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Ruminations
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2003: Tragedy or farce?
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A boy goes to school
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Zamfara Gov. vows to fully implement Shari'ah
 Governor Ahmed Sani of Zamfara has vowed to fully implement the Sharia legal system in the state this year as it was only partially implemented last year.
 He said that the government has embarked on an intensive enlightenment campaign in order to educate the public on the need to shun all vices so as to have a reformed society.
 The governor said that the government had also employed 25 lawyers to prosecute cases in Sharia courts.

Bacita sugar coy suffers N1.31b loss
 The Nigerian Sugar Company Ltd., Bacita, suffered a loss of N1.31 billion in the last three years as a result of the flooding of its sugarcane plantation, the destruction of irrigation and flood protection, infrastructure and equipment.
 Its Managing Director, Dr. Isaac Gana, said that the losses did not include those arising from low yields of sugarcane per hectare.
 Gana, who estimated the losses at about N600 million added during a workshop that the issue of water management was of major concern to NISUCO.

Vice President Atiku Abubakar condoles M.D. Yusuf
 Vice President Atiku Abubakar has sent a message of condolence to former Inspector-General of Police, Alhaji M.D. Yusuf, over the death of his mother, Hajiya Hadiza.
 The Vice-President, whose message was delivered by the Katsina state governor, Alhaji Musa Yar'adua, prayed God to grant the deceased eternal rest and to her family the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss.
 The Vice President had visited Katsina last Thursday, to pay a condolence visit to Yusuf, but his plane could not land at the city's airport, due to poor visibility.
 Aged 95, Hajiya Hadiza died last Monday of last week after a brief illness and had since been buried according to Islamic rites.

The nation awaits a new cabinet

The nation has been thrown into anxiety as it awaits the formation of a new federal cabinet following President Olusegun Obasanjo's announcement to dissolve the existing one. Last week's Federal Executive

By Sulciman Mohammed and Ibrahim Modibbo
 Council (FEC) meeting was regarded as the last for the current members of the council.
 The nation may still have to wait a little bit more until

the return of the president from Switzerland today and of the Senate President, Chief Anyim Pius Anyim from a tour the United States and United Kingdom during the week.
 The trips abroad by the

two top members of government is believed to have delayed the announcement of the members of the new cabinet. The constitution prescribes that the list must be passed to the Senate which will screen and confirm the appointees.

Daily Trust gathered that already, the President and the Vice-President, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar have reconciled their interests with regards to their respective nominees in the new cabinet.
 Aside the absence of the president and the Senate President, Daily Trust learnt that the delay may also not be unconnected with the intensive lobby from pressure groups from the North and East under the auspices of the Arewa Consultative Forum (APC) and the Ohaneze who are pushing hard for their candidates.



COMPARING NOTES: L-R: Chief Dubem Onyia, Dr. Bekki Ketebu-Igwe and Mrs Pauline Tallen, all ministers before the last cabinet meeting in Abuja... last week.
 Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje.

Sources in the presidency hinted that the new cabinet is also expected to placate some disgruntled elements from within the PDP and the opposing All Peoples Party (APP) and the Alliance for Democracy (AD) who also filed nominees for the plum jobs.
 Presidency sources revealed that lobbyists have also extended their pressure to the wives of the president and his vice, Mrs. Stella Obasanjo and Mrs. Titi Abubakar respect
Contd. on pg 2

FG's third quarter revenue receipts hit N506.11b

Total revenue realized by the Federal Government during the third quarter of the 2000 fiscal year, which ended September 30, amounted to N506.11 billion. Minister of State for Finance, Senator Jubril Martins-Kuye announced that the revenue shows an increase of N123.6 billion over the proportionate budget estimate of N392.56 billion for the period.

By Aliyu Ma'aji, Business Editor
 In the same vein, earnings in the same period outstripped the N395.52 billion recorded in the second quarter by N110.59 billion.
 The minister said the monthly average revenue for the period under review was N168.70 billion, while the previous quarter stood at N131.84 billion. Out of the total

amount, oil revenue was N404.00 billion, while non-oil revenue accounted for the remaining N102.11 billion.
 Explaining the reason for the boost in accruals, the minister pointed out that rising prices of crude oil in international mercantile exchanges between July and September 2000 peaked at an average of 28.90 per barrel, while the

As the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Alhaji Ghali Umar Na'abba renounces his oppositions against the presidency, a splinter group within his supporters have emerged from a crucial meeting in Abuja with a game plan aimed at impeaching him.
 The group according to sources has had about ten meetings in the last three days at different locations in Abuja where they marshalled out their points and fortified their strategies with the aim of removing the Speaker.
 The meeting which was attended by the required two-thirds of members cutting across party and geographical boundaries according to sources have concluded arrangements to team up with the Tony Anyanwu led opposition to reintroduce the impeachment process in the first week of February.

Group insists on Na'abba's removal

By Ibrahim Modibbo, Political editor
 Daily Trust gathered authoritatively that although the House will resume next week almost all the members are now in Abuja, having daily consultations on how to have a smooth transition of the im
Contd. on pg 2

Faseun's case file was tampered with

The police in Lagos now believe that the case file of the leader of the banned Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC), Dr. Fredrick Faseun may have been tampered with to ensure his release.
 The Lagos state Commissioner of Police, Mr. Mike Okiro who gave the indication at the weekend said Dr. Faseun

From Wisdom Patrick, in Lagos
 was liable for a myriad of ethnic skirmishes in the state.
 He said in an interview with Daily Trust that intelligence reports available to him showed that the Directorate of Public Prosecution in Lagos might have tampered with the case file.

-Okiro
 The state number one detective stated further that he was in Lagos state not to serve anybody but the citizens of Nigeria, "irrespective of their ethnic background or tribe and I would do that without fear or favour," he boasted.
Contd. on pg 2



Ghali Na'abba

NEWS

Senate is set to pass HYPPADEC bill

The Senate will leave no stone unturned to ensure the passing of the bill creating the Hydro-Power Producing Areas Development Commission (HYPPADEC).

This assurance was given by Senator Isa Mohammed representing Niger South Senatorial district who pointed out that the people of Niger, Kebbi, Kogi and Kwara states deserve the bill to take care of the environmental degradation caused by the establishment of hydro electric dams on the Niger and Kaduna rivers.

He told *Daily Trust* in Abuja that HYPPADEC, "will also conceive, plan and implement projects and programmes in the areas of health, housing and urban development and all such activities that would impact positively on the lives of our people who live upstream and downstream of the dams."

By Sani Babadoko,
News Editor

He said the devastating impact of hydro-electric dams on the environment included sedimentation, inundation of land with excess water modification of local microclimate at dam sites and flood flow and collapse of dams.

He said the creation of dams on rivers Kaduna and Niger has altered the natural flow of the rivers and adversely affected the inhabitants of the areas to whom flooding has become a yearly phenomenon.

Senator Isa who is vice-chairman Senate Committee on Public Accounts said there are also biological and chemical changes caused by the existing of the dams. He said the terrestrial ecosystem before the dams were constructed



Senator Isa Mohammed have been turned into aquatic which meant the introduction of new flora and

fauna.

He said investigations has also revealed that because of the generally flat floor of Kainji, Jebba and Shiroro Hydro-Electric Power Stations there is high evaporation rate which has affected marine life in the up and downstream areas.

Senator Isa said, "the modification of the local micro climate affects our people because the high rate of humidity provides fertile ground for multiplication of disease carrying germs while rainfall and erosion has increased around the dam areas.

The nation *Contd. from pg 1*

tively, including clerics and "Babalawos" all in the efforts to make the new cabinet.

On his part, President Obasanjo has emphasized that the new cabinet would comprise fresh blood to ensure the success of his administration.

The new list, according to investigations would contain some Senators and House of Representatives members, a measure aimed at dousing the frequent friction between the executive and the legislative arms of government which took most part of last year.

According to sources, the initial list prepared by President Obasanjo contained only minor changes but intensive lobby from pressure groups and individuals has forced him to undertake a complete shakeup, in what the source described as "far reaching."

In this regard, *Daily Trust* learnt that no fewer than 15 serving ministers may be dropped in addition to some special advisers and assistants regarded as "non performers."

Daily Trust gathered that the new list may include former Senate President, Evan Enwerem, Senator Haruna Abubakar, former Deputy Senate President, Senator Gbenga Aluko, the only PDP Senator from the South-West and Senator Wahab Dosunmu from Lagos state.

Those who may be picked from the House of Representatives include Honourables Tony Anyanwu, Sadiq Yar'adua and Ned Nwoko. Other expected nominees include PDP stalwarts and executives; Mr. Gbenga Olawepo, Asst. National Publicity Secretary, PDP, and Mr. Kekere Ekun, another a PDP stalwart. The names of the Director-General of the Bureau for Public Enterprise (BPE) Alhaji Nasir El-Rufai is strongly believed to be in the list.

Daily Trust also learnt that Chief Philip Asiodu, National Economic Adviser, Alhaji Kasim Ibrahim Imam Presidential Liaison Officer to the Senate, Mrs. Titi Ajanaku, Presidential Adviser on Women Affairs and Ambassador Dele Cole, Presidential Adviser on International Relations are expected to be in the new cabinet.

Others include, Dr. Bode

Olajumoke and Alhaji Adamu Waziri Mohammed all strong members of the (PDP).

Our investigation further revealed that on his return from Switzerland, President Obasanjo would put finishing touches to the list which presidency sources said he kept close to his chest "in view of the intensive lobby and pressure on him by different groups and individuals."

revenue receipts *Contd. from pg 1*

budget was predicated on US \$20 per barrel. Equally, he said production level was pegged at 2,2480 million barrels per day. This later moved to 2,3480 mbpd and now stands at 2,4112 mbpd, including condensate giving oil revenue increased of N62.95 billion from N341.05 billion.

Non-oil revenue increased to N102.11 billion in the third quarter from the N54.45 billion of the preceding quarter. However, tax on petroleum products, which used to be under oil revenue was transferred to non-oil revenue, effective from August 2000.

Expenditure profile of the period under review indicate that government's total budgetary release was N110,609,389,749.84, out of which N63,527,085,887.00 was for recurrent while N48,082,303,862.84 went for capital.

A breakdown shows that Federal Ministry of Power and Steel, Agriculture, Education and Health got N12.8 billion, N2.4 billion, N7.2 billion and N1.6 billion respectively. Moreover, out of a total amount of N47.965 billion extra budgetary release, the sum of N46.757 billion was for recurrent while the balance of N1.218 billion went for capital expenditure.

Daily Trust further gathered that Nigeria's foreign ex-

change profile during the third quarter suggest that total inflow was US \$4,004.6 million while outflow was within the region of US \$2,883.8 million. This translated into a net inflow of US \$1,120.8 million. Thus, average inflow and outflow were US \$1,334.9 million and US \$961.3 million while average net inflow stood at US \$ 373.6 million. Hence, total inflow in the third quarter was higher than that of the preceding by US \$3,266.80.

According to the Minister, Gross External reserves from August to September 30,2000 stood at US \$8,118.147 million out of which US \$478.772 million was blocked, leaving a net reserve of US \$7,639.374 million. This figure he said indicated a 12.0 percent hike over that of the preceding quarter in which the figure was just US \$6,796.527 million.

On debt servicing, payment in the third quarter was

US \$223.32 million about 55.8 per cent less than the US \$505.616 million paid in the second quarter. Payments in respect of principal was US \$205.84 million, interest, US \$14.23 million and commitment/other charges were US \$3.24 million.

As at 30th September 2000 Nigeria's external debt stood at US\$27.77 billion. Out of this amount US \$3.286 billion (11.84%) was owed to multi-lateral institutions of which World Bank groups share was 7.67%, ADB group had 3.4%, the European Investment Bank accounted for 0.65%, ECOWAS Fund 0.03% and IFAD had 0.09%. The London Club was owed US \$2.043 billion. Promissory notes holders are equally awaiting the payment of their US \$1.446 billion. Nigeria also owes US \$,006 billion to non-Paris Club Bilateral Creditors. The balance of US \$20.924 billion also stood to the credit of members of the Paris Club.

Faseun *Contd. from pg 1*

Okiro said it was on record that a number of armed robbery cases sent to DPP ended up in trash bin with the suspects regaining their freedom and returning to their trade almost immediately.

He recalled the case of a police sergeant and Inspector of Police, "who were shot dead by a released armed robber." The suspect he said shot them because the sergeant and the

inspector screamed at the court when the DPP said it found nothing incriminating on the suspect in the case.

Okiri therefore called on the Lagos state government to overhaul the directorate, to give room for quick dispensation of justice in the state. He alleged that with present crop of officials at the DPP the future of crime bursting and prosecution in the state was bleak.

Na'abba *Contd. from pg 1*

peachment process.

The major grouse of the splinter group against the Speaker is his latest romance with the presidency as well as his non-challant attitude to their welfare.

Although un confirmed, *Daily Trust* learnt from a source that the group whose arrow heads include representatives Usman Mohammed and Dr. Ahmad Lawan are not comfortable with the new found love that exist between the Speaker and the Presidency which they feel may compromise the integrity and independence of the legislative arm.

If specifically frowned at the nod allegedly given by the leadership of the House to the Presidency to re-introduce a supplementary bill of N80 billion for the purchase of a new aircraft for the Presidential fleet. The group vowed to mobilize all democrats in the House to team up with the aim of throwing out the bill when it comes to the floor for deliberations.

Dr. Ahmad Lawal who issued a press released in this regard last yesterday condemning the planned passage of the bill said "the rapport between the executive and the legislature especially the House of Representatives that has just been forged should not be portrayed as a gang up against Nigerians."

Promising to execute their jobs as true representatives of the people Lawal said "where there is a clash between President's interest and the peoples interest, we shall not fail to identify ourselves with the peoples interest."

"If we don't do this Nigerians would hate us much more than when we had problems with the President" he said.

The group which expressed displeasure that after standing

by the Speaker in his trying period over the moves by the Presidency to impeach him, accused Na'abba of directing too much energy towards pleasing the leadership of House's welfare to the detriment of the rest of the members.

Sources told *Daily Trust* that some members were angry that the Speaker dolled out money running into millions of naira as constituency & welfare allowances to the leadership of the House during the Christmas period when the rest of the members were left in the cold.

Meanwhile, sources told *Daily Trust* that efforts by supporters of Na'abba to call for a reconciliatory meeting failed for the umpteenth time last week as most of those in the splinter group refused to honour the meeting.

"The issue is apprehensive and we need prayers for divine intervention" the source said.

Speaking to *Daily Trust* on the matter, Ezuiche Ubani, special assistant to Ghali Umar Na'Abba on media matters said that all is well with the Speaker's supporters as there is no splinter group emerging from the camp.

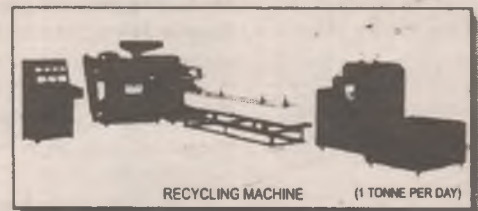
He also denied knowledge of any plan to impeach Na'Abba as according to him, the Speaker is in firm control of the situation on ground.

Also speaking on the alleged nod given to President Obasanjo to send an N80 billion supplementary bill to purchase an additional aircraft to the Presidential Fleet, Mr. Obani said "the President does not need a nod from the Speaker to send my bill to the House."

"As tradition demand, all the President is expected to do is to send any bill to the House and it is left to members of the parliament to pass it or not."

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NEWS

Briefly

Nigeria to host Africa-American summit

Nigeria is set to host the 5th African-American summit in Abuja from May 21 to May 25, 2001. The Minister of Information and National Orientation, stated in Abuja today. The statement which was signed by Mrs. Edna Akpa, the Director of External publication department of the ministry indicated that the federal government had begun preparation.

Kano State to plant 5 million seedlings

About five million tree seedlings would be planted by the Kano State Agriculture Ministry before the end of this year as part of the government's efforts to check desert encroachment, Gov. Rabi'u Kwankwaso, has said. The governor said that some of the modest achievements of his 18-month-old government, included the enrolment of about 432,000 pupils in government-owned primary schools. He attributed the soaring amount of enrolment to the rehabilitation of all dilapidated primary schools, provision of teaching and learning facilities to the schools by the government as well as the attention given to the education sector by his administration.

Fire kills 25, destroys N109m property in Kaduna

Twenty-five people died in various fire incidents while property worth N109.7 million were also lost between January and December 2000 in Kaduna State, the Chief fire officer of the state, Ishaku Adamu, has said. Adamu said in a statement in Kaduna at the weekend that the Fire Service Department salvaged property worth N194.4 million from destruction in 269 fire incidents recorded during the period.

Plateau to benefit from CIDA project

The Plateau state government will benefit from the health and environment programme of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). A delegation of the agency visited the state governor, Joshua Dariye weekend to fine tune areas of assistance to the state. The governor pleaded that they should not concentrate their programme in the cities.

Nasarawa supports NYSC

Nasarawa State government has reiterated its commitments to support the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) scheme in the state. Governor Abdullahi Adamu of Nasarawa State who stated this in a message to the state 2001 NYSC management and employment workshop also said that due to the enormous achievements of the NYSC scheme in the state, the serving youth corps member should not suffer rejection and frustration. In the hand of their employers during their service year in the state.

Cyclists stage protest ride over fuel hike

Motor cyclists in Obudu local government area of Cross River State have staged a protest ride against the outrageous increase of pump price of Petroleum products.

Obudu which is in the northernmost part of the state was held to ransom for hours as the cyclists blocked major streets in the town.

A source from the National Union of Motorcyclists, Obudu, an umbrella union of the cyclists told Daily Trust that the union was unhappy about the increases in the pump price from 22 naira to 40 naira per litre.

President of the Union, Mr. Patrick Agogo said the increase in the pump price was outrageous going by the ten naira fixed per drop.

Mr. Agogo however said that the fare per drop would

be agreed on if the pump price is reduced to N26.

The union officials however blamed the high cost of transportation on the attitude of the council saying that the council officials were insensitive to the plight of the people.

They enjoined the council to take drastic measures in dealing with owners of service stations who increase the price of fuel at will rather than clamp down on them (cyclists).

They warned that further attempts by the council to threaten them will spell doom for the people as they were bound to withdraw their services in the area.

The cyclists also vented their spleen on the state's task force on petroleum products which they said are "toothless bulldogs as their attempted intimidation of the fuel dealers to reduce the pump price have proved abortive

Nigeria at the weekend clinched four chairmanship positions out of the 13 standing committees of the ECOWAS parliament.

After its close door session last Friday, the parliament elected Mao Ohubunwa and Chief M.T. Mbu, as chairmen of the Committee on foreign Affairs, Defence and security, and the committee on Economy, Finance and Trade respectively.

Gabriel Dumi chairs the committee on Energy, Technology and Scientific Research while Khairat Abdulrazaq Gwadabe heads the committee on Women and Children's Rights.

A break down shows nine members from nine other countries chair a committee each.

Rhahuku Pere of Togo heads the committee on Law, Regulations, Legal and judicial matters while Mamadou Boye Ba of Guinea chairs the committee on Rural development.

Others are Hawa Yakubu of Ghana, committee on Transport and Communication; Coumba Ba of Senegal Environment and Natural Resources committee; and Pargui Emile Pare of Burkina Faso, commit-

Nigeria heads four committees of ECOWAS parliament

By Kevin Ebele Adinnu

tee on Public Health and Social Affairs.

John Gray of Liberia heads the committee on Education, Training, Employment, Youths and Sports and B.M. Kamanda of Sierra Leone oversees the committee on Industry and Mines

The rest are Hamat N.K Bah of the Gambia, committee on Tourism culture and Handicrafts; and Randolph Desire Azondeka of Benin, Budget control and Accounts committee.

Every committee, in addition has a vice chairman, first and second rapporteurs as officials.

In his remarks at the end of the session, the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives Mr. Chubudom Nwuche stated that Nigeria was prepared to provide all the required facilities for the sitting of the ECOWAS parliament in Abuja.

Our goal, "he maintained," is to ensure that the parliament is firmly established.

The Deputy Speaker urged the ECOWAS parliamentarians to subsume their national inter-

ests under the interest of the sub region if the parliament was to be relevant.

"The parliament will in the short run be expected to ensure full demonstration of all countries in the region, alimentation of civil wars, political conflicts and the promotion of economic well being of all our citizens," he stated.

According to him "To meet these challenges, you need to transform yourself from being only persons representing your countries to become fully person representing ECOWAS".

The next session of the ECOWAS parliament will hold in May in Abuja. No specific date has been fixed for the meeting.

The 120 member parliament was inaugurated by ECOWAS chairman, president Alpha Konare of Mali in November, 2000 in Bamako, Mali.

Each member state has a granted minimum of five seats in the parliament with the remaining 40 seats allocated on the basis of population.

Nigeria has 35 seats, the biggest followed by Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire both eight and seven seats respectively.

13 out of 15 national parliaments attended the maiden plenary session. Parliamentarians from Cape Verde and Cote d'Ivoire did not attend.

Sharia court sentences herbalist for sodomy

A sharia court at Gyadi-Kano at the weekend sentenced a 59 year old herbalist, Muhammed Fauz, of Sheka quarters, in Kumbotso local government area of Kano State, to two years imprisonment for having anal sex with a 12 year old boy.

The presiding judge, Mr. Justice Ibrahim Isa-Rabo, also ordered that Fauzi be given 100 strokes of the cane. In addition, he should also pay a fine of N10,000 and another N5,000 to the victim as damage.

He said that Fauzi was found guilty of the offence

under section 128 of the Kano State Sharia penal code and that he had confessed in the court that he committed the offence. Isa-Rabo said that three elder brothers of the victim, had earlier testified that they caught the convict having anal sex with the victim in the convict's garage at Sheka quarters in Kumbotso local government area of the state.

He also said that three punishment were specified in the Qur'an for a Sodomist and that they included hanging, stoning to death or imprisonment and a fine. But that the court settled for the least punishment because the convict admitted his offence.

Conference advocates true federalism

By: Suleiman Muhammed

Participant at a conference on "federal-state's relations under presidential democracy" rose from their deliberations calling for a constitutional review for the emergence of true federalism.

The conference, organised by the office of the secretary to the government of the federation (SGF) for secretaries to state government, in Abuja has among other things examined the principles of separation of powers and prospects for harmonious relationship between the three tiers of government. A communiqué issued at the end of the conference stressed the need for a thorough review of the 1999 constitution and the existing institution in order to facilitate inter governmental cooperation and collaboration.

While recognizing the roles of the secretaries to governments as chief advisers in democratic dispensation, the conference

expressed dismay over the existing conflict among the three tiers of government, and called for dialogue coordination and collaboration among stakeholders.

They also called for a proper re-orientation of political office holders on the context of a federal-democratic system and, "make deliberate efforts to promote equity and justice in government at all levels in the country".

The one-day conference was to acquaint all the secretaries to government on their expected role in a democratic setting as well as re-orientating them on the expected challenges ahead.

President Obasanjo had in a goodwill message noted that without a healthy relationship among the tiers of government, "our efforts to reduce poverty, illiteracy, disease and unemployment, and to promote the overall welfare of our citizens will not achieve the desired results".

Zamfara promises tougher Sharia

From Salisu Z. Maradun in Gusau.

The Zamfara state government weekend celebrated the first year anniversary of the implementation of the Sharia legal system with a promise to be sterner in prosecuting accused persons.

State governor, Ahmed Sani who performed the ceremony at the Ali Akilu Square in Gusau frowned at what he described as attempts by the police to sabotage the full implementation of the legal system in the past one year.

He did not elaborate.

He promised that in the years ahead any police officer who is found wanting must be made to face the full length of the law, saying that a special committee will be constituted for the arraignment of erring police officers before sharia courts.

