state, Dr. Adedolapo Adeniji said officials of the state government failed to abide by the necessary procedure in prosecuting the projects.

Adeniji insisted that officials of the state government failed to submit the technical details of the proposed projects.

He also said the state government was trying to give out the project to some private investors who would build, and operate the bridges

for profit motives.

The Controller said the ministry was ready to support any move by the state government over the construction of the bridges if its officials followed the necessary procedure and abide by the technical details required from it.

The Lagos State government had early this year, signified its intention to build nine pedestrian bridges across major roads which belonged to the federal government in the state.

Some of the identified areas were; Agege Motors road, Oworonshoki expressway, Ojodu - Berger, Ikorodu road and other areas in the state.

The bridges were expected to be built and operated by some private investors who would recoup their money through the advertisement that would be displayed on the them.



The signpost of the Police force Headquarters, Moloney, Lagos.

pic: Oladipupo Odunwu

# News

## Dabo apologises to Dariye

**D**r. Godwin Dabo, the PDP Assistant National Zonal Auditor, has apologised to Gov. Joshua Dariye of Plateau State for asking him to resign from office.

Dabo also called on several serving and erstwhile public figures to tender similar apologies to Dariye and the people of the state over their various roles in the emergency rule saga.

The public figures include the Deputy Senate President, Ibrahim Manu, Mrs Pauline Talen, Mr Fidelis Tappun and Cmdr Jonah Jang (rt).

Dabo, who spoke with newsmen in Lokoja, said he initially disagreed with emergency rule but changed his mind when he was shown documents purportedly

showing payments made by Dariye.

He said he later regretted urging Dariye to resign based on the governor's explanations and what had happened to other party leaders.

The PDP stalwart expressed dismay that people of the middle belt region were being looked upon as a dangerous specie in the country.

He said: "We have made more contributions than anybody else to ensure the survival of Nigeria as a corporate entity.

"Unfortunately, we have nothing to show for it. There is no industry in the middle belt; there is no any federal government presence in the zone."

## Masari hinges development on peace, democracy

**T**he House of Representatives' Speaker, Bello Masari has hinged the country's progress on the attainment of lasting peace and democracy.

Masari took this stand at the 2005 Afan national festival held recently at Kagoro, Kaduna State.

In his view, "nothing positive can be forthcoming in an atmosphere of rancour, acrimony or crisis."

Against that background, Masari lauded the Chief of Kagoro, Malam Gwamna Awan, who was marking his 60th year on the throne, "for guarding his people against crisis of any kind".

According to him, Gwamna is an institution of wisdom and vision.

"From him, our leaders are supposed to come and learn the excellent virtues of leadership."

In a speech, the Kaduna State Governor, Ahmed Makarfi, praised the people of Kagoro chieftdom "for consolidating the peaceful co-existence of the area".

Government would strive to meet their basic needs, he pledged, urging the people to support his administration to

achieve its goals. He stressed that the state government would not relent in its efforts to ensure that democracy dividends reached the common man.

Makarfi appealed to his people to ensure the prompt payment of the subsidised water rates to enable the water board procure chemicals and diesel for steady supply of water.

Earlier, Awan had commended both the federal and Kaduna State governments for inaugurating a NEPA transformer installed at the Kagoro commercial motor vehicle park.

He asked the youth in his community to shun drug abuse and all forms of moral decadence.

"In fact, you need to face your studies seriously because any conduct capable of destroying our youths can destroy the entire society," he said.

Dignitaries at the occasion included the Minister of State for Finance, Mrs Ninadi Usman; Sen. Isaiah Balat, the speaker of the Kaduna State legislature and members of the House of Representatives.



Speaker Bello Masari

## Why people join cult-Royal father

**T**he Chief of Marwa in Kaduna State, Malam Tagwai Sambo, has blamed the "get-rich-quick syndrome" for most people's involvement in cultism.

Sambo told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in his palace at Manehok, Kaduna State, that other factors include hatred, blackmail and the quest for political power.

"But these other factors are still subordinate to the

He stressed the need for the unity of the middle belt, saying he was a stakeholder in Plateau State and had equally been affected by what happened there.

"Dariye is a saint when compared to some pathological corrupt governors whose fraudulent activities are well documented," Dabo said.

**T**he National Unity Forum has condemned in its entirety the barbaric manhandling of journalists by policemen at the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) secretariat in Abuja on Tuesday.

The Chairman of the forum, Malam Inuwa Abubakar, in a statement in Abuja yesterday, decried the primitive behaviour of law enforcement agents saying,

## Forum condemns police brutality on journalists

"Nigerian Police still have a long way to go in the journey to embrace civilised policing of the public."

Malam Inuwa said the Inspector General of Police

and the Police Commission should pay for the damaged cameras and treatment of journalists that were brutalised at the occasion.

He averred that for policemen to treat journalists like common criminals in the course of performing their legitimate duty is unacceptable in a democracy like ours.

Inuwa in the statement urges the police authority to set up a machinery to continually train and re-train policemen in the latest method of dealing with civilians in public gatherings as it obtains in civilised societies world over.

It would be recalled that several journalists including *Guardian*, *Daily Trust*, *Tribune*, *Independent* and *NAN* photographers were mercilessly brutalised by overzealous policemen during the PDP NEC meeting at Wadata House, Abuja, Tuesday. The *Tribune* correspondent, Mr. Segun Olatunji, who was beaten to a coma is now critically ill in a hospital in Abuja.



The national president, Dynamic Igbu Youth Forum, (DIYF), Chief Sunday Ugochuku, condoling the executive secretary of the Nigeria Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC), Engineer Mustafa Bello over the death of his father in Kontogora... recently.

## Wada Nas, fearless vanguard of

### masses — NUJ

**T**he Kaduna state council of the Nigeria Union of Journalists has described the late Alhaji Wada Nas as a fearless vanguard of the masses.

A statement made available to the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) and signed by the union's Chairman, Mr Andrew Fadasom, said Nas was an honest, dedicated and principled man.

It said though Nas, a former special duties minister, was criticised for identifying with the late Gen. Sani Abacha's government, he stood his ground in terms of principle.

"A great patriot, Nas' death came as at the time his

wisdom, commitment and leadership was much needed by Nigerians.

"As Nigeria marches through the threshold of democratic experiment, Alhaji Wada Nas was set to play an even more active role and give his best, as usual, to Nigeria," it stated.

The union said Nas would be remembered for his epigrams and wisecracks which enriched the fourth republic and also for his active role for a progressive north.

In another statement, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Alhaji Bello Masari, expressed shock at the death of Nas and described him as a consistent

character. Masari said Nas would be remembered for his dogged fight to ensure justice and fairness in the polity, and prayed Allah to grant his family the fortitude to bear the

## Ekiti pensioners receive N812m

**T**he Ekiti State government has paid N812 million to pensioners between April 2003 and December 2004, according to the pensions board.

The board said in a statement in Ado-Ekiti that another N355 million had been paid to retired civil servants in the same period.

According to the board, "a sum of N420.8 million is still outstanding, out of the pensions arising from the 142 per cent increase in pensions."

Governor Ayo Fayose had promised to settle the remaining 13 months arrears of pensions, amounting to N210.4 million and inherited from previous governments, the board said.

Meanwhile, the Ekiti Head of Service, Mr. Segun Bankole, has directed the Civil Service commission to send all promotion lists for the year to the Ministry of Establishment and Training

loss. Nas died on Monday in Kaduna State and was buried in his hometown Funtua in Katsina State.

He is survived by two wives and 20 children.



Governor Ayo Fayose

# News

## Idoma group vows to defend Ogbeh over rift

The Idoma National Forum, Jos branch, has thrown its weight behind the PDP national chairman, Chief Audu Ogbeh, and expressed confidence in his ability to continue to extol democratic ideals.

The Jos branch of the forum in a statement jointly issued by its chairman and secretary, Mr. BS. Okwoli and I.S. Agada, respectively, noted that Ogbeh's letter to President Obasanjo, which has the Amambra crisis as its main thrust, mainly drew attention to the blot the events represents and its threat to Nigeria's young democracy.

They described Chief Ogbeh as a man who "stands tall and well respected among Nigerians; who wants to see the rule of law and fair play in the daily lives and in the governance of our great country."

While noting the role Chief Ogbeh had played in the growth of the PDP, the forum recalled that within a few months in office, the party's national chairman as-

From Rakiya A. Mohammad, Correspondent (Jos)

...sured all factions were united to place the party on a firm footing for the 2003 and subsequent election.

It added that Ogbeh should be recognised as one of the pillars in building the PDP to become the largest party in Africa.

The Idoma Forum said it had before the current turn of events watched with admiration the collaboration of President Obasanjo and the party chairman as both exhibited maturity, team spirit and clear understanding of a common purpose and direction.

"It is from this perspective and the desire to consolidate these virtues that Nigerians continue to look up to the ruling party to deliver the true dividends of democracy," it asserted.



Estu-Nupe, Alhaji Yahaya Abubakar (left) discussing with the Emir of Ilorin Alhaji (Dr.) Ibrahim Gambari at the launching of an Hausa biography "Shugaba Na Gari" on the former Head of State, General Abdul Salami Abubakar (rid), in Kaduna... recently.

## Gov Attah commissions rural project

From Edet Ekanem, Stringer in Uyo

Eleven rural projects consisting of eight rural electricity and three mini water projects were commissioned in Ikono local government area of Akwa Ibom State by the state Governor, Obong Victor Attah.

The electricity project initiated by inter ministerial direct labour co-ordinating committee of the state government for Ikono are located at Nkari Obio; Ndiya Etok; Mbiabong Nkwongo; Nung Ukim Etelifa; Mbiabong Ikot; Ibiaku Nk Okpo; Ukpom Ibakachi and Ibiaku Okpo. While the three mini water scheme were commissioned at Ikot Akpe Edok; Ikot; Akpa Edet and Urban Secondary School. Ibiaku communities respectively.

Commissioning the project, Arc. (Obong) Victor Attah, at Ikot Akpa Edet community expressed satisfaction that his administration has provided meaningful development project across the state.

Governor Attah who was accompanied by his Deputy, Dr. Chris Ekpoyang and members of his executive council welcomed the setting up of a six-man committee by the benefiting community for the maintenance of the facility, and therefore recommended that similar committees be constituted in communities where government development project are located for sustainability.

Speaking at Ikot Akpa Edet where mini water project was commissioned, the governor said the water project was to alleviate the suffering of the people there especially in trekking long distances in search of water. He advised them to make optimum use of the facility for the realisation of the aims and objectives of the government in providing the facility.

At Mbiabong Nkwongo and Mbiabong Ikot communities where electricity projects were commissioned, the governor said his government was not a gallery, but one that forges ahead and does what is right for the people.

He vowed not to discriminate in the provision of necessary infrastructure to all parts of the state, noting that his administration has the responsibility of providing motorable roads in addition to providing the immediate needs of the people.

Calling for the continued support and cooperation of the people for the administration to succeed, Obong Attah commended members of the inter ministerial direct labour co-ordinating committee for the excellent performance.

