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NIGERIAN POSTAL SERVICE

STAR FEATURE

The resurrection of Minna airport

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Happy Birthday to our Brother @ 54



Mallam Bello Ibrahim Gwandu, MFR, PCTT (Tombia Gwandu)
President, Nigerian Chartered Institute of Transport and Logistics
Faruh's (Ayyu) Friends

MONEY LAUNDERING

Dariye diverted N1.2bn ecological fund

—Witness

The federal high court sitting in Kaduna has been told that the N1,161,162,900 allegedly laundered by the Plateau state governor, Chief Joshua Dariye, was proceeds of ecological funds allocated to the state from the federation

From Sani Babadoko, Bureau Chief (Kaduna) & Rakiya Mohammed, in Jos

account. Testifying at the resumed hearing yesterday, a prose-

cution witness, Mr Adewusi James Olanrewaju, a principal accountant at the Central Pay Office attached to the office of the secretary to the government of the federation (SGF), said according to the payment voucher, the amount was for flood control in

Bokkos and the rehabilitation of abandoned mine pits in Jos.

He said the Plateau state governor, Mr Dariye, came personally on July 7, 2001 along with his aides to the office of the permanent secretary (ecological fund) in the

SGF's office to collect the cheque.

Mr Olanrewaju said he was summoned to the permanent secretary's office where the PS endorsed the voucher and cheque while an aide to governor Dariye signed the voucher and the delivery register and collected the cheque.

The court admitted the photocopies of the cheques and delivery register as exhibit A, A1 and 2 respectively. The witness however said there was no letter of authority since the governor was present.

Also testifying for the prosecution, Alhaji Abdus-

Contd. on Pg 2



Chairman, M-tel board of directors, Hajija Halita Aliyu (left) UBA managing director, Aliyu Dikko (middle) and Zenith Bank general manager, Adaora Umeoji, during the signing of a N15 billion syndicated loan facility agreement between M-tel and a Consortium of banks led by UBA, yesterday in Abuja. Pix: Felix Onigbinde.

Useni faction refutes ANPP endorsement of confab

Jigawa names reps, IBM Haruna leads ACF team

The Lt-General Jeremiah T. Useni (rd) faction of crisis torn All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), has refuted the party's alleged endorsement of the forthcoming National Political Reform Conference with the faction insisting that the opposition party is yet to take a decision on the issue.

Addressing the press yesterday in his office, General Useni said his faction was "shocked" to hear Chief

By Abdu Labaran, in Abuja Sani Babadoko, in Kaduna & Hassan Koroff, in Dutse

Don Etiebet claiming that the ANPP has endorsed the conference at its national working comm-itee (NWC), meeting, insisting that as a party, ANPP has not taken a decision on the conference.

The embattled national chairman of the ANPP, Chief Don Etiebet, had at a press conference Monday, at the party's national secretariat,

disclosed that the ANPP as a party has not only endorsed the political reform conference but had sent in the

Man hacks wife, daughter to death

It was a sordid tale for the residents of Kalasu village of Ganjuwa local government area of Bauchi State when a middle aged man, Hassan Adamu reportedly lost his patience and hacked to death his wife, Halima and their nine months

names of its four nominees which he however refused to disclose.

In addition, Chief Etiebet also claimed that the leade-

Contd. on Pg 2

From Tashikalmah Hallah, Correspondent (Bauchi)

old baby girl, Bilkisu, over what he alleged as "over nagging".

Malam Adamu, Daily Trust learnt, picked a quarrel

Contd. on Pg 2

ANPP Reps vow to oppose confab budget

The All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), caucus in the House of Representatives, yesterday indicated its resolve to reject the N931,721,615.28 National Conference budget before the National Assembly, saying it would oppose it when it comes up for consideration on the floor of the House.

President Obasanjo had on January 16, forwarded to both chambers of the National Assembly, the budget for the conference seeking

By Hammeed M. Bello, Senior Political Reporter

approval to facilitate the national conference billed to open next month and to last about three months.

But the ANPP Whip in the House of Representatives, Hon Usman Balkore, from Sokoto state, who gave his caucus' position yesterday in an interview with newsmen, described the conference as another deceitful jam-

Contd. on Pg 2

SOME STATE DELEGATES AT A GLANCE

Akwa-Ibom
Mr Etim Inyang
Mrs. Helen Esuene
Dr Asikpo Essien
Dr Ekeng Anam-Ndu
Senator Akaninyene
Ukpana
Senator Emmanuel Essien
Ibok-Essien

Borno
Muhammadu Goni
Baba Ahmed Jidda
Nuru Alkali
Mohammed Aliba
Ibrahim Dancida
Lawal Buba

Anambra
Dr Chukwuemeka Ezeife
Mr Zik Obi
Senator Mike Ajegbo
Mr Gabriel Akweze
Chief Obi Ogene

Jigawa
Najib Hassan
Sulaiman Bappa
Habu Gumel
Aminu Ringim
Tijjani Inuwa Dutse
Fatima Mai Borno

Benue State
Victor Malu
Geoffrey Ejigah
Steven Okor
Fred Orti
George Korgba
Jack Gyado

Kano
Magaji Danbatta
Auwalu Yadudu
Sule Yahaya Hama
Isiaku Umar Tofa
Haruna Salihi
Musa Tanko Waziri

Contd. on Pg 2

News

Dariye *Contd. from Pg 1*

Ibrahim Adekanle, the Central Bank (CBN), Controller in Kaduna, who was at the headquarter in Abuja during the transactions, said he received the cheque for confirmation.

He said the cheque was presented to CBN for confirmation by the Wuse branch of All States Trust Bank in Abuja.

The lead prosecution counsel, Mr Chike Okoronma, said he had three more witnesses to testify but that they were not in court and applied for an adjournment.

The presiding judge, Justice Abdullahi Liman, then adjourned the case, to Monday February 7, 2005.

Meanwhile, the federal high court in Jos yesterday insisted that the Attorney-General of the Federation produce a copy of the treaty signed between the British authorities and the Nigerian government to assist the court in the prosecution of the case brought by the Plateau state government against the EFCC.

The court could not continue with the case yesterday when it came up due to the failure of the attorney-general to make available a copy of the treaty as requested by the court at the last adjournment on January 18.

The defendants in the case, the EFCC and the attorney-general of the federation had severally referred to the treaty in their counter-affidavits while the attorney general and the UK authorities had in their correspondence over governor Joshua Dariye's issue sought each other's cooperation under the treaty.

Counsel to the attorney-general, Mr Kehinde Elejah, told the court that they were unable to get the information as directed by the court.

He however pleaded for more time to enable them collate the information and make it available to the court.

The presiding judge, Justice Charles Archibong, who noted that the required information on the treaty was central to the case asserted that "it is very material to have before this court provisions of the treaty severally cited by the UK authorities and our own attorney-general of the federation."

He said "in addition, some brief under official cover filed and exhibited as a

process of court relating to any other request previously made by either of the government of the UK or the Federal Republic of Nigeria under the said treaty and any proceedings in either country following therefore would be extremely useful in this proceedings and the court would be greatly guided."

According to the judge, it is necessary to get the provisions of the treaty to see if it can be married with the Nigerian constitutional provision, adding that if the court is not guided by the contents of the treaty it may arrive at something that is "wishy-washy."

Justice Archibong said the court would only proceed with the case when the information has "proved manifestly unavailable."

He then adjourned the case till 28 February, warning that if on that date the information is not ready, "we will proceed without the benefit of the guidance."

ANPP *Contd. from Pg 1*

boree, saying that the ANPP members would not participate to approve unjustified plundering of tax payer's money.

He said the National Assembly cannot appropriate money for a conference that is not recognised by law, adding that the president has illegally set up a parallel National Assembly in the guise of National Conference and that the ANPP caucus will not participate in any act of illegality.

"There is no law backing that conference, or assembly or forum, so the National Assembly cannot appropriate money to an amorphous body that is not recognised in law because it is illegal and unconstitutional," the ANPP whip said. "The caucus will definitely reject the budget," he vowed.

Responding to questions as to what the caucus will do if the conference holds and the report comes to the National Assembly for approval, the minority Whip said, "that is where the aspect of blackmail comes in because first and foremost, the national Assembly cannot recognise a federal body doing functions for which it has no competence in law."

"Secondly, whatever deliberations and recommendations that may come out of that conference might come

Auditors report has revealed that the Petroleum and Pipelines Marketing Company (PPMC) has incurred an operational loss of N9.5 billion between 2002 and 2003, showing also that the company is an unproductive money guzzling venture that cannot stand.

This revelation also came to the effect that pipelines and other facilities of the PPMC depots across the country are in a deplorable state despite the continued funding it gets from its parent body, the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC).

The management of the PPMC however failed to appear before the House of Representatives Petroleum

ship crisis that has dogged the ANPP for the better part of last year was "now very much behind us" adding that the crisis has made us better, "more united, stronger, more purposeful and focused to face future challenges."

But refuting these claims, General Useni declared that

to construe the position of Nigerians on issues which could have been handled by the National Assembly which constitutes elected representatives of Nigerians.

He questioned the competence of the selected representatives whose views that were dictated for them would be treated as superior to that of elected representatives of the people.

"Our belief is that, it is like some people are interested because if they blackmail the executive and the president falls into their trap, they want to force their minority position on the country in regards to the structure of the economy and government, social and political relations and so many other things."

"Some of these people don't even believe in the unity and cohesion of this country because they are threatened by it and can only force their way through the window. They ought to have come through elections so that they can canvas the viewpoints of their constituencies and other Nigerians."

"We believe the president and his government has yielded to pressures from a vocal minority about restructuring Nigeria through a sovereign national conference which has been the key agitation of the people that believed they have an agenda to force on the country, but don't believe in democracy, unity and cohesion of the country," the ANPP whip said.

with his wife on Thursday last week and in the process the wife abused him, which according to eye-witnesses infuriated him as he beat her to a pulp.

While beating her, it was alleged that the suspect who is now cooling his heels in police custody in Bauchi, was saying "sai na kashe ki" meaning "I have to kill you".

Our correspondent gathered Tuesday that there are different versions as to how the suspect was alleged to have killed his wife and daughter, with some saying he killed her with a club, while others said it was with a knife.

A man who identified himself as Malam Usman, claimed that the suspect used to have quarrels with his late wife, while the wife, he alleged had been cursing him, "and he used to complain about it" he added.

Although Malam Usman said that the suspect was

PPMC a drainpipe - Reps c'ttee

By Hammeed M. Bello,
Senior Political Reporter (Reps)

Sub-committee to defend the discovered anomalies even as they were said to have been properly invited for the defence.

The House sub-committee, led by the chairman, Hon Tam Brisibe, which made the disclosures yesterday while addressing newsmen at the National Assembly in Abuja, said reports of auditors available to it show that the PPMC incurred a loss of N51 million in 2002 and N9 billion in 2003.

The auditors named as Messrs Akintola Deloids, Balogun and Company, according to Hon Brisibe, indicated in their reports that the

PPMC cannot be sustained due to the steady decline in its operations and huge losses it has incurred.

The auditors, according to the committee, said the over N9 billion loss incurred has eroded shareholders funds to the tune of N10 billion deficit, adding that the company's turnover in 2002 and 2003 stood at N25 billion and N3 billion respectively.

The committee expressed disappointment over the sorry state of facilities and pipelines of the PPMC which it discovered during its

nationwide tour in December of all PPMC branches.

They said that none of all the depots visited had functional fire-fighting equipment and that the level of preparedness to fight fire was poor, even as the NNPC resolved to continue to fund the company.

The House committee said it was shocked that the PPMC management turned down its invitation, but resolved to extend another invitation for Tuesday, February 8, and if the PPMC fails to appear, it will invoke the constitution to order the arrest of the management of the petroleum company.

be seen as if it had something to hide.

"As far as we are concerned, there is nothing wrong with dialogue since we all agree that the issue of our territorial integrity is not an issue to be deliberated on, then we can discuss all other issues. We will give our own version of the story, others will give theirs and we shall come to a consensus," declared retired Vice Admiral Murtala Nyako, who is a delegate from Adamawa State.

The meeting also discussed the forthcoming census after receiving a report from its committee on the 2005 Census.

At yesterday's meeting presided over by the ACF chairman, Chief Sunday Awoniyi, were retired Generals John Shagaya, I. B. M. Haruna and Buba Marwa as well as retired Colonels John Yahaya Madaki and Joshua Madaki.

Others included Alhaji Garba Ja-Abdulkadir, Saidu Barda, Hamid Ali, Barrister Inuwa Abdulkadir, Chief J. K. N. Waku, Senator Dangana Ndayako and Senator Abubakar Girei.

They also include retired Col. Haliru Akilu, Alhaji Umaru Ndanusa, Alhaji Abdullahi Ra'is retired Col. Musa Shehu, Dr Mahmud Tukur and retired AVM Hamza Abdullahi.

Also yesterday, the Jigawa state government announced names of its representatives to the forthcoming national conference.

According to a release made available to *Daily Trust* signed by the governor's director of press, Alhaji Sani Jibril, the list includes two serving commissioners, an emir and two others.

The release announced the Emir of Kazaure, Dr Najib Hussain, Alhaji Suleman Bappa, and Engineer Habu Gumel as members.

Others are Alhaji Aminu Ringim, Alhaji (Barrister) Tijjani Inuwa Dutse and Hajija Fatima Mai Borno.

Meanwhile, in an exclusive interview with *Daily Trust*, the state deputy governor, Alhaji Ibrahim Hassan Hadejia, said a retreat would be organised to prepare the representatives ahead of the national assignment.

According to him, experts would be drafted to widen the horizon of the selected participants in technical areas that may require expert knowledge.

He said Nigerians should be optimistic and extend goodwill to the participants so that they would be better

Useni *Contd. from Pg 1*

Chief Etiebet had no right "to commit the party to the conference" since, according to him, no such decision has ever been taken by any recognised organ of the ANPP.

Similarly, General Useni also denied that the party has got all its troubles behind it saying that the party's reconciliation meeting, proposed by its governors is still to take place and wondered when and where the NWC met to commit the ANPP to the conference.

"The party is still trying to put its house in order and until that is done, any talk about putting our problems behind us is just that," he stated, telling Chief Etiebet to wait until the party's February 10th reconciliation meeting before committing the whole party to any undertaking.

The former FCT minister also blamed Chief Etiebet for all the crises that the party has gone through, linking them to the chairman's serial disregard for due process as prescribed by ANPP's constitution.

"The cause of the quarrels in the party is that Etiebet always takes unilateral decisions without involving anybody," he stated, adding that as long as Chief Etiebet continues on this course, there is no way the factions could be reconciled.

On the fate of the names of the four nominees sent by the Etiebet faction, General Useni said his faction does

Man *Contd. from Pg 1*

of explaining the bone of contention between the duo, which lead to the sordid incident.

Mr Yinka Kayode, Bauchi State commissioner of Police while confirming the incident to *Daily Trust*, explained that "Yes, we received a report from our DPO [Divisional Police Officer] in Ganjuwa that one man was arrested in connection with the murder of his wife and daughter. The suspect is now in our custody and we are still investigating the matter," he said.

According to him, the police wants to ascertain the truth. Why did he murder his wife and daughter. We want to ascertain also his state of mind whether he is sane or not and once we have concluded our investigations, we will charge him to court for murder.

"It's a murder case. We don't waste time in taking him to court, but in doing so, we have to conduct a thorough investigation," he con-

SOME STATE DELEGATES AT A GLANCE

Kaduna State
Umar Dikko
Chris Abashiya
Ja'afaru Makarfi
Emmanuel Toro
Ango Abdullahi
Abdullahi Jibrin

Katsina State
Ibrahim Coomassie
Saidu Bafda
Garba Ja Abdulkadir
Kabir Saidu
Ibrahim Shema
Tukur Mani

Kwara State
Abubakar Baraje
Ayinla Folorunsho
Kola Shittu
Saidu Isa
Mahmud Ibrahim

Niger
Shehu Bida
Dahiru Awaisu Kuta
Abubakar Magaji
Umar Kawu
Isiyaku Jikantoro
Garba Duba

Osun
Cheif Ebenezer Babatope
Justice Bola Babalakin
Professor John Ayoade
Chief Olu Alabi
Mr Dosu Oladipo
Dr Wale Oladipo

Taraba State
Fariko Bobbo Anadami
Luka Zanya
Ibrahim Abubakar
Emmanuel Bavoaa
Yakubu Agbaizi



News

Auto crash claims 19 lives in Plateau

No fewer than 19 people died and eight others seriously injured in a ghastly motor accident along Akwanga-Gwantu road last Sunday.

The accident was said to have involved a Peugeot 505

From Jibrin Dauda, Regional Editor, (Jos)

salon car with registration number Lagos BP 535 BKY and a Hiace bus whose number could not be identified because it caught fire. Both vehicles were for commercial purposes.

Daily Trust was told at the Jos University Teaching Hospital that the Peugeot car was travelling to Abuja from Jos while the Hiace bus was travelling to Bauchi from Abuja, and that both vehicles ran into each other and caught fire at about 3 pm on Sunday afternoon.

Daily Trust further gathered that corpses of the 19 victims have been deposited at the Gwantu General Hospital mortuary in Kaduna state, while four of the eight people who sustained injuries have been transferred to Jos University Teaching Hospital (JUTH) and Our Lady of Apostles (OLA) both in Jos, Plateau state, for relevant medical attention.

The police have confirmed the accident and the death of the 19 people.

Chairman of Sanga local government council in Kaduna state who visited the scene of the accident and donated N50,000 for the treatment of the survivors called on the public whose relations travelled on the Abuja-Jos road last Sunday but who have not returned to check at the Gwantu general hospital, as well as JUTH and OLA hospitals in Jos.

FG decentralises due process

By Benjamin Auta

In a bid to decentralise the budget monitoring and price intelligence unit, the federal government has directed all ministries and agencies to create their own procurement units with immediate effect.

This was contained in a circular signed by the secretary to the government of the federation, Chief Ufot Ekaette.

The circular directed that consultant engaged by the BMPIU should be disengaged at the expiration of a one month notice that ends in February.

The circular said in line with the due process policy of the federal government, ministries and agencies of government are hereby directed to set up procurement units in that respective ministries and agencies.

The circular also directed the office of the Head of the civil service to create a procurement officer cadre within the service in their management and establishment offices.

"The creation of this cadre and appointment or deployment of this category of officers will obviously have implications for the retention of consultants that have been engaged by ministries and agencies outside the civil service structure. The circular said that consultants engaged outside the civil service be given one month notice and that their appointments should be terminated at the expiration of the notice.

The circular further added that "this will also apply to consultants currently retained in the procurement unit of the BMPIU as well as other consultants in ministries, departments and agencies engaged to do jobs which do not require rare skills not easily available within the mainstream civil service."

Further more, consultants relieved of their posts were also advised to apply for the position of procurement officers in the civil service. They are also free to make a case to the Head of the civil service of the federation for consideration.

FG moves to audit NITEL, M-tel

The federal government has initiated steps to conduct actuarial audit of the Nigerian Telecommunications Limited (NITEL) and Mobile Telecommunications Limited (M-tel).

Specifically, the federal government, through the National Council on Privatisation (NCP) wants to be determine NITEL and M-tel staff pension funds deficit as at this month; compare the accrued liabilities with the assets at hand; determine the value of benefits, assuming every member of the pension fund scheme is made redundant at the date of valuation (February 2005); and explore options on how to deal with the deficits.

In line with this objective, the government is seeking for reputable consultants to assist the NCP in conducting the audit.

A statement from the secretariat of the NCP listed the requisite criteria for selection of the consultants to include evidence of track record in similar assignments carried out in the past five years and availability of appropriate skills among staff proposed



President Olusegun Obasanjo exchanging greetings with his Namibian counterparts, President Sam Nujoma during his two-day visit to Nigeria on his arrival at the State House Abuja...yesterday. Pix: Joe Oroye

Lake Nyos: Nigeria's possible tsunami-conference

From Sani Babadoko, in Kaduna

Participants at a conference on the lessons of the Asian tsunami have alerted the country that at least 75,000 Nigerians in Adamawa, Taraba, Benue and Cross River states could be killed in the event of a volcano eruption from lake Nyos in neighbouring Cameroon Republic.

The conference which held in Kaduna yesterday by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), noted that the lake erupted thrice in 1954, 1982 and 1984 with massive flooding of the river Benue.

The conference attended by all stakeholders in emergency management such as the police, fire service, road safety, oceanographers and

meteorologists was told that massive public enlightenment and mobilisation was necessary to get Nigerians prepared for any eventuality.

In a keynote address, the NEMA director-general, Alhaji Salisu Shuaibu Makarfi, told participants that "there was need for a rethink in our approach to natural disasters and its management.

"The only area where we could probably think of a natural disaster of the magnitude experienced in the

Asian region is the western boundary of Nigeria with Cameroon," he declared.

Alhaji Makarfi said, "since we have recognised a slight possibility of occurrence, it is very imperative that we begin, as a matter of urgency, work to improve our contingency preparedness. This is to ensure the safety of the populace in the event of the disaster.

The NEMA DG said developing countries suffer most from such disasters and therefore, "it becomes important that as one of the developing countries, we must put

heads together to ensure that we plan ahead in the interest of the future and safety of our citizens and resources."

He said if any progress is expected in preparedness, collaboration among stakeholders in disaster management must be prioritised.

He said in preparing, there was the need to have a multifaceted, multiresource, multiagency and multidisciplinary response adding that there was also the need for a resource map, a warning system and the development of strategic stocks by states and local governments.

Reps to investigate BPE over PSPLS

By Zainab Alimi, Political Reporter

The House of Representatives yesterday mandated its committee on privatisation and commercialisation to conduct an investigation into the failure of the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE), to commence the privatisation share purchase scheme (PSPLS) which was mandated to it three years ago by the National Council on Privatisation.

The committee is to determine the cause(s) for the delayed take-off of the scheme and ascertain the

amount of funds and fees already advanced to contractors, consultants and any other agency or persons involved in the delay in implementing the scheme since October, 2003.

The committee is expected to submit its report, which should contain the propriety or otherwise of expenditures on the scheme and the extent of its compliance with due process, within a month.

In a motion moved on the

floor of the House by Hon. Celestine Nnaemeka Ughanza and seconded by Hon. Halims Agoda, Hon. Ughanze questioned the lack of transparency associated with the delay in implementing the scheme.

He said that the delay has denied millions of Nigerians the opportunity to participate in the on-going privatisation exercise, adding that contracts worth millions of naira has been awarded for the executive of the scheme by the federal government.

The PSPLS is an initiative intended to offer opportunity Nigerians who ordinarily would not have had the means to buy shares under the privatisation programme.

Under the scheme, participating Nigerians will be able to apply for N10,000 worth of shares payable over a period of five years in cash, dividends, bonuses and proceeds from the sale of shares or other appropriate repayment methods.

Hon. Ughanze said that the House committee on privatisation and commercialisation had addressed several letters to BPE to brief the committee on the scheme as well as the contracts awarded, but got no response from the bureau.

Shehu Musa warns against anti-north national dialogue

An elder statesman and the former Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Alhaji Shehu Musa has warned that there are alleged attempts by some politicians to put the North in undue disadvantaged position in the nation's socio economic development at the forthcoming national dialogue.

Alhaji Musa made this allegation in Minna the Niger state capital, at the pre-National Conference Stakeholders Meeting on Monday.

He pointed out that plans

are under way to put the North at disadvantaged position in the scheme of things at the national conference.

He advised the north should forge a common stand and articulate their positions in a way that its interests would be adequately represented at the national conference.

He suggested that the representatives of the north should go to the conference with broad and open minds that could see beyond a national get-together and secure for the region all its due

benefits within the nations federal structure.

Furthermore, Alhaji Musa also alleged that the judicial reform agenda of the conference was aimed at annihilating the Sharia legal system introduced by most of the northern states.

Also speaking at the occasion, Governor Abdulkadir Kure of Niger state explained that the state convened the stakeholders meeting in an effort to have a wide variety of views to articulate the states positions at the conference.

News

FG moves to rid Niger - Delta of illegal weapons

The federal government may have begun moves to rid the Niger-Delta of illegal weapons as part of its response to the alarming increase in the rate of violent crimes and illegal weapons circulation in the country.

Daily Trust gathered that the committee on the control of violent crimes and illegal weapons inaugurated by President Olusegun Obasanjo in April last year will be having a forum with various organizations in Port Harcourt this Monday and later move to Asaba, Delta State for a similar meeting.

While in Port Harcourt, the committee will visit Bori and Ahoada towns where it will hold similar forums with youth and civil society

From Ikenna Emeka Okpani, Bureau Chief, (Port Harcourt)

work, the committee will also hold public sittings, media forum and interactive session with the general states within the six geopolitical zones of the country", he said.

Daily Trust gathered that the committee will be in Rivers State for three days and will meet with traditional rulers and opinion leaders in the zone to brainstorm on ways and means to curtailing youths in the area from violent crimes and possession of illegal weapons.

More than ten houses were attacked in which more than N4 million was lost after an armed robbery operation on Monday night.

The incident occurred at GRA quarters when at about 3:00 a.m. the men of the underworld numbering about 30 armed with different weapons, attacked the residences of some prominent personalities mostly businessmen and carted valuables and money.

According to the source, the robbers who were dressed in police uniform, arrived at the residence of one Sanusi Mubai an instructor with the state's school of health technology, Tsafe and subsequently moved to the

Robbers attacks 10 houses in Gusau GRA

From Salisu Zakari Maradun, Correspondent (Gusau)

house of his neighbour also by name Sanusi Jega, a business tycoon.

The robbers, who successfully carried out their operation despite the presence of the police, were said to have also attacked the house of Alhaji Gado Maibulawus, Malam Tukur Mayanchi, a cashier with the ministry of education and that of Alhaji Dan Alkali, a businessman.

Many people who spoke with our correspondent

expressed dismay over the inability of the police to tackle the increasing robbery cases the state for many years now.

When contacted, the state's police commissioner, Alhaji Ibrahim P. Machi, confirmed the story, saying investigations are on to fish out the culprits.

It would be recalled that a week before sallah, about four different cases of robbery took place in Gusau alone apart from numerous cases that took place in other parts of the state.

Nadada hinges good governance on rural dev

For a government to be rated high and prudent in the management of resources, such government should have the development of the rural areas as its main objectives, Alhaji Mohammed Nadada Umar has said.

Alhaji Umar, secretary to the Bauchi State government in an interview with Daily Trust explained that most administration places priority on the metropolitan areas forgetting the rural areas where majority of the population live.

According to him, a good administrator should place priority on the provision of good roads, water and primary health care facilities to the rural areas as "these facilities would ginger speedy development at the grassroot level". Alhaji Nadada Umar explained that the Bauchi State government, having realized the potentials in the rural areas and the need to check urban drift, constructed several rural roads in different parts of the state, in addition to the construction of general hospitals in all the 20 local government areas of the state.

Equally, he said that the government has constructed several healthcare centres in the state and electrified many villages.

"The idea of all this effort is to open up the rural areas for speedy development. We didn't neglect the urban areas. You have been here for over a year now. You're a living witness to what this government has done in terms of providing basic amenities to the people.

"Before the advent of this administration, there are some areas that were completely inaccessible, but we have constructed roads, provided them with electricity and water. So we

From Tashikalmah Hallah, Correspondent (Bauchi)

in place, the idea of urban migration would be minimized".

Alhaji Umar also added that "in the rural areas, there are great potentials. The farmers need good roads to transport their produce to the urban or semi-urban areas. And with electricity, they would set up small scale business and this would help the government in its drive for its self employment scheme".

He also said that the government has provided the youths with many incentives that have made them self employed and the government still has in stock many projects for them under the poverty eradication programme.

Although, the Zannan Misau acknowledges that the government cannot meet the demands of every community at the same time, however, he said that, "after the end of this administration, we hope that whoever is coming will build on what we have started. Ours is just like a foundation, and we believe that whosoever is coming in 2007, if the Almighty would let us see, will continue from where we stopped".

The secretary to the government also explained that the Bauchi state government is not competing with any state, but stressed that "we're just trying to improve the lot of our people. So, for any person to pass any judgment on the administration of Governor Adamu Muazu, I think the people's judgment should be supreme."

However, he appealed to the people of the state to always embrace peace as a panacea to rapid development, stressing that "without peace, nothing can



The immediate past chairman of First Bank of Nigeria Plc, Alh. Mahmud Ibrahim Atta died in a London hospital on Monday, January 25, 2005 and was interred at the Isa Kaita Road Cemetery in Kaduna on Tuesday, January 26, 2005. Picture shows former President Ibrahim Babangida (second left); retired Lt. Gen Salisu Ibrahim former Chief of Army Staff (first right) and retired Gen. Muhammadu Wushishi (third left) welcoming First Bank directors led by retired Gen. Garba Duba (standing), and Alhaji Muhammadu Ibrahim (first from left) and other dignitaries to the home of the deceased.

Nigeria to get \$81 from US to fight HIV/AIDS

The newly appointed assistant administrator for Africa of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Mr. Lloyd D. Pierson, has announced American government's donation of \$81 million to Nigeria this year, the fight against HIV/AIDS.

By Sunday Ejike Benjamin, Health Reporter

Mr. Pierson announced this yesterday after visiting the Gwagwalada specialist hospital in order to gain more knowledge about the collaboration between the government of Nigeria and

that of the United States in their joint efforts to combat HIV/AIDS in the country as part of the emergency plan for AIDS relief.

He said the budget allocation for Nigeria in this regard for the rest three years will depend solely on the strength of the partnership and its ability to reach

emergency plan targets, just as he noted that, Nigeria, as one of the 15 focus countries for the emergency plan, will expressly receive government's resources to fight HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Mr. Pierson who is also the US government's representative on the board of directors of the African development Foundation, further pointed out that Nigeria, in partnership with the US government, local and international partners, are poised to reduce the impact of HIV/AIDS through sustainable treatment, care and prevention programmes.

In his comments, the medical director and chief executive of the hospital, Dr. Nandul Durfa, commended the intervention of the US government in the fight against HIV/AIDS, pointing out that the hospital has exhausted the chances of 450 patients to be placed on antiretroviral drugs in the hospital.

Obasanjo re-appoints Hamman Tukur as RMAFC boss

President Olusegun Obasanjo has reconstituted the Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC), with the erstwhile head of the commission, Engr. Hamman Tukur as chairman.

Tukur was the commission's boss between 1999 and September 21, last year, when his tenure and that of 28 other commissioners expired.

In a letter to the President of the Senate, Chief Adolphus Wabara, presented on the floor of the senate yesterday, Obasanjo requested the upper chamber to confirm Tukur's re-appointment as well as 28 commissioners representing states where there are vacancies.

According to the President's letter dated January 28, the new

By Habeeb I. Pindiga, Reporter (Politics)

Nathan (Adamawa), Efang Inyang (Akwa Ibom), Sam Agumadu (Anambra), Richard Asena (Benue), Orho Obada (Delta), P.A. Nwankwo (Ebonyi) and Tom Uloko (Edo).

Others are Adebisi Aladejana (Ekiti), Emmanuel Nnamani (Enugu), Aliyu Kwali (FCT), Saidu Mohammed (Gombe), Mohd Kali (Jigawa), Yakubu Shehu

(Kaduna) and Kabiru Rabi (Kano).

Also on the list are Abu Gidado (Katsina), Ignatius Amodu (Kogi), Ahmed Zuruq (Kwara), Orji Oye-Wado (Nasarawa), Muhd. Enagi (Niger), Aremu Adeyemi (Ogun), Oladipo Abitogun (Ondo), Oladeji Ariyibi (Osun), Ayantayo Ayandele (Oyo), John Mankilik (Plateau) A.S. Oyaghiri (Rivers), Bello Kware (Sokoto), Isa Geidam (Yobe), and Muhammad Maradun (Zamfara).

