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## STAR FEATURE

### When weed threatens Hadejia-Nguru wetland

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# IBB can contest in 2007 - Obasanjo

President Olusegun Obasanjo has said that there is no law in the country barring former military president (retired) Gen. Ibrahim Babangida, from making efforts to be president again.

Answering a question after delivering the eighth Commonwealth foundation lecture before a large audience at the University of London on Tuesday, Obasanjo said Babangida, like any other Ni-

gerian, was free to contest the presidency.

"If Abacha were alive, nothing will stop him from making effort," the president said, noting that the country's constitution "does not stop anybody from making efforts".

"There is no problem in anybody making efforts," he said, stressing however, that it was up to Nigerians to use their judgement to deny or accord them the opportunity

to secure power.

"It is your judgement and then you will get whatever you ask for," the president said in answer to the question from a Nigerian student of the university.

The student had sought to know Obasanjo's opinion on the attempts by Babangida to return to power in spite of his alleged past poor records.

Answering another question, Obasanjo said that

things were changing for the better in Nigeria and that many Nigerians were now returning to the country to take up employment or pursue legitimate vocations.

He said that governments at all levels were making efforts to improve the standard of education and enrolment of pupils in schools.

He added that he would soon sign into law, a bill that would allow the federal government to make counterpart

contributions to education for the first nine years.

On the situation in Darfur, western Sudan, Obasanjo said that he would like to see the perpetrators of criminal acts in the area punished for

their offences, but emphasised that he would rather encourage "justice with reconciliation".

He reiterated that Sudan was not a signatory to the

Contd. on Pg 2

## Confab: Kano seeks supremacy of Sharia over constitution

The Kano state delegation to the National Political Reform Conference has demanded constitutional amendments to make Islamic Law supreme over provisions of the constitution.

An 11-page memorandum submitted to the conference in Abuja yesterday by the

By Habeeb I. Pindiga,  
Political Reporter

state delegation also called for the expansion of powers of state Shari'a courts of appeal to cover all aspects of Islamic Law.

The memorandum is seeking for amendments to section 1(3) of the 1999 constitution to put a proviso that will exclude Shari'a from instruments that are subservient to the constitution.

Section 1 of the constitution reads: "(1) This constitution is supreme and its provisions shall have binding force on all authorities and persons throughout the Federal Republic of Nigeria (3) If any other law is inconsistent with the provisions of this constitution, this constitution shall prevail, and any other law shall to the extent of its inconsistency be void."

But the Kano delegation urged that sub-section 3 be modified to read: "If any other law, save the Islamic Law, is inconsistent with the provisions of this constitution, this constitution shall prevail and that other laws shall to the extent of the inconsistency, be void." This means that when Shari'a provisions run contrary to constitutional stipulations, the former would have precedence.

On section 277 of the constitution, which limits the powers of a state Shari'a

Contd. on Pg 2



Former military president, General Ibrahim Babangida (right) admiring calabash presented to him by a Fulani girl (left) during his official 2 day visit to Bauchi... yesterday.

## Royal father arrested for cattle rustling

By Jibril Daudu, Regional Editor (Jos)

The chief of Dilori in Shendam local government area of Plateau State whom the police gave his name as Nanman Goesur and four others are being held by the police in Jos for their alleged roles in the theft of 32 cows and 11 sheep.

Plateau State police commissioner, Mr. Joseph Apapa, who paraded the suspects before newsmen in Jos yesterday, said the traditional ruler is also the king of cattle rustlers in Plateau State.

Worse still, the police commissioner said the traditional ruler was allegedly involved in the murder of two mobile policemen at Shimankar during the ethno-religious crises in the state.

Contd. on Pg 2

## Ibora: Police clear Uwais, others of corruption

By Kemi Ogedengbe,  
Judicial Editor

The police has cleared the Chief Justice of Nigeria, Justice Muhammadu Lawal Uwais and six other judges of the Supreme Court of bribery and corruption while adjudicating over the ex-convict case filed against Governor James Ibora of Delta State.

Some group under the name "Derivation Front" based in Ugheli, Delta State, had made an allegation of corruption in some newspapers (not Daily Trust) that Justice Uwais was given N250 million for himself and N5 billion for distribution to some justices entertaining the case before the Supreme Court against the Delta State governor over the ex-convict suit.

petitioned the president who in turn directed the police to investigate the allegation.

The police team headed by a deputy inspector general of police, (DIG) Ogbonna Onovo, in the final report to President Olusegun

Obasanjo, exonerated the judges of the apex court more so, that the person who made the allegation, Mr. Edikeme Akpovilli, refused to appear before the police panel to substantiate his allegations.

Contd. on Pg 2

## Ngige moves to stop removal

### • I won't quit PDP - Dariye

By Kemi Ogedegbe, Judicial Editor and Shakirat Abdulmajeed, Correspondent (Lagos), Hammed M. Bello, Senior Political Reporter

Ngige from office.

The plaintiffs are seeking a declaration that the expulsion of Dr. Ngige from the PDP does not affect his position

tenure as the governor of Anambra State.

They are also seeking a declaration that INEC has no executive or administrative authority to remove the governor of Anambra State because the PDP has expelled him.

Contd. on Pg 2

# News

## IBB *Contd. from Pg 1*

UN protocol establishing the International Criminal Court (ICC), pointing out that the country could therefore, not be compelled to go by the protocol.

"What Sudan is saying is: How do you bring them (criminals) to book and also achieve reconciliation? Let us look inwards to see what will serve our purpose.

"I am for justice and reconciliation; justice without reconciliation is postponing the evil day," he said.

Earlier in his lecture which centred on "the Commonwealth in the 21st century: prospects and challenges," Obasanjo had said that the Commonwealth has been important to both its 53 member-states and the world at large.

He tasked the organisation to improve on its delivery of developmental aid to members, 49 of which he said were poor.

The president said that "the Commonwealth must be seen as an organisation that stands by the highest standards and can be expected at all times, to be on the side of

promoting democratic values.

"It must be able to support democratic consolidation, encourage holistic reforms and provide technical support to its members."

He stressed the need for a more sympathetic consideration by western nations toward the debt crisis faced by most African countries emphasizing that Africa too deserves the unconditional debt relief offered to some European countries in the last 50 years.

He said that Germany, Poland, Russia alongside Iraq and Pakistan were offered relief by western donor nations and stressed that Africans too are more than qualified for such assistance.

Obasanjo also said that the developed countries of the world need to remove the existing trade barriers and open up their markets to the developing world.

"Globalisation should be a win-win situation for both developed and developing countries," he stressed.

## Ibora *Contd. from Pg 1*

In the summary of the report, the police said that investigations would remain inconclusive without hearing from the main accuser of the judges, Mr. Akpovilli.

"There is a possibility that a person with such name does not exist. In the circumstance, suspicion falls on Barrister Moses Oddiri who was the former national coordinator of the Derivation Front that handed over to Akpovilli. Barrister Oddiri admitted in his statement that he has an axe to grind with Governor James Ibori."

The police said the investigating team is now poised to arrest Barrister Oddiri compel him to produce Mr. Edikeme Akpovilli whose whereabouts and identity remains unknown.

The detailed investigation report read as follows:

From the investigations so far carried out, the following facts could be discerned:

There was a pending matter before the Supreme Court between Goodnews Agbi and another versus Audu Ogbe and four others.

The bone of contention between the parties is the eligibility of the governor to contest the 2003 gubernatorial elections on the account that governor Ibori is an ex-convict and therefore not qualified for the office of governor.

An organization which calls itself "Derivation Front" with its address given as No. 225 Ughelli-Patani road, Ughelli, pitched its tent with one of the parties to the dispute - Goodnews Agbi.

Before the Supreme Court could deliver its judgment on 6/2/04 in the matter, Derivation Front had written not less than three petitions to the Chief Justice of Nigeria on the possible likelihood of the apex court compromising the judgment.

## Royal father *Contd. from Pg 1*

With the arrest of the kingpin and his four member gang, the police commissioner hopes that cases of cattle rustling, an issue that was described as one of the major reasons for the protracted ethno-religious crises in the southern parts of the state, would now end.

He explained that the arrest followed complaints by one Abdullahi Balge of Bolori in Shendam local government area that unknown persons attacked his cattle rearer and made away with 32 cows and 11 sheep on February 17, 2005.

He said "investigations led to the arrest of the chief of Dilori, Nanman Goesur and four others who had earlier held a meeting on February

15, 2005 on how to carry out the raid."

According to the police boss, the chief organized the raids while Selven Danjuma along with the three others carried them out. He said they have all "confessed to the crime," but that the arms used in the operation were yet to be recovered even as arms used in previous robberies during the crises were traced to the gang.

Mr. Apapa also announced the recovery of two AK 47 rifles, one dane gun and 30 live ammunitions from four persons who were in illegal possession of them. The police gave their names as Velyim Kopjil, Nanbol Timlan, Nanlong Nyenwai and Lokden Timka.

# BPE: Reps begin probe of Bala today

By Hammeed M. Bello,  
Senior Political Reporter

The immediate past director-general of the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE), Dr. Julius Bala, is to appear before the House of Representatives committee on public accounts today to defend billions of naira alleged to have been plundered by the BPE in the privatization process.

The chairman, Public Accounts Committee of the House, Hon. Adeyemi

Oluwole, told *Daily Trust* in an exclusive interview yesterday in Abuja that the House is probing Bala over about 41 million US dollars he claimed to have paid to Denham Nigeria Limited as consultancy fees.

Hon. Oluwole also said that Bala is to explain the over N2 billion spent out of the

over N10 billion set aside to assist interested Nigerians to participate in the privatization of some public establishments in the country.

He said the money provided by a consortium of banks under syndication arrangement and that the committee found out that the \$41 million paid in a cloudy arrangement by BPE to Denham was not accounted for which the House will in-

vestigate at a public hearing which opens today.

"Initially, what we heard was that N2 billion of the N10 billion had been spent and the people who own the money have not benefited under the scheme, yet BPE spent N2 billion; exactly for what did you spend that money?" the lawmaker asked.

"The job with which BPE is saddled is enormous and we shall get to the roots of the perceived illegal spending because we would not allow anybody to mess up such funds," he said.

He stated that in the 2005 budget, the federal government has earmarked about N32 billion to be earned from the sale of public companies and establishments and the vehicle for the realisation of the money is the BPE, which explains why the bureau has to be thoroughly sanitized.

## NASS approves N355bn for debt servicing

By Isa Sanusi, Senior  
Political Reporter

The Senate has adopted the harmonized 2005 Appropriation Bill in which the upper chamber overruled the House of Representatives by retaining the over N355 billion appropriated for foreign and domestic debt servicing earlier rejected through a resolution by the lower chamber.

The budget, now ready for the assent of President Olusegun Obasanjo, has a deficit of N263.2 billion to be financed by the federal government's share of fifty per cent excess crude earnings for 2004 which stands at N163 billion and the sale of federal government's proper-

ties that will fetch N20 billion. Privatisation proceeds from ALSCON and NITEL will yield N30 and N67 billion respectively.

The harmonized Bill signed by the chairman, senate committee on Appropriation and Finance, Senator John Azuta-Mbata and the chairman, House Appropriation Committee, Gabriel Suswam, puts the budget at N1,799,938,243,138.00 with N737 billion for capital expenditure and N617 billion for recurrent expenditure.

The Bill provides that the

## Ngige *Contd. from Pg 1*

The plaintiffs also asked for an injunction restraining the defendants jointly or severally from taking any steps affecting the office of the governor of Anambra State based on the PDP letter purporting to expel Dr. Ngige or initiating any process for his removal from office.

Listed as defendants in the suit filed by the state's attorney general, Chief Nnoruku Udechukwu (SAN) are the PDP and the INEC.

The plaintiffs want the court to determine whether Dr. Ngige is still a governor of the state under the 1999 constitution and other statutes in force in Nigeria following his expulsion from the PDP on whose ticket he rode to become the chief executive of Anambra State.

The plaintiffs are also asking the court to determine whether INEC, under the provisions of the 1999 constitution or any other statutes has any executive or administrative authority to remove the governor of Anambra State or to perform any other functions touching upon the tenure of the governor upon his expulsion from the party.

In the motion which is seeking the interpretation of the expulsion, the plaintiffs contended that the governor, once elected into office can only be removed from office in a manner prescribed by the 1999 constitution and not otherwise.

The plaintiffs argued that the expulsion of a governor from his party is not a ground for removing him from office under the 1999 constitution, saying that no political party under its internal arrangement has powers to remove a serving governor duly elected into office at a general election. Meanwhile, the governor of Anambra State, Dr. Chris Ngige, said yesterday that he decided to go to court, to challenge his expulsion from the PDP to put an end to the lingering injustice in the party.

Speaking with reporters at the presidential wing of Murtala Muhammed International Airport, Lagos, yesterday, Governor Ngige disclosed that his lawyers are in court to teach the PDP leadership how to follow the rule

of law in doing certain things.

His words: "My lawyers are in court. I am challenging the expulsion not because I am desperate to be in the PDP but I want to challenge it to prevent the injustice being meted out to other members. Some of the victims might not be political office holders. They can be ordinary members of the party. We want the party to follow the rule of law in doing certain things. So my lawyers are in court."

The governor who disclosed that he has picked a new political party as an alternative platform to the PDP, however declined to reveal the identity of his new party, stressing that he will make it known soon.

"The true situation is that we are still considering the various offers but in the next few days, I will let you know publicly where I now stand. I have received some cards from various parties but you don't know which card I have accepted," he added.

Meanwhile, the governor of Plateau State, Chief Joshua Dariye, suggested yesterday that he owes no apology to anybody in his party, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), because he offended none and will not quit the party or be forced out.

Dariye, at a meeting with newsmen yesterday in Abuja, was reacting to perceived moves by the PDP to either suspend or expel him from the party as was done with Governor Chris Ngige of Anambra State. Ngige who was suspended along with Chris Uba, his acclaimed political godfather, has already challenged his expulsion in court.

Responding to a question, Dariye said he was a democrat and a founding member of the PDP and will not succumb to any calculated attempt to ease him out of the party without any known offence against individuals or the party. "I am not going anywhere," he declared.

Dariye however pledged his loyalty to President Obasanjo and the PDP and asked that justice must not be compromised as part of efforts to consolidate on the gains of democracy in the country.

## Kano *Contd. from Pg 1*

court of appeal to disputes on Islamic Personal Law, the delegation asked that the jurisdiction be widened to include all aspects of Islamic Law.

The memo said: "the word 'personal' in section 277 of the 1999 constitution should be deleted to read Islamic Law. It should be recalled that 1979 constitution was similarly amended in 1990 and 1995 constitutions."

It also sought for the creation of a residual legislative list and the transfer of evidence from the exclusive to the concurrent legislative list of the constitution.

The delegates also rejected calls for resource control and demanded the return of the onshore-off shore dichotomy in the application of the 13 per cent derivation principle. It contended that "the revenue accruing from off-shore oil resources, which

fall within the territorial waters and the 200 nautical miles by the Exclusive Economic Zone guaranteed by international law and practice, belongs to the entire federation and should not be subjected to the derivation principle"

Kano further urged for referendum on the outcome of the conference, and suggested that the National Assembly must be taken along in the process of giving legal backing to the conference's report.

Other demands of the state include retention of presidentialism, the 36-state structure and the 774 local government areas, abolishing of joint local government account, provision for independent candidature in elections, far reaching prison reforms and posting of police personnel up to the rank of Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) to their states of origin.

But the delegation criticised what it said was a questionable process of convening the conference with lopsided representation and without legal backing. This, it said, makes the conference vulnerable to manipulation.

"With all due respect, we wish to observe that the basis of representation used is undemocratic, inequitable, unbalanced and runs foul of all established and conventional modes of constituting a body so important and invested with authority so broad and unchecked to shape Nigerian polity, economy, the society and its constitutional form of governance. It is unjustifiable, for instance, to give one state, which under the 1999 constitution has 10 members at the House of Representatives, equal number of delegates with another which has 24 members.

The police commissioner also paraded one Damian Nwalozie who allegedly robbed three ladies of their handsets at Basabuji area of Jos at gunpoint on March 13, 2005. A toy gun, three knives and a hand set jacket were found on him.

Mr. Apapa also said that last Sunday, a Toyota Corolla with registration number Plateau AE 913 BSA, ash-grey in colour, was abandoned by four occupants who were pursued by policemen from Laranto division on patrol duty after they refused to stop for routine checks.

He said one military jack knife and one military face cap were found in the car.

# NEWS

## Nigeria to get stable power supply by 2008 - Makoju

The managing director of the National Electric Power Authority (NEPA), Joseph Makoju says that a stable power supply throughout the country is possible in three years time.

"We are building four new power stations across the country. The fourth will give us 2,000 mega watts. The oil companies are building more. Expectedly, this will also give us 2,000 mega watts. We project that with all these, capacity will have increase in three years time to catch up with demand," he said.

The managing director, who was speaking yesterday

By Jibrin Abubakar, Foreign Desk Reporter

in Abuja during a ceremony organised by the Canadian High Commission to assist NEPA with N82.5 million for the training of NEPA staff in Canada. He said the country required about 6,000 mega watts.

Engr. Makoju said that President Olusegun Obasanjo is scheduled to commission a new power station next month in Delta state, adding that the new power station will provide the country with additional 330 mega watts (10 per cent addition to the existing mega

watt).

According to him, the power bill signed by the National Assembly will further attract investors into the various sectors of the parastatal.

"Until now, there was some elements of uncertain. Three years back, we did nothing in the power sector, that is the truth," he added.

The NEPA boss who expressed optimism said: "It will take time to get there but at least we have started the journey."

Engr. Makoju said other countries succeed because they were able to have excess mega watt, saying Ghana, for instance has 6,000 excess

Meanwhile, the Canadian High Commissioner to Nigeria, Mr. David Augell, said Canada is working towards an improved power supply in Nigeria.

A statement made available to *Daily Trust* by the Canadian High Commission said the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), will provide 70 per cent funding, while Maritoba Hydro International, a contractor to NEPA, will provide 30 per cent of the funds.



Minister of Water Resources, Alhaji Mukhtar Shagaru (middle) briefing newsmen after FEC meeting flanked by Chief Liyel Imoke, Minister of Power and Steel (left) and Minister of Culture and Tourism, Chief Frank Ogbuewu. Pix: Joe Oroye.

## Election rigging bane of democracy in Nigeria

By Isa Sanusi, Senior Political Reporter

--Mbu

Nigeria's first minister of foreign affairs, Ambassador Mathew T. Mbu, has described election rigging and related malpractices as the nation's major setback on the path of nurturing democracy and suggested that Nigerians should resist attempts to rig elections henceforth.

Ambassador M.T. Mbu noted that election rigging was the fundamental factor responsible for the fall of the first republic, adding that Nigerians can borrow a leaf from the Ukrainians whose protest brought to end a government that saw itself into power through election

rigging.

The elder statesman stated this at a reception organised for Senator Ben Obi, who through a prolonged legal battle, regained his mandate as a senator representing Anambra central.

Also at the occasion were the President-General of Ohanueze Ndi Igbo, Professor Irukwu, former secretary-general of the commonwealth, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, PDP chieftain, Alhaji Isiaku Ibrahim, former chief of general staff, Admiral Ebitu Ukiwe, Alhaji Isma'ila

Isa Funtua, Chief Emmanuel Iwunyanwu and former Inspector General of Police, Alhaji Muhammadu Gambo Jimeta, among others.

In his brief remarks, Chief Emeka Anyaoku noted that the ongoing national political reform conference is an opportunity to reshape the nation and build a stronger democracy.

He said: "The problems of this country baffles almost everyone. But with this conference, we have an opportunity to redress some of the crucial issues that afflicts the nation's polity."

Meanwhile, Senator Kanti Bello says the only way the ongoing national political reform conference will make impact on the nation is by addressing the crucial issue of election rigging.

"The only way this conference can help this nation is for them to revisit the issue of election rigging. All Nigerians know and even Obasanjo acknowledged that the 2003 election was rigged. Therefore, the conference should concentrate more to give us the way forward with regards to elections."

He further said: "people use police and thugs to rig election. The conference should look at ways to ensure free and fair elections. If elections are faulty, then the essence of democracy is defeated. The reason why people in power are not performing and are even stealing money is because they can rig elections."

## Diesel price hike: NARTO suspends strike

The National Association of Road Transport Owners (NARTO), has suspended the planned withdrawal of its services scheduled to commence yesterday over the N12.00 increase in the ex-depot price of diesel.

This followed the appointment of a broad-based committee to work on all issues raised by the association and a report to be submitted within a fortnight.

The broad-based committee was set up at the meeting of all stakeholders in the downstream sector of the petroleum industry which was held in Abuja from the evening of Tuesday to the early hours of yesterday.

NARTO's demands for reversal of the N12.00 increase in diesel informed the 14-day ultimatum for withdrawal of services which was issued two weeks ago. Against the backdrop of other demands packaged by the association in its presentation at the meeting, it was held that the issue of the reversal of the N12.00 increase which NARTO demanded could not be treated in isolation without considering other industry issues incident to the increase as articulated by the association. The issues according to NARTO's leader of delegation who is also the national operations coordinator, include; appropriate freight rate increase, removal of five per cent withholding tax on haulage of petroleum products, payment of demurrage on haulage of petroleum products, resumption of PEF collection, full implementation of a uniform pump price of petroleum products and payment of insurance premium to be factored into freight rates.

Other issues Alhaji Isa pointed out, include rehabilitation of access roads to loading terminals by major marketers, joint development by major marketers of the land allocated by the Lagos State government as truck terminal to avoid obstruction of traffic by trucks parking on the highways as well as review of the entire transportation matrix (SPA 23).

By Austine Odo, Senior Reporter (Labour)

Alhaji Isa who disclosed this to *Daily Trust* alongside Barrister E. B. Kanawa, NARTO's executive secretary, said after several hours of arguments and frank discussions, the stakeholders had reached a consensus on the best way to solve all the problems in a holistic way to pave way for, stability and progress in the downstream sector of the oil industry.

## LG funds: Abia councils file suit against EFCC

By Kemi Ogedengbe, Judicial Reporter

Nineteen local government councils in Abia State and the state's accountant general have filed a suit at the federal high court, Abuja, seeking to restrain the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) from investigating them over alleged misuse and diversion of council funds. The plaintiffs are praying for an order to restrain the EFCC and the attorney general of the federation from investigating their plaintiffs pending the hearing and determination of the suit.

In an affidavit in support, the plaintiffs said that their statutory and constitutional functions did not fall within the purview of the powers of the EFCC, moreso, that none of the plaintiffs wrote a letter of complaint to the commission or the attorney general of the federation concerning distribution of funds within the state.

The EFCC had written a letter of invitation to the accountant general of Abia State titled: "Illegal deductions of local government funds by the Abia State government," and invited him to report to the commission for questioning.

But instead of reporting to the commission, the plaintiffs filed a suit against EFCC, saying that the EFCC statutory functions relates to the investigation and prosecution has no bearing

on the management of local government finances. The plaintiffs said they will rely on the case of Abia State and 35 others versus the attorney-general of the

federation and will further contend that the responsibility for the management of the councils is vested in the state government while the plaintiffs are not accountable to EFCC or any agency of the federal government.

The plaintiffs said that all the councils in the state submitted their accounts and books for examination to the auditor-general of the local governments in accordance with the provisions of the local government laws of Abia State.

## Judge sentences man to death by hanging

From Rakiya Muhammad, Correspondent (Jos)

A high court judge in Plateau State, Justice Felicia Dusu, has sentenced one Jacob Wakpsan to death by hanging for the ritual murder of his close friend. The offence is punishable by death according to section 22 of the penal code.

Delivering judgement, Justice Dusu said from the confessional statement of the accused and the evidence presented before her, it was clear that the offence was premeditated.

The judge also noted that the convict committed the offence out of the desire to make quick money

It would be recalled that Jacob Wakpsan of Wase local government area had on the night of 24<sup>th</sup> April 2000, lured his friend, Tumba Danfumah, into the bush on the pretext that he was assisting him to hunt for honey.

However, on getting to the bush, the convict who was armed with a knife, stabbed the deceased severally leading to his death.

The accused then removed some parts from the

dead body including the tongue, eyes and private parts which he kept in a polythene bag.

When asked the whereabouts of his son the following day, Jacob told the deceased's father that he knew nothing about him.

Jacob went to Yelwa where he was said to have planned with some people to sell the parts to them for the sum of N80,000.

However, on reaching

there he could not locate the buyers and thereafter returned home where he later disposed the human parts in a pit latrine.

Jacob was subsequently arrested by the police and charged to court.

The convict, who had shown remorse before his sentence, appealed for forgiveness from the family the deceased, government and people of the state and urged others who engage in such heinous acts to learn from his experience.

## Gov Bukar supports Obasanjo over immunity

From Isa Umar Gusau, Correspondent (Damaturu)

Yobe State Governor, Bukar Abba Ibrahim, yesterday added voice to that of President Obasanjo, calling for the amendment of the immunity clause that provides cover for serving presidents, Vice Presidents, state governors among other from facing offence charges in courts.

President Obasanjo on Tuesday expressed optimism that the immunity clause will be amended at the ongoing national political reforms conference to pave way for the fight against corruption.

Governor Ibrahim said "immunity clause for all elected politicians should be eliminated from the Nigerian constitution.

"I believe that absolute immunity like absolute power, corrupts absolutely. So immunity should be eliminated. But something should be put in place to stop mischief." While commenting on the need for a referendum on the outcome of the ongoing national reforms conference as canvassed by some delegates,

the governor said, "there is nothing wrong in having a referendum, but we should know the conclusions first."

*Daily Trust* however observed that the governor's statement was in contrast with his position at a public hearing over the confab organised by the Yobe State government, during which, governor Ibrahim declared may constitute undermining the proceedings. Governor Ibrahim however maintained his position, saying he was in total support of amending the immunity clause, saying, that was his opinion.

# NEWS

## National Confab ... National Confab ... National Confab ...

### No apology for coup

— Useni

A member of the defunct Provisional Ruling Council (PRC), retired Lt. General Jeremiah Useni, said yesterday at the national conference that ex-military officers who apologized for coup plotting were on their own.

Useni, a deputy national chairman (north) of the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP), said those who tendered the apology had no mandate from the armed forces nor were they delegated by ex-military officers.

Therefore, he said, the apology should be disregarded.

"I want to make it clear that those who made the so-called apology on behalf of the military did so on their own without the mandate of the Armed Forces headquarters, with the consent of we their colleagues at this conference. So the apology should be disregarded," Useni said.

The former minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) said contrary to popular belief, the military was not an agent of destruction but rather an institution trained to protect Nigeria's integrity.



L-R HRH, King Afred Diete Spiff, Bayelsa State delegate, Emir of Gombe, HRH, Alhaji Usman Shehu Abubakar, delegate from North East and Air Commodore Emeka Omeruah (rtd), delegate from Abia State putting heads together during the sitting of the National Confab in Abuja ... yesterday  
Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje

## Anyaoku opposes resource control

Former Commonwealth Secretary General and delegate to the ongoing national political reform conference, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, has opposed the

By **Abdu Labaran,**  
Group Political Editor

agitation for resource control, saying the concept

is not helpful to the country. Chief Anyaoku told *Daily Trust* that resource control was not a helpful phrase and should therefore not be encouraged.

Rather than resource control, the country he suggested, should settle for a formula for the distribution of federal revenue in a way that will allow each federating unit to develop according to its pace.

"I don't believe that resource control is a very helpful phrase. I think what we need to do is to settle for a formula for resource allocation, for the distribution of federal revenues among the federating units in a way that would allow each federating unit to be able to develop according to its pace, he advised.

Describing the conference as "a very welcome opportunity for Nigeria to look at all the things that are wrong with

the structure of the polity and its governance," the former Commonwealth scribe faulted the existing government structure, describing it as inefficient and very expensive.

Lamenting that over 80 percent of the nation's revenue is being spent on administration, he suggested that the system needs to be changed to have far less number of federating units than the existing 36 states, "if this country has to have any hope of development."

He however advised that the Presidential system be retained as opposed to the parliamentary system, which some of his fellow delegates and other Nigerians seem to be in favour of.

Chief Anyaoku said that subjecting the recommendations of the conference to a referendum was not necessary unless the National Assembly stands in the way of implementing of the report.

### Domestic tourism will foster unity

— Delegate

By **Habeeb I. Pidiga,**  
Political Reporter

One time All Nigeria Peoples' Party (ANPP), gubernatorial candidate for Nasarawa state, Alhaji Ali Akwe Doma, has urged the federal government to give priority attention to domestic tourism as a way to foster unity.

Doma who is on the federal government delegation to the ongoing national political reform conference, said domestic tourism will also prevent capital flight.

He told *Daily Trust* in Abuja yesterday that when tourists visit parts of the country other than the places they live, opportunity will be created for them to socialise with more Nigerians.

This, he said, will strengthen the bonds binding the nation's diverse communities.

According to him, there are various potential tourist sites spread across the country unexploited and urged government at all levels to develop such sites to shore up their revenue.

Doma said also that when domestic tourism is developed, Nigeria may pay attention to international tourism.

The delegate lamented that Nigerian tourists who go abroad for leisure were encouraging capital flight, when such funds could remain at home through domestic tourism the conference to come up with recommendations on how to develop domestic tourism.

## Traditional institutions: Group slams Shehu Sani

By **Nasir Dambatta,**  
Assistant Features Editor

The chairman of the Northern Youth Forum (NYF), Mallam Jibreel Tafida, has dismissed the claim by a delegate to the ongoing reform conference, Mallam Shehu Sani, that traditional institutions are agents of disunity.

Tafida told *Daily Trust* that he as "a northerner" was disappointed by the "unguarded utterances" of the delegate, "who is supposedly representing the north, where there is a culture of respect for traditional rulers."

He went on to say northerners are known to be proud of their cultural heritage and wondered why the delegate made the outburst. Explaining further, Tafida quoted former president Kenneth Kaunda, as saying "a country without a culture is like a people without the spirit which makes them a nation," adding that the delegate has derailed.

Tafida also stated that he wished the delegate could be recalled by the north-east zone, adding "I wonder through which process someone with that kind of ideas got nominated to

represent a region whose royal fathers he views in this light."

Speaking further, Tafida said "by implication," the delegate's statement affected President Obasanjo, "who is himself a chief."



Alhaji Bashir Mohammed Gumel, Jigawa State delegate, addressing the National Political Reform Conference in Abuja yesterday  
Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje

### Delegate canvasses new prison reform

A Bauchi state delegate to the ongoing national political reform conference, Barrister Habibu Aliyu, has suggested a prison system in which emphasis would be on imparting skills rather than punishment.

He said yesterday in Abuja that Nigerian prisons have been turned into grounds for hardening of criminals instead of reformation centres.

"Nigerian prisons are no more than mere dungeons and are nowhere near the reformatory institutions they were originally

conceived to be. In this day and age, prisons the world over are no longer places for the incarceration of social miscreants under dehumanizing conditions.

"Prison inmates are isolated from the larger society for a period specified and sanctioned by the law so as to afford them the opportunity for introspection, remorse and possible repentance for wrongs done to society."

Aliyu called for prison reforms that will turn Nigeria's penitentiaries into places of imparting skills and craftsmanship.



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# Idang Alibi on Thursday

## Nuhu Ribadu

Faithful readers of this column would acknowledge that in the unofficial national hall of fame erected by this column, Mr. Nuhu Ribadu, the passion-driven and zealous chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), occupies a pride of place in it.

Hate Ribadu if you will, but you cannot accuse him of either incompetence or a lack of integrity. This man loves the assignment he has been given and has done a good job of it. He has approached his job with so much zeal that a mention of his name sends criminals scampering for cover.

Other heroes which this column has celebrated and erected as role models, mainly for their public virtues, include, but not limited to, Nasir el-Rufai, Dora Akunyili, Frank Kokori, Abubakar Dangiwa Umar, Gani Fawehinmi, Balarabe Musa and Adamu Ciroma.