According to him "this time around, we will not condone any deliberate attempt to sabotage the process (sharia)," adding that members of the committee would be men of impeccable character and knowledgeable in Islamic jurisprudence.

Governor Sani enumerated the achievement made so far in the implementation of the Sharia legal system in the state to include construction of 13 new courts with Alkali quarters pointing out that the salaries of the judges have been increased in order to encourage them carry out their judicial functions effectively.

He also spoke of the effort to fight corruption in the state and alleviating poverty, saying an anti-corruption commission had been established while N500m had been spent on poverty alleviation programme of the state.



Rev. Peter Okunrinmade, Perm. Sec. Women Affairs Ministry, Hajiya Aisha Isma'il, Dr. (Mrs.) Bekki Katebu-Igwe, Mrs. Zainab Maina, President NCWS at the National Youth Summit Conference in Abuja. Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje.

Bill on street begging, hawking underway

A bill prohibiting begging and hawking will soon be sent to the national assembly. Minister of Women Affairs and Youth Development, Hajiya Aisha Ismail has disclosed.

She said in Abuja at the weekend that the bill exclusively protected the rights of women and children adding that for too long, women had carried the family burden with parents playing marginal roles.

She said parents do not have a right to subject their children to avoidable risks involved in hawking and begging.

She said the bill will also seek to put at the disposal of women who were the most vulnerable in divorce cases which in many cases involved child custody.

Hajiya Aisha who identified poverty as the main cause of the twin malice of hawking and begging told a press con-

ference on the forthcoming youth summit in Abuja that some parents have abandoned their responsibility to their families.

She said the Federal Government has voted the sum of five million naira for hosting the youth summit to be attended by 3000 participants from all the local governments youth organizations where a national youth agenda would be fashioned out.

NEWS

67 Nigerians sue Obasanjo

As the Justice Chukwudifu Oputa continues sitting in Port Harcourt to unravel alleged perpetrators of human rights violation, 67 Nigerians languishing in Kuje Prison, Abuja, have instituted a legal action against President Olusegun Obasanjo.

The 67 Nigerians who have been remanded in Kuje Prison on the orders of an Abuja Chief Magistrate court are being held on allegations of suspected armed robbery.

Others joined in suit along with President Obasanjo include the Attorney General of the Federation, the Inspector-General of Police and the FCT Comptroller of



President Obasanjo

Prisons.

In a motion ex parte filed before the Federal High Court, Maitama, Abuja, counsel of for plaintiffs, Mr. Dele Oye is seeking the order of the court to challenge their continued detention in Kuje Prisons.

Mr. Dele Oye, leading eight other lawyers in the suit No. FHC/ABJ/M376/2000 is seeking two reliefs from the court to make a declaration that their continued detention in Kuje Prison for a period ranging from one year to six years without trial is illegal, null and void.

He made an order releasing them from unlawful detention forthwith.

The suit filed on behalf of the 67 alleged suspected robbers by the Human Rights Committee of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA), Abuja branch, of which Mr. Dele Oye is the chairman.

Grounds upon which the reliefs are sought is that the applicants have been in detention for between one and six years in Kuje medium security prison, Abuja and that their detention is not in accordance with any procedure permitted by law and is not justified by any of the circumstances stated in section

35 and 36 of the 1999 constitution of the country. In a five paragraph affidavit, in support of the motion, Mr. Paul O. Eshiemomoh also for the accused person swore that being a member for the NBA Abuja branch of the Human Rights Committee and following their long detention without trial, the lawyers have been requested to offer them assistance.

When the matter came up for hearing on Friday, the presiding judge, Mrs. C.M.A. Olatoregun was unavoidably absent and the case was adjourned to today.

Governors Bafarawa, Adamu sign 2001 budget bills into law

Governors Attahiru Bafarawa and Abdullahi Adamu of Sokoto and Nassarawa states have signed this year's appropriation bills of their respective states into law.

While Bafarawa's bill contains N11.8 billion, Abdullahi Adamu's is N9.8 billion.

The Sokoto state governor signed three other bills into law. They include the Sharia Panel Code, the Sharia Criminal Procedure Code and the Local Government Amendment law.

A statement signed by the

The National Youths Summit to be held in Abuja from February 1 to 3 may gulp as much as N50 million, the Minister of Women Affairs and Youths Development, Hajiya Aisha Ismail has said.

The minister said in Abuja at the weekend that for the first time in the history of the nation, "Nigerian youths are being brought together for a summit".

Ismail stated that the ministry was looking forward to the summit "with optimism toward this initiative of involving Nigerian youths in the enterprise for their development".

She stated that the summit was in line with President Obasanjo's directive to review the existing National Policy on Youths Development, with a view to addressing the issues af-

National Youths Summit to gulp N50m

fecting the youths.

She said the ministry had eight months ago, initiated consultations with Youths Organisations and agencies which enabled the ministry to draft a National Youths Development Policy.

The minister expressed hope that the summit would realize its dreams, if the participants ensured the effective use of the opportunity.

She expressed optimism that the youths summit would address and correct the Misgivings of the past and provide a detailed plan of action and

implementation strategies which would transform the nation's youths.

The summit expects about 3,000 youths drawn from three nominated and accredited youths from local government areas and three representatives nominated and accredited by each state government, one of which must be female.

Others include the students' union presidents and secretaries-general nominated and accredited by each higher institution and two representatives from each ministry of women affairs and youths development

Director of Press to the governor, Alhaji Almustapha Shehu, said that the 2001 appropriation law would enable the state government to execute its fiscal policies, explaining N4.7 billion was for recurrent expenditure and N7.1 billion was for capital projects.

The statement said that the Sharia penal and criminal procedure codes had provided legal backing to Sharia courts in discharging both civil and criminal cases.

Speaking while signing the bills into law, Bafarawa said that the bill on Sharia penal and

criminal codes would facilitate the dispensation of Justice in Sharia courts while the local government amendment law was to ensure justice and fairness, which he described as some of the dividends of democracy.

Governor Abdullahi Adamu explained that the budget bill comprised the recurrent expenditure of N4,393,460,3 and a capital expenditure of N5,430,819,630.00.

He said the state house of Assembly has raised the recurrent expenditure for the current

fiscal year to N40 million.



Gov. Attahiru Bafarawa

The Debate begins

We hope you have not forgotten that on Thursday, February 8, 2001, we will begin the publication of debates on topical issues of the moment.

The selected topic for debate is
The Generational Shift: Can the under 50 politicians deliver?

We have received the opinion of some contributors. We are awaiting yours.

Remember: the publication date is
Thursday, February 8, 2001

Thanks for your patronage

2003: Tragedy or farce?

By Richard Umaru

It has been said that when history chooses to repeat itself it does so in one of two ways: either as a tragedy or a farce. I cannot really say which of these two comes more often than the other, but both can really be unmitigated disasters.

As Nigeria gradually bores into 2001 and the "Fourth Republic" epileptically gets mid-stream, many discerning Nigerians are beginning to worry over what the first post-handover elections hold for the country come 2003. Will the elections be smooth, peaceful and acceptable: or would there be a repeat of the debacle of 1983 when the NPN's "landslide" victory turned into the military's return to Aso Rock?

The question itself is germane, for our experiences in this country has been that post-handover elections have been the critical benchmarks for the drastic—even tragic—change in the character of governments. First, it was the crises that bedevilled the post-independence elections of 1964 which directly led to the first military coup d'état of 1966. Similarly, the Waterloo of the "Second Republic" was the discredited and heavily manipulated post-handover elections of 1983. There is now little doubt that the critical test of the durability and sustainability of the present democratic project would largely depend on whether or not this country is able to hold a credible and acceptable general election in 2003.

But what are the omens? I am afraid, only an unstoppable optimist can really say that these are good. Take the political parties for one. All of them are consumed in one form of crises or the other. The ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) has really not been a party in the true sense of the word, since its controversial convention early last year. Lacking any coherent common ideological platform beyond the desire to hold power and any semblance of internal discipline, the PDP has been incapable of agreeing on anything either in the legislature or the executive.

The Alliance for Democracy (AD), originating as it did as a compact of ethnic champions, has cracked right in the middle. It cannot agree even on who should be its nominal chairman not to talk about weightier matters. The All Peoples Party (APP) is faring no better. Lacking any visionary leadership and bereft of any articulate programme or sense of direction, it has been wobbling along in the political wilderness like a driverless jalopy.

Yet viable and structured political parties—as the aggregation of popular interests—are essential in a political system, since they provide order and systemization to political discourse and contestations. Given the present state of disarray in the political parties, even the simple exercise of nominating candidates for elections has the potential of generating so much crises and violence within the parties as to pose a real threat to the stability of the country itself.

Then there is the state of preparedness, or lack of it, of the electoral bodies to contend with. By the provisions of the 1999 Nigerian Constitution, all elections into the local government councils—all due early next year—are supposed to be conducted by the independent state Electoral Commissions. As of today, many states are yet to constitute these bodies. And even where they have been constituted little or no work has as yet been done by them in preparation for the onerous responsibilities before them.

But perhaps even more serious is the lackadaisical manner the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) seems to be viewing the all-important task of voters registration, which faces it in its preparation for the 2003 general polls. Everybody knows that the foundations of a free and fair election is the preparation for a comprehensive and accurate voters roll. And everybody also knows that the voters roll prepared in 1998-1999 in the run-up to the 1999 elections was grossly

inaccurate and unsatisfactory. If INEC is therefore really committed to the conduct of credible and acceptable elections in 2003, it ought to have given more serious attention to the challenge of preparing an acceptable and verifiable voters register than it has done so far.

All these, as we have said, are bad omens for 2003. But the worst of these omens is the confusion and speculation over whether or not President Obasanjo would make a bid for a second term. The President himself has not come out publicly to declare his position although all the tell-tale indications are that he would not be averse to a second term. But if he does declare his interest to run, Obasanjo would be well in his right so to do. After all, the constitution does provide for it.

Yet, I think, that this constitutional provision—which allows a maximum of two terms for the President, Governors and local council chairmen—is, at this material juncture in the country's historical development, fraught with a lot of dangers. The first of these dangers lies in the undermining of executive performance. We know for sure that in Africa—if nowhere else—the temptation to sit-tight in office is often too great for sitting heads of government to resist. As a consequence of this sit-tight syndrome most heads of government spend half their time plotting and scheming how to remain in power than in delivering the so-called "democracy dividend". Even in Nigeria, with the intentions of President Obasanjo as yet undeclared, the plottings and schemings for 2003 are already well underway, mid-way into his first term. The delirious effects this is bound to have on the Administration's focus would take only a matter of time to manifest.

Then there is the negative impact which a two-term provision has on the sense of involvement and participation in government by the different parts of the country. For now, at least, whether one supports or opposes the rotational principle in the selection of candidates for election, the fact remains that that principle has become part of the unwritten code in political practice in Nigeria. Yet, a two-term provision in the constitution makes the operation of rotation difficult in practice.

If, for instance, the two-terms were to be enjoyed by everyone, how long would it take for every zone or section of the country to have the opportunity to field its own candidates for the top post? The apparently interminable wait can only heat up the political climate, as it is already beginning to do, and increase the feeling of frustration and alienation. Indeed, one of the palpable threats to the successful and peaceful conduct of the 2003 elections remains the very question of whether or not President Obasanjo would seek a second term.

In these circumstances one cannot help but to concede that there is merit in the recent call by General Adisa (rtd) for a constitutional review of the two-term provisions in the constitution. I personally believe that a single six year term for the President, five year term for governors and four year term for council chairman has a great deal to recommend itself. Not only would it give sufficient time for the incumbents to introduce all the changes that they believe would make a difference in the lives of their constituents, but it would also take the heat, crises and distractions out of the present two-term provisions.

In the meantime, however, we can only hope and pray that as we march towards 2003, Nigeria will not re-enact the tragic and farcical experience of 1963-1964 and 1983! God forbid.

Dr. Richard Umaru, a former Permanent Secretary in Kaduna State, is now an Editorial Board member of Daily Trust.

EDITORIAL

Publish list of indebted states

The information that N700 billion foreign debts amassed by the states of the federation in barely 19 months of the civilian administration is shocking. More disturbing is the fact that the states are not making any visible efforts to redeem these huge debts.

Official statistics have shown that for the 30 states, the N700 billion translates into N20 billion per state. The same statistics have also revealed that the amount is far above the yearly budgets of the individual states where they usually project between N5 billion and N7 billion per year.

We are worried by these developments for the reasons that the governors do not, and have not consulted the people on whose behalf they claim to have acquired these loans. The state Houses of Assembly, the constitutional representatives of the people have feigned ignorance of any consultation with them by the governors regarding the loans. The right thing is for the governors to have consulted the people through their representatives, the Houses of Assembly, before committing their states to the loans. The result is that the teeming masses on whose behalf the loans were claimed to have been taken do not know the principal amount, the interests to be paid on them, the terms of payment and the penalties for default. Worse still, they do not even know the purpose(s) for which the loans have been taken.

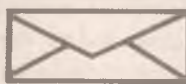
There are fears that most of the loans have not been utilised for the purposes they were acquired and the current governors may be putting their next two, three or even four successors in the financial problems of repaying these loans thereby endangering their developmental programmes.

This is the predicament of the present administration as most of the foreign debts for which we are now running from pillar to post, seeking forgiveness, remission or re-scheduling were taken by previous governments, and, in some cases, for suspicious reasons. For instance, records have shown that about 18 per cent of our standing external debt was taken for projects that were never executed and that only 9 per cent were expended on authentic projects.

Many reasons can be adduced for the huge external debts amassed by the states in so short a time. One is the fear for coups where the governors believe that soldiers may seize power anytime and must therefore, amass as much wealth as possible and as soon as possible. In this regard, they overlook all financial regulations including the checks and balances expected to be exercised by the Houses of Assembly. Here too, the Honourable members have thrown away their constitutional responsibilities because of the frequent financial inducements by the executives of the states.

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has merely expressed worry with the ever-increasing external debts of the state governments. It should do more. One, it must publish the list of states that have incurred external debts including the amount. Two, it must fashion out fresh regulations that will curtail the excesses of state governors in taking foreign loans.

This should be done now, else, the developmental efforts of the states will be jeopardised when repayment period arrives. Our current experience with pleas for debt forgiveness says it all.



LETTER OF THE DAY!

Congratulations!

We have been reading the new titles in your stable, the *Daily Trust* since its debut on January 15

Permit me to say that we are impressed by the quality of the newspaper. That, in our view, is to be expected, as your staff is made of probably

some of the most experienced journalists in the country.

Nevertheless, we urge you to continue to be fair and accurate in your re-

porting. Journalism, history shows, serves society better when it is based on these tenets.

Please convey to your staff, the Hon. Speaker's best wishes. *Ezuche Ubani, Special Adviser, Media Affairs to the Hon. Speaker Alhaji Ghali Umar Na'Abba.*

Opinion

Atiku Abubakar and the north(II)

By Timawus Mathias

Continued from last Thursday

One needs to be cautious in putting the crisis of leadership in the north in perspective because the elders have a tendency to feel insulted. Our elders are forever our source of wisdom and inspiration and truly deserve our highest esteem. They are however our source of headache also.

Even as there was killing of northerners in parts of the south in the recent disturbance, and one commends the restraint of the north in bearing the pains with mercy, are we not aware that the violence is being orchestrated by agents of destabilization who hate the north for foisting Obasanjo on them? Are we not aware of the efforts of Afenifere, OPC and some childish newspaper columnists who act and write without regards to, or may be even knowledge of the sacrifices that gave them their being? Should we join in the chopping down of the nascent democracy, for the system to be improved only when we take charge?

There is a hypocrisy that has become common place in the way the Obasanjo/Atiku Abubakar administration is being portrayed and the emergence of ACF to champion a "Northern" cause, the primary one being that the north is being marginalized. The marginalization of a whole region is that some few "families" are losing their comfortable positions, and others who supported the bid for Obasanjo are yet to be "settled" by the new government. Their support for Obasanjo hitherto seen by Nigerians to have been propelled by the strong desire for national cohesion, and integration, is now giving way to a mere bid for individual interests. The new beginning has gone sour and cold all so soon.

And we all know that marginalization as a position is untenable. Northerners put the Obasanjo administration together. Northerners keep it in place. Unless we say that Lt. Gen. T.Y. Danjuma, Adamu Ciroma, Sani Zangon Daura, Hassan Adamu, Rilwanu

Lukman, and a host of others are not northerners. And we forget so soon that not too long ago, the north had by the acts of leadership it threw up, mismanaged the opportunity to lead the country "right" by badly wounding the sensibilities of the south, especially the Yoruba. Their son won an election and was denied the mandate. Then Abacha capped their woes with heinous acts eventually "stream-rolling" a coup plot that enabled his regime to clamp down on Yoruba elements mainly.

Of course, the truth is simple. Obasanjo has proved to be an unwilling tool in the hands of those who threw their money on a bet to promote personal objectives. Order and propriety in some aspects of national life are threatening vested interests that can only thrive on inefficient establishments. Government patronage is recognizing new faces and forgetting others with certificates of occupancy on the national cake. Rationalizing the injustices of Abacha's and in fact General Abubakar's appointments in such a way that could accommodate the ethnic equation could not go down well with the "North" whose "sons" dominated the vital appointments in the economy, especially the oil industry. It stands to reason that in any rationalization of appointments, the hitherto most favoured people of the country become the "victims" of the correction of unbearable deprivation of a fair chance. Even today, there is a tenacious hold on opportunity and power by select clans to the frustration of other ethnic minorities, and the government must tackle this national condition squarely by offering other communities opportunities as well. The current involvement of indigenes from oil producing parts of the country in the oil industry is a step in the right direction, and the only way to promote justice and fair play in the national interest.

People who consider themselves the chosen few may hold Atiku Abubakar in scorn, but no one can deny him the vice-presidency, a statement that begs to be made. Leadership

may be held in scorn, but it is still the leadership.

The venom being spewed against Atiku Abubakar is ill deserved and so unnecessary. Atiku Abubakar did not appoint himself vice-president. There was an offer that must have come from the president and from no one else. There was an acceptance that could have come from Atiku Abubakar and from no one else.

Transition to civil rule is meaningless if the new democracy is shortlived. The nation invariably gets worse off. Nigeria needs a democracy that can survive long enough to sustain itself on ideals of freedom, human dignity, rule of law and communal tolerance - a civilian administration that can use popular policies and good governance to overcome dereliction by the military. Such an administration or democracy can only be sustained by good governance. The props upon which good governance can rest, and democracy thrive must be made to exist in fair distribution of opportunity and wealth.

Achievements of Reception 2000

The presence of all the 19 governors of the northern states alone speaks volumes of Atiku Abubakar's political clout. They collectively connote the entire northern political machine. They collectively are purveyors of the Sardauna of Sokoto, and can carry on the struggle he died committed to, One North, One People, One Destiny. Most remarkably, it was this slogan that had laid the foundation for the unassailable relevance the northern power elite had enjoyed in the political dynamics of this country. However, ego and

greed, subsequently emptied the Sardauna doctrine of its core provision for jet-set comprehensive northern development that recognised people without regard to tribe and religion. Thereafter, it has been a pathetically twisted legacy of ethno-sectarian divide which has for all political purposes, reduced the north into splinters of aimless political focus and humiliating socio-economic collapse. The reality of life is that, like it or not, the era of opportu-

nities for those born with a silver spoon is fast gone. No kid gloves for the princess, and no reservation for the preferred Competence, acceptance, relevance have become adequate criteria for serving the nation. It is clear that following the footsteps of Sardauna, there has now emerged a leadership with the astute political will and deft plans to restore the aspirations of a solidly composite north in line with the Sardauna dream. Atiku Abubakar's northern acceptance and solid support is well told by the size, diversity and passion of the Kaduna gathering.

Even the (southern) press has applauded the reception, and taken note that the giant north has neither slept nor slumbered. The southern press points to the assertion by some of the speakers that the north would no longer tolerate wanton provocation and unnecessary killing of northerners in other parts of the country. It sees as a call to arms, the statement that was indeed an expression of the genuine feelings of the entire north, and the south must note that. Those who often consider a break up of Nigeria must know that it is not going to happen without the spilling of blood as no nation is ever formed without one section compelling other section to belong.

Reception 2000 has served the interest of Nigeria in a very fundamental way. It has established a vital bridge-head across the dangerously eroding gap between the central government and the so-called "marginalized" north. The north is now at its own initiative, solidly behind the government, but ready to demand and take its rights. As for the south, the build-up schism against the north in a reactive aftermath of the political exploits of northern-dominated military dictatorship, should now be put to rest. For here is now a north, bold and confident with a revamped leadership ready for the business of reconfiguring the development of this country in the interest of all.

Timawus Mathias (Chief) is of Quest Media, Abuja.

Between Bunu and displaced dwellers

By Ibrahim Jirgi

The decision by the federal government to change the nation's seat of power from Lagos to Abuja was mooted by the late head of state, General Murtala Ramat Mohammed. It came after the recommendation of a committee headed by Justice Akinola Aguda, a renown legal luminary and justice of the Supreme Court, in February, 1975.

Subsequently, Abuja received its official stamp on February 3, 1976 to be precise, while the federal government promulgated Decree No. 6 of 1976 to establish the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) with the sole aim of planning, designing and developing Abuja. A Ministry of Federal Capital Territory (FCT) came into being with the promulgation of Decree No. 12 of 1985 to serve as the supervisory body of the FCDA.

Since the relocation of the seat of power from Lagos to Abuja in 1991, Abuja has had its teething problems, one of which is inadequate residential accommodation, facing not only workers but also traders and artisans who trooped into the city for one form of business or the other.

As a result of this problem, many residents of Abuja resorted to living in suburbs or satellite towns mostly in illegal structures thereby defacing the original masterplan of Abuja. These illegal structures were erected in defiance of the laws on land allocation and town planning of the city. In a bid to checkmate these illegal structures, the FCT has earmarked 36 satellite villages for demolition and already, 200 of such illegal structures have been demolished by officials of the FCT in Durumi (1) and Kado on September 11, 2000. This development has not only brought condemnation to the officials of the FCT by the residents of the affected villages, it has also gingered them to plan for a show-down with the FCT, if the demolition exercise continued. *Haba!* Is that the meaning of life continues? (fighting a constituted authority).

While one admits that the demolition exercise has its disadvantage of sending the residents of the illegal structures out of their abode with virtually no where to live, because of the exorbitant rent in the districts of Garki, Abuja, Wuse and Maitama, one should not lose sight of one of the gains of the exercise which is to ensure that such illegal structures that were erected in defiance of the laws of allocation and town planning and even in "green areas" give way as they deface the beauty of the city. The beauty of Abuja must be protected and preserved.

Infact, that is why this writer endorses the setting up of a committee by the out-going Minister of the FCT, Arc. Ibrahim Bunu to review all land allocations within and outside the city; identify how and when allocations were made and offer an acceptable formula for future land allocations in Abuja. The setting up of the committee is timely.

With this development, residents of the illegal structures in all the satellite towns earmarked for demolition by the FCDA should exercise restraint and bury the hatchet while the FCDA on its part, should halt the demolition exercise, pending the outcome of the findings of the ministerial committee.

This is the only way the simmering controversy between the honourable minister, Arc. Ibrahim Bunu, the residents of the satellite towns and even critics of Arc. Bunu would be nipped in the bud.

The federal government's proposal to provide water supply, rural roads and electrification to the tune of N450 million, to all the six area councils of the FCT is most gladdening, but efforts should be extended to the provision of residential accommodation, especially in the satellite towns to cater for the increasing demands of workers in the affected villages of Kuje, Kubwa, Nyanya, Karu, Kwali etc.

This is the only way, we shall return Abuja to its original master plan of a beautiful city and centre of unity, worthy of our pride. For now, congratulations on your good works, Hon. Bunu. The sky is your limit.

Ibrahim Jirgi, a journalist, writes from Abuja.