National mosque sub-committee meets Thursday

The launching and fund raising sub-committee of the Presidential Committee for the rehabilitation of the National Mosque, Abuja, has scheduled to meet tomorrow (Thursday, February 3).

A statement signed by the secretary of the sub-committee, Salisu Na'Inna-Dambatta, said the meeting,

governor Abdullahi Adamu of Nasarawa State, will hold at the governor's lodge, John Jatau Kadiya Crescent, Asokoro district, Abuja.

Personalities invited to the meeting, according to the statement are; Ustaz Bala Lau, Ustaz Tijjani Bala Kalarawi, Alhaji Zakari Yakubu, Alhaji Yusuf Sulaiman and Alhaji Garba

Others are; Alhaji Faruk Halliru, Alhaji Umaru Faruk, Alhaji Ibrahim Sidi Bamalli, Alhaji Gambo Jika Adamawa, Alhaji Isma'ila Modibbo Adamawa and Alhaji Abdullahi Garba Ra'is.

The rest are; Sheikh Yusuf Gambo Rigachukum, Dr. Bashir Mubi, Alhaja (Mrs.) Latifat Okunu, Ustaz Ishaq Kunle Sanni, Alhaji Liad Tella and Sheikh

Soliloquy

WITH
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Opinion

PDP: Inevitable meltdown beckons

One clear mistake which everybody seems to be making right now is that of the assumption that whoever will succeed Olusegun Obasanjo as president in 2007 will first have to take on the Herculean task of wresting the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) from its present leaders, between their national convention later this year and early enough before the electoral battle of 2007. Such a theoretical sucker would then have to go to the additional trouble of having to re-invent it into a winning party again, all within these next two years, not so?

This is not a very reasonable or logical expectation really, however, because the cost of salvaging the PDP from the debris of its own ruined reputation and the immediate record of its two terms in power from 1999 to 2007 will be so high that it may be infinitely more economical and logical for all serious presidential hopefuls to find accommodation in other existing registered political parties than to acquire the wreckage of the PDP and seriously hope to use a party so clearly BER [Beyond Economic Repair] to win the presidential race two years from now.

For the plain truth is that the PDP as a viable political party has maneuvered itself into a completely blind alley from which it can no longer wriggle out and still retain the slightest semblance to an organisation which can inspire the Nigerian electorate with any spark of trust, confidence or pride in the membership of it. The reader can easily test the validity of this judgment by asking himself/herself what kind of image comes to the mind when they meet someone who has a reputation of being a PDP big-wig, whether at the national, state or local level of the party.

Is it a picture of integrity, trustworthiness and determination to work for the improvement of Nigerians and their country, or is it one of evil power steeped in secretiveness, cloying hypocrisy, deceit and subservience to godlessness in order to join in the power-group which is in control of the machinery for "chopping" Nigeria to death?

Any Nigerian who can confront himself/herself with this question in the total privacy of their minds and souls, and answer themselves candidly without self-deceit, will have no further difficulty in coming face to face with the true nature of what the PDP truly has become as a political secret cult, in barely five

matter succinctly therefore, the party has become, in the public eye, the secret society which you join clandestinely in order to surrender your values and your soul to the "powers that be", in order for you to survive and succeed in Nigeria today, regardless of your hard work and God-given talent. It is a giant club of armed robbers which you join in secret and forever thereafter are ashamed to claim to belong, because everybody knows that it is a container of evil and avaricious people whose sole purpose for belonging is to rip off a chunk of the nation's flesh for personal and cabal consumption.

Now, what kind of a monumental fool of a presidential aspirant do you think would like to buy into this kind of a mob of greedy sub-humans, completely stripped bare of the thinnest veneer or pretense at honesty, honour, good conscience and honest-to-goodness fear of God, except the graven images to which they take their recruits in horrid shrines deep in the forest, there to swear secret oaths of allegiance to the gods of avarice, and make blood sacrifices? Say, what have Tony Anenih and his Ogboni co-travellers turned our country into, in just five short years of indiscipline, lawlessness, power-drunkenness and godlessness? A 21st Century Voodoo-land, modelled after Papa Doc Duvalier's old Haiti, complete with *tonton macoutes* to whip us into line and terrorise us into conformity? I swear by God and in all sincerity of belief, the PDP is fit for nothing now but outright death, if Nigeria is to ever make headway. We must first destroy this monster which we created for ourselves, like a golden calf, before we can once more see clearly enough to retrace our steps back to honest and painstaking nation-building for ourselves and our progeny.

Never in the history of Nigeria has there ever been such a mountainous pile of resentment and hatred as the

"At what other time in Nigeria's history has Nigeria's ruling party been such a dreadful tyrant over its own members, terrorising its own state governors, humiliating its own senate presidents and disgracing its own founding members and its own legislature so publicly?"

one which the PDP has built up for itself in the enormous pool of former friends and party members whom it betrayed, disgraced and sent into perjury and oblivion in its monomaniacal hunger for power and monopoly of personal enrichment. Never has one single party held such a commanding sway over the affairs of this nation, and then given such free rein to thugs and godless cabalists to impose themselves like Colossuses over our nation's destiny. Come to think of it, at what other time in Nigeria's history has Nigeria's ruling party been such a dreadful tyrant over its own members, terrorising its own state governors, humiliating its own senate presidents and disgracing its own founding members and its own legislature so publicly? But for our great determination to stick to the democratic path, no matter how bitter the going gets this time around, would the Nigerian military not long before now have shot this gang of thieves calling itself the PDP to hell and back, or jailed them indefinitely several times over, in these last five horrid years?

It seems to me to be the most appropriate thing in the world right now therefore for the Nigerian people themselves to destroy this PDP monster and bury it deep underground, before any other matter can legitimately even arise. Surely, no internal or external well-wishers of Nigeria can hold us to blame if we decide of our own free democratic will to throw off the yoke of this naked gang of national armed robbers and give any other one of our existing parties the fair chance to at least try to lead us in another direction totally different from this pernicious one in which we remain forever one of the three most corrupt nations on earth and our citizenry remains one of the most impoverished on this globe?

Say, am I running mad, or is it my compatriots who are slowly going stark raving crackers, for lack of the will and courage to send this pack of PDP rascals and maggots packing?!...

A nation of shoddy economic policies

By Abubakar Wambai

Nigeria, government policies do not conform with basic objectives as the ruling class preoccupies itself with policies that are in complete antithesis to the developmental standards of the country's economy.

However, it is factually evident that much has conspicuously been left to chance as far as the Nigerian economy is concerned. Even by merely looking at the convulsively dreadful rate, at which the nation's inflationary indicator stands today, one needs not be told about the perilous and economically destructive implications such a phenomenon portends for our economy.

Many stringent measures for economic reform from the view point of macro economic management and planning were taken with a view to resolving the crises by myriad of regimes both the military and civilian, but the quagmire still remains as it is.

But, the question worth posing is where the problem actually lies?

First, the thoughtless and ill-advised inauguration of the Structural Adjustment Programme (S.A.P.) by Babangida's regime, where he succumbed to the conditions of I.M.F. and World Bank was the first blunder that plunged the economy in a state of total disarray.

The insuperable havoc the inauguration of S.A.P. wreaked on the economy is inexplicable. The structural adjustment programme, rather than salvaging the economy from its maladies ended up making it more zapped than it was before the implementation. Some of the objectives of S.A.P. were:

Devaluation of the domestic currency which paved way for the cheapening of national assets in favour of the west. Trade liberalization which exposed the economy fully to the vagaries of western exploitation as a result of which terms of trade turned against us. Deregulation of the exchange rate, which led to over valuation of the cost of capital.

Privatization of government parastatals which entails selling off of some core government's parastatals under the guise of securing their efficiency in the hands of private individuals. These among others, were some of the shoddy economic objectives of S.A.P. the outcome of which did not yield any fruitful result on the welfare of the citizenry.

Babangida himself admitted in his 1989 budget

being battered by a high rate of inflation, unemployment, devaluation of the naira and reduced living standards. At no time since independence have we ever been more economically enslaved than we had been during the S.A.P. era. But today, it seems rather obvious that the kind of policy thrust Obasanjo and his cronies are imposing on Nigerians, tends to be even more devastating than the S.A.P. Since inception to date, the Obasanjo's administration, has perfected it self only in pursuing economic policies that are in line with the western agenda of the rape, retardation and advertent destruction of the peoples of Nigeria.

Again, some couple of months ago there was an unprecedented N25bn increase in the minimum capital share that each operating commercial bank should maintain against its deposits. Well, it is agreed that the security of our commercial banks could be ensured this way but what of the profitability aspect of the portfolio management which is line with the theory of monetary economics?

I astound at how the professor of economics, Charles soludo while coming up with his policy thrust for portfolio management focused solely on the attainment of the security objective of portfolio management and traded off income/profitability aspect of it. And in as much as profitability objectives of the portfolio management, is traded off, the tendency is massive retrenchment of workers by the banks Commercial banks as they start realizing fall in their profit margins, which would worsen, further the already existent unemployment impasse in the economy.

This also reminds me of the abandoned Ajoakuta Steel Company in Kogi State. About two years now, government had signed a 3.6 billion US Dollar contract with a Russian firm (Solgas) for the revival of the company.

Very unfortunately, we just heard that the contract has been quashed up for reasons that up till now have not yet been substantiated to us. I also read in the daily triumph newspaper of Friday Nov. 5 2004 that still in its surreptitious move to hood wink us into believing that it wants to revive the place, Government of recent signed another fresh contract with an Indian firm called ISPAT industries for the so called completion of the project.

I tender my apology to the reader for I would not delve much into the politics on which the entire process

industries for become laggard as they can not compete even with their counter parts in other countries of the continent let alone competing at international level due to the dilapidated state of infrastructure and the environment, which is not enabling.

Today, the situation in Nigeria is that even ordinary food has gone grossly beyond the affordability of the populace let alone other necessities of livelihood sustenance. Debts have always kept piling up agricultural and other strategic sectors of the economy have been out rightly neglected. Government has focused solely on the oil sector. And very unfortunately the oil sector today, merely caters for the progressive economic needs of the "West" at the detriment of the populace.

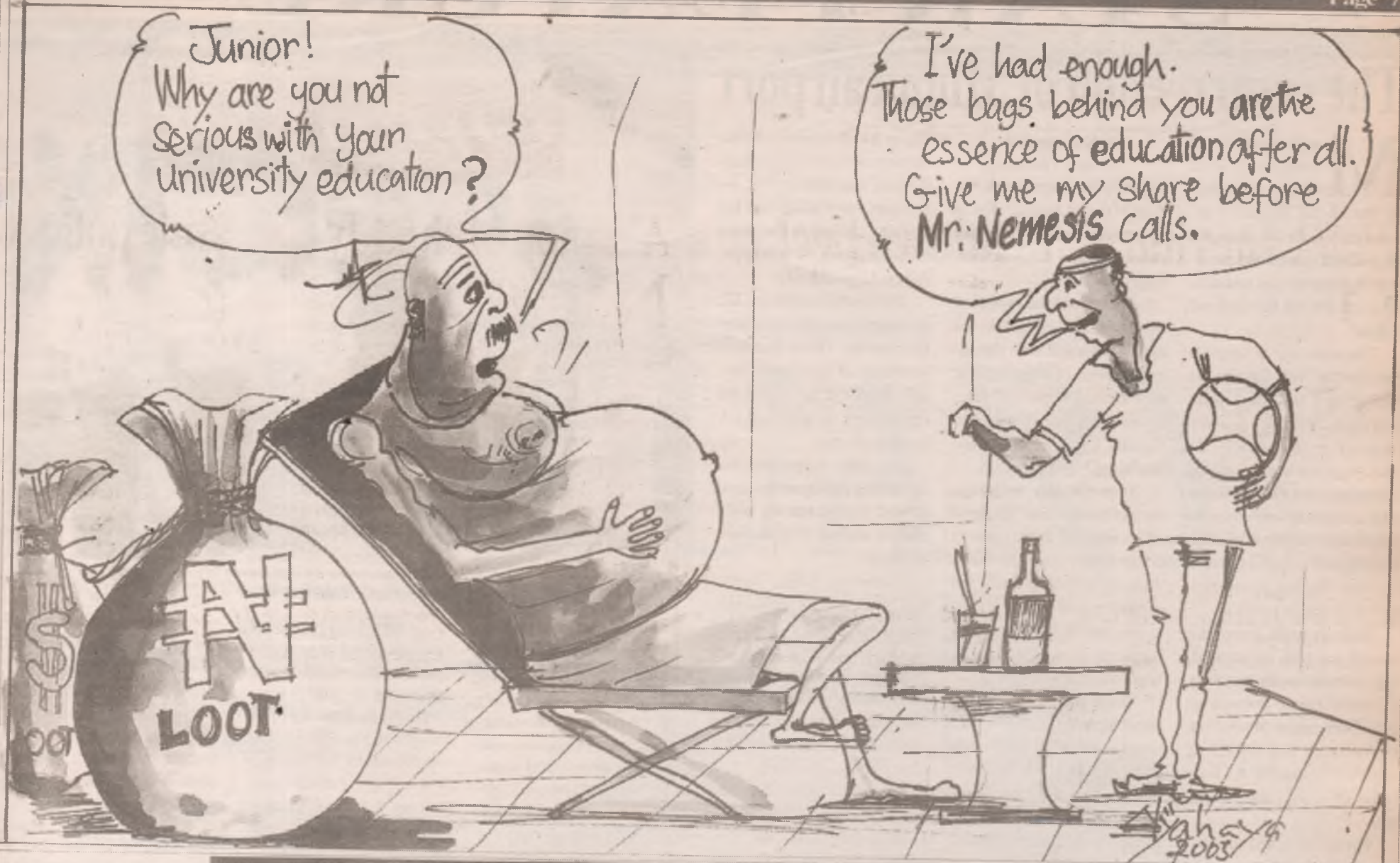
The recent and previous hike in the fuel pump price is indicative of the unanimous acceptance of the W.C policies by the ruling class. The perpetrators need to know that the higher oil price episodes of the past fifty years revolved around conflicts in the Middle East, and as such, major suppliers were adversely affected. These and similar historical epochs were never a success economic story for those economies. By the way, why can't government revive our refineries so that we can be producing the product domestically rather taking it abroad for refining?

Therefore, the travails of the Middle East should serve as warning bells for incessant oil price increase in Nigeria. These crises, make our economy to look just like a ship floating aimlessly on the turbulent high seas with the captain no where in sight.

Fundamentally, the genesis and causes of our economic crises is traceable to our reinforced link with the international capitalist system. And unless we sever ties with this capitalist system, which is the principal agency of our under development history shall always repeat itself. Alas, even the Nigeria's populace does not seem to learn from its mistake as it believes in an Hausa Adage that says: "In Fada Yafi Karfinka Mai da Shi Wasa".

Meaning, once faced in a battle with the opponent that is stronger, then surrender the battle for the opponent. This is quite a docile and equanimous character that needs to be cast off our minds if at all we want to find exit from this imbroglio. A stitch in time saves nine.

Wambai Sanusi is lecturer, Department of Economics Bayero University Kano



YOUR LETTERS

Balogun: Is EFCC crazy for credit?

Perceptive Nigerians had always known that it was a matter of time for Mr. Tafa Balogun to leave office inelegantly as Inspector General of Police. He was an IGP in a class of his own. No past Inspector General could compare with him, and one sincerely prays none can in the future. His fall from power on January 16, 2005, has understandably been celebrated throughout Nigeria.

The Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Alhaji Nuhu Ribadu, has been claiming credit for Mr. Balogun's exit. A day after the IGP's unceremonious retirement, Alhaji Ribadu told the Hausa language service of the *British Broadcasting Corporation* (BBC) that he was responsible for this development through his recent petition to President Olusegun Obasanjo, detailing Balogun's stupendous corruption which has seen him transformed into one of Nigeria's wealthiest men in the last three years. Press reports, quoting EFCC sources, claim that between two and four billion naira has been traced to the former IGP's bank accounts, mostly at the Fountain Trust Bank.

Ribadu's claim of credit for Balogun's sudden and forced retirement which Nigerians anxiously wait to see converted to outright dismissal is consistent with a pattern which the brash EFCC chairman has firmly established: a passion, a very strong desire, to be seen as

the giant killer. Ribadu may have written such a heavily indicting report to the President against the IGP, but to say this is the reason for his retirement is absolutely cocky. Did Chief Obasanjo tell Ribadu or any other person that the reason for getting rid of Balogun is the petition he wrote? So, how did Ribadu arrive at this conclusion?

Commonsense counsels that it is most unlikely that Balogun was thrown out on the strength of the EFCC Chairman's petition. Balogun's avarice has for at least two years been an issue in the public domain. Which state commissioners of police have not complained bitterly and sometimes openly about the huge amounts they were required to send him monthly? How many state governors can genuinely claim not to have been regularly fleeced of colossal sums by the police authorities during the Balogun era? Who has forgotten what transpired just before and during the last election?

If the EFCC has just got to know of Balogun's kleptomania, despite all the human, financial, electronic and diplomatic resources at its disposal, then, there is nothing to celebrate about the petition to the President. If anything, it is embarrassing that the economic crimes commission has just got to know about this massive graft, a whole 17 months after a weekly magazine exposed it and did much of the job for the EFCC, or, as the

Americans would say, the EFCC had the job cut out for it.

Most Nigerians are worried that the Federal Government did not act on the first exposé of *The News*. Didn't the government consider the exposé serious enough? It will be a tragic if it did not. On the other hand, if the administration did investigate the story, what was the outcome? If its investigation showed that the cover story was baseless, it would certainly reveal that our security and intelligence agencies are anything but useful. But if the government investigation did prove conclusively that Balogun has notoriously itchy fingers, why didn't the administration act promptly? Why did it wait for almost two years on an issue that borders on national security and the moral foundation of our nation which is under the watch of an administration that makes a show of its avowed determination not to "continue with business as usual"?

It does look increasingly likely that Balogun's removal did not spring from EFCC's petition against the IGP because the Federal Government, like the Nigerian press and the public, has for long been aware of Balogun's compulsion for stupendous wealth. If the Obasanjo government was interested in punishing Balogun for avarice, it could not have gone ahead to bestow on him one of the most prestigious national honours, namely, Member of the Federal

Republic (MFR). The Obasanjo regime may have merely rewarded Balogun for using the police to rig the 2003 general elections far more brazenly than any other election in the nation's chequered history. Balogun's police were to be subsequently used to achieve other politically motivated objectives which were in deep conflict with national interests, like the abduction on July.

To repeat the obvious, the notion being propagated by Ribadu that Balogun was removed as Inspector General of Police on the basis of a petition by the EFCC leadership is not convincing. Ribadu's claim is typically tall, informed by a certain megalomania and narcissism. Ribadu is driven by an unmistakable craze for credit.

Perhaps, we should not be surprised at EFCC's seeming recklessness, as opposed to fearlessness. How can this lawyer state publicly in respect of Governor Joshua Dariye of Plateau State that he does not recognize the constitutional immunity shielding governors and the President from criminal prosecution? Can he claim to have the legal capacity to prosecute the President? Aren't Governor Dariye and President Obasanjo enjoying the same constitutional immunity? The respected former Chief of Army Staff, Lt. Salihu Ibrahim, was said to have publicly warned Ribadu to stop overstepping his bounds.

EFCC's propensity for

taking credit so as to be seen as the giant killer cheapens it. The agency is now seen by a growing number of Nigerians as partisan, ever enthusiastic to do someone's bidding. It is playing a dubious role which the Federal Government wanted the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) to play in respect of political opponents, a role which Mr. Justice Mustapha Akanbi, the ICPC chairman and a dignified former president of the Court of Appeal, admirably rejected. Anytime

a prominent person has a disagreement with the President, a letter is immediately dispatched to the EFCC. Take the case of Audu Ogbeh, the outgoing Chairman of the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

It is time Nuhu Ribadu recognized that it takes more than playing to the gallery to grab newspaper headlines or earn integrity of purpose.

Dr. Obasuyi is of the University of Benin. Correspondence to 49 New Lagos Road, Benin City, Edo State.

National confab and an aide's gaffe

I was shocked to discover that President Obasanjo's adviser on civil society organisations has handed over his duties to a Kaduna-based bald-headed activist. Instead of taking care of the issue of civil society representatives to the conferences, Alhaji Abba Gana surrendered his duties to this bald-headed activist of Kaduna.

The implication of surrendering the sensitive issue of nomination civil society representatives to the bald-headed activist is clear.

Incompetent activists, usually loyal to the bald-headed activist would full the conference hall and the civil society may end up not having a well-articulated position at the conference. Another implication is how President Obasanjo allows opportunists - people to penetrate his government these days.

It is also surprising that the president does not even know some of the participants are nominated through the back door.

Mohd Sani Dutsinma Church village Area I Garki, Abuja.

Reactions to articles published in this paper may be directed to the editor via the email address: editor@dailytrust.com

The resurrection of Minna airport

Minna airport was constructed over twenty years ago by the Shehu Shagari's administration. Before then, the Niger State capital had an airstrip in the town that was constructed during the first republic.

The decision to upgrade the airstrip into full-fledge airport took into consideration the future of the aviation industry in the country. In fact, Nigeria's second trial at democracy in 1979 and its robust economic achievement heightened the hope for aviation business which informed the then Shagari administration to invest in aviation.

Without doubt, it was conceived that with the expanding economic activities then, air travel would become an expedient means of transacting business and conveying pilgrims annually to holy lands of Mecca and Jerusalem.

For so long, the purpose for which the Minna airport and its sister stations were established has not been achieved due to the recession in the economy over the years. The airport seems either abandoned or condemned to inadequate use while others of the same generation were completely closed down. Eventually, those that were closed down became desolate once again rendering the billions of the tax payers' money a disheartening waste.

To serve the purpose of memory, it would be recalled that some of the airports that closed down out rightly when the economy became bad included Owerri, Ilorin, Ibadan, Enugu and Calabar airports.

In fact when those airports were constructed, it was believed that they were ad-

By Kashim Sule
Stringer (Minna)

equately equipped with the state of the art facilities found in a modest airport to make departure and landing purposes easy.

Apart from the facilities, they were also staffed by the agency charged with the administration of airports then, the Nigerian Airports Authority that later transformed into Federal Civil Aviation Authority of Nigeria.

Subsequently, however, the governments of the states of location of those airports became very concerned with their dilapidating condition considering the huge investments sunk in them and, consequently, made them operational once again.

Niger state government, out of its own initiative started negotiation with the federal government to breathe life into the Minna airport again, at least, to facilitate the air lifting of thousands of Muslim pilgrims.

As a result of the initia-

ilities and determine whether the airport will be able to handle hajj operations. The inspection team which was led by him included the state commissioner of transport, Alhaji Aliyu Dattijo.

During the inspection, the managing director inspected the tarmac. The deplorable condition of its runway surface deprived the airport the opportunity of airlifting pilgrims last year.

He later inspected the lightning facility which is of utmost importance for night landing and bad weather management.

Earlier on, Alhaji Gambo had inspected the arrival and departure hall located on one of the wings of the airport complex. To make sure that everything is in order, he checked the restaurant and the toilets facilities at the airport, to avoid discrepancies.

Expressing his observation later, Alhaji Muhammad Gambo okayed the condition of facilities at the airport for both domestic and interna-



A calibration team from Dakar, Senegal who constructed the calibration lights at the airport. In the middle with Babangida is the commissioner of transport, Alhaji Dattijo Aliyu.

safety of Nigerian airports

According to him, Nigerian airports are very safe, adding that the negative remarks heaped on the country's airports before now was borne out of political sentiments. Alhaji Gambo said the desire of the western countries to chase the military out of power led to the dirty campaign on Nigerian airports.

the facilities, saying that he would not hesitate to recommend the airport for hajj operation in year 2005.

He praised the state government and, specifically, the commissioner for transport for creating conducive environment for the workers of the FAAN to discharge their responsibilities.

Earlier, the commissioner of transport, Alhaji Aliyu Dattijo, told the managing director of the state's extent of involvement in rejuvenation of the airport which is owned by the federal government.

He said a Senegal-based construction firm called ITL was granted 12 million naira interest free loan free to repair the airport. Alhaji Dattijo further explained that the Niger state government spent N400,000 to revive the destroyed control tower.

The transport commissioner disclosed also that the state government's resolve to put the airport to function informed its decision to advance N300,000 to the Nigeria Airspace Management Agency (NAMA) to purchase diesel to run their generator while seven (7) handsets

where given to NAMA staff to facilitate their assignment.

On the assistance extended to the Federal Aviation Authority, Alhaji Dattijo said, N600,000 was given to the authority to assist it to do its work. It spent it on the repairs of the waiting hall.

Responding, the state governor Engineer Abdulkadir Kure adduced reasons why Minna airport should be used for the hajj operation.

He said after Kano and Bauchi states, Niger is the next state with the largest contingent that undertake the religious rite annually, but its pilgrims had often encountered serious problems both at departure and arrival points.

In his own calculation, the secretary of Niger State pilgrims board said if Minna airport is allowed to handle hajj operations it will not only cater for Nigerlites.

He observed that pilgrims from Zamfara, Kebbi and Sokoto states will have risks reduced, as Sokoto airport always has problem of haze limiting the ability of aircrafts to land.

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tive, recently, the managing director of the Federal Aviation Authority of Nigeria, Alhaji Muhammad Isa Gambo paid a working visit to the airport to check the fa-

tional operation.

He expressed the hope that the condition of the facilities at the airport, would halt the excessive criticisms from the west over lack of

The managing director, who later paid a courtesy call on the governor of the state, Engineer Abdulkadir Kure, informed the governor of his satisfaction with the state of



The managing director of FAAN Alhaji Muhammad Gambo and the Minna Airport Manager, Alhaji Salisu Isa inspecting facilities at the airport.



The new approach lightning facilities work in progress at the airport.

Trust International

AU leaders vow to root out instability

Heads of state wrapped up the fourth summit of the African Union, renewing commitments to find African solutions to the long-running conflicts impeding development of the world's poorest continent.

They also pledged to do more to fight the scourge of AIDS and other deadly diseases.

"We have adopted a wide range of decisions and declarations and where necessary, we have also adopted a plan of action and follow-up mechanism," said Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, chairman of the 53-member grouping, at the end of the two-day session.

The leaders had also reviewed various conflicts on the continent including the crisis in Ivory Coast, the civil war in the western Sudan region of Darfur and renewed tensions in the Democratic Republic of Congo added Obasanjo, whose term as head of the AU was extended until January 2006.

Ostensibly devoted to examining proposals to expand Africa's leadership role at the United Nations particularly on the powerful Security Council, the summit evolved into a discussion about conflict resolution, diplomats and summit organizers said.

Chronic instability is a root cause of the abject poverty facing some 300 million of Africa's 830 million people, who survive on less than one dollar a day without access to clean water or effective sanitation.

The continent is lagging behind the rest of the developing world in pursuit

of the UN's Millennium Development Goals, which aim to halve poverty and extreme hunger, reduce child mortality and combat diseases such as malaria and AIDS, which together kill some 9,000 people in Africa every day.

The AU's social affairs commissioner Bience Gawanas said the will was there for Africa to approach, if not reach, the targets by 2015 as long as both the international community and African governments made good on existing financial commitments to the health and welfare of their citizens.

"Peace is not just about the absence of war but also the absence of poverty, the absence of children going to bed hungry, and the absence of disease," she said.

"If we are able to mobilize help and resources when natural disaster strikes, surely we are able to do the same for diseases and poverty, which have killed millions of people in Africa."

Many of Africa's desperately poor are refugees, among them an estimated 1.6 million Sudanese who have fled an explosive two years of violence in Darfur, creating the world's largest humanitarian crisis.

A long-awaited UN report about the violence in Darfur, born from a rebel uprising in February 2003 against government neglect of the desert region, does not describe the violence as genocide, the Sudanese foreign minister noted Monday.

"We have seen the report and they did not say there is

a genocide," Foreign Minister Mustafa Osman Ismail told reporters on the margins of the summit.

The Darfur crisis has been labelled genocide by the United States, despite denials from Khartoum, which has dubbed the rebels outlaws.

Ivory Coast's deadly impasse also took centre-stage, following an inconclusive result from the January 14 summit of the AU's Peace and Security Council in Gabon.

"We are still trying to work out a deal. We have no choice but to continue to pursue a political solution" to the Ivory Coast conflict that has pitted northern rebels against the government since September 2002, a top UN official told AFP Monday on condition of anonymity.

Obasanjo said the heads of state had called on the United Nations to expand the 6,200-strong mission in Ivory Coast, to ensure that there were enough troops.



President Olusegun Obasanjo

Thousands flee in Congo's attacks

Over 2,000 people have sought refuge near UN peacekeepers in northeastern Congo after a week of attacks by ethnic fighters, a UN spokesman said Monday.

Some 2,500 villagers are outside a makeshift UN base after fleeing Che, a remote district of sweeping hills and cut-off valleys where daily attacks have killed 18 people and destroyed over 220 homes since Jan. 19, said UN spokesman Mamadou Bah.

Dozens of Pakistani peacekeepers arrived by helicopter Saturday to secure the area after humanitarian workers last week saw burning homes and residents fleeing for safety as fighters attacked Che, Bah said.

Residents told peacekeepers that ethnic Lendu fighters have been terrorizing the 11-kilometre area every day since Jan. 19, looting and burning homes and murdering people in the night.

They claimed the fighters also kidnapped 34 women and young girls. Two other women are unaccounted for, they said, according to Bah.

Che is 60 kilometres north of Bunia, capital of Ituri province, where murderous raids by ethnic tribal fighters have grown routine.

Bah said the peacekeepers, along with a team of aid workers, are treating wounds and providing food and water to the displaced people. He said most had been attacked with knives, machetes and arrows.

Peacekeepers are patrolling the area by helicopter to maintain security, and the UN will ask Congo's government to reinforce Che with soldiers, said Bah.

Since 1999, fighting in Ituri has killed more than 50,000 people and forced 500,000 to flee their homes, UN officials and human-rights groups said.

Africa wants veto powers at security council - Mbeki

Africa wants veto powers for two new permanent seats it hopes to get on the Security Council in an historic reform of the United Nations expected this year, South African President Thabo Mbeki said.

The demand for veto powers, agreed at a summit of African leaders in Nigeria on Monday, presents a challenge to the world body which has unveiled plans to raise the number of seats, but leave veto powers in the hands of the existing five permanent members: the

United States, Britain, France, Russia and China.

"In light of the fact the current permanent five are saying they will retain the right of veto, therefore the new permanent members should have the same right," Mbeki said in an interview with Reuters and South African Broadcasting Corp after a summit of the African Union (AU) late on Monday. "The AU is saying you should not have two degrees of permanent members, some with a veto right and others not."

A high-level panel on reforming the United Nations has proposed two models for enlarging the council from 15 to 24 members.

One proposal suggests adding six new permanent members without veto power-including two from Africa- plus three new non permanent members for a two-year term.

The second option suggests adding eight seats in a new class of members who would serve for four years, subject to renewal - again this would include two from Africa. This plan foresees one non-permanent two-year seat.

Mbeki said the 53-member organization had decided on the first option, "with improvements."

The African Union will also press for five non-permanent seats on the Security Council, Mbeki said, against the U.N.'s proposed three, to allow each of the five main African regions to have one each.

Sudan, Darfur rebels to resume peace talks in February

Peace talks between the Sudanese government and rebels in the restive western Darfur region are to resume in February in the Nigerian capital, the Sudanese foreign minister said.

"Yes. In Abuja. Next month," Foreign Minister Mustafa Osman Ismail told reporters on the margins of the fourth African Union summit, also being held in Abuja.

The African Union has sent some 1,700 peacekeepers to Darfur to help stem the consequences of the two-year civil war that has left some 70,000 people dead and sparked the exodus of more than 1.6 million people, causing the world's largest humanitarian crisis, according to the United Nations.

