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TRUST IS A BURDEN

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Jonathan: I have not seen Yar'adua since Nov

By Mohammed S. Shehu, with agency report

ACTING President Goodluck Jonathan said yesterday that he has not seen or spoken to ailing President Umaru Musa Yar'adua since he returned home from hospital in Saudi Arabia two months ago.

Yar'adua's health status remains a mystery as he has not made a public appearance since he began receiving treatment for a heart ailment last November.

"He left in the early hours of the 24th of November, then on the 26th we spoke extensively. Since then, we have not really had any sustained discussion," Jonathan, who is in Washington on his first foreign trip as acting president, told the BBC yesterday.

In recent weeks though, Yar'adua has received several visitors including Muslim and Christian clerics as well as Governor Isa Yuguda of Bauchi State, who is his

son-in-law, business mogul Alhaji Dahiru Mangal, who is a close political associate of Yar'adua's, as well as Alhaji Shehu Inuwa Imam.

Asked if he has either seen or spoken to Yar'adua since his return to Nigeria two months ago, Jonathan said "No, I have not."

Jonathan also gave no indication whether the president's condition had improved. He said he had not seen the president's doctor but said he had spoken to his

wife three times.

"I've not seen the doctor. I have had - on about three occasions - discussions with his wife," he told the BBC's Network Africa programme. "And I've had discussions with some of the other aides."

"In terms of the last time we (Jonathan and Yar'adua) really had sustained discussions, that was 26 November - I think so - yeah," he said.

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Court allows teen to marry grandma

From Sadeeq Aliyu, Gusau

THE High Sharia Court in Tudun Wada, Gusau in Zamfara State yesterday upheld the marriage between an 18 year old boy and a 55 year old woman and declined a request from the boy's mother to annul the marriage.

Hajiya Aisha Abubakar, mother of the groom, sued the 55 year old bride Ai Maikare, seeking the marriage's dissolution on account of age disparity between the couple. She also alleged that the woman charmed her son and lured him into marrying her.

However, in his judgment yesterday, the judge, Bashir Danmatsule dismissed the case, stating that there was no ground for the court to dissolve the marriage. He said all the four witnesses who testified had told the court that the marriage was contracted according to Islamic rites.

He also dismissed as baseless the argument of the groom's mother that there was no representation from either his paternal and maternal sides during the wedding. The judge said the Sharia requires only the representative of the bride to be

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PHOTO: AFOLABI SOTUNDE

PROFESSOR Humphrey Nwosu, former Chairman, National Electoral Commission (NEC) speaking at the Leadership roundtable conference on 'Why free and fair elections are necessary, in Abuja yesterday.

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'Doma has no hand in Adamu's arrest'



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Nigeria loses 100,000 barrels of oil as Shell suspends production at EA field **30**

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A forum of secretaries of PDP in the North wants 7-point agenda implemented **50**



The Governor of Kwara state Dr. Abubakar Bukola Saraki (right) receiving a gift from the Managing Director /Chief Operation Officer of Media Trust Limited Alhaji Ishaq Ajibola, during a courtesy visit to Government House, Ilorin, yesterday.

Media Trust a natural partner — Saraki

From Mustafa Abubakar, Ilorin

KWARA State Governor Dr. Abubakar Bukola Saraki yesterday in Ilorin said *Daily Trust* is a natural partner with his administration in efforts to develop his state.

Saraki who spoke while receiving the Managing Director /Chief Operations Officer of *Media Trust* Limited Alhaji Ishaq Ajibola in his office yesterday, added, "I believe there is a lot of catching up to be done in going forward and as a government, we will continue to sup-

port organizations like yours that is built on energy, new generation and team in the interest of developing this country".

"We thought you (Media Trust) had forgotten your friends, but I congratulate the entire staff and management team of the *Media Trust* for being able to continue to progress and be a success, especially in the Northern part of the country. I congratulate you for that and wish *Media Trust* the best in her further expansion. I hope there will be a stronger develop-

ment between the Kwara State government and the *Media Trust*", he said. Commenting on the state's agricultural programme, the governor who cited small scale farmers who are majorly rice cultivators in the state said, "If we can get such grown to secondary level and rice factories being set up in various places in the country, this will take over factories that are already moribund in the Northern part of Nigeria and will in turn take care of youth unemployment in the country".

Earlier in his remarks, the Managing Director /Chief Operation Officer of *Media Trust* Limited Alhaji Ishaq Ajibola who acknowledged the challenges faced in the delivery of Trust editions to the state said each time he visits the state, logistic problems usually take the centre of discussion.

He said to get the editions down to the state especially the state's capital early as others, the company was trying to make new arrangements that would get the papers across to the state early.

Gov. Idris opposes ban on street begging

From Isiaka Wakili, Lokoja

GOVERNOR Ibrahim Idris of Kogi State has ruled out the possibility of the House of Assembly passing a bill prohibiting street begging in the state.

Speaking yesterday to our correspondent through the

Commissioner for Information Tom Ohikhere, the governor said beggars were part of the society, noting that on no account would his administration discriminate against anybody.

"Beggars of Kogi State origin will never be ejected from

the streets. Five months ago when the Lagos State government made the move to throw out beggars from the streets, Kogi State government sent out an emissary to Lagos to provide us the details of all the street beggars of Kogi origin with a view to bringing them home for

proper care. This shows that this administration caters for all", said the commissioner.

He further said that every arm of government should be conscious of how it treats people in the society, stressing that it would not be ideal for the House to eject beggars from the streets.

Lamido sets up c'ttee to probe Turaki

From Yusha'u A Ibrahim, Dutse

A six-man committee was set up yesterday by the Jigawa State government to probe the imme-

diately past governor of the state, Alhaji Ibrahim Saminu Turaki, over the sale of government property at both state and local government levels.

The Commissioner for Information Alhaji Aminu Muhammad said yesterday while briefing newsmen on the outcome of the state executive

council meeting that the committee was to investigate the sale of government property in the past five years by the former governor.

Don alerts on Niger Bridge

From Beatrice Onuchukwu, Awka

THE Vice Chancellor, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Professor Boniface Egboka, has expressed fears over the imminent collapse of the River Niger Bridge and urged the appropriate ministry to expedite

action on a second bridge across the River Niger.

Egboka said the heavy human and vehicular traffic on the bridge was weighing heavily on it.

Speaking in an interview with *Daily Trust*, he said the bridge was not constructed to carry the volume

of load it carries presently, adding that loads carried by vehicles using the bridge portend danger to its continued existence.

Egboka faulted the police, customs, immigration and local government authorities that check vehicles at the Asaba and Onitsha ends

of the bridge, saying the numerous checks cause traffic build ups, a situation which he said contributes to its sagging.

In addition to the challenge of the collapsing Niger Bridge, he said gully erosion is another monster threatening the economy of the state.

Perm sec escapes abduction

From Abdullahi Tasiu Abubakar, Yola

THE Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Secretary to the Adamawa State Government Mr John Yahya escaped being abducted on Tuesday night by a lone gunman.

Daily Trust learnt that the lone gunman, who is believed to be in his 30s, attempted to abduct the permanent secretary in his own home, located at the highbrow Dougirei GRA in Yola, the state capital.

Mr Yahya had just returned home around 8:30 pm and parked his Toyota Camry car, when the gunman, standing along with his night watchman, ordered him to get back into the car and drive along with him.

The permanent secretary pretended as if he was going to comply, but when he saw a small opening he ran into the other wing of his house and jumped into his neighbour's house to escape.

Borno loses commissioner, declares today work free

From Isa Umar Gusau, Maiduguri

THE Borno State government has declared today a work free day following the death of the state Commissioner for Health Alhaji Zubairu Maina Shani yesterday after a protracted illness. Maina, who died at the Jos University Teaching Hospital, was believed to be the closest to Governor Ali Modu Sheriff in the state cabinet. Both men were hostel mates in secondary school, it was learnt.

The commissioner's remains will be buried this morning in Maiduguri, the government announced yesterday. He died at the age of 46. Governor Ali Modu Sheriff described the commissioner's death as "devastating news" which he received with "great shock, deep sense of loss and grave concern but with total submission to the Will of the Almighty Allah".

In a statement issued by Alhaji Shehu Mustapha Liberty, Special Adviser on Information and Media, Sheriff said his administration had "indeed lost a patriotic, humble, and respectful com-patriot" and that "the demise of the late commissioner came at a critical time that his contributions were required to move the State to a much higher level. The State Government would no doubt miss his wisdom".



THE late Commissioner for Health, Zubairu Maina Shani

Counter accusations trail EFCC/Ibori case

By Boco Edet

ECONOMIC and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and former Delta state governor James Ibori continued to trade words yesterday following the decision of the former to declare the latter wanted.

EFCC declared Ibori wanted on Tuesday for failing to honour invitations extended to him and allegedly evading operatives of the commission.

The Economic Governance Unit of the Commission is investigating allegations in a petition submitted by the Delta Elders Forum that the ex-governor used government shares as collateral to obtain a N44 billion personal loan from a bank.

The anti-graft agency had said in a statement that letters were sent to his known residences in Abuja and Lagos to which they were yet to receive any response but the governor responded that

he received a letter at his residence on Monday when he had already been declared wanted.

According to the governor in a press statement signed by his media aide, Tony Eluemunor, the letter dated March 22nd and signed by Zubairu Muazu on behalf of the chairman was delivered by one Mike Anigbogu at 4.20pm requesting his presence at the Abuja office of the Commission on April 17.

A statement issued by EFCC's

spokesman Femi Babafemi yesterday said operatives had approached some officials of Delta State government on March 22 to extend an invitation to Ibori to which he had replied through the parties that he wanted to be interviewed in Delta not the EFCC office in Abuja.

Babafemi said he was declared wanted based on this development and not on the letters of invitation.

The spokesman also said the

investigation was based on fresh allegations bordering on official corruption and money laundering which had nothing to do with the case earlier decided by the Asaba court.

"It is obvious that Chief Ibori has gone into hiding since then. And as such, our decision to declare him wanted was based on our previous contacts with him and not on the letters being referred to in the advertorial," he said.

Buhari opts out of Mega Party

• As AC, DPP agree to merge

By Turaki A. Hassan

GENERAL Muhammadu Buhari has opted out of the plan by opposition political parties to form a coalition to unseat the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) under the auspices of the National Democratic Movement (NDM).

The decision not to join the Mega Party by the former All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP) presidential candidate in 2003 and 2007 was made known at the end of the 4th plenary meeting of the NDM in Abuja.

Briefing newsmen after the meeting yesterday, Buhari's associate and former member of the House of Representative Faruk Adamu Aliyu who represented him and the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) said, "Today our merger has come to an end."

Aliyu maintained that while the CPC will not join the Mega Party, it will still be part of the NDM saying, "We in the NDM agreed to have an electoral alliance during elections or if at any point time they need us. But our decision not to join merger is because we are not desperate to win elections or by all means; what we want is that even after our death God will reward us for laying the foundation for a broad base and true idealistic platform where justice prevails with free and fair elections and whoever wins is declared winner. We are afraid of what happened in the past."

He said people have seen what Atiku Abubakar, who was part of the merger talks at the initial point, did, "So if we don't learn lessons what kind of people are we? That is why we are opting out."

Reps probe N200 bn agric loan

HOUSE Committee on Agriculture is investigating the alleged mismanagement of the N200 billion agricultural loan, the Chairman, Rep Gbenga Makunjuola, disclosed on Wednesday.

Makunjuola said in Umudike, Abia state, that the investigation became necessary following insinuations that the money was deposited in a particular account where it was yielding interest.

"The House has mandated the Committee on Agriculture to investigate the matter because the allegation is that the money is being kept in a certain bank and that it has been yielding interest and we need to find out the rationale behind it.

"The Governor's Forum is agitating for the early disbursement of the fund and up till now the money has not been released," he said.

Makunjuola said that he was not aware of any rural or commercial farmer in the country who had accessed a "dime" out of the fund.

"Apart from this fund, the immediate past Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources also gave us information that Federal Government had set aside another N6 billion research fund.

"He informed us that it was a competitive research fund for all research institutes in the country.

"But the unfortunate thing is that none of the research institutes has benefited from the fund," he said. (NAN)



THE casket containing the remains of late Senator Tawar Wada leaving the National Assembly after the valedictory session in Abuja, yesterday.

PIC: FELIX ONIGBINDE

Atiku visits PDP headquarters, says 'I'm back'

By Muideen Olaniyi

FORMER Vice President Atiku Abubakar met with the leadership of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) for about one hour to explain his reasons for coming back to the party.

Atiku, who arrived Wadata headquarters of the PDP at 1:38pm yesterday accompanied by one of his top allies Otunba Oluwole Fasawe, went straight to the office of the PDP National Chairman Prince Vincent Ogbulafor after receiving a rousing welcome from party staff.

Fielding questions from journalists after the meeting, the

former vice president declined comment on his 2011 ambition, saying he came to informally brief the party leadership on his return to PDP since last week.

Meanwhile, PDP National Chairman Prince Vincent Ogbulafor has shed more light on the meeting, saying Atiku came to inform them about his return to the party and his plans of action for the future, adding that the PDP umbrella is large to accommodate everybody.

Ogbulafor said: "This is a political party. It is an office which is open to all Nigerians. The umbrella is large enough to accommodate every Nigerian. If

all Nigerians decide to join the PDP, it's a pass mark for the party.

When asked if the party gave any conditions to Abubakar before accepting his coming back, Ogbulafor dismissed such notions saying he is welcome back in line with the recommendations of Dr Alex Ekwueme PDP National Reconciliation Committee.

"Why should I set terms for him? You know the party has a constitution. In our constitution, if you are suspended, you have a period of term to serve. Then if you are coming back, the Constitution also sets conditions for coming back. So I can neither set terms nor give conditions.

Jonathan extols Ribadu over war on corruption

By Mohammed S. Sheikh

ACTING President Goodluck Jonathan has lauded the former Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission

(EFCC) Nuhu Ribadu, saying the anti-graft body has not been vibrant as it used to be.

Speaking as a guest at the Centre for Global Development (CGD), in Washington DC, on

Wednesday, Jonathan acknowledged contributions of Ribadu to the anti-corruption fight in the country.

Jonathan's commendation drew applause from the audience, where

he promised the international community that the government would further strengthen the EFCC to be able to effectively carry out its anti-corruption campaign.

He agreed with the audience

that the commission has not been as vibrant as it used to be in the days of Ribadu but reassured that the Nigerian government would not relent in fighting corruption at all levels of government.

ICPC probes 2009 capital projects

By Boco Edet

CHAIRMAN of the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) Justice Emmanuel Ayoola has ordered a probe on the implementation of N796.7 billion earmarked for capital projects in the 2009 budget.

In the budget, federal government designated N796.7 billion which represents 91% of the capital vote to five key priority sectors listed as critical infrastruc-

ture- N361.2 billion, human capital development-N131.9 billion, land reform and food security-N91.8 billion, security-N67 billion and the Niger Delta-N77.12 billion.

Justice Ayoola said this when Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice Mohammed Bello Adoke visited him in Abuja yesterday.

According to him, "We believe that the greatest acts of corruption are committed where the money is greatest and it is in the capital votes segment that you have so much

money voted and that is the area of activity in which those people who want to make quick profit out of the nation would make such profit."

The ICPC boss also said the commission's approach to anti-corruption was to deal with both grand and small scale corruption.

"Our own interpretation of zero tolerance for corruption is probably different from the general notion from what it means. When it comes to the fight against corruption we do not divide between the big man and the small man.

Whether the act of corruption is committed by the small man we approach the fight against that perpetrator with the same degree of commitment as we would fight the big man," he said.

He noted that since ICPC decided to focus on public enlightenment the number of petitions it received had doubled.

Adoke commended the ICPC for carrying out the campaign against corruption without criminalising people and promised the Ministry's support of its activities.

PIC: AFP



THIS frame grab taken off Chinese State CCTV shows Chinese rescue workers searching through the rubble following a strong earthquake in Yushu County in Northwest China's Qinghai province yesterday

Why June 12 elections succeeded, by Prof Nwosu

By Fidelis Mac-Leva

JUNE 12, 1993 elections succeeded because the then electoral body adopted the open ballot system, Prof Humphrey Nwosu, who conducted the elections, has said.

Speaking at a roundtable on free and fair election organised by Leadership newspapers in Abuja yesterday, Nwosu said subsequent elections were unsuccessful because the nation's electoral bodies went back to the secret balloting system.

"There is everything wrong with the secret ballot system; it encourages multiple voting, under aged voting as well as ballot snatching as well as results manipulations", Nwosu, who chaired the defunct National Electoral Commission (NEC), said.

He also said the June 12 presidential election was annulled by a 'cabal' of senior

military officers around the then military President Ibrahim Babangida who never wanted elections to hold in the first place. He maintained that the elections were won by the late chief MKO Abiola.

According to Nwosu, the military cabal were propelled to act on June 12, 1993 when they realised that the court action taken by NEC at the Court of Appeal, Kaduna, succeeded in securing accelerated hearing fixed for June 25, 1993.

He said NEC headed for the Court of Appeal in Ibadan to challenge the ruling of an Abuja High Court on June 10, 1993 against the conduct of the June 13, 1993 presidential elections.

"In the Appeal NEC prayed the court to be allowed to conclude its constitutional role in keeping with the provisions of Decree No 13 Presidential Election (Basic con-

stitutional and Transitional Provision) Decree 1993 by pronouncing the winner of the election."

Speaker of the House of Representatives Dimeji Bankole expressed the hope that the ongoing electoral reforms would go a long way in broadening the franchise of democratic participation as well as opening up the electoral process to greater transparency and credibility.

Gen Muhammadu Buhari attributed the crisis in the electoral system to leadership failure in the country insisting that Nigerian leaders must ensure credibility in the electoral process as a sure way of earning the confidence of people.

Chairman of Leadership Group, Sam Nda Isiah, said the roundtable was aimed at offering some directions on how to move the country's electoral system forward.

Vision 2020 implementation plan out next week

By Fidelis Mac-Leva

REPORT of the four year medium term implementation plan to push Nigeria in the league of the world twentieth economies in the next ten years will be out next week.

The Central Working Committee of the country's Vision 2020 will do the submission, according to the directive given by the Minister of National Planning Shamsudeen Usman. Vision 2020 document represents Nigeria's long term strategic agenda for development. Chief Philip Asiodu is the chairman of the Central Working Committee of the Vision.

National Planning Ministry is also set to make available report of the Vision to all the newly sworn-in Ministers of the federation.

Usman gave the directive yesterday at a ceremony organised by the commission's management to welcome him back to the commission as minister.

The Vision 2020 document, the minister said, represents Nigeria's long-term strategic development agenda, while the first 4-year implementation plan contains medium term priorities, programmes and projects.

FG sacks Anyanwu from BPE

By Yunus Abdulhamid

THE Federal Government has finally sacked Dr Christopher Anyanwu as the Director General of the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE), *Daily Trust* has learnt.

The sack letter was signed by the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Alhaji Yayale Ahmed and was delivered to the BPE late yesterday, about five weeks after Anyanwu was handed an indefinite suspension. All effort to get the BPE's spokesman, Chukuwuma Nwoko's reaction proved abortive as calls placed to his mobile line did not get through.

The sack was said to have been ordered by Acting President Goodluck Jonathan. It said he (Anyanwu) was sacked for public interest.

Ms Bolanle Onagoruwa took over from the Anyanwu upon his suspension, being the most senior director at the privatisation agency. Though she was however due for retirement since March 18, 2010, having being a director for eight years, she is still holding the forte pending the appointment of a substantive DG.

Anyanwu was alleged to have among others "unilaterally and fundamentally altered the conditions and guidelines approved by the NCP for the sale of NITEL/MTEL, even after these had been published in the print media.

Deputy directors at the BPE had also petitioned the acting president over what they described as "unusual appointment of acting directors" by Anyanwu while he was in charge.

Advertising council to clamp down on illegal ads

By Yunus Abdulhamid

THE Advertising Practitioner Council of Nigeria (APCON) says it will soon clamp down on media houses that carry advertorials that do not meet established standards.

Chairman of APCON Advertising Standards Panel (ASP) Mr Sesan Ogunro said the Nigerian media should publish only adverts that come with APCON clearance certificate to ensure that the consuming public are served with morally and culturally correct information as well as satisfy legal conditions.

Sesan was speaking when he led a nine member team of APCON on a visit to corporate headquarters of Media Trust Limited in Abuja.

"We are soliciting the corporation of Media Trust to ensure that the advertising industry protects consumers in Nigeria by conforming to legal and ethical rules in Nigeria," he said. He said the ASP is constitutionally mandated to vet all adverts before they are published and any media house that refuse to abide by this will be sanctioned according to the provisions of the laws. Registrar of APCON Alhaji Garba Bello Kankarofi however said that advert materials on vacancies, public notices, congratulatory messages and bank statements were excluded from APCON vetting list.

Jonathan: I have not seen Yar'adua since Nov

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Mr Jonathan said Yar'adua's doctor had not tried to contact him. "He [the doctor] has not come to me. I don't want to compel him."

In his interview, Jonathan also touched on clashes in Jos, where tensions between Muslims and Christians since the start of the year have left many dead.

He promised to prosecute those behind text messages inciting the violence, which he said was ethnic, rather than religious. He said most of the indigenous population in Jos were Christian, while "some - not all" of the settlers were Muslim.

"So if anything touches a settler who is a Muslim, it will be interpreted as if they are attacking the Muslims," he said. "And if the settlers that are Muslim now touched the indigenous population that are Christian, it will be interpreted as the Christians are being attacked."

Jonathan thought the time for talking was over, and those responsible for committing crimes in Jos should be prosecuted. "Anybody that is remotely or directly linked up with the crisis should be prosecuted," he said.

Court allows teen to marry grandma

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present at the wedding prayer.

He said at the age of 18, the groom is mentally matured to engage a woman for marriage, citing Suratul Nisai verse 3 in the Holy Qur'an where men are enjoined to marry up to four wives. The judge said under the Sharia, only women are compelled to bring their representative before solemnizing a marriage, but as for men, they can send even a slave or an unbeliever to represent them if they so wished.

The judge however ordered the groom to go and tender an apology to his mother for disobeying her wish and to seek for her forgiveness.

After the verdict, the groom, Bashir Abubakar and his bride Ai Maikare expressed happiness over the judgment and told our reporter that they would continue to live as husband and wife. Bashir also promised to apologize to his mother as ordered by the judge.

Yesterday's court sitting attracted a large crowd of people who besieged the court premises to witness the outcome of the marriage saga.

Excerpts of Jonathan's interview with CNN's Christiane Amanpour

Amanpour: Well, let me ask you this. You are now acting president, because the president, Mr. Yar'adua, is unwell.

Jonathan: Yes.

Have you seen him since he has come back from his medical absence in Saudi Arabia?

No, I have not seen him.

Why not?

Jonathan: Well, when somebody is seriously ill, either the president or a citizen of Nigeria, and by virtue of being a president is a public figure, but still when you are seriously ill would respect the opinion of the family. And in the thinking (ph) of the family is that (inaudible) insulate him from (ph) most of the key actors in government (ph).

I have not seen him. The Senate president (ph) has not seen him, district (ph) has not seen him, and (inaudible)

Doesn't that cause, when all the senior members of government, including yourself -- doesn't that cause anxiety amongst the people?

Jonathan: Yes, it does. It does. Obviously, it does, but we cannot over-influence his family's thinking (ph).

Would you prefer that the family allowed you to visit him?

Yes, of course. But I will not want to force.

What is his actual state of health? This also is a mystery.

I can't say exactly. It's only the medical doctors that can.

Have they told you?

No, they haven't.

Have they made any public statements?

Not quite. Not now. At the beginning, yes, but (inaudible) left for Saudi Arabia, I think in the second week or so or within the first week we are told that he has acute pericarditis. After that, no other statement has been issued.

So if he can receive religious leaders, why can he not receive at least the acting president who's acting in his name?

Well, religious leaders are there for (inaudible) blessings. But probably that is why they asked the religious leaders to go and pray for him. We are a very, very religious society.

Do you believe that those around him -- his family, his loyalists -- are trying to undermine you or your new cabinet or your efforts as acting president?

I wouldn't say they were trying to undermine me, because the laws of the land are very clear.

Do you think he will ever come back to government?

I can't say that. It's difficult for any of us as mortals to say so.

So you are now acting president, and you have essentially a year, because elections will be held this time 2011.

Yes.

What is your most pressing issue?

The most pressing issue for Nigeria now, in terms of basic infrastructure, is power. What outside power...

You mean electricity?

Electricity. What outside (ph) that -- what is central to the minds of Nigerians now is an election that their votes will count, free and fair elections, because we've been accused of a country that our elections somehow questioned. And I promise Nigerians that they will surely get that, and I've done some experiments (ph).

The next thing that Nigerians that (ph) worries about issues of corruption. I know we've been accused of (inaudible) government (inaudible) at the expense of society. So they expect us to take these two issues (ph) seriously.

So what can you do to take those issues seriously? Obviously, the issue of good governance, of free elections, free of corruption is central, and you heard the United States has also said just now that you must remove the head of the election commission, Mr. Maurice Iwu. Will you do that?

You see, the issue of the -- the electoral body -- the issue is that whether the president electoral body -- we called an Independent Electoral Commission, INEC -- can conduct free and fair election or not. And I told them that, yes, they can, because I have done it with the same people.

But issue (ph) of the people is INEC, I told them that, look, between now and ending of June, most of the officials at the national level -- they're called commissioners (ph) -- their tenure will end, and we're going to review them on individual merit. And if people will still (ph) cannot go back, we have to replace them.

Do you think he will stay or will he be removed? That's something that the U.S...

... Among -- among the commissioners at the center (ph) that their tenure (ph) will end by June this year. And we are going to review...

So he will be out by June?

All of them we'll review (ph). And any one of them that we feel is not competent definitely...

Do you feel that Mr. Iwu is competent?

(Inaudible) I know that this question continues to come up (ph). What I've said (ph) -- the issue is beyond Mr. Iwu.

I know. But I'm specifically talking about him, because it's come up in your meetings with US officials.

Yes, I agree that within the period that he's chairing INEC (ph), there are quite a number of controversies. I agree. There are quite a number of concerns. There are quite a number of controversies. There are a number -- the perception is that the feeling back home and in the inter-

national community is that he cannot conduct a free and fair election.

So I know what I'm telling you, that this (inaudible) Iwu, I'm not trying to (inaudible) for him. The Iwu (ph) we are talking about has conducted free elections (ph). These past three elections (ph) (inaudible) credible.

So the issue is -- because the issue is beyond Iwu (inaudible) set up an electoral system and our regulations and laws that will make sure that anybody who is appointed to that office should be able to conduct acceptable elections. And that is my focus.

OK. Will you run in 2011? Will you present yourself as a presidential candidate?

For now, I don't want to think about it. I came in as the vice president (ph) to run with President Yar'adua. Of course, getting close to -- to period of election he took ill, and I have to take over under somewhat controversial circumstances. Only last week, I reconsidered (ph) the cabinet.

So let us see Nigeria will move forward first. If the country is not moving, what -- what will I tell Nigerians I want to contest -- yes, I'm a politician and I would be interested in politics, since I'm still relatively young.

But the -- the reason I ask you is because...



Jonathan: Yes, but I cannot even tell (ph) myself now. I must assess myself.

I understand.

You cannot just wake up and say you want to contest an election to be the president of a country. First of all, you must say, can you really bring the dividends of (inaudible) three months after which we review ourselves. And I used to tell people, look, if I'm not satisfied to what is happening (inaudible) election?

Well, I'm asking you because there is this informal agreement amongst various locations north and south which has been closely followed about taking turns at the presidency and that power must shift. For instance, Mr. Yar'adua, who is from the north, has not even finished one term, and he should have a second term, according to your informal agreement. You're from the south.

Yes.

So it's kind of not your turn, so that's why I'm asking you -- and everybody's very interested as to whether you will present yourself for elections.

Yes, those interests are there.

I (inaudible) part of a lot of meetings in the ruling party (inaudible) even (inaudible) within the ruling party (inaudible) but, basically, the issue of whether I will contest or not is it (inaudible) I used to say that, if I contest elections, the elections in Nigeria are not only the presidency election, et cetera (inaudible) of Nigeria.

There are options for me if I want to contest election. I (inaudible) contest as a vice president or anybody. I can contest as a president, because the laws allow me. But that is not my own priority now.

My priority now is to see how, within this little period left, what impact can we show?

But let me just get something straight. You say that you can conduct and it's possible that you will contest, yes?

It is, of course.

Yes? It's possible that you will contest them?

These are options. I don't want to think about it.

One other question on elections. Mr. Ibrahim Babangida (ph), former Nigerian military leader who seized power, essentially, and ruled for about eight years in the late '80s and '90s, says that he wants to contest them again in 2011. Is that acceptable?

Jonathan: He's very free. There is no law stopping Babangida (ph) from contesting. Babangida (ph) and any other military head of state (ph) is very free to contest. It depends on the people, and that's why we say that -- yes, it depends on -- I will say that the votes of the people must count. Babangida (ph) is a leader that has been head (inaudible) about eight years-plus, just like you said. Babangida (ph) has his friends. He has done some good jobs, even though some people may see -- nobody will be a leader that who will not see you from both left and right.

But as an individual, Babangida (ph) is very free to contest the presidency. Other military (ph) leaders are interested in contesting the presidency, not only Babangida (ph), and they are all free. On that 11th day, Nigerian votes will count, and not me (ph).

Sheriff seeks law to appoint new emir of Uba

From Yahaya Ibrahim, Maiduguri

FOLLOWING the death of the 72-year-old emir of Uba, Alhaji Ismaila Mamza, Governor Alt Modu Sheriff says he would seek a law to empower him to appoint a new emir as the existing law only empowers district heads under the emirate to appoint an emir for

Uba. The late Mamza was on the throne since 1974. He died on Sunday, April 4, 2010 after a protracted illness.

Sheriff who led a delegation of top government officials to condole the people of the area said there was need for the law to be amended to conform with laws dealing with appointment of other

emirs in the state in which the governor is empowered to make the appointment on the recommendation of appropriate king makers in the emirate.

While describing the late emir as a man who lived a peaceful and purposeful life worthy of emulation, the governor expressed hope that the new law would be in place

in two months to pave way for the appointment of Mamza's successor.

The Waziri of Uba Usman Bello while receiving the delegation, appealed to Sheriff to hasten the appointment of a new emir to avert sharp disunity among princes that may be contesting for the throne. He said a quick appointment of a

successor would minimise rivalry.

He urged the governor to appoint someone that would be accepted by the communities under the emirate.

It would be recalled that the late emir died in Abuja shortly after he was flown from London where he had been receiving treatment for an undisclosed ailment.

Kidnappers free 4 expatriates

From Muhammad Bello, Port Harcourt

FOUR expatriates kidnapped last week Thursday have been released by their captors. The three Syrians and a Lebanese working for Macro Engineering Nigeria Limited, a road construction firm, were abducted at gun point after the assailants killed a policeman attached to the firm.

Police spokesperson, Rita Inoma-Abbey, told our correspondent, "The men were released unhurt on Monday". She could not say if a ransom was paid for their release. Those released were Messrs Miland, a Lebanese and Messrs Farid, Right and Remond, all Syrians.

On March 31, gunmen kidnapped a local employee of the French oil group Total on his way to work in Port Harcourt.

Benue lacks strong federal presence — Don

By Hir Joseph, Lafia

PROFESSOR John Sambe, the immediate past Head of Department of Mass Communication department at the Benue State University, Makurdi, has urged the Federal Government to strengthen its presence in the state.

The university don said in an interview in Makurdi, the state capital, that as the country prepares for the 2011 general elections, there was the need for people in the state to elect credible persons that would be able to represent the state effectively at the national level. He said although Benue participates fully in the politics of the country, it gets nothing as compared to other states in terms of appointments and award of contracts that would change the fortunes of the people.

Professor Sambe has indicated interest to contest for the Senatorial seat of the North-East senatorial zone in the state. He said his ambition is to represent effectively the interest of zone A people of the state comprising of seven local government areas. According to him, he intends to establish strong collaboration with the leadership of the state if elected.



FROM left: Managing Director, New Nigerian Newspapers, Alhaji Tukur Abdulrahman, Governor Namadi Sambo of Kaduna State and Editor, New Nigerian Daily, Alhaji Bala Muhammad, during a courtesy call on the governor in Kaduna yesterday.

Saraki reshuffles cabinet

From Mustafa Abubakar, Ilorin

KWARA State Governor Dr. Abubakar Bukola Saraki has reshuffled his cabinet with the return of the suspended Secretary to the State Government (SSG).

This is the second in one year. Alhaji AbdulGaniyu Cook-Olododo was about three weeks ago suspended alongside the Special Adviser to the Governor on Political

Affairs Alhaji Musa Abdullahi and the governor's Personal Assistant on Political Matters Alhaji Hassan Gegele from the office over allegations of insubordination.

A statement signed by the Chief Press Secretary to the Governor Mas'ud Adebimpe said the former SSG was reappointed as the new Chief of Staff, Government House and takes over from Dr. Ali Babatunde Ahmad while Alhaji Saka

Abimbola Isau (SAN) takes over as the new Secretary to the State Government (SSG).

Meanwhile, Governor Saraki has forwarded to the House of Assembly, a letter for the appointment of new commissioners to join the State Executive Council.

The list includes the former Chief of Staff Dr. Ali Babatunde Ahmad. The governor has also approved the appointments of four

new special assistants.

They are Alhaji Ja'afar Bio as Senior Special Assistant (Legislative Matters), Mr. Yinka Aje as Senior Special Assistant (Agriculture), Mr. Musbau Olusegun Lawal Special Assistant (Legal Matters) and Alhaji Aliyu A. Olola as Personal Assistant (Political Matters).

There appointments, according to the Chief Press Secretary take immediate effect.

Councillors allege victimisation over contract scam

From Andrew Agbese, Jos

COUNCILLORS in Shendam Local Government Area of Plateau State have alleged victimization by the council Chairman, Nicholas Kemi Nshe, over their report on contract awards in the local government.

The Shendam legislative committee of works, housing and transport had in its assessment report, queried some of the contracts awarded by the chairman of the local government, saying they were inflated above budgetary provisions without clear explanations.

