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Petroleum Industry bill



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Nyako, Aminu: We don't want Atiku in PDP

By Abbas Jimoh &
Muideen Olaniyi

FORMER Vice President Atiku Abubakar's return to the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) hit a brick wall yesterday when Adamawa State governor Admiral Murtala Nyako and Prof. Jibrin Aminu both told party national chairman Prince Vincent

“Nyako, who spoke on behalf of the group was unequivocal in their opposition to Atiku's return

Ogbulafor that Atiku is not welcomed into the PDP in his home state. Also in the delegation were Senator Folashade Grace Bent, Rep. Binta Garba, PDP National Vice Chairman (North East) Senator Paul Wampana, the Adamawa State PDP State and other party chieftains from the state.

A competent source at the meeting told *Daily Trust*
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PHOTO: SANI MAIKATANGA

STREET beggars scavenging at a refuse dump in G.R.A. Kano, yesterday.

For 3rd time in a month:

Jonathan stalls PDP NEC meeting

By Muideen Olaniyi

THE third proposal in five weeks by the National Working Committee of the ruling Peoples Democratic Party's (PDP) to hold a much-delayed meeting of its National Executive Committee [NEC] may come to naught because up until

yesterday, Acting President Goodluck Jonathan refused to authorise the meeting, *Daily Trust* learnt from reliable sources in Abuja. Although the meeting is supposed to hold on Thursday, no notice has been sent to members because since last week, when he returned from a trip to the United States, Jonathan had not

approved the plan to go ahead with the meeting.

PDP's 27 state governors have already arrived in Abuja in anticipation of a NEC meeting later this week. They were scheduled to hold a meeting at the Kwara Lodge in Abuja last night, and the issue of the stalled NEC meeting was expected

to feature at the meeting.

It will be the third time in more than a month that the Working Committee's proposal to hold a NEC meeting will be shot down by Jonathan, a senior party source told *Daily Trust* yesterday. Late in March, the NWC had proposed to

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Jos crises threat to national security — Miyetti Allah

From Hamza Idris, Damaturu

THE continued attacks and gradual killings going on in Jos is a threat to national security which must be addressed before it moves to other places, Alhaji Mai Aliyu Usman, the Chairman of the Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association of Nigeria (MACBAN) in Yobe State has said.

Mai Aliyu who spoke to *Daily*

Trust in Damaturu yesterday said the Federal Government should see what is happening in Jos as a national emergency.

"The once peaceful city is now in the news every day. Jos is now an arena of guerilla warfare and it is portraying the country in a bad light", he said.

"What is happening (in Jos) is questioning the essence of governance because lives of innocent

people are being wasted everyday and governments and all lovers of goodwill have the responsibility of finding a way out of the problem", he added.

Mai Aliyu said Islam and Christianity are religions of peace that do not condone deliberate and calculated killing of innocent people. "The soul of man is sacred and the essence of government is compromised if people,

including innocent children as well as women who are vulnerable, could be killed at will", the chairman said.

He said the problem in Jos was being aggravated by the "I don't care attitude" of those in authority to arrest and punish perpetrators and sponsors of the various crises that keep recurring in Plateau State.

He said there was need for a political will by all stakeholders to

fear God and solve the problem in Jos. "It is one thing to have a committee to investigate a given crisis and it is another thing entirely to implement the recommendations of the committee...It is actually the failure of governance that keeps giving the perpetrators of the mayhem the impetus to continue what they are doing. This cannot happen in a civilised society", he noted.

PIC: AFP



FIREFIGHTERS try to put out a fire on the Lagos Ibadan highway in Ibafo in the early hours of Saturday after two tankers filled with petrol and three trucks carrying goods heading to neighbouring states caught fire following a collision. More than five occupants of the trucks including drivers' assistants were burnt to death.

Birds hit Dana aircraft, halt flight

From Nahimah Ajikanle, Lagos

AN Abuja-bound aircraft operated by Dana Air was yesterday hit by birds, causing serious damage to the left engine of the MD-83 aircraft.

The aircraft which took off at the domestic runway of the Murtala Muhammad Airport, Ikeja Lagos at about 9.20am was hit by birds shortly after take-off. Journalists at the nearby Press Centre observed a sudden change in the sound of the aircraft which drew attention of other people at the lounge to move out and see what was happening.

It was observed that the aircraft emitted fire balls three times from

its left engine and immediately had its speed reduced. The aircraft made a return, landed at the international wing at about 9.45am, and was escorted by fire trucks while it taxied to MMA2 where the passengers onboard disembarked.

Most of the passengers expressed shock over the incident when the pilot told them that the aircraft had a bird strike and had lost the left engine. They thanked God for saving their lives.

One of the passengers, Babatunde Adeleke, said he was not travelling again, though the airline was to make an alternative arrangement to fly them to Abuja. Another passenger, Victor Uzoeahi, said he was surprised

about the incident.

On whether he was still willing to fly, he said, "No, no, no, not now, thank God I am alive, I am going back home. I can't travel again for now."

Also on board the flight, an expatriate, Mr. Elim Karam, said he was warned by his wife not to travel but he did not listen, adding that he did not even know anything was happening to the aircraft because he was "hanged off". He said, "I am still travelling. I have an appointment and there is no going back".

Chief Executive Officer of Dana Air Mr. Jacky Hathiramani said, "Dana Air Flight 9J 995, en route Abuja from Lagos, suffered

a bird strike shortly after take-off and, in line with the airline's safety and service policy, the Captain made an emergency landing at MMIA, Lagos."

According to Hathiramani, all 97 passengers and crew disembarked the aircraft safely, and the aircraft was taken to the hangar.

Most of the passengers he said were booked on alternative Dana Air flights to Abuja while a few who preferred a refund were given.

He added, "We would like to thank all the passengers onboard the flight for their cooperation and understanding, as well as the NCAA and all the airport authorities for their responsiveness and support".

Lamido reshuffles cabinet

From Yusha'u A Ibrahim, Dutse

GOVERNOR Sule Lamido of Jigawa State yesterday effected a minor change in his cabinet. Those affected are the Commissioners for Water Resources,

Finance and Local Government, Alhaji Salisu Mahmoud, Alhaji Hannafi Yakubu and Umar Ya'u Roni respectively.

Governor Lamido announced the change at the swearing-in of the new Commissioner for Edu-

cation Professor Haruna Wakili. Professor Wakili replaced Professor Ruqayyah Ahmad Rufa'i who was recently appointed Minister of Education.

Lamido said the former Commissioner for Local Government

Alhaji Umar Ya'u Roni was moved to the Ministry of Finance while that of Finance, Alhaji Hannafi Yakubu was posted to Water Resources and Alhaji Salisu Mahmoud is now the Commissioner for Local Government.

Police, pastoralists disagree on Kuru clash figure

THE Pastoral Resolve (PARE) said in Kaduna yesterday that six persons were killed while 600 were displaced in the recent herdsmen-farmers clash in Kuru Local Government of Kaduna State.

PARE is the umbrella body of pastoralists in West Africa and has former Head of State, retired Gen. Muhammadu Buhari as patron.

The Executive Director of PARE, Dr Saleh Momaleh, told newsmen in Kaduna that the deceased included a female and five males aged between 12 and 65 years. He called on security agencies to wade in while the state government should resettle the victims.

"Only a genuine fact-finding commission can unearth the truth and bring the culprits to justice," he said.

But the state's Commissioner for Police, Mr Mohammed Tambari-Yabo, told journalists in Kaduna that three people died in the incident.

While urging law-abiding citizens to go about their normal business, Tambari-Yabo said the situation had been contained and normalcy restored. He said some persons were helping the security agencies in their investigations. (NAN)

Kidnappers release woman

From Muhammad Bello, Port Harcourt

THE police in Rivers State have confirmed the kidnap of a couple in Eleme near Port Harcourt Sunday. Police spokesperson, Rita Inoma-Abbey, told our correspondents that while the abductors freed the wife, they demanded that she should pay them a ransom of N50 million to secure the release of her husband.

She said the police were still investigating the incident which came on the heels of the forceful abduction of four expatriates April 9 and released five days later.

Alleged theft of N104m: ICPC files charges against Ogbulafor, others

By Isa Umar Gusau

THE Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) has slammed a 16-count charge of alleged N104million fraud against PDP national chairman Prince Vincent Ogbulafor in his days as minister of state for special duties in 2001.

Prosecutors filed the charge yesterday at the FCT High Court, Maitama alleging Ogbulafor and four others, Emeka Ebilah, Henry Ikoh, Jude Nwokoro and Emmanuel

C. Bosah, used three fictitious companies to siphon the money from government coffers.

According to the court papers, principal prosecution witness would try to prove that Ogbulafor and the others used Henrichiko Nig. Ltd, DHL Consultants, and Chekwas Industries to siphon N82.6 million, N11.5 million and N6.2 million respectively.

The prosecutors alleged that Ogbulafor, as head of the National Economic Intelligence Committee (NEIC), set up to verify debts owed local contractors, along with the others

forged contract documents to show that the three companies had executed jobs worth N104 million.

Ogbulafor was also alleged to have received N2 million directly from the second accused person, Ebila, and another N28 million through Chris Nwoke.

The case will be assigned to a judge today by the Chief Judge of the Federal Capital Territory Justice Lawal Gumi.

The ICPC will be seeking court warrant to arrest Ogbulafor and the four other accused persons for prosecution, Daily Trust learnt.

Police recover two corpses in Plateau village

From Ahmed Mohammed & Mahmud Lalo, Jos

TWO corpses were recovered by the police command yesterday in Riyom local government area of Plateau State.

Plateau State Public Relations Officer ASP Muhammed Lerama who confirmed the incident said information reaching them revealed that four people went to farm yesterday morning and did not return home which prompted a search team to go looking for them. Though the PPRO said they were yet to have full details of what happened as at the time of filing this story he however said that preliminary report showed that two corpses were discovered while the remaining two were still missing.

Lerama told our reporters that further details of the incident will be made available today.

A resident of the area Mr Pam Daniel said four people were killed by some assailants suspected to be Fulani when they went to farm Monday morning.

Pam said residents became suspicious when the four people did not return from the farm towards the evening which made them to launch a search operation in the company of security men. He said it was late in the evening that the corpses of two people out of the four were discovered; the remaining two were still missing.

Meanwhile, youths in their dozens allegedly blocked Jos-Abuja road in the area harassing motorists passing through to show their grievances over the incident before they were dispersed by the Special Task Force.



MANAGING Director, Media Trust Limited, Alhaji Isiaq Ajibola (third left) with Unilorin principal officers. They include (from left) Deputy Director, Information, Mr. Mahfouz Adedimeji, Dean, Faculty of Law, Dr. Egberongbe, Prof. A.B. Olayemi, DVC (Mgt. Services), Prof. Ishaq O. Oloyede, Vice Chancellor, Prof. K.L. Ayorinde, DVC (Academic), Mr. Ayo Sijuwola, Bursar and others during the MD's visit to the university.

Jonathan meets fiscal commission over dwindling revenue

By Mohammed S. Shehu

FOLLOWING a sharp drop of funds from the Federation Account and Excess Crude Account, Acting President Goodluck Jonathan has held a crucial meeting with officials of the Revenue Mobilization, Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC).

Jonathan summoned the meeting at the Presidential Villa, Abuja, to proffer solution out of the bankruptcy which heightened fear following reports that state governments might not be able to pay workers' salaries in the next two months when the \$3.2 billion currently left in the Excess Crude Account is shared out.

Briefing State House Correspondents shortly after the meeting, Chairman of

RMAFC Alhaji Hamman Tukur warned that the commitment of the government to the Joint Venture Cashcalls (JVC) might frustrate the implementation of the 2010 Budget.

The JVC is a partnership between the three tiers of government, through the NNPC, and major oil companies on oil exploration.

Tukur stated that Nigeria could not afford to continue to give back what it's earned from the crude oil sale to the JVC.

"So, our argument is that if the JVC practice continues, our excess oil revenue is depleted, then how do you finance the budget? By what miracle?"

"So, we should stop certain practices to be able to finance the budget," he said.

He revealed that the acting President had approved the setting up of a committee to look

into the dwindling excess oil revenue.

He said his commission had embarked on study tour of some Asian countries, including Malaysia and Brazil to understand how they successfully converted their excess oil revenue into infrastructural facilities.

He, therefore, advised the three tiers of government to always use their oil income to develop their infrastructure as well as invest in viable industrial ventures.

"Nigeria is an oil producing country, let convert our oil income into formal infrastructural ventures because oil must go one day," he added.

Tukur also frowned at the pegging of oil price by the National Assembly, saying that "the benchmark being done by the National Assembly is totally useless."

Atiku: How Balarabe Musa and co frustrated Mega Party

By Abdulkadir A. Abubakar

FORMER Vice President Atiku Abubakar has identified former Governor Balarabe Musa of Kaduna State as one of those who frustrated the recent initiative to form a mega opposition party in the country.

The former vice president made this disclosure in a statement issued by his media office in Abuja yesterday in reaction to allegations by Alhaji Balarabe Musa listing the former vice president as one of those responsible for the failure of the mega party initiative.

Atiku said Alhaji Balarabe Musa gave an inadequate

account of the matter. "It is on record that Alhaji Balarabe Musa stopped attending the meetings of the mega party initiative immediately its meetings were moved away from the house of Pa Anthony Enahoro. It is also on record that Alhaji Balarabe Musa declined to join the mega party as a member on the ground that he was not willing to lose the identity of his political party, Peoples Redemption Party (PRP).

"Balarabe has the unenviable record of being the first major political actor to walk away from the Mega Party at a time when it had the most attraction for other parties and factions.

The statement stated that there were two initiatives for the formation of the mega opposition party. One was under the leadership of Chief Anthony Enahoro while the other was under the leadership of General Muhammadu Buhari, former Vice President Atiku Abubakar and former Governor Bafarawa of Sokoto state.

It was in the bid to enlarge the national spread of the mega-party that it was agreed upon to bring the two initiatives together. Alhaji Balarabe Musa was part of the Chief Enahoro Initiative but he stopped attending meetings of the initiative immediately the two groups were brought together.

Police deploy DIGs to zones ahead 2011 polls

By Misbahu Bashir

INSPECTOR General of Police Ogbonna Onovo has approved the deployment of six Deputy Inspectors General of Police (DIG) to each of the 6 geo-political zones in the country to find ways of making the 2011 general elections free and fair.

Onovo had said at a recent meeting with senior police officers that police will not interfere with the electoral process and will not allow electoral fraud.

The Police Force Public Relations Officer ACP Emmanuel Ojukwu said yesterday that the top policemen were deployed to the zones to identify the peculiari-

ties there including possible problems that can hinder the conducts of the 2011 elections so as to proffer solutions on time.

"They will interact with the people and governments in the various states within each zone and find the measures police can adopt to ensure genuine elections," he said.

He said it is expected that the police will also seek to collaborate with the people and authorities in the states to ensure strict adherence to electoral guidelines.

The DIGs will spend 2 weeks in the zones after which they will submit reports to the police management.

Minister: NUJ award to Goje, well deserving

THE award for the Best Performing Governor of the Year bestowed on Gombe State Governor Alhaji Mohammed Danjuma Goje by the Nigerian Union of Journalists is a clear testimony of the governor's landmark achievement in the entrenchment of democracy in Nigeria, says Minister of State for Information Mr. Labaran Maku.

The minister, who stated this in his remarks at the NUJ's 55TH Anniversary celebration and awards night held at the Sheraton Hotel Abuja, added that Governor Goje's records of achievement from 2003 to date in the areas of water supply, roads, healthcare delivery and infrastructural development are projects that touched the lives of the people of the state.

According to him these and many others achievements have rightly earned him a number of awards including that of the NUJ which is an encouragement to political office holder in ensuring that they provide the dividends of democracy to the electorates.

He added that choosing Governor Goje as the best performing Governor of the year by the watch dogs of the society was due to his invaluable contributions to national integration, peaceful co-existence and religious

tolerance which has also demonstrated the Governor's commitment in uplifting democratic governance in Nigeria.

Guest Speaker of the occasion Alhaji Magaji Dambatta (OFR) said the award bestowed on Governor Goje stood him out from others as the award is only given to achievers who have distinguished themselves in serving their people and humanity.

In his remark, Governor Mohammed Danjuma Goje said democracy has come to stay in Nigeria stressing that democracy is the best form of government that cares for the people and allows equal participation in the act of governance.

The governor attributed the success of his administration to the support and understanding of his people, civil servants and other stakeholders dedicated the award to the people and government of Gombe State.

Earlier, NUJ National President Alhaji Muhammad Garba applauded the role played by past leaders of the union, who have contributed a lot in bringing the union to this level of 55 years of service to the people. He described the event as very significant in an effort to reposition the union to face the challenges ahead.

Governor Goje as the best performing Governor of the year by the watch dogs of the society was due to his invaluable contributions to national integration, peaceful co-existence and religious tolerance.



WIFE of the Acting President Patience Jonathan (right) acknowledging cheers from PDP supporters during departure ceremonies at the Makurdi Airport at the end of her visit to Benue State at the weekend. With her is Governor Gabriel Suswan.

Sokoto guber appeal: S/Court continues hearing today

By Adelanwa Bamgboye

THE Supreme Court will continue hearing today on the appeal challenging the election of Governor Aliyu Wammako of Sokoto State filed by the candidate of the DPP, Maigari Dingyadi.

Dingyadi, in a motion argued through his counsel Lateef Fagbemi (SAN) at the commencement of the hearing yesterday, prayed the apex court to set aside its own order made on 15 March 2010 and dismiss the suit.

Fagbemi's motion was however opposed by Yahaya Mahmoud, INEC counsel, Chief Wole Olanipekun, SAN, counsel for Governor Aliyu Wammako of Sokoto State and Alex Izziyon (SAN).

The panel of five Justices of the Supreme Court headed by Justice Mahmoud Mohammed was informed by counsels that there were no fewer than nine different motions and applications before the court.

Olanipekun while objecting to Dingyadi's motion told the court that he had filed a counter affidavit of 28 paragraphs. He said the appeal under consideration did not come by virtue of Section 243 of the 1999 Constitution but by virtue of Section

233, so it is not an election petition as such.

According to him, Dingyadi's application was premature, unnecessary and time wasting, bearing in mind the March 15th order by the Supreme court to preserve the subject matter, adding that it is an appeal on which the Supreme Court can give judgement hence it is not time bound.

While opposing the motion, INEC informed the court that the DPP candidate had applied to withdraw the suit in which INEC objected.

He explained that the court had adjourned till 15 March 2010, but on March 10, the court dismissed the suit. The INEC counsel said if the court had been aware of the processes filed by INEC, they would not have dismissed the suit.

The DPP candidate had gone to the Court of Appeal, Sokoto, contending that the Court of Appeal, Kaduna's verdict implied that Wammako could not contest again in the fresh election it ordered to be conducted.

The candidate had earlier failed to obtain such a declaration from the Federal High Court, Abuja and later from the second Election Appeal Tribunal in Sokoto, both of which maintained lack of jurisdiction to interpret the verdict of the Court of Appeal, Kaduna.

Jonathan orders review of Petroleum Industry Bill

By Hamisu Muhammad

ACTING President Jonathan Goodluck has ordered the review of some topical issues in the Petroleum Industry Bill which did not favour the International Oil Companies (IOCs), the Special Adviser to the President on Petroleum Matters Dr Emanuel Egbogah has said.

Egbogah said this yesterday at the Nigerian Association of Energy Economics (NAEE) conference in Abuja, that the "acting president has instructed me to look at all the projects in question to ensure the IOCs get the deserved rate of return".

He said initial reviews of the same projects have already probed that the projects in question have good rate of return. The international oil companies have been complaining over the fiscal regime in the new law which proposed for more tax especially on deep offshore projects.

The IOCs complained that their billions of dollar-worth investments are at risk if the bill is pass the way it is now.

But the proponent of the PIB said the IOCs are only jealous because government wants more take in the oil and gas revenue which as proposed in the bill.

"We went round and we did project by project review of all the oil and gas projects in the country especially the deep offshore projects. During our review we have established that the rate of return is far higher than the expected 56.7", said Egbogah.

He said his team will go back again and review the projects again on the 23th April, 2010 in order to verify more of their claims.

The new Group Managing Director of the NNPC Shehu Ladan said in Lagos that the government is going to look at the issues that generate controversies between it and the international oil companies.

PHOTO: SANI MAIKATANGA



BAKING masa along Zoo Road in Kano yesterday.

We don't want Atiku in PDP

Continued from page 1

Trust last night Nyako, who spoke on behalf of the group was unequivocal in their opposition to Atiku's return to PDP to seek the party's presidential ticket.

"We do not want Atiku back. We have been winning elections without him, therefore he should not be allowed to return to the party's fold," Nyako reportedly said.

Ogbulafor was however said to have countered the visiting group's position, saying PDP should be open to all Nigerians.

While insisting that Atiku is an asset to the party, he was quoted as saying that "PDP should be open to all Nigerians. It should not dictate who will join and who will not."

Ogbulafor was also said to have told the visitors that they should go back and be prepared to receive Atiku and that they should bring out the register and make it available to whoever is ready to join the party.

Speaking to reporters after emerging from the meeting, Nyako said: "the party is the one to make a pronouncement to what has been discussed. When we go back to Adamawa we will tell them what we discussed here."

Atiku's media aide Malam Garba Shehu told our reporter last night that if it is true that Ogbulafor told Nyako and the others to prepare to welcome Atiku, then it would be a welcome development.

Shehu said, "This is a welcome development. It has confirmed what Atiku and his associates have said that the political environment in PDP has changed from its dictatorial past. Does anyone need further evidence that internal democracy has returned to the party?"

PDP's National Publicity Secretary Prof. Rufai Ahmed Alkali refused to comment on the meeting's outcome, saying, "This is the national secretariat of the party. Sometimes we invite governors or chieftains and sometimes they come on their own."

It would be recalled that Atiku visited the PDP national secretariat last week to register his return to the party, which he left in 2007 due to his bitter quarrels with then President Olusegun Obasanjo.



ATIKU Abubakar

Jonathan stalls PDP NEC meeting

Continued from page 1

hold the NEC meeting on March 31, but the Acting President scuttled it by saying the date clashed with his other schedules.

The NWC then proposed a NEC meeting for Thursday, April 8, but Dr. Jonathan again shot down the date, saying he was preparing for his trip to the US on Saturday, April 10. However, sources said, he agreed that the NEC meeting should be rescheduled to Thursday, April 22. When he returned from his American trip last week, the party leaders again went to seek his confirmation for the meeting to hold this week, but Jonathan withheld confirmation and was yet to give it as at yesterday.

Speaking to *Daily Trust* on phone yesterday, PDP's National Publicity Secretary Professor Rufai Ahmed Alkali only said the party "has not fixed any date for NEC meeting."

He said, "We have not taken a decision on that yet. That is the situation of things now. When we take a position, we will tell you. No date has been fixed yet. You people are causing confusion in this country. When we do that, we will announce it formally." In announcing earlier postponements, Alkali always said a "new date will be communicated to all members in due course."

Daily Trust learnt that the reason for the Acting President's stalling of the party's NEC meetings is his desire to contest for the party's 2011 presidential ticket and his fear that if the NEC meeting is held soon, it will approve guidelines for the PDP primaries that will effectively exclude him from the race. Already, our sister publication *Sunday Trust* reported in its edition of April 10 that PDP has got draft guidelines in place for the primaries.

The central issue in contention, *Daily Trust* learnt, was the PDP's decision to zone the presidential ticket to the North for 2011, a decision announced by party chairman Prince Vincent Ogbulafor last February after a meeting with the party's state governors in Abuja.

A top party member told *Daily Trust* that sometime last month, Jonathan confronted the PDP governors over the decision and said in no uncertain terms that he was unhappy with it. He berated the governors for making such a weighty decision without first clearing it with him. However, the source said, the governors led by their chairman Dr. Bukola Saraki said what they did was to reaffirm an existing party policy. As to the timing of the announcement, they said they did so in order to calm the polity, given the heat generated by the poor handling of President Umaru Yar'adua's ailment and the extra-constitutional decision to invest Jonathan as Acting President.

Daily Trust learnt that Dame Patience Jonathan also confronted Prince Vincent Ogbulafor over the announcement and accused him of embarrassing her husband. As a combined result, *Daily Trust* learnt yesterday that the Acting President and his advisers have now tipped former acting party secretary Prince Bernard Eze to take over from Ogbulafor as party chairman. Eze became the party secretary in 2005 when the then secretary, Ogbulafor, was forced to resign soon after President Olusegun Obasanjo forced out then party chairman Chief Adu Ogbah.

The dilemma that Jonathan's men are facing, sources said, is how

to remove Ogbulafor, since they lack majority support in the NEC and a mini-convention is also required to change the current leadership, which was selected by the PDP governors in 2008 and is still supported by them.

According to a top party member, Dr. Jonathan's leading advisers in his self-succession bid are former President Obasanjo and the chairman of his Presidential Advisory Committee, Lt General T. Y. Danjuma. The source said while Obasanjo has urged Jonathan to use heavy-handed tactics such as the ones he himself used in 2004 to oust the party leaders, the Acting President is reluctant to do so, having assured Nigerians and the international community that he would conduct free and fair elections in 2011, beginning with transparent party primaries.

Repeated efforts yesterday to obtain the Acting President's spokesman Ima Niboro's comments on why the PDP NEC meeting was delayed were not successful. He did not answer his calls and several text messages sent to his phone lines were not answered.

According to the document earlier obtained by *Sunday Trust*, PDP should have approved the commencement of sales of interest forms by state assembly, National Assembly, gubernatorial and presidential aspirants by April 1, 2010. The process would have ended on April 30 with the return of the forms. Screening of aspirants was slated for June 21 and 22, while screening appeals would have been entertained June 24 and 25.

Other items on the time table for gubernatorial aspirants include screening of applications (June 21-22), screening of appeals (June 24-25), primary elections (July 3), run-off elections (July 10), election appeals (July 12). The time-table for presidential aspirants include publication of notices of PDP congresses/primaries to party members (June 28), screening of aspirants (July 8-10), screening appeals (July 12-13), and national convention/presidential primary (July 24). Also, primary elections into the National Assembly were supposed to commence on April 28 and run through June 10, 2010, while those of state assembly were supposed to commence on May 20 and run through June 28, 2010.

PDP's spokesman Professor Alkali also denied yesterday that PDP had issued guidelines for the 2011 primary elections for its presidential, governorship and National Assembly candidates.

Alkali said, "Our attention has been drawn to newspaper reports purporting that the National Secretariat of the PDP has released guidelines for nomination processes leading to the general elections in 2011.

"Following incessant calls and enquiries from numerous Party members nationwide, we wish to state categorically that the publication is speculative, misleading and has no foundation whatsoever, as the National Working Committee (NWC) is still working on the details of our timetable and guidelines for elections which will be released at the appropriate time.

"For the avoidance of doubt, guidelines for the conduct of primaries can only be authorized by the National Executive Committee (NEC) after inputs have been collated from various organs of the Party and the process has reached an advanced stage.

"We therefore wish to call on all our members nationwide to ignore the publications and await the release of guidelines by the National Executive Committee of our great Party in due course."

FG plans data base on unemployed persons

By Francis Okeke

MINISTER of Labour and Productivity Chief Emeka Wogu said the Federal Government is set to open a data base on all unemployed persons in the country.

Wogu made the statement in Abuja yesterday when he received a delegation of the Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) led by the group's national coordinator Comrade Emmanuel Onwubiko.

The minister challenged the civil right community to add protection of the rights of oppressed workers to their

agenda as a way of redressing inhuman treatment of Nigerians in the workplace.

"I am equally keen on developing a database that will have the statistics of the unemployed Nigerian youths both skilled and unskilled, both graduates and non-graduates," Wogu told HURIWA.

He said once the data base is there everybody will have access to it and from there it will be taken to another level of job placements so that those who want certain categories of skilled and unskilled manpower can go into the database and make their selections.

The minister said "equally we are looking at a very innovative approach to the Nigerian content in terms of labour so that when companies are engaged in contract we will know who they are employing and avoid situations when people win multi-billion contracts they go and recruit foreigners. We must do things differently now."

Earlier, Comrade Emmanuel Onwubiko commended Acting President Goodluck Jonathan on his choice of Chief Wogu as labour and productivity minister and expressed concerns over the danger posed by the high level of unemployment in the country.



GOVERNOR Ibrahim Gaidam of Yobe State (middle), his deputy Abubakar D. Ali (right) and Mr. Alescio Ferraro of A.G Ferraro Construction Company at the Yobe investment House, Abuja when the governor visited to inspect ongoing construction works, yesterday.

Rep confirms moves to oust Bankole

By Turaki A. Nassan

A member of the Nigeria First Forum (NFF) lobby group in the House of Representatives said the group is going to push for leadership change in the lower legislative chamber.

The PDP lawmaker who does not want his name in print said the main objective of forming the NFF was to "create the enabling environment for the Acting President Goodluck Jonathan to do his work without any hindrance from any quarter."

"We have been meeting in Valencia Hotel; it is our usual meeting venue and we do meet at least two times a week. The NFF is quite embarrassed that in terms of weight and respect, the Senate is ahead of us. We are not happy with the way things are being run in the House by the leadership. I could remember for 50 days the Speaker did not recognize me to contribute on the floor of the House."

He said the House leadership was forced to pass the resolution that made Goodluck Jonathan acting president following the group's intervention. "The House will have passed a

contrary motion. We had to go into closed session three times before we got the motion passed because the leadership was not interested in that," he said.

Daily Trust gathered yesterday that Speaker Dimeji Bankole has started making efforts to void the plot to impeach him as he has acquired a new GSM line with which he reportedly sent text messages to members pleading with them to shelve the impeachment move.

One of the text message obtained by this paper reads, "This is my new number, you can reach me through it 24/7 and I am pleading with you to drop that thing."

One of the strategies the leadership was said to put in place to prevent introduction of the impeachment motion is dedication of today, Wednesday and Thursday plenary sessions for the consideration of the constitutional amendment bill.

The House notice paper for the week indicates that while today and tomorrow's meeting will be used to debate the bill clause by clause, Thursday's session will be for voting on the bill.

FRSC, minister disagree on Abuja speed breakers

By Misbahu Bashir

FCT Minister Senator Bala Mohammed said the speed breakers erected in some selected spots in the territory will be removed.

This is even as the Corp Marshal of the Federal Road Safety Commission Osita Chidoka said the speed breakers have reduced road crashes and should be sustained.

The minister and the Corps Marshal made the assertions at FRSC National Stakeholders Forum tagged 'Activating the United Nations Decade of Action on Road Safety in Nigeria 2011-2020' in Abuja.

Sen Mohammed said people have

sent immeasurable letters of complaint to him against the bumps and since they do not conform to international traffic standards, they will be removed. "We are going to remove them," he said.

Instead, the ministry will adopt appropriate safety measures to check over speeding and control traffic, he said. The bumps were built in spots with frequent accidents by the former FCT Minister Adamu Aliero.

However, Chidoka said since the erection of the road humps 2 years ago, accidents have not occurred in the spots. "It is agreed that the bumps did not coincide with road safety standards but since their establish-

ment accidents have reduced and no accidents was recorded in the spots where they were built," he said.

He said the FRSC will liaise with the ministry to modify the bumps to make them user friendly.

Former Head of State Yakubu Gowon asked governments to dedicate more funds to road safety activities so that Nigeria can reduce road carnage by 50 per cent by the year 2020.

He said governments have to spend 10 per cent of roads constructions funds on safety components on the roads. He said the poor attitude of drivers to traffic regulations is to a large extent the factor that leads to roads accidents.

1000 die in road crashes from Jan to date

By Misbahu Bashir

A total of 1,058 people were killed in road accidents across the country from January 2010 to date, the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) Corps Marshal Osita Chidoka has said.

Chidoka said at the FRSC stakeholders' forum in Abuja yesterday that the commission recorded 1,737 road crashes across the country in which 1,058 people were killed.

He said 5,338 people sustained various degrees of injuries from the accidents.

The FRSC boss said the commission has increased surveillance on the roads and consequently made more arrest of defaulting motorists than ever.

He said the revenue accrued by the commission from the payment of fines has surged from N500 million to N1.5 billion in 2008, adding that over N6 billion representing 3 per cent of the GDP is lost to road crashes and the figure may surge if accidents fail to reduce.

The Corps Marshal said a total of 224 driving schools in the country were approved by the Commission. People must undergo training in the schools

before being given drivers licence.

Chairman of the FRSC Lawal Gwadabe said accidents can be reduced when road safety efforts are made better and used as well as when roads and vehicles are safer.

Secretary to the Government Mahmud Yayale Ahmed represented by Permanent Secretary, General Services Office, Suleiman D. Kazzim, said government is concerned about road safety because productive people between the ages of 15 and 25 formed majority in the number of deaths in crashes.

IoD quarterly meet holds in Abuja

By Yunus Abdulhamid

THE Institute of Directors (IoD) Nigeria branch is holding its quarterly Members' Night tomorrow. The event is billed to take place at the Reiz continental Hotel.

Deputy Governor of Central Bank of Nigeria

(CBN) Dr Kingsley C. Moghalu is to give the dinner speech.

The Institute of Directors is a foremost professional body with membership around the world and promotes corporate governance, integrity and transparency in businesses.

Doctors' strike cripples services at LUTH

THE ongoing nationwide indefinite strike by the Association of Resident Doctors (ARD) has paralysed medical services at the Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH).

The ARD commenced the strike on Thursday last week, demanding payment of the Consolidated Medical Salary Scale (COMESS) and improvement

in the Residency Training Programme.

ARD had embarked on a warning strike on March 2 and March 3 after which it gave the Federal Government a 21-day ultimatum to meet the demands or face an indefinite strike. The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) correspondent, who visited LUTH yesterday did not see any

patient at the hospital's Accident and Emergency Ward.

The ward was locked while security guards informed visitors that services were not available. Chairs in the ward were turned upside down.

A notice signed by the management of LUTH was pasted on the entrance to the ward. It said patients would not be admitted.

A relative of a patient on admission in LUTH told newsmen that only consultants were attending to patients. The relative, who pleaded anonymity said the services were skeletal.

"Normally, during the ward round, new medications are prescribed and results of test checked, but these have stopped as a result of the strike," she said.

She appealed to the Federal Government to meet the demands of the striking doctors to save patients.

Dr Yemi Raji, President, LUTH Branch of ARD, declined comments on the strike, but a senior doctor in the hospital, who pleaded anonymity, appealed to the government to "act fast". (NAN)

PIC: FELIX ONIGBINDE



From left: National Coordinator, Human Right Writers Association (HURWA), Comrade Emmanuel Dnubiko, Minister of Labour and Productivity Chief Chukwuemeka Wogu and Chief Consultant to HURWA Law Matter, during HURWA's visit to the minister in Abuja, yesterday.

Meningitis: NOA warns on overcrowding

From Ismail Mudashir & Maryam Ahmadu-Suka, Kaduna

THE National Orientation Agency (NOA) has urged people to avoid overcrowded places to prevent Cerebrospinal Meningitis (CSM).

The Director of the agency in Kaduna State Alhaji Galadima Zubairu Soba, who made the call in statement yesterday, said the hot weather could lead to an outbreak of meningitis if preventive measures were not adhered to. He urged parents to vaccinate their children against the disease.

"The general public can prevent the spread of meningitis by keeping their environment clean, avoid overcrowded places and ensure adequate ventilation. In the event of the outbreak of the disease which usually comes through fever, cough, body weakness, catarrh, headache with poor vision and stiffness of the neck and the body, the person should report immediately to the nearest hospital for medical attention," he said.

Meanwhile, the Isaiah Balat Foundation has immunized over 3000 people, mostly children in Madakiya and Kagoro village in Kaura Local Government of Area of the state. Speaking during the exercise, the initiator of the Foundation, Senator Isaiah Balat, said with the dilapidated state of health centers in the country, it was important for privileged individuals in the society to assist those vulnerable to such diseases.

Waku flays junior ministerial slots for Maku, others

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

SENATOR Joseph Waku has flayed Acting President Goodluck Jonathan over the assignment of junior ministerial posts to ministers from Benue, Plateau and Nasarawa States. The former lawmaker, who spoke to Daily Trust in an interview yesterday wondered how Jonathan arrived at the decision to assign the three min-

isters, Sam Ode (Benue) Josephine Taggun (Plateau) and Labaran Maku (Nasarawa) junior portfolios.

"If in acting capacity, Jonathan, a Christian and minority can assign such positions President Yar'adua, a Fulani and Muslim, gave us serious positions in the Federal Executive Council (FEC), then the people of the three states should watch out. He has devalued us

and can do worse", he said.

He described the ministerial appointments as "departmental ministers", saying that was what they were called during the Shehu Shagari's regime, because they were only heads of department.

"A minister of state is just a nomenclature. What Jonathan has done to us is annoying, provocative, insulting and disgraceful", he added.

NBTE trains poly lecturers on solar energy

From Ismail Mudashir & Maryam Ahmadu-Suka, Kaduna

SEVENTY five polytechnic lecturers from across the country yesterday commenced a 2 week training on solar energy development in Kaduna State, courtesy of the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE). The Acting Executive Secretary of NBTE, Architect Ade O. Aimola, said, "The training was conceived to provide the lecturers with the principles of photovoltaic education on the development of solar energy and its storage. To also prepare them for the task of developing curricula in solar energy tech-

nology," he said.

According to him, the present curricula of polytechnics and specialized technical institutions were not detailed. He stressed that professionals in the field needed basic knowledge of energy science and technology.

Declaring open the training, the Chairman, House of Representatives Committee on Education, Alhaji Farouk Lawan emphasized the need for the exploration of renewable energy potentials of the country. He said the National Assembly would support NBTE to develop manpower for the utilization of the abundant solar energy in the country.

"Our inability to use the abundant solar resources in this country has clearly set us back. The effective way of addressing the climate change is to diversify the energy source of the country," he added.

The Director-General of the Energy Commission of Nigeria Professor Abubakar Sambo called for the enactment of a law on renewable energy development in Nigeria. Represented by the Director of Renewable Energy in the commission, Professor E.J. Bala, he also urged for proactive measures to be taken to harness the potentials of renewable energy in the country.

