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Oba Oyebade Lipede

A Great Egba Monarch



OLADIPO ODUNOYE
OLALEKAN AKINPELU
'WALE OPE-AGBE



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By:

**Oladipo Odunoye
Olalekan Akinpelu
'Wale Ope-Agbe'**

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1

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to all sons and daughters of Egbaland who have contributed in one way or the other to the growth and development of Egbaland.

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To all of you and many others we cannot mention now owing to space constraint we say thank you and God bless.

Preface

There is no gainsaying the fact that Abeokuta and its environs have witnessed phenomenal changes in terms of social and economic development particularly in the last 25 years. The need to put this on record and highlight the personality who is the catalyst of these positive changes necessitated the writing of this book.

When it was predicted that the reign of the 9th Alake of Egbaland will witness tremendous transformation of Egbaland many did not believe it. However, the result is glaring today.

Oba Michael Mofolorunso Oyebade Lipede the central figure of this development has been ably leading the struggle for modernisation particularly by ensuring that Egbaland gets its due from the State and the Federal Governments.

His wealth of experience over the years both at home and abroad in the course of doing what he does best-service-has been brought to bear on his rulership of the Egba people. His clarion call on the Egba people to come home to develop what is theirs coupled with his sincere and objective dealings with both indigenes and non-indigenes in Egbaland have yielded positive results, bringing about the much needed growth and development of the ancient city.

No doubt, Egbaland has been witnessing peace and tranquility in the era of our indefatigable Kabiyesi.

At the conception of the writing of this book, we had thought that there would be some difficulties during our interviews especially as regards the Kabiyesi's readiness to give retrospective details of himself from his youthful days. But we were proved wrong in the course of the various interviews with him as the Kabiyesi gave answers to our questions without making references to documents.

We have however reflected his life in different chapters from his roots and early life to his school days, his world of work, his reign and achievements in Egbaland. We have also selected just a few of his speeches for publication for you to appreciate his enormous mastery of the society. We gathered comments from a cross-section of people in Egbaland (indigines and non-indigenes) about Kabiyesi, Oba Oyebade Lipede to show how acceptable his reign has been. In fact, the last chapter in which others assessed him gives you an insight into his life and achievements as the 9th Alake of Egbaland.

Oladipo
Olalekan
'Wale

Foreword

Twenty-Five Years represent an important landmark in the reign of any monarch. It is customary to celebrate it as the SILVER JUBILEE, a joyous occasion and a cherished opportunity for sober reflection on the impact of the ruler upon the development of his domain and the progress of his people. For the 25 years' reign of Alayeluwa Oba (Dr.) Oyebade Lipede, (1972-97) the 9th Alake of Egbaland, we are fortunate to have in the pages of this book a magnificent record of its genesis and its impressive achievements.

At the momentous occasion on 5th August, 1972 of the Coronation and the Presentation of the Instrument and Staff of Office to the new Alake by then Military Governor of the Western State, Brigadier Oluwole Rotimi, Oba Oyebade Lipede in his acceptance speech, reproduced *in extenso* in this book, declared "I solemnly promise a dynamic and progressive leadership." We can see for ourselves in the pages that follow how marvellously he has fulfilled this tremendous undertaking.

In an era when Obas reign but no longer rule, Oba Oyebade Lipede has employed his enormous influence to rally his people towards the sustenance of their front line position in our country and has donned the toga of the apostle of change regarding the progress and modernisation of the famed Egba homeland. His clarion call to his people to come back to "Marcedonia," as it

were, and help their ancient citadel as well as his constant urging upon the powers-that-be to do justice to Egbaland in the distribution of national development projects have achieved spectacular results.

This is amply demonstrated in this book.

As we celebrate the last 25 years, we inevitably look forward to an equally glorious era when we would, 'Insha Allah', witness the GOLDEN JUBILEE of this epoch-making reign. The unity of his people, which Oba Oyebade Lipede is constantly striving to achieve, is a continuous exercise which we believe his example will fortify for in our unity lies our strength. Oba Oyebade Lipede has carved out for himself a niche in the affection of all Egba people and has made himself an epitome of the ideals of a modern Oba, the Father of all his people and their spokesman in the national arena. Is it any wonder that he is respected by his natural ruler peers in the country and the Authorities at both State and Federal levels.

We salute Alayeluwa Oba (Dr.) Oyebade Lipede, the 9th Alake of Egbaland, on this auspicious occasion of his Silver Jubilee. We pray that he may long continue his mission of forging the unity of all his people and promoting their all-round progress.

Kabiyesi!

Prof. Saburi Biobaku

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

Roots and Early Life	1 - 14
The Royal Birthplace	3
Abeokuta and Olumo Rock	5
Egba Anthem	7
Pa Adebowale Lipede	11

CHAPTER 2

Oyebade Lipede at School	15 - 22
---------------------------------	----------------

CHAPTER 3

His World of Work	23 - 35
--------------------------	----------------

CHAPTER 4

Oyebade Lipede: The 9th Alake of Egbaland	31 - 54
--	----------------

CHAPTER 5

Growth and Development in Egbaland	55 - 71
---	----------------

CHAPTER 6

A Day to remember	72 - 82
--------------------------	----------------

CHAPTER 7

Selected Speeches of Oba Oyebade Lipede	83 - 143
Oyebade Lipede on Commerce	84
Oyebade Lipede on Traditional Rulers	86
Oyebade Lipede on Women in Development	105
Oyebade Lipede on Culture	114

Oyebade Lipede on Religion	124
Oyebade Lipede on Development	135
Oyebade Lipede on Politics	138
Oyebade Lipede on Judiciary	142

CHAPTER 8

Assessment of Oyebade Lipede by others 144 - 170

Bibliography	171-172
--------------	---------

Index	173-174
-------	---------

Chapter 1

Roots and Early Life

Perhaps there are some significant things about the birthplace of great men and women of history. It is important to note that a majority of them who had their names written in the book of world records were either born in remote areas or in the heart of villages where there are no visible signs of growth and development. But their rural backgrounds have never constituted physical or psychological obstacles to their greatness.

In fact, there are historical and contemporary great men and women, who despite their humble beginnings and their relatively rustic and unknown birth places, turned out to be statesmen influencing all persons and events around them.

The ancient city of Abeokuta, the royal birthplace of Oyebade Mofolorunso Lipede, one of such great men, is made up of collection of settlements. The immediate cause of the settlements was to be found however in the long and bitter armed disturbances and struggles arising from

various inter-tribal wars. However, it was about the end of July or early August in 1830 (during the Owore season) that Chief Sodeke, like the biblical Moses, the Law-Giver, marched the whole Egba people to Abeokuta, their new settlement. They passed by Oke-Lantoro, now known as Alli Gate, where Muslims now pray on Bairam Festivals. They soon all settled on the Western side of Olumo, initially, occupying a comparatively small portion of land; the present Ikija to Igbore quarters. Chief priests then, assured them of prosperity at Abeokuta. Today, Abeokuta the then small settlement is kilometres in radius and made up of about 72 townships each of which has its own homestead (*Orile*). The entire city of Abeokuta is therefore a collection of settlements of four sections of Egbas. These are: Egba Alake with 45 townships. Egba Oke-Ona has seven townships. while Gbagura (Egba Agura) has 17 townships. and Egba Owu with three townships.

Egba Alake with 45 townships is in turn made up of three subsections. These subsections are Egba Eku, Egba Aarin, and Egba Agbein. The nomenclature of these groups of Egba settlers reflects the timing of their arrival in Abeokuta.

The Egba Agbein, for instance, is the third subsection of the Egba Alake that came to Abeokuta last. The name

of this set of Egba people, however, resembles their previous brethren who arrived before them. Egba Agbein therefore means the last Egba Alake to come. Egba Agbein had their headquarters at Igbein.

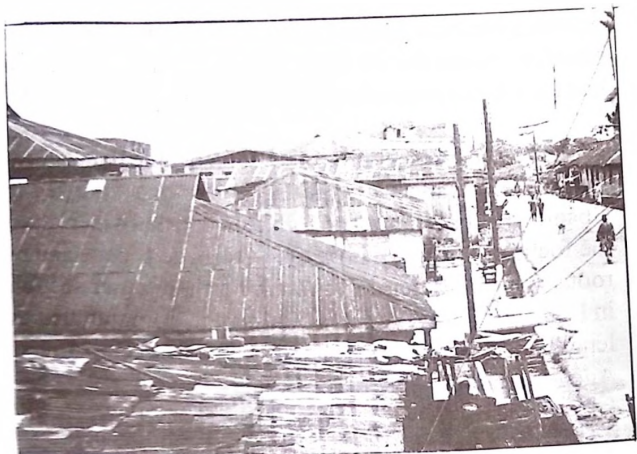
The second section of the Egba people that came to settle in Egbaland were the Egba Oke-ona followed by Gbagura (Egba Agura) and Egba Owu in that order. Since the focus of this work is on Oba Oyebade Lipede and his roots, we would not delve much on these other sections in Egbaland. However, it is pertinent to point out that the length and breadth of Egbaland stretch from Omi Adio to Agege and from Ajura to Idi-Emi.

The Royal Birthplace

Erunwon, is one of the townships within the Egba Eku. It is surrounded by Ake, Itoko, Ikaagbo, Ijemo and Ibarapa in Abeokuta. Though the touch of modernity could easily be seen in Erunwon, a majority of the houses there still wear their old looks today.

Erunwon is reputed to be the birth place of notable families and people both in Egbaland and Nigeria. Among the popular families in Erunwon are the Orijas, Sofoluwes, Sonekans, Howells, Lawyer Solanke otherwise known as *Funfun leye n'su*, etc. They are all great men in their community, chosen professions, religion and in the nation.

One of such great men that have their roots linked to Erunwon is the ninth Alake of Egbaland, Oba Michael Mofolorunso Oyebade Lipede, born at Erunwon, one of



Aerial view of Erumwon



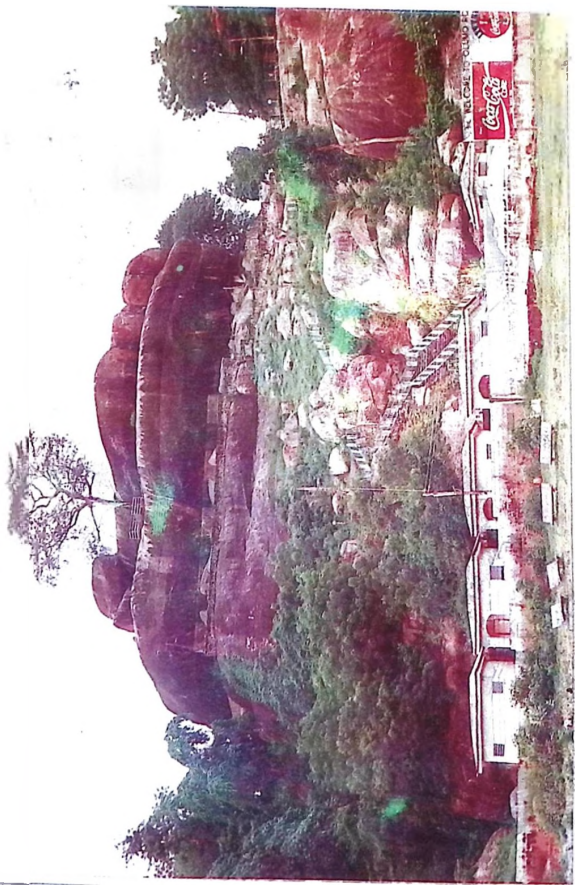
Erake House at Erumwon

the several townships around Ake Palace. *Eruke House*, where Oyebade was born, is a few electric poles away from the present Ake Palace.

■ Abeokuta and Olumo Rock

The historic city of Abeokuta in general (about 100 kilometres from Lagos by road) is about 91.44 metres (300 feet) above sea level. It has a hot humid climate and an average annual rainfall of 119.38 cm. (47 inches). The ancient town is set amidst a group of granite rocks of pre-cambrian formation, the central one being the famous Olumo Rock. Abeokuta which means "the city under the rock" derives its name from Olumo Rock. The rock is regarded as sacred in the history of Abeokuta because it is where the first settlers found refuge from their attackers.

Olumo's age may be difficult to determine but its formation must have resulted from the eruption of molten magma which is a characteristic of all igneous rocks in their formation. A closer look at the top of the rock reveals the outline of a crocodile lying on its belly and facing southward. A school of thought attributes this to a myth that Olumo Rock may have been erected as a temple to a deity (the god of crocodile) thousands of years ago when crocodile was worshipped by the natives. Nowadays, some animists regard Olumo as a sacred rock and they revere it. The rock itself is a massive geological structure with which the fame of Abeokuta is closely associated. It is a delight to behold and touch this historic and mystical rock. No wonder it has become a tourist attraction. It



Olumo Rock

overshadows Abeokuta as one of the most impressive sights in the city.

Olumo , according to history, derived its name from its being naturally furnished with apartments where human beings might live in safety. It was in the caves the Egba settlers lived throughout the civil wars for maximum security. Hence Olumo was derived from "*Oluwa mo*" , meaning built by the Lord. Another plausible school of thought asserts that Olumo is an abbreviated corruption of the statement credited to the first settlers - *Oluwa fi gbogbo wahala wa mo. Olufimo, OLUMO*. Olumo, therefore, is the symbolic citadel of the Egba people and the rallying point of Egba folk celebrations and a common source of their pride and joy. No wonder the installations and anniversary celebrations of any Alake are heralded by the booming of guns on the rock which is usually dressed up during important occasions.

The Egba people however enjoyed great protection, prosperity and security under the spell of Olumo Rock. They are up till today justifiably proud of the rock. In fact, the Egba people have their own anthem depicting the significance of Olumo Rock. The anthem goes thus:

ON THE HILLS AND IN THE VALLEYS

- (1) On the hills and in the valleys,
There I was born
There I was bred
And brought up



Aerial view of a Section in Abeokuta

In an independent State
I shall stand on the Olumo Rock,
And rejoice in the name of Egbaland,
I am a descendant of Lisabi.

Chorus:

I shall rejoice, rejoice
And rejoice,
On the Olumo Rock,
Rejoice! Rejoice !! O,
Rejoice !!! On the Olumo Rock

- (2) Abeokuta, the land of
The Egba people
I shall not forget thee
I shall put thee foremost
In my heart,
As a Nigerian city,
I shall rejoice on the Olumo Rock,
I shall boast of this
In my heart,
That in a foremost town,
There live the Egba people.

Chorus:

I shall rejoice,
And rejoice!
On the Olumo Rock,
Rejoice! Rejoice!! O
Rejoice !! On the Olumo Rock.

L'ORI OKE ATI PETELE

- (1) Lori Oke ati Petele
N'be lagbebi mi o
Nibe l'agbe to mi dagba o,
Ie Ominira
Emi o f' Abeokuta sogo
Ngo duro l'ori Olumo
Mayo L'oruko Egba o
Emi omo Lisabi.

Chorus:

Mayo Mayo, Mayo o
L'ori Olumo,
Mayo, Mayo, Ma a yo o
L'ori Olumo

- (2) Abeokuta Ilu Egba,
Nko ni gbagbe re:
Ngo gbe O l'eke okan mi - i
Bi ilu Odo Oya
Emi O mayo Lori Olumo
Emi o sogo yi l'okan mi,
Wipe Ilu Olokiki o o o
L'awa Egba ngbe.

Chorus:

Mayo Mayo, Mayo O
L'ori Olumo,
Mayo, Mayo, Ma a yo o
L'ori Olumo

To the Egba people, Olumo Rock stands not only as a monument of faith in unity but also a source of national strength and unfailing protection and sustenance by the Supreme Being who led their ancestors through the perplexities of life safely to Abeokuta. This refuge marked the end of their wanderings and struggles for existence. It marked the focal point of their promised land where they were freed from incessant persecution and fears of annihilation.

Aside from being an emblem of the Egba people, Olumo with its beautiful environment is a major tourist resort in Abeokuta. The town itself is a blend of the old and the modern. It offers an admirable romantic scenery which makes it an international favourite spot among tourists.

Pa Adebowale Lipede

Oyebade's father, Prince Adebowale Lipede of the Jibodu ruling house, was a farmer while his mother Madam Emilia Abiola Lipede was of the Jibolu Taiwo/Coker Sowemimo family in Abeokuta.

Prince Adebowale Lipede, like many of his contemporaries in those days, was a cocoa and kolanut farmer at Akonko village though near Ibadan, but within Egba Kingdom the capital of the present Oyo State. Cocoa and kolanut till today are their most prominent cash crops in the West.

Pa Adebowale Lipede who had formal education and could read and write grew up at the Mission House with the white Christian Missionaries until 1867 when the Egba people drove out the missionaries. His relationship with the missionaries had a great influence on his Christian life



Pa Adebowale Lipede

as he was able to combine both his traditional chieftancy title with that of the church. As the Balogun of Erunwon he was also the Ekerin of Egba Christians. A brave prince who lived up to expectation, he was known as the Prince of Jibodu Ruling House and was fully in charge.

As a prince, he fought relentlessly for peace in Erunwon kingdom and in the whole of Abeokuta.



Yeyeoba Abiola Lipede

As a young person, Adebowale Lipede went to the mission at 12 and was to be a priest or pastor but for a disagreement between the Christians and the Egba people which made him to leave the mission house and join other members of his family when the Christians went to settle at Aroloya now on Lagos Island. The contact and relationship of the Lipede family members with the missionaries made them to become one of the first few

enlightened people in Abeokuta and its environs. They knew and appreciated the value of education early and were therefore, in the forefront in training their children in Erunwon. Among the other families that appreciated the value of early education and moral training for their children in those days were the Majekodunmis, Howells, Moores, Coles, Dalleys, the Sofoluwes, the Cokers, the Sonekans, Folarins, Peters, Kutis, et cetera.

Pa Adebowale Lipede's ambition was to ascend to the throne in 1920 and become the custodian of the custom and tradition of Egbaland. But unfortunately, his ambition did not materialise. It was his last child, Oyebade Mofolorunso Lipede, who was to keep that glory with history.

Prince Adebowale Lipede was a polygamist to the core, as he had four wives and six children.

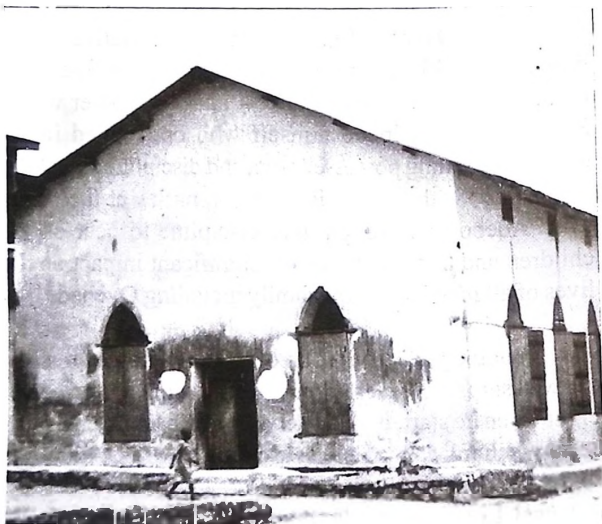
On a bright morning of January 26, 1915 a great event took place in the morning of January 26, 1915, when Yeyeoba Abiola Adeline Kusimo Lipede, bearing an advanced pregnancy, went in company of other Oloris on condolence visit to the family of Oloye Samuel Peters who died at Peter's Compound, Keesi, Abeokuta. On their return to Erunwon, Olori Abiola went into labour and eventually gave birth to a baby boy who was later named Michael Oyebade Mofolorunso Lipede. A sort of philosophical nickname in the form of a sentence was given to the new boy : *A wa si aye ni ijo ti ika nre orun.*

Oyebade Lipede at School

Omoba Oyebade Lipede grew up in a relatively large household with his parents in company of five other children – brothers and sisters – and three other wives. Pa Adebowale Lipede himself who once lived in the missionary setting possessed strict and disciplined qualities associated with Christian missionaries at that time. Thus Adebowale brought that discipline to bear on his children and this was to have a significant impact on the lives of all members of the family including Oyebade.

Young Oyebade, the son of a farmer, however, soon showed signs of academic and literary talents at the age of eight when he started infant school. Oyebade later moved to day school at St. Peter's School, Ake in Abeokuta under the headmastership of Mr. E. A. Oyebode. Precisely, Michael Lipede was admitted to St. Peter's School on October 16, 1924, with admission number 2212 and his date of birth, 26th of January 1915, written against his name in the admission register. Names like Lajide Adebo, Latunji Benjamin, Ladeinde Japhet, Ladeinde Emmanuel, Bisi Kuforiji among others were also on the same page with Michael Lipede in the admission register.

Among his teachers were the late Fashoranti, Sodiya, and Fagbemi. Omoba Oyebade Lipede passed his



St. Peter's Primary School, Ake, Abeokuta

standard IV examination in 1930 and had to his credit two certificates at the Abeokuta Schools Exhibitions in the History of Abeokuta and Written Composition.

By 1931, Oyebade Lipede was at the Abeokuta Grammar School when Rev. I.O. Ransome-Kuti alias

·Daodu' was the principal. Among his teachers then were Messrs. H.F. Kuforiji, Adepegba, Bamodu, W.A. Creppy and Adedayo. During his short stay at Abeokuta Grammar School, he ranked among names like Mpuluma, Chukura, J. B. Jones, et cetera. However, on 15th of October, 1932 the unexpected happened. Pa J.T. Adebowale Lipede, the father of Omoba Oyebade Lipede, died. He was buried the following day, Monday the 16th October. But Pa Lipede's death was a turning point in the life of Oyebade Lipede because it made his stay in Abeokuta Grammar School short and compelled him to move from Abeokuta to Lagos in 1933.

"Advice Papa gave me"

Pa Adebowale Lipede gave his son, Oba Oyebade Lipede a useful and unforgettable advice: "Don't bear a grudge".

I was able to pick many things from my relationship with him. Daddy never liked me to bear a grudge against anybody and so he would always advise me not to quarrel with any member of the family, that I should always be nearer to God and that I should always call on Him when in difficulty and that I should not allow the sun to go down on me when I am angry with anybody.

He also advised me to be in my place of worship regularly and this I kept up till this day.

Father played a great role in my life as regards my education and career. He wanted me to be a priest but as God would have it my father



Oyebade and His father

died when I just finished my primary school. There was never a time or a day Papa and I disagreed and even members of our family lived happily together with love and affection. My father warned me not to quarrel with any member of the family, and often stressed that I should forgive whoever wronged me within 24 hours. And with my father's advice, I

have been able to be in love with all men under
the sun.

On his father's death, his mother was still alive but because he had been closer to his father, he was able to adjust to life in Lagos where he had to live with his uncle, Adeboye Lipede, who was then working in the Treasury and lived at 3, Pike Street, Lagos.

To further his education, Omoba Oyebade Lipede was at C.M.S. Grammar School, Lagos, from 1933 to 1936. The principals of the grammar school at that time were Rev. C.J. Thorne, and Rev. J. Olumide Lucas. Among his school mates were Onibuwe, Olumide Johnson, T. Johnson, Obayomi Phillips, Ipaye, Reis, Bode Thomas, A. Glover, J.B. Jones, and Bankole. Among his teachers were E.E. Effiong (FRGS), Rev. S. I. Kale, Artist Onabolu (Artiscoco) and E.A. Babaniji.

At C.M.S. Grammar School, Oyebade Lipede was a member of Gordon House and a member of the football team (First eleven). His strong Egba accent earned him the nickname '*Baba Egba*'. As a young scholar he always attended very good schools. He continued to demonstrate his academic and literary talents and even represented the school at various school competitions in History and Geography which were his favourite subjects. Among topics taught then in History and in which Oyebade excelled were the history of India and that of the British Empire. The thrilling aspect of the history of India to Lipede "was the population which was then about 353,000 people."

Another favourite subject of his was geography. Although he is a widely travelled man, unfortunately, Oba Lipede has not been to India despite the many countries of the world he has visited.

Unlike many pupils who went to school just for the fun of it, Oyebade had a strong desire at the end of the elementary school to further his education in order to increase his knowledge in all directions. He was encouraged in this quest for knowledge by his parents who already knew the value of education. He is *Primus Inter pares* even up till today. However, as the Alake, he is *nulli secundus* in Egbaland.

Brilliant as he was at school, Oyebade had his fair share of youthful exuberance and juvenile delinquency. He suffered the foibles and immaturity of the adolescent age. When he was in school, sometimes he roamed the streets, and at other times he played football and table tennis with some of his playmates like the Late Adetayo, Sowande, A. Solanke, D. A. Olatosin and others.

One very significant thing about Oyebade was that he never let the idea that he was a "heir apparent" overwhelm him as he never went to school as a prince but as Michael Mofolorunso Oyebade Lipede just like any other student. This assisted him a great deal later in life as he never looked at anybody with impunity. This humility earned him the post of a Senior Prefect in his final year at the C.M.S. Grammar School. In those days, a senior prefect was expected to be an embodiment of perfection



*H.R.M Oba Oyebade Lipede as Chancellor and Holder of Honourary Doctor
of Law of the University of Uyo*

both in academics, sports, comportment and the ability to organise and co-ordinate young and old students including mates, besides, other outstanding qualities.

Apart from the good moral education he received from home under the tutelage of his father, Pa Adebowale Lipede, a man of strong character, as well as his uncle and other elders, Oyebade came under the influence of teachers who shaped his moral value system in life. These teachers taught him at various levels in the primary and secondary schools. One of them that vividly comes to Oyebade's mind was Mr. Layode, the Headmaster, St. Peter School, Ake, Abeokuta who came from Ibadan. He was a strict disciplinarian and a man of high moral standard. Other teachers that greatly influenced the life and personality of Michael Oyebade Lipede were two of his principals - Rev. I. O. Ransome-Kuti and Rev. W. R. Kuye.

It was all these influences that made Oyebade develop the kind of moral qualities, academic excellence and the spirit of sportmanship that made him to be chosen as the Senior Prefect of the exalted school, C.M.S. Grammar School, Lagos.

On leaving school and just like his father, Oyebade nursed the ambition of becoming a man of the collar. Omoba Lipede however discarded the idea when he discovered that working on merchant vessels was more rewarding and fascinating. One of the events that helped in shaping the life of young Oyebade was his stay at No. 3, Pike Street, Lagos where he lived with his elder brother while attending C.M.S. Grammar School, Lagos.

His World of Work

The residents in the area were usually awoken by the sound of Naval ships at 5.30 a.m. every day. And with frequent visits to the dock, Oyebade fell in love with the smart appearance of customs officers in khaki uniforms and helmets. Therefore, upon completion of his education at C.M.S. Grammar School, Oyebade “went to His Majesty’s Customs Department, with its smart khaki suit uniform and helmet to match, a veritable dashing figure of the time admired by both the male and the gentle sex alike”. Here, he started his working life on the 17th of May 1937. Having scored 72 marks in a special selection examination conducted for new entrants. Oyebade thus, began a career in the Customs and Excise Department in Lagos and “... in accordance with the undertaking of all Civil Servants in those days to serve any where in Nigeria”, he was subsequently transferred to Warri.