The Chairman of the Commissioning Committee, who is also the Commissioner of Finance, Chief Umanah O Umanah said the commissioner of electricity and water projects in Ikono local government area has brought to 60 the number of rural development projects so far commissioned by the state government since the exercise December 2004, indicating that more of such projects are billed for commissioning on or before Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2005.

Chief Umanah assured the people of the state that 369 wards in the state will soon be provided with various development project before the end of the present administration and called on the people of the state to support the government to realise the objectives.

## Customs plans tough on smugglers

From Adelanwa Bangboye, Correspondent (Lagos)

Men while returning from an anti-smuggling patrol.

Mr. Gyeng Jacob Buba, the Comptroller General of Customs, who disclosed this at the C-G conference held in Calabar, noted that with the incident, the conference was starting on a sad note.

Specifically, the FOU Zone 'A' of the NCS is to enforce the service laws and regulations, particularly, as they affect smuggling and protection of customs revenue collection.

"You will agree with me that I and my officers are not smuggling and economic saboteurs who are bent on wrecking economy of this country", Umar Musa Daura said.

He explained that the five trucks were intercepted at various points in Lagos and on closer exterminations, they were found to contain prohibited goods.

"On 11<sup>th</sup> December, 2004, a truck with Reg No XE505SGM, carrying 2x20 container No MSCU1986 20/2 and miscu 1356 4/4 was intercepted along Apapa Ijora Road and they were found to contain 2, 076 cartons of assorted wine.

"At Apapa area, on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2004, another truck reg. No XFS21 NNE, loaded with container No CATU 051/14064/7 was impounded. The examination of this container revealed the content to be 1,355 pieces of lace materials;

4,800 pieces of head tie, and 208 rolls of damask textiles.

"One other truck Reg. No XE 517 KJA carrying container No MSKU 222118/2 was intercepted along Ijesha Oshodi expressway and on examination, was found to contain 36,750 dozens of ladies pants.

At another point in Apapa truck Reg. NoXF 810 NSH, carrying 1.40 container No POCU705322/0 was intercepted and examinations revealed that the contents were various electronic facilities".

He added that in this particular case, evasion of duty payment was suspected to be intended by the importers as relevant import document were not produced.

He however said that no arrest has been made so far because the smugglers always abandoned their vehicles while investigations continue.



Chief Audu Ogbeh, PDP Chairman

## Council chairman escapes robbery attack

From Bassey Ita, Correspondent (Calabar)

The Chairman of Odukpani local government of Cross River State, Mr. Bassey Aniba, has escaped death, Saturday along with his family members, following attack by a robbery gang.

Reports said the dare devil who are based in Urua Efak Uyo, Ikot Ngong and Ikot Oron Abasi, in Odukpani local government area stormed the private residence of the chairman, at Akpap Okoy last Saturday to join in the party organised at the instance of the chairman with the aim of wrecking havoc and having their fill of the chairman's language.

Incidentally they succeeded in their plan as they destroyed and looted property of the chairman, his wife and relations who gathered for the night party.

Reports revealed that no sooner had the incident occurred than youths of Akpap Okogongi, Urua-Etaktyayo, Ikot Ngong and Ikot Okon Abasi and Creek Town gathered forces to face the robbers whom they identified as the "Urua Uyo boys" who have been terrorising citizens in the area.

Information gathered revealed that the combined force metamorphosed in a vigilante group which went

round all known hide out of Uma Etak Uyo and Ikot Ngong throughout the night of Saturday until the criminals were unearthed from their hideout in a forest area where they had retired to share the loot.

Six of the robbery suspects were arrested in the process while a number fled, ammunitions and personal effect were recovered from them.

Other victims of the robbery incidents who spoke to Daily Trust maintained that the robbers have been tormenting them since the last two years, as they continued to molest, rape and rob traders, and other villagers of Urua Efak Uhuo and the adjoining villages.

The village head of Urua Etak Uyo, Chief Okon Inyang, told Daily Trust that he could not complete his residential apartment, while his market toll contract got from the council has been a mirage due to frequent attack by robbers.

He maintained that the robbers operate from a hide out and often come out during market days or during events in the community to

## Jigawa records 181 road accident deaths in 2004

From Hassan A. Karofi, Correspondent (Dutse)

At least 181 people were confirmed to have died in road accidents across Jigawa State in the year 2004 according to a statistic released by the office of the Road Safety Commission in Dutse the state capital.

According to the release which was made available to Daily Trust by the FRSC, the statistic shows an increase of road accidents as against 2003, even as the commission has described the increase as highly disturbing.

The release signed by the Commands Public Enlightenment Officer, Abubakar Tata, revealed that 178 vehicles were involved in the accidents, this according to him represent 14.10% increase

from last years 125 vehicles which stand at 14.3%.

He said available records has shown a drastic increase as witnessed in the state in previous year, this he added is as a result of recklessness, over speeding and outright disregard to traffic rules and regulations.

The command further explained that most of the accidents recorded were avoided, as most were either due to dangerous over speeding or reckless over taking resulting from non-challant attitudes or motorist, to the established traffic rules.

This (2004) year, 181 people were killed in various

road accidents representing 15.1% as against 109 which represent 9.1% in 2003.

The statement further reiterates the readiness of the command in ensuring free road accidents through efficient and effective campaigns that would see to the deduction of road accidents in the state.

"We will take adequate measures in place to see to the maximisation of road accidents as part of our resolve to ensure a free accident this year", the statement said.

While reiterating the resolve of the command, the FRSC called on the public to cooperate with the commission in minimising road traffic accidents in the state.

# News

## Kaduna court discharges IBB assaulters

**A** Chief Magistrate Court sitting in Kaduna State has discharged accused persons arrested for an alleged assault on the former military president, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, while attending a wedding ceremony June last year in Zaria.

Delivering judgement, the Chief Magistrate, Garba Abdul, held that the prosecutor have failed woefully to prove the allegation against the accused persons, Alhaji Isma'ila Musa, Sarkin Gandun Zazzau and two others by refusing to bring witness to court.

Justice Garba held that "justice" is not one way traffic, as court owns a duty to conclude any matter before it within a reasonable time "saying that the police has been accorded enough opportunity to prove the case or at least to present the

### Sokoto bars 6 pregnant women from hajj

**T**he Sokoto State health sub-committee for the 2005 Hajj has barred six pregnant women from performing this year's Hajj.

Alhaji Abdullahi Maigwandu, chairman of the committee, told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Sokoto that "the affected women's pregnancies were above five months."

According to him, "the women hailed from Illela and Tambawal local government areas."

Maigwandu explained that "although Islam does not prohibit pregnant women from performing Hajj, the vigorous nature of the exercise makes it difficult for some of them."

In view of this, they are barred to protect both their health and those of the unborn babies."

Meanwhile, clinics had been set up at the Hajj camp and the Sokoto airport, as well as in Medina, Mecca, Jeddah, Arafat and Mina, to take adequate care of pilgrims from Sokoto State, he said.

Maigwandu also said that enough drugs had been bought to take care of the pilgrims, both at home and abroad.

"Qualified doctors and other health personnel were also engaged to ensure that the pilgrims are kept healthy," he added.

From Aliyu Haruna, Correspondent (Kaduna)

witness but no avail.

He held that no prima facie case has been established to warrant the court to frame any charge against the accused person under section 159 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC) for want of evidence, saying that who ever is not satisfied with the ruling has right of appeal.

He held that he found nothing before him to act on, saying the evidence so far adduced in conclusive and the statement sought to be tendered have go through the trial to ascertain its voluntariness.

The accused person, Abdullahi Nuhu and two others were arraigned before the Chief Magistrate Court on 30th June, 2003 for alleged criminal conspiracy, intentional assault and inciting disturbance contrary to section, 97, 399 and 114 of the penal code.

When the police First Information Report (FIR), to the accused persons, they pleaded not guilty to the allegations in which the court ordered the prosecutions to prove the case against the

accused persons.

The Principal Witness (PW1) Hussaini Musa, a Superintendent of Police (SP) serving with Zaria city division has earlier testified that on 20/6/2003 at 1500 hours while he was on special duty together with others at the one Alhaji Munnir Ja'afaru (Yariman Zazzau for the said Yarima's daughter at Kusfa, Zaria city, in which many dignitaries attended General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida and General Muhammadu Buhari were in attendance.

The witness said that after the wedding Fatima, while his team were escorting General Babangida to where his car was parked, the accused person went toward the said former president pointing fingers at him, saying in Hausa language "Allah Ya isa banu yafe bu macuci," meaning God will not judge, we will not agree, cheat.

The witness further stated that his team were able to control the crowd that surged towards the former head of state.

The witness also submitted that the accused were later arrested and taken the magistrate courts.

### 'Yams on petrol tankers unsafe for consumption'

**A** retired Chief Nursing Officer, Mrs Minengimi Reuben, wants NAFDAC "to determine the safety of yams, hauled in petroleum tankers."

Reuben raised the alarm yesterday in a chat with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) at Eleme, Rivers State.

She noted that "many tanker drivers haul yams in tanks after discharging petroleum products."

Reuben said: "Our drivers, after lifting products from Port Harcourt refinery to various parts of the country, use the same tankers to convey yams on their return." Some of the tanker drivers sold their yam tubers at a mini-market located just before the refinery, she said.

Reuben also condemned "the way petroleum tanker drivers park their vehicles on the Port Harcourt refinery road indiscriminately."

She recalled that "a representation was made on the poor environmental state of the surroundings of the refinery."

"But nothing has been done to restructure the ghetto, which constitutes a serious health hazard to the public and to motorists."

In the same vein, Mrs Jemaimah Daka, head of the Dakama Beautification Association in Rivers State, tasked both the federal government and oil companies "to check the destruction of aquaculture in the area."

The situation posed serious health dangers and should be halted immediately, she stressed.

### Obasanjo appoints Lecky NHIS scribe

**P**resident Olusegun Obasanjo, has approved the appointment of Dr. Muhammed Lecky as Executive Secretary of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS)

A statement signed by the



President Olusegun Obasanjo



PDP national secretary, Chief Vincent Ogbulajor (right) being interviewed by journalists during the NEC meeting held in Abuja ... Tuesday. Pic: Kennedy Egbonodje.

### Nasarawa acting gov tasks xtian pilgrims on religious practice

**T**he Nasarawa State Acting Governor, Mr. Labaran, has urged the state intending Christian Pilgrims to Israel to remain steadfast by keeping the Biblical Ten Commandments while in the Holy Land in order to avoid operating in variance with the laws of the host country.

The acting governor who is leading the contingent to the pilgrimage made this charge Tuesday in his Fare well message to the pilgrims at the Abacha Youth Centre in Lafia.

He enjoined them to take the lesson learnt during the workshop organised for the intending pilgrims seriously, as doing otherwise would jeopardise the purpose for which the pilgrimage was intended.

A statement by the Director of Press Affairs to the Acting Governor, Mallam Danmusa Mohammed, indicated that Mr. Maku advised the pilgrims never to abscond during their brief stay in the Holy Land as being practised by some participants from other parts of the country.

