

LIBRARY

Complementary Copy
NOT FOR SALE

DAILY TRUST

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2010 RABI'U AWWAL 9, 1431 A.H.

TRUST IS A BURDEN

www.dailytrust.com VOL. 23 No 72 N150



Jonathan: We'll better Ghana's election record

Page 3

Arewa Suites, Abuja
General Manager: Ademola Adeniji, 011-234-234-2345
Central Business District P.M.A. #10, Abuja

- Newly Renovated Rooms for our Esteemed Guest
- Luxury Furnished Rooms
- Available Services:
 - Single Room
 - Standard Double Room
 - Luxury Suites
 - Diplomatic Suites
 - Presidential Suite
 - 24 Hours Room Service
 - Restaurant Services
 - Business Centre
 - Shop Arcade
- Travel Agents
- Conference/Banquet Hall
- Outdoor Catering services
- Bar Service
- Car Hire Services
- Bukka Chop
- Spacious Car Park

Telephone: 011-234-234-2345
011-234-234-2346
011-234-234-2347
E-mail: arewasuites@arewasuites.com

Inside Today's Daily Trust

Business

China Unicom says it has not started any negotiations in a \$2.5 billion bid for NITEL **25**



Sport

The new Technical Advser to be engaged by NFF has been given World Cup semi final target **52**

Digest

Learning to play a musical instrument could help to improve children's reading **35**

Politics

Senator Usman Albishir says his supporters will determine his stay in All Nigeria Peoples Party **50**

EFCC arrests Abdullahi Adamu

● Over alleged N15 billion fraud

By Misbahu Bashir, Suleiman M. Bisalla & Hir Joseph, Lafia

FORMER Governor of Nasarawa State Alhaji Abdullahi Adamu was yesterday arrested by the operatives of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) over alleged fraudulent award of contracts and stealing of public funds estimated at N15 billion.

EFCC's Head of Media and Publicity Mr. Femi Babafemi said, Adamu was arrested over fraudulent award of contracts mostly on capital project during his eight-year rule as governor of the State. He said the former governor would be arraigned in court after his interrogation.

Adamu was moved yesterday morning to the Headquarters of the

commission in Wuse 2, Abuja, where he is being interrogated. The former governor weekend declared his intention to contest the Nasarawa-West Senatorial seat in the 2011 general elections.

The allegations by the EFCC against Adamu include the alleged non-execution of the N71.7 million

Continued on page 5

Saudi clears FEC team to Yar'adua

By Mohammed S. Shehu, Atika Balal & Aisha A. Umar

THE six-man delegation mandated by the Federal Executive Council to visit Saudi Arabia and ascertain the true state of ailing President Umaru Musa Yar'adua's health was billed to leave the country last night after the Federal Government eventually secured a landing clearance for the Presidential jet scheduled to convey them.

The team was earlier

“We will leave tonight (yesterday) and we are not going to be there all week

billed to embark on the trip on Sunday night, but the trip was cancelled following government's inability to secure landing permit for the Presidential jet conveying them to Saudi Arabia.

Briefing reporters after emerging from a meeting with Acting President Goodluck Jonathan at the Presidential Villa, Abuja, yesterday, Foreign Affairs Minister Chief Ojo Maduekwe said the landing clearance was secured in the early hours of yesterday, and that the team would leave by midnight yesterday barring any last minute changes.

“We will leave tonight (yesterday) and we are not going to be there all week. It is not going to last long, and as soon as we carry out the purpose of our going

Continued on page 5



ACTING President Goodluck Jonathan (right) with former president of Ghana John Kufour during his visit to State House, Abuja, yesterday.

Woman gives birth to conjoined twins

From Muhammad Abubakar, Bauchi

A 28 year old mother of seven, Binta Isa, at the weekend delivered conjoined twins in Guduba village in Ningi Local Government Area of Bauchi State.

This is the first of such birth in the community. The woman, who is receiving medical attention alongside the twins at the General Hospital Ningi, told our correspondent that such a thing had never happened in either her family or husband's family. She said she had been married for 13 years.

The mother, who appeared to be in a stable condition, told our correspondent that she was rushed to the hospital shortly after delivering the twins, and that she never attended ante-natal care before the birth.

The Chief Medical Officer of the Ningi General Hospital, Dr. Bakunawa Garba Bello, told our correspondent that the woman delivered the twins Saturday night around 11:20 pm, but was rushed to the hospital. He said when they were brought to the hospital, she was in shock while the twins were in distressed and that the case was rare because they were joined at the abdomen with two 'active' legs on one side and two deformed legs on the other side, sharing one umbilical cord and anus.

He said from what they could see of their genitals, they appeared to be males.

"This is the first recorded case of such a birth in the hospital and government in the entire local government area. They have some special peculiarities because of the way they are fused. It is not common to have twins joined at the abdomen with a common pelvis most likely affecting their urogenital system," he said.

He said this kind of birth was an indication that the ante-natal system was not well integrated. "Other likely reasons may be deficiency in some minerals and vitamins such as Folic Acid or due to some infections."

He said he had already contacted a consultant paediatrician at the University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital who would assess the twins for possible separation.

"The hospital is one of the few places in the country where separation of such conjoined twins could be carried out," he added



FROM left: Senate President David Mark, Former Chief Justice of Nigeria, Justice Alfa Belgore, and Minister of Justice and Attorney General of the Federation, Prince Adetokunbo Kayode, at a lecture on Democracy, Human Rights and the Role of the Security Agencies, in Abuja yesterday.

Edo Assembly in bloody session over Speaker's removal

From Vincent Egunyanga, Benin

MEMBERS of the Edo State House of Assembly yesterday in Benin engaged one another in a bloody fight over the leadership of the House.

Trouble started when the House resumed sitting after a three-week recess and the Speaker, Zakawanu Garba, started making his opening speech when the Action Congress (AC) leader in the House, Paul Ohanbanu, raised his hand to be recognised but was ignored.

At this point, the AC members who had met the previous night on the removal of the Speaker, started shouting, "Point of order, Point of order".

When the situation became uncontrollable, resulting in a free for all fight with members using knives, machetes, chairs and other dangerous weapons against one another, the Speaker adjourned sitting indefinitely.

The adjournment did not help matters as fighting continued inside the chambers

and outside. At this point, thugs who had been stationed around the Assembly complex, jumped in and started beating members and staff of the Assembly when a detachment of anti-riot policemen were brought in to control the situation.

When normalcy returned after about two hours, the 13 Action Congress members came back to the chamber and announced the suspension of Speaker Zakawanu Garba, Deputy Speaker Levis Aigbodion, PDP leader Frank Okiye and Blessing Agbabakor.

With the suspension of the principal officers of the House, the 13 members of the 24-member House announced the removal of the Speaker and appointed Peter Aliu as Acting Speaker.

The AC leader, Paul Ohanbanu, said the principal officers were removed to pave way for investigation into allegations of financial impropriety against them.

But reacting to the development, Zakawanu Garba said he remained Speaker.

He told our correspondent in Benin on telephone that the AC members sponsored by

the state government wanted to impeach him through the back door but the coup failed.

He said they brought in thugs to destabilise the House. He said the House had adjourned before the alleged removal of the principal leaders, stressing that all was done after the adjournment was illegal.

He said the Action Congress had 12 members in the state House of Assembly but needed 16 members to remove the Speaker.

Some members of the House including Johnson Ogwuma and Phillip Shuaibu left the Assembly with bandaged heads.

Workers closed for the day at the 2.00pm to avoid being caught up in the cross fire.

Over 20 heavily armed mobile policemen have been stationed in the Assembly building. Teargas was used to disperse the crowd loitering within the Assembly premises.

Meanwhile, a PDP member in the House, Bright Omokhodion, representing Esan West, has decamped to the AC.

Speaker Garba said he had already declared his seat vacant.

Speeding truck kills 2, crushes car

From Hamza Idris, Damaturu

A heavily loaded truck moving on high speed yesterday killed two persons, smashed another vehicle and crushed two motorcycles in Damaturu.

The accident occurred at the main roundabout in the state capital around 9am reportedly after the break system of the vehicle failed.

Witnesses said the driver who was carrying bags of assorted food items from Maiduguri to the Southern part of the country, entered the town on high speed which made it difficult

for him to control the vehicle after realising that the break system was no longer functioning. "When he approached the roundabout, there was nothing he could do...he therefore smashed the Honda Accord car which was in front of him before crushing the next motorcycle which was carrying two people", Adamu Musa, a resident of Damaturu who was at the scene of the accident, told Daily Trust.

"The rider of the motorcycle died on the spot as his head was chopped off while the passenger died on the way to the Sani Abacha Hospital," the witness said.

Yobe State police spokesman Mohammed Pada said investigation into the matter was going on.

Our correspondent reports that accidents involving heavy trucks are now on the increase in Damaturu.

Though the state government had completed the 18km ring-road in addition to the four new roundabouts which would make it easier for heavy truck drivers to proceed to the South through the by-pass without going through the city centre, many drivers are reluctant to follow the new route.

PDP denies shopping for Yar'adua's replacement

From Ismail Mudashir, Kaduna

THE North-West Zone of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) has denied reports that it had started shopping for the replacement of the ailing President Umaru Musa Yar'adua.

A national daily Sunday reported

that the North-West Zone executive committee of the party had during its meeting Saturday, short listed names of notable politicians, most of whom are currently governors of states in the North-West to replace the ailing president.

Reacting to the report, the Zonal

Secretary, Barrister Baba Lawal Aliyu, said the report was nothing but a figment of the reporter's imagination.

He said during the meeting, prayers were held seeking speedy recovery of Yar'adua and his return to Nigeria to continue work.

He said the meeting also unani-

mously confirmed the unflinching support of all members in the zone for President Yar'adua who the zone insists must be allowed to finish his tenure. The appointment of Dr. Jonathan Goodluck as Acting President is pending the recovery and return of President Yar'adua.

Nigeria tackles reform, unrest at oil conference

By Hamisu Muhammad, with agency report

THE annual Nigeria Oil & Gas Conference opened yesterday in Abuja to discuss stalled oil reform, domestic gas supply shortages and stability in the Niger Delta region.

The three-day Nigerian oil summit offers the opportunity for the major players in Africa's biggest energy industry to give updates on current operations and contact potential investors.

Minister of Petroleum Rilwanu Lukman, Minister of State for Petroleum Odein Ajumogobia and NNPC head Mohammed Barkindo would address the conference on the outlook for the country's oil industry and the impact on domestic energy supplies.

Delegates arrived in Abuja yesterday with speeches, seminars and discussions due for today and tomorrow.

The absence of President Umaru Yar'adua has raised concerns about the amnesty programme.

Attacks on oil and gas installations in the Niger Delta in recent years have prevented Nigeria from pumping much above two thirds of its 3 million barrels per day (bpd) installed capacity, costing it an estimated \$1 billion a month in lost revenues, according to the central bank.

Nigerian crude is favoured by refiners in the United States and Europe because it is light and easy to process into fuel products.

FG, labour to set up c'ttee on deregulation

By Mohammed S. Shehu

THE Federal Government and the Nigeria Labour Congress met yesterday and agreed to set up a joint committee on deregulation.

Sources said the resolution was a form of compromise between the government and the organised labour in order to sort out grey areas in the planned deregulation of the downstream sector of the petroleum industry.

This was the outcome of yesterday's meeting with Acting President Goodluck Jonathan and the labour led by the President of the Nigeria Labour Congress Abudulwaheed Omar at the Presidential Villa, Abuja.

Omar told newsmen after the meeting that the NLC congratulated Jonathan and advised him on the need to tackle the challenges ahead.

A source at the meeting said the ministries of finance, labour and productivity and petroleum resources have been mandated to work with the representatives of labour to constitute the members of the committee.

When inaugurated, the committee would deliberate on the grey areas, which hitherto have been the bone of contention between the government and labour on the deregulation issue.

Jonathan: We'll better Ghana's election record

By Mohammed S. Shehu

ACTING President Goodluck Jonathan has appreciated Ghana's immediate President John Kufour for setting the pace in the history of electoral revolution in Africa by presiding over free and fair election in Ghana and assured that Nigeria is poised to do better than Ghana come 2011.

Jonathan said Nigeria is mindful of its position and has assured

African countries that the country is committed to leading by example on the continent.

Jonathan stated this yesterday when he received the former Ghanaian President who paid him a courtesy visit in the State House, Abuja.

Jonathan said Nigeria will continue to do what is right despite daunting national challenges, while maintaining its leadership role in sub-Saharan Africa.

He noted that this year is quite significant for many African countries which are marking the golden jubilee anniversary as independent nations alongside Nigeria.

Kufour, who was in Nigeria for the THISDAY Awards to commemorate Nigeria's 50th Independence Anniversary, congratulated Dr. Jonathan on his assumption of office, saying he came to pay respects and show

solidarity with Nigeria's Acting President.

"Your knack for diplomacy and skill has helped to stabilize the situation in Nigeria. We want you to know that we wish you well. Nigeria is the anchor nation in West Africa and sub-Saharan Africa and your stability is ours as well. We are praying for your success and I am personally confident that you will succeed," Kufour stated.



ONE of the destroyed churches in last Sunday's crisis in Kazaure, Jigawa State.

FG warns security agencies against unjust treatment

By Aisha Umar A.

THE Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice Prince Adetokunbo Kayode said unfair actions and inactions to the rights of the citizens by security agencies will no longer be tolerated.

Speaking at a seminar on human rights organized for Nigerian security agencies by the Federal Ministry of Foreign

Affairs, Kayode said there is need to strike a balance between maintenance of order and obedience to the laws of the land in the course of performing their duties.

In his welcome address, Foreign Affairs Minister Chief Ojo Maduekwe said the country remains committed to the protection of human rights, adding that crisis in Nigeria will stop only if the feeling indigeneship

is conquered and "until we have a country where an Igbo man from Abia State can become the governor of Kano State".

Senate President David Mark, in his remarks, said "It is not always an easy thing for the police to determine what amounts to minimum force in certain situations and that explains why most of their actions violate human rights."

He called for the establishment

of a special complaints commission to address the mounting complaints by officers and men of the Nigerian Police and disclosed that the Senate was working to amend the Evidence Act.

In his paper titled, "The judiciary and the rule of law", the former Chief Justice of the Federation Alfa Belgore called for the amendment of the Evidence Act, the Criminal Law and the Arbitration Law.

Middle Belt politicians strategise ahead 2011

By Abbas Jimoh

SOME leaders of the Middle Belt Forum, a regional socio-political group, may have begun strategising their political steps in view of the political situation created by President Yar'adua's ill health.

Daily Trust learnt that a meeting of some members of the Forum including former Minister of Information Prof. Jerry Gana, Prof. Lami Lombin, and Chief Solomon Lar was held at the Rock

View Hotel in Abuja recently to discuss 'politics and issues' as they relate to the interest of the Middle Belt region.

Prof. Gana had put up a strong presidential campaign in the run up to the 2007 general elections and was also part of the Eminent Elders' Group that called for a formal handover of power from President Umaru Yar'adua to then Vice President Goodluck Jonathan.

However, a source who

attended the meeting said the issue of the recent crisis in Jos also featured briefly but an observation raised by one member regarding the presence of only one prominent Muslim politician, Engr. Tanko Abdullahi, from the region and certain issues raised forced the meeting to adjourn to a date yet to be announced.

Others in attendance, Daily Trust learnt, include Chairman of the MBF Isaac Shaahu, former Sports Minister Damishi Sango,

Senator John Shagaya and Evangelist Musa Paul Gindiri, among others.

Some politicians from the zone including former Deputy Senate President Ibrahim Mantu told Daily Trust that though they were aware of the meeting, they were not invited.

When contacted, Prof. Jerry Gana denied knowledge of any meeting of the leaders of the Middle Belt in Abuja or anywhere last week.

Friend: Murdered ex-EFCC was trailed

By Misbahu Bashir & Idris Ahmed

FORMER Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Superintendent Danjuma Mohammed was prior to his killing tracked by his killers for some time, his friend said.

Mohammed was shot in the abdomen by his assailants at his

newly rented apartment in Gwarimpa, Abuja, on Sunday morning and died on the way to the hospital.

The friend, who does not want his name mentioned, said Mohammed had complained to him that unknown persons suspected to be hired assassins were trailing his movements. He said the deceased had, as a result of that, been dis-

guising his identity and changing routes to avoid the suspected killers but did not alerted the police.

Another associate of the deceased said the murdered police detective had informed him that he was driving mostly at high speed, fearing that "anything can happen to him".

Mohammed was said to be

among the EFCC operatives that were sent back to the police when Farida Waziri became the head of the anticorruption agency. He was later posted to the Federal Inland Revenue Services (FIRS). He investigated top politicians and government functionaries while serving with EFCC as investigator during the time of Nuhu Ribadu.

He was buried yesterday at about 2pm an Izom, his home town in Niger State according to Islamic rites.

At the FIRS headquarters yesterday, Daily Trust learnt Mohammed was attached, albeit on ad hoc basis, to the task force team enforcing the collection of tax defaulting institutions.

NBC sanctions 35 stations

THE National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) on Monday in Abuja said it sanctioned 35 broadcast stations for breach of broadcasting code in January.

The commission said in a statement issued by Mr Awwalu Salihu, Head, Public Affairs, that the sanctions ranged from warning to fines.

Salihu said stations fined included Broadcasting Corporation of Oyo State, Imo Broadcasting Corporation, FM Owerri and Anambra Broadcasting Services, Awka.

He said the stations were given fines ranging from N50, 000 to N500, 000 for repeated broadcast of Not To Be Broadcasted (NTBBs) and adverts with spurious claims.

Other stations fined included those advertising alcohol outside the stipulated time and broadcasts contravening election regulation.

Salihu said OSRCTV Akure, OSRC FM Akure, Jeremi FM, Warri, Independent Television Benin and Delta Radio Television, Warri were fined.

He said Voice of Delta Asaba, Adaba FM, Akure, BCOS, Ibadan as well as BRTV FM and BRTV in Maiduguri got a warning each.

Salihu also said FRCN Yola, Adamawa Broadcasting Corporation Yola, Yobe Broadcasting Corporation, NTA Maiduguri, Channels TV, WAZOBIA FM, BOND FM and Rhythm FM Abuja received warnings.

He said the commission also issued warnings to Independent Television Abuja, NTA Kaduna, ABG Communications, Desmins Television Kaduna, Africa Independent Television Kaduna, Rima Radio Sokoto, Plateau Radio Television Corporation, Jos and AIT Jos.

He said the stations were warned for breaches that included praise-singing, absence of aviation warning light, broadcast of NTBB musicals, wrongful logo embossment and live relay of foreign news. (NAN)



LAGOS State Governor Babatunde Fashola (middle), Nigeria's former Permanent Representative to the United Nations Alhaji Maitama Sule (right) and former Senate President Senator Ken Nnamani (left) during the 7th Annual The Sun Man of the Year Award held at the Expo Hall, Eko Hotels & Suites, Victoria Island, Lagos, at the weekend.

Court to rule on Ribadu's suit March 30

By Atika Balal

AN Abuja Federal High Court has fixed March 30 for ruling/judgment in a suit filed by former Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) against the Code of Conduct Tribunal (CCT).

Nuhu Ribadu had gone to court seeking enforcement of his fundamental human rights and a right to fair hearing. He is challenging the jurisdiction of the CCT to try him over allegations of failing to declare his assets. The court, on January 27 ordered that all parties file their applications and adjourned for adoption of written address. Yesterday however, Counsel to Ribadu, Sola Ebgeyinka asked the court for another adjournment, an application the court denied.

He said the plaintiff has expressed interest in being present at the next adjourned date due to the change in government and it will be wrong for counsel to adopt addresses without instructions from him.

Counsel to the AGF, A.A Malik however said an application for adjournment cannot be predicated on any change of government. He said the suit had reached a limit whereby addresses should be adopted or the suit withdrawn.

He urged the court to invoke order 12 rule 3 of the Fundamental Human Rights Enforcement Rule which deems all addresses as adopted.

Malik is challenging the competence of the suit and jurisdiction of the court. He is asking the court to dismiss the suit.