On the 3rd of June, 1937, Omoba Oyebade Lipede was again transferred to Sapele. Two other officers who arrived in Sapele on the same day with him were Messrs. Elumezie and Onwegbusia. On arrival at Sapele, Oyebade was a guest of one Mr. Lawoye, a cashier at B. B. W. A. Limited. The Collector of Customs who was Oyebade’s



Oyebadé Lipede and three other colleagues



Oyebade Lipede in 1941

boss then was Mr. J.C.Cobb. At that time, Oyebade was on a monthly salary of £3.00. But his hard work always earned him an allowance of two shillings six pence whenever he worked on the ship. At that time, the journey from Warri to Lagos would take three days. Oyebade Lipede was later transferred to Warri, Mr. Elumezie was retained at Sapele and Onwegbusia was sent to Koko.

On arrival at Warri, Oyebade was a guest of Mr. E. N. Amosu - S. C. O. in charge of the office. Mr. P. U. Idundun was the P. C. in charge/Boarding Officer. The Tidewriters were Messrs. R. A. Otomewo, L. C. Bobmanuel, and Oyebade Lipede.

Later, Oyebade Lipede left the quarters of E. N. Amosu and hired a room at No. 18, Old Barracks quarters at four shillings (£=:4:=). The room was big enough, so Oyebade partitioned it into a room and a parlour. When one Mr. Pearce got the contract to install electric lights in Warri, Oyebade helped in preparing the Bills of Entry and other documents. He was then able to get electric light into his apartment for which he paid two shillings per month. This made the apartment to cost all together six shillings per month.

In 1940, Oyebade met a Saro lady called Megan Clarkson Williams and they got married in 1942. The wedding took place at the Warri Registry before Mr. L. L. Cattle - The Senior District Officer. The wedding party took place at "Dore House" (Hall). Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Lahanmi, Mrs. Kofo Ademola and a host of other friends

and well wishers were present. Later a church service was held at St. Andrew's Anglican Church at Robert Road, Warri. For some personal reasons, Oyebade decided to confine all activities concerning the wedding ceremony to Warri. He advised his family members both in Lagos and Abeokuta not to travel to Warri but to send their prayers and well wishes. This may be as a result of his being prudent in management of resources.

The newly married Mr. and Mrs. Oyebade Lipede were later transferred to Lagos. In Lagos, the couple lived at No. 18, Andrew Street, where they had two children (twins). The only one that survived was named Mofolorunso Adeyinka Lipede while the other died at delivery. The babies were midwived by Dr. Femi Pearce at Forcados.

An incident happened earlier that Oyebade Lipede will not forget. It was the death of his loving mother. Precisely, on the 8th of May 1942, one Mr. Y. N. Dakolo of the then Post and Telecommunications walked into his office in the Customs Department, Warri and gave him a copy of a Telegram, signed by Mrs. A. Adetayo of Ake, Abeokuta, it contained the sad news of his mother's death. After young Oyebade read the telegram, he became confixed as a young man. The telegram was taken later by Chief Akpata of P&T to late Sir Justice Adetokunbo Ademola who was an elder relative then working as a magistrate in Warri. It was Mr. Ademola who came to ask Mr. Ugboma (Oyebade's supervisor and also the collector of Customs) for his permission to let him travel to



Oyebade Lipede with his sister, Late Mrs. Lamihun

Abeokuta. Five days casual leave was granted to enable him travel. Adetokunbo Ademola then took him to his quarters in his Chevrolet car with registration No. AB 2 and thereafter consoled Oyebade. On the same day, Oyebade sent a telegram to His Royal Highness Alayeluwa, Oba Ladapo Ademola II, the then Alake of Egbaland to advance money to his sister (Mrs. J. A. Aboaba) for the funeral expenses of his mother with an instruction not to wait for him in Abeokuta before burying his mother. Oyebade's action was in fulfilment of his mother's wish that she would not like to be kept in the mortuary.

Adetokunbo Ademola gave him money and a loan which he did not collect back. The following day, Oyebade travelled by M/V Matang, a Chinese boat, to Lagos and by train from Lagos to Abeokuta.

Oyebade got to Abeokuta at about 5.00 p.m. and on reaching 'Eruke House', Erunwon, the crowd of sympathisers who went with the corpse to Lantoro had just returned to the house. He went with some relatives to the cemetery and there bade goodbye to his mother. Thus Oyebade became an orphan, alone in life, no father, no mother except his sisters and brothers to share with him his joy and sorrow. There are enough pieces of evidences that God has been with him ever since. In remembrance of the death of his mother, and to make up for his inability to witness her burial, the Lipede House now holds a memorial service on the 7th of May every year with visits to Princess Abiola's tomb.

There were on the whole, four women in the life of Oba Oyebade Lipedede. The first was Lucy, whom he met in Warri and who died recently in Benin, Edo State. The second was Megean Clarkson Williams, a Sierra Leonian, who had four children for Oba Lipedede. The third wife was Mrs. Wosilat Agbasi popularly known as 'Alhaja'. She stood by her husband during the succession struggle for the Alake throne until she died in Abeokuta on the 2nd of February 1978. The last and the youngest wife who now lives with him is Olabimpe (nee Sowami) whom he married after his ascension to the throne in 1973. Olori Bimpe gave birth to Oba Lipedede's last child, Adeluola Fadeke, on the 10th of November, 1974. His other children are Adeniran (1942), Adeyinka (1944), Dotun (1946), Ayo (1950) and Biola (1953).

In 1948, Prince Oyebade was transferred to the Department of Statistics, Ikoyi. There he came across Messrs. Osikominu, Ogan, Bajulai, Taylor and Duke. In 1948, Oyebade was again transferred to the Marketing and Exports Department, Lagos.

In that year, 1949, the Custom and Excise Department was transferred from the Department of Marketing and Exports. A new autonomous unit – Marketing and Exports Department – was created to handle the colony's 577 produce exports. Oyebade then transferred his stewardship as a shipment inspector responsible for the supervision of Nigerian exports in conformity with



Oyebade Lipede during his civil Service days



Oyebade Lipede's Children



international standard to the new body.

As part of the development programmes to ensure that the produce met international standard, Oyebade went on an inspection tour in 1955. The tour which took him to England, France, Holland, Belgium, Hamburg, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Norway and other countries which bought Nigerian produce was to give him first hand information on produce inspection procedures in those countries. He was later posted to the London office of the Marketing and Export Department in 1956. Oyebade returned to Nigeria in 1960. On his return, he was promoted to the post of a Shipping Officer.

By 1962, the Nigerian Produce Marketing Board took over the job which was an exclusive preserve of colonial



Oyebade at Hamburg with three other colleagues in 1956 during one of his official trips abroad

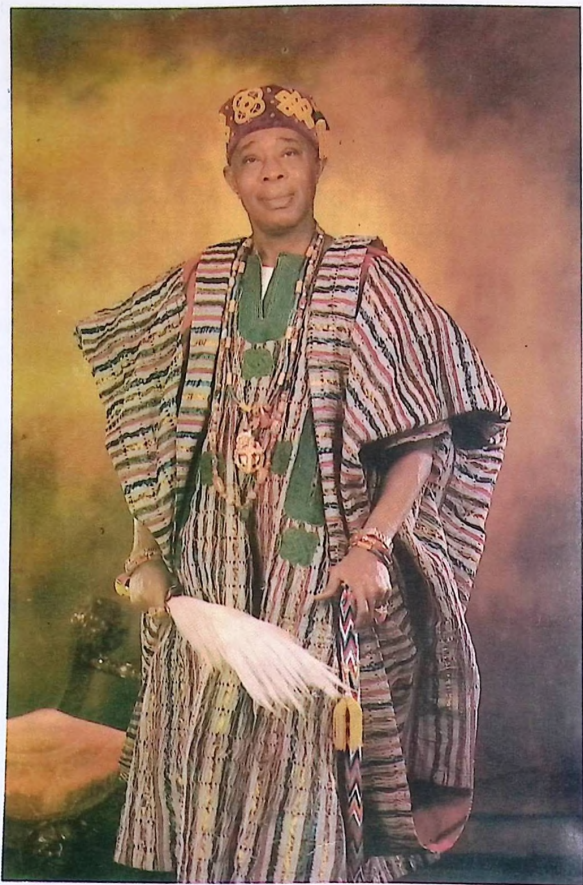
expatriates and Oyebade was absorbed into the Board as head of the shipping section. The new appointment gave him the opportunity to set up and organise activities of the Port Harcourt Wharf. He eventually retired from the services of the Marketing Board as Principal Shipping Officer in 1971 after representing Nigeria in several important capacities and having acted severally as Shipping Manager.

Oyebade represented Nigeria at various organisational meetings including the International Conference in Geneva (UNCTAD), and Accra, Ghana.

Retired but not tired, he went into private practice with Dr. John Sodipo, an Egba man who was then Chairman, Board of Directors of Equatorial Shipping Company. As occasion demanded, he travelled abroad in the company's interest and later became the Managing Director of James Pantan & Sons Limited, with headquarters at Apapa and branch offices at Abeokuta.

Oyebade Lipede at work was a manager of human and material resources and so he belonged to many social and professional groups befitting his status. Thus, the young Oyebade Lipede, from his school days in Abeokuta, had come a long way through Lagos and what is now Delta and Rivers States to become a true servant of Nigeria in the field of commerce, and, indeed, a man of the world. He was one of the few Nigerians to be admitted into the highbrow expatriates-filled Apapa Club in 1962. His qualities made him the club's president two years later thus becoming the first Nigerian to occupy the

prestigious position. He was also a member of many other clubs and associations. He later became patron of the Apapa Club. Grand Patron, Abeokuta Sport Club. Oyebade is also the Patron of Jibolu - Taiwo Family and a staunch member of St. Peter's Cathedral Church, Ake, Abeokuta. He was a member of Christ Church Cathedral, Lagos and a member of St. David's Church, Lafajai, Lagos.



His Royal Majesty, Alayeluwa, Oba Micheal Mofolorunso Oyade Lipede
C.F.R., J.P., D. Litt.
The 9th Alake of Egbaland.

Oyebade Lipede: The 9th Alake of Egbaland

With the passing away of Oba Gbadebo II, the 8th Alake of Egbaland from Laarun Ruling House on the 26th of October, 1971, the stool of Alake became vacant thus paving the way for the Jibodu Ruling House whose turn it was to present the next occupant of the throne.

Usually, Obaship succession in Yorubaland even where there is direct inheritance, is turbulent, and the ascension of Prince Oyebade Lipede to the throne was not different. Some eight aspirants were identified and it became known that the Lipede section of the Jibodu Ruling House who, in the past had been expected to contest for the throne, was unlikely to put up a candidate. The younger members of the family, especially the women, took up the cudgel however, and literally pressured their most eligible member, Prince Oyebade Lipede, to enter the list or else the family would lose its opportunity. Thus, Oyebade Lipede, became a "reluctant candidate". It is however important to note that "of the nine aspirants, he was undoubtedly outstanding; by his upbringing, public service, influence and affluence. However, after a prolonged succession tussle with eight other candidates, Prince

Oyebade Lipede was selected by 17 out of 21 members of the King-Makers' Council which included Chief Toye Akor (a surviving member of the council). Oyebade's selection was later ratified by the *Ifa Oracle* in accordance with Yoruba tradition in April 1971. It was however, not until 20th of May, 1972 before the then Military Governor of the former Western State, Brigadier Obawole Rotimi (then Lt. Col.), pronounced Prince Lipede as the 9th Alake of Egbaland.

After the formal ratification, Prince Michael Mofolorunso Oyebade Lipede proceeded immediately to the *Ipebi*, the secluded quarters for the Alake-elect to spend the first customary 90 days.

At the *Ipebi*, the Oba-elect went to the secluded quarters, a one-room apartment with a sleeping bed, two feet wide and a pit toilet. There was a bathroom marked out of the compound by corrugated iron sheets covering a side of the small house and was denied of every luxury. He was forbidden to sleep with women, even his wife, in this place during the period.

Before entering *Ipebi*, the Alake-elect had undergone a series of traditional rites at the *ile OgboniEgba* (Ogboni House) in Itoku – the meeting place of all Ogboni chiefs considered as judges and elder statesmen in the Egba system. There, he was traditionally transformed from a *regular citizen* to an Oba.

On Wednesday, August 5, 1972, the ancient city woke

up to the earth-shattering booms of traditional cannons and guns fired from the tip of Olumo Rock and jubilation of both the indigenes and non-indigenes, men and women, old and young. The joy was all over the land, Alake elect, Prince Michael Mofolorunso Oyebade Lipede, the Adila of Erunwon had completed the mandatory 90 days of traditional preparatory in *Ipebi* towards his being crowned and installed as the 9th Alake of Egbaland in succession to the late Oba Samuel Adesina Gbadebo II. The installation took place amidst pomp and pageantry before a very large crowd.

At the installation/presentation of staff of office to the Oba, the Military Governor of then Western State, Brigadier Oluwole Rotimi (now retired) before presenting the Staff and Instrument of Office to the new Alake made an interesting speech.

IT affords me a great pleasure to be present on this epoch-making occasion to present the Instrument and Staff of Office to the new incumbent of one of the most revered thrones in Yorubaland. The ceremony of this morning is very significant in that it marks the fulfilment of the utmost desire and aspirations of the people of Egbaland to have a paramount ruler following the death of Oba Gbadebo II.

The Alake occupies a position of eminence and considerable authority, attracting both inside and outside Nigeria. From time immemorial, the Alake stool has

Being an address delivered by Lt. Col. Oluwole Rotimi, the then Military Governor of Western State at the Installation Ceremony of His Royal Majesty, Oba Oyebade Lipede, the 9th Alake of Egbaland on 5th August 1972.

always been a highly contested one and it is to the credit of the Egbas that the present appointment was made within a short period of the demise of Oba Obafemi II.

The suzerainty of an Alake is fully recognised throughout the length and breadth of Egbaland. Moreover, the Alake of Abeokuta chieftancy is one of the very important traditional titles in the State. The holder is a member of the Council of Obas and Chiefs, a body charged with the responsibility of advising my government on chieftancy matters including disputes that may involve disciplinary action being taken against an offending Oba or Chief. I would like to seize this opportunity to say a few words on the proper role of an Oba in the present-day Western Nigeria. Such a discourse requires a brief excursion into history to know what the Oba stood for in the past, and the transformation that has since occurred.

Traditionally, the Oba was the law giver, the chief executive, the supreme judge, the commander-in-chief of the army, and the arch-priest. Indeed, the innumerable appellations showered on him emphasised his paramourcy: *Iku baba yeye*, depicting him as death because he was so powerful as to be able to strike at a time when mortals least expect. He was *Alaye*, the owner of this world. He was next to *Olodumare* and was therefore referred to as god's deputy - *E'keji Orisa*.

Indeed, some departed Obas are worshipped till today. Thus we have Oduduwa, Oranyan, and Sango. These superlative references are, however, largely symbolic representation as it were African conception of political sovereignty. For, in reality, the personal power of an Oba was checked and controlled. Indeed, there existed a kind of traditional constitutionalism. The Oba's authority was diffused and checked through the

entrenched position of lesser chiefs who were usually drawn from the leading sections, quarters or families in the kingdom.

The Oba too could not afford to alienate important corporate groups. For example, here in Abeokuta there was the powerful Ogboni society whose *Iwarefa* chiefs were nearly as powerful as any Oba. You also have the *Olorogun* chiefs whose military position no Oba could ignore.

When the British colonial power was imposed, the new masters mistook symbol for substance and conveniently concluded that the Yoruba Oba was an autocrat. The Oba like his emir counterpart north of the Niger was invested with new powers under the hollow title of Sole Native Authority. He became on the one hand a dictator vis-a-vis his subjects and, on the other, a pauper vis-a-vis the colonial masters.

The adroit politicians of course, knew that they could neither secure nor sustain political power even after independence without the support of some of the prominent Obas. The way-out was to lure the Obas into the political arena. They took political office away from their kingdoms; others became Director of Corporations and State-owned Companies. Some even became party activists. The Obas thus compromised their traditional office with disastrous consequences. Little wonder that many an Oba went into hiding within or without their domain during the turmoil which preceded the assumption of political power by the Armed Forces.

I have gone to this length to trace the chequered history of obaship in this state so that we may better appreciate the need for our obas to seek a new role which would restore their respect and dignity in an age when every person, high or low, is conscious of and is eager to

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assert his rights.

From our experience in this state, I believe a modern oba must strive at all times to sustain his popularity amongst those he is called upon to rule. He has, in other words, to ensure that he is continuously acceptable to his subjects. I venture to suggest two ways by which he can do this:

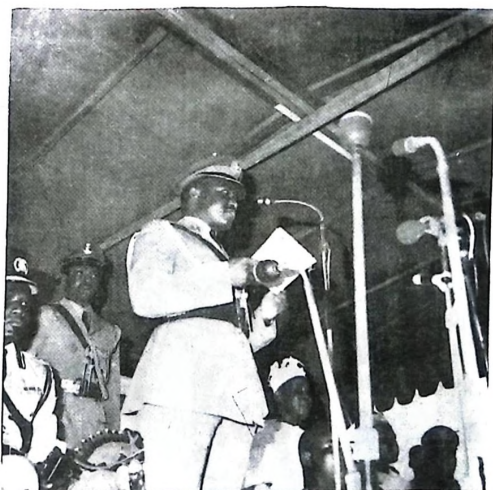
First, the modern oba must become the focal and rallying point for his people. He must be in a position to bring together not just his chiefs but also the non-titled leaders of the community, both young and old; the farmers and the professionals; the market women and the workers. No oba who is partisan, preferring one group to the other, can achieve this. Since alliances change so often in our community, a partisan oba risks his throne for he may ride high today, in the company of his chosen friends but tomorrow, the other side now in control would not hesitate to send him out with ignominy.

Second, a modern oba must identify himself wholly with the aspirations of his people. He must be in the vanguard of their struggle, social or economic, selflessly playing his own part in the provision of amenities for his people. He must marshal all the resources at his disposal in leading his people to secure for themselves and by themselves what the government is unable to provide immediately.

An oba who fulfils these two requirements would be an asset both to his people and the government. He would then be in a position to transmit and interpret government policies and at the same time communicate to government the yearning and aspirations of his people. Indeed, in the present context of Nigeria, this role would make the Military administration much easier and mutually beneficial. ...

Kabiyesi, Oba Lipede, as you ascend the throne of your fathers, please bear in mind the general remarks I have just made on the obligations of obaship.

In particular you must constantly remember that it has pleased God to call on you to lead the Egbas who are among the most enlightened people in this country, indeed in Africa. It is my hope that, given your rich industrial and economic background, you will assume a leading role in the ensuing crusade for economic development of Egbaland. Your subjects have set the stage for you by contributing, through purchase of shares, some N96,000.00 to which my government has added a matching grant of N40,000.00 under the Divisional Self-Help scheme. This contribution is the largest so far recorded by any division in this state.



Brigadier Oluwole Rotimi (Rtd.) presenting his speech on the installation day.



Cross section of the crowd that witnessed the installation of H.R.M. Oba Oyebade Lipede

I shall be personally pleased too if you could bring your influence to bear on the promotion of culture especially as this nation looks forward to playing host to the All-Black Festival of Arts scheduled to take place in Lagos in 1974. May I also appeal to you sons and daughters of Egbaland to come together in unity and rally round your new oba in a partnership which would usher in a lasting peace and phenomenal progress in all spheres of life.

Finally, Your Highness, I sincerely congratulate you on your ascension to the throne of your ancestors and pray that God in His infinite mercies may give you long life and good health on the throne, coupled with a peaceful and prosperous reign.

I now have the greatest pleasure in presenting to Your Highness the Instrument and Staff of your high office.



His Royal Majesty, Oba Mofolorunso Oyebade Lipede the 9th Alake of Egbaland receiving his staff of office from Brigadier Oluwole Rotimi (Rtd.)

As the 9th Alake of Egbaland, Oba Lipede swung into action. He immediately addressed his mind to the task of re-unification of all Egba people for the purpose of developing their home town. Earlier before his ascension, political affiliations of the past and some of the recent activities of the palace had torn the people apart, creating lines of differences. Oba Lipede therefore extended a hand of fellowship to all, including his opponents to the throne. This was regarded as the popular clarion call on the day of his installation on the 5th of August, 1972. His speech:

YOUR Excellencies, the Military Governors, Commissioners, my brother Obas, other natural rulers, my Lords Spiritual and Temporal, Chiefs of all ranks, distinguished friends, ladies and gentlemen.

From the bottom of my heart, I thank you for your presence here today.

I am deeply moved by the sight of you all here this morning at a ceremony to which we have all looked forward. It is an occasion of very great moment to me and from your own marvellous turn-out, I have every reason to believe that it is indeed a red letter day in the history of Egbaland.

First and foremost, I have to thank Your Excellency, Governor Rotimi for being here today to perform this ceremony of my installation as the 9th Alake of Abokuta. Secondly, I am deeply grateful to Your Excellency's Government for making this occasion

Being a speech delivered by Oba Odetokun Lipede, the Alake of Egbaland in Abokuta at his installation ceremony on 5th August 1972.

possible by giving approval to my appointment. I have no doubt that all Egbas and their well-wishers join me in thanking you.

In this connection, I cannot omit to mention the noble role played by the Commissioner for Local Government and Chieftancy Affairs, Dr. L.O. Adegbite, in resolving the appointment tangle with such amazing speed and precision. For this I am deeply grateful.

Let me at this stage express my profound gratitude to my ruling House - the Jibodu Family - which sponsored my candidature for this title. I sincerely thank them all for the unflinching support they gave me throughout the struggle and up to this time. At this juncture I have to single out for mention the person of Sir Adetokunbo Ademola who did



His Royal Majesty, Oba Mofolorunso Oyebade Lipede the 9th Alake of Egbaland presenting his first speech

the mopping up operations and cleared the way for this happy occasion. It is to his eternal credit that the problems connected with the appointment were eventually resolved.

Finally, I thank the kingmakers and every other person who had anything to do with my appointment. My prayer is that I should live to justify your hopes and trust in me.

Life in *Ipebi* is indeed a necessary purgatory to full regal existence. My 3 months' stay there has nonetheless been most rewarding for I was able to contemplate, in a condition of discipline and semi-detachment, the life of an Oba in its full spectrum; especially that of an Alake over this ancient and sophisticated Egbaland of ours. To all of you who made that experience really robust and least exacting, I say a very big thank you.

As you are all aware, the Nigerian Railway Corporation has contributed its quota towards the large crowd gathered here this morning. Excursion trains have been provided and extra coaches laid on to make it possible for many sons and daughters of Egbaland to witness this ceremony. I sincerely thank the Corporation for this gesture and wish it more progress and greater service to Nigeria.

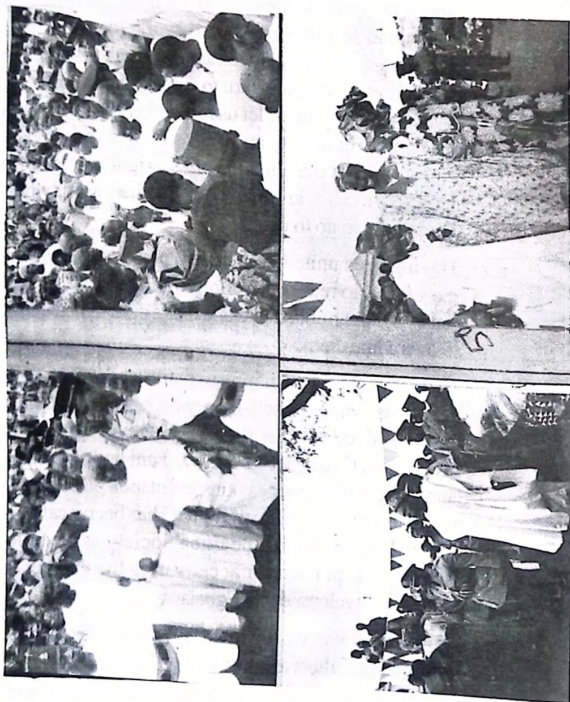
Your Excellency, ladies and gentlemen, I feel very proud and lucky to arrive at this auspicious time as the Alake of Abeokuta. When we look back we find that the history of Egbaland is replete with outstanding achievements in civilisation, administration, commerce and learning. We have been privileged to contribute strongly to the leadership of this country in the past. Today other communities are also contributing; we should welcome this fact but that does not mean that we should be complacent ourselves. Nigeria expects every man to do his duty. But in order that we may continue to do this we, Egbas, must cultivate a united sense of purpose; we must work together; we must avoid strife and rancour in our midst.

Thank God, I can see signs of a brighter future. To assist to make such future a reality, my first assignment on ascending the throne is to unite the various components of our great Egbaland. I therefore take this opportunity to appeal to all sections and persons in Egbaland to close ranks and work for a common purpose. Let everybody refrain from malice, bitterness and hatred. Let us all learn to respect the feelings and views of one another; let us remember that one single tree however mighty and bountiful does not make a forest and that the other man has a right to live. May God help us all to know, to do unto others as we would want them to do to us.

Having been united in spirit and in purpose it will be easy for us to realise our shortcomings in the various fields of human endeavour and make determined efforts to overcome them.

At this juncture I am happy to mention the economic and social value of self-help which was practically expressed of late in the Egba Development & Investment Company - EDICO. I am happy that the launching of this epoch making event took place during my regime and that in itself EDICO has been a catalyst to transform and unite the Egba Society as a whole. There is urgent need for accelerating the growth of economic development in Egbaland.

I salute all of you who are participants in this venture and appeal to others to join it in the common interest of our fatherland. On my part, I support the project heart and soul and shall do all in my power to further its interests and upliftment. In this connection, I wish to appeal to all well-meaning industrialists, investors and financiers throughout the country to come over to Egbaland and establish. I guarantee you the utmost welcome and boundless opportunities.



Cross section of the crowd that witnessed the installation of H.R.M. Oba Oyebade Lipede

To those Egba sons and daughters who stay too long abroad and who come home only occasionally, I offer similar welcome. I want you to build houses in the town and feel more at home. Land will be made available to you at reasonable cost.

I trust that our friends will pardon me for devoting so much of my address today to my own people and our problems. But while our charity naturally begins at home, it does not end there. We recognise only too well that we Egbas are only a part of the Western State, and the Western State only a part of the Nigerian Republic. We are therefore committed to working alongside our compatriots for the well-being of our State and that of the great Country and Nation to which we all belong. The very presence with us today of so many non-Egbas is both evidence and a reminder that we and they belong together. I wish you all God's blessings and a safe return to your respective homes.

Your Excellency, ladies and gentlemen, I cannot on this occasion lay open all my manifesto. This is hardly the occasion for it. Apart from this, I cannot afford to tie you down with a business speech when I know you are all here to rejoice with me.

Once again I thank you all for this wonderful show of love and support. And particularly, I thank the members of the Coronation Committee who have arranged this splendid ceremony in my honour.

And so, in the presence of God and of you all; I this day re-dedicate my life to the progress of Egbaland. We cannot afford the luxury of sectionalism and lethargy. It is now or never that we should all rise like one man to restore honour and glory to the ancient land of our birth.

I solemnly promise a dynamic selfless and

progressive leadership. I need the prayers and co-
operation of you all and by God's grace we shall
succeed.

