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**NEWS**

**Kaduna water board on verge of collapse**  
- Assembly c'ttee chairman

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**NIGERIAN POSTAL SERVICE**

**Police foil biggest bank fraud**

Police in London say they have foiled one of the biggest attempted bank thefts in Britain. The plan was to steal £220m (\$423m) from the London offices of the Japanese bank, Sumitomo Mitsui. Computer experts are believed to have tried to transfer the money electronically after hacking into the bank's systems. A man has been arrested by police in Israel after the plot was uncovered by the National Hi-Tech Crime Unit. Unit members worked closely with Israeli police. The investigation was started last October after it was discovered that computer hackers had gained access to Sumitomo Mitsui bank's computer system in London. They managed to infiltrate the system with key logging software that would have enabled them to track every button pressed on computer keyboards. From that, they could learn account numbers, passwords and other sensitive information. Yeron Bolondi, 32, was seized in Israel after an attempt to transfer £13.9m into an account there. We have undertaken various measures in terms of security and we have not suffered any financial damage said Takashi Morita of Sumitomo Mitsui. He has been charged with money laundering and deception but police say their investigation is continuing. His relationship with the gang who tried to break into the network is unknown. They have issued a warning for banks and businesses to watch out for cyber criminals. The National Hi-Tech Crime Unit was launched in April 2001 with responsibility to track down the growing rate of criminals who operate in cyberspace. Takashi Morita, Head of communications at Sumitomo Mitsui in Tokyo, said the company has not suffered any financial loss as a conse

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**NATIONAL CONFAB**

# Northern delegates protest c'ttee membership

A group of leaders of state delegations from the North have launched a protest against the composition of the business committee of the national political reform conference. The leaders, in a petition to con-

By **Habeeb I. Pindiga**, Political Reporter

ference chairman, Justice Niki Tobi, alleged a breach of the rules of procedure in the setting up of the committee. Tobi on Tuesday an-

nounced a 50-man business panel headed by Alhaji Abdullahi Ibrahim (SAN), from Kogi state, to plan the day to day activities of the conference. But some leaders of state delegations from the North

feel aggrieved with the composition, alleging that in setting up the committee, Order VIII Rules 8.1 and 8.2 were breached. The rules stipulate that "(8.1) Conference shall establish such number of commit-

tees as will enable it discharge its functions; (8.2) In constituting such committees, the conference shall take into consideration in totality, the diversity of representation." But the leaders alleged that Tobi had flouted these rules by arbitrarily forming the committees without the consent of the conference. The letter, dated March 16, obtained exclusively by *Daily Trust* in Abuja yesterday, described the chairman's action as alarming, "coming

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Hajiya Amina Titi Abubakar (left) and Director of the Yar'Adua Centre, Jamila Furis, during the 7th national programme of commemoration by the 'Yar'Adua Memorial Forum held at the Yar'Adua centre, Abuja... yesterday.

## New cars for military officers

The federal government is negotiating with some commercial banks to provide loan facilities to enable military officers purchase brand new cars as a means to improve the welfare of the men. President Olusegun Obasanjo recently disclosed that plans were underway to provide subsidy for officers in form of loans to assist them in their mobility problems. He said it was degrading for senior officers who are supposed to own cars to be seen awaiting public transport by the road side. He continued, "some sort of duty travel allowances or loans should be given to sol-

By **Ruby Rabi**, Defence Reporter

diers to afford bikes while loans should be given to officers to buy cars. These loans should be approved immediately. It will lift the morale of our soldiers and help them perform their constitutional duties properly." Reaffirming the president's directive, Minister of Defence, Engineer Rabi Musa Kwankwaso, told newsmen that the federal government is interested in providing vehicles for soldiers. Therefore, he said two committees have been inau-

gurated by the ministry to collaborate with banks to ensure that loans are facilitated

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## Reps query NASS mgt, Anyim over N3.4m tyres

The Public Accounts Committee of the House of Representatives has accused former Senate President, Anyim Pius Anyim, of breaching financial regulations for allegedly approving the procurement of bullet proof tyres to the

By **Hammed M. Bello**, Senior Political Reporter

tune of N3.4 million without ledger. The committee has also queried the management of the National Assembly for

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## NNPC RECRUITMENT Kupolokun writes 19 govns

Following the lopsidedness in the recent recruitment of some top management staff in the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), the Group Managing Director of the corporation, Engineer Funsho Kupolokun, has written to the governors of the 19 states that lost out in the exercise to forward applications of two qualified candidates each for consideration. *Daily Trust* had reported in its edition of Monday, March 7, 2005, that the NNPC breached the federal character principle in the recent recruitment exercise in which 30 senior management staff were employed from

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

only 16 out of the 36 states of the federation, leaving out 19 states without representation. However, inaugurating the first quarterly communication conference for the Group Public Affairs Division (PAD), of the NNPC yesterday in Abuja, Engineer Kupolokun hinted that he has written to governors of all the states that lost out in the recent exercise to forward names and credentials of two qualified applicants from their respective states for

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Dr. Funsho Kupolokun

## News

## Commissioner's son defrauds lady

**A** Gombe magistrate court II has found one Mr Samson Lakilwa Ahmadu Madugu, eldest son of the Gombe state commissioner of education, guilty of defrauding a lady of N19,500.

In her submission, the plaintiff, Miss Sarah Yakubu, told the court that sometimes in November, 2004 the defendant collected N19,500 on the pretext of renting a single bedroom for her but did not deliver.

Narrating her ordeal, Miss Sarah, told the court on Wednesday March 16, 2005, that she demanded a refund of the money when she realised the deal was not going to go through.

According to her, "Samson had told me on several occasions to come to him and get my money lent anytime we meet, he will tell me he has no

From Mohammed Abubakar,  
Stringer (Gombe)

money. Instead, he just told me to go and do anything I could and that he was not going to pay."

Miss Sarah, a civil servant, prayed that the court collect the money from Samson with 10 percent interest and an additional N1,000 as expenses for her troubles while chasing her money from the defendant.

In his response, Mr Samson, admitted collecting N19,500 from the plaintiff for the purpose of renting a room for her but did not do that.

Presiding magistrate, Mr Abdulsalam Jatau, said by admitting collecting the principal sum, the defendant has pleaded guilty to the charge.

He ordered the defendant, Mr Samson Ahmadu Madugu to refund the sum of N19,500 to Miss Sarah with an additional five percent of the amount as interest and another N500 for her expenses.

Magistrate Jatau said his ruling was based on Order 23 Rule 1 of the district court rules of 1963.

## Kogi stakeholders to meet over housing policy

From Ahmed Tahir Ajobe,  
Correspondent (Lokoja)

**K**ogi state is to hold a stakeholders summit that would fashion out a definite housing policy to ensure adequate and affordable houses for its people.

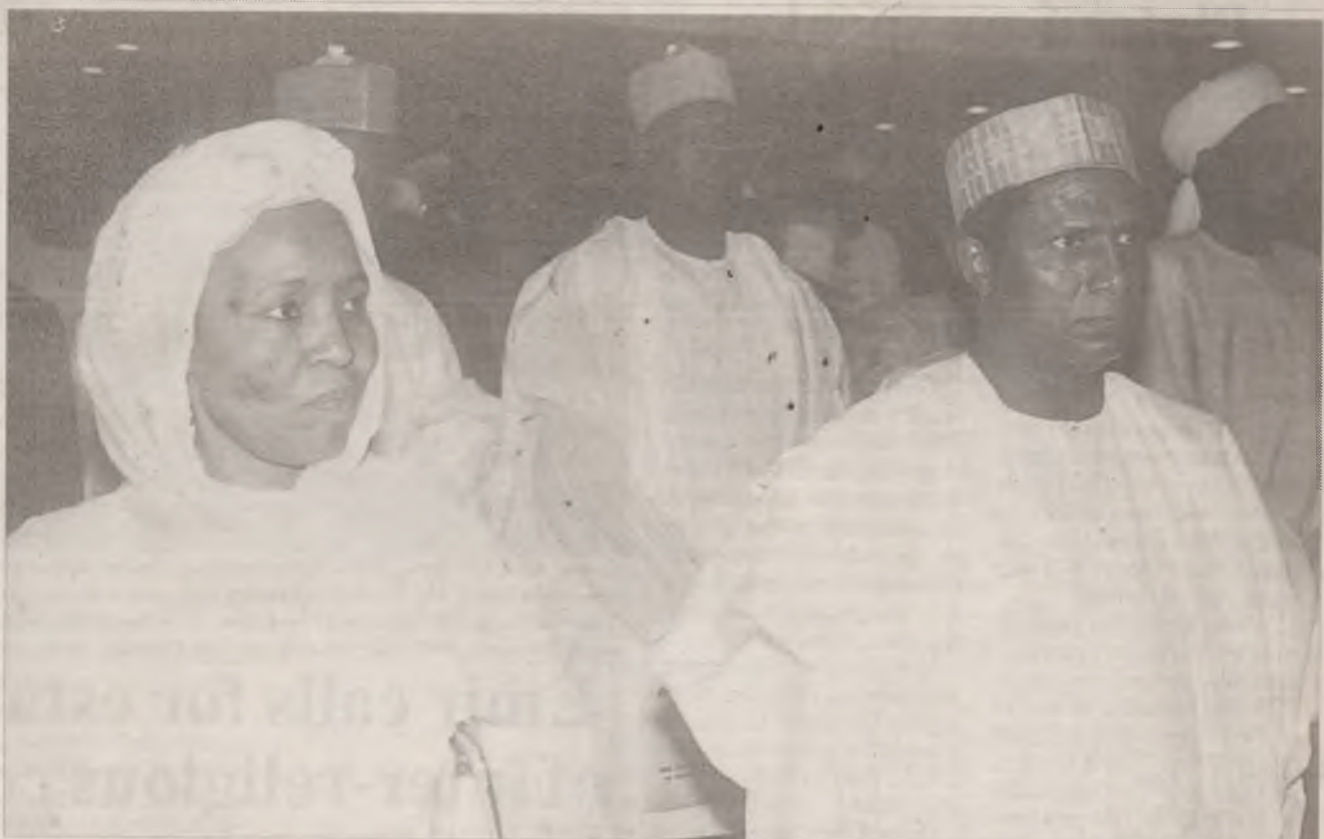
The summit, the first of its kind since the creation of the state, is being organised by the Kogi State House of Assembly Committee on Works and Housing in collaboration private with a estate developing firm known as Choica Homes limited, real estate developers Association of Nigeria (REDAN), under the leadership of Alhaji Lateef Jakande and the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria (FMBN).

Briefing newsmen on the forthcoming housing summit, the chairman, Kogi State House of Assembly Committee on Works and housing, Hon Suleiman Adawari Usman, said the summit become necessary in view of the acute accommodation problem facing the people of the state.

The cost of accommodation, he noted, keeps skyrocketing daily especially in the city centre, noting that only a pragmatic and radical measure would guarantee adequate and affordable houses for the citizens of the state through private sector participation.

He commended governor Ibrahim Idris for his feat in the housing subsector and urged him to provide an enabling environment for the private sector to adequately participate in the scheme.

The summit which will hold between March 23 and 25, 2005 will attract eminent personalities including the minister of housing and urban development and her works counterpart, governors of Benue, Nasarawa, Plateau, Niger and Kwara states among others.



Governor Umaru Musa Yar'Adua of Katsina State and Hajija Birta Yar'Adua, wife of late Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, during the 7th National Programme of Commemoration by the Yar'Adua Memorial Forum held at the Yar'Adua Centre, Abuja... yesterday. Pic: Joe Oroye.

## Kaduna water board on the verge of collapse - C'ttee chairman

From Aliyu Haruna & Maryam  
Musa Umar, in Kaduna

**T**he chairman of the Kaduna State House of Assembly committee on water resources, Honourable David Kushiavi Avong, says that except immediate steps are taken by the state government, the state water board may collapse.

Hon Avong who represents Kaura constituency disclosed this to newsmen in Kaduna after touring all the state water treatment plants to access their inability to supply enough potable water to the people of the state.

According to him, the House will soon invite all the district managers, plant managers and the general manager of the state water board to the House to access the problems hindering the supply of water to the general public.

He disclosed that over the years, sufficient funds have not been given to the board, adding that most of the plants have not been getting adequate power supply from the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA).

Others problems facing the board, he said, includes lack of vehicles for the movement of the maintenance staff and refusal of some federal government parastatals, ministries, military formations and the police to pay their water bill for several

years. On the salary and entitlements of staffs, Honorable Avong said that there have been inconsistency in the payment of staff salaries, a situation that was led to seeking from the accounts department of the board in both formal and informal ways leading to the dismissal of some staff of the board.

He disclosed that the House will also embark on public hearings so that people can send their views in order to proffer lasting solutions.

Hon. Avong added that due to perennial water supply problems in the state and the yearnings and aspirations of the people, the Assembly mandated the committee to ensure that a lasting solution is found to alleviate the sufferings of the people.

## Sen. Oyoyo accuses Wabara of malice

**F**ormer Chief Whip of the Senate, Senator Victor Kassim Isa Oyoyo, has accused the Senate President, Adolphus Wabara, of "unprovoked personal hatred following a letter to him from the Senate President, asking him to handover all official property in his possession to the new Chief Whip, Senator

Udoma Udo Udoma. Senator Victor Oyoyo, who was the Senate Chief Whip until late last year, was replaced by Senator Udoma Udo Udoma when members of the South-South caucus in the Senate passed a vote of no confidence in him.

Wabara wrote Senator Oyoyo a letter dated March 15 saying: "At a meeting of

the principal officers of the Senate, it was decided that following recent minor changes of some principal officers in which you were affected, you be reminded that you ought to have handed over all official properties attached to your office, especially official quarters, official vehicle(s) and office allocation to your successor."

The letter concludes that: "You are therefore, advised to do the proper handing over as soon as possible, but not later than seven days from today (March 15), following which compliance may have to be enforced."

However in a reply to Wabara's letter, Senator Victor Oyoyo says: "I have already given Senator Udoma my previous office. I also asked him to take delivery of the Peugeot 607 which was under repairs in SCOA Lagos. I have spent a lot of money on the old car. He even asked me to keep it but I told him that I do not need it. He can let me know what address to deliver it."

Senator Oyoyo's letter continues: "As for the house, the monetisation policy of the federal government predated whatever changes took place in the Senate. The President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, said that houses are to be sold to the occupiers. If Mr President of Nigeria reverses himself on this issue, then there would be a different situation."

The lawmaker told Wabara: "I have noted the hatred you have directed at my person even though I saved you when your new found friends were after you. This unprovoked hatred will return to you a thousand fold at God's time. I serve God."

## I'am into active politics - IBB

From Tashikalmah Hallah,  
Correspondent (Bauchi)

**F**ormer military president, Ibrahim Babangida, has reiterated that he is into active politics, just as he stated that Alhaji Nuhu Ribadu's statement that he (Babangida) is not legible to contest the 2007 general elections was a rumour peddled on the pages of newspapers.

The former military ruler in an interview with newsmen in Bauchi, Thursday, explained that he was never a politician when he was a military officer, but stressed that democracy is healthy and he is ready to contribute his quota to the development of the nation through democracy.

General Babangida flanked by the former minister of the F.C.T. retired Air Marshal Hamza Abdullahi, was asked to clarify his stand in the build up towards the 2007 general elections said: "My stand is very simple. Like every political animal, there would be politics now and up to 2007 and beyond and I am going to be in politics from now on to the date of my retirement."

"I was never in politics before, so, try to understand. I was a military officer and now democracy

is a healthy thing to the nation. At present, I am healthy and strong. I feel I could be in the position to provide some contributions towards the development of this country. Therefore, I would be in politics in 2007".

General Babangida refused to make a definite statement about his ambition for 2007, saying it was a rumour that has been circulating about his alleged ambition for the coveted seat Aso Villa in 2007 general elections.

According to him, "Well, the rumour has always been there. But, if it is the will of God, and all things being equal, anything that would bring development to this country is always welcome".

"In my own opinion, joining politics is aimed at giving your own contribution to the development of the nation. Whether I contest or not is not mine, but its for the people to decide. If the people of Minna said this one is eligible to contest the local government seat, and they come to me with the proposal, I will study and reflect on it and at an appropriate time, I will give them the answer".

## Rural telephony

### Bill gets second reading

By Isa Sanusi, Senior  
Political Reporter

**A** Bill for an Act to provide telephone and telecommunications services to rural communities in Nigeria has passed a second reading in the Senate with a provision for funding from the fifty percent of the annual operating levy paid by telecommunications operators.

Chairman, Senate Committee on Communications, Senator Baba Tela, said the Act will facilitate the establishment of a Universal Service Agency and a Universal Service Fund to consider, design and determine a system which shall promote widespread availability and usage of telephone throughout Nigeria by encouraging the installation of telecommunications services all over the country.

The Bill, according to him, provides for loan facility for those intending to operate rural telecommunications services while the universal services agency will liaise with the Nigeria Communications Commission to determine the quality of services offered and regulate operators.

The agency will also provide technical assistance to

operators and will continually survey and evaluate the extent to which universal service has been achieved in the country and conduct research to keep abreast of developments in the federation and elsewhere on telecommunications services and information technology.

"The agency shall manage on behalf of the federal government by the use of professional managers or community based services managers, all existing rural telecommunication projects in the country and all future rural telecommunications projects that may come on stream.

Responding to questions from newsmen after the passing of the Bill, Senator Baba Tela lamented that the present telecommunications operators are concentrated in the cities, adding that with the coming on board of the universal services agency, areas neglected by giant telecommunications companies will be covered, adding that the agency will facilitate development at the grassroots.

# News

## Delegates *Contd. from Pg 1*

so soon after the conference has just adopted its Standing Orders (Rules of Procedure). It also has stirred anxiety in us as to whether the rule of law and fairness will ever prevail during the cause of this conference."

Quoting copiously from the Standing Orders, the letter contended that the formation of the business committee was null and void and urged the chairman to dissolve it and follow the due process.

The leaders said they were "not aware that the conference has, since the passage of the Standing Orders, delegated any of its mandatory powers in respect of its functions for the 'establishment' and 'constituting' any committee of the conference or any of its functions whatsoever and to whosoever."

They also accused the chairman of watering down the list of nominees to the committee earlier made by zones as requested by Tobi. "Most of these names so submitted have not appeared in your list!!!" the letter said.

It also said: "Already rumours are awash here in Abuja, and indeed elsewhere, that private sessions are usually conducted in a very big house everyday prior to and after the conference sessions where whatever issue that were to come before the conference are discussed and approved before placing it before the conference! We refuse to believe these rumours."

*Daily Trust* gathered that the protest was to be lodged with the chairman yesterday but this had to be shelved till Monday because some state delegation leaders were yet to sign the petition.

A dependable source among those spearheading the protest told *Daily Trust* yesterday that about half of the 19 state leaders have endorsed the letter.

The source added that some of the states indicated reservations over the letter but it was not clear as at the time of going to press yesterday evening which states signed and which did not.

## NNPC *Contd. from Pg 1*

consideration into various positions.

A dependable source in the NNPC told *Daily Trust* yesterday that the GMD gave this hint while responding to some key issues raised by the guest speaker at the conference and chairman, editorial board of *The Guardian* newspaper, Dr. Reuben Abati.

Dr. Abati addressed participants made up of all public affairs officers of the NNPC, including those from its 11 subsidiaries on the topic: "Media Relations - Media Perceptions of the NNPC (What it is doing right and what it could do better)."

The *Guardian* editorial board chairman, according to our source, lamented that most newspapers fail to follow up on spot stories published from the corporation's activities, emphasising that such follow up stories were necessary to help the NNPC successfully execute most of its programmes.

Our source disclosed that "in his response, the GMD said that based on a recent report by one of the newspapers (the *Daily Trust*), on our recruitment, I've personally written to ask governors of the states left out in that exercise to submit applications of two qualified professionals for consideration into certain positions in the corporation."

The *Daily Trust* report published nearly two weeks ago had showed that out of the 30 top management staff recruited by the NNPC, Ogun state alone had five candidates, Edo state had four, while Abia, Adamawa and Rivers states had three

each of their indigenes recruited.

Other states that benefited in the exercise are Kwara and Osun states with two candidates each, while Anambra, Delta, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Ondo and Oyo states got one slot each.

Curiously, even oil producing states like Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa and Cross River states were excluded in that recruitment exercise. The other 16 states that completely lost out include Bauchi, Benue, Borno, Ebonyi, Gombe, Imo and Jigawa. The rest are Kogi, Lagos, Nasarawa, Niger, Plateau, Sokoto, Taraba, Yobe and Zamfara states.

Our source hinted that the Group Executive Director, Corporate Services of the NNPC, Alhaji Ibrahim Waziri, was among the senior staff of the corporation that attended yesterday's conference.

Efforts to reach the general manager, public affairs division of the NNPC, Dr. Levi Ajuonuma, to confirm Kupolokun's statement failed. Up to press time yesterday, calls to the spokesman's telephone line went through without response. His mobile phone however indicated that it was switched off.

An earlier statement issued by the corporation's spokesman and made available to *Daily Trust* said the conference was convened "in line with the ongoing transformation exercise in the NNPC," adding further that "the conference will expose staff to new trends in information and public relations management and thus improve their performance on the job."

## Workers give FG two-week ultimatum over sack

By Austine Odo, Senior Reporter (Labour)

The trade union section of the Joint National Public Service Negotiating Council has urged President Olusegun Obasanjo to create a forum for government and the unions to deliberate within the next 21 days, the planned rationalisation in the federal civil service.

In a letter addressed to President Obasanjo dated March 14, 2005, made available to *Daily Trust* in Abuja yesterday, the unions said they should not be blamed for any breach of industrial peace in the country as it has become difficult to keep the peace following government's refusal to meet the unions over the impending mass sack.

"Your Excellency, if the prevailing situation of suspense and fear persists in the civil service without the government deeming it fit to meet the unions as proposed in our letters, it becomes difficult to guarantee industrial peace. In this case, the unions should not be blamed," the letter said.

According to the unions, government has turned deaf ears to their earlier two letters Ref: ADM/JNPSNC/VOL.II/32 dated October 10, 2004 and ADM/JNPSNC/VOL.II/36 dated February 18, 2005, in respect of the impending rationalisation in the federal civil service.

The letter, signed jointly by the presidents and secretaries of the affiliate unions, explained that the unions had made it explicit that they were not averse to reforms but had at the same time, pointed out that premature retirement

were avoidable and definitely uneconomical.

According to the unions, the federal civil service is presently engulfed in a frightening uneasiness, anxieties and fear over security of employment resulting in discontents, frustration and low morale.

They observed that in spite of government's favourable disposition to the principles of consultations, "we are at pains to appreciate why the issue of rationalization of civil servants is not considered critical enough to justify consultations with the trade unions in the civil service with the framework of the public service negotiating council."

The unions argued that to retire staff prematurely was uneconomical because it constitutes a serious strain on pension budget and entails paying a large number of workers who could have retired later.

They therefore urged President Obasanjo to put in place the appropriate machinery to examine with the unions the issues raised in their letters on the subject of premature retirements.

It would be recalled that the joint national public service negotiating council had in a bulletin issued last week, said the estimated 16,000 workforce in the federal civil service whose personnel cost is about 17 percent of the total public sector budget cannot be beyond the federal government's ability to sus-

tain.

The JNPSNC wondered why the government is planning a massive purge in the civil service when it was already finding it difficult to meet its pension liabilities even as government is using consultants for jobs which the existing workforce could effectively handle.

In a reaction, the Peoples

Democratic Party (PDP), national vice chairman for the South-West, Chief Bode George, while speaking at a forum in Ibadan, defended government's plan to "right-size," saying those affected in such an exercise would be assisted by government to access loans with reasonable interest rates to set up their own businesses.

## Reps *Contd. from Pg 1*

allowing such transactions but according to the public accounts committee chairman, Hon. Adeyemi Oluwole, who spoke exclusively with *Daily Trust*, "whoever facilitated the faulty procurement must be brought to book."

Hon. Oluwole said the Clerk of the National Assembly, Alhaji Ibrahim Salim, had informed the committee that advice by his office to Anyim's office over the procurement did not sail through.

The committee, Oluwole said, also discovered that the former Senate President, through his security chief detail, claimed to have bought the bullet proof tyres, but were not brought into the store, and no ledger or receipts were documented.

"The decision of the committee is that the National Assembly should go after the Chief Detail who was an officer of the State Security Services (SSS) who has gone back to his office.

"The National Assembly establishment wrote the SSS Director-General to contact the fellow to come and account for the

procurement," Hon. Oluwole said.

This was sequel to a seven-day ultimatum given to the Clerk of the National Assembly to produce the chief detail to Anyim who was accused of aiding the questionable transactions, even as Oluwole insisted that the House was interested in having Anyim himself to testify and defend the transactions which allegedly took place during his tenure. "He is the one who is liable directly and we should go after him."

He said it was in that regard that the committee directed the National Assembly to within seven days, reach Anyim and collect the money back, or have it properly retired and the changed tyres brought back.

He said also that the same aide, whose name was not given, sometime collected N520,000 as out of pocket expenses incurred on a ten-day official trip to Lagos-Enugu and Owerri which is in conflict with the N7,000 he is entitled to daily.

Hon. Oluwole explained that when the National Assembly management was confronted with the anomaly, they explained that they raised a query but that "when Anyim constituted himself into the chief accounting officer, they bypassed all procedures and were writing to Anyim himself seeking approval for funds."

He said failure to retrieve the money within seven days as directed, the police would be engaged to enforce the law.

Efforts to contact the Clerk of the National Assembly, Alhaji Ibrahim Salim, failed but an authoritative source in his office told *Daily Trust* yesterday that moves are being made to address the matter as directed.

## Police *Contd. from Pg 1*

quency of the robbery attempt.

He said: "The case is still in the middle of investigations so we cannot comment further."

"We have undertaken various measures in terms of security and we have not suffered any financial damage."

## New cars *Contd. from Pg 1*

for the purchase of these vehicles.

The committee is expected to do a comprehensive research on the scheme which will embrace everyone and ensure that all beneficiaries pay for the cars through some long term arrangements that will not be a burden to the officers.

*Daily Trust* investigations revealed that the arrangement for the purchase of the cars have reached an advanced stage as the ministry of defence is negotiating with some commercial banks who are to provide the funds for the purchase of the cars from the Peugeot Automobile company.

Presidential sources told *Daily Trust* that some modalities have been considered by the committee in charge of the scheme as lieutenant colonels and below as well as their equivalents in the Air Force and Navy will get the 306 models while Colonels and above will get the "406" types. Major Generals are likely to get the 406 Prestige models.

Our source said over 10,000 cars are being negotiated for but the modes of payment is still not clear as the

parties involved have not reached a consensus.

He revealed that some of the banks involved in the transactions include Zenith Bank and Gulf Bank.

When contacted, the Army public relations officer, Colonel Mohammed Yusuf, said the federal government was not purchasing cars for military personnel.

Colonel Yusuf said some vehicles were distributed to different departments in the army for operational use and the vehicles were painted in army colours meant for official use.

He said three weeks ago, a 406 saloon was given to his office to assist him with his official duties but the car was not his property.

He pointed out that the federal government will however continue to purchase cars for the service because the military is not part and parcel of the monetisation policy which allows staff to buy properties under their custody for better maintenance.

He said, "Our cars or barracks can't be monetised because of the nature of our jobs which involves security

and is paramount."

He continued, "I recall that the president said he wants to revive the car loan scheme to help improve welfare packages and bring to an end the era of senior officers struggling for public transport by the road side."

"The cars that were distributed recently are 39 in number and were purchased by the Ministry of Defence from the 2004 budgetary allocation for official use only," he said.

Meanwhile, the director of public relations, Air Force, Group Captain Ibrahim Kure and Information Director, Navy, Navy Captain Sinebi Hungiapoko, said although they have heard about the president's directive that the car loan be revived, nothing concrete has come out of it.

Investigations shows that great expectations followed the president's directive as some officers have started imagining themselves as car owners if the deal sails through.

However, the mode of payment for the vehicles have not yet been finalised even as the arrangements and negotiations are underway.

# News

## Plateau ex-speaker backs probe of Dariye

Speaker of the Plateau State House of Assembly in the second republic, Prof. Dakum Shown supports the proposed probe of financial impropriety leveled against the Plateau state governor, Joshua Dariye.

Prof. Shown, the immediate past chairman of the university of Uyo governing council and an elder statesman, said the decision of the People Democratic Party (PDP), to probe the alleged financial misdeeds of Dariye is a step in the right direction.

While stating his position to newsmen in Jos yesterday, Prof. Shown commended the PDP for initiating action to probe Dariye because it will bring out the whole truth in all the allegations especially with regards to Dariye's persistent denials of them.

His words, "I think the decision to investigate the governor of Plateau state is in the right direction because we have only been reading these things (allegation). We have followed the Kaduna court case and the governor himself has spent a lot of time denying them."

"With this full investigations, we will now know the facts and we want to know the facts. If they are proved, then the line of discipline in the PDP could be carried out."

The former speaker also played the establishment of a

## Gov Idris moves to check ghost workers

From Ahmed Tahir Ajobe,  
Correspondent Lokoja

Worried by the rising monthly wage bill of the state, the Kogi state governor, Alhaji Ibrahim Idris, has directed the state ministry of finance and the state pensions board to account for salaries of civil servants who have long disengaged from the service.

Gov. Idris who gave the directives while receiving the committee on establishment of the state House of Assembly in Lokoja, said that he was surprised that salaries of retired civil servants who have long left the service of the state kept recurring on the pay bill of the state.

The monthly wage bill, according to him, ought to decrease monthly as a great number of civil servants who have reached the statutory retirement age retire every year but was dismayed that the bill kept rising without a corresponding reduction in respect of retired personnel.

He urged the ..... Concerned and the finance ministry to recover the amount concerned so that it could be used-The payment of graduation and pension of the retirees.

The administrations he promised will seek ways to increase the monthly subvention of the state pension board.

From Jibril Daudu,  
Regional Editor Jos

50-man. Think tank by the Plateau state government for its members at the national political reform conference (Cohfab) describing it as a waste of money.

Governor Dariye had last week inaugurated a 50-man think tank under the leadership of Dr. Alexandra Kebang who had earlier been dropped as a delegate to the confab, to assemble information, ideas and views to assist the state's delegates in their assignment at the confab.

However, Prof. Shown took a swipe at the decision, alleging that Governor Dariye only wanted to give some idle people jobs in order to occupy them.

He said apart from the large size of 50 people to service six delegates a think tank was unnecessary because stakeholders had met and agreed on "the Plateau perspective" and had given the state delegates the mandate to present it.

## Lottery: FG discontinues case against Lagos govt

The federal government yesterday discontinued a case filed against the Lagos state government over the enactment of lotteries law in the state.

Chief Justice of Nigeria, Muhammed Lawal Uwais, said proceeds was discontinued following a notice from the plaintiff.

The federal government had filed a suit seeking a declaration that the Lagos state lotteries law, 2004, is illegal and unenforceable to the extent that its purpose to regulate business of National and ON-LINE lottery in Nigeria contrary to the provisions the National Lotteries Act 2005 and schedule article 62(a) of the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999.

The government had also sought an order nullifying the provision of part B of the Lagos state lotteries law 2004 and an order of injunction restraining the defendants by himself and his agents and any other person however described from enforcing the Lagos state lotteries law 2004 against any Nigerian wishing to carry on the business of National lottery Act, 2004.

The plaintiff is also asking the court to determine whether or not the Lagos state government can by law or otherwise, determine, regulate or delimit the rights of Nigerian citizens to carry on the business of National or on-line lottery, having regard to the provisions of Article 62(a) of the 2nd schedule of the constitution of Nigeria, 1999?

Asking, whether or not the Lagos state lotteries law, 2004, particularly part b therefore, which empowers the Lagos state government to regulate or restrict/limit the rights of Nigerian citizens to practice the business of national lottery and or obtain a



Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Governor, Prof. Charles Soludo (r) and CBN deputy governor, financial sector surveillance, Mr. Tunde Lemo during their visit to House Committee on Housing and Urban Development at the public hearing on violation of National Housing Fund Act 3 of 1992 and recovery of unremitted funds, held at the National Assembly Complex, Abuja...recently  
Pix:Felix Onigbinde

## Emir calls for establishment of inter-religious commission

From Tashikalmah Hallah,  
Correspondent Bauchi

The Emir of Ningi in Bauchi State, Alhaji Yunusa Mohammed Danyaya, has suggested the establishment of a National Inter-Religious Group Relations Commission to serve as a clearing house for ethno-religious conflicts in the

country.

Alhaji Danyaya who also doubled as the chairman of Bauchi State Inter-Religious Committee, made this suggestion at the inaugural meeting of his committee.

Besides setting up such a commission, the royal father equally suggested penalties stiffer

meted to those who exploit religion to foment trouble.

The emir explained that the two most prominent religions, Christianity and Islam abhorred violence, hatred and unwarranted killings and blamed the recent intermittent religious disharmony between Christians and Muslims in the state to the activities of selfish politicians who use religion to achieve selfish purpose.

The chairman urged traditional and religions leaders in the state to expose those who are fomenting trouble in their areas and appealed to members of his committee to

set aside prejudices, apprehension about each other and work for the peace and progress of the state.

According to the royal father, "we have unanimously resolved that leaders of religious groups should educate their members that under no circumstance should any person, Muslim or Christian take the laws into their hand."

The formation of an inter-religious group was sequel to the frequent religious crisis in the state. Since the ugly incident that engulfed Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University in which a 400 level architecture student was murdered. Apart from this, there have been several attempts to cause religious crisis in the state.

Meanwhile, the state government has vowed to deal with anybody who attempts to cause any religious crisis in the state. While the commissioner of information, Barrister Ibrahim Zailani, has warned seriously aftermath of a fire incident that occurred in Yelwa Tudu of Bauchi metropolis.

## Nigeria's Debts are questionable-Hon Lawan

From Musa Umar Kazaure,  
Regional Editor Kano

The chairman, finance and appropriation committee of the House of Representatives, Hon. Farouq Lawan, says Nigeria pays more to service its foreign debts than it spends on development.

He told reporters in Kano that Nigeria is currently devoting onethird of its annual earnings debts which is still at 35billion dollars even after five years of payments to the London and Paris clubs.

Hon. Farouq Lawan insisted that the foreign debt issue is now more political than economic, citing countries like Pakistan, Iran and others that have had their debts forgiven due to their political inclinations and patronage. He added that though Nigerian is not classified among the highly indebted nations of the world due to her income generation but Nigeria has not done any serious borrowing since 1999.

He stated that most of the monies that Nigeria has been paying to the two debt cartels are default charges that

have been added to the real debt. The finance and appropriation committee chairman added that most of the debts owed by Nigeria are questionable as they were said to be collected during the military regimes.

The lawmaker who represents Bagwai, Shanono federal constituency in the lower house, said that the world debt cartel, London, Paris clubs have been making it difficult for the country to isolate countries and pay them back their debt separately adding that Israel, for example, which Nigeria only one million dollars, is not allowed to conduct the payment directly from Nigeria unless through the London or Paris club cartel.

On the issue of corruption, Hon. Farouq stated that there are evidence of reduction in corruption in Nigeria especially with the introduction of the due process and the EFCC anti-corruption crusade.

## Six million Nigerians HIV positive-expert

From Sani Babadoko,  
Bureau Chief, Kaduna

About six million Nigerians are now infected with the HIV virus, a medical practitioner at the Institute of Health, Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, Dr. (Mrs.) Ugo Amanyeiwe-Adaka, has disclosed.

Presenting a paper titled; "Anti-retroviral Drugs, Access, Administration and Use; Challenges and Proposal at a round table on women and HIV/AIDS by the Gender Progressive Initiative (GPI), in Kaduna, Dr. Ugo said the figure was arrived at during a nationwide sentinel survey which indicated that five per cent of Nigeria's population has contracted the deadly virus.

She however noted that the figure could be higher as a number of persons who ought to have been tested during the sentinel survey were not tested.

Dr. Ugo regretted that anti-retroviral drugs (ARVS), were not in adequate supply in the country for eligible persons having the HIV virus.

She disclosed that efforts are at an advanced stage for the production of ARVs in Nigeria adding that "RAMBAXY has built a factory for it and are ready to go to NAFDAC for registration".

"Whether we like it or not, HIV is real and it has come to stay. We only hope that cure for it will come some day", Dr. Ugo declared.

Other papers at the round table were; "The Socio-Economic Impact of HIV/AIDS On Women," by Mallam Hassan Abdu, project director, Centre for Development research and Advocacy, Kaduna.

In it, he painted a picture of helplessness by women whose reproductive role make the easy victims of the virus while it is also women that are saddled with the care of orphaned children whose parents die as a result of AIDS.

Another paper was; "Impact of HIV/AIDS On Women: Access, Administration and Use of ARVs," by Dr. Rosemond Akuse, Head of paediatrics, ABUTH, Kaduna.

Coordinator of the GPI and wife of the deputy governor, Mrs. Charity Shekari, described HIV/AIDS as the biggest challenge to mankind.

According to her, palliatives such as anti-retroviral drugs have helped to give people living with the virus a new lease of life".

"However, the challenge of proper administration and use of these drugs need to be addressed. The issue of lack of access to these drugs and how people living with the virus can live healthy lives in the absence of ARVs is yet to receive proper attention", Mrs. Shekari added.



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## NEWS

NATIONAL CONFAB... NATIONAL CONFAB... NATIONAL CONFAB...

## Tit bits

By Habeeb I. Pindiga

## Predictable speeches

Apparently, many of the distinguished delegates are in the natural political reform conference with a particular mindset. The thing is so glaring that when a delegate stands up to speak, from his or her costume, you can easily predict what he will say. If you sported a hat, make no mistake about it, you will surely talk about the environment degradation of the Niger Delta. Which means there must be resource control. When you see a red cap (minus those of the Umaru Dikkos and Sola Sarakis), sit back for a vitriolic campaign for federal character in infrastructure spread and of course regional army. If it's a lady (or woman or even a girl—there are so many who see themselves and behave as such), you can bet your life she will harp on gender equality till Tobi says "time please!" And for the *babban riga* men, agriculture, solid minerals and oil in the Lake Chad Basin are the key words. Consensus building indeed!

