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## New political association debuts

A new political movement, the National Solidarity Association (NSA), made its debut in the country's political scene yesterday in Abuja, promising to "take on the cause of all those in our polity who are genuinely

By Ibrahim Modibbo,  
 Political Editor

The Protem National Chairman of the NSA, Alhaji Saleh Jambo, said at a press conference that the association would ensure that "never again will our people live at

the fringes of their dreams or as spectators in the appropriation of the wealth of their land."

He said the mission of the association was to rebuild the society by bringing together diverse groups and elements into a harmonious

whole. Jambo said the NSA would promote national unity against the background of "recent divisive forces and tendencies which threatened our hard won national solidarity and harmony, while pursuing a comprehensive

programme of genuine national reconciliation based on respect and the highest regard for the national interest."

The movement also pledged to advance the cause of democracy by seeking to establish a formidable Pan-Nigerian political party that will be characterised by discipline, order, due pro-

cess, a sense of purpose rapid economic and social development, adding that it will end all forms of poverty, hunger, ignorance, corruption and bad governance, as well as expand opportunities for the youths and women to harness their potentials and knowledge in the pursuit of national development.

contd. on pg 2



National Solidarity Association Protem Chairman, Alhaji Saleh Jambo (left), Chief Clement Akamgbo (SAN) and Chief Alex Akinyele at the formal announcement of the Association in Abuja... yesterday. Pix: Felix Onigbinde.

## ALSCON stinks of corruption - Obasanjo

•N7.2bn unaccounted for

President Olusegun Obasanjo yesterday raised alarm over alleged corruption in the Aluminium Smelter Company of Nigeria (ALSCON), Ikot Abasi, saying over \$600m (about N7.2 billion) was unaccounted for in the company.

President Obasanjo regretted that corruption had immensely put the company out of production, adding that about \$2.3 billion is expected to be expended to bring back the company to capacity level of producing about 193,000 metric tonnes of aluminium annually.

By Suleiman Mohammed

Speaking when members of the Obasanjo Solidarity Forum from the south-south paid him a visit at the State House, Abuja, the president expressed concern over the level of corruption in most government-owned companies, saying it was time to check the menace at all levels.

According to him, a similar project less in capacity than ALSCON, could produce over 250,000 metric tonnes of aluminium annually, and assured that government would soon implement the report of the inves-

tigation panel, which he described as alarming.

While assuring that the

### Adedeji advocates true federalism

The former Secretary-General of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Professor Adebayo Adedeji has advocated for true federalism if Nigeria's fledgling democracy is to be saved from danger.

Delivering a paper at this year's Obafemi Awolowo Memorial Lecture in Lagos yesterday, Professor Adedeji said "our realistic option is to return to our federal roots.

company would be resuscitated, President Obasanjo decried the wanton disregard to government companies by

contd. on pg 3

By Ibrahim Modibbo,  
 Political Editor

To save our fledgling democracy from mortal dangers we must reconstitute true federalism. Without peace and political stability, good governance will continue to elude us and sustainable human development will remain unattainable."

Professor Adedeji warned that democracy cannot thrive in a situation of

contd. on pg 3

## 19 northern govts. probe hajj 2001

From Dare Oyewole, Kaduna

Worried about the inadequacies that characterised annual hajj operations, the 19 northern state governors have set up a committee to review previous hajj operations and recommend ways of improving the annual exercise.

Rising from their one-day meeting in Kaduna yesterday, the governors noted with dismay that the just concluded hajj exercise left much to be desired.

The governors however did not disclose the composition of the committee and its time frame.

In a communiqué issued and read before newsmen by the Zamfara State governor, Alhaji Ahmed Sani, the governors reviewed the participation of the northern states in the ongoing privatisation exercise.

They resolved that each state and organisation should be encouraged to be more committed by ensuring that all allotments made for states were fully utilised.

On the devastating effects of illegal mining, desertification and deforestation, they resolved to pay more attention to the development of irrigation activities.

### RESOURCE CONTROL

## Supreme Court adjourns case to May 21

The legal battle between the Federal Government and 36 states over the control of revenue from the country's oil resources opened in Abuja yesterday, but the Supreme Court adjourned further hearing to May 21, 2001.

The court said it adjourned the potentially explosive case to allow all parties to the dispute to prepare their cases.

Before the adjournment, the Supreme Court had heard the initial arguments from the lawyers representing the 36 state governments.

In arriving at the decision, the Chief Justice of the Federal

contd. on pg 2



Chief Bola Ige, Minister for Justice (right) with Chief F.R.A. Williams (SAN) at the beginning of hearing into the Resource Control suit at the Supreme Court, Abuja... yesterday. Pix: Kennedy Egonodje.

# NEWS

tion, Justice Mohammed Uwais who headed a panel of seven justices hearing the case, said the Supreme Court was granting the legal teams of the states and the Federal Government 14 working days each within which to prepare their objections and respond respectively.

"The case is hereby adjourned to May 21 for the hearing of the preliminary objections to the issue of jurisdiction," Justice Uwais said.

The 36 states in the country had filed a counter suit challenging the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court to hear the suit earlier filed by the Justice Minister and Attorney-General, Chief Bola Ige on February 6, 2001.

In the suit, Chief Ige is praying the Supreme Court to determine the seaward boundary of a "littoral state" within the nation, in order to calculate the revenue which accrues to the federation account directly from any natu-

ral resource derived from that state, in consonance with section 162 (2) of the 1999 constitution.

At yesterday's court session, however, hundreds of demonstrators from Akwa-Ibom State were at the Supreme Court premises, displaying placards which have inscriptions such as: "No resource control, no one Nigeria."

While explaining the ra-

## Supreme court *contd. from pg 1*

tionale behind the Federal Government's action, Chief Ige said his job as Nigeria's Attorney-General was to seek judicial interpretation of any part of the constitution that is being misinterpreted.

He said most people have wrongly termed the Federal Government's suit to mean the legal fight for the control of Nigeria's natural resources.

According to him, "the

suit is not over resource control. It is wrong for anybody to say the suit is on control of the resources."

However, about 30 states have so far filed their defence at the Supreme Court, with some of them challenging the jurisdiction of the court to hear the suit.

The argument of the states is that, it is only the National Assembly that can decide on the matter. Such states as Akwa-Ibom,

Bayelsa, Cross-River, Delta, Edo, Ogun, Ondo and Rivers are claiming in their response to the suit that the natural resources located off-shore ought to be treated or regarded as being located within their respective states.

This position was however countered by Taraba State on February 26. The state, in a six-paragraph statement of defence, challenged the claims of eight oil-producing states as to their ownership of the natural resources located in the states.

He said members of the nascent political grouping were "motivated by the general dissatisfaction that today runs through our people."

He cited "instability, lack of direction and indiscipline within existing political parties, but particularly, a total lack of accountability on the part of public officers" as part of the reasons for the formation of the association.

"This association is neither about patronage nor is it about political positions," he declared, saying, "it is about mobilising our people in the rural areas, urban slums, work place, boardrooms and in positions of authority and power to serve our people in honest trans-

parency."

The 95 members governing board of the party include notables like Alh. Saleh Jambo, Alhaji Kabiru Turaki, Dr. Chudi Amuta a frontline journalist and Brigadier General Raji Rasaki (rtd), Brigadier General Saleh Michika, Chief Obong Akpan Isemen, Alhaji Saidu Barda, Alhaji Dabo Lere and Chief Rufus Ada George, all former governors.

Others include Alhaji Abdul Quadir M. Bauchi, Professor Sam Oyovbaire, Chief Duro Onabule, Dr. Ogbonnaya Onu, Chief Clement Akpamgbo, Chief Clement Ebiri, Mr. Segun Awolowo, Ambassador Hamza Abubakar, Chief

## New association *contd. from pg 1*

Atuekong Don Etiebet, Senator John Wash Pam, Hajiya Halima Alfa, DIG Parry Osayande (rtd), Alhaji Sagir Mohammed Wazirin Ringim, Chief John Nwobodo, Dr. H.O. Kusamotu, Alhaji Adamu Modibbo, Mrs. Regina Udu, Senator Aniete Okon and Dr. J.C. Oduuna among others.

The 22-member board of trustees of the association include Brigadier General John Shagaya (rtd), Senator Albert Legogie, Alhaji Ahmadu Abubakar, Chief Alex Akinyele, Admiral A.A. Aikhomu, General Halilu Akilu, Chief Olu Adebanyo, Chief Ime Umanah, Alhaji Asheik Jarma, Comrade Uche Chukwumerije, Dr. Joe

Nwodo, Chief Jibola Olanipekun (SAN) and Alhaji Haruna Abubakar, former Deputy Senate President.

Others in the list are Alhaji Muhammadu Bello Kirfi, Alhaji Muhammadu Koiranga Jada, Dr. Bala Takaya and Chief Sunny Omaseye.

The political association has also formed six committees that include strategy and mobilisation, finance and fund raising, security and intelligence disciplinary, publicity and media as well as legal committees.

The 19-member strategy and mobilisation committee include Alhaji Saidu Barda, Chief Olu Adebajo, Dr. Joe Nwodo, Chief Rufus Ada

George, Alh. Dabo Lere, Prof. Sam Oyovbaire, Chief Alex Akinyele and Mr. Joseph Tredia among others.

Finance and fund raising committee which is an eleven members committee include Alhaji Sale Jambo, Chief Ogbonnaya Onu, Chief Anie Okonkwo, Alhaji Abdul Qadir Dantata and Alhaji Muhammadu Koiranga Jada.

Security and intelligence committee has Brigadier General Raji Rasaki leading a team of retired military officer like Brigadier General Tunji Olurin (rtd), John Shagaya, Col. Issac O. Nnorah (rtd), AIG Bashir Albasu (rtd) and Mr. Gezi Asemowe.

The disciplinary committee include Alh. Sale

Michika, Dr. Fauk Musa, Senator Dangana Ndayako and Chief George Fente among others.

The publicity and media committee is a nine-member committee with Chief Duro Onabule, Dr. Undi Amuta, Mr. Wisdom Dike, Mr. Asaph Zadok, Alhaji Junaidu Muhammadu Yan Tumaki, Comrade Uche Chukwumerije and Chief Alex Akinyele.

The legal committee parades legal luminaries like Barrister Clement Akpamgbo, U.E. Okolusha, Kabir Turaki and Brigadier General Idada Ikponmwen. Others include Alhaji Bashir Albasu, Col. Issac Nnonah and Alhaji Abubakar Gimba.

# The Debate Continues

Thursday, May 3, 2001 we continue with another topic in the publication of debates on topical issues.

The next topic is:

**2003: Are more political parties needed?**

We eagerly await your valuable contributions on this worrisome and important national issue on or before Monday, April 30, 2001.

Remember the publication date is  
**Thursday, May 3, 2001**

NEWS

FCT chief judge refers Abacha's case to court of appeal

The Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Chief Judge, Justice Mohammed Saleh, who is presiding over a criminal case involving Mohammed Abacha, yesterday in Abuja referred the case to the court of appeal.

In a ruling on the motion filed by the counsel to Abacha challenging the High Court of lacking jurisdiction to try the accused, Saleh said the court had suspended its ruling earlier scheduled for today, pending the interpretation of the decree 53, by the court of appeal.

He stated that decree 53 had raised a substantial question of law, as regards sec-

tion 295, sub-section 2 of the Nigerian constitution.

On the submission of Bagudu's counsel requesting for the suspension of the warrant of arrest hanging on Bagudu, the second accused, Saleh said the matter would be determined after the decision regarding the jurisdiction.

NAN recalls that at the last sitting of the court on April 5, Abacha's counsel filed a motion requesting the court to refer the criminal case to the court of appeal, as the matter involves substantial question on the interpretation and application of the 1999 constitution.

ALSCON contd. from pg 1

public servants, and warned that the anti-corruption crusade of government would not spare anybody, no matter how highly placed.

The Obasanjo Solidarity Forum led by Mr Etin Uyosoro had demanded the resuscitation of the company alongside the National Fertiliser Company of Nigeria

(NAFCON), among others. Mr. Uyosoro told the President that states from the south-south zone comprising Cross River, Rivers, Bayelsa, Edo, Delta and Akwa-Ibom were adequately involved in the forum's programmes on government to increase the 13% derivation for the oil-producing states.

Adedeji contd. from pg 1

crises and polarisation, and observed that democracy can also not take root in a polity where politics is transformed into warfare.

"Nigeria has established a reputation as a country at war against itself. It moves regularly from political crisis to civil strife and, once, to the horrendous cataclysm of a 30-month long violent civil war. We must learn to turn our plurality and diversity into sources of strength which enriches rather than divides our peoples, societies and polity," the Professor of Economics said.

Professor Adedeji who observed that the minority groups in the country had genuine causes to want to assert their right to self determination, however, stated that the current crisis in the Niger-Delta dramatises the feeling of unfairness and inequity.

He said "just as the former western and northern regions had been champions of the derivation principle in the 1950s when cocoa and groundnuts provided considerable resources because of their high export earning, the people of the Niger-Delta are making a similar claim today. It is important that the nation enters into dialogue and address the issue politically."

He disclosed that while the growing polarisation has made the youths of the Niger-Delta rebellious, Nigerians must also learn from our chequered history that no condition is permanent.

after another has been favoured with buoyant revenue when the export price of its primary production has provided a dynamic boost to its economy but no part of the country is condemned to poverty for lack of resource.

"All regions are potentially resource rich and true federalism provides virtually unlimited opportunity for competitiveness and innovativeness," he said.

He maintained that Nigeria needs peace, political stability and an enabling environment that would energise its people and dynamise its economy.

He said, "it is often stated that an opportunity once lost cannot be regained. Nigeria has been lucky that through divine intervention some of its lost opportunities resur-fact."

The Federal Government has vowed to protect the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja from degenerating into squalor typical of the Lagos setting that forced government to relocate the seat of government in 1992.

President Olusegun Obasanjo who made the pledge yesterday in an audience with a delegation of the United Nations Agency for Human Settlement (Habitat) at the state house, Abuja, said the city of Abuja would not be allowed to be messed up any how.

He said Lagos was Nigeria's biggest problem as far as urbanisation was concerned, adding that government would welcome the assistance of the agency in evolving and implementing a workable programme of urban renewal and redevelopments. Such programmes, he said would serve as a test case for the efficacy of habitat's method since "a solution that works in Lagos, will work anywhere else."

He then pleaded with the Agency to include Lagos in its sustainable cities

Governor Ahmed Sani of Zamfara State has advocated the setting up of special funds to tackle the menace of desert encroachment in the northern states.

Addressing the opening ceremony of the nineteen Northern states' Governors. Forum in Kaduna yesterday, he observed with concern, that thousands of square kilometres of vegetation are being lost to desert encroachment.

He said besides the special funds, a strategy should also be evolved towards involving the people to participate actively in controlling the menace.

The governor said through this effort, useful vegetation can be saved for local energy needs, herbal medicine, environmental

FG vows to save Abuja from illegal structures

By Suleiman Mohammed

programme in addition to Ibadan, Enugu and Kano, saying that the rapid rate of urbanisation in the country was a major concern to government.

President Obasanjo reaffirmed government's commitment to the provision of shel-

ter as a fundamental human need, saying that a special presidential forum has been scheduled from April 28, 2001, at which experts in the field of housing and urban development would brainstorm and proffer the solutions to Nigeria's problem in this area.

Earlier, the Executive Director of the agency, Mrs. Anna Kajumlo Tibaijuka said they were in Nigeria for the launching of the Global campaign for good urban governance. She described Lagos as the sixth largest city in the world, and that with its present rate of development, it would be the third in the world by the year 2005.

Suit against Head of Service struck out

An Abuja High Court yesterday struck out an N8 million libel and defamation suit instituted against the Head of Service by his former domestic servant, Danladi Aya.

The presiding Judge, Monica Dongban Meuseu, yesterday struck out the suit following an application to that effect by counsels representing the applicant.

When the case came up for mention, the earlier counsel to Danladi Aya, Mr. R.O. Nnah announced his appear-

ance and also included two other colleagues, Mr. T. Kambai and Mr. O.C. Okpara while Mr. Aliyu Momoh leading one Ameh Asumogie announced their appearance for Alhaji Mohammed Yayale.

At this stage, the counsels to the plaintiff told the court that they had resolved their differences and asked the court to strike out an earlier motion of March 12, 2001, seeking to join the litigation and the court did so.

Meanwhile, Mr. R.O. Nnah then sought to move an earlier application dated

February 26, 2001, seeking to strike out the suit against Alhaji Yayale.

After moving the motion supported by a five-paragraph affidavit, the presiding judge uphold the motion and struck out suit number CV/917/2001 against the Head of Service.

It will be recalled that Danladi Aya, a former domestic employed of Head of Service, had gone to court alleging that he was beaten and tortured by the Head of Service and his members of his family on allegation of stealing N17 million.

Governor Sani campaigns against desert encroachment

From Dare Oyewole, Kaduna

protection, microclimatic effect and game-reserve value.

Alhaji Ahmed disclosed that a directorate of afforestation had already been established in Zamfara state to properly address the issue and to put these goals into practice.

He also stressed the need for them to coordinate the various vaccination programmes within the region because of its position in the hot climate areas of the country.

According to him, most of the diseases in the region were easily communicable

either through people's movement within the states or were facilitated by extreme weather conditions.

He maintained that through a coordinated approach, the scourge of killer diseases such as cerebrospinal-meningitis can be effectively controlled, adding that vaccinations can be coordinated and carried out at the same time throughout the Northern states.

Speaking on the activities of illegal miners, Alhaji Ahmed Sani called for immediate check of their activities so as to have more earnings and control fatal accidents resulting from unprofessional mining practices.

Alhaji Ahmed also called on the Federal Government and mining companies to assist in the reclamation of lands destroyed by mining excavations.

The Federal Government, he said, should set aside special funds from the statutory allocation for this programme while mining.

"Mining companies should be fully involved in reclaiming land to its natural agricultural productivity since they were directly involved in its destruction," he supported.

Alhaji Ahmed reiterated the governors call on the Federal Government and the



Gov. Ahmed National Assembly to urgently review the Revenue Allocation formula to enable them address the ever-increasing level of poverty, illiteracy and economic backwardness.

He also called on the Federal Government to provide effective balance and fairness within the framework of our corporate existence saying that the issue of HYPERDEC should be given urgent attention.

He further urged the Federal Government, National Assembly and the Federal Character Commission to direct all federal agencies to fully implement the Federal Character policy.

"What is obtainable now is against the spirit of fairness and oneness," he said, adding, "our people are entitled to federal jobs like any other



Alhaji Muhammad Bashar, Emir of Daura (R) and Alhaji M.T. Usman, member Board of Trustees, Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation at Late Major General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua

# NEWS

## FG fights desertification with N32bn

The Federal Government's campaign against desertification and other forms of environmental degradation in the country will consume over N32 billion in the next four years.

The programme is a product of a ministerial committee raised by President Olusegun Obasanjo to articulate practicable means of checking desert encroachment and soil erosion in both the Northern and Southern parts of the country.

By Osborne Adi Jnr

ing gas flaring by the year 2001.

Specifically, the committee has recommended the application of gas as replacement to fuel oil (LPFO) and automotive diesel in the industrial power sector.

Already, there is substantial increment in fiscal incentives for companies engaged in various aspects of gas production, returning and marketing.

Obasanjo had also said at the meeting that it is the desire of government to encourage the private sector to establish gas-fired Independent Power Plants (IPP) and manufacture power plants and micro-power generating plants to meet various electricity requirements of their operation and power needs of the communities. "We are supporting these with massive investment in a national gas pipeline networks," he said.

Daily Trust gathered at the weekend that the programme will address all relevant issues, especially the use of renewable energy like solar energy as alternative to wood as fuel, which has been identified as a major contributor to the destruction of the environment.

According to the report, which has already been submitted to President Obasanjo, the application of biotechnology in the recovery and sustenance of the forest reserves will also be given attention.

President Obasanjo had at last week's meeting of the D-8 Energy Expert Working Group meeting in Abuja,



Obasanjo hinted that his administration's vision of tackling these problems that had endangered the nation's ecosystem, would involve diversification of energy sources for both domestic and industrial uses in order to replace the use of wood as fuel.

"Wood is the most common form of energy for our rural dwellers. Its exploitation and use have become environmental disaster," the president had said.

The Federal Government is also critically examining the use of natural gas in areas where it can be economically substituted for alternative fuels, according to the report.

It is the expectation of government that with effective and attractive fiscal incentives, investments in the sub-sector will not only increase, but is capable of end-

## Nasarawa governor woos foreign investors

By Henry Omu

The Nasarawa State Governor, Alhaji Abdullahi Adamu, has appealed to foreign investors, especially those from the United States of America, to take advantage of the current democratic dispensation in Nigeria and invest in the country's economy.

The governor who was speaking at an interactive session between 36 state governors and a delegation of visiting American congressmen, said the nation is presently experiencing a new dawn after many years of military rule.

Governor Adamu who spoke as the chairman of the Governor's forum at the interactive session, told the visiting congressmen that their visit would promote the exchange of ideas on how to improve economic and political relations between Nigeria and the United States.

"The 36 states in the country including the FCT are blessed with varying potentials and US investors are welcome to invest in any of the states," Alhaji Adamu said.

The leader of the six-man US delegation, Rep. J.C. Watts explained that they decided to visit the country because "Nigeria is very critical to Africa and the United States.

According to Watts, who is the House Republican conference chairman, the Bush administration is interested in seeing Nigeria as a beacon of progress in all sectors of human endeavour.

He assured the governors of the determination of American Lawmakers to widen the scope of cooperation and assistance between the Bush administration and the various state governments in Nigeria.

Similarly, the United States ambassador to Nigeria, Mr. Franklin Howard Jeter urged the state governors to seize the opportunity of the visit to explore all axis of common interest.

He said the visiting congressmen were the first batch of American Lawmakers leaving the United States on a working visit to any part of the world since the coming of the Bush administration.

Senegal has given the former President of Chad, Hissene Habre, 30 days to leave the country after efforts to try him on torture charges linked to his 1982-1990 tenure collapsed last month.

Speaking to Sud FM radio in Dakar, the country's capital, the Senegalese President, Abdoulaye Wade advised Habre to seek asylum elsewhere.

"We have given him 30 days to leave Senegal. I am not expelling him, but I have given him one month to leave," Wade was quoted as

## Senegal expels Habre

By Kevin Ebele Adinnu, with agency reports

saying.

President Wade however said that Senegal would not try the former Chadian leader as Chad had not provided sufficient evidence for the courts to prosecute him for alleged crimes against humanity.

Senegal's Supreme Court ruled last month that it could not try 58-year-old Habre as the alleged crimes were committed outside Senegal, but the victims pledged to pursue him and called for Senegal to expel him for trial elsewhere.

The Senegalese president has opposed trying Habre in Senegal, favouring a trial in a more developed country.

"If they (human rights lawyers) think Senegal can try Hissene Habre, then France, the United States and England must be capable of trying Hissene Habre," Wade said over the weekend.

Mr. Habre was put under

house arrest in Senegal more than a year ago after being indicted following 10 untroubled years in exile.

It was the first time a former African head of state had been indicted in another country for human rights offences.

A commission set up by Habre's successor in 1991 accused his administration of 40,000 political murders and 200,000 cases of torture.

It said Habre had also embezzled state funds on a huge scale from the impoverished country.

The case against Habre has drawn comparisons with the former Chilean President, Augusto Pinochet who avoided a trial abroad following a legal battle in the United Kingdom.

International and Senegalese human rights organisations have joined bereaved families and Chadian torture victims in pressing for Habre's prosecution.

## ABU SSANU braces up for another showdown

From Waziri Isa Gwantu, Zaria

Barely four weeks after it suspended its three-week old strike following appeals by the university's governing council, the Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU), Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria branch, has alerted that it is bracing up for another showdown if its demands are not met immediately.

Chairman of the union, Mr. S.K Jod who disclosed this while addressing the union's congress, warned the university's vice chancellor, Professor Abdullahi Mahdi, to choose between paying SSANU and UNTSU members their February salary which they were denied for going on strike or another round of industrial unrest.

"Why should he, after refusing to pay us our allowances and other benefits approved for us by NUC, decide to hold our February Salary just because we embarked on a normal and genuine strike to press home our demands," he queried.

The SSANU chairman who was visibly angry during the address, said "we are prepared to give our last drop of blood in the struggle to reclaim all that is due for us as recommended by the Federal Government."

Mr. S.K Joel however appealed to the SSANU members to continue with their routine official services until they receive directives from the executive council to do otherwise.

"Forward ever; backward never. We are ready to fight for the payment of our entitlements as long as we

are alive, and if Mahdi refuses to pay us, someone else will come and pay us," he boasted.

It would be recalled that the SSANU members embarked on a strike on Thursday February 1, 2001 to put pressure on the university authorities to pay them some allowances which other universities have paid their staff.

The strike which lasted for about a month was later suspended following the intervention of the institution's governing council which promised to advise the authorities to pay them the allowances, especially those that were really approved for them by the Federal Government. "But up till today," SSANU alleged, "nothing has been done."



From left, President Olusegun Obasanjo, Chairman, Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation, Chief (Mrs) Titi Amina Atiku Abubakar, wife of the Vice President and Hajija Binta Shehu Yar'Adua, wife of the late General Shehu Yar'Adua at the late General's memorial lecture held at Nicon Hilton Hotel, Abuja.. Saturday. Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje.



Prof. Borishade



**EDITORIAL**

**ASUU, FG and misplaced priorities**

For parents and guardians with wards in universities whose graduation has been delayed sometimes by more than three academic sessions as a result of strikes by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), the industrial action it embarked on last week can not be amusing. But for the university lecturers who have over the years witnessed the devastation of university education and the lowering of academic standards due to inadequate financing of the sector, a strike is the next logical action to draw attention to their plight and that of the products going through the system.

The strike declared after a 21-day ultimatum by ASUU, followed the failure of the Federal Government to sign an agreement reached between it and the union on December 18, last year. The ultimatum expired two weeks ago without any positive response. This necessitated the union's National Executive Council (NEC) meeting in Owerri, the Imo State Capital, at which the union called the current strike action.

Their numerous demands had to do with personal emoluments and greater funding for facilities to enhance teaching, learning and research activities in our tertiary institutions. A frustrated ASUU President, Dr Oladipo Fashina, told newsmen in Owerri that, "all our union's goodwill and entreaties for peace and stability in the Nigerian university system remained unattended by the Federal Government." He said rather than sign the agreement, "the Federal Government had deployed a series of threats and diversionary tactics to give the public the impression that it was addressing the issues in dispute."

In the disputed agreement the Federal Government allegedly reached, during negotiations with the union last December, to pay the least paid lecturer, a graduate assistant, a basic salary of between N633,500 and N724,000 which translates to a monthly pay of N52,750 and N60,333 while at the top of the ladder are professors to be paid between N2,350,067 and N2,903,312 or N187,505 and N241,942 monthly. According to ministry sources, ASUU is also insisting on 53 other allowances, grants, fringe benefits and other privileges including housing and transport allowances, meal subsidy, entertainment and injury allowances and free tuition for lecturers' children in staff schools. The total bill is put at N153 billion, twice as much as provided for education in the 2001 budget.

In a letter to Vice-Chancellors, the Minister of Education, Dr. Babalola Borisade, said the agreement reached with ASUU last December was practically impossible to implement partly because of its "outrageous nature" and partly it came after the 2001 budget had been passed. "It will require a supplementary Appropriation Bill to the National Assembly, which has to be taken along with other government expenditure requirements." He added, however, that government will continue to dialogue with ASUU.