Those we contemplate celebrating in the near future, by the grace of God, will include Prince Tony Momoh, Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, Dr. Rilwanu Lukman, Professor Turner Isoun.

We occasionally and deliberately single out some of these compatriots for some praise not because they are flawless but mainly because of the sometimes novel or positively radical approach they have brought to bear in the discharge of their public commission.

Which is why in spite of the fact that in the past few months some of these heroes have unnecessarily talked themselves into trouble, I do not have any feeling of great regret adopting them as authentic Nigerian icons.

***"Were it not for his good works, el-Rufai nearly lost his job in order to placate senators who felt offended by something he said. And now there are indications that there is a threat to Ribadu's job because he gave the erroneous impression that government is using him to pursue its 'hidden agenda' for 2007. Ribadu and el-Rufai are a pride to my generation. I won't love to see them disgraced, not for what wrong they have done but for the indiscretion of their tongue."***

The first to self-destruct with his tongue is of course Mallam el-Rufai. This hero of mine has this amazing capacity to allow the frustration and stress of his job make him say things that are inappropriate, unsuitable

for the circumstance or totally unnecessary. His recent remarks that he has no apology to offer over the Pentascope/NITEL fiasco is a good example.

Every one, including those who have been adversely affected by el-Rufai's demolition activities, agrees that the man is doing a very good but painful job of making FCT a beautiful and functional city. Every day in my prayer closet, I pray that the Almighty God will give the man the grace not to talk too loudly, too unwisely or too unguardedly so that he is not sacrificed to please those who favour chaos and the culture of impunity in our land.

Nuhu Ribadu is fast stepping into the footsteps of those public officers who allow their over-enthusiasm to ruin the excellent service they are rendering to the fatherland. What demonic agent came over him in South Africa to grant that interview in which he ended up sounding like a politician in a rival camp out to scuttle General Ibrahim Babangida's presidential ambition in 2007?

A friend and colleague on the *Trust* Editorial Board, Mallam Ujudud Sharrif, has told us that Ribadu was quoted out of context. Whether Ribadu was quoted out of context or not, I wish to advise him that no medium can misquote a man who has said nothing. Pundits, commentators, interpreters, analysts, essayists and all those who make a living trying to decipher the actions and utterances of newsmakers, can only presume the "statement" of a silent man. None of them will ever misquote the man who kept silent.

There is no law any where that says that a public official must grant interviews or make statements. Public officials no matter their zeal, no matter the fervour of their commitment to pursue the public good, must learn the virtue of

speaking only when it is absolutely necessary.

Part of the hazards of public service is that you may be misunderstood sometimes by the very people you are sincerely trying to serve. This obviously is responsible for el-Rufai's impatience and anger and which lead him to utterances which then portray him as arrogant, insensitive or unfeeling.

One of these days, I will seek an appointment to see el-Rufai and Ribadu and give them two precious gifts: a bottle each of anointing oil and a copy each of Robert Greene's book **48 Laws of Power**.

I will humbly instruct these two eminent gentlemen that before they retire to bed and early in the morning when they rise from it, they should anoint their tongue and call on God to grant them the grace to say only what is necessary for public consumption.

After this, they should complement their faith by reading Rule 4 of Greene's book which counsels public officers to speak only what is necessary, for as the Bible says, "faith without corresponding good works is dead."

As a student of literature, I am fully aware of the literary term called "tragic flaw" which refers to any major weakness in a hero that will most likely lead him to a tragic end. In spite of this awareness, I feel enormous pain each time I see some of my favourite public figures whose tragic flaw seems to be their tongue, talking themselves into avoidable trouble.

Is it impossible to be a silent performer? Of course, it is not. And it is principally for that reason that in due course this column intends to celebrate Rilwanu Lukman (who is no longer in public view) and professor Turner Isoun, current minister of science and technology who is very much in the public eye but who works more than he talks.

Why am I concerned about the public utterances of el-Rufai and Ribadu? It is because Nigeria is a land where good people are sacrificed for small sins in order to appease certain interests whose egos are bruised.

Were it not for his good works, el-Rufai nearly lost his job in order to placate senators who felt offended by something he said. And now there are indications that there is a threat to Ribadu's job because he gave the erroneous impression that government is using him to pursue its "hidden agenda" for 2007.

Ribadu and el-Rufai are a pride to my generation. I won't love to see them disgraced, not for what wrong they have done but for the indiscretion of their tongue.

# SHORT PIECES

With Professor Layi Erinsho  
laierinsho@yahoo.com

## Weekly

## How the times have changed for VCs

It has been such a long time. I am talking about thirty five to forty years ago when I was an undergraduate at the University of Ibadan. Oh many of my classmates have retired from the public service while quite a number of us who entered the academia will quit in the next four or five years.

Nowadays, I look back and each time appreciate the fact that times have changed. Of course times should change because this is the essence of life. But in what direction have the times changed in our country? Is it for good or bad? This brings me to the good old days and I am sure that the younger generation would say here we go again because we are fond of talking about the good old days of my generation. Never mind, I look back with nostalgia to those times.

I had the privilege of seeing Professor Kenneth Dike our Vice-Chancellor twice during my undergraduate programme at Ibadan: the first time during my matriculation and the second when he called at our hall of residence along with the Inspector General of Police following a violent demonstration against the government in 1966. The Police had forced its way into the Sultan Bello Hall to beat up the students and destroy their property and the VC came along with the Inspector General of Police to assess the damage. I probably would have seen him again at my Convocation in June 1968. But Professor Dike escaped to America as a result of the Nigerian crisis.

Any invitation to see Vice-Chancellor at the time was a big deal. You must have committed a grievous offence that would probably earn expulsion or suspension from the university. You had to be in a suit or dress and also be robed in an academic gown before you could be ushered into the office of the Vice-Chancellor. You would be shivering by the time you were before him.

Alas, times have changed and all these are of the past. Vice-Chancellors are accessible commodities today and can be seen quite easily by their students today in bars, market places, and pepper soup joints. They roam government offices these days and you are not a performing Vice-Chancellor if your photograph does not appear regularly in national newspapers or junk magazines. Vice-Chancellors also belong to societies including cult.

This is the time of freedom and democracy and Vice-Chancellors are not left out of the scheme of things. In actual fact the marketing of Vice-Chancellors is a serious business that began during the military era when

they befriended top military officers. Of course you were unlikely to be appointed a Vice-Chancellor if you had no 'connection' in upper echelon of the Military. Nowadays, the 'connection' must be established with top politicians.

Convocation ceremonies used to be strictly academic activity in my time at Ibadan. The podium was set for the principal officers of the university, deans, heads of departments among others and the ceremony used to start promptly. This is no longer the case today. The important guests that have no role to play upstage the principal officers of the university on the podium at Convocation ceremonies.

Pardon me, I once attended a Convocation ceremony at which Deans etc. were seated in the audience while men and women of substance sat next to Vice-Chancellor. Of course this did not matter because Convocations are no longer academic but community affairs. The State Security Service plays a vital role on how guests are to be seated at Convocation for security reasons.

The Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of the Council of a University once insisted that he should be invited to preside at a Convocation lecture. Never mind if the Pro-Chancellor that made the request was a former university professor! The Chairman almost insisted that he should be in attendance at Senate meetings from time to time in order to remind the university about government policy on higher education.

Our academic conferences are no longer strictly for scholarly discourse as was the case in the past when scholars came from all over the world and the Vice-Chancellor declared the meeting open. In those days, eminent scholars were invited to deliver keynote address/papers while the proceedings were published and they became major landmarks.

Alas, the times have changed. These days it is the Minister or of Governor or preferably the Head of State that is invited to declare the meeting open. Keynote addresses are now read by political appointees rather than by scholars. The result is that conferences are like political rallies today. Scholars used to invite top military officers and top politicians to declare the meeting open. Of course the special speakers often do not attend punctually and as a result conferences never start on time. The participants are treated to long often rambling and worthless opening addresses.

The main reason for academic conferences is no longer robust scholarly exchange but to organise what appears to be major funfairs and/or to prepare the

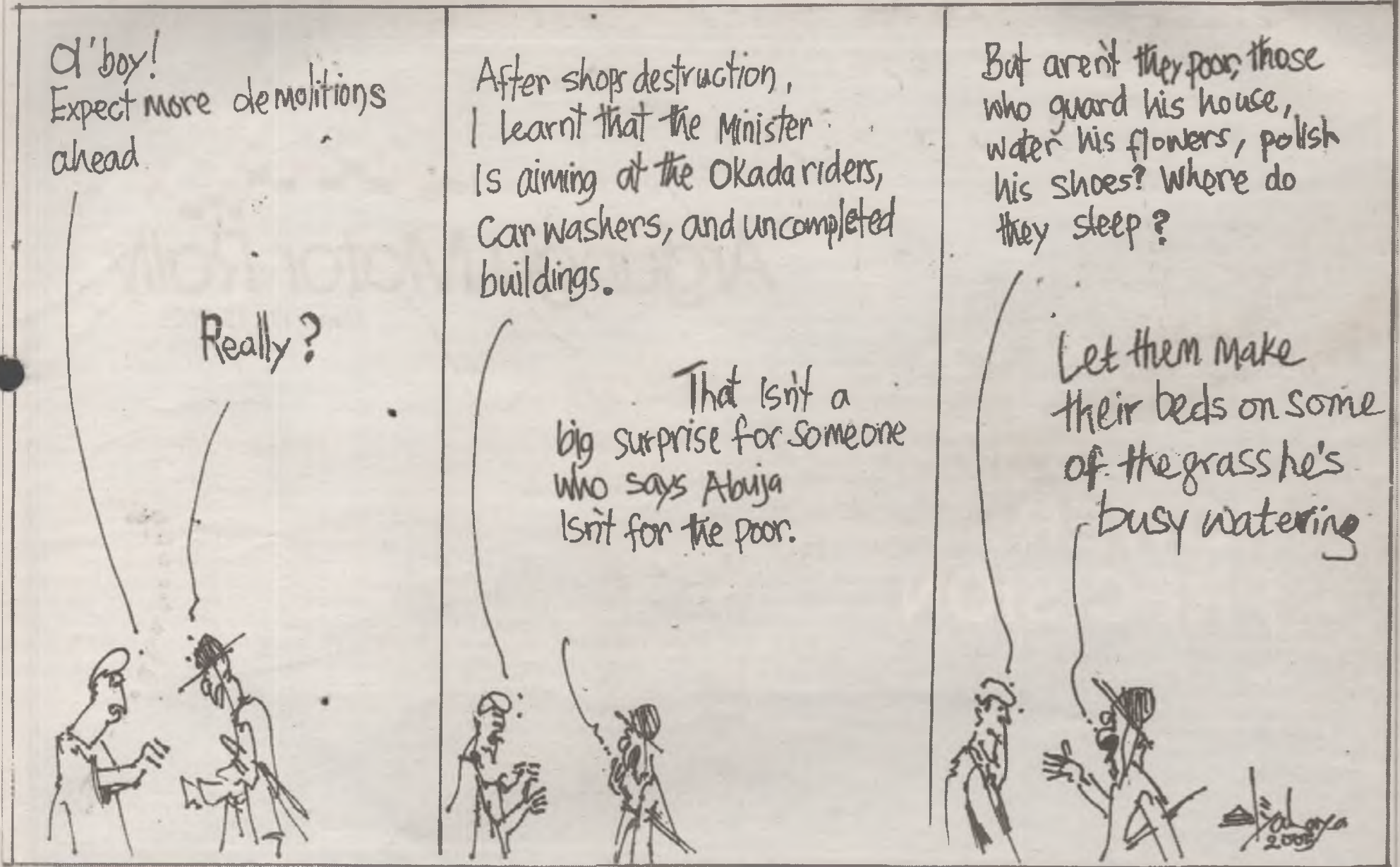
ground for the organiser of the meeting to secure a major appointment within or outside the university. Consequently, academic conferences are for hustling or politicking today.

Public officers were to be seen and not heard long time ago. But times have changed. Nowadays, top public officers compete with politicians for newspaper headlines. A Permanent Secretary is too delighted to see his/her photograph in the newspapers. He is asked to declare open a conference. He issues statements without authorization from Government. Permanent secretaries also attempt to double as erudite scholars. They write and launch books with funfair. I am not suggesting that they are not well read. Indeed, many of permanent secretaries possess higher or doctorate degrees and could well be teaching in our universities. But this is the age of freedom of speech and every one is encouraged to join in the debate. There is no harm if permanent secretaries pontificate on all subjects and issues that affect Nigeria. Remember you dared not speak in those days otherwise you were queried for voicing your opinion as a civil servant.

Of course the private sector was inconsequential in those days and you could count the number of respectable businessmen and women on your fingertips. But the private sector has grown in Nigeria and we have so many in top positions in the sector. Everyone successful individual in the private sector is some sort of a whiz kid. After all you are whiz kid in Nigeria if you can make so much money while your more brilliant classmates that are in the academia have remained poor.

The views of the rich matter a lot in a materialist society like Nigeria. But years ago, it was the opinion of the philosophers' class that mattered as prescribed by Plato. Our scholars are very stupid because they cannot make money. The views of these poverty-stricken scholars on issues do not really matter any more.

Have times changed for the better? It is certainly a matter of ones opinion or values. Some would argue that things have changed for the better while others would hold a contrary viewpoint. Whether Vice-Chancellors should be very accessible or academic ceremonies like convocation should become rallies or top civil servants should be encouraged to come out of the closet would well nigh depend on ones values and orientation. But as things are, the trend today is for us to leave undone those things that we should do and to those that are unimportant.



**YOUR LETTERS**

**No UNILAG, no!**

It is nauseating to read about the conditionality imposed upon UNILAG students as a prelude to re-opening the institution on March 29 2005. It was reported and confirmed by the school authorities that every returning student regardless of which degree programme he or she is pursuing, is culpable (in the ongoing investigation regarding "arson") and are expected to pay N10, 000 for damages done to school properties in the last crisis that led to its closure.

These and other obnoxious policies are being slapped on innocent students of the institution, in addition to mass detention. These are people who, in my opinion, are victims of persecution by way of the unfounded allegations that they burnt the Vice Chancellor's lodge and that of the Student Affairs officer. Again, this brings to light our national sense of justice. It is unfortunate that no one amongst those who paid shameful solidarity visits to the institution's authorities has condemned these actions by the authorities. It criminal to hold innocent students vicariously liable for offences committed by a mob that invaded the VC's lodge and burnt it

down because of the same controversial policy of privatization of hostels, some of whom the police and the authorities claimed are already identified and are being prosecuted (persecuted!).

It behooves on the returning students (with or without leaders) at UNILAG to reject these penalties. I do not see any reason why anyone should be apologetic about taking actions to defend their integrity and their economic survival. There is the need for a repudiation these unbearable conditions, which include the exclusion of student accommodation for an unspecified period, even when the students have already paid for housing to last for a session.

May I use this medium to commend the Governor Goje administration on its achievements in the educational sector since inception. The land mark proposal of a state university is only one out of many. I would, like Oliver Twist, ask for more. The young educationally-disadvantaged state has over the years been able to meet its quota in the Nigerian universities and this made it possible for the few able Gombe state students to secure admissions for

The bad handling of this issue must not be allowed to stand. It is important to tell our parents here that they too have to join hands with their wards in storming UNILAG on resumption day in a mass protest that will force the Nigeria Police to beat a retreat from defending the local dictatorship at UNILAG.

I was President of Students Union of the University (1992-1994) and I can still remember how we fought dictatorship. Some of us, are willing to provide leadership to defend our past legacies of "zero-tolerance for dictatorship" even as we caution the present leadership to be wary of dining with the local dictatorship.

Comrade Omoeyele Sowore  
Omoeyele@yahoo.com

**Well done Goje, but...**

professional courses like medicine and surgery. Not all the students can afford the costs for which reason scholarships are awarded as an incentive. I will make particular reference to medical students from Gombe state. Our scholarship is still only N6000 as against what obtains in other educationally-disadvantaged states, ranging between N15000 and N20000.

We purchase the same books and pay the same

Permit me a space in your newspaper to express my happiness, gratitude to Governor Ibrahim for the laying foundation for construction of the road that links kumbotso with zoo road which was initiated more than two decades ago by the administration of former executive governor of Kano State Dr. Moham-madu Abubakar Rimi.

Our dream has become reality by the construction of this road. In fact, I don't know the word that I can use to show the extent of my appreciation with regards to this and other policies, namely: education poverty alleviation; strategic Sharia implementation; welfare for civil

fees with our counterparts from the other states. So, considering the amount one needs to purchase medical text/work books and other necessities the N6000 is really not sufficient.

I will like to, on behalf of other Gombe State students of medicine, implore your Excellency to invoke the *sarkin aiki* formula by effecting the increment of our bursary to enable us cope with the challenges. Abubakar Ibrahim  
legitimatecritics@yahoo.com

**Kumbotso: Thanking Gov. Shekarau**

servants; rural electrification; water supply and policies on the environment to mention a few.

Indeed, you deserve

commendation. May the Almighty Allah guide you and protect you.

Kabiru Usman Ali  
Rigafada

Kumbotso L.G.A.

**Still on Nigeria's lopsided confab**

Leaders are basically supposed to explore those aspects that tend to increase the bond of unity among their followers, but our own case is directly the opposite. Nigeria requires some minimum, acceptable standard for doing certain things.

It is quite amazing that Obasanjo will convene a conference to decide the future of this country and forget these basic standards. Democracy we say is what we are practicing, even though participants were randomly chosen. Recognition should have been given to issues like

religion.

A situation where clearly, Muslims are outnumbered is totally unacceptable and must be revisited. The meaning of this is that any issue that has to do with religion that is put to vote, Muslims are already at a disadvantage. As if adding salt to injury, the Chairman and Secretary are also Christians. It is either we revisit this issue or we risk result of the confab being unacceptable to a majority of our people.

Yusuf Abubakar  
No. 7, Autan Bawo Street,  
Off Zoo Road,

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



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### PUBLIC NOTICE

#### RE: "NEWLY ESTABLISHED PENSION FUND ADMINISTRATOR"

The Attention of the National Pension Commission (PenCom) has been drawn to a paid advertisement placed in page 42 of Daily Trust Newspaper of Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2005 by "a newly established Pension Fund Administrator" purportedly inviting the general public to tender for certain services.

PenCom wishes to inform the general public that:

- 1 Section 44 of the Pension Reform Act 2004 (PRA) clearly states that "-----Pension Funds shall only be managed by Pension Fund Administrators licensed by the Commission under this Act".
- 2 PenCom has recently invited interested entities to apply for licences to operate as Pension Fund Administrators and Pension Fund Custodians. Applications are still being received and evaluated.
- 3 PenCom will soon release the names of licensed Pension Fund Administrators and Pension Fund Custodians to the public.
- 4 PenCom, therefore, invites the general public to discountenance the said advert, which was meant to mislead and defraud the public.

Signed

Management  
15th March 2005

## Advertorial

# IBB BETWEEN NUHU RIBADU AND FEMI FANI-KAYODE

*E-mail: mamzapaul@yahoo.com*

Nigeria is crux of insomnia because serious national issues are sometimes treated with insidiousness. Littered by residual apocryphal lurch, resolves for character moulding becomes a twisting whittle for upbraid. Nothing illustrates this, than the IBB's attempted travails in politics under the Obasanjo's era. Searching for possibilities of constrictions against threatening power-blocs the government deploys various means available to out stage what remains of this threat.

The President himself would not say it but the apparatus representing him have echoed it and echoes they say are good signals. What is sometimes amusing is the lack-luster mannerism of approach at targeting the target.

I respect Alhaji Nuhu Ribadu for his past records of insurmountable professionalism, more so, in a hard-knell of security detailing which requires precision of conduct and accuracy of evidence-building. Nuhu Ribadu as National Chairman of Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and Chief Dora Akunyili as Director General of National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) would make rational feat in Combating financial crimes and sub-standard supplies under an administration of rationality where such organs are given full independence or unalloyed moral support of the government of the day. But when Nuhu Ribadu was quoted by the Press in an event under the aegis of Patriots club of Nigeria in far Nigeria in far away Johannesburg, South Africa that "He IBB, is so crafty". Nowhere will you see his name as the owner of a property or the holder of a bank account abroad. But that does not mean he will escape. Never, never again in Nigeria will someone like him come to rule the country. It is too late for people like that. The world has changed", I felt very sad, for two reasons: one he has diffused the earlier wide-scale skepticism about the alleged deals of IBB, whose burden of proof lie in his hands and two, he has shown an outrageous interest in nailing a perceived enemy through partisanship by concluding that IBB or someone like him will never, never rule Nigeria again without practically saying why, at least from his admittance of lack of proof Ribadu's assertions raise a lot of unresolved answers, infact by omission, draws unnecessary sympathy, even for the convicted: a tale of putting the chart before the horse. One may say that it is not news to assert that a Nigerian leader has stolen money, what will make news is a Nigerian leader that has not stolen public fund that an intellectual judgement is required to ascertain the frightening wheezes that has a missing link in the deliberate confusion being synthesized to divert attentions from present realities of moral justifications. Even the present operators attest to the fact that presently the situation can be worse than before. However, politics in Nigeria, unlike what Ribadu wants us to believe is not about rationality at least from the adopted misdirected issues of swooping leadership indifference.

Like the present IBB contentions, it was late Allhaji Wada Nas while reminding Ribadu on the need to tender a deserve of respect for Chief Joshua Dariye of Plateau state, went beyond borders that whether Nuhu Ribadu will follow President Obasanjo to Otta farm after his tenure in

Aso Rock. because late Nas felt the certain briskly disposed approaches that are incomprehensible and personalized.

The contradictions in Ribadu's statement notwithstanding, the ammunitions that provides power in the contemporary power game is not rationalisations but money and rigging ability as exemplified by the 2003 elections. Unless the situation changes, by the present Nigeria standard, *IBB is the most powerful man in the Nigerian political waters, it does not matter whether one likes his face or not.* On the issue of indictment of IBB, it is either the Presidency felt an attempt along that line will force the falling of rumbles in the ranks of power contentions or that IBB knows something about Nigeria that Nigerians don't know, in that case turning at the end as a hero of a sort. Whatever; Ribadu's recent statement will raise more posers to the genuinity of government claims now and in the past, if at all the statement is correctly reported as said. An affirmative approval will uphold what Chief Femi-Kayode said earlier on, that he had the approval of the content of his letter of the presidency in responding to Colonel Abubakar Umar's letter to President Olusegun on the state of the nation. Like Ribadu, Kayode said in his letter that Abubakar Umar and his small group apparently referring to IBB group that he holds brief for *will NEVER SMELL POWER IN NIGERIA AGAIN (emphasis mine)*".

Both Ribadu's recent submissions and Fani-Kayode's past assertions are correlative and similar in rhyme except that it was tendered at different occasions of circumstances. If wishes are horses Ribadu's and Fani-Kayode's sent errands can work but politics is not simple arithmetic. When Senator Ali Modu Sheriff (then in the National Assembly) disclosed an colossus sum as his war chest to out-stage the then Alhaji Mala Kachalla of Borno State as Governor, Governor Kachalla even with incumbency factor of power and control of resources had to reign himself to defeat even before the main event and had to go into an alien party and the Senator was already sitting on the throne before the official announcement. Similarly in Kwara Sate, Chief Olusola Saraki had barricaded his erstwhile pal in politics, Alhaji Mohammed Lawal in a tense fight of effecting up Lawal to down. Lawal in a muscle pulling contest which saw his own son Chief Bukola Saraki emerging as Chief executive of Kwara State and so on. If these antecedents are anything to follow, then Nuhu Ribadu and Femi Fani-Kayode should just hold their nerves for politics to take its course but pray this time that a genuine fashion will emerge, which all indices had consistently shown that Nigeria State is not a vast rationality island neither is it an empire of ubiquitous intervention.

Except IBB himself provide a truce to the already truculent inkling coming out prematurely and with the massive international support he enjoys, I already foresee his presence around Aso Rock - the seat of power. This is a reality that Nigerians must live with for now. If the option of politics fails, IBB has an option of politicizing politics and the present day politicians know it. Just watch out.

*E-mail: mamzapaul@yahoo.com*

# Trust International

Foreign & Diplomatic

## 56 Journalists killed in 2004

Fifty-six journalists around the world were killed in 2004 because of their jobs, the deadliest 12 months for reporters in a decade, the Committee to Protect Journalists reported Monday.

Of the 56, the committee said, 36 were targeted for murder, continuing a long-term trend in annual surveys of the safety of journalists.

Iraq remained by far the most dangerous country for journalists, and 2004 featured a dramatic shift of the risk of death in combat to native Iraqi journalists. Most of the 23 reporters killed there were Iraqis, and the committee said 9 of the 23 were murdered.

"The toll made the war in Iraq one of the deadliest conflicts for journalists in recent history," the report said.

The profession became more hazardous in other ways as well, as government control over the news media increased in Russia and all the other former Soviet republics except the three Baltic states, and 122 journalists - 42 of them in

China - were imprisoned for their reporting.

In the United States, a reporter was jailed for job-related reasons for the first time in three years, the group said. The reporter, Jim Taricani of WJAR television in Providence, Rhode Island, is serving six months' home confinement for refusing to reveal a source.

In the report, "Attacks on the Press in 2004," the advocacy group wrote: "Nowhere are new, harsh realities more evident than in Russia, where a purge of independent voices on national television and an alarming suppression of news coverage during the Beslan hostage crisis marked a year in which President Vladimir Putin increasingly exerted Soviet-style control over the media."

In the other 12 former Soviet republics, it said, controls on the news media are more stringent than at any time since the closing years of the Soviet Union.

The number of 56 journalists killed was the highest since 1994, when 66

died. Many of those were victims of fighting in Algeria's civil war.

Most of the reporters who were jailed last year were locked up on vague "anti-state" charges, such as sedition, subversion and working against the interests of the state, the group said.

Four countries accounted for more than three-quarters of the

## -Report

122 imprisoned journalists: China, with 42; Cuba, with 23; Eritrea, with 17; and Myanmar, with 11.

and Myanmar, with 11. (VIEWS)



Zimbabwean President, Robert Mugabe

## Zimbabwe lifts ban on Newspaper

Zimbabwe's Supreme Court quashed a ban on the independent *Daily News* newspaper, known for its anti-government line, but upheld a controversial media law that has forced three other newspapers to close down.

Chief Justice Godfrey Chidyausiku said the government-controlled Media and Information Commission (MIC) had flouted all norms by ordering the paper to close without even giving its management a chance to defend themselves.

"This is a serious violation of the fair hearing principle and a gross irregularity justifying the setting aside of that determination," the judgment said.

The MIC, handpicked by former information minister Jonathan Moyo, had refused to register the newspaper, defying a directive by Zimbabwe's Administrative Court in October 2003.

It was ordered closed on the ground that it did not have the mandatory publishing licence from the MIC.

Chidyausiku said MIC chairman Tafataona Mahoso had displayed a bias against the *Daily News* before he took part in a meeting to consider the newspaper's application for a publishing licence.

Mahoso was quoted in a government-owned daily as branding the *Daily News* "an outlaw" days before his commission sat to examine the newspaper's application for a licence.

"It was shown that the utterances could have created an apprehension in the minds of reasonable men that justice would not be done," the judge said.

The *Daily News* and its sister paper, the *Daily News* on Sunday, were forcibly closed in September 2003 under Zimbabwe's stringent media laws which require all news organisations to obtain a licence from the commission.

In March last year, the *Daily News*' publishers, Associated Newspapers of Zimbabwe (ANZ), went to the Supreme Court to argue that sections of the media law, which has been condemned by rights groups here and abroad, violated the constitution.

But the court on Monday refused to strike down sections of Zimbabwe's tough media laws, saying "there was nothing in the newspaper group's appeal that establishes that the contentious sections are 'unconstitutional'."

ANZ chief executive officer Samuel Sipepa Nkomo cautiously welcomed the ruling saying he was "really disappointed" that it took so long to come but underlined that it meant there was still hope for the independent media.

"I am really disappointed with the time it has taken for delivery of this judgment, but at the same time I am happy that the decision to refuse us registration has been set aside," Nkomo told a news conference.

"That I believe is a sign of hope for the independent press, that we can still continue to exist. I am happy that at least the Media and Information Commission now knows that they are supposed to give us a licence and we will see whether they give us a licence in the coming few days," he said.

The *Daily News* was launched in 1999, providing nearly a million readers with the only independent alternative to two state-run dailies - the Herald and the Chronicle.

It proved to be a thorn in the side of President Robert Mugabe's government, with its harshly critical editorial line.

Mugabe in January signed into law an amendment toughening up the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act which can see unlicensed journalists jailed for up to two years.

The original law was passed in March 2002, just days after Mugabe's victory in controversial presidential polls which were widely slammed as being marred by violence and fraud.

Following its promulgation, four independent newspapers have been shut down and scores of journalists arrested while others have fled the country for fear of arrest.

## Press freedom: The Aljazeera story

Al Jazeera's correspondent Taysir Alouni is in a Madrid jail for no other reason than challenging the Western and distinctively the American narrative of the Third World.

Alouni is not a terrorist, and Spanish High Court judge Baltasar Garzon knows this very well. In fact, it appears that Alouni was arrested - first in September 2003 - before the charges against him were even engineered.

Various reports spoke of considerable American and Israeli influence in concocting the prosecutors' list. The warm-hearted and brilliant journalist had suddenly become a suspected terrorist mastermind.

Alouni's real crime, however, was his unmatched contribution to journalism during the American war and subsequent invasion of Afghanistan in 2001.

While Washington wished to convey one very well-orchestrated - and largely fabricated - narrative of the war, Alouni, the last standing journalist in Afghanistan, told another.

He was little concerned with what the well-dressed Pentagon military brass had to say about the precision of their "smart bombs", which smartly wiped out entire villages and took the lives of thousands.

Alouni's footage and on-scene reports countered the White House claims. He narrated a completely different story, where flattened houses, blown up bodies and limbless children were the main characters. Alouni's reports were not unsubstantiated propaganda.

They were coming live from faceless mountainside villages near Kabul, from over-flooded and critically under-equipped hospitals, and of course from morgues and fresh mounds of earth, where mass graves were being dug as heaps of bodies stood waiting.

By: Ramzy Baroud

One might make the claim that Alouni's lone well-documented account of Afghanistan will disturb and defy the official American liberation story for many years to come.

According to the prevailing conventional wisdom of US foreign policy, Alouni committed two grand mistakes.

The first is obvious; he exposed the holes in every Department of Defense assertion that Afghans were not targeted by the war and thus offset the outlandish claim that the US military action against Afghanistan was meant to liberate the people of that country.

Second is the less obvious, that deals with the right to narrate.

Throughout history, the West understood the Arab and Muslim world based on its own interpretations of that world, and cared little for the East's own self-perception.

Thus Western designations of the Middle East did not necessarily reflect the Middle East as much as it reflected its interpretation by Western narrators.

While such a practice seems harmless as far as literally works are concerned, in politics and war the consequences are grave.

For example, "Saddam cannot be trusted" is a diluted remake of "Arabs cannot be trusted", a unifying theme among many Western intellectuals and Orientalists. The fact that Saddam had no weapons of mass destruction changed nothing.

Moreover, the fact that in the town of Fallujah alone, more Iraqis were killed than those who died in the attacks of September 11 should not essentially translate that both tragedies are equal, for after all, the Fallujah victims are Arabs.

(One must mention that the Western narrative celebrated those

deaths as a victory against insurgency and labored to pin a civilized face to the mass graves. On the other hand, the mere linking between US foreign policy and 9/11, most recently by University of Colorado professor Ward Churchill, could warrant a nationwide backlash and overt charges of treason.)

The tragedy becomes two-fold when one realizes that the dominating narrative of the West has taken over the Arab world as well.

Not only does the West interpret the Middle East to a Western audience, but the Middle East trusts no other interpretation of itself, albeit unreliable and unrepresentative, unless it is Western.

This is, of course, anything but atypical since it widely conforms to the indoctrination process that most colonized Third World countries experienced.

However, as dominating as the Western narrative may be, there have been some serious attempts to confront it. Perhaps Al Jazeera television has been the most successful in that attempt, and undoubtedly, Alouni has been at the forefront of that success.