Maulud: FG declares Friday public holiday

THE Federal Government has declared Friday, Feb. 26, as a public holiday to mark the Muslim festival, Id-el Maulud. Minister of State for Interior Ademola Seriki announced the holiday in a statement in Abuja yesterday.

He wished all Nigerians at home and abroad a blissful and joyous celebration and urged them to use the occasion to reflect on the true teachings of Prophet Mohammed, which emphasised the virtues of humility, sobriety and selfless service to humanity. He also urged Nigerians to pray for peace and progress of the country. (NAN)

15 Nigerians, 2 Ghanaians arraigned over oil bunkering

By Misbahu Bashir

FIFTEEN Nigerians and two Ghanaians were yesterday arraigned before a Federal High Court in Asaba, Delta State, by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) over illegal oil bunkering. The 15 Nigerians are: Ebizugbe Kennedy, Kalu Emmanuel, Awagbe Kehinde Peter, Alonte Kolapo Kehinde, Moloko Joseph, Yinka Ajibade, and Ogonoye Adeshina. Others are Anyigi Edu Sunday, Adebayo Babatunde Micheal, Chukwudi Egwu, Adeyeye Adebawale, Segun Adenuwa, Busari Olatunji Adeleke, Odewu Joseph and a lady Ogundipe Olubokola. The two Ghanaians are Owusu Kwaku and Joseph Akwa Koffi.

They were arrested by the Joint Task Force Operation Restore Hope, Yenagoa, Bayelsa State and transferred to the EFCC on February 10, 2010. The suspects, who were arraigned on a two count charge, were denied bail by the trial judge Justice Marcel Awokulehin who ordered that they be remanded in prison custody till March 9, 2010 when their counsel, Barrister Nelson Otaji would argue their bail application.

EFCC's Spokesman Femi Babafemi said count one of the two-count charge of conspiracy and illegal oil bunkering states that the suspects, conspired among themselves together with Niyi Fafunwa now at large to commit felony by dealing in petroleum products contrary to Section 3(6) of the Miscellaneous Offences Act and punishable under Section 17 of the same Act. Count two states that the suspects alongside Niyi Fafunwa, now at large on February 9, 2010 at Parkinson creek, off Warri channel, Delta State without lawful authority to deal in petroleum product by bunkering 723.6 metric tone of crude oil into MT Shekinnah later changed to MT B Excel.

Alison-Madueke supports invocation of section 144

By Nasir Inam

MINISTER of Solid Minerals Diezani Alison-Madueke supported the invoking of Section 144 of the Constitution with regards to the medical status of President Umaru Musa Yaradua, a reliable source at the ministry said.

The source however said

though Mrs Alison-Madueke supported the invocation of section 144, she insisted that the term incapacitated must be preceded by the word 'temporary'.

He said contrary to allegations in newspaper reports, the minister never had any altercation with some ministers over her support for invoking Section 144.

According to the source, "She implored that it was FEC's duty to uphold the Constitution and do its national duty and in so doing protect the dignity of President Yaradua.

He said at no time did Mrs. Alison-Madueke enter into a verbal altercation with any of the ministers.

Yar'adua: SNG gives 10-day ultimatum to FEC

By Muideen Olaniyi

THE Wole Soyinka-led Save Nigeria Group (SNG) yesterday gave the Federal Executive Council (FEC) March 3, 2010 deadline to invoke Section 144 of the Constitution to declare the ailing President Umaru Musa Yar'adua permanently incapacitated.

Addressing newsmen yesterday in Abuja, a member of the SNG Coordinating Committee, Salihu Lukman, said the failure of President Yar'adua to speak directly to Nigerians for three months and the inability of his aides to show his live image were incontrovertible evidence of his incapacity.

Lukman expressed hopes that the FEC delegation would be allowed to gain access to President Yar'adua and return home to activate Section 144 of the constitution. He voiced disgust over failure of past high profile delegations to see him.

According to him, "If they (FEC delegations) fail to see the President, it will be conclusive evidence that he is permanently incapacitated and can no longer act as President. The Acting President should then be sworn in as President."

He said the group's position is predicated on the need to follow legal and constitutional means in the resolution of national issues.

"This is the only way democracy can survive and flourish, and indeed, it is the only way by which Nigeria can be said to be governed by the rule of law," he said.

Information Ministry calls for tender on Nigeria at 50

THE Federal Ministry of Information and Communications has invited tenders from interested companies for items to be used in celebrating Nigeria at 50.

A statement signed by the Acting Permanent Secretary of the Ministry, Mr M.B.M. Suleiman, said the winning company would be expected to design and host the website.

"It will also design the logo and provide event managers as well as print compendium for the celebration which begins before October," it said. (NAN)



FORMER President of the United States of America George W. Bush (right) with former Head of State Muhammadu Buhari at the Nigeria at 50 Thisday Award Night, in Abuja on Sunday.

EFCC arrests Abdullahi Adamu

Continued from page 1

contract for the construction of engineering complex at Nasarawa Polytechnic, the N34 million contract for the construction of Admin block in Lafia Poly, and the award of N1.1 billion contract for various projects without due process. The former governor is currently the secretary of the Board of Trustees of the ruling PDP.

Reacting to the arrest of the former governor, Barrister Musa

Elayo, former Minister of State for Justice said the arrest which came shortly after the former governor had declared his intention to run for the Senate seat of Nasarawa West is politically motivated.

Speaking to *Daily Trust* on telephone yesterday, the former Minister wondered why any such allegations were not raised since the former governor left office in 2007. He described Adamu as the most outstanding politician in Nasarawa State, stressing that he

is a rallying point for politicians whether in or out of PDP, which is why he has become a threat to some politicians.

"Nasarawa State is in a total mess at the moment. Nothing is going on; there is complete disenchantment from the political class and the civil service," he said.

Nasarawa State governor, Aliyu Akwe Doma could not be reached for comments last night as he did not pick his calls. However, Governor Doma's spokes-

man, Ibrahim Addra told *Daily Trust* that the information was strange to him. "This is all news and strange to me. I cannot confirm anything because I am just hearing it from you."

"First I am not aware of any arrest nor was I briefed by my boss if the state government originated any complaint. Secondly, I cannot say why, if at all the former governor was arrested by the EFCC. That is all I can tell you for now," Addra added.

Saudi clears FEC team to Yar'adua

Continued from page 1

we will start coming back. The request was made close to the weekend when I asked the Saudi Ambassador to come and see me. He promised to convey our request to the Kingdom. It is only by yesterday that the details of our going were concluded. So, by the time we have it, it was almost midnight. So, we couldn't continue because we have to get the people on the delegation to be ready."

Members of the team are Minister of Petroleum Dr. Rilwanu Lukman; Secretary to the Government of the Federation Alhaji Yayale Ahmed; Minister of Health Prof. Babatunde Osotimehin; the Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice Chief Kayode Adetokunbo.

Others are the Minister of Agriculture Dr. Sayyadi Abba-Ruma; and Foreign Affairs Minister, Chief Ojo Maduekwe. Maduekwe said the team would visit both the ailing President and the King of the Saudi Arabia. Asked whether their mission would include gathering medical

report on the president's health condition, Maduekwe said: "We are not a medical team. We are not a medical panel."

He said the inclusion of the Minister of Health Prof. Babatunde Osotimehin on the team does not in any way make the team a medical panel. "The fact that he is the minister of health does not make him a member of a medical panel. An engineer can be minister of health; even a lawyer like me can be minister of health."

The only position in the executive council, which by constitutional provision requires a particular profession to head that ministry is that of the office of Attorney-General, it must be a lawyer. The fact that the minister of health is on this team does not automatically mean that he is going there as a medical doctor. It could have been minister of culture, it could have been anybody else, so it should not establish any linkage between the presence of Prof. Osotimehin, renowned medical scholar and minister of health. There is no linkage between that at all and the pur-

pose of this visit.

He said the purpose of the visit was to express the Federal Government's appreciation to the King of Saudi Arabia and their solidarity with the first family and assure Yar'adua that under the dynamic leadership of the Acting President Jonathan, "governance was going on."

"The executive council remains focused, united and that every issue whether it is infrastructure, health care or education or even diplomacy have been proceeding normally. You can see the floury of foreign visitors to Nigeria and we need to have this conversation in Saudi both with the government of Saudi and also members of the first family," he said.

It is not clear if the team will be allowed to see Yar'adua. It would be recalled that many delegations that went there in recent weeks could not see him.

His doctors at the King Faisal Specialist Hospital are said to be preventing visitors from Abuja to see him in the hospital. Nigeria's ambassador to Saudi Arabia,

Abdullah Aminchi said he himself had visited Yar'adua on Saturday and that the condition of the president, who has not been seen in public for three months, was improving after treatment for a heart ailment. "I saw him the day before yesterday... He's really feeling better now," Aminchi told AFP.

He said it was Yar'adua doctors and not Saudi authorities, as some Nigerian officials have charged, who had denied access to the ailing president. "It is only the doctors assigned to him who are preventing them (visitors) from seeing the president," despite a green light from the Saudi authorities, Aminchi said.

The Charge d' Affairs of the Saudi Arabian Embassy in Abuja, Jalal Hassan O. Almograby, corroborated Aminchi's assertion that it's not that the Saudi authorities that have been preventing visitors from Nigeria from seeing Yar'adua, but his doctors. Speaking to *Daily Trust* yesterday at the embassy, he said the only person that can restrict access to the president is his doctor.

Police arrest 3 fake military officers

From Ruqayyah Yusuf Aliyu, Kano

THE Police in Kano have arrested three fake military officers in the state, the Commissioner of Police, Alhaji Mohammed Gana, has said.

He said two of the alleged fake officers were until their arrest, parading themselves as Army Lieutenants while one of them claimed to be a Captain.

Gana who spoke when he visited Kano State Governor Ibrahim Shekarau at the Government House yesterday, said the fake military officers were arrested in their houses with military uniforms which he alleged that they used for robberies. He said the command had in the last one month also arrested over 30 armed robbers. The police commissioner further said the the command has also arrested over 65 thugs popularly called Yandaba within the metropolis. He said the thugs were also arrested with dangerous weapons they use in carrying out illicit activities.

He promised not to relent in his effort in the fight against crime and all forms of criminal activities in the state while he advised politicians to avoid the use of political thugs during campaigns. He further advised that politicians at all times should conduct political activities in a lawful way.

Responding, Governor Shekarau commended the police commissioner for the achievements within the last one month, saying he had proved that he was an active police officer willing to serve the country. Shekarau further pledged his continuous support for the command while urging the police to deal with anyone found sponsoring violence in politics, not minding his political affiliation or the party he belongs.

Gana alleges plan to remove Yar'adua

From Ismail Mudashir, Kaduna

A group of prominent people are plotting the removal of President Umaru Musa Yar'adua by insisting that he should be declared incapacitated, former President Olusegun Obasanjo's campaign coordinator in 1999, Alhaji Umar Gana, has said.

Addressing newsmen in Kaduna yesterday, Gana said they had perfected their plans to remove the president and that

some members of the Federal Executive Council (FEC) were being used for the actualization of the plot.

"Those plotting to remove Yar'adua are enemies of the country and Nigerians should, irrespective of political affiliations, work against them because they are not doing it in the interest of the country but for their own selfish interests," he said.

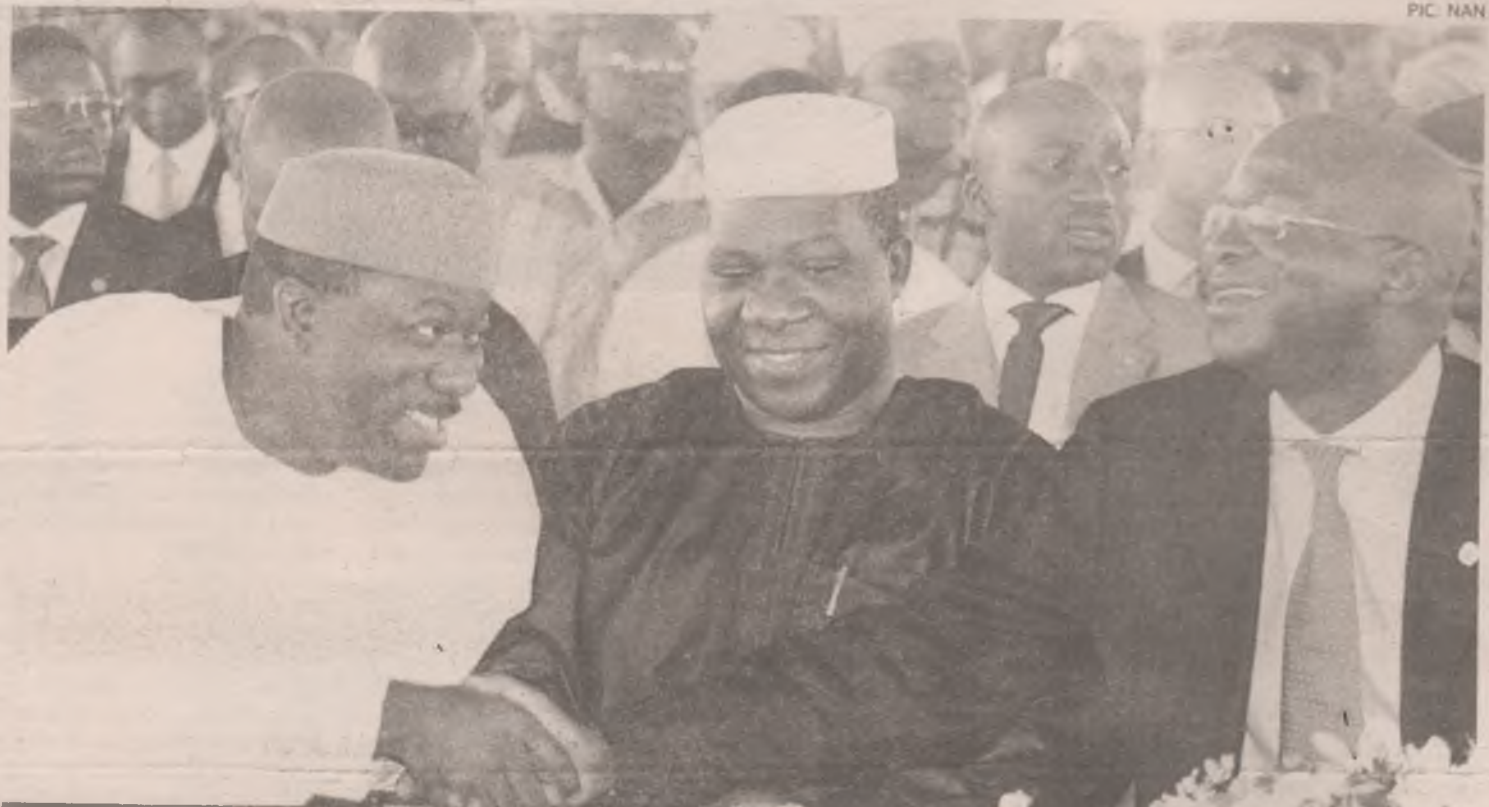
Gana, who is also the Chairman of the Democratic Advancement

Option (DAO) said the six-man team constituted by the FEC to visit the president in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, was one of the weapons of the cabal to remove the president. He added that the resolution of the National Assembly that made Vice President Goodluck Jonathan the Acting President had addressed all issues raised by the absence of President Yar'adua.

Gana while stressing that the moves of the cabal were capable of disuniting the country, said the

proposed visit of the FEC members was ill-timed and totally unnecessary, saying, "Allow the sleeping dog to lie".

"This cabal is all out to remove the president at all costs and all what they doing are unnecessary and totally on-political. It is a fact that certain individuals are trying to cause confusion in the country and we should all resist it. All what they are doing will not pay any dividend. Allow this man to attend to his medication," he added.



FROM left: Action Congress gubernatorial candidate for Ekiti State Mr. Kayode Fayemi, Lagos State Commissioner for Information and Strategy Mr. Opeyemi Bamidele and Governor Babatunde Fashola of Lagos State, at the Governor's Forum with civil servants to mark his 1,000 days in office in Lagos yesterday.

Epidemic looms as water scarcity persists in Ogun

From Kehinde Akinyemi, Abeokuta

THE Ogun State Water Board is offering residents of Abeokuta, the state capital, free water as supply problems persist, raising fears of an epidemic.

The water situation worsened last week with residents resorting to stream and untreated boreholes for water supply. But, in what appears to be a palliative measure, the water board sent out tankers from neighbouring Ijebu Ode and Sagamu to give free supply to Abeokuta residents. At the popular Ibara area, an 8,000 liter tank was seen along Quarry Road dispensing water to residents.

A house wife, Mrs. Taiwo Salami, told our correspondent that the

service was a great relief.

Another beneficiary who identified herself as Biola, said the palliative measure was a welcome development, "particularly, when all places we used to get water had gone out of supply. I am still contemplating the option of going to the nearby stream to get water."

However, some residents, in areas such as Obantoko, Adatan, Mokola, Saje, Adedotun complained that the gesture was not extended to them, leaving them at the mercy of endless search for potable water.

An official reaction to the development was that the water cooperation suffered a major fault in its technical development which hampered the already epileptic supply from the public source.

NIMET predicts low rainfall in N/East

From Yahaya Ibrahim, Maiduguri

THE Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NIMET) has predicted shortage of rainfall in the North-east this year, advising farmers in the region to delay the planting of crops till June.

The agency's North East Zonal Manager Zakariyau Darazo disclosed this yesterday in Maiduguri, adding that there were indications that the rainy season may be delayed, adding that

farmers need to tarry awhile before commencing planting.

Darazo said farmers should rather embark on planting early mature crops like Maize, Millet, Sorghum, Groundnut, Irish potatoes among others and delay other crops.

According to him, the 2010 rainfall onset is expected to commence late June in Borno while its cessation will be by around October 9 with total downpour of 417mm com-

pared to the 487 recorded in 2009.

He also called on government to build storage facilities where the farmers could keep animal fodders to forestall frequent clashes between cattle rearers and farmers as the shortage of rainfall would have great effect on livestock.

The NIMET boss advised the people to evacuate drainages within their area, saying heavy downpour may occur and could destroy lives and property.

14 held over Kazaure crisis as normalcy returns

From Yusha'u A Ibrahim, Dutse

FOURTEEN persons have been arrested in connection with last Sunday's crisis in Kazaure Local Government Area of Jigawa State over the alleged killing of a tractor driver, Mallam Muhammad Jazuli, by some traffic wadens, just as normalcy is returning to in the area.

Speaking to *Daily Trust* yesterday in Kazaure, the state Police Commis-

sioner Alhaji Abdullahi S. Fana who confirmed the arrest, also said more arrests would be made as police continued search for more culprits.

"Fourteen persons including the traffic warden that caused the crisis have been arrested. We will intensify investigation and I am sure we will get to the root of the crisis. And anyone found guilty will be taken to court to face the consequences of his or her action. Police will not condone any

breach of law and order in the state," said the commissioner.

Some youths went on rampage last Sunday over the killing of Mallam Muhammad Jazuli for allegedly violating traffic rules.

The traffic wardens were said to have beaten up the deceased as a result of which he got a head injury and subsequently died at the Kazaure General Hospital where he was rushed for treatment by his relatives.

Bayero seeks Shekarau's intervention on Al-Mustapha

From Ruqayyah Aliyu & Jaafar Jaafar, Kano

Emir of Kano Alhaji Ado Bayero has directed one of his emirate councillors to channel a request on behalf of the council to Kano State Governor Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau to intervene in the continued incarceration of Major Hamza Al-Mustapha.

The emir gave the directive

yesterday while receiving the leadership of the National Youth Progressive Forum in his palace, saying the agitation should be channelled to Governor Shekarau, who in turn should lobby his Lagos State counterpart.

The emir stated that when the Kano State governor puts the request to his Lagos counterpart, the Lagos governor should look

into the case and see whether it falls within the purview of clemency.

The youths earlier staged a peaceful demonstration at the emir's palace, holding placards and banners. During the protest, the youths argued that the continued detention of Major Hamza Al-Mustapha, James Danbaba, Rabo Lawan and J.B. Yakubu was

not in the interest of the nation.

"This case has tarried in court for about 10 years and 13 judges have handled the case. Since amnesty is given to other people, I think Al-Mustapha and co should also be given clemency", one of the protesters, Abdulbasi Fagge, said.

