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Citizen

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Citizen

All the News in Perspective

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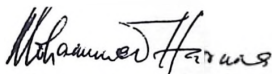
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PREFACE

Ike Okonta, the anchorman of this week's story, could not have described it better when he tells the reader of how reporters descended like vultures on BCCI (Nigeria) Ltd in its Apapa headquarters, expecting to feed on its carcass following the worldwide closure of its overseas affiliates in the wake of alleged fraud involving over 2 billion dollars or 20 billion Naira.

BCCI (Nigeria) was and remains in the local big league. Its collapse was therefore bound to be newsworthy, the more so since its founding chairman was Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki, the Sultan of Sokoto. However, if the reporters expected to see a dead BCCI, the bank, or rather its faithful customers refused to oblige. In spite of the bad news abroad, these customers refrained from making a run for their deposits. And so the reporters could only report the good news that the bank remained intact.

Having weathered the first days of the crisis certain questions still remained unanswered. What will happen to the 40% equity held by BCCI (Holdings) Luxembourg? What about BCCI (Nigeria)'s assets in BCCI abroad, if it had any? What of the letters of credit that its Nigerian customers may have opened through BCCI Overseas? Okonta, Mohammed Haruna, Tola Sunday and Bolaji Adebisi fanned out in search of the answers. The result is this week's cover.



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Citizen, July 15, 1991

LETTERS

Chike Obi goofed

Sir,

I read with dismay Professor Chike Obi's derogatory commentaries on Professor Jibril Aminu and Professor Babatunde Aliyu Fafunwa, who have exalted themselves in academics.

His comments on these individuals are mere sentimental expressions, probably jealousy, who knows? He cannot however claim ignorance of the reputable records and works of these gentlemen.

He explicitly showed to us, who have not been opportunized to know him well, that he is an intellectual robot who has no independent mind of his own. His controversial proving of two-third majority of 19, in the second republic was only a gimmick he played which we are now sure had fetched him enough to start his so-called Nana Research Institute.

I can bet that Professor Chike Obi is not a sharp mathematician as he and his cohorts are trying to show. A good mathematician should not have memory lapses as was obvious in an interview he had with a magazine (not *Citizen*). This was categorically clear in the interview in which he could not give exact and accurate dates on particular events that took place not even quite long ago in his life.

Also in the interview, he made reference to an editor of *Punch* newspaper, who according to him, is a Muslim. I wonder what his religion as a Muslim got to do with their business transaction. No matter what his religion is, it doesn't matter, provided he is serving in his capacity as an editor and not as a Muslim. Academicians are the least we expect to make damaging references at this crucial time that Nigerian is in the midst of religious crisis and worst still, in a transition programme, when all hands must be on

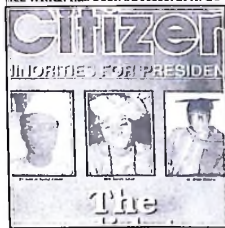
deck to evolve a good democratic society devoid of any tribalism or sectionalism.

Bello Ahmad Ale
Birnin Kebbi

Reaching out

Sir,

One could not agree more with Professor Yayock on the importance of agricultural research to the Nation's economy ("Reaching out", June 24 — 1st July, 1991). I should also add that agricultural development through effective research is a necessary pre-condition for the overall economic development of any nation. IAR or any other agricultural research institute has traditionally developed product-line approach to research, believing that technology can be easily transferred using top-down approach, a practice which has been successful in de-



veloped countries. Product-line approach is however consistent with mono-culture and mono-culture is inconsistent with the socio-cultural practices of food and fibre production of the majority of our peasantry.

Given the dual nature of our production systems, majority small scale and minority large scale, our research institutes must simultaneously evolve production systems approach to research where considerations are given to the interaction of technical and human elements in

our peasant production. Hence realising the multiplicity of resource use within the bound of the peasant's economic, ecological, and associated socio-cultural circumstances, otherwise agricultural research institutes will continue reaching out and touching no one.

Maiwada Zubairu
Kano

The "king" is here

Sir,

"In time of crisis" says Edmund Burke; "the good leader refuse to do something in order to allow evil to prevail". It is time to alert this country of the political development in the race to civil rule 1992. The parade of presidential aspirants to a single seat meant for only one person is an unhealthy development. A leader is a person who will emerge from a group of people in the grass-roots not from the top and usually such a leader lives in a village not in the cities. The leader for 1992 is therefore a youth of age bracket 35 — 37 years and presently lives in a village in Oyo State as we have found out. We have gone very far to the North, South and East and have worked as secret police to look for our leader for 1992 and our effort has yielded fruits. The presidency will come from the South, come 1992 and in Oyo State.

Perhaps if you need to know, check Afigio Local Government in Oyo State. We have seen this 'star' born of mixed blood like Winston Churchill of Britain. He is an unannounced presidential aspirant who has the practical solution to the socio economic-problems of this great nation.

Nigerian Patriots,
Benue State.

Editor's note

We had a mind to drop this letter into the dustbin, but then we thought, well you never know.

Letters to *Citizen*, carrying names, signatures and addresses, should be brief and to the point. They should be typed double space and addressed to Letters Page, *Citizen*, G.11 Unguwan Kanawa, PMB 2334, Kaduna.



**BANK OF CREDIT AND COMMERCE INTERNATIONAL
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THE GENERAL PUBLIC, CUSTOMERS AND CLIENTS OF BCCI [NIGERIA] LIMITED ARE HEREBY ASSURED THAT THE ACTIONS TAKEN AGAINST BCCI BRANCHES IN EUROPE AND AMERICA DO NOT APPLY HERE IN NIGERIA.

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ABDULLAHI MAHMOUD
MANAGING DIRECTOR

LEADERS

BCCI's travails

The penultimate Friday, July 5, the Bank of England, that country's central bank, moved to close down BCCI (Holdings) Luxembourg S.A. According to the Bank of England, BCCI was discovered by its auditors, Price Waterhouse, to have manipulated its 1989 accounts to cover up heavy losses by inflating its deposits. The closure in England, followed closely by closures in Europe and Africa, seems to have brought to a sad end what until July 5, seemed to pose a formidable challenge to the West's domination of International banking and money market.

Did BCCI deserve its fate? The choice of the headquarters of its two main affiliates, BCCI (Holdings) Luxembourg S.A and BCCI (Overseas) Ltd., Cayman Island, was bound to elicit suspicions about its integrity. Luxembourg, and even more so, Cayman Island, are not known to have, let alone enforce, strict banking rules. Indeed the latter shares with Swiss banks the dubious reputation for being the haven of questionable money.

Still we believe its closure by the Bank of England was harsh and perhaps even unwarranted. BCCI was not the only bank that operated out of Luxembourg and Cayman Island. In any case, doing so could not automatically qualify a bank as fraudulent and prone to deal in drug money. More to the point, the evidence against BCCI, to the extent that it can stand in a court of law, hardly proved that BCCI was an incurable or even a leading launderer of drug money or fiddler with deposits.

In short the closure of the bank suggests that it was merely being made a scape-goat for daring to match western banks at their own

game, worse, in their own turf; BCCI in a short two decades had grown to be the world's fifth largest private bank.

While it is doubtful that BCCI overseas deserved its come uppance, it is fortunate that its fate has not rubbed off on its Nigerian affiliate. Partly this was due to luck and partly it was due to management's foresight. The luck is that depositors did not panic. As for management's foresight, the replacement of Asian management with Nigerian management helped to instill depositors' confidence. On their part the new management was sensible enough to break the monopoly of BCCI (Overseas) as BCCI (Nigeria)'s corresponding bank. The quick and timely support from Central Bank was of course also crucial.

There are a few lessons to be learnt from all this. The first is that the strategy of buying into western economies is a double-edged sword. We need therefore to reexamine suggestions that we should invest heavily in upstream activities of oil in western markets. The freezing of Iranian assets during the American hostage crisis and now the closure of BCCI suggests great caution in this respect.

The second lesson is that Nigerian's, if not their governments', control of the commanding heights of the country's economy, including the financial sector, is crucial to development. It is not difficult to imagine what would have been the fate of Nigerian depositors if BCCI (Nigeria) was merely a branch of BCCI Overseas. The impact also of the collapse of the bank as one of the country's top ten would have been damaging.

For BCCI (Nigeria) itself, needless to say, it must change its image as an overly liberal bank, starting from its name.

Making ECOWAS tick

Executive Secretary Abass Bundu last week in Abuja gave the heads of state and government of the 16 countries that make up the Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS, what he called "a

dismal account" of the performance of their sub-regional economic block, which they set up in 1975. Not that the report surprised them. No, not in the least. In fact, he was telling them what they already knew: the road to the

economic integration of the sub-region is no shorter than it was 16 years ago.

First, intra-community trade is still very much at a low ebb. This is not for want of a machinery. A trade liberalisation scheme went into effect last year which allowed some member states to market selected industrial products in other countries in the sub-region. There exists a mechanism — a compensation budget — that protects countries that are likely to suffer loss of revenue from opening their domestic markets to such exports. Despite such an elaborate arrangement to facilitate the take-off of the scheme, we are told "there is as yet no transaction in those selected products".

Second, a vital instrument of economic integration, the protocol on free movement of persons has been ratified but its provisions have gone largely unimplemented. As a result community citizens have been subjected to constant harassment on West African highways and at entry points.

These are but few instances of the lethargy that has afflicted ECOWAS. Why this? Secretariat officials have identified five major factors: poor economic situation in the sub-region, national priorities, level of political commitment, multiplicity of inter-governmental organisations and institutional arrangements at the national level for regional integration.

As has been noted by the the ECOWAS chief scribe, those factors raise a further question of whether member states do understand "the full implication or significance of belonging to a regional integration grouping." Fortunately that

question has been answered, if only in part, by the setting up of a committee of eminent persons, headed by one of the founders of ECOWAS, Nigeria's one-time head of state, General (rtd) Yakubu Gowon — to review the organisation's treaty.

It is expected that the Gowon review committee will deliver to the Authority of heads of state next year in Dakar, Senegal, a treaty that will simplify the procedure for decision-making, suggest alternative ways of financing integration programmes, which will be a departure from the present practice of annual budgetary contributions. According to Dr. Bundu, the authority expects "an instrument which will define and elaborate provisions for solidarity, political cooperation, regional peace and security".

This is the right kind of orientation that ECOWAS needs to take into the next century, when the trend towards formation of regional economic blocks will witness a surge upward. West Africa cannot afford to be marginalised. Thank God its leaders are not waiting until the committee of eminent persons throws copies of its report on their laps in Dakar next year. In Abuja last week they adopted a declaration of political principles that stresses their preference for a peaceful resolution of disputes and acceptance of political pluralism, among other measures meant to accelerate regional integration. They also endorsed an ECOWAS court of justice, "as a mechanism for enforcing community decisions in member states".

It is all a part of the new found Abuja spirit, and to echo the words of President Sogio of Benin, one prays to God that West Africa reap only the benefits of a world terribly agitated politically.

Leave them alone

At a recent workshop organised for female political party members by the National Council of Women's Societies, NCWS, the chairman of the women affairs committee, of the National Republican Convention, NRC, Alhaja Suliati Adedeji complained of harassment of female politicians by security agents. Acting on the disclosure from the National

Electoral Commission that the NRC women affairs committee was illegal, officials took appropriate steps to disband them by interrogating the active members.

Much earlier, NEC had to remind the NRC that the women's committee bore some resemblance with the women's wings of parties which have been banned. In its response, the NRC stated that it was not a women's wing,

had no intention of developing into one and was no different from the 16 other standing committees inaugurated at the national level. Each of these committees had at least one female member while the women's committee had 22 members, one from each state and Abuja and four men.

As a purely advisory body, its task was to devise strategies for effective mobilisation of women for active political participation. In achieving these, problems militating against women's political involvement in all states were to be identified and solutions proffered. These are certainly laudable aims that complement the massive enlightenment embarked upon by government. In addition, the NRC argued that by its structure the women affairs committee bore no resemblance to women's wings of parties which were an elaborate structure that made them a party within a party. It has since instituted a suit in court to restrain NEC from disbanding it.

Against the background of the issue which is subjudice, a few clarifications can still be accommodated. For one, the wisdom that informed government's decision to ban the establishment of women's wings by

parties can not be faulted. Where they exist they serve as the peripheral territory, indeed the political backyard to which women were marginalised. Under it they canvassed for votes but were ostracised from the mainstream party where they could have realised their full potential. Any meaningful attempt to absorb women into mainstream politics had to scrap the counterproductive women's wings. For another, women who aspire to political leadership will eventually lead men and women and the mainstream party should constitute a starting point. Taking cowardly cover in women's wings of parties could hardly offer such relevant lessons.

However, in the process of involving women in politics the need for a special committee to address the peculiar problems that face women as a marginalised group may be necessary. Indeed this line of thinking informed the creation of the National Women's Commission. By establishing its women affairs committee, the NRC is only determined to ensure that it captures female votes which could make or mar its chances of success at the polls. We believe the NEC had overreacted to the committee's existence and would do well to let it be.

Africa's triumph

The remarkable success of the ANC's 48th national conference which ended in Durban, South Africa last week was a triumph for all Africans. Many white South Africans and their kinsmen in Europe eagerly waited to see chaos and disunity at the conference, which they would then seize upon and proclaim that the black man cannot manage anything. In the run-up to the conference, the western media made much of the tactical disagreements between ANC "moderates" and "hardliners". There were even suggestions that Nelson Mandela was out of step with the ANC rank-and-file.

Well, last week's successful conference put to rest all such speculation. It was true that ANC delegates differed in their perceptions of various tactical issues, including sanctions and the armed

struggle. No one should expect otherwise in an organisation that leads a people who have suffered four centuries of racial oppression, and one that has itself suffered a ban, exile and the execution of its cadres.

In the end, the ANC united behind firm decisions and a strong, democratically-elected leadership. The congress showed much imagination in its handling of the sanctions issue, and we especially urge African countries to cooperate closely in implementing the phased perspective to ending sanctions. No African country should hasten to end sanctions ahead of ANC prescriptions in a mistaken attitude of being more catholic than the Pope. Africa's friends abroad should also cooperate in this venture. They cannot know better than the ANC when apartheid has ended and it is time to lift sanctions. He who wears the shoe, knows where it pinches.



In 1990,
4,380 of the deaths on the highways resulted from

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OVERTAKING AND
OVERLOADING !**

What a shame ?

What future for our children ?

What future for our country ?

OBEY SPEED LIMIT REGULATIONS NOW Before it is TOO LATE



MOHAMMED HARUNA

childish sentiments *Periscope* said in effect, had manifested itself in Buhari boycotting President Babangida's tour of his (Buhari's) native Katsina state, boycotting the launching of Arewa House Appeal fund at which the president was a special guest and finally boycotting the OAU summit in Abuja to which he had

general with extreme passion.

Now it seems I could not have been more mistaken than in thinking *Tribune* is unmatched in its hatred for Buhari. *The Tribune* may have said more terrible things about him, but never in my life did I for once imagine that the *New Nigerian*, yes the veritable *Al Ahram* of Nigeria, would behave the way it did in its edition of July 3. Whatever its opponents may think of it, the one endearing quality it was universally acknowledged as possessing was that it told truth to power. It had never been known, except in its dark days under Sidi Ali Sirajo, to merely possess post-mortem courage. What the paper did on July 3 was to throw this quality to the dogs.