Sir Ahmadu Bello: The leader of the century (II)

By Paul Mamza

Continued from last Thursday

A man known universally for his analytical prowess and deep introspection, Sir Ahmadu Bello, produced a brilliant formulation that will propel the entire north gradually into a self-dependent and combat-effective entity surviving on the built-in fulcrum for fifteen consecutive years.

If ingenuity, visionary leadership, political integrity and intellectual prowess are major determinants in assessing leadership, Sardauna would have no rival in Nigeria. Opposition groups were contended with maturity by the late Sardauna. You could imagine Sardauna sitting on a round table with Chief Joseph Tarka, leader of the

United Middle Belt Congress and Mallam Aminu Kano, leader of the Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) to iron out differences and misgivings amicably. There was never a time the ruling party under Sardauna and the opposition parties disagreed on issues that were fundamental. He managed his territory and path of its destiny with high mental skill and physical prowess. Thirty five years after his death, if Sardauna were to come back, he would certainly have frowned at the celebrated indolence of some of his would-be successors and their egocentric posture. He would have seen his hard earned ideals crumble due to discontinuity with the standards set up by him. He would not have understood why a

northerner can be a second class citizen in Nigeria. He would have queried the miscalculations of the northern political elite. He would not have allowed the systematic weeding of the northerners occupying strategic positions. He would have prevented a situation where northerners were engaged in a fight with each other. He would have faulted the erroneous methodologies that paved way for institutional degeneration of the north. He would have viewed the concept of power shift as the equivalent of a political regicide. He would have stopped the course of a limited philosophical perception and the vain prevarications of the northern people in the modern times. A returning Sardauna would have been bemused by the heavily corrupted leaders that made

it a way of life to secure ill-gotten wealth cornered away from public accounts. He would have thanked Almighty Allah for an early recall.

The late Sardauna lived a humble and decent life while on earth. His personality cannot be faulted even by some southerners where he was regarded with disdain. His legacies are more enduring than any other legacies set aside in the post-independence Nigeria. To me, he is the greatest man and leader of his century. *Allah shi jikan Gamji dankwarai, domin yabon gwani ya zama dola.* May Almighty Allah grant the soul of this man of honour, the provider for the needy, nationalist, the Earl and Poinsetta of the north eternal rest. Amin.

Concluded... Mamza writes from Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

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LAVI BALOGUN KILLERS



YOUR LETTERS

Short 'n' Sharp

We sighed with relief

I read with joy and happiness, the emergence of *Daily Trust* Newspaper. The Announcement which appeared on page 16 of our dear Weekly tonic, the *Weekly Trust* of December 8-14 2000, made me and countless others to heave a sigh of relief. This is long overdue considering the over-pollution of the press atmosphere by pro-ethnic Mgbati press.

Ibrahim Khalil Ismail, Kano

You are incomparable!

I believe the work being done by you is immeasurable and incomparable. you really stand to defend the interest of well-meaning Nigerians, not considering selfish interest, ethnic or religious difference.

Munir M. Bala Tilde

Ungwar Kasa Tilden Fulani - Toro L.G.A Bauchi

Zamfara, pay our allowances

We wish to remind the governor of Zamfara state and his Commissioner for Education about our scholarship allowances. We are undergraduate students of the Federal College of Education, Kano. Nothing concrete has been done for us since the creation of this state in 1996.

Sani Mohammed Kura,

Former President, Zamfara Students Union, F.C.E. Kano, P.M.B. 3045, Kano state.

Kudos Senator Idris

Abubakar

My profound gratitude and appreciation go to the distinguished senator representing Gombe South senatorial district in the person of Barrister Idris Abubakar who is also the senate committee chairman on public accounts for his giant stride in awarding scholarship to the children of the less-privileged in Gombe state.

If we have people of your kind in Gombe state, I believe most of our children will not be roaming about on the streets due to lack of financial support to further their education.

Suleiman Mohammed (Candy),

C/o P.O. Box 171, Gombe, Gombe state.

J.B. Daudu was right!

I agree with J.B. Daudu (SAN) who in the *Weekly Trust* (Vol. 3, No. 44, Dec. 29-2000, January 4, 2001) gave good points to compare Mohammed Abacha's case with Faseun's one. If there is no corroboratory evidence against Faseun, since he is only a leader of Odu'a People's Congress (OPC), then there is no piece of evidence against Mohammed Abacha, because nobody saw him with those who killed Kudirat Abiola.

Abdullahi Aliyu Dederi,

H.I, P.O. Box 178, Kano.

Haba, Ghali Na'abba!

I must confess that my allegiance and loyalty to the honourable speaker has began to fade. Why approve such a large sum of money for the purchase of an aircraft while our social and economic sectors are continually deteriorating? Why such approval when most of the members of the house were still on holiday at their constituencies or at their homes in Abuja? Ghali has forgotten that millions of Obasanjos cannot relieve him of his position as speaker of the house of representatives if God wishes him to remain so.

Abbas Rabi'u Lawan Rijiyarlemo,

P.O. Box 10673, Kano.

Bantex's decision is welcome

Muslims should be the first group of citizens to welcome the idea of the chairman, Kaura local government of Kaduna state, Mr. Barnabas Bala Bantex that, "We will declare a Christian state", disclosed in an interview with *Punch* newspaper, Wednesday, October

11, 2000 Pg 13

For as reaffirmed by Pastor Thomas Kubua of Christ salvation Church in Jos, "Shari'a is biblical", *Tribune* newspaper 7/2/2000. Muslims should feel at ease that no God-fearing Christian should abhor

Shari'a. The Mosaic law as contained in Qur'an 6:151-152, would therefore complement the task of Sharia i.e. sanitising the society from immorality and indecency; adultery, murder, stealing etc, thus instead of amputating a

Muslim thief as provided by Qur'an 5:37, now a Christian thief, if caught while stealing should be sentenced to death as provided by Exodus: 22:1-4, as Matthew 5:17 provides the up-to-date application of Old Testament's injunctions.

By so doing, both Muslims and Christians would be lifted to much better code of conduct with divine rather than human origin, I urge God-fearing Christians to remember Proverbs 14:34 and to "prove all things, hold fast that which is good", 1 Thessalonians 5:21.

Sanusi Iguda, 158B K/Nasarawa, Kano.

Daily Trust be objective too!

Permit me a space in the *Daily Trust* to air my appreciation and goodwill message to the management and entire staff of the Paper. In fact introducing the *Daily Trust* is well-timed so as to supplement the weekly edition.

The weekly edition has really been entertaining and informative. Moreover as a frequent patronizer of the *Weekly Trust* I must confess that the *Trust* usually demonstrates some measure of

objectivity in it's news reporting despite the glaring subjective approach of some Nigerian press. The progressive approach of the *Weekly Trust* made the paper to declare Gani Fawehinmi as the man of the year 2000. This is in contrast with others whose thinking and attitudes are always antagonistic towards the affairs of the northern part of the country, no matter how good and credible such issues or personalities are.

The *Daily Trust* has actually started on a good footing with the few editions so far. All I want to say is that the staff should brace-up to the challenges of modern journalism and to imitate the objectivity of the sister *Weekly Trust*. On the other hand I urge the general public to patronise the paper and to contribute in writing articles to the new *Daily*. Finally I wish the *Daily Trust* and Media Trust Nigeria Limited long life and prosperity.

Uba Waziri, Kano.

I came in contact with the works of Sheikh Ahmed Deedat while studying for my BDS degree at College of Medicine, Idi-Araba around 1995.

Before I left Nigeria in 1997, the rumour had it that he was dead. Fortunately, I left for the Republic of South Africa that same year. On arrival, my enquiries found out that he was sick and visitors were not allowed to see him.

This year when I took my vacation leave, I decided to have my holiday spent in Durban, away from the northern province where I am based. On arrival in Durban, I went to the office of IPCI, which he founded, where I was given the phone number of his son, Yusuf to arrange a visit with him.

My dream came true on 16th November 2000 after Magrib Sallah, when I was ushered into the house of Deedat. I went in the company of my wife, Tawakkaltu, and met Mr. Deedat watching one of his videos.

Here was the interna-

Ahmed Deedat: The living miracle

tional master of comparative religion Deedat on bed, confined by the stroke he had four years ago. He

firm the letter that eventually forms the words.

Part of the favours of Allah 'SWT' on Deedat is

We were given his book compilation - *The choice* and his last video, a lecture given in Sydney, Australia,



Holding a copy of the *Weekly Trust* is Dr. Abduljalil Adebisin, next to him is Mr. Deedat and on the right is his wife, Tawakkaltu.

could neither speak nor swallow but was fed by means of a tube passed to the stomach. He uses a special word board to communicate with his family and guests. When letters of the alphabet are called, he blinks his eyelids to con-

firm the letter that eventually forms the words.

Our short stay with him was emotional and he quoted from his books while his 79-year-old wife, Hauwa, served us snacks and drinks.

April 1996, as gifts. Our du'a to Allah SWT is to grant him peace on his bed and the ability to remain steadfast in Al-Islam till his last breath (Amin). Dr. J.A. Adebisin, P.O.Box 1616, Groothoek, 0628, RSA.



GOVERNOR SAMINU TURAKI AND MESSIAHS OF JIGAWA STATE

In the last few months, there has been concerted and well orchestrated attacks on the person and official position of His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Jigawa State, **ALHAJI IBRAHIM SAMINU TURAKI** by a section of individuals camouflaging as NGOs operating outside Jigawa State using selected media.

Hardly does a week pass by without one sponsored unfavourable mention or criticism of the State Chief Executive in some particular newspapers.

The attacks have been well coordinated, consistent but down right wicked, vile, malicious and a dishonest pack of lies.

The similarity in the content and character of these attacks point clearly to the fact that they are sponsored by clique whose only link to Jigawa State is in the names but really have no interest of Jigawa State at heart. Whose aspiration is what they can make out of Jigawa State but not what they can offer to the State. They have initiated no project as true Jigawa State indigenes and never bothered about its development despite various position they had held in the society. Their concept of governance does not transcend award of contracts.

In the last few months, these faceless elements have sponsored some write ups using supposedly respected newspapers, magazine and sometimes junk news magazines to pursue their campaigns for a return to power or a re-launch of their campaign machinery while playing down the efforts of the Governor in bringing genuine investment and putting a solid foundation for the industrialisation of Jigawa State.

It is not our intention to defend the Executive Governor and the ruling party against these vernoms, but we as concerned indigenes of Jigawa State feel, we should not allow these faceless groups and self seeking individuals among them to derail the wheel of progress and the development of the State, as all and sundry know and appreciate the good work the Governor is doing for the State.

We would like to emphasise however, that we are not surprised about these attacks for they have been expected. We would not have bothered about them but for their consistency and dimension they are systematically taking.

It is obvious that there are a number of influential Jigawa State indigenes, so called who are today comfortable with the progress the State is recording under the administration of Alhaji Ibrahim Saminu Turaki.

Some of these individuals feel threatened by the score mark awarded the Governor recently by the President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo.

The ever-rising political profile of Alhaji Ibrahim Turaki stemming from his laudable projects geared towards industrializing the State and his agricultural initiatives. In a desperate effort to bring down the Governor by whatever means, these individuals designed a strategy to politically discredit, if not destroy the Governor and his noble programmes meant for the enhancement of the living condition of largely rural farmers and the State.

The strategy is the same and the press war has been a recycling of the same accusations in the same tone and style in different newspapers and magazines. A few months ago, it was Hadejia Emirate Development Association (H.E.D.A) whose grouse with the administration is what is perceived as a marginalization in office appointments of Hadejia Emirate and that the Governor is inaccessible and dictatorial among others. However, it did not show that either as a group or individually there has ever been an attempt to seek audience with the Governor or at best offer meaningful suggestion for the progress of the State.

Recently, it was one Mohammed Bello of Tempo Magazine who though a journalist was commissioned to trail the Governor from Dutse through and through Abuja and to Birnin Kebbi, and Commissioners Road Kano, all in malevolent effort to report how Saminu Turaki became a Governor and who Saminu Turaki is. Next, it was the News Magazine, where in the Governor was accused in one slot of using his company to import 500 units of Computers worth N700 Million and in another breath Alhaji Abdulkadir Hadejia in an answer to a question said. This is why the Governor is being accused of coming with some people abroad to defraud the State... Only Saminu will come and tell you that he would bring computers and internet to Jigawa and at the end of the day nothing would come." 'WHICH IS WHICH.'

It would appear that some, if not all of those who lost out in the 1999 election from the two political divide have up till today not yet reconciled themselves to the fact that their loss in the election was an act of Allah, and that it is He alone, the Lord of Power who gives power to whom He pleases and who strips off power from whom He pleases and who gives honour to whom He pleases and who brings low whom He pleases."

These messiahs are holding Alhaji Ibrahim Saminu Turaki responsible to every vote lost by them in the said election and spoiling unabatedly in their war against the will of Allah by unleashing press war against him.

What these critics are indirectly admitting is their inability to match the political and administrative Skills of the Governor who has emerged in all his programmes and plans a wonderful strategist who knows where to place his priorities without unduly playing to the gallery.

Indeed, we feel very proud of His Excellency which is now and ever emerging as an achiever and avowed best Governor of the North West Geo-political zone.

But what are the facts? The geographical entity known as Jigawa State, until it was carved out of Kano State, had remained a semi-urban unit, with no single industry in place, no source of revenue and largely dependent on Federal allocations. While other States with visible structure dating back to three decades ago are merely servicing them, the Jigawa State under the able leadership of Governor Saminu Turaki and despite all constrains is laying foundations for the successful take off of the structures. These can be seen in agricultural sector.

We dare say, that no one has been able to achieve so much in agricultural sector in the State since its creation as did Governor Saminu Turaki within his 18 months tenurship as a Governor.

Nevertheless, for these faceless elements the Governor must be maligned, defamed, attacked and destroyed because he is fairing where others have failed or should not have been in the Jigawa State Government House at all. They have failed to say that the Governor Saminu Turaki is corrupt or that he is buying choice properties all over Kano Metropolis or that he has unduly abused his office in one way or the other.

May we ask those who are wishing to oust Alhaji Ibrahim Saminu Turaki from the Government House to hold their breath until 2003 general election and even then it is the ordinary Jigawa people in a clear democratic contest who will decide if he has done a good job or contribute adventurist with a not too well defined and clear idea for the development of the State but their hidden political agenda.

*Long live Jigawa State
Long live Federal Republic of Nigeria*

ALH. BALA MOHAMMED HADEJIA

ALH. IBRAHIM ALFA YELLEMAN

ALH. IBRAHIM ABUBAKAR GUMEL

DANJUMA PRINCE

MUDIS. MAKERA

HAMISU M. MAMMAN

LAWAN YAN RONI

BALA YARGARBA.

MIDDLE EAST DIPLOMACY

Arabs see Sharon as greater evil than Barak

Arabs are loath to pick Ehud Barak as their preferred winner in Israel's prime ministerial poll on February 6. But Ariel Sharon inspires even heartier revulsion.

Barak, accused by many Israelis of making too many concessions to Palestinians is damned in Arab's eye as the man behind Israel's "atrocities" in suppressing a Palestinian revolt in which 323 Arabs have been killed, along with a Jerusalem shrine sacred to Jews and Muslims on September 28.

The violence erupted after Sharon visited a Jerusalem shrine sacred to Jews and Muslims on September 28.

Sharon who had asked Arabs to forget the past and move on with peace talks if



Arafat

he is elected, cannot easily shake his image in the Arab world as a ruthless scourge of Palestinians.

Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri predicts an omi-



Barak

nous future for the Middle East if the man who led Israel's bloody 1982 invasion of his country reaches the pinnacle of power.

"Sharon's position (towards Palestinians) is the best

prescription for war because his stand is a provocation to people's feeling and rights and challenges international law and conventions," Hariri said last week.

Sharon resigned as defence minister in 1983 after an Israeli inquiry found him indirectly responsible for the 1982 massacre by Lebanese Christian militiamen of hundreds of Palestinian refugees at two Beirut camps ringed by Israeli troops.

"Israel will pay the price (if Sharon wins)" Hariri said.

Despite Sharon's record, some Arabs view Barak as little better, saying he has unleashed disproportionate firepower against Palestinian protesters, furiously expanded Jewish settlements and failed to honour signed peace accords.

The Israeli politician who might kindle faint Arab hopes, Nobel peace prize winner Shimon Peres, is not a candidate.

Case of the missing Ws

President George W. Bush has lost his middle initial from many computer keyboards at the old executive office Building in the White House complex.

In an apparent prank carried out by departing Clinton administration staffers, Bush aides discovered that dozens of computer keyboards were missing the "W" key.

Bush aides said on that the W was marked out in some cases but often the key had been removed, and sometimes taped on top of doorways, or damaged with the spring broken.

The new team was studying whether any of the keyboards could be salvaged, but it appeared in many cases they would simply have to be replaced.

Bush made a big deal out of his middle initial during campaign rallies, often holding up the middle three fingers of his hand to form a W. He is often popularly referred to as "Dubya." Bush's middle name is Walker.

Bush aides were working to repair or replace the keys.

13 killed in Zanzibar violence

At least 13 people have been killed in running battles between opposition protesters and police on the semi-autonomous islands of Zanzibar on Saturday.

Opposition officials said they believed at least 12 of their supporters had been killed as demonstrations across Zanzibar to call for a rerun of disputed elections turned violent.

One member of the security forces was also killed when his head was cut off, a police official said.

NEWSMAKER

Life begins at 40

For the first 40 years of his life, Bush was never considered presidential material. Until 1994, when he was elected governor of Texas, he was known as the undistinguished son of a distinguished father.

A fun-loving fraternity boy but an average student and less-than-successful businessman, the younger Bush's greatest moment up to then was helping put together a consortium that bought the Texas Rangers baseball team in 1989.

The turning point in Bush's life came in 1994, two years after his father was pushed out of the White House by Clinton, when he stepped forward to run for governor of Texas.

Few, including his mother, gave him much chance against the feisty and charismatic Democratic incumbent, Ann Richards. But surprising the pundits, Bush established himself as an immensely likable campaigner with shrewd political instincts and a natural rapport with voters. He won.

As governor, Bush proved to be a cautious and pragmatic executive, willing to reach across party lines to build alliances and personal relationships with Democrats. He also benefits from an economic expansion that brought prosperity to Texas as well as the rest of the nation.

Still, Bush's record in Texas was attacked by Gore who accused him of fiscal irresponsibility in making large and politically popular tax cuts at the expense of children's health care and the criminal justice system.

When Bush won re-election in a landslide in 1998, garnering for a Republican a large percentage of Hispanic votes, it became clear he was the Republicans' best hope of winning back the presidency in 2000 after eight years of Clinton.

Followed father's footsteps

The eldest son of George and Barbara Bush, George Walker Bush was born in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1946. The family moved to Midland, an oil town in West Texas, in 1950.

Bush followed his father's footsteps in 1961, enrolling in the exclusive Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, where he was an average student who never made the honour roll.

After gaining a bachelor's degree from Yale, where he was boisterous president of the Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity, Bush worked at several jobs, distinguishing himself in none.

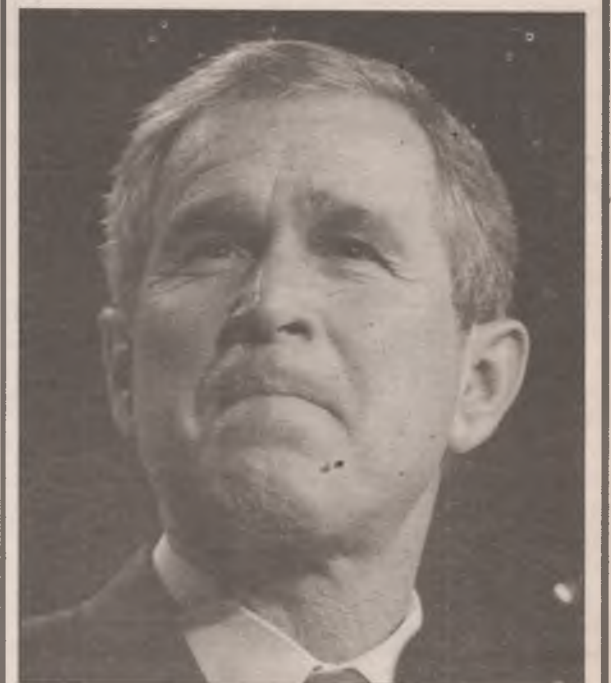
He avoided service in the Vietnam War by enlisting in 1968 as a pilot in the Texas National Guard. Later documentation suggested he may have been accepted at least partly because of the identity of the father.

Bush gained an MBA from Harvard Business School in 1975. Two years later he married Laura Welch, a librarian who became a steady influence on him. The couple has 19-year-old twin daughters, Jenna and Barbara, both of whom are now at college.

The next years Bush spent as a West Texas oil man. Three times he was saved from financial trouble by partners who gave him a fresh start or new infusions of capital. He also ran unsuccessfully for a House of Representatives seat in 1978.

When rumors of past drugs use swirled around him, Bush refused to confirm or deny them. He has been more open about the drinking problem he had when he was younger, which eventually led him to quit alcohol in 1986.

Disclosure late in campaign of Bush's 1976 arrest for drunken driving appeared to do little to damage him.



Bush

Estimates vary on Indian quake death toll

India grappled with varying estimates of the death toll from the killer earthquake with newspapers reporting that 15,000 to 30,000 people could have died in the worst disaster to hit the country in 50 years.

The Pioneer newspaper said yesterday that 30,000 people had died in the state's Kutch district which includes the Bhuj region, the worst affected by the earthquake that devastated the state on Friday, India's Republic Day.

It said the smell of burn-

ing corpses hung in the air as relatives lit funeral pyres on the streets.

The Hindustan Times put the death toll at "15,000 and still rising" while the Times of India said it could go up to 20,000.

The earthquake, measuring 7.9 on the Richter scale, pulverized buildings in western Gujarat state into giant mounds of twisted steel and concrete and its tremors were felt in various parts of India, Pakistan and Nepal.

Official figures have place

the number of dead at 6,072, including 5,000 from Bhuj.

But officials say the actual number could be many times that as thousands of people are still buried mountains of rubble.

It was the world's second major quake of the year. On January 13, a quake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale killed at least 700 people in El Salvador and made 10 percent of that country's population homeless.

A 1999 quake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale killed more than 2,400 people in Taiwan

link to a central computer, which churns out preliminary results within minutes.

Earthquakes with a magnitude of about 2.0 or less are called microearthquakes; people don't usually feel them and they are usually tracked only by local seismographs.

Events raking about 4.5 or greater, or which there may be several thousands every year, are strong enough to be recorded by sensitive instruments all over the world.

Great earthquakes, such as the 1964 Good Friday earthquake in Alaska, have magnitudes of 8.0 or higher. The San Francisco earthquake of 1906 has since been calculated at 8.3.

Another in Mexico in 1985 registered 8.1 on the scale.

On average, one earthquake of such size occurs somewhere in the world each year, the US Geological Survey says.

The Richter scale has no upper limit, but the largest known shockers have had magnitudes in the 8.8 to 8.9 range.

In 1950, a quake measuring 8.6 on the scale struck northeast India, killing hundreds of people.

The Richter scale, what it is and what it measures

Most people have heard of the Richter Scale, the measure of the strength of an earthquake, but what does it really measure and what does it mean?

The US Geological Survey estimated that Friday's quake which killed hundreds in India measured 7.9 on the scale. The quake which killed 2,400 people in Taiwan in September 1999 measured 7.6, so does that mean the Indian quake was just slightly stronger than the one in Taiwan?

The answer is no.

As the strength of earthquakes rises in steps up the Richter scale, each quake releases 31 times more energy than one registered at the previous notch.

Introduced in 1935, the scale is named for American physicist Charles F. Richter of the California Institute of Technology, who evolved it from patterns he discovered by studying more than 200 earthquakes a year.