Chairman of the then committee, Sunday Niagwan, who spoke

with our correspondent in Jos said he and some of the members of the committee had reasons to believe that they were being victimized by the chairman for their stand against corruption in the local government. He said the dissolution of the then committee on works was the first of such cases, saying it was no coincidence that it was immediately after the report got to the EFCC that the committee was dissolved while he and some of his colleagues had been denied payment of their constituency projects allowances for no reason.

The council chairman neither picked his call nor replied the text message sent to him by our correspondent on the matter.

Shagari institute being revived for democracy

From Abdulfatai Abdulsalami, Sokoto

DR Zayyanu Umar, the Executive Director of the Shehu Shagari World Institute for Leadership and Good Governance in Nigeria (SSWI) says it is being revived to promote democracy, responsible leadership and the rule of law.

Disclosing this to newsmen in Sokoto, he added that the institute was established in 1997 by the "admirers" of the Second Republic president, Alhaji Shehu Shagari, in recognition and appreciation of his great public service to humanity, stressing that the institute had been established to promote the

lofty ideals of Alhaji Shehu Shagari.

Dr. Umar, who is also a lecturer in the Political Science Department of the Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto said though the institute had been moribund for the past 3 to 4 years, Alhaji Shehu Shagari had as a person, been contributing his quota to national development, democracy, peace and unity among Nigerians.

"The ideals of the former president are being cherished nationally and internationally", he said, adding that Nigerians need to make strenuous efforts to consolidate the current democratic gains in the country.

AbdulMutallab absent at pretrial hearing

A United States District judge issued three orders yesterday during a pretrial hearing for the Nigerian-born man dubbed "the underwear bomber."

U.S. District Judge Nancy Edmunds ordered another status conference for 2 p.m. June 22, set a cut-off date of Sept. 10 for all motions and asked the defense to submit a new speedy trial waiver.

Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, 23, is accused of trying to detonate a bomb in midair while aboard a Northwest Airlines flight from Amsterdam to Detroit Metropolitan Airport on Christmas Day.

Abdulmutallab is being held in federal prison in Milan and was not at the hearing.

"The government said it has turned over considerable discovery but some is outstanding, to be turned over in the next few weeks," said Rod Hansen, media information officer for U.S. District Court Eastern Division of Michigan.

"The defense did not want to say the government is uncooperative, but it is having difficulty in dealing with the discovery because of the amount."

Because Abdulmutallab is being held in federal prison and is not with the general population because of security regulations, there are only certain days attorneys can see him, Hansen said.

They have asked for clearance to bring in a laptop for Abdulmutallab to review material, and that has to be worked out, also because of security issues.

He pleaded not guilty in January to a six-count charge, including the attempted murder of 290 people on board the plane and trying to use a weapon of mass destruction. If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of life in prison.

TUC threatens to shut INEC over non unionisation

By Francis Okeke

TRADE Union Congress (TUC) yesterday said it will shut offices of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) across the federation over its refusal to allow the commission's workers to form a union.

TUC President General Comrade Peter Esele gave the warning when the union met with the Minister of Labour Chief Emeka Wogu in an interactive session called by the minister to familiarise himself with stakeholders in the labour sector. Esele told the minister that the major challenges will arise from issues such as deregulation, minimum wage, contract staffing and casualisation.

"I can assure you that your road will be rough, but the roughness of the road is what sharpens you. The process is tough but it brings out beauty. You will face those challenges, it is normal," he said.

He assured the minister of support for policies that will 'add value' to Nigerians but warned that labour would only support if the government was doing the right thing.

The minister told the TUC delegation that achieving industrial peace and harmony are his areas of focus.

He said he will work on promoting dialogue, protection of workers right, decent working environment and quick resolution of industrial disputes.

Legal Aid Council is brokeDG

By Adelanwa Bamgboye

DIRECTOR General of the Legal Aid council (LAC) Mrs. Nwaka Laetitia Akinlami has said that the council was broke even as it continues to render free legal services to the indigent.

Mrs. Akinlami spoke at the maiden retreat for management staff, zonal directors and state coordinators of the council held yesterday in Abuja.

She said the council is faced with diverse challenges which include funding, manpower, operational vehicles, delay in the passage of the legal aid (Amendment) bill, and absence of a National Legal Aid Policy and Action Plan.

She said the council does not collect money from clients because its services are free and the clients do not have money.

On the delay in the passage of the Legal Aid (Amended) Bill, she said that the council had worked together with the National Assembly to harmonise what they had and what LAC brought in from stakeholders meeting in 2007.

She said the Attorney General of the Federation had also been harmonising the proposed Bill adding that everybody that was needful to get had been contacted.

She said the passage of the Bill is a priority case, adding that the council needed the law within the next two weeks.



FROM left: NAFISA, wife of late Lt. CDR. Ahmed Yusuf, pilot of the naval aircraft that crashed on 26th January 2010 in Port Harcourt, receiving a key and documents from the Chief of Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Ishaya Ibrahim in Abuja yesterday.

Promotion: HND holders allege bias in Immigration Service

By Sule Lazarus

DISQUIET reigns at the Nigeria Immigration Services as some senior officers alleged they were denied promotions in a recent exercise because they hold Higher National Diploma (HND).

It was learnt yesterday that some of the affected senior officers are planning to seek legal redress, arguing that the action that favoured degree holders in contravention of government's directive on promotions and recruitment.

The aggrieved officers, it was further learnt, are majorly of northern extraction who were suppose to move from the rank of Assistant Comptroller to Deputy comptroller.

A source told Daily Trust that the Presidency had in the past sent a circular to the Board of the Organisation, saddled with the responsibility

of recruiting, promoting and discipline its personnel, stating clearly the criteria that should be adopted in the promotion of all personnel irrespective of tribe or religion.

The directive was sequel to the recommendations of the Presidential Committee on the Restructuring of the Immigration Services headed by Engr. Mustapha Bello regarding the criteria to be used for promotion of all deserving personnel of the Service.

The committee recommended among others that, there should not be any form of discrimination in the promotion of officers based on degree/HND dichotomy.

He said "all 4 cadres in the Immigration Services, namely Immigration Assistant Cadre, Immigration Inspector Cadre, Immigration Superintendent Cadre and the Professional Cadre should be streamlined to ensure that round pegs are put in round holes".

In the circular with reference number SGF. 6/S.18/1V/246, dated January 31st 2005, which was signed by the then Secretary to the Government of the Federation [SGF], Chief Ufot J. Ekaete sent to the Board stated emphatically that all the directives must be adhered to.

"Supt Cadre officers with degrees or HND, Insp. Cadre officers with NCE, ND or its equivalent and officers in the Supt Cadre but who do not have required qualification should be converted to its equivalent" the circular added.

When contacted, Public Relations Officer of the organization, Mr. E. King denied knowledge of the circular, stating that it is the responsibility of the Board and not that of the management.

Efforts to contact the Secretary of the Board, Alhaji Mohammed Abubakar failed as he did not pick his call.

IGP to probe disappearance of suspects from custody

By Misbahu Bashir

INSPECTOR General of Police Ogbonna Onovo will investigate the circumstances over the disappearance of six suspects arrested by the police in Rivers State last year in connection with robbery.

This followed request by the Amnesty International to Attorney General of the Federation Mohammed Bello Adoke to investigate the matter and ascertain the whereabouts of the detainees.

Police Force Public Relations Officer ACP Emmanuel Ojukwu said Onovo has not been informed about the case but will certainly probe it if he gets to know about it.

"The matter will be investigated and officers found guilty in the case will be punished accordingly," the PPRO said. The IGP and Commissioner of Police in Rivers have been notified.

On April 7 2009 the police stopped the car of Chika Ibeku (29), Gabriel Ejoor Owoicho (29), Precious Odua (27) and two others. They were arrested and detained at Omoku Police station, Rivers State. On April 8, Johnson Nnaemeka (39) was questioned at Omoku Police Station. He was arrested on 9 April, and his house was searched. They all informed their families of their arrest.

Mother of one of the men told Amnesty International: "My son called me on the phone around 7am,

on 8 April. And he told me he was arrested. The line went off. That was the last thing I heard of him."

Tawanda Hondora, Deputy Africa Director at Amnesty International, said one year after repeatedly calls for the police to reveal the whereabouts of the suspects and bring them to court, they have not been seen.

The suspects were taken to the SOS in Old GRA, Port Harcourt, where police officers confirmed their detention but their families were not allowed to see them after their transfer.

On April 11, police officers at SOS claimed the men were transferred to Special Anti Robbery Squad (SARS), which officers at SARS denied.

FG intensifies plans to eradicate polio

By Ruby Leo

MINISTER of State for Health Alhaji Suleiman Bello has reaffirmed government's commitment to eradicate polio by the end of the year.

The minister made this known during the launch of the ball to 'Kick Polio out of Africa Soccer Ball in Nigeria', campaign at the national stadium in Abuja yesterday.

Bello said he would begin the campaign in his home state of Zamfara, which recorded one case of the polio virus this year, adding that all machinery would be deployed to ensure that no Nigerian child is ever infected with the virus.

Chairman of the Nigeria National Polio-plus Committee Mr. Olubusuyi Aina Onabolu said the project was an initiative of Rotary International. He said the

organisation was using the platform of the first ever FIFA World Cup to be played on African soil to drive home the message that everyone must make concerted efforts to "End Polio Now."

Onabolu said, "The ball was kicked off in South Africa and has to travel to all the 22 polio affected countries in Africa to end its journey at the Rotary International Convention in Montreal, Canada in June."

Earlier while receiving the representatives of Bill Gates Foundation who were in the country to access the level of progress made in Nigeria at eradicating polio, Bello said tremendous progress has been recorded since traditional and religious leaders became involved in the exercise.

Leader of the delegation Mr. Michael Gullabey confirmed the progress made in the last one year, saying there had been

a dramatic reduction in wild polio cases in Nigeria compared to 2009.

At a meeting with the Executive Director of the National Primary Health Care Development Agency, Dr. Mohammed Ali Pate, traditional rulers agreed to go back to their various states and ensure that both tiers of government commit funds and the needed machineries to kick out the epidemic from the region.

Identity commission gets new equipment

By Francis Okeke

NATIONAL Identity Management Commission (NIMC) has taken delivery of two high end IBM Enterprise Servers, storage systems and a robust Business Continuity Servers.

The servers are part of the infrastructure required to establish a reliable, secure and scalable Identity Management System for Nigeria.

A press release signed by the commission's spokesman Anthony Okwudiafor said the materials were critical systems which constitute Phase I of the commission's project of enhanced service delivery.

Okwudiafor said the equipment worth millions of naira was delivered by Interglobal Limited recently.

Management team of the commission, led by Engr. Aliyu Aziz, the Director, Identity Data Base Department (IDD), said the commission remain focused on enhancing its operations.

The director reiterated that the items delivered were part of the first phase of the project which includes the supply, installation and development of IBM P-series server, storage system, Data Protection associated software and a business continuity system.

He said the second phase will include provision of additional hardware and software for higher availability and geographical disaster tolerance and recovery. The staff of the commission will also be trained abroad on IBM series facility to ensure knowledge transfer "especially as there is a three year after sales support component."

'Voters education is panacea to apathy'

By Abbas Jimoh

A massive voter education would encourage inclusive participation of Nigerians in the electoral reform, Comrade Fidelis Edeh of the Service-Accord Initiative (SAI) has said.

Speaking at a one-day workshop themed, "Voters Education:

A critical tool for an open electoral process and legitimate voting" yesterday in Abuja, Edeh said voter apathy in Nigeria is caused by lack of commitment by elected leaders.

He said the recent FCT council election is a testimony of what massive enlightenment campaign can achieve among electorates.

"No doubt, a major challenge in the electoral process is the need to help change the attitude of apathy or fear to one of active participation of the citizenry," Edeh said.

He urged Nigerians to individually and collectively insist in owning Nigeria by serving and protecting the common good.

Minister tasked on women empowerment

By Muideen Olaniyi

MINISTER of Women Affairs Mrs. Josephine Anenih should evolve policies that will give access to more women to participate in politics and pursue other gender empowerment scheme to improve their lives, the Nigerian Enterprise Group (NEG) has said.

NEG's Chairperson Mrs. Margaret Onaiw, in a statement, hailed Acting President Goodluck Jonathan for considering a gender sensitive woman leader like Mrs. Anenih to head the Women Ministry.

Mrs Onaiw expressed belief that the appointment of Anenih would bring a fresh impetus for sustain-

able women development in the country.

She hoped that the new women minister will bring to bear upon her job all the experiences she gained over the years in direct participatory politics, adding that her antecedents and profile in women activism and politics in the past years make her qualified for the job.



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Any additional information (on request) would be provided expeditiously. But such information will not be considered a reason for extending the submission date.

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Central Area District
P.M.B 2851 Garki, Abuja

Nyako accuses Atiku's associates of plot to hijack PDP

From Ibrahim Muhammad, Yola

ADAMAWA State Governor Murtala Nyako has alleged that there are moves by Atiku's associates to take over the party. Speaking with journalists yesterday, Nyako said he was not objecting to Atiku's return to the Peoples Democratic Party, but that he should be subjected to scrutiny.

He added that, "Because already, his people are saying they want to take over the control of our great party, the PDP. His return should be subject to scrutiny because we can only admit a person who can bring development to the party, not disharmony."

He also denied rumours that he had reconciled with the former vice president.

Reacting, Atiku's spokes-

man, Garba Shehu told our correspondent on phone that the former vice president welcomed Governor Murtala Nyako's declaration that he was not opposed to his return to the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

"Atiku believes that the perception that he and his associates are coming to take over the party is a propaganda being dished out by fifth columnists. Atiku has always advised his supporters to treat all party members with respect and humility. So, there is really no reason for anyone to feel threatened," he said.

He appealed to all stakeholders to disregard any attempt to drive a wedge between Atiku and important constituencies within the PDP.

Edo to mark Undemocratic Day

From Vincent Egunvanon, Benin

THE Edo State government is to mark the 14th April every year as Undemocratic Day. This according to government officials is because on April 14, 2007, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) conducted what it called the worst governorship and House of Assembly elections in the state. The Special Adviser to the Governor on Political Matters, Charles Idahosa, at a news conference in Benin Tuesday said the April 14th 2007, elections would be remembered to give Nigerians the opportunity to reflect on what happened and learn some salient lessons.

"Though, Governor Adams Oshiomhole was elected on 14th April 2007, he was denied the mandate, until he defended it in court and won at the election tribunal," he said.

He said the state government would also mark that day because of the political engineering which the governor was championing in the country, saying Governor Oshiomhole was championing the doctrine of 'one man one vote'. He said the campaign for electoral integrity dubbed 'one man one vote' by the governor was an ideological battle for the liberation of the people from the grip of godfathers.

"The so called godfathers decided the direction of the elections in 2007 in the political boardroom in utter negation of the will of the people. They determined who became what in the party by selecting the candidates of their choice and also took steps to vote for them on behalf of the people, who were only made to queue up on election day to cast their vote in order to create a facade and thereby legitimise a fait accompli," he added.

UNICEF blames education backwardness in North on unqualified teachers

From Ruqayyah Yusuf Aliyu, Kano

THE United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF) has attributed the backwardness in education in the North to the employment of unqualified teachers in primary and junior secondary schools in some states in the region. This was disclosed by an Education Specialist with the UNICEF field office in Bauchi, Mrs Saratu Yunusa while delivering a paper titled 'Quality basic education: A call for community participation in the ten DFO states' during an education stakeholders meeting in Kano yesterday. Mrs Yunusa said the number of unqualified teachers in the northern states was alarming.

She said the meeting was to identify the gaps in basic primary and junior secondary schools education in the states with a view to sharing each other's experiences and proffering solution to the problem. She said the meeting was also aimed at identifying areas of challenges and capacity development in gender mainstreaming and community participation for delivery of quality education.

Kogi 2011: It is fight to finish – Opposition

From Isiaka Wakili, Lokoja

PLANS are underway by opposition parties in Kogi State to wrestle power from the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) in the next general elections. The state's Chairman of the African Liberation Party (ALP) and Secretary of the Nigerian National Volunteer Service, Ibrahim Itodo, said this in a chat with our correspondent yesterday. Itodo, who is also a member of the Conference of Nigerian Political Parties (CNPP) said it would be incorrect of the PDP to

assume that the opposition is dead in the state, noting that Governor Ibrahim Idris was allowed a second term in the interest of the state.

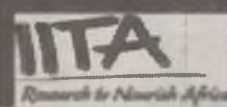
"Opposition is not dead in Kogi. We compromised to allow Governor Idris a second term in the interest of the state. Now, we are coming out with an emerged opposition to battle PDP in the next elections. Few days ago, the opposition in the state held a meeting to concretize plans to dismantle PDP in 2011. It is fight to finish. The PDP-led govern-

ment has failed to deliver the state from the shackles of underdevelopment. We are fielding credible candidates to defeat the PDP. We are fully prepared and have agreed to adopt a consensus candidate for the gubernatorial election," he added.

On the much-touted power shift, Itodo said that was not the most important need of the state, saying a purpose-driven leadership was needed to fast track the state's economic, human and material development.

"Kogi State has suffered from leadership squab-

bles. We have enormous resources to transform the state if responsible leadership is in place. We need economic, human and material development. Development is not all about providing vehicles and building houses. Power shift is not the basic thing. There ought to be a power shift based on credible leadership. We need a people-oriented leadership that knows the hues and cries of the people. So, when we talk about power shift, we should bring in credibility, transparency and accountability," he said.



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Nasarawa doctors get 50% salary increase

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

THE Nasarawa State government has given doctors and other health workers under the state Hospital Management Board a 50 percent salary increase, the state's Commissioner for Health Dr. Bawa Abimiku has disclosed.

The commissioner, who recently resumed office following the reconstitution of the cabinet, told our corre-

spondent in Lafia yesterday that he had just been briefed that the government had increased the health workers salaries by 50 percent. He therefore charged the workers to reciprocate government's gestures by working hard, saying to whom much is given, much is expected.

He acknowledged that the workers earned lower than some of their counterparts in other states, but called for understanding, saying the state had a lot of

constraints.

"We need our people to come back home and work. Condition of service vary, but sometimes, you have to make sacrifices. Once you agree to join the system, you should help to build the system, not destroy it," he said.

The state government had in January 2008, entered an agreement with the NMA to implement the Consolidated Medical Salaries Structure (CONMESS).



CROSS section of Enugu State commissioners at the state executive council meeting in Enugu yesterday.

Doma has no hand in Adamu's arrest — Senator Jibrin

From Ibraheem Musa, Kaduna

GOVERNOR Aliyu Akwe Doma of Nasarawa State had nothing to do with the arrest of former Governor Abdullahi Adamu by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and his subsequent arraignment in court over alleged corruption charges, Senator Walid Jibrin has said.

In an interview with our correspondent, Senator Jibrin said Governor Doma has a cordial relationship with his predecessor. The senator who is also a BOT member of the Peoples Democratic Party said, "The so called friction between Akwe Doma and Abdullahi Adamu exists only in the imagination of people who do not want peace in Nasarawa State."

According to the PDP stalwart, the case against Adamu started building up long before Doma became governor, arguing that it was purely coincidental that the former governor was arrested by the EFCC after he declared interest to contest for the Senate in the 2011 elections. He said Doma was a gentleman,

who could not condescend so low to engineer the arrest of anyone, let alone his predecessor.

Senator Jibrin added that there was no reason why the governor should see Adamu's aspiration as a threat because the former governor had already served the state for eight years.

"In any case, Adamu will be contesting with six other aspirants at the primaries. The governor did not only sympathise with Adamu during his travails, he also prayed for him, just like many people in Nasarawa State," he said.

Senator Jibrin said the EFCC could query anyone, including the governor and that the commission could also arraign any one in court. He pointed out that Governor Doma had been delivering dividends of democracy to the people of the state and that he should not be distracted by linking him to issues that he knows nothing about.

He said the governor had not only ensured peace in the state, but has also embarked on massive infrastructural development, including roads construction and rural electrification.

Textile workers fault minister on bailout

From Ismail Mudashir, Kaduna

TEXTILE workers under the aegis of the National Union of Textile Garment and Tailoring Workers of Nigeria (NUTGTWN) yesterday condemned the statement allegedly credited to the Minister of Commerce and Industry Senator Jubril Martins Kuye that the current economic condition of the country does not favour a bailout for the textile industry.

The union called on the minister to resign, saying, "He should leave if his intention in the ministry is to pursue an agenda that is not consistent with the national policy framework as enunciated by the Acting President Goodluck Jonathan."

In a statement signed by Comrade Reginald Agulanna and Comrade Issa Aremu, President and Secretary-General of the union respectively, the workers said the current framework for the revival of the textile industry was borne out of a decade-long study by United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) and all the stakeholders. The workers said the minister had no business to reinvent another one.

"There is already a bail-out plan for the industry and textile industry in particular. There is the textile revival fund. The mandate of the new Minister of Commerce and Industry is to realize this existing plan, not to jettison the plan or reinvent another personal agenda," they said.

Defence Hq delegation in Jos to assess task force

From Mahmud Lalo, Jos

A delegation from the Defence Headquarters in Abuja arrived Jos the Plateau State capital yesterday to assess the operations of the Special Task Force (STF) set up by Acting President Goodluck Jonathan to restore peace in the state.

The delegation was led by the Director of Operations at the Defence Headquarters Air Vice Marshal Moses Akinola Akinsanmi. He said the visit was to assess the operations of the STF and to find out if they had challenges.

"We are grateful to God that the situation in Plateau to a large extent is now stable due to the efforts of the task force, which consists of the three services and the police. We want to ensure that we restore law and order and maintain peace in the state," he added.

He said the task force would not be permanent in the state, saying a time would come when the military would withdraw and the police will continue with its duty.

The General Officer Commanding (GOC) 3rd Armoured Division and the Commander of the STF Major General Sale Maina, who received the delegation urged the committee headed by Chief Solomon Lar, the state government as well as traditional and political leaders in the state to contribute their own quota towards the restoration of peace in state.

The delegation visited all the areas, where the STF are stationed.

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RE: NOUN ADVERT - DAILY TRUST 14th April, 2010

NOUN - Invitation for Financial Bidding

The above advert was wrongly carried in Daily Trust 14th April, 2010 page 43.

Please kindly be informed that the advertisement has been suspended.

awaiting the Federal Tenders Journal Advertisement.

Regards please.

Management

Online Reactions

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ON www.dailytrust.com



Boko Haram: Court awards N100 million to leader's in-laws

NOW the Police may begin to respect the Right to Life in Nigeria as the government is being made to pay dearly for their extra-judicial activities.

Isa Mariri
isamariri@yahoo.com

It's a good judgment. I hope the authorities will obey it because it's one thing to get a judgment and another to get justice. As the family gets judgment, I pray they also get justice.

Sunusi Musa
iyando22@yahoo.com

It is a wonderful development in the Nigerian Judiciary. What happened during the Boko haram clashes was a total disregard for human rights. Somebody that submitted himself to the authorities should at least be prosecuted before execution. Extra-judicial killings should be addressed once and for all in Nigeria and let justice reign.

Zanna Baruwa Gashua
bukar.zanna@yahoo.com

Haba this is a lesson to our so-called leaders. This is just the beginning. God will bring all the perpetrators of this act to book and they will surely face His judgment either here or in the hereafter.

Yakubu Jikamshi
jikamshi@yahoo.com

LG buys N11m vehicle for district head

AN N11m car for a District Head after Shekarau has distributed Jeeps worth N10m to every Head is a sign of the corruptive aggrandizement that has perpetrated its way in to our local government councils. Are they there to buy luxury cars for others or to serve people in the locality with infrastructure?

Isa Mariri
isamariri@yahoo.com

Kano state government recently purchased jeeps for all district heads. So why waste N11m to buy another vehicle? And yet he is complaining of inadequate funds. He could have executed some projects with the money.

Usman
shehudal@yahoo.com

IBB: Why I'm vying for presidency in 2011

BABANGIDA placed Nigeria in confusion by annulling our best ever election in 1993. He must tell us why. Abiola/Kingibe's election in 1993 was supposed to be a turning point for this country. Nigeria would have gone beyond the politics of religion and sectionalism by now if Abiola/Kingibe had worked out well. We don't need that kind of person as our leader. It should be noted that the issue of two terms for the south and two terms for the north is not constitutional and people must note this. It means Goodluck can very well contest and win the next election. In any case, I think Christians should also be given chance for the next so called 1-term remaining for the north for the sake of fairness if the issue of north-south terms arrangement is insisted upon. My opinion in any case is to delete the gentlemen agreement and allow people to vote on the merit of each candidate.

Aji Isuwa Suleiman
suleimanaji@yahoo.com

IBB, like every other Nigerian, has a democratic right to aspire to be the president of this country but the final decision on who will be the occupant of Aso Rock after the 2011 elections rest with the Nigerian electorate. It's time for Nigerians to vote wisely and ensure that their votes count.

Ibrahim Tsadu Ibrahi



FORMER President Ibrahim Babangida

elkutigi@gmail.com

IBB, you are welcome to the political scene of our great nation. You have been tried and tested and you could be the messiah we are looking for but remember that the ghost of June 12 is still hovering over our heads. May good luck be on your side.

Muhammad Guiwa
dunguza3@hotmail.com

It is always believed that 'the greater the experience, the higher the chances to do better'. That is why Obasanjo did fairly well in his eight years in power. We are behind you and pray for your success because this country needs

experienced people like you.

Bapetel H.
hussainibapetel@yahoo.com

Really, this country and its people are always taken for a ride. If not what does IBB want in Aso rock after seventeen solid years? I cannot fathom what he wants rather than to maintain the status quo but he will do himself good by not attempting as the people of this country will vote massively against him. Nigerians need to have it at the back of their minds, that this same IBB was the one who annulled the fairest election ever in the history of this country.

Usman Santuraki
usbaturaki@yahoo.com

It is amazing that General Babangida will contest for presidency in 2011. I don't think Nigerians will consider him because of his past performance... someone that redirected this country from certainty to uncertainty. Let him come out and clear himself for annulling June 12 election.

Zanna Baruwa Gashua
bukar.zanna@yahoo.com

It is true that IBB conducted the freest and fairest elections in Nigeria. There's no controversy about that. But I think it is time we engage the story of the illogic of annulling the freest and fairest

elections ever. Don't you think so, sir?

Buba Magaji
bubaethan@yahoo.com

I am sure with the present situation in Nigeria, you are the right person to fix things. You have my vote but you have to furnish Nigerians with your manifesto in order for you to have their full mandate. Good luck.

Nazir Ahmad Lawi
nazirahmadlawi@yahoo.com

Yes Baba, go ahead. I am one hundred percent in support of you to return to power in 2011. I am very sure that you want to return to power in order to correct the mistakes that happened in the past and to save the country from the current critical condition it is in. Go ahead and may Allah select the rightful candidate for us in the coming election of 2011.

Abubakar Chika Maru
abubakarsuleiman2009@yahoo.com

Ironic, isn't it that today Babangida is testifying that June 12 was the freest and fairest elections ever held in Nigeria. If you knew this all along, why then did you not let the results stand? You are now talking about "leadership and experience".

Abdul Rimi
abdulrimi@gmail.com

Credible election is now or never, IBB says

I agree with IBB but I want to know if he is saying this as a concerned Nigerian or

because he wants to join the race. I pray if eventually joins and wins, what happened to

Abiola should not happen to him. Our God will see him

through, amen.
Oby Chubby
angelchubby4u@yahoo.com

EFCC declares Ibori wanted



EX-GOVERNOR James Ibori

YOU can arrest him again, but get proof of all the allegations first since it goes saying that "he who asserts is a duty upon to prove". Prepare your evidences so as not to waste the precious time of our courts like you did before.

Isa Mariri

isamariri@yahoo.com

Oh God, where is he going with this amount while many are sleeping with hunger? EFCC, charge him and prosecute him if found guilty.

Nazir Ahmad Lawi
nazirahmadlawi@yahoo.com

What a surprising issue. Always James Ibori... what about other governors? Were they saints? Please EFCC leave Ibori alone, let him enjoy what others are enjoying. He is not the only one that looted his state treasury. Let us do justice to all.

Kabir Ibrahim Gusau
aahlulzikri@yahoo.com

I think is high time we stop using our security agencies to play politics. Please madam

Waziri, if this guy is guilty, bring him to book and prosecute him. I mean charge him according to the rule of law. May God bless our beloved country and the people fighting for our rights.

Mohammed Sani
sano267@yahoo.com

Is he wanted because Yar'adua is now 'out' or because he is a suspect? If the EFCC has obtained court injunction, it is left for Police to arrest him not EFCC. Why can't we ever be serious in this country? All the criminals are known and they should all be pursued rather than pursuing some and leaving others. I still think it is the duty of the Police to arrest someone and not the EFCC

Aisha Audu
aisha.audu@gmail.com

22 die in Ondo road mishap

NIGERIANS roads have become death traps sending Nigerians early to their graves. Despite the budgetary allocations to fixing Nigerians roads, such allocations always end up in private pocket and we have the lives of Nigerian to pay for that!

Ibrahim Tsadu Ibrahi
elkutigi@gmail.com



FRSC boss Osita Chidoka

Idang Alibi

idangalibi@dailytrust.com; 08036938729

Time to do away with the celibacy law (III)

In response to our proposition that the time has come for the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church to do away with the celibacy law, a Muslim sister, Aisha Idris writing from Bauchi made a contribution (see Letters, Daily Trust, Friday, 9th April, 2010) which I consider worth thoughtful consideration by Christian brothers and sisters. She advised that we read the Quran, Surah 57 (Al Hadid), verses 27-29 which say as follows: *Then we sent after them Our Messengers, and We sent Jesus, Son of Mary and gave him the Ingil (Gospel). And We ordained in the hearts of those who followed him compassion and mercy. But the monasticism which they invented for themselves, We did not prescribe for them, but (they sought it) only to please God therewith, but they did not observe it with the right observance. So We gave those among them who believed their (due) reward; but many of them are fasiqun (rebellious, disobedient to God).*

Celibacy law is an invention by the church to please God. It is not what has been commanded by God. And even as we invented we are not observing it correctly. This reminds me of the command by God that it is good

Where then did then Roman Catholic hierarchy seed that its priests and nuns should not get married?

to make a vow but once we make the vow we should be faithful to fulfil that vow because God hates fools who rush to make vows. I am sure God would not have minded if we made a vow that placed on us a burden that God did not see fit to place on us.

But since the history of the Roman Catholic Church we have heard of popes, bishops and ordinary priests who have fathered many children in violation of their vow of chastity. Some of these children have become priests and nuns and since likes begets likes there will be no end to the mockery of that vow. That law has caused and is still causing a lot of embarrassment to the church. Everyday you read of priests abusing minors or committing other grave sexual sins that even ordinary people like us do not commit. This is a reproach.

It is understandable, though not excusable, if lay men like us by our actions cause the land to sin. But I think it is something else if priests consistently and habitually defile the land through abominable sexual acts. By his calling, a priest is supposed to be always holy before his God because He is holy and demands that he always be like Him, continues to defile as a result of a vow no one can keep? Many leave the beds they have just committed adultery or other acts of sexual

perversions straight serve mass and give "holy communion" and raise their defiled hand to bless the congregation. Surely, that will only pollute the congregation.

I have read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. There is no where in this great Holy Book where it is mentioned that a priest should not marry. Rather, I have read in Leviticus 21 verse 7 in which God commanded priests to get married with the only condition that a priest must be married to a virgin. Where then did then Roman Catholic hierarchy seed that its priests and nuns should not get married?

As far as I am concerned, the celibacy law is a man-made law that is contrary to the laws of God. It should therefore be jettisoned.

My sincere counsel to the hierarchy of the church is that let no one be made to claim that he is or can be strong lest he falls headlong into some terrible sins as some Roman Catholic priests have been doing since the invention of the celibacy law. Let no man deceive himself (1 Corinthians 3:18)

The celibacy law has not achieved the high-minded purpose for which it was conceived and instead of continuing to live a lie until humanity is wiped away by fire and brimstone, we should put an end to it and live in peace with our God.

Whatever may be its failings, the Roman Catholic Church has done so much for humanity. It spread western education to all the nooks and corners of the globe such that there is hardly any modern person on earth today with formal education who does not owe something to the Catholic Church. That legacy will be greatly diminished by the horrible tales of sexual perversions coming out of parishes across the globe.

As a Christian and a member of the church of the lord Jesus Christ I feel I am a stakeholder in what is going on in the Roman Catholic Church which is a part of the body of Christ, and I have a responsibility to counsel that the celibacy law that has brought a lot of damage to the church should be done away with. It does not matter that a people have been doing a particular wrong for several centuries. What matters is that when there is a realization that a people have been towing the wrong path, they should quickly retrace their steps.

When the great apostle Paul thought on marriage and sex, he was very careful to say that while he himself had elected to become celibate he would recommend that others who are not so sure of their strength to overcome certain temptation should get married so that they would be no sexual immorality in the society.

An argument can be advanced by supporters of the celibacy law that if a law is too difficult to keep it does not mean that such a law should be abrogated but the celibacy law is an anti-human law, it is against nature itself and that cannot be obeyed by even one percent (1%) of the population for whom it is made such a law is an extremely bad law and should be removed from the law books.

By Kabiru Danladi Lawanti

Gombe: A state in mourning

The last week of March and first week of April will forever be in the minds of people of Gombe State, particularly Gombe North and South Senatorial Districts. In a span of two days they both lost their two senators. News of the sudden death of the chairman Senate Committee on Agriculture, Senator Tawar Umbi Wada (PDP, Gombe South) on March 31 and that of Senator Kawu Peto Dukku, (PDP, Gombe North) on April 2, 2010 came as a shock to many not only in Gombe state alone but the entire nation. The week can be described as one of sorrow for the families of the deceased and many people, both within and outside the state.

Senator Wada was an erudite legislator who brought his training as a lawyer to bear on the fresh insights he brought on every issue on the floor of the Senate to which he made contribution. His colleague, Senator Kawu on the other hand was a quite legislator. Both were loved by their constituencies in their own ways. This is evident from the crowd that gathered in Gombe Emir's palace to pray for the remains of Senator Kawu on Saturday April 2, 2010 and those that escort the remains of Senator Wada on Friday, April 9, 2010. Lest we forget, this is the second time the people of Gombe South are losing a serving Senator. Senator Idris Abubakar also died on active service in 2002. So for the people of Gombe South, the death of Senator Wada is the second they would witness since 1999.