Buhari, the paper said, installed fascism in the country. May be so, but the paper must have such a short memory if it forgot that back in 1985 it made a song and dance of the general being selected as its Man of the Year for 1984. At that time the much dreaded Decrees, No 4 and No 2, which the paper cited as evidence of Buhari's fascism, were very much in place. *Haba, New Nigerian*.

Sounding like a repeater station of the *Periscope* in the *Sunday Tribune* of June 23, the paper reeled off the same litany of Buhari's purported misdeeds of recent, namely his alleged boycott of functions at which President Babangida was present. The only difference was that while *Tribune* said Buhari was being "childish" the *New Nigerian* said he was merely engaged in "petty brooding" about his record in government.

The *New Nigerian* I knew would have sought to find out from Buhari why he kept away from those functions. And if it did, perhaps it would have saved itself the embarrassment of what Dr. Mahmud Tukur, a minister in Buhari's cabinet, in reacting to the July 3 article, aptly described as "pandering to the base emotions of the moment"

Haba New Nigerian

Haba New Nigerian!

Several weeks ago I felt strongly like using these pages to tell the editors at *The Tribune* newspapers a piece of my mind over the abusive language they have consistently subjected Major-general Buhari (rtd), former head of state, to. At that time *Periscope*, that well-informed, if not well-written column in *Sunday Tribune*, had called him illiterate and worse. I thought it was just not done to call your former head of state such type of names, especially if he left office with his integrity intact. Somehow I never got round to it.

And then in its edition of June 23, the *Sunday Tribune* announced to my relief that it, or at least, its column, *Periscope*, was calling a unilateral ceasefire in its war with the general. "Having accepted the supremacy of democracy" said the paper in obvious reference to the general's widely reported declaration that he was now a democrat, "We of the *Periscope* have effected a ceasefire in our verbal wars against Buhari and his fellow clubmates in tyranny. We are now at peace with him."

Still the paper could not resist a parting pot-shot in spite of its unilateral truce. Having become a latter-day democrat, the paper said, it would like to advise the general to push aside his "childish sentiments over events of 27 August 1985." The

been invited like Gowon, Obasanjo and Shagari.

For a parting shot, I thought these were hardly unkind things to say even though Buhari could very well have had better than childish reasons for keeping to himself. After all *The Tribune* stable has said far more terrible things about the general before. Probably the worst was *The Tribune* of August 4, 1988. Reacting to speculations that Buhari, at that time still in detention, may be freed by President Babangida as a good-will gesture on the third anniversary of his regime, the paper said "our hunch is that the teeming majority of Nigerians have no love for him and "HE CAN AS WELL DIE IN DETENTION" (emphasis mine)! Mercifully the president ignored this advice for the self-serving rubbish that it was.

With all this, I had thought no one hated Buhari more than the *Tribune* especially since they had good reason to. For some strange reason those at *Tribune* imagined that the reason for the Buhari coup was to install Chief Awolowo as president after three months. When, instead, Buhari did the unthinkable, thing by ransacking the Chief Awo's residence for some security documents that were indeed found and also packed several UPN chieftains into jail, it was not difficult to understand why *Tribune* would hate the

BCCI

Money trouble

In spite of the forced closure of its overseas associate last week, for BCCI (Nigeria) Limited, it is business as usual

The corporate headquarters of Bank of Credit and Commerce International (Nigeria) BCCI, in Apapa, Lagos witnessed a flurry of activities last week. Following the forced closure of the international banking behemoth, BCCI (S.A.) and BCCI (overseas) in Europe and the United States, June 5, over alleged fraudulent practices by the bank's top executives, a horde of journalists descended on the office of the managing director, Alhaji Abdullahi Mahmoud to find out the "true situation of things". They came, armed with cameras and note-books expecting a stampede: jittery and anxious customers rushing to the bank to withdraw their savings before BCCI (Nigeria) is closed down like its overseas counterparts.

Nothing of the sort happened, however. At BCCI's main banking hall on the ground floor of its Apapa



Apapa headquarters of the BCCI: flurry of activity

headquarters, it was business as usual. Nothing was out of place. Customers came in, transacted their business and went away. The cashiers were all in their cages and there was nothing in their faces to show they were expecting an impending crash. Said Silas Nwokike, an Apapa-based oil executive who operates a current account with the bank, "I was not

clients of the bank that the action taken against BCCI branches overseas did not in any way apply here in Nigeria. According to Abdullahi Mahmud, "normal banking transactions are continuing. Letters of credit will continue to be processed in the normal way". Central Bank of Nigeria officials also added a calming voice to clarify the

(Nigeria) Limited. The remaining sixty percent is owned by Nigerian investors. BCCI (Nigeria) is therefore, by virtue of the fact that its majority shares are owned by Nigerians, a Nigerian company, incorporated in Nigeria, and managed by Nigerians.

John U. Ebhodahe, managing director of the Nigerian Deposit Insurance Corporation, a



Customers in a confused state at the London offices of the BCCI

bothered by the announcement that BCCI overseas was closed down. My money is here with BCCI (Nigeria) not BCCI (Overseas) and I do not have reason to believe that it is not safe".

Following the June 5 closure of BCCI in Europe and the United States, the managing director of BCCI (Nigeria) Limited issued a press release, assuring the general public and customers and

situation. Tony Ede, CBN chief spokesman told *Citizen* in his office last week that BCCI (Nigeria) Limited is a bank duly licensed in Nigeria and that it is not a subsidiary or branch of BCCI overseas. Said Ede, "the Central Bank has no reason to doubt the ability of BCCI (Nigeria) Limited to continue to meet its obligations".

BCCI (S.A.) Luxembourg holds forty percent of the shares of BCCI

government parastatal which insures bank deposits and ensures stability in the nation's banking environment, told *Citizen* that the forty percent share of BCCI overseas is no cause for concern. Said Eghodaghe, "what is forty percent? It is just a minority share. If BCCI overseas winds up and says it wants its money, we will pay. There is no way it can affect depositors here in Nigeria", adding, "if BCCI dupes

Nigeria", adding, "if BCCI dupes somebody in Britain, it does not affect anybody here". According to the managing director of the NDIC his organisation supervises BCCI (Nigeria) Limited closely and believes that it still possesses the capability to function as a bank.

BCCI (Nigeria) Limited it seems, had anticipated the closure of the BCCI conglomerate. Although BCCI Luxembourg owned only 40% of BCCI Nigeria, it controlled management through a technical agreement. This agreement expired in January last year. The Nigerian shareholders seized the opportunity and in March successfully amended the Articles of Association of the bank to provide for Nigerian management. This has now proved to be a wise step because at the earliest opportunity the Nigerian management ended the monopoly that BCCI overseas enjoyed as BCCI Nigeria's overseas correspondent. Along with BCCI overseas, the bank also appointed American Express. Abba Kyari, the Bank's Company Secretary, told *Citizen* that the bank wrote to the Central Bank of Nigeria recently informing it that its first foreign exchange bid this month should be entirely routed through American Express.

Kyari said even without this anticipatory action, customers of the bank needed not fear any loss. He explained that BCCI's assets in BCCI abroad were minimal although he did not give any figures. He also explained that all letters of credit opened abroad will be honoured because money for trade transactions are not regarded as bank assets and therefore are not liable to be seized by the liquidators. "This", he pointed out "is international law".

For BCCI overseas, trouble started in 1988 when an American grand jury, armed with iron-clad evidence indicted the bank for

money laundering. After a series of negotiations, the American government offered BCCI a plea bargain thus avoiding a trial in which prosecutors had planned to present evidence that laundering

Noriega, the ousted Panamanian dictator. Washington was also irked that BCCI, through certain Arab intermediaries, secretly purchased the controlling shares of First American, the largest bank in the

At BCCI's main banking hall on the ground floor of its Apapa headquarters, it was business as usual. Nothing was out of place. Customers came in, transacted their business and went away.

drug money was an approved policy of the international banking consortium. The Florida case opened the door for disaster to come in. By 1989, BCCI had lost 498 million Dollars resulting from bad loans. The company, in a desperate attempt to restructure and save itself from collapse, closed down seventy offices and retrenched about 17% of its entire work force, especially in the United States. Help however came in the shape of Sheik Zayd bn Sultan al Nahayan, ruler of Abu Dhabi who put up one billion Dollars and took possession of the embattled bank.

By this time however, it was obvious that the monetary authorities in London and Washington were merely waiting for an opportunity to pounce. Their grouse was that BCCI overseas allegedly laundered 32 million Dollars of drug money between 1985 and 1987, 500,000 Dollars of which belonged to Manuel

Washington area in 1981.

That opportunity presented itself on July 5 when officials of the Bank of England, following allegations of large-scale fraud in the bank leading to huge losses accumulated in the bank's leading and treasury operations, moved in and closed down BCCI's central



Mahmoud: business as usual



Mamman Daura and Kyari: no reason to doubt BCCI's integrity

bank's assets were also seized in Cayman Islands, Luxembourg, Spain, France and the United States. The swoop was carried out without

prior consultation with Sheikh Nahayan who owns 77% of the bank.

Reacting to the closure last

week, Abu Dhabi authorities accused the Bank of England of intervening too soon, even when it was aware that plans were

"A banker's equivalent of the Gulf War"

This, a senior manager of BCCI Nigeria told a colleague the other day, "is another Gulf War". Alhaji Sabo Nannoo, the Bank's General Manager (North) was referring to the recent collapse of BCCI Overseas.

The bank has lately come under renewed attack on its integrity from banking authorities in Europe and America. For three years now the authorities had charged it with laundering drug money. To this was added, last week, the more serious charges of fraud and insolvency.

However even before the bank could answer to the charges, its operational headquarters in London and legal headquarters in Luxembourg were closed down. Because BCCI operated worldwide basically through autonomous units there was a simultaneous shut down of the bank in many countries in Europe, America and Africa. However BCCI Nigeria Limited remained unaffected having registered as a Nigerian company with 60% Nigerian shareholding.

The question is: what really is BCCI's crime?

What does its collapse portend for its local affiliates? Western Banking authorities say that for sometime now BCCI has been into laundering drug money and cite as damning evidence the fact that Manuel Noriega, the deposed Panamanian leader and a reported drug kingpin is one of its most valued customers. To this has now been added the charge that the bank's managers have been fraudulent and inevitably have led it into insolvency. Reports in the western media say the bank's auditors, Price Waterhouse, while going

through its 1989 annual report, have discovered evidence that the bank tried to cover a 2 to 4 billion Dollars (20-40 billion Naira) loss by inflating customers' deposits.

How does BCCI answer to all three charges of laundering drug money, fraud and insolvency? Without categorically denying them, the bank's spokesmen countercharge that its crime really is that it has become a roaring success, an exemplar of what the right combination of Third World fund (specifically Arab) and

creative and sound Third World management (specifically Asian) can achieve. A dispassionate examination of international finance suggests that BCCI has a point. Indeed the very hasty manner in which western banking authorities moved to close down the bank underscores this point. According to a BCCI (Nigeria)'s spokesman, Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al-Nahayan, the ruler of Abu Dhabi and BCCI's single biggest shareholder had committed 600 million Dollars in cash and guaranteed a similar amount by 10 am as bail out money on Friday July 5. Three hours after the money was in, the Bank of England closed it down. Obviously BCCI has a point when it cites envy as the reason for its closure in Europe and America.

Take the laundering of drug money for instance. The drug business is estimated at 100 billion on the conservative side. The evidence sited against BCCI, apart from the dubious one of its link with Noriega, is that its managers in Florida fell for a "sling" operation in which they accepted to launder 16 million Dollars drug money in 1988. On the strength of this evidence, and against the background of the huge drug trade, obviously BCCI must be a small fry. Since drug consumption remains basically a western phenomenon, the probability is that the real big time drug money

launderers will be American and western (in particular Swiss banks who do not ask awkward questions about the colour of money) banks.

As for fraud and insolvency, it is instructive that the Americans are yet to move in on Savings and Loans financial outfits, which suffered perhaps this century's biggest rip-off, several years after the rip-off was discovered. Estimates of the cost of the bail-out to tax payers are put at 285 billion Dollars over 30 years but the authorities would rather pay up than see the S & L's

Still there are other areas of worry for Nigerians. There is the question of BCCI Overseas's 40% share in BCCI Nigeria.

go under.

Clearly BCCI's crimes goes well beyond money laundering, fraud and insolvency. Its real crime seems to be that it has posed a serious challenge to the domination of international finance by Western banks. The bank which started back in 1972 had grown into the world's fifth largest private bank by June 5. What is more, the bank had used mainly Third World managers in Europe and America. Worse, it has had the effrontery to buy out some American banks and secure the patronage of leading western statesmen like Jimmy Carter and Edward Heath.

This is perhaps why BCCI was singled out for punishment even before all the evidence about its alleged crime were in. Even on the evidence that was in, there were far bigger Western culprits.

Now that the West has closed down BCCI overseas, what does it mean for BCCI (Nigeria) and for Nigerians? More than a week after the closure of BCCI abroad, part of this question sounds rather academic. The first two week-days after the Friday closure were the most critical in terms of depositors panicking and triggering

there is the question of what will happen to letters of credits opened by businessmen in Nigeria.

On the first issue, what happened at Continental Merchant Bank when Chase Bank of New York withdrew several years ago as a 40% shareholder is instructive. Business continued as usual at CMB. In fact the bank has grown since then. All it did was warehouse the 40% shares and seek new buyers.

On the second issue, obviously the fate of Nigerian depositors hang in the balance. With possible government deposits, however, the authorities should come clean if we do indeed have any money there. They should tell Nigerians how much it is and what they intend to do to minimise our losses.

As for letters of credit, Abba Kyari, (no relation of Brigadier Abba Kyari, first military governor of Kaduna State) told *Citizen* that in international law, trade deposits are not regarded as a bank's assets and therefore are not liable to be seized whatever finally happens to BCCI.

All this is consoling for BCCI (Nigeria) and its customers. It is, however, only cold comfort for BCCI overseas and its customers. Its success has merely earned it Western envy and as a result has now cost the Third World a moral equivalent of the Gulf War in a contest where the first World continues to set the rules.

By Mohammed Haruna

underfoot by Sheikh Nahayan to bale out the troubled bank with an additional 6 billion Dollars. Said an adviser to Nahayan, "His Highness is very angry at what has happened. The Bank of England acted arbitrarily and without consultation".

There are however indications that the oil-rich Sheik will do something to help small investors who had lost money following the closure of the bank. Particularly hard-hit are Asian businessmen and private investors in Bradford, Great Britain who are estimated to have had about fifteen millions pounds in various BCCI branches. Reports, though yet to be confirmed, also say that the Nigerian government and some private investors also had substantial deposits in BCCI overseas. There is talk though that Sheik Nahayan will bale out the

small investors when things are eventually sorted out. Nahayan, Abu Dhabi officials said last week, may make some donation to a suitable fund in this regard.

he brainchild of Agha Hassan Abedi, a visionary Pakistani banker,

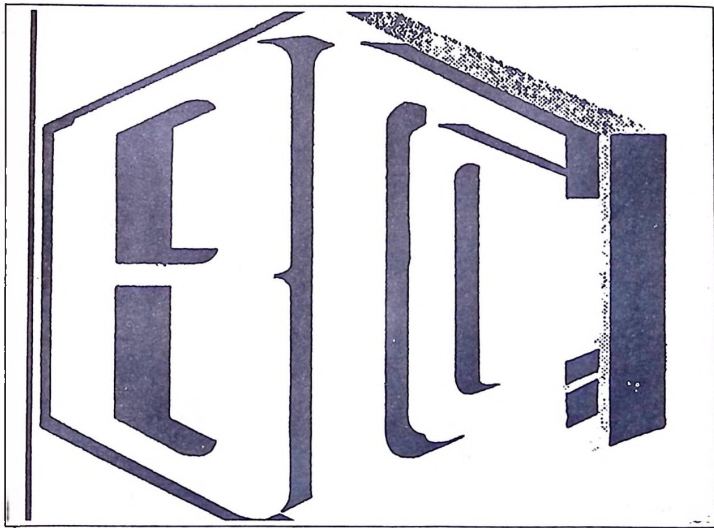
TBCCI opened shop in 1972 with the assistance of some wealthy Arab financiers. In Abedi's own words, BCCI was designed to be "a new centre for Third World cohesion and a rallying point of thoughts and aspirations of the underprivileged". By 1980, BCCI had grown into a veritable behemoth with assets totalling 20 billion Dollars, a veritable Third World success story, and a counterweight to the western dominated international financial system. Perhaps it was this perceived threat, more than any other factor, that prompted

western financiers with Bank of England in the lead, to puncture the BCCI dream.