While calling on them to desist from turning the journey into a business venture, the Acting Governor pleaded with the pilgrims to pray hard during the exercise for their State Governor, Alhaji (Dr.) Abdullahi Adamu, the people of Nasarawa State and to remember those recently killed in the Asian Tsunami wave disaster.

Earlier in his address, the Chairman of the Christian Pilgrims Welfare Board, HRH, Abaga Toni, Dr. Sylvester Ayi, thanked the state Governor, All. (Dr.) Abdullahi Adamu, for sponsoring more than half of the 160 participants from Nasarawa State.

The chairman commended the solo effort made by one of the Baptist Churches which is sponsoring its pastor for the religious rites, urging other organisation to emulate this gesture.

He stressed that participants should use the occasion to glorify, worship God and pray for the progress of the country.

He called on them to remember the story of the 3 wise men who visited Christ at his birth but returned to their country soon after.

He pledged the continuous maximum support of the Christian faithful in the state to the present administration.

In his remarks, the Commissioner of Information and Internal Affairs, who is one of the pilgrims, Mr. Suleman Adokwe, thanked the government and people of the state for the privilege accorded them to perform the pilgrimage.

Mr. Adokwe urged fellow participants to move closer to God so that by the end of the pilgrimage, they would have been made anew.

### Budget: Yobe gov. signs N5b provisional warrant

**G**overnor Bukar Ibrahim of Yobe yesterday signed a provisional N5 billion capital and recurrent warrant pending

the passage of this year's budget by the state House of Assembly.

Addressing members of the state executive council, Ibrahim said the amount represented one-twelfth of the proposed budget.

He said the constitution had empowered him to sign the provisional warrant, stressing that the amount would be used to complete ongoing projects.

He said the state would construct a modern veterinary hospital to cater for the large number of livestock, adding: "It is through such that our leadership in livestock production will be sustained."

He said cattle ranches would be developed as well as grass plains and animal reserves, noting that "we will also consider establishing dairy factories."

In another development, Ibrahim said that plans were underway to purchase 20 fire fighting vehicles to reduce the loss of lives and property through fire outbreak.

# News

## Maiduguri LG mobilises for census

The Chairman of Maiduguri Metropolitan Council (MMCA), in Borno State, Alhaji Mohammed Imam, has ordered that adequate attention would be carried out towards the 2005 census.

Alhaji Imam, who was speaking in *Daily Trust* shortly after a rally on the census exercise in Maiduguri, said in 1991, the National Population Commission has put the figure of the Maiduguri Metropolitan at about eight hundred thousand, saying the figure is currently put at between 4-5 million.

He noted that as a result of the increase in population, the local government has been receiving attention from the state government.

From Isa Umar Gwan, Correspondent in Maiduguri

because it is the heart of Borno.

The chairman said that policies on provision of educational institutions, health facilities, among other social demands, are determined by census results of 1991 which does tally with the reality on ground.

Imam said it was in view of the seriousness attached to the upcoming exercise that his council selected and inaugurated a census Publicity Committee to complement the efforts of the state government.

He said the committee was aimed at ensuring total participation of people in the local government.

## Yobe cancels school fees

Governor Bukar Abba Ibrahim of Yobe State has approved the abrogation of school fees in his state, as part of measures to boost western education.

Alhaji Ibrahim Jirgi, the governor's special assistant on media, said in Bauchi, yesterday that the move was also intended "to boost the development of the educationally disadvantaged state".

Jirgi explained that the government "will from now on shoulder the financial responsibility of its citizens, from the primary to the tertiary level".

Governor Ibrahim also directed the prompt payment of scholarship allowances to all indigenes of Bauchi State in tertiary institutions, he said.

Meanwhile, N500 million has been earmarked in the 2005 budget for the take-off of the proposed state university.

According to Jirgi, "the state polytechnic at Geidam has taken off fully".

"Principal Officers, including the rector, registrar, bursar and heads of departments have been appointed," he added.

## Surveyor faces forgery charge

A 36-year-old surveyor, Godswill Adam, of Kado State Abuja, yesterday appeared before an Abuja Chief Magistrate's Court for alleged forgery.

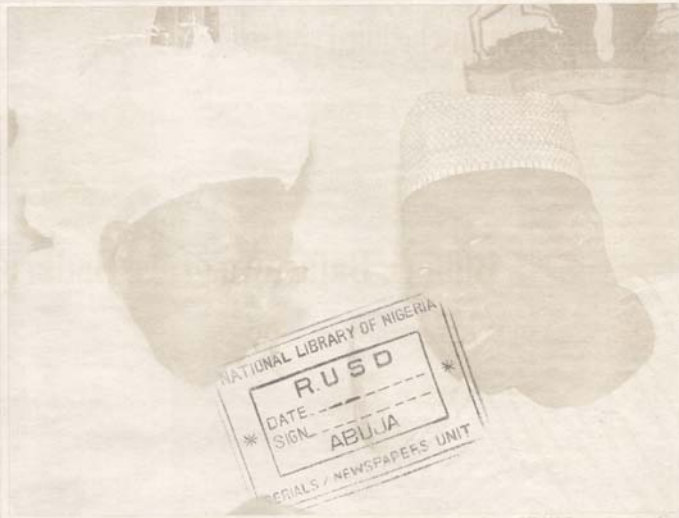
Adam's tenant, was said to have forged tenancy payment receipt for N180,000. The prosecuting police officer, Ishiaka Abdulkarim, told Magistrate Othman Musa that the accused claimed that he made the payment to his landlord, adding that he also issued a cheque of N20,000 that was not honoured.

Prosecutor Abdulkarim added that the offence contravened the penal code.

The accused pleaded not guilty to the charge, while the defence counsel, M.O. Idah applied for his bail. Idah argued that the accused would be presumed innocent by law until the contrary was proved, adding that his client would neither impede investigation nor abscond.

The prosecutor objected to the bail application on the ground that the offence was not ordinarily bailable and investigation was in progress.

The trial Magistrate Musa, granted the accused bail in the sum of N300,000 with a surety in like sum, and adjourned the case till March 22 for hearing.



The Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammad Maccido (left) with Governor Adamu Alieri of Kebbi State at a reception organised in honour of the participants of the 19th National Qur'anic Recitation Competition held in Birnin Kebbi recently.

## Why Taraba lacks federal project - Legislator

Disunity among the political class has been described as the main factor hindering effective execution of federal government projects in Taraba State.

The observation was made by a House of Representatives member representing Jalingo, Yorro and Zing federal constituency, Honourable Alma-shy A. Alqadash, while speaking to journalists in his constituency office, Jalingo.

From Ado Adami, stringer in Jalingo

The lawmaker revealed that unlike what is obtainable in other states where stakeholders rally round to articulate and pursue state projects collectively, the case was different in Taraba State.

He lamented that despite the massive votes received from the state during the 2003 elections, Taraba State was neglected by the federal government simply because the political class lack unity of purpose.

"It pains me a lot because even the project that were approved and awarded has been abandoned. It's unbelievable that in the whole of the north east region, only Taraba State has no tertiary institution of learning. What a neglect?"

Honourable Alqadash reasoned that in a normal working relationship, the state government supposed to involve its representatives at all levels, to lobby and influence the execution of federal projects in the state.

He then called on all Taraba State political stakeholders to consider the role of one another as important and ensure cordial working relationship to move the state forward.

On national issues, the lawmaker said the proposed national dialogue though unconstitutional was timely, since the National Assembly, being the body saddled with that responsibility has failed completely.

He revealed that most of the members at the National Assembly represent only the interest of their political godfathers and not their original constituencies.

He advised that for dialogue to succeed, a proper agenda has to be drawn, and only people of reputable integrity be allowed as delegates to the dialogue.

He supported the removal of the immunity clause in the constitution, which protect some elect officials from prosecution in any court of law. He decried the clause as high, ... sided, paving way for those protected to loot public funds.

## Governor Sheriff's car accident victim not dead - Physician

Amidst media reports that one Ali Musa who was on Sunday knocked down by Governor Ali Modu Sheriff's vehicle, had died, the personal physician to the governor, Dr. Suleiman Meleh, said that the information was false.

According to the physician, a doctor had been assigned to take care of the victim since the accident took place, saying he is alive.

Dr. Meleh and Governor Sheriff's chief press secretary led journalist to bed 16 at the male surgical ward of the Specialist Hospital, Maiduguri, where Ali Musa is being admitted, declined rumours about the alleged death of the victim.

Dr. Meleh said that since the accident, he has been attending to the victim, saying that the governor has shown concern over the 25 year old victim.

Ali Musa was on Sunday at about 11.00am hit by a



Kano State Governor, Malam Ibrahim Shekarau and the Emir of Kano, Alhaji, Ado Bayero (C) going round for inspection of materials displayed during flagging off ceremony of empowerment programme for Qur'anic Teachers (Alarummas) held at Sani Abacha Indoor Hall Kano...recently

# Inside Politics

## Obasanjo pays unscheduled visit to Ogbe

President Olusegun Obasanjo Tuesday paid an unscheduled visit to the home of the PDP National Chairman, Chief Adu Ogbé.

The president, who branched Ogbé's home on his way back from the Wadata house venue of the national executive council meeting of the party, spent sometime in the house located close to the presidential villa.

Coming at a time the rumour mill was full with talk of moves by Obasanjo to remove Ogbé both as his ad-

viser on food security and as national chairman of his party, it was indicative that the two had reconciled.

Ogbé spoke on the visit later at the State House, where he witnessed the inauguration of the national committee on raising resources in support of the victims of Tsunami.

He told reporters that although the president was not a stranger in his house, today's visit was "a most welcomed surprise."

He said the visit had shown how deep the reconciliation between them had gone and commended Obasanjo for his wisdom and courage.



Chief Adu Ogbé

## FCT APGA

### disowns meeting

The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) chapter of the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) has disassociated itself from a meeting by a group purporting to be APGA members on January

6, 2005 in Abuja.

The chapter also said that it was not aware of any proposed meeting of the party scheduled for Abuja today adding that a local chapter to the National Secretariat of the party, it (FCT) chapter ought to know about any meeting of the party.

In a press statement signed by its Vice Chairman and Organising Secretary, Stanley Ude Harry and Obiorah Chidzie respectively, the FCT APGA maintained that it had always been the tradition of "our great party to hold its meeting at the National Secretariat situated at House 4, Road 115, Gwarinpa Estate, Abuja, and therefore any meeting by any group held outside the National Secretariat on January 6, 2005 is illegal".

The statement then warned party members not to attend such meetings just it warned against convening illegal meeting in the name of the party!

## Buhari, Bafarawa grace Badaru's wedding

ANPP Presidential Candidate General Mohammed Buhari (rtd) and Sokoto State Governor Attahiru Dalhau

From Hassan A. Karofi, Correspondent, (Dutse) Bafarawa as well as several former governors, politicians

and prominent businessmen were among the large crowd that attended the wedding of the daughter of ANPP's board of trustee member, Alhaji Badaru Abubakar over the weekend.

The gathering, the like of which has not been seen for a long time in the ancient city of Kano, brought about the cream of the nation's political scene from both the PDP and ANPP as thousands of people converged at the Badaru Babura's residence to witness the ceremony.

