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Ogbulafor in the dock over N104m fraud

PHOTO: FELIX ONIGBINDE

By Adelanwa Bamgboye



PEOPLES Democratic Party National Chairman Chief Vincent Ogbulafor in the dock at the Abuja Federal High Court yesterday.

PEOPLES Democratic Party's (PDP) National Chairman Prince Vincent Ogbulafor was finally arraigned in court by the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) yesterday, but he challenged it to prove each of the 16 count criminal charges preferred against him.

Ogbulafor as well as Emeka Ebilah, Henry Ikoh and Jude Nwokoro all pleaded not guilty to all the charges preferred against them before Justice Ishaq Bello of the FCT High Court, Maitama, Abuja.

The accused persons were all admitted to bail in the sum of N5m each with two sureties in like sum. The prosecution led by Chief Solomon Adegboyega Awomolo did not oppose their bail applications. However, counsels to the accused persons submitted that having regards to the social status of all the accused persons, they should be admitted to bail on self recognition.

Ogbulafor, clad in a light blue agbada with a red cap, was represented by Joe Gadzama SAN. Emeka Ebilah, (the second accused person) was represented by Awa Kalu, SAN, while Henry Ikoh (third accused) was represented by Chris Uche, SAN.

All charges were dropped against the fifth accused person - Emmanuel Bosah, after the Court was informed that he was already

deceased and a death certificate was tendered.

ICPC had alleged that Ogbulafor, Ebilah and Bosah in March 2001 used their offices as Minister of Special Duties, Secretary/Member, National Intelligence Committee (NEIC) and Director Budget Implementation, Federal Ministry of Finance respectively to conspire and receive through a proxy, Henry Ikoh, N82m from the Federal Government of Nigeria in the name of a company, Henchriko Nig. Ltd.

Ogbulafor, Ebilah and Bosah were alleged to have conspired to use the NEIC contract verification panel to verify fictitious contracts

“ Accused persons were all admitted to bail in the sum of N5m each with two sureties in like sum

purportedly executed on behalf of the Federal Government of Nigeria by a company known as Henchriko Nig. Ltd.

The ICPC alleged that the accused persons used their positions to fraudulently receive from the Federal Republic of Nigeria the sum of N11, 519, 906.25 through a proxy Chris Abujah in the name of company DHL Consultants as payment for fictitious contract purportedly executed on behalf of the

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Vice-President

IBB demands free hand for Jonathan

By Abbas Jimoh with agency reports

PRESIDENT Goodluck

Jonathan should be given a free hand to choose his deputy, former military President Ibrahim Babangida

said yesterday.

Babangida told NAN in a telephone interview that it would not be fair for any-

body or group to impose any candidate that might not be the choice of the President.

“It will not be fair for some people to choose a candidate for the President

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Takai resigns to vie for Kano guber

From Auwalu Umar & Ruqayyah Yusuf Aliyu, Kano

ALHAJI Salihu Sagir Takai who was endorsed at a rally last week by Governor Ibrahim Shekarau for next year's governorship election has resigned as Kano State Commissioner for Local Government Affairs to contest the race.

Takai announced his resignation at a press conference in Kano yesterday.

His resignation, he said, followed "incessant calls" on him from the various segments of the society to contest the gubernatorial election. He thanked Governor Shekarau for giving him the opportunity to serve under his administration for seven years as

commissioner for water resources and later commissioner for local government affairs.

He said for a politician to be called upon by his supporters to contest for a position, it is only fair and appropriate to heed the calls. The resignation, according to him, will accord him the opportunity to make contacts with his supporters for advice and guidance to accomplish his political aspiration.

Takai promised to form a broad-based and open government if elected Kano governor in next year's general elections, saying also that his government would continue from where that of Shekarau stops.

"We shall continue from where the present administration stops in order to ensure continuity. My government will not

be different from that of Malam Ibrahim Shekarau", he said.

He said when he held sway as commissioner for water resources, the 150 million liter per day Tamburawa water project was conceptualized and executed. This was in addition to the successful laying of 17km water pipe line along Tamburawa and Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital and execution of various water reticulation projects in the state, he said.

On the legacy he would bequeath as commissioner for local government, the governorship aspirant said he helped to strengthen the rapport and synergy between the state and local governments in such areas as counterpart funding of

regional water schemes and support for sharia implementation agencies.

Takai, a two time local government chairman, is a HND holder in Business Administration from Kano State Polytechnic. He once worked at SCOA for five years as spare parts controller.

Meanwhile, the name of chairman of Kiru Local Government Area Alhaji Aliyu Datti Yako has been forwarded to the state House of Assembly for confirmation as commissioner to replace Takai at the Ministry of Local Government Affairs. Yako is one of the local government chairmen from the state who openly declared support for Takai's governorship aspiration.

Four die in cultists/OPC clash

From Kehinde Akinyemi, Abeokuta

FOUR members of a cult group including their leader were feared dead yesterday in a violent clash between the group and members of the Odua Peoples Congress (OPC) at Ifo in Ifo Local Government Area of Ogun State.

The clash paralyzed socio-economic activities as markets, public and private offices remained closed for several hours, as the rival groups went after each other. Trouble started when the leader of the OPC group in the area, one Olaiya, was allegedly killed in a confrontation with the cultists on Sunday.

Our correspondent gathered that following the wide spread report that the OPC leader had died early yesterday, his members went for a reprisal against the cultists and in the clash, four members including the cultist leader identified as Alabede, also known as Abu Agana, were killed.

The clash paralyzed activities at Ifo, Papa, Arigbajo, Ilogbo, Pakoto and Owode. The ever-busy Lagos/Abeokuta road became deserted for hours as motorists plying the road abandoned their vehicles and ran for safety.

The intervention of the police however brought the situation under control. The Council chairman, Sikirulai Ogundele, told our correspondent, "The police have actually restored order. But, contrary to news, the OPC leader is not dead," assuring that peace had returned to the council area at about 2.30pm with the police presence.

Several attempts to get the Police Public Relations Officer (PRO) Muyiwa Adejobi were futile as he did not pick our correspondent's calls.

Man in court over friend's death

From Sharafa Dauda, Maiduguri

MOHAMMED Banye of Cross-Kauwa in Kukawa Local Government Area of Borno State was yesterday arraigned before a Maiduguri High Court for allegedly killing his close friend, Babande Yau Sale, with a knife.

Banye, a Fulani nomad, became jealous



ALHAJI Garba Ruma, Director, UBA Plc; Phillips Oduoza, Deputy Managing Director, UBA Plc; AbdulQadir Bello, Executive Director, UBA Plc, Tony Elumelu, GMD/CEO, UBA Plc; and Alhaji Ja'afaru Paki, Director, UBA Plc, during the Bank's 48th Annual General Meeting in Abuja on Monday.

More condolences for Yar'adua

From Lawal Ibrahim, Katsina

THE President, Court of Appeal, Justice Ayo Salami, led other justices of the court to condole the family of late president, Umaru Musa Yar'adua in Katsina yesterday.

They were followed by the Corps Marshal of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) Osita Chidoka who also led top officials of the agency to the state. Justice Salami described the late president as a loyal and committed person who adhered to the tenets of the rule of law and refused to interfere

with court activities even as he praised him for initiating various reforms which Nigerians stand to appreciate in the course of time.

Mr Osita Chidoka who said he was in the state to register the corps's heartfelt condolences, described Yar'adua's loss as a personal loss to them due to the special interest he showed for the organization. In the same vein, the former emir of Gwandu, retired Col Mustapha Jokolo who also led a delegation to the state governor, described late Yar'adua as a man of peace and a good friend with whom he had worked for years

under his late older brother, Shehu Musa Yar'adua.

Others include a delegation from the NURTW led by its National Chairman, Alhaji Gidado Hamman, ALGON President, Dasuki Jalo Waziri, DG NYSC, Brig. Gen. Maharazu Tsiga, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria led by its VC, a council of Ulama and a Group of Imams from Niger Republic led by one Aliyu Mohammed MaiYasin. The Emir of Katagum was also represented by Dan Amar Katagum, Alhaji Ahmed Gadauci among others.

and stabbed his friend twice in the chest after suspecting that his wife was secretly having an affair with him after she refused to live with him in their matrimonial home, preferring to stay with her parents, the court was told yesterday.

Our correspondent gathered that the nomad stabbed his friend on October 31,

2009 somewhere around Cross-Kauwa in Kukawa and is being charged with culpable homicide, an offence punishable with death as provided in Section 221 (b) of the Penal Code. The accused pleaded not guilty when the charge was interpreted to him in Fulfulde by a court official.

The suspect, who appeared frail and

weak in court, was said to have visited his friend at his village near Cross-Kauwa and persuaded him to accompany him to an unknown destination before killing him. The presiding judge, Justice Gana Alkali Wakil, adjourned the case to June 8, 2010 to allow the prosecution present witnesses and tender exhibits against the accused.

Jonathan moves into Yar'adua's office

By Mohammed S. Shehu

PRESIDENT Goodluck Jonathan yesterday officially resumed work in his new office at the Presidential wing of State House, four days after he was sworn-in as President and Commander-in-Chief.

Jonathan also performed his first official duty at the President's office by receiving the visiting Gambian Head of State Yaya Jameh represented by his Vice President Isatou Njie Saidu.

Saidu came to the State House to commiserate with him over the death of former President Umaru Musa Yar'adua and congratulate

him on his assumption of office as president.

A source at the Presidential Villa disclosed to Daily Trust that the President had earlier held meeting with the Secretary to the Government of the Federation Yayale Ahmed before he proceeded to the new office.

Jonathan became President Thursday last week following the demise of Yar'adua on Wednesday. His resumption fell 2 days short of the expiration of the seven-day national mourning declared by the Federal Government in the wake of Yar'adua's death.

Jonathan was accompanied

to the new office by his Principal Secretary, Mr Mike Oghiadome, the Chaplain of Aso Villa Chapel, Ven. Obioma Onwuzurumba, and other aides. Onwuzurumba offered prayer for Jonathan before the President left the office for Aguda House after about 30 minutes.

The President Jonathan has been operating from Akinola Aguda House, the official residence of the Vice President since February 9 when he was made acting president. He is expected to relocate to the Presidential Villa with his family any moment from now to pave way for a new

Vice President to occupy Aguda House, the vice president's official residence.

Commenting the Gambian visit, Jonathan, who is the Chairman of ECOWAS, said that he would do everything possible to move ECOWAS forward and achieve integration among the States in the sub-regional body.

Jonathan extolled the relations between Nigeria and the Gambia noting that both countries are traditional allies. He said the two countries would work together to strengthen their relations.

Responding, Saidu said she

was in Abuja to convey the commiseration of the Gambian Head of State Yaya Jameh over the demise of Yar'adua and to felicitate with Jonathan over his assumption of office as President.

Jonathan also received a special delegation from the State of Qatar, led by that country's Minister of Islamic Affairs, Ahmed Abdallah, who brought a special condolence message from the Emir of Qatar, His Highness Sheik Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani. He thanked the government and people of Qatar for their friendliness and solidarity with Nigeria.



Power outage again at Lagos airport

THE power outage which hit the Murtala Mohammed International Airport, Ikeja, for about three hours on Sunday recurred yesterday. The outage occurred between noon and 3pm, disrupting activities within the terminal building of the airport. The situation left some parts of the building with light while others remained in blackout.

Following the development, the Minister of Aviation, Mrs Fidelia Njeze, reassured air travelers of the Federal Government's commitment to providing adequate facilities in the country's airports. She described the incident as unfortunate and apologised to air passengers, while assuring them that adequate steps would be taken to forestall the recurrence of such flaws in future. "I use this opportunity to apologise to all our passengers for the inconveniences they suffered during the outage. (NAN)

Revenue commission considers two to replace Tukur

Idris Ahmed

FEDERAL Commissioners of the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) are considering picking one out of the two most senior Commissioners to act as chairman when the tenure of its current chairman Hamman Tukur elapses tomorrow.

A Commissioner who spoke to our reporter said they may pick either Alhaji Ahmed Iliyasu (Bauchi) or Alhaji Salihu Jega (Kebbi) to act as chairman pending when a substantive chairman is appointed by the presidency.

Three commissioners - Alhaji Ahmed Iliyasu (Bauchi), Alhaji Salihu Jega (Kebbi) and Alhaji Omokayode Anjorin (Lagos) - entered the revenue commission at the same time and their two term tenures end by September. It is the responsibility of the presidency to appoint a chairman for the commission subject to the approval of the National Assembly. The tenure of Hamman Tukur and 24 other commissioners end tomorrow after they might have completed their two-term tenures.

About nine other Commissioners will have their appointments renewed after spending the first tenure of five-year, Daily Trust learnt.

The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Repub-

lic of Nigeria and other enabling laws empower the Commission to: monitor the accruals into and disbursement of revenue from the Federation Account; review, from time to time, the revenue allocation formula and principles in operation to ensure conformity with changing realities.

The Commission was also empowered by the Constitution to advise the Federal, State and Local Governments on fiscal efficiency and methods by which their revenue is to be increased. It was to also determine the remuneration appropriate to political office holders and discharge such other functions as may be conferred on the Commission by the constitution or any Act of the National Assembly.

By statutory provisions the Commission is a member of the Federation Account Allocation Committee, Local Government Joint Accounts Allocation Committee, Joint Tax Board, Commission on Ecological Fund, and National Council on Statistics. The enabling laws also empowered the Commission to demand and obtain regular and relevant information, data or returns from any Government Agency including the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation; Nigerian Customs Service, Federal Board of Inland Revenue, Central Bank of Nigeria, and the Federal Ministry of Finance.

Oil talks stall between Nigeria, China - Adviser

TALKS between Nigeria and China over Beijing's bid to buy 6 billion barrels of Nigeria's oil reserves have been stalled for months due to a dispute over price, a senior Nigerian government official said on Monday.

China last year offered to invest as much as \$50 billion to acquire a large stake in Africa's biggest energy sector, a bid which included incursions into some oil blocks held by Royal Dutch Shell, ExxonMobil and Chevron.

"We have not had any discussions with China for several months," Emmanuel Egbogah, Nigeria's presidential adviser on energy, told Reuters in the capital Abuja.

"We have made our position clear. We told them we want a fair market value for our oil."

Egbogah declined to specify how much Nigeria was seeking for its oil, which usually sells at a premium in

the physical crude markets because it can be more easily refined into fuel products than Middle Eastern grades. Egbogah reiterated that China was unlikely to be given all the reserves it wanted.

The last reported talks between the two countries occurred during Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi's trip to Nigeria in January.

Egbogah said Nigeria remained open to talks with China, but no date had been set for another round of negotiations. Industry executives have said Nigeria is using the possibility of a Chinese bid for its oil as leverage in difficult contract renewal negotiations with its existing Western oil partners.

Exxon is the only one so far to obtain a renewal for its three shallow water oil licences, which currently produce around 580,000 barrels per day, for a further 20 years.

Sokoto records one wild polio virus case

By Ruby Leo

A confirmed case of wild polio-virus case has been discovered in Dange/Shuni local government Area of Sokoto State, paralyzing a 9 month old baby.

The type 1 wild poliovirus is the most dangerous and feared case which is capable of paralyzing children.

Though the country is yet to record any type 1 wild polio virus case this 2010, this is however the first in six months bringing the number to 3 cases of polio in 2010, compared with 240 for the same

Daily Trust had reported that the remaining two cases of type 3 wild poliovirus were discovered in Anka local government area of Zamfara and Bomadi LGA of Delta State, on April 9th and January 3rd respectively.

Speaking on the issue, Dr Mohammed Ali Pate, Executive Director National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA), said that drastic and immediate measures have already been put in place to interrupt the spread of the deadly virus.

He said the NPHCDA is working closely with states and local authorities, traditional leaders and other partners to fully investigate and determine the risks to children in the Dange/Shuni LGA and adjoining areas.

The NPHCDA has placed Kebbi and Zamfara states on increased alert for polio cases, with a polio vaccination campaign planned across 20 Northern states from 5-8 June.

Meanwhile the nine-month old boy in Dange/Shuni LGA experienced paralysis in his left leg following a fever on 18 April 2010.

North West lawmakers insist on VP slot

By Turaki A. Hassan

MEMBERS of the House of Representatives from the North West caucus geo-political zone have cautioned President Goodluck Jonathan on the choice of Vice president outside the zone as according to them "to do contrary will not be in the strategic interest of Mr. President."

Lawmakers, politicians and other opinion leaders from the region have been demanding for the Vice Presidential slot since the death of President Umaru Musa Yar'adua last Wednesday who hailed from the region.

Addressing newsmen at the

National Assembly yesterday, the caucus led by Rep. Bashir Adamu Kazaure (PDP, Jigawa) said their demand was in tandem with the provisions of the 1999 constitution which stipulates that all institutions of government should reflect the Federal Character of the Nigerian nation.

Accompanied by Representatives from the seven states of Kano, Kaduna, Jigawa, Zamfara, Katsina, Kebbi and Sokoto which makes up the region, Kazaure said, "We urge Mr. President to do what is right. The North-West should be considered for the position of Vice President. Anything to the contrary would

amount to shutting out the North-West from the centres of power in Nigeria. That step will not be in the strategic interest of Mr. President. The current intense scheming to upstage the North-West in the race for the Vice President is unfair, unjust, condemnable and portends grave danger for the unity of the North in particular and Nigeria in general, more so, this will endanger the geopolitical power equation in the country."

The lawmakers argued that, since late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua hailed from the region and was snatched away by the cold hands of death before the comple-

tion of his tenure, it is only fair and just that a person from the North West be selected to fill the vacant position of the Vice President.

While pledging their total support for President Goodluck Jonathan they however, urged him to remain steadfast and be guided in all his actions by the principles of equity and fairness.

The names being pushed from the North West include that of former Kaduna State governor Senator Ahmed Mohammed Makarfi, former minister and Sokoto State deputy governor Mukhtar Shagari and former Kano State governor and minister of defence Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso.



PRESIDENT Goodluck Jonathan (right) welcoming the Gambian Vice President Aja Aisatou Njie-Saidey, during her condolence and congratulatory visit at the Presidential Villa, Abuja, yesterday.

PIC: NAN

ICPC probes Customs, recoups N600m

By Boco Edet

SIX hundred million naira has been recovered from the Nigeria Customs by the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) which is probing the paramilitary body for allegedly short-changing the federal government in remittance.

The Nigerian Customs was said to have failed to remit its annual unspent balances to the federal government sub-treasury account since 2005 and owes several millions of naira.

The probe was initiated after the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) submitted a report on the alleged shady activities of Customs to ICPC.

ICPC's investigation is also to monitor the revenue generation profile of the government agency to ascertain how much was to be accounted for.

Resident Consultant on Media & Public Matters confirmed the commission was probing the Customs service and had already recovered some money.

Nigerian Customs, the second largest revenue generating organ of government, is permitted by law to withhold 7 percent of its annual revenue.

House of Representatives has endorsed that EFCC be drafted to recover the sum of N46 billion owed Customs by the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) being amount accruing from tax on petroleum products which the Corporation imported into Nigeria within a specified period.

EFCC is also to assist the Nigerian Customs in recovering the sum of \$ 5 billion being unpaid levy by crude oil exporters.

This was sequel to a report on a bill seeking to repeal the Customs and Excise Management Act of 2004 laid before the House of Representatives by the Committee on Customs headed by Honourable Yakubu Dogara.

Ibori: Court adjourns ruling to May 31

THE Federal High Court in Asaba on Monday struck out Chief James Ibori's application asking the court to restrain the EFCC from arresting him before hearing substantive suit on May 10.

Ibori had on April 28 through his Counsel, Mr Joseph Daudu, filed the application for enforce-

ment of his fundamental human rights over alleged fraud involving the shares of some companies.

The suit number FHC/ASB/CS/34/2010 was filed after Justice Ibrahim Buba had refused to grant Ibori's oral application to restrain the EFCC from arresting him. But at the hearing of the main applica-

tion on Monday, Buba struck out the matter after all the counsel to the parties said they would not object to its being struck out.

Respondents in the suit are the Attorney-General of the Federation (AGF), the EFCC, the Inspector General of Police (I-G) and the Director, State Security Service

(SSS). At Monday's hearing, the court also adjourned ruling in the main case to May 31 after listening to Abubakar Mahmud, Counsel to A-G, I-G and SSS.

Counsel to the EFCC, Mr Chile Okoroma and Daudu (Ibori) also advanced their arguments at the resumed hearing on Monday.

Jonathan solicits ANPP's support

By Mohammed S. Shehu

PRESIDENT Goodluck Jonathan has called on all political parties to join hands with the present administration to bring good governance to the people.

This, he said, would be a way to honour late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua whom he said had great vision for the country.

He stated this yesterday when

he received chieftains of the All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP) led by its National Chairman Edwin Ume-Ezeoke, in the State House, Abuja.

Jonathan thanked ANPP for its co-operation, saying the way the party relates with other political parties calls to mind what the late Waziri Ibrahim of the defunct Great Nigeria Peoples Party (GNPP) described as

"politics without bitterness."

He reaffirmed the administration's commitment to conduct credible elections in 2011. According to him "we will come up with a National Electoral body that will conduct elections that will meet the expectations of Nigerians and the International community who are demanding free and fair election next year," he stated.

Ezeoke earlier said the visit was to convey the party's condolence over the death of President Yar'adua and to caution him on his choice of vice president.

He also congratulated President Jonathan on his ascension to the presidency, and prayed that God will help him provide the kind of leadership Nigerians have been yearning for.

Jonathan denies plot to extend tenure

By Mohammed S. Shehu

PRESIDENT Goodluck Jonathan has denied hatching plan to elongate his tenure by postponing the 2011 general elections.

A national daily (not *Daily Trust*) reported yesterday that the purported move to elongate Jonathan's tenure for between six months and two years was being spearheaded by a newly emerged strategists who "contended that the new move for tenure elongation was informed by the inadequate time to complete the ongoing fundamental reforms in the polity."

But Jonathan in statement by his spokesman Ima Niboro said the President has no plan to postpone the 2011 Nigeria's elections, as provided for in the 1999 Constitution, assuring that "the march towards ensuring free and fair elections in 2011 is on course."

The statement described the report as "another attempt to insult the sensibilities of Nigerians, through a flagrant display of irresponsibility."

"The issue of tenure is a constitutional affair, and the presidency has a specified tenure of four years, and not one day more. At the end of the specified tenure elections must be held."

"As far as we are concerned, the march towards ensuring free and fair elections in 2011 is on course."

He explained that the President's immediate priorities were how to tackle numerous challenges facing the country and as such, any talk of tenure elongation was a distraction.

Governors relocate to Abuja

By Mohammed S. Shehu

MAJORITY of the 36 state governors have temporarily moved to Abuja shortly after the death of former President Musa Yar'adua, an investigation by *Daily Trust* has shown.

Daily Trust gathered that the attention of the governors has now shifted to the President Villa, Abuja ahead of the final selection, of a vice president following the elevation of President Goodluck Jonathan on Thursday, a day after the demise of President Yar'adua on Wednesday.

Since the changes in the corridors of power, the governors have relocated to Abuja in order to keep a close watch on the unfolding political intrigues trailing the nomination. The governors, along with other high profile politicians, now turned the Villa into a Mecca of sorts.

Daily Trust observed that even on the swearing-in day, about eight governors visited the Villa. They were governors of Zamfara, Mahmuda Shinkafi; Kwara, Bukola Saraki; Nasarawa, Aliyu Akwe-Doma; Ogun, Otunba Gbenga Daniel; Enugu, Sullivan Chime; Benue, Gabriel Suswam; Oyo, Alao Akala and Imo, Ikedi Ohakim.



SOME of the 20 shops at Rodija Market, Ibadan, which were razed by fire on Sunday night.

Ogbulafor in the dock over N104m fraud

Continued from page 1

eral Government of Nigeria and used NEIC contract verification panel to verify same as executed. It was further alleged that the accused persons used their positions to fraudulently receive through a proxy, Sunday Nmesiriana, N13,704, 214.69 in the name of EMEPROL CO Ltd as payment for fictitious contracts.

According to the ICPC, the accused persons used their positions to fraudulently receive from the Federal Republic of Nigeria through a proxy, Chekwas Obinna, N6.286 million in the name of a company Chekwas Industries Ltd as payment for fictitious contract.

Specifically, the accused persons were accused of holding private interests in the verification by the NEIC contract verification panel and the payment of a consultancy services contract worth N11.68 million carried out by a company called COMP-CON Associates.

All the accused persons were alleged to have used their positions

to hold private interests in the verification by NEIC contract verification panel and payment of a consultancy services contract worth N14, 987, 062.50 carried out by a company called EBILAH-SALMON AND PARTNERS.

Specifically, Vincent Ogbulafor was alleged to have in the month of March 2001 received N28 million belonging to the Federal Government of Nigeria from one Emeka Ebilah through Chris Nwoke. Ogbulafor was also accused of receiving in October 2001 N2 million from one Emeka Ebilah.

On his part, Henry Ikoh was alleged to have in April 2001 received the sum of N7.5 million from one Emeka Ebilah. Jude Nwokoro was alleged to have in November 2001 received N2 million from one Emeka Ebilah through a proxy, Colonel Austin Akobundu.

Before adjourning till 21st, 22nd, 23rd and 24th June, the trial Judge commended all the lawyers that appeared before him in the case for their conduct.

IBB demands free hand for Jonathan

Continued from page 1

on the matter of his vice. My position is that he should be allowed to choose whoever he wants to run the affairs of state with," Babangida added.

He said Jonathan needed a free hand to choose a vice-president who he thinks would help him to pilot the affairs of state at this crucial period in the nation's history.

The choice of a vice-president has attracted comments from diverse groups and individuals since the death of President Umaru Yar'adua last Wednesday night.

Jonathan was sworn in as President and Commander-in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federation last Thursday by the Chief Justice of Nigeria Justice Aloysius

Katsina-Alu at the Presidential Villa, Abuja.

Babangida is an aspirant in the 2011 presidential race under the platform of the People's Democratic Party (PDP)

Meanwhile, the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) has advised President Goodluck Jonathan to choose a Vice President that would not only align with him to deliver the dividends of democracy, but would also be supportive of his desire to conduct free and fair 2011 general elections.

ANPP's National Publicity Secretary Emma Eneukwu, told journalists yesterday in Abuja that the party is concerned because the person that would be picked would not be the Vice President of any particular political party but of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

"Our country witnessed a good working relationship between former President Yar'adua and Dr. Goodluck Jonathan as the Vice President.

Therefore, it is pertinent that President Goodluck Jonathan should search for someone who would align with him to deliver the dividends of democracy. He must be careful over the people who have lined up to grab the slot. The question is, are they really interested in serving the country or their private pockets? Anybody who nurses the ambition to be President in 2011 is not a favourable candidate, because the person will jeopardise any efforts towards conducting a free and fair election.

"President Goodluck Jonathan should be mindful of the fact that

if he makes any mistake in picking a wrong person, he would be blamed at the long run. The National Assembly must hasten actions when the nominee is submitted to them so that there would not be delay in producing a Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria," Eneukwu said.

He said that as the nation mourns the death of former President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, the pressure on Jonathan on the nomination of a Vice President could be adjudged to be right considering the fact that President Jonathan had carried on as an acting President for almost three months.

He advised that Jonathan should resist distraction by pressure from either former presidents, or some emerging cabals.



GOVERNOR Bukola Saraki of Kwara State (left), presenting first class staff of office to the new Olofa of Offa, Oba Mufutau Muhammadu Gbadamosi Esuwoye II in Offa, yesterday. These with them include the State's Commissioner for Local Government, Chieftaincy and Community Development (third right), Olori Mistura Gbadamosi.

Court orders Onovo to reinstate sacked cops

From Adewale Giwa, Akure

ONE year after police authorities under former Inspector General of Police Mr. Mike Okiro dismissed seven policemen in Ondo State, a Federal High Court in Akure yesterday ordered the Inspector General of Police Mr. Ogbona Onovo to reinstate them. The seven had approached the court to challenge what they called illegal dismissal from the force in 2009.

Those affected include, Sergeant Ogunremi Yinka, Sergeant, Arifo Samuel, Ser-

geant Adesina Olugbenga, Sergeant Ayodele Fasore, Sergeant Adejumo Ajose, Corporal Emmanuel Onisa and Constable David Awe.

It would be recalled that the seven policemen were allegedly dismissed from service by the former Inspector General of Police for threatening to go on strike through a publication in one of the national dailies, if they were not promoted.

In her judgment, Justice Gloria Okeke said their dismissal was unlawful.

She ruled that the evidence before the court showed that the plaintiffs had nothing

to do about the publication on January 26, 2009.

According to her, the dismissal was illegal since defendants failed to come up with any defence and necessary documents to prove their case at the court. Okeke noted that the names written on the said documents which caused the dismissal of the policemen were fictitious, stressing that the names of the dismissed officers did not appear on it.

She affirmed that the dismissed policemen were not given fair hearing before they were detained and dismissed.

Blackout: Passengers task airport authorities on facilities

From Nahimah Ajikanle, Lagos

PASSENGERS at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Lagos who on Sunday experienced blackout for hours have charged the airport authorities to fill the gap in facilities.

The terminal building was thrown into darkness between 4.30 pm and 7.00 pm Sunday, the peak period for major European carriers including British Airways, Lufthansa, Air France/KLM, Delta Airlines and a few others.

The power interruption affected major equipment used by airlines and ground handling companies during flight operations which made it impossible for them carry out

boarding or disembarking passengers.

The common user check-in equipment which functions better with stable power and not back up facilities could be put to use during the period and this made the terminal building to be jam parked with passengers.

Passengers that arrived aboard Lufthansa Airlines, Air France/KLM, Delta Airlines, and British Airways were trapped at the conveyor belt axis of the airport, as there was no electricity to facilitate conveyance of their luggage for tracking and collection. Most of the passengers were sweating profusely and wiping their faces with handkerchiefs. They complained bitterly of their experience which they said was characteristic of many airports in Nigeria. They

were bitter that the Lagos International Airport being the premier gateway into the country should be fixed to save the nation the negative image of facility failure.

Normalcy was restored at about 7.30pm after the technical personnel attached to FAAN engineering directorate fixed the faulty cable. FAAN attributed the blackout to a faulty electrical cable that supplies power into the terminal building.

FAAN spokesman Akin Olukunle said the use of alternate source of power could not assuage the situation because the same faulty cable supplies power to the system that controls the terminal, stressing that the authority tried its best to manage the situation.

Yakubu Buari becomes Olomu of Omupo

From Mustafa Abubakar, Ilorin

THE new Olomu of Omupo in Ifelodun Local Government Area of Kwara State, Oba Yakubu Buari Ilufemiloye II was yesterday installed the 16th Olomu of Omupo. Speaking after his coronation by the kingmakers at the palace in Omupo, the monarch said his agenda for the community was to run an all-inclusive administration.

58 year old Buari, a chartered accountant, promised to run an open administration

and consult widely on matters that affect the community.

He enjoined everyone in the community to cooperate with him to develop the town.

"I will involve the community in a participatory government where everybody including the young and old will come together to assist in contributing to the development of the community without hatred", he said. The new monarch had worked with the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board, the defunct Trade

Bank and also as a part time lecturer with the University of Ilorin.

The Chairman, Advisory Council to the kingmakers, Mr. Kayode Odeyemi, stressed the need for all indigenes of the town to come home and develop their community.

Odeyemi appealed to other contestants to the throne to accept the choice of the people and join hands with the new monarch to move the community forward. He thanked the state government for approving the choice of the people.

Man battles to separate baby's 2 heads

From Rakiya A. Muhammad, Sokoto

A man, Malam Sani, of Tambuwal Local Government Area of Sokoto State is fighting to get help to separate the two heads of a baby girl born to him by his wife, Malama Saratu, about a week ago.

Both mother and child are said to be in stable health. Our correspondent learnt in Sokoto early yesterday that after delivery, the baby was taken to the Gumi General Hospital for separation but were later referred to the Usmanu Dan Fodiyo University, Teaching Hospital, UDUTH, Sokoto.

But when contacted, the Public Relations Officer, Usmanu Dan Fodiyo University Teaching Hospital, Tijjani Bello Siddiq, said they had not yet received such case, suggesting that they may not have reached the hospital when Daily Trust got in touch with him.

The financial implication of the case could not be ascertained at the time of filing this report but the man solicited the assistance of the state government, individuals and corporate organisations to facilitate the separation of the two heads.

1 die, others injured in Kano rainstorm

From Jaafar Jaafar, Kano

NINE year old Mohammed Lawan died Sunday while scores of people sustained injuries when a rainstorm devastated many areas of Ungogo Local Government Area of Kano State.

The rain started around 4:50 pm Sunday. Many houses in Sharifai, Bachirawa, Katsinawa, Garun-Iya and other areas of the local government have collapsed due to the effect of the storm.

Witnesses said the storm also brought down electric poles. "Roofing sheets and debris of the collapsed building were seen flying about during the storm," said a resident, Sunusi Lawan Ismail.

According to him, when the rain started they found refuge in a building strong enough to withstand the accompanying storm. Our correspondent observed that the victims are now without proper shelter.

Officials of the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) were also seen around the area yesterday inspecting the wreckage of their installations.

Jonathan urged to overcome personal ambition

From Ibrahim Chonoko, London

A UK-based activist, Ms Alice Ukoko has advised President Goodluck Jonathan against contesting for the presidency so that he could "fulfill the sacred trust destiny has placed on him".

In an interview with the Daily Trust in London, Ukoko urged the president to overcome his personal ambition and lay a solid foundation for democracy and development for Nigeria.

Ukoko, who is the Chief Executive of the London-based Women of Africa Organization (WOA), said Jonathan should regard his position as a "divine trust" and live up to the challenge of charting a credible system for the country, especially on free and fair elections.

"He should hold his office in trust for God, for Nigeria and Nigerians", she said, and urged him to resist pressures and temptations to contest for the presidency in 2011. "He should be wary of praise-singers and

the trotters on the corridors of power who may mislead him into taking wrong decisions", she said, stressing that the same people would be the first to castigate him as soon as he leaves office.

She said if the president reflects on the fact that he did not contest on his own right to be where he is today, he would understand that God placed him there to deliver justice and fair play to Nigerians.

"It is a divine ordination which he should not throw away", she said, stressing that the

president should have the courage to work for the over-all interest of Nigerians and "put his mark on the sands of history".

Ukoko lamented what she described as "lack of an effective government" that could tackle the myriad of problem plaguing the country or provide basic necessities to the citizenry.

She advised President Jonathan to focus on key issues and make a mark rather than taking on the whole issues and end up without making any difference.

PIC:FELIX ONIGBINDE



HOUSE of Representatives Deputy Chief Whip Aminu Waziri Tambwal (right) and Chairman, North-West parliamentary caucus, Basir Adamu during the North-West House of Representatives caucus press conference on zoning of the position of the vice president in Abuja, yesterday.