Detained LG boss petitions against Zamfara AG

From Sadeeq Aliyu, Gusau

THE Chairman of Gummi Local Government Area in Zamfara State Suleman Gyalange, who was arrested and detained for allegedly causing public disturbance about a month ago has written a petition against the Attorney General of Zamfara State to the Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Committee. He is accusing the Attorney General of unlawful detention.

In the petition, which was made available to Daily Trust yesterday, the chairman who is still in detention in Gusau prison, accused the Attorney General Armaya'u Bukkuyum and the state's Director of Civil Litigations Aliyu Abdullahi for ordering his arrest and detention shortly after the Court of Appeal in Sokoto State reinstated him on March 19, 2010.

He alleged that because the Attorney General was dissatisfied with the court's decision, he proceeded to the Sharia Court in Gummi, where charges were framed against him that he stole N3 million belonging to the council and forcefully took over the council with some people wearing police uniform.

Police lost 2 officers, N30m to Jos crisis - CP

From Ahmed Mohammed, Jos

TWO officers of the Plateau State Police Command were killed while five others were injured and police property worth N30 million was destroyed during the January 17, 2010 Jos crisis, the command said yesterday.

State Police Commissioner Mr Ikechukwu Ayo Aduba said this yesterday when he briefed the Deputy Inspector General of Police Mr Declan Uzoma who

was on an official visit to assess the security situation in the state in the first quarter of 2010.

Mr Aduba said they embarked on rural patrols and beefed up security in all the rural areas to prevent attacks on people.

"We remain undaunted in the face of the challenge so posed, we came out with new strategies to combat crime, we deployed eight out of the 10 vehicles given to us by the Inspector General of Police for the rural patrol

scheme", he said.

He added that in the course of investigation, the police arrested 207 persons, 49 after the attack of Dogo Na Hauwa and surrounding villages while 151 arrested with weapons in Mangu.

He said all had confessed to the crimes and were arraigned before the Federal High Court in Jos, adding that the Joint Task force handed over seven suspects immediately after the Bayel incident but they denied

participating in the invasion of the village but that investigation was on to ascertain their culpability or otherwise.

Mr Aduba said they deployed 778 men on 24 hour basis and appealed to police authorities to add more policemen to the Plateau command because many policemen were transferred out of the Plateau without replacement.

The Deputy Inspector General in charge of Training Mr Declan Uzoma said he was in the state as

directed by the IGP that all DIGS be on the field to monitor and assess the operations of officers. He commended the Plateau command for the role they have been playing to maintain law and order in the state.

Mr Uzoma urged policemen to always be at their duty posts and interact with the communities they serve so that people would have confidence in them and provide useful information to arrest criminals.

Ondo warns traditional rulers on politics

From: Adewale Giwa, Akure

TRADITIONAL rulers in Ondo State have been warned to steer clear of active politics in order not to bring the name of the institution into disrepute.

State Deputy Governor Alhaji Ali Olanusi who gave the warning at a meeting with traditional rulers in the northern senatorial district of the state yesterday, said they should not involve themselves in partisan politics but play advisory roles.

He said, "I want to appeal to you, our traditional rulers, that you have no business to involve yourselves in active politics. As monarchs, you are expected to be neutral and not partisan. As leaders in your various communities, you should make sure that you don't drag the name of the institution into the mud. Unlike what happened before now where traditional rulers were used by politicians, we are not going to encourage such thing. Traditional rulers are expected to play advisory role by making sure that government does the right things for their communities. They should be on the forefront of fighting social ills affecting their communities".

The Deputy Governor also urged them to caution youths in their domains not allow themselves to be used by desperate politicians to disrupt the peaceful co-existence of the state.

Responding on behalf of the traditional rulers, the Olubaka of Oka, Oba Adebore Adeleye, said the monarchs in the state were not ready to drag the name of the institution into disgrace.



CHAIRMAN, House Committee on Rules and Business Ita Enang (left) with Chairman, House Committee on Climate Change Eziuche Ubani during the press conference on activities in the House in Abuja, yesterday.

Onje seeks better leadership for Idomas

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

BENUE-SOUTH Senatorial aspirant, Comrade Daniel Onje, has called for a more pragmatic and result-oriented leadership for the Idoma nation.

Onje who spoke with *Daily Trust* yesterday expressed dissatisfaction with the leadership of the Idoma nation in the past 10 years.

"It is glaring that the people of the Benue South-Senatorial District are tired and desire a change. We desire a new lease to life from the suffocative polity engendered by lack of vision at the various levels in Benue-South", he said.

Onje is from Orokam in

Ogbadibo Local Government Area of Benue State, the same senatorial zone as the incumbent Senate President, David Mark. Orokam is a strong base of Idoma politics.

He is an official of UK-based Transparency and Anti-Corruption Campaign in Africa (TRACA) and a former student leader in Nigeria and West Africa, has the campaign slogan, "Its Daybreak in Nigeria".

He promised to properly represent his people and initiate far-reaching and people-oriented legislations in the National Assembly towards the democratic advancement of the entire country, adding that though he does not have the finances to back up his ambition, he

would still seek popular votes and genuine commitment of the electorate to go to the Senate next year.

He said his desire to bring positive change to the zone which had remained a stronghold of the (PDP) under Senate President David Mark since 1999 had given him the courage to contest after wide consultation.

He said the use of money in politics and electioneering and godfatherism had caused political office holders to fail in their responsibilities to the people, and that the experience garnered from political activism as a student of Political Science and Economics from the University of Ghana would propel

him to serve his people better. He is contesting on the platform of the Action Congress (AC).

"Silver and gold I have not. I may not afford to give the people of Benue-South wrappers, salt, rice and lies, but I offer myself for change that will heal our land. Though money can make a difference, it certainly cannot be the answer to the decades of suffering which the people of Benue South have experienced. I am coming out so that together, we can restore our sense of common purpose and the challenges we face today require tough decisions such as I have taken to run for the senate seat", he said.

BBC veterans train journalists

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

VETERANS of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) at the weekend trained about 50 journalists in Nasarawa State on "Journalism Ethics and Editorial Responsibilities".

The one day course sponsored by the Nasarawa government was coordinated by the Director General of the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) Usman Magawata who said his role in the course was part of his commitment to the development of the state.

Magawata reminded journalists of their role in nation building and urged them to be awake to their responsibilities. He observed that Nasarawa State was being under-reported.

Alhaji Zakari Yakubu, formerly of the BBC, emphasized the train-

ing and retraining of journalists to bring out the best in them, saying Nigeria would develop if journalists were encouraged through various means, including retraining.

A retired BBC specialist and International Media and Training Consultant, Stephen Hall, who han-

dled the course, said nothing short of the ethical codes of journalism and editorial responsibilities must be observed by journalist if they were concerned with societal advancement. He urged them to go for facts and pursue fairness to make for balanced reporting.

Late Akanni's estate: Court upholds sharing formula

By John Chuks Azu

AN FCT High Court has upheld a Memorandum of Understanding on the sharing formula of late Timothy Olusegun Akanni's estate brokered by the Soun of Ogbomosho, Oladunni Oyewumi Ajagunbada 111 for the feuding members of the family.

Akanni, a former staff of INEC died in the Bellview Airlines crash

on the 22nd October, 2005 at Lisa village in Ifo Local Government Area of Ogun State.

Olufemi Akanni and Uche Eucharia Akanni, the first and second wives of late Akanni respectively, and other close relatives have been feuding over his estate since 2006.

The disputing parties reached an agreement on 23rd of May, 2009 at the palace of the Soun of

Ogbomosho and agreed to share the assets of the deceased on the basis of 55% and 30% for the first wife and second wife respectively and 15% for the family members.

While delivering the judgment on Monday, Justice Sadiq Umar struck out the suit against the defendants which include National Westminster Bank PLC of London, Royal Bank of Scotland PLC, Bellview Airlines, Independent National Electoral

Commission (INEC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).

Justice Umar further held that the court will abide by the out-of-court settlement of the family and that he expects the EFCC will defreeze all the accounts previously in dispute following the subsisting peace.

He said the decision of the family which was witnessed by

the Soun to resolve the matter out of court will allow the soul of the departed a peaceful rest at last.

Earlier, counsel to the plaintiff applicant, Uche Eucharia Akanni, A.D. Zubairu, has informed the court of his clients decision to withdraw the subsisting concurrent writ application served on the parties to the dispute following the decision of the family of the deceased to abide by the MoU.

Minister: Steel industry needs refocusing

By Abdulkadir Badsha Mukhtar

MINISTER of Mines and Steel Development Arch. Musa Muhammad Sada said the steel industry in Nigeria is at a confusing state and needs refocusing.

The minister made the remark in Katsina, his hometown, when he paid a courtesy visit to the Katsina State Governor Alhaji Ibrahim Shehu Shema.

He attributed the sorry state of the industry to what he described as the multiple agenda the industry is made to live with even when the time to execute the programmes are very short.

The minister however said that with the information at his disposal, the problem can be corrected. He said the policy that stops government at lower level from involving into the mining activities within its localities is affecting the sector in a very negative ways.

"The local information from the mining sites is very important and you get it from individuals who are around the sites of mining better than with scientific methods, the first guide is from the people that leave there to get historical information," he added.

In his remarks, the Governor Ibrahim Shehu Shema commended the minister for the services he rendered Katsina State as the immediate past Commissioner of Works and Housing.

He said his ministerial appointment was well deserved, urging him to continue with the good work at the federal level.

Governor Shema said out of about 25 solid mineral resources in the northern states, 18 different solid mineral deposits are in Katsina state.

The minister also visited the Emir of Katsina, Alhaji Abdulmunin Kabir Usman.



A man crosses an empty departure hall at Gatwick airport in southern England yesterday following the closure of the airport due to ash emitted from an Icelandic volcano.

Disaster: Women group calls for emergency hotline

By Abbas Jimoh

THE federal government has been advised to immediately establish a functional three digit emergency response hotline to boost the early warning, response and management of disasters in the country.

This is contained in the communiqué at the end of a four-day workshop jointly organized by the Women Peace and Development Initiatives (WPDI) in col-

laboration with the Abdulsalami Abubakar Institute for Peace and Sustainable Development Studies (AAIPSDS) Minna in Abuja at the weekend.

The communiqué jointly signed by Dr. Bolero Ketubu of WPDI and Mrs. Diamond P. Oyidi also condemned the increasing and recurring incidents of violent conflict in Nigeria and their attendant human and material deficits especially to women and chil-

dren.

"We lamented the non-utilization of early warning signals of conflict by the appropriate authorities, and the reluctance to put early response mechanism in place; leading to repeated incidents of conflict from which few lessons are learned. We therefore call for early warning and early response mechanisms beginning with the immediate establishment of a functional three digit emergency response hotline nation-

wide," the communiqué said.

It also noted that poor governance, corruption, over centralization of governmental functions, malfunctioning of public institutions and other vices promote conflict and work against peace and development in Nigeria.

It also expressed concern over the absence of national institutions to protect women, children, the aged and the physical challenged from armed and violent conflict in the country.

Yobe Investment House to yield N200m annually

By Boco Edet

THE construction of an Investment House in Abuja funded by the Yobe state government would generate N200million annually upon completion at the end of the year, Governor Ibrahim Gaidam has said.

The property which is gulping N1.4billion is expected to recoup total monies spent on the project within a seven year period.

Governor Gaidam who paid an inspection visit on the project located within Abuja's Central Area yesterday said it was

informed based on a drop in the market value of shares suffered generally.

"At the state executive council, we decided to divert some of our shares at the Yobe Investment Company and re-invest in the construction of the Investment House to save our investments over all but also to diversify our ways of generating revenue," he said.

The governor was received at the project site by his deputy Engr. Abubakar D. Ali who doubles as the state commissioner for commerce, the ministry supervising the project.

40 police wives get N50,000 loans

By Misbahu Bashir

WIVES of 40 police officers have been given N50,000 loan by the Police Officers Wives Association (POWA) in Abuja yesterday.

President of the association Mrs. Stella Onovo said this during a workshop in organized by POWA in Abuja.

She said the loans were given to the beneficiaries to enable them boost their trades and businesses, adding that the gesture is part of the association's programme of empowering women and making the economy of the nation vibrant. She said the money was

obtained from Nigeria Police Force Micro Finance Bank whose officials have screened the beneficiaries. She said the Bank ascertained the application forms of the women before giving them the money. Some may receive over N50,000 depending on the request and assessment. Mrs. Onovo said members of the Association in the other states of the federation who have applied for the loan will be considered.

She said the workshop was aimed at educating the members on the need to be productive members of society as well as stay healthy.

Fake SSCE results threaten varsity education –VC

From Isa Umar Gusau, Maiduguri

UNIVERSITY education in Nigeria is being threatened by fake Senior Secondary School Certificate results presented by applicants seeking admission into universities, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Maiduguri Prof. Mohammed Mala

Daura has said.

Daura, who spoke with journalists at the weekend in Maiduguri said several unqualified admission seekers forge results and other certificates to gain admission.

He said it was for that reason that the University of Maiduguri set up a screening committee, which scrutinises credentials of

applicants and other students on a routine basis to ascertain originality of the documents.

"One of the biggest challenges which our higher institutions are facing today is the problem of fake results or forged certificates and I can tell you that the University of Maiduguri has moved ahead to tackle this problem. We have established improved meas-

ures to detect fake or forged certificates," he said.

The vice chancellor advised admission seekers with fake statements of results and certificates not to present the papers before the university authorities, saying they would be detected.

Daura denied speculation that the university may extend its current holiday to six months

for renovation of infrastructure, noting that neither the governing council nor the Senate of the university had taken such a decision.

He however said it was true that capital projects such as the expansion of major roads in the campus were on-going, but maintained that none of the projects would affect the university's calendar.



EFCC Chairman Mrs. Farida Waziri (left) with the former Deputy Speaker, House of Representatives and member of the Presidential Advisory Council Chibudom Nwuche, during the Commonwealth Law Conference in Abuja, yesterday.

Group opposes split of Kaltungo/Shongom constituency

From Chris Agabi, Lagos

THE Kaltungo Unity Forum, a group in Gombe State has opposed the recommendation by the National Advisory Committee on the delineation of constituencies, that the Kaltungo/Shongom Federal Constituency be split.

This was contained in a petition to the Chairman of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), made available to newsmen and signed by Alhaji Ahmed Abdullahi, Chairman of the group and Mr Pire Park Maidambe (Ragaman Kaltungo), secretary. The group maintained that the cultural ties between Kaltungo and Shongom is from time immemorial and should not be severed.

"The recommendation of the committee to split the Kaltungo/Shongom Federal

Constituency is contrary to the wishes and aspirations of Kaltungo chiefdom. We therefore call on the commission to reverse this decision in the interest of peace and progress," the group said.

The committee had recommended that Kaltungo be merged with Balanga while Shongom be added to Billiri to constitute another Federal constituency.

"Furthermore, we are worried about the population figures used by the committee in splitting Kaltungo and Shongom because the figures for these local government areas are currently subjects of litigation.

Using these contentious figures is therefore sub judice in our view. Kaltungo and Shongom are not only united by one chiefdom, but share traditional institutions, structures and facilities that are

inseparable.

It is for the above reasons and more that we find the proposal to split Kaltungo/Shongom Federal Constituency strange and disturbing and we speak the minds of all sons and daughters of Kaltungo Chiefdom.

From the population figures quoted in the report of the committee, the difference between Kaltungo and Shongom is less than 10,000 and the difference between Balanga and Billiri is also less than 10,000. We therefore wonder what necessitated the recommendation.

Furthermore, the difference in population between Balanga/Billiri and Kaltungo/Shongom Federal Constituencies is 102, 830 which is far below the bench mark of 150,000 that was used as criteria for proposing changes", they added.

Stay clear of my family, Saraki warns political office holders

From Mustafa Abubakar, Ilorin

KWARA State Governor Abubakar Bukola Saraki yesterday warned all political office holders in the state to stop interfering in his family affairs.

The governor who gave the warning while addressing executives of the Peoples Democratic Party wards from the 16 local government areas of the state warned against sycophancy and hypocrisy.

"No one can claim to love my father more than I do, neither can anyone claim to love me more than my father. If you follow me, you are following my father and if you are following my father, you are equally behind me. I cannot allow people to put my family in disarray because they are looking for political positions. All I'm doing is to stick to the advice of my father, because after the election of 2003, he advised me to take care of his people", he said.

The governor, who also disclosed his intention to ensure potable water in the state, said his government had approved the procurement of more water tankers to facilitate water supply until the completion of the Asa Dam project.

Group wants Fashola's probe to be public

From Femi Akinola, Lagos

THE True Face of Lagos, an anti-corruption group in Lagos State that accused Governor Babatunde Fashola of financial improprieties has asked the Lagos State House of Assembly (LAHA) to allow the sitting of the probe panel to be done in public.

The group, which was at the House of Assembly yesterday said if the panel conducts the investigation behind the scene, the people would be denied the opportunity of knowing the truth.

In a letter signed by the group's chairman Mr. Adesina Adebayo, the group commended the House for the promptness with which another probe panel was constituted after the initial panel was dissolved by the leadership of the House. However, none of the members of the Assembly, particularly those of the probe panel was on hand to receive the letter from the group as a source at the House told Daily Trust that the chairman of the panel, the Deputy Majority Leader of the Assembly, Ajibayo Adeyeye, is in the United States as part of Governor Fashola's entourage.

2010 hajj: Kwara fixes May 31 as deadline for payment

From Mustafa Abubakar, Ilorin

THE Executive Secretary of the Kwara State Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board Imam AbdulKadir Shehu has said that the deadline for payment for the 2010 hajj is May 31, 2010.

Shehu said this while briefing members of the pilgrims board before they embarked on a sensitization tour of the 16 local government areas of the state. The two-day tour, according to him is to prepare intending pilgrims for the exercise. Imam Shehu advised them to commence payment based on last year's fares with a minimum deposit of N400,000. He also advised them to obtain their e-passports as early as possible.

Online Reactions

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ON www.dailytrust.com



Generator explosion kills 2 kids

OUR Acting President should please find a lasting solution to the power sector's ailments. Every household now has a generator and there are a lot of hazards attached to this. It is only God that is saving us. I console the parents and may God to give them the fortitude to bear this irreparable loss.

I also pray for their quick recovery.

Akindele Lola
akindelelola@yahoo.com

damurna@yahoo.com

Plot to oust Bankole thickens



SPEAKER, House of Reps Oladimeji Bankole

PLEASE Acting President, removing or replacing people does not matter. Focus on significant issues such as electricity, security, water supply, education etc

Imrana Aliyu Gulbun
imranaaliyugulbun@yahoo.com

For God's sake what has the

gentle but simple and hardworking speaker Bankole done?

Abdullah Musa Yaro
abdullahiriversong@gmail.com

I do not have respect for our legislators, from State Assemblies to the National Assembly. We were all witnesses to how the Bauchi

state House of Assembly ousted the then deputy governor simply because he refused to follow his boss. We saw how the National Assembly hurriedly confirmed the recent ministerial nominees. Our politicians are gullible and not to be trusted. They are out to satisfy their whims and caprices. Why remove somebody simply because he has political differences with someone else? As far as I am concerned, Bankole has been doing well in the house. Nigerians should try by all means to resist this move. His removal is unnecessary and uncalled for. Please let us stand up and defend our democracy.

Abdullahi Ibrahim
giriabdul@yahoo.com

Here comes another drama. And if I may ask, did the speaker violate our constitution? Did he violate any of the rules of National Assembly? If not, why the impeachment threat? With these kinds of illegal impeachments, Nigeria is gradually being turned into a jest nation.

Abubkr Badru Jkamshi

Anything that goes up must come down. Impeachment is not a new thing to Bankole, after all he took over from an impeached legislator.

Bernard
gracenard@yahoo.com

These are all media views and comments even though it has been said that there are element of truth in every rumour. Even if it is true, we must be selective in our choice of words and also make sure that sentiment is ruled out from our comments.

Sam
nanlelee@yahoo.com

This confusion shall continue trailing the PDP until they lose everything via in fighting. This is the prayer of Nigerians. There is nobody to pity among them; they all contributed to our failure.

May God oust them and replace them with a better set.

Usman Ahmed Danbaba
danbaba1986@yahoo.com



FORMER President Ibrahim Babangida

Rep upbraids IBB over comment on youths

A slap on our faces as youths from someone who ruled Nigeria in his early 30s to make such a statement. With God on our side we pray for the best for this country of ours.

U. Sani
ak4us007@yahoo.co.uk

Babangida was the major architect of the destruction of my generation's foundation, yet he still had the gut to come out and insult us. Despite his negative contributions, Nigerian youths are today ranking with global intellectuals.

Maks
mmkilani@yahoo.com

The pride of a parent is to see his/her child become useful and achieve the potentials of life. All the sleepless night of a mother is to ensure her child is safe and guarded and the happiest moment of a lioness is when the child can stand for itself as it appeared in the animated film, "The lion king". A teacher is proud of his achievements when a student is able to exhibit the knowledge acquired. Therefore, if the former president thinks the Nigerian youth is useless, then it means something is wrong with him, because the Nigerian youth as a child, woke up to follow the trend of its parents. He should not blame them for their relentless efforts to also partake in the sharing of the national cake or not having anything to offer. That is typical of a Nigerian elder or leader who thinks Nigerian youth have nothing to offer. The hope of Nigerians is the youth and they should not be castigated for what no one is yet to achieve so far.

Hadiza S. Umar
hadizaus@yahoo.com

NNPC, FIRS, Customs under probe

I don't think it was wise to pick Gbenga Daniel to do that job. He does not have very impressive records in the state he is governing. Dr Jonathan, listen to public opinion before you move.

Akin Oyewale
akinwale@gmail.com

Gusau faults anti-corruption war, CBN reforms

TO borrow Chinua Achebe's conclusion on the problem with Nigeria, it is purely that of leadership. Our leaders have allowed all institutions in the country to die.

Mustapha
almustash@yahoo.com

I am impressed by Gen. Gusau's statement. I agree with him totally on the CBN reforms and believe it has caused more damage to the economy of Nigeria than good.

Dauda Thihwi
daudathihwi@yahoo.com

I think Gusau will do us good by telling us how the CBN is helping to promote crime in the society. I think Sanusi is doing well in ridding us of rouges in the banking sector.

Abdullahi Ibrahim
giriabdul@yahoo.com

Instead of coming out with innovative strategies and policies to reverse the current credit crunch in

the system, the CBN comes out with policies that are actually making things worse. The truth is that after throwing the Nigerian banking system into crisis, the CBN is coming out with a series of panicky and highly reactionary policies that have kept Nigerian banks anticipating the CBN rather than concentrating on their core business of lending to support economic growth. The positions of current bank managements have been made worse by the fact that the CBN has no blue print or any form of comprehensive document in place to help them anticipate the rash of policies flowing from the CBN stable.

Phemmy
phemo4sure@gmail.com

May we have more of your kind in the activities of Governance. May you have the opportunity to put your observations to action. Now I know why Obasanjo denied your aspiration. Thank you for your patriotism and your willingness to



GENERAL Aliyu Mohammad Gusau, National Security Adviser

join hands in redeeming the corporate being of our great country.

Musa
mzu1212@gmail.com

Alhaji Gusau has done well in his paper by properly outlining the reason for crime increase. But what he missed most is the unemployment

factor. I expected him to tackle this as another impediment to the problem and this has connection to non-constant supply of power in the country. He should therefore help in actualizing the 7-point agenda now that he is back in the system.

Ahmad Tijjani
ahmadtijjani2008@yahoo.com

Task force kills 2 in Jos South village

THE crisis in Plateau can only come to an end if the sponsors or the people that instigated the crisis are brought to book no matter their positions. Very common

Nigerian problem: only the small criminals were apprehended and are now facing prosecution.

Aminu Abdullahi
aminu.abdullah@yahoo.com

I am appealing to the Acting President Dr Jonathan Goodluck to take necessary action on the issue of Jos. Also, Gen. Aliyu Gusau should be very vig-

ilant on the matter. Please the issue of Jos should end right now.

Kabir Ibrahim Gusau
ahlulzikri@yahoo.com



By Haruna Manu Isah

Nepotism as bane of graduate employment in Nigeria

The hopes and dreams of graduates in Nigeria are daily meeting the sharp rocks of disappointment posed by corruption and nepotism. Nigeria's economy is largely public sector driven, because government is the largest employer of labour. The private sector development is being hampered by lack of infrastructure; hence this pivotal sector cannot absorb the ever growing number of graduates now roaming the street in search of not too available jobs. Therefore, this forced our graduates to on a daily basis turn to government ministries, agencies, extra-ministerial department, military, paramilitary and government parastatal for vacancies and possible placement.

A friend of mine, recently applied for a job he was qualified for, and his father queried him on why should he applied for a vacancy in a government establishment, where he had neither a godfather to see him through nor money to pay his way? My friend countered that indeed, he didn't have a godfather and nor did he have money to give to secure the appointment. But he has God to look up to. His disappointment was clear. Disillusion-

The valid question is, is it that such applicants did not apply or their application letters were missing?

ment not because he had to seek divine intervention, but because the Nigerian system of employment has so degenerated to the extent that it's absurd to apply for a vacancy without a godfather or money to give, however highly qualified.

Some of our future leaders are being exposed to all sorts of "you must give gratification syndrome"; to get a job they qualified for. It is only in Nigeria that aptitudes tests are conducted to psychologically assuage our teeming job-seekers. For at the end of the day, it is those with the right connection that get called. And by analogy, you may liken this to a politician who spends his money to secure votes during election; of course, the first he does after assuming office is to recoup his 'investment' and definitely make a profit. The dangerous dimension is that, a graduate who secures a job through such dubious means, however qualified, must first recoup. And before you know it, looting of the public treasure becomes a celebrated evil. A cycle of corruption is thus begun.

The federal character principle had in the recent past come under severe attack by some section of the media and our elites. I do not agree with the opponents of the federal character principle for the reasons being adduced to utterly myopic and at best simplistic. The apposition that there is an appreciable increase in the number of qualified graduate from practically every state, hence, the prin-

ciple is no longer relevant. This does not put into consideration that the principle had its root in the passion for fairness. And logically, this seemingly increased number of qualified graduates from hitherto, educationally less developed state further stressed the indispensability of the federal character principle. This is to avoid sentiment induced domination from one state or section of the country, under guise of having equally qualified graduates. The principle breeds cross-fertilization of ideas for national development. Merit is not an exclusive birthright of any tribe or state. Come to think of it, even now with the recognition of the federal character principle by the 1999 constitution, but yet if you pay a visit to a parastatal or ministry in Abuja, you would mistake it for a particular household in Ogun or Imo state as the case may be.

Therefore, you may agree with me that there is intrinsically nothing wrong with the principle, but it is the operation of the federal character commission, the body responsible for its enforcement that needs to be seriously looked into. It is most likely, that the opponents of the federal character principle were disappointed with the operation of the Federal Character Commission. Federal character principle promotes nationality unity, for it gives everybody a sense of belonging. But the federal character commission is a toothless bulldog; it neither barks nor bites. The commission puts eye on advertisement of vacancies that such adverts must last for six weeks, what happens after the stipulated six weeks, the commission becomes tongue-tied.

A clear point of reference is the recently released Nigeria Navy short service list. It is now a recurrent event to see some shortlisted candidates without an application number. The valid question is, is it that such applicants did not apply or their application letters were missing? Or were such applicants that careless not to have written their application numbers on their script during the test? This further raises doubts as to whether they really passed the test as required. And if either of these questions were true, it then means that such applicants were so privileged for their names to have come down from heaven and get slotted in without application numbers. There are so many suspicious cases like that. What about NECO, that equally released names of short-listed candidates for interview, but some did not apply for any particular post as depicted on the list, but yet got shortlisted. In Nigeria, if you have one of your own at the top, you don't need to apply for anything or attend any interview, for these were meant for another species of applicants. Well, NECO was even reasonable compared to UBEC, which having called for applications last year through the media, but only some selected few were called through text messages for appointment and subsequent absorption. Some even alleged that the recruitment was done before the advert.

Isah wrote from 1 Kwaru Ajilo Close, off Majalisa; Badarawa, Kaduna (harunamanu@gmail.com)



Ujudud Shariff

ujushariff@dailytrust.com

Rimi: The beginning of the end

The tragic death of Alhaji Mohammed Inuwa Abubakar Rimi, the first civilian governor of the old Kano state and Minister of Communications on Sunday April 3rd triggered by an armed robbery attack while returning to Kano from Bauchi state in fulfilment of a promise made to the new Emir of Dass, Alhaji Usman Bilyaminu Othman to witness his formal coronation and presentation of staff of office was a great loss to the masses of this country and the beginning of the end of a heroic struggle. His sudden death and its circumstances shocked the nation and paralyzed Kano by the unprecedented turnout of hundreds of thousands of mourners that escorted his body to the graveyard and paid their last respect.

While we still mourn the death of a political mentor, leader, philosopher, and great advocate and spokesman of the voiceless, we are highly honoured and vindicated by the number of people that escorted him to his final abode and the millions that continue to troop his residence to pay their condolences. The huge turnout is a serious statement by the masses that they know who their leader was. The lesson here is simply that those who underestimated Rimi in life should be more careful of him in death. The masses have unmistakably demonstrated their political sophistication and have resolved to continue with the struggle for their redemption. Politics without Rimi is destined to be stale, tasteless and colourless.

In his native Kano, politics without him is doomed to ideological bankruptcy, political stagnation, humour as a result of the absence of serious developmental issues, re-emergence of money

The millions of litres of tears that rolled over the cheeks of the mourners will never be in vain

bag politics and glorification of political thugs.

The millions of litres of tears that rolled over the cheeks of the mourners will never be in vain. The tears were real, the emotions real, the prayers they offered for the repose of the soul of the *khalifa* (anointed by Malam Aminu Kano himself) were moving and the trouble they took to travel from far and near to visit his residence very inspiring. Throughout the seven days mourning period, the human traffic that flowed in to the house was incredible. They came from different hamlets, villages, towns and cities throughout the country to pay their condolence. The Secretary to the Government of the Federation, ministers, state governors, emirs, chiefs, sheikhs and pastors all came to bid their farewell to the undisputed leader of the *Talakawa*. It was also an incredible sight to see his lifelong political enemies, those that conspired

against his presidential bid extolling the virtues of the Imam amidst crocodile tears!

Looking back at his entire 69 years sojourn on earth, Rimi devoted the large part of it struggling to improve the living standards of the people. From the age of 24 when he first contested an election into the House of Representatives under the banner of the NEPU, he marched on. His opportunity to translate dreams into reality came in 1979 when he became Governor of the old Kano state under the banner of the People's Redemption Party (PRP).

That was where his tremendous work through the provisions of rural roads, water, hospitals, clinics, dispensaries, electrification and massive public enlightenment programmes all endeared him into the hearts of the ordinary people. In the state capital, Rimi established a Television station (CTV-67), a newspaper company, Triumph Publishing Company Limited, publishers of *Daily Triumph*, *Sunday Triumph*, *Al Bishir* and *Al Fijr* newspapers. He did so much for the state within a short time (1979-1982/83) and made Kano assert its place as a progressive and industrializing state to the extent that at the time whenever Kano sneezed, the whole country caught cold! And when a rift erupted in his ruling PRP as a result of serious disagreement with his leader, the late Mallam Aminu Kano, Rimi did not hesitate for a second to join the SANTSIS (Slippery) faction that was formed by his supporters at the Kano State House of Assembly.

The Santsi supporters fought the TABO (Mud) supporters to a standstill, a fight that exists till today, in one form or the other. This earned Rimi the title of IMAM OF CHANGE (Leader of Change) or *Limamin Chanji* (Change). He will be called so to eternity!

Another personality trait of Rimi was his courage and honesty in at all times speaking his mind and calling a spade, a spade. His outspokenness and oratory placed him ahead of most if not all politicians. The 'fire' in him mobilized the people and nurtured a whole generation from 1979 onwards, was and if you want to be uncharitable, indoctrinated by him that knew no fear! His truthfulness, a very rare attribute of an average Nigerian politician, earned him a great respect as a father and a very reliable personality.

Nigeria has certainly lost a nationalist and a great leader and those of us who were his disciples, have lost a great source of inspiration and a fountain of knowledge and courage.

To the *Dan Masani* of Kano, Alhaji Yusuf Maitama Sule in his tribute when he paid his condolence visit to the residence of Rimi, he said poetically, Rimi "lived a very good life, and died a good death." I agree!

We will end this piece by once again restating the obvious that though he is back to his Creator, Rimi is still very much with us in Kano and will continue to be very relevant in the politics of the great state from his grave. The natural question therefore is who will be his *Khalifa* (Successor)? Will it be Sule Lamido, the Jigawa state governor, Muktari Abdulrazak Gora, Usman Sule Riruwai or some other pretenders?

Shariff is a self-styled disciple of Rimi



Your Letters

Send your letters to letters@dailytrust.com

6000mw: No excuse for failure this time

The unreserved apology tendered to Nigerians by the Acting President for the inability of this administration to deliver on its promise of delivering 6000 megawatts by last December is still fresh in our minds. Of course, Nigerians have accepted the apology in good faith and also commend him for putting himself up as Minister of Power. But we want to remind

him, being the acting President and Chief Supervising Officer of the Ministry of Power, to know that heading this ministry at this material time requires his undivided attention. This is because, it is on record that the former President Olusegun Obasanjo had also added a ministerial portfolio (i.e Petroleum Ministry) to his already tight schedule, but at the end of the day there was nothing good to show for it.

Therefore, in order to avoid history repeating itself and to achieve tangible results in the limited time he would have, we want the Acting President and Minister of Power to demonstrate to Nigerians that he really means what he says by taking the following steps:

1. Ban the importation of generators into our country, and
2. With immediate effect order the removal of generators from the Presidency and the houses of his Ministers and other political office-holders, including workers in the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) and Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN).

Finally, taking these steps is necessary in order to break the back of the cabals and the economic saboteurs militating against the functionality of the power sector. But if he fails to do so, Nigerians will not forgive him for the second time. A stitch in time saves nine.

Mahmud Zakaria, Wuse II, Abuja

Text us on 08 131 8000 30

No to political witch-hunt

ACTING President Jonathan should discourage crude way of practising politics and face the big challenges confronting him. How will Bankole's impeachment that he is rumoured to be supporting, help the country?

KAMAL Mahmood, Kaduna, 07032448261.

Is OBJ here too?

THE recent purported impeachment move against Bankole, being spearheaded by Obasanjo and his cohorts in the House of Representatives, speaks volumes of Obasanjo's clandestine activity towards the so-called unity he professes as an elder statesman. His activities are to say the least selfish, undemocratic

and destructive to the growth of Nigeria. What does he really want, to dictate?

ABDULRAHAMAN Jibril, A.B.U, Zaria, 07036077880.

Stop this cake sharing

FG, States, LGs shared 888 billion naira recently. This endless and wasteful exercise should stop. Pump the money to power and other critical infrastructures that can benefit the common man.

UBALE Bompai, Rano, Kano State, 08033246464.

Northerners, where is our faith?

WHY are we still politically naive such that we seem to believe that only ex-this or ex-that can

lead this country, when we have vibrant and honest young politicians that have better qualities to help the region out of its imposed doom? It is sad...

YUNUS A. Kobo, Kano State, 08022180636.

Tasking ministers

GOVERNMENT should set specific performance targets for each minister with timelines. This should be based on not more than 3 priority areas for each ministry. Presidency and Nigerian people will assess each based on these targets. Anything short of that, all we will get is lists of policy reversals and power show, which FCT and petroleum ministers are already spearheading!

08033056419.



By Azubiike Ishiekwene

An era ends, a story begins... (II)

Cont'd. from yesterday.

b) The imaginary "suspensions" from work

On Tuesday, March 9 and Wednesday, March 10, I was in the office when I received phone calls from concerned friends who said they had read on the Internet that I had been suspended. I also read it on the Internet. But I did so right at my office desk at Punch! And on March 22 when I commenced my vacation, the word was out again! Azu has been suspended! I applied for my leave and it was approved by the Management. My leave certificate, with reference number PN/PS/2005/451/134 is dated March 22, 2010. I was not on suspension and never have been in my 21 years at Punch

c) "Refund" of N17million surcharge

It is a wicked lie that Punch has asked me to refund any money. How can I refund what I have not taken? Punch has said it is interested in asking advertisers whose adverts appeared on the early pages without authorisation to pay the surcharge for such adverts. I did not receive any payments for early pages and as far as I know the request for such payments – not refund – has not yet been made to the advertisers concerned.

d) The CNN/Multichoice judging panel

I have read in some publications that I was "removed" from the CNN/Multichoice African Journalist of the Year 2010 judging panel. That is untrue. After Mr. Ayorinde's slanderous petition appeared on the Internet on March 5, I informed the Management of Punch of my intention to discuss stepping down from the panel with the organisers. I had a telephone conversation with CNN's Vice President for Europe, Asia and Africa, Maggie Eales on Monday, March 8. On Tuesday, March 9, I wrote a letter to CNN/Multichoice announcing my intention to step down until I have been cleared of the allegations against me. I worked with organisers to select Ikechukwu Amaechi, the Editor of the *Daily Independent*, as the Nigerian stand-in.

e) Azu as the axe man of Punch

This is a very convenient label, especially since 2007 when the editors started reporting directly to me. I have been in Punch for 21 years and people conveniently forget that I did not always spend that time in positions where I could influence the retention or removal of senior editorial persons. Before I became executive director three years ago, at least 12 senior editorial positions had changed for various reasons and under different circumstances all of which I had absolutely no control over. The resignations of Mr. Yusuf Alli and Mr. Yomi Odunuga, both mentioned in Mr. Ayorinde's petition, had nothing to do with me personally, whatever they may have privately been led to believe. The decisions taken were a collective one.

f) An era ends...

More lies are spreading already, and I wish to remind the purveyors that I am not unmindful of my rights under the law. They are saying I was asked to choose between sack and resignation. I laugh. I voluntarily retired my appointment with Punch on April 15, with the support and understanding of my family and friends who have stood steadfastly with me through this trying period. I know that a few out there wished for a humiliating ending – but this gracious exit is the Lord's doing. For weeks, I watched Punch, the company where I have worked for 21 years take a needless bashing and the names of its key officers dragged in the mud. I do not wish to do anything that would extend this grief by one day.