At the Kano Government House, the leader of the delegation, Mr Isyaku Musa Gusau,

asked Governor Shekarau to intervene in the matter, saying the former Chief Security Officer to the late General Sani Abacha had been languishing in prison without conviction.

In his response, Governor Shekarau said although he had no right to free the detainees, he would channel the case to the appropriate authorities.



PIC: NAN

FROM left: NLC President, Comrade Abdulwaheed Umar, TUC President Peter Esele and NLC Secretary General, Comrade John Odah, after a meeting with Acting President Goodluck Jonathan in Abuja yesterday.

Fire guts Yoruba leader's residence in Jos

From Ahmed Mohammed, Jos

THE house of the President General of the Yoruba community in Plateau State, Chief Toyo Ogunsuyi, was Sunday gutted by fire.

No life was lost, but property worth millions of naira were destroyed.

Speaking to our correspondent yesterday in Jos, the Personal Assistant to the president, Babatunde Oladapo, said Ogunsuyi was watching television with his wife when he suddenly heard a loud bang on his roof. He got up to peep through the toilet window and discovered that his roof was already on fire.

He said Ogunsuyi and his family then ran out of the house! Chief Ogunsoyi was recently appointed into the Chief Solomon Lar committee on the Jos crises after he protested the non inclusion of Yorubas in the committee.

Oladapo said they had reported the matter to the police. When contacted, the Police Public Relations Officer ASP Mohammed Lerama said he would speak to newsmen after obtaining clearance from the commissioner of police.

Protest: Council boss sues for peace

From Isiaka Wakili, Lokoja

THE Chairman of Ogori/Magongo Local Government Area of Kogi State Mr. Gabriel Daudu has appealed to workers and people of the local government to remain calm as the current crisis in the local government area would soon be

resolved.

Daudu, who spoke with newsmen at the weekend in Lokoja, said those behind the recent protests were enemies of the local government.

He assured that the crisis would soon be resolved, adding that the council would overcome its current financial

crisis.

He noted that as part of measures to motivate the workers, N15 million had been earmarked for the payment of salary arrears and leave bonuses for the junior staff. It would be recalled that six of the 10 councillors had last week sent a letter to the state House of Assembly

calling for Daudu's suspension.

Meanwhile, the state Chairman of the Association of Local Government Of Nigeria (ALGON) and Chairman of Lokoja Local Government Area, Yabagi Bologi, has described the suspension calls by six councillors from Ogori/Magongo as unconstitutional.

Police pledge level playing ground for Sokoto politicians

From Abdulfatai Abduljalami, Sokoto

THE new Commissioner of Police in Sokoto State Alhaji Muhammed Abubakar has assured politicians in Sokoto State of a level playing ground.

The commissioner who addressed newsmen in his office in Sokoto yesterday added that politics should be practised without bitterness for development.

Abubakar called on politicians in the state to play politics without rancour, or vandalism, victimization and intimi-

dation, assuring the people of the state that he would work for peace.

"I am a policeman and not a politician, I am not here to play politics", he said.

The commissioner advised members of the public and politicians in particular, to always inform the police about their activities, noting that they are not magicians and may not know when a meeting is taking place.

Alhaji Abubakar noted that the police should be adequately informed of any political or public gathering to provide security.

Kano lawmakers task LGs on revenue

From Hisham Habib, Kano

THE Kano State House of Assembly has asked the 44 local government councils to create viable ways to improve their internally generated revenue to meet up with global trends and reduce over-dependence on federal grants.

The call was contained in a report presented by the House committees on local government and that of appropriation, on the local government budget estimates for the year 2010 presented to the House yesterday. The estimated budget according to the chairman of the local government committee, Habibu

Saleh, is N95 billion and findings of the committees indicated that over 53 per cent of the councils' budget goes to recurrent expenditure while capital projects are left with a mere 43 per cent.

The legislators therefore called on the local government administrators to intensify efforts in revenue generation as the contribution of the internally generated revenue to their budgets is only about 13 per cent which the lawmakers described as insufficient. The report also called on the councils to institutionalize professional units where budget and planning would be reviewed to avoid embarrassment and unneces-

sary errors in the budget proposal submitted to the assembly annually.

It also drew the attention of the councils to their inability to control stocks and bonds bought by the councils and the need to consistently train their staff on modern financial record keeping to make the functions of the lawmakers easier.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as MISS IWOKURA CYNTHIA ATONBARA, now wish to be called MRS ADEYINKA CYNTHIA ATONBARA. All former documents remain valid. General public take note please.

Military moves to protect civilians during conflict

By Benjamin Auta

THE Nigerian Armed Forces has produced a code of operation with specific instruction on how best to protect civilians in conflict areas, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Air Chief Marshal Paul Dike has said.

He spoke at the opening ceremony of the Senior Mission

Leaders Course conducted by the National Defence College (NDC) yesterday in Abuja.

Dike, who was represented by Major General Penap, urged participants in the course to strive and not to rest in their oars to gain excellence in the training.

Speaking earlier, Commandant of the NDC Rear Admiral G.J Jonah said the institution

has interacted with many international institutions like the AU, UN, ECOWAS and P-3 Plus countries in the areas of peace and conflict resolution.

He also said that the institution has been contributing its quota in the area of peace and conflict resolution, adding that the college has contributed to the work on the framework to guide

senior mission leaders in operationalising the UN capstone doctrine.

Representative of the ECOWAS Rosaline Ofori, said that the article of the AU as the legal and policy frame work for the establishment of the African Standby Force calls for a common defence and security policy for the continent.

She added that ECOWAS has already started in 1999 it endeavours with the protocol relating to the mechanism for conflict prevention, management, resolution, peacekeeping and security.

Participants who are drawn from the Armed Force, Police and the civilian populace will spend two weeks in the training which is sponsored by the EU.

New permsecs resume at aviation, interior ministries

By Shehu Abubakar & Abdulkadir Badsha Mukhtar

THE new Permanent Secretary of the Federal Ministry of Aviation, Barrister Danladi Kifasi has promised to sustain the efforts of his predecessor in moving the aviation sector forward.

He made the remark while taking over the affairs of the Ministry as the Accounting officer, Rhoda Iliya, the Chief Press Secretary of the ministry said in an online statement.

Danladi Kifasi promised to run an open door policy and expressed his determination to make the Ministry achieve its mandate.

The outgoing Permanent Secretary Mallam Idris Adamu Kuta said the success recorded in his one year in office was as a result of the cooperation and support

received from the management and enjoined them to extend similar support to his successor.

Meanwhile, the new Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Interior Dr. (Mrs.) Ajoritsedere Awosika has solicited for the support of staff in making her tenure successful.

Speaking while taking over the ministry from the outgoing Permanent Secretary, Dr. Goke Adegoroye, who has been redeployed to the Ministry of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Dr. Awosika said no one can perfectly work in isolation.

The outgoing Permanent Secretary Dr. Adegoye said the Interior Ministry had so far recorded achievements in the interest of the Nigerians; however, such achievements, are mostly taken for granted for they are not propagated.



FROM left: Governor of Rivers State Rotimi Amaechi, Prince Tonye Princewill and King T.J.T. Princewill, the Amanyanbo of Kalabari Kingdom, during the King's 80th birthday celebration at King Square, Buguma in Rivers State ...recently.

NEMA, Britain set to fight disaster

By Abdulkadir Badsha Mukhtar

THE National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), in collaboration with the British High Commission and the Bournemouth University Disaster Management Centre, is planning a seminar to fight disaster in Nigeria.

The first formal Executive Seminar, which is for the Local Government Chairmen, Vice Chairmen and Directors is set to create awareness in disaster management to the first responders at the local level.

NEMA DG AVM Mohammed Audu-Bida said that the three-day program would provide opportunities for the executives to be equipped with required knowl-

edge on how to explore, discuss strategies and tactical issues in Disaster Management.

The central focus of the exercise is to strengthen and improve the country's capability to prepare, reduce risks, and respond to natural or man-instigated disasters; in addition to planning, and establishing coordination in disaster risk reduction.

Represented by the Director Training of the Agency Mrs. Clem Aisueni, NEMA DG said the active participation of the executives in the seminar will enable them clearly understand the concept of disaster management and apply the knowledge in facilitating a faster response to disaster in their respective communities.

CPC demands restoration of democracy in Niger

By Abbas Jimoh

THE Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) said the military takeover of power in the neighbouring Niger Republic is a setback for West Africa and Africa as a whole. National chairman of CPC Senator Rufai Hanga, who condemned the coup in Niamey, demanded for immediate restoration of democracy in the country.

He advised the new junta to conduct election immediately and return the country to civil rule.

While calling on regional bodies to intervene in the interest of democracy, the party says, "It is the attitude of sit-tight African leaders that most often resulted in this kind of adventurous acts by revolutionary groups."

"What happened in Niger is the penalty for flagrant disobedience of a country's constitution. This is a wakeup call to all responsible authorities. If we find ourselves in power, we should learn how to use it for the good of the masses," Hanga said.

Reps commend BPE over sale of NITEL

By Nasidi A. Yahaya

THE House of Representatives' committee on Privatisation and Commercialisation yesterday commended the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) for its recent sale of Nigerian Telecommunications Limited (NITEL) and Mobil Telecommunications (Mtel).

Chairman of the Committee Rep Abbas Braimah (PDP, Edo State) said the bid in which the New Generations consortium

emerged the preferred bidder with a \$2.5billion offer was done in a process that was "transparent and in line with the guidelines for the selection of core investor."

The committee, in a statement signed by Olusegun Akinloye, said unlike the three previous failed attempts at privatizing NITEL/Mtel, the BPE in the recent bid introduced a more stringent requirement of posting a 30 per cent bond of the anticipated bid offered by each potential core investor.

According to the committee, the bid winner, New Generation Consortium, should be allowed to choose another technical partner in line with the privatisation guidelines so that the current sale will not be scuttled.

"If China Unicom decided to pull out of the consortium, New Generation should be given the opportunity to replace them to move the process forward after payment of the bid price as approved by the NCP," the statement added.

Minister criticizes professors for lack of impact on development

By Sunday Williams

SCIENCE and Technology Minister Dr. Alhassan Bako Zaku has criticised the academies and eminent professors over lack of professional impact in the economic development of the country.

Speaking in Abuja during a meeting with presidents of National Academies and selected eminent professors, the minister expressed displeasure on technology deficiency in the country despite huge resources invested in knowledge acquisition.

He said that with the number of professors in the country, the nation still depends on foreign countries to move forward.

He said: "With all the professors and the knowledge they have, I don't still see the impact they have in the country. we still depend on foreign countries to move the nation forward technologically who do not have up to the number of professors we have."

He said if any nation is unable to speak the language of science and technology, it becomes diffi-

cult if not impossible to communicate with other nations on matters of vital interest to her collective future.

In his remarks, Chairman of the occasion Akin Mabogunie said there are eight major outputs expected from the forum which include finding a way to impact more effectively on the productive sector, upgrade the small scale sector to address capacity deprivation and also to maximise the relationship among the enterprise base, university base and government base institutes.

Community threatens to force DG NITT out of office

By Shehu Abubakar & Francis Okeke

THE Acting Director-General of the Nigerian Institute of Transport Technology (NITT) Dr Samaila Femi has been asked to retire in line with the new civil service rules or be forced out of office.

In a 4-page petition to the Head of Service of the Federation dated January 16 and a copy made available to *Daily Trust*, the association said Dr Femi has been a Director in the federal civil service for over nine years and should therefore comply.

A Federal Government with circular reference number HCSF/061/S.1/111/68 of August 26, 2009, says civil servants that attain eight years in service as Directors or Permanent Secretaries must retire.

The association said since the institution is

located in their community, any abuse of the government's circular on the retirement of directors by Dr Femi could lead to flagrant abuse of similar government directives thereby making the institution a breeding ground for disobeying lawful orders.

"We are by this letter reporting to you the happenings in NITT Zaria with the deliberate support of the Minister and Permanent Secretary of the ministry so that you use your good offices and direct the acting DG to go home before the community sacks him out of office," the petition reads.

The association said it is unable to reconcile the rationale behind sending indigenes of Kaduna State on retirement while those from other states 'illegally and shamelessly' remain in office.

The association urged the Federal Head of Service

to ensure that paragraph 2 of the circular on the tenure of office for Permanent Secretaries and Directors is enforced on Dr Femi who they said has been a Director in the federal civil service for over 9 years now.

When contacted on phone, Dr Femi declined any comment on the matter. However, sources at the NITT in Zaria told *Daily Trust* that record in Dr Femi's personal file in the institute revealed that he became a Director in January 2001.

Assistant Director Press and Information in the office of the Head of Service, Mr Tope Ajakaiye, said though it is not the duty of the Head of Service to enforce the contents of the circular on staff of Federal Ministries and their agencies, total compliance to it by all Directors and Permanent Secretaries in the federal service is compulsory.

Minister lauds Ebonyi State first lady

By Akor Ojoma

WOMEN Affairs and Social Development Minister Mrs Salamatu Hussain Suleiman has commended the wife of Ebonyi State governor, Mrs Josephine Elechi, for bettering the lives of women, children and other vulnerable groups in Ebonyi state.

The minister stated this when Mrs Elechi paid an advocacy visit to her in Abuja.

Mrs Salamatu said the first lady's project, Mother and Child Care Initiative (MCCI), helps in tackling

the issue of maternal mortality and morbidity in Ebonyi State.

The minister commended Mrs Elechi for initiating a law discouraging the activities of unskilled birth attendants, promoting maternal death and free obstetric care policy among others.

She also commended Mrs Elechi for establishing the South East Fistula centre, which has treated over 415 women from over 11 states free of charge, her scholarship to over 60 orphans and vulnerable

children and breast and cervical cancer screening programme, among others.

She assured her of the ministry readiness to support her in all her efforts, especially in the areas of challenges facing the project and for the VVF centre to attain a national status.

Earlier, Mrs Josephine Elechi had appealed for the ministry's support in assisting the Fistula Centre so that the free treatment can be sustained even beyond the tenure of the administration.

Ex-Rep cautions on invocation of Section 144

By Nasidi A. Yahaya

FORMER Minority Leader in the House of Representatives Umara Kumalia has warned the Federal Executive Council (FEC) against invoking section 144 of the constitution on ailing President Umaru Yar'adua.

He told newsmen in Abuja that the current political impasse occasioned by the Nigerian leader's prolonged absence due to illness should be a way of reflection and submission to the will of Almighty God.

According to him, the only way to resolve the political situation is for the

National Assembly to review the constitution and remove some lacunas therein.

"The constitution has not envisaged this problem, what the Constitution envisaged is what we have been waiting for in the past almost three months and it hasn't happened. The letter has refused to come and we cannot allow a vacuum to continue to exist."

Alhaji Kumalia also warned the Acting President Goodluck Jonathan against surrounding himself with bad advisers.

Kumalia commended the National Assembly for its resolution on the political crisis as well as the position of the 36 states Governors on the issue.

FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, YOLA.

P.M.B 2042, YOLA, ADAMAWA STATE.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ADVERTISEMENT

The Federal College of Education, Yola wishes to invite applications from suitably qualified candidates for employment into the services of the College in the following Academic Departments:

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

- (i) Christian Religious Studies
- (ii) Islamic Studies
- (iii) Social Studies

SCHOOL OF SCIENCES

- (i) Biology
- (ii) Chemistry
- (iii) Computer Science
- (iv) Integrated Science
- (v) Mathematics
- (vi) Physics
- (vii) Physical and Health Education

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

- (i) Educational Foundations
- (ii) Curriculum & Instructions
- (iii) General Studies
- (iv) Educational Psychology
- (v) Primary Education Studies
- (vi) Primary Education Studies (Nomadic)

SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES

- (i) Arabic
- (ii) Arabic Medium
- (iii) English
- (iv) French
- (v) Fulfulde
- (vi) Hausa
- (vii) Igbo

SCHOOL OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

- (i) Agricultural Science
- (ii) Business Education
- (iii) Fine and Applied Arts
- (iv) Home Economics

VACANCIES

The following vacancies exist:

- (i) Assistant Lecturer
- (ii) Lecturer III
- (iii) Lecturer II

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ASSISTANT LECTURER - CONTISS 07

- (i) Lecturing as required by the Head of Department.
- (ii) Acting as Examiner in subjects taught.
- (iii) Assisting in laboratory/workshop/studio development.
- (iv) Performing any other duty that may be assigned from time to time.

LECTURER III - CONTISS 08.

- (i) Performing the duties of Assistant Lecturer at a higher level of responsibility.

LECTURER II - CONTISS 09.

- (i) Performing the duties of Lecturer III at a higher level of responsibility.
- (ii) Co-coordinating and supervising the teaching of a number of related subjects.
- (iii) Acting as Examiner in subject taught.
- (iv) Acting as co-examiner for subjects taught by staff at the Assistant Lecturer and Lecturer III Levels.
- (v) Supervising students projects and carrying out of project work/applied research.
- (vi) Assisting with the grooming of more Junior Lecturers in the Department.
- (vii) Performing any other duty that may be assigned from time to time.

QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND PUBLICATIONS.

(i) All candidates seeking employment into the Lecturer cadre must acquire teaching qualifications in addition to the academic qualifications with at least Second Class Lower degree and register with Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN).

(ii) POST OF ASSISTANT LECTURER.

A candidate must possess a good degree from a recognized University in relevant field.

(iii) POST OF LECTURER III

A candidate must possess a Master Degree in relevant field or a good degree from a recognized University in the relevant field, with at least, 3 years relevant experience.

(iv) POST OF LECTURER II

A holder of a good degree plus a minimum of six years relevant post-qualification teaching /research/industrial experience or a holder of Master degree with at least three years teaching experience or a Doctorate degree in the relevant field from a recognized Institution.

In addition, the candidate for this post should have either:

- (i) Two Seminar/Conference papers/exhibition or
- (ii) One Journal article accepted for publication.

SALARY AND CONDITION OF SERVICE

The remuneration and other conditions of service are as applicable and obtainable in the services of Federal Colleges of Education in the Country.

METHOD OF APPLICATION

Applications should be submitted with 12 copies of Curriculum Vitae stating: Date of Birth, Marital Status, Qualifications, Experience, Publications, Names, State of Origin, Addresses of three referees, Photocopies of credentials etc.

ALL applications are to be submitted to the Establishment Division and addressed to:

**The Registrar,
Federal College of Education,
P.M.B. 2042,
Yola,
Adamawa State.**

Applications are to reach the above address not later than six (6) weeks from the date of this publication.

**YAHYA H. JADA, ACIA, MNIM
REGISTRAR**

Police move against arms movement in Jos

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

THE interception of arms which were being moved from Obudu in Cross River State to Jos, Plateau State at the weekend by men of the Nasarawa State Police Command has led to

increased stop-and-search points along roads linking the state with neighbouring states.

Our correspondent observed the increase in check points along the Lafia-Makurdi road and the Lafia-Akwanga road.

A stop-and-search operation at the weekend intercepted arms which were illegally being transported to Jos from Obudu.

The state Police Commissioner Ephraim Uzor Amakulor told newsmen that the vehicle in which the

arms were being conveyed was intercepted along the Akwanga-Jos road.

The arms recovered include 12 locally made single barrel rifles, three revolvers and one revolver short gun.

Amakulor said the rifles

were hidden under the door and boot mats of the car.

He added that his men also arrested the driver of the vehicle, Adasu Eshaji, who claimed to have been paid N20,000 to take the rifles to Jos.

The state police com-

missioner who confirmed our correspondent's observation on the increase in check-points along major roads linking Nasarawa with other states said the step was taken to ensure security of lives and property.

Okada riders sue PLSG, PLHA over ban

From Mahmud Lalo, Jos

COMMERCIAL motorcycle operators and the Motorcycle Transport Union of Nigeria (MTUN) as well as the Road Transport Employers Association of Nigeria (RTEAN) in Jos have filed a case against the Plateau State government, the state House of Assembly and the Attorney General over the prohibition of commercial motorcycle operation in Jos and Bukuru metropolis.

The suit which was filed by the applicants' counsel, Barrister Muhammed Lawal Ishaq, was contained in a Motion on Notice filed in a Federal High Court in Jos yesterday.