In the post 9/11 era, the Western media celebrated Al Jazeera, for the latter's mission was seen as complementary to the Western press's constant attempt to "expose" Arab countries and "highlight" their lack of democracy, and so forth.

So it is no wonder why Al Jazeera was quickly labeled the "CNN of the Arab world". This was not a mere badge of honor, but an indication of the faulty assumption that Al Jazeera was a conformist, rather than a truly independent and critical media outlet. The defining moment was the US war on Afghanistan. It was then and there that Al Jazeera seemed to rebel against the role to which it was entrusted.

Al-Jazeera

# Trust International

## Africa

### Ugandans ask world court to spare rebels

A delegation from northern Uganda is in The Hague to try to persuade the International Criminal Court (ICC) not to issue arrest warrants for rebel chiefs.

The group, which will meet the court's chief prosecutor, fears warrants would deter Lords Resistance Army (LRA) commanders from accepting an amnesty.

They are also concerned that it could hamper efforts to end the conflict in northern Uganda through peaceful means.

Human rights groups estimate that the LRA has abducted 20,000 children.

One-and-a-half million people have been displaced

### Nigeriens protest tax rise

Thousands of protesters in Niger have demonstrated outside parliament against rising prices - some calling for the president's resignation.

They were complaining about tax increases of nearly 20% imposed in January on basic commodities.

The BBC's correspondent in Niamey said the rally ended in violence, with shops looted and streetlights smashed.

Niger, rated as one of the world's poorest nations, was badly affected by last year's locust invasion.

President Mamadou Tandja, who won a second term in office in December, has brought a measure of economic and political stability to the country.

The protesters said the recent tax hikes have pushed the cost of sugar, flour and milk beyond the means of many people.

Slogans like "President Mamadou and his prime minister should resign" were being shouted by the demonstrators, BBC correspondent said.

Taxes were also levied on water and electricity and some placards read: "Water is a constitutional right in Niger".

The speaker of parliament promised to pass on to government the list of demands handed to him by the crowd that marched to parliament.

The protesters warned they would return to the streets on Saturday if their demands were not met.

Two thirds of Niger's 11 million people live on less than \$1 a day and the country is at the bottom of the UN Human Development Index.

since the fighters launched their rebellion 19 years ago.

The delegation of religious, cultural and district leaders is meeting with Luis Moreno Ocampo in an attempt to stop - or at least slow - the wheels of justice.

LRA rebels, who have no clear political agenda, are continuing to kill innocent civilians.

The UPDF has been fighting a long war against the rebels

Many feel the ICC's work is likely to dissuade the rebels from accepting an amnesty offered by the Ugandan government.

"We all need justice. Peace and justice go together," said delegate David Onen Acana II.

"But let's work on the peace first and the justice later on," he said.

The ICC has indicated that soon it intends to issue arrest

warrants for several senior LRA rebel commanders.

A former minister working as a mediator between the rebels and the Ugandan government has said she would have no option but to abandon the whole peace process if those warrants of arrest were issued.

The Ugandan military is currently on the offensive against the LRA rebels and has weakened them.

But observers doubt the military option alone will ever produce lasting peace - hence the calls for the door for a peaceful end to the conflict to be kept open.



Sudanese ambassador to Nigeria, Abdr-raheem Khalil. Sudan has criticised the United States for campaigning for UN sanctions against it. The UN, however reported that 180,000 people have died since the war broke out in Darfur.

### Thousands flee Kenyan clan raid

Thousands have fled their homes in north-eastern Kenya after 30 people died in a revenge attack between rival Somali clans on Tuesday.

The BBC's said some 5,000 members of the Garre clan, targeted in the raid by 80 Murule militiamen, have fled to El Wak town.

Since December some 50 people, mainly women and children, have died in violence in Mandera district.

A severe drought has led to competition for control of water and pastures.

"We have boosted security and patrols along the areas that we think are vulnerable to revenge attacks," Gabriel Ndolo, a police commander in the area, told AFP news agency.

The 80 heavily armed men involved in the attack on the village have crossed over the border to neighbouring Somalia.

Security along the border has been tightened up and helicopters have been flying over the area, BBC correspondent said.

Some Murule families - up to 2,000 people, fearing a revenge attack, have also been fleeing their home areas to the towns of Mandera and Fino.

Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai, Kenya's deputy environment minister, said in January she was ready to use her influence to reconcile the warring clans.

But BBC correspondent in the region says there has been little evidence so far of government efforts to resolve the dispute.

The communities grazing their livestock are scattered over a large area and police find it difficult to monitor, he said.

Professor Maathai said frequent clashes in Kenya and Somalia were rooted in land degradation and conflicts between pastoralists and farmers.

### 'Zimbabwe poll not free and fair'

This month's parliamentary elections in Zimbabwe cannot be free and fair, according to a new report from human rights group Amnesty International.

An Amnesty team visited Zimbabwe last month and said opposition candidates and activists are being

harassed and denied food aid.

The report, however, found there was less violence than in recent polls.

South African President Thabo Mbeki recently said he thought the elections would be free and fair.

"Persistent, long-term and systematic violations of

human rights and the government's repeated and deliberate failure to bring to justice those suspected to be responsible means that Zimbabweans are unable to take part in the election process freely and without fear," said Amnesty's Africa programme director, Kolawole Olaniyan.

Although the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) agrees that violence has declined ahead of the 31 March poll, Amnesty said that many voters are still afraid.

"The use of implicit threats and non-violent tactics to intimidate opposition supporters is widespread," Mr Olaniyan said.

"Given past acts of reprisal against opposition voters including eviction, assault and denial of food, such tactics create a pervasive climate of fear and threat," Mr Olaniyan said.

Zimbabwe's ruling Zanu-PF party denied rigging previous elections and said the MDC is crying foul because it is losing support.

The government also pointed to electoral reforms, such as the setting up of an Electoral Commission and Court.

In the court's first ruling, it allowed jailed MDC MP Roy Bennett to seek re-election.

### Malawian journalists arrested

Two Malawian journalists and a civil servant have been arrested over reports that President Bingu wa Mutharika moved out of his residence because of ghosts.

The journalists, including a BBC reporter correspondent, have been charged with publishing false news likely to cause public alarm and fear.

Mr Mutharika angrily denied the reports and suggested they were part of a feud with his predecessor, Bakili Muluzi.

On Tuesday, 25 journalists staged a protest to support their colleagues.

They delivered food to Mr Tenthani, Reuters reporter Mabvuto Banda and the personal assistant to the vice president, Horace Nyaka. Mr Tenthani, who also writes for the AP news agency, said he is standing by his story.

The president's advisor on Christian affairs back-tracked on his part in the reports.

Reverend Malani Mtonga is denying telling several journalists that Christian priests had been called to exorcise the "evil spirits".

Earlier, another aide who did not want to be named, had told our reporter: "Sometimes the president feels rodents crawling all over his body but when lights are turned on he sees nothing."

But Mr Mutharika dismissed the suggestion.

"I have not met any ghosts yet, I have never in my life been afraid of them," he told journalists on his return from a trip to Belgium.

He also said that allies of Mr Muluzi might be behind the reports.

Mr Muluzi hand-picked Mr Mutharika to succeed him as leader of the ruling UDF party and he won elections

last year but the two fell out when Mr Mutharika launched a fight against corruption.

Lowani Mgonga, Malawi director of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (Misa), told the BBC News website that the government was using the law to "silence the media".

"The fear or alarm that the police are talking about is not there," he said.

Controversy has raged over the costly palace which housed parliament until Mr Mutharika's election.

MPs are having to rent a venue for when parliament reconvenes at the end of March, after a gap of six months.

The president justified his

decision to evict parliament by arguing that the New State House had originally been built as a presidential residence.

Kamuzu Banda, Malawi's founding president, spent only 90 days in the palace which took 20 years to build and cost \$100m.

With its 300 air-conditioned rooms, it is set in 555 hectares (1,332 acres) of land outside the capital.

When Bakili Muluzi, Mr Mutharika's predecessor, came to power in 1994 he refused to live here, condemning its "obscene opulence".

Instead, he used the Sanjika Palace in Malawi's commercial capital, Blantyre.

### Somali leaders back calls for foreign troops

A section of Somali leaders on Tuesday supported proposals to deploy foreign peacekeepers into their war-torn country.

However, they said the troops should not include forces from countries neighbouring Somalia.

And the group, which included MPs in the new transitional parliament, deputy ministers and civil society representatives, scoffed at Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni's remarks that Somalia was on its knees and should be salvaged by an Igad peace-keeping force.

"We are in full agreement with our colleagues that peace-keeping forces should be deployed to our country. However, troops from neighbouring Somalia, that

is, the frontline states, will not be part of the team," said Ali Bashe, who read a statement during a Press conference in Nairobi.

Sources later said the leaders were actually opposed to peacekeepers from Ethiopia, an old rival of Somalia.

"What these people mean is that they particularly don't want Ethiopian troops in their country," said the source.

Among the signatories was a former prime minister in the first Transitional National Government (TNG), Mohamed Abdi Yusuf.

They were, however, unanimous in their endorsement of an agreement reached by the cabinet and parliamentarians last week in Nairobi on the urgency for restoration of security in the capital Mogadishu.

### Hungary marks National Day

The Embassy of Hungary in Nigeria Tuesday celebrated its national day which marks the beginning of their National Movement for Independence over 100 years ago.

Speaking at the occasion, the ambassador of Hungary to Nigeria, Mr. Gyorgy Szabo, said new bridges should be built between his country and Nigeria, saying that diplomacy was more about creation and making new things happen between the two countries and peoples.

He said the countries should explore new ways, and pointed out that Nigeria and Hungary are already involved in food processing, agriculture, medicine, education and small scale factories.

By Elkanah Chawal, Reporter (Foreign Desk)

"The bridges we have built already, we have to follow up upon them. I mentioned the areas we have been involved in for 40 years. It should continue," he said.

The ambassador stated that Nigeria and Hungarian relations goes as far as 40 years ago which was celebrated by the Embassy last year. He said the relation is improving and that his deputy foreign minister's visit to Nigeria in January shows the commitment of his country to Nigeria.

He added that many Nigerians have been trained in Hungary, especially doctors, and stated that benefit from relations has to be mutual.

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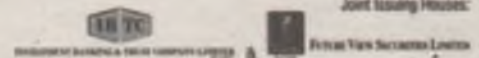
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# Business Trust

## Today's flight schedule

Albarka Air	
Lagos - Abuja	07:20
	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 - Abuj	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 - CB	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.
Lagos - sokoto	8:55a.m.
Sokoto - Lagos	11:55a.m.

Most airlines operate the same flight schedule on week days.

The Director General of the Bureau for Public Enterprises (BPE), Mrs. Irene Chigbue, has said that the BPE had concluded arrangement to complete the privatisation of the National Aviation Handling Company (NAHCO) through an Initial Public Offering (IPO) by June as approved by the National

## NAHCO for privatisation June - Chigbue

By Mohammad S. Shehu,  
Reporter Aviation

Council on Privatisation (NCP).

Chigbue disclosed that the commencement of the privatisation of NAHCO which started since 1999 was

thwarted by series of stakeholders conflict which she said made it impossible for BPE to sell the company.

"You are fully aware that the privatisation of NAHCO commenced way back in 1999 and the BPE was not able to make any progress because there was stakeholders conflict, and it was impossible to reconcile the conflict and impossible to have a common agenda," she stated.

This is coming at the heels of the raging controversy over the financial position of NAHCO following last month's suspension of the gene-

ral manager, Musa Agboneni, over alleged misappropriation of the company's funds.

Speaking after the inauguration of the reconstituted Aviation Sector Reform/Implementation Committee by the aviation minister, Mallam Isa Yuguda, the DG added that on the list for concessioning (private sector participation) is the Federal Aviation's Authority of Nigeria (FAAN).

She disclosed that the consultant, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), is already in the country to formalise the deal and build a new agenda preparatory for the take off.

The concession, when completed, will put the country's 22 airports under private control. She added that BPE will finalise the full privatisation of all enterprises under the aviation sector by the middle of this year.

While inaugurating the committee earlier, Mallam Yuguda said the rationale behind the privatisation was to enable Nigerian public have a stake in the business of aviation.

The committee under the minister has representatives of FAAN, NCAA, BPE, NAMA, NCA and other stakeholders.

## FG, IDA embark on MSMEs project

The federal government in collaboration with the International Development Association (IDA), a World Bank agency, have embarked on Macro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) project, in three states in the country.

The MSMEs according to Ms Irene Arias, Business Development Officer of International Finance Corporation (IFC) at Hamdala Hotel in Kaduna, is a 'pilot project' for three states namely Abia, Kaduna and Lagos in 'Catfish Industry and market for Business Development Services' (BDS).

Ms Irene said that the project will focus on the fish industry due to its durability, scales and potential to income generation, adding that it will also be used to measure the performance in access to finance on MSMEs in the improvement of investment in the three states.

Also speaking, the director of Emerging Market Economic, United Kingdom, Mr. Sunil Saha, said that the aim was to increase the performance of levels of MSMEs in selected non-oil sectors, and also to develop and strengthen the capacity of local intermediaries to deliver financial and non financial services.

Mr. Sunil said that the main components of MSMEs projects is access to finance, to establish local commercially viable, regulated micro-finance companies, business development service, in order to meet the demand of MSME in target states and create investment climate. Others includes public and private sectors partnership development that provide best capacity building to government institutions, monitoring and evaluation of project components.

Mr. Sunil who is also the manager of the Project Management Unit (PMU), said that the MSMEs is critical for job creation, pointing out that it create more Gross Domestic Product (GDP) than the formal sector.

He said that the project which commenced in January will be implemented over a five year period, adding that the Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC) is the executing agent of the project on behalf of the federal government, while Project Management Unit (PMU) function is to be provided by UME

From Aliyu Haruna,  
Correspondent (Kaduna)

limited, of the United Kingdom.

In his remark, Governor Ahmad Mohammad Makarfi of Kaduna state said that it was in recognition of MSMEs that the state government partnered with New African Merchant Bank to facilitate loans for the small and medium entrepreneurs in the state.

Alhaji Musa Baba Zaria, the state's commissioner of commerce and industry who represented Governor Makarfi disclosed that the state also established the Kaduna state Industrialisation Trust Fund in order to create enabling atmosphere for potential investors.

On land acquisition for the establishment of industries, Governor Makarfi said that the state do not discriminate in the provision of land to investors.

## NESG holds summit June

The Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG) has announced June 1 - 3, 2005 as new date for the 11<sup>th</sup> Nigeria Economic Summit. It would be recalled that the summit couldn't hold last year (2004).

The Director-General of NESG, Dr. Mansur Ahmed, who made public this development in a statement made available to Daily Trust in Lagos stated that the event which will take place at NICON HILTON Hotel, Abuja, will be formally declared open by President Olusegun Obasanjo.

He said that the theme of the summit for this year is "Building Momentum for Economic Transformation and Growth," saying that the theme and format owes to the recognition that the federal government has a well documented economic agenda (NEEDS).

Therefore, he posited that the summit will build on "the key themes of NEEDS and elaborate on them to establish how to facilitate the achievement of the goals and targets stated in the document.

"It is expected that the open forums and the break out sessions of the 14 policy commission will generate meaningful dialogue and discourse which should result in concrete recommendations for the government to fast track the achievements of goals stated in the NEEDS document."

## Former WorldCom boss, Ebbers found guilty

Former WorldCom Incorporated Chief Executive Bernard Ebbers, a one-time milkman who turned an obscure long distance phone carrier into a telecommunications giant, was found guilty on Tuesday of orchestrating an \$11-billion accounting scandal that drove the company into bankruptcy.

The federal jury returned its verdict on the eighth day of deliberations, convicting the 63-year-old Ebbers of fraud, conspiracy and filing false documents with securities regulators. He is set to be sentenced on June 13 and faces up to 85 years in prison.

The tall, bearded Ebbers, who worked as a coach, bouncer and milkman before

getting into the telecommunications business, sat with his hands folded as the verdict was read and showed little reaction. He then turned to hug his wife, who was crying.

"We profoundly disagree with the verdict," said Reid Weingarten, the lead attorney for Ebbers, promising to appeal the conviction. "The fight will continue."

Ebbers declined to comment to reporters after the verdict, which was viewed as a major victory for federal prosecutors and corporate governance reformists.

Ebbers spent two days on the witness stand during the trial defending himself against charges that he masterminded an accounting fraud at the worldwide telecommunications giant he transformed through a series of takeovers beginning in the early 1980s.

Along the way, Ebbers became widely regarded as a savvy entrepreneur and maverick, cementing his reputation in 1998 with the \$40 billion purchase of MCI Communications Corp., the largest acquisition in corporate history at the time.

Those who knew Ebbers describe him as a brusque and exacting executive with a quick temper, known to toss underlings out of meetings and publicly embarrass them.

Cost-conscious and a stickler for odd details, he went so far as to count the cars in the parking lots at night in the Clinton, Missis-

sippi, headquarters to see how many people were working late and who was going home.

But he could also be a charming and folksy CEO, who preferred cowboy boots to suits, opened shareholder meetings with a prayer, ate lunch in the cafeteria and ran a company that had become a Wall Street darling by the late 1990s.

WorldCom's finances and popularity began to deteriorate, however, as the dot-com bubble burst and growth of the telecommunications industry slowed. By late 2000, WorldCom accountants began making false entries to hide the financial problems from investors and the public.

Ebbers has maintained he was unaware of the fraud: indeed, he told the jury of seven women and five men that he would have put a stop to it had he known it was occurring.

Instead, he said, he was kept in the dark about the financial tricks used by Chief Financial Officer Scott Sullivan, one of six WorldCom executives indicted when investigators uncovered the \$11 billion scandal in 2002.

"He never told me he had made an entry that wasn't right," Ebbers testified. "If he had, we wouldn't be here today."

Sullivan, like all of the executives except Ebbers, pleaded guilty to fraud and agreed to cooperate with prosecutors.



Tele-Quip system Managing Director, Hamisu Idris Madugu receiving certificate for best airtime distributor from M-tel chief executive officer, Mr. Edwin Momife during an awards night, organised by M-tel, to honour outstanding franchise dealers in Abuja ...last week. Pix: Felix Onigbinde

# Business Trust

## Energy

### Petroleum Act: Oil producers, DPR disagree over amendments

Oil Producers Trade Section (OPTS) of the Lagos chamber of commerce, the umbrella body of oil producing companies in Nigeria Tuesday disagree with the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR) over some proposed amendments in the petroleum act and production sharing contract decree currently under review by the National Assembly.

Stating their position to the House Committee on Petroleum Resources at the National Assembly, chairman of the OPTS Mr John P. Chaplin said there are existing laws which already cover some of the proposed amendments sponsored by DPR.

He said significant investments have been made based on the existing legal

By Hamisu Muhammad, Business Reporter

and fiscal regimes, contractual arrangements with federal government and multilateral agencies.

According to the chairman, the sanctity of these contracts should be maintained stressing that changing the terms midstream would have serious implications for the companies and Nigeria.

Parts of the legislation considered unfavourable by the oil majors are abandonment and abandonment security of the oil fields, refining 25 percent to 50 percent of the crude oil produced by the oil company locally and employment of permanent skill staff as against contract appointment.

Managing Director, Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC), Basil Omiyi tyold the law markers that refining business is not a priority to SPDC based on the current market conditions.

He said in most instances, Shell is combining refining business with marketing to succeed, if not "refining business is a very competitive and hard to maintain."

Responding on the contract staff Mr Omiyi said oil exploitation is a capital and technical intensive which require very minimal manpower.

He therefore urged the National Assembly to consider investors in the new legislation that will provide favourable environment in the industry.



Group Managing Director, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Engineer Funsho Kupolokun (middle) being conducted round the brand new petroleum tankers by Mr M. S. Barkinda (left) ...recently.

### ExxonMobil fetes long term investment strategy

Chairman and Chief Executive of ExxonMobil corporation, Lee Raymond has said that the company is committed to a long term market view even as he stressed that this has singularly give it the leverage for growth among its peers.

He explained that the company's focal point is timing and that its sector leading return on capital employed is the fallout of management vision to make better investment decision that its contemporaries.

According to him: "Return on capital employed is a very long term measure. Ultimately what it does is reflect a broad approach to business that is different from company to company and gets replicated in the return."

Drawing inferences from the company's presence in Libya, president of ExxonMobil Corporation, Rex Tillerson stressed that the company was involved in the first bidding round in the North African nation's oil industry since the United States lifted ban on transacting business there.

"Libya is somewhere we were interested in. The window of opportunity there isn't close. We don't have to

From Mohammed Shosanya, Correspondent (Lagos) with agency reports

be anywhere. We can be patient because of the diversity of our resources and the opportunities we have all over the world," he added.

### NMGS boss urges FG to seek alternative to oil

The president of the Nigerian Mining and Geosciences Society (NMGS), Dr Joseph Orie has called on the federal government to evolve a sustainable policy toward developing other natural resources of society country instead of running oil economy.

Speaking in an address at the society's 41<sup>st</sup> summit lecture tagged Eko 2005 on Tuesday, the president noted that the nation's petroleum reserve is the basis of its existence.

According to him, all reserves accumulated over the years may fizzle out and no longer be in existence if the Obasanjo led government short in evolving on aggressive drive to arrest exhaustive reliance on petroleum.

Dr Orie also charged the federal government to borrow

He further disclosed that the oil giant is holding a powerful discussions with Venezuela regarding the country's decision to raise its charges on the company's production to 16.6 percent from one percent.

a leaf from developed countries like China whose every policy was focused and driven round the development of its economic components.

He said the 2008 planned date for ending gas flaring on the country should not be allowed to falter while also expressing the readiness of the geosciences society to help in this regard and other environmental issues.

Meanwhile, the commissioner of solid mineral in Lagos state, Akin Doherty has implored the NMGS to offer export advice toward turning the recurrent environmental degradation and massive flooding in the state.

The commissioner who represented Governor Bola Ahmed Tinubu said the advice is necessary to reposition the state as the economic revenue centre of the country.



## THE INSTITUTE OF CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS OF NIGERIA

(Established by Act of Parliament No. 15 of 1965)

### List of Accredited Universities/Polytechnics As At December 2004

INSTITUTIONS	EXPIRY ACADEMIC SESSION
1. Abia State University, Uturu	2005/2006
2. Abia State Polytechnic, Aba	2002/2003
3. Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	2003/2004
4. Akeru - Ibiem Federal Polytechnic, Afikpo	2003/2004
5. Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma	2004/2005
6. Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi	2004/2005
7. Babcock University, Ilishan - Remo	2004/2005
8. Bayero University, Kano	2006/2007
9. Benue State University, Makurdi	2006/2007
10. Delta State University, Abraka	2003/2004
11. Enugu State University of Science & Technology, Enugu	2003/2004
12. Federal Polytechnic, Ado - Ekiti	2003/2004
13. Federal Polytechnic, Bauchi	2002/2003
14. Federal Polytechnic, Birnin	2006/2007
15. Federal Polytechnic, Edo	2006/2007
16. Federal Polytechnic, Idah	2006/2007
17. Federal Polytechnic, Ibaro	2002/2003
18. Federal Polytechnic, Nekede, Owerri	2004/2005
19. Federal Polytechnic, Nasarawa	2002/2003
20. Federal Polytechnic, Oba	2006/2007
21. Federal Polytechnic, Oke	2006/2007
22. Igbinedion University, Okada, Benin-City	2005/2006
23. Institute of Management & Technology, Enugu	2004/2005
24. Imo State University, Owerri	2003/2004
25. Kaduna Polytechnic, Kaduna	2003/2004
26. Kano State Polytechnic, Kano	2004/2005
27. Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin	2001/2002
28. Lagos City Polytechnic, Ikaja, Lagos	2006/2007
29. Lagos State Polytechnic, Isolo, Lagos	2003/2004
30. Madonna University, Ota	2006/2007
31. Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Abeokuta	2006/2007
32. Nig. Army School of Finance & Administration, Apapa (NASFA)	2004/2005
33. Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka	2006/2007
34. Nuhu Bamalli Polytechnic, Zaria	2001/2002
35. Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife	2003/2004
36. Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye	2002/2003
37. Osun State Polytechnic, Iree	2006/2007
38. Ramat Polytechnic, Maiduguri	2006/2007
39. Rivers State Polytechnic, Bori, Port - Harcourt	2006/2007
40. Rivers State University of Science & Technology, Port-Harcourt	2004/2005
41. Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Owo	2005/2006
42. The Polytechnic, Ibadan	2003/2004
43. University of Benin, Benin - City	2005/2006
44. University of Calabar, Calabar	2005/2006
45. University of Ilorin, Ilorin	2002/2003
46. University of Lagos, Akoka	2004/2005
47. University of Jos, Jos	2001/2002
48. University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri	2003/2004
49. University of Nigeria, Nsukka (Enugu Campus)	2004/2005
50. University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt	2002/2003
51. Waziri Umaru Polytechnic, Bamin - Kebbi	2003/2004
52. Yaba College of Technology, Yaba	2004/2005

Students and members are enjoined to pay their annual subscriptions and update their contact addresses as soon as a change occurs for proper record keeping.

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Registrar/Chief Executive

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# Business Trust

## Finance

### First Atlantic Bank leads capital appreciation stocks

Most banking stocks suffered significant depreciation in their market capitalisation in 2004 but First Atlantic Bank Plc recorded outstanding capital appreciation to lead the high-flying banking stocks during the year.

According to a release from the bank at the end of 2004, First Atlantic Bank's market value per share recorded an increase of 183.5 percent above its opening value for the year, about 892 percent ahead of the year-end growth of 18.5 percent recorded by the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE)'s all-equities based all share index.

Analysis of banking stocks performance showed that out of the 29 stocks that

started the year, 18 banking stocks ended on the downside while two others stagnated at the opening values. First Atlantic Bank led eight other banking stocks including Intercontinental Bank Plc, Access Bank Plc, NAL Bank, Guaranty Trust Bank and First Bank of Nigeria on the capital appreciation list.

In line with international best practices, the Nigerian securities market adopts the 12 month calendar year as a standard review period. The Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), on this basis, usually present annual reports detailing performance of the market and its various components.

The official report of the NSE indicated that the all share index - which measures overall share pricing trend of equities, recorded a growth of 18.5 percent from its opening value of 20,128.94 to close 2004 at 23,844.45. At the height of its bullish rally, the index had hit 30,703.46, representing about 53 percent on its opening value.

"The performance of the index reflects the difficult economic environment quoted companies operated in 2004." Dr (Mrs) Ndi Okereke Onyuike, director general, Nigerian Stock Exchange had explained in the report for the year.

### Okonkwo endorses ACB's IPO

The growing wave of endorsements of the ongoing public offer of ACB International bank Plc took a spiritual turn on Thursday as the founder of The Redeemed Evangelical Mission, TREM, Bishop Mike Okonkwo, poured effusive blessings on the bank's offer.

According to a release signed by its head corporate commission, Igwe U. Igwe, Bishop Okonkwo who spoke in Lagos during a courtesy call on him by the management of the bank led by managing director chief executive officer, Mr John I. Udeka, expressed confidence that the offer would record a huge success on account of what ACB has come to symbolise in the banking industry.

The immediate past president of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN), who is a former staff of the bank maintained that ACB has kept faith with Nigerians and should be treated no less by them in its moment of need.

According to him, the offer will be a success because Nigerians know what ACB stands for and that would ensure that the target of the bank's board and management in the ongoing public offer would be achieved.

Responding, the ACB boss, Mr John I. Udeka commended the Pentecostal Bishop for his remarkable evangelical activities over the years. He assured Okonkwo and all members of his church that ACB International Bank has a capacity to give subscribers to its public offer a good and fast return on investment.

### NCS charged to emulate military, others

The management of the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) has been charged to emulate other military and paramilitary agencies by honouring and sending-off their own retired high rank officers.

This advise was given in a press statement signed by a Lagos based industrialist, Prince Olu Ologbese.

Specifically, Prince Olu Ologbese noted with regret the NCS's inability to actualise their desire to send-off their own retired high rank officers particularly their former Comptroller-General of custom, Alhaji Mustapha Aliyu (OFR) whose tenure brought some respect to the custom and first comptroller-general to be best owed with national honour by the federal government while still in service.

"Whatever is the cause of this omission should by now be a thing of the past. And if there is anybody still against this send-off, the incumbent comptroller-general should appeal to such

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Chairman, Chartered Bank Plc, Lt-General Mohammed Wushishi (rtd) welcoming Executive Chairman, Chanchangi Airlines, Alhaji Ahmadu Chanchangi (right) to the bank's investors' forum in Kaduna ...recently.

### WEMA Bank now Western Union agent

Wema Bank Plc has been appointed a direct agent by Western Union for International Money Transfer services in the country.

Under the arrangement, Wema Bank will be required

to receive money from Western Union Money Transfer International on behalf of customers from any part of the world and pay to beneficiaries in any part of the country in US dollars or naira currency.

A statement communicating this from the bank signed by its spokesman, Eddy Ademosu, said with this development, Nigerians living abroad now have a wider and unhindered opportunity to transfer money to their relations and friends in any part of the country.

According to a statement issued by the public relations department of the bank, the Western Union service has since commenced in the branches of the bank nationwide.

The statement assured customers that adequate arrangements have been made by the bank in all its branches to ensure a success of the new service.

It said that the bank, which prides itself in excellent and prompt service delivery, has set up special pay-points in all its branches to attend to only customers of Western Union money transfer, thereby eliminating delays.

Meanwhile, the bank has been re-appointed by the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) for the collection of its duties and other charges.

The appointment, which was recently conveyed to the bank, is in recognition of its transparency and high operational efficiency in the banking industry.

Consequently upon this

positive development, the bank and the NCS have entered into a new agreement on collection of duties and other revenue.

It stated that the bank will take advantage of its over 110

on-line branches across the country, state of the art facilities and up-to-date information technology system to ensure that effective and efficient services are rendered to customers at all time.

### Ajibola, Asalu endorse NAL's N10bn offer

It was endorsement galore Friday for NAL Bank Plc's ongoing N10 billion offer as a plethora of top dignitaries who graced its investors forum at Golden Gate Restaurant, Ikoyi, Lagos commended the bank.

These dignitaries who include Vmbile Nigeria Limited chairman, Mr Gamaliel Onosode, former Attorney General and minister of justice, Chief Bola Ajibola and president Shareholders Solidarity Association of Nigeria, Asiwaju Akintunde Asalu who all hailed NAL Bank as a viable investment at this point in time.

According to Onosode, investing in NAL Bank is equal to identifying with the bank which has done a lot to contribute to national development saying that when the bank indigenised its equality back in the 70's it was done voluntarily.

As he said the federal government's indigenisation and privatisation efforts would not have been possible but for the patriotic zeal of the bank, saying that the bank represents Nigeria's

From Bright Ewulu, Deputy Business Editor (Lagos)

determination to take what is good in its past to correct the system.

Chief Ajibola said his business relationship with the bank began in 1963 and that since then he has kept faith with NAL, going further, he warned the youth across the country to be careful of the type of banks they invest in.

According to him his investment in NAL has paid off since the bank is still solid 40 years after he began dealings with it.

Asiwaju Asalu endorsed the bank's offer, saying that the bank's plans to partner with the State Bank of India is credible given the strength of the 200 year old bank.

He stressed that he has only endorsed two banks since the consolidation exercise kicked off and that he is only too glad to endorse it to any discerning investor, given the bank's human resources capacities, investment banking ability and increase of integrity.