At 45 years of age and after a combined 10 years of editing two of Punch's leading titles, including *Saturday Punch*, which remains the flagship since I had the honour to edit it, I have decided to explore other opportunities and challenges that beckon. I have read that I "resigned," or was "dismissed" from the services of Punch. I also laugh. My exit from Punch – and the records of my letter of retirement and the company's letter of acknowledgement show this – couldn't have been more dignified even if I had worked in Punch for another 21 years.

An era has ended; another begins...
Concluded.

Ishiekwene was until last week Executive Director (Publications) of Punch Newspapers.

DAILY TRUST

EDITORIAL

No. 20 P.O.W. Mafemi Crescent, Off Solomon Lar Way,
Utako District, Abuja
09-6726241, 6715364

A welcome judicial rebuke

The Borno State High Court sitting in Maiduguri last week delivered its judgement in a case of extrajudicial killing brought against the police by family members of an associate of the leader of the Boko Haram sect, Malam Mohammad Yusuf, whose death also in similar circumstances is still being investigated by federal authorities.

In a landmark ruling, the judge ordered the police authorities to pay the sum of one hundred million naira as compensation to the family of Alhaji Baba Fuga Mohammad, whose death in the custody of the police during last year's Boko Haram crisis the court described as 'wrongful'.

The late Baba Fuga Mohammad was father in-law to the late Mohammad Yusuf.

He was arrested by the police at the height of the uprising by the sect members and detained at the police station. The police said he was arrested for questioning because of his relationship with the Mohammad Yusuf; his body was later found, riddled with bullets.

Fuga Mohammad's family challenged his arrest, detention and subsequent execution by the police without due process. The court's ruling is a vindication of their quest for justice.

The court also declared that Mohammad's arrest and detention, after he voluntarily reported himself to the police, were ab initio illegal and unconstitutional, because no due process was followed by the police. His death in police custody via a hail of bullets was therefore extrajudicial, and the police must be made to pay for their gross and wanton act.

The police, and the Borno State Government, which is co-defendant in the suit, have given notice of appeal against the court's ruling; it is their right to do so, and we hope that the outcome of all the judicial processes would help build a solid body of legal foundation to begin to deal with the messy issue of extrajudicial killings that have disturbingly become commonplace among the nation's security agencies.

Personnel of the Nigeria Police Force are notoriously susceptible to this criminal conduct. As the most appropriate organ in a democracy to call in to quell unrest or address law-enforcement issues, the Force has time and again proved incapable of handling simple civil disturbance before it degenerates to national security problem.

The Maiduguri judgement should be a signal to all security agencies that the days of impunity, by killing persons without due process, is well and truly over. The police authorities must act with a renewed sense of mission to inculcate in their personnel the rudiments of civil crowd control. The nation is paying too much of a price in human resources and treasure in these arbitrary and extrajudicial killings perpetrated by apparently untrained persons licensed to carry arms, but without the commensurate discretion in knowing exactly when to use them; and they must be stopped. Those involved in them must individually be held to account for their conduct.

The ruling is a welcome development; we encourage victims of the extrajudicial conduct of the police, and indeed of every other security outfit in the country, to take their cases to the courts and seek redress there.

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e-mail: opinion@dailytrust.com

2011: If Jonathan rides his luck...

As far as Jonathan Goodluck and the race for the presidency in 2011 goes, it is beginning to appear that Shakespeare's timeless admonition that no art could tell the mind's construction on the face could be nonsense after all!

Power, as we all know, can be profound in the manner it corrupts the minds and intellect of politicians. Throughout history too many politicians have found the sweetness and magnetism of power too compelling to resist.

Africa, with its long chronicle of sit-tight leaders and graveyards for life presidents, provides the most telling evidence of power as the quintessential temple of corruption and lasting temptation for politicians.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that from the image of the tame, naïve, and even confused politician he appeared when the combination of constitutional subterfuge and political expediency foisted him on the nation, in recent weeks, the acting President Jonathan Goodluck, is beginning to acquire the kind of swagger and poise that suggests that he is finding the taste and glamour of power increasingly irresistible. I suspect that he is about to jettison the temporary tenancy of the Aso Rock Villa for a much longer stay.

It shows in recent cabinet changes; alleged plots to unseat the incumbent Speaker of the House of Representatives; attempts to hound the PDP leadership into submission; alleged plans to change the leadership of the EFCC; romance with Nuhu Ribadu; and even the *thinly veiled schemes to permanently remove ailing president Umar Musa Yar'adua.*

The conclusive proof, of course, was the interview he granted the CNN anchor Christina Annampour. In it, Jonathan repeatedly tried to dodge the question and comprehensively refused to rule himself out of the race. It is now obviously only a matter of time before he comes out of the closet on his ambitions for 2011.

When politicians compulsively refuse to provide direct answers to simple questions, you know instantly they are being economical with the truth. It could be either they buying time, or the issue is very much on the front burner!

If the PDP leadership is overhauled very soon, whoever replaces Vincent Ogbulafor will ensure the party reflects the image and vision of its new supreme leader, who, in this case, happens to be Jonathan Goodluck.

A new PDP leadership that reflects the thinking of Jonathan or even the new political convictions of Olusegun Obasanjo, could swiftly repudiate the party's zoning arrangement of the party, which dictates that the next president must hail from the north. The resources are abundant to ensure that the zoning formula is declared undemocratic, as would any party member who rejects the move!

Already, a new slogan to suit the strategy like a glove is being quietly promoted. The Reps currently lead-

Muhammad Al-Ghazali

ghazalism@dailytrust.com,
08052100432 (SMS only)

ing the assault on Dimeji Bankole, call their group 'the Nigeria First Forum' (NFF). The message clearly suites Jonathan, especially when a compliant section of the media can always be 'relied' upon to label any living creature that rejects the repudiation of the zoning as undemocratic and unprogressive.

And if truth must be told, since the zoning of offices should have no place in any democratic adventure, they will be correct in their assertions. I also believe it dishonours merit. Jonathan could exploit the folly in its adoption. But that is not the only thing that could work for him.

When Jonathan decides to choose the option of coercion, even the previous investigations of the acting First Lady, by the same EFCC, under Ribadu will not be a hindrance

If Farida Waziri were to find herself out of work tomorrow, and Ribadu returns in any capacity to fight Corruption, all the governors currently antagonistic to the acting President, and who, given their control of resources, could shape the *destiny of the PDP in any way, will run for cover.* They will certainly become less belligerent in their opposition in their for survival and to avert disgrace.

We have seen it all happen before, under Obasanjo. When Jonathan decides to choose the option of coercion, even the previous investigations of the acting First Lady, by the same EFCC, under Ribadu will not be a hindrance. After all, investigations, like the compilation of damning security reports, are subjective even at the best of times.

Besides, in Africa, regrettably, whoever pays the piper, ultimately dictates the tune. What will make the music especially bitter for those opposed to Jonathan is that, in this instance, the potential piper could also have his own personal scores to settle!

Yet another option that will serve Jonathan though pregnant with risks were if the new cabinet should suddenly decide to invoke the relevant portions of section 144. The move could make Yar'adua's presidency history especially if the Senate agrees to play ball.

The way things are beginning to appear, if the acting President wants anything from the Senate he will get it. In a nation crawling with felons, how many of our senators have lived above board in the past ten years of our democracy? They could also be open to intimidation in my view.

Greed could also be another decisive factor. It runs freely in the veins of Nigeria politicians. It almost made third term possible. Jonathan has vast resources at his disposal, including powers to waive and dispense official patronage like the seizure and allocation of oil blocks.

When he became acting President, Nigerians from different persuasions including yours truly, set an agenda for the man. Since there was limited time before the next general elections, we urged him to write his name in gold by focusing on a few issues that have made Nigerians prisoners of poverty and insecurity for so long.

We urged him to concentrate on electoral reforms to usher in credible elections in 2011. We wanted a quick fix to the embarrassing power situation. We demanded investments in the security for our lives and properties. If, in between, a few jobs could be found to reduce the queues of the unemployed it was just fine.

It was my genuine hope that if he achieved all these in the limited time left, also removed himself from contending for any office, he would join the ranks of a statesman that are so dearly lacking in the nation today.

But all those dreams appear to have disappeared in the space of a few weeks. Jonathan is set to prove that he is every inch, a Nigerian, after all. In Nigeria, visions and strategies for development are never complete unless our leaders see a role for themselves in it. It is a tragedy of monumental proportions that very often, the picture that emerges afterwards is often very ugly.

Clearly, Jonathan now views his presidency as very distinct from Yar'adua's. In the next few weeks, if all that I have predicted come to pass, even the rumored surrogacy Jonathan to former President Olusegun Obasanjo will also become purely academic. ~

With too many voices whispering into his ears, Jonathan is set blast off into his own orbit of delusion where even Obasanjo could easily qualify as a threat that will need to be contained in due course. Such is the nature of power.

From all indications, power has conquered another prey in Jonathan. And since failing to understand its dynamics is comparable to riding a tiger, we now have to wait until it eventually consumes him. And unless he studies the terrain carefully, it will surely happen.

It is a destiny that awaits all wary transgressors in the risky game of power. That is not to say that like IBB, he is not entitled to run for the Presidency. But it is a choice he must make responsibly.

INTERNATIONAL

Swazi environmentalist wins international prize

WHEN Thuli Makama set out to help struggling communities in Swaziland, she envisioned mediating agreements allowing people to collect firewood from wildlife parks. Instead, she ended up fighting to save lives.

Makama, head of the Swazi environment group Yonge Nawe, has been investigating allegations of private park rangers killing suspected poachers in sub-Saharan Africa's last absolute monarchy. Yesterday, she was named one of this year's winners of the Goldman Environmental Prize, the most prestigious international award for environmental activists.

The US-based Goldman organization hailed her as among "a group of fearless emerging leaders taking on some of the world's most pressing environmental problems affecting not only local communities but the entire planet."

However, the man many Swazis credit with founding the kingdom's conservation movement, Ted Reilly, says his rangers act within laws aimed at stopping poaching, often at great personal risk. "Very similar numbers of rangers have been killed in the line of duty by poachers as vice versa," he wrote The Associated Press in an e-mail.

Makama says families living just outside the parks where foreign tourists vacation depend on international food aid — and the occasional antelope or warthog hunted in protected land. "These are just hunters and gatherers who need this to survive," Makama said. "People are being killed for hunting a small impala."

Before heading to the United States to accept her award, Makama visited some of those who are pressing civil cases in deaths at the hands of rangers. She piloted her four-wheel-drive along flooded dirt roads, skirting foot-deep ruts in a country where half the population of 1 million lives in poverty.

In Kashoba, a hamlet of mud-and-stick huts without electricity or running water, Makama sat under the trees on grass mats with the family of 32-year-old Siculo Mamba, who was shot and killed in January after he bagged an impala on private land where game was raised for sale to parks.

Mamba's nephew, Mciniseli Bulunga, said his family would stick with a case that could take years, even if it meant being labeled opponents of the revered King Mswati III and his network of chiefs and advisers.

"We really thought the chiefs and all the traditional structure would step in, but it hasn't happened," Bulunga said. "Going to court is not just about us. It's about justice for the community. If we keep quiet, they'll just continue to butcher us."

Makama, citing local newspaper reports, counts some 50 deaths at the hands of rangers since 1997. That was the year the government issued a decree naming Reilly, his son, daughter and five other rangers. Under Swazi law, the rangers can shoot and kill poachers caught in the act.

Turkey seeks to regain foothold in Africa

A century after the last Ottoman soldier left Libya, Turkey is seeking to make a comeback in Africa, eager to consolidate its status as a regional power and to open new markets.

Turkish President Abdullah Gul's official visits to Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of Congo last month underscored increased efforts by the Islamist-rooted government for closer contacts with the continent, where many share the country's predominantly Muslim faith.

In 2008, Turkey held a first summit of cooperation with African leaders, hoping to organize similar events every five years, and won the status of a "strategic partner" from the African Union.

The number of Turkish embassies on the continent has risen from 12 to 17 in the past two

years and preparations are under way to inaugurate 10 more.

"Africa is a region on which we will focus a lot in the coming years and decades," Turkey's deputy prime minister Ali Babacan, who is responsible for the economy, told AFP.

"Turkish business people are really interested in Africa... They go there without encountering any prejudice.

"They receive a warm welcome." Turkish exports to Africa have grown by more than seven times in a decade to reach 10.2 billion dollars in 2009, making approximately 10 percent of its total exports, according to official figures.

Imports from African countries have doubled in the same period, reaching 5.5 billion dollars.

Djibouti approves third term for president



DJIBOUTI president Omar Guelleh

DJIBOUTI'S parliament yesterday approved a constitutional amendment allowing President Ismael Omar Guelleh to run for a third term.

The 59 parliamentarians present spent one and a half hours studying the amendment before unanimously adopting it. It had already been adopted at its first reading April 14.

"The procedure is that the bill should be adopted at its first reading by the Assembly," the speaker of the National Assembly, Idriss Arnaoud Ali, told AFP.

"Thereafter the president of the republic can either decide to hold a referendum to validate the constitutional amendment or he can ask members of parliament to examine the law a second time, in which case it must be passed by two thirds of them," he explained.

"It is the population who have repeatedly demonstrated in favour of this amendment and we received a mountain of petitions where the people wanted the president to be able to continue with the reforms he launched, notably the fight against poverty and the

development of the energy sector," Arnaoud said.

During the reading of the bill several thousand demonstrators in favour of the constitutional amendment had gathered in town where they chanted the initials of the president, who has not yet announced his intention to run as a candidate.

The banners they held read "Ismael Omar Guelleh, the people want you to stay on" or "Our future with Ismael Omar Guelleh!"

Once the reading was over the parliamentarians and Prime Minister Dileita Mohamed Dileita received a standing ovation when they announced to the assembled crowd that the amendment had been passed. The opposition, who boycotted the last legislative elections in 2008, has no seats in parliament.

The constitutional amendment, in addition to abolishing the two-term maximum, sets an age limit of 75 for presidential candidates and shortens the mandate to five years from six. In all 14 amendments were adopted, among them the outlawing of the death penalty and the creation of a senate.

International

Israeli defense minister says occupation must end

ISRAEL must recognize that the world will not put up with decades more of Israeli rule over the Palestinian people, the country's defense minister said in unusually frank remarks yesterday. Ehud Barak's comments came against the backdrop of severe friction between the US and Israel's hawkish government over an impasse in peacemaking.

Last week, President Barack Obama issued a surprisingly pessimistic assessment of peacemaking prospects, saying the US couldn't force its will on Israelis and Palestinians if they weren't interested in making the compromises necessary to end their decades-old conflict.

Barak spoke to Israel Radio on the occasion of Israel's Memorial Day, dedicated to the nearly 23,000 fallen soldiers and civilian victims of terror attacks. The day is observed with a two-minute nationwide siren when people stand at attention, traffic is halted and everyday activities come briefly to a standstill.

At sundown yesterday, the somber Memorial Day switches into Israel's 62nd Independence Day celebrations.

"But we also shouldn't delude ourselves," he added. "The growing alienation between us and the United States is not good for the state of Israel."



ISRAELI air force officers salute during a service marking Memorial Day at the Har Hatayassim air force memorial near Jerusalem, yesterday.

Hamas vows to keep executing 'collaborators' in Gaza

THE Palestinian Islamist movement Hamas ruling the Gaza Strip said yesterday it will keep up executions of those convicted of spying for Israel despite the outrage of human rights groups.

"We will continue to implement the death penalty for all those who are so sentenced," Hamas interior minister Fathi Hamad told a press conference, adding that spying for Israel was a "red line" for the Islamist-run government.

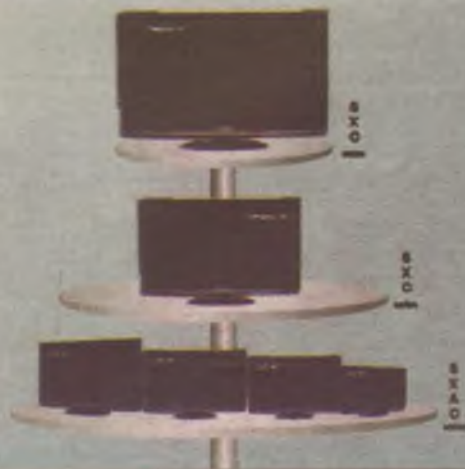
"Anyone who finds himself in this treacherous condition is an agent and a spy. He is providing information without regard to who he really is, and should be brought to justice," he said. "If there is a death sentence we will implement it immediately in order to preserve our people and its project of jihad (holy war) and liberation."

Rights groups roundly condemned the Hamas government's pre-dawn execution by firing squad of two alleged "collaborators" last Thursday, saying there was little chance of them having been given a fair trial in the besieged territory.

Amnesty International called the executions -- the first in Gaza in five years -- an "extremely retrograde step by Hamas" and said the two men were convicted in "unfair military proceedings." Hamad hit back at such groups, saying "they should speak about the crimes of the (Israeli) agents and not the justice that we are carrying out."

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& DEPARTMENT STORES NATIONWIDE

International

Bomb in Pakistani city of Peshawar; 23 dead

A suicide bomber attacked Pakistani police guarding a protest rally against power cuts in the city of Peshawar yesterday killing 23 people, police and government officials said. Islamist militants fighting the government of nuclear-armed Pakistan have launched a string of bomb attacks in Peshawar, which is the gateway to Afghanistan, killing hundreds of people over the past year.

The latest blast went off in an area of the old city known as the

Storytellers' Bazaar as a protest against power cuts organized by a religious party was breaking up, officials said. "A man blew himself up when policemen were sitting in their vehicles after the rally," said provincial Information Minister Mian Iftikhar Hussain.

Several officials of the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) party, which organized the protest, were among the dead, said members of the party which has a record of sympathizing with Islamists. Police officer

Imran Kishwar said 23 people had been killed and 29 wounded.

Ambulances with red lights flashing raced through the streets as dusk settled on the city. "We were returning to our police station when the blast went off," a slightly wounded policeman, Riaz Khan, told Reuters. "I saw bodies and limbs scattered all about when I turned around." It was the second blast in the city yesterday.

Earlier, a six-year-old school boy was killed and five boys and

two other people were wounded when explosives went off outside their school in the city, doctors said.

Security forces have made significant gains against the militants in offensives over the past year, clearing the fighters from strongholds in the Swat valley and in the regions of South Waziristan and Bajaur on the Afghan border.

But the militants have demonstrated time and again they have the capacity to strike back with

gun and bomb attacks. City police chief Liaqat Ali told reporters his men had found the bomber's head. Bombers often strap explosives to their bodies and their heads are cut off by the blast.

The militants were trying to destabilize cities across the country after largely lying low for several months, he said. "Now they've reorganized, regrouped, and they will try to hurt us, hit us, but nonetheless, we're ready," Ali said.

Armed Thai troops patrol Bangkok business district



A Thai soldier mans a business district next to a show window selling sport gear yesterday.

THAI troops with assault rifles deployed to Bangkok's business district yesterday to deter anti-government protesters who braced for battle by stockpiling paving stones as the standoff threatened to descend into more bloodshed.

A leader of the "Red Shirt" protesters, thousands of mostly rural demonstrators camped out in the capital since March 12 to demand the dissolution of Parliament, accused the troops of preparing the area to be "a killing field."

The government has declared Silom Road, a thoroughfare studded with bank headquarters and office buildings, off-limits to the protesters who are occupying a nearby main shopping district in their bid to oust Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva and force new elections.

Large coils of razor wire blocked sidewalks at several points, though pedestrians simply went into the streets to walk around them. Tourists took snapshots.

Protest leaders had called for a mass rally today, with some indicating it may be staged in the business district. However, the protesters have often changed their plans to keep security forces off-guard.

With demonstrators already laying siege to Bangkok's main shopping area, the prospect of a march in nearby Silom — both a business and tourist hub — threatened to sink the already shaken economy even further.

Troops initially moved in to block entry to Silom, patrolling some of the city's most famous sex-bar strips, which are just off the main drag.

Some took positions atop buildings after searching for possible snipers and along a skywalk running above the road. Others guarded bank buildings, ATM machines and entrances to subway and elevated rail stations.

3 rescued, 5 days after China quake killed 2,000

RESCUERS pulled three people alive from the rubble yesterday, five days after an earthquake killed nearly 2,000 people in a Tibetan region of western China.

Aid convoys clogged the main road into the remote mountainous area. China Central Television said a 4-year-old girl and an elderly woman had been trapped since Wednesday under a bed in a collapsed mud house in a village about 13 miles (20 kilometers) from the hardest-hit town of Jiegu, until rescuers dug them out yesterday morning.

Relatives kept Wujian Cuomao, 68, and Cairen Baji alive by sending them food and water through gaps in the rubble with the help of bamboo poles, state broadcaster CCTV said.

The report showed a team of rescuers lifting the white-haired woman onto a stretcher, throwing a thick blanket over her and putting her in an ambulance.

The child was seen wrapped in a blanket in the arms of a rescuer. CCTV gave few details of the survivors' conditions, saying only that the woman's life was not in danger while the child suffered no injuries.

Also yesterday, rescuers freed a Tibetan woman named Ritu from her toppled house on a hillside, CCTV said. Half her body had been trapped by the debris, the report said, but her vital signs were stable. The death toll from the quake in Qinghai province climbed to 1,944, the official Xinhua News Agency said yesterday. More than 12,100 people were hurt.

At least 1,100 bodies were cremated or buried by Saturday, according to the provincial civil affairs department.

International



CUBA'S government bio-diversity researcher Humberto Rios, center, walks with farmers along a sweet potato field in Bauta, Cuba.

Cuba's 'seed man' wins global environmental prize

THE folk-singing scientist strides over dry, fluffy soil that's brown with a hint of red, like brownies fresh from the oven. He's talking about seeds. He's always talking about seeds.

Humberto Rios Labrada's campaign to let Cuban farmers choose the crops and seed varieties best for their lands helped him win one of the 2010 Goldman Environmental Prizes known as the "green Nobels" yesterday. "I want the seed to adapt to the people, not the people to adapt to the seed," the 47-year-old, self-described hippy told The Associated Press during a recent

visit to this farming town 20 miles east of Havana. Rios' wants to make Cuban farms more sustainable by giving farmers more autonomy — a radical notion in what has long been a strictly top-down planned economy where officials tell producers just what to grow, even if it isn't quite right for the soil.

Amid spindly stalks of young corn and dark-green sweet potato shoots on a Bauta farm, he lectured farmers on how to mix seed combinations to improve yields and quality techniques that have helped produce bigger beans, tastier squash, heartier rice and better varieties of other crops across Cuba.



MY CONSTITUENCY LEGACY

Constituency legacies are those humanitarian projects initiated, implemented and bequeathed to the deserving communities as related to our elected political office holders. As the nation draw closer to another elective year, it becomes imperative that lawmakers will be taking inventory and account for the stewardship of services they rendered to uplift the well being of their people. As it affects the state and federal lawmakers, quite a good number have demonstrated kindness and generosity vis-a vis their electioneering promises. They are trailing the blazing of good representation through provision of constituency projects and contribute to debates, bills and other sundry issues of national importance.

To celebrate our National Assembly representatives, **Media Trust Limited**, the publishers of *Daily Trust*, *Weekly Trust*, *Sunday Trust* and *Aminiya* newspapers, is packaging a special project on the above subject [MY CONSTITUENCY LEGACY]. The aim is to applaud and highlight the contributions of individual lawmaker who has demonstrated kindness to his/her people. Given the foregoing, federal lawmakers are invited to participate in the project as a way of showcasing their contributions [Constituency projects] executed to the admiration of their various constituencies.

For participation/enquiries, please contact :

Leke Adelere on 08059100282

Lilian Tanimola 08052377534.

The date of publication is from Monday, May 17 to Saturday, May 31, 2010.

Thank you as we anticipate your participation.

Management

DAILY TRUST

Europe flight ban hits Kenya's fresh produce exports

KENYA'S horticulture industry has lost \$12 million to the volcano-induced European airspace closure and it will take several weeks to recover even if flights resume now, it's association of exporters said yesterday.

Horticultural exports are the leading hard currency earner in east Africa's largest economy, raking in 71.6 billion Kenya shillings (\$924 million) last year. The sector provides thousands of jobs in a country with a high unemployment rate. "It is bad.

"We have lost \$3 million a night so that is a total of about \$12 million as of last night," Stephen Mbithi, the head of the Fresh Producers Exporters Association of Kenya (FPEAK) told Reuters by phone.

FPEAK is an umbrella body that brings together 150 firms including growers of vegetables, flowers and fruit. Some 82 percent of total output is exported to the European Union.

Mbithi said the country flies out 1,000 tonnes of fruit and vegetables every night at this time of the year and only about 100 tonnes left on Monday morning, destined for Spain. "We want to see if we can open a corridor into Spain then we can send everything from Spain straight to Germany, Netherlands Belgium and everywhere we sell," he said.



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COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT [CSDP] WORLD BANK ASSISTED

VACANCIES

The Federal Government of Nigeria has applied for a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) towards the implementation of Community and Social Development Project (CSDP).

The overall goal of the CSDP is to improve access to services for Human Development (HD). To achieve this goal, the Project Development objective is to sustainably increase access of poor people (in rural Communities) to improved social and natural resources infrastructure services in a sustainable manner through the provision of grant support to beneficiaries for Identifying, Prioritizing, Implementation and Maintenance of Communitydriven micro projects under approved Community Development Plans (CDPs).

In order to ensure effective implementation, Niger State Government requires the services of the following key staff for the Community and Social Development Agency (CSDA).

- (1) General Manager
- (2) Project Officer - Procurement
- (3) Project Officer - Supervision

Applications are therefore invited from suitably qualified candidates to fill the above vacancies.

1.0 General Manager

(a) Roles and Responsibilities

The GM shall:

- i. Be the chief Executive of the Agency and shall be responsible for carrying out the day to- day activities of the Agency
- ii. Be in charge of the general administration of the community social Development Project (CSDP),
- iii. Be the Accounting officer of the State Agency, give approval for proposal of CDPs recommended by the State Agency Management Committee.
- iv. Authorize expenditure in accordance with the annual budget and work program of the State Agency as approved by Board of the State Agency.
- v. Conduct dialogue with donors and those capable of providing complimentary technical and administrative skills and financial resources:
- vi. Ensure regular and adherence to the State Agency reporting relationship with the Project Financial Management Unit (PFMU) of the State, Federal Program Support Unit (FPSU), Federal Ministry of Finance and the World Bank.

(b) Qualification and Experience

A university degree in Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Engineering and/or any other relevant degree with at least fifteen years post-qualification experience in the private or public sector, five of which must be at management level. An experience in the management of rural development projects shall be an added advantage. Applicants must be computer literate.

2.0 Project Officer - Procurement

(a) Duties/Responsibilities

- i. be responsible for procurement at the State Agency including procurement planning, design, implementation, management and training;
- ii. be responsible for the preparation of bid documents (inclusive technical specifications) for the acquisition of goods/services;
- iii. serve as Secretary of all evaluation and selection of consultants and suppliers within agreed processes;
- iv. effectively manage all contracts and ensure that deliveries (quality/quantity/time) are in line with contract provisions;
- v. ensure appropriate sanctions are applied on defaulting contractors;
- vi. provide training on procurement and community contracting to Operations Officers,

- vii. provide assistance to financial officers on contractual disbursement;
- viii. ensure that CPMCs adhere to procurement procedures and guidelines;
- ix. prepare and submit procurement status reports on a quarterly basis as part of financial monitoring report;
- x. prepare evaluation reports for all evaluation of goods and services;
- xi. maintain comprehensive procurement unit cost database to be used in preparing a Project Cost Document and provide up to date information on all procurement at the SA;
- xii. ensure that procurement plans are implemented as scheduled;
- xiii. Any other duties as may be assigned by the Finance and Administration Manager.

(b) Qualification and Experience:

At least a first degree or HND in Business Administration, Engineering, Architecture, Marketing, Purchasing and Supply or any related field, with at least 5 years post qualification experience part of which must relate to procurement in a foreign funded agency or state government due process office. Computer literacy is compulsory and experience in community contracting will be an added advantage.

(3.0) Project Officer - Supervision

(a) Roles and Responsibilities

- i. Responsible for supervising and coordinating the activities of operations officers
- ii. Assist in the provision of technical advice on all engineering works e.g. construction/rehabilitation of infrastructure, erosion control bands, agro-processing equipment, feeder road construction etc.
- iii. Ensure compliance with state level technical specification/standards for all social infrastructure,
- iv. Prepare budget and work plan for supervision of CDPs and micro-projects contained therein;
- v. Provide guidance to Operations Officers designated to undertake supervision.
- vi. Regularly submit monthly supervision reports to the Managers of Operations and M&E;
- vii. liaise with the relevant State Agencies for certification for all social infrastructure at completion,
- viii. Any other duties assigned by the Manager Operations.

(b) Qualification and Experience

At least a first degree or HND in engineering, architecture, social and natural sciences, with at least, five (5) years experience in design and/or supervision of construction of social infrastructure. Computer literacy is essential and experience in implementing community level infrastructure is an added advantage.

(4.0) Remuneration

The advertised positions have attractive remunerations commensurate with the mode of entry and in accordance with the CSDP Staff Regulations and Conditions of Service

(5.0) Method of Application

Applicants are required to submit ten (10) copies of written application with detailed curriculum vitae, certificates and other credentials attached.

(6.0) Closing Date

All signed and sealed applications should be addressed and forwarded two weeks from the date of this advertisement to:

The Board Chairman,
Community and Social Development Agency (CSDA)
No. A6 Mu'azu Muhammed Road, Abdullahi Kure House
P.M.B 210
Minna, Niger State.



**BUDGET ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY
ARC MOHAMMED NAMADI SAMBO, FMA, FCC**



THE EXECUTIVE GOVERNOR OF KADUNA STATE TO THE KADUNA STATE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY ON 29TH DECEMBER 2009 WITH APPROVED FIGURES BY THE HOUSE IN MARCH 2010

Mr. Speaker,

Hon Members,

It is with immense pleasure that I appear before you today to fulfill one of the requirements of good governance as enshrined in Section 121 of the 1999 Constitution. Let me refresh you Mr Speaker and honourable Members that during our previous appropriations, they had formed the basis for expanded stakeholders' participation in the budgeting process. Needless for me to remind you that as true representatives of the people, their interest is uppermost in your minds and you had always championed their interest by ensuring that such people-oriented projects and programmes are fully integrated and reflected in the approved appropriation which we had executed in the previous fiscal years.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to express our gratitude for the diligence and efficiency with which this Honourable House had discharged its



His Excellency Arc Mohammed Namadi Sambo FMA, FCC
Executive Governor, Kaduna State

Free textbooks and uniforms in line with our Free Education policy. Similarly, we have produced Question & Answers textbooks to prepare final year students for their SSCE and NECO examinations respectively. We had also paid examination fees for the candidates including students of tertiary institutions in Law, Health related courses, National College of Aviation Technology (NCAT), Kaduna State University (KASU), etc. including augmenting school fees at other institutions of higher learning across the State. During our tour of projects executed for commissioning in the State, we visited the Kaduna State University and commissioned a sizeable number of projects including 13 new laboratories, lecture halls and theatres, libraries, Faculty of Medicine, Computer Centres, just to

- ii. The Islamic Development Bank (IDB) N2.5billion interest-free loan for the construction and equipping of four new Science Secondary schools in Koreye (Jama'a) in Sabon-Gari Local Government, Rigachikun in Igabi Local Government, Manchok in Kaura Local Government and the New Millennium City hosting the last one.

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

In pursuit of our objective to ensure that education is catapulted to an enviable level in the State, we had declared a state-of-emergency in that sector and had consistently appropriated



Kaduna State winner of the 2009 National Primary Schools Competition

functions over the years, including the pursuit of your Oversight Functions. You will concur that there has not been any executive interference in all that you did during the years under review. It is with this in mind that we are short of words to express our heartfelt appreciation for your kind support, understanding and cooperation extended to the Executive Arm of Government to enable it discharge its statutory functions.

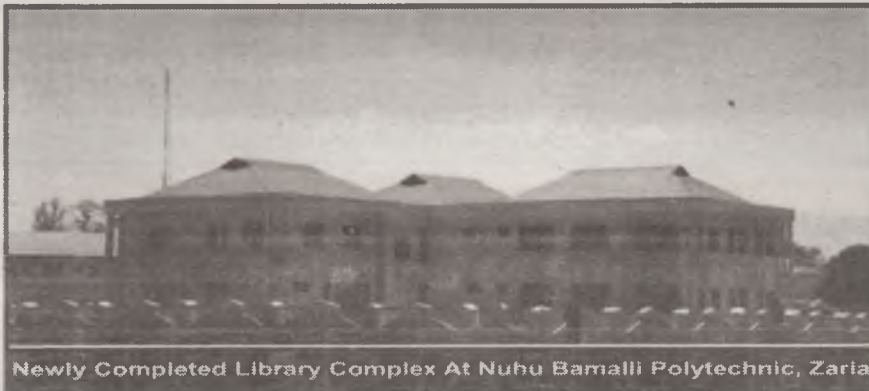
Having said this, we shall continue to mutually cooperate for the betterment of our society such that our efforts shall remain indelible in the annals of history.

REVIEW OF THE 2009 BUDGET

This Honourable House will recall that in the previous year, an estimate of N153,695,023,705 was appropriated which comprised of N34,938,352,725 and N118,756,670,980 as Recurrent and Capital estimates respectively.

The Budget size was revised to a Recurrent Expenditure of N36,738,352,721 and Capital Expenditure of N116,956,670,980 allowing for proper flow of implementation. Subsequently, two (2) Capital Supplementary Appropriations were also approved, which include:

- i. The Federal Government Grant on the Hosting Rights of the FIFA Under-17 World Cup to which Kaduna State won a sub-seat for the upgrading of facilities at both the main bowl and for training centers within the capital city amounting to N250million



Newly Completed Library Complex At Nuhu Bamalli Polytechnic, Zaria

27% of our Budget on Education. With these huge investments in that sector, we have constructed, renovated, furnished and supplied equipment to primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. We provided portable water supply to our various schools and institutions. The



Launching of the 2nd Phase Kaduna State inter-city Transport Scheme

infrastructure provided also includes classrooms, lecture theatres, laboratories, libraries and ICT centres. We have distributed



Uniform & textbooks for the Free & Compulsory Primary Education Programme

mention a few. Other institutions that projects were commissioned include College of Education Gidan-Waya and Nuhu Bamalli Polytechnic, Zaria. The Language Laboratory of College of Education Gidan-Waya is exceptional and a significant edifice worthy of being mentioned.

TRANSPORT

We have almost completed the road projects that were inherited. Similarly, new road projects have been awarded which include the extension of the Kofar-Doka-Babban Dodo-Kofar Kuyambana road, the Tum-Madakiya road and other joint State and Local Government projects spread all over the State worth N5,324,973,675.01

The total amount involved in all road constructions, including bridges, is in the total sum of N7,128,651,294.92. A fourth bridge across River Kaduna to link Kaduna North with Kaduna South is currently in the pipeline. It is aimed at eliminating the traffic congestion connecting the two local government areas.

The Railway sub-sector, though an avenue to cushion the hardships encountered by our people occasioned by the economic realities of the times, has increased the spending capacity of our citizens by over N250million on transporting 800 thousand people to date. It has also reduced drastically the cost of market goods, especially the perishable ones, in view of the low price of fares and the mass utilisation by our people. Therefore, to ensure continuity and regularity in service, a total sum of N110million was expended for rehabilitation,

BUDGET ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY ARC MOHAMMED NAMADI SAMBO, FMA, FDC

maintenance and management of the Railway Service in the State.

In our effort to develop the Inland Dry Port, which will further boost our socio-economic status, we had since worked out a very favourable and viable partnership arrangement with Inland Containers Nig. Ltd (ICNL) for the re-development of Kaduna Inland Dry Port. It is pertinent to let you know that recently we received the officials of the Nigerian Shippers Council who have confirmed to us that very soon this arrangement will come to fruition as it will be gazetted for immediate take-off. This programme intends to maintain the status of Kaduna as the hub of economic activities in the North where goods can be imported and exported.

HEALTHCARE

There is a tremendous progress of work on the 300-bed Specialist Hospital physical development. Our request for equipment leasing from the Islamic Development Bank has received their blessings and the sum of \$45million has been approved for the provision of state-of-the-art equipment and other necessary facilities at the hospital, which is due for completion at the first quarter of 2011. The sum of N1.38billion has so far been expended towards the realisation of the project. This project, we believe on completion, will arrest the capital flight of our citizens travelling abroad seeking for a good health medical services. Similarly, the sum of over N400million has been expended for the construction and rehabilitation of hospitals and Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs) across the State. The Free Maternal and Child Welfare programme for women and children under five (5) years of age has already benefitted over 3 million people through our 28 hospitals and 115 Primary Healthcare Centers at the cost of about N2.8billion Naira only.

WATER SUPPLY

Water sustains life is an old adage and one of our topmost priority is the provision of portable water supply to our citizens across the State. We have therefore embarked on both Urban and Rural water supply schemes in the year under review of which some have been completed while others are still on-going. These projects include:

- (i) The 150mld Zaria Regional Water Supply project which is currently at 30%



RURAL ACCESS ROADS PROJECTS: MAITZO-KWASU-RANDA RD IN SANGA

completion;

- (ii) The rehabilitation of the Kaduna Water Treatment Plant which is almost at 90% completion;

- (iii) The Zonkwa Regional Water Supply scheme at Manchok which is to be

completed in March 2010, Kafanchan/Kagoro water supply scheme



The 50,000mt Kafanchan Grain Silos one of the 3 constructed at the three senatorial zones

which has reached advanced stage of completion. The Saminaka Water Supply Scheme which is planned to be completed very soon;

- (iv) Under Rural Water Supply Programme 4000 hand-pumps and motorised boreholes have been completed while 1,400 existing boreholes have been rehabilitated, a total of 63 Solar-powered boreholes were awarded last year and completed while an additional 7 were awarded this year bringing the total number of solar-powered boreholes to 70 and the contract for the construction of 759 constituency boreholes have been awarded and work is currently in good



MULTI-BILLION NAIRA ZARIA WATER SCHEME

progress.