Yar'adua: Islamic council urges Muslim to organise special prayers

By Abbas Jimoh

MUSLIMS across the country have been enjoined to hold special prayers next Friday at their respective Jumaah Mosques for the repose of the soul of late President Umaru Yar'adua.

The Nigeria Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) gave the advice yesterday in Abuja in condolence message over Yar'adua's death.

Secretary General of the council, Dr Abdullateef Adegbite, who described Yar'adua's death as a huge loss to Nigeria, said the late president was a transparent, honest and sincere leader noted for his humility.

"In the name of his Eminence Sultan Sa'ad Abubakar, President-

General NSCIA and on behalf of the Nigerian Muslim community, I extend heart-felt condolences to President Goodluck Jonathan and the entire nation on the demise of our beloved President Umaru Musa Yar'adua.

He listed Yar'adua's achievements in office to include public declaration of his assets, owning up to electoral defects, setting up of the Justice Uwais Panel on Electoral Reforms, and the historic declaration of Amnesty to the militants.

Adegbite sent condolence messages to Yar'adua's family and the entire nation, and prayed Almighty Allah to forgive his sins and grant him Al-Jannah firdaus.

Suspension of Nnamani, others from PDP: Court fixes May 26 for hearing

By John Chuks Azu

ANFCT High Court in Gudu, Abuja, yesterday fixed May 26 for hearing on a substantive application to quash the suspension of former Senate President Ken Nnamani and 18 others from the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

Others suspended Disciplinary Committee of the PDP along with Nnamani are: They are: Adolphus Wabara, Ken Nnamani, Aminu Masari, Onyema Ugochukwu, Tony Ukasanya, Sony Iroche, Emmanuel Agboti, Sylvanus Ngele and Ifeanyi Ararume. Others are: Achike Udenwa, Rochas Okorocho, Chris Ekpenyong, Abiye Sekibo, Auwal

Tukur, Bawa Bwari, A.B.C. Nwosu, Peter Odili, Kelechi Igwe and Bernard Eze.

The application was filed by the counsel to the suspended persons Kanu Agabi before Justice Abubakar Talba.

The suspended members had earlier obtained an injunction on Thursday, 21st April 2010 restraining the party from conducting the National Working Committee (NWC) meeting of the party which they believed would have been used to ratify their suspension.

The ruling was later modified by the court to the effect that the NWC meeting could go on provided the 'suspension' is not on the agenda.

Biggest police barrack lacks electricity, water

By Misbahu Bashir

THE largest police barracks in the country in Dei-Dei Abuja, with 7,000 houses is left without electricity, roads and pipe-borne water.

There are over 7,000 policemen in the barracks living with their families but they suffer lack of basic amenities. The houses were initially built by the Federal Capital Development Authority but occupied by the police early in 2001.

A police officer living in the barracks said the lack of pipe-borne water in the barracks has worsened its sanitary conditions with the available water closet systems not functioning. "So many policemen cannot use the toilets in their houses," he said.

He said there was no electricity in the houses in spite of its closeness to the city centre. "We need electricity to power our televisions and iron our uniforms. We also want to use our personal computers because certain secu-

urity strategies are got from the internet," he said.

There are no roads linking the houses and no recreational facilities for the officers to use. "In fact if the police authorities did not maintain the houses properly, they will become unfit for human habitation soon," he said. Money is earmarked annually in the police budget for the maintenance of all police houses. Police authorities recently built few pit latrines for collective use of officers.

Abacha's son challenges Swiss \$350m order

AN appeal by the son of Nigeria's ex-ruler Sani Abacha against a court order to return \$350m (£236m) in illegally gained assets has begun in Switzerland.

Abba Abacha was also convicted of being a member of a criminal organisation and given a suspended custodial sentence.

Switzerland began investigating the Abacha family in 1999 and has so far handed back about \$700m to Nigeria.

Nigerian state lawyers believe Sani Abacha, who

ruled from 1993 until his death in 1998, may have stolen \$2.2bn.

The appeal started on Monday at a court in Geneva, officials say.

However, Swiss newspaper Le Temps reports that Mr Abacha, who is currently in Nigeria, would not be attending the hearing.

He was refused a visa to come to Switzerland because he did not apply for it in time, the newspaper says.

NEMA: 5 Northern states risk food shortage

By Abdulkadir Badsha Mukhtar

THE National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) said five northern states risk food shortage following prediction that the rainfall in the country would be short this year.

NEMA Deputy Director Planning Research and Focus Alhasan Nuhu said this while briefing reporters ahead of the agencies meeting with World Food Program.

He said: "I would not be able to

mention the states now, [however] from particular report; I think we have five states at the extreme north. We are now at monitoring stage to see what would come out."

Daily Trust findings however shows that the likely states to be affected are: Jigawa, Kano Katsina, Borno and Sokoto states.

"After NIMET report, NEMA conveyed technical experts to be able to digest the report and to be able to advise the affected states. After the meeting we sent letters to the respected states," he said.

VP: Jonathan asked to shun governors

By Abbas Jimoh & Abdulmutallib A. Abubakar

CONFERENCE of Nigerian Political Parties (CNPP) has urged President Goodluck Jonathan not to appoint any of the governors or politicians within the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) nursing presidential ambitions as his deputy.

The CNPP also said that President Goodluck Jonathan would forget the implementation of post-amnesty deal in the Niger Delta and the provision of electricity as started by late President Umar Musa Yar'adua if he joins 2011 presidential race.

Secretary-General of CNPP Chief Willy Ezugwu also said that Jonathan should be careful

in choosing the Vice-President because the post is a vital one.

Ezugwu said if Jonathan should make the mistake of appointing an ambitious politician whose eyes are on 2011, he may end up having a crisis in his hand at a time Nigerians need dividend of democracy.

He said that with the death of President Yar'adua, Jonathan

should not politicize government activities but see the whole country as his constituency and make sure he attends to the yearning of Nigerians not PDP's.

"I want to call on the new President to do everything as led by his conscience, he should avoid revenge or play a politics of vendetta, he should uphold the principle of rule of law as

laid down by his former boss," he said.

CNPP's National Publicity Secretary Osita Okechukwu said for Jonathan to achieve remarkable gains above what the Late Murtala Muhammad accomplished within 6 months, he must disregard sycophants and not contest the 2011 elections.

JAMB: Candidates to pay N10,000 to view answer sheet

By Maureen Onochie

CANDIDATES who sat for the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) by the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) but didn't get their scores are to pay the sum of N10,000 to be able to see the answer sheets.

JAMB released the examination results on April 23, but 82,000 out of the 1.2 million candidates that sat for the exam did not get their scores when they printed their results from the internet. Nil was attached to all their subjects, except English language.

"People have been coming to pay N10,000 to view their results", the Director of Information Technology Olujide Adisa said.

JAMB said that the candidates did not get their scores because some of them did not shade the answers properly.

According to the Deputy Director, JAMB Registrar's Office, Dr. Yusuf Lawal, some candidates did not shade the proper answers for the proper subjects while others did not indicate the subjects they sat for on the answer sheet.

He said this at a press conference yesterday at the JAMB National headquarter, Abuja.

Lawal advised candidates to read instructions properly during subsequent examinations to avoid similar problems and urged invigilators to guide the candidates on the instructions given before the commencement of the examination.

Meanwhile, the affected candidates staged a protest at the JAMB office yesterday.

"I have been writing this exam for the fifth time - since 2005 - and the same problems always occurred. They either cancel the result or got it withheld", Gloria Asuquo said at the JAMB office.



MAIHA Traditional Dancers performing at the on-going Adamawa State Local Government Areas Agric Show yesterday.

C'wealth tasks Nigeria on gender responsive budgeting

By Akor Ojoma

THE Commonwealth has urged the careful implementation of all action plans for gender responsive budgeting in the country to provide a basis for follow up and eventual support.

Interim Director Social Transformation Programmes Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat

London, Mr Indrajit Coomaraswamy gave the advice yesterday at the advocacy and capacity building workshop on gender responsive budgeting for the Nigerian cabinet in Abuja.

He said the workshop is part of the commonwealth secretariat support towards enhancing gender and economic empowerment in member countries particularly

in the context of the global economic crisis.

Mr Coomaraswamy said following the economic crisis it is increasingly acknowledged that Gender Responsive Budget Initiatives (GRBIs) have a significant added value in enhancing women's economic empowerment, assuring accountability and promoting people's centred economic

governance.

Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development Iyom Josephine Anenih said gender does not refer to women alone and as such gender budgeting is not a call for a separate women budget but one which would accurately identify the various interest groups scrambling for scarce resources.

NEMA officials to be trained on emergency logistics

By Abdulkadir Badsha Mukhtar

WORLD Food Program (WFP) has embarked on a three-day training workshop for the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) officials on logistic management in emergencies.

The training, which began yesterday, was based on the five identified areas in the Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) signed between NEMA and WFP for the management of disaster across the country.

The two agencies would collaborate in areas of rapid food security and assessment training, and capacity building training in

Humanitarian logistics management in emergency.

Others include emergency preparedness and response workshop, telecommunication assessment mission, and emergency preparedness federal and state capacity assessment.

Speaking at the event, NEMA DG, retired Muhammad Audu-Bida said the training is to enhance capacity in contingency planning, assessing more food in the post emergency, quick response-planning, food insecurity, poverty alleviation, proper networking of the warehouses in the country, and attending to the vulnerable groups promptly.

ECOWAS wants private sector involvement in agreement with EU

By Aisha Umar Agaie

ECOWAS ministers negotiating the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union for a free trade area of the two regions have called for the involvement of the private sector.

The minister said the integration of the private sector in the region is important because it will bear the brunt of the regional Common External Tariff (CET) that will accompany the agreement.

The ministers, under the aegis of the Ministerial Monitor-

ing Committee (MMC), said at the end of a two-day meeting in Bamako that the injection of the sector was the best mechanism for securing the private sector interest in the impending agreement with the European Union.

The region is finalizing the elements of a five-band CET after regional leaders approved a 35 per cent tariff under a fifth band that will be levied on certain products to be determined by regional officials in order to, among others things, protect certain West African industries from dumping under the impending agreement.

More Boko Haram suspects arraigned

From Sharafa Dauda, Maiduguri

FOUR suspected members of the Boko Haram Islamic sect were yesterday arraigned on a four-count charge of conspiracy to commit arson, culpable homicide, conspiracy and mischief to set public

places on fire and being in possession of dangerous weapons to cause destruction to houses and property.

The suspects have been in custody since their arrest after the July, 2009 crisis in Borno and some northern states.

The suspects, Alhaji Bukar Goni Baitu, Babagoni Goni Mahinu, Hassan Goni Mahinu and Abubakar Namtuka were arraigned before Justice Gana Alkali Wakil of High Court 11 in Maiduguri. This brings to 164, the number of suspected Boko Haram

members facing trial in the state.

The police are accusing them of committing offences punishable under sections 97, 221, 337 and 103 of the Penal Code which attract death and life imprisonment. The case was adjourned till June 9, 2010.



FROM LEFT: House of Representatives members, Ms. Peace Nnaji, Mr. Gilbert Nnaji, Enugu State PDP Chairman, Mr. Vita Abba and Enugu State Governor, Mr. Sullivan Chime at the donation of cars to Enugu East PDP Local Government Chairmen in Enugu, yesterday.

3 die in Borno auto crash

From Yahaya Ibrahim, Maiduguri

THREE persons including the driver of an 18 seater bus died at the weekend in an accident along the Maiduguri-Koduga road when the driver of the bus lost control due to a burst tyre.

The Borno State Sector Commander of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) Alfred Adegboye

confirmed the incident to our reporter on phone.

According to him, the commercial bus was conveying 17 passengers from the Bama Motor Park in Maiduguri to Gwoza, adding that three persons including the driver died on the spot while others sustained various degrees of injuries.

He said the injured passengers

were rushed to the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital (UMTH) by the rescue team of the FRSC. Adegboye attributed the accident to unlimited potholes on the road and excessive heat in the region, saying with the tyre pounding the potholes severally, they were bound to burst.

He said families of the

deceased had already claimed the bodies.

The sector commander had some weeks ago cautioned drivers against long distance trips due to the harsh weather, saying it could cause mechanical faults in vehicles. He also advised motorists against the use of Tokunbo tyre which he said could easily burst due to excessive heat.

Imo law maker faults automatic ticket

From Johnkennedy Uzoma, Owerri

A member of Imo State House of Assembly, Chief Ray Emeana, yesterday flayed calls by certain groups for automatic tickets for serving lawmakers to return in 2011.

Emeana who spoke with our correspondent in Owerri said any lawmaker, who did not perform to the satisfaction of his constituents should not be given another opportunity.

He said though the Constitution provides that a legislator can continue to serve as long as his/her people want, a non performing lawmaker must not to

be allowed to continue. On the allegation that the state House of Assembly was a toothless bulldog, the legislator denied it, saying those making that statement were doing so because the House refused to unnecessarily take up arms against the governor. Emeana, who is the Chairman House Committee on Information, Due Process and Inter-Parliamentary said the members were doing their duties as lawmakers. He said the Imo House of Assembly could be adjudged as the most vibrant, taking into consideration the quality and number of bills it had passed into law.

Police kill 3 armed robbery suspects

THE Akwa Ibom State Police Command said yesterday that three armed robbery suspects were shot dead in a gun battle with the police last week.

Mr Walter Rugbere, the state Commissioner of Police, said this in Uyo while briefing newsmen on the command's efforts at reducing crime rate in the state. He said two locally-made pistols, seven live cartridges, three GSM handsets, 60 rounds of 9mm live ammunition, an envelope containing prayer requests and N44,290 cash stolen from a church were recovered from the hoodlums.

Rugbere said the robbers were

dislodged by a police patrol team at Ikot Ekpene while trying to rob a hotel.

"Two of the robbers whose names and addresses are not known, were shot dead while others escaped with bullet wounds," he said.

He said in another operation, a two-man armed robbery gang operating with a motorcycle, was smashed, resulting in the death of one suspect while the other escaped. Items recovered from the suspects included one locally-made pistol with two live cartridges, N11,000 cash, a Nokia GSM handset and a Nanfang model motorcycle.

Police task rival Igbo factions on peace

From Yemi Bamidele, Ibadan

THE police command in Oyo State has urged the warring Igbo groups in the state to steer clear of acts capable of breaching the peace.

The state Commissioner of Police Alhaji Baba Adisa Bolanta who spoke at a meeting with the factional Igbo leaders enjoined them to resort to constitutional means of settling any perceived grievances, saying his command would not allow any of the groups to take the laws into its hands.

But the leader of one of the groups, Dr. Anozie alleged that the election by the Igbo General Assembly, Oyo State Chapter, last Saturday in which Chief Alloy Obi emerged as the 'Onyendu Ndigbo' of Oyo State was aimed at causing confusion and deceiving the public. At an interactive session with newsmen, Dr. Anozie said neither the Igbo community in Oyo State nor any competent law court had de-robed him of his headship of the Ndigbo in the state since he was, 'Democratically elected and installed in 1997'.

"Since then, about 14 years now, no court, despite all the cases instituted at various courts by this same group in order to snatch the position has ever ruled that I should stop serving my people in that capacity."

Host communities tackle Dangote Cement over N1bn claim

From Isiaka Wakili, Lokoja

COMMUNITIES in Kogi State hosting Dangote Cement have debunked the claim by the company that it spent about N1 billion on the development of the area. The leaders of the four communities Saturday denied the claim while conducting journalists round the projects purportedly carried out by the company in the communities. The Oba of Oyo, one of the communities, Chief Solomon Obahawu described the company's claim as fraudulent and a calculated attempt to stop the people from demanding for payment for the land it was currently occupying.

"The Dangote Group has not fulfilled any of its promises to the people of Oyo, the boreholes they said they gave us have not produced water since 2005, and there are no schools here. Our conditions are getting worse on a daily basis as a result of the blasting they are doing in our land", he said.

The Bajana of Obajana Oba Idowu Isenibi also described the management's claim as an attempt to rob the host communities.

He therefore urged the chairman of the company, Alhaji Aliko Dangote, to investigate the N1 billion claimed to have been expended on the host communities.



MEMBER, National Association of Sea Dogs West Idahosa (left) with President, National Association of Sea Dogs Emmanuel Bassey at a forum organised by the association in Abuja at the weekend.

Zazzau history confab postponed

THE two-day Zazzau History conference which was supposed to begin today has been postponed to next month due to the fact that the nation is in mourning, following the death of former President Umaru Yar'adua, one of the promoters of the conference and former Solicitor General of Kaduna State Barrister Aliyu Umaru has said.

In a chat with our correspondent in Kaduna yesterday, he said the event will now hold between June 8 and June 10 at the Arewa

House, Kaduna.

He maintained that every other item on the agenda remains unchanged.

The conference will be chaired by Alhaji Abbas Dabo Sambo while the Emir of Zazzau Alhaji Shehu Idris will be the royal host. Governor Namadi Sambo will be the chief host and retired General Yakubu Gowon is expected to be the special guest of honour.

The Sultan of Sokoto Alhaji Muhammad Sa'ad will also grace the occasion.

Gov did not sack 12,000 - Assembly

From Isiaka Wakili, Lokoja

THE Kogi State House of Assembly has dispelled rumour that the state government sacked 12,000 civil servants following last year's staff audit. Barrister

Yunusa Ibrahim, representing Bassa Constituency, yesterday on behalf of the House told our correspondent that the government neither retrenched any worker nor informed the House of any plan to

do so.

The lawmaker, who is also the Chairman of the House Committee on the Governor's Office, said the screening was to purge the state civil service of ghost workers.

"Governor Ibrahim Idris has no intention whatsoever of sacking any civil servant in the state. What he did was to ensure that ghost workers were sent packing so that they do not reap where they have not

sowed", he said.

On the number of ghost workers detected through the exercise, the lawmaker said he could not say the exact number until the final report is submitted to the House. But some of the

affected workers claimed that they were genuine workers, alleging that they were sacked because they were employed during the administration of the former governor, Prince Abubakar Audu.

Plateau gets new JIBWIS head

From Mahmud Lalo, Jos

THE Islamic group, Jama'atul Izalatul Bid'ah Wa Ikamatus Sunnah (JIBWIS) has announced Ustaz Muhammad Nasir Abdul Muhyi as the new Chairman of the Plateau State Council of Ulama.

The announcement by the National Chairman of the council Ash Sheikh Muhammad Sani Yahaya Jingir at the weekend fol-

lowed the death of the former state chairman of the council Sheikh Adamu Ibrahim Mai Shafi.

Mai Shafi, 75, died last month at the Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital Kano after a protracted illness. Abdul Muhyi was until now the Principal, School for Higher Islamic Studies and has served in different capacities in the organization.

Ustaz Aliyu Abdul

Wahabi has also been appointed as the Vice Chairman I of the council, Ustaz Ibrahim Umar as Vice Chairman II, Malam Tanimu Aliyu as Secretary as well as Malam Ibrahim Muhammad Gunda as the Assistant Secretary. Sheikh Jingir called on the new leaders of the council to see their appointments as a call to serve Allah and lead the people in the right direction.

Court adjourns case on Kuru victims to June 14

From Mahmud Lalo, Jos

THE suit filed by the victims of the January crisis in Kuru Karama, Plateau State against the Police Service Commission (PSC), Inspector General of Police (IGP), the Plateau State government and four others has been adjourned till June 14, 2010.

The matter is before the Federal High Court in Jos. The presiding judge, Jus-

tice Binta Aliyu, yesterday adjourned the case to June following a request by the counsel to the Kuru victims, Barrister Ahmed S. Garba, to allow him serve the Police Service Commission, Inspector General of Police, former Plateau State Police Commissioner Mr Gregory Ayanting as well as the Attorney General of the Federation their charges.

The Kuru victims had last month filed a suit

against the defendants at the Federal High Court through their counsel, Barrister Garba, alleging that though, there was a security breach in Jos on January 17, 2010, the defendants actions led to the escalation of the crisis. They are asking for N100 billion as damages. Counsel to the Plateau State Ministry of Justice, Labaran Yunusa, did not object to the request for adjournment.

Coordinator lists gains of Qur'an contest

From Rakiya A. Muhammad, Sokoto

THE on-going national quranic competition will ensure unity and brotherhood among Muslim youths and adherents of Islam in general, the National Coordinator of the programme, Dr. Abubakar Muhammad has said.

Dr. Muhammad who spoke with journalists in Sokoto State yesterday said various states would take

part in the competition and that the competition is in six categories.

He added that participants in each of the categories would be asked to recite verses from the Qur'an. The competition opened last Friday on a sober note due to the death of President Umaru Yar'adua and a special prayer session was held for him.

The closing ceremony which has as Special Guest of Honour Presi-

dent Good luck Jonathan is slated for Saturday May 15, 2010.

Among those expected at the closing ceremony are former President Shehu Shagari, Sultan of Sokoto Muhammad Sa'ad Abubakar and Professor Abubakar Aliyu Gwandu, who is the guest speaker. The Qur'an competition is organized by the Centre for Islamic studies at the Usmanu Dan Fodiyo University, Sokoto.

Jonathan to visit Rivers Thursday

From Muhammad Bello, Port Harcourt

PRESIDENT Goodluck Jonathan is expected to visit Rivers State on Thursday, May 13. The visit which was earlier slated for Thursday last week had to be postponed due to the death of President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, who died Wednesday last week.

According to a statement by the Chief of Staff to Governor Chibuike Amaechi, Chief Ezeunwo Nyesom Wike, the programme for the visit remains the same.

He added that the visit would afford President Jonathan the opportunity to inspect projects undertaken by the Rivers State government and commission those that had been

completed. Some of the projects are the new 100 megawatts power plant at the Trans Amadi Gas Turbine, the groundbreaking ceremony for the monorail project and inspection of the Owerri-Airport dualization project.

He called on the people of the state to come out en masse to welcome the president.

Condolence Message

Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilaihir Raji'un



I Muhammad Sani Abacha on behalf of late General Sani Abacha Family wish to extend our heartfelt condolence to the entire family of late President Umar Musa Yar'adua. We also extend same to Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, members of the Federal Executive Council and members of the National Assembly.

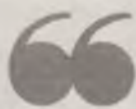
Our heartfelt condolence also goes to Katsina State Government, Katsina Emirate Council, the good people of the State and entire Nigerians on the great loss of a great leader.

We pray God in his infinite mercy will grant his soul eternal rest and make Aljannah Firdaus his final abode.

late President
Umar Musa Yar'adua



Signed
Alh. Muhammad Sani Abacha.



By Abdullahi Usman

The curse of democracy in Northern Nigeria (I)

"An age is called Dark, not because the light fails to shine, but because people refuse to see it".

- James Michener

In virtually every corner of the globe where it is practised in its ideal form, democracy contributes significantly to improving the lot of the population by conferring on every citizen equal rights in determining, from among various contestants, those that have the best prospects of providing good governance in the course of managing the affairs of the polity for a defined period of time. Unlike other forms of governance, it also comes with the added advantage of conferring on the electorate the unique ability to vote out such elected officials during subsequent election cycles in the event that their performance falls below expectations; an obvious reality that serves as a constant reminder to the elected officials to strive towards delivering on their promises to the electorate.

In places where it functions and flourishes without hindrance, rep-

These individuals, who are mainly uneducated or semi-literate, are often encouraged to break the law with impunity

resentative democracy often delivers the bulk of its intended benefits to the people, making it perhaps the most cherished and coveted system of governance known to mankind. These benefits that have now come to be regarded as the proverbial "democracy dividends" in Nigeria, appear in various forms, from the protection of life and property of the citizens, improvement in healthcare and education and development of physical infrastructure such as roads and power, to mention a few. Whether or not our fledgling democratic experiment has succeeded in meeting the yearnings and aspirations of the common man remains a matter of conjecture.

A proper assessment of the level of development achieved in the course of our current democratic experiment is beyond the scope of this discourse, which is to attempt an in-depth review of the unintended burden that democracy (or, to put it more appropriately, its practitioners in the form of the nation's political class), has inadvertently bestowed on the nation, with particular emphasis to the situation in Northern Nigeria. This, of course, has nothing to do with the all too familiar tales of vote rigging that rears its ugly head at virtually every poll conducted in the country.

One major source of concern, for me, is the blatant manner in which members of our political class in the North regularly engage the services of jobless youths as thugs for the purpose of intimidating political opponents and their supporters during elections. These individuals, who are mainly uneducated or semiliterate, are often encouraged to break the law with impunity. Even where the law enforcement agents are able to effect their arrest as they should, those standing solidly behind them, and in whose name they carry out their dastardly activities, always ensure that they are promptly released to resume their assigned task of causing mayhem.

A significant pointer to the serious menace caused by these miscreants is a seemingly innocuous interview granted by a blacksmith to the *BBC Hausa Service* correspondent in the North-East region in the aftermath of the 2007 general elections.

The man bemoaned the sharp drop in patronage, which saw his average sales of machetes, axes, knives and similar dangerous objects from between 25 to 30 units per day in the build-up to the polls, to less than 10 units immediately afterwards! In times past, one would ordinarily expect a boom in the sales of some of these implements to coincide with the onset of the rainy season, as farmers prepare to till the land in readiness for the approaching farming season.

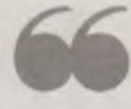
This is, however, not to say that the ugly incidence of political violence is limited to the

North; far from it! After all, some of the major problems bedeviling the nation today, such as the militancy issue in the Niger Delta (or, at least the criminal aspects of it); the frequent unresolved cases of assassinations in the South West, and; problems of armed banditry, kidnappings and extortions in the South East can all be rightly said to have either been initiated by the politicians, who provided arms to these criminal elements during elections, or indeed flourished under their watch!

Even the seemingly intractable ethnic crisis in Jos has variously been linked by some commentators to the obvious differences between some of the major political actors within Plateau State. One obvious danger with this attitude of providing tacit support to these criminal gangs is that they often do get out of control, thereby constituting a serious impediment to the peaceful co-existence and well-being of the society.

If anyone is ever in doubt as to the level of nuisance and threat to life and property that can result from the unchecked criminal activities of these miscreants, that person only needs to pay a visit to the hitherto peaceful North Western State of Sokoto.

To be cont'd.
Usman (usmanabd@gmail.com)



By Aliyu Modibbo Umar

Those dubious awards to governors, etc

I recall an experience I had as a Special Assistant to one time Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF) in the Second Republic, late Shehu Musa the *Makaman Nupe* during his sojourn as a member of the Constitutional Conference Commission.

The late *Makama* by any standards was an erudite personality who garnered experience in public service where he rose to become a Permanent Secretary in the Federal Civil Service in addition to other meritorious appointments.

During the General Abacha regime, I accompanied him to see a senior figure in that administration.

When we got there, I noticed how that person was carrying on with a lot of airs and pomposity and actually kept Alhaji Shehu Musa waiting for over 30 minutes. I found it a bit strange, but the late Shehu Musa betrayed no disappointment at all even if, as I suspected, he didn't like the obvious snob.

Out of curiosity as we left the place, I asked him why the man could behave in such manner towards him. He said 'Aliyu, whenever you see any man of that standard blowing hot air and arrogance in public service, if you scrutinize well you will find out that he is hiding a great deficiency. Either he is incompetent or he is from a poor pedigree'. It was a great lesson for me.

Nigeria has started witnessing such arrogance in the conduct of public servants as demonstrated in numerous but dubious awards being given to them by the media in recent times. More disturbing too is that organisations one can easily call reputable have also joined in this new award giving enterprise.

Where is the conscience of a nation when bandits and gangsters pay their way to become role models?

Take for instance the awards of *Man of the Year* or *Governor of the Year* by media organisations in this country. A leading media organisation initiated this and at the very onset, credible personalities from Nigeria and beyond the shores of Nigeria were honoured with such awards. It became not only a model in recognising excellence and good governance but it also acted as an inspiration for achieving excellence.

However, Nigerians have watched this noble concept completely submerged in the sludge of dubiousness. What started nobly has degenerated so lowly that people with dubious and questionable characters as well as buccaneers in office are the ones getting those awards. What went wrong? How can Nigerian media be celebrating depravity at a time we need to put our acts together having in mind that it ought to be the catalyst for the change we need?

Let's take an example of the award of *Emerging Tigers* of the recent past by a respected and leading newspaper in the country. In that category, after going through the list of the recipients, one is inclined to believe that the title 'Emerging Tigers' was a misnomer for that award, given the fact that most of the recipients' morals are elastic in the minds of the public. This is happening because there are no stipulated and standardized criteria for these awards. Some musings point to the fact that some of these awards are purely political with most of the recipients having to pay to be recognized! This is absurd.

Where is the conscience of a nation when bandits and gangsters pay their way to become role models? What impact will this trend have in governance and the governed when criminals who ought to be locked up in jails wind up being eulogised as the integrity of the Nigerian nation? The media's major role is to protect society against such morally bankrupt individuals but when the media allows itself to be sucked up by corruption as promoted by these dubious individuals, then our society is being viewed from the wrong end of a telescope! Now see where this trend has led Nigeria to.

Every organisation in the country has now instituted one sort of award or the other. National Association of Nigerian students (NANS), Nigerian Medical Association (NMA), and Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) are a few of these.

Not too long ago, Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) which I used to belong to, gave the most laughable award to a state governor whose state is notorious for gangster politics culminating into inflation of contracts, intolerance of opposition, lack of rural development and who regrettably runs the state from Abuja where he is resident.

This same governor used his state much needed funds to sponsor live coverage of the ceremony on Nigeria's two major television networks. We were witnesses of some governors in the past that ran the affairs of their states like a personal business, sponsored and bought several awards and chieftaincy titles and who are now either on the run for monumental fraud and corruption or are hiding in shame-only extending doomsday through the now notorious perpetual injunctions against investigations and arrests. They had the leeway to perpetuate anomaly because the media and society that were supposed to condemn them rose in recognition, even when their dubious activities puked rational citizens. This is what these dubious awards are engraving in our society. It is pathetic.

In all honesty, after a thorough scrutiny, out of the over 10 governors that have received these awards, maybe one or two have made tangible progress in achieving the millennium goals which include but not limited to healthcare, education, eradication of hunger and poverty and reduction of maternal and child mortality. The others cannot point to a single sector they have positively affected in their states.

To be concluded.
Dr Umar was a former Minister of the FCT.



Your Letters

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Who should be vice president of Nigeria?

As usual, the sycophantic harvest drums are out and the loudest noise is being made simply because Nigeria wants to appoint a Vice President. The hype is so intriguing and deafening that it is catching and drying up every living organism in the country. It is as if without it, there will be no more life here! Yet, assuming that all the constitutional criteria are met, going through the list of the names being touted, one can easily say that they all cannot stand the test of morality for leadership.

One of the most important qualities of our next Vice President (VP) is that he/she must

have the characters of the immediate past VP, Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan (GEJ). GEJ's interesting characters in this regard are that he was obedient even to the wives of his bosses, cool, matured on every issue of the state and loyal to the last second. I am sure that if GEJ were to be the VP to Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, that *roforof* fight with Alhaji Atiku would not have occurred.

Who should be our next VP should show Nigerians how less corrupt he/she was or has being in positions of high responsibility; this is not a *yeah* or *nay* issue, it is a more serious business, not that of mere formality that does not add any value to our democracy. We need proof on how they were able to stem corruption in those offices they had occupied before or are still occupying. What we need is a fresh, young, intelligent sound mind probably from the private sector who will apply a business-

like attitude with unqualified and decent passion to work with our President and achieve the best within twelve months. The current Minister of State for Finance is a good example of the character that we are looking for here.

Discipline is the hallmark of a good leader. It suggests focus on critical or most important issues. Today, that issue is how to bring to reality the existence of steady, affordable and cost-effective electric power in Nigeria come May 2011. My people of *Ikwerre* will say that one piece of advice is enough for the wise person.

The time is short and requires incisiveness and clear path. This is one good trait of the *Ijawman* when it comes to politics and I know that President GEJ will always be the son of his father. Mr President needs more than good luck

Okachikwu Dibia, Abuja.

Text us on 08 131 8000 30

Vice President of Nigeria

PRESIDENT Goodluck Jonathan should think rationally about the VP issue and display his choice; otherwise those people that have exhausted their time will be driving him up and down, and he has no time for that.

MURTALA Dukku, Gombe, 08061254603.

OBJ involved in this one too?

OBJ is out, once more, to impose a VP on us. We hear he has particular candidate he is pushing. If Obj succeeds, it will be the beginning of another weak foundation for the North. Nobody is crying fowl yet until failure dawns on us. Why is Obj given so much latitude to do so much damage to our collative will? We are still wiping our tears from more than two years of wasted time and resources. The irony of it all is that Obj seems to enjoy our pains!

DRISU, Kaduna, 08035760568.

Ignore professed do-gooders

IN nominating a vice president Dr Jonathan should no listen to fake advice if his goal is a better Nigeria.

MUSA Dauda, Toro, Bauchi State, 08068640203.

Nominee must be outstanding

PRESIDENT Jonathan has all the skills to choose a good vice president in his administration for good governance. His last action, when he reshuffled the cabinet, attests to that point. When choosing a good vice president for this country, Jonathan should however consider the greatest support given to such person as well as his selfishness commitments to the development of Nigeria as a nation.

MUNTARI Bala BK, Katsina, 08030433517.

A timely warning

LT Gen TY Danjuma and the members of Presidential Advisory Council acted wisely and they are right on the advice to President

Goodluck Jonathan about not putting himself as candidate for president in 2011.

KABIR I. Goje, Jalingo, 07065550394.

Don't push your luck, Jonathan

IF Goodluck Jonathan comes out in public and proclaims that he will not contest in 2011 then I would agree he is real good luck man; but if he says he will contest then he luck could turn sour for the nation.

ABBA Usman, Nguru, Yobe state, 08036808284.

Mission accomplished?

THE propaganda in some newspapers, the demonstration led by Wole Soyinka and his posse, etc, all in the effort to force Umar Yar'adua to resign, have all come to pass. The honest leader is gone and suddenly every one says he's done well. These groups and people do they now feel a sense of fulfilment?

SULAIMAN Aliyu, Yaba, Lagos, 08061617077.



By Bolaji Samson Aregbeshola

The failed attempt to impeach Bankole's loyalty

I wonder when Nigerian legislators would come to understand that impeachment does not mean removal from office. It means accusation of a public official for gross misconduct and finding that official guilty. The recent threats of impeachment of loyalty by some group against the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Dimeji Bankole would have had serious consequence on the Nigerian political system if such a plot had not been averted. The move in the lower house could have overheated the polity. I do not know why legislators who are supposed to be focused on how to develop their constituencies and pass bills that will affect the lives of Nigerians are often busy making impeachment for oppression.

A person can only be impeached if found guilty of gross misconduct in the performance of the function of his office; but impeachment in Nigeria is often done outside the purview of the constitution. The spate of impeachment by Federal and State legislators in the present dispensation is worrisome, the reason why Nigerian legislators must be careful in their use of impeachment.