## Shehu Sani Vs Traditional rulers

As a mark of courtesy to the custodians of our culture, each speaker accords some seconds in his protocol roll to the traditional rulers—there are about a dozen of them seated. You can't blame the delegates because nobody can afford to risk the wrath of the fierce looking palace guards waiting at the entrance to the chamber. But Malam Shehu Sani thought differently. When he stood up, the activist began by descending so heavily on the traditional rulers. He said all traditional institutions must go if Nigeria is to remain one, as emirs, Obas and obis are the first set of people to pay courtesy visits to coup plotters (successful ones of course). And the man cannot boast of any muscles that can protect him from the hefty whip-wielding guards. Well, as fate would have it, Sani stepped out unmolested. We must say our minds, no matter whose robe is smeared!

## What!

Considering how obesity found its way into the chamber, an elder statesman (she is a lady), advised that all of them go on a sprint race to shed off the excess weight (and luggage, if any). She didn't stop there. While passing through the corridors at tea break, the lady came from behind a man with a bulging belly, tapped the damn thing and said "You must shake it off." He turned round, admired the lady and said "But it's still functional!" A reflexive "WHAT!" escaped my mouth.

## No more thanks, Mr. President

During the debate on the presidential speech, many speakers dedicated almost the entire allotted three minutes showering praises on Obasanjo. Surprisingly, in fact with no explanations, these accolades have ceased. Instead of thanking the president, they merely recognise protocols and *talk the talk*. What went wrong? Some wagging tongues have already started speculating that besides the conference bags; no delegate has seen one bag more!

## Delegates love titles

From the way they parade chains of titles, these delegates are real Nigerians. You have 'His Royal Majesty', 'Barister, Chief, Dr. Mrs.', 'High Chief', 'Honourable, Alhaji, Dr., Senator, Major General', and so many others. In fact worried by this tendency, some academic doctorate degree holders have since began distinguishing themselves from honorary title carriers. They refer to themselves as PhD. Medical doctors are also looking for how to make the distinction. With due apologies to Idang Alibi and his *Salute to Alhaji Dr. Chief, Jibiti Wayo*, we may soon start hearing of 'Elder Politician Dr. Chief Gemade', 'Governor's father Saraki', 'Middle Belt Advocate Lar', 'Professor Resource Controller Sagay', 'Admiral Farmer Nyako'. We love titles!

## Growing high table

From a three-man leadership, the conference now has seven persons on the high-table. Before, it was only Tobi, Kukah and Katagum. Arikawe, the deputy scribe soon joined them. Later another deputy secretary, together with the co-scribe, Prof. Oloyede, also mounted the platform. Trust Nigerian women because they swiftly cried "general inequality!" And for balancing, Mrs. Elizabeth Pam is now enjoying the high seat—as a time keeper. Soon the youths may also demand a slot, may be that of whip.

## Sada Ilu

He represents the retired SSS personnel when he said the other day that the SSS is misunderstood by Nigerians. Nobody took him seriously. In fact to indicate their exception to the man's remark, delegates heckled at him. Undaunted, Ilu went a step further yesterday by saying the SSS were behind everybody's comfort at the conference. Some journalists, including yours sincerely cried blue murder! Only two days ago, a number of them were manhandled (and even woman-handled) by some SSS operatives. So, where is the comfort?

## OPC may take over state police —Oyo delegate

One of the delegates representing Oyo State at the national political reform conference, Mr. Adebayo Shittu has cautioned that state police will mean trouble for the country.

Shittu said yesterday that the dreaded Yoruba brigade, the *Odua People's Congress* (OPC), could take over the force in the south-west should states be allowed to create their own police outfits.

"The state police is one of the most undesirable things. If state police is allowed, the OPC will take over and everybody will be in trouble," he said.

Stories by Habeeb I. Pindiga,  
Political Reporter (Senate)

The delegate lamented the perennial neglect of the police force, which he said has led to insecurity all in the country.

Shittu said through government yearly announce fat budgets for the force, police personnel buy uniforms and fuel official cars with their personal money.

He suggested measures to curb corruption at the top hierarchy of the force and also said the contentious Land Use Act must not be abrogated as it protects land for the entire citizenry instead of allowing a few individuals to take over.

Former minister of internal affairs, Prof. Musa Yakubu, has disagreed with claims that the presidential system of government is too costly for Nigeria.

He said other systems are as costly as presidentialism.

Speaking yesterday in Abuja at the ongoing national political reform conference, Yakubu, who leads the Adamawa State delegation, said Nigeria should retain the presidential system with amendments.

The Nigerian model, he, however said, was full of imperfections that makes it costly.

Yakubu suggested that public officers must be made to cut the bloated number of their aides as part of ways to make the system cost-effective.

"But I don't believe that

## Presidential system not too costly —Prof Yakubu

the presidential system is too costly," he said, giving examples with the United States, Ghana and South Africa, where presidentialism is being operated successfully.

Speaking on the current foreign debt imbroglio, Yakubu said Nigeria must face the reality, which is to negotiate and service its debts.

He contended that none of the creditors was willing to cancel Nigeria's debt, as it was one of the strangleholds they have on the country.

## How to avoid desperate political contest, by Ganduje

Former Kano State deputy governor, Dr. Abdullahi Umar Ganduje, suggests that the federal government be made less powerful to avoid desperate political contest for state power.

In a nine-page memorandum to the on-going national political reform conference, Ganduje, who is on the federal delegation, said for an enduring federal system, powers must be developed to the states and local governments.

"Nigeria should redefine the structure of her federalism by making the centre less powerful and less attractive to avoid desperate political contests for access to or control of state power," he said.

The memo, which is on power sharing, listed seven ways to ensure fairness to each section of the country.

They include de-emphasising of ethnic and religious affiliations; psycho-

logical and social orientation; redefinition of the nation's structure as well as transparency and accountability in government.

He said that political leadership "should not be based

on ethno-regional and other primordial considerations but on such generally acceptable criteria as a record of proven integrity, experience, age, requisite educational qualifications and commitment to serve."

## Kogi delegate wants power shift in constitution

A member of the Kogi State delegation at the ongoing national political reform conference, Mr. Suleiman Joseph, has called for the inclusion of the power rotation principle in the constitution.

This, he said, would make it possible for minority groups to aspire the presi-

dency in Nigeria.

Joseph, a Dean at the Federal College of Education, Okene, Kogi State, said also that rotational presidency will engender unity, stability and give a sense of belonging to ethnic minorities across the federation.

At present, he said, it is

difficult for minority groups to make it to the highest office in the land.

Joseph also alleged that the Ajaokuta Steel Company was sabotaged because it is situated in one of the minority states and urged that the company be completed to diversify the nation's oil-dependent economy.



L-R: Dr. (Mrs) Ibideyo Alebiosu, Ekiti State delegate, Professor Omotayo Olutoye, elder statesman and Dr. Adewumi Abitoye Ondo State delegate discussing during sitting of the National Political Reform Conference in Abuja...recently.

Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje

# News



Speaker of the House of Representatives, Alhaji Aminu Bello Masari flanked by Sangari of Aure, Alhaji Abubakar Umar II and House Leader, Hon. Abdul Ningi at the turbaning ceremony of Hon. Shu'aibu Abdullahi as Mutawallen Aure in Nasarawa State...recently.

## FG moves to privatise airports, aviation agencies

The federal government has commenced action to privatise the country's airports and other aviation agencies to enhance efficiency and better service delivery.

As a result, the government has constituted a 15-member "Aviation Sector Reform Implementation Committee (ASRIC)," to work out modalities for the exercise which will be completed by the end of the year.

Inaugurating the committee in Abuja, Aviation Minister, Isa Yuguda, said that the government decided

to concession the airports as well as the privatisation of the aviation agencies for sustainable development of the sector.

Yuguda said that the committee will among others, advise the National Council on Privatisation (NPC), on policies and programmes to promote competition, efficiency and transparency in the restructuring and privatisation of the sector.

"It will also formulate proposals to attract private financing and investment in the aviation sector as well as the reformation of the sector to improve efficiency and quality of aviation services in the country," he noted.

He also said that the committee will carry out the privatisation of the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), Nigerian Aviation Handling Company (NAHCO), as well as the agencies of the defunct Nigeria Airways, including SAHCOL, SKYPOL, SKYCAT and SKYPRINT.

The minister said that the membership of the committee include the Permanent Secretary in the ministry, Mr. Tommy Oyelade, as the Chairman, Director-General of the Bureau for Public

Enterprises (BPE), Mrs Irene Chigbue and the Director-General of the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA), Mr Fidelis Onyeyiri.

Others are FAAN's Managing Director, Alhaji Gambo Umar, Managing Director of the Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA), the Rector, Nigerian College of Aviation Technology (NCAT), Mrs F.O. Odutola and the Managing Director of EAS Airlines, Capt. I.I. Wada.

Also, the Special Assistant to the President on Aviation, Capt. Shehu Iyal, the liquidator of Nigeria Airways Ltd., Mr Babington Ashaye, Dr. Steve Mahonwu and AON's Secretary, Capt. Mohammed Joji, are members of the committee.

Others are Capt. M.B. Gowon, Capt. Jonathan Ibrahim, the Executive Director, Bellview Airlines,

Mr. Gabriel Olowo and the President, National Union of Air Transport Employees, Mr I. Itua.

NAN reports that the country has 20 airports with four of them located in Lagos, Abuja, Kano and Port Harcourt, having international status.

## VP calls for political integrity

Vice President Atiku Abubakar says there is the need for a critical mass of politicians and party leaders in the country to be built around transparent elections and political integrity.

Abubakar said at the opening of the 7th Yar'Adua Memorial Forum yesterday in Abuja that democracy and freedom could only be

sustained if there was eternal vigilance.

"That way, we might break the existing cycle that has created negative incentives for candidates and parties and ultimately subvert the electoral system," he told the gathering of politicians, political activists and academicians.

Abubakar, who is a

beneficiary of the late Musa Yar'Adua's political school, described his mentor as a champion of the cause of democracy in the country.

"He had no doubt that the country would one day return to a democratic system of governance," the vice president said of Yar'Adua, who died in detention on political charges.

In an overview of the

forum, Dr Peter Lewis of the American University, Washington DC, described elections as confidence building apparatuses, saying that even minorities look up to it as a last resort towards their emancipation.

Lewis, an Associate Professor at the university's School of International Service, enumerated the causes of electoral crises in both developed and developing economies, saying that mutual distrust among politicians is a critical factor.

He said, however, that electoral problems were not insurmountable, adding that dialogue and negotiation have been used to solve such problems in many countries.

Lewis, who spoke on "Troubled Election Outcomes as Threat to Democracy", said electoral reforms were necessary for the political future of any country and called on the civil society to participate fully in such reforms.

The forum, to be rounded off on Saturday by President Olusegun Obasanjo, has as its theme, "Electoral Reform: Building Confidence for Our Future."

## Economic posterity depends on transportation - NITT, DG

The director-general, Nigerian Institute of Transport Technology (NITT), Dr. Ibrahim Vandu Chikolo says a successful take-off of the economy cannot be possible without integrating all logistics elements and transport.

The director general was speaking in a welcome address for a visiting Professor, Gideon Nieman, from the University of Pretoria, South Africa, who was at the NITT to deliver a lecture as part of the collaboration between the two institutions.

Dr. Vandu-Chikolo said, "to be able to steer the economy successfully under a free market, managers of industry must learn to effectively work the integral forces inter-relating all logistics elements and transport to ensure a positive impact on the economy."

He said that was why NITT has pitched its strategy on imparting knowledge and skills to Nigerians because "under the scenario, the management of logistics element by all sections of industry and the economy in general will play a major role in the successful take-off of our economy in the new era."

He said this objective have compelled the NITT to develop specialised courses and specialised qualifications synonymous with skills acquisition that would make NITT graduates add value to

From Sanl Babadoko, Bureau Chief Kaduna

operators in the industry and the economy in general.

Dr. Vandu-Chikolo announced that NITT will sign a memorandum of understanding with the University of Pretoria during the visit.

At the palace of the Emir of Zazzau where the director general took the visiting Professor on a courtesy call on Alhaji Shehu Idris, Dr. Vandu-Chikolo commended the Emir for the peaceful co-existence in his domain.

"There is no gainsaying that the peace and harmony we are enjoying in Zaria in general and NITT in particular is occasioned by the stabilising role of His Royal Highness," the DG added.

In his lecture titled: "The Alignment of Supply and Demand In Supply Chain For Competitive Advance," the South African Professor talked about relationship between supply and demand, traditional and modern approaches to resolve supply-demand mismatches among others.

## Makarfi approves security allowance for councillors

The Kaduna state government has approved N25,000 as security allowance to each local government councillor in the state.

The state governor, Alhaji Ahmed Makarfi, made this known when members of the state councillors forum paid him a courtesy visit on Wednesday.

He said that already, the payment of the security allowance has since commenced and urged the councillors to make good use of the allowance for the purpose it was meant for.

He warned that the state government will sanction any councillor found wanting in the discharge of his responsibilities.

Makarfi stated that the government will hold councillors responsible for any breakdown of law and order in their respective wards.

On the on-going staff audit in the 23 local government councils of the state, the governor threatened to sack all the staff of any council that refused to cooperate with the auditing staff and accused some of the councils of defrauding

government of huge amounts of money through the inflation of salary figures.

He alleged that a local government council which was paying N7.5 million as salary to its staff two years ago now pays over N17 million as salary even when no new staff was recruited by the council.

Speaking earlier, the chairman of the forum, Mallam Aliyu Haruna, had thanked the governor for approving security vote for councillors and urged him to approve a medical allowance for them to enable them take care of their medical needs.

## Work begins at Itakpe mining coy

Work has commenced at the National Iron Ore Mining Company, Itakpe, following an informal handover to the new landlord, Global Infrastructures, a subsidiary of ISPAT group.

The executive director of the company, Engr. Nurendra Malam Verma, in a chart with Daily Trust yesterday in Lokoja, said the company has since commenced rehabilitation of key sections of the iron ore mining company with a view to make it productive.

The national iron ore mining company, Itakpe, was formally handed over to ISPAT following the successful signing of the

From Ahmed Tahir Ajobe, Correspondent Lokoja

concession agreement between the federal government and the group.

Under the agreement, ISPAT group is expected to put NIOMCO in good shape to feed Ajaokuta Steel Company Limited with the necessary raw materials for its operations.

He highlighted some of the achievements by the group at the Ajaokuta Steel Company which includes successful rolling of wire rod mill at the wire rod mill and the light section mill, the lighting of the sinter plant furnace, laying of 10 km network of cables around the blast furnace among others.

## Kwara UNPP chairman loses mother

The death has been announced of Hajia Salamat Imam AbdulRahim, mother of the Kwara State chairman of the United Nigeria Peoples Party (UNPP), Malam Nurudeen Imam AbdulKarim.

A statement from the UNPP boss said Hajia Salamat died on Monday, March 14 and has since been buried according to Islamic injunctions in Okene, Kogi

From AbdulRazak Adebayo, Correspondent (Ilorin)

State. Fidda'u prayers was held in Sheikh Tajudeen's compound, Okene, led by the Chief Imam of Eberiland, Sheikh Musa Galadima.

Hajia Salamat is survived by six children including AbdulKarim, former director of land administration, FCDA, Abuja and Tijjani AbdulKarim of the presidency, Abuja.

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Your election as the N.S.E. Chairman has indeed resurrected and refocused the Katsina Chapter of the Association after many years of slumber. Your conferment with the FNSE award did not come to many of us as a surprise.

Congratulations once more and  
Keep up the Good work

*Signed  
Management*



**ENGR. RABI'U IBRAHIM FNSE**,  
Director, Civil Engineering Ministry of Works,  
Housing and Transport  
Katsina State.

# Opinion

## In defence of Babangida

Continued from back page

government purpose and essence—and pride; because his commission is invoked by everybody in government to point to the reality of a government actively engaged in fighting corruption. It is not so much due to the absence of any other proof; but, rather, because it is the only one that works. And it works because of the dedication and indefatigability of Ribadu.

Ribadu, a dedicated police officer with, alas, a non-legalistic, or perhaps a post-legalistic, mind, is no doubt married to his job. He is serious at work, perhaps too serious for an Obasanjo appointee. And energetic crime buster, he has pursued corruption with rare doggedness, captured its essence and apprehended its perpetrators; and is currently mired in the difficult task of defeating it.

No doubt, he is a man almost possessed by that delightful disease of always wanting to see things done right—by nature, by training and by acquired instincts. He is a young man who is apparently angry with the whole world because it harbours criminals—Reds under the Beds. As a lawyer, he, doubtless, would wish to right all wrongs if he could; and as a policeman he probably tried and found out that the world was not what it seemed; and now, as a commission chairman, he would, doubtless, wish to

Knowing the dangers to crime-busters on the Nigerian scene, we must all salute his courage, and difficult and often thankless decision to stay above board, and—above all—his independence. He seemed to have indeed managed the impossible by having resisted being used as the punitive arm of the political executive to hit out at its real and imagined enemies. But all this stand in danger of being lost if he allows it to be seen that he goes to work with such tough-minded prejudice.

If, indeed, Babangida is, as Ribadu said he is, a crafty criminal instead of pronouncing him guilty and, in advance, sentencing him to political banishment, he should have sought to be a crafty crime buster and thereby prove his case than simply talk.

It is not good to talk when you don't have to; but, in this situation, it is even better to act and keep silent even when you can speak. Ribadu has been noted for his outspoken tough talking; and this has, no doubt, added to the Ribadu Mystique that is feared by all criminals and respected by everyone. His tough-talking has induced in Nigerians the "sit-up" attitude that people here need to be put into before any behavioural reforms or attitudinal changes can be forced onto them. But tough-talking can not be a substitute for

Babangida may be true; but he, as the chairman of a public crime fighting outfit, lacks the luxury to work on it, or even indicate a desire or readiness to do so. Or allow it to determine how he prosecutes his war against crime.

But though unproved and perhaps beyond proof of the view of Babangida asserted by Ribadu is widely shared in this country; and, of course, Babangida must take a disproportionate share of the blame as much for what his regime did, as for what it failed to do. His regime has, with some justice, been accused of destroying the system.

Certainly the civil service has, for instance, still not fully recovered from his 1988 Civil Service Reform. In general, Babangida attempted to intellectualise the process of governance by allowing university dons freedom to experiment with what they know nothing about. This, of course, proved a recipe for disaster which university professors are expert at creating.

But no university degree can prove a better aid to public administration than the **Civil Service Rules**, and no professorial chair can devise a better way of controlling public funds than the **Financial Regulations**. By destroying the authority of these two documents, the Babangida reforms created a corruption-friendly environment. In addition, the Babangida regime had the

***"Yes, the world may have changed, but the rule for catching criminals has not; and, especially for those engaged in the dispensation of justice, it still requires proof beyond reasonable doubt. Otherwise, everything becomes suspect. And even if the law is an ass, the lawyer is not"***

keep the international financial law and order situation from deteriorating, or restoring it to the status quo ante if upset. But there are limits to which enthusiasm should be allowed to go.

As a law-enforcement officer, Ribadu should not have been seen or heard going against the law, no matter how much he may be against its spirit. Since he has elected to be its enforcer, he must therefore regard and treat it as the supreme standard to measure his official conduct. His criticism of the immunity clause contained in the Nigerian constitution, for instance, as part of his charges against Governor Joshua Dariye of Plateau State was not in the best of tastes. No matter how much a public officer may hate the immunity clause, the fact is that it is there; and one may have to learn to work with it until the time it is amended or repealed.

conclusive investigation.

He should certainly have waited until after he has caught Babangida before trying him, and then try him before pronouncing his guilt; and do that before crucifying him politically. Nothing less is required by his background, professional training and work experience.

But by jumping the gun he has betrayed this disgusting bias that has the capacity of vitiating a very good record built over several years; and, as a result of this unexplainable tendency to rush to judgment, all the good work he has done stand in great danger of being compromised. He should have proved above adopting the criteria of the man in the street because his interest in this matter ought to have been no more than that of an impartial prosecutor. He may be in a great hurry to nail a crook, but he doesn't know a crook until the crook is nailed. What he thinks about

noble intention of helping individuals close to it; but, unfortunately, this could be, and in some instances was, done in ways that did harm to communal interest. But these were not the issues Ribadu considered to issue the comments that were quoted out of context. In the process, it was not really Babangida who is now on trial. It is Ribadu and he stands to lose more than he can afford after all that he has done.

No doubt, Ribadu is not unaware that his personal integrity and the great respect that he enjoys depend on his being fair, and especially his being seen to be so by everybody. But all this respect that he has earned even from those who have been at the receiving end of his searchlight as a public crusader and an advocate for law and order and due process may be compromised if people suspect that he is actuated by motives other than those for public good.

## Thoughts on jobless doctors

Dr. Shehi Ali Abubakar

It used to be unthinkable to see a medical doctor failing to get employed within a few days after graduation. Infact what delays a doctor's employment is the mandatory swearing – in ceremony by the Medical and Dental Council before he takes on any employment. It is common for your friends from other faculties to envy you; by saying you are lucky6 as you are assured employment as soon as you graduate.

Housemanship or Internship is the first point of call for a Medical graduate as a pre-registration employment for 1 year before full registration is given to practice as a medical practitioner. This 1 year employment is mandatory and a medical doctor is supposed to do it within 2 years of graduation or his license will be revoked until he writes another exam which is set by the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria.

The situation on ground presently is far from the picture painted above. medical doctors in Nigerian are presently in an unemployment crisis that many are wondering whether the many years spent (ASUU strike inclusive) were actually worth it after all.

I am not an angel of doom, and neither am I a pessimist but I think I can say without fear of contradiction that the future is to say the least gloomy for the Medical Profession in Nigeria. This is a profession to which I belong so I stand to gain nothing painting it this way, but the truth must be told.

Now, that was a digression. A freshly graduated doctor now takes an average of eight – sixteen months to secure a place for Internship and by the time he or she completes the programmes,

His provisional license would have expired and he would have concluded his Internship without a license.

These groups of doctors are the lucky ones because at least they have secured a place for the internship within the 2 years of their provisional license. The other group and I personally know many can not get a place within the 2 year period and by this time, they are legally speaking unqualified doctors.

This situation has now extended to medical officers who are the next step after House officers who may or may not have done their 1 year mandatory youth service scheme depending on age. A Medical Officer is either pursuing his residency in an accredited hospital or is working as a general practitioner in a general or private hospital.

There are many medical doctors now who have passed their primaries exam which qualifies them to start their residency programme in a recognized hospital but have failed to gain employment into these hospitals.

Over 20 of my classmates along have this qualification but are either sitting at home or at best offering locum services at private hospitals far less than the national minimum wage.

Many doctors who can afford it have now resorted to writing foreign exams which would enable them to practice either in the UK or USA. These exams come at great cost but they are more reliable than the Nigerian equivalent in terms of relevance to the field and also as a means of getting employment because despite our numerous problems, Nigerian doctors are highly regarded in foreign countries. It is estimated that there are over 20,000 Nigerian doctors in the USA alone and this estimate is conservative because there are many that bypass immigration laws of these countries.

Dear reader you may ask what is the genesis of this crisis in this noble profession you respect so much. My simple answer is the systematic neglect of the health sector by successive government of this potentially great country. No health policy or plan has been adhered to for more than 10 years by any government and some of these policies are well articulated if only they are implemented. Poor budgeting allocations over the past 20 years to the health sector at between 2 – 3% have not helped matter.

Teaching hospitals were established to serve as tertiary level of medical care for the training of medical doctors at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Presently many teaching hospitals need resident doctors in various departments to fill up the spaces created by former resident doctors who have completed their residency programme and are now consultants, but are unable to employ these residents because of lack of funds in the last 2 year.

Some teaching hospitals that have done interviews for resident doctors over 8 months ago, some of which have given letters of appointment to the doctors cannot afford to allow them to commence work because they cannot pay them. This is as bad as that.

Some years back, the government in an attempt to increase the number of

hospitals that offer residency programmes in the country upgraded some general hospitals to the status of federal medical centres, but this noble idea has been bastardized by the same lack of funds for the employment of staff, for which purpose the hospitals were upgraded in the first place. These hospitals now have beautiful infrastructure without manpower to run them.

Dear reader, with all these myriad of problems outlined, you must ask what are the solutions to them. A well articulated health policy backed by adequate budgetary allocated and a determined political will to implement them is my humble suggestion. A target should be set for each teaching hospital, Federal Medical Centres and other accredited hospitals for the number of residents and house officers they can employ and this should be backed by enough funds to achieve the target. There are many state owned general hospitals that can be accredited to offer residency programme in liaison with Federal Ministry of

Health or other teaching hospitals as this will help in decongesting the teaching hospitals to which most residents run to for their residency programme.

I believe a hospital does not have to be affiliated to a University for it to be able to run a postgraduate programme as long as it satisfies the criteria for the programme as stipulated by the National Postgraduate Medical College or the West African Postgraduate Medical College. This will go along way in expanding the opportunities for medical doctors to pursue specialist courses, improve the quality of health care they offer to their patients and also contain the present brain drain tide now facing the health sector.

It is very unfortunate for the government of this country to spend tax payer's money in training medical doctors over many years only for these doctors to be lured away by foreign countries, just for the simple reason that there is no space for them in these hospitals or not incentives for them to stay and work.

Some of the best trained doctors you have encounter in Europe or Asia are Nigerians trained in Nigeria and exported to serve these countries to the detriment of their own nation. The implementation of some of these and many other policies will go a long way in bringing back those days during which it was unthinkable to have an unemployed medical doctor.

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## YOUR LETTERS

# Watching the watch dog

Lately the Abuja council of the Nigeria Union of Journalists with the aid of the Nigerian police arrested a fake journalist. This unwholesome behaviour is all pervading in Abuja and its environs. Fake journalists are seen all over the place and their unsuspecting victims glibly assuming that they are bonafide journalists. The scintillating part of this information is that the said fellow is now facing litigation.

Pursuant to the above mentioned, is issue of accreditation of journalists in national functions like the ongoing conference National Political Reform Conference (NPRC). Out of the blues a myriad of news papers and magazines emerged to cover the function, and it is crystal clear that many of these newspapers and magazines were not functional prior to this conference.

Without due recourse to the monitoring body, Nigerian Union of Journalists which stands as both trade and professional body that regulates the activities of practitioners; many of the journalist that came for the accreditation were all accredited. No action was taken to separate the wheat from the chaff. This is part of what is wrong with Nigeria, our inability to respect procedures. In fact this is an indictment on the accreditation protocols department of the National Political Reform Conference which ought to have taken steps to ensure that only genuine journalists were accredited and the only yardstick for ensuring this is through the NUJ.

Due process shouldn't be

contracts but about respecting procedures in all spheres of our national development. No nation advances without respecting the tenets of different professional bodies that ensures its development. Jeremy Turnstel wrote a book titled "The media is America" and a decade later he wrote another book "The media is still America" This is to say that the United States of America is what it is today as a result of its hold on a well regulated media.

Beside the holy Quran and the holy Bible the next object of "religious belief" is the media. We all assume that anything reported in the press is gospel truth. Though that should be the case but not always the case. Therefore, only credible media houses duly registered and recognised by the Nigerian Union of Journalist should be allowed to cover such an event that boards a great deal on our National Unity.

Another issue is that of journalists that gatecrash in functions. It is normal for a journalist to be dogged in nature but in the same breath display some amount of gentle manliness. Some of these journalists attend functions uninvited and these have effects on the image of the profession. They wriggle their way using some forms of subterfuge.

Whenever there occurs any absurdity or any momentous event in the society, the journalist with a whoop of delight brings it to public glare. Here the

as a watchdog of the society. Who then, watches the watchdog?

The lure of lucre has become an insignia of the Nigerian journalist, especially those who are bereft of societal values and respect for the ethics of the profession.

However, as the watchdog of the society we need to exhibit or show candles of decency to the society we serve. Brown envelope is prostitution. As a journalist the movement one collects gratification, sentiments creep in, one now becomes stripped of the ability either to tell the truth (which is the fundamental principle of the profession) or to be objective.

## Re: Zamfara Rep escapes mob attack

I write: to congratulate you on the high reputation you have gained within few years of operation.

You have had the trust and this is why you are increasingly gaining wider readership all over the country, this must have followed on the high standard you have demons-trated right from the scratch. Besides your paper has been very informing.

I am however disap- pointed by your report

The need now and always is for fairness, objectivity, truthfulness and accuracy on the side of the Nigerian journalist. Journalist should be discerning enough to know that giving or receiving brown envelop is an attempt to subtly disarm and gag the press. Therefore, contentment on the side of the journalist should be of prime importance. This is our turf and no one holds the forth better than the journalist, this calls for a need to guard the profession jealously.

We should in no circumstance raise up to cheap baits. Journalist should not allow the harsh economic realities in Nigeria

entitled, "Rep escapes mob attack in Zamfara". by Salisu Zakari Maradun on your edition of 15/3/2005 which is said to have no iota of truth.

I hope you cross-check stories that are likely to cast doubt in the minds of your readers about you. Trust is a burden, hard to build but easy to crush.

Kabiru U Jabaka  
Department of  
Preliminary Studies,  
The Federal  
Polytechnic,  
Kaura-Namoda

to blindfold our senses of judgment. We should be of good conduct and stand on the path of truth and the attainment of unparalleled excellence. We must, as an agenda setting arm of the society exhibit attitude worthy of emulation. The Nigerian union of journalist should make it a statement of duty to register all

journalists in one body, like is found in the Nigerian Bar Association and Nigerian Society of Engineers etc. This is the only way we can bring the practice of journalism to greater heights and to its pristine pride of place so that "the labour of our heroes past shall never been in vain".

Yahaya Ola Taidi  
International Institute of  
Journalism NUJ National  
Secretariat Complex  
Garki, Area II Abuja

## Reps unfair to Hon. Yerima

Please permit me a space in your newspaper to react to the injustice done to Hon. Haruna Yerima by the House of Representatives.

First I want to say that we need just about four more of Hon. Yerima's kind of person in that House. As the matter of fact, even in envy Hon. Yerima for his guts and courage to have told the members nothing but the white truth. Whether they accept the truth told or not, with time history will surely vindicate Hon. Haruna Yerima. And again i keep wondering if history will ever be kind to these

type of members we have at the National Assembly today.

How on earth our members would now prefer to be collecting free card from MTN on monthly basis and in turn decides to turn off their eyes to whatever rubbish that MTN is doing to us.

Dear Hon. Yerima, please do not mind any other member who is opposed to your fight against corruption. As for me, you are the only member at the National Assembly who is qualified to be truly called an Honourable.

I greet you.  
Atondo Mbayuav  
Gboko, Benue state

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

## The Senate and Abiola's reparations crusade

Late Basorun M.K.O. Abiola of blessed memory stood for many ideals and fought many noble causes, which were in most instances, of direct benefits to humanity until he was unjustly incarcerated and eventually died in the hands of his captors, some of who are today the beneficiaries of the democracy he fought and died for.

One of the causes that late M.K.O. Abiola stood for and fought with all his might, personal resources and abundant mental intellect, was the issue of reparation for Africa, arising from the inhuman treatment meted out to Africans and the black race during the infamous and inglorious slave trade era. He believed absolutely that the heartless white man's actions by way of slave trade were inherently evil and therefore condemnable. They should, he once said, pay adequate reparation for the bestiality and indignity they subjected fellow human beings to through the slave trade.

Singularly, late M.K.O. Abiola commenced the struggle for reparation for Africa. Single handedly, he assembled a formidable team from his Concord Press stable, for the war on reparation. Late Abiola, true to the calling of the office of a generalissimo, fought bravely

By Oluamide Lawal

for the cause.

With his able team, he visited many African countries, sensitizing and mobilizing support for the African cause. He was particularly in Ghana (once known as the Slave Coast) and Senegal, where slave trade business boomed while it lasted. Abiola was at the dungeons, the dark rooms, 'the doors of no return' among other unholy sites of the slave trade era.

At Senegal, M.K.O. Abiola was moved to tears, when he saw the chains, padlocks and other notorious 'tools of trade' with which his fellow African men and women were subjected to hardship and a long trek on their way to the lands of no return. He actually donned one of the chains on his neck. It was a pathetic scene.

The late generalissimo of Yorubaland took it upon himself to visit many African Heads of State and governments and vigorously championed the cause of reparation. He pleaded with them for support, to enable the defunct Organization of African Unity (O.A.U) now African Union (A.U), speak with one voice and take a definitive and decisive position on the issue of reparation, with a view to

presenting same to the United Nations (U.N) for appropriate action. This irreversible commitment may be sustained, especially with President Obasanjo as the Chairman of AU.

M.K.O. Abiola succeeded, in co-operation with the then government of General Babangida, to have officially tabled the reparation issue before an extra-ordinary session of the defunct O.A.U. The motion for the payment of reparation for African was unanimously adopted by that session of O.A.U. for onward transmission to the United Nations. Abiola was fulfilled for he was irrevocably committed to the cause. He succeeded in tying the reparation issue to the neck of the O.A.U., which after his foray into politics, eventual unjust detention and avoidable death, developed clay feet in pursuing the matter. But must reparation fight die with Abiola? Must his struggle be in vain? Must the issue be swept under the rug by a body as 'viable' as African Union? The answer is no!

In 2003, President George W. Bush of the United States of America (U.S.A) was on a visit to the African continent. He did not mince words in condemning man's inhumanity to man through the slave trade. This was at

Senegal and Ghana. Together with his entourage, they were taken round the slave trade 'black spots'. He was visibly shaken, by the agonies, psychological torture, trauma and indignity caused our own black brothers and sisters must have gone through in the hands of the slave masters.

Is it not the right time for the African Union to hit the nail hard on the head once more and present the reparation case to the U.N, so soon after President George W. Bush visit to our continent? After all, it is hard to divorce the United States from the UN.

This is where our nation's apex law-making body – the Senate, has a daunting task in its hands. It has got to debate exhaustively, a motion on the issue of reparation for Africa and pass an urgent resolution, compelling President Obasanjo to table the matter at the next session of African Union and pursue it vigorously as he did the NEPAD. After all, Nigeria is regarded as the giant of Africa, whatever that means. Chief Adolphus Wabara, the Senate President should bring up the matter for the attention of his fellow distinguished senators. It is not out of place for the senate to have a committee on reparation that will go round the continent to re-awaken

and sensitize our 'sleeping leaders' over the issue. This should be distinct from the foreign affairs committee. It should not be a jamboree.

It would be to the eternal credit and glory of the present senate if it could muster enough energy over the matter and record its name in gold in African hall of fame, if this noble venture is realized. It is a debt we all owe the sweet memory of late M.K.O. Abiola and blacks the world over. It should not be trivialized. It should rather be one of this great son of Africa's enduring legacies. One way of immortalizing him is through landmark crusades. Abiola is to Africa, what Martin Luther King is to the black Americans. In USA, there is a day set aside to celebrate the life and times of this great American.

The outgoing National Assembly, despite its seeming inadequacies, magnanimously and unanimously passed a motion to the effect that, the National Stadium in Abuja be named after *The First Pillar of Sports in Africa*. But the executive arm of government in its 'wisdom' has not deemed it fit to make the old Senate's resolution a reality. Whatever it is, M.K.O. Abiola loomed larger than life. His memory deserved the best form of immortalization.

What's more, you cannot blaze trails if you are not relevant and self-confident. Late Abiola was both. He blazed trails, reparation being one of them. Late M.K.O. Abiola made waves beyond the shores of Africa with responsibilities for higher goals. He got himself involved in noble causes with all his energies, attention and ingenuity, which in turn reinforced his strength for hard work and fruitful results.

If the present administration fails, either through commission or omission, to immortalize him in the right sense of it, a day will come in the life of this nation, when those who believe in Abiola's core value and virtues will be in the saddle and do the right thing rightly. Who knows tomorrow?

If Barrister Pius Anyim could emerge a recipient of Nigeria's second highest national honour – G.C.O.N for being the senate president for just two years and at the age of 39, nothing stops the man of the people – M.K.O. Abiola, from being given a post-humous national honour of GCFR. He deserves this and even more.

*Writes from Crystal Villa Ede, Osun State and can be reached at*

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## Of national confab and referendum

One of the attractions of democracy is freedom of expression. After several years of dictatorship, Nigerians have been and indeed right to, express themselves on virtually every issue. While this freedom has been grossly abused by some people, the generality of articulate Nigerians are beginning to focus on positive pursuits towards making our society a better place to live in.

As the conference, popularly referred to as National Dialogue, goes into full steam, a number of issues have emerged, which need to be resolved urgently. Of interest here is the debate on whether or not the conference recommendations be subjected to a referendum. It is not necessary.

In order to appreciate this position, it is imperative to draw attention to some of the realities of the present Nigerian situation.

Not backed by law, the National Political Reform Conference is an advisory body set up by the executive, which also proposes to

Onukwugha Esin Osuji

submit their recommendations to the legislature for debate and passage into law. There is already a sovereign in place, duly elected by the people of Nigeria to represent their interests.

The recommendations of the National Dialogue do not, therefore, have to be put forward to a referendum.

In as much as procedures and *modus operandi* should be sorted out, what Nigerians want now are quality debates on fundamental issues facing

them. They want to be assured that the representatives are focused and that erstwhile opposition against the dialogue

Taking a cue from President Obasanjo's inaugural speech, the conference participants indeed have a Herculean task ahead: "We should not discuss in fear and we should never fear to discuss". Basically, the national dialogue provides an appropriate forum for representatives to bare their minds on their concerns, interests and proposals for

the nation's progress.

Nigeria today is confronted with a lot of challenges in the polity, economic participants would cover many grounds by sticking to their terms of reference. They are an advisory body, which has been assembled by the Federal, and State Governments to offer the nation the benefit of their knowledge, experience and wisdom in our collective march to sustainable development.

By identifying certain areas as non-negotiable, the

President is obviously thwarting the hopes of potential warlords, tribal chieftains and other self-willed participants. The conference can be used to initiate the disintegration of the country. While not presuming anything, Nigerians have clearly achieved varied levels of national integration over the years. The conference is expected to help consolidate the positive sides of the union and recommend means of redressing inequities, injustices and unfair practices.