There are two elements in the minister's response. Is it because the demands were "outrageous" that government refused to sign it? Or is it because the agreement was reached after the 2001 budget had been passed?

Either way, there are elements of distrust. ASUU, as a union, can not rise from negotiations with the Federal Government to claim what was not agreed upon. Until the minister's, statement last week, no official came out to refute ASUU's claim since the agreement was reached last December. If these agreements were freely reached, why should the minister outrightly call them "outrageous"?

The Federal Government might have put off the implementation of the agreement because of the amount involved. If, however, there is goodwill on both sides, the next thing the government should do is to call the union and explain its predicament. With this, it would be unnecessary to introduce the rather sinister aspect of an agreement reached after the passage of the 2001 budget. After all, the same budget was passed before a supplementary Appropriation Bill was sent and approved for the purchase of the N320 billion Presidential aircraft.

The face-off between the two must not be allowed to continue because as is usually the case in the fight between two giants, the underlying grass suffers. In this case, the students, some of whom were due to start their final examinations, are those at the receiving end.

The issue has to do with having our priorities right as a country. Considering that education is the only legacy we can bequeath to our children, and by extension, posterity, we believe it should be given all the attention it deserves.

Daily Trust believes there is a misplacement of priorities by the government. Projects such as the \$38 billion National Stadium in Abuja and the Presidential aircraft should not receive precedence over education, health and social welfare. On the part of ASUU, we advise that intransigence and the resort to strike at the slightest provocation can not bring about the end to the crisis in our educational system. The crisis itself is not a product of a few years, but the prolonged neglect by successive administrations since the 1970s which has led to the greatest brain drain in our history and the drastic fall in the quality of university products. The two sides must now allow reason and friendly persuasion to prevail to minimise whatever bashing our children's education might have received.

**TUESDAY COLUMN**

**Deregulation: Not yet the lord's prayer**

By Ahmed M. Salik

Reading Professor Attahiru Jega's piece entitled "O! Lord, Give Us Our Daily Petrol" (*Daily Trust*, March 13, 2001), a number of questions rapidly come to mind, key of which are: 1) In the realm of public debate (as distinct from intellectual discourse) what should be the role of the intellectual? Should his/her role be to educate or advocate, to clarify or obfuscate, to enlighten or highlight, to facilitate or solicit, to construct or obstruct etc? 2) In a national exchange of ideas prelude to a major decision with potential for affecting the well-being of millions of citizens, should the intellectual be objective and present to the public an impassioned analysis of the issues or should he take a stand, express an opinion and defend it to the last? 3) Should the public on their part take such an opinion as the gospel truth or just as another opinion in much the same way as might be expressed by others not so intellectually endowed? 4) Arising from the esteem with which he is held by society, does the intellectual have any special responsibility for exactitude, objectivity or analytical transparency etc?

It is by no means clear as to which of these divergent goals Professor Jega sought to achieve in his article. Assuming that he aimed for the more desirable goals of educating, enlightening, facilitating etc. it would appear that he opted for a tedious and somewhat complex approach. His article appeared more as an advocacy for a particular populist point of view than a helpful guide through the myriad of arguments for and against deregulation of the petroleum sector. In our contribution here, we propose to go a little further on the issues and provide a different perspective while avoiding unnecessary technicalities.

There is no doubt that the fuel crisis has remained endemic and long queues at filling stations as well as petrol hawkers are a permanent and sore feature of the horizons in several of our cities and highways. It is an irony that major oil exporting country and a prominent member of OPEC for that seems incapable of efficiently meeting the fuel consumption requirements of its citizens. The basis of this failure and of the fuel crisis generally is to be found in the peculiar politics and economics of fuel refining, distribution and consumption in the Nigerian society. The solution to the crisis lies in making appropriate policy shifts especially in those affecting the ownership, control and pricing of petroleum production and its products. The Good Lord has surely endowed us with the capacity to resolve the crisis if only we make use of our senses and summon the courage to do what is right. It is certainly not yet time for the Lord's prayer.

Often times, as little as a slight hint of fuel price increase is enough to elicit threats of fire and brimstone and of economy-paralyzing strikes. Witness the strikes of the year 2000 on the fuel price increase of that year. Indeed the oil sector seems to be sacred to some people such that both the marketers and un-informed consumers vigorously resist any attempt at reforms. The interests in the fuel refining and marketing business are so powerful that whichever way government pursues to stabilize the sector is frustrated. Some years back the NNPC, out of despair with the antics of the fuel transporters, was reported to have acquired some tankers to be involved in the haulage of petroleum products. The transporters would have nothing of such and on strike they went until the NNPC backed down. Clearly then there are certain well entrenched interests located along different segments of the production/distribution/consumption chain that make it near impossible for government to resolve the crisis in a practical manner. The situation could be summarized as follows: The government in its desire to provide cheap and affordable fuel to the citizens (to promote economic activities etc.) fixes the price of fuel at below its economic value. A "rent" or "premium" is artificially created at this 'uneconomical' price. "Rent seekers" or "profiteers" cash-in on it by hoarding or creating artificial scarcities such as by going on strike or the flimsiest of excuses etc. In the alternative, they transport the products across borders to rake-in even higher profits by earning foreign exchange and repatriating it to exchange at the foreign exchange market. Since the Naira/dollar exchange rate was and is in continuous decline, higher and higher profits are guaranteed the smugglers. The attraction to engage in the twin practice of hoarding and smuggling is, therefore, too strong to resist by many unscrupulous entrepreneurs who are hardly swayed by appeals to patriotism and national interest. The law enforcement agencies' resolve is no match to the determined on-slight of these rent seekers. They devise all means to beat the enforcement agencies through wholesome corruption, harassment and even assassination.

In this theatre of the absurd, the rent-seekers find unwitting supporters in labour unions, students, academic staff and other

radicals. These elements, instead of directing their energies and protests against the profiteers, misdirect their gust at the government whenever the latter attempts to correct the anomaly through appropriate pricing. A retinue of self-righteous "experts", agitators and other demagogues claiming to be speaking for the "masses" further compounds the problem. They make loud noises on the electronic media and publish obscurantist articles arguing why government should solve the fuel crisis by **doing nothing!** By the time the debate is over, we are back to where we began, entrenched positions remain even more entrenched and the people's plight no better than it had been. The government would have been harangued and harassed into soft-pedaling or outright backing down into a meaningless decision. After all these, the problems persist, the marketers relapse to business as usual and the citizens continue to wallow in intermittent shortages, long queues, adulterations and explosions, thanks to the radicalism/militancy establishment!

Given the foregoing scenario it is, therefore, hard to subscribe to Prof. Jega's view that the fuel crisis persists on and is sustained by the government's and its agencies' flagrant failure to contain illegalities in the petroleum business. While it is true that the government has indeed failed to stamp out illegality in the petroleum sector, the same is also true of several other sectors of the economy. Sharp practices abound in virtually all sectors and the institutions of state perennially fail to counter them. For example, there has been a growing threat to lives and property from men of the under-world. Little purpose would be achieved by continuing to assert that the growing incidences of armed robbery are due to the failure/refusal of the police to effectively police our neighbourhoods without inquiring further to determine why the police fail or refuse to do its job; etc. The fact is that at our current state of socio-economic and political under development, state institutions are coming under increasing stress and strain and their capacity to render effective services is being seriously diminished. What is true of the police is equally true of the judiciary, education, health care delivery system etc. The decline and collapse of state infrastructure is surely an argument in favour of reducing the weight it is called upon to carry even as efforts continue to strengthen it. In this regard, common sense dictates that whenever alternatives to reliance on state bureaucracy exist, they should be grabbed. For example, if market forces could resolve the fuel crisis, they should be utilised instead of insisting on more of the same bureaucratic and unworkable medicine.

Prof. Jega obviously disagrees with the idea of an implied subsidy in the current official pricing of petroleum products. He says, "the subsidy dimension is baffling and intriguing for any person who has been through Economics 101 can see through the subterfuge if she/he wishes to do so!" Unfortunately the Professor is not being helpful here. It would have added greatly to the educative value of his piece if he had, for the benefit of the reading public, stated how this subterfuge is exposed in Economics 101. I have gone through Economics 101 and even beyond and I am genuinely desirous of seeing through this subterfuge. My understanding is as follows: Subsidies are legitimate tools of trade and economic policy that are employed by governments to achieve certain desirable economic objectives. For subsidies to be most effective, however, they should be provided direct to the target group. The biggest snag with subsidies is often their failure to reach the target group be they consumers, farmers or industries. The truth is at the prevailing prices of petroleum products in this country, there is an incontestable subsidy the government is funding to the tune of billions of Naira. Regrettably, the bulk of this subsidy does not reach the intended target i.e. the final consumers. Rather, a retinue of corrupt public officials, distributors, marketers and petrol hawkers is cornering the subsidy.

At the domestic level, as long as prices of petroleum products are fixed at below their real economic value, hoarding and shortage will persist as distributors perpetually stand to gain from it. Although officially petrol sells for N22 per litre, in Kano for the last 6 years buying it at N50 per litre has become the norm. No matter how severe the shortage, at the price of N50 to N60 per litre, fuel is always available to those that can afford. In other words, demand tends to equal supply at the price of N50 per litre. If we insist that government should artificially maintain the price at the uneconomical level of N22 per litre, we are only unwittingly enriching the distributors and the marketers who will continue to cash-in on these huge and undeserved profits. From a distributive-justice point of view, it is morally wrong for the marketers with very small percentage of investment relative to the refineries, to be raking-in profits far in excess of the actual producers and to the detriment of the consumer for whom the subsidy is meant.

In the latter part of his write-up, Professor Jega reluctantly agrees to the need for commercialization though not privatization of the refineries. Question is what is so sacrosanct about government ownership of enterprises, especially the refineries? If one is running a business and is steadily and consistently losing money, then what is wrong in cutting off one's losses by selling or even auctioning the business? Several billions have been sunk into the refineries and how much has been recovered in return? The point is: government is not endowed with the capacity to run business efficiently. Partly for the reason that "government business is nobody's business". Therefore "government has no business running business". No amount of re-organisation, reformation or refinancing will transform public enterprises into success stories. Other countries have long come to this realisation and had since followed the path of privatisation. Regrettably in our own economy since 1988 successive governments have been rather hesitant to take privatisation to its logical conclusion. It is hoped that the current government will succeed where others failed.

On a final note it should be remembered that all over the world, the era of government is receding and that of free enterprise is blossoming. Government is being rolled back and in its place private initiatives are taking over. Those countries that realized this early and took the initiatives are better off for it today. Even in developed countries, where the ability of the state superstructure is on the increase, they have long since appreciated the limits of government in business and have followed the path of privatisation. In some cases, they have even transcended privatisation and their current buzzword is globalisation. Down here we are still debating deregulation and privatisation. It's high time we moved on.

AHMED M. SALIK, is a General Manager with the National Economic Reconstruction Fund, Abuja.

**LETTER OF THE DAY**

**Gen. Buhari, please contest 2003 election**

Kindly permit me a space in your newspaper to call on all patriotic Nigerians, to join hands together and beg General Muhammadu Buhari (Rtd.) TO CONTEST THE 2003 PRESIDENTIAL election. Nigeria's contemporary problems are multitudinous and have reached a crisis stage. It, therefore, requires a leader of proven integrity and honesty, who understands these problems and is always ready to defend and protect the sovereignty of the country, no matter the sacrifice. Such a leader should possess all the qualities required to lead us in the years to come.

Muhammadu Buhari. He has all the qualities; he was successful petroleum minister and during his reign as Head of State, fought and almost eliminated corruption and indiscipline in this country. Buhari's performance at Petroleum Trust Fund was, without doubt, excellent and transparent.

Arise O compatriots, let us all understand that the nation's interest will be best served, if we recognise with justice those who are sincere and humble, those that are blessed with leadership ingenuity and have a generous heart, big enough to contain all. This country needs his humble dedication and sincerity.

Nigeria needs a patriotic president in the mould of

Engr. Tukur M. Lawal, of P.O. Box 156, Bisije Funtua.

## Opinion

## Interpreting the law

By Kokwain .P. Nyam

Among the many religions we have in the world today are Christianity and Islam, which have one significant thing in common as evident in the Christian and Islamic calendar dates viz. in the year of our Lord Jesus Christ i.e. Anno Domini - (A.D) for Christians; and in the year of the Prophet's flight i.e. After Hijra (A.H) for Muslims. So the year 2001 AD refers to the years of spreading the gospel from the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ to date. And the year 1421 A.H refers to the years of spreading Islam from the flight -year of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) to date.

Christianity and Islam basically mean the same thing through total submission to the will of God; bowing to the will of God or doing the will of God (please see Quran 2: 136 and Matthew 7:21 etc). It is also said that Islam dates back to Father Abraham himself and not only from Prophet Muhammad (SAW). This is because of the absolute surrender of himself (human will) to God's will -which he (Abraham) did on the proposed human sacrifice of his son to God, based on his strong FAITH in God (please see Hebrew 11 :8-11 and Quran 3:67).

A dictum says "The law is an ass" which means a law is usually interpreted to suit the interpreter's personal or group interest -until a competent court of law interprets it otherwise. This includes interpretation of the divine law (SHARIA) by various religious bodies, councils and "individuals; with each group or individual claiming to have the correct interpretation -until we reach the ultimate court of God (Heaven).

The various Christian denominations and Islamic sects we have at present, sprouted from the religion of Father Abraham only; but because of different interpretations given to this God's Law, and within this same religion of faith in God; we now have divisions and conflicts.

In my earlier articles, I quoted among others Quran 2:62 and 5:72 which says: "Those who believe in the Quran, and those who believe in the Jewish scriptures, and the Christians, and the Sabians, and any who believes in God and the last day -and work righteously, shall have their reward; and on them shall be no fear -nor shall they grieve".

Here, my interpretation of those verses is that, any body who belongs to any group of believers mentioned in the said verses -should not be regarded as an enemy or unbeliever as written in Quran 5:54 which says:-

"O ye who believe, take not the Jews and the Christians for your friends and protectors. They are but friends and protectors to each other only. And he amongst you that turns to them for friendship is of them. Verily God guideth not a people unjust". Therefore, it is only when the behaviour proves contrary to the claim of the person or group; that negative treatment of distrust can be meted out against the person. In other words, I interpreted Quran 2:62 and 5:72 in the context of peaceful co-existence among all the various religious and ethnic communities in Kaduna state, in particular, and Nigeria in, general. But with reference to salvation in the hereafter, I leave that spiritual contextual interpretation to the clerics and individual convictions of the people -hence, I still stand by my interpretation in the context of peaceful co-existence.

In reaction to some of my articles especially on "COMMON LAW IS BEST FOR KADUNA STATE", some respondents quoted Quran 3:85 as "And whosoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted from him, and in the hereafter, he will be one of the losers".

Well, could this verse be compared and contrasted with Biblical John 14:6 .which says: "Jesus said. ...., I am the way, the truth and the life; no man comes unto the Father (GOD) but by me (Jesus)". Thus

I wonder why my opposing respondents did not quote Quran Chapter 5:50 which says: "Let the people of the Gospel judge by what God has revealed therein (of the gospel). If any do fail to judge by the light of what God has revealed (in the Gospel) -they are no better than those who rebel". Another opposing respondent (Mallam Auwalu Ado) quoted Quran 3:19 which says:- "The religion before God is Islam (Submission to His will) nor did the people of the Book dissent there from except through envy of each other, after knowledge had come to them. But if any deny the signs of God, God is swift in calling to account". This verse only confirms my stand on the same subject-matter-hence I am still

elaborating on the said quotation (Quran 2:62) in the context of the meaning of Islam to mean total submission to the will of God through belief; which also applies to Christianity as confirmed in Matthew 26:39-42 where Jesus Christ Himself submitted His will to God's will. Also Quran 3:20 says "... I have submitted myself to God..... Do ye also submit yourselves? If they do, they are in right guidance ..... and in God's sight are ALL His servants". So can we now agree that religion should, and MUST be a personal (internalized) matter with God the creator -and NOT coercive by any authority? Therefore, whoever faults the Bible or Quran is on his/her own.

Furthermore, one can clearly see that the people of the Gospel are Christians -who are supposed to use the revelation of God (SHARIA LAW OF LOVE) as revealed through Jesus Christ in Matthew 18:15-17 that:-

"Moreover, if your brother especially (fellow Christian) offends you -go and tell him his offence (just between you and him only); if he accepts his fault then you have gained him. But if he refuses to admit his fault, then take with you one or two more brethren so that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word can be established. And if he still refuses to admit his offence take the matter to the church elders; and if he still refuses to admit his fault, then regard him as a pagan".

Therefore, in the light of the foregoing, the issue of a universal religion -or a religion that has a majority membership (in a given area) has no relevance to Quran 5:50 which recognizes the Christians' rights and faith in the principles and practice of Christian Sharia Law of Love (John 13:34;

15:12; 1st Corinthians 6:1-10 etc) as juxtaposed with Islamic Sharia Law in the Quran and Hadith.

Kokwain, P. Nyam wrote in from No.8 Kwato Road, U/Rimi-Kaduna.

## The truth about NEPA

By Dominic Kidzu

Frankly, it is easy to understand why consumers give in to endless emotional outbursts whenever power supply fails them. Clearly, an expression of righteous indignation. The supply and outage of power provokes the highest irritation level, which explains why, when outage strikes while cooking, watching television, reading or writing, you feel disoriented and even disorganised.

The reaction most times is spontaneous and understandably so. Light is power. It is the soul of everything about life. Maybe that is why it is so easy to monitor and measure the performance of the National Electric Power Authority and to condemn same, for every outage. Maybe that is why we cannot accept any reason.

But we must face the facts squarely as they are. For no matter how much we berate NEPA people, or abuse them, or even; physically attack them, light is still going to go off, when it goes off and come on, when it comes on. And since we must have this light, why don't we stop for a while and listen to what they have to say.

Worried stiff about the incessant power cuts at my house in Ikeja, Lagos, and my temporary abode in Maitama (FCT), I sought audience with Mallam Mousa Booth, NEPA's image-maker, asking to know why a simple Nigerian, such as I am, cannot enjoy steady power supply. Booth took me on an excursion through the past, present and future of NEPA and for the two hours that he spoke to me in his office at the corporate headquarters of the authority, power fluctuated six times. In the end, I walked away lighter hearted than I came in, flushed with the realization that NEPA was a real behemoth and that like an elephant, it just won't do to look at the corporation only from the point of the consumer. Clearly, the people at NEPA feel as disappointed in us as we

are in them. It stands to reason that decades of military rule decimated the fabric of the Nigerian State, and evidence abounds in political, social, economic and mostly, infrastructural sphere. NEPA is not excepted. By the time the military left in 1999, out of 78 Nos installed generating units in all the power stations, 38 Nos representing 35% or 1,988MW of installed capacity were no longer available. In fact, since 1998, no new 330 kV or 132KV-transmission line has been added to the National Grid and no new power station had been commissioned since 1990.

Investment in the core sectors of generation, transmission and distribution has not matched the increasing quality and reliability of power expected by Nigerians. Today, Nigeria, with a population of more than 120 million people, 36 states, a fast growing new capital, and 774 local governments, has only ten power stations and an installed generating capacity of less than 6,000 MK.

It is noteworthy that South Africa with a population of 42 million has a 40,000 MV installed generating capacity. This makes simple nonsense of our plants most of which have outlived their recommended life spans. I recall that in December, last year the Corporation took well-appointed advertorials in national dailies preparing consumers to expect power fluctuation and load sharing as a result of two operational drawbacks on its network.

It had reported a fire outbreak resulting from gas pipeline vandalism near the Delta IV power station, Ugheli in Delta State and a major technical fault at the Kainji hydroelectric power station. Vandals are also reported to have struck near Oshogbo, cutting off the Ikeja-West-Oshogbo 330 k V transmission line and towers from the

National Grid.

Booth explains that the two 330 KV lines are the major links between the three hydro-generating stations in the North of the country and the thermal generating stations in the South. Their setback logically led to load shedding throughout the country as a result of the obvious drop in power generation to the National Grid.

Commentators have rightly pointed out that Nigeria's national power system has fallen short of its potential to support economic growth of the country, but they fail to note that contending interests in our public sector allocation have made the public financing of the power sector inadequate. Critics find it rather compelling to reel out supposedly large sums NEPA has received from government forgetting that these so-called generous allocations are at best, a drop in the pan, considering the enormity of work to be done. Seriously, public money will never get the job done.

Luckily, the Obasanjo administration has shown commitment to the eventual privatization of the power sector. The Technical Board of NEPA has commenced this effort with the unbundling of the corporation into its functional units, and the invitation of private participation in the rehabilitation. Thus, generation, transmission and distribution and the eventual introduction of a separate single buyer to perform centralized bulk power trading is in the offing where the operation of each of these elements will be put in the hands of separate management structures to suit expected privatization models.

The expected deregulation policy has already galvanized state governments to initiate efforts at producing their own electricity independent of NEPA. In fact, private investors can choose either to participate in the delivery of emergency power such as Enron is doing in Lagos or in-

vest in the on-going rehabilitation efforts through the Rehabilitation, Operate and Transfer (ROT) programme etc.

Meanwhile, the Technical Board has created windows of opportunities leading to deregulation of the sector which has witnessed the coming of Enron International to generate and sell 270 MW of Electricity while an MOU has been signed between Mobil, NEPA, Power and Steel Ministry and Shell. Other MOUs signed are those between Power and Steel Ministry and Eagle Energy Consortium to generate 500 MW of Electricity and that signed between NEPA and ESKOM Enterprises, the South African monopoly.

Also in the pipeline are the development of Abuja thermal station (300MW), Geregu thermal station (300MW), Zungeru Hydro station (950MW) and Mambilla Hydro station (3960 MW). Surely when all these come to be, the nagging irritation of power outages should have been put behind us.

There is no way you can institute an instant turn-around hard on the heels of repudiating the decay and anachronism of over 30 years or, for that matter, construct new power stations in anything less than four years. Building a giant caricature of NEPA by the nation's elite media is not in the final analysis to the advantage of even these journalists. The bellicose caricature will still not wish away the bitter facts that there is a drop in water level and that it is going to take more than just a few weeks to get obsolete and badly damaged equipment back to work. Maybe, Nigerians should just try to understand the situation some more. After all those who work in this NEPA are themselves, Nigerians.

Mr. Dominic Kidzu, lives at No. 25, Katsina-Ala Crescent, Maitama District, Abuja.

## Obasanjo's economic battles

By Haruna Penni

Nigerians are understandably impatient and expectedly eager to start enjoying the fruits of an economic boom envisaged under democracy and as promised by the politicians during electioneering campaigns.

Most Nigerians are poor as indicated by official statistics. The government is fighting many economic battles. Given this scenario, it is actually not out of place for Nigerians to imagine the dividends of democracy largely in terms of positive economic growth indices, more money in their pockets and a visibly improved standard of living.

Thus, important issues such as the sustainability of democracy, peace, stability and keeping the country one, which should normally be in the front burners, have been pushed into a secondary position. This is dangerous. The President has some economic battles to fight but there is still hope for a better tomorrow despite all odds.

Nigeria has adequate quality manpower and the material resources to raise the per capita income of the country. But to what extent has the energy of the population been harnessed towards pursuing honest, transparent, and vigorous effort using their talents and capabilities to move the country forward? The truth is that we have actually been in want of both purposeful leadership and followership in all aspects

of our national life. These negative factors of poor leadership and followership are earning the attention of the government.

The Obasanjo administration has been consistent in saying that we have to change our negative moral and ethical attitude to public service, and remove all the fundamental structural defects that led to the mismanagement of the macro-economic sectors leading to the accumulation of a crippling external debt, mass unemployment, low capacity utilization and infrastructural decay. This was what actually necessitated the rebirth of national orientation campaign and the introduction of anti-corruption law, which the government rightly regarded as the number one enemy of development and progress in Nigeria. Containing this hydra-headed monster is a major priority of the government.

The Obasanjo government hopes that a successful ethical purification or a war against corruption would be a prelude to the revival of the economy. This perception is informed by the reality that the corruption cankerworm has damagingly eaten into the fabric of our society, thereby derailing the direction of government physically, socially, politically and economically. "We must tackle it head on for our country to

make any meaningful economic progress", President Obasanjo declared at the ceremony to sign into law the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act 2000. Without mincing words, corruption retards economic development and progress could be made where it is pervasive.

It needs to be pointed out that the fourth republic inherited a comatose economy with a declining capacity utilization, poor structural performance, large trade deficit, unemployment, inflation, import dependence, mono-economy, weak industrial base, weak private sector, huge external debt overhang and neglected public utilities, among others. This state of decadence was not inflicted by the Obasanjo administration. Therefore, we owe this government patience and prayers.

Consequent to all these problems and issues, the government has not left any doubt of its economic direction, which is of strict fiscal discipline, honest, transparent and accountable leadership that could inspire the entire citizenry, despite the fluctuating fortunes of oil, our largest single foreign exchange earner. This necessitated certain drastic measures including the curbing of extra-budgetary expenditure and the ascertaining of actual establishments in public institutions.

As a responsible member

of the international community, Nigeria is expected to start paying back her external debt. While this is going on, the government is not resting on its oars in pressing for debt forgiveness, debt rescheduling or outright cancellation, especially as some of the debts were of doubtful authenticity as the President pointed out on several occasions.

The Obasanjo Administration has not only created new economic policies and articulating bodies, but retained and strengthened the inherited ones like Office of the Chief Economic Adviser to the President, Office of the Honourable Minister on Economic Matters, National Debt Management Office, National Planning Commission and Economic Affairs Office, among others.

Above all, the economic policy thrust of the government includes globalisation, privatization and putting the economy on a sound footing, through various measures implemented to reduce the level of decadence in the system. The welfare of the citizenry is the bedrock informing any policy. The government envisages a strong, broad-based and buoyant economy with a rapid and sustained growth of between six and ten percent annually.

Mal. Haruna Penni, is a Senior Press Officer in the Presidency.

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3 KILL-AND-DIVIDE POLICEMEN TO HANG  
NEWS

THEY STOLE WITH GUNS!  
LET JUSTICE ALSO CATCH UP  
WITH THOSE WHO USE  
BIRO.



YOUR LETTERS

**Borno needs a strong and unified front**

We need a strong but purposeful Borno Youth Movement to decide on whom to be our leader in the next election due to take place in the year 2003. There is need for the Borno Youth Movement to decide on who is going to be their next governor, Senators, Representatives, members State House of Assembly, local government chairmen and councillors. These crop of political office-holders are very important to the development of Borno state in general. The youth should sit down and analyse the past performance of each and every contestant particularly their contribution towards education and socio-economic development in their constituencies. It is high time to deviate from the old norms of voting into power

any character regardless of whether he or she is important to the development of our society. The World Bank report which indicates that only 30% of Borno state population is literate compare to more than half and nearly 80% in some states in the Southern part of Nigeria is an eye-opener. The 30% voting is too dangerous to toy with since there is no immediate hope of reaching higher percentage of literacy rate. In view of this, it becomes pertinent on Borno state youth to analyse the performances of our current political office-holders and those aspiring to contest in the next election due in 2003. The youth have to be convinced before casting their votes. I am particular about the youth because they are in the

majority and can equally convince their elders to vote for the right person in the coming elections. The lack of strong, virile and united Borno state youth association can further compound the illiteracy problem. Since it is our view that the choice of a particular leader depends on the problems the group is facing, leadership automatically falls on the person best suited to accomplish the group's goal. However, there is need for the youth in various political parties in the state, irrespective of their political affiliations, to form a solid union and identify the parameters to be used in electing good leaders. Zannah Lawan, No. 35, Kofan Doka, Zaria, Kaduna state.

