

TSM

The Sunday Magazine

THE SUNDAY MAGAZINE VOL. 2, NO. 20,

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SABOTAGE

Encounter with
Idi Amin

Exclusive!

Confessions of Ibrahim Alfa

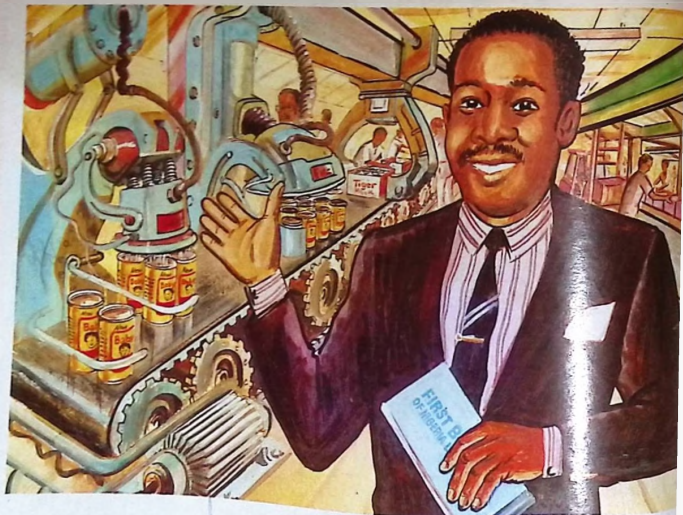
(retired Chief of Air Staff)

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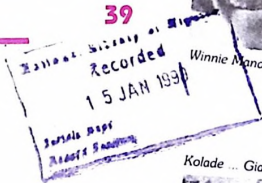


Ibrahim Alfa ... having fun



Winnie Mandela ... trouble with a capital T

Cover Design
FELIX EDIALE



Kolade ... Giant strides



Soccer amazon



Doe ... jitting end



A letter from the Editor

Ibrahim Alfa, retired Air Marshall and former Chief of the Air Staff, is an unusual man. During the civil war, he won a reputation as one of the most daring pilots in the Nigerian Air Force. War veterans still speak of sorties he embarked on which other pilots had cringed from. And at that time he was only a baby pilot, just fresh from training. The story still gets told of the day the news got to his base that an airport in Gabon was being used to ferry arms to Biafra.

Alfa was said to have been mad at this development which was helping in prolonging the war, and perpetuating the suffering of civilians. Unknown to his commanding officer, Alfa and another equally young hot-headed pilot, quietly went to ready their aircraft.

They were going off to destroy that Gabonese airstrip. Later when he was asked he told his colleagues he didn't mind even if his military career was terminated after that day. He told them he was ready to sacrifice all to save his country.

His CO got wind of this secret plan, but realised the Nigerian Air Force could not afford to lose the services of this daring lad. He called Ibrahim Alfa and that same day posted him off to another location where he couldn't possibly carry out his plans.

His career in the military did not get to an end until late last year. Before then this hot-head was in the AFRC the day President Babangida came out of the chambers and casually told television cameras that the AFRC had been dissolved.

A stunned nation had since wondered how it was possible for this to be done. No officer has been able to give this insight. But Ibrahim Alfa does in this edition of TSM. And his answer to that question is definitely going to surprise you.

I can remember him telling me when he was Chief of Staff that nobody could get him angry. During the interview that made this cover, we strenuously put that boast to test. Alfa disappointed. He never showed any signs that he could be ruffled.

Which is probably why he could cope with his job as the boss of the Transition Committee. The only difference with Alfa now is that he is a more relaxed man.

But his interview, unusual as the man, is one you'll most certainly enjoy.

A new voice joins the vibrant TSM family this week. Mohammed Bulama, exquisite prose writer who lectures at the University of Maiduguri. Bulama will bring you spectacular vision on a regular note from the far north. But before then, when he walked into the office and mentioned he flew and spoke with Idi Amin when the ex-despot last visited, I knew that was Bulama's launching pad.

TSM gets better everyday. Enjoy yourself.

Ely Obasi

TSM

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Mamser's denial

Our attention has been drawn to your publication of August 5 1990 entitled 'NRC delegates were vandals' part of which reads

"MAMSER Directors had the same opinion Said Chuks Osuji, Imo State MAMSER boss while speaking to Gloria Fiorini his Rivers State counterpart. 'the difference is clear', SDP delegates are more organised. More manageable than NRC delegates. Look at them and you wouldn't have a doubt.

Fiorini agreed and chipped in. from the state level the difference is very clear. Of course they are better organised. While they were coming into the Banquet Hall this morning, they queued up. One wouldn't say as much about the other party"

It will be necessary to state emphatically that Dr Chuks Osuji, Director of MAMSER in Imo State did not grant any interview to your reporter or to any reporter during the National Conventions of the two political parties nor did he express such opinion credited to him in your said publication.

A proper interpretation of the said publication shows that it was a deliberate attempt to discredit the Imo State MAMSER Director and to cause disaffection between him and the entire membership of NRC in Nigeria. Knowing the type of excellent professional journalism being advocated and practised by the TSM, we wonder

what must have motivated this type of embarrassing article against the State Director.

Therefore, it will be appreciated very highly if you can publish this denial by Dr Chuks Osuji in respect of the said article in your next edition because he does not and cannot favour any of the two parties as a MAMSER Director.

Okems Okemezie,
for: State Director,
Directorate for Social Mobilisation,
Owerri.

Editor's Note: We stand by our story.

Between Murtala and IB

I disagree with Kayode Samuel when he says that "Babangida is widely reputed as the first ruler in Nigeria's history who really wanted to be the top man and worked towards achieving his aim" (TSM Vol. 2, No. 16, September 2, 1990).

However shortlived the regime of Murtala Ramat Muhammed was, we should not deny him the credit of being one ruler who deliberately set out to revamp the nation's ailing economy, check political instability and instil discipline at all levels of our national life.

Murtala did not need to wage paper wars against corruption or indulge in extravagant media commercials. The difference as they say, is clear — number of years of rulership notwithstanding.

Uzoma Ogudike
ISPUB, Nempi Area Office, Oru.

Should Nigeria withdraw from the ECOMOG Force?



Bayo Oladipo
Journalist

WITH the killings of foreign nationals and the destruction of their property, it will be foolish to regard the Liberian crisis as an internal issue. Furthermore, Liberia is a brotherly state. Anything done by Nigeria and other West African countries should not be too much. Therefore ECOMOG should stay and realize its peace keeping mission.



Juliet Kalu
Student

WHAT business has ECOMOG with Liberian civil disturbance in the first place? To me our participation is just a sheer waste of human and material resources to ensure the perpetuation of cannibalism. ECOMOG force should pull out and allow Liberians to settle their problems internally.



Olu Fatimi
Administrator

THERE should be two considerations before taking a decision on whether Nigeria should continue participating in the ECOMOG force or not. Security of Liberian sovereignty and the plight of its sovereign masses. If they are the reasons for ECOMOG involvement in the first place, ECOMOG should stay.



Oserheimen Osunbor

I BELIEVE the idea of an ECOMOG Force in Liberia is a misconceived one. But since the force has gone as far as dabbling into an internal affair of a sovereign nation, the force has created a stalemate and it should stay to achieve a peaceful compromise before leaving. For Nigeria, which is the major force in the group, to pull out should be unthinkable.

The day I met Idi Amin

brief but memorable encounter with erstwhile Ugandan tin-god, Idi Amin, on the eve of January 1989 could not have occurred in more unlikely circumstances. That December night, the last hours of 1989, I, along with a handful of other more mentally than physically worn-out fellow travellers, was only too grateful to take cover inside the comfortable belly of the Lagos-bound aircraft, away from the freezing Maiduguri hammam tog, and relieved that the end to our seemingly interminable airport waiting game, no thanks to Nigera Airways' inefficiency, was finally in sight.

As we took turns to embark upon the long-awaited flight, there was nothing we could do but stop dead in our tracks, as though computer-programmed, at the hard to believe but unmistakable sight of the former ruler of Uganda. Looking quite untrifled, the Ugandan giant simply moved his lips in the cynical grin he was well known for in his heydays. Idi Amin Dada was obviously enjoying the milk stir his least expected presence had caused.

Needless to say, we did not recall in awe, and much less, in fear, of the ex-despot's presence as millions before us in those unforgettable days he held court in Kampala, had done. For, not only was this time his "theatrical style" Nigeria and his "audience" almost entirely Nigerian, but everybody present, not the least the man himself, knew that the myth surrounding him, had exploded in his face a long time ago.

But we were all puzzled, very visibly puzzled. And for me the temptation to chat up the former self-styled Field Marshall was, of course, too strong to resist. My request for an interview was off-handedly declined by Amin, ostensibly on the grounds that he was yet not ready to speak to the world. As I stubbornly stood over his famous massive frame, all he could volunteer was his delight in once again treading the African (and even more so the Nigerian) soil. Then, accepting my card which I offered him, he gave me his word that he will remember to invite me over for an interview when the time came (which he said was going to be soon), glancing as he spoke, at the grey suited young man seated by his side who, I learnt later, was his son. That promise remains unfulfilled as yet.

Nonetheless, I did not need a chat with the exiled Ugandan dictator to know only a few days afterwards, that he was on his way enroute his East African home-country which he grossly misruled for eight years. His mission, To unseat the government of Uganda and subsequently to reinstate his reign of terror. And his instrument, launching an armed counter-revolutionary rebellion from the Zaire-Uganda border.

If that misadventure was not



By Mohammed Bulama

foolhardy, brazen and too tall an order, nothing else could qualify for such a description.

Yet while one can keep one's self occupied speculating as many options as one can think of, it has struck me that Amin's temerity was a product of the failure of those who sacked him from power to despatch him to the great beyond for his criminal atrocities against his compatriots. Had the invading Tanzanian troops and their Ugandan allies zeroed their target on the capture of Amin, rather than merely being content with chasing the dictator out of Kampala, Africa would have been the better for it. Nigeria, for instance, would have been spared the embarrassment of seeming to have an unholy romance with the discredited ex-dictator Mobutu Sese Seko Zaire would have been spared yet another dent on an almost irredeemable image. The Saudis would have been saved the dilemma of nearly abandoning their responsibility to their guest of a decade (then). And above all, Ugandans would have spared the distracting agony of having to look back over their shoulders with apprehension of Amin's probable return.

But because an unfortunate twist of fate still keeps him alive, Amin, along with other blood thirsty ex-African tyrants in the mould of Bokassa, has unabatedly cast a sizeable dent on the ego of this misused continent.

That was Amin

And then there was Doe, Samuel Kanyon Doe, who massacred his way into the Executive Presidential Mansion in Monrovia and who got bludgeoned out of it. Doe died the way only tyrants deserve to die—in humiliation and gruesomely. That he was captured by, and died in

the blood-dripping hands of his ilk and under the very nose of the region's self appointed peace-makers only add drama to the scenario.

The Liberian saga, for all its embarrassment for Africa, remains noble for Doe's demise. Had the former Master Sergeant outlived the gory tale that has been Liberia's lot in the past decade the African tragedy would have been even more heart-rending. The Silver lining in the sky, if ever there was one for Africa, would have finally dimmed out.

In retrospect, it was a blessing of inestimable value that a belligerent Doe refused to heed the good counsel to honourably step down from office. Here was a man who dragged his already backward country to the primitive epoch, and would have been conferred the privilege of being ferried to another land to silently enjoy the 'fruits' of his labour.

For us, in Nigeria, it is even the more a blessing. With the possibility staring us in the face that had Doe left Liberia in the Idi Amin-style he had more than just a chance of warming into a Nigerian embrace, his inglorious demise is good tidings. We have been spared a damaging blow to the collective psyche of this nation. That we have got ourselves involved in a turmoil which by the day is assuming more genocidal dimension, and which only Heaven knows when, and how it will cease, is bad enough. Bringing Doe here to live in our midst would have been an unmitigated disaster.

In one respect, at least, what remains of Liberia will count itself luckier than Uganda. If and when there is a Liberia again, for there is none now, its people will be relieved of the tormenting burden of having to look back over their shoulders for the return of Samuel Doe.

Yet for Africa, the cheer in Doe's death cannot carry far. The face of this continent is still littered with so many Does, rulers who had enormous pleasure in unleashing reign of terror on innocent men and women. Left, right and centre, they cling to power even just with the tips of their fingers, into senility and subsequent death.

Good Heavens, if Africa could remain "blessed" with sit-tight misrulers who almost always come the Doe way, then let them go the Doe way. They deserve no less.

Bulama, a political science teacher at the University of Maiduguri, is a guest writer.

Why have we been so cruel to Samuel Doe?



By Ely Obasi

I can imagine how they did it to him. *Ticker tapes* which rolled into town last week bore stories which tingle the skin. They went after him with those matchets, as though they were chopping wood. They sliced him repeatedly. Most touchingly, they trimmed off the genitals of Master Sergeant Samuel Doe, and left him to bleed and suffer to death.

Why do we always start with the genitals? It wasn't Doe's genitals that murdered William Tolbert. It wasn't Doe's genitals that destroyed the economy of Liberia. There is absolutely no way Doe could have employed that section of his anatomy in that massive rigging of elections which saw him digging himself further into the Executive Mansion.

Yet that was the very place the boys of Yormie Johnson started with. Even after they cut it off, they chopped it up, and scattered the little fleshy pieces. One source even said they chewed up every bit of the damned little thing.

But that is not the cruelty I am talking about. The real great cruelty against Samuel Doe was the one we perpetrated a long time ago, long before Charles Taylor swaggered back from his American jail. Long before Yormie Johnson found that power, no matter how wretched, was more intoxicating than *Burukutu*.