Perhaps more than any other period in our chequered developmental experience, this conference should be for real, the results of which millions of Nigerians are enthusiastically awaiting. The representatives need to realise that this is not one of those *ad-hoc* assignments to generate some cash, make 'connections' and boost their CVs. They are on the threshold of history.

It is, therefore, imperative that discussions are held with candour, open minds and in the positive expectations of a Nigerian State sustained on

the foundation of equity, justice, fairplay and peaceful co-existence.

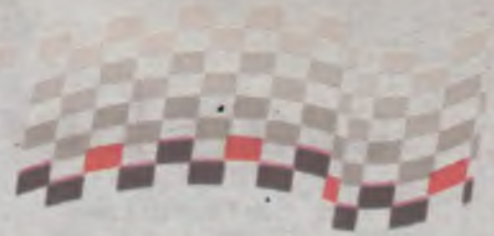
The Union or Federation: There is nothing wrong with Nigerians as a people. All over the world, we have proved our mettle as enterprising, hardworking and resilient. The country is steadily asserting its pride of place in African, and indeed, world affairs. We are on the road to the development of "a modern nation-state; a nation that possesses real capability to harness her natural resources and the creative talents of her people for the upliftment of the welfare of every citizen".

This vision is realistic enough to be adopted as part of the Mission Statement of Nigeria. As the conference takes centre-stage, the representatives are respectfully reminded that they have a unique opportunity to contribute to the making of modern Nigeria.

*Onukwugha Osuji, writes from Lagos and can be reached at*

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***"Not backed by law, the National Political Reform Conference is an advisory body set up by the executive, which also proposes to submit recommendations to the legislature for debate and passage into constitutional amendments. The recommendations of the National Dialogue do not, therefore, have to be put forward to a referendum"***



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Africa

## Nigeria proposes tribunal for Sudan

Nigeria has proposed an African-run tribunal to hear cases of alleged war crimes in Sudan's Darfur region.

The proposal was put forward in an apparent attempt to end deadlock in the United Nations Security Council over a new resolution on Sudan.

The United States opposed calls for war crimes suspects to be tried at the International Criminal Court (ICC), which European countries favour.

Pro-government militias are committing genocide, said

Darfur's non-Arabs.

It is believed that more than 100,000 have died and some two million have fled their homes in the two-year conflict.

The Sudan government denies backing the Janjaweed militias, accused of mass killing, rape and looting.

On Wednesday, the UN pulled its foreign staff out of parts of West Darfur, following threats from the Janjaweed.

Nigeria said it had support from Sudan for its proposal.

"We welcome the general

principle that African solutions are required for African problems," said Richard Grenell, spokesman for the US mission to the UN. But the position of European countries such as the UK and France, which support the ICC, is not clear.

A UN human rights probe found that there was not a deliberate policy to carry out genocide in Darfur but that serious war crimes and crimes against humanity had been committed.

Its report contained a sealed list of war crimes suspects.

The draft resolution on Sudan also backs plans to send some 10,000 UN peacekeepers to monitor this year's deal to end a separate, 20-year conflict in southern Sudan.

Previous draft resolutions have threatened to impose sanctions on Sudan unless it took action against the Janjaweed but they were blocked by China and Russia, which have close ties to the Sudanese government.

## Opposition MP to challenge Mubarak

An Egyptian opposition leader has declared his candidacy in this year's presidential elections, a few days after being released from prison.

Ayman Nur's statement of intent on Wednesday makes him the first person to challenge the governing National Democratic Party (NDP) in nearly 24 years of rule by President Hosni Mubarak.

Nur made the announcement at the doorstep of the charity he runs in his constituency in Islamic Cairo. He addressed a crowd of more than 1000 people in the street.

The building was surrounded by a heavy contingent of riot police who tussled with the crowd before Nur's arrival.

"With thanks to God, the party, to you and to your love, I announce here that we are going to participate in the upcoming election for the presidency of the republic against the National Democratic Party. And this party will fall," Nur said.

"They have to apologise for the false elections during the past miserable 50 years. We have never chosen a president before... Change is coming one day, and that day is soon," he said.

The crowd responded with chants of "Allahu Akbar (God is great)".

Earlier, when Nur arrived at the building, his supporters shouted: "Welcome, Mr President", and threw candies as he blew kisses.

The populist, pro-reform Nur, whose al-Ghad party has seven legislators in the 454-seat parliament, was freed from prison last Saturday after spending six weeks in detention on suspicion of forging nearly 2000 signatures to obtain a license for his party last year.

He denied the charge, saying his arrest was an attempt to eliminate him as a rival to Mubarak.

Nur's detention gained international attention, largely because he has championed the call for multi-candidate presidential elections.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said she raised "very strong concerns" about the detention when she met Egypt's foreign minister in Washington last month.

His intended candidacy comes after Mubarak made a surprise announcement on 26 February asking parliament to amend the constitution to allow multi-candidate elections for the first time when Egyptians go to the polls in September.

Egypt traditionally holds plebiscites in which voters say yes or no to a single candidate who has been approved by par-

liament, which has been dominated by the ruling party since the 1970s.

Mubarak has won four such referendums, each time with a yes vote of more than 90%.

## Outcry as S/Africa names street Gandhi

South African authorities are reconsidering their decision to rename a street in Durban's red-light district after peace-maker Mahatma Gandhi.

An outcry followed the announcement last week and local radio stations have been bombarded with complaints.

His descendants feel one of the main port city centre streets would be more fitting to bear his name.

Gandhi spent 20 years in Durban in the early 1900s, fighting against racism under British colonial rule.

The naming of streets or places after a historical icon is usually greeted with applause by that icon's supporters.

But Point Road, the bone of contention - a two mile-long street running from the downtown beach precinct to the city's harbour mouth, is notorious for vice and crime.

Over the last few decades, the neighbourhood of apartment blocks has been over-run by growing sex and illicit drug enterprises.

Drug dealers brazenly ply their trade on the street alongside sex workers employed by escort agencies and massage parlours.

Many of Durban's more than one million residents of Indian origin have reacted angrily to the move they feel is an insult to Gandhi, who fought and for the rights of Indian indentured labourers in South Africa.

Ela Gandhi, Mahatma Gandhi's granddaughter - an African National Congress MP and head of the Gandhi Satyagraha Foundation - is against the renaming, though for a different reason.

"My concern is that Point Road is a small road and for a person with the stature of Gandhi who has international significance, a much bigger and important road should be named after him," she said.

"As far as Point Road's reputation is concerned, no-one in my family has raised that with me, although I can imagine why people who have a certain affection for Gandhi and what he stood for, would feel upset about it."

Mrs Gandhi said she was disappointed that her family wasn't consulted on the re-naming.

Residents of the controversial street offered a mixed re-

sponse to the proposed name change.

"I suppose it's part of change and change is good but it really doesn't make any real difference to me," said one sex worker.

"This place has a bad reputation. Perhaps giving it Gandhi's name will make it change for the better," mused another local.

The planned street name change is part of a nationwide effort by the South African government to honour people who contributed the fight for freedom and human rights.

Mahatma Gandhi, regarded as the father of India, spent 20 years in Durban.

## ECOWAS inaugurates council of elders

The chairman Economic Community of West Africa States, (ECOWAS) President Mamadou Tandja of Niger, has inaugurated the 2005 Council of Elders in Niamey, Niger capital, enjoining them to remember their complementary role in the restoration of peace and security in West Africa.

President Tandja told the 15-member council, that unless peace and stability was restored to the region, the recurring crises would continue to undermine its efforts to develop and focus on its primary responsibility of integration and address development challenges.

He said that in recognition of the correlation between peace and development, Niger has developed a framework for peace that incorporates the ancestral values of dialogue in recognition of the place of traditional institutions and other structures in the resolution of conflicts.

The executive secretary of ECOWAS, Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas, noted that the inauguration was taking place against the background of the growing menace of conflicts in the region, adding that the region will continue to rely on the support of the elders to meet the challenge.

Meanwhile, in a communiqué at the end of their one-day 4th inaugural meeting, the council expressed concern over the stagnation of peace resolution in Cote d'Ivoire and urged the Ivorians to overcome their political differences for national interest.

The council reaffirmed its



DR Congo troops drive past a woman carrying her baby. A dangerous humanitarian crisis is looming in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) with sharply increasing unrest in the region of Ituri where nine UN soldiers were killed on Friday, the UN warned.

## Cannibalism: Rebels boil victims alive in Congo-UN

Militiamen grilled bodies on a spit and boiled two girls alive as their mother watched, UN peacekeepers charged Wednesday, adding cannibalism to a list of atrocities allegedly carried out by one of the tribal groups fighting in northeast Congo.

The report came as a key UN official said the ongoing violence in Congo, claiming thousands of lives every month, has made it the site of the world's worst humanitarian crisis. The commander of UN forces in Congo, Gen. Patrick Cammaert, presented a report on abuses alleg-

edly committed by the Patriotic Resistance Front of Ituri.

"Those responsible for atrocities will be brought to justice," Cammaert said.

Peacekeepers have also begun working to cut off weapons supplies to the group, which apparently entered the country

from neighboring Uganda, he said.

Members of the group were suspected of killing nine UN peacekeepers in a Feb. 25 ambush. On March 1, gunmen fired on Pakistani peacekeepers and the peacekeepers fought back, killing up to 60 fighters, UN officials said at the time.

## Kenya protesters in police battle

Kenyan police have arrested nine people and used tear gas and water cannons in running battles with protesters before the opening of parliament.

Some 200 people were waving placards demanding a referendum on a new draft constitution which would limit the president's powers.

President Mwai Kibaki has formally opened what is expected to be a stormy parliamentary session.

His government has not kept election promises to change the constitution.

It has also been rocked by a string of corruption allegations. The protesters fear parliament will amend the draft leaving the president's authority largely intact.

Riot police - some on horseback - dispersed the crowds in anticipation of Mr Kibaki's arrival at parliament.

In his speech, Mr Kibaki promised to introduce a new constitution and urged MPs not to be divided along political lines. The issue has split his ruling Narc coalition. Backers of Public Works Minister Raila Odinga said he was promised the new, powerful post of prime minister in return for supporting Mr Kibaki's election campaign.

Mr Kibaki also said he would continue the fight against corruption - another of his 2002 campaign pledges.

"We cannot afford to be divided in our efforts to fight corruption. Corruption steals from all of us," he said.

The BBC correspondent, who was outside parliament, said police claimed the demonstration was illegal.

Security around parliament was extremely tight and those entering the building were frisked, BBC correspondent said.

"We are not hooligans, we are not thieves, all we want is a new constitution, which is our right," said Kennedy Karemi before being arrested by police, Reuters news agency reported.

By Elkanah Chawai  
Reporter (Foreign Desk)

security and solve their problems through dialogue.

The council of Elders requested the ECOWAS executive secretariat to take all necessary steps to assist Togo in the organisation of elections come 24th of April and urged it further to ensure the greater involvement of members of the council in the resolution of conflicts and in civil society organisation in regional integration process.

The council also urged member states to expedite action on the ratification of various ECOWAS instruments, protocols and decisions relating to peace and security, notably the protocol relating to the mechanism for conflict prevention, management, resolution, peacekeeping and security as well as democracy and good governance.

The 15-member council, which is a mechanism for preventive diplomacy, consist of General Abdulsalami Abubakar, former president of Nigeria, Mr. Gactan Nitchama and Mr. Bitokotipou Yagnimim, both former ministers in Guinea Bissau and Tog respectively as well as vice speaker of Sierra Leone parliament, Elizabeth Alpha-Lavalié, Bernadine Do-Rego from Benin, Debra Ebenezer Moses from Ghana, Dieudonne Essienne from Cote d'Ivoire, Abdourahmane Sow from Guinea and Mbaye Mbengue from Senegal.

Others are Bahou Ousmane Jobe, a magistrate from Gambia, Leopold Andre Ouedrago from Burkina Faso, Mr Emmanuel Gbalaze from Liberia, Professor Sira Diop from Mali and Mr. Amirou Garba from Niger.

support for the mediation efforts of President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa and appealed to the conflicting parties to cooperate with him to restore peace and security to the country.

The council also noted the difficulties being experienced with the implementation of the comprehensive peace agreement in Liberia, particularly with growing allegations of corruption and youth unemployment.

ECOWAS expressed concern over the heightened tension generated in the Liberian capital, Monrovia by the recent events in the National Transitional Legislative Assembly (NTLA), disclosing that a team of investigations will arrive in Monrovia today.

It enjoined Liberians to cooperate with the team and desist from taking any further measure that might exacerbate the situation.

The council also requested ECOWAS to intensify its ongoing efforts in Guinea Bissau to secure additional international financial assistance for the country and support the process towards elections.

It noted with satisfaction, the development in Togo following the death of President Gnassingbe Eyadema, declaring that only the conduct of free, fair and transparent elections would peace and social harmony be ensured. It called on the Togolese people to consolidate the gain of the late president in areas of peace and



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### Bus explosion kills 30 in China

About 30 people are thought to have died when a bus exploded in the southern Chinese province of Jiangxi.

The bus was travelling from the southern city of Shenzhen to the eastern province of Zhejiang when the accident happened early in the morning.

The force of the blast was so violent that it also injured passers-by and damaged nearby homes, reports said.

There have been a number of accidents in China this year caused by the mis-

handling of explosives.

The practise of keeping dynamite in homes, although illegal, is common in China, and safety measures are often ignored, the BBC's correspondent in Beijing reports.

China's government has recently introduced legislation aimed at reducing the high number of industrial accidents.

At least seven people were injured in the blast that occurred at about 4.00am local time near the city of Shangrao, reports said.

Police at the scene said they could not confirm the

exact casualty figures because of the destruction caused by the blast, which was heard up to two kilometres away.

"I can only tell you that it was a sudden and unexpected explosion," Shangrao city official Huang Hailing told the AFP news agency.

Mr Huang said no survivors were found on the bus which was "completely destroyed".

Police immediately closed the highway just outside of Shangrao to continue their investigation

Newspaper editor Abd al-Karim al-Khaiwani, who was sentenced to one year in jail last September after harshly criticising the Sanaa government, has drawn attention from the West.

Viewed by detractors as more of a politician than a newsman, al-Khaiwani is the only Yemeni journalist behind bars, and his case has not gone unnoticed.

US Undersecretary of State for Global Affairs Paula J. Dobriansky said she had raised the issue with her Yemeni hosts during a visit to Sanaa last month.

A Sanaa-based diplomat who requested anonymity said: "These things are not good for a country's reputation. Of course, he should be

### Yemeni journalist languishes in jail

Al-Khaiwani, who edits the opposition weekly Al-Shura, was given the one-year jail sentence in early September on grounds of inciting violence, defaming President Ali Abd Allah Salah and publishing false news.

His case is linked to an armed rebellion waged by Zaidi preacher Shaikh Husain Badr Uddin al-Huthi in northwest Yemen last year.

The Zaidi group is a moderate Shia Muslim sect dominant in northwest Yemen but in the minority in the mainly Sunni country.

The Yemeni government announced on 10 September that the army had killed al-Huthi, nearly three months after he started a rebellion in the mountainous northwest, near the border with Saudi Arabia,



Abd al-Karim al-Khaiwani

triggering clashes that left more than 400 people dead.

Al-Khaiwani, a member of the Zaidi group, defended al-Huthi throughout the conflict and was bitterly critical of the government's handling of the rebellion.

He went so far as to lash out at the family of the Yemeni president, which is normally unthinkable in an Arab country.

Al-Khaiwani was hauled away and re-emerged in a Sanaa prison a few days later, where he remains.

He reportedly was recently attacked by another inmate.

"To this day, the appeal court has not made a decision," said Rahma Ali Hugira, a 28-year-old journalist who founded the Yemen Female Media Forum to promote the rights of women journalists in Yemen.

"They don't have the right to put him in jail" before the appeal court has its say, she added.

"They don't have the right to put him in jail," she continued.

But the court seems in no hurry to rule. A verdict that had been expected on 2 March was postponed until 22 March when the court president ordered the public to vacate the place minutes after the session began.

### Lebanon: Hezbollah rejects call to disarm

Hezbollah's leader has said it will keep its weapons, despite pressure from US President George W Bush to disarm.

Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah said the group, a powerful pro-Syrian political and military movement in Lebanon, needed to protect the country from Israel.

President Bush had said on Tuesday that Hezbollah could "prove" they were not a terrorist group by laying down weapons.

Meanwhile, Syria's intelligence agents have left their headquarters in Beirut, as part of a phased Syrian withdrawal.

Speaking in a televised

debate, Mr Nasrallah insisted Hezbollah would remain armed in the face of US demands and despite Syria's pull-back under international pressure.

"I'm holding on to the weapons of the resistance because I think the resistance ... is the best formula to protect Lebanon and to deter any Israeli aggression," Reuters news agency quotes him as saying.

Mr Nasrallah said the group's arms would not be used domestically but only against Israeli forces.

Hezbollah mustered widespread support at a rally in Beirut last week

His statement followed

comments made by Mr Bush after meeting Jordan's King Abdullah II in Washington on Tuesday.

"I would hope that Hezbollah would prove that they're not [terrorists] by laying down arms and not threatening peace," Mr Bush said.

Mr Bush later quashed suggestions he had left the door open for the group to play a political role in Beirut.

"Hezbollah is on the terrorist list for a reason and remains on the terrorist list for a reason. Our position's not changed on Hezbollah," he said.

The movement has been on the US state department's

list of terrorist organisations for years, with Washington accusing it of sponsoring Palestinian attacks against Israel.

Last year, a UN resolution, backed by the US, called for Lebanon's militias to disarm.

Hezbollah, which has thousands of armed fighters and holds 12 seats in Lebanon's parliament, demonstrated its strength with a mass pro-Syria rally in Beirut last week.

Meanwhile Syrian intelligence agents loaded trucks with office equipment as they pulled out of their headquarters in Beirut's Ramlet al-Baida district and branches in other towns on Wednesday.

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# Trust International

## World Report

### Dismay over Wolfowitz's nomination to head World Bank

There has been a cool response to President Bush's nomination of Paul Wolfowitz to be the next head of the World Bank, a key development agency.

Mr. Wolfowitz, 61, currently US Deputy Defence Secretary, has a reputation as a "neo-conservative" hawk and was a key architect of the Iraq war.

News of his candidacy brought criticism from aid agencies and faint praise from several European government ministers.

Mr Bush described Mr Wolfowitz as a "compassionate, decent man".

French and German ministers were guarded in their reaction, while Sweden's foreign minister said she was sceptical about the nomination.

French President Jacques Chirac "took note" of the nomination, a spokesman said.

But UK Foreign Secretary Jack Straw backed Mr Wolfowitz, calling him "very distinguished and experienced internationally".

Japan's Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi also stood by the nomination, his spokesman said.

In an apparent sign that President Bush was alert to the sensitivity of the nomination, White House officials revealed that he personally telephoned a string of world leaders to discuss Mr Wolfowitz's candidacy.

In addition to Mr Chirac and Mr Koizumi, UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder and South African President Thabo Mbeki all received calls, the Associated Press reported.

Some World Bank staff and some member governments fear that Mr Wolfowitz - an advocate of the muscular spread of democracy - would use his position to change its focus from development aid to a wider political mission, the BBC's correspondent reported from Washington.

The organisation, which has 184 members and is traditionally headed by an American, is responsible for leading global efforts to promote economic development and

reduce poverty.

Aid agencies and development experts lined up to criticise the nomination.

A British-based campaign group, the World Development Movement, described the nomination as a "truly terrifying appointment".

Joseph Stiglitz, Nobel Prize winner and a former World Bank chief economist, said: "Choosing the right general in the war against poverty will not assure victory, but choosing the wrong one surely increases the chances of failure."

Greenpeace, ActionAid, and Oxfam were among other critics.

But World Bank critic Allan Meltzer, who chaired a US congressional committee on the bank in 2000, said Mr Wolfowitz was well qualified for the job.

"We don't need a development person, there are plenty of people at the bank who do that," Mr Meltzer told the BBC News website.

"What the bank needs is focus: how many children are inoculated against measles every year? What have we done to bring water to the villages?" Meltzer said.

Current World Bank president James Wolfensohn will leave in June after 10 years, despite seeking re-appointment.

It is the second time within weeks that Mr Bush has appointed a hardliner to a key international post.

Earlier in March, he nominated Under-Secretary of State John Bolton to be US ambassador to the United Nations - a body Mr Bolton has repeatedly derided.

Mr Wolfowitz must be formally approved by the World Bank's executive board.

US appointments to the World Bank presidency are usually unchallenged, as are European nominations to lead the International Monetary Fund.

The view in Washington is that the White House would not have announced the president's choice unless sufficient support had already been garnered behind the scenes, BBC correspondent said.



US Deputy Defence Secretary, Mr. Paul Wolfowitz

### EU postpones Croatia entry

European Union foreign ministers have postponed imminent talks on Croatia's EU entry because of Zagreb's failure to arrest a war crimes suspect.

Ministers want Croatia to co-operate fully with The Hague tribunal by handing over Gen Ante Gotovina.

Belgian Foreign Minister Karel de Gucht said an EU climbdown on Croatia would have weakened its power to make Serbia surrender key suspects.

No new date has been set for the talks, which would have begun yesterday.

But ministers said talks could start "as soon as the Council has established that Croatia is co-operating fully with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia".

Olli Rehn, the EU commissioner for enlargement, made it clear that Croatian membership was still very much a possibility.

"I want to underline that Croatia's future is in the European family, Croatia is a candidate country, nothing has changed in that regard," he said.

"Croatia has also made plenty of progress, lots of progress, and I hope that the last stumbling block could be cleared soon. For its part, the European Union has today in the council adopted the negotiation framework, he added."

Gen Gotovina is accused of murdering Serb civilians

natural resources to a selected group of Russian businessmen - the so-called oligarchs.

Mr Chubais, 49, also ran former President Boris Yeltsin's successful re-election campaign in 1996.

He became the chairman of Russia's Unified Energy System (UES) in 1998.

### Russia power boss survives attack

The head of Russia's state-controlled electricity monopoly, Anatoly Chubais, has survived an assassination attempt.

Officials said unidentified gunmen opened fire on Mr Chubais' car and also detonated an explosive device as he was driven to his office in Moscow.

"Everything is okay with Chubais," Mr Chubais' spokesman Andrei Trapeznikov told Reuters news agency.

Mr Chubais, a former deputy prime minister, was instrumental in Russia's privatisation programme in the 1990s.

He oversaw the much criticised sale of Russia's

## Odd World

### Two men walk six days non-stop

Two men in St. Vincent walked for six days without sleep in a bid to set a world record for the longest nonstop hike, but Guinness World Records said Tuesday it won't recognise the feat.

Horns blared as thousands greeted Earl Daniel and Joel Butcher when they entered Heritage Square in the capital Monday at the end of a walk that lasted 144 hours and seven minutes. They began on March 8. It was not immediately clear how many miles they walked.

Monday was National Heroes Day in this former British colony of 117,000 residents and Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves and opposition leader Arnhim Eustace joined them on the final 4 miles of their journey.

"We said we were going to do this, and we have done it and have made all of St. Vincent and the Grenadines proud," Daniel said.

Both men said they had been in contact with Guinness World Records Ltd. in London.

Guinness confirmed the men had contacted the company but said the category would not be recognised, because it is "impossible to compare" one person's performance with another's.

"Individuals often walk at different speeds" and "some individuals may choose a more demanding course" while "the time people take for necessary breaks may vary," Guinness spokeswoman Laura McTurk said.

Daniel, 41, and Butcher, in his mid-30s, could not be immediately reached for comment since they were fast asleep.

Scores of villagers took turns accompanying the pair, who were often soaked by rain as they walked across the country during sweltering days and chilly nights.

Both men stayed at a hospital Monday night as a precautionary measure and they were released Tuesday in good health.

It was not immediately possible to confirm that the current record is, as Daniel and Butcher said, five days and 10 hours.

### Fat-measuring machines installed in fuel stations

Singapore has installed fat-measuring machines at petrol stations and supermarkets as part of the government's efforts to combat obesity in the city-state, health officials said.

Slips of paper generated from the computerised machines, which resemble step-on weighing scales, will indicate the user's Body-Mass Index (BMI) - a weight-height ratio used as a benchmark for body fat.

"Along with the reading, the machines will also churn out messages reminding the user to exercise, such as jogging for thirty minutes on a regular basis," said a spokeswoman from the Health Promotion Board.

The machines, which are available free of charge, will be situated around the island-nation till the end of the month.

The BMI checks are part of the Singapore government's ongoing campaign to promote healthy living amongst its citizens. Other activities to be held throughout the year include health seminars and mass exercise sessions.

Singaporeans are taught to be fat-conscious as early as primary school. Students who fail to achieve prescribed BMI levels are made to undergo fat-busting exercise and diet regimes.

### Retirement home for aged call girls

Distressed to find aging homeless women still working as prostitutes in downtown Mexico City, womens' groups are preparing a roomy retirement home to take 65 of them off the streets.

Rejected by their families and stripped of much of their earnings by policemen and pimps, the elderly sex workers said they have no choice but to keep working, sometimes for less than \$2 (1 pound) a day or just a plate of food.

"I may have two or three clients a day but I can't charge what the young ones do. Sometimes I just ask for food or a hotel room," said Gloria Maria, a kindly faced woman of 74 who mostly sleeps outdoors in a grimy downtown food market.

Funds raised this week will go toward fixing the roof of an elegant but crumbling 18th century building donated by the Mexico City government to serve as a retirement home for Gloria Maria and others.

Like many of her co-workers, Gloria Maria was raped as a teenager and fell into prostitution soon afterward.

Prostitution is not legal in Mexico but sex workers are tolerated, along with the shoe shiners, orange juice vendors and tamale sellers who clog the streets of big cities, creating a grey economy that absorbs millions of unemployed.

While some of these workers can put savings under the mattress for old age, or hope their children will support them, prostitutes often have nothing after a life of exploitation by pimps and paying bribes to avoid arrest.

Few are in touch with their families or children.

"Other people pay taxes and can retire with a pension. We are exploited by society then thrown away when we get old," said one lithe young prostitute, with long blond hair and funky platform shoes.

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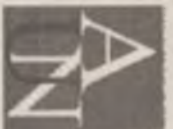
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Every applicant is required to submit the following documents before being considered for admission:

1. Application form completed and signed by the applicant.
2. Certificate from a recognized secondary school
3. Four recent passport photographs
4. Photograph of identity card or international passport
5. Non-refundable application fee of N=5,000 (US \$40). The application fee can be paid at any branch of Habib Nigeria Bank or Guarantee Trust Bank, or it can be delivered with the application to AAUN at the address listed below. The necessary payment form for payment through a bank can be found on the ABTI-American University web site.

In order to substantiate information provided in the basic application, applicants will be required to submit the following supporting materials:

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- b. Secondary school transcripts, as well as transcripts for any post-secondary work that has been undertaken.
- c. Recommendation letters from at least two referees who are able to comment on the applicant's potential for post-secondary academic work.

An applicant to the University must satisfy all University and School requirements. In addition, he or she must possess the following minimum qualifications:

- a. For admission into 100 level courses, a candidate must possess the Senior Secondary School Certificate (SSCE) or equivalent, with credits in five subjects in not more than two sittings. He or she must, in addition, have an acceptable score in the Joint Admission and Matriculation Examination.
- b. For direct admission into 200 levels, a candidate must possess two 'A' Level passes or equivalents in addition to credits in three other subjects at the SSCE or equivalent. Advanced Placement courses are also accepted for credit if completed with a grade satisfactory to the admitting School.
- c. International Baccalaureate Diploma with grades that are satisfactory to the admitting School.
- d. In all cases, credit in English and Mathematics is required. In addition, credit in Mathematics for all Science-based specializations and business courses.
- e. Applicants from non-English speaking countries must have a score of not less than 180 on the machine-based international TOEFL or 510 on the paper-based version in order to be admitted.
- f. The University reserves the right to set an entrance examination in addition to the above requirements.
- g. Candidates seeking admission into School of Information Technology must have credit passes in English Language, Mathematics and Physics.

## The Admissions Process

During the maiden academic session, AAUN will select two hundred outstanding students to enter the University's inaugural class in September 2005. Accepted students will be admitted to one of six founding undergraduate majors. AAUN therefore seeks applications from highly qualified candidates from around the world. Prospective applicants can either download the AAUN application form from the University web site and fill, or fill it online. Claims of certificates accompanying applications will be verified at a later date. Applicants who choose not to apply on-line may download the AAUN application form from: [www.abti-american.edu.ng](http://www.abti-american.edu.ng) and send it, along with evidence of payment of application fee, to the following address:

Office of the President: ABTI-American University of Nigeria, c/o ABTI Academy, Lamido Zubayru Way, Yola Township By-Pass, PMB 2250, Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria. E-mail: [abtiuniversity@yahoo.com](mailto:abtiuniversity@yahoo.com)

Applicants from the United States and other international locations may send application materials to our office in Washington, D.C., at the following address:

ABTI-American University of Nigeria  
3201 New Mexico Avenue, N.W.  
Suite 258 Washington, DC 20016-8026

Application to AAUN will be selective and highly competitive, so applicants are encouraged to submit their materials by the earliest possible date. Further information is available by e-mail or telephone:

E-mail: [abtiuniversity@yahoo.com](mailto:abtiuniversity@yahoo.com)  
Phone in Nigeria: 075-635017, 08036200067  
Phone in the United States: 202 885 3966.

## Payment of Tuition & other Fees

Tuition and other fees at AAUN incorporate a tolerable subsidy level in the foundation years. Admitted candidates within Nigeria can pay their tuition and other fees at any branch of Guaranty Trust Bank or Habib Nigeria Bank closest to them. Particulars of such transaction should be filled into the relevant tuition/fees column to be found on AAUN website.

Applicants in Europe, United States and Canada can pay their tuition and other fees at the following affiliates of Guaranty Trust Bank of Nigeria: Citibank of US, Barclays Bank of London or Australia-New Zealand Bank. Alternatively, such international applicants may wish to make their payments at any branch of Habib Bank in the United Kingdom or in any Asian branch of the bank. African applicants outside Nigeria can pay at any branch of Guaranty Trust Bank of The Gambia or Sierra Leone. Credit card payment is also acceptable for local and international applicants. All prospective applicants have the option of downloading the AAUN application form from our website to apply or file in their applications through direct postage to Yola, Nigeria or our Washington Office in the United States.

*ABTI-AMERICAN...New Concept Fresh Options*

ANNOUNCER  
Abubakar Abba Tahir  
PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGER, AAUN

# 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
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 - Cal	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	2:30p.m.
<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.
Lagos-Sokoto	8:55 am
Sokoto-Lagos	11:55 am

Most airlines operate the same flight schedule on week days.

## International

### JPMorgan settles WorldCom suit for \$2bn

JPMorgan Chase & Company on Wednesday agreed to pay \$2 billion to settle a lawsuit accusing it of hiding risks from WorldCom Inc. investors when the bank helped the company sell bonds.

The second US bank is the last major financial institution to settle the class-action lawsuit, which was filed on behalf of hundreds of thousands of investors who bought WorldCom stock and bonds before the phone company sought bankruptcy protection in July 2002.

If all of the settlements are approved, investors will recover about \$6 billion, the largest US securities settlement ever.

More than a dozen banks settled their parts of the

lawsuit this month. On Tuesday, a Manhattan jury convicted former WorldCom chief executive Bernard Ebbers of fraud, conspiracy and filing false documents with securities regulators in orchestrating an \$11 billion accounting fraud. He faces up to 85 years in prison.

"Given recent developments, we made a decision to settle rather than risk the uncertainty of a trial," JPMorgan Chief Executive, William Harrison said.

New York-based JPMorgan expects to take a \$900 million first-quarter pretax charge, or \$560 million after taxes, for the settlement. Analysts polled by Reuters Estimates on average expected the company to report a profit of

71 cents per share. Last year, the company set aside \$2.3 billion for litigation related to WorldCom and Enron Corp.

"They needed to settle because the risk of putting a case in front of a jury outweighed the potential reward," said Michael Nix, who helps invest \$1.1 billion for Greenwood Capital Associates LLC in Greenwood, South Carolina. "They could have said they had a good case, but Bernie Ebbers might have said that too."

Only Citigroup Incorporated, which agreed last year to pay \$2.58 billion, settled for more. But JPMorgan paid more on a percentage basis than Citigroup, in light of the relative responsibility the banks had for WorldCom's offerings.

### US stock futures take a hit on GM loss warning

U.S. stock futures fell on Wednesday after General Motors Corp. warned of a quarterly loss on significant weakness in its North American operations, dragging down shares of other carmakers.

The Detroit company said it expects a loss of about \$1.50 a share, excluding any special items. Previously it had targeted breaking even or being profitable for the quarter.

GM, a Dow component, fell 5 percent to \$32 on the Inet electronic brokerage system. It closed at \$33.72 on the New York Stock Exchange on Tuesday.

"This stock (GM) is down

early in the morning, and more people have yet to digest the news," said Robert Basel, managing director of Citigroup Global Markets. "This will cause rotation from that group into other areas. So all in all, the market will be down, but not huge."

Rival Ford Motor Co. fell 1.3 percent to \$12.07 and DaimlerChrysler AG was down 1.8 percent at \$45.28 on Inet.

S&P 500 futures, which had been higher before the GM announcement, fell and were down 0.8 of a point, but still holding just above fair value accounting for interest rates, dividends and time to expiration on the contract.



## TELL Communications Limited

(Wealth Creation Awareness Series)

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## A 4-Day International Seminar On

# Opportunities for Wealth Creation in Agribusiness

(With Excursion to Parakkou & Savalou)

April 12 - 15, 2005 @ The Songhai Farm Centre, Porto Novo, Republic of Benin

### Seminar Benefits

The Seminar is designed to equip participants with practical skills in the areas listed below:

#### Day 1:

- › The Concept and Framework of Integrated Farming
- › The Techniques and Economics of Biogas Production
- › Production of Organic Fertilizers & Animal Feeds
- › Fundamentals of Agricultural Marketing: The Songhai Approach

#### Day 2:

- › Farm-House/Structure Construction Techniques
- › Mushroom Farming and Export Potentials
- › Mastering Honeybee Keeping and Processing
- › Fundamentals of Fish Farming and Aquaculture
- › Potentials in Rabbit, Grasscutter, Quail and Poultry Farming.

#### Day 3:

- › Excursion Trip to Savalou & Parakkou Farms

#### Day 4:

- › Project Feasibility, Enquiries and Departures

Please note that, this module (1) will accommodate the first 50 to confirm booking with payment in certified bank cheque/cash to TELL Communications Ltd. OR to: Guaranty Trust Bank - A.C No: 2117401524110. UBA Plc - A.C No: 0162010002935, on or before March 31, 2005

### Target Audience

- › Aspiring Agribusiness Entrepreneurs & Financiers
- › Retiring Civil Servants or Private Sector Executives
- › National Assembly Members in search of Viable Constituency Projects
- › State Commissioners for Agriculture
- › State Commissioners for Women Affairs/Youth Dev. & Poverty Alleviation
- › Directors in the Federal Ministry of Agric.
- › LG Chairmen/Supervisory Councillors for Agric
- › Head, Agric & Credit Dept of Commercial Banks

Seminar Fee: **N89,950**

Covering: Tuition, Accommodation & Feeding, Seminar Materials/Souvenir, Tea/Coffee & Lunch Breaks, Excursion Trips. Transportation to & fro Porto Novo not included

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### Enquiries/Reservations

Dejo Adebisi: Co-ordinator  
Tell Communications Ltd  
Plot 28 Kudirat Abiola Way Oregun, Ikeja, Lagos.  
TEL: 01-7747910, 08022902578

Obayemi Oladipo  
Acme Consulting Company  
Tel: 08033817805

It is not just another talk-show but a practical skill-acquisition programme

# Business Trust

## Aviation



L-R: Mr Wale Babalakin, Chairman, Stabilini Visiononi and Managing Director of the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), Engineer Mohammed Gambo Umar, while inspecting the reconstruction of the burnt terminal of the Murtala Mohammed International Airport, Lagos ...recently.

## Tsunami: Nigeria to set up early warning systems

Nigeria is at the moment on the verge of setting a weather early warning system (WEWS) to enable it prepare adequately in cases of dangerous disasters similar to the tsunami that inflicted heavy casualties in southern Asia last year.

According to the director general and chief executive of Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NIMET), Mr Liwhu Akeh, the agency commenced the acquisition of advanced Doppler weather

From Shakirat Abdulmajeed,  
Correspondent (Lagos)

radars to "monitor natural disasters and storms before they occur," adding that the equipment will also assist with relevant information for farmers in rural areas.

He added that the European Union is assisting NIMET with meteorological second generation satellite ground receiving system, "which is being installed at the moment. After installing

the prototype, we will begin gradual replacement of the old equipment under the second phase with the new ones in our weather stations," he said.

Akeh added that NIMET engineers are undergoing training at the moment on how to operate and manage the new equipment.

He hinted further that the federal government has approved the sum of N240 million, as part of the counterpart funding required to

facilitate the smooth take-off of the project.

Mr Akeh who is the vice president of the United Nations World Meteorological Organisation technical committee on agromet and natural disasters said the organisation is meeting in Brazil in March to begin assisting nations in putting Weather Early Warning Systems in various parts of the world.

According to him, since the Tsunami efforts are being taken by various United Nation's Institutions and other international bodies to ensure that early warning equipment are installed in various regions of the world, Nigeria Emergency Management Agency in Nigeria is also working hard on the subject.

The African Centre for Meteorological Application for Development (ACMAD), which is run by the United National Economic Commission for Africa is also running a project to assist African countries meet up with weather challenges for rural farmers.

By the end of 2005, NIMET will be able to not only accurately predict weather, but also offer relevant information relating to weather, environment, and water resources from all centres of the world for aviation, marine activities, agriculture, tourism and education.

## China's first private airline airborne

China's first private airline has taken to the skies, ending the government monopoly on the rapidly growing civil aviation sector.

Okay Airlines made its maiden flight from Tianjin in north China to the central city of Changsha on Friday.