YOUTH & SPORTS

This is an area we have recorded monumental success which has been acknowledged the world over. The 16th National Sports Festival tagged "KADA 2009" was not only successful in the organisational activities and efforts of providing the necessary world class sporting facilities but was one of the best performances by the State contingent to the Games. For the first time ever, the State emerged 5th on the medals table signifying hope for the future of sports and its development. This feat is a booster to our gradual return to our enviable position as the sporting hub of the Nation. Similar massive investments were made in hosting the FIFA Under-17 World Cup at the Kaduna sub-seat by the Government. Currently, Murtala Mohammed Square has a conglomeration of sporting edifices which includes the Umaru Musa Yar'adua multi-purpose Hall and Sporting Complex, the Olympic size swimming pool and a list of other sporting facilities of international standard.

AGRICULTURE

The Agricultural Sector received a reasonable share with an expenditure of

N8.26billion expended on varied agricultural development programmes. Our efforts at providing the necessary support to our farmers was further re-enforced by our massive supply and distribution of fifty thousand metric tonnes (50,000mt) of fertilizer at the cost of N5.48billion, the rehabilitation and construction of Strategic Grains Storage Facility are also further boosted by the allocation of the sum of N168million while animal traction got N189million. We purchased agro-chemicals worth N15million and improved seedlings worth N32million for distribution to our farmers. We also awarded contracts for the supply of small irrigation pumps and spraying equipment worth N549million for distribution at subsidized rates to our dry-season farmers.

On the same vein, Grains worth N13.5million was procured and stored in our Strategic Grain Reserve Scheme. Bee keeping which is fast becoming one of our new agricultural initiatives received a boost when the sum of N4million was earmarked and expended in its promotion. Our contribution to National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIC) was honoured when we paid the premium of N3million while Kaduna Agricultural Development Project (KADP) programmes gulped a whopping sum of N1billion. Contracts were also awarded for the construction of Hunkuyi, Kuzuntu and Kufana Earth Dams worth N1.36billion. Consultants were engaged for the production of designs and documentations for the construction of three (3) Multi-Purpose Dams that will provide about seventy thousand (70,000) Hectres of irrigation land, 70mw of Hydro power and raw water supply to Kaduna Metropolis up to year 2035.

RURAL & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Power Generation efforts have been intensified in the year under review. Apart from wholesale efforts of the State to wheel 34mw of Power from the Gurara Dam, other collaborative efforts at Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangements have been worked out with the China Machinery & Equipment Company (CMEC) and

the Kaduna State Agency for Power Generation Company (KAPSCO) for the generation of 84mw of Thermal Power. All these are at advance stage of execution and are meant for the revival of our ailing industries.

Furthermore, other smaller rural electrification projects worth about N1.3billion were executed



300-bed Specialist Hospital under construction at the Millennium City

in the year under review. Distribution of 250 transformers and solar projects for 12 villages were commissioned

The revival of the textile industries, which we pursued vigorously at inception, has finally gotten the blessing of Mr President who has graciously awarded contract for the-

**BUDGET ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY
ARC MOHAMMED NAMADI SAMBO, FMA, FCC**

construction of a 215mw Thermal Power plant for the revival of textile industries in the State. Only recently, the high-powered committee led by the Chief Economic Adviser to Mr. President and the Federal Minister of Finance, visited the State to inspect the textiles preparatory to the eventual take-off of the scheme. Similarly, the sum of N100billion is now ready for Kaduna textile industries revitalisation exercise.

RURAL ROADS

In our determination to provide access roads to our rural farmers to transport their farm produce to available markets with ease, we have expended the sum of N1.371billion for the construction of rural feeder roads. The World Bank Rural Mobility Project has commenced and will provide 450km of rural roads in the State.

POVERTY ALLEVIATION



Taxi-cab loan scheme

The endemic nature of poverty amongst our people precipitated our proactive measures to address the menace of the scourge. Accordingly, calculative measures were employed to ease the situation by taking an inventory of all unemployed youth and those that require assistance in accessing financing to establish various businesses of their choice. We now have, in our Biometric Data, 800,000 people that require our support.

Micro-Credit Transportation:- in this step, a total of 100 buses were purchased at the cost of N146,662,000 and distributed to members of the NURTW, NARTO and RTEAN as the beneficiaries of the scheme while the Kaduna City Taxi initiative also received a boost as 60 Toyota Saloon and 40 Volkswagen Golf Cars were purchased in the year under review and distributed to our unemployed youths and the Okada riders at the cost of N88,645,000.00. The Kaduna State Leasing Company has also commenced operation with 50 new Peugeot cars being leased to individuals or organisations interested in taxi business.

Farmers Empowerment Programme:- the total sum of N100million was disbursed as loans to 230 cooperative societies with five thousand seven hundred and ninety five (5795) members in the 23 local government areas of the State. 216 tractors and equipments were also distributed to the co-operatives.

Waste-to-Wealth Programme:- we are determined to recycle waste and we have sought the services of a reputable and reliable contractor to embark on the programme. The sum of N151,200,000 was approved for the establishment of 12 lines of Waste-to-Wealth plastic recycling and animal feed processing plants.

Donations of Crash Helmets to Okada Riders:- based on the safety demands of our citizens and in order to fully comply with the Federal Government's Crash Helmets Compulsory Programme and in view of the low liquidity position of our Okada drivers, we have procured 1000 crash helmets at the cost of N5million and freely distributed to them across the State.



The multi-billion naira Kauru Bridge in Kauru L.G.A.

Distribution of Poverty Alleviation Materials: our poverty alleviation initiative was predicated on our desire to ensure that beneficiaries are mobilised to be self-employed and will own the necessary tools for productivity and drive away poverty amongst our people. The ceremony for the commencement of the disbursements in this category was recently held at Murtala Square which attracted people from far and wide. Cash loan disbursements to beneficiaries amounted to N34.5million while material and other facilities disbursements amounted to N345.5million. This includes but not limited to vulcanising equipment, hair dressing, sewing machines as well as treated mosquito nets and hospital equipments.

Mr Speaker, Hon Members, we place on record our profound gratitude and appreciation for the maximum support and understanding we have been enjoying from this Honourable House. Without this support and cordiality, these achievements will certainly have been a mirage. I must seize this opportunity, therefore, to also assure you of our continued cooperation to this Honourable House in the interest of our dear State.

2010 BUDGET

The 2009 Budget was tagged "BUDGET OF CONSOLIDATION & STABILISATION" because of the relative progress which the "People's Budget" of 2008 had made in impacting positively on the lives of the people through the people-oriented programmes embarked upon and satisfactorily executed in the year under review. It was principally viewed as a Performance-Based Budget as it lays emphasis on the performance indices, a system that seeks to address the key sectors the budget was tailored to achieve. Therefore, in the spirit of ensuring that these successes were not derailed from, the 2009 Budget derives its name as a means of consolidating and stabilizing the "People's Budget"

Accordingly, the 2010 Budget is tagged "A Budget of Empowerment and Progress" in our spirit of ensuring the continued drive to eradicate poverty and ensure optimum realisation of our set targets in those areas outlined earlier, we are committed to ensuring that our philosophy of socio-economic reforms are attained within the available resources at our disposal. We shall ensure the continued empowerment of our people while safely executing projects and programmes to ensure that we make appreciable progress in attaining our targeted objectives of driving away poverty amongst our people.

In putting together the 2010 Budget, a lot of considerations were made with regards to resources



Newly completed Kafanchan Township Stadium

accruing to the State. This includes funds from the Federation Accounts or Statutory Allocations, Internally Generated Revenue and Other Sources.

The situation of Statutory Revenue may not be the same as last year because the Crude Oil Benchmark for 2010 is far above that of the year 2009. In furtherance to our efforts at boosting our internally Generated Revenue from the great potentials that abound in the State, the State revenue board has doubled their efforts on revenue generation with the assistance of the World Bank and DFID which will definitely minimise revenue losses. As usual, Government will continue to support these agencies towards attaining optimal performance.

A) RECURRENT REVENUE

i) Statutory Allocations

As we are aware, receipts from statutory sources are subject to fluctuations in the international market for



Distribution of poverty alleviation materials

crude oil prices. In spite of this, we will strive to ensure that our philosophy of socio-economic empowerment to our people which remains the main trust of this administration is maintained within the limited available resources. Accordingly, we have made a realistic projection of N42,000,000,000 to be collected from the Statutory Allocation.

ii) Excess Crude

The sum of N10,000,000,000.00 is expected from the Excess Crude Account

iii) Internally Generated Revenue

Our expected Internally Generated Revenue (IGR) is put at N12,430,310,000

B) CAPITAL RECEIPT

In the year 2010, Government envisaged its Capital Receipt to be more realistic in order to deliver its programmes and projects as follows:-

A. CAPITAL	2010 APPROVED ESTIMATES
Value Added Tax (VAT):	6,000,000,000
Transfer from Recurrent	
Budget Surplus:	7,948,505,880
Privatization:	678,000,000
Funds:	1,271,700,000
Proceed from sale of Fertilizer:	970,140,180
Internal Loans:	25,520,000,000
External Loans:	19,673,051,640
External Grants:	1,076,770,45
Internal Grants:	14,465,457,275
Other Sources of Revenues:	42,266,976,300
Total Capital Receipt:	N119,934,601,725
B. RECURRENT EXPENDITURE	
Consolidated Revenue	
Fund Charges:	3,702,372,818
Personnel Cost:	18,748,051,217

BUDGET ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY ARC MOHAMMED NAMADI SAMBO, FMA, FRC

Overhead Cost: 21,021,678,380
Public Debt Charges (Repayment): 1,508,548,000
10% to Local Government Joint Council: 800,000,000
Total Recurrent Expenditure: N45,780,650,815

C) CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

Mr. Speaker, Hon Members, our proposed capital outlay for 2010 Financial Year stands at N119,870,601,725.00

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2010 BUDGET

The total Budget size envisaged for 2010 is N165,715,252,540 as estimated from the total expected Receipts of same amount. Like it was in the 2009 Approved Estimates, attention is basically going to be focused in the 2010 fiscal year on Education, Transport, Health, Power and Agriculture respectively.

In our effort to reduce poverty and generate employment opportunities for our people, we have set in motion, the provision of various earth-dams and irrigation projects in various locations within the State. Similarly, we have also made a Provision of 1% of our Capital Budget in this year's estimate to support the Federal Government initiative for the



The new School of Nursing Kaduna

establishment of Micro-Finance Banks (MFBs) in the State, the aim of which is to ensure that financial services are made available to the vast majority of the low-income earners and the poor to engage in productive activities and create jobs among others. This has become necessary in view of the fact that lack of access to financing has been identified as one of the major avenues militating against our growth and development.

We are continuing with the articulated programme on Free Medical Treatment for Pregnant Women and children under 5 years in the Health sector throughout the State. We intend to increase the number of hospitals to be covered under this programme. In addition, the construction of the 300-bed specialist hospital is in full progress and has already reached an appreciable stage of completion.

Some of the on-going projects in the Transport Sector have been completed. New awards were made to take care of some critical areas.

We have maintained the tempo on the repairs, renovation and rehabilitation of schools in the State. Coupled with this, about 4000 teachers were recruited to provide adequate, qualitative and quantitative teaching in both secondary and tertiary institutions. Other priority programmes implemented include free uniforms, textbooks and notebooks. The implementation of the TSS 27.5% new salary increase for teachers has put the teaching profession as the highest salary earner in the State.

We intend to start a pilot programme on feeding to primary school pupils including the construction of staff quarters. I must also share the joy of the recent success of our Primary School students who came first (1st) at the Presidential National School Debate held in Abuja between the 15th - 17th of this month. This is a clear testimony that our education programme is on the right track and achieving success. You will recall that in 2008 our students came second (2nd) at the NECO examination National ranking

The development initiatives taking place in Kaduna State has attracted the attention of our development partners within and outside the State. Private sector establishments have indicated interest to partner with the State in promoting non-oil sector ventures based on the high potentials that abound therein. The International Community has also expressed



One of the solar-powered boreholes constructed across the state installed at Kafarwan General Hospital

enthusiasm to enter into partnership arrangements with the State to further support our poverty alleviation programmes, social sector and solid minerals developments. Pursuant to this, the State has already embarked on new projects with the development partners in the following areas:

- (i) Governance and Capacity Building Project - a World Bank sponsored initiative which has already commenced work;
- (ii) Kaduna State - Japan Initiative for Production and Export of Ginger, Cassava, Acha and Beniseed;
- (iii) Millennium Village Project which started at Pampaida in Ikara LGA, has been scaled up to support four additional communities in Ikara Local Government Area;
- (iv) Kaduna State Indian Initiative for Cottage Industry Development and Skills Acquisition;
- (v) Kaduna State - China Initiative for the Production, Processing and Export of Ginger, Sugarcane, Cassava, etc;
- (vi) The State and Local Government Project (SLGP) has already been mobilised in the State and had commenced its training programmes;
- (vii) The Partnership between Kaduna State and the World Bank, DFID and USAID which took off in January, 2009;
- (viii) The Partnership for the Transformation of



The new administrative block Government House Kaduna

Health Systems (PATHS) between DFID and the State has commenced effective work in the health sector. Only recently DFID supplied the State with 40 containers of drugs and hospital equipment to support the State Health Sector Programme.

These projects along with other on-going initiatives are aimed at transforming the State towards eradicating poverty and enhancing the general well-being of our people. In addition, the State is working closely with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Secretariat at the Presidency to ensure that it derives full benefits from the Debt Relief Fund

CIVIL SERVANTS AND PENSIONERS

In continuation of our efforts to better the lot of the Civil Servants and Pensioners, adequate provision has been made from the Micro-Credit and Human Development Funds for their welfare to which they can access. Other provisions are for Housing and Car Loans. This will enable civil servants obtain their own cars and houses. Also, the sum of N150million has been earmarked to cater for Training and Development while E-Governance and State Internet

Backbone has an allocation of N300million. Personnel Costs is estimated to be N17.741billion, while Pensions and Gratuities which we pay as at when due has an allocation of N3billion. These are significant increases from the previous year's allocation.

The essence of the increase in all these packages is to further motivate the workforce to put up an optimum performance towards positively high yielding productivity and output. Pensioners shall continue to enjoy their retirement benefits which we pay regularly.

CONCLUSION

The Budget estimate for this year Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, has addressed both the ongoing projects and the zeal with which the State is determined to complete them. Also, new projects awarded shall be dispensed with in a manner in which we shall meet your expectations and that of the electorates.

We shall continue to pursue Kaduna State of our dreams. We shall continue to pursue our *welfare*



Training & distribution of laptop computers to Civil Servants

programmes and projects because we believe our people deserve the best service from a government that they put in place. We are putting in place solid and needed infrastructure that include power generation, large irrigation schemes, expanded education, provision of health services and modern and effective transportation system, effective poverty eradication mechanism that will lead to the creation of an industrialised, new and prosperous Kaduna State.

Mr Speaker, Honourable Members, all the efforts we are making to ensure that we turn around the fortunes of the State will not be complete if we refuse to access development funds which are meant for developmental initiatives worldwide. The feasibility studies of the projects we are embarking upon confirm their status as viable and high-yielding projects such that they can provide adequate return on our investment. In this regard, we approached the IDB, ADB and the World Bank for Concessional Funding in order to ensure the establishment of solid infrastructure, which will create the needed enabling environment for complete poverty eradication and enhancement of the socio-economic development of the State.

Mr. Speaker, Honourable Members, may I use this opportunity to once again thank you and the Hon Members for your support and cooperation without which we could not have achieved the lofty targets we had set for ourselves. Let me appreciate our Religious Leaders, Traditional Rulers, Politicians, NGOs, Labour Unions, Media Organisations and the good people of Kaduna State for their support and cooperation towards attaining successes we have recorded so far.

The Judiciary as a tier of Government has lived up to its expectations as the last hope of the common man. We appreciate them for the matured way they had handled all adjudications before them to the admiration of all. We urge them to maintain the tempo. Finally, special gratitude goes to our civil servants for the maturity and understanding they have shown under difficult and enticing circumstances. Their support and cooperation has, to a large extent, contributed to the remarkable success this administration has achieved. May God protect and guide us all. Ameen

Thank you and God bless.

BUSINESS

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Fuel scarcity: NNPC to build 50 new fuel stations

From Mohammed Shosanya, Lagos

THE Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) has concluded plans to build 50 new fuel stations across the country.

The initiative which is to be executed by NNPC Retail Ltd, a subsidiary of the NNPC, would see the introduction of two new categories of retail outlets – the Super Mega-Stations, Mega-Stations and Standard Stations – under the Corporation's retail business, besides a cocktail of mega-stations, floating mega-stations and affiliate stations already in operation across the country, a statement said yesterday.

The Corporation's Group General Manager Public Affairs Dr Levi Ajuonuma, in a statement quoted the Managing Director of NNPC Retail Ltd, Dr. Oladipupo Ajiboye, as saying that the 50 new fuel stations would fall into different categories.

He said: "Some of them will be super mega stations, some will be mega-stations and others will be standard stations. This categorization is based on the size and the kind of facilities each would have, and accounts for the cost variations. What we know now is that the actual cost of each station will be determined by the size, location, and the kind of facilities each would have and on whether they are super-mega, mega or standard stations."

According to the NNPC spokesman, the initiative was the corporation's way of checking the spate of scarcity of petroleum products in the future.

"Besides ensuring that Nigerians enjoy adequate supply of products close to their homes and at affordable prices, this initiative is also a means of creating jobs and boosting the economy to ensure that we touch the lives of Nigerians in many positive ways," Ajuonuma stated.

The Corporation currently has 37 mega-stations, 12 floating stations and 265 affiliate stations across the country.

The affiliate stations are being increased on a continuous basis.

Meanwhile, the Nigerian Petroleum Development Company (NPDC), a sub-



NNPC Group Managing Director Malam Shehu Ladan

siary of NNPC says it hopes to hit production of 250,000 barrel of oil per day by the year 2015.

Its Managing Director, Kunle Olaosebikan, who disclosed this in Lagos at the weekend, said the company's desire to grow its current production capacity of 75,000 barrel of oil is tied to the passage of the Petroleum Industry Bill and the ongoing transformation in the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation [NNPC].

He further said the company is determined to deliver 60million standard cubic of gas within the second quarter of this year.

Olaosebikan said the Nigerian National

Petroleum Company is the fourth largest Nigerian oil and gas company.

"At the NPDC, we aim to be Nigeria's premier exploration and production company and always the preferred operator and partner of choice. We will continuously add value to our stakeholders as we become the fourth largest oil producer in Nigeria within the decade.

"We are building a competent workforce as our business and impact spreads to the West African sub-region and beyond and we will continuously facilitate the socio-economic empowerment of host communities and operate in a safe and environmentally friendly manner consistent with industry standards."

FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Chanchangi Airlines
Lagos-Abj: 07.15, 10.00, 13.10, 15.30, 17.30
Abj-Lagos: 08.00, 11.45, 13.40, 15.30, 17.00
Lagos-Kad: 10.45, (on Fri), 17.00(Mon/Fri/sat/Sun)
Kad-Lagos: 07.30(Mon/Fri), 08.00(Sat/Sun)

Nigerian Eagles Airlines (Virgin Nigeria)
Abj-Kano: 18.40 (Mon-Fri)/sun
Kano-Abj: 08.35 (Mon-Fri) /Sat
Abj-Soko: 09:35, (Mon), 10:10 (Fri), 11:20 (Wed/Sun)
Soko-Abj: 11.35(Mon), 12.00(Fri), 13:20 (Wed/sun)
Lagos-Abj: 07.15, 11.40, 14.00, 16.30, 17.00, 17.20;
18.30 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun), 8.00; 12.40; 13.10; 20:00 (Fri)
Abj-Lagos: 07.00, 09.30, 10.30, 11.15, 16.15;
19.15, 19.25, 19.35 (Mon-Fri/Sat/sun);14:55; 15:15;
20:45(Fri); 19:45(Sun); 11:25, 13:35, 16:25(Mon)
Lagos-PHC: 07.40, 09.30, 10.00, 12.20, 13.30, 14.00,
16.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); PHC-Lagos: 10.50, 11.20,
12.45, 15.30, 16.15, 17.15 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); Lagos-Owr: 12:15; (Tue-Fri/Sun; 12:40 (Mon/Sat)
Owr-Lagos: 14:25 (Tue-Fri/Sun) 14:50 (Mon /Sat)
Lagos-Cal: 08:00 (Fri), 09:10 (Wed-Thu), 12:40 (Tue/Sat/Sun), 13:10 (Mon)
Cal-Lagos: 10.05 (Fri); 11.15(Wed/Thu); 14.55 (Tue/Sat-Sun), 15.15(Mon)

IRS Airlines
Lagos-Abj: 09.45, 11.45, 12.45, (Mon-Fri) 09.30, 12.45(Sat&Sun)
Lagos-Kano: 06.15(Mon-Fri), 16.30(Sat /Sun)
Kano-Lagos: 07.30(Mon-Fri), 10.30(Sat /Sun)
Abuja-Kano: 10.30am (Mon-Fri/Sun)

STOCK MARKET INDEX

Date:	Monday, April 19, 2010
Index:	27,988.71
Volume:	626,502,784
Cap.:	N6,796,780,499,230.00

TRUST INDEX

Inflation	12.3%
GDP	6.68%
Budget	N4.6tr
Ext. Reserves Acct	\$41.5bn
Excess Crude Acct	\$3.9bn
Poverty Ratio	54.4%
Monetary Policy Rate	6%
Banks	24
Oil Price	\$82 a barrel
Power Supply	2,500MW
Oil output per day	2.6mbd
Broad Money Supply	N10,618,587.9m
Credit to Private Sector	N10,006,236.9m
Inter-Bank Rate	1.1700%
Treasury Bills	2.02%
Deposit Rate	10.98%
Prime Lending Rate	18.28%

CBN EXCHANGE RATES

16/4/2010	Buying (NGN)	Central (NGN)	Selling (NGN)
CEA	0.2853	0.2953	0.3053
DANISH KRONER	26.7918	26.8818	26.9717
EURO	199.4972	200.1742	200.8511
PORTUGUESE ESCUDO	227.641	228.4135	229.1879
RIYAL	39.2933	39.4267	39.56
SDR	224.6203	225.3825	226.1447
SWISS FRANC	139.075	139.547	140.0189
US DOLLAR	147.35	147.85	148.35
WAUA	223.7664	224.5257	225.285
YEN	1.9902	1.9956	1.991

Bureau de Change Rates

BUYING	
Dollar	N151
Euro	N204
Pound	N234
SELLING	
Dollar	N152
Euro	N206
Pound	N236

Source: S&J Bureau de Change, Wuse Zone 4, Abuja.



Business

Presidential system too expensive - Tukur

* Nigeria has no revenue formulae

By Jibrin Abubakar & Idris Ahmed

HOW are you involved in the mobilisation and allocation of resources to states?

The Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) is one of the 14 executive bodies set up by the constitution. It was not set up as a result of any law by the National Assembly. The other bodies are like INEC, National Population Commission etc.

These bodies are like officers of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and they are not under any tier of government. We are just officers of the Federal Republic of Nigeria answerable to the President.

One of the responsibilities of this Commission directly specified by the constitution is to mobilize all funds into what is called the Federation Account. The Federation Account is the basket of money that belongs to the Federal Republic of Nigeria and not to any government or tier. When the monies are disbursed to the government, they become consolidated revenue funds of FGN, the States or the Local Government.

That basket is what is called the Federation Account and when we come to allocation; we design a revenue formula for it. For the three tiers of government - FGN, 36 states and the 774 local governments - we designed a vertical formula guided by the constitution. To divide the money for the 774 local governments, we design a horizontal formula which looks at things like population, land mass, terrain and social factor.

In designing the horizontal formula we try to see how ordinary Nigerians on the street can benefit from the federation account. We do this and pass to the President. The constitution says that on the receipt of the revenue formula the President shall table before the National Assembly.

Every month when allocation is made, every local government council is giving certain amount of money from the Federation Account directly and by name.

The State House of Assembly cannot pass a law to override a federal law. What a State House of Assembly can do to affect the revenue of local government is that by law every state government is to set aside 2 percent of its internally generated revenue to its local government. The State Assembly can pass a law for the State to donate that 2 percent to its local governments but not to make a law covering all revenues coming to the local government. It can only make law for revenue coming from the state.

But there is no discipline in the country and this issue is not being resolved in many local gov-

ALHAJI Hamman Tukur, chairman of the Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) wants Nigeria to revert to parliamentary system, saying the presidential system is uneconomical. He says budget defence by ministries encourages corruption. Tukur raises alarm that Nigeria has no revenue formula and that it only uses a circular.



ALHAJI Hamman Tukur

ernments and that is why local government suffers from shortage of funds.

The Commission has for several times tried to fight this. Sometimes we win and sometimes we lose. That is the allocation side I have explained.

When you come to the fiscal side, we now look at the efficiency and how this resources are been utilized.

Under the fiscal efficiency, we fix the salaries and allowances of all legislatures in the country and when you fix the salary they can not contest whatever we fixed for them in court.

What criteria do you use in determining their remuneration?

That is the problem. We are now trying to look at the number of times they seat and how many bills they pass into law. We also fix the salaries of the President as well as the Judiciaries, the governors and deputy governors. Whatever we propose for the President and others, the legislatures cannot increase it but can reduce it.

It is our function to determine the salaries of the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. When we determined the salaries of the legislature, it is non-negotiable.

When you talk of the fiscal

efficiency, that is where we look at the budget and the efficient ways in which this resources are being utilized to make sure that there is development in the country. We advise executive both at the federal and state levels to stop certain processes in the budgetary practice. We said do not prepare budget twice. Every executive arm liaises with its MDAs and experts to prepare the budget because they are competent enough to do so. If the legislatures don't understand anything in the budget, they should not call individual ministry to come and explain, they should call the executive and treat it as an entity because the executive treat them as entity. This is because the President does not submit it to the committee of the National Assembly because the President submitted the budget to the National Assembly. When you call an individual ministry to come and explain the budget it becomes a negotiated budget and it is open to corruption and we say stop it. For instance, if the legislature is calling on the executive and every ministry to defend their budget, where does the legislature defend its own budget? Every Nigerian is not honest, the executive is not honest, and the legislature is not honest. We must have checks and balances in the budget.

Can you explain the issue of constituency project?

Every local government councillor has a ward, a constituency, local government chairman and members of house of assembly have constituencies too. The constituency project is what constitutes capital development. The accounting officer of the Federal Republic is the President and the accounting officer of each state is the Governor and if there is no development people would shout on the governor.

There is no going to be individual member responsible for that constituency. This brings a lot of questions on the efficiency of the constituency projects. It brings about lack of transparency, it encourages inefficiency in the budget and we said stop. These are all under fiscal efficiency and like I said we can only advice.

In carrying out these functions, what are your challenges?

Our challenges mainly are lack of discipline. Nigerians are not disciplined and honest.

When you said Nigerians, could you be specific, is it government officials or all Nigerians?

Let me put it this way. Nigeria has been through military dictatorship for several years. Some of you young chaps don't know any other form of government except that dictatorship and we then woke up one day to presidential system of government.

The dictatorial tendencies have been with us for long. It breeds indiscipline. To now adopt democratic procedures in doing things and accounting for what you have done has become a problem. This is one of the major issues of Nigeria and Nigerians. It is a big challenge and it may require several democratic experiments for us to mature into democratic processes.

You just spoke about the issue of democratic government, are you saying that Nigerian democracy is too expensive?

Yes.

What can the revenue commission do to reduce the cost?

Nothing, we are not even competent enough to do anything. It is purely political. May be we should have tried parliamentary democracy before we move into the American side of Presidential system.

I asked this question because you are involve in allocation and you advice the President, we are thinking that there is a way you can help in reducing the cost while advising the President.

You see, the constitution is purely presidential. It is a fundamental problem of the constitu-

tion. If it were to be parliamentary democracy every minister on the floor of the assembly would have to defend everything he does but presidential system is a different thing. The governor of a state is in charge of everything. His commissioners are answerable to him and not to the people.

If we had go through the parliamentary democracy after exiting the military rule and then go to presidential system, it would have been better. The Commission cannot advice because it is purely political and it is within the 1999 constitution.

If you are asked to make a suggestion, would you have preferred Nigeria starting with the parliamentary system?

You see the issue is accountability. Parliamentary system is more responsible and transparent. If a minister messed up yesterday the parliamentarian will call him to order. There is no way for corruption because you have to account for everything. There is no need to set up a committee to probe anything as minister responds to questions right on the floor of the house on daily basis.

You are therefore saying that presidential system is expensive.

Far too expensive and to be frank with you it is may be because Nigeria enjoys too much free monies. It encourages corruption and Nigerians don't appreciate the money they have because they are not taxed. Every month the multinationals just declare what they wanted and Nigerians are not aware of how it is gotten. They government officials just eat the money and ordinary Nigerians don't care because they do not sweat for it. Believe me if you pay tax you would ask questions. But now it is free money. The problem is separation of power. Presidential system must go with separation of power. Another challenge we have is about the revenue formula. The revenue formula we are using now is illegal. There is no legal revenue sharing formula in the country.

We have been agitating for a new revenue formula.

It is obsolete and we have done an amendment to the formula and when it was sent to the National Assembly it has never seen the light of the day. What we have now is just a circular from the former ministry of finance which is totally illegal, unacceptable to the Nigerians and the commission.

If you give them (Nigerians) a deserving formula, all these issues particularly with the Niger Delta crisis could have been solved. The proposed revenue sharing formulae takes care of all that by given them certain percentage because oil is being produced from there. This will take care of all the social problems there.

Business/TELECOMS

NCC: Who succeeds Ndukwe?

By Zakariyya Adaramola

WHEN he was leaving early this month after the expiration of his second term in office as the Executive Vice Chairman (EVC) of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) Engr. Ernest Ndukwe told staff of the commission that he would not influence the decision to select who steps into his shoes. Engr. Ndukwe, who spent 10 years at the helm of affairs at NCC, said the decision of who becomes the next NCC's helmsman rests solely on Acting President Goodluck Jonathan. Ndukwe was appointed to the position by the Obasanjo administration on February 18, 2000 and served for two successive terms of five years each.

Acting President Jonathan had ordered Ndukwe to handover the affairs of the commission to the most senior staff. He therefore handed over to Engineer Stephen Bello, who came to the commission about the same time as Ndukwe. The former EVC said he had not anointed anybody for the job because it would be unfair for him to do so because, according to him, every candidate has equal right to be chosen.

Mr. Ndukwe was probably economical with words. What he was trying to say in essence was that any individual interested in the position should better take his case to Aso Rock, where he can better argue on why he thinks he could be the next EVC. And truly, as the anticipation are getting higher within government circle and the private sector that the crucial decision to name a new EVC for NCC, the nation's influential telecoms regulator, will be taken soon by Acting President Jonathan, some of those interested are said to have been engaging in a very serious lobbying to curry the President's favour.

A presidency source also said that as indications began to emerge last Friday that the Acting President may start checking the files of those interested in the job in the next couple of days, some powerful individuals in the country have stepped up influence-peddling to see their preferred candidate emerge as the new NCC boss.

Daily Trust gathered that one of the five aspirants within the commission may eventually clinch to the coveted job.

They are: The Acting EVC of

A high level lobbying is going on in the country's seat of power to influence selection of the Nigeria Communications Commission (NCC)'s next Executive Vice Chairman. Who clinches this seat? Our reporter takes a look at the candidates for the coveted job.



the commission Engr. Bello; the executive commissioner of technical services, Malam Bashiru Gwandu, Vice President (Academics & Student Affairs) Digital Bridge Institute (DBI), Kano, Professor Umar Garba Danbatta, Director of Media and Information Security Dept Sylvanus Ehikioya and Director of NCC's Consumer Affairs Dept Lolia Emakpore.

Outside of the NCC, Daily Trust learnt that former top shot of privately owned phone company, MTS First Wireless, Eugene Juwa and Emmanuel Ekuwem of the Association of Telecommunications Companies of Nigeria (ATCON) are also encouraged to show interest because of their pedigree.

Some who are advocating for geographically realignment say it is the turn of the North since the former head of the agency hails from the South. If that is considered then the Acting EVC, Stephen Bello, Bashiru Gwandu or Professor Danbatta may be appointed as the case may be.

Engr. Bello, who is from Kogi State, was a colleague of Ndukwe at GT Telecom, where the latter was Managing Director before he was appointed as the EVC. He joined NCC about the same time

as Ndukwe. He was also said to be the favourite of Ndukwe and some members of the NCC board, although the former said he had no favourite for the position.

Malam Bashir Gwandu is also another candidate from the North (Kebbi State). He is said to be qualified for the plump job. He holds a BSc in Physics Masters degree in Applied Physics. He has an MSc Electrical Engineering Courses in Power Electronics and Drives and MSc courses in Communications Engineering at the United Kingdom. He again obtained an MPhil degree in Electrical/Electronic Engineering, all from the University of Birmingham and PhD in Electronic/Electrical Engineering at Aston University and subsequently undertook an MBA Finance course at the Birmingham Business School.

Gwandu has designed many devices that are used in the telecom industry some of which have been patented in Europe and United States. He is a Chartered Electrical Engineer (also Core registered), and a full member of the 3 main International Electrical Engineering Institutes, i.e. The IEE UK, IEEE USA, and IEICE Japan and has published over 36 Electronic and Electrical Engineering Research papers in world-class Electrical Engineering journals and conference proceedings.

As Executive Commissioner for Engineering and Technical Standards at the NCC; he supervises Spectrum planning and management, Quality of Service Monitoring and Network Optimization, Equipment Type-approval,

Numbering Plan, Allocation and Management. He was the Executive Commissioner in Charge of Licensing and Consumer Affairs of the NCC until Jun 07.

He also initiated the Anti-Mobile Phone Theft Scheme in Nigeria to curtail phone theft, the introduction of Tariff Comparison Platform for Consumers so as to aid choice, the abolishing charges to Customer Care Lines.

On his part, Professor Danbatta is said to be the favourite of most members of NCC board but it is alleged that some senior staff of NCC are working against him. Academically, they say he is the most qualified candidate but Daily Trust could not get his CV.

A former top shot of privately owned phone company, MTS First Wireless, Eugene Juwa and Emmanuel Ekuwem of the Association of Telecommunications Companies of Nigeria (ATCON) are also said to be favoured for their experience and mastery of the industry.

But they say what may likely work against this duol is their geopolitical origins. This has prompted some experts to call on Mr. Acting President to discard regional affiliation in the appointment of a head for NCC.

But the national President of the National Telecommunications Subscribers of Nigeria (NATCOMS) Chief Deolu Ogunbanjo said, "Dr. Jonathan should throw all the names submitted to him by NCC into the dust bin and look around the country or outside of it for a good, honest and qualified man to head NCC."

His reason: all those being peddled as the next EVC are part and parcel of what he called the toothless NCC, which he said had failed to call some GSM companies that are cheating on telecoms subscribers to order.

Daily Trust gathered that the reactions of several stakeholders to the news of the politics of succession at the NCC showed that the new helmsman, whenever he emerges, might face a divided sector, a development that would not augur well for the gains so far achieved in the sector.

All in all, the Acting president should, according to some industry watchers, put a man who would further transform the ICT sector in the place. They said he should not choose a man who would make the fortune of the industry to nose-dive.

Truly, the need to guard the fortunes of the industry from being destroyed should be paramount in choosing the next EVC. The rising investments in the telecoms sector has been a very tremendous one as the country rakes significant revenue earnings, ranging from spectrum fees, annual operating levies and other earnings from the sector.

While all these permutations are going on, Nigerians are particularly worrisome about the telecom tariff charged by telecom operators. They would want a new head who will compel the GSM/CDMA operators to bring down their prices so that the sector will grow more than its current state of 79million lines and about 47 per cent teledensity.

Daily Trust gathered that the reactions of several stakeholders to the news of the politics of succession at the NCC showed that the new helmsman, whenever he emerges, might face a divided sector, a development that would not augur well for the gains so far achieved in the sector.

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Star Feature

Kaduna's crippled 'miracle' centres

You don't need to know how to read and write to pass the Senior Secondary Schools Examination, be it National Examination Council (NECO), the West Africa Examination Council (WAEC) or any other examination. At miracle centres, what you need is money to pay the charges of the miracle doers. Our correspondent investigates how the centres operate.

From Ismail Mudashir, Kaduna

WHEREAS some of the miracle centres operate under the guise of private schools, others function as exam coaching centres. The centres are growing at alarming rate daily in locations across the country, making the operators of the centres to make brisk business.

Students of public schools and those in private schools with a strict proprietor register in the centres for the forthcoming WAEC and NECO, in order to make their results in one sitting. Drop outs who want to go back to school, find solace in these centres.

These centres place their banners in strategic locations in urban centres. The banners carry inscriptions such as this "Register for your WAEC or NECO; Exams tutorial centre; SSCE registration is on here. In the centres, less emphasis is given to library books, and laboratory equipment, as these are not needed by the students to pass.

In a bid to get first hand information on how the centres operate, I went to one of the famous miracle centres (name withheld) in Kaduna last Friday, with a secondary school girl under the guise of registering her for the forthcoming NECO. It is located in Kaduna south. The centre which operates as a secondary school, is the only school in the area.

As we entered the school, I looked round and I saw the administrative block of the school. Only the principal's office was opened. There, we met a smart looking short man, who introduced himself as the principal and proprietor of the school.

After the exchange of greetings, I introduced myself as a business man. I told him I want to register my younger sister for the SSCE. He said registration for WAEC has closed since the examination is on, but he advised that I should register her for NECO.



BACK view of a miracle centre situated in Kaduna South, before the commencement of the day's business.

"The registration is closed but I can help you to register her for NECO, but you will pay 25,000 naira. The registration is 20,000 while the remaining 5,000 naira will be used for transportation

to submit her form at the NECO headquarters in Minna, Niger state," he said.