According to the Motion on Notice, the applicants are praying for an order enforcing their fundamental human rights as enshrined in Section 34 of the constitu-

“According to the Motion on Notice, the applicants are praying for an order enforcing their fundamental human rights



GOV Jonah Jang

tion of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 and Article 20(1) and 22 (1) of the African Charter.

They also want an order directing the respondents not to infringe on the application of rights by promulgating a law prohibiting the use of motorcycles for commercial purposes as doing so will amount to depriving the applicants of their employment and means of livelihood which is protected under Section 34 of the constitution.

The Plateau State government had earlier submitted a bill to the state Assembly for the prohibition and regulation of commercial motorcycle activities in Jos and Bukuru metropolis.

The bill has already passed its first and second readings and has been given to the House Committee on Works and Transport for further legislative action. The committee is expected to submit its report on February 25, 2010.

Lar c'ttee gets 7 additional members

From Ahmed Mohammed & Mahmud Lalo, Jos

ACTING President Goodluck Jonathan has added seven persons to the Solomon Lar-led presidential advisory committee on Jos crises, a statement by the Director of Press and Public Affairs at the Plateau State Government House James Mannok said yesterday.

The newly appointed

members are; Senator Gyang D. Dantong, Senator John Wash Pam, Chief Markus Ishaya, and Mohammed Adam Alkali. Others include Chief Toyo Ogunshuyi, Barrister Akuzamus Anakwe and Barrister Smart Irabo. The statement added that the Acting President also approved the appointment of the Permanent Secretary, Cabinet and Special Services Barrister I.

D. Gyang as a Secretary to the committee.

It would be recalled that the Acting President in January, following the crisis in Jos and its environs, set up a 15-man advisory committee headed by the first civilian governor of the state, Chief Solomon Lar. The committee is expected to find the cause of the recurrent crises in Jos and proffer solutions for lasting peace in the state.

537 inmates share 160 beds

From Leye Adewumi, Akure

ABOUT 537 inmates are sharing beds meant for 160 inmates at the Olokuta prison, a suburb of Akure, Ondo State.

Our correspondent learnt

yesterday that the Olokuta Prison which has 160-beds is currently overcrowded with the inmates, many of whom are still awaiting trial.

A prison source said about 49 of the inmates had been convicted while the

remaining were awaiting trial. Some of the inmates decried their continued stay in prison without trial.

One of the prison welfare officers who craved anonymity said most of the inmates had been convicted.

Sharu Hassan dies at 86

From Jaafar Jaafar, Kano

RENOWNED Kano-based businessman, Alhaji Sharu Hassan, died Sunday after a protracted illness at the age of 86.

Family sources said the deceased had been battling

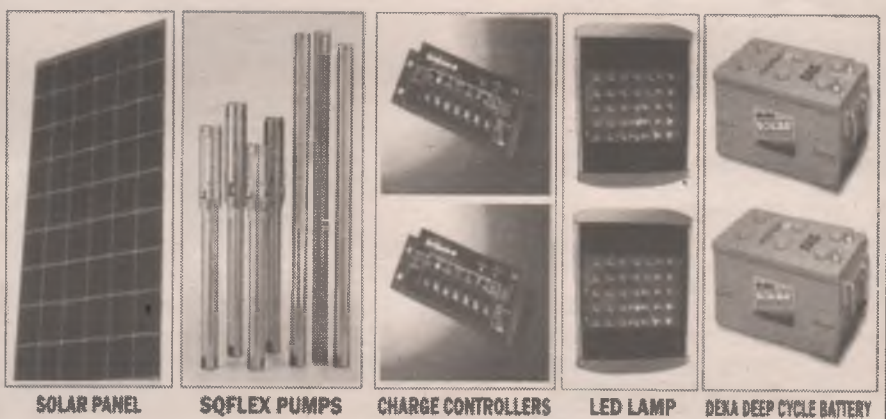
with diabetes and partial paralysis in the last decade.

According to one of his sons, Nura Sharu, the late Sharu Hassan was bedridden for almost 10 years. He said he died a few days after he was admitted at the Aminu Kano Teaching Hos-

pital. Nura Sharu described his late father as a caring man who dedicated his life to his family and the cause of his religion. Alhaji Hassan left behind three wives, 34 children and 81 grandchildren. His remains were buried at the Dakata cemetery.

SOLAR POWERED PRODUCTS/SYSTEMS

Eauxwell Special Offers between Feb - March 2010



SOLAR PANEL SQFLEX PUMPS CHARGE CONTROLLERS LED LAMP DEKA DEEP CYCLE BATTERY

EauxSolar Panel, monocrystalline (80Wp)	N52,000
Grundfos SQFlex Pump Submersible	N260,000
Morningstar Charge Controllers SL10A, 12V	N16,000
Morningstar Charge Controllers SL 20A, 12V	N21,000
LED Lamp, 35W	N50,000
Deka Deep Cycle Battery, 100AH @ 12V (USA)	N40,000

Hurry while stock last!!!

EAUXWELL NIG. LTD.

Plot 123 Joel Ogunaike Street, Ikeja GRA, Lagos.
Tel: 01-8180190, 01-4186288, 07039481061
Katsina: 08033893787 Abuja: 08037827924
E-mail: eauxwell.sales@gmail.com

Online Reactions

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ON www.dailytrust.com



FEC's six-man team in Saudi

THEY will also return like the governors and members of the House of Representatives, without seeing him.

Adamu A Goni
amujeli@gmail.com

The story is not going to be any different from the previous ones. The delegation will not see him. The trip is nothing, but just a pure waste of tax payers' money. The money for the aviation fuel should have been used to pay for the medical bills of the poor, who cannot even afford N100 for a card of Paracetamol.

Samira
sdegoshie@yahoo.com

I am shocked that a nation has to literally go on its knees to know the cause of its president's ill health. If those close to the president do not think Nigerians are entitled to know whether their president is fit to continue in office, then the National Assembly should throw him out and let the nation move on. The office is for the benefit of Nigerians and not a section of the nation. The whole thing is a national disgrace. I wonder why we cannot get things right.

Doueyi D. Fiderikumo
doueyifiderikumo@yahoo.com

If indeed the delegation of the FEC has arrived Saudi Arabia, we must insist that their discussion



PRESIDENT Umaru Yar'adua

with the ailing president be aired live for us to see.

Merem Emeribe
emeokoro@yahoo.com

Whether the six man FEC delegation sees the president or not, the stage is set for the activation of Section 144 of the 1999 constitution.

Ibrahim Tsadu Ibrahi
elkutigi@gmail.com

I hope the delegation went to Saudi Arabia with a few Ghana-must-go (GMG) bags? The other teams that went to Jeddah returned without seeing the president. This, I think was because they went there with only goodwill. All the talk about getting clearance from the Saudi monarch is, just talk. I am convinced that a few GMG bags delivered to the right quarters will remove all the known and unknown obstacles.

Pita
justpita@yahoo.co.uk

Police arrest anti-Blair protester

INSTEAD of fighting corruption and bad election in Nigeria, he is protesting about Afghanistan. How can that help Nigeria? Right

activist or religious activist? People are suffering in Nigeria, dying everyday because our health sector is bad, power has been

hijacked in Nigeria, religious crises everywhere and corruption is everyone and he cannot organize a protest to save his own people. I

am not sure he understands what human right is all about.

Aji Isuwa Suleiman
suleimanaji@yahoo.com

Soldiers topple Tandja in Niger

THIS is a welcome development. ECOWAS does not allow coups, yet some selfish leaders will over throw government and all they receive are mere condemnations while their citizens suffer. I really do not like military coups, but the one in Niger was inevitable and I hope the people coming will not be worse than the ones they are replacing.

The captured president should be shot, else he might be used as a bargaining chip.

Kingsley Ukaoha
ukaohak@yahoo.com

We are always talking of how to develop our poor African continent which is lagging behind in almost all aspect, but some of our greedy politicians are taking us back because of their selfish behaviours. Tandja, it serves you right, though no one likes military leadership.

Umar Dahiru
uddahiru@gmail.com



FORMER Niger President Mamadou Tandja

This is a lesson for Nigeria. It is not yet uhuru. You can see how many people, government or organizations condemned the coup. The voice against the coup is a few because the soldiers abused the law just as Tandja went against the law by manipulating the constitution. Nigerian politicians, take note! The young military officers are watching the

abuse of law and corruption.

Abdallah
abd.amin34@yahoo.com

It seems African leaders will never learn from history. What is happening in Niger can be seen in our leaders. After serving as president of the country for ten years, he is still not satisfied.

Oyeyemi, G.M.
gmoyeyemi@gmail.com

This should serve as a lesson for African leaders, especially those trying to violate the constitution of their country to continue to hold on to power as if it is their inheritance.

Abubakar Chika Maru
abubakarsuleiman2009@yahoo.com

I think that is the best way to handle our sit-tight African Heads of State. This is why Africa will continue to "progress" backwards and we'll continue to blame the west for all our woes.

Anthony Unukpo

tonaria2000@yahoo.com

Tanja got what he deserved. He thinks Niger is his own alone. Is he the only person in Niger or is he the only good leader that Niger ever produced? No one should feel sorry for him.

Yahuza Magaji
magaji.2010@gmail.com

This is the dividend of poor governance. Nigeria should learn from what happened in Niger. Anywhere there is corruption coupled with poor governance, the result will be violence and people will take laws into their hands. May God help Nigeria.

Babayo EL-nafaty
babayoelnafaty@yahoo.com

I was happy with the coup. I hope it will serve as a lesson for other African leaders that think that no one can perform better than them.

Usman Ahmed Danbaba
danbaba1986@yahoo.com

Former EFCC cop shot dead

THIS is very sad. Why should anyone kill someone for doing a job he is paid for. His former boss said something like this before he fled Nigeria.

Obanor
kenor@web.de

Sometimes, I wonder what people want. Anyway, let them kill all those blocking their evil ways and let them wait and guard the earth after we have gone. For the family of Danjuma, please accept our condolences. For the police, it will be a shame if you do not uncover the killers of one of your own.

Hafizu M
mhafizu@yahoo.com

It is clear that no one is safe in Nigeria today. Only recently we heard of the murder of Efenji Efenji, an aide to a CAC chief executive was also murdered some time

ago. I am afraid, not because I will be a likely victim, but because I know that if am murdered today, no one will be punished. A Federal Minister was assassinated and up to this day, no one has been arrested or charged with the killing. May God help this country.

Kabiru Danladi
kblondon2003@yahoo.com

This is really a sad day in Nigeria, where people die for serving their motherland. My heart goes out to the family of the late EFCC cop, Superintendent Danjuma Mohammed. I am however not comfortable with the usual police attitude towards bringing the culprits to justice as they always say, "Investigations have commenced." This is unacceptable. In the United States, if you kill a police officer, you are put on America's Most Wanted

TV program, shown nationally every week. The police departments will stop at nothing to bring you to book whether dead or alive. This will serve as a deterrent to others. But in Nigeria, criminals go scot-free all the time. This is the time to change.

Jeff Sally
jffsala@aol.com

Madam, this is one of the hazards of the job, do not be deterred. Some lives must be sacrificed for things to get better. He has paid that price so that our nation could be better. I think the battle line has been drawn and Madam Waziri should not rest until she gets to the root of the matter. Goodluck, Madam.

Audu John
audu2000@yahoo.com

It is unfortunate. We have again

lost a gem. The level of insecurity in our dear nation is in a sorry state. May the Almighty God have mercy on Mohammed and others.

Ahmed Umar
mayanchi2000@yahoo.co.uk

May Allah accept him as a martyr and grant him jannatul firdaus. May he also bless Nigeria with more people like him to fight corruption. Those behind these kind of killings should continue and see whether they will live in peace to enjoy their loots. They will surely die.

Yusuf
belyus2000@yahoo.com

The murder is not unconnected to his role in EFCC, you know in Nigeria, your role determines your fate. It is regrettable.

Zanna Bukar Baruwa
bukar.zanna@yahoo.com

Army denies grumbling over recent postings

I am really intrigued with the level of facts that was written about this topic. I am in the Military and I know that there will never accept it, but what was published is true and we, that are in the system cannot do anything about it. It is

a general believe that the Army belongs to the North and people from the South do not really have a say in their policies and appointments.

What I am saying is the fact about what happened last year. A

Commanding Officer posted to a unit in Yola barely 2 months was substituted by another CO from the North because the unit was nominated to carry troops to the Niger Delta.

You can investigate this fact.

We, from the other parts of the country are posted to the extreme northern states while their god sons are posted to the south to enjoy. May God help us.

Kulak
kulak2@yahoo.com



By Ola O. Olatawura

Reviewing litigations on Yar'adua's health

On Friday, 29 January 2010, Justice Dan Abutu CJ, Federal High Court delivered the last of 3 judgments exclusively heard by him arising from the serious ill health, incommunicado, and absence of President Umaru Yar'adua. This provoked a constitutional crisis, amongst others. In the first judgment, arising from an action to compel the President to handover to his Vice President, the learned CJ held that section 5 of the constitution allows the Vice President to automatically function when the President could not function as a result of illness. This interpretation and application is seriously flawed. Section 5 does no more than identify the persons and officers constituting the executive arm of government. The decision also contradicts the constitution's preference for a chief executive or executive President. The decision suggests collective responsibility for governance by the executive arm of government. It is trite that the presidential arm of government rests on an individual President or state Governor, who though assisted by ministers and other public servants, is alone responsible for the direction of the executive arm of the government. Simply for this reason, a US' President's table plaque

“He cannot perform functions belonging to the President or others not expressly delegated by the President”

stated: “the buck stops here.” Ordinarily, the Vice President has specified functions. He cannot perform functions belonging to the President or others not expressly delegated by the President. (Section 148 (1) CFRN 1999) The second decision, initiated by Hon. Farouk Lawan, concerned the duty of the Executive Council of the Federation popularly known as Federal Executive Council to comply with section 144 CFRN 1999 by passing a resolution that the President is incapable of discharging the function of his office, etc. Where a two-third majority of the FEC confirmed the ‘legal fact’, other provisions would follow suit, including where necessary constituting a medical panel to assess the President is “permanently incapable”. The result is well known.

The FEC unanimously held that the President is not incapable of performing the duties of his office. Only him, it was said could state whether he was incapable. It is obvious the FEC did not answer the question or fulfil or follow the directive. It was for them to state ‘whether in the light of constitutional duties of the President, particularly sections 5 (1) (b) and 148 (2) the President is incapable to discharge the functions of his office’. Clearly, the President has not been conveying and attending meetings. He is not a position to coordinate his, the Vice President, or ministers’ activities. He is also not supervising the ministers. The FEC is also not in position to advise the Presi-

dent of their activities on account of his ill health. The directive, no doubt, was not well drawn to specify what would constitute ‘incapability of the President’. In the absence of a voluntary disclosure by the incumbent President, whether the constitution requires it, whether on the available facts there is a case for a medical examination of the President to confirm the state of his physical and mental health. The answer to the live case is pretty obvious. Any other answer raises complications for the addressees as to their loyalty to the nation and the constitution. Because they de facto stand to benefit from the situation they may be cited before the appropriate court or tribunal, including the Code of Conduct Tribunal and now or in later years, a Public Inquiry Tribunal. It is unclear whether the FEC has notified the court that it has applied with the order and that will be application.

It may be noted that the resolution conflicts with Section 144 (5) in so far as the Vice President voted. Mr. Michael Aondoakaa (former Minister of Justice and Attorney General) has stated the Vice President did. Only the ministers can vote. The Vice President is not a minister. Of course, nothing prevents the plaintiff/claimant from challenging the so-called compliance, bringing an action for contempt of court on members of the Executive Council, or filing an appeal against the direction as not complied with.

In the final decision, the NBA case, the learned CJ held that section 145 of the constitution applied. The President, the court held, was not obliged to transmit a letter to the Senate President and the Speaker of the House of the Representatives that he is proceeding on vacation or unable to discharge the functions of his office. According to the learned Chief Judge, the Vice President automatically became Acting President. Although one may not agree with the arguments deployed by the claimant, the learned CJ's interpretation is a tragic reading of the applicable section 145 and the whole constitution. It completely misconceived the wording, functions, and purpose. Section 145, as previously addressed in a published piece, refers to when the President is partially unwell. (*Daily Trust*, December 2009). It certainly obliges the President to notify the Senate President and the Speaker of the House of the Representatives. The court's reliance on the opening provision “whenever” cannot be read to be a discretion. It is strictly a description of an action, the act being influenced by either the President going on vacation or being unable to discharge the functions of his office. It is also wrong to say it is voluntary. Any voluntariness exists only in the specific sense that the President is able to inform the Senate President and the Speaker of the House of the Representatives. If he does not notify these persons, who it must be noted are heads of the elected peoples representatives, the position would be that there is still a President who is de facto and de jure in charge and no other person can ‘discharge the functions of his office’.

To be cont'd.

Dr. Olatawura is Goldmann Lagos Transnational Lawyers, Abuja.



By Gambo Usman Alih

Can this federation stand?

According to conflict theorists, conflicts, whether political, communal, ethnic or religious are often influenced or motivated by disparity rather than similarity among the people especially unequal ones.

Karl Marx wrote in 1937 in the “*Communist Manifesto*” that “the history of all existing society is the history of class struggle”. In other words, be it agrarian, feudal or capitalist society, conflict is constant because of class differences. Arguing from this perspective, one could say that conflict is inherent in human relationships. Although this perspective has gained momentum especially among its adherents, it never suggests that every underlying relationship must be expressed with the same magnitude of hatred and jealousy neither does it suggest that such conflict can not be minimized to the barest point.

Every form of interaction among human beings and groups can generate conflict. Conflict is the spice of every state. It tests the fragility or otherwise of the state and creates the basis of future amelioration or adjustments. However, conflicts beyond certain thresholds are detrimental to the very survival of the state, precisely because they threaten the consensual basis of association.

Mohammed Haruna, a seasoned columnist with *Daily Trust* newspaper

“This has resulted in the death of at least 20,000 people and the displacement of about 1.5 million people”

insinuated in one of his recent articles on Jos crisis that Nigeria as an entity may cease to exist earlier than predicted by the American Intelligence Report. Nigeria has witnessed a lot of crises in the past and the country had triumphed over them in the past but Jos crisis posed the greatest threat to the territorial integrity, continuity and unity of Nigeria as a single multi-ethnic federation.

According to an assessment in October 2000 by Akinola Aguda, the respected jurist and the man who chaired the presidential committee for the relocation of Federal Capital from Lagos to Abuja, maintained that “one thing is certain: the present edifice called Nigeria as we know it today has come nearly to the end of its life...The cracks on its walls are too great for the edifice to continue to stand”. The endangered foundations of Nigeria's multi-ethnic edifice seem to be all too apparent from the ethnic, regional, religious and political turbulence that has assailed the country (and claimed more than 50,000 lives) since the inauguration of the country's fourth republic in May 1999.

These ethno-political convulsions

have included the rash of state-ethnic and inter-ethnic clashes over “resource control” in the oil-rich Niger Delta region, the turmoil over the extension of Shari'ah or Islamic law in the Muslim North, the violent confrontations or tensions between indigenes and non-indigenes and between sedentary farming population and nomadic Fulani herdsman across the length and breadth of the country, the nation-wide proliferation of ethnic militant movements of unemployed or under-employed youths, the often excessive but ultimately ineffectual and counter-productive repression of ethnic conflicts or protests by official security forces, and the intensification of pressure for the re-negotiation and re-evaluation of the country's federal constitutional structure, or for the territorial re-configuration or dissolution of the federal along ethnic-regional lines.