The Richter scale is a more objective, quantitative basis of measuring earthquakes than the other

widely-used standard, the 12-point Mercalli scale, the US Geological Survey says.

The Richter scale does not measure an earthquake's effects, but gives its strength in terms of the energy released, as measured by seismographs.

The scale starts at one and has no upper limit each unit is 10 times greater than the one before.

Mathematicians refer to this method of arranging numbers on a scale as logarithmic.

For instance, the Survey says, a magnitude of 5.3 might be calculated for a moderate earthquake, and a strong earthquake might be classed as magnitude 6.3.

But because the Richter scale has logarithmic basis, each whole number increase in magnitude on the scale represents a 10-fold increase in an earthquake's measured amplitude.

A quake's strength is ranked on the basis of the maximum amplitude of the signal recorded by a seismograph and how far the instrument is from the earthquake's; state-of-the-art seismic systems use telephone lines and satellites to

TRUST INTERNATIONAL

AFRICA & THE MIDDLE EAST

ANALYSIS

Congo nationalism could complicate peace efforts

An upsurge of nationalism after President Laurent Kabila's assassination in Democratic Republic of Congo could complicate efforts to end a war which has drawn in the armies of six African nations, analysts said on Thursday.

May pundits outside Congo have suggested that Kabila was the main obstacle to peace in the war against rebels fighting to overthrow him with massive help from Ugandan and Rwandan troops.

But while people in Kinshasa still desperately want an end to a conflict that has further impoverished their country, Kabila's killing by one of his own bodyguards has stirred a wave of defiance.

"Many of us underestimated the strength of passion and nationalism in this country and the feeling of people against the Ugandans and Rwandans," said one Western diplomat.

"We will drive out the Rwandans," chanted the gangs of youths who jogged alongside Kabila's coffin as it was borne through the streets of Kinshasa on Sunday.

The last big surge in popularity for Kabila came in August 1998 at the outbreak of the war, following a collapse in relations between the president and the ethnic Tutsi Rwandans who had held key posts in his administration and the army.

Kabila was only saved by intervention of troops from Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia.

The war in the vast, mineral-rich country has dragged on despite an accord signed in the Zambian capital Lusaka in 1999, which called for the eventual withdrawal of all foreign forces and for a dialogue between the different Congolese factions.

Kabila was frequently accused of blocking implementation of the agreement and the deployment of 5,500 member UN observer force.

Pulled in two directions

Now his successor, his son Joseph Kabila, is being leaned on by the African allies, the United Nations and Western governments to try to revitalize the peace deal.

The UN representative in Kinshasa, Kamel Morjane, said Joseph had sent positive signals on securing peace at their first meeting. But the 31-year-old new president who commanded his father's army, could face different pressures at home.

"The Lusaka accords are outdated and they have to be reviewed. The Congolese people will say 'no' to Joseph if he universally accepts," said Jean Nunga, a professor of political science and member of parliament.

Military sources say as many as 6,200 troops have been sent by Congo's allies to beef up security in the sensitive period after Kabila's death, raising fears that the conflict, already dubbed Africa's First World War, could escalate further.

But at the same time, the allies have said they want a quick end to the fighting, which they themselves can barely afford. After a meeting in the Angolan capital Luanda at the weekend, they called for fresh talks.

Diplomats say Joseph Kabila will have to find a way to juggle the calls from outside while he still has to win over a population suspicious of the way he was named and of his background.

Many in Kinshasa say replacing the elder Kabila with his son is as good as saying Congo is a monarchy.

And while the government has squashed a widespread belief that Joseph's mother was a Rwandan Tutsi rather than Congolese, there remains a perception that he is less comfortable in Kinshasa and western Congo than in the south and east.

"The anger will go on for maybe one week," said one African diplomat. "How they manage the anger is entirely about finding the right balance. They cannot take it too far so that it goes against them."



Joseph Kabila

Israeli-Palestinian talks end without a deal

Israeli and Palestinian negotiators ended five days of talks in Egypt without a peace deal at the weekend but said they were closer than ever to agreement.

All but abandoning hope of a breakthrough before Israeli elections on February 6, they issued a joint statement in the Egyptian Red Sea resort of Taba saying they would resume talks after the election and believed they could bridge the gaps.

"It proved impossible to reach understandings on all issues despite the substantial

progress that was achieved in each of the issues discussed," the written joint statement said.

Despite the failure to reach even a partial agreement, Palestinian officials said President Yasser Arafat would meet Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak in Sweden tomorrow or Wednesday to discuss peace.

Israeli sources said Barak had not yet decided whether to go to Stockholm and was considering how being seen at Arafat's side would affect his already slim chances of winning the prime ministerial elec-

tion against right-winger Ariel Sharon.

The negotiators discussed four main issues in Taba, the fate of Palestinian refugees, borders, security and the future of Jerusalem. The four were the main obstacles to a deal after an inconclusive US-brokered summit last July.

"The sides declare that they have never been closer to reaching an agreement. It is thus our shared belief that the remaining gaps could be bridged with the resumption of negotiations following the Israeli election," they said.

signed by the government and rebels of Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in November, but UN peacekeepers have been unable to deploy in rebel-held areas and a peace process agreed in 1999 appears at a standstill.

RUF rebels control most of the north and the diamond-rich east of the West African country.

"There is no way an election can be held because RUF rebels continue to occupy the majority of the country," said Alhaji Foday Koroma, a member of parliament for the opposition People's Democratic Party.

The talks were suspended for two days in mid-week after the killing of two Israelis in the West Bank. But they resumed despite violence in which at least 312 Palestinians, 48 Israelis and 13 Israeli Arabs have been killed in the past four months.

Bloodshed continued at the weekend. Palestinian sources said several Palestinian people had been hurt in clashes near the cities of Ramalla and Nablus in the West bank.

Bloodshed continued at the weekend. Palestinian sources said several Palestinian people had been hurt in clashes near the cities of Ramalla and Nablus in the West bank.



Barak

Sierra Leone election in doubt - poll body

Sierra Leone's presidential election, due in February, looks in serious doubt, the head of the country's electoral commission said even as he blamed lack of funds and chronic in-

that amount and we are looking to foreign donors for the rest, but they are reluctant because of insecurity in the country," he said.

Under Sierra Leone's constitution, the five-year mandate of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and his government expires in February. Parliamentary elections are also due in early 2001.

A civil war has been raging in Sierra Leone since 1991. A fresh ceasefire agreement was



Tejan Kabbah

"The electoral commission has needs a total of about \$23 million," Walter Nicol told Reuters.

"The government of Sierra Leone should provide half of

Salary increase for Moroccan army, others

Elements of the Royal Armed Forces, the Royal Gendarmerie and the Royal Guard will have a salary increase.

The decision was announced in Rabat, Morocco on Wednesday by King Mohammed VI, who is also the

Supreme Chief and Chief of the General Staff of the Royal Armed Forces, at the beginning of a ministers council.

A statement by the official spokesman for the Royal Palace said that the decision to increase the servicemen's pay was to "improve the financial

situation of the elements of the Royal Armed Forces, the Royal Gendarmerie and the Royal Guard... to align them on the guaranteed minimum wage reduce the gap between the salaries of officers and non-commissioned officers."

The Association of Women in the Mass Media (AMCS) in Mozambique has launched a new community radio in Maputo, that seeks to deal specifically with issues important to women in the country.

The new radio ration,

Women journalists launch radio station

called 'N'Tyana' broadcasts both in the official Portuguese language and in Shangaan, the African language most widely spoken in Maputo.

Speaking at the inauguration ceremony, Julieta

Langa, chairperson of the supreme mass media council, the country's watchdog on press freedom, said the new radio would deal with such matters as education, the new family law currently under nation-wide debate, domestic violence and

health particularly the spread of the lethal disease AIDS.

"It's a radio station which should make a difference and should work to educate our children", said Langa.

Julio Sousa, the regional director of Oxfam-America, the NGO that financed the station, declared "it is very pretty to have women, not only as newsreaders, but also as the owners of a radio that will allow them to discuss their problems".

Sousa said that it is located in Laulane, an outlying suburb of the city.

The AMSC coordinator, Delfina Mugabe, urged the community to collaborate with the station, by sending in suggestions as to the matters they would like to hear discussed on the radio.

The station cost of 2,000 dollars.

Nine people have been trained to work on it, and initially it will broadcast for 13 hours a day.

Kenyan to chair joint military commission in DRC

OU Secretary-General, Salim Ahmed Salim, has appointed Brig. Njuki Mwaniki of the Kenya Armed Forces as new chairman of the Joint military Commission for the implementation of the cease-fire agreement in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The appointment was made "after due consultations with the parties to the conflict," the OAU said in a statement at the weekend. Mwaniki succeeds Brig. Rachid Lallali of Algeria, who has returned home after his mandate ended in 2000.

The 47-year-old infantry brigade commander in the Kenyan army and Indian military academies and attended further training at the Defence Staff College in the United Kingdom and the National Defence University of the People's Liberation Army in

China. Mwaniki has taken part in various peace support operations and seminars in the US.



Salim Salim

"The joint military commission is a decision-making body answerable to the political committee that was set up

to oversee the implementation of the DRC cease-fire agreement," the OAU said.

Its mandate includes, among others, assisting in the disengagement of forces and investigation of any cease-fire violations.

The commission also verifies all information, data and activities relating to the military forces of the parties, disengagement of military forces of the parties and works out mechanisms for the disarmament and qualifying of all armed groups and Congolese civilians.

In addition, it is charged to monitor and verify orderly withdrawal of all foreign forces from the DRC.



NIGERIAN EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL VACANCIES

As part of the Federal Government's effort at improving the economic base of this country, this Administration has decided to strengthen the Nigerian Export Promotion Council (NEPC) to enable it cope with the demands of modern day non-oil export promotion and development. To this end, applications for employment are invited from suitably qualified Nigerians for the following vacant positions in NEPC Offices located at Abuja, Port-Harcourt, Lagos, Kano, Enugu, Jos, Minna, Akure, Benin and Yola.

S/N	POST	QUALIFICATION	EXPERIENCE	DUTIES	SALARY
1.	Chief Trade Promotion Officer	A good Honours Degree with Second Class Upper in Economic, Marketing, Finance, Statistics, Social Science, Business Administration/ Management from any recognised University. MBA OR ANY OTHER Post-graduate qualification in any of the above-mentioned disciplines or related fields including Computer Studies will be an added advantage.	At least 15 years post-qualification experience in Commercial or Industrial Organisations with emphasis on industrial production, product development or market research.	Organising export market research and product/export market analysis. Operating incentive schemes and tariff structures for Industrial/production systems. Organising trade publicity and publications. Handling of trade procedures and documentation matters.	14.
2.	Chief Account	B. Sc or HND in Accounting, Finance and Banking from a recognised institution. Possession of professional qualifications c.g. ICAN, ACCA, ACA, c.t.c would be an advantage.	At least 15 years Post-NYSC cognate experience. Should be conversant with Government Financial Regulations.	Assisting the Director Finance Department planning, co-ordination and supervision of the Accounts of the Council. Other duties that may be assigned from time to time.	14.
3.	Assistant Chief Trade Promotion Officer	Same as in (1) above but in addition, candidates with post-graduate qualification in project evaluation will also be considered.	Same as in (1) above but in candidates must possess at least, 12 years post qualification experience	Undertaking and analysing export market research statistics, Undertaking supply- base studies. Advising on product design and adaptation including quality, standards, packaging and labelling. Advising producers on export costing and pricing. Assembling, collecting, analysing and disseminating on regular basis, information on shipping, air and land transportation, e.t.c	13.
4.	Principal Trade Promotion officer	Same as in (3) above	Same as in (1) above but candidates must possess at least, 10 years, post-qualification experience.	Assisting in performing any of the duties stated in (3) above.	12.
5.	Senior Trade Promotion Officer	Same as in (1) above.	Same as in (1) above but candidates must possess at least 6 years post qualification experience.	Same as in (3) above but at a	10.
6.	Trade Promotion Officer I	Good Honours Degree in Economics, Marketing, Statistics, Business Administration, French, Computer Sciences, Law and Library Sciences.	Candidates with relevant experience will be given preference. Such candidates must have worked at least 3 years on similar jobs.	Same as in (4) above but at a lesser degree	09.
7.	Trade Promotion Officer II	Good Honours Degree in Economics, Marketing, Statistics, Business Administration, French, Computer Sciences, Social Sciences, Law and Library Sciences.	Candidates with relevant experience will be given preference	Same as in (4) above but at a lesser degree.	08.
8.	Account II	Good Honours Degree in Accountancy from any recognised University or any of the following recognised Professional accounting bodies: ICAN, ACCA, ACA, ACMA, CPA.	Post-qualification experience will be an advantage.	Accounting and Financial functions.	08.
9.	Confidential Secretaries Gd.II, III, and IV	RSA/FTC/HND/OND: 120/50, 100/50 w.p.m. in shorthand and typewriting. Good knowledge of computer operation will be an added advantage.	Post-qualification experience will be an advantage.	All secretarial duties.	08/07
10.	Senior typists: typists Gd.III	SSCE/GCE (O/L) plus 50/35/25 w.p.m. in typewriting. Good knowledge of computer operation will be an added advantage.	Post-qualification experience will be an advantage.	All secretariat duties	07/04

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE:

Conditions of Service are similar to what are applicable in the Federal Public Service.

METHOD OF APPLICATION:

Application in candidate's handwriting accompanied with relevant credentials and C. Vs. should be addressed to:

**The Executive Director,
Nigerian Export Promotion Council,
Kumba Street, Wuse Zone 2, P.M.B 133,
Abuja**

Note later than 14 days from the date of this advertisement.

Note: Only short-listed candidates shall be invited for interview.



NIGERIAN EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL

APPROVED OVERSEAS INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIRS AND EXHIBITIONS PROGRAMME FOR YEAR 2001

His Excellency, the Chairman NEPC Governing Board has approved Nigeria's participation in thirteen (13) Trade Fairs and Exhibitions for the year 2001.

The Nigerian Export Promotion Council is therefore co-ordinating the participation of interested reputable Nigerian companies and government agencies to the following fairs and exhibitions:-

- i) 18th Session of International Fair Khartoum, Sudan, 1st – 11th February, 2001
- ii) International Food & Beverages Exhibition (FOODEX PAPAN) Japan. 13th-16th March, 2001
- iii) Cairo International Exhibition, Cairo. 21st-30th March, 2001
- iv) International Fair, Tripoli, Libya. March, 2001
- v) Kuwait International Trade Fair, Kuwait 25th April-4th May, 2001
- vi) Namibia International Trade Fair, Namibia, 6th-9th June, 2001
- vii) G.15 Summit, Indonesia. June 2001
- viii) Royal Agricultural show/Exhibition, U.K July 2001
- ix) IZMIR International Fair, Turkey 26th August-3rd September, 2001
- x) Solo Exhibition, U.S.A Summer 2001 (please note that those who had applied for the year 2000 edition of this exhibition need not apply again as their earlier applications are still valid)
- xi) GITEF-Gulf International Trade Fair, Dammam, Saudi Arabia. 26th Sept. –30th October, 2001
- xii) Havana International Fair, Cuba 28th October-4th November, 2001
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- v) Publicity in the host country and;
- vi) Other participation logistics

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NNPC enjoins marketers to avoid contamination of petroleum

The NNPC at the weekend in Abuja enjoined Petroleum Products Marketers to ensure that their tanks for distributing kerosene to consumers were free of contamination.

The Corporation said in a statement signed by its General Manager for Public Affairs, Mr. Ndu Ughamadu, that it was the Corporation's policy to sell only standard products to marketers at its depots.

"Consumers, on their

part, are implored to always ensure that safety



Mr. Jackson Gaius-Obaseki, NNPC GMD

procedures are adhered to in handling petroleum products," he added.

Ughamadu stated that the warning had become necessary in the face of loss of lives and debilitating injuries sustained by kerosene users in Benin where seven were killed on Tuesday, while 11 others were seriously burnt.

The Corporation expressed sympathy with those, who suffered injuries and the bereaved family members of those killed in the explosions.

Airways pensioners protest non-implementation of 14.2% pension increase

Nigeria Airways pensioners on Tuesday stormed the headquarters of the national Carrier in Lagos, protesting the non-implementation of the Federal Government's 14.2 per cent increase in pensions.

The retired workers, carrying placards with various inscriptions critical of the Airways Management, claimed that they were owed Billions of Naira arising from arrears of pensions and unpaid gratuities.

In a statement by the Chairman of the Pensioners Association, Mr. S. B. Dalumo, they claimed that the Airline's management was yet to fully pay the federal government's new pensions rate, which became effective two years ago.

"We fell into this predicament sometime in May 1999, when the federal government approved an in-

crease of 150 per cent on all existing pensions nationwide.

"Two months later, another circular was issued approving an additional 30 per cent increase with effect from January 1, 2000.

"Pensioners were awarded another 14.2 per cent increase on the existing take-home pension pay through a circular dated May 17, 2000," the Chairman said.

In his reaction, Mr. Chris Aligbe, the Airways General Manager of Public Affairs, appealed to the pensioners to be patient as the Airline would pay the approved increase when the condition of the Airline improved.

He explained that the distressed Airline's Pension Bill had increased to N26 million monthly because of the implementation of the 150 per cent increase.

"We have been paying pensioners consistently, but just last year, the federal government announced another 14.2 per cent increase for pensioners.

"It is that 14.2 per cent increase that is causing problems," he said.

Aligbe explained that the finances of the Airways had not improved enough to be able to pay the increase.



Dr. Kema Chikwe

World Bank awards N86 million water project contract in Abia

The World Bank has awarded two contracts valued at N86 million for the strengthening of the re-established Water Board in Abia, the State Commissioner for Public Utilities and Water Resources, Mr. Arua Arunsi has said.

Arunsi told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) at the weekend in Umuahia that the contracts for the two projects were for financial management and technical development.

He explained that the financial management project

entailed the organisation of the billing system, proper recording of water used, collection of revenue and computerisation of the system.

The Commissioner said that the Technical Development Project included the inventory of the water agency's assets, rehabilitation of the water schemes and proper water management.

Arunsi said that the contract, awarded last month, was expected to be completed in June, adding that his ministry had already

started the supervision of progress of work in those projects.

He said that the state government re-established the water board due to its acknowledgement of the importance of the board.

The commissioner observed that since the board was rendered moribund, the problem of water supply became worse, because sufficient revenue was not generated to maintain the system. He said he was optimistic that the realisation of the two World Bank projects would change positively, the history of water generation, supply and maintenance in the state.

The Nigerian Stock Market

Gainers/Losers as at 24/01/2001

Gainers

COMPANY	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE
NESTLE	42.02	44.00	1.98
GUINNESS	29.34	30.74	1.40
UBN	26.05	27.35	1.30
FIRST BANK	24.70	26.93	1.23
JBERGER	34.05	36.00	0.95
UBA	16.10	16.90	0.90
UNIONDICON	17.40	18.00	0.60
PZ	12.63	13.20	0.57
NNFM	8.29	8.70	0.41
NBC	13.70	14.10	0.40
IGL	7.23	7.66	0.32
SCOA	2.61	2.62	0.11
UTB	3.39	3.50	0.11
NMCABLE	2.08	2.18	0.10
INLANDBANK	1.90	1.99	0.09
UAC-PROP	1.64	1.72	0.08
COOPBANK	1.55	1.62	0.07
TOATL	60.20	60.26	0.06
COOPDEV	1.27	1.33	0.06
AFPRINT	1.35	1.38	0.03
UACN	3.26	3.28	0.02
TIB	1.48	1.50	0.02
CADBURY	19.64	19.65	0.01
ORIENT BANK	0.58	0.69	0.01

Losers

COMPANY	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE
MOBIL	63.50	60.40	3.10
TEXACO	57.02	55.00	2.02
NB	26.17	25.00	1.17
LEVBROS	21.50	20.80	0.70
AFRIBANK	9.48	9.10	0.38
NIGERINS	5.88	6.54	0.34
GURANTY	4.50	4.56	0.24
VITA FOAM	4.12	3.92	0.20
CHARTERED	3.81	3.62	0.19
UNTL	4.07	3.90	0.17
FLOURMILL	11.12	11.00	0.12
OWENA BANK	2.40	2.28	0.12
CFAO	3.12	3.00	0.12
GOLDBREW	2.10	2.00	0.10
SAVANNA	1.62	1.54	0.09
CRUSADER	1.78	1.72	0.06
TRIPPLEG	1.39	1.33	0.06
EKOBANK	1.03	0.98	0.05
ACADEMY	1.07	1.02	0.05
COSTAIN	1.15	1.10	0.05
WEMA BANK	2.00	1.96	0.04
LASACO	0.88	0.84	0.04
JOHNHOLT	1.43	1.40	0.03

Summary of NSE Transactions

	OPENING	CLOSING	%AGE CHANGE
MKT. CAP	493,726,596,994.59	497,588,995,343.74	0.78
INDEX	8,578.79	8,645.90	0.78

DEALS	VOLUME	VALUE	No. OF COMPANIES
1,714	24,885,558	312,665,093.82	90

Source: NSE, Abuja Area Office.

₦ £ \$

BUSINESS DAY

₦ \$ ¥

IMF, World Bank do not dictate FG's fiscal policies — Martins-Kuye

By Aliyu Ma'aji,
Business Editor

Minister of State for Finance, Senator Jubril Martins Kuye, has debunked allegations that the IMF and World Bank have set up offices in the CBN and Aso Rock Villa with a view to dictating trends in Nigeria Fiscal Policies. Senator Kuye who was fielding questions from journalists after presenting the quarterly performance report on the economy last Thursday in Abuja said, "I am not aware of the presence of any IMF supervisors, I am only aware of IMF advisors. And this is only a confidence measure to ginger up investors' interest in our economy. They are not looking into our books to dictate to us. Our sovereignty is intact. We do, however, take advice from them. This is purely professional."

Senator Kuye also insisted that despite criticisms, budget

2000 was "faithfully and strongly" implemented. He conceded however that the N96.4 billion deficit envisage was under-estimated as the actual figure hit N200 billion. De-



Jubril Martins-Kuye

spite this short coming, he maintained that the recurrent part of the budget achieved the desired goals while capital expenditure experienced slight distortions. According to him, "2001 budget will be more strongly implemented than last year's because "we have carefully packaged it to rely on internally generated revenue. External dependency is almost zero and there is very marginal deficit. And we are seeking approval to draw on external reserves whenever the need arises. By February all ministers would have gotten their allocations," he enthused.

Senator Kuye's assurances are coming on the heels of wide-spread suspicion that some white people, presumably IMF/World Bank operatives have taken up offices in the CBN both in Lagos and Abuja. Reports have it that they are pop-nosing into the nation's financial blue prints and at the same time trying to convince federal authorities to swallow, hook line and sinker, alien financial conditionalities.

Customs move to check revenue leakages

By Ahmed Shekarau

As part of efforts to check the activities of corporate bodies and individuals that defraud the government of substantial revenue through diversion of payments made as import and export duties, Nigeria Customs Service has adopted new measures to recover all funds diverted into private purses.

The Comptroller-General of the Nigeria Customs Service, Alhaji Ahmed Mustapha who disclosed this while briefing senior customs officers in Abuja, also alerted on the activities of some banks who allegedly defraud the government of substantial revenue by issuing out fake receipts and pay-slips.

Alhaji Mustapha who stressed on the need to stem the rising tide of such fraudulent activities, observed that the Service had achieved substantial success in its efforts to recover the amounts so far discovered to have been diverted.

He told the officers to be vigilant to ensure that government's revenue does not go down the drain, saying that: "our duty is to ensure that gov-

ernment is not being cheated."

The Customs Boss warned that: "henceforth, all officers must be extra careful and vigilant to block all sources of revenue leakages, noting that no amount of mischief would make the customs service to reduce import duties unless the government changed its stand on any of the measures.