I told him that I prefer WAEC, because only 1.8 percent of candidates that sat for NECO external

passed the exam. He said "don't worry about the mass failure. If only one percent will pass it, believe me, she will be among them. At this centre, there is no failure. Even those who can-

not read or write, pass here. Can she write? I answered in the affirmative.

Few minutes into our discussion, I told him that she is the one managing the business of our mum at the Kaduna

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KADUNA State Commissioner of Education, Alhaji Suleiman Lawal commenting on the Miracle centres.

Market, as such she will not be able to attend classes. He said "No problem. The majority of my candidates are working class pupils, most of them are from outside Kaduna. She does not need to attend any class. In fact, she wants to be absent throughout the exam. We can help." How? I quickly asked him. He said that he would register her for what he called, "Non appearance" but that we will pay 1,000 naira. "The non-appearance is allowed because we pay the invigilator 1,000 naira to mark her present on the register. We will pay another 1,500 naira for each question and answer sheet," he added.

"I don't think our charges are too high here. We are not pricing tomatoes. We are out for business. Ours is not like those centres that collect stipends and at the end of day, they will not be able to deliver. You know this is business. They will collect your money and you cannot take them to police station, because it is illegal business. I am telling you the plain truth," he added. When I asked him to give assurance that the candidate will pass the exam, he brought out previous results of the centre, and showed that virtually all the students pass their examinations, excluding IRS and CRS. I asked him if the students failed the subject, he said "I don't cheat in religion. I have been doing this since 1987. I have never found myself in a police net. That's why I don't cheat in business," he said.

After the discussion he agreed to collect 45,000 naira for the non-appearance, and assured me that the candidate will pass her examinations at once. I promised to return next Tuesday. He demanded for my phone number, and I gave him my old number. He told me that NECO will register him a 5 year accreditation, and that his accreditation by WAEC expires in 2015.

Another centre situated near the popular Junction in Kaduna, the exam officer, inquiring about the gender and the age of the candidate, demanded for 30,000 naira for registration. "You know registration is closed, but I will do forms left. If you can pay the amount to take the form to Minna, Niger state, the headquarters of NECO, so that your brother can be registered. WAEC is on already, so your brother cannot be registered for it."

When asked to guarantee that the candidate will pass, he said "I am not the Almighty and I cannot claim to be Him, but I am assuring you that your brother is going to be carried along in the exams. Here, we treat everybody equally, and that is why our candidates always pass with flying colours."

A respondent (name withheld) who came from Kaduna to sit for the ongoing WAEC in one of the centres in Nassarawa, Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna state says, "I don't want to write my exam here, because my brother who sat for WAEC and NECO exams without making the required five

credits, got his result here at a go. This is why my father gave me money to register in the centre, and I know I will pass just like my brother did."

James Uba (not real name) of Barnawa road Nassarawa, who spoke to our correspondent at one of the centres, said he left his school, Government Day Secondary School (GDSS), Nassarawa to register at the centre, because only few students that sat for the NECO and WAEC in GDSS made their result last year.

"I engaged in menial jobs to add to what my parent gave to me for the registration, because I know it would be difficult for me to pass in my school. Our principal and the exam officer are too harsh. They hardly allow you to help yourself in the exam hall. Oga, register the person you want to register, you will not regret," he told our correspondent, who claimed he wanted to register his younger brother for the forthcoming NECO in the centre.

Shedding light on how the centre operates, an educational promoter based in Kaduna, Malam Jubril Zakirai said over 100 miracle centres are existing in the state, and that students prefer the centres to their schools, in order to pass their WAEC or NECO exams easily.

"The main factor responsible for the downturn in the education sector are the miracle centres. Students pass exams without reading. What they need to do is to pay, and the operator of the centre will facilitate it. It is examination malpractice of the highest order. Once you can pay, you will definitely pass your exams."

"They charge their clients based on his or her appearance. Those who go with their cars, or those who are well dressed, pay higher than those who are looking wretched. They will ask you the grades you want, and they will charge you based on it. If you want distinctions, the fees will be higher, compared to somebody who goes for credit in all the

“She does not need to attend any class. In fact, if she wants to be absent... we can help”

subjects. Just pay them and go to bed, the miracle will do the rest," he said.

The centres, according to him, are registered with the government, but added that the government seems not to be worried about the ills they are perpetrating. "Many of the centres possess all the necessary logistics. They operate like normal secondary schools, but their main business is the miracle centre business."

"Don't blame the examination body for accrediting the centres, all stakeholders in the education sector share the blame, the government, exam bodies, the parents are not helping matters too. It would surprise you to know that many public schools are turning to miracle centres, because those managing the schools, I mean the principal and exam officers, are making a lot of money from it. The only difference is that while the private schools are all out for profit, government schools are not supposed to be. So they do the miracle centre along with their normal work," he added.

He said all stakeholders in the education sector need to contribute in addressing the menace, saying the centres are all over the country, and that the operators of the centres and their customers, must be brought to book, to move the education sector forward. While advocating for the proper supervision of government projects on education, and strengthening of the supervision and inspection of schools by government, he urged parents to discourage their wards from patronizing miracle centres.

When contacted, the Kaduna state commissioner of education, Alhaji Suleiman Lawal said the state government was aware of the centres, and described them as centres where students make fake results without undergoing the stress of reading.

"Yes, we are aware of the miracle centres, but we are advising the people of the state to desist from patronizing the centres, because the day of reckoning for parents who allow their children to write exams there, is around the corner. If you take your child there because you want him to pass without reading, you will

have yourself to blame at a later time, as the child would not be able to contend with the academic rigour of higher institutions. Students that pass through the centres are withdrawn in tertiary institutions, because after their first semester exam, they will have many carryovers," he added.

To check the excesses of private schools in the state, he said the state government has since established the private schools management board, to monitor and regulate the activities of all private schools in Kaduna state. "The board ensures that the schools meet all the requirements for operation. But you see we have many schools across the state, making it difficult for us to sanitize the whole system, but we are not relenting in checking this problem."

"I disagree with you that students are trooping to Kaduna from neighboring states, as a result of the thriving business of miracle centres. Do you have statistics to prove it? We are aware of the centres, and we know people are coming from other states, but they are not trooping as you are saying. Most of these centres flourish during external examinations, and not during the internal examinations. We are working to check them," he said.

Reacting to the allegation that government schools in the state are now turning to miracle centres, he said the state government would not hesitate to sanction any principal or teacher found aiding examination malpractices. "All these are only happening in the urban centres, our schools in the rural areas are free of this problem," he added.

"People are so desperate to get results because we are overemphasizing the fact of results. All these are happening because we are placing emphasis on paper qualification. There is a general disconnection in the society. If you go to banks or other institutions, you will hear people complaining of the abysmal performance of our graduates in their field of endeavors. This is because of the prominence giving to paper qualifications," he noted.

“Even those who cannot read or write, pass here. Can she write? I answered in the affirmative.”

Business

Ministries are ignorant of Public Procurement Act – Senator Makarfi

By Turaki A. Hassan

YEAR-in-year-out budgets have been receiving poor implementation at all levels of government, as the Chairman of Senate committee on Finance what do you think is responsible for this and what is the way out?

First of all, I can only talk at the national level where I am. From the report we have, Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) did not fully comprehend the relevant provisions of the Public Procurement Act and it is also possible that there were deliberate actions to seat on funds to frustrate the implementation and benefit from it. But I don't have evidence to show that that is so because it's being alleged. So all these issues have contributed some complained that it is the Public Procurement Act itself that causes some delays in the process and some are calling for amendment of sections of the Act that will enhance budget performance.

Be that as it may, I think the best thing is actually to educate people—both the implementers and participants in the budget process so that wherever we have delays we can avoid these delays and also processes should commence in a very open and transparent manner to make progress.

SENATOR Ahmed Mohammed Makarfi (PDP, Kaduna North) is the Chairman Senate Committee on Finance. In this interview the former two term Governor of Kaduna State identifies the reasons for the continuing poor implementation of budgets by Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and says the 48 hours port clearance is far from being achieved in Nigeria.

Your committee uncovered a fraud by the MDAs in which they seem to be existing as independent republics by not bringing their Internally Generated Revenues (IGR) for appropriation by the National Assembly as provided for in the 1999 constitution. In 2008 apart from the national budget, the IGR of MDAs was at par with the entire budget; in doing this they refer to the Act establishing them which they say empowers them to spend these monies without recourse to the National Assembly. Don't you think it is time to amend most of these Acts so as to block the leakage?

Whether there were fraud or not I am not in a position to say but of course there wasn't full disclosure but there are two issues here involved: The IGR, yes, it is true that the Act setting them up says that they can expend some percentage of their surpluses and that they should also remit the remaining to the Federation Account. But then, they determine their expenditure

and nobody checks that. So they can as well decide to spend everything leaving no surplus at all which is ridiculous. Apart from that there are what they call memorandum item, there are expenditures that are incurred by relevant government agencies but they do not feature on the budget as a budgetary item. In terms of appropriation of course, we insisted that that should be brought into the budget process so that the full picture of all government expenditure can be known. That is why when we pass a budget of say N4 trillion the actual government expenditure of the year may be up to N7 trillion. But it is only you have all these information before you can take any action on it. And without knowing what they will spend which do not go through appropriation even when you go on oversight function you will not be able to actually know the true state of things. So this is an improvement in the system and we are happy this improvement has taken place. Yes it is high time that all these old laws are

reviewed. It will help us in diversifying our resources which will lead to stability of our public expenditure.

Are you considering sponsoring a comprehensive bill that will address this problem once and for all?

Well, I have not personally thought of it because you see there are so many government agencies and they fall under different committees but I think this is an issue that even the executive agrees that it is long overdue and my thinking is that they are in the best position to review all these laws so that they will bring them as one executive bill because they cut across all these committees in the National Assembly.

Despite the concession of our ports and other measures taken in the last ten years, the Nigeria Customs Service has not been able to achieve 48 hours port clearance of good, what is actually the problem?

I understand that they don't have the calibre of staff, even their remuneration is poor and they are the poorest paid federal revenue generating agency in Nigeria.

They are shouldered with enormous responsibilities. We need to call a spade a spade and address the issue of adequacy of qualified staff, in adequacy



SENATOR Ahmed Mohammed Makarfi

of remunerations, in adequate equipment. Without some kind of subvention from some other funds base on purely the percentage of revenue they get they will even hardly pay salaries and their salary is nowhere near what other revenue generation agencies get. You know you don't expect the best out of what you don't take care off.

If we want the best from them in terms of accountability, in terms of ease of their work we equally have to sit down and put them in the shape they are supposed to be in. It is an achievable thing but we are far away from that. The Nigerian Port Authority (NPA) is an agency that is seriously underfunded and understaffed in terms of qualified staff.

Business/Empowerment

NDE trains Customs officers' wives

By Sunday Williams

THE Customs Officers Wives Association (COWA) in collaboration with the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) has commenced training for wives of customs officers and men on various entrepreneurial skills.

The training which is taking place in Abuja is in the areas of soap

making, computer literacy, fashion designing, interior decoration, event management etc.

Speaking on the training, the president of COWA, Hajia Saadiya Abdullahi Dikko said the best way to empower people is to build their capacity towards self reliance.

She said: "I believe that when you give somebody money he or she may come back tomorrow to ask for

more but when you developed the capacity of the person to produce, he is mostly to be self reliance and can positively affect his or her environment."

She said the training which will last for six weeks is expected to boost the chances of the trainees in gainful and self employments, adding that some of them will be assisted with soft loans to start their businesses.

She said the training will also take place in different zonal command of the service and called on the customs women to go to the nearest command and register in the state chapter. Last month, COWA appealed to some corporate organizations and spirited individual for financial assistance to enable it achieve its objectives of setting up a primary school and skills acquisition

centre. Speaking further, the liaison officer of COWA, Joseph Attah, said the association is ready to collaborate with any organization that believes in its objectives.

He said that there is no doubt that the morale of officers and men of the service will be boosted with activities that will improve the standard of their living and that of their immediate dependants.

...Trains youths on farming

From Ruqayyah Yusuf Aliyu, Kano

IN a bid to boost agriculture in the country, the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) will engage youths in agricultural skills acquisition. The training will commence soon.

This was disclosed by the Kano State Coordinator of the directorate, Malam Umar Ibrahim Kadira while delivering his speech at the occasion of a day orientation programme for

471 new trainees of the National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (NOAS).

Kadira said 120 youths will be trained in different agricultural areas including fish farming, poultry, micro-life stock farming, preservation and storage of farm produce among other things. He said the directorate will also train 200 women in hair dressing, cosmetology, leather works and batik making.

The Coordinator said the aim of the orientation was to sensitize the trainees on the rules and regulations guiding the scheme as well as to avail them with the benefits of the programme.

He said the trainees will be attached to different master craftsmen and women who will for a period ranging for six months to two years.

Also speaking, the Director General of the directorate, Malam

Abubakar Mohammed said NDE is creating employment in the country through 86 different schemes with the view of reducing unemployment and its attendant consequences in the society.

Mohammed who spoke through a staff of the vocational skills development department of the directorate, Malam Miariga Madubi urged the trainees to abide by the rules and regulations guiding the scheme as well as take it serious saying, it could

be the beginning of their fortune in life.

On his part, Director, Administration and General Services of the Kano State Guidance and Counseling board, Abdullahi Musa cautioned the youths on discipline and honesty in all their dealings. He said the future of the country lies in their hands and therefore they must be disciplined enough to face the challenges of putting the country back to its past glory.

Business/Commerce

PAN woos customers at Abuja fair



PAN MD Shehu Sani Dauda

By Sunday Williams

PAN Nigeria Limited, Nigeria's leading auto makers are wooing customers to their stand with special discount at the on-going Abuja International Motor fair holding at Eagle square Abuja.

According to the brand's coordinator at the fair, Musa Bashir Usman, the company in conjunction with their four major dealers participating at the fair, are offering special discount on some selected cars purchased during the period of the motor fair which is 14th to 22nd April 2010.

"We are offering up to .1 million naira (100,000) discount on some selected products bought within the period of the fair," he said.

Also apart from sales of cars, the company is at the fair with their After Sales unit who offers free checks at the venue of the fair. The After Sales unit which consist of technical advisors and spare part personnel are on ground to diagnose and solve customers' problems.

The coordinator called on people in Abuja and environs to take full advantage of the fair and buy the latest 307 sedan jubilee design and dedicated to Nigeria's 50th golden anniversary.

'Ghanaian trade attracts more patronage'

By Sunday Williams

GHANA'S international trade fair attracts more exhibitors from different country's of the world than the ongoing Abuja international trade fair, a Ghanaian exhibitor at the fair Gifty Kofi of Quinces Enterprises has said.

The Abuja Chambers of Commerce Mines and Agriculture (ABUCCIMA) had last week said that about sixty Ghanaian exhibitors mostly sponsored by the Ghana Export Promotion Commission are participating at the fair.

Kofi, who came on self sponsorship, said the money charged for participation at the fair is on the high side which accounts for low participation.

She said: "My country and your country's trade fair are different. The number of different countries coming to our trade fair is more than the ones com-

ing here. The cost of the fair is too much. It cost us N250,000. If the organizers can work on the money, the fair will attract more exhibitors."

She however said that the trade fair is okay in terms of sales, adding that since they came from Bayelsa and Warri fashion fair, they have made some sales.

Another Ghanaian exhibitor, Julia Opare of Truworth fashion said the trade fair is encouraging and better than the arts and culture fair she attended sometimes in Abuja.

"I have virtually sold anything I brought to the fair. I will never regret this experience and when will come again when the opportunity comes," she said.

On the cost of the fair, the Director General of ABUCCIMA, Sir Joe Wenegeime had said that the cost of providing infrastructures at the fair like electricity, water, security etc accounts for the high charges.

CIPMN nets N63.5m profits in 2009

From Chris Agabi, Lagos

THE Chartered Institute of Personnel Management of Nigeria (CIPMN) has recorded N63.5 million profit in 2009 as against N43.2million recorded in 2008 representing 46.7 percent increase.

Presenting the Institute's performances at the close of 2009 financial year ended 31st December 2009, at the 41st annual general meeting (AGM) held at the Institute's headquarters Alausa Lagos, the outgoing President and Chairman of Council, DR. Oladimeji Alo said the success is part of the strategic objective to launch CIPMN on the part of financial sustainability.

Details of the balance sheets also show that net assets of the Institute in the year under review stood at N309.9 million from N246.4 million or 28 per cent growth while debts owed the Institute is N17.1 million.

Enumerating other achievements of the Insti-

tute, Dr. Alo also noted that students' membership improved by 47 percent and the Institute opened four more additional branches in 2009.

He said most of the Institute's programmes in 2009 were success in terms of attendance and profits.

Besides its collaboration with the CBN and BPE, the Institute also signed an MOU with Global Village Consult to hold series of international human resources conferences.

He noted that part of the Institute objective on improving the quality of the Institute's intellectual activity was to "raise the intellectual content of all CIPMN activities and give members a compelling reason to cherish their Institute" he said, adding that they introduced a special HR forum in 2008 and the 2009 edition of that programme was led by Dr. Ken Graham from the United States of America and attended by over 120 participants.

Lagos rakes N124bn from bond issuance

From Femi Akinola, Lagos

LAGOS State government has raked in not less than N124.5 billion from sales of N50billion bonds to investors at a fixed rate of 10 percent in the second tranche of the N275 billion debts issuance programme.

Governor Babatunde Fashola, represented by his deputy, Princess Sarah Sosan disclosed this after a meeting with the stakeholders at the Banquet Hall of the governor's office in Ikeja yesterday.

She said the amount represented 249 percent over the 50 billion mandates given by the state government to the book runners, led by Chapel Hill Denham Management. The first tranche of the initial offer of N57.5 billion was also oversubscribed by 117.93 percent.

At the completion of the board meeting held yesterday in Lagos, Governor Fashola said results of the just concluded bond offer is nothing but a clear indication that the investing public is keen to partner with the government in ongoing transformation.

"What our beloved state has accomplished by these bond issuances is no mean feat. We are thrilled by it. We are, in all humility, proud to be partnering with all the stakeholders to build a state in which we all have an opportunity to thrive, and bequeath a brighter and rewarding future to the next generation," he said.

The governor said that Lagos State remains the only sub-national entity within Nigeria to score the many firsts by the feat, including the first to undertake successive bond issuance during the tenure of the same administration, the first to issue a bond without an Irrevocable Standing Payment Orders, the first to issue a bond without any under-writing arrangements

and the first to undertake an offering by way of a 'book build'.

He noted that different projects are being undertaken with proceeds from the bond. "A major project which is a construction plan is at an advanced stage. It is the upgrading of the Lagos-Badagry Expressway into a 10-lane highway, featuring pedestrian walkways, bus routes and a rail line.

With bond proceeds, the potential of our water transportation project will be maximized. This is already ongoing in ferry terminals at Ikorodu, Badore and Osborne," Fashola told the investing public.



LAGOS State Governor Babatunde Raji Fashola

Northern flour mills has no plan of disengaging staff — MD

From Halima Musa, Kano

THE Northern Nigeria Flour Mills has no plan to disengage or suspend any of its staff, managing director of the company Alhaji Rabi'u M Gwarzo has assured the staff.

Gwarzo who gave the assurance while presenting gifts to about 165 staff of the company at the premises of the company in Kano said the company would not sack a staff without any reason. "I'm assuring you that no staff will be sacked or suspended

without any genuine reason," he said

He also assured the workers that the management was planning to increase their salary and enhance their welfare. The MD commended the workers for their efforts and dedication to work, which he said was what moved the company forward.

In their separate remarks, the chairmen, senior and junior staff associations, Malam Umar Ibrahim and Malam Yahya Hamisu commended the management for the kind gesture and pledged to put extra effort to further move the company forward.

Business



FROM right: Minister of State for Finance and Chairman of the Federation Account Allocation Committee (FAAC), Mr. Remi Babalola, flanked by the Accountant General of the Federation, Alhaji Ibrahim Dankwambo (right) and the Director of Home Finance in the Federal Ministry of Finance, Alhaji Gidado Mohammed (left), during the FAAC meeting held in Uyo, Akwa Ibom on Friday, April 16, 2010

Stockbrokers welcome new rules on margin loans

From Kayode Ekundayo, Lagos

THE new rules on margin loans issued by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) at the weekend excited some stockbrokers in Lagos who urged the apex bank to monitor the implementation of the new rule.

CBN at the weekend issued a new guideline prohibiting margin trading in shares of banks in the capital market and also established a maximum cap of 10 per cent exposure to margin lending in the loan portfolios of banks.

The new rule was based on the background that large exposures of banks to the capital market was a major contributor to the recent banking crisis.

The managing director, Credit Bureau Limited Tunde Popoola said the new rule would bring sanity into the capital market, adding that the market strives on speculation and because of that investors in the market are risk takers.

"So whatever government can do to regulate the market is welcome. There should be proper care of public fund. Using loan for margin lending is not good enough for our economy more so that it not impacting on the economy", he said.

Frank Ogiemien of Partfinder Securities said though the new policy is good for the economy, effort should be made to sustain it.

He said: "It is good policy anyway. It is good that CBN is helping at this stage to regulate the market. As a matter of fact most banks have stopped accepting shares as securities. What CBN is trying to do is to try and manage already bad situation"

CBN said the new regulations and rules were produced by the Financial Services Regulation Coordination Committee (FSRCC) and the new rules will guide the operations and activities surrounding lending specifically meant for trading in stocks in the capital market.

'Union Bank yet to settle former staff'

From Mohammed Shosanya, Lagos

FORMER workers of Union Bank Plc yesterday protested over the non-payment of N3 billion severance package owed them by the bank.

The aggrieved former employees thronged the headquarters of the bank on Marina street in Lagos as early as 7a.m, disrupted banking operations, chanting solidarity songs in order to drive home their demand.

Some of them displayed various placards with the inscriptions such as "Pay the legitimate entitlement of ex-staff now and respect international and Nigerian labour law. If you must retire me prematurely, pay my retirement benefit in full. All of you will face the judgment for spending our money to feather your nests."

Speaking with newsmen after the picketing, National Coordinator of the Aggrieved Retired Senior Staff of Union Bank, Victor Adefisan, said about 2,500 staff of the bank were prematurely retired between 2006 and 2008 without payment of their severance package.

Besides, he said the bank also kept the former staff in the dark as regards remittance of contributory pension funds and

dividend warrants on their shares.

According to him, the bank's action contradicts a subsisting agreement with the employers association of all banks and financial institution reached on the payment of severance package to workers as at when due.

He said United Bank for Africa, First Bank, Afriland Plc, Niger Insurance and other financial institutions have accordingly paid their former staffs the benefit and wondered why Union Bank is found wanting. But, management of bank in a statement signed by Eddy Odumosu, Principal manager, said the protest came as a surprise as no prior notice was given to it by the so called aggrieved senior staff pensioners.

"It should be recalled that the current management of the Bank came into office following the intervention of Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in August 2009 and has since not carried out any severance exercise to warrant any form of protest", it said.

It noted that the issues raised by the aggrieved pensioners were already a subject of litigation and this had been communicated to representatives of the group previously. The Bank is thus constrained to await the outcome of the court cases and cannot selectively address the perceived grievances.

NASS proposes oil and gas summit

By Nasiru Imam

THE Anti-Money Laundering and Cyber Security Group at the National Assembly is proposing an oil and gas summit titled "Special Legislative Briefing on Critical Infrastructure Protection in a Deregulated Oil and Gas Economy" to create a better understanding in the minds of Nigerians on the success and failure of the ongoing deregulation.

Addressing newsmen at the weekend in Abuja, the Coordinator Anti-Money Laundering and Cyber Security Coalition in the National Assembly, Hon Bassey Etim, said the upcoming summit shall draw participants from major stakeholders in the oil and gas sector.

The Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) is expected to brief the National Assembly members on energy reforms and transformation in the ongoing deregulation of the downstream sector of the oil and gas economy.

Several meetings are being held regularly between major stakeholders in the oil and gas sector with members of the national assembly in preparation of the proposed briefing at a public function where the corporation shall address Nigerians on energy reforms later this month.

He noted that the protection of critical infrastructure in the sector will determine how far the production and supply of crude and refined petroleum products will go across the country and at export level.

Etim, who was optimistic of the success of the ongoing deregulation with the disappearance of fuel queues at petrol stations even though the price of crude has dropped, declared that the complete removal of major marketers from the importation of petroleum products into the country was the best decision taken by the federal government in recent times.

He said middle role in business creates suspicion and short falls especially in the oil and gas economy which was a direct responsibility of government to explore, refine and distribute petroleum products before involving the private sector lately.

"The oil and gas summit has therefore become necessary at this time to take a critical look at the protection of facilities on line and as well the sustainability of the progress recorded, in case there are plans to reintroduce sentiments by bringing the major marketers back that of course shall be resisted by Nigerians at all quarters", Etim said.

Oil drops below 82 dollars as risk appetite sours

OIL prices sank to a three-week low of below 82 dollars a barrel on Monday, extending the previous session's 2.7 per cent decline, as risk appetite soured across the board after investment bank Goldman Sachs was charged with fraud.

Goldman, which has large positions across many markets including commodities, was charged with fraud by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) over its marketing of a subprime mortgage product.

The news dragged down broad U.S. equity indexes.

The banking powerhouse also saw pressure building on both sides of the Atlantic on Sunday, with Germany and the U.K. saying that they will seek details from the SEC.

The aspects are about Goldman's activities as a prelude to potential legal steps following a U.S.-led fraud investigation.

U.S. crude for May delivery CLC1 fell 1.44 dollars to 81.80 dollars, after having dropped as low as 81.73 dollars, the lowest since March 29.

"We are seeing a spillover reaction to news of Goldman being charged," said David Moore, an analyst at the Commonwealth Bank of Australia in Sydney.

"It's mainly a sentiment issue; oil prices have risen very strongly in recent weeks on bullish sentiments and anticipation of a demand recovery later this year.

"So it is naturally very vulnerable to a correction when market sentiments change," Moore said. (Reuters/NAN).

U.S. crude for May delivery CLC1 fell 1.44 dollars to 81.80 dollars.

Business/Finance



Nigerian Stock Exchange
(Source: APT Securities)
Monday, April 19, 2010

STOCK Name	Prev Day Close	Open	High	Low	Price	Change	Deals	Volume Traded	Value
ZUP									071.38
ABCTrans	1.07	1.07	1.10	1.04	1.10	0.03	19	591,974	630,978.88
ACCESS	10.90	10.90	11.00	10.71	10.88	-0.02	217	11,910,690	129,616,816.00
AFRIBANK	2.86	3.00	3.00	2.99	3.00	0.14	73	3,149,612	9,444,455.00
AFRINSURE	0.50								
ALUMACO	8.57	0.00	0.00	0.00	8.57	0.00	1	500	4,285.00
AP									37,628,196.00
ASHAKACEM	22.82	22.83	23.80	22.83	23.79	0.97	181	5,283,093	123,982,856.00
ASOSAVINGS	0.71								
BECOPETRO	1.60	1.61	1.61	1.60	1.61	0.01	34	691,200	1,117,806.00
BERGER	7.57					0.00	7	80,300	637,582.00
CAPOIL	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.00	17	1,296,900	674,252.50
CONOIL	48.51	0.00	0.00	0.00	48.51	0.00	36	35,484	1,793,020.75
CONTINSURE	0.97	0.97	1.01	0.97	1.01	0.04	14	3,162,850	3,109,500.50
CORNERST	0.78	0.81	0.81	0.80	0.81	0.03	36	10,127,000	8,192,370.00
CUSTODYINS	3.68	3.82	3.86	3.60	3.63	-0.05	49	6,658,192	24,696,580.00
CUTIX	3.59	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.59	0.00	3	6,720	25,267.20
DANGFLOUR	24.13	24.06	25.33	24.06	25.33	1.20	398	5,060,902	127,617,752.00
DANGSUGAR	19.90	20.00	20.89	20.00	20.00	0.10	735	10,335,794	212,594,320.00
DIAMONDBNK	9.53	9.60	9.60	9.18	9.18	-0.35	127	10,897,360	103,015,952.00
ECOBANK	6.28	6.13	6.55	6.13	6.30	0.02	85	1,737,755	11,040,970.00
EQUITYASUR	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.00	5	832,500	416,250.00
ETERNAOIL	8.30	8.65	8.70	8.65	8.70	0.40	62	683,585	5,872,979.00
FCMB	9.46	9.12	9.50	9.12	9.35	-0.11	60	1,146,539	10,737,985.00
FIDELITYBK	3.27	3.29	3.40	3.27	3.36	0.09	209	10,305,539	34,439,628.00
FIRSTBANK	17.05	17.05	17.20	16.50	17.00	-0.05	964	431,613,925	7,375,448,576.00
GLAXOSMITH	27.60	0.00	0.00	0.00	27.60	0.00	14	33,590	931,315.12
GOLDINSURE	0.83	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	-0.04	11	4,005,000	3,163,950.00
GTASSURE	2.99	3.13	3.13	2.92	3.00	0.01	79	5,519,118	16,835,736.00
GUARANTY	24.46	25.09	25.49	23.24	23.24	-1.22	1171	87,624,959	2,123,914,112.00
GUINEAINS	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.00	8	1,210,000	605,000.00
HMARKINS	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.00	14	7,671,000	3,835,500.00
INTENEGINS	0.66	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	-0.03	35	10,180,474	7,024,527.00
INTERCONT	2.00	2.09	2.10	2.07	2.10	0.10	95	3,016,064	6,298,549.00
JAPAUOIL	1.90	1.81	1.97	1.81	1.97	0.07	365	32,782,176	61,270,980.00
JBERGER	53.47	56.14	56.14	56.14	56.14	2.67	25	344,698	19,351,346.00
LINKASSURE	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	1	2,000	1,000.00
MOBIL	151.44	159.01	159.01	159.01	159.01	7.57	40	173,355	27,565,178.00
MTI	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	1	10,000	5,000.00
MULTIVERSE	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.00	12	838,000	419,000.00
NAHCO	13.95	14.00	14.64	14.00	14.63	0.68	225	2,774,264	40,172,904.00
NASCON	9.89	10.26	10.38	10.00	10.36	0.47	122	3,338,628	34,505,004.00
NB	70.81	70.01	70.01	69.00	69.53	-1.28	149	1,539,281	107,515,200.00
NBC	39.35	0.00	0.00	0.00	39.35	0.00	18	63,754	2,633,677.75
NCR	8.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	8.13	0.00	2	20,000	162,600.00
NEIMETH	2.57	2.50	2.69	2.50	2.69	0.12	32	834,193	2,205,195.25
NEM	0.75	0.77	0.77	0.72	0.74	0.00	11	3,032,022	2,233,359.50
NESTLE	289.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	289.50	0.00	30	42,471	12,878,297.00
NIGERINS	1.11	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	0.05	11	4,092,679	4,747,507.50
NIWICABLE	0.69	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.03	3	125,000	90,000.00
NNFM	41.20	0.00	0.00	0.00	41.20	0.00	3	15,500	660,450.00
OANDO	120.51	126.53	126.53	126.53	126.53	6.02	201	1,467,216	185,644,192.00
OASISINS	0.85	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.81	-0.04	1	60,000	48,600.00
OCEANIC	2.02	2.05	2.09	1.92	1.93	-0.09	153	9,220,157	18,468,106.00
OKOMUOIL	21.62	0.00	0.00	0.00	21.62	0.00	4	25,000	513,500.00
OMATEK	0.73	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.03	12	586,084	445,423.84
PLATINUM	1.67	1.59	1.73	1.59	1.67	0.00	142	9,175,184	15,111,421.00
PRESCO	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25	0.00	24	517,546	3,752,208.50
PRESTIGE	4.76	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.76	0.00	8	115,937	578,499.62
PZ	31.94	0.00	0.00	0.00	31.94	0.00	52	191,056	5,932,259.00
REDSTAREX	3.88	3.88	4.07	3.88	4.07	0.19	40	1,529,937	6,148,489.50
REGALINS	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.00	1	750,000	375,000.00
ROYALEX	0.78	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.03	9	279,607	226,481.67
RTBRISCOE	6.16	6.16	6.16	6.16	6.16	0.00	44	452,438	2,787,018.00
SCOA	8.71	0.00	0.00	0.00	8.71	0.00	1	1,500	12,420.00
SKYEBANK	7.98	7.73	8.00	7.65	8.00	0.02	177	8,314,445	65,346,328.00
SOVRENINS	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.00	8	1,267,000	633,500.00
SPRINGBANK	1.05	1.03	1.03	1.00	1.00	-0.05	18	1,085,396	1,117,161.50
STACO	0.63	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.03	16	5,164,144	3,408,335.00
STARCOMMS	2.35	2.26	2.40	2.24	2.26	-0.09	36	2,709,608	6,274,136.00
STDINSURE	0.60	0.61	0.63	0.61	0.61	0.01	67	3,987,618	2,468,961.50
STERLNBANK	2.38	2.49	2.49	2.49	2.49	0.11	55	4,833,241	12,034,770.00
TANTALIZER	1.34	1.34	1.35	1.28	1.28	-0.06	37	2,939,064	3,872,376.00
TOTAL	185.87	0.00	0.00	0.00	185.87	0.00	17	6,998	1,300,718.25
TRANSCORP	0.54	0.56	0.56	0.52	0.52	-0.02	43	7,738,730	4,118,527.00
TRIPPLEG	4.37	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.37	0.00	1	6,666	27,730.56
UAC-PROP	26.25	27.00	27.00	27.00	27.00	0.75	20	279,815	7,579,203.50
UACN	54.50	53.73	54.40	53.73	54.28	-0.22	71	987,026	53,333,840.00
UBA	16.70	16.99	16.99	16.00	16.51	-0.19	336	34,542,078	570,003,776.00
UBN	6.14	6.00	6.20	6.00	6.07	-0.07	200	7,077,174	42,897,300.00
UNHOMES	0.99	1.03	1.03	1.03	1.03	0.04	39	2,617,003	2,693,513.00
UNIC	0.94	0.96	0.96	0.90	0.94	0.00	13	622,959	573,063.12
UNILEVER	26.00	27.30	27.30	26.11	26.36	0.36	116	2,804,641	75,455,192.00
UNIONDAC	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.91	0.92	-0.03	63	4,523,014	4,210,280.50
UNITYBNK	1.00	1.00	1.04	0.96	0.96	-0.04	36	3,608,210	3,617,945.25
UNITYKAP	0.63	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	-0.03	2	120,000	72,000.00
UNIVINSURE	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.00	3	156,935	78,467.50
UPL	8.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	8.40	0.00	19	182,868	1,485,284.00
UTC	0.97	1.01	1.01	1.01	1.01	0.04	10	377,447	381,221.47
VITAFAM	7.35	7.50	7.50	7.50	7.50	0.15	35	307,034	2,269,516.00
VONO	0.36	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.56	0.00	1	1,800	1,008.00
WAPCO	45.00	45.00	45.52	44.50	45.00	0.00	70	2,724,263	122,623,752.00
WAPIC	0.93	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.00	1	1,000	960.00
WEMABANK	1.11	1.12	1.14	1.11	1.11	0.00	60	2,391,044	2,686,578.00
ZENITHBANK	15.45	16.22	16.22	15.50	15.50	0.05	1	1,000	68,546,812.00



**THE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF COLLEGE OF NIGERIA
(ASCON)**

P.M.B 1004, Topo Badagry

5TH APRIL, 2010

**INVITATION TO TENDER FOR THE EXECUTION OF CAPITAL
PROJECTS IN THE 2010 ANNUAL BUDGET**

The Administrative Staff College of Nigeria intends to execute some Capital Projects as contained in its 2010 Budget. Consequently, the College is inviting reputable Contractors to tender for the projects as listed below

LIST OF PROJECTS

1. Rehabilitation and Modernization of Training Rooms in ASCON Complex Phase I (Rms. No. 49; 64; and 184)
2. Rehabilitation and Modernization of Training Rooms in ASCON Complex Phase II (Rms No. 5; 6; 7/8; 9 & 10; 22; 26/27; 54; and 56/57)
3. Rehabilitation and Modernization of Training Rooms in the Computer Centre, ASCON Complex Phase II (Rms. No. 1, 2, 3, and 4)
4. Installation of Table Telephone Box in Offices in ASCON Phases I & II
5. Supply and Installation of Telecommunication Cables
6. Supply and Installation of Personal Computers
7. Supply and Management of Bandwith in ASCON, Badagry, and Abuja Liaison Office.
8. Supply and Installation of Note-books
9. Development of Financial, Human Resource, Participants and Library Information System
10. Renewal of Office Accommodation in Block 1, ASCON Phase I
11. Renewal of Office Accommodation in Block 2, ASCON Phase I
12. Renewal of Office Accommodation in Block 3, ASCON Phase I
13. Renewal of Office Accommodation in Block 4, ASCON Phase I
14. Renewal of Office Accommodation in Block A, ASCON Phase II
15. Renewal of Office Accommodation in Block B, ASCON Phase II
16. Renewal of Office Accommodation in Block C, ASCON Phase II
17. Renewal of Office Accommodation in Block D, ASCON Phase II
18. Renewal of Office Accommodation in the Computer Centre
19. Rehabilitation of Gate at ASCON Phase II
20. Reconstruction of Main Gate, ASCON Phase I.
21. Painting of Admin Block Phase I
22. Painting of Admin Block Phase II
23. Painting of Perimeter Fence Phase I
24. Painting of Perimeter Fence Phase II

SCOPE OF WORK/SPECIFICATION

The detailed specifications for the work are contained in the Tender Documents which are available for collection in the Procurement Department of the College. Interested Companies and Organizations are to obtain Tender Documents from the College on payment of a non-refundable fee of **N10,000.00** only.

All intending Contractors are implored to conduct a visit to the projects locations in ASCON, Topo Badagry.

REQUIREMENTS FOR TENDERING

All Tender Documents should be accompanied with the following:

- (i) Company's Certificate of Registration with the Corporate Affairs Commission;
- (ii) Tax Clearance Certificate for the last three years;
- (iii) Evidence of similar works successfully completed in the past;
- (iv) Personnel Profile (Technical and Administration);
- (v) Banker's Statement of Financial Capability;
- (vi) Evidence of VAT Registration and Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN);
- (vii) Evidence of Registration with ASCON;
- (viii) Company official telephone number(s) and e-mail;
- (ix) Name of Company's Banker and Company's Account Number.