**Bachama marginalization - a fallacy**

The Daily Trust report entitled: "Bwatiye people petition Obasanjo over Marginalization" published on 22 Feb., 2001, makes an interesting reading. Firstly it exposes Bachama blackmail of Adamawa and Federal Governments in a deliberate misinformation alleging marginalization. Secondly one deciphers contradiction in their cry of neglect while at the same time threatening to resist the Federal Government's intension to privatize her holding in the Savanna Sugar Company. Thirdly it also brings out Bachama's secret manoeuvres and betrayal of Batta Community in the Bwatiye Project. Recorded history teaches that Bwatiye is synonymous with Bwata, who swiftly laundered themselves from the crass arrogance and ridicule. In political settings, appointments to

key positions in government are made to conjure mutual confidence and give a sense of belonging to the community that benefits. Expectedly, in civilize societies, courtesy demands that you appreciate the little given to you and later, request for more. It is imperative at this point to correct the erroneous notion traded on marginalization. The Public is aware of the fact that the Vice-President Atiku Abubakar recently honored the Chief of Bachama with a National Merit Award (Officer of the Order of the Niger OON). The monarch is yet to reciprocate the gesture with gratitude. His continuous silence means consent to the uncouth petitioners. Beyond that, other largesse of Bachama Include: an ambassadorial appointment, Director, National Maritime Authority, State Police Commissioner, Bank

Director- B.G.N, Director Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Brigade Commander, Membership of Federal Boards and Parastatals. Then at the state level, the tribe has two permanent secretaries, a special adviser to the governor, commissioners, four secretaries while many of them are board members of some state-owned parastatals. These crop of selected Bachama sons and daughters are okay to transform the socio-economic well being of their people. The unfortunate thing is that Bachama is marginalizing the Bachamas but they shift the blame on state and Federal Governments. Based on these, I unequivocally condemn the unwarranted sabotage of the government's service to the citizenry. Sambo Gang Buba, General hospital, Mubi, Adamawa State.

**Tonnie Iredia's NTA parley with Zamfara state governor**

Allow me space in your widely read newspaper to comment on the recent parley of the NTA Director of News, Mr. Tonnie Iredia, with the Governor of Zamfara state, Alhaji Ahmed Sani, Yariman Bakura, on the popular NTA Programme: POINT BLANK. I wish to commend the Yarima Bakura for his calmness in doing justice to the questions raised by Mr. Iredia even as it seemed he was trying to play a joke on the governor for obvious reasons. Apparently not satisfied with all the governor said, Mr. Iredia invited a non-indigenous cleric whose reply was a rude awakening to the realities of the two religions in the state. Iredia's action was purposely tailored to belie the governor's reply to one of the questions. Mr. Iredia sir, what you owe the entire Muslim community of Nigeria is to invite

the governor of your home state, Chief Lucky Igbinedion, being the first non-Muslim governor to pass what seems like a Sharia bill prohibiting prostitution, to appear on the same programme. You should ask him why despite the sizeable number of indigenous Muslims in Edo state, his excellency vowed not to allow the teaching of Islamic Religious knowledge (IRK) in the state public schools. He should also be asked why these indigenous Muslims are not appointed into key positions in the state. What ever his Excellency's reply, we expect that you will likewise invite an indigenous Muslims from the state for an equal air time for a rejoinder. Mr. Iredia, if you do this, we will know that you are not one of those who abuse the trust of their offices. We are earnestly waiting for Justice to be done. Abu Khalil Abdullah, Kofar Marusa Low Cost, Katsina, Katsina state.

I read with dismay an editorial comment published by the Daily Times newspapers of Wednesday, January 31st, 2001. From my little knowledge of Journalism, editorial comments are supposed to be the official stand of the paper on any given issue, and it is normally deliberated upon by some, well selected intellectuals who, before writing the commentary, research on the topic and come up with an authentic piece devoid of misrepresentation of facts. But to my greatest disappointment, the piece was written in total disregard to the Islamic rules and flagrant disrespect to the religion of Islam. If the Judgement being passed on innocent citizens

**Daily Times has goofed**

by OPC and Bakassi whether found guilty of not is accepted by Daily Times despite the fact that it was executed in an uncivilised and barbaric manner, then the 180 strokes of cane carried out on Barira Ibrahim found guilty of engaging in premarital sex should not warrant even a column news item, let alone an editorial comment. What Daily Times failed to know is that, this punishment is a prescription from the almighty Allah, to any Muslim found guilty of the offence. One could have expected the paper to devote

more of its space on killings of innocent souls in places like Lagos, Ibadan and Modakeke instead of wasting space on a divine injunction. The killings are really affecting our drive for foreign investors rather than Sharia which is there to sanitise our sinful environment. I believe if the Daily Times had done a thorough research on the punishment, such ignorant, lousy, and disrespectful editorial will not be written. So please sit up. Sule Ya'u Sule, lives at No. 277, Tukuntawa - Kano.

**Sarah and Co. should contest in 2003 election**

Permit space in your medium to commend Mrs Sarah Jibril and Hajiya Na'ja'atu Muhammad for their untiring efforts in championing the cause of Northern nay Nigerian women. Meanwhile, time has come for the two women to broaden their horizons in the nation's political landscape. I am, therefore, appealing to them to contest for the office of the Vice-President come 2003. Let the two take the bull by the horn by signifying their interest as they will enjoy overwhelming support from anxious Nigerian women who are in dire need of a change. Murjanatu A. Sa'eed, Wadata pharmacy, Jos, Plateau state.

**Re: Letter to the 19 Northern governors**

Kindly permit me space in your newspaper to air my view on an article with above heading written by Ahmad Tafida Jalingo and featured in the March 27, 2001, edition of Daily Trust. The write-up I must say, was hope-inspiring. I endorse the various commissions proposed by the

elder statesman especially, the Agriculture Research and Development Commission, nomadic, riverine, Sahel and montaneous people Development Commission and Mineral Resource Extraction and Marketing Company Limited. This will surely boost economic and agricultural activities and bring about rapid

development in the North. The nomadic, Riverine, Sahel and Motane people Educational Development Commission will serves as substitute for the repealed nomadic education programme. Abdulahi Salihu Abubakar, Angwan Hausawa, Garki Village, Garki-Abuja.



# NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

ESTABLISHED BY ACT NO.22 OF 1995

PLOT 800 BLANTYRE STREET, WUSE II

P.M.B 444, GARKI-ABUJA

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Tel:09-5238656

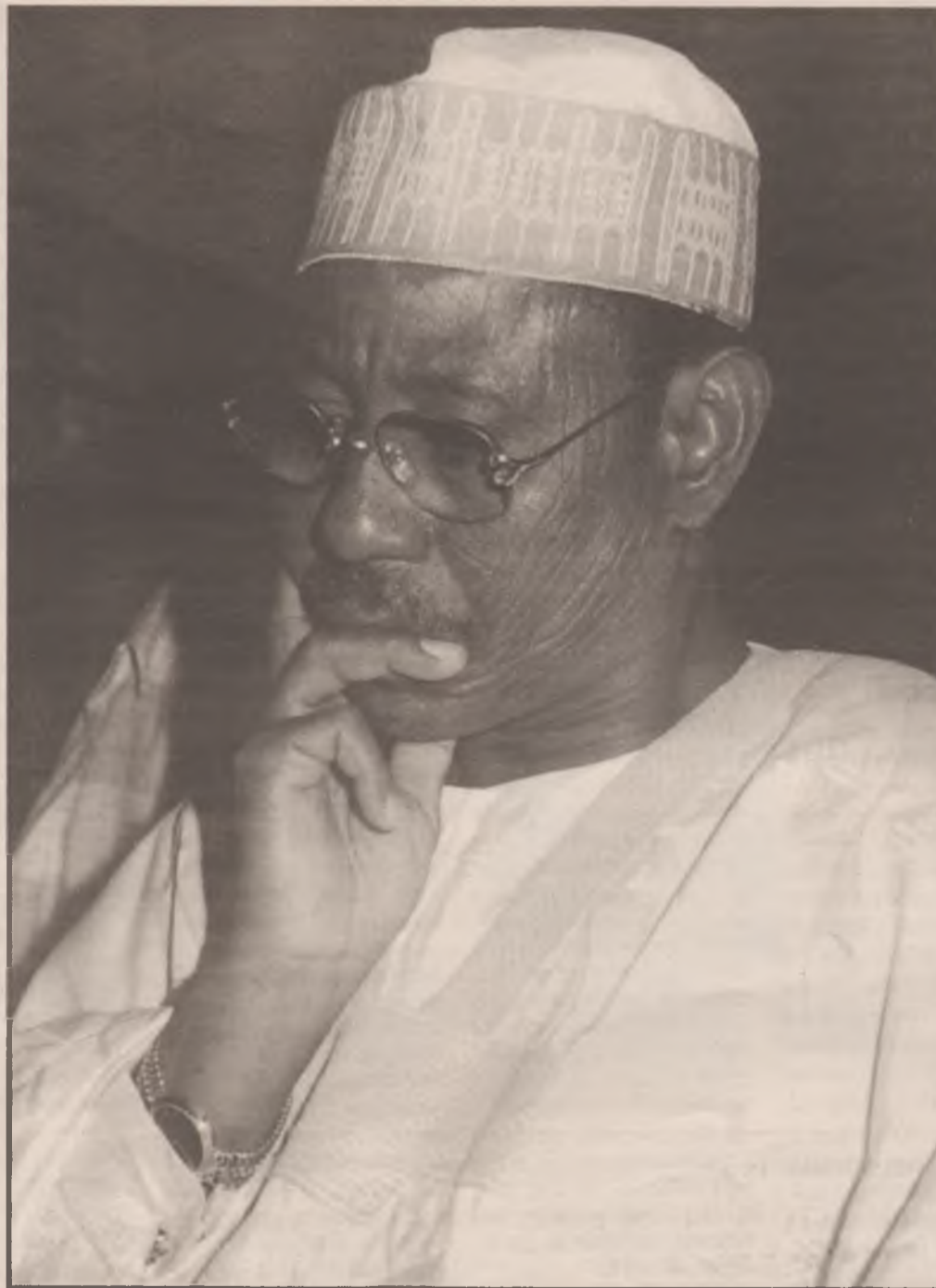
09-5239393

09-5239394

Fax:09-5238657

## INNA LILLAHI WA INNA ILAIHIR RAJI'UN

The Chairman, council Members, Management and Staff of the National Human Rights Commission commiserate with the Augie family, the Senate President, the Government and the People of Kebbi State over the death of **Senator Adamu Baba Augie**, the *Wazirin Kebbi* who died in a motor accident on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2001 along Funtua-Gusau Road.



### Late Senator A.B. Augie

The late Senator who was a pioneer member of the Governing Council of the National Human Rights Commission (1996-1999) contributed immensely towards the development of the Commission. We at the Commission will forever remember his invaluable contributions to the promotion and protection of Human Rights in Nigeria and his role as Chairman of the Promotion and Publicity Committee of the Commission.

We pray Almighty Allah in His Mercy to forgive his sins, and make *Al-janna Firdausi* his perpetual abode.

*Signed:*

**BUKHARI BELLO**

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

TRUST INTERNATIONAL

Foreign & Diplomatic

**The Movement System has become Uganda's contribution to the democratisation process on the continent. Now the opposition has alleged that Museveni has distorted the movement system. What would you say to that allegation?**

I am glad you said the movement system has been one contribution to democracy in Africa because I think, Uganda's history was uniquely disastrous to a level where political parties were more of a liability than an asset. The parties that we had were based on religion. You had the Catholics belonging to the Democratic Party, the Protestants to the UPC. The Muslims caught in between... It was an untenable situation and it could end up being worse than Northern Ireland or other countries where you have two extremist groups like Rwanda and so on.

The whole idea was, look, let's not fight over a division, which is unnecessary. We have common problems—poverty and ignorance and disease. When can we find a format that will make all of us belong to the family...

The whole concept of the Movement is that all Ugandans are members. The difference between it and a one-party state is that in one party state, you still have to join. There is a process of joining and not everybody, even in the (former) Soviet Union, not everybody belonged to the Communist Party but his one, we are all assumed to be members.... This has been part of the major contribution to Ugandan development because it ushered in a very high level of stability. It's a new concept. It's going through regeneration, growth, realignment. There are new members who are even more active in the process. There were some mistakes but there were a lot of improvements in the process. So, it's a growing system but the government once appreciated that look, let the people of Uganda decide at every stage. So, we have a referendum every four years for the people to decide whether they feel the system is good enough or we go to the traditional multi-party system.

In the last referendum, the people voted that we continue with the movement system.

**How come they alleged that Museveni has derailed the system?**

Well I think it is more of a personal opinion because if you look at the structure of the Movement System, we have almost five tiers. It starts with the Local Council (I) which is the village council. It's one of the most efficient democratic structures we have in Uganda. It has a minister for women affairs, a minister for youths, a minister for development. They also have some judicial

# Museveni has no kitchen cabinet

— Ugandan envoy

*President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda is, perhaps, a tough act to follow. Those who speak in his favour do so with as much fervour and enthusiasm as those who want to bring him down. The Ugandan High Commissioner to Nigeria, Mr. Julius Onen, spoke to the Foreign Desk Editor, Kevin Ebele Adinnu.*

powers at the village level.... If you need a passport, it is the people there who recommend you... Museveni couldn't hijack that.

Then we have local council (II). This is more of an overseer of local council (I). They group like 10 local council I and the executives are appointed as members. Then the third tier, Local council III is the one at the country level. It's like a sub-district. It is where all the planning at the local level takes place. They even get subvention from the central government directly.

Then you have local council IV which is an overseer of these three down there. Then the central Authority, the equivocalent of your state apparatus here, is the local council V. The elections are extremely competitive.... So we are shifting to what you may call a mini federal arrangement. For somebody to say the President has subverted this process is missing the issue...

**President Museveni has been popular. In the 1996 election, he won convincingly. There was no serious challenge. But this time around, Dr. Kizza Besigye challenged him. Not only that he challenged him in the election with four others, he refused to accept the results of the election. Before we even talk of the results of the election, why this increasing disenchantment with President Museveni?**

I think it is a healthy aspect of the Movement System. We have in Uganda, rather I think it is also peculiarly an African problem of what you call politics of appointment.

When somebody is in government, everything is fine. When somebody is out of government, everything is wrong.... That is one element and then of course, the more you liberalise, the more you privatise, you throw the society to the challenge of competence. If you have a class of people who wants to survive on political patronage, to them the cake has become too small because they may not have the ability to now work on their own to be able to survive. This in fact is the biggest challenge to privatisation in most African countries because the majority of people who don't want privatisation are those who are going to live on the state. Some may not want to let go. They will have no jobs, they will have no contact to give. I mean if I'm a private bank, I will give contact to the best competent fellow. We don't care what tribe you are... I think most African countries are in their transitional periods. So you get disenchantments everywhere. You can see the example here. His excellency President Obasanjo won with overwhelming majority but you see it in the same fellows within the same party crying marginalisation and all that. It is the same problem.

**Dr. Besigye has gone to court to challenge the result of the election. During the election we heard reports of intimidation of the opposition., electoral malpractices like ballot papers being in wrong hands. Are you convinced of the fairness of that election?**

I think the election by and

were clear, very professional public opinion surveys right from the beginning of the campaign and it became clear towards the end that Dr. Besigye was losing greatly. Some Ugandans value him (Museveni) because of the very terrible experience in security and stability. At the back of the people's mind in the end was that the devil you know is better than the devil you don't know. They have had this peace and stability and they don't want to trade it for anything else. They saw in President Museveni somebody that that will give them five years of that continual progress....

The allegation of rigging and violence was widely reported. It was not limited to one candidate. You see, there was a lot of emotion involved because again of the Movement System. The two strong candidates were from the same political party. So there were a lot of emotions and some people, I think, took it to the extreme....

Well, the matter has gone to court and we have a lot of respect for the judiciary. They should be able to come up with a logical and a much more objective resolution of it.

**During the campaign, Museveni said something that got some of us worried. He said that he fought to acquire this power and was not in a hurry to just give it up and would even groom a successor when he is ready to go. That does not mean well for somebody who has democratic credentials.**

No, I think some of these quotations were really taken out of context. What he was

**When somebody is in government, everything is fine. When somebody is out of government, everything is wrong.... If you have a class of people who wants to survive on political patronage to them the cake has become too small because they may not have the ability to now work on their own to be able to survive."**

From 1986 to now there has been a lot of changes in the leadership. Ministers have been changed, some ambassadors have been changed. Those who started in 1986, they are less than 10 percent who are still there. Disenchantment, in my analysis of African politics boils down to the politics of appointment.

large, from observation of all foreign observers who witnessed it, it was free and fair. Nobody is denying there were no incidents of irregularities and this did not only affect one candidate, it affected, each of the candidates to some degree. I think that is also typical of the teething problem of electoral process in Africa. There

trying to emphasise is that he has all his life fought for peace and stability in Uganda. He is not going to allow somebody to come and create that felling of insecurity among the people.

I don't think he was claiming that he will be there forever, therefore, without him there will be no peace and stability but the way the cam-



Onen

paign came out generated certain unfortunate fear among the people that things could degenerate because Ugandans were comparing this campaign with the one we had in 1980 when President Obote came. So there was a lot of apprehension. So those statements Museveni made were really to say, look, he is not going to allow Ugandans go back to those days. He has fought all his life to avoid this kind of situation and the best legacy he can leave for Uganda is leave a leader who will continue with the same policy...

as a leader, when you want to leave the scene, you want to feel that you have left it in safe hands....

**I hope that is not an indictment on Jerry Rawlings. General laughter.**

**Your excellency, I would also want you to reply to these allegations that Museveni has destroyed the institutions; that he is one-man this. A one-man tenders board in the Ministry of Defence; that he has surrounded himself with his kith and kin.**

I think it is laughable. One, if you look at the various tiers of our government, you find that there is a broad spread of appointments based on regions, so that a region doesn't really feel marginalised in the scheme of things.

The local council system which is the foundation of the Movement System is so localised that it has never even been possible for anybody, for instance, to impose a candidate in an area. One of Obote's biggest (cause of) downfall was that his party used to impose candidates in areas.

If you had the chance to go and observe our parliamentary election, you would be amazed at the excitement, at the dyna-

mism, the competition. There is no way somebody from out would come and control the situation.

For me, I'm from the extreme north, next to the Sudan border. Museveni is from the west. So really, it is not very true.... I think what the president has tried to do is to keep an eye on everything to make sure that the system functions, to pick the right kind of people and put them in the right kind of place irrespective of where you come from and whom you are and of course, in the process, a few fellows feel they are being victimized, it is natural. Just like I said, when you have politics of appointment and politics of living on the state, you end up with people who feel they are not in the scheme of things because they have not joined the inner core.

One leader you can never find in Africa is probably President Museveni. I can assure you, he has nothing like what you call a kitchen cabinet. If you ask Ugandans who are his friends, they will probably not name one. He says publicly that he has work mates. He has no friends... He works with you on an issue; that's the end of it.

**Dr. Besigye has been working with Museveni. He was his personal physician. Would you now say that he lost out and was disenchanting with the system?**

O yes! I think as a human being, he also has his own ambition to lead and nobody faults him on that. All of us have our own dreams particularly in a competitive atmosphere, you must start at some foundation. It is always very easy to start pointing at faults in a system. No system is perfect particularly if it is a system you helped to build up.

# TRUST INTERNATIONAL

AFRICA &amp; THE MIDDLE EAST

## Sudan releases opposition leader

The freeing of Mohammed Hassan al-Amin, a Sudanese opposition leader, has raised hopes for the release of other accused anti-government activists, a leading party figure said.

Mohamed Hassan al-Amin, head of the Popular National Congress' constitutional department, was detained in February along with PNC leader, Hassan Turabi and three senior party members. Turabi remains in jail and may be tried on charges of conspiring against the government, but Al-Amin was released Saturday without explanation.

"We believe that his release could be the first step to freeing the remaining members, it is quite possible," Abdallah Hassan Ahmed, the PNC's assistant secretary general, told *The Associated Press*.

Fathi Khalil, chairman of Sudan's Bar Association, praised the release of al-

Amin.

"It is an encouraging move to our initiative seeking the release of all political detainees," Khalil told *AP*.

Turabi, leader of the opposition PNC, and four senior party members were arrested in February after Turabi called for overthrowing the president and announcing that he had signed an accord with

the Sudan People's Liberation Army, the main rebel force.

A five-man committee formed by the Sudanese government reportedly has completed Turabi's interrogation, but no trial date has been set.

Turabi was detained on charges of conspiring to topple the government. Security police subsequently detained at least 20 of his followers and closed his party's newspaper.

## .....rebels threaten oil workers

Sudanese rebels have threatened to attack international oil workers operating in the war torn south of the country.

The SPLA rebels, who are fighting for autonomy or independence in the south, said the Sudanese Government was using money from oil exports to finance its military operations.

A number of foreign companies, including Britain's Rolls Royce, have been brought in by the Sudanese Government to help exploit the country's vast new oil re-

serves.

The rebels have targeted oil installations since Sudan began exporting oil in 1999.

International human rights organisations have accused foreign oil companies of fuelling the conflict in which an estimated two million people have been killed.

The rebels accuse government troops of waging a brutal scorched earth policy to drive civilians from the oilfields.

In the flat, parched plains of southern Sudan, the talk is of famine and oil.

## Biya demotes General

Atenga, the former Commander of Bamenda military district.

Biya also sacked Col. Bobbo Ousmanou, Commander of the Coastal Gendarmerie Legion and chief of the National Gendarmerie Operations centre which was created recently to take over the activities of the Military Operations Command. The military command has come under

severe criticism for widespread violations of human rights and liberties.

Col. Mohamadou Ousseini, a former inspector at the Defence ministry and who once served as commander of the National Gendarmerie Legion in the north-west replaced him. The President also dismissed Capt. Jean-Jacques Aba Ndzengue who was head of the intelligence and transmissions Bureau at the Littoral Gendarmerie.

He played a key role in the investigation and criminal operations carried out by the Gendarmerie Operations Centre.

A source from the ministry of state for national defence said that the senior officers were sacked after an inquiry found that certain members of the police forces had taken lightly the 'disappearance' of nine youths in Douala's Bepanda district.

The Gendarmerie Operations Centre led by Capt. Aba Ndzengue arrested the youths on 23 January for allegedly stealing a gas cylinder. It is suspected they were executed by a Military Operations Command firing squad a few days later.

The presidential decree read on national radio Saturday called for the immediate arrest of those directly responsible for the disappearances, which have prompted a series of protest demonstrations in Douala over the past two months.

President Paul Biya of Cameroon during the weekend sacked Brig. Gen. Philippe Mpay who headed the Douala Military Operations Command and commander of the country's second military district.

In a decree, Biya transferred Mpay to the country's sixth military district in the English-speaking Bamenda Province in the country's north-west.

His replacement in Douala is Gen. Camille Nkoa

## Driver to testify in school fire case

A taxi driver who helped arsonists to ferry 25 litres of petrol to set ablaze a dormitory at Kyanguli Secondary School will be used as a State witness in the trial.

Two students currently in custody will appear in court today, each of them facing 67 counts of murder.

To be charged alongside the students is the headmaster, Mr David Kiilu, and his deputy, Mr Stephen Musyoki, who are likely to be charged with an offence of failing to prevent a felony.

Well-placed sources said one of the suspects is a 17-year-old Form Three boy, whose father works as a senior officer with a United Nations agency in Nairobi.

One of the boys was found with Sh2,000 on being arrested.

Sources close to the

prosecution said the businessmen who came into contact with the suspects are unlikely to be charged, but will be called as witnesses.

Among them is a petrol station service attendant who reportedly sold petrol to the suspects, a shop owner who sold them the jerry can to carry the fuel, and a kiosk owner who reportedly sold them the matchboxes used to set the dormitory on fire.

At the same time, the condition of eight victims of the fire at the Machakos and Kenyatta hospitals is stable.

Machakos District Senior Nursing Officer, Mr Paul Kavoo, said five students are admitted to the hospital, while three are in Kenyatta.

Antony Aoko was yesterday moved from Kenyatta to the Machakos to continue getting medical care close to his relatives.

## S/African arms scandal widens

New corruption allegations have emerged in South Africa as investigations continue into a multi-billion dollar arms deal with European weapons manufacturers.

One of the successful bidders, the European Aeronautical Defence and Space Company, has faxed a letter to South African national newspapers admitting that it helped to secure luxury cars for around 30 South African officials.

The company, which is partly owned by the Mercedes Benz manufacturer, Daimler Chrysler, said

it rendered assistance in acquiring the vehicles for what it called VIPs in the diplomatic, political and defence sectors.

Investigations so far have suggested that the cars were not given to the officials as gifts, but were sold at reduced prices.

These are by far the most serious allegations of corruption to have emerged since South Africa sealed the deal with European weapons manufacturers almost two years ago.

Opponents of the arms deal have long accused the governing African National

Congress of accepting bribes and have demanded an independent inquiry into allegations of corruption.

The ANC has consistently denied any charges of wrongdoing, but it has resisted attempts to bring in an independent judicial investigator to examine the deal.

The scandal surrounding the supply of luxury cars has enveloped senior officials within the ANC.

Even the party's chief whip, Tony Yengeni, has been accused of accepting a bribe. He is now being investigated by a team appointed by the government.



Tanzanian opposition march to demand new constitution and electoral commission in Dar-es-Salam, April 7, 2001. (Reuters).

## Kuwait: Women football causes controversy

A row has erupted in Kuwait over a women's football tournament, organised by Kuwait University and a number of women's unions.

The head of the Muslim Brotherhood, Abdullah al-Mutawa, has called for it to be cancelled saying it was a disobedience to God for women to take part in such activities.

But leading women's activist, Rola al-Dashdi, told the *BBC* the tournament should go ahead and that society must not bow to the Islamists.

Kuwaiti women already play tennis, volleyball and basketball, but football it seems has been a step too far for the Islamists.

The leader of Kuwait's

Muslim Brotherhood said the tournament could subject the whole of society to the wrath of God.

A well known conservative MP, Walid al-Tabtabai, also criticised the competition.

He said it was not acceptable for the tournament to be held in open because it would allow men to watch women's bodies and that that was clearly forbidden by Islam.

## Khatami criticises arrests

The Iranian President, Mohammad Khatami, has strongly criticised a new wave of arrests of liberal activists and intellectuals by agents of the ultra-conservative Revolutionary Court.

"I do not see such measures as benefiting the (Islamic) system and people... I cannot help feeling regret," the reformist president said.

The *BBC's* Tehran correspondent said it was rare for Mr Khatami to make

such a direct comment on the judicial crackdown on reformists.

More than 40 people were detained in a series of raids in Tehran and other cities. They were accused of attempting to overthrow the Islamic regime.

"Boosting the climate of intolerance in society will dishearten intellectuals... Our nation desires nothing more than freedom, progress and guaranteed rights," state television quoted Mr Khatami as saying.



Rescuers looking for bodies inside a bus hauled from Sabaki River, Kenya. 34 persons have died from the accident which occurred April 1, 2001. (AP).



## FEDERAL MINISTRY OF WORKS AND HOUSING MABUSHI, ABUJA

**NIGERIA LAUNCHES THE GLOBAL CAMPAIGN FOR GOOD URBAN GOVERNANCE APRIL 10 - 12, 2001 AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE, ABUJA.**

The Federal Government of Nigeria in collaboration with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) will flag off the Launching of the Global Campaign for Good Urban Governance in the African region on Tuesday, April 10, 2001 at the International Conference Centre, Abuja. The Launching which will be performed by His Excellency, **Chief Olusegun Aremu Obasanjo, GCFR.** will be attended by the Vice President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, State Governors, Members of the National Assembly, Ministers, Party Chieftains, State Commissioners in charge of Local Governments, Chairmen of the 774 Local Government Councils, Executive Director and officials of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). Multilateral and Bilateral Agencies, Local and International NGOs and the general public. The Launching of the Campaign is in pursuance of one of the key commitments of the Habitat Agenda agreed upon by 171

Governments around the world at the Istanbul (Habitat 11) Conference of 1996.

