

DAILY TRUST



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Friday, January 1, 2021
Jumadal-Ula 17, 1442 AH

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR READERS AND ADVERTISERS

N200
Vol. 52, No. 5

48
PAGES

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NIGERIA COVID-19 CASE UPDATE 31 DEC
NEW CASES: **1,031**
TOTAL CASES: **85,510**
DISCHARGED: **71,713**
DEATH: **1,289**

We killed 2,403 B/Haram, bandits, others in 2020 - Military P 6

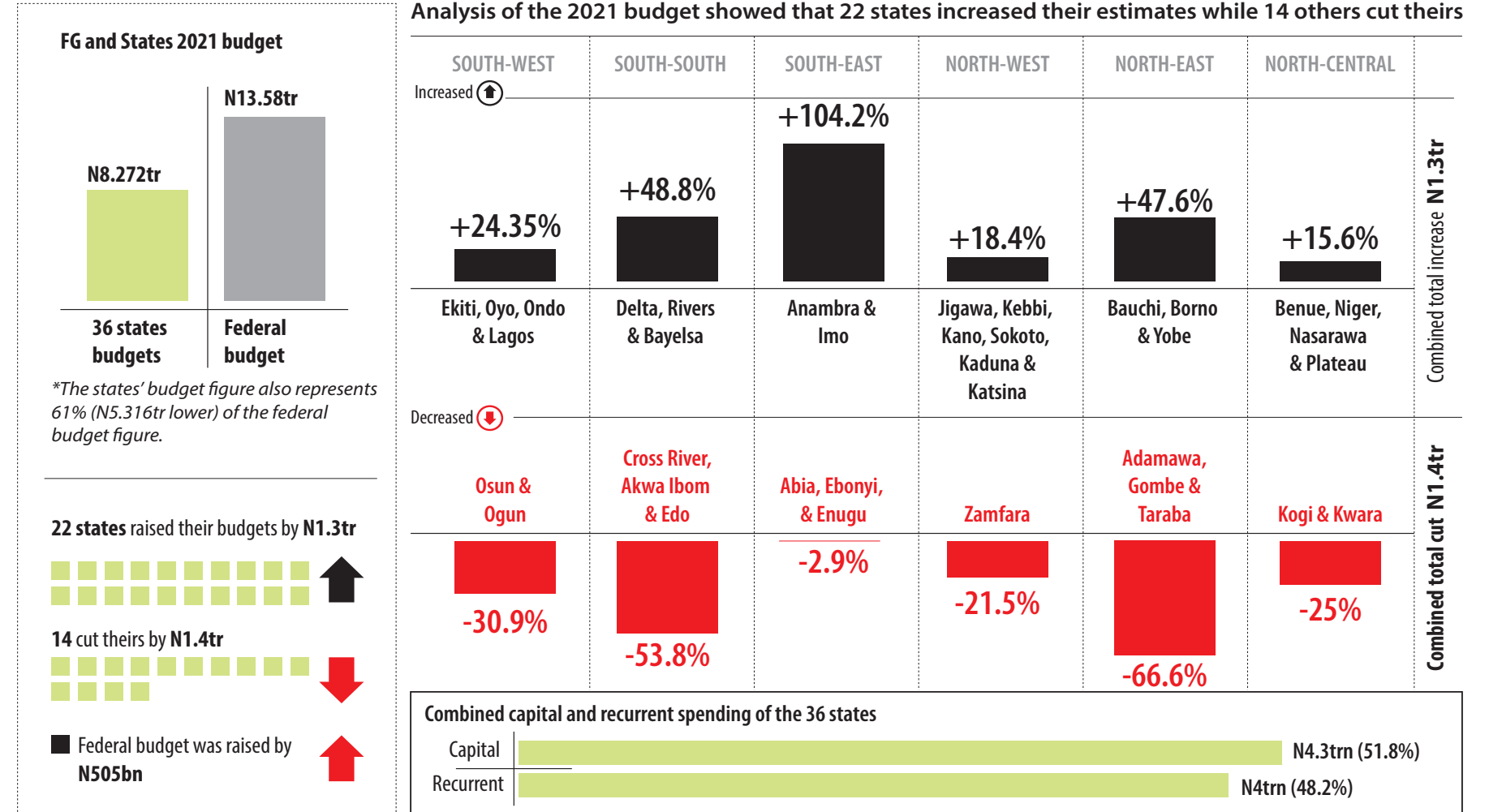
Buhari: We'll work to restore hope P 6

Brexit: What you need to know about the UK leaving the EU P 46

2021: Experts worry over low IGR as states budget N8.3tr

- Capital projects to gulp N4.3tr, salaries N4tr
- Cross River drops to N277.7bn from N1.1tr - P4
- Buhari signs federal budget, finance act - P10

Breakdown of states' budgets



Infographic: Ali A. Geidam

Forex ban on 42 import items remains as AfCFTA begins today

Hurdles trail electricity metering for 5m consumers P 22	Kaduna sex party: Police parade organisers, hotel demolished P 37	Kano women protest over missing children P 38
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LAGOS EDITION

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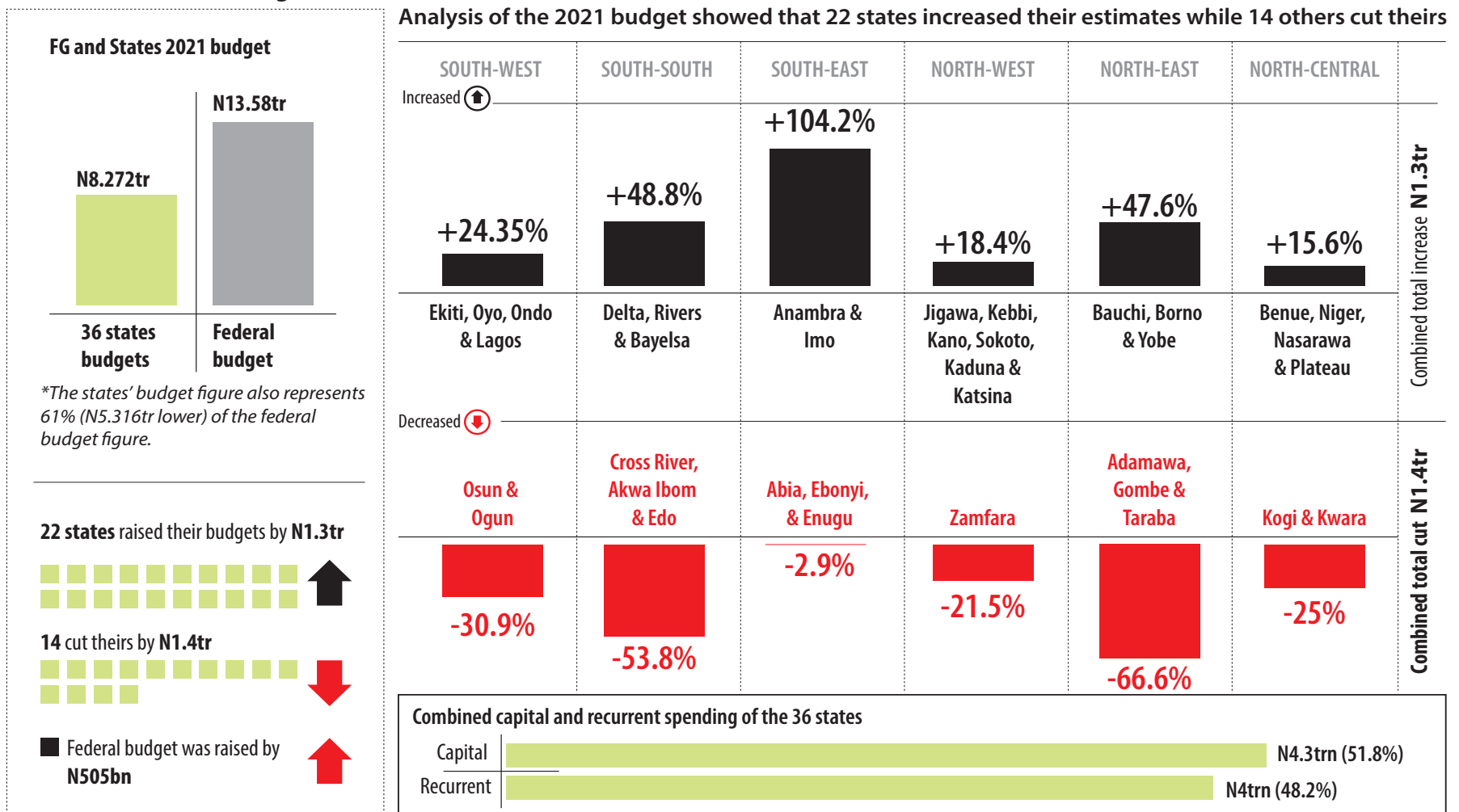
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Ogun Police arrest 2,735 for rape, kidnapping, robbery in 6 months P 39

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WEATHER

ABUJA PARTLY CLOUDY 37 MAX 22 MIN	KANO SUNNY 33 MAX 14 MIN
SOKOTO SUNNY 34 MAX 17 MIN	IBADAN PARTLY CLOUDY 38 MAX 22 MIN
KADUNA SUNNY 35 MAX 17 MIN	MAIDUGURI SUNNY 34 MAX 15 MIN
ENUGU PARTLY CLOUDY 38 MAX 22 MIN	P/HARCOURT PARTLY CLOUDY 29 MAX 18 MIN
JOS PARTLY CLOUDY 31 MAX 14 MIN	
LAGOS PARTLY CLOUDY 34 MAX 24 MIN	

(Temperature in centigrade)

Basic protective measures against coronavirus (COVID-19)

Wash your hands frequently with soap and water

Maintain social distancing

Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth

Practice respiratory hygiene

If you have fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early

Stay informed and follow advice given by your healthcare provider

NCDC toll free numbers

Call 080097000010 | SMS 0809555577 | Whatsapp 07087110839

AFRICAN SAYINGS >>

A fat sheep does not worry about the drought

(Kenya)

Source: BBC collection of listeners' proverbs

FOOD FOR THOUGHT >>

"Be patient with yourself. Self-growth is tender; it's holy ground. There's no greater investment"

- Stephen Covey

PHOTO OF THE DAY >>

■ The Asher Hotel where the maiden edition of a sex party was billed to take place on Dec. 27, in Kaduna, which was demolished by officials of the Kaduna State Urban Planning Development Agency (KASUPDA) on Thursday

Photo: Maryam Ahmadu-Suka

PRAYERS TIMES

CITIES	FAJR	DHUHR	ASR	MAGHRIB	ISHA
ABUJA	5:33	12:40	3:53	6:22	7:27
ENUGU	5:35	12:38	3:51	6:17	7:22
KADUNA	5:32	12:39	3:52	6:20	7:25
KANO	5:27	12:34	3:47	6:16	7:21
KATSINA	5:29	12:40	3:53	6:24	7:29
LAGOS	5:50	12:56	4:09	6:35	7:40
MAIDUGURI	5:10	12:17	3:30	5:58	7:03
P/HARCOURT	5:46	12:48	4:01	6:22	7:27
SOKOTO	5:40	12:48	4:01	6:30	7:35

SOURCE: Society for the propagation of Islam, Kaduna

STOCK INDEX AS AT THURSDAY 31, 2020

GAINERS	BOCGAS	NNFM	CILEASING	FCMB	BUACEMENT
OPEN	9.57	6.74	5.20	3.33	77.35
CLOSE	0.87	0.61	0.47	0.30	6.95
CHANGE	10.00	9.95	9.94	9.90	9.87
LOSERS	FTNCOCOA	ETERNA	AIICO	INTBREW	ETI
OPEN	0.66	5.10	1.13	5.95	6.00
CLOSE	-0.07	-0.51	-0.11	-0.54	-0.50
CHANGE	-9.59	-9.09	-8.87	-8.32	-7.69

NO, THANK YOU

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IN-DEPTH

FEATURE

Nigeria's 10 months battle with COVID-19

By Abiodun Alade

The COVID-19 virus has infected over 79 million people since the first case was identified in Wuhan, China in December 2019.

It has since assumed a pandemic proportion, killing a whopping 1,754,493 people worldwide as of 2 pm yesterday, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).

The first confirmed case in Nigeria was announced on February 27, when an Italian citizen in Lagos tested positive for the virus. On March 9, a Nigerian citizen who had contact with the Italian was traced to Ewekoro, Ogun State and recorded as the second case of the virus in the country.

Nigeria recorded the first death from the virus on March 22. As of December 23, 1,236 deaths have been reported across the 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

Although Nigeria is one of the countries with low fatality rates from the virus, the country averages five deaths daily since the first death from the coronavirus was announced in March.

The COVID-19 virus is not a respecter of status, age, colour or creed. It has broken through the seemingly impenetrable protective details of government leaders to claim its victims. It has humbled respected medical personnel, physicians, top security chiefs among others. It does not care about the wealth or investment of captains of industries; not even the charming look of beauty queens could hold it captive. It has defied traditional institutions, falling some of its custodians.

It hits palatial mansions in the same way it devours ghettos and slums with no sympathy. The coronavirus has no boundaries and has made its way across all levels of society and age. It has travelled fast.

Suleiman Achimugu, a former Managing Director of Pipelines and Product Marketing Company (PPMC) a subsidiary of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) was Nigeria's first fatality.

The virus also felled Abba Kyari, the former Chief of Staff to President Muhammadu Buhari since 2015, who was said to be a crucial member of the 'cabal' running the country.

At the end of June, the former governor of Oyo State, Senator Abiola Ajimobi, passed away due to complications from the COVID-19.

Bayo Osinowo, the senator



■ Nigeria's handling of COVID-19 has been rather dramatic with palliatives meant for the poor not reaching them

representing Lagos East Senatorial District also passed away on June 15 at the age of 64.

The Ondo State Commissioner of Health, Wahab Adegbenro, died from COVID-19 complications on July 2 at the state's infectious diseases hospital.

The death of some traditional rulers has also been linked to complications from COVID-19.

Palpable panic recently dominated the Nigerian Army top brass, following the death of the General Officer Commanding (GOC), 6 Division, Port-Harcourt, Major-General Olubunmi Irefin.

Irefin, who was attending the Chief of Army Staff Conference in Abuja died of COVID-19 complications.

The Chief of Army Staff, Lt-General Tukur Buratai, cancelled the conference as over 20 army generals reportedly tested positive for the virus. The virus has also killed prominent Nigerians in the Diaspora.

Governor Kayode Fayemi of Ekiti State, Nasir el-Rufai of Kaduna, Okezie Ikpeazu of Abia, Bala Mohammed of Bauchi, Seyi Makinde of Oyo, Rotimi Akeredolu of Ondo, Babajide Sanwo-Olu of Lagos, Ifeanyi Okowa of Delta State are among state executives that have tested positive for the virus.

According to health experts, symptoms of COVID-19 are variable, but often include fever, cough, fatigue, breathing difficulties, and loss of smell and taste. Symptoms begin one to 14 days after exposure to the virus. Around one in five infected individuals do not develop any symptoms. While most people have mild symptoms, some develop acute respiratory distress syndrome.

The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) through the National Emergency

Operations Centre (EOC) has continued to lead the national public health response in Nigeria with oversight of the Presidential Task Force on COVID-19 (PTF-COVID-19). The NCDC is also working closely with all states of the federation to support their response activities to the pandemic.

Several measures were instituted by the federal government through the PTF-COVID-19 together with the Federal Ministry of Health to curtail the spread of the disease and protect the health of Nigerians. These include an initial lockdown of non-essential activities; closure of schools; a ban on international flights etc. In March, the government announced lockdown of major cities, including Lagos, Kano and the FCT. Some state governors also followed suit.

The lockdown was not without its drama. For instance, Rivers State Governor Nyesom Wike had a clash with the FG when he ordered the arrest of two pilots of Caverton Helicopters Ltd, who flew a helicopter into the oil-rich state. Wike had barred vehicles and flights from entering Rivers State as a preventive measure to halt the spread of the novel coronavirus in the state.

Popular Nollywood star Funke Akindele-Bello also came under attack for holding a party in her Lagos mansion, to celebrate the birthday of her husband, Abdulsheed Bello known professionally as Skillz or JJC Skillz. The duo was later arrested and fined. Controversial musician Naira Marley was also arrested over a drive-by concert in Abuja.

However, some Nigerians felt the government was biased in the implementation of its policies as some prominent Nigerians,

including members of the PTF were caught on camera violating some of the restrictions during the burial of Abba Kyari and political rallies in the country.

In May, the FG commenced the gradual easing of lockdown measures initially instituted at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. This is to ensure a balance between preserving lives and livelihoods while addressing the socio-economic disruptions caused by the outbreak.

However, following the second wave of the COVID-19 infection in the country, the FG has asked all government staff on Grade Level 12 and below to stay at home for the next five weeks. Schools are to remain closed till January 18, 2021.

The FG asked state governments to close all bars, night clubs, pubs and event centres and recreational venues. It also limited all gatherings linked to religious events to less than 50% capacity of the facility of use.

Lagos, Kaduna and the FCT have emerged as the new epicentres during this period, with over 70 per cent of all confirmed cases.

In the last two weeks, there has been a rapid increase in the number of COVID-19 cases across the country. On December 17, a record daily number of 1,145 new confirmed cases was recorded. This increase is as a result of a convergence of circumstances which include increased local and international travels, business and religious activities with minimal compliance with COVID-19 safety measures by members of the public, according to the NCDC.

While Nigeria and Nigerians await the availability of vaccines in the first quarter of 2021, the non-pharmaceutical

interventions of regular washing of hands with soap and water, use of face masks and keeping physical distancing remain a major campaign to curtail the spread of the virus.

Sad enough, there are those who think the virus is a hoax. Some claim the pandemic is a scam by the government to loot resources. This was given credence when some Nigerians discovered COVID-19 palliatives allegedly hoarded in warehouses in the aftermath of the #EndSARS protests.

These people have disregarded all the protocols put in place to checkmate the spread of the virus. And there are fears that they will lead the anti-vaccine campaign, if not checked.

The National Coordinator of the Presidential Taskforce (PTF) on COVID-19, Dr. Sani Aliyu, who said the COVID-19 vaccine, when procured by the government, will be administered to Nigerians free, expressed fears that some Nigerians may be reluctant to receive shots of the vaccine.

"The biggest challenge we will have with the vaccine is not going to be the logistics, the biggest challenge will be the public acceptance of the safety of the vaccines and allowing themselves to be vaccinated, the challenge will be very similar to the one we have with polio," he said.

Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic has hit the world in a way never expected and has demanded that we make sacrifices by changing the way we live.

The fight against COVID-19 requires a collective effort. We must protect others by acting responsibly especially during this yuletide season.

This is not an excuse to live in fear as more than 55 million people have recovered from the virus, rather we should adhere to the recommended measures by NCDC and other public health authorities, as we celebrate Christmas and New Year.

The virus that causes COVID-19 is more likely to spread in mass gatherings, especially when held indoors. It is advisable to avoid such gatherings during this time, or hold them outdoors with physical distancing, compulsory use of facemasks and provision of handwashing facilities or hand sanitiser.

In the post-COVID-19 era, the federal and state governments must also focus on improving the public health system, which inadequacies have been exposed by the virus. It should never be business as usual.

2021: Experts worry over low IGR as states budget N8.3tr

From Sunday M. Ogwu, Lagos

The 36 states of the federation have pegged N8.272 trillion for spending in 2021, just as 22 of them have raised their budgets by N1.3tr, while 14 cut theirs by N1.4tr, an analysis of the records have shown. The N8.2tr budgeted by the states is about N5.316tr lower than the N13.588tr budget of the Federal Government assented to by President Muhammadu Buhari yesterday.

The states' budget figure also represents 61 per cent of the federal budget figure, Daily Trust reports. Twenty states; representing 56 per cent, have signed their budgets into law, while 16 others or 44 per cent were yet to do so as of Wednesday.

A further analysis shows that whereas the federal budget of 2021 was raised by N505bn from N13.082tr to N13.588tr, 22 states equally raised their estimates by N1.3tr, while 14 cut down their budget figures by N1.4tr.

According to the data records, the N8.2tr states' budget is just N99bn higher than the N8.173tr revised 2020 states' budget. Just like the Federal Government, the states revised their 2020 budgets due to the COVID-19 pandemic which affected their revenue projections. However, experts have expressed concern on how the governors would finance the budgets considering low Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) and dwindling fortune at the centre as the world battles the second wave of COVID-19.

22 states raise budgets by N1.3tr

The analysis of the 2021 budget shows that 22 states increased their estimates, while 14 others cut down their budget figures. The 22 states had proposed N4.27tr but raised it by N1.314tr to N5.584.7tr during the budget defence processes.

According to the breakdown, four states in the South West: Ekiti, Oyo, Ondo and Lagos, initially proposed N1.363tr but jerked it up to N1.695tr; representing N332.6bn increase.

In the South South, three states: Delta, Rivers and Bayelsa, jerked their budgets from N821bn to N1.222tr; rising by N301.6bn. Anambra and Imo in the South East had proposed N240bn, but raised it to N490.1bn; this is at least N250.1bn rise in the projected spending by the two states in 2021. In the North West, six states increased their budget from N1.024tr to N1.212tr. At least Jigawa, Kebbi, Kano, Sokoto, Kaduna and Katsina had their combined budget increased by N187.4bn; the analysis indicates.

Three states in the North East: Bauchi, Borno and Yobe, had proposed N358bn, but raised it by N170.6bn. These states now have a combined budget of N528.6bn for 2021.

Four out of the six North Central states also increased their budgets from N464bn to 536.4bn; which is N72.4bn rise in the expected spending. These states are Benue, Niger,



■ From left: Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu, signing the 2021 Appropriation Bill into Law while Chairman, House Committee on Finance, Rep. Rotimi Olowo and Commissioner for Economic Planning and Budget, Mr. Sam Egube, watch at Lagos House, Marina yesterday

Nasarawa and Plateau. In 14 states, spending drops by N1.4tr

Contrary to the increase in the budget of 22 states, 14 others across the six geopolitical zones have cut their spending estimates by N1.479tr. These states had proposed N4.009tr, but cut the estimates to N2.531tr; indicating N1.47tr drop.

Further analysis shows that Osun and Ogun in the South West began with N648bn, but trimmed it to N448bn.

Three states in the South South proposed N1.877tr, but slashed it to N866.7bn, losing out N1.010tr. The ambitious N1.1tr budget of Cross River State was reduced by N866.7bn to just N277.7bn. The other two states are Akwa Ibom and Edo.

In the South East, Abia, Ebonyi and Enugu had pegged N437bn combined budget but slightly dropped it to N424.4bn. The cut is a paltry N12.6bn.

Zamfara is the only North West state that cut its budget. It had proposed N182bn but dropped the figure to N142.7bn; a difference of N39.3bn. Kogi and Kwara in the North Central proposed N338bn, but cut it by N84.5bn to N253.5bn.

In the North East, the budget of N527bn was for Adamawa, Gombe and Taraba states. However, this was dropped to N395bn; a reduction of N132bn.

How states fared on submission, passage

In terms of fiscal discipline, the analysis reveals that all the states submitted their 2021 budget estimates to the state assemblies; a situation that is more favourable than when they submitted the 2020 budget in 2019. Another positive indicator is that 20 of the states have had their budget estimates passed by their Houses of Assembly and their governors have signed the estimates into law as the 2021 Appropriation Act.

The states that have passed and signed their budgets include Adamawa, Akwa Ibom, Delta, Jigawa, Katsina, Kano, and Kaduna. Others are Kebbi, Niger, Sokoto, Osun and Ebonyi.

The rest are Zamfara, Ekiti, Yobe, Nasarawa, Abia, Enugu, Ogun and Bauchi. However, there are 16 states that are yet to sign their budgets into law. In the meantime, the states have their budgets at various stages of consideration at the state assemblies. More so, compared with the 2020 budget process, the records show that only nine states: Kaduna, Benue, Bauchi, Edo, Kogi, Kebbi, Gombe, Osun and Sokoto, signed their budgets into law 48 hours before the end of the year.

Capital, recurrent spending compete

There may be some sort of competition between the budget for capital and recurrent spending in the states' budget.

The 36 states with a cumulative budget of about N8.3tr allocated N4.3tr to capital expenditure; representing 51.8 per cent, while recurrent expenditure got N4tr; representing 48.2 per cent.

In contrast, the 2020 budget saw a paradigm shift from a budget that was dominated by recurrent expenditure to one with a higher capital expenditure allocation.

A further breakdown of the budget indicates that 20 states had a higher capital provision to recurrent expenditure, while 16 states have lower provision for capital projects.

The states with higher capital expenditure are Abia, Anambra, Bauchi, Borno, Delta, Katsina, Kaduna, Kebbi and Lagos. Others are Niger, Rivers, Ondo, Ogun, Osun, Plateau, Imo, Ebonyi, Enugu, Zamfara and Gombe.

Experts worry over states' revenue, funding

While the timely processing of the 2021 budget has been lauded by some experts, they are however worried about Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) of states, the budget implementation and the bleak future occasioned by the second wave of COVID-19 and the current economic recession.

Professor of Capital Market and a former Commissioner for Finance in Imo State, Uche Uwaleke, said the Federal

Government showed the way because all the states of the federation waited for it before concluding. Prof. Uwaleke said, "The Federal Government not only submitted on time, but the National Assembly also passed it in good time."

"It is now left for the state governments to show discipline by ensuring that every kobo spent must have been appropriated and a supplementary budget must be prepared and approved by the assembly."

Speaking on the reduced appropriation by most states, he said it was due to low IGR, explaining that, "The states are basing their revenue projections on the Federal Account Allocation Committee (FAAC), so it is expected because FAAC is low because of the low oil price and excess crude account is no longer buoyant to supplement what goes to the states."

Speaking on the options available for financing the deficit in the state's budget, Prof. Uwaleke urged states to explore the capital market.

He said, "The only problem is that it will be difficult because of the conditions set by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) which will require the states to have high IGR and their debt levels must be one that is not too high to complicate or compound their repayment capacity."

He said the best option was for the states to engage more in Public Private Partnership (PPP) and warned that, "The states must avoid bank loans for projects because it is a funding mismatch. Before the states get started on projects, the funding matures and it starts compounding interest."

On why most states increased their budgets, a development analyst and Head of African Operations of One.Org, Edwin Ikhuoria Daniel, said the states might have considered the possibility of a rise in oil prices following several reports of a global recovery and projections suggesting that prices may hit \$70 per barrel before the

end of 2021. Daniel said, "The expectations are that with increased vaccination against COVID-19, flight operations will resume fully and global trade will pick up swiftly and these have implications for increased oil prices."

He noted that because of the lull in economic activities, businesses that were not borrowing from the banks would look to the state governments to fill that gap. He explained that, "The only problem is where they are putting the funds. If the intent is to borrow to consume, then they will have a real challenge to contend with."

But Abba Musa, an economist, said he suspects the governors were just "building castles in the air." According to him, "Though they have wonderful ambitions, I have my doubts as to whether they would get the money to actualize those dreams because the whole world is in turmoil. Who do you think will lend them money?" he asked.

"I expected the governors to be realistic in their approaches by proposing lean budgets and then implement them. It is better to have a small budget and implement it than to have a bogus budget which would just remain on paper," he said.

How states implemented 2020 budgets

Budget implementation report for states is a daunting task as the pandemic added to the challenge. Only few states have made their quarterly budget implementation reports available online.

Lagos State Governor, Babajide Sanwo-Olu, said the overall 2020 budget performance improved from 56 per cent at the end of the first quarter to 77 per cent by the third quarter of 2020.

Gov. Sanwo-Olu also said as of September, 2020, the state's total revenue performed at 98 per cent, while total capital expenditure and total recurrent expenditure performed at 71 per cent and 83 per cent respectively.

He said he was optimistic that by the end of the year, a performance level of at least 86 per cent would be achieved.

Kaduna State implementation report in September indicates that it met 45 per cent of its revenue target, 19.9 per cent of its recurrent expenditure target and 24.3 per cent of its capital expenditure target.

For Nasarawa State, it met 69 per cent revenue target in September, 74 per cent of its recurrent expenditure and 44.8 per cent of its capital expenditure.

On the difficulty in ascertaining the 2020 budget implementation level so far, Daniel asked, "If they have not been able to determine the actual performance of a previous year, how do you determine what is realistic?"

He said the Federal Government had done a lot better in this regard as it occasionally made available reports to suggest some level of tracking and evaluation.



Hello, 2021

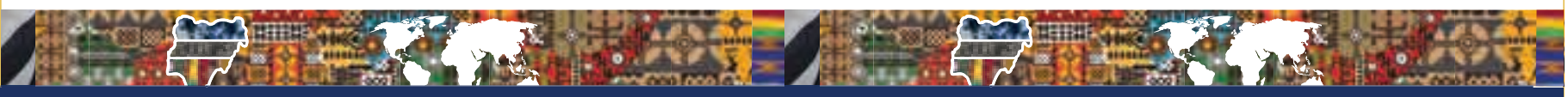


As we walk into 2021, let us reflect on the past year, the lows, the highs, the lessons and the blessings. Let us adapt to the new normal, embrace it and flourish.

Happy New Year!

FIRSTBANK IS AN FBN HOLDINGS COMPANY 

-You First-



Buhari: We'll work to restore hope

By Muideen Olaniyi

President Muhammadu Buhari says his administration will use this year to restore the hope of fellow Nigerians in the vision of a united and progressive Nigeria.

Buhari, in his New Year broadcast to the nation this morning, said last year was a very tough year that put "our national resilience and ability to survive these tough times" to test due to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

He, however, said that it gave renewed hope that "we will again brave any storms that lay ahead in 2021 and beyond."

He restated his pledge to ensure that the on-going challenges were faced head-on with renewed determination and with all the appropriateness and urgency required.

The president renewed the commitment of his administration to continue focusing on delivering key strategic priorities of Security, Economy and Anti-corruption (SEA) agenda.

Buhari said the administration recognised that "we rapidly have to move to a more proactive and pre-emptive postures" to ensure that terror attacks on citizens "do not become a norm."

He said the message to the

West African neighbours with the recent reopening of four borders was that Nigeria was "fully open" for those willing to conduct business in a fair and equitable way.

"Our administration is fully aware of the responsibility we have to protect the lives and property of all Nigerians, and we will not relent in learning and adapting to changing threats to our national security and civic well being," he said.

On anti-corruption, he said his administration has recorded substantial gains so far, disclosing that they would be working with the National Assembly to enact laws that

would strengthen the anti-corruption fight.

"I am aware that for some of our compatriots, the progress we have registered since the inception of this administration is not nearly as fast or as sufficient as they would wish. I do not begrudge them their views in so far as they signify a wish, in which we all share, for only the very best for our country.

"Nevertheless, I call upon all Nigerians to carefully recall the circumstances of our coming to office, the facts on the ground and the resources at our disposal since 2015 with the accomplishments of this

administration.

"As a people, we have shown admirable resilience in the face of every adversity, an unmatched capacity to recover speedily from every setback, an unparalleled generosity of spirit when we resolve our differences, and a constant readiness to invest faith and hope in the destiny we share as a united country built on the diversity of its peoples.

"It is these attributes that underpin the Nigerian spirit of 'can do, will do' that gives me hope that we shall yet get to our destination and fulfill our calling together, especially with the solid resolutions, we are setting in this new year," he said.



■ A congested street of Lagos despite the increases in daily coronavirus cases. Photo: AFP

Our focus this year – Lawan

By Abdullateef Salau

The Senate, yesterday, rolled out priority issues on its legislative agenda for 2021.

The Senate President Ahmad Lawan said the legislature would, in 2021, prioritise the passage of Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB), Electoral Reform Amendment Bill, constitutional amendment, security issue as well as give accelerated consideration to measures proposed towards the containment of COVID-19.

Lawan stated this in his 2021 New Year Message to Nigerians.

He said the National Assembly was determined to pass the Petroleum Industry Bill (PIB), which has defied passage for about two decades, by the end of the first quarter of 2021.

"It is our utmost desire to make the passage of the PIB one of the legacies of the ninth National Assembly," he said.

The Senate President also assured that the Electoral Reform Amendment Bill would be passed before the second quarter of 2021.

The early passage of the Electoral Reforms Bill, he said, was necessary in order to enhance the democratic process of free, fair, transparent and credible elections in the country.

Also on the National Assembly's priority list in 2021, according to Lawan, is the amendment to the 1999 Constitution,

"We have it on our agenda to pull through the process of constitutional amendment in 2021. The process which started in 2020 requires extensive consultations and the buy-in of everybody," Lawan said.

He also said the nation's apex legislative body would give accelerated consideration to any measure proposed towards the containment of the COVID-19.

"In this regard, the National Assembly is waiting for the executive to propose supplementary appropriation for the procurement of COVID-19 vaccine.

"In the meantime, we should continue to adhere strictly to the non-pharmaceutical protocols as prescribed by the relevant

health authorities," he added.

The Senate President noted that the issue of security has always been top on the legislature's agenda and would continue to be of utmost priority in 2021.

He said the parliament would sustain its collaboration with the executive for a lasting solution to the country's acute insecurity.

He said: "Our hope to do all these and accomplish much more in the New Year lies in the unity of purpose of the ninth National Assembly.

"The Assembly has been approaching issues in a bipartisan and patriotic manner right from the onset of the current dispensation.

"This is further reinforced by the sustained harmony and tremendous understanding between the Legislature and the Executive, which we earnestly believe will continue in the New Year and beyond.

"By now, the benefits of harmonious relations between these two arms of government should be clear to all."

We killed 2,403 B/Haram, bandits, others in 2020 – Military

By Idowu Isamotu (Abuja) & Lami Sadiq (Kaduna)

The Defence Headquarters, yesterday, warned Boko Haram terrorists, bandits, kidnapers and other criminal elements terrorising many parts of the country to desist from the acts and repent before troops descend on them this year.

The Coordinator, Defence Media Operations, Maj. Gen. John Eneche at a press briefing in Abuja, noted that the troops on land, air and water have begun changing of tactics and strategies to deal with the criminals and their informants ruthlessly.

Eneche, who put the figure of terrorists, bandits and other criminal elements killed across all the theatres of operation in the country last year at 2,403, explained that the number was outside those killed during various airstrikes that were not documented.

He said that a total number of 864 kidnapped victims across the country were rescued by troops last year.

He said: "Boko Haram terrorists, bandits and other criminal gangs should repent now as we cross over to 2021. Definitely, the message out there to the criminals is that, if you continue, you have indirectly signed your death certificate because it is a task that must be done.

"The efforts and sacrifices of the gallant officers and men of the military as well as

other security agencies that conduct these operations have been progressive. Within the period under review, troops engaged in series of land, maritime and air operations, involving both kinetic and non-kinetic activities across the country.

"The land operations conducted among others across the various theatres of operation include; clearance, ambush, raid, picketing, cordon and search operations as well as artillery bombardments and aggressive patrols. Others were maritime operations involving anti-piracy, anti-illegal bunkering, anti-crude oil theft and anti-pipeline vandalism operations as well as other duties such as anti-smuggling operations."

Meanwhile, the Kaduna State Government yesterday said the military has neutralized several armed bandits with several herds of cattle at a location northwest of Kuduru Forest in Birnin Gwari local government area of the state.

The state Commissioner of Internal Security and Home Affairs, Samuel Aruwan, said the state government was informed in an operational feedback that some rustled cattle were affected following the air offensive by the air component of Operation Thunder Strike, a Defence Headquarters response to banditry in some locations in the state.

Extortion of NIN applicants attracts 7 years imprisonment - NIMC

By Zakariyya Adaramola

The National Identity Management Commission (NIMC) has said the enrolment for the National Identification Number is free

and those extorting innocent Nigerians risk seven years imprisonment.

NIMC, in a notice posted on its social media platforms, yesterday, said Nigerians should report

cases of extortion for onward prosecution.

The notice titled, 'NIN Enrolment is free', read, "The punishment for extortion if convicted is seven years imprisonment as stipulated

in sections 14, 20, & 21, of the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission Act and Sections 10 & 12 of the Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act."

NIMC's head of public

relations Kayode Adegoke, told Daily Trust that the warning became pertinent amid complaints by applicants who accuse some NIMC staff and some agents of the commission of extortion.