I thank you all and may peace and prosperity reign
supreme during my reign - Amen.

As soon as Oba Oyebade Lipede finished his first
speech as the Alake of Egbaland, the shout of *Kaabiyesi*
from all present rent the air. Some even went further to
chant his totem (*oriki*):

Alayeluwa Oba Oyebade Lipede

Alake ti ile Egba

Omo erin jogun ola

Omo abata butu oloro

Omo oloro kekeke ko gbodo jewo

Omoliyemo lo to'oba je,

Omo ohun ti o dun bi ibi kosi

Ohun ti a ni la fi fun ara eni ko je

Otosi eniyan li onta ara re lopo

Eni to ba gbon a fa tire mora.

K A B I Y E S I .

As part of the installation ceremony, a royal anthem
was composed for His Royal Majesty, Oba Oyebade
Lipede. The anthem which was composed by a renowned
organist Mr. Remi Shyllon was the first in the history of
Egbaland. This anthem, however, earned Mr Shyllon, the
nick name: Royal Organist. The anthem goes thus:

Lipede Oba Wa

Kabiyesi Oba Alake

Adeluola Oba tiwa

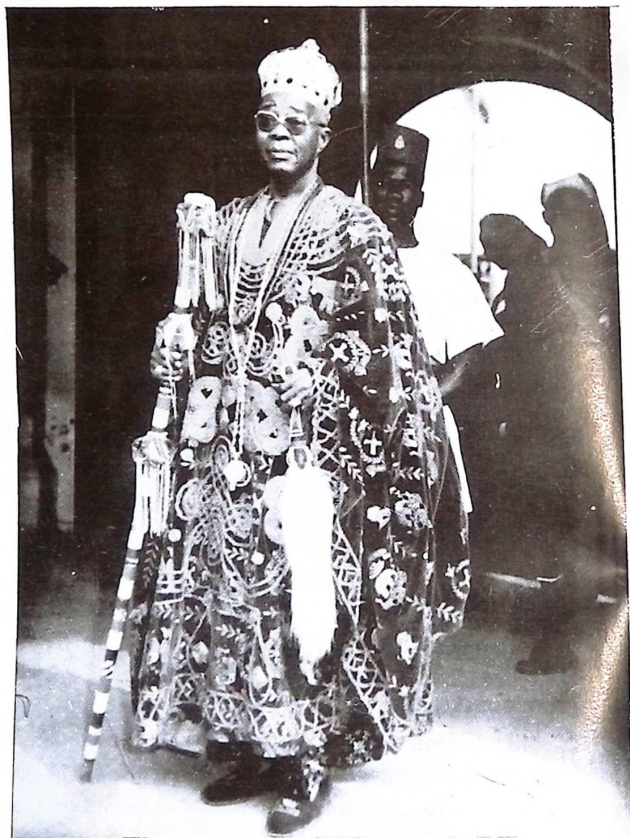
Omo Lipede ara Orun
Omo Akalu ayirigi

Ade a pe lori, Bata a pe lese/2ce
Ilu Egba ko ni rehin
Ina ife a tan gere
Kabiyesi Oba tiwa

Kabiyesi Oba Alake
Omo Erin jogun ola
Oba wa
Om' Abatabutu Oloro
Omo Liyemo to to sin
Ade a pe lori etc.

The vigour, alacrity and creativity with which he took up the issues of development and industrialisation of Abeokuta attracted attention which has never been done in the history of the ancient city. And to say that the past 25 years have witnessed Oba Lipede living up to his promises is an understatement. He started practical moves in line with his call for physical development of Abeokuta and he saw this quest for development as a personal challenge and material sacrifice. He began this with the construction of a new building where he has been performing his royal duties. The first Alake had lived in the old building since 1885, to which other occupants had done one amendments or the other. The move to build a new and befitting palace was initiated by Oba Lipede with the launching of an appeal fund on the 9th of August 1975 while the foundation stone was laid on the 7th of August,

1982. This building which contained a large reception, gallery, offices and living apartments was opened for use on the 26th of January, 1985.



H.R.M Oba Oyebade Lipede

Growth and Development in Egbaland

The ancient city of Abeokuta has in the past 25 years witnessed rapid growth and development, thanks to the clarion call 25 years ago by the then newly installed Oba Oyebade Lipede on the Egba people at home and abroad to come home, invest and contribute their own quota to the development of the ancient city.

It is proper and worthwhile to highlight the outstanding achievements of Oba Michael Mofolorunso Oyebade Lipede the 9th Alake of Egbaland from the writings of outstanding historian, and an Egba indigene himself and former Vice Chancellor, University of Lagos - Professor Saburi Biobaku in the Daily Times of 26 January 1995 on the occasion of the Oba's 80th Birthday anniversary.

He wrote inter alia:

In Egbaland, the Alake can now count upon the assistance of three more obas besides Oba Adedayo Lakuko, Shobekun II, the Agura of Gbagura. There are also Oba (Dr.) Adedapo Tejuoso, Karunwi III, the Osile Oke-Ona, Egba; Oba (Dr.) Olawale Adisa Odeleye, Lagbedu I, the Olowu of Owu; and Oba Jacob Olufemi Omolade.



Oba (Dr.) Oyeade Lipede, the Alake of Egbaland with Oba (Dr.) Adedapo Tejuoso, the Osinle of Oke-Ona, Egbu

Lafa II. the Olubara of Ibara. That these men of outstanding calibre agree to return to serve Abeokuta is not only evident of the enduring pull of traditional rulership but also an earnest of good fortune to Egbaland with capable rulers serving their sections and Abeokuta.

An outstanding achievement during the obaship of Oba Oyebade Lipede was the creation of a new state by the Federal Government and naming Abeokuta as the state capital on the 3rd of February, 1976. He spearheaded the agitation and many representations made to the Federal Government as well as several memoranda submitted to the then Irikefe Panel on the creation of more states in Nigeria, when the panel visited Abeokuta, on October 18, 1975, to ascertain the wishes of the Egba, Egbado and Ibarapa people on the creation of more states. Prominent Egba chiefs and others submitted memoranda. These included Chief Toye Coker, the Apena Egba; Chief S.O Adebo, the Okanlomo Egba; Professor S. O. Biobaku, Bapitan Egba; Chief Fagbenro Beyioku, Apesi Iseri; Dr. Asiwaju; Chief Gbeleyi; D. M. Gbolagunte and several others. Although, the choice of Abeokuta as the state capital was proposed then not only for its physical development but on the premise that Abeokuta had in the past served as the headquarters of the old Abeokuta Province comprising Abeokuta, Egbado, now Yewa, Ijebu and Remo areas. This has made Abeokuta to witness rapid development in terms of size and socio-economic well-being of the people since 1972.

This has led to the citing of industries in the town by indigenes. They include Chief Tunde Abudu who set up the Midland Galvanising Industries Limited, The Apex Paints Limited and Industrial Projects International (Nig.) Limited. Another indigene that responded to the call was Chief Ogo-Oluwa Bankole with the establishment of Premier Paints. Elder Alamutu's efforts in Nigeria's tourism development are known internationally just as his 'Rock House' in Ibara remains a tourist attraction. Chief Nolla Edun has contributed his own efforts to the beautification of Abeokuta with 'Amazing Grace' - a beautiful architected piece.

In the field of education, Abeokuta during the reign of Oba Oyebade Lipede, the 9th Alake of Egbaland, has witnessed tremendous progress turning out every year many men and women in various fields of academics. Egba sons and daughters have benefited from the Leventis - Egba Scholarship Foundation which was established through the connection of Oba Oyebade Lipede. It is also on record that A.G. Leventis started his business in Egbaland and was installed as the first Babalaje of Egbaland. The Foundation has since awarded 15 Post Graduate and Under Graduate Scholarships up to 1996. The first set of four post graduates were awarded in 1995. From 1997, the Foundation award will expand its scope to cover the Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology.

The ancient city can today boast of two Federal and State Government's institutions: The University of Agriculture, Abeokuta and the Federal College of Education, The Ogun State Government owns the Ogun

State Polytechnic, Abeokuta and numerous secondary schools.

The presence of the Federal Government is also felt with the establishment of Ogun/Osun River Basin Development Authority whose dam in Oyan provides the raw materials for the water needs of Ogun and Lagos States and a branch of the Central Bank of Nigeria. In Abeokuta alone, there are no fewer than eight residential and industrial/commercial housing estates located in Olomore, Ita-Elega, Oke-Ata, Asero, Idi Aba, Ayetoro road, Ijeun titun, Ojere, and Ita Osin whereas Ibara was the only housing estate prior to the ascension of Oba Lipede.

Serving as the seat of government, the town has of necessity got a new secretariat complex, expansive roads and well - lit and smooth dual carriageways linking the ancient and modern parts of the city in spite of its unique undulating and rocky topography. The state government has a five-star international hotel - The Gateway Hotel with its headquarters at Abeokuta and branches at Ijebu-Ode and Ota as well as a commercial bank, Gateway Bank. The State also has a library named after the Late Chief Simeon Adebo who was one-time Nigeria's Permanent Representative to the United Nations. One of the most elegant buildings in Abeokuta was also built by the Ogun State Property and Investment Corporation (OPIC) as its corporate headquarters named after Oladipo Diya, a former military governor of the state and currently the Chief of **General Staff**.

The reign of Oba Oyebade Lipede has witnessed tremendous growth and development for the town and the people. It was during the reign of Oba Lipede that a Yoruba man, particularly an Egba man became the Head of State and Commander in Chief of the Nigerian Armed Forces. The man, General Olusegun Obasanjo, a brave and brilliant soldier, leader and statesman remained the only military head of state to have voluntarily relinquished power on October 1, 1979, to a democratically elected government in Nigeria. It is also on record that during the reign of Oba Lipede, another Egba man, Chief Moshood Kasimawo Olawale Abiola, the millionaire businessman, won a pan-Nigerian electoral victory, widely regarded as the freest, fairest and unparalleled in Nigeria's political history. Unfortunately, this election of June 12, 1993, was annulled by the government of General Ibrahim Babangida. However it is an irony of fate that another Egba man, Chief Ernest Sonekan, was appointed the Head of the Interim National Government which succeeded the government of General Babangida.

It is also remarkable that the peaceful reign of Oba Oyebade Lipede witnessed outstanding achievements by Egba sons and daughters in the social, political, economic and educational sectors in the Nigerian polity.

Dr. Lateef Adegbite, another Egba man a one-time commissioner in the old Western Region and Legal consultant to the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, is the Secretary-General of the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs.

One of the kingmakers in Egbaland and of course, a strong pillar in the Egba traditional set up, Chief Toye Coker (SAN), was a former chairman of the Board of Directors of Savannah Bank in addition to other respectable positions he occupied. Among other indigenes who have done the ancient city, the Oba and indeed the whole citizens proud is the seasoned banker and accountant, Chief Oluwole Adeosun who has also held high positions in the economic sector of the country. He was the a former Managing Director of NAL Merchant Bank and a one-time Secretary for Communication during the Babangida regime. Chief Olusegun Osoba, an indigene of Abeokuta, became the second Executive Governor of the state after Chief Bisi Onabanjo. Abeokuta can be proud of the achievements of people like Prince Bola Ajibola who was appointed as a Judge of the World Court at the Hague, thus becoming the second Yoruba man to occupy the exalted position offer Dr. Teslim Elias. Before moving to the World court Ajibola was also the Minister of Justice and Attorney-General of the Federation. Professor Olikoye Ransome-Kuti, another Egba man and son of the famous Rev. I. O. Ransome-Kuti, contributed immensely and attained a feat that has never been equalled in the field of Primary Health Care (PHC) for the country when he was the Minister for Health and in this held was the outstanding international service of Professor A. Adeoye Lambo a former Deputy Director General of the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Egba women were not left behind in the annals of achievements, growth and development during the reign

of Oba Lipede. Chief (Mrs.) Bola Kuforiji Olubi was on many occasions chairman and member of boards of several business concerns. She was former Managing Director, UBA and later Federal Secretary the equivalent of a Federal Minister in the defunct interim government and many others too. Another erudite banker that proved her mettle was Maria Sokenu who was the first Managing Director of People's Bank of Nigeria. There is also Chief (Mrs.) Toyin Olakunrin who is the first Chartered Accountant in Nigeria.

Oba Oyebade is happy witnessing these tremendous contributions of Egba people to the growth and development of the country. It is therefore true to say that the prophecy of Ifa Oracle, the hopes and beliefs of traditional rulers as well as indigenes in choosing Oyebade Lipede some 25 years ago concerning prosperity of Abeokuta during his reign as the 9th Alake have been fulfilled. On the part of Oba Lipede, he has fulfilled all the promises he made. God has enabled him to bring Egbaland to the height of fame.

New settlements marked by building with modern architectural designs have sprung up in several parts of the city. Oba Lipede is still in touch with the Federal Government for the dualisation of the Lagos - Abeokuta road. The city has assumed the status of a modern city, rapidly climbing up from a desolate rural settlement to a mobile urban centre with dependable infrastructure. The Egbas surely have a cause to celebrate the 25 years of meritorious service of a discerning Oba. In recognition of the outstanding achievements of Oba Lipede, more

feathers are being added to his cap.

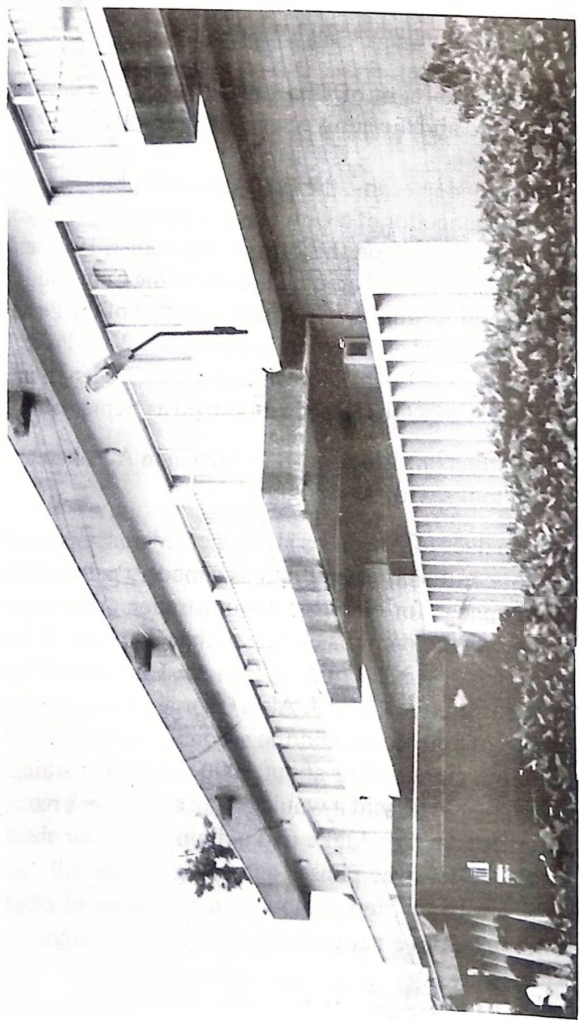
During the reign of Oba Lipede, Abeokuta became 150 years old and the anniversary was celebrated in 1980.

Oba Lipede became the first Alake of Egbaland to be made the Chancellor of a University – University of Uyo, Akwa Ibom State– on the 14th of November, 1992 and also a recipient of the National honour of the Commander of the Federal Republic (CFR) and a Justice of the Peace (JP). He was guest at the commissioning of a Water Project in Saminaka, Lere Local Government Area of Kaduna State in 1995 – A day Oba Lipede described as ‘remarkable’.

The streets of Lafenwa, and Adatan in Abeokuta wear new looks with street lights.

The palace of Alake has also benefited from this trend of development as it was rebuilt as a modern palace with adequate spaces for effective administration about eight years ago. At the commissioning of the first phase of the palace which cost N2.2 million then, the Chairman of the building committee Chief J. Akin George who is also the Baagbimo of Egbaland said the second phase had a hall that could accommodate about 1000 guests at a sitting. When completed he said it would have a committee’s room, special office for the Alake and a dining room for about 50 people. The three phases according to him will cost about N5 million then. Below is a run down of other outstanding achievements during Oba Lipede’s reign:

The 31st of January 1976 witnessed the establishment



New Ake Palace

of the Federal College of Education, Osiele.

Abeokuta became a State Capital on 3rd February 1976

The University of Agriculture, Abeokuta was established in Abeokuta in 1988.

- Abeokuta witnessed tremendous development and is quickly competing with Lagos in building of new houses with modern architectural and structural designs.

- Many industries sprang up in response to the clarion call of the Alake on indigenes to come and establish industries in the city. This was what led to the setting up of such industries as Midland Galvanising Industries (Midgal) by a prominent indigene, Chief T. Abudu, the Mayegun of Egbaland.

- The New Cathedral Church of St. Peter, Ake, Abeokuta was commissioned under Bishop T. T. Akintayo on the 4th of January 1983.

- Oyan Dam was built in 1983 which currently supplies Ogun and Lagos States Water Corporations raw water for the citizens. It has also advanced agricultural development of the two states.

- Since the establishment of Egba Kingdom in Abeokuta, the third Iyalode of Egbaland was installed. She was Chief (Mrs.) Bisoye Tejuoso.

- A new stadium was built at Kobape during Oba Lipedè's reign and was later named after the Late Muda Lawal an outstanding Egba footballer. In fact, the land was negotiated by the Alake.

- The first Executive President and Commander-in-Chief of the Nigerian Armed Forces, Alhaji Shehu Shagari attended the 150 years anniversary rally at Asero Stadium Abeokuta where the Alake of Egbaland, Oba Oyebade Lipedè was the Chief Host.

- The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Runcie visited Abeokuta on a religious mission to Nigeria in April 1982 with Oba Alake as host.

- Oba Oyebadè Lipedè accompanied by prominent chiefs went on royal tour of Sweden and the United Kingdom between 18th and 29th of June 1982.

- On the 29th of March 1983, the President of Nigeria, Alhaji Shehu Shagari commissioned the Oyan Dam constructed by the Ogun/Osun River Basin Development Authority. Oba Oyebade Lipedè in company of his chiefs attended the ceremony.

- Oba Oyebade Lipedè received the Emir of Kano, Alhaji Ado Bayero and his entourage at Ake Palace on 15th November, 1983.

- Oba Oyebade Lipedè was received royally by the Abeokuta Descendants Union of Nigeria, Kaduna Branch on the 29th of November 1983.

- His Majesty, the Alake of Egbaland accompanied by chiefs went on royal tour of Munich, West Germany, London, and France between the 5th and 18th of June 1984.

- Oba Oyebade Lipede donated an annual prize of N250.00 to the best student of Salawu Abiola High School, Osiele for ten years on the 15th of November 1984.

- On the 21st of June 1985, His Royal Highness, Oba Oyebade Lipede paid a royal visit to the United Kingdom. He came back on the 6th of July. He also paid a visit to Austria, Vienna between the 11th and 14th of July 1985.

- Kabiyesi, Oba Oyebade Lipede paid a royal visit to Bournemouth between 19th and 21st July 1985.

In return for the good work that the Oba has done in his domain, the people are full of appreciation. During his 20th anniversary on the throne, it was a big celebration. All notable indigenes did their best to a friend, colleague and a father of all who has given his whole life to the service of humanity – the service of his own people. For the 20th anniversary celebration, thanksgiving services were held both at the Ancient Cathedral Church of St. Peter's, Ake as well as the Central Mosque, Abeokuta. As a keen sportsman himself, Oba Lipede was honoured by his people with a handball competition at the Oba Lipede Sports Centre, Ijeja, Abeokuta and a football match at Asero Stadium, now Mudasiru Lawal Stadium, during the



*H.R.M Oyebađe Lipede and Olori Adebimpe Lipede during the 20th
Coronation Anniversay*

celebration.

On the occasion, the Archbishop of the Nigerian Anglican Communion, His Grace, the Most Reverend J. Abiodun Adetiloye, described the Alake as the greatest factor in the development of Abeokuta.

It is on record that everywhere Oba Lipede goes, he offers his advice that have a soothing effect on the people. On one of his visits to Abeokuta North and South Local Government Areas, he urged the people to see themselves as one. Anticipating that boundary demarcation problem may set them against one another, he told them that "You are one and the same."

On different occasions, notable men and women resident within and abroad have written letters of commendation as well as presented awards to the indefatigable Oba Michael Mofolorunso Oyebade Lipede for his selfless service to his people in Egbaland and humanity in general.

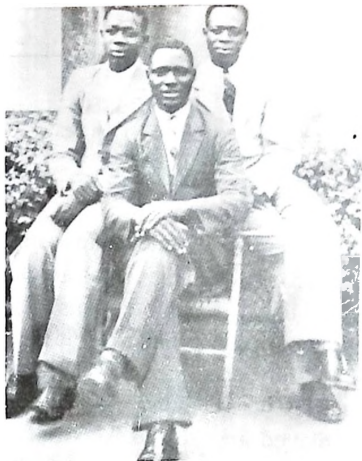
Oba Oyebade Lipede in his 25 years reign has thus become the second longest reigning monarch in Egba history after Oba Sir Ladapo Ademola II who reigned for 42 years (1920-1962).

In his attempt at developing Egbaland, Oba Lipede has used three methods which have worked well to transform Egbaland. First, he regularly calls on indigenes to come home and establish industries and business concerns in Abeokuta. Second, he regularly calls on State

and Federal Governments to physical establish their presence in Abeokuta. Third and most important, Oba Oyebade Lipede uses chieftancy titles not for his personal gains but to attract development to Abeokuta. These three approaches have yielded positive results. Between 1972 and now, no fewer than 200 companies were incorporated in Abeokuta, according to the records of the Ministry of Trade, Cooperative and Industries.

With the creation of Ogun State in 1976, the Federal presence was established with the setting up of Federal College of Education, Abeokuta, in the same year. The Federal University of Technology was established in 1983 and was later changed to the University of Agriculture, Abeokuta in 1988.

The second bridge over the Ogun River was built during the reign of Oba Lipede.



Oyebade Lipede & two of his youthful friends



No. 3, Pike Street, Lagos where Oyebade Lipede lived when he was at C.M.S. Grammar School.

A Day to Remember

For Oba Oyebade Lipede, there were many eventful days in his private life and even as an Oba. One of the days he would like to remember in his life was the day the Daily Times reported in its Saturday, 6th May, 1995 edition on page 5, a story headlined: “Day Egbaland moved to Saminaka.” It was the day that the entire people of Saminaka played host to the Alake of Egbaland, Oba Oyebade Lipede.

Saminaka broke into a carnival in the morning of Tuesday, April 23, 1995. The traditionally sleepy town was a celebration of colour, sirens, music and dance. Ceremonial convoys mingled freely with festive entourages, billowing gowns, flowing robes, leaf green army dresses and with sky-white naval caps while talking drums and trumpets quarrelled with gongs and flutes in an electrifying celebration. The Emir of Zaria, Alhaji Shehu Idris, was present as the royal chief host with an impressive entourage of traditional rulers and for a moment, Egbaland literally relocated to Saminaka. On the day Oba Oyebade Lipede’s royal convoy included Oba (Dr.) Adedapo Tejuoso, the Osile Oke-Ona, Dr. Lateef Adegbite, the Secretary-General of the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, and Chief Toyce Coker, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria.



H.R.M. Oba Oyebadé Lipede with Alhaji Shehu Idris the Emir of Zaria, at the commissioning ceremony



A cross section of guests at the Saminaka Water Scheme commissioning ceremony

For a moment, the Alake was in a warm embrace with the Emir of Zaria. The occasion was to witness the commissioning of the Saminaka Dam which had been under construction for nearly two decades.

The people of Saminaka could not conceal their joy at the temporary shift of Egbaland to their home. The Alake and his entourage were generously pampered with gifts. Two live cows, six rams, 12 goats and an assortment of grains large enough for a Mercedes Benz 911 truck were presented to the visitors.

Activities for that day were rounded off with an exclusive gala night at the Government House, Kaduna. It was refreshing to the royal visitors that they were treated to a Yoruba dance by the Yoruba Community, and a dance drama presentation by the Bazobbe group of the Kaduna State Council for Arts and Culture.

In the words of Oba Lipede himself, there has never been a day like that before for him outside his domain. With the number of people who gathered there from all walks of life, it was an honour that he considers unparalleled.

Some have interpreted the visit to mean a demonstration of the large heartedness of Oba Lipede whose gesture should elicit genuine reciprocity particularly with regards to securing reprieve for some of his prominent subjects currently incarcerated.

The visit to Saminaka could constitute the basis for the unification of Nigeria and the construction of the national psyche if it transcends the realm of superficiality.

Thus, history will be made in this country when the hydra of ethnicity, religious bigotry and sectionalism are interred for the birth of a truly united Nigeria. At the occasion, Oba Oyebade Lipede delivered a speech: which goes thus:

We are highly honoured and most pleased to be part of this historic ceremony of commissioning an important project that is bound to make a significant impact on the well-being of the people of Lere Local Government Area and beyond.

The present Military Administration of Kaduna State under the dynamic leadership of His Excellency, Col. Lawal J'afar Isa, deserves glowing tribute for the determined attention he gave to the project which had virtually been abandoned by successive administrations of the state before he assumed office. Thus after an agonising wait for seventeen years, the affected people can now smile as potable water will happily be within their reach from this day on. We congratulate the State Government for its people-oriented policies and actions of which this water scheme bears an eloquent testimony.

We need not enumerate the multiplying effects of this unique water supply scheme. Suffice it to say that it would contribute immensely to the eradication of water borne diseases like guinea-worm. With access to pipe-borne, and therefore, clean water, the people would be healthier and

Being a speech delivered by HRH, Oba Oyebade Lipede , the Alake of Egbaland at the Commissioning of Saminaka Water Supply Scheme



H.R.M., Oba Oyebade Lipede preseting his speech at Saminaka Water Scheme commissioning ceremony



H.R.M., Oba Oyebade Lipede with Emir of Zaria Alhaji Shehu Idris (Drinking the water), Chief (Mrs.) Alaba Lawson and Military Administrator of Kaduna State, Col. Lawal J'afar Isa

stronger, and are bound to be more productive in whatever they do. Water too is not only life-giving, it is also industry-generating, standing along side good network of roads, sustained electricity supply, efficient communication system, as major infrastructures that can engineer the rapid industrialisation of any area. I am encouraged to learn that both the Federal and State Governments are leaving no stone unturned to ensure the reliable provision of these agents of development.

In this regard, I wish to appeal to the people to reciprocate the noble gesture of Government by being law-abiding and peaceful. They should also be good citizens paying their taxes and dues promptly and regularly. Moreover, they should be productive especially those among them who till the soil. For agriculture remains the mainstay of our economy. We have now experienced in a most expensive way the limits of oil wealth. Had we not neglected agriculture in the past, the sorry state of the Nigerian economy would probably have been averted. No nation that cannot feed itself can enjoy a steady prosperity. The good people of Lere Local Government Area should therefore step up farming activities in a positive response to the State Government's gesture of committing huge funds from its scarce resources to construct the Water Scheme at a very difficult time like this.