However, as soon as the burial and mourning of the Senators ends, the business of the day would continue, because that is the way of the world. It

So for the people of Gombe South, the death of Senator Wada is the second they would witness since 1999

is not too early to start speculating the likely successors of the two senators, because of the tricky nature of Gombe politics.

What is a fact is that opposition parties in the state are almost dead or non-existent as in recent years the ruling PDP in the state was able to muzzle them out rendering them almost incapacitated. The focus now will definitely shift to how the heavy weight within the ruling PDP in these two senatorial districts will be able to manage or fight it out among themselves, everyone in his effort to ensure his men succeed the two late senators.

In Gombe South for instance, Mr. David Albashi, a present Commissioner under Goje administration has shown interest long ago to replace late Senator Wada, who was preparing to contest for the Governorship seat before his untimely death. However,

the Deputy Governor, Dr. John Lazarus Yoriyo was also interested. They are all from the same local government, Balanga. Mr. Albashi, the super Commissioner as he is referred to by his admirers was a former deputy chairman in his local government before his appointment as a Commissioner and enjoys the goodwill of the incumbent Governor, Danjuma Goje; however, Dr. Yoriyo is a very powerful figure in the Southern Senatorial District with a wider support from the traditional institutions. These are the two names that actually became prominent even before the recent development, though there are names that cannot be ignored in the race. For example, Dr. Danlami Arab Rukuje, former General Manager, Gombe State Water Corporation is also a candidate to contend with, not forgetting Lt. General Timothy Shelfidi, the Nigerian Ambassador to Russia.

If the struggle for the Senatorial seat in Gombe South is reduced to two people, the fight for Gombe North seat is the trickiest. The Senatorial District comprises Dukku, Kwami, Nafada, Funakaye and Gombe local government areas. It is a District that house almost all the 'who is who' in Gombe State with little exception. The PDP National Publicity Secretary, Professor Rufai Ahmed Alkali is from Dukku, the same town with late Senator Kawu Peto. Some analysts were of the opinion that Rufai may contest the senatorial seat, but they were quick to point out that it would be a political suicide for the state to sacrifice Rufai's current position as PDP National Publicity Secretary to contest the senatorial seat, because there is no guarantee the state will be allowed to retain the slot again.

Also Alhaji Usman Bayero Nafada the Deputy Speaker, who is eyeing the Governorship seat, has been ruled out. Therefore, the focus has shifted to Mallam Saidu Alkali, former Secretary, Gombe State Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board and presently the State Commissioner for Information and Alhaji Ahmed Walama, the current Chairman of Dukku LGA. Both candidates are grass-root politicians with a large followership; however Alkali's disadvantages include his lack of exposure to national politics. With the recent development in the political arena, Walama has more advantages, having served as a Chairman of Dukku for more than seven years; he has achieved a lot through people oriented projects in his local council and a favourite candidate, moreover he bagged an MBA from the BUK and currently the Chairman of the State ALGON. He is highly exposed and very much in touch with national politics and very fit for the seat.

Whatever may be the case, it is the people of the two senatorial districts who will decide through their votes the person that can best represent their interest in the senate. Ours as usual is to guide them, so as to have an informed decision when making their choice. But as citizens it is high time for us to fully participate in the political process by presenting out people we hope can fully represent their people.

Lawanti wrote from Area 11, Garki, Abuja.



Your Letters

Send your letters to letters@dailytrust.com

Re: The colour is faded

I expected Malam Mahmud Jega as well as Comrade Isaa Aremu to say one or two things in their respective Monday columns on the passing away of the political giant, activist, and vocal politician, the audacious, fearless and the one who fought for the common man, Alhaji Dr. Muhammad Abubakar Rimi; they did not disappoint, because both paid their tributes to the late governor of old Kano state in their columns of April 12, 2010.

However, I wish to remind Malam Mahmud Jega that, Hajia Asabe Reza was mistakenly, indirectly or unintentionally outlined in his analysis, because Hajia Asabe Reza impudently affirmed her right to be radically different nonetheless among the female politicians in the country.

In my opinion, Nigeria has never produced a woman politician who was courageous, fearless, and confident enough to stand like Hajia Asabe Reza, beside Hajia Gambo Sawaba and presently there is Hajia Naja'atu Mohammed who is aspiring to be one.

In fact it is generally believed by many that her utterances, cour-

age and tongue-lashing among others, earned her to be nicknamed "Reza" literally means, Razor blade which everyone knows is sharp and can cut deep.

The Federal Government and in particular Kano and Jigawa state governments should name some places in honour of Rimi. Also I appeal and advise Alhaji Sule Lamido, the Jigawa state governor to fill the now vacant position of Santsi leader, which Rimi held. May God helps and guides you aright also may Aljanna Firdaus be Rimi's abode. Amen.

Adamu Muhammad Usman,
Kafin-Hausa, Jigawa State
(adammusman@yahoo.com)

Text us on 08 131 8000 30

Enough of spent forces

LET Nigerians think well before 2011 elections to select credible leaders.

RICHARD Usugh, *Gidan Murtala, Kano, 08065525588.*

The most investigated Nigerian?

WHAT do the records say? I never heard ICPC, EFCC, or any other body probing IBB.

SULAIMAN Aliyu, *Yaba, Lagos, 08061617077.*

Ghost of June 12

NOW that IBB wants to contest in the 2011 presidential election, I personally advise him to first explain why he cancelled June 12th 1992 election, and also apol-

ogise to Nigerians for the debacle that ensued.

YUSUF Sani Yarsanta, *P O Box 249, Funtua, Katsina state, 08063150435.*

Bad politics

SENTIMENT has dominated Nigerian politics. Those calling for Yaradua's ouster should remember he is much alive, so you calling him incapacitated is nonsense, and sheer mischief. Many leaders have fallen sick without any uproar, e.g. Felix Houphouet-Boigny of Ivory coast Seyni Kountche of Niger and a host of others. But no one raised eyebrows. Why should Nigeria be different? The north must be allowed to finish her turn.

08035908669.

What about kerosene?

NOW that petrol is widely and easily available, thanks to NNPC, we are looking forward to see the availability kerosene at 50 naira per litre.

BG Abdulkadir, *Maiduguri, 08066080056.*

Teachers' burden

GOVERNOR Shinkafi of Zamfara State should take interest in what is going on in the state, regarding recruitment of teachers. There is a racket in the system that compels each applicant who applies for teaching with his NCE. Most pay the sum of N30, 000 before they get employed, whether they are indigenes or non-indigenes.

EDDRYSE M Gusau,
08033570593.



By Muda Kakau Jalam

Re: Wazirin Fika was economical with the truth

I refer to "Wazirin Fika was economical with the truth," by one A.T. Mohammed, published in the Opinion Column on page 12 of the *Daily Trust* newspaper of Friday, March 19, 2010, concerning what we all came to believe as the genuine and only reason behind Baba-Waziri's Guest Columnist write-up on the back page of the same newspaper of Friday, March 5, 2010, i.e. to simply commemorate the one year passage to the great beyond of his beloved boyhood mate and life-long extra-ordinary companion, the late Emir of Fika, Alhaji (Dr.) Abali Muhammadu Ibn Idrissa. No more, no less.

3. Fortunately, even A.T. Mohammed agreed, when he wrote in his comments as referred to above, that it was only the Waziri that was unquestionably competent enough to fully commemorate the late Emir Abali without any bias or prejudice. Admittedly, Mohammed wrote thus: "We believe strongly that Waziri was one of the most qualified people alive to give a good account of the life and times of the late Emir Abali Muhammadu."

4. However, from all indications, Mohammed had unfortunately failed to show any more understanding of the matter, especially the depth of the rather more sacred and holy relationship which existed between the late Emir and his Waziri which lasted for the rest of their lives since they came to meet for the first time in 1945 as classmates, including all the other three young princes in their own rights from some of the surrounding villages in the old Fika Emirate that Allah in his own wisdom brought together in Bornu Middle School Maiduguri.

6. Ultimately, it is no wonder that when all these five young princes grew up together into adulthood, they became angels or apostles and symbols of "unity, peace and progress" across all the land and tribes of the old Fika Emirate, including all those ethnic groups who later came and settled harmoniously amongst the local tribes, particularly in Potiskum metropolis.

8. It is unfortunate that Mohammed seemed to have missed all these all-important points and instead he went ahead to distort facts and to mislead the public ostensibly by deception or deceit, based on misconceptions and falsehoods, some of which he attributed them to the noble Waziri of Fika to the extent that he copiously misquoted the Waziri and wrote a very lengthy paragraph which he falsely attributed to the Waziri, but which could nowhere be traced in the Waziri's submission in the *Daily Trust* as referred in the opening paragraph of this presentation above.

9. Clearly, Waziri did not make any such written statements anywhere as alleged and asserted by Mohammed whose glaring motive could only be to ostensibly mislead the people, create confusion and stir inter-tribal commotions against or amongst all the peace-loving tribes and ethnic groups living in Potiskum town, including in descending majority order, the Karai-Karai, Bolewa, Ngamawa, Ngizimawa, Fulani, Bare-bari, Hausawa, Yoruba, Ibo, etc.

10. As if that were not grave enough for him, Mohammed went further to allege that it was as a result of "a long-standing inter-group chieftaincy dispute with the Ngizim", that several attempts were made in the past to depose the late Emir of Fika, or to relocate the Emir back to Fika town, or to split the old Fika Emirate and to restore a "so-called" Ngizim chieftaincy in Potiskum town.

11. Unknown to Mohammed, however, as a matter of historical fact since from the time of the British occupation of Northern Nigeria, the Emir of Fika stood out prominently as one of the officially graded and recorded traditional rulers who occupied pre-eminent positions in the land, strongly supported by well-organised administrative and judicial systems which ensured that peace and tranquillity reigned supreme and prevailed all over their domains, throughout the entire Region.

12. In fact, as at 1st January, 1965, the Emir of Fika uncontested and indisputably remained on the "List of Chiefs of the Northern Region of Nigeria" as one of the only three Chiefs in the then Bornu Province, graded as Second Class Chiefs, including Biu and Bedde, with the Shehu of Bornu and Emir of Dikwa graded as First Class Chiefs each.

13. At this juncture, it is pertinent to illustrate the extent to which peace reigned during the colonial administration as far as the Bolewa-Ngizim serene relationship and peaceful co-existence, as recounted by the father of the late Governor Mamman Ali.

Jalam wrote from Potiskum, Yobe State.

DAILY TRUST

EDITORIAL

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09-6726241, 6715364

The murder of Umaru Marau Marau

The emergence of commercial motorcycle operators in nearly every part of the country from the mid-1980s is regarded as one of the socio-economic consequences of government's failure to create jobs and reduce poverty. They operate under various names, like "okada", "achaba", "Kabu-Kabu" and "going?" among many others. Whatever their value was, this has been overtaken by their nuisance in all parts of the country. They appear to have affinity for disregard for traffic rules and other road users. This attitude has resulted in several cases of accidents, with disturbing rate of fatalities. There are instances in which they have also been linked to crimes, including robbery, murder, rape and kidnapping. They are quick to take the law in to their hand, even when they are clearly at fault.

The extreme manifestation of this was displayed on March 15 2009, when a taxi driver, Umaru Marau-Marau, was attacked and killed by commercial motorcycle operators in Kano. Marau-Marau, a cab driver was killed and set ablaze in his vehicle by a mob of commercial motorcycle operators over a crime that the police later confirmed he never committed.

Reports indicate that the deceased met his death after a minor traffic infraction between him and a commercial motorcyclist at Gadon-kaya that resulted in to some altercations. When he was stopped at Kofar Na'isa by the motorcyclists, they set upon him the moment he alighted from his taxicab, accusing him, falsely, of being a child kidnapper. Managing to escape, he was pursued by the motorcyclists, and began yelling "kidnapper! Kidnapper!" in his wake, until he ran into the residence of the owner of the taxicab located at Gadon-kaya area. Taken in by the "kidnapper" chant, angry youths mobilized by the motorcyclists forced Marau-Marau out and bludgeoned him to death. Thereafter, they drenched his car and his body with petrol, and set them on fire.

The Police Public Relations Officer (PPRO) of the Kano state Police Command, SP Baba Mohammed Azare, confirmed the incident. He added that the police have already established that the deceased was not a kidnapper. Yesterday, the police paraded eight suspects, aged between 19 and 26 years that they believed were behind the brutal act. While taking their protest to Kano Government House, Malam Sani Hassan Jinjiri, leader of the taxi Drivers' union, where Marau-Marau was a member, remarked that they were there to register their complaints on the matter as required of law abiding citizens. Responding for the government, the permanent secretary in the Government House, Alhaji Muhammad Garba Fagge, assured the taxi drivers that government would fully investigate the matter.

The government's proposed action should not be limited to investigating this particular incident. As a result of mounting complaints in virtually all parts of the country, the activities of the commercial motorcyclists need to be curtailed. Placing a total ban on their operation, like the Plateau State government has proposed, is not the solution, given that governments have failed to provide a reliable integrated intra-city transport system, a void that the motor-cyclists have filled, with unpalatable consequences.

To begin to deal with the problem, an efficient transport system is imperative before government can contemplate banning the use of motorcycles for commercial purposes in the country. Government needs to introduce measures to stem the criminal activities of commercial motorcycle operators, for instance by restricting their operations to specific periods of the day and to specific areas of towns and cities. Meanwhile, the full weight of the law must be brought to bear on the murderers of Marau-Marau.

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A tribunal on girls' education (I)

Civil Society Watch

By Hajiya Bilkisu (mni)

I was there early, eager to participate in the activity on girl child education. The organiser of the event, Mrs Felicia Onibon of Abuja based Change Managers International Network, welcomed participants as they trickled in. She stated that the objective of the meeting was to draw attention to an important gender issue. The Tribunal on Girls' Education in Nigeria was organised by Change Managers International Network as a pre-Beijing plus 15 activity, at the Bayelsa House in Abuja. The aim, according to the organisers ' was to document cases of violation of the right of the girl child to education for use as an advocacy tool for improving the situation of girl child education in Nigeria. The tribunal was also tasked with eliciting information from the audience and the testifiers on where to find girl child school drop-outs with the objective of returning them to school. The outcome of the tribunal, will provide all stakeholders a basis for action towards ensuring that children in this category are found, planned for in a structured manner that is monitored and measurable before 2015.

The tribunal was presided over by a six - member multidisciplinary Panel of Judges, all of them gender activists with a passion for promoting girl child education. Among them were Oby Nwankwo who chaired the tribunal, with Dr Benedicta Agusiobo, Eugenia Abu, Ms. Stella Amadi and my humble self. We listened to pathetic cases of young girls and adults who either dropped out of school or were never enrolled in school. It humbled many participants and made us to appreciate the fact that education which is a basic right, necessary for the development of the human being is denied to poor people.

One of the testifiers was a young girl of 11 years, he last child in a family of six. Her mother gave her out as a paid house girl where she was paid N3, 000 from her employer for the services she was rendering. According to her, the salary was used by her mother to pay school fees for her brothers. When asked by the Panellists if she was aware that primary school was free, she responded in the negative. Another testifier was a 7 year old orphan girl, whose parents are dead. She said that she and her siblings were living in an uncompleted building because they did not have a home. Her elder sister later moved in with a man in order to provide shelter for her siblings although they are not married. She said that she had never been to school and she would really love to be in school. None of her siblings was in school.

A young woman told an interesting and inspiring story. She said that they were ordinarily a happy family and all the children were in school until their parents

separated and things fell apart for them. Their father took them all to the village because he could not afford to enrol them in school. Their mother who was the sole breadwinner did not know that he was taking them to the village. The father sent the testifier to live with a family in Asaba where she served as a house help. Life was unbearable because the couple maltreated her. One night she fell asleep on the sofa in the living room. When the woman came in and saw her sleeping on the chair, she screamed and called her husband. The husband beat her and she was sent back to her father.

Pregnancy: These have also militated against girls' attendance, retention and achievement in schools. About 30% of school-age girls drop out of school having already begun childbearing before the age of 18.

Inadequate school infrastructure: Classroom space, furniture, and equipment are lacking; many schools are in rugged and unsafe physical condition; water, health and sanitation facilities are inadequate; and *pupil teacher ratios* are high, with as many as 100 students in one class, especially in schools in urban slums.

Cultural and religious biases: Many Nigerian parents, especially in large families with limited resources, enrol boys in school instead of or before girls. In one of the cases the testifier was earning a salary of N3, 000 at age 11 and it was used to pay fees for her brother.

Their father took them all to the village because he could not afford to enrol them in school. Their mother who was the sole breadwinner did not know that he was taking them to the village

She got married subsequently and had children. However her desire to go to school remained. Rather than feeling helpless, she enrolled in school and she was placed in the same class as her daughter. She is presently in Junior Secondary 2 and her ambition is to be a lawyer.

Early marriage as a barrier to girl child education was highlighted by the testimony of a 23 year old lady from Kaduna state who said she was forced to marry at age 14. She started having children almost immediately and never went to school. When her husband divorced her she returned to her parents' house where she stayed with her children. She never went to school but after her divorce, she was referred to an NGO that was supporting her to attend mass literacy classes. There were several testifiers whose testimonies are not included in this report due to space constraints. The tribunal's report is produced below.

From the testimonies given at the tribunal and the contributions of participants who cross-examined the testifiers, the tribunal identified the following barriers to girl child education in Nigeria:

Poverty, Child Labour and economic issues: With 70% of the population living below the poverty line, parents are unable to leave all their children in school. Girls are often sent to generate income for families by selling wares in the market or on the street. Boys are sent to school with the income of the girl child hawker.

Early Marriage and Teenage

Gender bias in content, teaching and learning processes: Boys are given more opportunities to ask and answer questions, to use learning materials, and to lead groups. Girls are given less time on tasks than boys in primary and secondary school science classes. This was seen during the self introduction session in the tribunal, when some young girls who were in the back row were left out. They did not utter a word until someone raised an eyebrow and called the moderator's attention. She observed that if it were boys, they would have raised their hands and protested.

Poorly qualified teachers: By 1996 only 33% of all primary school teachers held the minimum Certificate of Education qualification mandated by the Government in 1989. Among the testifiers who broke the barriers and acquired education through the mass literacy classes could not testify in English language. The one who said she is pursuing the NCE certificate course and was almost finished could not communicate clearly in English language. The Panelists observed that the standards were still very poor.

Poorly Paid Teachers: A testifier observed that their teachers at the mass literacy class are complaining of poor salaries. They earn the equivalent of N50 per hour and this does not sustain them. Many of them have dropped out and others are threatening to go. The pupils are frustrated by this as the teachers do not put in their all as a result.

Congratulations For A Well Deserved Appointment



Prof. Rukayya Ahmed Rufa'i
Minister of Education

You have made history as the first woman from the northern part of the country to become
A substantive Minister of Education.

You were before then, the only woman to become a commissioner for education twice in Jigawa State.

As the first female professor from the north western part of the country, all these were not surprising to us, your antecedents, achievements, dedication and patriotism over the years, have only begun to earn you well deserved recognition.

As you take over the valuable, but dwindling education sector of the country, we join numerous, friends, relatives and fellow countrymen in praying for increased wisdom, guidance and protection from Allah (SWT) so you can move the sector to a greater height.

More grease to your elbow professor.

We are indeed proud of you!

Signed

Hajiya Dije Sabo Kurawa CNA, MNES, MNIM, MTMFA
Hajiya Bilkisu Bello Dandago
Hajiya Zainab Isa Aliyu



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INTERNATIONAL

Bashir's party asks rivals to join Sudan government

SUDAN'S ruling party yesterday said it would invite opposition groups to join the government if it won elections, in an apparent bid to heal rifts over fraud accusations and faltering peace deals.

Sudan is four days into presidential and legislative polls that were supposed to bring the oil-producing state back to democracy more than two decades after a military-led coup.

The poll's credibility was cast in doubt after some major parties decided to boycott large parts of the poll, accusing incumbent president Omar Hassan al-Bashir and his northern National Congress Party (NCP) of widespread rigging.

"If we are declared winners in the elections ... we would extend the invitation to all parties, even those who have not participated in the elections, to join the government because we believe this is a critical moment in our history," senior NCP official Ghazi Salaheddin told reporters.

"We are facing important decisions like self-determination in the south and would like to garner as much support and as much consensus as we can."

The elections were set up under a 2005 peace accord that ended more than two decades of north-south civil war and also promised southerners a referendum in January 2011 on whether they should declare independence.

The overwhelming majority of southerners are thought to favour separation. But many have warned there is a risk of conflict in



AN internally displaced boy uses a water pump to fill his container at a polling station in ZamZam IDP camp in Al Fasher, northern Darfur

the build-up to the vote.

Bashir's NCP and other northern parties have vowed to campaign against separation, with some analysts saying the north

is reluctant to lose control of oil fields in the south.

Salaheddin said one of the first jobs of a new "inclusive" government would be to take a fresh look

at policy on the conflict in the western Darfur region -- negotiations between Khartoum and a major Darfur rebel group are currently stalled. He said another

priority of the new government would be to resolve a dispute over the position of the county's north-south border -- a remaining sticking point in the 2005 accord.

Rwanda defends suspension of two newspapers

RWANDA yesterday said this week's suspension of two newspapers was not politically motivated ahead of August's presidential election but a media watchdog fiercely criticized the move.

Paris-based Reporters without frontier (RSF) slammed the 6-month suspension, saying it was designed to silence media critics.

"This decision clearly aims to gag Rwanda's main sources of independent news in the run-up to the August 2010 presidential election," RSF said in a statement yesterday. "It suppresses all critical journalism and deprives Rwandans of an alternative to the state newspapers," RSF added.

Four peacekeepers missing in Darfur were kidnapped - UNAMID

FOUR South African peacekeepers serving with a UN-African Union mission in the western Sudanese region of Darfur have been confirmed kidnapped, spokesman Nouredine Mezni said yesterday.

The four UNAMID policemen missing since Sunday were held and their car taken near Nyala in south Darfur, Mezni told AFP, adding that no one has claimed the abduction of the two men and two women. "A crisis group has been set up with the Sudanese authorities to follow the issue," he added.

UNAMID chief Ibrahim Gambari said he was "very concerned" by the kidnapping, his spokesman said. It is the first time that a kidnapping has taken place so close to one of the three larger towns that form the capitals of the three states that make up Darfur. UNAMID said on Monday that the four had been missing for 24 hours but did not immediately confirm their nationalities.

The alarm was raised on Monday when a colleague living in the same residence as the peacekeepers contacted the mission about their absence, Mezni said. Staff of international organisations and peacekeepers are subject to a curfew in Darfur. "There has been no sighting of our staff and we are deeply concerned for their well-being," UNAMID chief Ibrahim Gambari said in a statement read to AFP by Mezni on Monday.

Black empowerment law delayed in Zimbabwe

ZIMBABWE'S mostly white-owned businesses won't immediately have to comply with a law that requires them to hand over 51 percent control to blacks, two ministers said yesterday.

But it is unclear whether the controversial law that requires all businesses and foreign companies to meet race quotas will be eliminated or only delayed. Gordon Moyo, a minister in the coalition government loyal to Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai, said in a statement yesterday that the law was declared "null and void" at a meeting of the power-sharing government chaired by President Robert Mugabe.

"Cabinet agreed that the

essence of the original regulations was against government's policy of true empowerment through full utilization of our national resources and encouraging investment to drive economic growth," he said.

The first deadline for companies to submit handover proposals was set for today. But Saviour Kasukuwere, a minister from Mugabe's party, said implementation of the law will go ahead, but has been delayed for more discussions.

Economist Eric Bloch in February likened the announcement to "an earthquake stronger than Haiti and Chile" to local businesses and investor confidence.

International



SHIITES gather at the holy shrine of Imam Ali to mark the last days of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan in Najaf.

Officials say Iraqi forces foil 9/11-style plot

IRAQI security forces disrupted a 9/11-style plot by al-Qaida in Iraq to fly hijacked planes into Shiite religious shrines, Iraqi and US officials said yesterday.

Iraqi security officials said they temporarily shut down at least two airports and have arrested two men — one of the intended pilots and an airport worker — suspected in the plot, which appeared aimed at undermining the country's stability while US troops prepare to go home.

Two US intelligence officials in Washington confirmed the plot but said it did

not appear to be fully planned out, nor was it clear that militants would be able to carry out any attacks. Both US officials spoke on condition of anonymity because the investigation was still under way.

Airports in Baghdad and Najaf were shuttered last week as intelligence officials said they learned of the plot.

The airport in Najaf remains closed because of its proximity to the gold-domed Imam Ali shrine, one of the most revered Shiite religious mosques in the world, one of the officials said.

MY CONSTITUENCY LEGACY

Constituency legacies are those humanitarian projects initiated, implemented and bequeathed to the deserving communities as related to our elected political office holders. As the nation draw closer to another elective year, it becomes imperative that lawmakers will be taking inventory and account for the stewardship of services they rendered to uplift the well being of their people. As it affects the federal lawmakers, quite a good number have demonstrated kindness and generosity vis-a-vis their electioneering promises. They are trailing the blazing of good representation through provision of constituency projects and contribute to debates, bills and other sundry issues of national importance.

To celebrate our National Assembly representatives, **Media Trust Limited**, the publishers of *Daily Trust*, *Weekly Trust*, *Sunday Trust* and *Aminiya* newspapers, is packaging a special project on the above subject [**MY CONSTITUENCY LEGACY**]. The aim is to applaud and highlight the contributions of individual lawmaker who has demonstrated kindness to his/her people. Given the foregoing, federal lawmakers are invited to participate in the project as a way of showcasing their contributions [Constituency projects] executed to the admiration of their various constituencies.

For participation/enquiries, please contact:
Leke Adelere on 08059100282
Lilian Tanimola 08052377534.

The date of publication is from Monday, May 17 to Saturday, May 31, 2010.

Thank you as we anticipate your participation.

Management

DAILY TRUST

Former Jerusalem mayor arrested in bribery scandal

ISRAELI police arrested a former mayor of Jerusalem yesterday in connection with a multimillion-dollar bribery scandal that has been linked to a key confidant of former Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. The arrest of Uri Lupolianski marks the latest twist in a scandal that has riveted Israel.

Last week, a longtime Olmert associate and five others were arrested in the affair, in which huge sums of money allegedly changed hands to promote several real-estate projects, including a large development in Jerusalem that required a radical change in zoning laws.

Olmert was mayor of Jerusalem when the bribery allegedly took place, and the construction was done during Lupolianski's tenure. Police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said Lupolianski was arrested and appeared before a court in central Israel. The court ordered he be held in custody for five days.

"This is part of the ongoing Holyland investigation," Rosenfeld said, referring to the gigantic Jerusalem housing complex at the center of the affair.

Olmert was forced to resign in 2008 to battle separate corruption charges. Last week, an Israeli court suspended his trial on those charges for four weeks after his lawyers said the former Israeli leader couldn't receive a fair hearing in the current climate.

The American supporter, businessman Morris Talansky, said he had given Olmert hundreds of thousands of dollars, some of it in envelopes stuffed with bills.

International



LAVA spews from the Fimmvorduhals volcano near the Eyjafjallajokull glacier.

Iceland volcano eruption melts glacier, causes floods

ICELAND'S second volcano eruption in less than a month melted part of a glacier and caused heavy flooding yesterday, forcing up to 800 people to evacuate, but no casualties were reported.

"We have two heavy floods coming out from the melting of the Eyjafjallajokull glacier," local police spokesman Roegnvaldur Olafsson told AFP from near the site of the eruption in the south of the country.

So far, "no lives are in danger but we have evacuated the area and all roads are closed," he said, adding that the ongoing eruption was bigger than the blast at the nearby Fimmvorduhals volcano last month.

Police said earlier Wednesday that following the eruption, which began around 1:00 am (0100 GMT), between 700 and 800 people had been evacuated from their homes in the remote, lightly populated area 125 kilometres (75 miles) east of Reykjavik.

"There were a lot of earthquakes in the area," police spokesman Baldur Sigurdsson told AFP.

Norwegian ambassador Margit Tveiten and a group of other Norwegians camping not far from the eruption site were also set to be evacuated after roads out of the area were flooded, the embassy in Reykjavik said.

"There are large floods on both sides of the volcano, and the road in (to where they are) is blocked and the whole area is isolated due to the floods ... There are fears that a large bridge will break," embassy spokesman Per Landroe told AFP.

According to geophysicist Gunnar Gunnarsson of Iceland's Meteo Institute, the eruption was in "the southwestern part of Eyjafjallajokull's top crater."

"Smoke coming out of the top crater is towering more than 20,000 feet (6,000 metres) in the air," he told AFP around midday yesterday.

"The water flow in the Gigjokull glacier tongue in the northern part of Eyjafjallajokull has risen by 2.5 metres and is still rising," he added.

Icelandic public broadcaster RUV reported Wednesday afternoon that a 500-metre fissure had appeared at the top of the crater. Evacuees were being directed to Red Cross centres, RUV said.

Olafur Eggertsson said he had been forced to evacuate his farm, which lies in the path of one of two large floods of melt water coming from the glacier.

"At around 10:30 this morning we heard a lot of noise and saw mud and soil suddenly rushing down from the mountain.

Cargo plane crashes in Mexico, 5 crew dead

A cargo plane crashed into traffic while trying to land overnight in the northern Mexican city of Monterrey, killing all five crew members on board, authorities said yesterday.

Rescue workers were trying to determine if a sixth person was killed inside a car that may have been crushed under the plane, said Hector Gonzalez, director of civil aeronautics at the Transportation and Communications Department, in an interview with Mexico's

Televisa network.

Emergency workers could not immediately confirm a vehicle amid the smoldering wreckage.

The Airbus A300 was trying to land in rainy and cloudy conditions at about 11 p.m. when it crashed on a road leading to the international airport for Mexico's third-largest city, said Jorge Camacho, director of civil protection in Nuevo Leon state.

The plane, belonging to Mexico City-based

Aerotransporte de Carga Union, had taken off from Mexico City. Firefighters at the scene said the plane caught fire after the crash, but the blaze was put out.

Charred and smoking wreckage was spread around a radius of at least 50 meters (164 feet).

The nose of the plane and both wings had been torn away from the fuselage and lay in the middle of the two-lane road.

Authorities were investigating the cause of the accident.



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- Framework for Achieving MDGs in Nigeria
- Framework for Implementing NV20:2020
- Plan-Budget Coordination for Attainment of MDGs and NV 20:2020
- Empowering PRSD for achieving MDGs and NV 20:2020

Target Participants The Conference is for Directors, Deputy Directors and Heads of Department/Unit of Planning, Research and Statistics (DPRS) in Nigeria's public service and their private sector counterparts. Other development stakeholders will find the conference useful.

Duration: One week

Date: May 10-14, 2010

Venue: Jiyamere Visitor Suites, Mile 3, Bauchi Road, Gombe, Gombe State.

Note: The Conference is partly funded by African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) sponsored and participants will not be required to pay any course fee. However, participants will be responsible for their transportation, accommodation, and feeding over the period. To ensure placement on the programme and to facilitate adequate preparation, you are required to send your nomination to the Centre, at least two weeks to the commencement date. This is important because participation is **strictly on confirmation**.

For further enquiries, contact:

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COUNCIL OF LEGAL EDUCATION



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APPLICATION FOR 2010 BAR PART I COURSE

This is to inform all intending applicants for admission into the Bar Part I Course for the 2010 Academic Session that applications will commence from Monday April 19 to Friday May 14, 2010. The session will commence on Monday June 14, 2010 at the Headquarters Bwari, Abuja.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS: The programme is open to Law graduates of approved overseas universities or Law Schools whose Law courses have been approved by the Council of Legal Education. The programme is also open to students who have obtained at least a "Pass" in the English Bar Final or Solicitor's Final Examinations, provided the course of studies includes core subjects as stipulated by the Council of Legal Education. Degrees obtained through Part-time studies, long distance learning or study as an external student are not recognized for admission to this programme.

METHOD OF APPLICATION: Prospective applicants are to visit the School Portal, www.mynlsp.com. Follow the instructions, fill the form and submit the same on-line. After this, print a copy of completed form A2, then download and Print forms, B, B1 and B2. No payment for application form is required.

CLOSING DATE: Downloaded Application forms together with References on applicants must be completed and returned to the Law School on or before Friday May 14th and 21st, 2010 for application forms, and references respectively. On no account will late submission of application forms be entertained.

Applicants are to note their Application Numbers as this will be required to check their admission status subsequently.

Y.S. USMAN, ESQ.
SECRETARY TO COUNCIL AND
DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION.



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH, ABUJA NATIONAL MALARIA CONTROL PROGRAMME

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND CUSTOMISATION OF DISTRICT HEALTH INFORMATION SYSTEM SOFTWARE [DHISV2.0] FOR NATIONAL MALARIA CONTROL PROGRAMME

The National Malaria Control Programme (NMCP) has the mandate to oversee "all malaria control activities in Nigeria. The vision is a malaria-free Nigeria. The Government and entire people of Nigeria believe that every Nigerian has the right to access highly effective malaria preventive services and curative care delivered as close to the household as possible. All households, communities and Governments at all levels are working together to take appropriate and effective action to prevent and treat malaria.

The oversight functions of NMCP includes monitoring and supervision of all malaria control activities at sub-national levels to ensure compliance with national policies, effective implementation of strategic and operational plans, and timely feedback from the field in form of reports.

NMCP was also recently chosen as one of the three Principal Recipients for the Global Fund Round 8 Malaria in Nigeria for the public sector in 18 states of the country.

In view of the above, NMCP hereby invites reputable and competent companies to respond to this invitation by forwarding Expression of Interest (EOI) to the Program in this regard.

Objectives and Scope of Work

- Installation of DHIS v2.0
- The Software is to be customized for data entry at the facility/Local Government level in the country and upward transmission to the national level.
- Indicators should be interfaced with the Arc Explorer/or any GIS software that allows data to be presented as thematic maps or analysed further in a Geographical Information System software or Health Mapper.
- Train the database administrators and key staff on managing the database.
- Support the step-down training for all the DHISv2.0 users within the project.
- Manage and maintain the database for 12 months before final hand over to NMCP.
- Develop a protocol guiding the entering of data into the DHIS database at different levels (PRs, SRs, State etc.).