Let me explain. Here was a man who all he wanted in life was to be an electrician. Do you get it? An electrician with a little shed by Agege Motor Road in Mushin. A humble little man who would go around helping you fix the little socket whose fuse had blown. A rodent of a man, always handy to help you adjust your electric meter to cheat NEPA of a few naira. A lowly man whose only demand in life was little money to keep Nancy and her breed of squirrels just a little above the plumbline of starvation.

But here was this little man by a combination of fate and his personal adventurism, catapulted to the incredibly dizzying heights of state power.

Here was this little man opportunely to stand at the plush green lawn of America's White House. The Mushin electrician standing shoulder to shoulder with one of the greatest communicators of all time, Ronald Reagan. Never mind that on that occasion Reagan, in a great but

instinctive perception of the man's littleness, had called him, Ambassador Moe. Never mind that at all!

Here was this mean man, whose greatest feat in life would have been stealing the cables you gave him to wire your new house, and selling same back to you, now sitting at the dinner table with Reagan and his top aides. Do not forget that Reagan's wife who most probably was also at table, is also called Nancy. And that Ronald himself, let's face it, never wanted to stand at the White House lawn, never dreamt to be President. All he had asked of life was just to be a second-rate actor, doing a few lepid movies, and maybe flaunting his generous genitals (those things again) in a few soft-porn outtings. He also had been conspired, by fate and adventure, to the White House.

Americans, vain bastards they are, like to call their president! "The Most Powerful Man in the world." Now Ambassador Moe, sorry President Doe, stood with President Reagan. You must know just how the Kranman from Liberia would have felt. Which he was right to feel!

Don't let it bother you, that people, lots of people, had to be killed, so Doe could get into, and remain in the Executive Mansion. These things happen, you know. Which is why despite the menace of Taylor and his band of brigands, Samuel Doe landed at Murtala Mohammed Airport, shortly after April 22 to see another President. This time Babangida. You see, he who feels it knows it. He knew that no matter how charitable IBB might like to be, there was something to be done to Gideon Orkar and his band of ex-servicemen. It was the duty of one president (and a general at that) who knows to show solidarity with another President (and also a general) who may not know. Or who may want to allow vain popularity, instead of expediency, get into his head.

Garbled speeches don't make one a head of state. Why did people like Dimka and Orkar think they could, like Doe, grab power, simply because they could take a radio station and mouth a few illogicalities. Doe was not doing anything wrong, so why were we so cruel to him?

But, quite seriously, the fault wasn't that of Samuel Doe. The God or Allah who

created Doe failed to equip him with something which he gave all of us. We knew it. And all this while we made no efforts to help him. In this lies our culpability in what has happened to the late master-sergeant and his country.

No head of state in this world, facing deposition, has been as lucky as Doe. Ask Estelita Peron or Nicolai Ceausescu. The case of the Romanian despot is so recent and so pathetic. It was Christmas day, just this last Christmas that he discovered it was all over. He attempted to escape by helicopter, and when it didn't work, by car. But the people who were after him caught up with him. They put him through a most humiliating mock trial, and finished him off, along with his sweetheart wife, and made a television thriller out of it.

But Doe was so lucky. When the US saw that he was a finished man, they gave him all the facilities to go away and enjoy his 10-year loot. They provided him aircraft, troops, intelligence, all the works. They told him, go Doe to anywhere in the world you wish. Nigeria, his friend, did not desert him. We told him, come here Doe, and enjoy what is left of the Bar Beach.

Not that that was the best way to help Doe. For he would have, like Bokassa, after a while in exile, gone back to terrorize his people and torment himself. Don't forget power is like *Burukutu*. Once you've sipped, there's no getting away.

So Doe looked all of us in the face and spat at us. The fault wasn't really his. God who created him failed to equip him with the facility to recognise that the heydays of the top-dog does get to run out. Doe didn't know, and he couldn't know.

Now I say this with all gravity. We did not help Doe enough. If we had, we should have done the only thing that would have been of help to him. And saved him all this torment.

There's only one thing to do to people who God denied this facility. Look around the world and see if it is not true.

There's only one tangible way to have meaningfully helped Doe. Our cruelty to him that we didn't do this all this while.

And that thing is this: We should have arranged the assassination of Samuel Doe a long time ago.

Don't you think so? Let us know



Politics & Policy

Confessions of a retired general

Interview by Ely Obasi, Kayode Samuel & Comfort Obi

After a prolonged encounter with Ibrahim Mahmud Alia, it would be easy to conclude that the man might have fared just as well as a politician as he has as a soldier. They guy is smooth, almost too smooth—like someone on the hustings. Built like a soldier, Ibrahim Alia talks

- How the Abuja party conventions were remote-controlled and why we couldn't do anything
- My worries for the Third Republic
- Why we allowed IBB to sack AFRC
- Why I badly wanted to retire
- Mass purge in the armed forces
- The joys of life after retirement



by Mackson Onyiahwa

like a politician. Which is probably why his namesake and Commander-in-Chief, Ibrahim Babangida, thought it fit to ship him, so soon after retirement, into the midst of politicians as chairman of the now defunct Transition to Civil Rule Committee.

The other day Ibrahim Alia happened by at TSM's Ilupeju office, generally radiating that trademark hail-fellow-well-met air and apparently living up his double retirement. Last December, Alia retired as Nigeria's longest serving chief of air staff. And last month he was seen off his much shorter sojourn as Transition Committee boss.

It was a disarmingly relaxed Alia who told us all about himself—from his childhood days when he said he

Alia: "I'm starting to understand the civilian a little better now"

peeled cassava and sold gam, through his days as a fighter pilot and Air Force chief, to the current spate of retirements in the military, through his most recent experience with the "new-breed" politicians. And, yes, the Abuja party conventions and his own political aspirations, even though he told us "I am banned five times!"

As the interviewers' questions kept coming at him, Alia protested: "Look, you guys, spare me now. I am your visitor. Even SSS interrogation is not like this!" Obviously the airman thought he was on a courtesy call. We thought so too.

The twice-retired, five times banned Alia says he is now busy working on his memoirs. This interview, we make bold to say, should do just fine as a fitting appetizer while you await the main course, Savour it.

TSM: In your experiences at the Transition to civil rule assignment what was your most lasting impression and what do you think of the processes we are practising?

ALFA: It is slightly more complicated than I thought. We have transition to civil rule committee and transition to civil rule programme. The committee was dissolved last month, because the whole idea of the committee was to start the two political parties and then hand them over to NEC. But I am slightly worried about what may happen at the elections of December. One thing I understand is that people don't seem to accept things and wait for the next turn. And during this party convention that we had, sometimes you have to really put your foot down. And that was only Intra party election. I don't know what will happen. That isn't the election yet. It is not I hope people, the politicians that will take part in the December elections, will have a sense of compromise otherwise there will be so many court cases that it could ridicule the nation.

TSM: You talked about the fact that you people had to put your foot down to get things done. But the circumstances where you should have put your foot down was what the former CGS now the Vice President just came and spoke about at Abuja. The fact that money was used (by politicians). It was quite obvious and it was rampant.

ALFA: It was not as open as you thought! I was in Abuja and I tried to personally catch people physically. I heard a lot of rumours. I know people who just agitated because they thought money was being used. But I told them, if I take the case up, can you stand by your words? They said no. Even, journalists who came to me,



... Rimi was in my house in Abuja

I challenged them.

TSM: You said you saw money bars. (And she confessed it to Alfa)

ALFA: I agree, you said money was used. But you know they didn't allow me to see them. I expected somebody to bring me photographs.

TSM: You said you saw money bars. I hope it wasn't your office that was shielding you. Some of them even exchanged hard currencies.

ALFA: No, no, no. You see I was interested because I am even planning to write. One day I will write a book on politics. But nobody could prove it. I was thinking that somebody should have gone to NEC and tell them I have seen this thing and prove it. A sort of investigative thing.

TSM: In the case of the money being exchanged.

ALFA: But what I heard was this, I heard that even journalists were among. I am sorry to say, but the impression I got was that some journalists themselves were involved. Yes, well, you know it yourselves. But, I haven't seen. I heard that money went round. But you know you cannot go and hold somebody without proof. When it started, journalists came to me and I tried to ascertain if they could get one person or somebody who will confess. Even if he failed the election. Somebody who will say, I know I would

have won but for this money. And some of the amount which were mentioned. You have bizarre amounts like N2 million, N5 million, N10 million, you know, I cannot imagine it. But, I knew we paid N2,000 each for everybody to come. I knew that some people spent more than that amount of money. So, they must have been given transport aid by somebody else. Okay, maybe you say that was humanitarian. But to give money so that there will be switching of votes, I have a feeling that it was there. There is no doubt about that. But who gave it to whom is the issue.

TSM: We saw it. But the amount was not declared.

ALFA: Yes, that is what I heard, and that is what I am hearing from you.

TSM: That there is a case in court in Inno State based on this. It is still in court and is from the SDP fold.

ALFA: Well, it will stay in court until it is determined. What is the substance of the case?

TSM: Well, one of them dragged others to court. That somebody paid them a lot of money.

ALFA: Who paid? You see the issue of receiving is not usually easy to resolve. Particularly when it is not recorded. It is difficult. I have learnt not to take things at face value, because, in the final analysis this court could be confronted with some very embarrassing questions. And you may not be able to substantiate it, unfortunately. You know, it is not done. I have just learnt that there is a difference between morality and legality. If it is the issue of morality somebody will say, I was guilty. It is true I was given. So the case will end. But honestly,

TSM: This issue of banned politicians, everybody saw Nzeribe around Kaduna. General Yar'Adua was there as well as Abubakar Rimi. Jambani did not go but was marshalling things from Lagos. Isn't there a way they could have been kept away, at least physically? The presence of Nzeribe, Rimi and Yar'Adua in Kaduna made it very obvious that these men were actually in control. So, they were meeting with the delegates.

ALFA: You see, that is what I am saying. First of all, during the convention Yar'Adua was not in Abuja. He was in Kaduna. Most of this people never came to Abuja. I did not see Nzeribe there and I came in to the convention venue very often.

TSM: What about Babanga Turur and Rimi?

ALFA: Babanga Turur, I learnt, left before the convention. I learnt he is one of the directors of Agura Hotel. He

name for shareholders meeting
TSM: *What is the reaction?*

ALFA: We are in a country where we are very very advanced when it comes to this sort of thing. After all we were holding the conventions in a hotel. We did not hire the hotel exclusively for the convention. In fact all we hired was the convention hall. Anybody who wanted to come and put up in the hotel was free to do so. In fact most of the people who were there were not among the delegates. I don't think there were more than 10 percent who were actually delegates putting up in the hotel. So who will pay for the rest of the hotel? In future the parties could hire a whole hotel and maybe stop people from coming. It is very difficult to prevent such things now.

TSM: *But you agree that banned politicians had a lot of influence at the conventions.*

ALFA: Ah goodness gracious, don't you think they are bound to! I have the opportunity I would have influenced it. There is no doubt about it. You know what I discovered? I was talking with some of my friends, I was a lot of them in both parties. They said it is just like being a retired military officer and then there is a war going on, and you feel that something is going on, you voluntarily put in what you can to help so that the system survives. I would not understand them because it is not my profession. They said, they went there for the sake of business, and they met people. Very convenient. You know a lot of them are lawyers, and they have been in this business for a very, very long time.

TSM: *them, you can't circumvent them.*

ALFA: You can't do anything to them. You can't do anything.

TSM: *Rimi said, quite directly, in an interview we had with him that they interfered with the process...*

ALFA: Absolutely (cuts in)

TSM: *In fact, that they formed the parties and government just gave them names.*

ALFA: Yes, I read it. I am very conversant with it. But what I am saying is if he did, I didn't see it. And we have a lot of security organisations there. Nobody reported seeing it. And I know he did not come to Abuja. Maybe he interfered in Kano, but certainly not in Abuja. Because he was not there.

TSM: *Most of them were in Kaduna...*

ALFA: (Cuts in) Okay, that is possible.

TSM: *They were meeting with the delegates, and Rimi was in Abuja.*

ALFA: Okay. I saw him but that was after the convention, not during. But you may be right. Even, he came to my house. Most of them were in my

house, both from the NRC and SDP. I learn a lot from what they had to say.

TSM: *While you were with the political transition committee, you interacted with a lot of people. How did you see the political future of this country?*

ALFA: These new breed politicians are not young people. Most of them are over 40. They are much more exposed. They even have people who are sixty. They will still call themselves new breed. They are not. You know in this country, it is when you least expect it to survive that something comes up from nowhere. It is true. This country is firm. But things are much more sophisticated and they continue to be more sophisticated. Maybe it will reach the new political order. If we can reach there then more and they will be more sensitive to criticism. And the older politicians are more like statesmen because they have suffered the colonial era. They have seen what it is to compromise and negotiate. And people who fail should know that there is another day. And that is why I have always pleaded with most of them in my transition committee days, that it is not a die-hard type of thing. There should be nothing like opposition when we win or lose. The opposition party should be able to make an input. And also, those who form the government should not take the opposition as lepers. That is what makes politics fun. And unless we believe in this negotiation and compromise, then all the efforts of the transition will go down the drain. And that will bring problems to this country.

TSM: *Now, that you have finished with the transition programme assignment, what next? What are you looking forward to?*

ALFA: Nothing. I am now having more time to read and write and continue writing. It is very exciting.

TSM: *What are you writing?*

ALFA: My experiences.

TSM: *In the military or outside it?*

ALFA: Both. All together.