First to reach the venue of the ceremony was Governor Attahiru Bafarawa who, along with his state executive members, speaker of the state house of assembly and many prominent Sokoto politicians besieged the residence of the bride's father an hour before the wedding faitha of Hajiya Aisha B.

Abubakar and Dr. Yunusa Ya'u.

Also in attendance were the deputy Governor of Kano state, Engineer Magaji Abdullahi, former military administrators of Jigawa, Akwa Ibom and Kaduna states who were besieged and cheered by the crowd.

Others who attended the ceremony include former civilian governors of Jigawa and Kano state, former Speaker Ghali Na'aba, Minister for State, Works, Alhaji Sale Shehu, and several other political heavy weights from the northern part of the country and beyond.

The arrival of General Mohammed Buhari to the venue was greeted with cheers as people surged forward to catch a sight of the ANPP presidential candidate who came amidst tight security.



Governor Peter Odili of Rivers State and Dr. Abel Goubadia, INEC chairman, here putting hood together at Hotel Presidential, Port Harcourt, during the retreat for electoral commissioners in Port Harcourt... recently.

## Gov. Kalu, most detribalized Nigerian - Commissioner

Following Abia State Governor Orji Kalu's recent declaration to contest the 2007 Presidential election inspite of his party's (PDP) decision to zone the office to the North, Daily Trust met his Special Duties Commissioner, Chief Chika Odom who explained the governor's reason to contest the presidential election.

Excepts:

Chief Orji Kalu recently declared his intention to run for the presidency in 2007. Does this not amount to shunning the agenda of the Igbo as proposed by the Ohanaeze Nd'Igbo to harmonise the Igbo candidates for the election as well as that of his party, PDP which has zoned the presidency to the north?

No, this does not amount to shunning the Ohanaeze Nd'Igbo. Rather, the governor has set the tone for other Igbo candidates to declare their ambitions early enough to enable the zone strategise on how to win the presidential election in 2007. What Kalu has done is

to accept the challenge of the Ohanaeze Nd'Igbo by coming out. You will recall that his speech in 2001 was what really motivated the umbrella organisation of the Igbo in swinging into action on the issue of the 2007 presidency. Nobody took the issue seriously until that speech during the Igbo Day.

Now, he has also increased the tempo of political activities with his decision to vie for the presidency and making it very clear to the whole world that he intends running. It is now left to any other person who is interested in the race to come up quickly. And this is very important because a presidential campaign is not a haphazard thing. You can't just rush into a presidential campaign and think you'll succeed. It is never done like that. More so, the governor happens to be sure of his own credentials and ability to deliver that was why he made his intentions known very early.

Nigeria is such a big country that if you start your campaigns late, you are not likely to be able to cover the whole country. So, rather than saying he has defied the Igbo agenda, the governor has only strengthened it by his declaration.

But his party, the PDP, has zoned the 2007 Presidency to the North. Does that mean he is going to switch parties?



Chief Chika Odom

There is nowhere in the PDP's constitution that says the party's presidential aspirants must come from only one part of the country. Moreover, PDP has not made any categorical statement vis-à-vis where its presidential flag bearer must come from.

But some have questioned his intentions based on allegations of

having failed to deliver democratic dividends to the people of Abia State and...

(Cuts in) I am very happy that the Federal Government

took the decision to start publishing how much each state receives from the Federation Accounts. Abia State is one of the least receiving states from the federal purse. The documents are there. You can

verify these things. When you have done that, then visit the state to assess what the Kalu administration had achieved in the last five and a half years since coming to office side by side with the revenue that accrued to the state. One thing is clear, nobody can steal government money in that small states except you want to grind the entire government machinery to a halt. We believe that what the governor has been able to achieve in the last five and a half years is monumental. We want people to visit Abia State so that we can physically point out what we have been able to do. It is not a matter of propaganda or politics we are talking politics.

But some have also questioned his level of education...

(Cuts in) The constitution has fixed a ceiling on the educational qualification demanded of a person who wants to run for

such office. I can assure you that the Governor of Abia State has the requisite qualification as required by the constitution to run for the presidency. You don't need to be a Wole Soyinka or Chinua Achebe to become the president if you understand what leadership and service to the people is all about and you have the capacity to deliver.

What gives governor Kalu the conviction to contest?

He is the most detribalised Nigerian who is of the Igbo stock and occupying such level of political office he is holding now. He is more acceptable to the other geo-political zones more than any other Igbo politician today. We should realise that what we are talking about is the presidency of Nigeria and not the presidency of Igbo land. If all the Igbo were to queue up behind a candidate unanimously and the other zones say they do not accept the candidate, all the Igbo votes can't elect a man the president of Nigeria. So, it is about time we stop being naïve and realise that the presidency project is a national project and we must bring out somebody who has the clout, the capacity, the financial muscle, the organizational capability, to run for a presidential campaign. It is not an emotional game, it is hard-core business.

**So, it is about time we stop being naïve and realise that the presidency project is a national project and we must bring out somebody who has the clout, the capacity, the financial muscle, the organizational capability, to run for a presidential campaign. It is not an emotional game, it is hard-core business.**

# Inside Politics

## ANPP govts parley on party's crisis

Governors of the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) controlled states and some national leaders of the party met on Monday, January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2005 at Kebbi state Governor's Lodge Abuja in further pursuit of lasting solution to the intractable crisis that dodged the party.

Chaired by Governor Muhammad Adamu Aliero of Kebbi state, the meeting was attended by Governor Ahmed Sani Yerima of Zamfara state, Senator Ali Modu Sheriff of Borno state, Atahuru Dalhatu BaFarawa of Sokoto and Bakar Abba Ibrahim of Yobe State.

A statement signed by Governor Muhammadu Adamu Aliero of Kebbi state said others in attendance include Alh. Umaru Aliyu Shinkafi, a former National Chairman of the party, Alh. Garba Yusuf Ali, Lt. Gen. Jermiah Useni (rtd), Maj. Gen. Bashir Magashi (rtd) and a former speaker of the House of Representatives, Chief Edwin Ume Ezeoke.

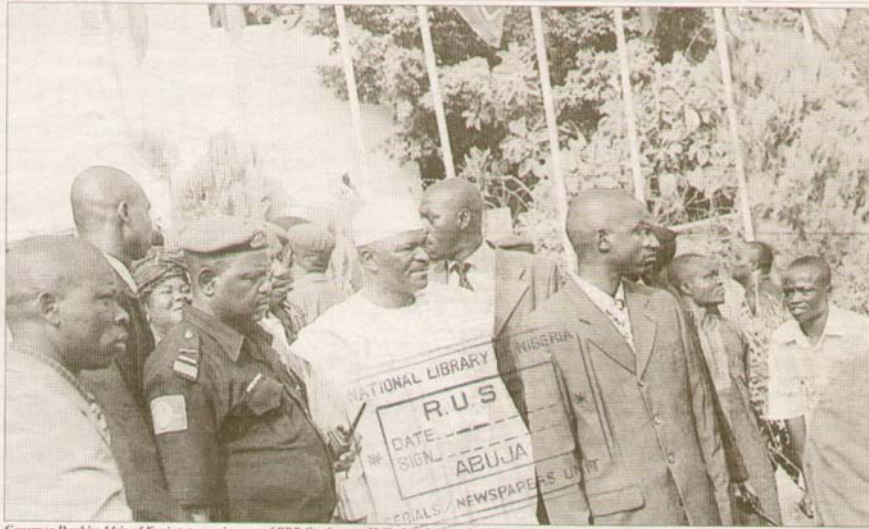
According to the statement Governor Muhammadu Adamu Aliero of Kebbi State was saddled with the task of convening a reconciliation meeting aimed at finding lasting solution to the problem in the party.

It said that the proposed reconciliation meeting which would be chaired by Governor Muhammadu Adamu Aliero, is scheduled for Thursday February 10<sup>th</sup> 2005, at Kebbi state Governor's Lodge Abuja and will be attended by all the seven ANPP Governors and all members of the National Working Committee (NWC) of the party.

## Group urges Zamfara gov to contest presidency

The Yerima Solidarity Association (YSA), an umbrella campaign organisation for Zamfara state governor, Alhaji Ahmed Sani, has called on him to declare his interest for the presidency in 2007.

A statement signed by Malam Muhammad Usman, National President of the group, called on the governor to contest the 2007 presidential election. The call, according to the statement was because of the groups conviction that having done well as governor in Zamfara state, Alhaji Ahmed



Governor Ibrahim Idris of Kogi state moving out of PDP Conference Hall after the party's NEC meeting held in Abuja Tuesday. Pic:KENNEDY EGBONODJE

## APGA wants Anambra elected officials to leave office

The All progressive Grand Alliance (APGA) has said that in view of the recent revelations by president Olusegun Obasanjo, Chief Chris Uba and Dr. Chris Ngige that the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) did massively rig the entire 2003 elections in Anambra state, elected officers on PDP platform in the state should vacate their office immediately.

In a statement signed by its National Chairman, Chief Chekwes Okorie, APGA said that based on the confessions of the trio, it was apparent that APGA candidates won the Governorship, national Assembly and state House of Assembly elections in Anambra state" and that president Obasanjo's letter to the PDP Chairman, Chief Audu Ogburn on the Anambra state and that president

Obasanjo's letter to the PDP Chairman, Chief Audu Ogburn on the Anambra state that he massively rigged the elections and Dr. Ngige's confession in 2003 that both the governorship and presidential polls result in Anambra state were written on the same table "were clear public evidence that APGA won all the elections in the state".

It said that, since Nigeria is not a lawless society "we demand immediate restoration of all stolen mandates as a way out of the Anambra political turmoil, which has made mockery of our nascent democracy."

The party condemned the call by the PDP leadership on

Dr. Ngige to resign as Anambra State Governor saying that the call bordered "on insincerity, perfidy and treachery against APGA".

According to APGA, democracy can only flourish

in Nigeria if the peoples votes and mandates are respected, adding that "since the electoral robberies had been committed and confessions made, it is time for restitution and restoration of all stolen mandates."

## Leadership crisis rocks IBB campaign group

Cracks have emerged in IBB Vision 2007 as a result of what some members call the hijacking of the organisation by past military aides and friends of former military president, General Ibrahim Babangida.

The National Publicity Secretary of the organisation, Salman Yusuf told Daily Trust that nobody was against anybody no matter his professional background as long as their interest tallies with that of the organisation which, according to him, is the mobilisation of the grassroots for total support of IBB when he decides to contest the presidency of Nigeria in 2007.

"What we are against is the militarisation of our organisation by those friends, giving unchallenged orders and instruction in an organisation that is purely democratic. We welcome their participation in the organisation but they have to learn to do things in a democratic way," he declared.

When contacted in Kano, the National secretary of IBB Vision 2007" Alhaji Abubakar Adamu Kazaura

observed that although efforts to bring all pro IBB campaign groups under one umbrella was welcome, it should however, be properly articulated and involve all stakeholders.