Forcing Patricia Etteh to resign in the cloud of the scandal over contracts to refurbish her official residence and purchase luxury cars for the House leadership was quite understandable but the attempted removal of Bankole because he was seen as being loyal to Yar'adua, and ipso facto not keen on Dr. Jonathan's emergence as Acting President, was uncalled for.

This again brings me back to the issue of power play which has now become the order of the day among most Nigerian politicians. Every government institution and constitutional processes/procedures are now used as tools by our politicians to achieve their political ambition. It is evident that the power game among politicians has over the years caused their lack of paying no attention to the challenges facing Nigeria as a country. There is no sector of the economy that government can boast of improving in the last 10 years of democratic governance.

One would have expected members of the House of Representatives to begin impeachment proceedings against Bankole when the controversial lawyer, Festus Keyamo petitioned the Speaker and other principal officers of over-invoicing in the purchase of five cars each for the 27 committees of the members of the House of Representatives; but that did not happen. Soon afterwards, the House committee on Ethics and Privileges exonerated Bankole and other principal officers.

Few months later, some members of the house started a plot to impeach Bankole whom they absolved from impropriety during their investigation over suspicion of his loyalty to President Jonathan. It really goes to show how mischievous Nigerian lawmakers have become. They close their eyes to issues of gross misconduct among some members but are quick to call for impeachment when a colleague refuse to align himself with their way of thinking. The basis for Bankole's impeachment which some lawmakers listed as abuse of member's privilege, breach of trust, non-adherence to known legislative practices and gross abuse of office were targeted to rope him. Bankole was also queried on why he attracted over 21.8 billion naira projects to his constituency to the disadvantage of most members. He may be guilty of some of this charges; but the lawmakers' accusation came a little too late.

Impeaching Bankole to pave the way for the invocation of section 144 to declare late Yar'adua incapacitated and make the then Acting President, Goodluck Jonathan a substantive president should be the last thing on the minds of those who were resolved to remove Bankole, because the constitution is clear on the matter. But this issue became politicized because Nigerian lawmakers don't do the right thing even when the position of the law is known. If the lawmakers were sincere in the discharge of their duties, the late Yar'adua would have been declared unfit before his death but the National Assembly was divided among itself with some pledging their loyalty to the late Yar'adua while others to President Jonathan. It is unfortunate that most Nigerian lawmakers put their personal interests before the constitution which they swore to defend and uphold at all times. They have reduced the constitution to a mere document that they do not have regard for its governing principles. Though the 1999 constitution needs to be amended, it remains the law governing Nigeria and no individual regardless of their status or position should disregard the constitution because they think it is weak and flawed.

My advice to members of the National Assembly is that they should not politicize the processes that will lead to stabilizing the political system. The attempted impeachment of the Speaker Bankole was unnecessary.

Aregbeshola wrote Lagos (smarekismet@yahoo.com)

DAILY TRUST

EDITORIAL

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Rescind VAT hike

A recent plan by the federal government to increase the Value Added Tax (VAT) from five to 10 percent once again highlights the debate over governments' apparent insensitivity to the excruciating hardships that citizens currently grapple with. The proposed VAT hike, made at the 122nd joint meeting of the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) and the Joint Tax Board (JTB) barely three months after the release of \$2.5bn to state governments from the excess crude account, is indication that all is not well with the system.

At the tail end of the Obasanjo government in 2007, VAT charges was raised from 5 to 10 percent, but was reversed by the incoming Yar'adua administration following public outcry against the increment. We wonder what has changed to persuade the FIRS to seek to dust its file and reintroduce the proposal now, besides claiming that that the nation's revenue profile had dropped. We also wonder whether the social cost to the livelihood of Nigerians had been taken into account before the proposal was even contemplated. As an import dependent economy, the cost of imported finished goods and raw materials which attract VAT charges will naturally skyrocket beyond the miserly earnings of the average Nigerian household. No doubt, the increment would also have a negative impact on the growth in industrial output as well as in the welfare of Nigerians because manufacturers and service providers will find the perfect excuse to ramp up prices of goods.

Increasing VAT charges at a time when the economy is in de facto depression would lead to high level of unsold goods, thus creating avenue for employers of labour to lay off workers which will in turn add to the already high unemployment rate in the country. Furthermore, providers of services will suffer decline in patronage while essential services that attract VAT such as power, water, and financial services would become virtually unaffordable. The bottom line is that the drive for revenue by governments should not constitute a threat to the survival of business, and the overall living standard of the citizens. Of course, government has much to handle as far as service delivery is concerned, but the impulse to hike VAT without working out how best to cushion its side effect would add a further burden, especially at a time like this that hardship in the land is at its peak.

Given this scenario, it is necessary for the federal government to rethink the issue and evolve the best way to expand the economic base that would yield more revenue without overtaxing the average consumer and wage earner. There is also the need to address all identifiable obstacles to an effective tax administration in the country. Though government is talking of using the proceeds it hopes to generate from the increase to fund part of the 1.5trillion naira required for police reform, it is however ill-advised that VAT is considered as the best way of accomplishing it. In fact, we think the time has come to cut the high cost of running government at all levels.

To review the VAT rate simply because it is indirect taxation, hence more convenient, suggests the need to overhaul the tax system to ensure that citizens pay their dues according to their earnings and net worth. This is important because only few Nigerians, especially those considered highly placed in the society, are in the tax net. Also, there is need to put in place appropriate mechanism towards eliminating the current multiplicity of taxes across the country. The recent directive for action by the tax authorities in this regard cannot be feasible without attaching any sanction for defaulters. As government is desirous of increasing revenue through more taxes, we believe on the other hand that more transparency in the system and the judicious utilisation of proceeds generated for the betterment of all is imperative to curb waste and justify any additional taxation. Until this is done, the clamour for more revenue without commensurate application of proceeds would be untenable.

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To avoid OBJ's fourth term

In an uncanny way, the tragic drama that has become the Nigerian political space in the past several weeks, including of course, the unfortunate demise of the former president Umaru Musa Yar'adua, reminds me of the various processes involved in a Formula-1 Grand Prix race.

As we cascade dangerously towards and uncertain destiny, and all its implications for the health of the polity, it has become obvious that all the seamless plots and manoeuvrings by the various political gladiators is to determine who emerges in pole position to pick the PDP's prime ticket for the Presidency in the general elections, scheduled for 2011. As anyone familiar with the Formula-1 circuit will acknowledge, in a Grand Prix race the drivers place a high premium on qualifying in pole position for the race proper.

Barring engine trouble, or other unforeseen hazards such as the ruptured tire or imperfect pit stops, drivers who start in pole position always stand the better chances of winning the race especially on difficult courses where over-taking could be a perilous and almost impossible option to exploit. The Aussie, Mark Weber, successfully proved that when he held on to win the Spanish Grand Prix in convincing fashion over the weekend.

Therefore, if you permit me, the death of President Yar'adua; the impending return of Nuhu Ribadu in some official capacity; the rehabilitation and re-injection of other Obasanjo era reformers back into the system to checkmate real, and imaginary adversaries; the war for control of the PDP; nocturnal visits to the Villa and the secret meetings with political foot-sluggers at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport on the choice of Vice President, all point at one thing: the much dreaded 'third term' we fought with a passion, but which the Chicken farmer from Ota craved like a demented soul three years ago, is now upon us, unless Goodluck Jonathan decides to put the nation first!

And in fairness to Obasanjo, he remains fully in his element. He remains completely without shame or regrets for his actions. Eight years of his presidency left the economy in the hands of bandits and its political system morally bankrupt.

Today, he is not about to blink an eye simply because people suspect he foisted a terminally sick person on the nation as president so he could die in office to enable his protégé to take over for selfish reasons. Even now, he continues to tempt fate with reckless impunity, like he did for every single year of his disastrous presidency.

We can go to hell for as long as he cares. Obviously, he now wants to determine who emerges as our Vice President, and ultimately the presidential candidate for the PDP in 2011, without bothering about what qualifies him for the role. And who says he cannot have his way?

I once posited on this page that Yar'adua was every inch a victim of the infamy that catapulted him to the Presidency in 2007 as much as

Muhammad Al-Ghazali

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its principal beneficiary. Today, I feel hugely vindicated. Obasanjo's cowardly comments only when he knew the late president was incapacitated and unlikely to hit back exposed the fact that he never had any special liking for the man.

His use of proxies to ensure that he was speedily impeached even while he lay critically ill on his death bed also exposed Obasanjo's desperation at 'reclaiming' the presidency

guards in the efforts to curtail what could essentially Obasanjo's third term by default, and even the more sinister 'fourth term' if he succeeds on foisting another presidential candidate on the nation in 2011.

If Obasanjo succeeds in goading Jonathan to run for the Presidency in 2011, it could easily polarize a nation already struggling to recover from eight years of his desperate divide and rule tactics. It could threaten the peace Yar'adua almost succeeded in achieving in the Niger Delta and ultimately destabilise the entire nation. That is only one reason that makes Obasanjo one of the most dangerous people in the land today.

And what makes his methods so lethal is that for him the end

“Obviously, he now wants to determine who emerges as our Vice President, and ultimately the presidential candidate for the PDP in 2011

to perpetuate his hegemony on the polity.

It was equally a testimony of the late president's personal courage that even while he battled with what proved to be a terminal illness; he succeeded in keeping Obasanjo at bay. That aside, he also returned some measure of decency to a Presidency Obasanjo serially desecrated for eight painful years. And he could very easily have jailed him!

After a moment of deep meditation, Yar'adua once muttered to my good friend Olusegun Adeniyi, his Special Adviser on Media Affairs, that Obasanjo should be grateful to his God that he (Yar'adua) was the president! The former president did not elaborate on the statement. It was not necessary. I am also not about to pre-empt Segun's memoirs, which I have encouraged him to write to enrich all of us at some point in future.

If you lived in Nigeria between 1999 and 2003, it will be abundantly clear to even the blind that Obasanjo should be one of the high profile inmates of Kuje Prisons, not plotting to foist a Vice President on the nation, or angling to have a say on who becomes the nation's President in 2011.

With the abundant resources available to him, coupled with the phase and intensity of unfolding events, it will be safe to conclude that Obasanjo now considers himself in pole position to achieve both. It shows in his swagger and renewed confidence. Apparently, something in Goodluck Jonathan's character must have encouraged him.

Only time will tell, of course. Still, I doubt very much if Jonathan has the stubbornness and tenacity to deflect serious overtures from Obasanjo on issues of crucial national importance.

The way I see events unfolding, the governors are the last rear-

has always justified the means. He agreed to the zoning arrangement in the PDP obviously so he could secure his second term in office. I have never been in support of rotational presidency for obvious reasons, but it is my strong believe that there could be honour even among thieves. When an elderly fellow repeatedly eats his vomit like Obasanjo repeatedly does, it leaves a very sore taste in the mouth.

I read somewhere that the Presidential Advisory Committee headed by T. Y. Danjuma, have advised Jonathan not to run and I hope he listens to them. But I doubt if it will be enough to deter him if Obasanjo insists on it. Even the threat of mass resignation issued by PAC is unlikely to work with someone of the same mindset as Obasanjo. It could easily play into his hands.

That leaves only the governors on the frontline to stop Obasanjo. However even they could be vulnerable if there is recourse to the old tactics of intimidation using the various apparatus of state.

No matter how the battle to curtail what could easily become Obasanjo's third term and even fourth term goes, Nigerians must know that the nation is fast approaching a very important epoch in its history in which they will all be forced to make a responsible choice in defence of their nascent democracy. In making that choice they will need to get rid of the ugly shadow of Obasanjo and prevent it from emerging in every corner of our political firmament.

For the sake of Jonathan Goodluck I hope he finds the potential for greatness that stares him in the face too compelling to ignore. He could do an 'Abdulsallam' and give us credible elections in 2011. I pray he finds sufficient courage to snub Obasanjo's diabolical overtures.



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It is with heavy heart, but with total submission to the will of Almighty Allah that we received the demise of Late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua (Mutawallen Katsina).

We join our fellow Nigerians to mourn this tragic loss of a patriot, a visionary and selfless leader who gallantly battled ill-health to give Nigeria a new direction. We acknowledge his landmark achievements and indelible footprints, characterized by purposeful, result-oriented and unquantifiable service towards the attainment of a New Nigeria that will be the pride of all.

We deeply commiserate with His Excellency, the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, GCFR, the entire family of the late President and indeed all Nigerians on this tragedy. We pray to Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala) to reward his good deeds with Jannatul Firdausi.

May Almighty Allah bless, strengthen and guide our president in the onerous task of providing excellent stewardship. May He grant you the wisdom to reposition Nigeria to take its rightful position in the comity of Nations.



Late President Umaru Musa Ya'Adua
August 1951-May 5, 2010

Signed

Dr. Aliyu Magatakarda Wamakko
Executive Governor, Sokoto State

AFRICA REPORT



ROY Bennett addresses the media outside the High Court in Harare yesterday after he was acquitted of terrorism charges in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe MP's aide cleared in plot to overthrow Mugabe

ZIMBABWE'S High Court has acquitted a leading opponent of President Robert Mugabe of terrorism charges. White farmer Roy Bennett, the treasurer-general of Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), was arrested in February last year while his colleagues were being sworn in as ministers in the Mugabe-led coalition.

He was accused of illegal possession of arms for purposes of committing terrorism, banditry and sabotage - charges that would have seen him face the death penalty if found guilty. The MDC said the prosecution

was politically-motivated.

Judge Muchineripi Bhunu dismissed the charges, saying: "The state has failed to prove its case. The accused is accordingly found not guilty."

Bennett said: "I am very happy. This judgement gives hope that we are returning to justice and the rule of law."

Mugabe had refused to swear in Bennett as deputy agriculture minister until he was acquitted. The dispute is one of the issues being discussed by negotiators from Mugabe's Zanu-PF and MDC in talks mediated by South African President Jacob Zuma.

UNESCO 'dictator' Obiang science prize condemned

A coalition of human rights groups has condemned a UN agency for planning to award a prize sponsored by Equatorial Guinea President Teodor Obiang Nguema.

The 28 groups say the agency should end its association with "one of the world's most infamous dictators".

Mr Obiang, who has led the oil-rich country for 30 years, has been accused of rigging elections and corruption.

He has previously denied such charges.

The first \$3m (£2m) UnNESCO-Obiang science prize is to be awarded in June.

A UNESCO spokesperson told the BBC the agency had no

comment to make because the decision had been approved by the organisation's board in April.

Mr Obiang seized power from his uncle in 1979. He was re-elected last year with 95% of the vote.

Last year, a French court threw out a lawsuit against Mr Obiang and two other African leaders, accusing them of using public funds to buy luxury homes.

The court said foreign heads of state could not be sued.

The human rights coalition has written to UNESCO, asking it to identify the source of the funds used to sponsor the prize.

"The prize's \$3m endowment should be used for the education and welfare of the people of Equatorial

Guinea, rather than the glorification of their president," said Tutu Alicante of the human rights organization EG Justice.

Equatorial Guinea's vast earnings from oil and gas should give its population of 600,000 people a theoretical income of \$37,000 a year each.

But most Equatorial Guineans live in poverty after 15 years of plentiful oil production.

Human Rights Watch describes Equatorial Guinea's government as one of the most abusive and corrupt in the world.

"The grim irony of awarding a prize recognizing 'scientific achievements that improve the quality of human life,' while naming it for a president whose

30-year rule has been marked by the brutal poverty and fear of his people and a global reputation for governmental corruption, would bring shame on Unesco," reads the letter.

Normally a secretive state, Equatorial Guinea made headlines in October with the pardoning of a group South African and British mercenaries headed by Simon Mann who had been jailed for attempting a coup.

In 2004, a US Senate investigation discovered that Mr Obiang, and members of his family, were the signatories to accounts at Riggs Bank in the US which had received millions of dollars in revenues from the central African country's oil wells.

Mali imam living in fear after backing women's rights

AN imam in Mali is living in fear after backing a new family law which no longer obliges wives to obey their husbands, angering Muslim groups.

He has received threatening phone calls and local Muslim leaders have tried to dismiss him. The new law is currently being given a second reading in parliament after Mali's president refused to sign it because of the Muslim protests.

In April, the imam of Kati, 15km (9 miles) north-west of the capital, Bamako, wrote a letter to Mali's High Islamic Council stating he saw nothing in the new family law which infringed the country's social values, much less Islam, the BBC's Martin Vogl in Mali says.

The High Islamic Council has said imams can only be dismissed by their congregation and it is unclear what weight the decision by local Muslim leaders to sack the imam will have, our reporter explains.

But the incident has highlighted the intense feelings among Muslims towards the new family law.

Its most contentious provisions give more rights to women. For example, under the law husbands and wives owe each other loyalty and protection rather than obedience, women get greater inheritance rights and the minimum age for girls to marry in most circumstances is raised to 18.

Mugabe urges end to violence on Zimbabwe anniversary

ZIMBABWEAN President Robert Mugabe has called for an end to political and racial violence as the country celebrates 30 years since independence.

Speaking at a ceremony marking the anniversary, he urged Zimbabweans to "foster an environment of tolerance". He also said he would press ahead with a controversial plan to hand over foreign-owned firms to black people.

The policy is opposed by Mr Mugabe's partner in the unity government, the Movement for Democratic Change.

Addressing supporters at Harare stadium, Mr Mugabe said: "The leadership of the inclusive government urges you to desist from any acts of violence."

Middle East & Asia



IRAQI soldiers gather at the site of a bus explosion in Iskandariyah, 50kms south of Baghdad

Aquino leads in presidential election

SENATOR Benigno "Noyoy" Aquino has a sizeable lead over rival Joseph Estrada in the Philippine presidential election, early results indicate.

The Commission on Elections (Comelec)

said Mr Aquino, son of former President Corazon Aquino, had about 40% of the vote with 38% of ballots counted.

Millions of Filipinos have been voting for a president, vice-president and more than 17,000 other official posts. Voting was marred by the deaths of at least six people in political violence.

Mr Estrada had about 25.76% of the vote, said Comelec chair Jose Melo, and property tycoon Manny Villar was trailing in third with just under 14%.

Mr Melo said about 75% of the more than 50 million registered voters in the country had cast a ballot.

The presidential candidates are vying to replace President Gloria Arroyo, whose second term expires in June.

Under the terms of the constitution she is required

“Mr Aquino - queued for several hours at polling stations, after newly-introduced voting machines malfunctioned

to stand down, but she is running for a seat in parliament. Official results are expected to be announced in the next two days.

Mr Aquino had been the pre-election favourite. Correspondents say the 50-year-old's political pedigree - as the son of the beloved former president - has been hugely important in his campaign.

But he is also considered an honest, if inexperienced, candidate. Some voters - including Mr Aquino - queued for several hours at polling stations, after newly-introduced voting machines malfunctioned.

But officials insisted that all votes would be counted and kept polling open to accommodate the delays. Previous elections have been tainted by violence, and despite increased security, at least six people were reported to have been killed in gun and bomb attacks in and around polling stations.

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Online Reactions

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ON www.dailytrust.com



KANO State Gov Ibrahim Shekarau

2011: Kano deputy gov, others unite against Shekarau's choice

SHEKARAU should remember that he was not imposed but the people of Kano voted him as a result of their allegiance to Buhari. There is therefore no way now that he can impose someone on the people and we hope that the PDP will use this opportunity to over throw them

Auwal Sagir

asmsycool@yahoo.com

These are the problems of our elites. Being a governor does not mean you have become infallible. You must seek the suggestions of all the stake holders. For Shekarau, this is a sign of possible failure in the coming 2011 election because even the intrigues between Shekarau and General Buhari alone will surely affect the outcome of the election in Kano state come 2011. Add to this the internal crisis and that is enough to make the difference.

Zanna Baruwa Gashua
bukar.zanna@yahoo.com

Who will believe that Shekarau has sold Kano's gubernatorial seat to the PDP? Please Shekarau don't betray the trust of Kano people.

NaHauwa

postolucinda@yahoo.com



CHIEF Vincent Ogbulafor, PDP National Chairman

PDP national caucus to meet tomorrow

I hope the President chooses the very best for us as his vice. Those governors jostling for the position are exhibiting the highest form of greed. With one year to go, one wonders what a sitting governor wants to accomplish as Vice President other than to fill up his pocket.

Abubakar Tanimu Umar
whatlegacy@yahoo.com

Yar'adua's last 48 hours, by family

YARADUA'S last days would have been more dignified if he had resigned at the right time. This way, he could have shown that he was selfless and placed the country's interests above his own. His failure to resign has cast a shadow on his legacy.

Mohammed
hamaseyor@hotmail.com

May his soul rest in aljannah. Turai, take heart. You have done what any wife should have done for her ailing husband in the circumstances.

Ahmadu
abappah@yahoo.com

Hajia Turai Yar'adua might not be a good Nigerian but to me she is a good and dedicated house wife.

Abdulwaheed Odunuga
success_tayo@yahoo.com

...Very sad. May Allah grant the family and all Nigerians the fortitude to bear the loss. Amin.

Abubakar Tanimu Umar
whatlegacy@yahoo.com

It was heartbreaking and shocking even though he had been sick for a long time. He was a man that clearly had a good vision for Nigeria's future. All humans have one or more failings and he was not an exception. We pray that Allah forgives him all his wrong doings. Personally, I have forgiven him and hope all Nigerians will do the same. May his family have the fortitude to bear the loss. I am so sorry for the lateness of my condolence but I have done the most important thing (prayed for him).

Usman Ahmed Danbaba
dانبابا1986@yahoo.com

I wish to extend my condolences to the former first lady and the family of President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, the people of Katsina and Nigerians at large over the demise of our dear president and the Commander-in-Chief of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. No doubt his death was painful and really touched the deepest crevices of our hearts but at the same time, we have no any objections and submit everything to the will of God.



THE late President Umaru Yar'adua

May Allah grant his soul a perfect rest in Aljannah.

His death at this time is a great loss to the nation's nascent democracy. He was a humble man with sterling qualities of leadership who meant well for the nation. His political ideology and philosophy were based on the rule of law. Nigeria and the entire African continent has never had such a gentle, dedicated and hardworking leader and will miss him.

Umar A. Galadima
umargaladima08@yahoo.com

May Almighty Allah grant our late president Mallam Umaru Musa Yar'adua with Aljannatul Firdausi. The death of our dear president is a great loss to all Nigerians in particular and the entire world in general. Mallam Umaru was a counselor, a father, a brother and also a friend of all. May Allah grant the family and all Nigerians the fortitude to bear the loss. Hajija Turai, you have done your best for your loving husband. May Allah reward you abundantly.

Kabir Ibrahim Gusau
ahlulzikri@yahoo.com

Obasanjo, Andy Uba consult Jonathan over VP

JONATHAN, if you truly mean to take Nigeria to a higher level, the first test of your resolve will be seen in your choice of Vice President. Please do not be swayed in your choice by favor or lobbyists. Choose based on merit alone.

Alkasim Wudil
alkasimhussien@yahoo.com

Obasanjo is responsible for most of the problems that have befallen our nation since our return to democracy. He is clearly trying to influence the president to pick his candidate as usual. I hope the president will be firm enough to do what is right.

Abubakar Tanimu Umar
whatlegacy@yahoo.com

Hmmm, Obasanjo again? Jonathan please beware before Nigerians start hearing the voice of Jacob but seeing the body of Esau. My advice is do not contest



FORMER President Olusegun Obasanjo

in 2011. Wait for 2015.

Mustafa Ali
mustafaa@yahoo.com

If Obasanjo keeps perambulating in and out of Aso villa, it means Jonathan is not capable of running this country because every now and then his administration will be interrupted. Obasanjo should leave Jonathan alone so that we

would know the kind of stuff he is made of.

Mahmoud Muazu Ali
mudex18@yahoo.com

The former president succeeded in manipulating the 2007 presidential election and now he is meeting with the president yesterday as part of the intrigues towards the selection of a Vice president I'm sure. We will never allow him to interfere again in all matters of governance.

The Secretary to the Government of the Federation deserves to be the next vice president being the most senior & experienced officer in the present administration. He is an active member in the FEC. He has displayed beyond reasonable doubt his commitments to the unity and well being of this country.

Umar A. Galadima
umargaladima08@yahoo.com

What Nigeria should copy from Sudanese elections - Amb Dahiru

IT is unfortunate that most of the people they saddle with important responsibilities in this country do not make the best of it. How can a former Nigeria ambassador to Sudan (2005-2007) sent to monitor elections in Sudan not be able to tell us precisely if there is a term limit for the president and other political office holders in that country?

Secondly, his submission that Nigeria is to learn from the Sudanese election shows clearly that he really does not want anything good for this country. If not did he rightly say that many of the political parties boycotted the election because they got reliable proof that the NCP (the ruling party) had concluded plans to rig the election? Many of the voters were disenfranchised. Yet the ambassador tells us that the election was free and fair.

Chris
c.akase@yahoo.com

Danjuma-led PAC to Jonathan: You contest, we quit

I do not think that part of the job of the PAC is to decide whether or not the president should run for re-election. They should stick to their scope of work. Moreover the constitution of Nigeria is superior to whatever "gentleman" agreement they make erroneously think exists. Their personal opinions should be kept as such (personal) and not wish to have it enforced on the rest of Nigeria.

Tayo
olorunfemi@ymail.com

For the interest of peace and unity of the Nation, let Jonathan

governs the affairs of the Nation till 2019.

Tongniahas Timlong
yillimkyles@yahoo.com

Kudos to the Presidential Advisory Committee (PAC). This shows a deep sense of objectivity and commitment and a demonstration of total patriotism and righteousness. If all our leaders can act as such, we will definitely shun sycophancy and 'cabal-ism' which are militating against the progress of our nascent democracy and the country in general. For the President to conduct free and fair elections, he must be out

of the race for fairness and proper enforcement. It is difficult and sometimes not possible for somebody to avoid selfishness in a competitive environment. It is now left to the President to whether choose the path of honor or subject himself to possible breach of public trust and to some extent, law and order.

Zanna Baruwa Gashua
bukar.zanna@yahoo.com

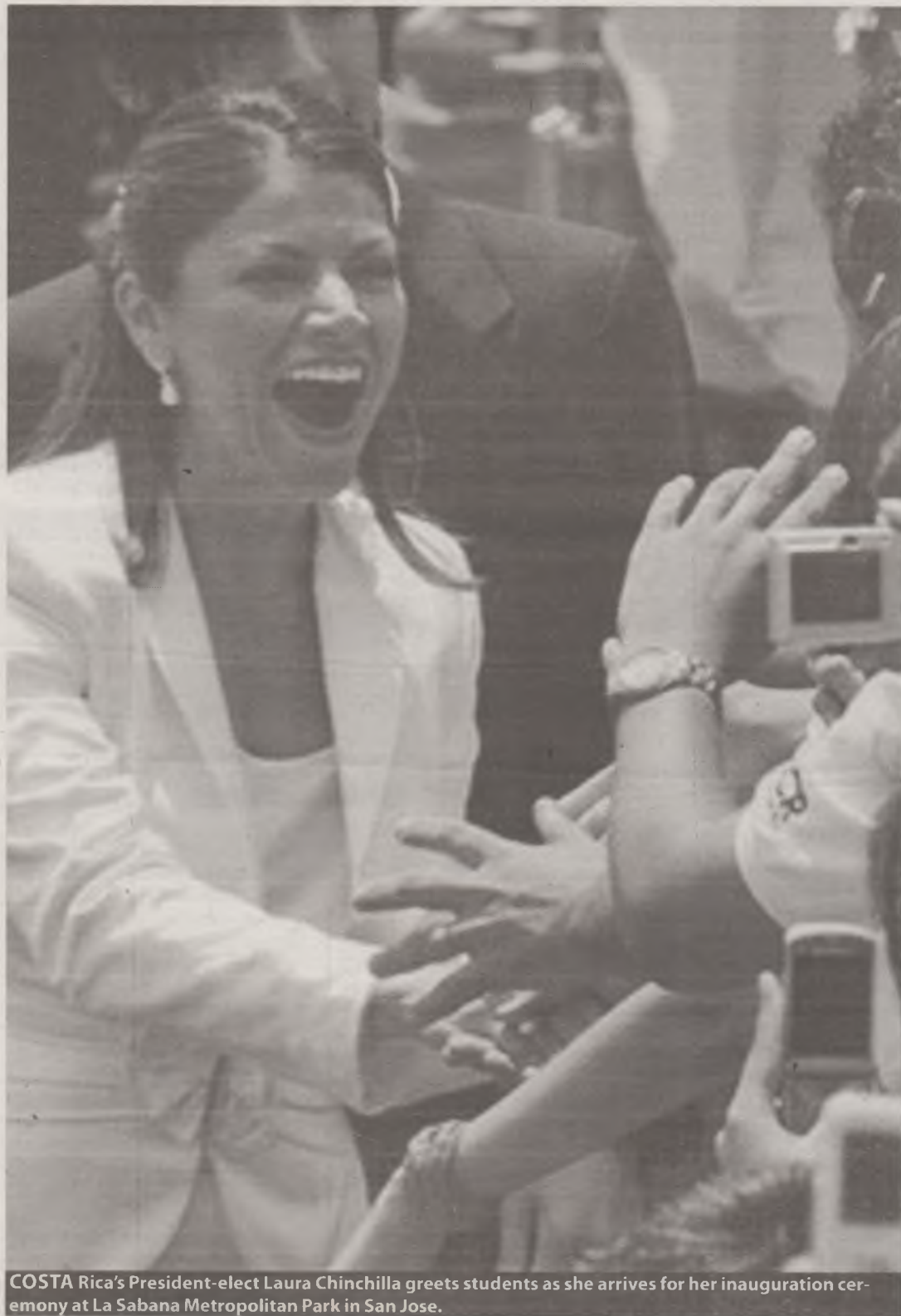
I never thought Nigerian elders are focused to this extent. There is no doubt that their advice may be the greatest thing that could ever happen to Jonathan's political career

because even if he finally makes the PDP's ticket which is seemingly impossible, Nigerians will not vote for him as they don't trust him, so he will just end up with a bad reputation like the person that is trying to force him to contest. However, conducting a free and fair election will propel his name to unimaginable heights and gain him recognition within the international community. He should think twice. As they say, "what an elder sees while lying down, a young one will not see even if he climbs a tree".

Usman Ahmed Danbaba
dانبابا1986@yahoo.com

World

Costa Rica inaugurates new President Chinchilla



COSTA Rica's President-elect Laura Chinchilla greets students as she arrives for her inauguration ceremony at La Sabana Metropolitan Park in San Jose.

COSTA Rica inaugurated Laura Chinchilla as its first woman leader on Saturday, replacing Nobel laureate Oscar Arias with his former vice president and protege. Chinchilla promised to rule with "humility, honesty and firmness" and said she'll pursue the same economic policies that recently brought the country into a trade pact with the US and opened commerce with China.

Elected in a landslide, Chinchilla has also pledged new protections for the pristine parks and reserves that make this Central American nation first in the world for land preservation.

"We're teaming up for a safer Costa Rica," she said, explaining that a safe country offers a good education, health care, decent housing, care for children and seniors, a prosperous and competitive economy and green, clean industry.

The fifth Latin American woman to be elected president, Chinchilla takes office in a decent economic climate despite the world economic crisis, thanks to policies enacted by Arias that helped insulate Costa Rica. Chinchilla, a 51-year-old Georgetown University graduate, is a social conservative who opposes abortion and gay marriage. She

appealed both to Costa Ricans seeking a fresh face and those reluctant to risk the unknown.

Her inauguration was attended by dignitaries including the presidents of Mexico, Colombia, Ecuador and Georgia. She hugged and kissed her husband, parents and 14-year-old son during the ceremony. Then she hugged Arias, a popular leader who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1987 for his work to end civil wars in several Central American countries.

Arias served as president from 1986 to 1990, and again from 2006 to 2010, boosting tourism and eco-development. During his tenure, Costa Rica became the most visited country in Central America, with a \$2.2 billion tourism industry, and Arias has pushed eco-tourism, environmentally friendly development and improved trade relations.

In 2007, he set a goal for his country to be the first carbon-neutral country in the world by 2021, a goal Chinchilla supports. And in recent months, he attempted to mediate between Honduran leaders during a coup. Chinchilla says she wants to help Honduran President Porfirio Lobo, elected in the fall, to repair international relations damaged during the coup.

Gordon Brown 'stepping down as Labour leader'

GORDON Brown has said he is stepping down as Labour Party leader. Mr Brown, prime minister since 2007, said he wanted a successor to be in place by the time of the party's conference in September.

Mr Brown announced his intention to quit in a statement in Downing St in which he also said his party was to start formal talks with the Lib Dems.

The Conservatives won the most seats and most votes in the election and have been in talks with the Lib Dems.

Mr Brown said no party had won an overall majority in the UK general election and, as Labour leader, he had to accept his part in that.

He said he had no desire to stay in his position longer than was needed to form a stable government, and that he would ask the Labour Party to set in form the process of a leadership contest.

He said it could be in the interests of the country to form a "progressive" government - possibly in coalition with the Lib Dems - the UK's third largest party.

It emerged earlier that the Lib Dem negotiating team, who have held days of talks with the Conservatives, had also met senior Labour figures in private.

The BBC's political editor Nick Robinson said one of the stumbling blocks to any Lib Dem-Labour deal had been Mr Brown himself.

Turkish opposition leader quits over 'sex tape'

THE leader of Turkey's principal opposition party has resigned following the circulation of a video purporting to show him having an affair.

The video allegedly shows Deniz Baykal, who led the secularist Republican People's Party (CHP), in a bedroom with a female CHP politician.

Mr Baykal claimed he was a victim of a government-orchestrated plot. His party is currently opposing constitutional reforms proposed by the governing AK Party.

Mr Baykal resigned during a news conference yesterday, during which he said such videos could not be aired without the knowledge of the government. "This is not a sex tape, this is a conspiracy," he said.

"If this has a price, and that price is the resignation from CHP leadership, I am ready to pay it. My resignation does not mean running away, or giving in.

"On the contrary, it means that I'm fighting it." Both Mr Baykal and the woman allegedly shown in the video are married. In his news conference, Mr Baykal did not confirm or deny any affair.

The secretly-filmed video surfaced on YouTube last week. Turkish prosecutors launched an investigation on Friday, banning the dissemination of the tape. Mr Baykal, 71, had led the CHP since 1992.

Mass grave of Kosovo victims found in Serbia

ACTING on tips from witnesses, Serbian war crimes prosecutors have discovered a mass grave believed to contain the bodies of 250 Albanians who were killed in Kosovo during the 1998-99 war there, then transported to Serbia and secretly buried to hide the atrocities, officials said Monday.