Prequalification Requirements

- Certificate of registration as a Company in Nigeria
- Detail of relevant verifiable experience of similar past project executed.
- Comprehensive Curriculum Vitae of staff to accomplish the tasks
- Evidence of capacity to do the job and bank reference
- Evidence of Audited Accounts and Tax clearance for the last three (3) years
- Evidence of VAT registration and remittance

Submission of Tender Documents

Two (2) copies of completed documents and one (1) original copy, with each section separated by a divider, must be submitted, bound and sealed in an envelope and clearly marked "GF-MIS-2010 to reach the address below on or before 4pm on the 27th of April, 2010

The Programme Manager,
Global Fund,
National Malaria Control Programme,
1st Floor Orji Uzor Kalu House,
First Avenue,
Off Shehu Shagari Way,
Maitama, Abuja.

Email: nmcpdatabase@gmail.com, folademajek@gmail.com, itorogodfrey@yahoo.com

- Note:**
1. Late submissions will be rejected.
 2. Electronic submissions are not allowed
 3. This advertisement should not be considered as a commitment on the part of NMCP; nor shall it entitle companies to make any claim whatsoever
 4. Applicants should note that only pre-qualified companies would be invited to bid and demonstrate the practicability of the use of the software, through a detailed PowerPoint presentation.
 5. NMCP reserves the right to reject any or all submissions.

Signed
National Coordinator

Offer-Circular



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Federal Government of Nigeria ("FGN")

UNITS OF SALE:

₦1,000 per unit subject to a minimum subscription of ₦10,000 and in multiples of ₦1,000 thereafter

INTEREST RATE:

For **New Issues**, the marginal rate that clears the volume being auctioned, or the highest accepted rate, becomes the coupon of the issue.

For **Re-openings** of previously issued bonds, (where the coupon is already set), successful bidders will pay a price corresponding to the yield-to-maturity bid that clears the volume being auctioned, plus accrued interest from the original issue date.

INTEREST PAYMENT:

Payable semi-annually

REDEMPTION:

Bullet repayment on the maturity date

STATUS:

1. Qualifies as securities in which trustees can invest under the Trustee Investment Act
2. Qualifies as Government securities within the meaning of Company Income Tax Act ("CITA") and Personal Income Tax Act ("PITA") for Tax Exemption for Pension Funds amongst other investors
3. Listed on the Nigerian Stock Exchange
4. All FGN Bonds qualify as liquid assets for liquidity ratio calculation for banks

SECURITY:

FGN Bonds are backed by the full faith and credit of the Federal Government of Nigeria and are charged upon the general assets of Nigeria

**INTERESTED INVESTORS SHOULD CONTACT OFFICES OF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING
PRIMARY DEALER MARKET MAKERS (PDMMs):**

Access Bank Plc.
Afribank Nigeria Plc.
Associated Discount House Ltd.
Bank PHB Plc.
CitiBank Nigeria Ltd. (Citigroup)
Consolidated Discounts Ltd.
Diamond Bank Plc.

Ecobank Nigeria Plc.
Express Discount Ltd.
Fidelity Bank Plc.
First Bank of Nigeria Plc.
First City Monument Bank Plc.
First Securities Discount House Ltd.
Guaranty Trust Bank Plc.

Kakawa Discount House Ltd.
Oceanic Bank International Plc.
Stanbic IBTC Bank Plc.
Standard Chartered Bank Nigeria Ltd.
Union Bank of Nigeria Plc.
United Bank for Africa Plc.
Zenith Bank Plc.

* (1) The DMO reserves the right to alter the amount allotted in response to market conditions
(2) An additional sum of N60 billion (N35bn in 3-year tenor & N25 bn in 5-year tenor) will be allotted as non-competitive bid.

ONSLAUGHT AGAINST THE RULE OF LAW IN ZAMFARA STATE: THE CASE OF ALHAJI SULEIMAN GYALANGE CHAIRMAN GUMMI LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL (PART 2)

This is to correct the fiction presented as facts by the Honourable Attorney General of Zamfara State in his advertorial of 7th day of April 2010 published on page 48 of Daily Trust Newspaper.

The "Honourable" Attorney General's ground for flagrantly abusing the judicial process is that they have appealed against the judgment of the Court of Appeal Sokoto to the Supreme Court. The point the A.G. failed to understand is that an appeal does not operate as a stay of execution. Having gone on appeal, did the Hon. A.G. file an application for stay of Execution before the proper court? Was the execution levied while the application was pending? The answer is No on the issue of appealing to the Supreme Court. Our search at the Supreme Court showed that there is no pending appeal on this issue before the apex court. However, the Hon. A.G.'s concept of appeal is to file Notice of Appeal at the lower court and thereafter go to slumber. They have not approached the Court of Appeal to settle record of proceeding, for the appeal to be transmitted to the Supreme Court. We challenge the Hon A.G. to furnish the appeal No. at the Supreme Court.

The "learned" Hon A.G. further contended that the execution was wrongful. He did not deny the fact that the execution was carried out by the court. How do you challenge a wrongful execution of the judgment of the Honourable Court? Is it by taking the laws into your hands or following the due process of law? It is only an ingenious A.G. that will approach a Higher Shariah Court to review an execution carried out by the High Court of Justice. What do you make of a "Chief Law Officer" who does not understand the hierarchy of Courts and whose cumulative appearances before a court of law since his call to bar are less than 20?

The Honourable Attorney General, contended that he

filed a direct complain because the reinstated chairman vandalized the Local Government Secretariat and stole N3 million. In the meeting with the Commissioner of Police, Zamfara State command of 21st March 2010. The DPO of Gummi Police Division stated unequivocally that not a single louver was broken not to mention vandalism and that he inspected the secretariat with the AG on 20th March 2010 and he is bemused with allegation. Since the execution Gummi has been very peaceful and it is pertinent to note that the vice chairman and his council have been reporting to office at the Local Government Secretariat without hindrance. The execution was carried out in presence of Policemen, State Security Services, and Civil Defence Corps. The Hon. A.G. originated the complaint, conducted the investigation in his office and began persecution.

Questions for the Hon. A.G.:

Who kept the said N3 million and in which office? From which bank was the money withdrawn? And for what purpose at the close of work on Friday preceding the weekend? Are you aware that the financial regulation does not allow any public officer to keep such large sum in his drawer? Why the so called theft was not reported to the police? You are aware that this falsehood cannot stand judicial scrutiny hence your decision to approach the Shariah Court. This falsehood was fabricated only as a reason to justify the illegal detention of the reinstated chairman.

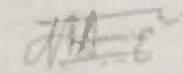
The case of the reinstated chairman was to be heard on the 6th day of April 2010 at the Higher Shariah Court, Gummi. The Counsel to the reinstated chairman was in court at Gummi but curiously the A.G. as the complainant was not in court. The judge instead of sitting was instructed by Mr. Chief law officer to proceed to Gusau central prison and sign an

extension of his detention warrant to the 22nd day of April 2010. Your conclusion on what manner of justice that will proceed from this kind of arrangement is as good as ours. The Hon A.G if your accusations are true why not allow the reinstated chairman to have his day in a properly constituted court?

We wish to inform Nigerians that the Zamfara State Government have deliberately requested workers of Gummi local Government to stop going to work at the secretariat. Can a government that means good shut down the services of the third tier of government simply because they hate the faces of those at the helm of affairs? Why are they trying to set up parallel secretariat and at whose expense? Why pay council workers March salary outside the secretariat without the consent and approval of the reinstated council?

We are aware that the Hon. A.G is not motivated by any altruistic ideals but purely for pecuniary benefits. The Gummi legal tussle provides him with easy and unfettered access to the treasury of the Local Government. He is afraid that the source of cheap slush fund will be plugged.

We once again call on Nigerians, all men of good will to prevail on Zamfara State Government to respect rule of law by releasing unconditionally the reinstated chairman of Gummi local government council Alhaji Suleiman Gyalange from prison and accord him all his rights and privileges as the chairman. We wish to alert Nigerians that the council sacked by the court are till disbursing fund due to the Gummi local council illegally from their bedrooms.



Alhaji Umar Abbas

act:onaid

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT – Leadership Empowerment, Advocacy & Development (LEAD) Programme Advisor - Sokoto

ActionAid Nigeria (AAN) is one of ActionAid Country Programmes around the world. ActionAid is an International Non-Governmental organization registered in The Netherlands with headquarters in Johannesburg South Africa. ActionAid International works in 50 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas. 22 of these country programmes, affiliates or associates are in Africa and are led by Africans. We have been doing development work on the continent since 1972 and in Nigeria since 1999. ActionAid works with the poor and excluded in Africa, promoting values and commitment in civil society, institutions and governments with the aim of achieving structural changes in order to eradicate injustices and poverty in the world.

To effectively consolidate on our country strategy, AAN is inviting applications from qualified candidates to fill the position of **LEAD Programme Advisor - Sokoto**

Person Specifications

Education/Qualifications

- Degree in Social Sciences, Arts or Humanities is **essential**.
- Masters degree in relevant field as above is **essential**.

Experience

- A minimum of 7 years working experience preferably in the social development field is **essential**
- A minimum of three years experience in a similar position especially in budget process engagements and policy advocacy is **essential**

Skill/Abilities

- Excellent oral and written communication skills is **essential**
- Excellent conceptual, analytical, documentation and presentation skills is **essential**
- Excellent Skills in budget/policy analysis and interpretation is **essential**

Personal Qualities

- Creative and takes initiative.
- Able to work effectively in a diverse team environment
- Willing and able to travel

All interested candidates should fill in the application form as accessed from the application pack on <http://www.actionaid.org/pages.aspx?PageID=12&ItemID=205> and www.actionaid-nigeria.org. The application pack contains the Vacancy announcement, Job Description and Application form.

ActionAid offers competitive terms of employment. Applications from women are particularly welcome. Applications are also particularly welcome from candidates living with HIV/AIDs (PLWHAs).

Closing date for receipt of application forms is 25th April, 2010. Only short listed candidates will be contacted. Only Electronically completed application forms will be entertained and should be mailed to vacancy.nigeria@actionaid.org. Applications will **ONLY** be considered if submitted on AAN's Standard Application forms.



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Lagos: Mr. S. Ojeme 08057494526 Abuja: Mrs. J. F Femi-Walsh 08057494537

Port Harcourt: Engr. Lawal 08057494535

For more information contact:

 **STRUCTEC**

Plot 2 &4, Block D Amuwo-Odofin Ind. Scheme Apapa /Oshodi Expressway, Amuwo-Odofin.
P.O. Box 391, Apapa.

Port Harcourt: 33, Elechi Beach Road, Mile 1, Port Harcourt.

Abuja: 28, Ndola Crescent, Off Micheal Opara Opp Ibro Hotel, Wuse Zone 5, Abuja.

THE FEDERAL POLYTECHNIC, BAUCHI
P.M.B. 0231, BAUCHI

**INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION
FOR 2010 CAPITAL PROJECTS**

The Federal Polytechnic, Bauchi is desirous of engaging the services of competent Companies to undertake the following;

1. LOTA: Procurement of Equipment for Academic Departments
2. LOTB: Construction of Perimeter Fence
3. LOTC: Construction of Roads and Drainage
4. LOTD: Furnishing of Estate Management & Quantity Survey Departments Offices
5. LOTE: Consultancy Services for Tender Analysis and Supervision of Building Constructions & Road Drainage to cover Architectural, Structural Quantity Surveying and M&E Services (Consortium)

GENERAL PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Evidence of Incorporation by the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC).
2. Company Audited Accounts for the last 3 years (2007, 2008 & 2009).
3. Tax Clearance Certificate for the last 3 years (2007, 2008 & 2009).
4. Evidence of VAT Registration and VAT remittances.
5. Verifiable evidence of previous experience in a relevant job with copies of Awards and Practical Completion Certificates.
6. Financial Capability/Banking Support.
7. Evidence of Community and Social Responsibility.
8. Evidence of Compliance/fulfillment of statutory obligations to employees of the Company with respect to Pension.
9. Sworn Affidavit that none of the partners of the Company has been convicted in any Country for any criminal offence including fraud or financial impropriety.
10. Sworn affidavit indicating whether any Officer of Federal Polytechnic, Bauchi is a former or present partner, Director, Shareholder or has any pecuniary interest in the Company.

**ADDITIONAL PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS**

1. Experiences/technical qualification of key personnel with copies of their Certificates.
2. Equipment and Technology Capacity.

**ADDITIONAL PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES**

1. Evidence of registration with Professional Bodies
2. Company/Firm Profile including names and technical qualification of key personnel with copies of their Certificates address and phone number.

SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTS

The documents are to be submitted to the undersigned in a sealed and signed envelope marked "either Lot A, Lot B, Lot C or Lot D, followed by the title of the project" at the top right corner of the envelope and to reach him not later than 4th May, 2010.

The submissions are to be opened at 12:30 pm of the same date at the Council Chamber of the Polytechnic and all applicants are invited to attend. Please note that this is NOT an invitation to Tender and only Contractors that have been pre-qualified will be invited to Tender.

Signed:
L. Ibrahim
Registrar



National Board for Technical Education
Plot 'B' Bida Road, P.M.B. 2239 Kaduna
www.nbte.gov.ng



PHOTOVOLTAIC TRAINING IN POLYTECHNICS

1. INTRODUCTION:

With the increase in energy crisis worldwide, some of the world leading powers are shifting their attention from fossil energy to other alternative sources of energy such as **BIOMAS-COGERATION, BIOFUEL, SOLAR-THERMAL, and WIND TURBINES**. In addition to providing energy, these sources are also environmentally safe.

Nigeria therefore needs to engage its schools with programs that will produce specialists and technicians to spur the development of these viable sources of clean and cheap energy.

Safe-Energy Resources Sdn Bhd.; which is a multi-Energy Solutions providing company registered in Malaysia and represented in Nigeria in conjunction with the University of Malaysia Pahang has designed a training program for Nigerian Polytechnics in Solar education.

2. STATE OF PHOTOVOLTAIC EDUCATION IN FEDERAL POLYTECHNICS

The state of photovoltaic education in all Polytechnics in Nigeria has become an issue that requires urgent attention because:

- i) Presently none of the institutions under the purview of National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) runs an accredited National certificate in the area of photovoltaic education
- ii) There is no curriculum covering the course.
- iii) No competent and qualified academic and technical staff to handle such even when introduced, and
- iv) No infrastructure in place for laboratory simulations

Our company will provide manpower development and skills acquisition programs that will create a solid foundation to kick-start this program for the Polytechnics under the guidance of the NBTE.

In furtherance of its resolve to ensure that polytechnics and indeed the entire Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) sub-sector play its expected role of stimulating technological development in the country, the NBTE in collaboration with **Safe-Energy Resources Sdn Bhd Malaysia**; has arranged a training Programme on Photovoltaic training for lecturers of Polytechnics.

3. CLASS AND QUALIFICATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

It is expected that Photovoltaic education will be integrated into the curricula of polytechnics in Nigeria with the first step being the training of staff. Most of the participants shall be drawn from the various Polytechnics with Diploma, Higher Diploma or B.Sc in Electrical and Electronics, Physics and similar related fields and who are currently lecturing or working in various Polytechnics.

Special Guest of Honour

His Excellency
Arc. Muhammad Namadi Sambo, FNIA
Executive Governor, Kaduna State

Guest of Honour

Prof.(Mrs) Ruqqayat A. Rufai, OON
Honourable Minister of Education

Guest Speaker

Prof. A.S. Sambo, OON
Director General, Energy Commission
of Nigeria

Chief Host

Engr.Musa Abdullahi, MFR
Chairman, NBTE Board

Host

Arc TPL Ade O. Aimola
Acting Executive Secretary

Venue: UNESCO Nigeria TVE Centre of Excellence
No. 9 Kajuru Close, off Degel Road
U/Rimi GRA, Kaduna

Date: April 19th - May 2nd, 2010

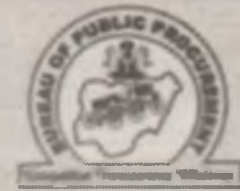
Time: 9:00am daily

Signed:

Arc TPL Ade O. Aimola
Ag. Executive Secretary
National Board for Technical Education



**THE PRESIDENCY
BUREAU OF PUBLIC PROCUREMENT (BPP)**



**A FURTHER CALL ON SOME MINISTRIES,
DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES (MDAs)**

The Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP) once more announces the 2010 stakeholders' sectoral capacity building workshop on Public Procurement Act, 2007. The objective of the workshop is to review the provisions of the Public Procurement Act as it affects the preparation of tender documents and prequalification of bidders for Goods, Works and Services and to discuss the implementation challenges of contractor **PRE-QUALIFICATION**. At the workshop, critical issues relating to pre-qualification of contractors, consultants, procurement efficiency and corruption prevention in respective Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) will be discussed. The remaining workshop schedule is as follows:

April 15th

- Ministry of Petroleum Resources - Departments, Agencies & Parastatals
- Ministry of Aviation – Departments, Agencies & Parastatals

April 19th

- Federal Ministry of Health – Departments, Agencies and Parastatals

April 20th

- Federal Ministry of Education – Departments, Agencies and Parastatals

April 22nd

- Federal Ministry of Environment – Departments, Agencies and Parastatals
- Federal Ministry of Finance – Departments, Agencies & Parastatals
- Federal Ministry of Information and Communication – Departments, Agencies and Parastatals

April 26th

- Federal Ministry of Police Affairs – Departments, Agencies and Parastatals
- Ministry of Internal Affairs – Departments, Agencies and Parastatals
- ICPC, EFCC

Venue of all workshops is at: **NEW STATE HOUSE AUDITORIUM, IBRAHIM TAIWO STREET, STATE HOUSE, ABUJA**. Time is: **9.00AM daily**.

All enquiries to: info@bpp.gov.ng, or send a text to: 08138377013

SIGNED
Dr. Abiodun Adeniyi,
Bureau of Public Procurement (BPP).

BUSINESS

0805 1000 536



N/Assembly: Why we're probing N200bn agric loan

HOUSE of Representatives Committee on Agriculture Chairman Gbenga Makunjuola said in Umuahia on Wednesday that the alleged mismanagement of the N200 billion fund for agricultural loan was now under investigation.

Makunjuola said the investigation became necessary following insinuations that the fund, which was floated by the CBN for the development of commercial agriculture, was kept in a particular bank where it is yielding interest.

"The House has mandated the Committee on Agriculture to investigate the matter because the allegation is that the money is being kept in a certain bank and that it has been yielding interest and we need to find out the rationale behind it.

"The Governor's Forum is agitating for the early disbursement of the fund and up till now the money has not been released," he said.

Makunjuola said that he was not aware of any rural or commercial farmer in the country who had accessed a kobo

out of the fund.

"Apart from this fund, the immediate past minister of agriculture also gave us information that the Federal Government had set aside another N6 billion research fund.

"The minister informed us that it was a competitive research fund for all research institutes in the country, but the unfortunate thing is that none of the research institutes has benefited from the fund," he said.

Makunjuola said that it had become necessary for the government to dip into the Special Intervention Fund or what it called the Natural Resource Fund to establish a modern research and Bio-technology Centre for agricultural activities in the country.

He said that from the achievement of the National Root Crops Research Institute (NRCRI), Umudike, had made in bio-technology over the years that it had become imperative for a modern Bio-technology Centre to be established in the country.

"Now that Nigerians have come to

terms that there is need for bio-technology in agriculture and with the modest achievement of NRCRI in this area such centre should be established in Umudike to enhance its efforts. "The importance of research is for development and when established, this centre will be the brain behind research programmes in agriculture.

"When this is established, technology will be transferred to the rural farmers, who are the end users and our crop production will increase," he said.

The Executive Director of NRCRI, Mr Kenneth Nwosu, said that time had come when level of appropriation for research institutes in the country should be tied down on their output and contribution to national development.

Nwosu said that the institute was working hard to transform to a Centre of Excellence in root and tuber crop development and research in Africa.

"Our constraints have been inadequate funding, water and power because capital and overhead funds allocated to us are inadequate," Nwosu said. (NAN).

FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Chanchangi Airlines
 Lagos-Abj: 07.15, 10.00, 13.10, 15.30, 17.30
 Abj-Lagos: 08.00, 11.45, 13.40, 15.30, 17.00
 Lagos-Kad: 10.45, (on Fri), 17.00(Mon/Fri/Sat/Sun)
 Kad-Lagos: 07.30(Mon/Fri), 08.00(Sat/Sun)
Nigerian Eagles Airlines (Virgin Nigeria)
 Abj-Kano: 18.40 (Mon-Fri)/Sun
 Kano-Abj: 08.35 (Mon-Fri) /Sat
 Abj-Soko: 09:35, (Mon), 10:10 (Fri), 11:20 (Wed/Sun)
 Soko-Abj: 11.35(Mon), 12.00(Fri), 13:20 (Wed/Sun)
 Lagos-Abj: 07.15, 11.40, 14.00, 16.30, 17.00, 17.20;
 18.30 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun), 8.00; 12.40; 13.10; 20.00 (Fri)
 Abj-Lagos: 07.00, 09.30, 10.30, 11.15, 16.15;
 19.15, 19.25, 19:35 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun);14:55; 15:15;
 20:45(Fri); 19:45(Sun); 11:25, 13:35, 16:25(Mon)
 Lagos-PHC: 07.40, 09.30, 10.00, 12.20, 13.30, 14.00,
 16.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); PHC-Lagos: 10.50, 11.20,
 12.45, 15.30, 16.15, 17.15 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); Lagos-
 Owr: 12:15; (Tue-Fri/Sun); 12:40 (Mon/Sat)
 Owr-Lagos: 14:25 (Tue-Fri/Sun) 14:50 (Mon /Sat)
 Lagos-Cal: 08:00 (Fri), 09:10 (Wed-Thu), 12:40 (Tue/
 Sat/Sun), 13:10 (Mon)
 Cal-Lagos: 10.05 (Fri); 11.15(Wed/Thu); 14.55 (Tue/
 Sat-Sun), 15.15(Mon)
IRS Airlines
 Lagos-Abj: 09.45, 11.45, 12.45, (Mon-Fri) 09.30,
 12.45(Sat&Sun)
 Lagos-Kano: 06.15(Mon-Fri), 16.30(Sat/Sun)
 Kano-Lagos: 07.30(Mon-Fri), 10.30(Sat/Sun)
 Abuja-Kano: 10.30am (Mon-Fri/Sun)
 Kano-Abuja: 11.45, 5.00 Fri, 12.15 Sun

STOCK MARKET INDEX

Date:	Wednesday, April 14, 2010
Index:	27,929.86
Volume:	932,986,441
Cap:	N6,755,516,653,320.00

TRUST INDEX

Inflation	12.3%
GDP	6.90%
Budget	N4.6tr
Ext. Reserves Acct	\$40bn
Excess Crude Acct	\$3.2bn
Poverty Ratio	54.4%
Monetary Policy Rate	6%
Banks	24
Oil Price	\$85 a barrel
Power Supply	2, 500MW
Oil output per day	2.6mbd
Broad Money Supply	N10,796,734.5m
Credit to Private Sector	N10,018,035.3m
Inter-Bank Rate	1.1600%
Treasury Bills	2.02%
Deposit Rate	12.28%
Prime Lending Rate	18.38%

CBN EXCHANGE RATES			
14/4/2010	Buying (NGN)	Central (NGN)	Selling (NGN)
CFA	0.2961	0.2961	0.3061
DANISH KRONER	26.9413	27.0327	27.1241
EURO	200.6318	201.3126	201.9934
HOLLAND DOLLAR	227.4987	228.2637	229.0287
RIYAL	39.2933	39.4267	39.56
SDR	22.8114	22.8644	22.9174
SWISS FRANC	139.6021	140.0758	140.5495
US DOLLAR	147.35	147.83	148.31
WAUA	224.0474	224.8077	225.5679
YEN	1.7749	1.7803	1.7857

Bureau de Change Rates

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

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

Northern Business

In Lokoja, fishermen are millionaires

From Isiaka Wadli, Lokoja

AT a time millions of Nigerian graduates are searching for white collar jobs, some young men in Lokoja, Kogi State capital are exploring fishing not only to eke out a living, but also to acquire wealth.

Many of them reside in Lokoja metropolis, while a few others usually come to Lokoja from neighbouring villages in the state. However, there are others who reside in huts built around the river area.

At childhood, 32-year-old Tanimu Garba, from Maiduguri, Borno State aspired to be a farmer so that he could be an employer of labour. After completing his secondary education in 1995, he decided to pitch tent with fishing. He relocated to Lokoja where he joined one of his friends in the job way back in 1996.

According to him, Lokoja, because of the presence of the River Niger, remains a very suitable place for fishing. In his words, "no amount of fishes we catch from the River Niger here in Lokoja can be caught in any other river in this country. I believe that this is nature at work. I pray this river never run dry."

Tanimu says no other job could have earned him a better living. His inability to acquire higher education, he contends, is no longer regrettable. Why? He boasts that he is a fulfilled fisherman having a wife and two kids. Not only that, he has also, through his job, been able to set up a restaurant for his wife in the city of Lokoja. All these, he says, are in addition to his ability to employ three young boys for the job.

Priding on his achievements in the job, Tanimu said: "I have been on this job for almost 15 years. On a daily basis, I set my nets inside the river very early in the morning and return there in the evening to pick

fishes that may have been trapped in the nets. I also use my hooks to catch fishes from the river.

At a go, a single net could catch at least nine fishes, while a hook does not catch more than one at a time. That is why I prefer using the net, Tanimu says.

"Every day, I catch at least 100 fishes depending on the kind of net I set on the river. The bigger the net is, the more fishes are caught. At times, my boat is filled with fishes. I have customers all over Lokoja. I must confess to you that fishing is a very lucrative business. You don't incur much cost in fishing. All you need are nets and hooks. The biggest net costs only N7,000, while a good hook can be obtained at the rate of N750, he enthused.

Although he couldn't proceed beyond secondary school, Tanimu said he has no regret since fishing has done so much in my life, financially especially.

He makes at least N10,000 every day, and in a month, he makes an estimated N250,000. From his proceeds, he established a restaurant for his wife in Lokoja Township.

"Her restaurant is so big and booming that most of her customers would not believe that her husband is a common fisherman. My wife and I are blessed with two children and we are all living fine. I'm rich in my own right," he says.

Tanimu owns a private motorcycle. He said he could have bought a car if he wanted it. He has also built a house of his own. "Is that not a big achievement?" he asked this reporter.

Another fisherman, Abubakar Mohammed, 37, from Koton-Karfe Local Government Area of Kogi State insists it is either fishing or nothing.

Nothing, he says, will make him



ABUBAKAR Mohammed displaying his catch.

quit the job he has engaged in for the past 10 years. How he got into fishing? He said he merely got fascinated by the activities of fishermen in his area. He recounts that he used to curiously watch those fishermen after school hours during his secondary school days, saying that nobody actually trained him for the job he later grew up to do.

Abubakar considers himself lucky for choosing to be a fisherman.

He explains: "I started this job ten years ago. I don't catch less than 150 fishes daily. Sometimes, I make like N10,000 a day. I have never made less than N200,000

in a month. I usually sell my fishes directly to fish mongers. At times, I take them to fish dealers who weigh them with scale."

Abubakar explained that he has invested in cattle rearing from the proceeds of his fishing occupation. He has 58 herds of cattle at present, he said.

He counts the possession of two wives and eight children as part of testimony of doing well in his chosen business.

He told Daily Trust: "My children are in very good schools in Lokoja. This is because I have enough money to send them to the best school in the city. It is also rosy for my two wives and they are proud of having a fisherman as their husband. I established businesses for them. My first wife is a hair dresser and the second one is a fishmonger."

37 years old Abubakar relishes the respect he gets from his two wives because of his ability to provide for their needs.

"They respect me a lot because I take good care of them. You know a poor man never makes a good husband. Fishing is my secret. The only problem I have in this job is that some of my customers, especially fish mongers buy on credit and refuse to pay. But this has not in any way affected me. I don't think I will ever quit fishing. For me, quitting fishing is quitting the world of wealth. Quitting fishing is also like inviting poverty into my life," he said.

He said he laughs at those who expect government to provide jobs for them. "They don't think of helping themselves. Heaven helps only

those who help themselves. I know many of them, especially the so-called graduates, would see fishing as a dirty job. Unfortunately, that is what they are getting wrong. Where are the clean jobs? What is dirty about a job that earns you a good living?," he asked.

Abubakar further revealed that the dredging of the River Niger by the federal government was driving the fishes farther into the river.

According to him, "Fishes are the most stupid creatures I have ever encountered as they are easily trapped inside fishermen's nets. It is just now that they seem to be demonstrating some wisdom because of the on-going dredging of the River Niger. The fishes are now going deep down the river and it is becoming somehow difficult for us to catch them. That does not mean we still don't catch them, but before the dredging started, we had less difficulty catching them."

Abubakar advises jobless graduates across the country to start looking inwards and think of what to do to earn a living rather than continue to expect white-collar jobs from the government "because the so-called white-collar jobs are non-existent.

I would want our graduates to think of what they can do on their own, not necessarily fishing. But if any one of them is interested in fishing, I am ready to train him/her. Learning fishing does not require much training. It does not have anything to do with university certificate. It is all about readiness and commitment," he concluded.



TANIMU Garuba says he has no regrets being a fisherman

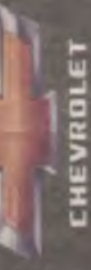
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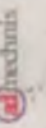
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INTERMOTORS



Star Feature

The '12 millionaires' horses' of Machina

In Machina, Yobe state, there are 12 millionaire horses, and they are only seen in public during the annual Machina Cultural Festival (MACUF) or at the Abuja Carnival. They are prestigious and live in a special place within the palace, unlike the rest which are kept in stables.

sion. Two people, well dressed in royal apparels mount two beautiful horses. The Kachalla is the Chief of Defence Staff of the emirate.

It is the Kachalla that clears the durbar arena for the revered "Dokin Zage". Whenever they come out, they move in a straight line, to the admiration of spectators.

Immediately the Kachalla marches -past, then another set of 12 horses, known as Kajawu, light up the scene with their unique style. Unlike the Dokin Zage, the Kajawu are mounted by horse riders who have excelled in the arts of controlling horses ,and manipulating them.



THE Emir of Machina Alhaji Bashir Albishir Bukar Machinama.

From Isa Umar Gusau and Hamza Idris, who were in Machina

INDEED, they are "kings". Each one of them is adorned with silver and bronze, as well as royal regalia valued at one million naira. This, of course, does not include the price of each of the horses.

The horses are highly revered, as they are not meant for either horse riding or racing. Rather, they are simply well fed, well kept and reside in the palace of the Emir of Machina, His Royal Highness, Alhaji Bashir Albishir Bukar Machinama.

These horses seldom come out except during special occasions such as the Machina carnival, where they are used to pay homage that is out of the ordinary, for the Emirs, kings and thousands of dignitaries, who throng to Machina every year for the fiesta, which takes place during the Easter break.

The horses, all of them white, are known as 'Suddu' in Kanuri or 'Dokin Zage' in Hausa, and are taken care of, by specially designated people, who ensure that they are well kept and fed.

Hundreds of years ago, the horses

during battles also march out with the Emir who encourages other warriors to crush the invaders. The Emir rides at a time on one of the horses on battlefields, and another horse could only take its turn on the death of the one the emir is riding on.

Now that the wars are over, the Dokin Zage is used for entertainment, and as a sign of royalty. In Yobe State, Machina is known as the home of durbar. The emirate has remained the sole representative of the state at the Abuja Carnival, and has won the overall

award of the durbar category three times consecutively.

Because of their importance, even during festivities, the Dokin Zage appears in the durbar procession, after other categories of horses have marched forward.

Mala Alamma are two giant horses that carry two hefty men, each one bearing the flag of the Machina Emirate. They are always the first to appear in public , and they signify the sanctity and the sovereignty of the emirate.

Kachalla is always the second that appears in the durbar proces-



ONE of the palace soldiers displaying horse

re na

Shortly after they entertain guests, the Kajawu give way to district heads in their special characteristics. They move in groups. There are several districts in Machina. These include Machina, Dole-Machina, Falmaram and Damai, who invited participants displaying expertise in their indigenous style, which show rich cultural heritage and brought fame, attention and gifts to those who attended.

After the district heads, the village heads equally participated in the exercise. While some of them move on horses, others carry decorated machetes, gold



THE 12 horses of Kajawu.

plated swords and royal fans, as they move in style.

The princes equally showcase their ingenuity during their presentation. Machina princes are experts when it comes to this.

Every Machina festival is also a great event for the servants of the Emir. They also show solidarity, acceptability and allegiance with their expertise during their presentation. On that day, hundreds of them dress in royal regalia, climb horses and dine and wine with the high and mighty.

Records show that in this year's event, 250 horses participated in the durbar. Also, there were dozens of camels that participated.

It was discovered that the zeal and commitment of the Emir to re-introduce the annual fiesta about three years ago, is to bring to

life, the hobby of his late father who was famous as a lover of horses and the durbar.

From time immemorial, the durbar had remained the number one sport of the Machina people, a town situated in the extreme northern part of Yobe State.

The original name of Machina is 'karbi kauwa' (a Manga word meaning physical features) which historical documentations traced to the Sefawa Dynasty of the Kanem Borno Empire, which had its headquarters in Birnin Ngazargamu, which now forms part of Yobe State.

Experts say the influence of climatic fluctuations is reflected in the superficial deposits overlay in Machina and its adjoining villages, which resulted in the deposition of a series of sand dunes, which runs in a north-east to south-west

direction, in response to the prevailing wind direction, and therefore a delight to any visitor.

At present, Machina has an Emir with a first class status, and is ranked fourth in the hierarchy of emirates in Yobe State.

Thousands of dignitaries including traditional rulers from Borno, Gombe, Yobe, Nasarawa, United Kingdom and Niger Republic, attended the event which lasted five days.

Other activities featured during the fiesta included traditional dances, local wrestling (kokuwa), horse racing (sukuwa) and one-legged race (Langa-langa).

More exciting is the fact that unlike during the two previous editions of the event, when joyful journey to Machina had to end in Nguru town, some three hundred

kilometres away from Damaturu, the Yobe State capital, where one has to disembark from any light vehicle conveying him, and board the available heavy trucks known as "Lenge-Lenge". These are capable of traversing the fifty six kilometer untarred road to Machina, which is dotted with thorn trees and sand dunes. This year, the situation has improved courtesy of the state government's gesture of re-mobilizing the contractors handling the road project, who have gone back to work, and made the road more accessible by all kinds of vehicles.