Chadian mediators had said earlier that they would suggest a postponement of the resumption of the latest round of talks, opened in December and immediately aborted by the rebels over allegations of a government offensive, pending the mounting of a mission to the desert state to examine the conditions on the ground.

The conflict in Darfur was born from a rebel uprising in February 2003 against government neglect of the desert region.

Khartoum responded with a deadly show of force by Arab militias called the Janjaweed, who are accused of having waged a scorched-earth campaign against non-Arab civilians to bring down the rebels.

The crisis has been labelled a genocide by the United States, despite denials from Khartoum, which has dubbed the rebels outlaws.

A UN commission is expected this week to release a report about whether the two years of violence can be considered genocide.

Ismail said Monday that Khartoum has seen a copy of the report, "and they did not say there is a genocide" in the Darfur region.

At a press conference Sunday in Abuja on the margins of the AU summit, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan declined to elaborate on the details of the report but did avow that "gross violations" of international human rights have taken place.

"Action will have to be taken," added Annan, who urged the UN Security Council to reconsider the application of sanctions against Sudan.

After weeks of relative calm, the region again exploded in violence following an air raid last

Thursday in northern Darfur attributed to the government that left some 100 people dead.

"We are not saying that there was no air raid, but it's not our policy to bomb any civilians," Ismail said. "We will punish those who committed it, but it's not our policy."

...US; Europe split over UN report

A key report on war crimes in Sudan's Darfur region is triggering an intense diplomatic battle between the United States and Europe on how to prosecute perpetrators of pillage, slaughter and rape.

A UN appointed commission of inquiry reported on Monday that the Sudanese government and its militia allies committed major crimes under international law, setting the stage for Sudan officials and rebels to be prosecuted as war criminals.

The 176-page report concluded that Khartoum had not pursued a policy of genocide against non-Arabs in Darfur, where at least 70,000 people have died from

killings or disease and 1.8 million people were forced out of their homes.

But it said some individuals may have acted with "genocidal intent," which only a court could decide.

That court, the commission's five legal experts said, should be the Hague-based International Criminal Court, or ICC, set up to try individuals for genocide, war crimes and massive human rights abuses.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and Europeans want the UN Security Council to refer Sudan to the ICC. The panel has produced a sealed list of suspects.

"This is a case that is tailor-made for the ICC,"

Britain's U.N. ambassador, Emyr Jones Parry told reporters.

But the Bush administration vigorously opposes the court, citing fears of prosecutions against U.S. soldiers abroad.

Instead it wants to set up a new U.N.-African Union tribunal in Tanzania. Diplomats said Washington was willing to pay a considerable sum to establish the court but feared no other rich country would help.

"Our interest here is accountability for the perpetrators of the atrocities," said acting U.S. Ambassador Anne Patterson. "We're going to look at this issue very very closely in the next few days."

Rwandan denies genocide charges

Defence lawyers for the first woman to be charged with genocide at the international tribunal for Rwanda have begun presenting their case.

The ex-minister for women and the family, Pauline Nyiramasuhuko, is standing trial with her son.

They are accused of organising the murder of Tutsis in Butare in the south-west, during the 1994 genocide.

The charges against them include inciting troops and militia to rape hundreds of women.

They deny the charges. The long-delayed trial began in June 2001. She was first arrested in Kenya eight years ago.

Ms Nyiramasuhuko's defence lawyer told the court that the accusations were part of a smear campaign.

Almost 60 people are held in Arusha, suspected of masterminding and orchestrating the killings of an estimated 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

The Rwandan government has accused the tribunal of being slow and inefficient.



Federal Republic of Nigeria
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON PRIVATISATION
 Secretariat: Bureau of Public Enterprises

Actuarial Audit of NITEL and M-TEL
Selection of Consultants

Request for Expressions of Interest

1. The Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) wishes to engage Consultants to assist the National Council on Privatisation (NCP) for the conduct of Actuarial Audit for the Public Telecommunication Enterprises:

- I. Nigerian Telecommunications Limited (NITEL)
- II. Mobile Telecommunications Limited (M-TEL)

The scope of work for the selected consultant(s) shall include but not limited to:

- a. Determine NITEL and M-TEL Staff Pension Fund deficit as at the valuation date, February 2005;
- b. Compare the accrued liabilities with the assets at hand;
- c. Determine the value of benefits assuming every member of the scheme is made redundant at the valuation date;
- d. Advise on available options as to the treatment of the deficit.

2. Submission of Expression of Interest

The NCP now invites qualified Consultants to indicate their interest in providing the above-mentioned services.

Expressions of Interest from prospective Consultants should specify the following minimum information as basis for qualification:

- Evidence of firm's track record in similar assignments carried out in the past five years, including role of firm (if in a joint venture), description of outcome and references of Consultants Staff in the assignment cited.
- Indication of the availability of appropriate skills among staff proposed for the assignment.
- Overall approach to the assignment.

3. Selection Process

The selection and contracting of the Consultants will be conducted in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers. January 1997 (revised September 1997, January 1999 and May 2002). Interested firms may obtain further information at the address below during office hours, Monday to Friday.

Five (5) copies of Expression of Interest must be submitted in a sealed envelope clearly marked "Expression of Interest: Actuarial Audit of NITEL and M-TEL" and delivered not later than 5.00pm Nigerian time on Tuesday, February 21, 2005 to the following address;

National Council on Privatisation – Secretariat:

Dr. Julius J. Bala

The Director General

Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE)

Member/Secretary, National Council on

Privatisation (NCP)

Hamza Zayyad House, 1, Osun Crescent, off Ibrahim

Babangida Way, Maitama District, Abuja FCT,

Nigeria.

Tel. 234-9-4134670, 4134656, 4134636 - 460789

Fax: 234-9-4134671 - 2

Attention: **Mr. Benjamin Dikki**

Director (Power & Communications)

E-mail: bdikki@bpenq.org, eetim@bpeng.org

Expression of Interest must be submitted on or before 5.00 pm on Tuesday, February 21, 2005.

Trust International

Campaigning begins in Saudi local polls

Hours after Iraqis went to the polls, another Arab election has quietly got under way in neighbouring Saudi Arabia, with the start of campaigning for Riyadh municipal council elections on 10 February.

Modest in scope and participation, the Saudi elections are the first nationwide ballot since the 1960s in a country that has faced international and domestic pressure to liberalise its absolute monarchy.

The elections have been delayed twice. The government first announced that two months of local voting would begin in September but that was

postponed to November so it would not clash with the fasting month of Ramadan, which began in mid-October.

Zafer al-Yamy, a lawyer and candidate in Riyadh's electoral district number three, laid out his platform on Sunday night to a hundred Saudi men sitting in a beduin tent beside a busy highway in eastern Riyadh.

They discussed a local housing crisis, lack of playgrounds and how to fight corruption.

"This is a good step towards reform. The world can see that the kingdom is making its citizens partners in decision-making," al-Yamy said.

At best, the elections will be only a partial reflection of popular will. Just half the

council seats will be chosen by voters, women cannot participate and many men cannot be bothered, judging by voter registration figures.

"This is a first for Saudi Arabia. It is a good start but it is too early to judge"

Just 149,000 signed up in Riyadh, a city of more than 4 million - a paltry turnout even after women, armed forces and people under 21 were excluded.

Other regions of the huge desert kingdom will vote in March and April.

No one is sure how much authority the councils will wield but there is no shortage of candidates - more than 1800 in the Riyadh area.

Businessmen, tribal figures, limousine drivers and government officials have launched campaigns with newspaper advertisements, posters, websites and nightly meetings to make their case.

Candidates are barred from campaigning on radio or television or in mosques, and none belong to any party. Still, many are investing heavily in the hunt for votes.

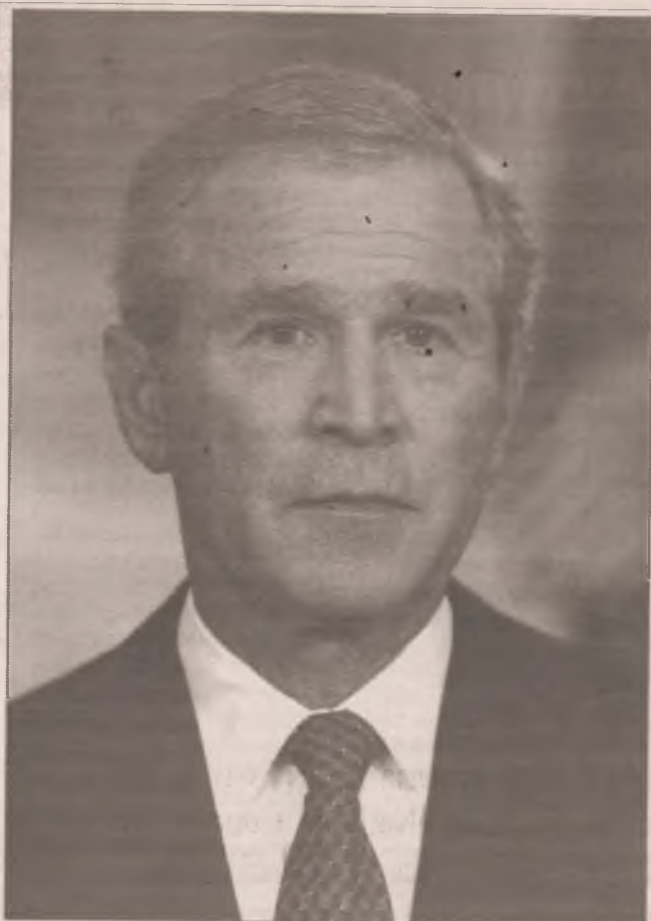
"Election campaigns are expensive. Some will cost millions of riyals (hundreds of thousands of US dollars)," al-Yamy said at his gathering, attended by many of his extended tribal family.

Some Saudis, less affluent than the country's petrodollar image suggests, hope the elections will help address what they see as a deeply unfair distribution of wealth in the world's biggest oil exporter.

One man at al-Yamy's meeting asked why he waited 16 fruitless years for the council to provide land to build a house, when the city is littered with empty plots. Others demanded what the candidate would do to address corruption and waste.

"There is bad planning," al-Yamy said. "And where it isn't bad planning, there is bad implementation. The losses are a scandal."

But he said it would take time for any council to tackle the task. "To begin with, there will be big gaps in the legislation, but with time and sincere work there will be new mechanisms to balance public and private interests," he said.



President George Bush of US

Troops leaving now is nonsense

Iraq's interim president said Tuesday it would be "complete nonsense" to ask US and other foreign troops to leave Iraq at this point but some of the 170,000 soldiers could be leaving Iraq by the end of the year.

Ghazi al-Yawer, who had been a strong critic of some aspects of the US military operation in Iraq, said foreign troops should leave only after Iraq's security forces are built up, the security situation has improved and some pockets of terrorists are eliminated.

"It's only complete nonsense to ask the troops to leave in this chaos and this vacuum of power," al-Yawer told reporters.

"By the end of this year, we could see the number of foreign troops decreasing," he said.

Al-Yawer, a Sunni Arab, helped negotiate the end of the three-week Marine siege of the Sunni rebel city of Fallujah in April. But the city then fell into the hands of insurgents and religious zealots, forcing the Marines to recapture Fallujah last November in some of the heaviest urban combat for

American forces since the Vietnam war.

"There were some mistakes" in the occupation "but to be fair...I think all in all it was positive, the contribution of the foreign forces in Iraq," al-Yawer said. "It was worth it."

Al-Yawer was asked by a reporter whether the presence of foreign troops might be making the security situation worse by serving as a lightning rod for rebel attacks.

He said foreign troops were "invited" to remain in Iraq after the June 28 transfer of sovereignty, when the U.S.-led occupation formally ended and the U.S. governor of Iraq, L. Paul Bremer, left the country.

"The foreign troops had been invited after the 28th of

Turkey warns Iraqi Kurds

Turkey has warned that it could take action if Kurdish attempts to take control of Kirkuk in northern Iraq plunge the oil-rich city into ethnic turmoil.

In comments published in a newspaper interview on Monday, Turkey's Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul expressed renewed concerns that more Kurds than those expelled under Saddam Hus-sein's rule had settled in Kirkuk.

"We are observing that the situation has reached dangerous proportions," Gul told the English-language Turkish Daily News.

He added the demographic structure of the city, which is also home to large numbers of Turkmen - a community of Turkish descent backed by Ankara - had been altered.

"Now our fear is the possibility that these gross changes in the demography of Kirkuk could trigger an ethnic confrontation, which has not been seen so far."

Israel suspends West Bank security transfer

Israel has put security control transfer plans on hold in parts of the West Bank to the Palestinian Authority Palestinian negotiations minister Saeb Erakat told AFP.

Palestinians had been preparing to take control in the city of Ramallah, as well as Qalqilya, Jericho and Tulkarem yesterday but talks on Monday night between Israeli Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz and former Palestinian security minister Mohammed Dahlan on the issue broke up without agreement.

"Mofaz and Dahlan did not arrive at an agreement but they decided to transfer all the issues for more negotiations after Weisglass gets back from Washington," said Erakat.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's chief advisor Dov Weisglass is currently in Washington where he has held talks with US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Weisglass has been heading the Israeli delegation at negotiations with Erakat, whose main task has been to arrange a summit between Sharon and new Palestinian leader Mahmud Abbas.

Israel had appeared ready to hand over responsibility to the Palestinians in parts of the West Bank after they had managed to put a halt to attacks by militant groups in the Gaza Strip.

However a spate of mortar shelling by the radical Islamist group Hamas on Monday, in response to the killing of a Palestinian schoolgirl, has underlined the limitations of the Palestinian forces.

Meanwhile, an Israeli soldier has been wounded as Palestinian resistance fighters launched several attacks in response to the killing of a schoolgirl some 24 hours earlier.

Targeting an Israeli military base near Bethlehem in the occupied West Bank yesterday, Aljazeera has learned that one soldier was injured in the attack.

Hamas' military wing, Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, claimed responsibility for two

of the three attacks in which five mortar shells were also fired at the illegal Neve Dekalim settlement in occupied Gaza Strip.

The National Resistance Brigades, the military wing of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), has also claimed responsibility for firing two rockets at the Neve Dekalim colony in response to the killing of Nuran.

...vows to bring back Ethiopian Jews

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon pledged to bring Ethiopia's remaining Jews to Israel by the end of 2007.

Sharon ordered that a cross-departmental plan be prepared within three months to meet his objective, at a meeting with a raft of ministers, his office said in a statement.

"We must make every effort to increase immigration and therefore the Treasury will have to set aside additional resources in order to achieve this aim," said Sharon.

The prime minister said he attached "great importance on immigration, especially as a solution to the problems of the Falash Mura in Ethiopia."

The Falash Mura community are Ethiopian Jews who were forced to convert to Christianity in the last century.

The government gave the green light in February 2003 for some 20,000 of them to immigrate under Israel's law of return, which grants Jews anywhere in the world the right to make the aliyah (ascent) to Israel and claim citizenship.

But there have been complaints by members of the Falash Mura community in Israel that their relatives' immigration has been blocked by the government over their eligibility.

Al-Zarqawi's group slams Iraqi elections

The al-Qaida-linked militant group led by terror mastermind Abu Musab al-Zarqawi said Monday that Iraq election would not stop its campaign of violence, vowing to step up its holy war.


"Your brothers in the al-Qaida organization ... will continue the jihad (holy war) until the banner of (Islami:) unity flutters over Iraq," the group said in a statement posted on the Internet.

"These elections and their

results will not affect us in the al-Qaida in Iraq but will increase our strength and intention to getting rid of injustice," it said.

The statement addressed President Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair saying, "Let Bush, Blair ... know that we are the enemies of democracy."

It said almost no one from heavily Sunni Arab region participated in Sunday's vote "except for some theatrics that they made up to fool people."



AMINU KANO TEACHING HOSPITAL, KANO
P.M.B. 3452, KANO

Tel: (064) 663383-4, 668232-6, 666535, 666568 Fax: (064) 663354
Website: www.akh.org e-mail: enquiries@akh.org

ENTRANCE EXAMINATION INTO THE COMMUNITY HEALTH OFFICER COURSE

This is to notify applicants seeking admission into the above mentioned programme that an entrance examination into the course has been scheduled as follows:

Date: Monday 7th February 2005
Time: 9:00 am
Venue: Catering Conference Hall Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital, Kano

Applicants are advised to check the Notice Boards in the Catering Block, CHO School or the Medical Advisory Committee Secretariat to confirm if they have been shortlisted to sit for the screening test from Tuesday 1st February 2005 or call any of these numbers for the confirmation: (064) 661018, 666537, 668236, 666535.

Shortlisted candidates are advised to bring their writing materials to the examination hall.

Signed: Management

Trust International

World leaders praise Iraqis, urge caution

The presidents of France and Russia, top opponents of U.S. policy in Iraq, joined world leaders on Monday in praising last weekend's landmark elections as a success of democracy over terrorism, but the welcome was tempered by concern that Sunni Arabs be included in a future government.

French President Jacques Chirac spoke with President

Bush by telephone, saying he was satisfied by the "participation rate and the good technical organization."

"These elections mark an important step in the political reconstruction of Iraq. The strategy of terrorist groups has partly failed," Chirac said, according to a French presidential spokesman.

Russian President Vladimir Putin also praised the elections, calling them "a step in the right direction and a positive event," according to the ITAR-Tass news agency.

"The conditions for holding the elections were quite difficult, to put it mildly," Putin told reporters after

meeting in the Kremlin with Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas. "At the same time, I must say that the very fact of it is an important event, maybe a historic event, for the Iraqi people because it is undoubtedly a step toward democratization of the country."

Putin's comments were a far cry from his harsh warning in December that the elections could not be fair amid a continuing U.S.-led occupation.

Iranian government spokesman Abdollah Ramezanzadeh said the elections were "held freely" but under "difficult circumstances."

He expressed the hope that the vote would contribute to security in Iraq and hasten the departure of US troops, adding that Iran was "ready to cooperate" with the future government — which is likely to be dominated by Shiite

Muslims and be friendly with mainly Shiite Iran.

A spokesman for British Prime Minister Tony Blair said he was encouraged by the turnout, adding that Britain would work with the new government to bring stability and order to Iraq.

In Brussels, the European Union's foreign policy chief said Iraq's move toward democracy would pay off in the provision of more aid.

"They are going to find the support of the European Union, no doubt about that, in order to see this process move on in the right direction," Javier Solana told The Associated Press. Areas where the EU is looking to help include drafting a new constitution and training the judiciary and security forces, he said.

NATO Secretary-General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer said

the election could lead to the alliance stepping up training efforts for the Iraqi military.

But the issue of Sunni participation — both in the vote and in the government that will emerge — was high on many leaders' minds.

"The most difficult task lies ahead — to make sure the results of the elections have a stabilizing effect on the situation in the country," the Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

German Foreign Minister Joschka praised Iraqis "for the will they have shown to shape the future of their country peacefully and democratically, despite massive intimidation."

But, he added, "it is of decisive importance in this to integrate all political, ethnic and religious groups in Iraq ... no part of the population must be excluded from shaping the common fate of all Iraqis."

EU ends diplomatic row with Cuba

European Union foreign ministers agreed yesterday to restore normal diplomatic relations with the Cuban government while pledging to increase contacts with critics of President Fidel Castro.

The decision, announced by Luxembourg's Foreign Minister Jean Asselborn, ends a freeze on high-level contacts imposed by the 25-nation bloc after Havana cracked down on dissidents in March 2003.

A statement approved by the ministers said the EU was willing to resume "a constructive dialogue with the Cuban authorities aiming at tangible results in the political, economic, human rights and cooperation sphere."

But the EU insisted it would continue to raise human rights issues and demanded the "urgent" and "unconditional" release of all dissidents, including the 75 given prison terms of up to 28 years in the 2003 clampdown.

Asselborn told a news conference the new policy would be reviewed in July.

"We highlighted the need to support a process leading to democratic pluralism, respect for human rights and basic freedoms," he said.

The EU stressed that any normalisation of relations would not curtail its contacts with Cuban dissidents.

"The EU would develop more intense relations with the peaceful political opposition and broader layers of civil society in Cuba, through enhanced and more regular dialogue," it said.

Cuban authorities said earlier this month they had resumed formal ties with all of the EU's ambassadors in Havana. They had suspended relations in retaliation for the EU's ban on high-level governmental visits and participation in cultural events in Cuba and the Europeans' decision to invite dissidents to embassy gatherings.

In November, the EU reviewed diplomatic sanctions against Cuba and Havana released 14 of 75 imprisoned dissidents.

Human Rights Watch urged the EU, however, not to fully normalise economic relations with Havana until Castro's regime releases more dissidents and introduces legal reforms.

"Cuba's recent release of some of the dissidents is a welcome step, but it does not signal a meaningful change in the government's repressive policies," said Jose Miguel Vivanco, Americas director at the New York-based human rights watchdog.

In Prague, former Czech President Vaclav Havel also urged the EU to keep suppo-

rting Cuba's dissidents even as it restores diplomatic relations with Havana.

The former dissident said in an article published Monday in the daily newspaper *Hospodarske Noviny*, that the newly expanded EU must "defend its freedoms and values, and not abandon them" by aligning itself with dictators.

The thaw could eventually have economic consequences since the 2003 dispute

also saw the EU defer a request by Cuba to join the EU's trade and aid pact with African, Caribbean and Pacific nations, which could have granted easier access to European markets. Havana withdrew its request after the EU linked it to human rights improvements.

Cuba also refused to accept further assistance from the EU's aid budget, which had allocated \$11.3 million to the island in 2002.



ZENITH BANK PLC

Plot 84, Ajose Adeogun Street, Victoria Island, Lagos.

STATEMENT TO THE NIGERIAN STOCK EXCHANGE AND SHAREHOLDERS ON THE UNAUDITED RESULTS FOR THE HALF YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2004

The Board of Directors of Zenith Bank Plc is pleased to announce the Bank's unaudited results for the 6 Months ended December 31, 2004.

	6 Months ended 31 December, 2004 N'000	6 Months ended 31 December, 2003 N'000	Variance %
Gross Earnings	18,358,137	12,487,354	46%
Profit Before Tax	5,010,748	3,398,228	48%
Taxation	(983,109)	(652,459)	51%
Profit After Tax	4,027,639	2,745,766	47%

The bank recorded remarkable increase of 46% and 48% over the same period of last financial year in gross earnings and profit before tax respectively. The Board of Directors is confident that barring unforeseen circumstances, this trend would be sustained in the remaining period of the financial year.

Dated this 11th Day of January, 2005

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD

MICHAEL OTU
Ad. Company Secretary

...FUL. CELEBRATED. CEASELESS.
 ...ONSTANT. CHARGED. CHARISMATIC. CHARMING.
 ...AR. CLASSY. CLIMBING. COLOURFUL. COMFORTABLE.
 ...MMITTED. COMMUNICATIVE. COMPETITIVE. COMPATIBLE.
 ...OMplete. COMPLEMENTARY. COMPREHENSIVE. COMPOSED.
 ...TERIZED. CONCERNED. CONSTANT. CONDITIONED. CONNECTED.
 ...US. CONSIDERATE. CONSOLIDATED. CONSTRUCTIVE.
 ...ORDIAL. COUNTRY-WIDE. COMPLEMENTARY.
 ...COMPOSED. COMPUTERIZED. CONSCIENTIOUS.
 ...CONNECTED. CONSCIENTIOUS. CAPABLE. CAREFUL.
 ...EASELESS. CERTAIN. CHARGED. CHARISMATIC.
 ...CIVILIZED. CLEAR. CLIMBING. COLOURFUL. COMFORTABLE.
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 ...ATED. CORDIAL. COUNTRY-WIDE. COMPREHENSIVE.



What's in a name?

Business Trust

Telecom

Today's flight schedule

Albarka Air

Lagos - Abuja	07:20
	10:30
	15:15
	13:00
Abuja - Lagos	8:45a.m.
	11:00
	13:15
	17:00
Maiduguri - Abuja	06:50
Abuja - Maid.	17:00
Lagos - Yola	1:00 p.m.
Abuja - Yola	14:30
Yola - Abuja	15:30
Yola - Lagos	4:00 p.m.
Chanchangi Airlines	
Lagos - Abuja	8:15a.m.
	11:00a.m.
	12:10p.m.
	4:45p.m.
Kaduna - Lagos	8:30a.m.
P/H - Lagos	9:00a.m.
	4:30p.m.
Abuja - Kaduna	2:30p.m.
Kaduna - Abuja	1:30p.m.

IRS Airlines

CBQ - Abuja	8:00 a.m.
Abuja - Lagos	9:45a.m.
Lagos - Kaduna	9:30a.m.
Kano - Lagos	7:30p.m.
Lagos - Kano	11:15a.m.
Kaduna - Lagos	11:00a.m.
Lagos - Abu/MM	2:30p.m.
Abuja - MM	1:45p.m.
MM - Abuja	3:45p.m.
Abuja - CBQ	5:15p.m.
Kano - Abuja	1:15p.m.
Abuja - Kano	2:30p.m.
Kano - Lagos	3:45p.m.
Lagos - Kano	6:00p.m.

EAS Airlines

Lagos - Abuja	8:15p.m.
	11:45a.m.
	5:45p.m.
Abuja - Lagos	10:15a.m.
	7:15p.m.
Lagos - Jos	11:45a.m.
Jos - Lagos	2:30pm.

Dasab Airlines

Auja - Lagos	8:30 a.m.
Lagos - PHC	10:30 a.m.
PHC - Lagos	12:30 a.m.
Lagos - Kano	2:30 p.m.
Kano - Lagos	4:30 p.m.
Lagos - Abuja	6:30pm.

ADC Airline

Lagos - Abuja	7:15 a.m.
	12:45 p.m.
Abuja - Lagos	8:55 a.m.
Lagos - Calabar	11:15 a.m.
Calabar - Lagos	7:20 a.m.
P/H - Lagos	9:45 a.m.

Most airlines operate the same flight schedule

Minister of communications, Chief Cornelius Adebayo has said about 600,000 lines would be provided under the Code Division Multiplex Access (CDMA) rural telephony programme by the Nigerian Telecommunications Limited (NITEL).

Speaking at the inauguration of NITEL's CDMA telephone exchange at Oro Town, Irepodun local government of Kwara State on Monday, Chief Adebayo said the national rural telephony programme which was being pursued with vigour would make Nigeria

NITEL to provide 600,000 CDMA lines

From Abdulrazak Adebayo, Correspondent, Ilorin

to become an integral part of the global village.

The minister also disclosed that foreign investors in the manufacture of pre-paid card would begin operation in the country by April this year, adding that discussions were on with some foreign terminal equipment manufacturing companies interested in taking advantage of favourable business environment in the country.

"It is therefore our hope and belief that by the end of this year, the national network capacity and capability would double while investments, business and human empowerment in the industry would witness a boost," the minister added.

In his address, the chief executive officer of NITEL, Rein Zwolsaman, said the commissioning of the ultramodern new communications system was unique because "it is the first unit of this system to be commissioned into the NITEL network," adding "after this inauguration, we will start the development of a massive number of lines, using this technology all over the country."

The NITEL boss explained that the 600,000 lines to be introduced in the country would spread to Lagos, Port Harcourt, Enugu, Abuja, Kano, Onitsha, Maiduguri and Ibadan.

He said the digital unit installed at Oro would provide telecommunications services, in the town covering more than 1,000 square kilometers, with excellent speech quality and internet access.

Also speaking, Governor Bukola Saraki of Kwara State appealed to NITEL to focus on Katama and Baruten local governments to enable the

people be linked with the outside world.

He said since the advent of the GSM, there has been a revolution in the

telecommunications industry which has helped to transform the world into a global village with positive impact on the lives of the people.



Cornelius Adebayo, minister of communications

SBC to buy AT&T for \$16 bn

SBC Communications Inc. said on Monday it would buy AT&T Corp. for about \$16 billion, making SBC the largest U.S. telecommunications company and ending the independence of the world's best known telephone company.

The purchase, which will face antitrust and regulatory hurdles, will make SBC the largest U.S. provider of land-line and wireless communications service to homes and businesses with about \$90 billion in annual revenues.

"We've seized a great opportunity and asset in AT&T," SBC chairman Ed Whitacre told a conference call with analysts. "We obtained these assets for a fair price that will pay for itself in a very short period of time."

SBC's acquisition of the No. 1 long-distance carrier includes \$14.7 billion in SBC stock and a special cash dividend of roughly \$1.04 billion to be paid by AT&T to its shareholders when the deal closes.

SBC will issue 0.78 of a share for each AT&T share, valuing AT&T at \$18.41 a share. AT&T will then pay a special dividend of \$1.30 a share. Combined, the deal would value AT&T at \$19.71 a share, equal to its closing stock price on Friday.

Analysts have criticized the \$16 billion purchase price for the deal, which is expected to close by the first half of 2006, as too much for a company with shrinking revenues and questionable growth prospects.

AT&T, whose history dates back 130 years to the invention of the telephone, has been slammed by increasing competition from SBC and other dominant local carriers in the long-distance market. AT&T

market value and revenues peaked in 1999.

"AT&T's business doesn't seem that accretive or value added," said Greg Gorbatenko, an analyst with Marquis Investment Research.

"AT&T last July said it would pull back from the residential market, stung by government regulation and a changing marketplace as consumers turn increasingly to wireless services.

Injection of funds 'll boost Mtel privatisation -chairman

By Austine Odo, Senior Reporter

Injection of funds into the Nigerian Mobile Telecommunications Limited (Mtel) is aimed at not only improving the company's services as a GSM operator but also enhancing its value for the privatisation programme of the present administration, the company's board chairman Hajiya Halita Aliyu has said.

The board chairman was responding to questions from newsmen in Abuja yesterday after signing a syndicated loan agreement with a consortium of banks led by the United Bank for Africa Plc (UBA).

Hajiya Halita pointed out that the facility which would be used for installation of additional transmission backbone and integrated power systems would also pay for the phased implementation of Mtel's marketing and publicity campaign which in turn would add value to the company and prepare it for divestment of government shareholding.

She acknowledged the role of the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) which she said, showed commitment to the survival and growth of the company by maintaining steadfast support throughout the process of getting the

awareness requested by the syndicating banks, saying that Mtel was poised to provide quality service to its customers.

Mtel presently runs at over 80 percent of projected capacity with 950,000 lines out of the 1.2 million lines capacity. The rapid growth of

Mtel across the federation, necessitated the provision of additional facilities for a more robust network performance.

It would be recalled that the Federal Executive Council in April 2003, gave consent for Mtel to accept a 113 dollar payment guarantee facility from UBA in order to commence the expansion of

its GSM network to enable the company meet the competitive challenge from other GSM operators.

On the strength of this facility, Mtel awarded contracts to its three network equipment partners; Ericsson, Motorola and ZTE with a target of expanding the capacity of the network to 1.2 million lines.

...board promises improved services

The chairman, board of directors of Nigerian Mobile Telecommunications Limited (Mtel), Hajiya Halita Aliyu has promised to use the N15 billion syndicated loan from a consortium of banks to improve the fortunes of the company.

The chairman said during the signing ceremony in Abuja yesterday that Mtel would use the loan to complete the local portion of the GSM expansion project started in 2003, advance payment for further network roll-out, install proper systems to manage the increased network capacity, switching upgrade, backbone transmission capacity, integrated power system and initiate a targeted, focused and coordinated marketing and promotional campaign.

the banks had conducted due diligence on the business and operations of Mtel over the past nine months, and assured that the money would be judiciously utilised.

She pointed out that the partnership with banks was premised on board and managements' determination to carve a niche for Mtel in the highly competitive telecommunications market, even as Mtel already parades a profile of about 950,000 connected GSM lines of which 800,000 are active subscribers.