The Kaduna State Government has demonstrated convincingly that with prudent management of resources, it is still possible for the impact of Government to be felt by the ordinary citizen. I therefore appeal to those who exercise the power of Government in this country be it Federal,

State or Local, to remember that their position is one of trust, which they should strive to fulfil to the benefit of the people over whom they rule. They must devote their energies and resources to the upliftment of the people. The time has come to exterminate poverty from our nation and to ensure even development, so that whether in the cities of Kaduna, Kano, Jos, Port-Harcourt, Enugu, Lagos or Ibadan or in the numerous rural towns or villages of the North, East or West of this country, Nigerian citizens would enjoy comparable high standards of living, including qualitative education, good health care, all-season roads as well as an efficient communication system along with uninterrupted electricity supply. Full employment should also be added for good measure.

I believe these goals are attainable with selfless dedicated and honest leadership as well as a disciplined and hard-working followership. In this regard, I call on Government to mobilise the people of this country towards greater agricultural production and appropriate industrialisation. Since white elephant industrial projects have not helped us in the past we must turn to industrial projects appropriate to our level of development, and relevant to our needs.

However, productive agricultural activities and meaningful industrialisation cannot be embarked upon in an environment of political distrust and gloom. We must make conscious efforts to heal all political wounds and initiate national reconciliation. We have done this successfully, before; for example, at the end of our bloody civil war, a quarter of a century ago, to the acclaim of the international community. We can repeat the feat again. May



*His Royal Majesty, Alayeluwa, Oba Oyebade Lipede, the Alake of Egbeland
with Alhaji Shehu Idris, the Emir of Zazzau.*

the Almighty give us the courage, spirit and will to do so once more.

It remains for me to express profound appreciation and thanks to the good people of Kaduna State for the honour done to Ogun State, Egbaland and my goodself in being invited to commission this Water Scheme. It is a singular honour that I shall for ever cherish and which would certainly further cement the unity of our great country.

Impresit Bakolori, the Government Company that executed the Scheme well ahead of the completion time, deserves our congratulations for a job well-done.

I shall now proceed to commission the Saminaka Water Supply Scheme and unveil the commemorative plaque to the glory of God Most High, the prosperity of Kaduna State, the comfort and happiness of all who will drink and use the water for various purposes.

Thank you all.

Chapter /
**Selected Speeches
of Oba Oyebade Lipede,**



His Royal Majesty, Alayeluwa, Oba Micheal Mofolorunso Oyebade Lipede
C.F.R., J.P., D. Litt.

The 9th Alake of Egbaland.

In the last 25 years, Oba Mofolorunso Oyebade Lipede as the 9th Alake of Egbaland made quite a number of speeches, delivered addresses, papers and lectures. In this chapter, we serve you with what we called his selected speeches to acquaint you with his thinking as a royal father.

Corporate Lipede on Commerce

The following report was prepared on behalf of
the Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Warfare,
Washington, D. C., in response to a request from the
Department of Justice, Bureau of Investigation, dated
October 1, 1941, regarding the activities of the
International Chamber of Commerce in the United States
and its efforts to coordinate the activities of
foreign corporations operating in the United States.

The International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) is a
non-governmental organization of business men from
all over the world. It was founded in 1888 and
has since that time been working for the
promotion of international trade and the
improvement of the conditions of commerce
between nations. The ICC is a permanent
organization and its members are business men
from all countries.

The ICC is a permanent organization of business men
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organization and its members are business men
from all countries.

responsibilities. It is hoped that the outcome of the Ibadan Conference would bring in more understanding between the Government and Traditional Rulers.

The present Military Administration has emphasized its policy of reviving the economy and instilling a sense of direction and discipline in the nation as a whole, with a view to catering for the needs of the common man, the bulk of our subjects. One of the ways of putting this declared policy into action is by faithfully monitoring the activities of the Odu'a Group of Companies, jointly owned by the three States of Ogun, Oyo and Ondo. Considering the improvements witnessed in the operations of the Company since the new administration took off, there is no doubt in my mind that before long, 'Odu'a would become that reality it is meant to be: an economic giant of which its owners will be justly proud.

We also have no doubt in our minds that with the patriotic and nationalist approach which the Directors of the Odu'a Investment Company from the three States have been giving to other economic problem, in their States, in attempts to instill more financial discipline in all economic activities, it is a question of time before the 3 'O' States start dictating the pace, in all other things, to the other States of the Country.

Distinguished Heads of Government, my brother Obas, Ladies and Gentlemen, once again, I want to place on record my sincere appreciation on behalf of all Traditional Rulers in Ogun State of the noble gesture of the State Government, for according us the honour of this courtesy call as a prelude to your meeting. While welcoming you all again to this State, I wish you an enjoyable stay, and the three great minds who would discuss the Naira and Kobo business of Odu'a successful deliberations.

May God bless you all.

future. one should cast a cursory glance at the past. At the time of the beginnings of our association with the British authorities, ranging from the consular to the colonial government era, Natural Rulers in their several domains were sovereign rulers and the British entered into Treaties and Agreements with them as such. As the British Administration later took root, especially under Colonel, Lord Lugard, the Indirect Rule System, as evolved for the Northern Emirates, underpinned the administration and where, indeed, there were no readily identifiable Natural Rulers, warrant Chiefs were appointed and Natural Rulers were then the main instruments through whom the vast protectorates of Northern and Southern Nigeria were administered. They were sole Native Authorities and Local Government Councils were largely advisory to them. As British Imperial rule began to give way to more democratic forms of government in the country, the powers of Natural Rulers were inevitably eroded and except, perhaps, with the Emirs' Councils, Natural Rulers gradually lost their executive positions, and in effect, now reign without ruling. That is at the local level. At the national level, the story was somewhat different. As a means of balancing the more vociferous opinion of the educated elements in the era preceding self-government, the British injected some leading Natural Rulers into the country's executive council and others into the Legislative Council. When Regions were created, Natural Rulers featured in Regional Executive Councils, albeit as Ministers without Portfolio, and dominated the Houses of Chiefs which constituted the upper House of the Regional Legislatures. They were no longer represented at the federal level; but at the Regional level they were powers to be reckoned with, despite the strength of the political parties. This state of affairs lasted until the end of the First Republic and the ushering in of military rule.

The first military administration saw an attempt to restore Natural Rulers to an influential advisory position at the federal level, especially when politics has been banned. Some conclaves of Natural Rulers were summoned and addressed by the military. The second military administration continued the trend, and courtesy visits to Natural Rulers featured in all Heads of State's touring programmes. At the state level, however, their influence seemed to be confined to tendering advice on

appointments and discipline of persons of their exalted ranks. Council of Obas and Chiefs or of Emirs were empanelled in the states with the main function of deliberating upon "Chieftaincy matters" referred to them. At the local level except, perhaps, in the former Northern States, the trend was that Natural Rulers were assigned the roles of presidents of councils, performing principally ceremonial functions and having little or no say in the administration of statutory customary justice.

New Roles for Natural Rulers

The changing role of Natural Rulers from the pre-colonial era to the present military administration is perhaps inevitable. Natural Rulers are the symbol of the Unity of their peoples and communities - commonly called the "fathers of their peoples". As party politics gained grounds, Natural Rulers who held ministerial offices became inevitably identified with the "parties in power" and suffered diminution in emoluments and even deposition when power changed hands among the political parties. To limit Natural Rulers to their traditional functions would, therefore, appear one way out of the dilemma. Party politics invaded the then Local Government Councils and if natural rulers do not back the majority party in the council they were not only challenged in their authority but could also be penalised to the detriment of their status. Nevertheless especially when party politics are prohibited and there are no easy ways of ascertaining the views of the people and bearing in mind the failure repeatedly of nominated councils and the recourse to appointment of officials as Sole Administrators of Council Areas - the Natural Rulers often stand out as the only credible spokesmen of their respective peoples. What is more, the peoples themselves continue to show their confidence in their Natural Rulers and even the elite recognise the abiding influence of the institution, judging by the readiness of many of them to vie for these offices whenever there are vacancies. It is pertinent, therefore, to consider what the appropriate role of Natural Rulers should be in the immediate future together with the ancillary problems of how best to ensure that the status and dignity of the holders of the offices of Natural Rulers are adequately safeguarded.

The first essential is a re-affirmation of the fact that there is a distinct and abiding role for Natural Rulers in the administration of the Federal Republic of Nigeria at all levels of government. This, in fact, is in accordance with the present practice of consulting natural rulers informally, but it is time that the situation is formalised and, where necessary, enshrined in the new constitution.

Traditional Rulers at the Local Government Level

The Local Government level is the principal level of administration in which the role of Natural Rulers is crucial and indeed paramount. As a result of the Local Government Reforms of 1976, the statutory functions of Natural Rulers at the Local Government level are intended to be performed through their Traditional Councils. The functions of a Traditional Council as laid down by the various State Local Government Edicts of 1976 are as follows:

- (a) to formulate general proposals as advice to the Local Government or to all Local Governments in its area;
- (b) where applicable to harmonise the activities of such Local Governments through discussion of problems affecting them generally and by giving advice and guidance thereon to such Local Governments;
- (c) Where applicable, to co-ordinate development plans of such Local Governments by joint discussion and advice;
- (d) where requested by the Military Governor/Administrator, or, as the case may require, by some or all the Local Governments in its area, to assist in the assessment of community tax in consultation with such Local Governments in the area and its subsequent collection;
- (e) to determine religious matters where appropriate;
- (f) to give support for arts and culture;
- (g) to assist in the maintenance of law and order;
- (h) to advise on any matter referred to it by the State or Federal Government.



H.R.M., Oba Oyebade Lipede with H.R.M., Oba Aderemi, the former Ooni of Ife



H.R.M., Oba Oyebade Lipede with H.R.M., ObaOlumade Sijuade, Olubuse II, the Current Ooni of Ife

- (i) to make representations or express opinion to the State Government or any other organisation on behalf of all such Local Governments on any matter of concern to the area as a whole whether or not such a matter is within the legislative competence of any such Local Government;
- (j) to determine questions relating to chieftaincy matters and control of traditional titles and, where such matters are within the exclusive prerogative of the principal Oba, to give advice thereon where so requested;
- (k) notwithstanding any other provision of the Edict, to determine customary law and practice on all matters governed by customary law including land tenure under customary law.

In reality, however, Traditional Councils have been most ineffective and have not taken off in most places. Paragraph 22 of the Federal Government's Guidelines on Local Government Reforms clearly stipulates that in all cases, Presidents of Traditional Councils should receive automatically copies of all Agenda, Memoranda, and supporting documents, Notes and Minutes of all Local Governments and should try to bring these to the attention of their Councils. In most places, what you have at the moment is that Agenda are never sent in advance to the Presidents and Minutes/Agenda of the meetings are often sent after action had been taken on them thereby making the possibility of tendering advice on important issues a non-event. There was the case, for instance, of a Local Government that built toilet facilities in an area where market stalls were preferred. This was done without prior consultation with the Members of the Traditional Council in whose area the toilet facilities were built. Besides, although paragraph 21 of the Guidelines clearly realised that in order to perform its functions, a Traditional Council would need a small staff, a legal identity as well as grants from the State Governments, no such provisions have in fact been made in most places. So far, therefore, it can be said that the experience has been that Traditional Councils do not afford Natural Rulers an opportunity of meaningful participation in government at the grass-root level.

By far the most important role of the Natural Ruler at the Local Government level is therefore at the moment that of being the rallying-point for the economic, social, commercial and cultural development of his area. In this connection it is important that Natural Rulers should be encouraged to function as Heads of Districts, whether or not they are normally resident in the districts, so as to provide such districts with respectable focal points for developmental efforts. Finally, in land and matters of customary personal laws - marriage, divorce, custody of children and succession, in most communities the citizens still look up to the Natural Rulers as the fountain of their justice.

■ Traditional Rulers ■ and State Level

The vital place of National Rulers as the first point of contact of the peoples of their domains in the administration of state affairs should be recognised. Therefore Natural Rulers must be provided with an appropriate forum for airing their views and bringing their knowledge and experience of public affairs to bear upon governmental decisions in their States. This objective can be attained by the following means :

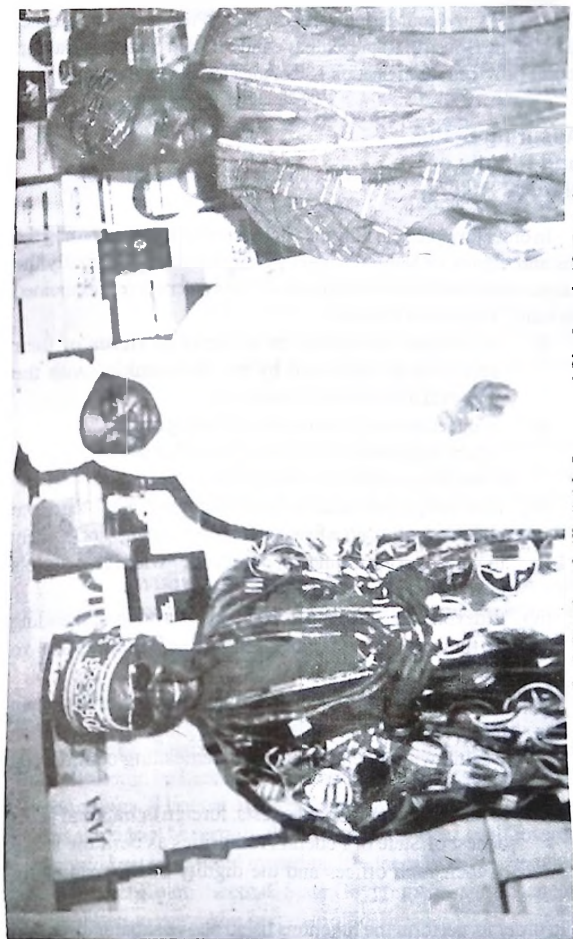
- (i) the recognition of Natural Rulers as quasi-representatives of the State Government in their domains upon whom important State visitors must call and whose well-being would be an index of the success of the State Government in that area;
- (ii) the establishment of a State Upper Legislative House comprising of only Natural Rulers. The reasons for this proposal are as follows:
 - (a) By virtue of Section 73(1)(h) of the Electoral Decree, No. 73 of 1977 an Oba, Emir, Obi, or Paramount Chief cannot contest an election to any Legislative House, or to the office of President or vice President, or Governor or Deputy Governor of a State.
 - (b) Past events have clearly shown that there is a need for a mature, non-partisan opinion on legislative matters in order to ensure the peace and stability of the nation.

- (c) The existence of an Upper House would tend to act as a check against the possible excesses of the lower House.
- (d) The existence of a State Upper House will not entail any substantial charge on the state's funds. This is because Natural Rulers need not be paid anything more than sitting allowances as members of the State's Upper House as their salaries as Natural Rulers have already been assured by the State Governments.

In order to make this necessary recognition of the state-wide role of Natural Rulers practicable, Natural Rulers must be classified. This classification should be undertaken by the State Government using an agreed formula applicable throughout the country. Such formula can be that a Natural Ruler whose domain covers a whole Administrative Area or a combination of Local Governments should be designated a **FIRST CLASS NATURAL RULER**. Those with domains covering only a part of a Local Government or are of well-known historical importance, although are subsidiary in a Division should be designated **SECOND CLASS NATURAL RULERS**. Chiefs who do not fall within these two classes should not be eligible for membership of the House of Natural Rulers and *ipso facto* should be free to engage in party politics, to vote and be voted for in parliamentary and other elections that are subject to the inter-play of party politics.

Traditional Rulers at Federal Level

Whilst the role of Natural Rulers should be evident primarily at the local level and secondarily at the State level of governments, they should also have a notable way at the Federal level. This should more appropriately be, however, in the guise of elder states-men who should be consulted informally from time to time or as occasions may arise. In addition to this informal consultation, an official forum should be created for them at the federal level certainly for those of them who are of **FIRST CLASS** rank, based upon a common system of categorisation throughout the country, and this is best done by including them in the **COUNCIL OF THE NATION** to be presided over by the **PRESIDENT OF THE**



H.R.M., Oba Oyebade Lipede with Alhaji Ado Bayero and Oba Lamidi Adeyemi, the Alaaifin of Oyo

FEDERATION and comprising state governors, President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representative and selected first class Natural Rulers as provided for in Section 137 of the Draft Constitution.

Assuring Status and Dignity of Natural Rulers

In order to appreciate fully the vital necessity of safe-guarding the status and dignity of Natural Rulers we must summarise briefly the functions which custom and tradition as well as modern practice enjoined upon them. They are as follows:

- (i) to comport themselves at all times as Heads of their communities appointed by the communities with the approval of the State Government;
- (ii) to undertake traditional duties, including rituals, where appropriate, in varying dimensions but in the best interests of the communities;
- (iii) to discharge their social duties involving not only attendance at all kinds of religious functions but contributing hand-somely to various appeal funds in conformity with the people's expectations;
- (iv) to devote their attention to the people's business, attending to their complaints and making representations to Governments on their behalf;
- (v) to display manifest financial capability in order to sustain their status in communities not placing high premium upon wealth, without engaging upon demeaning commercial pursuits; and
- (vi) to play host to important guests, foreign or national at the behest of State or Federal Authorities as befit the status of their high offices and the dignity of their domains.

In order to perform the functions listed above satisfactorily, the first pre-requisite is that the Natural Rulers should be assured of commensurate remunerations. To ensure this, it is essential that:

- (i) their remunerations continue to be a charge upon the funds of the State Governments to protect them against the vagaries of local government finances, pressures from Local Government members such as the notorious “kobo resolutions” and possible inability of local sources to make adequate provision for their natural rulers;
- (ii) the amount for such Natural Ruler should be fixed according to his class, First or Second, it should comprise of two parts:
 - (a) a stipend, being the nationally determined minimum for that class of Natural Rulers; and
 - (b) a tax-free duty allowance based upon the estimated population in the area of his domain and the probable frequency of his reception of august visitors at the behest of State and Federal authorities;
- (iii) the emoluments of Natural Rulers and Chiefs other than those in the First and Second Class (which should be nationally determined) could be fixed by the appropriate State Governments.

The provision, however, must be that all holders of recognised offices should be accorded remunerations which would befit their status and their expected scale of local duties.

Another important aspect which should be born in mind, as part of maintaining the dignity of the institution of Natural Rulers, is their physical surroundings. Palaces or official residences are of varying types but they all should be kept in sound condition and situated in salubrious surroundings. The cost of the maintenance of residencies of Natural Rulers should not be borne by themselves but by the Local Governments and could best be assured by adding it to the subvention pertaining to each Natural Ruler. Second, State Governments should encourage communities to provide appropriate official residences for their Natural Rulers. These are places to be visited by important dignitaries and should

... suit and equipped for such purposes. Whilst it is not advocated that State Governments should build these residence or palaces, they should automatically provide matching grants to augment the efforts of the people who raise money of their own volition for such buildings or at least contribute generously to appeal funds which may be launched by the people to build be-fitting places for their natural rulers.

In conclusion, it is generally agreed that Natural Rulers have vital roles to play in the administration of our dear country now and in the future. If we are not merely to pay lip-service to this realisation, they must be guaranteed and assured a place in our new Constitution. In short, I should support:

- (a) the inclusion of First Class Natural Rulers in any future Council of the Nation;
- (b) the creation of a State Upper Legislative House comprising those Natural Rulers of First Class ranks in each State to function as a check on the Lower House;
- (c) the classification of Natural Rulers and the guarantee of commensurate remunerations for them. The first two classes on nationally agreed criteria; and their remunerations to be on the basis of non-debatable subventions in the Estimates of the State Governments concerned; and
- (d) the maintenance of the building and the grounds comprising the residence of Natural Rulers at government expense and the obligation of State Governments to contribute to funds being raised by communities for building new palaces.

There has been genuine concern expressed by well-meaning leaders of public opinion in this country as to whether or not Natural Rulers should be involved in partisan politics. There is no doubt that the path of wisdom is that Natural Rulers should abstain from partisan politics. By doing so their fortunes will not be tied to the vicissitudes of any political party. However, now that elective democratic government at all levels is around the corner, it is important to draw a clear distinction between support for the government of the day and participation in partisan politics. To my mind, any Natural Ruler who does not support

the popular government of the day is not only unwise but also undemocratic. It is in realisation of this fact that Natural Rulers have always supported the government of the day, be that government elective or military. It is however necessary for it to be generally known and accepted that support for the government of the day is not and should not be regarded as participation in partisan politics.

That Natural Rulers no longer rule their domains is an accepted fact. They possess, however, a great measure of informal power and still wield tremendous influence for good in their areas of authority. If adequate provision is made for them as advocated in this paper, there is no doubt whatsoever that the Institution as still revered by the people and approved by the governments will be sustained and encouraged to give of its best in ensuring the stability of the nation and promoting the all-round development of all the people of Nigeria.

I WISH first of all to thank His Excellency, Chief Bola Ige, Governor of Oyo State, my Brother President, Vice President and members of Oyo State Council of Obas for hosting this very important meeting, which is the first since the Lagos State was created in 1967 and Ogun, Ondo and Oyo States were created in 1976. I think I am expressing the feelings of my Brother Obas when I express deep appreciation for the hospitalities and courtesies which the government and people of Oyo State have extended to us since our arrival for this Conference yesterday.

As a result of the Local government Reforms of 1976, the statutory functions of Natural Rulers at the Local Government level were intended to be performed through their Traditional Councils. The functions for a Traditional Council are laid down by the various State Local Government Laws of 1976. The Constitution of 1979 has not changed these.

In reality, however, Traditional Councils have been most ineffective and have not taken off in some places. Paragraph 22 of the Federal Government's Guidelines on Local Government reform clearly stipulates that in all cases, Presidents of Traditional Councils should receive automatically Notes and Minutes of all Local Governments and should have right to bring these to the attention of their councils. In most places, what you have at the moment is that Agenda are never sent in advance to the presidents and Minutes/Agenda of the meetings are often sent after action had been taken on them thereby making the possibility of tendering advice on important issues a non-event. One of the reasons for the ineffectiveness of the Traditional Councils is that the Senior Traditional Chiefs who were the effective members of the old Chieftaincy Committees were excluded from the membership of the Traditional Council under the Local Government Laws of 1976.

The position of the natural rulers in the scheme of things in the country as at today, therefore, is that whereas their traditional functions as natural Rulers are unlimited, their statutory functions are not only limited.

Being a speech delivered by HRM, Oba Oyebadé Lipede, the Alake of Egbaland at the Conference of Obas from Lagos, Ogun, Ondo and Oyo States, held at Ibadan on Thursday, 11 September 1981.

but in certain cases restrictive. In this connection, even the state councils of obas as established by section 178 of the 1979 Constitution is limited in its functions to advising the Governor on any matter relating to customary law or cultural affairs, inter-communal relations and Chieftaincy matters. The Council is also empowered by the Constitution to advise the Governor whenever requested to do so on:

- (a) the maintenance of public order within the State or any part thereof; and
- (b) such other matters as the Governor may direct.

It is my advice that in the discharge of our traditional and modern statutory functions as Natural Rulers, we should always remember that we are fathers of all subjects irrespective of their political leanings, religious beliefs or vocational calling. In this regard, we are duty bound to co-operate with the government of the day; here, government is not just the executive arm alone, but also the legislature and judicial arms. At the same time, we must be manifestly seen to be non-partisan; our palace gates must, therefore, be kept open to members of the non-ruling political parties who should be free to consult us and seek our advice from time to time. Nor should our obligation of co-operation be confined to State Governments; rather we must also extend to the Federal Government our full co-operation. As in the case of State Government, so with the Federal Government, co-operation must be with the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary.

I welcome this our conference but I would like to see it as a first step towards the resuscitation of the meetings of Natural Rulers of all the States of the Federation which were held regularly in the period before 1979. Such a national forum for our Natural rulers would go a long way to cement the unity of our beloved country which we all regard as **paramount**.

Natural rulers should co-operate with the government of the day at Federal and State levels: they should also ensure that they are accessible to the leaders of non-ruling political parties who may want to

seek their advice on any issue.

Federal and State Governments should consult Natural Rulers on legislative and executive proposals likely to affect the subjects of the Council. Quers before decisions are reached on such legislative and executive matters, and

and There should be regular meetings of Natural Rulers in the States in order to provide the forum for advising the Federal and State Governments on important issues.

This Conference can come to a decision on these three vital issues, which have gone down in history as an epoch-making one.

Thank you, Brother Obas, for your time and attention, and may God bless you all and grant our Country and respective States peace, unity and prosperity.

FIRST and foremost, we would like to thank His Excellency. Alhaji Lateef Jakande, Governor of Lagos State and my brother President, Vice-President and members of the Lagos State Council of Obas, for hosting this meeting. This meeting is a follow-up of those that have been held in Ibadan on 11th September, 1981 and at Abeokuta on 18th December, 1981.

We have seized the opportunity of our previous meetings to discuss matters of general interest to the country and of particular importance to our subjects in our various domains. Such issues have included:

- (a) the role and functions of traditional rulers and chiefs in the presidential system of government in Nigeria;
- (b) the position of traditional rulers in the new local government arrangements, and
- (c) the Nigerian Constitution in relation to the position of traditional rulers.

In particular, we have stressed the need for all Nigerians to step-up food production, and in this regard, we have called on all the governments in the federation to cooperate in achieving this goal.

Recent developments have shown that what is called for on the part of all Nigerians, particularly now, is self-reliance. We should strive to feed ourselves, clothe and provide shelter for ourselves from the resources available in the fatherland. Our over-dependence on imported goods and services will not be in the long-run to the interest of this nation.

We have been convinced that it will be in the national interest for all traditional rulers in the country to meet at a forum like this, for the exchange of ideas in the interest of national unity and progress. We therefore wish to call on our brother traditional rulers in other States of the country to consider the desirability of all the traditional rulers in the country coming together in a common forum in the overall interest of our

Being an address by HRM, Oba Oyebade Lipede, the Alake of Egbaland presented at the Conference of Obas from Lagos, Ogun, Ondo and Oyo States held in Lagos on 30th April 1982.

great nation. It is our view that in order to achieve the much desired national unity and stability, various interest groups at the grass-roots, political and traditional rulers' levels, should come together in the national interest. There is no doubt that in unity lies our strength.

We wish to thank the Governor, the members of the Council of Obas and the people of Lagos State for the excellent arrangements which they have made for the holding of this conference, and for the hospitality and courtesy which they have extended to each and everyone of us since our arrival in Lagos State. We wish this conference successful deliberations and may God bless us all.



Olori Bimpe Lipede

Oyebade Lipede on Women in Development

THIS is an auspicious occasion for us all. Today we are celebrating 100 years of the death of Madame Tinumbu, the first Iyalode of the Egbas. I am pleased to know that you have all gone to do honour to this great heroine at Ita Iyalode in Owu; the section of her first husband and at Ojokodo, in Gbagura the section in which she was born and where she lies buried. We know, however, that Madame Tinubu belongs to all the Egbas. She was our first Iyalode and the title was conferred upon her in recognition of her valuable services to all the Egbas.