New Year: Govs urge unity, adherence to COVID-19 protocols

By Jeremiah Oke (Ibadan), Ado A. Musa (Jos), Hope A. Emmanuel (Makurdi), Hassan Ibrahim (Bauchi), Magaji I. Hunkuyi (Jalingo) & Victor Edozie (Port Harcourt)

Governors have urged Nigerians to promote unity in the country and adhere to COVID-19 protocols to reduce the spread of the virus.

In their separate New Year messages, the governors said irrespective of all differences, Nigerians should live together peacefully for the socio-economic development of the country.

Oyo State Governor, Seyi Makinde, in his message, said despite the scourge of the COVID-19, his government was able to address infrastructure deficit in the state.

Makinde, who urged residents of the state to maintain a positive outlook this year said the state was open for business and that his government remains committed to its promise to uplift the state, stating that it would never take the support of the people for granted.

On his part, the Plateau State Governor, Simon Bako Lalong, said despite the challenges of the outgoing year, Nigerians should be optimistic and pray for recovery and progress.

Lalong said the economic challenges brought about by COVID-19 and recession can only be overcome by the deliberate synergy between the government, private sector, and citizens in pursuing set objectives that will create opportunities for recovery and growth.

Also, in his New Year message, Governor Samuel Ortom of Benue State expressed

optimism that the state remains on course to realising the vision of an economically self-reliant state despite numerous challenges encountered last year.

Ortom also averred that the state as a prosperous federating unit of Nigeria anchored on the fear of God would in 2021 recover from the global, national and sub-national economic and pandemic crisis which has adversely affected the economy.

Similarly, the Bauchi State Governor, Bala Mohammed has tasked the citizens of the state and other Nigerians irrespective of ethnic colouration, political differences or religious persuasions to remain united for the development of the state.

"I appeal to our citizens to brace up for the second wave of COVID-19. We must see and treat this disease as a clear and present danger that requires sacrifice, discipline and commitment to fight it," he said.

In his message, Taraba State Governor, Darius Ishaku urged the people of the state not to allow the lessons of 2020 to elude them but rather use the lessons and experiences to guide their actions and decisions in this year. Ishaku in a New Year message to the people of the state also urged citizens of the state to forgive one another and make peace with their neighbours.

In the same vein, the Rivers State Governor, Nyesom Wike, has raised alarm over the second wave of COVID-19 in the state. Wike had earlier warned that he will lock down the state this month if residents continue to flout the COVID-19 protocols.



Fr. Cornelius Ejiogu of St. Luke Roman Catholic Church, (left); some officials of the U.S. Department of State and the Nigerian Embassy in Washington D.C. with family members of Late Amb. Sylvanus Nsofor, immediate-past ambassador of Nigeria to the U.S., at a ceremony in preparation for the departure of the body from the Dulles International Airport, Washington, on Wednesday. Photo: AFP

Woman crushed to death in Osun

From Hameed Oyegbade, Osogbo

Tragedy struck last night as a hit-and-run vehicle killed a middle-aged woman in Osogbo, Osun State capital.

The accident happened a few metres after the bridge on the Gbodofan River at Makson area

along Ogooluwa at about 9:40 pm. It was gathered that the victim, identified as Mrs. Agboola, came to Ayoni Cherubim and Seraphim Movement church for crossover night service. Eyewitnesses said she was already in the church but later came out to the main road when she

was hit by an oncoming vehicle and died instantly.

Officers of the Federal Road Safety Corps and Nigeria Police Force were on hand at the scene to remove the corpse from the road. The body was later moved in a Federal Road Safety Corps vehicle to the mortuary.

Odele, #EndSARS counsel plans long exile

From Abdullateef Aliyu, Lagos

The #EndSARS movement legal representative, Miss Modupe Chizoba Odele, has revealed that she would be going on a long exile from Nigeria after her passport was reportedly seized again by officials of the Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS).

She revealed in a series

of tweets on her verified handle @Mochievous that her passport was seized again but was released after she made calls to some people who she did not disclose.

Daily Trust reports that her passport was earlier seized for days in the wake of the #EndSARS protest in October.

Odele had provided legal aid for the #EndSARS

promoters.

She revealed early this morning that she almost missed her flight last night after the immigration officials allegedly took her passport for "secondary clearance."

There has been outrage in some quarters over alleged government clamp down on the promoters of the recent #EndSARS protest.

Zulum meets minister over Borno refugees

From Misbahu Bashir, Maiduguri

Borno State Governor, Prof. Babagana Umara Zulum yesterday in Abuja met with Minister of Foreign Affairs, Geoffrey Onyeama, behind closed doors over the planned repatriation of Borno State refugees in Cameroon.

Hundreds of refugees fled to Cameroon following attacks by insurgents six years ago.

Governor's spokesman, Malam Isa Gusau, said the meeting was a follow up to Zulum's series of meetings with Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development, Sadiya Umar Farouk,

National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons and United Nations High Commission for Refugees, (UNHCR), among other stakeholders.

The meeting discussed the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which had the mandate to facilitate the repatriation through diplomatic channels, hopefully in January 2021.

The meeting was attended by Nigeria's Ambassador to China, Ambassador Baba Ahmad Jidda.

More than 60,000 Nigerian refugees, the majority from Borno and some from Adamawa

State were believed to be in Minwao camp in Cameroon, which Zulum had visited and supported with social protection relief.

The governor had approved ongoing construction of thousands of houses in which repatriated refugees would be permanently resettled in safe communities.

Zulum was also in the Niger Republic and the Republic of Chad, where Borno citizens lived as refugees. In both countries, the governor authorised and supervised the distribution of food items and cash relief to thousands of families.

Abia schools to resume Jan 11, A/Ibom Jan 4

From Linus Effiong, Umuahia & Iniabasi Umo, Uyo

Primary and secondary schools in Abia State would resume on January 11, 2021, for the continuation of first term 2020/2021 academic session, the Commissioner for Education, Dr Kanelechi Nwangwa, has said.

Nwangwa told Daily Trust yesterday in Umuahia that following the new wave of COVID-19, school heads

and proprietors had been directed to ensure that safety guidelines are observed in school premises. He said the first term would officially end on Wednesday, February 10, 2021.

In a related development, the Akwa Ibom State Government has emphasized that schools in the state would resume January 4, 2021, despite the spike in COVID-19 infection.

Speaking yesterday in Uyo after the

State Executive Council meeting, the Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Mr Ini Ememobong explained that the early resumption was to prevent a disruption in the academic calendar as the first term was due to end on January 23, 2021.

He said the government has directed the Commissioner of Education to ensure that all schools adhere to the COVID-19 preventive guidelines.

In tomorrow's

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Happy 2021 our Amiable Governor

I wish His Excellency the Executive Governor of Yobe State, Hon. Mai Mala Buni, the Government and People of Yobe State a very prosperous 2021.

Your Excellency, you have done enormously well in moving our dear state forward in 2019 and 2020.

I am optimistic your leadership in the year 2021 will InshaaAllah give our dear state the best.

Your Excellency, you are an inspirational leader and a role model to every youth in Yobe State. I pray to Allah to grant you good health and increased wisdom to continue to lead our state to greater heights.

Sir, I wish you, the government, the people of Yobe State and Nigeria a very peaceful and prosperous 2021.

Happy New year Your Excellency

His Excellency,
Hon. Mai Mala Buni,
(Chiroman Gujba)
Executive Governor, Yobe State

Signed
Alh. Baba Manu Girgir





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Buhari signs 2021 budget, warns revenue generating agencies on target

By Muideen Olaniyi

President Muhammadu Buhari has signed the N13.588 trillion 2021 Appropriation Bill and the 2020 Finance Bill into law.

President Buhari signed the documents at a brief ceremony witnessed by Vice President Yemi Osinbajo, Senate President Ahmad Lawan, Speaker Femi Gbajabiamila, a couple of principal officers of the National Assembly, the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), Boss Mustapha and the Minister of Finance, Budget, and National Planning, Hajiya Zainab Ahmed, among others.

The National Assembly had on December 21, 2020, passed the 2021 Appropriation Bill with an aggregate expenditure of N13, 588, 027,886, 175 trillion.

It comprises a total

Capital Expenditure of N1,060,751,051,650 and total Capital Expenditure of N4,125,149,354,222, Statutory Transfer stands at N496,528,471,273; recurrent Expenditure of N5,641,970,060,680 and Gross Domestic Product, GDP growth rate of 3.00 per cent.

The National Assembly also provided the sum of N3, 324,380,000 trillion for debt servicing.

The legislators had increased the budget estimate by the sum of N505, 607,317,942 from the estimate of N13, 082, 420, 568,233 presented to them by President Buhari on October 8, 2020.

President Buhari, while speaking after signing the documents, said that in designing the 2021 budget, the government deliberately chose to pursue an

expansionary fiscal policy.

The president restated that the 2021 budget would accelerate the economic recovery process, promote social inclusion and strengthen the resilience of the economy.

Buhari revealed that he would soon send a borrowing plan to the National Assembly since the 2021 budget has deficit.

"I am aware of the changes that the National Assembly has made to the 2021 proposal. We will examine these amendments and where necessary, will revert to the National Assembly with a request for amendment, virement or other appropriate adjustments to ensure that the core objectives of the Budget are accomplished," he said.

Buhari, who said the 2021 budget was critical to the delivery of his administration's

legacy projects, directed the Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning to put the necessary measures in place to ensure effective implementation.

The president warned agencies of government saddled with generating revenue generation to work hard to meet their targets.

"Relevant agencies are to ensure the realisation of our crude oil production and export targets. Heads of defaulting agencies are hereby warned that they will be severely sanctioned," the president said.

He also appealed to citizens and the business community, at large, to fulfil their tax obligations promptly.

The president, while speaking on the 2020 budget performance, said it currently stands at "an impressive rate" of 97.7% in spite of

the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the nation's economy and the government's revenues.

Buhari commended the National Assembly for what he called steady support in safely steering the economy during challenging times.

Speaking with journalists, Senate President Lawan said the signing of the 2020 and 2021 budgets before the end of the year to keep the January to December budget cycle alive was "a very historic and memorable event."

Speaker Gbajabiamila, while speaking on debt servicing, said there was nothing wrong in borrowing for an ambitious development plan.

The speaker said what was important was the application of the borrowed fund in a transparent and judicious manner.

Let's keep hope alive, Gbajabiamila urges Nigerians

By Balarabe Alkassim

The Speaker, House of Representatives, Femi Gbajabiamila has called on Nigerians to remain resolute and keep their hopes alive for the country to overcome its developmental and other challenges.

He made the call in a New Year message signed by his Special Adviser on Media and Publicity, Lanre Lasisi.

He urged Nigerians to keep their hopes alive and remain positive this year as the country passes through challenging and trying times.

The Speaker urged them to use the experiences of year 2020 and work towards a better 2021.

The Speaker said he was optimistic that the year 2021 holds a lot of positives for Nigeria and Nigerians, hence the need for the citizens to remain positive.

Gbajabiamila also called for continuous unity and peaceful coexistence among Nigerians, saying "we have no other country than Nigeria; this is the only country we can call ours."

"It is my hope and prayer that the year 2021 will be better than all the preceding years of our nation's history.

"In this New Year, let's remain resolute and determined in our nationhood. Yes, we may be going through challenges as a nation, but with our collective determination, we shall overcome," Gbajabiamila said.

Also, the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, Ahmed Idris Wase, has urged Nigerians to pray and have faith in their leaders.

He made the call in a New Year message signed by his media aide, Umar Muhammad Puma on Thursday.



■ From left: Vice President Yemi Osinbajo; President Muhammadu Buhari; Senate President Ahmad Lawan; and Speaker of the House of Representatives Femi Gbajabiamila, during the signing of the 2021 Appropriation Bill into law, at the Presidential Villa Abuja yesterday. photo: Felix Onigbinde

Government with humility, CAN urges leaders

By Abbas Jimoh

The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) has urged Nigerian leaders to govern and discharge their responsibilities with humility and fear of God to be able to succeed.

The CAN President, Dr. Samson Ayokunle, gave the charge on Thursday in his New Year message.

"I urge all those in political power in our nation to lead with humility by listening to

Godly admonition because their wisdom alone may not be enough to reposition our nation, especially, to restore our security and bring about peace and prosperity presently eluding our nation.

"The present spate of kidnappings for ransom or death, terrorism, banditry, herdsmen attack, armed robbery and other anti-social activities in our nation are dents on the leadership of our nation.

"Though, we understand that leadership is tough and sympathize with those in power, Nigerians at the same time expect that leadership would rise more gallantly to address our near horrible socio-economic situation in this nation which is almost crippling us. Let us love one another and put an end to cruelty against one another under any guise. Nigerians deserve to have their rest of mind," Ayokunle said.

Buhari lauds peaceful polls in Niger Republic

By Muideen Olaniyi

President Muhammadu Buhari has lauded the outgoing President of Niger Republic, Mahamadou Issoufou and the citizens of the country for the peaceful and successful conduct of the presidential and parliamentary elections on December 27.

President Buhari spoke on Thursday at an audience with Architect Namadi Sambo, former Nigerian

Vice-President and leader of the ECOWAS Electoral Observation Mission (EOM), appointed to oversee the elections.

Buhari said President Issoufou deserved to be congratulated on how he organised and conducted the elections.

"I have been very, very impressed by what I have been seeing and hearing. I will call to congratulate him. Issoufou is going home with honour and

grace. All is well that ends well," he said in a statement issued by his spokesman, Garba Shehu.

President Buhari, who also hailed the work of the ECOWAS Mission to the Niger Republic under Architect Sambo, described it as very impressive.

In his remarks, the former Vice-President described the elections as "successful, free and fair. The elections went well. No incident had created an alarm".

How to end banditry in North - Bagudu

By Faruk Shuaibu

Governor Abubakar Bagudu of Kebbi State has identified fair treatment of all groups struggling for land resources, including farmers, herders and fishermen as the solution to banditry in the North.

Bagudu, while featuring on Arise TV, yesterday, noted that past experiences indicated inclusion as the main driver of peace and prosperity, thus, all groups competing for land resources should be treated fairly.

"Banditry, which might have causes and originated from lack of inclusion or perception of that non-inclusion, can be dealt with by punishing criminals and at the same time focusing on the bigger challenge in ensuring that any groups do not feel angry."

According to him, Kebbi, which is the safest state in the North West, was able to maintain peace among all groups by pushing for an inclusive and localised mechanism for conflict resolution, adding that states or communities that have evolved ways in dealing with conflicts tend to contain whatever anger or agitation more easily.

"There is a conflict between these occupations; farmers, pastoralists and fishermen because they are all relying on fixed resources, landmass and to some extent, water resources.

"If the pressure on all these resources by the different components of the agricultural sector is not well managed, it can occasionally lead to conflict-causing behaviour which can manifest in many different forms and keep worsening, especially coupling with the existence of drugs problems and small arms proliferation," he said.



Cheers to fresh starts, new beginnings and all the resolutions that won't make it past February...LOL.

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Outrage as Customs, smugglers' clash claims 4 in Ogun

From Peter Moses, Abeokuta

There was outrage yesterday in Ogun State as stray bullets allegedly fired by the operatives of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) killed a young man at Oke-Odan, Yewa South Local government Area of

the state.

Daily Trust reports that this brings to four deaths in series of clashes between customs officers and the daredevil smugglers in the state within two weeks.

It was gathered that pandemonium broke out

yesterday when customs officers, while chasing a suspected car smuggler along Idiroko border road, shot sporadically, killing the yet-to-be-identified youth.

The incident, it was gathered, led to a riot as youths of Oke-Odan barricaded the international road, causing

heavy gridlock.

The irate youths made bonfires on the road as they threatened to engage the customs officers, who were said to have fled the scene immediately the incident occurred.

When contacted, the Public Relations Officer (PRO) of the

NCS, Ogun 1 Area Command, Hamed Oloyede, neither confirmed nor denied the killing.

When asked if he was aware of the incident, Oloyede simply said, "I had about the incident but I didn't get the detailed information."



■ From left: Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu, signing 2021 Appropriation Bill into Law while Chairman, House Committee on Finance, Rep. Rotimi Olowo and Commissioner for Economic Planning and Budget, Mr. Sam Egube, watch at Lagos House, Marina yesterday

Sanwo-Olu, Diri sign 2021 budgets

From Christiana T. Alabi, Lagos & Bassey Willie, Yenagoa

The Lagos State Governor, Mr. Babajide Sanwo-Olu and his Bayelsa State counterpart, Douye Diri, have assented to their states' 2021 appropriation bills.

Lagos House of Assembly had on Tuesday, passed the slightly adjusted budget of N1.163 trillion for the 2021 fiscal year as against the N1.155 trillion earlier proposed by the governor.

The budget, christened "Budget of Rekindled

Hope" has a recurrent expenditure of N460.6 billion and N702.9 billion capital expenditure.

The governor also expressed optimism that the budget would help expedite the state's recovery process from the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 and the EndSARS protests.

He stated that a significant portion of the budget has been committed to human capital development, youth engagement, social intervention initiatives, and the completion of ongoing

projects.

Similarly, Governor Douye Diri of Bayelsa, while signing the budget of N329.29 billion said the increase in the figure would address areas of deficit identified in the appropriation bill as well as assist in the infrastructure development of the state.

The governor, however, said that the increase in the 2021 budget was intended to tackle the completion of the three senatorial roads, in addition to rehabilitation of the internal roads within the Yenagoa metropolis.

Stop labeling Fulani as criminals - Miyetti Allah warns

From Ahmed Mohammed, Bauchi

The Fulani socio-cultural group, Miyetti Allah Kautal Hore, Bauchi State chapter has cautioned against labeling the Fulani tribe as criminals.

The state chairman of the group, Alhaji Hussaini Muhammad, stated this yesterday while briefing newsmen in Bauchi.

He said labeling the Fulani tribe as criminals was unconstitutional because it violates the fundamental human rights of the Fulani

people.

Hussaini also warned that against the use of "Fulani herdsmen attack" by media organisations, saying the phrase was uncalled for, ethnocentric and against the entire Fulani race, who are known for hard work, tolerance and development.

He wondered why some media outfit, despite their professionalism could stoop so low to label an entire group as "attackers".

"But when persons from other ethnic groups commit

more heinous offences, they are referred to as unknown gunmen, bandits, ritualists, armed robbers, but not associated with their tribes," he said.

"We observe there is no ethnic group in the entire globe whose men are all pious, as there must be a Judas in every twelve and where the said Judas is identified, he should be called by his actions and not his entire group as it's been done to the Fulani ethnic group," he added.

Kano clears air on 'selling' state properties

From Sani Ibrahim Paki, Kano

Kano State Government yesterday denied selling the state-owned Triumph Publishing Company (TPC), Daula Hotel and Shahuci car park among other property.

The state's Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Barrister

Muhammad Lawan, made the clarification while leading the government delegation on tour to the sites.

He said the properties in question were neither sold nor given out to private individuals for free.

"Contrary to what many people are insinuating, the Triumph Publishing

Company, Daula Hotel, Shahuci car park were never sold. We entered into an agreement with private companies as Public-Private Partnership (PPP) to turn the places that were hitherto abandoned and used as miscreants' hideouts for a better purpose," the commissioner said.

Ekiti judicial panel kicks as army shuns invitation

From Raphael Ogbonnaiye, Ado-Ekiti

Ekiti Judicial Panel of Inquiry into allegations of Human Rights Violations has deplored the Nigerian Army's refusal to honour its invitation.

The Chairman of the panel, Justice Cornelius Akintayo, yesterday, said: "We have to put on record that this is the 5th case in which the Nigerian Army has been served as respondent but failed to show up and there is no letter or representation to show courtesy.

"The Panel is of the view that

the Nigerian Army should show respect for this panel set up by the authority of our land and respond appropriately to the invitation."

He, however, directed that the Nigerian Army be contacted on the adjourned dates of hearing the petitions in order to respond to the various allegations against its personnel.

He said their appearance to throw more light into the allegations against them would unravel the truth and strengthen the peace and confidence of the Nigerian populace reposed in the Nigerian Army.

Ndume empowers 1,200 women in Southern Borno

By Abdullateef Salau

The Chairman, Senate Committee on Army, Senator Ali Ndume, yesterday, launched an empowerment programme for 1,200 women in Borno South Senatorial District.

The women, some of whose husbands had been killed by the Boko Haram insurgents, received grinding machines, sewing machines and cash gifts.

A statement by Ndume's media office in Abuja, explained that the Deputy Governor of Borno State, Umar Usman Kadafur, handed over the items to the women.

The statement added that

the wife of the Senator, Hajiya Maryam, also donated an electric transformer to the people of Galtimari ward in Biu.

The Deputy Governor appealed to the beneficiaries not to sell the items given to them but to use them for the purpose they are meant for.

The local government areas, which benefitted from the largesse are Biu, Hawul, Kwaya, Bayo and Shani.

The second batch of the 600 women, according to the statement would hold in Askira/ Uba for the women of Chibok, Damboa and Gwoza local government areas.

Kebbi releases N3bn for retirees' gratuity

From Aliyu M. Hamagam, Birnin Kebbi

Kebbi State Government has approved the release of N3 billion for the payment of retirees' gratuity in the state.

On December 11, the state's chairmen of Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC), Umar Halidu Alhassan, and Trade Union Congress (TUC), Danladi Aliyu Dabai, issued an ultimatum that by January 1, 2021, the organised

labour would shut down the state if the state government failed to pay the retired workers their entitlements.

The state's Commissioner for Finance, Ibrahim Muhammad Augie, in a statement, yesterday, said the sum of N2 billion was approved for the payment of state government retirees and N1 billion for local governments and local government education authorities retirees.

Molested student: A/Ibom surrenders case to police

From Iniabasi Umo, Uyo

The Akwa Ibom State Government said it has surrendered the case involving a student of Deeper Life High School that was allegedly molested to the police for investigation.

The Commissioner for Information and Strategy, Mr Ini Ememobong stated that the government withdrew from the case following the concurrent investigation by the police, the proper agency saddled with that responsibility.

The victim's Mum, Deborah Okezie had taken to Facebook to cry out over the alleged sexual abuse.

She stated in the viral video that her son was sexually molested by his seniors saying: "They will remove his boxer and push their legs and hands into his anus... look at a child I sent to school, he came back with a broken anus," she added.

Mrs Okezie had in another video also claimed that she was being threatened from different quarters.

A statement by the Commissioner for Information and Strategy however, debunked the claims by the mother of the victim that she was intimidated and attacked when she visited the office of the Commissioner for Education.



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Gunmen kidnap 3 girls in Adamawa

From Kabiru R. Anwar, Yola

Gunmen suspected to be Boko Haram insurgents have kidnapped three girls in Madagali Local Government Area of Adamawa State.

Residents told Daily Trust that the young girls and a married woman were working on their guinea corn farm last week on the outskirts of Dar village in Madagali when

a group of armed men rounded them up and forcefully took them away.

The insurgents later released the married woman on the ground that she was too old, said a resident, who declined to be named for security reason.

“Our girls are still there since their abduction last week. We call on government and the military to do whatever is possible to rescue them

and take the fight to these people,” he said.

Another resident, Iskarju Ezekiel appealed to the military authorities for a sustained onslaught against Boko Haram fighters in Madagali and neighbouring Borno communities

Military authorities at the 23 Armoured Brigade in Yola could not be reached for comment as at the time of filing this report.

ACF raises alarm over importation of weapons using camels

From Lami Sadiq, Kaduna

The Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) has raised alarm over the importation of dangerous weapons through camels around the Sokoto, Zamfara borders from neighbouring countries and urged the federal government to immediately deal with the situation.

The chair of the forum's National Executive Committee, Audu Ogbe, said members from Sokoto and Zamfara States, during its last meeting, had reported that large herd of camels were crossing into the Nigerian borders with a lot of baggage on daily basis and there was no one checking them.

Ogbe, in a statement yesterday, said such

lapses within Nigerian borders persist at a time when weapons of all kinds “are coming into our country and worsening the climate of terror and national uncertainty.”

Ogbe, a former minister under the current administration said: “Already, it is speculated that weapons as dangerous as Rocket Propelled Grenades, RPGs, and anti-aircraft guns are part of the cargo ferried by camels freely into our country from neighbouring countries. It will do the nation a great deal of good to deal with this situation immediately. The ACF is deeply worried.”

He stated that it has become clear that as victims pay ransoms to kidnapers, the money is instantly converted to more sophisticated weapons and instruments of death by the kidnapers.

Man arrested for beating 3-yr-old daughter to death

From Eugene Agha, Lagos

A middle-aged man, Patrick Imoh, has been arrested for allegedly beating his three-year-old daughter, Favour Imoh, to death at Lekki area of Lagos.

The incident, which occurred on Sunday, December 27, 2020, threw the entire Jakande Estate community into mourning.

It was learnt that the man allegedly flogged his daughter with a wire over her perpetual habit of defecating and urinating on the floor until she fainted and later died.

It was gathered that the frequent quarrels between the suspect and the deceased mother forced her to move out of the house, leaving behind the deceased in the care of a second wife.

Before the suspect was taken to Jakande Police Station, he told our correspondent that the ugly incident still occurred to him as misery as he felt that he never meant to kill his daughter.

Tell phone calls and text messages to the Lagos State Police Public Relations Officer, Muyiwa Adejobi, were not answered nor replied as at press time

Ondo gov pardons 11 prisoners

From Bola Ojuola, Akure

Ondo State Governor, Oluwarotimi Akeredolu, has pardoned eleven inmates at the state's correctional centres.

The governor said the gesture was to inmates to mark the 2021 New Year celebration.

He said the inmates were granted amnesty because of their good conducts and on the recommendation of State Advisory Council on Prerogative of Mercy, chaired by the state's Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Sir Charles Titiloye.



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10 solid reasons why Nigeria's 2021 budget should be trashed

In spite of apparent challenges around the funding of the 2021 budget, with Nigeria already cap-in-hand begging for loans from everywhere, I still believe the document should be thoroughly scrutinised for purpose, and if we do, we just may junk it altogether.

The budget is the most important document in any nation on earth in any given year. This goes beyond the fact that many companies and organisations key into government plans yearly, as suppliers, contractors, consultants, and strategic partners of every hue. It is a fact that the government remains the biggest spender in every country. No private sector entity can come up yet, with the kind of budgets that governments are able to put together. Why is this so? It is because governments plan sustainably for every resident in their domain, and even people from other countries or all over the world. The USA for example, being the top country in the world, has to plan not only for Americans but for billions of other people either on an economic or security front. Nigeria also has to plan not only for Nigerians but for people in Niger Republic, Ghana, Benin Republic, Chad and others, either for their power needs or for the security issues which unite the peoples of these countries. However, I can see that despite the acute awareness of Nigeria's strategic role in the subcontinent, our budgets have always been a joke and the 2021 proposal is in the same basket; a joke.

How much is N13trillion?

So, I have always advocated for a larger budget for Nigerians. I proposed N15 trillion three years ago. Nigeria's Federal Government has today proposed N13 trillion which looks like a large figure and may be evidence that the government is caving in to some of our agitations. But the amount is also nothing, given the fact that Nigeria has devalued the Naira, and that most of the budget is not skewed towards benefiting the people. There seems to be little or nothing in this budget for anyone apart from politicians. The president happily went to the National Assembly to announce another period of jollification to the ever-money-hungry politicians because the budget can only cover their excesses.

There are so many problems with this budget and it seems like year-in, year-out, our fiscal situation only gets worse. President Buhari has to also question his luck, especially why in the three recessions that Nigeria has ever entered, he was the president. He announced the onset of the next recession in the budget speech with so much confidence, perhaps based on top-level information that he may have been availed back-end. The many problems of the 2021 budget include:

1. Out of a budget of N13 trillion, a total of N5 trillion will be borrowed afresh

2. Our deficits keep increasing. This time we budget to have a deficit of N5.2 trillion or 40% of the entire spending we intend to do. There is the usual trickery of comparing our deficit with an almost meaningless GDP, but real financial management requires that we compare with the budget itself. In the military days, we used to have reasonable deficits like 3% or 5% of the budget. Deficits are good when a country hopes to instigate growth, such that the federal government spends a little more than it can raise. But for some years now, we have been maxing out at 35% - 40% deficit. I don't know anywhere in the world a federal government goes so berserk as to be borrowing way beyond reasonability. It doesn't make sense. In 2003, Nigeria's budget deficit was 16.4% while in 2005 under the Obasanjo administration, the deficit was

10% of the N1.6 trillion budget. In 2008, under Yar'adua, Nigeria's deficit was 20% of the budget. It is under this government that this apparent huge deficit recklessness began and it has serious implication for the future of our children.

3. Still on the future, I recall Lee Kuan Yew used to say if democracy is the primacy of the wishes of the majority, then the wishes of unborn children should always carry the day. The 2021 budget of N13 trillion is to be financed with N5 trillion of new borrowings (N4.3 trillion of new borrowings and N700 billion of new drawdowns on pre-approved borrowings). This means that Nigeria can only generate just over N7 trillion from grants/aids as well as internally generated revenue. Again, with a situation where debt servicing is already so high, we have to borrow 40% or N5 trillion, of the proposed budget. Not sustainable. Indeed there is no difference between the management of a household's finance and a country's finance. Any father of a household that has to consistently borrow 40% of the money required to sustain his family every year is beyond reckless.

4. The personnel cost of the federal government, as estimated in the budget, is over N5 trillion or 40% of the budget. This means that the entire budget deficit will be used to pay public and civil servants. This could also mean that from the N7 trillion of internal and external revenue the government wishes to generate, over N5 trillion, or about three quarters of all revenue will be used to pay salaries. In short, the Buhari government has totally lost its way and is dragging the whole of Nigeria with it to a bitter end.

5. There was a brief mention of revenue in the 2021 budget speech. The federal government hopes to finance the budget using over N7 trillion of revenue that it may generate. The president decided to lump up all the MDAs or government agencies, without breaking things down. The only assumption in the budget was as usual about how much crude oil we hope to sell, and at how many dollars per barrel. I will come to that shortly. One would have expected the president to dwell on some of the units where the N7 trillion revenue will be made up. In fact, aside from the assumptions on crude oil, the expected revenue from all key MDAs should set the tone for the budget. Except, of course, the intention is to hoodwink and befuddle the people, there is no reason why the president cannot state exactly what the expectations are from the Customs, FIRS, NIMASA, NPA, FAAN, Immigrations, NCC, CAC, NNPC, CBN and others. This will help the leaders of those government agencies to sit up. The current situation where they make money and remit nothing to the consolidated revenue fund, leading to all the hoopla in the Senate and House of Representatives recently, need not come up. I am alleging executive connivance with these agencies because the president seems to be giving them blank cheques *ab initio*. The Representatives needn't command them to remit 60% of all takings as they did recently. And with presidential connivance, it is unlikely that the MDAs will pay heed, until another legislative review.

More on this next week.

I wish us all a much better year 2021. I am compelled to pray against evil people who are behind pandemics with a view to controlling the world. If we allow them to cow us and seize control of our minds with the fear being peddled, then we would have died before we die. Stay strong, aware, positive and determined my people. We need every strength we can muster as we face up to so much chicanery in today's world. This is my view.

Mohammad Qaddam Sidq Isa

mohammadsidq@gmail.com

Politics of Ulama bashing

In Northern Nigeria particularly, the increasingly intense philosophical struggle between "liberals" promoting outright westernisation of the society and the Ulama advocating the adoption of only what doesn't contradict the society's value system features systematic and sustained Ulama-bashing, which has become quite a popular trend.

For the sake of clarity, while the term "Ulama" refers to Muslim clerics in general, it's used herein to specifically refer to those of them with a particular commitment to the promotion of the Pristine Islam as exclusively contained in the noble Qur'an and the authentic Sunnah according to the perception of the *Sahaba* and their successors. Because it's such Ulama who are targeted the most with a view to discrediting and blackmailing them into a compromise on Islamic injunctions against *Shirk*, *Bid'a* and immoral worldly desires.

Though, of course, none of them is infallible, for infallibility is an exclusive attribute of the Messenger of Allah (SAW), yet they, as a whole, remain the custodians of the Prophet Muhammad's legacy, which underscores the sacredness of their mission. They are, therefore, never beyond criticism; after all, sometimes some of them make inexcusable blunders, thus expose themselves to concerted public bashing.

Having said that, in most cases, the purportedly objective criticism against them suggests pre-existing prejudices and an underlying motive to achieve other objectives in disguise.

The penchant of a typical Ulama-bashing Northern Nigerian "intellectual" for vilifying them and exaggerating their shortcomings and faults is clearly driven by a desperate wish to undermine their credibility and frustrate their mission.

Yet, on social media particularly, and apparently inspired by those "intellectuals", every attention-seeking Northern Nigerian wannabe "wayayye" and aspiring "thinker" practices his "critical thinking" ability at the expense of the parts of the society's value system he deems inconsistent with what he considers tolerance and modernity. Likewise, many an English language enthusiast seeking to improve his English writing ability practises on Ulama-bashing and vilification among other related things.

Also, since the beginning of the current Buhari administration, Northern Nigerian Ulama-bashing critics have excessively bashed the Ulama for their alleged hypocritical silence on the Buhari administration's inexcusable underperformance in terms of the security situation in Northern Nigeria.

This is even though, the Ulama, both as groups and individuals, have never been silent as alleged; they have always spoken out in the course of their respective regular public lesson sessions and lectures in mosques and other places. They

have always demanded that the government do all it takes to bring an end to the situation.

Yet, a hate-filled Ulama-bashing critic, who never attends such places nor follows their circulating video and audio clips, would just accuse them of being hypocritically silent. In fact, many an Ulama-bashing dude would unearth or promptly share on social media some maliciously unearthed previous video or audio clips of some Ulama, speaking out on the security situation during the Jonathan administration in an attempt to prove the Ulama's purported hypocrisy.

Unfortunately, many gullible people have fallen for that hoax. Yet, it's even more unfortunate that even some otherwise respectable Muslim clerics who often get overly emotional when speaking out on the situation, bash their fellow Ulama based on that unfounded allegation. Apparently, such clerics assume that speaking out on the security situation in the country should always be in an aggressive tone otherwise it's tantamount to hypocritical silence.

Now, while the Ulama should speak out on issues of public concern, they shouldn't allow themselves to be distracted from their core *Da'awah* mission. They should ignore any public pressure on them to speak out unnecessarily on every topical issue. And even when they have to do, they should ensure the authenticity and adequacy of their information. They should also be realistic in their conclusions. Because, unfortunately, many otherwise discerning Muslim clerics often get carried away and end up making analyses, conclusions and even allegations based on unsubstantiated information they were clearly fed with by some people they trust, thereby exposing themselves to avoidable ridicule and possible prosecution.

After all, there are people's representatives at all levels of government who were elected or appointed and are paid from the taxpayers' money to not only speak out on behalf of their respective constituencies but to make a difference on the ground with innovative policies and appropriate implementation. So, if indeed the Ulama-bashing critics are sincere, their constant and relentless bashing should be primarily directed at those elected representatives and other public officeholders.

Interestingly, the Ulama's influence in the eyes of the authorities – if any, is actually extremely insignificant, contrary to what many among their respective followers and others assume. And though a typical Ulama-bashing "intellectual" realises that, he deliberately implies and sometimes even asserts the contrary knowing that it would make it easier for him to convince the gullible that the Ulama are hypocritically silent being part of the beneficiaries of government largesse.

EDITORIAL

No. 20 P.O.W. Mafemi Crescent,
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As we welcome the New Year

By all accounts, the outgone year 2020 could rightly be described as *Annus horribilis* both in Nigeria and the world generally. It was the year in which the whole world was laid low by the COVID-19 pandemic, which not only claimed millions of lives, but also brought the global economy to its knees.

Indeed, governments around the world were compelled to enforce total lockdown in their countries following the spread of the pandemic, leading to total cancellation and grounding of local and international transportation. All manner of physical contact and interaction were severely restricted, which in turn drastically affected economic and commercial relations within and between countries.

By the time the pandemic started to ease off, the world had slipped into an economic recession. And with the reported incidence of the second wave of the pandemic now in full force, it is quite clear that the last has not been seen of the plague.