TSM: *So, we are expecting two books?*

ALFA: One may be small. The military one may be small. I had an opportunity to see a former statesman, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe and had a long interview with him. I was with him all time. It was very, very revealing. That will be part of the Second Book. Even if I have to spend my whole 10 years on that book alone, it is alright. I now know the Nigerian more than before. They tell a lot of fairy tales and most are unpredictable. You can never rely on what they tell you. They tell you exactly the opposite of what they are planning to do. So don't waste your

time listening to them.

TSM: *When you look at your career, you rose to the highest position, a three-star general, and head of the Airforce. When you look at your military career, what are the most enduring events or experiences that you can recollect?*

ALFA: Things have changed slightly now. When I joined it was interesting and more emphasis was given to professionalism. In case of comradeship, I hope that it is picking up. But now, there is more emphasis on individualism. I am sure, I am not talking for everybody, but at that time, there



The military have changed



TOWARDS 1992



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... I can now sleep well, dress as I like

was no ambiguity in my mind that I will die for my country if you touch Nigeria. I was so indoctrinated to believe that if you touch this country, I will die for it. I hope it is the situation now.

TSM: You trained as a pilot. You were reputed to be one of the best during the war. Because of military involvement in politics, it is a long time since you flew. Do you still know where and how to hold the joystick?

ALFA: Oh, that is a very good question. First of all, certainly, in our own group, I was not the best pilot. But okay there are different aspects of aviation. You have flying in good weather, flying in bad weather, low level flying, aerobatics, and things like that. There are different phases. I was average in all of them. We lost the best pilots in that war. And once in a while, of course, if I have the opportunity to fly it is a hobby. If there is, maybe serious war or something, I may not be involved to the extent of going to fight because the new crop of pilots that we have now are well trained. They have had the opportunity to be trained well. They are flying much more sophisticated aircrafts.

And they are highly professional, in fact far much more professional than we were. The only difference may be guns. That is all. We had far much better crop of fighter pilots in our time than now. Even now, when you talk to them, they say those times were more primitive. They can't understand how you can fly with such a slow aircraft as we flew and when they are shooting you, and you are still going on. But that was because of the indoctrination, I never, never thought I would be shot. Maybe one was being stupid. But it is the indoctrination. But we have far much better pilots now. And even when I was in the Air Force, when I visit them, they still take me round. When we fly with them, they showed me they are better. Some of them I had cause to be involved in their training. So if there is crisis now, I don't think one will go

to fight, maybe we will be involved in the training. The basic type of training. But on operations, we can only advise so that they don't commit the same mistakes and lose people the way we did. So, it is true sometimes, if you are trained properly, you will not totally forget. It is not possible. If you are trained properly you will always know when mistakes are coming. When the aircraft is misbehaving itself and your own limitations.

TSM: There are people who are saying sometimes that there is no proper Reserve list for the Nigerian armed forces. The way it is done in other places, if there is a crisis you can be called upon to render some services. That does not exist in Nigeria. And they had thought that before your group left office, you might have been able to solve that problem. But is it in place now?

ALFA: Emm, no fully I know there were a lot of studies then to be made. You know it because, it affects the terms and conditions of service for officers. And because these are the sort of things that you should be told from cadetship that this is what you will be going through. That is, that you'll be in a reserved list, so that you will from the beginning know whether you want to join the service. I don't think that much attention has been given to this. I don't think so. Because they feel we are very big. The population is very big. When crises do happen, people will be called. And I think, we are lacking a lot of things for granted. You are right. Maybe now when there is crisis I am called and I will say no. I don't want to. Nothing can happen to me legally. But there should be a clause. And I am sure something is being done. And I will not be surprised by the time military hands over there will be something really specific on this issue. Because if it is properly organised, the country will be in a position to reduce its armed forces. You see what is happening now in the United States. A lot of reserves are

being recalled. All what you need to do is that maybe once in six months, you are called back to be updated on what is happening. I think we are realising now that the armed forces is getting more expensive. I am sure, something will be done.

TSM: There is this age-long worry that officers retire at very young age. In the past few days, it has been hot more so much that when you see those who are leaving now, it seems that people like you (Alfa) retired at an old age.

ALFA: Yes, but most of them that are retired are my colleagues. We joined the same time.

TSM: They are your colleagues?

ALFA: Yes. We joined the same day. A lot of them. In fact, most of them.

TSM: People like the Air Commodores?

ALFA: The difference is maybe not more than six months. You know, a set below us. Or something like that. You see the promotion in the airforce, is just like a pyramid. That is why you have this sort of thing. These are the hassles of underdevelopment. And it will continue for a long time. You know the structure of the armed forces is actually built on the number and structure of the service itself. I am very happy first of all that I was given the opportunity to leave in peace. So that I will have time also to sleep well without the tension of being in the military. If the world is in peace, then you don't need the military. So, the military is associated with an emergency situation for any country. And when you are given the opportunity to head an emergency organisation, of course, that situation stands. And now, I have some few years at least to sleep well. To wear the type of shoes I want to. To dress anyhow. And go out when I want to without wearing uniforms all the time. You know there are a lot of constraints in the military. It is in fact, after you leave the military then you begin to understand that we are putting so much for our country without actually knowing it. To travel, you have to say where you are going. And as a regulation, you are not allowed to stay more than 48 hours, without informing the commanding officer. There are days you have emergencies where they will say nobody is to leave the unit. And these are small constraints that you do not know and they are just like drop of water in a cup. Anyway, in the final analysis, you will still have to leave. But one thing that the country will be missing is that they have invested so much on these officers, and that in advanced countries, these are people trained in

management problems. From second lieutenant, all officers must attend courses for management because what you are dealing with is rare

TSM: There are some worries. When Gowon became a general he was 33. When Obasanjo became head of state, he was about 39 or there about. When Balagbali became head of state, he was about 45, and heading at the country it was as if leadership was passing each time to more mature people. And a lot of people believe that the war was fought because the two primary men were 32 and 33, and very impotent. Of course, all the men around them were impotent. I don't think at your age, you will go to war as quietly as Gowon went to war at that time. Will you?

ALFA: (Cuts In) Of course, there are certain things that I had done when I was young that if I remember, I will get frightened. I think maybe those (politicians) who may be coming will be mature enough to be discussing, you know, with the military. Just as they do in the advanced countries. You know you don't make a red carpet decision just because you are elected, without discussing it with those in the forces. They keep them abreast on the developments and what the government is doing always. So I would wish, that maybe the civilian regime that is coming should, take seriously or maybe make a note of this thing where those who have the opportunity to hold the arsenal of this country would have a little input not actually on what the party or what the government is going to do, but on what makes the military behave the way they are behaving. Now, I am beginning to understand, you know because I have been interacting with a lot of civilians. Some of the things that I didn't hear, even when I was in the service. I have now heard from some of them. Then they were shy to tell me certain things but now I hear things that I never thought existed.

TSM: There is the feeling about the general removal of a lot of officers who have been political appointments. There is still a lot of resentment expected in the lists for the army and the navy. The air force has retained its own. For the air force, (Yusuff Nurobi, the Chief of Air Staff) is the only AFM left now.

ALFA: Any retired senior officer, especially one who had headed any of the services, even in advanced countries, is normally not allowed to make any comment regarding that service record. I have avoided making any statement because first of all, I don't know the circumstances that al-

lowed it I had my time, nobody interfered with how I ran the air force. When I have something, I brief the commander-in-chief and I can't think of any day that I discussed any serious issue that I am convinced on, that was turned down. I don't think it is fair. I don't know the parameters there, and I don't think a country like Nigeria will just wake up and make certain changes like this without actually sitting down and thinking. And I think we should wait and see the whole restructuring. Maybe they want to reduce the strength of the services. Maybe, they want to put more equipment in place and things like this. I will prefer this really because of having the professional level raised. But it is not right actually to say anything in this thing. After all, it is something new.

TSM: You said something about reduction of size of the military. The question is actually what the people might consider as the optimal size of the military, the armed forces in its entirety. People are touting various figures. Some are saying 75,000, some 90,000. If we can cut down troops to that level we can divert resources to hardware from overhead. What will you consider to be the optimal size of the armed forces?

ALFA: Okay, can I say what I understand? When a lot of things are being considered, there are a lot of parameters which are considered. Firstly, our threat. And what will even be our threat comes in. Parameters like what even can our economy sustain

TSM: This is the first time that the head of state in the country was able to retire people this way, sack AFRC, remove ministers, governors and other top government functionaries. What made it possible for you people to accept it. Was it that you people had more mature minds?

ALFA: Firstly, you should understand that there has to be a point in time, and your profession that you have to give way to new blood and new thinking to correlate with the changing times. I said one of the four things that bothered me, that made me make the final decision to seek for separation was this that when you start visiting a unit and then you ask, any problem? And everybody says everything is alright, then something is wrong. And of course, most of us have done our best. There was a time when the nation called us. We have done our own best. Everybody was given an opportunity to go and see what he has finished. So, I may be an individual on this. All armed forces all over the world, there are times when such things happen.

TSM: Okay, we are trying to put in place a system that will discourage the military from coming into politics again. So how do you know they won't come back?

ALFA: I have a different assessment. I really don't know your yardstick in this. I talked to a lot of them and I think most of them really know the repercussions of not compromising the situation. Nobody would have wished for the circumstances that led a lot of them losing their freedoms during a military push. To this, I must say the bulk of the problem rests on whoever is going to rule this country after 1992. There should be self assessment that means when anybody is found wanting in government, he should be asked to leave, not only because of the party. And the right type of people should be called to run certain specific organs of the state. I know in other countries there are men who are not party card carrying members being co-opted because of their specific knowledge and integrity, to run certain organisations that have very very sensitive implications. So there has to be a level of party patronage. And if this is done, nobody, either the opposition party or real pressure groups are thrown out as lepers. For instance once in a while, a form of briefing is given by the President on the economy and the general direction of what the country is. Even in political manipulations, there are certain things that people just don't say. So the opposition leader will not know all about it.

... Something must be wrong





The world

By Mackson Onyejekwe

January 1988, a comely lad, James Stompie Seipel, 14-year-old activist was found murdered. Rather butchered—his throat was cut up and the air-pipes and gullet yanked out through the slit! His bulging eye balls drooping tongue and the wild look on his face showed the grave violence that preceded his death. He was found dumped in a ditch in Soweto. The black township went berserk. Winnie Mandela and her 30-man body guard branded Mandela United Football Team were accused of the murder. They allegedly abducted Stompie from his Soweto church hostel. The allegation was reinforced by other cases of nocturnal sinister activities of the 30-man football team.

And now, more than two years after the gruesome murder, the South African prosecutors are convinced that Winnie Mandela should be brought on trial in connection with Seipel's death. In the prosecution writ at the Witwatersrand division of the Supreme Court Mrs. Mandela and seven others are to face trial on charges of kidnap and assault with the intent to do bodily harm.

Klaus von Lieres, Attorney-General of Johannesburg District has declared in a statement that Winnie and others shall appear in court September 24, when date for subsequent trials will be fixed.

Two things are remarkable. Klaus Wilkau, Attorney-General at Witwatersrand, is a man of his words: he moved slowly but firmly with the trials. This more than engenders fear. When in September 1989, Wilkau declared his resolve to prosecute Jerry Richardson, coach of the 30-

Winnie's woes

A make-or-mar legal battle puts a question mark on the credibility of the Mandelas and threatens on-going negotiations for a peaceful end to apartheid



Winnie's troubles threaten to overwhelm Nelson

man 'football team', he indicated that he would reserve his decisions in respect of Mrs. Mandela till after Richardson's case has been concluded. Richardson had since been sentenced to death. He was convicted last month for the murder of Seipel. Now it's Winnie's turn. Winnie is facing the same charges for which Richardson was sentenced to death.

Mrs. Mandela has continuously denied her alleged complicity. During a recent trip to the United States, journalists grilled her over the issue and she reiterated that she should welcome being charged, "so that I could appear in a court to defend myself".

Nelson Mandela, who was serving his 27 year jail term during the incident has repeatedly absolved Winnie from the allegations and persistently maintained that the South African government was

staging a witch-hunt against his wife, to smear the image of the ANC, as well as tarnish the credibility of the Mandelas.

As the count-down to the final date fades off, Mrs. Mandela has been having repeated brushes with the police. In one such incident, she was stopped at a road block, taken away and detained. Mrs. Mandela who was then riding her Mercedes-Benz car through the Tokoza township, handed over spent cartridges of assault rifles, which she was carrying with her at that time. She was released shortly after.

Meanwhile, Ismail Ayob, Mrs. Mandela's lawyer is said to have started warming up for the legal battle royale, which could make or mar the Mandelas.

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Squeeze for LSDPC

... as allottees of Dolphin scheme unite
to fight a common cause

By Yusuph Olaniyonu

Scheme in Lagos. Else, they would not have promised and failed to deliver on schedule to some upwardly mobile, yuppy executives in Lagos.

It all happened last year when LSDPC called on these executives in the banking, military, insurance, oil, publishing and private business sectors to complete basic payments amounting to N450,000 each for houses of the Dolphin Scheme. All the allottees complied. And with a promise that they 'will move into their houses by January this year'. But as one allottee who is a top manager in one of the nation's leading oil companies told TSM, 'LSDPC later told us to hold on till March'. But March has gone to August and the houses in the highbrow estate remain uncompleted.

Meanwhile, the allottees have now mobilised to fight their cause. In a circular inviting members to a meeting at a restaurant in Victoria Island, it was

stated that 'we believe that being several individuals, none of us has been in the position to put pressure on either LSDPC or HFP to accelerate work ... unless we come together and do something, we cannot rule out the possibility that the situation will not change much in the foreseeable future'.