The burial site hidden beneath a small building and a newly built parking lot is the fourth mass grave of ethnic Albanians from Kosovo that has been found in Serbia since 2001. Two others were discovered in Kosovo. In each case, most of the bodies were those of civilians, including women and children.

The latest discovery is another example of the mass atrocities that were committed during the bloody Serb crackdown on the Kosovo separatists that killed at least 10,000 people and left nearly a million displaced.

Hundreds of bodies of slain ethnic Albanians have been exhumed in Serbia and returned

to Kosovo since Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic was ousted from power in a popular revolt in 2000.

The previously discovered mass graves in Serbia represented the bulk of genocide charges filed against Milosevic at a UN war crimes tribunal in The Netherlands, where he died of a heart attack during his trial in 2006.

Serbia has since tried to deal with its wartime past as it seeks European Union membership, which requires the prosecution of those who committed atrocities during the wars in the Balkans in the 1990s. Milosevic's policies still have strong support among ultra-nationalists in Serbia.

"According to witness testimonies, there are 250 bodies of Kosovo Albanians inside" the newly discovered grave, Serbia's war crimes prosecutor Vladimir Vukcevic said at a news conference yesterday in Belgrade, Serbia's capital.



THE WEST AFRICAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

HEADQUARTERS

Examination Loop, P.O. Box GP 125
Accra, Ghana.

STAFF VACANCY

POST OF HEAD OF TRAINING & HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

The council, a sub-regional organization responsible for the conduct of a variety of examinations in English-Speaking West Africa, has vacancy for an Officer to head its Training and Human Resource Development Unit within the HRM Department. Applications are therefore invited from suitably qualified nationals of the member countries, to fill the position.

QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The Council is looking for a seasoned professional in the field of Training and Human Resource Development between 45 and 50 years of age. The applicant must possess a good University degree (at least Second Class Lower Division) in the Humanities/Arts, Social Sciences, etc., and an appropriate formal training as a Trainer. A Masters' degree in Human Resource Management/Development and membership of a recognized relevant professional body will be an added advantage.

Candidates must possess excellent written and verbal communication skills in English, and competence in the use of Standard IT application software, i.e. Word, Excel and Power Point.

He/She must have not less than ten years of instructive experience in the training of staff in reputable organizations.

The candidate should have self confidence, be a goal-getter, and have knowledge in preparation and implementation of strategic plans.

DUTIES

The successful candidate will be based at the Headquarters, Accra, and will be responsible to the Deputy Director, Human Resource Management. He/She will be responsible for identifying training needs of the Council, development of appropriate training programmes, determining training methodology, administration of training budgets and evaluation of the results of all training programmes.

He/She will also be expected to perform other Human Resource Management functions. These duties will embrace all offices of the Council where staff are engaged in a wide variety of activities including professional, administrative, technical, clerical and secretarial duties.

SALARY AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

The salary for the position is very attractive. Point of entry into the scale will depend on qualifications and experience.

The Council's Conditions of Service compare favourably with those of other sub-regional organizations. They include free medical care for staff and dependants, subsidized accommodation, pension contributions etc.

The successful candidate who is a non-Ghanaian will, in addition, be paid allowances applicable to foreign staff, i.e. Foreign Posting Allowance, Expatriation Allowance, Spouse Allowance, Leave Allowance and Education Allowance. He/She will also enjoy diplomatic privileges.

METHOD OF APPLICATION

Interested candidates are requested to write for or collect application forms from the Council's Offices in their respective countries. Candidates in Ghana may collect the forms from the office of the Deputy Director, HRM, WAEC Headquarters, Accra, on the presentation of a written request.

Completed forms should be returned not later than **28th May, 2010** through the Heads of National Office in the respective countries and for those in Ghana, to: -

The Registrar
The West African Examinations Council
Headquarters
P.O. Box GP 125
Accra.

Attn: Deputy Director, Human Resource Management

Only shortlisted candidates will be communicated with.

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR, HRM
For: THE REGISTRAR**

Felicitations



Alh. Abdullahi Dikko Inde,

Comptroller General of Nigeria Customs Service

On behalf of the Bauchi State Congress of Importers and Exporters, we hereby identify and happily rejoice with our Comptroller General of Nigeria Customs Service Alh. Abdullahi Dikko Inde, on his 50 Birthday.

We pray God Almighty to grant him Long life, prosperity and above all wisdom and good health to steer the affairs of Nigeria Customs Service.

Once more happy birthday, our Icon.

Signed:

A.H Umar

For: Management



**BAUCHI STATE HEALTH SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT II
(WORLD BANK ASSISTED)**

Invitation for Bids (IFB)

Country: Federal Republic of Nigeria
Purchaser: Bauchi State Health Systems Development Project II
Credit No: 4522UNI
IFB Title: Procurement of 7No 27KVA Generator Sets & 6No Ambulances
IFB No: BASG/HSDP/II/WB/NCB/001/GOODS/AF/2010
Date of Issuance: 17th May, 2010

- This Invitation for Bids follows the General Procurement Notice for this Project that appeared in *Development Business*, and Daily Trust News Paper of Thursday 2nd April, 2009.
- The Bauchi State Government through the Federal Government of Nigeria has received a credit from the International Development Association toward the cost of *Bauchi State Health Systems Development Project II*, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payments under the Contract for Procurement & Installation of 7No 27KVA Generators Sets and 6No Ambulances.
- The *Bauchi State Health Systems Development Project II* now invites sealed bids from eligible and qualified bidders for the Procurement of the following:

LOT No	Description of Items	Quantity	Delivery Period
1	27KVA Generator Set.	7Nos	60 Days
2	Ambulances	6Nos	60 days

- Bidding will be conducted through the **National Competitive Bidding (NCB)** a procedure specified in the World Bank's Guidelines: Procurement under IDA Credits, and is open to all bidders from Eligible Source Countries as defined in the Guidelines.⁵
- Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from *Bauchi State Health Systems Development Project II*, at the address below and inspect the Bidding Documents from **9.00 am – 4.00 pm Monday – Thursdays and 10.00am on Fridays except on public Holidays.**
- Qualifications requirements include:
 - Evidence of Previous supply (sale) of similar equipment proposed for the last 3 years.
 - Audited accounts for the last 3 years to demonstrate the financial capability of the bidder in terms of profitability and adequate working capital.
 - A margin of preference for certain goods manufactured domestically shall not be applied.
 - Additional details are provided in the Bidding Documents.
- A complete set of Bidding Documents in **English** may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written Application to the address below and upon payment of a non refundable fee of **N25,000.00 (twenty five thousand naira) only for a lot and N20, 000 (twenty thousand naira) for additional lot.** The method of payment will be **Cash or Bank Draft** in favour of **Bauchi State Health Systems Development project II**. The Bidding Documents will be collected by the bidder or representatives.
- Bids must be delivered to the address below at or before **11.00am on the 14th June, 2010.** Electronic bidding **will not be permitted.** Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives, who choose to attend in person at **11.00am on the 14th June, 2010.** All bids must be accompanied by a **Bid Security of N1, 000, 000.00 (One Million Naira) only** or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency.
- The address (es) referred to above is

Attn: Bala Barde
Project Manager,
Bauchi State Health Systems Development Project II,
Ministry of Health, P.M.B. 65, Bauchi
Bauchi State.
E.-mail: babarde@gmail.com



**BAUCHI STATE HEALTH SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT II
(WORLD BANK ASSISTED)**

Invitation for Bids (IFB)

Country: Nigeria
Project: BAUCHI STATE HEALTH SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT II
Date Issuance: 10th May, 2010
Opening Date: 7th June, 2010
Contract Identification No: BASG/HSDP/II/NCB/CW/001/WB/AF/2010Lot 1-5
World Bank Loan/Credit No: 4522 UNI
World Bank Loan/Credit Name: HSDP II

- This Invitation for Bids follows the General Procurement Notice for this Project that appeared in *Development Business/National Dailies* on 2nd April, 2009.
- The Federal Government of Nigeria has received a Credit from International Development Association towards the cost of *Bauchi State Health Systems Development Project II* and intends to apply part of the funds to cover the eligible payment under the Contract for the (A) the Construction of 2No PHCs including Staff Qtrs at Atafowa in Itas/Gadau L.G.A & Dott in Dass L.G.A. (B) Provision of Solar Boreholes and water tank at 2No PHCs at Atafowa, Dott & School of Midwifery, Bauchi.
- The *Bauchi State Health Systems Development Project II* now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the under listed rehabilitation works.

(A). CONSTRUCTION/ REHABILITATION OF PHCs WITH STAFF QUARTERS				
Lot No	Description	Bid Security	Location	Contract period
1.	Construction of PHC and Staff Quarters	N1,000,000	Atafowa	4 months
2.	Construction of PHC Maternity and Staff Quarters	N1,000,000.	Dott	4 months
(B). PROVISION OF BOREHOLES				
3	Provision of Solar Boreholes and Water Tank	N250,000.00	Atafowa PHC	4 months
4	Provision of Solar Boreholes and Water Tank	N250,000.00	Dott PHC	4 months
5	Provision of Solar Boreholes and Water Tank	N250,000.00	School of Midwifery, Bauchi	4 months

- Qualifications requirements include:
 - Experience as prime contractor in the carrying out of at least two civil works of a similar nature and complexity equivalent to the works and shall not be less than **N25,000,000.00** for lot 1-2 and **N15,000,000.00** for lots 3-5 average turn over.
 - The period is within the last 5 years; the essential equipment to be made available for the Contract by the successful Bidder shall be the minimum of **1No. Tipper, 1No. Concrete Mixer, 1No. Vibrator, 1No. Leveling Instrument, 5No. Wheel Barrows, 10No. Head pan, 6 No. Shovels, the construction work while for the boreholes should have a minimum of Drilling Rig, Compressor, welding machine and other Plants necessary for the production of pre-cast concrete elements, etc.**
 - liquid assets and/or credit facilities, net of other contractual commitments and exclusive of any advance payments which may be made under the Contract, of not less than the amounts stated below:
Lot 1-2 NGN 25,000,000
Lot 3-5 NGN 10,000,000
 or its equivalent in a freely convertible currency
- A complete set of Bidding Documents in **English language** may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written Application to the address below and upon payment of a non refundable fee of **N25,000.00 (Twenty five Thousand Nigerian Naira) for a Lot and N20, 000.00 (twenty thousand Naira)** for any additional lots or its equivalent in any freely convertible currency. The method of payment will be **cash or bank draft** in favour of **Bauchi State Health Systems Development Project II**. The document will be collected by bidder's representative or sent by courier services on request.
- Bids must be delivered to the address below at or before **11:00 a.m. on 7th June, 2010.** Electronic bidding **shall not be permitted.** Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be opened physically in the presence of the bidders' representatives, who choose to attend in person at the address below at **11:00 a.m. on 7th June, 2010.**
- Bid must be delivered to the address below on or before **11:00 a.m. on 7th June, 2010.** All bids must be accompanied by a **Bid Security of One million Naira (N1,000, 000.00) for each lots 1 – 2, Two Hundred & Fifty Thousand Naira (N250,000.00) for each lots 3-7.** or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late bid will be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders or their representatives and anyone who choose to attend at the address below.

Bid Issuance Date: 10th May, 2010
Bid Opening/Closing Date: 7th June, 2010
Time: 11:00am
Venue: Ministry of Health
 Conference Hall
Office Hours: Monday – Thursday 8:00am – 4:00pm
Friday 8:00am – 1:00pm

All Correspondence to:
Project Manager
Health Systems Development Project II
Ministry of Health
Bauchi State Nigeria.

Singed
Bala Barde
Project Manager

Email address: babarde@gmail.com



FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA
FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION POST-BASIC (STEP-B) PROJECT

Invitation for Bids

FEDERAL SCIENCE AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE,
DAYI - KATSINA STATE

Procurement of Science and Technical Equipment, Textbooks and Instructional Materials.

IDA CREDIT No. 4304-UNI

Date of Issuance: Tuesday 11th May, 2010

- This Invitation for Bids follows the General Procurement Notice for this Project that appeared in Development Business, issue no. 591 of 2nd July, 2007.
- The Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has received a credit from the International Development Association towards the cost of Science and Technology Education Post Basic Project, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payments under the Contract for the Procurement of Science and Technical Equipment, Textbooks and Instructional Materials CONTRACT NO: STEP-B/FSTC/DAYI/GDS/NCB/01/2010
- The Science and Technology Education Post Basic Project, Federal Science and Technical College Dayi Katsina State, now invites sealed bids from eligible and qualified bidders for the Procurement of the following:

Lot No.	Description	Qty	Bid Security	Bid Validity Period	Delivery Period	Delivery Location
1	Science and Technical Equipment	Various	At least 2.5% of Bid Price	90 Days	60 days	FSTC DAYI PMB 4040, Malumfashi Katsina State. Nigeria
2	Textbooks and Instructional Materials	Various	At least 2.5% of Bid Price	90 Days	60 days	FSTC DAYI PMB 4040, Malumfashi Katsina State. Nigeria

- Bidding will be conducted through the **National Competitive Bidding (NCB)**, a procedure specified in the World Bank's Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits, and is open to all bidders from Eligible Source Countries as defined in the Guidelines.
 - Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from STEP-B FSTC, DAYI Katsina State at the address below and inspect the Bidding Documents from 8:00am to 4:00pm Monday to Friday excluding public holidays.
 - Qualifications requirements include:
 - Evidence of previous supply (sale) of similar Equipment proposed for the last 5 years.
 - Audited Financial Statements for the last 3 years to demonstrate the financial capability of the Bidder in terms of Profitability and adequate working capital.
- A margin of preference for eligible national contractors *shall not be applied*; Additional details are provided in the Bidding Documents.
- A complete set of Bidding Documents in **English** may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written Application to the address below and upon payment of a non refundable fee of N 10,000.00 (Ten Thousand Naira) only. The method of payment will be Bank Draft in favor of STEP-B FSTC DAYI or by cash. The Bidding Documents will be collected by the representative of the Bidder or by courier services on request.
 - Bids must be delivered to the address below at or before **2:00pm on Tuesday 15th June, 2010**. Electronic bidding will *not* be permitted. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders or bidders' representatives, who choose to attend in person at the address below at **2:00pm on Tuesday 15th June, 2010**. All bids must be accompanied by a *Bid Security* of 2.5% of the bid price in a freely convertible currency or bank draft from a reputable Nigeria commercial bank.
 - The address referred to above is:
The Project Manager,
Science and Technology Education Post-Basic Project, (STEP-B),
Federal Science and Technical College,
PMB 4040, Malumfashi,
Dayi,
Katsina State.
Nigeria
E-mail: stepbfstcdayi@yahoo.com
Telephone: PM-07033818426, PO-08083117891, CO-07040581846,
M&E-08087998737, FO-08023608611

Signed: Management



BAUCHI STATE GOVERNMENT

STATE UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION BOARD (SUBEB)

AJIYA ADAMU ROAD, NEAR AWALAH HOTEL ROUND ABOUT
P.M.B. 0109 BAUCHI

INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION TO TENDER FOR THE CONSTRUCTION/ RENOVATION OF CLASSROOM BLOCKS AND VIP TOILETS

The State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) Bauchi, intends to carry out the above projects under the Education Trust Fund (ETF), Special BOT intervention 2009.

Reputable Contractors are hereby invited to bid in the following projects:

- LOT 1 a) Cikin Fada Primary School, Bauchi
b) Baba Sidi Primary School, Bauchi
c) Fadamar Mada Primary School, Bauchi
d) Rariya Primary School Bauchi
e) Wunti Primary School, Bauchi
f) Bakari Dukku Primary School, Bauchi
g) JSS T/Salmanu, Bauchi.

- LOT 2 JSS Tilden Fulani, Toro LGA
LOT 3 JSS Sade, Darazo LGA
LOT 4 Bulkachuwa Primary School, Katagum LGA
LOT 5 Central Primary School Dagauda, Dambam LGA
LOT 6 JSS Dass, Dass LGA
LOT 7 JSS Darazo, Darazo LGA
LOT 8 JSS Faguji, Giade LGA
LOT 9 Day Primary School, Azare, Katagum LGA
LOT 10 JSS Faggo, Shira LGA
LOT 11 Central Primary School Azare, Katagum LGA
LOT 12 JSS Boto, Tafawa Balewa LGA
LOT 13 GSS Toro, Toro LGA
LOT 14 Nasarawa East Primary School Azare, Katagum
LOT 15 JSS Tafawa Balewa, Tafawa Balewa LGA
LOT 16 JSS Nabordo, Toro LGA
LOT 17 JSS Lore, Tafawa Balewa LGA
LOT 18 JSS Bogoro, Bogoro LGA
LOT 19 Maiturare Primary School, Ningi LGA

- To qualify for the bidding, the following documents are required:
 - Certificate of incorporation of Company with the Corporate Affairs Commission.
 - Evidence of registration as a Contractor with the Bauchi State Government.
 - Tax Clearance Certificate for the last 3 years.
 - Evidence of Financial strength of the Company.
 - Professional qualification of key personnel of the company.
 - Availability of plants and equipments to execute the works.
- Pre-qualification document should be sealed and marked **CONFIDENTIAL** and addressed to the Executive Chairman, Bauchi State Universal Basic Board,
Ajiya Adamu Road, Near Awalah Hotel Roundabout,
P.M.B. 0109, Bauchi,
Bauchi State.
- This is only an invitation for pre-qualification and not for tender and is valid for two (2) weeks from the date of this publication.
- Only successful contractors will be contacted for tender after screening, please.

Signed
KABIR ALI KOBI
Public Relations Officer
For: EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN

BUSINESS

0805 1000 536

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CULLED: punching.com

Why Sanusi should resign now - Shareholders

By Jibrin Abubakar & Idris Ahmed

GOVERNOR of Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Sanusi Lamido Sanusi should resign honourably because his reforms have hurt the country's economy, the Independent Shareholders Association of Nigeria has said.

President of the association Sonny Nwosu said at the UBA's Annual General Meeting yesterday in Abuja that Sanusi's reforms are not working, arguing that they have destabilised the economy. The CBN governor had sacked some top bankers since he was appointed by the late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua. Thousands of banks staff have also lost their jobs to his reforms.

But Sanusi says the banks were being distressed and were at the verge of collapse before the apex bank intervened.

Mr. Nwosu attacked some of the CBN's reforms include fixing tenure terms for the banks' chiefs and sacking the Group Managing Directors of eight troubled banks last year among other things.

"My advice to him is to resign because he has failed. Let a neutral person that would not have the kind of attacks he is getting through misuse of power. The economy is down and you can still hear some people talking about disengagement of staff. "Within the banking system they have disengaged more than 10,000 people and you know what that means to a family," Nwosu said.

He said if the bank's chiefs were not sacked they would have made sure they "pay salaries to these people and the worst scenario was to review their salaries."

He said the court cases against some of the banks chiefs have no basis as CBN could prove allegations against them. "On the issue of loan itself, it is only few bad eggs which defraud the banks. Many of these people took loans for their businesses", he said.

CBN Governor Sanusi said last year that he would resign if his policies were not done in good faith. His phone was not available when *Daily Trust* tried to contact him yesterday. He did not reply the text message sent to him too.



TONY Elumelu

UBA GMD bids farewell to shareholders

Dividends drop by N13.7bn

By Jibrin Abubakar & Idris Ahmed

THE outgoing Group Managing Director of the United Bank for Africa (UBA) Tony Elumelu yesterday at the bank's 48th Annual General Meeting, which marked his last, delivered his farewell message to shareholders.

UBA's profit after tax in 2009 was N2.3 billion compared to N40.8 billion in 2008. The bank's profit before tax also dropped from N56.8 billion in 2008 to N13.7 billion last year, Chairman of the bank Ferdinand Alabraba said in his statement. The bank's gross earnings rose by 46 percent from N169 billion in 2008 to N247 billion in 2009. The bank will also pay shareholders N2.1 billion dividends with a stock dividend of 10 kobo and one share for five. UBA paid its shareholders N15.8 billion in 2008.

Mr. Oduoza Phillips, the bank's Deputy Managing Director, South will take over from Mr. Elumelu on August 1, 2010 in compliance with the CBN order limiting the tenure of banks' chiefs to 10 years. Mr. Elumelu has served as CEO of banks for 13 years. In his address, he said: "I am pleased to report that we achieved significant milestones on each goal, which when combined, sets the stage for what I believe will be the platform for growth and profitability in 2010 and the years to come. "Our African strategy is beginning to yield the desired results, with subsidiaries contributing about 10% (2008: 5.6%) to deposit liabilities of the Group. Whilst the Group performance has been impacted this year by the investment needs of subsidiaries, we have focused on building scale, and remain confident that most of the subsidiaries will achieve break even positions in 2010." He said the bank was also the lead arranger and underwriter for N18.5 billion Imo State government of Nigeria Bond. "I wish to specially thank you, our shareholders for the opportunity to serve you and your support during my tenure," he said.

BRIEF

CBN awards banks

From Mahmud Lalo, Jos

THE Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Jos Branch has awarded several banks at the weekend during the Jos Area Clearing House end of year 2009.

The event witnessed the attendance of various banks representatives who went home with different category of awards in recognition of their hard work and pursuit of excellent banking operation.

At the event, Union Bank of Nigeria PLC went home with the highest number of awards where their representatives notched, the best bank with the highest volume of financial instruments, best developing financing bank as well as punctuality to clearing house sessions.

Similarly Zenith Bank got the best bank with error free/ accuracy award at the clearing house, First Bank bagged an award for the highest value of instruments, Intercontinental Bank got the highest currency processing activities award as Access Bank went home with the best dressed clearing bank representative award.

STOCK MARKET INDEX

Date:	Monday, May 10, 2010
Index:	27,714.39
Deals:	8,423
Volume:	353,759,397
Value:	N 3,243,294,449.77
Cap.:	N6,703,429,638,223.46

TRUST INDEX

Inflation	11.8%
GDP	6.68%
Budget	N4.6tr
Ext. Reserves Acct	\$40.1bn
Excess Crude Acct	\$3.9bn
Poverty Ratio	54.4%
Monetary Policy Rate	6%
Banks	24
Oil Price	\$80 a barrel
Power Supply	3,700MW
Oil output per day	2.6mbd
Broad Money Supply	N11,010,063.6m
Credit to Private Sector	N10,037,422.5m
Inter-Bank Rate	1.2000%
Treasury Bills	2.02%
Deposit Rate	7.51%
Prime Lending Rate	18.06%

CBN EXCHANGE RATES

7/5/2010	Buying (NGN)	Central (NGN)	Selling (NGN)
CFA	0.2802	0.2902	0.3002
DANISH KRONER	26.2418	26.3907	26.5396
EURO	195.3914	196.0533	196.7151
EURO DOLLAR	224.5413	225.3039	226.0655
RIYAL	39.3627	39.496	39.6293
SDR	222.3745	223.1278	223.881
SWISS FRANC	136.2093	136.6707	137.132
US DOLLAR	147.61	148.11	148.61
WAUA	222.2943	223.0473	223.8003
YEN	1.3516	1.3599	1.3681

Bureau de Change Rates

BUYING	
Dollar	N151
Euro	N204
Pound	N234
SELLING	
Dollar	N152
Euro	N206
Pound	N236

Source: S&P Bureau de Change, Wuse Zone 4, Abuja.



Northern Business

'Multiple taxation, porous borders killing businesses in North'

Pharm Alex Onyido is Chairman PAL Pharmaceutical Industries Limited, a pharmaceutical company based in Kano. In this interview, he speaks on challenges of drug production and circulation of fake drugs in Nigeria, blaming Nigerians for the importation of substandard drugs.

From Lawan Danjuma Adamu, Kano

WHAT are the challenges of drugs production in Nigeria?

Drug production in Nigeria is a very difficult endeavour. This is because of the numerous problems that face the industrial sector in the country generally. First, the issue of power outage hinders production and adds to overhead cost because we are forced to use generator to produce, which requires us to spend two times what we will spend if there was constant power supply from PHCN. Secondly, the industry is being challenged by the issue of fake drugs.

The fake drugs are mostly produced by companies overseas and dumped in Nigeria and as local manufacturers we find it difficult to compete with them due to the fact that cost of production in the producing countries is cheaper than here. So, by the time they bring the drugs into Nigeria, they get upper hands in our markets because they give out their drugs at give away prices. That actually is not giving us hope as local manufacturers. Fake drugs have been one of our major problems, especially in the North here where people patronize them a lot because they are cheaper.

Most of our brothers in this part of the country go for the fake drugs even though it is not good. Definitely, there is need for effective law to tackle the issue of fake drugs in Nigeria. Thirdly, we are constantly challenged by the issue of salary increment from our staff, which is resulting from the current inflation in the country. High cost of basic commodities is putting pressure on the purchasing power of our employees, who in turn confront us with demand for wage increase.



PHARM Alex Onyido

That affects our output, because not all the time we can afford to increase their salaries. And then finally, the issue of governments at various levels asking us to pay multiple taxes is bothering us a lot. Recently I had to go to court to protest a tax of N2million that was levied on my company by my local government, which we could not pay. At the end of the day it was trimmed down N500,000 and we paid. Multiple taxes are really bad for us local manufacturers. Governments should encourage us and give us better atmosphere to operate.

You mentioned fake drugs as one of the major challenges facing the industry presently. How can this problem be tackled?

NAFDAC is doing its best in this regards, but I have to be frank with you, our borders in the North

are porous. Our border with Niger Republic at Maradi, for instance, has been one particular route through which these fake drugs are brought and dumped in Kano. The customs officials who allowed these drugs to come in through the Niger border have to be held responsible. If the customs and the entire law enforcement agencies of the country are not firm against the freighting of fake drugs through our borders in Lagos and Kano, the problem will remain with us.

Can we blame foreigners or Nigerians for the substandard drugs into the country?

It involves both our nationals and foreigners. Sometimes they do it in the form of partnership, with the foreign partners bringing it in themselves. But most often, it is we the Nigerians that actually market,

because non-Nigerians cannot bring in and sell fake drugs in the country without the collaboration of Nigerians. Therefore, it is we Nigerians that are solely responsible for the menace of these fake drugs.

Why do Nigerians prefer cheaper drugs?

It is because cheaper drugs are easily affordable, although they have low potency and are not efficacious. Thus, one can say it is because of the prevailing economic situation in the country that people still go for them. Similarly, one can say illiteracy is another factor. Being that the poor men in the village cannot differentiate between a fake and good drug, they are wont to buy it the moment the names sounds the same with the one on their prescription form.

Therefore, in order to avert this, there is need for serious education and enlightenment on the part of the citizenry. They should be wary of buying drugs just because of similarity in names; they should rather go for the ones that are manufactured locally. Local production takes care of necessary factors involved in production. Also, as a local manufacturer one has a stake and he/she would not want people to say he is producing fake drugs in his country. So you are careful not to endanger people's life.

It is no longer news that industries are folding up on a large scale here in Kano. What is the secret of your survival?

The secret is both spiritual and mundane. If you are called to go into something, then definitely God will give you the strength. My own calling as a manufacturer is from birth and I think that gave me the strength to prosper.

On the other hand, you must be determined to work hard. In

my own case, I go extra length to keep the factory going; I go starving to make sure my factory does not collapse. So it needs extra sacrifice to keep a factory running now in Nigeria, otherwise if you go home and sleep it will collapse. Therefore, the secret is I don't joke with my factory.

What are the ranges of drugs that your company produces?

We are involved in variety of drugs like tablets such as paracetamol, chloroquine. We also produce syrups, like oral liquids, multi-vitamins and others. We produce external preparations like lotions. We produce dry powder granules, such as ampiclox, ampicilin.

Do you produce antiretroviral drugs?

We are not yet producing antiretroviral drugs. But we are currently making arrangement to produce it. May be by next year, we will be producing the drugs.

How far have you gone with the arrangement?

We have been able to acquire the machines for the production; we have also acquired a factory for that and we have started running test on the product. We are hoping that the pilot test will be finished by the end of this year. We actually don't have a specific date it will be in the market, but hopefully when we have NAFDAC approval it will not take long before it goes for sale.

Are you partnering with a foreign company to produce it or is it yours solely?

I don't need to partner with anybody to produce antiretroviral drugs if I can produce paracetamol in the first place. Once you get the necessary raw materials you produce it, you follow the same process as in the production of other drugs. The only thing you don't do is producing it on the same line with the others; in its case you have to create a separate line for it.

Adamawa: Livestock traders complain of multiple-taxation

LIVESTOCK traders in various markets in Adamawa have complained of "multiple taxation", saying the development is responsible for the high cost of animals.

They also said the multiple taxation had forced some traders out of business.

Malam Audu Musa, a cattle dealer at Ngorore Cattle Market, told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on Monday that the traders paid various taxes to five different government agencies.

Musa said traders and cattle owners paid N200 per head of cattle to enter and exit the cattle market, while four different government officials also collected different taxes from traders.

He said traders paid taxes to the Cattle

Traders' Union, the Transport Owners Association, the Cattle Market Owners Association and the Cattle Loaders Association.

Another cattle dealer, Malam Abdullahi Chede-Abdullahi, told NAN at Gurin Cattle Market in Fufore Local Government Area that they paid taxes to six revenue different government revenue agents.

Chede-Abdullahi said that apart from their unions, traders also paid for entering and leaving the market, loading and off-loading, produce and quarantine charges.

He said that the traders were forced to pay additional charges if the animals were brought in from Chad or Cameroun, as most of the animals sold at Gurin and Chigari were from the border towns.

When NAN visited Song, Gombi and Mubi cattle markets, the story was the same, as traders said they paid taxes to four or six government agencies.

At Mubi and Ngorore markets, traders said that apart from the taxes, they paid extra charges if the animals were to be transported to the southern part of the country.

Malam Yahaya Diddijo and Malam Abdullahi Buladega, both transporters, told NAN at Mubi Cattle Market that although they were not truck owners, they were involved in the transportation of animals.

Diddijo said "we collect dues from the traders as transport owners, as well as dues for escort and our 'sallama due' (farewell gifts)."

A livestock dealer in Ngurore Market,

who pleaded not to be named, said traders paid between N220,000 and N250,000 to hire a truck for the conveyance of their animals to the eastern part of the country.

He said "when a dealer buys a big cow for between N120,000 and N170,000, he pays N1,000 per head of cattle, N10,000 to the person who assists him in bargaining, N10,000 to the Vehicle Owners Association and another N35,000 per escort."

He also said dealers paid N2,500 as way-bill charge, N3,000 for loading, N1,000 for ropes and stick, N1,000 for feeding the cows per night and N40 for marking each cow.

The traders called on the government to assist them in reducing the charges and reduce their operational costs.

Business

SIM card registration suffers setback

By Zakariyya Adaramola

SIM packs are still sold in open markets across the country because GSM operating companies have not exhausted the ones they had in stocks before the May 1 dateline, the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) has said.

NCC, had in December last year, directed all telecoms companies operating in the country to put all necessary arrangements in place for the smooth take off of the SIM registration,

which is aimed at improving security in the country.

"The NCC, in exercise of its regulatory functions as provided for by the Nigerian Communications Act (NCA) 2003, wishes to inform the general public and all the relevant stakeholders that arrangements have been concluded for the commencement of registration of all SIM Card Holders in Nigeria.

"The registration process will include the capture of the photograph and biometrics of the subscriber.

Proxy registration shall be restricted to the direct families of persons seeking registration. The Commission has directed all telecom operating companies to put all necessary arrangements in place for the smooth take off of the exercise", it said.

But despite the expiry of the dateline for the commencement of the exercise in the country, Daily Trust investigation yesterday showed that SIM packs of all GSM operating companies are still being sold in the open markets and on

streets, contrary to expectation of subscribers.

Our correspondent observed in Abuja that SIM packs sellers carried on wooing buyers to themselves, just the way they had been doing it before the May 1 dateline.

A seller at Wuse Market, who identified herself simply as Janet, said she was unaware of any dateline on SIM registration.

She told Daily Trust: "We still get them {SIM packs} where we buy them at wholesales and we still sell

to people."

But speaking in an interview with Daily Trust, the Head, Public Affairs of NCC, Mr. Reuben Mouka, said it is the responsibility of the GSM operating companies to flag off the SIM registration exercise.

According to Reuben, the SIM cards being sold are the ones the companies had produced long before the dateline expired.

He said companies still have up to six months to exhaust what they have in stocks, adding it would

be unfair for NCC to rush them into beginning the new process without allowing them to sell off what they have.

However a spokesman of one of the GSM companies, who preferred anonymity, told Daily Trust on phone that it may take the companies a longer than six months to begin the new NCC exercise.

According to him, the companies are not in hurry to start it now because it will involve some expenditure, which is yet to be budgeted for.

Investors' cumulative net worth grows by 0.77 %

TRANSACTIONS on the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) opened for the week on impressive note with cumulative net worth of investors rising by 0.77 per cent.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the market capitalisation appreciated by N51 billion to close at N6.703 trillion against N6.652 trillion recorded last Friday.

All-Share Index went up by 211.03 points to close at 27,714.39 compared to the opening index of 27,503.36.

The banking sub-sector was still the most active with 175.63 million shares worth N1.79 billion traded in 3,955 deals.

Shares of Zenith Bank accounted for the bulk of transactions in the sub-sector with 35.74 million shares valued at N561.79 million traded in 386 deals.

The insurance sub-sector, boosted by the shares of International Energy Insurance, followed exchanging 82.40 million shares worth N83.61 million in 550 deals.

Investors in International Energy Insurance traded 21.49 million shares valued at N13.78 million in 69 deals. Information and communication technology sub-sector sold 22.8 million shares worth 46.94 million in 112 deals. Total led the price gainers' table, chalking up N10.15 to close at N214.90 per share.

Julius Berger shares rose by N2.70 to close at N56.70 while WAPCO gained N2.10 to close at N44.10 per share.

Mobil shares led the price losers' pack, dropping N7.94 to close at N150.90 per share.

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Succeeding Together



Tony O. Elumelu, MFR
Group Managing Director/CEO

GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR/ CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S STATEMENT 48TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING CONGRESS HALL, TRANSCORP HILTON HOTEL, ABUJA MAY 10, 2010

Distinguished shareholders,

It is my pleasure to present to you our Group performance for the period ended December 31, 2009.

2009 was a particularly eventful year for the African financial services sector, as the impact of the global financial crises of the previous year began to take its toll. However, the fractures in the international financial system provided opportunities for well capitalized and liquid banks, such as UBA, to further consolidate their position as market leaders. The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) implemented resolute regulatory measures to ensure the stability of the Nigerian banking system, including a special audit or stress-test on all banks, and I am pleased to record that UBA was one of the first five banks to pass the audit.

UBA demonstrated resilience, emerging from these events stronger than ever, thus vindicating our risk management and governance practices. Our focus has always been on building the necessary institutional and governance frameworks to ensure business sustainability and continuity. Indeed, in 2009 we consolidated our position as a leading financial services institution in Africa.