The chief organiser of the festival who is also the Emir of Machina, Alhaji Bashir Albishir Bukar Machina (OON) said his emirate shouldered the responsibility of handling the maiden edition of the festival, was quick to add that the Yobe State government and the First Bank of Nigeria, had sponsored everything this year.

He therefore called on the federal government to list the Machina Cultural Festival in its list of historical sites, which according to him will make the annual event more exciting, and take it to international prominence.

Emir Albishir said the aim of the annual festival was to showcase the "rich cultural heritage" of his emirate, as well as foster unity, love and peaceful coexistence between people of Yobe State, as well as others from across Nigeria and the neighbouring countries.

“The horses, all of them white, are known as 'Suddu' in Kanuri or 'Dokin Zage' in Hausa, and are taken care of, by specially designated people, who ensure that they are well kept and fed.

Business

Nigeria loses 100,000 barrels as Shell suspends production

From Mohammed Shosanya, Lagos

THE Shell Petroleum Development Company has announced temporary shutdown of operation at its Joint Venture-operated EA field offshore Western Niger Delta.

The company said production of some 100,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day has been deferred due to the development.

A statement from the company

yesterday said the suspension was to enable the company carry out repairs of its equipment which connects the Floating, Production, Storage and Offloading (FPSO) facility, Sea Eagle with the mooring platform.

The equipment in question, according to the statement was scheduled to be overhauled in May this year, but bad weather - including a storm on 26 March - has

forced the schedule to be brought forward.

Meanwhile, the Managing Director of Shell Nigeria Exploration and Production company [SNEPCO], Chike Onyejekwe has said that Shell's Bonga oil field, operated continuously for four years between April 2006 and April 2010 without a single safety incident resulting in lost time injury (LTI).

Islamic Microfinance bank launched

From Mohammed Shosanya, Lagos

THE first Islamic micro finance bank in the country, Al-Barakah Microfinance Bank was yesterday commissioned in Lagos.

The bank is an initiative of The Muslim Congress which spans 16 years.

At a well attended event, the Chairman of Al-Barakah Micro-Finance Bank, Dr. Abdul Hakeem Mobolaji said the bank is set up in response to the increasing demand for alternative micro

credit products by the less privileged members of the society against the conventional banking practices.

He also said the bank would provide succour and financial service to the society in support of the Federal government's drive to eliminate poverty in the country.

"What we are commissioning today represents our contribution towards providing an alternative banking for Muslims and non-muslims alike.

It is our fervent hope that more

like-minded individuals and corporate body will embrace this window and deepen the financial market through provision of sophisticated Islamic instruments and finance".

“What we are commissioning today represents our contribution towards providing an alternative banking for Muslims and non-muslims alike

125 micro banks to start e-Payment

By Zakariyya Adaramola

OVER 125 micro-finance banks across the country are set to begin electronic payment following an agreement between two local software companies---SystemsSpecs and Maxim-Pro.

Maxim-Pro is an indigenous software company whose product, MaxiSoft banking application is used by over 125 microfinance banks in Nigeria.

SystemSpecs also an indigenous software company, which developed an e-Payment platform called Remita that enables companies to pay workers salaries, vendors/suppliers, pension remittance to PFAs/PFCs, and taxes to FIRS.

Speaking to Daily Trust on phone yesterday, spokesman of SystemsSpecs, Mr. Moses Braimah said the two companies recently agreed to integrate their products-Remita e-Payment platform and MaxiSoft banking application-to enable micro finance banks carry out e-payment function.

According to him, the decision of the two companies was based on the need to ensure that users of their application are properly positioned and connected to the most

widely used e-Payment platform by commercial banks in Nigeria and to synch the microfinance banks payment transactions with that of mainstream banking institutions.

He said workers whose accounts are domiciled in the microfinance banks can now be paid directly.

He said that through this collaboration, the microfinance banks would become CBN compliant.

He explained that the agreement entails the seamless integration of Remita with MaxiSoft banking application and the training of key personnel of the micro-finance banks that use MaxiSoft application.

The agreement, he said, would eventually result to the spread and permeating of e-payment to rural areas in the country.

"Our decision to collaborate with Maxim-Pro is to further deepen the application of True e-Payment in Nigeria payment system and to ensure that the federal government and CBN directives on payment is strengthen and sustained for greater success", Mr. Braimah said.

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Business/Aviation

Minna Airport city will grow our economy - Aliyu



NIGER State Governor Mu'azu Babangida Aliyu

Stories from Nahimah Ajikanle Nurudeen, Lagos

GOVERNOR of Niger State, Babangida Aliyu has reiterated that the concept of the Minna Airport City Project is for the regeneration of the economy of the State.

Speaking with journalists at the Presidential Lounge of the Murtala Muhammad Airport Ikeja Lagos, Aliyu said the idea was to capture the whole West African sub region through the airport as an industrial link for trade and various business transactions.

"By the time the project is completed, we would have manufacturing industries; people would not have to go China to get some of the products they used to import. With the airport city, those things could be produced here at a relatively lower cost, and the movement of the goods is also key."

The governor said Niger State is the largest producer of rice in Nigeria but called for the support of the Federal Government to fight the rice cartels whose imports make the produce too and discourages farmers.

He said, "The whole economic regeneration is built on agriculture, and I am happy that in the next 11 months, we will see the ministry of agriculture helping us."

SAHCOL invests \$1.4m on handling equipment

THE Skyway Aviation Handling Company (SAHCOL) has said it is putting additional \$1.4 million to purchase ground handling equipment to enhance its operation to international standard.

Speaking with aviation journalists at the Presidential Lounge, Murtala Muhammed Airport (MMA), in Lagos, the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of the organisation, Mr. Isaac Orolugbagbe said the amount invested is in addition to the earlier N2 billion invested on equipment.

According to him, SAHCOL is into aggressive acquisition of the state-of-the-art facilities because of its yearnings to provide quality services to its customers.

His words, "We will do what the customers want. We are building a new SAHCOL that is customer oriented. We want to build a SAHCOL where investors will get return for their money."

He explained that some of the equipment that were ordered for with the ini-

tial N2 billion have started arriving the country.

"We will go public on or before five years. The year is certain but the date is not certain," he said.

On human capacity building for the company's staff, he said "Now that the company is going through a re-engineering process, SAHCOL cannot train everybody. But for sure, those we can train will be trained and those we cannot train will exit."

But for sure, those we can train will be trained and those we cannot train will exit.

Abuja's airport runway of controversy

AN expert in the aviation industry, Mr. Olumide Ohunayo has condemned the controversial second runway of the Nnamdi Azikwe International airport, Abuja saying that the project is uncalled for.

Speaking exclusively to *Daily Trust*, Ohunayo said it is mind boggling to hear that the contract for the construction of the runway was inflated by \$200 million.

The House of Representatives Committee on Aviation last week conducted a public hearing on the contract where it gave a damning verdict, citing breach of procurement procedures and inflation of contract sum.

According to Ohunayo, the airport does not even require an additional runway considering the level of traffic it's currently accommodating. He said stakeholders still have not learnt their lessons from seizing opportunity of office to award unnecessary contracts for their selfish interests.

Ohunayo said "The second Abuja runway project cannot be a priority because the present runway is below optimum usage. This is coming barely a year after the N19.4 billion safe tower-gate scandal which is still pending in court, with accompanying soap opera. We need to be conscious and watch during the investigative period."

He urged the Federal Government to address the issue of bailout for the ailing domestic airlines operators who are going to patronize the airports.

Speaking further, Ohunayo disclosed that constructing additional runways for any airport in Nigeria is not needed adding that apart from resurrecting folding airline operators, government should aggressively fast track rehabilitation of the infrastructures in the aviation industry.

"We should rather fix the problem of vanishing local carriers who are the end users while the legislature should urgently pass freedom of Information (FOI) bill so they can have access to more information for effective over-sight duties, he suggested."

Ohunayo added that the Director General of the Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA) Dr. Harold Demuren recently complained of the difficulties in fast tracking world bank sponsored projects, because the World Bank, are practically negotiating and paying for projects directly instead of giving the agencies the money, which naturally shows lack of trust in public accountability and ultimately slows down implementation due to the long process of verifying, negotiating, approv-

ing and disbursing financial resources for the ongoing works.

He said if aviations chief and minister continue to follow this line, the industry might see public and corporate support for infrastructure and other development turning to apathy.

Ohunayo however stated that "I just hope it's a false alarm that will not go beyond allegation. If proven, it is a clear case of a first degree in engineering being tantamount to first class degree in engineering graft."

The House of Representatives Committee on Aviation last week conducted a public hearing on the said inflated Abuja second runway contract awarded by the Federal Aviation Authority of Nigeria [FAAN] without an engineering design and bill of quantity.

Managing Director of FAAN, Richard Aisuebieogun told the Committee that the Bureau of Public Procurement [BPP] scaled down the cost to N63.5 billion from N72 billion before the contract was awarded to Julius Berger, which designed the new runway for a completion period of 24 months.

A resolution of the House on March 3, 2010 mandated the committee to probe the controversy surrounding the award of the contract after the debate on a motion by Dino Melaye, alleging sharp practices and violation of the BPP Act by officials of the Ministry of Aviation and all agencies connected with the contract.

At the public hearing, the committee established abuse of BPP Act and gross inflation of the contract when compared to similar contracts executed by the Akwa Ibom, Gombe, and Katsina State Governments.

Director General of BPP, Engr. Emeka Eze who was represented by Engr. Nebo Olisa Emordi, a director in the bureau informed the committee that the Federal Ministry of Aviation, under the immediate past Minister Engr. Babatunde Omotoba recommended restrictive

tendering for the contract.

He added that Julius Berger appeared to be the most competent of the last two companies shortlisted for the project, and that BPP issued the 'no objection certificate' on the sum of N63.5 billion recommended by the ministry, against the sum of N72 billion prepared by Julius Berger.

FAAN's Director of Airport Engineering Services, Engr. Dunomah Saleh in his presentation said FAAN's in-house evaluation of the project had estimated the cost at around N26 billion, although, he admitted that the site of the runway was not visited, while bid document was given to the contractors as a guide in the preparation of their proposals.

Former minister Omotoba, stated that the ministry was alarmed at the price of N83.4 billion submitted by Julius Berger.

Omotoba explained that the ministry recommended restrictive tendering, based on the Procurement Act.

Chairman of the Committee, Bethel Amadi pointed out sections of the BPP Act that were breached in the contract by FAAN and the ministry.

He blamed the BPP for certifying the project when only N4 billion was appropriated for it in the 2009 budget, while further alleging that FAAN deleted three of the companies that bided for the project.



AN airplane

Business/Agric

Yobe to vaccinate 850,000 animals

From Hamza Idris, Damaturu

OVER 600,000 cows and 250,000 sheep and goats are expected to be vaccinated in Yobe State to protect them against major trans-boundary diseases.

Alhaji Zanna Laisu, the commissioner for Animals and Fisheries stated this in Lantaiwa Village of Tarmuwa local government area yesterday while launching the second phase of the 2009/2010 Annual Mass Animal Vaccination Campaign.

He said during the first phase of the programme which

was carried out in Fune local government area last year, about 900,000 cows were vaccinated.

Laisu said the animals would be vaccinated against diseases including contagious Bovine Pleura Pneumonia (CBPP), Black Quarter Diseases (BQ) in cattle and Peste De Petit Ruminant (PPR) in sheep and goats which have remained a menace in the country.

"All necessary measures must be taken to protect the animals because nonfads have no particular boundary as they move with herds of cattle, sheep and goats across sub-Saharan Africa in search of greener pasture and potable

water for animal consumption", the commissioner said.

"Along with these movements come the trans-boundary animal diseases. This is why the state government approved N7 million for the procurement of inputs and vaccination for the animals", the commissioner added.

State chairman of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) Alhaji Aliyu Mai who spoke at the event called on the government to construct boreholes for herders in strategic locations which according to him will address problem of water shortage for animals and human consumption.



THE cassava policy introduced by the Obasanjo government has been abandoned

Institute develops 4-in-one cassava variety

THE National Root Crops Research Institute (NRCRI), Umudike, in Abia, has developed a four-in-one cassava variety, the Executive Director, Dr Ken Nwosu, disclosed on Tuesday.

Nwosu announced this at the NRCRI 2010 Annual Research Review and planning workshop. He said the new cassava variety contained starch, protein, vitamin 'A' and iron.

"In the next three to four years, as you are consuming cassava, you are taking in starch, protein, vitamin 'A' and iron; that is the good news for Nigerians," he said.

The director said the institute achieved the feat through collaboration with a research consortium known as "bio-cassava plus" and funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

He said that the new variety, which took three years to develop, was being field tested in the institute.

He called on the National Assembly to pass the Bio-Safety bill into law to enable the institute to go into large scale production of the new cassava variety through biotechnology.

Nwosu noted that the country remained the world's largest producers of cassava, yam and cocoyam, with an annual production of 45 million tonnes, 32 million tonnes, and five million tonnes respectively.

The director said the institute had so far developed a total of 29 cassava varieties, but expressed regret that 98 per cent of them were consumed locally.

He stressed the need for a quantum leap in cassava production to satisfy local demand and have excess for export.

According to him, cassava production will double when the improved pest and disease resistant varieties replaced the traditional varieties still in the farming systems.

On the challenges facing the institute, Nwosu identified inadequate power and water supply as well as paucity of funds as the major impediments.

He suggested that the time had come when the level of appropriation should reflect performance and contribution of the institute to the national economy.

He also called for a special intervention fund to transform the institute into Centre of Excellence in roots and tuber crops research in Africa. (NAN)

'Commercial agric will ensure food security'

COMMERCIALISING agriculture in the country will ensure food security, Prof. Chris Ogbonna, the Special Adviser on Agriculture to Gov. Ikedi Ohakim of Imo, said on Tuesday.

Ogbonna this in Owerri at the one day workshop held for extension officers of the Imo Agricultural Development Programme (ADP).

He underscored the importance of the role of extension workers towards the adoption of modern agricultural technology for increased productivity.

Ogbonna said the government was set to galvanise relevant stakeholders toward achieving food sufficiency in the state. He called on the people to brace up for the challenges ahead as the agricultural sector would be accorded priority henceforth.

Earlier, the Programme Manager, Imo ADP, Chief Don Okwu, noted that extension officers were confronted with many challenges that impeded their work. (NAN).

AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY AVERAGE PRICES FOR APRIL 13, 2010

COMMODITY	VARIETY	LOCATION	PRICE/TON (Naira)
PALM Produce	Palm Oil Benin	(Edo State)	185,000.00
		P.K.O	185,000.00
COCOA	PALM Kernel	Akure (Ondo State)	46,000.00
			430,000.00
MAIZE	Graded	Bodija (Oyo State)	425,000.00
			59,180.00
MAIZE	White	Mangu (Plateau State)	69,390.00
			42,000.00
MAIZE	YELLOW	Dawanau (Kano State)	45,000.00
			48,000.00
SORGHUM	White	Dawanau (Kano State)	48,000.00
			43,000.00
			43,000.00
SOYABEANS	UNCLEANED	Gboko (Benue State)	N.A
			50,000.00
SOYABEANS	CLEANED	Dawanau (Kano State)	56,000.00
			N.A
SESAME	Uncleaned	Dawanau (Kano State)	N.A
			N.A
SESAME	Cleaned	Gboko (Benue State)	N.A
			147,000.00
SESAME	Uncleaned	Mangu (Plateau State)	N.A
			150,000.00
SESAME	Cleaned	Muna (Borno State)	150,000.00
			N.A
GROUNDNUT	UNCLEANED	Dawanau (Kano State)	N.A
			117,000.00
			107,000.00
GROUNDNUT	Shelled M/Bargo	Daka Muna (Borno State)	N.A
			138,480.00
			123,000.00
GROUNDNUT	Shelled Agric	Gboko (Benue State)	95,259.00
			120,000.00
			108,000.00
GUM ARABIC	Native	Muna (Borno State)	45,000.00
			N.A
			N.A
GUM ARABIC	Unshelled	Muna (Borno State)	N.A
			N.A
GUM ARABIC	Grade 1	Muna (Borno State)	N.A
			N.A
GUM ARABIC	Grade 2	Muna (Borno State)	N.A
			N.A
GUM ARABIC	Grade 3	Muna (Borno State)	N.A
			N.A

(SOURCE: Abuja Securities and Commodity Exchange)

Business/Finance



Nigerian Stock Exchange
(Source: APT Securities)
Wednesday, April 14, 2010

STOCK Name	Prev Day Close	Open	High	Low	Price	Change	Deals	Volume Traded	Value
ABCTANS	1.23	1.18	1.18	1.17	1.17	-0.06	19	358,103	423,941.38
AFRIBANK	3.25	3.09	3.41	3.09	3.09	-0.16	154	10,012,630	31,764,042.00
AFRINSURE								20,000	10,000.00
AFROMEDIA	0.55	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.55	0.00	1	2,000	1,140.00
AGLEVENT	5.10	5.35	5.35	4.99	4.99	-0.11	36	879,737	4,512,622.50
AIICO	1.71	1.79	1.79	1.63	1.63	-0.08	255	22,450,142	38,159,572.00
AIRSERVICE	3.36	3.52	3.52	3.52	3.52	0.16	32	931,500	3,278,890.00
ALUMACO	9.02	8.57	8.57	8.57	8.57	-0.45	1	50,001	428,508.56
AP	43.39	43.01	43.01	41.23	43.00	-0.39	185	1,359,758	57,640,320.00
ASHAKACEM	24.90	23.66	23.66	23.66	23.66	-1.24	41	1,276,618	30,204,782.00
ASOSAVINGS	0.64	0.67	0.67	0.61	0.66	0.02	118	48,973,925	31,578,216.00
BAGCO	3.62	3.46	3.80	3.46	3.75	0.13	613	5,489,694	20,033,870.00
BCC	60.73								
BECOPETRO	1.65	1.60	1.63	1.60	1.63	-0.02	35	645,576	1,052,338.75
BERGER	7.1								
BETAGLAS	16.41	0.00	0.00	0.00	16.41	0.00	1	1,215	18,941.85
BIGTREAT	1.22	1.26	1.26	1.16	1.16	-0.06	91	3,973,239	4,748,447.00
BOCGAS	10.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	10.20	0.00	8	39,000	414,600.00
BOGURY	19.11							412,483	7,785,148.00
CAP	29.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	29.67	0.00	3	1,138	33,764.46
CCNN	23.25	22.09	22.09	22.09	22.09	-1.16	25	280,490	6,196,024.00
CHEVRON	69.79	0.00	0.00	0.00	69.79	0.00	3	9,998	732,553.44
CHEASING			4.36	3.98	3.98				
CONOIL	46.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	46.20	0.00	30	33,412	1,584,958.75
CONTINSURE	0.99	0.99	1.02	0.96	0.96				
CORNERST	0.69	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.03	22	4,910,435	3,535,513.25
EOSTAIN	8.25	7.84	7.84						
COURTVILLE	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.00	3	213,500	106,750.00
CRUSADER	0.94	0.94	0.94						
CUSTODYINS	3.61	3.52	3.70	3.51	3.70	0.09	12	360,368	1,286,191.62
CUTIX	3.03								
DAARCOMM	1.58	1.65	1.65	1.51	1.51	-0.07	111	7,440,353	12,113,634.00
DANGSUGAR	19.90	19.10	19.10	18.91	18.93	-0.97	117	1,501,478	28,461,876.00
DIAMOND									
DNMEYER	3.21	3.37	3.37	3.37	3.37	0.16	5	109,800	370,026.00
ECOBANK	6.50	6.21	6.30	6.18	6.18	-0.32	70	1,422,493	8,833,820.00
EQUITYASUR	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	4	29,700	14,850.00
ETI	20.00	20.00	20.00	19.50	19.50	-0.50	32	1,461,225	28,918,464.00
FCMB	9.00	8.56	8.80	8.55	8.80	-0.20	53	1,000,572	8,579,664.00
FIDSON	3.60	3.42	3.42	3.42	3.42	-0.18	50	966,897	3,389,257.00
FIRSTBANK	16.21	15.89	16.16	15.87	16.16	-0.05	1118	22,068,337	352,055,904.00
FIRSTINLN									
GLAXOSMITH	26.63	0.00	0.00	0.00	26.63	0.00	10	15,059	398,596.16
GOLDINSU									
GTASSURE	3.04	3.04	3.04	2.89	2.89	-0.15	30	2,678,200	7,773,507.00
GUINEAINS	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.00	52	7,809,068	3,904,534.00
HONYFLOUR	8.55	8.70	8.97	8.50	8.55	0.00	93	3,484,325	30,397,758.00
IBTC	11.10							1,312	
INTENEGINS	0.73	0.75	0.76	0.70	0.71	-0.02	196	55,495,237	41,030,656.00
INTERCONT			2.16	2.00	2.10			6,531,008	
IPWA	1.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.20	0.00	1	40,000	45,600.00
JBERGER	46.20	46.40	48.51	43.90	48.51	2.31	101	5,162,961	240,181,728.00
LINKASSURE	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50			43,000	21,500.00
MOBIL	130.83	137.37	137.37	137.37	137.37	6.54	24	146,289	20,095,720.00
NEIMETH	2.34	2.45	2.45	2.45	2.45				
NESTLE	300.10	0.00	0.00	0.00	300.10	0.00	72	159,336	49,497,108.00
NIGERINS	0.97	1.01	1.01						
OANDO	110.25	115.76	115.76	110.25	111.31	1.06	401	7,042,537	804,292,288.00
OASISINS	0.93								
OCEANIC	2.09	2.01	2.09	1.99	2.09	0.00	209	9,499,000	19,140,062.00
OMATEK	0.64	0.67	0.67	0.61				10,386,201	6,654,224.50
PLATINUM	1.72	1.70	1.70	1.64	1.65	-0.07	93	7,280,855	12,127,469.00
PZ	31.26	30.99	30.99	30.99				368,929	11,205,971.00
REGALINS	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.00	3	218,480	109,240.00
RTBRISCOE	6.88	7.00	7.22	6.95	6.95	0.07	39	973,941	6,872,565.50
SKYEBANK	7.89	7.92	7.95	7.80	7.95	0.06	177	8,613,288	67,929,144.00
SOVRENINS	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.00			
SPRINGBANK	1.03	1.08	1.08	1.08	1.08	0.05	13	130,193	139,096.34
STDINSURE	0.60								
STERLN BANK	2.50	2.38	2.38	2.38	2.38	-0.12	15	896,177	2,132,901.25
TOTAL	167.73					8.38			
TRANSCORP	0.52	0.51	0.54	0.50	0.53	0.01	64	9,968,349	5,215,093.50
UACN	56.89	54.05	54.05	54.05	54.05	-2.84	85	1,073,764	58,047,460.00
UBN	6.20	6.18	6.18	5.89	5.90	-0.30	207	4,747,495	28,320,324.00
UNITYKAP	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.00	3	1,801,000	1,080,600.00
WEMABANK	1.27	1.21	1.23	1.21	1.21	-0.06	78	5,150,062	6,242,933.00

NATIONAL SOLIDARITY ASSOCIATION (NSA)

3E SHEHU LAMINU/DIKKO ROAD, D&D PLAZA, 1ST FLOOR, UNGUWAR RIMI GRA, KADUNA.

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www.democracyforigeria.org

IBB 2011

A CALL TO NATIONAL SERVICE

WHO WE ARE

The National Solidarity Association (NSA) is the apex body for the co-ordination of all pro-IBB groups both in Nigeria and the Diaspora. Established in 2001, the Association is an independent, not-for-profit network of individuals, groups and organisations that subscribe to the vision and democratic commitment of former President Ibrahim Babangida.

The major anchor of our current commitment is the rapid modernisation and transformation of Nigeria based on the principles of civic empowerment, public accountability and transparency in Government in the context of an open market economy.

We are trans-partisan with membership drawn from the private, non-profit and public sectors, diverse men and women, urban and rural, from east and west, north and south of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. We represent the entire spectrum of political inclinations, traditions and ideologies. We are not sponsored nor endorsed by any political or ideological organization. Our backgrounds and beliefs represent the vast range of the unique Nigerian experience. Our diversity reflects the reality of the Nigerian landscape. But we share a common goal: to develop a common grand vision and pursue an agenda for Nigeria's transformation into a modern prosperous nation in the shortest possible time.

THE CHALLENGE

We accept squarely the central challenge of the moment: to end the national drift and the creeping culture of weak leadership. We reject the present situation in which Nigeria, after 50 years of political independence, still finds itself plagued by political division, insecurity, rampant corruption joined by embarrassing infrastructure, increasing abject poverty, high illiteracy, deteriorating economic prospects, frightening unemployment and poor social services.

OUR DEFINING MOMENT

We recognise that these challenges also provide the nation with a unique opportunity to rise to greatness. We are convinced that what the situation requires is a strong visionary leader who has the experience and proven capacity to provide the leadership necessary to unite Nigeria as a functioning Democratic Republic.

Our country today faces big challenges requiring far-reaching solutions. The decision we make over the next 12 months will go a long way to determining our history for the next half century. Truly, now is our defining moment. In a complex era in

world history when strong political leadership is crucial to the wealth and greatness of nations, we face a watershed election in 2011, which is expected to produce our next President who will face the daunting task of putting the country back on track on many domestic and international fronts.

THE IBB IMPERATIVE

This nation needs a President who is more concerned with what is right and not what is most popular. We need someone who can govern towards real results and true progress instead of party rhetoric and a limited personal agenda. We need someone who has the vision, experience and passion of a true and demonstrated leader.

We are convinced that former President Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida remains the best option for securing the nation under a strong but popular leadership that can put together the broadest national coalition. He has the national visibility, proven experience, charisma and far reaching international contacts as well as the liberal ideological stance to provide an inclusive leadership for the country.

Our next president must be **PRESIDENTIAL** in every sense.

GET INVOLVED

All pro-IBB groups and Organisations are to re-validate their membership by sending details of their address, state of operation, contact persons, e-mail address and phone contact to the address below within two weeks from the date of this publication.

Register now to become an individual or group Member, Volunteer, Recruiter, Promoter, or Driver of the NSA.

TO REGISTER:

1. Online Registration: Visit our website to register online or
2. Send your name and address or membership list to our Protem co-ordinating office:

CO-ORDINATING OFFICE:

NATIONAL SOLIDARITY ASSOCIATION

3E SHEHU LAMINU/DIKKO ROAD, D&D PLAZA, 1ST FLOOR, UNGUWAR RIMI GRA, KADUNA.

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Signed:

ALIYU A. MOHAMMED

Executive Secretary

DIGEST

By smiling, you could be adding seven years to your life

THE secret to a longer life could be as simple as cracking a smile. The broader your grin and the deeper the creases around your eyes when you smile, the longer you are likely to live, a study has shown.

The research adds to mounting evidence that a happy disposition can have a powerful impact on health as well as life expectancy.

Broader grins and wrinkles around the eyes reflect an underlying positive outlook on life that translates into better long-term health, the researchers believe.

The conclusions emerged from a study of old photographs.

Experts at Wayne State University, Michigan, studied 230 pictures of major league baseball players printed in the 1952 Baseball Register. The register listed each player's statistics, such as date of birth, weight, marital status and career details.

The researchers ranked each player according to whether they had no smile at all, a partial smile,

where only the muscles around the mouth were involved, or a full-blown smile that featured

a toothy grin, raised cheeks and creases around the eyes.

The researchers then compared the photos with the life span of each player.

The results revealed that of the 184 players that had since died, those in the 'no smile' category had lived an average of 72.9 years.

Among the 'partial smiles' group, lifespan had averaged out at 75. But those with the biggest grins had lived for an average of 79.9 years - seven more than their straight-faced colleagues.

The study, published in the journal *Psychological Science*, found putting on a false grin may not give the same benefit because the extra life expectancy was only seen in players who had genuine smiles, known as Duchenne smiles.

These are smiles that engage groups of muscles around the mouth and eyes and are named after the 19th-century neurologist who defined them in detail.

'Non-Duchenne' smiles affect only the mouth.

The findings support another study which showed that being happy can reduce the risk of heart



SMILEY smiling could add up to seven years to your life.

disease. Scientists who studied 1,700 people over ten years found

those who were most anxious and depressed were more likely to suf-

fer clogged arteries and high blood pressure.

Being a clean freak increases your risk of illness, allergy expert claims

EXCESSIVE cleanliness which creates a sterile environment has led to soaring rise in allergies, a new report has shown.

Allergies have become widespread in developed countries - with hay fever, eczema, hives and asthma increasingly prevalent.

According to Dr Guy Delespesse, director of the Laboratory for Allergy Research at the University of Montreal, the hike in allergies is due to our obsession with cleanliness.

Allergies can be caused by a range of factors - family history, air pollution, processed foods, stress, smoking - yet our limited exposure to bacteria is also to blame.

Dr Delespesse said: 'There is an inverse relationship

between the level of hygiene and the incidence of allergies and autoimmune diseases.'

'The more sterile the environment a child lives in, the higher the risk he or she will develop allergies or an immune problem in their lifetime.'

In 1980, 10 per cent of the Western population suffered from allergies. Today, it is 30 per cent. In 2010, one in 10 children is said to be asthmatic, and the mortality rate has increased 28 per cent between 1980 and 1994.

'It's not just the prevalence but the gravity of the cases,' says Dr. Delespesse. 'Regions in which the sanitary conditions have remained stable have also maintained a constant level of allergies and inflammatory diseases.'

'Allergies and other autoimmune diseases such

as Type 1 diabetes and multiple sclerosis are the result of our immune system turning against us.'

Although hygiene does reduce our exposure to harmful bacteria it also limits our exposure to beneficial microorganisms. As a result, the bacterial flora of our digestive system isn't as rich and diversified as it used to be.

Dr Delespesse recommended probiotics to enrich our intestinal flora. Probiotics are intestinal bacteria that have a beneficial impact on health. They've been used for decades to make yoghurt.

He said: 'Consuming probiotics during pregnancy could help reduce allergies in the child. They are not a miracle remedy, yet they are one of many elements that improve our diet and our health.'

Sign Language



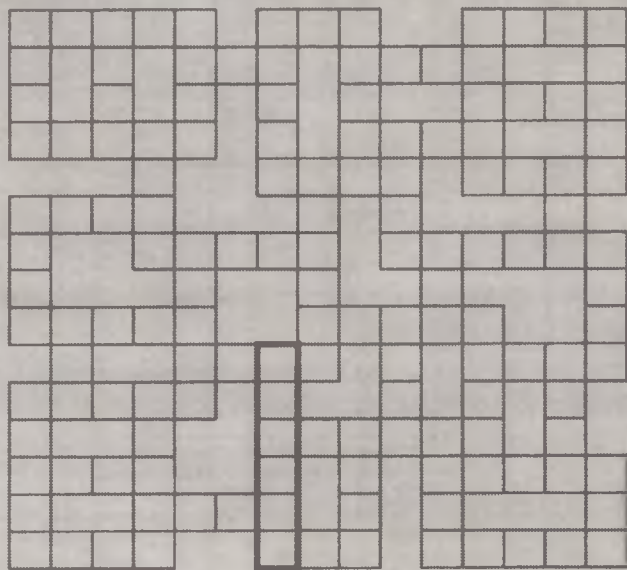
So that's how great lawyers win their cases.
 Photo location: Window in Illinois store, by Richard Dassow
 Culled from www.signspotting.com

KRISS KROSS

4

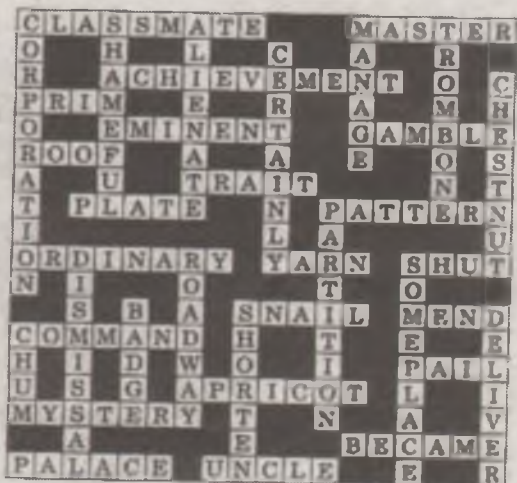
Solve this like a regular Kriss Kross, putting numbers instead of words into the gram.

- | | | | |
|-----------------|------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 3 Digits | 1004 | 7985 | 41167 |
| 096 | 1023 | 8221 | 43114 |
| 108 | 1248 | 8237 | 51325 |
| 195 | 1323 | 8410 | 61407 |
| 377 | 1909 | 9304 | 67904 |
| 606 | 4199 | | 77302 |
| 687 | 4208 | 5 Digits | 81706 |
| 786 | 4321 | 03144 | 96347 |
| | 4675 | 06241 | |
| 4 Digits | 6809 | 09814 | 6 Digits |
| 0144 | 7017 | 14602 | 065381 |
| 0771 | 7304 | 23105 | 092134 |
| 0906 | 7501 | 25340 | 471056 |
| 0972 | 7968 | 36371 | 507512 |
| | | 39765 | |



SOLUTION TO KRISS KROSS

3



SUDOKU

The Sudoku puzzle consists of a 9x9 square grid made up of smaller 3x3 square grids (regions). The numbers already present within the puzzle are "given"- these are there to start you off. The aim is to complete the puzzle by filling the empty cells. Every digit from 1-9 needs to fit in each row, column and region of 9 squares. Each row, column and region must contain just one instance of each number, 1-9.

128

4		9		6				
	6	2	3					
1		3	2					4
				7				5
9	5			1				8 7
	2			9				
7					5	4		8
					7	3	2	
			8			7		6

Solution to Sudoku 127

4	6	7	5	8	1	9	2	3
8	3	5	4	2	9	6	1	7
2	1	9	3	6	7	4	8	5
5	2	6	1	4	3	8	7	9
3	7	4	9	5	8	1	6	2
1	9	8	2	7	6	3	5	4
7	4	3	6	1	5	2	9	8
9	8	1	7	3	2	5	4	6
6	5	2	8	9	4	7	3	1

News Extra

Hundreds dead in China earthquake

A series of strong earthquakes struck China's western Qinghai province yesterday morning, killing at least 300 people and injuring thousands more.

The quake, which measured 7.1 on the Richter scale, struck an area in southern Qinghai, near Tibet. It was centred on Yushu county, a region with a population of about 100,000, mostly herders and farmers.