The Campaign places emphasis on the norms of good governance such as citizens participation, consultation, collective decision making, transparency, accountability, inclusiveness and openness in all the state matters.

Further more, the Campaign is to influence the climate of world opinion and build the constituency for change in values, behaviours, attitudes and approaches at the local exchange.

All are cordially invited to this historic event.

Your destiny is in your hands. Be involved in the affairs of your community, town or city.

**Signed:**  
**Permanent Secretary,**  
**Federal Ministry of Works and Housing,**  
**Abuja.**

# Capital City Classified

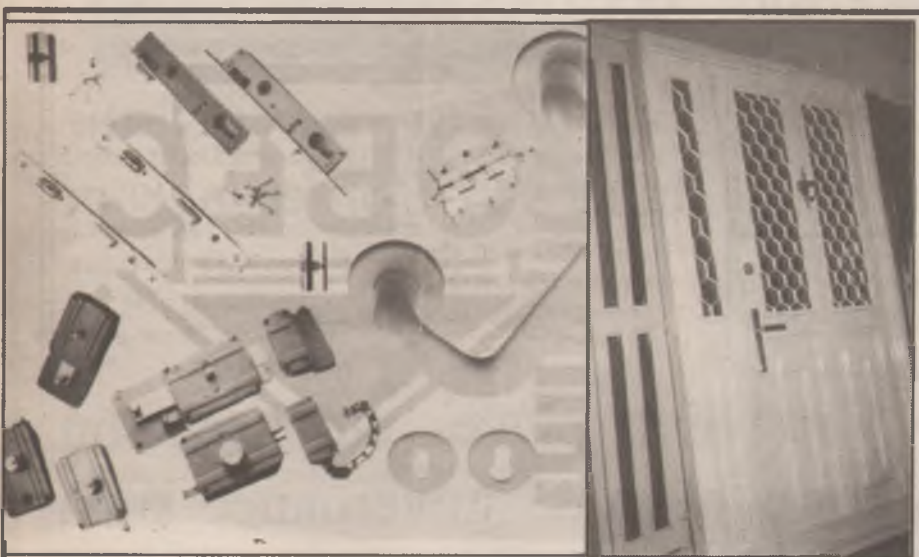
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 I, formerly known as BUKAR AJIMI SHETTIMA, now wish to be known as ABUBAKAR AJIMI SHETTIMA, former document remain valid B.S.W.C. and the general public to note.

**CHANGE OF NAME**  
 I, formerly known as MARY PAUL, now wish to be known as RABIHARUNA HAMZA. Former documents remain valid, University of Maiduguri and the public to note.

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The Bournvita Children's Magic Flight flew to Abuja...



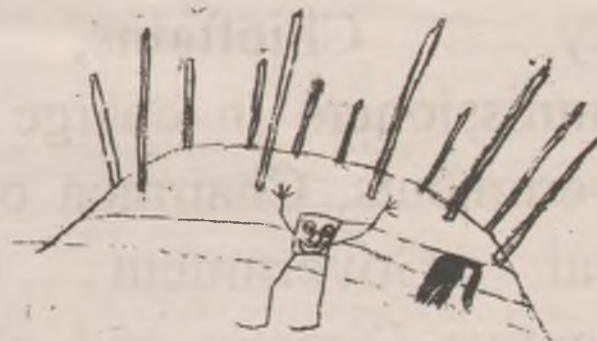
In 1999

The Bournvita Children's Magic Flight flew to Ghana...

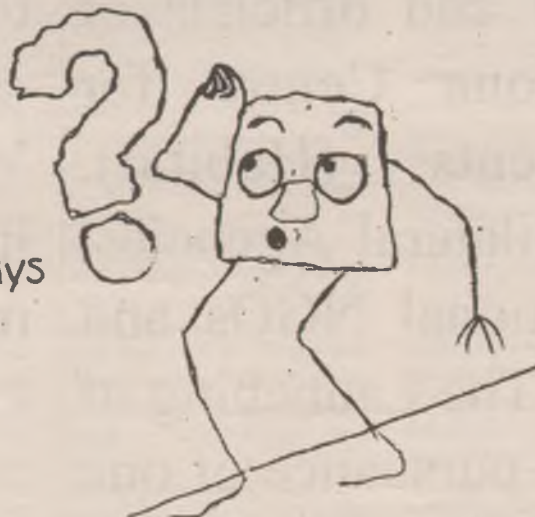


In 2000

The Bournvita/British Airways Children's Magic Flight flew to the United Kingdom...



Guess where  
 The Bournvita/British Airways  
 Children's Magic Flight  
 is flying to In 2001?



Tune to NTA Newsline on Sunday 8th April to find out.

# BUSINESS DAY

## NSE posts N14.1b in 3 months

The Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) has posted a total volume of business amounting to N14.1 billion in the first quarter of year 2001.

The deputy director-general of the exchange, Alhaji Rasaq Oladejo who disclosed this, weekend, said this equals the entire volume of business transacted in 1999.

Oladejo said that the current performance of the exchange is not extraordinary as the exchange in year 2000 doubled its 1999 posting of N14.1 billion with N28.1 billion achievement.

According to him, "this possess a challenge to all

From Bright Ewulu, in Lagos

stakeholders of the NSE, saying that the wonderful achievements mandates that all concerned need to work harder."

He said from NSE's achievement in the first quarter that it is possible for NSE to quadruple its 2000 performance.

The CBN certificates instrument not on offer during the transactions within the period under review.

With the strong performance of various CBN investment instruments in the money market in recent times, analysts believe that the excess liquidity situation

in the economy is bound to stabilize.

However, some commentators like the deputy director-general of the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE), Alhaji Rasaq Oladejo hold that the CBN certificates are against the micro-economic health of the economy.

It is views being that the apex bank should have contented itself to treasury bills rather than evolving new instruments since its responsibility is not limited to the macro-economy alone but also includes the micro perspectives.

Nevertheless, CBN officials have severally expressed joy at the credible

performance of the certificates which 360 maturity category was over sub-



Alh. Adamu Ciroma, Finance Minister.

scribed in the preceding week.

## BPE names adviser on NITEL soon

By Idongesit Inyang Abasai

Adviser on the privatization of NITEL Plc would be named next week.

The representative of Ministry of Communications (MOC) hinted newsmen in Abuja Thursday. This is in line with the invitation to Expression of Interest (MOI) by Bureau of Public Enterprises on 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2001.

In the count down, BEP employed a team of experts to screen entries. During evaluation, only consortia that scored 75 and above were selected. Only four consortia made it. These are: The Nomura FBNMB Consortium, the Bank Belgolaise/African Merchant Bank Consortium, Pricewater House Coopers Consortium, and Absa/LMB/MBC Consortium.

But the later was disqualified on the grounds of inadequate technical and financial information.

The financial bid for the advisory services of Nomura is US\$3,944,912 which exclude local tax of about US\$153,948. The consultants success fee was named based on the actual consideration paid and a reducing sliding scale percentage dependent on the actual consideration paid for NITEL and M-Tel. While investment success fee would be calculated on a flat percentage basis of 0.5% on dry contractually committed investment.

On the other hand, Pricewater House Coopers Consortium submitted a financial proposal of

US\$3,749,377 inclusive of local taxes which is estimated at US\$534,243 with a success fee of 0.8% of the purchase considerations of the equity sold.

AMB Consortium quoted for US\$2,700,700 excluding a local tax of US\$103,900.85.

In the grading, Pricewater House Cooper scored 94%, AMB seconded by 88% while Nomura had 80.8% in technical packaging of the bill. Ministry of Communications would recommend the winning consortium to World Bank for a no approval. The name is expected to be announced next week. The move towards putting NITEL in the market has actually started. Two weeks ago, the BPE boss, Mallam el-Ruffai showcased NITEL and NEPA in America for core investors.



Ahmed El-Ruffai, D-G BPE.

## Minister directs suspension of work on N1.5 billion plant

The Minister of Industry, Chief Kolawole Jamodu has ordered the suspension of work on the installation of a N1.5 billion new captive sulphuric acid plant at Federal Superphosphate Fertilizer Company (FSFC), Kaduna, pending a re-appraisal of the project to renew the project's implementation strategy.

The Minister who gave the directive after a recent inspection of the Fertilizer Company said the present conception of the project would lead to wrong implementation of the government's policy on the project.

A statement signed by Samuel Babajide, Press Secretary to the Industry Minister, reported the Minister as saying that "the design (of

By Ahmed Shekarau

the project) as present conceptualised will lead to



Chief Lawrence Nwurukwu, Minister of State, Industry

substantial over capacity in the acid plant."

Jamodu also raised ob-

jection to the conception of the project "without adequate provision for funds to execute it."

The Minister, who observed that the fertilizer company was designed to produce 100,000 metric tonnes of fertilizer and 42,000 metric tones of sulphuric acid annually, also expressed dismay at the condition of the plant "after successive governments have committed over N15 billion on the company.

He was however optimistic that the completion of the ongoing rehabilitation of the fertilizer company would enhance its productive capacity, which he said will generate employment and make fertilizer available to farmers.

He reiterated government's commitment to turnaround the fortunes of the industrial sector for the better, pointing out that it is for this purpose that the government to cater for the financial needs of the industrial sector would soon float a new bank of industry.

The bank, he stressed, will provide financial assistance towards the rehabilitation of the ailing industries in the country, and encourage the establishment of new ones.

The Minister assured the staff of the plant that their welfare would be given priority attention, urging them to reciprocate by working hard.

## Shareholders forum holds in Kano

A two-day forum aimed at providing efficient share registration services and resolving the problems of shareholders of First Bank of Nigeria Plc has taken place in Kano state. The forum organised by the First Registrars Nigeria Limited, also included other shareholders of their various client companies residing in Kano zone.

Most of the complaints that came from the shareholders of the First Bank of Nigeria Plc and other companies include non receipt of share certificate, non receipt of dividend warrant, change of name, change of address, registration later of administration in respect of deceased shareholder, lost of

From Habiba Adamu, in Kano

certificate, etc.

The managing director of the First Registration, Mr. Bayo Olugbemi said that the forum is an innovative way of creating goodwill between shareholders and companies.

He also pointed out that it was also meant for prompt rendition of returns to regulatory authorities and also professional advice was offered to the shareholders and the companies.

He maintained that they conducted such forum recently taken place in Port Harcourt and from Kano, they will also move to Warri and Maiduguri. He said those shareholders residing

in Kano zone and also miss the opportunity of participating should wait for the forum.

He added that complaints that can be tackled immediately were resolved during the forum, and those that cannot be solved immediately like that of lost of certificate were the shareholders could not get guarantee of indemnity from their banks immediately then they will do it later and send it to them in Lagos.

The participants of the forum enthused that some of their problems were resolved immediately which saved them the cost of travelling to Lagos more especially with the present financial constraints.

## Air line operators to pay navigational charges

Scheduled domestic air line operators in the country are to commence the payment of navigational charges on domestic routes to the Nigerian Airspace Management Agency (NAMA).

Chairman, board of directors NAMA, Chief George Obioha disclosed this to newsmen in Rivers state while on a familiarization tour of the Port Harcourt International Airport with members of the board.

He disclosed that also to be affected by the new helicopter and cargo operators as well as oil and allied companies on exploration activities, adding that private aircraft owners flying within the country's airspace will be part of the new deal.

Chief George Obioha told newsmen that the action has become necessary in order to improve on the revenue profile of the agency,

From Shakirat Abdulmajeed, in Lagos

"to enable it establish a dynamic airspace architecture that will meet the requirements of a safe, efficient and economic navigation system.

He declared that the days of free lunch with NAMA



Kema Chikwe, Aviation Minister

are over, charging that all users of navigational services provided by NAMA

have to pay their dues.

He emphasised that his agency is aware and mindful of the business situation and climate affecting the airlines, adding however, that NAMA cannot subsidize the operations of the airlines, being itself a self-funding agency.

He, however, assured that the charges would be moderate and reasonable as well as reflective of our realities of the prevailing business climate.

The chairman maintained that no law is required for the implementation of the policy as the law establishing NAMA empowers it to charge for services rendered by it.

He sued for co-operation of all those that might be affected by the new policy trust especially the Airline Operators of Nigeria (AON), adding that the policy is purely in the interest of safety in aviation sector.

# BUSINESS DAY

## The Nigerian Stock Exchange Daily Summary: (Equities)

1 <sup>st</sup> Tier Securities Sector					
Agriculture	Company Name	No of Deals	Quotation (N)	Quantity Traded	Value of Shares (N)
	Okomu Oil Palm plc.	11	11.50	3,729	42,883.59
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	11		3,729	42,883.59
<b>Automobile &amp; Tyre</b>	Dunlop Nigeria plc	29	3.83	347,028	1,316,994.77
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	29		347,028	1,316,994.77
<b>Banking</b>	Access Bank Nigeria plc	5	1.10	123,000	135,300.00
	AfriBank Nigeria plc	39	8.00	1,110,115	8,585,740.55
	Chartered Bank plc	12	4.82	247,757	1,880,297.74
	Eko International Bank plc	14	1.10	9,224	10,146.40
	First Bank of Nig. Plc	170	28.06	389,710	11,032,336.80
	FSB International Bank plc	3	3.50	4,094	14,329.02
	Guaranty Trust Bank plc	67	5.59	644,626	3,708,516.56
	Hallmark Bank plc	6	4.33	105,800	458,114.00
	Inland Bank (Nigeria) plc	2	1.64	5,125	8,405.00
	Inter Merchant Bank plc	13	0.81	663,656	537,561.36
	Liberty Bank plc	2	2.05	14,000	28,700.00
	Lion Bank Nig. Plc	8	1.17	121,533	144,513.61
	Manny Bank Nigeria plc	4	1.79	250,000	447,500.00
	NAL Merchant Bank plc	6	2.10	16,757	35,189.70
	Omegabank plc	4	2.0	11,900	23,818.00
	Savannah Bank plc	16	1.31	114,029	144,556.99
	Trade Bank plc	2	1.04	10,000	10,400.00
	Trans International Bank plc	4	3.00	256,507	769,057.00
	UBA plc	75	13.99	488,400	6,596,388.60
	Union Bank plc	152	38.00	626,098	23,123,386.80
	Universal Trust Bank plc	24	4.36	322,628	1,410,553.88
	WEMA Bank plc	34	2.00	825,229	1,695,751.20
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	662		6,443,240	60,202,332.20
<b>Breweries</b>	Guinness Nig. Plc	30	35.52	69,873	2,484,089.86
	Nigerian Brew. Plc	76	27.52	231,149	6,391,231.68
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	106		301,022	8,875,321.42
<b>Building Materials</b>	Ashakacem plc	6	6.88	8,324	57,269.12
	Benue Cement Company plc	6	4.79	10,817	51,813.43
	Nigercem plc	1	0.54	1,125	607.50
	WA Portland Comp. Plc	19	20.00	46,059	921,180.00
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	32		66,325	1,030,870.00
<b>Chemical &amp; Paints</b>	Berger Paints plc	16	2.65	28,222	76,470.20
	DN Meyer plc	1	10.82	5,000	54,100.00
	Premier Paints plc	2	0.82	400	328.00
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	19		33,622	130,898.28
<b>Computer &amp; Office Equipment</b>	NCR (Nigeria) plc	2	2.07	14,820	30,677.40
	Tripple Gee and Company plc	2	1.35	2,166	2,924.10
	Wiggins Teape Nigeria plc	2	2.69	1,050	2,824.50
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	6		18,036	36,426.00
<b>Conglomerates</b>	A.G. Leventis Nigeria plc	2	1.18	14,866	17,541.12
	CFAO Nig. Plc	14	2.50	136,971	342,415.50
	John Holt plc	12	1.54	15,674	24,551.00
	Lever Bros Nig. Plc	78	21.00	389,921	8,299,087.50
	P Z Industries plc	48	12.49	408,120	5,075,378.20
	SCOA Nig. plc	1	2.06	208	428.48
	UACN plc	83	3.71	812,681	3,042,866.61
	UTC Nig. Plc	3	0.98	1,250	1,175.00
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	241		1,779,691	16,803,444.51
<b>Construction</b>	Cappa & D'Albarto plc	4	8.07	10,128	81,732.96
	Costain (WA) plc	1	0.96	200	192.00
	Dumez Nigeria plc	1	2.38	80,000	190,400.00
	Julius Berger Nig. Plc	9	50.77	10,516	533,696.02
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	15		100,844	806,020.00
<b>Engineering Technology</b>	Nigerian Wire and Cable plc	4	341	55,520	129,972.00
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	4		55,520	129,972.00
<b>Food/Beverages &amp; Tobacco</b>	7-Up Bottling comp. Plc	19	4.93	11,490	56,645.70
	Cadbury Nigeria plc	79	30.30	284,361	8,579,418.66
	Flour Mills Nig. Plc	59	12.63	722,685	8,681,926.85
	N. Nig. Flour Mills plc	2	12.76	4,256	54,306.56
	Nestle Nigeria plc	24	52.01	40,019	2,090,230.44
	Nig. Bottling Co. plc	49	18.26	249,048	4,376,734.76
	Union Dicon Salt plc	9	17.00	34,300	588,600.00
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	241		1,346,159	24,427,862.97
<b>Health Care</b>	Ekocorp plc	1	3.41	1,000	3,410.00
	Evans Medical plc	1	1.20	4,600	5,520.00
	May & Baker Nigeria plc	4	3.37	41,580	140,124.60
	Neimeth International Pharm	5	5.44	2,000	10,880.00
	Smithkline Beecham Nig. Plc	16	3.00	53,465	162,544.51
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	27		102,645	322,479.11
<b>Industrial/Domestic Products</b>	B.O.C. Gases plc	7	5.73	35,078	200,996.94
	Vitafoam Nig. Plc	11	3.83	106,761	401,707.05
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	18		141,839	602,703.99
<b>Insurance</b>	AIICO Insurance plc	3	3.10	1,266	3,924.60
	Cornerstone Insurance Co.	2	2.10	30,000	60,300.00
	Lasaco Assurance plc	1	0.90	367	330.30
	Niger Insurance Co. plc	4	7.60	28,415	207,467.50
	Royal Exchange Assurance	1	3.60	22,500	81,000.00
	UNIC Insurance plc	9	2.16	52,026	112,376.16
	Wapic Insurance plc	2	1.04	25,890	26,925.60
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	22		160,464	492,324.16
<b>Managed Funds</b>	C & I Leasing plc	3	1.33	20,500	27,153.01
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	3		20,500	27,153.01
<b>Packaging</b>	Abplast Products plc	5	1.07	425,000	429,100.00
	Avon Crowncaps & Containers	10	1.31	287,563	376,293.28
	Beta Glass co. plc	1	8.20	12,800	104,960.00
	CMB plc	5	0.63	65,290	41,132.70
	Poly Products (Nig) plc	2	0.53	8,600	4,522.00
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	23		799,253	956,007.98
<b>Petroleum (Marketing)</b>	African Petroleum plc	19	19.34	10,224	197,732.16
	AGIP (Nigeria) plc	50	25.00	181,426	4,491,962.51
	Mobil Oil Nig. Plc	10	63.00	34,956	2,185,806.00
	National Oil Co. plc	30	24.80	8,134	201,723.20
	Texaco Nigeria plc	19	66.65	34,999	2,328,924.45
	Total Nigeria plc	11	64.00	17,632	1,125,473.75
	Unipetrol Nigeria plc	10	26.88	6,292	169,128.96
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	149		293,663	10,700,751.03
<b>Printing &amp; Publishing</b>	Academy Press plc	2	0.18	3,600	2,916.00
	Daily Times plc	1	0.50	384	192.00
	Longman Nigeria plc	8	6.20	17,635	111,261.25
	University Press plc	3	3.93	12,500	49,125.00
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	14		34,119	163,494.25
<b>Real Estate</b>	UACN Property Dev.	38	2.68	1,348,701	3,614,518.68
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	38		1,348,701	3,614,518.68
<b>Textiles</b>	Afprint Nigeria plc	2	1.14	1,562	1,780.68
	Nig. Textile Mills plc	1	1.66	5,000	8,300.00
	United Nig. Textiles plc	1	3.15	100	315.00
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	4		6,662	10,395.68
<b>The Foreign Listings</b>	M-Net/Supersport	1	93.48	534	49,918.32
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	1		534	49,918.32
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Tier Securities</b>	<b>Type Totals</b>	1,665		13,403,596	130,742,773.34
<b>Second-Tier Securities</b>	Cutix plc	2	2.70	5,100	13,761.00
	<b>Sector Totals</b>	2		5,100	13,761.00
	<b>Type Totals</b>	2		5,100	13,761.00
	<b>Grand Totals</b>	1,667		13,408,696	130,756,534.34

## Katsina steel rolling mill resumes production today

The Minister of State for Power and Steel, Alhaji Mohammed Goje, will today flag-off the resumption of production at the Katsina Steel Rolling Mill Company Limited, his media assistant, Malam Adamu Abdullahi has said.

In a statement in Abuja, Abdullahi said that production was suspended in 1998 due to the colossal loss which was incurred by the company as a result of the massive dumping of imported finished steel products in the country.

"The unfavourable operating climate was further compounded by the military

administration, which embarked on massive importation and selling of finished steel products," he said.

The media assistant said that the company, which was inaugurated in December 1982, had an installation capacity of 210,000 tonnes of iron bars for building and wire rods for the wire processing industries.

It achieved a peak annual production of 75,000 tonnes, which represented about 30 percent capacity utilisation.

He also said that concerted effort had been made by the Federal Government to revive the steel sector, which would propel the es-

tablishment of small-scale industries that would use steel and provide employment.



Danjuma Goje, Min. of State for Power and Steel

## Customs impound 76 vehicles at Idoroko border

In spite of the Federal Government order banning the importation of vehicles through the nation's land borders, smuggling of second hand vehicles (*Tokunbo*) continues, the Area Controller of Customs (CAC), Idiroko, Alhaji Hassan Kila, has said.

Kila told newsmen at the



Ahmed Mustapha, Customs C-G

border town of Idiroko in Ogun, that 76 assorted vehicles had been seized from smugglers by hits of-

ficers within the first two months of the ban coming into effect.

The Federal Government's ban on the importation of vehicles and containerized goods through the nation's land borders, became effective on February 7.

The CAC said that the *Tokunbo* vehicle smugglers had become more daring and were engaging law enforcement agents in running battles, in the bushes, with sophisticated weapons and acid.

He said that three of his officers were critically injured on Thursday last week, when the patrol jeep in which they were pursuing a vehicle being smuggled into the country smuuersaulted at a bush path at Thumbo near the border.

"The injured officers were rushed to the Ogun State Teaching Hospital at

Sagamu in critical condition," Kila said, adding "we thank God that they are responding to treatment".

The damaged white land power with registration No. OS 074 F01 and the Toyota Corrola car it was pursuing, which also crashed, were shown to newsmen at the Idiroko police station, where both vehicles were towed to.

Kila said, "the Customs at Idiroko, which lost five of its officers to smugglers attacks last year, faces a lot of logistic problems as it is now left with a single rickety Land Rover jeep for the patrol of the expanse border of mostly swampy terrain.

"We need a minimum of 12 Land Rover jeeps for effective patrol of the border around Idiroko. Hopely, the Customs headquarters in Abuja would respond to our requests in due course," he said.

## OOAN canvasses law against touting, arbitrary taxation

Out-Door Advertising Association of Nigeria (OOAN) has appealed to the Federal Government to enact a legislation banning touting on Nigeria's highways as well as taxation advertising by agencies on bill boards.

The appeal was made by the National President of the Association, Chief Jas Kolawole Oykan, while featuring in a monthly programme of the correspondent chapel of Ogun NUJ in Abeokuta, Ogun state.

Chief Oykan who disclosed that his Association has sent a bill to the National Assembly about their plight said, "the constitution says it is only the local government have the right to collect advert rate."

His words, "Some of the

From Olumide Bajulaiye, in Abeokuta

problems facing the industry is multiple taxation, it is eroding our profit so much. The constitution says we should pay only to local government, right, but we have a lot of agencies coming in to demand for rates."

Any such agent are, environmental sanitation, garden park, Federal Ministry of Works, inland water ways, landlord and even area boys.

The OOAN boss disclosed further that, "in Lagos now you cannot put a bill-board without paying as much as N500 to area boys. They will vandalise your bill-boards. These area boys are criminally minded, usually drunk and armed with dangerous weapons, as they have made life terrible for

our operators."

The Adele Olu of Ilaro stressed further that even local governments charges outrageous amount. "If the local government or these agencies continued, there may be an influx of unemployment". He further added that, "if the government can come to their aid by regularising the advert rate and remove area boys from the highways, there would be enough to pay workers (those they employ).

Chief Kolowale Oyekan however, disclosed that his Association lost millions of naira in Zamfara and some *Sharia* states, as a result of the penal code which forbid them to display some goods.

# BUSINESS DAY

## BRIEFS

### Wema Bank elevates 262

The management of Wema Bank Plc has promoted 262 staffers in its employment to various higher positions while about 284 staffers bagged merit awards.

The promotions which involved both junior, senior and top management cadres are the outcome of the bank's appraisal exercise for its 2000/2001 financial year.

In a press statement by the bank's public relations department and signed by Eddy A. Ademosu said 172 of those involved were promoted in the senior/management cadre while 90 were from the junior category.

### AP appoints new MD

A new Managing Director has been appointed for African Petroleum Plc. He is Engr. M. Sule.

Engr. Sule's appointment came after the completion of the mandatory six months transition period approved by the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) for privatized company.

Engr. Sule who replaces Alhaji Umar Abba Gana was until his appointment, the executive director, operations in the company. A statement issued by the media consultant to African Petroleum, Mr. Ademola Adedoyin stated, the erstwhile Chief Executive, Alhaji Umare Gana relinquished the position after 10 years of service.

### IBN donates N16m to LBS

The Intercontinental Bank Nigeria Limited (IBN) has donated a sum of N16 million to Lagos Business School.

Donating the sum is a brief ceremony at the institution in Victoria Island, Lagos, the vice-chairman and chief executive officer of the bank, Mr. Erastus O. Akingbola said the financial assistance was in support of the construction of the school.

He attributed the support to his bank's belief "that the center will produce should entrepreneurs who will drive Nigeria's march to greatness and economic prosperity.

The Edo state government which is in the vanguard of raising capital from the stock market has listed a total sum of N1 billion revenue bond at the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE).

According to the Governor, Chief Nosa Igbinedion, who spoke during the occasion, said the first Edo state floating revenue bond was inspired by industrial and developmental potentials of the state and the need to finance them for the overall betterment of the people.

Said he, "Edo state has the potential for industrial development and growth in diverse areas, including food processing, rubber and cocoa processing, tourism and hospitality business."

## Edo floats N1bn revenue bond

By Bright Ewulum, in Lagos

and banking sectors have come out to criticize the securities.

Furthermore, he called on the CBN to reconsider its



Chief Lucky Igbinedion, Edo State Governor

Igbinedion said, "looking at these, the state government does not have any illusion that statutory allocation would be sufficient to meet the investment needs of the state."

The governor, maintained that just as the Federal Government needs.

The deputy director-general condemned the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) over its introduction of the CBN certificates, saying if CBN is looking at the micro-economic perspectives and not the macro-economic, it wouldn't have come up with the securities.