Perhaps, I should seize this opportunity to remind you all why we hold Madame Tinubu's memory so dearly. She was born in Gbagura in the old Egba Forest: she quickly over-came the grief of the death of her first husband and of her two sons and began trading in goods as well as in slaves between Abeokuta and Badagry. Her next husband became an Oba at Lagos and for the short period she was Olori she showed signs of her future greatness. The third husband was powerful in the Oba's court at Lagos and with her success in trade she began to wield enormous influence on the side of the Oba. The conflict between Kosoko and Akintoye which led Akintoye to return to Abeokuta, his mother's town, leaving the throne for Kosoko, saw Madame Tinubu and her husband moving to Badagry where she worked for Akintoye's transfer there from Abeokuta for greater safety and eventually saw Akintoye's return to Lagos in 1851 with the help of the British. Needless to say that Madame Tinubu became the power behind the throne of Akintoye and his son and successor, Oba Dosumu.

Being an address by HRM, Oba Oyebade Lipede, the Alake of Egbaland presented on the occasion of Homage-paying at the Aafin Ake during the celebration of the Centenary of Madame Tinumbu, Iyalode Egba's death on Thursday, 3 December 1987.

The growing influence of Madame Tinubu in Lagos affairs alarmed the British Council and the European traders. They eventually coerced Dosumu to expel her from Lagos on a trumped-up charge of slave dealing. She immediately resumed her trading operations in Abeokuta. In the Dahomi invasion of 1864, she pitched her tent close to the war-front; supplying the men with food and ammunition and encouraging those planning to desert, to return and fight. It was after the defeat of the Dahomi that the Egba recognised her services by naming her IYALODE.

Her support for Oyekan to become the Alake, which failed, was successful after the death of Ademola I. Thus she also at Abeokuta became the power behind the throne until Oyekan's death. The great lesson of all this is not only that Egbaland produced this remarkable heroine but that in our traditional constitution there has always been a place for women. I urge you all to play your own part in the affairs of our nation and aspire to greatness like Madame Tinumbu, Iyalode Egba.
May God Bless You All.

for other higher posts which can only be reached through the acquisition of the necessary education. It is this low mark for our women we are aspiring to raise, as the present mark is not befitting to the women population viewed from the perspective of the roles of women in the society.

I am aware that inspite of the present period of economic recession, that state government is determined to prosecute this programme with zeal by making necessary provisions for women, some of whom had dropped out from the primary school and those who have not at any time attended any school. To this end, centres for literacy education will be erected in the market places to cater for our market women and necessary materials for their study will be provided by government. Literacy courses will also be provided in the rural areas where the greater need for this type of education exist. Our women should therefore make time available for this literacy programmes which are conducted three days in the week - on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays between 4.00 p.m. and 6.00 p.m.

I would also like to appeal to all connected with the execution of this laudable programme to ensure its success in every aspect. I would also like to appeal to other fellow citizens, the private sector and the philanthropists among us to make their own contributions to ensure the success of this campaign.

Lastly, I would like to thank all those who have honoured the invitation to be present here today. God bless us all.

IT is with great pleasure that we welcome Your Excellencies to Egbaland on the occasion of your maiden visit to this city. We wish to assure Your Excellencies that you are very much at home in Abeokuta and we hope you will have sometime during your busy schedule to visit some important places of historical significance in the City particularly the final resting place of Iyalode Tinumbu the symbol of Egba successful Womanhood.

Egbaland had been blessed with a number of dynamic and patriotic women folk. The late Iyalode Tinumbu distinguished herself in the realm of business and politics and was shoulder high and above her male and female counterparts in her days. For this reason, she earned herself both national and international recognition. In the field of mass mobilisation and concern for the rural women in particular, the late Mrs. Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, in the recent past, was a remarkable colossus. It is hoped that Your Excellencies will find some time to visit the present-day Egba women at work and at play. Itoku is the traditional centre of commerce in Egbaland. We hope Your Excellencies will find time to see our traditional *adire* industry from production to distribution.

We have noted with profound admiration the dedicated wholehearted support which Your Excellency had given to our beloved Head of State, General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida, in the successful implementation of the Human Rights policy of this administration. We have noted your sustained efforts to see to the implementation of this policy particularly the area concerning the women and the youth. The concern which Your Excellency had shown for the youth in waging a public enlightenment campaign against drug abuse, particularly among the youth, had been praise-worthy. Your Excellency's concern for the rural women had been evidenced in your soul-inspiring address to the workshop on Better Life For the Rural Women which was held at Abuja in September this year.

Being an address by HRH, Oba Oyebade Lipede, the Alake of Egbaland presented on the First Lady, Mrs. Maryam Babaginda on the occasion of her visit in the company of Mrs. Constancia Mangué De Obiang to Abeokuta on Thursday, 5th November, 1987.

IT gives us a great pleasure to be present here today at the launching of this very important book. "*A Lady*" - a Biography of Lady Oyinkan Abayomi. Lady Abayomi has very strong Egba connection, her late mother being a descendant of the Williams Family of Abeokuta. After a distinguished academic career starting in 1903 at the Anglican Girls Seminary, Lagos and ending at the Royal Academy in London in 1919 where she was awarded the Academic Diploma of the Associated London College of Music. She was a Music teacher both at the Anglican Girls School and Queens College, Lagos for many years.

Lady Oyinkan Abayomi was actively involved and dedicated to the improvement of the lot of the women folk in Nigeria from her tender years. She was a founding member of the Girls Guide Movement in Nigeria and became the first Nigerian Guide Captain in 1925. Through her efforts in 1931 the then colonial government approved the sum of £50 sterling as grant in aid to the movement and this marked the first great milestone in the history of Guide in Nigeria.

In 1949, Lady Abayomi was appointed Deputy Commissioner Girl Guide for Nigeria. Two years later, she became the first indigenous Chief Guide Commissioner for Nigeria. Although she remained leader of the movement until 1982, her work with the Girl Guide was virtually ended in 1967. She was succeeded by Mrs. Mbanefo and Council of Guilders which included Lady D. Jibowu, Mrs. Titi Sodeinde, and Mrs. Margaret Olowu. She was however elected Life President of the Movement.

She was awarded the MBE by the Queen and later with her husband's KBE awarded by the British Government in 1951 became Lady Abayomi. She served in the Lagos City Council as a female Councillor representing the interests of women.

Being an address by HRM, Oba Oyebade Lipede, the Alake of Egba land presented at the launching of *A lady - A Biography of Lady Oyinkan Abayomi* on Wednesday 11 March 1987.

At that workshop, Your Excellency directed the attention of the Government and the Public to such areas, the elimination of which will improve the quality of lives of the rural women and their children. Those areas included:

- a. Ignorance of their civic and legal rights and the absence of suitable machinery to enforce these rights even when they are aware of them;
- b. Under-developed health care provisions.
- c. Scarce and unsuitable mode of transportation for people to evacuate produce to the markets;
- d. Inadequacy of essential amenities, the absence of which tend to attract the young and the able bodied away from the villages;
- e. The dearth of social and educational facilities;
- f. Lack of access to innovation and educational information which may reduce the physical drudgery of their lives and thereby make their productive efforts more financially rewarding; and
- g. Inadequate opportunities for gainful employment of their time and talents.

Your Excellency is the First Lady in the history of recent administrations in this country that will show manifestly and pursue her interest in the affairs of women and the youth in this country. We heartily commend Your Excellency for this public spirited gesture. We would wish to advise that in order that the rural women may derive full advantage from the deliberations on the recent workshop at Abuja, the gist of Your Excellency's address and the summary of deliberations at the workshop should be made available to women organisations in all the Local Governments in this country.

Once more, we wish to welcome Your Excellency to Abeokuta and assure you of the warm hospitality of all the Citizens of this State Capital wherever you may go. We wish you God's travelling mercies during your visits and on your journey back home.

Thank you and God bless you.

Following the establishment of the Lagos Branch of the National Council of Women's Society, Lady Abayomi was elected the branch first President. They campaigned for equal opportunities for Girls and Boys and for the welfare and progress of women in educational opportunities, employment in all works of life and for better conditions for women in the Civil Service. She was elected leader of the Women's Party and with a number of able lieutenants hoped to enhance cooperation between female members of the western educated elite and illiterate members of the society mainly the market women.

Later she was appointed the second member of the Western House of Assembly in 1954 and became head of the Female Section of the Nigeria Youth Movement which was then led by her husband, Sir Abayomi. She became an inaugural member of the Action Group.

In recognition of her contribution to the development of Communities in Nigeria in general and the education and progress of women in particular, she has been awarded a number of Chieftaincy titles among these are the Lika of Ijemo and the Iya Abiye of Egbaland. The Yeye Sikalu of Ado-Ekiti, the Moroye of Lagos and the Iya Eko of Lagos.

In a message to the Nation, marking her 90th Birthday, Lady Abayomi called for discipline among Youths and Adults and urged the avoidance of social excesses among them exorbitant funerals, expensive weddings, avoidable festivities and wasteful social practices.

The greater part of her life was spent serving the Community and her life is an example which future generations should emulate. She has been a pride to the people of Egbaland.

It gives us a great pleasure to recommend this book "*A LADY*" written by Chief Folarin Coker to the reading public not only in Nigeria but also overseas in order to have a bird's-eye-view of the contributions of a great Nigerian woman by constitutional means to the development of the dignity of womanhood in Nigeria. Thank you and God bless us all.

Oyebade Lipede on Culture

IT is a real pleasure for me to preside on the occasion of the launching of *Studies in Yoruba History and Culture*, being essays in Honour of Professor S. O. Biobaku, organised by his Historian Colleagues, to mark his attainment of the age of 60. As we all know, circumstances prevented the appearance of the book until Professor Biobaku had become 65 years old and so reached the mandatory age of retirement from University service in Nigeria. The book can, therefore, be regarded as marking the formal withdrawal of Professor Biobaku from official academic life.

I say this is a joyful occasion for three main reasons: First, we are honouring a well-known scholar of Yoruba History and Culture, a modern pioneer in this field of scholarship. Second, the ceremony takes the form of launching a book written by his Historian Colleagues, describing the work of the Guest of Honour and by their several contributions depicting the present state of scholarship in this field which is of special interest to me as an Oba and the traditional custodian of the culture of my people. Third, this is a joyful occasion for me as Professor Biobaku is not only a scholar but is also one of my chiefs.

It is a refreshing sign of the times that scholars came together to honour one of themselves. I salute Professor G. O. Olusanya, the Editor of the book and all his colleagues, especially Professor A. B. Aderigbe whose contribution shows how well he knows Professor Biobaku as a scholar and as a man. It is my hope that scholars in other fields of academic study would emulate the good initiative of Professor Olusanya and his associates and give us studies of pioneers in their fields and present state of their endeavours. We hear too much of sterile rivalries

Being an address by HRM, Oba Oyebade Lipede, the Alake of Egbaland presented at the launching of "Studies in Yoruba History and Culture" (in honour of Professor S. O. Biobaku) on Saturday, 24th March 1984 at the Federal Palace Hotel, Lagos.

in the Nigeria academic world; let us hear more and more of individual achievement and fruitful collaboration.

Of Professor Biobaku's field - History and Culture - much has been done but a lot more remains. Judging by the History of the Egba alone, the pioneering works of Ajisafe, Losi, Adebesein Folarin, Ladipo Solanke to mention only a few Egba Historians and analysed accounts of the culture of our peoples. I know this is what Professor Biobaku is doing and I have given him a commission, which he must now pursue with vigour having retired from his official labours, and bring forth an up-to-date and authentic History of the Egba people.

In doing that Professor Biobaku knows that he has my whole-hearted support. I want to go further, on this occasion, and pledge the support not only of myself but of all my brother natural rulers throughout the length and breadth of our country for the work of scholars which will shed powerful light on our History and Culture and produce authentic works on the civilisation of our part of Africa. I am sure that you can always count on our encouragement in producing your objective studies which can stand the test of true scholarship.

We, the natural rulers are solidly behind you; the ball of scholastic production in the field of History and Culture is in the court of the Nigerian academics. I am confident, by the token of today's occasion, that you will not neglect the opportunity.

IT is always a pleasure for me to come to the University of Ibadan. Today, my pleasure is even greater than usual because I have come to declare open the splendid exhibition of *Aso Adire* cloths and pattern in the well-known collections of Mrs. Betty Okuboyejo which the Institute of African Studies are staging here for a few days. I say this because, Abeokuta, the capital of my domain has long been famous as a centre of cloth dyeing industry, whilst other Yoruba towns such as Ibadan and Osogbo also produce *Aso Adire*, Abeokuta has long been pre-eminent in Yorubaland.

The history of textile industry in Yorubaland dates back to the period before the Oyo Empire. Trade between North-East Africa and Yorubaland brought in Aso Oke, heavy woven fabrics. As lighter materials came in the form of calico and brocades, the Yoruba dyers, who were accustomed to bright and cheerful colours for ceremonial and important social occasions, devised new techniques of adding colours to the imported fabrics. Basically, two different techniques were employed in the making of *Aso Adire*. One is to use raffia or cotton thread to tie the cloth in desired patterns and this acts as a resistant to the blue-dye. The patterns can also be stitched with a needle or by machine. The second method is to paint the patterns on the fabric with starch made from cassava flour with brush or feather or to apply the resist through a stencil which has been cut into a design. In both methods, the resist object are removed after dyeing the cloth and the desired designs come out bright and clear.

From the settlement in Abeokuta by the Egba in 1830, *Aso Adire* has been one of the important industries engaged in by the majority of women folk. People came from as far away as Senegal to buy *Adire* at Itoku market. In the period before and immediately after the Second World War. *Aso Adire* was one of the elitist attires in Yorubaland in

Being an address by HRM. Oba Oyebade Lipede, the Alake of Egbaland presented at the Exhibition of *Aso Adire* held by the Institute of African Studies, University of Ibadan, on Monday, 22nd October 1979.

general and Egbaland in particular. A decline, however, set in after the mid-fifties. Happily as a result of the fiscal measures announced in the 1979/80 budget speech there has been an increase in the popularity of Aso Adire.

I have noticed also the influence of the *Aso Adire* designs and patterns in some of the textile materials being produced in Nigeria today. This is a welcome development as the *baticks* now feature many colours than the traditional Adire blue.

It is my view, however, that the appropriate research institutes in this country should come to the aid of the local women entrepreneurs by ensuring the survival of their well-priced craft. I know the Institute of African Studies of this University has long shown an interest in this field, I am aware of the book on *Adire Cloth in Nigeria* published by the Institute in 1971. More research is needed to replace some of the blessings of modern textile technology in the hands of the makers of *Adire* and I am sure that from the interest which foreigners and people of African descent are showing in *Aso Adire* a well-developed and modernised *Adire* industry will be a source of pride to the black man everywhere. Moreover, in these days when Local Governments are seeking means of raising independent revenues, *Adire* cottage industries can be established under their auspices and marketed cooperatively to satisfy local demands and provide a new export avenue for the country.

This Exhibition may well lead to the realization of the objectives which I have just mentioned. If so, not only will it not be in vain but indeed we owe a debt of gratitude to Mrs. Betty Okuboyejo for showing us through her collections, the rich variety of our *Adire* designs and patterns. I congratulate her and also the Institute of African Studies, the sponsors of this worth-while display.

With these few remarks, Mr. Vice-Chancellor, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have great pleasure in declaring this exhibition on *Aso Adire* open.

Thank you all.

I AM pleased to see that the 1988 Lisabi Day Celebrations have proceeded well despite the unavoidable circumstances which led to the postponement of Lisabi Day from 5th November, to 3rd December, 1988. Once we have started a tradition, we must ensure its continuance. I congratulate the Chairman and the members of the Lisabi Day Celebrations Committee for their hard work in arranging the various events.

Today, we have come to the climax of all the events. I would like to emphasise that the purpose of our celebrating the memories of our past heroes and heroines is to inspire the living to attempt deeds which will be worthy of our ancestors. I am pleased that more and more Egba sons and daughters are heeding my call and are coming home to build their residences in Abeokuta and its environs. I would like to see more of them coming to Abeokuta and the other Egba Local Government areas to establish industries which will not only advance our economic development but also provide employment for our people especially in this difficult time of economic recession worldwide.

I am particularly happy therefore that we are starting on this occasion an annual presentation of insignia to selected captains of industry who have established amongst us enterprises which have been a pride to Egbaland. I congratulate these worthy pioneers and exhort them not to rest upon their laurels, but to regard our modest recognition not only as a token of our appreciation but as means of spurring them to greater achievement. I hope by next year they would have added to their economic enterprises in Egbaland. I also seize this opportunity to appeal to other Egba sons and daughters to follow their example and ensure that Egbaland is flooded with industries.

It is my pleasure to present to the deserving recipients these token appreciations from the Egba people for their invaluable contribution towards the economic development of Egbaland.

Being an address presented by HRM, Alayeluwa Oba Oyebade Lipede, the Alake of Egbaland at the Grand Finale of the 1988 Lisabi Day Celebrations on 3rd December

1988

The observance of a Special Day to be known and marked as Egba National Day which will be an annual events had for a long time been the expressed desire of majority of the Egba Community particularly the Elite. The motive behind this proposal is borne out of the fact that in many spheres of human endeavours, the Egbas had always and continued to distinguish themselves in all walks of life with attendant brilliant success. In order to retain this past and lost glory of our past heroes and heroines who had contributed and made their landmarks in bringing out the much talked about progress and development, we have therefore, thought it expedient to salvage efforts by reviving this past glory in our life-time.

To this end, we have set up and launched a special Committee on the 5th April, 1987 under the Chairmanship of Professor S. O. Biobaku and tagged Lisabi Day Committee to plan and arrange activities for the effective celebration this year to serve as a beginning. The Committee has worked relentlessly to draw up a befitting programme of events starting from 4th to 8th November, 1987. The formation of this Committee arose from the realisation of the need for all Egbas to come together and put their resources together for the improvement of Egbaland.

The significance of such observance of the Lisabi Day would lead to:

- (i) Initial reunion and lasting unity among the people of Egbaland and thus bringing home many who are not in the habit of coming to Abeokuta often thus strengthening the bond of brotherhood and fellowship among the Egba Sons and Daughters.
- (ii) To remind the Egba of the glorious advancements of our past fallen heroes and heroines.
- (iii) To see at first hand areas in which they can assist in the development and progress of our fatherland.

May I at this junction, mention that to organise such successful celebrations would need substantial sum of money to prosecute the various activities already drawn up. It is to this end that we are gathered here today, to launch a N1.00 Appeal Fund per person as part of the fund

raising activities to meet all the expenses expected to be incurred during the Celebrations. The collection of this donation which has received the blessing and kind gesture of the Ogun State Government will be judiciously used to erect Monuments and Status in strategic places and locations in Egbaland to symbolise our past leaders and Warriors like Lisabi, Sodeke, Tinumbu, Agbo of Ika, Alatise, Lumloye, Somoye, Matiku, Aloba, Okemla, Majekodunmi, Cokers, Kutis, Folarins and a host of others who had given immense services to develop Egbaland to whom we are now indebted and proud of. To this end, efforts are already been made to start with the erection of the Status of Lisabi.

I now commend you to the N1.00 Appeal Fund donation by enjoining you to buy at least one each and also to assist in ensuring that members of your families, societies, organisations, religious bodies, clubs and all well-wishers of Egbas all over the State to buy at least one Donation Ticket. An individuals may buy more than one and as many as thousands of Tickets.

Thank you and God bless.



Staff of Office, A traditional emblem at Ake Palace, Abeokuta

I AM very delighted to see you all assembled here. I heartily welcome everybody especially the State Military Governor, Navy Captain Muhammed Lawal and members of his Executive Council. It is very kind of you to come to share our joys as we remember our past heroes and heroines of whom Lisabi Agbongbo Akala is the most prominent of them all.

We have come to the climax of the 1989 Lisabi Day Celebrations I congratulate the Chairman and members of the Lisabi Day Celebrations Committee and the representatives of the Egba Clubs who have worked with them to make this year's celebration such a huge success. I am sure all those who were present here on the woro night when I, Obas and members of the Egba Chieftaincy Committee received the four main groups in their enthusiastic processions, on horse back and ingenious floats would agree with me that we could never have had a more joyous beginning for this year's celebrations.

Lisabi, as we all recall, formulated the strategy and boldly led the final campaign that totally liberated the Egba people from the yoke placed on our neck by the imperialist regimes of Oyo Alafin.

Although we had been enjoying relative freedom since then, we know that human bondage is an everlasting possibility.

The British came early this century to disturb Egba independence; and on the pretext of seeking to promote peace and stability in the area of jurisdiction of Egba United Government, they annexed our land and declared it to be part of the British Protectorate of Nigeria.

Even with the restoration of our independence along with other groups in 1960, the condition of bondage has not totally disappeared. On the contrary, economic bondage is much more evident in our country

Being an address presented by HRM, Alayeluwa Oba Oyebade Lipede, the Alake of Egbaland at the Grand Finale of the Lisabi Day Celebrations on Saturday November 4, 1989. At Ake Palace Square, Abeokuta.

today. The greatest challenge before us therefore is how quickly and how effectively to liberate ourselves from this crippling bondage. Would a new Lisabi emerge to lead us through, not only in Egbaland, but also in the entire Nigeria.

We must admit too that our salvation lies in our hands. Let each and everyone of us strive to be a Lisabi, instilled with a grim determination to deliver us from economic bondage. This calls for such attributes as courage forbearance, self-discipline and self-sacrifice. Above all, there is the need for co-operative effort.

We can give whole-hearted support to our Federal and State Government in their relentless efforts to bring our Country back from the brinks of economic despair. We can all go back to our farms, cultivate our food crops and bring forth bumper harvests that will pave the way for our self-sufficiency in food supply. Indeed as our people say "If we remove hunger from an economic plight, the rest is simple.

I would like to seize this opportunity to call upon Egba sons and daughters to come back home to establish industries in Abeokuta. We request you to do for your home-land what you are reputed to be doing elsewhere. It is a cliché to say "Heaven helps those who help themselves"; it is nonetheless true. The Federal and State Government will all the more readily listen to our calls to establish suitable industries in Egbaland if we are able to demonstrate to them what we are doing ourselves. The message I wish to give you all today is that which has been associated with the late President John F. Kennedy of the United States; namely "think not of what your country can do for you but of what you can do for your country.

This charge also goes to the Chairman and members of the Lisabi Day Celebrations Committee. They should think not only of junketing and merrymaking in their annual programmes for the celebrations. It is time for them to have targets which can be launched at the next Lisabi Day aimed at the improvement of the socio-economic conditions of Egbaland, surely they are aware of the fact that the Centenary Hall built

just under 60 years ago can no longer adequately serve as a befitting City Hall for Abeokuta. Perhaps, I should remind them that the first Botanical Garden and Museum established in Nigeria were built in Abeokuta in the 1860's; where today do we have such amenities in the Egba metropolis which is also the State Capital of Ogun State? There are no doubt several other similar projects which can fire the imagination of our people and underpin our annual Lisabi Day Celebrations. "A word is enough for the wise".

With regard to the Political Transition Programme, I urge all to co-operate fully with the Federal Military Government. The Government, on its part, should explain the new party system, which is very innovative, to the people, clearly. We, the Traditional Rulers, as Fathers of the people are prepared to lend a hand in any programme of Public enlightenment that Government may devise.

As we rejoice today, we pray that the Nation's journey to the new political era may be peaceful.

May I seize the opportunity of the presence in our midst of our Military Governor, Navy Captain Mohammed Lawal to thank him for his efforts to improve the status of Abeokuta as the Ogun State capital. May I also through the Military Governor thank the Federal Government for raising the status of the University institution at Abeokuta to that of a full-fledged Federal University of Agriculture. I would like to assure the Governor and the authorities of the University that I and my Chiefs are resolute in our resolve to settle all the outstanding problems at the permanent site of the University so that the occupation of the land may proceed peacefully and the establishment of the University of Agriculture at Abeokuta may proceed smoothly and without any hitch whatsoever.

Once more, I rejoice with all Egba sons and daughters and all our friends from far and near for making this year's Lisabi Day Celebrations a resounding success. May the Almighty God grant all our visitors His travelling mercies and continue to bless all of us. Lisabi a gbe wa O.

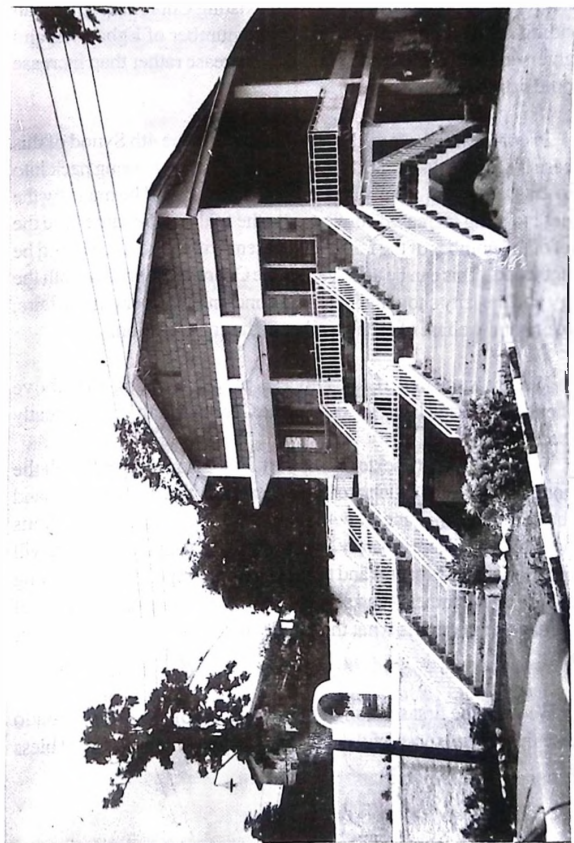
Oyebade Lipede on Religion

WE wish to congratulate the Rev. T. I. Akintayo, the Diocesan Bishop of Egba/Egbado Diocese of the Anglican Communion on behalf of the entire Diocese on the attainment of the 10th year of the existence of the Diocese. The first session of this Synod therefore is an epoch-making one. Some have wondered that since Egbaland was the first place where Christianity was introduced in this country, it is paradoxical that its Diocese is one of the youngest in the country. We thank God for the role which it had pleased the Almighty to assign to Egbaland in the propagation of Christianity in Nigeria.

Looking back these past 10 years one would naturally want to take stock of the achievement and shortcomings of the Diocese since its inception. The Diocese had completed and will soon dedicate a new Cathedral. This is not a mean achievement having regard to the fact that the cathedral was built in a record time. The credit for this achievement must no doubt go to the Diocesan Bishop, the Rt. Rev. T. I. Akintayo whose moving spirit and burning desire brought the project into fruition. We should not however forget the good foundation which has been laid by the retired Rt. Rev. J. S. Adeniyi, the first Diocesan Bishop of the Diocese. The maturity and wealth of experience of the Rt. Rev. J. S. Adeniyi were the crucial elements in the laying of the solid foundation upon which the Diocese stands today.

Statistics are not readily available but one can wonder whether the congregation of the Diocese had substantially increased over the

Being a Goodwill Message delivered by HRM, Oba Oyebade Lipede, the Alake of Egbaland presented to the 4th Synod of Egba/Egbado Diocese on Monday, 28 April 1986 at the Cathedral of St. Peter Ake, Abeokuta.