Our experience in Nigeria has not been any different although we were fortunate to have recorded relatively fewer fatalities from the pandemic. But the economic impact has been devastating following the prolonged but necessary lockdown instituted by the authorities to curb its spread. The ever vibrant and productive economic relations Nigeria is known for took a hit as millions of livelihoods shrunk or shut down completely.

Added to this is the scourge of insecurity, which continued unabated with several recorded incidences in parts of the country contributing to the general sense of desperation among the populace.

As we entered the closing weeks of the year 2020 with an economic recession, coupled with recorded incidences of the second wave of COVID-19 as well as the spike in insecurity, the prospects certainly may not look encouraging.

But Nigeria is well known for its resilience and ability to prevail over adversity. Even with the combined effects of the foregoing three, there are clear signs that the famous never say die spirit of Nigerians is beginning to manifest in coping with the situation.

It is this spirit that will increasingly come through as we welcome the New Year. In this regard, there are encouraging reports indicating that we will grow out of the economic recession by the end of the first quarter of the New Year. As for the second wave of the COVID-19, it is also heartening that in their usual creative ways, Nigerians have found ways to cope with the pandemic and keep it largely at bay. We have also learnt to embed the protocols of the pandemic as requested by the authorities in our daily lives, which will certainly go a long way in curbing its spread in the second wave, which is on-going.

The greatest challenge, however, remains the insecurity ravaging the land. It has proven to be hydra-headed in different forms and in various parts of the country; terrorism, kidnapping, banditry, armed robbery, sectarian crises and the like.

Here again, it is encouraging that the federal and state governments have stepped up efforts to degrade the scourge. We also note that the government has responded to the well-meaning suggestions by Nigerians across the board on how to tackle the issue. And Nigerians themselves have not allowed the incidence of insecurity to dampen their morale in pursuing their daily chores, especially in the worst-affected areas. This again is a reflection of the famous spirit of Nigerian resilience and perseverance in the face of daunting odds. With these concerted efforts from the government and other stakeholders, we expect to gradually see off the siege of insecurity in the land in the New Year.

Aside from these, there are reasons to be hopeful that as the tempo of political activities pick up in the New Year in the run-up to the 2023 elections; the public space will liven up with political parties, groups and civil society organisations making their pitch in various ways. Not only will this spice up the lives of Nigerians as the debates flow back and forth, but some economic benefits will also trickle down too as the political space opens with the demand and supply factors of political engagements.

In all, notwithstanding the pervading atmosphere of gloom, 2021 brings with it a silver lining, which Nigerians will as usual look to with hope and optimism.

Let us, therefore, welcome 2021 with optimism despite our prevailing circumstances.



NURA DAURA: Ag Chief Executive Officer
NAZIRU MIKAILU: Executive Director/Editor-in-Chief
HAMZA IDRIS: Editor
AHMED SHEKARAU: General Manager, Business & Strategy

Leadership: Addressing the challenges of a recession

By Dr Alim Abubakre

While the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a virulent recession in many countries globally, Nigeria's case is a bit direr. Even before COVID-19 struck, Nigeria was already suffering from the adverse consequences of collapsing oil prices. Hence, without effective and impactful strategic leadership, the virus could aggravate the pain of an already hard-biting recession.

For organisations that are not dynamic, responsive and agile, the effects of the recession are likely to continue hurting their performance and threaten their existence. Some of the many challenges that organisations are facing include a high level of inflation and insecurity. Other stumbling blocks include fluctuations in forex, low customer demand, high operating costs, negative GDP, dwindling business and government revenue, loss of critical talent due to unavoidable redundancies and, of course, diminishing productivity due to low levels of morale among staff.

Without a doubt, being a leader during such a challenging period of great uncertainty is a challenge in itself and also an opportunity to make a profound impact and consolidate one's legacy. It is a time, not only to work hard, but also to be strategic and ensure that one remains optimistic even when the going seems to be getting worse. For someone who has been in leadership for long, experience may offer some perspectives, but these are unprecedented times and solutions of the past may not suffice. Also, what about those new in management positions? For organisations to win in these times characterised by severe socio-economic crises, they need strategic leadership.

Importantly, organisations need viable strategies that can help you manage the challenges that your organisation faces during such unprecedented times and turn it into opportunities. After all, companies such as GE, Disney, FedEx and IBM were all founded during recessions and DHL, Amazon and Netflix are all currently doing well despite their higher cost of operations and their increasingly disruptive and turbulent operating landscape. Here are some strategies that you can implement to succeed:

Establish strategic priorities

Dwight D. Eisenhower, the 34th President of the United States from 1953 until 1961,

said: "I have two kinds of problems, the urgent and the important. The urgent are not important, and the important are never urgent". This quote underscores the importance of prioritising and advance planning. Thus, if one were to ask Eisenhower who was the Allied Forces Supreme Commander during World War II, NATO's first supreme commander and who successfully navigated NATO and the USA through uncertain times; how can you achieve your diverse goals in these fast-paced and turbulent times? His response is likely to be that not all activities are necessary. So, when sailing through hard economic times, identifying priority areas and therefore, the ability to develop the strategy and implement it to reflect the set critical direction is what separates those who succeed from those who fail.

It is, therefore, imperative for leaders to determine and clarify their strategic priorities. What priority areas mean here is that you need to identify those essential activities that you must do to survive and succeed. So, those that are important but not urgent can be scheduled for another time, those that are urgent but not important can be delegated while those that are important and urgent should go on.

But how do you ensure that this is implemented? Well, you need first to identify critical organisational vulnerabilities and address them as well as ensure that your senior leadership team is aligned to this priority. Then stay fully informed about the happenings within and outside your industry. Follow trends and changes that you can attribute to the recession. Your focus here should be responding appropriately to changes in demand for your goods/services, as well as the behaviour of your stakeholders (e.g. customers, regulators, investors and competitors). Recession hits both at a micro, intermediate and macro level, so understand how the economy is affected as well as the impacts on your stakeholders and how you can effectively and efficiently unlock scarce value.

Manage finances and cash flow carefully

Recession significantly affects sales, revenue and profits. One way to manage its effects as a leader is to monitor your expenditure, earnings and cash flow carefully. Explore innovative expenditure solutions, for example, instead of outright purchase can you lease? Another could be, after weighing the cost of switching

and if it is not too high, in place of using big service providers such as courier and IT providers that have substantial operational costs, could smaller firms be a suitable replacement?

If you could offer incentives such as discounts for advanced payments and use of electronic remittance to receive sales revenue faster, this could be a means of reducing default risks. It would help if you could explore all business lines of credit locally and internationally including business credit cards even before you need them. Explore the use of inventory and a percentage of account receivables as collateral. Most importantly, ensure that your spending is only limited to the most critical areas that you need to focus on to keep your organisation going despite the harsh financial/economic environment. Can you cut on utility, rent or renegotiate on terms of loans?

Keep your staff informed of your current situation

One of the ways to sail smoothly through turbulent economic times is to keep your team informed and optimistic about the future. However, this is often hard since some of your staff members are likely to exit to find employment elsewhere, feel insecure or even engage in private activities. You might also want to downsize and lay off some of them to keep costs as low as possible.

As you tighten staffing levels, note that there are key people that you cannot afford to lose. So, the best way to act is to make any necessary redundancies all at once then make sure that all key people are motivated by listening to them, involving them in solving problems, celebrate any progress made and appreciate your team. It is not just enough to keep them. You also need to train those who remain with the organisation to keep their morale high and help you keep the organisation going despite the difficult situation.

Keep your customers satisfied and happy

Customer satisfaction is what creates the difference between organisations that survive and those that thrive. Ideally, when customers are satisfied with your services, they tend to share their experiences with friends. Eventually, those friends of theirs will end up as your customers too if they are happy with what you offer them.

Note also that satisfaction finally turns into loyalty, but customer loyalty is difficult to maintain during an economic

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Letter to the Editor

e-mail letters@dailytrust.com text 08131800030

CARTOON by AKILA JIBRIN



A'ibom 2023 gov'ship: It is the turn of Itu/Ibiono Ibom

For fairness, equity and justice to take its full course, Uyo senatorial district come 2023 should be given the chance to produce the next governor with, in particular, Itu/Ibiono Ibom Federal Constituency taking its turn.

Zoning is one of the many formulae used by political parties to resolve problems associated with allocation and distribution of positions and offices among competing interests and groups. This provision brings unity, peace and stability into our political system. Today, there is no political party in Nigeria that has not adopted the idea of zoning.

One of the ideas used by the PDP to win the governorship in Akwa Ibom State in the past years was zoning. Since then and over

years now, we have had the position and among other principal offices rotating to the benefit of all political zones, ensuring socio-political stability in the state.

Uyo Senatorial District was supposed to produce the deputy governor; they took it away from them, because they had no strong political gladiator to speak for them. It is only through the instrumentality of the zoning arrangement that Uyo for 2023 is guaranteed.

The major issue before the people of Uyo Senatorial District now, who are angling for the governorship to return to the zone in 2023, is to make sure they put their house in order and sustain the political arrangement put forward by the forebears to guarantee equity, fairness and justice to all.

But in terms of equity and political considerations, it should be noted that Akwa Ibom State sits on a tripod that consists of Uyo, Ikot Ekpene and Eket Senatorial Districts. From 1999 through 2007, Obong Victor Attah of Uyo Senatorial District served as governor and Senator Godswill Akpabio succeeded him. Akpabio, who hails from Ikot Ekpene Senatorial District was in office from 2007-2015. And Udom Emmanuel will complete the eight years turn for Eket Senatorial District come 2023 on the same political platform. It should be noted that in the interest of stability and harmonious development, Uyo Senatorial District should start again with ITU/Ibiono Federal Constituency taking the lead.

Moving down to Itu/Ibiono Federal Constituency, the 2023 governorship of the state is of their right. If the Zoning is to be jettisoned, that means morally, we don't have any reason complaining about Nigerian politics.

Equity and justice, whether to majority or minority, has no colour. Itu/Ibiono Ibom people are most qualified because that is the only zone in Uyo Senatorial District that has never tasted such position.

I'm optimistic that the Obong Udo Ekpeyong-led administration will not do anything that would alter the pre-arranged calculations to thwart the aspirations of ITU Local Government Area producing the next Akwa Ibom State governor.

Bernard Titus, Uyo

Re: Bishop Kukah, a reluctant comment

Kukah is playing a familiar game; namely the manipulation of religion for political ends. In 2014, some Muslim clerics convinced the populace that the source of our woes was Jonathan's identity; he's the 'other', a Southern Christian who must be replaced with one of our kind - a Northern Muslim - if we were to get out of the woods. How has that worked for people who fell for that propaganda is anyone's guess.

Now as politicians shift their attention to the next election circle, Kukah is

resorting to the same game; this time though the audience is the Northern Christian population.

The fact is that the masses, regardless of which faith they profess, suffer the consequences of bad governance equally. We all suffer same killings, kidnapping, bad roads and skyrocketing inflation. Political clerics - politicians in religious garb - like Kukah will continue to market the jejune idea to gullible followers that our problem is simply the identity (religion, ethnicity) of the man

in charge so we should do everything to ensure that your kind is in charge.

Religion is an asset; however when it's left in the hands of people like Kukah and his co-travellers, it risks becoming a national liability.

Is it any wonder then that despite the huge crowds in mosques and churches, Nigerians are known not for being godly or pious but for all the wrong attributes.

Ibrahim Adamu, Kaduna State University

Text us on 08131800030 & 08112661608



Happy New Year!

I welcome the year 2021. I pray the world will overcome its many challenges which include COVID-19, terrorism, banditry and kidnapping. May Allah save Nigeria and the world from these and others.

Muktar Ibrahim, Katsina - 07066434***

Kudos to PMB for hitch-free celebrations

For some years now, vehicles no longer queue at filling stations at Christmas and New Year for fuel. This is a unique achievement of this administration. I appeal to the government to extend this to the other sectors. Nigerians

need a caring government.

Sumaila Rabi'u Adjoto - 08164210***

President's directive to CBN

The presidential directive to CBN on importation of food items is ill-timed. We do not have enough to eat. COVID-19 has made life tough and farming is difficult because of banditry, flooding, among others. It is not late to reverse the directive to allow for massive food importation to feed the teeming population as the effect of hunger is a disaster to the nation's polity.

Abdulkadir Mamman - 08035890***

Leadership:
Addressing the
challenges of a
recession

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downturn. Thus, leaders need to safeguard necessary investment in marketing to ensure top of mind awareness, as well as emphasise brand proposition, build brand trust and recognition. All these functional strategies and tactics are fantastic ways to reduce business risk, stabilise the brand, assure the long-term health of the brand, capture market share from weaker competitors and achieve loyal customers, even in these challenging times. With a devoted team of customers, surviving and winning in the current and even future recessions won't be hard. Also, through research and customer service, leaders need to ensure that their organisational products and services exceed the expectation of their customers in terms of functionality, delivery time and after-service support. Explore multiple platforms for your organisation to stay in close contact with your customers offline as well as online and find ways of meeting and exceeding their needs. Leaders need to ensure that their organisations are sharing reassuring messages, demonstrating genuine empathy to customers and reinforcing emotional connection.

Seek opportunities home and away

The impact of a recession is not uniform across the world. Some parts will often suffer more than others in such instances. It, therefore, makes sense to market your organisation across the borders, so you have opportunities home and away.

One way to expand your scope across the borders is through seeking relevant areas where you can innovate and get new clients. The Africa Free Trade Agreement offers some opportunities to expand to other neighbouring countries which you are not presently operating in. This may require a different business model in such contexts such as selling to the bottom of the pyramid. As long as what you are doing is earning you something, do not despise it; the question mark of today may be the cash-cow of tomorrow.

In a nutshell, providing exceptional leadership during a recession is not an easy task. It calls for resilience, serious restructuring of operations, scaling down of some activities, making redundancies, empathy and most importantly, keeping your customers and other stakeholders happy since you need them not only for survival but to thrive. If you can manage all these, you are no doubt going to sail through and emerge victorious.

Dr Abubakre is a British-based entrepreneur and Founder & Non-Executive Chair of TEXEM, UK



Here's to a new year filled
with opportunities.
May it bring peace, joy and
good health to you and
your loved ones.

HAPPY
*new
year*

BUSINESS

CBN EXCHANGE RATES

	US DOLLAR	Pound STERLING	EURO	YUAN/ RENMINBI	RIYAL	CFA
Buying	379	508.54	462.11	57.97	101.004	0.688
Central NGN	379.5	509.21	462.72	58.04	101.138	0.698
Selling NGN	380	509.88	463.33	58.12	101.271	0.708

COMMODITIES PRICE (Dec. 30, 2020)

CRUDE OIL BRENT	\$51.29
GOLD	\$1,873.90
SILVER	\$25.76
NATURAL GAS	\$2.61

BUREAU DE CHANGE RATES

	Dollar	Euro	Pound S.
BUYING	N460	N568	N621
SELLING	N475	N580	N632

From Sunday M. Ogwu, Abdullateef Aliyu, Christiana T. Alabi, & Eugene Agha (Lagos), Francis Arinze Iloani, Chris Agabi, & John Chuks Azu (Abuja)

Forex ban on 42 import items remains as AfCFTA begins today

As the African Continental Free Trade Areas Agreement (AfCFTA) among the 54 participating countries commences today, January 1, 2021, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has insisted that it will sustain its foreign exchange (forex) restriction for 42 import items it had prohibited earlier.

The commencement of the pact is coming barely two weeks after the federal government reopened the land borders shut for over one year.

The AfCFTA agreement allows participating countries to trade about 90 per cent of goods without any duty payment. However, each African country reserves the right to restrict importation of 10 per cent of goods that it has local capacity to produce.

Speaking on this yesterday when contacted by *Daily Trust*, a Deputy Director in the Corporate Affairs Department of CBN, Dr. Isah Abdulkumin, said the forex restrictions regime still subsist even though those items can be imported.

Dr. Isah said: "Forex restriction does not mean banning those items. The responsibility for banning or exclusion from importation lies with the fiscal authority, what I can confirm to you is that the restrictions have not been reviewed."

The items denied forex by CBN include fertilizer, rice, cement, poultry, meat, palm oil/vegetable oil, among others.

Initial hurdles around trade pact

The promoters, solely member countries of the African Union (AU) believe that AfCFTA will remove hurdles and obstacles militating against free flow of goods and services in the continent.

When fully operational, it is expected that the intra-African trade would increase by over 50 per cent as it currently accounts for less than 20 per cent of exports in Africa, compared with about 60 per cent in Asia and 70 per cent in Europe.

The Federal Government of



■ The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) secretariat office in Accra, Ghana opened in August 2020. Photo: Ghana Presidency.

Nigeria became a signatory to the AfCFTA in July, 2020, after a one year delay.

The President Buhari-led administration had expressed initial reservations about signing the pact. However, a panel was set up by Nigeria in March, 2020 to appraise the situation and endorsed processes for the country to join in the pact.

President of the Dangote Group, Alhaji Aliko Dangote, and the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN), among other major players had raised concerns regarding the AfCFTA, because while Nigeria is a viable business option for growth for Africa, other African countries could be hostile business environments for Nigerian goods to thrive.

There are also concerns that some countries might collude with Western and Asian countries to smuggle in foreign goods and disguise them as African made, thereby eroding the objectives of AfCFTA.

Another concern from economic experts is that some African countries could ship those items to Nigeria at cheaper cost and might be at an advantage if Nigerian local producers are not competitive.

This could happen at a time when the Lagos ports access road gridlock has continued with over 500 containers of raw materials

trapped.

The cost of moving containers by trucks from the ports to other parts of Lagos has also risen by over 300 per cent due to the congestion.

Nigeria leads in new \$3.4trn market

The Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Otunba Adeniyi Adebayo, has called on Nigerians, particularly industrialists to take advantage of the inherent opportunities to promote Made-in-Nigeria goods.

In a statement by his Special Assistant on Media, Ifedayo Sayo, the Minister said Nigeria cannot afford to be left out of the emerging African economic block, stressing that AfCFTA will form a \$3.4 trillion dollars economic bloc, which Nigeria must play a leading role.

The Secretary, National Action Committee on AfCFTA, Francis Anatogu said the Federal Government has done the groundwork for the take-off of the pact on January 1, 2021.

Reactions trail operation of trade pact

Major entrepreneurs, operators and analysts have expressed mixed reactions as the African trade pact becomes operationalized.

Mr. David Akwu, an economist in Enugu said whilst the forex restrictions could spur local capacities in those 42 items, if the

cost of production of the same items are still high, the products wouldn't be competitive in a AfCFTA regime.

He also said with local farmers facing insecurity during harvest, food export is threatened. "So I'm really wondering how competitive we can be in food exports in the face of AfCFTA."

The executive director of the Centre for China Studies and international affairs analyst, Charles Onunajju, said the AfCFTA is a huge incentive for investors to flood Africa.

"If I have to spend 40 percent to generate power in Nigeria and have 20 percent to generate power in South Africa and Rwanda, why do I come to Nigeria when I can produce in South Africa, Rwanda and still sell in Nigeria?"

However, the Abuja Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) has lauded the take-off of the trade pact. In a statement signed by the Chamber's President, Alhaji Al-Mujtaba Abubakar, said the implementation today marked a new dawn in Africa's drive towards economic integration.

More so, the Lagos Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) has welcomed the pact operationalization. Its Director General Dr. Muda Yusuf, said: "The AfCFTA is a good dream, especially in the light of the numerous benefits of a larger

market."

"A liberal trade regime within the continent poses a major risk to the Nigeria manufacturing sector. Nigerian industrialists, especially those in the SME segment, are highly vulnerable because of their weak competitiveness."

On the strengths, Dr. Yusuf said the Nigeria service sector is relatively more competitive and would gain much more from the trade deal.

"Already our financial services, entertainment, fashion, distributive trade, e-commerce, ICT, and Telecoms have a strong presence in many countries on the continent."

On his part, the Executive Secretary of the Nigerian Shippers' Council (NSC), Barr. Hassan Bello, said: "It will enable investors to benefit not only from the Nigerian market but from other countries on the continent as well. It will afford producers and retailers the opportunity to expand their frontier to other markets."

But Vice President of the Association of Nigerian Licensed Customs Agents (ANLCA), Dr. Kayode Farinto, berated the National Action Committee on the Implementation of AfCFTA for doing a poor job of sensitising stakeholders in the Nigerian maritime and transportation sector.

But the Managing Director of Aero Contractors, Capt. Ado Sanusi, said he was not too convinced that the region is ready for the initiative because of the difficulty in getting visas to most African countries.

"I am not too convinced that we are well prepared for this because the countries are still not giving visas on arrival," he said.

A restriction to the full gains of the trade pact may be the hindrance of free movement in all African countries. But Nigeria has pushed for the ratification of protocol on free movement of people.

Vice-President Yemi Osinbajo recently said the success of the AfCFTA will require a faster ratification of protocol on free movement of persons.

NIGERIAN RAILWAY CORPORATION ABUJA – KADUNA TRAIN SERVICE (AKTS) TIME TABLE

SUNDAYS – TUESDAYS and THURSDAYS - SATURDAYS										WEDNESDAYS (ONLY)																	
From ABUJA	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL				From KADUNA	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL													
	AK 1	AK 3	AK 5	AK 7	AK 1	AK 3	AK 5	AK 7		KA 2	KA 4	KA 6	KA 8	KA 2	KA 4	KA 6	KA 8										
IDU	07:00	09:50	14:20	18:00	-	-	-	-	RIGASA	06:40	10:35	14:00	18:00	-	-	-	-	From ABUJA	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	From KADUNA	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL				
KUBUWA	07:17	10:07	14:41	18:15	07:14	10:02	14:36	18:16	KUBUWA	08:31	13:04	16:03	20:07	08:28	12:59	15:58	20:04	IDU	07:00	18:00	-	-	RIGASA	06:40	18:00	-	-
RIGASA	-	-	-	-	09:15	12:01	17:00	20:02	IDU	-	-	-	-	08:43	13:20	16:16	20:20	KUBUWA	07:17	18:15	07:14	18:12	KUBUWA	18:31	20:07	08:28	20:00
																		RIGASA	-	-	09:15	20:20	IDU	-	-	08:34	20:20

NEWS

Nigeria's debt rose to N32.2tr in September – DMO

By Simon Echowofun Sunday

The total debt stock for Nigeria rose to N32.2 trillion in September 2020, the Debt Management Office (DMO) has said.

The debt grew by N1.2 trillion from the N31tr recorded in June 2020, just within a three month period, the report released on Thursday by DMO showed.

It said: "The Total Public Debt Stock stood at N32.223tr or \$84.574 billion. The debt stock is made up of the Domestic and External Debt Stocks of the Federal Government of Nigeria, the 36 State Governments and the Federal Capital Territory.

"Compared to the Total Public Debt Stock of N31tr as at June 30, 2020, the Debt Stock in Q3 2020 increased by N1.214tr or 3.91 per cent," DMO noted.

The agency also said the federal government, the state governments and the FCT all recorded increases in their debt stock due to borrowings to enable them to respond appropriately to the COVID-19 Pandemic and to meet revenue shortfalls.

The office also said the issuance of Promissory Notes by the federal government was used to settle inherited liabilities which further contributed to the growth in the public debt stock since the 2018 fiscal period when they were first issued.

DMO attributed the increase in the debt stock to borrowings that had enabled the FGN, states and FCT to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

DPR shortlists 161 firms for final stage of marginal oilfield bid round

The Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) said 161 successful companies have been shortlisted to advance to the next and final stage of the bid round process for 57 marginal oil fields in the country.

Mr Paul Osu, Head, Public Affairs, DPR, told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on Thursday in Lagos that the firms were selected from the over 600 companies which applied for pre-qualification.

A marginal field is any field that has reserves booked and reported annually to the DPR and has remained unproduced for a period of over 10 years.

"The 2020 marginal oilfield bid round process is still ongoing in line with our published timelines on DPR website and bid portal.

"The current status is that 161 successful companies have been shortlisted to advance to the next and final stage of the process," Osu said.

He said the bid rounds began on June 1, adding that the DPR had put measures in place to ensure that the awardees would be credible investors with technical and financial capability.

According to him, the objective of the 2020 marginal field bid round is to deepen the participation of indigenous companies in the upstream segment of the industry and provide opportunities for technical and financial partnerships for investors.

Osu said Nigeria last conducted marginal field bid rounds in 2003, with 16 of the fields now contributing two per cent to the national oil and gas reserves, while bringing development to their host communities in the Niger Delta. (NAN)

Stocks end with 50% return as investors gain N778bn

From Sunday Michael Ogwu, Lagos

The Nigerian stocks ended the last trading session of the year on an impressive note as investors gained 777.6 billion as market capitalisation advanced to 21.1trillion while year to date return rose to 50 per cent.

According to records, the yearly returns seen in the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) were the first in 17 years.

The All-Share Index (ASI) rose 3.8 per cent week on week (w/w) to 40,270.72 points on the back of gains in BUA Cement (+28.9 per cent), MTNN (+6.2 per cent) and Zenith (+1.2 per cent).

Activity level declined as average volume and value traded fell 12.6 per cent and 14.1 per cent to 602.1m units and 8.7bn respectively.

The most traded stocks by volume

*First of such in 17 years

were AIICO (689.2 million units), Access (263.9m units) and UBA (153.1m units) while Dangote Cement (13.2bn), MTNN (8.3bn) and Zenith (3.6bn) led the value chart.

Performance remained bullish across sectors as four of six indicators tracked closed in the green, save the Banking and Consumer Goods indices, which lost 0.6 per cent and 0.5 per cent w/w respectively due to losses in ETI (-8.4 per cent) and Flour Mill (-7.0 per cent).

Meanwhile, the Industrial Goods and AFR-ICT indices recorded the most gains, up 10.4 per cent and 2.4 per cent w/w respectively, supported by buying interest in BUA Cement (+28.9 per cent) and MTNN (+6.2 per cent).

Similarly, the Insurance and Oil &

Gas indices closed 1.7 per cent and 0.2 per cent higher w/w respectively, underpinned by gains in NEM (+31.6 per cent), Linkassure (+6.1 per cent) and OANDO (+1.6 per cent).

Investor sentiment as measured by market breadth waned to 0.9x from 3.8x last week as 29 tickers gained against 33 losers.

NEM (+31.6 per cent), BUA Cement (+28.9 per cent) and CI Leasing (+20.6 per cent) led the top gainers while MANSARD (-75.0percent), FTNCOCOA (-25.8 per cent) and AIICO (-10.3 per cent) led the decliners.

Analyst at Afrinvest said: "We are optimistic about a sustained bullish run in the upcoming year although, we expect investors to take profit."



■ From left: Katuka Halilu, Regional Operations Director (ROD) Airtel Nigeria; Saleh Babagana, Teachers Village IDP Camp Manager and camp resident, present a pack to an IDP, during the presentation of 1,000 food palliative packs to residents of the camp in Borno State in the Airtel 5 Days of Love yuletide programme.

COVID-19 protocols: FAAN raises airport compliance teams

From Abdullateef Aliyu, Lagos

The Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN) yesterday said it has constituted a compliance monitoring team for all the airports to drive compliance on the COVID-19 protocols.

Spokesperson for FAAN, Mrs. Henrietta Yakubu, in a statement said the Authority

took the measure to ensure the safety of travelling passengers and other airport users as the world battles a second wave and a new variant of COVID-19.

Daily Trust reports that the federal government imposed the new travel protocols, which took effect on Monday especially for travellers from the UK and South Africa.

Violators of the protocols are liable to pay a fine of \$3,500, the government said.

The FAAN compliance team will ensure the protocols are enforced from the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport Abuja, to the Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMIA) Lagos, the Port Harcourt International

Airport, Mallam Aminu Kano International Airport and the other airports.

The spokesperson said across the airports, "Car parks have been rearranged for seamless pick-up and drop off to avoid congestion.

"We have also created new drop off zones for passengers with reduced mobility," she added.

Oil firm, foreigners, others top list of First Bank's N228.6bn debtors

By Simon Echowofun Sunday

A firm belonging to Mr Philip Olaiya, various chapters of the Nigerian Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE), some local SME owners and foreigners have dominated the list of debtors of First Bank of Nigeria Plc.

The debtors owe the bank about N228.6 billion in outstanding payments for loans and overdrafts they have taken as far back as 2002 and as recent as 2018 of which more than 95 per cent of their repayment period had expired before 2020.

First Bank had on Thursday published a list of the 175 debtor firms in a national daily.

Top on the list is OPI International Nigeria Limited, a company in Lagos chaired by Mr Philip Olaiya with Mr Olutayo Oduwole as director. It got a dollar-denominated oil and gas

contract finance facility in 2012. The debt servicing period for the eight-year loan expired in 2020. However, the bank said N62.8bn of the facility has not been paid.

Karington Telecoms took a 30-day overdraft on November 1, 2013 but has not completed paying N36.4bn outstanding sum. The foreign company is situated at the Isle of Man and it has Gilian Ralston Jordan and Nigel Christian Gautrey as directors.

EER (Colobus) Nigeria Limited, a firm with a business address in Lagos has Osamede Okhomina, Yinka Ogundare, Godwin Imohi, Olanike Anani as directors. The firm's one year loan taken in December 2018 and expired in 2019 has N20.3bn as outstanding.

The owners and directors of Starcomms PLC comprising Chief Maan Lababid, lababidi Omar,

Edward Apul, Aminu Dantata Tojudeen, Ogbechie Chris, and Oladokun Olusola, took an overdraft on October 6, 2002, and were supposed to complete the repayment by August 31, 2007. However, N16.1bn is outstanding as of December 30 for the five-year facility by the telecommunication company with its head office in Lagos, the bank's publication showed.

Analysis of the publication shows that some of the 175 loans and overdrafts were taken by the Nigerian Prisons Service Multipurpose Cooperative (PRISCO) headquarters in Abuja of N839.9 million.

Various sums were drawn by the Nigerian Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) chapters in Kogi, Ekiti and Oyo; Small and Medium scale Enterprises (SMEs) across states, among others.

FEATURE/NEWS

By Simon E. Sunday (Abuja), Risikat Ramoni (Lagos), Lami Sadiq (Kaduna), Victor Edozie (Port Harcourt), Jeremiah Oke (Ibadan), Ado Abubakar Musa (Jos), & Tony Adibe (Enugu)

Hurdles trail electricity metering for 5m consumers

*We still pay for meters, denied ownership – Consumers

As a new year begins, consumers have raised concerns over the hurdles slowing the installation of meters for over five million registered power users, in spite of the ongoing National Mass Metering Programme.

A cross section of customers of some of the 11 Distribution Companies (DisCos) also lamented that these hurdles have continued despite a November 1 increase in electricity tariff by over 50 per cent.

According to records from the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), out of the estimated 10 million registered electricity consumers across the 11 Distribution Companies (DisCos), as of March 2020, over 5 million consumers do not have meters.

This huge chunk of DisCos' customers still battle with complaints of estimated billing. And, in spite of efforts by NERC to cap the estimated bill, hundreds of them said they are still overbilled especially in the new tariff - Multi Year Tariff Order (MYTO) 2020 regime.

The Minister of Power, Engr. Sale Mamman, supervises the initiative propelled by NERC to ensure that with proper meter testing by the Nigerian Electricity Management Services Agency (NEMSA), the DisCos will install one million meters for their customers at the end of December 2020.

Daily Trust on Sunday reports that while some DisCos including Kaduna, Abuja, Eko DisCos flagged off the scheme from October, some are just rolling out including Yola DisCo - the only Federal Government owned DisCo.

Engr. Mamman who flagged off the scheme at the DisCo just recently, said, "It is with great pleasure that I stand before you at this landmark event to flag-off the intervention policy of the Federal Government towards closing the metering gap in the Nigerian Electricity Supply Industry. This occasion is a clear testimony of Yola Electricity Distribution Company's commitment to providing its customers enhanced service delivery."

The minister said the Federal Government granted Yola DisCo N5.061 billion soft loan to source for 85,376 meters comprising 62,324 single-phase units and 23,052 three-phase meters units under the National



■ Preloaded cases of meter devices at the Abuja Electricity Distribution Company (AEDC) Central Store in Abuja.

Mass Metering Programme.

However, some officials privy to the programme, have said the 1 million meter target for 2020 would not be feasible.

Consumers pay, placed on hold

Aside the logistics in rolling out the meters, some consumers have said they were asked to pay for the meters before they are installed, while others said they only realised deductions when they buy tokens after the meters had been installed.

Ochayi Okorie, a customer of AEDC in Abuja said, the service centre asked that he had to pay for the meters to be processed. "This is in continuation of the Meter Assets Providers (MAP) scheme, but customers were made to believe that this new scheme makes the meter free for consumers."

Although at the launch of the metering programme in Abuja on November 3, Managing Director of the AEDC, Dr. Ernest Mupwaya confirmed that it was at no cost to consumers.

"I got the installers to fix a meter at my apartment, but when I vended, I realised that a certain amount is deducted for the metering. That was not what I was told when they installed the meters. However, it is better than the outrageous estimated bill I had been getting," Jones Okon, a resident in Kaduna noted.

Some also complained that they were told the meters won't get to reach them this year, in spite of their willingness to acquire the device.

"In Masaka, AEDC officials told us they were doing it according to phases and that they will attend to us by next

year, although they have taken our details," Job Ishaya said.

Another complaint from customers is that they are not allowed to own the meters or transfer them when they move from their residents even when they paid for it.

Mr Chinedu Nosike, just moved to his house in Kubwa but could not transfer the meter he bought at a rented apartment in Dawaki, a nearby area in Abuja. "I complained and officials of AEDC said I could only transfer my token, that the MAP law forbids customers from moving or tampering with meters," he explained.

How metering scheme fared
Daily Trust assessed the implementation progress of the MAP Regulation of NERC, which was enforced since May 2019. It has a target of accelerating meter installation for power consumers towards ending estimated billing by 2022.

Although there is a caveat for credit, which could be paid in the form of electricity token for five years or so, the DisCos have never explored that option, making it difficult for the consumers.

However, industry watchers said the target was not feasible. To ensure it was met, the Federal Government complemented it with the mass metering programme to quickly bridge the 5m metering gap.

Managing Director of Kaduna Electric, Engr. Garba Haruna had confirmed this on October 28, when the DisCo launched its 80,000 mass metering scheme.

"We will not ask you to pay for a meter before you are being metered, we will just roll out

to you and then we will sort ourselves out, maybe gradually, over a period of time, something that you don't even know that you are paying," he said.

NERC pushed meter cost by 14%

In spite of meter acquisition funding now available from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in the mass metering scheme, records have shown that the MAP under the 11 DisCos still charge the hiked 14 per cent average meter cost.

The meter investors and MAP firms are to access the fund from CBN at five per cent interest rate. However, a handful of their representatives have said NERC was yet to review the meter costs since June when the Commission hiked the meter prices.

As of May 2019, a single phase meter sold for N39,991.50 while a three phase meter went for N67,055.85.

However, by June 2020, the single phase meter rose to N44,896.17 while the three phase meter sold for N82,855.19. Analysis shows that the single phase meter rose by N449 which is 11 per cent, the three-phase meter rose by 18 per cent, N829.

Justifying the 14 per cent average hike, NERC in the notice said, "In arriving at the approved unit costs, the Commission has considered the recent changes in foreign exchange (forex) approved by the CBN and the applicable rates available to importers of meter components and/or fully assembled meters through the "Investors & Exporters" forex window."

Besides, NERC gave the DisCos and MAP the liberty to also include the 2020 Value Added Tax (VAT) rate of 7.5 per cent applies. "All costs are exclusive of Value Added Tax (VAT)," NERC said in the May 2020 notice.

With the 7.5% VAT inclusive, a customer must pay N48,263 for a single phase meter or N89,069 for a three phase meter.

'Scheme may spike local production'

Despite the challenges in accessing the meters as quickly as consumers would want, the funding avenue opened by CBN may favour local production.

Although some local meter assembly plants said the CBN

conditions were stringent, they believe that it was the first time the Federal Government was tending towards boosting local capacity in electricity meter devices.

However, operators of these factories, still say they have the fluctuating forex rates, power supply and other issues to contend with.