Citizen learnt that as part of its strategy for overcoming the crisis, it is changing its name to Africa International Bank, the Central Bank and the Corporate Affairs Commission of the Ministry of Trade permitting. Federal Government may have already given its nod, sources close to the bank said.

One thing is abundantly clear however: BCCI Nigeria has successfully weathered the storm engendered by the closure of its European associate and has retained the confidence of its clients and customers.

By Ike Okonta with
Mohammed Haruna
Tola Sunday and Bolaji
Adebiyi



SPECIAL REPORT

ECOWAS

A new spirit is born

Abuja may well have given ECOWAS "a new political spirit, a new horizon", but its economic score-card still reads a minus

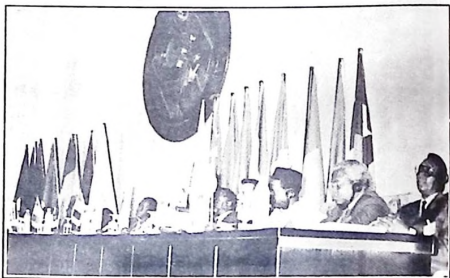
President Abdou Diouf of Senegal, easily the tallest head of state at the 14th summit of the authority of the Economic Community of West African states, ECOWAS, in Abuja rose to his full height to respond, as is traditional, to his surprise election as the chairman of this sub-regional economic block. "Abuja is a watershed", he began in impeccable French. "Nothing should remain as it has been before. A new spirit is born, the Abuja spirit and with it a new horizon that I believe will reinforce the efficiency of our organisation".

He left nobody in doubt as to what he meant by this "new spirit of Abuja". He was referring to the eight-point declaration of political principles, endorsing political pluralism. By the declaration the heads of state and government of ECOWAS "reaffirm our commitment to securing peace and

maintaining stability in the ECOWAS sub-region", their determination to refrain from the use of force against one another, to settle "all disputes among ourselves" peacefully, to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, encourage "the full

enjoyment of all rights inherent in the human dignity of the human person and essential to his free and progressive development".

They also "believe in the liberty of the individual and in his inalienable right to participate by means of free and democratic



ECOWAS heads of state and government at the opening day

processes in the framing of the society in which he lives". They pledged to speak with one voice through ECOWAS, resist outside forces which might want to undermine "the expression of our collective will and determination" and to take "all necessary measures to ensure the speedy and effective realisation of the aims and objectives of the ECOWAS treaty".

This endorsement of political pluralism did not surprise anybody, least the heads of state of the sub-region themselves. A cynical foreign newsreporter asked whether any of them really imagined himself opposing the political wind of change that has been blowing across Africa since early this year. Indeed, President Ibrahim Babangida of Nigeria, who himself is the chairman of the

Diouf calls a "historical logic" that has overwhelmed him and his 15 colleagues, but euphoric they were in "welcoming it". To the Senegalese leader the declaration of political pluralism "shows we understand the dynamics of history before us and we want to respect the African tradition of dialogue and understanding". He was convinced that "our decision should be welcomed by our people and the entire international community".

President Nicephore Soglo of Benin, himself a beneficiary of the "wind of liberty" last February and attending an ECOWAS summit for the first time as head of state, said that his country has been fortunate to have retraced the path of democracy without bloodshed. He prayed God to have pity on Africa such that "this wind of freedom

"This declaration means a greater and more open participation of our people in the national decisions that shape their destiny", he said. His country was on its way to "political pluralism, and there is no turning back".

To Dr. Abbas Bundu, executive secretary of ECOWAS the declaration has provided a vital missing link in the 1975 treaty — the political dimension of regional integration. He noted that though the heads of state and government acknowledged the need for sub-regional peace and security, ratified in 1981 the protocol on mutual assistance in defence, "nothing has been done to implement its provisions". According to him, it is ironic that as clear as the protocol is, there was still debate over the legitimacy of ECOWAS seeking to restore peace to Liberia. "If the will to implement that protocol had existed earlier", Dr Bundu said, "the community would not have resorted in 1990 to the expediency of creating the ECOWAS standing mediation committee and ECOMOG".

Incidentally, that "expediency" turned out to be ECOWAS' strongest plus on what Dr. Bundu called "a dismal report-card". In the words of the executive secretary, ECOWAS' involvement in the Liberian crisis has not brought it "any material benefit" but it did demonstrate "the cohesion, the solidarity that exist in the sub-region". But more importantly, as he told *West Africa* magazine recently, the heads of state of ECOWAS took that "historic decision" on Liberia to arrest the threat that the Liberian crisis posed to peace and security, so that with the maintenance of stability they could continue the business of cooperating and integrating their economies more smoothly".

By that intervention, he said the ECOWAS sub-region has demonstrated that Africa does have the capacity to find solutions to its own problems where "there is a will



Bundu and Diouf: hailed the cohesion and solidarity of ECOWAS

Organisation of African Unity, OAU did warn against swimming against the current, as it were. "We, in this sub-region," he said, "should not lose sight of the new emerging political trends and democratisation process... They have brought into sharper focus the need for us to implement ...the African charter for popular participation adopted by the Assembly of the OAU heads of state and government last year".

It may well have been the inevitability of what President

blowing on the continent would cool tensions... and make it possible for citizens of a country to live in common in the same state". He saw in it a final phase of the continent's rebirth.

President Joseph Momoh, whose country, Sierra Leone he regards as a victim of the "political upheaval in Liberia", and what in his own words is "a revolving theatre of the absurd and deceit" also welcomed the declaration of political principles.

"We are all comfortable with the ECOWAS peace plan" — Dr. Sawyer

In the light of the Yamoussokro accord what framework exists for cooperation between you and Mr. Charles Taylor?

Dr. Sawyer: We are comfortable with the five-member monitoring committee, which will operate as an adjunct to the ECOWAS standing mediation committee within the ECOWAS peace plan. During the All Liberia Conference in March, the National Patriotic Front (NPFL) proposed a formula for the appointment of an elections commission. It was adopted by the conference. Therefore we are confident that the NPFL and all the other political parties and interest groups that participated in the conference will also feel comfortable with such a structure.

The accord said that the interim government of Liberia under you and NPFL should undertake to maintain security in the respective zones under their control until the beginning of the electoral process. What does this mean?

Dr. Sawyer: It was meant to suggest that Taylor has an obligation between now and the establishment of the elections commission to ensure that there is order on his side. But clearly, the interim government operates in an area

protected by ECOMOG... The process of disarming is going on right now and the NPFL seems to be cooperating. ECOMOG has gradually built confidence into the NPFL and other groups. So I think, we don't have much to fear but only to be optimistic that the process will continue to unfold in keeping with the Lome ceasefire agreement as well as the spirit of Yamoussokro and the ECOWAS communique. *What is the role of Prince Yomie Johnson in the peace process and in what capacity do you recognise Charles Taylor and his NPFL?*

Dr. Sawyer: His Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia, NPFL, is part of the interim government. In fact, the vice-president was chosen from his group. Johnson himself is assisting in the effort to persuade the young men of the INPFL to turn in their weapons and participate in some of our programmes of rehabilitation and readjustment. He recently announced that the INPFL would form a political party. We welcome that. That's the way we want the process to go. We are urging Mr. Taylor to similarly do so. That's democracy. *Your interim government and the NPFL were to have presented a single delegation. This does not*

appear to have taken place. Could you explain what if anything went wrong?

Dr. Sawyer: You would have done well to ask those who came and didn't participate. I think we do know that they came to Abuja under an arrangement that we would all have one delegation. Whether they misrepresented their own mandate or something developed in their area after they arrived here, we are in no position to know at this point.

The NPFL group that came said they did so on the understanding that theirs would be a separate delegation from yours. They also said that as far as they understand the Yamoussokro meeting, there were to be separate elections, not a single election as your spokesman said. If so shortly after Yamoussokro there is such basic misunderstanding, then what hope is there for the agreement?

Dr. Sawyer: We must deal with the communique that came out of the ECOWAS meeting. I don't think that Taylor is taking about a divided Liberia. Our country is one, indivisible. We consider the success of the Liberian elections to be an important manifestation of the commitment of ECOWAS to those political principles that

were contained in the declaration read here today. This body is on trial to ensure that it lives up to the declaration of political rights. *President Jawara has just said that Taylor controls 90 percent of Liberia. What does this say in terms of de facto or de jure control of Liberia?*

Dr. Sawyer: Taylor's forces have always claimed to be in control of Liberia. We need to examine the quality of that control. What control do roaming bands have pillaging the countryside?.. What is the nature of this control as far as organised society is concerned, when each day hundreds of people are walking their way from behind Taylor's lines in ECOWAS protected areas? So what does this say about the quality of control, about what people think is happening in our country? Where lies the people's idea of legitimacy? Is it behind road-blocks guarded by fighters who are destroying their property and subjecting them to brutality and intimidation or is it in Greater Monrovia.. where a macrocosm of democracy is already flourishing? *This is an excerpt from a world press conference Dr Sawyer addressed in Abuja on July 6 shortly after the 14th summit of ECOWAS authority ended.*

to find such solutions". Addressing a joint press conference on the last day of the three-day summit (July 4 - 6), President Dauda Jawara of the Gambia, outgoing chairman of ECOWAS and Abdou Diouf of Senegal, his successor, both commended the excellent work of the standing mediation committee and ECOMOG. "An effective ceasefire has been in place in Liberia since Bamako (summit in November, 1990) and this is holding".

Dr. Amos Sawyer, president of Liberia's interim government of national unity, agreed that ECOWAS has done a very good job in his country. "I must say to you, without equivocation", he told his colleagues on July 5, "that our

nation would have perished, were it not for the wise and timely decision of the ECOWAS standing mediation committee to send in the ECOWAS ceasefire monitoring group, ECOMOG".

"powers outside the sub-region". The summit communique endorsed the initiative of Cote d'Ivoire's President Felix Houphouët-Boigny, who on June 29-30 in Yamoussoukro called on five heads of government

This endorsement of political pluralism did not surprise anybody, least the heads of state of the sub-region themselves.

The problem though is not over, and the search for "a final solution" is broadening to include even

(Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia and Togo) to push for a quicker solution to the

Old loyalties die hard

Perhaps, the single most intractable problem of ECOWAS since its formation in 1975 has been the mutual distrust and suspicion that exist between Anglophone and Francophone countries. This in itself is a carry-over from the old rivalry between the erstwhile colonisers of the sub-region — Britain and France. To the French-speaking West African member states of ECOWAS, Nigeria symbolises perceived domination of the subregional economic block by their English-speaking neighbours. However, in Abuja last week, "a new spirit of regional solidarity was born, one of its elements being a decision by heads of state and government to denounce "gradually" their loyalties to inter-

governmental organisations, IGOs, in preference to one single subregional economic community. Following are samples of opinions expressed on the matter:

Mr. Abdou Diouf, President of Senegal and new Chairman of ECOWAS: We'll not accept any policy of division. The unanimous policy is that ECOWAS should be the only economic community in West Africa. We shall work out a rationale pragmatic plan that will integrate the benefits of existing IGOs into the framework of ECOWAS.

President Ibrahim Babangida: In our march towards greater integration, it is important that we consciously encourage

the community... to acquire even greater authority... The surrender of some aspects of our sovereignty to a supra-national authority is a natural part of this process.

Dr. Abass Bundu, Executive Secretary of ECOWAS: It is clear that the issues is a political one, first and foremost. A definitive political decision must now be sought.

Mr. Mbemba Jutta, Gambian Minister of Trade: We in West Africa have to outgrow micro-nationalism. We have to fully embrace the doctrine of a common and concerted approach to the problem of economic emancipation of the West African peoples... A major handicap to the

implementation of community programmes is the multiplicity of intergovernmental organisations in West Africa. Effective measures should be taken to rationalise the regional integration process so that eventually we can have only one economic community in West Africa.

Mara Celestin, Béninois journalist: Fear of domination of ECOWAS by Anglophone countries, especially Nigeria, exists among French-speaking states. It's real. That suspicion was reflected in the alignment of forces in the Liberian crisis. Francophone countries support Charles Taylor. I don't know why it is so, but I think the problem is with our leaders.

By Tawey Zakka

Liberian crisis. The meeting set up a five-member committee, an adjunct to the ECOWAS standing mediation committee. Its mandate was to plan for elections in Liberia within six months and monitor the ceasefire agreed upon by the feuding parties in Liberia in Lome earlier this year.

The Yamoussokro meeting also approached Mr. Jimmy Carter, former American president for the assistance of the International Negotiations Network (INN) in the monitoring process. (He has consented to the request). It also agreed that both the interim government and Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia, NPFL, "should undertake to maintain security in the respective zones under their control until the beginning of the electoral-processes". The ECOWAS final communique endorsed all those positions and added some of its own. The Authority appointed an ECOWAS observer group for the Liberian elections, a special fund for

manner the summit "presented" its terms. Questions were also asked, but mainly by newsmen, about the role of Mr. Carter's INN, whether ECOWAS was washing its hand clean of Liberia, and whether Liberia was being partitioned. The Yamoussokro accord was to be rocked by a crisis during the Abuja summit. A Charles Taylor delegation had arrived that Monday of July 4, but refused to take its seat when it was told that it was to be part of a Liberian delegation led by interim president Sawyer. The president would not be drawn into any discussion of the controversy though he granted an interview on the whole Liberian civil war (see box).

On the role of the International Negotiations Networks, ECOWAS executive secretary Bundu has this to say: "ECOWAS hasn't transferred its assumed responsibility for a search for a lasting solution to the Liberian crisis to anyone outside of the sub-

aspects of conducting supervising elections".

One other plus which the Community has chucked up would appear to be the willingness of member states to surrender old loyalties to ECOWAS to make it the only economic community in West Africa. The summit communique announced that the Authority of the ECOWAS resolved to designate it "as the single economic community in West Africa for the purpose of regional integration and the realisation of the objectives of the African Economic Community". A study is to be conducted by both ECOWAS and the other intergovernmental organisations, IGOs, to "formulate a pragmatic and flexible plan of rationalisation."

Meanwhile, the heads of state and government, the communique said, "agreed to progressively renounce" their loyalty to such IGOs to make ECOWAS stronger. Old loyalties have been difficult, particularly for Francophone countries, ever suspicious of their Anglophone counterparts' "demination" of ECOWAS to let go of. The election of President Diouf of Senegal as the new chairman of the organisation against the tradition of the "electing" leader of the host country, observers said, may have been intended to pacify the Francophone fears. After all, they said, President Babangida has held the chairmanship on two previous occasions. Even now, he is the chairman of OAU.