I would highlight some key transactions and milestones achieved during the period, which illustrate our progress, despite the global financial storm.

Key Transactions

- Arranger and lead underwriter of a USD265 million loan to Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation/Mobil Producing Nigeria Unlimited for the Natural Gas Liquid II Supplemental Refinancing
- Lead arranger and underwriter for N18.5bn Imo State Government of Nigeria Bond

Key Milestones

- Launched our Africash and Afritrade products to facilitate swift and cost effective transfers across Africa
- Initiated the Western Union Money Transfer service, thereby becoming the first bank in Nigeria to be an agent of the two largest Money Transfer Operators (the other being Moneygram) since the non-exclusive environment came into being as directed by the Central Bank of Nigeria. We are also replicating this in other non exclusive countries across Africa.
- Expanded operations in seven new African countries, bringing to 16 the number of African countries we currently operate in;
- Launched a Group Shared Services platform designed to unlock scale economies in our operations and transform customer service. This is the first of its kind in this part of the world;
- Recognized as the second fastest growing brand within the world's top 500 global financial institutions by the Financial Times (FT)/The Banker Magazine; recognition of our position, as "the Bank that unites Africa".

Each in a different way attests to our ability to pursue disciplined growth, to compete with peers locally and globally and find new ways to serve our huge and growing customer base.

I am elated in the way UBA has navigated through one of the most serious global financial crises of recent decades. Equally, I feel extremely confident about the future, our business prospects in Africa and the ability of African institutions such as UBA to drive economic development across the continent.

At the beginning of the last financial year, we set out our corporate objectives, which were aimed at further consolidating the considerable progress we made in 2008 towards achieving our vision of being 'Africa's Global Bank'. I am pleased to report that we achieved significant milestones on each goal, which when combined, **sets the stage for what I believe will be the platform for growth and profitability in 2010 and the years to come.**

1. FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

Looking forward, our focus this year will be on the following key aspects of our business:

a. Delivering Exceptional Customer Service

As customer service mastery remains the primary differentiator between successful and unsuccessful service organizations, UBA is extremely focused on ensuring that we build this competence into every facet of our business. To this end, we commissioned our **Service Excellence Programme** in May 2009, aimed at ensuring that UBA ranks amongst the most customer-focused service providers in Africa, by the end of 2010.

The programme is anchored on six customer-centric touch points including:

- Process Excellence
- Branch transformation
- Training/Culture Change
- IT Optimization
- Service Management
- Pricing & Product Management

As part of the programme, a Service Excellence Day (SED) initiative was launched to change our staff's attitude towards internal and external customers. SED is observed on the last Friday of every month Group-wide, and involves putting our leadership team at the front-line, directly serving our customers. It also provides management with the opportunity to recognize and reward staffs who demonstrate exceptional customer service attitudes.

Our focus on internal and external customer service reaffirms our commitment to our customers and colleagues, thus further positioning us to effectively compete in the increasingly sophisticated markets.

b. Maintaining Leadership in Nigeria

Nigeria is currently the second largest economy in Sub-Saharan Africa – and is projected to be the largest in less than a decade. Apart from being our headquarter location, Nigeria's inherent growth potential makes it a crucial market for us and with our deep local knowledge, we have the ability to bring real scale advantages to the delivery of our products and services. Consequently, we have strengthened our business capabilities and executive oversight in both UBA Nigeria North and South, to ensure we provide unmatched banking services to our ever-teeming customer base.

We also refocused our attention on our corporate and institutional customers to deliver tailored cash management and trade solutions to meet their cash flow needs. In 2009, we introduced the CEOs Business Breakfast sessions as an interactive platform to engage this customer segment. The Bank co-hosted one such session with the British High Commissioner and the UK Trade and Investment department, and others with the South African High Commissioner and the South African business community, the Aviation Industry and Oil & Gas Industry. We shall build on this in 2010.

c. Expanding our African and Global Reach

In 2009, UBA made further significant progress in accomplishing its goal of extending operations across the African continent. We commenced operations in seven new African countries bringing the total number of African countries we operate in to 16, Nigeria inclusive - **Francophone West Africa** - Burkina Faso, Cote D'Ivoire, Guinea Conakry, Republic of Benin and Senegal; **Anglophone West Africa** - Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone; **Central Africa** - Cameroun, Tchad (Chad) and Gabon; **East Africa** - Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda; and **Southern Africa** - Zambia. Notably, we moved significantly into Eastern and Southern Africa; and are recording achievements that show that we can compete efficiently and win market share in new, often complex markets.

We have established a representative office in Paris, in addition to an affiliate presence in the United Kingdom and a branch in the United States. UBA is also in the process of establishing its presence in China and United Arab Emirates to facilitate trade in these key corridors for Africa. In 2010, with our growing global reach, we will support our customers' international businesses and participate more actively in the global financial arena.

The global economic downturn and financial crisis has changed the landscape significantly, offering considerable advantages to banks like ours. A number of the large banking mandates we won last year were achieved in spite of stiff competition from global peers. Our ability to expand in this way augurs well for the growth of our corporate business.

2. 2009 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

a. Balance Sheet

Despite the challenging operating environment and the introduction of a common year-end for all banks operating in Nigeria, the Group balance sheet as at December 31, 2009 reflects strength upheld by solid capital and liquidity positions.

I. Assets

The Group's total assets dropped slightly to N1.55tr (2008: N1.67tr), as we made additional provisions for diminution offset against the asset value. There was a 44% growth in gross loans and advances to customers from N445bn to N643bn, demonstrating our commitment to support the various economies in which we operate. Our liquidity ratio remained strong at 47% (22% above regulatory minimum). In spite of increased lending activities, additional investments in our Africa rollout, and fixed assets infrastructure.

II. Liabilities

Customers' deposits as at December 31, 2009 held up well at N1.25tr (2008: N1.33tr), a reflection of market confidence in the Bank and in spite of our cutting back on expensive deposits. Our loan to deposit ratio

"I am pleased to report the milestones on each goal sets the stage for what I believe will be the platform for growth and profitability in 2010 and the years to come."



stood at 48.7% (2008: 32.4%) indicating increased leveraging of our balance sheet. This is still below peer average. Though we note the CBN loan-to-deposit ceiling of 80%, we however continue to adopt a cautious mode in growing our loan portfolio. As we continue to strengthen our risk management capacity, we will prudently grow the loan book in 2010 financial year to boost revenue growth. Our shareholders' funds stood at N186.8bn (2008: N195bn), culminating in a risk-weighted capital adequacy ratio of 16.3%. This is well in excess of the 10% minimum stipulated by the CBN.

b. Income Statement

Given the requirement by the Central Bank of Nigeria for all banks in Nigeria to have a common year end of December 31 commencing in 2009, our income statement was based on a 15 month period to 31 December 2009, as against 12 months for the prior period.

i. Income

Gross earnings for the Group rose 46% during the period from N169.5bn to N246.7bn. Interest and similar income remained significant in the Group's income profile and underscores the strength of the Group's core business of financial intermediation. During the period under review, net interest income grew by 57% from N75bn to N118bn, while net interest margin improved from 5.9% in 2008 to 9.2% in 2009.

The Group continues to make efforts towards growing other lines of income, through focus on product innovation and development, particularly in the area of payments, international trade and electronic-banking. Other income comprising largely of fees, commissions, investment and foreign exchange income, grew 30% from N53bn in 2008 to N69bn in 2009. Growth in our operating income remained strong at 46% for the period from N128bn in 2008 to N187bn, reflecting the earnings capacity of our underlying operating activities.

ii. Expenses

The Group recorded a 91% growth in operating expense from N68bn in 2008 to N130bn in 2009 arising from harsh operating conditions, increased staff costs and increasing infrastructure challenges. This was further accentuated by start-up costs arising from our Pan-African expansion. However, while scale has necessitated an increase in our overall cost, UBA still remains efficient on a unit cost basis (considering our staff strength and large branch network) and cost management remains one of the major items in executive management's agenda.

The Group increased its provision for diminution in the value of assets by 1362% from N2.6bn to N38bn. The increased provision reflects both the effects of decline in stock and oil prices on the value of loans to customers as well as the exceptional provisioning recommended by the CBN following its special examination of all banks during the period. These contributed largely to the decline in profit before tax and exceptional items which declined from N56bn in 2008 to N13.7bn in 2009.

iii. Exceptional items

The Bank wrote off special assets of N7bn during the period. The special assets relate to impaired assets acquired during the takeover of Continental Trust Bank Limited by United Bank for Africa Plc in 2005. The write off is consistent with the agreement reached with the Nigerian Accounting Standards Board to write off special assets over a period not exceeding five years effective from 2006. Consequently, the balance outstanding in the special assets account is expected to be written off in full by the end of 2010 financial year.

iv. Returns to shareholders

The Group recorded a profit after tax and exceptional items of N2.4 billion for the period ended December 31, 2009. In line with our tradition of distributing returns to our shareholders, the Board of Directors is proposing a dividend of 10 kobo per share and a bonus share issue of 1 new share for every 5 shares held.

c. Africa Expansion

Our African strategy is beginning to yield the desired results, with the African Bank subsidiaries contributing about 10% (2008: 5.6%) to deposit liabilities of the Group. Whilst the Group performance has been impacted this year by the investment needs of subsidiaries, we have focused on building scale and diversifying our earnings geography, and remain confident that most of the subsidiaries will achieve break even positions in 2010, and contribute very significantly in the future profitability of our Group.

3. 13 YEARS OF WEALTH CREATION FOR OUR SHAREHOLDERS

The past thirteen years during which I served as Chief Executive Officer first at the erstwhile Standard Trust Bank Plc and now at UBA have been particularly rewarding for shareholders who shared this exciting journey with me as:

... that we achieved significant wealth, which when combined, I believe will be the platform for our profitability in 2010 and the years to come.

- Crystal Bank was financially distressed and had closed operations to the public for months when I led a group of investors and management to acquire the bank and christened it Standard Trust Bank in 1997
- Customers and shareholders had lost all their deposits and investments in Crystal Bank, but subsequently all the bank's depositors were repaid
- Existing shareholders regained their investments and;
- Investors in 50k ordinary shares of Standard Trust Bank in 1997 saw its value rise to N7.41/share in 2005 at the time of the merger with UBA. When you take into consideration the bonuses and dividends of N0.89K per share that they also received during the period, their total return on investment for the 8 years (1997 – 2005) came to 2,209%
- Similarly, investors in the shares of UBA which were priced at N10/share in July 2005 at the time of the merger with STB have received significant returns on their investment in spite of the current capital market down turn. Again, when you take into account the four bonus payments we have declared (i.e. 1:5 in 2005, interim 1:2 in 2008, final 1:4 in 2008 and 1:5 in 2010) and the dividend payments since 2006 totaling N3.25, the return on investment is a princely 300.1%!
- All in all the sum of N10,000,000.00 invested in the equity of STB in 1997, converted to UBA shares in 2005 and held to date would be worth N662.7m today. This is a straight line return of 6,527% in 13 years.

I am therefore fulfilled that we have created significant wealth for our shareholders who bought into the vision and supported us through the past 13 exciting years!! The years ahead look even brighter!

4. PASSING THE BATON

As you are aware, I will be retiring as CEO of UBA on July 31, 2010 following the new regulation by the Central Bank of Nigeria announced in January 2010 which limits the tenure of bank CEOs to 10 years.

I have served as CEO of United Bank for Africa Plc since its merger with Standard Trust Bank Plc (STB) in August 2005. Prior to this, I had been CEO of STB, since 1997; bringing the total number of years I have served as CEO to 13. During this time, we have gone through periods of prosperity and challenges, emerging bigger, stronger and better focused on our vision of becoming Africa's Global Bank. We successfully carried out the largest bank merger and integration in Sub-Saharan Africa and have within 5 years transformed the institution from a single country operating entity to a Pan African and global player with operating presence in 16 African countries spread across West Africa, Central Africa, East Africa and Southern Africa; and additional presence in Paris and London. All these have been made possible by the commitment shown by the UBA workforce and continued support of our customers, Board and shareholders.

In line with our robust succession plans and in compliance with the CBN guideline, the Board of Directors, after due consideration, approved the appointment of Mr. Phillips Oduoza as my successor effective August 1, 2010, subject to the approval of the CBN. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Oduoza was the Deputy Managing Director, UBA South Bank – the Group's largest Strategic Business Group in terms of revenue contribution. Phillips holds a 1st Class degree in Civil Engineering and an MBA (Finance) from the University of Lagos. He is also an alumnus of the Advanced Management Programme (AMP) of Harvard Business School and has over 20 years banking experience spanning all facets of the profession. A seasoned professional, Phillips has operated at Executive Management level for over 10 years, initiating and implementing strategic policies across the industry. I am confident that he will build on the foundation that we have established and launch the Group on a new growth trajectory for the benefit of all shareholders.

I wish to specially thank you, our shareholders, for the opportunity to serve you and your support during my tenure as we strove to deliver a vision of building a world class financial institution in Africa, by Africans, serving businesses across Africa and beyond. This race we run is a marathon, and as I pass the baton to Mr. Oduoza, I ask you all to extend the same support to him so that together, we will deliver on the bank of our dreams

UBA – Africa's Global Bank.

God bless you all and long live UBA.

Tony O. Elumelu, MFR
Group Managing Director/CEO

NIGERIA AT



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CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR CONFERMENT
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Alhaji Ibrahim Hassan Dankwambo

On behalf of the Board, Management and staff of the Central Bank of Nigeria, the Governor, Mallam Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, wishes to congratulate Alhaji Ibrahim Hassan Dankwambo, the Accountant General of the Federation and member of Board of Directors of the CBN, on his conferment with the 2010 Merit

Award by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria, ICAN.

The Bank associates itself with your immense contributions not only to the growth of the Accountancy profession, but also your meritorious services to the Nation through hard work and dedication. We are indeed proud of your achievements.

Signed
Management

Business/Finance

Only 10 per cent of Nigerians do insurance - NAICOM boss



MR. FOLA DANIEL, NIGERIA'S COMMISSIONER FOR INSURANCE

By Jibrin Abubakar & Yunus Abdulhamid

INSURANCE penetration in the North has not been commendable. What do you think is responsible for that and how do you think it can be corrected?

I think the low insurance penetration is not limited to the North. Generally, there is low insurance penetration in Nigeria. Nigeria has insurance gap of about 90 per cent which means that not more than 10 per cent of the populace has anything to do with insurance. Whether it is in the North or South, there is a common denominator of insufficient awareness of the mechanism of insurance as a means of managing risk. Indeed it is the cheapest way of managing risk but people are not aware. That is the general problem responsible for lack of penetration of insurance in Nigeria.

The insurance companies are complaining that the N100million capitalisation base recommended by the government committee is on the high side. What is your take on this?

The federal government empowered the committee to review the 2003 Insurance Act. The committee submitted various recommendations. The essence of the work of the committee is to bring the insurance practise in Nigeria at par with global best international practise. We need to have an insurance legislation that enables the enhancement of business and that will engender confidence of the insuring public. These are the major objectives. So to achieve all these objectives, various recommendations were made that touch on various segments of the insurance industry. Whether there is specific recommendation, I cannot remember now.

I think it is also worthy of note that the National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) did not set up the committee. We were just a member of the review panel. The federal government has not come out with any white paper on the

proposals of the committee. The federal government is not bound to accept it. It could accept it or moderate it, or even reject it. As a committee we have completed our assignment.

Can you give us a highlight on the content of the committee's recommendation?

I can't do that. I am a member. I am not in the position to give you a highlight. To get it, you need to see the honourable minister of finance.

Last year, you launched a project which if implemented is supposed to generate some trillions of naira to insurance stakeholders and government by 2012. How realistic is that, especially when some jobs are expected to be created?

I think you are talking about our MDRI programme, where one of the major objectives is to enhance the productivity

of the insurance industry and to also meaningfully contribute to the nation's GDP. The insurance contribution to the GDP now is very low and one of the objectives of the MDRI programme is to boost the insurance productivity. One of the things we have done to achieve this is to look at the sources of business for the insurance sector. We classified these businesses as those that are voluntary and those that are compulsory. In our various legislations there are over a dozen of compulsory insurances. We have chosen to focus for now on six areas that are not well known to the member of the public. One of them is make sure that public buildings are insured against possible risk or death against the third party.

The definition of public building is very wide. The stadium is a public building, the market, the church and mosques are all public buildings. This is because members of the public have access to the building. Secondly, the law also says all building in the cause of erection which is of two storeys and above must be insured. That also was design to take care of public interest. There is also the motor insurance aspect of it. We also have people hawking fake motor insurance. We are focusing on this to make it efficient. Of course, there is also the Group Life Policy, where companies who have on their pay roll a minimum of four people and above and that is embedded in the PENCOM Act 2004. We also have compulsory insurances for HMOs (Health management Officers); professional indemnity insurance; so that due to the negligence of the medical providers, the injured third party will have some recourse to remedy and compensate. It is very important. People are not just aware.

Recently, you flagged off the Market Development and Restructuring Initiative (MDRI) in Sokoto. Why Sokoto?

We are sensitizing Nigerians all over. If you remember 2008, we have a flag off in the federal capital here. The rest of last year and the better part of this year were used to pre-

pare so that we don't just go flagging off and not implementing. We need to put in place the structures. Launching in Sokoto is one of the series of what we are going to be doing. Before Sokoto we did it in Ibadan. We would be going to Maiduguri and Port Harcourt to sensitize Nigerians.

Some people are advocating for Islamic insurance, how difference is it from others?

Takaful is an Islamic Insurance that recognises the tenets of Islam. It's just a deviation from the normal insurances. It is packaged in a way that it does not offend anybody's religious beliefs. It is a new insurance product in Nigeria. About five companies are already selling it. It is to take care of situation where people in the past had to take conventional life insurance that is against their religion. It is the same thing with having an Islamic banking. It respects people's religious belief.

Where would you situate the Nigeria's insurance sector within the African insurance landscape?

We are not occupying our rightful position in Africa. Our premium position of the insurance market is about fifth in Africa. In fact, we are poor number five. We are behind South Africa and Tunisia. Base on premium, we are really very far from them. That is why we are creating awareness to the members of the public through these launchings. We are trying to reverse this position. We have huge potentials to be the number one and one of the leading insurance countries in the whole of the world. We have a huge population of about 150 million, which is the raw material you need for insurance to thrive.

Most of the insurance companies concentrate their operations in the rural areas. Are you concerned about this?

As a matter of fact, we are deeply concerned about the concentration of the insurance companies in the rural areas. Unless we are visible we would not get the kind of penetration we are asking for, given the resources available we have in this country. So we are urging all the insurance companies to open shops in local government areas. The example is that a few of Nigerian companies have gone out to establish branches, and some of these countries don't have the population of some of our local government areas.

What is your biggest headache?

The biggest challenge I have is the insurance awareness. If people become aware of how they can deploy insurance to manage their daily life, then we would have more buy in. Awareness creation is a big challenge because Nigeria is a very big country. We have a lot of diversity. For us to create awareness that will be grass root friendly, we need to go to virtually everywhere. So we really need to devise the language we use so that the message can be driven home.

“We are deeply concerned about the concentration of the insurance companies in the rural areas. Unless we are visible we would not get the kind of penetration we are asking for, given the resources available we have in this country.”

Business/Finance

Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE)

Monday, May 10, 2010

COMPANY Name	No of Deals	Quot. (N)	Quantity Traded	Value of Shares (N)
2ND-TIER SECURITIES				
CAPITAL OIL PLC	3	0.50	100,796	50,398.00
AGRICULTURE				
FTN COCOA PROC. PLC	22	0.96	2,534,655	2,441,666.25
LIVESTOCK FEEDS PLC	37	0.98	581,838	570,201.24
OKOMU OIL PALM COY PLC	13	15.13	151,707	2,295,326.91
PRESKO PLC	1	7.50	1,000	7,130.00
SECTOR Totals	73		3,269,200	5,314,324.40
AIR SERVICES				
AIRL/SERV/LOGISTICS PLC	7	3.92	44,680	166,656.40
NIG. AV. HANDLING COY PLC	173	14.20	2,969,857	41,553,534.54
SECTOR Totals	180			
BANKING				
ACCESS BANK PLC	202	9.97	11,404,025	112,940,523.40
AFRIBANK NIGERIA PLC	100	2.40	4,027,056	10,107,666.66
SECTOR Totals	302			
BANKING				
ECOBANK NIGERIA PLC	70	6.04	2,614,509	15,788,988.44
FIRST CITY MON. BANK PLC	94	8.25	4,722,340	38,639,001.54
FIDELITY BANK PLC	154	2.96	7,953,285	23,921,757.48
FIRST BANK OF NIGERIA PLC	991	15.56	18,450,792	288,356,676.70
FINBANK PLC	64	0.63	3,305,823	2,060,808.06
GTBANK PLC	541	17.41	11,112,681	196,295,614.19
STANBIC IBTC BANK PLC	95	10.90	7,831,037	84,365,732.05
INTERCONT. BANK PLC	76	1.95	1,259,110	2,462,736.99
OCEANIC BANK INT. PLC	150	2.00	5,244,975	10,609,816.85
BANK PHB PLC	85	1.49	5,690,522	8,179,361.86
SKYE BANK PLC	221	8.62	22,401,479	193,100,748.98
SPRING BANK PLC	15	1.07	635,560	658,387.29
STERLING BANK PLC	61	2.34	8,517,775	19,918,906.72
UNT. BANK FOR AFRICA PLC	334	13.50	7,918,551	106,803,425.51
UNION BANK OF NIG. PLC	159	5.65	2,939,674	16,715,454.57
UNITYBANK PLC	7	1.11	570,602	633,368.22
WEMA BANK PLC	44	1.20	2,898,862	3,415,565.83
ZENITH BANK PLC	386	15.70	35,743,797	561,788,973.16
SECTOR Totals	3,955		175,634,868	1,792,076,987.23
BUILDING MATERIALS				
ASHAKA CEMENT PLC	101	21.70	1,366,761	29,469,758.49
BENUCE CEMENT COY PLC	36	68.00	328,840	22,155,121.84
CEMENT CO. OF N/NIG. PLC	85	22.50	1,323,911	29,831,082.70
LAFARGE WAPCO PLC	82	44.10	2,571,069	111,814,342.56
SECTOR Totals	304		5,590,581	193,270,305.59
CHEMICAL & PAINTS				
BERGER PAINTS NIGERIA PLC	20	8.74	115,125	959,387.41
CHEM/ALLIED PROD. PLC	5	31.15	5,040	164,808.00
DN MEYER PLC	35	5.80	1,100,526	6,341,318.42
I. P. W. A. PLC	1	1.14	25,480	27,773.20
SECTOR Totals	61		1,146,171	7,493,287.03
CONGLOMERATES				
A. G. LEV. (NIGERIA) PLC	17	3.99	454,600	1,817,132.00
CHELLARAMS PLC	10	10.44	153,812	1,605,797.28
JOHN HOLT PLC	1	9.28	592	5,221.44
PZ CUSSENS NIGERIA PLC	44	29.50	226,034	6,576,701.90
SCOA NIGERIA PLC	1	8.71	50	414.00
TRANS. CORP. OF NIG. PLC	19	0.50	857,224	432,012.00
UAC OF NIGERIA PLC	90	53.98	998,640	53,838,513.74
UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC	84	29.40	876,374	25,231,144.01
SECTOR Totals	266		3,567,336	89,506,936.33
CONSTRUCTION				
COSTAIN (WA) PLC	74	9.00	580,082	5,160,970.93
JUL/BERGER NIGERIA PLC	39	56.70	523,940	29,257,272.03
MULTIVERSE RES. PLC	1	0.50	274,805	137,402.50
SECTOR Totals	114		1,378,827	34,555,645.46
ENGINEERING TECH.				
CUTIX PLC	13	4.20	215,988	906,772.00
NIG. WIRE AND CABLE PLC.	13	1.21	1,379,400	1,669,074.00
SECTOR Totals	26		1,595,388	2,575,846.00
FOOD/BEV. & TOBACCO				
7-UP BOTTLING CO. PLC	16	44.54	21,040	946,313.65
BIGTREAT PLC	37	0.87	2,084,624	1,781,936.63
CADBURY NIGERIA PLC	149	28.68	2,236,962	63,820,363.49
DANG. FLOUR MILLS PLC	359	23.95	1,978,835	47,245,610.09
DANG. SUGAR REF. PLC	141	19.45	1,921,532	37,348,259.50
FLOUR MILLS NIGERIA PLC	115	71.00	1,875,338	131,676,756.08
HO/WELL FLOUR MILL PLC	55	8.66	1,876,260	15,832,223.87
NAT. SALT COY NIGERIA PLC	106	9.40	2,393,909	22,359,953.03
NIG. BOTTLING COY PLC	24	36.00	34,947	1,268,877.56
NESTLE NIGERIA PLC	40	314.00	33,889	10,754,658.48
N/NIG. FLOUR MILLS PLC	5	35.34	174,150	6,154,461.00
TANTALIZERS PLC	19	1.10	520,356	572,455.60
UTC NIGERIA PLC	35	1.66	674,722	1,107,421.50
HEALTHCARE				
EVANS MEDICAL PLC.	16	1.70	371,653	635,813.95
FIDSON HEALTHCARE PLC	55	3.00	3,056,582	9,835,272.60
GLAXOSM. CONS. NIG. PLC	11	22.98	21,248	512,501.76
MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC.	16	7.59	211,688	1,610,011.92
NEIMETH INT. PHARM. PLC	2	3.08	43,200	126,576.00
UN/DIAG. & CLIN. SERV. PLC	44	0.73	4,230,543	3,120,937.25

SECTOR Totals	144	7,934,914	15,841,113.48
HOTEL & TOURISM			
IKEJA HOTEL PLC	12	2.18	735,100
SECTOR Totals	12		735,100
IND./DOMESTIC PROD.			
B. O. C. GASES NIGERIA PLC	4	10.73	12,000
FIRST ALUMINIUM NIG. PLC	1	0.51	2,700
VITAFOAM NIGERIA PLC	15	6.60	30,000
VONO PRODUCTS PLC	2	0.50	64,454
SECTOR Totals	22		109,154
INF. & COMM. TECHN.			
CHAMS PLC	56	0.90	3,412,698
MASS TEL. INNOV. NIG. PLC	1	0.50	3,000
STARCOMMS PLC	55	2.13	19,346,386
SECTOR Totals	112		22,762,084
INSURANCE			
AIICO INSURANCE PLC.	44	1.59	3,475,945
CONTINENTAL REINS. PLC	27	1.48	9,500,000
C/STONE INSUR. CO. PLC.	22	0.74	1,840,000
CUST/ALLIED INSUR. PLC	23	3.55	807,558
EQUITY ASSURANCE PLC	3	0.50	300,000
GOLDLINK INSURANCE PLC	25	0.79	2,880,850
GUAR. TRUST ASSUR. PLC	85	2.53	8,478,643
GUINEA INSURANCE PLC.	1	0.50	20,000
CONS. HALLMARK INS. PLC	2	0.50	12,000
INT. ENERGY INSUR. COY PLC	69	0.66	21,497,244
LASACO ASSURANCE PLC	34	0.51	5,177,725
L/UNION & ROCK INS. PLC	36	0.59	5,916,222
LINKAGE ASSURANCE PLC	2	0.50	200,000
MUT/BENEFITS ASSUR. PLC	24	0.50	7,103,000
N.E.M. INS. CO. (NIG.) PLC.	55	0.66	10,515,075
NIGER INSURANCE CO. PLC	23	1.29	1,707,663
PRESTIGE ASSURANCE PLC	16	4.00	292,164
STACO INSURANCE PLC	33	0.54	1,977,968
STAND. ALLIANCE INS. PLC	14	0.53	398,380
UNIC INSURANCE PLC.	6	0.90	216,000
UNIVERSAL INSUR. COY PLC	3	0.50	73,700
INTERC. WAPIC INSUR. PLC	3	0.92	14,500
SECTOR Totals	550		83,077,765.83
LEASING			
C&I LEASING PLC	27	3.65	912,584
SECTOR Totals	27		912,584
MARITIME			
JAP/OIL & MARIT. SERV. PLC	61	1.86	1,658,531
SECTOR Totals	61		1,658,531
MEDIA			
DAAR COMMUNIC. PLC	18	1.09	32,350
SECTOR Totals	18		32,350
MORTGAGE COMPANIES			
ASO SAVINGS & LOAN PLC	40	0.52	1,937,601
RES. SAVINGS & LOANS PLC	7	0.50	1,403,000
UN/HOMES SAV/LOANS PLC	27	0.90	647,340
SECTOR Totals	74		3,987,941
OTHER FINANCIAL INST.			
CRUSADER NIGERIA PLC.	9	0.92	485,000
D/CAPITAL MAN/TRUST PLC	2	2.02	55,000
ROYAL EXCHANGE PLC	27	0.74	1,351,535
SECTOR Totals	38		1,891,535
PACKAGING			
NIG. BAG MANUF. COY PLC	459	3.50	5,368,973
BETA GLASS CO. PLC	7	14.84	101,750
NAMPAK NIGERIA PLC	1	6.01	4,675
SECTOR Totals	467		5,475,398
PETROLEUM (MARKETING)			
AFRICAN PETROLEUM PLC.	61	38.10	223,283
BECO PETROL. PROD. PLC	18	1.77	312,889
MRS OIL NIGERIA PLC	6	69.79	12,945
CONOIL PLC	38	50.00	92,375
ETERNA OIL & GAS PLC.	35	8.03	384,580
MOBIL OIL NIGERIA PLC.	36	150.90	163,353
OANDO PLC	161	114.00	1,463,052
TOTAL NIGERIA PLC	36	214.90	265,576
SECTOR Totals	391		2,918,053
PRINTING & PUBLISHING			
LONGMAN NIGERIA PLC	14	9.93	122,726
UNIVERSITY PRESS PLC	18	7.25	167,396
SECTOR Totals	32		290,122
REAL ESTATE			
UACN PROP. DEV. CO. PLC	25	25.00	1,166,145
SECTOR Totals	25		1,166,145
ROAD TRANSPORTATION			
ASSOCIATED BUS COY PLC	26	1.10	750,250
SECTOR Totals	26		750,250
TEXTILES			
UNITED NIGERIA TEXT. PLC	8	1.42	100,000
SECTOR Totals	8		100,000
THE FOREIGN LISTINGS			
ECOBANK TRANS. INCORP.	16	19.70	1,095,032
SECTOR Totals	16		1,095,032
OVERALL Totals	8,423		353,759,397

What is Buy-In

If a broker fails to deliver securities sold to another broker on the settlement date, the receiving broker may buy the securities at the current market price of the stock and charge the delivering broker the cost difference of such a purchase.

Googl

GAINERS	
TOTAL	10.15
JBERGER	2.70
WAPCO	2.10
GUINNESS	2.02

LOSERS	
MOBIL	7.94
MNFM	1.85
FLOURMILL	1.30
ETI	1.03



NATIONAL BUREAU
OF STATISTICS



CENTRAL BANK
OF NIGERIA



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in collaboration with the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), will conduct the 2009 Annual Socio-Economic Survey nationwide, from May 3 to 23rd, 2010.

The overall objective of the survey is to collect socio-economic statistics, personal workers' remittances and data on Information and Communications Technology (ICT). These data would facilitate:

- the production Gross Domestic Product (GDP),
- compilation of the Current Account section of the Balance of Payment (BOP) and
- generation of ICT indicators.

These statistics would assist in monitoring the economic performance of the country.

The general public is therefore requested to assist the enumerators in the field to achieve the objectives of the survey.

Please note that failure to cooperate with the enumerators is punishable under the Statistics Act of 2007, the CBN Act of 2007 and the Communications Act of 2003.

Thank you.

Dr. George Adewoye
Director of Real Sector &
Households Statistics Dept.
National Bureau of Statistics

Sani I. Doguwa, PhD
Director of Statistics
Central Bank of Nigeria

Dr. Henry Nkemadu
Policy, Economic Analysis and Research
Nigerian Communications Commission

PUBLIC NOTICE

EXTERNAL AUDITORS FOR A REGULATOR IN THE FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTOR OF THE ECONOMY

Reference to our earlier advertisement on the above subject matter in the Daily Trust Newspaper of Wednesday, March 24, 2010 and Thisday Newspaper of Friday, March 26, 2010.

This is to inform firms who indicated interest that the bid documents would be opened on Monday, May 17, 2010 at 2.00pm. Venue is on the 2ND Floor, Shippers' Plaza, Michael Okpara Street, Wuse Zone 5, Abuja.

**SIGNED:
MANAGEMENT**



FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (TECHNICAL) BICHI

P.M.B 3473, KANO
KANO STATE

POSTPONEMENT OF THE 4TH COMBINED CONVOCAATION CEREMONY OF FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (TECHNICAL) BICHI, KANO

We regret to inform the general public and Graduands that the 4th Combined Convocation Ceremony of Federal College of Education (Technical) Bichi, earlier slated for Saturday 15th May, 2010 is postponed to a later date.

We wish to reaffirm that the College's Governing Council will announce a new date, soonest.

We regret all the inconveniences caused by this postponement.

**SIGNED
ALH. (DR.) MUHAMMAD ALI
Registrar**



NIGERIAN EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL

EXPORT EXPANSION GRANT (EEG)

SUBMISSION OF BASELINE DATA FOR 2009 RATINGS

This is to inform all Exporters interested in or those already registered for the Export Expansion Grant (EEG) scheme, that they are requested to submit their 2008 baseline data for the purpose of determining their EEG rates for 2009 non-oil exports from Monday, April 19, 2010.

2. DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS:

- (i) Complete Baseline forms 1A, 1B, 1C *and their annexes*. (The forms can be assessed on www.nepcng.com.)
- (ii) 2008 Audited Financial Statements, which must include Value Added Statements.

Notes: (a) Photocopies of Financial Statements are not acceptable. Any photocopy must be duly certified by the Company's Auditor.

- (b) *Companies, who are submitting baseline data for the first time should in addition to the above, submit their Financial Statements for 2006, 2007 and 2008.*
- (c) *New companies should submit their Management Account for 2009 or Audited Financial Statement for 2009 and Projected Financial Statements for 2010.*

3. In order to ensure that the information provided in the baseline data forms conform with what is contained in the Audited Financial Statement, all exporters are further requested to provide the following additional information:

- (I) Analysis of *Turnover* into Local and Export Sales.

- (ii) Analysis/Schedule of Total Export Sales (N) showing the conversion rates used.
- (iii) Details of *Addition to Fixed Assets during the Year*.
- (iv) Breakdown /Analysis of *Cost of Sales* into local and Foreign Input (Raw materials and packaging).

Note: All figures must correspond to the information provided in the Audited Financial Statement for the period under review.

4. TIME SCHEDULES:

For orderly and smooth processing of EEG applications, the following time schedules must be strictly followed:

- (I) **15th June, 2010** - Submission of 2008 baseline data for 2009 rates will close. (Processing of EEG applications for 2009 claims will commence immediately).
- (ii) **16th September, 2010** - Submission of 2009 applications will close.