He stated his joy that even others in the financial

stock of the certificates, maintaining that the government should rather ensure that government bonds are encouraged for the betterment of the economy.

Oladejo maintained that it is the vision of the managers of the exchange to ensure that it plays developmental roles in the overall economy.

## Stockpiling, hoarding, responsible for fuel scarcity -IPMAN scribe

From Musa Umar Kazaure, in Kano

The stock piling and hoarding of petroleum products by NNPC at Apapa reservoirs has been blamed on the continuous scarcity of petroleum products especially in northern parts of the country. The measure taken in anticipation of fuel deregulation by the Federal Government is said to be part of NNPC's strategy to flood the market with the products as soon as deregulation is an-

pay by bank draft suffer untold hardship at the lifting points in Warri, Ibadan, Port Harcourt and Lagos, yet they hardly get two truck loaded in a week.

The IPMAN scribe said most of the petroleum products lifted at Apapa ends up in the hands of "cash and carry" petrol dealers who connive with some station managers in the south to divert the fuel to the north.

"We do not blame those dealers because if NNPC was giving us (IPMAN) sufficient fuel to bridge, they (cash and carry dealers) would not have gone all the way to be buying those fuel meant for filling stations in the south at exorbitant rate. In other words, those dealers are doing a great service to the north in the present predicament," Alhaji Yau Sani added.

He noted that most of the fuel in black market came from such dealers who just businessmen with money to buy the commodity from southern allocation. He also criticised the NNPC allocation formula, describing it as unfair. "How can Lagos be given 285 tankers of fuel, Abuja 45 and you give Kano, Jigawa, Katsina, Bauchi and part of Yobe combine only 12 trucks and out of this 12, we only see 3 to 4 trucks per day. That is why the southern filling stations sell off their allocations to cash and carry dealers because they have more than enough," he posited.

The IPMAN executives who were soliciting for the Emir's intervention in their plight, pointed out that 75 percent of their members have stopped bridging fuel from the south because of the hassle involve and delays in the payment of their bridging claims. They noted that their tanker drivers and officials spend up to Port Harcourt, Warri and Ibadan to lift fuel but little is given to them in terms of allocation.

## CBN off-loads N591m treasury bills

By Bright Ewulum, in Lagos

ing to supplement government revenue.

Maintaining the commit-



Joseph Sanusi, CBN Governor

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) sold a total sum of N59.1 million treasury bills in the money market last week as against N28.7 million recorded in the preceding week.

Of this sum, a total of N35 million securities were allotted in the primary market while N24.1 million was sold in the secondary market auction. In the preceding week, N14.1 million and N14.6 million were off-loaded in the secondary and primary markets respectively.

In the period under review, N35 million securities which were on offer was over subscribed to the tune of N45.1 million. However, only N35 million worth of securities were allotted.

Whereas in the secondary auction, bids received amounted to N27.2m as against N24.1 million sold.

The securities will mature variously on May 18 and foreign investment capital as a supplement to domestic savings, so does state governments needs extend financ-

ment of his government in ensuring the deepening of Nigerian stock market and boosting of available investment instruments in its by tapping into the market, the governor assured investors in the government bonds of the state readiness to meet their obligations.

As he put it, "as pathfinders in this kind of financing arrangement, we recognize the burden of responsibility we have to contend

with and will endeavour to be model borrower from the capital market."

In reply, the deputy director-general of the exchange, Alhaji Rasaq Oladejo praise the Edo state governor for supporting the exchange, saying that because of Edo's initial steps other state governments are going to raise money from the capital market.

He disclosed that Abia state government may soon come to the market to raise capital for developmental purposes.

It would be recalled that the Edo state government first came to the market in 1999 to raise N500 million for the financing a housing project in Benin city, but ended up raising N1 billion as the offer was over-subscribed.

With the new development, the bonds can now be traded on the exchange.

On the estate, Igbinedion said, "following the successful conclusion of the first Edo state revenue bond, construction has since commenced at the site of the housing estate."

## Foreigners dominate South African tourism -report

Foreign visitors spent 7.1 billion rand (about N107 billion) in South Africa during the first six months of 2000, according to a study commissioned by the Ministry of Environmental Affairs and Tourism.

The study - a comparative analysis of the January-June period, from 1994

to 2000 - says this is a "significant increase of 1.1 billion rand (about N16.6 billion) over the 1999 figure.

According to the study, more than 2.8 million foreigners visited the country in the first six months of last year. In a statement yesterday to market the release of the study, Envi-

ronmental Affairs and Tourism Minister, Valli Moosa, said South Africa had retained its market share in a year which had been tough for tourism worldwide.

"Contrary to the negative perceptions and reports at the time of a drop in tourism, the number of overseas visitors increased

by 4.4 percent," he said.

Moosa said the study showed the South African tourism industry had been performing at a "steady growth pace". "The significant increase in overseas arrivals and expenditure is evidence of continued confidence in the South African tourism industry by the overseas market," he said.



Adamu Ciroma, Finance Minister.

# ADAMAWA COMMUNITY F.C.T., ABUJA

## **FELICITATIONS!**



**Mallam Adamu Bello**  
*(Dan-Iyan Adamawa)*  
**Hon. Minister of Agriculture**

**I**t is with great joy that we, members of the Adamawa Community resident in the Federal Capital Territory, FCT, Abuja, received the news of your appointment as the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and member of the Federal Executive Council.

Your choice as the Honourable Minister representing Adamawa State is a clear testimony of Mr. President's confidence in your ability to help him move Nigeria forward. Given your track record of achievements in public life, members of the Community are positive that you will discharge your duties to the nation creditably well.

We wish you God's guidance and abundant blessings.

**B. M. Barkindo**  
**(Interim Chairman)**

# Star Feature



Bronze and aluminium items on display.

Pictures by Felix Onigbinde.

## The smiths of Bida (I)

By Tadaferua Ujorha

The man worked at the bellows with a kind of gentle frenzy. Clearly, this was a man who loved his work. The bellows produced a sound, which can hardly be called enchanting. In fact, it had a sluggish, almost ponderous, aspect to it. Still, the man worked and the bellows produced the air, which spread a healthy radiance through the little flames amidst the fresh charcoal. Then the flames spread rapidly, and the place took on a healthy redness. The flames leapt upwards and broke into minute forms, which soon disappeared. Again, the man worked at the bellows, and the flame leapt again, and sparks emerged from it and disappeared into the air. Now most of the other workers within the hut had stopped working and looked at the man at the bellows with something like silent respect.

When the flame rises highly, that may be the crescendo, the fundamental moment in the art

workshop or forge of Mallam Mohammed Tswata Muku Bida who is a Brass smith and leader of the Brass smiths in the Bida area. He is slightly above average height, and has a slight stoop. As the interview progressed, it was clear that he has a clear mind, and an excellent memory. The entire area or yard is called *Gwata Muku*, which is a Nupe word meaning that Brass smith, work in that part of the town. Malam Mohammed Tswata Muku said that he has worked as a Brass smith for decades, and that his grandparents played a central role in conveying knowledge of Brass work to him. He mentioned that at the age of three years, children are encouraged to sit in the workshop with the smith and by a process of observation, the child would learn, he said.

He added that the materials for producing Brass are located at the riverside and that in the past people spent considerable amounts of time at the riverside. Today, he lamented, people can hardly go to the riverside because strange things happen at the river and there are the demands of our new society, he added. He mentioned that companies now sell Brass, and this is the basic raw material, which they (the Brass smiths) use. He added that in the past the small stones which are the basic raw materials for Brass, were dug up at the riverside. These are then taken to the workshop or forge where they are melted, and the impurities are removed with the use of fire. The remaining substance is Brass, he said.

Mallam Mohammed mentioned that the work of a Brass smith is a masculine activity, as such there are no female Brass smiths. He added that *Gbom-Gbom* is the name of the other section of the town where Brass work is also done. The name itself is vividly onomatopoeic. He said women participate in Brass and aluminium products principally at the level of sales. He said that in the past he had often given his wife Brass products

Aluminium containers, spoons and brass objects are on display here.



Aluminium containers, spoons and brass objects are on display here.

Contd. on Pg.18

## Star Feature

Contd. from Pg.17

to sell and that other men do this.

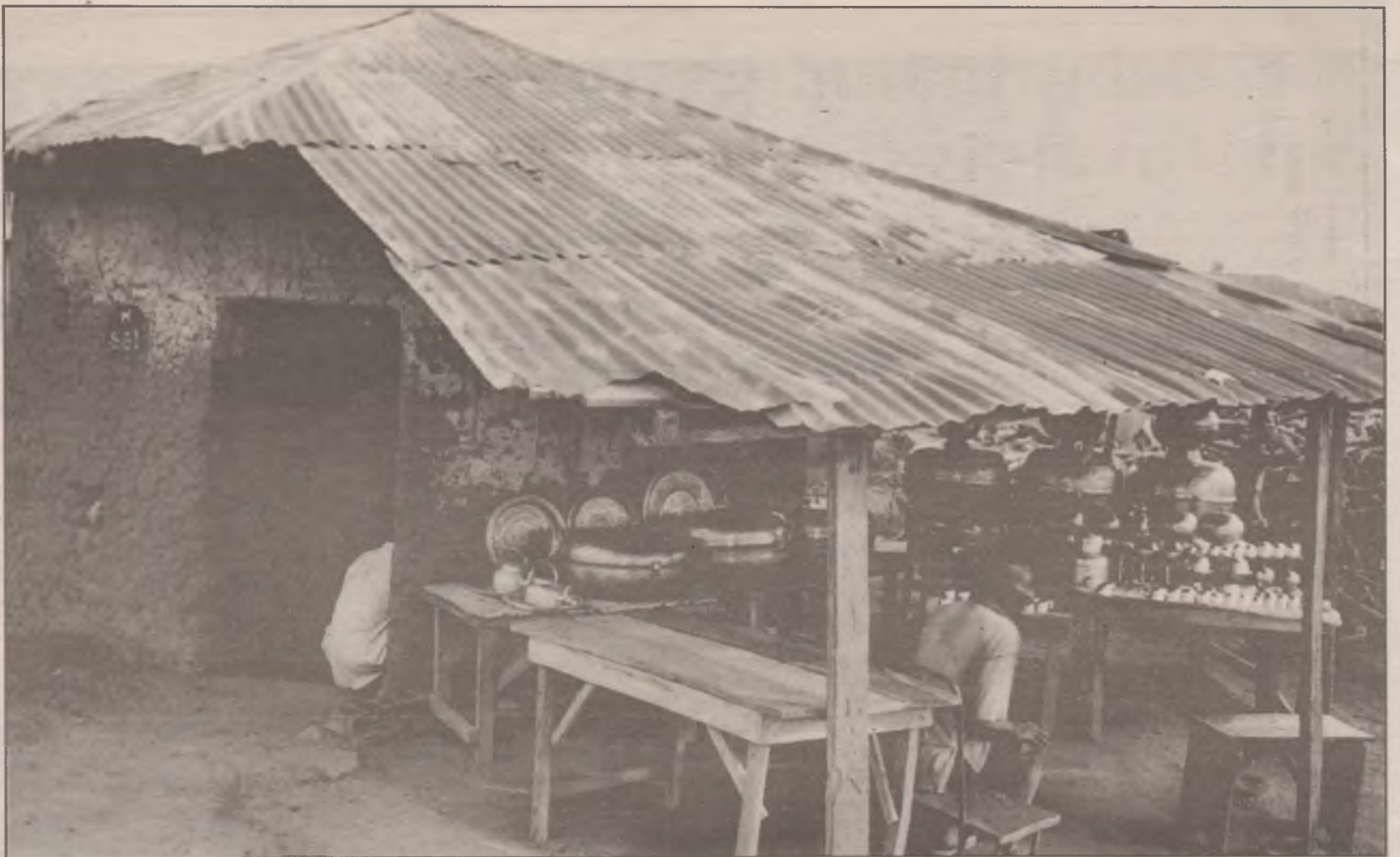
Next, he focussed on the tools of his trade and provided the Nupe names for these. Interestingly, these names were divided into male and female types. For instance, there was the very masculine 'Etsugi', which is the king of irons. 'Emugo' is used to remove hot objects from the fire and it is the equivalent of the pincer. Another is called Uwan Makera, which again is feminine. Thus, the tools took on male and female characteristics, depending on their special qualities.

Just outside mallam Mohammed's workshop was a massive circular box, which is normally given out to Nupe ladies when they are getting married. This is part of the tradition in Nupe speaking areas, it seems.

Mallam Mohammed added that it would take at least twenty days to design one of these circular boxes. These designs were of a lovely form and the intricate patterns were beautiful in every aspect.

At Tswata Muku, there is a concourse of sounds, which perpetually echo from morning till night. The Brass smith's work with a lot of irons and related objects, and this explains the variety of sounds in the place. Irons are being smoothened, and shapes are emerging, while fires are glowing in different huts, in locations scattered all over the streets. Most of the men work bare-chested because of the heat, in the various huts. Usually there are some six or seven workers alongside the 'leader' who is easily discernible,

***"It's that moment of such significance that everybody must, of course, remain quiet in silent salute to the flame and the man. The hut was made of mud and it had three doors to let in the air. There were also small windows built into the structure, too."***



A common sight at Tswata Muku

# The smiths of Bida (I)

especially since the workers often refer to him from time to time. At this place there is a permanent glow, which comes from the effect of the rays of the sun upon the Brass products placed on tables throughout the street. Thus, there is an excellent charm which is reinforced by such unique Nupe traditions as a brief genuflection when two persons meet, and an exchange in the language, which is poetry by itself.

Outside the workshop, there were large and small bowls on display, and swords and knives also. There were items for Horses too. There was a complete radiance in that place and also a great crowd too. Soon, some female customers came along. After

a little bargain they purchased sets of the traditional aluminium spoons for which the place is famous.

Mallam Mohammed also said that he has been a smith for well over sixty years, the added that the job requires a lot of patience and thoroughness from an indi-

vidual. He opined that those who are in haste could hardly flourish as a smith. He implied that the work of a smith is an Art which requires the most faithful, and the most patient of workers.

On the hours involved in the job, he mentioned that he usually arrives at the forge by 8.00am and

that he remains there till about 5.00pm, which means that he puts in at least nine hours of work everyday.

Doing this as routine everyday for sixty years has a way of refining one's appearance and despite his age, Mallam Mohammed could present a set of healthy arms, which were as clear, strong and precise as the fires with which he had encounters everyday.

He provided more advice for those with interest in the work of a smith. He said that there is a measure of danger because sometimes the fire might flare up and burn the smith, or sometimes the fire would pierce a hole on the container one uses, and the item inside

may be lost. This usually caused the smith a lot of pain, but he averred that smiths have learned to prepare for that eventuality.

Then Mallam Mohammed or 'Baba' as we had now come to call him returned to the bellows and began to rouse the flame again. The bellows sang and soared as the flames emerged and waxed into a lovely redness in the slightly darkened room.

Mallam Mohammed pressed again, and the flame leapt, while he now looked at us, from behind the flame, almost mischievously.

*To be contd.*



Malam Mohammed Tswata Muku Bida

***"Outside the workshop, there were large and small bowls on display, and swords and knives also. There were items for Horses too. There was a complete radiance in that place and also a great crowd too. Soon, some female customers came along."***

NEWS

# Delay in budget approvals is stalling us - chairmen

The delay in the approval of budget proposals of local government councils in Sokoto state is reported to be hampering development projects at the grassroots.

A cross-section of local government chairmen, who spoke to *Daily Trust* in Sokoto recently, said the proposals which were sent to the state government through the Department for Local Government Affairs, were yet to be approved.

They said this had affected their plans, thereby exposing them to accusations of not being able to discharge their responsibilities to the electorate.

According to them, their concerns were genuine as even now in second quarter of the year, the department is yet to complete the process of budget defence by the chairmen.

The chairmen maintained that the system whereby councils seek approvals, from the department before executing capital projects was against the tenets of democracy and the separation of powers.

The chairmen alleged that the department usually awarded contracts for these projects in favour of their contractors who are not necessarily the choice of the

From Abdulfatah Abdulsalami, Sokoto

They believed the state governors were doing this in order to frustrate their plans of fulfilling their electoral promises.

Responding to the allegation while speaking to newsmen, the deputy governor, Alhaji Aliyu Magatakwa Wamakko, said councils which met requirements for projects usually got necessary approval.

He said "the state is not frustrating councils' efforts, but since we have a supervisory role over them, we are careful so that councils do not initiate projects that cannot be completed."

"We do not want them to litter the landscape with uncompleted projects as any such projects cannot benefit the community."

The deputy governor gave the assurance of fair treatment to all the chairmen who have submitted proposals.



Chief Tony Anenih, Minister of Works and Housing (L) discussing with Chief Donald Duke, Governor of Cross River State during the PDP convention 2001 held at International Conference Centre, Abuja

Over N75 million was realised at the fund-raising ceremony for the building and equipping of a new library complex at the National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies (NIPSS), Kuru, Jos, over the weekend.

The Director-General of the institute, Maj.-Gen. Joseph Garba (rtd), explained that the decision to solicit for funds for the project was because of the need to give the institution a befitting library complex.

Continuing he said, "the need to provide efficient library service led to the construction of a library in 1980. However, in the last 10 years,

# NIPSS raises N75m for library

From Buhari Bello, in Jos

the building has become unsuitable for documentation, data storage and proper information management."

According to the Director-General, who was a one-time Permanent Representative at the United Nations, a detailed survey by structural engineering experts revealed that the building was sinking

progressively which constituted a physical danger to its users.

The new library is designed to serve as a "centre for reflection, research and dialogue where academics, professionals, policy-makers and other citizens would meet to reflect and exchange ideas on the issues affecting Nigeria," he said.

# We'll rid North-East of bandits if... Bakassi boss

The national chairman of the Eastern Nigerian vigilante group, popularly known as the "Bakassi boys", who is also the Abia state chairman of the group, Chief Onwuchekwa Ulu, has vowed to rid North-Eastern Nigeria completely off the menace of armed bandits if invited.

Chief Ulu, who is one of the funding members of the group, made this offer in his office on Faulks Street near Ariara market, Aba in Abia state during an exclusive interview with *Daily Trust*.

He also offered to bring to book, within the shortest possible time, all those behind the Katsina ritual killings and other dangerous crimes in the North.

"The governors would have to legalise our activities in their various states and the police there must be ready to accept us."

"But I must quickly warn, no criminal will be spared irrespective of his position in the society. The punishment for a common criminal is the same for the privileged one provided we find both of them guilty of the same or similar crime," he declared.

"We don't care about the types of arms the robbers are carrying or how well prepared they may be. Provided

they are criminals, we will catch them like rats and deal with them. It is our responsibility to wipe out crime in any society we find ourselves in," he added.

Chief Ulu said further that if any state in the North preferred to use its indigenes, it could recruit young men and send them to "Bakassi" headquarters for training, provided the recruits were innocent as criminals sent down would not return.

He also called on the Nigerian police to see them as partners in the eradication of crimes in the country, pointing out that the police should examine the conscience and antecedents of whoever comes around to



Gov. Kalu condemn the "Bakassi boys" as their intentions are dubious.

"There are so many people who are highly placed that are into criminal activities or sponsoring crimes. You don't expect such people to be happy with us or even say anything good about us."

"Unless the police are able to understand all these things, they will never understand and differentiate between false allegations and those that hold water. We are all out to destroy criminals and their activities," he vowed.

Chief Ulu, who said their power was from God, confirmed that they have not had any Northerner as a victim which was proof that crime was not prevalent in the North."

# Gov. Sani denies sour relationship with Christians

Governor Ahmed Sani of Zamfara state has denied reports of a sour relationship with Christians since the introduction of the Sharia legal system in his state.

He also said his government never ordered the demolition of any church at Dashe - dominated by Christian indigenes -- as claimed by the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in Gusau recently.

Speaking in an interview with newsmen in Kaduna over the weekend, the governor said he was in good terms with all Christians living in the state as his introduction of the Sharia legal system did not do any harm to them.

Governor Sani said as long as he did not do anything that would harm the Christians, he had no apologies for associating himself with his religion.

He explained that what happened in Dashe town was not a religious issued as CAN wanted the world to believe.

According to Alhaji Sani, it was the person who single-handedly built the church in

From Dare Oyewole, in Kaduna

question that went to remove the church building's roof for the construction of his personal house.

Commenting on the acute water shortage in Gusau, he stated that it was beyond the state government as bringing water from Bakolori to Gusau would cost over N12 billion.

He, however, disclosed that the state was talking with the Federal Government on the issue and expressed the

hope that something concrete would soon be done.

Describing the state of education in the state as "terrible," the governor said his government was doing all it could to improve the situation.

The governor, who traced the reasons behind the state's educational backwardness to poverty, said he had taken measures aimed at encouraging people, especially girls to go to school.

Part of the measures, he

disclosed was the introduction of monthly allowances ranging from N1,000 to N5,000 to all categories of students in the state.

"In my state now, those who are doing remedial courses are receiving N1,000 every month. Those who are doing OND courses are taking N2,000 monthly, HND and degree students receive N3,000 per month while science and medical students are receiving N5,000 monthly," he said.

# Nobody is indispensable

National chairman of the All People's Party (APP), Alhaji Yusuf Garba Ali, has again said that no member of the party, however highly placed, was indispensable to the party and that the party's disciplinary apparatus would be unleashed on any erring member whose actions and utterances ran contrary to APP's ideals.

In a chat with newsmen in Maiduguri, at the commissioning of 15 ward offices opened by the state APP, Alhaji Ali also stated that the party had no automatic ticket for any aspir-

ing or serving political office holder for 2003 presidential elections.

"We are a democratic party. There is nothing like automatic ticket for anybody," the APP national chairman emphasised.

Commenting on the Borno APP chairmanship tussle between Alhaji Abba Asheik and Mr. Stephen Iliya, Alhaji Ali said anyone of them who paraded himself as chairman was only wasting his time as the party's National Executive Committee (NEC)

only recognised the Interim Caretaker Committee headed by Alhaji Sule Yari Gandi.

The APP chairman, however, said a new elected leadership of the party in Borno state would merge in the next two months.

The APP national chairman, also commented on the resource control agitations, saying the clamour was tantamount to calling for the dissolution of the federation "because in a

federation, there has to be something that binds us together".



Alh. Yusuf Ali

--APP chairman

## NEWS

# FG to revamp primary health care with N2b

In its effort to revamp the Primary Health-Care (PHC) delivery in the country, the Federal Government has made available the sum of N2 billion for the construction of 200 health-care centres in various parts of the

From Yinka Oladoyinbo, in Ibadan

determined to ensure a sound health-care delivery for every citizen of Nigeria.

Prof. Ransome Kuti also noted that primary health care delivery is a service needed by everyone, arguing that it should be a community-based arrangement for it to

effectively tackle the problems we have in the communities.

According to him, "80 percent of our health problems will be solved if we run our primary health-care delivery effectively and efficiently. "The health-care centres tackle the problems identified by the community, and they

must be tackled in a manner that people could afford."

He, therefore, advocated community participation in the rendering of PHC services and community ownership of the services, adding "we believe that is the only way the services can be sustained."

Prof. Ransome Kuti,

therefore, said that the agency was ready to develop the health centres with an arrangement that would allow the indigenous people to take care of the running of the centres.

"A district committee would be established to take care of the centres, the staff welfare and the drugs,

the village should be made to feel it and know that the services are for them," he concluded.

Prof. Kuti and his team had earlier paid a courtesy call on the state governor, Alhaji Lam Adesina, where he had promised that his agency would do its best to change the face of PHC delivery in the country.



Prof. A.B.C. Nwosu, Health Minister.

This was disclosed recently by the chairman of the National Primary Health-Care Development Agency (NPHCDA) and former Health Minister, Prof. Olukoye Ransome Kuti, at an advocacy meeting with stakeholders in the health sector, held at the Premier Hotel, Ibadan.

According to Prof. Kuti, the health centres would be built at a cost of N10 million per unit and would be built in wards where there are none presently so as to make every ward get a health centre.

He said the initiative would be implemented under the NPHCDA and was designed to complement the efforts of the states in the area of provision of primary health-care services.

The minister, however, noted that two earlier unsuccessful attempts were made by past governments in 1975 and 1985, adding that the present administration was

The disagreement that followed the appointment of the district head of Padan Kagoro in Kaura local government area of Kaduna state, has taken a new dimension as many of the people are calling for his immediate deposition.

Among those who spoke to *Daily Trust* over the

## Subjects want district head deposed

From Ibrahim Ka-Almasih, in Kaduna

matter was Mr. Yatasi Bala (aka Jide) of the Kamang ruling house who warned that unless the relevant authorities acted promptly, the chieftaincy dispute might get out of hand.

Mr. Bala, who also

claimed to be a card-carrying member of PDP, Pada ward, alleged that it was the chairman of Kaura local government, Mr. Barnabas Bala, that influenced the candidature and subsequent appointment of one Mr. Musa Iya, as the district

head of Pandan Kagoro in total disregard to the wishes of the people.

He alleged that the chairman, having realised how increasingly dangerous the situation was becoming, went back and pleaded with the governor to change the district head but was ignored as the governor reminded him of his earlier recommendations.

However, the governor, according to Mr. Yatai, told the chairman to advise Mr. Musa Iya to resign so that the most acceptable person would be appointed in his place.

Mr. Yatai said the two other contestants to the district headship, Mr. Aba Badung and Philemon Wada, were more acceptable besides the fact that they were both traditional title-holders as against Mr. Musa Iya, who, according to him, was a commoner.

When the *Daily Trust* asked the Deputy Speaker, Kaduna State House of As-

sembly, Hon. Gideon Gwani, who represents the Kaura federal constituency, he confirmed that election conducted to know the most acceptable candidate of the three erstwhile candidates did not favour Mr. Musa Iya.

He added, however, that the state government has written to the election committee to remind it was not



L-R: Chief Precious Ngalali, Col. Mohammed Bello Kalief (rtd), C.O. Okafor, Minister of State for Water Resources, Minister of Water Resources, Perm Sec., Water Resources respectively and others during the Minister's meeting with Chairmen and Chief Executives of River Basin Development Authorities ... recently. Pix: Kennedy Egbonodie

## NUJ chairman commends Gov. Lawal

From Abdul Laro, in Ilorin

The chairman of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Kwara state council, Alhaji Muhammed Tunde Akanbi, has commended the state governor, Alhaji Muhammed

Lawal, for his generous assistance towards the successful hosting of the just-concluded meeting of the NUJ National Executive Council (NEC) meeting held in Ilorin.

In a statement signed by the chairman, publicity sub-committee of the planning committee, Mr. Sunday Adeleke, and made available to *Daily Trust*, Alhaji Akanbi thanked the governor for the donation of N500,000 to host the meeting and an additional N500,000 to launch the NUJ calendar for year 2001, as well as his promise towards the completion of the NUJ chalets in Ilorin, the state capital.

The NUJ chairman also commended the Emir of Ilorin, Alhaji Ibrahim Sulu Gambari, for the donation of a cow towards the hosting of the meeting and thanked General Abdulkarim Adisa for supporting the union with a N50,000 donation.

Alhaji Akanbi also acknowledged the assistance of the state police commissioner, Alhaji Ghasali Lawal, and officers of the state police command for providing security during the NEC meeting.

## NOA takes deregulation campaign to the grassroots

From Shakirat Abdulmajeed, in Lagos

The National Orientation Agency (NOA) has begun a nationwide campaign to educate the grassroots people on the deregulation of the petroleum sector.

The campaign, which has already kicked-off in Abia and Niger states, is aimed at making people at the grassroots understand the implication of the exercise.