The circular also stated the problems faced by the allottees as a result of the slow pace of work on the scheme. Those who took loans to pay for the property have paid a conservative estimate of N125,000 annual bank interest. Those who paid out of their pockets have lost about N100,000 annual interest on money that would have been invested. This is exclusive of rental charges amounting to several thousands of naira still being paid by allottees.

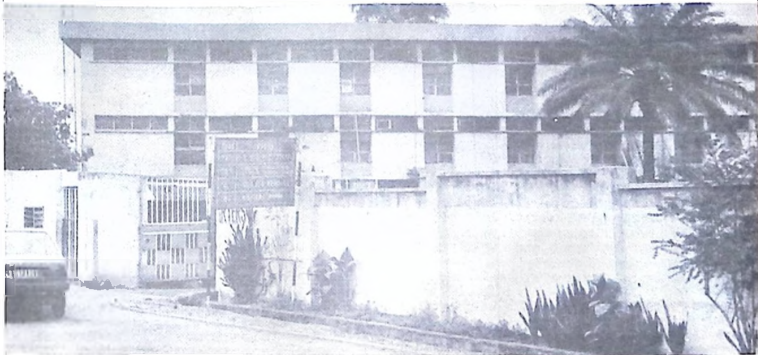
But LSDPC would not take any blame for non-performance. Its spokeswoman, Ronke Serrano, dismissed all the claims as 'just a result of communication gap between the allottees and



Money

When beggars die no comets are seen. But heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes.

But, it seems the Shakespearean aphorism was unknown to the Lagos State Development and Property Corporation (LSDPC) and its contractors, HFP Construction Company. Or maybe they have chosen to neglect it in their deal on the Ikoyi Dolphin



* LSDPC — Where the ball started rolling

my corporation.

She further explained that the corporation never promised any particular date for the hand-over of the houses. According to Serrano the call for them to complete payments was to forestall fluctuations in market prices and the contractor was fully paid immediately.

She however agreed that 'we are working behind schedule because we intended constructing only 412 units in the estate but due to pressures from customers, we had to increase the number to 650. You will realise that even with the system construction method being used, the date of completion had to change'.

Also HFP believes that the privileged allottees were crying wolf where there was none. Yaakov Chai, the Managing Director believes they are working on the agreed schedule with LSDPC. The allottees think all that matters is paying money and the houses will be ready the next week.

He further explained that the slow pace of foreign exchange acquisition and chaotic supply of necessary materials like aluminium, terrazo, flooring tiles and iron had affected the pace of work. Likewise the inadequate security on the construction site which had cost the company several stolen items.

Chai however added that 'all we are concerned with is constructing the best of quality houses for the allottees. And thus we have taken our time to do, even at extra cost to us'.

'For example, we took time to do soil test for each house, made a de-flooding system as well as comprehensive drainage system around the area', Chai added.

The Managing Director further assured allottees that their housing units would all be ready 'before the last day of December. And the estate would be one of the best in the country if our arrangements on maintenance, security, power supply and telecommunication equipment fall through'.

And these arrangements were the subject of a round table discussion between representatives of the three parties. At the meeting in which the allottees led by a Lagos lawyer, Zik Obi, held with LSDPC and HFP teams headed by the two managing directors, explanations were made and hard feelings assuaged. TSM later saw the various parties chatting freely with understanding.

Obi told TSM that they have got a December promise which looked realistic. Some of the allottees would move into the estate 'soon' as the first phase has been handed over to

LSDPC. Though without basic amenities like electricity, water, and well constructed roads. These facilities are to be provided before December' Serrano added.

Another case of the Machiavellian Prince(s) being always right. But still persists a certain nagging fear. Allottees are concerned over security. TSM

has learned that the estate located by the busy, Ikoyi express-way may not be completely fenced in due to the desire of the LSDPC to show-case it.

Some allottees fear that this might render the estate insecure, leaving the residents vulnerable to not only uncontrolled human traffic but also armed robbery.

Events



The Amazing Bourvita Dream promotion organised by Cadbury Nigeria Limited has taken off in four zones. Aba, Ibadan, Kaduna and Lagos. A Volkswagen Amazon car will be won in each of the zones.

Picture shows Mr. Ayodele Akadin, Finance Director of Cadbury Nigeria, unveiling the Bourvita Dream Car for Lagos zone. The competition lasts till November 16, 1990



A business-Government-Media Party was held by Grant Advertising Nig Ltd. at Lisa Court Oduduwa Crescent, Ikeja recently. Here Otunba and Mrs Michael Balogun of First City Merchant Bank discuss with Chief G Eneli, Chairman of Alpha Merchant Bank Ltd.

Riding fast from the past

Cadbury Nigeria Limited clocks 25, and looks back with pride.

By Chudi Okoye

Christopher Olusola Kolade is a happy man. Happy, because the company of which he is helmsman, Cadbury Nigeria Ltd, has clocked 25. But that's not the only reason the urbane MD is beaming. The main reason, it appears, is that Cadbury has seen 25 years of pivotal success. And last week in Lagos Kolade called a conference to tell newsmen all about it.

Cadbury's history goes back 32 years to the exertions of one rambling Briton, George Heywood, who, as export representative for UK-based Cadbury Brothers Ltd, led a team of crack salesmen who tramped the jagged pathways of Nigerian villages trying to assess the market potential of the company's products in Nigeria. Back in 1956, *Pronto*, a Cadbury Fry (Export) product, had been introduced, and Heywood's brief had been to report on the potential of significantly increasing sales. George Heywood's report was quite enthusiastic. And two years later in 1960, *Bournvita*, a malt-based food drink, was introduced. One thing led to another, and on January 9, 1965, Cadbury Nigeria Ltd (CNL) was incorporated.

CNL has come a long way since then, at least by management's own estimation. From a product range comprising only *Bournvita* and *Pronto* in 1965, the company now has a portfolio of 12 products. These include food drinks, foods, confectionery, and health products. Staff strength has grown from 250 in 1965 to about 1,500 currently. Trading record has appreciated from N242,000 (\$121,000, by conversion rates then) to N337,012,000 in 1989. And from an arrangement in which Cadbury merely packed bulk supplies of *Bournvita* and *Pronto*, the company has achieved 80 percent local input into *Bournvita*, its flagship brand. Indeed come October 13, President Babangida will commission a N55 million cereal conversion plant built by Cadbury as a major step toward localising inputs.



Kolade unveiling the new Cadbury Logo

As it is now, CNL is poised to expand its base. Recently, it took over the Trebor brand of sweets from Christlieb following the acquisition of that product by the Cadbury — Schweppes group in UK. This, according to Adebola Ashiru, CNL's marketing director, will shoot to 70 percent the company's 55 per cent share of the confectionery market.

Cadbury isn't about to stop there. Says Christopher Kolade, "We are going to buy up ailing companies. When we identify them, we'll make an offer they can't resist. We have the managerial and technical expertise. We have the technological base. It makes sense that we should expand our portfolio."

Well, this isn't to say everything Cadbury touched has turned gold. The company has had its share of misfortune and miscalculation. Several of the products earlier developed are today nowhere on the shelves. Last year, in the heat of the cocoa boom, CNL decided to delve into the export market for raw cocoa. Grand preparations, such as would befit a company with CNL's resources, were made. But somehow, the venture came unstuck. Cadbury didn't count

on the swift change of fortunes. And so when the world price of cocoa came crashing, CNL lost a whopping N38m.

Again, CNL seems somewhat hesitant about reaching its export potentials. Last week, newsmen wondered why a company so mature in age and awesome in clout hasn't started exporting its products. Kolade had something of an answer. Cadbury, he said, is interested in export. But since there are many Cadbury-Schweppes sub-

sidaries with similar products around the world, breaking through will be quite a task. But what about good old ECOWAS market? A source within the company told *TSM* that it is all very well to talk about the ECOWAS market, if one didn't know the level of foreign exchange suture many countries in the subregion are facing.

All in all, there's good reason for the high sense of achievement in which management and staff of Cadbury Nigeria Ltd. are basking.

Where
News
is Fun

Look, and leap for IPWA

By Chudi Okoye

G of some funds you're wondering how best to invest? Here's something to think about, if you aren't in a hurry to pluck returns

IPWA plc, the paints company, is in the fattening room for funds to finance its expansion programme. For starters, the company is offering rights issues of about N8m as a way of building up its financial muscle. But rights issues are strictly for shareholders' delight! You'll be more concerned, if you aren't one, with another kind of offer IPWA is making, a N15m debenture stock which will be redeemed between 1995 and 1997.

The issue, managed by Grindlays Merchant Bank, opens tomorrow, September 24. Available in units of N100, the stock will attract a floating interest rate of 2.5 percent per annum above the prevailing CBN Minimum Rediscount Rate (MRR) in any given year during the seven-year term of the debenture. At the moment the MRR stands at 18.5 percent. This means the debenture will have an initial coupon of 21 per cent per annum. However, this may swing up or down, depending on the turn of the MRR.

But this isn't to say you're into a freewheeling deal. The coupon for IPWA's stock could never sink below 15 percent, nor could it ever soar above 24 percent.

A coupon of 24 percent maximum may appear small enough investment bait to bite in light of money market rates. But you'll do well to study current corporate borrowing preferences. Then you can decide where to put your money. And in case you decide to dive for the IPWA deal, here's a word or two about the company.

IPWA PLC, known until a couple of weeks ago, as International Paints (W.A.) Ltd, was incorporated on January 23, 1961. It is currently owned 40 per cent by IP Overseas Investments Ltd, UK, 20.4 per cent by the Nigerian Industrial Bank, and 39.6 per cent by Nigerian citizens and associations. The

company is into the production and supply of decorative paints, marine paints, protective coating for the oil industry, lacquers, enamels and varnishes.

Last year it made a sales haul of N72m which was some 49 per cent above its 1988 turnover. From this it raked in a post-tax profit of N6.3m, which represented a 32 per cent mark-up from the 1988 figure. For

Abuja hosts PR conference

Some 2,000 public relations experts from different parts of the world are converging at the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, for a four-day Commonwealth Public Relations Conference, first such ever, which begins today, September 23.

Among those attending are a number of notable international figures: William Corbett, president of the International Public Relations Association (IPRA); His Excellency Juan Antonio Samaranch, president of the International Olympic Committee; Alain Modoux, UNESCO's Head of Communications and at course Emeka Anyaoku, Secretary General of the Commonwealth Organisation; Former Minister of Information, Tony

Wema waxes on

Shareholders of Wema Bank plc will gather next Friday, September 28, to receive their board's report on the performance of the bank in the year ended March 31, 1990. The shareholders are likely to come away satisfied at the way their board handled affairs during the year gone by.

Chairman of board, Dele Ogedengbe, will be telling them of a 15.5 per cent increase in total revenue from N117m in 1988/89 to N134m. They will also hear of a jump in profit before tax of 27 per cent from N22m in 1988/89 to N28m in 1989/90. They will walk a bit taller when Ogedengbe tells them that their bank 'has joined the

1990, the company's directors forecast a 25 percent jump in turnover to N90m, and a 26 percent increase in profits to N8m, that is after the company might have visited government barbers for the tax shave.

Hmm, not bad. But before you pitch mind that the forecast is based on certain expectations. The company expects, among other things, that it will keep its share of the paints market; that there won't be any disruption in the importation of necessary inputs; that political situation here and in supplier countries will remain stable; and that it won't suffer any major uninsured 'catastrophe'.

Thick assumptions, these, but John Lagett, MD of Grindlays says underwriting for the issue has been oversubscribed. Which means, according to the MD, that buyers can invest with confidence.

Look, and then leap.

Moman had been on the bill to address the conference, but it looks like the job will now be done by the new man, Alex Akinyele.

The conferees will be talking about "The World in Transition," and no less than 18 sub-themes and case studies have been marked down for informed treatment. On the choice of theme for the conference, Corbett, the helmsman of IPRA, has this to say: "The conference theme is appropriate and right on target. The 1990s will provide unprecedented opportunities for professional communicators and this conference will get us all on the right track to professional success."

However, conferees aren't going to be jaw-jawing all through. Nerve-calming aides like sight-seeing tours, dance and drama are woven into the conference programme.

club of companies with billion naira assets." For Wema's total assets increased from N898m in 1989 to N1,000 billion. But even more thrilling to the shareholders will be the news to be contained in Ogedengbe's report, that the board of directors is thinking of not only raising dividends accruing to them by 33 per cent, from N3m to N4m, but also of allotting a bonus share of two to five shares at the cost of N8m to them.

This piece of news will be particularly exciting because in several of the years preceding 1989, the bank which was struggling to get on its feet, could not afford to declare dividends, much more give bonus shares.

Bauchi State Water Board



Coasting in the waters
of success



*Engr. Rabiul Diori, General Manager,
Bauchi State Water Board*

It is said that if you want to wipe out a whole community, just contaminate the community's source of water supply and relax. It is not for nothing that people say water is life. That is why from time, the provision of potable water for human consumption has always been a priority. The production of chemicals and other contaminants makes this need even more pressing.

The recent cases of water-borne diseases like Guinea worm have galvanized the Nigerian authorities into making water top priority. The Bauchi State Government has not been far behind in this endeavour.

In 1976, when Bauchi State was created out of the former North-Eastern State, it inherited only four water supply schemes. These were:

- (1) 46 boreholes in Bauchi which produced 140 million litres of water per day.
- (2) 90 boreholes in Gombe producing 1.43 million litres per day.
- (3) 3 boreholes in Azare with an output of 0.68 million litres per day.
- (4) An intake arrangement from a stream at Tula producing 0.38 million litres per day.