Paramilitary police were forced to use shovels to dig through the rubble in a township where most of the homes had been flattened, footage on state television showed.

The quake, which measured 7.1 on the Richter scale, struck an area in southern Qinghai, near Tibet.

Officials said excavators were not available and with most of the roads leading to the nearest airport damaged, equipment and rescuers would have a hard time reaching the area.

The first tremors sent residents fleeing ashouses made of mud and wood toppled, said Karsum Nyima, the local TV station's deputy head of news.

'In a flash, the houses went down. It was a terrible earthquake,' he said. 'In a small park, there is a Buddhist tower and the top of the tower fell off.'

'Everybody is out on the streets, standing in front of their houses, trying to find their family members.'

The quake hit the county of Yushu, a Tibetan area in Qinghai's south. A local government Website put the county's population at 89,300, a community of mostly herders and farmers.

State broadcaster CCTV said the death toll had risen to about 300, with an additional 8,000 people injured.

The China Earthquake Administration said phone lines were down, hindering rescue efforts, while workers were racing to release water from a reservoir where a crack had formed after the quake.

In Jiegu, a township near the epicenter, more than 85 per cent of houses had collapsed, while large cracks have appeared on buildings still standing.

'The streets in Jiegu are thronged with panic and full of injured people, with many of them bleeding from their injuries,' an official said.

There were also students buried under the debris of a collapsed vocational school.

State TV showed footage of paramilitary police using shovels to dig around a house with a collapsed wooden roof.

A local military official, Shi Huajie, told state broadcaster CCTV rescuers were working with limited equipment.



RESIDENTIAL and business properties lie destroyed after a strong earthquake struck China's Qinghai province yesterday morning, killing at least 400 people.



MOST of the roads leading to the nearest airport are damaged, meaning equipment and rescuers will have a hard time reaching the area.

'The difficulty we face is that we don't have any excavators. Many of the people have been buried and our soldiers are trying to pull them out with human labor,' Shi said.

'It is very difficult to save people with our bare hands.'

Five thousand tents and 100,000 thick, cotton coats and heavy blankets were being sent to help survivors cope with strong winds and near-freezing temperatures, the Qinghai provincial government said in a statement.

Wu Yong, a local military

chief, said medical workers also were urgently needed but that roads leading to the airport had been badly damaged by the quake, creating difficulties for people and supplies to be flown in.

He said rescue efforts were hindered by frequent aftershocks

and strong winds.

The epicenter of the first quake was located 235 miles south-southeast of Golmud, a large city in Qinghai, at a depth of six miles.

Ten minutes later, the area was hit by a magnitude 5.3 quake, which was followed after two minutes by a temblor measuring 5.2.

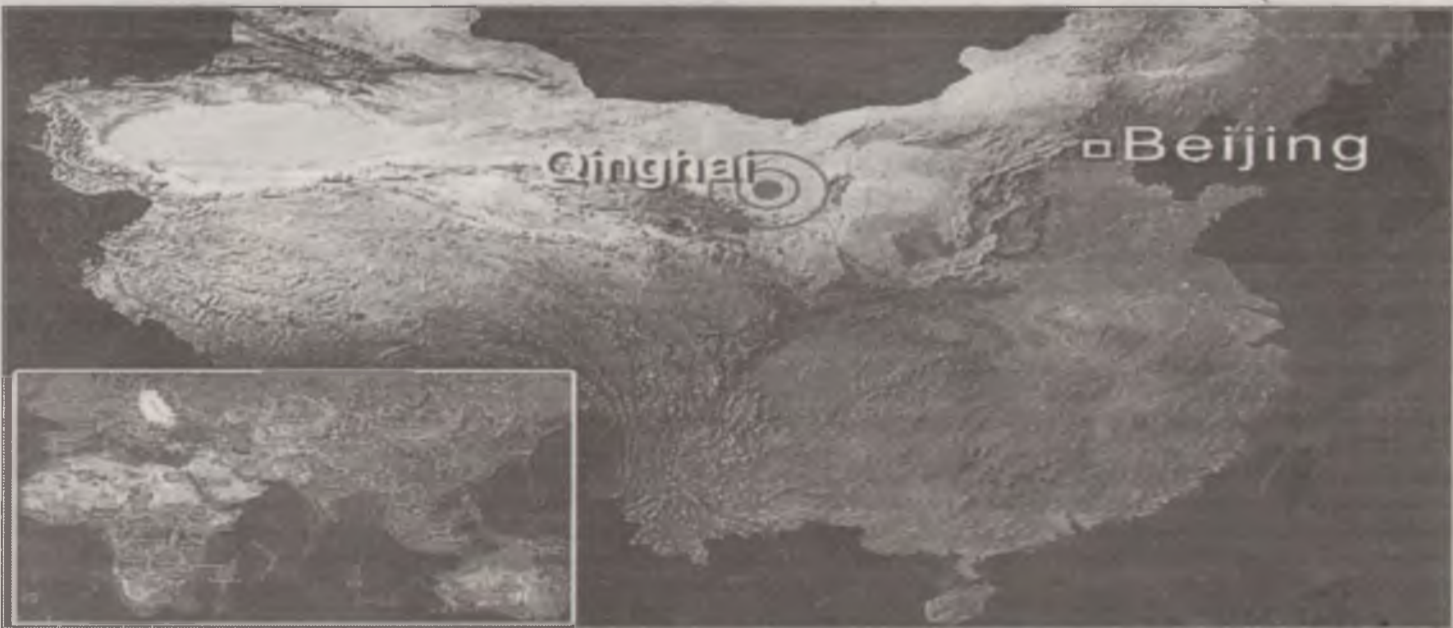
Both the subsequent earthquakes were measured at a depth of 6 miles. Another quake, measuring 5.8, was recorded at 9.25am.

Xinhua cited officials at the China Earthquake Networks Centre as saying at least 18 aftershocks have been reported and that more temblors exceeding magnitude 6 were likely to occur in the coming days.

In 2008, a magnitude-7.9 quake in Sichuan province left

Officials said excavators were not available and with most of the roads leading to the nearest airport damaged, equipment and rescuers would have a hard time reaching the area

almost 90,000 people dead or missing. That quake flattened several schools, killing thousands of students. Poor design, shoddy construction and the lax enforcement of building codes were found to be rampant.



LOCATION: The earthquake struck in the Qinghai region of China.

News Extra

Poles protest against plans to bury Polish president in Wawel castle

The funeral of President Lech Kaczynski has sparked protests in Poland over whether he should be allowed to be buried at Wawel Castle in Krakow alongside the country's heroes and royalty.

Demonstrations were held in Warsaw and Krakow over plans to bury Mr Kaczynski in the cathedral crypt of Wawel castle, the equivalent of burying a British prime minister in Westminster Abbey.

The protests were the first sign of cracks in the national unity inspired by the Smolensk air disaster, which claimed the lives of Mr Kaczynski and his wife, along with 93 of Poland's top political and military leaders, as they flew to the western Russian city to a Second World War memorial ceremony.

Poles took their protests to the internet, where a Facebook page dedicated to opposing the decision generated over 31,000 supporters in just a few hours.

Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz of Krakow consented on Tuesday to a request from the Kaczynski family that the presidential couple be buried in Krakow's Wawel castle after Sunday's funeral, which will be attended by world leaders including US President Barack Obama and his Russian counterpart Dmitry Medvedev. The castle contains the graves of Polish royalty and notable figures including the country's wartime leader General Wladyslaw Sikorski.

But the disaster has failed to erase the dislike many Poles had for President Kaczynski when he was alive. The late president had a dismal 30 per cent approval rating in recent months, and was widely expected to be voted out of office in Sept elections.

Andrzej Wajda, the Oscar-winning film director, added his considerable moral clout to the debate by criticising the move.

"President Lech Kaczynski was an ordinary and good man, but there is no reason for him to lie in the Wawel among the kings of Poland and Marshal Jozef Pilsudski," he wrote, referring to the founding father of the modern-day nation.

Grzegorz Kosmala, a Warsaw public relations executive opposed to the decision, also expressed his anger.

"I'm really sorry for President Kaczynski's death, but Wawel is not the place for him," he said. "When he was in office, President Kaczynski appeared to act on behalf of the opposition party led by his twin brother. He divided Poles more than he united them."

Mr Kaczynski will be the first



MOURNERS kneel at the coffins of late Polish President Lech Kaczynski and his wife Maria that were lying in state at the Presidential Palace Tuesday.

president to be buried in Wawel, which has sparked fears that it could set an unwelcome precedent.

Many critics of the decision have proposed that the presidential couple be buried in Warsaw's Powazki cemetery, which

has been going on for some time," said Mr Duda. "These destroyers are now making a fuss because

Kaczynski's funeral.

Members of the late president's Law and Justice party had

opposition, will stand as a candidate in the elections.

But even as the arguments

“ Poles took their protests to the internet, where a Facebook page dedicated to opposing the decision generated over 31,000 supporters in just a few hours. **”**



POLISH President Lech Kaczynski died in a plane crash in Russia.

contains the graves of some of Poland's most famous sons and daughters.

But Andrzej Duda, from the late president's office, dismissed the criticism.

"What we are seeing is a continuation of an attempt to destroy [the president's reputation] that

they know that the memory of man who was a Polish patriot and true servant of his country will be perpetuated forever."

Bronislaw Komorowski, Poland's acting head of state, sidestepped a second potential row by delaying the announcement of presidential elections until Mr

described Mr Komorowski's original intention to announce the election day before the president had been laid to rest as disrespectful.

There is increasing speculation that Jaroslaw Kaczynski, the late president's identical twin who is leader of Poland's conservative

over the burial threatened to overshadow the nation's grief over the Saturday's crash, Poles continued to queue for hours to pay their respects to President Kaczynski and his wife, where they were lying in state in central Warsaw.

Culled from guardian.co.uk

APPRECIATION

To our friends

And well wishers...

On The Death Of Our Beloved: Fatima Balaraba Ibrahim (Aunty Ba'ba)



Fatima Balaraba Ibrahim

Former Minister of State, Energy

... during her chequered, humble existence and whenever she had cause to celebrate 'life', you, our friends and well wishers, had faithfully rejoiced with her; conversely, during her moments of earthly trials and tribulations, you had truly shared in her grief and in her agonies. And just last week, on a fateful Tuesday (6th April, 2010), when the Almighty Allah, in His divine wisdom, after a ghastly motor accident, closed the book of her life, together with her aged Step Mother's, Hajiya Maryam (Aba) Waziri, you again, our friends and well wishers, were no less faithful in your fraternity nor were you any less true in your humanity.

From all walks of life and across tribes and tongues, faith and geography, you came to Kaduna, Abuja and even as far as to Birnin Kebbi, not only to commiserate with us and to share in our unfortunate tragic bereavement, but also to publicly reassure us of your friendship and your solidarity. By so doing also, you helped to greatly assuage our grief, tremendously strengthened our fortitude and imbued in us the courage to bear this irreparable loss. For these, we cannot possibly thank you enough. We only pray that the Almighty Allah requites you all bountifully for this selfless act of ibada. We therefore, in no exhaustive or any particular order of hierarchy, most profoundly thank, for their visits or messages of condolences:

Fmr. Pres. Shehu Shagari; Fmr. Heads of State, Generals. Muhammadu Buhari, Ibrahim B. Babangida, Abdulsalami Abubakar; Speaker of the House of Representatives, Hon. Dimeji Bankole; Nat. Security Adviser, N.S.A. Aliyu Gusau; SGF, Alh. Yayale Ahmed; Chief Of Army Staff, Lt-Gen. Abdulrahman Dambazau; His Emnce. The Sultan of Sokoto, Fmr. Speakers, Aminu B. Masari and Gali U. Na'aba; Justice S.M.A Belgore, Lt.-Gen. M.I. Wushishi, Govs. of Kaduna, Namadi Sambo; Sokoto, Aliyu M. Wamako; Gombe, Danjuma Goje, Kebbi, Saidu N. Dakingari, Adamawa, Murtala Nyako; Senators Jibril Aminu, Ladan Shuni, I. Saminu Turaki, Abu Ibrahim; Hon. Faruk Lawan; Ministers/Paras. of Information, Dora Akunyili; Police Affairs, Adamu Waziri; Nat.

Planning, Shamsuddeen Usman; Works and Housing, Sen. Sanusi Daggash; Minister of State for Foreign Affairs; Justices Umar Abdullahi, Amina A Augie; Dep. Govs. Of Kaduna, Kebbi, Zamfara; Dep. Spkr. Jigawa State house of Assembly; Hon. Ibrahim Y. Kanya; SSG,

Kaduna State; Brig-Gens. Halliru Akilu, Lawal J. Isa; Alani Bankole; Fmr. Milit. Govs. Gen. Garba Mohammed, Bgdr-Gen. Ahmed Dako, AVM Hamza Abdullahi, Col. Maimalari, Lt.Gen. Garba Duba; Fmr. Civilian Govs. Dr.

Garba Nadama, Abba M. Rimi, Yahaya Abdulkarim, Alh. Abubakar Musa, Dr. Rabi'u kwankwaso; Fmr. Ministers Dr. Shetima Mustapha, Dr.

Ibrahim Lame, Amb. Ibrahim Kazaure, Dr. Mansur Muktar, Isaiah Balat, Maina H. Haruna, and Sen. Adamu Alero; Maj-Gen. Sulaiman I. Wali, Sen. Waku, AVM Umaru Abbas, Grp-Capt. Ahmed Tijjani; Alh.

Umaru Shinkafi, Alh. Bamanga Tukur, Alh. Abdulkadir S. Dantata, Alh. Baba Dantata, Alh. Aliyu Makaman Nupe, Senators. Isah

mohammed and Dangana; Dr. Tanimu Yakubu, Dr. Hakim B. Ahmed, Brrs. Mohammed Wabil and Aliyu Umar; Engrs. Bello

Sulaiman and V.I. Maduka, Prince Bayo Sanda, Alh. Yahaya Mahmud, Alh. Lema Jibrin, Alh. Ishaku Ibrahim, Alh. Sale M. Jambo, Alh. Samaila I. Funtua, Alh. Hassan Ciroman Keffi, Alh.

Gambo Magaji, Alh. Ibrahim Y. Abdullahi; Profs. Sadiq Wali, Mamza, Sani Sambo, and M.H. Ahmed; Alh. Mansur Ahmed, Alh. lawal Isa, Rt. Rev. George Bako; Alh. Ibrahim Buba, Mal.

Sokoto, Alh. Bello Damagun, Alh. Hassan Hadeja, Alh.

Wada Maida, Alh. Idris Abdulkadir, Alh. Nuuman B. Banbatta, Alh. Bala Ibrahim Manzo, Alh. Garba Halliru, Alh. Lawan A. M. Habibu Sani, Alh. Sani Y. Babura; Sarkin Fulanin Dambo Katsina, Sarkin Garko, Sarkin Hanbo, Danmalikin K/Gora, Sarkin Maska, Mayanan Katsina, Galadiman Zuru, M. Magaji Danbatta; Alh. Yaro Bodinga; Cols. Ahmed Ali, Mohammed Kudu and Musa Shehu; Alh. Maccido Dalhat, Alh. Umar Mutallab, Alh. Musa Salihu, Dr. Aliyu Abdullahi, Alh. Sadiq Mahmud, Mr. Moses Dalyop, Chrm. Jos South L.G.; M. Abidu Yazidu, Alh. Bello Gusau, Alh. Garba Abdulkadir, Alh. Yakubu Shehu, Alh. Muhammadu Liman, M. Dahiru Ibrahim, M. Bello Tunau, Alh. Mohammed Baba Gana, Alh. Liman Kwande; Ambs. Kabiru Rabi'u, Adamu Mohammed, Magaji Mohammed, Yusufu Katsina, Ibrahim Wamban Gusau and Hamza Ahmadu; Mgt. of Unity Bank, Cpt. Iyal, M. Yaya Abubakar, Alh. Muhammadu I. Ringim, Alh. Abdullahi M. Magaji, Alh. Shuaibu Idris (Mikati), Alh. Abdullahi Gumel, Dr. Sani A. Shinkafi, Dangida Media, Iya Abubakar, Mohammed A. Mohammed, Isa Galauda, Ahmadu Zakari, Garba I. Gada, Usman Albishir, Abubakar Naammo, Masud Doguwa, Saidu M. Dansadau, Alh. Umaru Saro; Their Royal Highnesses, The Emirs of Gwandu, Zazzau, Argungu, Suleja, Hadeja, Kazaure, Ringim, Nasarawa; The Mai Bade (Emir of Bade), the Chief of Jere, Nat. Pres. NUJ; D-Gs./ Mgts. of NTA, FRCN, VON; Boards/Mgts. of Freedom Radio Kano, Jigawa State Radio, Kaduna State Media Corp., Exec. Sec. APCON; Mgt. of DITV, Galadiman Kano, Madakin Kano, Makaman Kano, Walin Kano, Katukan Kano, Sarkin Ban Kano, Dokajin Kano, Magajin Rafin Kano, Sain Kano, Dan Adalar Kano, Dangomban Kano, Dan Masanin Kano, Sarkin Yakin Kano, Durbin Kano, Dan Isan Gbagi, Turakin Bade, Barden Zazzau and the District Heads of Ringim Emirate.

We thank Almighty Allah for having granted you all journey mercies back to your various destinations. Thank you and Allah be praised.

Signed:

AMBASSADOR AMINU BASHIR WALI, mni,

for: The Wali family and the families of: Alhaji Umaru Wazirin Guandu and Mall. Ibrahim Magajin Kanya.

ENVIRONMENT environment@dailytrust.com

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FG embarks on shoreline mapping

By Mustapha Suleiman

THE Minister of Environment Mr. John Odey has said that the federal government through the National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA) has carried out an Environmental Sensitivity Index (ESI) mapping of the shoreline between Lagos

and Calabar.

Odey stated this during the second meeting of Environmental Clean-up and Remediation of the Niger Delta sub-committee held in Abuja.

"The mapping is essential to preserve and protect our fragile ecosystem from the impact of oil spill. I therefore urged

all oil companies operating in Nigeria to take advantage of the Environmental Sensitivity index mapping to guide their operations," he said.

He explained that the mapping which extended 50km inward captured all available sensitive ecosystems for adequate protection in the event of oil spill.

The mapping is essential to preserve and protect our fragile ecosystem from the impact of oil spill. I therefore urged all oil companies operating in Nigeria to take advantage of the Environmental Sensitivity index mapping to guide their operations

PIC: AFOLABI SOTUNDE



A riverbed in Area One, Abuja showing cracks due to excessive heat caused by lack of rainfall.

Kogi Assembly to ban street begging

From Isiaka Wakili, Lokoja

THE Kogi State House of Assembly is making efforts to pass a bill that would prohibit street begging in the state.

Chairman of the House Committee on Information, Mr. Mustapha Allah-Dey disclosed this to our correspondent yesterday.

Allah-Dey, who is representing Lokoja I Constituency, explained that the House was worried about the growing number of street beggars across the nooks and crannies of the state.

According to the lawmaker, most of the street beggars, especially those within the city of Lokoja, the state capital, are from neighbouring states.

"Many of these beggars are not indigenes of Kogi State. They think that Lokoja accommodates all sorts of things, and that is why they have come to settle here. We will soon show them that street begging is not tolerated in this state. Efforts are underway to pass a bill to prohibit the act. This will not only affect beggars from outside the state, but all street beggars as well," said the lawmaker.

'Nigerians should change with weather pattern'

By Nasir Imam

AN environmentalist has said that when climate changes, Nigerians have to change with the weather pattern.

Dr. Victor Fodeke is Head/Designated National Authority, Special Climate Change Unit, Federal Ministry of Environment, Abuja, in an interview, said our agriculture

is actually rain fed and we know that we depend on the rain for agricultural output. Anything that affects rainfall is affecting the life of humans.

"The consequences are here. I am very happy that Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NIMET) is doing a good job giving us what the scenario can be and what the farmers can do and how the farmers can just plant so that

they can know that harvest time will change. I believe that this is now the time for action.

"The time for talk has ended. This is the time for action. We either control this thing. We need to adapt to the changes for our own good. If we don't control or we don't adapt the other alternative is to die. Africa is dying. This is the time to save lives and to save the economy," Dr. Fodeke said.

NESREA begins registration of electronic dealers

THE National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA) says it has commenced the registration of electrical/electronics dealers in major markets across the country.

The Agency's Coordinator in Lagos State, Mrs Eunice Eze, said on Monday that the registration would facilitate issuance of permits to qualified importers.

Eze, Assistant Director, Inspection and Enforcement, noted that the unregulated importation of electronics and electrical products, had turned the business into an all comers' affair.

She said response to the registration had so far been low but stressed that the agency would enforce the neces-

sary sanctions.

"NESREA has commenced registration of importers of electrical/electronics with a view to giving permits to dealers who can meet required importation standards.

"Importation of products that are over eight years and above would no longer be allowed. Importers must ensure that products entering into Nigeria are functional and below eight years," she said.

Eze added that the agency would deploy monitoring and enforcement officials to the ports to ensure that substandard products no longer found their way into the country.

The NESREA official urged security operatives in the ports to cooperate with the agency in checking the importation of substandard products.

"Nigerian markets are today dumping ground for fake and substandard electrical/electronic goods and people do not know the danger these pose to health and the environment," she said.

Eze appealed to Nigerians to desist from the use of substandard electronics to avoid contamination and exposure to carcinogenous substances.

She also warned against open burning of disused electronics near residential areas and unauthorized places. (NAN)

Environment



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Cyclone kills 89 people in eastern India

A cyclone packing winds of more than 100 mph (160 kph) demolished tens of thousands of mud huts in northeastern India, killing at least 89 villagers, officials said Wednesday.

The cyclone struck close to midnight on Tuesday in northeastern parts of West Bengal and Bihar states, uprooting trees and snapping telephone and electricity lines, West Bengal Civil Defense Minister Sri-kumar Mukherjee said. Hundreds of people were injured and many thousands left homeless.

Devesh Chandra Thakur, Bihar state's Minister for Disaster Management, said there was no cyclone warning from the weather department, so villagers were unprepared.

Television footage showed uprooted trees lying across shanties and sheets of corrugated metal ripped from the roofs of homes. Small children sat outside their damaged huts as parents tried to salvage their belongings from inside.

The cyclone demolished nearly 50,000 mud huts in West Bengal and thousands more in Bihar, officials said.

The worst-hit villages in West Bengal state were Hematabad, Raiganj and Kiran Dighi, where police and rescue teams have recovered 39 bodies, Ramanuj Chakraborty, a senior local official told The Associated Press.

A prison wall collapsed in Bihar's Araria district, forcing authorities to shift more than 600 inmates to another prison, officials said.

Heat: Residents resort to sleeping outside

BAUCHI town has been experiencing "very high temperature" forcing some residents to sleep in the open to avoid heat related diseases.

Some residents said on Tuesday that it was difficult for them to sleep indoors due to the heat.

They further complained that due to lack of constant power supply they were not able to enjoy facilities such as fans and air conditioners.

"Even the privileged among the members of the society find it difficult to sleep comfortably because of the noise of generators.

"The only solution in my view is for the PHCN to come up with a miracle and provide

constant power supply to Nigerians for at least 20 hours every day," Anthony Musa a resident of Ibo Quarters in the metropolis said.

Another resident, Malam Sulaiman Isa, said because of the heat he and some members of his family slept on the roof of their building because it was cooler.

"I and some members of my family sleep on top of our house, because it is cooler up there since it is a storey building.

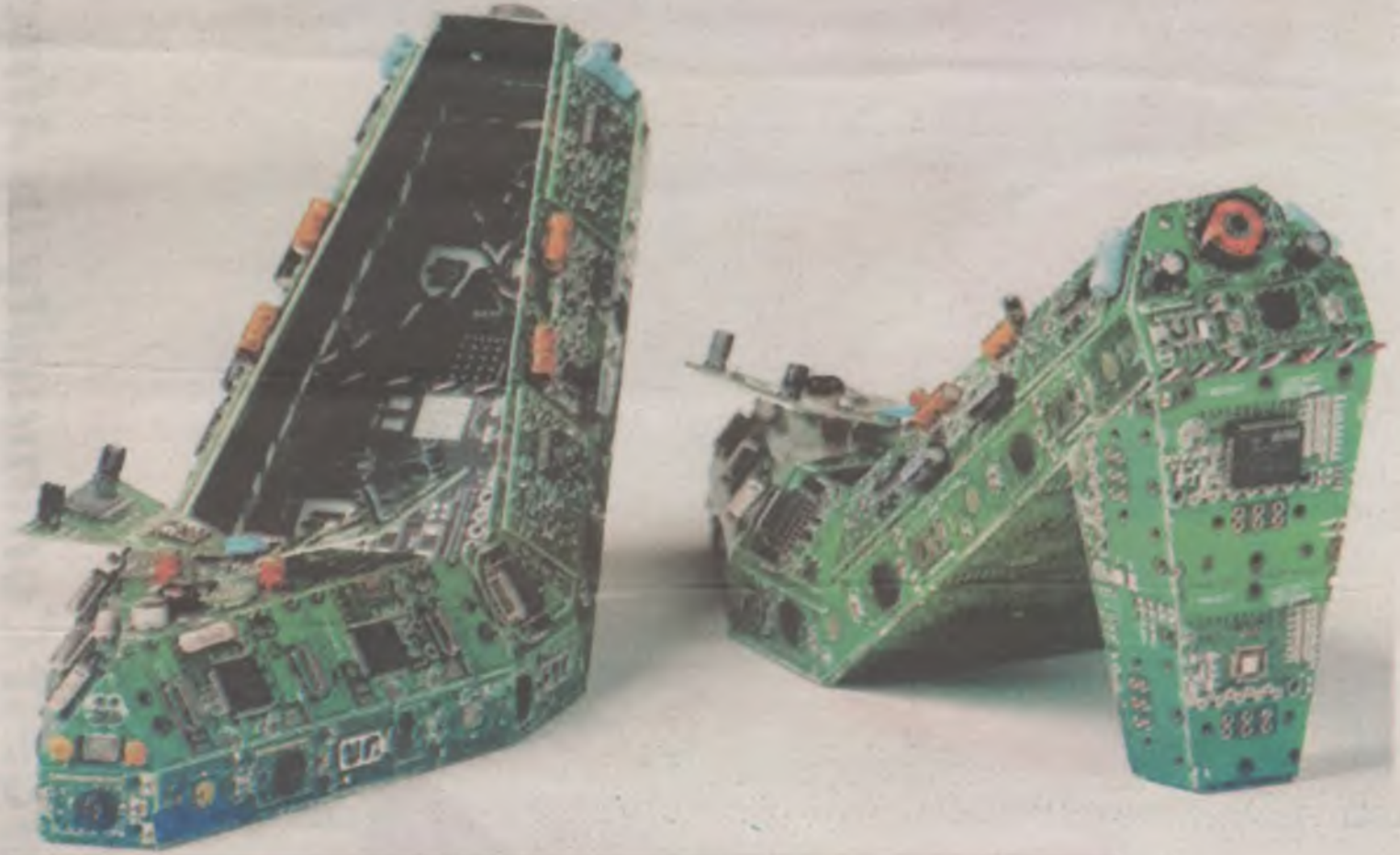
"We know it is dangerous especially now that thieves take advantage of the weather to perpetrate their nefarious activities at night," he said.

He called on the management of PHCN to

improve on its services, adding that although the company had recently been showing remarkable improvement, problems still existed.

The management of PHCN in Bauchi had been directed by their superiors at the headquarters not to talk to newsmen on matters of power supply.

However, a staff of the company who pleaded anonymity, said that the authorities were very strict on the directive and that no officer would dare to give out information relating to the power situation otherwise he or she would be sanctioned. (NAN)



SCULPTURES made entirely from recycled circuit boards and other electronic parts

'Nigeria should not associate with Copenhagen Accord'

By Nasir Imam

COMMUNITY activists, leaders and representatives of Host Communities Network of Nigeria gathered at Ikarama Community in the Okordia Clan of Yenegoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, Nigeria rose from its deliberations last week and stated that Nigeria should not associate with the Copenhagen Accord.

In a statement signed by its National Chairman, Host Communities Network of Nigeria, Comrade Che Ibegwura Nigerian, the body said government and her representatives must not go behind Nigerians for any reason to sign the accord as there is nothing in the accord that is in the interest of Nigeria, Africa and other developing countries around the globe.

The statement said that Nigeria should

take advantage of the upcoming World Peoples Climate Summit in Cochabamba, Bolivia to join other countries of like mind to set targets for the developed countries whose greed and over consumption has brought the world to this climate crises state while ensuring that the developing countries do not get enmeshed in the greedy over consumption in their quest to develop.

Harsh weather: FRSC cautions on long journey

From Yahaya Ibrahim, Maiduguri

THE Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), Borno Command has warned motorists to stop embarking on long distance journey at noon saying the harsh weather condition been experience presently could be risky to their vehicles and endanger their lives.

Borno sector commander of the FRSC, Alfred Adegboye gave this advice yesterday in Maiduguri. According to him the biting effect of heat in most northern part of the country could cause mechanical fault in vehicles saying it is better to travel in the early hours of the day before the heat becomes intense.

Adeboye advice motorists to desist

from fairly used tyres popularly known as Tokunbo tyres explaining that they could burst on the road due to excessive heat.

The sector commander also said arrangement has been concluded to embark on enlightenment campaign in order to sensitize commercial motorcycle drivers in the state on the importance of cash helmet.

He appealed to the state government

to provide crash helmets to commercial motorcycle operators in the state in order to encourage cyclists and protect their lives and that of their passengers adding that his men would redouble their efforts to ensure that the people obey traffic law.

He urged the people to cooperate with the commission in its bid to ensure safety on the highways and roads.

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NERDC begins implementation of new schools curriculum next year

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

THE Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) said it will commence implementation of the nine-year basic education and new senior secondary education curriculum from September 2011.

Executive Secretary of the council Professor Godswill Obioma, who disclosed this at the end of a sensitization workshop

held in Lafia, Nasarawa State, said the new curriculum is part of the ongoing efforts at laying a good foundation for education at both primary and secondary levels.

He said the old school curriculum has become obsolete and would be phased out gradually which will terminate in June this year for junior secondary school and June 2013 for primary schools.

He said the new curriculum

contains vital aspects of modern day life including ICT, skills acquisition through technology education, and civic education with emphasis on rule of law.

Professor Obioma said that it was in realization of the many gaps and in the nation's educational curriculum that the council was mandated in 2005 to re-structure and re-align the education offered at the primary and secondary levels.

He said this will prepare pupils and students for the life ahead of them with emphasis to self-reliance, confidence, competence, and global competitive.

According to him, the implementation strategy include printing of 20 subject-based curricula that make up the nine-year basic education programme, presentation of the curricula to the Minister of Education, state-wide distribution of the curricula using the

facilities of State Universal Basic Education Boards and the development, printing and distribution of NERDC manual for development and utilization of industrial resources.

In his remarks, Nasarawa State Commissioner of Education, Suleiman Ubam applauded NERDC for the initiative, saying the new curriculum would bring new impetus in the nation's educational system.



PRINCIPAL of Olumasa Basic Education School Miss Susan Holmes (right) winner of the 7th Nigeria Intercollegiate National Mathematics Competition Airree Owoh and one of the directors of the school Makum M. A. Aduu at the presentation of the prize in Abuja recently.

Plateau varsity seeks adequate funding

From Ahmed Mohammed, Jos

THE newly appointed chairman of the Governing Council of the Plateau State University Professor Daniel Saror has appealed to the state government to provide adequate funds in order to uplift the academic standards of the institution.

Daniel, who was the former Vice Chancellor of the Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, made the call shortly after the inauguration of the board in Jos.

He said that in order to achieve academic excellence, there is the need for government to provide them with adequate funds to build laboratories and other research centres. He said government must also create a peaceful environment within and outside the campus so that people will be able to learn and understand.

According to him, the

council will soon launch what he referred to as "Plateau State University Development Fund" to get funds from individuals and corporate organisations in order to meet the needs of the university.

Speaking at the inauguration exercise, Governor David Jang urged the governing council to ensure his government's vision for the institution is achieved.

"As the highest formulation body for the steady growth and development of the university, our major focus is to build and have a compact virile and enviable university for the people of Plateau state," he said.

It would be recalled that in 2007, the state government suspended academic activities of the university shortly after it received the report of the Administrative Panel set up to look into the activities of the university.

No child will be left out of school, says minister

By Abdullahi M. Gulloma

FEDERAL Government will do everything possible to ensure that no Nigerian child of school age will be denied of qualitative and free universal basic education, Minister of Education Professor Ruqayyatu Ahmed Rufai has said.

The minister stated this when the Ministerial Committee on Madrasah led by Professor S. Galadanchi visited her in Abuja.

She said the percentage of children who are out of school is alarming and unacceptable, stressing

that education roadmap designed by the Ministry of Education has provision to take care of such challenges.

She in view of time constraints, only the most critical issues identified in the roadmap would be looked into and strategic plan to tackle them would be taken.

The minister also expressed assurance that the committee's report and recommendations would be studied and given quick attention, and urged members of the committee not hesitate to give necessary advice and support that would enhance service

delivery in the education sector.

Speaking in the same vein, Permanent Secretary in the ministry Professor Oladapo Afolabi said the calibre of the committee members gives a lot of confidence, and stressed that no child born in Nigeria should be educationally disadvantaged.

In his remarks, Professor Galadanchi said the purpose of the visit was to formally inform the minister of the committee's activities as she came on board at the time it is rounding up its work.

MTN Foundation establishes lab for deaf students

From Chris Agabi, Lagos

MTN Foundation has established a digital laboratory for deaf students in Kaduna State under its SchoolsConnect programme.

The new digital laboratory is located at the Demonstration School for Deaf Children (DSDC) in Kawo.

The school is among the 13 new beneficiary schools in the fifth phase of the MTN Foundation SchoolsConnect project.

Under the MTNF SchoolsConnect project, the foundation is seeking to bridge the digital divide by ensuring that school chil-

dren have the appropriate computer skills through the provision of digital laboratories equipped with internet connectivity to numerous academic institutions.

In the case of special schools such as the DSDC in Kaduna State, special software applications suitable for the beneficiaries who have special needs have been installed.

The SchoolsConnect project at DSDC will also include a training workshop for teachers to be specially trained by experts in the area of ICT education, using the Microsoft Digital Literacy Curriculum (DLC) and

other educational content.