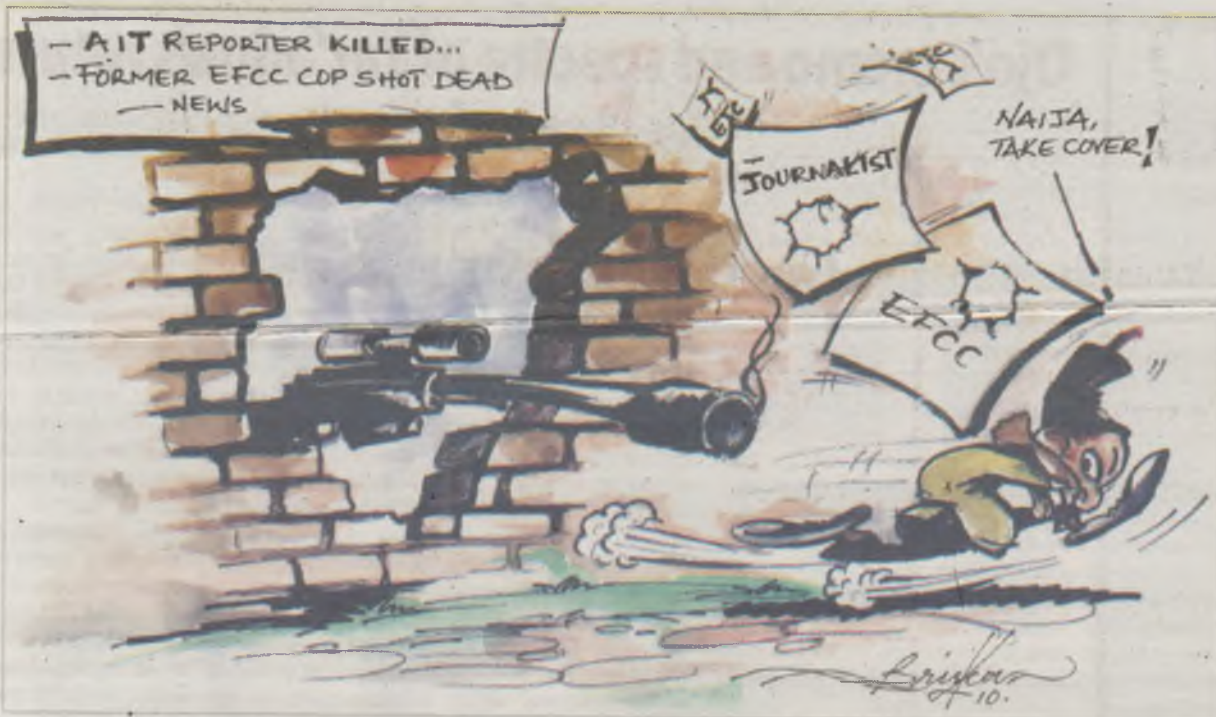
Between 1999 and 2010 no fewer than 120 conflicts were recorded in the country. This has resulted in the death of at least 20,000 people and the displacement of about 1.5 million people. In February 2006, as many as 50,000 people were internally displaced and about 150 killed in a wave of violence across the country, sparked off by protests against the caricatures of Prophet Muhammad.

Former President Obasanjo asserted that violence had reached unprecedented levels and hundred killed with much more wounded or displaced from their homes on account of their ethnic or religious identification. Schooling for children has been disrupted and interrupted; businesses have lost billions of naira and property worth much more destroyed. The Federal Government continues to incur huge resources in managing the socio-political and economic consequences of the near collapse of state authority in Plateau State.

According to Hajija Hadiza Sani Kangiwa, The Commissioner of The National Commission for Refugees (NCFR), 31,826 persons internally displaced from the recent Jos crisis, women and children were mostly affected. The Federal Commissioner stated this yesterday while fielding questions from newsmen at the inaugural meeting of the expanded Technical Working Group (TWG) coordinated by the commission in Abuja. She said women constitute 35% of the total number of internally displaced persons, children constitute 30%, the elderly 15% and men and others 20%. It is really sad and unfortunate!

Plateau State a once peaceful, serene and beautiful plateau and fine weather and cosmopolitan nature had become a shadow of its former self. Fear, suspicion and uncertainty have become an associated feature of Plateau State and Nigeria in general. The government and all stake holders in Nigeria must go back to the drawing board for the sole aim of reversing the ugly trend in Nigeria and ensure the sanity and unity of Nigeria where every Nigerian will feel a sense of belonging.

Alih can be reached at gamboteidi@yahoo.com



Your Letters

How safe are Nigerians?

As Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) continued to mourn the consummate and astute journalist with the Africa Independent Television (AIT) late Efenji Efenji, likewise the overambitious and voracious killers whose heinous acts would never go free. Regular killings of Nigerian journalists over the hackneyed years could be traced to some political foes that refused to abide by the political truth. Political and religious assassinations among Nigerians are no longer news. The so-called selfish and recalcitrant politicians who never want progress to affect its citizenry. The administration of former president Olusegun Obasanjo and President Yar'adua have witnessed wantonly assassinations of eminent Nigerians in recent times. The likes of late Dele Giwa,

Editor of *Newswatch*, who was assassinated through a well-calculated letter bomb in 1986, late Bayo Ohu, the assistant editor on political desk of the *Guardian* Newspaper and among others. Many progressive and indefatigable politicians no longer find the politics of the country so easily anymore. Apart from political killings in Nigeria, Unknown Nigerians have been murdered without the government security agencies finding the lasting solutions to it; the likes of late Funsho Williams, former PDP governorship candidate, Dipo Dina and others. The worst is that the killers are always difficult to locate, despite the handsome amount of money being placed on anybody that could find the genuine assassins. However, the pen-pushing profession is now the prey of high political assassins who intentionally satisfied their financial egos without considering the importance of human lives. Even the electronic and the print media are no longer saved in terms of these continuously killings of these Nige-

rian journalists in the country. Is spirit killing these brilliant journalists? Does that mean indiscriminate killing justified retaliation instead of reconciliation? Nigerians must desist from these notorious acts. Even the Holy Bible condemned the wastage of human lives with no just cause. The National Assembly must not relent in its effort in the area of passing severe penalty bill on those that snatched human lives. In fact armed robbers, coup plotters, kidnappers, pickpockets; 419ners are easy to comb out from their oblivion. For Nigeria to move forward at this present political turf, the acting president Dr Goodluck Jonathan must work on the state of security situation of the country. The so-called powerful countries like USA, Germany, France, UK and others have assiduously worked on their security situation without hesitation. Well, acting president Dr Goodluck Jonathan must do something on the security now!

Goday Odiđi, Apapa, Lagos
(aguri_god@yahoo.co.uk)

Text us on 08 131 8000 30

Simpler way to remove the president
LET the National Assembly plug the lacuna in Section 143 of the 1999 Constitution by an Act. Then remove the President; that's better than the present rigmarole. **BAYODE Ogunmupe, Garki, Abuja, 08034673443.**

Save us, Aliero
WHAT is FCT administration doing about house rent increases all over the territory, mostly in Kubwa, landlord? Why? **08037648329.**

Adamu for Senate?
FORMER Nasarawa State Governor Abdullahi Adamu should please return to his farm, instead of wasting him time (and ours) to seek to represent the people of Nasarawa West in the senate, come 2011. When he was governor for eight years he did next to nothing to develop the state. We

shall resist any effort that seeks to bring him as our senator. **MUNTAKA M. Umaisha, Umisha ward Toto local government, Nasarawa state, 08030591993.**

Who wants to be a loser?
I'M still licking my wounds after spending close to four hundred thousand naira on GLO's Text 4 millions promo, without winning even a consolation prize. Now they've come out with another promo called Bid 2 win. My question to the promoters is: are these promos for real, are they meant for the benefit of their numerous subscribers or are they meant to make GLO richer? **ISAAC, 08075666125.**

Here they come again
EX-VICE president Atiku Abubakar should be reminded that Obasanjo's failed tenure elongation project had nothing to do

with doing the right thing for Nigeria, the people of Adamwa and the entire North. He cannot use that to excuse his own failure. The fact is that Aremu's failure is his as well. **ABUBAKAR Ndana, Kaduna, 08068014505.**

Jonathan should bear in mind...
ACT well, follow due process, rule of law, and make sure that you can explain to your boss whatever you did, because by God's grace, President Yar'adua will be back. **AMINU Adamu Kura, 08032554873.**

Puzzling
ONE of the reasons I buy *Daily Trust* is the crosswords puzzle. For sometime now, its place has been taken by signpost. Please resume its publication immediately. **KABIRU Mohammad, 08037019264.**



By Sunday Saanu

That contentious ranking of universities

Recently, some researchers released what they called 2010 World Universities ranking on their website in which they said University of Ilorin was the best university in Nigeria, 55th in Africa and 5,846 in the world. The unknown body gave the second best position to Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) in Nigeria, 61st in Africa and 6,265 in the world while the University of Ibadan (UI) was said to be third in Nigeria, 63rd in Africa and 6,396 in the world.

While the University of Jos was rated fourth best in Nigeria, 74th in Africa and 7,000 in the world, University of Lagos, according to the strange body, was the fifth in Nigeria, 79th in Africa and 7,246 in the world. Only these Universities in Nigeria were rated. Last year, the same body had awarded the best University in Nigeria position to the University of Benin but the best UNIBEN of last year is not among the best five this year!

Since the release of this so-called 2010 webometric ranking, concerns have been expressed among the stakeholders particularly in Nigeria, as the rating is not only questionable and dubious but quite specious and imperialistic. The questions are: Who are the people behind this webometric ranking? Who appointed them the judges over world universities? More importantly, what are the benchmarks used for the rating? Academic performance? Teaching and Research outputs? Community service? Did every University agree on the yardsticks adopted? When did they carry out the rating?

Indeed, curiosity is left unquenched as the so-called webometric ranking disguises more than it reveals. These are the people who have never been to Nigeria, yet they are passing judgement based on the little information they could assess on the internet. It was the University of Benin yesterday (2009), University of Ilorin today (2010) and which one tomorrow? This suspicious ranking can only represent dark side of intellectual rigour expected of scholars: questionable in content, nebulous in intent.

A fallacy of hasty generalization, and unwarranted assumption.

It is too soon to forget that University of Ibadan, (UI) fondly referred as "the first and the best" defeated the whole of Africa in 2009 Zain African challenge competition when it came first among many African universities that participated in the highly tasking intellectual duel. Yet, this is the same university one unknown webometric people have ranked third in Nigeria!

As at today, 23 UI products are serving as vice-chancellors of different universities in Nigeria, while thousands of others are holding one important position or the other across the globe. University of Ibadan has the highest number of professors in Nigeria. To be specific, close to 300 lecturers are professors in UI which no other university in the country could contest. Again, this premier university produced the first African Nobel laureate, Prof Wole Soyinka, world acclaimed writer, Chinua Achebe whose *Things Fall Apart* has been translated to over two hundred languages across the world, UI's annual turn-out of PhD degree holders exceeds all that of other universities combined in Nigeria. UI is the flagship of Post graduate education in Nigeria. Yet, it is the third best, according to the imperialists, in Nigeria.

One can go on and on citing classical examples of unrivalled record of academic excellence of the University of Ibadan. This is just to show the inherent illogicality in the so-called webometric ranking. It is pointless to be arguing about the supremacy of UI in Nigeria, the record speaks for itself. But it is important to speak out against the speciousness of webometric ranking because silence will be too costly to keep in this matter.

Against the contradictions in the webometric ranking, Nigerians should just disregard the ranking as it does not reflect the truth. In fact, it is imperialistic in design, dubious in claim and illogical in outlook. It is far more surreal that UI is academically third to Ilorin and Ife. It is an error of judgement as UI is never in rivalry with any other because the difference is just too clear.

However, one clear message is learnt in this so-called webometric ranking: UI is under-reported. It is often complacent. The earlier we wake up to this reality, the better. This is an era globalization, thriving on information and communication. Every organization ought to be very serious about information management and dissemination otherwise poor ranking and rating will continue to hunt.

Saanu is of the University of Ibadan (sundaysaanu@yahoo.com)

DAILY TRUST

EDITORIAL

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

Making Abuja recreation parks safer

All over the world, parks, gardens and other recreation centres are carved out of bustling cities to encourage residents to relax and sometimes interact with nature in its elements. Such centres also serve as grounds for picnics by individuals and families; are used by students for the study of nature and as observation and conservation posts by environmentalists eager to monitor the effects of pollution and the transformation of species.

It was a welcome development that the designers of the Federal Capital City, Abuja, reserved areas for parks, gardens and recreational centres in the city. They have gone a step further to ensure that such areas remain green and have, in most cases, leased them to those willing to invest in legitimate recreational business. Companies and individuals have taken on the greening of some of these areas as part of their corporate social responsibility.

However, recent events have raised security concerns at these parks across the capital city. Media reports revealed that many of the capital city's parks have been taken over by gangs and miscreants who have turned them into battlegrounds and wreaked havoc on innocent citizens seeking recreation.

In the past, people have been battered and assaulted. There are reports of handset snatchings, intimidation and armed robberies involving patrons of these centres. Only last weekend, a former staff of the Africa Independent Television, (AIT), Mr. Efenji Efenji was brutally killed in the presence of his wife and child by unknown persons at the Cortland Garden, Karu on the outskirts of Abuja on February 14 in circumstances that the police are yet to explain. Efenji had gone with his family in search of Valentine's Day fun when he was stabbed; he bled to death. Police have since announced some arrests in connection with the murder.

Last month, armed gangs harassed revellers at the Abuja Millennium Park, roughening up people and injuring scores of them. These and other spates of incidents call for better management and policing of these recreational centres, and a better appreciation by the public of their original concept. Abuja municipal authorities have set good example by outlawing the sale of alcohol and other intoxicants at most of the recreational grounds. But it is rather difficult to enforce the rules because by their very nature, it is would be well nigh impossible to screen or curtail people bringing their own drinks and sharing it among friends and relations, the very ideals the parks should promote. This is particularly so when these centres are used as venues for weddings, receptions or even product launches.

We believe that the police can do a lot more to stop these centres from being hijacked from their original concept as relaxation spots if they worked hand-in-hand with municipal authorities. With better management and more policing, we can make these centres true relaxation spots where people can go and have a moment without fear of molestation. Abuja, apart from being a capital city is also host to several members of the international and diplomatic community, most of who are used to such recreational facilities in their home countries; they should feel and be safe in those areas. The police should also increase their patrols in the parks and station their vehicles around the vicinities to come to the rescue of anyone whose safety is threatened and deal with the culprits.

KABIRU A. YUSUF: Chairman/Chief Executive Officer
ISIAQ AJIBOEA: Managing Director/Chief Operating Officer
MANNIR DAN ALI: Executive Director/ Editor-in-Chief
ALI M. AKOSHILE: General Manager, Business & Strategy
MAHMUD JEGA: Editor, Daily Trust
SHEHU O. MOHAMMED: Asst. General Manager, Finance
GARBA ALIYU ABUBAKAR: Asst. General Manager (IT)
ABDULKADIR ALIYU: Head, Advert

e-mail: opinion@dailytrust.com

Ojo's memo and spectre of Yar'adua's return

"The art of war teaches us to rely not on the likelihood of the enemy not coming, but on our own readiness to receive him; not on the chance of his not attacking, but rather on the fact that we have made our position unassailable."

— Sun Tsu

One of the most intriguing battles in the history of warfare occurred at Cannae, next to the river *Aufius*, in the southeast of Italy on the 2nd of August 216 BC. The battle was remarkable for the tactical brilliance of the Carthaginian commander Hannibal, as well as the import of deception in war, and I dare to add, politics.

At Cannae, two Roman armies commanded by the L. Aemilius Paullus and C. Terrentius Varro, fighting in unison for the first time ever, led a combined total of 86,000 men in the vain effort to annihilate the Carthaginian army under the Brilliant leadership of Hannibal. Hannibal's forces had humiliated the Romans in separate battles through the Alps at Trebia, and Lake Trasimene. The battle of Cannae was therefore viewed by the Romans, as one to end the threat posed by Hannibal, who commanded the multi-ethnic Carthaginian army of approximately 40,000.

What followed next, in the words of the military historian Will Durant "... was a supreme example of generalship, never bettered in history... and it set the lines of military tactics for 2,000 years."

The Romans out-numbered the Carthaginians by almost two to one. They were the military superpowers of the time. Worst still, Hannibal's escape route appeared cut off by the river *Aufius*, behind his position. In Roman eyes, everything pointed towards a decisive victory.

But Hannibal never read the script. The River may have cut off his escape route, but it was also part of his battle strategy. Its presence meant his forces could not be out-flanked by the Romans either way. The masterstroke, however, was the battle plan itself.

The Romans deployed in classic rectangular formation, with the strongest infantry units at the center. Their cavalry units were positioned on the flanks. Hannibal opted to position his weakest forces at the center of engagement, while his battle-hardened Africans held in reserve at the flanks along with his cavalry. The result was predictable.

As expected, the weak Carthaginian center caved in as soon as the battle commenced and appeared seemingly in retreat towards the inevitable slaughter on the banks of the river behind them. What the Romans failed to notice, however, was that even as they retreated, the battle formation of Hannibal's army had dissolved into a crescent, with his strongest reserves on the flanks along with the cavalry.

The seemingly weak center had lured the Romans into an elaborate trap. When Hannibal's reserves engaged fully, the Romans were surrounded from all sides. Out of the 86,000 Romans that commenced

Muhammad Al-Ghazali

ghazalism@dailytrust.com,
08052100432 (SMS only)

the battle, only about 14,000 lived to fight another day. The rout was emphatic. It was the earliest known deployment of the pincer movement in military history.

Like at Cannae, the battle is presently on for the political soul of Nigeria. Our survival as a virile and sovereign nation is at stake. What is not clear, however, is how the battle will end. But the permutations are instructive. The amalgamation of the motives, tactics, schemes and strategies employed by politicians and various interest groups in the sordid tangle for relevance that culminated in the unconstitutional

to reap the consequences, one way, or the other.

Exiles like Nuhu Ribadu, and Nasir el-Rufai, along with the former Bauchi state governor Adamu Muazu, occupy the third tier in the elaborate drama of deceit tempered by enlightened self-interest. If Yar'adua's tenure were to end tomorrow, this group will become fully integrated into the resurgent political machine that called formed the government in the last administration.

The last group contains the foot soldiers and cheap opportunists of the 'third term' genre, in the National Assembly (NASS) and the Federal Executive Council (FEC). Ordinarily, all democrats, except for the antecedents of those spearheading the move, should applaud news that the FEC is prepared to invoke sections 144 and 145 of the constitution in dealing with the

In the coming days; the attempt to perpetuate the illegality by removing Yar'adua from office will become even more daring

ascendance of Goodluck Jonathan to the presidency, has made the military manoeuvres at Cannae all those centuries ago, seem like child's play.

In the coming days, the attempt to perpetuate the illegality by removing Yar'adua from office will become even more daring. The signs are ominous. Like at Cannae, one thing has become obvious from the events of the past several weeks. Unlike when Obasanjo tested the waters during the Trust Annual dialogue with a bit of trepidation, over-confidence now appears to have permeated the ranks of those who want to make Yar'adua's presidency history, even while their motives are dissimilar and may not entirely be in tandem with the national interest. Permit me, now, to list some of the major combatants and interest groups in the epic battle for the political soul of the nation.

Three former leaders of the nation sit on top of the list of gladiators. They are Generals Olusegun Obasanjo, Muhammadu Buhari, and Ibrahim Babangida. Of the three, only IBB is yet to show his hand one way or the other. General Buhari too, may not have over-committed himself, but most of political associates, like Buba Galadima have already made their views known on the subject matter.

Next, are the state governors; and here, I need stress that naked ambition – like the little matter of who succeeds Jonathan as the next VP, appears to be sufficient bait. Political relevance and unfettered access to the consolidated revenue fund are the other contingent issues to them. They have now played their trump cards by wittingly or unwittingly hopping on the train to Ota, induced no doubt, by the 'coincidental' release of monies from the excess crude account to the three tiers of government. They now wait

status-quo. The fact that their move has attracted controversy tells its own story.

Ojo Maduekwé encouraged Abacha to perpetuate himself in power. As National Secretary of the PDP, he also purged the party of all nuances of internal democracy, along with its chairman Ahmadu Ali. Together with fringe members of Obasanjo's kitchen cabinet like Dora Akunyili, he also enthusiastically supported the third term project.

That explains why many in the FEC except about four Ministers viewed actions with maximum suspicion. They believed the memos submitted to the council so far on the issues stank of the rotten eggs from Ota farm! The risk we run is that their exact motives can be easily hidden with the realm of their constitutional responsibility on the matter. Many have described what happened a few weeks ago as the equivalent of a civilian coup, but in reality it is increasingly becoming clear that Obasanjo is fast becoming the principal beneficiary of the entire mess.