On the alleged fraudulent activities of some banks whose identities he did not disclose, the Comptroller-General said "the attendant loss of staggering amounts of collectable revenue cannot be allowed to continue."

He warned the officers not to allow any bank to defraud the government, directing all Zonal, States and Unit comptrollers to obtain copies of the government's policy measures and "ensure strict compliance with same in all ramifications."

Alhaji Mustapha said: "we are bound to ensure their (the policies) implementation to the latter," to make sure that the Service does not allow any com-

panies or individuals to defraud the federal government of its revenue.



Alhaji Ahmed Mustapha CG, Nigeria Customs Service

DHL acquires new aircraft for ITE operations in Africa

DHL Worldwide Express has acquired a new ATR 42 Aircraft to replace the smaller Beech craft that services the Lagos-Douala-Libreville route in its renewed effort to improve service delivery to its customers in Nigeria and the rest of Africa.

Andy Lowe, Chief Executive of DHL Aviation in Africa told journalists in Johannesburg, South Africa that the new ATR 42 with a capacity of almost six tons would meet increasing demand of logistics, particularly from Nigeria's petrochemical industry.

The new ATR 42 s fed by a new Boeing 757, which flies daily from Europe to Lagos.

"We want to see our group flying to all African countries everyday by the end of next year. At the moment we fly to 33 everyday", the Southern Africa correspondent of the News Agency of Nigeria quotes Lowe as saying at the briefing.

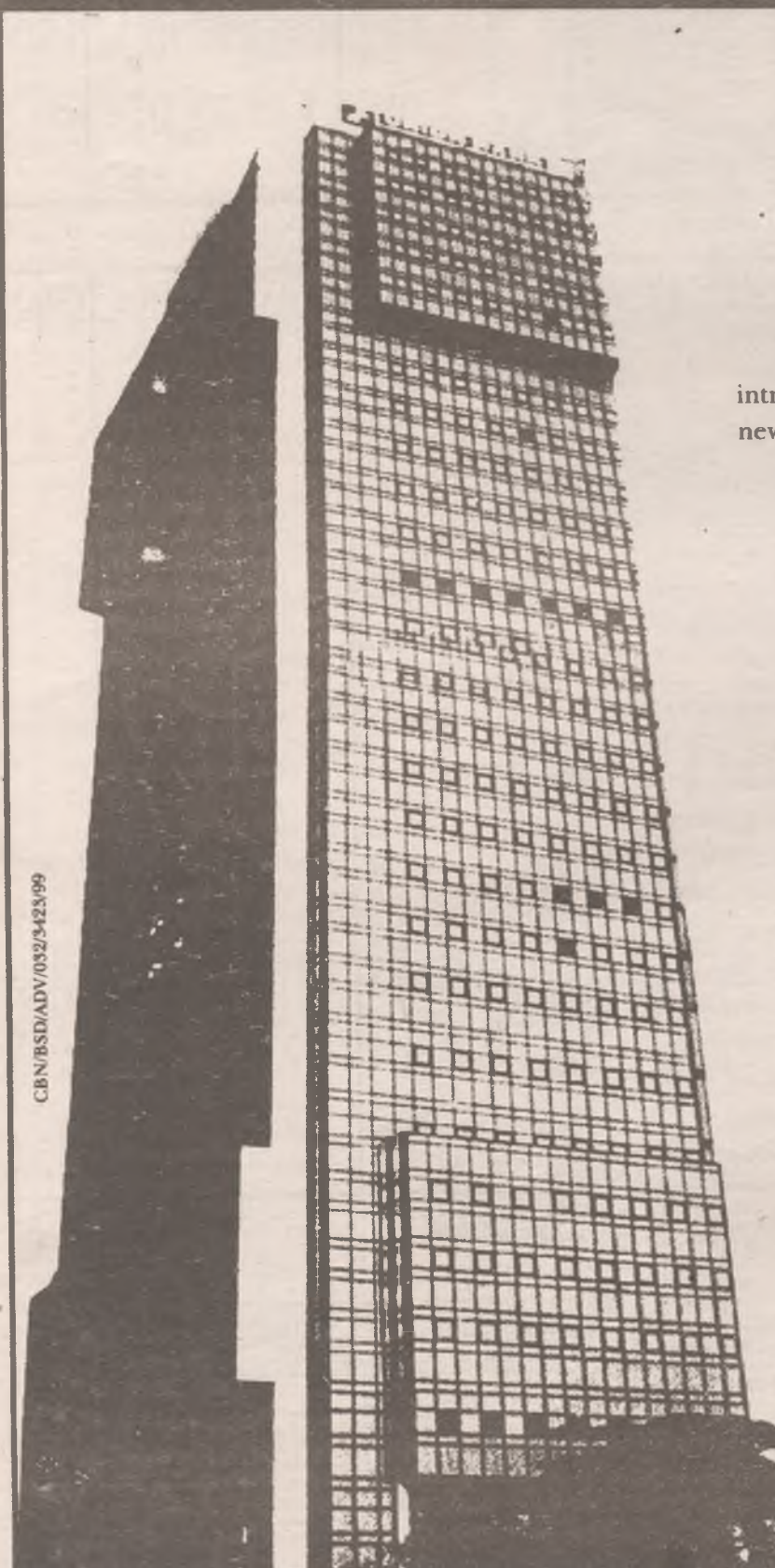
Lowe said that DHL's decision to upgrade its planes on the continent was as a result of the huge market response to the frequency and reliability of its service in West and Equatorial Africa.

He said that the company made a direct and indirect investment about \$70 million dollars to further the improvement of its capital requirements.

"This investment is further evidence of our commitment to provide customers with the fastest and most reliable deliveries, from and within Africa." Lowe said.

DHL Africa has 19 aircraft, flying 62 routes a day in 30 countries seven days a week.

UNION BANK IN THE AGE OF CHANGE

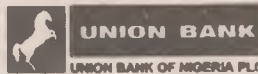


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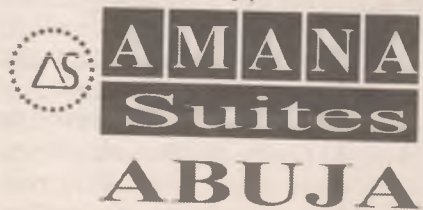


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Star Interview

Sir, what is your motivation in politics?

I have been motivated to join partisan politics because I felt politics in the Third World at large and Nigeria in particular requires the services of people of my standing. I felt at a point in time that people of Taraba state need somebody like me to develop the state from its grassroots posture to one of the best states in Nigeria. I am in politics to serve, and to serve to the best of my ability.

What could you say are the major landmarks recorded by your administration since assumption of office in 1999?

Well as you know, Taraba state is a rural state. When it was created by the General Ibrahim Babangida administration, it was a rural state with virtually no infrastructural facilities befitting a state. So, when I was in government the first time, I was able to put some structures on the ground. These include among others access roads, television and radio stations, stadium, presidential lodge and so on which of course, unfortunately was not really completed before I left office. But God in His infinite mercies put it in the hearts of people of the state to vote for me the second time and I want to assure you that if you go round Jalingo, the road network has greatly improved. The television station with all its digital equipment will be fully operational by the end of January 2001. The booster station in Bali will also be installed. The radio is going to be digital too and all the monies for the equipment has been paid. We also realized that if you don't motivate the civil servants, you will not get the desired results from your proposals. So, we implemented the minimum wage salary of N6,500. We are among the first three states to implement that in the country. We have done a lot of projects which time will not permit us to enumerate here. In the area of revenue mobilization and generation, we were able to put together a gas plant that will generate not less than N300 million in a year. The plant takes off fully in January 2001.

What is your administration's policy thrust in the field of education?

Well, I want to thank God that I have been propelled and further motivated by the noble objective of the Universal Basic Education (UBE), that was launched by President Olusegun Obasanjo. We as a government feel that we must do our own part in order to encourage education at all levels. The scholarship board has not only been reconstituted, but we also reviewed upwards the allowances given to our students by almost 100%. The focal point of this administration is to improve qualitative and quantitative education in our primary and secondary schools as well as tertiary institutions. We are determined to succeed and by His Grace, we shall not rest on our oars.

Taraba is described as the food basket of Nigeria, and with its vast potentials, what is your administration doing to feed the nation.

Taraba is a rural state with vast agricultural potentials. We feel that in order to encourage food production, this administration has to embark on deliberate measures aimed at enhancing mechanized farming among our rural populace. With this in mind, we purchased three brand new tractors for every local government in the state and we have also refurbished two tractors each, to all the local governments in the state. We hope to divide the local governments into co-operatives and we would give them these tractors to take care of themselves. By this, we hope to achieve two things; one, to



Gov. Nyame

We'll resolve Muri Emirate crisis...- Nyame

Governor Jolly Nyame is frank, if somewhat controversial. He comments on religion, the under 50's and the PDP. He expands upon the decision to scrap the Ministry of Women Affairs, and much more. In this interview, with Ibrahim Modibbo, our political editor, he unfolds with an increasing clarity.

boost food production and secondly, to encourage people to improve their economic status.

What is the blue print of your investment potentials and what do you have on ground to attract would-be investors?

One of the things that would really encourage investors to come to any given area is the capacity to secure their investments. We have deliberately decided to encourage our investors to come in and we have encouraged Tarabians to rally around government so that the investment of each of these investors would be secured. We also agreed that whatever land investors want in Taraba state would be given to them free of charge. Government would pay compensation for those lands they would require, and the investor would be given free of charge. Apart from that, government would negotiate with those investors so that they could get a tax holiday. We would not expect them to start paying taxes immediately as these would depend on the types of industries they want to set up, as well as the machinery they would install.

Some states in the federation have

witnessed strained relationships between the Executive and the Legislative arm of government. What is the Taraba experience?

Well, the position in Taraba is not different from what is obtained in other states in particular and at the national level. But, let me quickly also say that because of my openness and level-headedness, the relationships here in Taraba are not getting out of hand. Take for example, the issue of the impeachment saga, which of course everybody knows I was the first chief executive in the country that the House of Assembly tried to impeach but because of my ability to get in touch with them so as to resolve our differences, we are now good friends just like when we started. So, I think my relationship with the House of Assembly, is very cordial.

Now, looking at your budget 2001, what could you say are the high and low points of the budget?

Well, the emphasis is going to be on rural development. We realized that we have placed so much emphasis on trying to complete structures on ground in the state capital, Jalingo. So, this year we want to

go out to improve facilities in the rural areas or better still our various constituencies. We hope to put more smiles on the faces of people at the local government areas.

You have just appointed some new members of the State Executive Council. While doing that, you scrapped some ministries and added new ones. What motivated these development?

Well, I was able to swear in my commissioners, and it is also true that I added some new ministries and scrapped the Women Affairs Ministry. I also decided to reduce the burden of some ministries, like the Ministry of Works which had under it Transport and Housing duties. So, I felt that putting all these big departments under one ministry would be so cumbersome for one commissioner to handle and we have a lot of able hands that could help government to handle those departments. I want to make government more effective, so I had to decentralize these important departments. I decided to scrap the Women Ministry because I don't want to encourage gender differences at all. A ministry that is specifically meant for women is a clear

Contd. on Pg. 17

Star Interview

Contd. from Pg. 16

indication that women are supposed to head that ministry. If you put a man to head the ministry, he would feel out of place, or however educated a woman would be, she has to head that ministry. So, I felt that if a woman can be a commissioner for Women

ease. It is not rice and beans. The issue started even before I got into government and is not going to be handled as easy as people think of. I have approached it in this way; first of all to identify the problem involved in rulership tussle, the legal

those that were in politics before us. There must be a situation where both the under and over 50's come together in order to forge ahead with a view to bringing political sanity in the country. Of course, the under 50's would learn from those that consider themselves very experienced. I am afraid that when such a gang up manifests so much in our body politics, we might end up dividing the country into pieces.

You are a governor elected under the banner of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP). So far, how has the PDP government fared in improving the lives of Nigerians?

Well, it is both positive and negative. Positive in the sense that the President has done well in trying to promote party programmes and the manifesto. So far, I think it is good, but the negative aspect which I feel must be discouraged as we enter 2001 is that the President opens up too much, such that other beneficiaries who happen to come from other parties come into the government not with the intention of assisting Mr. President to succeed but they are helping to destroy not only him but the party. When you have ministers that happen to come from AD and APP, you will find out that all these ministers would be implementing their party programmes. So, a situation like this will undermine the

have a minister like that of Education, who is Yoruba deciding to take a Hausa as special assistant or have the Minister of Communications who is a Hausa man to have an Igbo man as his special assistant, if he has a project, instead of taking it to Sokoto, may be, the SA would encourage him to take it to Akwa Ibom. So, once you have projects springing up not on the basis of directing it to one's geographical area, religion, culture or tribal learnings, then nobody would cry of marginalisation. You see my ADC is not even an indigene of Taraba and my protocol office is not of my religion. And when you look at the contracts I award, some people are accusing me of directing too much contracts to non-indigenes; I said OK ... look at it this way. If you give a contract to an indigene who would not do it well such that by the end of a year or two the building he completes collapses and kills people, what has one done. So, we try to bring people from every part of the country that can do good jobs for us.

How is the Middle Belt agitations likely to affect the unity and cohesion of the North as a political entity?

I don't think it would divide the North, but would rather encourage the cohesion between all the various interest groups in the North. I think all the Middle Belt is



Gov. Nyame

Affairs, she can also be that of Health or Justice. So, I feel it is good to give the women a good challenge to take up their appropriate place in the society in Taraba.

Women under the aegis of the National Council for Women Societies have been complaining against governors scrapping the Women Ministry. Don't you think that by your recent action, they would complain of being marginalized?

Well, in our own case, they should commend us rather than criticize us, because I have two women in the cabinet, and I also have a special adviser who is in charge of Women Affairs, which will not necessarily be a ministry but more of a department where their activities will continue unhindered. The women should be happy that under me, they have two commissioners.

How is the security situation like in Taraba state?

So far so good, I want to thank the Commissioner of Police and the Director, State Security Service (SSS). The duo have worked so hard and have so far reduced the menace of armed robbery and banditry in Taraba state. A week before the last

implication vis-à-vis the social and political implications of the tussle. So far, we have looked into the legal tussle and we have identified the strength as well as the weakness of the issue and we are trying to handle the social aspect now. By the grace of God we are able to have the two families not only talk to one another but to get this issue resolved and have everything behind us by the year 2001.

Is it true that your government has issued a statement recently, banning religious worship in mosques and churches located in ministries and parastatals throughout the state?

Well, it is not totally accurate to say so. We only said, as a policy we do not want to encourage the construction of religious structures within government property. Take the issue of what happened at the state secretariat. I had given an approval for a mosque to be constructed and at the same time, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) also felt that they ought to be given an opportunity to also construct a chapel. I felt that there is no point for the two religious groups to start competing with one another. They can of course in a healthy atmosphere try to evangelise, but they



Gov. Nyame

programmes of PDP as well as the people that gave Obasanjo the mandate to form a PDP government.

The North has been complaining of marginalisation by the government in the center. Do you agree with these complaints?

Well, I wouldn't want to say that the North has been marginalized. I made a clear statement during the 19 Northern state governors meeting last year, that in most cases, we are the victims of our own circumstances. The issue here is that when you have a minister that comes from a particular geographical area, he only encourages people just from his own area. He brings his special assistants and so on from his own area and whatever project he is promoting in his own ministry, he takes a big part of it to his own area. You see, when you have government and those at the helm of affairs encouraging this kind of thing, you would definitely have people cry out about marginalisation. But once you

saying is that it is not adequately being taken into consideration when it comes to power sharing or something given to the North as a bloc. I am very proud to say that I belong to the Middle Belt but the thing is that we sometimes end up accusing ourselves because positions have been given to various people within the Middle Belt. Like during the Babangida, Abacha and up to Abdulsalami administrations, positions were given to individuals of Middle Belt origin. These there were sensitive and powerful positions, but the question to ask is, what have they done with such positions. So, sometimes we are victims of our own imaginations. I don't want to believe that all these hues and cries would not divide us but rather it would make us stronger. Except we are taking it personal, otherwise we need to sit down as one indivisible North, to iron out issues that affects us all.

"Once you have a minister like that of Education, who is Yoruba deciding to take a Hausa as special assistant or have the Minister of Communications who is a Hausa man to have an Igbo man as his special assistant, if he has a project, instead of taking it to Sokoto, may be, the SA would encourage him to take it to Akwa Ibom. So, once you have projects springing up not on the basis of directing it to one's geographical area, religion, culture or tribal learnings, then nobody would cry of marginalisation."



Gov. Nyame

Christmas/Sallah, we held a security meeting and so far we only recorded just one incident in the whole period of the festivities. This is a commendable achievement to the law enforcement agencies for their determination and diligence to check crime rate in the state.

One of the fundamental problems staring your administration in the face is the Muri chieftaincy matter. What is the way forward so far?

Well, the issue of chieftaincy is dicey. It is not an issue that can be handled with

should not use government property for that purpose.

The under 50's of which you rightly belong are ganging up towards 2003. As a politician and a governor of Taraba, do you think that such a gang up is necessary?

To be honest with you, having been brought up from a village and having been cultured by my aged parents, I have come to realize that there is no way I can be of substance without the training of my older ones. What I mean here is that the under 50's ought to receive certain lessons from

DISTINCTIVE BANKING

(OUR PROMISE TO OUR CUSTOMERS)

PREAMBLE

INDO-NIGERIAN MERCHANT BANK LIMITED was incorporated in November 1981 and commenced merchant banking operations in 1982. The bank fully complied with CBN's stipulated minimum paid up capital of N500million before the mandatory deadline of 31st December, 1998. This reassured the confidence of shareholders of the bank.

The bank aims to explore the possibility of establishing mutually rewarding business relationships with a select and highly discerning clientele, by providing manifold wholesale banking and other specialised products and services, especially in the area of current account maintenance, cash management account relationship, as well as managing call and fixed term deposits.

OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT CONTROL



Chief A.O. Abudu, MFR
Chairman INMB

The ownership of the bank is by way of a joint-venture arrangement between State Bank of India (SBI) and some prominent Nigerian investors and Nigerian Institutions. SBI is the premier commercial Bank in India with a total asset of \$60.06 billion as of March 2000. It has the largest network of 8,998 branches in India.

It owns 51% of INDO-NIGERIAN MERCHANT BANK's share capital while the balance 49% is held by notable Nigerian investors and institutions including Nigerian Reinsurance Corporation Plc, with management control held by SBI. Mr P. G. R Prasad, was appointed as the Managing Director and Chief Executive of the bank effective from October, 1998. He is an experienced banker with about 30 years of rich cognate experience.

The Board of Directors comprise eminent Nigerians: Chief A. O. Abudu, MFR, a distinguished legal practitioner and an accomplished industrialist as Chairman.

Also on the board are Chief (Dr) E. A. O. Shonekan, GCFR, former Head of State and the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Alhaji Sulaiman S. Baffa, the former Chief Executive of Union Bank of Nigeria Plc and UBA Plc and The Nigerian Security Printing and Minting Company Limited. Mrs C. O. Oyeleye represents Nigerian Reinsurance Corporation on the Board.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The bank operates on the bankmaster banking software with systems capability for multi branch accounting as well as multi-currency processing. This computer system is versatile and adaptable to evolving demands from regulatory authorities and customers.

It provides timely management information and customers statements of accounts. Customers instructions and transactions are executed on an On-Line Real-Time basis. The system is year 2000 compliant. Other facilities in the pipeline include Internet Banking, and remote access to account Information and Statements from the comfort of customers office/home through dial up connectivity.

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

The bank boasts of highly-skilled and experienced Indian and Nigerian professional bankers in its top management echelon who are able to offer specialized and comprehensive range of wholesale banking products and services to a broad spectrum of middle and top-tier corporate and high networth individuals. These include traditional banking products and services amongst which are

- ▶ Short Term Import and Trade Finance
- ▶ Export Finance under NEXIM (RRF) Scheme
- ▶ Finance for Small and Medium Scale Industries
- ▶ Investments and Corporate Banking
- ▶ Foreign Exchange Operations
- ▶ Equipment Leasing
- ▶ Financial Advisory/Capital Market Services
- ▶ Treasury and Money Market operations.

FOREIGN OPERATIONS

As authorized dealers, the bank is very active in the foreign exchange market apart from also being visible in the export and autonomous market for foreign exchange. Customers buy or sell orders are executed with a high degree of professionalism and promptitude while international trade transactions are structured to suit the peculiar requirements of clients at very competitive rates, terms and conditions. Through the vast network of branches of its principal and correspondent, State Bank of India, the bank has the swiftest direct link to major commercial centres of the world.

DEPOSITS

The bank accepts corporate and personal deposits at competitive interest rates depending on the amount and tenor. These rates are constantly reviewed in line with the changing money market conditions and CBN's guidelines. The Bank has two special deposit products, namely INDO-SIP and INDO-QUEEN designed to meet the needs of the discerning depositors.

INMB ACCEPTANCE

This product, which provides higher effective yields in the form of discount earnings is designed to ensure maximum returns to investors/customers without compromising the safety of their funds. It is also rediscountable.

SUMMARY

INDO-NIGERIAN MERCHANT BANK has established itself over the years as one of the prudently and efficiently managed merchant banks in Nigeria. The bank's promise to its customers is to keep their business target in focus through its "bulls eye banking" which it has come to be known for.

The bank has repositioned itself to be a key and dominant player in the banking industry in this millennium using state-of-the-art computers and information technology backed by a team of well-qualified and highly-skilled personnel with solid financial base to deliver value to its select and discerning clientele.

The bank invites you to experience its distinct and quality products and services by establishing a mutually beneficial relationship at any of its offices today.



**INDO - NIGERIAN
MERCHANT BANK LIMITED**
(A Subsidiary of State Bank of India)

...Providing financial solutions, worldwide

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PLOT No. 650, ZONE 5, WUSE, ABUJA. TEL: 09 - 5236205 - 06. FAX: 09 - 5236206.

NEWS

Cross River/Akwa Ibom feud: Council boss raises alarm over kidnap

By Bassey Ita in Calabar

No fewer than four fishermen were allegedly killed in the crisis-torn Ikot Offiong border area of Akwa Ibom and Cross River States by persons suspected to be militant Oku Iboku youths in the Itu local government area of Akwa Ibom state.

Vice chairman of Odukpani local government council in Cross-River, Mr. Ekpenyong Oku Ita made this known when a three man delegation of the House of Representatives Committee on Government Affairs visited the area on a fact-finding mission.

Mr. Ita whose council borders Itu in Akwa Ibom intimated the team that there was a report to that effect recently, that some militant Akwa Ibom youths of Oku Iboku origin were on the prowl in the border following reports that the

displaced Ikot Offiong people were carrying out fishing activities at the Itu river estuary.

He maintained that



Gov. Attah

Akwa Ibom indigenes had consistently attacked the Odukpani people since the Ikot Offiong/ Oku Iboku crisis started in April 1999.

The vice chairman stressed that the people of Odukpani had been patient on the matter to allow government take speedy action that would resolve the crises.

Ita also used the opportunity to commend the fed-

eral government for sending relief materials to the displaced persons who now settle in diaspora and expressed confidence in the



Gov. Duke

House of Representatives committee in handling the matter and assured of council's support for a just cause.

Earlier, the committee Chairman Mr. Bashir Adamu told the vice-chairman that the visit, which was the second since hostilities broke out in the area was sequel to a report brought before it by the member representing the area.

The Kano state government is to spend the sum of N252, 504,380 for the execution of various road and housing projects in the state this year, the Commissioner of Information, Alhaji, Nura Mohammed Dankadai, has said.

He said the state government has also approved the sum of N191, 176,814 for the construction of Kumbotso bridge in Kumbotso local government area, which when completed would ease communication between people of Kumbotso, Challawa, other parts of the metropolis with Tamburawa, Dawaki kudu

Kano to spend N252m on roads, housing

Habiba Adamu-Kano

and other communities.