The company has benefited from Beijing's decision last month to expand opportunities for the private sector, opening up previously closed sectors.

Okay Airlines is also bringing the era of discount travel to China.

Okay airlines operates the Tianjin-Changsha route exclusively.

The airline is hoping to cash in on the boom in domestic air travel.

Passenger trips inside China were up by almost 40% last year to 120 million.

The figure is expected to grow as increasing numbers travel both for business and pleasure.

Three other private carriers are waiting in the wings to begin operations, all of them reportedly looking at low-cost travel.

There is a huge potential demand for discount flights but analysts have expressed doubts as to whether the aviation sector's liberalisation will be comprehensive enough to allow them to make a profit.

## US airline faces Concorde inquiry

A French judge has placed Continental Airlines under judicial investigation in connection with the Concorde crash that killed 113 people in 2000.

The airline is being investigated for "involuntary homicide and injuries".

It follows an official report in December which blamed the accident on a metal strip that fell off a Continental jet prior to the Concorde's take-off.

Under French law, a judicial investigation is normally a first step towards possible criminal charges.

If charges are brought and Continental found guilty, the US airline could face huge claims for damages.

A Continental lawyer denied the airline bore any responsibility.

"Our defence is that we did not commit any error," said lawyer Olivier Metzner.

"In the course of this process, we will do everything, provide all the missing elements of this matter, to show that Continental Airlines is not responsible for the Concorde crash.

"The American authorities investigated the role of Continental Airlines and concluded that Continental did not commit any errors whatsoever in the case of Concorde's crash."

The Air France Concorde caught fire and crashed soon after take off from Paris' Charles de Gaulle airport on 25 July, 2000.

A French public prosecutor said in December that one of Concorde's wheels burst after hitting a strip of metal that had fallen off a Continental DC-10 plane a few minutes earlier.

Fragments from the tyre then punctured the Concorde's fuel tanks, causing the fire.

The public prosecutor said there was "a direct causal link" between the plane hitting the strip of metal and the bursting of one of its tyres.

He also highlighted an "important defect" in the design of Concorde, saying its fuel tanks did not have sufficient protection from debris in the event of a burst tyre.

All Concorde jets - both Air France's and those flown by British Airways - were grounded for more than a year following the crash, before being taken out of service for good in 2003.

## NCAT rector seeks for corporation of aviation stakeholders

The rector of the Nigerian College of Aviation Technology (NCAT), Engineer Folashade Odutola has appealed to all corporate bodies and aviation stakeholders to join in the concerted effort to return the institution back to its glorious days.

Engineer Odutola made this call in Zaria last week at the graduation ceremony for aviation journalist who had undergone a one-week training course in aviation.

While acknowledging the immense support of the federal government, she noted that government could not do it alone as there were numerous competing demands on its limited resources. Engineer Odutola hinted

that the federal government has approved substantial sum for the college's revitalisation. Adding that electricity problem, which has bedevilled the college for some time, will soon be a thing of the past as plans have been put in place to repair the generators at the institution.

She further hinted that with the recent directive from the minister of aviation, the college will be filled up with modern infrastructure.

She disclosed that the college will introduce several courses after the Easter break saying: "we are packaging everything, the modern hostel renovation work has just began, due to the nature of the aviation industry, we

don't expect much students we are appealing for sponsorship of students from state and local governments."

She disclosed further that procurement of a new radar for the school is included in the year 2005 budget adding that as soon as funds are released, a new one will be provided.

She stressed the need to give the school adequate publicity to attract students from different parts of the country.

A total of 36 aviation writers drawn from media organisations across the country participated in a week-long aviation training course. 21 participated in basic studies, nine in advance and six in management studies.

# Business Trust

1ST-TIER SECURITIES

THE NIGERIAN STOCK EXCHANGE

REPORT AS AT THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2005

COMPANY NAME	NO OF DEALS	QUOTATION(N)	QUANTITY TRADED	VALUE OF SHARES
<b>AGRICULTURE/AGRO-ALLIED</b>				
LIVESTOCK FEEDS PLC.	3	2.83	4,938	13,974.54
PRESKO PLC.	29	9.50	200,228	1,908,494.54
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>32</b>		<b>205,166</b>	<b>1,922,469.08</b>
<b>AUTOMOBILE &amp; TYRE</b>				
DUNLOP NIGERIA PLC.	17	1.75	57,888	101,788.54
INCAR NIGERIA APLC.	1	1.30	75	97.50
R. T. BRISCOAE PLC.	41	4.00	220,405	895,399.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>59</b>		<b>278,368</b>	<b>997,285.04</b>
<b>BANKING</b>				
ACCESS BANK PLC	1	3.42	200,000	684,000.00
AFRIBANK NIGERIA PLC.	25	6.63	386,491	2,562,435.33
COOPERATIVE BANK PLC.	1	1.92	500	960.00
COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT BANK PLC.	1	0.75	500	375.00
EIB INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	2	2.26	25,771	58,242.46
FIRST BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	602	22.94	3,248,997	74,699,706.31
FSB INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	36	1.38	582,758	804,206.04
GUARANTY TRUST BANK PLC.	234	9.91	2,073,119	20,656,147.38
GULF BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	20	0.39	6,159,153	2,402,069.67
INTERNATIONAL MERCHANT BANK PLC.	22	0.54	1,118,342	604,814.68
INLAND BANK (NIGERIA) PLC.	84	1.73	28,215,104	47,304,150.42
INTERCONTINENTAL BANK PLC.	5	7.81	22,220	173,538.20
LION BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	9	0.58	71,041	41,203.78
MANUFACTURERS BANK NIGERIA PLC.	6	1.09	422,500	460,525.00
NAL BANK PLC.	2	2.80	299	837.20
OCEANIC BANK PLC	87	4.01	9,954,269	36,625,209.16
OMEGA BANK (NIGERIA) PLC.	19	1.40	378,886	511,646.10
STANDARD TRUST BANK PLC	13	7.41	38,876	288,071.16
TRANS INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	22	1.41	1,437,521	1,871,893.18
UNITED BANK FOR AFRICA PLC.	17	10.00	50,907	509,070.00
UNION BANK NIGERIA PLC.	358	18.50	2,960,035	54,861,480.67
UNIVERSAL TRUST BANK PLC	3	0.71	100,500	71,360.00
WEMA BANK PLC.	8	3.93	231,596	910,172.28
ZENITH BANK PLC	193	13.10	1,865,807	24,298,600.84
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>1,770</b>		<b>59,545,192</b>	<b>270,400,714.86</b>
<b>BREWERIES</b>				
GUINNESS NIGERIA PLC.	224	76.00	997,941	75,877,539.12
NIGERIAN BREWERIES PLC.	403	33.77	1,201,133	40,590,705.34
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>627</b>		<b>2,199,074</b>	<b>116,468,244.46</b>
<b>BUILDING MATERIALS</b>				
ASHAKA CEMENT PLC.	95	23.00	358,019	8,257,009.37
BENUE CEMENT COMPANY PLC.	3	4.20	45,645	191,709.00
CEMENT CO. OF NORTHERN NIG. PLC	5	5.71	410,200	2,410,740.00
WEST AFR. PORTLAND CEMENT CO. PLC.	11	10.35	94,347	976,491.45
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>114</b>		<b>908,211</b>	<b>11,835,949.82</b>
<b>CHEMICAL &amp; PAINTS</b>				
BERGER PAINTS PLC.	12	4.80	40,758	200,350.00
CAP PLC.	4	6.19	33,709	209,605.75
D. N. MEYER PLC.	4	4.38	31,901	142,344.60
NIGERIA-GERMAN CHEMICALS PLC.	4	3.60	43,032	156,841.70
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>24</b>		<b>149,400</b>	<b>709,142.05</b>
<b>CONGLOMERATES</b>				
A. G. LEVENTIS NIGERIA PLC.	1	0.95	10,545	10,017.75
C F A O NIGERIA PLC.	8	4.01	32,182	129,049.82
CHELLARAMS PLC.	1	1.71	1,019	1,742.49
JOHN HOLT PLC.	2	0.63	25,502	16,066.26
UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC.	141	15.10	897,283	13,481,046.84
P. Z. INDUSTRIES PLC.	93	10.84	434,885	4,895,488.22
S C O A NIGERIA PLC.	13	0.99	24,000	23,760.00
U.A.C NIGERIA PLC.	165	14.17	2,879,228	40,798,660.76
U.T.C. NIGERIA PLC.	4	0.94	3,828	3,598.32
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>428</b>		<b>4,308,472</b>	<b>59,359,430.46</b>
<b>CONSTRUCTION</b>				
COSTAIN (W.A.) PLC.	7	0.90	9,646	8,681.40
G. CAPPAL PLC.	1	2.23	49	109.27
JULIUS BERGER NIGERIA PLC.	4	15.20	175,450	2,666,840.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>12</b>		<b>185,145</b>	<b>2,675,630.67</b>
<b>ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY</b>				
NIGERIAN WIRE AND CABLE PLC.	4	0.61	51,780	31,232.40
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>51,780</b>	<b>31,232.40</b>
<b>FOOD/BEVERAGES &amp; TOBACCO</b>				
7-UP BOTTLING COMPANY PLC	19	22.81	30,874	704,015.30
CADBURY NIGERIA PLC.	147	49.53	260,022	12,842,308.95
FLOUR MILLS NIGERIA PLC.	35	16.61	109,100	1,812,151.00
NIGERIA BOTTLING COMPANY PLC.	54	49.99	154,699	7,709,596.47
NESTLE FOODS NIGERIA PLC.	86	141.00	162,157	22,721,895.44
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>341</b>		<b>716,852</b>	<b>45,789,967.16</b>
<b>HEALTHCARE</b>				
EKOCORP PLC.	11	0.89	153,450	144,182.06
EVANS MEDICAL PLC.	11	2.85	36,107	106,946.00
MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC.	3	4.54	28,602	131,601.04
MORISON INDUSTRIES PLC.	2	1.08	631	681.48
NEIMETH INTERNATIONAL PHARM. PLC.	14	3.07	191,449	587,878.51
GLAXOSMITHKLINE CONSUMER NIG. PLC	20	8.15	290,245	2,380,016.50
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>61</b>		<b>700,484</b>	<b>3,351,305.59</b>
<b>INDUSTRIAL/DOMESTIC PRODUCTS</b>				
FIRST ALUMINIUM NIGERIA PLC.	4	0.90	126,732	116,123.24
B.O.C. GASES PLC.	1	2.85	5,000	14,250.00
VITAFOAM NIGERIA PLC.	27	3.10	261,171	784,841.60
VONO PRODUCTS PLC.	1	1.90	3,000	5,700.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>33</b>		<b>395,903</b>	<b>920,914.84</b>
<b>INSURANCE</b>				
ACEN INSURANCE COMPANY PLC	1	0.60	300	180.00
AICO INSURANCE PLC.	9	1.78	90,139	156,686.30
BAICO INSURANCE PLC.	2	1.00	4,375	4,375.00
CORNERSTONE INSURANCE CO. PLC.	6	1.33	833,241	1,108,210.53
LASACO ASSURANCE PLC.	3	0.73	50,000	37,400.00
LAW UNION AND ROCK INSURANCE PLC.	1	1.14	13,000	14,820.00
N.E.M. INSURANCE CO. (NIG.) PLC.	1	0.73	2,109	1,539.57
NIGER INSURANCE CO. PLC.	2	2.99	610	1,823.90
ROYAL EXCHANGE ASSURANCE PLC.	16	2.89	842,230	2,363,461.21
STANDARD ALLIANCE INSURANCE	10	0.71	665,100	433,221.00
UNIC INSURANCE PLC.	5	0.86	16,477	14,170.22
WEST AFRICAN PROV. INS. COY. PLC.	9	2.40	59,869	144,720.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>65</b>		<b>2,577,450</b>	<b>4,280,607.73</b>
<b>MANAGED FUNDS</b>				
C & I LEASING PLC.	12	1.40	177,770	248,678.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>12</b>		<b>177,770</b>	<b>248,678.00</b>
<b>PACKAGING</b>				
NAMPAK NIGERIA PLC	2	1.66	233	386.78
BETA GLASS COMPANY PLC.	2	3.70	12,366	45,754.20
POLY PRODUCTS (NIGERIA) PLC.	1	0.91	2,000	1,820.00
STUDIO PRESS (NIGERIA) PLC.	1	1.62	3,666	5,938.92
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>18,265</b>	<b>53,899.90</b>
<b>PETROLEUM(MARKETING)</b>				
AFROIL PLC.	3	0.72	10,000	7,200.00
AFRICAN PETROLEUM PLC.	82	55.00	266,069	13,991,694.99
ETERNA OIL & GAS PLC.	10	2.04	39,400	80,376.00
MOBIL OIL NIGERIA PLC.	41	171.00	57,415	9,751,587.72
CONOIL PLC.	69	101.00	55,128	5,564,357.89
TEXACO (NIGERIA) PLC.	50	162.75	203,650	31,423,500.11
TOTAL NIGERIA PLC	41	172.00	37,127	6,370,244.00
OANDO PLC.	141	86.50	321,708	28,240,218.36
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>437</b>		<b>990,497</b>	<b>95,429,179.07</b>
<b>REAL ESTATE</b>				
UACN PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT PLC.	32	8.50	254,819	2,156,334.50
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>32</b>		<b>254,819</b>	<b>2,156,334.50</b>
<b>TEXTILES</b>				
UNITED NIGERIA TEXTILES PLC.	10	1.90	100,302	192,597.96
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>100,302</b>	<b>192,597.96</b>
<b>Overall Totals</b>		<b>4,067</b>	<b>73,763,150</b>	<b>616,823,583.59</b>

TOP 10 TRADES YESTERDAY

SYMBOL	VOLUME	VALUE	TRADES
NB	1,201,133.00	40,590,705.34	403
TIB	1,437,521.00	1,871,893.18	22
ZENITHBANK	1,865,807.00	24,298,600.84	193
GUARANTY	2,073,119.00	20,656,147.38	234
UACN	2,879,228.00	40,798,660.76	165
UBN	2,960,035.00	54,861,480.67	358
FIRSTBANK	3,248,997.00	74,699,706.31	602
GULFBANK	6,159,153.00	2,402,069.67	20
OCEANIC	9,954,269.00	36,625,209.16	87
INLANDBANK	28,215,104.00	47,304,150.42	84

TOP 10 GAINERS

SYMBOL	LASTCLOSE	YESTERDAY'SCLOSE	CHANGE
TEXACO	155.00	162.75	+7.75
AP	53.00	55.00	+2.00
NESTLE	139.00	141.00	+2.00
TOTAL	171.20	172.00	+0.80
CADBURY	48.85	49.53	+0.68
NBC	49.40	49.99	+0.59
OCEANIC	3.83	4.01	+0.18
LEVBROS	14.96	15.10	+0.14
ROYALEX	2.76	2.89	+0.13
VITAFOAM	3.00	3.10	+0.10

TOP 10 LOSERS

SYMBOL	LASTCLOSE	YESTERDAY'SCLOSE	CHANGE
UNIPETROL	90.60	86.50	-4.10
MOBIL	174.00	171.00	-3.00
GUINNESS	77.00	76.00	-1.00
JBERGER	16.00	15.20	-0.80
NB	34.39	33.77	-0.62
PZ	11.39	10.84	-0.55
PRESKO	9.96	9.50	-0.46
CCNN	6.00	5.71	-0.29
GUARANTY	10.20	9.91	-0.29
ASHAKACEM	23.25	23.00	-0.25

## Oil prices scale new highs, OPEC helpless

Oil prices scaled fresh highs on yesterday, forcing OPEC to consider a second output increase just a day after its deal to raise supplies failed to halt crude's record-breaking advance.

US light crude broke above \$57 for the first time, gaining 56 cents by 0920 GMT to \$57.03 a barrel. London's Brent crude, benchmark for European imports, added 65 cents to a record \$55.53 a barrel.

OPEC President Sheikh Ahmad al-Fahd al-Sabah said the exporters group might begin talks as early as next week over a second output rise if prices do not ease.

The Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) agreed on Wednesday to raise output by 500,000 barrels per day with immediate effect.

The agreement allows the addition of a further 500,000 bpd if prices do not fall below \$55 for US crude.

Sheikh Ahmad said any additional barrels could reach the market as early as April.

"If prices continue as they are now, then starting from next week we will start our discussions," he told reporters in Isfahan, Iran where OPEC held its Wednesday meeting.

Investors from other asset classes have bought heavily into oil and commodities markets, driving US crude on average to \$49.16 so far this year, up \$7.70 from 2004's average and \$18 higher than the mean for 2003.

"This market is fuelled by fears, not fundamentals," said Deborah White of Societe Generale in a report.

Strong demand led by China and other emerging Asian economies is straining OPEC's spare production capacity.

With its output already near a 25-year high, OPEC is stretched to meet rapidly rising demand, leaving investors betting that oil's bull run has further to go.

"It's not in our hands, prices are determined by the market," said UAE Oil Minister Mohamed al-Hamli.

World oil consumption is expected to rise to 86.1 million bpd during the seasonal demand peak in the fourth quarter, up from 83.7 million bpd over the first nine months of 2005, projections from the Paris-based International Energy Agency showed.

Oil's latest charge higher came after US government data on Wednesday showed US gasoline stocks falling by 2.9 million barrels, more than three times market expectations, due to strong demand and lower production at domestic refineries.

OPEC is not getting much help from non-cartel oil producers.

Norway, the world's third-biggest crude oil exporter, said it had limited capacity to boost output. OPEC has urged big non-OPEC suppliers, also including Russia and Mexico, to also raise production.

# Business Trust

## Finance

### First Bank pledges to revive education

Apparently worried by the downward trend in the nation's educational sector, the managing director and Chief Executive of First Bank of Nigeria Plc, Mr Jacob M. Ajekigbe has pledged the bank's assistance to reverse the downward trend.

Delivering a speech at the awards ceremony to formally conclude the 2004, First Bank under graduate essay and senior secondary schools quiz competition held at the Agip Hall, Muson Centre,

From Samson Ojo,  
Correspondent (Lagos)

Lagos, the First Bank chief executive, stated that for education to be given the prominence it deserves, the private sector must assist government in creating an enabling environment for academic advancement.

Commenting on the objective of the First Bank annual undergraduate essay and senior secondary schools quiz competition, Mr Ajekigbe explained that it

was aimed at stimulating intellectual research in topical issues of national relevance among the undergraduates who are the leaders of tomorrow.

Said he: "the competition in a way, gives them an opportunity to have a say on national issues and it encourages their involvement in the quest for a better society through intellectual discourse rather through street protests."

On the choice of the topic for the bank's 2004 undergraduate essay competition "Nigeria's Banking System and the challenges of the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS), the First Bank CEO explained that the choice was based on the bank's believe that "our youths should be involved in the discourse."

Miss Oluyemisi Aina, of the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ife, Osun state, emerged the winner, while Mr Tochukwu Onyido and Mr Goodwin Agada emerged the first and second runners-up respectively.



The Finance Minister, Mrs Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala (right) and Dr Oby Ezekwesili at the commissioning ceremony of the National Emergency Management Agency's Mission Control Centre held in Abuja ...recently.  
Pix Joe Oroye.

### Equity Bank honours staff

The Regional General Manager in charge of public sector in the northern region in Equity Bank of Nigeria Limited, Malam Mohammed Lawal Jari has emerged as the best staff of the bank in the year 2004.

By Ahmed I. Shekarau,  
Group Business Editor

joining Equity Bank as senior manager in October 2001.

According to a statement from Equity Bank, the honours and awards to its staff was aimed at recognising those who "distinguished themselves," through concrete contributions to its progress, to motivate them to work harder.

The parameter on which staff were judged for the award, the statement said, includes commitment to duty, integrity and self discipline, attitude and responsiveness customers, error rate and deposit mobilisation.

Sources said M. L. Jari has won similar awards twice while at ICON Limited. "It may, therefore, not be surprising that he emerged tops among Equity Bank staff last year," a source said.

Equity Bank, which is a member of the Intercontinental Group (along with Intercontinental Bank Plc, Gateway Bank Plc and Global Bank Plc), it was incorporated in 1988 and has 40 branches and cash offices nationwide, with correspondence relationships with Deutsche Bank, New York and UBA New York.

Its total asset base stands at N23.7 billion while its shareholders' funds grew from N1.9 billion in 2002 to N2.3 billion in 2003.



Moh'd. Lawal Jari, GM Equity Bank

In a colourful ceremony held in Lagos, the regional general manager was presented as overall best staff of the bank, while 22 others were presented various with other awards.

A citation read of the general manager in absentia at the ceremony, which was made available to *Business Trust* in Abuja shows that M. L. Jari holds both BSc and Masters' Degree in Business Administration, and worked as a lecturer in Bayero University Kano (BUK) as well as with the FITC, Yaba, ICON Limited and Africa International Bank Limited before

### Investors endorse Chartered Bank's offer

Some investors have expressed confidence in the ability of Chartered Bank to deliver on its promise of handsome returns on their investment. Mr Oni Okanlawon, Water and Environment Scientist with the National Water Resources Institute, Kaduna said he believes in the bank because of its conservatism which has sustained it rather than the hype associated with other players in the industry, a statement from the bank said.

While, responding to enquiries about Chartered

Bank's merger partners, Mr Moses Adedoyin, managing director of Chartered Bank said that the delay in announcing the names was in line with the wishes of the other partners, assuring that Chartered Bank would retain its franchise in the new group. He, therefore, called on all and sundry to invest in the bank's share.

The bank is offering for subscription, 2.49 million ordinary shares of 50 kobo each at N3.40, a discount of 50 kobo per share on its current market price of N3.90 kobo. The offer will close on March 21.

### University appoints Intercontinental Bank to sell admission forms

Redeemer's university has appointed intercontinental Bank Plc to sell its admission forms for the 2005/2006 academic year.

The forms which sell for N4,000, are obtainable in all the 60 branches of the bank nationwide. The sale is expected to be concluded on April 15, 2005.

According to a statement by Mr Emeka Anaeto, the bank's head corporate affairs, Intercontinental Bank was chosen among the few banks to sell the redeemer's university admission forms given its strong retail service network as well as proven competence in similar exercise for other examinations bodies such as the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), West African Examinations Council (WAEC) and National Examinations Council (NECO).

With a network of 60 branches a deposit base of N56 billion and an asset base of over N71 billion, Intercontinental Bank is involved



Charles Soludo, CBN Governor

### Prudent Bank goes to the market

Prudent Bank Plc has announced plans to offer 5,000,000,000 ordinary shares of 50 kobo each at N2.00 per share for subscription by the general public. This resolution was finalised at the completion board meeting of the bank which was held on March 15, 2005 at the Oceanview resta-

urant, Adetokunbo Ademola Street, Victoria Island, Lagos.

According to a release from the bank, the offer, which opens on March 21 and closes on April 20, 2005, is being undertaken to raise N10 billion as part of efforts to meet the CBN minimum capital requirements of N25 billion.

The net proceeds will be utilised in upgrading the bank's IT and automated teller machine infrastructure, branch expansion, human capital development, and the development of the bank's working capital.

Prudent Bank Plc was originally incorporated as Prudent Merchant Bank Limited in December 1989 and

commenced merchant banking operations in June 1990. It operated as a merchant bank for 10 years until 2000, when it secured a commercial banking license and commenced operation as a one-branch commercial bank. Today the bank has 36 branches in major cities in Nigeria.

The bank's total asset, which stood at about N1 billion in 2000, grew to N25.9 billion in the financial year ended 2003. In the same four-year period, profit after tax grew from a little over 31 million to 610 million by financial year 2003. The bank has forecast a dividend per share of 7 kobo in 2006 and 15 kobo in 2007.

### NATIONAL TRUCKS MANUFACTURERS LIMITED, KANO

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Minimum qualification HND in Secretarial Studies from a recognized institution with at least 5 Years experience as secretary with senior staff officer in a reputable organization.

Interested candidates should forward their hand written application with CV, by hand or by post, with the envelope clearly marked "CONFIDENTIAL" on the top right hand corner within one week from the date of publication of this advertisement to be addressed to:

MANAGER ADMINISTRATION  
NATIONAL TRUCKS MANUFACTURERS LTD  
KM 11, ZARIA ROAD, P. O. BOX 6418, KANO



# THE SENATE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

## PUBLIC HEARING AND CALL FOR MEMORANDA BY SENATE COMMITTEE ON BANKING, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

### ON

A Bill for an Act to amend the Nigeria Deposit Insurance Corporation (NDIC) Decree No. 22 of 1988 and for matters connected therewith.

**VENUE:** SENATE HEARING ROOM 1

**DATE:** MONDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> MARCH, 2005

**TIME:** 10.00AM

Members of the public, individuals, communities, Banks and Financial Institutions, etc, that have interest and inputs in the Bill are kindly requested to send their Memoranda and/or appear before the Committee during its sitting.

Please send all Memoranda in 12 copies to: James idenyi, Secretary, Senate Committee on Banking, Insurance and Financial Institutions,  
**Senate Committee Room 10,  
National Assembly Complex,  
Three Arms Zone, P.M.B. 141, Garki,  
Abuja.  
Tel: 0803-786-2539**

**NOTE:**

All submissions should reach the above address on or before Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2005.

Signed  
Senator Ambuno Zik Sunday  
Committee Chairman

# ASUU can hold its own

*Professor Tijani Bande was serving as the director-general for the African Centre in Morocco when he suddenly realised that he had missed the classroom for almost four and a half years. One year before the expiration of his first tenure, he made a quick decision to return to the shores of the Usman Danfodiyo University where he is used to. Soon after his return, the seat of the vice chancellor became vacant and as destiny would have it, he became the "numero uno" or "first among equals." Professor Bande has in the last one year been serving as the vice chancellor of the Danfodiyo University. After several weeks of rescheduling of this interview with him, he finally decided to share his precious one and a half hours with the duo of Aminu Mohammed, our Sokoto Regional Editor, and Abdulfatai Abdulsalami, our correspondent. He talked on his four-year stay in Morocco, state of Nigerian universities, the on-going national conference and a lot more. Excerpts:*

**S**ir we would like you to briefly tell us about your career in this university?

In fact, I do not know what to say other than the fact that I have been a teacher in this university and currently have the privilege of being the vice chancellor. In short, I have been a teacher all through here and in other universities. However, I once found myself outside the shores of the university for about four years and three months when I left for an international assignment.

**You said you left the shores of the university for an international assignment, what was that assignment?**

I have the privilege of serving as the Director-General of the premier centre concerned with the board of governance in public administration in the African continent established in 1964. It is funded by African governments and by the time I left there were officially 37 African states which were members of the board. The board is composed of ministers with the responsibility of public service and economic development of member countries. In fact, in some countries the prime ministers or the vice presidents represent their countries on the board. It is a very important centre and Nigeria has played a very important role in its establishment, development and growth.

I should also say that I am the second Nigerian to head that centre. The first Nigerian to head the centre later became an ambassador to Argentina. He did extremely well during his tenure and when I took over from him, what I did was to extend what he had done. In fact only the head of service of the federation can assess what we have done on behalf of Nigeria during our tenures. I served there as I said earlier for four years and three months before leaving to take up my present appointment.

**For someone who has been a teacher all his life, what was it like when you took the job at the African centre in Morocco?**

Well, it was not some thing extremely different to me as a teacher because it is a research centre and you know teaching is about research and more research. In fact I was invited to

head the research department in the centre for a short period and that was how I became an acting director general for one year and thereafter I was elected to the office of the director general. I left a year to the end of my first tenure because I wanted to come back and continue with what I like doing best, teaching. As I said earlier, the two are interrelated but you see the African centre is much more occupied with public administration. It is a centre which works with other world agencies such as the United Nations Organisation (UNO).

**It is almost a year now since you came back and took over as the vice chancellor of the Usman Danfodiyo University, what are the changes you met?**

Well, I found what I left, a university that is devoted to serious studies in all fields. Basically, there are improvements. In fact, I was impressed when I came back from Morocco to see a lot of new buildings and the academic standard was okay. I was impressed to find out that a new faculty was established.

My focus is on leading this university to be a leading centre of learning in Nigeria. It is going to be challenging but with the kind of support I am

getting, I believe we can make it.

**You earlier said you left the job of the director general at the African centre a year before the expiration of your first tenure. Were you recalled by the university to take the job of the VC or you applied for it?**

Remember I told you earlier I am a teacher all through and I am committed to it. The job of a VC is not what really attracted me but you see having served the centre for four years and three months I felt I have done a lot to improve the centre and I should allow others to judge me. You see, I am sure the four years and some few months I have been there are very memorable in the history of the centre. I believe I have been able to achieve what if any, very few of my predecessors had been able to achieve within the short time I was there. I left for the centre as a teacher and I did not want to stay longer than necessary before coming back so I have to make a decision sooner or later which I did. And you see, the job of a vice chancellorship is not a do or die issue. In fact, whoever emerged as a VC at that time would have been my friend? I have been here since July 1998 and you can see whoever had emerged would have

been a friend. It is not an issue of competition but service and I offered myself for that service, therefore whether I am a vice chancellor or not I would still serve the university.

You see a university is part of the process of a nation building and that is the kind of service I am here to offer, to build the university and the nation. A lot of people had wanted me to come but it was a decision I finally made myself, to come back home and help in the process of building this university to achieve academic excellence.

**I believe the election that led to your appointment was not different from others conducted in sister universities or was it free from intricacies, intrigues and other uneventful happenings?**

It wasn't different but as I told you earlier it was not a do or die affair. We had many people who were qualified and each of them would do a better job if given the opportunity. However, after all the politickings, the most important thing for me is to regard every group as a vital component of the institution to work collectively for the progress of our dear university. The appointment is just a five year job and after I finish serving my tenure I would still go back to the classroom as a teacher. It is just a matter of time. You see people see the position of a vice chancellor different from the outside but if you are in the system it is just like any other job. From the outside, people take it to be a position of power but you see it is a very very difficult job. Students have their own problems and you have the academic and non academic staff with their challenges too. One has to provide their needs in terms of facilities, classrooms, hos-

rels, laboratories, research materials and so many things other.

The vice chancellor is not above the board, he is simply a member of the senate and ASUU. You cannot have your way just because you are a vice chancellor.

**How did you receive the news of your appointment as the vice chancellor of Usman Danfodiyo University?**

Well, let me correct an impression, a vice chancellor is not an administrator. He is the head of the academic and administrative divisions of the university and his first duty is that of a teacher. Make no mistake; no vice chancellor would continue to maintain his respect as a teacher if he sees himself as a bureaucrat. Even though a vice chancellor may not have the privilege to teach as many courses as he had done in the past, he cannot be removed from the task of a teacher. He would however continue to be an administrator because that has to be done. But the part of administration is assisted by the registry, which is a very strong component of the university. In short, a vice chancellor has to focus his attention on both the administrative and academic quality of the institution. A vice chancellor would have to continue to be who he is as a professor in his department and the entire university. It is a matter of striking a balance?

**From your explanation it appears you are still teaching?**

I have to because it is a part of me. We have many vice chancellors in Nigeria who teach and it is very encouraging to hear that here at the Danfodiyo University we have some of our former vice chancellors back with us busy



Professor Bande stressing a point at teaching in their various departments. The essence is to keep you abreast of contemporary issues as a teacher.

**How are you coping in the area of funding?**

You see, it has been improving gradually in the last few years. The government is now showing a lot of concern. There were times projects have to be abandoned half way but all that is now becoming history. A university needs a lot of money to keep it excelling and with the involvement of individuals now in assisting educational institutions things are improving.

Again, the governments of Sokoto, Kebbi, Zamfara and Katsina states, which are our catchments areas, are giving us tremendous support and some individuals have even erected buildings for us which is very encouraging. It is very important for universities to generate more money so that they become less dependent on government but it has to be understood that universities cannot be, and should not be, revenue generating outfits even though they cannot be fully dependent on government.

Universities should first



"My focus is on leading UDUS to excellence."

## dialogue – UDUS VC



the interview.

and foremost be concerned with the quality of their students above any other thing and this is what we always try to do here at Danfodiyo. Even though we receive much less than we need the focus should be on the quality of our students. Briefly, we use what we have judiciously by making sure that we focus on our priorities.

**From the above, it means university autonomy is not possible because government cannot continue to fund what it has no absolute control over?**

Well, you see there is a lot of confusion concerning autonomy. We cannot say because some countries are doing it and so we must also do the same but rather we should find out the history of education in this country before arriving at a conclusion. I think universities are now doing better than before and I think a university should focus on national development rather than on revenue generation. When you start doing that you derail. Whatever we do should be connected to the idea of qualitative education which is accessible. So I think given the situation now and the history

of these private universities. One, they are established by law so they are quite in order. They go through the due process before they are established. So I think their emergence is healthy because they will put public universities on their toes. There is now a choice for the candidate to either go to public or private universities depending on what you can pay or afford to. The only thing however is to ensure through the National Universities Commission (NUC) that standard is maintained. The standard for both public and private universities should be regulated by the NUC. So I think we should welcome the emergence of private and state universities because they ease pressure off the public universities.

The questions is not whether we have too many universities but the most important thing is to guarantee appropriate standard, once the private and state universities meet the standard, then what is more than for them to be part of the national development. What we should look for is quality so that anywhere within the African region Nigerian graduates can go and prove themselves. I would like to see Nigerian graduates going to Ghana to excel. By and large I think we should strive to make our education standard not only for the Nigerian market but the international market as well.

**The Danfodiyo University would soon be 30 years old and we still have the permanent site not fully developed, what is causing the delay?**

Well, I think the point is this. You see, this is the permanent site and it is simply one of the campuses. It is no longer an issue that other places are temporary. So I think this concept should be clear to every-

body. The idea is, by the time we develop this campus fully there may be congestion because already there is congestion at the city campus which is no longer a temporary site. Already, we share space with the teaching hospital which we use in the training of our students. So, we have locations here and there which we cannot call temporary. We have always made it clear to every visitor here that we did not start like other universities, which started with campuses owned by others. We started afresh.

We now have few buildings springing up. In the 2004 appropriation act, about N250 million was budgeted for the construction of a library and this is a major milestone in the history of this institution. Again, this year, we are assured of funds to build our faculty of pharmaceutical sciences. We also have a programme of establishing a laboratory science in conjunction with the teaching hospital. So these are areas where there has been improvement. The faculty of social sciences would have a budget of its own while some faculties have their buildings almost completed. In fact, we have almost all the needed facilities and in the next three or four years we will have an engineering faculty. With the speed the government approves budgets for capital projects for universities, I think in the next 10 years you are likely to see a different and much improved Danfodoyo University.

**You were not specific on the engineering faculty when you said in the next three or four years why wait up to that time?**

You see we do not want to rush and start something we cannot finish. Our faculty of medicine started gradually and

today we have some of the best graduates in the continent. So, you see, I think there is the need for us to establish an engineering faculty going by global trend now where the whole world has become a village with the help of technology. In fact, there is a lot of concern and already the governments of Sokoto, Kebbi, Zamfara and Katsina have seen to that necessity. There are many diploma holders in physics, mathematics and other sciences who would do better in engineering. Again, there are diploma holders in electrical, mechanical and civil engineering who need to further their education but could not do so. Already, universities like Bauchi, Kano and ABU Zaria are producing but he want to complement their efforts to ease off the pressure so that those who fall within our catchment areas can also have a place to study.

**One major problem in our universities today is cultism. How is it here?**

We have told everybody in black and white. This problem of cultism is always part of what vice chancellors discuss when they meet either with the minister of education or the NUC. However, the truth is, we don't have cultism in this university and I will say it loud. We thank God for this but we are not resting on our oars. We are always in touch with the security agencies to assist us and anytime we suspect something we let them know in time. We must ensure that cultists do not penetrate into our system. You see, a university is an open system, a place where knowledge is shared but when you have so many people in one place like that anything can happen. For now, I assure you we have no room for cultists. What we do here is to train

people to face the national challenge and not to be bandits. So I advise students that cultism is harmful not only to themselves but the university and the nation. I know it is a big battle because in some universities vice chancellors and lecturers are harassed by students who want grades they did not work for. We pray we don't experience such here and we are very vigilant. On the whole, we are not saying it cannot happen here but as I said earlier we are in touch with the relevant security agencies to check this ugly menace.

**How would you react to ASUU's plan to convene its own national conference different from the ongoing one?**

I don't think I have a view because I am a member of ASUU and interestingly, the national president of ASUU is in my department here in Usman Danfodiyo University, Sokoto. ASUU like any other lawful organization has the right to talk about national issues. So I do not think anybody can or should deny ASUU or NLC or market women organization the right to convene a national dialogue. This has to be understood. The country has decided to organize a national dialogue what we do is simply give support to ensure that the outcome of the dialogue by whatever group is fruitful for the country. The most important thing is for us to one another, it is one country and we have a duty to protect it to be a stronger nation where there is equity.

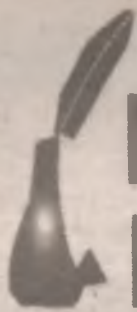
So if the national conference is to better the lives of Nigerians, so be it. And if there are other bodies which also think they have something they want to contribute in their own little way, they have the right to discuss. So ASUU has a right to call for a dialogue because I believe ASUU is not going to call for a regional or ethnic agenda. ASUU is a very respectable body.

**How would you want to be remembered as a vice chancellor?**

Well, I don't think I have any particular thing other than to say that I would want to be part of a group located in this university that has worked for this country and served it with all sincerity of purpose. I would want to be remembered as someone who served in a national university where people from different parts of the world come to study and know a bit about Nigeria by their interaction with others. So far I am not regretting my choice of being a teacher and I am proud of that because I know I am serving the nation in my own little way. It is a choice I have made in life and I will forever cherish that. My greatest strength in this university is that I have known and worked with every vice chancellor since inception and I know how they struggled to build this institution. So I would like them to also acknowledge what I have done to improve on what I have met.



"Universities should strive to maintain standard and focus on national development."



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## FEDERAL MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AREA 11, GARKI, ABUJA

### PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT

The Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Mallam Adamu Bello FCIB, **Dan'Iyan Adamawa** cordially invites all stakeholders and the general public to the Donors Consultative Meeting on the Expansion phase of the National Special Programme for Food Security (NSPFS).