French and English-speaking heads of state and other top ECOWAS officers were in an expansive mood over the willingness of the sub-regional leaders to surrender a bit of their supremacy in the interest of their peoples (see box). Whether in practice it works is another matter altogether. For the moment, Mr. Diouf, the new chairman's word on it should be reassuring to pessimists. "We'll not accept any



Boligny: brokered peace plan



Jawara: former chairman

the elections commission, "to assure its integrity and inspire public confidence" and an ECOWAS trust fund for that country. Contribution to both funds would be voluntary.

Dr. Amos Sawyer, Liberia's interim president said he was "comfortable" with the Yamoussokro accord, but he openly expressed his displeasure over the

region". He confirmed though that it was he who proposed to the Carter Centre "a possible role that they could play in the electoral process", and that as far as he was aware, neither Dr. Sawyer nor Charles Taylor objected to it. "We do recognise", Dr. Bundu said, "that they have a capacity in that area of operation, mainly the technical

policy of division", he said, "multiplicity of economic organisations is bad because they dissipate effort and make financial contributions difficult to meet".

This would seem to be about all there is positive to see in ECOWAS' "not too happy a story", in the words of Alhaji Dauda Jawara, president of The Gambia. The organisation since 1975, has seen little action taken in its core programmes aside from the initial enthusiasm in ratifying the protocols of the treaty. All the 26 but three of them have been ratified. There action has stopped.

According to Dr. Bundu, "a wide range of decisions have been taken in the major areas, providing an adequate basis for initiating the integration process". Alas! these decisions have remained unimplemented. The decision on trade liberalisation, for instance, was taken in January last year. The aim was to promote intra-Community trade in selected industrial products through a policy of revenue loss compensation. A compensation budget was created for this.

According to Mr. Mbemba Jatta, Gambian minister of trade, and chairman of the ECOWAS council of ministers, all the eight member states that have submitted industrial products under the scheme "have paid almost the totality of their contributions to the compensation budget". Yet their approved products are not in the markets of member states because "other prior conditions", such as printing of the certificate of origin to accompany the goods, have not been met. President Babangida's disappointment was visible when he spoke on the issue on the summit's opening day. "The present low volume of intra-community trade is very regrettable... It is time we have a critical look at the entire provisions of the trade liberalisation scheme

and its implementation modalities so as to identify possible bottlenecks with a view to removing them".

Another area of "inactivity" is immigration, in particular, the protocol on free movement of persons. Its final phase went into effect last year, but according to the Nigerian leader, "it is not certain if all members are applying its provisions". In fact, an answer came from the Gambian trade minister: "only three member states have printed and issued the ECOWAS travel certificate and harmonised residence permit". ECOWAS executive secretary Bundu decries "the rigorous checks and conditions enforced on Community citizens at entry points", saying the practice "completely negates the spirit and letter of the protocol on free movement".

Nothing so graphically illustrates the problem of the Community as do the huge arrears of contributions to its annual budgets that member states have run up. As at December 1990, these

he himself openly admitted.

He identified five factors that he believed were responsible for ECOWAS remaining "a back-burner". These included the poor economic situation of the sub-region. An external debt of 70 billion dollars and a debt service of 8.6 billion dollars as at last year, he said, "confirmed the incidence of absolute poverty", a state of serious crisis. The other factors were national priorities, multiplicity of intergovernmental organisations, level of political commitments and institutional arrangements at the national level. Dr. Bundu's conclusion is that "only a miracle can save the sub-region from imminent collapse", a miracle which he, however, believes, "we, West Africans can work ourselves". But it calls for "a change of attitude to economic development, strong political leadership, commitment to collective self-reliance and regional integration, determination to sacrifice and giving of one's best for the common good".



Babangida and Sawyer: collective will and determination

arrears amounted to 20 million dollars, about twice the size of the annual operational budget of the ECOWAS secretariat. In Banjul in May 1990, the heads of state resolved to impose sanctions against defaulting states, such as stopping their quotas of staff in the secretariat. If the threat had been followed through, key staffers like Dr. Bundu, would have had to go, as

These are exactly the "ingredients of recovery" that the committee of eminent persons, headed by Nigeria's one-time head of state General Yakubu Gowon, which was inaugurated in Abuja last May, is expected to place before heads of state and government when they meet in Dakar, Senegal next year.

By Tawey Zakka

Jeddah air mishap

The Lord taketh

On their way home from the Holy Land 242 Nigerian pilgrims perish in a crash

News of the air disaster first reached the Nigerian public on Thursday morning. At about 10 o'clock, the BBC announced that a Nigeria Airways chartered DC 8, conveying pilgrims home from Saudi Arabia, had crashed at Jeddah's King Abdulaziz airport, killing everyone on board. As it turned out, the ill-fated aircraft was chartered from Canada by Holdtrade and was conveying 242 pilgrims from Jeddah to Sokoto's Sir

Abubakar III Airport. The plane took off at 6.40 am Saudi time, equivalent to 3.40 am local Nigerian time. Only eleven minutes later, its Canadian pilot turned towards the airport and requested permission to land.

The Saudi air controllers, sensing danger, granted permission and immediately cleared the runway for an emergency landing. In the event, the DC 8 never made it. Eye witnesses told FRCN Kaduna

reporters in Jeddah that the plane was on fire even as it approached the airport. Five kilometres shy of the runway, the plane disintegrated and showered debris over a very wide area. All 242 pilgrims on board, five officials of the pilgrims' transport agency Holdtrade as well as the 14 Canadian crewmen of the DC 8 perished in the crash.

The air accident caused widespread consternation in Nigeria, dwarfing the Okada plane



A crashed Nigeria Airways plane: bedevilled by disasters?

accident outside Sokoto barely two weeks before. Vice President Augustus Aikhomu, who was in charge in Lagos at the time, described the affair as a "national calamity". President Babangida himself cut short an important visit to eastern and southern Africa and rushed home to take charge of the aftermath. Reports spoke of panic in Sokoto, destination of the ill-fated aircraft, as relations of pilgrims went into deep mourning for loved ones even before officials released the list of passengers on the plane. With most of the state's 2,500 pilgrims to this year's Hajj already back in Sokoto, relatives had a fairly good picture, almost immediately, as to who was in the plane. Colonel Bashir Magashi, the state's governor, who had himself performed this year's Hajj, summoned an emergency meeting of the executive council as soon as the news broke.

Some angry relatives of pilgrims immediately charged that

diverted its plane to other places. As a result, the minister asked Nigeria Airways to step in and evacuate the remaining pilgrims.

It is yet to be determined if this ad hoc arrangement contributed to the disaster, but in the wake of the crash, Holdtrade was suspended from the Hajj operations altogether. Nigerian officials then moved to pick up the pieces, literally.

Saudi authorities scheduled a mass burial for Saturday in Jeddah, in keeping with muslim traditions of a prompt burial. Nigerian officials in Jeddah, led by the minister of state and the *Amirul Hajj*, the Emir of



Douglas: the skies become a graveyard

The air accident caused widespread consternation in Nigeria, dwarfing as it did the Okada plane accident outside Sokoto barely two weeks before. Vice President Augustus Aikhomu, who was in charge in Lagos at the time, described the affair as a "national calamity".

the disaster was preventable. The evacuation of pilgrims from Saudi Arabia was already a source of worry for Federal authorities. More than three weeks after the Hajj ended, thousands of pilgrims from three far northern states were still stranded at Jeddah. Two days before the crash, minister of state for external affairs Zakari Ibrahim, who co-ordinated the operation, charged in Jeddah that one of the transport agencies, Holdtrade, had defaulted on its contract terms and had

Daura, Muhammadu Bashar, requested Saudi permission to bath and clothe the crash victims prior to the burial, another key Islamic custom. The officials then made efforts to calm the remaining pilgrims, 172 of whom were from Sokoto State alone, assuring them of speedy evacuation by Nigeria Airways. The pilgrims apparently viewed it as a case of Allah retrieving His own; the minister of state told FRNC Kaduna that the pilgrims and himself "consoled and

condoled each other".

The air crash in Jeddah last week will go down in history as Nigeria's worst in more than 18 years. On January 22, 1973, a Jordanian Airlines Boeing 707 aircraft conveying Nigerian pilgrims home crash-landed at Kano airport and burst into flames, killing 173 pilgrims, although several others survived, including the pilot. Since then, Nigeria has recorded several crashes of both civilian and military aircraft. The worst of them occurred at Enugu in November 1983, when a Nigeria Airways F-28 plane landed two kilometres off the runway, killing 27 persons. Less than two months ago, a Nigeria Airways A-300 airbus skidded off the runway in Lagos and was severely damaged, although no one died. And less than three weeks ago, an Okada Air plane crash-landed at Dutsin Maigari, in Sokoto State, killing 3 of the 55 passengers and crewmen. Last week's crash at Jeddah brought this year's record of air accidents to a gruesome climax.

By Mahmud Jega
with reports



Abuja may be a "virgin land", a "land of national unity" and "a home for all Nigerians". It is also a land of equal opportunity, but it is certainly not a land of equal population. Everyone can aspire to rule the territory, but, yet again, it's not everyone that will win. That is the picture of the mayoral race in Abuja, the country's new capital. And this is just at the party level (the primaries are slated for the 27th of next month nationwide). The settlers, the indigenes; that is, are just out to prove, one more time, that a democratic choice usually strives on numerical strength. They are drumming it loud and clear that they have the numerical strength that would allow them the pleasure of picking a candidate for themselves. Of course that candidate must be one of them.

The fear of the indigenes is not unfounded. It is always the case that in a place such as Abuja where some ethnic groups have settled a long time ago, but suddenly find themselves competing for anything that belongs to "their territory" with some later-day settlers, the "locals" become more united, believing only one of them can think and act for them. The indigenes are therefore not worried about any "visitor" aspiring as long as he knows that they are reserving their precious votes for their kinsman.

Mr. Joseph Ayonmike does not quite think seriously of all the noise about the power of the indigenes.

Abuja mayoral race

Indigenes' show

The indigenes see this as an opportunity to assert themselves

Perhaps the only known "non-indigene" in the race now, is credited as the busiest of all the aspirants. Ayonmike is bidding for the job on the strength of what "I have done for the people". More on that later.

Right now, what is the situation of the parties themselves? Since the last local government

Joseph Ayonmike, especially, Kyauta Yepwi and Dr. Salihu Yunusa, the main contest is between Malam Adamu Shuaibu and Mr. Yunana Daudu.

Members of the SDP are obviously satisfied with the capabilities of Alhaji Ibrahim Tukura, even though lately Mr.



Daudu



Shuaibu

elections in which the two parties evenly shared the four local government areas, the National Republican Convention, NRC, seems to be taking over control of the territory. That explains the intensiveness of the race in the party. In fact members of NRC are so sure of producing the Mayor that a member told *Citizen* that "whoever wins in our party is automatically the mayor". And how true this is? For, in the Social Democratic Party, (SDP) only Malam Ibrahim Tukura seems to be a serious contender. On the other hand in the NRC, apart from the spirited showing of Mr.

Daniel Karo, a full-blooded "indigene" himself, has been getting favourable response from the people. Daniel Karo may be ahead of the other aspirants, like captain Fadawa, but what can he do to make up for what Alhaji Tukura has gained since the early stage of the bidding? Perhaps, Tukura's only worry now is how he is going to scuttle the ambition of any of NRC's formidable duo of Malam Adamu Shuaibu and Mr. Yunana Daudu.

It is not so easy in the NRC's camp. At least four aspirants are said to have the capabilities of springing surprises. This may not

be unconnected with the fact that the party has successfully dislodged the SDP from its pre-local government elections position of last year.

One name that is obtrusive to any discourse on the mayoral race is that of Mr. Joseph Ayonmike. Ayonmike is from Warri, Bendel State and he has settled in Abuja for such a long while now that he regards himself as a "full-blooded" indigene. A top member of his campaign directorate says it is the legitimate right of every Nigerian to aspire to rule Abuja, adding that they (Ayonmike's team) are not feeling the impact of the indigenes

it is as a result of the clamourings of the indigenes in general or the indigenous aspirants' trump card. One thing we do know very well is that the trio of NRC's Adamu Shuaibu and Yunana Daudu and the SDP's Ibrahim Tukura are all known staunch defenders of the rights of the "indigenes" of the territory. It is only in style that the three are distinguishable. The fact that in both the NRC and SDP, the Gwaris, the largest ethnic group in Abuja has not less than 10 candidates further underlines the ambition of the indigenes. Malam Adamu Shuaibu is Igbira from Abuja, one of the four local

ensure that even if he eventually loses to Yunana, it will be at a very high level. Indeed, the Mayorship is one such level.

Yunana has also one thing going for him. He was said to have served his people tremendously well as the pioneer secretary of Abuja. Many in government are said to have benefited from his goodwill. And it is that goodwill that he is relying on to see him through. But, as one top aide of Malam Adamu Shuaibu would probe, "what has anyone done for the indigenes of this territory, in the government, that Malam Adamu has not done more?" That is where Malam Adamu picks his baton.

Malam Adamu's service to the indigenes is said to predate Abuja itself. As a former headmaster and principal at Suleja local government of Niger State — which lost most of its territory to Abuja, Malam Adamu can be remembered as an aggressive exponent for education for the surrounding villages of Suleja. Most of them are Gwaris, and now Abuja indigenes. Malam Adamu was a former director, ministry of education in Niger State, a director of education in Abuja and also acting director-general. That is why people say he is the ideal choice. There is a snag here, though. Malam Adamu is Igbira, one of the indigenous ethnic groups, by far smaller than the Gwaris. Often times, competency, gets trashed by the decisive showing of ethnicity — especially when an ethnic group has an overwhelming numerical strength. That is one benefit both Yunana and Tukura are about to reap.

So while SDP's Tukura waits — that is the fruit of his running away (to SDP); at least, he is about to fight again — NRC's Malam Adamu Shuaibu and Mr. Yunana Daudu are about to go on a head-on collision to produce a winner for the party that's just waiting to claim the exalted Mayoral seat.

By Rabiu Barde



Tukura



Yunana

because they are not as parochial, unpatriotic and selfish as those who are trying to ride on the back of tribal sentiment to power. This same man has a poser for all those who are parading themselves as indigenes: "can anyone of them come out and challenge the fact that they have not done a tenth of what Ayonmike has done for the development of Abuja?" Ayonmike is the owner of the 5 star hotel, Agura. This overzealous aide was reminded that election is a game of number, and that the indigenes constitute over 80% of the voters of Abuja. And, that they want one of their own to be the Mayor.

Being an indigene seems to be the main albeit silent prerequisite for aspiring for the mayorship. If actually it is, it is not clear whether

government headquarters in the territory.

Mr. Yunana Daudu. That is one of three names on everyone's lips. The two others being Ayonmike for his *tour de force* — belief in Abuja as the land of equality; and Malam Adamu Shuaibu for his impressive track record, competence and exposure. Yunana is such a looming figure. At a time he cast his shadow on his fellow townsman, Tukura (both are from Rubocci) he (Tukura) had to decamp, in the process, postponing the eminent collision between them. The reasoning here is that since Tukura contested for a senatorial seat on the platform of the NPN during the Second Republic, he naturally belongs to the NRC. It is said that he went to the SDP just to

Onyekwere Ogba "NERFUND is on course"

Onyekwere O. Ogba, 41, is the managing director and chief executive of National Economic Recovery Fund, (NERFUND). Established in 1989 as a key part of the Structural Adjustment Programme, NERFUND was designed to provide credit facilities to small and medium-scale industries. Tola Sunday our business correspondent spoke with the chief executive of NERFUND on various aspects of the organisation's activities.