In continuation of the state government efforts to provide the people of the state with vital infrastructural facilities, the state executive council he said has approved the sum of N45,299,967 for the construction/rehabilitation of five metropolitan roads viz Jahara road, Babakusa Goron Dutse junction road, Sabo Barkin Zuwo marternity- Yan mota road, Kwanar Dala Makera junction road and Yan

Muruchi- Makwarari road.

Other community oriented projects to be executed by the state government include approval of the sum of N7, 534,200 to further complement ante-natal services to the citizens of the states, approval of the sum of N5, 749,256 for the construction of staff houses at Kibiya primary health care and approval of the sum of N2, 744,175.00 for the special connection of Waziri Shehu Gidade Hospital with 11KV NEPA feeder school.

...Gives N2m loan for youth programme graduands

Habiba Adamu-Kano

The Kano State government has provided the sum of N2 million naira as loan to the 600 graduands of youth employment programme in the state.

The Commissioner of Information Alhaji Nura Muhammed Dankadai said at the graduation ceremony

that he was satisfied with the successful completion of their courses in the various fields offered by the programme.

Machinery and equipments to assist the graduands in their self-sustaining efforts worth N5.9 million naira were distributed to them. The machinery included sewing machine, welding machines and soap making equipments.

On the issue of herdsmen and farmers' clashes in Kano,

the commissioner of agriculture has been directed to articulate proposals for a lasting solution, he said.



Gov. Kwankwaso

FIB fire blamed on negligence

The Police in Lagos have confirmed that the recent fire outbreak affecting major parts of the Federal Investigation Bureau, (FIB), Alagbon close, Lagos was caused by negligence. Speaking to Daily Trust in a telephone interview from Abuja, the Force Public Relation Office, Mr. Haz Iwendi, an assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) said a panel had been set up by the Inspector-General of Police to investigate the cause of the fire. Iwendi said that the panel became necessary because of the conflicting reports received by the police authorities as regards the fire incident.

He added that an inventory of properties destroyed by the inferno was also being documented.

Daily Trust investigation revealed that the fire gutted the ballistic and homicide section of the FIB and authoritative sources said vital documents and case files of some controversial murder cases have been destroyed by the fire incident.

However, Iwendi refused to either confirm or deny these allegations, saying it would amount to pre-empting the report of the panel.



CALLING AEPB: Such kinds of meat hawkers pose health hazards to residents of the Federal Capital Territory. Pix: Kennedy Eghonodje

Fuel scarcity in north blamed on sharp practices

From Dare Oyewole, Kaduna.

The shortage of petroleum products being experienced in the northern states has been attributed to the sharp practices of the marketers and the turn-around maintenance going on at the Kaduna refinery.

Speaking with the Daily Trust, the zonal operations controller of the department of petroleum resources, Dr. Dogara Bijimi said the refinery has not been operating at full capacity and that the main unit that produces was yet to come on stream.

He however stated that what was being supplied daily was enough to reduce

the long queues at the pump stations but for the illegal activities of the marketers.

Dr. Bijimi said the department had in its efforts to curb these illegal activities, resorted to closing down indefinitely, twenty-eight fuel stations in Kaduna, Plateau and Nasarawa states for offences ranging from fuel diversion, hoarding and selling above government approved prices.

A break down of the affected stations showed that eight were closed down in Kaduna, eleven in Plateau and nine in Nasarawa state.

Dr. Bamtji disclosed that the department would soon embark on a joint operation with the law enforcement agencies to

clear the roads of illegal sales of petroleum products particularly hawkers in premium motor spirit, automotive gas oil (diesel), engine oil and base oil.

APP stalwart seeks probe of former Nassarawa administrator

From Buhari Bello Jos

The inability of Nassarawa state government to probe the activities of the former military governor of the state, Col. Sama'ila Mande has come under severe attack.

According to an APP chief-tain in the state, Alhaji Rabiu Nunku who spoke to Daily Trust last weekend in Jos, "the people are interested in knowing how the state was ruled under the military in view of what took place in other states which probed such ad-

Former NITEL staff petitions Commission

By Adelanwa Bamgboye

A former employee of NITEL, Mr. Ade. S. Oshilaja has petitioned the chairman of the judicial commission of enquiring into NITEL and M-TEL seeking redress for the termination of his appointment with the Lagos zone on 19 December 1997, over an allegation that an outsider wrote a ledger card for him at the credit control section of Lagos 'D' Exchange.

"I was employed into the former NET Ltd in January 1976 as a telegraph operator where I worked and by dint

of hard work rose to the rank of senior communications superintendent until October 1996, when I was redeployed to work at the credit control section at Lagos 'D' Exchange under Finance Division.

Oshilaja stated further. "I was not given any training pertaining the order of working here that we all followed which put myself and 8 lady staff there in this type of a situation."

The petitioner who denied committing any crime or offence stated that "a query was given to the two of us and I was terminated, the other "offender" is still a staff of NITEL.

He said that since his appointment as telegraph operator in 1976, "I have not got a single query instead, I got commendation letter for a job well done."

The commission started work about a week ago and it is headed by Hon. Justice Daniel Ishola Adeniyi, other members of the commission are Mr. Palinus J. Ekunke, Chief Mrs. Janet Okwara and Prince Ajibola Afonja.

NEWS

Traditional ruler supports religious studies

From Shehu Abubakar in Benin City

The recent recommendation of the Nigerian Inter-Religious Council for the compulsory teaching of Islamic and Christian religious knowledge to the followers of the two religions in Nigerian primary and secondary schools has been applauded by the Okhaijesan of Esan, Alhaji W.O. Momodu II.

Speaking with *Daily Trust* reporter in his palace at Irrua, Edo state, Alhaji Momodu II said there would be no peace in any country where government neglects the major religions of its people.

"Teaching people to understand their religion is like bringing them closer to their

God and thereby grooming a people who would easily be governed," he said.

The traditional ruler's comment comes at the back-



Gov. Igbinedion

drop of the position of Edo state governor, Chief Lucky Igbinedion who defied calls

from the Edo state Muslim Community supported by some of their Christian counterparts for the introduction of Islamic studies in the state primary and secondary schools.

Alhaji Momodu wondered "why the state government is doing everything possible to frustrate the Muslim and Christian communities in the state."

Alhaji Momodu who also noted that the entire country is mainly made up of Muslims and Christians wondered why the issue of Hajj fare is still considered as a problem. He advised the government to simplify all issues related to holy pilgrimage by subsidizing the cost of both Muslim and Christians pilgrimages.

The territorial Manager of the Iponri Exchange of the Nigeria Telecommunication (NITEL), Engineer Albert Ibrinke at the weekend admitted before the Justice Abaniyi panel investigating the activities of NITEL and M-tel that he paid N10 million meant for repair works at the Aba exchange into his personal account while he was a senior manager there.

Engineer Ibrinke who was testifying before the panel said the money was meant for the rehabilitation of Aba cables 2 and 3.

He stated that the money was drawn on a draft cheque, which he cleared within a week.

He said that after he had cleared the cheque, he opened an account with UBA and paid the N10m into the personal account.

According to Engr. Ibrinke, the job was to take

I paid N10m into my account

-NITEL manager

two months but that he did it within five months and that over N10m was spent.

"I withdrew everything and only about N2,000 was left in the account".

Irked by this revelation, the commission chairman said, "we are worried that this kind of money got out of NITEL and was put into a personal account. Was this N10 million not beyond your expenditure limit? the chairman queried.

Engr. Ibrinke said that before the N10m was given to him, same money had been spent for the same purpose but was misused and that annoyed

the then Minister who then gave individuals money to carry out this same job.

But the commission pointed out that a few months before Engr. Ibrinke went to Aba, the NITEL G.M Engr. Walker had carried out the same job with N1 million and got a letter or commendation from the then Executive Director (ED) zonal Administrator (ZA).

According to Engr. Ibrinke, what Engr. Walker did was peripheral as he (Walker) only went to Aba to cover the joints.

Personnel management directors to go in Osun

The fate of all directors of personnel in the 30 local council areas of Osun state hang in the balance as the state government has made up its mind on terminating their appointments.

The development is part of the on-going staff rationalization exercise embarked upon by the government of Chief Bisi Akande which has already swept 8,000 out of the 21,000 workforce in the State.

Reliable sources in the state informed *Daily Trust* that the letters for their sack have already been signed, awaiting dispatch.

According to our source, the recent devel-

opment does not have much to do with productivity or discipline but hinges on party loyalty. The source said the State government wanted to replace them with people who would be loyal to and support the party (AD) in the Local Government elections coming up next year.

It would be recalled that the Osun state government in the last few weeks has sacked over 8,000 of its entire workforce.

In the same vein, the chairman of the state chapter of Nigeria Union of Local Government Employee (NULGE) was also given the boot by the state government in a move believed to have had political undertone.



(L-R) Alh. Ibrahim Salim, Clerk of the National Assembly, Hon. Farouk Lawan, Chairman House Committee on Inter-Paliamentary Relations and Mr. Austin M. Zvroma, Regional Ssecretary, CPA, African Region at the just concluded meeting of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in Abuja. Pix: Kennedy Egbodnodje

Gov. Duke signs two bills into law

Two bills establishing the Cross Rivers state Sport Commission

and the Urban Development Authorities have been signed into law

other step in its resolve to put the state ahead of others in the country.

The governor said the establishment of the Urban Development Authorities in Ikom, Calabar and Ogoja was to start the process of developing the three senatorial districts of the state adding that the process would be hastened.

He pointed out that his administration met at it inception a deplorable state of social infrastructures including the pitiable state of urban and rural roads to general absence of essential social amenities like pipe borne water, electricity and other facilities.

Governor Duke also noted that the provision of

these amenities would consequently improve the well being of the people through the elimination of poverty and the establishment of a sustainable economy.

He maintained that the result of these efforts would yield increased revenue for the state, better income for the workers and a general improvement in the well being of the people.

The Governor said the Sports Commission law would among other things facilitate the growth of sporting activities throughout the state by identifying, nurturing and developing the many sporting talents, which a bound in the state.

Panel on Pfizer's "Trovan" vaccine shuts out press

The panel of enquiry set up by the Federal Ministry of Health to investigate counter accusation between officials involved in the "approval" of Pfizer's clinical trial of "Trovan" vaccine in Kano in 1996, began closed-door sitting in Abuja at the weekend.

Trial of the vaccine by the Pharmaceutical Company to combat cerebro-spinal meningitis led to the death of 11 children and deformation of 200 others.

While Pfizer claimed that it had the approval of health authorities in Kano state and at the Federal government level

to try the drugs on the victims, government officials traded blames on what organ of government was responsible.

Some government operatives in office at the time of the incident either denied or admitted tacit knowledge of the incident.

Health and government officials from Kano state, the National Food and Drugs Administration and Control and the Federal Ministry of Health were expected to testified before the panel weekend.

Correspondents of the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) were, however, shut out of the venue of the sitting

of the panel as an official insisted that "the sitting is not meant for press coverage."

Earlier in the month, a US-based newspaper accused Pfizer of unethical practices in the drug experiment.

The publication led to public outcry in Kano and in other parts of Nigeria and in the United States, compelling the health ministry to set up the panel.

Parents of the deceased children and those who were maimed as a result of the clinical trial have already sought compensation from Pfizer as they claimed that they were not told that the victims were being used as guinea pigs.



Gov. Duke

by Governor Donald Duke.

Signing the bills, Mr. Duke stated that the state government had taken an-

INSIDE POLITICS



The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) African region met in Abuja last week. Hon. Farouk Lawun (right) going through some documents with the CPA general secretary, Mr. Austin M. Zvoma. Pix Kennedy Egbunodje

Kwankwaso, Assembly may clash over 2001 budget

Kano state house of assembly has threatened not to pass the 2001 appropriation bill submitted by the state government unless the managing director of the Rural Electrification Board (REB), Dr. B.M. Sani is sacked.

The speaker of the house, Alhaji Abdullahi Gwarmai disclosed this to *Daily Trust* in an interview in his office in Kano. "There is no going back,



Gov. Kwankwaso

Court rules against INEC on lawmaker's recall

A Federal High Court sitting in Enugu, today, dismissed with N2,000 cost, an application by INEC challenging the injunction the court placed on plans to recall an assemblyman in Anambra state.

In dismissing the preliminary objection filed and argued by INEC through its counsel, Chief Alfred Eghobamien (SAN), Justice Akinjide Ajakaiye said INEC's application had not been sustained "and is accordingly dismissed."

The Judge, who said the plaintiff in the substantive suit, Mr. George Okoye (PDP Njikoka constituency II), was

entitled to costs, awarded N2,000 cost against INEC.

Ajakaiye also adjourned hearing in the substantive suit to March 12.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) recalls that Okoye, had prayed the court to restrain INEC or its agents from taking any steps to recall him from the membership of Anambra House of Assembly.

Okoye also urged the court, in the substantive suit, filed and argued by his counsel, Afam Akputa, to restrain one Peter Igbo, representing the petitioners seeking his recall, from relying on their allegations pending the determination of the suit.

His prayers were granted

by Ajakaiye, but INEC filed an objection to the ruling, saying that the court lacked the jurisdiction to hear the case.

He pointed out that INEC was not an agent of the federal government by virtue of independence conveyed by the edict establishing it.

The substantive suit was annexed to a 33-paragraph affidavit in which Okoye also maintained that there had never been a time that members of his constituency invited him to any meeting to express their loss of confidence in him.

In his ruling, Ajakaiye upheld Akputa's submissions over INEC's objection, saying INEC's argument that his court could not hear the suit was "an absurdity".

is always behind anybody who is the right path". He told our reporter that all the allegations against him were mischievous, unfounded and shameful. "I am ready at any given time to defend myself either before the state assembly or any public fora, be it radio or television".

Dr. Sani further revealed that the allegations were aimed at tarnishing his image and blamed his predicament on the senior management staff of the agency, but when our reporter spoke to some senior staff, their reply was that their chief executive, does "everything single-handedly". According to them since he assumed office May 2000, he has not called for both management or board meetings, while all the projects purportedly executed by him were false.

But the Amalgamated Union of Public Technical and Recreational Employees, are against the removal of Dr. Sani and have written to the state government protesting the state house of assembly decision.

From Aliyu Sulaiman in Kano.

we want him removed, we don't need anything below this", he said.

He stated that the house has decided to suspend its earlier action for the interest of the development of the state.

"Our interest is the progress and development of the state". The speaker however denied that the House took the stand because the managing director was not co-operating with them to loot the agency's treasury.

Rather, the speaker said the managing director has done nothing since he assumed office in May last year and that he was not following normal procedure in discharging his responsibilities.

Meanwhile when *Daily Times* contacted the managing director of the board, Dr. Sani said, "I don't want to comment on this matter because before man and God, I know God

is always behind anybody who is the right path". He told our reporter that all the allegations against him were mischievous, unfounded and shameful. "I am ready at any given time to defend myself either before the state assembly or any public fora, be it radio or television".

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I'll not accept any ministerial appointment -Okadigbo

The former Senate President, Dr. Chuba Okadigbo has said in Abuja, that he would not accept any ministerial appointment from the present government.

He told *Daily Trust* at a reception held for returning Chevening Scholars by the British High Commission, that they (in the senate) were eagerly awaiting the list of the nominees but suggested he would not touch the job even with a long pole.

When asked whether Obasanjo's vote of no confidence in his cabinet was an indication of his historic face-off with the executive, he replied "*res ipsa loquitur*" a Latin expression meaning "the facts speak for themselves".

The British High Commissioner in Nigeria, Mr. Graham Burton, while seeing off Dr Okadigbo told *Daily Trust* he would be worried if there were no

By Kevin Ebele Adinnu

fighting between the legislature and executive.

"People talk about the executive and legislative fighting. This is democracy. It is what happens in a democracy and when everybody came in eager to bring about immediate and overnight change, it is inevitable that there will be real big differences in the way they should go about that," he said.

According to the High Commissioner: "I would be much more worried if there were no fighting between the legislature and the executive and if there were no problems in the regions and if there was no talk about factionalisation."

"We are coming to a dangerous turn now with two years to go to the next elections. Let's not start looking at the next election yet. Let's go into the next election on the basis of what

you have achieved in the first term," he declared.

At this juncture, Dr. Okadigbo aligned himself with the new British high commissioner.

"That has been my position," Okadigbo interjected.

However, Mr. Burton maintained that 19 months was a very short time to correct the "extent of the mess which the present government inherited."

"I think that nobody really understands the extent of the mess which the present government inherited" he said.



Dr. Okadigbo

Rep. wants petroleum minister in new cabinet

President Obasanjo has been urged to nominate a substantive minister to take charge of the petroleum sector. The call was made by Rep. Ehioge West-Idahosa, chairman House of Representatives committee on petroleum.

The lawmaker in a press statement in Abuja stated that his appeal has become necessary, because the appointment of a petroleum minister by the Presidency will be in line with the numerous house resolutions advocating for such an appointment.

While explaining that such an appointment will benefit the nation's petroleum sector, Rep. West-Idahosa argued further that this is of utmost importance in view of the many laws in the petroleum industry, that strictly require certain roles and documents by the minister of petroleum resources.

Moreover, he reiterated that the house petroleum committee believes that policy formulation in a sector, as critical as the petroleum sector "cannot be left in the hands of a special assistant to a special adviser as is presently the case".

Based on this, the committee chairman said he welcomes the on-going reorganisation in the Department of Petroleum

By Henry Omuwu Resources (DPR), including the change of leadership effected by the Presidency.

"This reorganisation must however, be considered an interim measure to sanitise the petroleum industry, which was before now being run without due regard to

regulatory legal framework for the industry", the chairman added.

Accordingly, Rep. West-Idahosa suggested that the real remedy that will ensure strict compliance with laws and regulations guiding the oil sector is the granting of autonomy to the reorganised department.

The Speaker of the Abia State House of Assembly, Mr. Stanley Ohajuruka, has called for better welfare conditions for members of the armed forces so that they can perform their duty of defending the country's territorial integrity.

The Speaker made the call while receiving a delegation of the students and staff of the Command and Staff College, Jaji, who were in the House to observe legislative proceedings.

Ohajuruka urged the federal government to evolve a deliberate policy that could make the job of the armed forces attractive, so that the members would suffer no distraction.

He enjoined all the different facets of the Nigerian polity to demonstrate genuine commitment and resolve the

regulatory legal framework for the industry", the chairman added.

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current efforts to nurture and enduring democratic culture in the country.

In his remarks, the leader of the delegation, Brig. Gen. Tunde Braimoh, explained that the tour of the legislative houses in the country was an annual event and called for "the said that the purpose of the tour was to enable the students "to appreciate the socio-economic and political issues that are fundamental to the development of the Nigeria nation."

Braimoh, who is the director of joint studies at the institution, said that the tour would take them to 12 states.

He said it would enable the students to have an on-the-spot assessment of what was happening in the various states of the federation.

PARLIAMENT



Hashidu 'll be re-elected

Gombe State Commissioner of Information, Alhaji Garba Gadan has dismissed critics of the state government, saying the chances of re-electing governor Abubakar Hashidu in 2003 was "very bright".

He contended that, even critics come out and say, "we are only playing politics" in their castigation of the state government, stressing that the level of development recorded within the last 20 months touches on every aspect of human endeavour.

Speaking in an exclusive interview with *Daily Trust* in Abuja, Alhaji Garba noted that

-Commissioner

By Sulciman Muhammed

during president Obasanjo's visit to the state last November, a number of projects were commissioned. These include, the rural electrification in Duku, the state presidential lodge, the fertilizer blending plant completed at N700m, the state legislative quarters as well as the Tomato factory among others.

According to the commissioner, a number of rural and urban roads have been completed while water supply and health facilities have been im-

proved particularly in rural areas.

He said criticism by political opponents was a normal tradition in politics. "APP has been an outstanding party in Gombe state... and the governor has not disappointed the electorate", he said, adding that the relationship between the state executive council and the legislative was cordial.

However, he said the recent allegation of financial embezzlement levelled against the State House of Assembly by the former Clerk of the House, Hajiya Hajarat Salim was yet to be established. "If there's any gross mismanagement of public fund in the State House of Assembly, that has not yet been established," he explained.

Aggrieved prominent members of the Alliance for Democracy (AD) may have turned down invitations into the membership of the party's Board of Trustees, *Daily Trust* can now reveal.

Inside sources in the party told our reporter that although letters had been sent out to 18 prospective members of the board, only nine have so far indicated their acceptance of the positions while the remaining nine are yet to either accept or reject the offer.

According to the source, most of those who have not reacted to the invitation are those in the camp opposed to the leadership of Senator

AD members reject posts

By Ekele Onwuchekwa

Ahmed Abdulkadir, although the source would not give the names of those yet to respond to the invitation.

The national chairman of the party, Senator Ahmed Abdulkadir when contacted on the development confirmed that only nine have so far confirmed their acceptance of the offer, adding that he hoped the others would respond before the boards of trustees' inauguration which is expected to hold at the next National Executive Council (NEC) meeting of the party slated for February 13

and 14.

Senator Abdulkadir gave the names of those who have accepted the offer as Chief Bola Ige - chairman, Chief Alban Ofili Okonkwo, Elder John Omo Ikhiroda, Chief S.B Sawani and Dr. Alex Mshellia.

Others are Alhaji Yahaya Hamani, Dr. Chukwuemeka Ezeife, Dr. Udentia O. Udentia and Prof. Nze Mark Odu.

On whether the inauguration would still hold if all the prospective members do not accept the offer, the party chairman said: "we will still go ahead with the inauguration even if we don't have more. Nine is not a bad number. Even if we had six."

According to him, the criteria for selecting the members among other things was on the basis of three persons from each of the six geo-political zones in the country.

Meanwhile, the party has sent a list of nominees to the Presidency as members into the technical committee reviewing the 1999 constitution.

Senator Ahmed who disclosed this said that President Obasanjo has already ratified the list.

He gave their names as Dr. Stella O. Dorgu, Prince Valentine Ahams, Alh. Mohammed Babangida Umar, Alh. Abdulhamid Hassan and Barrister Adeniyi Akintola.

Others are Barrister Sunday Kuku Iyakaro, Alh. Mohammed Gambo Saleh.



Garba Jiji Gadan

INEC requires N20b for 2003 elections

Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) chairman, Dr. Abel Guobadia has said in Benin that the non-conduct of a fresh census could pose serious danger to credible conduct of the next 2003 elections.

He said the delineation of constituencies by INEC rested on the availability of current census data from the National Population

Commission as well as geographical data from the National Boundary Commission.

Guobadia was delivering a paper titled "The political and social environment of election management in Nigeria" at the 8th Oba Akenzua II memorial lecture, organised by the alumni association of the University of Benin.

He also said adequate

funding, was very necessary for a successful conduct of any election, pointing out that "election costs are the price of maintaining democracy".

He described Nigeria as one of the least spenders on elections, maintaining that for the 1998/99 transition elections, Nigeria only spent seven cents per voter, per year, as against an average of 10 dollars per voter, per year in South Africa.

THE YOUTH MOVEMENT OF NIGERIA CONGRATULATES:

Alh. Mohd Ibrahim Mni, OFR

Magajin Malam, the new District Head of Kanya Babba

and

Alh Mustapha Bako

Magajin Rafin Ringim and Council member of His Highness, the Emir of Ringim

Alh. Sayyadi Mahmud Ringim

over their turbanning Ceremony which took place on 19th January, 2001 in Ringim town.



ALHAJI MOHAMMED IBRAHIM Mni, OFR
Magajin Malam, Hakimin Kanya Babba



Alh. Sayyadi Mahmud Ringim
Emir of Ringim



ALHAJI MUSTAPHA BAKO
Magajin Rafi, Dan Majalisar Sarkin Ringim

We the YOUTH of this centre are proud to be associated with this amazing success. We wish you Allah's guidance

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Arts & Entertainment



By Tadaferua Ujorha

Night Clubs

Mama's Place is situated within Abuja gardens and it is organised to entertain, to soothe and to thrill. This is a cosy nest that is set within a valley. There are rolling fields, well kept hedges of yellow bush and pavements all around.