Needless to say, the total capacity of these four water schemes was grossly inadequate to meet the needs of the newly created state, with the growing influx of people, commercial and industrial activities, especially into the state capital, and other urban areas. The state government then went into action to expand the state's water supply scheme, by creating the Bauchi State Water Board (BSWB).

At its creation BSWB faced enormous problems, chief of which is that faced by the northern part of Nigeria in the Southern part of Nigeria, the problem is not lack of water, but the palatability in the North, however, the governments face the twin problems of impounding and distributing enough water, and also purifying the impounded water. Moreover, the pipe network was not adequate to meet the water distribution needs of a bludgeoning state.

The problem of impounding enough water was further compounded for BSWB by the Sahelian drought which was at its devastating worst at the time the Board was created.

There was also the problem of the board settling down to business. When the Board took off in September 1976, there were only four water engineers and some clerical/administrative staff of the water division of the ministry of Natural Resources, on secondment to the Board. There was only a two-room office accommodation in the Headquarters in Bauchi, and small single-room office units in Gombe and Azare.

These personnel and housing assets were hardly adequate to mount the kind of operation envisaged to provide water for the rapidly expanding personal, commercial and industrial population of Bauchi State.

All this problems, conspired with irregular financial flow from the state government to stultify the efforts of BSWB. But problems are meant to be solved. And so, the Bauchi State Water Board, evaluated its assets, went into action, and drew up short, medium and long-term programmes to contain the situation.

The primary aim of BSWB is to provide potable water for Bauchi State. Until the necessary personnel and technical infrastructures are put in place water still has to be provided. So, the short term tankers were provided to distribute water,

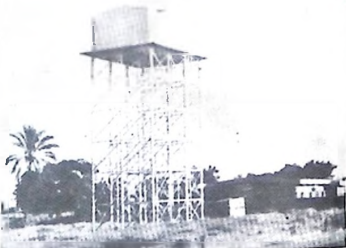


High lift dumps and filters at the Treatment Plant

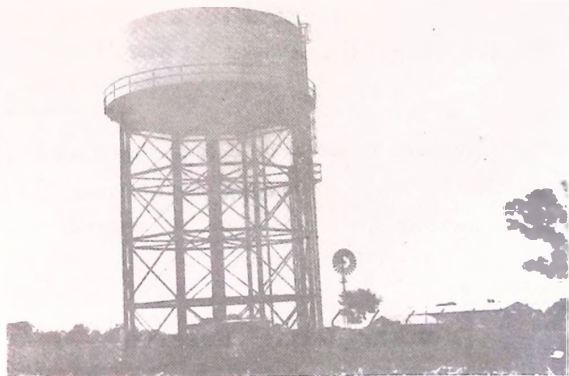
especially in the absence of a good pipe network. With this in place, attention was then placed on the personnel front.

After planning the manpower requirement and development programmes, the result is that, at present, there are over 100 senior staff and over 2,000 intermediate and junior staff, all working in better office accommodation. The current General Manager and Chief Executive of the Board is Engr. Rabiu Diori. He is ably supported by various departmental and zonal heads.

With the Board team in place, it now made a frontal attack on water scarcity. In Bauchi State. Contracts for the drilling of boreholes were awarded, while two drilling rigs were purchased to drill boreholes through direct labour. Strange tanks were also erected and water supplied to the people through skeletal distribution networks.



50,000-gallon capacity overhead tank at Darazo



An overhead tank at Azare

However, due to the hydro-geological characteristics of some parts of the state, especially the western block with its prevalence of Hard rock (crystalline) structure, it was found that borehole yields would be generally poor. The recourse then in to the building of dam sites. Dams, are of course, most suitable for large communities, and are long-term solutions to water problems.

A dam was thus proposed for the state capital, Bauchi and work started in 1978. A temporary dam was constructed and the impounded water pumped to the town after treatment through a 15mgd compact treatment plant which was commissioned in 1980, thus providing additional 10 million gallons of water per day. Contracts for the construction of storage reservoirs, each with a capacity of 2.5 million gallons per day was awarded and commissioned in 1987.

To supply water to Gombe town, and its environs, BSWB is in liaison with the Upper Benue River Basin Development Authority for the construction of the Dadin Kowa Multi-purpose Dam. The feasibility report on the project has since been submitted and efforts are being made to ensure early implementation. The dam will supplement the existing water supply facilities in Gombe Area, which has witnessed tremendous improvements in water supply since the days when the Board inherited only two water supply schemes at inception.

Presently, the following urban areas enjoy a functioning water supply scheme, Bajoga, Dukku, Tallasse, Kumo, and

Billiri from a modest 1 million litres from only two water supply schemes. Gombe and its environs now enjoy over 40 million litres from the water supply schemes in these urban areas.

Azare is also not left behind. At inception, the Board inherited only one water supply scheme in Azare Town, with a daily capacity of 675,522 litres. Since then, the Board operates water supply schemes in Misau, Jama, Yana, and Gamawa.

Bauchi Town, being the state capital, seems to enjoy the efforts of BSWB, for obvious reasons. It has the largest concentration of personal, commercial and industrial activities. This large concentration has not in any way deterred the Board, as it continues to strive to provide water to the teeming population of the town.

A contract for the Bauchi Township water supply project was recently awarded. When completed, in 1992, it will comprise a treatment plant for 10mgd, 43.5km of 800mm pumping main and 210km of distribution. Work is progressing steadily.

Apart from the Bauchi Township water supply schemes, other schemes being operated in the Bauchi Area are located in Ningi, Alkaleri, Dass, Darazo, Talawa Balewa and Tojo.

There is no doubt that more steady progress will be made by the Bauchi State Water Board in providing water for the teeming urban population of Bauchi State. This is especially so now that the Board no longer handles water supply to the rural areas.



“We wanted to escape from it all”

— Vena Levery

Tourist from New Zealand

And for many days, Vena and his fellow tourists holed up at Yankari Game Reserve, soaking themselves in the wide life, the natural environment and the warmth of Wikki Springs.

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SPECIAL REPORT
ON
BAUCHI STATE

A

Visitors

Impression

(Concluding Part)

CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK

Of all these the Yankari Game Reserve is the most important. Recently the Nigeria Tourist Board conferred a merit award on it for being the most developed, most promoted, most popular and most visited resort in the country. MD of the Yankari Game Reserve and Tourism Company Ltd, Habila Ramani Dogo, reckons that annual visitor turnover at Yankari ranges from 30 to 40 thousand; over 60 per cent of these foreigners. One might infer from this that the game reserve has everything going for it.

That is far from the reality Dogo told TSM that the reserve which generates some N1 million annually gulps half as much again in maintenance. There are so many reasons mentioned by the MD. Operational cost is going sky-high. The business is seasonal. Yankari is a holiday resort; how many Nigerians can afford to vacation? Besides, the culture of holidaying hasn't quite sunk in. Those who know prefer off-shore recreation.

TSM asked the MD if the problem couldn't also be poor management. "Our problem is not management", he retorted, "it is lack of adequate financing, *chikena*".

As a way out, he said, management is seriously considering handing over the reserve, at present 100 per cent Bauchi State — owned, to the federal government as a national park. TSM was told preparations are on.

The story of Yankari typifies the general condition of industry in Bauchi State. All the elements are there: great potential, conscious development effort, positive but somehow not good enough result.

Bauchi State is richly endowed with agricultural and mineral resources. Some of the agro-based industrial raw materials obtainable in the state include cotton, maize, tomatoes, sorghum/millet, cassava, beans, groundnut, poultry, livestock and fish. Mineral resources include clay, limestone, tin, columbite, galenena, kaolin and others.

The government of Bauchi State has taken a number of steps to exploit these for industrial development. It has done that, officials say, by solely or in joint action establishing industries whose basic raw materials are available in the state. It is instructive that many of the state-owned companies and those it has equities in are agro-based.

Government also strives to provide industrial infrastructures. One of these is financial. Apart from establishing a bank, an insurance company, and an investment company, government makes it easy for other banks to operate in the state.

There is not one of the frontline commercial banks in the country that doesn't have a branch in Bauchi. Besides, it has launched an industrial development appeal fund.

Officials of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism equally point to the provision of roads, communication facilities, water, housing, hotels, electricity and industrial estates as a deliberate measure to boost industrial development. Industrial estates, TSM discovered are already existing in the urban areas of Bauchi, Gombe, Misau and Azare. Ministry officials say locations have been identified in all local government areas for the establishment of industrial estates, while similar layouts are being earmarked in 44 semi-urban and rural areas.

TSM enquiries reveal that other investor-attracting measures are in place: mechanism to make it easy for investors to acquire land; open door policy to allow

access; and fairly easy conditions.

To what extent has this given impetus to industrial advancement in the state? Quite substantially, considering where the state is coming from. There are local scores of industrial and commercial enterprises, many of them privately-owned, others state-owned existing in Bauchi State. But problems remain.

Some of the bankers TSM spoke with complained about the low level of business — meaning, borrowing. The State's Investment Company needs to be re-engineered, and the Industrial Appeal Fund given a new breath of life. Opinion survey of resident businessmen reveals discontent about the apparent lopsidedness in the distribution of infrastructure to favour urban areas. When TSM observed that the state's integrated rural development authority is doing a lot to make the rural areas more attractive, a counter-argument was made that that is not sufficient to attract business away from the urban areas. Finally, government officials themselves complain about businessmen's fixation with distributive trade, rather than manufacturing.

These problems however, according to Finance Commissioner Phillip Usman, are being addressed by government. "The government", he said, "is giving adequate attention to industrial development. People should not misconstrue things: industrial development is not a day's job".

Health

Only a 692-word speech by former governor Joshua Madaki, and history was made eighteen days ago in Bauchi State. On that day, August 29, 1990, the Drug Compounding UNIT (DCU) of the Specialist Hospital Bauchi, was commissioned. With this unit, Bauchi State can now produce many of its required drugs, locally.

The DCU project somehow had been Madaki's baby although the idea stretches back to 1986. That year a number of cottage hospitals and health clinics were commissioned in the state. This occasioned a steep rise in demand for drugs. Hence the idea of a unit in which drugs could be compounded locally to ease demand pressure.

For some reason however nothing much had been done to effect the idea until July 1989, by which time Madaki had become governor.

VI Emenike, pharmacist in charge of the project says the former governor was quite interested in the idea. Madaki dropped in time and again to check progress of work, to ask about problems, to urge them on. Moral and financial support, Emenike says, were made available. So that at the end of the day, according to Health Commissioner Joshua Maina, some N2.7m had been thrown into the project.

The DCU Madaki commissioned 18 days ago is capable of producing assorted types of medicament used in health care service: syrups, lotions, disinfectants, ointment, creams, and various other preparations. Quantities of these are already in stock.

TSM gathered that Bauchi was the first state in the north to embark on this venture.

Health care is one area which, it appears Bauchi State government has marked out as priority. Consider-

STATE

erable attention has been paid to rural health care and disease control. The Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) and Oral Rehydration Therapy (ORT) are vigorously pursued. Primary health care programmes are being developed in all the 20 local government areas. The state's efforts here had elicited some assistance from the Federal Ministry of Health and UNICEF.

Bauchi State government has also given emphasis to the development of health infrastructures. A number of projects were recently commissioned; some are about to be commissioned; and yet others are still being developed. These include health institutions like general hospitals, cottage hospitals and health clinics.

The health care delivery system, according to senior health officials, is being reorganized to provide cost-effective, accessible and acceptable services.

All these, says Commissioner Maina, so the state can achieve health for all by the year 2000.

Urban Development

Monday, January 22, 1990 was an important day for Joshua Madaki. On that day, the former governor of Bauchi State laid the foundation of what he called his "darling project". That project, "the biggest capital project ever embarked upon in this state", happens to be a N380.64 million water supply scheme meant for Bauchi Township.

Joshua Madaki had every reason to feel good. Ever since Bauchi became the capital city, one of its most prickly problems had been the shortage of potable water. The 18 boreholes it used to have grew to be abjectly inadequate in light of the influx of people and expanding breadth of industrial and commercial activity. Administration after another had scrambled around to find a 'lasting' solution. So it was that in Madaki's time the idea of a Bauchi Township Water Project came to fruition.

Financing agreement for the project was concluded in May, 1989, less than a year of Madaki's accession. The project is financed substantially from an offshore loan advanced by the African Development Bank. However the Bauchi State government is committed to 11 per cent of the total cost.

Joshua Madaki said on that cold morning seven months ago: "there is no doubt in my mind that we are on our way to realizing one of the objectives of this administration". He went on to promise that the project would be completed not a day later than scheduled.

One remarkable thing about Bauchi State which strikes a visitor driving around the major cities, is the amount of urban-consciousness infused into development packages. Beneath the overhang of resistant tradition, there's a pulsating desire to 'catch up'. This had set the tone for urban development.

In Bauchi town alone there are 18 major roads. A majority of these are dual carriage-ways, complete with street and functional traffic control lights. Indeed, such is it that in some parts of the town where streets are lined by buildings of considerable age, roads of

rather modern carriage are still found slicing through as if symbolising the onslaught of urbanism.

A visitor from Lagos would not fail to marvel at the absolute lack of accommodation pressure. The Bauchi State government, obviously, has seen to it that Indigenes and visitors alike have comfortable places of abode. There are about seven housing estates in Bauchi alone. And that's excluding the World Bank/Federal Government/Bauchi State government-financed Makama Housing Project in Bauchi.

The Makama project, begun in early '80s, aims to foreclose city congestion by increasing the housing stock available to low income earners. In a way, it is like the low-cost housing scheme, except the modalities are many worlds away.