She announced that within the first quarter of 2005, Mtel would roll out some new services specifically mobile network service, multimedia services, polyphonic ring tones among others which she said would reposition the company for greater impact in the industry.

chief executive officer of UBA (the lead arranger), Alhaji Aliyu Dikko in his remark, said the syndication was a strong belief in the deregulation policy of government and acceptance of the need for dynamic public-private sector partnership.

"We recognise the importance of, and the synergy of the telecom sector as one of the leading pillars for the growth and development of the Nigerian economy," he said.

The syndicated loan facility represented the final tranche of syndicated votes issuance facility of N15 billion underwritten by the consortium.

The consortium apart from Chartered and Diamond Banks had mid 2004, made available a N5 billion bridge loan to Mtel as the first



ABUJA INVESTMENT AND PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LIMITED

3RD Floor Tofa House, Plot 770 Central Business District,
FCT PMB 302, Garki, Abuja Nigeria.
Tel: (09) 523 5193, Fax: (09) 523 5191

**ABUJA INVESTMENT AND PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LIMITED GUDU DISTRICT MARKET IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE
FINAL NOTICE TO ALLOTEES**

This is a final call to all Allotees of Gudu Market to settle all outstanding payments on or before February 25th, 2005. All Allotees should note that the recent increase in the cost of shops was necessitated by the need to provide befitting infrastructure and facilities to the market.

The following facilities have been provided:-

- **630 comfortable shops.**
- **Separate Electricity Prepaid Meters.**
- **Water Meters.**
- **Fire Extinguishers.**
- **50 year Lease Term with Bankable Title Documents.**
- **Adequate Parking Spaces.**
- **Properly Landscaped And user Friendly Environment.**

The Minister of The Federal Capital Territory will commission the Market officially in March 2005.

All Allotees should make full payment for their shops on or before February 25th, 2005. Allotees who fail to make complete payment before the said date will have their offers revoked and shops sold to other interested buyers. All revoked Allotees will have full refund of their deposits.

Meanwhile, Allotees that have made complete payments should come and collect their offer letters and shop keys.

BE A PRESTIGIOUS OWNER OF A SHOP AT THE ULTRA MODERN GUDU MARKET, THE MARKET OF THE FUTURE.

All enquiries should be directed to:-

1. Ibrahim Uzaibat 08045283730
2. Funsho Gbodi 08035866781
3. Kingi W. Ibrahim 08037863482



ALL NIGERIA PEOPLES PARTY (ANPP)

TOUR OF ANPP FORMATIONS IN THE COUNTRY BY THE NATIONAL CHAIRMAN CHIEF DON OBOT ETIEBET

AIM

- To see and appraise the facilities and administration of our chapters throughout the country
- To interact with our leaders and members on the current developments in the country
- To collect views of our members on the forth-coming National Political Reforms Conference.

ITINERY

S/NO	STATES	DATE	TIME	VENUE
1	ENUGU	3/2/05	11 a.m.	ENUGU
2	EBONYI	"	"	"
3	ANAMBRA	"	"	"
4	IMO	4/2/05	10 a.m.	OWERRI
5	ABIA	"	"	"
6	CROSS RIVER	5/2/05	10 a.m.	CALABAR
7	AKWA IBOM	"	1 p.m.	UYO
8	RIVERS	"	5 p.m.	P/RCOURT
9	BAYELSA	6/2/05	10 a.m.	YENAGOA
10	DELTA	"	2p.m.	ASABA
11	EDO	"	5 p.m.	BENIN
12	ONDO	7/2/05	10 a.m.	AKURE
13	EKITI	"	2p.m.	ADO EKITI
14	O SUN	"	5p.m.	OSHOGBO
15	OYO	8/2/05	11 a.m.	IBADAN
16	OGUN	"	4p.m.	ABEOKUTA
17	LAGOS	9/2/03	10 a.m.	LAGOS

BACK TO ABUJA

18	BORNO	14/2/05	10 a.m.	MAIDUGURI
19	YOBE	"	3p.m.	DAMATURU
20	BAUCHI	15/2/05	11 a.m.	BAUCHI
21	GOMBE	"	3 p.m.	GOMBE
22	ADAMAWA	16/2/05	10 a.m.	YOLA
23	TARABA	"	3p.m.	JALINGO

BACK TO ABUJA

24	KANO	18/2/05	10 a.m.	KANO
25	JIGAWA	"	3 p.m.	DUTSE
26	KATSINA	19/2/05	10 a.m.	KATSINA
27	ZAMFARA	"	3 p.m.	GUSAU
28	SOKOTO	20/2/05	10 a.m.	SOKOTO
29	KEBBI	"	3 p.m.	B/KEBBI
30	NIGER	21/2/05	11 a.m.	MINNA
31	KADUNA	"	4 p.m.	KADUNA
32	PLATEAU	22/2/05	11 a.m.	JOS
33	NASSARAWA	"	4 p.m.	LAFIA
34	BENUE	23/2/05	10 a.m.	MAKURDI
35	KOGI	"	4p.m.	LOKOJA
36	KWARA	24/2/05	11 a.m.	ILORIN
37	ABUJA	"	4p.m.	ABUJA

Signed
CHIEF NNAMDI OLEBARA
National Publicity Secretary

Business Trust

Finance

EFCC, ISSL to explore fraud detection techniques

The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) is expected to participate in a security fair being organised by the Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC) and Intersecurity Systems Limited (ISSL).

The aim of the security fair which is tagged NISSEX 2005, is to among other things, explore new techniques of fraud detection in banks and other financial institutions as well as in government institutions.

According to a press release signed by the operations manager, NISSEX 2005, Nuhu Danladi, the fair also aims to avail participants the opportunity "to see the latest hi-tech security equipment and services" the statement said.

The statement further disclosed that the security fair which is schedule to hold on the 8th to 10th of February 2005, will also feature presentations "on new fire fighting techniques and safety measures in the oil and gas industry."

The security fair is expected to feature participants and potential investors from Hong Kong,

By Anas A. Galadima,
Reporter (Business)

USA, South Africa, Israel, Yugoslavia, United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates amongst others.

"The NISSEX committee has representatives of the Inspector General of Police, from the NIPC, federal

ministry of internal affairs, Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) and the Department of State Security" said the statement.

President Olusegun Obasanjo is expected to declare the fair open on the 8th of February at the Le-Meridien Hotel Abuja, the venue of the fair.

Dollar steady ahead US Federal Reserve meeting

The dollar edged up against major currencies yesterday, but kept to tight ranges versus the euro, ahead of a possible rise in US interest rates and a meeting of Group of Seven industrialized nations later in the week.

The yen lost some ground on waning expectations for a revaluation of the Chinese yuan after a G7 source told Reuters on Monday the meeting is not looking for an abrupt change in China's currency policy.

"Positions are square now and people are sitting back and waiting for the events later this week," said Paul Mackel, currency strategist at ABN AMRO in London.

"The China comments affected the yen but in general there is more trading in crosses than euro/dollar.

At 6 a.m. EST, the dollar fetched 103.78 yen, up 0.14 percent from late U.S. trade on Monday. The yen also lost ground against the euro to stand at 135.27 yen.

The greenback was little changed against the euro at \$1.3022 but rose half a percent against the Australian dollar after the Australian unit reeled from worse-than-expected trade data.

The market paid little attention to news that euro zone manufacturing activity grew in January at its fastest pace in three months as global demand raised exports.

A survey for the NTC Research Eurozone PMI showed a rise for the second month running to 51.9 from 51.4 in December. That pulled the index further above the 50 level that divides growth from contraction and beat the consensus forecast of 51.7.

Sterling was also jolted slightly lower against the dollar and euro by weaker-than-expected UK manufacturing data.

Wednesday's decision on interest rates by the U.S. Federal Reserve (news - web sites) is widely expected to produce another quarter percentage point hike in the fed funds rate.

But traders will be looking for any signs that the central bank could accelerate its campaign of "measured" monetary tightening in coming months.

"The bias is for further tightening and this should support the dollar," said Koji Fukaya, chief manager of research at Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi in Tokyo.

If the Fed raises rates to 2.5 percent as expected, that would lift returns on U.S. deposits further above those in the euro zone. The European Central Bank is expected to leave rates unchanged at 2.0 percent in a policy meeting this week.

Also on Wednesday, investors will watch President Bush (news - web sites)'s State of the Union speech for any outline of steps to curb a large and growing budget deficit.

Any sign of aggressive measures to curb the fiscal deficit would likely support the U.S. currency, analysts say.

New Zimbabwean banking group faces legal challenge

A brand-new umbrella grouping of collapsed Zimbabwean banks got off to a rocky start after one of its partners went to court to try to break free from the new banking group.

The Royal Bank — one of the three collapsed banks to be merged into the Zimbabwe Allied Banking Group (ZABG) — filed a suit in the Harare High Court on Monday against a central bank decision to place it under curatorship and subsequently merge it in the ZABG, the state-owned Herald said.

The ZABG, which started operations on Monday in 22 branches across the country, comprises the Royal, Barbican and Trust banks which were closed down last year.

In its suit, the Royal Bank is seeking to bar the central bank from "using its premises, vehicles and other assets in the new project."

It is also seeking to bar all advertisements in which

part of the ZABG and against "the placing of ZABG employees in the offices of Royal Bank or retrenching the employees of Royal Bank."

The case was filed by Royal Bank chief executive Jeffrey Mzwimbi and executive director Simba Durajadi who themselves are accused of defrauding the bank of millions of dollars.

Their suit argued that the merger of the Royal Bank in the ZABG "has been carried out without any consultation with the directors, shareholders, creditors and depositors."

They also claimed that the central bank had grossly misrepresented and undervalued the Royal Bank's assets.

The central bank, which came up with the ZABG to invigorate and clean up the country's crisis-ridden financial sector, plans to take in more collapsed banks in the umbrella body provided they meet certain criteria.

Central bank governor Gideon Gono, the chief architect of the ZABG, did not react to the suit, but simply told the Herald: "We will meet them in court."



CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA TENDER NOTICE

NIGERIAN TREASURY BILLS

Notice is hereby given by the Central Bank of Nigeria that 91-day Federal Government of Nigeria Treasury Bills amounting to N45,000,000,000 will be issued by an auction-based system on Thursday, 10/02/2005.

Interested Authorized Dealers (Commercial/Merchant Banks, Designated Discount Houses and Brokers) are invited to submit tenders to reach the Issues Office, Central Bank of Nigeria, Lagos, not later than 1.30 p.m. on Tuesday, 08/02/2005.

Each tender must be in multiple of N1,000 subject to a minimum of N1 0,000 per tender. Authorized Dealers are allowed to submit multiple bids and quote multiple rates. A tender may be for own account of Authorized Dealers or made on behalf of interested members of the public, who are advised to apply to their banks or Brokers for the Bills.

Tenders for the Bills should be submitted on the prescribed printed forms in duplicate and in sealed envelopes clearly marked "TENDER FOR BILLS". The result of the tender will be announced before the close of business on Wednesday, 09/02/2005. The Bank reserves the right to reject any tender in part or in full.

Allotment letters will be issued to successful tenderers on Thursday, 10/02/2005. Payment in full for the amount of the accepted tenders must be made to the Central Bank of Nigeria not later than 1.30 p.m. on the issue date 10/02/2005. This will normally be effected by direct debit to the accounts of the affected Authorized Dealers which should ensure that their accounts with the Bank are adequately funded for this purpose.

ISSUES OFFICE
CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA
TINUBU SQUARE
LAGOS



CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA PRESS RELEASE

NATIONAL ANNUAL SURVEY ON AGRICULTURAL EXPORT COMMODITIES IN NIGERIA

The Consultative Committee on Agricultural Export Commodity Statistics (CCAECs) under the auspices of the Central Bank of Nigeria; Federal Ministry of Commerce; Federal Office of Statistics and Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development will be conducting a nation wide annual establishment-based survey on production, processing and marketing of fourteen agricultural export commodities in Nigeria.

This exercise would involve visits to some Government Ministries, Agencies, Private farms, Individual farmers, Commodity Associations, Research Institutes and Agro/processing companies in all the States of the Federation.

The 2004/2005 survey will commence in February 2005 and last for a period of 10 weeks.

We use this medium to seek the co-operation of members of the public, community heads, State Governments and the general public on this national assignment.

Signed
Director, Development Finance Dept.
Central Bank of Nigeria
Chairman, Consultative Committee
On Agricultural Export Commodity
Statistics (CCAECs)

Business Trust

1ST-TIER SECURITIES

THE NIGERIAN STOCK EXCHANGE

REPORT AS AT TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2005

COMPANY NAME	NO OF DEALS	QUOTATION(N)	QUANTITY TRADED	VALUE OF SHARES
CUTIX PLC	1	1.30	20,000	26,000.00
Sector Totals	1		20,000	26,000.00
AGRICULTURE/AGRO-ALLIED				
THE OKOMU OIL PALM COMPANY PLC	12	17.00	36,330	618,148.00
PRESKO PLC	22	10.50	128,080	1,375,212.93
Sector Totals	34		164,410	1,993,360.93
AUTOMOBILE & TYRE				
DUNLOP NIGERIA PLC.	34	2.00	885,112	1,778,972.00
Sector Totals	34		885,112	1,778,972.00
BANKING				
ACCESS BANK PLC	5	3.42	63,838	218,325.96
AFRIBANK NIGERIA PLC.	23	6.63	114,247	757,457.61
FIRST ATLANTIC BANK PLC	6	3.41	127,800	435,798.00
CHARTERED BANK PLC	1	3.90	500	1,950.00
EIB INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	1	2.26	40,000,000	90,400,000.00
FIRST BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	465	23.60	1,305,189	30,684,632.24
FSB INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	53	1.61	1,952,008	3,096,363.96
GUARANTY TRUST BANK PLC.	303	11.98	2,443,596	29,214,440.25
GULF BANK OF NIGERIA PLC	23	0.67	3,719,500	2,536,755.00
INTERNATIONAL MERCHANT BANK PLC.	49	0.66	3,954,991	2,591,570.96
INLAND BANK (NIGERIA) PLC.	20	1.40	1,000,625	1,384,593.75
INTERCONTINENTAL BANK PLC.	6	7.81	41,848	326,832.88
LION BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	2	0.78	50,000	39,000.00
MANUFACTURERS BANK NIGERIA PLC.	31	1.23	1,874,642	2,303,440.43
NAL BANK PLC	9	2.80	356,684	998,715.20
OCEANIC BANK PLC	11	6.30	128,798	811,427.40
OMEGA BANK (NIGERIA) PLC	8	1.22	30,369	37,050.18
STANDARD TRUST BANK PLC	23	7.41	212,626	1,575,558.66
TRANS INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	11	1.79	411,693	722,483.66
UNITED BANK FOR AFRICA PLC.	64	10.00	8,473,587	84,735,870.00
UNION BANK NIGERIA PLC.	352	20.00	3,572,642	70,866,580.47
UNIVERSAL TRUST BANK PLC	1	0.98	5,000	4,900.00
WEMA BANK PLC.	19	3.93	291,162	1,144,266.66
ZENITH BANK PLC	105	14.91	4,561,971	68,018,987.61
Sector Totals	1,589		74,693,316	392,907,000.88
BREWERIES				
GUINNESS NIGERIA PLC.	201	101.51	864,185	88,731,989.80
NIGERIAN BREWERIES PLC.	475	34.30	2,208,852	76,630,101.66
Sector Totals	676		3,073,037	165,362,091.46
BUILDING MATERIALS				
ASHAKA CEMENT PLC.	69	24.00	288,487	6,915,628.03
BENUE CEMENT COMPANY PLC.	1	4.51	250	1,127.50
CEMENT CO. OF NORTHERN NIG. PLC	10	7.03	152,475	1,071,552.00
WEST AFR. PORTLAND CEMENT CO. PLC.	39	11.00	192,553	2,131,028.17
Sector Totals	119		633,765	10,119,335.70
CHEMICAL & PAINTS				
BERGER PAINTS PLC.	33	5.30	257,041	1,388,863.80
CAP PLC.	13	7.00	26,123	170,952.25
D. N. MEYER PLC.	2	5.00	2,166	10,830.00
NIGERIA-GERMAN CHEMICALS PLC.	11	3.70	124,623	466,110.10
Sector Totals	59		409,953	2,036,756.15
COMPUTER & OFFICE EQUIPMENT				
TRIPPLE GEE AND COMPANY PLC	2	0.91	2,586	2,353.26
Sector Totals	2		2,586	2,353.26
CONGLOMERATES				
A. G. LEVENTIS NIGERIA PLC.	8	1.20	120,815	138,161.70
C F A O NIGERIA PLC.	8	5.86	10,000	56,460.09
JOHN HOLT PLC.	1	1.00	226	226.00
UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC.	178	17.00	998,123	16,921,551.57
P. Z. INDUSTRIES PLC.	71	13.15	232,040	3,133,353.47
S C O A NIGERIA PLC.	1	1.19	10,000	11,900.00
U.A.C.NIGERIA PLC.	43	14.17	665,500	9,430,135.00
U.T.C. NIGERIA PLC.	8	1.23	36,391	43,091.09
Sector Totals	318		2,073,095	29,734,878.92
CONSTRUCTION				
COSTAIN (W.A.) PLC.	11	0.90	80,354	72,002.40
JULIUS BERGER NIGERIA PLC.	7	14.62	1,101,915	16,110,014.47
Sector Totals	18		1,182,269	16,182,016.87
FOOD/BEVERAGES & TOBACCO				
7-UP BOTTLING COMPANY PLC	45	24.00	110,472	2,691,615.04
CADBURY NIGERIA PLC.	184	58.99	298,960	17,590,128.44
FLOUR MILLS NIGERIA PLC.	89	16.61	2,283,445	37,928,021.45
NIGERIA BOTTLING COMPANY PLC.	70	53.00	183,058	9,911,918.35
NESTLE FOODS NIGERIA PLC.	110	143.00	160,438	23,394,243.61
Sector Totals	498		3,036,373	91,515,926.89
HEALTHCARE				
EKOCORP PLC.	1	1.09	20,000	21,800.00
EVANS MEDICAL PLC.	18	3.31	150,000	510,250.00
MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC.	11	5.69	69,450	382,250.50
NEIMETH INTERNATIONAL PHARM. PLC.	13	3.30	121,100	390,615.00
PHARMA-DEKO PLC.	3	4.70	2,580	12,158.70
GLAXOSMITHKLINE CONSUMER NIG. PLC	23	8.95	75,541	673,353.27
Sector Totals	69		438,671	1,990,427.47
HOTEL & TOURISM				
TOURIST COMPANY OF NIGERIA PLC	2	4.20	2,000	8,400.00
Sector Totals	2		2,000	8,400.00
INDUSTRIAL/DOMESTIC PRODUCTS				
FIRST ALUMINIUM NIGERIA PLC.	10	1.06	300,161	302,612.66
B.O.C. GASES PLC.	7	2.84	47,600	137,380.00
VITAFOAM NIGERIA PLC.	74	3.42	1,066,606	3,518,570.66
YONO PRODUCTS PLC.	11	1.90	2,544	4,833.60
Sector Totals	102		1,416,911	3,963,396.92
INSURANCE				
AICO INSURANCE PLC.	5	2.06	3,000	6,113.00
BAICO INSURANCE PLC.	2	0.93	10,000	9,025.00
CRUSADER INSURANCE PLC.	25	0.98	801,678	784,730.88
LASACO ASSURANCE PLC.	3	0.83	6,500	5,395.00
LAW UNION AND ROCK INSURANCE PLC.	9	1.45	934,233	1,342,217.85
LINKAGE ASSURANCE PLC	13	1.99	63,228	124,172.67
MUTUAL BENEFITS ASSURANCE PLC	1	0.93	14,000	13,020.00
NIGER INSURANCE CO. PLC.	19	3.29	303,060	997,067.40
PRESTIGE ASSURANCE PLC.	4	1.97	64,522	127,108.34
ROYAL EXCHANGE ASSURANCE PLC.	10	3.84	49,845	197,318.74
STANDARD ALLIANCE INSURANCE	1	1.67	15,000	25,050.00
UNIC INSURANCE PLC.	5	1.03	52,000	53,560.00
WEST AFRICAN PROV. INS. COY. PLC.	5	2.86	21,201	59,432.23
Sector Totals	102		2,338,267	3,744,211.11
MANAGED FUNDS				
C & I LEASING PLC.	18	1.69	435,085	734,483.44
Sector Totals	18		435,085	734,483.44
PACKAGING				
AVON CROWNCAPS & CONTAINERS PLC.	1	1.11	15,000	16,650.00
NAMPAK NIGERIA PLC	1	1.29	1,400	1,806.00
BETA GLASS COMPANY PLC.	3	4.70	100,266	471,311.38
POLY PRODUCTS (NIGERIA) PLC.	6	0.74	67,000	46,890.00
VAN LEER CONTAINERS (NIGERIA) PLC.	1	2.29	1,333	3,052.57
Sector Totals	12		184,999	539,709.95
PETROLEUM(MARKETING)				
AFROIL PLC.	8	0.85	209,600	178,220.00
AFRICAN PETROLEUM PLC.	150	67.00	404,924	27,075,473.02
ETERNA OIL & GAS PLC.	7	2.04	17,325	35,343.00
MOBIL OIL NIGERIA PLC.	51	182.00	497,065	89,462,625.20
CONOIL PLC.	71	123.90	99,988	12,734,703.24
TEXACO (NIGERIA) PLC.	20	160.10	14,099	2,314,477.00
TOTAL NIGERIA PLC	47	182.00	57,164	10,366,758.00
OANDO PLC.	225	95.01	196,192	18,740,488.49
Sector Totals	579		1,496,357	160,908,087.95
PRINTING & PUBLISHING				
UNIVERSITY PRESS PLC.	4	1.80	60,680	109,224.00
Sector Totals	4		60,680	109,224.00
REAL ESTATE				
UACN PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT PLC.	39	8.59	347,603	3,059,400.20
Sector Totals	39		347,603	3,059,400.20
TEXTILES				
UNITED NIGERIA TEXTILES PLC.	8	2.73	43,997	120,397.05
Sector Totals	8		43,997	120,397.05

TOP 10 TRADES YESTERDAY			
SYMBOL	VOLUME	VALUE	TRADES
FSB	1,952,008.00	3,096,363.96	53
NB	2,208,852.00	76,630,101.66	475
FLOURMILL	2,283,445.00	37,928,021.45	89
GUARANTY	2,443,596.00	29,214,440.25	303
UBN	3,572,642.00	70,866,580.47	352
GULFBANK	3,719,500.00	2,536,755.00	23
IMB	3,954,991.00	2,591,570.96	47
ZENITHBANK	4,561,971.00	68,018,987.61	105
UBA	8,473,587.00	84,735,870.00	64
EKOBANK	40,000,000.00	90,400,000.00	1

TOP 10 GAINERS			
SYMBOL	LASTCLOSE	YESTERDAY'SCLOSE	CHANGE
MOBIL	180.00	182.00	+2.00
MAY&BAKER	5.42	5.69	+0.27
SKBEECHAM	8.68	8.95	+0.27
CAP	6.75	7.00	+0.25
FIRSTBANK	23.42	23.60	+0.18
VITAFOAM	3.26	3.42	+0.16
PFIZER	3.15	3.30	+0.15
WAPIC	2.73	2.86	+0.13
ASHAKACEM	23.90	24.00	+0.10
ETERNAOIL	1.95	2.04	+0.09

TOP 10 LOSERS			
SYMBOL	LASTCLOSE	YESTERDAY'SCLOSE	CHANGE
TEXACO	167.00	160.10	-6.90
GUINNESS	106.00	101.51	-4.49
NESTLE	147.00	143.00	-4.00
UNIPETROL	96.50	95.01	-1.49
TOTAL	183.00	182.00	-1.00
NBC	53.99	53.00	-0.99
ZUP	24.95	24.00	-0.95
ZENITHBANK	15.69	14.91	-0.78
NB	35.00	34.30	-0.70
PZ	13.75	13.15	-0.60

Oil prices hold below \$48

Oil prices held just below \$48 a barrel yesterday, as the market remained nervous that OPEC producers may cut supplies before the end of the first quarter.

U.S. light crude dropped 21 cents to \$47.99 a barrel, about \$2 above Monday's low when prices fell after OPEC agreed at the weekend to leave output unchanged for now and Iraq's election passed without attacks on oil facilities.

"OPEC have certainly set the stage for oil in the mid-\$40s up to \$50 and they're still talking a possible cut. It's extremely price supportive," said John Brady at ABN AMRO.

The Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries kept official production limits steady at 27 million barrels per day despite oil prices close to \$50 a barrel, confident that higher fuel costs were not damaging global economic growth. But the cartel left the door open to shaving production later to contain a second quarter stockbuild, which typically happens after the end of the northern winter.

OPEC meets in Isfahan, Iran, on Mar. 16, but ministers could agree on an output cut by telephone before then.

"It depends on whether demand slows but I think they will have to do something. It is unlikely we will have a second quarter this year like last year when Chinese demand exploded," said Deborah White, senior economist at SG Commodities in Paris.

OPEC will be watching U.S. stockpiles carefully as the focus shifts away from low winter fuel supplies toward healthier crude and gasoline inventories ahead of the second quarter, when demand hits a seasonal low.

US crude oil inventories are running 9 percent above year-ago levels and gasoline stockpiles are up three percent, although fires at two US refineries have raised concerns over motor fuel supplies months before the peak summer season.

Exxon Mobil earns record \$8.42bn in 4th Quarter

Exxon Mobil Corp., the largest U.S. oil company, said, on Monday, that it earned a record \$8.42 billion in the fourth quarter and \$25.33 billion for all of 2004, as higher prices for oil and natural gas erased a slight decline in production.

Exxon Mobil, the world's largest publicly traded oil company, just missed \$300 billion in sales for the year.

The company said it earned \$1.30 per share in the October-December period, compared to \$6.65 billion, or \$1.01 per share, a year earlier.

The oil giant easily beat the profit prediction of analysts, who forecast \$1.07 per share, according to Thomson First Call, which said Exxon appeared to have set a single-quarter earnings record for operating earnings by any U.S. corporation.

Exxon Mobil shares rose 33 cents, or 0.6 percent, to close at \$51.60 on the New York Stock Exchange (news - web sites). The stock has traded in a 52-week range of \$39.91 to \$52.05.

"In summary, we had a very good year," said Henry H. Hubbell, vice president of investor relations.

The Irving-based oil giant made more in all parts of its business. Earnings from exploration and production of oil and gas rose to \$4.89 billion from \$3.27 billion a year earlier. Profits from refining and selling products such as gasoline and jet fuel tripled to \$2.24 billion from \$726 million.



FEDERAL POLYTECHNIC, NASARAWA

VACANCY FOR THE POST OF RECTOR

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ADVERTISEMENT

1. PREAMBLE:

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates for the post of Rector, Federal Polytechnic, Nasarawa.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Rector is the Chief Academic and Administrative Officer of the Polytechnic as provided for in Degree No. 33 of 1979, and amended by Degree No. 5 of 1993.

3. INFORMATION ON THE POLYTECHNIC:

The Federal Polytechnic, Nasarawa was established in 1983. It has 1054 staff and students population of 5376. It consists of 4 Schools and 18 academic departments as follows:

a) School of General Studies and Applied Sciences:

- i) Department of Computer Science
- ii) Department of Science Laboratory Technology
- iii) Department of Statistics
- iv) Department of General Studies

b) School of Business Studies:

- i) Department of Accountancy
- ii) Department of Banking and Finance
- iii) Department of Business Administration & Management
- iv) Department of Marketing
- v) Department of Secretarial Studies

c) School of Engineering Technology:

- i) Department of Chemical Engineering
- ii) Department of Mechanical Engineering Technology
- iii) Department of Electrical Electronic Engineering Technology
- iv) Department of Agricultural Engineering Technology

d) School of Environmental Studies:

- i) Department of Architectural Technology
- ii) Department of Building Technology
- iii) Department of Quantity Surveying
- iv) Department of Estate Management
- v) Department of Town and Regional Planning

4. DUTIES OF THE RECTOR:

In addition to being the Chief Administrative Officer, the Rector is also expected to, among other things give academic leadership and play an active part in enhancing academic excellence and extending the services of the Polytechnic to Government, Industrial and Commercial Sectors of the Nigerian Economy. The applicant must therefore possess a very high sense of dedication to duty, drive and resourcefulness. Above all, he must be a person of high integrity.

5. QUALIFICATION:

The Applicant should hold a minimum of a Masters degree in areas relevant to any of the programmes in section 3 above from a recognized institution of higher learning plus at least 15 years post qualification cognate experience or Ph.D plus 12 years post qualification experience. Possession of higher degree and membership of relevant professional bodies will be of definite advantage. Candidates with less than the minimum experience or who are on salary below HATISS 14 need not apply.

6. CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT:

This is as applicable to other Federal Polytechnics in Nigeria

METHOD OF APPLICATION:

Candidates are expected to submit 15 copies of handwritten application including photocopies of certificates and curriculum vitae to the Registrar using the address below indicating:

- i. Name (Surname first and underlined)
- ii. Date of Birth
- iii. State of Origin and Local Government Area
- iv. Marital Status
- v. Number and dates of birth of Children
- vi. Postal Address
- vii. Educational Institutions attended with dates
- viii. Qualifications
 - a) Academic
 - b) Professional
 - c) Honours and Distinctions
- ix. Working Experience and dates (to include teaching, administration, research and any other relevant experience)
- x. Membership of Professional bodies
- xi. Name and address of present employer, salary and current status
- xii. Conferences/Seminars attended with dates and papers presented, if any
- xiii. Publications and dates, Name(s) and relevant pages
- xiv. Services to community, State, National and International Organizations
- xv. Names and addresses of three (3) referees.

Candidates will be required to produce the originals of their certificates and other credentials at the interview. Photocopies of certificates will not be accepted. The application should be submitted in sealed envelopes labelled "APPLICATION FOR THE POST OF RECTOR OF FEDERAL POLYTECHNIC, NASARAWA".

They should also request their referees to send confidential reports on them direct to:

**The Registrar
Federal Polytechnic
Nasarawa**

One copy of the application should also be sent to:

**The Executive Secretary
National Board for Technical Education
Plot 'B' Bida Road
P.M.B. 2239
Kaduna**

CLOSING DATE

Three weeks from the date of this publication

Signed
**Dr. Abubakar R. Ahmed II
(Dan Iyan Nasarawa)
REGISTRAR**



NIGERIAN NATIONAL MERIT AWARD

**NIGERIAN NATIONAL MERIT AWARD YEAR
2005 CALL FOR NOMINATIONS.**

1. Nominations are invited for the Nigerian National Merit Award 2005.
2. The Nigerian National Merit Award, which is an Order for Dignity and distinct from the National Honours, was instituted to accord proper and due recognition for outstanding intellectual and academic attainments and contributions to general development of Nigeria and is conferred on the recipients by the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces.
3. The Objective of the award system is to stimulate and reward excellence in Science, Engineering/Technology, Medicine, Humanities, Arts and Culture and any other field of human endeavour.
4. The award is open to all citizens of Nigeria.
5. Any Nigerian citizen of outstanding merit can be nominated by one or more Nigerian citizens. Any person may by himself, where not sponsored by another person apply to the Board for this purpose. Where two or more Nigerians are collaborating on any deserving undertaking, they can be similarly nominated for a joint award.
6. Nominations are valid only for the year of nomination.
7. In addition to its intrinsic value, the award carries a cash prize of seven hundred and fifty thousand naira (N750,000.00) only, which is intended to assist recipient(s) in carrying out further work in his or her chosen field. The Laureate is also entitled to use the acronym NNOM after his/her name.
8. The Governing Board will be guided by the following criteria:
 - (a) Selection will be made from a wide range of contemporary works, which are innovative, creative, essentially Nigerian in content and of national and international distinction.
 - (b) The candidate's achievement should be of benefit to the Nigerian Society in particular and humanity in general.
 - (c) The achievements may constitute a specific breakthrough in any field or may be of cumulative nature.
 - (d) The award emphasizes distinct merit and upright morality.
9. The Procedure for Nominations:
 - (a) Nominations shall be made strictly on the prescribed format. Sponsors should also provide a brief information on themselves.
 - (b) Nominations and supporting documents shall be addressed to the:

**The Secretary
Governing Board,
Nigerian National Merit Award,
The Presidency,
3rd Floor
Merit House,
Aguiyi Ironsi Way, Maitama, Abuja.**

All supporting documents including the Nomination form should be sent in three (3) copies. Candidates with incomplete documents will not be considered.