Still, I have the sneaky feeling that he may have misjudged Yar'adua just as he almost fatally underestimated Abacha. For as long as Yar'adua has not been certified medically dead, we must live with the specter of his return, even on a wheel chair, sooner rather than later. That will put the cat among the pigeons!

Except they find a way to impeach him, or amend the constitution to foreclose his vengeance when he returns, I fear that Yar'adua's foes may have boxed themselves into an elaborate trap. If Yar'adua returns tomorrow, the ranks of our exiled politicians is likely to swell. Woe awaits all those who have crossed him!

TALK MORE FOR 50% OFF!

Now pay 50% less on Glo to Glo calls on Glo TALK MORE

* Glo to Glo : 30k / sec (N18 / min)

* Glo to other networks : 60k / sec (N36 / min)

So what are you waiting for, avail this rate plan and enjoy talking to your near and dear ones this festive season and beyond.

To subscribe to TALK MORE, prepaid customers dial *100*1*2#-

For details call 121, 200 or 500 from your Glo line.
From other networks call 08050020121

Glo mobile reserves the right to modify or withdraw this rate plan without notice

Rule your world





His Excellency, **Ibrahim Gaidam**
Executive Governor, Yobe State.

CONGRATULATIONS

On behalf of the entire civil servants in Yobe State, I, Alhaji Dauda Yahaya mni, the Head of Service, Yobe State, wish to congratulate His Excellency, Alhaji Ibrahim Gaidam FNCA, CPA, the Executive Governor of Yobe State over his victory at the Supreme Court.

Your landmark achievement at the Supreme Court was indeed a victory for democracy, Yobe State and all of us who are associated with your development initiatives.

We are indeed grateful for the 50 per cent waiver granted to the civil servants on houses in the state on owner-occupier basis. We also appreciate regular training and prompt payment of our medical bills.

We wish to pledge our total support and co-operation, once again.



Signed:
Alhaji Dauda Yahaya mni,
Head of Service, Yobe State



His Excellency, **Ibrahim Gaidam**
Executive Governor, Yobe State.

CONGRATULATIONS!

THE MANAGEMENT AND STAFF OF LAKE CHAD MERCHANTS NIGERIA LIMITED, JOIN THE NUMEROUS FRIENDS AND WELL WISHERS OF GOVERNOR IBRAHIM GAIDAM OF YOBE STATE IN CONGRATULATING HIM ON HIS WELL DESERVED VICTORY AT THE SUPREME COURT WHICH HAS PRESERVED HIS OFFICE AS THE GOVERNOR OF YOBE STATE . THIS LANDMARK JUDGEMENT HAS NO DOUBT VINDICATED YOU AND HAS GONE A LONG WAY IN JUSTIFYING THE SAYING THAT WHAT GOD HAS DESTINED CANNOT BE CHANGED BY MANKIND.

WHILE WE ENJOIN ALL PEACE LOVING AND WELL MEANING PEOPLE OF YOBE STATE TO JOIN HANDS WITH THE STATE EXECUTIVE IN HIS EFFORTS TO MOVE THE YOUNG STATE FORWARD, WE WANT TO USE THIS FORUM ALSO TO PRAY THAT ALMIGHTY ALLAH CONTINUE TO GUIDE YOU IN YOUR COMMITMENT TOWARDS IMPROVING THE LOT OF THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE AND BEYOND.

SIGNED
KUWATA GONI
CHAIRMAN/CHIEF EXECUTIVE

INTERNATIONAL

Niger's junta guarantees return to civilian rule

THE United States stepped up calls yesterday for a peaceful and early transition from military to civilian rule in uranium-rich Niger where a military coup has overthrown President Mamadou Tandja.

The appeal came after the junta promised to hand over power to civilian rulers and return the west African state to democracy as soon as politicians agreed on a new constitution and hold polls.

"The United States continues to support the hopes of the Nigerian people to see constitutional order re-established and a peaceful transition leading to prompt, fair and transparent elections," said a statement in French from

the US embassy in Niamey. Washington had already called Friday for a speedy return to democracy. Non-governmental organisations yesterday echoed the appeal.

"We call on the military to keep their promise to restore democracy as soon as possible," said FUSAD, an umbrella organisation for local NGOs.

The junta gave an international delegation "necessary guarantees" that the country would be returned to constitutional democracy through dialogue among all political parties and the civil society movement culminating in elections. But the military rulers provided no timeframe in their talks with UN and African envoys in Niamey on Sunday.

Niger, which had enjoyed a decade of rare stability in the troubled west African region, was thrown into political turmoil last year when Tandja decided to extend his grip on power beyond the 10-year-limit. The move stirred anger at home and abroad. Niger was suspended from a regional grouping as the European Union, the main donor to the impoverished country suspended aid. The military said it stepped in to break the impasse as it became apparent political dialogue between Tandja and his rivals had stalled. Had the country's laws not been violated, the military officers said they would not have stepped forward.

ECOWAS

chairman

Mohamed Ibn Chambas said United Nations and African envoys who visited Niamey at the weekend discussed with members of the junta how the country can get back to "normal constitutional life as quickly as possible".

"They have given us the necessary guarantees and all this will be done with the participation of civil society and the political parties," said the head of the 15-member Economic Community of West African States.

"Dialogue will be opened with all the vital forces of the nation which will end in the drawing up of a new constitution and a period of transition," added Chambas. The junta has promised a transparent process and that the end

of "free and fair elections power will be handed to a democratically elected government, as was done in 1999", said Colonel Djibrilla Hamidou Hima, one of the top military leaders said.

Although the coup has been condemned abroad, the military rulers whipped up popular support among the impoverished country's 15 million people. Thousands of people staged demonstrations throughout the weekend in show of support of the overthrow of Tandja. The junta said Tandja, whom they arrested during a raid of the presidential palace last Thursday, was being held at the same palace in Niamey and that the Red Cross had been cleared to visit him.

Ugandan rebels kidnap 40 in Central Africa



CENTRAL African Republic soldiers at a military camp in Birao

UGANDAN rebels kidnapped at least 40 people and wounded a soldier during an attack in the southwest of the Central African Republic, a Central African soldier said yesterday.

The soldier said the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) swept through the town of Rafai early Friday evening going "door to door, taking at least 40 people hostage and stealing property." The soldier, who asked not to

be named but is based in nearby Bangassou, said a Central African army unit responded.

"During the clash that followed, a Central African soldier was wounded and several Tongo-Tongo (the local name for the rebels) were wounded. But the rebels managed to flee with the hostages." The soldier added that the FACA, or Central African army, was in pursuit of the rebels. Last week the LRA carried out

two attacks in the same region, kidnapping at least 10 people in a raid on the village of Kamandare, a military source said. Residents of the village of Gbangomboro fled in advance of a similar looting attack two days later.

LRA rebels occupied the nearby mining town of Nzako for a few hours, looting houses and shooting in the air, before withdrawing with several dozen kidnapped people, according to wit-

nesses and a source in the security forces.

Led by Joseph Kony, the LRA took up arms in 1988 in northern Uganda, where they acquired a reputation for brutality. Since 2005, under pressure from the Ugandan army, the fighters pulled back from their bases in north Uganda to move into the far northeast of the Democratic Republic of Congo, across the border from the CAR.

Third suspect arrested after Kigali attacks

RWANDAN police have arrested a third suspect in connection with three grenade attacks Friday in the capital Kigali that left two people dead, according to a revised toll, a spokesman said yesterday.

Police spokesman Eric Kayiranga said "a man was arrested Saturday night at a market in Huye district" in the south of the country. "He is suspected of being among the people who threw the grenades," he told AFP.

The police had announced on Saturday the arrest of two suspects belonging to the Interahamwe, the extremist Hutu militia that carried out the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi minority. Kayiranga also said one person died of injuries sustained during the attacks over the weekend, bringing the death toll to two. Four people were still hospitalised on Sunday, he said.

I/Coast opposition shuns new unity government

TWO Ivory Coast opposition leaders say they will not join a new proposed governing coalition, deepening the crisis sparked by President Laurent Gbagbo's dissolution of the government earlier this month. Two top opposition leaders refused yesterday to join the government which is expected to be announced yesterday. Mediator Blaise Compaore, Burkina Faso's president, was expected yesterday in Abidjan to negotiate with leaders.

The West African nation has been divided between a rebel-controlled north and a government-controlled south since 2002.

International



WOMEN supporters of former United Nations nuclear chief Mohamed ElBaradei, hold his portrait and give the thumbs up, as they prepare to give him a hero's welcome at Cairo, airport.

Ex-UN nuclear chief: Egypt must change

FORMER UN nuclear chief Mohamed ElBaradei sharply criticized Egypt's ruling system yesterday, saying the country has stagnated under President Hosni Mubarak while corruption has thrived. In his first televised appearance since he returned to his native Egypt, the 67-year-old ElBaradei said his ultimate goal is to set the country down the path of democratic reform.

But he remained coy on the primary question on many Egyptians' minds — whether he'll challenge President Hosni Mubarak in elections slated for next year.

He also didn't give specifics on how he would lobby for democratic change. "I am not nominating myself," said ElBaradei, who returned Friday for the first time since leaving his post as head of the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Association after 12 years in office.

"I am talking about the fate of a nation, and the future of our sons. I am saying we have a problem. We must change course. Whether I am part of that change or just light the way, this is secondary."

Egypt has been ruled for nearly 30 years by Mubarak, who appears

to be trying to set up a political dynasty by grooming his son to succeed him, although both father and son publicly deny there is a succession plan.

Respected worldwide and untouched by the corruption tainting much of Egypt's current regime, ElBaradei, who won the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize, could be the most credible opposition leader to emerge as this US-allied country prepares for 2011 presidential elections.

Last year, young Egyptians and activists called on him in an open letter to run for president. ElBa-

radei responded that he would only join the race if guaranteed that elections would be free, fully supervised by the judiciary and monitored by the international community.

He repeated those conditions yesterday, but added that if those terms are met, he would even take on Mubarak at the polls.

However, it would be an uphill battle for him to even run. Constitutional reforms in 2005 and 2007 introduced multicandidate presidential elections for the first time, but made it practically impossible for independent candidates to run.

Israeli strike on Iran would be 'disaster' - Turkey

A pre-emptive Israeli strike on Iran's nuclear facilities would be a "disaster of unpredictable consequences", Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan warned in an interview published yesterday.

"We have to find a solution through diplomatic means," he told the leading Spanish daily *El Pais*. "We must not leave the negotiating table."

Israel this month raised the possibility of using force to stop Iran from developing nuclear weapons, something Tehran vehemently denies it is seeking.

Asked about the possibility of an Israeli pre-emptive strike, Erdogan said it would cause "a disaster in the region, a disaster of unpredictable consequences. It would be something unthinkable which I don't even want to imagine."

Erdogan also said he has had no direct contact with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Relations between Turkey and Israel have deteriorated since the Jewish state's 22-day offensive in Gaza that ended in January last year.

Turkey, which has good relations with its neighbour Iran, has offered to host an exchange of Iran's low-enriched uranium (LEU) with 20 percent enriched uranium to be supplied by world powers to Tehran as part of a UN-drafted deal.

...As Iran vows to respond 'strongly' to any attack

IRAN has no intention of launching a war but will respond "strongly" to any attack, Deputy Foreign Minister Ali Ahani said in an interview published yesterday amid concern over its nuclear programme. "Iran certainly will not start a war. Ahani told Croatia's *Vecernji List* daily. "But if we are attacked, we will respond strongly."

Israel, which accuses Tehran of trying to acquire atomic weapons under the guise of a civilian programme, a charge Tehran strongly rejects, has not excluded the possibility of striking Iranian nuclear sites.

Asked about Iranian investment in weaponry, Ahani said the Iranian people were "peaceful" and everything that his country was doing in this field had a "defensive character" because of "threats" against Tehran. Iran wants to acquire Russian S-300 anti-missile systems, a move considered by Israel and the West as a threat.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad told reporters last week that Israel was mulling starting a war "next spring or summer" but has yet to make a final decision.

Israeli soldiers clash with Palestinian protesters

A crowd of Palestinian youths pelted Israeli soldiers with stones and empty bottles yesterday, drawing tear gas and stun grenades in the most serious violence to rock this volatile West Bank city in months.

The clashes erupted a day after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu enraged Palestinian residents by adding a disputed Hebron shrine to Israel's list of national heritage sites.

The Palestinians claim all of the West Bank as part of a future state, and saw the Israeli move a largely symbolic gesture, as a

provocation.

Hebron merchants shuttered their stores to protest the decision, and some 100 youths burned tires and threw stones and bottles at Israeli forces in the city. The Israeli military said one soldier was lightly wounded, while Palestinians said three protesters suffered from tear gas inhalation.

Hebron has been a flashpoint for decades. Several hundred ultranationalist Jewish settlers live in heavily guarded enclaves in the midst of some 170,000 Palestinians.

Under accords signed in the

1990s, the Palestinians control 80 percent of the city and the Israeli military controls 20 percent. Netanyahu's move heightened long-standing tensions around the shrine.

Jews revere the site as the Cave of the Patriarchs, where the Bible says the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were buried along with three of their wives. Muslims call it the al-Ibrahimi mosque, reflecting the fact that Abraham is considered the father of both Judaism and Islam.

At a special Cabinet meeting Sunday, Netanyahu added

the cave and a second West Bank shrine, the traditional tomb of the biblical matriarch Rachel in Bethlehem, to the list of some 150 heritage sites.

The addition of the two West Bank sites reflected pressure from Jewish settlers and other nationalists to expand the number of heritage sites in the West Bank.

The prime minister, who has angered settlers by agreeing under US pressure to slow settlement construction in the West Bank, said the two sites must be preserved because they show Israel's ancient ties to the land.

International



MALAYSIA'S Prime Minister Najib Razak and first lady Rosmah Mansor are seen here waving to a crowd in Putrajaya.

Malaysian PM's wife denies hand in govt decisions

THE wife of Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak has denied suggestions she is the power behind the throne, saying that while she speaks her mind, she is not involved in government decisions.

"It is not something that I am sensitive of as it is not true," Rosmah Mansor told state news agency Bernama Friday, insisting she was not the hidden hand behind the premier's policies.

"Maybe I am a bit vocal or gregarious," she said. "But it does not mean that since Datuk Najib is a reserved person, I am making the decisions." I am the type who will voice out my dissatisfaction, but once said, it is done."

Malaysia's first lady, who has a reputation for being outspoken, said she and her husband are "best friends" but that

his soft-spoken demeanour should not be underestimated.

"Do not provoke him. If he is angry, there is no forgiveness for you," she reportedly said.

Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim, who is on trial for sodomy, earlier this month accused Najib and Rosmah of being behind the sex allegations.

"These are trumped-up charges involving two black hands -- Najib and Rosmah," said Anwar, who was sacked as deputy prime minister and jailed on similar charges a decade ago.

Anwar, who was released from jail in 2004 after the sexual misconduct count was overturned, has made a comeback to politics as the leader of a reinvigorated opposition.

Suicide car bomb kills nine in Pakistan's Swat

A suicide car bomber hit a military convoy killing nine people, including children, in Pakistan's Swat district yesterday, just months after the army claimed to have quelled a Taliban uprising.

The bomber blew up a vehicle packed with explosives as security forces drove through the centre of Mingora, the main town of Swat where the military has sought to reassert control after putting down the Islamist insurgency.

Shops and cars were damaged in what was the deadliest attack in the former tourist district once frequented by Westerners since a suicide bomber flung him-

self at a military convoy killing 45 people on October 12 in Shangla.

Local television footage showed a car enveloped in flames and black smoke billowing down a street, as casualties lay on the ground in blood-soaked clothing. Soldiers rushed to the scene and ambulances ferried away the wounded. Frightened women and children could be seen scurrying from the scene. "I was going for some work in the bazaar but was stopped by security forces because the army convoy was moving," said Saedur Rehman, a 45-year-old teacher. Moments later, a car hit the tail end of the military convoy.

More than 40 held in Turkey coup plot

MORE than 40 people were arrested in Turkey yesterday in connection with an alleged military plot against the Islamist-rooted government, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said.

"This morning our security forces began a detention process," he told a news

conference during an official visit to Spain. "As of now, more than 40 people have been detained."

He was responding to a question about Turkish media reports that police yesterday detained three retired generals as part of an investigation into an alleged coup plot.



INDUSTRIAL TRAINING FUND HEADQUARTERS

DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S OFFICE
MIANGO ROAD, P. M. B. 2199, JOS - NIGERIA

VACANCY FOR THE POST OF AN ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (LEGAL) ON CONTISS 13

Applications are invited from suitably qualified applicants for the post of Assistant Director (Legal) in the Legal and Council Affairs Unit under the Directorate of the Industrial Training Fund (ITF).

Qualifications:

A good Honours degree in Law: LLB, BL with a minimum of second class lower plus NYSC experience. Possession of higher qualification LLM with minimum of 7 years cognate working experience shall be an added advantage.

Method of Application:

Applications must be submitted in ten (10) copies with comprehensive Curriculum Vitae and photocopies of credentials. Applicants should also submit names of three (3) Referees who must forward reference direct to the Director-General, Industrial Training Fund, Headquarters, PMB 2199, Miango Road, Jos, Plateau State.

Closing Date for Submission:

Applications must be received not later than two (2) weeks from the date of this publication. Please note that only short listed candidates would be invited for interview.

Signed:

Director-General/Chief Executive

Career Opportunities in a Telecom Carrier Company

The Dangote Group is a diversified and fully integrated conglomerate with interests across a range of sectors in Nigeria and Africa. Current interests include cement, sugar, flour, salt, pasta, beverages, noodles, poly products, transportation and real estate with new projects in the oil and gas, telecommunication, fertilizer and steel sectors of the economy.

Dancom Technologies is an emerging Telecoms Carrier Company and a member of the Dangote Group of Companies. We are currently looking for suitable candidates for the following positions:

Fibre Field Engineer

Overall Objectives of the Job:

- To manage the day to day field roll-out activities of a national fibre carrier deployment project.

Role Profile:

- Degree in Electronics Engineering, additional qualifications in Fibre Engineering.
- Minimum of 7 years post education experience in Fibre Optic Engineering and Fibre Networks Management. Broad working knowledge of the Nigerian telecommunications sector, with special consideration to knowledge of fibre carrier, fibre backbone and fibre ring systems.

Civil Works Field Engineer

Overall Objectives of the Job:

- To manage the day to day field roll-out activities of a national fibre carrier civil works deployment project.

Role Profile:

- Degree in Civil Engineering.
- Minimum of 7 years post education experience in Telecommunications Civil Works Support Systems Engineering and Facility Management experience. Broad working knowledge of the Nigerian telecommunications sector, with special civil works related consideration to fibre carrier, fibre backbone and fibre ring systems.

Auto CAD Technician

Overall Objectives of the Job:

- To create and manage an engineering drawing database to support the day to day field roll-out activities of a national fibre carrier deployment project.

Role Profile:

- Degree in Civil Works, additional qualifications in Telecoms Civil Works Support Engineering.
- Minimum of 5 years post education experience with hands-on experience of the drawing application AutoCAD. Working knowledge of the Nigerian telecommunications sector, functionally conversant and certified in the latest generation AutoCAD series.

Logistics Technician

Overall Objectives of the Job:

- To create and manage the Microsoft Project or Primavera project logistics database to support the day to day field roll-out activities of a national fibre carrier deployment project.

Role Profile:

- Degree in Civil Works, additional qualifications in Telecoms Civil Works Support Engineering.
- Minimum of 5 years post education experience with hands-on experience scheduling and project managing applications of Microsoft Project or Primavera. Working knowledge of the Nigerian telecommunications sector, functionally conversant and certified in the latest generation of Microsoft Project or Primavera.

Program Management Coordinator

Overall Objectives of the Job:

- To manage and support the internal and extended services of the Program Management Office, PMO.

Role Profile:

- PMI certified with telecoms background in PMO functionality as a minimum.
- Minimum of 5 years post education experience in program/project management application. Working knowledge of the Nigerian telecommunications sector, functionally conversant in Excel, Word, PP and other standard computer based tools.