Alhaji Abubakar maintained that if progress was made all sister organisations must be involved in any decision to be taken under the new umbrella organisation for IBB 2007, "the Nigerian Project."

The Marshal-General of the "IBB Vision 2007", Alhaji Yusuf Alhasan Gumel said that he represented the organisation at the Abuja meeting of TNP but was surprised that what was discussed at the meeting was not what was released to newsmen.

He disclosed that the decision taken at the Abuja meeting was that a politician from the northwest be appointed to coordinate the zone and was therefore surprised to discover that a retired general who is not intune with the realities of grassroots politics and mobilisation.

## 2007: Sarumi advises Duke on third term

Impressed by the performance of governor Donald Duke of Cross River state, the Managing Director of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Chief A.B. Sarumi has advised him to consider running for a third term in 2007.

Chief Sarumi said in Calabar at the weekend that because everybody talked about the present developmental strides taking place in Cross River he would suggest to Duke to go for a third term, if it was possible.

"Duke is one who has set marks so it is possible or if the law permits he should go in for the third term as the governor of Cross River state. This is because everybody in the country now is taking about Cross River state" Sarumi said.

Sarumi, who was in Calabar for a Chieftaincy title conferred on him by the Efik Monarch, Edidem Professor Nfa-Elizah Henshaw, also expressed appreciation to the

Bassey Ita Correspondent (Calabar)

people of Cross River for the honour done him even as he promised to serve the nation within his tenure in office effectively and efficiently.

The NPA boss, who was decked in an Efik traditional regalia with his wife depicting the title of "Ada Idaha ke Efiu Abumfu," also poured encomium on Duke for "setting a precedence in development which previous administrations could not."

Responding, Mr. Duke expressed confidence in Chief Sarumi to see that ports operation at the Calabar Ports heightened by making it more operational to meet the operations and developmental needs of the state government.

He stated that the honour to Sarumi was not only from Efik land but from all those who strongly believe in him to create a positive impact on the nation's economy by taking the authority and ports operations to greater heights.

From Aliyu Haruna, Correspondent (Kaduna)

Sani will equally do well as Nigeria's President.

The statement urged all youths organisations, clubs and associations as well as other Nigerians to join in the campaign to persuade the governor to contest the 2007 presidential race.

Similarly, the statement urged all the political parties to endorse and support the bid to drag governor Sani to contest for the presidential race, adding that he is a man of great talent, endowed with zeal, dynamism and foresight

# SPORTS

## Big guns ready for season opener

A top-class field is ready to compete for the Mercedes Championship as the 2005 PGA Tour starts on Thursday.

Vijay Singh, Tiger Woods and Ernie Els are looking to start the new season with a victory in Hawaii.

And Singh, the world number one, is expecting a tough year as he tries to hold on to top spot.

"Everybody is going to be starting level," said Singh. "You've just got to get in front as quick as possible and see if you can stay there."

Singh added: "That's the way I've always thought, and hopefully I'm going to start that way again."

The Fijian goes into the tournament with his trainer, Joey Diovidisyl, temporarily taking over as his caddy.

Last year Dave Renwick caddied for Singh, but after a rocky relationship towards the end of the season the two boys parted company.

Renwick is currently spending time with his family in Scotland and after the Mercedes Championship Singh's former caddy Paul Tesori will take over the bag-carrying duties.

Woods goes into the

tournament looking to start the year on a high as bids to reclaim his number one ranking.

The American won his last two tournaments of last year - the Dubai Phoenix and the Target World Championship and is playing in two of the first three tournaments of this season's PGA tour.

World number four Retief Goosen is also competing in Hawaii and is looking to build on last season, when the South African capped a fine season by winning the Tour Championship.

"They've [Singh, Woods and Els] been busy on Tour here a little bit longer than me and people know from a little bit better," said Goosen.

"But I think a couple more years of good play, it might be a different story."



Singh... looking forward to the start of the golfing season.

## Schumacher gives \$10m in tsunami aid

Ferrari's four world champion Michael Schumacher is to donate \$10 million to help the victims of the South Asian tsunami, his manager Willi Weber said on Tuesday.

The donation from Schumacher was announced by Weber on a German television fundraising drive that on Tuesday evening received more than 34 million euros in

pledges.

"It's an unfortunate and horrible what happened to so many people," Schumacher, who turned 36 on Monday, said in comments on his website. "Our hearts are very blind to it. We're suffering with them."

The official death toll from the Asian tsunami on December 26 has climbed to around 130,000, with millions left homeless, hungry and threatened by disease.

Schumacher, driving his Ferrari, won his seventh F1 world title last year.

## Moya beats nerves in opening win

Top seed and defending champion Carlos Moya made easy progress into the second round of the Chennai Open in Madras.

The Spaniard saw off qualifier Julian Knowle of Austria, 6-4 7-6 (7/4).

"One's always nervous playing the first match of the season," he said. "He had more match practice than me and I'm happy to have put it out of the way."

Paradorn Srichaphan struggled against Belgian Christophe Rochus until the match turned on a second set tie break, the Thai winning 4-6 7-6 (7/4) 6-1.

Jonas Bjorkman also came from behind to win.

The Swede lost the first three games before beating India's Karan Rastogi 6-4 6-0.

Bjorkman, seeded fourth, has pledged to donate his tournament winnings to the continuing relief effort in Asia following the devastating Boxing Day tsunami.

"These have been a tough few days for all of us," he said.

"I hope we can bring a little light in the darkness around us. It's our duty to lend all help to those affected and the response I've got from my fellow players has been very positive."

Madras, now known as Chennai, is the capital city of Tamil Nadu state where an estimated 8,000 people died in giant waves triggered by an earthquake off the Indonesian coast.

## O'Neal's season high leads Pacers past Bucks

Jermaine O'Neal scored an NBA season-high 55 points as the Indiana Pacers crushed the Milwaukee Bucks 116-99 on Tuesday, shortly after he announced plans of a personal relief fund for tsunami victims.

Having said before the game he would donate a \$1,000 for every point he scores in Thursday's clash with the San Antonio Spurs, O'Neal could be in line to make a sizeable donation to relief efforts in Asia if he can match or better Tuesday's career-high performance.

O'Neal, who sat out a 15-game suspension for his part in a brawl with fans during a game with the Detroit Pistons in November, has quickly returned to form.

The all-star forward's haul, supplemented by 11 rebounds, was one better than the previous season best set by Philadelphia's Allen Iverson and just two points shy of Reggie Miller's Pacers club record of 57.

The victory was the fourth straight for the Pacers who remain without all-star Ron Artest, serving a season-long suspension for his role in Detroit melee, and Stephen Jackson, out with a 30-game ban.

In Minneapolis, Amare Stoudemire scored 34 points before being ejected as the Phoenix Suns avenged one of their few losses of the season out gunning the Timberwolves 122-115, improving their NBA-best record to 27-4.

Not even a career high and franchise-record 47 points from reigning NBA MVP Kevin Garnett could cool the red hot Suns, who claimed their first win at the Target Center in almost five years, sending the stumping Wolves to their third straight loss.

Garnett, who also grabbed 17 rebounds and four assists, easily improved on his previous career high of 40 points and eclipsed the team mark of 44 held by Tony Campbell and Wally Szczerbiak.

Shawn Marion added 28 points while Steve Nash chipped in with 20 points and 16 assists as the Suns without a late rally to record their 14th win in 15 games.

In San Antonio, two members of the Spurs sup-

porting cast played starring roles as Bruce Bowen scored a season-high 24 points and Brent Barry added 14 to spark a 100-83 victory over the Los Angeles Lakers.

Bowen also played a part defensively holding Kobe Bryant to just 17 points, denying the Lakers leader a fourth consecutive 40 point outing.

Tim Duncan had a relatively quiet night offensively for San Antonio, contributing 12 points and 15 rebounds while Manu Ginobili had 13 points as Spurs picked up their sixth win in seven games.

In Washington, Larry Hughes matched his season high with 33 points and dished out seven assists as the Wizards crushed the New Jersey Nets 112-88.

Gilbert Arenas added 20

points and the Wizards hit for a club record 14 three-pointers to collect their second straight win spoiling brilliant efforts from the Nets duo of Vince Carter and Jason Kidd.

Carter had 31 points for his best performance since joining the Nets from the Toronto Raptors last month while Kidd added 19 points, eight rebounds and seven assists.

The Nets saw the game slip away late in the fourth quarter, failing to score in the final five minutes and missing their final seven shots while the Wizards drained the last 13 points.

In New York, Chris Weber scored 22 points and Peja Stojakovic hit for 21 as the Sacramento Kings downed the Knicks 105-98 to celebrate their first win in the Big Apple since 1996.

## Dates set for 2006 African Nations Cup finals

Next year's African Nations Cup finals in Egypt will be played from January 20 to February 10, the Confederation of African Football (CAF) have announced.

Both the opening match and the final will be played at Cairo's National stadium, currently closed for renovations. It has a capacity of 80,000.

The other venues for the bi-annual continental championship have yet to be announced but are expected to be Alexandria, Port Said and Awan, according to CAF officials.

The dates are again expected to cause a storm of controversy with club managers in Europe, who will be forced to give up players to compete in the event during the European league season.

The last Nations Cup tournament in Tunisia fell on almost the same dates in 2004 and the controversy over the release of European-based players for the tournament

dominated the build-up to the event.

CAF president Issa Hayatou has refused previous calls to move the tournament to a date in the European off-season even though the vast majority of players who participate at the Nations Cup finals now come from clubs in Europe.

The draw for the 2006 finals will be held in Cairo on October 20 this year, a fortnight after the qualifying competition ends.

The qualifiers for the 2006 Nations Cup finals have been combined with those for the 2006 World Cup finals in Germany and resume again in March, having reached the halfway stage.

The winner of each of the five qualifying groups goes to the World Cup finals while the top three teams in each group qualify for the Nations Cup finals.

As Egypt qualify automatically as hosts, the first three teams excluding the Egyptians go through from their group.



Indiana Pacers forward Jermaine O'Neal, left, puts up a shot against Milwaukee Bucks forward Marcus Fizer during their NBA clash on Tuesday.

# Sports

## Linesman's blunder denies Spurs victory

Tottenham Hotspur were denied a shock Premier League victory at Manchester United when a huge error by a linesman deprived them of a last-minute winner at Old Trafford on Tuesday.

With the teams level at 0-0, Spurs midfielder Pedro Mendes launched an ambitious looping shot from 45 metres which was spilled by United goalkeeper Roy Carroll at least a metre over his own line.

Carroll desperately scrambled the ball away and the referee allowed play to continue as linesman Ray Lewis failed to signal that it had crossed the line.

The incident overshadowed a match in which United were frustrated by a disciplined Spurs defensive performance as they slipped 11 points behind leaders Chelsea.

"I can understand it but it's still a disgrace if you are playing football in 2005 and there is so much technology in the world," Spurs coach Martin Jol told Sky Sports.

"I am very happy with a draw but obviously it would have been nice to win at Old Trafford."

United manager Alex Ferguson also said the time had come for video equipment to be used.

"It just adds weight to the point about technology being brought in," Ferguson said.