Ake Palace Chapel, Ake, Abeokuta. Built during the reign of HRM, Oba Oyebade Lipele.

past 10 years. It is true that some additional Churches had sprung up here and there during the past 10 years, but such Churches would appear to cater for those who broke away from existing Churches rather than providing for new converts. Further, the number of Egba sons and daughters in Holy Orders had tended to decrease rather than increase over the past 10 years.

In our view therefore, the challenge before the 4th Synod of this Diocese is "Evangelism". The Diocese should strive to bring back into the fold its lukewarm members. Positive efforts should be made by the Diocese to bring increased converts into the fold. At the same time the belief of the number of the faithful at present within the fold should be strengthened. This can be achieved by the Church comprising both the clergy and the laity showing increased concern in the personal affairs, problems and welfare of each member of the congregation.

We are sure that if the Diocese proceeds along the above mentioned suggested lines, the ends of the Christian faith will be greatly realised.

We would like to seize this opportunity also to appeal to all the religious leaders in this country to let peace be their watchword. Egbaland had been noted for peaceful co-existence among people of various religious beliefs. There is hardly any family in Egbaland where you will not find Christians, Muslims and traditional worshippers all co-habiting peacefully with brotherly and sisterly love. This shining example of peaceful co-existence is what the whole nation needs now than ever before.

We wish the first session of the 4th Synod of the Egba/Egbado Diocese fruitful and successful deliberations. Thank you and God bless you all.

I HEREBY express my profound gratitude for the opportunity which My Lord Bishop of Egba/Egbado Diocese, the Right Reverend J.S. Adeniyi, has offered me to address distinguished Religious Leaders and Synod Delegates in this Cathedral Church of Saint Peter, Ake, Abeokuta today.

I understand that the central theme of this year's synod is **Spiritual Renewal**. At first, the question may be raised as to the need for such an exercise, particularly so when we are reminded now and again that we live in the Lord and God lives in us. But why not? After all, we renew our motor vehicle/motor-cycle insurance and/or our driving licence every year. I believe that the basis for this legal requirement is to ensure that both driver and the vehicle are constantly in roadworthy condition for their own as well as the safety of the general public who also make use of the highway. The danger that is inherent in non-renewal or error in renewing of an insurance or driving licences however grievous is, nevertheless, confined to the public highway and may not affect more than a mere percentage of the people in the area. Whereas a person who is spiritually expired can do incalculable harm, not only to himself, his own environment but to the whole human race or the universe. From the layman's point of view, this will seem to justify, least in a way, why an exercise in SPIRITUAL RENEWAL is desirable and beneficial.

Apart from the routine nature of renewal exercise, the present situation in our country needs and indeed compels spiritual renewal. As we are all aware, social change is taking place at a faster rate, not only in this country but all over the world. In the face of these rapid social changes, existing systems are undergoing crucial pains to adjust to the new situation. Consequently, almost all the facets of our lives of our society have been completely affected by these rapid changes. These have most unfortunately given rise to conflicts and indiscipline in our society.

Being an address by HRM. Oba Oyebade Lipede, the Alake of Egbaland presented to the Third Session of the First Synod of Egba/Egbado Diocese at the Cathedral of St. Peter, Ake, Abeokuta on Monday, 30th April 1979.

In the field of education, indiscipline in the form of late coming, truancy, gross disrespect for constituted authority and at times violent demonstrations have manifested themselves in our Secondary Schools and Institutions of Higher Learning. The question that arises, therefore, is what type of adult, what type of working class and indeed what type of society are we building for tomorrow? Could this be a product of our socio-economic development? If so, what remedy should we find to save ourselves and those whose fortune it will be as custodians of this great country from imminent collapse? I am indeed very pleased that both the Federal Military Government and the State Governments have contrived an ingenious device by establishing Councils and Committees for Education for Citizenship comprising of eminent and respected educationists, religious and community leaders to work out suitable programmes for combating the social ills in our society so as to save it from disintegration.

The picture in the other sectors is not better either, for example, in the economic sector, we are plagued with ever rising high prices, hoarding of scarce commodities with a view to maximising profit at the expense of our fellow men, smuggling the total effect of which will be detrimental to our national economy and growth, greed avarice and so on. It has taken Decrees promulgated by the Federal Military Government on Foreign Exchange, Price Control, Smuggling to mention a few to bring sanity into the chaotic situation. It is not in any doubt, therefore, that there is need for SPIRITUAL RENEWAL particularly at this time?

When we turn to the Social Sector, we see signs of family instability, break-down of marriages and homes, gaps between parents and their children and so on. With these, is it any wonder that theft, organised armed robbery, murder and other forms of heinous crimes have been on the increase. There is an on-going debate on whether the blame for this societal decadence should be placed at the door steps of teachers or parents themselves. It is not for me to apportion blame here but I will like to seize this opportunity to appeal to parents and guardians generally to take greater interest in the academic and moral development of their children. It is disheartening to note that some parents do not

insist on checking the progress reports of their children. do not even know the examination numbers or the schools of choice of the children when they enter for competitive examinations for admission into higher institutions. This is most pathetic and disgraceful. In other countries, parents and guardians who know their duties do not only insist on checking the progress results of their children but also make appointments with the appropriate teachers or headmaster to discuss the weak points observed in the reports if any, or even engage such teachers in a meaningful dialogue on the course of the academic development of the children and the career options open to them. As for the headmasters and teachers, whilst it is evident that some of them are performing their duties diligently, there are others who can be described as passengers in the teaching service. These are the ones who seem to be more interested in the monetary benefits they can derive from teaching than in educating the young ones placed in their care. They devote greater attention to their private interests than to the teaching jobs for which they are handsomely paid. It is therefore, very easy for any one to agree with the conclusion which some people have drawn to the effect that the decline in the standard of education particularly at the primary and secondary school levels is attributable to lack of dedication on the part of many teachers in our schools. I have, however, gathered with pleasure that the State Governments who have responsibility for these levels of education have taken bold steps to strengthen the inspectorate arm of their Ministries of Education with a view to ensuring that headmasters and teachers perform according to the standards laid down for them.

In this brief address, I have argued and probably justified the need for an exercise in SPIRITUAL RENEWAL. I have also touched on the gross indiscipline, disrespect to constituted authorities in our educational, economic and social sectors. I have also drawn attention to instability in families manifested in breakdowns of marriages and homes, gaps between parents and their children as well as the rapid social changes giving rise to friction in the existing system. I have also mentioned the vigorous efforts which the Federal Military Government and the State Governments have made in the way of establishing Councils and Committees for Education for citizenship to map out appropriate programmes as well as

the promulgation of tough decrees on Foreign Exchange, Price Control, Smuggling, etc. to arrest the situation. Finally, educational authorities have also shown their concern for the decline in standards in primary and secondary schools and they are taking bold steps to strengthen their inspectorate arms.

While all these steps are worthwhile and commendable, they are legal instruments which can only work if they are backed-up by the change of heart of each and everyone of us in this country. In other words, unless there is spiritual rejuvenation or according to the theme of this Synod: SPIRITUAL RENEWAL, it is most unlikely that much will come out of them. It is therefore my conviction that the role of religious leaders in this crusade cannot be over-emphasised. By virtue of your access to the hearts and souls of your adherents, you are capable of wielding a great deal of influence on them. I have no doubt, therefore, that appropriate programmes will be developed to continue to inculcate in your followers the need for concern for our fellow men, self-sacrifice, honesty, love, brotherhood, dedication, diligence, loyalty and so on.

The Military Administrator, My Lord, the Chief Judge, Members of the State Executive Council, My Lords Spiritual and Temporal, Distinguished Religious Leaders and Synod Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish the Synod a successful and fruitful deliberations. May the Almighty God bless the Egba/Egbado Diocese and let it grow from strength to strength.

Thank you.

WE are delighted that you chose our City as the venue for your 1984 Biennial Conference. We welcome you most heartily and wish you very successful deliberations.

You are meeting at a time when far-reaching changes are taking place within our Nation following the overthrow of the last Civilian Government and the threatening collapse of the National economy. I believe that your organisation and other religious bodies have a role to play in assisting the new Military Administration to re-order our Society in the interests of all of us. We must admit that if those time-tested social values which are rooted in the teaching of the great religions like Islam and Christianity have been duly observed by the over-whelming majority of Nigerians who profess these religions, we would not be where we are today: violent changes would not occur in our Government, corruption would not have been so profound and widespread; hoarding which all religions denounce would not be indulged in by our traders; armed robbery would not be rampant; nor would Nigeria hold a leading position in drug abuse.

Judging by the achievements of your society since its foundation over three score years ago, I am confident that you have a lot to contribute in bringing about the desired changes in our country and in advancing the cause of Islam which is your main objective. I shall always applaud the Society's Educational Programme and the troubles taken over the years to adapt it to suit prevailing conditions. Thus when it was important to give priority to Western-type general education, your Society built a number of schools to enable many Muslim children to acquire general education. These primary and post-primary institutions were found in every nook and corner of Nigeria. When our Governments in their wisdom decided to take over schools, your Society readily complied and shifted your interest into another desirable area, namely giving Islamic education to your children so that their knowledge of the religion could be more thorough.

Being an address by HRM, Alayeluwa Oba Oyebade Lipede, the Alake of Egbaland presented at the Ansar-Ud-Deen Society of Nigeria's Biennial Conference held at Ogun State Hotel, Banquet Hall Abeokuta on 20th April 1984.

But before I end this address, let me issue a caution to your society. You should do nothing that would give the impression that you are a distinct group from the rest of the Muslim Community.

The Society should see itself as operating under the umbrella of the Central Mosque of each town where it has a branch. Thus while the growing size of Muslim worshippers may necessitate having more than one Jumat Mosque, everything should be done to ensure that Eld Prayers which are said twice a year are held in one praying ground behind the Chief Imam of the town.

I am very pleased to observe that this is what obtains in my domain. The Members of Ansar-Ud-Deen Society observe their Eld Prayers behind the Chief Imam of Abeokuta. Moreover, some of your leading members including your National Vice-President and State Chairman, Alhaji A. A. Adenekan holds a senior title in the Central Mosque. He is very active within the Muslim Community as a whole and as Osi of Egba Muslims he is one of my worthy Chiefs. I commend the religious leadership that he and his colleagues have been giving to Egbaland.

I would also like your Society to team up with other Muslim groups to strengthen Islamic unity. That done, another step should be taken to bring the Christians and Muslims together to discuss from time to time common matters of interest to the two religions. In this way, it would be possible for the leaders of the two religions - Christianity and Islam, to take a common position on number of issues such as the need to include religious instructions in the school curriculum.

Once more, I welcome you all and pray that your Conference would be a great success and that your Society would grow from strength to strength. Insha Allah.

WE are happy to welcome your Lordship, the Most reverend Robert Runcie, the Arch-bishop of Canterbury to this great city of Abeokuta, capital of Ogun State of Nigeria.

This is the first occasion when an Arch-bishop of Canterbury will visit Abeokuta, although it was some 139 years ago when Chief Sodeke, as the Military Officer then administering the old Kingdom of Egbaland, received with warm embrace the Reverend Henry Townsend, of blessed memory, when he first arrived at Abeokuta on 4th January, 1843 to commence his missionary work.. We are happy that the good work which the late Reverend Henry Townsend and a host of the other Church Missionary Society Priests did in Egbaland has yielded fruits ten thousand-fold. The outward manifestation of this can be seen in the establishment of many Anglican Churches in the length and breadth of Egbaland, with many thousands of faithfuls, culminating in the establishment of the Egba/Egbado Diocese of the Anglican Church which was formally inaugurated at an impressive ceremony performed by the Arch-bishop of the then Province of West Africa, the Most Reverend H. N. D. C. Scott at the Cathedral of Saint Peter, Ake, Abeokuta on 3rd August, 1976.

We are proud to acknowledge openly today that the relationship between Egbaland (first, as the then Egba United Government, later, as part of the Federal Republic of Nigeria) and the government of United Kingdom has been mutually beneficial. The first institutions of learning in Egbaland were established and run by the Missionaries. The first medical care delivery institutions in Egbaland were established and run by the Missionaries. Trade and commerce flourished as a result of the interaction with the Missionaries and the British Government.

The first divine service ever to be held at Abeokuta was held on 5th January, 1843, and the preacher was Mr. (later) Reverend Henry Townsend with Mr. Andrew Wilhelm as his interpreter. In order to

Being an address by HRM. Oba Oyebade Lipede, the Alake of Egbaland presented to the Most Reverend Robert Runcie, the Arch-Bishop of Canterbury on the occasion of his visit to Abeokuta on 20th April, 1982.

cement and strengthen the bonds of religious association between Egbaland and the Government of Great Britain, Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, of blessed memory, presented two neatly bound Bibles (one in Arabic and one in English, there being no Yoruba at that time) with a letter addressed to the people of Egbaland which was received and read at a general meeting of Egba Chiefs on 23rd March, 1849. In 1904 when the late Oba Gbadebo I, Alake, and some of his chiefs paid a State visit to England, His late Majesty, King Edward VII presented the late Oba Gbadebo I, Alake, with a copy of the Holy Bible to replace the original one given by Queen Victoria in 1848 (but received in 1849) which had been destroyed by fire. In 1980, to mark the 150th anniversary of Egba settlement in Abeokuta, His Excellency, Sir Marvyn Brown, the Higher Commissioner for the United Kingdom in Nigeria presented on behalf of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, a new volume of the Holy Scriptures to us on Sunday, 21st December, 1980.

It is therefore with great pleasure that we, on behalf of our sectional Obas, Chiefs and people of Egbaland, welcome the Most reverend Robert Runcie, the Arch-bishop of Canterbury to Abeokuta this glorious day. We wish Your Lordship a very pleasant stay in Abeokuta, in particular and Nigeria in general and we are sure that when Your Lordship will return to the shores of the United Kingdom, Your Lordship will carry back with you sweet memories of this historic visit.

Thank you and God bless you all.

Oyebade Lipede on Development

THE laudable project would stand for ever as a symbol of Egba unity and solidarity. This noble gesture is a welcome re-enactment of the legendary team spirit of our ancestors who in unity threw off the yoke of the Alaafin of Oyo in ancient times, repelled the ferocious attacks of the Dahomeyans under the leadership of their war-like King Gezzo, and successfully resisted for a long time foreign rule when the rest of Nigeria was already subjugated by Imperial Britain.

Many of you would remember that twenty years ago, when I ascended the throne, I made a clarion call on all Egba sons and daughters to rally round me to transform Abeokuta into a modern city. In particular, I appealed to Egbas living abroad to return home to put up their own houses in Abeokuta. The response was most impressive. Today, there are beautiful houses erected here and there, so much that when Abeokuta assumed a new status as State Capital, housing the public officials who flock the city, did not pose a serious problem.

However, much still remains to be done, for Abeokuta still lags behind as a state capital compared to its counterparts for the states created in 1976. In this respect, Ogun State Government as well as the Federal Government should have a fresh look at Abeokuta and its needs as a State Capital, in particular with a view to stepping up its physical development.

Being a speech delivered by H.R.M. Oba Oyebade Lipede, the Alake of EgbaLand on the occasion of the commissioning of the Community Hospital Built by the Joint Action Committee (JAC) of Egba Clubs at Asero on Saturday May 2, 1992.

I am of course convinced that Abeokuta would thrive better and look more beautiful if the city and its environs are industrialised. Industrialisation is a joint responsibility of the government and the people. The three tiers of government: Federal, State and Local, should provide the infrastructure and the enabling environment for industrial ventures. The citizens, on their part, should be enterprising and patriotic enough to site industries in their home towns. I would like my subjects to give serious thoughts to this matter and to respond positively as they have done in respect of housing development. The collective efforts which produced this Community Hospital can be extended to industrial activities. We must break the myth that the Egbas cannot combine successfully in business ventures.

Chief Olatunde Abudu, the Chairman of JAC took the lead in the industrial crusade about a decade ago when he attracted three industries in one fell swoop to Abeokuta. That feat is yet to be equalled by any. But I am confident that the biggest benefactor of this Community Hospital Project, our illustrious son, M. K. O. Abiola, my Bobagunwa, would before long focus his attention on the industrial needs of his native city.

At this juncture, let me, on behalf of Egba people, acknowledge the gesture of the Federal Military Government in taking over the State Hospital at Idi Aba. The Minister of Health and Human Services, the Hon. Professor Olikoye Ransome-Kuti, a public spirited, highly motivated and dedicated Minister, deserves a glowing tribute for all he has done to improve the Nation's Health delivery system. His hard work and total commitment have paid off very well. For when he became Minister in 1985, the health facilities in the country were in a parlous state. Today the story is different. For the Egbas, charity does not always begin at home, for we are by nature too selfless.

This probably explains why the Federal presence in the Health Sector in Abeokuta, the seat of Ogun State Government, has come only on the last lap of the present Administration. We would however make one plea though, that the Hon. Minister of Health should leave no stones unturned to ensure that the facilities at the State Hospital, Idi Aba are

updated, before he leaves office at the end of the year.

Finally, I have an advice for JAC. It is most difficult and extremely expensive for a Social Club to equip, maintain and administer a modern hospital to the required standard. JAC is therefore advised to content itself with just the provision of the hospital building, hand the same to the State or Federal Government. Indeed, the Federal Government could use the premises as an Annexe to the State Hospital, Idi Aba, which is just round the corner, thanks to the good road network around here.

Once more, I commend JAC and all the affiliated Egba Clubs for this wonderful achievement and call on them to embark immediately on a similar useful project to the glory of Egbaland, and the progress of Ogun State and our beloved country, Nigeria.

Many thanks to you all.

Oyebade Lipede on Politics

WE are gathered here this afternoon to reflect on the political future of our country, Nigeria which we have all freely and proudly adopted as our Nation.

We may all have some misgiving about her performance since Independence, about how our political affairs have been conducted, about the lost opportunities which, if they had been properly seized, we would not be where we are to-day politically or economically. But we cannot cry for ever over spilled milk. Our duty now is to repair the damage of the past and move resolutely into the future in a concerted effort to create a new Nation, politically stable and economically vibrant.

But our dream of a greater tomorrow would come to nought unless the right political order is established.

The Egba people as an integral part and parcel of the Nigerian Nation deeply concerned about the future, have decided to hold this Special Session of their highest political organ, the Egba Chieftaincy Council. This Council has a long history pre-dating the colonial era. The British had nothing but administration for it when they just had contact with it in the 1840's. But as the colonising mission progressed, the British began to erode our Traditional system until the substance of it was thrown out in favour of the British System.

Sadly when our politicians began to agitate for constitutional reforms and independence, they ignored the traditional system and opted

Being an address delivered by HRM, Oba Oyebade Lipede, the Alake of Egbaland at the Special Public Session of Egba Chieftaincy Council Convened to Discuss the Future Political System Envisaged For Nigeria held on Thursday, September 25, 1986 at the Centenary Hall, Ake, Abeokuta.

for the alien British System, perhaps because that was what they understand best or because they felt obliged to impress the Colonial Master that they were capable of operating successfully the British System if political power was handed over to them.

Now that we have experienced the British Parliamentary System as well as the American Presidential System, all to no avail, has the time not come for us to do that which we ought to have done some fifty or more years ago, namely, to examine our traditional system with a view to drawing substantially from it in structuring a new political system for Nigeria.

It is my candid view that because we had opted for political systems not really rooted in our past, we have continuously groped in the dark. I urge us to retrace our steps, pick the traditional torch we had left behind and beam its light into the political future we are evolving.

We the Egbas strongly believe that our traditional model of government has a significant relevance for the new Nigeria. This Special Session of Egba Chieftaincy Council will focus attention on that Model. We urge the Nation to evaluate the Model and adopt those aspects of it that would enhance the effective governance of our country. We do not claim all-sufficiency for the system, rather, our position is that many of its features would suit our political needs. Where the Model is deficient, the Nation would be justified in borrowing from elsewhere. Britain, America, Soviet Union, or even China. We should be open to all but not closed to our own.

I welcome you all to this important Debate. Your contributions should be frank and constructive. At the end of it all, we would collate all the view-points into a Memorandum which we intend to forward to the political Bureau as Egba contribution to the National Political Debate.

May I in conclusion wish this historic session fruitful deliberations. To demonstrate the importance I attach to the exercise. I shall be with you throughout the proceedings.

Long live Nigeria and may Egbaland continue to flourish.

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you all to this meeting on behalf of the Ogun State Council of Obas. As indicated in the letter of invitation, we in the Ogun State Council of Obas representing all the Obas in this State have considered it desirable to have a heart-to-heart talk with you the Leaders of the six Political parties in the State and the State Commissioner of Police on the very important question of the maintenance of peace during the current electioneering campaigns and the forthcoming series of elections. We are meeting you this morning as fathers of all our people, including your goodselves, and we hope that our appeals will be given the traditional regard they deserve.

We are, of course, mindful of the fact that peaceful co-existence is a matter which should be of the utmost importance to you too, because we have no doubt that political parties exist for the people as they are expected to usher in, using the well known cliché, "a Government of the people by the people for the people." We wish to appeal to you the leaders to impress it upon your supporters that the welfare of the people who your parties are eager to rule should be supreme in all that they do whether before, during or even after political campaigns. It is stating the obvious to say that people who are maimed by the so-called political stalwarts may, in the end, not be able to cast their votes during the elections, and so unruly behaviours and wanton destruction of lives and properties by political supporters are counter productive and they should be deprecated.

We appreciate the fact that as we move nearer the elections, the political tempo is bound to increase but we are convinced that, given the necessary maturity on all sides, political campaigns can still be conducted in a reasonably peaceful atmosphere. Experiences have shown that wherever there is commotion, it is the masses for whom the political parties are supposed to cater that always suffer. We have read in the newspapers some disturbing reports of clashes among political parties

Being an address delivered by HRM, Oba Oyebade Lipede, the Alake of Egbaland at a meeting held by the Ogun State Council of Obas with Leaders of the six Political Parties in the state and the Commissioner of Police at Afin Ake Hall, Abeokuta on Thursday, 2nd of June, 1983.

resulting in serious injuries to opponents and destruction of valuable properties. We are worried by these ominous signs and we would want political parties to do all in their powers to contain such behaviours. After all, whichever party wins hopes to govern healthy and happy people should always be supreme in your considerations. We therefore appeal to you in the name of all that is good and honourable to conduct your electioneering campaign in as peaceful an atmosphere as is humanly possible. You should avoid bitterness in all that you do because, as we are all aware, bitterness generates personal animosity which is invariably disruptive to the happiness of the people. We enjoin you political leaders to watch your words and ensure that your supporters refrain from all acts of thuggery at all times.

We will be happy to see that you conduct your campaign as mature politicians and worthy leaders our people. We also appeal to the Commissioner of Police to ensure that his men handle their delicate assignments with all sense of responsibility and dedication to the cause of the nation. We appeal to you all to feel free to speak out at this meeting and let us have your ideas as to how all the political campaigns and the subsequent elections can be peacefully conducted, bearing in mind the fervent hope of all us here gathered that the tree which we are jointly planting today will grow and yield the desired fruits of which we and posterity shall be proud.

In concluding this short opening address, we would like to remind you of the immortal words of Socrates that "those who want to move the world must first of all move themselves."

Distinguished Party Leaders, Commissioner of Police Gentlemen,
we thank you all most sincerely for attending this meeting.

May God bless you all.

Oyebade Lipede on Judiciary

YOU are gathered on the spot where many decades ago, the most important decisions affecting Egba people were taken including matters of life and death, liberty and property. Our predecessors as Rulers presided over the highest Judicial Tribunal in the land. Through a most intricate appeal system, the final decision in any dispute was entered here in Ake, hence the saying of our people: *Ejo ku s' Ake*. (Literally meaning, the case has died in Ake). All that is no more now. The native wisdom of our people has been jettisoned in judicial matters, for imported norms, principles and procedures. Customary Law is only alive today in the smallest matters and before the most inferior Courts in the land.

This development appears irreversible and I do not intend to indulge in a romantic nostalgia. Rather, I only wish to avail myself of the rare opportunity of a massive judicial presence in my Palace to ask whether the solution we have adopted as a Nation was necessarily the best in our circumstances. Why did we meekly submit to the legal domination of the Colonial Master in our early encounter with their legal system? If such a surrender was inevitable in the hey days of colonialism, when freedom and independence came, why did we not opt for legal acculturation, in which we would select the best norms and procedures from our Traditional System of Justice and the British Common Law and Equity? Such blend of the best from both world's would certainly have served us better.

In spite of the decisive preference for the British Judicial system in our country, there are still complaints about the performance of our modern

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Courts. Some of these complaints, admittedly, are exaggerated. But attention should nonetheless be paid to them, so as to improve the quality of justice and thereby secure the confidence of the people. For example, we laymen have always wondered why sentencing decisions should vary so widely from court to court and from Judge to Judge in similar cases, even though we accept the theory that punishment should fit the particular criminal. Similarly, damages awarded in libel cases are not always consistent. Again, why should the judicial process be so slow and expensive?

It is therefore necessary to convince the populace that our judicial system is rational and not arbitrary and that the criteria applied in adjudication are consistent.

Bearing in mind that neither the universities nor the Nigeria Law School teach Judicial Methods to our future lawyers and Judges, a forum is certainly needed for our Judges to acquire the techniques of sound adjudication, and update their learning from time to time. I understand the lectures which you are here to attend in Abeokuta are a prelude to the establishment of a permanent Institute for the Judiciary. This development is most welcome. I commend the Federal Military Government for the concern it is showing in this matter. It is gladdening to hear President Ibrahim Babangida himself declare in Abuja, a few days ago that the Institute for the Training of Judges is to materialise shortly.

The Nation looks forward to a virile Judiciary in this country and one which is well-equipped to serve the Nation competently. This is because the Judiciary is the guarantor of our Constitution, the umpire between the government and the people, the last hope of the lowliest citizen in the safeguard of his person, liberty, property and indeed his aspirations in life. By the same token, the authorities should improve the conditions of service of our Judges, sustain their independence and protect them from intimidation. This is the way to ensure a sober, wise and courageous Bench, dedicated to the highest standards of justice.

May God continue to guide you all aright in the great work you are doing. I assure you we appreciate you Judges collectively and severally.

Assessment of Oyebade Lipede by others

HERE is the Paramount Ruler of Egbaland, educated and well enlightened, wealthy before ascending the throne, yet humble, God-fearing and at home with all his subjects at all levels of life. An ideal monarch.

Since ascending the throne in 1972, through the encouragement and persuasion of Oba Lipede, a large number of Egba indigenes have built houses in Abeokuta and, more or less, settled at home. A few have established industries.

The Kabiyesi also worked hard to ensure that Federal Government higher institutions were located in Egbaland.

All this contributed in no small measure to the development of Egbaland since 1972.

Oba Oyebade Lipede is highly respected and loved in and outside Egbaland. He is well known for not running after what the Government can do for him personally, but what the Government can do to enhance the welfare of his people.

May the Almighty ELEDUMARE grant our Paramount Ruler good health and longer life on the throne.

**Chief Adebisi MacGregor
Oluwo of Ilawo, Egba Oke-Ona,
Lisa of Egbaland.**

I HAVE had the honour and privilege of working close to the Palace as a member of various Committees in Egbaland. This gave me the opportunity of being able to access Kabiyesi and appreciate his sterling qualities.