Makama Project Architect, B.S. Valentine who drove this reporter around the sites, says but for a few plots yet to be taken up, the project is now completed. The entire site covers about 100 hectares of land. About 2,500 plots have been given out. All the sub-projects embarked upon to compliment the major site project — for services like roads, water supply, schools, clinics, electricity — have been completed and handed over to the appropriate government authorities. And many beneficiaries are living comfortably in their Makama homes.



Wheel of Industry...Ashaka Cement

Education

Many people scorned the idea when Jubril Aminu, Education Minister at the time, first gave it mention. Many thought: Fancy the spectacle of a ridge-faced cattle-boy in well-laundered shorts and shirts and polished sandals, with a school bag slung over his rancher's shoulder! It had seemed so queer, so skeptics scoffed some more, certain the nomadic education programme was bound for the rocks. Well, those skeptics need a little trip to Bauchi State.

After the programme was launched in 1987, officials of the state's ministry of Education had gone in search of areas with great nomad density. In 1989, six pilot schools were established. Education Commissioner Chadi Aliyu says there was enthusiastic acceptance

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of the programme by Fulanis. Many Fulani communities even went ahead and built their own schools, and later came around to ask for teachers.

There are at the moment in Bauchi State, 35 nomadic schools, 16 of them government-established, the remaining 19 set up by Fulani communities themselves. What they are taught? Hygiene, Agriculture, some English, Writing and Arithmetic, IRK and Arabic studies.

With the establishment of six schools in 1989 there were 381 pupils and 19 teachers. With number of schools now at 35, total enrolment has shot up to 1879 pupils with the number of teachers going up to 106. More and more demands are being made by nomads and the state government is considering creating more schools.

What is happening, says Chadi Aliyu, is "a silent revolution". That revolution was induced by the massive campaign launched by the state government to get its mobile populations. Like the more sedentary ones, educated.

Government's greatest point seems to be in its ability to mobilize the forgotten ones. Education for the handicapped, though a nation-wide phenomenon, receives priority attention in Bauchi State. Education for women was inaugurated at the federal level. But it has recorded its greatest success in Bauchi State.

The thinking seems to run like this: you don't have to suffer stark illiteracy simply because you're a nomad; or because you're handicapped, or because you were married off early in life. Everyone, government seems to think, deserves some form of education.

Education is top priority in Bauchi State. Everything is being done — from assistance to coercion — to give indigenes of every calling minimum education. Year after year, education receives a plum budgetary share of more or less 10 per cent. This says Aliyu, is to see that programmes are not throttled by inadequacy of funds.

Government is attacking from all sides. Parents are made more responsible for the education of their children. In an age when schools are turning into commercial enterprise, an assortment of subsidies are still available in Bauchi State. An edict exists under which anybody unwilling to send his/her child to school can be prosecuted. Principals and traditional rulers and LG chairmen are threatened with closure of schools if enrolment and attendance do not improve.

As it would seem, government's effort is paying off handsomely. Exults the commissioner for Education, "throughout the state, the traditional resistance to Western education is crumbling".

Sports And Leisure

It doesn't seem vain that Bauchi State should be dubbed the "Mecca of Sports". Only that state could be so called without it sounding hollow. Consider for instance that in the two years of Madaki's governorship over 21 non-local sporting events took place in Bauchi State. Many of these events had global participation, others regional, yet others national. It isn't for nothing



Multipurpose Sports Hall

that Bauchi State was elected to host such succession of important events.

Perhaps more than any other state in Nigeria, Bauchi makes the greatest investment in sports. Especially in capital projects. There's a magnificent multipurpose sports hall that can seat 3,500 people. There's an Olympic size 8ft deep 50m by 20m swimming pool which is adjoined by an 18ft deep 25 sq m diving pool. There is a standard-track stadium, and a Games Village of exceptional conception. An expensive multi-purpose open-theatre sits just a walk away from the pools, as does a considerably modern recreation park. It is surprising the amount of commitment thrown into the maintenance of these facilities.

When TSM visited the pools two weeks ago, purification and recirculation work was going on. At the multipurpose sports hall, workers had just finished polishing the expensive wooden floor when TSM arrived. At the Tafawa Balewa Stadium renovation work was in progress. So was the construction of the Games Village which TSM gathered is meant to ease the problem of accommodation faced by visiting contingents.

TSM asked the commissioner of Youth Affairs, Sports and Social Development, Peter Buba Bajoga why her state invests so much in sports.

Her answer was revealing. The state government, she disclosed, had completed arrangements to commercialize the facilities. They have been handed over to a private firm, and every year, 70 per cent of profits will go to the state government. But that's not all.

"There is something else we gain from sports: something inestimable, something unquantifiable. Sports has brought so much glory to Bauchi State. There can be nothing greater than that".

Epilogue

This is the Bauchi State we saw in the brief time we stayed. To be sure Bauchi is not in the first league of developed states in the country. Nor is it in any way pretending to be. But one thing is certain. It will be right there in front when the bell tolls for states with a bright future. About that there can be no doubt.

The Bauchi State I found

Valedictory words of Joshua Madaki

On how he took his redeployment

I DIDN'T feel either elated or dismayed because I have already prepared my mind for whatever may come out from the then prepared changes. There is nothing unusual about being redeployed especially in this situation when I am merely moving to the next door. As I have always maintained, by my military training, I am prepared for changes in whatever form especially those that affect my official assignments. In short my reaction to the news of the redeployment is one of appreciation to the Federal Government for asking me to continue facing the challenges of leadership, even though in another state.

On his achievements

I have always wanted people to tell me my achievements rather than me coming to blow my own trumpet. However, my first achievement is my ability to carry out the assignment bestowed upon me by the Federal Government in a manner that questions have not been asked as to my ability or conduct during my tenure. I hope that it will also not border on immodesty if I mention to you that I have maintained a tempo by making Bauchi State peaceful in the manner it has always been known.

The World Bank-assisted projects like the water programmes at Bauchi and Gombe including the Makama Housing Scheme do stand out as evidence of our commitment to improving the welfare of our urban dwellers.

In sports and tourism development, my administration has placed Bauchi on global map for not only consolidating our achievements in sports in the area of providing facilities to meet international standards but also in hosting global championships as well as in tourism-related activities.

Also looking at the Transition programme, I think we have not fared badly, a good example being that Bauchi State is the first and only state that was able to build and hand-over all local government party offices before the expiration of the Federal Government deadline.

In the education sector, my administration has piloted a new primary education scheme to a standard of excellence that earned Bauchi State the first position as the most organised primary schools education. You may recall also the United Nations has recently selected Bauchi State as the state with the most organised literacy campaign. I am of the opinion also that my government has maintained an open-door policy, perhaps more than any other state in the country. Our story of success as a government is a long one and this forum may not be adequate to recount all the stories in such a short time that we have.

On problems he encountered

The normal problems in administration Bauchi State has no unique problems per se, and the kind of problems we have are the normal day-to-day problems you find at all levels of government in the country and even beyond. Take religious problems as an example, you will agree with me that such a problem is more of a national one. Or take rumour mongering as an example, would you say that these problems are limited to Bauchi State alone? On a more general note, if you discuss problems like internally generated revenue, which to be frank is very low, then perhaps you might be talking about specifics. But even on this score, you cannot compare for instance our administrative values with say Kano State which for sure has more than we do. So in a nutshell I have not encountered problems of high magnitude as to jeopardise my administrative machinery. The few normal problems I encountered, though un-

wanted, still had their positive effects in that they made me look inwards and reflect on their overall implications, which altogether offers me an experience that guides my further actions.

On legacies he is leaving

In a few words, patience and open-mindedness. One thing we found valuable was the ability to be patient with everybody even in the face of extreme provocation. With patience everything, no matter how hot will turn to history. Another legacy we will leave behind is that of open mindedness in which we listen to all shades of opinion so that we can single out those that merit closer consideration towards a general strategy that would enhance the development of the state. Before our coming perhaps nobody thought that sports can be developed at state level to assume the status of an industry. Through patience and proper planning we have been able to elevate sports to a proper industry. And with our open mindedness we have evolved an open door policy through which we learn from anybody in bringing out the best. Such are our great assets.

On his successor

My successor is a fine soldier, a seasoned administrator and a man of tremendous talent. I have no doubt in my mind that he wouldn't need my public advice to steer the ship of this state with the best of his ability. And in any case, if there is such an advice, I think it is more appropriate to include such in my handover note rather than go public. Let us be fair on him.

Advice to Bauchi State

Bauchi is a fast developing state. The good people of the state should endeavour to keep this flag of development flying. This state is endowed with a lot of advantages; they have a large expanse of arable land, their infrastructural facilities are many and varied and of high standards, they have hard working and intelligent people. The state should endeavour to consolidate on what it has built so far and take advantage of the abundant resources at its disposal so that the lame which Bauchi has attained should not be allowed to fall.



Madaki cutting the tape to commission the drug compounding unit



Independence Day anniversary

Nigerians are used to being roused out of bed for an important broadcast, a celebration of the birth of nationhood. And rarely had such celebration gone beyond listening to boring speech-making. But this year's 30th anniversary will certainly be different. For the first time in the annals of the country's Independence Day, Nigerians in London will link up with Lagos for the nation's thirtieth Birthday.

It's the first in what promises to be a refreshingly exciting annual television stations across the country. Viewers in London and North America will also watch the one-hour documentary entertainment show. And guess who are spinning out the innovative idea. Elom Phillips-Eteng and Joy Igwebuika. Though they live in two different locations, both have found a common ground — a driving ambition to add class and glitz to the nation's Independence Day celebration.

It's the duo's high-tech pioneering efforts to awaken the consciousness of Nigerians (home and abroad) to ap-

preciate the country's freedom from colonial masters as done by other foreigners. Phillips-Eteng, a graduate of marketing and chief executive of *Music Channel Television* in a jubilant mood and a sense of self-fulfillment told *TSM* last week on their new idea. Said he, 'when a nation has survived 30 years of nationhood, its citizens are entitled to celebrate, to cherish and remember that day.'

Though it is their first major project in the country, Phillips-Eteng who has edited *Black Teens in Britain* told *TSM*, 'it is an opportunity to put into practice something that has been on my mind and a chance for young Nigerians to design a TV programme that will truly reflect the image of the country as well as the success story of our great leaders.' While Phillips has been busy in Lagos making waves, Joy is putting finishing touches to the London angle.

Like all lofty ideas, it has not been easy for Phillips and Joy to turn their dreams into reality. Initial capital for a sound take off was a major prob-

Continue on next page

Arty stuff

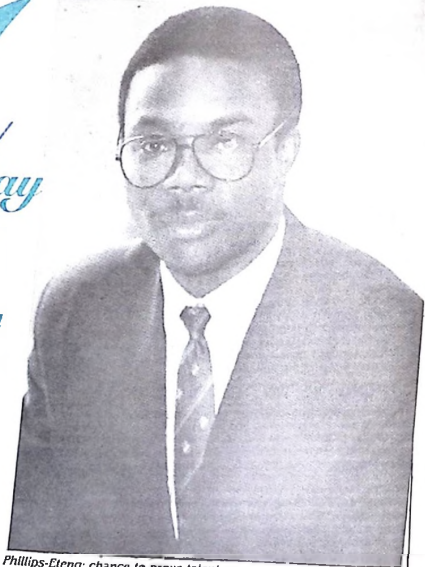
A ray of sunshine

Two enterprising young Nigerians are poised to add glamour to Independence Day celebration.

By Dan Onwukwe

atch out. Something big and innovative is going to happen on October 1st 1990. In far away London, England, two enter-

prising Nigerians have knocked off an outstanding attraction that will try to change the dull face of the nation's



Phillips-Eteng: chance to prove talent

By Izuagie Umogbai

In an industry where the transient is the norm, celebrating a tenth anniversary is indeed an achievement.

The fact that the Mojekwu Five, a family entertainment group are still together after 10 years is an achievement on its own. For the children, (for they are children), it has been a decade under the klieg lights and numerous audiences.

The group which started off performing acrobatic dance steps now has a repertoire of juggling and balancing acts. They also imitate foreign artists in their dance steps and their songs.

The children whose ages range from 5 to 18 perform in night clubs and parties. Their acts which are well choreographed, involve some limb bending and energy sapping moves.

Watching the Fives performing on stage is like looking at a group of agile ballet dancers. If you fear for these children, they are ready to assure you that the shows don't disturb their going to school. The physically fit kids enjoy

A decade of Mojekwu delights

what they do

At a press briefing recently, the artistic director of the group Miller Mojekwu, who happens to be their

father, said that 10 years on the stage was indeed a time of trumpet blowing. To mark this achievement the group would be staging a show at the National Arts theatre on Sunday the 7th of October, 1990.

In what could be described as giving back to society some of their gains, the Mojekwus would give special awards to some disabled Nigerians who still manage to function well in the society despite their disabilities.

Other awards would go to some selected show-biz-whiz-kids in Nigeria. The occasion which is billed to attract the likes of M.K.O. Abiola, Emmanuel Iwuanyanwu and other notable members of the society would be preceded by a post anniversary bash later in the month.

Continued from page 50

lem

Countless letters to various government agencies did not yield a positive response. But that didn't dampen their spirits. With hardwork, strings of luck combined with their interest in show business and of course connections in night places, the problem of finance was crushed. Already, N2 million has been earmarked for the programme. As the first and youngest editor/publisher of *Black teens*, a black teenage magazine in Britain, taking business risks have been part of the young man. And his earlier adventure into TV and film shows abroad seem to make him believe that if *Happy Birthday* was a gamble, the risk may alter all worth the trouble. With strong support coming from Joy Igwebuike, a Sociology graduate and housing adviser to Hammersmith in Central London, there's no stopping the twosome. Corporate sponsorship is expected from blue-chips companies like Cola-Cola. The big television show will kick off between 5:30 — 6:30 p.m. on all NTA stations and 6—7 p.m. on state television stations.