SUBMISSION OF TENDERS:

All Tenders should be addressed to:

**The Director-General,
Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON),
P.M.B. 1004, Topo Badagry, Lagos.**

The completed Tenders are to be in sealed envelope and must be dropped in the Tenders Box in the Director-General's Office with the title of the Project boldly written at the top right hand corner of the envelope.

CLOSING DATE

The closing date for submission of Tenders is 12 noon of **14th May, 2010**

CONTRACTORS' SELECTION PROCEDURE

- (i) All submitted Tenders will be opened in the presence of all Tenderers or their representatives a few minutes after 12.00 noon of the closing date **14th May, 2010** at the College Board Room, in Badagry;
- (ii) Where the closing date falls on a work-free day, opening of Tenders shall be on the next working day.

**Signed
Secretary (ASCON Tenders Board)**

5th April, 2010



**THE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF COLLEGE OF NIGERIA
(ASCON)**

P.M.B 1004, Topo Badagry

5TH APRIL, 2010

**INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION OF CONTRACTORS FOR THE
EXECUTION OF CAPITAL PROJECTS IN THE 2010 ANNUAL APPROPRIATION**

The Administrative Staff College of Nigeria is desirous of undertaking a pre-qualification exercise for the Capital Projects under the 2010 Budget.

Consequently, the College hereby invites reputable Contractors to indicate interest to be pre-qualified for the under-listed projects:

LIST OF PROJECTS

1. Sinking of new Boreholes/Construction of Water Treatment Plant
2. Supply and Installation of Sewage Pump/Rehabilitation of Aeration Tanks and the Sewage House
3. Perimeter Fencing and Construction of Gate at ASCON Complex Bwari, Abuja
4. Construction of sixty (60) Bed-Room International Participants Hostel Accommodation
5. Procurement of Toyota 30-Seater Buses including accessories
6. Procurement of Toyota Utility Vehicles including accessories.

PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENT

Interested and competent contractors wishing to carry out any of the above jobs must submit the following documents for verification:

1. Evidence of registration with Corporate Affairs Commission
2. Evidence of registration with ASCON
3. Evidence of payment of tax for the last three (3) years
4. Comprehensive company profile with CV of key personnel
5. Evidence of similar jobs successfully executed or being executed within the last three years of value not less than N50 million, attaching copies of letters of award and successful completion certificates
6. Reference letter from bank stating how much credit line the bank is willing to give to carry out such project(s)
7. Operational strategy
8. Company's registered address, functional contact e-mail address, GSM phone number(s).

SUBMISSION

Applicants are expected to collect a copy of brief to assist in their submission. These documents are to be collected from the Procurement Department of the Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON), Topo Badagry, Lagos.

Application for pre-qualification accompanied by the above listed documents should be forwarded in sealed envelop boldly marked at the top left corner with title of project and addressed to:

**The Director-General,
Administrative Staff College of Nigeria (ASCON),
P.M.B. 1004, Topo Badagry.**

CLOSING DATE

All submissions must be received at the above Office not later than **30th April, 2010**.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

- (a) This is not an invitation to tender. Full tendering procedure will be applied to contractors prequalified and found capable of executing the project
- (b) Nothing in the advert shall be construed to be a commitment on the part of ASCON
- (c) The names of successful pre-qualified contractors will be pasted on the ASCON Notice Boards.

**Signed
Secretary (ASCON Tenders Board)**

5th April, 2010

DIGEST

Revealed: How our fast food culture is making us impatient

EATING fast food makes people impatient even when they are not short of time, a new study claims.

Scoffing takeaway burgers and fries also triggers cravings for instant happiness and reduces the impulse to save money, scientists say.

Students in the study became jittery even when shown the logo of burger chain McDonald's so quickly on screen that they could not recognise it.

Researchers say that daily exposure to fast food brands could have a subliminal effect on behaviour, making people hurry regardless of whether they are pushed for time.

They conclude: 'Our experiments suggest that the unconscious

goal of saving time embedded in fast food may have the unexpected consequence of inducing haste and impatience.

'Thinking about fast food increases preferences for time-saving products.

'More strikingly, we found that the mere exposure to fast food symbols reduced people's willingness to save and led them to prefer immediate gain over greater future return, ultimately harming their economic interest.'

Student volunteers were quickly shown six logos from fast-food chains - McDonald's, Burger King, KFC, Subway, Wendy's and Taco Bell.

They could not consciously see



Eating takeaway burgers and fries triggers cravings for instant happiness, researchers say.

what they were but the subliminal effect was marked.

Their reading speed was measured before and after seeing the logos and it was significantly

faster afterwards.

Participants also preferred time-saving products like three-in-one skincare treatments rather than separate versions

after seeing the logos. When asked whether they would accept a small sum of money immediately or a larger amount in a week's time, they again opted for instant reward after being exposed to the brands.

Researcher Chen-Bo Zhong, assistant professor of organisational behaviour at Canada's Toronto University, said: 'Fast food represents a culture of time efficiency and instant gratification.'

'The problem is that the goal of saving time gets activated upon exposure to fast food regardless of whether time is a relevant factor in the context.'

'For example, walking faster is time-efficient when one is trying to make a meeting, but it's a sign of impatience when one is going for a

“We're finding that the mere exposure to fast food is promoting a general sense of haste”

stroll in the park.

'We're finding that the mere exposure to fast food is promoting a general sense of haste and impatience regardless of the context.'

Colleague Sanford DeVoe said: 'You're constantly confronted by fast food advertising.'

Chronic exposure to it throughout the day is going to have a long-term effect. 'When I sit in a fast food restaurant, I find myself gobbling my Big Mac down at this incredible speed even though there is no rush at all.'

Culled from telegraph.co.uk

Migraine attack gives English woman a Chinese accent



SARAH Colwill, 35, from Plymouth said her new accent is starting to annoy her

A woman suffering from migraines has ended up speaking with a Chinese accent.

Sarah Colwill believes she has Foreign Accent Syndrome (FAS) - a rare condition which causes the sufferer's speech to change.

The 35-year-old, from Plymouth, Devon, has suffered migraines for 10 years. Her condition causes the blood vessels in her brain to expand, resulting in stroke-like symptoms.

She has experienced paralysis down one side of the body for days at a time, but this is the first time her voice has changed.

Sarah who lives with her husband Patrick, said: 'I am frustrated to sound like this. I just want my own voice back and I don't know if I will get it back. I was born in Germany but I moved here when I was 18 months old. I've never been to China.'

Until now Sarah has always spoken like a 'Janner' - a native to Plymouth.

The IT project coordinator said: 'For the first few weeks it was quite funny but to think I am stuck like this - my voice has started to annoy me now. It is not my voice.'

She has been in contact with doctors from the US and Oxford University who are interested in studying what has happened to her.

Foreign Accent Syndrome is still not fully understood. Doctors believe the condition is most commonly triggered by a stroke or head injury, when tiny areas of the brain linked with language, pitch and speech patterns are damaged.

The result is often a drawing out or clipping of the vowels that can sound like an accent from a different country such as China.

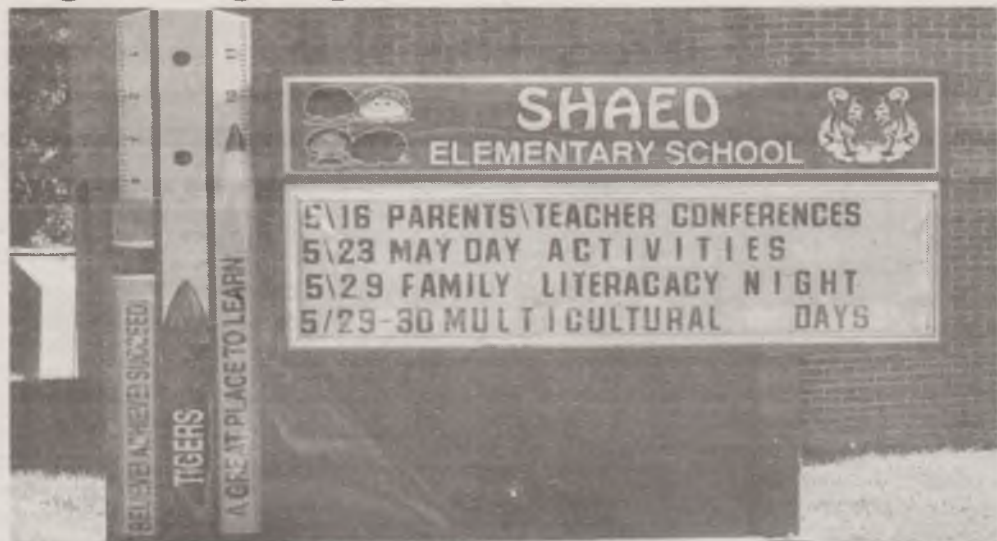
Beautiful torture! The ancient bed of nails is back

THAT old chestnut 'you have to suffer to be beautiful' has never appealed to me. I'd much rather remain average and pain-free. Whenever people talk glowingly about pushing themselves to the limit in neon Lycra or proudly boast 'I couldn't move my face for a week, but it was worth it' of some evil beauty treatment, I struggle to understand how a mild, temporary sense of well-being is a worthwhile pay-off for physical agony.

For me, the whole point of undergoing a health regime is to feel better, not as if you've been stampeded by a herd of angry bullocks. Is this really doing me good? Flic Everett lies on the Bed of Nails - and lasts just 30 seconds. So I'm struggling to understand why anyone in their right mind would want to spend ten seconds, let alone ten minutes, lying on a bed of nails.

Maybe for certain Eastern mystics it's a normal way of life, but as a health regime, I can think of at least 200 easier ways to promote well-being: starting with sleeping and ending with a nice glass of wine.

Sign Language



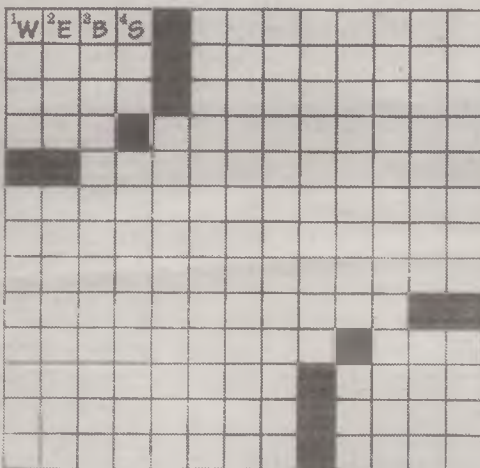
Oga Headmaster, check the spelling of literacy...
 Photo location: Washington, DC, US, by James McCann
 Culled from telegraph.co.uk

DIAGRAMLESS 1

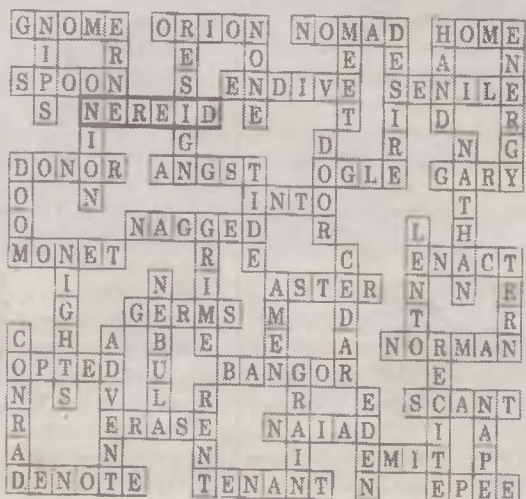
DIAGRAMLESS 1 easy

Puzzle 1 is started for you. Starting boxes are available for the others. Use both the definitions and the definition numbers as aids in supplying the words and the black squares in the diagram. The pattern of black squares in each Diagramless is symmetrical (see below). Insert a number with every starting letter of a word across or down, and a black square at the end of every word.

- | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| ACROSS | 30. Cain and — | DOWN | 26. Light brown |
| 1. Spider homes | 31. Taxi | 1. Cover (gifts) with paper | 27. Time off from work |
| 5. Woolly mama | 32. Angel topper | 2. Alleviate | 28. Like: 2 wds. |
| 8. Eyelid hair | 33. For each | 3. More radiant | 29. Plaything |
| 12. Scarce | 34. Put on | 4. Ocean | 31. Food fish |
| 13. Broadcast | 35. Rot | 5. Enthusiastic | 32. Skirt border |
| 14. Choir member | 36. Marry | 6. Telegram | 34. Sandwich shop |
| 15. A continent | 37. Papa's wife | 7. Epoch | 35. Father |
| 16. Your boy's boy | 38. Thread reel | 8. Serving spoon | 36. Least good |
| 18. Wooden nail | 41. Slumber spot | 9. In addition | 37. Encounters |
| 19. Hive buzzer | 42. Hit — hay | 10. Cease | 38. Leg part |
| 20. 36-Across secretly | 45. Dreadful | 11. Sharpen | 39. Skin opening |
| 21. 60 minutes | 47. Radio knob | 17. Tidy | 40. Mine finds |
| 23. Ma. West | 48. Angers | 19. Burger roll | 41. Seeped (into) |
| 24. Glassy cloth | 49. Up to now | 22. Lubricate | 43. Difficult |
| 26. Young child | 50. New — City | 23. Unruly crowd | 44. Deer kin |
| 27. Large tub | 51. Bird's abode | 24. Tree fluid | 46. "Farewell!" |
| | 52. Asner and McMahon | 25. Lincoln's nickname | 47. Color (hair) |
| | 53. Final parts | | |



SOLUTION TO KRISS KROSS



6

SUDOKU

The Sudoku puzzle consists of a 9x9 square grid made up of smaller 3x3 square grids (regions). The numbers already present within the puzzle are "given"- these are there to start you off. The aim is to complete the puzzle by filling the empty cells. Every digit from 1-9 needs to fit in each row, column and region of 9 squares. Each row, column and region must contain just one instance of each number, 1-9.

131

7		3	4					9
6			8			1		
						8	2	7
	7		9	5				
	2			7				8
					6	4		5
2	4	8						
			1			9		4
5						2	6	8

Solution to Sudoku 130

8	5	3	7	2	4	9	6	1
6	9	7	5	1	3	4	8	2
4	2	1	6	8	9	7	3	5
5	3	9	2	6	7	8	1	4
1	6	2	4	3	8	5	7	9
7	8	4	9	5	1	6	2	3
3	4	5	1	7	6	2	9	8
2	1	6	8	9	5	3	4	7
9	7	8	3	4	2	1	5	6

News Extra

Lookout, it's coming right behind you!

... Wall of black fog covers Iceland



IT'S behind you: Motorists escape the smoke and ash rising up from the Eyjafjallajokull volcano

ated an eerie spectacle. Almost completely blocking out an otherwise blue sky, the cloud resembled a tornado as it swept across the landscape. On remote farms, animals, houses and nearby mountain ranges were coated in grey as the wall of fog moved across the sky, creating the impression it was the middle of the night.

As the fog moved in, farmers lured their animals to safety amid fears they would be poisoned by eating or drinking volcanic ash.

'The biggest problem is that the roads have been destroyed so the milk can't be collected. We can only stock a certain amount on the farm; if the roads aren't repaired soon, we will have to throw it away.'

The ash is still falling thickly; it's difficult to see through it. But it could change direction for the north, which would move it away from the farms.'

'Our biggest fear is the floods. They could come at any moment. Our land hasn't been damaged yet, but some of our neighbours' has.'

Dark, menacing and showing no signs of abating, this is the apocalyptic-

style scene that has simultaneously captivated and terrified locals at the heart of Iceland's volcanic eruption.

As people in Britain and the

rest of Europe are caught up with the unprecedented travel chaos caused by the eruption, those in Iceland are living with blankets of ash falling from

the sky and fears of volcanic floods. This stunning series of images shows how the black volcanic fog that has wreaked havoc across Europe has cre-



DARKNESS falls: A farm is shrouded in black as the volcanic cloud spreads across Iceland



TAKING cover: Farmer Thorarinn Olafsson tries to lure his horses back to the stable as a cloud of black ash looms

News Extra

Richest American presidents

George Washington (1789-97)

Source of Wealth: inheritance, plantations

On the Money: \$1b, quarter

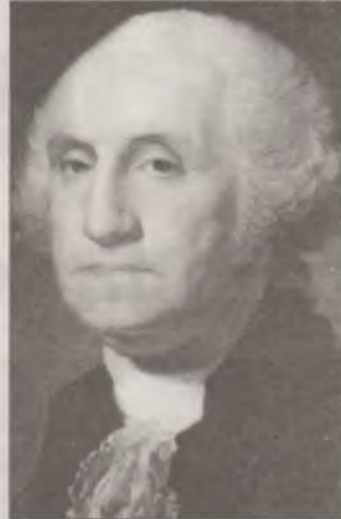
The first president was also likely the richest in relative terms, perhaps the only commander in chief of his day who would have made the Forbes 400 Richest in America. Washington came from a wealthy planter family, and then married the widow Martha Dandridge Custis, who was also extremely rich. Washington's wealth was one of the reasons he was called on to lead the American Revolution—his military and political acumen was a bonus. Like many planters, Washington could be cash poor, and according to Robert F. Jones, author of *George Washington: Ordinary Man, Extraordinary Leader*, he lost money while president, spending more on housing and entertainment than his \$25,000 presidential salary.



ANDREW Jackson



FRANKLIN Roosevelt



GEORGE Washington



HERBERT Hoover



JOHN F Kennedy



THEODORE Roosevelt



THOMAS Jefferson

Thomas Jefferson (1801-09)

Source of Wealth: inheritance, plantations

On the Money: \$2b, nickel

Jefferson is a tough case because, while he was born rich and lived extremely well—he died broke. Jefferson was born into one of the Virginia colony's most distinguished families—only one man in Albemarle County, where he lived at Monticello, owned more slaves than he did. As a young lawyer, his clients included some of the leading families in the colony. On the other hand, "His plantations were rarely profitable and his income as a lawyer in the 1770s fluctuated between \$1,000 and \$1,800 a year," says Lucia Stanton, a historian at the Jefferson Home at Monticello. He was considered one of the 100 richest

men in Virginia (a 1954 *William and Mary Quarterly* article placed him "about" 28), though not in George Washington's league. As to his nagging debts, Pessen says: "These...were the debts of a hugely rich man Washington's estate was valued in excess of \$500,000. His main plantation at Mount Vernon had 300 slaves.

Andrew Jackson (1829-37)

Source of Wealth: land speculation, plantations

On the Money: \$20b

Although "Old Hickory" was widely regarded as a commoner and backwoodsman, Jackson was in fact one of the richest presidents of the 19th century, says Blessing. Jackson's father died before he was born and he was raised by a well-off uncle before becoming a lawyer and earning a large fortune in real estate. He fell into debt early in his adulthood, but later owned 150 slaves at his primary plantation. He owned a racetrack and was a successful gambler, says Andrew Burstein, author of *The Passions of Andrew Jackson*. But the bases of his fortune were land deals that came to him in his capacity as a U.S. Army general. He and his army buddies were involved in negotiating the cession of land by Indians. "Then they went about [buying and] developing those lands," Burstein says. Even people close to Jackson raised eyebrows. "But it was part



ZACHARY Taylor

of the political atmosphere back then" and it didn't hurt his political career.

Zachary Taylor (1849-50)

Source of Wealth: Inheritance, plantations

The 12th president, a general like Jackson, was descended from the Mayflower pilgrims and was second cousin to President James Madison. His family was a major landowner in Mississippi, Louisiana and Kentucky. Though he was a career army officer and a hero of the Mexican War, he also attended to his cotton plantations. He died in office in 1850.

Theodore Roosevelt (1901-

09)

Source of Wealth: Inheritance

Roosevelt's family was among the first settlers in Dutch New York and his grandfather Cornelius Van Schaack Roosevelt was one of the wealthiest merchants and bankers in New York City during the mid-19th century. But Roosevelt scholars note that by the 1870s, the industrial revolution had changed all the rules and people like William Henry Vanderbilt far outdistanced the Roosevelts. T.R.'s parents both died by the time he was in his early 20s and he spent his life either in public service or working as an author and rancher. As a result, T.R. was much less well off than his cousins and many of his friends, says John Gable, executive director of the Theodore Roosevelt Association. Nonetheless, his inheritance allowed him a substantial income of \$8,000 per year, enough to support a large home and servants, but not enough for a townhouse in Manhattan. T.R. lost much of his fortune before he was president in an ill-fated ranching venture in the Dakota Territories.

Herbert Hoover (1929-33)

Source of Wealth: mining, investments

Hoover was probably the most successful businessman among the presidents and one of the wealthiest. An orphan, he was raised by his uncle, a doctor and

“ T.R. lost much of his fortune before he was president in an ill-fated ranching venture in the Dakota Territories

school principal in Oregon. At Stanford University, he excelled in geology. After graduation, Hoover held a series of increasingly senior jobs with mining consulting firms outside of the U.S., which eventually allowed him to invest directly in mining properties. By 1908, he was earning \$100,000 per year, says Gorge H. Nash, author of the three-volume *Life of Herbert Hoover*. By World War I, when he was just 40, he was worth somewhere between \$1 million and \$5 million, Nash says. When war broke out, he began to devote himself to public life, turning down even more lucrative job offers. The future president worked without salary as head of the Commission for Relief in Belgium. While serving as secretary of commerce and president, Hoover donated his salary to charity, according to Timothy Walsh, director of the Herbert Hoover Library in West Branch, Iowa. Hoover worked hard as an author to pay his bills.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1933-45)

Source of Wealth: Inheritance

A distant cousin of Theodore, FDR came from an old money New York family. His father was an investor; his mother was the heir to a China trade fortune. FDR was an only child raised in grand

“ LBJ laid the Texas good ol' boy routine on pretty thick, but he was an extremely wealthy man—one who earned his fortune entirely while he was in public life

Cont'd on page 39

News Extra



THE first president of the US George Washington

Fine owed by George Washington for overdue library books now N45m

First president of US failed to return two volumes borrowed in 1789 from New York Society Library

Founder of a nation, trouncer of the English, God-fearing family man: all in all, George Washington has enjoyed a pretty decent reputation. Until now, that is.

The hero who crossed the Delaware river may not have been quite so squeaky clean when it came to borrowing library books.

The New York Society Library, the city's only lender of books at the time of Washington's presidency, has revealed that the first American president took out two volumes and pointedly failed to return them.

At today's prices, adjusted for inflation, he would face a late fine of \$300,000 (about N45 million).

The library's ledgers show that Washington took out the books on 5 October 1789, some five months into his presidency at a time when New York was still the capital. They were an essay on international

“At today's prices, adjusted for inflation, he would face a late fine of \$300,000 (about N45 million).”

affairs called Law of Nations and the twelfth volume of a 14-volume collection of debates from the English House of Commons.

The ledger simply referred to the borrower as “President” in quill pen, and had no return date.

Sure enough, when the librarians checked their holdings they

found all 14 volumes of the Commons debates bar volume 12.

Under the rules of the library, the books should have been handed back by 2 November that same year, and their borrower and presumably his descendants have been liable to fines of a few cents a day ever since.

Other prominent borrowers who used the collection did not appear to have the same problems with returning titles.

The first treasury secretary, Alexander Hamilton, the first chief justice, John Jay, and Thomas Jefferson's vice-president, Aaron Burr, are all listed in the ledger under both borrowing and return dates.

“We're not actively pursuing the overdue fines,” the head librarian Mark Bartlett said. “But we would be very happy if we were able to get the books back.”

Culled from guardian.co.uk

Richest American presidents

Cont'd from page 38

style in Hyde Park, N.Y., Manhattan and Campobello Island off the coast of Canada. Though a mediocre student, he attended Harvard and Columbia Law School. He quit law school before graduation, but passed the New York bar exam and joined a Wall Street law firm. The work bored him. FDR was elected to the New York State Senate at age 28. His wife Eleanor was T.R.'s niece. Because his mother lived until 1941, FDR never controlled the family fortune. But he was certainly able to tap it. Roosevelt died at age 63 in 1945, leaving a personal estate.

John F. Kennedy (1961-63)

Source of Wealth: inheritance

Kennedy's father Joseph was the son of a successful bar owner and sometime bank organizer who became one of the wealthiest people in the U.S. with interests in banking, movies, liquor and investing. He became the first chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission and aimed his son even higher. JFK studied business at Stanford but left to serve in World War II. His status as a war hero and his father's fortune led to his becoming the youngest elected president. JFK was notorious for going around with no money, and his pals who chipped in for him knew to send the bills to Joe's office, says Gil Troy, author of Mr. and Mrs. President: From the Trumans to the Clintons. He also had a large income from trust funds. Like Hoover, he donated his presidential salary to charity. Because his parents were alive when he was assassinated, he never inherited even a piece of the family fortune, which we estimated at its height in 1990 to be about \$850 million-valued at just north of \$1 million

Lyndon B. Johnson (1963-69)

Source of Wealth: TV and radio stations, real estate

LBJ laid the Texas good ol' boy routine on pretty thick, but he was an extremely wealthy man—one who earned his fortune entirely

while he was in public life. LBJ's father Sam was a prosperous farmer and businessman (and state legislator) who lost most of his fortune when the future president was 13. LBJ worked briefly as a school teacher, but entered politics at age 23. By the time he was president, he had a reported \$14 million fortune. Part of the money was from Texas land deals says Robert Dallek, author of Lone Star Rising: Lyndon Johnson and His Times 1908-1960. The key, however, was his wife's purchase in 1943 of KTBC, a radio and television station in Austin, Tex. The station—which for years was the only TV station in Austin—prospered and there was plenty of speculation that Senator Johnson pressured the Federal Communications Commission to keep KTBC the only game in town.

George W. Bush (2001-2009)

Source of Wealth: inheritance, baseball

The 43rd president is only the second son of a president to be elected to the office (John Quincy Adams was the first; Benjamin Harrison was the grandson of William Henry Harrison.) The Bush family money goes way back, says Herbert Parmet, author of George Bush: The Life of a Lone Star Yankee, but in recent generations the key figure was George Herbert Walker—called Uncle Herbie by the clan—an investment banker from St. Louis. (Prescott Bush, the current president's grandfather, was also an investment banker before being elected to the U.S. Senate.) Walker's firm, G.H. Walker & Co., bankrolled Bush Sr.'s oil venture in Texas. By the time he became vice president in 1980, the father's fortune was somewhere between \$2 million to \$4 million. George W., the first MBA president, was much wealthier than his father upon entering the White House—primarily on the strength of the roughly \$15 million he cleared on the sale of his shares in the Texas Rangers (initial investment: \$605,000).

“George W., the first MBA president, was much wealthier than his father upon entering the White House—primarily on the strength of the roughly \$15 million he cleared on the sale of his shares in the Texas Rangers (initial investment: \$605,000).”

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China quake death toll nears 2,000

THE official death toll from an earthquake on China's remote Tibetan plateau on Wednesday reached 1,944 on Monday, but rescuers dug out two more survivors who had been trapped under rubble for more than 100 hours.

Another 216 people are listed as missing after the quake struck, the official Xinhua news agency said, although rescue operations across the ruined town of Gyegu in Qinghai province's Yushu country were being scaled down as the focus shifted to aid distribution.

Tents, food and water were being delivered to quake victims across the county seat of Gyegu, as well as further into the mountainous region.

President Hu Jintao flew to Yushu over the weekend to comfort survivors and examine relief distribution.

Hu vowed to rebuild homes and schools, and urged continued efforts to save anyone still alive under the crumpled remains of buildings.

In a rare moment of hope, rescuers pulled two people alive from a wrecked building after spending 123 hours trapped in the rubble, state television said. Taiwan's Red Cross Society sent a 20-person medical relief team to Qinghai on Sunday to help quake survivors with expertise and supplies, a Red Cross official said on Monday.

Many tents have been set up in the open areas of the city, including Gyegu's main square, a sports ground and a horse-racing track.

Military troops and Buddhist monks are providing meals for the victims and medical teams are on hand.

The harsh conditions on the Tibetan plateau, Gyegu is about 4,000 metres above sea level and temperatures drop below freezing at night and strong winds are frequent.

Cold, snowy weather is forecast for the next few days.

In heavily Tibetan neighbourhoods of town, some quake survivors said they still largely had to fend for themselves, gathering food and water and building their own makeshift tents. (Reuters/NAN)

Revive environmental health services, Emir urges govts

THE Emir of Ningi in Bauchi State, Alhaji Yunusa Danyaya, has called on the three tiers of government to revive the services of environmental health officers (EHOs).

Danyaya made the call on Monday in Abakaliki at a mandatory continuing education programme for environmental health officers organised by the Environmental Health Officers Registration Council of Nigeria (EHORECON).

Danyaya, who is also the Chairman of EHORECON, was represented by Chief Anthony Ezekwesili, a member of the council.

He noted that the neglect of the services and practice of the health officers by the various tiers of government had resulted to the "drastic" deterioration of the environment.

"It used to be a common sight during the colonial and post-colonial era to see sanitary inspectors moving from place to place and house to house enforc-

ing environmental health standards.

"This age old activity which kept many diseases at bay has been neglected by many succeeding governments and the society over the years.

"To worsen the situation, many states and local governments have for many years placed embargo on the employment of environmental health officers.

"This situation has given rise to the prevalence of preventable diseases such as diarrhoea, lassa fever and malaria, among others," he said.

The chairman therefore urged governments at various levels to "massively employ, train and empower" more EHOs to enable them to contribute to the achievement of the MDGs.

"The general public is looking forward to seeing them on the streets again, doing what they know best, which is monitoring the health of our environment," he said. (NAN)

Kwara residents tasked on flooding

From Mustafa Abubakar, Ilorin

AS the rain sets in, the people of Kwara State have been advised to take measures to prevent flooding during the raining season.

The Special Adviser to the State Government on Emergency and Relief Services, Alhaji Suleiman Yusuf, made the call while featuring on a Radio Kwara accountability programme, "SCORE CARD".

He noted that disasters sometimes do not naturally occur but caused as a result of man-made activities and carelessness.

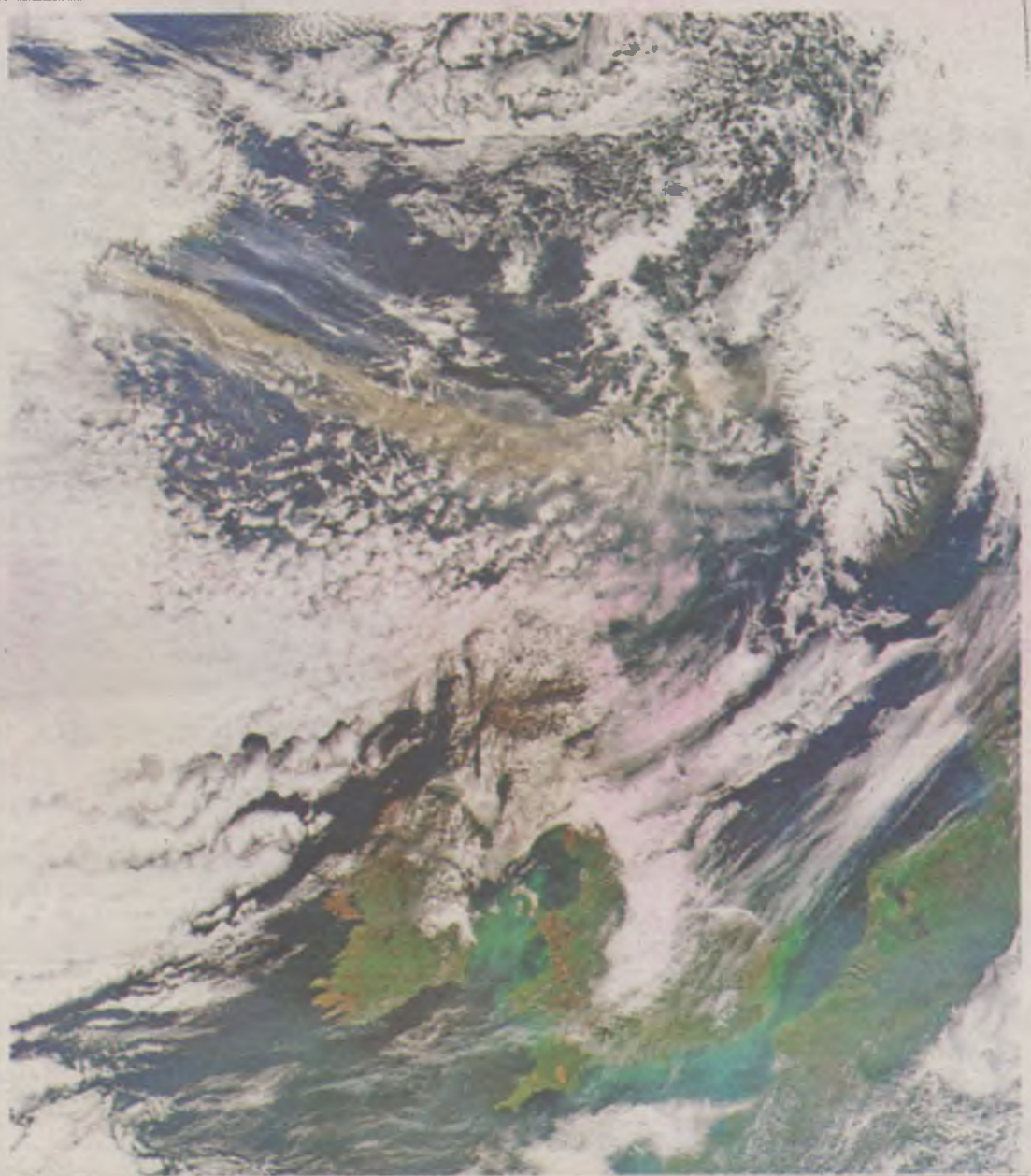
The Special Adviser enjoined people residing along river banks areas, especially Asa River,

to vacate the areas in order to prevent flood disaster and waste of valuable materials.

Alhaji Yusuf who commended Governor Abubakar Bukola Saraki for his magnanimity to the people of the State, advised the people to be safety conscious and always switch off all electrical appliances when not in use.

Adding that, over fifty million naira has been spent in the last four months in the State on relief materials.

He therefore advised people who were genuinely affected by disaster to report such incident with evidence, in order to receive aids from government.



AN image recorded by NASA's Terra satellite shows the volcanic ash plume stretching from Iceland to the north of Britain

Agency, NGO partner on refuse evacuation in Kano

From Jaafar Jaafar, Kano

KANO State's Refuse Management and Sanitation Board (REMSAB) and members of Active Citizens Programme, Kano are partnering toward evacuation of refuse in Dala local government area of the state.

Active Citizens Programme is an initiative of British Council that is aimed at building trust and understanding in local and global communities.

Speaking during an advocacy visit paid by the members of Active Citizens to the board, the leader of the delegation, Ambassador Auwalu Alhassan, said Dala

Local Government is part of the programme's Social Action Project centres and they found it imperative to partner with the board toward evacuating a dumpsite at Dayi area of the local government.

Ambassador Alhassan said people of the Dayi area were battling with the refuse, which completely blocked the access road of the area. "People are finding it difficult to pass through the area because the heap of refuse has completely blocked the road," he said.

The team leader noted that during their Need Assessment Survey, they learnt that REMASAB regularly evacuates refuse from the area

but because of the absence of alternative dumpsites, the residents of the area resort to dumping garbage on the road.

While calling on the board to, as a matter of urgency, help clear the dumpsite, Ambassador Alhassan said after the evacuation, Active Citizens would plant seedlings, erect caution sign posts and fix the road and drainages in the area.

In his response, the acting managing director of REMASAB, Engineer Isma'il Bello, applauded the efforts of Active Citizens, saying it was statutory and obligatory duty of the board to evacuate refuse in the state.

Environment



environment@dailytrust.com

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FLORA at the Abuja Millennium Park

'Indoor air pollution major cause of death in Nigeria'

INDOOR air pollution from the use of fire wood is a major cause of death in Nigeria after malaria, according to an NGO boss.

Mr Ewah Eleri, the Executive Director, International Centre for Energy, Environment and Development (ICEED), made the assertion in an interview in Abuja on Monday.

Eleri said: "Apart from malaria, I don't see any other source that claims people's lives in Nigeria more than fire wood cooking."

"Wood cooking is taking so much of our people's lives and women and children are more vulnerable because they go to the kitchen regularly."

He cited a WHO report published in 2007 as indicating that Nigeria recorded 79,000 deaths annually, attributable to solid fuel use.

"Globally, reliance on solid fuels is one of the 10 most important threats to public health," the report stated.

He said that a survey by ICEED on the use of firewood in urban centres, revealed that 54 per cent of Abuja residents depended on fire wood for domestic cooking.

This finding, he said was contrary to the popular belief that fire wood use was only by rural households.

"Today firewood has become a major source of domestic energy for the urban population with its health implication," he said.

Eleri described the problem as a "silent energy crisis" which has far-reaching consequences on human health and the environment if not adequately addressed.

He noted that wood energy constituted 90 per cent of household energy use and the demand for it far outstripped supply, resulting in rising prices.

Eleri, who is also a director in the Nigeria Climate Action Network (Nigeriacan), an NGO, has called for a domestic action plan to respond appropriately to the global climate change menace. (NAN)

Three killed in mining pit

THREE employees of an international mining company operating in the Komu area of Oyo State have been reportedly killed by gaseous fumes from the exhaust of a water pumping machine while working in a mining pit.

Ms Olabisi Okuwobi, the spokeswoman for the Oyo State Police Command, said in Ibadan that the firm's Chief Security Officer, Mr Sunday Timkat, reported the incident to the police.

Okuwobi said Timkat had reported that some of the employees of the company, with its headquarters in Abuja, were evacuating water from the mining pit when they were suffocated by fumes.

"Timkat said that during the process, one of them, Nuhu Idris, 35, who entered the pit last was the first to be brought out dead after he suffocated as a result of the intake of gaseous fumes from the exhaust of the water pumping machine," Okuwobi

said.

She added that two other labourers, Lucky Monday, 28 and Alhaji Ibrahim Albert, 30, also died of suffocation.