"I don't think you can blame the referee or the linesman because I wasn't sure myself that the ball had crossed the line. It looked like it had but I wasn't dead sure."

United dominated the first half and nearly broke the

deadlock with a neat shot on the turn by striker Alan Smith which was brilliantly turned away by Spurs goalkeeper Paul Robinson.

Winger Cristiano Ronaldo headed narrowly over the bar from a corner and captain Roy Keane's neat volley flew just wide

as United were left to rue the absence of injured strikers Ruud van Nistelrooy and Louis Saha and the suspended Wayne Rooney.

The hosts also lost in-form winger Ryan Giggs to injury in the first half but continued to pour forward, coming closest to scoring on

the hour when Spurs defender Noe Pamarot turned a cross against his own post.

Tottenham rarely threatened Carroll's goal but played neat passing football through midfield and striker Robbie Keane shot just over the bar shortly before

Mendes's ambitious effort. As controversy raged around the stadium in stoppage time, United had a penalty appeal turned down and defender Gabriel Heinze brought another diving save out of Robinson.

Spurs remained seventh in the standings.



Manchester United's Cristiano Ronaldo speeds past Tottenham players. Three of the English Premiership's leading managers united in a call for the introduction of video technology to help referees after Tottenham were denied victory over Manchester United by an astonishing blunder by officials.

## Drogba puts Chelsea in touching distance of title

Didier Drogba has put Chelsea within touching distance of

their first English title in 50 years after Jose Mourinho's side opened up a commanding seven-point lead at the top of the Premiership.

The Ivory Coast striker repaid a large chunk of his 24-million-pound transfer fee with a first-half double that fired Chelsea to a 2-0 win over Middlesbrough on a night that could prove decisive in the title race.

With Arsenal and Manchester United both held to draws, the title is now, in the words of Middlesbrough manager Steve McClaren, "Chelsea's to lose."

Mourinho's assistant, Steve Clarke, would not go that far but he did underline the psychological edge the Blues had gained by coming through the gruelling Christmas and New Year period with maximum points from four games and no goals conceded.

"The only thing that matters now is that we are still in front when it comes to May," Clarke said.

"It was a good night for us but we don't have to worry about the results elsewhere. We've been top of the league for some time now and we're enjoying it up there."

Arsenal had to come from behind to secure a 1-1

draw with Manchester City at Highbury while a Manchester United side missing Ruud van Nistelrooy, Louis Saha and Wayne Rooney needed an appalling blunder by the referee to escape with a goalless draw against Tottenham at Old Trafford.

United now stand 11 points adrift of Chelsea and it will take something special for Sir Alex Ferguson's men to get back into serious contention.

Typically however, the Scot is refusing to accept that the battle is lost.

"I sometimes think this is when the season starts in earnest because there is an added pressure as you reach the point of no return," he said.

"I think we are better under pressure because there is a great sense of urgency in the team as they realise that they will have to grind out results now."

Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger struck a more realistic tone.

"At the moment Chelsea do not look like dropping seven points but you never know. Anything can happen in football," the Frenchman said. "It is not easy but if we want an easy job we should

stay at home. This is a job for a strong man and for us to give up and say they've won it would be criminal.

Restored to the Chelsea starting line-up at the expense of Eidur Gudjohnsen, Drogba required barely a quarter of an hour to fire his side into the lead, latching on to a pass from Frank Lampard and beating Gareth Southgate before finishing from just inside the box.

Two minutes later the Ivory Coast striker killed the game as a contest with a bullet header from a precisely delivered free-kick from Lampard.

That was the cue for Jose Mourinho's side to turn on the style and, but for the heroics of their goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer, Boro might easily have been on the receiving end of a five or six-goal thrashing.

What Arsenal would have given for that kind of evening. As it was, Arsene Wenger's side were left reeling by a stunning Shaun Wright-Phillips strike just after half an hour.

The step-son of Arsenal legend Ian Wright took full advantage of Patrick Vieira losing possession outside his own area by lashing in a drive from more than 25 yards.

## Late Osman strike seals gripping Everton win

Record signing James Beattie watched his new club Everton remain on course for Europe after Leon Osman's spectacular injury time winner gave the Merseyside club a 2-1 victory over Portsmouth at Goodison Park.

Nigerian striker Aiyegbeni Yakubu thought he had rescued a point for the battling visitors after defender Alan Stubbs had made the vital breakthrough.

Everton went on to carve out - and waste - a succession of chances before Osman struck in the dying seconds to settle an entertaining game.

Portsmouth arrived at Goodison Park boasting an unbeaten away record under their Croatian manager Velimir Zajec.

The 48-year-old former director of football at Panathinaikos and Dynamo Zagreb had steered the south coast club to three wins and three draws in eight games since succeeding Harry Redknapp, now in charge of south coast arch-rivals Southampton, in November.

Everton's hopes of hosting European action next season had not been helped by two successive defeats yet the six-million-pound capture of Beattie from Southampton just hours before kick-off clearly lifted the spirits of supporters.

Beattie's arrival had come too late for him to take part in Everton's first home game of 2005 although the 26-year-old, who has agreed a four-and-a-half-year contract, was paraded on the pitch before the start wearing his new No 8 shirt.

He stayed to watch former Arsenal striker Kevin Campbell make his first Premiership start for more than four months in place of six-goal leading scorer Marcus Bent.

Campbell has been forced to take a back seat during the first half of the season but with Duncan Ferguson serving a three-match suspension and Bent rested after a prolonged spell in the team, the 34-year-old finally got his chance to impress.

Only a brave block by Dutch defender and Portsmouth captain Arjan De Zeeuw prevented Campbell from sending the hosts into a sixth minute lead as Everton went in hunt of their fourth successive home win.

Portsmouth were restricted to a couple of long-range attempts by Czech Republic midfielder Patrik Berger before Stubbs' first goal of the season gave Moyes' side a deserved 29th minute lead.

The big defender gave goalkeeper Shaka Hislop no chance with a powerful header from seven-yards following a corner by Danish midfielder Thomas Gravesen.



Drogba takes Chelsea within touching distance of their first title in 50 years.

# Sports

## Power tussle grounds activities in Glass House

Activities are now grounded at the NFA in Abuja as no definite official appears to be in control of the Secretary-General's office and all the other departments.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the Sports Minister Musa

Mohammed had on Tuesday directed the new management to take over the Glass House immediately.

But a check by NAN yesterday at about 2 p.m. revealed that none of the officials or the out-going management led by Chief Taiwo Ogunjohi was in the

office for duties. The situation has created anxiety and uncertainty among the staff as many of them expressed fears about their status following the ongoing reforms in the association.

The staff have become apprehensive, especially with the renewed FIFA threat to the government to re-instate

the sacked management by Friday or face outright ban.

"Why is the new management afraid of taking over, are the members not confident of what to do?", an obviously disturbed staffer asked.

Some of the staff, who pleaded anonymity, expressed fear that the confusion

in the soccer house might adversely affect the country's build-up to the 2006 FIFA World Cup.

They said that the ongoing preparations for the African Youth Championship in Benin Republic this month could also be affected.

Mohammed had on December 23, sacked the Ogunjohi-led team, replacing it with fresh hands headed by Segun Odegbami.

The action prompted sharp disagreements between the ministry on one

hand as well as FIFA and NFA on the other.

Consequently, the NFA board protested against the measure in separate petitions to FIFA, NASS and the ministry, a situation that finally led to FIFA's serious threat to ban the country's organised competitions.

The world soccer ruling body had earlier in October issued a three-month ultimatum to Nigeria to refine its soccer laws or face suspension.

### Okoye denies Enyimba switch

From Okechukwu Eze, Sports Correspondent (Lagos)

Rangers captain Sam Okoye has denied reports linking him to African champions, Enyimba FC.

He said that Abuja side are yet to demonstrate enough commitment and yet to fulfil their contractual obligations. Okoye disclosed to our correspondent on phone that though he was willing to join the People's Elephant, he remains a Rangers player until the contractual agreement were endorsed by all the parties.

"Actually talks were on the high side between myself and Enyimba officials but for now I remain a Rangers player. Not until we reach a satisfactory legal agreement, I will remain in Enugu.

"I joined Rangers since 1996 and my calculation, I have done so much for them, just as they've done for me. You know in life it's not good to remain stagnant. One has to seek new challenges. That's what I am seeking with Enyimba," the former Flying Eagles keeper said.

Okoye, however, denied insinuations that his form has dipped as he was not considered for the national team by the Super Eagles handlers.

"My form dropped? Well, I remain who I was in 1999 and I am, even better now because of my technical exposure in the game. I have been in charge of Rangers goalpost since 1996, in the process I rose to become captain of the side, inspiring the team in its domestic and continental campaigns.

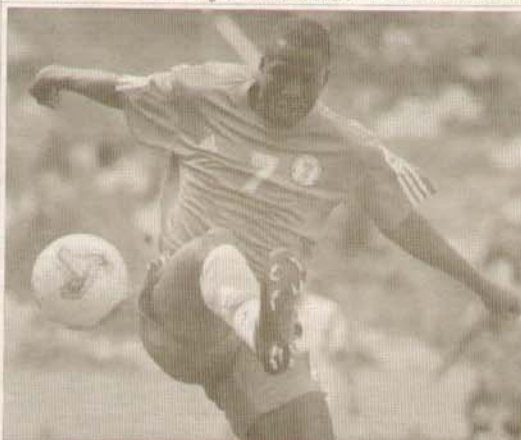
"But I assure you that in no distant time the Eagles handlers will remember me," he said.

### Ojo frowns at N25,000 monthly wage

Rangers attacker, Ebenezer Ojo has expressed displeasure over the N25,000 monthly wages of Premier League players which the NFA is mandating club owners to pay players for their services.

Ojo, who attributed the mass exodus of Nigerian players to foreign countries to the meagre allowances and welfare package for the players, said its too meagre for Premier League players.

"Personally, I am not satisfied with the monthly take home of N25,000.



Super Eagles striker John Utaoka controls the ball. The federal government yesterday approved scrapping Decree 101 which compromised the independence of NFA and which FIFA had queried.

### TABLE TENNIS

## Officials want consolidation of leadership status

Nigeria's status as a leader in table tennis in Africa seems to remain solid in spite of the obvious lack of injection of adequate funds and fresh hands in the game in the country.

Its leadership status was further enhanced by the country's performance in the 8th All Africa games tagged "Abuja 2003", in which Nigeria won seven gold medals.

But that position is being threatened by countries like Egypt, South Africa, Tunisia and Algeria to mention a few, which are consistent with their development programmes.

One major problem that

the Nigerian Table Tennis Federation (NTTF) focussed on in 2004 was how to consolidate the gains made so far in the sport and sustain the country's leadership position.

Unfortunately, this aspiration could not be met as the only way was to continue participating in local and international competitions to improve the skills of the players.

Apart from preparations for the 2004 Athens Olympic Games, the NTTF had not did not do much in terms of competitions locally and internationally.