- (c) The closing date for the receipt of nominations shall be 18th March, 2005.
- (d) Neither the Governing Board nor any of its Specialised Committees of Assessors will entertain or enter into any correspondence with candidates or their sponsors as to the processing or fate of any nomination.

**The Secretary,
Governing Board,
Nigerian National Merit Award, The Presidency,
3rd Floor, Merit House,
Aguiyi Ironsi Way, Maitama, Abuja.**

NOMINATION FOR THE AWARD OF 2005 NIGERIAN NATIONAL ORDER OF MERIT FOR SCIENCE, HUMANITIES, MEDICINE AND ENGINEERING/TECHNOLOGY

Nominations must reach the Secretary of the Nigerian National Merit Award Board before 18th March, 2005. Nominators must not make public the names of nominees.

Date Received

CANDIDATE Submit only one Nomination per form)	SURNAME First Name Middle Name		
	Position or Title:	Field of Endeavour:	
Current Address with Tel.No:			
THE NOMINATION IS BASED ON THE FOLLOWINGS: • DISCOVERY • INVENTION • INNOVATION OR OTHER OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE			
GROUNDS FOR THE NOMINATION: (Detailed specification of grounds for nomination, curriculum vitae, bibliography and other relevant documents should be attached in triplicate)			
Signature:		Position or title:	
NOMINATOR		Name (please print or type): Mailing Address:	Date: Any other information
CO-NOMINATOR		Tel. No. Signature	Position or title
		Name (please Print or Type): Mailing Address	Date: Any other information



NATIONAL AGENCY FOR FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND CONTROL.

CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS
Plot 2832, Olusoga Obasanjo Way,
Wuse Zone 7 Abuja
Tel: 09-4709837, 09-5240995-6

PROCUREMENT OF ANTIRETROVIRAL DRUGS BY FEDERAL MINISTRY OF HEALTH – NAFDAC REACTION TO CRITICISM

Following the approval by the Federal Ministry of Health for the purchase of antiretroviral (ARV) drugs from Ranbaxy, Strides and Worldwide Commercial Ventures (representing Hetero Drug India), National Agency for Food and Drug Administrative and Control (NAFDAC) has been inundated with calls from people making enquiries, apart from several newspaper articles, questioning the safety of the ARV drugs with respect to World Health Organization (WHO) prequalification criteria.

It is the duty of NAFDAC, as a responsible regulatory authority that has enjoyed public confidence, not only to correct any misinformation, but also to clarify any issue that bothers on integrity of any of its regulated products.

The availability of good quality, safe and efficacious medicines is a major concern of WHO and National Drug Regulatory Authorities. To ensure that quality pharmaceuticals are available, WHO sets norms and standards, develops guidelines and advises member states on issues related to quality assurance of medicines in national and international markets.

The prequalification of drugs by WHO for use internationally is part of these activities. It is aimed at facilitating access to medicines that meet unified standards of quality, safety and efficacy for various life threatening diseases like HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. These activities of WHO are advisory and are not intended to replace national regulatory authorities or national authorization systems for importation of medicines.

In recognition of this fact, WHO states that "National Regulatory Authorities can review their own situation and take appropriate actions in accordance with their own regulatory requirements and practices". This means that each National Drug Regulatory Authority can set its own standards which may vary from WHO standards as long as the quality, safety and efficacy of the product are assured.

NAFDAC has put in-place guidelines for listing (giving market authorization) of ARV drugs, which include the following:

- ⌋ Documentation processes which involve the review of dossiers on the products, submission of a certificate of free sale which is an indication that the product is freely sold and used in the country of production, Certificate of Pharmaceutical Production (COPP) etc.
- ⌋ Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) assessments
- ⌋ Laboratory evaluation to confirm quality standards/active ingredients, impurity profile, formulation stability etc.

All the ARV drugs recently purchased by the Federal Ministry of Health from Ranbaxy, Strides and Worldwide Commercial Ventures were registered by NAFDAC between 2003 and 2004 following appropriate procedures and tests, which certified them satisfactory and also in addition to meeting all other drug registration requirements. These tests certify the quality standards of a product and all the products from Ranbaxy, Strides and Worldwide Commercial Ventures met the requirement hence their prequalification and listing by W.H.O.

W.H.O delisted the products from these companies not for reasons of safety or efficacy, but because of lack of proof of their

bioequivalence and this was due to non-reconciliation of information on good clinical and laboratory practices. Bioequivalence tests are clinical trials conducted in healthy volunteers to find out if the concentration of a generic medicine in the blood of a patient is equivalent to that of the originator product.

Bioequivalence is required by W.H.O for products indicated for health conditions requiring assured therapeutic response. That there is no information on bioequivalence of a product does not make the product ineffective, substandard or of bad quality.

In some countries bioequivalence is not a requirement for generic products such as HIV drugs.

W.H.O usually permits drug regulatory authorities of member countries to critically assess situations and make their own decisions on issues of this nature based on their operations and needs.

An ARV drug is not automatically unusable because of non proof of their bioequivalence. This fact is recognized by W.H.O which advised that where it is "difficult to find an immediate alternative, it is recommended that patients continue to use the de-listed products, as the risk of withdrawing treatment is higher than that of providing medicines whose bioequivalence is not proven but which have otherwise been prequalified". It will therefore be dangerous for the Federal Ministry of Health to disrupt the HIV treatment programme it has embarked upon with Ranbaxy and Hetero triple fixed dose combination immediately after the delisting of the drug by WHO without adequate plan for alternatives. Such "treatment interruption, constitutes a serious risk for the individual and may have negative implications from a public health perspective" (W.H.O).

In addition studies conducted by the Nigeria Institute of Medical Research (NIMR) Yaba have proven the drugs to be effective in the treatment of HIV patients in Nigeria.

The Federal Ministry of Health sought the advice of NAFDAC on what should be done after this delisting of ARV drug by WHO; this was immediately after tender was concluded. The Agency advised that the delisted drugs which had been confirmed to be effective by both NAFDAC and NIMR should be used for six months to fill the gap before a new tender is advertised; it is expected that within six months, the tendering adverts, submission processes, selection, importation, etc would have been concluded for alternative ARV drugs, if the delisting status of those in use still subsists.

NAFDAC reassures Nigerians that the interest of consumers remains paramount in all its activities, and it will not do anything to betray the trust and confidence of Nigerians. In this regard its decision is in the best interest of People Living with Aids (PLWAs).

NAFDAC wishes to use this opportunity to appeal to local drug manufacturers to embark on local production of ARV drugs. Government will do everything possible to encourage them.

NAFDAC uses this opportunity to thank Nigerians for their continued trust and support.

NAFDAC: Safeguarding the health of the Nation.

SIGNED

Abubakar Jimoh

For: NAFDAC Management

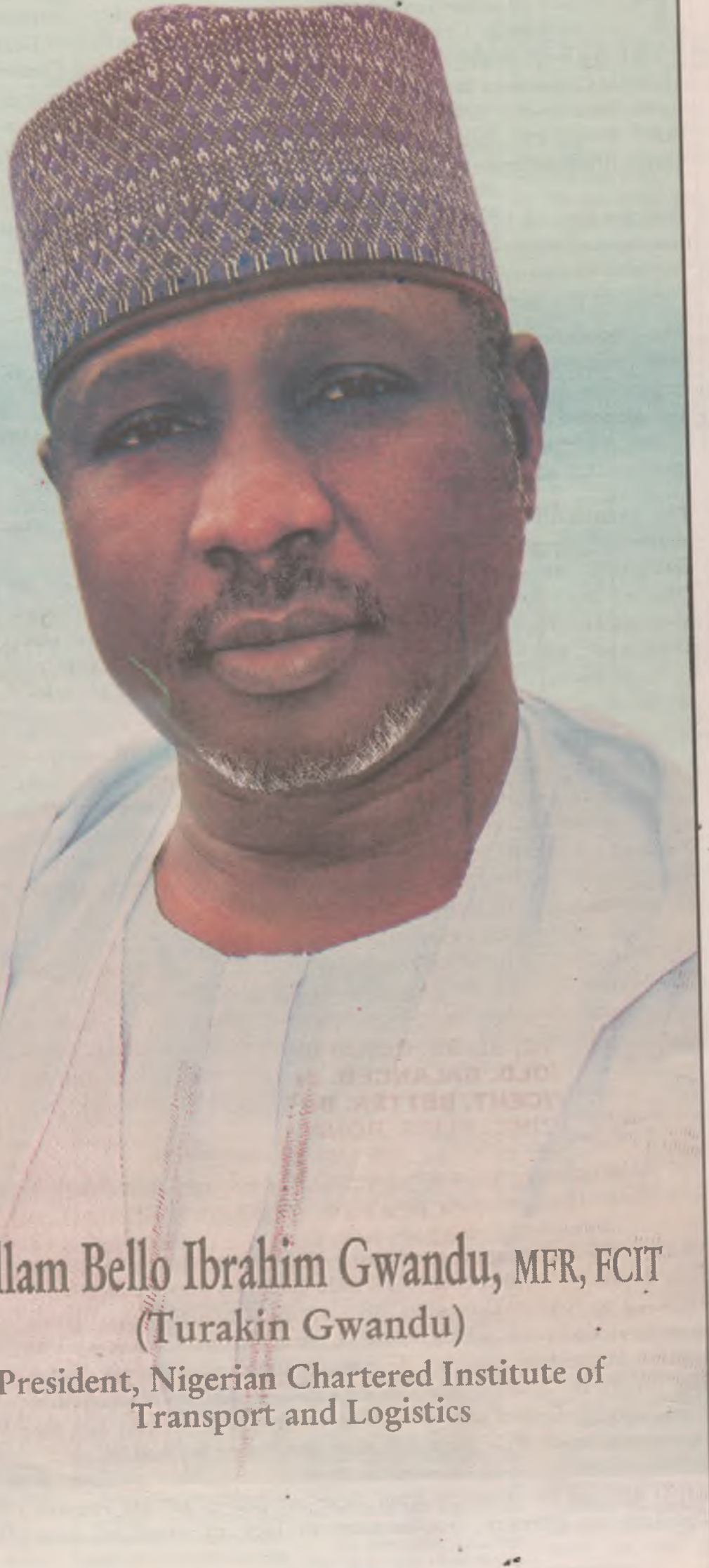
Happy Birthday!

We have cause to rejoice with you in the celebration of your

54th Birthday

We thank the Almighty Allah for creating in you a worthy motivator to us.

May your joy continue to flow from the heart of the Almighty Creator as you clock 54 years. Amin.



Mallam Bello Ibrahim Gwandu, MFR, FCIT
(Turakin Gwandu)
President, Nigerian Chartered Institute of Transport and Logistics



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What's in a name?

PROPERTY & ENVIRONMENT

Minister solicits development partners' support on environmental problems

The United Nations Assistant Secretary General, Mr. Marcel A. Boisard has reiterated his organisation's determination to assist in solving environmental problems in the country.

Mr. Boisard who stated this recently when he paid a courtesy visit on the minister of environment Col. Bala Mande (rtd), pointed out that United Nation is involved in the training on intermediation of climatic change activities in desertification and biodiversity.

According to him, the organisation is making plans to address environmental problems in the Niger Delta region of the country adding that, already, discussions have commenced with four governors from the area on what UNIYAR can do in

By Sunday Ejike Benjamin,
Health Reporter

addressing socio-economic problems in the area. •

He said youths from the area will be involved in the organisation's activities so as to give Nigerian youths in the area a sense of belonging in the activities of the organisation.

Responding, the minister of environment, Col. Bala Mande noted that United Nation has been a very strong partner in the fight against environmental degradation in the country adding that the organisation's contribution is needed now that the country is looking at its own capacity building.

He applauded the organisation's pledge of assistance to the development of Niger Delta Region of the country just as he noted that

such assistance is timely as remediation of degraded environment and other environmental problems needs the involvement of partnership involvement in addressing them.

Col. Mande said degraded areas as in the northern part of Nigeria is drawing the attention of the government and as such needs partnership with international agencies to address the environmental problems in the area.

An NGO, Joint Wetlands Livelihoods (JWL), has said N324.3 million is required to dredge the Rivers Kafin-Hausa and Hadejia to save the Hadejia-Nguru Wetlands from extinction.

JWL told newsmen touring the wetlands that "the health of the two rivers was endangered by situation and Typha grass, depleting the natural fortunes of the affected wetlands."

Malam Isa Sulaiman, JWL research officer, said the affected states of Jigawa, Yobe and Bauchi, were expected to contribute financially to the proposed dredging project.

"Of course, the third and

NGO targets N324.3m to save wetlands

final step, which is an intervention at basin level, is expected to be financed with the support of the federal government," he said.

"The JWL advisory committee has commenced contacts with affected states and the federal government for the immediate take-off of the project," he said.

Sulaiman called for urgent measures to restore the wetlands in view of their

economic potential, noting that "the deplorable state of the wetlands has rendered over 350,000 people poor in the past five years."

"In fact, it has contributed to the rise in child malnutrition, divorce, crime rates, migration, violent communal conflicts and severe anxiety about the future of inhabitants of the wetlands," Sulaiman added.

Kaduna state gets land use committee

Kaduna State government has announced the setting up of a committee on land use and allocation to enlighten the public on the matter.

The Chairman of the committee, Alhaji Ahmed Maiwada, explained during a tour of Jema'a council area that the committee was established "to create awareness on the need to follow due process in registering landed property".

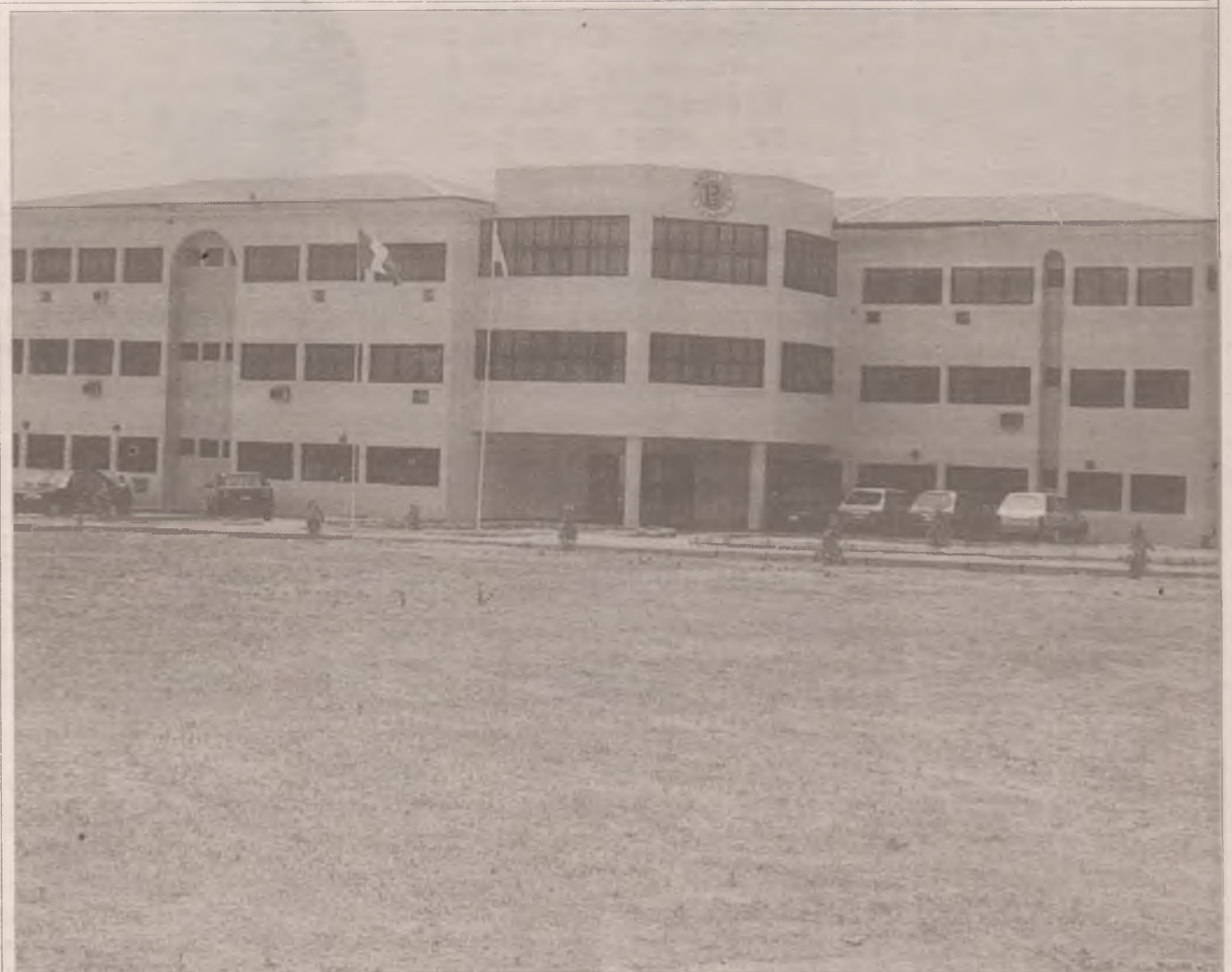
According to him, "ignorance of the importance of formalising land acquisition and use has often been identified as the major source of conflict associated with land".

Against that background, he said the state government had directed each local council to constitute an 11-member advisory land

committee. Responding, the Chairman of Jema'a council, Mr. Abraham Jatau, commended the foresight of the government in constituting the committee.

"This will in no small way sanitise the process of land acquisition and use, and also promote a peaceful co-existence," said Jatau, represented by his deputy.

He assured the visiting committee that Jema'a council would "do everything possible to enlighten the targeted audience within its jurisdiction."



Front view of the Pharmacist Council of Nigeria (PCN) building on plot 7/9, Idu Industrial Layout, Abuja.

UNEP warns of environmental impact by tsunami

The head of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Klaus Toepfer, has said that the recent Indian Ocean tsunami could have serious impact on the environment of

affected countries.

Early indications from the UNEP's work on the tsunami were that the direct damage to the environment, including water supplies, forests and other natural resources will

likely be high in many of the countries affected.

"Beyond the immediate concerns of threat to human health and livelihoods, there is increasing evidence of serious impacts on the natural

environment, such as damage to coral reefs and protective forest in a number of countries," he said.

Toepfer was speaking today at the World

Conference on Disaster Reduction which started in Kobe (Japan) on Tuesday.

He stressed the importance of the environment in disaster reduction. "Without the environmental dimension firmly in the equation, there will be no long term disaster risk reduction," he said.

Toepfer called for increasing investment in environmental protection and putting a disaster prevention value on the natural ecosystems.

More than 4,000 participants from about 150 countries and organisations are attending the five-day meeting to map out a disaster reduction guideline for the decade to come.

KASEPPA boss tasked on leadership

The newly appointed chairman of Kano State Environmental planning and protection Agency KASEPPA, Alhaji Yakubu Ali Bashir has been advised to adopt the spirit of trust and honest while discharging his primary assignment.

Former principal of Kazure secondary school now Kazure polytechnic, Alhaji Bashir Mansur Yola gave the advice at a reception party organised in honour of the

By Yusha'u Adamu Ibahim,
Correspondent (Kano)

newly appointed chairman by group of friends and well wishers.

Alhaji Mansur Yola said if the new chairman would uphold trust and honesty in the discharge of his assignment he would achieve a lot as according to him only honest leaders can records achievements.

He disclosed that the appointment of Alhaji Yakubu

Ali Bashir was not to him alone but a development to the entire Old Boys of Kazure secondary school.

Alhaji Mansur Yola who disclosed that they will continue to offer their meaningful advice to them stressed that it is within the concept of Islam for a teacher to advice his disciples whenever the need arise.

Alhaji Bashir Mansur Yola who was the 2nd principal of the then Kazure secondary school charged the Old Boys

to uphold the habit of assisting their colleagues and urged them to the Kazure Old Boys Association the Association which he said will unite them and strengthen their relationship.

He expressed optimism that they will continue to remain friends, charging them to uphold the readings of Islam wherever they find themselves.

On his part the newly appointed chairman, KASEPPA Alhaji Yakubu Ali Bahir promised to implement all the advice given to him.



Gov. Makarfi

PROPERTY & ENVIRONMENT

The undersea earthquake disaster known as Tsunami

By Ambrose Inusa Sule

Most natural disasters are global and respect no boundary. Such was the recent massive undersea earthquake in the South East Asia known as Tsunami which sent huge waves crashing ashore in at least ten countries and several Islands, leaving in its wake hundreds of thousands dead and rendered millions homeless and the disaster zone threatened with outbreaks of disease.

Tsunami is a Japanese word for an undersea earthquake. Though, this may not be the biggest on record, the effects may be the biggest ever because many more people live in exposed areas than ever before.

Each year millions of earthquakes rumble through the crust of our restless planet-earth. Most of these are hardly felt. This includes minor earthquakes, thousands of which occur, each day. Still on average, nearly 140 earthquakes a year are very serious enough according to seismologists that can be labelled "strong", "major" or "great". Throughout history, these have caused millions of deaths and incalculable damage to property.

Earthquakes are among the most destructive and powerful forces in nature. Earthquakes can happen in any climate during any season and at anytime of the day. But most earthquakes are confined to narrow belts where 90 percent of major earthquakes are likely to occur. Some countries seem to live with earthquakes as other people live with tornadoes, floods, hurricane, typhoon or volcanic eruption.

What causes earthquakes scientists try to explain by using the theory of plate tectonics? They say that earth's crust plate's lies on some 20 rigid plates or slabs of rock that move slowly, sliding past and at certain points under one another. These plates move very slowly, at something like the rate of which your fingernails grow, a few centimetres or so a year. Over many years stress builds when the plates stick as they try to slide past each other. This type of activity goes on continuously. Often the shock waves that result are not powerful enough to be felt at the earth's surface but they can be detected and recorded by a seismograph. At other times enough rocks break and enough shift takes place to shake the surface violently which result to severe earthquakes.

A seismograph is a device that measures and records the motion of the ground during an earthquake. The first one was developed in 1890. Disasters like earthquakes forced Chinese to devise an

efficient means of detecting them before they occurred by the use of dragons.

In 1932, Charles Richter invented a method of measuring the extent of energy released during an earthquake. It has since become the major instrument of measuring earthquakes. Today more than 4,000 seismograph stations are known to be operating worldwide. As the number of seismograph stations grow, new scales based on Richter's idea were developed. What is called the moment

Tsunamis waves travel much less rapidly than earthquakes and seismologists after record them long before the sea waves reach populated coasts.

A digital program called the Advanced Seismic Research and Monitoring System was reported to have been developed by the United States. This system completed with speedier access and more high powered software applications is to help seismologists to "be able to almost instantly pinpoint areas where the most violent shaking from an earthquake has occurred". This will make it easier for authorities to send

are likely to occur.

Some of the major plates or fault lines according to geoscientists include the Philippines submarine plates, the Eurasian tectonic plate, the North American plate, the Pacific plate, the Indian plate, the African plate and the Haiyuan plate. The Haiyuan plate covers most major parts of the Asian continent.

In 1999, a French Geologic Research reported that within the Haiyuan plate is the Haiyuan fault line that has not shifted since the 13th century. This is also most shifted earthquake prone in recorded history and incidentally, the

occur three to four days after a major solar activity or passage across the sun's central meridian. The Research Centre compared 630 major earthquakes between 1904 and 1967 with 370 recorded lunar activities by National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to conclude that moon spots has clear relationship with earthquakes.

Though, Geoscientists in their broad spectrum did not include African as one of the areas prone to tectonic earthquakes, but Nigeria has over the years experienced earth tremors but none

volcanic eruptions such as Mount Cameroon and Kilimanjaro. In antiquity, such volcanic eruptions were frequent. However, the area prone to volcanic activities in Nigeria have been inactive for the past 2,000 years.

But some countries on the coast of West Africa like Cameroon, Ghana and Guinea have sometime experienced more than tremors. They have experienced serious volcanic eruptions and earthquakes.

Israel has "the longest and most continuous historical record of earthquakes on the face of the earth" writes Professor Amos Nur. The reason is that part of the Great Rift Valley, the fault line between the Mediterranean and the Arabian plate's courses right through Israel from North to South.

The massive undersea earthquakes waves which swept 7,000km from the epicentre in the Southern Asia also struck Kenya, Mauritius, Seychelles and Somalia with hundreds of fishermen feared drowned, showed that you do not need to be on the fault line zones before you could be affected. Nature rules are changing fast.

It is becoming evident that areas that were not known to have experienced certain natural disasters are now wallowing in them, pointedly, due to the Ozone Layer Depletion that is changing the natural rules of seasons and climate round the world.

How prepared is Nigeria should it be affected by any of these natural disasters. Nigeria is known to have exhibited lukewarm attitude towards such critical issues like this as it has always preferred fire-brigade approach. It should be recalled that toxic gas released from Lake Nyos along the volcanic fault line in Cameroon claimed some lives in places like Akwa Ibom, Cross River, and Adamawa States.

Who says that Nigeria will not partake in this unholy natural disasters one day, may God save our souls.

In 1976, an idea was muted by the Federal Government to establish a Remote Sensory Centre but it was not until 1988 that it was eventually established in Jos. But the launching of a satellite to the space by National Space Research and Development Agency (NASRADA) may eventually afford Nigeria the capability to develop a disasters warning system.

Now that the world has become a global market place, natural disasters have also taken que and today they know no boundary. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

Ambrose Sule is the Publisher, Editor-In-Chief Global Environmental Outlook Magazine.



An image showing Acehnese surveying damaged property following the devastating earthquake on December 26, 2004 in Banda Aceh and before the tsunami hit the province. Large parts of Banda Aceh were destroyed by the magnitude 9.0 quake.

magnitude scale, for example, measures the energy released at the source of the quake.

Of course, these scales do not always reveal the degree of damage inflicted by an earthquake. Consider an earthquake in Northern Bolivia in June 1994, with a magnitude of 8.2 which reportedly killed only five people. Yet in 1976 quake in Tangsha, China, with the smaller 8.0 magnitude which resulted in hundreds of thousands of death.

In contrast with magnitude, intensity registration shows the effects that an earthquake has upon people, structures, and the environment. This is more descriptive measure of the severity of an earthquake in human terms. After all, tremors in themselves do not usually harm people. Instead, collapsing walls, rupturing gas or power lines, falling objects, and the likes cause the most injuries and fatalities.

Although, one goal of seismologists is to be able to provide early warnings as it happens is still a hope for the future. But

help into the affected areas.

But why is there constant movement in the earth's crust? "An explanation is to be found in plate tectonics, a concept which has now revolutionized thinking in the earth's science" says the National Earthquakes Information Centre (NEIC). "We now know that there are seven major crystal plates subdivided into a number of small plates, NEIC adds, "all in constant motion relative to one another at rates varying from 10 to 30 millimetres three eights of an inch to five inches per year."

Most earthquakes, NEIC says are confined to narrow belts that define the boundaries of the plates. This is where 90 percent of major earthquakes

most populated area in the world.

One of the most disastrous quakes in history happened in 1920 in the Gansu province of China which claimed over 300,000 lives. The last of the quakes in this area was in the eastern district of Beijing in July 28, 1976 with 8.2 on the Richter scale with a death toll of 242,000 and injured over 164,000 people.

In a popular research on earthquakes, scientists discovered that changes in the sun's activities are related to earth's spin. At the Leningrad Research Centre in the former USSR it was discovered that earthquake

resulted in an earthquake. Though a tremor is described as a minor earthquake.

Within the space of 20 years, there have been more than twelve recorded earth tremors in Nigeria. Records have it that there was tremor in 1990 and in August 28, 1984 in Ijebu-Ode in Ogun State. Two years later it reared its ugly head again in Bornu State. After a ten year lull, it happened at Aku in Enugu State and Rivers State in 1986. Earth tremor shook Lagos State in 1999 and on March 7, 2000 a tremors was reported in Ibadan.

The few cases of natural disasters associated with the earth crust in Africa are mainly

"Tsunami is a Japanese word for an undersea earthquake. Though, this may not be the biggest on record, the effects may be the biggest ever because many more people live in exposed areas than ever before.

Each year millions of earthquakes rumble through the crust of our restless planet-earth. Most of these are hardly felt. This includes minor earthquakes, thousands of which occur, each day. Still on average, nearly 140 earthquakes a year are very serious enough according to seismologists that can be labelled "strong", "major" or "great". Throughout history, these have caused millions of deaths and incalculable damage to property."

PROPERTY & ENVIRONMENT

Parastatal solicits support for FG projects in South-South

A call has gone to the federal government to build a flyover at the Eleme through Aba road to Port Harcourt junction as well as an extension of the dualisation of the Onne to the Ocean terminal road with a bridge to link it to Kpokri Island.

The MD/CEO of the oil and Gas free zone authority Dr. Noble Abe made the call when he led a delegation to the minister of works Senator Adesaye Ogunlewe. He (the MD) said providing the infrastructures would alleviate the logistic bottlenecks his authority and the communities there experience.

The minister who said he was familiar with the area disclosed that his ministry was already working to execute some of the projects. But he quickly added that government was currently committed to substantial number of ongoing projects in the area, that included the Rivers State and the South

By Aminu Yusuf Ibrahim
(Intern)

South generally that cost a whopping N23 billion. He said they had to be completed before new ones were stated.

On the bridge linking Onne Kpokri Island that was vital in harmonising infrastructures within the free zone, the minister said for dearth of funds government of could not embark on it alone. He said there was need for the oil and Gas authority in conjunction with the companies operating there to work together with government to design the bridge in a way it would not be an impediment to movement of boats and ships plying the area.

He further enjoined the private sector operating in the South South zone to show greater involvement to develop its potentials for the benefit of all the country.



Environmental protection agency clearing a street in Kano

1004 residents protest sale of estate

By Abdulfatah Olajide,
Correspondent Lagos

Residents of 1004 federal housing estate on Victoria Island, Lagos, last week embarked on a peaceful rally to protest government's insistence on selling the estate

to UAC properties limited rather than to the occupants of the estate.

Addressing the rally, the chairman of the 1004 residents association, Mallam Abdul Kohol accused the federal government of insincerity in its implementation of the housing aspect of its monetisation policy.

Mallam Kohol said government's refusal to sell the 1004 flats to the civil servants occupying them currently even while they were prepared to pay the N7 billion being offered by UAC properties for the flats, was an indication that the government was unconcerned about the welfare of civil servants.

He lamented that "none of the provisions of government policy on monetisation as it affects the wellbeing of civil servants was adhered to," adding that "government was yet to pay the so called monetisation to core civil servants up till now talk less of officers of federal parastatals."

Mallam Kohol also noted that military and Para-military personnel whom the monetisation policy does not affect were equally occupying some flats in 1004 estate.

He therefore wondered what would the fate of such people would be when government sells the estate to UAC.

He debunked the alleged claim by the minister of housing and urban development, Mrs. Bolaji Osomo that only about ten per cent occupants of 1004 estate are legitimate civil servants.

According to him, the verification exercise on occupants carried out by the ministry has since shown that more than eighty per cent of them were legitimate senior civil servants who work in Lagos.

He explained that occupants of the estate have

for several years been responsible for the maintenance of their respective flats and the common facilities in the estate like the central sewage system, elevators, boreholes, etc.

Mallam Kohol argued that Mrs Osamo's position that the occupants should be denied the right to purchase their respective flats because most facilities in the estate are central was not tenable.