On response of people to the programme

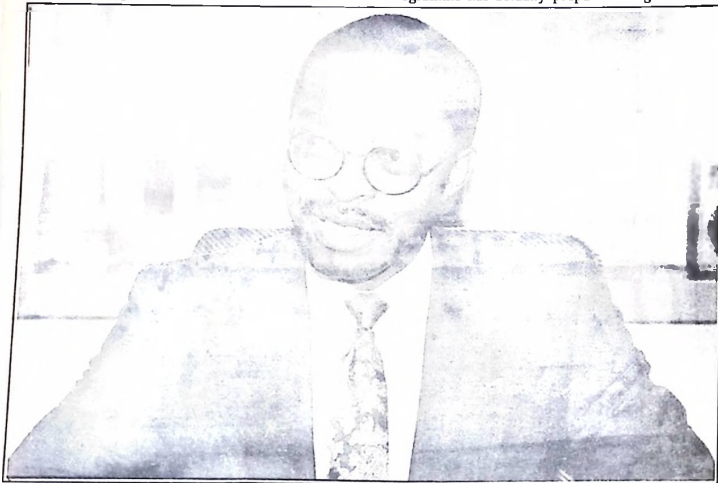
It has to be judged from their own experience. This is a country that had for quite sometime neglected production. Trading has always been more or less the peoples' culture. You export raw materials and import finished products. People get rich from exporting raw materials and importing finished products. You had the big importers, general merchants. So now to ask them

not to do that, to now transform that export, to change that export to a final product is strange. That is the reaction. You have to push people hard to do that. When you say this is the money to do it they will say give us the money let us do what we use to do. Why should you now restrict us? And that was part of the problem initially when NERFUND came.

With NERFUND, we monitor the purchase of machinery, we monitor factory, we don't let the bank do the ensuring and just inform us. We go and make sure that the thing is in place. If it is not in place you return the money immediately. That is what is in the agreement. So, it is like pushing people towards a certain direction.

On the shift from exporting to local production

It is already happening. The Structural Adjustment Programme has actually prepared the ground while



Ogba: we are like fertilizer

NERFUND is a catalyst. It is just like fertilizer to help the growth. The high cost of foreign currency has made many Nigerians not to be able to afford imported goods. But they still need the same goods, so somebody just has to transform it, from that raw materials to the final product. Usually if you transform it without all the transport cost and all the high cost of labour in overseas,

it will be cheaper. If you take cocoa and change it into Milo or Vitalo in this country it will be cheaper than when you export the cocoa, pay the transport, even with the same cost of manufacturing over there, and transport will increase the cost of the one manufactured in England. Nigerians don't have as much money but they will need this product, so it is now the duty of somebody to do the manufacturing in the country. That is what I mean when I said the Structural Adjustment Programme provided the ground and NERFUND became the fertilizer to help the growth.

On applications for NERFUND loan facility

Those sent by the bank is approximately 135 out of which 120 have been approved. For the rest not approved some of them will need more information, e.g. if you say the company belongs to a Nigerian and the names you sent does not sound like a Nigerian name and you don't send form C02 from the company registry showing the owner of the company. We want to make sure we keep within what the law says. It is not because I am part of those who made the law but I am looking at what the law says. What I have not done is to add my own ideas. That is dangerous because people can challenge you and you cannot really have anything to say. The law says it must be hundred per cent owned by a Nigerian and you must ascertain that. If you don't do it, it becomes a criminal act. There are some few other reasons.

On the value of NERFUND loans

The average loan value is 1.2 million Naira per project. We have agreement with 91 banks and more are coming. This is an indication that Nigerians have started to realise the potentials of joining the production bandwagon.

On projection of projects per year

We made a projection at the end of last year that we should complete 2000 projects this year. This year we had a slow start and that is because we had a new board.

On the composition of NASSI/NERFUND board

Everybody can't be on the board. I don't appoint board members. May be the question should be directed to those who appoint board members. But I know that I don't have negative relationship with small scale industrialists because we fund them.

If you don't belong to NASSI it does not make your project not to be approved. Whether you belong to NASSI or not, it is irrelevant in NERFUND scheme. Once your project is 100% owned by a Nigerian you have equal opportunity in the NERFUND scheme with any other person whose project is 100% owned by a Nigerian. It does not matter whether you are a member of NASSI or not. NERFUND does not discriminate



Finance minister: Alhaji



Budget and planning minister: Okongwu

against members of NASSI or MAN or NACCIMA or any other organised NGO's.

I don't really see what the problem is. But the question is that since this is available for every Nigerian, why would a particular sub-group want to be a member of the board? Do they want to discriminate against Nigerians who are not their members? What is their intention? What is it that they want to achieve by being on the board given that it is available to every Nigerian?

Also, NASSI means National Association of Small Scale Industries, which means their members are already small scale industrialists. They already had their industries, so why do they think that a special fund is created for them?

If I were a member of NASSI what I will do is come to NERFUND and collect the names of the persons you

when the data is staring in front of me 23 billion Naira that are bad loans which the banks have to write-off.

In this country you will find out that people don't pay back loan unless you are holding their houses. Except there is a segment of the society that pays back loan uncollateralled, and that is the segment where "esusu" works. That is why the People's Bank is a well designed programme because it is targeted on that segment. Besides that segment people don't repay loan. Go and ask NDE what their experience is today in collecting back money.

If NERFUND was to be a bank that lends out money directly, it would have to take collaterals otherwise it would be stupid to lend out without collaterals. The only other way which you can lend out without collaterals is that you invest 40% of a business and I put up 60% as NERFUND we go and buy.

The prospect of NERFUND is tied down to the prospects of production in this country. I think we've got to a point where we have no choice, as a nation. We have to produce. If we don't produce, we would be in so much trouble.

have given loan to so as to co-opt them to become our members. It is assumed that as a member of NASSI you already have a small scale industry and the only money you will need is that you want to buy spare parts, rebuild your factory or expand it. You have every chance to the fund like any other Nigerian.

On areas in the decree that needs improvement

There is nothing that is static. Life is dynamic; there is always change in the life of an organisation like that of human being, there are improvements. The president has just approved certain improvements on it (NERFUND Decree) which is going to come out in the amendment decree.

On effect of collateral on the NERFUND scheme

I like the topic collateral. If you will recall when the prudential guide line of the CBN was announced, it was found out that 23 billion Naira of bad loans was in the system. If you checked many of the loans are uncollateralled. You find that Nigerians never pay back loans that are not uncollateralled. It doesn't make sense if I am a banker to over-lend out money uncollateralled

On future prospects of NERFUND

The prospect of NERFUND is tied down to the prospects of production in this country. I think we've got to a point where we have no choice, as a nation. We have to produce. If we don't produce, we would be in so much trouble. The prospect is so bright that NERFUND would be able to fertilize the seed or plant more seed and it will grow. The prospect of NERFUND is bright given the society in which we are in; industrialisation takes a while but given sufficient time, Nigeria will get there.

On the fluctuating value of the Naira

There are local producers of machinery in this country. Those who patronise them are people who know that they get better value for their Naira by going to patronise them rather than British manufacturer. In small scale business, we are talking about corn-threshing or cassava grinding, there are very efficient locally manufactured machines that can do that very well, my own thesis is this: The more you make it difficult for Nigerians to buy from overseas, the better for the economy. I am not the one who decides the value of the Naira but the more difficult it is for Nigerians to buy overseas, the better for this country and if the depreciating value of the Naira will make it more and more difficult for Nigerians to buy overseas it is better for this economy. For the small manufacturer it is now a blessing in disguise that he now buys machines that are relatively cheaper, not the state-of-the-art machinery.

He can even refurbish some parts of the machinery using Nigerian engineers and Nigerian engineers can then learn something about the design.

By Tola Sunday

Aba market

Another feather for the giant

Aba, fondly called "the Japan of Nigeria," moves to consolidate its position in the country's economy with a 100 million Naira international-standard market

If you live in any of the urban areas of this country, chances are that Aba affects your life in one way or another. That little knot with which your mechanic got your car repaired and back on the road last time might have been made at the bustling commercial town. Same goes for that beautiful "packet" shirt you bought the other day — never mind that it had a "Made in England" label conspicuously hung on its collar.

Aba, fondly called *Enyimba* (Elephant) city and "the Japan of Nigeria," has a lure which thousands of traders from the four corners of the country find irresistible. One of the features which has spread its fame far beyond the vast borders of Imo State is the Ariaria market. Located on Faulks Road on the fringes of the town, Ariaria is reputed to be the biggest market in Imo State and the most popular east of the Niger, second only to the famous Onitsha market in Anambra State. It is there that many a talented fabricator heads for in search of a buyer after dutifully copying one mechanical component or the other at one of the many backyard "manufacturing firms" in Aba.

Now Ariaria is on the line for even more honours; it is on the road to being transformed into a model market of international standard befitting the status of the famous city which hosts it. The project, according to officials of Aba local government area, is to gulp in excess of 100 million Naira. Chief Charles Chike Ubani, chairman of Aba local

government, who confirmed the imminent take-off of the ambitious project to *Citizen* in Aba, said it was being undertaken in the interest of the traders. The Ariaria market of his dream will be constructed in four

phases. When completed, it will be well sealed up, making it impossible for either rain or sun to interfere with business activities in the market. It will also boast of facilities such as banks, police station, fire service station, a health centre and modern conveniences. The project, to be financed with private sector participation, will get off the ground whenever the multitude of traders who earn their daily bread from the sprawling market agree to vacate it for the bulldozers and the masons.

The transformation, when it is



Ubani: in the interest of the traders

finally done with, will be the height of glory for a market which came into being as a child of circumstance. Prior to the year 1974 there was no Ariaria market, except for a handful of timber sellers. The turning point

came when Ekeoha, the main market in Aba, was razed to the ground in an infamous fire disaster. Ariaria then came into the picture as a relief market. It was supposed to accommodate the traders until Ekeoha was rebuilt, but as the years quietly passed by, with the rebuilding of Ekeoha moving at snail speed, Ariaria gradually warmed itself into the center-stage. Seventeen years after it was reduced to mere rubble, Ekeoha situated along Asa Road and now housing the Imo shopping complex, is still begging

for completion and a return to life. Emma Ngere, Aba local government information officer, told *Citizen* last week that it would be wrong for the local government authorities to continue watching

Ariaria expand and decay without taking action. "By omission or commission the market is far expanding and is taking over the other markets in the state," he said. "It has far outgrown the name relief

market right now, Ariaria is a regional market; it is not serving only Imo State, but also Rivers, Cross River, Akwa Ibom and Anambra States."

By Isaac Umunna in Aba

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Merchant banks get pass mark

Merchant banks in the country have been commended for fulfilling their assigned targets of credit disbursement to agriculture and manufacturing. The Manufacturing Association of Nigeria (MAN) half-yearly economic review (from July-December 1990) shows that merchant banks loans and advances to agriculture stood at 16.0 per cent, one per cent above the prescribed target. The same level was achieved in January - June 1990.

Contrarily, the review shows negative deviation of the performance of the commercial banks from the prescribed targets of

credit allocation to the high priority sectors.

In both period under review and the corresponding period of the year, their credit allocation to the high priority sectors stood at 46.0 per cent in each period, while the low priority sectors received 54.0 per cent. The same pattern was obtained in the first six months of 1990.

The economic review alleged last year that there was a deviation of 4.0 per cent which was below the target by 5.0 percent in January-June 1990. Financial analysts believe that commercial banks still consider the manufacturing sector as insufficiently attractive for loan disbursement.



Fafowora: a plus for Merchant's banks

Business by Telly

A new programme called Business TV has begun on NTA 2 channel 5. The programme is designed to take care of the interest of the business class.

Anchored by Ted Iwere, publisher and

chief executive of *Business Magazine*, the programme comes up every Thursday from 10 to 10.30 pm. It is sponsored by Worldwide Business Media Ltd, Publishers of *Business Magazine*.



Iwere: taking care of business

NewDEVCO forges ahead

Last week Thursday, at the Kaduna Durbar Hotel, Banquet Hall, the Board of Directors of NewDEVCO, a subsidiary stock brokerage arm of New Africa Merchant Bank Limited, held their annual general meeting to present this year's annual report and statement of accounts for the financial year ended 31st March, 1991.

Mallam Dahiru Mohammad, the chairman of the company, in his statement, reminded the directors of their collective "objectives to get the company resuscitated from its previous slumber as well as providing a stockbroking arm for New Africa Merchant Bank Limited, a subsidiary of New Nigeria Development Company Limited (the NNDC). During the course of the year under review, NNDC handed over the management and control of NewDEVCO to New Africa Merchant Bank, under terms and conditions that are beneficial to all three

parties - thus NNDC, New Africa Merchant Bank and NewDEVCO, making the management agreement renewable after the initial period of five years.

The major aims of the management agreement is to train staff, deploy competent staff to the company and provide stock broking facilities to New Africa Merchant Bank business by the company.

The company has already solved the greatest problems of its stock brokers by fully computerising the company thus making it easier for their staff to operate on the stock brokerage business of generating contracts notes, balancing with other stockbrokers and debiting and crediting of customers' accounts. The Kaduna head office of the company, which was closed sometime ago owing to some unavoidable financial predicaments, was opened in February this year and is now fully operational at No 4, Waff Road, Kaduna. Six new products were introduced in the

company in order to diversify its income base, in addition to its traditional function of stockbroker. Among the new products introduced are commodity brokerage and trading, treasury financial intermediation and nominal holding service.

Malam Dahiru who is also the managing director of the New Africa Merchant Bank also revealed that the

company an impressive record profit, before taxation of 380,910 Naira in 1991 against 246,654 Naira in 1991. The chairman specifically commended the acting general manager and his team of experts for their remarkable performance within a short period in operation.

The company was incorporated in 1978 and got its licence in 1979 and started operation that same year.

By Abdullahi Usman



Mohammed: chairman NewDEVCO

John Holt welcomes MacRae

British high commissioner to Nigeria Christopher MacRae, recently paid a courtesy call on John Holt PLC at the Ebani House, group head office, Lagos. The

memorable occasion witnessed a get together group picture with some directors of the company.

The occasion was to welcome the new high commissioner to Nigeria.

By Tola Sunday



From left, Ladbroke, Eze, Macrae and Jonsen

Togo

Pathfinding

President Eyadema bows to pluralism, but few believe him

Few Togolese believe it would hold. True, President Gnassingbe Eyadema agreed at a meeting with the opposition last month after several days of clashes between pro-multi party demonstrators and government troops to convene a national conference on the political future of the country. This has suffered two postponements. It was shifted first from June 24 to 26 and then to July 8.

Whatever doubt there was disappeared as the conference finally began in the capital, Lome, last week. Over 800 delegates from opposition groups and professional associations are participating in the one month talks which is expected to choose a transitional government in preparation for multiparty elections. Ironically, the talks is taking place at the national unity house, the former headquarters of the ruling *Ressemblement Du Peuple Togolais* (RPT). The rest of the country's 3.5 million people would watch the proceedings which the government has promised to broadcast live.