Grace Charles, the chief executive of Mama's Place tells me that in the evenings, a band let's out a thrilling song from 8.00 p.m. until dawn. There is music going everyday, except Mondays. Mama's Place has a bar enveloped by fine thatch, and all the lawns provide evidence of good tending. A sense of mystery, wonder and excitement is captured in the curving pavements and the alternating shades of green which expand in every direction.

Grace Charles says that there are plans to introduce mega-musical shows whereby musicians from outside Abuja would come to Mama's Place and perform. Here, there is a multi-purpose hall, a stage, a series of little



The singing valley!

A pavement bordered by Yellow Bush plants at Mama's Place.



bridges and a small stream. Customers are drawn from the middle and higher classes of so-

ciety. Here, you can find some peace, quiet and inner stability.

Mama's Place is located opposite the National Hospital, Abuja.

Fashion



The Glowing Collection!

Hugo Boss, world famous fashion designers are in Abuja again, and they can be found at Bibian A. Ladi Kwali Conference Centre at the Sheraton Hotel and Towers.

Each day, they are present at this location from 9.00 a.m. to 9.00 p.m.

Here is the latest in terms of men's wears which cover a mass of

materials ranging from suits, jackets and trousers, to ties, shoes, belts and coats. You would find items of the best quality and the finest taste.

The 2000 and 2001 exhibition at Sheraton Hotel and Towers, Abuja, would last for another two weeks. Hugo Boss, Nigeria, has offices at Sheraton Hotel, Lagos.

Art Watch!

Workshop

The Creative Writers Club of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria meets every Thursday at Room 68, Faculty of Arts, A.B.U. by 5.00 p.m.

Book launch

Hajji guide by Aishat Kande Abubakar will be launched on Saturday 10th February 2001 at the Conference Hall of the National Mosque, Garki - Abuja, by 9.00 a.m.

Chief launcher will be His Excellency, Alhaji Ahmad Sani, Yariman Bakura and Executive Governor of Zamfara state.

Guest of Honour is the Saudi Arabian Ambassador to Nigeria, while the Guest Speaker will be Professor A.A. Gwandu, Chairman, National Committee on Hajj Affairs.

Gala Nite

The Abuja chapter of ANA is preparing for an AGM and Gala Nite which should hold on February 28th 2001 by

4.30 p.m. at Halal Restaurant, Women Centre, Abuj. The day would feature a guest address, a book presentation, reading of poems, elections, dinner and the conferment of merit awards.

Encounter

Recently, I bumped into Aaladdin, a popular performer who is as cheerful as he is kind and talented. It was as though we had met for years. He was seated in a friend's car and kept on beaming at me as the discussion progressed. The story on him would be featured shortly. Readers should look forward to the story on this performer whose name evokes childhood memories of Eastern genius and talent. Many would remember Aladdin who, I think featured so much in the Arabian Nights tales. This performer would throw us all back to those rare and enchanging moments of our childhood.

Dances and Songs at Minna

The Annual Schools Carnival of Arts and Festival of Songs (ASCAFS) is a programme designed by the Association of Nigerian Authors, Niger state branch to bring together, students of post-primary schools for an intellectual fair. It is a forum for school children to showcase their latent talent in creative writing, quiz

competition, painting, craft, drama, song and cultural display, so as to sharpen their skill for easier comprehension. The children are made to go through the processes of reading, writing and thinking with fun and pageantry. At the end of the programme, they are given incentives to stimulate the interest in Book Culture and Arts.

Festival

This programme is the first of its kind in Nigeria and it is yet to be copied. Patrons and Art enthusiasts such as Abubakar Gimba, Yahaya Dangana, and other trustees, have always availed the association of their financial and moral support towards the success of the programme.

This year's carnival will

hold from 5th - 8th February, 2001 at U.K. Bello Theatre, Minna and New Horizon Secondary School, Minna.

There will be cultural displays, on-the-spot poetry and short story writing. The students will also participate in songs, plays, crafts, and many other fun-filled and thrilling events throughout the three-day cultural fair. This carnival has always enjoyed the support of the Niger state government and many other bodies.



Did Pharaoh visit?

e-business

“With GSM, Internet will change the face of business in Nigeria”

Information Communication Technology (ICT) is the emerging bedrock of global business opportunities. The ICT market which currently runs in Trillions of Dollars internationally, is in fact itching into Nigeria. In this interview, Mr. Taiwo Onakoya, Abuja branch manager of SIO-Tel, one of the three leading Internet service providers (ISPs) in the country, told our InfoTech correspondent Osborne Adi Jnr., how the Internet is changing the face of business in Nigeria today.

Can you please, tell us why SIO-Tel is coming into Abuja now?

Going by our feasibility, Abuja is supposed to be our second phase of development after the Lagos spin. We are in Abuja to bring Internet services down to the people of Abuja and to move them very closer to the information world, which is Internet and E-mail. And also to increase the level of E-commerce in the FCT. We have now shut down and ready to deploy some of the sophisticated technologies in getting to the people at the cheapest and affordable rate.

Secondly, we want Abuja to have a feel of what is happening across the world. Once there is communication, there is freedom for the people - that is in the form of progress.

Can you tell us exactly what services you are introducing into the market here?

In the service we are introducing, we want to encourage people, as many people as possible to open cyber craft shops on each and every street that everybody at the grassroot will have the feel. They may not have a telephone line. That is why we want to deploy Internet connectivity to the people via the wireless net, so that it will get to the interior of Abuja.

Now, what technology are you employing in this venture?

In this venture, we are deploying the best and state-of-the-art technology in wireless communications. We want to do this by proving to investors that there are so much to be done and so much to be realised in the Internet.

The FCT is another big market considering the teledensity of Nigeria, where only about 800,000 lines service over 120 million people. The teledensity is very, very low. So to get to the people you need to come up with easier and cheaper means of wireless.

So what are the requirements for one to get connected to the Internet?

Our main source of supply to the people would largely depend on radio connection, whereby, we are going to get some people or group of people who are interested in Cyber craft business. They will get a radio.. we are going to install a radio here in our office and the two radio will communicate wireless. We will encourage people to open cyber craft shops, where they can do business with the people through us.

Can you explain the process for the understanding of those not conversant with Internet operations?

Dealing with the end users is going to be very, very strategic. It is going to be largely based on our infra-

structure. At the moment, we can control to a very large extent the wireless communication. Getting to the end-users through Dial-up depended largely on the infrastructure made available by government. That is the scenario as it is now.

Once government is willing and able to support ISPs in Nigeria, we would make Dial-up available at very cheaper rates. But to a very large extent, those are extraneous factors being controlled by the federal government regulations. We don't have control over that. But now is the radio, which we want to utilise maximally.

What I am saying is this. Supposing one wants to get connected to the Internet, what steps does he take?

He needs to have basically a telephone line, and a computer not just a computer but one that is Internet ready. A full multi-media would be advised. But at the same time, it must run either Windows 95, Windows 98 or probably MT as the case may be. Once you have these basic infrastructures, the computer must have a modem that is where you plug the phone, what the modem does is, it tries to change your signals from data to voice that would now go with the telephone line and a modem is waiting at the other end to demodulate it to the original status-quo - that is voice. In a nut shell these are the requirements.

Last year, at the instance of NCC, there was a meeting of all stakeholders in the Internet business. At that meeting, almost all ISPs complained over NITEL's involvement in the Internet service provision. They anchored their argument on the monopoly of NITEL on exchange control which would not argue well for them if it dabbles into service provision, how do you read this scenario?

As the case may be, NITEL control the monopoly of the nation's telephone lines. Telephone line is a major factor when it comes to Dialling-up. In that regard, if NITEL chooses to compete, I mean, they have the monopoly. They could call the shots. Like I said, if the government wants to be fair to all concerned, I believe that the same toll free line should be made available to ISPs. ISPs are willing to pay for these toll free line too. If you compete favourable in the market, given the same variables then, it would pay the populace because they would have a better choice. As it is no ISP can match NITEL when it comes to Dialling-up that is why each an every company is trying to carve a niche for themselves.

I vividly remember, that government's major concern is that the cost of Internet connectivity is very high if you live the ISPs without NITEL coming in. How do you react to this?

Amm... to fix a price depends on so many variables. It is not like you pick the line from the oblivion. Different ISPs are going through different means to give lines to people, so there are bound to be differences in prices.

It is exactly one week to day (Friday 26/1/2001) that the federal government sold out three of its four GSM licences. With this

development, how do you look at the future of Information Communication Technology in Nigeria?

The rate of telecom development



Taiwo Onakoya,

in Nigeria to some extent at this stage is very encouraging. Though we are still behind, but with the licencing of GSM, the populace are being empow-

ered. Because the more information you have at your finger tips, the better for you and the more exposed you are to the external world. For instance,

we have at the moment, less than 800,000 to more than 120 million people. So, with the GSM licencing, there would be more phone lines in circulation. That means everybody would go about with their GSM phones. It is going to be a boost to our commerce. Between the art of buying and selling that means, you should have better information, you can reach people faster, you can get connected to the

Internet on your mobile phone. I mean the cost and face of business would be cheaper and faster.

But then, my own opinion is that

-SIO-TEL BOSS

more companies who have the capacity of providing GSM should be licenced to operate without hindrance. If that is done, it will cover the entire country in terms of infrastructures.

Had it been that those days in South-Africa when the blacks were fighting the whites, there was GSM phones in that country, the story would have been different. Many black people killed because, there were no effective communication systems in place.

If they had their GSM sets they would have planned better, grouped better and better informed before time. All those shootings and killings would have been avoided because they could have reached themselves easily whenever there was any attempts to raid a particular black stronghold.

Today South-Africans have access to GSM and at very cheap and affordable rates. For any attack to take place today will not be an easy task because the people are well equipped communications wise. That is the power of information technology and that is economic power too.

Strategies for developing new knowledge industries for Nigeria, by ITAN

By: Osborne Adi Jnr.

high skills Information Technology related Human Resources (ITHRS).

These strategies include, specifically;

E-Governance: In view of the fact that existing structures have become incapable in responding to challenges of the global economic competitiveness, market forces alone, have become incapable to leapfrog developing nations into great heights. For Nigeria to get connected and benefit from the merging global economy, reported to be around the region of trillions of U.S. Dollars, the need to plan and design strategic approaches capable of restructuring the entire national development processes becomes inevitable.

Governance without dynamic IT support will be crisis ridden and will eventually fail.

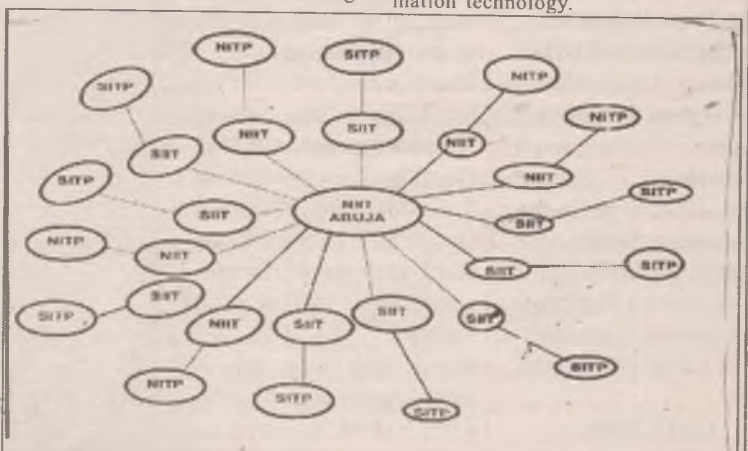
The association's new thinking is that in view of the fact that information and communication technology have redefined education and that the critical mass of attaining success in technology mastery is by producing highly competent human resources then, new means must be devised for enforcing

our development strategies. Also the development of the nation's IT human resource core competence must be reinforced.

To achieve this objective enabling environments must first of all be enacted. According to ITAN strategies, these environments involves the establishment of a National Information Infrastructure (NII) and States Information Infrastructure (SII). This could be boosted by infusion into the NYSC programme, an IT overdose along with armies of IT lecturers at the shortest time possible - within a new civil service structure, who will be deployed into all the levels of the nations' educational system.

The second strategy is the establishment of a National Institute of Information technology (NIIT) in the six geo-political zones and a national IT commission to manage these institutions.

The third and the final phase of this plan is that every state should be mandated and encouraged to establish a State Institute of Information Technology (SIIT). This should be followed up with towns/cities IT parks, where residents can go to learn about information technology.



Graphic impression of National and State Institutes of Information Technology framework and Information Technology Development Parks.

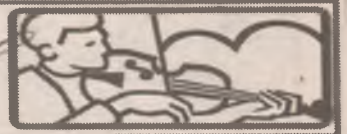
The Information Technology Association of Nigeria (ITAN) has been in fore front of the campaign towards incorporating Information, Communication Technology (ICT) in all spheres of Nigerian life. Since its establishment in 1991, initially as the Micro-Computer Vendors' Association of Nigeria - MIVAN and later changed to Computer Vendors' Association of Nigeria (COVAN) in 1999, it has not deviated from its onerous task of promoting and fostering computer awareness in the country through computer education, sales and service of both hardware and software.

ITAN has organised series of national and zonal workshops on developments in the IT world. Currently, it is engaged in discussions with the federal government through the Ministry of Science and Technology on the need to fashion out an IT policy for Nigeria.

At a recent conference on "Deploying IT in National Development - Imperative for E-Governance, E-Commerce and E-Everything", Mr. Chris Uwaje, the association's President, said given all the necessary support and encouragement, ITAN was poised to replace oil with IT as the nation's major foreign exchange earner. He maintained that the nation cannot afford to focus on oil alone as its major foreign exchange earner, instead decision makers should give topmost priority to IT development in all its reunifications particularly, in budgeting.

As part of its commitment to the evolution of a National IT plan, ITAN has worked out a network programme, which it believes, if implemented, would take ICT down to grassroot levels.

In its quest to actualise this plan, ITAN has developed strategies for developing new knowledge industries for Nigeria. It is the position of the association that the critical mass for building and developing new knowledge industries for Nigeria lies in establishing dynamic frameworks for incubating



BOOKS

A boy goes to school! (IV)

Continued from Thursday

My exposure to Sokoto in 1935 started with something of a bang. That year was the silver jubilee anniversary of the coronation of King George V of the United Kingdom. A grand durbar was staged in Sokoto in May to celebrate the occasion. It was just before these festivities began that I was asked to report for admission into the Sokoto Middle School. On receiving the message in Shagari, my brother-guardian, Magaji Bello, quietly dispatched me to Yabo en route to Sokoto with the knowledge of only my mother and a few others. I was accompanied by Gago, the same man who had earlier escorted me to Yabo Elementary School.

On reaching Yabo, Sarkin Kabi Shehu directed us to proceed immediately so as to catch up with the Yabo contingent, which was to spend the night at Jaredi on its way to Sokoto for the durbar. We arrived in Jaredi at night where I had a much-needed sound sleep until the early morning. But to my astonishment, I woke up to find that my escort, Gago, was nowhere to be seen. He had left for Shagari, having arranged with some Yabo horsemen to look after me for the remaining part of the journey. I had to walk all the way to Sokoto, a distance of twenty kilometres, as the horsemen refused to give me even a brief ride.

We arrived at Sokoto late in the evening. I was exhausted but nevertheless thrilled by the sight of a big city of new and interesting spectacles. I was fascinated by the beautiful buildings, especially those with corrugated iron-roofs and gracious simplicity of Hausa architecture. I was also overwhelmed by the constant traffic of cars and bicycles everywhere I went, and by the bustling activities of gaily-dressed people which contrasted markedly with rural Yabo. I also had the wonderful opportunity of watching the durbar which was held at Gandu (*Gandun Sarkin Musulmi*), in the west of the city, now the site of the new Sokoto Central Market. There was also the dazzling spectacle of fireworks in the evening of the day of the durbar. No sooner had these festivities ended than I was asked to report to the Middle School.

I got to the school in the evening and was directed by the Headmaster, Mallam Sani Dingyadi, to the dormitory where I met my classmates, Maishanu Toronkawa and Bello Bodinga. The school hostel was not very different from the one in Yabo although it was bigger and surrounded by a high wall. It was situated near the city gate of Kofar Taramniya, on the grounds of the old provincial school. The Central Elementary School and its boarding house, called *Gidan Hattara* (House of Care) were also situated nearby, not far away from the Native Authority (NA) workshops. The staff quarters were also very close by, dwarfed by the headmaster's white-painted residence which proudly bore a bold inscription: HASSANIA (era of Sultan Hassan). It was the first and at the time the only private storey building in Sokoto.

The headmaster and one Uban Aiki Aminu, the Supervisor of Works (hence his

At an impressionable age, Shehu Shagari comes under the influence of a number of unforgettable role models such as Waziri Junaidu, the late Waziri of Sokoto, and Mallam Shehu Yabo. The deep bond between mother and child is captured with all the colour and daring which this implies.

Shehu Shagari: Beckoned to Serve

**The book**

forenames), were the only proud owners of two small cars among all the NA officials. The teachers owned horses although their £60.0.0 (sixty Pounds Sterling) annual pay easily put them among the highest paid NA employees. The entire school premises and the residential quarters were always kept very clean and tidy. Pupils each of whom was responsible for a particular section did this. Punishment for untidiness ranged from severe beatings by prefects to fatigues such as cutting the lawns, fetching water from the stream and, in some cases, helping the night-soil man (*wali*) with his rather delicate job.

Our hostels were made up of four blocks simply named North, South, East and West respectively. Each was under the supervision of a prefect and an assistant. I was in South House whose prefect was Magaji Lafagu, a strict disciplinarian with a more tyrannical presence than even the teachers. Feeding was more regular here

than at Yabo although it was far from adequate; about 9-10 boys would share one dish of tuwo for breakfast or dinner. At lunch, each boy was given a bowl of fura da nono. Shortage of bowls meant that many boys had to make grooves inside their fura balls so as to have their own share of the yoghurt. Each could then wait for a bowl to mix it or else consume it without doing so.

Cleaning of the school hostel and a cold bath were compulsory early morning routines, after which we all had to dress up quickly and run to the school, which was just under 1 km away. The rule was that one must cross a line marked across the football field before the bell rang at 7.00am. Failure to do so on time met with instant whipping (*bulala*). There was physical training (PT) on the field, followed by a roll call at the open morning assembly in front of the school building, and then to the classrooms.

I was impressed by the beauty of the school buildings, opened only a year before our admission. It had an imposing storey structure part of which was the office of Mr L R O Norwood, a British Senior Education Officer (SEO). His deputy, Mr M A Shillington, another Briton, had his office near the headmaster's own downstairs. There was another imposing building on the other side that was the school workshop for carpentry and foundry lessons. On the far side across the main road was a big building complex housing the General Hospital.

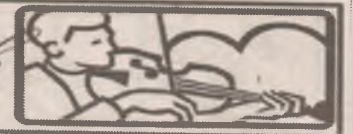
Inside the school itself, the classrooms were spacious and comfortable. Unlike at Yabo Elementary School where we sat on mats, I now had a desk and a chair. The lessons were far more exciting as we were now being taught in English. Our class was called Remove class, a kind of intermediary class between the elementary and higher middle school classes. Under our able teacher, Mallam Mamman Gusau, we concentrated more on the practice of speaking and writing English. On some occasions, Messrs Norwood and Shillington conducted the English lessons themselves. This helped us to learn proper English pronunciation and intonation at an early stage, and rather well too for a number of us. In fact, Ibrahim Dasuki Dogondaji spoke English so well that he was immediately promoted to a higher class.

Our teachers were good, disciplined and hard-working. There were only five classes in the school: Remove class and Middles I-IV, none of which had up to 30 pupils. Besides Mallam Sani Dingyadi, the headmaster, our teachers in 1935 included Abubakar Sokoto, Haruna Birnin Kebbi (Emir of Gwandu, 1954-95), Adamu Koko, Mamman Tureta, Mamman Gusau and Umaru Binanci, the Arabic teacher. There were also Abba Gana, the Carpentry Instructor, and Sahabi Sokoto, the Metal Work Instructor. Two senior teachers had left before our arrival: Ahmadu Rabah (later Ahmadu Bello, the Sardauna of Sokoto) who left to become the District Head of Rabah, and Alhaji Dogondaji (later Sarkin Shanu) who returned to Dogondaji to assist his ailing father in the administration of the district.

Later in the year, the Middle School at Birnin Kebbi was closed down and some of its teachers and pupils were transferred to our school. Among these teachers were Mallam Kakale Jega and Mallam Maigari Gwamba. The latter replaced our class teacher Mamman Gusau who was appointed the Sokoto NA Chief of Police (Wakilin Doka). There were further staff changes: Abubakar Sokoto replaced the headmaster Sani Dingyadi who was transferred to the Sokoto NA Treasury, while Mallam Junaidu Sokoto took over from Umaru Binanci as the Arabic teacher. The teaching profession was thus to be the breeding ground of many of Sokoto's



Arts & Entertainment



BOOKS

Cont'd. from Pg.25
political and administrative elite.

In Sokoto, I continued to take some lessons in Islamic Religious Knowledge (IRK) from Umaru Binanci and subsequently from Junaidu Sokoto, later the Waziri of Sokoto (1948-1997). Mallam Junaidu was an excellent teacher and the subjects which he taught were easily the most popular among students. We started learning Arabic grammar under him and many of us were indeed able to read, write and even speak Arabic within a short space of time. Besides, he was also an Arabic and Hausa poet and was thus a source of inspiration to many of his students.

The most important development in the teaching of Islamic studies was when Shehu Yabo, the Science Master, started an evening class in his house for interested pupils. A formidable Arabic scholar, he made tremendous impact on his pupils some of whom later ranked among the most authoritative Nigerian Islamic scholars men, like Sheikh Abubakar Gummi, Professor Haliru Binji, Bello Gusau and Mika 'ilu Mafara (all now sadly deceased). He supervised my reading of many compelling Arabic texts until my departure in 1941 to Kaduna College (now Barewa College, Zaria) where my fervour for Islamic studies was almost undermined by my fascination with science subjects.

A number of desirable developments also occurred in the Sokoto Middle School from 1937 when a new Senior Education Officer, Captain E J H Bowler, took over from Mr Norwood. The changes were greatly welcomed although there were to be many difficulties for the pupils as well. One of the improvements was the introduction of new sets of uniforms for use during classes, sports and outings. Previously, each pupil had only one set of white kaftan and trousers. Our teachers, who previously wore big gowns (*Babban riga*) and turbans to school, were also made to change to white kaftans and trousers. Some teachers objected to this, and one of them even resigned in protest. There was great improvement in feeding: the diet was made better while each pupil was provided with his own bowl.

In 1938, we moved to a new building complex not far away from the school as old site. But then, the new buildings, like the old ones, were also round huts with no shutters to the doors and windows. These, and the absence of perimeter walls, made the rooms less secure and also very cold during the harmattan. Wooden beds were, however, provided to every pupil, as were blankets. But we still had to put our precious mats beneath the blankets, as mattresses were not provided. New teachers' quarters were also built alongside the hostels, which enabled each housemaster to invigilate his allotted hostel block. The teachers' quarters were also very poorly built; each consisted of three round huts and a mud entrance hall (*shigifa*), and also had a well. Neither pipe-borne water nor electricity was known in those days.

Mallam Alhaji Dogondaji was brought back from his village (*Dogondaji*) to replace Abubakar Sokoto as headmaster. The former was a very good administrator and he served until 1945, the year I joined the school's teaching staff. Mallam Shehu

Yabo, a product of the famous Katsina Training College, established a science laboratory and began teaching science subjects to classes III and IV in 1938. The introduction of science subjects was viewed with great suspicion because of the mistaken belief in the community that science was anti-Islam.