The Mojekwus in action

TSM
Journalism
for the
1990s



STARDUST

TAKE a look at these names - Yemi Majekodunmi, Taya Manney, Rita Martins, Julie Coker, Omasan Buwa, Regina Asida. What have they got in common? Looks? Wealth? Spunk? Yes and No. They have got all these and more. They are enduring stars, what's more they are set to do the catwalk come Friday, October 12th, 1990. They are going to promote the best of Nigeria's fashion, culture, beauty at Federal Palace Hotel, Lagos.



Martins - Ready for the catwalk

SILVERBIRD is putting the show that promises to be balm together.

How does it feel to be ten? Are you still a child or a mini adult? Well, Ben Murray-Bruce thinks Silverbird Productions has come of age, old enough to have lined out special programmes to mark that day. Remember, when he used to bring foreign acts to the country, Murray-Bruce seems to have found solace in the bosoms of beauty queens. Or should we say politicians as he's talking of veering into its murky waters.

Not as a combatant mind you, but as an advocate of the 'real' Nigerian. Watch out for a slugging match between Tom Ikimi (NRC) and Baba Gana Kingibe (SDP) on television in November. Trust Murray-Bruce he'll put up a fine show as usual.

IF you run into Yemi Majekodunmi, Miss Independence 1962, don't ask her for an interview. Because she will give a winning smile and nothing more. However, the lady (that is truly a lady) has decided to slay away from the klieg lights for now. "Well until I am 50. That is three years from now, then I'll give you a comprehensive interview. I think the young queens should be the ones that should enjoy being interviewed. For now I enjoy the bliss of slaying away from the noise," she told Stardust. Well, we're

wanting Glad the appointment is not for the year 2,000!



Majekodunmi - an evergreen lady

WHOS a bad mama jama at 50? Raquel Welch of course! Seems she is the only sex siren bold enough to flaunt her vital assets at that age. Talk of middle age spread, menopause, wrinkles don't scare the actress. While some of her Nigerian counterparts must be nursing their grandchildren, she goes about in a plunging neckline. Some gals are lucky, aren't they?

Happy Birthday Raquel, and keep packing them in.

MOST organisers of launching ceremonies should learn a thing or two from officials of Nigerian Association of Interior Decorators (NAID). Although, last Wednesday's launching of the young association started an hour behind schedule they didn't stuff the audience with the usual excuse. That of lateness due to circumstances beyond their control! NAID surprisingly pronounced themselves guilty and went on with the programme.

Besides, the fine music belting out from its music box turned the long wait into a mini disco session. Instead of a stone-faced audience, we had a lively audience that bopped to such tunes as 'Raining Nite in Georgia.' Just the two of us' wish all ceremonies were like this.



Latunji - Guilty and sorry



Welch - alive and well

MAYBE Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) should be christened Supreme Television Authority (STA). He who must be obeyed, waited upon, even when it's late for an assignment. How else can one describe the wait print journalists were subjected to at last Wednesday's press briefing by Silverbird Productions Ltd. When the ceremony was about to kick off, Oscar Udofia GM, begged that NTA (STA?) should be given time to set up its instruments. Well, didn't they say somewhere that the last shall be the first!

ALTHOUGH mum is the word we make bold to say that another general interest magazine will soon hit the newsstands. Anyone, who says the market is already saturated had better start learning how to mouth the word *Whispers*. That is the name of the new magazine lumbering from Everest Oloegbu's bowler hat. We gathered that Nellie Onwucheka, ex-Everywoman Editor will pilot the ship. If you are running off already with your C.V. to clinch a job, recruitment is now over.

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Vegfru tomato ketchup
- adds zest to taste.



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Life

How to hug the limelight

Stand shoulder high among your peers, and become the boss of the future.

bosses of the future. That is if they want to stop being the token woman.

Take the case of Lola (real name withheld). She is a media executive in an advertising agency in Lagos. Although, she had a natural flair for writing jazzy copies she kept this fact to herself. She, however, confided in her company's copywriter who always sounded her out for fresh ideas. The affable guy promised to put a word in the right ears about her prowess. This he never did. Instead, he continued plagiarising her ideas and earned some fast promotions. While she remains stagnated at the lower rungs of the ladder. The guy quickly cut her off from his world now that he had climbed the middle management cadre.

Lola simply couldn't find her bearings in the foggy world of office politics. Having imbibed the feminine virtues of gentility, kindness and wait-for-your-turn, she didn't know when to wheel-deal like the guys. She could have asked for a meeting with the

By Mubo Okosun

We don't need an Olabayo to predict that there will be more executive women in the year 2,000. It is on the cards that the present generation of women creating ripples in computer, banking, law, advertising and journalism will go on to become gurus in their fields.

While these future bosses can conveniently unlock computer mysteries, float debenture stocks, publish an avant garde journal, perform intricate operations, the same wizardry is not usually extended to office politics, networking or taming the corporate environment.

Some otherwise smart women behave like Klutzes when it comes to unravelling a maze of problems at work. They just cannot seem to pick up cues fast enough. They walk around in a dazed manner while exploits are shared out behind them. They always seem to be on the outer fringes of decision making.

The new thinking among psychologists and sociologists is that women have to learn how to succeed at their jobs. Since they are in for the long haul, they have to learn the ropes that women have to imbibe if they are going to be counted among the top



Kuforiji-Olubi...has mastered office politics.

head of the department she wants to get a transfer to. Or she could have shown him some of her works, instead of going through a colleague who happens to be a rival. The corporate world is full of minefields that can only be detonated by adopting certain strategies. This works well when you know what you are up against, what your interests or goals are, and who is likely to help you realise these things.

Women, for one, are still not steeped in office politics. They still divide their colleagues into two broad groups — enemies and friends. And they act that way too. They carry on with their friends while they are openly hostile to perceive threats. What they don't know is that, today's enemies could very well become tomorrow's friends. It is wise not to deal one's cards so openly.

According to Joyce Brothers, a US-based psychologist, "a woman who wants to get ahead must learn to get along. She must learn the rules, and set aside her personal feelings. As she puts it, "men feud with each other, fight tooth and nail for business, resort to various stratagems, but they seldom burn their business bridges. They maintain an air of civility in public. For them, business is business".

Which explains why politicians who helped to plunder the nation's resources and were in opposing camp can converge and find a common ground and work together again. That is why today's feuding partners can pick up the pieces and become tomorrow's entrepreneurs.

New Rules ...

Women, too, have to devise rules that will work for them on their jobs. One of such strategies is networking, where a group of professionals would meet and discuss from time to time. Men have been doing this for so long it's second nature to them. They could caucus in men's rooms, bars, cars, clubs or while out with the boys. They get to learn when there are job openings, or when a company is collapsing, or when to deal their stocks.

Some professional women have cast aside traditional prejudices, and have set up a female network. Such women include: Doyin Abiola, Concord's Managing Director; Ndji Chereke, Chairman of the Stock Exchange; Nike Adeniran of Dominion Trust; and Evelyn Brume of IMB. Others are doing their networking away from public glare.

What women need to do more, says a stockbroker, is to see their jobs as a major part of their existence. According to him, some women still have an ambivalent attitude towards their jobs. They seem to send some signals as if they are only here to while away time before marriage or motherhood. Consequently, they are bypassed for promotions and are not even considered for important assignments.

during meetings or lunch. It reminds them that you are still a little lady. strict those activities to the ladies room.

(4) Acquire guys as friends.

Or rather become one of the boys. Not an easy task, but it's worthwhile to cultivate them. Especially if you are the only female in the computer section. Don't socialise with the boys when you can have a more rewarding relationship with your boss.



Sokenu...A smart banker



Abiola...believes in women

Handy Hints

These tips have been compiled for the bosses of the future. They are guaranteed to get them through the most difficult situations at work.

(1) Keep your ears to the ground.

A smart worker is one who maintains a cordial relationship with everyone. Even if you can't stand scheming Enc or the Chatterbox in Accounts, grin your teeth and say hello. They might have direct lines to where it matters.

(2) Turn lunchtime into talksops.

This is the time you can socialise to your heart's content. Don't always wait to be invited. If there's someone who appears more knowledgeable get close to him. You can always pick his brains or bounce off ideas with him.

(3) Appearances matter a lot.

Discard all those frilly, see-through clothings you used to favour in school. Stripes, plains and functional dressing is the rule. Have you seen any guy

come to work in anything less than formal? Don't apply lipsticks or powders

(5) Don't transport home to the office.

This translates as keeping the hon front far away from the office. On your account should you bring screaming kids to the office. It will merely provoke more talk for the male chauvinist. she can't keep her home, then she can't succeed at work. (Never mind that he's a failure at home too).

(6) Keep your secrets well wrapped up.

Don't fill in everyone on your latest troubles. Especially indiscretions of the heart. If word is passed round that you are suffering from a broken heart, it might affect your chances. Women are still seen as incapable of separating heart matters from serious issues. Guys have special slots for different issues. So, learn to keep mum when it matters.

(7) Love in the office.

This should be avoided whenever practicable. Because whatever achievements you have garnered will be placed against the relationship. Avoid getting involved with your boss because if the relationship gets sour, you may be tired or neglected in your department. No matter how dishy your boss or colleague is, pass him or her to your friends. Remember, business is business!

Extracts from the new book:

"Publish and be damned". So the cliché examined and vindicated, not damned. Do you remember a Nigerian called Dete Ginyi? Since I started working on this book I have not stopped thinking of Dete and letter bombs. This book, my fourth, may well be my last. For the first time in my life I am really scared of what will happen to me. I don't know who or why Dete was killed, but it is generally believed I was due to his pen. Truth is some people go for me like in Dete's case? If they do not use Dete's tactics as well they send hired assassins disguised as those robbers to deal with me? Some exposures and truths in this book are highly influential members of our Society in and out of Government. They may decide to blow an unpalatable the whistle and bring pressure to bear on the Government to arrest me on trumped up charges, set up a Kangaroo Tribunal, sentence me to death and stage a bar beach show with me as the sole actor. This may be openly frontal and brutal. But why not? Influential do worse things and get away with them. Hang the bastard Nzeribe. I can not be bought or intimidated. Their solution may be the above. My fears write what's standing. I will go ahead and what needs to be written, say this regime under the cloak of its Human Rights stance will not succumb to the machinations of evil men. They have tried politically to eliminate me. Will they try physically?

I have a President nicknamed MARADONA, who has done everything he said he would not do and has not done everything he said he would do. My president sets out his goals trying to be beloved by all and to please all but ends up being doubted by all for being unpredictable and contradictory. Yet I vote for him because

I therefore publish in this book the full text of my letter to former President Shehu Shagari in 1983 giving details of the 16 billion dollars Nigerian have smuggled out of Nigeria into foreign banks. The list shows that most of the account operators are civil servants, military officers, Government functionaries of all cadres, retired and serving. How and where did they make the money?

I therefore, having exposed in detail the incontrovertible sordid behind the scenes operations of the NEC and Transition to Civil Rule Tribunal, at least in my own case, I depose that both Professor Humphrey Nwosu and Rt. Justice Fred Anyang'uan should resign since they must be men of honour, pride and conscience. If not, they should be sacked with ignominy for treachery, in order for the entire Transition Programme to command any cloak of respectability and acceptance locally and internationally. Otherwise, the entire exercise is open to questions.

But what Dan Agbese left unsaid, perhaps diplomatically so, is the historical fact that Babangida had been executed each time he had taken part in either plotting or executing the illegal act of overthrowing a government. He would not have been around to be President. But even that is beside the point. The key issues that here is a clear example of a man who acts, in whichever way he does, only with his own personal security and preservation in office as the foremost consideration in his mind. Yet I vote for him."

Read Nzeribe's predictions for 1992

NIGERIA

Seven years of Shagari

WHO NEXT?



WHAT NEXT?

by Chief Arthur Nzeribe

CHIEF ARTHUR NZERIBE

ANOTHER

BLOCKBUSTER

Remember Chief Nzeribe's previous books:

Nigeria: Another Hope Betrayed. Published and printed in the UK in 1985. Over 100 000 hardback copies distributed Free throughout Nigeria.

Nigeria: The Turning Point. Published and printed in the UK in 1986. Over 50 000 hardback copies distributed Free in Nigeria.

Nigeria: I Believe. A manifesto for the Third Republic. Published and printed in the UK in 1988. Over 500 000 hardback copies distributed Free throughout Nigeria. 20 000 copies were seized by the SSS.

Published by Publishing House Limited, PO Box 4034, Lagos, Nigeria or c/o, 2nd floor, 11 Bruton Street, Lond on W1X 6BN, England.

This information demonstrates that the author does not write for monetary gain but because of his unbridled patriotism and convictions. However, this fourth book on Nigerian public affairs by the author can be available only through private circulation.

If you wish to receive a copy, send a stamped, self addressed envelope, not less than 10" by 6" enclosing 100 Naira or £8 in postal or money order, or bank draft/cheque made payable to the publishers.



Take students invade Akoka

Eager to appear with it, they ape campus slangs and culture.

By Alozieuwa Simeon

Whaz-up! Indeed, what is up? This is the common question most visitors to campus, and even students pose to no one in particular these days. And for such a place as University of Lagos, when this popular expression no longer passes for a mere slang you can be sure the Akokites are up to something.