MEMMCO, a meter manufacturing firm along the Lagos - Ibadan expressway, is one of the few thriving firms.

The Managing Director, Engr. Kola Balogun, said his company can produce over 7 million meters annually.

"We have the capacity to produce 60,000 electricity meters monthly which totals up to 7.2m annually. We service Ibadan and Kano DisCos," Balogun said.

Mojec is another manufacturing firm in Lagos, along the Apapa - Oshodi expressway. Under the Chairman, Mojisola Abdul and the Managing Director, Chantelle Abdul, the firm has been engaged by over seven DisCos as a MAP firm aside being a producer. Its record shows it boasts of over 5,000 installation capacity daily.

When contacted, the MD, Chantelle Abdul, confirmed the firm has the capacity to roll more meters than expected.

Metering Solutions is another MAP firm and meter manufacturer in Awa, Akwa Ibom State. At the plant, an official said the firm was already installing meters for customers under Port Harcourt, Eko and Kano DisCos.

"Our factory can produce three million prepaid meters annually, so we are capable of meeting the needs of electricity consumers. We are even capable of producing six million prepaid meters annually working in two shifts," the official noted.

Under Port Harcourt DisCo, Armese, a MAP firm said it has deployed over 200,000 meters within the DisCo's network. However, for the MAP contract, it is engaged to install 71,194 meters.

The Managing Director of New Hampshire Capital, Mr. Odion Omonfoman, whose firm is engaged by Ibadan DisCo, said he had confidence in the capacity of local producers to bridge the metering gap.

Elumelu's entrepreneurship portal opens today

By Simon Echowofun Sunday

The 2021 Tony Elumelu Foundation Entrepreneurship Programme portal will open on January 1, 2021.

According to the Foundation, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Ifeyinwa Ugochukwu, will hold a

virtual press conference to herald the opening of the application portal.

The Foundation is also celebrating 10 years of empowering African entrepreneurs and catalysing Africa's development.

So far, the Foundation said it has empowered 9,038 young African

entrepreneurs and has supported one million Africans across the 54 African countries.

The Foundation described itself as the leading champion of entrepreneurship in Africa.

"Our objective is to empower women and men across our continent,

catalysing economic growth, driving poverty eradication and ensuring job creation.

"We believe the private sector's role is critical for Africa's development and that the private sector must create both social and economic wealth," it noted.



**HAPPY NEW YEAR
2021**



His Excellency
ENGR. ABDULLAHI A. SULE
EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF NASARAWA STATE

Your Excellency, we are extremely grateful for the extraordinary support and patronage we have enjoyed from you and the good people of Nasarawa State. We look forward to a more fruitful and productive new year. Nigeria's Home of Solid Minerals shall be greater!

SIGNED: **AARE ADETOLA EMMANUEL KING**
GMD/CEO, ADRON GROUP





Gov. Mai Mala Buni

YOBE STATE IN THE YEAR 2020



The year 2020 will remain memorable in the history of Yobe State and the lives of the people. Like all other states, Yobe State during the year had its fair share of the consequences of the global COVID-19 pandemic and the unfortunate economic recession.

For many authorities, it was a season of confusion getting a way forward amidst the global challenges. But in what seems like a divine intervention, Yobe State Government took critical, strategic and decisive decisions to give the state a sense of direction.

In spite of the challenges, Governor Mai Mala Buni had ensured uninterrupted payment of salaries, unbroken provision of services to the people, completion and initiation of people oriented projects and programmes to improve the lives of the people.

The new year was greeted with Buni's good news of his approval to pay the new N30, 000 minimum wage to civil servants in the state. Governor Buni declared, "We are

determined to revitalize the civil service through good remuneration and emoluments for better results. We are ready to pay N30, 000 minimum wage effective from January 2020". It was indeed a good beginning for civil servants in the state, and the governor lived up to his words.

Not deterred by the increased bill in the payment of the new minimum wage, Governor Mai Mala Buni subsequently laid foundation for construction of the Multi-Million Naira Maternal, New Born and Child Healthcare complex as well as distribution of 28 customized tricycle ambulances to curb maternal and infant mortality and, to ease transportation of sick persons and expectant mothers to the nearest health facilities.

Similarly, the recession that accompanied the COVID-19 pandemic did not discourage the Buni administration from continuing with its development projects. The Babbangida township roads and drainages were

completed and commissioned, boosting movements of goods and services and improving the volume of trade in the local government headquarters. While this was going on, the government established COVID-19 Isolation centres in Damaturu, Potiskum and Nguru. The centres were provided with the necessary working tools and equipment.

In June 2020, history was made again. His Excellency was appointed as Chairman to lead the 13-man APC caretaker/ Extraordinary Convention Planning Committee to salvage the party from an imminent collapse.

Many had their reservations on the tasking responsibilities of a state governor doubling as national chairman of a ruling party. Some also expressed fears that governance in the state may suffer. However, within a short period of time, Governor Mai Mala Buni proved that he is able, capable and ready for the two offices. He is now running the two offices concurrently and unperturbed with

utmost successes.

While road, electrification, housing, agricultural and other social infrastructures are being executed without hitch, His Excellency Governor Mai Mala Buni is at the same time retrieving and receiving great politicians who earlier left the All Progressives Congress for other political parties. Notable among them are former Speaker House of Representatives, Yakubu Dogara; former PDP national Chairman, Chief Bamabas Gemade; Sen. Ishaku Abbo, Sen. Hama Misau, former Head of Service of the federation, Mr Danladi Kifasi and many others.

This monumental and unprecedented success earned Governor Buni and members of the committee commendations from President Muhammadu Buhari, the National Executive Committee of the party, state chapters and non-executive National Working Committee members of the party, prompting the APC to extend the tenure of the Buni-led caretaker committee to complete the task of

repositioning the party through reconciling its members, reclaiming its national leadership position and membership registration and revalidation.

There was never a dull moment for His Excellency Governor Mai Mala Buni who ensured completion of on-going projects like the Damaturu International Cargo Airport, township and inter town roads, supporting the resuscitated state owned factories to remain functional and productive.

At a time when many states were burning and suffered massive looting from the #EndSARS Protests, Yobe State enjoyed a peaceful moment owing to the proactive measures taken by the Buni administration. Government engaged elders and youth into 'Frank Talk' discussions giving everyone and the group a sense of belonging in governance of the state. The state government through SEMA is consistently and transparently distributing

palliatives to truly deserving persons thereby earning the

peoples' confidence in government.

Similarly, new projects including township roads in Damaturu, Potiskum, Gashua, Geidam and Nguru were initiated and now nearing completion. The Damaturu Modern Market has reached an appreciable stage of completion just as the governor launched the construction of others in Nguru, Gashua and Potiskum with plans almost concluded to launch the one in Geidam.

It is quite gratifying to note that the Mega Schools in Damaturu, Potiskum, Gashua, Nguru, Geidam and Buni Yadi have been completed. The Dr Garba Iliya-led committee on resuscitation of water supply across the state had since completed its work with great results and improved water supply in all the major towns.

The year 2020 in Yobe State is therefore very productive and memorable. With such commitments from His Excellency, Hon. Mai Mala Buni, the year 2021, will by the grace of God be more prosperous and successful.



Tree Planting Campaign



Presenting the 2021 bill to the State Assembly



Signing the 2021 appropriation bill into law



1800 housing units under construction across the state.



General Hospital Buni Yadi Destroyed by insurgents, reconstructed by the Buni Administration



Inspecting Covid 19 Isolation Center in Damaturu



Distribution of Palliatives by SEMA



Distribution of Palliatives in Potiskum



Gov. Mai Mala Buni with beneficiaries of Buni Money POS operators supported to operate POS in communities



Continuous collaboration on peace and security



Gov. Buni with COAS Gen. Buratai putting heads together on Security



Damaturu overhead bridge



Township road under construction Buni Yadi 1



Rural Water supply



Cargo Airport Building 1



Test landing the runway of the Damaturu International cargo airport



Maiden flight at the Damaturu Cargo Airport



One of the Model Schools in Damaturu



Gujba Model School



Damaturu Modern Market under construction



Damaturu Modern Market under construction



Foundation laying ceremony of Gashua Modern Market



Rural Electrification

MOTORING

More vehicles soon with locally assembled Geely brands

From Abdullateef Aliyu, Lagos

Nigerians especially, car enthusiasts would begin to see Geely automobiles on the roads as Mikano Motors, has begun the local assembly of two Geely models at its plant along the Lagos-Ibadan expressway.

The two brands - Geely Emigrand 7 (Sedan) and Geely X7 Sports (SUV) - assembled locally were test-driven recently ahead of their launch shortly.

Geely models were common in Nigeria and distributed by Hyra Motors before they vanished. However, Mikano Motors, a subsidiary of Mikano International Limited, is working to stage a comeback for the Chinese automobile.

Emigrand 7 sedan

Powered by a 1.5-litre engine, Geely EC7 sedan, comes with a load of safety features including seatbelt reminder, anti-theft alarm device, hand brake unreleased reminder, (anti-lock brake system and Electronic Brake-force Distribution (EBD), reversing visual system, door child safety lock, collision safety fuel cut system, speed-sensitive automatic door locking system, explosion-proof, leak-proof plastic fuel tank, among others.

At a time when there are rising records of road crashes, the vehicle comes with over speeding alarm device which alerts the driver.

According to information from the assembler, the car is equipped with cruise control, remote central locking, keyless entry-driver side, head restraints, air conditioning system and infotainment.

Geely X7

This Sports Utility Vehicle

(SUV) also assembled in Nigeria is in the crossover category. It is powered by a 2.4 litre engine and equipped with airbags. Occupants of the car are also protected with ISOFIX child seat anchorage points, door child safety lock, and the Tyre Pressure Monitoring System (TPMS).

It has an explosion-proof, leak-proof plastic fuel tank, speed-sensitive automatic door locking system, anti-pinch function and air filtration purification device.

The Geely X7 is also equipped with internal light delay function, panoramic sunroof, cruise control, remote central locking, keyless entry, mobile mapping central screen, bluetooth hands-free device, LCD trim computer, multi-function steering wheel, anti-theft protection, electronic control and alarm system, active safety functions and reversing radar system.

Commenting, Mikano Motors' Sales Manager, Everistus Eze, said the local



assembly of the Geely brands will create jobs and boost the economy.

He also said aside being a Chinese automotive brand that recorded top scores in European Car Assessment Programme (EuroNcap), Geely vehicles, via its acquisition of top European brands, including Volvo and Lotus are produced in line with European standards.

"This current Geely auto

brand is a meeting point for the latest automobile technology and modern science.

"Although Mikano has always been known as service provider in many aspects, including power, steel and medical, our decision to invest in the automotive sector was motivated by our belief that Nigeria deserves a better transportation experience, rather than being a dumping

area for second hand cars with no history, no warranty and no spare parts," he noted.

The company also said the vehicles will come with a friendly auto finance scheme to ensure affordability for more Nigerians after it is launched.

The firm is also working on rolling out auto-gas vehicles and electric cars as the government is creating the necessary enabling environment for that.

FRSC tougher on speed limit device

From Abdullateef Aliyu, Lagos

The Corps Marshal of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), Dr. Boboye Oyeyemi has directed Commanding Officers to step up enforcement of the law on use of speed limit devices.

Boboye gave the directive following a review of the first phase of the end of the year special patrol being embarked upon by personnel of the corps.

He expressed concerns over increasing cases

of speed related crashes recorded within the period.

In a statement by the Corps Public Education Officer, Assistant Corps Marshal Bisi Kazeem, the Corps Marshal expressed satisfaction with the conduct of most drivers and the performance of the personnel in containing the rate and fatalities of road traffic crashes during the festivity period.

He however expressed concerns over the increasing level of speed induced crashes recorded within the period.

Oyeyemi stated that the development is undermining the efforts of the Corps to ensure safer road environments.

He said every effort must be deployed towards restoring normalcy on the roads adding that he had ordered for a review of the strategy for a more effective enforcement of the regulations on use of speed limiting devices.

"We must step up enforcement of the regulations on use of speed limiting devices in the second phase of the special operations and first

quarter of next year to drastically force down the growing trends of speed induced crashes.

"Consequently, those that are operating without speed limiters or those using faulty ones as well as those that have reset their own speed limiters to make them ineffective must not be spared to protect other road users," Oyeyemi said.

Following the directive, the Lagos Sector Commander, Mr. Olusegun Ogungbemide, revealed that 35 vehicles were arrested along the Lagos-Ibadan expressway this week.



Car Brief - The Peugeot Pick-up

In 2019, Peugeot unveiled the covered Pick-up vehicle which are assembled in Nigeria according to PAN Limited, a Kaduna based Peugeot home in Nigeria. Here is what you need to know about this utility vehicle.

The All-New Peugeot Pick-up comes as 403 covered Pick-up, 404 covered Pick-

up, and 504 Pick-up vehicle. It is a functional work tool that is durable and reliable in all terrains.

The bed is 1.40 metre long and 1.39 metre wide, equipped with anchoring hooks on the outside, and allows a load of up to 815kg to be transported.

The side walls and rear panel are completely covered with a protective resin which adds to

the rigidity and durability of the whole vehicle.

The company also said the cab and the rear compartment are fixed on a ladder chassis with a rigid rear axle, four-leaf springs and comes with Yokohama tyres as standard.

These assets assure reliability and endurance, and are adapted to the load and use in all terrains in all conditions, it said.



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KATSINA STATE GOVERNMENT

SUPPLEMENT: MASARI'S IMPRINT AGAINST DAUNTING ODDS

Although these are not the best of times to indulge in much self adulation, what with the deadly twin challenges of pervasive insecurity and the covid 19 pandemic ravaging the northern part of the country, including Katsina State, a little appraisal of the Masari administration's journey from inception to date, may just be what the doctor recommends. In fact, it's the tonic needed to enliven the moody atmosphere, and move away from the gloomy narrative that has cast dark shadow onto the society by these debilitating adversities.

There could be no better opening than the vote of confidence severally passed on Governor Aminu Bello Masari by President Muhammadu Buhari who, impressed by the Governor's performance, commended him for the exceptional quantity and quality of service delivery in the President's home state of Katsina.

A very fastidious person, and one not given to frivolity, the President has this to say about Governor Masari: "Thank you, Governor Masari, for taking care of the people of my constituency", during the commissioning of the redesigned and reconstructed Fago- Koza Road on Thursday, August 15, 2019.

And in his good will message on the occasion of the Governor's 70th birthday anniversary on May 29, 2020, President Buhari also passed a vote of confidence on the Katsina State Governor, enthusing that "Governor Masari has done very well in revamping and repositioning the educational sector in Katsina State, with focus on the girl-child and almajiri, boosting infrastructure and health care services by initiating an upgrade and expansion of all General Hospitals, and other centres.

"Governor Masari's visionary and accommodating leadership style, wealth of experience and penchant for seeking greater good for his people and the country are exemplary".

And after the recent rescue of the 344 abducted Kankara Science Secondary School students, after one week in captivity, the President lavished yet more praise on Governor Masari for his uncommon efforts which led to the quick release of the students by their captors with no loss of life, thereby giving credit where it duly belongs.

Notwithstanding these challenges, made even worse by the cynicism of incurable skeptics, the Masari administration has been able to make these appreciable interventions:

EDUCATION:

At the inception of his administration in May 29th, 2015, Governor Masari inherited a state rated the second poorest economically, and third most educationally backward. This situation was in sharp contrast to what



should rightly have been the fate of Katsina, having, once upon a time, blazed the trail in education and agriculture in the northern part of the country. Katsina



Aminu Bello Masari, Governor of Katsina State

was home to the first post primary school in the north, and erstwhile leading cotton, groundnut and corn producer in the country.

Ever the optimist, he remains convinced that turning the fortunes of the state for the better is doable, steeped in the belief that "a problem remains only so to a mind lacking in commitment and conviction to surmount it". According to him, even the paucity of funds cannot be sufficient justification for poor performance, because it's not how much money is available, but how it is judiciously used from what is available. And these truths have been his guiding philosophy as he pilots the affairs of Katsina state from May 29, 2015.

It is an incontrovertible truth that no society can develop above the level of the education of its citizens. This is why for Governor Masari, education remains "the first,



second and third priority" of his administration. The administration's numerous interventions in the sector, especially at the primary and secondary school levels have been unprecedented in the state.

These interventions have not been limited to infrastructure development, as quality (training and retraining), quantity (recruitment) and welfare (promotion and payment of salary and other entertainments as and when due) of teaching and non teaching staff have attracted equal attention from the government.

With classrooms designed to accommodate a maximum of 50 pupils taking as much as 150 at both primary and secondary schools, the Masari administration quickly embarked on the renovation and construction of new classrooms across the state. 15,000 units of furniture, comprising double seater chairs and desks have been procured and distributed.

Primary schools :-

A total of 1,026 new classrooms were constructed, and 1,268 classrooms were rehabilitated, bringing the total to 2294 classrooms in excellent condition in use.

Office accommodation for primary school teachers:- One Hundred and Thirty Five (135) new offices were constructed, whereas 532 were rehabilitated. Similarly, 135 new stores were built, while 532 were rehabilitated.

A total of 930 toilets were built in primary schools across the state.

Secondary Schools :-

Seven new secondary schools were built across the state at the total cost of N1.1billion.

Twenty Five (25) secondary schools across the three Senatorial zones in the state underwent complete rehabilitation and upgrading at the total cost of N3.2billion.

Fourth Eight (48) secondary schools suffering from dilapidation and damaged by storm received partial repair and rehabilitation at the cost of N7 billion.

Out of the Eighteen (18) Science and Technical Vocational Schools in the state, thirteen (13) were completely rehabilitated and upgraded at the cost of about N2 billion.

Government has promoted, with payment of full areas, over 1100 primary and secondary schools teachers in the state, some of whom have had no promotion for upwards of 10 years.

All girls secondary schools in their state have been converted to boarding.

With over 2000 teachers already recruited for primary and secondary schools, 5000 more are currently being recruited under the S (tate) Power Programme.

Girl Child Education.

This is another area where the Masari Administration has placed high premium, encouraging parents, notably mothers, to send the daughters to primary school as against sending them on hawking errands.

This department has generated many programmes that have mothers as beneficiaries, and the result has been a drastic reduction in street hawking by school age children.

Tertiary education :-

From 2015 to date, the sum of N7.32billion has so far been expended on scholarship to Katsina State indigenes as well as the provision of infrastructure and services at the four state owned tertiary institutions, namely, Umaru Musa Yar'adua University (UMYU), Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic (HUKP), Isa Kaita College of Education (IKCOED) and Dr. Yusuf Bala Usman College (YBUC).



HEALTH

The government has embarked on, with many already completed, the renovation, rehabilitation and remodelling (by 70%) of the General Hospitals at Katsina, Daura, Funtua, Malumfashi, Musawa, Dutsinma, Mani, Baure and Kankiya. These are being complemented with state-of-the-art equipment to rival the best in the country.

In like manner, health centres in the rest of the local government areas in the state have received treatment commensurate with the status of the locality.

The construction of a Specialist Eye Centre at the General Amadi Rimi Specialist Hospital is in advanced stage of completion

So far a total of 993 medical and health workers, comprising 110 doctors (including 15 consultants), 250

nurses and 330 midwives and allied health personnel have been recruited, with another batch of 500 medical staff currently being recruited.



30 medical doctors have been granted full sponsorship to pursue residency/specialisation. The college of Nursing and Midwifery has recruited 13 Nursing tutors, five Medical Educators, and one lecturer. Full sponsorship has been granted for nurses:- 18 post-graduate Diploma (Nursing Education), four to study Degree in Nursing (BN.Sc), 11 to study Masters Degree in Nursing (MSc) and 3 Phd in view). Additional 200 health workers have been granted approval to undertake full-time and part time studies at home and abroad to build their capacity.

Governor Masari's administration has not only renovated and upgraded but secured accreditation for Katsina School of Nursing, the first time since it was established in 1956, and doubled its annual students intake from 50 to 120.

The School of Midwifery in Malumfashi and the Schools of Health Sciences at Daura and Kankiya have also been renovated and upgraded.

Perhaps, the icing on the cake in the administration's expansive intervention in the health sector is the plan to establish a state owned teaching hospital by converting the Federal Medical Centre Katsina, with the support



and approval of the Federal Ministry of Health. The project is so much on course that, all things being equal, would see the light of the day in the next couple of years.

The Masari administration has also constructed 10 health posts at Dajin Rugu Forest for Fulani communities in 10 local government areas (Jibia, Batsari, Dutsinma, Safana, Danmusa, Kankara, Faskari, Danja, Sabuwa and Dandume).

Also, 3 Zonal Cold Stores at Sandamu, Dandume and Kankiya were built and provided with 3 walk-in Cold Rooms, 2 giant generators and 7 number Hilux vans for direct vaccine delivery.



The Comprehensive Health Care Centre at Ketare in Kankara Local Government area was completed, while a similar one at Kafur was fully renovated.

COVID 19.

Just when insecurity was putting too much strain on the lean resources of the state, COVID 19 pandemic reared its deadly head to put even further strain on

what little is left of the resources.

Still, the government had but to be up and doing in ways whatever, and keep on doing so, to mitigate the deadly impact of COVID 19.

This single determination to control the rampaging disease saw to the establishment of a 260-bed isolation centre, in addition to other 20-bed facilities, 10 each at the General Amadi Rimi Orthopaedic Hospital, Katsina and the Federal Medical Centre, Katsina.

AGRICULTURE:

In view of the importance given to the sector by Governor Masari, his deputy, Alhaji Mannir Yakubu is given charge of the agriculture ministry as its commissioner, ably assisted by Dr. Abba Abdullahi, an internationally renowned consultant, as Special Adviser on Agriculture.

As a wholly agrarian state, Katsina state is an active participant in the CBN's sponsored Cotton and Rice Anchor Programmes, with Katsina first in cotton, and second only to Kebbi in the production of rice.

Farming in Katsina has been given a new impetus with an unprecedented regular procurement and distribution of sufficient quantity of assorted fertilisers for both wet and dry seasons farming without the usual annual fanfare of public launching of the distribution of the commodity.

A reasonable quantity of tractors, now being assembled in the state, has been procured and distributed to farmers in the state on soft loan by the government. The Masari administration has concluded arrangements



with the Indian Tractor manufacturing firm, Mahindra Machines to assemble the tractors and other farming implements at the recently resuscitated Kankiya Metal Works factory.

A Faculty of Agriculture has been established in the Umar Musa Yar'adua University to give further impetus to the agricultural sector in the state.

The state has been an active participant in the CBN Rice Anchor Barrowers Scheme, with rice farmers in the state benefiting to the tune of N200 million. Thanks to the support and encouragement of the government, the beneficiaries have fully repaid their loans 100%. Katsina is second only to Kebbi state, in rice production under the programme.

WATER SUPPLY:

On a scale never undertaken before, comprehensive rehabilitation and upgrade of the Ajiwa Dam and Water Works (for Katsina township and environs), Malumfashi Dam and Waterworks (for Malumfashi township and environs) and Mairuwa Dam and Waterworks (for Funtua township and environs), as well as the Daura and environs water works, have been embarked upon by the Masari administration, with many already completed.

Also, thanks to the collaborative efforts with the Federal Government, the hitherto abandoned waterworks at Zobe Dam in Dutsinma town, Sabke Dam in Daura town and Jibia Dam in Jibia town are all but completed, with only a few finishing touches before commissioning.

Efforts have been stepped up by the Masari administration to expand the utilization of these dams, which are among the largest man made bodies of water in the country for irrigation purposes.

Many earth dams have been rehabilitated, several are under construction in all three senatorial zones for irrigation and animals uses.

The biggest intervention yet is on the Ajiwa Water Works, which is the major supplier of pipe borne water to Katsina town, the state capital and environs.

Every facility has its capacity doubled to ensure fair daily water supply, especially to institutions like schools and health facilities.

INDUSTRIALISATION:

A new department, Katsina State Investment Promotion Agency (KIPA), headed by a Director General, was established by the Masari administration to drive the industrialisation programme.

The agency has hit the ground running, organizing, within its first couple of months, an economic and investment forum with participation of leading Nigerian and foreign business persons and companies with Dangote and BUA groups among the local participants, with other participants coming from China, India, UAE, US, and UK.



Governor Masari administration has liberalized the space and created a conducive environment for investors to do business.



Governor Masari has revived some industries that have remained moribund since they were established in 1979 by the administration of Governor Balarabe Musa of the defunct Kaduna State during the Second



Republic. These include Kankiya Metal Works, Kankara Kaolin, Funtua Burnt Bricks and Daura Tannery, among others.

While the Chinese have already set up shop in Katsina State, Dangote conglomerate has acquired land to establish a tomatoes farm and processing factory.



The BUA group has also approached the state government to acquire land for the establishment of a textiles factory and allied products.

A huge industrial park, the like of which exists nowhere in the neighbouring states, has been mapped out by the administration to encourage investors and other entrepreneurs to open shop in the state in a one-stop business environment.

ROADS, HOUSING AND TRANSPORT:

Contrary to the jaded narratives regularly churned out by enemies of progress, Masari administration has added significant mileage on the road infrastructure in the state, the lean purse at its disposal notwithstanding.



The Masari administration has completed all the unfinished road projects inherited from the immediate past administration, most of which were hastily awarded but barely started on the eve of the preceding administration's departure in May, 2015.

To date, the Masari administration has constructed over 510 kilometres (and counting) of roads in almost equal measure in the three Senatorial zones in the state. Thirty nine (39) rural feeder roads with a total length of 461 kilometres have been constructed across the 34 local government areas in the state.

FLOOD CONTROL:

Flooding in many urban centres had hitherto been a perennial menace, with many a resident dreading the commencement of the wet season.

Not unmindful of flight of many during the rainy season, the Masari administration from its inception in 2015, rose to the challenge, spending no less than N2.5 billion on a deliberate policy to tame, and save Katsina State from the fury of flooding.

On a more ambitious scale, are ongoing projects in Katsina (the state capital), Jibia, Malumfashi and Funtua in a gigantic multi billion naira Storm water and Drainage Management scheme, under the State and World Bank jointly funded Nigeria Erosion and Watershed Management Project (NEWMAP).

The Katsina and environs project involves the construction of an 11-kilometre-5m wide concrete-lined drainage stretching from Kofar Guga through Sabuwar Kofa down to Shinkafi Bridge.

These projects are being handled two reputable construction companies, Mothercat and Triacta, with the former handling Katsina and Jibia, while the latter handles Malumfashi and Funtua.

So far, the Masari administration has undertaken (some completed and others in various stages of completion) the construction of flood control structures in 122 locations covering over 150 communities.

These projects include:

- (i) 88,537m of combined reinforced concrete-lined, block-lined and masonry-lined drainages,
- (ii) 1,910m of retaining wall,
- (iii) 360m of drift,
- (iv) 104 culverts, and
- (v) 1,550m of dyke/embankment.

In the state capital and environs, alone, the intervention saw to the construction of 21,139m reinforced concrete-lined, block-lined and masonry-lined drainages, and 24 box culverts.

HOUSING:

Three housing estates with a combined strength of 450 units of houses are currently under construction and in various stages of completion. The 200 housing units near the Federal Medical Centre are all but completed. With Funtua as the commercial melting pot of the state, the Masari administration has expanded and upgraded by almost 50% the Funtua central market and mortar park.

The state government has also expanded the transport authority by replenishing its fleet of vehicles with 30 no. Toyota Costa and Hiace buses.

EMPOWERMENT:

With about seven different MDAs involved in various empowerment programmes, over 15000 youth have received training and empowered in various trades and crafts, at the ratio of 60%/40% in favour of women.



The agencies tasked with this all important programme include Ministry of Science and Technology, Katsina State Economic Empowerment Directorate (KASEED), Women Affairs Ministry, Department of Girl Child Education and the Department of Youth And Women Empowerment.

SECURITY:

Given the priceless nature of good education and security, no amount of money and time spent on these sectors is too much, in view of the of the alternatives.

To appreciate the ground covered by the Masari administration in the area of security, an appraisal of the state of insecurity, pre the APC government in Katsina state may help do that.

The issue of acute insecurity that came in the form of cattle rustling, killings, kidnapping and rape which seriously affected farming and commercial activities had been common, in especially eight local government areas in the state. These local government areas are contagious to the vast and deep Rugu Forest, which serves as permanent 'hideout' to the bandits.

So acute had been insecurity in Katsina state, that on a day in March, 2014, with then President Gooluck Jonathan and national chieftains of then ruling PDP in town, bandits cold-bloodedly massacred 142 people at a community nestled between Faskari and Sabuwa local government areas, in an operation that lasted upwards of five hours with no presence of security personnel.

On coming into office, Governor Masari initiated a joint security action by the seven North West states of Katsina, Kano, Kaduna, Jigawa, Zamfara, Sokoto and Kebbi, as well as far way North Central state of Niger. However, this was short lived, as all but him decided to go about it individually within their state jurisdiction. The governors were to later come back in a United front to fight the menace after some quality time was lost to the bandits.

He negotiated an amnesty programme for repentant cattle rustlers, who handed over their fire arms and ammunitions to government in a ceremony attended by the top hierarchies of the security agencies, notably the Military and the Police and the Department of State Security, in return for forgiveness, reintegration and provision of amenities like schools, clinics and water points in their settlements. Ten primary schools and ten clinics, as well as earth dams and other water points were built in the affected areas as promised by the Governor.

He also initiated, in collaboration with MTN, the launching of Animal Identification and Management Solution Programme (designed to track stolen animals) at Runka in Safana Local Government, Katsina state on Saturday, 2nd December, 2017.

One key demand Governor Masari made of the bandits before the peace deal was sealed, was for them to eschew banditry for good everywhere in the country, not only in Katsina state.

Another effort at reaching a permanent peace deal with the leadership of the disparate groups

of bandits hit a brick wall because Governor Masari had insisted that they must lay down and return all their arms and ammunitions and leave the forest and join their compatriots in the towns and villages for full reintegration with the larger society. The bandits balked, promising only to spare Katsina state in their dastardly activities, but continuing in other states.

The manifold increase in the permanent presence of the military and the police force in Katsina state is owed to Governor Masari.

Prior to 2016, there was only one military formation in the state, the Army's 3 Battalion Katsina with no Airforce presence. Today, Katsina state boasts of the Army's 17 Brigade, two Battalions one each in Daura and Malumfashi, three Airforce formations, one each in Katsina, Daura and Funtua. In the case of the police force, four additional Area Commands have been created to bring the number to six, to complement the Katsina Police Command.

Even though the security chiefs in the state are not answerable to the Governor, the state government nonetheless shoulders a burden greater than its meagre resources can comfortably support. The state government pays the operational allowances of the duty personnel, in addition to the monthly financial assistance given to all the security agencies in the state. This is of course outside the frequent extension of logistics support, often in the form of operations vehicles like Toyota Hillux vans and motorcycles.

THE KANKARA SECONDARY SCHOOL BOYS ABDUCTION:

But for President Muhammadu Buhari's timely commendation of Governor Masari for the hitch free rescue of the abducted 344 Kankara Science Secondary School students, some charlatans with debatable pedigree would have hoodwinked the uninformed into giving them unearned credit for the rescue efforts.

The relentless vigour expended by the Governor in the swift rescue operation, against the backdrop of global attention on Katsina State, has exposed the lie in the traducers' evil narratives against some key actors in the state government.

SERVING AND RETIRED WORKERS

ENTITLEMENTS:

SALARY AND OTHER ENTITLEMENTS:

Another area where the Masari administration has yet to be found wanting is the payment of serving and retired workers' salary and other entitlements.

As Governor Masari is wont of stating, workers salary and other entitlements are rights not privileges, and settling them as and when due, is a duty not a favour. Since the inception of the administration on May 29, 2015, the payment of salary has remained consistently on or before 25th of every month.

PENSIONS AND GRATUITIES:

From June 2015 to August 2020, the Masari administration has paid a total N71 Billion in pensions and gratuities for retirees of the state, the local governments and the local government education authorities.

STAFF RECRUITMENT:

From January 2018 to date, the various MDAs, with the exception of the education ministry have recruited a total of 3,080.

CONCLUSION:

Governor Aminu Bello Masari is not your typical run of the mill politician, whose words are anything but his bond. In Rt. Hon. Masari resides a politician who walks his talk, shunning political correctness, the stuff for pretenders.

He does not believe in playing to the gallery to pander to the convenience of the 'next' election, his sole concern being what is right and good for the next generation; a conviction which gives him the courage to take what to some may seem unpopular decisions, once he believes in doing so the interest of the larger society is served best.

Signed,
Abdu Labaran Malumfashi,
DG Media.
1/1/2021.



With God in the joy of beauty and youth.
- Barbara La Marr

Friday, January 1, 2021

simoneche@dailytrust.com

...young at heart

Youths urged to shun drugs, embrace sports

From Ibraheem Hamza Muhammad, Lafia

Nigerian youths have been advised to shun drug consumption and abuse, and embrace sports so they can be self-reliant, and become role models.

The National President of the Karate Federation of Nigeria (KFN), Mr. Silas Ali Agara made the appeal in Lafia, Nasarawa State recently.

He said, "It is high time for parents and guardians to entice their kids and wards to embrace sports to be fit and have brighter futures than to engage in the illicit act of drug abuse.

"The youth should understand that drug abuse leads to health related issues, like mental retardation amongst others.

"It is better to choose sports, make friends, be a sports ambassador, sign big contracts from clubs and endorsements and be a role model instead of having mental retardation and be a prisoner," Agara noted.

While sensitizing some youths in the state, he also explained how rewarding and interesting it is to have teenagers and youth represent their schools, local governments, states and even the country at various sporting events.

Tech start-up to give 1,000 scholarships

From Abdullateef Aliyu, Lagos

A local educational technology firm, Ustacky has unveiled a Microdegree Scholarship Programme targeting 1,000 talents.

The programme seeks to fill the wide skill gap of employers having problems finding the right talent through provision of technical and financial support to upcoming talents building careers in software development and data science.

The application opens this week and runs till January 31, 2021, a statement said. The firm also said 10 outstanding candidates will receive N50,000 each and may be employed by the firm.

The programme which is run in collaboration with Data Science Nigeria (DSN) and Wennovation, is open to committed tech enthusiasts and developers pursuing a career in technology.

Co-founder of Ustacky, Teslim Sulaiman, said, "At Ustacky, we leverage cutting-edge solutions to craft the finest programmes and courses for Africa's software engineers. We do this with an expert-led team of local instructors delivering top-notch content for a primarily African audience."

Sulaiman also said the programme is part of Ustacky's moves towards redefining the technology ecosystem in Africa.

It also launched the Ustacky Remote Internship recently, a free six-month internship that preps enthusiasts towards careers in frontend and backend software development and data science.

The Ustacky Head of Operations, Ilyas Muiyiwa, said: "Our core mission is to make Africa the next developers' talent hub. That's why we primarily impart industry-relevant programming skills to tech enthusiasts across the continent. We hope to churn out 500,000 developers and data scientists within the next five years."

How my varsity project created jobs – Osuji

By Simon Echowofun Sunday

Mr Toochukwu Osuji is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Director, Process at Greenocks Biodiesel Limited in Lagos. It is a start-up firm and refinery that refines waste vegetable oil, converting it to biodiesel to power diesel engines.

Daily Trust encountered Mr Osuji at the biofuel convention of the Energy Commission of Nigeria (ECN) recently in Abuja where the Minister of Science and Technology, Dr. Ogbonnaya Onu had charged the private sectors to take charge of providing alternative fuel towards relieving Nigerians in the wake of rising petrol prices.

Speaking during an interview session, Osuji, a young graduate of Chemical Engineering from Covenant University in Ota, Ogun State, decided to start up the business after submitting his final project on biodiesel refinery at the university.

He said: "We founded this company in 2017 and I convert waste vegetable oil to biodiesel. It was my final year project at the Covenant University where I studied Chemical Engineering.

"I must say that this is not an innovation because it is existent in other countries, but the trend is just developing in Nigeria as alternative fuel," Osuji said.

But to a lot of people, the trend of having alternative diesel fuel may be new. According to Osuji, "Biodiesel is an alternative for diesel that can run diesel engines. Anything that diesel can power, biodiesel can also power it. It works for cars, for generators, tractors and any other heavy duty machine."