The teachers will in turn teach the students to make optimal use of the facilities provided by the MTN Foundation.

The SchoolsConnect project is the flagship project of the Education portfolio of the MTN Foundation.

Other schools that will benefit from the Phase 5 of the project include Katsina College (Junior), Katsina; Government Day Secondary School, Katsina; Government College (Pilot), Katsina; and Government Junior Day Secondary School, Kofar Yandaka, all in Katsina State.

DAILY TRUST EDUCATION

Minister harps on entrepreneurship education

From Ismail Mudashir & Maryam Ahamadu-Suka, Kaduna

MINISTER of Education Professor Rukaiya A. Rufai has identified lack of entrepreneur capacity as the bane of the development of the country.

Speaking at a workshop on entrepreneurship education for lecturers of polytechnic, monotechnics and specialized institutions, she said Nigeria's enormous human, material and investment potentials remained untapped because of lack

of entrepreneur skills.

The minister who was represented by the Rector of the Kaduna Polytechnic, Dr. Danjuma I. Isah, said to turn around the fortunes of the country into productive economic venture, the entrepreneur capacity of the citizenry must be enhanced.

"We are convinced that the development of entrepreneurial education in all higher education institutions deserves high priority as this will tremendously assist the nation in the successful achievement of the

seven-point agenda of the president," she said.

The minister reiterated the commitment of the federal government to develop the entrepreneurship education in the country, urging stakeholders to continue to assist educational agencies and institutions in the implementation of their programmes.

She commended the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) for producing the necessary documents for the effective delivery of entrepreneurship courses

in schools.

Earlier in his address, Acting Executive Secretary of NBTE, Architect Ade Ojo Aimola said the board has produced the curricula, teacher's guide and training manuals for entrepreneurship education.

Represented by Director of Finance and Supply of the board, Alhaji Isa Suleiman, he said for the country to realize the full benefit of the sector, training and retraining of lecturers teaching the courses must be enhanced.



MINISTER of Education Professor Rukaiya Ahmed Rufai and Cross River State Governor Liye Imoke at the convocation of the University of Calabar recently.

Minister wants consumer protection put in school curriculum

By Sunday Williams

THE Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Josephine Tapgun has expressed support for the introduction of consumer protection as part of secondary school curriculum in Nigeria as canvassed by the Consumer Protection Council (CPC).

Speaking in Abuja at the 2nd edition of the National Young Consumer Contest Awards, the minister said when children are trained and empowered to be discerning and assertive consumers, businesses will have no option than to meet the demands of the marketplace.

She said the simple schools competition by the CPC has the potential of building a formidable mass of young men and women that will sanitize the marketplace and enhance the cravings for made-in-Nigeria products.

She called on all pro-

ducers of products and services in the country to make consumer protection a vital part of their business plan in order to enhance their competitiveness in the marketplace.

Speaking, the Director General of CPC Mrs Ify Umenyi said the council has been able to encourage the establishment of 462 consumer clubs in secondary schools while 76 entries came in from the clubs for this year's competition.

She said the council decided to move for consumer protection activities to the secondary schools because of the knowledge roles of children in the purchasing and consumption patterns of homes.

She called on state governments to support the crusade for setting up of consumer clubs in their schools to promote ethical consumption which will aid their poverty eradication programme.

Counsellor faults implementation of 6-3-3-4 education system

A professional counsellor, Mrs Jane Ebere, said the 6-3-3-4 education system in Nigeria is recording a poor utilisation of professional counsellors.

Ebere, the Welfare Officer of the Lagos State Chapter of the Counselling Association of Nigeria, said that the trend contributed to poor enrolment into technical schools.

"The first three years in secondary school is supposed to identify students who will do better in technical schools and those who are university materials.

"But because the professionals to

give expert advice in this regard are not consulted, many students proceed to become polytechnic and university hopefuls in spite of their academic abilities.

"The resultant effect is that many of those who seek admission to our technical colleges are those who were denied university placements," she said.

Ebere, a teacher at the Badagry Junior Grammar School also said that the under-utilisation of professional counsellors was responsible for wrong choices of occupation by

some youths.

"Our schools do not have counselling departments to guide the young ones on the choice of courses that will bring out the best in them.

"Unfortunately, the problem of wrongful deployment of skills and wrong choice of professions starts from the secondary school level where proper advice is lacking," she said.

She called for the establishment counselling departments in all primary and secondary schools in Nigeria for proper guidance of pupils and students. (NAN)

3 arrested at NAF exam over alleged malpractice

THREE applicants were arrested for alleged malpractice during the recruitment examination into the Nigerian Air Force non-commissioned officers cadre.

More than 10,000 candidates sat for the examination in the Lagos zone comprising Lagos and the other states in the South-West.

The suspects were allegedly found with answered scripts during the examination. They have been handed over to the police for further investigation and prosecu-

tion.

Namadi approves N4.8m for students' welfare

From Ismail Mudashir, Kaduna Governor Mohammed Namadi Sambo of Kaduna state has approved N4,813,200 for the feeding, maintenance and general welfare of students in the Interstate Exchange Programme (SEP).

This was contained in a statement signed by the Special Adviser on Media and Public Affairs to the governor Alhaji Umar Sani.

According to the statement, the amount is for the second term of the 2009/2010 academic session.

The statement urged students to take advantage of the magnanimity to study well in order to excel in their academic pursuits.

The statement reiterated the commitment of Governor Sambo's administration to enhance the standard of education in the state, saying the development of the state is tie on the development of education.

JAMB to begin online examination in 2011

THE Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) will commence online examination in 2011, registrar of the board Professor Dibu Ojerinde has said.

Ojerinde said this during a press briefing on the conduct of the 2010 Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) in Abuja.

"It will be easier for those who are outside the country to write the examinations without any headache," he said.

He said all necessary

arrangements had been made for the smooth conduct of the examination which would hold simultaneously in 321 towns in the country.

Ojerinde said the examination, billed for April 17, would also hold in six foreign centres, including Accra in Ghana, Buea in Republic of Cameroon and Cotonou in Benin Republic.

Others centres are London in UK, Jeddah in Saudi Arabia and Johannesburg in South Africa.

labour report

We teach youths value of hard work – NDE Coordinator

By Francis Okeke

COORDINATOR of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) office of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) Hajiya Hadiza Bulama has said that the directorate inculcates in Nigerian youths the value of hard work and responsibility as part of achieving success in life.

Hajiya Hadiza said this when she received an award for excellence in the line of duty presented to her by the Northern Students Congress (NSC).

She said "We handle youths here both graduates and non graduates

and even illiterates by teaching them how to be job and wealth creators instead of wasting precious time looking for nonexistent jobs.

"As we do this, we teach them self confidence and the value of hard work and responsibility which will not only take them to the peak of their careers but will also open doors for them in their journey to success."

She thanked the students for giving her the award of a "Peak Performer" saying it is a challenge for the directorate to do more in its quest to alleviate poverty through sustainable job creation. She dedicated the award

to the staff of the FCT office of the NDE.

While presenting the award, President of the NSC Comrade Yusuf Abubakar said Hajiya Bulama emerged the winner of the award after passing through a stringent nomination process.

According to him, the award is to spur the Hajiya Hadiza Bulama led directorate to greater height in the pursuit of more jobs for Nigerians.

She is the fifth recipient of the award since the group was founded in 2007. Secretary to the Government of the Federation Mahmud Yayale Ahmed has also been a recipient of the award.



Hajiya Hadiza Bulama receiving an award of Peak Performer from the President of Northern Students Congress Comrade Yusuf Abubakar

Casualisation: Labour minister tasks NLC, TUC on input

By Francis Okeke

MINISTER of Labour and Productivity Chief Emeka Wogu yesterday charged the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) and the Trade Union Congress (TUC) to make inputs to the Federal Government's campaign to eradicate casualisation and other forms of exploitation of workers by some foreign and local employers of

labour.

Wogu stated this while receiving the NLC President Comrade Abdulwahed Omar and the President General of TUC Comrade Peter Esele with their executives. He said the Goodluck Jonathan administration has demonstrated its interest in workers welfare through the constitution of a number of committees on workers' issues.

Omar pledged the cooperation of workers to the administration's stated goal of creating more jobs for Nigerians, while Esele pledged support of the congress to the minister who he said had started very well through his consultative efforts.

"On casualisation in the workforce as Minister of Labour and Productivity I intend to take bold steps to correct it as this dovetails into issues of good working con-

ditions and practices," Wogu told the NLC executive members.

"What is important to us as Nigerians is the national prestige and the question of how Nigerian workers are treated in the workplaces either owned by Nigerians or expatriates."

Speaking in the same vein, the Minister told the TUC delegation that, "I will ensure that this ministry through concerted

efforts and inputs from the TUC as social partner will make efforts to reduce casualisation." Giving the determination of the administration to boost the welfare of workers he said:

Omar and Esele commended the minister for initiating the meeting noting that with the Minister's proactive inclinations, industrial peace could be achieved.

We don't want to talk; we want them to pay our entitlements – President General, Dockworkers

COMRADE Anthony Nted Emmanuel is the President General of the Maritime Workers Association in Nigeria, against the back drop of an earlier 14 days ultimatum given to the management of the Nigerian Port Authority (NPA), in this exclusive interview with Daily Trust, Comrade Emmanuel gives extensive as well as revealing issues that prompted the Union to resort to the strike action after numerous negotiations and warnings have failed.

By Benjamin Auta, Lagos

TELL us about the situation that prompted your union to give Nigerian Port Authority (NPA) 14 days ultimatum before you commenced the now suspended strike action?

I think the issue is very clear because we are running an organized body and we just can't wake up in the morning and give ultimatum to the NPA. Now there are few issues that calls for urgent attention, you remember that NPA's Managing Director (MD) Abdulsalam set up a committee that worked out a minimum standard for the dockworkers. Those we call the dockworkers are the tally clerks, security, the ordinary labourer and the winch men. The agreement has been implemented since 2007 and the dockworkers have been paid since but the tally clerks

and security on board have not been paid up till now. The only reason or explanation by the NPA is that the man who headed the committee has no right to sign; that is Mr. Ajala who was the General Manager Operations as at then. But we said that he is the right man to sign because he heads the minimum standards and when we split the committee into two, we said that the tally clerks will be paid by the NPA, while other labourers will be paid by the terminal operators.

Mr. Ajala had to sign, NIMASA signed and other people involved signed but the MD said he will not honour the agreement and at the same time he said that he did not recognize the committee headed by the same Mr. Ajala.

We believe that the tally clerks are very many that they cannot be placed on permanent employment. We said fine, pay them on hourly bases which

will amount to N187.50k per hour but the MD still said that he was not going to pay dragging the matter till after a year.

After that, he used delay tactics and took the matter to the Board; let me remind you that this matter has been on ground. Minimum standards have been signed but the man went and constituted another Board. Even the Chairman of the Board asked why we are going on strike when the matter has been with the Board that has been constituted. At the end of the day the man set up another Board to do verification and they recommended payment of arrears to the tally clerks and security on board vessels but the story we are hearing now is that the Board has not met but this Board has met since November last year. All of them are running after politics rather than taking care of the issues at the port.

There is a difference between politics and business because the economy of the country depends on the ports and if there is anything that happens that needs attention urgently I think it should be the workers welfare.

We also talked about end of year bonus of 2008, other parastatals like NIMASA, NNPC and other companies working in ports that belong to the FG have paid end of the year contract bonuses but not the NPA. Their end of the year contract bonus have not been paid and we are now in April, if you ask they will say that they are waiting for the Board to meet and give approval for it.

We also talked about gratuity; many people have left the NPA, you know that it is the only thing that somebody takes home after he retires from work and I know so many people who have lost their lives without getting their gratuity. I remember one

Mr. Owie, who left the industry for a very long time but his gratuity has not been paid. And I tell you this man is going through pains with his family. We have other like him.

We also talked about severance package for workers of which the NPA only pay N200, 000. Some people are now dead leaving their money. Initially we did verification to ascertain the true number as you know there is always fraud as some people verify themselves twice, we went ahead with the NPA by supporting them because we know the authentic number of people working at the ports. We also talked about monetization, there was a letter from the wages and salaries commission to the NPA which said that if the NPA can pay without recourse to subvention from the government and the MD knows he can pay.

ABUBAKAR TAFAWA BALEWA UNIVERSITY, BAUCHI

(OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR)

VACANCY FOR THE POST OF REGISTRAR

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for the post of Registrar of this University:

1.1 Qualification

Candidates should possess an honours degree in Arts or Social Sciences with at least 15 years post qualification cognate experience in a university or other tertiary institutions. Possession of relevant higher degrees or postgraduate professional qualifications in the appropriate fields including proficiency in Information Communication Technology (ICT) will serve as additional advantage.

1.2 Responsibility

The Registrar, who is the Chief Administrative Officer and one of the Principal Officers of the University, shall be responsible to the Vice-Chancellor for the day-to-day administration of the University. By virtue of his office, he shall be the Secretary to Council, Senate, Congregation and Convocation.

1.3 Conditions of Service

The conditions of service are as obtainable in Federal Universities in Nigeria. His appointment, which is for a period of five years, is governed by the conditions stipulated in the University Laws and Regulations.

1.4 Salary

The post carries an annual salary of CONUSSS 15 plus approved allowances.

1.5 Method of Application

Candidates should send written applications, along with 30 copies of curriculum vitae giving the following details among others - Name, Age, Nationality, Marital Status, Educational Institutions attended with dates, Academic, Professional and other qualifications obtained with dates, working experience (i.e posts held, duration and salary earned) and Publications (if any) to:

The Vice-Chancellor
Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University
PMB 0248
Bauchi, Bauchi State
Nigeria

Applicants should send the names of three (3) referees, at least two (2) of whom should be competent to attest to the candidates' professional/academic standing and character. Candidates should request their referees to send their confidential reports direct to the address above.

TO REACH HIM NOT LATER THAN SIX (6) WEEKS FROM THE DATE OF THIS PUBLICATION.

Signed:
Prof. M. H. Muhammad
(Vice-Chancellor)

13th April 2010



INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA
FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COLLEGE, ANKA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION POST-BASIC (STEP-B) PROJECT

Procurement of laboratory equipment, chemicals, laboratory fittings, stools and instructional materials
IDA CREDIT NO: 4304-UN
ISSUANCE DATE: 15TH APRIL 2010

1. This invitation for Bids follows the General Procurement Notice for this project that appeared in Development Business Issue no. 591 of 12th July, 2007.
2. The Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has received a credit from the International Development Association towards the cost of Science and Technology Education Post Basic (STEP-B) project, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payment under the contract for the procurement of laboratory equipment, chemicals, laboratory fittings, stools and instructional materials contract number **IFBNSTEP-B/FGCANK/NCB/GDS/01/10**
3. The Science and Technology Education Post Basic (STEP-B) project, Federal Government College, Anka now invites sealed bids from eligible and qualified bidders for the procurement of the following:

Lot No.	Item Description	Quantity	Bids Security	Delivery period	Validity period	Location
1	Reagents, Apparatus/Equipment for Biology, Chemistry and Physics labs	Various	At least 2.5% of bid price	60 days maximum	90 days	FGC, Anka Zamfara State
2	Installation of laboratory fittings for Biology, Chemistry and Physics labs including stools	280 stools 3 labs	At least 2.5% of bid price	60 days maximum	90 days	FGC, Anka Zamfara State
3	Procurement of instructional materials	Various	At least 2.5% of bid price	60 days maximum	90 days	FGC, Anka Zamfara State

1. Bidding will be conducted through the National Competitive Bidding (NCB), a procedure specified in the World Bank's Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD loans and IDA credits and it is opened to all bidders from Eligible source countries as defined in the Guidelines.
2. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from Federal Government College, Anka, Step-b-project office and inspect the bidding documents from 8.00am to 4.00pm Mondays to Fridays excluding public holidays.
3. Qualification requirements include Evidence of previous supply (sale) of similar reagents and Equipments/Apparatus proposed for the last five years.

Audited financial statements for the last three years to demonstrate the financial capability of the Bidder in terms of profitability and adequate working capital.

4. A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Ten Thousand naira (10,000.00) only**. The method of payment will be by Bank draft in favour of Federal Government College, Anka step-b project or by cash. The bidding documents will be collected by the representative of the bidder or by courier services on request.
5. Bids must be delivered to the address below at or before 2.00PM ON 17th May, 2010. Electronic bidding will not be permitted. Late Bids will be rejected. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representative who chooses to attend in person at the address below at 2.00pm on 17th, May 2010. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of 2.5% of bid price in a freely convertible currency or bank draft from a reputable Nigeria commercial bank. Bidders may bid for one or more complete lots as awards will be based on individual lots. Any bid submitted for incomplete lots will be declared non-responsive.

PROJECT MANAGER

Science and Technology Education Post-Basic (STEP-B) Project
Federal Government College, Anka
Zamfara State
Telephone: 080366222465, 08086907061, 08034512955,
E-mail: stepbzamfarafgcanka@yahoo.com

CITY NEWS



HOTLINES: 0803-3493-462 & 0703-8927-513
email: citynews@dailytrust.com

PIC: KENNEDY EGBONODJE



UNDERAGED children at work in a traffic jam at Wuse Zone 4, Abuja.

Woman seeks divorce over husband's temper

By Romoke W. Ahmad

A mother of two children yesterday told an Abuja Customary Court that she wants her nine-year old marriage terminated over her husband's violent behaviour.

Mrs. Oluchukwu Nwabufo of New Karu, Nasarawa State, told the court that she got married to Stephen Eze under the Igbo customs of Akuzu at Ouyi in Anambra State.

She told the court that since her marriage, she has never enjoyed her matrimonial home, despite her been a sincere, obedient and loyal wife.

"My husband is too violent, comes home at odd times, beats and threatens to kill me," she lamented.

She told the judge that few days before bringing the matter to court, her husband lifted her up the air and hit her on the ground while they were fighting, which resulted in her having back pain.

"My husband is fond of keeping me and our children on hunger strike whenever there is a misunderstanding, which makes me beg for food on credit," she said.

The woman appealed to the court to dissolve the marriage and grant her custody of the little boy.

She also requested that her husband be made to pay the expense of a medical check up to be conducted on her back.

Responding, the husband, Mr. Eze informed the court to plead with his wife on his behalf, adding that he still loves her and will do everything henceforth to make her happy but the woman turned down his pleading.

Judge Hauwa Yilwa adjourned the case to April 21 for further hearing and to enable the husband respond to his wife's allegations.

Abaji council boss calls for mobile police unit

By Abubakar Yakubu

THE Chairman of Abaji Area Council, Alhaji Yahaya Musa Mohammad, yesterday appealed to the police high command and federal government to establish a mobile police base in the council as a result of the militant nature of politics in the area.

He said several attempts were

made at his convoy, while his blood brother was badly brutalised and is in the hospital because of last Saturday's council polls.

Alhaji Mohammad denied rigging the election and appealed to the opposition to see reasons as he was ready to carry everyone along.

He said if the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) was not popular, they could not have won 8

council seats and conceded two to the opposition, adding that party agents at polling units duly certified the results.

According to him, the opposition besieged the office of Abaji Independent National Electoral Commission in order for results not to be released but the police dispersed them.

The chairman disclosed that

the police apprehended some thugs, who turned out to be from the opposition and expressed his surprise at the behaviour of an elected PDP public figure, who against the party.

Alhaji Mohammad vowed to take the case to the party's disciplinary committee so that the man is punished for anti-party activities.

... As Abaji group criticises call for election cancellation

By Ogechi Ohalee

MEMBERS of the Abaji Youths' Movement for Peace (YMP) yesterday condemned the call by members of the Abaji Concerned Youth Forum for the cancellation of Saturday's council polls, in which the incumbent Chairman, Alhaji Yahaya Musa Mohammad won under the platform of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

Secretary of the group, Muhammad Danmallam, said the National Human Rights Commission's electoral monitor affirmed the large turnout of voters and only faulted apathy of voters at the Abuja Municipal Area Council's election.

He expressed regrets over the election violent that erupted the

following day at Abaji, which was Sunday, adding that the misled youths that barricaded the Abuja-Lokoja expressway left thousands of motorists and commuters stranded for hours.

Danmallam explained that whoever is not satisfied with the conduct of the election should go to court and channel their grievances rather than taking laws into their hands.

The group appealed to the federal government and police to tighten security in Abaji area council being the gate way to the FCT.

While commenting on the election, the secretary said Abaji indigenes as well as residents casted their vote without hindrance, adding that since the creation of Abaji, the area council has never witness

such a massive turn out of voters as was seen last Saturday.

The group's scribe called on Alhaji Mohammad the incumbent council chairman to carry everybody along, irrespective of party, ethnic or religion in order to move Abaji forward, adding that development could only be achieved if there is cordial relationship and understanding.

They also appealed on the council chairman to seek ways of ensuring that unemployed youths in Abaji are gainfully employed.

"The council administration should concentrate on infrastructure as well as agriculture, whereby a lot of things needed to be done in that area should be done so that Abaji people will continue to ripe the dividend of democracy.

Youngster accused of raping girl

By Hussein Yahaya & Ibraheem A. Fatai

A 21-year-old man was yesterday arraigned before an Abuja magistrate court for allegedly raping a 12-year-old girl.

Eze Harrison of Apo New site Village, Garki, Abuja, was accused of raping the girl on April 6, between 10 pm and 12 midnight.

Prosecutor Ambi Ayuba told the court that on April 7, a complainant reported to the police that his 12-year-old daughter (name withheld) was raped by the accused.

"The accused waylaid the girl on her way back from where she went to sell fried yam, forcefully took her to a bush and had sexual intercourse with her against her consent," the prosecutor said.

According to the prosecutor, the offence the accused commit-

ted is punishable under Section 275 of the Penal Code Law.

When the one-count charge was read to the accused, he denied the charge, while his counsel, C. J. Okereke, made an oral application for his bail.

The prosecutor opposed the bail of the accused and said if the bail is granted, it will jeopardise police investigations, which are still ongoing.

"The result of the medical examination carried out to determine whether the girl was raped or not is not yet out and if the accused is granted bail, he may interfere with police investigations," the prosecutor argued.

In her ruling, Magistrate Njideka Duru ordered that the accused be remanded in prison custody till April 16, in order for the defence counsel to make a formal application for his client's bail.



INVITATION TO A FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION ON THE ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW 9-YEAR BASIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM (BEC)

The Extra-ordinary meeting of the National Council on Education (NCE) held in 2007 approved a New 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) for the implementation of the 9-Year Basic Education Programme. The BEC is a functional skill-oriented curriculum specifically designed to facilitate acquisition of basic functional skills which include Science and Technology, Literacy and Numeracy, ICT, Civic responsibility and Vocational Skills. The Curriculum were printed, launched in the 6-geopolitical zones of the country, and distributed to public schools nationwide through the States and FCT Universal Basic Education Boards.

The Council also prepared Teachers Handbooks for the effective implementation of the curriculum in the classroom. The implementation of the new 9-Year Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) commenced in September 2008, with Primary 1 and JSS 1 classes respectively. The actualization of ideals of the BEC is predicated upon effective delivery in schools. To this end, and in recognition of your role as a critical stakeholder and implementer of the curriculum, the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) is inviting you to a Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The FGD will focus on the following issues:

1. Availability of the curriculum
2. Sensitization on the content and structure
3. Curriculum relevance
4. Preparedness of teachers

Participants:

State Commissioners of Education,
SUBEB Chairmen,
Directors School Services in SUBEBs,
Directors (Primary and Secondary) in State Ministries of Education,
Zonal Directors, Federal Inspection Services (FIS),
Heads of FIS in the States,
UBEC Zonal Coordinators,
LGEAs Secretaries,
NUT, ANCOPPS, NAPLAN/SBMCs, National Association of Proprietors of Private Schools, CSOs, NGOs & FBOs

The FGD is scheduled as follows:

- **Arrival:** Wednesday 21st April, 2010
- **Meeting:** Thursday 22nd April, 2010
- **Departure:** Friday 23rd April, 2010
- **Venue:** North East Zone: Confrence Hall, Federal Secretariate, Damaturu, Yobe State.

For more information on the FGD, please you may call any of the following telephone numbers: 08069766528; 08063804971; 08069259978.

- **Venue:** North West Zone: Royal Africana Hotel Post Office Road, Kano.

For more information on the FGD, please you may call any of the following telephone numbers: 08035871674; 08063804971; 08069259978.

- **Venue:** North Central Zone: Hydro Hotel Minna, Niger State
- For more information on the FGD, please you may call any of the following telephone numbers: 08052205875; 08063804971; 08069259978.

Signed:

Prof. Godswill Obioma
Executive Secretary,
Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council, Sheda
Abuja

Case of suspected fake journalists resumes

By Usman A. Bello

HEARING continued Tuesday at an Abuja magistrate court in the case affecting nine suspected journalists.

The first Prosecution Witness (PW1), Kayode Oyeibisi, told the court that the accused persons were arrested impersonating journalists at various event venues on February 16.

He said they were apprehended by a task force comprising the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), press council and police.

During cross examination, the witness said from investigations carried out at the venues, the suspects

were neither journalists nor registered by the NUJ to practice journalism, adding that some of them were caught with more than one identity card.

He said the media the suspects claimed to represent were not listed among those invited for the events but they included their names in the attendance lists for journalist

When asked about the criteria to practice journalism, Oyeibisi said a journalist must have received necessary educational qualification and should be registered by the NUJ.

He explained that Section 17 of the Press Council Act of 1999 prescribes

the conditions for one to qualify as a journalist.

One of the defence counsels, Mr. Maxwell Okpara, demanded for a copy of the Act to enable him cross examine the witness further but the prosecutor, Sgt. Albert Okara objected and stated that the defence counsel cannot request for the document since it was not tendered as exhibit and admitted by the court.

Chief Magistrate Oyebola Oyewumi accepted the prosecutor's argument and adjourned hearing to April 27 and May 12 for continuous cross examination of the witness.

AEPB to build 1000 toilets in Abuja

By Abdulmutallib A. Abubakar

THE Abuja Environmental Protection Board's Director, Dr. Abubakar Yabo, yesterday disclosed that 1000 public toilets will be built at strategic locations of Abuja city in order to solve the problem of indiscriminate urinating and defecation on the streets.

He said the board is working assiduously to erect the toilets that will include permanent and mobile structures, adding that if constructed, they would help enhance health status of the residents as well as assist to restore the beauty of the city.

The director disclosed to the press that the new development plans is to ensure the achievement of environmental sustainability.

Also speaking, the board's Spokesman, Mr. Samuel R. Musa, said the toilets construction projects is in the 2010 budget and the project will soon start.

According to him, the board sent a proposed master plan to Abuja Regional Planning unit for approval.

Mr. Musa also stressed that because of the increasing number of people in the city, it is necessary that such toilets are constructed and maintained in order to make sure people defecate and urinate properly.

Mechanic jailed 5 months for dangerous driving

By Romoke W. Ahmad

AN Abuja magistrate sitting at Karu Friday sentenced a 27-year-old mechanic to five months imprisonment for reckless driving that led to an accident on March 27.

Bolaji Wale of Orozo village was jailed for contravening Section 23 of the Road Traffic Act.

Prosecutor Stephen Eimoga stated in court that the accused drove a Mercedes Benz with registration number BB 77 ABC recklessly along Jikwoyi-Nyanya road and damaged another vehicle driven by Abubakar Muhammed.

The accused pleaded guilty to the offence and said it was a mistake.

Magistrate Ahmed Ilelah sentenced him to five months imprisonment or to pay N4,500 as fine option.

Traders lament over Mararaba timber Inferno

By Abubakar Yakubu

THE Mararaba Timber Dealers Association in Nasarawa State yesterday lamented over the huge losses they suffered when fire gutted their business premises on March 25.

The group appealed to the National Emergency Management Agency

(NEMA) and Karu local government Area of Nasarawa State to assist them.

In letters entitled 'Letter of Notification and Appeals for Assistance' by Ayogu Boniface Chuks, chairman and Ugwoke Joseph, secretary, they lamented that the fire destroyed property worth

over N50 million and needed immediate assistance from both bodies and other well-meaning organisations to save its members from untold hardship the inferno caused them.

It would be recalled that fire gutted Mararaba timber market on Thursday, 25th March, 2010 at about 3am.



CRESCENT UNIVERSITY, ABEOKUTA

(University of the Islamic Mission for Africa)

Km 5, Ayetoro Road, Lafenwa, P. M. B. 2104, Sapon, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria

Tel: + 234 (0) 8030644731, 039 - 774116

Website: www.crescentuniversity.edu.ng

e-mail: crescentuniversity2007@yahoo.co.uk

ADMISSION INTO DEGREE PROGRAMMES 2010/2011 ACADEMIC SESSION

Crescent University, Abeokuta is a private University of the Islamic Mission for Africa, licensed by the Federal Government of Nigeria on 9th June, 2005 and fully residential at undergraduate level.

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for admission into the under listed full-time Degree Programmes of the University in the 2010/2011 Session.

College of Natural and Applied Sciences

i. Department of Mathematical Science Code

B.Sc. Mathematics	2980IH
B.Sc. Statistics	29803K

ii. Department of Chemical Sciences Code

B.Sc. Chemistry	29804G
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B.Sc. Biochemistry	29806J
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iii. Department of Biological Science Code

B.Sc. Biology (with specialization in Botany and Zoology)	29807F
B.Sc. Fisheries and Aquaculture	29808B
B.Sc. Microbiology	29810F

iv. Department of Physical Sciences Code

B. Sc. Physics	29811B
B.Sc. Water Resources Management	29813E

College of Environmental Sciences

B.Sc. Architecture	29832H
B. Sc. Estate Management	29830E
B. Sc. Urban and Regional Planning	29833D
B.Sc. Wildlife Management & Ecotourism	29809I
B.Sc. Biodiversity conservation and Utilization	29815H
B. Sc. Environmental Management	29814A

College of Information and Communication Technology

i. Department of Computer Science Code

B. Sc. Computer Science	29838F
B. Sc. Computer Science with Economics	29816D
B. Sc. Computer Science with Statistics	29835G

ii. Department of Information and Communication Technology Code

B.Sc. Information Technology	29817K
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College of Social and Management Sciences

i. Department of Accounting Code

B.Sc. Accountancy	29820K
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ii. Department of Economics Code

B. Sc. Economics with Operations Research	29822C
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iii. Department of Business Finance Code

B.Sc. Banking and Finance	29823J
B.Sc. Business Administration	29831A

iv. Department of Mass Communication

B.Sc. Mass Communication	29828A
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v. Department of General and Islamic Studies

B.Sc. Arabic and Islamic Religious Studies	
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vi. Department of Social Studies

B. Sc. Industrial Relations	29842B
B. Sc. Sociology	29840J
B. Sc. Political Science	29839B

Admission Requirement: Credits in 5 subjects which must include English and Mathematics in the General Certificate of Education (G.C.E) O' level, West African School Certificate; School Certificate Examination (SSCE) or National Examination Council (NECO) and Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) Result. Candidates are expected to choose Crescent University as either first or second choice in their JAMB form but those who intend to change their choice to Crescent University would be considered.

Method of Application: Application forms are obtainable at the Admission Office of the University upon payment of N5,000.00 (Five thousand Naira only) through Bank Draft, addressed to Crescent University, Abeokuta. Please note that the application forms are also available on the University Website (www.crescentuniversityng.com) and at the following centers:

1. Islamic Mission for Africa, No 1-15 IMA Avenue, Isale Apata, Off Moshood Abiola Way, Abeokuta, Ogun State.
2. Adebomi Group, 66 Bonojo Street, Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State. 0803-351-1139
3. Rapid Investment Ltd., 1st Floor, 54 Queen Street, Alagomeji, Yaba 0803-351-1148
4. Bola Ajibola & Co., 1st Floor 52, Allen Avenue, Ikeja, Lagos 0803-321-7148
3. All branches of Guaranty Trust Bank
4. All branches of Industrial and General Insurance (IGI) Plc.

Submission of Application Forms: The completed application forms with 12 passport photos and 3 photocopies of original credentials should be returned to the Admissions Office of Crescent University, Abeokuta or through our website or wherever they purchase their forms from. Candidates are advised to ensure that they quote correctly the Codes indicated in front of some of the listed choice of courses when completing their JAMB forms.

THE UNIVERSITY ADMITS CANDIDATES IRRESPECTIVE OF SEX, RELIGION, TRIBE OR NATIONALITY.

Announcer
Z. A. Ajibola
Registrar

Inside Politics

Plateau PDP: Caucus considers 3 for chairmanship

From Andrew Agbese, Jos

THREE names have been penciled down for the chairmanship position of the new exco of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Plateau State by the party's caucus.

The three candidates are former factional chairman Emmanuel Mangni, who is being

presented by the Ibrahim Mantu camp; Letep Dabang, who is being presented by the Chief Joshua Dariye camp; and former state AC chairman Maichibi Vwarji, who is coming into the race without clear support from any of the camps.

A member of the caucus who does not want to be named told our correspondent that the various camps within the PDP have

presented a candidate each to the caucus for consideration while negotiations were still on to decide which aspirant would be chosen.

All the aspirants are from Pankshin local government, where the source said the position had been zoned to in the central senatorial district of the state.

The two rival executives in the state were dissolved by the national

working committee of the PDP and a caretaker committee was set up to conduct fresh elections which may hold by the end of the month.

Our correspondent learnt however that the negotiations excluded the camp of Governor Jonah Jang, as his camp chose to challenge the dissolution of the excos in court and has continued to recognise

one of the dissolved factional leaderships.

The source said negotiations had to continue even without the governor's camp as time was running out and the party "cannot wait endlessly for the governor."

Our correspondent learnt the caucus decided on consensus approach to avoid the rancor of an elective congress.

PDP chiefs want 7-point agenda executed

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

A forum of secretaries of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in the North has urged acting President Goodluck Jonathan to implement President Umaru Yar'adua's socio-economic development blueprint, the 7-point agenda.

In a communiqué at the end of a two-day meeting in Makurdi, Benue State, the forum said the 7-point agenda is a "vehicle that will take Nigeria to higher economic, political and social developmental heights."

The communiqué, signed by Publicity Secretary Adamu Oyanki from Nasarawa State, urged "Jonathan to remain focused, steadfast and resolute... in order to achieve the development targets and strides in the seven-point agenda."