# Business Trust

## 1ST-TIER SECURITIES

## THE NIGERIAN STOCK EXCHANGE

REPORT AS AT WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2005

COMPANY NAME	NO OF DEALS	QUOTATION(N)	QUANTITY TRADED	VALUE OF SHARES
CUTIX PLC	3	1.24	114,800	142,352.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>114,800</b>	<b>142,352.00</b>
<b>AGRICULTURE/AGRO-ALLIED</b>				
LIVESTOCK FEEDS PLC.	1	2.83	2,000	5,660.00
THE OKOMU OIL PALM COMPANY PLC	19	16.70	101,055	1,706,486.14
PRESCO PLC.	14	9.96	115,300	1,146,220.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>34</b>		<b>218,355</b>	<b>2,858,366.14</b>
<b>AIRLINES</b>				
AVIATION DEVELOPMENT COMPANY PLC.	3	1.02	111,000	111,220.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>111,000</b>	<b>111,220.00</b>
<b>AUTOMOBILE &amp; TYRE</b>				
DUNLOP NIGERIA PLC.	14	1.78	192,985	364,698.72
R. T. BRISCOE PLC.	56	4.10	372,578	1,505,615.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>70</b>		<b>565,563</b>	<b>1,870,313.72</b>
<b>BANKING</b>				
ACCESS BANK PLC	9	3.42	1,013,081	3,464,737.02
AFRIBANK NIGERIA PLC.	33	6.63	424,558	2,814,819.54
FIRST ATLANTIC BANK PLC	4	3.41	18,872	64,353.52
CHARTERED BANK PLC	1	3.90	5,000	19,500.00
COOPERATIVE BANK PLC.	2	1.92	2,200	4,224.00
COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT BANK PLC.	2	0.75	450	340.50
EIB INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	1	2.26	11,574	26,157.24
FIRST BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	540	22.98	2,575,817	59,238,260.94
FSB INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	45	1.32	8,407,769	11,098,255.08
GUARANTY TRUST BANK PLC.	359	10.20	2,794,560	28,991,596.30
GULF BANK OF NIGERIA PLC	18	0.38	8,822,715	3,189,525.82
HALLMARK BANK PLC	1	1.69	5,000	8,450.00
INTERNATIONAL MERCHANT BANK PLC.	18	0.56	692,403	395,584.99
INLAND BANK (NIGERIA) PLC.	46	1.65	10,431,500	16,931,226.50
INTERCONTINENTAL BANK PLC.	1	7.81	1,000	7,810.00
LION BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	2	0.58	15,160	8,792.80
MANUFACTURERS BANK NIGERIA PLC.	16	1.14	6,316,190	7,560,456.60
NAL BANK PLC.	4	2.80	400,000	1,120,000.00
OCEANIC BANK PLC	10	3.83	151,200	579,096.00
OMEGA BANK (NIGERIA) PLC.	15	1.42	117,334	165,080.09
STANDARD TRUST BANK PLC	19	7.41	676,065	5,009,641.65
TRANS INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	9	1.36	100,000	136,000.00
TRADE BANK PLC.	1	1.35	2,000	2,700.00
UNITED BANK FOR AFRICA PLC.	43	10.00	395,391	3,953,910.00
UNION BANK NIGERIA PLC.	303	18.50	1,449,374	27,080,729.74
UNIVERSAL TRUST BANK PLC	9	0.71	145,207	107,065.58
WEMA BANK PLC.	13	3.93	55,802	219,301.86
ZENITH BANK PLC	219	13.21	1,248,149	16,312,942.77
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>1,743</b>		<b>46,278,371</b>	<b>188,510,558.54</b>
<b>BREWERIES</b>				
GUINNESS NIGERIA PLC.	198	77.00	680,336	52,238,202.05
NIGERIAN BREWERIES PLC.	458	34.39	1,402,953	48,212,908.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>656</b>		<b>2,083,289</b>	<b>100,451,110.05</b>
<b>BUILDING MATERIALS</b>				
ASHAKA CEMENT PLC.	97	23.25	1,213,308	28,106,513.65
BENUE CEMENT COMPANY PLC.	7	4.20	470,000	2,012,000.00
CEMENT CO. OF NORTHERN NIG. PLC.	7	6.00	214,775	1,329,350.00
WEST AFR. PORTLAND CEMENT CO. PLC.	9	10.35	19,259	199,330.65
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>120</b>		<b>1,917,342</b>	<b>31,647,194.30</b>
<b>CHEMICAL &amp; PAINTS</b>				
BERGER PAINTS PLC.	11	5.00	68,006	334,920.68
CAP PLC.	8	6.35	74,320	470,549.25
D. N. MEYER PLC.	5	4.60	20,790	95,524.65
IPWA PLC.	1	0.50	625	312.50
NIGERIA-GERMAN CHEMICALS PLC.	3	3.62	55,151	200,316.25
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>28</b>		<b>218,892</b>	<b>1,101,623.33</b>
<b>COMPUTER &amp; OFFICE EQUIPMENT</b>				
HALLMARK PAPER PRODUCTS PLC.	2	0.87	1,200	1,036.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>1,200</b>	<b>1,036.00</b>
<b>CONGLOMERATES</b>				
A. G. LEVENTIS NIGERIA PLC.	4	0.95	145,622	138,340.90
C F A O NIGERIA PLC.	7	4.01	13,234	53,068.34
CHELLARAMS PLC.	1	1.71	300	513.00
JOHN HOLT PLC.	8	0.60	11,451	6,727.02
UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC.	143	14.96	553,327	8,297,757.76
P. Z. INDUSTRIES PLC.	34	11.39	106,664	1,212,365.64
S C O A NIGERIA PLC.	1	1.04	250	260.00
U.A.C. NIGERIA PLC.	69	14.17	590,296	8,364,494.32
U.T.C. NIGERIA PLC.	7	0.94	18,000	16,278.40
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>274</b>		<b>1,439,144</b>	<b>18,089,805.38</b>
<b>ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY</b>				
NIGERIAN WIRE AND CABLE PLC.	6	0.61	42,580	26,075.80
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>42,580</b>	<b>26,075.80</b>
<b>FOOD/BEVERAGES &amp; TOBACCO</b>				
7-UP BOTTLING COMPANY PLC	23	22.80	125,220	2,807,788.15
CADBURY NIGERIA PLC.	153	48.85	340,479	16,979,135.62
FLOUR MILLS NIGERIA PLC.	26	16.61	184,806	3,069,627.66
NIGERIA BOTTLING COMPANY PLC.	64	49.40	143,139	6,995,564.63
NESTLE FOODS NIGERIA PLC.	89	139.00	181,283	25,841,232.20
NORTHERN NIGERIA FLOUR MILLS PLC.	1	15.00	1,200	18,000.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>356</b>		<b>976,127</b>	<b>55,711,348.26</b>
<b>FOOTWEAR</b>				
FOOTWEAR & ACCESSORIES MAN. PLC.	8	0.32	176,179	56,377.28
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>176,179</b>	<b>56,377.28</b>
<b>HEALTHCARE</b>				
EKOCORP PLC.	4	0.93	52,000	48,360.00
EVANS MEDICAL PLC.	12	3.00	155,096	477,659.52
MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC.	3	4.75	12,000	57,264.05
NEIMETH INTERNATIONAL PHARM. PLC.	14	3.23	171,819	555,335.37
GLAXOSMITHKLINE CONSUMER NIG. PLC	19	8.20	126,624	1,040,479.35
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>52</b>		<b>517,539</b>	<b>2,179,098.29</b>
<b>INDUSTRIAL/DOMESTIC PRODUCTS</b>				
NIGERIA ENAMELWARE COMPANY PLC.	3	3.40	1,916	6,514.40
FIRST ALUMINIUM NIGERIA PLC.	8	0.92	141,350	131,355.50
B.O.C. GASES PLC.	8	2.85	58,000	165,375.00
VITAFOAM NIGERIA PLC.	31	3.00	395,078	1,187,378.02
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>50</b>		<b>596,344</b>	<b>1,490,622.92</b>
<b>INSURANCE</b>				
AIICO INSURANCE PLC.	11	1.70	171,400	294,124.00
CORNERSTONE INSURANCE CO. PLC.	4	1.39	73,632	102,780.80
LASACO ASSURANCE PLC.	5	0.76	200,000	152,000.00
LAW UNION AND ROCK INSURANCE PLC.	6	1.14	578,500	674,565.00
NIGER INSURANCE CO. PLC.	3	2.99	1,000	2,990.00
ROYAL EXCHANGE ASSURANCE PLC.	6	2.76	121,182	350,568.90
STANDARD ALLIANCE INSURANCE	11	0.68	482,025	305,613.50
UNIC INSURANCE PLC.	11	0.86	269,671	225,022.54
WEST AFRICAN PROV. INS. COY. PLC.	10	2.40	612,911	1,473,519.74
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>67</b>		<b>2,510,321</b>	<b>3,581,184.48</b>
<b>MACHINERY(MARKETING)</b>				
BLACKWOOD HODGE (NIGERIA) PLC.	3	0.58	37,260	21,610.80
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>37,260</b>	<b>21,610.80</b>
<b>MANAGED FUNDS</b>				
C & I LEASING PLC.	6	1.39	23,968	32,886.20
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>23,968</b>	<b>32,886.20</b>
<b>PACKAGING</b>				
BETA GLASS COMPANY PLC.	4	3.70	31,459	116,398.30
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>31,459</b>	<b>116,398.30</b>
<b>PETROLEUM(MARKETING)</b>				
AFRICAN PETROLEUM PLC.	83	53.00	15,087,355	814,722,940.45
ETERNA OIL & GAS PLC.	8	2.04	115,622	235,868.88
MOBIL OIL NIGERIA PLC.	38	174.00	61,768	10,747,589.56
CONOIL PLC.	59	101.21	68,308	7,078,225.89
TEXACO (NIGERIA) PLC.	26	155.00	29,500	4,587,332.35
TOTAL NIGERIA PLC	45	171.20	22,120	3,792,252.67
OANDO PLC.	218	90.60	194,082	17,301,845.52
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>477</b>		<b>15,578,755</b>	<b>858,466,055.32</b>
<b>PRINTING &amp; PUBLISHING</b>				
ACADEMY PRESS PLC.	1	1.90	10,000	19,000.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>10,000</b>	<b>19,000.00</b>
<b>REALESTATE</b>				
UACN PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT PLC.	39	8.47	603,421	5,109,708.50
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>39</b>		<b>603,421</b>	<b>5,109,708.50</b>
<b>TEXTILES</b>				
UNITED NIGERIA TEXTILES PLC.	5	1.98	20,604	40,621.88
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>5</b>		<b>20,604</b>	<b>40,621.88</b>
<b>Overall Totals</b>	<b>4,007</b>		<b>74,072,513</b>	<b>1,271,634,567.49</b>

### TOP 10 TRADES YESTERDAY

SYMBOL	VOLUME	VALUE	TRADES
ZENITHBANK	1,248,149.00	16,312,942.77	219
NB	1,402,953.00	48,212,908.00	458
UBN	1,449,374.00	27,080,729.74	303
FIRSTBANK	2,575,817.00	59,238,260.94	540
GUARANTY	2,794,560.00	28,991,596.30	359
MANNYBANK	6,316,190.00	7,560,456.60	16
FSB	8,407,769.00	11,098,255.08	45
GULFBANK	8,822,715.00	3,189,525.82	18
INLANDBANK	10,431,500.00	16,931,226.50	46
AP	15,087,355.00	814,722,940.45	83

### TOP 10 GAINERS

SYMBOL	LASTCLOSE	YESTERDAY'SCLOSE	CHANGE
NOLCHEM	100.00	101.21	+1.21
7UP	21.72	22.80	+1.08
NBC	48.75	49.40	+0.65
PRESCO	9.49	9.96	+0.47
UAC-PROP	8.10	8.47	+0.37
CAP	6.10	6.35	+0.25
ASHAKACEM	23.00	23.25	+0.25
PZ	11.19	11.39	+0.20
SKBEECHAM	8.05	8.20	+0.15
BERGER	4.89	5.00	+0.11

### TOP 10 LOSERS

SYMBOL	LASTCLOSE	YESTERDAY'SCLOSE	CHANGE
TEXACO	158.50	155.00	-3.50
AP	55.47	53.00	-2.47
CADBURY	49.98	48.85	-1.13
NB	34.86	34.39	-0.47
UBN	18.96	18.50	-0.46
UNIPETROL	91.00	90.60	-0.40
TOTAL	171.49	171.20	-0.29
OCEANIC	4.03	3.83	-0.20
CCNN	6.20	6.00	-0.20
NIG-GERMAN	3.81	3.62	-0.19

## US trade deficit hits record \$665.9bn in 2004

The United States deficit in the broadest measure of international trade soared to an all-time high of \$665.9 billion in 2004, showing in stark terms the speed with which the country is becoming indebted to the rest of the world.

The Commerce Department reported Wednesday that the shortfall in the current account was 25.5 percent higher than the previous record, the \$530.7 billion deficit set in 2003. The department also noted that the deficit was worsening as the year ended with the shortfall in the fourth quarter hitting a record \$187.9 billion, up 13.3 percent from the third quarter deficit.

The Bush administration contends the soaring trade deficits reflect a US economy that is growing faster than the rest of the world, pushing up imports and dampening demand for US exports. But private economists are worried that the huge level of resources being transferred into the hands of foreigners will eventually result in lower US living standards.

Meanwhile, the Federal Reserve reported that output at the nation's factories, mines and utilities rose by 0.3 percent in February, following a tiny 0.1 percent increase in January. It was the best showing since a surge of 0.8 percent in December and was led by a 0.5 percent jump in manufacturing, the third straight 0.5 percent gain in this sector.

In other economic news, the Commerce Department said construction of new homes and apartments rose by 0.5 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 2.195 million units in February, the fastest pace in 21 years.

Construction of single-family homes hit an all-time high of 1.775 million units, up 0.3 percent from January, and multi-family construction was up 1.7 percent to 420,000 units.

Analysts believe the housing sector, which has set sales records for four straight years, will begin to cool this year under the impact of rising interest rates.

The current account trade deficit is closely watched by economists because it is the broadest measure of international trade, covering not only trade in goods but also trade in services and investment flows between nations. The deficit for 2004 was not only a record in dollar terms but also as a percentage of the total US economy, climbing to 5.7 percent of the gross domestic product, up from 4.8 percent of GDP in 2003.



# CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA

## PRESENTS

### TWO-DAY WORKSHOP ON THE PREPARATION AND PRESENTATION OF AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE COMMUNITY BANKS IN NIGERIA

Further to our publication on the above subject, we wish to inform you that Jos Zones will be from 21<sup>st</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2005. Yola and Kano Zones will take place from 30<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2005, Abeokuta and Enugu Zones will be from 4<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2005 while Owerri Zone will be 11<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2005 respectively.

The venues and dates for the runs are as stated below:

#### **JOS ZONE TWO RUNS: FROM 21ST - 24TH MARCH. 2005**

The underlisted community banks in Plateau, FCT, Nasarawa, Niger, Kaduna, Bauchi and Kogi States should attend at the venue and on the dates stated below:

**VENUE:** Country Home Hotel,  
6, NEPA Close, Tudun Wada, Jos.  
**TIME:** 8 a.m each day.

#### **1ST RUN: 21ST-22ND MARCH. 2005**

Ace CB, Municipal CB, Gwagwalada CB, NCWS CB, Wuse United CB, Odu CB, Lokongoma CB, Ida CB, Iyamoye CB, Ife CB, Imane CB, Kogi CB, Isanlu CB, Kabba CB, Unyogba CB, Iyale CB, Atabkpa CB, Ovidi CB, Akwengwu CB, Okengwe CB, Ihima CB, Egbe CB, Ekirin Ade CB, Dekina CB, Biraidu CB, Igalaogba CB, Ugwolawo CB, MOPA CB, Amoru CB, Ohon CB, Aiyetoro-Gbede CB, Ayigba CB, Enjema CB, Odagba CB, Ogugu CB, Fahinmta CB, Gyallesu CB, Birni CB, ABU CB, Barnawa CB, Saminaka CB, Gwong CB, Jere CB, Gworok CB, Chat CB, Bajju CB, Sabo Yelwa CB, Hamda CB, Atyap CB, Hamdala CB, Bukuru CB, United People CB, Wase CB, Nwaghavul CB, Nimpar CB, Aten CB, Kerana CB, Ngas CB, Daffo Mangai CB, Amba CB, Keffi CB, Garu CB, Sadau CB, Misau CB, Akuyam CB, Katagun CB, Gamawa CB, Alkalari CB, Okpoga CB, Zion CB, Borgu CB, Kontangora CB, Modiya Yekokpe CB, Bida CB, Lapai CB, Salka CB, Lvunkpan CB, Beun-Doko CB, Busu CB, Gwada CB, Darazo CB, Akuyam CB, Ningi CB, Sadau CB, Misau CB, Katagun CB, Gamawa CB, Alkalari CB, Garu CB.

#### **2ND RUN: 23RD - 24TH MARCH. 2005**

Ace CB, Municipal CB, Gwagwalade CB, NCWS CB, Wuse United CB, Odu CB, Lokongoma CB, Ida CB, Iyamoye CB, Ife CB, Imane CB, Kogi CB, Isanlu CB, Kabba CB, Unyogba CB, Iyale CB, Atabkpa CB, Ovidi CB, Akwengwu CB, Okengwe CB, Ihima CB, Egbe CB, Ekirin Ade CB, Dekina CB, Biaidu CB, Igalaogba CB, Ugwolawo CB, MOPA CB, Ohon CB, Aiyetoro-Gbede CB, Ayigba CB, Enjema CB, Odagba CB, Ogugu CB, Fahinmta CB, Gyallesu CB, Birni CB, ABU CB, Barnawa CB, Saminaka CB, Gwong CB, Jere CB, Gworok CB, Chat CB, Bajju CB, Sabo Yelwa CB, Hamda CB, Atyap CB, Hamdala CB, Bukuru CB, United People CB, Wase CB, Nwaghavul CB, Nimpar CB, Aten CB, Kerana CB, Ngas CB, Daffo Mangai CB, Amba CB, Keffi CB, Garu CB, Sadau CB, Misau CB, Akuyam CB, Katagun CB, Gamawa CB, Alkalari CB, Okpoga CB, Zion CB, Borgu CB, Kontangora CB, Modiya Yekokpe CB, Bida CB, Lapai CB, Salka CB, Lavunkpan CB, Beun-Doko CB, Busu CB, Gwada CB, Darazo CB, Akuyam CB, Ningi CB, Sadau CB, Misau CB, Katagun CB, GamaW'a-CB, Alkalari CB, Garu CB.

#### **YOLA ZONE: ONE RUN: FROM 30TH - 31ST MARCH. 2005**

The underlisted community banks in Adamawa, Taraba, Borno and Gombe States should attend at the venue and on the dates stated below:

**VENUE:** Yola International Hotel  
Kashim Ibrahim Road, Yola.  
**TIME:** 8:00am each day

#### **ONLY RUN: 30<sup>TH</sup> - 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH. 2005**

Jen CB, Marmara CB, Ure CB, Dan Anacha CB, Avyi CB, Michika CB, Maiha CB, Jimeta CB, Biyama CB, Girei CB, Ummah CB, Song CB, Belel CB, Fufore CB, Mayo Belwa CB, Numa CB, Biu CB, Bama CB, Yelwa CB, Dandal CB, Ngala CB, Shongom CB, Tangale CB and Gombe United CB.

#### **KANO ZONE: ONE RUN: 30<sup>TH</sup> - 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH. 2005**

The underlisted community banks in Kano, Katsina, Jigawa, Sokoto, Kebbi, Yobe and Zamfara States should attend at the venue and on the dates stated below:

**VENUE:** Tropical Hotels Limited  
17/19 Niger Street, Kano.  
**TIME:** 8:00am

#### **ONLY RUN: 30TH - 31ST MARCH. 2005**

Nagarta CB, Rima CB, Gwadabawa CB, Yabo CB, Dogon Daji CB, Hinache CB, Garewa CB, Bakori CB, Funtua CB, Batsari CB, Danja CB, Danmusa CB, Batagarawa CB, Waje CB, Gwarzo CB, Falana CB, Wudil CB, Matasa CB, Rogo CB, Danbatt CB, Kibiya CB, Aliero CB, Birnin-Kebbi CB, Dandi CB, Lega Magaji CB, Argungu CB, and Imani CB, Dutse CB,

Bugudu CB, Kwatashi CB, Kaura Namoda CB, Zurmi CB, Shinkafi CB, Gusau CB, and Gashua CB.

#### **OWERRI ZONE: THREE RUNS: FROM 11<sup>TH</sup> - 16<sup>TH</sup> APRIL. 2005.**

The underlisted community banks in Imo, Abia, Akwa Ibom, Cross River and Rivers States should attend at the venue and on the dates stated below:

**VENUE:** Executive Garden Hotel 5C Okigwe Road  
Owerri, Imo State  
**TIME:** 8:00am each day

#### **1ST RUN: 11TH - 12TH APRIL. 2005**

Okpofe CB, Okporo CB, Omuna CB, Osina CB, Umuaka CB, Umuhu-Okabia CB, Ovuru CB, Ogbaku CB, Awo-Omama CB, Ekwe CB, Amaifeke CB, Obowu CB, Ihioma CB, Dikenafai CB, Nwabosi CB, Umuna CB, Obodoukwu CB, Nguru-Nweke CB, Alvana CB, FUTOCB, Ihitte CB, NSU CB, Umuihi CB, Amurie Omanze CB, Ummumo CB, Ife-Ezinihitte CB, Obudi CB, Ihitenansa CB, Ebenator CB, Urualla CB, Orsuihitekwa CB, Mbanator CB, Mbieri Nwotuoque CB, Afor Iseke CB, Ogbe CB, Onicha Amairi CB and Obizi CB, Abia State University CB, Abiriba CB, Okeoha CB, Onna CB, Nsehe CB, Educk CB, Ikpe CB, Okon CB, Ibiono Ibom CB, Ibiaku CB, Edet CB, Winmos CB, Eket Urban CB, Abak Urban CB, Calabar CB, Ohong CB, Bekwara CB, Obudu Urban CB, Ishi Bori CB, Eti-Urua CB, Akin CB, Baccoco CB, Mbuka Area CB, Akparabong CB, Okoyong CB, Ikemmesit CB, Yala CB, Ben Deghe-Etim CB, Utugwang CB, Osokom CB, Akamkpa CB, Ugep CB, Unical CB, Ekondo CB, Ishie CB, Polycal CB, Old Umuahia CB, Umuchukwu CB, Omniafor CB and Uturu CB.

#### **2ND RUN: 13TH - 14TH APRIL. 2005**

Okpofe CB, Okporo CB, Omuna CB, Osina CB, Umuaka CB, Umuhu-Okabia CB, Ovuru CB, Ogbaku CB, Awo-Omama CB, Ekwe CB, Amaifeke CB, Obowu CB, Ihioma CB, Dikenafai CB, Nwabosi CB, Umuna CB, Obodoukwu CB, Nguru-Nweke CB, Alvana CB, FUTOCB, Ihitte CB, NSU CB, Umuihi CB, Amurie Omanze CB, Ummumo CB, Ife-Ezinihitte CB, Obudi CB, Ihitenansa CB, Ebenator CB, Urualla CB, Orsuihitekwa CB, Mbanator CB, Mbieri Nwotuoque CB, Afor Iseke CB, Ogbe CB, Onicha Amairi CB and Obizi CB, Abia State University CB, Abiriba CB, Okeoha CB, Onna CB, Nsehe CB, Educk CB, Ikpe CB, Okon CB, Ibiono Ibom CB, Ibiaku CB, Edet CB, Winmos CB, Eket Urban CB, Abak Urban CB, Calabar CB, Ohong CB, Bekwara CB, Obudu Urban CB, Ishi Bori CB, Eti-Urua CB, Akin CB, Baccoco CB, Mbuka Area CB, Akparabong CB, Okoyong CB, Ikemmesit CB, Yala CB, Ben Deghe-Etim CB, Utugwang CB, Osokom CB, Akamkpa CB, Ugep CB, Unical CB, Ekondo CB, Ishie CB, Polycal CB, Old Umuahia CB, Umuchukwu CB, Omniafor CB and Uturu CB. Uzuakoli CB, Oloroko CB, Nsulu CB, Arochukwu CB, Okaiuga CB, Okpuala CB, Ohafia CB, Ebem-Ohafia CB, Mgbidi CB, Akokwa CB, Amaigbo CB, Amucha CB, Atta Nwambiri CB, Ekwema CB, Home Trust CB, Ntueke CB, Ekwereazu East CB, Ogberuru CB, Uratta CB, Akabo Amata CB, Arondizuogu CB, Ekiti CB, Ikole-Ekiti CB, Ijesa-Isu CB, Ijefo-Ekiti CB, Ifinsin CB, Igaki-Ekiti CB, Ido CB, Efon Alaye CB, Aramoko CB, Amoye CB, Asiegha CB, Ibolo CB, Balogun CB, Ajose CB, Agosasa CB, Owu Ikija CB, Orisun CB, Obanta CB, Oja-Odan CB, Molusi CB, Isara CB, Ilara CB, Ilese CB, Ikenne CB, Igbesa CB, Eso-E CB, Egba CB, Egba-Odeda CB, Egba-Owode CB, Egba-Onikolobo CB, Covenant CB, Araromi CB, Erit.wo CB, Ila-Orangun CB, Ile-Ogbo CB, Ilobu CB, Mapo Arogun CB, Masifa CB, Moro CB, Obokun CB, Ola CB, Osogbo CB, Oyan CB, OSPOLY CB, Olu-Basiri CB, Olofin CB, Okuku CB, Oke Egan CB, Ogiyan CB, Ayedaade CB, Oduduwa CB, OAU CB, Moyofade CB, Modakek CB, Kuta CB, Iwoye CB, Isundunrin CB, Ipole Ijesha CB, Inisa CB, Ikoyi-Osun CB, Ikire CB, Ijebu-Ijesha CB, Ifelodun CB, Ibu-Aje CB, Iba CB, Erin-Oke CB, Ayegunle CB, Ede CB and Agbale CB.

#### **2ND RUN: 6TH - 7TH APRIL. 2005**

Ososa CB, UNAAB CB, Imowo CB, Ifoyin CB, Ajuwon-Akute CB, Itele CB, Sagamu CB, Ilisan Iperu CB, Ijebu-Ife CB, Aiyeye CB, Ayetoro CB, Ojodu-Abiodun CB, Ajose CB, Iwade CB, Lisabi CB, Lafenwa CB, Orlu CB, Egba-Omi CB, Ilugun CB, Osiele CB, MAPOLY CB, Egba Joda CB, Oke-Ona CB, Ilugan Ijebu CB, Imodi-Mosan CB, Alekun CB, Ibafo CB, Ilaro CB, Arinkojoke CB, Ijaba CB, Isonyin CB, Owode CB, Ipara CB, Irolu-Remo CB, Abigi CB, Ejebu-Imusin CB, Ado-Ado CB, Opodo Ogboro CB, Ipoti

The letters of invitation have been forwarded to the participating institutions and if you do not receive your letter on or before the dates scheduled, you should endeavour to attend the workshop at the time scheduled for your zone or any other available session.

**SIGNED**  
**SAMA. ONI**  
**DIRECTOR,**

**OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS DEPARTMENT**  
**CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA, LAGOS.**



## NASARAWA STATE GOVERNMENT

### MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

#### FOURTH NASARAWA STATE AGRICULTURAL AND SOLID MINERALS EXPOSITION 2005



**Malam Adamu Bello**  
Hon. Minister  
Ministry of Agricultural



**Alhaji Abdullahi Adamu**  
Executive Governor  
Nasarawa State

*As part of its efforts to boost agricultural and mining activities in the state, the Nasarawa State Government, under the able leadership of Governor Abdullahi Adamu (Sarkin Yaki Keffi), will, this March, hold in Agyaragu, Jenkwe Development Area of Nasarawa State.*

*The particulars of the exposition are as follows:-*

**THEME:** Boosting Agricultural Production through Farmers Co-operatives.  
**DATE:** Monday 21st - 23rd March, 2005.  
**VENUE:** Agyaragu, Jenkwe Development Area, Nasarawa State.  
**TIME:** 10.00 a.m. Daily.

**Signed:**  
Hajiya A'ishatu R. Ibrahim  
Hon. Commissioner for Agriculture & Natural Resources  
Nasarawa State.

## When weed threatens

Fifteen years ago when the waters of River Hadeja in Jigawa State and River Jama'are in Yobe State seasonally flooded their intricate network of smaller river channels on their journey down to Lake Chad, the communities in over 60 villages spread across Jigawa, Bauchi and Yobe states were the happiest Nigerians. The waters provided them a source of livelihood in irrigation farming, fishery and livestock rearing. Farmers, fishermen and cattle rearers were migrating to the area in hundreds to reap the benefits of the flourishing wetland, and by the early nineties it was reported that the Hadeja-Nguru Wetland provided six percent of the country's annual inland fish sales. The high yields in cultivation of wheat, maize, rice and vegetables turned the wetland into another food basket of the nation as trucks and trailers were shuttling on the Hadeja-Nguru highway with grains dealers from the north-central and southern Nigeria in search of cheap foodstuff.

The lives of the people were robust. Their children were healthy and in schools. Their young men were always in the fields farming especially during the dry-season flood recession farming and above all they were living in peace with their Pastoral neighbours, the Fulanis. The people of these areas were producing more than the government supported irrigation schemes in the upstream according to statistics from the Joint Wetlands Livelihood Project in Hadeja.

But today, this once flourishing and happy community across 18 local governments in Jigawa, Yobe and Bauchi states is in poverty. Their able-bodied young men are fleeing to Chad, Cameroon and Niger Republic in search of menial

From Musa Umar Kazaure,  
Regional Editor Kano

jobs to feed the families and parents they left behind in the either dried or over flooded villages in the Hadeja-Nguru Wetland areas.

The situation in the wetland is that of double jeopardy. The River Hadeja on its way downstream to Lake Chad first branch off to the west at Magujin Idi to form Kafin Hausa River. Then further down, it branches off again to the west at Gubusum to nourish the wetlands in Guri and Kirikasama local government areas before turning into the Nguru Lakes and finally to its destination at Lake Chad. But the situation now is that three out of four of the major river channels emanating from the Hadeja River that flow through the Hadeja-Nguru Wetlands, are now blocked by floating grasses called Typha or *Kachala* in Hausa and siltation which has now stopped the water from branching off to the west at Gubusum and Magujin Idi into the hitherto flourishing wetlands in Guri Local Government area, thereby rendering their area a drought-stricken area and threatening their livelihood.

On the other hand, the excess water that could not meandre into the Guri side of the wetland due to the sand and Typha blockage is now overflowing into the other arm of the river that flows through over 40 villages in Birniwa, Kirikasama and Nguru local government areas, swallowing up their farmlands, destroying

their homes, cutting off road networks and threatening their very existence as a community in the areas.

The threat to the people in the area was too glaring for any visitor to the area. The town of Birniwa itself, the headquarters of Birniwa Local government, is under siege by the overflowing waters and typha weed which has reach the periphery of the town. The Hadeja-Nguru main highway has been cut off by the flooding waters for over a year forcing vehicles to go through a diversion that is worse than a Tsunami-stricken area. Three trucks were stuck in the muddy diversion and struggling to get out when this reporter visited the area. The famous Nguru cattle market known for its cheap and constant supply of livestock to north central and southern Nigeria had to be moved across the border to Guri Local government in Jigawa to make it easy for cattle traders coming from Hadeja and Kano to buy cattle. Between 30 to 40 trailers take off from this market every-market day on Wednesdays because the trailers cannot cross the destroyed Hadeja-Nguru highway. The threat to the remaining part of the highway is too glaring as the Typha weed and waters from the flooding river are closing up on the road itself.

At Makintari, a village in Kirikasama local government of Jigawa State, a farmer, Malam Muahmadu Auta, recounted their ordeal. "Five years ago, this whole land that is submerged by water was our means of livelihood. It was our

farms where we cultivate rice, maize, wheat and vegetables. But look at it today, it is all *kachalla* (typha). Many people had to relocate to other villages in neighbouring states. Worst still we cannot fish in the waters because all the fish hide inside the *kachala* grass, so you cannot catch them. We are really in trouble."