**Date:** Saturday, 19th March, 2005

**Venue:** Argungu Fishing Festival Village Argungu, Kebbi State

**Time:** 3.00 p.m.

The event will be chaired by His Excellency, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR, President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Federal Republic of Nigeria. He will be supported by Dr. Jacques Diouf, Director-General, Food and Agricultural Organization, Mr. President is expected to be accompanied to the occasion by five (5) other Heads of State/government.

All invited representatives of friendly countries, bilateral and multilateral organizations, international financial institutions and other invited guests are requested to assemble at the local wing of the Nnamdi Azikiwe International airport, Abuja, by 7.00 a.m. Departure to Sokoto is at 7.30 a.m. on a special chartered flight-DASAB Airlines.

On arrival at Sokoto Airport, delegates will be conveyed by road to Argungu Fishing Village courtesy Kebbi State Government. Delegates will return to Abuja same day on the same Airline by 7.30 p.m.

### For further information, please contact:

1. Mrs. E. J. Udobang - Secretary, Director (PCU)  
080-37860663  
080-45455377

2. Mrs. Hajara Abubakar (FAO)  
080-34088321  
09-4618738

3. Miss Anfani Micah (NSPFS)  
080-42142639

Let us partner together to develop Nigeria's Agriculture and Alleviate Poverty through the Expanded National Special Programme for Food Security (NSPFS):

### Announcer:

**Dr. Salisu Ahmed Ingawa**  
For: Honourable Minister

**Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development**

# THE HOME FRONT

## Fragments

By Safiya I. Dantiye, *Woman Editor*

### Mission to Chad

I am back again with the topic of separating children from their mothers and not necessarily about custody, but separating them for ever if the fathers have anything to do with it.

Though many people believe the saying that says 'hell hath no fury than a woman scorned', but the way some men take vengeance through children makes one wonder if these men have an iota of compassion.

While most of these instances happen when couple divorce, few surprising ones happen while the couple are still married. And though it may be justified (?) for a man who has divorced his wife to teach her a 'lesson' for the divorce, regardless of whether it is her fault or not by preventing her to see her children, it beats common sense for such cruelty to be done to a woman who is still married to the man.

Women are a pathetic lot because they don't seem to have right or say in matters that concern them. And their children are the dearest things to them and they can go to any extent to love and protect them.

One woman has now gone on a mission to find her children in far away Chad republic. She had not seen them in more than ten years.

**"Probably the husband believed that since she had other children, she could forfeit the 'lost' ones, as if any child can compensate for another. If a woman has ten children, each is special to her in a different way and no one can ever take his place."**

The story is that she was born in Nigeria, but married a man from Chad, her country. She had two children, and one day the husband took the little boys to go somewhere, one was three years old and the other was a little more than a year old and hadn't been weaned. When they didn't come back after sometime she became worried, especially about the baby. An inquiry told her that her husband had gone to Chad!, and people told her that they assumed they were all going together. She screamed and cried.

After several weeks the husband came back and she demanded for her children. He tried to placate her by saying he only wanted his children to be brought up in his country to learn the values and customs, so he took them to his mother.

But she would never understand and felt she could never live with him again. In fact she believed he could kill her since he could hurt her so much by taking her children away that she wished she were dead. Thereafter she sought for divorce which he refused to grant, until two years later after she took him to court.

She eventually remarried and had four children, but she always cried and wondered about her 'lost' children.

Now she went to her country, a county she had never been to, without relatives because both her parents lived and died in Nigeria, as such she didn't have contact with relatives there.

The surprising thing was that her husband told her not to look for her children, because she told him she just wanted to go and see her parents' land, since she knew that he didn't like her lamenting about the children or else he would refuse to allow her to go.

Probably the husband believed that since she had other children, she could forfeit the 'lost' ones, as if any child can compensate for another. If a woman has ten children, each is special to her in a different way and no one can ever take his place.

So just because you are woman your children can be taken or 'stolen' from you and nothing can be done about it. And you will spend your lifetime in anguish and hope, because you may or may never see them, besides you'll never be happy again.

## Poor reproductive health kills African women

-UNFPA

By Abubakar Haruna,  
Reporter (Women Desk)

Poor sexual and reproductive health has been described as the leading cause of death for African women.

The executive director of United Nations Funds for Population Activities (UNFPA), Thoraya Ahmed Obaid made the statement at the opening ceremony of the Regional Conference of African Islamic faith-based organisations at Nicon Hilton, Abuja, within the week.

Thoraya said "A woman in sub-saharan Africa faces a one in sixteen chance of dying during pregnancy and childbirth, compared to one in 3,800 for a woman in developed nations."

According to her, that was not just a health issue but an issue of social justice, she noted that millions of African children were left without mothers to care for them.

She further maintained that there had been solid evidence that increasing access to reproductive health services reduced poverty within families and nations.

She also said that when a woman planned her family, she would be healthier and could be more productive for her family.

She added that but when her reproductive rights - including the right to plan her family in terms of birth timing

and spacing, and to make decision regarding reproduction free of discrimination, coercion and violence - are promoted and protected, she had freedom to participate fully and equally in society.

According to her, poor maternal health caused half of all infant deaths, while each year, more than 4 million newborn children die during the first month of life, and 4 million more were still born,

adding that many of these deaths were due to complications their mothers experienced during pregnancy or child birth.

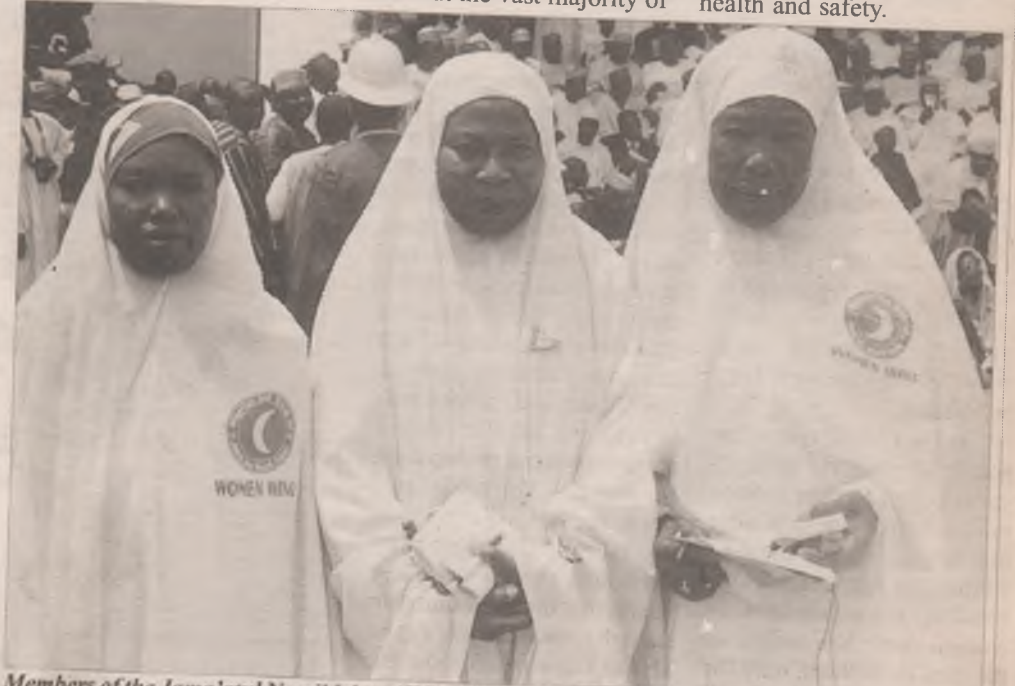
She stressed that their lives could be saved if all women had access to reproductive health services for family planning, care during pregnancy, and skilled medical attendance at birth and emergency obstetric care to handle complications.

On the HIV/AIDS, the UNFPA executive director, said that the vast majority of

new infections were among women and often young married women.

She pointed out that women were at high risk not because of their own risky behaviour but because of the risky conditions and relationship they encounter.

According to her, in many cases, these young married women did not have the means to protect themselves, urging that a lot need to be done to reduce their risk and empower them to protect their health and safety.



Members of the Jama'atul Nasril Islam (JNI) Aid-Group, Hajjiya Aisha Tarki, Hajjiya Medina Dauda Nadabo and Hajjiya Binta Bunkure Mohammed during the launching ceremony of National Mosque appeal fund held at the Eagle Square Abuja...recently.

Pix: Joe Oroye

## Mrs Atiku urges women to fight for rights

Wife of the Vice President, Aminu Titi Abubakar has challenged the women folk to be bold enough to confront those forces that infringe on the rights and privileges of their gender.

According to a statement signed by her chief press secretary Sayo Fabiyi, and made available to *The Home Front* within the week, Mrs. Atiku made the appeal in Atlanta USA while addressing the "Georgia commission on women" on issues of common concern to women.

Mrs. Atiku lamented the worrisome dimension of women and child trafficking across the continents adding that her foundation - "Women Trafficking and Child Labour Eradication Foundation" (WOTCLEF) took a bold initiative to fight the menace because of the grown concern for the dignity and rights of human beings irrespective of sex or affiliations.

She said "The advocacy strategy of my foundation is to create and sustain a 'platform for discussion and implementation of policy towards elimination of the worst forms of child labour, eradication of women trafficking and sustainable mobilization of all stakeholders."

She noted that the growth in the volume and complexity of this 21<sup>st</sup> century slavery had brought about an increased awareness on the menace of human trafficking hence the need to tackle the issue from all fronts because

of its attendant negative implications.

The wife of the vice president extolled Nigerian cultures and traditions and called on the women to act in concert and discourage sexist and cultural prejudices against women in the area of gender equality, religion, economy, widowhood practices, circumcision and gender violence.

Mrs. Abubakar emphasized the need to address and examine critical issues like the cultural dimensions of human trafficking, gender inequality, self-esteem and the status of young girls in the community.

In another development, the wife of the vice president has suggested stiffer legal measures as the best approach to fight the scourge of human trafficking and exploitative child abuse across the globe.

She noted that successful implementation of development goals would only be possible if gender perspective are fully mainstreamed into all areas of human endeavour such as human right, protection and promotion, peace and security and democracy and good governance.

She argued that poverty was not necessarily a by

product of human trafficking as greed and insatiable lust for materialism often combine to aggravate the scourge. While calling for total governments commitment at all level in the fight against the menace, Mrs. Abubakar drew a borderline between prostitution and human trafficking.

She also called on other countries to emulate Nigeria's efforts in combating trafficking in person by mobilising support and action from government agencies and relevant stakeholders to put a halt to this denigration of womanhood and humanity.

## Female genital cutting un-Islamic - Islamic scholar

Female genital cutting (FGC) has been described as barbaric, a misconception against Islamic principles and non-obligatory.

An expert in Islamic population and development from Egypt, Dr. Abdul-Aziz Kebe, said in Abuja at the regional conference of the African Islamic Faith-Based Organisation.

"We cannot say FGC is a Sharia compliant, Islamic or obligatory issue, but a big crime against humanity," he said.

The Islamic scholar said that most Muslims engaged in the practice with reference to the Hadith (tradition of the Holy Prophet).

He said that it was not the

practice of Holy Prophet, as it was contrary to his teachings, stressing that the Prophet did not mutilate any of his female children or propagate the act.

Kebe noted that even in Saudi Arabia, that was regarded as the seat of Islamic Affairs FGC was prohibited.

He said that FGC was more of a tradition and cultural heritage than religious affair, therefore a clear distinction should be drawn between Islamic rules and cultural practices.

Kebe said the possibility of female circumcision and not FGC could not be ruled out, but warned that it must be on medical advice.

"The circumcision must be neatly done by cutting the

ligament around the lip, without cutting the flesh," he said.

A cross section of participants at the conference described FGC as a criminal act that should be stopped because it was a crime committed in the name of religion.

One of the participants Hajjiya Afusat Kabba from Sierra Leone told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) that FGC was being done mostly to reduce the sexual desire of women.

"Why must you take away the pleasure created for her by God, this being one of the pillars of marriage?" She asked.

Kabba said in this era of globalisation, it had become more important for Muslims to come together and fight the barbaric act.

# THE HOME FRONT

## Between courtship and marriage

**M**arriage is an experience which most people look forward to. Every young man or woman dreams of a perfect partner. You see the way young girls dress? They do it to attract suitable partners. During courtship they call their boyfriends darling, honey, etc. These endearments are meant to solidify their relationship and build love.

On their part the young men spend time trying to impress their partners. They buy gifts and woo them with lovely words, all meant to show their ability to look after their future wives.

The couples put in all this effort for one reason. And that is love. Love is assumed to be the glue that cements marriages. But is this really true? Is love all we really need? Are this going to last for ever? Will the men keep on like that?

So *The Home Front* asked people's views and opinions on why men pamper women in courtship more than after marriage? Some blamed women for their misfortune, because, according to them women don't like reality so the men lie to them, only for them to discover the truth

By **Kanu Ndidiamaka**  
(Intern)

after marriage.

Still some believe that during courtship women are more beautiful because they are younger, but after having few children their beauty will fade and the men lose interest. Excerpts:

Why men pamper women in courtship, but not in marriage?

According to **Mr. David Vincent**, a student, was because men wanted to sleep with the women, while some do it in order to gain something, if the women earn more than them. So these men pamper such women with love and 'small' gifts to woo them.

**Mr. Godwin Yakubu**, a civil servant said to gain ladies' attention when you want to win a lady to your side especially during courtship, you must make use of the available resources such as time, money and all that it took to draw her attention to you and after you might have got her attention, you could leave her to her fate.

Adding that knowing each other's secret may cause suspicion during courtship such that the man may not be able to know much about the girl's hidden agenda, but by

the time they are married, the lady may unravel her secrets and the husband may no longer have any regard for her or give her the full respect she is to be accorded with.

**Mr. Joseph Alfred**, a civil servant with the federal ministry of finance said because her beauty may still be intact, a man may pamper a young lady since she was young and beautiful, but by

pointed out that something that has no blood relationship has to take pampering and tolerance to achieve, so that when it becomes part of you, you let go the whole thing and face reality.

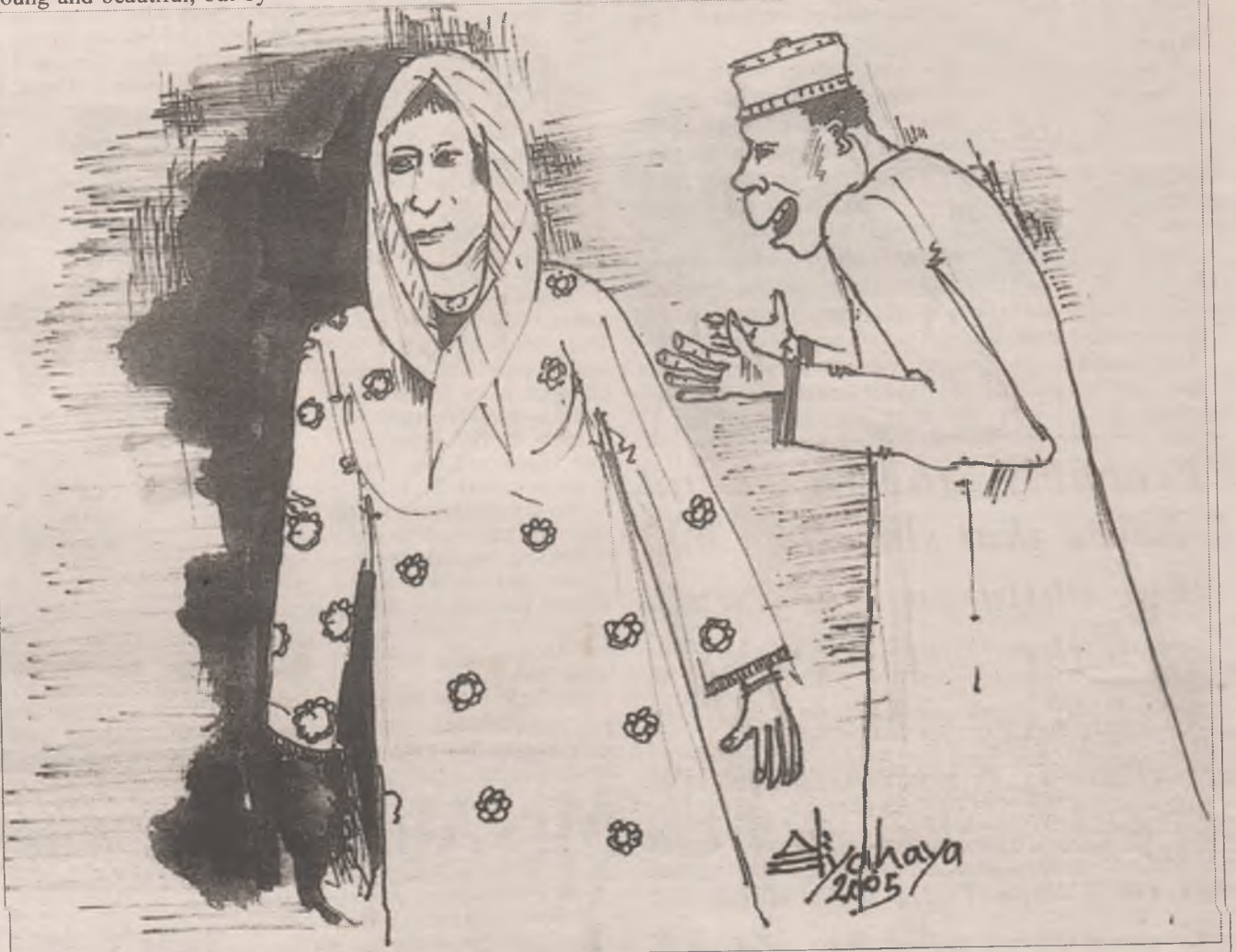
Another civil servant, **Mr. Chinedu Alozie** maintained that the change of attitude of men from that of courtship to marriage was not that men

pampered me but immediately I entered his house as his wife everything changed, in fact it was then it dawned on me that marriage and friendship are two sides of a coin."

**Mr. Bisi Abosedo**, a business man said women thought marriage and courtship were the same, but that in courtship you were still learning about each other. According to him if you have

she asked for anything he didn't have he would tell her he could not afford it. That he never pretended to her and though they have not have been having it so smooth but they were managing to live together.

Women didn't like to face reality, said **Mr. Emmanuel Obi**, a teacher at Model Primary School Bwari and also



## Prices of foodstuff at old Karmo market

Compiled by **Emehara Nkechi Hope**

- A bag of salt costs N800
- A bag of beans costs N12,000
- A bag of rice costs N7,500
- A bag of maize costs N5,000
- A bag of wheat costs N2,800
- A bag of flour costs N3,500
- A bag of guinea corn costs N1,500
- One bottle of groundnut oil costs N150
- One bottle of palm oil costs N130
- A cup of groundnut costs N70
- One mudu of red gari costs N80
- One mudu of white gari costs N60
- One tin of De Rica tomato puree costs N35
- One mudu of crayfish costs N350
- One mudu of sugar costs N150
- One basket of tomatoes costs N550
- One basket of pepper costs N400
- One basket of onions costs N300
- One mudu of rice costs N180
- One mudu of beans costs N120
- One mudu of guinea corn costs N70
- One mudu of maize costs N130
- One mudu of dry pepper costs N120
- A bowl of fresh tomatoes costs N60
- A bowl of fresh pepper cost N30
- One crate of egg costs N550

the time she gives birth to one or two children, her beauty may begin to fade and she may no longer look attractive to him and all the pampering may stop.

**Mr. Yinka Aderemu**, a student of University of Maiduguri said during courtship men tend to pamper ladies much more than when they marry because during courtship, there was the tendency that the lady may have other admirers so each and everyone of them try to pamper her more to win her heart.

**Mr. Thompson**, a civil servant with Bwari Area Council insisted that men pamper ladies in courtship than marriage because ladies could be pretty rough in their actions and approach. He further added that love mostly existed in courtship because that was the time money was being spent without planning ahead which was the most thing ladies desire in courtship but when in marriage things change as love was being shared among wife, children, etc. "But most ladies don't feel the same way, they want to be treated just as it was in courtship but men are faced with societal problems than engage in family affair," he emphasized.

Mr. Thompson also

were pretending. But the reason for such a behaviour that women find puzzling and unrealistic was that a lady may be behaving very well during courtship, as a result of which the man was ready to do anything for her. "But after the marriage, the lady brings out her true colour and the man's attitude towards her will definitely change too," he said.

**Mrs. Ifeoma Ibeagwu**, a mother of two lamented that if anyone had told her that her husband would ever change she wouldn't believe it. "When we were courting, I thought I was in control, because he loved and

not married the woman there are still some things she would not know about you, she discovers all these things when you get married and she feels you have been hiding them from her while it may not so. "You can never know someone until you live with the person," he stressed.

**Mr. George Peters**, a staff of federal secretariat Abuja admitted that men were difficult and women were terrible. He said "I am a father of three, I don't believe in pampering a woman before or after marriage. I started showing my true character to my wife from the first day I met her." He explained that if

a father.

His words: "Women don't like the truth, when you tell a woman the truth, she either leaves you for another man or she makes you look as if you are not a man. So what women need is to tell them lie about yourself and your family."

Therefore it was not true that men pamper women during courtship than in marriage insisted Mr. Obi, but rather it was the women's fault since in order for a man to attract a woman he had to lie to her about his achievements. And that it was not a man's fault also, if he showed his true colour to his wife.

**Mrs. Ifeoma Ibeagwu, a mother of two lamented that if anyone had told her that her husband would ever change she wouldn't believe it. "When we were courting, I thought I was in control, because he loved and pampered me but immediately I entered his house as his wife everything changed, in fact it was then it dawned on me that marriage and friendship are two sides of a coin."**

# THE HOME FRONT

## Items for a great kitchen

By Aisha Umar, Reporter  
(Women Desk)

**Dinner set:** After cooking you need wares to serve your food, it is advisable to buy dinner set of 47 pieces, and if you are the type that receives many visitors, you should buy 123 pieces, there is also 30 pieces you use to serve 6 people.

**Pot:** A kitchen is incomplete without pot, if you need a good pot and also one in vogue, you buy millennium pot. You can also buy quality tower.

**Grater slicer:** It is used to slice vegetables, fruits, etc.

**Multi-wander:** it has many components in different sizes, you can slice vegetables or fruits into different sizes.

**Rice cooker:** It is specially for cooking rice, you set it on time and put your rice and water in it when it reaches the time, it will stop and your rice is done.

**Kitchen trays:** There are different types and sizes of kitchen trays: the ones you can use to collect spices, they are always very small, and the ones you can use to serve people. There are big, medium and small sizes, we also have the ones you can use to serve cola.

**Frying pans:** There are different sizes of frying pans 28cm, and 22cm. It is advisable to use non stick because your food will not burn. There are also ≤ roasting pan, grill pan, sauce pan.

**Flask:** Is a container used to store hot water. We keep standby hot water, but there is limit to what we can use the hot water for, e.g. we can not use it to prepare pap, it comes in different sizes and ranges, 2litre, 1.5litre, 2litre, 2.5litre, 1litre. There is also a stainless flask, it will last interms of durability.

**Egg boiler:** It is specially for boiling egg, with the holes where you can place the egg, it normally contains six or ten eggs, and it is electronic.

**Plate rack:** It is where you place your plates in the kitchen. It makes the kitchen to look smart, there is also a space for spoons too on it.

**Tumblers' stand:** It comes in plastic and stainless stands. You place cups on it.

**Spoons:** An implement consisting of a shallow bowl on a handle, used for stirring, serving and eating food. There are different types of spoons, teaspoon, dessert spoon, soup-spoon, table spoon, wooden spoon.

There are also a set of soup spoons or mashers for mashing vegetables, yam, potatoes etc, we also have spoon for turning fish, eggs, etc, we also have spoon for removing things like potatoes etc, from oil, also for mixing soup and taking it from pot, spoon for serving spaghetti.

There are 24 or 74 pieces of set of spoons.

**Stove:** It is used for cooking, there are model 2608, model 2668, 601, 2601 depending on the type of stove

helps you to know the position of your kitchen utensils.

**Oven:** Electric oven is the best for use, because of equal circulation of heat at all angles. It is used for baking, toasting, grilling, etc.

**Oven proof dish:** These are unbreakable dishes you can as well use for baking or do anything in your oven with

**Canister or coffee tea and sugar container:** Is used to put your coffee, sugar, milk in it, to avoid being spoiled by the air.

**Trivet:** A metal or wood stand usually with three legs for holding hot pans etc.

**Bread bins:** Is a place you arrange your bread in before eating.

**Woks:** A large pan shape like a bowl used for cooking food especially Chinese food.

**Cruet set:** A set of small container for salt, pepper, and oil etc. for use on the table.

**Kitchen trolley:** It saves you from going and coming when serving food, it is a small table with wheel which you can push or pull after arranging your food set for serving. There are different sizes depending on the number of people you want to serve.

**Dinning table:** There is round, rectangle, square or oval table, depending on the number of your family or chairs you want to put, or numbers of visitors you receive at home.

**Kitchen cabinets:** These are like wardrobes, but here it is the kitchen utensils that are arranged in to the locker. It makes your kitchen neat and

different purposes, like napkins for cleaning tables, cleaning dishes, for putting down-hot pot, for cleaning your hand etc.

**Fridge or deep freezer:** It is very good where we have constant power supply. You buy your food items in bulk, it's saves money and time.

**Potato chipper:** It is used to slice your potatoes, it has 25 holes.

**Kitchen napkin:** A woman is supposed to have kitchen napkins, each one for

purposes, such as stirring, spreading, mixing, turning food during frying.

**Plate:** Round plates are for sweet foods like cake, etc, oval plates are for salty foods.

**Micro wave oven:** It is used for different purposes in the kitchen. It is used for toasting, baking and warming food and defrosting. There are different sizes and products, depending on what you want.

**Spatula:** It is a broad, blunt and often flexible blade which can be used for variety



## When debt comes calling

By Zainab Allmi, Political Reporter

I don't know who has the tendency to accumulate debt more between the man and woman. But so common is the scenario, from my experience with fellow womenfolk that more often than not, I'm reminded, to my face or in absentia, that even Nigeria, the so-called 'giant of Africa' owes more debt than it can ever repay!

Predictably, most put is down to poverty in the land. And in most cases, this is understandable. When the going gets too tough to handle, one may have no other choice than to ask for a loan. Whether or not the loan is obtained with intent to pay back remains the business of the conscience of the applicant of the said loan.

But putting aside the all-too-glaring hopelessness of the economy which puts too many people at the mercy of borrowing endlessly, some people actually don't know of, or simply haven't bothered to apply the 'cut your coat according (not to your size anymore) to your material' wise saying. And this is what has got most people in what people commonly call the hot pot of soup.

A lot of movies highlight various scenarios of abject poverty and how those

afflicted with unfortunate situations that warrant their indebtedness either to the landlord or lady as the case may be, and others like them, employ pitiful tactics of outsmarting their creditors.

I have had to ask for a loan when I run dry myself. What I can't beat though is living life normally when I owe a debt. Some are lucky to be able to pay off almost immediately. But some are not so lucky for reasons best known to them. Still, without the confidence that I'll be able to repay the loan, I abstain from obtaining it. Isn't it often said that eating a delicious meal is heavenly, but it is paying for it that stinks?

A few examples got me wondering about debt and have led me to train myself to avoid it. Nigeria's debt burden which seems to be swelling by day is enough lesson to any right-thinking person to avoid borrowing (especially money) like the plague.

A relation of mine exercises her tailoring skills to make a small source of income to complement her salary. The finished product is well appreciated and they fly off the sales rack in no time. I help her market the goods actually.

But like I pointed out earlier, who no like better thing? I purchased about four of the irresistible goods myself and suffered over a month's worth allocation to recharge cards, feeding and transportation fare as a result.

But where I couldn't wait for the month's pay to settle debt which I owed, thanks to the graciousness of the seller and the privilege of being family, other buyers who also made similar purchases now revel in either pretending they never made the purchases at all, or they simply throw in a casual "I'll come and see you soon," presumably to pay whenever they see you.

This attitude has never ceased to amaze me. So far, all the demonstrators as far as my experience with them goes, have been women. It reminds me of festive periods. Not once or twice in the past, my mom did the traditional dishing of the festival delicacy for distribution to our neighbours. And not once or twice, we never got our dishes back!

The trend is notoriously common in school. But while you may easily forgo the borrowed product which may not have cost you too much in school situation, the same thing may not be easy to do, especially when the loaned or

bought goods cost too much to be written off.

It makes me wonder, where is the sense of shame in people who do these? How can they not care being tagged debtors? Must you buy when you don't have the means to pay? Why not just ask and be given? Religious wide, I don't think any right is given to anyone to borrow and not return, or buy without payment. In fact, my religion says pay the labourer who renders you a service his due before his sweat dries up. And rather than beg, work to earn your pay.

It therefore beats my imagination when I see friends and people who can't seem to keep their eyes and hands off things they don't necessarily need and worse still, cannot afford. To top it, they start to make use of the product or money they have acquired on credit even before paying for it.

Aside from earning a bad name from people, these kind of people lose face in society, because they become known as "Mr." or "Madam borrow-borrow" to use the most common term. That is why it is not uncommon to see "No credit today, come tomorrow" signs put up on the doors of almost any store or place where things are sold, or

services rendered.

No matter the justification one may have for this action, it is better to save face by abstaining from accumulating or wanting to own things which, if not acquired, will not kill or harm one in any way. Where it becomes absolutely necessary and unavoidable, it is better to communicate one's inability to repay especially where a stated time of payment has been agreed upon by the parties involved in such agreement.

I read in a newspaper recently that trade by barter form of trade has sprung up somewhere in the country. Crude as this system may appear, I doubt if any party is aggrieved by debt owed him by another or if the seller's business is put to ransom by so much of his money tied up somewhere by debtors.

There is dignity in labour. And I dare add that there is dignity in keeping pledges, promises alike. If we avoid taking money or acquiring goods which we end up blowing without being able to pay for them, I believe a great number of us will be more honourable, respected members of the society. After all, one's good name is better than silver and gold. Not so?

# ABUJA TRUST

## Old Wuse Market gets enlarged parking lot

The information officer of the old Wuse Market, Mr. Innocent Amechina, has said that over 200 hundred parking spaces will be created soon for the market.

He made this revelation while speaking to *Abuja Trust* yesterday in his office at the market.

Mr. Amechina said, "As I am speaking to you now, we are just in the process of recovering some parking lots. Some of them that are parking lots were not even marked. We have about 140 parking spaces now and we

By Benjamin Auta, Crime Reporter

are creating about a hundred and we will create more at the far end of the market."

Mr. Amechina said that the amount collected by officials of the market as parking fees is not much as according to him, the management of the market offers social service(s) to the community.

He further that security in the market is guaranteed as there are many policemen and private security outfits securing.

He also said that the tick-

eting system was meant to sanitise the market adding that it is not peculiar to the market alone. He said among other reasons for introducing the ticketing system is to regulate traffic and the generation of revenue.

Recently some residents who patronise the old Wuse Market complained about the ticketing system claiming that the amount paid is high and that nobody gave any tangible explanation on what the revenue was meant for.

*Abuja Trust* however observed that various kinds

of vehicles pay various amounts ranging from N500 for trailers, lorries pay as from N200 to N300 while pick-ups and cars pay N100 and N50 respectively.



el-Rufai, FCT Minister

## New magistrates urged to shun corruption

The chairman of FCT Magistrates Association, Chief Magistrate Othman Musa, has advised the newly sworn in magistrates in the FCT to shun corruption.

Magistrate Musa, who gave the advice while addressing the new magistrates in his office in Jabi said administration of justice is a two-way traffic; justice to the complainant or plaintiff and justice to the accused or the defendant.

According to him, al-

By Abdulwahab Deji Ajikobi, Stringer (Abuja)

though magistrates may face problems in the process of trying cases, they have to be dedicated to work and use what he learned from school in order to achieve a set goal.

Magistrate Musa, who described magistrates as the Alpha and Omega of the courts the preside over, said they should have fear of God in their mind while trying cases because they will be questioned by God in the here-after.

## Accommodation, Abuja's most difficult side

Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory, is a city in haste. Because of its relative newness and its potential to provide sanctuary and satisfaction to a variety of professionals and desires, there is a perpetual influx of people to achieve these dreams. It is a place for all categories of people, graduates applicants, civil servants, businessmen, traders and artisans on the one hand and politicians, diplomats and many more on the other.

It will be saying the obvious that the bloating population of the city is putting pressure on several infrastructures the most demanding of which is access to decent accommodation. While there is a litany of houses both within the city centre and the suburbs to match the diversity of tastes, the fees charged on these houses are entirely another battle.

For instance, Hauwa Sule, a 30-year-old graduate of Business Administration just secured a job with a private firm in Abuja. Apart from the job, Hauwa lives in a one-room apartment in Wuse Zone 6. For this cubicle of a room, Hauwa paid N120,000 for a year.

To make matters worse for her, the landlord had recently given notice to Hauwa that come January 2006 the house rent will be reviewed upward to 140,000.

According to Hauwa, she is now compelled to begin to seek employment elsewhere outside Abuja where it would be cheaper to get accommodation.

Another lady, one Mrs. Tren Imoze, rented a self-contained apartment at N150,000 per annum last year and she paid for one year. But when her annual tenancy expired early this

By Maimuna Yusuf, Correspondent (Abuja)

year the landlord had increased told her that the rent had gone up to N200,000.

Mrs Imoze told our correspondent that she couldn't afford the new rate and moved out. She is now squatting with her sister at Kubwa.

Like Hauwa and Mrs Imoze, the crisis of securing decent housing in the capital city is the nightmare of all residents. Even for those who could afford to cough out the hundreds of thousands demanded by landlords the recurrent hike in rent within the city and the suburbs has become indeed very disturbing.

So whose responsibility is it to moderate or checkmate the incremental impulse of landlords? Does it need the intervention of government or property managers to appeal to landlords especially now that many civil servants stand the risk of vacating government apartments in the name of monetisation?

Our correspondent spoke to the managing director of Onward Properties Limited, Mr Mike Awoyemi, who stated that a landlord is under no obligation of government with regard to rentage. According to him the landlord can increase his fee any time he wants where as a tenant who feels aggrieved can move out.

He stated that in accordance with tenant/landlord agreement, a notice of six months should be issued to the tenants informing him or her of the new increment.

"We don't really blame the landlords especially these days because of the ground rents they pay to the authorities and other factors

like electricity bills and water," he said.

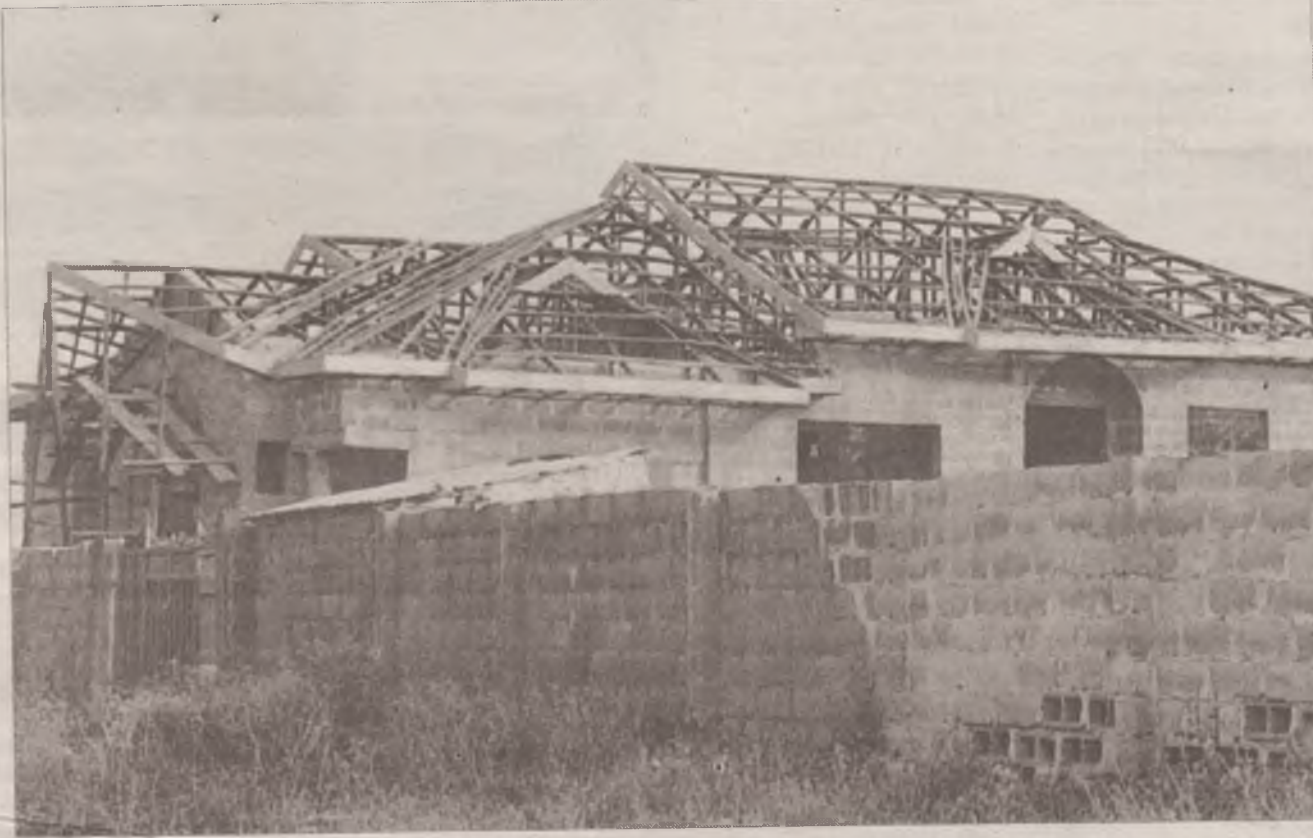
A landlord at Lugbe Federal Housing Estate, Phase II,

want to see their tenants' progress so that they would perpetually be under their roofs, a situation she said ex-

like the city centre and some decent suburbs like Kubwa, Karu, Lugbe, Gwarinpa and a few others where getting ac-

water and electricity.