Shehu Yabo, though himself a very religious man, was shunned and sometimes even openly abused as an atheist. Many believed that he had come to mislead young men into a new religion called science. The laboratory apparatuses he set up were viewed as instruments for making rain, thunder and lightning an imitation of the works of God! Accordingly, strident local opposition accompanied the building of a science block. It was only with persistence and time that Shehu Yabo won the confidence of his students.

Another area of improvement was athletics. With a new sports field and



With Sheu of Borno, Alhaji Mustapha El-Kanemi during Presidential visit to Borno State, May 1981.

facilities provided, we no longer needed to use the facilities of the Sokoto army barracks. But here, unlike in other aspects, the burden of constructing the sports field and athletic tracks were borne mostly by the students. Farming and gardening were introduced into the school curriculum.

A farm was developed south of the school, as was a school garden at *Akalawa*. The use of bullocks and ploughs enabled us to acquire skills in ploughing. Lots of flowers were also planted, as were numerous trees that every student was made to tend at least one each.

Arts and crafts were greatly encouraged with the help of artisans skilled in carpentry as well as technical and free hand drawing. A major influence here was Captain Bowler who himself was good at carpentry, and had been responsible not only for training the artisans while he was at Zaria, but for bringing some of them over to Sokoto. Students were soon able to make furniture and, as an incentive, were allowed to dispense with them as they saw fit. I myself made a box, a long chair, a deck chair and a cupboard; many colleagues did even better. The above changes made the school a much better place, but their potential for popularising the school was undermined by its well-known reputation for strict discipline.

A number of events also followed in quick succession. In January 1938, there

occurred an epidemic of cerebro-spinal meningitis (*sankarau*) throughout Sokoto Province. This promptly forced school closures for more than five months. We were all made to repeat our various classes, mine being class III. Sultan M Hassan died on 6 May 1938 after seven years' reign and a new Sultan, Siddiq Abubakar III, was installed on 7 July. A new Senior Education Officer, Mr Anthony A Shillingford, took over from Captain Bowler. Mallam Umaru Gwandu, formerly of Katsina Training College, replaced Mallam Adamu Koko as Geography/History and Games Master. Following in the footsteps of other teachers, the latter moved on to Sokoto Native Authority as Supervisor of Agriculture (*Sarkin Tudu*) at Kasarawa.

Then there was the outbreak of World War II, in September 1939, which provoked public expenditure cuts and adversely affected urban and rural living standards. Naturally, our school was not spared. We

I remember, however, one occasion in my first year (1935) when I felt really home sick and took French leave. I had dreamt that I had lost my mother. It was so dreadful that I decided I had to go home and see how she was. Next day I sneaked out of the school to the lorry station where I boarded a truck for a shilling. By evening, I was home in Shagari with my mother who was very happy to see me. A few days later, a *dogari* (emir's courtier) came with instructions from Sultan Hassan to take me back to Sokoto immediately. We had to trek the 50-kilometre distance because lorry services were not regular. We spent a night at Bodinga and arrived at Sokoto the following day.

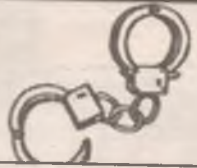
I was taken before Sultan Hassan who enquired why I had absconded from school. I told him exactly what happened and he was sympathetic. The normal punishment at school, his councillors said, would be some 12 strokes of the cane. This he considered to be rather severe for a small boy like me. In his genial manner, Sultan Hassan turned to me and said: "Young man, I would like to have a deal with you and if you co-operate you will not be whipped. Will you co-operate?" I replied in the affirmative. He then asked his secretary to give me a piece of paper and pen, and slowly dictated as follows:

I, Shehu Usman, the son of Magaji Aliyu Shagari, do hereby solemnly pledge before the Sultan M Hassan and his Council that I will never again absent myself from or be late to school without permission, and that I shall henceforth strictly obey the school rules. I shall never allow myself again to be reported to the Sultan for any reason whatsoever.

Sultan Hassan asked me to sign the pledge, which he then counter-signed. Thereafter, he sent me over to the headmaster with the signed statement and a directive that I should not be punished. But he added that I should be reported directly to him in the event of a breach. The incident greatly influenced my subsequent behaviour. I could never bring myself to break the pledge. The action of the kindly Sultan was in a way the most effective 'punishment' I have ever received. How many leaders in his position would have cared to strike such a sensible and humane deal with a recalcitrant village boy? It was a powerful lesson in enlightened and benevolent leadership. And it was not a freak incident. Sultan Hassan was well known as a clear and firm voice for the success of western education.

When we entered the final class in 1940, Mr Shillingford and other teachers gave us intense coaching for our final examinations, especially the entrance examination to Kaduna, later Barewa, College. Competition among the twelve middle schools in Northern Nigeria for places into the college, then the only secondary school in the North, was fierce. Ironically, while the teachers were keen to see us pass the entrance examination, the pupils were not. Our interest was limited only to acquiring the Middle IV Certificate. Many of us therefore deliberately refused to do well in the final examinations to avoid being sent away to Kaduna, a place we considered as no different from abroad.

To be continued.



Crime & Punishment



Court reinstates dismissed FCDA staff

By Uwem Umo

An Abuja High Court, Tuesday ordered the authorities of the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) to reinstate one Mr. Isaac Elujoba, a former assistant Chief Technical Officer (ACTO) of the authority.

Justice Ademola Kuti, delivering judgment in suit number FCT/HC/CU.245/99, (Isaac Elujoba Vs. Hon Minister of the FCT), declared that "the purported dismissal of Mr. Elujoba from his post was null and void as it does not admit of any justification

on moral or administrative ground."

Justice Kuti declared that the purported letter with reference No. FCDA/55/X/112/11 dated April 16, 1999 is "absolutely invalid" and made a declaration "for reinstatement of Mr. Isaac Elujoba back to his post as Acting Chief Technical Officer of the FCDA."

The Judge held that "the letter that described an Acting CTO as Principal Technical Officer (PTO), to with, Acting Chief Technical Officer as PTO is to say the least rash, hasty and ill-considered and is not acceptable to the principles of Equity and Justice."

He ordered that the emoluments of Elujoba from the purported dates of dismissal should henceforth be paid to him on his reinstatement.

Justice Kuti gave a specific order that the judgment be brought to the notice of the minister of the FCT "to ensure that the law does not act in vain and that no court will give a judgment that could not be executed."

It will be recalled that Mr. Elujoba had been purportedly dismissed from the services of the FCDA through a letter dated April 16, 1999 and signed by one A. A. Talida rather than the Minister.

However, counsel to the aggrieved man, Chief Karina Tunyan instituted an action against the FCDA.

Chief Tunyan in his originating motion sought a declaration in terms of unjust dismissal of Mr. Elujoba from the services of the authority.

The counsel also sought the court to determine the issue of law relating to Decree 17 of 1984 now abrogated but which was the enabling law at the time when the purported action was taken and also to determine whether certain purported acts were validly executed under the laws of that material time.



Arch. Ibrahim Bunu

Applicant drags Union Bank to Court

From: Shehu Abubakar, Benin City

An applicant, Mr. Imasuen Broderick of No. 116 Upper Lawani Street, Benin City has dragged the Union Bank Plc. to a Benin High Court in suit No. B/847/2000 claiming the sum of nine hundred million (N900,000,000.00) as damages for libel and defamation of character.

Mr. Broderick claims to have suffered in the hands of the Bank officials when he went to their Akpakpava Branch, Benin City, to cash a cheque No. 00090020 in respect of Current Account No. 235110561 for fifty thousand naira he claimed to have been given by his former employer, Dr. Enahoro who is the Provost of the College of Education, Benin City.

In a 24-point statement of claim submitted by Barrister Olayiwola Afolabi, counsel to Mr. Broderick, the plaintiff said that when he submitted the cheque to a female cashier of the bank, he was given a numbered tally disc while he waited for hours on end without being paid. When he insisted that he be attended to, Mr. Broderick claimed that the cashier summoned him and one other strange person who later turned out to be one Mr. Aisudo Ihenyen and presented his cheque to him bearing strange signatures at the back of the cheque signifying that the cheque might have been paid to another person. Mr. Broderick denied the different signatures at the back of the cheque.

Kaduna State Rehabilitation Board Secretary drags to court

From: Dare Oyewole, Kaduna

The Secretary, Kaduna State Rehabilitation Board, Alhaji Sadiq Abdullahi Iyau has been taken to a Kaduna Magistrate Court in connection with theft of a computer monitor.

According to the Police First Information Report (FIR), Sadiq was accused of stealing the machine valued at N16,000.00 belonging to his employer, the Kaduna State Government.

He was alleged to have stolen the computer monitor from his own office at about 1pm on December 30 last year.

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Abuja News

Lack of equipment stalls re-opening of Wuse hospital

Stories by Musa Badamasi

The Wuse General Hospital cannot be put to use one year after renovation work on it was completed, thanks to lack of equipment.

The situation has greatly affected health service delivery in the Federal Capital City, Abuja.

The hospital was in state of general disrepair in 1998 which necessitated total rehabilitation and comprehensive renovation to the tune of N100 million. The job was completed in 1999.

The Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) public building and maintenance department inspected and certified it okay for use.

The hospital is now wearing a new look but it cannot be put to use be-

cause such necessary equipment as beds and other medical equipment are lacking.

Most of the doctors, nurses and other health workers at the hospital have been redeployed to Garki and Gwarimpa hospitals, pending when the Wuse hospital would be actually ready for use.

When contacted, FCDA director of health services, Dr. Moses Ayo said that the government was aware of the problems of the hospital. "We have already started arrangement to ensure that the hospital takes off within the shortest possible time", he explained.

Dr. Ayo disclosed to *Daily Trust* that notice had been placed for competent companies to come forward with proposal to

bid for the supply of medical equipment to the hospital.

He confirmed that the

problem is not only peculiar to the Wuse hospital but affects other health centers in the Federal

Capital Territory (FCT).

According to him, seven companies had already submitted propos-

als to supply equipment to the hospital, "we are now shortlisting the various proposals received before the contract would be finally awarded", Dr. Ayo said.



Scarcity of petrol has become a recurrent decimal in Abuja. Picture shows a queue of vehicles at a petrol service station ... yesterday.
Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje

FCT spends N4m on immunization

About N4 million has been expended to execute the third phase of the immunization programme in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja.

Daily Trust gathered that the money was spent on the central co-ordination of the exercise in the six area councils in FCT, to ensure a hitch-free exercise.

According to Dr. Moses Ayo, director of health services in the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) part of the money was used to facilitate movement of vaccine and trained vaccinators and guides to various locations within the FCT.

He said that eradication of polio in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), is a task that required the contribution of everyone, adding that "In the same vein, other vaccine-preventable diseases in our midst must not be allowed to linger on".

Recently, at the official launching of the programme in Kwali area council, outgoing Minister of Federal Capital Territory, Alhaji Ibrahim Bunu said it was "our collective responsibility to achieve these laudable goals".

He said: "Our young ones must not be allowed

to die or be deformed by any of these preventable diseases because it is the right of every child to be immunized".

It was gathered that under the current immunization exercise, Vitamin A supplement is included to ensure that every child immunized would derive maximum benefit from the exercise.

Dr. Ayo, urged all the vaccinators to en-

sure that every eligible child in the household is brought forward to be given both oral polio vaccine and Vitamin A supplement.

He disclosed to *Daily Trust* that arrangement is underway to carry out post-immunization evaluation exercise so as to determine the level of success achieved.

AMAC relocates Gwagwa main market

The Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), has officially relocated the Gwagwa main market to a new site along Dei-dei road behind the Gwagwa Police Barracks.

Daily Trust gathered that following the



Mrs. Esther Audu, AMAC Chairman.

relocation of the market to a new site, a situation where traders would continue to hawk their wares along the road in Gwagwa would no longer be tolerated.

Already, official notices have been given to ensure that all those involved comply and relocate to the new market site as this development is expected to ease the traffic situation in Gwagwa.

Also, in the new market location, there is provision for motor park where the members of National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) operates.

Sources closed to AMAC chairman, Mrs. Esther Audu, disclosed that arrangement is underway to carry out similar relocation of Karmo and Idu markets to places where people could trade without obstructing the easy flow of traffic.

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SPORTS



Stemming Nigerian football nosedive

By Abubakar Mohammed

For the umpteenth time, the hope of Nigerians was again shattered. No thanks to the uninspiring performance of the national team, the Super Eagles during the last week Nations Cup qualifier against Zambia. It was horrible watching the once most revered team in Africa trying desperately to hold on to a goal lead against the minnows from East Africa.

Not that Zambia is not a strong nation, but with the abundant talent that abound in Nigeria, ordinary countries pitched against her should supposedly be seen cringing with fear. No doubt, Nigerians who have watched last week's game might have to see their darling team, like a phoenix, one day rise up from its ashes. Many reasons have been attributed by analysts as responsible for the lack luster performance of the super Eagles. Some have blamed the treble infection that has become the anthems of soccer development in Nigeria as solely responsible.

The triumvirate of the sports ministry, the N.F.A. and the players constitute the treble infection. Each of these treble infection, the analysts further argue, has rendered ineffective all solutions so far applied. The constant bickering between the sports ministry and NFA over who will call the first shot on one hand and the inordinately incessant demands of the players over their welfare and match allowances on the other have constitute clog in the nations quest to rediscover its glorious days. It would be recalled that the second coming of Bonfrere Jo was strongly pooh-pooed by the then NFA Chairman, Mr. Kojo Williams who was more favorably disposed to having Clemence Westerhof as the technical adviser.

Unfortunately Mr. Sango did't see it that way. He feels it would be much safer if Kojo's wings were clipped. Sango knew the kind of passion football alicit among Nigerians. And for him to continue to remain relevant as the sports minister, he need to be seen constantly at the epicenter of every major decision affecting the running of the game.

Therefore, he decided to find a novice who practically knows next to nothing concerning football administration. And he easily found that in Dominic Oneya, a refined military officer who could at the time of his election or is it selection- be described as mediocre. The catalog of disaster that has trailed almost every various major outing Nigeria has taken part in at various levels, may be only the only thing the minister and his lieutenants could brandish as their achievements. From the Nations Cup co hosted by Ghana and Nigeria to the Olympics held in Sydney, Australia the story is the same. At least Super Eagles could, somehow, be forgiven for not having mother luck, whom

they more often rely on, smile the way instead it smiled the way of the Cameroon's.

But the greatest catastrophe was at the Olympic soccer championship in Sydney last year. As depending champion, the world had expected to see the "Dream Team II" re-enact some of the deft skills that endeared them to many soccer fans. But Nigeria was so mercilessly beaten and eliminated from the competition that many people even forgot it had ever participated.

May be Nigerian sport officials need to be reminded about one obvious fact! A champion doesn't emerge from nowhere. To become a champion, it entails hard work, commitment and dedication

which are at present- conspicuously missing in the nation sports ministry's lexicon. But the big question is does Nigeria presently have the calibre of players needed to qualify the country for the Nations Cup and the World Cup which are both scheduled to take place next year? Frankly speaking the answer is no. If the match played last week against the 'Chipolopolo' of Zambia could be used as a yardstick to measure the technical savvy of the Super Eagles then Nigerians 'aint seen nothing yet'. The team was grossly lacking in cohesion. Most of the chances created were purely opportunist. Nobody could watch that match and not be filled with nostalgia.

However, Nigerians can

still bounce back from the abyss her soccer fortune had sunk to the enviable position it once occupied. And one of the damage control measure the nation's football handlers could adopt is to disband with immediate effect the entire members of the national team and also mandate the technical crew to start hunting for young budding talents that would replace the scrappy bunch that pass as the national team.

It is good that even Dr. Tijjani Yusuf, the NFA secretary General could'nt hide his consternation despite the lone goal scored by the Super Eagles. According to him the country need players that are committed and dedicated who can guarantee her qualification.

Mohammed writes from Badarawa, Kaduna.



Dominic Oneya

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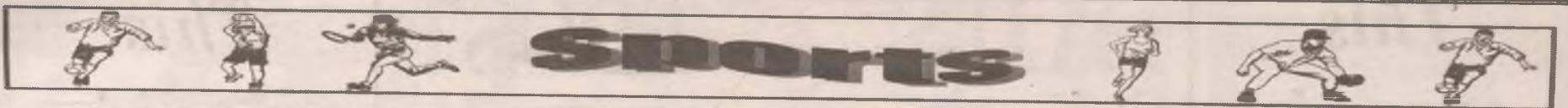
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Agali again!

His brace of goals set Eagles on victory dance

By Ismaila Umaru Lere, Sports Editor

Two headed goals by Victor Agali was all the Eagles needed to brush aside a stubborn Sudan on Saturday and brighten the nation's chances of hoisting her flag at next year's World Cup finals in Japan and South Korea.

Playing in front of a 16,000 capacity crowd at the Liberation Stadium, Port Harcourt, the star-studded Eagles had an uneventful and un-inspiring first half. They managed only one shot at goal in spite of their massive ball possession.

The midfield of Sunday Oliseh, Austin Okocha and Garba Lawal was unimaginative. The trio failed to create openings for strikers Jonathan Akpoborie and Victor Agali to threatened the Sudanese defence, which stood firm and dogged throughout the first half.

Being a very young and inexperienced side, the Sudanese packed their defenceline perhaps in fear of Eagles on slaughter. Mustafa el-Khaled and Mohammed Musa Dawud two of the most enterprising players in Sudan's midfield made few incursions but failed to break the Nigerian rear-guard. Chances on both sides were few and far



Hit man...Nigeria's Victor Agali vies with Reyes of Chile at the Sydney Olympics. He proved to be Eagles hitman with a couple of goals against Sudan.

in-between.

The Eagles seemed a rejuvenated side in the second half. They attacked more adroitly and the game became more lively. The deadlock was broken in the 58th minute when Agali rose above the Sudanese defence and nodded home a Garba Lawal's tantalizing cross from the left.

Moments later Hansa Rostock forward displayed once again his aerial power when he connected George Finidi's beautiful lob beyond the lifted arms of Sudan keeper, Ahmed El-Noar.

Sensing the need for urgency in the attack Eagles technical adviser Jo Bonfrere substituted the

ineffective Akpoborie with Nwankwo Kanu in the 68th minute. That move proved decisive as the Arsenal star got himself on the score sheet in the 89th minute when he finished brilliantly off a goal mouth melee.

NIGERIA (4-4-2)	
Shorunmu, Okpara, Udezue (Babayaro 76), Olorunkwo, West, Oluke, Okocha, Lawal, Finidi, Agali, Akpoborie (Kanu 65).	
SUDAN (5-4-1)	
El-Noar, Yassin, Abdulrazz, Bostawi, Mustapha, Dawud, Amir M, Sharif, El-Khaled (Mohammed M. 52), Mustapha (Kamal 55), Joseph.	
GOALS	0-2
SHOTS	0-3
CORNER KICKS	0-2
FOULS COMMITTED	4-10
POSSESSION	47%-53%
MAN OF THE MATCH: VICTOR AGALI	

Canada bids to host world Cup

Canadian soccer association is working on a bid to stage soccer 2010 World Cup.

Denis Coderre, the secretary of state for amateur sport, said recently that he has received a feasibility study complied by CSA that showed staging the tournament would be viable.

"I'm ready to say that we will go for it," Coderre said.

Coderre said as many as 10 cities would take part in the tournament,

and he said certain cities would be "Calgary, Alberta; Edmonton, Alberta; Halifax, Nova Scotia; Montreal, Ottawa; Toronto; Vancouver, British Colombia; and Winnipeg, Manitoba.

"They're onside. They're willing," Coderre said of the CSA, which would submit the Canadian bid to FIFA. Soccer governing body plans to select the winning bidder in 2004.

South Africa, which lost a 13-11 vote to Germany last summer for the right to stage the 2006

tournament, is the favorite.



Blatter...FIFA boss

Ugali joins Aliyu in Monza

Former U-23 Olympic team inviter, Emeka Ugali has joined Serie "B" outfit, Vicenza for an undisclosed amount.

The player who signed the contract papers on January 17 will be expected to team

up with Aliyu Mohammed who is serving a loan term from Serie A giants AC Milan with the ambitious Naples based Monza.

The attacking midfielder would be complementing his compatriots' efforts in the club's promotion

chase. Aliyu Mohammed's goals have so far put the club firmly on the promotion-chasing path and little wonder they have shown interest in another Nigerian.

Ugali passed the medical test last week.

Lewis: Two more fights and I'll quit

World heavyweight boxing champion, Lennox Lewis claimed he will fight only twice more before quitting boxing next year.

He believes he is much better than anyone else in the heavyweight division - including Mike Tyson - which he plans to bow out while still world champion. Lewis' unthreatened dominance of his sport is set to continue when he defends his WBC and IBF belts against the American Hasim Rahman in Las Vegas on April 21.

After defeating his major rival, Evander Holyfield in 1999 and then establishing an unchallenged reign with three comfortable victories

last year, it only remains for Lewis to defeat Tyson in a grand finale of his career.

He insisted there is a "60-40 chance", the fight will happen - despite Tyson's latest ban from the ring and intense business rivalry between American Cable TV network HBO who back Lewis and Showtime, who backroll Tyson.

Lewis said: "There is no competition out there for me. I am better than any other heavyweight on the planet right now. I will fight twice more at the most."

Lewis admits fans want to see him fight Tyson much more than meeting less known opponents like Rahman.

Rahman is ranked in the world's top ten, but even

Lewis' London promoter Pangs Elliades admitted.

"Lennox will win in two rounds."

Lewis is a victim of his own success and fight other than Tyson is seen as easy meat for him.

Lewis added in an interview with BBC, "Rahman is a worthwhile opponent."

But I know that people will always ask: "why don't you fight Tyson?"

Tyson still has raw power. But it is just his name that is selling point. I want the fight to happen. I don't want to retire and find Tyson come along and claim my titles and say where's Lennox Lewis?

But he knows he cannot beat me in the ring."

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No satisfaction... Prince Nasseem Hamed can toy with lesser talents like Cabrera until the cows come home, but neither the fighter nor his promoter are satisfied with that level of opposition.



Nigeria's Nwankwo Kanu wriggles his way through the Sierra Leonean defence in a World Cup qualifier. Soccer fans are not happy with Kanu & Co. despite beating Sudan 3-0 on Saturday. Pix Omo Oba.

keem Olajuwon



Retiring... Nigeria-born basketball star, Hakeem Olajuwon says he will retire soon from the game after a career spanning over two decades.

World Cup Qualifier: Fans disappointed, despite Sudan mauling

By Ismaila Umaru Lere

Soccer fans who watched the Super Eagles maul Sudan 3-0 at the Liberation Stadium, Port Harcourt felt disappointed with the team's performance.

The fans, who spoke to *Trustsport* in Kaduna after the match were vividly unhappy with the shoddy

manner Sunday Oliseh and Co. earned their victory last Saturday.

"Can you imagine such mediocrity from our foreign-based professionals against the young, inexperienced and unexposed Sudan," fumed a fan.

Nigerians expected an emphatic win to improve its goals aggregate as compared to arch-rivals Ghana.

"We feel that the Eagles should have come up with a scintillating performance not only to enhance our position on the group table, but to send the warning signals to other opponents, notably, Ghana," says Aminu Muhammed who also believed that technical adviser Jo Bonfrere hadn't done anything to earn credit for the victory.

"I think the Eagles win

because of their superiority in experience and individual flair over Sudan. I haven't noticed any of Bonfrere's technical input in the Eagles game".

Majority of Nigerians felt that the football authorities should fine-tune the team's preparations for the nation to realize her dreams of reaching the World Cup finals in Japan/South Korea next year.

Professor Nomau's travails, written & illustrated by Bulama Mustapha