NOA Executive Director, Mr. Segun Runsewe, who disclosed this to newsmen at the presidential wing of Murtala Muhammed Airport, Ikeja, stated that the campaign became necessary so that people at the grassroots would be able to



Prof. Jerry Gana

officers to take their assignment seriously in view of the importance government attached to the need to educate the people on the deregulation policy.

He said the principal orientation officers are to anchor the views of the people in their respective localities and forward same to the government through the agency.

Responding to allegation that some filling stations have raised the pump price of fuel from N22 to N35, the NOA director said, "but government has no plan to increase fuel price for now".

## Licensed agents fight customs's men at MMIA

From Shakirat Abdulmajeed, in Lagos

There was pandemonium at the cargo shed of the Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMIA) recently when customs licensed agents engaged men of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) in a physical combat.

*Daily Trust* gathered that the licensed agents were protesting the re-posting to the MMIA cargo shed of a customs' officer involved in the killing of an agent last year.

The agents, who vowed to resist the re-posting, trooped out in hundreds and barricaded the entrance to the cargo shed, thereby grounding business activities.

The crisis degenerated into physical combat when the agents attempted to invade the customs' house in

search of the officer. This move was stopped by the custom control of the area who called for police intervention.

*Daily Trust* gathered that at the instance of the comptroller, police "numbering about 20 swooped on the rioters and restored peace to the area." The licensed agents have, however, vowed to continue the protest until the officer is re-posted from the MMIA cargo shed.

It would be recalled that there was a clash between customs officers and licensed agents last year over the allegation of bribery against customs men at the port, which led to the death of the licensed customs' agent.

# INSIDE POLITICS

## COMMENTARY

### APP: Can it survive another crisis

By Henry Omu

The All People's Party (APP) is regarded by most Nigerians as the next viable option to the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) come 2003. But for the APP to become the alternative choice to the ruling PDP in the next elections, it must first remain focused on the task before it and be free from any internal wranglings.

While the party has consistently thumped its chest, on forming the next federal executive, because of what it termed the failure of the PDP-controlled Obasanjo administration to meet the yearnings and aspirations of Nigerians, it has, however, failed to convince most observers on how serious it is about this mission. Since its 1999 convention in Kaduna, the APP has been engulfed by one crisis or the other with the resultant effect of the party being comatose until the election of new national officers in November, 1999.

One major re-occurring decimal in the various APP crises is the figure of Dr. Olusola Saraki. The strongman of Kwara politics who is one of the founders and major financiers of the party, has since the Kaduna convention been in the "eye of the storm" in all the crises, including the present one which nearly resulted in the suspension of Saraki from the party.

The grouse of "Oloye" as Saraki is fondly called in political circles, has been that as someone who contributes substantially to the war chest of the APP, he deserves not only to be heard, but to be seen to be dictating the tune and pulling the strings in all spheres of party activities. A man who doesn't

forget nor forgive an "insult", Saraki demonstrated his stranglehold on the party, when he made the APP ungovernable for the then national chairman, Senator Mahmud Waziri, because of the way he was treated at the Kaduna convention.

Sen. Waziri had to throw in the towel following persistent attacks from Saraki's loyalists, who wanted a change of guard in the party's leadership. With his number one perceived "enemy" out of the way, Saraki effected a coup de grace, when at the next convention of the party he ensured his loyalists were put in strategic places in the Yusuf Ali-led national executive. With his men now in firm control of the party, expectations were that the APP had weathered the "storm" and was headed for many glorious years.

It would seem, however, as recent events have shown that too much, too soon was expected from the APP. The recent crisis which led to the suspension of four prominent national officers of the party namely; Pascal Bafyau, Senimar Minima, Dan Obi and Biodun Olujimi - all surrogates of Dr. Saraki, is traceable to the parting of ways of Saraki and the Yusuf Ali-led national executive.

An inkling of what to expect at the March 24, national execu-

tive council meeting in Dutse, Jigawa State was first alluded to in an interview granted *Daily Trust* by the APP national sec-

retary, Chief George Moghalu.

Said Chief Moghalu: "We've been sufficiently informed and actions of those



Alhaji Yusuf Ali

retary, Chief George Moghalu. He said the national secretariat was aware of plans by external forces to use influential members of the APP to destabilise the party because of the perceived opposition, the party is likely to

people have come to confirm that. It's unfortunate that people are being used to cause crisis in the party. People are being financed and funded to create crisis where there's none." Specifically, the APP national scribe

accused the PDP-controlled government of being behind the destabilisation plot, even as he vowed that the APP national leadership "is capable and would be ready to contain them"

He, however, refused to confirm that the party leadership and Saraki had parted ways. Though he persistently referred to Saraki as one of the party's leaders who played a prominently role in bringing the Yusuf Ali-led national executive into office, events in Dutse confirmed speculations that there is no love lost between the party executive and Saraki.

The strongman of Kwara politics narrowly escaped suspension from the APP, because of the pressure brought to bear on the national executive committee by APP governors, most of whose gubernatorial campaigns were funded by Saraki. But not so, for the four national officers loyal to the Kwara politician, who are currently fighting their suspension in court with Saraki apparently, rooting from the sidelines.

But, Saraki apparently aware of the designs of the party's leadership before the Dutse meeting denied allegations of planning to destabilise the party, and that he was working for the actualisation of Vice-President Atiku Abubakar's presidential ambition. He asserted in an interview, he granted a national daily that

not only was the Dutse meeting called at his instance, but that the Yusuf Ali-led national executive was chasing shadows by linking him with acts of destabilisation.

The APP stalwart accused the party executive of non-performance, explaining that since their election in September 1999, the executive has refused to embark on the mobilisation of old and new members. That, Saraki has a large followership within the APP is not in doubt, but whenever he decides to deploy all these into battle, the APP members should prepare themselves for a long drawn battle.

On the other hand, in order to prevent the party from becoming prostrate because of the present crisis, the national executive may be forced to sheath its sword and lift the suspension slammed on Mr. Pascal Bafyau, national organising secretary; Mr. Senimar Minima, national treasurer; Mr. Dan Obi, national welfare secretary and Mrs. Biodun Olujimi, publicity secretary.

But then, only a truce will seem reasonable at this time. Two major crises within two years since this democratic experiment commenced is not an enviable record for a party, intent on forming the next federal executive come 2003. No party wins an election if it is always bedevilled by crisis, no matter the sympathy voters may have for such a party. That APP is the alternative party is a matter of choice and conviction, but only the APP, its leaders and members can make that choice and turn it into reality.

### Cross-River Assembly orders LG boss arrest

From Bassey Ita, in Calabar

Following the arrogant and snobbish tendencies of the chairman of Calabar South Local Government Council, Mr. Essien Ayi, against the on-going probe of financial recklessness and fraud made against him, the Cross River State House of Assembly has ordered his immediate arrest by the police.

Also to be arrested is the revenue supervisor of the Calabar South Local Government Council, Mr. Ekpenyong Eyamba.

The two are to be produced on tomorrow by the state's police commissioner, Mr. Jerome Dele Akinmosin, under warrant in the House.

In a four-point resolution made by the House against the chairman for failing to appear before the House as earlier scheduled since last year and recently, the House, presided over by Hon. Mike Ogar, moved against the continued spending of the council's revenue by the chairman or any other officer holding brief for him except for payment of workers salaries.

The House also resolved to freeze the account of the council to stop it from reckless spending and fraud levelled against the chairman.

In addition, the House also announced as part of its resolution the suspension of the chairman from office, while it directed the vice-chairman, Mr. Alloysius Ene, to take over from the suspended chairman in acting capacity pending the outcome of the on-going investigation by the House.

The House further directed the special committee investigating the allegation levelled against Mr. Essien Ayi to submit its report within two weeks.

Mr. Essien Ayi, *Daily Trust* recalled has been jump-

### November election is another litmus test for PDP - LG boss

From Abdullahi Bego, in Maiduguri

The chairman of Nangere Local Government Area of Yobe State, Dr. Adamu Garba Talba, has described the planned election into leadership of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in November, 2001 as a good idea that



Gemade

would enhance unity within the party and improve its national standing.

In a chat with *Daily Trust* in Damaturu, Dr. Adamu Talba said the PDP was engulfed by internal crisis because several members of the party had misgivings regarding the last election into the party's national leadership.

To avoid another crack within the party, argued Dr. Adamu Talba, the party should give equal and unfettered chance to all members within the party who wish to vie for any elective post during the November, 2001

election. How the elections would be conducted, posited the Nangere council boss, would pose another litmus test on the party's credibility and coherence.

Dr. Talba, therefore, advised all party members "to do the nation's most popular party proud by adhering to democratic principles of fairness, justice and equity" in the conduct of the forthcoming election.

"Transparency and fairness will enhance unity within our party and the more united we are, the more strong we are certain to be," the chairman said.

### Gwandara community expresses support for council chairman

From Dare Oyewole, in Kaduna

The people of Gwandara community in Sanga Local Government Area of Kaduna State have pledged their unflinching support for their council chairman, Mr. Frank Baba, who is currently being probed over allegations of financial impropriety.

One of the council members, Mr. Boniface

Garba, had in a petition which led to the probe, alleged that the council chairman swindled the local government council of over N22 million.

However, in a release issued in Kaduna at the weekend, five leaders from the community dissociated themselves from the petitioner, saying that it was a

negative act which was capable of retarding the developmental efforts of the council.

The leaders are Philip Magaji, Danlami Barau, Zachariah Kubeji, Simon Ishaya and Lawal Alhaji Mohammed.

According to them, even though the petitioner belonged to their community, he (Garba) acted against the community's agenda as be-

ing speculated in some quarters.

"We are sad to note that the problem has been linked to the entire Gwandara community by certain group of people, as being our collective agenda. We felt duty-bound to say that Boniface Garba is executing his personal conviction and/or probably of those who are sponsoring him and not a Gwandara agenda," the community

said. Declaring their support and solidarity for the embattled council chairman, the community commended him for what it called "his untiring efforts towards the development of the council."

It therefore urged the council chairman not to be deterred by the petition or the on-going probe and that he should put more efforts in executing people-oriented projects.



# INSIDE POLITICS

## Misreporting Atiku

By Butrous Pemb

Any discerning reader of Ibrahim Modibbo's article captioned: "Atiku - Missing the Point" which featured in the *Daily Trust* of Wednesday March 28, 2001 would readily wonder and ask why and to whom was the writer doing a hatchet job for? Although the article, Modibbo could not hide his pathological hatred and disdain for the personality of Atiku Abubakar, the Vice-President. Having read the piece repeatedly, one cannot but come away with the impression that there is a grand conspiracy, between the writer and some fifth columnists, to demonise and ultimately nail the political coffin of the Vice-President.

As the latest recruit into the crucify-Atiku-army, Modibbo has roundly condemned the Vice-President over his statutory constitutional role, his "stagnation and inaction" since the inception of Nigeria's present democratic experiment. The writing in contention is a classic case of Jacob's voice but the hand of Esau, i.e. Modibbo was gleefully lending his journalistic license to opine evidently at someone's bidding.

By and large, one is miffed and intrigued by Modibbo's gladiatory style against the Atiku persona, and politics in view of the Vice-President's meteoric political profile, forthrightness and commitment to the survival and indivisibility of the Nigerian State. As a journalist, Modibbo knows it very well that the onus is on him to appreciate and analyse political issues and developments from non-partisan and objective point of view. Pity, Modibbo rather chose to belong to the emerging media lynching squad whose stock-in-trade is to snuff life out of promising politician, with just the stroke of a pen.

Now, what is Modibbo's specific grouse against the VP? First, he and his political associates are rather confused and dumbfounded by Atiku's incredible rise to the mainstream of national politics having, according to them, "abandoned his gubernatorial mandate in Adamawa State" and took the risk of being elected to a higher political stake (the Vice-Presidency), which Modibbo derogatorily called the "greener pasture". This is where Modibbo has "missed the point", as it is not greener pasture for Atiku's self aggrandisement but for the collective interest of the people of Adamawa State who are still over-joyed and feel vindicated by an act of providence that has catapulted their former governor-elect to the No. 2 coveted slot.

Now, Atiku's emergence as VP has only proved that the people's choice was a good material after all. In fact a better material to represent them at the national level. But this has never gone down well with Modibbo and his co-travellers. Reasons are aplenty. One, they are infuriated by Atiku's sagacity and twin political victory. Because he has not only deprived them of the Adamawa gubernatorial slot but has also blocked their chances of being one of their cronies become the VP. They are, therefore, victims

of Atiku's double-barreled political strategy that has given him the dual political victory with his god-son, Mr. Boni Haruna, holding forth as Adamawa State governor, while Atiku himself is currently enjoying the mutual confidence of President Olusegun Obasanjo as a powerful VP.

Apparently, praying for the slightest opportunity to nail Atiku's political coffin, Modibbo and his cohorts had seen it auspicious to deliberately misquote and therefore misreport the Vice-President at any given occasion. Such was the case at the recent Adamawa State PDP congress held in Yola. The bone of contention is that the VP was only honest to point out that the under-developed North-East sub-region should now begin to savour the beauty and fruits of democracy dividends. This is sequel to the present catalogue of infrastructural development going on in the area. Of course, to further drive home the point, Atiku disclosed that the region had at different times produced personalities who occupied leadership positions but at no time produced a leader into a critical position as No. 2 in the polity.

The Vice-President had particularly stressed that the people of the sub-region should emulate the Sokoto-Kano people who know the essence of having their own sons at the helm of affairs and therefore would always demonstrate their support for the government of the day whenever their kith and kin are in the corridor of power. He therefore called for total support towards the Obasanjo administration that has magnanimously given them the Vice-Presidency as well as appointed a handful of their illustrious sons into key ministerial and other political positions.

The bottomline of the Yola address was essentially to make the people appreciate the fact that the present power arrangement in our polity is favourable to them. He explained that the proximity to power the North-East presently enjoys may never come round to them if they toy with it and therefore appealed for all hands to be on deck to demonstrate support for the Federal Government. To this end, he appealed to the political leaders of the sub-region to eschew religious and ethnic politics that would cause any disaffection and division among the people.

That is precisely the crux of the Vice-President's speech which has been recklessly and ceaselessly misinterpreted by his political adversaries. At no time did Atiku ever infer, insinuated or directed any attack on the Hausa/Fulani elites or even the Sokoto-Kano political leaders. The video and audio cassettes are always available for anyone who feels strongly about this allegation to obtain and objectively listened to if only to appreciate and sinuate what the VP meant at the Yola PDP forum.

Since the VP spoke throughout in Hausa, it provided the cynics with the excuse to misquote and misinterpret the true spirit of

the point" having gone the whole hog to cast aspersions at an innocent soul.

The question is, was Atiku



Vice-President, Atiku Abubakar

this speech. That of course is the loophole the Modibbos mercilessly exploit to pillory the VP and pull him down the sewers.

Evidently, Modibbo's contentious article, is overtly anchored on the presupposition that Atiku, by all intents and purposes, must have castigated the Hausa-Fulani for the neglect of the North-East zone. There can never be more falsehood and mischief than that! Even though the VP has already dismissed the insinuations and reactions that greeted his Yola speech as "stupid, and very stupid indeed" (*Thisday*, 12/3/2001), nonetheless, his political adversaries will rather believe the skewed and politically sponsored media report.

Thank God the *Daily Trust* reporter in Yola was right at the venue where Atiku was alleged to have "bashed" the Hausa-Fulani elites. Because Atiku NEVER made such a statement, the reputable *Daily Trust* never reported it in its newsform. One stands to be controverted. Apparently the *Daily Trust* reporters in Yola is also a Hausa-Fulani (back and front) and could not have spared the VP if he had made the alleged statement. One wonders why Modibbo and his friends are crying wolf where there is none. Atiku has the sixth sense and therefore too smart a politician to commit such a political suicide. He is not given to attacking any power clique in any part of the country, more so of his own tribe. It really amounts to a clear case of overkill for anybody to put words into the VP's mouth simply to crucify him. Isn't this a case of giving a dog a bad name? No doubt, Modibbo "missed

wrong to have drawn the attention of his people to the democracy dividends at their door steps? Is there anything wrong to have asked the people to protect their political gains by continually supporting the Obasanjo-led government? Isn't it ironical that when people from other zones are doing all they could to support and express solidarity to their sons in government, Modibbo and his political friends simply find delight in bringing down their own on the altar of selfish motives? Or is it a case of the biblical prophet not being honoured in his home country? Pity!

It is always presumed that journalism practice would not temper opinion with facts but that truth must always remain the underlying consideration in political discourse. Modibbo has deliberately ignored the facts simply because the Obasanjo administration must be demonised and the VP crucified along the way. Otherwise, he could not also have brought the issue of the VP alleged targeting any group during the Arewa House lecture two years ago for the educational under-development of the North. If Modibbo has cared to go through the speech of the VP at all, he could have seen that what the VP did was a healthy critical self-appraisal of the role the elites have played both individually and collectively in keeping the North perpetually backward educationally. What Atiku really did was to follow the path of patriots like late General Hassan Usman Katsina, and Aminu Kano and others who at various times have expressed their concern about why the education of the youths in the

North should not be left in the hands of government alone.

Here again, Atiku's alleged crime is that he has forcefully argued that our elites have only paid lip service to the legacy of Sarduana of Sokoto, Sir Ahmadu Bello, over the issue of education. And these include also the state governments and local governments and even NGOs. The VP was very forthright that something must be done to redress this calamity. And although he was only re-enforcing an issue already canvassed for, it stands on record that the VP was the first Northern political office holder to publicly articulate and call for an affirmative and collective action towards empowering our Northern youths educationally.

However, this did not go down well with the likes of Modibbo. But when Modibbo allowed his prejudices and preconceived notions to becloud his sense of judgement, it does not matter much to us as it could be excused for simplistic conception of issues. However, where the truth is shoved aside just to make a cheap political point, then it must worry all of us, considering the personality at the center of the discourse. Certainly, the Vice-President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has risen far above such mundane level of political discourse.

Also, when Modibbo said "blackmarketeeing" is the main pre-occupation of some youths in Yola, he himself knows that he was simply engaged in scapegoating. Everybody knows that we have been living with this phenomenon for over 15 years and thankfully it is a problem that Governor Boni Haruna of Adamawa State is now battling with through the massive injection of funds into the educational sector. The truth is that the problem of our young people in this regard has very much to do with the collapse of education than with the worrisome blackmarketeeing.

As earlier observed, these are issues that should bother the northern elites presently. The spectacle of youths in the "Jimeta Shincow ward" is also replicated throughout the North and that was what had spurred the VP to call for a blue-print with the view to squarely address such a hopeless pass-time of the Northern youths generally.

In addition, Modibbo has forgotten that Atiku Abubakar is not a VP for the North-East Zone alone or even for the North only. He is by virtue of his position a VP for the whole of Nigeria, granted that he is a full blooded Hausa-Fulani Northerner. It is unfair, therefore, to reduce him to a mere local champion whose only preoccupation is with where he comes from. The VP has stood for Nigeria and has in all his dealings embraced the principles of fairness, equity and unity. Consequently, every section of Nigeria belongs to him. That is why as a mark of his national acceptance, and

despite the perceived prejudices of a cabal he is receiving honours and recognition as a true son of Nigeria all over the country.

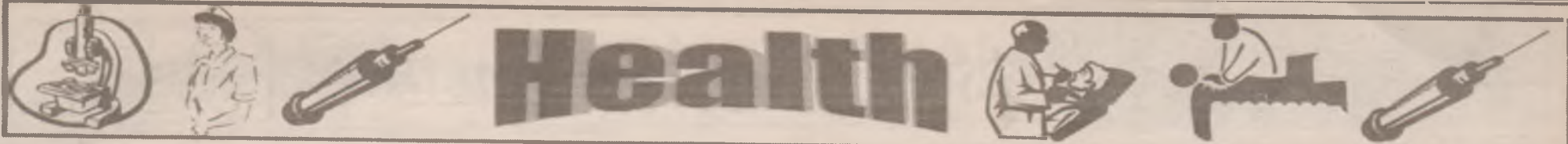
It should also interest Modibbo to note that so far the VP has received a dozen of chieftaincy titles not only in the South-West, but also in Ibo land, the South-South and of course in the North too. Such recognitions are beyond politics, they testify to the emerging role of the VP as a veritable bridge-builder for the much needed unity our country desperately desires.

Amazingly, for Modibbo to conclude that when it matters most, the Yorubas will abandon Abubakar Atiku for their kinsmen does not demonstrate a good sense of history. The Yorubas have lately emphasized personal qualities in politicians and not support candidates simply because they are Yorubas. The late General Shehu Yar'Adua has since broken the jinx of tribal politics in the West. In the 1992 presidential primaries of the defunct Social Democratic Party (SDP), General Yar'Adua, defeated three Yoruba aspirants namely, Chief Olu Falae, Chief Layi Balogun and Alhaji Lateef Jakande in the Yoruba states. He trounced Alhaji Jakande in his home state of Lagos; defeated Layi Balogun in his home state of Oyo and came tops in Osun and Ogun States ahead of all the Yoruba aspirants.

Such a precedent shows that the prospect is, therefore, good for any politician with similar nationalistic disposition to achieve Yar'Adua's legendary feat. By all accounts, Atiku Abubakar today is a symbol of the Yar'Adua legacy and it is understandable that he is reaping the fruits of the presence the Yar'Adua political goodwill has established in all parts of the country; the South-West inclusive.

Advisably, it is imperative for journalists and columnists like Modibbo who desire to partake in topical and sensitive national discourse to as a matter of ethics and principle treat as well as analyse issues dispassionately and never at the expense of facts. We must all guard against Nigerian journalism being reduced to a veritable rubber stamp of a few unscrupulous politicians who have the tendency to exploit the press for the personal interest and as tool for political vendetta. We must always feel obliged to report the truth and nothing but the truth, irrespective of our self-interest and no matter whose ox is gored. We can do our job creditably and earn a pride of place in our society, if only we resist the entreaties to misreport issues and personalities.

**Pemb**, is Deputy Chief Press Secretary to the Vice-President.



# FG to conduct national mental health survey

Plans are underway for a National Mental Health Survey to ascertain the extent of mental health problems in Nigeria.

This revelation was made by the Minister of state for Health, Dr. (Mrs.) Amina Ndalolo, in a press conference preceding the World Health Day celebrated last Saturday all over the world.

This year's world health day which focussed on mental health had as its theme: Mental Health; STOP THE DISCRIMINATION.

The theme, the Minister said, was informed by the effects of social stigma and discrimination which mentally ill people suffer.

For her, "the slogan, could not have been chosen as persons with mental and

**By Ikenna Emeka Okpani**

neurological disorders suffer not only the effects of the illness but also the effects of the social stigma and discrimination attached to these conditions."

These effects, Dr. (Mrs.) Ndalolo, noted, deter mentally ill people from seeking help and from being offered the most effective care available.

Noting that the causes of mental disorders were varied and include, heredity, socioeconomic problems, insecurity, brain damage due to road traffic accidents, accidents in workplaces and homes, birth injuries, stresses, inadequate care at child birth; malnutrition, infections, lack of social support, ageing as a natural

process, civil strife and use of drugs, Dr. Ndalolo said the ministry had formulated and adopted an up-to-date mental health policies and programmes since 1991.

Again in recognition of the fact that mental disorders can start early in life, the ministry had incorporated mental health as the ninth component of primary health care whose aim is to bring mental health services closer to the people.

As part of its efforts to provide mental health services, the Minister who was represented at the briefing by Director of Hospital Services, Dr. Suleiman Sani, announced that 5 state health facilities had been upgraded to Federal Psychiatric hospitals since 1998.

The five hospitals are expected to complement an already existing three in Yaba, Lagos; Aro, Abeokuta, and Uselu, Benin City.

However, the Minister revealed that the Lunacy Act of 1914 was outmoded and ir-

relevant. To this effect a draft legislation to replace it has been sent to the National Assembly for consideration.

To mark the world health day last Saturday a marathon walk rally/exhibition was flagged off by President

Olusegun Obasanjo at the Eagle Square.

A release made available by WHO to mark the occasion said an estimated 400 million people today suffer from mental or neurological disorders or from psychosocial problems.

## Canada unveils support for genetic research projects

The Canadian government has unveiled support of 150 million Canadian dollars (about 86 million US dollars) for the country's genetic research projects.

The projects involve 2,000 researchers and technicians engaged in 22 major projects at five genome cen-

tres.

Describing the genome research as "a key component of the Federal Government's science and technology strategy, Canadian industry minister, Brian Tobin, said the support will help "attract and retain world class researchers in Canada, and to position Canada as a world leader in

genomics and biotechnology."

Under Canada's genome projects, researchers are trying to gain basic understanding of genetic makeup, explore ways to conquer killer diseases like cancer, address problems of pollution and improve food production. (NAN)



More than four million South Africans are thought to be HIV positive.

## AIDS confusion strikes South Africa

**By Ikenna Emeka Okpani**

Controversy is breeding in South Africa over Thabo Mbeki's Aids committee which had just submitted its report.

The country's medical doctors are divided over arguments on the issue of whether HIV leads to AIDS or not and mode of treatment and prevention.

While resident doctors led by Dr. Sam Nkomo prefer what they call Non-Toxic treatment for the growing number of AIDS patients in the country, the Aids scientists who formed the core of the committee prefer other methods.

On the other hand, a leading AIDS activist in the country, Zaki Ahmed, believed government efforts amount to a waste of time, especially in the promotion of the use of condom on radio and televi-

sion adverts.

According to him, such promotions have led to less sex education and many more HIV positive pregnant women.

The number of pregnant women with HIV in South Africa had soared over the period. Presently, over 4.7 million South Africans are affected by HIV/AIDS.

Last week, a 3-day AIDS conference was held in South Africa. The conference had focussed on the pandemic monster and how to contain it, especially in sub-Saharan Africa.

At the opening ceremony, BBC reports, a leading AIDS patient, Justice Edwin Cammen, spoke at length on the efficacy of AIDS management drugs.

The issue of AIDS man-

agement drugs has raised a lot of dust in recent times over the exorbitant cost. It cost as much as 15,000 dollars to maintain AIDS for a month. Arguments are that even if it is reduced to 600 dollars, most Africans would not be able to afford it going by their per-capita income.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dr. Kofi Annan, last week met with six leading world pharmaceutical companies to beg them to consider cheaper products for sub-Saharan African management of AIDS.

The South African government has been having a running battle with multinational pharmaceutical companies over patent to produce cheaper AIDS management drugs for its people.

## Rainy season eases fear of meningitis

The arrival of the rainy season was received with great joy in most Northern part of the country where meningitis, caused by great heat was already wreaking havoc on the populace.

In Minna, capital of Niger State where over four cases of death due to meningitis had been reported, the people, especially children danced round during the rainfall last week.

Cerebrospinal meningitis generally caused by intense heat had been reported across the country including Abuja the Federal Capital.

In its response to the reported outbreak of the disease, government had immunized people free to contain the spread.

The worst outbreak in recent times had been four years ago in Kano State. The epidemic spread widely that both the state and federal government had to make distress calls to international organisations for help.

The intervention of Pfizer incorpo-

rated then helped contain the epidemic though a controversy had arisen recently regarding alleged Pfizer unethical testing of its drug while the epidemic lasted.



Engr. Kure, Niger State governor

## Cameroonian doctors face accusation of corruption

Cameroonian doctors have been accused of corruption and unethical practices which had led to the death of some of their patients.

A report monitored on BBC says, the doctors receive bribes apart from their service fees in government hospitals.

Unless a patient pays such illegal monies, the doctors refuse to attend to such patients. This had led to the

**By Ikenna Emeka Okpani**

death of some patients in recent time.