Applications will only be submitted after the determination and communication of EEG rates to Exporters.

5. Exporters are advised to strictly adhere to the guidelines on re-designed EEG. Incomplete or illegible documents will not be accepted.

6. The Nigerian Export Promotion Council will not accept responsibility for claims denied in respect of incomplete and illegible documents. All submissions must be addressed to the **Executive Director/CEO, NEPC.**

— Signed —

H. O. Otowo

For: Executive Director/CEO, NEPC.

DIGEST

Seventeen-year-old locked in toddler's body could unlock key to ageing



BROOKE Greenberg, left, pictured aged 16, with younger sister Carly.

A 17-year-old girl who is trapped in the body and mind of a toddler could help scientists unlock the key to ageing, according to scientists.

Brooke Greenberg, who will be old enough to vote next year, has failed to develop physically or mentally and remains just 30 inches tall with a mental age of a one-year-old.

Initially doctors were baffled and dubbed her unexplained condition, Syndrome X.

But now initial studies into her DNA have indicated that her

failure to develop may be linked to defects in the genes responsible for the ageing process in the rest of mankind.

It is hoped by analysing Brooke's DNA, scientists could gain a fresh insight into the process of ageing and even develop new therapies and treatments for diseases linked to old age.

A conference beginning in London this week, which will bring together some of the world's leading age researchers, will discuss some of the findings from Brooke's case.

Professor Richard Walker, of the University of South Florida School of Medicine, who has been leading the study, said it could help unlock some of the secrets of age and development.

He said: "We think that Brooke's condition presents us with a unique opportunity to understand the process of ageing.

"We think that she has a mutation in the genes that control her ageing and development so that she appears to have been frozen in time.

"If we can compare her genome

to the normal version then we might be able to find those genes and see exactly what they do and how to control them."

Brooke was born in Reisterstown near Baltimore in the United States and initially appeared to be a normal healthy baby.

However before the age of two she suffered a series of unexplained medical emergencies and it soon became clear to her parents Melanie and Howard that she was not developing as normal.

Doctors were unable to provide a medical explanation for her con-

dition but believe the various parts of her body are out of sync and so are not developing in a co-ordinated manner.

Brooke is able to make gestures and recognise sounds, but she cannot speak.

Her bones are like those of a ten-year-old, but she still has her baby teeth.

Professor Walker said: "Our hypothesis is that she is suffering from damage in the gene or genes that co-ordinate the way the body develops and ages.

"If we can use her DNA to find that mutant gene then we can test it in laboratory animals to see if we can switch it off and slow down the ageing process at will.

"Just possibly it could give us an opportunity to answer the question of why we are mortal."

Her father, said he wanted the genome research carried out in the hope it might help others.

He said: "Brooke is just a wonderful child. She is very pure. She still babbles just like a 6 month old baby but she still communicates and we always know just what she means." At the Royal Society conference starting this week experts from around the world will discuss the findings from Brooke's case in the hope it will eventually lead to new treatments for conditions such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Disease.

It is also believed it could lead to treatments which will allow us to all live longer.

Scientists have already carried out research which has showed lifespan of many animals can be dramatically extended by making minute changes in single genes.

'There is no cure for anorexia, but now I want to get better'

A choreographer talks movingly about her battle with anorexia - and how she found hope in a new clinic in Cape Town

Zoe Smith has no idea what caused the "voices in my head", but by the age of 14 she was mesmerised by them. They told her repeatedly that if she wanted to be loved and happy, she must be slimmer. Four years later, as she was starting dance college, Zoe was in the grip of anorexia.

"My ballet teacher warned me I'd lost so much weight my muscles were wasting away," she says. She went from one treatment to another - including one-to-one counselling and family therapy. "I didn't want to get better," Zoe admits.

It wasn't until December 2007 that Zoe, then 19, faced up to her illness and agreed, on the recommendation of her doctor, to spend four months at a new long-stay addiction rehabilitation clinic, Montrose Place in Cape Town. Founded by South African business-

man and former alcohol and cocaine addict Johnny Graaf, it offers a new approach to the management of eating disorders.

Zoe, now 22, and a choreographer living in north London, is one of 100 patients from the UK who have been successfully treated for anorexia at Montrose in the past three years. The clinic boasts a 70 per cent success rate, based on follow-ups after one year for those who completed its 90-day programme. Now, it is about to open a centre in London to prepare patients for treatment in South Africa or to help them afterwards.

Some experts are holding up the Montrose method as a model for the future, elements of which should be adopted by the NHS. Consultant psychiatrist Alessia Ciani, a senior lecturer in eating disorders at Imperial College, London, who also practises at the Priory Hospital, has sent patients to Montrose. "The clinical team is very good," she says. "There is nothing comparable on

the NHS. Funding in the UK does not allow residential treatment for anyone unless they are extremely ill with a BMI (Body Mass Index) of below 13 (20-25 is the healthy range). All other treatment is conducted via outpatients." So what makes Montrose different? The centre rejects many of the traditional "boot camp" methods of treatment such as behaviour modification therapies, in which patients are "punished" for not eating. Instead, they are encouraged to explore their freedom. Therapy classes may occupy their weekday timetable, but at weekends they climb Table Mountain, try shark-diving, or do community work in the townships.

Equine-assisted psychotherapy is a cornerstone of therapy. "Being around horses requires patience, compassion and respect - all qualities which anorexics lose sight of," says psychiatrist Dr Greg McCarthy, Montrose's chief medical adviser. "Seeing horses respond to their behaviour helps the

patients become more self-aware." Anorexia, which largely affects those between the age of 12-20, is a severe mental illness affecting 1 per cent of young women. About 10 per cent of sufferers are men, according to the charity Beating Eating Disorders.

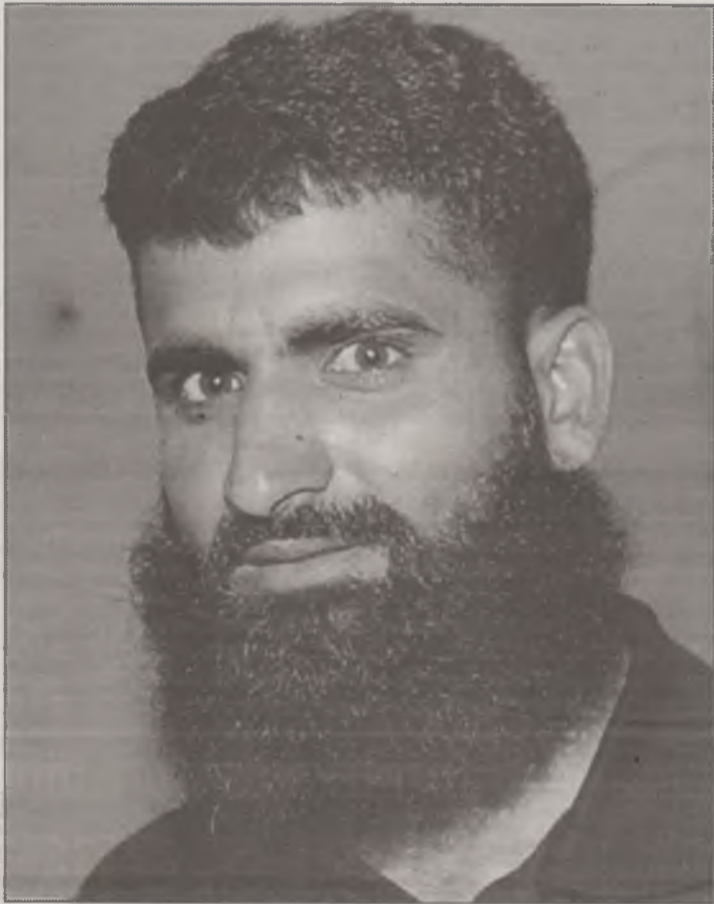
Anorexics typically weigh less than 86 per cent of their expected healthy weight, with a BMI of 18 or under. They are terrified of gaining weight, and in denial about the long-term consequences of their behaviour such as osteoporosis, gastrointestinal complications and dental problems. The condition has one of the highest mortality rates and suicide rates of any psychiatric disorder.

It is tricky to treat because it often co-exists with other illnesses and addictions. Drug therapy, with anti-depressants for example, may not work, partly because the body needs a certain number of calories before it can start to metabolise the drugs.

Culled from telegraph.co.uk

News Extra

Pakistani air passenger caught with a pair of electronic circuit shoes



ARRESTED: Faiz Mohammad

A passenger was detained by airport authorities in Pakistan after electrical circuits and batteries were found in the soles of his tennis shoes, an airport security official said today.

Officials were investigating what the components could be used for and why they were concealed.

Similar materials can be used in the construction of bombs.

Faiz Mohammad was arrested at Karachi's Jinnah International Airport Sunday night, said Munir Ahmed, a spokesman for the airport security force.

The materials were detected by a scanner.

Munir Ahmed said each shoe contained a small circuit connected to two AAA batteries.

Mohammad, a building constructor who was heading for Muscat in Oman, told investigators he bought the shoes from a market in Karachi and had no idea there were circuits hidden inside the soles.

'It is premature to say what was he up to. We are looking into the matter thoroughly,' police official Sohail Faiz said.

In 2001, British extremist Richard Reid was arrested after he tried to detonate explosives hidden in his shoes on a transat-

lantic flight.

Pakistan's security efforts have come under scrutiny since an alleged Pakistani-trained extremist was accused of a failed car bombing in Times Square last week. Top

“In 2001, British extremist Richard Reid was arrested after he tried to detonate explosives hidden in his shoes on a transatlantic flight

US officials have said the Pakistani Taliban were behind the plot.

Karachi, Pakistan's largest city, was targeted by authorities in the investigation into the Times Square bombing attempt. Four people with alleged links to Jaish-e-Mohammed, a militant group affiliated with al Qaeda, were detained there.



MOHAMMAD is being held at a police station after Airport Security Force handed him over, in the southern port city of Karachi



A security official shows a shoe with batteries installed in them



THE shoes even had an on/off switch to operate the electronics inside. It is believed they are 'massage shoes'

News Extra



THE ash cloud from Eyjafjoel volcano pictured Sunday in Hvalsnoellur, Iceland

Ash cloud snakes across Italy, France, Switzerland and heads for Germany

Further flight disruptions are expected in European airspace as a plume of volcanic ash snakes its way through southern France, Switzerland and northern Italy.

In Geneva, dozens of flights to Britain, Portugal, Spain, France, Ireland and Hungary were grounded, while Zurich airport listed flights to Washington, Dublin and Porto as cancelled.

Geneva airport is one of the main hubs for budget carrier easyJet. The airline warned passengers to expect further disruption to flights operating to and from Switzerland, southern and central France, northern Italy and northern Portugal.

Weather forecasts predicted that the ash would spread to southern parts of Germany, the Czech Republic and Austria.

The ash, stretching from the surface up to 20,000 feet, has forced the closure of airports throughout much of northern Italy.

Separately, a finger of the main ash cloud - centred in the mid-Atlantic at altitudes of up to 35,000 feet - was still touching on parts of Portugal and Spain, closing airports at Porto, La Coruna, Vigo, and Santiago.

Eurocontrol, the Brussels-based agency that coordinates air



GROUNDING aircraft

traffic control centres throughout the continent, said trans-Atlantic flights will continue to be diverted northward over Greenland to avoid the cloud stretching from Iceland to the Azores Islands.

It warned airlines to plan on

taking on more fuel for the longer flight around the oceanic no-fly zone.

Until Eyjafjallajökull, the volcano in southern Iceland, stops its emissions, flights will be at the mercy of the prevailing winds.

The volcano has shown no signs of stopping its eruptions since it began belching ash on April 13.

It last erupted for two years between 1821 and 1823.

It has been estimated that air-

lines lost more than £1 billion after the ash cloud forced passengers to miss their flights last month.

BAA, which runs Heathrow and Stansted, said the chaos had so far cost it £28million.

HEALTH REPORT

Nassarawa has highest TB cases –Keffi CMD

By Ruby Leo

Nassarawa state has been identified as the state with the highest TB prevalence rate, with many of its patients visiting the Federal Medical Centre, Keffi. The new Ag. Medical Director of the hospital, **Dr. Joshua N. Giyan**, in this interview with Daily Trust spoke on the challenges in dealing with the TB scourge, equipment needed and the gains made so far in its determination to ensure effective healthcare delivery system in the area. Excerpts.

What do you consider as the major challenges here?

They are enormous, because clinical services constitute the main business of the day and then the healthcare delivery. One of our main problems is people's attitude to government work; their nonchalant attitude toward their patients is not encouraging at all.

Another area is acquiring funds to purchase equipment. Then, here at the Federal Medical Centre, we have some space constraint which is also a major challenge.

Has the location of the hospital fulfilled the aims for which it was set up?

The location of the hospital is strategic. It is located about 50 kilometers from Abuja the seat of the nation's capital. Most vehicles pass through here which unfortunately result in many accident cases reported here.

A lot of people choose to come here even from the FCT. About 80% of our patronage is from rural areas including the neighbouring States of Benue, Kaduna, Plateau and even some parts of Kogi and Niger States.

How would you grade the HIV scourge in your health centre, especially as it relates to the north?

This HIV scourge is quite high in this area. Benue State ranked highest in the country. Nasarawa State came third in terms of prevalence. The reason for that was the proximity to Abuja, especially the Karu/Mararaba area. There are a lot of social activities in the FCT

and many people who work there also live in Keffi.

What about the cases of tuberculosis?

Tuberculosis is also an infectious disease and I think, if things have not changed, Nasarawa State has the highest prevalence rate. We started a programme on HIV in November, 2005 and by 2006 a Non-governmental Organization, the Institute of Human Virology, Nigeria, came to assist us to get a lot of things done. We have so far enrolled more than 7,000 people living with HIV/AIDS and close to 5,000 are on anti-retroviral.

And because of the level of patronage in this area we need to continue and beef it up, possibly make it a centre of excellence for research. Our concern really is to arrest the situation.

However the State Coordinator from the control-office will have authentic figure on tuberculosis cases. HIV and TB are like partners. HIV lowers the immunity while TB capitalizes on the lowered immunity and enters the body. It also lowers immunity for the HIV to enter the body faster.

The new government policy is to regulate foreign treatment for its officials, do you subscribe to the idea that special wards be built for very important patients to make their stay in the hospital more comfortable?

It is said that the way you make your bed so shall you lay on it. Our hospital have, to some extent been neglected, otherwise, we have all the manpower capacity to take care of patients here at home. Some cases that cannot be treated here, of course, would be referred abroad, but even then, it is my belief that if we are serious we will import all the technologies necessary to cater for whatever diseases.

We can import technology to enable us even do cardiac surgeries, brain surgeries here in Nigeria. When you look at other areas, look at the automobile industry in Japan, for instance, they just imported the technology and they are doing fine. The world is ready to cooperate with us if we are ready to do the right thing. We should build our hospitals to standard and we should get the expertise to help us on the track and then train our own people to handle these hospitals.

People who go abroad for treatment meet Nigerians there who treat them. Equipment and the enabling environment are just what we need, incentives etc. The government pronouncement is in the right direction.

There is now telemedicine,

e-health coming up. With that kind of technology a person can be here in the Federal Medical Centre, Keffi and an expert consultant in U.S can assist you via it during operation by giving advice.

We can import these technologies since we have the money. There is no place like home.

NAFDAC is complaining that adverse drug reaction (ADR) from hospitals are not encouraging. What is really the problem?

We have a team of – pharmacovigilante team – monitoring the reactions. We know here, especially in the area of HIV/AIDS, there were quite a number of patients that react to certain drugs, but it is expected because of the nature of the diseases.

Any time we find any reaction we record it and make sure it is properly kept in check. We have pharmacists who ensure genuine drugs, we don't have much adverse drug reaction cases. In any case you find that in any drug there is information about its adverse reaction.

Malaria has been described as a silent killer, what do you think is the way out?

It is really unfortunate that we are still struggling with malaria up till now. Other nations have already eliminated malaria. That is why when their citizens are coming to Africa they take all sorts of precaution. Malaria is not impossible to eliminate.

The problem is that we do not focus our attention on what we are supposed to do. If we tell people to clear their environment, make sure nothing holds water, cooperate with sanitation officers, but they don't listen.

Even when advised to use hospital insecticide net, they say, 'oh, I'm not comfortable under it and he sleeps in the open and catches malaria.

Do you see Nigeria achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) health programme by the 2015 especially on infant and maternal mortality?

No. I don't at all. I think Nigeria has a lot of doctors, we talk a lot and when it gets to the actual implementation you see something different. Lets take for example. You cannot be talking about curtailing or bringing down maternal mortality and childhood mortality without addressing primary health care. Let me tell you that there was a time we achieved 80% immuni-



DR. Joshua N. Giyan

zation coverage in Nigeria.

That was wonderful, when Professor Ransome Kuti was a Minister and by the end of his tenure Nigeria was really praised for the coverage. But now we have come down to something like twenty something percent in recent times even though we might be improving.

There is no way we can make any serious headway if the primary healthcare is not properly addressed. I am happy with the recent government moves to post midwives to the primary healthcare centres. This is not enough, there should be doctors too, but it is a welcome development.

Just give the personnel accommodation and rural posting allowance. Even corporers can do wonderfully well in this area, saving lives by detecting problems early ahead of time before sending them to general hospital.

Post enough doctors, not just one, to the general hospitals. There is need to have at least a consultant at the general hospital level, ideally, a consultant that can cover all the areas like a family physician to do simple operations while the major cases can now come to the tertiary institutions.

What kind of equipment do you require here at the Federal Medical Centre, Keffi.

Yes, equipments are needed in virtually all the departments. Equipments are costly. There is one that is about N150 million.

The CT scan is over a hundred million, mobile X-ray machine and all those laboratory automated machines, we need them. There will be less manual or human exertion of energy. You put a lot of jobs on the machine and in a couple of minutes you get your results. So that intervention can be faster. We need monitoring equipment at the theatre, the intensive unit, the casualty, equipment to restart the heart, in the dental unit, in fact we need all the equipments.

The list is endless if the vision of a five-star healthcare hospital as envisaged is to be realized.

What about retraining of staff?

Yes, this year we intend to start residency training for doctors to become consultants, because without that you undermine the ability of the young doctor you hire. It is the main cause of the brain drain in the medical profession. They will work and they will get training and the general hospitals will get consultants if this is done.

As Acting Medical Director do you see yourself taking over as the substantive medical director?

I only hope that a level playing ground be allowed to bring about the emergence of the best. I have been doing this work for quite some years now. My credentials should be able to speak for me. Evaluate my credentials along with that of others, simple.

ENVIRONMENT

environment@dailytrust.com

HOTLINE: 07041632079

FG to tackle S/East gully erosion

By Mustapha Suleiman

THE Federal Government has unveiled a new national strategy for curtailing erosion in the South-East region, which for decades has taken a huge toll on human and material resources.

The new strategy, which is a forest-based approach to stabilising gully erosion sites has been test-run in Enugu and Imo States by the Forest Research Institute of Nigeria (FRIN), an agency of the Federal Ministry of Environment and has received the approval of the authorities, especially the Erosion and Flood Control Department.

Minister of Environment, Mr. John Odey, who announced the new approach at the Second Lagos State Climate Change Summit organised by the state Ministry of Environment on the theme: "Trans-Boundary Effects of Climate Change: Sharing Best Practices in Mitigation and Adaptation Measure," said: "The Federal Government has therefore resolved to also push the forestry based approach to stabilising gully erosion sites."

He disclosed that FRIN has successfully carried out the stabilisation of erosion sites at Enugu-Ngwo and Okwudor in Enugu and Imo State respectively. "Work is also going on at the site in Umuchiana, Ekwulobia in Anambra State while more of such sites are to be taken

on this fiscal year. This approach will not only help stabilise the gully erosion sites, it would also help sink more carbon from the atmosphere as part of our mitigation strategy to combating climate change," Odey said.

Lagos State Commissioner for Environment, Dr. Muiz Banire, said the choice of the theme is partly informed by the realisation that while some cities have either perfected mitigation and adaptation strategies or developed home grown coping mechanisms, some others are still struggling to come to terms with the reality of the scourge. "Our expectation therefore is that this summit will be a veritable platform for the exchange of these best practices in a mutually beneficial manager," he said.

Kogi commissioner cautions against erosion

From Isiaka Wakili, Lokoja

KOGI State Commissioner for Environment and Physical Planning Architect Sule Mohammed has warned the residents of Lokoja, against acts capable of causing erosion in the capital city.

The commissioner yesterday in a chat with journalists said that the warning became necessary to address the problem of erosion in the capital city.

He noted that in view of the need to rid the state capital city of refuse, the government had constructed over 32 refuse sites in Lokoja and purchased two compactor trucks for the evacuation of refuse to the dumping sites.

Muhammed said that failure to desist from dumping refuse in the drainages in the city, especially during the rainy season, would lead to flood.

The Commissioner hinted that the state House of Assembly would soon pass a bill that would punish dumping of refuse indiscriminately in the state capital.

Failure to desist from dumping refuse in the drainages in the city, especially during the rainy season, would lead to flood.



SOME residents of Gwarinpa purchasing ice block to ward off the incessant heat in Abuja

Yobe NLC wants new measures on desertification

From Hamza Idris, Damaturu

THE Yobe state chapter of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) has called on Governor Ibrahim Gaidam to take new measures that would address illegal felling of trees and activities of firewood merchants in order to stop the spread of desertification which has claimed many hectares of farmlands, water-points and oasis in the northern part of the state.

Chairman of the congress Comrade Mohammed Bukar who spoke to Daily Trust in Damaturu yesterday observed that the Act passed by the State House of Assembly on desertification has failed to check activities of firewood merchants because none of the suspects was arrested and prosecuted for various offences of felling of trees for wood fuel and

thatching of huts and tents.

Bukar said in addressing the problems of desertification, environmental degradation and climate change in the state, "government must rise to the challenges of halting the rapid spread of desertification which has claimed many farmlands and oasis in Yunusari, Yusufari, Machina and Gaidam all in the northern state".

The NLC chairman also called on the government to re-strategise by adopting a holistic approach to fighting desertification and its effects on environment.

"This may include massive mobilisation of the entire workforce whereby each of them will plant two tree seedlings per annum for the next five years. The tree planting exercise will replace the approximate 1.5 million trees

which is being destroyed by the firewood merchants per annum," he said.

He also called for the resuscitation and upgrading of the five Nurseries in the state so that more seedlings would be nurtured and distributed to schools, industries and communities for massive planting.

Bukar contended that until the "workers' plan" of action on desertification is put in place, no amount of legislation could check the massive felling of trees and also called on government to provide alternative means to firewood so that users would not have reason to complain.

Our correspondent reports that Yobe State is facing serious problems of desert encroachment which has so far claimed many farmlands and communities.

Natural resources exploration necessary for Vision 2020

By Sunday Ejike Benjamin

UNTIL Nigeria de-emphasises reliance on oil as its major source of revenue and start exporting its natural and agricultural products, achievement of Vision 2020 will become difficult in the country, the Managing Director, Skyway Aviation Handling Company Limited, Mr. Isaac Orolugbagbe has said.

Orolugbagbe, in a speech he delivered yesterday on the occasion of the formal exit of the founder of National Association of Government Approved Freight Forward-

ers (NAGAFF), Dr. Boniface Aniebonam, at the Mainland Hotel, Lagos also said that the federal government must provide logistics infrastructure to facilitate movement of goods in order to appreciate the contribution of freight forwarding to the vision 2010.

He challenged members of the association to learn more about tariff and urged the association to liaise with other freight forwarding associations around the world.

The President of the association, Eugene Nweke, in his speech said the leadership and members of the association left behind by the founder would not disappoint him in the

conduct of the association.

He noted that the problems like cargo clearance delay, non compliance with best international practice, high port charges by terminal operators, failure of terminal operators to provide equipment, that necessitated the birth of the association are still on ground.

In his valedictory speech, Dr. Aniebonam, who traced the history of the association, said he was pulling out of the association activities to give room for the younger freight forwarders to control and infuse fresh ideas into the running of the association.

Environment



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Lizards face extinction worldwide

A major survey of lizard populations worldwide has found an alarming pattern of population extinctions attributable to rising temperatures. If current trends continue, 20 per cent of all lizard species could go extinct by 2080, according to Barry Sinervo, professor of ecology and evolutionary biology at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Sinervo led an international team of biologists who conducted the study, published in the May 14 issue of *Science*. The researchers surveyed lizard populations, studied the effects of rising temperatures on lizards, and used their findings to

develop a predictive model of extinction risk. Their model accurately predicted specific locations on five continents (North and South America, Europe, Africa, and Australia) where previously studied lizard populations have already gone locally extinct.

"We did a lot of work on the ground to validate the model and show that the extinctions are the result of climate change," Sinervo said. "None of these are due to habitat loss. These sites are not disturbed in any way, and most of them are in national parks or other protected areas."

As local populations continue to disappear, species extinc-

tions will follow, he said. "Most of these species currently registering local extinctions will be completely extinct by 2080, unless we change and limit the carbon dioxide production that is driving global warming," he said.

The disappearance of lizard populations is likely to have repercussions up and down the food chain. Lizards are important prey for many birds, snakes, and other animals, and they are important predators of insects. "We could see other species collapse on the upper end of the food chain, and a release on insect populations," Sinervo said.



A small boy riding a donkey in Katsina.

PIC: SANI MAIKATANGA

35 arrested during sanitation exercise in Ilorin

From Mustafa Abubakar, Ilorin

NOT fewer than 35 people were arrested and tried in four separate mobile courts within Ilorin metropolis for violating sanitation law.

Thirteen offenders were tried at post office mobile court, 12 at unity Junction, 5 at oja Oba and 5 at Ipata mobile court.

Presiding Judge of Oja-Oba court, Mr. Abdulkadir Ibrahim told *Daily Trust* that among the 5 offenders tried, only 4 could afford N500 fine option granted them while the remaining one person was ducked at Oja Oba Police Division.

The Judge of Ipata mobile court, Mr. AbduRasheed Olajide Adebayo, said four offenders were able to afford the 500 find imposed on them while the last one person was fined 1,000 for constituting nuisance after his arrest which he couldn't afford and now cooling his feet in police custody.

Meanwhile, the State commissioner for Environment and Forestry, Chief James Bamishaye Ayeni, however directed residents along Asa river bank to vacate the area as heavy rain which could precipitate flood was around the corner.

Ayeni stated that government was committed to the dredging of the river just as work was begun on the channelization of the river.

Natural systems risk rapid collapse, says UN report

By Nasir Imam, with agency report

NATURAL systems that support economies, lives and livelihoods across the planet are at risk of rapid degradation and collapse, unless there is swift, radical and creative action to conserve and sustainably use the variety of life on Earth.

"That is a principal conclusion of a major new assessment of the current state of biodiversity and the implications of its continued loss for human well-being.

The third edition of Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-3), produced by the

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) confirms that the world has failed to meet its target to achieve a significant reduction in the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010.

The report is based on scientific assessments, national reports submitted by governments and a study on future scenarios for biodiversity. Subject to an extensive independent scientific review process, publication of GBO-3 is one of the principal milestones of the UN's International Year of Biodiversity.

The Outlook will be a key input into discussions by world leaders and heads

of state at a special high level segment of the United Nations General Assembly on 22 September. Its conclusions will also be central to the negotiations by world governments at the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit in October.

The Outlook warns that massive further loss of biodiversity is becoming increasingly likely, and with it, a severe reduction of many essential services to human societies as several "tipping points" are approached, in which ecosystems shift to alternative, less productive states from which it may be difficult or impossible to recover.

Funds frustrate environment c'ttee work in Imo

From Johnkennedy Uzoma, Owerri

INSUFFICIENT funds have been identified as factor frustrating the work of Environmental Transformation Committee (ENTRACO) in Imo State.

Adviser to the Governor on Sanitation and Environment, Barr. Willie Amadi, told *Daily Trust* in Owerri yesterday that the committee could not function effectively in carrying out their task of cleaning Imo environment due to lack of funds.

He described the task of keeping healthy environment all the time to make it healthy for the people as a heavy one that requires enough money.

He said that the committee would not be able to evacuate heaps of refuse bins in the city on daily basis

with meagre funds allotted to it.

He said that similar committees in some states like Rivers are giving full opportunities to operate without unnecessary interventions from any other committees in the state.

Amadi called for release of funds by government to enable the committee to carry out their duties effectively for the interest of the state.

He expressed satisfaction with the commitment of the street sweepers in the state, adding that the introduction of the street sweeper have contributed enough in maintaining clean environment in the city.

While commending them for the continued commitment to duties, the Acting General Manager of ENTRACO disclosed that that soon the sweepers

would move into new layout along Orlu and Okigwe roads respectively.

To the owners of luck up stores at Akwakuma round about, he advised them to remove their structures to enable the contractors handling the Orlu road do their work effectively.

He expressed regret that despite repeated warnings some people were unable to comply with the order, adding that government would not allow any illegal structures on the road for the expansion of the junction.

Amadi said that the ongoing Orlu road reconstruction would be among the roads to be commissioned by the Governor as part of third year anniversary.

LAW

Contributions which should not be more than 1000 words may be sent to lawpages@dailytrust.com 08033353837 07029901030

Legal Quote

Appointment to the apex Court should not be based on Federal Character which breeds mediocrity and distorts the well cherished values of merit and seniority at the Bar, with resultant inefficiency in the system. The best available materials at any given time should be appointed to the apex court regardless of where they come from.....Hon. Justice James O. Ogbeye, retired Justice of the Supreme Court in his valedictory speech.

We have no provision prescribing procedure for emergence of VP -PDP Legal Adviser

By Adelanwa Bamgboye

THE National Legal Adviser of the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Chief Olusola Oke has said that there is no provisions prescribing the procedure for the emergence of a Vice President in the PDP Constitution and its electoral guidelines.

Chief Olusola Oke stated this during an interview with our Correspondent which took place on Monday, at the Federal Capital (FTC) High Court immediately after the PDP National chairman Prince Vincent Ogbulafor was admitted to bail by Justice Ishaq Bello.

According to him, under the PDP Constitution and electoral guidelines, no provisions are made prescribing the procedure for the emergence of Deputy Governor, Deputy Chairman or a Vice President. It is usually picking. It is the candidate that picks his Deputy or Vice and that applies to the current situation.

'But the truth of the matter is that consultations are usually made with stakeholders and in this case with political parties and this one is not going to be different in any manner from other situations.

'So strongly I can say that the President will consult with the Party and other party leaders and all stake holders before he would take a final decision on who will become the Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria', Chief Oke said.

However, going by the provisions of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (CFRN), it would seem that the ruling Peoples' Democratic Party (PDP) must approve the choice of the new Vice President (V-P) before he can assume the office.

This is because the procedure for picking a person to fill the

vacant office of the Vice President is provided for in section 146(3) of the 1999 Constitution which states as follows:

(3) Where the office of Vice-President becomes vacant -

(a) by reason of death or resignation, impeachment, permanent incapacity or removal in accordance with section 143 or 144 of this Constitution;

(b) by his assumption of the office of President in accordance with subsection (1) of this section; or

(c) for any other reason, the President shall nominate and, with the approval of each House of the National Assembly, appoint a new Vice-President".

The necessary question here is whether, in nominating a person as Vice President under section 146(3), to be approved by the National Assembly, the discretion of the President is circumscribed in any way.

Put in another way, can the President nominate whoever he likes, irrespective of age, party affiliation, criminal record, etc?

According to Festus Keyamo, 'it cannot be disputed that the drafters of the 1999 Constitution could not have intended that the type of Vice President to be nominated under section 146(3) should be different from the type of candidate to be nominated as Vice President to stand for election with the President under section 142 of the 1999 Constitution. Anything to the contrary will surely lead to absurdity'.

Section 142 of the 1999 Constitution states as follows:

"142. Nomination and election of Vice-President

(1) In any election to which the foregoing provisions of this Part of this Chapter relate, a candidate for an election to the office of President shall not be deemed



PRESIDENT Goodluck Jonathan

to be validly nominated unless he nominates another candidate as his associate from the same political party for his running for the office of President, who is to occupy the office of Vice-President and that candidate shall be deemed to have been duly elected to the office of Vice-President if the candidate for an election to the office of President who nominated him as such associate is duly elected as President in accordance with the provisions aforesaid.

(2) The provisions of this Part of this Chapter relating to qualification for election, tenure of office, disqualification, declaration of assets and liabilities and oaths of President shall apply in relation to the office of Vice-President as if references to President were references to Vice-President."

By the provisions of section 142(2) of the 1999 Constitution, the provisions relating to the qualification for election to the office of

President also applies to the office of the Vice President. The relevant provision in this regard is section 131 of the 1999 Constitution which states as follows:

"131. Qualification for election as President

A person shall be qualified for election to the office of President if -

(a) he is a citizen of Nigeria by birth;

(b) he has attained the age of forty years;

(c) he is a member of a political party and is sponsored by that political party; and

(d) he has been educated up to at least School Certificate level or its equivalent."

The provisions of paragraphs (a), (b) and (d) above are very straight forward. But then how can paragraph (c) above be read in conjunction with section 146(3)?

This is where the problem lies. In other words, does the PDP have a

role to play in the nomination and approval of the new Vice President?

Strictly under section 146(3) the PDP has no role to play. But if we agree that section 146(3) must be read in conjunction with section 131 above, then we must come to the inevitable conclusion that, unless the person that is to become the new Vice President belongs to PDP and he is actually sponsored by the PDP, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan cannot nominate him and forward his name to the National Assembly for approval.

In practical terms therefore, Goodluck Jonathan must consult widely with the PDP who must sponsor, approve and forward a number of names to Goodluck Jonathan from which Dr. Goodluck Jonathan will nominate a person to be the new Vice President and forward the name to the National Assembly for approval.

The National Assembly, on its part, upon receiving the name of a person nominated by Goodluck Jonathan to be the new Vice President, must write to the PDP seeking for confirmation of the person as a member of the PDP and the party's position regarding his nomination before going ahead to approve such nomination.

Anything to the contrary will breach the provisions of the constitution.

Meanwhile, Governors of the 36 states of Nigeria have been mounting pressure on President Goodluck Jonathan to pick one of the serving governors as his vice president.

The governors, it was gathered have agreed among themselves to nominate Jigawa state governor, Sule Lamido as Jonathan's vice.

The governors even before the death of President Yar'Adua have been lobbying President Jonathan to pick one of them as vice president.

President Jonathan must deliver on his mandate -NBA

From Adelanwa Bamgboye

THE Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) has called upon President Goodluck Jonathan, not to fail Nigerians now that the goodwill he enjoys is palpable.

Oluwarotimon Akerele, SAN, the NBA President stated this in a congratulatory message sent to the President on his swearing in as the new helmsman.