Prominent among the delegates are former OAU secretary general, Mr Edem Kodjo, Abdullahi Sallami who returned from exile in New York and son of Togo's assassinated first leader, Gilchrist Olympio who returned to Togo at the weekend after 25 years in exile. His home coming like all others is a result of the general amnesty government granted all political exiles. By Tuesday, the second day of the conference, members began settling down to serious business. A seven member coordinating bureau was consti-

tuted to conduct the talks. To lead the committee is 79 year old Nauso Karamakou; 16 year old Lokou Asogha is the secretary. The chairman, a former minister of agriculture in President Olympio's regime, was nominated following agreement by the government and the opposition that the chairman must be the oldest while the youngest among the delegates would be the secretary. The committee is also expected to conduct the election of substantive conference chairman.

The conference, though without a formal agenda, is expected to focus on the political, economic, and social life of the country. An opposition spokesman said there will be a post-mortem of the performance of the president and his government.

President Eyadema came to power in 1966, three years after the assassination of President Olympio and his regime has enjoyed relative peace and stability. Despite the upheavals taking place elsewhere in the continent, Eyadema has kept strong rein on this tiny country. After two decades in power however, cracks began to show. In 1986, a coup attempt to unseat him failed. Four years later several people were killed in Lome when loyal troops were called out to quell demonstration against the trial of two men sentenced to imprisonment for distributing anti-government leaflets. Togo was soon caught in the whirlwind call of multi party democracy sweeping across the globe, first in Eastern Europe and lately in Africa.

After several days of demonstrations and strikes calling for an

end to his one party rule, Eyadema reluctantly accepted to convene a conference at a meeting with the opposition Front for Democracy (FOD) last June. Returning from the OAU summit at Abuja Eyadema was met by a huge crowd of anti-government demonstrators at Lome airport. Troops were called out, not to shoot demonstrators but to remove the statue of the president strategically located in the headquarters of the ruling party. Before then a similar statue had been damaged by angry demonstrators.

Not satisfied, the opposition pressed for Eyadema's resignation or in the alternative hold a national conference to debate the country's future. Though loathing the idea of national conference that would reduce him to a titular head of state,



Eyadema: few believe him

as most of his powers would be transferred to an elected interim prime minister, the possibility of a coup was real.

The conference is expected to appoint a prime minister that would head a transitional government to organise a multi party democratic elections.

By Abu Mommoh with agency reports

Algeria

Business as usual

Chadli Benjedid sticks to his repressive hold on power

Four days after meeting four members of the Islamic Salvation Front *majlis* (consultative assembly), the Algerian government felt confident enough to arrest the two leaders who took over leadership of FIS following the incarceration of its leader, Dr. Abassi Madani and his deputy Sheikh Ali bn Hajj.

The number three man in FIS, Sheikh Hashim Sahnoun, took over as acting leader. He was arrested July 7. Mohammad Sayeed took over immediately. He too was arrested as he addressed a press conference. With 40 officially confirmed dead and over 1,200 in detention, the Ghazali regime waited for the worst.

Nothing happened. It then felt confident to tell the truth — 70 people had died and more than 6,000 were in detention. The curfew enforced June 5 following the violence between security forces and FIS supporters was lifted. Tanks and military vehicles deployed around Bab al-Oued and Maydan al-Shuhada, the two main FIS strongholds in central Algiers were withdrawn.

The government, carrying the burdens of a battered economy, took up the begging bowl. Ghazali sent a passionate appeal to the European Community ministers meeting to consider Algeria's 900 million Dollars request. The ministers decided to put off decision on the plea until September.

"We are in the most critical financial situation the country has ever known," Ghazali said as he sent another appeal to the World Bank. He also promised parliament to call on IMF to "ask in what way

help can come without recourse to debt-rescheduling".

Besides economic problems, the government — led by the National Liberation Front, NLF since independence in 1962 — has been torn by internecine and factional struggle since the death of Houari Boumediene. The threat of victory by the FIS in the coming elections helped to seal the cracks. As a result, government was able to count on the support of such "opposition" figures as Hussain Ayat Ahmed of the Socialist Forces Party and former President Ahmed Ben Bella. But the elections, scheduled for June 27, were postponed following demonstrations by FIS supporters. Since then the government has been taking its time.

To head off some of the sharp difference the common enemy didn't help the coalition to paper over, Ghazali put off his appearance before parliament 10 days ago. Yet since he put off the parliamentary meeting which was to consider his government's programme on Wednesday July 3, the prime minister has been grappling with how to stop the FIS having a role in Algeria's future. His dilemma, as one paper put it, is "how to have democracy and yet prevent the most popular party from winning".

And for good measure, the most popular party, was as blunt as he was brutal. Sheikh Ali bn Hajj's sight saw beyond even Algeria. He said, "let the world know that our mission is not to win the Algerian townships and provinces but to establish the *Khilafa* and to run the *Ummah* according to the Book of Allah".

Certainly this didn't sound like

democracy — to Algeria's leadership and their admirers on the other side of the Mediterranean.

The government is busy putting together the case against the FIS leadership. It has already accused Dr. Abassi Madani and the three others of "forming, organising, unleashing and conducting an armed conspiracy against state security".



Madani: detained to kill FIS

The question now is not whether but when the four will appear in court — where they will quickly become free because forming and campaigning for an Islamic party is no longer illegal. It has been legalised by President Chadli Benjedid. A safer and easier alternative is to try them under emergency regulations that will allow the government to do with them as it wishes.

Since official thinking seems to indicate that without them, FIS is as good as dead, the government may find it tempting to dispose of them. Tempting but dangerous for governments, as many past dead governments will testify.

By Adamu Adamu with agency reports

South Africa

ANC's new look

Emerging from its 48th conference, the Congress is all set to rule

After five days of intense debate on key political issues, 2,000 delegates to the ANC's first national conference inside South Africa for more than thirty years agreed early last week to soften their stand on the issue of sanctions. For some time, hardliners within the ANC were known to favour the continuation of sanctions against their country until apartheid is completely dismantled. This position apparently disturbed the ANC's widely travelled leadership, which feared that President de Klerk's reforms were eroding the case for sanctions in much of Western Europe, North America and Japan. Earlier this year, the head of the ANC's International Affairs Department, Thabo Mbeki, was said to have prepared a memo for the National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting in Harare, suggesting a softening of Congress' position, but hardliners voted down the idea.

Last week, under pressure from the ANC's elderly leaders, hardliners caved in on the sanctions issue. Summarising the outcome during the closing session on Sunday, Nelson Mandela said the ANC was adopting a "flexible and imaginative" approach to the issue of sanctions for fear that it might be left "holding an empty shell". The purpose of the new approach, Mandela said, is to "keep this weapon in our hands". The ANC leader revealed that the conference had been urged by the leadership "to consider using the phased perspective on the question of sanctions, and we have not been disappointed".

This phased perspective is be-

lieved to comprise a three-phase lifting of sanctions, closely linked to de Klerk's reforms. First, the ANC will agree to the removal of sporting, travel and cultural restrictions after the white regime removes all "obstacles to negotiations", particularly violence in the black townships. The second phase will involve the removal of trade and investment boycotts after an interim government is installed in Pretoria, and the third phase, to follow the adoption of a non-racial constitution and general elections, will be an end to the oil and arms embargo.

The conference followed up this decisions with a reconstitution of its leadership. On Friday, when delegates voted to fill the top leadership positions, the great Nelson Mandela was returned unopposed as the new president, a position he occupied prior to his arrest and subsequent conviction for treason in 1962. Former President Oliver Tambo was unanimously elected to the position of National Chairman, a new position from which he will preside over meetings of the NEC. Walter Sisulu, who also spent three decades in jail with Mandela, was challenged for the position of deputy president by Thabo Mbeki and by Harry Gwala, the leader of the Natal Midlands branch of the ANC. Sisulu, a former secretary-general of the ANC and internal leader during the leadership's exile, won the contest by a wide margin. Cyril Ramaphosa, leader of the powerful National Union of Mineworkers who led the great miners' strikes of 1987 and 1988, defeated incumbent Alfred Nzo to become the new secretary-general.

A total of 102 persons contested for positions on the 50-member NEC. Among them were 25 women, including Winnie Mandela; Albertina Sisulu, co-president of the UDF; Adelaide Tambo, Ruth Mompati and the president of the ANC Women's League, Gertrude Shope. After the vote on Sunday, 41 men and 9 women were elected to the NEC. Scoring the highest votes, 1,858, was Chris Hani, chief of staff



Mandela: no challenge for the great

of the *Umkhonto we Sizwe*. Thabo Mbeki polled 1,824 votes to place second, while Joe Slovo, secretary-general of the South African Communist Party, polled 1,769 votes to place third. Winnie Mandela, still appealing a six-year jail term for kidnap, polled 1,057 votes to place twentieth.

By Mahmud Jega with agency reports

Iraq

America's pound of flesh

Iraq submits a list of its nuclear equipment. America says it is not enough

It looks like America and Iraq are heading for another war. This time it is over whether or not Iraq has come clean with its nuclear programme. Last Monday, Iraq submitted a 26-page list of its nuclear equipment and facilities to UN Secretary General, Javier Perez de Cuellar and the International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA, in Vienna, and said that is all it has.

However, an American state department spokeswoman, Margaret Tutwiller, claimed that the list contained "significant omissions and discrepancies" and is therefore totally unacceptable to America.

UN officials also said the list showed that Iraq had been carrying out "extensive covert nuclear programme" and that its scientists are versed in all three processes available to produce enriched uranium, one of the key elements needed to make a nuclear bomb.

The list was provided in the wake of complaints by the UN that the Iraqi army was obstructing the work of its inspectors sent to fish out and immobilise its weapons of mass destruction and threats by failed to America to attack Iraq again if failed to co-operate with the inspectors.

In a letter to De Cuellar, the Iraqi foreign Minister, Ahmed Hussein, said information had been withheld for fear that exaggerated reports might provoke further American aggression. He also said that Iraq had already destroyed a substantial amount of its nuclear equipment in order to reduce the cost of its destruction. The UN had decided that Iraq would have to pay for the elimination of its weapons.

In the list sent to the UN, Iraq said that two large nuclear reactors built in the 60s and a number of nuclear research laboratories were destroyed by American bombing during the war. It bitterly accused the west of attacking without the slightest concern for the danger of a serious nuclear accident leading to extensive damage to civilian population and environment.

The Iraqis also said that the purpose of the wanton attacks was to cut short Iraq's scientific progress so that Arab nations would continue to be left behind in human civilisation. It also said that much of the details of its nuclear programme were conducted in secrecy because Israel bombed its nuclear reactor with impunity in 1981.



De Cuellar: UN not happy

Margaret Tutwiller, however claimed Tuesday that much of the information Iraq divulged did not tally with the "scientific data" that America had of Iraq's nuclear programme. She said Iraq gave an assessment of uranium enrichment to four per cent, a figure which she described as "inaccurate."

She claimed that Iraq had twice moved "sensitive and special equipment used in uranium enrichment" and warned that it must fully declare its nuclear potential. The curious aspect of the build up to another war is that America had said during and after its war that it had "effectively destroyed Iraq's nuclear capability."

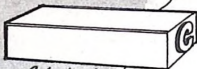
Asked about this, Tutwiller said she would stand by America's intelligence assessments and that "we feel that we have a pretty good picture of what's going on."

Curious too, is the meeting in Paris of representatives of the five members of the UN security council. The members, France, Britain, America, the Soviet Union and China, met for two days and "endorsed a principle that the Middle East should be a nuclear-free zone with all weapons of mass destruction banned from the region."

The meeting said the nations of the Middle East should accept international control on their nuclear activities, including a total ban on the import and production of components used in making nuclear weapons. The members met to seek ways to control the arms trade.

It is a difficult proposition in that the five members of security council are also the five biggest manufacturers and suppliers of arms, including the weapons of mass destruction. It will also be interesting to see how this "principle" would be applied to Israel since all, with the possible exception of China, are totally committed to its defence.

By Mohammad Bomoj with agency reports



Gutenberg's Movable Type

Shakespeare's Quill Pen



Robinson Crusoe's Bottle Post

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a Great Citizen
to communicate
Great news
and Sound views

Through history, we learned great ideas make great citizens. Like Gutenberg, Shakespeare, Crusoe. They all left their footprints on the sands of time.

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BILKISU YUSUF

places and old grudges and resentment among envious fellow smugglers were revived. Someone in the corridors of power listened to his adversaries and decided that Dan Sumogal's wings must be clipped. So it was that a new team of custom officials were posted to the Niger Republic border who not only refused to pay homage but also

own answers. First, he asked me to show him where smuggling was prohibited in the Qur'an. No answer. "I am an honest trader who abides by Islamic tenets. I don't steal money from the public like the "saints" who devise all these policies to curb smuggling. I do not hoard wealth. I spread it through philanthropy, the pen robbers don't". Secondly he pointed out that "pen robbers" and drug barons do more harm to the nation's economy than he would ever do. Thirdly, he advocated leadership by example where the elites would shun smuggling before they pontificate on its ills. But why did he have to bribe officials? If the officials do not think it is wrong to strike a deal he will do everything to protect his interests. Weird logic? Well, the Dan Sumogals of Kano, Katsina and Sokoto are still very active.

Last week, *Citizen's* survey on the smuggling of petroleum products told a sad story. These states have been experiencing an artificial fuel scarcity attributed to the activities of smugglers. A tanker of petrol which sells for 10,000 Naira in Nigeria is smuggled to Konni or Maradi in Niger Republic where it sells for 128,000 Naira!! The proceeds are then diverted into smuggling cigarettes, wheat flour and "tounst" cars into Nigeria.

In Katsina indefatigable Governor Madaki is not taking this affront lying low. He embarked on a patrol and captured oil tankers on their way to Niger Republic through Jibia. In Sokoto a government task force exists but the smuggling syndicate is invincible. The law enforcement agents and customs officials know why. Until these people are ready to learn a few lessons in patriotism and the art of resisting *kola* they will remain an ineffective tool for combating the mounting challenges of the smuggling syndicate.

intercepted lorry loads of Dan Sumogal's consignments. That jolted him out of his cocoon of safety. He pulled strings in several places to get his goods released without luck. In the end he confronted the leader of the daring team that seized his goods. The guy didn't budge and told Dan Sumogal that his assignment was to eradicate economic saboteurs. He got a cryptic response from an incensed Dan Sumogal who told him that he would fail in his mission because smuggling will continue with or without him. And it did. In fact it still does.

By a twist of fate, the team leader travelled home that weekend, only to die in a ghastly accident along the Lagos-Ibadan expressway. The story of his encounter with Dan Sumogal spread like wildfire and sent shivers down the spine of the remaining team members. They released his goods and looked the other way as Dan Sumogal continued with business as usual.

I stumbled on Dan Sumogal at the launching of a fund for the rehabilitation of destitutes organised by the Kano State Chapter of the Nigeria Union of Journalists. When I asked whether he realised that smuggling was an act of economic sabotage, he had his



Smuggler's logic

■ di dan Sumogal is the pseudonym for a bicycle repairer I knew in my childhood days. He later abandoned that trade to take up dealership in second hand clothes. The ware came in huge bundles smuggled into the country from neighbouring countries, Niger, Benin or Cameroun. It became a lucrative trade and Dan Sumogal prospered. He expanded his smuggling activities into other areas, to include Benson & Hedges and Rothmans cigarettes, Dutch wax prints and perfumes. As business boomed he raked in money and made a name as one of Kano's richest smugglers. As he climbed the ladder of success he acquired friends along the way, customs officials, security agents and other categories of law enforcement agents. One of his good friends was an area court judge. His profession was not a hindrance to their friendship which made so many things happen with effortless ease. Newly posted officers from these agencies paid him homage on arrival in Kano. Of course patriotism went into cold storage, while greed and avarice thrived. Dan Sumogal metamorphosed into a smuggling kingpin.