Adding a reason for this, the report says most Cameroonian doctors get as less as 200 dollars a month. So, to make ends meet, the doctors resort to other unconventional means to make money.

Over here in Nigeria, there have been complains over patients who have lost

their lives after doctors refused to attend to them for inability to pay certain amounts as deposit.

Last time in Ebonyi State, a doctor was sacked for seeking full payment of a certain amount of deposit before attending to a lady who was at a point of death.

The then State governor offset the bills and sacked the doctor for insensitivity and neglect.

# Arts & Entertainment

**TITLE:**  
**PUBLISHER:**  
**PRICE:**  
**AUTHOR:**  
**PAGINATION:**  
**REVIEWER:**

**Women and National Development - The Way forward,**  
**Spectrum Books Ltd,**  
**N3,500.00,**  
**Hajo Sani**  
**400,**  
**Haruna Penni.**

Honourable Hajo Sani's book on women marginalisation could not have come at a better time than now when all the relevant critical units and elements in the country's socio-political system are crying rightly or wrongly of being marginalized in the total nation state arrangement.

But the difference between Hajo's cry and those of the suave political gadflies is that in the former, the problem comes from natural consequence, while the latter are man made. Does it therefore mean that there is something the government can do to transform the opposite sex physically and culturally to become boys and then men?

Even at the just concluded World Women's Day celebration in Nigeria, the female participants still believed that it is a man's world 'because women are still at the receiving end of world conflicts'. The men did not agree with this. It is men that are on the receiving end they opined while the women are on the receiving side. Prof Chinweizu who is the godfather of this thesis in his famous Anatomy of Female Power outlines womb power, and kitchen power as some instruments women use to subtly handle the men.

Be that as it may, Hajo Sani, a former Honourable Minister of Women Affairs has only done what she knows best -that of repositioning, mainstreaming, emancipating, networking and empowering the oppressed, illiterate, poor, rural and urban women to wake up and take their rightful place in public affairs so that they can influence, control and contribute to policies affecting their lives.

Actually, the women movement for gender equity and justice has continued to gather momentum in different countries. In Nigeria, the recent advent of a democratic system of government has increased the pace of the debate and encouraged more articulation of their position. It has also increased the different perspectives from where the empowerment of women has been viewed.

Hajo's women development green book to be launched on Thursday 10th May 2001 at the Abuja Sheraton Hotel is dedicated to the evergreen memory of her late 11-year-old daughter, Miss Zulal-Rat Mohammed Sani and to women generally for their untiring struggles for economic, political, social emancipation and gender equity.

The author first acknowledged Almighty God, followed by her late husband. She also expressed indebtedness to some First Ladies from Dr (Mrs) Maryam Babangida, Dr (Mrs) Maryam Abacha, Hon. Justice Fati Abubakar, Mrs. Stella Obasanjo and Mrs Amina Titi Abubakar for their wonderful support and encouragement. She also remembered her sisters, brothers, staff, friends etc.

Describing Hajo as a welcome voice from the North where the is-

sue of women and development is rarely debated, Professor Bolanle Awe in the foreword pointed out that the book provides significant input by bringing to the fore salient features derived from the author's educational, Muslim and ministerial experiences. But what does Awe know about Islam as to profess that "Sharia seems to call into question the woman's fundamental rights?" Although the author herself did not shy away from this controversy as she delved into the subject of Islam and Women Rights, but she says this has been part of the religion.

Hajo reveals to her readers in the preface her reasons for writing the book. First, experience of teaching and taking administrative charge of an all female boarding college for almost two decades; Second, the opportunity of serving as Chief Executive of the Ministry of Women Affairs which enabled her to face the challenges of women emancipation. Third, presentation and defence of the Nigerian women's situation before the committee of experts of the UN 19th Session of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

The excellently researched book while highlighting the role of women

in nation building explains the potentiality of the multi dimensional status of women and how it could be converted to a dynamic force in development modelling. The author sees development here as consisting not only of economic growth, but also in terms of social, political, cultural and gender concerns.

The book lauds the state of awareness which led to the formation of women pressure groups, organisations and international conferences that focused on women, their traditional and modern roles, the need for them to access re-

sources, participate actively in all national pursuits and finally their sublime role of family, household and community maintenance.

The work of thirteen chapters explores the conditions of historical women in chapter one and examines the economic benefits to the community in chapter two. It documents the evolution of women non-governmental organisations with particular reference to Nigeria in chapter three, and reflects on the contributions of First Ladies in the development of the society in chapter -

four. It deals with the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs as a framework for women advancement in Nigeria in chapter five, and examines women's contribution in employment and the professions in chapter six.

The next chapter deals with the emergence of women as political office holders resulting from eighteenth-century political revolution. Chapter eight considers the level of women's participation in social services. Chapter nine analyses the legal provisions of the human rights of women and obstacles to women development participation. Chapter ten portrays women's right from Islamic point of view.

Chapter-eleven looks at UN and its agencies/NGOs' efforts at promoting and protecting woman rights, while chapter twelve focuses on major international women conferences organised by the UN in the twentieth century. Chapter thirteen reappraises preceding suggestions and charts a way forward for women development through education and skills acquisition.

Hajo Sani is an educationist with specialisation in Guidance and Counselling. She obtained her Bachelor of Arts (Education) degree from the University of Maiduguri and a Masters of Education (M.Ed) degree

from the University of Jos. She began her teaching career in 1982 as an employee of the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA), Abuja and was appointed Principal of Government Girls Secondary School, Dutse, Abuja, in 1985. In 1997, she was appointed Minister of Women Affairs. She is a recipient of many awards and had gained recognition from both national and international organisations. These include recognition as one of the Dynamic African Headmistresses by Forum for African Women Educationists (FAWE), Nairobi, 1995; Nigerian Youth Organisation Award 1997, and University of Abuja Campus Watch Award 1998. She is currently the Secretary General of West African Women's Association (WAWA) Nigerian Bureau, a member of the National Consultative and Coordinating Committee on the Advancement of Women and Trustee of the Association of Nigerian Authors, Abuja Chapter.

## BOOK REVIEW

## Video View

**3 LETTERS**  
SET  
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**4 LETTERS**  
BACK  
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SEEK  
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VIEW

**5 LETTERS**  
CABLE  
CLEAN  
CLEAR

EJECT  
ERASE  
FRAME  
SOUND

START  
TIMER  
VIDEO  
WATCH

**6 LETTERS**  
ADJUST  
BUTTON  
DIRECT  
INSERT  
PLAYED  
RECORD  
REWIND

**7 LETTERS**  
HANDSET  
SETTING

**8 LETTERS**  
CASSETTE  
TRANSFER

**9 LETTERS**  
PROGRAMME

**11 LETTERS**  
FAST  
FORWARD



## PUZZLE

5

REWIND

Arts & Entertainment

The Story of the New Nigerian Part XIII Bold Toddler!

In its early days the New Nigerian was often summoned by the authorities for one reason or the other. In today's account we see the New Nigerian struggling to achieve relevance and objectivity in an increasing turbulent land,

Books

Needless to say the following morning I was ordered to report to the Military Governor. 'Like some coffee' he asked as I walked into the lounge at Government House, the room I had first entered during the visit of Queen Elizabeth in 1956, 'You'd better make the most of it because next time we share anything may well be in the same prison cell!' 'He told me the New Nigerian with its blank pages had caused uproar in Lagos and I was also blamed for persuading the Daily Times to adopt a similar protest ploy. Evidently Alhaji Jose had also been' on the mat and had informed his inquisitors that since I had told him what I intended to do he could see no point in him acting any differently.

"You're a crafty devil" said Hassan, smilingly, but I felt he was far from convinced there was anything to smile about."

"You may well be right" I said, 'but I obeyed instructions to the letter. We weren't told not to publish; simply not to report on the events of the previous day. As far as I am concerned that is precisely what we did. We were informed of the ban so late in the day that there was insufficient time to take any other course. We had to catch our plane to Lagos and get copies to places all over the north. Any embarrassment that may have been caused in Lagos must be laid at the door of those who ordered the ban so late in the day.'

"I realised I was taking a dangerous stand, but Hassan said he understood and I knew we had his support. Nonetheless, he couldn't resist a parting shot as I got up to leave. 'You know, we may yet end up playing scrabble together in jail'

"We didn't, but that, as they say, is another story." On the 18th of June strong moves began to return the country to normalcy. The Northern Government headed by Colonel Hassan Katsina (he was promoted from Major to Lt. Colonel two weeks after his appointment as Governor), summoned Emirs and Chiefs to Kaduna from all over the North. The New Nigerian called the move as "a gigantic public relations campaign. It was not an easy exercise. The gov-

ernment, at the Federal and Regional levels, was rattled by the riots.

The New Nigerian continued to appeal for calm and support



Sir Ahmadu Bello

of the day. But after the riots there could only be an uneasy calm. Many Igbos began to flee the North and also Lagos. Ironsi reiterated his determination to maintain progress and stability in the country. He even announced his intention to rotate the Governors. In order to re-assure the Igbos and other aggrieved people, a Commission of Inquiry to probe the May riots in the North was appointed. On the eve of the opening of its sitting in Kaduna, the New Nigerian on 28th July showed its interest in the inquiry. Although the Inquiry was not a "trial, it said, certain things which are important to the future of Nigeria will be on trial. Honesty, truth, fair play, will be on trial. So too will be the rights of a citizen to live in peace and do his duty without fear or recrimination."

However, the inquiry was not to be! As the New Nigerian edition carrying the editorial was being sold on the streets, the events to usher in the July coup and to oust Ironsi's regime were already underway. In order to assert his authority, General Ironsi, towards the end of July, had embarked on a nation-wide tour. He first visited Kaduna where he was well-received and then toured Kano and the Mid-West. Ibadan was next where he was due to address a conference of traditional rulers July 28-29.

On 28 July mutiny among the soldiers broke out in Abeokuta, Ibadan and Ikeja garrisons. These army establishments had majority of Igbo officers but two-thirds of the

rank and file were from the North. The rank and file had been upset by the pattern of killings in January. Ibadan garrison in particular rejected an Igbo officer as their commanding officer in place of Colonel Largema. They were also resentful of the murder of Largema's predecessor in Ibadan, Colonel Kur Muhammed.' As a result of the mutiny many Igbo officers and other ranks were killed and the Head of State, General Ironsi and his host, Colonel Fajuyi, the Military Governor of the West, were first arrested in Ibadan Government House and then murdered. For three days at Ikeja cantonment, the country's future was debated among the coup makers mainly middle-rank army officers of Northern origin. Should the North secede? Should Nigeria remain one? If so should it be a Confederation or a Federation? And who is to lead the country? The New Nigerian did not gain the ring side seat to this debate.

But in its issue of 30th July it informed its readers of an emergency in Ibadan, Abeokuta and Ikeja, as a result of mutiny by "a small section of the Nigerian Army." Quoting government announcements on the radio of the previous day, the New Nigerian reported the situation as being under control but with Lagos and Kano airports closed. All was reported to be quiet in Northern, Eastern and Mid-Western areas. This was a remarkably accurate report of the outdoor activities in the country on 29th July. But by the time the paper went on the streets for sale on Saturday morning Ironsi's regime had been ousted, his next in command Brigadier B. Ogundipe had resigned. He submitted his letter of resignation to Alhaji Musa Dagash, then Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Defence. He then took refuge in a ship at Lagos harbour only to reappear in London as Nigeria's High Commissioner in the United Kingdom.

The New Nigerian did not then have a Sunday edition. So not until Monday were weekend events reported - Army talks in Lagos to decide on a new set-up for the country. It also reported the shootings in Ikeja, Abeokuta, Ibadan and Kaduna. It also reported the broadcast by Brigadier Ogundipe at the weekend "asking the public to cooperate in maintaining law and order." It also reported that on Saturday night "talks between the two factions of the Army began. These

continued through the night and it is believed that consultations were also held with leading members of the government in provincial towns."

The following day the New Nigerian announced a new National Government headed by Lt. Col. Yakubu Gowon. The Colonel himself, had the previous night in a broadcast over the network of Radio Nigeria announced the formation of a new National Government with himself as the Head of State and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. He promised to abolish the unitary system of government of Aguiyi-Ironsi because "As a result of the recent events and the other previous similar ones, I have come to strongly believe that we cannot honestly and sincerely continue in this wise, as the basis for trust and confidence in our unitary system of government has not been able to stand the test of time".

"I have already remarked on the issue in question. Suffice it to say that putting all considerations to test, political, economic as well as social, the base for unity is not there, or is so badly rocked not only once but several times."

"I therefore feel that we should review the issue of our national standing and see if we can help stop the country from drifting away into utter destruction. With the general consensus of all the Military Governors and other members of the Supreme and Executive Councils, a decree will be issued to lay a sound foundation of this objective."

Foreigners were assured of their personal safety: "I shall honour all international treaty obligations entered into by the previous Government". "But foreign interference in any form will be regarded as an act of aggression." Soldiers were warned not to loot and to keep law and order.

Yakubu Gowon's assertions of no basis for unitary system of government, the basis of unity being

rocked several times, would be the subject of controversy for a long time. Did he mean no basis for unitary system of government in Nigeria or no basis for unity of the country? In the end it was not to matter because the country survived the civil war.

The New Nigerian welcomed the eventual emergence, on 1st August, 1966, of Colonel Yakubu Gowon as Head of the National Government and appealed for public support. Even though the paper, some weeks earlier, had endorsed the Ironsi unilateral dissolution of the Federation and the institution of his so-called unitary government the New Nigerian was enthusiastic on the return of the Federation.

"NIGERIA has a new Government. New men have accepted the arduous and difficult task of guiding the nation. They have inherited many problems which will call for all their wisdom, all their skill and all their dedication.

For the sake of the country; for the sake of our people and for the sake of our children, the new leaders must be given every support. It is the duty of every citizen to support the Government and help it to maintain law and order. Everyone will hope that out of the mistakes of the past, will come wisdom and progress. The country has come through a grave situation. As Lt. Col. Yakubu Gowon said in his address to the nation yesterday, the unitary system of government has not stood the test of time. One reason perhaps was that it was imposed hastily and without sufficient thought for the future. Unity is not something which can be imposed by force. It must come about slowly and gradually and be built on goodwill.



General Yakubu Gowon

To be continued.



# Consumer Guide



## TODAY'S FLIGHTS

### Albarka Air Services

Abuja—Lagos:  
8.30am; 10.00am;

1.00pm; 4.30pm  
Lagos—Abuja  
7.00am; 9.45am;

1.00pm; 3.00pm.  
Abuja—Maid (1.30pm)  
Abuja—Maid (4.30pm)  
Maid—Abuja (7.30pm)

### Chanchangi Airlines

Abuja—Lagos:  
8.00am; 11.45am;

1.40pm; 3.00pm; 5.30pm  
Kaduna—Lagos (8.30am)  
Kaduna—Abuja—Lagos  
(12.40pm)  
Lagos—Abuja;  
7.15pm; 10.00am;

1.10pm; 3.30pm; 4.45pm.

Lagos—Abuja—Kaduna  
(10.00am)  
Lagos—Kaduna (5.00pm)

### Nigeria Airways

Abj—Lagos: 8.30am  
Abj—Lagos: 2.00pm;  
3.30pm; 5.30pm.

Lag—Abj: 7.00am;  
12.30pm  
Lagos—Phc: 9.00am  
Lagos—Enu—Phc:  
4.00pm  
Abuja—Yola: 3.30pm.  
Yola—Abuja: 4.45pm

### Eas Airlines

Abj—Jos 11.00am  
Abj—Jos—Lagos—  
11.00am  
Abj—Lag: 10.30am;  
4.30pm  
Lag—Abj: 7.15am;  
9.30am; 2.45pm.

### Bellview Airlines

Abj - Jos 11.00 am  
1 p.m, 5.20 p.m  
Lagos - Abuja 6-50 a.m,  
11.15 a.m  
Lagos - PHC  
7.40 a.m, 3.15 a.m  
PHC - Lagos 9 a.m.  
5.05 p.m

### Sosoliso Airlines

Lagos - Abuja  
12.30 p.m  
Lagos - Enugu 10 a.m, 4.30  
p.m  
Lagos - PHC 4.30 P.M  
PHC - Lagos 8.30 a.m  
Enugu - Lagos 7.30 a.m  
11.30 a.m

### Kabo Air

Lagos - Kaduna 10.00 a.m  
Lagos - Kano 10 a.m, 2p.m  
Jos - Lagos 8.30 a.m  
Kano - Lagos  
7.30 a.m, 12 p.m, 4p.m

### ADC Airlines

Abuja - Lagos  
8.30 a.m, 4.40 p.m  
Lagos - Abuja 7 a.m,  
3.15p.m  
Lagos - Calabar

## New questions over zobo

By Halima Yakubu

Zobo is arguably the most popular locally brewed soft drink in Nigeria.

Even though the drink originates from the North, it enjoys mass acceptance in the whole country.

The majority of Nigerians today rely on zobo to quench their thirst, without knowing whether or not it has its nutritional value or health complications. Medical practitioners argue that no research has been carried out to prove the medical safety or otherwise of the drink.

Zobo drink is got from the sour flower of a redish plant, (Yakuwa) which is native to Northern Nigeria. The flower is unshelled from its capsule and dried. It is boiled in water together with some spices to give it a pleasant flavour.

It is amazing to know that the colour of zobo changes from red to purple when poured on the ground - a colour change which no one has been able to

explain to date.

Many orthodox medical experts were restrained from making comments on zobo. They attribute their caution to the fact that the principal regulatory body for drinks and food, NAFDAC, has not made any pronouncement on the product.

According to a Kuje - based medical practitioner, Dr. Ahmed Sani, "the only way of preserving zobo is by freezing, and when kept for too long without preservation, it becomes fermented". He further stated that any drink which "ferments could either intoxicate or be harmful for human consumption."

The Public Relations Officer (PRO) of National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), Alhaji Abubakar Jimoh, commenting on the issue said, zobo was initially prepared for domestic

consumption, but now that it had become a commercial drink with a national market, NAFDAC was analysing on its contents to determine its suitability or otherwise for public consumption.

Traditional doctors consulted said "the drink is highly medicinal and contains a lot of vitamins." This was the view of a traditional medicine practitioner in Gwagwa, Mallam Dauda Hafis, who added, "it cures hypertension, diabetes, and other health - related problems like cancer and, even, stroke."

Mallam Hafis further explained that "zobo drink contains a lot of vitamins like vitamins A and B, saying, as we all know, vitamin A is for action, while B is for blood."

A regular consumer of the product, Mama Eze, says, "it is very effective. Zobo replaces lost blood, especially in women after delivery; it is also good for pregnant women and lactating mothers."

Other people interviewed said they cherish zobo because "it quenches thirst like any other drink." They, however, voiced their fears over its contents, methods of preparation and preservation on the human system - a situation that has made them to drink only the home-made zobo.

And so the questions remain: is zobo healthy? What are its contents? And the contents - are they beneficial to our bodies? Is it prepared and preserved under hygienic conditions at all? These are the questions Nigerians are asking and waiting for answers. These are the fresh challenges that NAFDAC must surmount.



Zobo drink on display

## FCT Minister to investigate cost of foodstuffs in Abuja

Worried by the rising cost of foodstuffs in Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Minister, Engr. Muhammed Abba-Gana, has declared his intention to set up a committee to investigate the problem. The Committee to be headed by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, Dr. Babangida Aliyu, will make recommendations to the Minister at the end of its investigations.

The Minister disclosed this when the executive officers of Abuja Women Amalgamated Traders Association (AWATA) led by their President, Chief (Mrs) Pearl Toyo Ita, called on him at the weekend.

According to Engr. Abba-Gana, the committee would among other things look into market cartel activities and their effects on the prices of foodstuffs in the FCT.

He said the committee, which would also have the MFCT Director of Women Affairs as one of its members, would hold meetings with leaders of market unions during its deliberations. He commended the AWATA members for their peaceful conduct and enjoined them to always conduct their activities within the ambits of

women traders that the present democratic government having been freely elected by the people will always make the people's welfare a top priority. "This government under President Olusegun Obasanjo will never relent in its resolve to provide affordable foodstuff, housing, water, education, electricity and healthcare for our people," he said.

Earlier, the AWATA President, Chief (Mrs) Pearl Toyo Ita, thanked the FCT Minister on his environmental sanitation programme aimed at making Abuja one of the cleanest cities in the world.

She said that women traders have decided to complement the Minister's effort by organising clean up exercises in the markets and other trading spots in the FCT.

Chief (Mrs) Toyo Ita described Engr. Abba-Gana as a good leader who is blessed with milk of kindness and urged him to expand market facilities in the FCT to accommodate more traders.

She observed that the population of Abuja was growing at a very fast rate, thereby requiring constant expansion of available facilities and infrastructure.

The women traders' leader decried the rising cost of food-



Alhaji Abba Gana, FCT Minister

partly blamed on the illegal activities of cartels masquerading as market unions.

She said that some of the so-called market unions charge as high as N10,000 registration fees for new members, even as most of them, are not registered unions.

Mrs Toyo Ita said that AWATA unlike the other unions was properly registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC). She appealed to the Minister to assist them with an allocation of a piece of land for the building of their office as their office donated by a member was recently burnt by fire at the New Central Area Market.

Women traders' leaders accompanied the AWATA President in the visit from the Six Area Councils of the FCT, namely Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), Bwari, Kuje,

## NEPA PRO advises consumers

Electricity consumers in the country have been advised to adapt themselves to a strict energy saving programme, so as to save NEPA's overloaded network from further extraneous pressures and to ensure a healthier power supply situation in the country.

Speaking exclusively with journalists, the Assistant General Manager in charge of Public Relations, Mallam Mohammed Mousa-Booth, pointed out that the unnecessary wastage of meagre amount of general power by electricity.

Booth stressed that although Nigeria's electricity supply system was inadequate, unnecessary usage and demand for power supply were compounding the strains on both power plants and the distribution networks.

He stated that most electricity consumers often engage in 'unholy' wastage of power through various means such as long periods of unnecessary over-use of light, illegal tapings, centralised facilities and improper installation of home appliances. Adding that switching off appliances when not in use or when not required makes electricity supply healthier and more stable.

According to him, out of about two million registered customers of NEPA, if one million made it a duty to switch off one light point each of 100 watts bulb when not needed some 100 million watts of power translating to 100mw of electricity would have been conserved, and this could be redistributed to serve more homes.

Speaking on the current load shedding exercise adopted by NEPA, Booth pointed at various inhibiting bottlenecks including a fall in water level, which has led to generation limitation, weak transmission grid and overloaded distribution network. He said the Technical Board and Management of the corporation are working tirelessly to enthrone a regime of uninterrupted power supply in the country.

"There is no way you can institute an instant turn-around hard on the heels of the decay and disuse of over 30 years or construct new power stations in anything less than four years. Even orders for the supply of powers and distribution transformers are made on exact specifications to the manufacturers and could take up to one year to be ready," Booth explained.

He said that the Technical Board has created windows of opportunities leading to deregulation of the sector which has witnessed the coming of Enron International to generate and sell 270MW of electricity to NEPA, while Memoranda of Understanding have been signed between Mobil, NEPA, Power and Steel Ministry and Eagles Energy Consortium to generate 500MW of electricity and that between NEPA and ESKO, the South African Monopoly.

Booth pleaded with Nigeri-

standing. "The fact is that load shedding has become inevitable at this time as a safety measure designed to enable the Authority save the few power generating units available at its power station while broken down units at both hydro and thermal stations are being reactivated. This load shedding is not permanent, it will stop as soon as power generation increases," he said.

### Good hint

Switch off lights when not in use or when not necessary, especially when you can make do with daylight in your homes. Dimmer switches help reduce electricity consumption and provide attractive lighting.

If you have six air conditioners and you can make do with one at a time, switch off the others.

When you are not at home, remember to switch off water heaters, air conditions, television sets and indeed all lights you do not need.

Switch off all security lights during the day.

When cooking with electric cooker use pots and pans that match ring sizes.

Remember that switching off appliances not in use does not only make available power supply very healthy, it also helps to avert danger to human lives and ensures that energy conserved is for the use of those who have absolute need of it.



Segun Agagu, Power & Steel Minister

## Bus Schedules

### Ifesinachi Nig Ltd

at Berger Junction by Sassandra Street and Nyanya Unipetrol Filling Station  
Abuja to Lagos  
Departure 8 pm

### ABC Transport

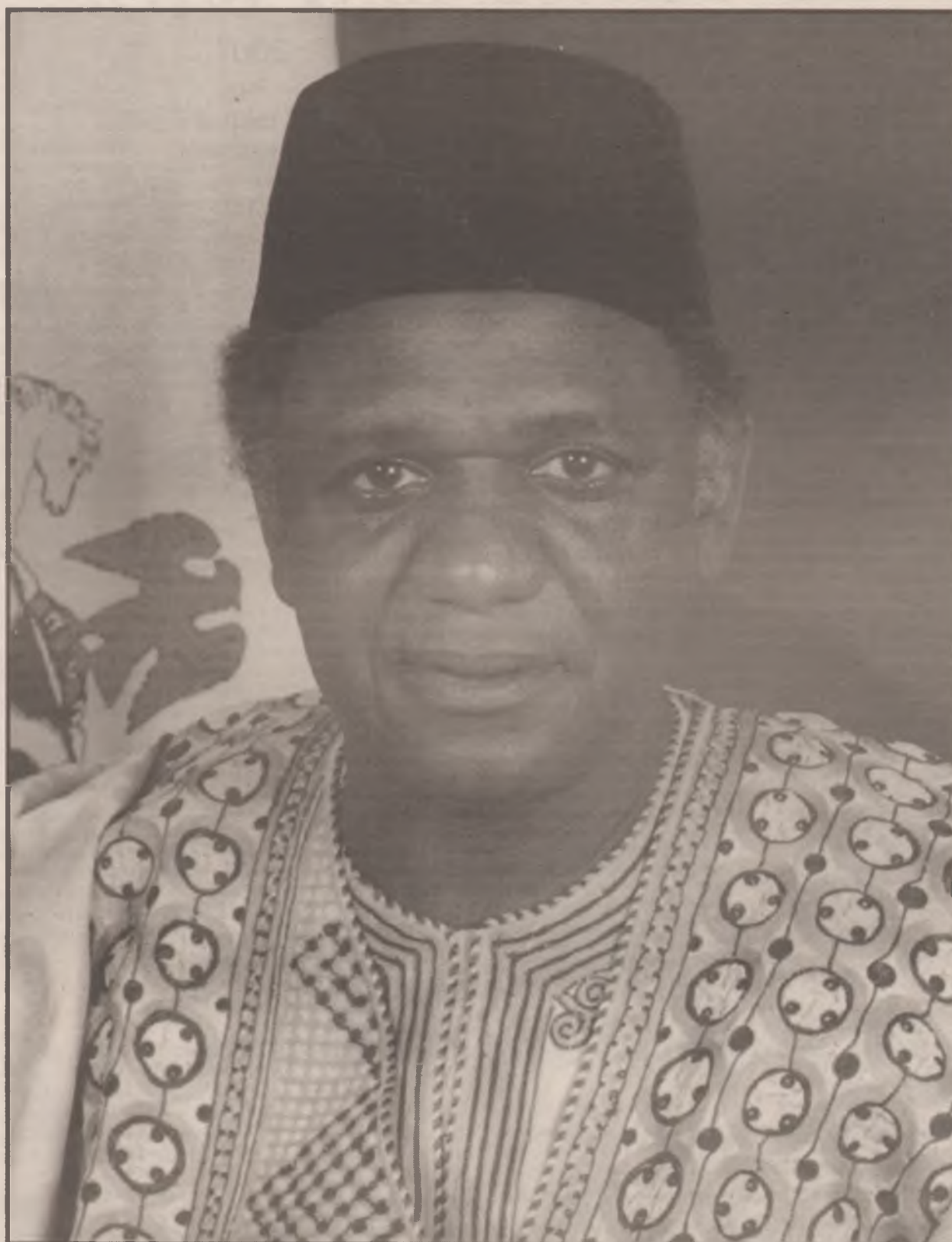
at Banex Plaza,  
Abj—Lagos  
Departure: 7.00 am,  
8.00am

### Chisco

at Utako District  
Abuja—Lagos N1,810.00  
Departure: 7.30am, 7.30pm  
C.N. Okoli at Berger Junction,  
Abj—Lagos

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Hearty Cheers to a distinguished patriot,  
an achiever and a visionary leader at 57



ALH. ABUBAKAR HABU HASHIDU

(Matawallen Dukku) first Executive Governor of Gombe State.