The first thing that struck me is his fear of God, his Christian values, his love for his fatherland, and his pride to see Egba sons and daughters

excelling in their various calling.

As a Christian, and a devout one, Kabiyesi never misses attending his Church, unless he is out of town. He will sit through the service, and participate fully. One of many occasions when you see Kabiyesi beaming with smiles and with his royal guard down, dancing and weaving is when he goes to the Altar for Thanksgiving. It is a thing of joy to watch him and share the electric moment with him. His favourite song being Hymn No. 178.

As a patriot, he, from the day of his installation, pleaded, cajoled, requested, blackmailed, forced, used all means to ensure Egba sons and daughters come home to built houses and factories and develop their fatherland. The Egba people owe to Kabiyesi the fact that the "Egba abroad" now come home to build houses, factories, etc. Another ceremony he enjoys so much is performing house or factory opening ceremonies. You watch him. He would be all smiles, very happy, and very relaxed.

That Egba sons and daughters now come home to accept chieftancy titles is due to the encouragement of Kabiyesi Oba Oyebade Lipede.

His 25 years reign has been a great and unprecedented period of blessings and economic, educational, and industrial development in Egbaland. Soon after his installation came the creation of Ogun State with Abeokuta as the Capital. This historic event was soon followed by various development such as establishment of Federal University of Technology (FUTAB), now known as University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (UNAAB). The establishment of Ogun State Broadcasting Service, Ogun State Television Service, OGBC II, Federal Medical Centre, Idi-Aba, The New Stadium, Federal Secretariat Complex, State Secretariat Complex, OPIC Building, Ogun State Hotel, Oba Lipede Market, State Parastatal Complex, Chief S. O. Adebo Library, State Cultural Centre, Establishment of Gateway Bank, Modernisation of Olumo Rock as a Tourist Centre, Expansion of Branches of Banks, the establishment of many Industries in Abeokuta. The New Alake's Palace, the New Agura's Palace, The New Olowu's Palace, etc.. to name a

few. These additions within the period of Kabiyesi's reign more than emphasise, the tremendous stride and contributions made to the development of Egbaland.

Another quality of Kabiyesi is his humble disposition, his approachability, and the reliance on the talent of his Chiefs, their advice and support at all times. His receptiveness to wise counsel has no doubt yielded fruit and made his reign an enviable one in the history of Egbaland,

Kabiyesi is also noted for giving fatherly advice to any of his people that needs it. He also warns people to change from their bad ways that can tarnish the image of Egbaland.

Kabiyesi is quick to chastise any erring Egba son or daughter, and for this he is known to be very outspoken. He hates any behaviour of an Egba son that will bring a slur to the image of Egbaland.

Kabiyesi is dedicated to the Unity of Egbaland. He preaches this at every opportunity and would sacrifice his time for anything that will cement that unity. He believed in the unity of Egbaland so much that when he was settling up the Committee to build the new Alake's Palace, he made an Oke-Ona Chief the Chairman, with the membership fully representative of all Egba sections. The same thing goes for the Lisabi Day Celebration Committee with membership spread over all areas of Egba.

Until recently, no one ever asks, discusses, or notes, where and Egba man comes from. All we know is the whether we meet in Kaduna, Kano, Lagos, London, or New York, we are all Egba people. That is how it was, that's why our forefathers established Egba United Kingdom. That's how it should be. That is what Kabiyesi Oba Oyebade Lipede, the 9th Alake of Egbaland stands for.

I am sure two of the cardinal points of Kabiyesi's reign are peace and unity, and the Almighty God has in His infinite mercy added on to these, development and prosperity of Egbaland.

His Royal Majesty will go down in history as the most committed, devoted, progressive and outward going monarch ever to reign in Egbaland.

I feel proud to be an Egba man. May God continue to give him the patience of Job and the wisdom of Solomon. in the discharge of his onerous duties, so that in the end, he will bequeath to us all, the bastion of unity for which our forefathers fought gallantly, and cherished proudly.

**Chief A. A. Popoola,
Baaye of Oke-Ona, Bajilo of Egbaland**

ACCORDING to the records found in St. Peter's School, Ake, Abeokuta which was founded in 1842, Kabiyesi was registered with number 2212 as Michael Lipede on the 16th of Nov. 1924 by the then Head teacher Mr. J. A. Ewumi.

Kabiyesi's birthday was recorded as 26 : 1 : 15 in volume 1 of the school admission register.

As for his academic performance the Manager who inspected the school at the time wrote SATISFACTORY and rated the school as one of the best in the province.

MY Pastor had once described Kabiyesi as "a humble man and a man after the heart of God." This was at the time the chapel in his palace was consecrated for the worship of God Almighty, and I had fellowship with him there at the chapel on few occasions.

When I assumed the position of headship of this school in Feb. 1995 and I learnt that this school was founded 1842, I got interested in who and who had passed through the historic school. I wanted to re-organise inter-house sports competition in the school and also called for Old-Pupils' Association for the school which I think is best for the development of education.

I discovered then that many important personalities like His Majesty, Oba Oyebade Lipede of Egbaland, His wife, Olori Bimpe Lipede, Pa Ayodeji, the Balogun Ake Christians, Pa Omotesho and Chief E. O. Akala had passed through this school (to mention just a few)

Kabiyesi was the first person I contacted as an old pupil about the School's Annual Inter-house Sports Competition. He accepted the patronship of the house "Lipede House" of St. Peter's Anglican School,

Ake. He sent his chiefs, his staff of office and donated a lump sum of money with which a Savings Account was opened for the school. Kabiyesi made a success of the 1996 Inter-house Sport of St. Peter's School, Ake.

May his reign forever know the fullness of joy. Amen.

LONG LIVE KABIYESI

**Mrs. J. A. Fajuyitan,
Headteacher,
St. Peter's Primary School,
Ake, Abeokuta**

THE information obtained from the School Admissions Register shows that Michael Lipede was admitted into the Abeokuta Grammar School in 1932. He left Abeokuta Grammar School for C.M.S. Grammar School in 1933. The reason for his transfer to C.M.S. Grammar School was attributed to the death of his father.

I, the incumbent Principal of Abeokuta Grammar School, was also an old boy of the school. I was in the Sixth Form in 1972 when Kabiyesi Oba Oyebade Lipede ascended the throne of the Alake of Egbaland. I could recall the role played by the Staff and Students of Abeokuta Grammar School at the Coronation.

Incidentally, I was one of the students that represented Abeokuta Grammar School at the Coronation Service. Today, I am the Principal of the famous Abeokuta Grammar School. I also recalled with pride the various roles the Alake of Egbaland, Oba Oyebade Lipede, has played in the upliftment of Abeokuta Grammar School to its present enviable position of a model school.

On behalf of the Board of Governors, the Principal, staff and present students of the Abeokuta Grammar School, I wish our Alayeluwa, the Alake of Egbaland, Oba Oyebade Mofolorunso Lipede a very happy anniversary and more successful years on the throne.

Ki Ade pe lori
Ki bata pe lese,

Esin Oba a joko pe (Amin)
Kabiyesi

Mr. Funso Ogun
Principal, Abeokuta Grammar School,
Abeokuta

OBA Oyebade came from an enlightened family, in fact the Lipede family was one of the earliest families that first imbibed Christianity along with Western Education. This could be attested to by the fact that all his brothers and sisters were educated. His statement that “If his (Oyebade) senior brothers were to be alive, he would not be less than 100 years old” means that they had welcomed education in the family since a hundred years ago.

Oba Oyebade is a gentleman, a pious Christian, kind-hearted, a good mixer with the old and young. In his earlier days, he has always joined his group in the development of Erunwon. He had been secretary to the Development Committee since 1964. It was on record that Oba Lipede with Chief Solo Ogundiran and Late Chief Shonekan (father of Chief Ernest Shonekan, Chairman Vision 2010) supported and heavily financed the construction of the first road in Erunwon in 1964. This road was constructed to make Shonekan’s house accessible. The same year, Chief Shonekan (senior) was installed Odofin of Itoko and Odofin of Erunwon the same day.

He is a lover of peace and has been involved in settling of disputes among subjects and even among Obas. On ascension to the throne, he was involved in bridging the gap which had been created as a result of the strained relationship between the former Oba and politicians.

Before Oyebade Lipede became the Alake of Egbaland, Egba people outside the city were scared of coming home talk less of erecting buildings. It was Oba Lipede who made a clarion call on all and sundry to come home and build. And like a magic, citizens speedily responded and spiritedly got involved in the development of Abeokuta.

Oba Lipede also encouraged all mushroom business people in Abeokuta then to start using bank facilities for the growth of their businesses.

In 1974, he made a very fruitful contact with the Federal Government in the rebuilding of Trunk A road from Lagos to Ibadan passing through Abeokuta. This was also the year we first witnessed a spectacular beautification of Abeokuta. The roads were widened and were also beautified with modern street lights to replace the old ones.

In 1975/76, Oba Lipede encouraged youths in the agitation for state creation and the memorandum for Ogun/Yewa State which was partially granted with creation of Ogun State. Abeokuta today is a competitive modern town. There were quite a number of developmental structures that sprang up during the last 25 years of Lipede's efforts. Among such monumental structures are markets, many schools, new roads, hospitals, hotels, Ogun State Radio and Television Stations with new towns that developed and grew like Idi Aba, Sabo, as well as the building of the new bridge otherwise known as the second bridge. The town Abeokuta has witnessed real act of modernisation.

Highly respected even among Obas and subjects, Oba Lipede has been a pacesetter, a trainer, a father and an oba to all. He is one Oba who has made his education, exposure and connection to bear on his obaship and in the development and administration of Abeokuta.

**Chief ' Sesan Soluade
The Balogun of Erunwon and Agbaakin
of Egba Christians.**

MY dad and Oba Lipede were of the same father. They lived together here for about eight years when Oba Lipede was schooling in Lagos. My dad brought him to Lagos and he attended C.M.S. Grammar School, Lagos.

I knew Oba Lipede to be a very humble person and loyal. He took good care of me being a younger person to him. He was the one who took us to school until he started work at Customs. He was gentle and was very obedient to his brother with whom he was living. His qualities then had built him up to become a very successful Oba.

**Mrs. Badejoko Owoyele
Ibukun Ola Lodge, 3, Pike Street,
Lagos.**

Oba Oyebade Lipede has not changed his attitude to life. He has been a very humble person and has remained so. Twenty -five years ago, he ascended the throne of his forefathers, but I have been very closely associated with him since 1959 - about 40 years ago. I have known him and as his cousin, I am able to say he has not changed.

There were seven contestants to the throne of Alake of Egbaland and 30 Kings-Makers and I am the only one still alive. At the selection meeting, not all of them attended the meeting where seven candidates were presented scores Oba Oyebade Lipede had 17, another candidate had three, and the other scored zero.

His first assignment on ascending the throne was the installation of two general title chiefs - the Odofin Egba, Chief D. A. Adeyinka and myself as the Apena Egba.

We were told that during the reign of the 9th Alake prosperity will return to Egbaland, that the population will increase tremendously and the general relationship of the people will be more cordial. When it fell on Oyebade Lipede to be the 9th Alake, we found that these predictions appeared to be correct. There was great influx of Egba sons and daughters from near and far acceding to the request of Oba Lipede to come home and build houses to change the old and dilapidated ones in the town. One can see now that this call has not only been acceded to but has been improved as the population has been increased and beautiful houses have adorned the whole place.

A group of Egba gathered themselves together and established a club, Abeokuta Club, on his coronation day and one of them single-handedly established a guest house at Isabo, and most of the members were allotted plots at the housing corporation Area to build houses. Later the Alake called on them to come home and establish industries so as to provide work for the people instead of going to Lagos and Ibadan for work. Some of them came home and established industries. Among them were Chief Tunde Abudu, who established five industries; ceramic industries at Ogunmakin in Egba Obafemi/Owode, and another one at Ibafo apart from small-scale industries which plotted the areas.

A number of industries are now planned for Abeokuta called the

Three Cees industries which is to deal in cement. A sugar industry at Papalanto, the Premier Paints Industry at Ifo by Chief Ogo-Oluwa Bankole, these are all within the jurisdiction of the Alake. The foam industry at Asero by Chief Ewuoso, the Oluwo of Ikija is also worthy of mention. There is hope for many more now and in the years to come.

Apart from that, Alake Lipede has drawn close to himself Egba sons and daughters at home and abroad. He personally attends their functions and particularly joins in the opening of their new houses or any project that is capable of improving the economic situation of Egbaland. One quality that he has is that he is easily accessible to all without discrimination irrespective of whichever part of Egba one comes from. He is accessible and helpful to people who call on him.

Oba Oyebade Lipede is very humble and he is always giving consideration to advice from his chiefs before taking action that would affect any citizen or the general administration of Egbaland. He is one of the obas and perhaps the only one who put the need and welfare of his people before his own personal interest. It is on record that he is one of the obas who never asked for government contracts or any thing that would benefit himself only. His request to governments or to anybody that can be of any assistance to him is on how to improve Abeokuta. His reign has been a great blessing to all and sundry.

**Chief 'Toye Coker, (S.A.N.)
The Apena of Egbaland.**

Oba Lipede is a Christian, a devoted husband, a contented man and a God-fearing individual. He is humble and a man that believes very much in God.

Oba Oyebade Lipede is a good confidant, a mentor and a man who strongly believes that with God, all things are possible. Oba Oyebade Lipede is both a father and a husband. He is a good pillar and a good leader. Since his ascension to the throne, Egbaland has progressed immensely. All thanks to God for this in the life of Oba Lipede.

I have been able to cope as an Oba's wife and as a banker because Oba Lipede has been an understanding husband. Despite the age gap between the two of us, the love that existed between us has kept us together.

The understanding of Oba Lipede has enabled me to cope as a wife and as a banker. He has given me enough cooperation and in fact, he has been a great influence on me. He has always approved all I do and without him, I would not have achieved as much. Our marriage relationship has been blessed with a baby girl, Adeluola who is about 23 years of age now.

Apart from being an Oba, Oyebade Lipede is a philanthropist who has the love of everybody at heart irrespective of where you come from. He is a man who is always ready to assist in any situation.

Olori 'Bimpe Lipede

OBA Lipede has encouraged a lot of indigenes to locate their ancestral homes and to develop a place of their own in terms of building a befitting structure for themselves. In times past it was not like that.

It was during the reign of Oba Lipede and in fact his open-door policy that brought about the A. G. Leventis - Egba Scholarship scheme which was founded by the A.G. Leventis Foundation to award scholarship to Egba indigenes in Universities in Nigeria annually. So far, a total of fifteen post-graduate and twelve undergraduate scholarships have been awarded up to 1996. There is a plan underway to expand the scope to cover the Polytechnics throughout the academic period with the influence of Oba Lipede. The cost of the scholarship up to last year was N12,000 for undergraduates and N15,000 for post-graduate.

It is on record that A.G. Leventis, who was the first Babalaje of Egbaland started his business in Abeokuta. Such conglomerates of A.G. Leventis like Coca-Cola are still big-time Business in Abeokuta till today.

Chief A. T. Abolurin
The Odole of Egbaland

I COULD remember the day Oba Lipede became the 9th Alake of Egbaland. On the third day, the newly crowned Oba rode on a white horse amidst poms and pageantry and people were too many. I was in primary one at Abeokuta Local Government Primary School which was then located inside Ake palace and was not able to see him because of the crowd. Oba Oyebade Lipede's reign has been peaceful and has

contributed immensely to the growth and development of Egbaland.

Akeem Olaotan
A taxi driver from Agooko
Abeokuta.

Oba Lipede and I have known each other since we were about nine years old. His father and my father were very good friends and each of us used to carry his father's paraphernalia whenever we were privileged to accompany them to meetings.

Oba Lipede often reminds me of the occasion when my father stood surety for his, Oba Lipede's, elder brother when the latter worked for a commercial firm in Ibara. His brother unfortunately was defrauded by his customers and thereby lost a large sum of money. Oba Lipede's father was greatly perturbed by this incident, but my father told his friend not to worry and calmly paid the deficit. I knew nothing about this incident, but it is to the credit of Oba Lipede's integrity and humility that he has told me this story at least 5 five times during conversation since he came to the throne.

Oba Lipede's exemplary qualities have made him a very popular ruler in Egbaland. His coronation attracted tens of thousands of Egba sons and daughters to Abeokuta and a great many of these have now built modern houses of their own in Abeokuta while many more have modernised their family compounds.

He was a unifying factor among the Egbas although in recent years this unity seems to be threatened. This has now imposed a duty on the Oba to do everything possible and accept any reasonable sacrifice to promote this unity in order to protect the invaluable heritage he has bestowed on the Egbas during his long glorious reign.

Chief (Dr.) M. A. Majekodunmi
The Osin of Egbaland.

THE Egbas have been greatly blessed to have as our Ruler Alayeluwa Oba Oyabade Lipede.

He had brought with him to Egba throne a rich experience from both the public and private sectors, personal commitment, enlightenment,

a sense of unity and above all the fear of God. Little wonder that his reign has to-date been a great success.

The Egbas have always been in the forefront in virtually every sphere of life in Nigeria. Oba Lipede has not only consolidated these gains by his style of leadership, he has also extended the areas of achievements. Thus the kingdom has experienced an impressive physical development which is gradually blending with the status of Abeokuta as a State Capital.

Oba Lipede is an accessible Ruler who has maintained an open door policy, so that Ake Palace, more than ever before, has become a truly rallying point, radiating love and unity.

We who also are his Traditional Advisers have found our assignment easy for our King is ever receptive of new ideas, and tolerant of other views.

We are really happy with our Oba. He has been ruling over us competently, creditably, with dignity and honour. We love him and wish him many more years of progressive and happy reign as he strives to fulfil his historic mission.

**Chief (Dr.) Lateef Adegbite
Seriki of Egbaland.**

OBA Lipede is an uncle and apart from being a relative, I am also an adviser to Kabiyesi by virtue of my chieftancy title of Agbusi of Egbaland. At the time Kabiyesi ascended the throne, I was away in Britain but was back home in December 1972. Prior to his ascension to the throne and during his stay at NPMC, he was a regular caller at our house at 48, Offin Road, Lagos to see his own uncles - Alhaji Tiamiyu and Amusa Egberongbe. He was ever ready to share his experiences about Government work and life generally. At the end of the visits, he always made it a point of duty to leave some cash which came handy those days.

When he attended the Festac '77 events in Kaduna in 1977 along with some other Western Region Obas, I was at that time working in the North, we all had a very nice time to the extent that his brother Obas wondered why I should remain up North. When I complained that the

family house would not be adequate for my family should I decide to return home and that there would be no job to come home to, he encouraged me to start the construction of a new building in the family compound at Ake. Kabiyesi arranged for the payment of all the building materials and supervision with my father's cooperation. Meanwhile, I sent him cheques in payment.

Oba Oyebade Lipede also encouraged me to secure employment in one of the State Corporations within the year, hence my homeward journey in April 1977. Kabiyesi's love and support for the extended family is intense as he always goes out of his way to unite and bring the family together.

Oba Lipede is calm, unruffled and not partisan. His goal is the peace and development of Egbaland. He will not quarrel about what goes to any section of the country but he is concerned whatever is due to the Egbas must not be denied them. He is forthrightness personified.

He regards all as his children and treat them alike. Even though he is a true Christian, he gives maximum support and assistance to adherents of other religions. Kabiyesi appreciates the value of education. He currently sponsors the education of a good number of children of the extended family and others.

Kabiyesi Oba Oyebade Lipede is a great clubman. He introduced me into the Apapa Club, Lagos which I joined in 1975 some twenty years back. Kabiyesi used to visit the club regularly. We used to play table tennis together and share some drinks thereafter. Kabiyesi is still very close to the activities and going on in all his clubs and attends their functions. In fact, in February 1997, Kabiyesi was one of the early arrivals at the Abeokuta Club Presidents Luncheon hosted at the club House by Chief Lamidi A. Sofenwa.

Engr. (Chief) Salih Egberongbe mni
The Agbusi of Egbaland

“UNEASY lies the head that wears a crown.” “Egba soro sin”. These are two sayings that come naturally to the Egba. Alayeluwa Oba (Dr.) Oyabade Lipede, the reigning Alake of the Egba, is fully aware of

these himself and they constitute a challenge which he has cheerfully accepted. It is the hazard of his occupation, so to speak, but how well has he prepared for his immense responsibility as the undoubted leader of the Egba people.

By the time Oyebade Lipede ascended the throne in 1972, Obaship had lost most of its erstwhile political lustre. Gone were the days when the Alake was the sole Native Authority; in the whirligig of time the Alake has become the "father of his people", a hardly articulated but none-the-less prestigious role. The Alake as the Paramount Ruler of the Egba people is one of four such rulers among whom rotates the Chairmanship of the Ogun State Council of Obas and he remains the Chairman of the Egba Traditional Council but these are essentially honorific positions when real political powers reside in the new Local Governments. Nevertheless, Oba Oyebade Lipede has accepted the challenge of his high traditional office and has seen in it a golden opportunity for promoting the welfare of all his people. He often refers to himself as a "chosen vessel by God" for the amelioration of the condition of Egba people, economically and socially, and he never tires of pleading their cause. Like a good Christian - and he is at Church every Sunday with the Olori, Adebimpe at the St. Peters Cathedral, Ake, unfailingly - he relies on the guidance of Almighty God in discharging his onerous responsibility as a Natural Ruler, knowing that ruling is beset with problems and no judge can satisfy all parties to a dispute at the same time by his pronouncement. Indeed "uneasy lies the head that wears a crown"; but to Oba Oyebade Lipede, a clearly enunciated policy geared towards the greatest good of the greatest number of his people provides a good balm to that uneasiness.

That policy has three planks. First comes his unfailing belief that the *raison d'etre* of his rulership is the preservation and protection of the well tested tradition of his people. The Egba *polis* is a traditional federation of four principal components. He is the paramount ruler but the sectional Obas are important rulers of their sections and must be accorded their due honour and dignity. The same goes for the District Obas and the Traditional General-titled Chiefs. The Alake is the rallying point of all the Egba and to derogate from that is to lead to chaos in the

well-ordered society which the Egba had inherited over the years. The next plank in his policy is that of developing Egbaland. With the early exposure of the Egba to Western education, they had been in the forefront in taking the benefits of their training to Lagos and all corners of Nigeria, to serve in the Civil Service, the Church and in Commerce; to raise families and build houses. An inhibition to return to Abeokuta was noticeable; the result was that the town exported talent for developing other places with only women, children and the aged largely inhabiting the old town. The new Alake was determined to redress the imbalance. At every opportunity, especially during the annual Coronation anniversary celebrations, he never tires of inviting the so-called "expatriate" Egba to return home and help to build a modern city at Abeokuta. The Alake himself led by example, built new houses of his own at Abeokuta, assisted would-be house owners to facilitate the acquisition of plots of land and when invited he never wavered to lend his August presence to their house warming occasions. The response to his call for the Egba to come home and build residential houses has been so magnificent that new mansions and well-designed houses have sprung up in impressive numbers in all the trunk road outlets from Abeokuta.

His third objective is his appeal to all Egba entrepreneurs and industrialists to come home and give the old town the benefit of their enterprising spirit. They should come home and build factories which offer employment to the people; for without jobs a town cannot be happily populated. The response here has also been encouraging, for numerous small scale industries have sprung up so that the Abeokuta - Lagos road is noticeably becoming an industrial zone, not to mention the impressive industrial establishments featuring at Ota within the old Egba Division of Abeokuta Province. Moreover, Kabiyesi, the Alake of Egbaland always seizes every opportunity to remind functionaries of the Federal Government that Government has neglected Abeokuta in particular and Egbaland in general in its disposition of industrial developments. Projects earmarked for Abeokuta were invariably withdrawn later. A recent example, which also emphasized the intensity of the Alake's concern, was the cancellation of the dual carriage way express road earmarked for the Ewekoro-Abeokuta Road at the inception of the General Abacha Administration. The Alake,

accompanied by some of his Chiefs, stormed Abuja to protest only to return with the proverbial promise that the project would be restored as soon as Government's finances improved. His endeavours to ensure the continuance of a Federal University at Abeokuta, after the Federal University of Technology, Abeokuta (FUTAB) was re-christened the "Abeokuta Campus" of the University of Lagos eventually succeeded with the establishment of the Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (UNAAB) and the Alake secured for the new University its expansive land in the Abeokuta - Alabata area where an impressive campus is now being developed.

Oba Oyebade Lipede has been able to adapt himself to the changing political scene, from military to civilian and then back to military in 1983/84. He has demonstrated outstanding qualities of leadership during the varying regimes. Abeokuta was the natural choice for the capital of the Ogun State when it was created in 1976. He welcomed this and extended that welcome to the authorities and other functionaries of the new State Government in the characteristic tradition of Egba hospitality. Despite the vagaries of politics, Oba Oyebade Lipede has retained the loyalty and confidence of his people and the respect of the new Administration by adhering strictly to his objective of promoting the development of his people.

Resplendent as occasion demands but always regal in his bearing, Oba Oyebade Lipede might appear austere but inwardly he remains his jovial self. Dedicated to his objective of developing Egbaland he would not suffer irrelevancies gladly. His place is assured amongst the leading Traditional Rulers in Nigeria and national honours have been bestowed upon him. A Justice of the Peace (J.P.) and Commander of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (C.F.R.) he is the current Chancellor of the Federal University of Uyo and the holder of the degree of Doctor of Letters, (*Honoris Causa*) D.Litt) of that University. On this occasion of the Twenty-fifth year of accession, his Silver Jubilee, we salute a great Natural Ruler and pray that he may long continue his signal service to Egbaland and, indeed, to Nigeria.

Long may Oba (Dr.) Oyebade Lipede reign in the hearts of his people. (Amen).

Chief (Dr.) Saburi Biobaku
Professor of History and
Baapitan of Egbaland.

KABIYESI, Oba Oyebade Lipede is a social man and an achiever. He is a man of peace. We thank God for having him as the Alake of Egbaland. Perhaps, if it had been somebody else, the peace we've been enjoying wouldn't have been possible.

Oba Oyebade Lipede is the Patron of Jibolu - Taiwo family comprising the families of the Sowemimos, the Cokers, the Thomases and the Kutis. He is also Patron of the Abeokuta Club, Grand Patron, Abeokuta Sports Club, Apapa Club, and many more. All these things have meanings.

Through his repeated calls on the sons and daughters of Egbaland to come home and develop the land, quite a lot of development activities are being witnessed today - new houses, hospitals, schools, industries, name it. He made it in such a way that unless you have a house in Abeokuta you cannot be honoured with a general title chieftancy. We have cause to thank God for choosing for us an Oba of the Calibre, integrity and international reputation of Oba Oyebade Lipede. He is an Oba that is genuinely interested in and who has grandiose plans for the progress of Egbaland. Oba Oyebade Lipede is a patriot, and a great philanthropist and has indeed contributed immensely to the development of Egbaland.

Chief Soniran Sowemimo
The Lukosi of Oba and
Akinpote of Egbaland.