The farmers in Makintari are lucky to have their homes still intact and only their farmlands submerged because the residents of Sabon Garin Malam Ibrahim were sacked from their homes and farmlands by the flooding water. They had to move into a nearby village called Kakuri and seek refuge with their families. "All our farmlands and homes are gone" says an elderly man from the affected village, Mallam Abubakar. "We are now squatters and refugees in our neighbours homes. No one seem to care about our plight. So many big men have visited us, the governor, the senators, the House members, yet we see nothing forthcoming. This is sad, this unfair." He said despondently.

Communities around Kirikasanma said their children had to leave school to go into their rice field and drive away quella birds that are attracted to the area by the wild-grass Typha. A middle-age farmer, Malam Yahaya, said they had to switch to farming Sesame seeds because the crop was non-attractive to the rampaging Quela birds but uneconomical to the farmers because its market is not large.

The situation was even more threatenng in Yobe than it was



The point of blokage by Typha weeds and siltation at Gubusum

in the wetlands of Jigawa because Nguru town was under siege and completely cut off from its Jigawa neighbours by flooded water. High embankments had to be erected last year to save Government Secondary School Nguru, which was over flooded, and the students vacated. The Nguru-Gashua highway, especially the Army Recce Battalion along it is under serious threat of being overflowed with water and Typha weeds. Fishermen along the once flourishing river banks speak of gloomy future as fishes are difficult to come by due to the overgrown wild-

weed. Waters and typha currently surround the Nguru Railroads, which are the oldest railroads in Nigeria. Even the resettlement houses built for the people of Margadu to escape the water and typha onslaught are also under threat by the slow but steadily moving water and Typha weed colonization.

In Madaci village, about 30 kilometers from Hadeja, the entire farmland of the inhabitants measuring over 100 hectares have been submerged by water and covered by typha weed. The residents, who were known for farming before the disaster struck, have now



Typha, Typha weeds everywhere along the waters of Hadeja River in Jigawa and Yobe states.



Pottash-carrying truk stuck in the muddy diversion due to damage on Hadeja-Nguru highway

## s Hadejia-Nguru wetland



taken to fishing, which they said was not profitable because the fishes hide in the typha weeds. The water has come so close to the village that people have started moving away from the threatened areas unto the higher grounds.

According to one of the elders of the town, Mallam Muhamadu, "The water not only flooded our farmlands and homes, but it also brought along quela birds and a breed of mosquitoes that we have never seen before. If you were to stay here till nightfall, you cannot eat without swallowing a mosquito. Our situation is

pathetic. We have done our best cutting the grasses by hand, but our effort is not enough because the work require heavy equipments." He seeks for help from both the state and federal authorities.

The irony of this great disaster in the wetlands of Hadejia-Nguru is that while the farmers in Kirikasama, Birniwa and Nguru are being rendered homeless, penniless and hopeless due to excessive waters flooding their homes and farmlands due to blockage at the river's confluence at Gubusum and Magadanar Idi, their counterparts in Guri and Badde local government areas

on the western side of the wetland are starved of irrigation waters to the extent of creating a drought.

At Tangale and Gabarwa in Badde local government area of Yobe State, the villages looked so desolate that the few people that came out to receive the touring journalists were handful, and mostly comprising children and elderly people. One of the Community elders, Mallam Kakdu Tangale, said for over 7 years they had been struggling to get governments to come to their aids and desilt the blocked river confluence as well as clear the water channels of typha weed so that they can get water for irrigation farming. He said the situation has reached a distress stage that people are running away from the village to Chad and Niger Republic. Mallam Kakdu said Tangale, which has over 5000 families before, can only boast of about 500 today due to the problems. He stated that they only earn their living now by cutting down the few trees around the dry land for firewood, which, they have been warned, will cause desert encroachment.

"But what can we do? Our main source of sustenance has been the irrigation water for irrigation farming, we must feed our children, we must feed our parents, our wives, and we cannot leave this place because it has been the land of our forefathers. We only pray that the governor of Yobe state will continue with the dredging of the river he started earlier last year because it is already yielding some results in some villages." He added.

At a village called Madamuwa Yamma, which is in Guri local government area of Jigawa State, the only thing still keeping the people's sanity, according to their village head, Maina Sambo, is the hand pump borehole which serves as the only means of getting water for virtually everything. The nine years impact of the drought due to the blockage of irrigation waters has taken its toll on the population that they see the coming of any visitor as a sign of hope. He added that all the communities had initiated a communal effort to clear the blockage and Typha weeds by hand but to no avail, as the job cannot be accomplished by hand except with excavators.

Perhaps one of the most devastated villages in the Guri-Badde-axis of the wetland was Gabargal where impoverishment has now forced the over 500 resident to resort to trade by barter with their Fulani neighbours. According to the village head, Mallam Ahmadu Gabargal, all the able-bodied young men in the community have migrated to Chad, Cameroon and Niger Republic in search of menial jobs, leaving behind only the aged, women and children. He added that their Fulani neighbours, aware of their plight, now give them *nono* in exchange for grains, which their young men brought along to the village after spending months outside.

The Village head was particularly bitter about the politicians they voted into power at both state and federal levels, who, he complains, have abandoned them to their fate despite several petitions and S.O.S letters. He stated that anyone that assisted to clear the irrigation water blockage at Gubusum and clear the waterways of the colonising Typha weed will be their darling on future election days. He said that all their pleas to Jigawa government and their Senator, Ibrahim Kirikasama, for help proved abortive as the only excavator brought by Jigawa state government to clear the blockage broke down on the first day of its assignment.

A Fulani milk seller, Malama Fatimah Jabbi, said life has become miserable in the village due to the lack of irrigation waters. "There was life and money before in Gabargal, but now everything is gone, no water for farming, no grass for our cattle and no food for us, that is why we collect the foodstuff they give and we exchange it for our milk. Somehow we have to survive"

she added.

The affected communities are not just folding their arms and waiting for government alone to come to their aid, especially with their experiences so far with their representatives. At Madaci, Mallam Muhamadu told the touring journalists of an effort by the communities in over 20 villages along the Burun Gana within Guri and Kirikasama Local government areas who have been working with their bare hands to remove the typha weeds for the past 5 months. Working in a group of 50 to 100 volunteers, they have been involved in trying to clear the mouth of the channel at Gubusum, and have been able to clear up to 20 kilometers of the over 70 kilometers channel. The little work they have done, according to Malam Muhammadu, has started yielding result as the water has started reaching areas it was blocked from reaching before especially those near the confluence at Gubusum. But the work is just too Herculean for the volunteers, argued the villager, because what 100 men will do in a day, can be done in five minutes by excavators.

A water management engineer with Kano State Water Board, Alhaji Garba Bichi, said if the two governments of Jigawa and Yobe states can provide four long-boom excavators each to work side-by-side along the blocked channels, desilting and removing the typha weeds, the entire problem could be solved in less than six months. He added that what is needed is commitment on the part of the state governments because if they are to wait for the federal government to come to their aids, it will be too late for the victims of the looming disaster in the Hadejia-Nguru Wetland.

An expert in wetland problems from JWLP Project, Alhaji Isa Sulaiman Dutse also agrees that priority must be given to the opening up of existing river channels in the wetland blocked by typha, siltation and aquatic weeds, to increase flow rates and restrict further spread of typha thereby reducing unwanted over flooding. This, he said, is the short-term measure and stage one of the overall solution to the problem, adding that the second stage will involve structural changes in the river system in the form of flow control or proportioning mechanism to distribute water more evenly between the channels in the rainy season, and to effect seasonal typha

control using integrated water level management and physical/mechanical control during dry season. This he said is a medium term solution that may be necessary for some years without the completion of stage three which involve improvement in the management of dam releases and water utilization upstream, which is the most desirable means of integrating water level management and physical/mechanical control to eliminate typha from both blocked and over-flooded river channels downstream through drainage, burning and cutting, and re-flooding, followed by seasonal drying out of the channels.

The Jigawa state government, according to its commissioner of Agriculture, Alhaji Kabiru Ali, says the problem of clearing the blockages is beyond the capacity of the state government because of the technicality involved, adding that the matter is presently before the Ministers of Agriculture and Environment. He added that the state had made frantic efforts to assist the people with excavators to clear the waterways but had some problem in the process.

The Yobe state government, according to Government House Sources in Damaturu, has even gone further to summoning a summit of all the stakeholders in the wetland looming disaster to discuss how to come to the aid of the suffering victims. Governor Bukar Abba, who is expected to chair the summit, is said to be very much concerned about the plight of the people, hence his directive to send two excavators to assist in clearing the blockage at Burum Gana, which has started paying off as people in villages along the river are beginning to receive water for irrigation.

National Assembly members from the affected areas, especially Dr. Ahmed Lawal and Senator Ibrahim Kirikasama, are said to be working frantically to draw the attention of the federal government to the looming disaster in the Hadejia-Nguru Wetland. They have so far dragged the ministers of Environment and works to the area as well as the Minister of State Works, Alhaji Shehu Saleh, who is a son of the soil in the area, and they have all promised emergency help for the people. But how and when will the help reach the suffering people of the wetland is the major concern of anyone who ventures into this disaster area of Hadejia-Nguru Wetland.



The deserted town of Garbagal where only the old and women are left behind

# Science & Education

## Higher Education This Week

By Dr. Isaac N. Obasi, zikobasi@yahoo.com

### Memo to the political reform conference (I)

Now that the National Political Reform Conference has gone into its main business of charting the much desired and expected new course for Nigeria, it is necessary that we present a brief memorandum to it for consideration. This is being done in response to Rev. Fr. (Dr.) Mathew Hassan Kukah's appeal that we should throw away cynicism for now and give the conference the support it deserves.

We pray and hope that many of those who have made Nigeria what it is today, and who have been given a golden opportunity to re-make Nigeria, should not fail the nation the second time. It is against this background that we share our thoughts on how to revitalize the higher education sub-sector. The views expressed here however are strictly personal and do not represent those of any stakeholder in the sub-sector who may or may not share our views. These views though personal are nevertheless based on our close research interaction with the sub-sector.

First, we believe that the current ownership structure of higher education (which comprises the federal government, state government and private sector owners) is a policy in the right direction. The non-existence of private universities long ago contributed largely to the underdevelopment of the sub-sector and robbed it of its vibrancy as a catalyst of economic development. Many years back before Nigeria liberalized higher education ownership, Tanzania (a relatively small country with a socialist-oriented background for that matter), had opened its doors to private sector participation in higher education. As small as the country is, it had long ago a specialized University of Medicine headed by a vibrant woman. We recognize that this is still a controversial issue among many of my colleagues, but from what is happening in other continents, Nigeria has no better choice.

Japan for example had 460 universities in 1985, out of which 95 were nationally owned, 34 were in public category, and 331 were owned by the private sector. Ten years after in 1995, it had a total number of 565 universities where 98 (note this marginal increase) were nationally owned, 52 were in public category and 415 (note this rapid increase here) were privately owned. Then in 2004, the total number of universities rapidly rose to 709, with 87 (note the decrease) nationally owned, while 80 (note the increase) were in the category of public universities, and a staggering number of 542 were private universities (see <http://web-japan.org/stat/stats/16EDU29.html> if you are in doubt). Since we cannot do detailed analysis here today, it suffices to say that Japan is what it is today partly because of the role of higher education.

If there is any lesson from Japan for us, it is that we require more private tertiary institutions without compromising the requirements to be fulfilled. On the maintenance of quality, the National Universities Commission (NUC) should continue to play its role of ensuring that quality is not compromised by this private participation. But this can only have the required moral force if the federal and state government-owned institutions are seen to be maintaining good standards. In other words, federal and state government owned tertiary institutions should be able to serve as good models for the private institutions to emulate and benchmark their academic programmes. There is no way this can be done if the private institutions perceive that the federal and state governments' owned institutions are not better in standards. They would easily use that as alibi for poor quality higher education provisioning.

The issue of funding has remained a contentious one for over two decades now. The recent statistics released by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) which indicate that there has been downward trend in the funding of higher education since 1999 in spite of increased allocation in absolute figures, should be seriously considered. This downward

trend should not be allowed to continue. The allocation to the sub-sector should be made to be rising every year in relation to the entire budget. Granted that the governments cannot fund higher education alone, the possibility of recommending for an increase in the percentage of education tax should be considered. No body should ever think of abolishing the education tax rather it should be made to be very effective. We recommend an incremental increase in the percentage of the tax so that it would not cause any shock to the organizations that are paying it. It should therefore be an incremental policy adjustment that should automatically be adjusted after say every five years. The idea of keeping the percentage of contribution constant for over a period of years as it has been the case is not helpful. And with better management of the funds, the possibility of expanding the list of beneficiaries to include a small percentage to the private tertiary institutions should be considered. As controversial as it may seem, our entire higher education system should be made viable for all if the tax payers money from the private organizations becomes a major source of revenue. The justifying philosophy is that taxes are collected by the government for the benefits of its entire citizens whether in the public or private sectors. The important role of higher education should compel the government to use such specific taxes to stimulate growth in both the public and private owned tertiary education.

The management and maintenance of security on our campuses has become a problematic issue for many years now. This august body should give a thought as to how to keep the campuses free from the menace of secret societies. The youth as the future leaders constitute one of our greatest assets and under no circumstance should we allow many innocent ones to be exposed to the menace of cult violence. The effective use of specially trained and enlightened arm of the police ('peace' and not 'force') on campuses should be considered. The free reign of violence currently on our campuses is simply as a result of the complete absence of law enforcement agents there. The lives being lost on campuses by far outnumber what may by any accident be lost if for any reason the law enforcement agents clash with the students. A historical analysis tells us that for the period when the police were on the campuses, there were only few lives lost as compared to the hundreds (or even thousands?) lost to various and many cult mayhem on our campuses these days. If any one is in doubt, the police posts in campus towns should be asked to produce of statistics of students killed through the activities of secret cults over the years.

As a free and democratic society, the Conference should discourage the federal government from toying with idea of de-nationalizing and in the process decentralizing ASUU or the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC). Such a move would precipitate more crises in the higher education sub-sector. In any case, how can we be abridging such a political right that was won in the 19th century at great a cost, in this 21st century? What signal are we giving to the world? We should spare more thoughts on how to solve the problems of higher education that produce a harvest of strikes and those of labour generally than taking the easy way out of proscribing national labour unions. We would continue next week.

Dr. Obasi writes from the Department of Political and Administrative Studies, University of Botswana, Gaborone, Southern Africa

## COMPETITION



The first prize winner of the 2nd Annual Primary School Mathematics competition, Master Chidum Okoye displaying his plaque and certificate after the award ceremony in Abuja...recently.

## Senate wants Prof. Oyibo honoured by AU

The Senate has urged the federal government to liaise with other members of the African Union to immediately institute the African international prize for science and technology.

Adopting a motion moved by Senators Nicholas Ugbane, Iya Abubakar and Chris Adighije, the Senate said it became necessary for Nigeria and other African nations to legislate for the enthronement of "African international prize for science and technology". It said that Prof. Gabriel Oyibo should be considered as the first recipient of the maiden edition of the award.

"If we want other nations and indeed the world to recognise and appreciate the accomplishments of African geniuses, African nations should, as a matter of urgency, create mechanism for recognising and honouring the geniuses and great exploits of our race," it added.

The Senate congratulated Oyibo on his achievements and invited him to address the senators in the chamber on his "God Almighty Grand Unified Theorem (GAGUT)".

Moving the motion earlier, Sen. Ugbane said that Oyibo ranked among the world's best scientists, mathematicians and physicists.

He said that his "God Almighty Unified Theorem" could be used to proffer solutions to incurable diseases, like HIV/AIDS and cancer.

"Its geometric solutions are used to proffer solutions to unsolved human problems and also define the concepts of life, the soul and spirituality and the representation of God as a creative as well as a unifying force," he added.

Ugbane said that foremost scientist Albert Einstein searched for the theory for most of his life to no avail. Other senators

who contributed to the motion described Oyibo as a scientist of repute and pride to Nigeria, the black world and Africa.

## Education key to eradicating poverty - Obasanjo

By Salaudeen Ozigi (Intern)

President Olusegun Obasanjo has reiterated the federal government's determination to eradicate poverty by pursuing universal primary education.

In his message to the 2005 Commonwealth day celebration in Abuja, the president, who was represented by the secretary to the federal government, Chief Ufot Ekaette, said the theme of this year's celebration: "Education: Creating Opportunity; Realising Potentials", is part of the Commonwealth's strategy to improving the quality of education.

He said poverty can be tackled by overcoming the barriers hindering qualitative education and mitigating against the impact of HIV/AIDS.

President Obasanjo said the federal government and the Ministry of Education believe in the principles and values of the Commonwealth, adding that one of such programmes is the Universal Basic Education (UBE), which was established to tackle the problem of illiteracy.

"Through the UBE programme, government will continue to re-invigorate and re-double its efforts toward the provision of basic education to Nigerians of school-going age.

"The scheme's successful implementation is further guaranteed by the UBE Act, and the provision in the law for not less than 2 per cent of the consolidated revenue fund to be used to

fund the scheme. The law has also made it mandatory for all parents to enrol their children in school," he said.

On the issue of gender parity, the president said particular attention would be paid to the girl-child education, and disclosed that the initiative has received a boost since the launch of the Strategy for the Acceleration of the Girl-child Education in Nigeria (SAGEN) in 2005 by the Federal Ministry of Education with support from UNICEF, Department for International Development (DFID) and Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

The government, he added, has initiated the girls' education project designed to improve the quality of the life of the girl-child in Nigeria through a collaborative and inter-sectoral approach to girls' education.

Other initiatives, according to him, include concessional admission for girls to pursue science related courses in universities, promoting gender-friendly environment in schools and promotion of girl-child education through the establishment of an all-girls federal government college in each state of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory; and the integration of the physically challenged children into main stream education in primary schools.

# Science & Education

## NUC declares war against academic corruption

The National Universities Commission (NUC) has declared its intention to stamp out 'sorting,' a term meaning academic corruption which it says has assumed a frightening dimension in Nigerian universities.

Prof. Peter Okebukola, executive secretary of the NUC who made the vow in Abuja, said that 'sorting' is the condition in which an academically deficient student sorts himself or herself out with the teacher or any other person of authority in the university in order to secure favours that will cancel such academic deficiencies.

"When a student switches to the sorting mode, he or she trades a commodity for academic favours. This commodity is primarily money, gift items or sex. The teacher may be sorted for better grades, while the administrator is sorted for admission and doctored transcripts," he explained.

By Henry Omuonu, Senior Reporter (Education)

Other forms of sorting, the NUC executive secretary said, include the purchase of hand-outs and books authored by a lecturer by students in order to obtain good grades.

"A few thousand naira in an envelope submitted with the course form to be awarded high marks in the course is sorting. A female student's one-hour sexual interaction with the teacher in the office or in an obscure hotel for better grades is sorting.

"Buying the lecturer tyres for his or her car, dresses for the children and for the teacher himself or herself and food items for the home is sorting," Prof. Okebukola added.

While complaining that 'sorting' was on the increase in Nigerian universities, he however

said the problem was not peculiar to the country, as the phenomenon is found in many countries of the globe where families pay huge amounts to secure admission and academic favours for their children.

He said the NUC and the committee of vice-chancellors met in Abuja recently, where it was agreed that war be declared on 'sorting' in Nigerian universities, and commended the University of Port-Harcourt, University of Abuja, Federal University of Owerri, its Akure counterpart and the University of Calabar for taking steps toward wiping out the phenomenon.

"While NUC will be

involved in system-wide sensitisation and public awareness to the efforts being made by the universities to curb the phenomenon, the senate of our universities will be expected to step up efforts at investigation, discipline and publicity of success stories," he said.

Moreover, Prof. Okebukola said the NUC will require universities to present a quarterly report on their level of success in tackling the phenomenon in their various campuses, just as each university is expected to appoint an ombudsman to oversee 'sorting' related complaints.

## Auchi polytechnic proceeds on early vacation

Following heightened faculty activities on campus, the Auchi Polytechnic, in Edo State has asked students to proceed on a three-week vacation.

The police have meanwhile beefed up security in the institution. The decision to close the school was taken at an emergency academic board meeting.

Management sources told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) that "we decided to take a quick vacation because of reports of the infiltration of cultists to unleash terror."

The source said there had been sporadic shooting last Sunday night at different spots within the town, causing panic amongst students and residents.

Consequently, "management directed that academic activities be suspended forthwith, while students should proceed on Easter break and resume on April 4," he said.

## FG pledges to fund research centres

From Aminu Mohammed, Regional Editor, Sokoto

The federal government is fully committed to the funding of the four energy research centres in the country.

This was made known by the director-general of the Energy Commission of Nigeria (ECN), Professor Abubakar Sani Sambo, when he visited the Sokoto energy research centre.

Professor Sambo disclosed that his appointment as director-general of the commission two months ago was with a view to revamping the research centres for them to be able to function effectively.

According to him, the federal government has reassured the commission of its readiness to give the commission all the necessary support.

The director-general who inspected facilities at the Sokoto energy research centre said he was impressed with what he said having headed the centre himself for five years between 1989 and 1994.

The Sokoto energy research centre which was established in 1982, with the basic objectives of carrying out research on the electrical, and solar energy has so far executed 50 pilot demonstration projects, some of which were put on display during Prof. Sambo's visit.

The centre is to provide electricity to Kwakwalawa village, near the Usman Danfodiyo university through its solar power plant with a capacity of 7.2KW and its 5KW wind electricity system respectively.

The centre is also providing electricity to the Usman Danfodiyo internet café which has about 15 computers.

Professor Sambo commended the centre for its pilot projects and assured the director and his management team of his commission's support to further develop the centre.

## Support private institutions, rector urges FG

The rector of the Abuja School of Accountancy and Computer Studies (ASACS), Dr. Akpan Ekwere, has reiterated the need to enhance quality educational standard, and for increased government support to private owned institutions in the country.

Addressing newsmen at the school premises, Dr. Ekwere stated that the institution has been striving for academic excellence, and in the process, has succeeded in drawing both national and international attention with the British Government donating 10 computers to the school.

"Right from the day we started this school, we applied to the government for land, and no body answered us. We applied to the FCT and we have not been able to get any support. Anywhere you go, they tell you it is a private institution," he said.

"Everything you see here, are all our effort. They say the government cannot come in and help private institutions. We believe that, that is discriminatory because we are training students for the nation," he added.

Dr. Ekwere also said that the school which will be having its sixth matriculation and award ceremony this weekend, has produced top quality graduates.

He stated further that, the institution was the third private polytechnic to be approved by the federal ministry of education and the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE).

By Michael Paul (Intern)

"It may interest you to know that the institution has received no kobo from the government since inception," he said.

Reacting to questions on social behaviours of students on campus, the rector said the school has been a social crusader and warned that any student caught practicing cultism and exam malpractice shall be expelled from the institution.

He called on the government to provide a conducive education environment.



Prof. Gidado Tahir welcoming Literacy Enhancement Advancement Programme (LEAP) officials from Washington to his office recently.

## PTA donates N1.3m to community school

The Parent Teachers Association of Day Junior Secondary School Kila, in Gwam local government area of Jigawa State has donated over N1.3 million to the school for the

By Hassan A. Karofi, Correspondent (Dutse)

provision of infrastructure. At its annual general meeting held at the school premises, the chairman of the

occasion, Alhaji Ahmed Hassan, called for unity, understanding and generous donations for the development of infrastructures in the school.

He called for community participation in the provision of education as the only way out to reduce the growing gap between people in the state.

The chairman of the PTA, Alhaji Zakari Muhammad Inuwa Kila, outlined some of the achievements of the association to include the provision of portable drinking water, stationeries and host of other things.

He equally disclosed that the PTA has acquired a new site for the school, as well as the provision of two classroom blocks that is still under construction.

In his speech, the principal of the school, Mallam Safiyanu Shu'aibu Sara, commended the PTA for their contribution towards the growth of the school, promising that teachers in the school will continue to do their best on uplifting educational standard at the school.

## Registrar blames teachers over vices in schools

The registrar of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), Mr. Anjikwi Musa Ciwar, has blamed the increasing rate of vices in schools on the professional deficiencies of teachers.

Mr. Ciwar who made the observation in a chat with newsmen in Abuja, said the role of teachers in the educational development of the country cannot be over-emphasised, adding that the federal government established the council to ensure that only qualified teachers were allowed to teach in schools.

The work of the council, he said, is made more daunting because of stiff resistance from unqualified

By Maimuna Yusuf, Reporter Abuja

teacher's who presently dominate the profession.

He warned that the council will wield the big stick against any teacher who fails to upgrade his or her professional qualification by the year 2006.

"A time will come in this country when teachers will find it difficult to secure employment without been adequately registered and licensed by TRCN," Mr Ciwar said.

Already, he said the council has taken delivery of the first batch of one million certificates and licenses to be issued to qualified teachers who have been duly registered by the council.

The delay in the issuance of the certificates and licenses, he said, is due to the on-going computerisation process in the

council, but assured that soon the council will release the certificates and licenses of 200,000 teachers nationwide whose data have been stored in its computer data bank.

"Teaching as a profession is a serious business and that is why the federal government has put in place modalities that would ensure the success of the on-going registration and professionalisation of teaching in the country."

He however warned that any private or public school that is using unqualified teachers by 2006, will have their licenses withdrawn, stressing that the council has chosen not to be confrontational despite the pressures from unqualified teachers in the system believing that with awareness people will come to know the truth."

# Science & Education

## Gov. Idris charges governing council to lift varsity

Governor Ibrahim Idris of Kogi State has charged the newly reconstituted governing council of Kogi State University, Anyigba, to work toward academic stability and growth of the young institution.

The governor threw the challenge at the inauguration of the council in Lokoja.

He charged the members to build on the foundation already laid by the university management in terms of uninterrupted academic sessions for which the institution was known.

The governor also urged them to settle down quickly and evolve policies and programmes that would ensure the smooth running of the university's academic programmes.

"With the inauguration of the council, the administrative machinery of our university will be further strengthened for better management of human and material resources," he said.

Idris stated that the reconstitution of the council was to reposition the university to enable it fulfil its objectives of providing education to the youths.

Responding on behalf of the members, the chairman, Brig.-Gen. Yusuf Amuda (rtd), reiterated the council's determination to improving standards in the university.

He promised to team up

with the university management to take the institution to greater heights, and thanked the state government for the confidence reposed in them.

The institution's vice-chancellor, Prof. Simon Okwute, appealed to the

governor to assist in the employment of more academic staff.

He harped on the need to strengthen existing academic curricula and facilities on the campus, instead of establishing new faculties or introducing more courses.

## Science reporters form association

The Science Communicators Association of Nigeria (SCAN), an umbrella body for science and technology reporters, will be inaugurated in Abuja tomorrow with the election of officials to run the affairs of the association.

A release by the chairman of the steering committee, Mr. Chris Okpalefe, said the inauguration would be held at the auditorium of the Raw Materials Research and Development Council (RMRDC).

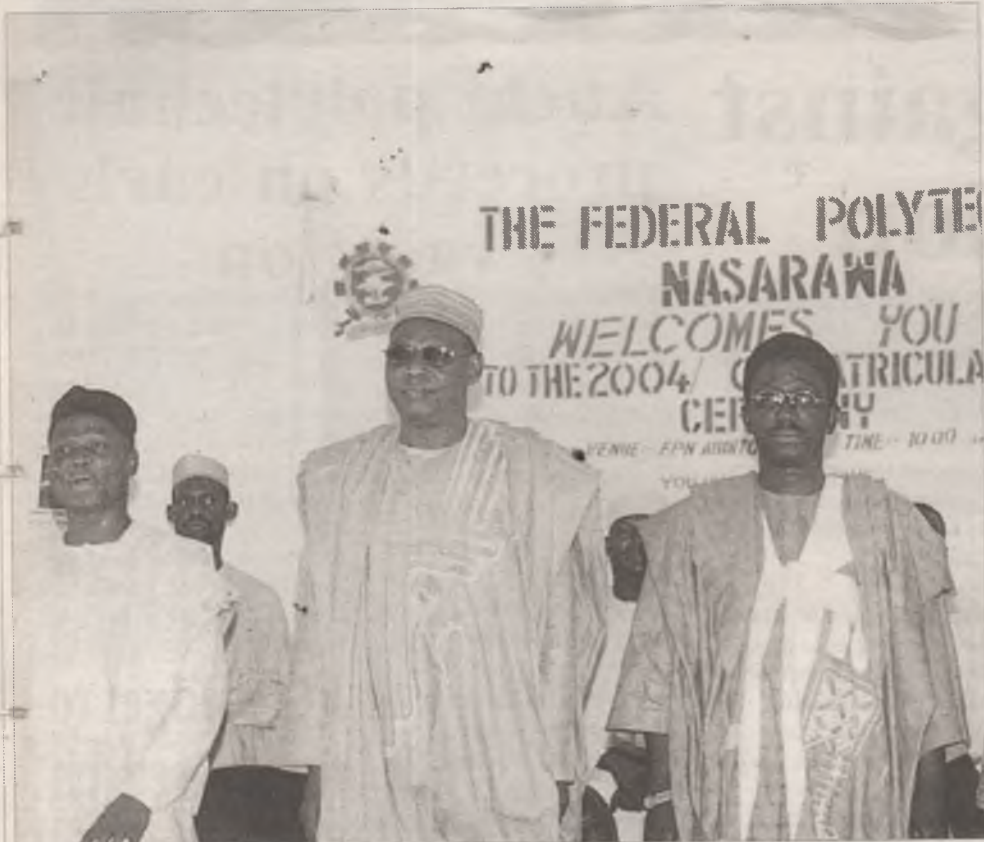
Mr. Okpalefe said science reporters and correspondents of media establishments from the 36 states and the FCT were expected to attend the inauguration.

The new association, when formed, he added, will project science and technology activities in

Nigeria and abroad; disseminate science and technology information in order to promote a science-culture amongst Nigerians; collaborate with science and technology establishments in the country and provide a forum for interaction of science and technology stakeholders for capacity building.

According to him, the idea to establish the association was conceived at the end of the science reporters and writers' workshop held from May 24-27, 2004, in Abuja.

He said the workshop was organised by the Federal Ministry of Science and Technology, the Raw Materials Research and Development Council and the African Technology Policy Network, a non-governmental organisation based in Nairobi, Kenya.



Dean students' affairs of the Federal Polytechnic, Nasarawa, Mr. Arowolo (l), the acting Rector, Mr. Pius Salami, the registrar, Dr A. H. Ahmed II and the chief librarian, Malam Adamy Mishelia during the 2004/2005 matriculation lecture held...recently.

## Confab: ASUP unhappy over exclusion of academia

The Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics (ASUP) has expressed disaffection with the Obasanjo administration over the exclusion of the academia in the on-going political Reform conference holding in Abuja.

Addressing newsmen in Abuja, the president of the union, Mallam Muhammed Umar Kibiya, said ASUP was disappointed with the federal government because it did not include issues affecting education in the agenda of the conference, and for failing to extend an invitation to the union to participate in the conference.

He expressed surprise that while the federal government invited NANS to the conference, it however failed to either invite the ASUP or ASUU, stressing that people representing the education sector at the conference were administrators and not academics.

"ASUP wishes to register its disappointment with the ongoing national political reform conference. Firstly, the conference did not include education in its agenda, neither was education recognised and given its proper place.

"Secondly, ASUP was not invited to participate in the conference. However, individuals in our institutions can go ahead and write their submissions to the conference if they so wish," Mallam Kibiya said.

The ASUP has however appealed to the federal government to extend the monetisation policy to

By Henry Omu, Senior Reporter (Education)

polytechnics as well as the implementation of the HATISS 15 salary scale, even as it expressed satisfaction with government over plans to scrap the National Board for Technical Education, and in its place, establish the National Commission for Polytechnics.

In a related development, ASUP has alerted Nigerians to attempts by a break away faction of the union to present themselves as the authentic national leaders of polytechnic teachers.

Mallam Kibiya, who raised the alarm, accused

the faction led by Mr. Kayode Adejumo of staging a walk-out during the 8<sup>th</sup> biennial delegates' conference of the union held at Rivers State Polytechnic, Bori, and of resorting to politics of blackmail and factionalisation during the conference.