A visit to some of the slum settlements revealed that most houses are bare of such



Structures like this are daily being built in Abuja, yet the prices of renting them continue to go up

Mr. Tokunbo Tyabalaki, told *Abuja Trust* that he has never had any problem with his tenants because they usually pay a two-year initial payment after which he would raise the rent. "The best way to avoid any problem is for a tenant to try to pay for two years at least," Mr Tokunbo said adding that rents continue to go up "as building equipment continue to increase in the market. This, he said are usually reflected by landlords in house rents.

For Madam Ngozi Iroh, a tenant at Nyanya, it is not just the rise in the prices of building materials that influences sudden increments by landlords. She believes that it is because of the jealousy of landlords who do not

want to see their tenants' progress so that they would perpetually be under their roofs, a situation she said ex-

ists where tenants reside in the same premises with the landlord. "Imagine how a jealous landlord would feel, when he sees his tenants' dustbins filled with used cans of juice, canned fish and all kinds of goodies. Next day he sees you with a new car and after that he hears that you have been promoted at work place," Madam Iroh said, concluding that when landlords see or hear news of progress of their tenants they resort to increasing their house rent.

"When you try to resist the next thing you get is quit notice. The quit notice is given because of your recent achievements," Madam Iroh declares.

Investigations by our correspondent revealed that just

commodation is expensive, houses built on squalid areas like Gwagwa, Dei-dei, Jabi, Karmo and a multitude of others are equally on the high side given the near absence of essential utility services like

essential facilities as toilet, bathroom, kitchen, or even pit latrines. Residents rely mostly on water vendors (*mai-ruwa*) for water and most times generating sets for electricity.

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# Abuja Trust

## Meningitis immunisation suspended due to vaccine shortage

The immunisation against cerebro-spinal meningitis in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) has been suspended due to insufficient supply of the vaccine from the National Programme on Immunisation.

Our correspondent who was at the FCT public health centre at Garki, reports that many people were asked to come back next week or go to other organisations for their immunisation.

According to the doctor in charge of the exercise, Dr. Balaraba, about 1.2 million doses of the vaccine were requested for but only 200 thousand doses were delivered. Out of this, the doctor said,

## FCT Fadama project moves to check conflicts

The FCT Fadama Development Project is to hold a conflict resolution workshop soon for stakeholders in the agricultural sector in the territory.

Amongst other things, the workshop will seek to check disputes between farmers and herdsmen in the FCT.

Speaking with the *News Agency of Nigeria (NAN)* yesterday in Gwagwalada, the FCT fadama project coordinator, Mike Uwazie, said the workshop was to assist reduce conflicts among agricultural practitioners in the FCT.

According to him, it was to ensure that farmers carry out their activities without infringing on the activities of others.

He said that the workshop became necessary due to incessant conflicts between farmers and herdsmen and among other practitioners in the agricultural sector.

He said the workshop which was expected to hold by the end of this month, would educate all stakeholders on how to operate without infringing on others.

The coordinator explained that during the workshop, herdsmen would be taught how to graze without damaging farms or farm produce, which he noted had been a regular source of conflict.

He added that fishermen would also be educated on how to carry out their trade without endangering sources of water to the communities within which carry out their trade.

He said hunters as well as other practitioners would also be educated on ways of operating without hurting their host communities or other practitioners.

Uwazie argued that by reducing conflicts, agricultural practitioners would be able to improve their productivity and output since they would

and it will have to follow due process so till next week."

However, according to the NPI manager, Alhaji Labaran Buhari, the exercise have covered many places within the FCT like Karmo, Tungan Madaki, Keffi, Sheretti, Burum, Gbagarefe, Jikwoyi, Karu, Jiwa, Kurudu and others.

## Police Command gets new PPRO

The FCT commissioner of police, Mr Emmanuel Adebayo, has appointed Mr Ativie Ehiomele, as the command's new police public relations officer (PPRO).

A deputy superintendent of police, Ehiomele, was enlisted into the force in 1973. A graduate of Law from University of Abuja, the new PPRO was before his appointment the divisional traffic officer in Garki division.

Ehiomele served as the second in command to the DTO in Kuje Division and also the officer in charge of patrol and guard at Kwali division. The PPRO has since assumed duty.

By Maimuna Yusuf,  
Reporter (Abuja)

Abuja Municipal area council office was given 100,000 about 50,000 was given to FCT public health centre while 50,000 went to other organisations and institutions on request.

Dr. Balaraba explained further that the only alternative for now is to retrieve some doses of the vaccine from these organisations that might still have some remaining saying: "we have been immunising over a hundred people daily and the vaccine got finished, we will write the government for more since it is not something we can buy

be able to expand their scope of operation.

He noted that improved scope of operations would also translate into higher income for the practitioners in the sector.

"By reducing conflicts, practitioners will be able to produce more thereby scaling down the poverty level in the FCT, he said.

Staff of the Bwari area council of the FCT have been given a two-year ultimatum to become computer literate.

Speaking at the opening of a two-week computer training workshop on Tuesday in Bwari, its chairman, Mr Isah Dara, said that computer literacy was now compulsory for all staff of the council.

Dara said that the workshop had become necessary in view of the global trend and the need for staff of the council to keep up with technological development.

He said since computers were now widely used to improve efficiency in official

## Bwari council urges workers to embrace computer

activities, there was the need for staff of the council to acquire computer skills.

He said the council was giving all staff of the council two years within which they were expected to equip themselves with computer knowledge.

He warned that any staff who refuses to become computer literate after two years would face sanctions such as loss of promotions and allowances.

Dara urged participants to

make maximum use of the computer workshop to acquire skills.

According to him, the council on its part would provide computers to offices so that staff could practice while carrying out their duties.

He appealed to other staff not participating at the workshop to explore other means of acquiring computer skills.

He assured them that the council would support them in their quest to improve themselves academically.

## Muslim pilgrims get luggage

The anxiety being expressed by FCT Muslim pilgrims to this year's Hajj will soon be over as their luggage are expected to arrive this week.

Speaking with the *News Agency of Nigeria (NAN)* in Gwagwalada, the director, FCT Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board (MPWB), Alhaji Husseni Ashara, said that arrangement had been concluded for the delivery of the luggage.

Ashara said the airlift of the luggage, which com-

menced on Tuesday night from Jeddah airport, would be concluded before the end of the week.

He said that by Friday this week all the luggage would have been delivered to the Hajj camp in Gwagwalada.

He said that excess luggage of the pilgrims which were airlifted under separate arrangement with a different airliner had arrived at the camp.

The director blamed the late delivery of pilgrims' luggage on delays in the remit-

tance of money by the directorate of pilgrims.

He appealed to the pilgrims to exercise patience as their luggage would soon be delivered to them.

He added that the board had made adequate security arrangements to ensure the safety of luggage at both the airport and the camp where they would be kept before final delivery to pilgrims.

"Security officials have been put on alert to ensure that the luggage are not tampered with," he added.

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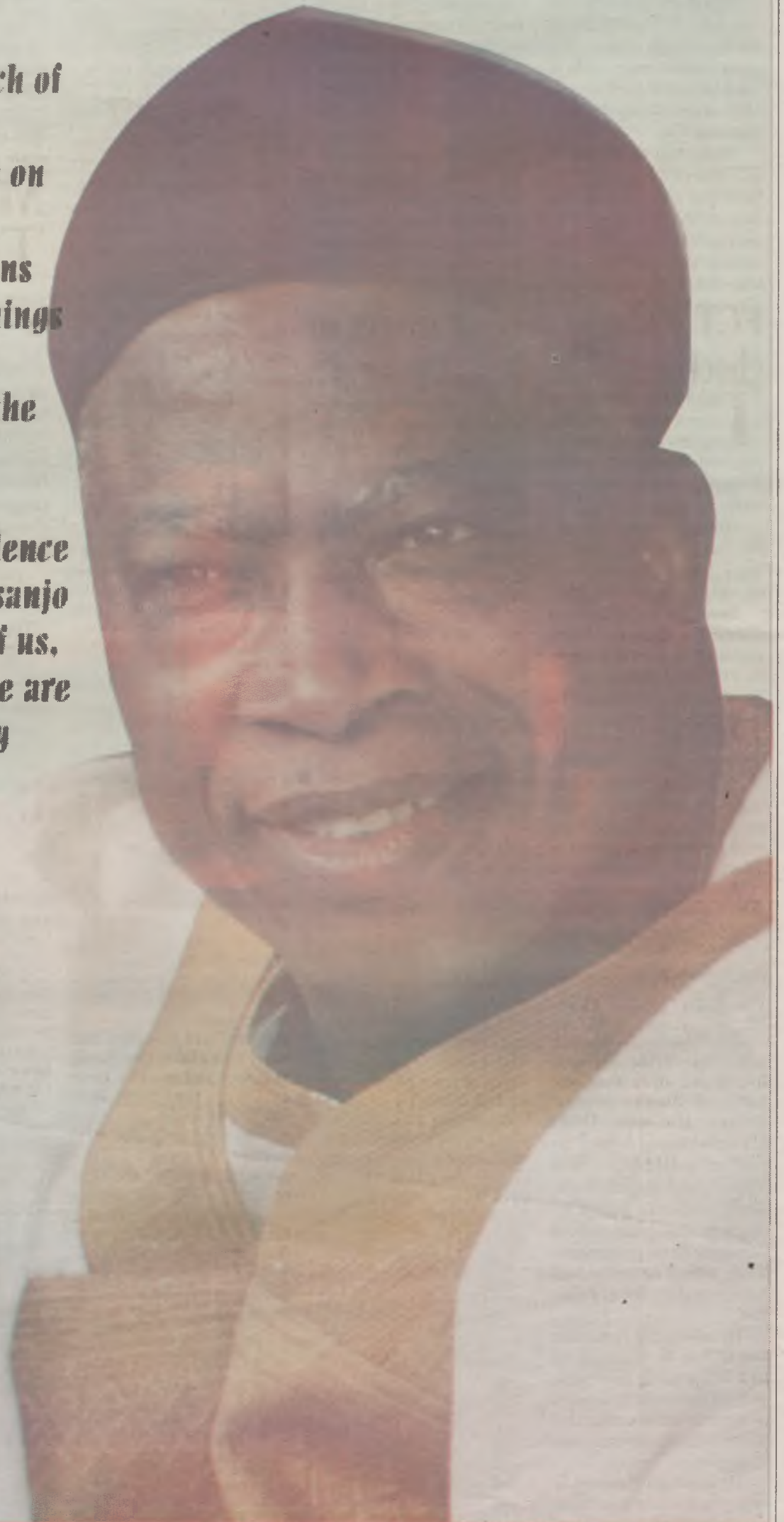
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Governor, Nasarawa State**



# KANO TRUST

## Behind the scenes of Hajj 2005

Hajj is one of the five pillars of Islam, which every Moslem, if given the opportunity, desires to fulfill. Every year, the Islamic rite is given the attention it deserves with elaborate plans made by the authorities in charge to ensure a hitch-free exercise. Hajj 2005 was not an exception, though the harassment caused some difficulties.

The Kano State Pilgrims Welfare Board, in conjunction with Kobo Air and IRS Airlines, which were contracted to airlift pilgrims, was up and doing to make the exercise superb; nonetheless, the issue of airlift of pilgrims by both airlines later became contentious.

It was however the expectation of every pilgrim to embark on the pilgrimage without much difficulty to perform the religious rite and gain the spiritual satisfaction of heeding the call of the Almighty Allah. Contrary to this expectation, most of the pilgrims from Kano State acknowledged that Hajj 2005 had both outstanding features that should be sustained as well as areas for improvement.

Prior to the exercise, it could be recalled that the Kano State government affirmed its ability to provide the best accommodation facilities for its pilgrims at *Mallah on Almasjid Almuhammadiyah* road in *Makkah*. But from every indication, the pilgrims' expectations were not met. A cross-section of pilgrims interviewed in *Makkah* said that the accommodation was far from the mosque, disclosing that about 20 to 25 minutes walk from the site of the accommodation to the mosque inconvenienced them.

Hajiya Rakiya Mohammed of Sheka quarters said that because she had *arthritis*, she had to spend extra-money in paying taxis each time she went to the mosque, a development she said made her spend more than she budgeted. Another pilgrim, Hajiya Halimah Umar Darmanawa, told *Kano Trust* that she trekked often because she had little money on her to pay taxis. She said she actually did not mind the distance as she considered it a sacrifice for the benefit of

By Jamilah Nuhu Musa,  
Who was in Saudi Arabia

*ibadat*. According to her, the distance depended on how fast one could walk, saying 'it can be done in ten minutes or one hour'.

For Ladidi Ibrahim Dabai and Mallam Aliyu Zango, it was not the issue of how far the accommodation was to the holy mosque, but the condition of the lodge for both male and female pilgrims. Ladidi said that the toilet facility for instance was appalling. Her words: "We cannot flush the toilet; and the bathroom is always flooded with water." Mallam Aliyu Zango also expressed the same feeling about the male toilets.

The clinic was not left out. In fact, at a time, doctors and nurses at the clinic demanded that the landlord sweep the environment of the clinic. The medical team decried the dirty environment, and attributed cholera that afflicted pilgrims to the squalid environment.

Investigations by *Kano Trust* showed that refuse was dumped at 2<sup>nd</sup> floor where food was sold. Decrying the environment, a medical doctor who claimed anonymity told *Kano Trust* that "most of the pilgrims who come here are treated for cholera. Look at the refuse dump and look at food sold at the same area, so what do you expect?"

Attempts to reach the landlord, whose name was given as Abu Abdulrahman, proved abortive but one of the cleaners, Auwalu Abdul-lahi, told *Kano Trust* that pilgrims had made several complaints about the condition of the building. He disclosed that male cleaners were prohibited from cleaning female apartments.

The issue of security came strongly as most of the pilgrims worried about the identity of people who often came into their apartments. The rooms occupied five, seven or more pilgrims who had different agenda at different occasions. While some of the occupants went to the mosque, others went to eat or to shop. On such occasions, they had to decide between themselves where to hide the key to their room. On some occasion

when they decide that one of their roommates could go with the key, the rest would contend with waiting for the particular pilgrim who had the key. It was feared that all sorts of people came into the building with different motives. While some whose identity could hardly be verified came to see their relations, others were traders who came to sell their wares from door to door. The fear

often in the mosque because "I hate this thing - any time I get to the lodge and there is no one to help me get to my floor, I used to sit outside the building until I get someone who can assist me."

Another aged woman, Nana Aisha Mandawari, who said she had chest pain, said she opted for the staircase despite her ill-health. "I use to go on the staircase little by little, until I get to my floor



The KUBAH Mosque in Medinah

of pilgrims concerning the issue of security was confirmed when on two occasions, thieves attempted to break into some rooms. A pilgrimage official who confirmed this warned female pilgrims to be more vigilant about visitors to their rooms.

During the seminars held for pilgrims before they departed to the Holy Land, they were enjoined to respect aged pilgrims.

Aged pilgrims from Kano were agile throughout the exercise. They were seen going about their activities diligently. The only problem that they faced was the lift in the building. They viewed it as a nightmare. Most of the aged male and female pilgrims said that they had never seen a lift before. Some said they had to close their eyes each time they were lifted. The situation to them was so frustrating that they needed the assistance of other pilgrims to help them operate the lift.

An aged female pilgrim, Hajara Liman, told *Kano Trust* that she had to stay most

and my apartment," she disclosed.

The issue of the lift was really a serious matter, as it went out of function most times and could only return to use after repair work. Fatima Amina Yusuf, a victim of a malfunctioned lift, told *Kano Trust* that she spent two hours in the lift which had to be forced open after she called operators on phone to rescue her. 'It was suffocating,' she stated. Another pilgrim who narrated her ordeal said that she and her younger brother were also stranded in the lift when it refused to open for some time. Yet others said they had to pray for Allah's guidance any time they used the lift.

Further investigations however indicated that the lift, which was not in use for the past five years, was only reactivated when the Kano State government indicated interest to rent the house. One of the cleaners, Auwalu Abdullahi, said that the lift was in good condition when Indonesian nationals occupied the building in year 2000

Hajj. Pilgrims however said that the state government should consider the issue of the lift when accommodation for Hajj 2006 commences.

The usual talk by Islamic scholars, and the pilgrims' welfare boards every year for pregnant women, nursing mothers and mentally deranged people to abstain from Hajj remained unheeded as these categories of people performed this year's hajj in large numbers. This led to some of the complications experienced by women during the exercise.

Pregnant women walked to the mosque tiredly, while those who could afford to pay for taxis to convey them did; but a greater number stayed home. A pilgrim who was delivered of her baby in Madina told *Kano Trust* that she was happy about the development. Several other pregnant women disclosed that though hajj activities were not easy for them, there was nothing wrong with embarking on the pilgrimage while pregnant.

The same went for nursing mothers who came with their kids. Some kids actually got lost and were found by pilgrimage officials in Mina. A nursing mother, who left her baby in Nigeria, said she often pressed her breasts to remove milk because without that, they swell up and were often painful. Another pathetic situation of a child was when a baby's mother was left behind in Mina and the baby had to be brought back to *Makkah* by a friend of the mother. The baby, who was barely 4 months old, cried bitterly.

On the issue of mentally deranged pilgrims, Islamic scholars had stated as well that they should abstain from the exercise. The situation arose in *Makkah* when a mentally deranged woman had to be placed under sedatives to calm her absurd behaviour. This situation made it impossible for her to perform most religious duties.

Pilgrims from Kano State also faced the problem of communication between them and pilgrimage officials, especially in *Madinah* and *Jeddah*. Mallam Abubakar Isa Ibrahim, from Sokoto State, who is a staff of the passport office in Madina,

corroborated this fact. He said that most often, pilgrims were abandoned to their fate in *Makkah* and *Madinah*. In his words: "the federal government's officials are the worst culprits. Once they get here, they no longer care about pilgrims. Last year, some Arab miscreants snatched a cell phone and some money from Nigerian pilgrims. When we got the report and we presented the case to the federal government team, they said there was nothing they could do about it. We also reported the issue of non-Nigerians coming into the Holy Land with Nigerian passports, but no action has been taken up to now."

On the issue of high cost of food experienced throughout the pilgrimage, pilgrims called on federal and state governments to look into the issue. They described the situation of buying a small paper cup tea for one *riyal*, an equivalent of 40 naira as absurd. They commended Governor Ibrahim Shekarau for giving each pilgrim 50 Saudi *Riyal* to cushion the effect of lack of money at the tail end of the exercise. They also commended him for the high quality of pilgrims' boxes imported from China.

On the discomfort experienced in the Holy Land in connection with the accommodation, the lift and the appalling situation of the toilets and apartments, the special adviser to Governor Shekarau on Special Duties and member of the task force on Hajj, Hajiya Mariya Sanusi Mahadi, said it was not intentional.

Hajiya Mahadi, who spoke with *Kano Trust* in *Makkah*, said that government's decision to get the *Mallah* accommodation was to help pilgrims to be accommodated in one place, and to reduce the incident of pilgrims getting, especially aged pilgrims. She observed that pilgrimage to the Holy Land was a serious religious programme. "Pilgrims are not here for a shopping spree; they prefer to be accommodated in *Sharamansir* and *Nakasa* areas, which are more commercial, and lively."

Concerning the lift experiences, she said the aged people would get used to it, and called on the people who sponsor mentally unsound persons to desist from doing so. According to her, "we do not have the capacity to treat mentally unbalanced pilgrims."



The controversial Kano pilgrims accommodation, which is about 30 minutes walk to the Holy Mosque in Mecca



Some of the selected media men that formed the publicity committee in the Holy land

# EKO TRUST

## Child trafficking: How police rescued 64 kids

While residents of Amukoko area of Ajeromi Ifelodun local government council were celebrating the relative peace that had just returned to the area following the bloody clash between members of the National Road Transport Union Workers and the students of Ijanikin and Cardoso colleges where a student was reportedly shot dead and two others seriously wounded, the police were busy unfolding another incident of more horrendous proportion.

This time around, it is the mystery behind a truck that had attempted to ferry some kids, about 64, crammed in a sealed container, to other West African countries. The Lagos State police command, on March 5, intercepted the truck en route Lagos from Nupe land in Niger State.

The truck, with registration number XA 103 BRT, looked ordinary: no windows, like the type used to carry fish; and padlocked. It could not have attracted the attention of the police, but for the intermittent bangs and noises coming from inside.

***"A policeman, Mohammed, from Niger State police command, who claimed to be the brother of the principal suspect, said his sister was innocent of the alleged human trafficking. He insisted that he knew all the people in the truck. "I was formerly living in Lagos, but now serve at the Niger State police command. The women are into petty businesses, like groundnut selling and their men engage in the exchange of clothes for plastics," he narrated."***

The only visible occupants were the driver and seven women who sat on the front seat.

As expected of a trained police force, the truck was halted for a routine check. The driver, apparently aware of his deal, readily wanted to grease the palms of the cops, unknown to him that 'integrity' has become the motto. Thus, he was forced to open the container.

Hitherto, the driver and other occupants in the front seat tried in vain to convince the police that the content of the truck was frozen fish. When it was eventually

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

opened, behold, there were 64 frail looking persons inside the dark container: 6 adults suspected to have hands in the deal, 58 teenagers, including female children who were under 18 years old, 11 of whom, between one and four years old, were babies. Many of them were naked. They were said to have pulled off their dresses apparently to contain the heat. The kids were believed to be natives of Nupe, Mokwa, in Niger State. The vehicle is allegedly owned by Xpress Partners Limited, a courier/freight services company.

After discovering the deal, the police arrested the suspected child trafficker, middle-aged Alhaja Fatima Baba; the driver of the lorry and a young man who posed as the conductor. While the suspects were detained at Amukoko Police Station, the kids were put under police custody.

Speaking with our correspondent shortly before she was transferred to the force SCID, Alhaja Fatima Baba claimed that she was



Truck with registration number, Benue XA 103 BRT, where 64 children were rescued by the police.

their lorry which they were travelling in ran out order and asked me to help them."

Alabi denied any collusion in the incident, saying he did not know the woman. "I was only helping, and that is how I found myself in this problem. Police did not stop us on the way until we got to Amukoko. I don't understand all these. We are not kidnapers," he lamented.

The owner of the truck, Tunde Lawal, who was also at the police station to defend the driver, said Xpress Partners Limited is a registered courier and freight company. He added that he sent his driver to Abuja on Thursday of the preceding week to deliver some consignments, and wondered why the police should arrest a man because he was trying to help stranded people.

"The parents of these children are here. They have identified their wards. Why are the police still holding them?" he said.

One of the women among those that were rescued said: "We were staying in Lagos before we travelled home. This woman (Alhaja Fatima) travelled to Mecca. We were waiting for her to come back. When she came back, we decided to come back to Lagos with her. When we reached Mokwa, the vehicle malfunctioned. And when

this driver approached, we begged him to convey us to Ilorin.

"He said he was not used to carrying people in his vehicle, but we begged him to help us as it was already at night. He brought us down to Lagos. It was when we got to Lagos and about to disembark from the vehicle that we were arrested by the police."

She denied working for Alhaja.

A policeman, Mohammed, from Niger State police command, who claimed to be the brother of the principal suspect, said his sister was innocent of the alleged human trafficking. He insisted that he knew all the people in the truck.

"I was formerly living in

Lagos, but now serve at the Niger State police command. The women are into petty businesses, like groundnut selling and their men engage in the exchange of clothes for plastics," he narrated. According to Mohammed, the suspect collected the kids to help their parents, adding that when they make money in Lagos, it is sent back to their parents.

It was amazing that the alleged trafficker claimed ignorant of the offence of human trafficking in spite of the vigorous campaigns by Women Trafficking and Child Labour Eradication Foundation initiated by the wife of the vice president.

At the FCID, the police authorities are working round

the clock to unravel the mystery behind the unholy incident of March 5. Both the suspects and the rescued children are being interviewed one after the other by officers of the trafficking section.

According to one of the officers who spoke with our correspondent, the investigation is going to be exhaustive because "we don't want to leave any stone unturned in our desire to get to the root of this matter."

But Nigerians are asking the police and the government to ensure that this matter is not swept under the carpet. Those who spoke with our correspondent lamented the rate at which unemployment is driving parents and other Nigerians to unholy activities.

## Lagos assembly dissolves c'ttees

The Lagos State House of Assembly has dissolved all 31 House committees in its domain following some recent moves to infuse order in its activities.

Announcing the dissolution of the committees during a plenary session on Tuesday, the speaker of the state's House of Assembly, Mr. Joko Pelumi, said that the committees would be reconstituted at a later date.

Pelumi further stated that the dissolved committees had undertaken various

activities and discharged their statutory and constitutional functions in the scheme of things creditably. He explained that by his letter of February 23, 2003, addressed to all the chairmen, they had been directed to render reports of their stewardship to the House from inception to date with a view to evaluating their performances in line with the focus and vision of the House.

The speaker said there was so much in the pipeline, which still needed to be done

by the House, hence the review and evaluation of the House activities.

He said, "The House, through the instrument, has resolved that all House committees be dissolved and they are hereby dissolved to be reconstituted at a later date".

He however disclosed that the committees would all be converted to ad-hoc committees of the House, until they are reconstituted to enable them to undertake activities relating to their various portfolios.

# News

## Borno engages army in civil works

The Borno State government is to engage engineers in the Nigerian Army in the construction of roads, bridges and other civil engineering works as a means of making them 'practise their skills'.

Governor Ali Modu Sherrif made this known yesterday in Maiduguri in response to a request by the visiting General Officer Commanding (GOC) Third Armoured Division, Jos, Major General Isiaku Ahmed Dikko, who paid him a courtesy visit.

General Dikko had requested the governor to engage army engineers in the 21 Armoured Bidgate, Maiduguri, by providing them with jobs such as the construction of rural roads and

From Abdullahi Bego,  
Regional Editor  
(Maiduguri)

'baby' bridges that link rural communities to help them practise their skills.

The GOC observed that while the army have a crop of well trained engineers, many of them "now do very little because we have nothing in the army to offer them (in terms of engineering works)."

General Ahmed Dikko added that the army engineers would be very willing to perform such services at rates lower than those charged by contractors. "The job they will do will be a lot cheaper than what a contractor will do...

what we are asking for is an opportunity to give our men the chance to continue to practise", he said.

The GOC also revealed that the Nigerian Army is involved in a massive, soon-to-take-off tree planting exercise, designed to halt problems associated with desertification.

The tree planting exercise is part of Obasanjo administration's drive to establish a 'green wall' against desert encroachment by planting up to one million trees from Sokoto to the edge of the Lake Chad.

While assuring the GOC that the Borno State government will patronise the army engineers, Governor Sherrif also commended the army for improving security in the state, which shares a border with the republics of Cameroon, Chad and Niger.

Governor Sherrif also expressed appreciation for the army's recognition of the state government's socio-economic interventions, saying that with the generous comments of the GOC in that direction, "we can now sleep very well".

The governor also called on the GOC to continue to ensure that men of the armed forces remain steadfast in their fight against crime and criminal activities in the state, in view of the fact that Borno State has a common border with three neighbouring countries, which makes it unique in terms of security requirements and readiness.

## Bayelsa gov. advocates permanent solution to Niger Delta crises

The only panacea to the recurring youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region is for the federal government to cease to have monopoly over mineral resources and enable states and local governments with required funding to attain their development objectives, the governor of Bayelsa State, Chief D.S.P. Alamieyeseigha, has declared in Ibadan.

In the alternative, the governor said the federal government should immediately instill confidence in the people of the Niger Delta and demonstrate that it is genuinely interested in developing this vital region, which he described as "the real food basket of the nation".

Governor Alamieyeseigha made the declaration at a public lecture entitled: "The Niger Delta Crises, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," under the auspices of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan.

In the lecture which lasted two hours, Governor Alamieyeseigha noted with concern that the Niger Delta had suffered 200 years of worsening physical and economic crises and blamed them on unfavourable economic, educational and social security policies by government against the indigenes.

According to the governor, it is regrettable that the Niger Delta region from which the country derives over 90 per cent of its foreign exchange earnings through the oil and gas revenue is left in such a pitiable backward position with most of its people neglected and impoverished.

"The Niger Delta, as it is today, qualifies as a national emergency", the governor stated regretfully, saying there is degradation all over the place with little or nothing to show for the multi-billion dollar oil being extracted from the hand.

To change the negative trend, Governor

From Dele Ogunyemi,  
correspondent (Ibadan)

Alamieyeseigha called for the development of a deliberate and properly executed job creation strategy for the Niger Delta "so that the many agitated and qualified youths and adults alike can enjoy job placements".

Furthermore, a Niger Delta Industrial Bank should be established with a specific mandate to ensure the economic development of the region, he recommended.

## Police halt students' riots

The police yesterday averted what would have been a major breakdown of law and order as students of Rivers State College of Education took to the roads to protest various issues including neglect and insensitivity on the part of the school authorities and the increase in school fees recently announced.

Our reporter gathered that trouble started in the early hours of Tuesday when the students started demonstrating around the school premises leading to quick intervention by the police.

An eyewitness told our reporter that the police used tear gas to dispel the protesters and in the process, arrested at least 20 of them who were then taken to the police station. People who saw the police van that conveyed the arrested students told our reporter that some of them were in bad shape with battered heads and torn clothes.

When *Daily Trust* contacted the police public relations officer in the state, Mrs Ireju Barasua, she confirmed that the police had arrested some students who participated in the riot whom she said had been taken to the force CID. Although she could not say the number of students in police custody, she confirmed that investigations were on and those found to have taken laws into

From Ikenna Emeka  
Okpani, Bureau Chief,  
(Port Harcourt)

their hands would be charged to court to serve as a deterrent to other students who might want to take laws into their hands.

"The school has laid down procedure of venting grievances but the students took the laws into their hands and would have caused serious problem in the area. When police arrived there, the students attacked them with dangerous weapons. They behaved like animals," she said.

She said the area command in the area, Mr Dekibo led the anti-riot operation and commended them for what she called professional handling of the case. Our reporter gathered that although the police are saying they used only minimal force to bring law and order to the situation, some of the arrested students were manhandled resulting in bad injuries in some cases, and none of the injured persons had been taken to hospital.

Efforts to get the school authorities to comment on the issue failed before press time but our reporter gathered that the National Association of Nigerian Students was looking into the case and had called on the police to ensure the release of the arrested

## OMAGEDGE IN KEANA: NOT IN CONTENTION

The entire nation watched with disbelief and a sense of admiration as the Nasarawa State government under the leadership of Alhaji (Dr) Abdullahi Adamu (Sarkin Yakin Keffi) embarked on ceaseless meetings, dialogue and other measures with his Benue counterpart to nix in the bud, the ethnic crises that rocked the Southern Senatorial district of Nasarawa State in 2002.

The swiftness of governments action, and indeed its glaring concern for and commitment to protecting the lives of its people earned the governor-Adamu led administration the enviable tag of the "peacemakers".

Today, that peace that we have all laboured to uphold, and which has to all intent and purposes returned to the Southern part of the State could yet be shattered if urgent steps are not taken to address some vital issues that could turn out to be a time bomb waiting to explode in some parts of the State.

It is against this backdrop that after series of meeting both within our community and along with our Tiv counterparts (neighbours), the Keana community of Nasarawa State wish to raise an alarm over attempts by some few individuals of the Tiv extraction living in Chen compound of Omagedge village area of Keana LGC, to cause confusion that could lead to breakdown of law and order in our locality.

It is on available record that the coming of the Tiv to what is now known as Nasarawa State is traceable to Keana where they came in search of farmlands during the reign of Osana Eladoga Onyatikpo and subsequently increased in number using Keana as the gate way to other parts of the region.

It is also clearly on record that Omagedge village area has been part of present day Keana even before the arrival of Tiv to the area as could be traced in the boarder demarcations of 1916, 1919 and 1924, apart from several other attempts to mark out a final demarcation by the Federal Government which was resisted by the Tiv people of Benue State, particularly in 1988, 1990 and 1995.

It is therefore a clear disregard to the existing map of the Federal Boundary Commission that few Tiv people in the said Omagedge transferred their allegiance to Guma LGC of Benue State since 1994 and continued to provide the peace loving people of Keana and Nasarawa by insisting that Omagedge is a part of Benue State.

The present issue at stake, which is the proposed burial of the late district head of Mbaduwe in Guma, Mr. Geve Gwabo at Chen compound of Omagedge village of Keana where he was born is threatening to turn out to be a bait that is likely to spark of another crisis in Keana and other parts of the State.

The Keana community is not in any way opposed to the burial of late Gwabo or any other Tiv person for that matter at Omagedge, but our quarrel is the failure to inform our authorities and the attempt by those few individuals to finally lay claim to the village as belonging to Guma LGC of Benue State after the burial.

### PRAYERS

In view of the foregoing therefore, we wish to state as follows:

1. We appeal passionately to the Federal Boundary Commission to finally settle this recurring dispute over the boundary between Nasarawa and Benue States by carrying out a final survey demarcation of the areas under contention.
2. The Nasarawa State Government under the leadership of Governor Abdullahi Adamu (Sarkin Yakin Keffi) should, as a matter of urgency, re-enact its peace form and dust its peace initiative by taking measures that would avert a possible outbreak of crises and breakdown of law and order in the area. This is against the fact that there are authorities of Keana LGC and the State Government over the issue under review.
3. In the same vein, and to maintain the relative peaceful-co-existence existing between Benue and Nasarawa States, we wish to call on the Benue State Government to as usual, come together with our State Government so as to find a way out of the present problem, and if possible, the said burial be performed at Guma where he died as a district head in the interest of peace.
4. Finally, the Keana community, including our brothers and sisters of Tiv extraction in Omagedge village of Keana LGC wish to reiterate our resolve to live in peace with ourselves and our neighbours and are ready to, as always, follow the path of peace and harmonious co-existence.

Long Live Keana LGA!  
Long Live Nasarawa State!!  
Long Live Federal Republic of Nigeria!!!

### SIGNED:

1. Oki Community Leader - Abari Agbhoshu
2. Iwagu Community Leader - Osana Orume
3. Obene Community Leader - Ogbole Idadu
4. Amiri Community Leader - Odapu Ogaji
5. Sgt Godwin Thabo
6. Mr. Moses Ogyere
7. Mr. Gbayima Nyam

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**Honourable Commissioner**  
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**Katsina State**

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- (1) Engineer Bala Almu Banye FNSE, Hon. Commissioner of Works, Housing & Transport, Katsina State
- (2) Engineer Rabiuh Ibrahim FNSE, Director of Civil Engineering, Ministry of Works, Housing & Transport, Katsina State
- (3) Engineer Kabir Umar FNSE, Director/Project Manager, Ministry of Health Katsina State



**Engineer Rabiuh Ibrahim  
FNSE**



**Engineer Bala Almu  
Banye FNSE**



**Engineer Kabir Umar  
FNSE**

As you are being conferred with fellowship award of Nigerian Society of Engineers (NSE) today, 18th March, 2005, we in **SCL** share with you the joy of this great achievement. Your contributions to the development of Katsina State and the Country in general are clear indications of your hard won award of Fellowship of this esteemed society.

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# News

## Afe Babalola advocates return to parliamentary, regional govt

Senior Advocate of Nigeria, Chief Afe Babalola, has called for a restructured Nigeria under a parliamentary and regional system of government. He made the call in Ibadan on Wednesday while delivering the first annual memorial lecture in honour of the late Justice Adewale Thompson, the foundation general secretary of the pan-Yoruba socio-cultural group, Yoruba Council of Elders (YCE).

While advocating the adoption of the parliamentary

From Dele Ogunyemi, correspondent Ibadan system of government as against the present presidential system, Chief Babalola argued that "the American form of presidential system of government being operated by Nigeria is too expensive for our resources to conveniently accommodate. It is high time we faced the reality of our existence," he maintained.

He however stated that if Nigeria must continue with the presidential system, 'the

whole system needs overhauling and restructuring in order to conform to presidential features'.

While calling for a regional government, he stressed the need for more powers to the zones, instead of concentration of powers and funds at the centre.

The renowned lawyer opined that the present states in the country should be restructured to zones with the present six zones increased to eight to accommodate more nationalities of common origins.

Hospitals which reject accident victims brought to them by road marshals risk a fine of N50,000. This was disclosed by the Nasarawa State FRSC sector commander, Mr Helda Nehemiah.

Mr Nehemiah told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on Wednesday in Lafia that the order would come into effect from April 3, adding that traffic offenders would also pay N5,000 fines instead of N500 from that date.

He said the commission had intensified its public enlightenment campaign for motorists and other members of the public not to violate traffic rules.

The number of road

## Reject accident victims, pay N50,000 fine — FRSC

accidents in the state dropped from 40 per cent in 2003 to 35 per cent last year, he said, adding that so far, it had witnessed a five per cent drop this year. Nehemiah attributed the drop to the command's aggressive enlightenment campaign which was launched in 2003.

He commended the good conduct of drivers and other road users in the state, and urged them to maintain the positive development so that lives and property could be saved on highways.

The sector command regretted the absence of towing van and ambulance in the command, and appealed to the state government to assist the commission.

Nehemiah reminded the government that the ambulance would facilitate the evacuation of accident victims to hospitals and thus avoid any untimely death.

## Police prosecutors and lawyers enjoined to be diligent

By Benjamin Auta, Crime Reporter

In a bid to tackle the problem of decongestion of prisons in the country, the acting Inspector-General of Police, Mr. Sunday Ehindero, has summoned a meeting of all police prosecutors, lawyers and directors of public prosecution to a stakeholders' meeting.

During the meeting, Mr Ehindero expressed dismay at the way police prosecutors performed in court, and that their inefficiency had led to the decongestion of prisons with over 70% of people who were presumed innocent languishing in jail while awaiting trial.

He said that the issue of 'Holden-Charge' had been declared moribund by law, as any person detained under it must be released unconditionally. He said that the role of prosecutors in criminal justice system was to prosecute and not to persecute, and to present cases as they were and not to distort facts.

He called on the prosecutors to be thorough and expedient in the course of carrying out their duties, noting that police prosecutors must have a thorough knowledge of the law.

Mr. Ehindero further disclosed that apart from training prosecutors abroad, a two-week seminar course would be organised for them locally where professionals drawn from the Federal Ministry of Justice, National Judicial Institute and human rights groups will educate them to make them more proactive.