If Dan Sumogal made friends in powerful places he also made foes. Tongues got loosened in several

Citizen

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Muda Lawal: a pearl in his days, a hero to be emulated. Page 47

Citizenship

by Osamu Akimoto



...NONE!... EXCEPT THOSE IN CALABAR, KANO, LAGOS AND SOKOTO!....

?!?...
...AND ALL OF THEM ARE YOUR CHILDREN?!... I GUESS YOU'LL HAVE TO DO THE COUNTING YOURSELF...

YES!... ALL OF THEM!... GIVEN BY GOD!... THAT'S NO PROBLEM, YOUR MEN WILL COVER THE OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY!....
...I TRUST YOU CENSUS PEOPLE!

WE ARE NOT CENSUS PEOPLE!

... CAN'T FINISH THAT
...TILL YOU'RE NINETY!

?!



Sea robbers rise again

Ahoy! old sea dogs, Ahoy pyrates! Ahoy secret cult watchers! The war on campus cults is far from over. In the University of Lagos, UNILAG secret cult members from the *Black Axe* group were bold enough to declare war on their born again saboteurs from the Scripture Union (S.U.). The SU students won the day when they routed the *Black axes* of Unilag.

In the midst of all this cult or no cult confusion has arisen a loud voice from the Pyrates confraternity, the "benign" organisation which gave birth to the "cancerous" secret cults that are now giving us sleepless nights. The pyrate voice is a journal called *Frontline*. A copy of the first edition caught the privacy of my watchful eye.

According to the journal, its editorials "will be pungent and reflect original opinions from pyratichal minds". A few down-to-earth columns are to be included such as features, classified adverts and business tips. But the most bizarre is the quaint corner. Fancy this quote titled *On Pyratichal Contradictions*:

"I tell you, extremism in anything is bad. Take odas is odas, for instance. It is simple and basic to pyrates. Yet, pushed to the absolute, it generates its opposite. It ceases to be an effective tool of organisation. Rather, it becomes a tool for the negative dominance of the pyratichal spirit by authoritarian egos. It is like

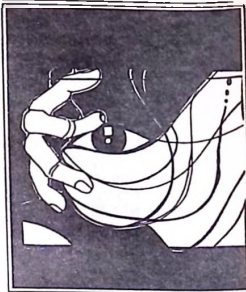
light which is needed for us to see. Yet, in the presence of extreme white light, we all become blind.

"Therefore, odas is odas should never be a slogan. When odas is odas becomes a slogan, confusion reign supreme and the ship becomes rudderless. Common sense should prevail in all circumstance. Needless to say "Sense before Slogan" itself should never be a battle cry or else it becomes a slogan and all is lost. Pushed to its extreme, common sense becomes common slogans (or common nonsense). Since common sense is not common, you can see why "Odas is Odas" makes sense. It is all very simple. Or is it?" If you don't understand this just go to sleep Ahoy!

I disown you !

The complex world of banking and finance is beyond the simple mind of an innumerate grapevine columnist. But I am amazed at how strong the survival instinct is among bankers. And so it came to pass that one of the fastest growing banks in the world has shrunk into the most scandalous in weight.

I am talking about the Bank of Credit and Commerce International Limited, BCCI. A giant with a looming presence world wide now has all its assets frozen in Europe, Japan,



Bangladesh, Sierra Leone, United States you just name the country. Why? You see someone is so unkind to think the bank is involved in money laundering, transfer of ill-gotten wealth from drugs kleptomaniac, corrupt leaders and other unethical banking practices.

The BCCI branch in Nigeria is not amused by the implications of this "bankgate", (no water this time) on its credibility at home. A spirited release is therefore promptly issued where BCCI Nigeria is disowning the mother, referring to it as a "minority share holder". Anxious customers are assured that events in Europe, United States and other countries have no bearing on the bank's operations in Nigeria. So business continues as usual while the son disowns the mother. May we never live to see the day the mother will disown the son. Amen.

It's wrong time,

The gentleman appears on the screen at prime time as you are watching TV. He's as smooth as silk. He tells you he's a systematic guy, that's why he plans his family with the right time product. He holds a packet to show you what it is. What a shame. Is NTA so desperate to make money that it

does not screen the type of advertisement it dishes out to its "30 million" viewers?

It is time to tell the promoters of that Right Time condom adverts that they have chosen the wrong place to sell their product. Family planning should not degenerate into planning and promoting prom-

iscuity. Like all other contraceptive devices and drugs, condoms should not be advertised indiscriminately. The Planned Parenthood Federation which is the agency responsible for implementation of family planning policies should call these "wrong timers" to order. It is one way of safe guarding our youth from the moral aridity that is threatening to swallow us.

Poetic inspiration

Beauty according to philosophers "lies in the eyes of the beholder". Of all the literature on beauty, desire and love, the most elucidating are poems composed by those moved by beauty, inspired by desire or mesmerised by love. The lines below are proof of the power of beauty, love and desire.

My love

When in the heat of my anger
I behold the exquisite beauty of your face
A myriad of emotions assail my being
And my anger evaporates in a wisp of smoke
For your presence is soothing balm
I sacrifice my evil nature
At the altar of your captivating smiles
For your love has always been
An antidote for my pain
I listen no more to the snoring
And backbiting of the world
For with you, my dreams are fulfilled
In your arms, an inner satisfaction
Pervades my entire being.

Ifanyi Omeni

Beauty

To reach out and feel is better
Than to hear the trumpets blown;
Beauty celebrated with gongs is mere folly:
Let it touch the nostrils is greater
With a love pervading and a crown
For beauty unexpressed, pure and holy.
Let it touch the eye; sniff its smell,
And let him all awe when it he sees
Open-mouthed as he stares and stares:
Let such a beauty catch like a spell,
A waking dormant desires; and with ease
Stirring ripples of small, throbbing fires.

Of desire

Bursting from the lap of the earth
Enwebbed in mystery
Probing in the crevasses
Of desire,
Questioning for things that have a body
Up, spiral tall and tough.

Within this gloom
I extricate myself
From psychic fog, ephemeral murk
And the jam-packed chambers
Of desire.

A washed from gory visions
Found in soulless imprisonment
With a glint in the eye
Of abrupt realisation, my teeth
Flash in the sun
Of desire.

And my fingers intercept
The passing waves of time
Probing in the turbulent waters of the heart
Once in a while catching
Things with a body —
Reeds
And fishlets
Of desire.

Ibrahim Sheme,

Lest I be deranged

In separation though
I hear thy voice
A voice with the subtleness
Of the morning dew and spell-casting
like the night-flute

I conjure thy image
That full of clarity of thy seductive eyes
those sensuously parted lips
that overtly created gait
I feel thy warmth
A sensation that createth
warmth soft and softer than fur
Thy absence derangeth the sanest
killeth all appetite extinguisheth



all hopes and worst than concurrent
AIDS to bodily human physiology
Oh Laraba, when do I hold and
cuddle thee

Or how beareth I thy absence
Tell me in that subtle voice
Lest I be deranged.

Mustash

Nightingale

Sweet melodic bird
immortal in poet's minds; songs
sweetly orchestrated in eardrums
at the fragrant bush behind
Silver moon sailing and smiling
across the ever waving trees' fingers
the song burst from a tree's hand:
chook, chook....
pioo, pioo, pioo....
all in a crescendo chucking
of night's nightingale's clout -
clucking notes of mellow
"aploonso" my apothosis
thou had thro' thy voice rendered
me "aphasia" wish I, o' wish, wish I
could envelope your songs in an
earthen pot container forever where
when I need it: those songs of a lover
crying out her heart for love:

O' nightingale
sing more songs of love, for
sorrow smitten souls to mend
whose hopes 'd been sapped
but theirs: persistent love
twinkling, twinkling every star
Obinna Chileze

Treating Ulcer

How is peptic ulcer treated?

Treatment is designed to heal the ulcer by reducing the amount of acid secreted by the stomach and neutralize any excess acid. The initial healing of an ulcer is not usually difficult: The problem is to keep it healed, since this is a chronic ailment that may subside and flare up many times.

None of the soft mushy foods (puddings, gelatin, milk) traditionally prescribed for ulcer patients have been found to speed healing. An ulcer patient can eat and drink what he or she wants (including alcohol in moderation) with these exceptions: coffee and other drinks that contain caffeine and are potent acid stimulators and highly spiced foods when the ulcer is active and painful.

Eating frequent small meals and having a bedtime snack are not advised for ulcer patients. They're better off eating a normal, nutritionally balanced diet.

Antacid preparations, which neutralize acid, are widely used and offer some pain relief. Sedatives, tranquilizers, antispasmodics, and other drugs that inhibit or block the nervous impulses that stimulate acid production often are prescribed too. But these medications affect the whole body and may have undesirable side effects, such as drowsiness and nausea. What is needed are drugs to specifically block acid secretion.

Are acid-blocking drugs available?

The first one to be proved for general use after lengthy trials is called cimetidine, marketed under the trade name Tagamet. In studies conducted thus far, cimetidine has

By Dan Kaercher

proved very effective and relatively free of significant side effects in treatment of chronic ulcer conditions. It works by inhibiting the action of histamine, a body chemical involved in acid secretion. According to Dr. Harold Roth of the National Institute of Arthritis, Metabolism, and Digestive Diseases (NIAMDD), cimetidine "appears to diminish the amount of hydrochloric acid secreted into the stomach more effectively and safely than other drugs currently available." To



be effective, cimetidine must be taken regularly as prescribed by a physician.

When is surgery necessary?

In a relatively small percentage of cases—when the ulcer becomes so deep that there is perforation and bleeding, or when the stomach outlet to the duodenum becomes obstructed by ulcer scar tissue or

muscle spasm—an operation may be necessary.

One type of operation, *Gastric resection*, involves removing the part of the stomach that produces the hormone that stimulates acid secretion, as well as removing some acid-secreting tissue. In an accompanying procedure, called *vagotomy*, the surgeon cuts the vagus nerves that link the brain with the stomach. Most ulcers heal when the main vagus nerves are severed, but there can be complications because the stomach may not empty as quickly after the surgery.

A significant advance is a new operation called highly selective vagotomy. Here the surgeon cuts only the smaller branches of the vagus nerves that are directly responsible for acid secretion. This procedure often heals the ulcer without the complications that can accompany a vagotomy.

Other promising, but still experimental, new techniques involve using an endoscope to cauterize bleeding ulcers and spraying the sore with a clotting substance or plastic-like coating to stop bleeding. These procedures may eventually be done in a doctor's office in many instances.

What about psychological factors?

Psychological stresses do not play as large a role as traditionally believed, but they do contribute to peptic ulcer conditions. The ulcer patient needs to understand the stress factors—such as family or career conflicts—that aggravate the condition and to make adjustments whenever possible. Both patient and doctor should work closely together to minimize excessive stress.

Culled from *Better Homes*

Drama

A sour toast for Soyinka

Not what it was intended to be

SAND! The season of African, American and Nigerian dramas which opened with fanfare in February was billed to end in style. And what better way than by presenting excerpts from what they termed "The best of Wole Soyinka". Conceived by Chuck Mike, a student of Soyinka since 1978 and later a colleague with whom he had collaborated on a number of productions, "Toasts for Soyinka" was first presented at the University of Ife to mark Soyinka's noble prize in 1986. Now, of course, it was meant to celebrate the close of a successful six-month season by the collective artistes or was it?

The date was Saturday, 6th July. Venue, Pec Repertory, Onikan converted to a round theatre. On hand to share in the toast were such eminent personalities as Rasheed Gbadamosi, chairman, Nigeria Industrial Development Bank (NIDB); Gbenga Sonuga, director, Lagos State council for arts and culture;

Deji Akintilo, Mrs. Edokpayi: both patrons of the group; uncle Bayo Oduneye of the University of Ibadan; and several other theatre buffs.

The auditorium was filled. Conspicuously absent, however, was the man of the moment, Wole Soyinka, but he had a double! Felix Okolo. There was no mistaking the greying bushy hair, goatee and sight limp of the literary giant. It was real, almost. For an uncomfortable moment as he stepped onto the stage, there were gasps of disbelief. Soyinka in life and blood? But no. He is out of the country, the audience had been told.

If the production offered any toast, it should go to Felix Okolo, for his versatility as an actor. With comparative ease he switched from Soyinka to Kongi, then to Bank chairman and back to Soyinka. It was acting at its best. But the two hour performance itself was a drab affair. The excerpts chosen barely came across to the audience....

In the "Trials of Brother Jero", for instance, Prophet Jeroboam, his adherent, Chume and other worshippers spend the whole time in Church and prophesying singing and dancing, a not too uncommon sight in any Lagos beach. Imagine, smallish Chume riding with his canterkerous wife, Amope, on to the stage in his rickety bicycle and the banter that follows. Or even the member of parliament, staking his career on the

devious prophet who "disappears" in the midst of a praying session'. But, of course, the audience was denied the humour inherent in these aspects of the play just as in "Opera Wonyosi" where emphasis was on the arrest of Mack, a rather chaotic scene, instead of on the enigmatic DJ whose songs and antics enlivened the play. Even in "The Lion and the Jewel", Lakunle bored the audience with his exaggerated gestures and Sidi with her overstressed Yoruba accent.

The tragedies never fared any better. In "The Road", the touts, Samson and Salibu just talk and talk about the professor. The audience yearn to see this man who could square shoulder to shoulder with a bishop. He never appears! There were sparks though in "Kongi's Harvest"! The anger of Kongi is real and as he pounces on his fawning secretary for bringing the news of the escape of one of the prisoners awaiting execution, you cringe. But "A Play of Giants" passed without notice as it was all *trenchi* while "Death and the King's Horseman" stretched the patience of the audience to the full. The Elesin, for instance, just squatted there, gyrating to a monotonous beat from the drums, the praise singer's chant adding little to his onward movement. You expect something else: the Iyalode daring him in prison; his son denouncing him for failing in his sacred duty even the encounter between Sergeant Amusa and the market women.... But these were mere wishes!

Surely, this is no way to toast our own Wole Soyinka.

By Oji Onoko



Okolo: a versatile actor

SPORTS

Muda Lawal

Another star gone

Ex-Eagles skipper Muda Lawal dies in his prime

For many, it was like a bad dream. But it was a reality. The news of the transition of Mudashiru Babatunde Lawal, crept in late in the evening of Saturday July 6, and many who heard it could not believe it. Who will? Was the man not just 37? Had he not just been decorated with a national honour, Officer of the Order of the Niger (OON) by President Ibrahim Babangida? And more importantly, was he not the assistant coach to the 3SC of Ibadan, a team preparing for the state F.A. Cup finals the following Monday? Affirmative answers to these questions only strengthened their disbelief. But the man had died that night. The soccer wizard, who tapped leather for 20 out of his 37 short years on mother earth, had just returned from a pre-match training with his club, when he slumped and died at his Ring Road Ibadan residence.