He noted that the socio-economic implications of ejection of civil servants would be great. "What becomes of the real estate sector in a city like Lagos known for the shylock nature of its landlords of suddenly about three thousand families who are going to be displaced simultaneously enter into the market to look for accommodation," he queried.

The rally which took place between 8am and 10am within the estate caused a momentary traffic jam on Victoria Island, as the two gates leading to the estate were locked, forcing motorists going into the estate to park their vehicles on Ozumba Mbadime and adjoining streets.

Also, Muslim and Christian clerics within the estate were invited to pray for divine intervention on the side of the residents.

The deputy Imam of the 1004 estate central mosque, Athaji Suleiman Ibrahim and Reverend O'Leary Noel of the St Charles Catholic Church within the estate prayed God to touch the heart of President Olusegun Obasanjo and Mrs Osomo and make them rescind the decision to sell the estate to UAC properties.

FG commissions CFC free plant for PZ

The federal government last week commissioned the Chloro fluoro carbon (CFC) free plant at the premises of Paterson Zochorris (PZ) company at Ikpeju in Lagos.

Col. Bala Mande said in his speech at the occasion that the CFC free plant represents part of Nigerian's fulfilment of its obligations to the Montreal protocol on Ozone Depleting substances (ODS).

The depletion of the Ozone layer by substances known as Ozone depleting substances (ODS) makes it possible for high doses of ultraviolet B- radiation to reach the surface of the earth causing problems such as skin cancer, eye cataracts, reduction of the human immune systems retardation of the growth of vegetation, and destruction of micro organisms in the sea.

Being aware of the dangers posed by the continued depletion of the Ozone layer, countries of the world came together in 1985 to establish a convention for the protection of the Ozone layer, which was adopted in Vienna in 1985 and was till then known as the Vienna convention for the protection of the Ozone layer.

The further efforts made

By Rabi Othman (Intern)

to protect the Ozone layer has resulted to the adoption of the protocol on substances that deplete the Ozone layer in Montreal, Canada in 1987.

The protocol, which is a legally binding instrument demands that parties should limit the production and consumption of ODS. The Vienna convention and the Montreal protocol entered into force on 22nd September 1988 and 1st January 1989 respectively.

Environment ministry's permanent secretary, Mr. S.O. Adekunle also made a remark at the occasion saying that the completed PZ project is the largest retrofitting project in the refrigeration sector and completed in 2003.

In the welcome address by Mr. P.V. Varselas-CEO PZ industries Plc also stated that the industry (PZ) has been in the forefront of the industrial development of Nigeria for over one hundred years.

Mr. P.V. vassals went on to say that PZ pioneered the manufacturing of freezers and refrigerators in Nigeria, back in the early seventies, with the renowned Thermocool brand.

Mr. S.O. Adekunle of environment ministry also said that the ministry will continue to work assiduously

with all stakeholders towards the successful completion of the ongoing ODS phase out project in Nigeria.

Illegal developers to be prosecuted, fined

Bogged down by the burden of spending N750,000 on each demolition exercise, the Lagos State Government said on Tuesday that illegal developers would henceforth be prosecuted and be made to bear the demolition cost.

The state also urged the federal ministry of works to respect the rule of law by discontinuing with the issuance of all forms of permits, ground rents and authorisation of illegal development across the state.

Articulating the government position at a press conference, Commissioner for Physical and Urban Development, Hakeem Gbajabamila said the on-going demolition exercise which kicked off on December 23 would affect all illegal structures in the Centre of Excellence.

The exercise which would affect all illegal developments along the presidential route (zero tolerance zone) have been carried out at Ilubirin and the toll gate end of the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway.

Gbajabamila said the prosecution of owners of illegal structures was being introduced as part of measures to curtail unauthorized development as

By Olumide Bajulaiye,
Correspondent (Lagos)

well as serve deterrent to erring developers.

Such "polluters", the commissioner added would also be compelled to pay the cost of removing the illegal structures as the enormous resources being disbursed on the on-going exercise could have been used in providing other social services for Lagosians.

Gbajabamila noted that the removal of illegal developments will affect all zero tolerance zones in the state, adding that it is part of the government's determination to make the city of Lagos and other cities liveable.

The zero tolerance zones according to him are roads set backs, all rights of ways of utilities like NNPC pipelines, NGC pipelines, NEPA transmission line, Water pipelines and all areas reserved for public uses such as open spaces, schools, refuse collection points among others Gbajabamila regretted that with a population of just about 15million, it appear as if there is no planning in the state, with Lagos expected to play host to 25million inhabitants by 2015.

ABUJA TRUST



Tankers queuing for water at Asokoro in Abuja, as acute water scarcity persists in the federal capital territory.

MFCT boosts Fadama Project with N29m

The Ministry of the Federal Capital Territory has given approval for the disbursement of N29 million to farmers under the FCT-Fadama Development Project. The executive secretary, Agriculture and Rural Development in the MFCT, Alhaji Waziri Ahmadu, disclosed that the funds would be distributed to farmers under the Fadama Project.

Alhaji Ahmadu said that the funds were the ministry's contribution to the actualisation of sustainable agricultural development in the FCT. 'The ministry would always render support and assistance to farmers in order to ensure they got involved in food production for residents of the FCT,' he said.

He added that the objectives of the Fadama Project were laudable as it would provide employment opportuni-

By Hassan Idris, Senior Reporter (Agriculture) With Agency Reports

ties for the rural populace. He said: "By empowering the rural populace, the rate of poverty will be reduced to a minimal level."

Speaking earlier, the FCT coordinator of the Fadama Development Project, Mr Mike Uwazie, said the project would extend its services to minority groups, such as widows, youths, orphans as well as other groups engaged in farming activities.

Uwazie said the main objective of the project, which has a six-year implementation period, would reduce poverty and increase the earning of rural farmers.

'The projects also sought to ensure all year agricultural activity in order to ensure food security and price stability,' he said.

Bad state of secondary education worries minister

Just as parents in Abuja are coping with new school fees in public schools in the territory, the MFCT administration has declared as unacceptable a situation where only six per cent of the FCT students could get enough credits to gain admission into tertiary institutions.

The FCT minister, Mallam Nasir Ahmed el-Rufai, made the declaration when he received in audience the executive members of the Association of Proprietors of Private Schools in the FCT, led by its president, Dr. (Mrs) Sally Bogunjoko.

Mallam el-Rufai, who lamented the state of some of the private schools he has visited, condemned the ramshackle structures, saying such are not acceptable in the territory. He stressed on the need to maintain standard, declaring that, "a half-educated child is dangerous to the society."

The minister stated that henceforth, the education secretariat would advise his administration on schools to be accredited, while the Department of Policy and Implementation will monitor the standard of schools in the FCT.

Mallam el-Rufai declared that any private school applying for land must show good track records of performance in NECO and WAEC examinations before being considered, and said all changes of pur-

By Nasir Imam, (Property & Environment Editor)

In his contribution, the representative of the executive secretary (Education), Dr. Ismail Isiga, stated that a committee set-up on accreditation has recommended that private schools should be made to pay 25 per cent premium, and also disclosed that some schools pencilled down did not meet the ex-

pected standard.

Earlier in her address, the president of the association, Dr. (Mrs) Sally Bogunjoko, commended the minister for what he has been able to achieve so far in the education sector.

Dr. Bogunjoko requested plots of land for 22 schools her association is representing, and for the minister to see their services as a com-

munity development contribution to the society.

Catholic University, Abuja, to organise fund raising

Catholics in Nigeria are to organise a fund raising ceremony in aid of the proposed Catholic University of Nigeria, Abuja, scheduled to hold on Thursday, at the Sheraton Hotel and Towers, Abuja.

A statement from the Catholic University, Abuja, signed by the president, Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria, His Grace, Most Rev. Dr. John O. Onaiyekan, and Prof. Afololabi Ojo, the chairman, Provisional Governing Council, said funds are needed for the development of the university.

The statement said that the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), at its meeting held in Abuja in March 2002, resolved that a

and with campuses outside Abuja as may become necessary.

It said that Catholic University of Nigeria, Abuja, is seen as a monumental gift of the entire Catholic community in Nigeria to the wider Nigerian nation, and the world.

"With the decision began the march towards the establishment of a Catholic University by the entire Catholic Church in Nigeria with the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) as proprietors," the statement said.

The Catholic University of Nigeria, Abuja (CUNA), the statement added, is expected to be a model to be looked up to in Nigeria, our

PRINTERS OF REPUTE IN NIGERIA

The printing industry in Nigeria has been providing monumental printing designs that projects the creativity of the industry thereby justifying its efforts in bringing out colourful and beautiful prints for the use of their various class of clients. Indeed, the last four decades has witnessed their astronomical development at improving the nation's economy.

In spite of their impacts and contributions to the economic development of the country, due to lack of adequate publicity, the activities of most printers are not known to majority of Nigerians.

Giving the appreciable efforts of the players in the industry both public and private, suppliers of printing machines and equipment, accessories, etc, and in spite of the harsh economic environment under which they operate, there is the need to appraise the contributions of the industry, X-raying its challenges as well as publicise their achievements and activities.

Media Trust Limited, the publishers of *Daily* and *Weekly Trust* Newspapers plans to feature some of the reputable and outstanding printing companies, manufacturers and suppliers of printing machines and accessories in a special project package. The date of publication is Monday, February 14, 2005.

For participation and further enquiries, please contact the Special Projects Department on any of the following nos: 08037038663, 08042145839, 08023762061, 08028494170 09-6720346, 5235787 extensions 124 or 117.

KANO TRUST

Red Cross solicits assistance for Tsunami victims

The Nigerian Red Cross Society, Kano State branch, has appealed to the public, particularly wealthy individuals, to generously assist the victims of Tsunami disaster in Asia.

The executive secretary of the Nigerian Red Cross Society, Kano State branch, Alhaji Musa Dr. Abdullahi who made the call in a press statement made available to the *Kano Trust*, said: "We write to appeal, on behalf of the affected victims of the disaster, to all members of the public, group and individuals to donate generously to the victims so as to improve their living condition, and alleviate their sufferings.

Alhaji Musa Abdullahi disclosed that the Nigerian Red Cross Society has opened four accounts in

By Yusha'u Adamu Ibrahim,
(Correspondent, Kano)

four different banks across the nation with a view to paving way for the public to financially donate to the victims of the unfortunate disaster.

The banks, according to the executive secretary, include First Bank Plc., account No. 237203000611; United Bank of Nigeria Plc., account No. 0122080000660; Bank of the North Limited, account No.-503489; and Zenith International Bank Limited, account no: 6012609316.

He further explained that all those who want to issue cheques should write them in favour of the Nigerian Red Cross Society for Tsunami disaster victims.

The Kano executive secretary of the society also said that for further information on the issue,

people should contact the executive secretary, Nigerian Red Cross Society, Kano, at office 1, Nassarawa Hospital road, Kano, or through telephone 064-645620, and 08037881595.

Alhaji Musa Abdullahi, who commended the FG for setting up a committee to seek assistance for the Tsunami victims, disclosed that God will surely rewarded all those who contribute to the assistance of the victims of the unfortunate disaster.



Chairman, Fight Against Desert Encroachment, (FADE), Chief Newton Jibunoh being presented with 'Babariga' by Makoda community...recently.
Pix: Musa Kazaure.

Farmers, Fulani herdsmen cautioned against violence

By Mustapha Isah Kwaru
(Correspondent, Kano)

Farmers and Fulani cattle rears have been enjoined to shun acts capable of disrupting their peaceful co-existence. The acting chairman of Bunkure local government council, Alhaji Madari

Haladu Gwamma, made the call during a meeting with the two groups on how to curtail violence. He observed that the cordial relationship between Fulani and farmers tops the priority of the local government, stating that all

hands should be on deck to curtail its collapse.

The acting chairman emphasised that the two groups should see themselves as partners in progress for the development of the area and farming activities, saying this could only be sustained if they eschew violence in its entirety.

Alhaji Gwamma pledged that the council will unmask measures aimed at improving the welfare of the two groups for the revamp of agriculture.

The council's branch chairman of Miyetti Allah Cattle Rearing Association, Mallam Sogiji Yaro, promised to promote peaceful co-existence with the farmers, adding that any misunderstanding will be solved amicably.

Responding, the district

head of the council, Alhaji Shehu Abubakar, applauded the acting chairman for fashioning out an avenue that will prevent clash. The measure, he said, will ensure peace, unity and harmony between the groups, just as he enjoined them to corroborate the gesture by jealously guarding against eruption of crisis that could hinder peace.

Meanwhile, the acting chairman has pledged to improve girl-child education as a measure to rid the society of street hawking and illiteracy. He made the remarks while distributing education materials to 50 female students who were admitted into secondary schools, adding that to provide conducive environment to ensure excellence, the council has voted over N40m as scholarship allowances for students.

Power outage hits Kumbotso LG

Socio-economic activities in nine villages of Kumbotso local government council in Kano State have been paralysed following erratic power supply to the area. A spokesman of the affected villages, Mallam Inusa Baba Abdullahi, disclosed this while interacting with the chairman of the local council at the council's headquarters.

Mallam Baba Abdullahi explained that the affected villages are Kumbo town, Ryugafada, Gamawa, Dan-Mai

Ummawa, Bechi and Garmgau, among others. He regretted that despite the proximity of the local council to the NEPA sub-station, the affected villages are not receiving priority from the authority.

He said further that all efforts to make NEPA change the situation yielded no result as till now, the villages are not enjoying even an hour power supply in a week.

Alhaji Baba therefore appealed to both NEPA authori-

ties and local government to immediately look for a lasting solution to the problem, which he said is seriously affecting the lives of the people in the area. He also suggested that the local council should intervene by appealing to the NEPA authorities to connect the villages with the grid serving the industries located at the area.

Responding, the local council chairman, Alhaji Sagiru Abdulkadir Panshekara, expressed con-

cern about the situation of the villages, and directed the Department of Works to take immediate action on the issue.

The chairman also called on Kumbotso district office of NEPA to rectify the situation, which he said will improve socio-economic activities in the area.

He then reinstated the council's commitment towards completion of the ongoing electrification projects in Challawa, Yansanda and Madinawa villages.

Bagwai people urged to live in peace

By Aliyu Saleh Machika,
(Correspondent, Kano)

The Bagwai local government council chairman, Alhaji Yusuf Ahmad Badau, has called on all and sundry to live in peace to enhance rapid development of their areas. Speaking through the acting chairman of the council, Ahmad Abdullahi Kiyawa in his *Sallah* message, Alhaji Badau said at this point in-time, there is need for constant prayers to ensure both economic and political growth in the country.

According to him, there is also need for the workers in the council to redouble their efforts through hardworking and dedication to ensure that the set objectives of the council were achieved, adding that already, the lo-

cal government council has awarded contracts for the construction of mosques in various places across the area council in an effort to promote Islam.

In his own speech, the director of personnel of the council, Alhaji Baba Ibrahim Gaya, said the payment of salaries and bonus for the staff of the council has motivated them towards discharging their duties. He further commended the performance of the staff for what he described as a job well done, adding that they should try their best in doing more for the general benefit of all in the council.



A refuse dump in the middle of a street in Kano...recently

Pix Mustapha Isah Kwaru

EKO TRUST

Burial at Ikoyi cemetery to cost N100, 000

Lagos residents desirous of burying the dead body of their beloved in Ikoyi cemetery will have to cough out about 100 thousand naira as interment rate payable to the Ikoyi/Obalende local government council of the state.

Investigation by our correspondent showed that residents who wish to bury a deceased person in the elite category of the cemetery are required to pay N90, 000 for a single vault space allocation with fence and additional N5, 000 burial permit for the three-chamber vault.

It was gathered that the erection of memorial stone permit would attract a rate of N20, 000, annual maintenance fee of N10, 000 and special cemetery development levy fixed at N20, 000.

In the middle class category of the cemetery, a single vault space allocation with or without fence and having three chambers would attract a rate of N50, 000. Investigation showed that burial permit in this category was also fixed for N5, 000, the erection of memorial stone attracts a rate of N10, 000 (minimum), annual maintenance fee of N10, 000 and special cemetery development levy of N10, 000.

Our correspondent learnt that in the ordinary category, a single vault space allocation was fixed for N25, 000, the rates of burial permit, inscription of memorial and annual maintenance fee were put at N2, 000, N10, 000 and N8, 000 respectively.

Relatives of the deceased interred in middle class section are also expected to pay special cemetery development levy of N5, 000.

It was gathered that in the sympathetic category, a temporary space allocation costs N10, 000 and additional burial permit of N2, 000 while

By Olumide Bajulaiye, Correspondent (Lagos)

paupers burial attracted no rate as they were to be done free of charge by the burial section of the Ikoyi/Obalende LG council of the state.

Other rates relating to burial functions fixed by the LG are, N25, 000 for the permit to open an old vault in the elite category, repair of vault to attract between N10, 000 and N15, 000 in the middle and ordinary categories while exhumation fee was fixed for N20, 000.

Two residents in Ikoyi and Obalende who spoke in separate interviews with our correspondent in Lagos observed that the rates are too high and urged the LG to review them downwards. The chairman of Ikoyi low cost dolphin residents association, Mr. Dapo Rotifa and another resident, Mr. Rasaki Salami said the LG should not subject mourners to hardship due to the escalating cost of interment of the area.

Rotifa suggested that the rate be reviewed just as Salami who told our correspondent that he buried his father at the cemetery about three years said the high interment rates fixed by the LG was unjustifiable. His words, "the burial rates are too much. To me it is like an extortion and I think the government should assist us to reduce the rates."

Efforts by our correspondent to obtain the comments of the chairman of the LG, Dr. Folarin Gbadebo-Smith failed.

Lagos to rehabilitate miscreants

Lagos State government has perfected plans to offer rehabilitation for social miscreants in the state. Towards this, government has completed works on the rehabilitation of the Skill

Acquisition Centre located at Tekunle Island (Ita-Oko) near Ise along Lekki Peninsula.

The 4, 200 square metre centre has facilities for training residents in fabrication, carpentry,

weaving, and agriculture component (involving snailry, poultry and fish production), detoxification centre, and residence for 200 along with a staff quarter and helipad.

Speaking shortly after inspecting the facilities, Lagos governor, Bola Tinubu noted that by the second quarter of the year it would have become operational once the new tools have been fully installed.

Tinubu said the pilot phase of the rehabilitation programme will exclude females and will be based on offering the youths an opportunity for change.

Sounding a note of warning that government's gesture if shunned by area boys will lead to dire consequences, he however declared that anyone who refuses this good gesture and our goodwill to offer him/her a new life must be ready to leave Lagos.

According to him, the six months period of residence will not only lead to a complete rehabilitation after graduation but to the

metropolis, the state government has also budgeted the sum of N30 million to light its roads. Speaking with newsmen at the weekend in Lagos, the controller of works Lagos, Dr. Adeniji Adedolapo disclosed that the minister, Senator Adeseye Ogunlewe has approved the purchase of generating sets to power the street lights.

According to him, to ensure that the lights are on all night, the minister has begun discussions with some foreign firms on how to use solar energy to power the lights.

His words; "by the grace of God, before the end of February, the construction of all streetlights would be completed. We have been given a lot of money and we are seriously working on their rehabilitation."

"We're committing over N50 million to the project because we'll buy new cables, new transformers and settle accumulated NEPA bill incurred on streetlights. "We have proposed to the minister to buy many generators in certain locations to avoid power failure, vandalism and to ensure stable and consistent power supply. The minister is also looking into solar energy to power the street lights," Adeniji added.

On its own the state government has disbursed the sum of N30 million to various contractors in the state towards the installation and continuous maintenance of streetlights in Lagos, through agency approach to street lighting.

The state commissioner for Works and Infrastructure, Engineer Rauf Aregbesola who disclosed this said the new approach was aimed at encouraging private sector participation in the maintenance of streetlight installations.

Aregbesola noted that past efforts of the state government to light up Lagos were frustrated by

the nefarious acts of vandals "who seems to be growing daily in their sophistication to beat all security dragnets set to apprehend them."

He regretted that at various stages the state had made use of state security agencies, including neighbourhood watch and local watchman without much link.

"Under this arrangement, contractors have been engaged in a pilot scheme to confirm the efficiency of the new system."

Some of the pilot scheme streetlight installation that are presently functional include; streetlight form Oko-Afo to Ilogbo, Odofin; Iyana-Ipaja to Idimu; Bajulaiye/Igbobi, Shomolu; Kudirat Abiola road; Ago palace Way, Okota; Lagos state secretariat road Alauasa and Akowonjo road in Alimosho.

In view of the positive feedback from the people, the state government has awarded the construction/rehabilitation of additional 20 streetlights installation to cover the 5 divisions of the state.

Some of the installations are located at Obafemi Awolowo Way, Ikeja; Old Akute Road, Iju-Ifako; College road, Ifako; Adeyemo Akapo street, Omole among others.

He however appealed to benefiting neighbourhood to be vigilant and report any erring motorists/persons who have indulged in the habit of knocking down streetlight poles to the appropriate authorities.



Cross section of Pro-National conference delegate committee at Airport hotel, Ikeja, Lagos... recently. Pic: Oladipupo Odunewu.

FG, LASG commit N80m to streetlights

Residents and visitors to Lagos metropolis who are afraid of traveling at night can now heave a sigh of relief, as both the federal and state government have committed over N80million to street lighting in the state.

While the federal government has earmarked over N50 million to rehabilitate all the streetlights on all its roads in



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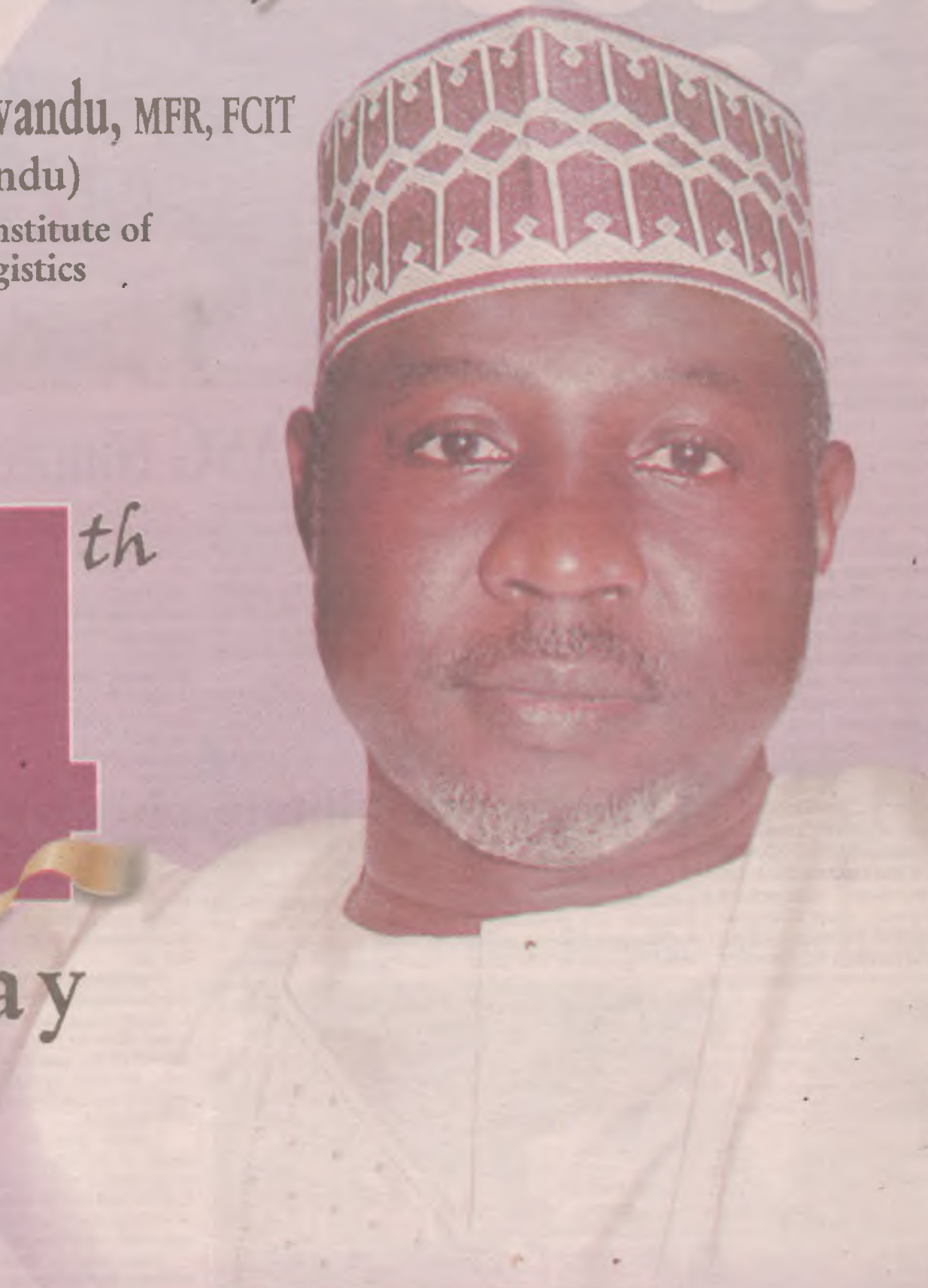
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News

Attah tasks new commissioners, advisers on loyalty

Public office-holders in Akwa Ibom State have been charged to demonstrate total commitment and loyalty in the course of discharging their functions as the state will not tolerate any abuse of office, or any act capable of thwarting the efforts of government towards the development of the state.

The Akwa Ibom State Governor, Obong Victor Attah who made the charge on Monday while swearing in four commissioners and two special advisers at the Akwa Ibom Hall, stressed that the state now demands high level of accountability, prudent management of resources, hard work and objective contribution from its workers.

Explaining the reasons for the minor shake-off of his cabinet, Obong Attah said it

From Edet Ekanem, Correspondent (Uyo)

was designed to further motivate and lubricate the machinery of government to set it in proper motion for the realisation of its set goals.

He further stated, "Certain circumstances, including the creation of a new ministry - the Ministry of Culture and Tourism - made it inevitable for me to drop some commissioners and special advisers from the state executive council, hence the appointment of four new commissioners and two special advisers to replace the outgoing ones."

Obong Attah called on all arms of government in the state to show understanding and cooperate with one another with a view to expand-

ing the frontiers of development, because according to him, democracy blooms and grows better where these virtues thrive.

The governor, while congratulating the new appointees, said their appointments were based on merit, qualifications and experiences, and enjoined them to integrate fully in the system, with a view to bearing the enormous responsibilities of meeting the hopes and expectations of Akwa Ibom people.

He warned them against the temptation of serving themselves rather than serving the public first, adding, "the challenge is for all of us to gird our loins and get ready for work - work that will improve the conditions and circumstances of the generality of our people and not of our own individual circumstances."

The lawmaker representing Ringim constituency at the Jigawa State House of Assembly, Alhaji Sule Udi, has called for adequate security measure through budgetary allocation, training of security personnel so as to guard against the continuous breakdown of law and order in the country.

Alhaji Udi said the recent escalation of violence in the country cannot be prevented due to inability of security agents to be prepared against such breach of security.

This, he disclosed, is largely due to ill preparedness of the agents in the areas of facilities, training and equipment.

He therefore called on the federal, state and local governments to provide a special budgetary allocation to the security outfits, so as to enable them to acquire modern technological equipment as well as expose them to train-

Lawmaker calls for more budgetary allocation to security

From Hassan A. Karofi, Correspondent (Dutse)

ing on modern technique used in combating crimes worldwide.

The lawmaker revealed that in Jigawa State, security was given a large budgetary allocation to enhance security and further protect the citizenry.

Alhaji Sule Udi also called for concerted efforts by all the tiers of government so that the much disturbed security breaches that have been bedeviling the country, and further drifting the nation's economy would be put to halt.

The chairman of the Jigawa State House Committee on Basic Education also revealed his concern over

farmers/Fulani clash which he said has of late caused loss of lives and property in the north-east and north-western parts of the country.



Gov. Saminu Turaki

Borno first lady decries increase in polio cases

From Isa Umar Gusau, Correspondent (Maiduguri)

The wife of Borno State governor and first lady of the state, Mrs. Fatima Ali Sheriff, has decried the increase in the cases of polio related diseases across some parts of the state.

She said this in a press statement signed by the Chief Press Secretary to the first lady, Mrs. Nancy Brain Mbaya, copied to Daily Trust in Maiduguri

According to the statement: "Mrs. Fatima Ali Sheriff expressed dismay that in spite of all efforts embarked upon by the state's mobilisation team, which she is the chairman, the number of polio cases has increased from four to eleven."

Mrs. Sheriff had disclosed that since the presentation of immunisation flags to wives of state governors by Mrs. Stella Obasanjo, she (Mrs. Sheriff) had put all hands on deck to ensure the eradication of polio in Borno State.

"She assured people in the state that the anti-oral polio vaccine campaign controversy has been laid to rest through the federal government, and Jama'atul Nasril Islam committee report which stated that the vaccine used in the country is very safe," the statement added.

Mrs. Sheriff stressed the need for continuous orientation of the people, especially women, to accord due importance to social programmes that have direct benefit on

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THE ARTS

Originality, creativity, bedrock of genuine development—Chikelu

The importance of originality and creativity in all spheres of national life, in pursuing genuine development of the country was extolled yesterday at the Fred Archibong art exhibition in Abuja when former head of state, General Abdulsalami Abubakar (rtd) and information minister, Chief Chukwuemeka Chikelu, called for urgent resort to cultural heritage.

The exhibition by the artist Fred Archibong, the 40th in 24 countries including, the United States, France, Africa, Britain, Brazil and South Korea, was a collection of 150 works of art.

"This exhibition is therefore a challenge to all of us on the need for originality and creativity in all spheres of our national life so that the nation's development thrust can be modelled on the virtues of our own creative thinking," Chief Chikelu, represented by the director, production, publication and documentation of the ministry, Mr Callistus Kayode Alabi, said.

He described the exhibition as an important communication strategy in

highlighting the abundant talents available in Nigeria as it also affords the international community the opportunity to experience a positive aspect of Nigeria, "instead of the negative image through which the international media tend to portray our country."

The minister said the exposure of the country's rich cultural heritage to the

By Uthman Abubakar
Senior Reporter (Features)

outside world was a development that would enlighten the citizenry and the international community on the nation's vibrant history and traditions.

On his part, General Abubakar, chairman of the occasion said, "If we truly support the creative talents

of our people, then we shall stop living on export of human labour, and primary products." He also said, "Our income in oil, cocoa, timber etc. shall then be put into the insignificance they belong in our wealth profile."

He concluded with a charge to Africans: "Let my people create, invent, display, and perform; then we can celebrate their creativity with all mankind."



Information minister, Chief Chukwuemeka Chikelu



The artist, Fred Archibong, working on wood



The artist painting

Title: *Citizenship Education for Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria*

Authors: Abdulhamidu Abdullahi and Dr. Suleiman B. Muhammad

Volume: One

Pagination: 56

Publishers: Famous Taste Digital Prints

Reviewer: Muhammed S. Shehu.

Reviving civic education

ones. Though the scope of institutions the content is for all the strata of the society.

With a glowing forward by the Deputy Rector, Federal Polytechnic, Nasarawa, Mr. P. O Salami, the book opens with chapter one, titled 'Citizenship'. It starts with the definition of the concept. According to Abdullahi, Citizenship can be defined as the status bestowed on the individual who has full membership rights in the community. He also examines the modes of acquiring citizenship, withdrawal of Nigerian citizenship, rights and obligations of a citizen in a

state and the fundamental objective and Directive Principles of Nigerian State Policy.

Chapter two, written by Yusuf Ali Zoaka, touched on the political segment of a state. The writer takes the reader back to the historical evolution of politics, the evolution of political parties and the contributions of the political party as an institution in a political system. He also touched on the vital role of the electoral system in the establishment of an enduring democracy. He highlighted the significance of free and fair

elections and listed conditions under which it is prudent to introduce free and fair elections.