Project Management Coordinator

Overall Objectives of the Job:

- To manage and support the internal and extended services of the Program Management Office, PMO.

Role Profile:

- PMI certified with telecoms back ground in PMO functionality as a minimum.
- Minimum of 5 years post education experience in program/project management application. Working knowledge of the Nigerian telecommunications sector, functionally conversant in Excel, Word, PP and other standard computer based tools.

Interested applicants should send recent CVs to careers@dangote-group.com within 1 week of this publication, indicating name and position applied for in subject line.



International

Obama puts forward last-ditch health care plan

MAKING a last-ditch effort to save his health care overhaul, President Barack Obama yesterday put forward a nearly \$1 trillion, 10-year compromise that would allow the government to deny or roll back egregious insurance premium increases that infuriate consumers.

Posted yesterday morning on the White House Web site, the plan would provide coverage to more than 31 million Americans now uninsured without adding to the federal deficit. It comes just four days before Obama's one-of-a-kind, televised health care summit with Democrats and Republicans.

Even with the latest changes, it's highly uncertain such an ambitious proposal can get through Congress. Republicans are

virtually all opposed, and some Democrats who last year supported sweeping health care changes are having second thoughts in an election year. After a year in pursuit of what was once his top domestic priority, Obama may have to settle for a modest fallback.

Weeks ago, the president and congressional Democrats were on the verge of an historic step — a long-sought remake of the nation's health care system after a half-century of unsuccessful attempts by scores of politicians. Then Republican Scott Brown stunned Washington with an upset win in the Massachusetts Senate race, denying Democrats their 60-seat majority and reversing any political momentum.

Determined to avoid facing voters empty-

handed, Obama offered a fresh proposal based on Democratic-passed bills.

The plan conspicuously omits a government insurance plan sought by liberals and viewed as a non-starter by conservatives and some congressional moderates. It includes Senate-passed restrictions on federal funding for abortion that have been adamantly opposed by abortion foes as well as abortion rights supporters.

The new White House plan would give the federal government the power to regulate the health insurance industry much like a public utility. The Health and Human Services Department, in conjunction with state authorities, would be able to deny substantial premium increases, limit them or demand rebates for consumers.



PRESIDENT Barack Obama speaks after his toast during the Governors Ball in the State Dining Room of the White House in Washington.

Unhappy with Israel, EU condemns Dubai killing

THE European Union condemned yesterday the use of fraudulent EU passports by the killers of a Palestinian militant in Dubai, showing its discontent with Israel without referring to it directly.

In a short statement, which European diplomats said was intended as a rebuke to Israel, EU foreign ministers said after talks in Brussels that the assassination raised "profoundly disturbing" issues and said citizens' rights were violated.

Dubai has accused Israel of being behind the killing of Hamas commander Mahmoud al-Mabhouh. Israel has not denied or confirmed it played any role but its foreign minister, visiting Brussels, said there was nothing to link it to the killing.

"The EU strongly condemns the fact that those involved in this action (the assassination) used fraudulent EU member states' passports and credit cards acquired through the theft of EU citizens' identities," the ministers said.

"The EU welcomes the investigation by the Dubai authorities and calls on all countries to cooperate with it." Diplomats said the statement was intended to put pressure on Israel, but no direct reference was made to it because there was no proof Israeli agents carried out the assassination.

The declaration is unlikely to have any long-term repercussions for EU-Israeli ties and Israeli officials have played down the possibility of a full-blown crisis.

Homeless Haitians: Aid halted to force them out

HOMELESS victims of Haiti's earthquake said yesterday that police are halting deliveries of food and water to try to force them to leave their camp on the grounds of the prime minister's office.

Police have padlocked gates to the camp where about 2,500 homeless people live under bed sheets propped on sticks on the sloping hill leading to the office. Stinking garbage with swarms of flies is piling up and portable latrines are filled, camp residents

complained. Witnesses said police beat 22-year-old Dalida Jeanty in the morning after she picked up a broom to sweep around her tent. "They called her and she did not come so they beat her," said her cousin, Alix Jeanty.

Friends and relatives carried the woman down the hill and UN peacekeepers arranged for her to be taken to the hospital.

A police officer guarding the gate refused to give his name or to comment on the alleged beating or on

accusations they have been turning away trucks carrying food and water for the past 10 days. Calls to the information ministry yesterday were unanswered, as was an e-mail to the prime minister's chief aide.

"We've been here for a month and we were being treated well, but for the past two weeks we have been mistreated," said Markinson Midey, a 22-year-old student. "Anytime they bring food or water, the police make the trucks leave."



LEVENTIS FOUNDATION (NIGERIA) LTD/GTE

OVERSEAS SCHOLARSHIPS FOR MBA STUDIES

ALBA Graduate School and A.G Leventis Foundation, offer two scholarship of €20,100 (plus €12,000 for accommodation and living expenses) to two qualified students from Nigeria to attend the Full-Time MBA program, at ALBA Graduate Business School in Athens, Greece for the academic year 2010-2011.

ALBA Graduate Business School is an accredited, research-driven academic institution with international distinctions.

The basic entry criteria required for the Full-Time MBA Program are the following:-

- Nigerian Citizen
- 1st Class and Upper 2nd Class Bachelors degree completed
- Ambitious individual
- Minimum of three years of work experience.

Eligible applicants are requested to apply online to the Full Time MBA or download the application form by registering at [http:// applications.alba.edu.gr](http://applications.alba.edu.gr) and send their completed application package (include all other official supplementary documents) by 16th of April 2010 to the following address:

The Executive Director
Leventis Foundation (Nigeria) Ltd/Gte
Iddo House, Ebute-Metta, P.O. Box 26, General Post Office
Marina, Lagos, Nigeria.

("LFN/ALBA Scholarship" should be written at top left hand corner of the envelope)

For more information please contact:
Ms. Erato Paraschaki, ALBA Director
of International Development,
eparasch@alba.edu.gr
or visit us at: [http:// www.alba.edu.gr/international](http://www.alba.edu.gr/international)

Ms. Nnena Chukwu, Leventis Foundation (Nigeria) Ltd/Gte
Iddo House, Lagos, Nigeria.
Email: leventisfoundation@agleventis.com: Or Tel: 01-4730968

APPRECIATION

On behalf of myself and that of the entire family members of Late Alhaji Muhammad Inuwa Ali [Turakin Jos], I wish to convey our heartfelt gratitude and deepest appreciation to everyone of you for

Still took time to commiserate with, and console us. Your personal or delegated condolence visits, material assistance, prayers, letters, telephone calls, text messages of condolence are most overwhelming. Truly, the presence of each one of you was very important to our family and it consoles us beyond your imagination.



Late Alhaji Muhammad Inuwa Ali
[Turakin Jos]

The entire family is humbled by the kind words and expressions you conveyed to extol the virtues of the Turakin Jos during your visits. We pray the Almighty Allah will answer all your prayers for the repose of his soul and reward you abundantly.

We will not forget the large crowd that turned out daily on condolence visits to commiserate with and comfort us. To all our leaders of various callings, friends, colleagues, associates and sympathisers from all walks of life who came and stood by us at our most trying time, we are most grateful.

the prayers and support you gave to us that strengthened and consoled us over the sad loss of our brother, father, husband and grandfather Late Alhaji Muhammad Inuwa Ali [Turakin Jos] who answered the call to eternity on 3rd of December, 2009.

We pray that we will all have the strength to accept the will of Allah, and may He, in His infinite mercy, admit and grant Alhaji Muhammad Inuwa Ali a place in Aljannatul Firdausi, ameen.

It is indeed most gratifying that despite your individual and communal commitments you

Signed:
Mohammed Hamisu Ali – Jos, NPM, mni,
Assistant Inspector-General of Police (Rtd)
For the Family



NIGERIAN RAILWAY CORPORATION

INVITATION FOR THE PRE-QUALIFICATION OF CONTRACTORS FOR THE REHABILITATION OF THE TRACK, BRIDGES AND CULVERTS OF THE EASTERN RAIL LINE OF NIGERIAN RAILWAY CORPORATION.

1. INTRODUCTION:-

In furtherance of the Federal Government's Railway rehabilitation programme, the Nigerian Railway Corporation (NRC) invites interested and reputable Contractors with relevant and verifiable experience in Railway construction to apply for pre-qualification for consideration to tender for the projects indicated below:-

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECTS

The projects involve Major Rehabilitation of Nigerian Railway Corporation's existing narrow gauge single line Rail Track, including the Bridges and culverts from Port-Harcourt to Maiduguri. The estimated total length of track work to be covered is 1,654km. To enable quick delivery of the works within the expected time frame, the work is divided into two projects.

Project (1) will cover the Rehabilitation Work from Port-Harcourt to Kaduna Junction through Kafanchan – 916km (approximately).

Project (2) will cover the Rehabilitation work from Kafanchan to Maiduguri including the branch line from Kuru to Jos all totaling 738 km (approximately).

3. PRE-QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

A requirement for pre-qualification is that the contractor must have a total annual turnover of at least N5B (Five Billion Naira) in each of the last three years from activities relevant to civil engineering construction.

In addition the contractor is required to submit the under mentioned documents.

- i. Valid certificate of Incorporation
- ii. Profile of firm/consortium including ownership and organizational structure, and CVs of key personnel to be deployed to the assignment.
- iii. Evidence of successful execution of major railway construction projects.
- iv. Audited Account for 3 years.
- v. Certified copy of last Annual Returns
- vi. Tax Clearance Certificate for last 3 years.
- vii. Evidence Value Added Tax Registration
- viii. Evidence of Strong Financial support from a first rate financial institution including readiness to provide contractor with a significant credit line in view of the size of the project.
- ix. Evidence and list of equipments, source and Location.

Failure to meet any of the criteria as well as submit any of the listed documents will be grounds for disqualification.

ENQUIRES

Enquiries in relation to this invitation for pre-qualification should be directed to:-
Managing Director's Office
Public Procurement Unit (Capital),
Nigerian Railway Corporation (HQ),
Ebute-Meta,
Lagos.

SUBMISSION OF PRE-QUALIFICATION DOCUMENTS

Three hard copies of the application and pre-qualification documents must be submitted in a sealed envelope and marked "PRE QUALIFICATION OF CONTRACTORS FOR THE MAJOR REHABILITATION OF RAIL TRACK, BRIDGE AND CULVERTS FROM PORT-HARCOURT TO MAIDUGURI" and delivered either by hand or by registered mail to reach the address given below not later than 1pm on Friday 26th March, 2010.

The Secretary,
Nigerian Railway Corporation (HQ)
P.M.B. 1037
Ebute-Metta,
Lagos.

Please note:

- a. All documents submitted must be accompanied with an affidavit Sworn in any Magistrate/High Court to confirm their authenticity.
- b. Only short-listed companies shall be invited to tender for works stated above.
- c. Late submission shall be rejected.
- d. This advertisement for pre-qualification shall not be construed to be a commitment on the part of NRC to award any form of Contract to your company nor shall it entitle any company submitting document to claim any indemnity from NRC.
- e. NRC reserves the right to take final decision on any of the documents received in your pre-qualification package.

SIGN:

MANAGEMENT



FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION
POST BASIC PROJECT (STEP-B PROJECT)

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COLLEGE,
IDOANI, ONDO STATE

IDA CREDIT No. 4304-UNI

PROCUREMENT OF SCIENCE EQUIPMENT, CHEMICALS,
TEXTBOOKS, INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS,
ICT FACILITIES, GENERATOR AND SCHOOL BUS
(IFB No. STEP-B/FGC/IDOANI/NCB/G/01/2010)

Bid Issuance Date Tuesday 23rd. February, 2010

1. This Invitation for Bids follows the General Procurement Notice for this Project that appeared in Development Business, issue no. 591 of 2nd July, 2007.
2. The Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) toward the cost of Science and Technology Education Post Basic Project, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payments under the Contract for the Supply of Science Equipment, Chemicals, Textbooks, Instructional Materials, ICT Facilities, Generator and School Bus at Federal Government College, Idoani, Ondo State.
3. The STEP-B Project Federal Government College, Idoani, Ondo State now invites sealed bids from eligible and qualified bidders for the Procurement of the following:

Item No.	Description of item.	Lot No.	Quantity	Bid Security	Delivery Period (Max)	Delivery Location
1.	Procurement of Science Equipment and Chemicals.	1	Various	2.5% Bid Price	90 days	FGC, Idoani Ondo State.
2	ICT Facilities	2	Various	2.5% Bid Price	90 days	FGC, Idoani Ondo State.
3	14 Seater Bus	3	1	2.5% Bid Price	90 days	FGC, Idoani Ondo State.
4	Textbooks and Instructional Materials	4	240	2.5% Bid Price	90 days	FGC, Idoani Ondo State.
5	Power Generator.	5	1	2.5% Bid Price	90 days	FGC, Idoani Ondo State.

4. Bidding will be conducted through the National Competitive Bidding (NCB), a procedure specified in the World Bank's Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits, and is open to all bidders from Eligible Source Countries as defined in the Guidelines.
 5. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from the Project Office, Step-B Federal Government College, Idoani, Ondo State and inspect the bidding documents at the address given below, between the hours of 8.00 am to 4.00pm Mondays to Fridays, excluding public holidays.
 6. Qualifications requirements include:
 - Evidence of previous supply (sale) of similar items proposed for the last 5 years.
 - Audited Financial Statements for the last 3 years to demonstrate the financial capability of the Bidder in terms of Profitability and adequate working capital.
- A margin of preference for eligible national contractors shall not be applied. Additional details are provided in the Bidding Documents.
7. A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written Application to the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Ten Thousand Naira (N10,000.00) only in Bank Draft in favour of Step-B Project, Federal Government College, Idoani, Ondo State. The Bidding Documents will be collected by the representative of the Bidder or by courier services on request.
 8. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before Monday 29th March, 2010, at 2.00 pm. Electronic bidding will not be permitted. Late bids will not be accepted. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives, who choose to attend in person at the address below on Monday 29th March, 2010 at 2.00 pm. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of 2.5% of bid price in a freely convertible currency or bank draft from a reputable Nigeria commercial bank.

9. The address referred to above is:

The Project Manager,
Science and Technology Education Post Basic Project (STEP-B),
Federal Government College,
Idoani,
Ondo State,
Nigeria

PM-08035695965, ME-08034278179, PO-08033797314, FO-08065474850

E-mail: stepbfgcidoani@yahoo.co.uk

Signed
Project Manager.



NIGERIAN MARITIME ADMINISTRATION AND SAFETY AGENCY (NIMASA)

Established under the Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (Act, 2007)

Maritime House: 4 Burma Road, Apapa, Lagos, P.M.B 12861, Lagos.

E-mail: info@nimasa.gov.ng Website: www.nimasa.gov.ng

NTM/0120/2010

MARINE NOTICE

VERIFICATION EXERCISE FOR DISENGAGED DOCKWORKERS

Notice is hereby given that the Honourable Minister of Transport has approved the conduct of the verification of Disengaged Dockworkers with a view to paying the Nigerian Social Insurance Trust Fund (NSITF) statutory deductions made on behalf of the Dockworkers by the Nigerian Port Authority (NPA).

The exercise is scheduled to take place in the following locations as follows:

1. LAGOS CENTRE

Date: Tuesday 23rd February - 27th February, 2010

Venue: Command Guest House, Child Avenue,
Apapa, Lagos.

Time: 10am - 4pm Daily

2. CALABAR CENTRE

Date: 5th - 8th, March, 2010

Venue: State Library opposite State Stadium
Calabar, Cross River State

Time: 10am - 4pm Daily

3. WARRI CENTRE

Date: 1st - 4th, March, 2010

Venue: Nigerian Maritime Administration
and Safety Agency
(Maritime Labour Pool)
New Port Gate, NPA, Warri, Delta State

Time: 10am - 4pm Daily

REQUIREMENTS FOR VERIFICATION EXERCISE

1. Photocopy of previous payment of N160,000.00 severance package
2. Any form of present identification
3. For Next of Kin:
 - I. Death certificate of the dockworker
 - II. Evidence of relationship with the deceased.
4. Please note that only Dockworkers who worked with the under listed Companies between October 2002 and August 2003, qualify for this exercise.

SIGNED:
MANAGEMENT

SUMMARY OF NSITF DEDUCTION FOR YEARS 2002 - 2003

(a) LAGOS PORT COMPLEX

1. GARUBA Dada Nig. Ltd.
2. Ejee Brothers Comp. Ltd.
3. W. Biney Comp. Ltd.
4. Antonio Assat. & Sons Ltd.
5. Molley Koop Ltd
6. Baderi Stevedoring (Nig.) Ltd.
7. S.B. Bakare & Brothers Ltd.
8. Akudicks Nig. Ltd.
9. Ruwan Bagaja Comp. Ltd.
10. Vac Int'l
11. B.K.B (Nig) Ltd
12. Abayomi Owulade
13. Alhaji Ramallan & Sons
14. Joaghe & Sons Nig. Ltd.
15. Oyenike & Oyenike

(b) CONTAINER TERMINAL

1. National Cargo handling Coy.
2. Ayolas Cargo & Gen. Serv. Ltd.
3. Kebbi Motor Limited
4. Vac International Nig. Limited
5. Joagbe & Son Inter. Nig. Ltd.
6. Environ Control Ltd.
7. Waeco Nig. Ltd
8. G.P.C Global Ventures Ltd
9. Aiba Nig. Limited
10. Vodax Nigeria Limited
11. T.S.E Nig. Limited
12. B.K.B. Limited
13. Taiboll Ventures Limited
14. Bulk Pack Service Limited
15. Dockland Maritime Ltd.
16. Tee Nig. Ltd.

(c) TINCAN ISLAND PORT

1. Garbass Nig. Ltd.
2. Walama Nig. Ltd.
3. National Cargo Handling
4. Abonel Assoc. Ltd.
5. Wildman Co. Ltd.
6. Mega Bound Nig. Ltd.
7. Pin Plane Tops Nig. Ltd.
8. Bis Biak Nig. Ltd.
9. Mac Banadol Nig. Ltd.
10. EFX Service Ltd.
11. Sahih Nig. Ltd.
12. Ultimate Cargo Handling
13. River Oak Drake
14. Julie Agbori Ogboru
15. SSH Inter Ltd.
16. Pakarika Invest Ltd.
17. Armad Nigeria Ltd.

(d) RORO PORT

1. National Cargo Handling Coy
2. Ilutex Nigeria Ltd.
3. Trade Albam
4. Okaima Brothers Ltd.
5. Pakarika Investment Ltd.
6. Baika Nig. Ltd.

(e) DELTA PORT WARRI

1. Delport Ltd.
2. Kingrandolph Lee Ltd.
3. Benetech Ltd.
4. Deep Water Serv.
5. National Cargo Handls.
6. Sprint Marine Ltd.
7. Steers Int. Ltd.
8. Chyzob Ent. Ltd.
9. Nigerian Ports Authority

(f) CALABAR PORT

1. National Cargo Handling Co.
2. Tally Clerks Security
3. Jadawa Comm. & Co.

BUSINESS

0805 1000 536

NITEL: Conflicting reports emerge from Unicom

By Yunus Abdulhamid

CHINA Unicom, China's No. 2 mobile carrier, yesterday said it has not commenced any negotiations in a \$2.5 billion bid for the Nigeria Telecommunications Limited (NITEL).

"The company has not participated in any direct discussions or negotiations with any relevant parties involved in the Proposed Privatisation. The company will continue to observe the development of the Proposed Privatisation, and will make announcements as and when appropriate," Unicom said in a statement, Reuters reports.

The statement is a softer tone and departure from the earlier denial of involvement in the entire process two days after New Generation Telecommunications was declared winner of the bid in Abuja last Tuesday, where China Unicom was named as part.

However, Bloomberg reported yesterday that China Unicom (Hong Kong) Ltd confirmed one of its units is interested in making an investment in the state-owned phone company.

Unicom's wholly owned unit, China Unicom (Europe) Operations Ltd., "would be interested in exploring the possibility of equity investment in Nitel," according to a filing to the Hong Kong stock exchange today," Bloomberg reported. The subsidiary also "indicated its interest in the provision of technical and managerial support services," the statement said.

The Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) at the weekend said it was standing by the New Generation Telecommunications Limited Consortium in spite of the dust raised by media denial of involvement by China Unicom in the bid.