■ Osuji

Although it is gaining acceptability, the refinery boss said marketing the fuel product is still a challenge. "Marketing our products is still our key challenge as it is quite new, but we have an association that is trying to conquer the challenge that we have.

"We have 500 to 1,000 litre production capacity daily but we can go beyond that as the demand improves," he noted.

Rather than seek a white collar job, Osuji said he held unto his vision after graduating. He wants other youths to develop such a vision and pursue it.

"The good jobs in Nigeria are quite difficult to come by, so I advise

Nigerians that the energy they will put into seeking for those good jobs can be used to start up something and in the near future you will be proud you made that decision."

In a further advice to the government on youth empowerment, the Secretary General and Director of Technical at the Biofuel Refiners, Producers and Distributors Association of Nigeria, Mr Paul Ugburo, said young people are the future of this country based on what is happening now.

He said: "With a little innovation on what Osuji is doing, he can engage over 20,000 youths in his factory.

"We are focusing on him as the beacon for youths in the area of biofuel and we are believing that in 10 years, he will be the person that will drive the process in this sector.

"We are letting the government know that if they want to invest in young people, they can enable them to go out and do it because we have the technology in Nigeria to create a biofuel refinery without going to China or other places," Ugburo noted.

He also emphasized that other youths can be empowered to create smaller refineries and refine biofuel as alternatives to petrol which has proven efficient for users and customers in Lagos and more in other countries like Brazil.

Ugburo said: "There are a lot of things we can do with environmental waste to create biogas and other alternatives to Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) and other mainstream fuel sources that are climate friendly. China started to encourage such entrepreneurial tendencies on clean energy and today, they have really gone far."

Reggae artist seeks support for vulnerable persons

From Abdullateef Aliyu, Lagos

Nigerian reggae super artiste and Enorecords LLC boss, Eno Osagie Kingsley, says he will always work to uplift the vulnerable persons wherever he can.

The artiste, also called Winning Jah (Nigeria King of Reggae), said he recently celebrated his 47th birthday with a tour around West African and European countries to meet with his fans and vulnerable

children. The countries include Nigeria, Ghana, Mali, Abidjan, Cotonou, South Africa, among others.

In a message to encourage them, he said, "I will never stop celebrating my birthday worldwide, because I believe givers never lack. This is why we must all do everything we can to impact on the downtrodden."

The musician who in 2016 released a single for the youth to shun terrorism and violence, said he released an album, 'Peace and Love' which had earned him huge success in Brazil and Africa.



Sokoto youth activist elected NYCN chair

By Simon Echowofun Sunday

The Sokoto State Coordinator of the Not Young To Run Movement, Amb. Yakubu Abubakar has been elected as chairperson of the National Youth Council of Nigeria (NYCN), Sokoto State Chapter.

Abubakar polled 241 votes against his opponent, Yusuf Muhammad who got 62 votes.

Speaking shortly after the election, Abubakar promised to carry everybody along. "I want to sincerely thank everyone who has

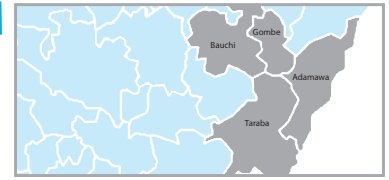
supported me on my journey into becoming the elected chairman of NYCN Sokoto state chapter."

Speaking further, Abubakar said: "I sincerely appreciate and thanked my team for their tireless support; I want to assure you that I will never let you down.

"For the young men and young women from Sokoto State, I am ready to fight for your rights and ensure that more young people get elected into office as well as getting political appointments," Abubakar noted.

NORTH-EAST TRUST

DAILY TRUST PUBLICATION



Vol. 1, No 110

Gombe distributes water pumps for dry season farming

From Haruna Gimba Yaya, Gombe

The Gombe State Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASSA) yesterday distributed water pumps for dry season farming to farmers in the state.

The project is under the Inclusive Basic Service Delivery and Livelihood Empowerment Integrated Project (IBSDLEIP) of the African Development Bank.

Speaking at the distribution ceremony yesterday in Gombe, the Project Manager of RUWASSA, Abdurraqib

Muhamamd Sa'eed said the IBSDLEIP was a \$29, 000 loan procured from the AfDB to address gaps in basic social services.

He said the project aimed at filling gaps in water, sanitation, health, education and livelihood, especially in the rural areas.

The project manager added that through the IBSDLEIP, the state will benefit from the provision, rehabilitation, access and utilisation of basic social services such as solar powered and hand pump boreholes, sanitation facilities, model primary

schools and model primary healthcare centres among others.

Sa'eed assured of RUWASSA's commitment to ensure timely execution and implementation of programmes that will have direct positive impacts on the lives and livelihood of people of the state.

Speaking while unveiling the items, Governor Muhammad Inuwa Yahaya said the project was to integrate the people that were abandoned by the previous administration.

He said the IBSDLEIP

project was largely targeted at the ordinary farmers, who engage in agriculture as their means of livelihood and constituted over 75 per cent of the state's population.

The governor added that his administration would ensure that the project impacted on people of the state, by ensuring women and youth benefitted by getting means of livelihood and improved their living conditions.

North East Trust reports that six Hilux vehicles, 26 motorcycles and 36 hand pumps were distributed.

3000 Guyuk residents benefit from free medical outreach

By Amina Abdullahi, Yola.

More than 3000 Guyuk residents have benefitted from a three-day medical outreach offered by the Senator representing Adamawa South Senatorial zone, Senator Binos Yaroe.

The outreach was conducted at the Cottage Hospital, Guyuk where medical personnel rendered their services, which included caesarean section, vagina prolapse and herniorrhaphy.

Binos has pledged to carry out same medical outreach on the remaining six councils that made up the zone.

He said the provision of quality health care services was one of his top priorities.

According to Dr. Talemoh Whycliff Dah of Rural Health Initiative, 108 patients had surgeries.

He explained the ophthalmologist had operated on about 98 cases of cataract, 255 had dental care and 500 had collected reading glasses.

A Consultant Obstetric and Gynaecologist, Dr Zaro Boysunni, said cases of blocked fallopian tubes, fallen bladder out of a woman's womb and multiple cases of fibroids were treated.

Beneficiaries of the outreach applauded Binos for the support.

NIN registration: Bauchi Assembly seeks state gov't intervention

From Hassan Ibrahim, Bauchi

Bauchi State House of Assembly has passed a resolution directing the state government to urgently provide support to NIMC to ease the registration of people for the national identity card.

The resolution was passed during the house plenary in a motion moved by the member representing Bauchi Central Constituency, Jamilu Umaru Dahiru.

According to him, people, especially those in the rural areas, have to travel long distances to the registration centres.

The lawmaker suggested that the government should help by providing more computers to the National Identity Management Commission (NIMC) so that every district in the state will have a registration centre to make it easier for people.

The Speaker, Abubakar Suleiman said something should be done to help people otherwise a lot of them will miss the registration deadline thereby losing their GSM lines.



■ The tractors donated by Senator Emmanuel Bwacha to his constituents

Photo by Magaji Isa Hunkuyi, Jalingo.

Bauchi Assembly donates truck to community mosque for conveyance of corpses

From Hassan Ibrahim, Bauchi

The Bauchi State House of Assembly has donated a truck to Ibrahim Bako Estate Juma'ah Mosque for the conveyance of corpses to cemeteries.

Presenting the vehicle to the community of the Estate at the Assembly Complex, Speaker, Abubakar Y Suleiman said the donation was in fulfillment of the pledge made by the Assembly during the commissioning of the Juma'ah Mosque.

The Speaker urged them to make good use of the vehicle. In his remarks, Deputy

Speaker Hon. Danlami Ahmed Kawule thanked the assembly for the gesture to the community, which is part of his constituency.

Receiving the truck, Ward Head of Ibrahim Bako Estate, Dr Bala Musa Lukshi also thanked the assembly for redeeming its promise.

He said the truck would assist both the estate and residents of other neighbouring communities.

Speaker of the Bauchi House of Assembly, Abubakar Y Suleiman presented the key of the truck to the chairman of the mosque Committee, Abdulazeez Ibrahim.

Senator Bwacha donates 10 tractors to constituents

From Magaji Isa Hunkuyi, Jalingo

The senator representing Taraba southern senatorial zone in the Senate, Senator Emmanuel Bwacha has said that he is duty-bound to respond to yearnings of his constituents.

Senator Emmanuel Bwacha told North East Trust in Wukari that his focus on the provision of basic needs to people in his constituents was part of pledges he made to the people when he campaigned for the office he is now occupying.

The senator who spoke after donating 10 tractors to communities in his constituency, said elected

officeholders were expected to provide basic things to the people that elected them.

He said the donation to farmers in Donga, Takum, Ussa, Ibi and Wukari was part of his efforts to help farmers to improve on their agricultural activities.

He said the senatorial zone has agricultural potentials but lacks modern farming tools, which was hampering utilisation of the potentials.

The lawmaker said if properly utilised, the tractors would improve farmers' productivity.

He advised the beneficiaries to ensure proper maintenance to sustain them.

KANEM TRUST

DAILY TRUST PUBLICATION

Vol. 1, No 110



Borno villagers spend night in bushes to evade insurgents

From Misbahu Bashir, Maiduguri

Hundreds of people in some parts of Borno State, reportedly run and hide in the bushes at night to guard against insurgents' surprised attacks.

Families living in areas prone to attacks in southern parts of the state resorted to taking refuge in the bushes following the deadly Christmas Eve and Boxing Day attacks in some communities in Hawul Local Government Area and neighbouring Garkida town in Adamawa State.

During the attacks homes, schools, churches as well as shops were looted and torched.

Several people were said to have been injured while others were killed in the attacks.

Wazini Paul, who lives on the outskirts of Lassa village in Askira/Uba Local Government Area, said people did not want a repeat of what happened at neighbouring communities in their area.

"That is why we hide in the bushes with our families at least to save lives even if the buildings are destroyed."

Paul said people who lived in sparse communities 'find it unsafe' to live in their houses in evenings because of the frequency of insurgents' nocturnal activities in the area.

"The attackers hide from the troops in the darkness of the night, when they are apparently more active."

He said that many of his relatives in the neighboring Kirchinga village under Madagali Local Government Area of Adamawa State also confided in him that they hid in the bushes at night.

A lady, Awa John in Deli village said her family found safety in the bushes at night even as "we lose sleep due to mosquitoes and biting hamattan."

She said residents were gripped with fear following the Christmas Eve attacks in some communities.

"We have been sleeping in the bush for a week now since the attack in some communities. My family is afraid of the Boko Haram fighters who shoot and kill people and burn houses," she said.

Governor Babagana Zulum had on Sunday cut his trip to Abuja short and travelled to some villages attacked by the insurgents on Saturday where he commiserated with the victims and pledged to rebuild damaged buildings.

Meanwhile, troops were said to have repelled an attack on Tungushe village, few kilometers away from Maimalari Barracks on Tuesday. The foiled attack, according to a source, indicated that the "insurgents have advanced towards the state capital."

SEMA begins construction of stalls for Potiskum fire outbreak victims

By Ibrahim Baba Saleh, Damaturu

The Yobe State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) has begun construction of stalls for traders affected by recent fire outbreak in Potiskum central market.

Kanem Trust reports that the inferno, which occurred in the early hours of Monday morning, left no fewer than 51 shops with items worth millions of naira destroyed.

SEMA Executive Secretary Dr Mohammed said the agency has responded swiftly to the directives of governor Mai Mala Buni coupled with the distress call by the victims to come to their aid.

He said the agency, as a matter of priority, saw the need to bring the victims back into their businesses by constructing temporary stalls to enable them continue providing for their families.

He disclosed that the section occupied by traditional medicine sellers was largely affected by the disaster.

One the affected traders and the chairman traditional medicine sellers association, Mohammed Jibrin, thanked the state government for quick response to their needs.

"We have also received donations from individuals and authorities in both cash and kind and we thanked all of them for the gesture done to us"



■ School burnt by insurgents in Hawul local government area on Saturday



■ Carpenters at work at Potiskum market

Yobe to recruit 3000 teachers, construct 7 modern schools

By Ibrahim Baba Saleh, Damaturu

Yobe state government is to recruit 3000 teachers for primary and secondary schools in the state within the first quarter of 2021.

The state Commissioner for Information, Abdullahi Bego made the disclosure during the end of year parley with journalists in Damaturu.

He said the state government had earlier convened the first education summit aimed at proffering solutions to the sector.

Bego said COVID-19 pandemic, among other challenges government had delayed the construction of seven model schools in some major towns to address problem of overpopulation in its schools.

He said the state also embarked on the construction of more schools and classrooms and renovation of existing ones in all the 17 LGAs, including the fencing of five model primary schools in five LGAs.

"Other projects in the education sector consisted of construction of 38 classrooms, 12 offices and 18 toilets"

GOC presents Christmas gifts to displaced families in Borno

Maj.-Gen. Abdul Khalifa, the Acting General Officer Commanding (GOC) 7 Division of the Nigerian Army, has presented Christmas gifts to displaced families in Gubio Camp in the Jere Local Government Area (LGA) of Borno.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), comprising 6,664 households and 32, 232 individuals, were displaced from Abadam, Kukawa, Monguno, Nganzai, Bama, Konduga, Ngala, Kala Balge and Gwoza LGAs in the aftermath of insurgents attacks in 2015.

Presenting the items to the IDPs, Khalifa, who was represented by Lt.-Col. Andrew Wuyep, Commander of 195 Battalion of the Army, disclosed that the gesture was to celebrate with the displaced families and to put smiles on their faces during the festive period.

He said the event, which witnessed the distribution of foods, drinks, noodles, biscuit and clothes, was also meant to improve civilian-military relationship in the host communities.

He said: "This exercise is in continuation of our efforts geared at winning the hearts and minds of the civil

population to support the army's counter-insurgency campaigns in line with the goals of the Chief of Army Staff.

"This event also provided a favourable platform to sensitise the IDPs on the need to be security conscious and responsive in reporting to the security agencies any suspected movement or strange activity that would breach peace," Khalifa was quoted as saying.

The Acting GOC reiterated the determination of the Nigerian military to restoring lasting peace and normalcy in the North-East.

He encouraged the IDPs to remain resolute until the crisis

was over for them to return to their homes.

Responding, Goni Mele, an IDP, commended the army for the show of love by identifying with the displaced families at the time of their needs.

Mele prayed to God to make the insurgents, whose activities had led to the deaths and displacement of thousands of Nigerians, to repent and embrace peace.

Ya-Bintu Usman, another IDP, said that the clothes given to her children would keep them warm during the harmattan, adding that it had not been easy being in the camp. (NAN)

NIGER-DELTA TRUST



DAILY TRUST PUBLICATION

Vol. 1, No 110

A/Ibom community sacks village for fraud

From Iniabasi Umo, Uyo

Ikot Obio Inyang community in Etinan Local Government Area, Akwa Ibom State, has stripped its village head, Chief Emem Akpan, of his position over alleged fraudulent activities.

The community ordered that Chief Akpan be handed over to the police over claims that he sabotaged the water project provided by the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC).

In a 14-point resolution by Ikot Obio Inyang Development Association (IKODA), signed by its

President, Mr Enefiok Umoh, and 89 other community members, the community said a police report of February 17, 2020, indicted the village head for vandalism.

The community alleged that the dethroned village head removed the solar pump controller, solar panel and other components, from the water facility and sold them, adding that he used the money for his personal benefit.

They said the village head carried out the activities without the knowledge and approval of the village council and community, and passed a

vote of no confidence on his leadership.

They insisted that Chief Akpan would plunge the village into hardship if he remains their head, noting that he ceased being the village head of Ikot Obio Inyang since December 26, 2020.

“Chief Emem Okon Akpan collected compensation for Ekom Iman-Etinan road due for Ikot Obio Inyang people, and never gave to the rightful beneficiaries.

“If Chief Emem Okon continues ruling as the village head of Ikot Obio Inyang, the community would meet

an irredeemable and untold hardship in all spheres of the community life. Enough is enough!

“The entire men, women, youths and social groups in Ikot Obio Inyang passed a vote of no confidence on Chief Emem Okon Akpan.

“Chief Emem Okon Akpan should be handed over to the police to face his pending cases and criminal prosecution,” the community said.

When contacted, Chief Emem Akpan said his purported sack by Ikot Obio Inyang Development Association was not valid.

He declared that the association ought to have consulted and got the endorsement of family heads.

He stated that even the headed paper used to announce his sack was not that of the village council, adding that it invalidated the decision against him.

“They are not members of the village council, but opposition. That is why you did not see any of the family heads sign the letter, and that is why they did not also use the headed paper of the village council.

“They are politicians, their position is not valid,” he said.



Some dead fishes and fishermen in Oduval-Okugbo communities

Tiv people lay claim to Cross River airstrip, Obudu Mountain Resort

From Eyo Charles, Calabar

Some youth leaders in Otangwala and Bebi communities in Obanliku LGA of Cross River State have alleged that some members of the neighbouring Tiv community are encroaching on their land.

Their spokesman, Amos Ushie, told a group of journalists on a visit to Obudu Mountain Resort which is close to the communities.

He expressed the fear that a very serious and perennial inter-state boundary conflict between Cross River and Tiv people of Benue State may soon erupt.

“In the last 10 years or more, there has been steady encroachment by mostly the Tiv of Benue State on a good part of Obanliku LGA of Cross River State, which is a shouting distant to villages

in Benue State.

“I can tell you that no fewer than 100 houses, clinics, schools, mechanic workshops and offices of National Union of Road Transport Union workers belong to Benue indigenes and more are springing up in our communities.”

Ushie said the influx of the Tiv people has increased in recent times.

“As it looks, it would be extremely difficult for these Tiv people to be pushed out of our land. Since they were not challenged at the onset when they began to encroach, it would be very difficult now that they have entrenched and grabbed massive portions of our lands to build houses and other structures. They are even pointing to the airstrip and the mountain resort as possibly situated

on their ancestral land,” he said.

Niger Delta Trust reports that one of the areas allegedly taken over is close to the Donald Duke Airstrip popularly known as the Bebi Airstrip.

One of the Tiv community leaders, Mr Amos Philips, insisted that the portions of land up to the Bebi airstrip are the ancestral land of the Tiv people and that it was wrong for the Duke government to have sited the airstrip.

Reacting, the chairman of Obanliku Local Government Area, Peggy Inde, said he was aware of the claims by the Tiv people.

He said officials of the council were meeting with their Benue State counterparts, adding “We are on it”.

Fishermen, residents lament over dead fishes in Odua-Kugbo Rivers

From Bassey Willie, Yenagoa

Some fishermen and residents of Ogboloma, Adada, Emelego, Okolomade, Akani and Amuruto coastal communities in Abua-Oduval Local Government Area of Rivers State have lamented the emergence of floating dead fishes in their rivers.

The affected communities, which are border communities with Ogbia Local Government of Bayelsa State, said the development started immediately after the water started receding after the flooding along the river bank.

They said there was a possibility of an outbreak of diseases as most inhabitants of the communities rely on the water from the river for their daily needs.

According to the residents, the

fishes locally called “Governor fish” (Aghurugh), “Mud fish” (Obolo) “floating fish” (Oriim) and Cat fish (Obarh), are mostly affected by the unknown disease.

Speaking with Niger Delta Trust, the paramount ruler of Ogboloma community, Chief Micah Igonieghel, explained that before the flood, oil exploration was being carried out by a company in the area, adding that this could be the cause of the situation.

Chief Igonieghel said the situation has affected the people’s means of livelihood as a large percentage of residents depend on fishing for survival.

Also speaking, the Community Development Committee Chairman in Ogboloma community, Mr Family Tom, explained that the community has never experienced such a thing in

the past, adding that the number of dead fishes was increasing everyday.

Narrating their experiences in the last one month, some fishermen, Mr Jimmy Orukari, Omololi Amamine, and a 78-year-old Mr. Blessing Ibiere, pointed out that they have been noticing wounds on the heads and tails of the fishes.

They said the situation has affected their business.

They, therefore, called on the Rivers State government and leadership of Abua- Oduval Local Government Area to immediately investigate the source of the problem.

Niger Delta Trust gathered that a similar incident happened in some communities in Southern Ijaw, Ogbia and other coastal communities in Bayelsa State last April. It was also reported in Bonny and Andoni local government areas of Rivers State.

Tension in Rivers community over death of cult leader

From Victor Edozie, Port Harcourt

Palpable fear has gripped residents of Obele community in Emouha Local Government Area of Rivers State over the murder of a repentant cult leader, Chica Anita.

Community sources informed our reporter that the repentant Iceland cult group leader was said to have been killed in Ibaa community of Emouha Local Government Area by another cult member belonging to Deygbam.

Our reporter learnt that the deceased, who was at Obele town on Wednesday, 30th December, 2020, had

a disagreement with the Demgbam leader popularly known as ‘Naked’ which resulted in the deceased allegedly being shot.

Our reporter also learnt that tension rose on Wednesday night in the community following the death.

The source said that if proactive measures were not taken by security agencies, there might be bloody days ahead in Emohua LGA.

Spokesperson of Rivers State Police command, SP Nnamdi Omoni, told reporters that information on the incident was very sketchy.

NORTH-CENTRAL TRUST

DAILY TRUST PUBLICATION



Vol. 1, No 110

Kogi community donates police station

From Adama John, Lokoja

The Ogidi community in Ijumu Local Government Area of Kogi State has built and donated a new police station to the Nigerian Police Force.

The facility was handed to the representatives of the Kogi State Police Command on Sunday by the President of Ogidi Development Association (ODA), Mr Sunday Thomas in Ogidi town.

Speaking during the handover ceremony, Thomas, who is the Federal Commissioner for Insurance National Insurance Commission (NAICOM) said the station was built to enhance security of life and

property in Ogidi and its environs.

He thanked members of the community for their steadfastness and contributions to the project.

Thomas also commended the Divisional Police Officer in charge of Kabba, ACP Dauda Ladisi for his commitment and dedication, which he said led to the completion of the project.

He expressed the determination and commitment of the people towards transforming the area through projects that have a direct bearing on their lives through self-help efforts.

“By the grace of God, by this time next year, this our major township road would have been tarred. We are regaining

the lost past glory of our community,” he said.

The state Commissioner of Police, Mr Ayuba Ede, while receiving the station commended the people for the effort.

Ede, who was represented by the Area Commander of Kabba, ACP Dauda Lasisi, said that the new station would enhance the effort of police to combat crime in Ogidi and its suburbs.

“The Inspector-General of Police (IGP) has been promoting and hammering on the idea of community policing, which is hinged on the relationship between the members of the community and the police.

“The idea is that there should not be any gap left for

criminals to capitalise upon and terrorise the community.

“Nothing can demonstrate the spirit of community policing better than this gesture from the Ogidi community, and we so much appreciate it,” he said.

He promised that the police will ensure proper utilisation and maintenance of the station.

In their separate remarks, the traditional rulers of the community, the Elebu of Ogidi, Oba Michael Akande; the Olu-otun of Ogidi, Oba Joseph Alamo; the Olojo of Ogidi, Oba Stephen Arogundade; and the Oloda-Ona of Ogidi, Baale Raphael Oloka, commended the leadership of ODA for initiating the project.



■ The police station built and donated by the Ogidi community

We are exposed to health hazards, Awo-Akpali people cry out

From Adama John, Lokoja

The people of Awo-Akpali and 10 other communities in Ankpa Local Government Area of Kogi State have cried out over the health hazards they are being subjected to due to coal mining activities of a company in the area.

The Chairman, Awo-Akpali Community Development Association (ACDA), Mr Ojochogu Marcus Ochigbo disclosed this while receiving the Patron of Ethical Values Compliance Corps, Hon. Tijani Isah Abdullahi in the village.

The chairman, who acknowledged the import of coal as a vital component of energy generation, however, lamented that the exploration exercise had led to the pollution of the only serving stream that the community and eight other villages in the environs depend on.

According to him, the only grace for the residents of Awo Akpali is the only borehole, constructed by a Rev. Father and which he magnanimously extended

to the people.

He stated that though the company constructed motorised borehole for the community, it had broken down long ago while efforts to repair it remained a mirage.

According to him, in spite of the fact that Awo Akpali was the host community to the company, it had not deemed it fit to employ any of the skilled indigenes of the village, adding that many unskilled members of the village were given jobs in the company as casual workers.

He said that the health centre started by the company, which was supposed to be completed and handed over to the community by the end of this month, has not been completed.

Ochigbo, who said that though the company gave N1 million to the village annually as scholarship to its indigenes to further their education, the amount was grossly inadequate and call for an upward review.

He called on the company to fulfil its

promise of empowering the people of the village through revolving loans, award of contracts to some of them and demolition of heaps of coal, which could pose as potential health risk to the people.

The Commander of the Corps in the state, Mr Okpanachi Timothy and two other officers were in the village to feel the pulse of the stakeholders and to assess the company in terms of its Corporate Social Responsibility to its host community.

Reacting to the people's complaints, the patron of the Corps, described the pollution of the river, as claimed by the people, as most unfortunate, adding that the health of the people was of paramount concern to the founder of the Corps, Dr Sera Jubrin.

He promised to convey the people's complaints and demands to the management of the company for a timely solution, to ensure harmonious relationship between the company and the host Community.

Old students give GDSS Minna face-lift

From Romoke W. Ahmad, Minna

Fortune smiled on the Government Day Secondary School, Minna when the 1992 set of the old students association decided to save its dilapidated structures.

The school, which had birthed the high and mighty in the society, was becoming a shadow of itself when the 1992 set came to its rescue with renovation and construction of more structures.

Speaking during the reunion, award presentation and commissioning of the projects executed by the set, the Chairman of the group, who was represented by Adamu Umar Aliyu, said the dilapidated infrastructure in the school was in dire need of prompt attention.

Some of the projects executed according to the Chairman include the renovation of two high rise classrooms, refurbishing of two staff rooms, renovation of the school administrative block and electrical fittings, renovation of the school library, construction of six VIP compartment toilets and the construction of perimeter fencing.

Aliyu said that the projects executed so far cost them over N20 million, which was contributed by members.

The association also promised to carry out other projects in order to ensure a complete overhaul of infrastructure in the school.

Some of the planned projects are; reroofing of the two high-rise classrooms, construction of motorised borehole and installation of overhead tank, rehabilitation of the school bus, construction of a standard school clinic among others.

The Chairman, therefore, appealed to its members and other sets that graduated from the school to join hands so as to actualise the projects.

The Commissioner for Education, Hajia Hannatu Jibrin Salihu, while commending the effort of the group called on other stakeholders in the education sector to emulate the group saying such efforts will definitely change the face of education in the state.

The highlight of the event was the recognition and presentation of awards to the old teachers and members who have contributed immensely to the school.

FOCUS ON KATSINA

Co-created
content

EVERY FRIDAY

Banditry: No state could achieve peace in isolation – Katsina SGS

The Secretary to the Government of Katsina State, Dr Mustapha Inuwa, was the head of the Amnesty committee that entered into peace deal with bandits and relative peace was achieved for almost two years during which a lot of the bandits surrendered their weapons and released rustled cattle which were returned to their owners. In this interview, he gave an update on the security situation in the state and possible ways out. Excerpts:



■ Katsina SGS Mustapha Inuwa

Sir, 2020 has been very eventful in Katsina, what strategy do have in place approaching the new year?

Yes, like you rightly mentioned, it is an unfortunate situation we have been experiencing and the worse we have experienced is the year 2020 where the rate of kidnapping and other forms of criminality have increased in various places almost on daily basis. You could remember very well, this is where the largest number, in history, of students were kidnapped by bandits and fortunately we were able to rescue them within a period of just one week. I don't think there is anywhere the world over where such a number was involved and the rescue operation lasted effective within three days, because that was when the negotiation started.

So, it was really sad and unfortunate and the government has invested a lot of resources in supporting the security agencies in this regard.

Now, we are moving into 2021 and fortunately the security chiefs of the nation were all here and they realized the magnitude of the problem and promised to strategize and face this security issue head-on, and from what we have seen, from the security agents, they are really coming up with new strategies.

But like we always say, the strategy that should be adopted to bring

these problems to an end immediately is when all the states concerned are involved, when there is a national platform, under one command that will direct this fight against this banditry. Because no matter what a particular state is doing, if the other states are not doing the same thing at the same time, the bandits will move to the place they consider safe haven from where they will continue to launch their attacks. For instance, most of the attacks in Katsina, the attackers come from Zamfara. They are in the same group, they organize and move from one place to another and as we all know, they are naturally mobile. So it has to be a well-coordinated effort by a national platform where you have the Army, may be from the Defense Headquarters, commanding at the centre while the state governors, as political heads of their respective states, should come together and take common positions on things that will help the military to achieve what they want to achieve. There must also be a synergy between what the state governments are doing and what the military are doing. With that I believe this issue could be tackled within the shortest possible time, and I hope by 2021 this will be actualized because if we keep on using same approach in this fight we should not expect a different result.

Another very important thing that the security

agencies need to do is to try to block their source of fire arms. It is very clear that most of the arms these bandits are using come from Niger Republic. So it is the responsibility of the federal agencies, especially the intelligence unit, to look at ways of how these things are coming and block it. If you collaborate with Niger government to block these sources, I believe you render them very ineffective and the few ones that are coming from Plateau state and other parts of the country, use the intelligence to block them as well. But if you allow this proliferation of fire arms, this issue will never end.

Another important issue that the government will need to do is to sensitize the populace of the implication of paying ransom. Once ransom will continue to be paid, these people will find it very difficult to stop their crime, because in a situation where you kidnap somebody and receive millions of naira, tell me what they will do to earn this money within a week or so? We can understand it is a very delicate situation but people have to make sacrifices. Other countries stopped kidnappings by refusing to pay ransom.

Sir, you are discouraging the payment of ransom, does that mean ransom was not paid to secure the release of the Kankara schoolboys?

Not a dime was paid. Take it from me that not a dime was given to those people in order

to release these boys.

There are some uncomplimentary remarks that the government has done enough on this issue of insecurity, what's your take on that?

You don't blame people for holding such opinions. Some say it out of ignorance because they don't know how the government works. Some don't know that is the responsibility of the state and what the federal government is supposed to do. What is important to them is that the government should provide security for their lives and property, and anything short of that, they can say anything. As you know, we inherited this problem and we promised to bring it to an end. So people have every right to expect the government to do just that.

But those who know, will understand that the state government can only support the security agencies. They are not under their command. The governor cannot direct the military or any other security agency to move one kilometer and conduct an operation without clearance from their superior officers. The governors cannot recruit one person into the security agencies. The entire responsibility lies with the federal government. So a local person may not know all these. But some know it but they like politicizing even issues that ought not to be politicized. Some do it out of mischief. So there is nothing you can do. What is most important to me is not the comment of the people but the efforts of the government yield positive results.

Sir, the world celebrated the non-kinetic approach adopted by Katsina state government in securing the release of Kankara schoolboys, are you considering such approach in taming this issue of insecurity?

You see, in this state we did it twice. In the early 2017 we had that and we were able to achieve relative peace for almost two years. Later, of recent, the security agencies, under the influence of the Inspector General of Police, also insisted that we go with this non-kinetic which we did. But you see, in all the two cases, what we realized is that one, these people don't have a common leader whom if you agree with, everybody accepts. They have different groups and even within he groups, they don't have a

common leader, unlike Boko Haram, which is based on a particular ideology. These are pure criminals and thieves. They don't have a common leader that all others follow.

If anyone enters into an agreement with the government, the rest will pull out and if he is not careful they can even kill him. That is why most of those that we have entered into an agreement with previously were killed by the rest.

Secondly, this peace approach is not something that will be achieved by a single state. It has to be done by all the affected states. Kaduna for instance has never entered into any peace deal with the bandits, Zamfara is currently doing, Sokoto has never while Katsina has done it. So it is difficult for us to get the understanding of all the groups. For instance if you talk to Shekau and other splinter groups and they accept peace, you can achieve that.

Again, even if you want to negotiate peace with these people, let it be on the point of strength. Let it be on their request, may be after having been confronted and devastated and they realized that there is nothing they could do, and they call for peace, they you give them a condition to surrender all their weapons, unless that is done, if you allow them to hold their weapons they you will go back to square one. So, even if the security agencies want to continue with this non-kinetic thing, let it be from the point of strength.

What is your message to the people of the state?

Well, like we always do, we appreciate the patience and understanding of our people. We know they are under serious situation, especially those living in the neighbourhood of these bandits who are being attacked almost on daily basis. Some of them have abandoned all they have for their safety. Honestly the government is so worried and concerned. If we have our way we can end this problem within a day

I want to assure them that the government is doing all it can to end this problem. Let me also appeal to those who are aiding these bandits in attacking their communities to have a rethink and change their ways for the good of all of us.



ALL PROGRESSIVES CONGRESS

CECPC 2020 NEW YEAR MESSAGE

Our Party, its leadership and members join all Nigerians to celebrate the commencement of another year - 2021. Indeed, the year 2020 evokes mixed feelings for our great Party, the All Progressive Congress (APC). Just like every other sector and activities belabored by the yearlong restrictions globally due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as a party, we did have our share of the inconveniences. Besides the pause of Party activities in the course of the year, we spent a part of the year witnessing internal rancors that almost threatened the kernel of the Party; and thereby warranting the prompt interventions of the Party leadership including NEC.

The fact that the Party survived the onslaught, emerged yet stronger, and went on to win a number of critical elections across the country in the later course of the year is a testament to the great strength of the Party.

The Caretaker/Extraordinary Convention Planning Committee (CECPC) came on board some six months ago as an interim administration to steer the affairs of the Party including organising the all-important Party congresses to elect a substantial Party Executive.

His Excellency, Hon. Mai Mala Buni led-Party National Secretariat accepted the honour of serving our great Party in response to the desire and directive of the National Executive Committee in such a critical period in the life of the Party; and has upon assumption of office, set out desirable action plans for the Party National Secretariat. So far, CECPC has recorded scores of implemented agendas within the limitation of the time frame accorded it.

However, the meeting of the Party NEC in November and the resulting extension of the tenure of CECPC has provided for the Party National Secretariat yet ample opportunity to further complete as much as feasible its set agendas for the Party.

On behalf of the entire staff of the Party National Secretariat and CECPC, I want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank and appreciate the support and encouragement of our amiable President and foremost leader of our great Party.

We equally appreciate the leadership of the National Assembly and the entire APC caucus of both chambers for their total support, collaboration, and understanding with regard to the agendas of CECPC in the last six months.

Our great party thanks H.E. Mai Mala Buni for accepting the crucial assignment of serving as Chairman of the CECPC and doubling as Governor of Yobe State.

We thank our ministers for their support, particularly the Attorney General of the Federation for providing legal guidance and advice that has helped the CECPC decisions.

The CECPC also deeply appreciates the confidence and trust our esteemed governors of the Progressive Governors' Forum reposed in the CECPC.

The NEC has shown trust in the capacity of CECPC to effectively lead the Party until the emergence of a substantive party leadership; and the extension of the tenure of CECPC is an indication of this trust. We appreciate and sincerely thank all the members of NEC for the trust reposed on CECPC.

We equally thank and appreciate all others, the press inclusive, who have contributed in various ways to the success of CECPC hitherto.

When we came on board six months ago, after understudying the state of the Party, the CECPC leadership set its agendas for driving its actions accordingly. The CECPC agenda include:

1. The need to resolve all pending and emerging internal crisis within the Party at all levels and to create an harmonious working atmosphere for the Party's coming general convention.
2. Subsequently, the need to get all ongoing litigations against the Party as well as among members - with bearing to Party issues - withdrawn and terminated
3. The need to expand the Party membership base via the revalidation of the Party membership, registration of new members and update of the Party membership register
4. The CECPC also saw the need for the review of the Party Constitution to address identified gaps and issues
5. The CECPC from the outset was saddled with the task of preparing and leading the Party's campaign in a number of critical elections for positions at the state and national levels. To this, CECPC had to commence preparation from the outset
6. The CECPC saw also the need to resolve the ownership tussle surrounding the building that houses the Party National Secretariat.