The forum also frowned at the appointment of Senator Bala Mohammed "with an ANPP background/membership" as minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). It said "this appointment might jeopardise the party's manifesto in

the Federal Capital Territory."

The forum also backed the declaration of the national leadership of the party that the presidency is still zoned to the North for the 2011 elections. It called on the party to pursue and abide by the principles and practice of democracy in the selection of the party's flag bearers in all elections.

"The forum's position is derived from its conviction that, as the beacon of hope for democracy in Nigeria, the PDP must always strive to set the needed examples in upholding the tenets of democracy," it said.

The forum urged Northern governors to seek collaboration and intervention of the federal government in factors retarding the region's development, including violent crises, and also pursue the implementation of agriculture, river dredging, deforestation and desertification programmes.

It also commended Benue State governor Gabriel Suswam for "delivering dividends of democracy to their electorates."

Ex-commissioner joins Oyo guber race

A former Lagos State Commissioner for Finance Dr Adebayo Adewusi has said that he will ensure Oyo State becomes one of the five biggest economies in Nigeria, if elected governor in the 2011 elections.

Adewusi said this yesterday in Ibadan while declaring his gubernatorial ambition on the platform of the Action Congress (AC).

He said that apart from Rivers and Lagos States, the other states were not viable.

Adewusi said that Lagos State was financially strong because it depended less on funds from the Federal Government.

"We shall use that magic in Oyo State. I shall ensure that Oyo State becomes autonomous financially.

"The new Oyo State I want you to know is not different from the foundation laid by our political

fathers but will be the one which shall surpass the achievements recorded by them," he said.

The aspirant, also a former Economic Planning and Budget Commissioner in Lagos State, pledged to bring Oyo State out of its economic stagnancy and retrogression.

He said the state was supposed to be next to Lagos in terms of economic vibrancy and stability.

"The reverse is the case as smaller states now enjoy more economic prosperity and infrastructural development than our state," he said.

Adewusi said that the resources available in the state were enough to make it the jewel of the nation's economy, pointing out that the state was unlucky due to its leaders who had been playing politics with the lives of the people. (NAN)



FROM left: Former Senate President Anyim Pius Anyim PDP, Chairman Vincent Ogbulafor, former Minority Leader Daniel Saror and former Deputy Senate Leader Jonathan Zwingina, after paying their last respect to the late Senator Tawar Wada at the National Assembly, Abuja, yesterday.

AC Rep defects to PDP

From Andrew Agbese, Jos

THE member representing Wase federal constituency in the House of Representatives, Ahmed Idris, has confirmed his intention to decamp to the People's Democratic Party from the Action Congress (AC).

His movement would be the second time a member of the National Assembly from AC would be defecting to the PDP in Plateau in the current dispensation. The senator

from Plateau central was the first to decamp last year.

Speaking with newsmen in Lamba where he went to support a Millennium Development Goals effort, Idris said many of the people who labored for the formation of the PDP in the state were not happy with the current crisis rocking the party and would want to come back to strengthen it.

He said he was returning to the PDP because that was where he was

before decamping to the AC.

Idris said he held consultations with his political associates and decided that it was time they returned to the PDP to restore the glory of the party, which he said has ebbed in Plateau in recent times.

He said he would be vying for the House of Representatives seat for Wase again but on the platform of the PDP, saying all his supporters were aware of the development and have given him the go-ahead to do so.

Group passes confidence vote on Ogbulafor

From Ibraheem Musa, Kaduna

AS the plot to remove Prince Vincent Ogbulafor gathers momentum, a group known as PDP Awareness Group has come out to defend the embattled national chairman, describing the people behind the move as political jobbers who are trying to remain relevant at all cost.

In a communiqué issued after its meeting in Kaduna, the group passed a confidence vote on Ogbulafor and commended his mature leadership style which

has helped in stabilising the polity. The communiqué, which was signed by pro tem chairman Ahmed Suleiman Leda and secretary Ayo Fayose, also advised the chairman not to be intimidated by the bully tactics of the groups fighting him.

According to the group, the nation went through difficult times as a result of President Umaru Yar'adua's ill health but Ogbulafor's efforts, as well as other prominent Nigerians, helped to calm the nation.

Also, PDP's resolution that a

northerner will still be its presidential candidate in the 2011 elections helped to a large extent in dousing the tension in the polity, the group further pointed out. It said that Ogbulafor incurred the wrath of the mischief makers because he has helped in stabilising the polity and that is why they want to remove him as PDP chairman.

The group advised those that are plotting Ogbulafor's removal to forget about the scheme because the era of removing national chairmen at will is over.

GOMBE CONCERNED CITIZENS

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE MINISTER OF POLICE AFFAIRS (A CASE IN GOMBE STATE)

Dears Sir,

Albeit, it is not our intention to join the fray in over heating the already heated polity, owing of course, to President Yar'adua's ill health and especially, his recent return from Saudi Arabia; the state opposition elements have found themselves in the politics of Gombe State, left us with no option other than to address you through this medium.

Sir, you must have known that the world over, the Police is known as an institution of state charged with the responsibility of maintaining law, order and the protection of lives and properties of any society. In the discharge of these onerous duties therefore, it demands that the Police must remain not only impartial, but neutral. *The Situation in Gombe State is however, in the Contrary.*

First, we are aware that State Police Commissioners in Nigeria (whether it is part of the law or convention) are not allowed to remain under one posting longer than 2 (two) years. If it is so, we wish to ask, has this law been changed? If no, why has the case of Gombe State Police Commissioner remain different? These questions have become crucial given the fact that, the state Police Commissioner in Gombe State has been there as Commissioner, since the past 7-8 years.

The long stay of Gombe State Police Commissioner has over the years, seen him being transformed to and an extension of the ruling party in the state. This is especially in the manner the Commissioner has become so overzealous in the fight against not only the opposition elements, but anybody, even within the PDP, purported not to be in the good books of the incumbent governor. Things have turned so bad that, questions are being raised by people, as to whether the Police in Gombe State have a mandate different from the one setting up the Nigerian Police Force?

Such insinuations cannot be said to be unfounded, given the manner the Police under the present Commissioner have become so partisan and *Therefore, Compromised.* Typical to this is, the manner, for instance, ABU MUAZU; (a former stalwart of the PDP and one of the Governor's boys) is increasingly being hunted, like a common felon by Gombe State Police for having the audacity to leave the ruling party. Since his leaving the PDP and the incumbent, but for the intervention of Police IG at the Forces HQ, ABU MUAZU would long have been dead or locked up in an unknown Police cell somewhere.

As this could not be and following ABU's relocation outside Gombe, he has become an object to be hunted anytime he ventures into Gombe (akin to the manner villagers pursue bush rat or, a Tom and Jerry relationship) by the state Police Command as was reminiscent in the manner ABU, was hunted at a recent wedding he came to grace in one of the local government areas of the state.

Another case in mind, sir, is the treatment being meted on a gubernatorial hopeful in the state and an A.N.P.P National Secretary by the State Police Command. We recall in one of his visits, the National Secretary and his followers were prevented from entering Gombe in convoy/ until the Police were prevailed upon. But even at that, the National Secretary was allowed entry not with his teeming followers/entourage, as they were disbanded by the Police. This, unfortunately, is being perpetrated at a time when the government in power is busy mounting 'Rule of Law' as its mantra.

One would have thought the matter would end at that. But this is far from being the case, as the ANPP national scribe, anytime he ventures into Gombe, (remember he is from Gombe State) for visits that have to do with either wedding, naming ceremonies and the likes; he has become an object of derision, to be trailed by Police operatives. For instance, in one of his visits home, the state government purportedly told the state Police Command that he (the ANPP scribe) had arrived Kumo town, in company of large retinue of youth with arms. On receipt of this hoax (from wherever?) the State Police Commissioner, without even caring to verify, dispatched about 8 (eight) Pick-ups load of armed Police men to Kumo, only to find out that, the said message was untrue. The ANPP scribe was not even in Kumo, in the first place and thus, reducing the armed detachment to ridicule and embarrassment.

A glaring case of compromise on the part of the Police in Gombe State under the present Commissioner could be seen in a very recent episode at Pindiga. It was supposed to be a wedding in which personalities like ABU MUAZU, the ANPP Scribe and MOHAMMED IBRAHIM HASSAN were expected to be in attendance. During the occasion,

certain group of persons with weapons, of course, under the watchful eyes of the Police in Gombe State, mounted road blocks, ransacking all incoming vehicles. The specific instruction given to these group of persons was that, under no circumstances must any of the above named personalities be allowed access to the venue of the wedding.

Sir, Nigerians and particularly, the world at large need to know that prior to the emergence of the present government in Gombe State, there was nothing like YAN-KALARE. The word YAN-KALARE and their activities therefore, followed the campaign activities of the election and subsequent re-election of the incumbent. It goes to say that, YAN-KALARE is completely the making and handiwork of the incumbent.

The Anti KALARE Squad as established by the incumbent therefore, needs to be seen as a smokescreen not only for hounding the opposition elements, but even those within the ruling party who disagree with the incumbent government, as a disguise of ridding the state of the YAN-KALARE's.

The other side of the entire saga in Gombe, is the thinking especially by the state Police Commissioner that the political environment in Gombe must remain gagged, reminiscent of the dark old military days. This, in the figment of the Commissioner's thought must remain so; when he went on air, announcing that the ban on all political activities remain enforced in the state. Since that statement, the thinking of the opposition element is that, perhaps, the statement could have been made in error and, have since then been expecting a retraction. But as the retraction was not forthcoming, the conclusion of the opposition element is that, the said statement was at the behest of the government, as a way of creating an environment intended at further intimidating the populace in the state.

While, we wish to reiterate in the strongest term our earlier condemnation of such resort to act of nihilism and desperation, either by the Police or any group of persons or individuals. At this point, sir, there is the need to draw your attention to the fact that, it is an established fact that the beauty of democracy, remains in the opposition. This argument is particularly derived from the fact that inherent in their activities (especially in the criticisms they offer) is an elixir that enriches political discourses and the polity at large. Sadly, the situation in Gombe State seems to be the reverse. And what this means is that, today in Gombe state, only the PDP has free access to the use of public places for its campaign activities.

In recent development, posters pasted by the opposition in Gombe where removed, turn and some where black painted by the thugs. Surprisingly, barely two days after the incidence the state governor came out publicly making pronouncement warning against posting bills with characteristics of a poster.

From the foregoing, what we have taken time to do was to serve you with a highlight, albeit brief, of the situation in Gombe, as far as the attitude of the incumbent governor, the state Commissioner of Police and the ruling party towards the opposition is concerned. You may agree at this time of the country's development, such tendencies do not augur well for the development of Gombe state nay Nigerian. It is our ardent hope that, if the hope of all Nigerians for the entrenchment of democracy and democratic ideals were to be sustained, the on-going shenanigans in Gombe state and indeed, where ever they are sighted need to be arrested before the on-going democratic process is derailed. To this end and to guide against the unforeseen, we demand an unconditional redeployment of the present commissioner of police.

We Equally call for the acting president to kindly intervene and stop the Gombe state governor from acting as a small God and allow the rufes of law to perpetuate in Gombe state. It is the same law in Gombe that is practiced in Kano, Jigawa, Yobe, Lagos, Kogi and all other states in the federation of Nigeria.

Long live Gombe state.

Long live the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Signed:

Ibrahim Tanimu (08081725008)

Natioanal Secretary

For: Gombe Concerned Citizens

No 15 Riyal, Gombe

SPORT

Amokachi
eyes first
trophy

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HODDLEGATE: Lagerback's absence stalls EFCC investigation

By Orkula Shaagee

THE absence of the Super Eagles Technical Adviser Lars Lagerback may have stalled the effort of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to investigate allegation of fraud in the hiring of a Technical Adviser for the Super Eagles two months ago, Trustsports has gathered.

But the EFCC has refused to confirm or refute the claims as its Spokesman Femi Babafemi said in a telephone interview that he could not comment on the matter because the man in charge of the case is not in town.

"I cannot comment on that now because the person in charge of the case is not available, and I need to get details from him", Babafemi stated.

But a source closed to the Commission informed that the agency could not go ahead with the investigation because 'one of the main actors in the case' Lars Lagerback is currently out of the country on a players' monitoring trip in Europe.

Babafemi had earlier confirmed that the Commission would summon former England Manager Glenn Hoddle, Super Eagles Technical Adviser Lars Lagerback, Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) officials will be invited for questioning over allegations of contract inflation levelled against some Nigerian officials by Hoddle.

Babafemi also said Hoddle's Manager John Shittu and members of the panel that interviewed and recruited the coach for Nigeria will all be summoned by the anti-graft agency for questioning.



SUPER Eagles tactician Lars Lagerback's absence has stalled investigation by EFCC into Glenn Hoddle's bribery allegation against NFF interview panel.

He explained that while Hoddle and John Shittu will be invited to clarify certain things with the agency, Lagerback and the Federation officials will be asked whether the Swede's contract was also inflated as was demanded in the case of Hoddle.

Kwara State Governor, Bukola Saraki had informed that Hoddle

complained to him that some officials demanded he inflate his wage demands by \$500,000 because this would guarantee the Englishman the job to lead the Super Eagles to the 2010 World Cup.

According to Governor Saraki, "My working with Hoddle was borne out of patriotism and my conviction that the right thing

must be done. I met Hoddle, who complained that he was asked to part with \$500,000 out of his \$1.5 million (proposed salary) and that that was the only way to do business in Nigeria," said Saraki.

"He said some people asked him to quote \$1.5 million instead of the \$900,000 he asked for."

Football agent John Ola Shittu,

who worked with Hoddle for the Nigeria job disclosed that the country's anti-corruption body, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), is now investigating this scandal after Saraki and he complained to the head of the Presidential Task Force (PTF) for the World Cup, Rivers State Governor, Rotimi Amaechi.

Lulu throws light on 'botched' friendly

By David Ngobua

CONTRARY to reports that the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) has again failed to prosecute an earlier arranged international friendly match between Nigeria and Colombia, NFF president Alhaji Sani Lulu Abdullahi has said the sport federation did not have

any arrangement with the South American country for a friendly to be played yesterday.

Speaking to Trustsports on phone from London, Lulu explained that yesterday was not a FIFA free day as was claimed by those who should know better than the crass ignorance they displayed in a bid to bring the NFF to condemnation in public domain

over the issue of the international friendly.

He said: "We had no arrangement for an international friendly against Colombia for today (yesterday). NFF knows that today is not a FIFA free day so there was no way we would have fixed a match on such a day. Those who are fond of making such comments should always cross check their facts".

On the meeting between Eagles Technical Adviser, Lars Lagerback with Europe based members of the team in London which was slated for yesterday, the NFF president said it was not canceled as reported but shifted to another date for reasons of convenience.

He explained that at least 15 members of the team who are supposed to be part of the meeting

had club engagements and considering their tight schedules, it was not possible to insist on going ahead with the planned meeting.

Lulu maintained that the meeting between Lagerback and members of the Super Eagles will still hold but at a later date that will be convenient for all those who are concerned.

WAFU Cup: Fans hail Eagles performance

FOOTBALL fans at the on-going West African Football Union (WAFU) Nations Cup, have lauded the home-based Super Eagles for their superlative performance since the beginning of the tournament.

The team have become the toast of soccer-loving fans owing to what they called their "brilliant outing" at the championship.

Some of the fans, who spoke with NAN on Wednesday in Abeokuta said

the Eagles should not rest on their oars until they win the tournament.

Kazeem Mosobalaje, a sports journalist, told NAN that the team had performed wonderfully well.

He, however, advised the technical crew to work more on the midfield and the forward.

Mosobalaje also charged the boys to introduce more aggressiveness into their matches, especially in the first half.

"I think they have performed well to everybody's chagrin; there are some of them, who, if given further training, can do well in the senior team," he said.

Although Wale Bankole, another football enthusiast, admitted that the Super Eagles had played well in the tournament, he, however, advised them to improve on their tactics.

"They have to wake up right from the blast of the whistle; a situation where

they swing into action only in the second half will not be too good enough," he said.

Another fan, Olayinka Akindele, said the Super Eagles had not disappointed her at the tournament, stressing "there has been no dull moment".

She canvassed support from Nigerians for the team and their technical crew to make them perform better.

For Akeem Busari, the technical crew needed

to work on the noticeable lapses before the next match.

The technical crew needed to work on the noticeable lapses before the next match.

The Eagles thrashed Squirrels of Benin Republic 4-0 in their first outing at the championship.

They whipped Sily National of Guinea 5-0 and defeated the Taranga Lions of Senegal 2-1 in their second and third matches respectively.

The Super Eagles will be taking on either the Black Stars of Ghana or the Burkina Babes of Burkina Faso in their semi-final match on Friday at the M.K.O. Abiola Stadium, Abeokuta.

Amokachi eyes first trophy

From Adeolu Johnson, Lagos

SUPER Eagles Assistant Coach, Daniel Amokachi, has said his ultimate dream is to win the maiden West African Nations Cup competition going on at Abeokuta as he insisted that he is a caretaker coach.

Amokachi said after piping the Senegalese national team on Tuesday that he was looking beyond the semifinal clash with either the Black Stars of Ghana or the Burkina Faso national team on Friday.

He explained that the performance of his boys against Senegal has given fresh hope that the Eagles would nick the trophy.

"Am happy that the boys have now settled and doing the business as expected and we are now looking to the next game with great expectation," he added.

The former Super Eagles attacker disclosed that they would take each match as they come as no game is easy in the championship.

He said the team had to work hard to beat the Senegalese national who were almost 2 goals up in the encounter.

When asked why the team did not score more goals like they did in their first two matches he explained that the match against the Teranga Lions was not easy.

He begged Nigerians to exercise patience as the time frame the team was put together was not

Am happy that the boys have now settled and doing the business.

enough.

"What only helped us in this championship was that we have been in camp since we lost out in the CHAN championship to Niger," he stated.

He said the doors of his camp are still open to more players discovered in the local scene.



AMOKACHI... He said his ultimate goal is to win WAFU Cup.

Musa targets new goal record

KANO Pillars scoring sensation Ahmed Musa has said that he has set a personal 20-goal target this season, which would finally put to rest the 17-goal mark set by Ishaya Jatau in the Nigeria Premier League 20 years ago.

Musa, 17, has netted 15 goals thus far as Pillars challenge for the league crown and he said he is confident he can add five more goals before the season ends in June.

"Things are going very well for me and I'm happy about this," Musa told MTN-Football.com.

"I have so far scored 15 goals and I believe I can go on to score five more goals and set a new record of 20 goals a season."

Musa's coach at Pillars, Salisu Yusuf, has already backed his striker to hit the 20-goal mark this term.

"Musa has been doing well and he is one of the reasons we are in the title race. We all hope he stays fit to set a new record by scoring at least 20 goals this season," said Yusuf.

The Pillars star scored his first international goal in three appearances in Sunday's 5-0 routing of Guinea in the on-going WAFU Nations Cup in Abeokuta, near Lagos.



AHMED Musa

Eagles prey on Stallions 'morrow

SUPER Eagles Team B will on Friday take on the Stallions of Burkina Faso in the semi-final of the on-going WAFU Nations Cup competition at the M.K.O. Abiola Stadium, Abeokuta by 5 p.m.

The match will be coming after that of Black Stars of Ghana and the Taranga Lions of Senegal which will hold at 3 p.m.

at the same venue.

The Nigeria led group A with the maximum nine points from three matches, while Burkina-Faso finished second in group B, with six points from three matches.

Ghana also led group B with nine points from three matches, while Senegal came second in the group with six points from three

matches.

Bano Goctar, the Chief Coach of the Burkinabes, has, however, promised the Nigerian side a show down at the Friday encounter.

Goctar, who spoke with newsmen after their last match with Ghana on Wednesday, which ended 4-0 in favour of Ghana, expressed optimism that his team would win the

competition.

Meanwhile, today has been declared a rest day for all the countries participating in the competition.

WAFU has, however, fixed a one-day international security seminar for the participating countries for today, with the theme: "Stadium Safety and Security".

The seminar, which will

hold at the Sky Pavilion, Oke-Ilewo, Abeokuta, is to be conducted by security officials from the British Football Association.

WAFU President, Dr Amos Adamu, said the seminar was aimed at exposing the participating countries to new techniques of handling security issues during football matches.



PELLEGRINI

Real's Pellegrini shrugs off criticism

REAL Madrid's embattled coach Manuel Pellegrini yesterday shrugged off media speculation over his future following a string of disappointing results.

"Right now the least of my concerns is my future. I am not worried about what will happen," he told a news conference.

"We will sit down at the appropriate time to discuss options. Right now is not the time. All we must do now is focus on the next seven matches."

The Spanish press has piled pressure on the Chilean after the club lost at home to arch-rivals Barcelona in 'El Clasico' at the weekend.

Possible replacements mentioned include Inter Milan's Jose Mourinho, Liverpool's Spanish manager Rafael Benitez - who came top of a poll conducted by 'Marca' earlier this week - Chelsea's Carlo Ancelotti and former Chelsea boss Luiz Felipe Scolari.

The 2-0 loss to Barca has left them trailing the champions

now with Uzbekistan side Bunyodkor.

The 2-0 loss to Barca has left them trailing the champions by three points with seven games left.

Pellegrini, who was appointed last summer, has already seen his side lose to unknowns Alcorcon in the King's Cup and crash out of the Champions League to French side Lyon at the last 16 stage.

The poor results have come despite a 250-million-euro summer spending spree - the bulk of it on Kaka and Cristiano Ronaldo.

Real look to bounce back at Almeria on Thursday as Barcelona host Deportivo La Coruna 24 hours earlier at Camp Nou.

"We said before the Clasico that whoever won the match still cannot afford to think they are the champions and that whoever lost cannot believe the league is over," Pellegrini said.

"The season ends on May 16, so we will try to cut into the lead until the very last match.

"This team is able to pick itself up as it has done in the past. Over the last three days I have seen the players get over the loss and focus on what needs to be done."

Murray crashes in Monte Carlo

ANDY Murray lost his first clay-court match of the season in straight sets to Germany's Philipp Kohlschreiber at the Monte Carlo Masters.

The 22-year-old Scot was out of sorts on Court Central as he was broken five times in total by Kohlschreiber, the world No 33, to lose 6-2 6-1 in just over an hour.

The loss continued the world No 4's poor form since reaching the Australian Open final, which has seen him now exit his last two tournaments at the first time of asking.

Murray reached the semi-finals at Monte Carlo last year and was given a wild card entry by the tournament organisers, following his late request to play, to kick-off his clay-court preparations ahead of next month's French Open.

But his plans were dealt an immediate blow by Kohlschreiber following an abject performance.

The Scot was broken twice in the opening set, during which his usual fight for the contest was clearly lacking.

Kohlschreiber fed off his opponent's lethargy before wrapping up the set when Murray hit a routine smash long from the net.

Things did not improve for the Scot in the second set when, after winning his opening service game, Kohlschreiber reeled off the next six to easily close out a match he described as one of the best of his career.

"It was almost a perfect match from beginning to end," the 26-year-old German said.

"I made not many mistakes and I had a lot of power in my game. I think I played really well today.

"I'm very happy of course. Yesterday after three sets I felt a little



Dumped... Murray was blown away by Philipp Kohlschreiber.

bit my adductor. But I feel great and such a victory gives me a lot of confidence."

Kohlschreiber admitted Murray had shown signs of rustiness in his first match on clay for the new season.

"It is very tough for him. I was not missing much and I was playing with a lot of top spin," he added.

"I knew that he doesn't like the

high spin, and I think he really didn't know what to do. It was his first clay-court match so maybe it was the reason."

Murray admitted his form was poor after he also lost in straight sets against Mardy Fish, who was then outside the top 100, at the Miami Masters last time out.

"The last two tournaments have been bad. It's been a long time since I lost a couple of matches like this,"

he said. "I have to make sure that I don't panic."

Speaking about his performance here, he added: "I just couldn't find the court. When it's like that, it's kind of difficult to play."

"I tried a few different things. I tried serve and volleying a couple of times, I tried hitting some high balls.

"(It) didn't make a whole lot of difference."

Nadal cruises past qualifier

JEU Nadal. The familiar refrain at claycourt tournaments resounded time and again yesterday as Rafael Nadal demolished Dutch qualifier Thiemo De Bakker 6-1 6-0 in the Monte Carlo Masters second round.

The world number three, gunning for an unprecedented sixth consecutive title in the glitzy principality, barely broke

sweat in a 59-minute stroll on centre court.

"I expected it to be tougher," said Nadal, who will face German Michael Berrer for a place in the quarter-finals.

"I think I played well. I played a very solid match, made no mistakes, with good movements, good directions."

Nadal, wearing white and

blue check shorts, showed he was fighting fit as he sprinted towards the baseline before the first ball was hit and it made an impression on De Bakker.

The Dutchman was no match for the Spaniard's raw power and devilish accuracy and left the court looking dejected.

Although Nadal has not won an ATP tournament in 11

months, the Spaniard showed he would not be easy prey in Monte Carlo.

The fluttering flags gave the Monte Carlo Country Club a leisurely feel on a bright day and the tranquillity of the gentle breeze was matched only by the glittering of the Mediterranean sea in the background as Nadal raced to a 4-0 lead.

Aiyegbeni denies injury relapse

EVERTON'S striker Yakubu Aiyegbeni has denied media reports that he is suffering a hang-over from his long absence from the pitch with a career-wrecking injury, but says he feels fit as a fiddle.

Aiyegbeni was back to goals scoring form last weekend and says that is a sure sign of his fitness level, which he says shows nothing about his long battle with an Achilles injury, and the Everton striker insists he has put it all behind him.

In contrast with a declaration by The Toffees' gaffer, David Moyes that the Super

Eagles forward is still feeling mental scars off the injury that ruled him out for so long, but the former top scorer of Portsmouth and Middlesrough striker insists it is the last thing on his mind.

"I don't feel like I'm still carrying my injury. I train every day and feel back to normal. People who say I'm still limping are entitled to their opinion, but I think I'm fine."

"I have no pain now. When I first came back it played on my mind and I was a bit scared going into challenges. I didn't want people to hit me but now I'm fine," said Aiyegbeni.

He stated further that he is still pleased to net against West Ham United at the weekend, which became his first league strike at Goodison Park since 2008.

"It was nice to score again. Ten months out was hard but now I've got my sharpness back and my condition is good."

"For me I was pleased to score but disappointment we could only get a point. It was a striker's goal thanks to a great ball from Bainsey."

"My positioning was good, and I know I can always score goals. I need to score more hopefully now before the end of the season," he said.



AIYEBENI



CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMISSION

Obituary

The Board, Management and Staff of the Corporate Affairs Commission commiserate with the Wada family on the painful loss of their illustrious son, father and husband, late Senator Tawa Umbi Wada which sad event occurred on Wednesday, 31st March 2010.



Late Senator Tawa Umbi Wada

27th January, 1957 – 31st March, 2010

Late Senator Wada was the Chairman of the Board of the Corporate Affairs Commission from 27th July 2001 to 29th June, 2004. He had made enormous contribution towards the repositioning and transformation of the Commission to its present enviable height. His memory will continue to linger in our hearts for a long time. We pray Almighty God to grant him eternal rest and give the family the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss.

Burial arrangements is as announced by the family.

Signed
Management

THE THURSDAY COLUMN

Is'haq Modibbo Kawu

kawumodibbo@dailytrust.com 08059100368 (SMS only)

The Bukola Saraki pension plan and Kwara politics

I am writing these lines in Buena Park, California, USA, but I spent the Easter weekend in Ilorin, attending my sister's wedding ceremony. The main issue of discussion during my visit was a controversial "Pension Bill" for the governor and deputy in Kwara State which is already a subject of public sitting in the state House of Assembly. The State Public Office Holders (Payment of Pension) Bill, as they come, is one of the most controversial draft Bills ever to pass through the House. Incidentally, it is presented as "a private member's Bill", sponsored by my own representative in the Assembly, Ishola Fulani, whose better known acumen is not exactly the legislative. But nobody is fooled by the "private" tag, given how houses of assembly are tightly on a leash held by governors in Nigeria; it is clear that in the Kwara "governor's pension" Bill, we have a classic of the voice of Jacob and hand of Esau!

The Bill, as is, has already passed a second reading in the House, and it deals with annual salary, allowances and fringe benefits for governor/deputy; after leaving office, they would be entitled to accommodation, free transport, 300% furniture and house maintenance allowances. Similarly, the two will enjoy domestic staff, free medical care for their immediate families, security, personal assistants, car maintenance allowance, entertainment and 20% utility allowance. Kwara State is also expected to build a house for the governor in any location he chooses in Nigeria AND Abuja, and the poor state will finance a 30-day annual vacation outside Nigeria for the governor and family with corresponding estacode and travel allowances, furniture payable every year, a fleet of six cars with security details and eleven SSS/police escorts, just like a sitting governor! What makes it even more curious, is that the Bill takes effect from 1999, and is to be enjoyed only by a governor that has done two terms; effectively, it is a Bill being perfected to ensure that Bukola Saraki, out of office, remains a perpetual governor, since he is the only person that meets the criteria set for the enjoyment of these privileges on the back of Kwara State forever!

Expectedly, the draft Bill has been the source of outcry, with the Kwara State chapter of the Nigeria Bar Association attending the public session held by the house of assembly as well as a coalition of NGOs and the CNPP. The brouhaha around the Bill has come at a time when the opposition is beginning to stir, for the first time in a long time, in the state. This followed a meeting convened by the *Tafidan* Ilorin, Doctor Amuda Aluko, under the aegis of the Kwara State Stakeholders Forum, to break the silence of the graveyard that has cast an authoritarian and hopeless pall on the politics of Kwara as well as the near-complete dominance of political and by extension, economic life, by the Saraki dynasty. According to information I gathered in Ilorin, the *Tafida* sent out one hundred invitations, but three hundred people from all parts of the state turned up on the day, all united by the feeling that Kwara should find a new lease of political life. Of course nothing is smooth for opposition politics in Kwara: it is fractious; often opportunistic; quite compromised and regularly available to the highest bidder and in Kwara, the group that controls lucre is the Saraki dynasty!

But back to the Pension Bill; it is clear as day light, that Bukola Saraki is the chief beneficiary and the invincible manipulator of the process. And if passed as is, he will live as governor forever, on the resources of the state. Of course

our governor/deputy should have a decent pension, but it is absurd to pass a Bill in just the interest of an individual, as the Bill attempts to. Absurd provisions such as a house in Abuja and a convoy of cars/retinue of security men merely uphold delusions of still being in power. And why start with Bukola Saraki, as if others were not governors before him? The privilege to serve must not morph into almost a birthright. A governor in the saddle for eight years, for good and bad, should not burden the state into the future. Bukola Saraki will be less than 50 years old when he leaves power next year. It means Kwara State will support a life of luxuries into the future despite the tremendous opportunities that have accrued to him during eight years of power. Clearly, that Pension Bill is unacceptable and it rubs salt into wound for the people of Kwara State. The proper thing is for His Excellency to direct his sidekicks in the Assembly to quietly drop the absolutely immodest package that is being cooked up for him. It is very unpopular and people are genuinely disgusted with the deepening impunity at the heart of the process of governance. Politically, Kwara State resembles a conquered territory and the draft gubernatorial Pension Bill just underscores that annoying caricature!

Muhammadu Abubakar Rimi: Unforgettable historical moments

Alhaji Muhammad Abubakar Rimi has received well-earned tributes since his tragic passing. I remember his progressive fervour when he hosted arguably the most

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important convention of the Nigeria Labour Congress, in February 1981. The progressive camp of labour headed by Hassan Sunmonu, had faced the state-sponsored challenge of the right wing, led by David Ojeli. Rimi provided the ambience for the progressive unionists to triumph. It was one of his finest moments just as he and his colleagues: Abdulkadir Balarabe Musa in Kaduna and Lateef Jakande in Lagos were the first governors to declare May 1st a workers' holiday in Nigeria in 1980. Abubakar Rimi's mass literacy program was very unique as it was very popular and he won the Nadezhda Krupskaya Literacy Award from UNESCO. During the 1990s, I visited one of the mass literacy centres that Rimi established close to the Emir's palace in Kano to record a feature material for Radio France International and had reflected upon the fact that the project remained a tribute to Muhammadu Abubakar Rimi. In subsequent years Rimi's politics became more controversial as he moved further to the right of the original (petty-bourgeois) radical platform (of NEPU/PRP) which offered him the opportunity genuinely to serve the people. Ruling class politics, whether in the NPP, SDP or PDP, sucked Rimi into the wilderness of cloak-and-dagger opportunism that is the hallmark of political life in contemporary Nigeria. We must be honest to also add that Rimi's political value diminished incrementally, the farther he moved away from the politics of service to the poor, which had originally defined him. Amongst the bandits of ruling class politics in the PDP, Abubakar Rimi was an ill-fitting presence because his radical origins meant that he never could be wholly trusted. He had unfortunately abandoned his own political and ideological origins to a point where he possibly could not even know his way back if he ever wanted to re-trace his steps; not that he ever wanted to anyway! His death nevertheless, has robbed Nigeria of a colourful patriot, never afraid to express his mind.

SPORTS REPORT



Manchester United's fans demonstrate against the Glazers

Red Knights prepare takeover bid

The Red Knights consortium have been meeting to finalise their plans to launch a takeover of Manchester United.

The group of wealthy United fans have said they do not expect to make a bid for the club before the end of the season but they are now drawing up a detailed battle plan.

The talks were to

confirm exactly where the money will come from to fund a bid and to determine the level of fan involvement in the proposed ownership structure.

A key discussion was also to focus on the £509 million bond taken out by the Glazer family who currently own United - it is likely any takeover bid would have to entail retaining the bond.



CESC Fabregas

Hill-Wood: Barca won't bid for Fabregas

Arsenal chairman Peter Hill-Wood has revealed Barcelona have assured the Gunners they will not table a bid for Cesc Fabregas this summer.

Speculation has long linked the Arsenal captain with a return to the Catalan club, where he spent several years as a youth player before moving to North London.

Barca star Lionel Messi said he believed it was just a matter of time before Fabregas returned to the Camp Nou as he "has Barcelona in his blood".

However Hill-Wood is convinced a deal is not in the pipeline as the Spanish champions are happy with their current crop of players.

Speaking to ESPN SoccerNet, Hill-Wood revealed that high-level talks between the clubs during their recent Champions League tie ruled out the possibility of Fabregas joining up with Pep Guardiola's side any time soon.