Moreover, he said most of the ASUP chapters that took part in the walk out were unqualified to participate at the delegates' conference because they were indebted to the union and therefore were not eligible to contest or vote during elections.

"ASUP now warns that anybody who deals with any of these illegal officers from the south west is doing so at his or her own risk," he added.

## Kogi varsity to run medical, engineering courses

Governor Ibrahim Idris of Kogi State has disclosed that Kogi State University, Anyigba, will soon commence medical, engineering and education courses.



Gov Ibrahim Idris

From Ahmed Tahir Ajobe, Correspondent (Lokoja)

Idris, who made this known during the convocation of the institution, said that a committee would soon be set up to look into the modalities for the establishment of the faculties.

He pledged to complete all the abandoned projects in the institution, valued at over N623 million, before the commencement of the second phase of the university project that would bring on board programmes in engineering, medical and education disciplines.

He challenged the university authorities to research into the abundant mineral and agricultural resources in the state for exploitation.

## 2004 Ranking of Nigerian Universities by Quality of Academic Programmes

### Administration/Management Sciences

RANK	UNIVERSITY	SCORE
1	Pan African University, Lagos	57.75
2	University of Lagos	56.22
3	Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	55.65
4	Obafemi Awolowo Univ., Ile Ife	55.20
5	University of Nigeria, Nsukka	55.10
6	University of Maiduguri	54.63
7	University of Port Harcourt	54.59
8	Abia State University, Uturu	53.64
9	Abubakar Tafawa Balewa	52.89
10	Fed. University of Tech. Owerri	52.87
11	University of Ado-Ekiti	52.47
12	Benue State University, Makurdi	52.34
13	University of Uyo	51.88
14	Rivers State Univ. of Sc & Tech	51.59
15	University of Calabar	51.46
16	Niger Delta University	51.35
17	Imo State University, Owerri	51.23
18	Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka	51.23
19	Lagos State University, Ojo	50.90
20	Kogi State University, Anyigba	50.45
21	Olabisi Onabanjo Uni. Ago Iwoye	50.42
22	Enugu State Uni. Of Tech.	50.05
23	Nasarawa State University, Keffi	44.50
24	Covenant University, Ota	43.62
25	University of Abuja	42.59
26	Fed. University of Tec., Yola	42.52
27	Igbinedion University, Okada	39.20
28	Madonna University, Okija	21.52



## INITIAL PUBLIC OFFER OF 6,968,034,416 ORDINARY SHARES OF 50 KOBO EACH OF INTERCITY BANK PLC AT N1.90

*Intercity Bank Plc is raising N13.2 billion from the Primary market, through an Initial Public Offer (IPO).*

### ABOUT THE BANK

#### BACKGROUND

Intercity Bank Plc is a 17-year old bank which started out as a Private Limited Liability Company after obtaining its banking licence on 28 October 1987. It commenced its banking operations on 28 October 1988. The bank converted to a Public Limited Liability Company on 8 September 1992. The bank engages mainly in commercial banking. The bank currently has a network of 23 branches and 4 cash centers across the nation which it hopes to increase by 30 branches in the near future.

#### THE STORY SO FAR

Intercity Bank Plc is a good example of a successful privatization of a State-Owned Enterprise (SOE) as private individuals and corporate bodies now hold 95% of the bank's share capital that was previously held by the state. From this origin as a state-owned bank, it has transformed to an established Regional Bank with operations mainly in Northern Nigeria.

Moving forward, it is presently in the process of transformation into a National Bank through its capitalization process and subsequent Merger with First Interstate Bank Plc.

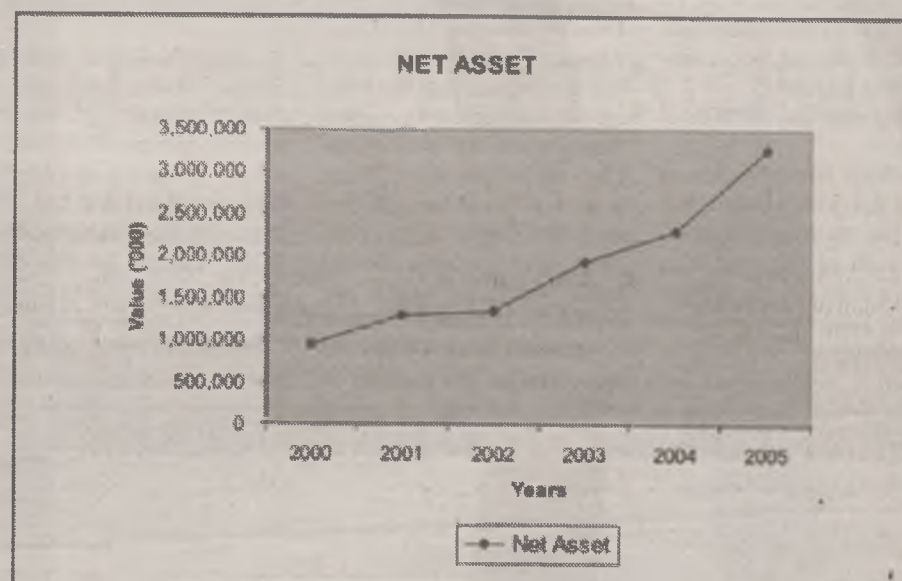
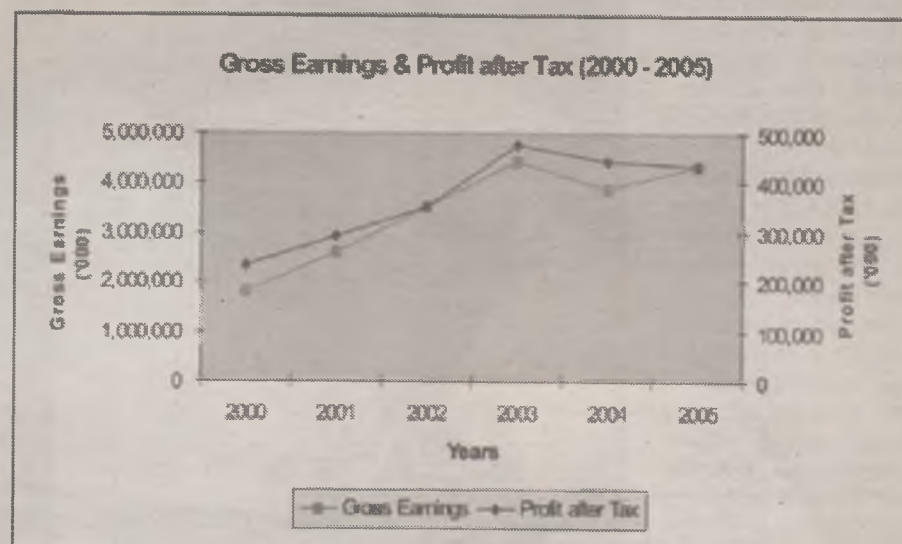
### FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The bank remains committed to increased growth as it grew its turnover by 113% and its Profit after Tax by 78% over a five-year period (2000 - 2004). The bank remains committed to its Shareholders' Value, as the bank's Net Asset has grown from its N853 million in 2000 to N2.5 billion in year ended 2004, an increase of 197%. With this performance and Management's strategy of making in-roads into other parts of the banking industry. We are recommending investing in Intercity Bank Plc because it shows Shareholders' wealth. The bank currently has a **P/E Ratio of 12.85** for the year ended June 30, 2004. This P/E Ratio compares favorably with the average P/E ratio for most banks presently raising funds. See Table below:

BANKS	OFFER PRICE	EPS	P/E RATIO
FCMB	4.00	0.11	36.36
CAPITAL BANK	2.15	0.07	30.71
EIB	1.80	0.27	6.67
CHARTERED BANK	3.40	0.47	7.30
FIRST ATLANTIC	2.50	0.19	13.02
<b>AVERAGE</b>			<b>17.82</b>

<b>INTERCITY BANK PLC</b>	<b>1.90</b>	<b>0.15</b>	<b>12.85</b>
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*Shown below is a graphical representation of the bank's financial performance in 5 years.*



Additional Financial Information is as contained in the Prospectus.

The bank with the overhaul of its Systems Network, its Risk Assets portfolio being cleaned to improve profitability coupled with the bank's performance makes it a good investment for a long-term investor.

### RETURN ON INVESTMENT

For every shareholder that invested N100,000.00 in April 1999 at N0.65 per share, the following would have accrued:

### INTERCITY BANK PLC

	Units	Price per share (N)	Amount (N)
Initial Investment (September 1998)	153,846	0.65	100,000
Cummulative Bonus	<u>230,767</u>		
	<b>384,613</b>	<b>1.90</b>	<b>730,765</b>
Capital Gain			630,765
Dividend (Net)			61,613
<b>Total Gain</b>			<b>692,378</b>
<b>Percentage Gain</b>			<b>692%</b>

### RECOMMENDATION

At N1.90 per share, Intercity Bank Plc Initial Public Offer (IPO) is trading at less than twice its book value (ratio of 1.94 to 1), and we therefore advice a **BUY** particularly for a long-term investor.

# News

Nigeria's foreign debt burden has always been a source of concern to many Nigerians. Recently, the ambassador of France to Nigeria, Mr. Yves Gauduel, told newsmen in Kaduna that Nigeria's debt is not forgivable considering its size and resources.

Daily Trust conducted a vox populi to find out the opinion of Nigerians on whether the country should pay such debt or it should be forgiven by Paris Club and London Club. Exerpts.

'It should be considered as bad debt.'

**Comrade Abdulkadir A. Salem, NULGE president, Abuja:** In the first instance those who involved us in this debt issue were the military people in collaboration with the Western world.

The western world knew that we were not operating democratic system of government and they gave the loan to the military people that have no mandate of Nigeria populace. In view of this, the debt should be cancelled. It should be considered as a bad debt.

'We must pay them their money.'

**Alhaji Ibrahim Anas, Wuse market, Abuja:** 'We must pay them their money.' The truth of the matter is that we must pay them their money. Because, if you collect someone's property or money, it is incumbent on

## Mixed opinion trail FG's call for debt cancellation

By Abdullahi M. Gulloma,  
Labour Reporter

you to pay. This is the practice all over the world. Let the military people pay them.

**Hajara Isa Musa, Lugbe,**

this debt issue is that we should pay these people their money in order to get out of this chain. It is necessary for us to pay the debt in question.

'Let them go to hell'

it in our budget proposal.' My opinion on this debt issue is that we should consider it as part of our budget in order to get rid of it. This debt is something we must pay and it will be of great help to the coun-

them.

I am advising the federal government to ignore the Western world on our foreign debt burden. The highest thing they can do is to sanction the country and after

forward.

**Tukur Abdullahi, Jabi, Abuja:** 'We don't have a choice.' If you look at the issue critically you will agree with me that we don't have a choice than to pay these people their money. Because Nigeria is blessed with abundant wealth. And it is in the interest of the nation to pay the debt we are talking about.

**Ebenezer Michael, Wuse II, Abuja:** 'It must be cancelled.' The only favour this people can do to the country and its people is to cancel this debt to enable us move forward.

To me, the debt burden is actually retarding success in the country. The amount is too colossal for us to pay. Apart from that, it appears that the debt is increasing by the day. So it should be cancelled to free the nation.

**Hafsat Garba, Wuse II, Abuja:** 'Nothing for them.' My opinion on Nigeria's foreign debt issue is that we should ignore those who gave our past military dictators the loan. In any case why should they give loan to people that were not elected by Nigerians?

It is very unwise for us to give them a kobo. As far as I am concern nothing for them. Let them go and sleep.



President Olusegun Obasanjo

**Abuja:** The only way out of this problem is that the military that collected the money from Paris Club and London Club should pay them. There is no way a civilian government that doesn't know anything about the debt collected some years ago would pay such huge amount of money.

**Abigail John, Utako village, Abuja:** My opinion on

**James Nathaniel, Kubwa, Abuja:** 'Let them go to hell.' I think it is high time we tell these people point black that we are not going to pay the debt. Let them go to hell. We have a lot of problems to solve in the country. So the debt issue is not something we can disturb ourselves about.

**Hamza Ya'u, zone 7, Abuja:** 'We should consider



Dr. Okonjo Iweala, Finance Minister

try if we begin to find ways to offset the debt.

**Danlami Abba, Garki village, Abuja:** 'Why should we pay them' My opinion on the debt repudiation is that we should not give the London Club or Paris Club a dime. Why should we pay them? They should go and collect the money from the people that collected the funds from

some years we will be again. 'Paying debt is a must'

**Dorothy Dangata, Apo village, Abuja:** 'paying debt is a must.' Well! Paying debt is a must. When you collect money from someone it is binding on you to pay him back. I think the most honourable thing to do is to pay these people their money so that the country can move



RC No 44064

NATIONAL FERTILIZER COMPANY OF NIGERIA LIMITED

### NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF RECEIVER MANAGER

1. **Otunba Lateef Adebayo Owoyemi, FCA, FCMA, FCIS, FIRM (2. PP), Chartered Accountant and Management Consultant, of LOP Consulting Limited, White House, Lateef Owoyemi Palace, Idowa-Ijebu, Nigeria do hereby give Notice of my appointment as Receiver Manager of the National Fertilizer Company of Nigeria Limited (NAFCON) RC No 44064, of NAFCON Plant Complex, Onne, PortHarcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria, in virtue of the All Assets Deed of Debenture dated 28th November, 2001 in favour of the company's Secured Creditor Bank.**

#### Registration

2. All concerned should please take notice, that my Deed of Appointment dated 28<sup>th</sup> February 2005 has been duly registered with the Corporate Affairs Commission, Abuja, Nigeria on 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2005. Consequently, all the powers of the company, its directors, shareholders and staff, over any and all of its assets, whatsoever, have become vested in me by Law, with effect from the date of my appointment as the Receiver Manager, that is to say 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2005.

#### Debtors

3. All debtors to the company should pay directly to me at the address given below within the next 21 days from the date of publication of this Notice.

#### Creditors

4. All creditors of the company and persons and or bodies who may have any legitimate claims against the company, should please register their proofs of such claims with me, within the next 14 days from the date of this publication.

#### Banks and Other Finance Institutions

5. All Bankers and providers of related financial services to the company, should please notify me of same, immediately, together with any securities held and a statement showing the company's up-to-date account positions (a) as at the close of business on 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2005 and (b) as at the date of making the statement.

#### Employees and Others Holding Assets

6. All employees of the company, and any other persons or bodies who are in possession of any properties and or assets of the company, movable and or immovable, should please confirm full details of same to me in writing, forthwith, keep such properties and or assets safe and secure, and in the case of movable properties or assets, deliver same to me at the address given below or to my duly authorized

agents.

#### General Manager and Head of Finance

7. As stipulated by Section 396(b) of the Companies and Allied Matters Act 1990, the General Manager and Head of Finance of the Company, are hereby required to submit to me within 14 days of this publication and in the prescribed form, a Statement as to the Affairs of the Company, as at 28<sup>th</sup> February 2005.

#### Potential Buyers

8. All persons and or organizations, local and foreign, who may be seriously interested in acquiring all, or any, of the properties or assets of the company, should please notify me of such serious interests and their offers at the address given below, without any delay. I am, of course, not bound to accept any such offers in part or in whole.

9. This Notice is given in furtherance of Sections 392, 393, 396 and 397 of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, 1990.

**The Mission - "RECOVER 100 %. RECOVER, BY ALL MEANS LAWFUL, 100 %"**  
Issued at Idowa-Ijebu, Nigeria, this 9<sup>th</sup> Day of March, 2005.

**Otunba Lateef Adebayo Owoyemi,**  
Receiver Manager,

**National Fertilizer Company of Nigeria Ltd - In-Receiver Managership,**

White House, Lateef Owoyemi Palace, Idowa, P.O.Box 364, Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria.

Tel: (234) 0805 55 44 332; 0803 30 33 936 Fax: (234) 037 430 271.

e-mail: [consultlop@hotmail.com](mailto:consultlop@hotmail.com) (Attention Otunba Owoyemi)

Job No. 290/162.1

# Inna lillahi Wa inna Illaihir Raji'un

*In loving memory of a beloved father, brother, grandfather and great grandfather, late Alhaji Aliyu Maisango.*

*From a humble background, through honesty, hard work and a vision, you worked your way up and never did you forget your roots. To the end, respect for others, whatever their status or lack of it and your sense of humour remained with you.*

*You had a dream and you went for it. In your life time you made great achievements; in your personal life, for your Jama'are Local Government, for Bauchi state and for the country at large. An industrialist is what you always called yourself, providing employment for people was always important to you. Tourism was dear to your heart and you loved and supported sports in general and football in particular.*

*Your sense of humour was such that you would share a joke with an elderly farmer coming back from the river side in Jama'are, same as you would with C.E.O. of some company in some part of the world. You made a great difference in the lives of many, and you continue to do so today even as you are no more with us.*

*On March the 16th 2002, three years today, the Almighty Allah called you back to him. Hard as it was, we watched you go and we prayed that You rest in perfect peace. Insha Allah your legacy lives on.*

*We love you and miss you so much.*

*We thank Allah for giving us the opportunity of having a father like you: a father that is one in a million.*

*May the Almighty Allah forgive you and have mercy on you Ameen.*

**INNA LILLAHI WA INNA ILLAIHIR RAJI'UN**

**LATE ALHAJI ALIYU MAISANGO**

16TH JULY 1931-16TH MARCH 2002

Signed  
Executive Chairman  
Awalah Hotels Nig. Limited

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- Ikeja Yenagoa

# KANO TRUST

## Water scarcity hits Kano Municipal

By Ahmed Abubakar,  
Reporter (Kano)

Acute water shortage in some parts of Kano metropolis is causing undue hardship to the residents. The water shortage, which has been on for days now, has rendered the teeming populace of some parts of Kano metropolis to run helter-skelter in search of water for domestic use.

Areas worst hit by the water shortage are Sheka, Kurma, Badawa, Tarauni and some other parts of the state. As a result of this development, water vendors have capitalised on the scarcity to make brisk

businesses.

Malam Tanimu Abubakar, a resident of Sheka quarters, said the water scarcity was the worst ever experienced in the state. He said although the state government has made people believe that rehabilitation work for all the existing dams in the state is going on, it should also disclose the extent of the work in order to raise people's hope.

The commissioner for Water Resources, Alhaji Salihu Sagir Takai, told *Kano Trust* that the present water crisis in the state was as a result of years of neglect of water management by past administrations. He added that among past regimes, only that of Audu Bako impacted much in water projects.

He said that the government had already procured 3 water pumps that will each be expected to pump at least 45 million litres of water daily, stressing that unless the Kano State water master-plan was adhered to, the problems of water shortage would not be eliminated within the state metropolis. He explained that with the expansion of structures being constructed on water pipelines, the proposed 40 million litres -0a day in Kano cannot be attained.

Meanwhile, the Kano State Challawa Water Plant is generating about 200 million litres of water per day, and to complement that, the state government plans to construct water plants at Tamburawa, Watari, Joda and Wudil.

## Jigawa to train 150 IT students

By Musa Umar Kazaure,  
Bureau Chief (Kano)

Arrangements have been concluded by the Jigawa State government to sponsor 150 students to Singapore for Information Technology (IT) training. The students, who are already camped at the Informatics Institute, Kazaure, are undergoing orientation trainings on the academic environment at the International Informatics Institute in Singapore.

The commissioner for Basic Education and Human Resources Development in the state, Alhaji Lawan Inusa Danzomo, who confirmed this, added that the 150 students who were selected from 27 local government areas of the state will leave the country by the end of this month, as arrangements with the institute in Singapore had been concluded.

He stated that a top official from Singapore was already in Kazaure informatics to coordinate the institute's programmes, adding that the students will undergo trainings on diploma and degree courses.

He noted that the state governor, Ibrahim Saminu Turaki, has given all the necessary support for the successful take-off of the state's Information Technology University, Kazaure, adding that the university has been duly registered with relevant authorities in Nigeria.

Infrastructure, he said, has been expanded and developed at the present information site at Kazaure, while foreign technical partners are being established for technical empowerment.



Governor Shekarau and commissioner of Information, Garba Yusuf, in a tête-à-tête during 'Meet the People' forum at Karaye...recently

## Residents accuse Kano govt of bias in mosquito control

By Abubakar Haruna,  
Reporter, Abuja

Kano residents have expressed dismay over the state government's lopsidedness in its mosquito control programme. The residents, who made their positions known while speaking with the *BBC Hausa service* monitored in Abuja, said that they did not see anything on ground with regards to control and prevention of mosquito in the state.

In the words of Malam Tijjani Goron Dutse, a motorcyclist, "honestly, I never see anything pertaining mosquito control,

because there are still plenty mosquitoes in Kano State."

But for Malam Mustapha Bebeji, prayers are the only recipe. His words: "The issue of mosquito in Kano State deserves nothing but prayers because it is getting out of hand. You can see rashes all over our bodies as a result of mosquito bites. We go to hospitals for treatments, but from every indication, the infection is resistant to medication."

He appealed to the state government to expand the

programme to other villages for the betterment of the teeming masses in the state.

On his part, the special assistant to the governor on Environmental Sanitation and Immunisation, Alhaji Auwalu Kabiru Kademi, said that it was not true that government was making lopsided efforts in its mosquito control programme. According to him, "We want people to be

patient. In fact, since we started this programme, we make sure that our agents go house-to-house to attend to residents; and the local governments are doing their best to ensure that the project reaches every nook and cranny of their respective areas."

According to him, the reason behind the programme was to save the residents from the menace of malaria.

## Unemployment cause of violence - Deputy gov

By Mustapha Isah Kwaru,  
Correspondent (Kano)

The lingering ethno-religious conflicts that pervaded various parts of the country have been attributed to unemployment among youths. This was disclosed by the Kano State deputy governor, Engr. Magaji Abdullahi, while receiving the Presidential Action Committee on Control of Violent Crimes and Illegal Possession of Arms. He maintained that unemployment remained the principal factor contributing to violent crimes, and canvassed for the review of secondary and tertiary institutions' syllabuses to pave way for self-employment after graduation.

The deputy governor used the forum to call on security agents across the country's borders to be vigilant as that was the only panacea to check

cross border crimes and possession of illegal arms among Nigerians. He also urged the judiciary to ensure speedy dispensation of justice.

The leader of the delegates, Deputy Inspector General of Police Alhaji Bukar Ali (rt), told the deputy governor that the federal government resolved to set up the committee to recommend possible measures of check-mating persistent conflicts and illegal possession of firearms in the country.

He said the committee had so far received over 100 memoranda to that effect, and added that it had an interactive session with the Niger-Delta youth and elders on how to curb the illegal possession of arms and crimes at the region.

## Sino-Afric supplies 9,215 tonnes of fertiliser to KNSG

By Yusha'a Adamu Ibrahim,  
Correspondent (Kano)

After much ado about the 100,000 metric tonnes of fertiliser contract in Kano State, the state government has finally got 9,215 metric tonnes, equivalent to 184,300 bags of the product ordered by Sino-Afric Agricultural and Industrial Company.

Following the development, according to a statement from the office of the Secretary to the State Government, the state government had set up a task force for onward distribution of the commodity to farmers in the state. It further stated that the state government found it necessary to set up the committee to ensure proper distribution of the fertilisers to the farmers.

It would be recalled that the state government took

the Sino-Afric Company to the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) for the latter's breach of contract over the fertiliser supply.

The contract, *Kano Trust* learnt, generated a lot of debates in the state to the extent that some government officials were accused of sabotaging its implementation.

Engr. A. Sabo Sarki is the chairman of the distribution committee, while the director, Administration and General Services of the Cabinet Office, serves as the committee's secretary. Other members are Alhaji Adamu Jibril, permanent secretary, Project Monitoring Bureau;

commander *Hisbah* board, managing director of the Kano State Agricultural and Rural Development Agency (KNARDA) as well as that of the Kano State Agricultural Storage Company (KASCO).



Gov. Shekarau

# EKO TRUST

## Chinese businessmen set up market in Ojota

The Chinese business community in Nigeria has established a China Market in Lagos for easy access to Chinese products at affordable prices. Inaugurating the market in Ojota, Lagos, the wife of the president, Mrs Stella Obasanjo, said that its establishment, signified a resounding vote of confidence on

the country's economy by the community.

Mrs Obasanjo said that the venture was also "a practical proof of growing bilateral cooperation between Nigeria and China."

She therefore called for further strengthening of the relationship between the two countries, which she said, was beneficial to their peoples.

She said that the country had liberalised its economy to the advantage of foreign investors and called on more of such foreign investments to come to the country.

"Nigeria's large population and pool of trained work force make the country easily Africa's most attractive investment destination," she said.

She charged investors and other Chinese firms to establish manufacturing subsidiaries in the country so that every product that would be sold in the country would be manufactured there.

"This is the challenge for the Chinese business community in Nigeria," she said, noting that the China Market concept in the country was a most attractive marketing strategy.

She said that the market would serve as "a one-stop shopping environment for a variety of Chinese products for Nigerians."



Vice President Atiku Abubakar and Governor Bola Tinubu of Lagos at a function in Lagos...last Saturday.

Pix: Joe Oroye

## N15bn NSE Bond: LASG begins repayment

With the expiration of a two-year moratorium on the N15 billion it raised on the floor of the Nigerian Stock Exchange NSE, the Lagos State Government will begin this month a yearly remittance of N3 billion.

The repayment of the N15 billion Bond, which has a five-year redemption period, would be on till September 2009 through half yearly repayment of N1.5 billion on March 31 and September 30 of each redemption year.

Secured in September 2002 as the first tranche of an N25 billion multiple bond issue proposed by the Tinubu administration, the facility has a lifespan of seven years.

As arranged by the NSE and the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the repayment would be through direct deductions from the state's statutory allocation from the federation account.

A sinking fund account was specifically created to ensure that the state kept faith with repayment terms without defaulting.

The Tinubu administration had approached the capital market for a long-term loan to re-finance the short-term credit facility it obtained from financial institutions to implement developmental projects in the state.

As explained by top government officials, the Bond issue packaged by Investment Banking and Trust Company Limited IBTC and First City Monument Bank (FCMB), would allow the state government to convert the existing loan and spread its repayment over the years.



Dr Ndi Okereke Onyike, DG, NSE

## CAPDAN security men, police clash at computer village

Business activities were put on hold for five hours Thursday last week at the popular Otigba Computer Village, Ikeja, Lagos, as security guards hired by the Computer and Allied Products Dealers Association of Nigeria (CAPDAN) to secure the village and men of the Nigeria Police clashed "over who has the right to ensure security in the market."

By Zakariyya Adaramola, Correspondent (Lagos)

The clash, according to an eyewitness account, started at about 9am when security guards at the village tried to arrest some area boys disrupting activities in the market.

The area boys, *Eko Trust* gathered, resisted the arrest and went on a shooting spree injuring in the process

many innocent traders.

"As the shoot-out continued, the leader of the area boys went to call the police, allegedly bribed them and concocted lies against the security guards. They were said to have told the police that the security guards were men of the Oodua Peoples Congress (OPC) disrupting business activities in the Computer Village.

"The police stormed the market in droves shooting and chasing away the security guards," said the eyewitness who is a shop owner in Computer Village.

But speaking with *Eko Trust* in an interview at the scene of the incident, police inspector Otabor Festus, who led other police officers in three vans to the village, said there was no iota of truth in the allegation that the area boys bribed them to "chase away the security guards from the market."

Otabor, who said his men came from the Area F Command, Ikeja, told *Eko Trust* that they were called to come

and ensure security and return normalcy to the market without any inducement.

His words: "It is not true that area boys came and bribed us to drive away the security guards. We can't condescend so low to do such things.

Area boys could not have had the guts to come to us. What actually happened was that some OPC men stormed the market in the name of CAPDAN security, arresting and executing jungle justice on the people. So, when they were on rampage, some concerned traders rushed to us for help and we quickly responded and returned normalcy to the market."

Disagreeing with the police officer, the assistant general secretary of CAPDAN, Mr John Oboro, told journalists that the security men were engaged by the association to rid the computer village of unwanted elements such as touts and area boys. He said CAPDAN decided to rid the market of touts and area boys because they scare away foreign and local businessmen and visitors to the market.

He called on the Inspector General of Police to probe the incident as CAPDAN duly informed the police before they embarked on the raid.

## Child trafficking: Titi Abubakar visits rescued kids

Wife of the Vice President Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, Titi Abubakar last weekend visited the 62 kids rescued in Lagos from a container and cautioned them to be wary of people who hunt them with promises of good jobs.

Titi Abubakar, who is the founder and chairperson of the Women Trafficking and Child Labour Eradication Foundation (WOTCLEF), maintained that people who go for the girls in the guise of providing jobs for them are mere exploiters.

According to her, WOTCLEF was doing everything possible to stop human trafficking, adding that she had to cut short her trip abroad to visit the children as a way of demonstrating her concern for them.

Meanwhile the National Agency for Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP) and other related matters has taken custody of children although the agony of the victims is far from being over as they are faced with the problem of feeding since government had not been funding NAPTIP since the beginning of the year.

There are about 14 other children kept in custody of the agency as witnesses in related human trafficking

By Olumide Bajulaiye, Correspondent (Lagos)

cases, four of the victims were brought from Seme Border last Friday when a team of the Nigerian Immigration Service swooped on a Celestial Church allegedly used as camp for human trafficking.

Though the International Office of Migration (IOM) has supplied some items to NAPTIP for the upkeep of the container victims, the United

Nations International Children and Education Fund has also promised to assist the agency in the upkeep of the children.

The container victims aged between six and 19 were brought by officers of the State Criminal Investigation Department, Panti, Lagos, and handed over to DSP Seluna Mutua, head, Child Trafficking department at the Force Criminal Investigation Department Alagbon, where they were taken to NAPTIP.

## Group tasks media on rape, child abuse

A non-governmental organisation, Media Concern in Women and Children has tasked the Nigerian press to spearhead the advocacy against rape and child abuse in the country.

Speaking in Lagos, executive director of the group, Princess Olufemi Kayode, bemoaned the rise in the rate children are being subjected to dehumanising and immoral conditions noting that the nation risks losing their potentials if the trend is not arrested.

According to her, the Nigeria press can salvage the situation through enlightenment, social mobilisation

By Mohammed Shosanya, Correspondent (Lagos)

and campaign against the vices and preferring alternative virtue to them, which will do the society proud.

She said since inception few years ago her group, which is specifically saddled with protection of children right has successfully treated 20 cases of rape and abuse against them.

## Shomolu NEPA gulps N30 million

The Shomolu district of NEPA in Lagos has embarked on the construction of distribution projects worth N30 million to help boost power supply in its network.

The business manager for the district, Mr Emmanuel Dickson, told a news conference on Monday in Lagos that already some of the projects had been completed while the others were in the process of completion.

According to Dickson, some of the projects include a 500 KVA transfer and 11/0415KV S/B at Bello Fola-wiyo, 300 KVA, 11/10.41 KV at Ogudu Valley and 11 KV feeder at Oworonshoki Shangisha.

The others are the proposed Odunlami 500 KVA, Balogun 500 KVA, Ewenla 500 KVA and Oluwo 30 KVA Substation.

He pointed out that the district could have embarked

on more projects that would help enhance its services in the area but was constrained by heavy debt owed it.

"We have a current debt profile of N2.194 billion out of which the government accounts for N140 million," he said.

He, however, warned customers to desist from illegal tapping or double feeding which, he said, were detrimental to the network.

# News

## National Confab... National Confab... National Confab...

### Memorandum submitted by Kano State delegation

#### Introduction:

It will be recalled that following a resolution adopted by the conference, the secretariat requested all delegates to submit their written memoranda. We have the honour to forward the following, being our contribution.

The views canvassed herein, in summary form, contain our well-considered recommendations and observations. They are the outcome of wide-ranging consultations with key stakeholders in our society; public hearings conducted to gauge the mood of and obtain popular mandate from the people of the state, and are largely shared by delegates who aspire to common ideals, aspiration and share cultural affinity with us.

It is our intention to submit, in an addendum, greater details to back up every point made.