OBA (Dr.) Lipede, the Alake of Egbaland is very humble, honest and free-minded. It is on record that Oba Lipede does not discriminate against any section of Egbaland and this has contributed to his success on the throne for the past twenty-five years. He is a true Christian who looks for the progress and development of Egbaland in particular and

Nigeria in general. Oba Lipede showed his love by inviting all sons and daughters to come home and build houses in Abeokuta. In the past, many Egba sons and daughters were afraid to come home and build houses at Abeokuta. Oba Lipede gave his full support to the sectional Obas who are now on the throne of their fore-fathers. The records are there to show that for the past 25 years, all the sectional Obas enjoyed the support of Oba Lipede on their appointments as well as on their installations.

Oba Lipede is open-minded and on many occasions, he intervened to settle disputes among Chiefs in the Community at the time that he was unaware that he become an Oba. He has shown his love, kindness and generosity to all sons and daughters of Egbaland without discrimination. The new Alake Palace was built by all sons and daughters of Egbaland.

He is the 9th Alake of Egbaland and he has enjoyed the confidence and support of all sons and daughters of Egbaland. I hope all Egba sons and daughters will continue to rally round Oba Lipede so that peace and tranquillity will continue to reign in Egbaland.

I wish Kabiyesi many more years of useful service to Egbaland in particular and to the Nation in general. Kabiyesi.

**Alhaji (Chief) A. L.
Adenekan
The Osin of Egba Muslim,
Abeokuta.**

KABIYESI Oba Mofolorunso Oyebade Lipede was one of the first Nigerians to be admitted as members of the Apapa Club in the early sixties. He became the First Nigerian and in deed the First African to preside in the Apapa Club in 1970. He left this club to ascend the throne in 1972.

As at the time the Kabiyesi became president of the Club there were four facilities - the main house, the tennis court and the swimming pool and the theatre block. From what I heard and the tone of his various letters to me he was very particular about the cosmopolitan nature of the Club.

Accountability was his watch-word. His interest and concern for the Club has always manifested in his letters and even any time we visited him.

His era after Oba Gbadebo II, was heralded with so much hope and expectations for Egbaland and Nigeria in general and I made bold to say that those hopes were never misplaced by the Egba people.

The astute and the dispassionate way in which he presided and managed the Club must have also been taken as his principle to Abeokuta. He invited every body to join him in the task ahead. He is a person who believes that every race or section must have their way, I must say that Abeokuta has done pretty well in his era.

Suffice it to say also that in recognition of Kabiyesi's continued contribution to Apapa Club, he was conferred with the Grand Patron of the Apapa Club with Rear Admiral Augustus Aiehomu in 1991 being the number citizen of the country.

I wish my Kabiyesi many more useful life of good health in uniting the Egbas.

I must reiterate Kabiyesi's unalloyed love and concern for this great Club and we would keep the flag of his principle flying.

Chief Akinbiyi Olawale Akinseye
President, Apapa Club

Oba Oyebade Lipede was a shipping man, he had worked in virtually all the ports of the Federation. He was a top executive officer, Nigeria Produce and on that score he was a First Class Shipping man.

On the social circle, he interacted quite freely with both expatriates and Nigerians.

Just before independence and immediately thereafter, most clubs were dominated by expatriates. You just have a few Nigerians among them. Its on this score that Oba Mofolorunso Lipede's election in 1969 as the First African President of Apapa Club was a landmark.

He was able to bring all races together and he was very much liked. An incident happened that came to memory. A white man who

was the president of Apapa Club in the 40's and 50's travelled back home; on his return to Nigeria and in Apapa Club asked who the current president was. Oyebade Lipede was showed to him. Typical of our Oba Oyebade, he offered him a drink in a glass cup. The disappointed white man in annoyance poured the drink on Oyebade Lipede.

On seeing the unfolding drama, the black who were around swooped on the white man and wanted to beat him up, but the gentle and easy going Lipede refused their actions. "I will teach him. That was the idea he had - (a black man cannot and should not be the president) before leaving the country but now things have changed", Oyebade Lipede said. This has been typical of our Kabiyesi, Oba Oyebade Lipede.

When he became the Oba, he had to invite the Egba sons and daughters who were making waves in other towns, cities and countries to come and build Abeokuta and its environs. He started by saying we should build a house instead of staying in hotels on our visits to Abeokuta and those who have the means should establish businesses and industries.

One thing I admire in him since he became the Oba is the forging of unity of the Egba people. We don't know whichever section we come from, as he deals with us in that way.

I have been the secretary of the Alake palace building since 1981 and my overall assessment of Oba Oyebade Lipede is that he is a King of peace and a king of prosperity

Chief F. O. Lawal
Saraki Adini of Egbaland
A former president of Apapa Club
Current President of Abeokuta Club

I HAVE known Baba before 1972 through Mr. Lawson he is an upright person. I must say he is a God sent to the Egba people. In the past, most people used Egbaland to spend their weekends, but Kabiyesi insisted that people should build houses and settle at home. At the time he was to be installed most people thought he would not be able to cope with Abeokuta life but look at him today except when he goes on his annual trip abroad he is always in the palace.

His clarion call for the Egbas not to use their home for weekend retreats only has brought about a lot of growth and development to Egbaland. He built a kind of confidence in people and allayed the general fear that if you build a house in your home you will die. People who heeded his advice are enjoying a lot from it today. A lot of people are doing quite pretty fine.

Oba Oyebade Lipede is a talented person, in education, religion, tradition of his people, name it, he is first in everything.

Peace, prosperity and religion are his watch word. He is a loving father.

kade o pe lori

Ki bata pe lese

Ejigba leke ko dabere

Igbayin ko tun wa lara

I say many congratulations to him on this historic 25 years coronation anniversary.

**Chief (Mrs.) Alaba Lawson
Asiwaju Iyalode of Egbaland.**

I HAD the privilege of knowing and working under the same roof with Oba Oyebade Lipede in 1956 at "Airways House" Marina, Lagos. Kabiyesi was then a Shipping Officer in the Department of Marketing and Exports while I was Produce Inspector, both of us were engaged in the grading, check-testing and shipment of Produce for the Marketing Board.

Kabiyesi was an embodiment of unassuming humility and transparent honesty. He still is. The point is that nobody knew then that our simple, approachable and friendly (though strict) *Oga* had a single drop of the blue blood in his vein. He, as it were, completely hid and reserved his princely-heritage card for playing at the calculated "last Card" moment in 1972.

Oba Oyebade travelled far and wide at home in Nigeria and abroad in several countries of the world; and he was very lively. You would then wonder how a much-travelled Shipping Magnate and the

first Nigerian President (now Patron) of the prestigious Apapa Club could opt for the strict and restrictive dictates of a Palace life, with its ancient customs, traditional rites, and all that. However, Alayeluwa, Oba (Dr.) Mofolorunso Oyebade Lipede, the cracular 9th Alake in Abeokuta (and we had 10 previous Alakes at the *Orile*) has proved all wrong in the way he quickly adapted as witnessed the resultant and formidable success of his 25 years reign.

The first encounter with the restrictive cultural covenant he signed with the Egbas came shortly after the euphoria of the coronation celebration. He was a bit bored, and the brand new Alake of Egbaland thought of relieving boredom by making a drive round his new kingdom for sight-seen and fresh air. He took the keys of his WE 1 Mercedes Benz, came downstairs; and had hardly opened the car door when he was surrounded by the *Olopa Ileke*, his Palace Messengers. Their leader, Lisemo, quietly, respectfully but firmly demanded the keys from him and politely "ordered" him back into the Palace. "Kabiyesi, it is never heard of that an Alake should drive himself. The Egba people will not accept that, Kabiyesi," said Lisemo. And the King obeyed his messenger, handed over the keys to him, and went back into the palace, quietly. What a lesson in humility. What an example in traditional conformity.

In the running of the affairs of State, Oba Oyebade Lipede always takes the honest advice of his Chiefs. As one of his Advisers, I know him to be a good listener and an astute sifter of the wheat of truth from the chaffs of lies and camouflages.

Oba Oyebade Lipede abhors dishonesty, fraud or lies. He is always prepared to do justice and fairness. He usually enjoins his subjects to be truthful. When listening to cases in his Traditional Court, he almost invariably starts by reminding parties that it is not safe for anyone to mislead the Crown, warning: *Eni ba puro niwaju Ade. Ade a ...*

Oba Lipede, like Nathaniel, is "an Israelite indeed, in who is no guile". When you have done something he thinks is not correct or you offend him, he confronts you with it at the first opportunity. He settles with you and that is the end of that. Perhaps Kabiyesi's weakness is that he does not hide his feelings about things, he can be very annoyed,

and chide, but he does not grudge.

Oba Oyebade Lipede is a great lover and keeper of tradition, and he strives to preserve the good tradition and custom of our forefathers. He often warns hypocrites in tradition to opt out if they cannot keep to the rules. In compliance with tradition, Oba Lipede resides in Ake Palace. He believes that the Palace is the traditional home of a King and he acts it despite the fact that he has personal houses in Abeokuta, and outside.

Oba Oyebade Lipede is a good Christian who preaches and practices the tenets of his faith. He often surprises the men of God when they visit him; as he often takes over and the exhortation boot is often on the other foot. The Muslim preachers are not also left out. This is demonstrated during the two Beiram Festivals on which occasions the Muslim yearly pay him homage after the *Yidi*. He often surprises them in his knowledge of the basics of the Qur'anic or Islamic Injunctions. Kabiyesi finds little or no difference between the two great religions.

However, he often accused the practitioners of the two great religions as he often complains that comparatively the adherents of the traditional religion are more dependable because their yes is yes and their no is no; you therefore know where you stand with them. I agree with Kabiyesi because the basic tenet of traditional religion is:

*Eni ba saye leto,
Aye a gbeso lara re;
Eni ba saye lodi,
Aye a gbòdi lara re.*

Meaning: Whatever you sow shall reap, whether good or bad. Is this not the lowest common multiplier of a good religion?

Finally, Oba Oyebade Lipede has been described as a Dove; I agree. It is as if Oba Lipede believed Literally, and had surprisingly often-times acted, the Biblical (Jesus') injunction that requires the left cheek to be turned for slapping after one's enemy has slapped the right one. I must quickly add however that by his actions and attitude in matters of this nature Oba Lipede has often-times demonstrated that there is a great reward in exercising patience. Patience to him is the hallmark of responsible leadership.

Little wonder that Egbaland had made great strides in an all-round development, be it social, economic, educational, environmental, etc. during the 25 years of the peaceful reign of Oba Lipede. As a good manager of men and matters, the octogenarian retired Shipping Officer has nautically successfully piloted the ship of Egba State so that the Egba can now sing:

Egba dara
L'aye Lipede Oba
Egba dara.

Meaning: Egbaland prospers and progresses during the reign of Oba Lipede. Long may he reign.
Ade a pe lori ... Ase.

**Chief E. Adeyemi Adeboye,
The Lisa of Ijemo and Oluwo of
Egbaland.**

I HAVE had the honour and privilege of working close to the Palace as a member of various Committees in Egbaland. This gave me the opportunity of being able to access Kabiyesi and appreciate his sterling qualities.

The first thing that struck me is his fear of God, his Christian values, his love for his fatherland, and his ride to see Egba sons and daughters excelling in their various calling.

As a Christian, and a devout one, Kabiyesi never misses attending his Church, unless he is out of town. He will sit through the service, and participate fully. One of many occasions when you see Kabiyesi beaming with smiles and with his royal guard down, dancing and weaving is when he goes to the Altar for Thanksgiving. It is a thing of joy to watch him and share the electric moment with him. His favourite song being Hymn No. 178.

As a patriot, he, from the day of his installation, pleaded, cajoled, requested, blackmailed, forced, used all means to ensure Egba sons and daughters come home to built houses and factories and develop their fatherland. The Egba people owe to Kabiyesi the fact that Egba abroad

now come home to build houses, factories, etc. Another ceremony he enjoys so much is performing house or factory opening ceremonies. You watch him. He would be all smiles, very happy, and very relaxed.

That Egba sons and daughters now come home to accept chieftancy titles is due to the encouragement of Kabiyesi Oba Oyebade Lipede.

His 25 years reign has been a great and unprecedented period of blessings and economic, educational, and industrial development in Egbaland. Soon after his installation came the creation of Ogun State with Abeokuta as the Capital. This historic event was soon followed by various development such as establishment of Federal University of Technology (FUTAB), now known as University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (UNAAB). The establishment Ogun State Broadcasting Service, Ogun State Television Service, OGBC II, Federal Secretariat Complex, chief S. O. Adebo Library, State Cultural Centre, Establishment of Gateway Bank, Modernisation of Olumo Rock as a Tourist Centre, Expansion of Branches of Banks, the establishment of many Industries in Abeokuta. The New Alake's Palace, the New Agura's Palace, The New Olowu's Palace, etc., to name a few. These additions within the period of Kabiyesi's reign more than emphasise, the tremendous stride and contributions made to the development of Egbaland.

Another quality of Kabiyesi is his humble disposition, his approachability, and the reliance on the talent of his Chiefs, their advice and support at all times. His receptiveness to wise counsel has no doubt yielded fruits and made his reign an enviable one in the history of Egbaland.

Kabiyesi is also noted for giving fatherly advice to any of his people that needs it. He also warns people to change from their bad ways that can tarnish the image of Egbaland.

Kabiyesi is quick to chastise any erring Egba son or daughter, and for this he is known to be very outspoken. He hates any behaviour of an Egba son or daughter that will bring a slur to the image of Egbaland.

Kabiyesi is dedicated to the Unity of Egbaland. He preaches this at every opportunity and would sacrifice his time for anything that will

cement that unity. He believed in the unity of Egbaland so much that when he was settling up the Committee to build the new Alake's Palace, he made an Oke-Ona Chief the Chairman, with the membership fully representative of all Egba sections. The same thing goes for the Lisabi Day Celebration Committee with membership spread over all areas of Egba.

Until recently, no one ever asks, discusses, or notes, where and Egba man came from. All we know is the whether we meet in Kaduna, Kano, Lagos, London, or New York, we are all Egba people. That is how it was, that's why our forefathers established Egba United Kingdom. That's how it should be. That is what Kabiyesi Oba Oyebade Lipede, the 9th Alake of Egbaland stands for.

I am sure two of the cardinal points of Kabiyesi's reign are peace and unity, and the Almighty God has in His infinite mercy added on to these, development and prosperity of Egbaland.

His Royal Majesty will go down in history as the most committed, devoted, progressive and outward going monarch ever to reign in Egbaland.

I feel proud to be an Egba man. May God continue to give him the patience of Job and the wisdom of Solomon, in the discharge of his onerous duties, so that in the end, he will bequeath to us all, the bastion of unity for which our forefathers fought gallantly, and cherished proudly.

**Chief A. A. Popoola, Baaye of
Oke-Ona, Bajilo of Egbaland.**

I SEE in him a practical rallying point of the ideal and practices of the Egbaland. He had showed in practical terms, that he is a leader every inch. In fact, for him to have led a diverse group of such ethnic group, shows his dexterity, honesty of purpose and resilience.

The ability of Oba Mofolorunso Lipede to lead shows that he is a good manager of people and a consummate leader. I must also say that his concern for the growth and development of Egbaland has always been demonstrated in practical terms. Although his clarion call for people

to come and build their home is yet to be fully realised, he should take solace in the fact that the journey of 1000miles must start with only one step and he had taken many steps towards achieving this.

It is my prayer that he would leave long to see the results of his noble efforts.

Chief Lai Labode
Mayegun of Ijaye
Social/Publicity Secretary, Abeokuta Club.

OBA Oyebade Lipede has not changed his attitude to life. He has been a very humble person and has remained humble still since the past 25 years when he ascended the throne of his forefathers.

I have been very closely associated with him since 1959 - about 40 years as his cousin and as a chief hence, I am able to say "he has not changed"

Chief Nelson Oyesiku
Lebute of Egbaland

OBA Oyebade Lipede is a wonderful, inspiring and supportive royal father. I have found in him somebody who matches his words with action. He called on all Egbas sons and daughters to come home and help develop their fatherland, and he has given support to all that have heeded to his clarion call.

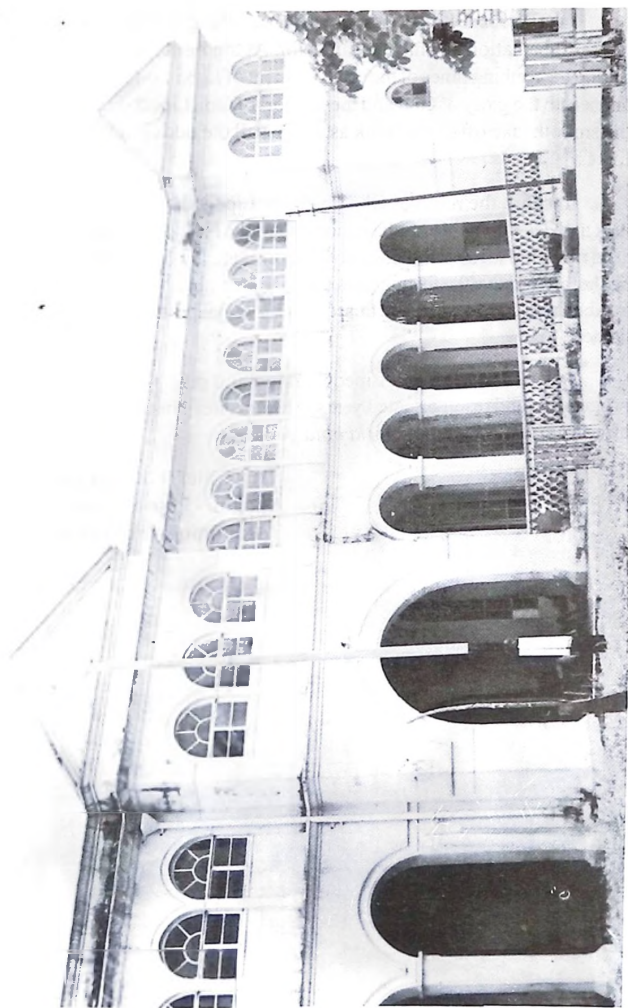
When I heeded to this clarion call by coming back home in 1985, I found in him a very supportive and understanding father. When I informed him of my plans to restore the old glory of Abeokuta being the first home of Print Journalism in Nigeria when *Iwe Iroyin Yoruba* was published in 1859, he gladly embraced the project and gave it all supports. This therefore, helped in the establishment of the first National Inter-Campus Magazine - *The Campus Link* Magazine and the first *National Developmental* Magazine - *Rural Link* Magazine that is published in four editions of English, Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo per edition.

Oba Oyebade Lipede has shown that anything for the development of the Egba nation is what he stands for. Again he stood by us firmly during the teething times of the establishment of Egba Community Bank and it is to the glory of God and the support of Oba Lipede that brought the smooth take off of the Bank as against all the odds put in by other forces.

In short, the reign of Oba Oyebade Lipede has really brought luck and development to Egba nation generally. He is a progressive and kind ruler and leader who does not discriminate. His progressive rule has helped remove the feelings that a young man can not start a business in Abeokuta and succeed and this is why more people are coming back home.

I thank God for Oba Lipede's reign and pray for many more progressive and result oriented years in the throne of his forefathers for him. *Kabiyesi, ki ade pe lori, ki bata pe lese.*

**Dr. (Chief) Gbenga Dalley
Apagun - Pote of Ijemo and
Akinfimojoye of Egbaland**



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Index

Abeokuta 1,2,3,4,5,10,11,14,22,27,29,34,53,55
Abeokuta Grammar School 17
Abiola, Chief Kasimawo Oloswale 60
Abiola, Princes 29
Abudu 58
Accra 34
Adebo Lajide 15
Adebo Lajide 57
Adegbite Dr Lateef 60
Adeluola 30
Ademola II, Oba Ladapo 29
Ademola, Mrs. Kofo 26
Ademola, sir Justice Adetokunbo 27,29
Adeosun, Oluwole 61
Adepegba 17
Advice 17
Agbas, Wosilat 30
Agbein 2,3
Agege 3
Agura 2,3
Ajibola, Prince Bola 61
Ajura 3
Ake 2,3,4,5,15,22,27
Ake Palace 5
Ake St Peter's School 15,22
Akoko Village 11
Alake 2,3,20,30,40
Alaye 40
Alli Gate 2
Ancient 1
Apapa Club 30
Arrival in Abeokuta 2
Asero Stadium 66,67
August 2
Baba Egba 19
Babanji E. A. 19
Barram Festival 2
Bamodu 17
Bankole E. E. 19
Bayero Alhaji Ado 66
Bemni, Edo State 30
Benjamin, Olatunji 15
Beyokun Chief Fagberu 57
Biobaku 50,55,57
Birthplace 1
Brethren 3
British Empire 19
C.M.S. Grammar School 19,20,22
CBN 59
Christian Missionaries 15
Chukura 17
City 2
Cocoa 3
Coker 14
Coker, Toye 28,57,61
Cole 14
Community 3
Contemporary 1
Copy 17
Culture 114-123

Customs Departments 23

Dalley 14
Development 133,137
Disturbance 1
Diya, General Oladipo 59
Education 14
Egba 2,3,10,19,20,34
Egba Aann 2,3
Egba Agbein 2,3
Egba Agura 2
Egba Alake 2,3
Egba Development & Investment Company 49
Egba Eku 2,3
Egba Kingdom 11
Egba Land 3,9,14,20
Egba Oke Ona 2,3
Egba Owu 2,3
Egba People 9,11
Egba Society 46
Egbado 57
Elias Teslim 61
Elumaze 23
Emmanuel Ladeinde 15
Fruke 5,29
Erunwon 3,14,29,39
Families 3
Folarin 14
Funfun 3
Gbadebo, Oba 37,39,40
Gbagura 3,55
George, Akin 65
Glover A. 19
Gordon House 19
Growth & Development
Ibadan 11,20
Ibara 58,59
Ibarapa 58,59
Idi Emi 3
Ifa 62
Igbem 3
Igbora 2
Igbore 2
Ijemo 3
Ikaagbo 3
Ikija 2
Iku Baba Yeye 40
India 17,20
Inter-tribal Wars 1
Ipaye 17
Ipebi 38,39,48
Itoko 3
Itoku 38
Iwarofa 41
Japhet, Ladeinde 15
Jibodu 11,37
Jibolu, Tauwo Coker 11
Johnson T. 19
Johnson, Oluvide 19
Jones J.B. 19
Jones J.B. 17

- Judiciary 142, 143
 Kabivesi 52
 Kafi 14
 Kale, Rev S I 19
 Keesi 14
 Kilometres 2
 Koko 26
 Kolanut 11
 Kufonji Bisi 15
 Kufonji H F 17
 Kuti - Rev I O Ransome 22
 Kuye, Rev WR 22
 Laarun 37
 Lagos 5, 17, 19, 22, 23, 27
 Lambo Prof A Adebayo 61
 Lawoye 26
 Lawyer 3
 Layode 22
 Lipede 2, 3, 22, 52, 53, 55
 Lipede Adebowale 11, 14, 15, 17, 22
 Lipede Adebayo 19
 Lipede Emilia Abiola 11, 14
 Lipede Mofolorunso Adeyinka 27
 Lipede Mofolorunso Oyeade 14
 Lipede Omoba Oyeade 14
 Lisabi 4, 10
 Lukas, Rev J Olumide 19
 Majekodunmi 14
 Moores 14
 Mpuluma 17
 Naval Ships 23
 Nigena 3, 23
 Nigeria City 9
 Nigerian Railway Corporation 46
 Nigerian Republic 51
 Nuli Secundus 20
 Oba Michael Mofolorunso Oyeade
 Lipede 3
 Obasanjo 60
 Odeleye, Oba Olawal: Adisa 55
 Oduduwa 40
 Ogboni 38, 41
 Oke-Ona 2, 3, 55
 Okelantoro 2
 Olatosin 20
 Olodumare 40
 Olori 14
 Olorogun 41
 Olubi, Chief Mrs Bola Kufonji 62
 Olumo Rock 2, 5, 6, 10, 11, 39
 Onabanjo, Chief Bisi 61
 Onabolu Artiscoco 19
 Om Adio 3
 Onibuwu 19
 Onwegbusia 23, 26
 Oranyan 40
 Orija 3
 Orile 2
 Osiele 65, 67
 Osoba, Chief Olusegun 61
 Owore Season 2
 Owu 2, 3, 55
 Oyeade Mofolorunso Lipede 1, 3, 11, 20
 Oyeade Mofolorunso Lipede 20, 34
 Oyeade Mofolorunso Lipede 22, 23, 27
 Oyo State 11
 People 3
 Peter 14
 Peter, Oloye Samuel 14
 Philips O Obayomi 19
 Pike Street 19, 22
 Politics 138-141
 PortHarcourt 34
 Post and Telecommunication 27
 Previous 3
 Priests 2
 Pnms Inter pares 20
 Prosperity 2
 Psychological 1
 Radio 2
 Rainfall 5
 Ransome - Kuti, Prof Olikoye 61
 Reis 19
 Religion 124-134
 Remo 57
 Roots 13
 Royal 1
 Rural 1
 Saminaka 72-82
 Sango 40
 Sapele 23, 26
 Sections 2
 Settlements 1
 Settlers 2
 Shagan Alhaji Shehu 66
 Shehu, Alhaji Idns 72
 Sodeke 2
 Sofoluwe 3, 14
 Sokenu, Mana 62
 Solanke 3, 20
 Solanke A 20
 Sonkan 3, 14
 Sowande Adetayo 20
 Sovemmo 11
 Statesmen 1
 Struggles 1
 Subsections 2
 Supreme Being 11
 Tejuoso T 55
 Tejuoso, Chief (Mrs) Bisoye 66
 Thomas, Bode 19
 Thorne, Rev C J 19
 Tinumhu, Madame Ivalode of Egbu.
 105 107
 Township 2
 Traditional Rulers 86-104
 Warn 23, 26.
 Warn, St Andrew Anglican Church 27
 Western 2
 Western State 21
 Williams 26
 Williams Megan Clarkson, 26, 30
 Women
 Women in Development 105-113
 Yeye Oba Abiola Lipede 14



Olalekan Akinpela, born in the late fifties, and an indigene of Osun State earned the Higher National Diploma (HND) in Mass Communication from The Polytechnic, Ibadan in 1987.

He worked in the Public and Government Department of the Shell Petroleum Development Company of Nigeria Limited, Port-Harcourt and had a stint with *The Guardian* newspapers before opting for a private venture. He is at present the Editor of *Mothercare Magazine* published by Opeds Nigeria Limited, Lagos.

Wale Ope-Agbe, who hails from Abeokuta in Ogun State was born in the late fifties. He holds a B.Sc degree and a post graduate diploma from Nigeria Institute of Journalism (NIJ). He had worked with *The Guardian* newspapers before opting for a private venture.

Now, he is the Executive Editor of *Mothercare Magazine* published by Opeds Nigeria Limited.

Oládipo Odunoye was born in Abeokuta in the late 50s and holds a B.Sc. degree and a Post Graduate Diploma from the Nigerian Institute of Journalism (NIJ). Mr Odunoye worked with *The Guardian* newspapers before he voluntarily resigned for private ventures. He is currently the Associate Editor, *Mothercare Magazine* published by Opeds Nigeria Limited.