The spokeswoman said investigation had shown that there was no foul play and added that the police had interrogated relatives and friends of the deceased.

Okuwobi said the remains of the three labourers had been deposited at the General Hospital, Iseyin. (NAN)

FG to consider nuclear technology in checking marine pollution

By Mustapha Suleiman

MINISTER of Environment, Mr. John Odey has said that the Ministry is considering application of nuclear technology to control marine pollution.

He made this remark when he received Director General, Nigeria Atomic Energy Commission Dr. Erepano Osaisai at the ministry's headquarters in Abuja yesterday.

Mr. Odey noted that in achieving this aim

discussions are being held with experts while the training of staff will be undertaken. He also said that the Ministry will continue to collaborate with government agencies as well as other stakeholders in order to ensure the success of the project.

He added that action plan will be put in place to facilitate its implementation.

Earlier, Dr. Osaisai said that his visit was to establish a working partnership with the Ministry on the issue of marine pollution

control.

He said that Nigeria has been picked alongside some African countries by the International Atomic Agency to partner with its agency on marine pollution control and the Ministry of Environment is the appropriate government agency to work with.

Dr. Osaisai expressed optimism that the ministry will facilitate the partnership for its early take-off.

Environmentalists task oil firms on gas flare, oil spill

AN NGO, the Network for Safe and Secure Environment (NESE), has renewed the call for oil companies to accept responsibility for the negative impact of their operations on the environment.

Mr Bob Okon, the Programme Director of the organisation based in Eket, Akwa Ibom, who made the call in an interview in Eket, said oil companies were not environment friendly, as oil-bearing communities were exposed to the negative effects of oil exploitation because there were no projects in such areas to protect the environment.

Okon said oil spills and gas flare were the most unfriendly acts to the environment perpetrated by the oil industry.

"NESE has noted with dismay the lip service paid by

oil industry stakeholders to environmental matters in our neighbourhood.

"The oil companies neglect the environment in the discharge of their corporate social responsibility and community development programmes.

"It is unfortunate that even when the National Oil Spills Detection and Response Agency (NOSDRA) instructed Mobil to clean up the recent spill, the company still remained adamant.

"They expose the environment and community to pollution from crude oil. We urge NOSDRA to wield the big stick and sanction Mobil to send the right signal to other oil firms," Okon said.

He said Mobil's host community in Ibeno, also in Akwa

Ibom, had sustained oil operations for more than 40 years without any conservation efforts.

According to him, oil spill clean-up without remediation work is incomplete.

"Most times the funds set aside for the environment do not benefit the environment; rather the people benefit from it and they do not give back anything to the goose that lays the golden egg.

"When oil spill compensation is paid, the people take the money and it ends in their pockets" he said.

The NGO also said that oil companies operating in Akwa Ibom should undertake conservation projects and remediation work to restore the environment to its natural state. (NAN)

Environment



environment@dailytrust.com

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LG boss promises clean environment

From Johnkennedy Uzoma, Owerri

THE Sole Administrator of Aboh Mbaise local government council, Mr. Ikay Njoku, has assured of making a clean environment the council's top priority during his tenure.

Njoku while chatting with Daily Trust in his office said that every council worker must be made to face the challenges of keeping the environment clean all the time

to ensure healthy living of the people.

He said that since his assumption and with the cooperation of the staff and workers of the council the premises have started wearing a new look.

He assured the determination of administration to complete all projects embarked upon to give the people a new lease of life. Some of the projects, according to the chairman, include the internal roads in the three blocks that make up the council, erection of health centre, water

schemes among others.

He said that the council would undertake some of the projects in partnership with the Imo Rural Road Maintenance Agency (IRROMA) which is a state government agency to ensure they are completed on time.

He regretted over the poor state of rural roads in the area assuring that his administration would ensure the upliftment of the area within the shortest period of his stay as council chairman.

Landlady faces jail term over poor hygiene

THE Mushin Customary Court in Lagos on Friday sentenced a landlady at Bakare Street, Mushin, to two months' imprisonment for poor environment sanitation.

The President of the court, Dr Abayomi Ipaye, sentenced 61-year-old Mrs Risikat Makinde of No. 34, Bakare St. after she pleaded guilty to poor hygiene in her compound.

Ipaye, however, gave the landlady an option of N5,000 fine.

The landlady admitted that she did not carry out proper maintenance of the building but promised to rehabilitate it soon.

The Mushin Local Government Sanitation Officer, Mr Raji Rasak, had said that Makinde's bungalow with more than 22 rooms lacked good toilets, kitchen and bathrooms.

Razak said the building's floors and walls were cracked and that the building had become an environmental nuisance.

The sanitation officer said Makinde contravened section 6 of the Lagos State Environmental Health Law. (NAN)



A skydiver pulled off an amazing stunt when he climbed out from the cockpit of a glider and crawled along the wing - then somersaulted under the wing and stepped onto the wing of a second glider travelling below. He then moved back onto the main fuselage of the second glider while the first rider turned upside down and flew overhead so that the skydiver could reach up and form a human link between the two planes. The spectacular stunt was carried out by Salzburg skydiver Paul Steiner 2,100 metres in the air with both gliders travelling at 100 miles an hour above the mountains in Styria, Austria

Impact of human activities on the environment

By Ibrahim Jirgi

ENVIRONMENTAL degradation is one of the fastest ecological menaces affecting human environments, particularly in the Sub-Saharan Africa. Available records have shown that hundreds and thousands of houses, farmlands and business premises have been lost to calamities caused by environmental degradation in the sub-Saharan Africa over the recent years.

Investigations also revealed that the growing human activities cause more serious damages to the environment. Man's activities like roads and building construction works have far-reaching effects on the environment. Others include bush burning, industrial activities, etc.

For example, the people in the Niger Delta region have been complaining bitterly and violently about the perennial degradation of their environment as a result of oil exploration activities in that region. Such industrial exploration affects fertility of farmland, air and water pollution, destruction of fishes and other aquatic animals, erosion, etc. It is said that up until now, gas flaring, with its toxic effects on the environment cannot be stopped by the Nigerian government five decades after the discovery and exploration of oil at industrial scale.

Experts say that gas flaring is a major contributor to the global warming and Nigeria is one of the countries that contribute to global warming. The United Nations and regional bodies have been launching vigorous campaign to stop global warming which is as a result of the ozone layer covering the face of the sun in order to prevent

direct heat of the sun against the earth.

Man has damaged the earth gradually over the years and this damage is now difficult to correct. For example, hedgerows have been destroyed but now people have realized what effects this has on the environment. The governments are paying farmers to replant them instead of just fencing.

However, not all of man's effects on the environment are harmful, some are beneficial. Conservation work is going on across the country and this is helping to preserve the wildlife and country side that we have left. The expanding human population has placed a huge demand on the food production of the country. The resources are limited but the population is increasing quite rapidly and so, the challenges is equally growing.

Researchers also indicate that man has had many far-reaching effects on the environment over the years. Global warming, pollution and the damage to the ozone layer are a few of the major things that can be heard about in the news.

The addition of certain pollutants like the carbon dioxide gases increases the temperature of the earth. These gases remain close to the surface of earth, forming an insulating layer. The surface becomes hot due to the solar radiations. This radiation is normally reflected back into the space. However, due to the presence of the insulating layer the heat remains within the earth's atmosphere and increases its temperature. The reduction in the forest cover also contributes to the heating of earth. This is called global warming.

Such human activities affect farmlands

thereby denying people in the rural areas their traditional occupation - farming.

It is quite disturbing to note that in several communities in Nigeria, human activities have added to gully erosions. For example, in Jos, Plateau State capital, there are gullies at the outskirts of the town where constant artisanal activities of miners have been going on for years. Also, in some parts of Kaduna, Oyo, Ondo, Nasarawa and other states, digging of soil in search of gold, diamond and other previous natural resources have created artificial waterlog.

In virtually most of the rural communities across Nigeria, activities of traditional system of building houses have equally contributed to environmental degradation. It is a common sight that people dig sand beside, in front as well as at the back of their houses, or neighbours' compound, in order to moulds and block for building of traditional houses during the dry season. However, by the time rainy season comes and it starts pouring down, holes from where sand is dug become water logged.

Often times, such water collected overflow and stream down into compounds of the entire villages thereby leading to house collapse. In instances, where the flooding is strong enough, people can be swept away and drowned.

The impact of flood can be terrible, be it man-made or natural flood. Although it was a natural occurrence, last week, a flood disaster swept through Damaturu, the Yobe State capital. According to reports, about 1,000 persons were rendered homeless, and property estimated at N200 million were destroyed.

Artificial desertification is also a major

factor in the destruction of our environment. This occurs through deaf forestation - cutting down of trees and burning of bush, construction of highway in the forest, construction of estate for human residence etc. These are familiar activities in our society and they are capable of causing serious harm to natural habitat.

In the last World Environment Day, which was marked in June, the Federal Government of Nigeria, in conjunction with the United Nations Environment Programme, had called for a need for an action on environmental protection.

At the Federal Capital city, Abuja, effort is being made to make Abuja green with tree planting campaign. Early this year, the FCT special committee chairman on tree planting, retired General T.Y. Danjuma, led a team which comprised members of the committee on tree planting exercise, especially in the Abuja metropolis.

It is interesting that in order to avert the perennial desert advancement in Northern Nigeria, there is an annual tree planting exercise. The exercise is designed to sensitise members of the public on the need for the tree planting, always at homes, working places and schools.

Other aspects of the campaign is to discourage tree felling by timber companies, electric poles, fire wood and several other uses. Tree planting is useful in the preservation of the ecosystem. Apart from beautifying the environment, improving natural setting, it also help in tackling the challenges of erosion.

Ibrahim Jirgi is MD/CEO Triple Cee Media.

HEALTH REPORT

Herbal medicines more effective than orthodox -expert

From Chris Agabi, Lagos

HERBAL medicines are natural and heal human beings better, compared to orthodox medicines, an herbal medicine expert, Olajuwon Okubena, the managing director Health Forever Product Limited has said.

The herbal researcher whose company produces Jobelyn range of products consumed widely in Nigeria, Europe and America noted that the best way to take care of a body is through natural process.

Herbal medicine is a form of alternative treatment that includes the use of different plants and plant extracts. It is one of the effective and safe treatment options, used to treat various ailments.

Speaking during the launch of Jobelyn new range of products in Lagos, Okubena said that herbal medicine also known as alternative medicine, is used to prevent and treat various ailments because various herbs are known for having amazing medicinal properties.

He noted that herbal medicine is one of the oldest forms of health care and is still gaining potency even in the face of orthodox medicines adding that in most countries, people now have a right to choose the form of medicine they prefer - herbal or orthodox even hospitals.

He added over 80 percent of humanity now use herbal medicines particularly in the third world countries.

His herbal medicines he said are taken from Sorghum bicolor and blended into forms of tablets, extracts, teas, essential oils or ointments.

He said his products have been tested and found to be effective for treatment of skin diseases, malaria, asthma, fibroid and cough among other ailments

According to him, his products are also effective to boost the immune system and improve blood supply and quality.

He listed some of his products to include, Abaleria, Asthmacare, Benabaotic, Bena cough Syrup, Benalex, Benafeb, Bena soap and Erect Aid.

Others include, Fibroton, Flobotic, Joblyn, Gornocure, Haemotonic, Hepacare, Holisa, Lumbicare, Sipiherp, Slim and Smart.

He said Jobelyn is produced under strict GMP standards and each batch tested for purity and efficacy. Its newest range of products he said are useful to build the immune system.

"Jobelyn blood builder formula support blood cell production, vessel integrity and promote healthy cholesterol levels.



NATIONAL President, Association of Medical Laboratory Scientists of Nigeria (AMLSN), Mr. Manason Rubianu (M.) flanked by his 1st Vice President, Dr. Okara Godswill Okara (R.) and chairman of the association Mr. Igwe Sunday during a Press briefing.

HIV/AIDS message spreads on Sokoto farms

Rakiya A. Muhammad, Sokoto.

SPREADING the HIV/AIDS message and not the virus has been a crusade many have emphasized, but how understood is the message and comprehended by Nigerians is yet to be ascertained, since the number of persons infected is still high.

In order to ensure farmers in Sokoto state are adequately equipped with the requisite information to check the spread of the dreaded disease, the HIV/AIDS Campaign was taken to them to build their capacity on the issue.

Mr. Agamah Enebi Solomon is the Project Manager of the HIV/AIDS campaign for Farmers and Agricultural workers, a project sponsored by National AIDS Control Agency, (NACA) and World Bank.

He says "what we have done here is to train group leaders that will now carry this campaign to their people to ensure sustainability of the project."

Primarily, three local governments in Sokoto state namely Bodinga, Goronyo and Sokoto North were selected wherein 12 field workers would for six months preach the campaign to farms, markets and homes of the farmers.

For each of the local government, six males and six females' field workers were involved to ensure gender balance.

But there have been some challenges in trying to get the message across to the farmers.

Mr. Solomon explains they were faced with some cultural challenges because certain issues especially pertaining sexualities were not openly discussed.

He enumerated some of the other challenges to include the level of literacy, saying, "lot of people cannot read and write but the way we trying to surmount this is to actually write the messages in Hausa and Aljami and that has improved the number of people that can read the message."

Thirdly, the Project Manager notes "you find out that people have constraints like loans, fertilizers, which they table when we speak about the HIV/AIDS message, they are also interested in other programmes which to me proves that what we are trying to do is right, because we are trying integrate the agricultural programmes and the HIV/AIDS message."

"The clear message is that the HIV/AIDS message is better and more effec-

tively communicated if you mix it with the other agric programmes."

According to him when the messages are integrated like say, HIV/AIDS and agriculture, the desired result are achieved from the indigenes, saying that putting the messages alongside the vocation of the farmers makes them interested and involved in the programme.

Nonetheless, the key information passed to the farmers is that they should first and foremost get tested and know their status.

At a forum for the farmers, Malam Nasiru Yahaya Isa, the Project Manager Sokoto State Agency for the Control of HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Leprosy, speaks on the basic facts about HIV/AIDS which current prevalence rate in Nigeria at 4.6 percent and in Sokoto about 6.0 percent based on the survey conducted in 2008 by the Federal ministry of Health.

He explains that what was used for the prevalence rates was ANC clients, that is the pregnant women who attend anti-natal clinic.

"These are women who could be married to farmers, a businessman, a tailor, a commissioner, a public servant, it cut across all strata of the society and form a representative sample of the society" Isa notes.

One alarming thing, according to him, is that some of the women may be married to somebody that has two or three additional wives, which makes them about five that could be positive.

He therefore harps on the need to always do pre-marital screening before marriage noting that it is only when one is screened that he/she will be able to know his status, whether positive or not and decide whether to go ahead with the marriage or not.

"It is not only the women who are supposed to go for the test but you find out that it is only the women that men insist must go for the test and the men would say no they are not going for the test, men should ensure they also go for the test," he states.

He highlights factors that fuel the spread of the disease to include poverty, ignorance, and illiteracy among others.

To him, the challenge in the fight against HIV/AIDS is behaviour change.

"A lot of campaign has been done, sensitization, outreach programmes, many people are really aware how HIV/AIDS is contracted and how it is

not contracted but the main challenge is behaviour change.

You can tell somebody that you will get this HIV through some objects but yet he goes to a barbing saloon without his clipper or he patronizes the street nail cutters without thinking of his safety.

"Many engage in sexual intercourse without the use of condom and even if he uses condom, is it consistent, I mean the use of condom, and was it properly used?"

He however discloses that that is why the agency now has a package- Behaviour Change Communication or Strategic Behaviour Change.

Shedding light on it, Isa said "this is a package whereby you look at the behaviours of a particular group of people and see how you are going to address such behaviour, if it is a long distance driver, look at those behaviours that are putting them at risk, if it is commercial sex worker, what are the behaviour that are putting them at risk, if it is the homosexuals, what are those behaviours, so you target them and address such behaviours."

Dr. Taofeek Ibrahim, Consultant Community Health, Usmanu Dan Fodiyo University, Sokoto speaking at the forum said, "HIV/AIDS is everybody's problem, it cut across all boundary, barriers, it is a real issue and we really have to try as much as possible to do something."

Dr. Ibrahim notes with concern, "I have seen very horrible things happen to people. A 14-year old girl was HIV positive, where did she come across it? It is our environment, because of the economic situation, we send our children to hawk, they go to places like construction sites to sell, and men harass them and rape them. We have a lot of work to do."

The Medical practitioner adds "also a deputy Imam coming down with HIV/AIDS. How did he get it? Marrying widows and divorcees is something good but the problem we have to encountered is that the men and women don't go for test before they get married and because some are in polygamous set up, more people may get the virus, if one person is infected."

He emphasizes that both men and women need to do pre-marital screening. "Why are we pretending? HIV/AIDS is a real problem and there should be no marriage without the two people knowing their status," Dr. Ibrahim counsels.

PIC: KENNEDY EGBONODJE

CITY NEWS



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Court sends emissary to attacked corps members

By Romoke W. Ahmad

AN Abuja magistrate court sitting at the Karu, yesterday directed the court registrar to visit National Hospital, Abuja in order to ascertain the health condition of two corps members and whether they are fit to give evidence in court.

Chief Magistrate Ahmed Shuaib gave the directive during

the resumed hearing of the case in which Mr. Ebenebe Samuel and his son Ifesinachi Ebenebe were charged for alleged joint act and causing grievous hurt.

The magistrate who adjourned the case to yesterday to listen to the accused persons bail application postponed the hearing due to the absence of the nominal complainants, who the prosecutor said were

still critically ill in the hospital.

Counsel to the accused persons had earlier informed the court of his intention to move a motion for the bail of the accused persons, while the Judge reminded him of his initial oral application and said the court has to wait for the nominal complainants to appear in court for their conditions to be known before bail can be granted

to the accused persons.

The accused persons' counsel told the court that the complainants are alright and the prosecutor is trying to frustrate the bail application.

He argued further that there is no medical report or evidence to show that the complainants can't give evidence, adding that his attempt to see the complainants on different occasions proved

abortive as he was not allowed to see them.

The magistrate then ordered the court registrar to go to the hospital to access the conditions of the complainants, and report observation in writing.

He also told counsel to the accused persons to come and tell the court if he is not allowed to see the complainants again.

22-yr-old jailed for handbag theft

By Usman A. Bello

AN Abuja magistrate court Friday sentenced a 22-year-old man to two weeks imprisonment for stealing a handbag belonging to one Faiza Yakubu.

Abubakar Balarabe of Mabushi village, Abuja, was found guilty of contravening Section 287 of the Penal Code Law.

Prosecutor Adamu Abdullahi had earlier told the court that Faiza Yakubu reported to the police that while she was driving along Wuse Market by Zenith Bank, the accused stole her handbag containing \$500 from inside the car.

He said the accused was immediately arrested, and the handbag recovered from him during police investigations.

The accused pleaded guilty to the charged and begged for leniency, blaming the devil for his plight.

The prosecutor urged the court to try the accused summarily under Section 157 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC) and Magistrate Aminu Eri sentenced him to two weeks imprisonment or to pay N200 as fine.



FULANI cultural group at an event in Abuja Saturday.

Minister orders removal of speed bumps

By Nasir Imam,

IN response to negative reactions by majority of motorists in the Federal Capital Territory, the FCT Minister, Senator Bala Mohammed, Monday directed for the immediate but gradual removal of the speed bumps at various roads' interchanges in Abuja metropolis.

He said the bumps will be replaced with more acceptable and friendly speed breakers.

Senator Mohammed emphasized that the removal of the offensive bumps at interchanges will be complemented with strict enforcement of traffic rules and regulations, adding that sanctions/penalties for offenders will also be effected as is practiced in all modern cities of the world.

Residents spoken to in Abuja expressed their delight at the minister's decision and said it is long over due.

Aliyu Magaji, a motorist, described the bumps as disturbing to motorists.

"They repeatedly damaged vehicles and there is no way you can avoid them once you are driving in the city centre," he lamented.

Another resident, Mrs. Salome James commended the minister's decision and advised that they are replaced with the ones that do not destroy vehicles.

FCT customary court judges elect new executives

By Romoke W. Ahmad

THE Association of Customary Court Judges of Nigeria (AJUCON) Abuja chapter at the weekend elected new executives to pilot the affairs of the association.

The election was observed by the inspectorate unit of the Customary Court of Appeal and saw

Ismaila Ibrahim emerge as the chairman of the association, who was sworn in alongside other elected members on the same date by the electoral committee of the association.

In his address, Ismaila Ibrahim, the new chairman, thanked members of the association for electing him as well as his team and promised to

promote good relationship between members with the management of the customary court of appeal.

The Association's Public Relations Officer, Ibrahim Salim Olasupo, disclosed that the association was established with the aim of fostering cooperation among members as well as seeing to members' welfare.

FCT minister wants Gwagwalada abattoir completed

By Nasir Imam

THE FCT Minister, Senator Bala Mohammed, has given two weeks ultimatum to the contractor handling the rehabilitation of the Gwagwalada Abattoir to complete the job.

The minister gave this ultimatum when he paid an unscheduled

visit to the project site at the weekend to douse tension and avert imminent breakdown of law and order by butchers over the slow work at the site.

Senator Mohammed wondered why a contract that was awarded in August 24, 2009 with a completion period of six weeks is still not completed in April 2010.

The minister remarked that improved hygienic condition of abattoir is very important for the lives of the residents of the Federal Capital Territory as the meat consumed by the general public emanate from there.

He therefore directed the contractor to complete the job within two weeks and also install

the cold room equipment that would improve storage capacity in the area as well as water facilities.

He also directed that henceforth all contracts in the territory must be executed as awarded with strict compliance to terms of each contract, especially the quality of job and timing.

Briefing the minister at the project site, the Secretary of Agriculture and Rural Development, Alhaji Mustapha Bala Batsari said the contract was awarded to King's General Enterprises Limited in August 24, 2009 with completion period of six weeks and that the government has met all its contractual obligations.

Man in court over cheating

By Hussein Yahaya & Ibraheem A. Fatai

THE police yesterday arraigned a man before an Abuja magistrate court for allegedly using a car belonging to another person as collateral in a hotel.

The man, Abdulrahman Alkali of behind Sigma apartments, Wuse 2, Abuja, was accused of conniving with his girl friend, Fatima, now at large, to commit the offence.

Police prosecutor Ahmed Mohammed told the court that on April 15, one Mohammed Haruna reported to the police that the accused deceived and collected his Honda Accord car with registration number HB96ABC.

He said the accused deceived the complainant by saying he wanted to stay in the car with his girl friend.

"He deposited the said car in Q Palace Hotel as a collateral, pending when he would pay N40,000 debts to the hotel," the prosecutor said.

The prosecutor informed that the accused absconded to an unknown destination, adding that the complainant was compelled to pay the hotel bill before his car was released to him.

According to him, the offences committed are punishable under Sections 79 and 322 of the Penal Code Law.

When the charges were read to the accused, he denied them and requested for bail.

Chief Magistrate Hadiza Dodo granted the accused bail in the sum of N100,000 with a reasonable surety in like sum, who must reside within the court's jurisdiction and swear to an affidavit to produce the accused in court on the adjourned date.

The case was adjourned to May 19 for hearing.

NGO wants more govt concern for less privileged

By Usman A. Bello

A Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), Aso Dynamic Club of Abuja, at the weekend called for more government's programmes that will uplift the lives of the less privilege and vulnerable children.

Club Chairman, Dynamite Abiodun Nubi made the call while presenting cash and food items to children at Anawin Home, Poorest of the Poor Rehabilitation centre at Gwagwalada.

He noted that society would be better off if adequate attention is given to the wellbeing of the needy, adding that the donation was part of the club's contribution in securing the future of vulnerable children.

Abiodun disclosed that the club has put in place various programmes in the area of health and education in order to complement government's effort and urged corporate bodies as well as other bodies to join hands with government in ensuring a better life for the poor in the society.

Reacting, Sister Awaji-Iton Solomon from the home, commended the club's gesture and promised to use the items judiciously for the benefit of the children.

Driver denies stealing madam's car

By Hussein Yahaya & Ibraheem A. Fatai

A driver yesterday in court denied stealing a Mercedes Benz car belonging to his madam, Mrs. Nkoli Imoh of Maitama, Abuja.

Chijioke Okanya of the same address was accused of committing the offence on January 1.

Prosecutor Mohammed stated in court that on January 1, the

complainant reported to the police that a driver attached to her stole her car.

He further stated that the accused removed the Mercedes Benz S550 salon car key from the wardrobe of the complainant's chief driver, Mr. Vincent Igbadalo.

"After collecting the key, the accused went to where the car was parked at No 1, Koemoe Street,

Maitama, and drove the car away without her consent," the prosecutor said.

The prosecutor said in the process of running away, the accused had an accident and was arrested with the car, adding that he committed an offence punishable under Section 289 of the Penal Code Law.

When the charge was read to

the accused, he pleaded not guilty and requested for bail, which was not objected to by the prosecutor.

In her ruling, Chief Magistrate Binta Mohammed granted the accused bail in the sum of N100,000 with a reliable surety in like sum, who must reside within the court's jurisdiction.

The case was adjourned to May 20 for hearing.

German Govt spends N121m to train FCTA staff

By Doris Afoma West

THE German Government has spent about N121 million in training staff of the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA), Abuja Environmental Protection Board (AEPB) and FCT Water Board, among others, on Geographic Information System (GIS)

handled by a German company called CUTECE.

FCDA's Director of Mass Housing, Engr. Umar Gambo Jibril, who disclosed this while giving out certificates to participants, said the training handle by CUTECE, will help in the area of waste management, water supply as well as transportation.

"We have trained several people from different organization within Abuja and this is the fourth set of people, who will be impacted positively in making Abuja the city that all of us are yearning for." He said.

He thanked the German government for their support and said the participants will use what they have learnt to fast track the devel-

opment of Abuja because CUTECE will provide soft wares that will enhance their jobs in the territory.

The International Operations Manager of CUTECE, Dr. Theodore Onyeche, identified lack of Geographical Information System (GIS) in maintaining the city as a problem, adding that that was the reason the training was put in place.

PIC: ABUBAKAR YAKUBU



PARTICIPANTS at a craft workshop in Mararaba...Saturday

Bwari residents want police, vigilantes to partner

By Hussein Yahaya

RESIDENTS of Bwari and its environment have called on the police to work with vigilante groups in beefing-up security in communities around Bwari in order to curb cases of armed robbery attacks experienced in the area.

Residents spoken to, lamented on cases of various robbery attacks, especially in the night, which hardly makes them sleep.

Mr James Idoko, a resident, observed that recent events across

the globe have shown that community policing had proved effective in efforts to fight crime.

"Honestly, I will prefer if the police partner with members of the Vigilante group in various communities so that the activities of criminals can be curtailed and effectively monitored," he said.

Another resident, Malam Sanni Ahmed, called on security outfits to intensify night patrols in Bwari communities, adding that most times robbery incidents occur from midnight to 4am.

Our reporter learnt that there

were reported cases of armed robbery attacks on SCC Road, Across River and Sabon Gari areas of Bwari, a few days ago.

In another development, the residents also decried incessant water scarcity in the community and attributed their plights to government's insensitive to people in rural areas.

Most residents spoken to lamented that they rely on water vendors before they can get potable water.

Mr. Johnson Isah, a resident, said a 20 litre jerry can of bore-

hole water from water vendors now sells for between N25 to N30.

Mrs. Modupe Ijaya, a civil servant, called on those in position of authority not to play politics with sensitive issues like potable water, electricity and good roads in rural areas, noting that those are the area where ordinary citizens feel the impact of government's effort.

Water vendors denied arbitrary increase of jerry can, adding that they sell their products based on how they get water from borehole operators.



A sensitization exercise organised by Rotary Club, Gwarinpa recently.



CONTROLLER FCT Fire Service, Liman Ibrahim Alhaji, being decorated with a new rank by Dr. Daniel James Abin, AMMC Director of Urban Affairs and FCT Comptroller of Immigration recently.



COMMERCIAL cyclists waiting for passengers at Nyanya recently.



UNIVERSITY OF ABUJA TEACHING HOSPITAL GWAGWALADA
PMB, 228, Abuja

INVITATION FOR PRE QUALIFICATION FOR TENDER

The management of University of Abuja Teaching Hospital Gwagwalada plans to execute the under listed projects under the 2010 capital budget.

PROJECTS

1. Construction of pediatrics outpatient clinic
2. Improvement in water supply and distribution
3. Furnishing of newly completed consultant offices
4. Procurement and installation of computerized tomography scan (CT-scan)

PRE-QUALIFICATION FOR BIDDERS

Interested companies/suppliers with experience in similar jobs are hereby invited for pre-qualification. Interested companies/suppliers are expected to submit the following:

1. Evidence of registration with corporate affairs commission
2. Copies of tax clearance for the last three years
3. Evidence of VAT registration
4. Company profile which should include CVs of key personnel with evidence of technical and managerial capability
5. Evidence of similar projects executed in the past, including letters of award, agreement and certificate of completion
6. Evidence of financial capability through letter of reference from a reputable bank
7. Evidence of payment of Non-refundable pre-qualification fee of twenty thousand (20,000) naira in bank draft payable to the University of Abuja Teaching Hospital Gwagwalada

Interested companies/suppliers applying for pre-qualification should please note that:

- a) Response to the pre-qualification is not an invitation to tender
- b) The hospital Management reserves the right to reject any or all pre-qualification submissions by any company/supplier.
- c) The hospital will not enter into any correspondence with any company/ supplier On why the company was disqualified
- d) This advertisement for pre-qualification should neither be construed as a commitment on the part of the Hospital nor shall it entitle companies/suppliers to make any claims whatsoever and/or seek an indemnity from the hospital.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION OF PRE-QUALIFICATION DOCUMENTS

One set of neatly bound pre-qualification documents in sealed envelop clearly marked "PRE-QUALIFICATION TO TENDER FOR ... AT UATH GWAGWALADA" should be dropped in tender box stationed at the office of the Chief Medical Director, not later than TWO WEEKS from the date of this advertisement.

OPENING OF TENDER BOX

Opening of tender box will be done on the last day for submission of pre-qualification documents by 12 noon

SIGNED
(Chief Medical Director)



TAFAWA BALEWA LOCAL GOVERNMENT

P.M.B. 003,
Bauchi State.

INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION FOR TENDER

In line with the Public Procurement Act No. 14 of 2007, Tafawa Balewa Local Government wish to invite competent and reputable companies to apply for Pre-qualification and tender for the:

- a. Construction of Maternity Health Clinic - 2 No.
- b. Construction of Zwall Motor Park
- c. Clearance of 8.7km Feeder Road.

2. Interested Companies are required to submit the following; Pre-qualification requirements. Prospective contractors shall be required to possess the following pre-qualification:

- a. Valid Certificate of Incorporation/Registration
- b. Current Tax Clearance Certificate
- c. Value Added Tax Registration Certificate
- d. Three years Company Audited Accounts
- e. Company Profile with Curriculum Vitae of Directors
- f. Bank Reference Letter
- g. Details of Equipments/Plants
- h. Evidence of Execution of Similar Contract with the Local Govt.

SUBMISSION OF PRE-QUALIFICATION DOCUMENTS

Pre-qualification documents should be enclosed in sealed envelopes marked "2010 PRE - QUALIFICATION" and must be returned to the Tafawa Balewa Local Government within two (2) weeks from the date of this publication, addressed to the Executive Chairman Tafawa Balewa Local Government, P.M.B. 003.

Please Note:

- a. All documents submitted will be subject to verification by the committee.
- b. Late submission will be rejected.
- c. This advertisement for "Pre-qualification to tender" shall not be construed to be a commitment on the part of the Tafawa Balewa Local Government, nor shall it entitle any person to make any claims and or seek indemnity from the committee by virtue of such person having responded to this advert and the Tafawa Balewa shall not enter into any correspondence with unsuccessful applicants.

Signed
Management
Tafawa Balewa Local Government.



GOMBE STATE AGENCY FOR COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The Government of the Federal republic of Nigeria has received a Credit/Loan from World Bank/International Development Association (IDA) towards the Community and Social development Project (CSDP). The objective of the CSDP is to increase access of people (in rural communities) in the state to improved social and natural resources infrastructure services in a sustainable manner through the provision of grant support to communities. The project will be implemented over a five year period. It is intended that part of the proceeds of this Credit/Loan will be applied to eligible payments for services of the following in Gombe State:

(1) General Manager:

(i) Key Duties of the General Manager (GM)

The GM shall:

- be in-charge of general administration of the CSDP;
- Authorize expenditure in accordance with the annual budget and work programme of the State Agency.
- conduct dialogue with donors and those capable of providing complimentary technical and administrative skills and financial resources;
- have the responsibility of overall discipline of the personnel, and could punish and reward staff;
- report to government and donors on the project periodically or as may be required.

(ii) Qualification: A university degree in Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Engineering and/or any other relevant degree with at least fifteen years post-qualification experience in the private or public sector, five of which must be at management level. An experience in the management of rural development projects shall be an added advantage. Computer literacy is required.

(2) Operations Manager:

- The Operations Manager shall be in-charge of:
- supervising the processing of applications seeking SA funding and technical/management support;
- ensure conduct of desk and field appraisals and forward to the Project Management Committee for review based on set criteria;
- providing overall supervision of formulation and implementation processes of CDPs and micro projects by CPMCs;
- ensuring the maintenance of records on all CDPs and Micro-projects on a continuous basis; and passing on such information to the M & E department;
- Liaison with relevant MDAs to provide technical and back-up support to communities.

(ii) Qualifications: A university degree or HND in Agriculture, Engineering, Extension Services, Social sciences, Natural sciences, Project Management and any other relevant degree, with at least twelve years post qualification experience. Previous experience in rural development projects or extension services shall be considered as additional advantage. Computer literacy is compulsory.

(3) Finance and Administration Manager.

(i) The Finance and Administration Manager shall be charged with the responsibility for:

- ensuring efficient running of the office and the maintenance of all office facilities;
- processing and paying all bills, salaries (etc) pertaining to the smooth running of the SA;
- maintaining schedules of personnel, welfare and other personnel functions;
- ensuring the proper recording of financial transactions of the Agency
- generating adequate, reliable and timely financial reports for the GM and other departments,
- Preparing annual budgets and work plans for the SA;
- processing and managing all fund disbursements as well as ensuring proper documentation to facilitate the release of funds from funding agencies to Communities;
- liaising with banks, tax authorities, and other regulatory agencies on behalf of the SA;
- prepare monthly and quarterly reports on financial progress of micro-projects and CDPs;
- offering training and capacity building in the areas of financial management, record keeping, and other related matters to the Community.

(ii) Qualifications: A university degree or HND in Accounting or Banking and Finance with at least ten years post qualification experience, membership of professional association such as ACCA, ANAN, ICAN or their equivalent is essential. Computer literacy is compulsory.

(4) Project Monitoring & Evaluation Manager.

(i) The M&E Manager shall be charged with the responsibility of:

- ensuring the maintenance of records of all types of data and information on SA activities.
- overseeing the monitoring and evaluation department of SA and coordinating the activities of the MIS and M & E units;
- providing guidelines and guidance for the operations of the MIS and M & E units for them to meet the expectations of the SA;
- liaising with the Operations and finance and Administration departments to collect and collate data for tracking of key activities of the SA;
- providing cumulative records, analysis and statistics of activities over time to guide operations and provide information base for planning and future evaluation.
- Ensure compliance to environmental mainstreaming and other safe guard requirements.

(ii) Qualifications: A university degree or HND in Agriculture, Statistics, Social sciences, Engineering, Extension Services or Project Management, with at least ten years post qualification experience. Computer literate and previous experience in project monitoring and evaluation shall be an added advantage. Computer literacy is compulsory

(5) Position: Project officer-Appraisal & Supervision.

Responsibilities:

- Responsible for supervising and coordinating the activities of operations officers.
- Assist in the provision of technical advice on all engineering works e.g. construction/rehabilitation of infrastructure, erosion control bands, agro-processing equipment, feeder road construction etc.
- In close liaison with relevant state ministries, departments, agency (ies) ensure the adoption of state approved standard technical designs for social infrastructure;

Qualification and Experience: At least a degree or HND in engineering, architecture, social and natural sciences with at least, five (5) years experience in design and/or supervision of social infrastructure construction. Computer literacy is essential and experience in implementing community level infrastructure is an added advantage.

(6) Position: Project Officer Gender and Vulnerable

Responsibilities:

- Develop an action plan for mainstreaming vulnerable groups and gender sensitive activities in the operation of the State Agency
- Assist project team to incorporate appropriate vulnerable groups (including gender) issues into project activities.
- Assist in organizing training for line ministries, LGA, LGRC and Operations Officers in mainstreaming vulnerable and gender issues in development activities.

Qualification and Experience: At least a first degree or HND in Social Sciences, Natural Resources Sciences, Rural Environmental Development, Agric extension with at least 5 years post qualification experience part of which must have been spent in CDD related areas. Computer literacy experience in Gender/Vulnerable Mainstreaming and Safety nets will be an added advantage.

(7) Position: Project Officer- Training & IEC

Responsibilities:

- Facilitate the carrying out of advocacy for the CSDP at the state level through information, education and communication (IEC) campaigns;
- ensure linkage with relevant ministries/agencies on integrating collective action and mobilization of resources, for sectoral development plans;
- undertake regular skill gap analysis of project staff, line ministries, LGRC and CPMC members and identify requisite training to address;
- maintain links with and update knowledge of other agencies' programmes on advocacy, sensitization and awareness and communication;
- be responsible for preparing periodic reports on progress in advocacy, mobilisation and awareness, measured against the targets of annual work plans and legal funding requirements (e.g. IDA/donor requirements);

Qualification and Experience: At least a first degree or HND in Social Sciences, Natural Resources Sciences, Rural Environmental Development, Agric extension with at least 5 years post qualification experience part of which must relate to training and social analysis, especially rural appraisals. Computer literacy is compulsory and experience in community level facilitation and mobilization is an added advantage.

(8) Project officer Monitoring & Evaluation:

Responsibilities:

- Responsible for data collection, collation and analysis for field level activities.