In chapter three, Otaki Osana Alanana discusses national ethics and discipline which, he noted, are crucial factors for the development of Nigeria. He associated

as a factor responsible for building the mind of the nation as well as instilling national pride and national discipline upon the citizenry. The scholars believe that the cultural factor is the most important component and constitute the bulk of national identity.

The last chapter by Sani Mashi discusses the environment and the ways in which the human factor affects the environment as the immediate resource to man. The writer highlighted the need for adopting measures to preserve the beauty of the environment.

The book is simply good. But as with any work of art, it is not perfect. It lacks the textual analysis that will give the power to move the reader who may not be willing to read the book after a first glance.

The strength of the book lies in its ability to successfully cover a wide range of issues relating to civic education.

Book Review

some of the ethno-religious conflicts in the country to the breakdown or ethics of discipline. He also juxtaposes the two concepts together in order to highlight their significance.

Chapter four, written by Suleiman B. Muhammad and Garba U. Kari, deals with culture and national identity. The two scholars discussed culture from the definition of former President Shehu Shagari who defined culture

the idea that gave birth to this book.

The book is written according to the syllabus of the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCCE).

The title of the book captures the efforts by the authors to organise an object of study that will instill in the students a sense of patriotism, unity and self dignity by acquiring knowledge on the fundamental rights and obligations of a citizen. Fortunately, the book is published at a time when civic education is no longer part of the country's school syllabus. Therefore, it provides a good civic education for our young

The book is simply good. But as with any work of art, it is not perfect. It lacks the textual analysis that will give the power to move the reader who may not be willing to read the book after a first glance.

The book *Citizenship Education for Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria* compiled by Abdulhamidu Abdullahi and Suleiman B. Muhammad is a work by committed academicians whose interest in exposing the Nigerian students to the rudiments of governance and citizenship cannot be overemphasized.

Nigeria, with a population of about 140 million people, 400 different languages, has the human potential to be great in Africa. But these advantages have remained elusive due to the lack of adequate civil education to guide the conducts of its citizens. It is out of this desire for Nigerian students to gain useful experiences that Abdulhamid Abdullahi and his contributors conceived

THE ARTS THE ARTS THE ARTS

Art and criticism

Although it is often said art exists for its own sake, the reality is that art serves little purpose if nobody acknowledges its existence, especially by way of an appraisal. Individually, we all acknowledge and respond to works of art. It's either you like this painting, enjoy that song, feel indifferent about a particular book or dislike a particular TV drama. These reactions are all forms of appraisal. Formal

appraisal of art is what art criticism is about. It is what the art critic does.

It should be noted here that 'critic' does not necessarily mean one who makes negative remarks. Understandably, many people associate the word 'critic' with negativity. In fact, the second definition for the word given by the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* says a critic is, "a person who expresses

By Crispin Oduobuk, Group Literary Editor
disapproval of...and talks about their bad qualities, especially publicly."

However, the dictionary's first definition says that a critic is "a person who expresses opinions about the good and bad qualities of books, music etc." Indeed, whether in art or any other field, the business of critiquing is, ideally, a matter of balanced appraisal.

Generally, art criticism may be defined as that which refers to reacting to; inferring significance, and judging particular renditions of art, especially in written or spoken formats. As with the matter of defining what constitutes art, consensus is not something that may be easily attained in defining what parameters should be used in critiquing art. Nonetheless, some useful considerations include;

- Some interpretations are better than others.
- Good interpretations of art tell more about the artwork than they tell about the critic.
- Feelings are guides to interpretations.
- There can be different, competing, and contradictory interpretations of the same artwork.
- Interpretations are often based on a world view.
- Interpretations are not so much absolutely right, but more or less reasonable, convincing, enlightening, and informative.
- Interpretations can be judged by coherence, correspondence, and inclusiveness.
- An artwork is not necessarily about what the artist wanted it to be about.
- A critic ought not to be the spokesperson for the artist.
- Interpretations ought to present the work in its best rather than its weakest light.
- The objects of interpretation are artworks, not artists.
- All art is in part about the world in which it emerged.
- All art is in part about other art.
- No single interpretation is exhaustive of the meaning of an artwork.
- The meanings of an artwork may be different from its significance to the viewer.
- Interpretation is ultimately a communal endeavour, and the community is ultimately self-corrective.
- Good interpretations invite us to see for ourselves and to continue on our own.

In this vein, Terry Barrett, the author of the book *Criticizing Art: Understanding the Contemporary*, writes, "Interpretation is the most important activity of criticism, and probably the most complex." Barrett's position, arising from the premise that art criticism is centred on the four basic activities of describing, interpreting, judging, and theorizing about art, is shared by many contemporary art critics. However, sharp divisions exist.

For instance, some insist that art criticism carried in newspapers and magazines concentrate mostly on the newsworthiness of art as, for example, when an artist holds an exhibition or a writer launches a new book. This school of thought see a divergence between this sort of art criticism and that which is done in the classroom. Others, naturally, fail to see any significant differences.

In conclusion, though it is not intended as a definitive guide, here are some core points offered by Barrett in his book on art criticism:

Barrett's Principles of Interpretation
Artworks have "aboutness" and demand interpretation.
Interpretations are persuasive arguments.

sented on the pages of a newspaper. Pictures submitted should be imaginative, insightful and should capture some exciting feature like passion, surprise, a display of skill, etc. Please name the work and attach a brief citation.

Guidelines for mixed media: Kindly follow the individual requirements for any two or more art forms you wish to combine. The catch is to avoid tackiness and keep the result viable in newspaper terms.

Mechanics
We prefer typed or computer-generated text. Please, do not send your original copy. We do not return submitted materials. Text should be typed or printed on one side of the paper only with a generous all-round margin. If submitting through electronic means (disks, email, etc), please send text files in .rtf format only. You may send your materials as attachments, but please, only in the required format. Electronic pictures should be in JPEG format only, saved at no less than 300 DPI.

Guidelines for fine arts and photography: We seek pictures or scanned images of full-sized art (paintings, sculptures, etc), sketches, cartoons, digital art, photographs and any other artwork that can be visually pre-

This container, called a *kuduo* among the Akan people of Ghana, was made from an alloy of copper using the lost-wax casting technique. Recent research suggests that they began being produced roughly 500 hundred years ago by Akan artisans. The prototypes for the *kuduo* were vessels produced in Egypt and Syria 500-700 years ago, and carried across the Sahara Desert by merchants who traded the Middle Eastern containers for gold. One of the richest gold producing areas of the world is found in what is today central and southern Ghana, the home of the Akan people. It is likely that these same merchants introduced the technology, lost-wax casting, used to produce *kuduo* and other important objects used as status markers in Akan society. It is interesting to note that there are no significant deposits of copper located in West Africa. Therefore, copper and its alloys came to be a valued trade commodity, first imported from the north and later from the coast of West Africa where, beginning in the 16th century, European merchants brought copper alloy artifacts to trade for Akan gold.

Dating *kuduo* is difficult since the tradition, in effect, died out over one hundred years ago. A few *kuduo* are still in use, found in shrines and the treasuries of Akan chiefs, but no

Vessel from Ghana

information about the origins of these objects is maintained. Most of the *kuduo* that are today maintained in museum and private collections, were found by accident while excavating new roads or digging the foundations for buildings. These objects do not carry any inscriptions identifying when or where they were made. Nor has a single *kuduo* been discovered in an archaeological context. In lieu of

hard chronological data, one may hazard an educated guess that those *kuduo* that stylistically are most similar to the imported Middle Eastern vessels are the earliest examples of the tradition, and those that display Akan innovations, are later. We may tentatively date, based on style, the Toledo Museum of Art *kuduo* to the 18th or 19th century.

This "casket" *kuduo*, with its hinged and hasped lid, is

embellished with figurative imagery that one would not find on a metal vessel from the Middle East, a leopard attacking an antelope. Such imagery is tied to a verbal/visual mode of communication that is central to Akan culture. Visual images, both figurative and abstract, carry meaning associated with an enormous body of proverbs. There, for instance, are many proverbs associated with leopards and antelopes. In this case, the leopard/antelope is a metaphor for power—the power of a paramount chief over lesser chiefs, or a chief over his subjects.

Kuduo were formerly made to serve as ritual containers used to hold the personal effects of wealthy individuals. They were often buried with their owner when he or she died. Examples like this one ceased being produced at the end of the 19th century because there was no longer a local demand for such objects. However, by the third decade of the 20th century, *kuduo* began being produced again, but for the tourist trade. Though there are many fine examples, few "modern" *kuduo* match the quality of craftsmanship and elegance of form associated with the former tradition.

Courtesy, UCLA website



Kuduo (ritual vessel), by the Akan people of Ghana, circa 18th or 19th century, cast copper alloy 21.9 x 16.8 cm on display at The Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, Ohio, USA.

The *Trust* papers invite original submissions from all interested individuals in the following art fields: Short fiction, short non-fiction, short plays, poetry, 'texting' wordplay, song lyrics, rap lyrics, essays, reviews, commentaries, fine arts, photography and mixed media.

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As general interest newspapers, our titles will only publish material that is deemed suitable for the entire family. In essence, this means while we encourage as much creativity and diversity as possible in materials submitted for publication, we will not publish anything that might be considered detrimental to the public good or unfair to any person(s) or ideal(s). Also, we have no interest in publishing indecent work, or aiding 'attack' causes of any sort, regardless of

their merits or the lack thereof.

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Guidelines for short fiction, short non-fiction and short plays: Whatever you're writing, it's your story—let it be original. Literary? Absurd? Indescribable? Well, it's your brew; serve it while it's hot. Or is it better cold? That's your call. Our angle is: if it's engaging, flows rationally, is self-contained and has minimal errors of lexis and structure, we're interested. Give us characters with life and—where necessary—exhibiting growth and you're in. But keep it under 1,000 words. You may submit accompanying artwork or photographs if available.

Guidelines for poetry, 'texting' wordplay, song lyrics and rap lyrics: It can't all be about love or even Cupid will get sick of it. And it's got to be decent else we'll hit 'Delete'. For poetry, please submit a maxi-

Call for submissions

mum of 3 at a time, with none exceeding 40 lines. For 'texting' wordplay, send a maximum of 4 with a 160 word limit each. For song and rap lyrics, send a maximum of 2 of no more than 48 lines each. In all cases, the emphasis should be on freshness, uniqueness, striking imagery and 'showing' rather than 'telling'. Freestyle? Rhyming? Haiku, limerick or oral traditional? Whatever you choose is cool so long as you don't recycle Shakespeare or hit us on the head with 'isms' even a professor would not know the meaning of. Again, you may submit accompanying artwork or photographs if available.

Guidelines for essays, reviews and commentaries: The essays we seek are supposed to serve as resources for artists, artistes and enthusiasts of the arts. Please, bear in mind you're submitting to a newspaper not a university journal meant for exactly twenty seven eggheads—including the editorial team. We'll let you run up to a convenient 1,500 words so be sure to have a very good reason for go-

ing over that figure. Accompanying artwork or photographs are welcome.

Reviews of works of art should begin with a brief description or synopsis of the work being reviewed. In all cases, please illuminate how the work succeeds or fails primarily from the angle of its rationality or lack thereof. Also, evaluate the coherent actualisation of the major character(s), if available or necessary. Finally, your critique should appraise the creative and functional interaction of the structure(s) of the genre used to present the work of art. This means, in written works for instance, explore originality in use of words and the efficacy of same. Please, reviews should not go beyond 1,500 words. As usual, accompanying artwork or photographs are welcome.

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your life. You may send along a recent picture of yourself, if you want it published.

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OBITUARY

With deep sense of loss and grief, the Management and the entire staff of

NATIONAL ELECTRIC POWER AUTHORITY (NEPA)

announce the death of

MR. JOHN ABOI SULEIMAN-ZAKY

*Assistant General Manager (Business Planning)
Corporate Planning & Strategy Sector*

**NEPA CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS,
ABUJA**

**Which occurred on Friday 28th January,
2005**

Born 50 years ago, Mr. John Aboi Suleiman-Zaky joined the services of the Authority on 1st April, 1991 as a senior manager (Accts) and rose to the rank of AGM (Business Planning) Corporate Headquarters, Abuja.

He is survived by wife and children

He will be greatly missed by the NEPA family and colleagues.

May his gentle soul rest in perfect peace (Amen)

BURIAL ARRANGEMENTS:

FRIDAY 4TH FEBRUARY, 2005

Christian wake keep at ECWA Church, Wuse II, Abuja. By 6.00pm

SATURDAY 5TH FEBRUARY, 2005

Body departs National Hospital Mortuary by 7.00am for his home town, Gidan Zaki in Zangon Kafaf LGA of Kaduna State for funeral service.

Interment follows immediately

Management



MR. JOHN ABOI SULEIMAN-ZAKI

Assistant General Manager (Business Planning)

Corporate Headquarters, Abuja.

AGED - 50 YEARS

News

Archbishop seeks prison reforms

The Anglican Archbishop of the Awka Diocese and Province of the Nigeria, His Grace, Most Rev Maxwell Anikwenwa, has asked the federal government to make transformation of various prisons a top priority. The Archbishop made the call at the Federal Prisons, Awka, during the commissioning of a water

From Beatrice Onuchukwu, Stringer Awka

Borehole on Sunday with over head tanks built and donated to the Awka Prisons by the Anglican Diocese of Awka.

The Archbishop thanked President Obasanjo for what he had so far done to better the condition of prison

inmates, but called on him to do more.

The bishop announced that the Anglican Diocese of Awka decided to sink the borehole in the Awka Prisons after visiting the Anglican Chapel of Compassion in the Federal Prisons, Awka, in January last year (2004).

Most Rev. Anikwenwa described the borehole water as quenching the suffering of the physical

water crisis, while the everlasting water is provided by Jesus Christ.

The Chaplain of the Anglican Chapel of the Compassion, Awka Prisons, Rev. Chuma Okoli, in appreciation, described Archbishop Anikwenwa as a long time friend of the prison.

Earlier, the Assistant Comptroller of Prisons in charge of Federal Prisons,

Awka, Rev. Ifeanyi Analiri, stated that by providing the water borehole to the prisoners, Archbishop Anikwenwa had not only given fish to the prisoners, but had taught them how to fish.

At the occasion, food items worth thousands of naira were also donated by various Anglican Churches in Awka and Amaobia.

Kaduna Poly ASUP suspends chairman

From Aliyu Haruna Correspondent (Kaduna)

The Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics (ASUP), Kaduna Polytechnic chapter, has resolved to suspend from office with immediate effect the local chapter Chairman, Alhaji Yusuf Yakubu, and his Vice, Mallam Yahaya Zubairu.

According to a statement made available to *Daily Trust* in Kaduna, and signed by Yahaya Saleh Ibrahim, the Acting Secretary General of the association, the officers were suspended on the ground of accusations of various offences detrimental to the pursuit of collective goals of the union members.

ASUP revealed that a four-member investigation and disciplinary committee was set up by the congress to investigate the allegations against the two officials, and submit its report within one month from the date of its inauguration. The committee has Mr. Emmanuel T. Idah as the head.

The statement indicates that the congress has also resolved that Mallam Ibrahim Ganiyu Sulaiman should act as the chapter's Chairman, and Mallam Yahaya Saleh Ibrahim as the Acting Secretary General. Other members of the executive include Muhammad Bala Aliyu as the Publicity Secretary; Mr. James O. Ali, Financial Secretary; while Hajia Amina Lami Abdullahi remains the Treasurer.

The congress had earlier resolved not to participate in the forth-coming National Delegates Conference (NDC) coming up in Bori, Rivers State.

The statement also said that the congress has also resolved that no member has been mandated to represent the chapter in whatever capacity at the conference.

50 Emirs to attend Argungu fishing festival

At least fifty (50) emirs across the country are expected to attend the forthcoming Argungu International Fishing and Cultural festival scheduled to hold between March 17 to 19, 2005.

The Emir of Argungu, Alhaji Samailah Mera who made the disclosure when he paid a courtesy visit to the Kebbi state Governor, Alhaji Muhammadu Adamu Aliero, said already, the emirate council has set up local organising committees for the success of the festival.

He explained that the council had since sent invitation letters to the traditional rulers within and outside the country. According to him, emirs from the neighbouring Niger and Benin Republics have indicated their intention to attend the festival as used to be the case.

Alhaji Samaila Mera further added that arrange-

From Kabir Dogondaji Correspondent (Birnin-Kebbi)

ments have already been made for the hosting of the traditional rulers.

The emir also told the governor that an enlightenment committee that would evolve traditional and leaders of thought has been set up to mobilise fishermen on the rules and regulations during the fishing festival.

Responding, Governor Alhaji Adamu Aliero commended the Argungu Emirate for assisting the government towards ensuring the success of the festival, while adding that the state would give all the necessary backing to the committees set up.

He disclosed that about 600 vehicles were expected to participate in the motor rally to be organised by Mercedes Benz and Bwaria Motor Works (BMW) companies.



Gov. Ali Modu Sheriff of Borno State on a test driving one of the motor-cycles distributed to people in the state by the state's Ministry of Poverty Alleviation & Youth Empowerment (3rd from right) is the ministry's commissioner, Alh. Mai Sheriff.

Nigerians not time-conscious

The British Minister of State for Africa and Commonwealth, Mr. Chris Mulin, has said that Nigerian citizens are not time conscious in the conduct of their activities.

Mr. Mulin stated this recently while presenting a clock to Governor Ahmed Mohammad Makarfi of Kaduna State, when he paid a courtesy call to his office in Kaduna.

The minister, who was in Abuja for the African Union (AU) Heads of States' Summit which was delayed for three hours before it commenced, said that the gift was to make

From Aliyu Haruna Correspondent, Kaduna

British Minister

the governor to be time conscious in his conducts.

He declared that he was in northern Nigeria to be able to assess how ordinary Nigerians feel, pointing out that it is not ideal for someone to visit a nation and remain in the capital city if he really wants to ascertain the true welfare of the citizens of that country.

Mr. Mulin expressed the determination of British government to assist northern Nigerian states on girl-child education, adding that his country is ready to help in the challenge that Nigeria and the government faces.

Responding, Governor Makarfi expressed appreciation to the minister's visit, saying that the minister had come to the right place, as Kaduna has been the seat of government for a long time, and also one of the headquarters of the British colony.

He also said that the British government is one of the governments in the world that are making conscious efforts to see that Nigeria is assisted in combating any predicament confronting her, and urged the government of Britain not to abandon the country (Nigeria) as all her efforts are noted among the committee of nations.

Farmer advocates agric subsidy

The inability of both federal and state governments to invest in agricultural as well as their failure to patronise research findings by various agricultural research institutes in the country has been described as the major setback to the growth of agricultural sector in the country.

A large scale farmer in Funtua and Chairman of the Authentic Farmers' Association in Katsina, Alhaji Muazu Isa Funtua, who made the assertion in an interview with newsmen, said the under funding of agricultural research institutes has rendered average/ordinary farmers in the country helpless.

He averred that 'there is no hope for agricultural growth in Nigeria so long as

From Lawal Ibrahim Correspondent (Katsina)

government refuses to change its negative attitude to agriculture, saying that yearly budgetary allocations to the sector are far from encouraging.

Osun votes N76m on agro-allied industries

The Osun State government has unfolded plans to work in collaboration with the International Institute of Tropic Agriculture (IITA) on cassava production in three senatorial districts.

Mr. Shola Oladeinde explained in Sohogbo that the government had already paid N76 million as counterpart funds for the projects to be executed jointly with the International Institute for Tropic Agriculture (IITA), Ibadan, Oyo State. According to him, "The industries will make use of cassava as a major raw material to produce chips, pellets, garri and starch."

He said, "The

By Hassan Idri Reporter (Agriculture)

Olagunsoye is committed to the industrialisation of the state, and the establishment of such industries will go a long way to transform the state and boost its revenue drive."

He added that the setting up of agro-allied industries in each of the three senatorial districts would also help to solve the problem of the youth unemployment.

Oladeinde pledged that 20 feeder industries would be established across the three senatorial districts to provide jobs for the growing population of unemployed

Sokoto cement coy gets new MD

The Cement Company of Northern Nigeria (CCNN) board of directors has approved the appointment of Mr. Alf Karlsen as the new Managing Director of the company. This was contained in a bi-annual publication of Sokoto Cement entitled: "Sok Cement News", made available to *Daily Trust* in Sokoto yesterday. The statement said further that the appointment takes immediate effect.

The statement further explained that Mr. Alf Karlsen replaced Engr. (Dr.) Ibrahim Gobir who is now appointed as the Chairman, Board of Directors, and also

From Abdulfatai Abdulsalami Stringer (Sokoto)

Group regional office in Abuja.

The *Sok Cem News* further noted that the swapping of positions between the two was part of the group's plan to develop its regional office so as to be more responsive to its future aspirations. The statement stressed further that Alf Karlsen had been working for SCANCEM International AWS since 1987, and also held several positions within the group, which include Treasury Manager (1987), Finance and Deputy Manager, Union Cement Company Ltd., United Arab Emirates (1982-1991).

NARTO President loses Mother

By-Yusuf Adamu Ibrahim Correspondent (Kano)

The death has occurred of Hajia Aisha Yunusa Sarina, the mother of the National President of the Nigerian Association of Road Transport Owners (NARTO), Alhaji Sani Yunusa Sarina.

Aged 70, the late Hajia Aisha died in a fatal motor accident along Wudil road, Kano on January 30th 2005.

An indigene of Sumaila local government area of Kano State, the Late Hajia Aisha has since been buried in Kano according to Islamic rites.

Hajia Aisha Yunusa is a well-known philanthropist in Kano who spent most of her wealth in the service of humanity, and the progress of the downtrodden in her community.

She is survived by eight children, 160 grand and great grand-children. Among them is Alhaji Sani Yunusa Sarina of Sani Brothers Transport and petroleum companies. May her soul rest in peace.



Inside Politics

2007: I will be a Nigerian not sectional President-Kalu

In furtherance of his jostling for 2007, Abia state governor, Dr. Orji Uzor Kalu has disclosed that if elected as the president of Nigeria, he would lead in a manner that will be devoid of ethnicity or religious bigotry rather, his Presidency will focus on values that will ensure the good of every Nigerian.

Governor Kalu, who stated this in an interview when he appeared as guest on the Voice of America (VOA) programme "State of Africa" monitored in Abuja, noted that his priority as a president would be to focus on the restoration of the middle class of the society which has been

wiped out as a result of unfavorable economic policies.

While answering a question from a caller from Nigeria who insisted he was not a Nigerian but a Biafran, Governor Kalu assured him that his presidency of Nigeria would effectively put an end to the agitation for Biafra, saying that "I will give leadership that will know no ethnicity or religion. The only common war I will have to fight is hunger and poverty and I will restore the middle class in the Nigerian society".

Governor Kalu also commended President Olusegun Obasanjo for intervening in the Liberian crisis by granting asylum to former Liberian President Charles Taylor saying that if he were in Obasanjo's position he would do exactly the same thing.

He asserted that the action of the President was not borne out of any personal consideration but rather, he took the action as a leader of Africa who was genuinely concerned about the plight of a sister country noting that the exit of Charles Taylor was necessary for genuine democracy to take root in Liberia.

The Governor has persistently premised his yearning for the presidency on his desire to return Nigeria back to Nigerians if elected as president while promising to reactivate the production sector of the economy.

Governor Kalu also anchors his conviction to being the most quantified person to be the President of Nigeria on his credentials "as a detribalized Nigerian who is at home in every geo-political zone of the country".

PDP chairmanship: Igala youths back Ahmodu Ali

The Igala youth council of Nigeria (IYCN) has thrown its weight behind Senator Ahmodu Ali declaring him as the rightful successor to chief Audu who resigned the chairmanship of the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) recently.

Chief Ogbeh is believed to have resigned following of a controversial letter he wrote to president Olusegun Obasanjo on the state of the nation especially the protracted political crisis in Anambra state between Governor Chris Ngige and his erstwhile godfather Chris Uba.

Reflecting their position in

a communiqué made available to Daily Trust, IYCN stated that Senator Ahmodu Ali, a founding father of the party should be considered to enable the North Central Zone complete Ogbeh's tenure which lasts up to the last quarter of this year and to continue up till 2007.

IYCN argued that though the presidency may shift to the North in 2007, PDP chairmanship still remained the right of the North Central zone until the presidential election is conducted adding

that the move to install a candidate from the South west was an ethnic agenda being blindly pursued in disregard of the party's constitution.

The communiqué, signed by IYCN president, Akwu Umar Goodman described Senator Ahmodu as a three times senator, former minister of education and soldier who has the credentials to succeed chief Ogbeh.

Goodman also noted the effort of Senator Ali in the success of the PDP at the 2003 polls which included the victory of the party in Kogi and Kwara states.

"Of the three past national chairmen of the PDP, none is a Muslim, let us give a Muslim a chance this time around to balance the equation", the communiqué concluded.



Gov Kalu



Member House Committee on education, Hon. Dahiru Bornoma (right) presenting exercise books to El-kanemi Islamic College Yola town during his constituency tour held at the Yola south local government Adamawa state...recently

Ekiti PDP gives Gov Fayose the nod to recontest

By Femi Oladipo, Stringer (Ado-Ekiti)

Members of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Ekiti Central Senatorial District have unanimously adopted Mr. Ayo Fayose as their gubernatorial candidate for 2007 elections, even as governor is yet to declare his ambition to recontest.

Drawn from five local government areas making up the senatorial district, including Irepodun/Ifelodun where the governor hails from, the PDP members took the decision at the party's

Senatorial meeting held over the weekend at Aramoko-Ekiti headquarters of the senatorial district.

Prominent PDP leaders at the meeting include the Senate Deputy Chief whip, Senator Clement Awoyelu, the Chairman of House of Representatives Committee on Communication, Honorable Yemi Arokodare, and the PDP state Deputy central senatorial chairman of PDP Mr. Mike Omoleye, all of who spoke in favour of the return of Fayose as governor in 2007 based on his excellent performance since he assumed office.

Governor Fayose, who was present at the meeting, said his administration would soon complete work on 12 major road projects across the three senatorial districts as well as the drilling of one boreholes per ward in the three senatorial districts in

the state.

He disclosed further that the 16 councils in the state would jointly finance the construction of eight major roads, revealing also that the chairmen have been directed to select 10 people per ward in each council that will benefit from the programme under which each beneficiary would be placed on a monthly stipend of N2, 500.

Four politicians including Mr. Abayomi Owoseni who was the gubernatorial candidate of United Nigeria People's Party in the 2003 election decamped to the PDP at the meeting.

Group raps Obasanjo-over middle belt

A group at the weekend in Jos decried what it described as the lackadaisical attitude of President Obasanjo towards the middle belt, even as it called for middle belt to be regarded as a separate region at the forth-coming National conference.

The group under the aegis of Middle Belt National President Forum (MBNPF) made the calling statement in a signed by its chairman and secretary, Comrade Joshua Laven and Comrade Mone Ancayi respectively.

The forum, which stressed that, its people of middle belt

UNPP expresses misgiving over confab

The United Nigeria People Party (UNPP) has expressed doubts about the sincerity of the Obasanjo administration in organising the forthcoming National Political Reform Conference.

Speaking in Abuja yesterday, the national chairman of the party, Alhaji Saleh Jambo said he doubted government's honesty in holding the conference, just as he warned that any reform that fails to address the excessive mismanagement of the nation's resources will

fail. Alh. Jambo also said the UNPP rejected the non-allotment of slots to the party for the conference, as according to him, the party is the fourth biggest party in the country in terms of elected representatives at the three tiers of government.

"I doubt the honesty of this venture. Any electoral or political reform that does not address the looting of the nation's resources and the massive corruption by this administration will fail.

"All issues listed for

discussion at the conference are issues that have been improperly handled by the administration, whether electoral, economic and political reform," he said.

The UNPP national chairman further faulted the mechanism adopted in selecting delegates to the conference, suggesting that non-partisan Nigerians who have distinguished themselves in various fields of human endeavor ought to have been nominated to the conference instead of the federal and state governments nominating delegates to the conference.

Also, a UNPP House of Representative member, Rep. Agbo Ogah said the party being the fourth biggest in Nigeria supports any attempts at resolving the problems of the country, adding that the through he doubts the intension of the conference, he hopes the conference will be transparent, honest and tailored to the well-being of Nigerians.

Said he, "we reject the classification of UNPP with other parties and demand at least two slot," adding that government should implement whole-heartedly the decision of the conference.

From Rakiya A. Mohammed, Correspondent (Jos)

have an identity, maintained that they did not belong to the north.

They lamented the way president Obasanjo had treated the region, noting that of recent when the president called a meeting of organisations, such as Arewa Consultative Forum, Ohaneze and Afanifere, he refused to invite the middle belt forum to such meeting.

"This singular act has clearly shown the amount of disregard you have, its region. After all that we have traded

for the peace, unity and stability of this country, is this all we will be paid with?, the MBNPF asked".

They also reacted "the maltreatment" on middle belt elders such as Chief Solomon Lar Chief Gernade Comrade and Chief Ogbeh, calling on president Obasanjo to as a matter of urgency redress hid "lackadaisical attitude towards the middle belt".

The MBNPF urged all middle belt to stand up against what it referred to as "orchestrated antagonism of our region", stressing the determination to ensure they are given their right.

Benue PDP to suspend Shuluwa, wife

From Hir Joseph, Correspondent (Makurdi)

Leader of the regrouped People's Democratic Movement (PDM) in Benue State, Chief Abu King Shuluwa and his wife, Mrs Elizabet Shuluwa, who is a serving commissioner in the state are currently facing suspension threats from the state chapter of the People's Democratic Party (PDP).

This followed a call by a national office of the party, the Benue born Dr. Godwin Dabo Adzuana that the PDM leader and vice president Atiku Abubakar loyalist and his wife be punished for supporting the ouster of chief Audu Ogbeh, as the party national chairman.

King Shuluwa, a chieftain of the PDP in the state, had during a press briefing applauded the controversial resignation of Chief Ogbeh and called it a blessing for the party and the country at largesaying that the ouster of chief Ogbeh should not be seen as a threat to on vice president Atiku's 2007 presidential ambition.

In a swift reaction therefore, Dr. Dabo, who was in Makurdi at the weekend disagreed with the position of chief Shuluwa on the various issue raised.

First, Dr. Dabo exonerated chief Ogbeh from blame for the crisis rocking the state PDP as a result of which the party has been without an elected leadership for two years running.

He however passed the blame back to chief Shuluwa for been the highest beneficiary of the party in the state, but without a little input to reciprocate it.

Sports

Ex-Caldas coach Montoya regains consciousness

Colombian soccer coach Luis Fernando Montoya, who was left quadriplegic after being shot in a robbery in December, regained consciousness on Monday after suffering a lung infection last week.

Montoya, who turned little-known provincial club Once Caldas into last year's South American champions, is being treated in a Medellin hospital after the attack on December 22.

"Mr. Montoya is still in the intensive care unit, he has regained consciousness," said the hospital in a statement.

Montoya had been showing a slight improvement until last week, when his temperature reached 42 Celsius.

The 47-year-old was shot near his home close to Medellin when he tried to defend his wife Adriana from robbers who trailed her after she withdrew cash from an ATM.

Four people, including two women suspected of being accomplices, have been arrested.

Montoya took over at Once Caldas, who are based in the Andean city of Manizales, in late 2002 and led

the previously unfashionable outfit on an unprecedented run of success.

They won the Colombian Apertura championship in the first half of 2003 and surpassed all expectations by lifting the Libertadores Cup, South America's equivalent of the Champions League, in July.

Their dream of becoming unofficial world champions was shattered when they lost to European champions Porto on penalties after a goalless draw in Japan on December 12.

Montoya resigned almost immediately afterwards.