7. The CECPC was also aware of the Party's financial obligations, particularly a number of litigation fees; and thereby prompting it to make the decision from the outset to offset the arrears of these litigation costs.

The preceding became the arrowhead of the CECPC drives in the last six months.

To what extent have we been able to deliver on our plans for the Party as the year 2020 runs to an end?

1. On the issue of conflict resolution, CECPC did set up several high-profile reconciliation teams across party chapters that were battered by internal crises and has recorded a good number of resolutions that has improved the Party's stand and cohesion since then. However, we have also recognised that conflicts and conflict resolution in a large family like ours would always be a continuous exercise and as such CECPC has laid a structure for continuous recognition of crisis where they exist and their resolution as much as it is possible
2. The Party's effort at resolving internal conflicts at various chapters has paid off with members' desire in compliance with the Party resolution to withdraw and terminate all ongoing litigations that involve the Party. We did also record few dissidents, despite all reasonable appeals, as per these decision and which as we are all aware have been appropriately dealt with by NEC at the recommendation of CECPC
3. The Party National Secretariat has widely discussed the need for registration of new members and update of our register to improve on the Party membership and support base nationwide. Our ground preparation has been applauded and approved by NEC and the exercise is set to commence in the last week of the month of January, 2021
4. We did set up a committee to oversee the review of the Party Constitution and to consider the recommendations of contributors, particularly on contemporary issues that need to be adequately captured. The process is still ongoing.
5. In the course of the year, since the beginning of the tenure of CECPC, we have led the party into major elections comprising governorship, National Assembly and state Assembly elections. In these elections, the Party did once again prove that it is the Party to reckon with in the country with significant wins across the board. A win in the Ondo State gubernatorial election despite the mass gang up against the Party, the senatorial seats won across Lagos, Plateau and other states as well as the good number of State Houses of Assembly won are parts of the CECPC fears for the year under review. It must be noted that a committee has also been set up to advise the Party National Secretariat on what led to the defeat in Edo state and what actions need to be taken to prevent a recurrence in the future.
6. Successfully, in the course of the year, we have been able to resolve the ownership tussle surrounding the building that houses the Party National Secretariat and necessary settlement to take full control of the building is already in progress.
7. Settling of outstanding litigation fees was one of the targets of CECPC from the outset, and that we have been able to deliver to a very large extent in the last six months.

Suffice to say, that as much as CECPC is proud to announce that it has done well by all standards in the last six months, there is still more to be done and which we are set to do and complete before the end of the tenure of CECPC.

1. We have recognised the need for continued conflict resolution and have decided to vigorously pursue reconciliation on all fronts to emerge as a stronger Party ahead of the congresses and the 2023 general elections.
2. Having got the approval for the Party membership registration, CECPC is now set to undertake the exercise efficiently and effectively in a record time beginning from the 25th January, 2021
3. CECPC is fully set to conduct a total congresses for the Party at all levels through a fair and transparent process of electing officials for the various organs of the Party that will culminate in the Party National Convention
4. The CECPC is working to create a member-centered party structure; one that guarantees the full participation of all members and accord privileges to strengthened members' trust, beliefs and engagements in all Party activities.

Recognising that time is very well against us, CECPC is already doubling its efforts to meet up with the tasks ahead in 2021. A democracy is as strong as the political parties it produces; and we are rebuilding our Party, APC to strengthen our democracy. We want to assure all our members that our commitment to lead the process of political change in Nigeria is unwavering.

May God continue to bless democracy, Party and Nigeria

Sen. John J. Akpan Udoedehe Phd.
National Secretary
Caretaker/Extraordinary Convention Planning Committee (CECPC)
January 1, 2021

Kaduna sex party: Police parade organisers, hotel demolished

From Maryam Ahmadu-Suka,
Kaduna

The Kaduna State Police Command yesterday paraded the suspected organisers of the maiden edition of a botched sex party.

This is as officials of the Kaduna State Urban Planning Development Agency (KASUPDA) demolished the building that was to host the party.

The state's Commissioner of Police, CP Umar Muri, said some youths were arrested on December 27, 2020, after concluding plans to stage an elaborate party titled "Kaduna Sex Party" at a hotel in Sabon Tasha, Kaduna.

The suspects arrested are: Abraham Alber, the hotel owner; Umar Rufai and Suleiman Lemona.

He said the principal organiser of the event is at large but all the musical instruments brought for the event were recovered and the suspects will be charged to court after investigation.

Confession

One of the promoters of the botched party has confessed that he conceived the idea, but that it was a mere joke between him and his friends.

The suspect said the sex party was not organised to cause nuisance in Kaduna, as it was not supposed to go public, but a mere party among friends.

"Kaduna Sex Party started as a joke between me and my friends, it was not meant to go public, it was not meant to cause nuisance among the public of Kaduna State. It was just someone that felt that she was too brilliant that posted it on Twitter, he said.

Hotel demolished

The Public Relations Officer of KASUPDA, Nuhu Garba, said the hotel, billed to host the party, was demolished for contravening rights of occupancy.

"The law has vested the agency the power to demolish any building that contravenes the rights of occupancy. For instance, if a residential building is turned into something other than the purpose it was meant for, the law gives us power to demolish such property especially if it is against public interest," he said.

"We were in Narayi, another suburb in the state to carry out similar assignment. We are currently demolishing another building that promotes illicit acts," he added.

Bandits neutralised

The Kaduna Commissioner of Police also disclosed that the Command, in collaboration with the Force Headquarters, Abuja and the Nigerian Airforce (NAF) successfully carried out a joint operation on bandits' camp in Kofa, Chukun LGA, where a large number of armed bandits were neutralised and dislodged and their camp destroyed.

He urged the neighbouring communities and villages to look out for the fleeing bandits and hastily report same to security agencies for a quick and appropriate action.

CP Muri also said the Command has apprehended over 82 suspects for various crimes and investigation into various allegations was ongoing.

He said some of the suspects have voluntarily confessed to their crimes and would be charged to court for prosecution accordingly, he added.

He stated that the Command also arrested a woman in Bauchi State, identified as Aisha Musa, who stole a 3-day old baby from the mother, one Mrs. Bilkisu Ishaq at her residence in Rigasa, Kaduna State.

Former minister, Nuruddeen Muhammad, loses father

From Zahraddeen Yakubu Shuaibu,
Kano

Malam Muhammad Unik, the father of former Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Minister of Information under Goodluck Jonathan's administration, Nuruddeen Muhammad, is dead. He was 70.

Unik died yesterday at the Aminu Kano Teaching



■ Malam Muhammad Unik hospital, Kano.

His death was confirmed

by the family of the former minister in a statement on Thursday.

Malam Muhammad served as a teacher throughout his life and retired as head master.

He left behind many children, among who are the former state Minister of foreign affairs, Dr. Nuruddeen Muhammad, Aminu Muhammad and Mustapha Muhammad.

Pharmacists elect new chair in Kano

From Zahraddeen Yakubu Shuaibu, Kano

Mr Sani Ali Yusuf has been elected as the new chairman of Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria (PSN), Kano State branch.

Yusuf works at the Pharmacy department of

the National Orthopedic Hospital, Dala, Kano.

Sani appealed to members to give him maximum cooperation in running the affairs of the association, while he assured of their welfare.

"I will give priority to the welfare of our members in areas of job opportunities,

educational development, rejoicing and sympathizing with one another as the case may be. I will also collaborate with all the relevant government and private organisations toward the development of our profession and the society in general," he said.

Insecurity: NPC urges Sokoto LGs to provide security for demarcators

From Abubakar Auwal, Sokoto

The National Population Commission has urged local government areas of Sokoto State to provide adequate security for demarcators working at security-challenged areas.

The National Commissioner representing Sokoto State, Alhaji Chuso Abdullahi Dattijo, made

the call while assessing the ongoing demarcation of enumeration areas in Binji Local Government of the state.

He assured that no area in all the 23 local government areas would be left out during the exercise.

"But the local government authorities must ensure their safety, especially in security-

challenged areas," he insisted.

Chuso also appealed to the people to cooperate with the demarcators by allowing them access to their homes.

NPC's coordinator in Sokoto, Dr Kingsley Okereke, said the demarcation was to carve out enumeration areas in preparation for the national population census.



THE KADUNA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL, KADUNA STATE

INVITATION TO BID AND APPROVED GUIDELINES FOR THE PUBLIC AUCTION OF KADUNA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL NON - ESSENTIAL RESIDENTIAL QUARTERS TO PUBLIC SERVANTS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

In pursuance of the housing policy of the Kaduna State Government, the Kaduna South Local Government Council has granted approval for the sale of its non-essential residential houses. All interested purchasers are advised to contact their Bankers and /or any Private Mortgage Institution for a facility. To this end, the public Auction of non - essential Kaduna South Local Government Council residential houses will proceed as follows:

A. Application Process:

- The application process starts when the payment terms and submission conditions, as listed below, are complied with;
 - All public servants occupying the properties must complete Application forms, attached with receipt of proof of payment of ₦10,000.00 in favour of the Kaduna South Local Government Council, along with the following:
 - Letter of Appointment into Public Office or Certificate of Election
 - Letter of allocation of quarters by an appropriate Authority (where applicable);
 - 4no. High resolution colour Passport Photographs.
 - All other bidders that are not political office holders must complete Application forms with receipt of proof of payment of ₦10,000.00 in favour of the Kaduna South Local Government Council, along with the following:
 - Tax clearance Certificate for last three years;
 - Certificate of Incorporation, Memorandum and Articles of Association for Companies, and
 - 4no. High resolution colour Passport Photographs.
- Dully completed application forms attached with the receipt must be submitted to; The Ad - Hoc Secretariat of the Committee on the Sale of Kaduna South Local Government Council Non-Essential Residential Houses; Kaduna South Local Government Council Secretariat, Makera - Kaduna Tel+2349070584914 Email: kadunasouthlhc@kds.gov.ng
- The submitted form shall be promptly acknowledged and issued with serial number, and a copy of such acknowledgement returned to the applicant.
- Sale of houses is on as - is basis and, as herein advertised, is **OPEN TO ALL KADUNA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL RESIDENTS AND INCORPORATED ASSOCIATIONS**. Evidence of payment of application fee of ₦10,000.00 (Ten Thousand Naira only), payable at any of the licensed banks, must accompany each **FREE** application form.
- Each applicant shall be entitled to purchase only one residential unit.

B. Bidding Process:

- The bidding process will be conducted strictly in conformity with the following procedure:
 - All houses occupied by public servants will be sold in an Open Auction whereby all residents of Kaduna South Local Government Council shall be given equal opportunity. A simple Auction System by way of competitive bidding shall be employed. All bids must be submitted with a bid bond by way of bank draft equal to 10% of bid value. All bids without a bid bond stand disqualified. The highest bidder shall be automatically declared the preferred bidder, along with the second highest bidder as the reserve bidder; with the bid bonds being retained and treated as non-refundable 10% deposit. All other bid bonds shall be returned (un-cashed) to unsuccessful bidders(s)
 - The highest bid price will then be offered to the public servant in occupation to exercise the right of first refusal by effecting payment of 10% non - refundable deposit within **fourteen (14 days)**. If the public servant fails to exercise the right of first refusal, the preferred bidder will be allowed to complete the transaction as envisaged.
- Within **seven (7) days** of the date of this publication, a copy of the previously processed Application Form, with the acknowledgements stamp and serial number clearly visible, is to be used by interested bidders to submit their bids in the public Auction.
- The bid (consisting of a duly completed, signed, and processed general application form and 10% bid bond by way of bank draft enclosed in a sealed envelope and submitted to the Ad- hoc Secretariat of the Committee on the sale of Kaduna South Local Government Council Non-essential Residential Houses in Kaduna South Local Government Council, Local Government Secretariat, Makera - Kaduna, Not later than **12:00noon on Friday, 8th January 2021**, being the expiration date of the Stipulated **seven (7) days** from the date of publication. All bids on each housing unit will be opened in public on the same day beginning at **1:00pm**, in the Council Chamber, Kaduna South Local Government Council Secretariat, Makera, Kaduna South, Kaduna.

C. Auction Process

- All bids on each housing unit will be opened on the same day beginning at **1:00pm**, in the Council Chamber, Kaduna South Local Government Council Secretariat, Makera, Kaduna South, Kaduna.
- No housing unit will be sold below the reserved price; being the open Market Value of the property.
- The preferred bidder will be determined by a simple evaluation of the highest bid submitted (provided that it is above the reserve price) and the bid bond will immediately become a 10% non - refundable deposit towards the purchase of the property.
- The second highest bidder will become the reserve bidder, provided that the submitted bid is above the reserve price.
- Public Servants will be given the right to match (**within fourteen days**) the winning bid on their currently occupied housing units, by effecting a non - refundable deposit equal to 10% of the winning bid value.
- Thereafter, a winning bidder will be declared.
- Bid bonds of all unsuccessful bids will be returned.
- Payment of 25% of purchase price (including 10% non-refundable deposit), must be made to the Kaduna South Local Government Council within 30 days of being declared winner.
- Balance of 75% must be paid by all purchasers within additional 30 days; thus, all purchasers must effect full payment within 60 days of contract.
- Each purchaser will be given custody of the original C-of-O issued by the Kaduna State Government with his / her picture or RCN Number scanned thereon, unless paragraph 19 below applies.
- Lender(s) will have immediate custody of original C-of-O with Governor's consent and legal mortgage executed in their favour by the Kaduna State Government.
- All transaction charges shall be for the account of the purchaser.
- In the event that a purchaser fails to comply with the payment terms, the non-refundable deposit (being 10% of the purchase price) will be forfeited to the Kaduna South Local Government Council, the contract of sale shall be rendered null and void, and the house declared unsold. Any payment in excess of the non-refundable deposit shall be refundable, less any administrative costs.
- In the case of houses offered to political office holders in occupation, they will be entitled to make subsequent payment from their Severance gratuity. However, failure to accept offer and/or comply with the payment terms will lead to eventual eviction and the forfeiture of deposit (if applicable).
- In the case of unsold houses offered for open auction, and where the highest bidder fails to comply with the terms of sale, bid bond of highest bidder will be forfeited, and the second highest bidder ("reserve bidder") shall be invited to complete the transaction. The reserve bidder's deposit shall be refunded with interest at Treasury Bill Rate +1%, if highest bidder completes transaction.
- If the reserve bidder fails to comply with the terms of sale, the bid bond shall also be forfeited and paragraph 6(i and ii) above shall apply thereafter.
- Subject to the implementation of the subsequent payment terms and conditions as in paragraph 16 -24 above, the winning bidder will take possession of the property immediately upon completion of pull payment - being 100% of the bid offer amount.
- In order to ensure transparency and accountability, at each point the process, the particulars of the Auction, including the names of the winning, preferred and reserve bidders will be published. Detailed property descriptions and relevant information will also be widely accessible, on the website of the Kaduna South Local Government Council and the Ad - Hoc Secretariat of the Committee on the sale of Kaduna South Local Government Council Residential Houses in Kaduna South Local Government Council Secretariat, Makera , Kaduna.
- The Kaduna State Government, at its sole and absolute discretion, reserves the right to withdraw any and all properties hereby advertised.
- All applicants at the venue of the bidding process are expected to wear their face marks and observe all necessary **COVID - 19** protocols.

COMMITTEE ON THE SALE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESIDENTIAL HOUSES IN KADUNA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCIL, MAKERA DECEMBER, 2020



CITY NEWS

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■ From left: Director General, Public Private Partnership Rivers State, Barr Eddy Mark; Rivers State Governor, Nysom Wike; Celebrant, Mrs. Priscilla Mark; Chief Operating officer, Upstream NNPC, Mr. Adokiye Tombomiyeye; Sokoto State Governor, Aminu Tambuwal; and Mr. Emmanuel Mark during the 90th years birthday celebration of Priscilla in in Port Harcourt yesterday.

Kano women protest over missing children

From Habibu Umar Aminu, Lubabatu I. Garba, Kano

Many mothers whose children have gone missing in Kano took to the street yesterday in protest of what they term as nonchalant attitudes on the part of authorities to ensure the safe return of their children.

The aggrieved mothers carrying placards and pictures of their missing children visited the state public complaint commission and the state ministry of women affairs to press home their demand.

At both places visited, their spokesperson, Zainab Abdullahi Giginyu, complained that over the years,

government has been adamant to their plight, despite several complaints to it.

She said, from 2016 to date, women have recorded cases of 118 children that have gone missing and are believed to have been stolen and sold elsewhere in the country.

According to her, the majority of the stolen

children were from Hoto, Kawo, Yankaba, and Gama areas of the state, noting that "We are greatly disturbed and want government to do the needful and return our children."

"We are aware of government committee but for years we have not heard from them or seen what they have done on the issue" she added.

Lafia LG budgets N4.2 bn for 2021 fiscal year

From Ibraheem Hamza Muhammad, Lafia

Lafia Local Government Area Council of Nasarawa State has budgeted N4,150,492.120.00 billion for 2021 fiscal year.

Chairman of the local government, Alhaji Aminu Muazu Maifata, disclosed this at the signing of the budget in the Secretariat on Thursday in the presence of the Council Speaker, principal officers and members of the legislative council

According to him, "N3,311,021,220

has been appropriated for recurrent expenditure and 839,480,000.00 has been estimated for capital expenditure.

"All the expenditures were planned to be financed through the following expected sources of revenue: Statutory allocation, Value Added Tax, Exchange gain difference, Excess crude oil and internally generated revenue," he said.

Aminu Maifata who is also the chairman of Association of Local Governments of Nigeria

(ALGON) in the state said that his administration has planned to drill boreholes and provide solar street lights in the 13 wards, construct culverts among others.

He said in 2020, his administration purchased a tractor, provided relief materials to victims of disaster, provided palliatives, paid WAEC and NECO examination fees to students among others.

The chairman however called on the people to live in peace and avoid any act that breaches law and order.

Bauchi govt to procure N759m vehicles for security agencies

Bauchi State Commissioner for Finance, Umar Sanda, on Thursday, said that the government would buy 50 operational vehicles, worth N759.5 million, for all the security agencies in the state.

Sanda, who made this known in Bauchi at a news conference, said that achieving effective security was one of the cardinal campaign promises of the state governor.

The commissioner explained that each of the pickups would be purchased at N15 million, adding that the governor decided to buy the vehicles so that residents could "sleep with their two eyes closed".

"The North East Development Commission (NEDC) had previously provided security vehicles to

some Northeastern states such as Yobe, Borno, and Adamawa, but unfortunately, Bauchi State was not included.

"It was on the basis of this that the security agencies in the state made a presentation to the governor on the need to provide them with pick-up vehicles with a view to securing the state," Sanda said.

Also speaking, the Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Samaila Burga, said that the state government had approved the training of 1,000 youths on integrated agriculture at the International Skills Acquisition Centre, Keffi, Nasarawa State.

He explained that the governor, who was not happy with the way

youths were roaming the streets, approved N318 million for the training programme.

He said the government would train "reliable individuals" whom it could stand as a guarantor for while accessing funds from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and other commercial banks.

"There is a lot of money available for agriculture at the Central Bank and many commercial banks; however, they always look for guarantees from the government, Burga said.

The Agriculture Commissioner disclosed that 50 people were selected for the training from each of the 20 local government areas and were expected to return to their LGAs to train others. (NAN)

QUICK READ

Lagos

Police to enforce all COVID-19 protocols

From Eugene Agha Lagos

The Lagos State Commissioner of Police, Hakeem Odumosu, yesterday, ordered all Area Commanders and their respective Divisional Police Officers in the state to enforce all COVID-19 protocols as highlighted by the Presidential Taskforce and Lagos State government.

The police boss gave the order while addressing the Area Commanders and DPOs at the POWA Hall, Oduduwa, Ikeja, amidst COVID-19 protocols. Odumosu who reiterated the need to enforce the use of face mask regularly at public places (markets/malls), social distancing, said he would be hard on night clubs, bars, lounges, event centres, social party, street carnivals, and the use of an infrared thermometer to check body temperature is now necessary when assessing public and private offices.

1 dies, 13 injured in Kaduna-Birnin Gwari road crash

From Mohammed Ibrahim Yaba, Kaduna

A vigilante lost his life and 13 others sustained varying degrees of injury in a ghastly car accident, while patrolling the Birnin Gwari-Kaduna highway in Kaduna State.

Daily Trust gathered that the accident occurred around 12: pm on Wednesday, when the Golf vehicle conveying the vigilantes had a collision with a trailer.

A community leader, Imam Hussaini Udawa, said the vigilantes were from Udawa town, volunteering to secure the highway from bandits' attacks.

"Yes, they were our local vigilantes on duty. The incident happened close to a place called Labi, few kilometres from Udawa town along Birnin Gwari-Kaduna highway.

"The deceased, Sahabi Shuaibu, has since been buried, while 13 others that sustained injuries are receiving treatment at Birnin Gwari Hospital," he said.

Anambra govt reiterates ban on night clubs

Anambra State government has reiterated the ban on night clubs for one month to ensure the safety of lives of its citizens across the state.

Mr C-Don Adinuba, Commissioner for Information and Public Enlightenment, made this known in an interview with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) on Thursday in Awka.

Adinuba urged all operators to comply with the directives on the ban of night club activities.

He said that the ban was in response to reports of increased incidences of COVID-19 pandemic in various parts of the world where a new strain of the virus, more infectious, had been reported.

"We need to take precautionary steps to guard against any form of coronavirus spread, as we may have returnees from outside the country with high incidences of COVID-19 to celebrate the Yuletide. (NAN)



CRIME

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Ogun Police arrest 2,735 for rape, kidnapping, robbery in 6 months

From Peter Moses, Abeokuta

The Commissioner of Police in Ogun State, Edward Ajogun, says the command has arrested 2,735 suspects for armed robbery, kidnapping, rape and cultism between July and December 2020 in the state.

He disclosed this while parading another set of suspects before journalists on Thursday

at the command's headquarters in Elewera, Abeokuta.

Ajogun noted that the suspects were arrested within the six months he assumed office as the commissioner of police in the state.

The arrested suspects, according to him, included 113 armed robbers, 227 cultists, 24 kidnapers, 47 rapists, and 2,324 others.

He added that 14 armed

robbery suspects were shot dead during gun battles with operatives of the command.

The commissioner revealed that the command recovered 57 various types of firearms, 82 different types of ammunition, and 31 vehicles.

Ajogun added that the command secured 45 convictions while 1,139 suspects are still undergoing prosecution in courts across the state.

According to him, N109million worth of property, including vehicles and cash were recovered from the suspects.

Among the suspects paraded were 12 cultists involved in the cult clash in Ijebu-Ode which claimed 20 lives while several others were injured.

Parading the suspects, the commissioner vowed to rid the state of crimes and warned

criminals to steer clear of the state.

He said, "The command will not rest on its oars in the coming year in ensuring adequate security and safety of the people of Ogun State.

"We will continue to clamp down heavily on criminals, most especially those involved in violent crimes such as armed robbery, murder, cultism and kidnapping."



Photo: Maryam Ahmadu-Suka

■ suspected kidnappers being paraded by Police in Kaduna yesterday.

Court remands 7 men for robbery, kidnapping of church members

An Itori Magistrate Court in Ogun, yesterday, remanded seven men in a correctional service centre for allegedly robbing church members of their properties and kidnapping one during church service.

The defendants, Mohamodu Sanni, 24, Abdul Salad, 28, Abdulraman Musa, 38, Abubakar Ibrahim, 39, Umar Aliu, 30, Suleiman Yusuf, 30, and Ismaila Yusuf, 20, are facing three counts of conspiracy, armed robbery, and kidnapping.

The prosecutor, Sgt. Adekunle Opayemi, told the court that the defendants committed the offence on Nov.

26, at about 10:45 pm at Christ Apostolic Church, Gudugba village, via Wasimi in Ogun.

Opayemi said that the defendants conspired with others at large, while armed with weapons to rob church members while holding a vigil.

He added that the defendants kidnapped one of the church members, Mrs Atolagbe Mojisola, 48, and prevented anyone from having access to her.

He said the gang robbed Evangelist Obisesan Seye, Mrs Oyere Temitope, Pastor Sanyaolu Zacheus, and Mrs Atolagbe Mojisola, of their phones, values yet unknown, as

well as the sum of N36,000.

The prosecutor said the offence contravened Sections 6(b) and 2(b) of the Robbery and Firearms Act Cap Rll Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004 and Sections 23 (2), 24(2) and 451 of the Criminal Code Vol. 1, Laws of Ogun State, 2006.

The defendants, however, pleaded not guilty to the charges.

The Magistrate, Mr B. A Somorin, remanded the defendants in a correctional service centre, pending legal advice from the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Somorin adjourned the case until Feb. 2, 2021. (NAN)

How to end insecurity - Islamic group

From Habibu Umar Aminu, Kano

The Jama'atut Tajdidil Islamy (JTI) said one of the surest ways to address insecurity in the country is for government to revive, reinvigorate and reintegrate the traditional justice system and administration across the country.

A communiqué issued at the end of its 2-day meeting in Kano signed by Abdulkadir Dangogo and Aliyu Diso said this strengthen information gathering and sharing, oversight, and response to social and security issues in their domain.

It stated that government must emphasise the strengthening of community policing initiative being implemented in states of the federation to enable adequate policing of all

communities, detect and mitigate crimes.

"Institute adequate mechanisms for the resolution of communal crises involving farmers and herders and religious conflicts in the Middle Belt. Government should create a smooth working relationship with traditional, community, religious, women and youth leaders in areas affected by and those prone to insecurity to enable information sharing and synergy in tackling the menace" the communiqué said.

It also urged governments to make adequate provisions to reclaim established grazing reserves and routes as well as watering points for cattle and other animals thereby reducing to the barest minimum conflicts between herders and farmers.

2 men docked for raping minor

An Ado-Ekiti Chief Magistrate Court, on Thursday, ordered the remand of Olaniyi Anu, 25, and Alobaloye Abidemi, 23, of no known addresses, at the Ado-Ekiti Correctional Centre for allegedly raping a minor.

The police prosecutor, Insp Bankole Olanukanmi, told the court that the defendants allegedly committed the offence on Dec. 28 at Otun-Ekiti.

Olanukanmi alleged that the defendants conspired and waylaid the 13-year-old victim, who was sent on an errand by her mother, and raped her.

He noted that the offence contravened

Section 31 of the Child Right Laws of Ekiti State, 2012.

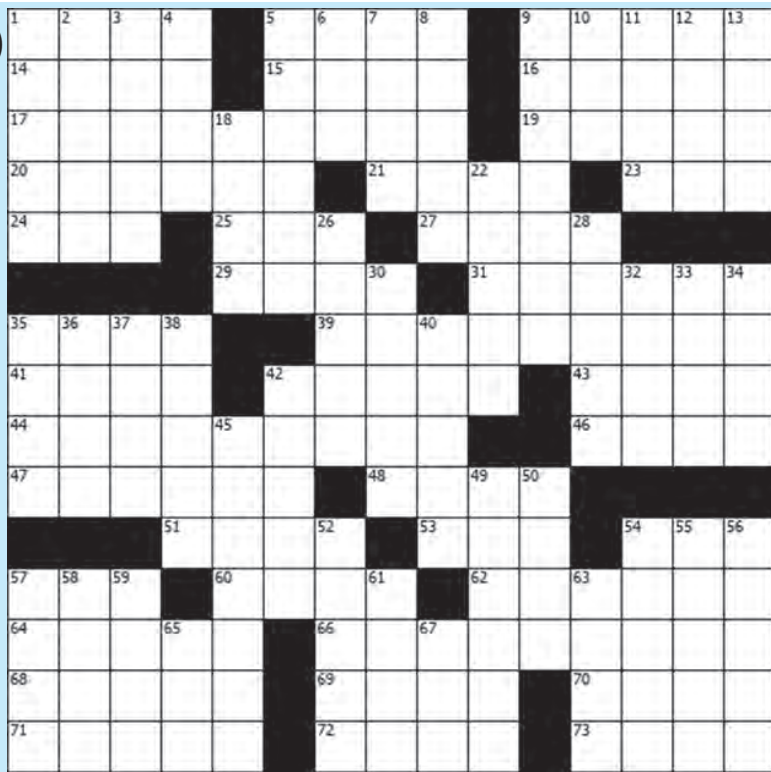
The prosecutor urged the court to remand the defendants in the correctional centre, pending the receipt of legal advice from the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP).

The pleas of the defendants were, however, not taken, but the Chief Magistrate, Mr Abdulhamid Lawal, ordered the remand of the defendants at the correctional centre, pending receipt of the legal advice.

He also adjourned the case until Jan.19, 2021, for mention. (NAN)

(170)

EASY CROSSWORD >>



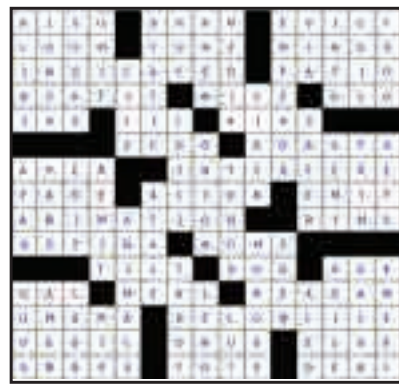
Across

- 1. Besides
- 5. Counterfeit
- 9. Kick out
- 14. Hover
- 15. Melody
- 16. Underage person
- 17. Pointed out
- 19. Deck's kin
- 20. Get lost! (2 wds.)
- 21. Learned
- 23. Ancient
- 24. Tax agency (abbr.)
- 25. Nervous twitch
- 27. Broadcasts
- 29. Mimic
- 31. Uses the oven
- 35. Mimicker
- 39. Butt in
- 41. Lose color
- 42. E.T., e.g.
- 43. Send forth
- 44. Movie genre
- 46. Borders
- 47. Eye part
- 48. Alaskan port
- 51. Pinball no-no
- 53. Fisherman's pole
- 54. Invite
- 57. Lass
- 60. Dinner or lunch
- 62. President Ronald

Down

- 1. Excuse
- 2. Hermit
- 3. Carbonated beverages
- 4. Leave out
- 5. ___ electricity
- 6. Gilligan's abode
- 7. Afresh
- 8. Newspapers and TV, e.g.
- 9. Monarch
- 10. Itinerary word
- 11. Division word
- 12. Snake formation
- 13. Walked upon
- 18. Refer to
- 22. Warning alarm
- 26. Spicy dish
- 28. Less hazardous
- 30. Scallion
- 32. Tractor-trailer
- 33. Prune the hedges
- 34. Gels
- 35. Distant
- 36. Window section
- 37. Censor
- 38. Send payment
- 40. Male voice
- 42. Dickens title beginning (2 wds.)
- 45. Beasts
- 49. Sullen
- 50. Genesis location
- 52. Gypsy's card
- 54. Limber
- 55. Hot sauce
- 56. Prepare to pray
- 57. Deities
- 58. Grace closing
- 59. Volcanic emission
- 61. Comedian Jay ___
- 63. Passed effortlessly
- 65. Pelvic bone
- 67. Slice

SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD (169)



SUDOKU >>

How to play: The number 1 through 9 will appear once only in each row, column, and 3 x 3 zone. There are 9 such zones in each sudoku grid. There is only one correct Solution to each sudoku.

Good luck!

170

Solution to Sudoku 169

				9				
7				5	1			
	3	4		2				
		2					5	
				6				
	6	9		7		1		
		8						2
					3		4	
2		5	3					

9	7	6	2	4	5	1	3	8
5	8	1	6	9	3	4	7	2
4	3	2	1	7	8	5	6	9
8	9	5	7	1	4	6	2	3
1	6	7	5	3	2	9	8	4
2	4	3	8	6	9	7	1	5
3	1	9	4	2	6	8	5	7
7	2	8	9	5	1	3	4	6
6	5	4	3	8	7	2	9	1

SNAPSHOT >>

Meet the world's tallest married couple



Sun Mingming and his wife Xu

A couple - Sun Mingming and his wife Xu Yan from China - are the tallest married couple in the world according to Guinness World Records. Mingming, 33, stands tall at 7ft 8.98" while his wife, Xu Yan, 29, is more than a foot smaller - but still incredibly tall - at 6ft 1.74". The couple has a jaw-dropping combined height of more than 13ft 10". The pair are (unsurprisingly) sports stars in their home country - Mingming is a basketball player while Yan plays handball. They met at the National Games of China in 2009 and married in Beijing on 4 August 2013. When the pair visited the Guinness World Records' UK headquarters, they shared their words of wisdom for a happy marriage. "No one is perfect, therefore you need to support one another on a daily basis," said Mingming. He also revealed the height-related difficulties facing the pair. "Everyday tasks such as traveling by car, plane or getting a room in a hotel do prove difficult, but we're used to these problems," he added.

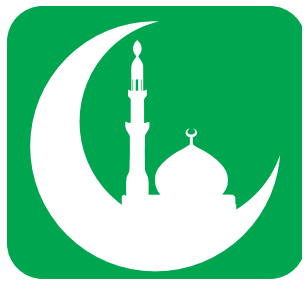
Thandiubani via tori.ng

SIGN LANGUAGE >>

HILARIOUS signs that will make you say WTF!



— [daily.bhaskar.com](https://www.daily.bhaskar.com)



TRUST ISLAMIC FORUM

The religion with Allah is Islam Q3:19

Afis A. Oladosu

08122465111 (sms only)

Year 2020 is at the 'train station'

Suddenly, the cathedrals are filled to the brim; all of a sudden, the mosques are 'invaded' by those who never visited them twelve months before. We constantly assume that access to the bounties of the Almighty can be likened to the computer key board- 'press and enter'. We indulge ourselves in the empty thought that we can harvest where we did not sow; that we can be ennobled with honour despite the iniquitous life that we live.

Thus there they go on the night of the 31st of December searching for the "face" of He whose Will they have abandoned for twelve months. There they go making New Year resolutions. I ask Oscar Wilde exactly what New Year resolutions means. He says "good resolutions are simply checks that men draw on a bank where they have no account." How could you insert your credit card into an ATM machine in the knowledge your account is in the red and still hope to draw hundreds of currencies?

I say: exactly what is new in the New Year? This question agitated my mind early this morning. I wanted to know what is new in the new month, in the new day. I wanted to feel happy, like my neighbour, to be merry, to indulge in self-love. I sought to know exactly where the train carrying the year 2020 would empty its content, its happiness, its sadness. I wanted to know exactly how many of us witnessed its arrival in December 2019; I crave to know how many of us are at this station, the train station of 2020, waiting to bid it bye as it departs. Yes. 2020 is departing. But to where? Where is 2020 going? Could it be that contrary to our assumption, 2020 is nothing but a sign, a signifier, the signified being ourselves. We are actually the ones at the train station. We are the ones waiting to depart. We are the ones who have accumulated the nights and days; we are the ones who have exhausted three hundred and sixty five out of the days allocated to us when we began our journeys from our fathers' loins into our mothers' wombs before our arrival to this world. We are the ones at the train stations of life and living. We are the ones arriving even as others are departing.

Thus waiting to chance upon that magical moment when 2020 would depart and yield space to 2021 is like waiting to know exactly at what moment shall we pause to exhaust one breadth before taking another one. Trying to know exactly at what moment would the year 2020 begin its own journey to eternity is like trying to know exactly at what moment would the day mesh into the night. It is like trying to know exactly what colour or complexion has happiness and sadness. It is like seeking to experience the beatitude of the celestial space while we are still bogged down in the morass and in the insuperable conditions of the terrestrial.

Eventually, I came to the conclusion that nothing is new in the New Year except the 'new' attitude, the new habits and experience we invest it with. The New Year is therefore nothing but an open book given to us by He in whose hands lie the portents of the heavens and the earth. The New Year is nothing but the new breadth we take of life and give to life. Nothing is new in the New Year but the new visions we have of and for ourselves and our world. The New Year is neither a beginning nor an end for in the reckoning of His Majesty, the Almighty, there is no beginning nor an end. Ironically however, 2021 shall be, for some, the beginning of the end the same way 2020 marked the end for others. Thus to be alive to witness the "departure" of 2020, the year of COVID-19, is to be lucky and be privileged.