- Compilation of monthly, quarterly and annual reports.
- Monitor progress towards attainment of targets and to adapt targets to realities,
- provide an improved foundation for planning effective resource use;

Qualification and Experience: At least a first degree or HND in Social Sciences, Statistics, Natural Sciences, Rural development and related fields, with at least 5 years post qualification experience part of which must relate to monitoring and evaluation of community based initiatives. Computer literacy is compulsory and experience in Community Driven development (CDD) is an added advantage.

(9) Project Officer Management Information System (MIS).

Responsibilities:

- design and prepare CSDP Management Information System operational manual,
- review alongside other project staff the data collection forms at the different stages of the micro-projects cycle;
- upgrade hardware and software applications of the agency;
- maintain the database for the agency.

Qualification and Experience: At least a degree or HND in Electrical/Electronic engineering; Information Management, Computer Science; Engineering and related fields. Five (5) years post qualification experience, two of which must have been in the design, development and implementation of Databases and client Server Software applications.

(10) Position: Project Officer Procurement.

Responsibilities

- be responsible for procurement at the SA including procurement planning, design, implementation, management and training;
- be responsible for the preparation of bid documents (inclusive technical specifications) for the acquisition of goods/services;
- provide training on procurement and community contracting to Operations Officers,
- ensure that CPMCs adhere to procurement procedures and guidelines;
- maintain comprehensive procurement unit cost database to be used in preparing a Project Cost Document and provide up to date information on all procurement at the SA.

Qualification and Experience: At least a first degree or HND in Business Administration, Engineering, Architecture, Marketing, Purchasing and Supply or related field , with at least 5 years post qualification experience part of which must relate to procurement in a foreign funded agency or state government due process office. Computer literacy is compulsory and experience in community contracting is an added advantage.

(11) Operations Officers (6 Nos).

Responsibilities:

- Sensitize and mobilize communities on CSDP project objectives and activities as well as issues related to HIV/AIDS,
- Facilitate communities to undertake needs assessment and prioritization that are socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable;
- Formulation of community Development Plan (CDP);
- Build capacity of the CPMCs and LGRC Desk Officers, as appropriate, through providing training in requisite areas e.g. Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs), record and book-keeping, project management, mainstreaming gender, environment and natural resources issues etc, as identified by the Project officer-IEC and Training
- Supervise the implementation of the CDPs to ensure quality assurance;

Qualification and Experience: A first degree or HND in Engineering, Social Sciences, Biological and Natural Sciences, with at least 1 year post qualification experience in any area. Computer literacy and willingness to learn and work extra hours and on week-ends is a must. Applicants are not expected to be more than 35 years as at the time of recruitment and not above Grade level 9 if recruited from the civil service.

(12) Administrative officer:

Responsibilities:

- Responsible for management of personnel matters
- Shall be responsible for supervising clerical staff
- Maintain and operate an open and secret registry
- Ensure appropriate record keeping, filing and documentation of all Agency mails and correspondences
- Responsible for managing all office utility service
- Responsible for maintaining office assets, including vehicles, plants, office premises, etc

Qualification and Experience: first degree or HND in the Social Sciences and Humanities with at least 5 years post qualification experience part of which must relate to Personnel and General office administration. Computer literacy is compulsory.

(13) Assistant Project Accountant:

Responsibilities:

- assist in preparing budget and work plan for the SA;
- assist to maintain the SA assets database
- assist to prepare monthly/ quarterly reports in accordance with accounting reporting requirements
- manage and control of inventory and stores of the Agency.

Qualification and Experience: A university degree or HND in Accounting or related field with at least five years post qualification experience, membership of professional association such as ANAN, ICAN, ACCA and knowledge of computer based accounting packages and experience in donor-funded or rural development project added advantage. Computer literacy is compulsory.

(14) Internal Auditor:

Responsibilities:

- ensure compliance of the agency to laid down financial and administrative guidelines and procedure;
- develop and monitor the implementation of annual plans of SA
- liaise with the finance and Administration Manager to ensure that audit (Internal and External) recommendations are complied with.

Qualification and Experience: A university degree or HND in Accounting or related field with at least five years post qualification experience, membership of professional association such as ANAN, ICAN, ACCA and knowledge of computer based accounting packages and experience in donor-funded or rural development project audit is added advantage. Computer literacy is compulsory.

(15) Secretary to GM:

Responsibilities:

- support the General Manager as a Personal Assistant/ Confidential Secretary;
- Provide secretarial assistance e.g. prepare all letters, memorandum and any requisite document for the GM;
- Organize itineraries, meetings and related schedules;
- Maintain adequate filing system for all mails and correspondence of the GM

Qualification and Experience: A university degree or HND in Secretarial Administration, with at least Seven years post qualification experience, Computer skills in presentations, internet and Microsoft packages is compulsory.

(16) Accounts Clerk (2 Nos)

Qualification and Experience: A Diploma in Accounting, Auditing or any relevant field with at least 2 years post qualification experience. Knowledge of computer packages is an advantage.

Responsibilities:

- Assist in keeping of records, petty cash and other financial matters that will be assigned to him or her from time to time.

(17) Office Assistant (2 Nos)

Responsibilities:

- Perform all clerical activities of the SA as may be assign by the FAM.

Qualification and Experience: At least SSCE/WASC, with at least 2 years working experience.

(18) Motor Driver Mechanic (6 Nos)

Responsibilities:

- Drive personnel and move goods/ people between and within communities and within and outside the state.
- Ensure maintenance of vehicle

Qualification and Experience: Candidates should possess at least, Primary or SSCE/ WASC or Diploma in automobile engineering. They must also have practical knowledge of the traffic code and should be Driver/ Mechanic with driver's license group C,D, or E and good driving experience of not less than 6 years, accident free. Possession of Driver/ Mechanic trade test II and I is an added advantage.

(19) Watchmen/ Security Outfit (4 Nos)

Responsibilities:

- Ensure security of office buildings and Government properties;
- keeping records of movement of persons and vehicles;
- searching vehicles and suspected visitors or employees

Qualification and Experience: Candidates should possess at least, Primary or SSC/ WASC with at least 5-10 years experience in similar job.

(20) Cleaner/Cleaning Outfit:

Responsibilities:

- cleaning offices, closet and office premises;
- performing general cleaning duties;
- supervising a number of cleaners.

Qualification and Experience: Candidates must possess Primary or SSCE/ WASC.

(21) Dispatch Rider:

Responsibilities:

- carrying and delivering letters, articles and messages

Qualification and Experience: Candidates must possess Primary or SSCE/ WASC.

B. The Gombe State Agency for Community and Social Development requests for 10 copies of Curriculum Vitae from eligible/interested applicants for the above positions. The remuneration is attractive and comparable to what obtains in private organizations.

C. All Applications must be addressed and delivered to:

The Secretary to the State Government,
Governor's office Gombe,
Gombe State.

The applications should be submitted to the above mentioned address not later than two weeks from the date of this advertisement. Applicants are to clearly mark on the envelope "EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FORPOSITION, Do not open before 10.00am on 04/05/2010". Only shortlisted candidates would be contacted.

D. Interested applicants may obtain further information from the office of the Chairman (Technical Committee), Gombe State Agency for Community and Social Development (CSDP), Opposite State Government Presidential lodge, GRA Road, Gombe.

Signed
Secretary to the State Govt,
Gombe State

Inside Politics

Balarabe: Opposition may rally behind Labour Party

From Ibraheem Musa, Kaduna

THE opposition is considering rallying behind the Labour Party for the 2011 presidential election, chairman of the Conference of Nigerian Political Parties (CNPP) Alhaji Balarabe Musa said yesterday.

Lamenting the collapse of the Mega Summit Movement, Musa blamed former ANPP presidential candidate Muhammadu Buhari and former vice president Atiku

Abubakar for frustrating the party which he said would have defeated PDP during the 2011 presidential election.

Musa, who made this known during the opening of the 16th national executive committee meeting of the PRP on Sunday in Kaduna, also said the MSM led by Anthony Eahoro was well on course until Buhari, Atiku, former governor of Lagos state Bola Tinubu and former Sokoto state governor Attahiru Bafarawa intruded and

broke the ranks of the movement.

He said the splinter groups were further coalesced into two with Tinubu breaking away, adding that the entire movement has now collapsed. "Atiku has gone back to the PDP. Tinubu is not with them. Bafarawa is undecided. He may team up with Buhari or he may not," Musa said.

In a communique issued after the NEC meeting, the PRP leader "condemns in strong terms the recent resolution by the

Senate to amend sections of the constitution to allow convicts to occupy public office."

He also condemned the financial conditions attached to independent candidature as counterproductive, arguing that it will encourage "moneybags to hijack political offices." Placing of these conditions, he pointed out, "is a warning to Nigerians that we may not have a credible electoral process for the 2011 elections."



MEMBERS of the Enough is Enough Coalition protesting over electoral reform in Lagos recently.

PIC: OLADIPIPO ODUNWU

TMG to monitor Reps debate on election reform

By Abbas Jimoh

THE Transition Monitoring Group (TMG) would monitor proceedings at the House of Representatives when lawmakers begin debate on electoral reform and constitution review this week.

TMG chairman Mashood Erubami and publicity secretary Auwal Musa Rafsanjani in a statement in Abuja berated the House for stalling action on 106 bills and 58 reports. They said the lawmakers abandoned their jobs to pursue their 2011 ambitions.

"It is inconceivable that members of the House could still refuse to give the same attention being given to the passage of the 2010 appropriation bill, in which over N4billion have been approved for their monthly salaries and other emoluments, to these outstanding bills which are equally important, like the bill on the legal framework upon

which credible conduct of the 2011 election depends, consideration and passage of constitutional amendments, Freedom of Information Bill which are now put at the back burner of House consideration.

They urged the House to emulate the Senate and pass the constitution amendment bills.

"We call on the Speaker Dimeji Bankole to follow-up on the threat as reported in the newspapers of imposing sanction on any erring members who are fond of just registering their names in the attendant register, or walking away after introducing their names.

"We want to assure the speaker that members of the civil society, human rights and pro-democracy outfits will be monitoring attendance of members upon resumption of the House and shall be at the gallery to monitor contributions of members to debate at the floor of the House," the statement said.

2011: Arewa youths tackle IBB, others

From Ibraheem Musa, Kaduna

A northern political pressure group has asked all northern politicians who are angling for the presidency in 2011 to forget their aspirations because northern youths are now ready to take their destiny in their hands.

The Arewa Youth Action for Change (AYAC), which handed down this warning in a communique issued after its lecture series on Sunday, said they took this decision because the elite have failed to address the north's

problems of mass poverty, almajirci and insecurity, especially in Plateau state.

The communique, which was signed by AYAC's chairman Sani Suleman and secretary Mahmuda Darma, advised northern youths to stop looking up to the elite for their political salvation because they "are primarily concerned with lining up their own pockets."

The group also frowned at the emergence of presidential candidates of northern origin who are cashing in on President Umaru

Yar'adua's illness to vie for the presidency in 2011. "We view this as a betrayal of a fellow northerner and naked opportunism, which we consider alien to the character of the north and its politics."

AYAC warned that northern youth will "not tolerate the imposition of any presidential candidate on the north in 2011." The group also warned sectional bodies like Ijaw Youth Council (IYC) against insulting the north over the speculated presidential ambition of Acting President Goodluck Jonathan in 2011.

ANPP hails Jonathan over FCT minister

THE Bauchi State Chapter of the ANPP has commended Acting President Goodluck Jonathan for appointing Bala Muhammed as Minister for the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

Mohammed, a former Senator, is a member of the ANPP.

Malam Muhammed Sabo, an ANPP Chieftain in the state, made the commendation in an interview in Bauchi yesterday. Sabo said the appointment of Muhammed portrayed Jonathan as "a true nationalist and leader with large heart as well as ability to carry every Nigerian on board in running

the affairs of the country irrespective of party affiliation."

"Bauchi ANPP and its teeming supporters under the able leadership of its Chairman, Alhaji Sani Shehu, will work assiduously to support Acting President Jonathan's aspiration to solidify the unity of the country and ensure the conduct of a free and fair elections in 2011," he said.

The ANPP chieftain, who is also the National Director of Publicity of the party, said that the broad-based ministerial appointments by the Acting President was an indication of his "sense of

maturity, discipline and decorum in running the affairs of the country."

"The ANPP in Bauchi will forever remain grateful to the Acting President for the choice of Sen. Muhammed, which is based on merit. We believe that the Acting President will find in Sen. Muhammed, competence, loyalty, honesty and experience in the discharge of his national calling.

"Already, the appointment has become a rallying point for unity between the ANPP and other political parties, including the PDP," Sabo said. (NAN)

Court to rule May 5 on Zamfara lawmakers

THE Federal High Court, Gusau, has fixed May 5 for ruling on the application filed by ANPP, asking it to declare vacant the seats of its 22 state house of assembly lawmakers who defected to the PDP.

The Zamfara State lawmakers, elected on the platform of ANPP, defected to the PDP in March.

ANPP filed a suit, which urged the court to declare their seats vacant and order INEC to con-

duct a fresh election.

The counsel to PDP, Mr M. Salahuddeen, had earlier objected to the application filed by the ANPP counsel, Mr Sani Katu.

Katu, however, told the court that the counter affidavit filed by Salahuddeen had some defects, and asked the court to dismiss it.

Justice Zainab Abubakar adjourned the case to May 5 for ruling on the application made by the ANPP. (NAN)

To Our
Esteemed Readers,
Advertisers and
Contributors



POLICY ON PUBLICATION OF ADVERTORIALS, PETITIONS AND RELATED MATERIALS



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EMIR OF KAIAMA: DEMISE OF A UNIFYING FACTOR

By Maimunat Usman Adaji

Expectedly since the past eight days that the 15th Emir of Kaiama, Alhaji Mohammed Tukur Omar Tasude 11 passed on, his death has been described in so many ways by sympathizers in and outside Kaiama Emirate with the underlining submission that the Bokobaru race, i.e. the Kaiama people have lost an uncommon leader on the Royal terrain.

While some described his death like loss of a golden fish in the river or that of an Iroko tree in the forest, others said his demise was like a lost of a defender and promoter of Bokobaru peoples' communal cause, having almost singlehandedly saw to the creation of Kaiama Local Government in 1989 with attendant upsurge of development in so many ways in an area known by Bokobarus as a place of rest, coupled with many other development-driven projects he royally facilitated in the Emirate within the last 37 years.

In contributing to the flow of tributes been deservedly poured on a genuine leader of his people, one can from societal cum communal angle(s) rightly described the late Emir as an uncommon unifying factor during his life time especially during his 37 years reign as Dii Bokobaru, otherwise known as Emir of Kaiama.

Analytically, during his reign, not only were the Bokobaru People (the indigenous Kaiamas, of which am one), were united and communally worked for the common goals of the race, but also accommodated and live very peacefully with other Nigerians like Yorubas, Fulanis, Tivs, Ibos, Hausas etc, who came to settle in their midst.

Strikingly in this regard, it is on record that the unifying leadership the late Emir gave the people of Kaiama Emirate within the last 37 years, made it constitutionally possible for Hon Elemosho Douglas (a Yoruba Nigerian residing in Adena Ward), not only to have been elected as a councilor from the ward but also presently serving as one of the five supervisory councilors in Kaiama Local Government in line with the Nigerian constitutional provision.

Aside political accommodation given other Nigerians residing in Kaiama Local government by the Bokobaru people under the Late Emir, economic or better put, commercial leverage(s) were also given to them as communally shown with the control of the biggest yam market in the local government (Gwaria) by the Yorubas apart from owning about 98% of the Hotels and Sawmills in the local government.

In a nutshell, within the last 37 years in Kaiama when the Late emir was on the throne, it had been for him and we his people, Royalty of Peace and Unity for all and Sundry in the local government devoid of any crisis whatsoever, be it ethnic or religious.

Obviously that is the reason why the Emir's palace in Kaiama has been Mecca of a Sort to hundreds of sympathizers within and outside the Emirate for the past one week, praying fervently to Almighty Allah to grant the Late Promoter of Unity and development, Aljana Fridaus and raise another one for the Bokobaru people.

Biographically, the Late Emir of Kaiama, Alhaji Mohammed Tukur



Omar Tasude II known as Dii in Bokobaru, came into this world on the 17th of March, 1922, attended Kaiama Elementary School for his primary Education from 1931 to 1936 and later went to the then Ilorin Middle School now Government Secondary School (GSS) Ilorin for his secondary education between 1936 and 1941 after which he went to the Veterinary School in VOM Jos between 1944 and 1945.

Apparently as a Prince then, equipping himself for future leadership of his people, the late emir later went to South DEVON Technical College in United Kingdom (UK) between 1957 – 1958 where he obtained Diploma Certificate in Public and Business Administration.

Career wise, before his Turbaning as Emir of Kaiama in 1973, Alhaji Mohammed Tukur Omar started his working career as a Veterinary Assistant in 1941, Head of Veterinary Assistant 1984, Chief Scribe Kaiama Native Authority 1951 – 1953, (Borgu Local Government Authority) from 1951 – 1961, ending his colourful Working career with the position of Senior Assistant Secretary at the Kwara State Governor's Office Ilorin in 1973.

Obviously as a Man destined to serve as a harbinger of greatness and progress for Kaiama Emirate and its people, from position of 3rd Class Chief of Kaiama Town in 1973, rose to Emir of Kaiama on 2nd Class Grade in 1982 and graded as a First Class Emir 19 years ago precisely in 1991.

Adieu! Our Unforgettable Emir and Unifying Leader.

Hon. Maimunat Usuman Adaji
represents Kaiama/Baruten Federal Constituency
in the House of Representatives.

SPORT

Lagerback's
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too large - Oliha

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Lagerback's list a big shame - Basse



RETURN of the old guards... Super Eagles players celebrate after winning against Zambia at the African Nations Cup in Angola. Nearly all members of that squad have been listed by Lars Lagerback for the World Cup in South Africa.

By Ibraheem A. Fatai

CAF Media Coordinator, Paul Basse, has described the 44-man provisional list released by Coach Lars Lagerback as a huge disappointment and not capable of achieving the semi-final target in South Africa.

Speaking yesterday with *Trust-sports*, Basse said the inclusion of some players that are in the twilight

of their careers has put a big question mark on the capability of the Lagerback-led coaching team to raise a good team for the Mundial.

"The team list is over bloated with some bench-warming players, like John Utaka, Kanu Nwankwo, Danny Shittu and Joseph Yobo. I don't see any reason why any serious coach should include such players in his list for a championship (World Cup) of this magnitude.

"The list is a big disappointment because it shows that the coach is not serious. In fact, he is presently beating about the bush with the inclusion of Kanu and co. What does Kanu have to offer Nigeria that he has not offered all these years?"

"I want to believe that Lagerback was pressurised by some people in the NFF to include the names of some players in his list. If not, Kanu, Utaka, Shittu and Yobo would not

have made the list," the foremost sports writer said.

Basse, however, hoped that when the camping proper commences, the former Sweden handler will do away with Kanu and other players who have no business wearing the green-white jerseys of Nigeria in South Africa.

"I believe that when the camping starts, Lagerback will send some of the players packing, because they

don't have any business making the list in the first instance," Basse said.

He commended the Swede for the inclusion of some new players, especially those plying their trade in the Nigerian Globacom Premier League, saying if they are dropped for the bench-warming eagles, it then means that Lagerback has not brought anything new to the Super Eagles.

...He wants experienced players - Ogunjobi

EXPERIENCE will top the yardsticks Super Eagles handler Lars Lagerback will use to select his final squad to the 2010 World Cup because the tournament is "not a picnic for boy scouts", Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) chieftain,

Taiwo Ogunjobi, has said.

Ogunjobi, who is the chairman of NFF technical committee told MTNFootball.com that Lagerback has made it very clear that he will be going first and foremost with experienced players to the World Cup

"because of the top level of the competition and the short time to prepare."

"However, he has also made it very clear that experience alone will not get a player to the World Cup because he expects a high level of discipline and hunger to

go with this. If that is not the case, he said he will prefer to go with young, less experienced players, who are hungry to succeed," Ogunjobi stated.

Lagerback has already showed his hand by going for experience in his 44-man provisional squad

with only two players, Yusuf Mohammed and Obinna Nwaneri dropped from the squad to the Nations Cup in February, while there are only two uncapped players - Brown Ideye of Sochaux and Siena's Michael Odibe.

Green: Odegbami's selling selfish agenda

CHAIRMAN of the Rivers State Football Association, Barrister Chris Green has dismissed recent write-ups in some national dailies by former national team captain, Olusegun Odegbami as simply designed to achieve personal agenda.

"I am shocked that a man of the caliber of Chief Olusegun Odegbami would be calling for the Government to intervene in the conduct of elections of the Nigeria Football Federation. That is the limit of a selfish agenda. It is sickening."

Green went further to poo-poo several other suggestions canvassed by Chief Odegbami in those opinion articles.

"Chief Odegbami is a man I respect for all he has achieved academically and in playing football up to national level, and even captaining the Green Eagles. But he failed to get his facts right. I am responding to his articles because they affect me as Chairman of a football association, affiliated to the Nigeria Football Federation and as an NFF congressman.

"Odegbami displayed his ignorance in the proceedings to the amendment of the NFF Statutes. It was easy for him to state that State Football Associations, local football councils, players' association, professional football league and all other members of the NFF are independent organizations with their own structures and workings, but he failed to tell the public that those members are admitted by the NFF and under the supervision and control of the NFF. The same is the case with NFF and FIFA. NFF is independent to the extent that it does not in its workings conflict with the rules and regulations of FIFA.

"The former international also talked about the issue of date of elections into the State FAs; these things were agreed at the NFF General Assembly and not the product of the NFF Executive Committee. No member of the NFF General Assembly is aggrieved on any of these issues."

Lagerbacks' 44-man list too large - Oliha

By David Ngobua

FORMER international Thompson Oliha has said Lars Lagerback's 44-man list for Super Eagles pre-World Cup training camp is too large as the time left to prepare for the Mundial is short.

Speaking to Trustsports yesterday, the former Eagles midfielder said a list of 30 players would have been good enough for the coach to select the best 22 or 24 players for the World Cup.

Oliha said the World Cup is too close for any experiment but believes that the Swede wants to

"I want to advise him to cut down the list now.

carry out another round of experiment before arriving at the players of his choice.

He said: "Looking at the list of players invited to camp, it is very clear that it is too large. I do not think Lagerback needs up to 44 players to get the best 22 or 24 for the World Cup. If I were in his position, I would invite only 30 players. How is he going to arrive at the required 22 players without going through unnecessary troubles?"

"I want to advise him to cut down the list now that he still has time to do so. If he goes to camp with 44 players, he is bound to have series of problems."

Oliha also expressed concern that while other countries have either concluded or are about to round up their preparations, Nigeria is still discussing a long list of up to 44 players.



SUPER Eagles tactician Lars Lagerback has come under fire over his 44-man list for Nigeria pre-World Cup training camp.

Chigbolu, C'wealth Games' high jumper, dies

JULIUS Chigbolu, a former Commonwealth record holder in the high jump, died on Sunday at his town, Illah, in Delta State, his son Augustine Chigbolu, has announced.

Chigbolu, an Abuja-based businessman, said on Sunday that his father, a prolific high jumper, in his days in the Police team, set an African record at the 1958 Commonwealth Games.

According to the Commonwealth Games Federation records www.thecgf.com/sports/results, Chigbolu, who died at the age of 81, jumped 6ft 6in (1.98 metres).

Chigbolu was also a member of the country's contingent to the 1956 Olympics Games in Melbourne Australia.

He was born on July 29, 1929 at Illah and attended Government School, Agbor, and the Africa College, Onitsha.

Chigbolu later left the Police and joined the Nigerian Prison's Service from where he retired in the 1980's.

Akpoborie slams Lagerback's list

FORMER Super Eagles striker, Jonathan Akpoborie has refused to be swayed by general euphoria among Nigerians over the 44-man list released by new coach of the side, Lars Lagerback.

Akpoborie argued in an interview with brilafm.net that the list is not solely Lagerback's idea and insisted that the manner of the Swede's appointment remains a flaw.

"Is he actually the one who submitted the list, or is it the NFF who took all the choices? I said it before that I would have preferred Eriksson in charge of our team.

"I know he would not do it this way. This time, I know they are the ones in charge. But, we just have to support them to make the team succeed at the World Cup," he said.

NPL crisis: Court sets April 26 for hearing

By Orkula Shaagee

A Federal High Court in Abuja yesterday adjourned till April 26, hearing in the case brought before it by Dr. Sam Jaja challenging the decision of the NPL to transform itself from the Nigeria Football League Limited to the Nigeria Premier League without authorization from the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC).

Barrister Phillip Ugochukwu representing Sam Jaja had requested the court to stay proceeding pending the appearance

of the Corporate Affairs Commission who are the fifth defendant in the case.

Jaja, former President of the Nigeria Referees Association, in the case had queried the legality of the action by the Nigeria Football League Ltd (NPL) to change its name to Nigeria Premier League without due authorization by the CAC.

But NFF in a preliminary objection filed by its counsel Patrick Okolo, asked the court to throw out the case on grounds that Jaja lacks the locus standi to ques-

tion the legality or otherwise of the changes.

When the matter came up yesterday Barrister Ugochukwu representing Jaja in the case sought the guidance of the court if the case can proceed without the Corporate Affairs Commission who is the 5th defendant in the case.

In his submission counsel to NFF contended that the court can proceed with the case and treat the Commission as deviant to the rules of the court adding that the absence of the 5th defendant who is disobedient to the court cannot stall the

accelerated hearing of the case.

That aside, Okolo maintained that the plaintiff is making no claims whatsoever against the 5th defendant and the preliminary objection is merely against the validity of the suit.

Ugochukwu on his part argued that since the CAC was served the originating summons and other processes that it is only proper and normal practice for the commission to be served the objections raised by the defendants.

He maintained that because the decisions that may be reached

touches fundamentally on the functions of the commission in line with section 7 (1) of the Companies and Allied Matters Act, Cap 2004 the case cannot proceed without the commission.

Justice Okorowo in his ruling ordered the counsel to the defendants to serve the CAC yesterday to enable the case proceeds on the April 26. He also ordered the NFF counsel to ensure that the plaintiff is served with all processes at least 48 hours to the next adjourned date so as not to unduly delay the case.



Inter bid to stop Messi

By Mark Meadows (Reuters)

BARCELONA are travelling by bus for today's Champions League semi-final first leg at Inter Milan, showing not even grounded flights and a huge volcanic ash cloud can halt the brilliance of Lionel Messi and Co.

Inter, though, did manage the rare feat of stopping the holders and their Argentine magician from scoring back in September when they met in a goalless draw in the group stages at the San Siro.

A 0-0 draw in the La Liga derby with Espanyol on Saturday and tired limbs from the 985-km bus trip, including an overnight stay in Cannes, will also give Inter hope that Barca will not be at their sparkling best.

An ash cloud from an Icelandic volcano has stopped air transport for much of Europe but Barca are not making excuses.

"With so many hours together on the coach, I am sure it will help us to be more united and to create a tight-knit group to beat Inter," midfielder Sergio Busquets told a news conference.

"It's a long journey and it's not something we are used to but with

music and some films I'm sure the trip will feel much shorter." Coach Pep Guardiola, without the injured Andres Iniesta but with former Inter striker Zlatan Ibrahimovic and left back Eric Abidal back in his squad, has plenty of time to mull tactics.

In recent games, Guardiola has dropped one forward in his habitual attacking trident in favour of a full back, Daniel Alves or Maxwell, who have played in an advanced role to help combat opponents' attempts to crowd the midfield.

However, it was not very effective on Saturday.

Meticulous Inter coach Jose Mourinho will have taken note of how Espanyol successfully harried and disrupted Barca's creative department, keeping Messi and Xavi largely under wraps with close man-to-man marking.

Media reports have therefore speculated Mourinho could make another surprise tactical move for Tuesday after the way his unexpectedly attacking line-up stifled Chelsea.

Right back Maicon may be asked to play in a more advanced role to pack the midfield like Barca, some reports have said.

UEFA said in a statement on Sunday that the game and Wednesday's other semi-final first leg between Bayern Munich and Olympique Lyon would go ahead despite the travel problems.

Inter are glad the match has not been postponed after rediscovering their confidence and swagger in a 2-0 win over Juventus on Friday.

Their Serie A title defence had stumbled badly in recent weeks despite their impressive elimination of Chelsea in the Champions League last 16.

"We have to prepare for the match with tranquillity. Games like these are played more with your mind than with your feet," Inter's former Barca striker Samuel Eto'o told Inter Channel.

Inter, who lost 2-0 at Barca in their second group meeting in November, are at full strength apart from left back Davide Santon being ruled out after minor knee surgery.

Probable teams:

Inter Milan: 12-Julio Cesar; 13-Maicon, 25-Walter Samuel, 6-Lucio, 4-Javier Zanetti; 8-Thiago Motta, 19-Esteban Cambiasso, 5-Dejan Stankovic; 10-Wes-



LIONEL Messi is now the UEFA Champions League top scorer.

ley Sneijder; 9-Samuel Eto'o, 22-Diego Milito

Barcelona: 1-Victor Valdes; 2-Daniel Alves, 3-Gerard Pique,

18-Gabriel Milito, 22-Eric Abidal; 6-Xavi, 16-Sergio Busquets, 15-Seydou Keita; 10-Lionel Messi, 9-Zlatan Ibrahimovic, 17-Pedro

This is not the 'real' final - Mourinho

INTER Milan coach Jose Mourinho yesterday denied that their Champions League semi-final against holders Barcelona is the 'real' final, insisting that would be disrespectful to Lyon and Bayern Munich.

Inter host the Catalans at the San Siro on Tuesday in what is certainly the more glamorous of the two ties in the last four.

But for Mourinho, who guided Porto to the crown in 2004 against Monaco in the most unlikely title-match of recent times, it would be disingenuous to consider this match ultimately decisive.

"An early final does not exist. It's

a semi-final and only the winners will go through to the real final, the one in Madrid," he said.

"And hence that won't be Inter-Barcelona. Lyon and Bayern deserve all the respect because they've reached the same stage as us.

"They also have a 25 percent chance of winning, they have their history and they've knocked out great teams, like Real Madrid.

"And Bayern have one of the best coaches in the world (Louis van Gaal)."

The two sides have already met twice this season in the group stages with the match in Milan ending in a goalless stalemate before Barcelona

dominated in a 2-0 success in Spain.

Barcelona dominated possession in both games but following the San Siro encounter Mourinho claimed his team had played well even without the ball.

And he is not expecting them to have much of it on Tuesday either.

"I'm not interested in the possession of the ball. If tomorrow the team that has the most possession wins, then we've already lost.

"For the first 10 minutes and the last 10 in the game in September in Milan, they were better but for the rest it was even.

"In the game in Barcelona in the group they showed great superiority,

winning easily and deservedly.

"But a lot of time has passed since then. They're as good as they were in November but we're much better now.

"Therefore I believe it's a 50-50 game. Tactically we're more compact, the mentality in the Champions League is very different, the psychological situation is totally different.

"We know it will be difficult but I doubt they're not concerned about playing us."

While the ultra-confident Mourinho claimed he has no concerns over the Catalans control of the ball, he also stated that he has no special plans to subdue the world's best player.

Argentina forward Lionel Messi scored four goals in a 4-1 demolition of Arsenal in the quarter-final, second leg at Camp Nou but Mourinho feels no need to pay extra attention to the young wizard.

"We'll see where he plays tomorrow. He can play on the right, on the left, as the frontman, behind Ibra (Zlatan Ibrahimovic) as he did against Arsenal, behind Bojan (Krkić) as he did against Arsenal at home.

"He's a great player who requires a lot of attention but it's not in my culture to man-mark.

"It won't be one against Messi and 10 against 10, it will be 11 against 11."

THE TUESDAY COLUMN

Sanusi Abubakar

sanusiabubakar@dailytrust.com

2011: Are serious debates about to start?

They say politics is a dirty game. Indeed, we have almost given up hope that 2011 will be decided by informed debates about the credibility and suitability of the contestants. Those in control of the coercive powers of the Nigerian state would in all probability chose, from among themselves, those to succeed. However, now that General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, General Aliyu Gusau and others have started some debates about why we should vote for them, and where we should be heading, in the next year or so, we should be grateful. Previously, nobody will even bother to say why he or she wants to lead us, they just make-up their faces, dress up in expensive attire and *denge-pose*, demanding to be elected on no clear ideological or political ground.

So now, at least, some discussions have started. IBB went to Jos and announced his conversion to something called "true federalism" and "resource control". How that is relevant to the Jos mayhem, he did not elaborate, nor did the journalists present ask him any appropriate follow-up. Many saw the use of these clichés as an attempt to appeal to sectional champions who may come in handy in the 2011 presidential elections. He has also recently jettisoned his preference for the "New Breed" and is reported to have said that this young generation of Nigerians cannot rule the country effectively. Not surprisingly, it was this remark that sparked up a controversy.

Dino Melaye, former Chairman of the House Committee on Information, lashed out calling IBB a senile old man and "a coward who hurriedly packaged an interim government and vamoosed." To him, those remarks were not just an insult to the youth, but also an attempt to promote "generational apathy and age cleansing." As far as Melaye is concerned, the battle to stop IBB "is a battle of no retreat, no surrender." While the senility and cowardice charges are unfair to IBB, and while we are not even sure how far Melaye's fighting words would take him, it is at least refreshing to see leaders coming out to say what they are thinking, and to be subjected to popular criticisms.

Not to be outdone, the National Security Adviser, General Aliyu Gusau, has now brought out a draft political manifesto. At least it resembles one. Most people knew him simply as a master-spy, very versatile in matters of national security and military intrigues. As a leader, we had no inklings as to his policy preferences or ideological thrusts. Not anymore. Following a security awareness seminar he organised for new ministers in his office his remarks, which were strangely made public, Gusau made the front page of most of our national papers with his condemnation of EFCC and CBN policies. His remarks also touched on Nigeria's Human Development Index, Education, Health, Poverty, Unemployment, and Food Security and so on, charging the new ministers to be conscious of the impact of public policy on the nation's security.

That these remarks of the nation's chief security adviser to a close-door seminar were the first of its kind to be made public goes without saying. Why were they made public? That is quite another matter and we can only speculate. To me, it is heartening to see an attempt to bring national security concerns to public debate, and I look forward to a full release of his address to the new ministers. Because, if

the whole intent of the release of those remarks is to show Gusau as a potential Vice President or even successor to Jonathan, then Adebisi Adekunle, his Chief Press Secretary, must go the whole hog, and make public the full text of the remarks, and thereby start an open debate. From the little that I have read, Gusau has an excellent grasp of the limitations of fighting graft and the credibility issue confronting the EFCC, for example. Ditto the police. But then, that is his job, and we hope he will transform those concerns into issues that may eventually become policies.

Where the trouble starts is in his understanding of economics and banking. First he accused the Central Bank of Nigeria of discriminating against some banks. Second, he said that the reforms are damaging the banking sector. Both statements I find very funny, if not for the unfortunate smear and potential discouragement of public officials knowing full well they cannot answer him

out of respect for protocol. Where was General Gusau, the banks themselves as well as the current crop of mostly sponsored critics, when the criteria used were spelt out? Why could they not have told the CBN that so and so bank failed to meet the criteria, but had to wait until now? Damaging the banking sector? Please spare us the joke. The sector was already a damaged contraption waiting to collapse. Now even criminals who were a party to the rape of our banks and should have by now been locked up, and

the keys to the cell thrown away, are now waking up to say they should have been left to continue with their crimes because the sector is so important, that it lays the golden eggs blah-blah-blah. General, believe me, economies are not built by paper wealth alone. These banks were not lending to agriculture or manufacturing. SMEs could not access the loans either. They were using public deposits to make more money through speculative and often criminal activities. Now they wake up, after hiding the loot somewhere and are now disturbing us with innuendoes, lies and threats.

It is in our overall national security interest that we evolve banks whose balance sheets are believable, banks that are truly into financial intermediation, that are helping us to create jobs and incomes. Otherwise we fail the next generations and reduce them to desperados who would not allow us to sleep at night.

Debates are good. Snide remarks, however, are diversionary. General Gusau is in the corridors of power; indeed he is among the handful that is really in charge today. He should have taken the matter up with CBN and EFCC, or with his boss. A national security adviser undermining the credibility of the banking sector regulators and the main anti-corruption agencies (and even our judiciary), in such a very public manner, does not help in our stated mission of restoring confidence. He is undermining their credibility. He is no stranger to government and knows fully well how things should be done. Still, let the debates begin. Let General Gusau resign a join the race, since he feels strongly about these things, but let him shop for more discerning advisors and spin doctors. Let us hear more from IBB, and from Buhari, Atiku, Tinubu and all of them out there who aspire to lead us? Where do they intend to take us, why and how? Politics is not a beauty contest.

SPORTS REPORT



ROBERT Cheruiyot

Cheruiyot wins Boston Marathon

Kenya's Robert Kiprono Cheruiyot won the 114th Boston Marathon yesterday, breaking the course record with a time of 2 hours, 5 minutes, 52 seconds. Ethiopia's Teyba Erkesso took the women's title.

Cheruiyot was 82 seconds faster than the course record set in 2006 by four-time winner Robert Kipkoech Cheruiyot,

who's not related. The 2010 champions each earned \$150,000 and a golden olive wreath from the city of Marathon, Greece; Cheruiyot gets an extra \$25,000 for the course record.

Cheruiyot finished 91 seconds ahead of Ethiopian Tekeste Kebede, with defending champion Deriba Merga in third and Americans Ryan Hall and Meb Keflezighi rounding out the top five.



ADRIAN Mutu

Mutu banned for 9 months

Fiorentina forward Adrian Mutu has been suspended for nine months by the Italian Olympic Committee's antidoping tribunal.

The 31-year-old Romanian twice tested positive for sibutramine following games against Bari and Lazio in January, and will be unable to play until Oct. 29.

"I'm not happy," Mutu said Monday. "A suspension this long for a laxative seems excessive."

In 2004, Mutu received a seven-month ban for testing positive for cocaine while with Chelsea.

His lawyer said they an appeal was possible to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne, Switzerland.