Then NTA channel 10, Lagos viewers got it straight at 1.00 pm Sunday 7, when ebullient Segun Odegbami appeared on the Sunday Special, a talk-shop programme to present the sports slot. He told the viewers that the previous day was a sad day for Nigerian sport. Why? Muda Lawal was dead! There could not have been a more reliable source to confirm a news. Odegbami wept on TV like a small child who had been deprived of his bean cake. He was deeply grieved, because they were friends. He was not alone. Engineer Remi Asuni, the Oyo State Football Association Chairman, amidst sobs, said it was "unbelievable" even when Lawal's lifeless body was right there before

him.

Muda Lawal started playing big-time football in Lagos in the late 60's when he joined Leventis 'Iddo Tigers' Football Club. He was moved to Ibadan in 1972 where he joined Housing Corporation Football



Muda: a pearl in his days

Club. It was from there that the handlers of 3SC (the Western Nigerian Development Corporation, WNDC, "Shooting Stars" Football Club) noticed his football artistry and invited him to team up with the darling club of the ancient city. Muda Lawal was a local champion at Ibadan until 1973 when he got his first national cap in a friendly tie with Cameroun. Since then he has dazzled the nation's soccer with his masterful body swerves and ball control.

Lawal holds a record five consecutive appearances in the African Nation's cup finals. He was the hero of Nigeria's 1974 Bronze medal winning team at the Addis Ababa Nations' Cup final. He was

also at the 1976, 78, 80 finals. At the 1980 finals which was held in Lagos, he scored the third Nigerian goal. His last Nations Cup appearance was in 1982 in Libya where he captained the team. Lawal is the only African footballer that holds all medals of the bi-annual soccer fiesta. He also remains the only African to have appeared in the finals five times consecutively.

Muda Lawal is also a gold medalist of the African Winners Cup Competition which his club, Shooting Stars of Ibadan won in 1976. Among other honours which he had helped to bring to his club, is the league trophy which was won in 1983 under his captainship. In that year too, he was the NFA's greatest goal scorer.

A versatile and talented footballer, Muda Lawal retired from active footballing in April this year. That was after he had put in 20 solid years into Nigerian soccer. In the process, he contributed to the fortunes of many clubs. When Colonel Oladayo Popoola dissolved IICC in 1984, he moved to Abiola Babes Football Club, Abeokuta in 1985. When things fell apart with the Abeokuta team in 1985, Lawal went back to Lagos to lace his boots for Stationery Stores FC. The Flamingo Flamingoes of Lagos. He returned to the Shooting Stars at Ibadan in 1988 and was there until he died a couple of weeks ago.

Fortunately, Lawal remains the most recognised and honoured Nigerian footballer to date. His laurels won on the field of play apart, he bagged, along with other members of the 1980 African Nations Cup winning team, the Member of the Order of the Niger (MON) honour in 1980. When he retired April this year, the Oyo State branch of Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN), organised an elaborate send-off party for him. There was a farewell football match at which over 100,000 Naira in

donations in aid of his retirement was collected. President Ibrahim Babangida, in recognition of his tremendous contributions to the development of soccer in Nigeria, also invited him to the State House in Lagos where he was given a second national honour in 11 years. On this occasion he was awarded the prestigious Officer of the Order of Niger (OON). In addition to this he was appointed the Soccer Ambassador of Nigeria. Very few Nigerians have had such recognitions and honour in appreciation of their contributions to national development.

At his funeral last week Monday, the high and low were there sobbing. There were two state governors, Abdulkarim Adisa and Oladchinde Joseph, a federal minister, Major-General Yohanna Kure (ret.), former governor of Oyo State, Major-General David Jemibewon, Dr. Lateef Adegbite, who represented the Alake of Egbaland, Chief Kola Balogun, Alhaji Yusuf Ali, Group Captain Obakpolor and a host of commissioners and thousands of soccer lovers. The government of Ogun State, his home state has signified its intention to immortalise Muda Lawal by naming a street in

Abokuta after him. The Oyo State government announced a package for his family. His five children, Olatunde, Bolanle, Besede, Bisola and Oluwaseun, are to be educated free of charge and to this effect, the 250,000 Naira is to be deposited at Trans International Bank, the interest of which will be used to finance their education. Chief Kola Balogun also announced the donation of a trophy to be named after the late soccer wizard. There is no doubt that Muda Lawal deserves all these and many more because his devotion to the game of soccer was total.

By Bolaji Adebisi

Challenge cup's blues

The outcome of this year's state F. A. cup finals upsets tradition and form books

The outcome of this year's state F.A. cup finals which were concluded last week, upset the form books and the tradition of the competition. It is difficult to imagine that well-known names like Stationery Stores of Lagos, Rangers International of Enugu, Sharks of Port-Harcourt and Ranchers Bees of Kaduna would not survive the fierce rivalry of the finals in their states.

But so it turned out. By the time the state finals of the country's most glamorous soccer competition were concluded last week to pick clubs who will represent their states at the national zonal preliminary coming up next month, rated clubs and Challenge Cup veterans like those mentioned above have been shocked out of contention by less fancied and unrated clubs.

The biggest upset of the states finals is the downfall of national challenge cup holders and Lagos State defending champions, Stationery Stores of Lagos. Stationery Stores, three-times cup winners who enjoyed unmatched popularity in Lagos met their Waterloo at Onikan Stadium at the hands of amateur

league division one club, First Bank.

If Stores' defeat can be termed a big upset, the ousting of Rangers International of Enugu, Sharks of Port-Harcourt, and Ranchers Bees of Kaduna, who in the past are favourites of their states, may be a clear signal that younger, stronger, and more determined clubs are sounding the death knell of the age-long dominance of these old warhorses. Rangers International

has won the challenge cup for a record five times was promptly sacked by youthful amateur league first division club NITEL Vasco.

Worse fate befell Ranchers Bees in Kaduna. The Kaduna based outfit, once a big name in the challenge cup competition both at state and national levels, now crippled by acute financial and management crisis, could not even make it to the state's final this year. They were kicked out in the semi final by the upcoming Nigeria Universal Bank, an amateur league division two club who eventually emerged the state champions. Another big name that will be missing when the national zonal preliminary kicks off is 1989



Jeje of Ranchers Bees



Azodo of Rangers

winners and last year's semi-finalists BCC Lions of Gboko. BCC Lions withdrew to concentrate on their continental cup winners cup campaign. Their decision looks logical, considering the fact that if they successfully defend, they will still have a chance to play in the continental championship, which is what the national challenge cup confers on its winners.

Many reasons have been speculated for the declining

fortunes of these once formidable clubs in this year's challenge club. The performances of clubs like Ranchers Bees, Stationery Stores and Sharks of Port-Harcourt in their F.A. cup final are a true reflection of their declining influence in the country's football. The league. Reflecting on the new trend unfolding in the F.A. cup, Malam Garba Abdullahi, a Kaduna based football enthusiast, said it was a sign of positive development in the country's

football.

The strong challenges from the smaller and younger clubs to these old clubs, said a football fan, Garba Abdullahi will raise the standard of the championship. "This shows that our football is growing. If these old clubs continue to win their state F.A. cup and represent their states every year, the competition will become too boring." The new trend reflects a positive development in the country's football.

South Africa's second coming

The ban placed on South Africa by international sporting bodies for her apartheid policy since 1960 was lifted last Tuesday when the International Olympic Committee (IOC) announced its re-admission at a meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland. Juan Antonio Samaranch, IOC president, announced the decision at the end of the meeting.

The re-admission of South Africa to the world's largest sporting body where they were suspended in 1960 and later expelled in 1970, followed the abolition of most of the apartheid laws that made South Africa an international anathema to all civilised nations.

The IOC had earlier given

series of conditions to be met before the country could be re-admitted. These include the unification of all sports along non-racial line, recognition by regional and international organisations and the abolition of all apartheid legislation by South Africa's government. Following the compliance with some of the IOC conditions and the favourable reports of the Olympic Committee delegation to South Africa early this year, IOC and other world sporting bodies started thinking of re-admitting the country back to their fold.

Less than 24 hours after IOC lifted the ban, the International Cricket Council (ICC) re-admitted it. The Federation of International

Football Association (FIFA) which expelled South Africa in 1970 has also spoken of re-admitting it as soon as conditions that led to the ban have been removed. FIFA president Joao Havelange has even spoken of staging world cup in South Africa in the year 2006 if the country's racial segregation policy is removed.

However, African sporting associations are yet to either comment on the latest development or make their stand known on the re-admission of South Africa. The South African Interim Olympic Commission had said some weeks back that it would seek the support of President Babangida, the OAU chairman to be allowed to take part in the next All Africa Games coming up Cairo next September.

Graf still no. 2

In spite of her victory at the Wimbledon grand slam, Steffi Graf of Germany still remains the world number two in the ranking slot she occupied before the All-England club championships. In the rankings just released French Open women's singles champion Monica Seles of Yugoslavia remains number one, even though she did not take part in the Wimbledon Championship.

There are some few changes

however in the new ranking. Martina Navratilova who was shocked out of Wimbledon quarter-final by tennis whizz-kid Jennifer Capriati, dropped to the fifth slot while Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario of Spain, former number five moves to the fourth spot. Jennifer Capriati of United States who made history as the youngest to reach Wimbledon semi-final at the age of 15 moved from 15 to 10th.

By Joe Olajuwon



Monica Seles: world No. 1

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DEFINITIONS
IN HUMOUR

Candid definitions

One moneyed sage (a terminological contradiction?) once boasted that if he could control the means of information (yes, media) he cared little who made the laws. He knew what he was talking about.

But often the informers are also the law makers in which case nothing goes straight. Distasteful business is clothed in honeyed robes; and terms and definitions often led through wrong lanes. You are then made to accept what you ought to shun.

Nationalism — National tribalism.
Secularism — Fanaticism without God.

Corruption — When things go smoothly for taker, smoothly for giver — *smugglingly* for the nation.

National Question — When the nation asks the question and the answer is — *Shurruppp!*

Media — *Me dear*, self-love, egoism, egotism, self-justification. And what more? Everything.

Reparations — Negro arrears. When you can't industrialise to merit *reparation* of profit then medievalise to get a pay cheque from history.

Junk — In journalism, as it is in politics, readers and people (the two can be different) get only what they deserve — and pay for.

Transition — The unspeakable in pursuit of the uncatchable.

Census — Counting your troubles before they are hatched. The trouble is that the troubles are uncountable — and they will be hatched.

Election — Election is a matter of conscience and patience. Most Nigerians lack conscience and election is not a matter for Nigerians. That's what I call logic.

Highway Code — If you obey the traffic rules, no one does. If you don't, you get *caught*. Both of them don't make sense and nor does either.

Customs — At international airport, if you disregard work ethics, you get *coat* — and that's your reward.

Customs — At the border if you disregard the rules you get to *coat-no* (*Cotonou* — where they give no coats). And you may pick up suspenders instead.

Prisons — When you look at the Nigerian scene, you will have no hesitation agreeing that a prison is a place where criminals are protected from the larger society.

Prison — Everyone is behind bars — the only difference is that criminals in prison have a smaller cell.

Hospital — Hospitals have a very funny, instructive, unfortunate and disheartening evolutionary history. From teaching hospitals (yeah, they taught) they became specialist, from where they were promoted general. And the descent (dissent?) began.

They became consulting clinics. They descended deeper: they became *mere* consulting

clinics. From there they were promoted *consoling* clinics.

Teaching Hospital — A hospital that teaches you a nasty lesson.

Specialist Hospital — A hospital with a specialty — chronic illness, hefty bill, empty pocket. It promotes your simple illness into a *chronic disease* and gives you a *hefty bill*, which cleans your *pocket empty*.

General Hospital — You go there confident that it will have several doctors, be well stocked with drugs and equipment — because it treats *generals*. Well, yes, it treats them — the general public.

Consulting Clinic — When they have no drugs, which is always, you can always consult the doctors, which is not always possible.

Consoling Clinic — At the consoling clinic, with luck you may get any of the following:

- (a) Drugs
 - (b) Consultation
 - (c) Consolation
 - (d) None of the above
- The answer is (d).

Keeling the budget

The only quarrel I have with William Keeling is that he has disobeyed my code of (mis) conduct — depending on whether you are an obedient servant or a disobedient master. Adapted from various sources, my code is only applied to the work of journalists who impress me. Keeling, by the way, is the first person to whom it is being applied. So to qualify you must break my first rule — the one that I most wish you to obey.

Here's the code:

- Seek to express, not impress
- Lie with statistics
- Show, don't tell
- Attribute, don't pontificate
- Get facts, then twist them
- Specify sources: anonymity of all sources is their absence.
- When all else fails, deny the story and blame editor's devil.

CITIZENS



He is suave in manner and cosmopolitan in outlook. Most people would probably mistake him for a showbiz impresario.

Richard Joseph, 46 author of "Democracy and prebendial Politics in Nigeria" is however not into the world of make-believe. At age 13, young, precocious Richard emigrated to the United States from his native West Indies. That, for him opened up a life of adventure. An Oxford alumni, he has lectured at the Universities of Karl, Dartmouth as well as the political science department of the University of Ibadan.

Not surprisingly, at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs where his book was launched, the Ibadan Connection was self-evident. What with Bola Ige, Tokunbo Dosummu, Adigun Agbaje, Tunde Adeniran, Bolanle Awe, Layi Balogun and Olu Agunloye leading a select crowd to

With his appointment recently as the managing director of Premier Commercial Bank, Alhaji Ibrahim Usman is poised to take the bank to newer heights.

A 1975 building engineering graduate of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Usman started his career as a management consultant trainee at centre for management development, Lagos. He has served in various capacities before becoming the general manager/ chief executive of Nigerian Airports Commercial Ventures Limited.

The managing director was a senior principal manager, financial services (corporate banking) division of UBA, Lagos, before being seconded to Nigeria Merchant Bank where he worked as an assistant general manager before his new appointment.

To commemorate the achievements of Alhaji Ibrahim Usman so far, committee of friends held a dinner party in his honour. The reception held at Shangra-Lai Restaurant in Eko-le-Meridien attracted leading bankers and top business and media executives.

He is at home with challenges. He craves it, revels in it and in fact thrives on it.

Mallam Abubakar Sani, 33, is a member of the Association of the Insurance Institute of Nigeria (AIIN) and a leading name in insurance.

Orphaned at six, little Abubakar learnt to weave through the rough patches of live to become the headboy of Sardauna Memorial College, Kaduna. This was in 1975. After school, the ABU actuarial science graduate deftly stamped his authority on the world of insurance, occupying top management positions in three companies in quick succession.

Still craving "simplicity and perfection" he persuaded some of his influential friends to set up Conglomerata Insurance with him as managing director.

Abubakar, who is also the brain behind the new-wave railway and passenger and freight insurance schemes is married with two kids.



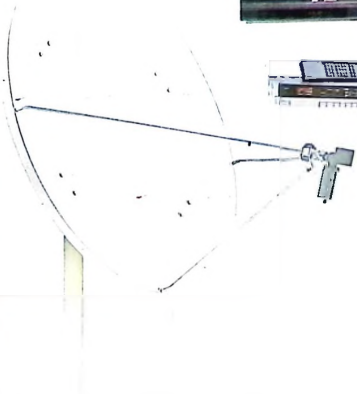
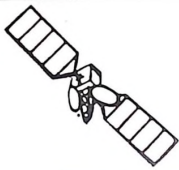
make the day for the homecomer.

Of his emotional departure from Nigeria in 1979, he says "I felt I was being torn from a land and people that had nourished me for almost four years".

By Yinka Tella and Umar Musa



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