#### Some fundamental observations

Before making our recommendations, we wish to point out what, in our considered view, are fundamental defects pertaining to procedural inadequacy, legal and constitutional anomalies and representational distortions, all of which have attended the constitution of the conference and its convening.

#### Questionable Process

With all due respect, we wish to observe that the basis of representation used is undemocratic, inequitable, unbalanced and runs foul of all established and conventional modes of constituting a body so important and invested with authority so broad and unchecked to shape Nigerian polity, economy, the society and its constitutional form of governance. It is unjustifiable, for instance, to give one state, which, under the 1999 Constitution, has 10 members at the House of Representatives, equal number of delegates with another which has 24 members.

The situation is made even worse, where the president appoints, as his nominees, thrice as many members to the conference for that state against the other.

We wish to express our serious reservation regarding this lopsided manner of constituting the conference, which leaves the process of its decision-making prone to manipulations and its ultimate recommendations full of distortions and their legitimacy suspect.

#### Shaky foundation

The absence of an enabling law, which sets out clearly the powers, functions and limitations of the conference has, in our considered view, further worsened matters. A process which has profoundly raised the hopes of Nigerians but is, without doubt, fraught with dangers and great potentials, ought not to be anchored on so shaky a foundation. The disavowal of the entire process by an important organ of the state, the National Assembly, being a legitimate and existing law-making organ under our constitution and the House of Assembly, its state counterparts, both of which, like it or not, will have a thing or two to do with the ultimate outcome of the conference, has further put to question the entire process.

To cure, salvage or otherwise ameliorate the observed defects in the conference, we recommend that:

(a) The president and all stakeholders should immediately embark on a deliberate effort to re-engage the National Assembly (NASS) to bring them on board; (b) that the president should propose to the NASS and get them to pass into law a bill which sets up the conference and empowers it with specific func-

tions; and that the outcome of the conference be subjected to national referendum to confer it with popular mandate and legitimacy.

#### Consensus building vs voting

We wish to note that an essential item on the agenda of the conference is how to cultivate the wholesome spirit of consensus building in the Nigerian polity. We commend the president for urging the conference to adhere to this mechanism in arriving at its decisions. Otherwise, we continue to be apprehensive that resorting to the mechanism of voting by a conference tainted by the inadequacies listed above will negate such a spirit and further aggravate matters.

Indeed, the best way to commence cultivating such a spirit will be for the conference itself to adopt consensus as the preferred means of resolving issues. We strongly recommend this method. By adopting the mechanism of consensus to decide issues, this conference will be following the ample and wholesome precedent set by the Constitution Review Committee, the Constituent Assembly, the Constitutional Conference and the Constitutional Debate Coordinating Committee of 1987/88, 1988/89, 1994/95 and 1998 respectively. It may be recalled that these bodies worked hard to engender consensus building around issues.

The few times when some of them abandoned this method and attempted to resolve, especially controversial issues by voting, landed them into stalemate, threats of boycott, needless acrimony and the avoidable overheating of the polity.

#### Below are highlights of our key recommendations and observations:

Structure of the federation and government

1. The people of Kano State reaffirm their resolve to keep Nigeria as a single indivisible Federal Republic founded on the principles of democracy, liberty, justice, fairness and pluralism.

2. All decisions made at the National Political Reform Conference should be regarded as proposals for the amendment of the 1999 Constitution as may be appropriate. All procedures prescribed in the constitution must be followed.

3. The Presidential system of government, as enshrined in the 1999 Constitution should be retained. Accordingly, its structure of the government and the three tiers namely: federal, state and local governments should be retained. Ways and means of ensuring good governance, transparency and accountability should be designed to strengthen the system.

4. The existing 36 states and 774 local government areas should be retained. But more powers and resources should be devolved to them. The proposals contained in the 1995 Constitution which seek to devolve more powers to the lower tiers of government should be revisited with a view to borrowing a leaf there from.

5. We recommend the amendment of our constitution to incorporate the tested and tried system of operating three distinct and clearly defined legislative lists as provided for in the 1963 Regional Constitutions.

Accordingly, provisions should be made for Exclusive, Concurrent and Residual list for the states. We also recommend the adoption of state constitutions which, as in 1960 and 1963, will embody all those aspects of the 1999 which pertain to states.

This will minimise undue uniformity and reflect diversities. It will augur well for and confer greater sense of autonomy to the federating units.

6. The traditional institution should be given a role in the constitution. This is in view of the significant role the traditional rulers play in resolving civil disputes and restoring peace among the Nigerian citizens.

#### Rotational Presidency

7. Rotational presidency is undemocratic and therefore it should not form part of the constitution. We wish to endorse the current practice whereby political parties build the principle of rotation in their strategy and electoral calculations by deploying its dynamics. As a matter of fact, since 1979, when the NPN introduced the idea of zoning and rotation, the practice has been gaining wide acceptance as a convention. We will not support fossilising such fluid concept in hard cast constitutional provisions which may cause problems of interpretation and implementation leading, as a result, to unnecessary political crises which may thereby be generated.

#### Sovereign National Conference/National Conference

8. Some commentators and agitators have called for a Sovereign National Conference, instead of a National Conference. It is unconstitutional to hold any Sovereign Conference when there is a lawfully constituted authority in power.

#### Political Parties

9. Nigerian people should be allowed to form parties as guaranteed by the constitution. In addition, party supremacy should be upheld by disallowing cross carpeting of elected officials as in the 1979 Constitution. Independent candidature should also be allowed to foster the spirit of greater participation and discourage party croynism. The funding of political parties should be based on the principles of transparency and accountability. And any government funding of parties should be based on the party's ability to raise funds independently as well as their performance at election.

#### Human and Natural Resources Mobilisation

10. The nation should formulate a comprehensive agricultural policy that will ensure upward review of federal budgetary allocation to the sector which also takes into account the proposals of international agencies to developing countries. A policy which will facilitate a substantial and sustained provision of subsidies and other forms of incentives to farmers, including export subsidy, the creation of enabling environment and provision of protection to them, should be adopted.

11. Food securities must be accorded high priority as in most other nations of the world because the nation's ability to feed itself is gradually dwindling in view of technological deficiency and increase in population. The National Assembly should, by law, set up a trust fund or set aside a substantial amount of money to be sourced from the Consolidated Revenue of the federation or the windfall from oil sales accrued in the last few years or such other sources as they may deem appropriate, which should be deployed and dedicated solely towards the regeneration of the agricultural sector throughout the federation.

12. Appropriate instruments and guidelines should be put in place in order to monitor and evaluate all agricultural policies periodically. The agricultural research institutes should be ad-

equately funded.

13a The federal government should hold in trust, control and facilitate the exploitation of all mineral resources in the country as enshrined by Section 44 (1.3) of the 1999 Constitution which states that: the entire property in and control of all minerals, mineral oils and natural gas in, under or upon any land in Nigeria or in, under or upon the territorial waters and the Exclusive Economic Zone of Nigeria shall vest in the Government of the Federation and shall be managed in such manner as may be prescribed by the National Assembly.

13b The revenue accruing from off-shore oil resources, which fall within the territorial waters and the 200 nautical miles by Exclusive Economic Zone guaranteed by international law and practice, belongs to the entire federation and should not be subject to the derivation principle.

14 The exploration of oil, gas, bitumen and other minerals should be intensified in the Chad Basin, Benue Basins or troughs and other areas in order to exploit the abundant availability of the resources in the country. The National Assembly should, by law, set up a trust fund and allocate a substantial sum of money to be sourced from the Consolidated Revenue of the federation or the windfall from oil sales accrued in the last few years or such other sources as they may deem appropriate to be deployed and dedicated solely to a sustained exploration and exploitation of the resources in these and other areas.

15. The nation should diversify its sources of energy for strategic reasons in line with the global trend since hydro-carbons are not renewable and the nation has abundant renewable sources.

16. Desertification should be declared a national emergency because desert encroachment continues to devastate vast arable land and threatens the whole nation gradually as the Sahara is moving southwards fast. A National Desertification Commission should be established. It shall benefit from the agricultural trust fund recommended above. We strongly support the immediate establishment of the Solid Minerals Areas Development Commission and the allotment to it of commensurate means to ameliorate the depletion of the ecology and erosion, all caused by flooding and the depletion fishing and agricultural activities in these areas.

#### Revenue Allocation and the Economy

17. There is need for a review of the revenue allocation formula in order to increase the share of the states and local government councils to facilitate the discharge of the additional responsibilities devolved to them. All revenue allocated from the Federation Account should be paid directly to the beneficiary federal, state and local governments. Local Government Joint Accounts maintained by the states should be abolished or else, some transparent rules be introduced to ensure accountability and participation of all stakeholders in the process of disbursement.

18.1 The derivation principle and other variables embodied in section 162 (2) which are to be taken into account by the NASS in the formulation of a law to regulate revenue allocation, should not be tampered with. We are not persuaded by and are unable to endorse the case made for any upward review of the amount due to states on grounds

of derivation for the following reasons:

(a) It is grossly unreasonable and inequitable

(b) It fails to take into account the contribution Nigerians from all walks of life have, over the years, made and continue to make with their blood and toil to protect the territorial integrity of the nation, including the protection of the oil wells and other vital and strategic installations;

(c) Advocates of this position have easily forgotten and continue to ridicule and even belittle the incalculable material contributions made from the resources of other parts of the country to make the initial investment at the exploration stage which ultimately led to the discovery of oil and its subsequent exploitation in these areas;

(d) The argument which canvasses total control over natural resources is against existing laws, constitutional provisions in the country;

(e) Such an argument ignores universal practice by which it is the nation state, and not the component units, which exercises absolute control over such natural resources. Such an argument have been used only selectively in pointing to the American practice, preferring to ignore the pervasive practice elsewhere, such as in Europe, South America, the Middle East etc.

(f) while fairness demands it and we can relate well to and sympathise with the argument which canvasses the need to attend to the devastating ecological and environmental problems associated with the exploitation of oil and gas in these areas, those in authority in these areas, to whom billions have been paid on grounds of derivations on the basis of the current formula, have neither justified nor rendered satisfactory account in the way they have deployed the funds made available to date. Rather than ask for more, we should all vow to hold such leaders accountable.

18.2 On the whole, we are convinced that the language embodied in the section referred to above, is flexible enough to accommodate any changes which may, in future, be considered desirable. Be that as it may, the Supreme Court judgment which is to the effect that the boundary of all littoral states ends at Nigeria's low-water marks and not extending to the continental shelf, must be respected and upheld for the purpose of derivation principle in the revenue allocation. Any attempt to tamper with this provision by the conference will amount to contempt of court as the matter is pending before a court of law for determination. It will also violate Order III, Rule 3.12 of the Standing Orders of the Conference.

19. The federal government should pursue the protocols and principles of ECOWAS, AU and NEPAD by ensuring the development of infrastructure such as the Transaharan Railway and Road network projects that will facilitate the integration of West Africa Sub-Region and the continent with the rest of the world. The River Niger should be dredged and the inland waterways along the

River Benue and Niger Delta should also be developed. In concert with other members of the ECOWAS, Nigeria should pursue the desirable goal of the declaration of River Niger as an international waterway. In pursuance of this objective, Nigeria and other member states of ECOWAS will enhance cross border trade, provide other less expensive means of transporta-

tion which will facilitate the movement of goods and persons and regional integration.

20. In order to foster economic balance between all sections in the country, the National Economic Council, which is established by section 153 (1) (h) of the 1999 Constitution should be empowered to ensure participation of states in the formulation of fiscal and monetary policies of the nation. Government should set-up a financial structure that would ensure full participation in all strategic investments by all parts of the country in accordance with geographical spread.

21. The privatisation process should be revisited in order to ensure fairness and equity. The need for sequencing of the privatization process should be stressed. This will help in redeeming Nigeria's image in the comity of nations.

#### Constitutional amendments

22. Section 1 sub-section (1) on the Supremacy of the Constitution should be amended and read as follows: - "If any other law, save Islamic Law, is inconsistent with the provisions of this CONSTITUTION, this CONSTITUTION shall prevail and that other laws shall, to the extent of the inconsistency, be void".

23. Similarly, the word "personal" in section 277 of the 1999 Constitution, should be deleted to read Islamic Law. It should be recalled that 1979 Constitution was similarly amended in 1990 and 1995 constitutions.

24. In addition, item 23 of part 1 of the second schedule of the 1999 Constitution should be amended to transfer "Evidence" to the Concurrent List.

25. All the relevant legal and constitutional provisions on the federal character must be respected, and in order to strengthen the Federal Character Commission, the constitution should be amended to make it an independent body under the National Assembly just like the Public Accounts Committee. It should also be funded from the consolidated revenue fund.

The federal electoral commission

26. The constitution should be amended to rename INEC to become the Federal Electoral Commission and place it under the supervision of the National Judicial Council.

27. The Federal Electoral Commission should be funded from the consolidated revenue fund or from such other sources, as the NASS may deem appropriate and which will enhance its autonomy and independence.

28. Political parties should be afforded equitable representation in the Federal Electoral Commission based on their strength in the National Assembly. The parties should nominate commissioners of the Federal Electoral Commission to the president for confirmation by the Senate.

29. A state governor shall be empowered to nominate one person to the president for confirmation by the Senate as a resident electoral commissioner to be posted by the commission to any state. The political parties should formulate the framework for the establishment of the Federal Electoral Commission.

30. State electoral commissions should be under the supervision of the State Judicial Service Commission. Their mode of appointment should be based on the same principles as pertain to the appointment of members of the Federal Electoral Commission.

Continued in page 34

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# News

## Community divided over Abia, Rivers

The Oyigbo local government area of Rivers state is divided against itself as members of the communities are confused over which state, Abia or Rivers, to belong to.

The local government, which is mainly inhabited by people of Ibo extraction, is situated at the border of Abia and Rivers states. A certain

From Ikenna Emeka Okpani,  
Bureau Chief, Port Harcourt

Dr. Martin Nwogu recently stirred the hornet's nest when he called in a local tabloid for the return of the local government to Abia state. He had alleged among things that the local government was supposed to be in Abia state and would fare better in Abia state than in Rivers state where it is allegedly marginalised. This prompted swift reactions from

those within the communities opposed to his view such as chiefs, youths, and women's groups, who trooped to Government House in Port Harcourt to disassociate themselves from the publication. The groups reaffirmed their loyalty, solidarity, and willingness to remain in Rivers state and denounced any claim aimed at detaching Oyigbo people from Rivers state.

Speaking at the protest, Eze Sunday Ojijiagwo, secretary of Oyigbo Council of Chiefs, traced the history of the Oyigbo people and said that they have never wanted to be part of any other state.

Chief Ojijiagwo, who is also a member of the River's State Advisory Council, said that they were in Government House to dissociate themselves from the said publication, which they described as a personal opinion of Dr. Martin Nwogu. They denied the allegation of marginalisation of the Oyigbo people in Rivers state, describing it as a calculated attempt to create ill feeling.

The Osun House of Assembly on Tuesday ordered the state's auditor-general for local governments to recover the N290 million excess bank charges against local governments in the state. The Assembly had recently charged its committee on public accounts to investigate the bank statements of all the councils in the state. Presenting the report of the committee to the House, the chairman, Adekeye Adelakun, told members that the money could be recovered from the banks involved.

Sponsoring the motion for the adoption of the report, the deputy speaker, Mr. Taiwo

## Assembly orders AG to recover N290m councils' funds

Sunmonu, said that the overcharge by the banks should be pursued and recovered.

The speaker, Adejare Bello, said that the Assembly would focus its searchlight on the spending of the local governments to ensure accountability and prudence. According to him, funds meant for the

development of the state would no longer be allowed to go down the drain or end up in any private pocket. He warned the local government functionaries in their own interest to avoid acts that would lead to leakages of funds and wasteful spending.

## Ex-councillors' suit: Court stalls judgement execution

Months after the execution of the judgment passed by the

From Lawal Ibrahim  
Correspondent Katsina

Malumfashi and Funtua High Courts in respect of the suit filled by ex-councillors for payment of their severance gratuity, another High Court in Katsina has issued an order ex parte stopping the execution of the judgment obtained by the plaintiffs. The order granted by a sitting high court judge, Justice Musa Danladi Abubakar, was pursuant to an ex parte motion raised by the defendant's counsel, Ahmed Audu, Esq. praying for the judges to set aside the writ of execution of the judgment due to certain irregularities in the process.

Granting their prayers, the presiding Justice Musa Danladi issued an ex parte order restraining the sheriff and the deputy sheriff from executing the former judgment pending the determination of the substantive case before the court.

However the ex-councillors have filed a notice of appeal questioning the jurisdiction of the court to entertain the matter, after the court overruled the preliminary objection they raised in that respect.

The lead defendant's counsel, Barrister Abbas A. Machika, Esq. informed newsmen that the Funtua, Bakori, and Kankara local governments failed to file their applications before the court until after they had already won judgment in their favour. That erred the procedure of their ex parte application under Order 32 of the high court rules.

It would be recalled that on of December 31, 2004 the High Court Division of Funtua and Malumfashi conducted a public auction where vehicles belonging to the local government, including that of the Bakori local government chairman, were sold to prospective bidders at the court premises.

## Benue govt to probe market fire

The Benue state government has set up a commission to investigate the cause of the fire that gutted the multi-million naira Makurdi modern market. The commission of inquiry is headed by a retired Assistant Inspector-General of Police, Mr. Andir Gur. Other members are Col. B. I. Abobo, Mr. E. M. Okwunjo, and representatives of the ministries Justice, Works, Commerce and Industries, and Water Resources and Environment. Also to serve on the commission are the secretary of the

Market Traders Union and the director of special services, who is to serve as the commission's secretary.

The permanent secretary, Benue state Bureau of Internal Affairs and Special Services, Mr. Akange Audu, said in a statement at the end of an emergency meeting of the Benue Security Council that the commission would look into the causes of the fire and also determine the extent of losses caused by the inferno. It will further suggest ways of restoring normalcy in the market and avoiding another fire outbreak in future.

## Bribery allegation bothers NPC

The National Population Commission (NPC) chairman, Samu'ila Makama, has expressed concern over reports that NPC officials demarcating enumeration areas (EAD) were being bribed by host communities. Speaking at a gala night organised in his honour by the Akwa Ibom state government on Monday, Makama said it was wrong for any community to offer bribes, just as it was wrong for any NPC officials to receive them. He acknowledged receiving reports that enumeration area demarcators (EAD) were bribed to expand the areas so that such communities would have a higher population in the census scheduled to hold in November. He advised communities to stop tasking themselves for the sake of raising funds for EADs, as such was illegal and not authorised by the commission.

Makama said that what the commission asked of the communities was to assist EADs with accommodation where necessary and possibly give them food during the period. He stressed however that the two requests did not warrant communities to task themselves as both accommodation and feeding were voluntary and not mandatory. Besides, any effort to cheat would be a waste of time and effort, he added, as modern technology has armed the population commission with relevant equipment to find out.

Makama explained that the commission was that it could detect areas of cheating via satellite, and that the team to verify the work done by EADs would identify falsified

ties to report any EAD that made financial demands to be disciplined by the commission.

Earlier, the special adviser to the Akwa Ibom state governor on political and legislative matters, Elder Joe Udobia, had said that the census was more serious than elections because errors during elections could be explained.

Udobia, who said census in Nigeria was synonymous with confusion and trouble, prayed that a successful one would be held this time. He told Makama not to publish any provisional population figures, 'so that the nation will have reliable and accurate data with which to draw up its developmental programmes.'

### Cont'd from page 32 (Memorandum submitted by Kano state delegates)

31. Members of the Electoral Commission should appoint a chairman from amongst themselves. The commission should be responsible for recruitment, promotion, discipline and training of its staff at all levels.

32. The Federal Electoral Commission shall be responsible for the compilation and periodic review of the register of voters, constituency delimitation, conduct of election etc. A provision should also be made whereby ballot papers can be made available for recounting in election petitions, if need be.

33. Legal backing should be given to the election monitors to enhance their performance to assist properly in the conduct of free and fair elections in the country.

Police and prisons

34. The command and control of the Nigeria Police should remain as per the provisions contained in the 1999 Constitution. The composition of the Nigeria Police Force must reflect the Federal Character. The present serious and acute imbalance in the current composition of the force must be addressed and corrected. Policing should be based on community understanding. There is a need to localise the recruitment and posting of the police force. In this regard, the policemen between the rank of constable to the rank of ASP must be indigenous of the state. A deliberate

implement this strategy should be formulated and pursued with vigour.

35. The quality and content of police training should be improved and the police academy should be of high academic standing.

36. The legal provision for categorisation of prisoners according to age and seriousness of offence should be implemented. Facilities for the training of inmates should be improved and modernised. The judiciary and the executive should discharge their constitutional role of decongesting the prisons by ensuring speedy dispensation of justice and regular visits to the prisons to review the cases of offenders. There should be training and retraining of prison officials so that they can appreciate the reformatory rather than the punitive nature of their duty."

Civil society

37. Civil Society Organisations are essential for the flourishing of democracy. We recommend the expansion of the political space for expressing dissent to policies. While we recognize the legitimate societal need to maintain law and order, we urge that that need be balanced with democratic imperatives to facilitate peaceful demonstration by political and civil society groups with minimum hindrance. Therefore, under no circumstances should the state be allowed to infringe on the rights of

## Gov Saraki unhappy over non payment of severance allowance

Governor Bukola Saraki of Kwara state frowned at local government councils for not honouring his directive on the payment of severance allowance to councilors in the state. Speaking at a meeting with 16 local council chairmen in Ilorin, he expressed surprise that some local governments were yet to implement his directive. He charged them to resolve the matter, which has dragged on for a year, and provide a solution without delay.

From Abdulrazaq Adebayo,  
Correspondent, Ilorin

Governor Saraki who said the meeting was aimed at harmonising and streaming issues that affect the local councils, hoped that the indictment of council officials by the Justice Oluyemisi Ajayi Commission of Inquiry would be discussed with a view to finding the way forward. The meeting would also deliberate on the joint capital projects being executed between the state government and the local councils.

## Aliero signs 2005 budget

Governor Adamu Aliero of Kebbi state on Monday signed the 2005 Appropriation Bill of over N41 billion. While signing the bill, the governor urged members of the Assembly to monitor the implementation of the budget. He said that although some of the major projects contained in

the budget were executed prior to the passage of the bill, the provisions of the budget would be strictly adhered to. 'Although we have completed the execution of the presidential lodge, Birnin Kebbi township road, and quite a number of others we shall continue to execute all projects contained in the budget,' he said. 'Let me use this opportunity to challenge members of the legislature to live up to expectations in conducting their business,' he added.

According to Aliero, both the legislative and executive arms of the government are partners in progress as elected representatives of the people.



Gov Adamu Aleiro

also assemble for civic interactions. However, they are expected to cooperate with civil security agencies to ensure maintenance of peace and order.

38 Government should encourage the participation of NGO's in the affairs of the society by adhering to the relevant roles established by law for them, especially at the local government council level where such organisations are expected to contribute towards engendering grass-roots participation in good governance through various responsible roles such as participation in statutory alarm committee that ensures accountability.

39 Non-governmental organisations should be discouraged from being the vanguard of alien cultures and political interest. They should rather be encouraged to propagate and promote the cherished values of our society. The authorities and their membership must also make them accountable and transparent, especially with reference to foreign funding by insisting that they publish their statements of account as required by law.

Signed: Alhaji. Magaji Dambatta, OFR  
Signed: Mall. Sule Y. Hamma  
Signed: Alhaji. Isyaku Umar Tofa  
Signed: Alhaji M. T. Waziri  
Signed: Prof. Auwalu H. Yaludu  
Signed: Dr. Haruna M. Salihu  
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# News

## Plateau security council wades into threat to peace

There are strong indications that the fragile peace in Plateau state after the state of emergency is threatened. This has prompted the state's Security Council to visit Wase and Kadarko and warn the people against inciting conflicts. The Security Council team led by the deputy governor, Chief Michael Bot-Mang (who represented Governor Joshua Dariye), comprised the brigade commander, the state's police commissioner, director of the State Security Service (SSS), the comptroller of customs, the comptroller of immigration, the comptroller of prisons, and other senior government officials.

Plateau government sources told *Daily Trust* that the team's visit followed reports of threats to peace in Wase and Kadarko towns of Wase local government area. The threats included preventing people who fled their homes in the wake of the crises from rebuilding their houses and resuming their farming.

Assessing the peace situ-

From Jibril Daudu,  
Regional Editor (Jos)

ation in the area, the Security Council ordered all persons who had illegally taken over the houses and farmlands of the people that fled from the previous crises to vacate them immediately or face the wrath of the law.

The deputy governor, who conveyed the message, also directed all self-appointed traditional rulers to stop parading themselves as such until government pronounces on the matter.

Chief Bot Mang pointed out that the state government was concerned with reports that although people were willing to return to their former places of abode, they were prevented by those who had illegally taken over their houses and farmlands as the 'spoils of war.' Some of the abandoned houses have reportedly been turned into market premises. The deputy governor said that such a situation was unacceptable and violated governments' peace initiatives. He warned

that those involved in the illegal acts would be dealt with decisively.

The emir of Wase, Dr. Haruna Abdullahi, urged the government to be firm and decisive in its pronouncements. He thanked members of the state's Security Coun-

cil for working towards the return of peace to the area.

The chairman of Wase local government, Alhaji Saidu Musa, said that despite the threats, a large number of returnees had arrived in places formally declared as 'no go areas'.

## Nigeria, Niger unite against Quealea birds invasion

From Isa Umar Gusau,  
Correspondent (Damaturu)

Nigeria and the Republic of Niger have resolved to join forces in combating the invasion of farms by Quealea birds in some parts of both countries. The resolution was contained in a communiqué jointly signed by Mr. Oumoum Yakouba, governor of Diffa region of Niger Republic and Governor Bukar Abba Ibrahim of Yobe state who led a Nigerian delegation to Niger Republic at the weekend. Quealea birds have long caused a lot of problems to local farmers, which have resulted in poor agricultural yields.

The resolution also committed both countries to par-

ticipate in the vaccination of animals and sharing of information on the outbreak of pests and other animal diseases. The two countries called on their farmers to ensure the quick evacuation of farm produce to avoid clashes arising from their consumption by trespasses cattle.

The communiqué also indicated that Nigeria and Niger Republic have agreed to integrate their healthcare delivery to further cement socio-economic ties. The two countries' delegations likewise recognised the fragile nature of the eco-system in the region as characterised by

The Jigawa state government has accused the controller of federal works ministry office in the state of undermining road maintenance in the state. According to the state's engineering and infrastructures commissioner, Alhaji Aminu Yanleman, only two of such roads were repaired in the last two years despite the N15 million released monthly to the state for the maintenance of federal roads. He said that the state's FERMA has been denied access to the monthly allocation and was unable to

## Jigawa laments inactivity of FERMA

From Hassan A. Karofi,  
Correspondent (Dutse)

do any meaningful maintenance work in the state.

Engr. Yanleman added that out of the eight federal roads in the state, six was neglected while the only two that were repaired had their potholes patched up. 'Only the Garki-Cuirel Hadejia road and the Birnin Kudu-Bauchi border road were repaired, while the Hadejia-Gamayin-Katagum, Gamayin-Kafin Hausa-Jahun, Huguma-Dutse and the Kazaure-Daura road were all neglected.

The commissioner also accused the office of the controller of denying the state monitoring team their right to knowledge of the activities of FERMA. He therefore called on the federal government to investigate the activities of the federal works office in order to facilitate the repairs of roads in Jigawa state.

It would be recalled that the state government has complained of the refusal of the federal government to repair or contract roads in the state since 1999, which complaint was conveyed by a delegation from the state to President Obasanjo.



Col. Bala Mande, environment minister

## Felicitations

The Chairman Charanchi Local Government, ALH. DIKKO UMAR RADDA, heartily rejoice with His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Katsina State, ALHAJI UMARU MUSA YAR'ADUA (*Mutawallen Katsina*) on the conferment on him the National Primary Education merit Award (NPMAN) by the National Universal Basic Education Commission, today Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> March, 2005, at the Shehu Musa Yar'adua Centre, Abuja.

We pray Almighty Allah to guide you as you move the people of Katsina to greater height.



ALH. DIKKO UMARRADDA  
Chairman Charanchi Local Government,  
Katsina State



His Excellency,  
ALHAJI UMARU MUSA YAR'ADUA  
(*Mutawallen Katsina*)  
Executive Governor of Katsina State,

Signed  
Alh. Dikko Umar Radda  
Chairman Charanchi Local Government,  
Katsina State

# Inside Politics



Ibrahim Masa, AD delegate, Yobe (left) exchanging views with Emmanuel Toro (SAN) Kaduna State delegate (right) at the national political reform conference holding in Abuja. Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje.

## Gov Tinubu urged to scrap new LG councils

Lagos State Governor, Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu has been urged to dissolve the newly created local government councils in the state in the interest of the people.

The appeal was made by Dr. Adedeji Aganga-Williams, an indigene of the state, residing in Vienna, Austria in a letter to Governor Tinubu.

Dr. Aganga-Williams, who is an international banker and finance expert, pleaded with the governor to show concern for the welfare and the well being of the people of the state by taking a bold step in reverting to the old structure of 20 local government councils in the state saying that the ongoing political tango between the federal government and the Lagos State Government should be discontinued in the interest of the people.

Dr. Aganga-Williams lamented that the situation became worrisome especially viewed against the backdrop that the lifeline of the local government workers, teachers and many others depends on the funds.

"That is why I am appealing to the Lagos State Governor to stop playing politics with the life of the people of the state and to revert back to the old local government and convert the newly created ones to development areas pending the time the constitutional issues are resolved," Dr. Aganga-Williams said.

In his letter, the banker also conveyed his belief that the issue at stake was complex and required not only constitutional but also political solutions.

In declaring his unflinching support for the aspiration of the good people of Lagos State and the dire need to bring development nearer to them so that they could also enjoy the dividends of democracy, Dr.

By Abdu Labaran, Group Political Editor

Aganga-Williams emphasised that such aspiration was more than legitimate and equitable if one takes a closer look at some states in the federation with less population but with infrastructure to cater for their people.

Continuing, Dr. Aganga-Williams stated that his position on the issue was informed by the interpretation of a legal luminary, Chief Gani Fawehiemi, who had not only advised the Federal Government to withhold the state's share of the local government funds till the newly created ones were dissolved, but also pointed out that only the former 20 local governments were entitled to collect funds.

"Now that both parties have gone to court, and in fact up to Supreme Court, I am of the opinion that the adjudication of the highest court in land is to be respected," the banker further said.

Dr. Aganga-Williams wondered why the National Assembly has been delaying the conclusion of the process for the ratification of the additional councils, noting that this was



Gov. Tinubu

incomprehensible since Lagos State has concluded its.

"Hopefully, the on-going National Political Reform Conference or National Dialogue will address the contentious issue of local government in the federation and come out with acceptable solutions," he concluded.

## 2007: AD suspends Adasu for supporting IBB

For playing a principal role in his former boss, 2007 campaign structure; "Project 2007," former Benue State civilian governor, Reverend Father Moses Adasu has been suspended from his party, the Alliance for Democracy (AD).

Although the former governor questioned the powers of the state executive body to take the decision, the party however, predicated its action on Article 7(a) and Article 16(1-2) of the its constitution which spell out the disciplinary measure for anti-party activities and gross misconduct.

The decision which is contained in a January 23, 2005 letter signed by the state chairman of the party, Barr. James Ogbu and 26 other members, stated that members unanimously ratified the indefinite suspension of Rev. Father Moses Adasu which was carried out by both his council ward, Mbaiwarno and Konshisha local council party executive on July 23, 2004 and August 3, 2004 respectively.

"With reference to the suspension of Moses Adasu by Mbaiwarnyam council ward and Monshis local government chapter of AD

## PDP inaugurates probe panel on Dariye

The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) yesterday inaugurated the panel set up recently to probe the allegations of money laundering against Governor Joshua Dariye of Plateau State.