On the local scene, the Lagos State Table Tennis Association organised the Asoju-Oba Table Tennis Competition, which has been sponsored by Chief Molade Okoya Thomas for 36 unbroken years. The competition held at the Mobolaji Johnson Sports Centre, Rowe Park, Yaba, Lagos, between December 13 and December 17.

Following on its heels, was the 13th Coscharis Table Tennis Championships, sponsored by Coscharis Group Nigeria Ltd. This competition was held at the newly refurbished Indoor Sports Hall of the National Stadium, Lagos, from December 20 to December 22.

Though one could say that they were only able to organise two competitions, it is still good for the development of the game and the players, considering the difficulties in securing sponsorship because of the country's economic downturn.

On the international scene, though the country could not send a team to the Senior African Table Tennis Championships in Mauritius in November, one of the country's international umpires, Mrs. Patience Ikeme-Iwuno, and an international referee, Mr. Oshuranti Lajide officiated.

Lajide was the tournament referee and also conducted an international umpires course on the sidelines. At the same championship, Mr. Olabanji Oladapo, NTTF's first vice-president and Nigeria Olympic Committee Secretary-General was returned as African Table Tennis Federation (ATTF) executive vice-president, Administration.

Six other Nigerians including the NTTF chief coach, Babatunde Obisanya, were also appointed into the various committees of the ATTF.

At the Olympics, although Nigeria did not win medals, it got to the round of 16, an attempt NTTF officials described as a good outing.

NTTF president Cosmas Maduka, commenting on the sport in 2004, said it has not been particularly good for table tennis and other sports generally because of the downturn in the country's economy.

## Hockey celebrate world ranking

By Peter Ejiufor (NAN)

The year 2004 has come and gone but for hockey, it a year that will ever remain green, because Nigeria made significant improvements, not only at the African level but the world stage as well.

There were two significant developments — Nigeria for the first time made it in the World ranking and for the first time also hosted an international hockey tournament in the newly installed astro-turf pitch in Abuja.

It is obvious that the installation of the astro-turf in Abuja in 2003, which was built to host the last 8th All Africa Games, provided the impetus that propelled the African Hockey Federation (AHF) to grant Nigeria a right to host an international championship.

In the country's maiden ranking, the National female team was ranked 22, while the male was ranked 38.

The developments, no doubt, were a culmination of efforts by the Nigeria Hockey Federation (NHF), the Federal Ministry of Sports and Social Development and other stakeholders that assisted in developing vital facilities, which has invariably assisted the National teams to secure hosting rights of international championships.

As a result of the rapid improvements of the National female team on the new playing surface, the team clinched a silver medal at the Africa games, while the males put up a sparkling performance also at the event.

It was the result that earned the male team their invitation to play in the maiden Afro-Asian Games in India in 2003, thus giving them the opportunity to participate in international competitions, which helped their eventual ranking.

With the astro turf, it was easy for the country secure the approval from the African Hockey Federation (AHF) to host the Africa Cup for Club Champions (ACCC) in Abuja in September.

However, three countries — Egypt, Ghana and hosts Nigeria — took part in the competition. In all, six teams from the participating countries featured in the male and four in the female categories.

The male category, Egypt, represented by El Sharka club won, while Nigeria that was represented by Delta Force of Asaba placed second. Yobe Desert Rollers of Damaturu was placed third.

Egypt's El Sayadeen placed fourth while Ghana's Trustees and Exchangers finished fifth and sixth respectively.

Nigeria's Heartland club clinched the female category title while Extinguishers of Ghana, Maryam Queens also of Nigeria and Egypt's El Sharka place second, third and fourth respectively.

Mrs. Toyin Aluko, NHF secretary, while speaking with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on the rankings said: "It is as a result of taking part in as many international competitions as possible.

"The teams took part in six international championships and the improved performance helped their rating. This is why the female team secured much higher ranking," she said.

"We have to work harder by seeking sponsorships to keep the game alive. We need to provide more facilities and also take the sport to the grassroots.

"It behoves all stakeholders to show commitment toward continued development of the sport at all levels, so that the gains can be sustained."

At the local scene, the Federation, successfully organised the National Super League in both the male and female categories — eight clubs featured in the male category while six participated in the female.

# Sports

## FIFA writes Galadima ...threatens to ban Nigeria

Nigeria Football Association (NFA) boss Ibrahim Galadima has said that he has received a letter from world soccer governing body FIFA warning that Nigeria risk a ban from

### Ogunjobi, others to face EFCC

Some of the members of the NFA management and board recently fired by the sports ministry are to be tried for corruption by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission.

A top ministry official said that world soccer governing body FIFA were accordingly briefed on this on Tuesday.

"Government stands by its decisions to fire the officials in question," a top official disclosed.

"We have already communicated to FIFA the high level of corruption at the NFA and that was why we went ahead to clean up the place. We cannot stand and watch people contravene the laws of the land in the name of football."

The official added: "Any moment from now, those who have been found wanting will be brought to face the full weight of the law."

"Last week, we also communicated FIFA on the changes we wish to carry out in line with their wishes."

The ministry's allegations against the sacked officials include non-accountability of FIFA grant of three million dollars, the 47,000 dollars spent on two visiting FIFA officials in respect of the FIFA goal project as well as the 60 million naira sponsorship fee from Globacom which the NFA used to prosecute the last African Nations Cup in Tunisia.

"This shows the sincerity and level of commitment to reform our football laws in line with what FIFA demand," the official offered.

However, FIFA has asked the government to reverse the recent sacking of the management and non-elected members on the NFA board before Friday or the country be prepared to face "the consequences."

### Cadet teams in danger

With a FIFA ban hanging like a sword over Damocles on Nigerian football, the first casualties are almost ready to be counted.

The Golden Eaglets departed for Luanda on Tuesday for the first leg of their qualifier against hosts Angola this weekend.

But if Nigeria is banned, the Eaglets will forfeit the match, and consequently miss out on a place in the African championships holding in Gambia in May. There is also the possibility

international competitions if the government fails to reverse recent decisions to sack the NFA management and some members of the board.

"The action of the ministry is in violation of the spirit of the Zurich meeting," Galadima said, while reading from the letter from FIFA.

"FIFA therefore said Nigeria have until 7 January (Friday) to revert to the status quo or face the consequence."

Copies of this letter were also sent to CAF Secretary-general Mustapha Falmuy as well as Amos Adamu who is on the executive council of CAF.

A Nigerian delegation led by Sports Minister Musa Mohammed was recently at FIFA headquarters in Zurich, Switzerland, during which it gave a commitment to the world soccer ruling body that efforts

are being made to repeal the obnoxious Decree 101 of 1992, which gives government full control of the NFA.

CAF and FIFA instructor Adegboye Onigbinde also confirmed the latest FIFA position, saying that Nigeria will now have to tread softly if they are to escape a FIFA ban by Friday.

Recently, the sports ministry made some sweeping changes in both the secretariat of the NFA as well as the board.

It fired the management team led by Taiwo Ogunjobi as well as dropped all non-elected members on the NFA board as the government sought to reform the country's soccer laws as directed by FIFA.

But an emergency board meeting of the NFA last week in Abuja rejected government's re-organisation, demanding that these changes be reversed.

## Nigerians brace up for ban

- It's about time we were banned -Amiesimaka
- Decision was expected -Eseka

Following FIFA's ultimatum to Nigeria to reverse Sports Minister Musa Mohammed's sweeping changes at the NFA, Nigerians are bracing up for a ban on Friday.

Sports lawyer and agent Chris Eseka told KickOff Nigeria that by Friday, FIFA will ban

Nigeria. "FIFA will ban us by Friday, and then we will do what we need to do and they will unban us," Eseka stated.

He added that the ultimatum

## FIFA, Galadima aware of reforms, Mohammed insists

By Ismaila Umaru Lere, Group Sports Editor

Sports Minister, Col. Musa Mohammed, says the world soccer governing body, FIFA, and NFA chairman Ibrahim Galadima had a foreknowledge of the on-going reforms in the NFA.

Addressing the new NFA management team on Tuesday in Abuja, the minister said that he discussed the withdrawal of government nominees from the NFA board with both FIFA and Galadima, ahead of the action.

"I regard the board's position on the reforms as blackmail and their claim that my action violated the NFA statute cannot be justified since decree 101 is still in force," he said.

He accused the out-going management of fraudulent

activities, adding that an audited account of its operations indicted the team over financial mismanagement.

Mohammed claimed that NFA got about 3.3 million dollars from FIFA's funds between 2002 and 2003, which it did not account for.

Revealing some financial transactions of the Glass House, Mohammed also indicted the managers for allegedly spending about 47,000 dollars to host a two-man delegation from FIFA over its goal project.

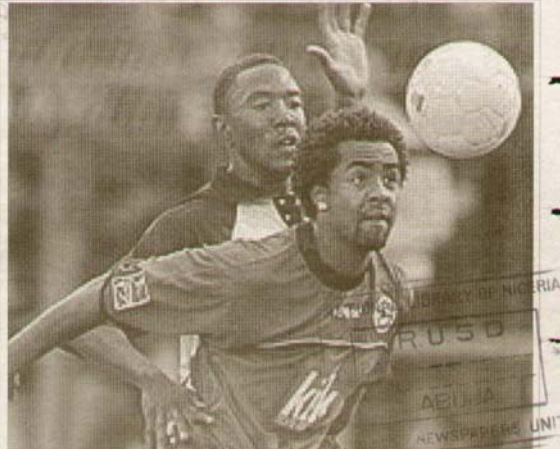
"They also got about N60 million as Globacom sponsorship which they failed to share with clubs," he said.

"Anybody found to have mismanaged the NFA funds

that they could also miss out on the invitational Meridian Cup tourney coming up in February which has produced players like Ifeanyi Udezue, Joseph Enakirhe.

The Under 20s are also in danger of missing out on the African Youth Championships taking place in Benin in two weeks time.

If issues are not resolved on time for the country to be unbanned, clubs expected to take part in continental preliminaries scheduled for the end of the month will also forfeit their games.



Nigerian born German international Patrick Owomoyela, right, in action for Arminia Bielefeld. The right back has generated interest among top clubs like Bayern Munich, Schalke and Borussia Dortmund.

### German teams scramble for Owomoyela

The race for Arminia Bielefeld Nigerian born German international Patrick Owomoyela has gathered momentum with the news that Bayern Munich and Borussia Dortmund have joined Schalke as strong admirers of the powerful right back.

Owomoyela, born to a German mother and Nigerian father, impressed greatly while taking part in the German national side's pre-Christmas tour to Asia.

The 25-year-old made his international debut and played a total of three games under new boss Jurgen Klinsmann.

Although the pacey right-sider has made just 18 starts in the Bundesliga, the top sides in Germany have already been alerted to Owomoyela's burgeoning talent.

It is expected that, while his contract runs until June 2006, Bielefeld may prefer to cash in on their highly promising starlet in the summer rather than risk losing him for free at a later date.

The player's agent, Uwe Kathmann, has admitted that his client is ready to leave in a bid to showcase his talents at a higher level and secure a starting spot in the national side in time for the 2006 World Cup on home soil.