We are proud to be associated with your  
laudable programmes and successes  
Many Happy Returns.

*Signed:*

ABUBAKAR HASSAN

FOR: C-FOUR

# DAILY TRUST

A PUBLICATION OF MEDIA TRUST NIGERIA LIMITED

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Sizes	Inches/col	Product Advert (N)	Public Notice (N)	Political Statements (N)	Colour Rates (N)
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(Across)	7.25" x 3 Cols	35,583.30	41,193	47,457	66,509.00
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(4) 10" x 6 cols		38,646.00	41,544		
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Strip Ad Colour (FP)	2" x 6 Cols.	36,909.00	=	Colour	
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				<b>Series Discount</b>	
Strip Advert (ROP)	2" x 6 cols	12,654.00		5-10 insertions 2.5%	
Earpiece(Front page)	2" x 2 cols	6,309.00		11-20 insertions 5%	
Earpiece(Back page)	2" x 2 cols	5,130.00		-	
Earpiece(Abuja Trust)	2" x 2 cols	4,500.00		-	
Classified Adverts	1" x 1 Col	675.00		21-50 insertions 10%	
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Change of Name	-	N20 per word			
<b>Loose Inserts</b>				<b>Technical Data</b>	
N6,210 per 1000 insertion. Handling charges N25,875.00				Columns - Six (6)	
				Depth - 14.5"	
				Width - 10"	

### Conditions for placing adverts

- All Adverts are to be prepaid in cash/cheque/bank draft.
- Special positions in the supplement attracts 35% surcharge.
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# Katsina Steel Rolling Co. Ltd



**Dr. Olusegun Agagu**  
*Hon. Minister of Power and Steel*



**Chief. Olusegun Obasanjo**  
*President and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*



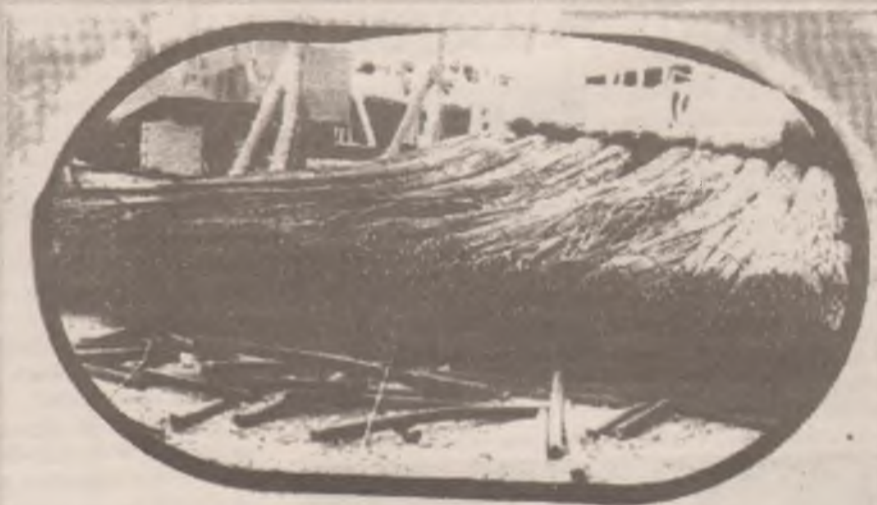
**Alh. Mohammed Danjuma Goje,**  
*Honourable Minister of State for Power and Steel*

The Management and entire staff of Katsina Steel Rolling Company Ltd. Heartily welcome the Hon. Minister of State for Power and Steel, Alh. Mohammed Danjuma Goje, to Katsina Steel Rolling Co. Ltd., as he flags off the resumption of production.

- Date:** Tuesday 10th April, 2001
- Venue:** Factory Site , Shehu Musa Yar'adua Way Katsina
- Time:** 10: 00 am.

The entire staff of Katsina Steel Rolling Co. Ltd, wish to express gratitude to you for your landmark achievement in revitalizing the company in particular and the public steel sector in general

*You are welcome!*



**BAR RODS**



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Shehu Yar'Adua Way,  
PMB 2056, Katsina  
Tel: - 065-430050, 430178, 430640  
Fax - 065 - 430963

Signed  
Katsina Steel Rolling Company Management



## Arsenal sail through, beat Spurs 2-1

Arsenal's stranglehold of power in north London shows no signs of loosening after their 2-1 FA Cup semi-final win over Tottenham.

Utterly dominant in their FA Cup semi-final at Old Trafford, the Gunners wasted more openings in one game than Tottenham have lately managed to create in a whole month.

But even though keeper Neil Sullivan was also outstanding, there was no miracle for supposed Spurs saviour Glenn Hoddle in his first match in charge as Robert Pires eventually clinched victory with 17 minutes left.

Tottenham had somehow managed to seize the lead after just 13 minutes with their first attack, as Gary Doherty headed past David Seaman.

But an already patched-up Spurs were fatally weakened when Sol Campbell went off injured after a foul on Ray Parlour, and Patrick Vieira was thereby allowed the space to head home the equaliser on 34 minutes.

In a cup tie packed with passion and goalmouth incident, if rather low on technical quality,

Vieira was Arsenal's inspiration from then on as they controlled a one-sided second half and eventually made the second breakthrough.

And so the French connection of Vieira and Pires ensured that while Tottenham's season is now over, Arsenal will continue to fight on three fronts - Premiership, Champions League and now FA Cup final.

George Graham may have taken Tottenham to the semi-final but Hoddle was unable to guide them any further and his era as manager must wait for evolution rather than experiencing an immediate galvanising revolution.

With five players - including Campbell - back after missing last weekend's 2-0 league defeat at Arsenal, he did make his mark on Spurs' tactics with a 3-4-3 formation.

With Steffen Iversen and Sergei Rebrov out wide, that placed the onus on Tim Sherwood and Stephen Clemence to control central midfield as well as Les Ferdinand to provide the attacking fulcrum.

Defensive cracks were immediately apparent, with

Wiltord shooting just off target and Lee Dixon testing Sullivan as Campbell attempted to steady his side and Hoddle coached vigorously from the touchline.

However, they still made the breakthrough on 13 minutes when Les Ferdinand spun and sent in a shot which Seaman did well to block only for the ball to rebound to Iversen inside the penalty area.

The Norwegian international mishit the ball but it went straight to Doherty, standing unmarked about eight yards out, and he headed home.

Stephen Carr celebrated rather provocatively in front of the Arsenal fans but he soon had more defending to do as Arsenal responded by hauling themselves back into the game.

On a pitch that was rapidly cutting up, both sides were giving away possession, but the goalmouth action intensified only for Arsenal's finishing to let them down.

However, when Campbell chose to block Parlour as the midfielder raced down the touchline, little can the Spurs captain have realised that it would prove the turning-point of the game.

Not only was Campbell booked but he also aggravated the ankle injury from which he had previously been struggling.

Off the pitch receiving treatment when the ensuing free-kick was taken, his defensive presence was sorely missed as Vieira rose high to head home the equaliser on 34 minutes.

And despite the frantic efforts of the Tottenham medical staff to strap him up, he was eventually forced out of the action and replaced by Ledley King.

The young defender took

time to adapt to the frantic pace as Parlour glided past him only to flash a shot just wide.

Ferdinand, who foraged tirelessly, was isolated up front and while Rebrov spun and shot just wide shortly before the break, that was only their second real effort of the game - with their goal having been the first.

The Ukraine international tried his luck again after the break but Arsenal were by now firmly in command as Silvinho and Henry both threatened.

Still the Gunners did not make the breakthrough, with Perry rising to the occasion and Sullivan in inspired form as he denied Wiltord as the striker broke clean through.

Hoddle brought on Oyvind Leonhardsen for Ferdinand, who was presumably injured, switched to a more conventional 3-5-2 and urged his defence forward.

How Arsenal did not score at this stage was a mystery. Henry headed wide, Parlour was even more profligate from close range and Sullivan's heroics continued as he denied Pires.

Stretching Hoddle's side to breaking point on the counter-attack, Wiltord reached the byline and Pires this time could not miss with a tap-in from close range.

On the ground where they suffered one of the lowest points of their season - thrashed 6-1 by Manchester United - they experienced redress by inflicting one of the most bitter possible blows on Tottenham.

The year may end in a '1' but just as Hoddle's last game as a Spurs player ended in FA Cup defeat - at Wembley in 1987 - so too has his first match as manager.

## Sanchez salutes defeated Wycombe heroes

Wycombe boss Lawrie Sanchez admitted he could not have asked for more from his battling players after their FA Cup run came to an end with a 2-1 defeat by Liverpool in the semi-final at Villa Park.

The Second Division side played out of their skins, but were eventually beaten by late goals from Emile Heskey and a stunning free-kick from Robbie Fowler.

However, one-club man Keith Ryan's 88th-minute effort gave Wanderers fans something to cheer and ensured an anxious final few moments for the Premiership side.

"We did the best we could and that's all I could ever ask of them," Sanchez told ITV.

"I am pleased we got a goal and that it was Ryan who scored it."

However, Sanchez conceded that in the end, the gulf between the sides had just been too much to overcome.

"They are a class apart, the free-kick showed that - but we came here and for 75 minutes we were in a game."

The Wycombe boss also felt sure his side would have taken a great deal out of today's encounter and could use it as a springboard in their battle to beat the drop.

Wanderers are only four points above the relegation zone, but have a couple of games in hand on clubs below them.

"We'll get wins on the back



Liverpool's Micheal Owen

of this," said Sanchez. "We have had this hanging over us and our league form has obviously dropped."

"Now we can get down to concentrating on the league games, put this season to bed and come out stronger next season and get ourselves in the First Division."

Fowler also paid tribute the Wanderers' display.

He added: "To be fair, every one of their players performed magnificently. They made us fight until the final whistle."



Gunners' delight: Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger lifting the 1998 FA Cup. Will he repeat the same feat this year?

## Jackson wants Bryant in Lakers

Coach Phil Jackson said Sunday that he wants Kobe Bryant in a Lakers' uniform next season.

Asked about Isaiah Rider's future with the team Jackson actually discussed Bryant's standing.

"I want Shaq (O'Neal) back next year," Jackson told Los Angeles reporters. "And Kobe's got a contract that extends (four years). Those are two players I want back. Outside of that, I haven't thought about it. I haven't thought about the players that are on the margin."

Pressed then on the Bryant issue, Jackson grinned.

"You guys are in the rumor market," Jackson said, chiding

### Basketball

reporters. "You know what's going on. Don't ask me these questions."

"There's been more than that that's been kind of thrown around here. So I know there's this underground, this kind of current, that's trolling through the NBA press desks, that says (a Bryant trade) might be a possibility. But we haven't considered it. There's been no feelers, nothing."

Jackson never did answer the question on Rider, who went into his latest pout after being used only three minutes against the Celtics on Friday.

"I like him," Jackson said. "It's just that he's unpredictable."

## Hewitt's win sends Aussies past Brazil

Lleyton Hewitt beat world No. 2 Gustavo Kuerten 7-6, 6-3, 7-6 on Sunday to send Australia into the semi-finals of the Davis Cup.

The 20-year-old's win over the reigning French Open title holder gave the 1999 champions a decisive 3-1 lead over Brazil.

"I feel almost speechless," Hewitt said afterwards. "That's the best I've ever hit the ball and to have beaten Guga (Kuerten) in his back yard in straight sets in these conditions with 12,000 people booing you is an unbelievable feeling."

Australia, who hammered Brazil 5-0 at home in last year's semifinals, will host Sweden in the last four after the Swedes beat Russia 4-1.

Tiebreaks were again Brazil's undoing.

Kuerten and Jaime Oncins lost three as they crashed to a straight sets defeat in Saturday's doubles to Hewitt and Patrick Rafter, and Kuerten lost two more on Sunday.

Hewitt, who also beat Fernando Meligeni on Friday, completed his three rubbers without losing a set and showed great maturity in ignoring the distractions of a partisan crowd or around 10,000.

Kuerten was dejected after losing a 25-match winning run on clay which stretched back to before last year's French Open.

Having won the Hamburg Masters Series event, Kuerten lifted the French Open, won two Davis Cup matches and then won the titles in Buenos Aires and Acapulco at the start of this year.

"This was one of my worst Davis Cup defeats and it makes me very down," he said.

"I didn't make the most of the chances I had in the first set. He had the right answers at the right moments. I was missing

### Davis Cup

those small details which win matches.

"We are a bit frustrated and a bit irritated. This was a revenge match for us and a chance to give us a semifinal tie at home. We let a big opportunity go. He (Hewitt) played well under pressure and a great part of their win was due to him."

Hewitt described the win as the greatest of his career.



Kuerten...lost to Lleyton Hewitt in the Davis Cup

"If I play like that, I'm going to be very hard to beat," he said. "That is as well as I have played in my career so far."

Hewitt, who barely committed an unforced error, won nearly all the baseline rallies and Kuerten also had trouble returning serve.

The Brazilian had only three break points in the match, none of which he converted.

Two went in the eighth game of the first set, leading to the Brazilian nightmare of another tiebreak.

Hewitt raced to a 6-4 lead, lost one set point when he doubled faulted but Kuerten hit a ball out on the next point in another baseline exchange to settle it 7-5.

Hewitt then broke serve in the second game of the second set, which he went on to wrap up 6-3 without ever looking in trouble.

Kuerten finally came to life in the third set, serving successive aces in the third game and getting to break point in the sixth.

Hewitt saved, all further games went with serve and Hewitt wrapped up yet another tiebreaker to the despair of the crowd.

The final match between Australia's Richard Fromberg and Brazil's Alexandre Simoni was abandoned in the second set due to rain.

**SPORTS**

## Mass exodus may hit Pelican Stars

**P**elican Stars of Calabar are at the verge of losing no fewer than 75 per cent of their present players, no thanks to the Cross River State government to meet its financial obligations.

Trustsports learnt that the bulk of the players currently owed several months of salary arrears and sign-on fees are no longer willing to put up with excruciating hunger and have decided to seek greener pastures elsewhere.

The precarious situation of the former queens of Nigerian female soccer is such that the club had threatened to discontinue with participa-

Stories by Patrick Andrew

tion in the current league but were persuaded to hang on by some concerned indigenes of the state.

Trustsports also gathered that the former national challenge holders had been hell bent to boycott last weekend match to protest the lack of concern, and neglect by the state government but were persuaded to shift ground so as not to appear unduly confrontational with Donald Duke government.

Besides the failure to pay the players their salary regularly and the mandatory sign-on fees, the state has ne-

glected its responsibility to the club in areas of provision of necessary training kits and other requisite logistics, according to sources who confided in Trustsports.

But the Pelican Stars are not the only team wallowing the mire of neglect, once famous Calabar Rovers, reputed for their football artistry are languishing in the bottom of division two table apparently due to lack of financial motivation to the players most, of whom are hardly get their monthly salary not to talk of sign-on fees and others necessary allowances.



Scrambling for the ball... Ranch Bees and Mighty Jets players in a midfield duel during a league tie in Kaduna... recently.  
Pix Joe Oroye

## Nigerians should've faith in Bonfrere-Abdullahi

**T**he Golden Eaglets chief coach, Musa Abdullahi has asserted that the Super Eagles qualification for the Japan/Korea World Cup 2002 depends on how much cooperation and support Nigerians would give Johannes Bonfrere in subsequent qualification matches.

The chief coach of the African U-17 champions said that the Dutchman, who has come under fire for relying on a crop of players cannot perform any magic in the qualification campaigns. Bonfrere he asserted opponents would only achieve success for Nigeria if most Nigerians rally round him to plot the fall of other opponents for the only available

ticket in the group.

Musa Abdullahi said it is too early to apportion blame particularly for past poor performances of the Super Eagles. Nigerians should work assiduously with Bonfrere to ensure the country's eventual qualification for the mundial.

"We should dismiss the inclination to apportion blame. Whether Bonfrere is technical sound or not, whether the players he uses to play the qualification matches have past their peaks or not should not be the main focus now. What should in all fairness is Nigeria's qualification. Even if we have to bulldoze our way to Japan/Korea in 2002 let's work in concert with

Bonfrere to achieve this."

The Eaglets coach would not agree with the current call for the technical adviser to overhaul the Super Eagles, stressing that it was rather inauspicious and precarious to do away with most of the foreign-based Eagles now.

The main focus he insisted should be how to utilise the services of the present bunch to pick the World Cup ticket and then whatever lapses may have been observed be corrected after the qualification and while preparing for the mundial proper.

According to him, Nigeria and not Johannes Bonfrere will be the loser should the Eagles lose concentration and become disoriented towards the World Cup qualification.

He warned against attacking personalities instead addressing issues squarely as it would enhance Nigeria's preparation for subsequent matches, stressing that all hands should be on deck to ensure that the Eagles will win remaining four matches.

"I believe if we beat the Lone Stars, which I am very confident we can, then over-

run Liberia in Lagos, we can equally go to Khartoum, Sudan and take the maximum points. If these happen then conquering the Black Stars in Lagos would be a foregone conclusion," he asserted.

The Eaglets coach, whose squad resumed camping yesterday in Ibadan in preparation for the two-legged friendly duel with Trinidad and Tobago on April 25 and 28, urged Nigerians to forget any perceived technical and administrative inadequacies to allow those in charge work for Eagles success.

## Female U-19 tourney draws holds April 17

**T**he draws for the maiden national U-19 women's competition have been slated for Tuesday, April 17 at the NFA secretariat.

The HOD Female Football, Mrs. Lizzy Onyenwenwa said the participating states are expected to be present at the draws ceremony.

Already 21 states have indicated interest to participate in the U-19 female fiesta scheduled for Makurdi, Benue State between April 21 through 30.

Participating teams are expected to arrive Makurdi a day before the tournament kicks off with 18 players and four officials to be catered for by the host state, Onyenwenwa said.

Meanwhile, entries are still being expected from the rest of the states yet to submit theirs, but the NFA said entries will close tomorrow.

The national U-19 tournament will be used to select fresh legs for the Super Falcons who will begin preliminary matches for the African Women Championship and the 2003 All Africa Games soon.

## NIPOGA honours Danjuma, governors

**T**he Minister of Defence, Lt. Gen. Theophilus Danjuma and some governors are to be investitured as patrons of the Nigerian Polytechnics Games (NIPOGA).

The investiture ceremony scheduled for April 20 at the Sheraton Hotels and Towers will be performed by the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Chief Ufot Ekaette.

The chairman, board of NIPOGA and Rector of Yaba College of Technology, Mrs. Felicia Odugbesan who disclosed this last Thursday during a courtesy visit to the Sports Minister, Ishaya Mark Aku, said efforts were in top gear to round up preparations for the games which kick off on May 16 to end on May 26.

The rector and host of the games informed the minister that the games was intended to boost the physical health of students as well as provide an avenue for conviviality among the leaders of tomorrow.

Sport Minister Aku, who revealed that the government has mandated both the ministries of sports and education to endeavour to return

brown to schools, lauded the board for its effort to ensure that the games was held.

He presented the government's cheque for five million naira meant to help with logistics for the NIPOGA to Mrs. Odugbesan.

The minister said, he was delighted with arrangements for polytechnics and colleges of education games and charged to board to make a success of the games by putting in place appropriate logistics commensurate with

government's investment.

He, however, acknowledged insufficiency in the government's widow's mite even as he called on the board to canvass for supplementary funds from the private sector and philanthropists.

The NIPOGA which began in 1976 has had funding hiccups in recent times. Nevertheless, Mrs. Odugbesan said arrangements have been concluded to make it a sub-continental affair within the maiden edition scheduled for February 2002 in Nigeria.

## NUGA publicity c'mttee tours media houses

**T**o sensitise the press and the general public on the state of preparedness of Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria over the hosting this year's Nigerian Universities Games (NUGA), the publicity and documentation committee of the games is embarking on a tour of some media houses today.

Some of the media houses expected to be visited, according to the chairman of the committee, Dr. Muhammad Umar, include

\* accredits 30 journalists

From Waziri Isa Gwantu, in Zaria

Daily Trust, NTA Network, FRCN, Aso FM, Voice of Nigeria, and AIT all in Abuja.

Other media houses expected to be visited are NTA Kaduna, KSMC Kaduna, MG and DITV Kaduna. Date slated for the visit of these houses is Thursday April 12.

The publicity committee chairman said he hoped that the media houses will co-

operate with the committee during the tour.

Dr. Umar, who regretted the late commencement for the tour which he attributed to the committee's inability to generate funds for the purpose, appealed to both the press and the public to bear with the committee on this unintended situation.

He disclosed that not less than 30 journalists would be accredited from various media organisations to cover the games, which is expected to kick off on April 19.



Onubafo of Enugu State in action during the Kaduna Clay Court Championship... recently.  
Pix Joe Oroye.

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# DAILY TRUST



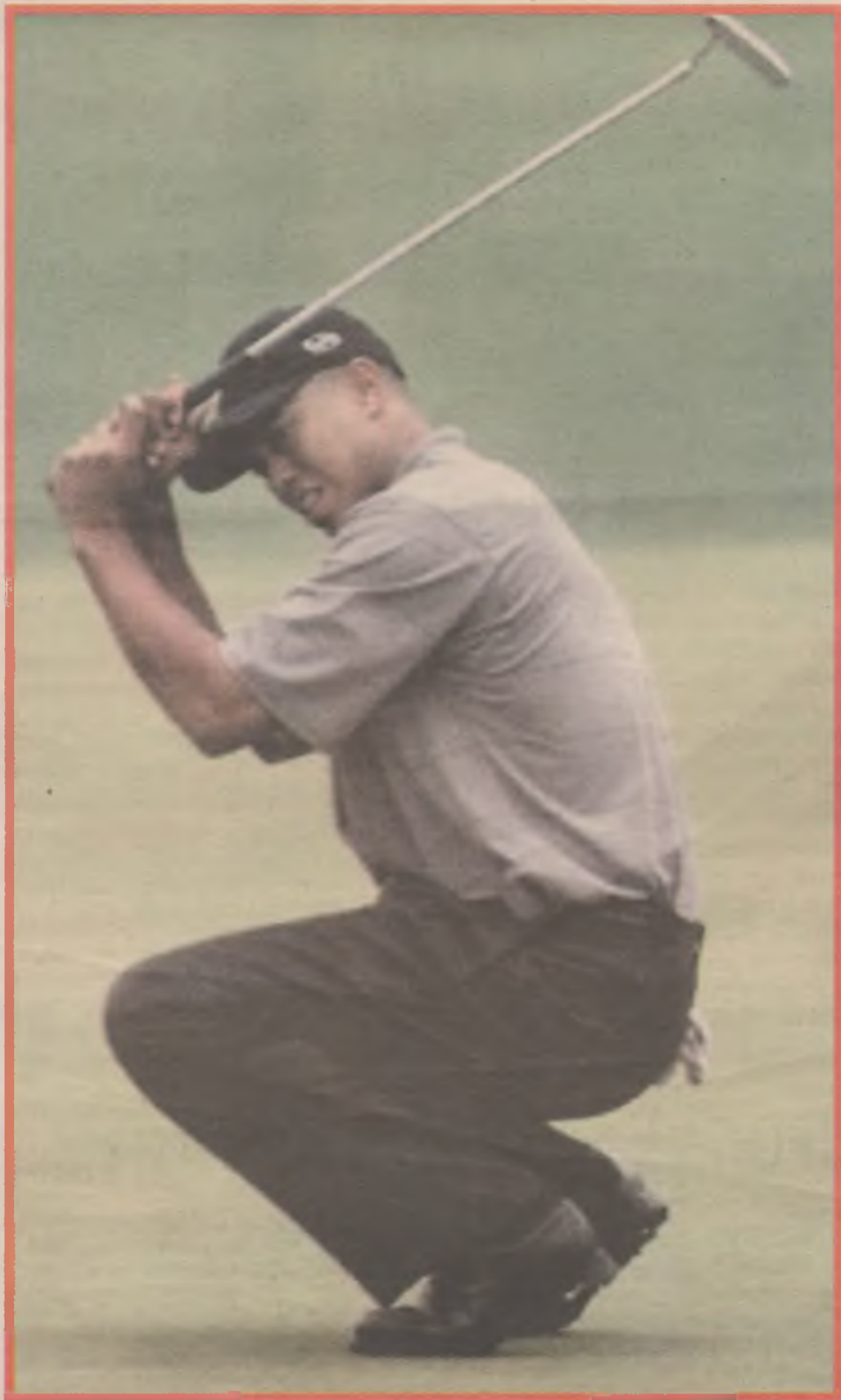
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## SNAP SHOTS

### Woods

**T**iger Woods has become the first golfer in the 15-year history of the official world rankings to break the 30-point average barrier.

Woods, who on Sunday made history as the first person to hold all four professional titles after his victory in the US Masters at Augusta, extended his lead at the top of the rankings with a 30.61 points average.



Tiger's Milestone... The world greatest golfer, Tiger Woods made history on Sunday by becoming the first man ever to bring all four of professional golf's most prized trophies under one roof.

### Waugh

**A**ustralian captain Steve Waugh called on Monday for the International Cricket Council (ICC) to introduce a world championship rankings system for limited overs matches similar to the ICC Test Championship.

The test championship, which starts on May 1, will rank all 10 test-playing nations as they play home and away matches against each other within a five-year period.



Waugh... Australian captain

### US athletes

**C**BC news on Sunday quoted a former US Olympics Committee doping control official as saying the United States routinely sent drug-using athletes to the Olympics-including last year's games in Sydney.

A transcript of the network's "60 Minutes II" programme due to be broadcast on Tuesday quoted Wade Ekum, the committee's top doping control officer until last year, as saying the drugs involved included the anabolic steroid nandrolone, stimulants and pain killers.

## Aku carpets local coaches

**S**ports Minister, Ishaya Mark Aku has criticised Nigerian coaches and said the country will continue to rely on the services of their foreign counterparts.

"The indigenous coaches are not exposed and do not possess the professional competence. So we must rely on foreign coaches until ours are better-developed," Aku was quoted as saying by the News Agency of Nigeria on Monday.

"Some appreciable number of local coaches are in football but they still need exposure," said Aku who was

appointed in January after a cabinet shake-up.

His comments are bound to stir up controversy among Nigerian soccer fans and pundits, who have constantly criticised the sports ministry's preference for foreign coaches.

The coach of the national soccer team is Dutch-born Jo Bonfrere-the 21st foreigner in the job.

Foreigners also hold key coaching positions in other sports.

Aku said his ministry would re-train and educate the local coaches so that they can achieve better results.



Olusola Adebisi stretches for a back-hand return against Alfred Koripamo during the World TB Day Tennis Championship in Kaduna... recently. Pix Joe Oroye

## Professor Nomau's travails, written & illustrated by Bulama Mustapha