For it is not by our choice or decision we found ourselves on this train, the train of life; it is not by our choice or decision we are changing this train in order to ride in the train of 2020; it is not going to be by our choice or decision when we shall be made to disembark from the train of life. Brethren, let us therefore begin to live our lives fully and in the knowledge that we may arrive the 'station', the station of dis-embarkment sooner than we imagine. Let us equally work assiduously for life as if our destination is as distant as that of Prophet Nuh who lived for nothing less than nine hundred and fifty (950) years. The Prophet of Islam (s.a.w) says "work for this life as if you are never going to die; work for your hereafter as if your death certificate has been signed and only waiting to be delivered".

QUR'AN: "Say, [O Muhammad], "Travel through the land and observe how was the end of the criminals." And grieve not over them or be in distress from what they conspire"

[AN-NAML 27:69,70]

HADITH: Abu Hurairah (RTA) reported: My friend, the Messenger of Allah (SAW) directed me to observe fast for three days in every month, to perform two Rak'ah (optional) Duha prayer at forenoon and to perform the Witr prayer before going to bed.

[Al-Bukhari and Muslim]

UNHCR launches Zakat app to unlock giving for refugees

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) has announced the launch of GiveZakat, an app to help users calculate and pay their Zakat. Money donated through the app will be used to support refugees and internally displaced people.

Zakat is the obligatory giving away of 2.5% of an individual's wealth each year which forms one of the five pillars of Islam.

The app allows users to choose which country their zakat will be spent in and produces bespoke

reports, showing donors how and when their money has been used. The app also includes a blog section, sharing the stories of the families donors are helping.

Khaled Khalifa, Regional Representative at UNHCR, said in a statement that: "Zakat alone can be a game-changer for refugees and IDPs, many of whom are poor, needy, debtors and wayfarers, rendering them eligible to receive Zakat... We wanted to make sure that Zakat donors have access to a user-friendly digital platform to easily understand

how their Zakat (and Sadaqah) donations can make a direct impact in the lives of the world's most vulnerable refugees and internally displaced families."

On 18th December, UNHCR launched a "supplementary appeal" for its 2021 COVID response. The UN agency is seeking \$455 million to support interventions for refugees, including cash assistance, prevention and response to gender-based violence (GBV), and promotion of mental health and psychological well-being. (fundraising.co.uk)



■ Muslims gathered at one of the 16 new mosques that were opened in the Republic of Tatarstan in 2020.

British Muslims challenge forced cremations in Sri Lanka

The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) is launching a legal challenge to the Sri Lankan government's policy that all people who die of COVID must be cremated, even in violation of their religious beliefs.

The insistence on cremation has caused great distress among the country's Muslim minority. Islam stipulates that the dead must be buried. World Health Organization guidelines permit the burial or cremation of people who die of Covid, but the Sri Lankan government adopted a policy of mandatory cremations in March.

Earlier this month, a 20-day-old baby who died of Covid was

cremated against the family's wishes. The child's father said he could not bear to witness the cremation.

A taskforce set up by the Muslim Council of Britain has written to the Sri Lankan high commissioner in the UK demanding an immediate reversal of the "forced cremation" policy and its impact on Muslim and Christian communities. The MCB said it would also pursue "the necessary legal action to end this violation".

Tayab Ali, a partner at London law firm, Bindmans, said: "The forced cremations of Muslim bodies in Sri Lanka are a serious violation of the religious freedom of a minority group.

It is a violation of international law to delay returning a family member's body for burial in a timely way unless there is good reason to do so.

"In this case the Sri Lankan authorities have departed from the WHO's recommendation for the safe management of a dead body during the coronavirus pandemic without any justification."

Sri Lanka is majority Buddhist, with Muslims making up about 9% of the population and Christians about 7%. The country has had more than 25,000 cases of Covid-19 and 124 deaths, including more than 50 Muslims who were cremated.

(UK Guardian)

Indian state bans Islamic schools from teaching religious scripture

An Indian state ruled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has passed a law to convert all Islamic schools to regular education institutions.

Every government-run Islamic school in Assam, locally known as madrassas, will be converted by April, the state's Education Minister, Himanta Biswa Sarma, confirmed on Twitter on Wednesday.

In a speech to local politicians the same day, Sarma positioned the law as a move to empower the Muslim community. He said it would ensure

"a right to equal education for all children and eases the path to higher education."

Madrassas provide a system of education in which students are taught about the Quran and Islamic history alongside general subjects like maths and science.

According to the 2011 government census, Muslims make up 34.22% of Assam's total population.

Once the law is passed, the madrassas will become "secular schools" which will not teach students about the Quran, officials said. Opposition politicians have

criticized the move, alleging it is reflective of hardening anti-Muslim attitudes in the Hindu-majority country. Senior state opposition leader Debabrata Saikia claimed the new law was passed by the BJP to "consolidate more Hindu votes."

Opposition politicians from the Indian Congress Party and the All India United Democratic Front staged a walkout during the discussion of the bill.

According to the chairman of Assam's Madrassa Education Board, Imran Hussain, about 700 schools will be impacted. (CNN)

INSIDE POLITICS

PoliQuote

People of the south West want APC. This is the reason why we must be united and be at peace with one another, we must be united to achieve our aims, we will make sure southeast controls Anambra
- Dr Ogbonnaya Onu

PDP needs unity to secure electoral victories in 2023 - Atiku

By Joshua Odeyemi

Former Vice President and 2019 presidential candidate of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, has said the party must be united to secure electoral victories in the 2023 general elections.

The Wazirin Adamawa also said it is only a politically naïve and visionless politician that will dump PDP for the All Progressives Congress (APC), adding that Governor Dave Umahi of Ebonyi State will one day “be courageous enough to tell Ebonyians the true reasons he left for a sinking ship, APC.”

Speaking at a political event on Tuesday organised at Afikpo South Local Government Area (LGA) in Ebonyi South Senatorial zone by one of the illustrious sons of the council and a PDP stakeholder in the state, Engr. Dr. Onuoha Nnachi, Atiku, in a goodwill message read by Oladimeji Fabiyi, said at the appropriate time the people will know the main reason Umahi joined the APC.

According to a statement by Atiku's media team, the event which was organised to mark the PDP Edda Day, witnessed a mammoth crowd and the attendance of party bigwigs from within and outside the state.



■ Atiku Abubakar

Atiku thanked all the party faithful in Ebonyi State for ignoring the decision and move of Governor Umahi to join the APC.

He expressed deep appreciation to the chief host of the event whom he described as one of the finest products and golden sons of the state for putting the event together.

In the message, Atiku said: “today's event is a testimony to the fact that Ebonyi is PDP,

PDP is Ebonyi.

“This event has made the loudest statement and sent a strong signal across board that PDP is not shaking in Ebonyi State and South East in general.

“For us as a party to continuously emerge victorious in our future elections, PDP must remain peaceful and united at all levels as togetherness is the key to our electoral success.

“We have the numbers, the people, the strength, the strategy and leaders in Ebonyi State.

“The governor's unfortunate action is a temporary setback, which is normal in political setting. Therefore, we must remain undeterred; PDP is remarkably strong and solid in Ebonyi.

“It is only a politically naïve, dumb, visionless and broken person that will leave a smooth sailing, progressive, purposeful and goal oriented ship and jump into a sinking and directionless ship on a voyage to nowhere.

“We hope one day, Gov. Umahi will be courageous enough to tell Ebonyians the true reasons he left for a sinking ship APC. If he does not, at the appropriate time we shall tell the people.”

PDP membership not ticket to heaven - El-Rufai's aide

From Mohammed Ibrahim Yaba, Kaduna

The PDP has been described as a simple political party and not a religion that will take its supporters to heaven.

Governor Nasir El'rufai's political adviser, Honorable Ben Kure made the comment at a meeting with other tribes under a group called Kabilu Unified Forum based in Cikun LGA of the state.

According to him, PDP's glory has long departed and that the party can never be relevant again in the state.

He called on the people, particularly those from the southern part of the state where he said the PDP still exists to change their mindset and be loyal to the ruling party to enable them enjoy more dividends of democracy in the area.

Kure further cautioned the ordinary southern Kaduna people not to allow some selfish individuals from the zone to mislead them against the ruling party, saying already some PDP members from the zone had defected to APC after realising that their communities had not benefited any dividends of democracy in the last 16 years of PDP governance in the state.

He also advised against giving consideration to selfishness and sentiment as yardsticks to elect people into offices as no political party is a religion, urging them to vote for only those who will bring development to their areas.

In a swift reaction, the PDP Secretary in the state, Alhaji Ibrahim Aliyu Wosono said the governor's aide only expressed his opinion as guaranteed by the constitution of the country.

Wosono said APC cannot convince the people of the state particularly those from Southern Kaduna because of the failure to secure and develop those in the area.

“Whatever he (Ben) said, he thinks he can convince the people of Southern Kaduna where 99 percent of them are PDP supporters and it's wrong for a leader to make such a statement,” he said.

Wosono, who advised the ruling party to seek for the support and votes of the people instead of abusing and castigating them said APC could not compare its achievements to those of PDP in the state.

2023: Yahaya Bello presidential campaign posters flood Kano streets

From Sani Ibrahim Paki, Kano

The campaign posters of Kogi State Governor, Alhaji Yahaya Bello, yesterday surfaced in some major roads in Kano ahead of 2023 presidential election.

Daily Trust observed that some of the inscriptions on the posters, including ‘Yahaya Bello for generational change’ were calling on Governor Bello to contest the presidential election come 2023.

The posters, however, do not have any logo of political party.

They were pasted at strategic locations in the state, including parts of Murtala Muhammad Way, Airport Road and Sani Marshal Road.

Other areas where the posters were spotted include Race Course Road, Bompai Road and some parts of Kano Government House streets.

So far, nobody has claimed responsibility for the pasting of the posters in Kano.

We'll organise convention before June 30 - APC

By Saawua Terzungwe

The APC Caretaker/Extraordinary Convention Planning Committee has said a national convention will be organised before June 30, 2021.

The caretaker committee also assured that the Buhari administration would tackle the socio-economic and security challenges bedeviling the nation.

The committee was inaugurated on June 25, 2020, to run the party and organise a national convention within six months following the resolution of the Adams Oshiomhole-led National Working Committee

(NWC) by the National Executive Committee (NEC).

But its tenure was extended by NEC on December 8, 2020, by another six months.

A new year message titled “Rebuilding our party for a stronger democracy” signed by Yobe State Governor and Chairman of the Caretaker Committee, Mai Mala Buni, and Secretary, Sen. Akpan Udoedehe, said party leaders would be nominated to serve in the convention committees.

The APC said the congresses and national convention would be democratic and transparent.

“Accordingly, we will expedite the internal process of

reconciliation and harmoniously resolve all pending leadership disagreements in the party before our national convention. Already, the process of membership registration/revalidation has commenced.

“Our party's membership registration/revalidation will be followed by activities for the party's leadership reconstitution at all levels, from ward, local government, state to national.

“And ahead of the congresses and national convention, competent party leaders will be invited to serve in Committees to ensure that the mandate of NEC is achieved before June 30, 2021,” the party also said.

I'll fulfill electioneering promises - Sen Abiru

From Abdullateef Aliyu, Lagos

The newly-elected Senator representing Lagos East senatorial district, Mr Adetokunbo Mukhail Abiru yesterday reiterated his resolve to fulfill his

electioneering promises.

He also promised to in the first quarter of 2021 formally inaugurate an Endowment Fund, a personal empowerment initiative set up for the indigent brilliant students, the aged, the youths

and the vulnerable, including persons with special needs.

In his New Year message, he said, “The Fund will complement the efforts of the federal and state governments in the areas of skill acquisition and capacity development.”

Lawmaker sets up N120m foundation for constituents in Sokoto

From Abubakar Auwal, Sokoto

A member of Sokoto State House of Assembly, representing Sabon Birni North Constituency on the platform of the PDP, Alhaji

Aminu Boza Sabon Birni, has set up a N120 million Foundation.

The money is being used to execute various developmental projects and assist his indigent constituents.

Boza told newsmen in Sokoto on Wednesday that the money was specifically set aside for his four-year term, ranging from 11th June 2019, to 11th June 2023.

The lawmaker, who explained that the foundation was being funded by him, said over N60million had so far been spent under the foundation from 11th June 2019 till date.

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2 x 2 cm N10,000 N20,000
3 x 2 cm N12,000 N24,000

KHADIJA: I, formerly known as **KARIMA HARUNA** now wish to be known and addressed as **KHADIJA ALIYU**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

I was formerly known as **MISS AIYELERO OLUWAFUNMILOLA FLORENCE** Now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS BELLO OLUWAFUNMILOLA FLORENCE**. All former documents remain valid. Authority concerned and general public should please take note.

I formerly known as **AHMED MURTALA** and **AHMAD MURTALA** now wish to be known and addressed as **AHMED MURTALA**. All former documents remain valid. General public to note

FELICIA: I formerly known as **MISS. MATTHEW UFWALAL FELICIA** and **MALLO UFWALAL FELICIA**, now wish to be known as **MRS. FESTUS UFWALAL FELICIA KATO**. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and general public should take note.

I was formerly known as **AMINA ISYAKU ALIYU** now wish to be known and called as **AMINA AI SADIQ**. All my former documents remain valid. Authorities Concerned and General Public should please take note.

GWAMNA: I formerly known as **SELCHANG STEPHEN** now wish to be called and addressed as **GWAMNA AUDU** all former documents remain valid. Any authority concern and general public should please take note.

I, formerly known as **MRS AMINA VICTOR PYARRAP** now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS AMINA AWATU PYARRAP**. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

OGANDO: I, FORMERLY KNOWN AND CALLED **OGANDO TUGBA ABRAHAM** NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN, CALLED AND ADDRESSED AS **OGANDO TUGBA**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC, BANKS AND OTHER AUTHORITIES SHOULD PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

I formerly known as **GRACE YUSUF** now wishes to be known as **AISHA YUSUF**. All former documents remain valid. General public to take note

ADAM: I formerly known as **USMAN ADAMU ABDULLAHI**, now wish to be known as **USMAN ADAM ABDULLAHI**. All former documents remain valid. All Authorities and general public should take note.

I formally known and addressed as: **STEPHEN HAMMAWA** now wish to be call: **MOHAMMED HAMMAWA. NIMC, Banks, all authority concern and the general public should please take note**

ADEYEMO ADEWOLE PETER, 21 Mission Street Angwan Maigero Kaduna, that I am Legal Owner of Driver's License that my date of birth was wrongly captured as 1st January 1974 the correct date of birth is 1st October 1974 all former documents remain valid. FRSC and general public should please take note.

LILIAN: I, formerly known as **DANYARO LILIAN NANMA** now wish to be known and addressed as **DANYARO LILIAN EPHRAIM** and my correct date of birth is 12/03/1992. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

NAKOMBO: I, FORMERLY KNOWN AND CALLED **UGOSOR DOOSHIMA CHARISTY & NAKOMBO CHARITY DOOSHIMA** NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN, CALLED AND ADDRESSED AS **NAKOMBO DOOSHIMA**. ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID. GENERAL PUBLIC AND OTHER AUTHORITIES CONCERNED SHOULD PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

ILIASU: I was formerly known as **ILIASU FALALU** now wish to be known and address as **ILIASU FALALU RAFINDADI** and all documents remain valid. Authorities Concerned and the general public should please take note.

NABAWIYYA: I formerly known as **NABAWIYYA SANUSI** and my date of birth was mistakenly written as 25-09-1996 now wish to be called and addressed as **NABAWIYYA SANUSI AHMAD** and my correct date of birth is 10-11-1996. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and members of the general public should please take note.

SAMA'ILA: I formerly known as **ISMA'IL ABDULMALIK** now wish to be called and addressed as **SAMA'ILA ABDULMALIK**. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and members of the general public should please take note.

HADIZA: I,formerly known as **HADIZA DAHIRU SALEH**, now wish to be known and addressed as **HADIZA TAHIR SALEH**. All former documents remain valid. The general public and any authority concerned to please take note.

CHINEDU: I, formerly known as **DANIEL BARRY**, now wish to be known and addressed as **DANIEL BARRY CHINEDU**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

ALI: I formerly known as **UMAR ALI NGGADA**, but now wishes to be known and addressed as **UMAR ALI**. All formal documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

HALIMA: I was formerly known and addressed as **HALIMA ISAH** That I now wish to be known and addressed as **HALIMA ABDULAZIZ** All documents bearing former names remain valid and the general public should please take note.

FATIMA: I formerly known as **LUCY IKEGBUNAM** now wish to be called and addressed as **FATIMA TUKUR**. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and members of the general public should please take note.

FATIMA: I formerly known as **FURERA MOHD BABA** now wish to be called and addressed as **FATIMA MUHAMMAD JAMBO**. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and members of the general public should please take note.

I, FORMERLY KNOWN AS ZAINAB AHMAD HAMEED, NOW WISH TO BE KNOWN & CALLED AS ZAINAB AHMAD WAKILI.ALL FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID.THE GENERAL PUBLIC AND ANY AUTHORITY CONCERNED TO PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

WAZIRI: I, formerly known as **AHIDJO KUNGAH WAZIRI**, now wish to be known and addressed as **AKAFTA KUNGAH WAZIRI**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

LAWAN: I formerly known as **KATAKO LAWAN ISAH**, but now wishes to be known and addressed as **ISAH LAWAN**. All formal documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

ABDULMALIK: I was formerly known and addressed as **ABDULMALIK KABIR** That I now wish to be known and addressed as **AS ABDULMALIK KABIR** All documents bearing former names remain valid and the general public should please take note.

I was formerly known as **ZAINAB SHUAIBU ABDULRAHAMAN** now wish to be known and called as **ZAINAB SHUAIBU**. All my former documents remain valid. General Public should please take note

YAHUZA: I formerly known as **YAHUZA HAJIYA SAIDA** now wish to be called and addressed as **YAHUZA ZAIDA**. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and members of the general public should please take note.

AYODELE: I, formerly known and addressed as **ADEOLU ADEPEJU SUCCESS**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **AYODELE ADEPEJU MOSIDAT**. All former documents remain valid. Authority Concerned and General public please take note.

DANLAMI: I, formerly known as **BABANGIDA IDRIS DANLADI**, now wish to be known and addressed as **BABANGIDA IDRIS DANLAMI** with date of birth 11th September, 1980. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

YAKUBU: I formerly known as **YAKUBU HARUNA ASTU**, now wish to be known as **YAKUBU HARUNA**. All former documents remain valid, Authority concerned and general public should take note.

CHIERERIA: I, formerly known as **EMEKA ONYEAKOSI** now wish to be known and addressed as **CHIERERIA ONYEAKOSI**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note

SALAMATU: I formerly known as **SALAMATU MUSA ADAM** now wish to be called and addressed as **SALAMATU MUHAMMAD ADAM**. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and members of the general public should please take note.

ABUBAKAR: I formerly known as **ABDULLAHI K ABUBAKAR** now wish to be called and addressed as **ABUBAKAR KABIRU ABDULLAHI**. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and members of the general public should please take note.

OYEWOLE: I, formerly known and addressed as **IGE OLUWAKEMI ESTHER**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **OYEWOLE OLUWAKEMI ESTHER**. All former documents remain valid. Authority Concerned and General public please take note.

MUHAMMED: I, formerly known as **MUHAMMED JIBRILLA** now wish to be known and addressed as **MUHAMMED JIBRILLA** and my correct date of birth is 10/07/1994 not 1/1/1992. All former documents remain valid. General public and my bank should take note.

DANLADI: I formerly known as **DANLADI YOHANNA**, now wish to be known as **DANLADI DAGAMI YOHANA**. All former documents remain valid, Authority concerned and general public should take note.

I, formerly known as **MOHAMMED ADAMU** Now wish to be known and addressed as **DALLADI MOHAMMED** All my documents remain Valid. Authority concerned and general public should take note.

I was formerly known as **MUKTAR BASHIR SHATIMA** now wish to be known and called as **MUKTAR BASHIR MUSTAPHA**. All my former documents remain valid. General Public should please take note

IBRAHIM: I formerly known **ISHIYAKU A SHUAIBU** now wish to be called as **ISHIYAKU ALHAJI SHUAIBU**. All former documents remain valid. Authority Concerned and the general public should please take note.

SALAMI: I, formerly known and addressed as **MISS POPOOLA TOSIN BOLAJI**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **Mrs SALAMI OLUWATOSIN WURAOA**. All former documents remain valid. Authority Concerned and General public please take note.

Formally the name was **DANASABE MOHAMMED MANU** now wish to be call and address as **MOHAMMED MANU**, the correct date of Birth is 25/May/1989. Bank and general Public should take note please.

ZAKARI: I formerly known as **ABUBAKAR DALHATU** now wish to be known and addressed as **ABUBAKAR ZAKARI DOB1/2/1996**. All former documents remain valid, Authority Concerned and the general public should please take note.

I, formerly known as **UMAR AHMAD** Now wish to be known and addressed as **ADAMU AMADU** All my documents remain Valid. Authority concerned and general public should take note.

I was formerly known as **GRACE AMEH** now wish to be known and called as **FATIMATU ADAMU**. All my former documents remain valid. General Public should please take note

IBRAHIM: I formerly known as **ARAFAT SHEHU IBRAHIM** now wish to be called and addressed as **ARAFAT IBRAHIM SHEHU**. All former documents remain valid authority concern and general public to note.

OLAMIDE: I, formerly known and addressed as **Miss OLAMIDE HALIMA AKINBODE**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **Mrs OLAMIDE HALIMA BOJESOMO**. All former documents remain valid. Authority Concerned and General public please take note.

AISHA: I, formerly known as **TOLANI AISHA** and **TOLANI AISHA SULEIMAN** now wish to be known and addressed as **AISHA SULEIMAN**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

ADEWALE: I formerly known as **ADELOKUN RASIDAT OLASUNBO**, now wish to be known as **MRS ADEWALE RASIDAT OLASUNBO**. All former documents remain valid, Authority concerned and general public please take note.

I, formerly known as **KABIR MUHAMMAD DAWAKI** Now wish to be known and addressed as **KABIR MUHAMMAD**. All my documents remain Valid. Authority concerned and general public should take note.

I was formerly known as **AISHATU YUSUF** now wish to be known and called as **AISHATU TALATU YUSUF**. All my former documents remain valid. General Public should please take note

FATIMA: I formerly known as **FATIMA MUHAMMAD SANI** now wish to be called and addressed as **FATIMA SANI**. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and members of the general public should please take note.

DOPEMU: I, formerly known and addressed as **Miss ADESOJI OLUWASEYI SARA**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **Mrs DOPEMU OLUWASEYI SARA**. All former documents remain valid. Authority Concerned and General public please take note.

I formerly known as **DAHAIURU AISHA** now wish to be known and addressed as **DAHIRU AISHA NANA**. All former documents remain valid. First Bank Plc, BVN and the general public take note.

MARY: I formerly known as **MARY ANGBIANDOO GAADI**, now wish to be known as **MARY ANGBIANDOO IKYERREVE** with correct Date of Birth 2nd November, 2002. All former documents remain valid. Authority concerned and general public please take note.

I, formerly known as **UMAR IBRAHIM LAMBU** Now wish to be known and addressed as **UMAR IBRAHIM YARIMA** All my documents remain Valid. Authority concerned and general public Should take note.

I was formerly known as **ATUME MEMBER BETTY** now wish to be known and called as **IJAGA MEMBER BETTY**. All my former documents remain valid. General Public should please take note

CHANGE OF NAME: I formerly known as **GWANI BUKAR KYARI** now wish to be called and addressed as **GONI BUKAR KYARI**. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and members of the general public should please take note.

MRS. UKAH: I, formerly known as **MISS. AGESE OKEOGHENE GIFT**. Now wish to be known as **MRS. UKAH OKEOGHENE GIFT**. All documents bearing my former name remain valid. The general public should please take note.

ALI: I, formerly known as **ADAMU ALI**, now wish to be known and addressed as **ALI ADAMU**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

UMARU: I formerly known as **ADAMU A. UMAR** now wish to be known and addressed as **ADAMU ALHAJI UMARU DOB5/6/1978 NOT 16/10/1986**. All former documents remain valid, Authority Concerned and the general public should please take note.

MUHAMMAD: I formerly known as **MUHAMMAD MAGUMERI**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MUHAMMAD ALHAJI ZARAMI**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note

I formerly known as **OKIBE ELIZABETH ORIAKU** now wish to be known as **OKIBE ELIZABETH** all former documents remain valid authorities concern and general public to note

CHANGE OF NAME: I formerly known as **ADAM IBRAHIM** now wish to be called and addressed as **ADAM KAURA**. All former documents remain valid. Authorities concerned and members of the general public should please take note.

HAMZA: I, formerly known as **HAMZA MOHAMMED**. Now wish to be known as **HAMZA AHMAD**. All documents bearing my former name remain valid. The general public should please take note.

AUGUSTINA: I, formerly known as **OLUCHI BRYAN MAURICE**, now wish to be known and addressed as **OLUCHI AUGUSTINA MAURICE**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

YAKUBU: I formerly known as **MOHAMMED DANBABA YAKUBU** now wish to be known and addressed as **MOHAMMED ALHAJI YAKUBU DOB/15/2/1980 NOT2/2/1980**. All former documents remain valid, Authority concerned and the general public should please take note.

HAUWA: I formerly known as **HAUWA ALKASIM**, now wish to be known and addressed as **HAUWA HUSSAINI**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

I formerly known as Muntaqa Bashir Jika now wish to be called and addressed as Muntaka Bashir. All former documents remain valid Authority concern and general public to note

CHINYERE: I Formerly known as **CHINYERE LINUS** Now wish to be called and addressed as **CHINYERE LINUS AJAH** All Former documents remain valid Any Authority concern and the general public to please take note.

BASHIR I, Formerly known as **KHADIJAT BASHIR** now wish to be known and addressed as **KHADIJAT BASHIR ALIYU**. All former document remain valid, public to take note

YA'U: I, formerly known as **YA'U ALI** now wish to be known and addressed as **YA'U ALIYU**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

MOHAMMED: I formerly known as **AISHATU IBRAHIM** now wish to be known and addressed as **AISHATU MOHAMMED**. All former documents remain valid, Authority Concerned and the general public should please take note.

FAVOUR: I formerly known as **FAVOUR NWANKWO**, now wish to be known and addressed as **FAVOUR OGOCHUKWU NWANKWO**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

I formerly known as **YUSUF MUSA ISMAIL DATE 05/09/1989** now wish to be called and addressed as **ABBA MUSA DATE 01/01/1995**. All former documents remain valid Authority concern and general public to note

BLESSING: I Formerly known as **BLESSING KINCHAI NSAN** Now wish to be called and addressed as **BLESSING NSAN JETHRO** All Former documents remain valid Any Authority concern and the general public to please take note

ISA: I formerly known as **ALI MOHAMMED ALHAJI**, now wish to be known and addressed as **ISA SAIDU ADAMU**. All former documents remain valid. general public should please take note

ETUSI: I, formerly known as **MRS OSIA SUSANNA ETUSI**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MRS ORONUKPO-OSIA SUSANNA ETUSI**. All former documents remain valid. General public take note.

ABDULLAHI: I, formerly known and addressed as **HASHIMU YAHAYA** now wish to be known and addressed as **ABUBAKAR ABDULLAHI MALAM** with date of birth 01/01/1987. All former documents remain valid. General public to take note.

NAZIRU: I, formerly known and addressed as **ABDULLAHI ALIYU** the name given to me by my FOSTER PARENTS, now wish to be called and addressed as **NAZIRU ALTI MOHAMMED** the name given to me by my BIOLOGICAL PARENTS. All former documents remain valid. Constituted authorities, MIN. OF EDUCATION BAUCHI, FIRST BANK and the general public should please take note.

I formerly known as **ISA IBRAHIM** now wish to be called and addressed as **ABUBAKAR ISAH BUBAAND MY DOB: 11-JAN-2000**. All former documents remain valid Authority concern and general public to note

SALISU: I FORMERLY ADAMU BALA NOW WISH TO BE CALL AND ADDRESS AS **SALISU HARUNA.FOOMER DOCUMENTS REMAIN VALID.FEDELITY BANK, ZARIA, NATIONAL IDENTITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM,NAGERIA AND GENERAL PUBLIC TO NOTE.**

GASHINGE I formerly known and addressed as **ADAMU ISAH** now wish to be known and addressed as **ADAMU ISAH GASHINGE** All former documents remain valid. All concern and authority General public should please take note.

ISMAIL: I, formerly known and addressed as **AHMED MUHAMMED** with date of birth 01/01/1985 now wish to be known and addressed as **AHMAD ISMAIL** with date of birth 02/04/1988. All former documents remain valid. General public to take note.

GADZAMA: I, formerly known and addressed as **SENATE ZIRA** now wish to be known and addressed as **SENATE HAMMAN GADZAMA**, and my date of birth is 19/8/1988 not 19/8/1983. All former documents remain valid. NIMC and UBA Bank and the general public to take note.

ALIYU: I formerly known as **DAUDA ALIYU KIMBA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **DAUDA ALIYU**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

I formerly known as **ABDULMUMINI ALI** now wish to be called and addressed as **ABDULMUMINI ALIYU**. All former documents remain valid Authority concern and general public to note

ADAM: I FORMERLY ABUBAKAR DANLADI AND ABUBAKAR ADAMU,NOW WISH TO BE CALL AND ADDRESS AS **ADAM ABUBAKAR DANLADI**. FORMER DOCUMENTS REMAINS VALID. ACCESS BANK,ZARIA AND GENERAL PUBLIC TO NOTE.

SOLOMON I formerly known and addressed as **ABUH SOLOMON GAMBO** now wish to be known and addressed as **ABUH SOLOMON** All former documents remain valid. All concern and authority General public should please take note.

THADDEUS: I formerly known and addressed as **NAVY THADDEUS**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **IZUAGBE THADDEUS**. All former documents remain valid. Authority concerned and general public to take note.

YAKUBU: I formerly known and addressed as **ENEITTO AYATU YAKUBU**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **HAYATU YAKUBU**. All former documents remain valid. Authority concerned and general public to take note.

OGBONNAYA: I formerly known as **ORJI OGBONNAYA UKA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **ORJI OGBONNAYA ORJI**. All former documents remain valid. Constituted authorities and general public should take note.

I formerly known as **ESTHER OGOM OKOYE** now wish to be called and addressed as **ESTHER OGOM NWACHINEKE**. All former documents remain valid Authority concern and general public to note

IDRIS: I, formerly known as **IDRIS USMAN**, now wish to be known and called **IDRIS USMAN IDRIS**. All former documents remain valid. The general public and any authority concerned to please take note.

SHINGE I formerly known and addressed as **ABUBAKAR HAMI JOJI** now wish to be known and addressed as **ABUBAKAR AHMED SHINGE** All former documents remain valid. All concern and authority General public should please take note.

AGBEDE: I formerly known and addressed as **IGOGHO ABDULKAREEM**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **AGBEDE ABDULKAREEM**. All former documents remain valid. Authority concerned and general public to take note.

MONDAY: I formerly known and addressed as **OYAREKHUA MONDAY**. Now wish to be known and addressed as **OYAREKHUA AGBOMEKE MONDAY**. All former documents remain valid. Authority concerned and general public to take note.

GBONJUBOLA: I formerly known as **GBONJUBOLA NAHEEM AYINDE**, now wish to be known as **GBONJUBOLA NAHEEM MOSHOOD**. All former documents remain valid, the general public should take note

I formerly known as **AHMED GARBA** now wish to be called and addressed as **YAKUBU AHMAD GARBA**. All former documents remain valid Authority concern and general public to note

DATE OF BIRTH I, ABDULAZIZ MUSA MUSAWA wish to inform the general public particularly Federal Road Safety Commission that my date of birth is 26th May, 1984 and NOT 21 December, 1984 as it was wrongly captured on my Driver's License.

ALI I formerly known as **AWARI BAKAKA**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MUHAMMAD ALI**. All former documents remain valid. general public should please take note

AUDU: I, formerly known and addressed as **HAMZA MALLAM AUDU** now wish to be known and addressed as **HAMZA .O. AUDU**. All former documents remain valid. General public to take note.

I, formerly known as **ISAH KABIRU HARDAWA** Now wish to be known and addressed as **ISAH KABIRU** All my documents remain Valid. All Authorities concerned, and general public Should take note.

ANTHONY: I formerly known as **ANTHONY ONYECHI**, now wish to be known as **SUNDAY ANTHONY AKPA**. All former documents remain valid. All Authorities and general public should take note

I formerly known as **SHAZALI UMAR UMAR** now wish to be called and addressed as **SHAZALI UMAR**. All former documents remain valid Authority concern and general public to note

ABDULLAHI: I formerly known as **MAGAJI ABDULLAHI** now wish to be called and addressed as **ABDULLAHI TSALHA** all former documents remain valid. Any authority concern and general public should please take note.

IBRAHIM I formerly known as **IBRAHIM MOHAMMED**, now wish to be known and addressed as **IBRAHIM MODU**. All former documents remain valid. general public should please take note

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UMAR I formerly known as **MAHMUD MOHAMMAD UMAR**, now wish to be known and addressed as **MAMUD MUHAMMAD UMAR**. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.

ZAINAB I formerly known as **ZAINABU SHERIFF** now wish to be known as **ZAINAB SHERIFF MUSTI**. All former document remain valid. General public should take note.

LARABA I formerly known as **LARABA JESIMEL** now wish to be known and addressed as **LARABA BALA**. All former documents remain valid. **FIRST BANK PLC** And General Public Should please take note.

SULAIMAN I formally known as **UMMI BALA**, D.O.B 21/03/1989, now wish to be known and addressed as **ZAINAB SULAIMAN**, D.O.B 20/01/1995, All former documents remain valid, Authorities concerned and general public should please take note.

ABDULHAMID I formally known as **HASSAN JIBRIN ABDULHAMID**, now wish to be known and addressed as **HASSAN ABDULHAMID**, D.O.B 3/04/1988, All former documents remain valid, Authorities concerned and general public should please take note.

VICE I formerly known and addressed as **AMADU BAYIS** now wish to be known and addressed as **AMADU VICE** All former documents remain valid. All concern and authority General public should please take note.

ABDU I, formerly known as **MOHAMMED YIMIRDLALANG ABDU** now wish to be known and addressed as **MOHAMMED YAKARKI ABDU**. All former documents remain valid. General public should take note.

DANIEL I formerly known as **DANIEL MAINA** now wish to be known as **DANIEL INUWA**. All former document remain valid. General public should take note.

ISYAKA I, formerly known as **MOHAMMED SULAIMAN** now wish to be known and addressed as **MOHAMMED ISYAKA SULAIMAN**. All former documents remain valid. And my correct **DOB** is 15-09-1992 not 25-04-1995. General public should take note.

ILIYA I formerly known as **ILIYA T. WABA** now wish to be known and addressed as **ILIYA THLAMA WABA**. All former documents remain valid. General Public Should please take note.

BASHIRU I formerly known and addressed as **ASMAU USMAN** now wish to be known and addressed as **ASMA'U BASHIRU MAIFATA**. All former documents remain valid authorities concerned and general public should take note.

HANNAFI I formerly known as **HANNAFI MALAM YUSUF** now wish to be known and addressed as **HANNAFI YUSUF**. All former documents remain valid. General Public Should please take note.

LOSS OF DOCUMENT

THIS IS TO INFORM THE GENERAL PUBLIC OF THE LOSS OF ORIGINAL LAND DOCUMENT BELONGING TO ONE DR. FATIMATU MOHD GONI 'F' OF NO. 1 BIRWA ROAD OFF MOHAMMED GONI STREET OLD GRA AREA MAIDUGURI, WITH THE SAME ADDRESS, WITH FOLLOWING DETAILS: ORIGINAL CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY PLOT NO, Bearing name ALHAIJI MOHD GONI WITH RELATED DOCUMENT LOCATED AT OLD GRA MAIDUGURI, BORNO STATE MEASURING 3402 Sqm. WITH FILE NO. BOJ 48322. SHE REPORTED AT G R A POLICE STATION, ON 31/12/2020, AT ABOUT 1233hrs. ALL EFFORT MADE TO TRACE THE SAID DOCUMENT PROVED ABORTIVE. IF FOUND OR ANY INFORMATION CONTACT BORNO GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SERVICE (BOGIS), AND GENERAL PUBLIC SHOULD PLEASE TAKE NOTE.