The PDP had at its National Executive Committee (NEC) meeting held in Abuja last week appointed Cross River State Governor, Donald Duke to head the panel to probe Dariye while the Board of Trustees (BOT) chairman of the party, Chief Tony Anenih is to head the panel to probe the National Working Committee (NWC) over their role in the Anambra crisis. Anenih's committee was also inaugurated yesterday.

The national chairman of the party, Col. Ahmadu Ali (rtd) suggested that the actions of party members, including state governors and party officials had become a source of embarrassment to the party, hence the two committees to check unwholesome acts.

"We must lead by example and practice what we preach. We must show our people that PDP is not a vehicle for attaining power but also a veritable instrument of development," Ali said, adding that "it is against this

By Hammeed M. Bello, Political Reporter

background that certain happenings around some of our public and party office holders must be a source of concern to the party."

He said also that "we have read a lot about His Excellency, Governor Joshua Dariye in connection with alleged corrupt practices. As a responsible party we have a duty to seek the truth to enable us take informed decisions.

The other members of the panel, according to Ali, include Barrister Sampson Ekhabafe, Hon. Bashir Sharrif, Dr. Danladi Sankara, Bode

Ojomo, Alhaji M.A. Shorobi and Chief John Igboke, and their terms of reference were:

To examine in detail the recommendation of the Oyinlola committee that the NWC be dissolved for not acting swiftly on Anambra crisis due to the interest of some of the members.

To examine allegations that some NWC members received bribe to alter the course of justice in the Anambra crisis, and to recommend appropriate disciplinary measures against the erring NWC members.

Commenting, Chief Anenih said he was happy to be witness to the happenings in the PDP, adding that in his assignment, he will not witchhunt anybody but justice will be done and discipline will be enforced.

## Forum supports banning ethnic associations

The chairman National Unity Forum (NUF), Malam Inuwa Abubakar has commended Alhaji Abubakar Mu'azu Hassan, a delegate from Gombe State at the national conference for advocating the scrapping of ethnic associations such as *Afenifere*, *Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF)*, *Ohaneze Ndigbo*, *Middle Belt Forum*, etc.

Malam Inuwa said the suggestion was a welcome one since according to him "such groupings are tribalistic and divisive in nature and capable of causing chaos in the country."

Inuwa agreed with Alhaji Abubakar that such organisations will not assist in the building of a united Nigeria which we all are striving to achieve, emphasising that these associations are bane of Nigeria's unity.

The chairman also congratulated the Gombe youth

leader for canvassing for the stoppage of recycling old leaders in government saying that since the first republic, almost the same set of leaders have been in government and now the same group are more in the present conference recycling old ideas which do not conform with the present realities.

Malam Inuwa said "these old brigade recycling themselves in power should be checked and the youth given a chance in governance of this country. At best they should serve as advisers and patrons."

Inuwa supported the youth leader also on his view that known corrupt Nigerians should be exposed and identified to countries in Europe and America in order to prevent them from doing business with their citizens and hiding their illegal wealth in such countries.

## USA-based group lauds Ali's emergence as PDP chairman

The USA/Canada chapter of the coalition for democracy has commended leaders of the North-Central Zone of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) for their unanimous choice of Senator Ahmadu Ali as the party's national chairman.

In a statement made available to *Daily Trust* in Abuja, the coalition asserted that Ali would in no small measure uplift the standard of PDD and make it a strongest party not only in Nigeria but in Africa.

"Senate Ali is one of those leaders in Nigeria who despite their military background, believe strongly in democratic principles and rule of law. He will definitely bring his wealth of experience to bear in the running of PDP," the coalition said.

The coalition also called on Nigerians to support the presidential ambition of Vice-President Atiku Abubakar in 2007 to enable him continue with the policies and programmes of the present administration saying that Vice-President Abubakar remains the only credible person to succeed President Olusegun Obasanjo in 2007.

"As is the rule in USA and other developed democracies around the world, Vice President Atiku Abubakar must be encouraged by all Nigerians to continue from where President Olusegun Obasanjo would stop in 2007.

"The vice-president is tested and trusted. He is very loyal and courageous in doing things. His acceptance within and outside the party (PDP) is very tremendous," the coalition said.

# SPORTS

## No early cheering for Chelsea

Chelsea were hardly in celebratory mood after taking a further big step towards the English Premiership title.

The Blues moved 11 points clear of Manchester United at the summit with just nine games remaining but despite creating a string of chances, could not do any better than a 1-0 win against relegation-threatened West Bromwich Albion.

However, after the euphoria of the Blues' 4-2 thriller over Barcelona that saw them sweep 5-4 on aggregate into the Champions League semi-finals, whatever the score against unfancied West Brom it would have seemed a come-down.

"We think we're doing very well, we're in the last eight of the Champions League, top of the league by 11 points, we've got the League Cup in the bag already," said Chelsea's downbeat assistant manager Steve Clarke.

Chelsea are at home to Crystal Palace on Saturday, with the south Londoners in a similar predicament to Albion.

The Eagles are hovering two points above the relegation zone and will be flying into Stamford Bridge with similar expectations to West Brom.

Palace will be the third leg of a four-game run against the Premiership's bottom clubs and though both Norwich City and the Baggies performed well against the runaway leaders, the end result was another Chelsea victory in both cases.

"We see the next games one game at a time, on Saturday it's Crystal Palace at home, we need to get three points and we expect to get three points," said the non-nonsense Clarke.

"No disrespect to Palace, who are a good side and have done very well, but we

have to get another three points and maintain the gap."

Chelsea fans had hoped Arjen Robben would feature against Barcelona but they may have to wait even longer for the inspirational Netherlands winger to return from a broken foot suffered on February 2.

"Robben is close, he's getting there, he may play on Saturday," the Scot revealed. "He might be better to wait a couple of weeks, wait a fortnight and start his season again."

West Brom manager Bryan Robson has a five point gap to make up on Palace, and the Baggies boss is keen to give his Eagles counterpart Jain Dowie all the advice he can.

"As long as Chelsea beat Crystal Palace, that gives us hope," Robson said.

"I've seen a lot of people try to play against Chelsea with five across midfield, but just never seem to get out of their own half because their central defenders are very dominant, so you can't really get out of your own half.



Chelsea midfielder Frank Lampard, left, and manager Jose Mourinho. UEFA referees' chief Volker Roth claims Mourinho and managers like him who stoke up fans against referees are causing a crisis in football.

## 'Monumental disaster' United's only hope

Gary Neville has admitted only a monumental disaster for Chelsea can lead to Manchester United winning the Premiership title this season.

The United defender hopes to make his return for Sir Alex Ferguson's side against Chelsea's west London rivals Fulham at Old Trafford on Saturday after missing the club's Champions League exit against AC Milan and subsequent FA Cup win against Southampton with an ankle injury.

But the England right-back trained Tuesday and will now look to play his part in extending an 18-game

unbeaten league run against the Cottagers.

However, with Chelsea's 1-0 victory over relegation candidates West Brom at Stamford Bridge leaving Jose Mourinho's side 11 points clear at the top with nine games remaining, Neville knows better than most that the Reds' title hopes are fading fast.

"They can make a mistake but it is looking less likely as each game goes by," Neville told MUTV on Tuesday.

"We still harbour hopes that they could really collapse. But we need more than a blip now, it would be a monumental disaster for them not to win the championship.

"They do have a lot of games coming up and with the Champions League matches as well, you never know what could happen. All we can try

and do is make sure we maintain our own form so if they do falter we can capitalise on them."

But whatever the outcome of the Premiership race, United appear well on course to finish in the top two and so avoid the hassle of an additional Champions

League qualifier in August.

United have been beaten just twice in the league this season, an opening day defeat against Chelsea followed by a 2-0 defeat away to Portsmouth at the end of October.

"If we can't get near Chelsea, we should at least look to

**- Neville**

secure second spot if we can," Neville said.

"We are defending an unbeaten run that goes back to October and we want to maintain it," he added.

## Troubled Dortmund poised for summer clear-out

Six-time German Champions Borussia Dortmund confirmed they will be letting at least six players leave the club in the summer in a bid to combat their acute financial problems.

Dortmund debts are estimated to reach 134.7 million euros (175.5 million

dollars) by mid-2006.

"Six or seven players will be leaving us," the club's business spokesman Hans-Joachim Watzke told SportBild magazine.

"The new squad will be trimmed down to 23 or 24 players with a 28 million euro salary cap."

Czech international

playmaker Tomas Rosicky, contracted until June 2008, is expected to be one big name departure with Borussia looking for a two-figure sum for the playmaker.

Brazilian Evanilson, Niclas Jensen, Guy Demel, Andre Bergdolmo, Ahmed Madouni and Sunday Oliseh are expected to leave with their lucrative contracts expiring at the end of the season.

Dortmund are keen to hold onto Czech star Jan Koller along with German internationals Christoph Metzelder and Christian Worns but a number of clubs are ready to swoop.

The 1997 Champions League winners are paying the price for gambling heavily on player transfers and wages after floating on the stock market in October 2000.

The club management hoped playing regularly in the Champions League would balance the books but the gamble backfired.

## French probe Ronaldinho's bank account

French fraud squad detectives are reportedly investigating how television channel Canal Plus put 15 million euros into the Swiss bank account of Brazil star Ronaldinho.

Ronaldinho, sold to Spanish side Barcelona for 30 million euros two years ago, was paid the money after joining Paris St Germain, owned by Canal Plus, in 1999, Le Parisien reports.

The newspaper said police sources said the money was paid through a Canal Plus marketing

subsidiary for the player's image rights.

Prominent agents in France were interviewed as part of investigations into transfers involving Paris St Germain and Olympique Marseille last week.

They are investigating allegations of tax evasion through transfers of money between France, Monaco and Switzerland.

The offices of the French football federation, the league and five major clubs were raided last month amid allegations of irregularities involving advertising and

television rights deals.

Lens, Girondins de Bordeaux and champions Olympique Lyon were the other clubs being investigated.

The five clubs were members of the now-disbanded Club Europe, launched by television channel Canal Plus in 2001.

It paid 250 million Euros to the five clubs to obtain their broadcasting rights.

But the payments stopped and Club Europe was dismantled after protests by Canal Plus shareholders.



Ronaldinho

# Sports

## Bay Hill showdown for big three

The world's top three battle it out in an enticing Bay Hill Invitational field in Orlando this week.

Having regained top spot, Tiger Woods bids for a fifth victory in six visits to the Florida course.

Els has been in excellent form on the Middle East stretch of the European Tour, winning both events in style.

Singh has won once in

the US this season and missed a short putt to lose a play-off with Padraig Harrington at last week's Honda Classic.

Woods insists that the number one ranking is not a priority. "It's not what drives me," he said. "I guess it might be more interesting for the fans but I'm not a fan, I'm a competitor."

"My whole idea is to win a tournament just like Vijay,

Ernie and anybody else in the field."

Woods has shown some imperious form in his four strokeplay events so far this season, finishing joint third in his opening outing and winning twice, most recently overturning a two-shot final day deficit to defeat Phil Mickelson at Doral.

In addition to his four European events, Els, ranked third in the world, has played in three US events, and has yet to finish outside the top six on either tour.

World number two Singh surprisingly missed the cut at the Pebble Beach Pro-Am, but has four top-five placings from his seven strokeplay tournaments thus far.

Retief Goosen, ranked fifth in the world, also takes part this week, looking to build on his share of eighth place at Doral.

Woods, Goosen and Els form a formidable three-ball, teeing off at 0840 local time.

A strong European contingent is headed by Spain's Sergio Garcia, with Darren Clarke and Nick Faldo paired together.

Other British stars trying their luck at Bay Hill are Brian Davis, David Howell, Graeme McDowell, Ian Poulter, Phil Price, Justin Rose and Greg Owen.

## Heat blaze into playoffs

Dwyane Wade nailed a jumper at the buzzer to help the Miami Heat edge the New York Knicks 98-96 on Tuesday to earn their 10th consecutive win and become the first team to clinch a playoff berth.

Wade finished with 24 points while Shaquille O'Neal contributed 23 as Heat also became the first team this season to record 50 wins.

The Knicks had looked poised to end Miami's streak when they pulled ahead 92-89 but despite support from the raucous New York crowd could not hold off the Heat who went on a 7-0 run to regain control with two minutes to play.

New York clawed back to level the game at 96-96 before Wade took the ball with 13 seconds remaining, ran down the clock and sank an 18-foot jumper.

Stephon Marbury scored 24 points for the Knicks while Tim Thomas added 20.

In Philadelphia, Allen Iverson scored a game high 36 points outshining Kobe Bryant to help the 76ers pound the Los Angeles Lakers 108-91.

The NBA's leading scorer, Iverson also contributed nine assists, five rebounds and three steals to the 76ers cause while Bryant had 20 points for the Lakers.

Rookie Andre Iguodala added 15 points for Philadelphia.

In Chicago, Rashard Lewis notched 30 points and Reggie Evans snared 19 rebounds sparking the Seattle SuperSonics to a 99-93 victory over the Bulls.

Ray Allen contributed 17 points and seven assists for Seattle while Ben Gordon led the Bulls with 21.

In Cleveland, LeBron James scored 36 points and snared nine rebounds powering the Cavaliers to a 92-73 win over the slumping Utah Jazz to post their third

consecutive win.

Andrei Kirilenko had 14 points and nine rebounds for the Jazz, who dropped their sixth straight game.

In Sacramento, Peja Stojakovic had 27 points and Mike Bibby added 21 points, 10 assists and six rebounds as the Kings beat the Orlando Magic 105-94.

Steve Francis had 25 points while Grant Hill added 24 for the Magic, who lost a season high fifth consecutive game.

In Dallas, Kevin Garnett had 25 points and 12 rebounds while Sam Cassell returned from a seven-game injury layoff to score 15 to lead the Minnesota Timberwolves to a 100-91 victory over the Mavericks.

Dirk Nowitzki led the Mavericks with 21 points while adding 15 rebounds and four assists.

## Sharapova shackles Zuluaga

Wimbledon champion Maria

Sharapova had to call upon all her reserves to beat Colombia's Fabiola Zuluaga 4-6-6-2-7-5 in the fourth round of the Pacific Life Open on Friday. The scrappy Zuluaga saved four match points before the Russian finally prevailed after several unforced errors.

"It was a big battle out there," said Sharapova, who will meet the winner of the Mary Pierce-Nadia Petrova match.

"I basically committed suicide when I had those four match points, especially when I came into the net and stayed in the middle.

"When you're not playing your best tennis, those are the matches where you finish, win or lose.

"But it's good to get through them, because I feel whenever I don't play that well, then the next day I come out and I do better and better."

Sharapova said she had briefly flashed back to her semi-final loss to Serena Williams at the Australian Open, where she squandered three match points.

"It comes back in your mind," said Sharapova.

"Like you had four match points before and you're up 5-2, you were playing so good and all of a sudden either she picked up her game or you just started going downhill.

"But it's good to learn. I was frustrated when I got back to five-all, but then I pulled it together."

## Mancini: 'We made it hard on ourselves'

Inter Milan coach Roberto Mancini was looking forward to Friday's quarter-final draw after his team's win over European champions Porto on Tuesday but admitted they did it the hard way. "We did everything we could to make things difficult for ourselves," said a relieved Mancini.

"Having scored early we then pulled back and didn't create much during the first half except on the break.

"We were better after the interval, though we should

have been more careful on that corner when Porto scored. When you concede a goal to go 2-1 up with 20 minutes left it's only natural that you feel a bit of fear."

Asked about recent reports linking Adriano to Real Madrid he said: "When a player doesn't play it's normal that he's unhappy. Tonight, though, he was extraordinary. Let's hope the three goals he scored have got him properly back into his stride."

Porto striker Benni

McCarthy was left to rue his side's exit.

He told Sky Sports News: "We were not as confident as we were supposed to be, we knew we had to start off great after drawing 1-1 at home and we gave away an early goal.

"We had to work twice as hard to get back and after that and it became a bit of a Mission Impossible, but we worked hard and all credit to the guys. But it can be very tough against Italian teams.

"They defend well and we weren't as good as we could have been tonight."



## NATIONAL MANPOWER BOARD

(National Planning Commission, The Presidency, Abuja).

### GRADUATE EMPLOYMENT TRACER STUDY

The National Manpower Board is pleased to announce its readiness to conduct the above named Study. The Study aims at:

- \* examining the postings and service experiences of youth corps members for efficient National Youth Service Corps administration in Nigeria;
- \* determining the extent to which graduates of various fields of study are affected by unemployment;
- \* examining the relevance of the existing academic training programmes and courses to the current labour market realities;
- \* examining the status of the Nigerian Labour Market as it affects the graduates of tertiary institutions;
- \* examining the employment experiences of the graduates;
- \* assessing the magnitude of unemployment problems; and
- \* examining the employment prospects of the graduates.

The Study is to cover National Youth Service Corps members for Years 2003 and 2004 as well as Batch A of year 2005.

All Stakeholders, including NYSC members of 2003, 2004 and 2005 Batch A, parents, State NYSC Directors and employers of the NYSC members for the years listed above are enjoined to kindly make available the data requested. This will be useful for the formulation of graduate employment and National Youth Service Corps policies and programmes.

*Note: This Study is being undertaken with kind collaboration and assistance of the NYSC Management.*

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# Sports

## 'Abdulazeez remains out of NFL board'

By AbdulRaheem Aodu  
Reporter (Sports)

The Nigeria Football League (NFL) has refuted the claims by its erstwhile security committee chairman, Hon. Abdulazeez Mohammed, that he only resigned from the security committee but not as a member of the NFL board.

The nascent league governing board reaffirmed that Abdulazeez resigned his membership of the board and so remains out of the board. The Ranchers Bees team manager is also advised to keep off all NFL activities.

NFL Executive Secretary, Salisu Abubakar disclosed to *Trustsports* yesterday that the Ranchers boss was given two options to either resign his membership of the board or be sacked, during the NFL board meeting held last week, to which he decided to resign.

Hon. Abdulazeez is no longer a member of the NFL board because he has resigned his membership and his letter of resignation was

duly accepted by the board.

Following the incident which took place in Kaduna, he first wrote a letter of apology to the board.

"However, during our meeting last Thursday, his case was discussed and he was given the options to resign or be board right there. The board later received another letter from him, where he appealed against the decision of the board to ban him for a season.

"Surprisingly, we later received letter number 4 in

which he rescinded his decision to resign from the board, rather limiting his resignation to the security committee which he used to head. We are in possession of the four letters but our stand is very clear and remains the same; he is no longer a member of the board. We have written to the League Owners to elect another person from his constituency to replace him," Salisu said.

Honourable Abdulazeez was found guilty of assau-

lting when he rained blows on the Kaduna FA chairman moments after his team lost to city rivals Kaduna United in a Professional League encounter. He later addressed a press conference, where he apologised to the football community and Nigerians, as well as resigned his post in the NFL board and the NFL security committee.

Abdulazeez reportedly said that he is still a member of the NFL board, that he only opted out of the security committee.

## Pillars on course for league crown

Kano Pillars are determined to win silverware this season and have vowed not to allow their leadership of the Premiership to slip by. Pillars along with Gombe United lead the league with 10 points after five rounds of matches. Coach Ufere Nwankwo told KICK OFF he believes that with the current spirit of his boys, nothing will stop them from achieving their aim at the end of the season.

"The boys are prepared to work and when you work hard, you get adequate reward which is the evident of our placement on the table." The former Nationale handler further told KICK OFF: "A much more improved Pillars are emerging gradually as against what happened last season.

"Our focus is to improve on last season's performance when the team came fourth and we are hoping to clinch the title this time around or at worst pick a continental ticket. That is our aim."

## 'Gabon too dangerous to be underrated'

Super Eagles' defender, Chidi Ordia has declared that Les Panteres of Gabon are "too dangerous" to be underrated by Nigeria in their World Cup game slated for Port Harcourt on March 26th. The CSKA of Moscow player told KICK OFF from Russia that having been in the team that played the Gabonese in Libreville in October last year, "I have come to realize that the team can be stubborn and should therefore not be underrated."

While confirming his participation in the Port Harcourt game, the defender described the expected showdown "as a crucial game we must show our commitment to win."

He declared further, "We know what is at stake, and Nigerians should pray for us. We need this game, and we cannot afford to fail ourselves and the nation."

Ordia disclosed to Kick Off that he will arrive in the country for the game on Sunday, 20th of March. He therefore appealed to the NFA to put the necessary machinery in motion for the successful

## Naira rain for Gombe

Players of Gombe United have received 30% of their sign on fees and all outstanding match bonuses settled courtesy of the N25m released by the Gombe State Governor, Danjuma Goje.

Club chairman, Inuwa Lamido, told KICK OFF that the money is a take-off grant from the budget approved by the governor.

"We gave a budget of N168m which was approved by his Excellency and the N25m that was released is for take off in which 30% of the players sign on fees have been paid while the balance will be settled as soon as the next batch is made available within next week."

"All the outstanding match bonuses have also been settled from the money with the exception of the technical crew who will receive their money later. In order to motivate the players, hence forth, all match bonus will be paid on the spot, even for away matches," the chairman added.

The chairman attributed the team's success in the league so far to the players' commitment and the determination from the management to achieve something this season.

"Our target as management is to get a continental ticket and the players having realized how important this assignment is, are also focused." Gombe United are joint leaders of the Premier League with 10 points, same as Pillars.



Injured Arsenal striker Thierry Henry (pictured) was named in the France squad for the World Cup qualifiers against Switzerland and Israel on March 26 and March 30, but there was no place for team mate Robert Pires.

## NIGERIA/GABON WORLD CUP CRACKER

### Galadima okays Liberation Stadium

Chairman of the Nigeria Football Association, Ibrahim Galadima has that the Port Harcourt Liberation Stadium meets all requirements to host the March 26th World and Nations Cup Qualifying match between Nigeria and Gabon.

Galadima who was in Port Harcourt on Wednesday afternoon took a tour of the

facilities at the stadium including the dressing rooms, referees room, mixed zone and the playing pitch and was delighted with what he saw.

"I was confident that we will get a good presentation and with what I have seen here, I can say Port Harcourt had always been ready to host this and other engagements."

"We at the NFA are now

vindicated by our decision to take the match to Port Harcourt and we must commend the Rivers State Governor for his personal commitment to the development of facilities in the state."

Galadima charged the stadium management to continue the watering of the grass and also endeavour to cut it before the big match.

He also charged the

Rivers State Sports Ministry to start a campaign early to enable fans come in their numbers to watch the match and also be of good behavior so there wont be any unsavory incidents.

"This is not Sharks or Dolphins playing but Nigeria so we have to project a good image of ourselves so we expect that the Rivers State fans are well educated before the match."

"We also want to shame people that chastised us for choosing the Liberation stadium for this match. I am confident that we are set for this match on the 26th and I believe the boys will also be playing on a very familiar ground and the credit for going to the World Cup will once again come to Rivers State before any other."

Galadima promised to return to Port Harcourt three

## Gabon, a must win for Eagles

Super Eagles' central defender, Joseph Enakahire has declared to Kick Off that the World Cup match against Gabon is "a must win for Nigeria." The Sporting Lisbon defender stated from Portugal that "this is a match we must do everything to win in order to bring our qualification for the World Cup back on track."

ers have resolved to win the game since our qualification depends largely on the outcome of this match." He added: "From this game we are going to approach all our matches with the seriousness they deserve. At this point every game, every match, matters to us. We cannot afford to toy with any of our

## - Enakahire

would hit the Eagles camp in Port Harcourt after his team's UEFA Cup game against Middlesbrough on Thursday march 17th. Sporting won the first leg, 3-2 in England and Enakahire revealed they are looking forward to repeating



This Space is  
for Sale

# DAILY TRUST

## THURSDAY COLUMN

Thursday, March 17, 2005

From the time I won the election in February 1999, I have gone round the world not once. I have met all the people that matter politically in the Group of 8 and Group of less than 8. Occasionally, I get good words. Then they prescribe that you must do this, you must do that and one of the things that they wanted us to do very much is the reform and as you know, we have a very comprehensive reform going on. Though Nigeria was doing things differently as prescribed by the creditors, this has not translated into debt relief.

-President Olusegun Obasanjo

Radical political discourse sometimes tends to underrate the psychological dimension to the subject of political culture and praxis in Africa. We generally seem to be so consumed in the appreciation of the high and low points of political economy analysis, that salient issues of the psychological atmosphere of policy formulation and implementation get lost in our reckoning. For a creative balance in that direction, we might have to turn to the great works of literature.

In the African setting, there is a lot to be thankful for in the great interventions made into the psychological portraiture of the African neo-colonial ruling classes by Sembene Ousmane in such epic works as *XALA* and *THE LAST OF THE EMPIRE* or Ngugi Wa Thiongo's *PETALS OF BLOOD*, *DEVIL ON THE CROSS* and the play *I WILL MARRY WHEN I WANT*. Each of these great works laid bare the dependent mentality of the African neo-colonial elite; how enamoured they often are in the presence of the politicians and business moguls of the imperialist world.

I have been reflecting upon these facts when I read the quotation at the top of this page from President Obasanjo sometime last week. Here is a president who repeatedly tells the Nigerian people that the economic reforms that has visited so much pain into the lives of the Nigerian people; a reform program that is systematically eroding our nation's sovereignty and is mired in a controversial privatisation project, etc; are actually home-grown, and designed with Nigeria's interest at heart. It seems that for the local audience, telling a lie is an acceptable part of policy.

But when the audience is foreign, and especially an audience of the Western world, our political leaders who treat the Nigerian people like a conquered people turn into jelly, and shake inside their dresses; they put up the very best behaviour and like school children at an Empire Day parade, they wear smiles, wring their hands and kowtow! Present Obasanjo is the best example of good behaviour in the presence of the leading imperialist politicians and where these colonial masters are concerned, they also learn to tell the truth, as we have noted from the quotation above.

The same act of being 'prim and proper' was exhibited by Nigeria's Finance minister, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, when she was interviewed on the BBC's *HARDTALK* program just a few days back. The minister, who loves Nigeria so much, that she refuses to earn her salary in our national currency, told Zainab Badawi, her interviewer, that Obasanjo's government is implementing "a very rigorous economic reform program that has been scrutinised by the International Monetary Fund". So painful as it might sound, we need to thank the Western nations for their intimidation of our neo-colonial rulers because through them, we get to know the truth about our countries in the underdeveloped world.

The veil has now been lifted from the lies we have been constantly fed about the "home grown" economic policies of retrenchment of workers, sale of our national assets in a dubious privatisation policy and a generally confused transition to a market place capitalism, which in effect is reducing the capacity of the Nigerian State to effectively intervene in the social processes of Nigerian society.

The truth is that neo-liberal capitalism at this phase of globalisation delocalises all controls over economic and political activity in society. What happens is a gradual transfer of power, decision options and functions from the community, the region and the state to the transnational corporations who Obasanjo and his economic team are facilitating to gobble up our nation in their zealous privatisation project. This is a worldwide process, which

## Obasanjo's 'Home Grown' Economic Reform Programme

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needs local elements, such as the members of Obasanjo's economic team to smoothen. In the scenario unfolding, peoples knowledge, creativity and works are reduced to mere commodities and people are forced to submit to an impersonal market forces.

In the context of our own reality, this process is tied to the need to facilitate a regime of debt management and at the same time help to off load our national assets into the control of members of this same elite in the *abracadabra* of privatisation, which the learned economist, Professor Sam Aluko, has described as unconstitutional, any way. We have a cabal in the Obasanjo government that is determined to



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push through these reforms no matter the social cost. And it is therefore not strange that they have concluded plans to sack up to sixty percent of the federal civil service workforce.

It is also part of the scheme, that Obasanjo even presented the *NEEDS* program to the political conference as one of the background documents upon which a different Nigeria would be built. It needs no emphasis that the Nigeria which is envisaged from the prism of a neo-liberal capitalist program is one of inequalities in wealth, a Nigeria that has been taken over economically by foreign transnational companies and their local potentates and one with an uncaring state apparatus which is nevertheless strengthened in the law and order department to be able to suppress any uprisings arising from the injustice the type of reforms that Obasanjo has been ramming down the throat of Nigeria.

The process in Nigeria is part of a worldwide project of neo-liberal globalisation and it is a glaringly unjust order. It has spurned an undemocratic and unaccountable global power structure defended by the might of the armies of the United States, Great Britain and others. This class of owners of the world, between 1960 and 2000, have doubled their control of global wealth. So while 2.8 billion people live with an income of just two American Dollars per day, the 400 richest individuals in the USA live with an average daily income of \$6.6 million! The truth is that our country is trapped, because its rulers are dedicated not to the independent development of our national economy, but are dedicated, through their policy choice, to the subservience of Nigeria to the worldwide

process of capitalist globalisation.

**CORRIGENDUM:**

The title of last week's column which came out as '*BETWEEN PERFORMANCE AND PERFECTION*' should have read as '*BETWEEN PERFORMANCE AND PERCEPTION*'.

**IBRAHIM UMAR UDUBO: A tribute**

I spent most of last week at the Radio Nigeria Conference Hall participating in the review of the *NTA/FRCN CHANGE* program. It was at the end of our program that I got to know that Ibrahim Umar Udubo, former Managing Director of Bauchi State Television had died. Ladan Salihu of the National Broadcasting Commission was to travel to Bauchi for the weekend and I was asking him if he knew Ibrahim; yes he did, but he added that Ibrahim died a couple of months ago.

News of Ibrahim's death shook me terribly. I met Ibrahim in 1980. We were both sent to Lagos, he from Bauchi and I from Ilorin, to read the National Network News on Radio Nigeria. We became friends immediately. Those were the halcyon days of our commitment to left wing political ideas, and I was particularly delighted to meet this unassuming but very determined friend from Bauchi. At the end of our tour of duty at Radio Nigeria, we returned to our different stations.

But Ibrahim Umar Udubo had the opportunity to work on the Hausa service of *Radio Moscow* and would be away from 1981 for the next ten years, until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. He wanted to cross over to the Hausa Service of the *BBC*, but that was not to be, due to some issues of principle. We would meet again, I think in 1991 or 1992, when he came to Bayero University Kano, to complete a Professional Diploma program in the Mass Communication Department.

I returned to Ilorin in 1997 as the General Manager of *KWTV*, and on a trip to Yola, I stopped over to look up Ibrahim at the Inland Bank headquarters in Bauchi, where he was the Public Relations Manager. In 1999 he actively participated with us at the Arewa House in Kano, during the *REPORTING THE NORTH* conference.

By 2002, he was already Managing Director of *BATV*, and he hosted me again at Bauchi, on my way to attend the congress of the Broadcasting Organisations of Nigeria (*BON*) at Yola, Adamawa state.

Ibrahim Umar Udubo, like most members of our generation, felt a keen disappointment with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the worldwide retreat of progressive social forces in the wake of that collapse. But what was lost at that level, was compensated with renewed commitment to the ideals of Islam. Ibrahim was the quintessential hardworking broadcaster and journalist, who was also a very devoted family man.

One image of him that lingers in my memory was his romantic attachment to country music, when we met for the first time in 1980. He would play back repeatedly the song *COFFEE BLACK* by Don Williams, so much so that it ended up becoming a favourite song of mine too! It was, he told me then, related to his emotional attachments to a lady who eventually did not become his wife. He found love far away in Moscow, while working for the Hausa Service of *Radio Moscow*, and is survived by his Azerbaijani (?) wife and five children.

We will all miss Ibrahim Umar Udubo: journalist, broadcaster, progressive thinker, a committed Muslim, family man and a patriot. May Allah forgive his sins and grant him *Al-jannat Firdausi*.

...ANDADA UGAH TOO!

Just as I was concluding these lines, Idang Alibi, member of the editorial Board of *DAILY TRUST*, brought the news of the death of Dr. Ada Ugah, poet and university lecturer, and lately, a political activist.

I can never forget that Ada Ugah, as the commissioner for Information in his Benue state, organised one of the best annual conferences of the Association of Nigerian Authors (*ANA*), in Makurdi, in 1988. Ada Ugah was a committed artist and poet who was dedicated to the very best of the Nigerian nation. His tragic passing in a road accident on the way to Jos, has taken a major poet from amongst us. May God give his family and friends the fortitude to bear the loss.