## Nasarawa judicial workers give 21-day ultimatum

Judicial workers in Nasarawa state have given the state government a 21-day ultimatum to, among other things, address the issue of non-implementation of arrears of promoted staff in the state judiciary or face the wrath.

The workers, under the aegis of Judicial Employees Negotiating Council (JENC), said if on March 29, 2005, the state government did not address their grievances, they would down tool to press home their demands.

The strike threat was contained in a communiqué jointly signed by the state's chairmen of Judiciary Staff Association of Nigeria (JUSAN), Area Courts Judges and Magistrates Association of Nigeria (MAN), Mr Simon A. Auna, Yusuf Yakubu and Sama'ila I. Usaini, respectively, among other signatories.

According to the communiqué, the Nasarawa state judiciary does not enjoy the status of a third arm of the government, as enshrined in the constitution, a copy of which was made available to the Daily Trust, said also that the state judiciary was subjected to the 'tortuous process of having to queue up at the office of the state's Head of Civil Service to collect its entitlements'.

"The judiciary will have to go running cup in hand, pursuing its salaries and other monies due to it from the executive to such an embarrassing situation that instead of being legal drafters and interpreters of the law, it has become memo writers," it said.

The workers also called on the state government to heed to the provision of section 121 (3) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which states that: "Any amount standing to the credit of the judiciary in the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the state shall be paid directly to the heads of the courts concerned."

According to the workers, the non-implementation of section 121 (3) of the

By Abdullahi M. Gulloma, Labour Reporter

constitution by the state government has affected the smooth administration of justice in the state.

The judicial workers also called on the state government to give the state's Judicial Service Commission independence as envisaged by section 197, pt 11, of the third schedule of the 1999 Constitution, and ensure that all entitlements accruable to the staff of the state judiciary are paid as and when they are due.

## NBA loses member

By Mohammed Shesanya, Correspondent, Lagos

The Nigerian Bar Association, Ikeja branch, has announced the death of one of its members, Barrister Nwokedi Nwafor.

from branch, died on Sunday, the 6<sup>th</sup> day of March 2005, at the age of 53.

Nwokedi attended St John's Primary School, and St Vincent's Secondary School, both at Agbogugu, for his primary and secondary education. He was called to bar in 1983 after completing his law degree, and had since retired to private practice as the head of Nwokedi Nwafor & CO. in Ikeja, Lagos.

The late lawyer, who had a stint in journalism, rose to the exalted position of legal adviser to the Daily Times, and was elected into the Constituent Assembly of 1988/89, representing Awgu North, East and West Federal Constituency in the old Anambra State.

According to the burial arrangement from the family, there will be a Christian wake at his residence, 13, Olaribiro Street, Ikeja, on Monday, 28 March, 2005. He will be buried at his home town, Akwu village, Agbogugu, on April 1 2005.



Governor Danjuma Goje of Gombe State (left) in a warm handshake with the chairman National Action Committee on Aids, dr. babatunde Oshotimehin at Government House Gombe...recently

## NPC to spend N35.5b on 2005 Census

The National Population Commission says it is set to conduct 2005

provided with N35.5b for the exercise.

The chairman of the commission, Chief Sama'ila Makama, made this known yesterday during a public forum organised by the commission in Uyo to usher in the commencement of the exercise.

Chief Makama said out of the amount, N14b has been set aside as wages for 9000 personnel - engaged as enumerators across the country, and the balance shall be used for the acquisition of automobiles and other facilities required for the exercise.

The NPC said the N35.5b was jointly donated by the federal government and international donors, mainly from European countries. He further disclosed that with the amount, the commission would comfortably conduct the census with all amount of transparency, while the result

From Edet Ekanem, correspondent Uyo

would be released in June this

The chairman further called on communities, landlords and individuals to provide accommodation facilities to enumerators who will be posted to their communities. He however warned against bribing them to inflate the census figure to their advantage.

Chief Makama revealed that census tribunal has been set up for aggrieved individuals who may want to contest the census results. He noted that in view of the controversy surrounding the demarcation of areas for the

census, the commission has planned to publish the demarcated areas in order to make it possible for omitted areas to be included in the areas designed for the exercise to be conducted.

He therefore appealed to Nigerians to make themselves available for counting because, according to him, those not found within the demarcated areas will not be counted.

In his response, Governor Obong Victor Attah of Akwa Ibom State, represented by his adviser on Political and Legislative Affairs, Elder Joe Udobia, appealed to the commission to provide an acceptable results at the end of the exercise, while promising a peaceful atmosphere for the exercise throughout the state.

## Hospital renovation gulps N964m

Gov. Ahmadu Mu'azu of Bauchi State has disclosed that the state government has so far spent about N964 million to renovate its general hospitals. He announced this at the opening of the upgraded Boto General Hospital in Tafawa Balewa council area on Wednesday.

Mu'azu noted that another N139 million had been earmarked for the repair of three other hospitals.

Meanwhile, the government has committed N116 million to the renovation of its School of Nursing and Midwifery, and another N436 million to the

construction of the School of Health Technology, Ningi. Mu'azu said equipment worth N95 million had been procured for the general hospitals at Boto and Burra. 'A contract had also been awarded for the supply of hospital equipment worth N107 million,' he added.

# News

## FG denies awarding contract for ghost road

In a press release from the office of the minister of works, Senator Adeseye Ogunlewe, signed by his chief press secretary, Lawrence Ojabo, the Federal Ministry of Works has debunked the recent claim by a national newspaper last week that it awarded a contract for a ghost road. The statement disclosed the road under reference as the Katsina-Ala-Zaki Biam-Buruku road, a federal highway duly listed in the inventory of Federal Highways and the Federal Highway Act Cap 135 of 1990.

By Nasar Imam (Property & Environment Editor)

ministry of works, the section from Katsina-Ala-Zaki Biam was part of the major north-south federal highway route A-4 (R.90) which originates from Calabar through Ikom-Ogoja-Katsina-Ala-Zaki Biam-Wukari-Numan-Biu-Damboa to Maiduguri.

The press statement said the section from Ugba-Buruku was part of the federal highway route (R.456) which originates from Makurdi through Yandev-Buruku-Ugba to Zaki Biam. The Katsina-Ala-Zaki Biam-Ugba-

Buruku road is therefore not a ghost road. It said that contract for the 56 km road, which passes through the most fertile and rich agricultural areas of Benue state and links Taraba-Benue with Cross River state, was awarded to Messrs. P. W. Nig. Ltd for the sum of N2.73 billion with a completion period of 24 months. The ministry said that work was in progress until the contractor abandoned the site temporarily during the communal clashes at the boundary of Benue/Taraba states in 2002/2003.

Thousands of protesting youths have held the Dutse local government chairman, Alhaji Balā Yargaba, and members of the Jigawa state Ward Development Fund Committee hostage for over 4 hours. They were demanding for the release of the monthly ward development fund, which their hostages of siphoning off. The youths, who represented 196 wards of the council, accused the chairman of siphoning off millions of naira from the state's account for joint development.

According to the youths' leader, Abdullahi Adamu Kude, the council has long denied the women of the 196 wards the monthly fund of N20,000 released for the

## Jigawa Youths protest alleged diversion of LG funds

From Hassan A. Karafi Correspondent, (Dutse)

poverty alleviation programme. The youths decided to protest, he said, in order to prevent a reoccurrence of what he called 'dubious and fraudulent activities in the disbursement of the local development fund.'

Daily Trust reports that the protest nearly got out of hand when the youths insisted that they would not leave until the monthly allocation of N20,000 for women's development was released.

It would be recalled that accusations of fund diversion in the 27 local

government areas and 50 development areas of Jigawa the state had put the state government at loggerheads with local officials and led to the state government's decision to reorganise the local governments.

**FG promises payment of N2.4bn for Sokoto road construction**

From Abdulfatai Abdulsalami, Correspondent (Sokoto)

The federal government has promised to pay the sum of N2.4 billion to the Sokoto state government. The federal government has promised to pay the sum of N2.4 billion to the Sokoto state government as part-payment to the contractor handling the construction of the Rimawa-Sabon Birnin local government link road. This promise was made by the minister of works, (Chief) Senator Adeseye Ogunlewe, while on an inspection tour of federal government roads under construction in the state. The 60-kilometre road, which was awarded to PW Nig. Ltd. at the cost of N5.5 billion with a part-payment of N2.24 million some months ago, was the first port of call on the minister's itinerary. He said that the government will ensure the payment of the sum of N2.4 billion and also pay the balance to the contractor as soon as the budget is approved.

The minister maintained that the federal government is interested in making all roads of international standard, adding that the move by the Sokoto state government was a right step in the right direction.

Speaking earlier, the Sokoto state governor, Alhaji Attahiru Dalhatu Bafarawa, noted that he decided to embark on the construction of the road after an assurance by the president that the expenses would be paid back to the Sokoto state government in due course. He therefore thanked Mr. President for accepting to pay back the total expenses incurred by the state, noting that the road was very important, as part payment to the contractor handling the construction of the road from Rimawa-Sabon-Sirain local government areas of the state.

This promise was made by the Minister of Works, (Chief) Senator Adeseye Ogunlewe while on inspection of federal government roads under construction in the state.

The 60 kilometre road awarded to P.W. Nig. Ltd at the cost of N5.5 billion with a part payment of N2.24 million some months ago was the first

## Reps pledge to resolve Pension problems

By Zainab Alimi, Political Reporter

The chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Pensions, Hon. Sani Sha'aban, indicated yesterday that the committee will 'permanently resolve all complications' in the management of pensions in this country. Speaking at a meeting with paramilitary services to ascertain their preparedness to implement the 2004 Pensions Act, he disclosed that certain anomalies existed in the 2005 budget with regard to pensions.

Hon. Sha'aban announced that the committee, which was established to look into the perennial problems of pensions in the country and prescribe permanent solutions to them, will study the budget and make presentations to President Olusegun Obasanjo on how best to improve pensions management in the country. He urged the paramilitary services to provide all necessary information to the committee for a speedy assessment of the situation.

In his brief, the controller-general of pensions, Mr. Abraham I. Akpe, appealed to the federal government to reconsider the monthly 7.5 per cent contribution of the Pensions Board to the pay-as-you-go pension scheme of the federal public civil service and the Federal Capital Territory. Mr. Akpe suggested that the Pensions Board be treated in the same way as the military, which contributes 2.5 % monthly to the scheme. He also called for 100% payment of gratuity to retirees rather than the piecemeal payment of pensions and death benefits, adding that funds budgeted for the payment of five years pensions and gratuities tended to distort the payment schedule in view of the fact that voluntary retirees from service and those who die or resign cannot be accurately ascertained and budgeted for. In his presentation, the

Immigration, and Prisons Pensions Office (CIPPO), Mr. Sani Mohammed Babura, disclosed that the retirement benefits of their officers were funded from the consolidated revenue fund through the Federal Ministry of Finance, while their recurrent expenditure and capital projects budget were allocated through Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs.

He said that pensioners presently on their payroll number about 5,595. Of this number 232 were categorised as civilian staff, while there were 19 officers from the Customs, 21 from the Immigration, and 23 from the Prisons Services. He added that section 8 of the new Pensions Act states that any officer who at the commencement of the Act is entitled to retirement benefits under any pension scheme existing before the commencement of the Act, but has three years or less to retire, shall be exempted from the new pension scheme. Such officers would receive their benefits under the existing pension arrangement. 'Under the implementation of the new Pensions Act 2004, the pension right of exempted paramilitary employees has been taken over by the National Pensions Commission (NPC),' he said.

## IGP set to meet target on NHF

The Inspector-General of Police, Mr. Sunday Ehindero, has held meetings to discuss the remission of contributions to the Housing Fund deducted from police salaries since the scheme was launched in 1994. This was made known to Daily Trust in a statement signed by the force image maker, Mr. Emmanuel Igbodalo (SP). The statement said that a committee comprising 17 personnel of the police force, police community bank National Housing Fund



Minister of Solid Minerals Development, Elder Odlon Ugbesia (middle) discussing with members of the Igala Youths Council of Nigeria over the poor conditions of the Okaba Coal Mine in Kogi State ... recently.

## Obasanjo commissions projects in Kebbi tomorrow

From Aminu Mohammed, Regional Editor (Sokoto)

As part of activities marking this year's Argungu International Fishing Festival, the president, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, is to commission the Birnin Kebbi VVF Centre, among other projects. A programme of events made available to the press indicated that the president, who was expected in the Kebbi state capital yesterday, will

kick-start his tight schedule with the commissioning of the Kebbi state presidential lodge. He will thereafter commission the newly dualised Murtala Mohammed Way in the state capital and later the Haliru Abatu road, also in the state capital. Other projects to be

commissioned by the president before attending this year's grand fishing show at Argungu include the Gwangwaji bye-pass, the Adamu Aliero Housing Estate, and the recently rehabilitated Birnin Kebbi-Argungu road. The president will also commission the Zauro water works along the Birnin Kebbi-Argungu road.

Meanwhile the annual Kabanchi display, which attracts a large audience, is scheduled to take place today at the Argungu racecourse. Other activities lined up for today include the canoe race, men's swimming with pots balanced on their heads, water relay, swimming on guard, wild duck catching, among others. Events like the annual agricultural trade fair, archery, and drama competitions have already been completed. The final lap of the motor rally comes up today at

By Benjamin Auta, Crime Reporter

Nigeria (FMBN) was set up to expedite action on the issue. The police boss charged them to meet the deadline of the House of Representatives Committee for the remittance of the fund.

The House of Representatives Committee on Housing and Urban Development recently ordered the IGP to refund within one month the sum of N2.3

for the National Housing Fund (NHF) but not remitted to the Federal Mortgage Bank. The committee chairman, Hon. Osita Izuanuso, disclosed that he discovered that the police had failed to remit the N2.3 billion deducted from its officers and men for the NHF to the FMBN, which is the legal recipient of the deductions.

While apologising, the IGP admitted that the police violated the rules by not making remittance. He indicted the FMBN for siding with

# Inside Politics

## New Constitution Almost Ready-Senator Hambagda

**Senator Omar Abubakar Hambagda who represents Borno South Senatorial District is also the chairman of the sub committee on the Executive of the National Assembly Joint Committee for the review of the constitution. In this interview with Isa Sanusi he bared his mind on some topical issues. Excerpt:**

### On Review of 1999 Constitution

To amend even a single line of the constitution is not an easy task. The previous National Assembly has gone round the country, collected public opinion, synthesized views and made recommendations: unfortunately these amendments were not passed up to the time the tenure of that national assembly expired. And in tandem with our legislative rules those amendments lapsed with the end of the tenure of that session. A new committee was therefore set up. This committee was divided into various sub committees and we are using the documents brought forward from the

previous senate as a working document. We also held public hearings at the national assembly to give feedback to Nigerians on what the previous National Assembly generated. All the sub committees have compiled their reports and we are now waiting for funding which is being sourced by the Deputy Senate President, Alhaji Ibrahim Mantu who is the chairman of the joint committee. The next step is for us to go on a retreat and consider the issues one by one and brainstorm on all the submissions made. We will then table them as an amendment bill before the National Assembly and subsequently the 36 states houses of assembly. Even at



Senator Umar Hambagda

the state assemblies, they still have to get the views of various stake holders which had not been presented to us and then it will come back to us. Remember that even Mr.

President set up his constitutional review committee and they presented a report. We are considering it too.

### On ongoing National Conference

People were saying that we the lawmakers were criticizing the conference out of fear of the fact that it will make us irrelevant. But the point is that whatever the conference will come up with does not have constitutional or legal backing. Even if we approve the money and they hold their conference and write copious reports, it will still come back to the National Assembly if they want it to have a force of law. But that is besides the issue. The issues are that there are no issues which they want to discuss that is currently not being addressed by the national assembly or that has not been tackled.

### On economic policies of Obasanjo's Government

I think we have to look at the economy of this country from the point of view of ordinary Nigerians.

This government is fully committed to the policies of World Bank and it has completely surrendered its mandate to them, it has reached the epitome of SAP. Babangida started SAP in 1986, till date that is what is being implemented. Obasanjo is crowing the package. For eighteen years we have been told to expect light at the end of the tunnel, but only darkness continues to come, in fact it has become darker and darker for ordinary Nigerians. Yet they are doggedly committed to the implementation of the last phase of SAP and in order to do that they imported the vice president of World Bank and made her minister of Finance. Our economic policy makers are a cabal of World Bank sympathizers. So that was why our economy will continue to be in mess.

### On alleged docility of the opposition in Nigeria

We in this dispensation do not believe in fighting and quarrelling as a mark of opposition

## SIECS canvass for more responsibilities

The Forum of State Independent Electoral Commissions of Nigeria (FOSIECON) has canvassed for constitutional amendments that would give the commissions more powers and responsibilities to enable them conduct all elections save those of the President, the Vice President and the National Assembly.

In its proposal, FOSIECON wants SIECS to be constitutionally saddled with the responsibility of conducting all state elections from local government councils to the governorship thereby limiting the function of the Independent National Electoral Commission (SIEC) to conducting only federal elections.

The forum's proposals, contained in its position paper presented to the ongoing National Political Reform Conference, also want the involvement of SIECS in the preparation, maintenance and revision of voters register in collaboration with INEC.

FOSIECON also wants SIECS to be part of the composition of INEC with their (SIECS) chairmen as appointed as ex-officio members of the national electoral body and (as) Resident Electoral Commissioners in respect of federal elections.

By Abdu Labaran, Group Political Editor

Specifically, the forum of SIECS proposed amendments to sections 78, 112, 114, 116(1), 118 and 178(1) as well as section 15(1) of the third schedule part (1) to which should be added that; "the State Independent Electoral Commissions shall have the power to (a) organize, undertake and supervise all elections to the offices of the governor, deputy governor, House of Assembly and the local government councils within the state, (b) in collaboration with the Independent National Electoral Commission compile and register voters in so far as the register of voters so compiled shall be applicable to the state and local government elections."

The SIECs, according to the forums, have justified their existence by "successfully conducting free and fair by elections in wards and local governments where vacancies existed prior to year 2003, as well as creation for the credit on of proposed local government areas!!

SIECS, FOSIECON further claimed, had also conducted general elections at local government level in March 2004 which, according to it "were acclaimed to be



Alhaji Malami Aliyu Yandoto

largely free and fair by local and international observers who monitored the elections."

Making further case for the retention of the SIECs, the forum maintained that given the laudable performance of the state electoral bodies, "it would not be in the interest of the people and the nation at large to dispense with the services of the commissions which are veritable instruments of federation."

Meanwhile, the forum of State Independent Electoral

Commissions of Nigeria has called on the Inspector General of Police (IG) to provide adequate security for the scheduled local government elections in Anambra State.

In a letter signed by its national chairman, Barrister (Alhaji) Malami Aliyu Yandoto and made available *Daily Trust*, the forum said the appeal became necessary in view of the several threats of death received by the chairman of Anambra SIEC from unknown persons in recent times.

In addition, FOSIECON also requested the IG to provide security assistance to all the chairmen of SIECS throughout the country.

In a related development, the FOSIECON national chairman, Alhaji (Barrister) Malami Aliyu Yandoto has called on all the stakeholders and the relevant authorities to ensure the successful conduct of the forthcoming local government elections in Anambra State.

Addressing a press

conference Wednesday, Barrister Aliyu Yandoto disclosed that arrangements were in full gear by the Anambra SIEC to ensure successful local government elections assuring that with cooperation from all and sundry the elections will be conducted freely and fairly.

Anambra is the only state in the federation yet to conduct local government elections on account of the political turmoil it has gone through in recent times.

### C4D commends

#### South-South Assembly

The Coalition for Democracy (C4D) has commended the leadership of South-South people's Assembly for bringing the entire people of the region together in order to speak with one voice.

A statement signed by the national secretary of the coalition, Alhaji Ali Abacha and director of protocol, Alhaji Ibrahim A Karo Dikko, said, the more would make the people of the region indispensable.

The coalition said that the beauty of democracy was that people should be given free atmosphere to unite and voice out their feelings and grievances.

The coalition also appealed to the people of the

South-South to team up with it in order to persuade Vice-President Atiku Abubakar to contest the 2007 presidential elections.

"We are not against the South-South expressing its aspirations because we are partners in progress. Our suggestion is that the South-South people should team up with C4D just as we are reaching out to all the other zones to support the emergence of Alhaji Atiku Abubakar as president of Nigeria in 2007," the coalition said.

The coalition also described as "false" statements making the round that some people have pulled-out from the Atiku Abubakar's camp.



# KEBBI STATE GOVERNMENT

## WELCOME

On behalf of the government and people of Kebbi State, His Excellency, the Executive Governor, Alhaji Muhammad Adamu Aliero, Garkuwan Gwandu, Welcomes the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR, and accompanying Heads of State to the 2005 Argungu International Fishing and Cultural Festival taking place from the 17th to 19th of March, 2005.

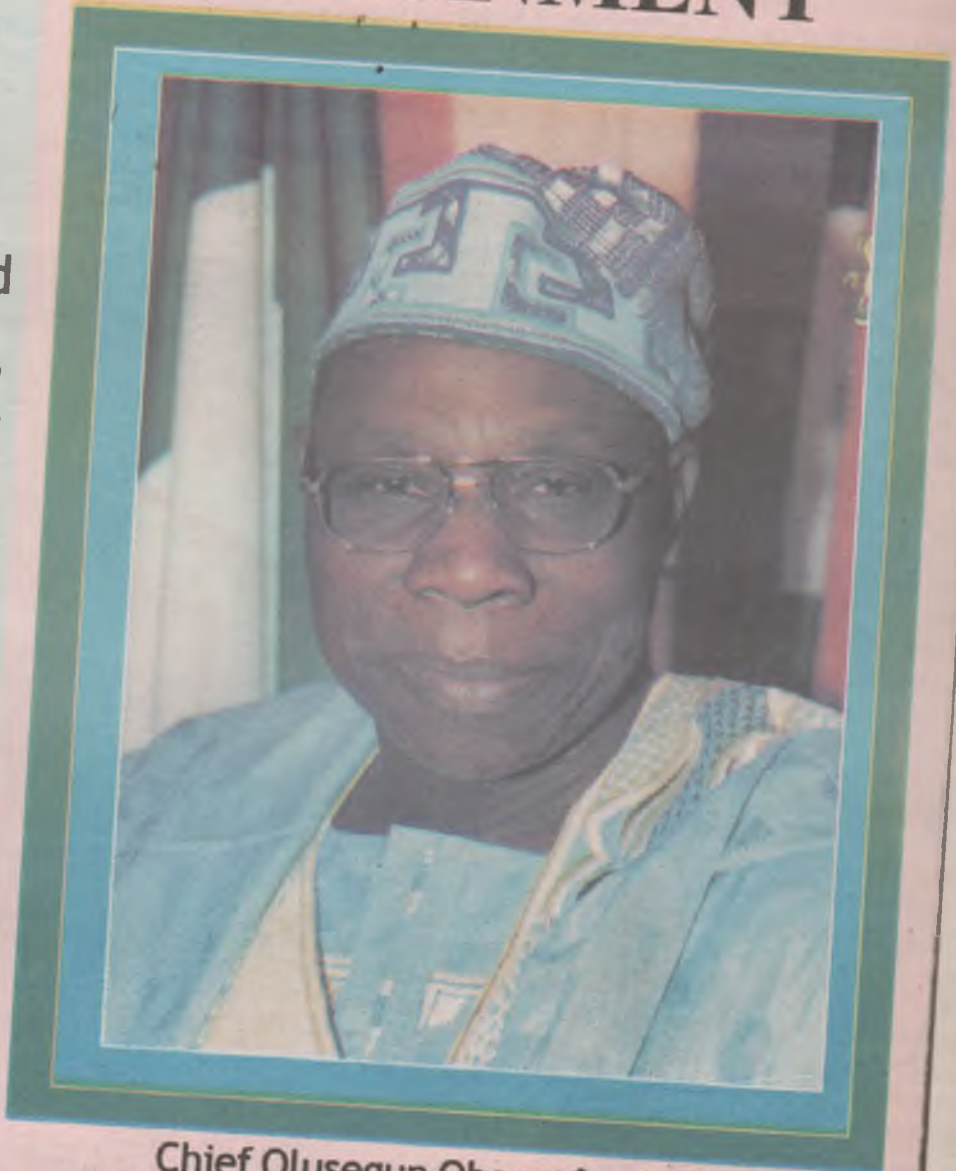
While in Kebbi Mr. President will commission the following Projects:

- 1) VVF Centre
- 2) Kidney Dialysis Centre
- 3) Presidential Lodge
- 4) Gwadangwaje New Housing Estate
- 5) Dualisation Project in the State Capital Birnin Kebbi.

Mr. President you are welcome to the Land of Equity.

Signed

**ALH. MUHAMMADU AUDI AMBURSA**  
*Hon. Commissioner of Information  
Chairman Publicity, Sub-Committee*



Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, GCFR,  
President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria



Alhaji Muhammadu Adamu Aliero  
(Garkuwan Gwandu)  
Executive Governor, Kebbi State

# Inside Politics

## 2007: Senators who want to be governors

Every keen observer of the current senate and its distinguished members will no doubt admit that the upper chamber is a mixture of hard working and not so hard working law-makers. Some are good representatives of their people and they show that by their informed contributions to debates on some funda-

By Isa Sanusi, Senior Political Reporter

mental issues that affect the nation. In handling their committee responsibilities they make the difference by ensuring that they champion the nation's general interest. This category of lawmakers conducts its legislative duties in ways and manners that exhibit their integrity and the will to leave a legacy. On the other hands are those senators who apart from doing nothing never even contribute to debates on the floor of the senate and at the committee level they hardly exist. Some of these legislators rarely attend plenary sessions and one will always wonder why and what brought them to where they are now. This apart, at least some thing is common to all senators and one of them is that they are all politicians keen on being in the limelight for the rest of their lives. Driven by ambition and all the privilege power can accord an individual, and in these days of politics of relevance, no politician will want to be out of the equation as soon as the expiration of current term of office in 2007.



Senator Bello Hayatu Gwarzo

the reverse it seems is the case in Nigerian politics as shown by the jostling of many serving senators to contest the governorship seat in their respective states. times last year when the legislator on grounds of principle rejected a car gift from the governor. The governor was enraged and tried to take his pond of flesh with an elaborate move to recall Senator Dansadau. Though the move in recent times it tilted towards alliances and a bit of godfatherism. However, Senator Gwarzo has no known godfather and is banking on the support of grassroots he enjoys. If zoning will matter in electing the next governor of

### Senators versus Governors

The provision of the nation's constitution places senators above governors even though the reality dictates the contrary. In many states the governor calls the shots and has every office holder at his finger tips. In few cases senators tend to go their own way. In Adamawa state Senator Jibril Aminu was not among the yes men of the governor and he in fact stands on his own politically to extent of being identified as none supporter of the governor's godfather's presidential ambition. In Plateau state, there seems to be a battle for the soul of the state's polity between the Deputy Senate President, Alhaji Ibrahim Mantu and the embattled Governor, Joshua Dariye. Politics in that state is clearly a division between the supporters of the two heavy-weight politicians. Perhaps, the messy record of Governor Dariye is giving Senator Mantu and his supporters an upper hand. A similar scenario is playing itself out in Abia State between Senate President Adolphus Wabara and Governor Orji Uzor Kalu. Love was lost between Senator Saidu Muhammed Dansadau nad Governor Ahmed Sani Yerima some-



Senator Abu Ibrahim

eventually failed but damage has been done. Gubernatorial ambition of Senator Emmanuel Okpede has not been taken kindly by his governor. Senator Saleh Usman Danboyi is a former deputy governor of Taraba State till 2003. Recently he granted an interview to a magazine in which he described the performance of his former boss, Governor Jolly Nyame as poor. The governor has not taken the criticism lightly and moves were sponsored to recall the senator. Things have not also been going well between Senator Usman Sani Sami and his governor Adamu Aliero.

As 2007 inches on many governors are said to be eyeing the senate and from the way things are going senators will not easily concede their seat to their governors. The battle will therefore be very dramatic.

### Senators eyeing Governorship

Only a few of the senators will admit that they are on the race even though facts establish that they are indeed in the race. Senator Bello Hayatu Gwarzo is the only PDP senator from Kano state and sources said that he is aspiring to govern the politically volatile state. The politics of Kano has since the first republic been ideology based but

doubles as the political godfather of the incumbent governor is also said to be nursing governorship ambition. In Katsina state the incumbent, Governor Umaru Musa Yar'adua is serving his second and final term and the

young politician who in his brief sojourn in public life has assisted his community and his people in the area of education and same has made him a powerful political force in the state. He is one of the many people said to be inter-

est. In Akwa Ibom state Senator Udoma Udo Udoma, Senator Tokunboh Afikuyomi in Lagos State, Senator Ibikunle Amosu in Ogun and so many other senators are already in the governorship race.

**Odds against them**  
Politics particularly in the present dispensation is more of money, godfatherism and the capacity to be in the good books of the powers that be. The 2003 election experience has left sour taste in the mouth of many to the extent that politicians no longer reckon with getting votes of the people. All senators with gubernatorial ambition will have to face a stumbling block in their incumbent governors. Because of a combination of unhealthy reasons incumbent governors will do all they can and even more to ensure that he who will step into their shoes is in their pockets. Except if the Immunity clause is removed from the constitution, which perhaps will put the governors in a position to be busy depending mounting charges of siphoning public funds and therefore deprive them of the time for political intrigues. Party politics is another odd and the way the leading political parties are conducting themselves will no doubt give the impression that anything may happen when struggle for power is on.



Senator Mannan Ali

contest come 2007 may be narrowed down to the clamour of the people of Funtua zone for a shift of power from Katsina Central where it has remained all the while. Political support in Katsina state is shapely divided between ANPP and PDP even though all the two senators representing the state are from the ANPP. Senator Abu Ibrahim who represents Katsina South is according to sources being prepared for governorship as one source said "the pressure on him to contest is too much". The lawmaker is favoured by his constant touch with his people and so many projects he sponsored across his senatorial zone. His other advantage is that the people of his zone will this time put in all its best to clinch the states first position. Mass support for the ANPP as a result of the Buhari factor in Katsina North enhances the chances of the ANPP. However, the PDP is also warming to retain the seat with particularly the widely speculated interest of the Speaker of House of Representatives, Alhaji Aminu Bello Masari in the governorship and the fact that he too is from Katsina South zone makes the contest a tough one.

Senator Emmanuel Okpede is known to the people of Nasarawa state as a

# SPORTS

## UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

### Chelsea chasing centenary success with European glory

After all the controversy and recrimination surrounding their spectacular win over Barcelona, Jose Mourinho's Chelsea would probably not be UEFA's ideal pick for Champions League glory.

However the London club have different ideas and would dearly love to celebrate their centenary by

conquering Europe as well as winning their first English league title since their only previous success in their Golden Jubilee year of 1955.

Chelsea, having already won the League Cup, pulled 11 points clear of nearest rivals Manchester United with a 1-0 win over West Bromwich Albion this week, securing themselves at least

a qualifying place in the Champions League next season.

Victory in Europe's top club competition would be the icing on the cake for the club's ambitious Portuguese manager who is still possessive of the title he won with Porto last season, saying he does not want to relinquish "my trophy".

Mourinho has sparked controversy at every turn, however, and is now caught up in a war with UEFA which seems largely illogical considering the success his side are having.

If his tactic was to take all the pressure off his men by putting it on himself a question remains. Why do that?

They were doing very well on the pitch already without the aggravation he seems to be storing up for himself off it.

He is under investigation by UEFA after sending his team out late for the second half in the first leg at the Nou Camp then failing to appear at the mandatory news conference.

He complained that his Barcelona counterpart Frank Rijkaard had spoken to referee Anders Frisk at halftime, suggesting an attempt at influence. He then criticised the Swedish referee after his side went down 2-1 following the sending off of Didier Drogba.

Mourinho could not have known quite what his outspokenness would lead to. Frisk quit the game last week, saying he had received threats against himself and his family.

UEFA referee chief Volker Roth called Mourinho "an enemy of football" this week, Mourinho threatened to sue, and all and sundry leapt into the argument including FIFA president Sepp Blatter, Chelsea chief executive Peter Kenyon and football commentators around Europe. The brouhaha is unlikely to subside for some time.

Meanwhile Chelsea's multi-national squad, largely assembled with and backed by owner Roman Abramovich's billions, are still doing the business.

Tuesday's colourless win over bottom side West Brom could not be compared with the skill-packed thrill-a-minute 4-2 home victory over Barcelona, but it pushed the side three more points towards the title.

Four different players — Eidur Gujohansen, Frank Lampard, Damien Duff and captain John Terry — scored against the Catalans and Chelsea barely missed suspended top striker Drogba and injured Dutch winger Arjen Robben.

### Bayern Munich's hopes rely on Makaay

Felix Magath's improving Bayern Munich side will fear no one in the draw for the Champions League quarter-finals as long as they have Roy Makaay back from injury in time for the first leg.

Bayern's form for much of

the first half of the season seemed only to confirm their decline since winning the European Cup for the fourth time in 2001, with goalkeeping and defensive errors too often undoing good work in attack.

But since returning from

the winter break, the Bavarians have been back to their authoritative best, while igniting hopes of a clean sweep of trophies in Magath's first season in charge.

Five wins from their first seven games in 2005 kept them top of the Bundesliga, a 7-0 victory over SC Freiburg took them through to the German Cup semi-finals and a 3-1 success at home over Arsenal marked their finest European performance in years.

The loss of Makaay to a thigh muscle strain on March 5 has stalled the comeback, with Bayern losing their two matches since then by 1-0 scorelines.

The first of them, against Arsenal, could not prevent them going through on aggregate but the second, away to Schalke 04 on Sunday, cost them the league leadership.

Makaay has been Bayern's most consistent goalscorer since signing from Deportivo

Coruna before the 2003-04 season and the all-Peruvian strike pairing of Claudio Pizarro and Paolo Guerrero has been unable to make up for his absence.

"We're toothless without him," goalkeeper and captain Oliver Kahn said. "We just don't look like scoring."

Makaay, who has netted seven goals in the Champions League this season, is scheduled to return in time for the quarter-final first leg on April 5 or 6.

If he makes it, Bayern will have every reason to be confident.

The club's winter break in sun-baked Dubai seemed to do wonders for Kahn, with the Germany international keeper returning in his best form since 2002.

Equally important has been the return to the side of Martin Demichelis in a holding midfield role.

Demichelis was originally drafted in as a short-term replacement for the injured Michael Ballack but the

Argentine's form has been so good that Magath has kept him in the team, demoting Bastian Schweinsteiger to the bench.

With Demichelis and Ballack together in the middle, and with Lucio and Robert Kovac in solid form at centre-back, Bayern should be resilient enough to deal with most sides in the quarter-final draw.

They do not quite not have the attacking invention of some of their rivals but they manage to create plenty of chances with midfielders of the calibre of Mehmet Scholl, Hasan Salihamidzic, Ze Roberto, Sebastian Deisler, Torsten Frings and Owen Hargreaves all pushing for places.

Magath's worries will all be focused on the state of Makaay's injured thigh.

With the Dutchman in the side, Bayern will feel they are a match for anyone. Without him, they will just be making up the numbers.



Makaay... back from injury

### Juninho dreams of Lyon's glory

Olympique Lyon midfielder Juninho, whose free kicks are beginning to instil almost as much fear in his opponents as David Beckham's, is dreaming of reliving his South American Cup success in Europe.

The Brazilian international, who won the Copa Libertadores in 1998 with Vasco De Gama,

believes the Ligue 1 leaders' can at least improve on last season's quarter-final appearance — and even go on to win the Champions League.

"It is a dream. I want to be able to say one day that I have won this competition," the player, who rejoices in the full name of Antonio Augusto Ribeiro Juninho Pernambucano, told Reuters

in an interview.

"We still have nine rounds of matches in the Ligue 1. But I hope we'll win five more games, which means we would have won the Champions League."

However, Juninho, who has already scored five goals in the competition, believes his team have what it takes to become the first French winners since Olympique

Marseille in 1993.

"This side is the most balanced I have ever known," he says.

In a way, Lyon look a little bit like last season's European champions Porto. They don't employ an orthodox striker as such, but play as a block with a very strong midfield.

Moreover, they have scored 27 goals in their eight Champions League matches — more than any of the eight remaining teams.

Last year, Lyon were eliminated by Porto in the quarter-finals, but are now a better side, eight points clear of Marseille at the top of the French League and with a fourth successive title in their sights. They also want to advance in Europe.

"If we don't go further this year, it will be a disappointment," said Juninho whose team mates know they can count on him when Lyon have an attacking free-kick around the penalty area.

"There is one thing you want to avoid with him: a free-kick contest during the training sessions," says former Lyon striker and compatriot Sonny Anderson. "He is just outstanding," says Lyon goalie Gregory Coupet, who now refuses to be in goal in training when Juninho is practising.

### Ample options ensure Ancelotti will have strong hand

It says everything about the strength in depth at AC Milan that they twice beat Manchester United, to take their place in the last eight in the Champions League, without either of their main strikers.

With European Player of the Year Andriy Shevchenko and Italy international poacher Filippo Inzaghi both sidelined, Argentine striker Hernan Crespo was asked to play as the lone striker and responded with the winning goals in the two 1-0 victories.

For the second-leg Milan were without Georgian left-back Kakha Kaladze and so Ancelotti asked captain

Paolo Maldini to roll back the years once again and return to the position where he was considered the best in the world for a decade.

Taking Maldini's slot in the centre of defence was Dutchman Jaap Stam — one of Europe's top defenders of the past five or six years who even if he had avoided injuries this season would not have been guaranteed a start in a defence that also includes the classy Italian centre-half Alessandro Nesta and the tireless Brazilian World Cup winning captain Cafu.

Crespo's success in particular recalled his presentation at Milan's plush

training ground, Milanello, at the start of the season when Ancelotti was asked if he was not storing up trouble for himself by having three big name forwards as well as the patient and reliable Danish striker Jon Dahl Tomasson.

"It is a long season with a lot of games in three competitions, everyone will have a role to play," said the Milan coach and how right he has proven to be.