According to Oluwarotimi Akerele SAN, now that the web of confusion, mischievously spun by

some elements for personal aggrandizement, has been cleared, through the intervention of nature, the NBA wishes to congratulate President Goodluck Jonathan on his swearing-in as the new helmsman.

'We note with satisfaction the cautious strides already taken by the President while acting for his late predecessor but admonishes that now that both political and legal encumbrances have been removed, Nigerians will not accept any excuse for non-performance. The foul feeling of the people of this country can only be assuaged by evidences of actual improvement in

their socio-economic conditions.'

'The President, while in acting capacity, did promise "to hit the ground running" as the time left is so short. We share this sentiment but also take solace in the existence of enviable precedence even if it occurred during the military era. The late General Murtala Muhammed ruled for only six months and etched his name permanently in the minds of the people. The President cannot afford to fail now that the goodwill he enjoys from well meaning Nigerians is palpable, the NBA President said.

He said that it was reassuring

to hear from him (Dr. Goodluck Jonathan) that the issue of corruption will be tackled headlong. He added that there are many outstanding cases which constitute serious embarrassment to the country in the international circles that this outgoing administration must look into urgently.

These, according to him includes Halliburton and Siemens bribery scandals while the government and the anti-corruption agencies continue to pay lip service in regard to their readiness to combat the menace.

The NBA President said further that some politicians have constituted themselves into a criminal cartel, wielding tremendous influence in government circles.

'These people are treated specially to the ludicrous extent that they choose the venue of their interaction with law enforcement agents. They insist on being treated like kings while the country groans under the yoke of their criminal acts. It should not be difficult for this government to send the right signal to corrupt elements that it will not be business as usual' the NBA said.

Law

TRUST LAW REPORT

The law is that once an alibi has been raised, the burden is on the prosecution to investigate and rebut such evidence. SC.239/2006

Contd. From last week
SUNDAY Ani, Peter Ani (appellants) v The state (respondent)
JUDGMENT (DELIVERED BY J. O. OGBE JSC)

The learned counsel for the respondent also filed a brief and formulated 3 issues for determination as follows: (i) Whether the trial court and the court below were right holding that the charge of armed robbery preferred against the two appellants was proved beyond reasonable doubt.

(ii) Whether the defence of alibi availed the appellants having regards to the peculiar facts of this case.

(iii) Whether the evidential value ascribed to the evidence of the P.W. 1 (complainant) by the court below was a misdirection in law?

The learned counsel for the appellants submitted that the two lower courts were wrong in convicting the appellants of the offence of robbery when the prosecution failed to prove its case beyond reasonable doubt. He said that the only evidence implicating the appellants was the evidence of P.W. 1 who claimed to have recognized the appellants with the use of bush lamp but in his first report to the Police he told the Police that unknown thieves broke into his house and stole his money. The Police report is exhibit "F" and the Police Officer who recorded exhibit "F" testified as D.W.1. He stated clearly that the report made to him was that unknown thief or thieves broke into the house of the complainant and robbed him of his money.

The learned counsel submitted that the evidence of D.W.1 raised reasonable doubt as to the veracity of the complainant's identification of the appellants. The lower court was therefore wrong in convicting the appellants of the offence of robbery. He relied on the case of *Bozin V. The State* (1985) 2 NWLR (pt.8) p.465; *Abudu V The State* (1985) 1 NWLR (pt.1) 55; and *Ebre V. The State* (2001) 12 NWLR (pt.728) 617 and submitted that where a complainant failed to mention to the Police the names of suspects at the earliest opportunity, his subsequent naming of suspect should be treated with caution.

On the second issue the learned counsel for the appellants submitted that the lower court made a wrong evaluation of the evidence and came to the wrong conclusion in affirming the judgment of the High Court. He said that the Police report in exhibit "F" showed that the complainant reported that unknown thief robbed him and the maker D.W.1 gave evidence that the complainant came back 3 days later and gave the names of the appellants as his suspects. Based on that information the Police arrested the suspects with the complainant as their guide.

The learned counsel for respondents argued issues 1 and 3 together and submitted that the prosecution proved the case against the appellants beyond reasonable doubt and the Court of Appeal was right in affirming the judgment of the trial court. The learned counsel submitted that the fact of the robbery was not disputed and the P.W. 1 clearly identified the appellants as participants in the robbery, and that resolved the only issue in controversy in the appeal. He further submitted that there is no legal requirement for the sole piece of evidence of an adult like P.W.1 to be corroborated and conviction can be founded on the evidence of a single witness once it is credible and accepted by the court. He referred to the case of *Stephen Oteki V. The State* (1986) 4 SC.222.

The appellants were charged with the capital offence of armed robbery and were in fact convicted and sentenced to death by the 2 lower courts. It is not disputed that the only eye witness to the event was P.W.1 and the robbery took place at about 4.am when it was still dark and P.W.1 testified that he recognized the appellants with the aid of a bush lantern.

He also testified that he did not mention the names of the appellants to the villagers when day broke, so that the appellants would not run away from the village. That appears to be a plausible explanation. However, on that very day of the robbery he went to Ozalla Police Station and reported that a thief or thieves broke the fence of his gate with iron rod, machet and torch-light and ordered him to open his door which he opened and they rushed in and attacked him and stole his money worth of N300,000.00 D.W.1 inspector James Eze who made entry in the Police Dairy was summoned to testify on behalf of the appellants; he insisted that the complainant did not mention any names of suspects when he made the first report. He returned 3 days later to mention the names of the appellants and led them to their village to arrest them.

The critical question is why the complainant failed to name the appellants at the first opportunity he had to report to the Police. He claimed that he mentioned the names of the appellants in his first report. Both the trial court and the Court of Appeal failed to consider the question of why Inspector Eze would choose to tell lies against the complainant in the Police report and in his testimony in Court. There was evidence under cross-examination that as at the time of his testimony Inspector Eze had done 29 years in the Police. This showed clearly that he was a very experienced Police Officer.

If the lower courts had adverted



CHIEF Justice of Nigeria, Justice Katsina-Alu

their minds to this serious evidence of Inspector Eze in contrast to the complainant's evidence it would have shown them that the prosecution did not establish its case beyond reasonable doubt. It should be noted that there was no evidence by the Police that any expired cartridges were found to the compound of the complainant to show that there were gun shots in the night of the incident.

In other words, there was a question mark as to whether the offence committed was actually armed robbery with a gun. In the case of *Abudu V. The State* (1985) 1 NWLR (pt.1) 55, there was a robbery involving several people and two of the accused persons were identified by a lady but she omitted to mention the names of the accused persons at the earliest opportunity. The High Court convicted the appellants. On appeal to the Court of Appeal two of the Justices dismissed the appeal while Justice Omo-Eboh JCA dissented. On appeal to the Supreme Court it unanimously allowed the appeal and held that where an eye witness omits to mention at the earliest opportunity the name or names of the person or persons seen committing an offence a court must be careful in accepting his evidence implicating the person or persons charged unless a satisfactory explanation is given. See also the cases of *Bozin V. The State* 2 NWLR (Pt.8) 465 and *Ebre V. The State* (2001) 12 NWLR (pt.728) 617.

The lower court in affirming the convictions of the appellants reasoned at pages 192 - 193 of the record of appeal as follows: "Further still, I would now dwell on the allegation of appellants relating to the disclosure by P.W.1 at the earliest opportunity. From the record of the trial court, at pages 45-48 Inspector James Eze attached to the four

corner Ozalla Police Station was the Police officer to whom P.W.1 first made report of the robbery. The said officer was not the investigating Police officer but gave evidence for the appellants as D.W. 1 and said.

"Two persons were arrested; I cannot remember the date of arrest. The arrest was made based on the report made to me. The two persons I arrested based on the report are the accused persons. The names of those arrested are not contained in exhibit "F". Chime Ugwu P.W. 1 came back about three days later and mentioned that he suspected two persons who should be arrested.

Deducing from D.W. 1 testimony he was unable to remember the date of the arrest of the accused persons but could however remember the accused. Moreover, that the names of those arrested are not contained in exhibit "F". Query, if exhibit "F" recorded by D.W.1 stated "unknown thieves", one wonders how he was able to make the arrests of the accused as rightly argued by the respondent's counsel, and that which the witness wanted the trial court to believe.

From all indications and in my humble deductions, P.W.1 must have disclosed the identity of the accused at the time he made the report to the Police Station and which was received by D.W.1. There could not therefore have been a report of "unknown thief or thieves" as claimed by him at exhibit "F".

With the greatest respect to the lower court its reasoning was entirely speculative. Inspector Eze made it very clear in his evidence that the complainant returned 3 days after the first report to give the names of the appellants and that led to their arrest. For the Court of Appeal to reason that the complainant must have given the names of the appellants at the first report is not

borne out from the record. When it is noted that the prosecution chose not to call Inspector Eze to testify on its behalf as the first person to receive the complaint, it showed that it had something to hide.

The lower court also misdirected itself when it held at page 191 of the records that the P.W.1 did recognize the appellants' voices when they spoke at the operation. The evidence before the High Court was that the complainant recognized the appellants with a light from a bush lantern. It was in the complainant's statement to the Police which was marked I.D. but was not formally admitted in evidence that he mentioned recognizing the appellants by their voices. The Court of Appeal had no business treating that piece of evidence as proved when the statement was never admitted as evidence in the trial court. In any event that statement contradicts P.W.1's evidence before the trial court.

For all I have said I am clearly of the view that the two lower courts were wrong in holding that the prosecution proved its case beyond reasonable doubt. As I have demonstrated, there were serious doubts in the case of the prosecution for any reasonable court to convict the appellants of an offence that carries the capital punishment.

"On the 3rd issue on the plea of alibi it is quite clear that the Police made no attempt to investigate the alibi of the appellants given in their statements to the Police. The law is that once an alibi has been raised, the burden is on the prosecution to investigate and rebut such evidence. See the cases of *Opayemi V. The State* (1965) 2 NWLR (pt.5) 101, *Bozin V The State* (1985) 2 NWLR (pt.1) 465 and *Obakpolor V. The State* (1991) 1 NWLR (pt. 165) 113.

Without investigating the alibi of the appellants but relying on the questionable identification of the appellants by P.W.1, the Police or the prosecution cannot claim that the case for the prosecution was proved beyond reasonable doubt.

Since I have resolved all the issues in favour of the appellants, it follows that I find the appeals meritorious. Accordingly, I allow the appeals and set aside the convictions and sentences imposed by the lower courts. In their place, I substitute a verdict of Not Guilty. The appellants are discharged and acquitted of the charge against them.

J.O. OGBE, JUSTICE, SUPREME COURT, NIKI TOBI, GEORGE ADESOLA OGUNTADE, IKECHI FRANCIS OGBUAGU, IBRAHIM TANKO MUHAMMAD, JAMES OGENYI OGBE (Justices of the Supreme Court sat on the panel)

Mr. S. Fowowe for Appellants; Mr. J.O.N. Ikeyi with Mr. C.U. Ekomaru for Respondent.

CITY NEWS



HOTLINES: 0803-3493-462 & 0703-8927-513
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Gwarinpa police recover stolen car

By Ogechi Ohalee

POLICEMEN from Gwarinpa Saturday evening recovered a stolen car snatched from a woman at 3rd Avenue in the area.

Armed robber had accosted the woman as she parked in the area to collect her children's passport photographs and they drove off with her vehicle, leav-

ing her as well as her children stranded.

Commenting on the issue, Gwarinpa Divisional Police Officer, Dalhatu Balarabe Imraia, a chief superintendent, said the victim immediately reported the incident to the police and revealed that the vehicle had a tracker.

"We raised a surveillance squad and called officials of

the company that installed the tracker, who directed the police on the movements of the criminals," he disclosed.

He said the police gave them a hot chase and recovered the abandoned vehicle at Bwari road.

The police officer revealed further that members of the squad responded within minutes of the distress call by pursuing the criminals and recovering

the car, whose number plate was changed with one that has a Kano number to divert attention.

He advised other motorists to endeavour to install trackers on their cars in order to make the work of the police easy when ever the police are confronted with such incident.

The divisional police officer also informed residents to be observant of strangers within

their environment. "When ones neighbour sees strange people loitering within their environments, they should suspect and inform the police immediately as the police cannot be everywhere," he added.

He commended the female victim for reporting to the police on time and also given them detailed information needed at the right time.

...As suspect boasts of ability to open locked cars

By Ogechi Ohalee

A suspected car snatcher arrested by the police at Kubwa yesterday boasted that there is no locked car he cannot open with some master keys found in his possession.

He said no amount of security device installed in a vehicle can prevent them from stealing the car.

Agbo Samuel, an indigene of Bayelsa State, further confessed that majority of his customers are motor dealers who come from Kano, Kaduna and the eastern parts of the country to buy the stolen cars.

He confessed that his syndicate changes the vehicles documents and plate registration numbers so that the buyers with the change cars will not be recognized by the original owners.

The suspect said he chose the car snatching business because it is lucrative and easy, adding that his partners in crime are wealthy people in the society who come from all parts of the country.

"We don't shoot or injure people but only use master keys to steal vehicles no matter the type of security device installed," he boasted.

A witness told our reporter that the suspect was apprehended at about 4 am, when a Kubwa police patrol team on normal stop and search operation pursued a black Honda Hallah car that refused to stop at Gado Nasko road in the area.

"The vehicle which had three occupants lost control after its tyres were punctured and crashed into a ditch," the witness added.

He said after the accident, the suspects took to their heels but the police apprehended one and searched the car.

"Policemen who searched the vehicle discovered thousands of key bunches of different sizes and shapes, which shocked other motorists around.

Reacting on the incident, Kubwa Divisional Police Officer, Mohammed Nasir, a chief superintendent, said the police in the area have been on the tail of the suspects and captured one of them.

He disclosed that investigations are presently going on to arrest the other members, adding that the case will be transferred to the FCT Criminal Investigation Department after preliminary investigations are concluded.



A commercial vehicle after its occupants were robbed along Abuja-Lokoja road at the weekend.

PIC: ABUBAKAR SADIQ ISAH

Woman complains of mother-in-law's interference in relationship

By Romoke W. Ahmad

A 21-year-old mother, Blessing Moses, yesterday told an Abuja Upper Area Court sitting at Karu that her mother-in-law normally interferes in the relationship with her son and also prevented her from breast feeding her baby boy three months after he was delivered.

She said the elderly woman told her son not to marry her because she is not from their tribe. According to her, when I asked my mother-in-law why she doesn't want me to breast feed my baby, she said it will not make my breast to fall, so that I can be attractive to another man who may be interested in marrying me," the woman stated.

She accused her mother-in-law of taking her sick baby to a church instead of a hospital and prayed that the courts

grants her access to her baby as well as dissolves the union between her lover and herself.

Obi Ignatus, the woman's lover, however denied the allegations against his mother and accused his lover of abandoning her baby and himself because he could not cater for her needs during the baby's illness, adding that his mother had to come to their home to assist them in taking care of the baby.

He further stated that his mother was initially against him marrying the girl on the ground that she is not from their state but he assured her of his love.

"I told her I will talk to my mother in order to make her see reasons but my wife's intention was to leave our house and she left when the baby was six months old," he lamented.

Ignatus also accused his lover of dating

one of his friends, who she claimed was her boy friend before they met at a club.

He told the court that he is no longer interested in marrying his lover despite the fact that he has given certain things to her family.

"Her father requested for N50,000 as damages, of which my father agreed to pay him N30,000 but he refused," Ignatus stated.

Blessing's father who was also around said he only requested for N20,000 to take care of his daughter who suffers from pains as a result of the caesarean operation she underwent during child birth but Obi's father said he will give N30,000 to her to go back to school.

Presiding Judge Issa Alhaji Yahaya ordered for the appearance of Obi's father in the next court sitting Thursday before the case can proceed.

Youngster jailed for attempted theft

By Hussein Yahaya & Ibraheem A. Fatai

AN Abuja magistrate court yesterday sentenced a youngster to one week imprisonment for attempting to steal a wallet belonging to one Uche Kalu Agwu.

Sanusi Aba of no fixed address was jailed for committing the offence at Utako Market, Abuja, on May 7.

Prosecutor Christopher Roko had earlier told the court that on May 7, one Uche Kalu Agwu of No 73 Durumi Area 1, Abuja, reported to the police that while driving along Utako Market, the accused

and two others pointed at his rear tyre as if something was wrong, which made him stop his car.

"As Uche alighted from his car, his wallet fell and the accused picked it and started running away, while his two accomplices, now at large, dragged his car key which was on the ignition with him," the prosecutor said.

He said in the process, the other two suspects also ran away, while Sanusi Aba was apprehended, adding that the offences he committed are punishable under Sections 79 and 95 of the Penal Code.

According to him, during police investigations, the accused confessed to the crime and said his accomplices ran away to an unknown destination.

When the charges were read to the accused, he pleaded guilty and pleaded for leniency.

After his guilt plea, the prosecutor asked the court to try the accused summarily under Section 157 of the Criminal Procedure Code and Chief Magistrate Josephine Obannor sentenced him to one week imprisonment or to pay N1,000 as fine.

Court remands suspected thief

By Hussein Yahaya & Ibraheem A. Fatai

AN Abuja magistrate court yesterday remanded a youngster in police custody for allegedly stealing a hand bag belonging to one Dr. Tenings Ekeanyawu.

Chief Magistrate Ademuyiwa Oyeyipo said his order was to enable the police conclude its investigation.

The accused, Lucky Idenyili of Kuje, in the FCT, was accused of stealing the bag from the conference hall of Merit House, Maiatama, Abuja, but was allegedly caught one month later.

Prosecutor Abu Okpanachi stated in court that on May 7, one Dr. Tenings Ekeanyawu reported to the police that, while he was in the conference hall of Merit House, his bag containing valuables suddenly disappeared and he could not find the bag until

a month later, when he sighted somebody with the bag at Sheraton Hotels, who was subsequently apprehended.

"During police investigations, it was discovered that the accused stole the bag, as the wallet and SIM card belonging to the complainant were found in the bag," the prosecutor said.

He went ahead to state that the accused confessed to the crime and committed an offence punishable under Section 288 of the Penal Code.

When the charge was read to the accused, he denied it and requested for bail, which was objected by the prosecutor.

In his ruling, Chief Magistrate Ademuyiwa Oyeyipo ordered that the accused be remanded in police custody to enable the police complete their investigations and adjourned the case to May 26 for hearing.

3 men charged with house breaking

By Bunmi Omolehin

THE police have arraigned three men before an Abuja Upper Area Court for alleged house breaking and theft.

Tochukwu Eze, Joseph Otute and Oraifle Tony of Gaduwa Estate, Area 8, Garki, Abuja, were accused of committing the offences on April 30.

Prosecutor Mohammed

Garba told the court that on April 29, one Chiboka Chukwu reported to the police that on April 30, when he left his house for a midnight weekly service at Living Faith Church, one of the accused persons broke into his house and went away with his HP laptop.

The prosecutor said the accused connived with the second accused person,

Joseph Otute, to sell the stolen laptop to the third accused person, Oraifle Tony at the sum of N15,000 with a promise to pay the balance later.

He said during police investigations, the laptop was recovered from the third accused person, Oraifle Tony, adding that the actions of the accused persons are punishable under Sections 288 & 317 of the Penal Code.

When the charges were read to the accused persons, they pleaded not guilty and requested for bail, which was objected to by the prosecutor.

Judge Umar Kagarko granted them bail in the sum of N100,000 each as well as a surety, who must reside within the court's jurisdiction.

The case was adjourned to June 11 for hearing.

Urgent

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NOTICE FOR THE AWARD OF CONTRACT AND INVITATION FOR TENDER

Gamawa Local Government under the able leadership of Alh. Bello S. Jadori is desirous to Award Contracts to reputable Registered Contractors for the Execution of Developmental Projects worth Millions of Naira to be spread and sited across the 18 Political Wards of the L.G.A.

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- b. DRILLING OF HANDPUMPS AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS OF THE L.G.A
- c. SUPPLY OF BRANDED LISTER GENERATORS (14 hp. III Phase) FOR VARIOUS WATER SCHEMES IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

3. Intended contractors are to purchase bidding documents at the LG Tender Board Office and submit same with BOQs & EOs not later than 5 days from the day of this notice after payment of non-refundable Reg. fee of N5,000.0 only, payable at the LGTB Office.

The date for opening of bids is Monday 17th May, 2010.

Signed
LGTB/DPC GAMAWA L. G

PIC: KENNEDY EGBONODJE



UNDERAGED children at work during a traffic jam at Utako recently.

FCTA new cabinet inaugurated

By Nasir Imam

THE new FCT Administration's Executive Committee (EXCO) has been charged to shun all forms of corruption and commit their stay in the administration to the service of humanity.

The FCT Minister, Senator Bala Mohammed gave this charge on Monday while inaugurating the new exco in Gwarinpa I District, Abuja.

The minister warned that his administration would not condone any act of corruption however minute.

"I must place on record our zero tolerance for cor-

ruption in all its ramifications, as misappropriation, misapplication or outright embezzlement of public funds entrusted will not be taken lightly because we will not hesitate to hand over offenders to the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) or the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other related Offences Commission for prosecution," the minister warned.

The reconstituted committee heads are: Olusegun Awolowo, Area Council; Hamza Adamu Buwai, Agriculture & Rural Development; Hussaini Halilu Pai, Education; Blessing Onyeche Onuh,

Social Development; Ivoke Jonathan Achara, Transportation; Precious Gbeneol, Health & Human Services; Muhammad Ma'aji Alkali, Legal Secretariat; Fatima Bintu Shettima, Coordinator, Abuja Metropolitan Management Council.

Responding on behalf of the appointees, the General Counsel/Secretary Legal Services Secretariat, Muhammad Ma'aji Alkali thanked the minister for the opportunity given them to serve.

He assured that they will justify the confidence reposed on them by turning around the fortunes of the FCT Administration.

Hawkers fight over N10 change

By Romoke W. Ahmad

TWO female hawkers yesterday engaged themselves in a fight over ten naira change at Wuse market, Abuja. The fight was however separated by some bystanders.

The girls, who were described as friends had a problem when one of them refused to give the other change after a customer tried to buy sachet water from her with N20.

The girl who was asked for change quickly approached the customer and sold sachet water to him, which angered her friend.

"I never knew her to be a selfish person and her

action made me to fight her," the hawker said.

She said both of them have been friends for a long time and stay near each other at Mararaba, in Nasarawa State, adding that she will never forget what her friend did to her because she trusted her so much.

The hawker who sold the sachet water was sorry for her action and said she never knew the customer met her friend first.

"I am sorry if I hurt her but she should know that I did not mean to hurt her, as it was a misunderstanding and I expected her to call me aside for explanation instead of fighting me in public," she added.

Fou'ad Academy club visits orphanage

By Hussein Yahaya

THE Sage Club of the Fou'ad Lababidi Islamic Academy, Abuja, last Wednesday visited the Karu Children Home and donated food stuffs, clothing and toiletries to children in the home.

Club members also interacted with children, nannies and officials of the home in order to know the problems confronting the home in a bid to solving some of them.

The group also called Pathfinder was led by its advisor, Hajia Kakakolo AbdulAzeez and they stopped over at Mararaba to enlighten residents of the area on the importance of girl child education as well as the negative effects of child hawking.

City News learnt that the club appointed the Director-General of NTA, Alhaji


Usman Magawata, as the chairman of the club's business advisory board.

Presenting the appointment letter to the director-general in his office, the club's advisor solicited for the assistance of the station in promoting the club's activities.

In his response, the NTA's director-general thanked the club for the honour done him and described the members of the club as young entrepreneurs who can contribute to the development of the society.


He promised to assist them in the task of carrying out their entrepreneur projects.

The club visit to the NTA was made up of its Secretary, Miss Zainab M.Goronyo and the FCT SAGE Coordinator, Mr. Muhammed Saheeb.



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POSITION: SENIOR PROGRAM OFFICER

LOCATION: TARABA

The Senior Program Officer (SPO) will assist the Project's Chief of Party (COP) in providing overall coordination of interventions for the Project in the state. The senior Program officer manages all activities within the state and ensures coordination and collaboration with state agencies and Commissioners as well as other implementing partners operating within the state. S/he ensures integration of project activities into a single strategic approach at the States, local government, and community levels. He or she assists the COP in providing oversight and technical direction to the state team and collaborates with the Technical Advisor for OVC and M&E to ensure the appropriateness and quality of interventions. He or She is responsible for coordinating all project activities in the states under his jurisdiction. S/he will be the driving force in grantee capacity building and grants management and will work closely with the technical advisors to address capacity gaps within the grantees. He/she will support the M&E specialist with ensuring data about all project activities are collected and submitted to the head office. S/he is responsible for ensuring that NGOs in the state are mobilized to provide quality services to OVC through adherence to national standards and other approved tools of the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development. Along with the COP, he or she serves as a technical liaison between the State offices, and other donors and stakeholders operating in states within the zone

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Post graduate degree in public health, education, public administration or management, or a combination of equivalent relevant experience and education.
- Minimum of 6 years experience managing and engaged in health and education projects, Reproductive Health/Family Planning, or Maternal Child Health, or integrated health projects.
- Demonstrated technical expertise in at least one of the following areas: Child Survival; Reproductive Health/Family Planning, Maternal Child Health, Child survival/Immunization, Organizational Capacity Building, Quality Assurance, integrated health education, and Behaviour Change Communication.
- Demonstrated successful experience collaborating with community, local, and State-level partners. Understanding of US Government regulations and administrative procedures.

POSITION: FINANCE & ADMIN OFFICER (FAO)

LOCATION: KEBBI

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Finance and Admin Officer will oversee the operations and finances of the state office and will:

1. Be responsible for all day to day accounting, check writing and managing bank account following USAID regulation and MSH policy and procedures
2. Ensure the proper use, maintenance and repair of facilities and equipment, such as generators, vehicles, communication, computer units and peripherals, video and audio equipment, other office equipment, and air conditioners.
3. Provide logistics support and coordination to all field activities and staff travel.
4. Ensure implementation of regulations and procedures for local purchase, procurement and logistics management.
5. Maintain rigorous operations in the field office, communicating regularly with the home office to assure smooth operations.
6. Assist technical staff to develop and manage monthly and quarterly activity budgets.
7. Supervise administrative and finance staff.

KEY QUALIFICATIONS:

1. University Degree in Business Management or accounting or equivalent certification from a Business Technical School.
2. Minimum 3 years management experience with USAID funded project.
3. Proficiency in Microsoft Office Programs, especially Excel spreadsheets.
4. Ability to use accounting software (i.e. QuickBooks).
5. Demonstrate good judgment and sound financial "common sense".
6. Ability to create and monitor budgets.
7. Understand the principals of adequate documentation and of audit and performance necessary to ensure audit compliance.
8. Advanced written and verbal proficiency in English including business terminology.
9. Excellent communication and organizational skills.

POSITION: TRANSPORT OFFICE ASSISTANT

LOCATION: ABUJA

The TO Assistant is responsible for ensuring the smooth operations of transport service office by providing clerical support. She or he works with transport officer to track drivers' movement by updating log board, keeping fuel tracking, vehicle service and maintenance log, tracking and supporting consultant with their movements, help TO plan driver's schedule as per the Technical Advisor's Activity Profile and submitting monthly transport report to Sr. Management. She or he is responsible for working with other staff from the headquarters and/ or state office to coordinate smooth transport service operations.

KEY QUALIFICATIONS:

- Bachelor's Degree and/or equivalent relevant experience.
- Verbal and written language skills in English required.
- Ability to work independently and take initiative.
- Ability to learn complex program procedures.
- Demonstrated competence to assess priorities and manage a variety of activities in a time-sensitive environment and meet deadlines with attention to detail and quality.
- Strong office and organizational skills.
- Demonstrated ability to work as an effective team member in a complex and fast paced environment.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and demonstrated ability to interact professionally with culturally diverse staff, clients and consultants.
- Demonstrated ability in computer skills for word processing, spreadsheets, and presentations (Microsoft Office applications preferred).
- 3-5 years of working experience in this field

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PIX: HUSSEIN YAHAYA & KENNEDY EGBONDJE



A cross view of a second-hand clothes market at Bwari yesterday.



BUSINESS activities in a yam market in Abuja yesterday.



ZUTA Mata members of St. Kizito's Catholic Church during the launching of their first musical album in Kuje recently.

Inside Politics

'Iwu's sack not enough to guarantee credible polls'

NASIRU Garba Dantiye, former House of Representatives Member (Babura/Garki federal constituency of Jigawa state) is a chieftain of the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP). In this interview with Daily Trust, he speaks on the recent removal of Professor Maurice Iwu from INEC the problems facing the nation's electoral processes and sundry issues. Excerpts:

From Yusha'u A Ibrahim, Dutse

YOU have been very critical of Professor Maurice Iwu, how will you describe his removal from the INEC?

Iwu's removal was not only a welcome development but something that ought to have been done much earlier than because he Iwu was put on that seat to serve the interest of PDP alone. We will recall that under Professor Iwu, winners in some cases were declared before the entire results were compiled.

We know that Iwu committed many atrocities while he was INEC chairman. We saw in Plateau State where INEC rushed to conduct election for seats which it declared vacant following the decamping of PDP legislators to the AC. But so many legislatures across the country decamped to PDP from other parties and nothing was done in spite of the fact that the constitution is very clear about this issue. Constitutionally, such people should vacate their seats, but INEC was not able to do anything simply because they decamped to PDP.

However, I am one of those who share the opinion that removing of Iwu is not the only problem of Nigeria's electoral processes, but one of the major problems. This is the right time for the federal government to handover the commission to a credible, trustworthy and just person that will handle the affairs of the commission with sincerity and commitment.

If Nigeria wanted to conduct a credible election in the future, we have to do something about the Nigerian security agencies including the police, the army, the SSS, who sometimes think they must work for the party in government. We also need to do something about some corrupt judicial officers, who sometimes disregard the real legal issues and make political



NASIRU Garba Dantiye

judgements.

In a nut shell, Iwu's removal is a welcome development and it is an opportunity for the government in power to start correcting things by appointing credible person to man the commission. This will guarantee us free and fair election in the future. To me, Nigerian election is a serious matter and the vote of the common man must be allowed to count so that credible leaders will emerge to govern us.

YOU said Iwu was not the only problem with the Nigerian electoral processes. What are the other problems?

Firstly, there is no internal democracy in all the political parties we have in this country. Secondly, our law enforcement agencies must be neutral and must have the moral responsibility of been fair to all political parties, not minding which one is

in power. This is because all the political parties have their roles in the nation's democracy. As it is today the policeman sent to the polling unit to ensure safety of lives and electoral properties end up intimidating the electorate, thump printing voting sheets and or stealing election boxes just to favour the ruling party. Thirdly, we must do something about some of our judges that tend to give questionable judgements.

Which kind of personality do you think will be suitable to chair INEC?

I think one of the problems we have is that the Senate is not doing its job properly otherwise some people would not be cleared for some of these important positions. I have seen some names being proposed for the INEC chairmanship including the current chairman of the Independent Corrupt Practices Commis-

sion (ICPC), Justice Ayiola. To me, Justice Ayiola is not a credible person to be given such a responsibility. But if at all his name was shortlisted among the contenders, I will be among the first to petition the Senate not to confirm his appointment. In fact based on my personal experience with him, I will kick against his appointment as INEC chairman.

YOU have accused Senators of not doing their job properly. What are they supposed to do when issues of this nature are brought to them?

This issue of appointment into some of these critical positions should go beyond 'take a bow and go'. It is also more than asking somebody the capital of some of the states in Nigeria. Every person nominated for appointment as minister or any important positions such as INEC chairman must undergo thorough screening. The Senate must ask the person critical questions. They should ask him what he has done to Nigeria and Nigerians in the past. What he has achieved in live. If he/she is a civil servant, the security must know how many accounts he/she has and if he/she is a businessman, they should know how many companies he/she has registered and the extent to which he has been paying taxes to government. They must also know the number of unregistered companies he/she has, which he has been collecting contract in their names.

By scrutinising the nominees properly, they will get to know those who have criminal tendencies. Unfortunately, however, many criminals are being given responsibilities in Nigeria. Let the Senate and security agencies go deep in their investigation on anybody proposed for appointment so as to come up with somebody that is credible for the job. Unfortunately the Senate is not doing that because the exercise

is looked at as purely PDP affairs. So anything PDP, whether good or bad, is credible. Also, anything PDP whether criminal or not, whether qualified or not belongs to the family, therefore the person must be cleared for the job. It is wrong. I think the national assembly should reject the bad eggs and replace them with good people within the party (PDP).

Few days before the removal of Professor Iwu, Governor Sule Lamido said all elected leaders who were calling for Iwu's removal should also vacate their seats because they were elected under an election organised by him. What is your reaction to Lamido now that Iwu is sacked?

Sule Lamido is a disappointment to his followers and the progressive elements of Nigeria who believed in him before he was given the responsibility of a governor. If I were Sule Lamido, I will tender my resignation and say Okay since the man (Iwu) has been sacked, I will be the first person to set example. In addition to that, it is well known fact that the 2007 election was the worst election Nigeria ever had. This was also the opinion of foreign observers. Even the biggest beneficiary of the election, late President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua admitted that. In fact that prompted him to set up the Justice Uwais's electoral reform committee. I think anybody that will tell us anything to the contrary may be living in a different world.

I think Governor Lamido has bitten more than what he can swallow. He has been ruling Jigawa like his personal property. He feels that he knows better than anybody. He made some pronouncements, which now God the Almighty is proving him wrong. He believes that PDP's machinery of rigging is going to remain alive for years. Unfortunately, we have started destroying them.

ABC Nwosu says it's not time for PDP to jettison zoning

By Muideen Olaniyi

PROFESSOR ABC Nwosu of the founding fathers of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) who was suspended for alleged deliberate intention not to shun the invitation of the National Working Committee (NWC's), yesterday said that the party's zoning arrangement should not be jettisoned at this point in time for national interest.

Prof. Nwosu, who featured on a live programme on AIT Television, said the PDP zoning arrangement could however be dumped if all the perceived injustices in the country had been addressed.

He said: "Let me say that for me, it (zoning arrangement) should continue until the perceived injustices are addressed so that Nigeria can move forward as a nation. I wonder what could have

been said in 1999 if PDP has fielded candidate of Northern extraction in the face of June 12. I just wonder what would have happened."

Recalling the resolutions of the meeting involving key political figures like late Bola Ige, late Abubakar Rimi, Alhaji Adamu Ciroma and Dr Alex Ekwueme among others in 1998 to avoid military incursion in politics, the member of 'PDP Reform Forum' said: "The first thing we

agreed upon was unity. The second thing was zoning. They called it rotation. The issue came after June 12 and the politicians resolved not to ignore June 12 and its injustice.