LOSS OF DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public of the loss of Original Letter of Grant and Certificate of Occupancy Plot No. 163 File No. RES/97/497, situated at Tokarawa TP/KAS/156C, bearing the name of **ZAINAB GIDADO/MARYAM GIDADO**, c/o PMB 3481 Kano.

All effort made to trace the original Letter of Grant proved abortive. Members of the General Public to note. If found kindly return to the nearest police station.

LEGAL NOTICE IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE SOKOTO STATE PROBATE DIVISION SOKOTO

WHEREAS the person whose name is set out in the first column here under in stated on the date and place stated in the said column.

AND WHEREAS the person (s) whose address and claim relationship to the said deceased is/are set out in the second column hereunder has/have applied to the High Court of Justice Sokoto for the grant of (LETTER OF ADMINISTRATION) of the personal properties of the said deceased.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the said (LETTER'S of Administration) will be granted to such person unless a notice to prohibit the grant thereof is filed in the probate Registry High Court of Justice Sokoto Within (TWENTY ONE DAYS) from the date of publication of this notice.

NAME AND ADDRESS OF DECEASEDS	NAME OF APPLICANTS
1. AMBASSADOR ABUBAKAR UDU OF NO 1 JEGA ROAD RAFIN ATIKU AREA BIRNIN KEBBI WHO DIED ON THE 9 TH DAY OF OCTOBER 2020 AT GARKI HOSPITAL ABUJA	1. MUHAMMADU BELLO UDU 2. KHADIJA UDU ALL OF NO. 1 JEGA ROAD RAFIN ATIKU AREA BIRNIN KEBBI THE CHILDREN TO THE DECEASED
2. AMURATU YAKUBU ABUBAKAR OF BREAKTHROUGH ACTION WHO DIED ON THE 14 TH DAY OF FEBRUARY 2019 AT UDUTH SOKOTO	2. 1. SALISU ISAH DANDURUMI 2. DAUDA YAKUBU ALL OF NO 68 AHMADU BELLO WAY SOKOTO THE HUSBAND AND BROTHER TO THE DECEASED

DATED AT SOKOTO THIS 31ST DAY OF DECEMBER, 2020
BASHAR IBRAHIM.
AG: CHIEF REGISTRAR

LEGAL NOTICE IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE SOKOTO STATE PROBATE DIVISION SOKOTO

WHEREAS the person whose name is set out in the first column here under in stated on the date and place stated in the said column.

AND WHEREAS the person (s) whose address and claim relationship to the said deceased is/are set out in the second column hereunder has/have applied to the High Court of Justice Sokoto for the grant of (LETTER OF ADMINISTRATION) of the personal properties of the said deceased.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the said (LETTER'S of Administration) will be granted to such person unless a notice to prohibit the grant thereof is filed in the probate Registry High Court of Justice Sokoto Within (TWENTY ONE DAYS) from the date of publication of this notice.

NAME AND ADDRESS OF DECEASEDS	NAME OF APPLICANTS
1. BUBA DANGALADIMA OF WAMAKKO LGA SOKOTO STATE WHO DIED ON 6 TH DAY OF APRIL 2020 AT UDUTH SOKOTO	1. HABIBU ABUBAKAR OF WAMAKKO LGA SOKOTO STATE THE SON TO THE DECEASED
2. SANUSI ADAMU OF NIGERIAN POLICE FORCE WHO DIED ON THE 29 TH DAY OF JANUARY 2019 AT UDUTH SOKOTO	2. ABDULLAH SANUSI MUHAMMAD OF KALAMBAINA AREA SOKOTO THE SON TO THE DECEASED.

DATED AT SOKOTO THIS 31ST DAY OF DECEMBER, 2020
BASHAR IBRAHIM.
AG: CHIEF REGISTRAR

LEGAL NOTICE IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE PROBATE DIVISION BIRNIN KEBBI, KEBBI STATE

Whereas the person whose name is set out in the first column here under died date and place stated in the said column. Whereas the person whose address had claimed relationship with the said deceased is set in the second column here under has applied to the High Court of Justice for GRANT OF LETTER OF ADMINISTRATION of the personal property.

Notice is hereby given that the said LETTER OF ADMINISTRATION will be granted to such person unless a notice to prohibit the grant thereof is filed in the probate Registry High Court of Justice Birnin Kebbi, within TWENTY ONE DAYS from the date of publication of this notice.

DECEASED:	APPLICANT FOR GRANT:
BELLO USMAN NIGERIA POLICE FORCE STATE HEADQUARTERS, SOKOTO STATE Who died on the 21st AUGUST, 2016	LAWALI BELLO SABUWAR SHIYA AREA DALIJAN GWANDU LOCAL GOVT. KEBBI STATE.

DATED AT BIRNIN KEBBI ON THE 21ST DECEMBER, 2020
SIGNED:
HUSSANI ABDULLAHI
Probate Registrar

LEGAL NOTICE IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE SOKOTO STATE PROBATE DIVISION SOKOTO

WHEREAS the person whose name is set out in the first column here under in stated on the date and place stated in the said column.

AND WHEREAS the person (s) whose address and claim relationship to the said deceased is/are set out in the second column hereunder has/have applied to the High Court of Justice Sokoto for the grant of (LETTER OF ADMINISTRATION) of the personal properties of the said deceased.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the said (LETTER'S of Administration) will be granted to such person unless a notice to prohibit the grant thereof is filed in the probate Registry High Court of Justice Sokoto Within (TWENTY ONE DAYS) from the date of publication of this notice.

NAME AND ADDRESS OF DECEASEDS	NAME OF APPLICANTS
1. MURTALA MOHAMMED K. OF NIGERIAN SECURITY AND CIVIL DEFENCE CORPS WHO DIED ON THE 28TH DAY OF MAY 2018 AT UDUTH SOKOTO	1. SAHARA'U MURTALA KAGARA 2. BINTA MOHAMMAD ALL OF KAGARA JABO THE DAUGHTER AND SISTER OF THE DECEASED.
2. ALKALI MUSA MUAZU OF NATIONAL DRUG LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY (NDLEA) WHO DIED ON THE 21 ST DAY OF AUGUST 2020 AT UDUTH SOKOTO	2. ABUBAKAR MUSA OF SHIYAR RAFI BAKURA ZAMFARA STATE THE ELDER BROTHER TO THE DECEASED

DATED AT SOKOTO THIS 31ST DAY OF DECEMBER, 2020
BASHAR IBRAHIM.
AG: CHIEF REGISTRAR

LEGAL NOTICE IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE SOKOTO STATE PROBATE DIVISION SOKOTO

WHEREAS the person whose name is set out in the first column here under in stated on the date and place stated in the said column.

AND WHEREAS the person (s) whose address and claim relationship to the said deceased is/are set out in the second column hereunder has/have applied to the High Court of Justice Sokoto for the grant of (LETTER OF ADMINISTRATION) of the personal properties of the said deceased.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the said (LETTER'S of Administration) will be granted to such person unless a notice to prohibit the grant thereof is filed in the probate Registry High Court of Justice Sokoto Within (TWENTY ONE DAYS) from the date of publication of this notice.

NAME AND ADDRESS OF DECEASEDS	NAME OF APPLICANTS
1. BASHAR ABUBAKAR OF NATIONAL DRUG LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY (NDLEA) WHO DIED ON THE 5 TH DAY OF MARCH 2020 AT FMC AZARE BAUCHI STATE.	1. ZINATU ABUBAKAR OF MABERA AREA SOKOTO SISTER TO THE DECEASED
2. AMINU MUAZU OF NIGERIA POLICE FORCE WHO DIED ON THE 1 ST DAY OF MAY 2019 AT GENERAL HOSPITAL RABAH	2. SAUDATU ALKALI OF SARDAUNA AREA GANDI RABAH LGA SOKOTO STATE THE WIFE TO THE DECEASED.

DATED AT SOKOTO THIS 31ST DAY OF DECEMBER, 2020
BASHAR IBRAHIM.
AG: CHIEF REGISTRAR

LEGAL NOTICE IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE OF KATSINA STATE, OF NIGERIA PROBATE DIVISION

WHEREAS the person/persons whose names are set out in the first column hereunder died interstate on the date and at place stated in the said column.

AND WHEREAS the person/persons whose addresses claimed relationship to the said deceased is/are set out in the second column hereunder has/have applied to the High Court of Justice Katsina for a grant of "letters of Administration" of the personal property of the said deceased.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the "Letter of Administration" will be granted to such person/persons unless "NOTICE TO PROHIBIT" the grant thereof is filed in the Probate Registry, High Court of Justice Katsina within twenty-one days from the date of publication of this notice.

DECEASED:	APPLICANT FOR GRANT:
LATERABE ABDULLAHI OF KATSINA STATE MBR. OF EDUCATION DIED OF UNG AREA DAKS LGA ON 22/8/2020 AT DUTSI	JAMU MUNTARI SABUWAR SHIYA LGA THE BROTHER OF THE SAID DECEASED.

DATED 31ST DECEMBER, 2020.

AT THE PROBATE REGISTRY, HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE, KATSINA. **KABIR SHUABU** PROBATE REGISTRAR

LEGAL NOTICE IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE OF KATSINA STATE, OF NIGERIA PROBATE DIVISION

WHEREAS the person/persons whose names are set out in the first column hereunder died interstate on the date and at place stated in the said column.

AND WHEREAS the person/persons whose addresses claimed relationship to the said deceased is/are set out in the second column hereunder has/have applied to the High Court of Justice Katsina for a grant of "letters of Administration" of the personal property of the said deceased.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the "Letter of Administration" will be granted to such person/persons unless "NOTICE TO PROHIBIT" the grant thereof is filed in the Probate Registry, High Court of Justice Katsina within twenty-one days from the date of publication of this notice.

DECEASED:	APPLICANT FOR GRANT:
LATE NABIRI IBRAHIM OF BATHICARAMA LOCAL GOVERNMENT DIED ON 9/9/2020 AT BATHICARAMA	ZARANI KABIR OF DANGORO BATHICARAMA LOCAL GOVT. SON OF THE SAID DECEASED

DATED 31ST DECEMBER, 2020.

AT THE PROBATE REGISTRY, HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE, KATSINA. **KABIR SHUABU** PROBATE REGISTRAR

LEGAL NOTICE IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE OF KATSINA STATE, OF NIGERIA PROBATE DIVISION

WHEREAS the person/persons whose names are set out in the first column hereunder died interstate on the date and at place stated in the said column.

AND WHEREAS the person/persons whose addresses claimed relationship to the said deceased is/are set out in the second column hereunder has/have applied to the High Court of Justice Katsina for a grant of "letters of Administration" of the personal property of the said deceased.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the "Letter of Administration" will be granted to such person/persons unless "NOTICE TO PROHIBIT" the grant thereof is filed in the Probate Registry, High Court of Justice Katsina within twenty-one days from the date of publication of this notice.

DECEASED:	APPLICANT FOR GRANT:
LATE MURTALA RAFAHURU OF VILLAGE HEAD OF YAKALATA, KATSINA DIED ON 22/11/2020 AT KATSINA	ULEHAMMADU WANI OF YAKALATA, KATSINA THE SON OF THE SAID DECEASED

DATED 31ST DECEMBER, 2020.

AT THE PROBATE REGISTRY, HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE, KATSINA. **KABIR SHUABU** PROBATE REGISTRAR

LEGAL NOTICE IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE OF KATSINA STATE, OF NIGERIA PROBATE DIVISION

WHEREAS the person/persons whose names are set out in the first column hereunder died interstate on the date and at place stated in the said column.

AND WHEREAS the person/persons whose addresses claimed relationship to the said deceased is/are set out in the second column hereunder has/have applied to the High Court of Justice Katsina for a grant of "letters of Administration" of the personal property of the said deceased.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the "Letter of Administration" will be granted to such person/persons unless "NOTICE TO PROHIBIT" the grant thereof is filed in the Probate Registry, High Court of Justice Katsina within twenty-one days from the date of publication of this notice.

DECEASED:	APPLICANT FOR GRANT:
LATE SANI TANIMU TANDAMA OF IYIPI KATSINA (KTP CHIEF KATSINA DIED ON 28/4/2018 AT KATSINA)	ASHE CANI TANDAMA OF SABUWAR SHIYA LGA, KATSINA THE DAUGHTER OF THE SAID DECEASED

DATED 31ST DECEMBER, 2020.

AT THE PROBATE REGISTRY, HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE, KATSINA. **KABIR SHUABU** PROBATE REGISTRAR

LOSS OF DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public of the loss of Original Letter of Grant and Certificate of Occupancy Plot No. 164 File No. RES/97/499, situated at Tokarawa TP/KAS/156C, bearing the name of **USMAN GIDADO**, c/o PMB 3481 Kano.

All effort made to trace the original Letter of Grant proved abortive. Members of the General Public to note. If found kindly return to the nearest police station.

LOSS OF DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public of the loss of Original Letter of Grant and Certificate of Occupancy Plot No. 138 File No. RES/2007/913, situated at Tokarawa TP/KAS/156C, bearing the name of **DAN'ASABE YAHAYA**, of Farawa B/Layi Off Maiduguri Road, Kano.

All effort made to trace the original Letter of Grant proved abortive. Members of the General Public to note. If found kindly return to the nearest police station.

LOSS OF DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public of the loss of Original Letter of Grant and Certificate of Occupancy Plot No. 137 File No. RES/97/1236, situated at Tokarawa TP/KAS/156C, bearing the name of **ABUBAKAR ABDU**, of No. 131 T/Wada Kano.

All effort made to trace the original Letter of Grant proved abortive. Members of the General Public to note. If found kindly return to the nearest police station.

Brexit: What you need to know about the UK leaving the EU



■ Boris Johnson

After months of negotiations, the UK and European Union finally agreed a deal that will define their future relationship, which comes into effect at 23.00GMT on 31 December.

I thought the UK had already left the EU?

It has. The UK voted to leave the EU in 2016 and officially left the trading bloc - it's nearest and biggest trading partner - on 31 January 2020.

However, both sides agreed to keep many things the same until 31 December 2020, to allow enough time to agree to the terms of a new trade deal.

It was a complex, sometimes bitter negotiation, but they finally agreed a deal on 24 December.

So, what changes on 1 January?

The deal contains new rules for how the UK and EU will live, work and trade together.

While the UK was in the EU, companies could buy and sell goods across EU borders without paying taxes and there were no limits on the amount of things which could be traded.

Under the terms of the deal, that won't change on 1 January, but to be sure that neither side has an unfair advantage, both sides had to agree to some shared rules and standards on workers' rights, as well as many social and environmental regulations.

Freedom to work and live between the UK and the EU also comes to an end, and in 2021, UK nationals will need a visa if they want to stay in the EU more than 90 days in a 180-day period.

Northern Ireland will continue to follow many of the EU's rules in order to avoid a hardening

of its border with the Republic of Ireland. This will mean however that new checks will be introduced on goods entering Northern Ireland from the rest of the UK.

Now that it's no longer in the EU, the UK is free to set its own trade policy and can negotiate deals with other countries. Talks are being held with the US, Australia and New Zealand - countries that currently don't have free trade deals with the EU.

Will there be disruption at the borders?

There may not be new taxes to pay at the border, but there will be new paperwork, and the potential for it to cause delays is a serious concern.

"This is the biggest imposition of red tape that businesses have had to deal with in 50 years," according to William Bain from the British Retail Consortium.

The UK says it will delay making most checks for six months, to allow people to get used to the new system, but the EU will be checking paperwork and carrying out checks from day one. So, if businesses are not prepared, or do not fill in the new paperwork correctly, it could cause delays and backlogs at ports like Dover.

The government has known about this for years, and has made plans to divert trade to other ports around the country and has built lorry parks in Kent, to avoid gridlock on the roads.

It's difficult to predict what the scale of any disruption might be, but government minister Michael Gove has said that UK businesses should prepare for some "bumpy moments".

Is this finally the end

of having to hear about Brexit?

Sadly, no. Decisions are still to be made on data sharing and on financial services, and the agreement on fishing only lasts five years.

Also, while the UK and EU have agreed to some identical rules now, they don't have to be identical in the future, and if one side takes exception to the changes, they can trigger a dispute, which could ultimately lead to tariffs (charges on imports) being imposed on some goods in the future.

Expect the threat of disputes to be a new constant in UK-EU relations.

What Brexit words means

The last few years have seen many words and phrases enter our lives. We haven't used them here, but politicians do use them. Here's what some of them mean:

Transition period: The 11-month period following the UK's exit from the EU (finishing at the end of 2020), during which time the UK has followed EU rules, to allow leaders to make a deal.

Free trade: Trade between two countries, where neither side charges taxes or duties on goods crossing borders.

Level playing field: A set of rules to ensure that one country, or group of countries, doesn't have an unfair advantage over another. This can involve areas such as workers' rights and environmental standards. Free trade agreements like the Brexit deal often include level playing field measures.

Tariff: A tax or duty to be paid on goods crossing borders.

Source: BBC

COVID-19: UK pledges £7m aid for poor Nigerians

By Zakariyya Adaramola

The United Kingdom has pledged an extra £7 million of aid to immediately provide food, nutrition, water and shelter for vulnerable families in Nigeria.

A statement by the British High Commission in Nigeria, said the fund will be made available to Nigeria through the World Food Programme. It said the fund is estimated to reach 430,000 Nigerians with unconditional food assistance and nutrition support for 108 days.

It said the UK is also lobbying international

donors to provide more funding and calling for all conflict parties to allow safe, sustained, and unhindered humanitarian access to all people in need of assistance; including 1.24m people the UN estimate are living in areas currently inaccessible to humanitarian actors due to insecurity in the northeast.

Gill Atkinson, the Acting High Commissioner at the British High Commission said: "I'm pleased that the UK is making this additional commitment of a further £7m in humanitarian aid in

Nigeria. It demonstrates how dedicated we are to helping provide continued lifesaving support to people who need it in Nigeria.

"It is imperative we prevent a further deterioration in food insecurity in the NE and vital we work in partnership with the Nigerian government to mitigate further decline in the situation. We encourage other donors to do likewise. Thanks as ever go to our UN and NGO partners who deliver lifesaving UKAID on behalf of the well wishes of the British people."

FG condemns killing of Nigerian in Ireland, demands justice

By Hamisu K. Matazu

Chairman of the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM), Abike Dabiri-Erewa, has condemned the killing of Mr George Nkencho, a 27-year-old Nigerian in Ireland.

She also called for a full, thorough and fair investigation into the matter.

Dabiri-Erewa, in a statement by the Head

of Media and Public Relations, NIDCOM, Abdur-Rahman Balogun, described the killing of the Nigerian by an Irish police officer as callous and wicked.

She appealed to the Nigerian community in Ireland to exercise patience and wait for the outcome of the investigation into the matter.

"Already, the African Advocacy Network

Ireland (AANI) has expressed shock to learn about the callous shooting and killing of George Nkencho on Wednesday, December 30. "The group said the circumstances surrounding the killing of a mentally challenged young man has enraged the African community and demanded a full independent public inquiry," the statement reads in part.

DAILY TRUST Classifieds made easy Page 3

<p>ALI I formerly known and addressed as FATIMA ZANNA ALI now wish to be known and addressed as YAGANA ZANNA ALI All former documents remain valid. All concern and authority General public should please take note.</p>	<p>IKHALO - I was formerly known as MISS. OBIALOR, CHIDINMA JULIET. That I now wish to be known as MRS. IKHALO, CHIDINMA JULIET. All documents bearing my former name remain valid. The general public should please take note.</p>	<p>MONDAY: That i was formerly known as ORIKE ABRAHAM CHUKWUEMEKA. Now wish to be known called and addressed as YAHAYA ABRAHAM CHUKUMEKA. All former document remain valid. General public should please take note.</p>
<p>MOHAMMED : I formerly known as MUHAMMED ADAMU IDRIS now wish to be known as MOHAMMED ADAMU IDI. All former document remain valid. General public should take note.</p>	<p>EKENEKEISO - I was formerly known as MANASSEH YAYA SUNDAY. That I now wish to be known as EKENEKEISO MANASSEH. All documents bearing my former name remain valid. The general public should please take note.</p>	<p>I, formerly known as YAHAYA ABUBAKAR SHEHU Now wish to be known and addressed as YAHAYA ABUBAKAR with D.O.B 01/01/1993. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.</p>
<p>CHARLES; I formerly known as GAJI KULKA BITRUS now wish to be known as CHARLES BITRUS. All former document remain valid. General Public should please take note</p>	<p>ESSIEN - I was formerly known as ESSIEN BRIGHT JOSEPH. That I now wish to be known as ESSIEN CHRISTIANA JOSEPH. All documents bearing my former name remain valid. The general public should please take note.</p>	<p>I, formerly known as SADIYA YAKUBU Now wish to be known and addressed as SADIYA MUHAMMADU. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.</p>
<p>MURTALA I formerly known as MURTALA YA'U now wish to be known and address as MURTALA MUHAMMED YA'U. All former documents remain valid and general public should take note</p>	<p>OLOWONIBI - I was formerly known as MISS. JOHNSON TOYIN FOLAKE. That I now wish to be known as MRS. OLOWONIBI TOYIN FOLAKE. All documents bearing my former name remain valid. The general public should please take note.</p>	<p>I, formerly known as RAHANATU MUSA WITH D.O.B 01/01/1985 Now wish to be known and addressed as RAHANATU UMAR with D.O.B 25/12/1985. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.</p>
<p>I, ABBA GANA ALI do solemnly declare that: the names ABBA GANA ALI and BABA ALI are referred to me, as I used to answer either of the names. Now I wish to be known and called ABBA GANA ALI. All former documents remained valid. Authorities concerned and public to note.</p>	<p>AFFIONG: That i was formerly known as UDOH MAGDALENE DANIEL. Now wish to be known called and addressed a AFFIONG EKPENYONG EFFIONG. All former document remain valid. General public should please take note.</p>	<p>I, formerly known as ABDULMUMINI AUDI Now wish to be known and addressed as ABDURRAHMANI ALIYU. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.</p>
<p>HAJJA I formerly known and addressed ADAMA USMAN now wish to be known and addressed as HAJJA AISA GONI MODU. All former documents remains valid. Authority concerned and General public to note.</p>	<p>MONDAY: That i was formerly known as BAGBI BARIBEFE DIMKPA. Now wish to be known called and addressed a BAGBI BARIBEFE MONDAY. All former document remain valid. General public should please take note.</p>	<p>I, formerly known as HUZAIFA BUHARI Now wish to be known and addressed as BUHARI UMAR. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.</p>
<p>ISA I formerly known and addressed as ABUBAKAR ISA DAYA now wish to be known and addressed as ABUBAKAR ISA All former documents remain valid. All concern and authority General public should please take note.</p>	<p>ASUQUO: That i was formerly known as MFON JOSEPH EKPEOWO. Now wish to be known called and addressed a MRS. MFON SUNDAY ASUQUO. All former document remain valid. General public should please take note.</p>	<p>I formerly known as FATIMA ADAM now wish to be known and addressed as FATIMA ABUYAZID ADAM. All former documents remain valid. General public should please take note.</p>
<p>BABALE I formerly known and addressed as SANI AUDU BABALE now wish to be known and addressed as SANI ALH AUDU BABALE All former documents remain valid. All concern and authority General public should please take note.</p>	<p>ANDREW: That i was formerly known as MISS. REBBECA AGEDAH. Now wish to be known called and addressed a MRS. ANDREW REBBECA. All former document remain valid. General public should please take note.</p>	<p>Requirement for Change of Name Women: Marriage Certificate or Court Affidavit; Men: Court Affidavit</p>



SPORT

Cavani fined, banned over Instagram post

→ Pg.48



■ Wahid Enitan Oshodi

Oshodi reappointed as ITTF's chairman

From Risikat Ramoni, Lagos

The Executive Committee of the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) has reappointed Nigeria's Wahid Enitan Oshodi as the Chairman of its Nomination Committee for another term of two years.

Oshodi, Vice President, ITTF Africa Western Region rose from being a member of the committee as the first Nigerian and African

to chair the highest committee in the world body is expected to serve for another two-year term (2020-2022) with most of its former members returning with the exception of one new member who is joining the team for the first time.

Oshodi, a former president of the Nigeria Table Tennis Federation (NTTF) and the brain behind Africa's elite table tennis tournament, ITTF Challenge Nigeria Open will lead the six-man committee with Qatar's Abdulla

Al-Mulla as his deputy while other members of the committee are Sandra Deaton (England), Andreas Georgiou (Cyprus), Lofti Guerfel (Tunisia) and Kook-Hee An (Korea Republic).

ITTF President, Thomas Weikert and ITTF CEO, Steve Dainton as well as Presidents of the Continental Federations and Executive Committee as Masahiro Maehara (Japan) as part of the Ex-officio members in the committee.

The President of African Table Tennis Federation (ATTF), Khaled

El-Salhy described Oshodi's re-appointment as a plus to Africa.

For the Secretary General, Nigeria Olympic Committee (NOC), Olabanji Oladapo, the reappointment of Oshodi was a confirmation of the confidence of members of ITTF Board.

An excited President of NTTF Ishaku Tikon described Oshodi's re-appointment as a confirmation of his exceptional leadership trait particularly his immense contribution to the sport in Nigeria and the continent.

NFF endorse Pinnick for FIFA Council seat

By Olusola 'Jide @jide_olusola

The Executive Committee of the Nigeria Football Federation has unanimously granted congressional endorsement to the candidacy of its president, Amaju Melvin Pinnick for a seat on the FIFA Council in the next elections slated for Morocco in March 2021.

It will be recalled that Pinnick had earlier disclosed his intention to vie for membership of the FIFA Council and will be looking to replace Guinea's Almany Kabele Camara on the council.

The 37-member FIFA Council is the main decision-making body of the world football body that sets the vision for FIFA and global football.

Pinnick was touted as a candidate for Confederation of African Football (CAF) presidency but revealed his sights were on the FIFA council while throwing his weight behind South African Patrice Motsepe.

"For me, it has never been a matter of personal ambition. Always, it has been the passion for service and desire to change the old ways of things and embrace wholeheartedly the new and exciting, and more

... propose to spend N5.6bn in 2021



■ L-R: FIFA President, Gianni Infantino in a warm handshake with NFF president, Amaju Pinnick

innovative and impactful ways.

"I fervently want to work with like minds and men of genuine calibre to restore the pride of the African, exorcise unflattering words like 'laughing stock' and 'scandal' and replace them, through hard work and enterprise, with 'respect' 'probity' and 'transparency'.

"I have a burning desire to

reconnect with the basic ideals of African football, reconnect with the authentic African values in a way that Africa's legends who toiled to make Africa great in the game will be proud once more," he said then.

Meanwhile, the NFF have approved the 2020 financial statement of the Federation, as

well as the proposed budget for 2021.

During the meeting, the NFF Executive Committee confirmed the approval of the Financial Statement of the Federation for the year 2020, as well as the proposed Budget of the sum of N5,625,942,790,00 for the year 2021 in a communique it released.

TTC place hopes on Quadri to end slide in TTBL

From Risikat Ramoni, Lagos

The management of TTC RhönSprudel Fulda-Maberzell is banking on experience and quality of Nigeria's top tennis player, Aruna Quadri to end the drop in the Table Tennis Bundesliga (TTBL)

After losing three consecutive matches against Neu-Ulm, Schwalbe-Berneustadt and Ochsenhausen at home, TTC will host visiting Post SV Mühlhausen in the Wilmingtonhalle at home on Sunday January 3, 2021.

According to Vice President of the TTC, Clau-Dieter Schad, TTC were complacent in the last few games, and they failed to win against the top opponents despite good performances to suffer three defeats in a row at the end of the year.

"It's of course annoying that we weren't able to take one or two wins from the games, but it also showed that the path we were taking is the right one," said Schad.

With German international Ruwen Filus and Aruna in their best form at present, Schad is confident the Nigerian can deliver the team.

With Aruna yet to get used to the league, Schad said: "That is why it is right that we do not raise the targets too early, but I am convinced that he (Aruna) will go a step further."

"We are optimistic and want to start the New Year with a sense of achievement," says Schad

Arsenal looking to loan players out in January - Arteta

Arsenal are likely to see a number of players leave the club on loan when the transfer window opens in January, manager Mikel Arteta said on Thursday.

The Spaniard said this was because they have a large squad and extra players in certain positions.

"There are a lot of players that are going to go on loan. That's the priority at

the moment, because we cannot sustain the numbers that we have in certain positions," Arteta told reporters ahead of Saturday's trip to West Bromwich Albion.

"We're looking to do that. And then we will see if we have the right opportunities in the positions that we need some more help. We're working with the club to try to address them."

Defender Sead Kolasinac has been linked with a move back to struggling German side Schalke 04 but Arteta refused to confirm any deal.

"We have had some conversations around a few players and whether we can find some loans... But, again, we cannot confirm anything at the moment," the manager added.

Arteta also said there was no need for a temporary halt to the season after surging infections in the league led to a third match being called off on Wednesday.

"All the protocols we have in place, everything we do around the training ground (and) matches, the fact that we play our game outside, they minimise the risk a lot," Arteta said.

DAILY TRUST

Friday, January 1, 2021
Jumadal-Ula 17, 1442 AH

www.dailytrust.com

N200
Vol. 52, No. 5

THE FRIDAY COLUMN

Jibrin **IBRAHIM**
jibrinibrahim@dailytrust.com

Bishop Matthew Kukah: Can a partisan tell truth to power?

This week, the major controversy in the country has been Bishop Kukah's Christmas message for 2020, which has divided the country right down the middle. While one side says the message is appropriate and he is keeping to his tradition of telling truth to power, the other feels strongly that the message is from a bigot that has committed sedition against his country and should be arrested and jailed. The problem with the divide is that it follows Nigeria's religious faultline with his supporters coming largely from the Christian community and the accusers from the Muslim community. This is a sad situation because what it tells us is the difficulty of an objective assessment of the Bishop.

Bishop Kukah is a good friend of mine that I have related with over the decades. I know him to be very committed to advancing the cause of the Nigerian nation and to have no ill will towards any religious group. He is somebody who will always say what he thinks in a clear and often confrontational manner and his area of academic interest cannot but draw him into controversy in a permanent manner and that has been the situation since the 1980s when he was writing his "Mustard Seed" column in the New Nigerian.

His doctoral thesis at SOAS in London was on the theme of "Religion, Power and Politics in Northern Nigeria" and this theme has been the essence of Northern politics and maybe precisely because of that very contentious. In the two decades before independence, the distribution of power in Northern Nigeria was largely in the hands of the Emirate system leading to contestation by the Northern Christian community organised in the Non-Muslim League and subsequently the United Middle Belt Congress. A lot of the agitations of the time were submitted to the Willinks Commission of Inquiry in 1958 with demands for the creation of the Middle Belt, which the British rejected. In his academic work and writings, Bishop Kukah has taken on the mantle of this advocacy and very few in the North are neutral on the issue, so over the years, people have lined up for or against Kukah. For his part, the Bishop has been proud to take up the mantle of port parole for one side in this debate and in this context gets a lot of the bullets flying in relation to the theme. I do not think Bishop Kukah sets out to be controversial, it is just that his area of interest and commitment has been controversial over the past 80 years so he finds himself in the centre. As a Nigerian citizen and political scientist, he cannot really be queried for engaging in such a contentious subject but others might say that as a Bishop,

he should leave the field to others and seek for less divisive issues.

As he has been mired in controversy for decades, people have made up their minds about him and I suspect many do not read what he writes but jump to conclusions on the basis of headlines. I saw many reactions to his Christmas message claiming that he had called for a coup against President Buhari. What he said actually was that: "Every honest Nigerian knows that there is no way any non-Northern Muslim President could have done a fraction of what President Buhari has done by his nepotism and gotten away with it. There would have been a military coup a long time ago

A lot of the opposition to Bishop Kukah is based on the reading that he is not just partisan on the Christian/Muslim divide but also on the party-political front. Some of the people I have discussed with point out that he was neither critical of the Obasanjo nor Jonathan Governments and that the virulence of his attacks on the Buhari Government is exceptionally high

or we would have been at war." This is an assessment of possible hypothetical outcomes he is making and not a call for a coup. I think this statement is wrong and should not have been made. First, on the empirical level, the Goodluck Jonathan Government was generally considered to have been as nepotistic and no coup against it happened. Secondly, Nigerians have suffered from almost 30 years of military rule and any suggestion of a possible coup could be read as an invitation for one and should be avoided by democrats.

A lot of the opposition to Bishop Kukah is based on the reading that he is not just partisan on the Christian/Muslim divide but also on the party-political front. Some of the people I have discussed with point out that he

was neither critical of the Obasanjo nor Jonathan Governments and that the virulence of his attacks on the Buhari Government is exceptionally high. For example, Bishop Kukah, speaking at a lecture organised by the members of the Pyrates Confraternity to mark the 80th Birthday anniversary of Nigeria's Nobel Laureate, Professor Wole Soyinka in 2014 complained that: "Nigerians love to criticise their country perhaps far more than any nation I know of in the world. Yes, we have all earned the right to be cynical and even contemptible about the way we have been governed, and about how the resources of our nation have been frittered away mindlessly." He added that: "...The President and the security agencies have become the objects of attacks and vilification and yet, there is very little that is being done to point at the way forward. I know that as day follows night, we shall pull out of this tragedy that we face as a nation. But the least we can do is to stand in the comforts of highways and homes that someone else constructed and thrown stones at ourselves and our people simply because we are living off someone else's sweat." The reality is that this language of understanding he offered to the Jonathan Administration he does not offer to his successor Buhari. It is, therefore, legitimate to accuse him of political partisanship in this regard. My good friend the Bishop, therefore, needs to reflect on his own relationships with previous governments and assess the validity of the claims of partisanship.

Much of the text of his Christmas message is a blunt attack about the nepotism of the Buhari Administration. The Bishop is right when he points out that increasingly, the people of Northern Nigeria, Muslim leaders inclusive, have been coming out to criticise the government: "For a long time, beyond the pall of politics, very prominent northerners with a conscience have raised the red flag, pointing out the consequences of President Buhari's nepotism on national cohesion and trust. With time, as hunger, poverty, insecurity engulfed the north, the President's own supporters began to despair and lament about the state of their collective degradation. Was this not supposed to be their song? The north that the President sought to privilege has become a cauldron of pain and a valley of dry bones. Today, the north itself is crying the most and why not? No one has suffered as much as they have and continue to. The helplessness is palpable and the logic is incomprehensible." This message was, however, lost because many see the Lord Bishop as a partisan himself. The messages of hope interspersed in the speech were, therefore, largely lost except to his fan club.

Bishop Kukah is a very intelligent and sincere man and should spend time this Christmas season to reflect on how he could most effectively articulate his message so that less noise is created and more people are able to accept to actually read what he writes and engage with him in a manner that can promote greater understanding.

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Oshodi reappointed as ITTF's Chairman → P 47

Cavani fined, banned over Instagram post



■ Edinson Cavani

Manchester United's Edinson Cavani has been given a three-match ban and a £100,000 fine for a social media post containing a Spanish phrase that is offensive in some contexts.

The Uruguayan, 33, pleaded guilty to a Football Association charge of using insulting and/or improper words.

Cavani sent the message after scoring a winner at Southampton on 29 November.

The striker subsequently deleted the post and apologised when the meaning that could be attached was pointed out.

Along with the ban and fine, Cavani must also complete a "face-to-face" education programme.

Hammon becomes first woman to lead NBA team



■ Becky Hammon

Becky Hammon became the first woman to lead an NBA team after the San Antonio Spurs' head coach Gregg Popovich was ejected against the Los Angeles Lakers.

Popovich put assistant coach Hammon in charge after he was removed in the second quarter of the Spurs' 121-107 defeat by the Lakers in Texas.

"Obviously it's a big deal, a substantial moment," said Hammon, who joined the Spurs in 2014.

Former WNBA star Hammon, who was the first woman to join an NBA coaching staff, said she did not know she would take charge if Popovich were to be sent off until he pointed at her.