Luis Fernando Montoya regained consciousness after suffering lung infection following his attack by armed robbers in Medellin, Colombia.

Bellamy joins Celtic on loan

Unsettled Newcastle United forward Craig Bellamy has joined Celtic on loan until the end of the season.

The Scottish champions confirmed the deal in a statement three hours before the January transfer window deadline of midnight CET on Monday following lengthy negotiations with the outspoken 25-year-old.

Bellamy fell out with Newcastle manager Graeme Souness last week over his position in the team and Souness later said the Welsh international would never play for the club under him again.

"This is a massive football club," Bellamy told a news conference at Celtic Park.

"I think my first home game, hopefully if I'm playing, will be an Old Firm derby (against Rangers on February

19). It's incredible.

"This is a great football club for me at this present moment and I just hope I can do this club proud."

Celtic manager Martin O'Neill said: "Whatever things are going to be questioned about Craig Bellamy, ability is not one of them."

"I'm sure he will knuckle down and get on with things. There are one or two big players in our dressing room...lads who can give it out

a wee bit as well so he won't have it all his own way in the dressing room."

On Friday, Newcastle accepted a six million pounds (\$11.29 million) bid for Bellamy from English Premier League rivals Birmingham City but the move fell through.

At Celtic, Bellamy will team up with Wales team mate John Hartson. Celtic are three points clear of Glasgow rivals Rangers at the top of the Scottish Premier League.

Olympiakos: 'No problem with Rivaldo'

Greek league leaders Olympiakos released a statement denying local press reports that their Brazilian superstar Rivaldo was not happy with coach Dusan Bajevic.

"With regard to articles that appeared today in the press and which spoke of a problem in relations between our footballer Rivaldo and our team's coach Dusan Bajevic, Olympiakos FC wants to

clarify that no such issue exists," the statement said.

In regard to the absence of Rivaldo, the 1999 World Player of the Year and 2002 World Cup winner, from the team's training on Monday,

Olympiakos said "it was due solely to a family matter."

The Greek press said Monday that Rivaldo was angry with Bajevic's decision to substitute him at halftime of Sunday's league match against Aris Salonika, which Olympiakos won 2-1 at home.

The domestic Athens News Agency reported that Rivaldo had met with Olympiakos vice-president George Louvaris Monday to lodge a complaint against Bajevic.

The Brazilian signed a two-year contract with Olympiakos during the summer with an option for an additional season on an annual salary of 1.8 million euros.



Rivaldo

Japan's Nakata signs for Marseille

Japan international Koji Nakata signed an 18-month contract with Marseille, the French first division club announced.

The 25-year-old Nakata, who left Japanese first division club Kashima Ant-

lers, completed the deal, which will keep him at the club till the end of the 2005/06 season, following a medical check-up.

Marseille official Pape Diouf said Nakata cost Marseille virtually nothing though he did not reveal a fee.

Last week Kashima failed to renew a contract with Nakata, whose obligation will expire at the end of this month.

Under FIFA rules, a player can sign with other clubs without a transfer fee after his contract expires, while Japanese local rules stipulate his former club can demand a transfer fee for 30 months after the expiration.

Nakata, who has 46 caps for his country and usually plays as a defensive midfielder, had been training with the national team for a home World Cup qualifier against North Korea on February 9.

Pandiani moves to Birmingham

Deportivo Coruna have agreed a last minute deal to loan Uruguayan striker Walter Pandiani to Birmingham City for the rest of the season, the Primera Liga club said on Tuesday.

The 28-year-old international had been pushing for a

move away from Depor after the club opened disciplinary proceedings against him for publicly criticising coach Javier Irureta and some of his team mates.

Pandiani was expected to move to Fiorentina, but the deal fell through after the

Serie A club opted to sign Bulgarian striker Valeri Bojinov from Lecce and Deportivo were involved in hurried negotiations to offload the Uruguayan to the Premier League side instead.

A burly English-style centre-forward, noted for his strength in the air, Pandiani moved to Depor from Penarol five years ago.

He was unable to earn himself a regular place in the first team, but a successful loan spell at Real Mallorca helped him break into the starting line-up last season and he finished the campaign with 13 goals in the league and six in Europe.

Collina to referee tsunami benefit match

Italian referee Pierluigi Collina will take charge of the "Football for Hope" benefit match to raise money for victims of the Asian tsunami, FIFA said on Monday.

Assistant referees Mohamed Saced from the Maldives and Jason Joseph Damoo from the Seychelles

have been specifically chosen for the match at Barcelona's Nou Camp on February 15 because their islands were badly hit by the disaster on December 26.

A team led by FIFA world player of the year Ronaldinho will face a side captained by European footballer of the year Andriy Shevchenko in the charity match.



Pandiani

Depor sign Coloccini from Milan

Deportivo Coruna have signed Argentine international defender Fabricio Coloccini on a 6 1/2-year deal from AC Milan for three million euros (\$3.91 million), the Primera Liga club said on Monday.

The 23-year-old centre-back, who has 11 caps and played in Argentina's winning Olympic team in Athens last year, joined Milan from Boca Juniors in 1999 but was moved out on loan to Spanish clubs Alaves, Atletico Madrid and Villarreal.

He returned to Milan this season but was unable to break out of the fringes of the team with captain Paolo Maldini, Alessandro Nesta, Alessandro Costacurta and Dutchman Jaap Stam ahead of him in the central defensive role.

"Milan originally did not want to sell or loan me out again," Coloccini told a news conference in La Coruna. "But they finally came to understand that at the age of 23 and with a World Cup around the corner I needed to play more games."

Congratulations



MALLAM BELLO IBRAHIM GWANDU, MFR, FCIT
(Turakin Gwandu)

To my beloved Husband on your 54th Birthday just to let you know how grateful I am that in my life's journey, some one like you has come into my life.

Founded thoughts always.

Signed
Hajiya Zainab Bello Gwandu

Sports

Babayaro on target for Newcastle

Nigeria's Celestine Babayaro scored the first goal of his Newcastle United career to help the English Premiership side into the fourth round of the FA Cup.

Babayaro got the third goal as his new club beat Championship club Coventry City 3-1. His Nigerian compatriot Dele Adebola got the conso-



Babayaro

lation goal for Coventry.

Another Nigerian Yakubu Aiyegbeni was on target from the penalty spot for Portsmouth who lost 2-1 to bitter rivals Southampton.

The Ivory Coast's Alex Cedric Konan got the only goal as Lecce beat Brescia 1-0.

Yet another goal for the reigning African Footballer of the Year Samuel Eto'o Fils who helped Barcelona maintain their lead in La Liga.

The Cameroon striker increased his tally for the season to 16 with a goal in Barca's 4-0 drubbing of Sevilla.

In Belgium, Guinea's Sambegou Bangoura scored a hat-trick in Standard Liege's 4-0 win over Cercle Brugge.

Nigerian Manasseh Ishiaku got one goal for Club Brugge as they defeated Oostende 7-3.

Zephirin Zoko of the Ivory Coast got one of Oostende's goals.

There were three African goals in Anderlecht's 5-2 win over Beveren.

Ivorian Aruna Dindane got the first for Anderlecht while his compatriot Moussa Sanogo got both goals for Beveren.

Algeria's Fadel Brahimi was sent off just four minutes after getting the only goal for La Louviere in their 1-0 win over FC Brussels.

Elsewhere in Portugal, Angolan Jose Fidalgo was red-carded soon after scoring the second goal in Nacional's 3-0 win over Beira Mar.

While in Turkey, Tunisia's Kais Ghodbane scored both goals for Samsuspor who won 2-1 against Ankaragucu.

His compatriot Ziad Jaziri also got two goals in Gaziantepspor's 3-1 win over Denizlispor.

Guinean Ibrahim Yattara scored a penalty for Trabzonspor in their 3-1 victory over Kayserispor.

Guinea Bissau's first ever goal in the French league was scored by 18-year-old Boudjari Ca. He netted for Nantes as they beat Istres 1-0.

Mohammed Kallon of Sierra Leone scored the first goal for Monaco in the 2-0 victory over Paris St. Germain.

Moroccan Abdelsalam Ouaddou was on target for Rennes as they beat Bordeaux 2-0, while Habib Gueye of Senegal scored the first goal for Metz in their 3-0 defeat of Auxerre.

Losers out of title race

Arsene Wenger admits that defeat at Highbury would rule either Arsenal or Manchester United out of the running for the Premiership title.

"I would say that the losers would be out of the title race - and if Chelsea win at Blackburn the next day, then they would definitely be out of it."

But he is not concerned about a repeat of their bad-tempered previous clashes.

"I don't worry about it," Wenger said. "We will always try to play football - and that is the most important thing."

He added: "We had the best disciplinary record in the Premier League last season and this season with fewer fouls committed and most sinned against."

- Wenger

"The disappointing thing in the first game was that it was not a really good promotion for English football - but I think this could be a classic game."

"We are only focused on the football and I can ignore completely that we are playing Manchester United."

"What's important is to get three points - and to keep on fighting for the title."

Mandaric delighted to keep Aiyegbeni

Portsmouth chairman Milan Mandaric has expressed his happi-

ness and relief that striker Yakubu Aiyegbeni did not leave the club in the January transfer window.

He said: "We have never wanted to sell Yakubu. But there is pressure on clubs with a star like him, when there is only a limited period in which to buy."

"I don't like these windows, really. The summer gives you much more time to strengthen your squad."

Pompey made three signings, including Slovenia striker Aleksander Rodic.

Also making the move to Fratton Park are two Greek players - goalkeeper Konstantinos Chalkias and midfielder Giannis Skopelitis.

Mandaric added: "I really believe our squad will be stronger for the matches that remain this season."

"Especially with Yakubu still here and back among the goals."



Aiyegbeni

Trust Classified

GLOBAL SAFE FOUNDATION

Notice is hereby given to the general public that the above named Foundation has applied for registration under Part C of the Companies and Allied Matters Act of 1990.

The Trustees are:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Samuel Ogallah Samson | 2. Felicia Stephen |
| 3. Paul Omale | 4. Aromeh I. Akoh |
| 5. Helen John Edwin | 6. Steven Okpom |
| 7. Ufedo G. Ugoyah | 8. Sunday Ogala |
| 9. Isaac Y. Atabo | |

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar- General Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse Zone 5. P.M.B.198 Garki Abuja within 28 days of this publication.

Signed:

Barr. Helen John Edwin

MISSING DOCUMENT

This is to inform the MFCT/FCDA and the general public that the Original Offer of Terms of Grant/Conveyance of Approval (Letter of Allocation) in respect of Plot No. 305 covering 1,100m² at Jabi District Abuja belonging to Mr. Sunday Eden Akpan has been reported missing. If found, please return it to the nearest Police station or the address below:

Mr. Sunday Eden Akpan
Suite 118 Lozumba Commercial Complex
Area 10, Garki,
Abuja.

MISSING DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public of the loss of Statutory Right of occupancy in respect of Plot No. LD989 within Guzape District, Abuja, with reference No. MFCT/LA/KN 4303 of 17/05/01, about 1,500m² issued to MUSTAPHA MAME SHEHU is missing. MFCT and AGIS to please take note.

Signed

MUSTAPHA MAMESHEHU

INCORPORATED TRUSTEES OF JESUS VICTORIOUS CHURCH

This is to inform the general public that the above named Church has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration under Part C of the Companies and Allied Matters Act of 1990.

The Trustees are:

1. Rev. Dr. Freeseed Onofekohwo - (General Overseer)
2. Pastor Gold Chukwuma Nwachukwu
3. Deacon Michael Omoregie - (General Secretary)
4. Adero Henry

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar- General Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse Zone 5. P.M.B.198 Garki Abuja within 28 days of this publication.

Signed:

BARR. AZUBUIKE IKENNA JULIUS
DISTINCT CHAMBERS, ABUJA.

INCO BEVARAGES LTD. SOKOTO

This is to inform the general public of the appointment of Messer ABDULSALAM ALIYU BABA as liquidator of INCO BEVARAGES LTD, SOKOTO. Anybody that has any business with the Company should contact me through the address below:

ABDULSALAMALIYU BABA
UNISEC NOMINEES LTD.
NO. 53 EMIR YAHAYA ROAD, SOKOTO
TEL: 08028782864, 08033792822

FAITH HEALING EVANGELICAL MINISTRY

This is to inform the general public that the above named Ministry has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration under Part C of the Companies and Allied Matters Act of 1990.

The Trustees are:

1. Faith O. Aigbe Sulc
2. Edna Ebhomielen
3. Celestine Charlese
4. Maliki Aigbe Sule
5. Samuel Aigbe

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar- General Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse Zone 5. P.M.B.198 Garki Abuja within 28 days of this publication.

Signed:

Secretary

LOSS OF LETTER OF GRANT/CONVEYANCE OF APPROVAL

This is to inform the general public and Ministry of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja of the loss of the Letter of Grant/Conveyance of approval with reference No. MFCT/LA/94/LA. 1235 and MFCT revenue receipts Nos. 4890291, 476060, 489145, 4891437 in favour of ABDULKAREEM A. ADESOKAN and all efforts to locate them have proved abortive

Signed

ABDULKAREEM ABDULSALAM ADESOKAN

MISSING DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public that a Certificate of Occupancy No. MFCT/ABU/AK 439 belonging to MRS NKESE N. EDUOK is reportedly missing. Anybody who comes across it should kindly return to the undersigned

Signed

MRS N. E. EDUOK
Plot 1615B

Maitama Yusuf Road, Asokoro Cadestral Zone A4 Abuja

GRACIOUS AGAPE INTERDENOMINATIONAL MINISTRY

This is to inform the general public that the above named Ministry has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration under Part C of the Companies and Allied Matters Act of 1990.

The Trustees are:

1. Dr. Col. Andrawus Pilasar Sawa
2. Ambassador Manassah Wakawa
3. Rev. Dr. Samuel Dibakor

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar- General Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse Zone 5. P.M.B.198 Garki Abuja within 28 days of this publication.

Signed:

RICKEY TARFA & CO.
LEGAL PRACTITIONERS & NOTARY PUBLIC
Plot 1195, Aminu Kano Crescent Wuse II Abuja.

Change of Names

I, formerly called MISS TUSKYA ATALA, now to be called MRS. TUSKYA A. ZAMUNA. Former documents remain valid. ABU, NYSC and public to note.

I, formerly MISS MARGARET EMAIKE, now MRS MARGARET JOHN ADIM NWAGAGBO. All former documents remain valid. National Commission for Museums and Monument and Public to note.

Sports

Wikki, Jets to play close door match

Omeruah c'ttee recommends sports restructuring

By AbdulRaheem Aodu, Sports Reporter

The Emeka Omeruah committee set up to prove the woeful performance of Team Nigerian at the Athens Olympics submitted its report to the Federal Government yesterday.

Air Commodore Emeka Omeruah (rtd), chairman of the body, said the committee recommended the total restructuring of the sports infrastructure so as to further improve country's performance at international competitions.

"After taking a critical look at Nigeria sports and the performance of Team Nigeria in Athens Olympics, we recommended the restructuring of the entire aspects of Nigeria sports to ensure its progress. The restructuring will also lead to drastic improvement in the nation's performance in international sporting competitions," he said.

The former sports minister said the report is in three forms: the executive summary, the main report and the verbatim report from stakeholders. The final report, according to him, was arrived at after the committee held public hearing across the country.

Omeruah said that implementing the report would involve a three way strategy namely short term, immediate term and long term.

"After synthesizing the report, Nigeria sport will never be the same again, most importantly, we need to do something to redeem our lost prestige, which we have been building since 1952," he said.

Receiving the report, the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Chief Ufot Ekaete promised to set up a white paper drafting committee to look into the findings and recommendations of the committee within a month.

Wikki Tourists and Mighty Jets will return to the trench tomorrow at the Aguiyi Irons Barrack, Abuja to decide who wins the play-off for a slot in the new 20-team format Premier League scheduled to begin on February 12.

But the match will not be opened to the public to forestall the repeat of last weekend's clash between fans of both teams, who encroached into the pitch barely five minutes away from the final whistle. Besides, the venue is regimented and thus discriminatory to unwieldy crowd.

The NFL board decided to order a re-play following the ugly incident last Sunday. As at the time the referee terminated the match abruptly, it was inconclusive even as both teams had not been able to register any goal. The previous match two days earlier had ended on barren note.

The board resolved that only 18 players and seven officials from each team should be admitted into the venue.

Besides, the board members, some NFA staff and sports journalists will equally be admitted to watch the match.

The board said both clubs are to bear the cost of accommodating, feeding, and transporting themselves to the match as well as be prepared to assume other responsibilities that may arise.

Already, Kwara United have secured one of the two places created at the last NFA annual general meeting to bring up the numbers of teams in the Premier League. Thursday's winner will

complete this number.

Meanwhile, two officials of Mighty Jets, Shehu Ibrahim and one Bala (surname unknown to the NFL), who were allegedly said to have threatened the centre referee and his assistants on the eve of the second match, have been banned for half a season. They are not to

participate in any NFA organized activities.

Mighty Jets have been fined N50,000 for the incident.

"Even the centre referee was seriously indicted and we have made our observations known to the NRA which recommended him to us for the desired sanction," Aisha Falode the

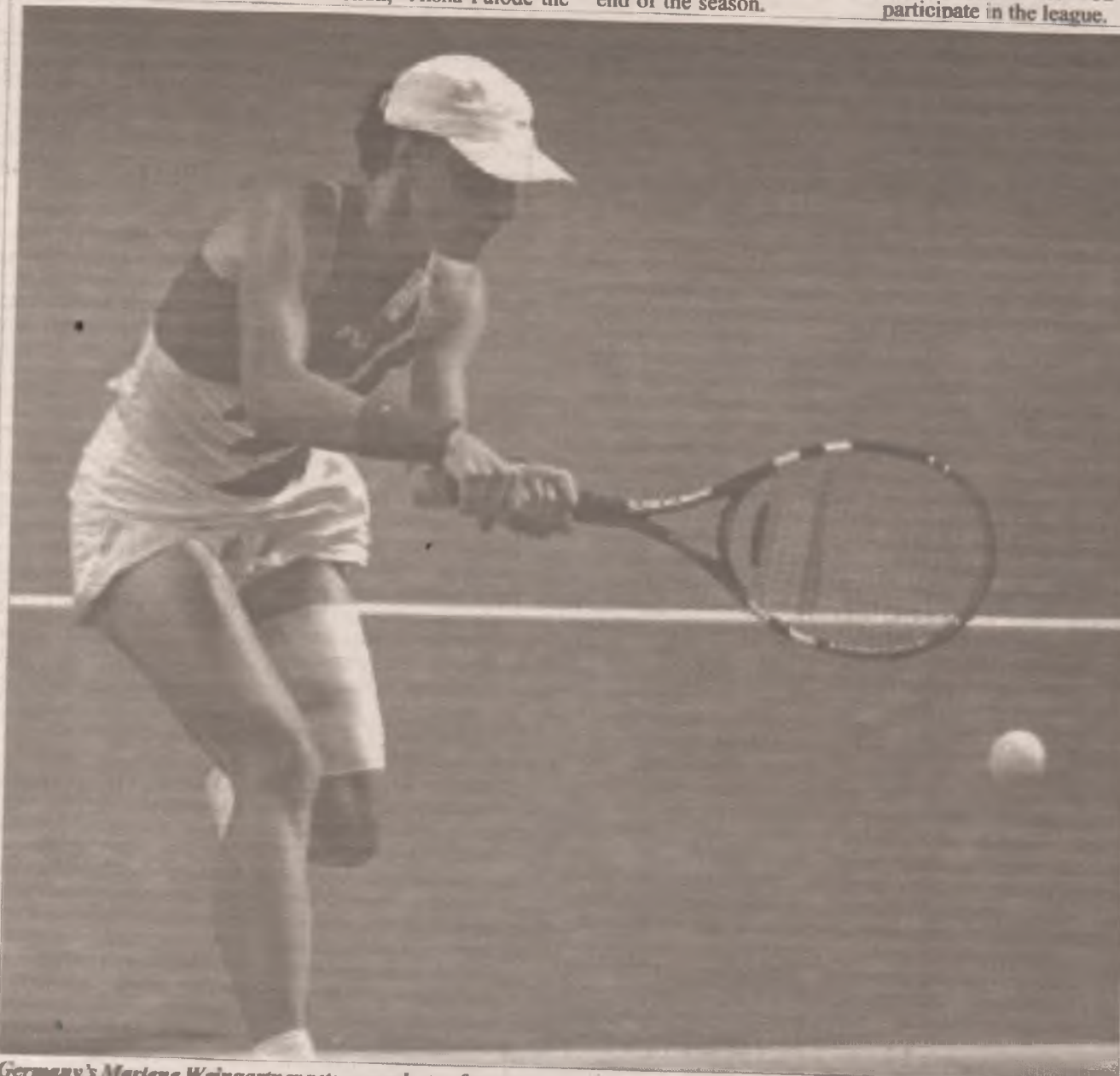
chairperson of the media committee of the board said.

Similarly, Aisha said the Adamawa United have been fined N100,000 for failing to participate in the play-offs. They had boycotted the play-offs to protest NFA's failure to ratify them for promotion, despite placing third at the end of the season.

The management of the team had petitioned both FIFA and NFA on the matter.

Grave allegations were equally made against certain board members of the NFA.

Aisha said Adamawa United must pay the fine along with another N100,000 registration fee before the team could be allowed to participate in the league.



Germany's Marlene Weingartner returns a shot to former world number one Martina Hingis of Switzerland during the first round match at the Volvo Women's Open in Pattaya, Germany. Weingartner defeated Hingis 1-6, 6-2, 6-2.

SGF explains Games Village sale

...says FG will build new hostels in Gombe, Yobe

By Patrick Andrew, Senior Reporter (Sports)

The Federal Government decided to sell off the hostel facilities of the 8th All Africa Games and to replace same with another because of fears that the sports ministry may not be able to maintain them.

Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Chief Ufot Ekaete said yesterday that the decision was taken by the Federal Executive Council, which proceeded to mandate the Sports Minister, Col. Musa Mohammed to present a proposal for new hostel facilities, which the ministry could maintain with ease. The new ones are to be built in Gombe, and Yobe states.

Chief Ekaete said this while defending the proposed N980m hostel facilities recently approved by the federal executive council few months after selling off the 594 units of houses at Games Village.

"Government gave Musa (Mohammed) the mandate to identify where to locate

and women could stay while in training and that would make up for the facilities at Games Village that was sold," the secretary said, noting that the minister's proposal has been approved by the government.

Chief Ekaete said it could have been impossible for the ministry to maintain the facilities at the Games Village because of the huge number of accommodations involved and the nature of the hostel itself.

"There was no way of using those facilities the way they were meant, because of the number of accommodations involved. This is why the government decided to sell them off, rather than leave them to lie idle and to be vandalized by hoodlums," Ekaete observed, stressing that moderate

those in charge.

Trustsports recalls that the 594 units of houses were last May sold to the public at the cost ranging from N12m to N16m each.

Even then, it became the cause of wrangling between the Minister of Housing Chief (Mrs) Mobolaji Osomo

and the House of Representatives House Committee on Sports over who should keep the proceeds from the sales of the forms.

Besides, most prospective buyers of the houses have been unable to meet the financial obligations on them,

compelling the Ministry of Housing to compromise on 61 days deadline for the completion of payment of the total amount.

Last September, some of the buyers sought a refund of their deposits on the argument that the cost was outrageous.

Flying Eagles for 2010 World Cup

Chairman of the Nigeria Football Association (NFA), Ibrahim Galadima, has declared to KICK OFF that the bulk of the nation's players to the 2010 World Cup finals will come from the Flying Eagles, who over the weekend won the African Youth Championship in Cotonou in superb style.

The Flying Eagles outclassed defending champions Egypt 2-0 in Saturday's final to record

boys for putting up "gallant displays at the AYC in Benin", said the "present set of players represents our future hope on whom we will build our World Cup team scheduled for South Africa in 2010."

The FA chief further stated: "With what we have seen of these boys raised by Siasia, we are going to have a formidable team who will give a very good account of the continent in the game.

produce a team that will make the entire continent proud."

Galadima also expressed the hope that most of these players from the Benin Republic Championship will eventually get contracts with clubs in Europe and "the exposure from this will be of great value to our football".

The FA boss added: "Our attention is on the Under-17, U-20 and the Olympics teams. The future will be on these teams and to rely therefore on the present

-Galadima



This Space is
for Sale

DAILY TRUST

Trust Is A Burden

WEDNESDAY COLUMN

Wednesday, February 2, 2005

EDITORIAL

Hope for local fuel production

In the bill before the National Assembly seeking to compel oil companies in Nigeria to refine their crude oil locally has a smooth passage, the face of the energy sector will change for good. The House Committee Chairman on Petroleum, Dr. Cairo Ojuogboh, and 28 other legislators in the Lower House of the National Assembly, are sponsoring a bill to amend the Petroleum Act, making it mandatory for the oil firms to refine locally rather than refining it abroad and bringing it back to sell to us at exorbitant rates.

This neo-colonial economic exploitation is a replay of the kind of exploitation our economy suffered during colonialism, when our primary goods were taken away to overseas, processed there into finished goods and imported into the country as final consumer products. Such a transaction does not give any economy an impetus for growth and development.

The oil companies have the needed capacity and resources to refine their crude oil in Nigeria. It is difficult to find any justifiable reason why they cannot refine fuel here in the country. Perhaps, the brisk business they are making in the importation deal is the only thing holding them back from setting up refineries locally. It is therefore a welcome development that the House of Representatives have taken the bold step to compel them to do so.

Our economy has so many things to benefit from the local refinement of the petroleum products. Apart from the ready availability of fuel, so many jobs will be created when the oil companies begin to refine fuel locally. The by-products of refined petroleum products are vital raw materials for many industries and hence, will advance our industrialisation efforts. These and other benefits associated with local refinement of fuel would be lost when crude oil is exported and refined outside the country. More importantly, the incessant fuel hike in the domestic market in response to the vagaries of international market will be a thing of the past.

We therefore urge all the legislators to demonstrate exemplary spirit of patriotism and grant the bill the deserved attention and expeditious passage. They must put the nation above self interest and rise above the mundane and shun the likely inducements from the oil companies who are making brisk business from fuel importation and would therefore stop at nothing to frustrate the bill. The lawmakers must appreciate the fact that as representatives of the people, they owe Nigeria and the entire citizenry, a great duty to grant the bill an expeditious passage in view of its enormous beneficial implications on the economy.

Being the 6th oil-producing nation on earth, the least that is expected of us as a nation, is not only to be self sufficient in domestic fuel supply, but also to export excess refined fuel to widen our foreign exchange base. Resort to wholesale importation for our local consumption is not only odd and shameful; it is also a national economic tragedy. Indeed, there can be no greater shame than for a major oil exporter to base her domestic supply on importation from other nations that probably produce less quantity of oil.

Be it as it may, we are not carried away by the spark of the Lower House as we need not be reminded that many times in the past, government had made promises to end fuel importation. Such promises had always ended as idle pronouncements with no action to back them up. In 2003 for example, the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) announced that by 2004, 75 percent of our domestic fuel requirements would be sourced locally. Today, the facts on the ground speak for themselves. On the contrary, over 75 percent of our domestic requirements are imported, making the citizens sceptical of government's promises. This time around, the National Assembly must be seen to be ready to make a difference.

We take special notice of the fact that even though about 18 persons have been granted licences to build and operate private refineries, to date, non has taken off. This proposed legal regime, which makes it mandatory for oil companies to build refineries in the country, and the privatisation of the four refineries, will hopefully mark a turning point and a new beginning of a revolution in the down stream sector of the economy. With this legal regime, there is the hope that in no distant time, the face of energy sector will change for good. What is required on the part of the law makers is the political will and strength of character to carry the crusade to the end, and ensure that nothing distracts them from passing the bill, which has a lot of promises for the economy.

President Obasanjo and SNC advocates

By Gbenga Olawepo

We challenge those ethnic pundits to provide for us an example in history of any naturally created state by God thrown down from heaven at the beginning of creation. All modern states are a creation of war and the result of effort of empire and state-builders.

Africa was not left out in the global trend to create multi national states even before the arrival of the white man; in fact, colonialism of which British imperialism was a variant halted the trend, which had been started by great empire builders. Songhai, Ghana, Kanem Bornu, Sokoto caliphate, Oyo etc, were multi national states created as a conscious effort of empire builders and most of them bigger than the whole of western Europe. It is therefore a fallacy to assume that without colonial amalgamation, the various ethnic groups would have existed as independent entities.

We insist here as we have always done, that the multinational nature of Nigeria is not a problem itself, requiring ethnic warlords together to address, states that are ethnically monolithic like Somalia have not proved a success story simply on account of their ethnic purity. There is no assurance that if Biafra were to be a country of its own, there will not be Umueri/Aguileri conflict; neither is there a guarantee that there won't be hostilities between Egba/Ijebu or Ife/Modakeke were southwest to be Oduduwa Republic. Let us be mistaken, one has not in any way submitted here that ours is a perfect state that requires no adjustment. The basic issue is that those issues that are being brought to the fore are symptoms of some other ailments, which can be easily obscured by ethnic issues.

Indeed there are fundamental problems that the Nigerian state is confronting today which if we were to allow a sovereign national conference today, will not be resolved by mere holding of such a conference. Some of these are not problem caused by President Obasanjo. Fundamental among the problems of the Nigerian state today is that we are saddled with a ruling elite either on the political turf or in the arena of business that has not been able to inspire and guide our society to generate the level of production necessary to address the question of poverty at such a pace that will match popular expectation that built up the era preceding the advent of democracy. Secondly, having failed to address poverty at a pace which can match popular expectation, we have also failed to utilize the opportunity of arrival of democracy to engage in civilized communication with our much disempowered people on our road-map to development in such a way as to give them hope and catch their popular imagination for the task of national reconstruction.

Thirdly, our collective inability as political starwarts, media practitioners, and professionals, to lift politics beyond mundane issues of statism, power rotation and shift, zoning and quota, thereby reducing politics to the very base level, and making discussions and choices become essentially sentimental. The above inadequacies have created a budding ground for the flourish of ethno religious sentiments; we have un-wittingly created a fertile ground for ethnic demagogues and opportunists to demonize the Nigerian state as an unworkable entity. We have by our act of omission and commission created space for ethnic revisionist elements to interpret elite failure in governance as evidence of the unworkability of Nigeria as a multinational enterprise.

Apart from the above fundamental problem of the Nigerian state, we also admit that there exist some imperfections in the Nigeria constitution, and the various modus operadi of strategic institutions of state. The constitution is however not a document cast in stone which cannot be changed. Like the constitution of United States that has undergone several amendments, the Nigerian constitution has inbuilt mechanism to accommodate amendments. The existence of this inbuilt mechanism for change in the constitution has not ruled out the necessity for other extra constitutional gatherings for dialogue and I guess that is why the government consented to a national dialogue. The simple fact is that such a dialogue can neither be sovereign nor ethnically based.

Our argument here is that the multinational nature of Nigeria is not a problem itself that ethnic representatives need to gather to address, as ethnic monolithism of some country like Somalia in Africa has not assured such states of automatic development. Such a gathering cannot be sovereign because the elected institutions of state that today exist are the repository of sovereignty of the people of Nigerian state. The grim reality is that the political north is home to over 80% of ethnic groups in Nigeria. Whereas the entire southwest Yoruba's may have about one or two delegates, were representation to be ethnically based, Adamawa alone will have over 100.

In a sense, Obasanjo's confab to me is a compromise designed to create an extra-constitutional platform to address salient issues that have been blighted by anger and emotion rather than logic, but cleverly avoiding giving them structural and institutional legitimacy. This appears to me the best that advocates of ethnically motivated sovereign national conference can get. So, why not let the confab be?

Olawepo is former Deputy National Publicity Secretary of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).