Whether this wind currently blowing on campus swerved in from the West or just from downtown the obvious is that now on campus it has found enough reinforcement, and it is waxing stronger and stronger. Take a look around and you see a lot of Guys with strange hairdos. That's not the big deal anyway. It's when you notice the peculiar way these Akokites style their hairs, then you may realize that they are really anxious to show a difference between the campus whaz-ups and the motor park whaz-ups. But funny enough they end up looking so much like adherents of some new strange religious cult whose basic teaching lays much emphasis on the hair. No wonder people are suspecting if another set of religious fanatics have invaded the country.

And there is yet another thing about the idea of looking campus whaz-up or looking Akokite. At the UNICK Barb-ing Saloon, which has expert-hands that churn out those odd hairstyles, it has been discovered that not every-body there on queue is an Akokite.

Some prospective JAMBITES (would be varsity undergraduates next academic session) are calling there in noticeable numbers to have their hairs ready. But I think they are being unnecessarily impatient. If they don't watch it, by the time they finally come in, they would not experience that fervor associated with new-coming. And if they would take my warning, it is better they hold on yet because there are lots of things to enjoy as ignorant JAMBITES than when they come in as 'experienced' JAMBITES.

Besides this, something else is cooking at the Unick Barb-ing Saloon. It is a matter of having the bucks in your wallet.

But do you know what? Not only do potential Jambites troop in there regularly, some other groups don't want to let slip this opportunity which the idea of looking campus whaz-up or looking Akokite provides. A number



Nundeen Alao ... whaz up?

of 'JAMB Attempted' (candidates who sat for Jamb examinations and were unsuccessful) come for superb cuts. When we accosted one of such impatient Jambites, he said 'yeah, you see, I've already told my fiance that I'm an Akokite, but it appears JAMB wants to upset the whole deal, and I'm not taking any chances and I can't imagine losing her! And keeping up appearances is one of the strategies of keeping her for good.

Strategy indeed! A lot of such guys are every where on campus clutching brief-cases, just to attune themselves to the campus slangs, and then go out to deceive their impressionable girl-friends.

Apart from would be students, other guys that invade the campus are budding business men or motor park

touts. They come with their hair styled, hang around a bit on campus, amaze themselves with a couple of campus parlance, then jet off into town. We didn't need to ask any of them their basic motive, but I know it must not be anything short of women.

So women, it's up to you. Either you (love?) a guy for what he is or you might be conned by unscrupulous guys parading as Akokites.

We welcome scripts of this nature from students in higher institutions.

Alozieuwa Simeon is a student of University of Lagos.

QUOTE LINES

"EDUCATION is that which discloses to the wise and disguises from the foolish their lack of understanding."
— Ambrose Bierce

"EDUCATION makes people easy to lead, but difficult to drive; easy to govern, but impossible to enslave."
— Henry Peter Brougham

"If a man empties his purse into his head, no man can take it away from him. An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest."
— Benjamin Franklin

"EDUCATION is too important to be left solely to the educators."
— Francis Keppel

"NOTHING in education is so astonishing as the amount of ignorance it accumulates in the form of inert facts."
— Henry Brooks Adams

"THE best education in the world is that by struggling to get a living."
— Wendell Phillips

"EDUCATION is the process of doing a set of prejudices down your throat."
— Martin J. Fischer

"I HAVE never let my schooling interfere with my education."
— Mark Twain

"THERE is nothing so stupid as an educated man, if you get off the thing that he was educated in."
— Will Rogers

"EDUCATION is an admirable thing, but nothing that is worth knowing can be taught."
— Oscar Wilde

"YOU can lead a boy to college, but you cannot make him think."
— Elbert Hubbard



Sporting

By Ochereome Nnanna

Female soccer, complete football

'protect' themselves with long, tight pants that reach almost to the knees. Head bands are very popular among lady footballers and you can guess why... to protect their variegated hairdos (Bob Marleys, Jheri curls and exotic perms) from getting ruined after one or two headers. Mascaraed faces are almost non-existent (what's the

Watching the ladies play football provides multi-dimensional thrills. Especially for the male football fan. Female soccer entails football action, fashion parade, beauty contest and a large dose of novelty entertainment. By the time they tully take their place, the girls are going to give soccer a completely new face.

In addition to the standard attire of boots, stockings, tugs and jerseys, some of the girls whose shorts are wide

From now on, the term: "woman goal" has ceased to mean an inferior one.

use, anyway?) So also are painted lips, except among a few goalkeepers who feel they have nothing to lose.

Watching some of them in action, the only thing that suggests that they are girls is the inescapable tell-tale bulge upfront. Quite a good many of them are properly bow-legged (the trade mark of natural footballers). In



Washing up after a match



Resting up at interval

fact, Chioma Ajunwa, Nigeria's current 100 metres and long jump champion and skipper of the Rivers Mermaids looked small and smart like an adolescent boy with her captain's arm band. In the match against Lagos Golden Wonder Girls which the Mermaids won 3-0 at Agege Stadium penultimate Saturday in the just concluded national Super League, she played the 'last woman in defence' role. But majority of them looked even more feminine in their soccer outfits and played the game the way only girls can.

Which, in fact was why the spectators, 98 per cent of whom were men, came to watch. Every move they made attracted comments, cheers and jeers. A sampler:

'Dis girls surprise me o! Some of dem ni play like man'

'Why not? Na one and half leg dem get? No be two leg men dey take play?'

'But dis Rivers girls sabi play o!'

'No mind dis Lagos girls. Na so so

waist ball dem sabi play well well.'

At the end of a match, a thoroughly fascinated football fan at the practice pitch of the National Stadium, Akin Ogunsoola, replied to TSM Sporting's poser 'Dem try, but woman be woman'. All around, some of the more daring fans were hugging and embracing the outstanding players, but some club officials quickly jumped in to extricate their girls from the adoring fans and herded them to a waiting bus.

Officials of the Rivers Mermaids did not bother themselves over the fans' show of affection for the girls. Not only are they used to such reactions in their three years of serious soccer experiment with the girls, they are confident of their girls' conduct.

Larry IS Ezeh, chairman of the Rivers Mermaids (formerly Larry's Angels) told TSM Sporting that after over two years of camping the girls together, they have imbibed a routine of discipline. Ezeh, who founded the club, said he wanted to make it a



Chioma Ajunwa; queen of the tracks, and of football.



Injured player takes a ride on coach's back. Lucky coach.

model which other female soccer teams would envy. For this reason, the 27 girls are camped in a hostel, given N15 feeding allowance per day each with adequate transportation and playing facilities. In addition, Shamakup Chemists, Port Harcourt was retained to provide medical services for the girls 'to avoid the danger of self medication'. According to him, he embraced female soccer programme solely 'because of interest'. Incidentally, Chioma Ajunwa, (who despite having been transferred to Lagos still plays for the club) is his relative.

Larry's Angels became Rivers Mermaids a few months ago when the Rivers State Government took over the team and sent Davidson Bob-Manuel, assistant coach of Sharks FC to coach them. What does it take to coach a female team, compared with a male one? Said Bob-Manuel, the boys are easier to coach because they were born into the game. It takes a lot of talking and endurance to coach girls but they are coming up. We will win this competition. Our main opponents are Kakanto Babes but they are old women.



Moses James wins again, this time over Barnabas Imudia of Bendel State.

The baby-faced bully

Moses James has acquired this bad habit of knocking out all his opponents!

By Ochereome Nnanna

Jesus! Jesus Christ! What a fight! he exclaimed as he entered the dressing room, blood gushing from his nose and mouth.

This was not a cry of pain. It was an exclamation of surprise.

As he submitted his head and hands for the divestment of the headguard, gumshield and gloves, Moses James kept on muttering to himself involuntarily. Everybody was equally amazed. He had just knocked out Barnabas Imudia of Bendel State in the second round of the semi-finals of the

IBB Cup tournament for amateurs. In fact, he had knocked down Barnabas twice before the referee came in to save the Bendelite from a possible date with tragedy, but it was the winner, James of Niger State, who ended up looking like a rag the dog had played with.

In addition to a weak nose that would haemorrhage at the slightest

flures of destruction, is trained on the opponent, seeking soft spots into which tiny fists of iron are delivered. Like Okorodudu, James' style emphasizes pure ring craft, but unlike Okorodudu, he ends the fights early.

This year alone, he has fought 10 times, won nine via knock-out, losing only one on points to controversial judgement during the Auckland Commonwealth Games. Knocking them out is where he lives. He won the Nigeria — Ghana challenge contest in the 63kg (light welter weight) as well as the IBB and Inter zonal gold medals. He is also a veteran of many international fights, including the 1987

contact with a hostile foreign body, he had multiple bruises inside his mouth, but his face was, as usual, unmarked like a baby's.

Like David Dafagbon (see last edition) Moses James does not look like a boxer. While Dafagbon is tall (he looks like a palm tree) James is diminutive and pellet, in fact, girl-like. Ever since this reporter knew him (that was about five years ago) he has always sported a jheri-curl'd hairdo, after his ring idol, Jerry Okorodudu. James is not handsome, he's pretty, you get the picture?

When he enters the ring, all that harmless good looks transform into the single-minded viciousness of a wild cat. A pair of eyes, suffused with the



Coach Segun Otawoyin of Niger State.

All African Games bronze. He is the only Nigerian amateur boxer to win the Eagle Belt (1986) and the Minister's Cup for the best amateur boxer of the year (1988) donated by Air Commodore Bayo Lawal.

Like Datagbon, he has received proposals for a professional career in the United States. Nnamdi Moweta, Nigeria's best known professional boxing promoter in the US on a visit home last year phoned his Minna Niger State base asking him to pack his things and follow him. James was all for it, but was dissuaded by his coach, Segun Olawoyin.

Segun told *TSM Sporting*: "I want him to win a major international medal, like in the Olympics. He is one of the best around, you know. What he needs is more exposure internationally. I don't want him to be exploited by Moweta or any other promoter as Joe Lasisi has been complaining."

Probably, the time for such exposure



James...going for it

is now. His Niger Sports Council employers have virtually nothing in terms of facilities for boxing. Their former training site in Minna used to boast of only a creaky old wooden ring with

an aged punch bag. As the state prepared to host the intermediate Commonwealth handball championships last year, the sports centre was transformed into a handball stadium. The boxers were sent to the 123 Battalion open field near the State Secretariat without the ring or even the punching bag. Therefore, meaningful training is difficult, not to talk of regular sparring sessions.

In spite of these infrastructural drawbacks, James has only gotten better over the years. Today, he is the most colourful amateur boxer in Nigeria and a solid prospect for Olympic gold.

After he had knocked out all his three opponents during the just concluded inter-zonal finals in Lagos, the acting chairman of the Nigerian Amateur Boxing Association (NABA), Frank Okonta went to his corner and told him: "you are one of our best boys. Nigeria is pinning a lot of hope on you".

By Ochereoma Nnanna

Warning: Wrong mathematical calculation can land you in grave trouble. Grava, as per six feet below grass roots level.

Two combat sportsmen whose weights were not included in the inter-zonal finals decided to fight in different weights in order to increase their zones medal haul, but ended up with their prestige in tatters.

Emeka Obidinma, representing zone 7 (Sokoto, Niger and Kwara) naturally wrestles in the 110 kilogramme or super heavyweight. In his bid to help his zone to gather more medals, he entered to wrestle in the 100 kilogramme or heavyweight. Seven hours to weighing-in time, Obidinma was a whole 10 kilogrammes overweight. He decided to do something drastic about it because he couldn't possibly hope to shed that load by mere physical exercise.

TSM learnt that he swallowed two *laxis* tablets (the drug is reportedly not illegal) and was able to make the weight. The drug, according to medical sources, causes dizziness and frequent passage of urine, and if taken excessively can damage an athlete's physical well-being.

The following day when Emeka was to fight zone 3's Asik Esua he was still short of energy and sweated profusely. Worried, his coach, Peter Ovuwarie took him to the medical centre for a test. Dr S. Ejim, wrote a

T

oying with tragedy

Wrestler narrowly escapes death by drug overdose

note to Ovuwarie, warning that the athlete's blood pressure (150/100) was dangerously high, and that any further stress or heavy knock may lead to the athlete being brought back as a corpse. 140/90 is the maximum safe blood pressure limit for combat sports people.

However, Obidinma was adamant. Eyebing the other athlete warily, he told *TSM Sporting*: "If I don't fight now they will think it's because I am afraid.

That's why I want to fight!"

"But your opponent must have heard of your plight, so he will come with all he has," our reporter pointed out.

"He himself knows the trouble that awaits him" Obidinma countered. "He knows me very well. I'm a radical!"

Obidinma later headed the voice of reason and gave up the fight to Esua.

One person that probably never got any advice was Sabo Mohammed of zone 6 (Kano, Katsina and Kaduna). Sabo holds the Commonwealth gold medal in the bantamweight (54kg) and in that weight he has no great opposition.

Sabo therefore decided to leave the weight to his zone-mate, Aliyu Adamu (who got to the final of the IBB tournament via a bye and a walk-over) to box in the featherweight class (57kg) hoping, by his calculation that two gold medals would fall into his zone's kitty. In the preliminaries, he lost ignominiously to zone 2's Nana Melsese (Bendel, Ondo and Rivers). Melsese, Peter Konyegwachie's contemporary, knocked him down three times in the first round, forcing the referee to stop the fight. Adamu also lost.

Sabo later told *TSM Sporting* that he had not trained adequately for the fight because of lack of facilities in Kaduna where the zone had camped.

Proud Melsese only said: "Yes I knew I would beat him roundly. He is the commonwealth champion. I know"

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