The central midfield trio of Gennaro Gattuso, Clarence Seedorf and Andrea Pirlo are among the first names on Ancelotti's team sheet for big games but Italy international Massimo Ambrosini can

hardly be considered a reserve and the Frenchman Vikash Dhorasoo, whose arrival from Lyon also raised eyebrows, has proven to be capable of slotting into the line-up without problem.

When Ancelotti has been forced, or has chosen, to play with a single striker then Portugal's Rui Costa has come into the side and after being written-off in some quarters showed against United that he is still well capable of performing at the highest level.

Even among those whose appearances in the first team are sporadic Ancelotti can call on a Croatian

international in Dario Simic, Brazilian winger Serginho and the vastly experienced former Italy international Alessandro Costacurta.

By the time Milan are back in European action in the first week of April both Shevchenko and Inzaghi should be back in peak condition meaning that Crespo's reward for leading Milan to the quarter-finals could well be demotion the bench.

But with Milan fighting hard to defend their Italian league title they are currently joint leaders with Juventus in a race that looks poised to go to the wire Ancelotti needs to have plenty of alternatives to keep his team fresh.

# Congratulations

**Congratulations  
on your investiture  
as fellow of  
Nigerian Society  
of Engineers  
(F.N.S.E. ) on 18<sup>th</sup>  
March, 2005.**



**ENGR. BALA A. BANYE, FNSE**  
Hon. Commissioner of Works, Housing and Transport  
Katsina State

**Signed**

**Arc. M. K. Ahmadu F.N.I.A.**  
**MULTI-SYSTEMS CONSULTANTS**



## THE NIGERIAN SOCIETY OF ENGINEERS

### Congratulations

*Congratulations on your conferment with the  
prestigious fellowship of the Nigerian Society of  
Engineers today, 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2005.*

*To us, this is a pride and honour to a gentleman like you  
to be identified*

*and given such a deserved award.*

*We are certain it is hardwork, excellence and  
commitment to the Engineering profession that has  
merited you this honour.*

*We also know that the sky is the limit.*

*May Almighty Allah continue to guide*

*and bless you in all your professional endeavours*

*We wish you more success as you progress in the service  
of our fatherland.*

**Signed**

**Engr. A. R. Mohammed MNSE**

**Engr. U. G. Jibrin MNSE**



**ENGR. YUSUF HARUNA (MNSE)**  
**NIGERIA PORTS AUTHORITY**

# Sports

## Race for Europe at heart of derby

As if any Merseyside derby needed extra spice, this season Liverpool host Everton with a race for the Champions League at stake as well as local bragging rights.

A win for Liverpool at Anfield on Sunday would bring them within four points of Everton.

Three points for the Toffees would not only complete the double, after the Lee Carsley-inspired win in December at Goodison, but also put them 11 points clear in the race for fourth place.

But even if Everton deny their bitter rivals the fourth spot, and with it the mega millions that come with playing in the Champions League, the Reds could yet have the last laugh.

Rafael Benitez has steered his team to the quarter-finals of this season's Champions League and if they win the tournament, Everton could be demoted to the UEFA Cup.

UEFA's Champions League regulations are clear.

Rule 1.3 states: At the request of the national

association concerned, the UEFA Champions League title-holders may be entered for this competition ... if they have not qualified via the top domestic league championship.

"If, in such a case, the title-holders come from an association entitled to enter four teams for the UEFA Champions League, the fourth-placed club in the top domestic league championship has to be entered for the UEFA Cup."

Last week a UEFA spokesman confirmed to BBC Sport: "One country cannot have more than four places - it would be up to the FA to make the request for Liverpool."

That means the Football Association, and its new chairman Brian Barwick, would have an unenviable decision to make - do they recommend that Liverpool go through at the expense of Everton?

So it looks as though one team from Merseyside will be in the UEFA Cup, but who will join them from the Premiership?

If Liverpool do not win the Champions League, finishing fifth will mean a UEFA Cup spot.

Chelsea's victory in the Carling Cup ensured sixth place would also be good enough, because the Blues have earned a UEFA place but will not need it as they should be in the Champions League.

The team finishing seventh will also gain a UEFA Cup place, if Arsenal and Manchester United win their FA Cup semi-finals.

This is because these two giants will almost certainly win Champions League berths through their league places so if they end up in the FA Cup final, the UEFA place reserved for the Cup winners will revert to the team that comes seventh in the Premiership.

That means supporters of clubs like Bolton,

Middlesbrough, Spurs and Charlton should be cheering on Arsenal and Manchester United on FA Cup semi-final weekend - though that might be easier for some than others!

Middlesbrough, however, are still involved in this season's UEFA Cup and if they or Newcastle win that competition but fail to qualify for Europe by any other means, another space in next season's competition would become available.

Yet another UEFA Cup spot could go to the team which tops the Fair Play League, as long as the Premiership finishes with one of the best three disciplinary records in Europe.

The Premiership, as of 16 March, was in the top three.

Chelsea currently lead that table, but will not need a

UEFA Cup place as they can not finish lower than 4th, so Tottenham are in pole position in second place.

Spurs could yet finish in the top seven, however, which means Norwich City, who are battling against relegation, still have a chance of a place in next season's UEFA Cup.

And two spots in the Intertoto Cup - which can lead to UEFA Cup qualification - are reserved for English teams.

At least three Premiership clubs, Middlesbrough being one, are thought to have expressed an interest in taking part, though Tottenham have already ruled out taking part.

Although the Intertoto has not proved popular with English clubs in the past, it provides three places in the UEFA Cup for the winners of the three separate sections.

### Casey shares lead at TCL Classic

England's Paul Casey shares the lead at the TCL Classic at Hainan Island in China, after an opening round of 64.

Also on eight-under par are the Swedes Johan Edfors and Fredrik Andersson Hed, and Thailand's Chawalit Plaphol.

Casey's European Ryder Cup team-mate Colin Montgomerie is three shots back on five under par after a 67.

The Scot needs to finish in the top two to keep alive his hopes of playing in next week's Players' Championship, and the Masters next month.

Behind Casey on seven-under par is a group which includes Ireland's Paul McGinlay, England's Paul Broadhurst and the Scottish pair of Steven O'Hara and Ross Bain.



Casey

### Magic make Davis disappear

Orlando has fired head coach Johnny Davis after their season-high sixth straight loss.

The Magic also also released assistant coach Ron Ekker. Chris Jent will serve as head coach on an interim basis.

Magic GM John Weisbrod said: "We feel at this time that we need a new voice and direction."

The Magic are currently tied for the eighth and final play-off spot in the Eastern Conference with Philadelphia. Both teams are 31-33.

Davis was named Orlando's head coach on 17 November 2003, taking over for Doc Rivers during the early part of the 2003-04 seasons.

His record with the team 51-84. His overall head coaching mark, including one season at Philadelphia (1996-97), is 73-144.



Davis

### Shearer double gives Olympiakos a Dyer night

A double from Newcastle captain Alan Shearer inspired his side to a 4-0 humbling of Greek outfit Olympiakos and handed them a place in the UEFA Cup quarter-finals with a 7-1 final aggregate score.

Shearer's brace took him to 191 career goals for the Magpies and within nine of the club record held by Jackie Milburn. There were goals also for Kieron Dyer - he also created Shearer's first - and Lee Bowyer, who scored his third of the campaign.

Victory gave Newcastle their eighth victory in a row in all competitions - the first time in a decade they have achieved that feat.

Dyer scored a beautiful goal in the 18th minute to all but erase any hopes of

Olympiakos getting a miracle result as he ran from an inside position to collect Bowyer's header and with his back to goal back heeled the ball past Euro 2004 winning keeper Antonis Nikopolidis.

Shearer should have made it 2-0 after just half an hour, but clean through on goal he blasted his shot high over the bar to the evident frustration of manager Graeme Souness.

Shearer was inches away from redeeming himself five minutes later as Laurent Robert whipped in a freekick and the former England captain got free of his marker but his outstretched boot was just inches short of making contact with the ball.

The Robert-Shearer combination worked well

again as the half drew to a close, the Frenchman got down the left flank and his brilliant cross saw Shearer get his head to it but it went agonisingly inches wide of the far post.

The Magpies were all over the Greek side and it was Robert who came close next as his freekick was well on target before taking a slight deflection which sent it for a corner.

Shearer finally managed to get on the score sheet on the stroke of half-time as Dyer's brilliant run to the byline saw the England midfielder drag the ball back and the Newcastle captain was on hand to shoot home, though a deflection gave the keeper no chance.

### Udinese end Milan's treble hopes

A C Milan's hopes of winning three trophies this season were ended after they were unceremoniously dumped out of the Italian Cup by Udinese.

Milan are through to the quarter-finals of the

Champions League and are joint-leaders of Serie A, but a second-string side failed to get the better of an Udinese team that dominated the match from start to finish.

An emphatic 4-1 quarter-final, second leg victory for Udinese secured a 6-4 aggregate score and a place in the semi-finals where they will play Roma, who booked their place in the last four earlier in the day by beating Fiorentina in a penalty shoot-out.

Two clinical finishes from Vincenzo Iaquinta and Stefano Mauri put Udinese in control at the Friuli stadium before Jon Dahl Tomasson replied for the visitors 13 minutes from time to keep the tie alive.

But Milan's Georgian defender Kakha Kaladze needlessly brought down David Pizarro in the box to concede a penalty which David Di Michele converted before another Mauri strike

in stoppage-time completed a convincing home win.

In Florence, Roma beat Fiorentina 7-6 on penalties. Fiorentina won the second leg of their quarter-final tie 1-0 over the 90 minutes to level the aggregate score and extra-time failed to separate the two sides.

Victory for Roma kept alive their disappointing season and gave a winning start to Bruno Conti, who took charge of the ailing Serie A club on Monday following the resignation of Luigi Del Neri.

Conti was a member of the Italy team that won the 1982 World Cup which was captained by Fiorentina coach Dino Zoff.

Roma defender Matteo Ferrari scored the only goal in regulation time, putting through his own net in the 12th minute.

Ferrari was later sent off before his Roma team-mate Daniele De Rossi joined him for an early bath.



Benitez...Liverpool boss

### Federer betters in-form Ljubicic

Roger Federer battled past Croatian Ivan Ljubicic 7-6 (7-3) 7-6 (7-4) to reach the quarter-finals of the Pacific Life Open at Indian Wells on Wednesday.

It is the fourth time this season the Swiss has beaten in-form Ljubicic, who has notched up 24 wins on the ATP Tour.

"I am so motivated for the tournament," Federer said. "I really want to defend this title and I feel I am able to dig much deeper than I used to."

Federer now faces Nicolas Kiefer, who beat

David Nalbandian 6-1 6-3.

Neither Ljubicic or Federer had dropped a set going into their high-tempo match in the Californian desert.

The only break-point chance of the contest came in the second game of the second set with Ljubicic serving at 30-40 down but Federer missed the return and the Croatian held on.

As it was, Federer proved to be stronger when it counted and Ljubicic sent a backhand long to hand the Wimbledon and US Open champion the match.

Australia's Lleyton Hewitt also booked his quarter-final spot at the after crushing Paul-Henri Mathieu of France 6-1 6-0.

Hewitt will play Andre Agassi after he swept Guillermo Coria 6-4 6-1.

Andy Roddick strolled past Fernandez Gonzalez, serving 10 aces in a 6-4 6-3 victory and will meet Carlos Moya who beat Fabrice Santoro 7-5 6-2.

British number one Tim Henman takes on Guillermo Canas in the last eight after he beat Spain's Tommy Robredo 6-4 2-6 6-2.

# Trust Classified

## LOSS OF ORIGINAL LAND DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public that the original copy of the Right of Occupancy (R of O) No. MFCT/LA/2001/BO 2153 of 12/3/2002 issued by Ministry of Federal Capital Territory, belonging to Alhaji Abdulkadir Sani of plot No. 234 'D' CLOSE off Lagos Street is missing. This notice is to inform the general public that the PCN will apply for a Certified True Copy (CTC) of the R of O and subsequently for a re-certification.

Signed

**Abdulkadir Sani Abdulkadir**  
Telenet Communications Ltd.

15 'D' Challawa Crescent off Limpopo Road, Maitama, Abuja

## LOSS OF ORIGINAL OFFER OF TERMS OF GRANT/CONVEYANCE ISSUED BY MFCT, ABUJA

The general public (especially Abuja Geographical Information System) is hereby notified of the loss of the original "OFFER OF TERMS OF GRANT/CONVEYANCE OF APPROVAL" issued to SAMANTHA JOSHUA by MFCT Abuja dated 14/05/02 in respect of Plot 1945 within Kuruduma District, Abuja.

If found please, call **08033203695**

## LOSS OF ORIGINAL LAND DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public that the Original Land Documents of Plot No. 1210 located at Mabushi District, with registration No. FCT/ABU/MISC/11910, measuring about 6469.54m<sup>2</sup>, bearing ODUNZE & CO. LIMITED is hereby declared missing.

If found, please return to the address below:

City Central Group of Companies  
Suites C19-21, Abuja Shopping Mall, Wuse Zone 3, Abuja.  
Tel: 09-5230476, 09-5231605

Or to any police station nearest to you.

Signed

Management

## LOSS OF DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public of the loss of Land Document with ref. No. FCT/ABU/KB.437 of Plot No. 57. Jahi belonging to MOHAMMED M. UTONO. Whoever transact business with the said document does that at his/her own risk.

Signed

**Ahmadu R. Mohammed**

Tel: **08036067177**

## LOSS OF DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public that the Original Copy of C of O of Plot No. 118 Maitama, off Aminu Kano Way, Abuja is missing. If found please contact MARYAM ISMAIL AHAMED OF No. 50, Yaounde Street, Wuse, Zone 6, Abuja.

Signed

**Maryam Ismail Ahamed**

## LOSS OF DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public of missing Letter of Allocation of Land situated at Plot No. 839, Kaura District, Abuja belonging to MR. JOHN OMOTAYO AKINLEYE of House 1, 13, Foreshore Road, Banana Island, Ikoyi, Lagos.

If found, please return to the owner at the above address, the nearest police station or the High Court of Lagos State.

## MISSING CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY NO. FCT/ABU/MISC/14040

This is to inform the general public that the Property described as Plot No. 291, Katampe Extension District Cadastral Zone B7, Abuja with Certificate of Occupancy No. FCT/ABU/MISC/14040 and Registered as FC 63 AT PAGE 63 IN VOLUME 88 (C OF O) in the Land Administration Registry Office at Abuja, in favour of CHRIST'S CHOSE CHURCH OF GOD IS MISSING. The Certificate of Occupancy was lost in the Custody of PASTOR JOHN ESEKA. If found, please return same to CHRIST CHOSEN CHURCH OF GOD OR THE UNDERSIGNED TAKE NOTE THAT THE PROPERTY IS NOT FOR SALE, AND ANY TRANSACTION THERETO IS VOID and CHRIST CHOSEN CHURCH OF GOD will not transfer Title to the purchaser for any reason whatsoever.

Signed

Barrister Esene Emmanuel (KSI)  
Emmanuel Esene & Co.  
Suite 17, Area 2 Shopping Centre,  
Garki - Abuja  
Tel: 08033499152, 09-2341489

## LOSS OF DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public that the Original Right of Occupancy No. MFCT/ABU/1313 size 1,200m<sup>2</sup> belonging to RAHEEMA MAHMOUD, No. MFCT/ABU/KB/537 Size 1,043.69m<sup>2</sup> belonging to IBRAHIM ALIYU ABUBAKAR and No. MFCT/ABU/JG/ 518 Size 1,200m<sup>2</sup> belonging to ABDULLAHI IBRAHIM all located at Sabon Lugbe District, Abuja are missing. If found, please return to the nearest police station or Ajia Raheema Mahmoud of Block 8B3 Flat 2 NNPC Quarters, Area 11 Garki Abuja.

## CHANGE OF NAMES

I, formerly known as LADI MAIMUNA IDI, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS LADI MAIMUNA DAWAKI. All former documents remain valid. NNPC Corporate Headquarters Abuja take note.

I, formerly SANI HAMISU, now wish to be called and addressed as LAWALI SANI. All former documents remain and general public to note.

Formerly, SANI ABDULLAHI, now wish to be called and addressed as IBRAHIM MAIDOKI. All former documents remain valid. LGEA Maradun and general public to note

## GOLD SELLERS ASSOCIATION KADUNA

This is to inform the general public that the above named BODY has applied for registration to the Corporate Affairs commission under part 'C' of the companies and allied matters Decree of 1990.

The Trustees are:

1. Alh. Saidu Yusuf Madobi  
3. Alh. Sahabi Yusuf  
5. Abdulrasheed I. B. Malumfashi  
7. Alh. Yakubu Mohammed  
9. Dan Alhaji Abdullahi Hussaini

2. Alh. Mohd Sirajo Shuaibu  
4. Alh. Abubakar Salisu  
6. Umar Dikko Hussaini  
8. Alh. Mohammed Nasiru Tahir  
10. Sani Abubakar

Any objection to this registration should be forwarded to the Registrar General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse zone 5, Abuja. Within 28 days of this publication.

Signed

Barr. Yakubu Hussaini  
Yakubu Hussaini & Associates  
1, B 13 Wushishi Road Kaduna  
062-210210, 08023637375, 08045470004

## CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

This is to inform the general public that the above named Organisation has applied for registration to the Corporate Affairs commission under part 'C' of the companies and allied matters Decree of 1990.

The Trustees are:

1. Surv. Furoebi Akene  
2. Dr. Elizabeth Bens  
3. Mrs. Akumoere Timibofa

Any objection to this registration should be forwarded to the Registrar General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse zone 5, Abuja. Within 28 days of this publication.

## GLORIOUS BODY OF CHRIST BIBLE CHURCH

This is to inform the general public that the above named Church has applied for registration to the Corporate Affairs commission under part 'C' of the companies and allied matters Decree of 1990.

The Trustees are:

1. Rev. Dr. Godwin Chiadikaobi Chigbata  
3. Pastor Freedom Ifeanyi Okafor  
5. Pastor Michael Umeadi Nonyelu

2. Rev. Mikeson Okoli  
4. Rev. Tony Onuorah Onuko  
6. Rev. Pastor Daniel Okeifi

Any objection to this registration should be forwarded to the Registrar General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse zone 5, Abuja. Within 28 days of this publication.

Signed:

**CHARLES UMERIE & CO. Legal Practitioners.**

## EXCELLENCE INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES, ZARIA

This is to inform the general public that the above named Ministries has applied for registration to the Corporate Affairs commission under part 'C' of the companies and allied matters Decree of 1990.

The Trustees are:

1. Pastor (Mrs) Cornelia Achetu Adikwu  
2. Mrs. Helen Love Owuna

Any objection to this registration should be forwarded to the Registrar General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse zone 5, Abuja. Within 28 days of this publication.

Signed:

**Comfort Sira Wiwa**  
Solicitor

## LOSS OF DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public that the Original Letter of Allocation/Grant No. No. FCT/ABU/MISC. 2495 covering a piece of land measuring 2599.43 Square Metres of Plot No. 122 located within Karu in Federal Capital territory, Abuja, belonging to Mr. Arowosaye Seun Isaac of Wuse II Abuja is missing. Whoever transact business with the said document does that at his/her own risk.

Signed

**G. I. AMASIORAH ESQ.**  
Solicitor to the Owner, Suite 3B4, Plot 627 Sokode Crescent,  
Zone 5, Wuse-Abuja Tel: 08042135793

## MISSING DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public that the Offer of Occupancy belonging to Alhaji Ibrahim K. Aliyu of the National Population Commission, Headquarters, Abuja got missing in transit. The land is at Jahi District, Abuja Plot No, 1223, File No, S. 0847

Any person in possession of the said Right of Occupancy should report to the nearest Police Station or send it to the National Population Commission headquarters, Abuja.

Signed

**Alhaji Ibrahim Aliyu, mni**

## LOSS OF ORIGINAL OFFER OF TERMS OF GRANT/CONVEYANCE ISSUED BY MFCT, ABUJA

The general public (especially Abuja Geographical Information System) is hereby notified of the loss of the original "OFFER OF TERMS OF GRANT/CONVEYANCE OF APPROVAL" issued to JAMES ANTHONY by MFCT Abuja dated 14/05/02 in respect of Plot 1905 within Kuruduma District, Abuja.

If found please, call **08033203695**

## CHANGE OF NAMES

I, formerly known as MRS JULIE ENIEKEDO DONLI, now wish to be known and addressed as MS JULIE ENIEKEDO OKAH. All former documents remain valid. Securities and Exchange Commission and general public to note.

I, formerly known and addressed as MISS IHEDIOHA NGOZI ADANMA, now wish to be known and addressed as MRS OSIGWE NGOZI ADANMA. All former documents remain valid. FCDA, please take note.

I, formerly ADETOMOWO ROSE FADUYILE PRINCESS, now to be called MRS YOMI BUNMI AJALA PRINCESS. Former documents remain valid and public to note.

I, formerly known as FATIMA UMAR, now wish to be called LAMI UMAR ADAMU. All former documents remain valid. ITAS-GADAU LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND GENERAL PUBLIC SHOULD TAKE NOTE.

# Sports

## Galadima looks beyond Gabon

From Okechukwu Eze, Sports Correspondent, Lagos

encounter. The only absentee will be Babayaro (Celestine) who called to inform us about his injury. To that effect, the team's technical crew knows what options left to be taken," he said.

He added: "I have already started looking beyond the match because there is still more work ahead. We need to be winning always so as to be comfortable and qualify for both the World Cup and African Nations Cup next year."

"There are Angola, Algeria and Rwanda to confront at away and those ones give me more concern." Similarly, former

are quick and fast. They are capable of frustrating any team but for that to happen, our boys must consent to it. If they allow them room to toss around, they will get punished. The best bet is for the Eagles to attack and attack, while also depending resolutely."

Reacting to the lateness of Super Eagles players to camp ahead of the match, the former Shell of Gabon play maker, lamented the situation and attributed it to lack of football culture.

the chairman of Nigeria Association, Ibrahim Nas set his sights beyond next weekend's World Cup qualifying match between the Super Eagles and the Panthers of Gabon in Port Harcourt, saying that the central Africans lack the agree to truncate the team's quest for a fourth consecutive World Cup finals.

In a telephone chat with our correspondent, Alhaji Galadima said he is confident of Nigeria's victory based on the players current form for their receptive clubs in Europe.

"I don't have any fear about the match against Gabon, because our players are all in form and infact will all be available for the

## Akanni backs Siasia

Former Super Eagles player Waidi Akanni has said that Flying Eagles Coach Samson Siasia is bound to succeed if given the necessary support.

Akanni, who was with his old pal at the African Youth Championship Benin 2005 and WAFU cup in Mali said Siasia has good grip of youth soccer and motivation the two ingredients needed for a successful youth team and all he needs to succeed at the World Youth Championship coming up in Holland later in the year is a strong backing by the football governing body in the country.

As far as the erstwhile Flying Eagles star is concerned, the Eagles would succeed if the planned playing tour to Europe materialise.

He maintained that "past loses to Brazil had been due to lack of exposure. We have a chance of avenging the Brazillians at Holland but the NFA and the Sports Ministry must give the team all the necessary moral and financial support it needs, besides the friendships abroad lined up for the team".

## Gombe coach pursues victory in Makurdi

Chief Coach of high riding Gombe United, Justin Tenger is upbeat about beating Lobi Stars when the clubs clash in a Premier League match slated for the Aper Aku Stadium in Makurdi this weekend.

Tenger, a son of the soil from Benue and former handler of Lobi explained to KICK OFF that he had always found it easy playing against his former club. "On several occasions that I led my teams against Lobi it had always been problem for them."

"Except for last year when we lost to them, I have never been beaten in Makurdi."

In the past I also took Katsina United, Kano Pillars and Tornados to the Aper Aku Stadium against Lobi Stars, and I never lost. This weekend's encounter will not be an exception," Tenger

boasted. The seasoned handler revealed that the Gombe State government's recent release of funds to the team is a morale booster to his boys.

"The Gombe State governor has just released some amount of money to pay part of the players' sign on fees and this has added to the boys' morale, having survived a desperate El-Kanemi at home, our target is to defeat Lobi so that we can keep our position on the league table."

He commended the efforts of the new management committee in attending to players' plight on time and governor Danjuma Goje for making good his promise of releasing money to the club, "which will assist our target of going continental this season."

Gombe United are second on the Premier League after five weeks, but are level on points with current league leaders Kano Pillars who enjoy a superior goal difference.



South Africa's Ernie Els hits from the sand trap on the second hole during the first round of the Bay Hill International PGA Golf tournament at the Bay Hill Club in Orlando, Florida, USA ...yesterday

## Zamfara United robbed

It was double trouble for Zamfara United on Wednesday after the team's official 504 Station Wagon car had its side windscreen smashed and properties worth several thousands of naira carted away by suspected hoodlums at the Nnamdi Azikiwe Stadium, Enugu.

Officials of the Gusau based team were amazed when they came out of the main bowl of the stadium following the 3-1 defeat to Rangers to find out that thieves had broken into their car.

In a chat with KICK OFF, Zamfara Team Manager, Sanni Garba Gusau, stated: "This is really surprising. We just came out and saw that our vehicle parked inside the premises of the stadium had its side windscreen broken and several properties belonging to officials and players as well as the car stereo taken away."

I can't equate the value of the lost items as my secretary has to take a proper inventory of all lost items. But roughly, it shouldn't be less than Four hundred thousand naira."

When KICK OFF called on the chief security officer of the stadium, he was said to be absent from his office. It was alleged that this was not the first time such incident was happening at the stadium.

## NPL pledges to place league on world map

The Nigeria Professional Soccer League says it will soon place the country's premier league on

the world map. Executive Secretary of the league, Salihu Abubakar stated this at the launching of

a newly-floated football club on Wednesday in Abuja.

The new football outfit is Emirates FC of Abuja.

"At the present, we are charting a new course to put Nigerian league on the world map."

"We want the world to be talking about Gombe United, Kano Pillars, Enyimba and others in our league, instead of Manchester United and so on," he said.

Earlier the FCT director of sports, Alhaji Sani Lulu who launched the club, praised its proprietor and management for their effort in developing soccer in the FCT.

He appealed to Nigerians, especially residents of the FCT to support the team in its bid to bring honour to the FCT.

"The proprietors are tested men and have the ability to nurture the club to greater heights," he said.

The Chairman of the club, Alhaji Abubakar Damburam explained that it started in 1998 as Arewa Stars through a group of his soccer-loving friends.

About N1.2 million in cash, materials and pledges were realised as donation by guests at the occasion.

## Enyimba should be ruthless - Ukadike

One time Nigerian star Chief Nicolas Ukadike has charged the Enyimba FC of Aba to be ruthless as they host Simba of Tanzania this weekend in their CAF Champions league clash. Ukadike, who was known for his robust play at Iwuanyanwu National and at the defunct ACB football club, told Nigeriasports.com in a chat that Enyimba must be aggressive and ruthless from the blast of the whistle when they take on Simba of Tanzania in Aba Sunday march 20.

Ukadike said, Enyimba must ignore the first leg 1-1 draw in Muanza and work for an outright victory.

"At this stage there is no room for gambling and complacency, since a Simba FC goal would bring pressure on them, I expect

Enyimba to be ruthless" he said.

Meanwhile, Enyimba climbed to third on the Nigerian League table after summarily thrashing NPA 4-0 in a rescheduled week 4 match at the Enyimba International stadium on Wednesday.

Four goals by Joetex Frimpong, Sikiru Atanda, Daniel Njoku and Eric Fascindo completed the total annihilation of the Lagos side.

Chairman of the club, Felix Anyansi Agwu told Nigeriasports.com after the match that the result is an indication that all is well in the camp of Enyimba.

"I feel sorry for Simba because they will be totally destroyed on Sunday in Aba," Anyansi enthused.

"We used our full Arsenal against NPA and there will be worse in store for Simba on Sunday."

## Nasarawa striker leads scorers' chart

Nasarawa United striker, Andrew Eseluka jointly led the scorers' chart with three goals after the opening five games of the 2005 Premier League.

The little known forward, who captains the newly promoted team of former Nigerian international striker Daniel Amokachi, has been in splendid form since the league kicked off five weeks ago.

He opened his goals account against NPA of Lagos in the second week, and added a brace more in Nasarawa's 2-1 defeat of log leaders Kano Pillars in Week Four.

Sharing the top scoring position with the Premier League rookie is Shooting Stars striker Ladi Gasper, who incidentally, grabbed his first two goals of the campaign against Nasarawa

United on the league's opening day in Ibadan. His third came in the 1-0 defeat of Enugu Rangers last week, also in Ibadan.

Interestingly, both players scored all their goals in home matches, and have the quartet of Onyekachi Okoye (Lobi), Prince Wilson Olomu (Enyimba), Gabriel Agu (NPA) and Hasan Aliyu (Kano Pillars), who have two goals each, to contend, with.

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### EDITORIAL

## EFCC and IBB

Mallam Nuhu Ribadu, chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), has been in the news lately over what he said, or didn't say, with regards to former military president General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida. According to the *Financial Standard*, Ribadu, whose latest headline sound bite took place in far away Johannesburg, when he spoke to the Patriots Club of Nigeria—a group of professionals living in South Africa—supposedly said, “the commission [EFCC] had, through its strong relationship in the international community, already ‘checked’ on Babangida’s affairs internationally. But he is so crafty. Nowhere will you see his name as the owner of a property or the holder of a bank account abroad. But that does not mean he will escape. Never, never again in Nigeria will someone like him come to rule the country. It is too late for people like that. The world has changed.”

Following the considerable excitement in the polity that this alleged statement has generated, the EFCC chairman, has been attempting some damage-control by explaining, or perhaps eviscerating, what he said. According to *Thisday*, Ribadu, in his defence, said “there were a barrage [sic] of questions on IBB. They those [sic] at the forum accused EFCC and the Obasanjo administration of double standard, that while apprehending other corrupt officials, we left IBB alone.”

“Now in response to the questions, I said that there are no facts at this time that could be used to nail IBB. But speaking generally, I said corruption, 419, money laundering are difficult to prove and pursue as many officials are often crafty, duplicitous and hide their activities in several ways. However, in today’s Nigeria EFCC is bringing corrupt officials to book day after day and because of the policies and resolute determination of the Obasanjo administration, it will be difficult if not impossible for any corrupt official to rule Nigeria again.”

At this juncture we must register our deep concerns over this affair. In the first instance, it is sufficiently clear, or should be, from Ribadu’s rebuttal that even if he did not intend that his remarks be read as specifically directed at the former military president, one cannot justly hold such an understanding of his words as being misconstrued. Indeed, if anything, his revelation that after his speech “a barrage of questions on IBB” followed can easily be cited as a relative indicator that he did in fact refer to the General, even if not exclusively, in his explanations. After all, while it is not impossible that in answering questions about IBB he may very well include many other persons in his responses, it is virtually unthinkable that he would absolutely leave out the one person he was specifically asked about.

Let this be clear: while we do not hold brief for General IBB, it is regrettable that through this unmitigated *faux pax*, Ribadu seems to be giving credence to charges that the commission he heads is being used by the government of the day to orchestrate a witch-hunt or vengeful politicking. In describing what in essence amounts to a preconceived plan by the EFCC “to nail IBB,” perhaps by whatever means, in order to stop him from ever coming “to rule Nigeria again,” Ribadu has unwittingly lowered the esteem he has enjoyed in the eyes of many since his appointment as the EFCC boss. This is unfortunate and disappointing, for Ribadu, let there be no mistake about it, is one of Nigeria’s finest police officers.

Indeed, his reputation as a competent and incorruptible officer dedicated to the courageous discharge of his duties has in effect become a matter of national pride. However, now there is the risk all the goodwill he enjoys may become dust in the wind on account of what may well have been the proverbial slip of the tongue. Moreover, it is galling that rather than offer a straightforward retraction of the offending statement, Ribadu has been busy playing the old “misquoted” card that has so glaringly failed to wash.

We must emphasise here that while we stand as one with the EFCC with regards to its motto “Nobody is above the law,” vindictive use, or abuse, of the commission’s powers must never be condoned. The EFCC is at liberty to quietly investigate every Nigerian, including General IBB. However, unless it has evidence that can stand the test of a free and fair trial in an open court, neither the commission nor its chairman should ever attempt to disparage or smear anybody through unwarranted statements regardless of their general nature or intention. Otherwise, the commission’s credibility, already under suspicion in some quarters, would be completely eroded for, as Ribadu should know, Nigerians do not believe a rabbit can just show up at a busy market for nothing.

## In Defence of Babangida

By Adamu Adamu

A fortnight ago, newspapers in the country reported comments made on General Ibrahim Babangida by Alhaji Nuhu Ribadu, chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, during a recent visit to Johannesburg, South Africa. The comments were so patently political and amounted to sentencing without evidence or due process.

My immediate gut reaction was to go for a pen. And that was exactly what I did, and started to defend a person I had myself in the past often criticised. Ribadu had just given what to me were, for a person in his position, unfair comments.

Ribadu was reported to have, among other things, said that the EFCC was investigating Babangida. Considering that Babangida was a one-time head of state who might have abused his office in a way that fell under the purview of EFCC’s brief, this was all legitimate and fair enough. The EFCC [Establishment] Act, 2004 had given the commission wide-ranging powers to investigate all manner of economic and financial crimes.

The report, originally carried by the *Financial Standard* and later by *Daily Trust*, also quoted Ribadu vowing that the general would never rule the country again. And considering that democratic electoral politics—the new way to power—is not an economic or financial crime, it was difficult to see why that was Ribadu’s business. Clearly, he was stepping beyond his official bounds.

According to *Daily Trust* [1/3/05] Ribadu even indicated that “the EFCC has ‘checked’ on General Babangida’s affairs internationally through the relationships with the international community, but admitted that so far, the commission has not succeeded in pinning the former leader with money laundering or any other financial crime. For a lawyer, that ought to have settled the matter. But Ribadu wasn’t done.”

“But he is so crafty,” he said of Babangida. “Nowhere will you see his name as the owner of a property or the holder of a bank account abroad. But that does not mean he will escape. Never, never again in Nigeria will someone like him come to rule Nigeria. It is too late for people like that. The world has changed.”

Yes, the world may have changed, but the rule for catching criminals has not; and, especially for those engaged in the dispensation of justice, it still requires proof beyond reasonable doubt. Otherwise, everything becomes suspect.

And even if the law is an ass, the lawyer is not. As a lawyer, Ribadu shouldn’t be the one to exhibit such anxiousness with the snail speed of the machinery of retributive justice. And as a law-enforcement officer, his concern for justice ought to have been predicated on patience with the demands of due process. The fight for morality in public affairs must not go beyond the bounds of ethical conduct in investigations.

I was still on the first page when I learnt that Ribadu had clarified the situation. It was, after all, he said, a quotation out of context. Good, I said, because I didn’t want to believe that he should allow himself this manner of indiscretion. I slackened in my writing. Three days later, the *Daily INDEPENDENT* [8/3/05] carried the story that Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, the vice-president, Alhaji Aliko Dnagote, Lagos-based businessman and Alhaji Waziri Mohammed, chairman of Nigerian Railways, had gone together with Ribadu to beg Babangida. It was all sickening but it was such a great relief that I didn’t have to write about that. I therefore tore up the sheet.

Later, however, I found out that the story in the *INDEPENDENT* was without foundation. The vice president’s office had in fact denied that any such visit to Minna had taken place. I therefore decided to write.

Before his clarification, speculations were rife as to why Ribadu would wish to bar Babangida from the presidency of the country. Three were given—that because he came from the vice-president’s state, he must have been fighting Babangida on his behalf; that though appointed by Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, Ribadu is really a closet Buhari loyalist; and finally, that he must have done it at the promptings of Obasanjo himself, who has all along wanted to nail Babangida. And so here was his chance.

But on closer scrutiny all the three possibilities simply collapse. The first two go together. Insinuations that Ribadu was prompted by Alhaji Atiku Abubakar would seem to have essentially been countered by assertions that Ribadu did so at the behest of Buhari, because mutually exclusive certainties would always cancel each other out. In any case, Babangida is not a political threat to Buhari, considering that they are not even in the same party. And Obasanjo didn’t have to go through Ribadu to get at Babangida if he wanted



Gen. Ibrahim Babangida

to, since it is now given and accepted that the chief can do anything he wishes with the country or anyone within it. In any case, Obasanjo had already countermanded this directive if he ever issued it at all, when he declared at the Commonwealth Foundation Lecture in Lagos last Wednesday that Babangida can contest the 2007 elections.

The issue, however, is not really about Babangida’s eligibility for the election; rather, it is about his culpability for economic and financial crimes as seen by Ribadu. But Babangida, who has a tendency to smile at his personal problems hoping that they will go away, is probably used to it. He once said he had been accused of most crimes under the sun.

Over the years Babangida has always been given the baptism, as it were, of communist legal fire. Whereas in Britain one is innocent until proved guilty; in France, an accused is presumed guilty until he is proved innocent. But in the communist world, their standards are different, it is said. An accused is presumed guilty until he is proved guilty. In other words, an accusation amounts to a sentence; and that is the standard Ribadu wishes to apply to Babangida.

This is clearly unacceptable from a public officer who is supposed to be neutral, apolitical, and impartial, seen and heard—a public officer who has been given this great responsibility and such wide-ranging quasi-judicial powers. As a public prosecutor, Ribadu is supposed to proceed, be guided by, and act only on the facts available to him, and not according to notions and opinions in his mind, or the talk on popular tongue. What is on his mind may be true and accurate, but the law doesn’t care.

It is not necessarily because what is asserted is not true but because it is not proved, and may ultimately remain forever beyond proof. And that is the border where the law, like journalistic libel, must recognise its limit. There is a large tract of untouchable territory between the public’s need and right to know and the integrity and private world of those under media’s scrutiny, even those whom, like Babangida, circumstances have thrown into the vortex of publicity.

Ribadu is the one refreshing face of the Obasanjo Administration that has been welcomed and approved by almost everyone in the country. And Ribadu is perhaps the only reason why, despite all the defects and deficiencies of that administration, including its probable illegality, it is difficult

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