While big-spending Schalke remain the favourites for Owomoyela's coveted signature, the recent interest shown by Bayern, and Dortmund, has accentuated the growing reputation of one of Germany's brightest stars.

very disappointing. "He was told that Decree 101 does not exist as far as FIFA is concerned, and made corrections to the draft statutes presented to them, on the understanding that he would no longer act under the powers of the decree.

"The NFA AGM approved the statutes and that issue should have been finished because that is the highest decision-making body on Nigerian football. Besides, he was the one working with the management illegally at cross purposes with the NFA board."

Eseka pointed out that the Minister made a mistake in appointing the new management. "He has no right to make any appointments in the NFA. Let this serve as a lesson for Nigerians who leave their homes and lobby for appointments."

Ex-international Adokiye Amiesimaka also welcomed the Fifa ultimatum, "It is about time we were banned so we can do the right thing," Amiesimaka said.

"For some reasons best known to them, it appears government doesn't want to let go of football. Why can't we learn from countries like South Africa, England, Germany and the rest? They don't have any problem with FIFA because their football is properly run. We should borrow a leaf.

"It is sad that we are going to be banned, but it is no more than we deserve," Amiesimaka said.

A different perspective came from Rangers CEO Davidson Owum. "Excluding clubs from the whole set up was wrong. That was where the problem came from and that is my own take on the matter."

But former Under 20 coach Tunde Disu says FIFA is being unfair to Nigeria. "It is unfair for them to come and threaten us like that," Disu stated. "We are trying to reform our football and they should give us the chance to do so."



Galadima



Mohammed

This Space is  
for Sale

# DAILY TRUST

THURSDAY COLUMN

Thursday, January 6, 2005

## Minister Shagari and the privatisation of water

By Is'haq Modibbo Kawa  
kawamodibbo@yahoo.com

Let me start by confessing that I stand on a somewhat shaky ground in respect of all the facts of the issue relating to the water resources minister, Mukhtari Shagari's plans for Nigeria's water supply system. Last Thursday it was I think, that the minister was interviewed on Nigerian Television. I did not watch the entire interview.

The segment of the interview that I chanced upon was where the minister was accepting the criticism, by Yusuf Jibo, about the quality of water coming from the public water supply schemes in the country. The minister had responded by saying something to the effect that one of the many options the government wanted to explore was the involvement of the private sector in water supply systems.

He went further to explain that already a couple of the Nigerian state governments, and he mentioned Lagos and Kano states, amongst others, were already committed to private participation in the supply of water. This sounded almost like a justification for the intention that he was letting loose on the Nigerian public on the medium of television. But as in the entire economic package of the Obasanjo administration, there is nothing original in the thesis to privatise water.

The debate about private sector involvement in water services has been raging for a while. The main proponents of the privatisation of water have been the World Bank and the IMF, transnational companies in the area of water supply systems and subservient regimes in third world countries, such as the Obasanjo administration, that have accepted to implement, line, hook, and sinker, the neo-liberal economic policies of the imperialist agencies.

A recent policy issues package of the American State Environmental Resource Center on water privatisation had pointed out the fact that the transfer of the production, distribution or management of water or water services from public entities to private corporations, broadly called privatisation of water, has become a most important trend in the world today, as the major transnational companies have greatly expanded their efforts to gain a large portion of the American (and the international) water service market.

The package went further to underline the controversy that the trend of entrusting a profit-driven company with an indispensable public service has generated, almost in every part of the world where the privatisation of water has been contemplated. This is primarily because of the possible contradiction between short-term profit maximisation and long term needs to protect infrastructure and natural resources. The study went further to point out that the profit motive may provide private water companies with incentives to avoid conservation and efficiency measures since profits depend upon volumes of water sold.

The resource center package further argued that the privatisation of water utilities has posed risks of rate hikes, negative economic impacts, inadequate customer service, reduced local control as well as raises questions concerning public access to information about water systems. In the conditions of the developing countries, is the added disadvantage of weak oversight functions by governmental regulatory agencies.

To be sure a huge human toll has been paid in terms of illness and mortality around the developing countries, as a result of the consumption of impure water. UNICEF estimates that in 1993, nearly four million children in the developing countries died from diseases caused by polluted water. A billion people drink unfiltered water taken from lakes or rivers into which human or animal faeces has been discharged.

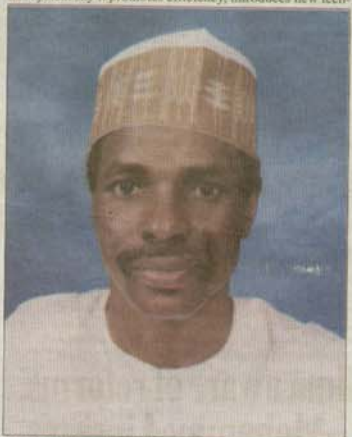
There is also the more important fact that public water supply systems in many countries, such as we have in Nigeria are aging, and are badly funded. The Nigerian state has not prioritised the supply of potable water to the Nigerian people, and with a regime of budgetary controls in response to the debt burden and the implementation of neo-liberal economic policies, water supply systems continue to deteriorate.

Related to these facts is the issue of the corruption involved in water supply contracting systems in many parts of the developing countries. Understanding the vital necessity of water for domestic and industrial use, ruling elites devote budgetary resources to corrupt contracts which are often unimplemented at the end of the day. The situation of the public water supply system, therefore degenerated over the years. It is this combination of factors that has been responsible for dry taps or the supply of badly treated water coming out of the taps as we have often seen in Nigeria.

It is in fact this type of background that has emboldened

the World Bank and the other imperialist agencies to include the privatisation of public water utilities as part of the entire package of neo-liberal economic programs in developing countries.

This is why I said that Mukhtari Shagari's thesis was anything but original. Those who posit that privatisation of water is the best way out of the rot of the public water utilities system say it promotes efficiency, introduces new tech-



Mukhtari Shagari, Minister of Water Resources

nologies, reduces leakage and generally improve service; of course it is given, that it becomes a source of profit for the transnational companies that take over the system.

The problem here is that there is no law which precludes a properly managed public water supply system from being efficient anyway. The mention of efficiency is at best a self-serving propaganda for transnational capitalism, as the example of water privatisation has shown in two notorious examples in Africa; Ghana and South Africa.

The Environment Development Challenges (EDC) News, commissioned by the environment policy division of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) has recently carried a report on the case of water privatisation in South Africa. It pointed out the disturbing fact that the promise of clean water-bringing health to children, and less work, plus better security for women has turned to a mirage by sky rocketing tariffs with privatisation. It stated further that the policy of "full cost recovery", embraced by the World Bank and the IMF, the donors and African governments alike, combined with privatisation has led to the cut off of the poor people from the promised clean water.

In South Africa alone, ten million people have suffered the cuts since the commencement of commercialisation of water in 1990. South African scientists have documented the fact that water privatisation in Africa means denying access to safe drinking water to the poor.

Edward Cottle of the Johannesburg-based Rural Development Services Network presented a recent report which underlined the fact that the "full cost recovery" approach to water utilities all over Africa, means that poor households stand less chances of getting access to safe drinking water or may even lose the water access they had. A major problem of privatisation is the increase in tariffs, and the study used the black townships in Fort Beaufort as an example, which saw a 600 percent increase in charges for water supplies after privatisation.

Other studies have shown that the gradual limitation of access to clean water in the wake of the privatisation of water utilities led to the use of unsafe water sources all over Southern Africa. This has been the direct cause of an unprecedented spread of a cholera epidemic in the province of Kwazulu Natal, which infected over 120,000 people, with 290 of them dying in the process. It was discovered that

many people had returned to the use of unsafe water source as they could not afford the privatised safe water.

These problems have arisen in South Africa whose state structures are much better organised and focused, yet the privatisation of water has brought so much problems. The problems in Southern Africa have not stopped the pressures to privatise water systems all over Africa. As a matter of fact the "full cost recovery" principle was introduced as a World Bank condition for obtaining credit, it remains an absolute condition among the bank, the IMF and was also recently adopted by such aid agencies as USAID, Britain's DFID, Germany's GTZ and the EU as a donor agency, according to a report.

It is curious that the privatisation of water remains a seldom phenomenon in the advanced capitalist countries with only an estimated five percent of the world's water resources being in private hands. But the push to privatise has been strongest in the developing countries, with a ringing endorsement by the 'IMF regimes' of the African countries who even endorsed it as part of the official credo of NEPAD.

Then there is the neo-liberal 'showcase' of Ghana. In July 2001, the World Bank approved for it a structural adjustment loan of \$110 million; but before its disbursement, the Bank forced the government of Ghana to implement seven "prior actions", including requirement to "increase electricity and water tariffs by 96 percent and 95 percent respectively, to cover operating costs." Pressured by the World Bank, the Ghanaian government made plans to lease the Ghana water company to two multinational companies to provide urban water service.

The World Bank included water privatisation as one of the conditions which determined the extent of Ghana's access to the portfolio of loans in the World Bank's Country Assistance Strategy (CAS). In response to the World Bank, Ghana government collusion against the Ghanaian people, a broad coalition known as the National Coalition Against the Privatisation of Water (National CAP of Water) was formed in May 2001, to conduct a broad campaign to ensure that all Ghanaians have access to safe and affordable water.

The group pointed out that most people in Accra do not earn a minimum wage of less than US \$1 a day, while a significant number have no regular employment. By April 2001, the average price for a bucket of water, which used to be 400 cedis, was raised to 800 cedis to comply with the Banks' required "prior action" for accessing structural adjustment loan. It was the civil society protests then that stemmed the tide of privatisation, but the regime in power is completely committed to the privatisation process.

A social explosion is certainly not too far away in many parts of Africa as a result of the new water disconnection coming in the wake of the privatisation of water utilities by the 'IMF regimes' of many of the African countries. At the fore front of the mobilisation against the privatisation of water has been the South African Trades Union movement and civil society coalitions in several African countries, such as we have noted in the case of Ghana.

At the Civil Society Conference on the Priorities and Challenges for the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in the New Millennium which was held in Durban, South Africa, on 19-20 August, 1998, prior to the 12th NAM summit, representatives of NGOs called on the Non-Aligned movement to "cease forthwith the privatization of all basic services, with particular reference to water transnationals which are currently operating in developing countries to the detriment of communities".

As I said at the beginning of this column, I don't have a complete understanding of the plans to involve the private sector in the water supply systems of Nigeria that Minister Shagari was enunciating in his television appearance last week. However, I believe it would be very useful to ponder the problems that have attended the privatisation projects of sister African countries before a head on rush into the murky waters of privatization of Nigeria's water utilities.

I believe that the provision of safe water supply for the peoples of our country is a fundamental human right. It is an area of national life that the state must handle with a great sense of responsibility through adequate investment in upgrading the utilities, the acquisition of new technologies, and the efficient management of water resources that are fast depleting as a result of uneconomic usage and exploding populations.

What has transpired in other African countries shows that privatization of the public water utilities sharpens the class divisions between the rich and the poor, heats up the polity and does not necessarily work in the overall interest of the country. The public realm should be invigorated to supply water in Nigeria for domestic and industrial use. We must be cautious about the privatization of water supply