"That is why you noticed that that election that was run in 1999 was virtually a contest between former President Olusegun Obasanjo and Chief Olu Falae. There were no other persons really because of that perceived injustice, he said.

Inside Politics



PIC: FELIX ONIGBINDE

FROM left: Chairman, House Committee on Anti-Corruption, Rep. Sabo Muhammed Nakudu, Rep. Farouk Abdullahi and Rep. Bala Bantex during the House of Reps North-west press conference to stress their position on the appointment of Vice President in Abuja yesterday.

Why I endorsed Takai for 2011, by Shekarau

By Abdulmutallib A. Abubakar

KANO State governor Malam Ibrahim Shekarau yesterday said he endorsed his Commissioner for Local Government Affairs Alhaji Salihu Sagir Takai as the All Nigeria Peoples Party's (ANPP) flag bearer for 2011 governorship election because of his leadership experience. Speaking on BBC Hausa Service, Shekarau said he expected

the people of Kano, particularly ANPP loyalists, to trust that he would not make the wrong choice. He said it is the pride of every good and respectable leader to have a qualified successor.

Shekarau endorsed Takai's candidature last week amid resentment from other aspirants including Senator Kabiru Ibrahim Gaya who said Takai is the most unpopu-

lar among the contenders.

According to Shekarau, Takai has the potentials to be a good governor, stressing that "even if I didn't say anything, I expect people to understand me positively. Anybody would like to leave a good legacy; to have a successor who can perform better than him."

He said though he had a good working relationship with his deputy, Engineer Abdullahi Gwarzo, Sheka-

rau said the success of his administration rested on the contributions of many personalities including commissioners, advisers and ordinary civil servants.

To those who are opposed his position and believe that Takai's choice will plunge the ANPP into trouble, Shekarau said they were free to express their opinions in a democracy.

Zamfara PDP suspends political activities to honour Yar'adua

THE Zamfara PDP leadership on yesterday announced indefinite suspension of all political activities in the state in honour of late President Umaru Yar'adua.

Alhaji Ibrahim Mallaha, the state Chairman, said in a statement in Gusau that the party had also organised Qur'anic recitation and special prayers for the repose of the soul of the late President.

He also said that the prayer would be aimed at craving the almighty God for peace and stability as well as unreserved unity of the country.

Mallaha further requested PDP supporters at wards and local government levels to commence a week long prayer session so that the entire state could be covered.

"While praying for God's mercy on President Yar'Adua, the state PDP equally pray for God to guide President Goodluck Jonathan and make his tenure beneficial to all Nigerians," the statement added.

He described Yar'Adua as a responsive leader, who used his skills to cultivate peace and unity among Nigerians, making their differences a source of strength.

"Yar'Adua will forever be remembered by the Zamfara people as honest friend, mentor and leader who showed so much love and respect by visiting our state two times in spite of numerous schedules," he said.

He also urged Nigerians to support Jonathan to continue with the good policies and programmes of his predecessor so that Nigeria could reach "the promised land". (NAN)

Group canvasses selection of woman as Vice President

THE Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) on yesterday in Abuja urged President Goodluck Jonathan to consider a woman for the position of the Vice President.

Mr Emmanuel Onwubiko, HURIWA Chief Operating Officer, said in an interview that it would be fair to give women a chance this time around.

The position of the Vice President became vacant after Jonathan was sworn in as President on May 6, after the death of former President Umaru Yar'Adua on May 5.

"I think the Presidency should appoint a woman as Vice President. I don't know why nobody is looking toward the appointment of a woman as a vice-president.

"Let us try a woman as a vice President, maybe Nigeria will be better for it," Onwubiko said.

He also urged the president to ensure equity and fairness in the selection process as he considers a woman of high repute from the North.

He stressed the need to appoint a person of high repute who would contribute toward addressing the nation's economic problems.

(NAN)

CPC threatens mass action if 2011 is rigged

By Abbas Jimoh

THE Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) yesterday in Abuja warned that President Goodluck Jonathan would be laying the foundation for mass action if he or the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) attempts to rig the 2011 general election.

National Publicity Secretary of the party, Dennis Aghanya, also advised Jonathan to be careful in his choice of Vice President.

"He should be mindful of the expectations of the masses - free and fair election. If he ends up picking any of those hawks, who may be overzealously power conscious as his vice, he will have himself to blame; such persons are capable of

mooting the idea of do-or-die and winning at all cost mentality," Aghanya said.

While acknowledging that Jonathan, like any Nigerian, could vie for elective positions or support any candidate to run, he said: "We can assure his Excellency that he will not be able to contend with the revolt that will accompany any attempt to rig the election, even with the combined forces of all the security arm of the country."

"If he tampers with the wish of the masses, he should be ready to face the consequences," the spokesman stressed.

He said Nigerians are ready to do anything to free themselves from the misrule of the ruling party, adding that CPC may look beyond going to court to seek justice after electoral frauds.

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Page 56



Lagerback names 30-man squad

■ Olofinjana out

NIGERIA technical adviser Lars Lagerback has named his 30-man provisional squad for the World Cup, including two players from the domestic league.

Hull City's Seyi Olofinjana has paid the price for not playing for Hull City as he has been left out of the squad, with Monaco midfielder Haruna Lukman reaping the benefits of his playing time with the Principality outfit.

Portsmouth forward John Utaka and his brother Peter are also included in the squad, as are two players in a race against time to be fit for the World Cup, John Mikel Obi and Ikechukwu Uche.

The two players from the domestic league are Bayelsa United goalkeeper Bassey Akpan, and Lobi Stars right back Terna Suswan.

The squad is expected to be cut down to 23 players on June 1.

Nigeria are drawn in Group B of the world Cup with Argentina, Greece and South Korea.

Goalkeepers: Vincent Enyeama (Hapoel Tel Aviv, Israel), Dele Aiyenugba (Bnei Yehuda, Israel), Austin Ejide (Hapoel Petah Tikva, Israel), Bassey Akpan (Bayelsa United, Nigeria)

Defenders: Taye Taiwo (Olympique Marseille, France), Elderson Echiejile (Rennes, France), Chidi Odiah (CSKA Moscow, Russia), Onyekachi Apam (OG Nice, France), Joseph Yobo (Everton, England), Daniel Shittu (Bolton Wanderers, England), Ayodele Adeleye (Sparta Rotterdam, Netherlands), Rabiun Afolabi (SV Salzburg, Austria), Terna Suswan (Lobi Stars, Nigeria)

Midfielders: Chinedu Obasi (TSG Hoffenheim, Germany), John Utaka (Portsmouth, England), Brown Ideye (FC Sochaux, France), Peter Utaka (Odense Boldklub, Denmark), Kalu Uche (Almeria, Spain), Dickson Etuhu (Fulham, England), Mikel Obi (Chelsea, England), Sani Kaita



SUPER Eagles midfielder Seyi Olofinjana, left, playing for his English club Hull City, tries to tackle Fabrice Muamba of Bolton during their English Premier League match last season. Olofinjana was dropped from the Eagles World Cup squad because he was not playing for his club regularly.

(Alaniya, Russia), Haruna Lukman (AS Monaco, France), Yusuf Ayila (Dynamo Kiev, Ukraine),

Osaze Odemwingie (Lokomotiv Moscow, Russia)
Strikers: Yakubu Aiyegbeni,

Victor Anichebe (Everton, England), Nwankwo Kanu, Obafemi Martins (Wolfsburg, Germany),

Ikechukwu Uche (Real Zaragoza, Spain), Obinna Nsofor (Malaga, Spain).

NOC meets May 13 to fix election date

From Adeolu Johnson, Lagos

THE Nigeria Olympic Committee (NOC) executive members will meet on May 13 to take a final decision on the election of new members into the body.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has given the Nigerian body up till next month to put its house in shape or risked

being sanctioned.

The panel set up to conduct election had fixed the date for April 30 but the NOC Exco had changed due to the non availability of the current President, Alhaji Habu Gumel and Secretary General, Banji Oladapo.

Gumel and his scribe have been busy attending international engagements thus making it diffi-

cult for the election to hold.

Meanwhile, a sports analyst and former member of the Nigeria Lawn Tennis Association, Dr. Shola Oniyide has called on Engineer Gumel to organize the election in the country's interest.

Speaking to journalists in Lagos, Oniyide accused the outgoing President of trying to use unconventional means to hold on to power.

"It is disheartening to note that Gumel has applied all sorts of illegal tactics to hang on to power after staying for eight years as President initially he came up with the argument that Sani Ndanusa who was the

former Sports Minister was not qualified to contest for the presidency of the NOC because he was a serving minister.

"Now that the man has been removed as minister he is still shifting the post by refusing to organize an election.

He reminded Gumel and his group that the script they are playing was what former NOC President, Raheem Adejumo played before Brigadier General Fred Chijuka and General Dyeri forced him out.

Onyedika's death throws Rangers' camp into mourning

SOME former players of Rangers International FC of Enugu have expressed shock at the death of their colleague, Emeka Onyedika.

Onyedika died on Saturday in Abuja.

Ernest Ufele, one of the former players, said yesterday in Enugu that Onyedika's death was a monumental loss to the Rangers' family.

"Onyedika was a fine gentleman and a good player who elevated the image of his team during his playing days.

"We, his colleagues, feel his death, but we cannot question God. Rather, we condole with his family over the loss," Ufele said.

Another ex-Rangers player, Dominic Nwobodo, said Onyedika's demise was unfortunate.

"It is unfortunate he passed on at a time his younger colleagues still need his experience. The family will miss him," Nwobodo said.

A junior colleague of the player's, Fancy Ewulu, said with the death, the club had been thrown into mourning.

"This is a terrible blow to the Rangers family," lamented Edwin Eze, the Director of Sports (Information), Enugu State Sports Council.

"It is a regrettable death to everybody, particularly his team mates," Eze said, describing the late Rangers' player as a good attacker and committed player throughout his life time.

He, however, said that his family should be consoled with the fact that they produced such a fine hero.

"They should accept the death as it is an inevitable end for all mortals," Eze counseled.

Members of the club were in mournful mood. Late Onyedika hailed from Abate in Idemili Local Government Area of Anambra.



Gael Monfils of France leaps to play a backhand against Stéphane Robert in their first round match in the Madrid Open tennis tournament at the Caja Magica in Madrid, Spain, yesterday.

National Hockey League kicks off May 15

By Orkula Shaagee

THE promise to reposition Nigerian hockey by the incumbent board of the Nigeria Hockey Federation (NHF) led by former international Patrick Ukah has taken a positive step with the kick off of the 2010 International Energy Insurance (IEI) National Hockey League this weekend.

Divided into two Atlantic and Savannah groups, all the hockey teams in the South West, South East and South South would converge in Lagos beginning from this week Saturday for one week of quality hockey games. The Atlantic Assembly comes to an end next Saturday.

According to Ukah, who played in the famous colours of Union Bank Hockey team, "The NHF is officially opening the hockey season and we want to do it with our most prestigious tournament, the IEI National Hockey

League. But the unique thing about this year's tournament is that it is going to lead us having our Premier League team. At the end of the year we would be able to categorise our teams into the Premier League and Division 2.

"But before that all the teams would be playing in one league



and the best ones would make up our Premier League which debuts next season".

With no fewer than 12 teams (male and female) taking part in

the Atlantic assembly at the Lagos National Stadium, the revived IEI hockey league would move to the Savannah Assembly comprising teams from the Middle Belt and Northern region. The venue for the Savannah assembly is the Astro turf pitch in Kaduna.

The best two teams (male and female) in both centers would have the opportunity to go for the grand finale at the National Stadium Abuja where the best male and female teams for the 2010 league would emerge.

"We want to win back our crowd so we are taking the Lagos opener very serious. We want to make sure that come back to stadiums to see hockey and enjoy great games like it used to be. "We are expecting traditional teams, like Union Bank team, El-Kanemi Flickers, Niger Flickers and a host of others. We intend to bring back the old rivalry in Sport city" Ukah added.

Enyimba urge Vita sanction

ENYIMBA have asked the Confederation of African Football (CAF) to sanction AS Vita Club for poor conduct after the Nigerian club overturned a three-goal deficit to qualify for the fourth round of the CAF Confederation Cup.

"We will make an official protest to CAF over the lack of sportsmanship displayed by Vita.

They never showed any spirit of sportsmanship during their stay in Nigeria," said Enyimba chairman, Felix Anyansi-Agwu.

"We are confident they won't go unpunished."

The two-time CAF Champions League winners fell 3-0 in DRC two weeks ago, only to come home to the eastern Nigerian town of Aba and cancel all the goals before completing a superb comeback with a 5-4 victory in sudden-death penalty shootout.

Uche Kalu netted a brace and Junior Osagie fired a third goal for Enyimba, before penalty-stopping goalkeeper Chijoke Ejiogu emerged the hero during the penalty shootout.

The Nigerian team also had to stage a comeback in the previous round of the competition against Angola's Academica.

Nigeria's other flag bearers in the Confederation Cup, Warri Wolves, crashed out in Zimbabwe when they lost 2-0 to hosts Caps United at the Rufaro Stadium in Harare.

Warri Wolves were therefore eliminated 3-2 on aggregate.

Heartland's victory well deserved –Emeteole

COACH Kelechi Emeteole of Heartland FC of Owerri says the team's win over SuperSports United of South Africa in Sunday's return leg match is well deserved.

According to him, the 3-1 victory in the CAF Champions League at the Dan Anyiam Stadium, Owerri is a motivating tonic toward making history in the competition.

"We have yet to recover from the narrow loss to TP Mazembe of Congo DR in last year's finals,"

Emeteole said after the match.

"We are, however, keeping hopes alive now that we are again in the group stages of the competition this year. "I am so happy that my boys played to instructions at home after the 1-1 away draw in the first leg in South Africa," the coach said.

Emeteole said the South Africans had a good team but Heartland worked harder and showed more determination to win the return leg encounter.

"I am also overwhelmed that

the boys executed our pre-match plans that we embarked on soon after our return from South Africa a fortnight ago," he said.

He said the technical crew and management of the club would still go back to the drawing board to strengthen the team for the matches in the group stages.

The coach said that Heartland were already waiting for the draws so as to know next opponents.

He said that the experiences gathered from the last edition of the competition would help the

team this time.

Emeka Nwanna opened scoring for Heartland in the 38th minute but Brian Umoni of SuperSports capitalised on a defensive error to equalise in the 80th minute.

However, Emmanuel Owoeri made it two for the home side in the 82nd minute just as the visitors were settling down for business after the equaliser.

Bello Kofar Mata sealed victory for Heartland with a third goal in the 87th minute.

Fergie questions his United buys, tactics

...after handing title to Chelsea



TAKING a bow... Manchester United boss Alex Ferguson and his players take a lap of honour after their win over Stoke

MANCHESTER United boss Alex Ferguson has suggested his award wasn't strong enough this season as Chelsea won back the league title.

United's narrow failure to win the title for a fourth successive time had Ferguson in contemplative mood.

Speaking after United's 4-0 win over Stoke on Sunday, the United manager said: "Did I always make the right team selections with the appropriate tactics? Do we have a strong enough squad?"

"It's an assessment that has to be set against injuries, cost, luck and of course the fact that there is a harder competitive edge in the Premier League these days. It's a tough old league very unforgiving and a lot of the teams at the top have lost games they expected to win."

One of the most costly of United's seven league defeats was their defeat against Burnley in August.

Ferguson is still angry about the 1-0 loss at Chelsea in November, when John Terry headed home from a free kick which the United manager still argues should not have been awarded.

"That's maybe swung the whole title around if you think about it,"

Ferguson said.

United managed to finish second despite reinvesting barely a quarter of the £80million Real Madrid paid for Cristiano Ronaldo last June.

Winger Antonio Valencia was the only recruit to play consistently well for United, with Michael Owen enduring an injury-restricted campaign after signing on a free transfer and winger Gabriel Obertan still yet to fully develop.

"I always knew we would miss Cristiano Ronaldo," Ferguson admitted.

But the 68-year-old Scot has never regretted selling Carlos Tevez despite the Argentina striker scoring 29 goals for neighbours Manchester City.

That was 17 more than United's record signing Dimitar Berbatov scored, with the languid Bulgarian failing to shine in his second season at Old Trafford.

Berbatov had to share second place on United's goalscoring leaderboard with own goals.

The 12th of those came on Sunday, with Stoke's Danny Higginbotham turning the ball into his own net. Darren Fletcher, Ryan

Giggs and Park Ji-sung scored the other goals for the hosts.

There was an over-reliance on Wayne Rooney, with his 34 goals. He arrived in a more central role following Ronaldo's exit but was plagued by injuries toward the end of the season.

"The way Wayne stepped up, not only to fill the gap but to demonstrate that he has taken his game to a new level, has been thrilling," Ferguson said. "Certainly his contribution has been one of the upsides of our year."

Amid the despondency, Ferguson reminded fans to put United's hat trick of titles in context.

When he arrived in 1986, the team hadn't won the title in 20 years - a woeful run that ended in 1993 and was followed by another 10 titles.

"We have to measure the success against the disappointments and taking everything into account, I think we are on the credit side," Ferguson said.

"It's not complacency, just common sense to conclude that we have had a good season that has not been without its rewards. It could have been better, but overall we are finishing in good shape."

Fulham preparing for biggest event in club history

FULHAM'S players are embracing the tag of underdogs one last time this season in preparation for Wednesday's Europa League final against Atletico Madrid, the biggest event in the west London club's 131-year history.

While Atletico is seeking to add yet another title to its collection, Fulham has never hoisted a major trophy and has only become a regular in English topflight competition this past decade.

Fulham's only previous appearance in a final ended in defeat in

the 1975 FA Cup but players have embraced the underdog tag this season to surprise the likes of Juventus, Hamburg and trophy holder Shakhtar Donetsk.

Manager Roy Hodgson saved the club from relegation from the Premier League just two years ago. Last season, he led Fulham to its record high league finish of seventh place. After the veteran coach's diligent work on tactics, technique and confidence, a group of relatively unheralded players heads to Hamburg confident of overturning

another more illustrious club.

"When we started out, we didn't even think about reaching the final," Fulham defender Brede Hangeland said. "It was almost a distraction from the league. But the closer you get the more you think about it and I think when we beat Juventus, we started thinking 'why not go all the way?'"

"I still think it's great just that we got to the final and if we win it it's a bonus. Obviously, we'll try to do our best but the important thing is to go out and enjoy it like a normal game."



DIDIER Drogba

Drogba shows his true colours

By Martin Rogers (Yahoo Sports)

DIDIER Drogba joined some pretty illustrious company when he was named one of Time Magazine's 100 most influential people on the planet last week.

His goal-scoring prowess for Chelsea and Ivory Coast wasn't the only thing that elevated him to that hallowed list. What also earned him recognition in this historic year for soccer was Drogba's stature in the sports world and on the African continent.

However, Drogba's antics on the final day of an extraordinary English Premier League campaign left much to be desired, and his actions created an unwanted sideshow to an afternoon that should have been about nothing but celebration.

Drogba showed where his priorities really lay by attempting to grab the ball from first-choice penalty taker Frank Lampard with Chelsea leading Wigan 1-0 in the first half of a game the Blues needed to win to secure the title. When Lampard quite rightly refused to hand over spot-kick duties, Drogba reacted furiously, pouting like a petulant child before a bewildered audience both at Stamford Bridge and on worldwide television screens.

The reason for Drogba's ire was concern that he would be denied the chance to win the EPL scoring crown. Heading into the final day of the season, both he and Manchester United's Wayne Rooney were tied with 26 league goals.

Lampard's converted penalty, which effectively put the game beyond doubt and ensured Chelsea would end United's three-year reign, was not enough to make Drogba calm down. He was a sulk-

ing, scowling, grimacing island inside a stadium erupting with joy.

Even by halftime, Drogba was still simmering and had to be ordered to be "quiet" by head coach Carlo Ancelotti.

"I spoke with him after the first half," Ancelotti said. "It was my decision, if there was a penalty, to give it to Lampard. I said: 'Quiet. You can score in the second half.'"

Wigan, down to 10 men after Gary Caldwell's red card, showed neither the ability nor desire to stand in the way of the champions-elect, and Chelsea promptly ran riot as Drogba struck three times after the break to claim the scoring title while Rooney hobbled around up in Manchester.

The hat trick changed Drogba's mood, and a hurried apology to Lampard followed after the game. Yet this was still an ugly moment and only Drogba knows whether he would have been so chivalrous if the second half had not transpired in such a productive way for him.

This summer, it will be about more than just goals for Drogba. He needs to pull the Ivory Coast onto his shoulders if it is to emerge from the World Cup's toughest group and become, as many predict, the African team capable of making a deep run.

Drogba likes his image of statesman and should be commended for the charitable works he has undertaken in his homeland. He likes the spotlight, likes political society and likes being seen as a "person of influence."

Now it is time for Didier Drogba to start setting the right example on the field, as well as away from it.



BAUCHI STATE GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA

Inna Lillahi Wa Inna Ilaihir Raji'un



It is with deep sorrow and heavy heart that we received the sad news of the passing away of our president, Malam Umaru Musa Yar'adua, GCFR (matawallen Katsina) which sad event occurred on Wednesday 5th May 2010.

The death of President Yar'adua was a monumental loss to the people of Nigeria, and indeed the continent of Africa at large. During his sojournship, he had impacted positively on Nigerians and accomplished so much, given the multi-farious issues bedeviling the country.

His vision was to move the country forward by ensuring respect for human dignity and worked tirelessly to fast-track the attainment of Nigeria's policy goals through the instrumentality of the 7 point agenda.

He devoted himself to the cause of the down-trodden. He built a reputation of honesty, patience, and prudence in the application of resources for human development purposes. His respect for the rule of law was unequalled. His commitment to the accelerated mobility of Nigeria as a world economic power was legendary. A faithful believer in the invisibility of Nigeria, he was a peace-maker who applied personal qualities of dedicated service to humanity in the quest to oil the wheel of world peace and security. A man of integrity, President Umaru Musa Yar'adua had left a legacy of service, courage and sacrifice in the service of his fatherland for the good of all.

The challenge of today is the ability to sustain his transformation policies to enable the nation achieve something functionally tangible to give the country a competitive advantage and opens for it many opportunities. I wish to on behalf of myself, the government and the good people of Bauchi state, condole his Excellency, president Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, GCFR, the family of our late president, and the entire people of Nigeria on the death of its great leader so compassionate in his leadership style.

He will be remembered as a promoter of good governance and sustainable democracy in Nigeria. I pray to almighty Allah to grant his soul Aljannat Firdausi and grant us the fortitude and the heart to bear this irreparable loss with equanimity.

President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, GCFR.
August 1951-May 5, 2010

Signed

Malam (Dr.) Isa Yuguda,
(Matawallen Bauchi)
Executive Governor, Bauchi State.





ON FOCUS: BRAZIL



Will Dunga sacrifice Brazil's flair, grace for glory?

By Ismaila Lere

BRAZIL'S coach Dunga made his name as a Brazilian who did not play the game like his compatriots.

He was the man who broke things up, got involved when games became messy and allowed his more talented colleagues to get on with the job of wowing the public.

Critics in his homeland were not impressed by his workmanlike style but he had the last laugh when lifting the trophy aloft in 1994 as captain.

In France four years later, he also led Brazil to the final even though he was playing his club football in Japan.

So he won over the football-mad public with his tenacity but quite what they made of him being appointed coach in 2006 was another matter.

Not only did he have no experience of coaching at any level but he was the symbol for the most UnBrazilian way of football. The use of two holding midfielders, the *tendency to play on the counter-attack* and the overlooking of the likes of Ronaldo, Ronaldinho and Pato have all seen him accused of playing in an un-Brazilian way, by ditching the classic Brazilian principles of yesteryear for a more patient, less spectacular way of playing.

All this ignores Brazil's record since Dunga became manager - Copa America winners, Confederations Cup winners, top of the South American qualifying group - but perhaps Brazil is a country where to win is not enough, you have to win with style.

In South Africa, would Dunga rid the team of its exotic flair, grace and carefree attitude?

Well, he has shown he is not afraid of dropping big names like Ronaldinho and Adriano and he seems to be making a good fist of picking from the best selection of players any manager in the world has.

At times there appears to be an embarrassment of riches for the Brazil boss but he is on the right course to meet all of the expectations that are coming his way.

TACTICAL FORMATION: Several experts have commented upon the unusual system Brazil play. Indeed, one of the odd things about the fact the Brazilian team is regarded as rigid and inflexible is the fact that no-one quite knows how to categorise this side. Some experts tend to see the system as a 4-4-2 diamond (or 4-3-1-2), while others see the shape was widely described as a 4-2-3-1.

The first diagram shows the different interpretations - the players in their 'actual' positions, but with lines depicting either formation. So on the first diagram, you have the diamond midfield, on the second you have the 4-2-3-1.

Some believe that the system is a diamond midfield, as shown in this picture. The back four marked by red, the midfield diamond by blue (Kaka is slightly to the left-of-centre, his usual position denoted by the blue dot), and the forwards marked by pink.

It would be difficult to look at that shape and deny that it was a 4-4-2 diamond - perhaps a 4-3-3 if you were considering Kaka in this picture to be playing as a forward. You would certainly not describe it as a 4-2-3-1, because Ramires (the midfielder furthest to the right) is clearly alongside Melo, the midfielder on the halfway line.

And yet, just minutes later in



DUNGA... Can he lead Brazil to another World Cup glory?

the same game, Brazil had taken this shape (on the second diagram) which looks much more like a 4-2-3-1. The defenders again in red, the two holding players in blue, the three attacking players in pink, and the lone forward in green.

The key to understanding the team's shift is probably the roles of Robinho and Ramires.

Robinho, the left-sided forward, usually takes up a position outside the opposition's right-back. In this sense, he is effectively playing as an old-fashioned outside-left, whilst the central striker (generally Luis Fabiano who was injured for this game, and replaced by Adriano) occupies the opposition's left-sided centre-back. Therefore, they play too far apart to realistically be labelled a front two, and they almost never combine.

The role of Ramires is also interesting. He effectively plays the same role he does for Benfica, shuttling from a central midfield position when defending, to a right-wing position when in possession. This requires a tremendous amount of energy, but the fact that he and Maicon (the right-back) possess both stamina and speed, means that those two can effectively cover three positions (right-back, right central midfield and right-wing) by themselves.

KEY PLAYER:

Ricardo Kaka:- There is danger all over the pitch when any Brazil team takes the field but Kaka is the brightest star of the bunch.

Real Madrid's summer signing is well known for his holy living off the pitch and faith in God, often displayed on his T-shirts, but on the pitch he is a devil to contend with.

Floating effortlessly between midfield and attack, he is a cut above most of the players who perform in his position and he almost always manages to have a major influence on games at any level.

While it was a wrench to leave Milan - he turned down Manchester City's millions before opting to join Real - the transfer should not have an adverse effect on his performances for Brazil.

Having already won the World Cup in 2002, he will have his sights on more glory in 2010 and there is little doubt he has the potential to be one of the best players on show in the finals.

ROUTE TO SOUTH AFRICA:

Brazil topped the ten-team South American qualifying table, as expected, but only by a point in the end.

Dunga's charges were never really in any sort of trouble and eased up towards the end, only

picking up a solitary point from their last two fixtures against Bolivia and Venezuela.

The highlight was the excellent 3-1 victory in Argentina that assured them of a place in South Africa.

The win heaped the pressure on Diego Maradona's side and once again showcased the finishing prowess of Luis Fabiano.

WORLD CUP HISTORY:

- 1930 First round
- 1934 First round
- 1938 Semi-finals
- 1950 Runners-up
- 1954 Quarter-finals
- 1958 Winners
- 1962 Winners
- 1966 First round
- 1970 Winners
- 1974 Fourth place
- 1978 Third place
- 1982 Second round
- 1986 Quarter-finals
- 1990 Second round
- 1994 Winners
- 1998 Runners-up
- 2002 Winners
- 2006 Quarter-finals

WORLD CUP HIGHLIGHT:

The 1970 World Cup final. The event screened in colour for the first time. Those canary-yellow shirts somehow only adding to the fantasy of the Brazil side.

Italy were simply torn apart by the superb South Americans and the final goal, the coup de grace, was an iconic moment in the history of football.

When Pele rolls the ball to his right nonchalantly, the TV pictures do not pick up on Carlos Alberto tearing down the right to meet the pass with perfect timing.

The skipper crashes home the fourth and the viewers around the world fell in love with the beautiful game.



BRAZIL - 4-4-2 diamond?



BRAZIL, 4-2-3-1?

THE TUESDAY COLUMN

Sanusi Abubakar

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Build on Yar'adua's legacies;
revive the land reform bill

With the death of Umaru Musa Yar'adua, our late President (and, to many of us a fondly remembered friend), we have lost a decent, courageous and civilised gentleman. Never a convert to the new "religion" of leaving everything to "the market forces", he was a true believer in the good that a well ordered, service-oriented developmental state can do for the welfare and future of the vast majority who, more often than not, are excluded from the scheme of things. He wanted truly to serve but came up against his own limitations, the opportunism of others he trusted, and finally, his own mortality. We shall all miss him.

One of the ways Nigeria, and especially President Goodluck Jonathan, can truly immortalise his name is to build on what he started but could not quite deliver; his Seven Point Agenda, unruly as that still is. True, the new regime says it is now focusing on some of them, reduced to three or four, given the lack of time and the need to organise genuinely democratic elections come 2011. However, there is one concern of Umaru that seems at risk of disappearing; his push for Land Reform. It is cheap but it will still be difficult to implement. And yet, it is crucial to any sustainable future we hope to build.

The late President had followed with keen interests the investigations and reports of the Land Commission, set up in 1980 by Governor Abdulkadir Balarabe Musa, under the chairmanship of Dr. Yahaya Abdullahi (now Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Niger-Delta). As governor he saw first-hand the problems of land administration. Over the years he had also flirted, like most of us, with the new ideas on land reforms, especially those of the Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto, and several others like him.

On the outside, looking in

De Soto had argued that we cannot build a strong economy with most of our people having no titles to even the land they currently occupy or till. This "excluded majority" remains on the outside looking in, and only a total reorganization of the land tenure system, and the evolving of well documented property rights and proper title-deeds, would liberate this "dead capital" and enable the peasants to participate in the modern economy. These untitled and undocumented assets, De Soto estimates, amount to as much as US \$10 trillion globally. Reforms based on this model worked in Mexico and Bolivia, but failed in some other places: Umaru wanted a committee to look into the possibility of such an experiment here in Nigeria.

In addition, several flaws have been identified and documented regarding the letter, intent and the administration of the Land Use Act, issued in March, 1978, by the then Federal Military Government, which purports to take over the ownership and control of land in the country thereby providing uniform legal basis for a comprehensive national land tenure system and Umaru Yar'adua mandated Prof. Akin Mabogunje and others he constituted into a Land Reform Committee, to look into these and find workable solutions. The issues were thoroughly debated in many fora. To **Lagos State Governor, Babatunde Fashola, for example, the issue is that of seeking ways to improve the processes of land administration rather than a repeal of the Land Use Act itself. He understood clearly that the way we Nigerians use land will determine whether we remain a**

Third World nation or cross to the First World, because the country is sitting on a lot of dead capital in form of lands. Senator Udoma Udo Udoma and others argued that the Land Use Act is an impediment which should be reviewed by taking it out of the Constitution and made a regular Act, which can be amended when the need arises. Others voiced other concerns regarding the matter.

It remains true that the objectives of the land use act have remained largely unfulfilled 27 years after its enactment, and some have argued that title to land appears to be more insecure now than it ever was. These deficiencies compelled Justice Augustine Nnamani who, as Attorney-General, was responsible for drafting of the Act and incorporating it into the Constitution, to observe that it has now become clear that due to its implementation, not its structure or intent, the objectives for which the Land Use

Act was promulgated have largely remained unfulfilled; indeed, he argued that they have been distorted, abused and seriously undermined. He added that the lofty hopes in the second stanza of the preamble - that the rights of all Nigerians to use and enjoy land in Nigeria and the natural fruits thereof in sufficient quantity to enable them provide for the sustenance of themselves and their families be assured, protected and preserved or in Section 1 "that all land be held in trust and administered for the use and common benefit of all Nigerians" - has been nothing but a forlorn hope, a pipe dream.

What is happening to the Bill?

Yet land reform is never straight forward because it touches on the economic, social and political lives of all of us. The late President clearly felt that something needed to be done which led him to include the issue in his Agenda. The committee he set up has since submitted its recommendations, and right now a Bill is being considered by the Senate. The House of Representatives, unfortunately, threw it out in the misguided assumption that land is a "state" matter and not a "Federal" one. The Reps totally misunderstood the whole idea of the proposed reforms, which sought to have an umbrella body, with a common template to streamline land administration, starting with a cadastral survey of the whole country, something beyond the resources of any particular state. Clearly they need to be educated on the matter or weaned away from the suffocating embrace of their governors whose interests they probably thought they were protecting. We cannot reform our agriculture or even develop the mortgage industry to finance mass housing, without land reform.

Yar'adua's bold attempt to tackle the issue of land must be pushed to some logical conclusion this year. It is the least we can do to honour his memories. But, perhaps I am being too optimistic. In the Preface to the 2009 book "ONE BILLION RISING: Law, Land and the Alleviation of Global Poverty" edited by Prosterman, Mitchell and Hanstad, Nobel Laureate and Colombia University Professor, Joseph Stiglitz said 'In a world in which we are constantly confronted with equity and efficiency trade-offs, land reform is one of those rare instances of a policy which simultaneously promotes both. Yet, the issue has for long been neglected - perhaps because the elites in many developing countries have done well by the status quo.' Perhaps. But people have been known to sometimes see beyond their noses.

We cannot reform our agriculture or even develop the mortgage industry to finance mass housing, without land reform.

SPORTS
REPORT

WAYNE Rooney

Rooney completes awards hat-trick

England and Manchester United striker Wayne Rooney has completed a hat-trick of awards after being named as the Premier League's player of the year by sponsors Barclays.

The 24-year-old had already collected the Professional Footballers'

Association and Football Writers' awards for this season.

Barclays named Harry Redknapp as their manager of the year in recognition of his achievement in guiding Tottenham to a fourth place finish and a place in the final qualifying round of next season's Champions League.



STEVE Nash of the Phoenix Suns after receiving six stitches to his eye against the San Antonio Spurs

Suns sweep Spurs to reach West finals

Steve Nash scored 20 points as the Phoenix Suns swept the San Antonio Spurs from the Western Conference semifinals with a 107-101 win Sunday night.

It was long-awaited redemption for the Suns, who had been booted from the playoff by the Spurs four times since 2003.

Stoudemire led the Suns with 29 points. He is the only Suns player who was on each of those Spurs-ousted teams over the last seven years.

They will either play the Los Angeles Lakers or the Utah Jazz in the West finals. The Lakers lead that series 3-0, and no team in NBA playoff history has ever come back from that deficit to win.