The BPE spokesman, Mr. Chigbo Anichebe, said information at the disposal of the bureau has not proved to the contrary that the firm was not qualified.

Managing Director of Gicell, the Nigeria representative of the Consortium Usman Gumi in a telephone interview with Daily Trust yesterday maintained that the China Unicom (Europe) had an undertaking with the consortium for technical partnership. He said; "I think it is left between the company's head office to sort things out with their European office. I think that is an internal affair and whoever wants to pull out of the partnership is free to do so anyway."



Chines President, HU Jintao

Unicom also said it was "very concerned about the various recent media reports in which the company was reported to have participated in the proposed privatisation," but has not authorised any person to comment on the deal.

In response to Unicom denial last Thursday, GiCell had provided copies of a letter

that allegedly came from Unicom's European unit saying the company was willing to be a technical partner to the consortium and would consider equity participation of 20 percent or more, should the group be victorious at the bid. The letter was signed by the company's President, Mr William So.

BRIEF

'China's investments in Nigeria hit \$7bn'

CHINA'S investments in Nigeria are worth \$7.24 billion, its Economic and Commercial Counsellor in Nigeria, Mr Rong Yanson, has said. The Chinese diplomat said this in Kaduna on Saturday at the opening of the 31st Kaduna International Trade Fair. Yanson said that Chinese investments in 2009 covered such areas as petroleum, iron and steel, manufacturing, agriculture, fisheries and pharmaceuticals. He said that China had excellent bilateral relations with Nigeria, adding that efforts would be made to strengthen the relations to the benefit of both countries. Yanson commended the Federal Government for providing the enabling environment for Chinese companies to operate in the country. "The Chinese enterprises have made great contributions to Nigeria's economy and they have enjoyed sound business relationship with Nigerian firms," he said. Yanson particularly commended the Kaduna State Government for supporting foreign companies operating in the state. He said that the master plan for development of Kaduna Millennium City was "attractive to the foreign investors".

Yanson also said that no fewer than six Chinese firms had signed trade cooperation agreement with the Kaduna State Government. He noted that there were a lot of business opportunities existing in the state for potential investors. (NAN)

Trust Index

Inflation	→	12.3%
GDP	→	6.90%
Budget	→	N3.1tr
External Reserves Acct	→	\$41bn
Excess Crude Acct	→	\$4.2bn
Poverty Ratio	→	54.4%
Monetary Policy Rate	→	6%
Banks	→	24
Oil Price	→	\$78 a barrel
Power Supply	→	2, 200MW
Oil output per day	→	1.9mbd
Broad Money Supply	→	N10,730,793.1m
Credit to Private Sector	→	N10,155,442.0m
Inter-Bank Rate	→	2.2600%
Treasury Bills	→	2.645%
Deposit Rate	→	12.56%
Prime Lending Rate	→	19.03%

Stock Market Index

Date:	Monday, February 22, 2010
Index:	23,168.64
Deals:	6,175
Volume:	346,238,985
Value:	N 1,657,690,784.62
Cap.:	N 5,579,975,818,870.39

CBN EXCHANGE RATES				BUREAU DE CHANGE RATES	
	Buying (NGN)	Central (NGN)	Selling (NGN)		
CFA	0.2897	0.2997	0.3097	BUYING	
DANISH KRONER	26.8799	26.971	27.062	DOLLAR.....	N151
EURO	200.1899	200.8681	201.5462	EURO.....	N207
POUNDS STERLING	230.5512	231.3322	232.1132	POUNDS.....	N242
RIYAL	39.36	39.4934	39.6267	SELLING	
SDR	226.2265	226.9929	227.7592	DOLLAR.....	*N152
SWISS FRANC	136.5655	137.0281	137.4907	EURO.....	N209
US DOLLAR	147.6	148.1	148.6	POUNDS.....	N244
WAUA	226.801	227.5693	228.3376	Source: S&J Bureau de Change, Wuse Zone 4, Abuja.	
YEN	1.6378	1.6434	1.6489		

Business

Controversy brews over oil blocks allocation

By Hamisu Muhammad

A fresh controversy is brewing over oil blocks allocation billed to hold this year by the government.

Daily Trust learnt that hopes by many investors to acquire fresh oil block licences this year is fading due to the controversial reports from the authorities concerned.

As some of the oil industry officials kept assuring investors of the possibility of the oil fields allocation, others have ruled out the process for this year.

Emmanuel Egbogah, Presidential Adviser on Petroleum Matters, recently said there are about two billion barrels of oil reserves likely to be dashed out this year for development even though the Acting President Goodluck Jonathan was reported to have suspended the planned process due to the absence of

President Umaru Yar'adua.

Egbogah said some of the oil fields have been identified as the ones either relinquished by multinational oil companies or those that were not sold in the previous bidding rounds conducted by the Department of Petroleum Resources (DPR).

Egbogah said in the report that the oilfields might attract Asian firms as well as indigenous companies.

"There will be a bid round his year that will include small fields. But there will be big ones as I would predict a couple of billion barrels of reserves," Egbogah was quoted as saying.

The petroleum ministry officials when contacted yesterday said they couldn't confirm of any bidding round this year.

The Chief Press Secretary of the Ministry, Clement Oni said

even though it is too early for him to speak on the issues as he is three weeks old in the job, he would not confirm of any oil block allocation this year.

"I cannot confirm whether there will be oil round", said Mr Oni. Another source close to the minister of Petroleum Resources Dr Rilwanu Lukman told *Daily Trust* that there is no plan for any bid round this year.

"To my knowledge, there will be no oil blocks bid round this year," the source said.

A report also had said that already the Acting President is set to allocate 20 out of the lucrative oil blocks.

The report said the oil blocks were already allocated as far back as December 2009 but were not appended to by the ailing President Yar'adua who is receiving medical attention in Saudi Arabia.

Oceanic upgrades 730 staff

By Sunday Williams

OCEANIC Bank International plc has upgraded 730 staff across various grades in keeping with its policy on staff motivation and reward.

A breakdown of the figure shows that while 338 staff were upgraded upon confirmation, 392 others had their appointments confirmed after meeting the Bank's performance parameters.

The Bank's management said it remains committed to bolstering staff performance through sundry reward schemes and training opportunities that will be extended to all categories of staff. "Our workforce rank among the best in the industry and we are happy to acknowledge and celebrate their expertise and dedication to the cause of making Oceanic a leading brand which offers top-of-the-range banking services."

Describing the Bank's workforce as the "bedrock of the Oceanic recovery plan", the Bank's management said its workers' resourcefulness and resilience have been instrumental to stabilizing the Bank and repositioning it for superior performance and profitability. "We have implicit faith in the professional abilities of our staff and have mapped out continuing capacity building programmes that will make them even more motivated to always delight our customers."

John Aboh, Managing director/Chief Executive Officer, Oceanic Bank International plc, said there are plans to formally recognize and reward outstanding members of staff in the Bank's upcoming Special Thanks and Recognition Scheme (STARS) event. "Our over-riding desire is to inspire excellence, professionalism, good corporate governance, transparency, and the 'can-do' spirit in our workforce."



RILWANU Lukman, Minister of Petroleum

'Commercial agric key to economic growth'

From Halima Musa, Kano

SUCCESSFUL implementation of commercial agriculture would remain a viable option for diversification into non-oil sector of Nigeria's economy, National Project Coordinator of Commercial Agriculture Development Project Dr. Babandi Aminu has said.

Addressing officials of Kano State Commercial Agriculture Development Association (CADA) when he paid an advocacy visit to Kano, the coordinator also said the project if well embraced would greatly help to reduce over-dependence on oil and gas. A statement by communications officer Kano project Dan'asabe Yahaya quoted the coordinator as saying commercial agriculture development project was designed to improve the business environment for agriculture to become more successful through transforming small and medium agricultural enterprises. "Thus, by this intervention, more food will be produced and surplus processed for export to reduce importation of rice, maize, milk and milk by-products", he said. Aminu, therefore, implored the association to mobilize its members to take advantage of the project and improve their economy and by extension complement federal government's food security initiative. The scheme's preparatory stage, according to him, was and that with some commodity interest groups had identified some areas of intervention, especially in the provision of rural infrastructure such as electric transformers and construction of farm access roads.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE



Arik Air	PH-Abuja: 08.45, 12.12.50, 17.00 (Mon-Fri), 08.45, 17.30 (Sat), 14.40, 17.30 (Sun); Abuja-PH: 07.15, 11.20, 15.30 (Mon-Fri), 07.15, 16.00 (Sat) 14.40, 17.30 (Sun); Lagos-Kano: 12.20pm (Mon-Fri/Sun)
	Kano-Lagos: 02.35pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Abuja-Kano: 03:35pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Kano-Abuja: 05:20pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Abuja-Gombe: 11:10am (Mon, Wed, Fri, Sun); Gombe-Abuja: 12.30pm (Mon, Wed, Fri, Sun); Lagos-Yola: Lag-Abj 04:50pm, via Abj-Yola 06:45pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Yola-Lagos: Yola-Abj 08:40am, Abj-Lagos 10:20am (Mon-Fri/Sat); Lagos-Maid: Lag-Abj 03:50pm, via Abj-Maid 06:00pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Maid-Lagos: Miud-Abj 07:30am, via Abj-Lag 09:15am (Mon-Fri/Sat); Abuja-Sokoto: 11:10am (Mon-Fri); Sokoto-Abuja: 12:50pm (Mon-Fri)
	Abuja-Akure 02:10pm (Mon, Wed and Fri); Akure-Abuja: 08:50am (Mon, Wed and Fri); Lagos-Kwara: 07:30am, (Mon-Fri) 07.30, 03:50pm Sat 08:00am, 11:45am Sun; Kwara-Lagos: 4:10pm (Mon-Fri), 01:10pm, 05:30pm Sat 09:45am, 05:00pm Sun
	Abuja-Kwara: 03:25pm (Mon-Fri); Kwara-Abuja 01.30pm (Mon-Fri); Lagos-Jos: 09:05am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); Jos-Lagos: 11.00am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
	ABV-QOW 02:30pm (Mon-Fri), 11:30am Sat 03:20pm Sun; Lagos-Kaduna: 10:20am, 04:10pm (Mon-Fri), 10.20 (Sat/Sun); Kaduna-Lagos: 12:10pm, 06:00pm (Mon-Fri), 12.10 (Sat/Sun); Lagos-Warr: 07:30am (Mon-Fri), 07:30am, 03:50pm (Sat), 08:00am, and 11:45am (Sun)
Aero Contractors	
	Lagos-Kad: 08.00am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
	Kad-Lagos: 09.40am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
	Lagos-Jos: 11.15am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
	Jos-Lagos: 13.15pm (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
	Lagos-Abj: 06.50; 13.30; 16.30; 19.45 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); 12.30 (Sun) 16.45 (Sat). Abj-Lagos: 07.30; 13.30; 19.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat); 10.30, 14.30; 19.30 (Sun) 18.30 (Sat); Lagos-Ben: 07:45; 11:00; 15.30; (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun) 12.30; (Sun); 15.30 (Sat).
	Ben-Lagos: 09.15; 12.30; 17.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); 17.00 (Sat); 14.00 (Sun); Lagos-Cala: 13.15; (Mon-Fri/Sat); 08.30; 19.00 (Sun); Cala-Lagos: 14.45; (Mon-Fri/Sat); 10.30 (Sun); Lagos-Enu: 09.30; (Mon-Fri/Sat); 15.00 (Sun); Enu-Lagos: 09.30; (Mon-Fri/Sat) 16.45 (Sun)
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)
	Kano-Abuja: 11.45, 5.00 Fri, 12.15 Sun
DANA Airlines:	
	Lagos-Abj: 07.20; 08.19, 09.00, 12.15, 15.30, 17.10 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
	Abj-Lagos: 07.20, 09.45, 11.25, 13.05, 14.40, 17.40 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)
	Lag-Kano via Abj: 08.19, Abuja: 10.00
	Kano-Lag via Abj: 11.25, Abuja: 11.25
	Lagos-Enu: 14.40,
	Enu-Lagos: 16.20
	Lagos-PH: 09.27
	PH-Lagos: 12.15
Overland Airways	
	Lagos-Ilorin: 07.15 (Mon-Fri), Ilorin-Lagos: 16.15 (Mon-Fri)
	Abuja-Ilorin: 15.00 (Mo-Fri), Ilorin-Abuja: 08.15 (Mon-Fri)
	Lagos-Ibadan: 07.15 (Mon-Fri), Lagos-Ibadan: 16.15 (Mon-Fri)
	Ibadan-Abuja: 08.00 (Mon-Fri), Abuja-Ibadan: 5.00 (Mon-Fri)
	Kats-Abuja: 07.30 (Mon-Fri) Abuja-Kats: 15.30 (Mon-Fri)
	Minna-Lagos: 09.40 Lagos-Minna: 13.00 (Mon-Fri)
	Abuja-Minna: 09.00 (Mon-Fri) Minna-Abuja: 14.30
	Jos-Kano: 10.15 (Mon-Fri), Kano-Jos: 11.30 (Mon-Fri)
	Abuja-Jos: 09.30 (Mon-Fri), Jos-Abuja: 12.30

Business/Energy

Fuel scarcity persists in North

By Hamisu Muhammad

SCARCITY of petrol is continuing in different parts of the North, even as the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation said its supplies have exceeded national demand.

Long queues and empty pumps dot the cities of Kaduna, Kano, Katsina and Sokoto, Daily Trust can report.

In Kano and Kaduna most of the filling stations owned by the NNPC have the petroleum products.

Last Thursday the NNPC claimed it has restored normalcy to Lagos, Abuja and some other cities in the country.

A statement from the NNPC Corporate Affairs said figures from the weekly loading plan for 17-22 February 2010 indicates that over 8,788 truck load of Premium Motor Spirit (Petrol), the equivalent of over 290 million litres would be made available to filling stations across the country by the NNPC and the major oil marketers. The outline shows a daily average dispatch of over 1,255 trucks, the equivalent of over 41.4 million litres of fuel.

"With the fuel supply/distribution challenges recently noticeable in some Nigerian cities especially Lagos and Abuja is finally becoming a thing of the past. The 'War Room, a special task force set up by the management of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, NNPC to eradicate the persistent fuel queues, is leaving no stone unturned in its effort to banish the incidence of fuel shortage".

As part of the arrangement, the task

force is coordinating the loading and dispatching of huge volumes of Premium Motor Spirit to filling stations throughout the country in excess of the national daily consumption figures.

"A breakdown indicates that while 1,565 trucks or 51 million litres were made available for loading on Tuesday, the figures for Wednesday stood at over 1,433 trucks, the equivalent of over 47 million litres. Thursday's number was put at over 1,210 trucks (over 39 million litres) while Friday and Saturday loading schedules have 1240 trucks each which translates to over 40 million litres per day."

The company said penultimate Sunday over 710 trucks or over 23 million litres are billed for loading while over 1,390 trucks the equivalent of over 45 million litres would make their way to various filling stations spread across the country.

Malam Farouk Ahmed, a member of the 'War Room' who is also the Executive Director Commercial, Pipelines and Products Marketing Company Limited (PPMC) a subsidiary of the NNPC stated that the whole idea of exceeding the national consumption level is to ensure that Nigerians have more than what they can consume on a daily basis so as to eliminate any form of panic buying or hoarding.

"We are adopting a common sense approach. When there is more than enough product in the filling stations nobody would want to fill his tank, go back home to empty the content and return to the queue because of fear of the unknown. We are making sure that stations are wet with products," Ahmed said.

Ahmed added that to ensure that what is loaded and dispatched gets to the desired destination, the 'War Room' has since constituted an effective monitoring team.

Power generation drops to 2,200mw

By Fidelis Mac-Leva

THE decline in Nigeria's power generation further slumped at the weekend to 2,200mw even as energy experts have warned that the situation would get to 'fatality level' between the months of March and April before the coming of the rains.

Sources at the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) who confirmed this to Daily Trust attributed the drop in power generation to lack of gas supplies from the gas plants which is negatively impacting on thermal plants.

The latest drop came on the heels of a threat by oil and Gas Company; Shell, to shut down its gas plants in the country unless the NNPC evacuates the concentration of wet condensate that had accumulated at the Warri Refinery. The volume of wet condensate which the NNPC reportedly commenced evacuation at the weekend, was put at 472,000 barrels.

Shell's ultimatum was preceded by a directive issued by Power Minister, Lanre Babalola, to the PHCN to accelerate the signing of the pending gas purchase agreement with the Nigerian

National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC)."

Daily Trust checks further show that the idle capacity of the Thermal Plants arising from shortage of gas has currently risen to about seventy percent.

By December 24, 2009, the power generation in the country stood at 3,700MW even as the actual capacity was reported to be 5,500MW.

Available records also show that as at January 2009 the actual generation distributed was 2789.6MW while the idle capacity due to gas and water limitation was 1,326MW and 528MW respectively.

Nigeria produces 4m tons of cooking gas

By Sunday Williams

NIGERIA produces over 4 million tons of Liquefied Petroleum (LP) gas otherwise known as cooking gas but unfortunately less than 1 percent of the country's population are using it, the President of the Nigerian Association of LP Gas, Auwulu Ilu, has said.

Speaking over the weekend when he paid a visit to the Minister of Commerce and Industry, he said the country's consumption per annum is about 70,000 metric tons which translate to about 0.11 percent while a country like Benin Republic which do not have a single drop of gas consumes 3.75 percent per annum.

He said the reason for the Association's meeting with Federal Government is to change the trend and find a way forward on how to make the cooking gas available to every home in Nigeria. He said at the individual levels, the stakeholders have a lot at penetrating the market but there have been constraints militating against the growth of the industry. He said the negative impact of the use of firewood and kerosene in cooking defeats the Federal Government programme of afforestation and climatic change, adding that the government should put in place policies that will help in reversing the trend.



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT

COMMITTEE ON THE AUDITING, WRECKING, CLEARING AND SALE OF RESIDUAL METALS IN NIGERIAN WATERS
C/O NIGERIAN MARITIME ADMINISTRATION
AND SAFETY AGENCY (NIMASA)
4, BURMA ROAD, APAPA, LAGOS.

NTM/WRECKCOM/01/2010

MARINE NOTICE

**TO ALL SHIP OWNERS,
SHIP OPERATORS,
MASTERS OF SHIPS
AND AGENTS**

REMOVAL OF WRECKS AND ABANDONED VESSELS IN NIGERIAN WATERS

The attention of the General Public is hereby drawn to the Ministerial Committee recently inaugurated by the Honourable Minister of Transport, **Alhaji Ibrahim Isa Bio**, with the mandate of Auditing, Wrecking, Clearing, Removal and Sale of Residual in Nigerian waters.

Pursuant to section 381 of the Merchant Shipping Act (MSA) 2007 notice is hereby given to all owners of wrecks, abandoned ships and derelicts littering Nigerian waters and are identified as being detrimental to the safety of navigation and posing environmental hazards to Ports, Terminals and Water Channels, to remove them within seven (7) days.

In the event that the owners fail, neglect or refuse to submit their removal plans of the abandoned vessels and derelicts to the committee within the period specified in this Notice, the vessels would be disposed off in accordance with extant laws.

For further enquiry please contact the Executive Director, Maritime Safety and Shipping Development, No. 4 Burma Road, Apapa, Lagos.

Tel: 08028316537

SIGNED:
PERMANENT SECRETARY
FEDERAL MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT
For Hon. Minister of Transport

Star Feature

Little love for national symbols

The apathy and ignorance displayed by most Nigerians towards the country's national symbols calls for concern, according to many.

By Tosin Omoniyi

BASKET Mouth is an Abuja based comedian who has perfected the art of being a humorous thorn in the flesh of the members of the Nigeria Police Force, especially those at the Force Headquarters, Abuja. Invited practically to virtually any function of the police holding in the capital city, his ability to make fun of the officers and men of the police, while at the same time eliciting laughter from them, is amazing. That accounts for why many of the ace comedian's contemporaries prefer to call him Police comedian.

A few months back in the wake of the transition of power from the erstwhile police chief, Mike Okiro to his deputy, Ogbonna Onovo, he was equally at his humorous best churning out hilarious jokes at the expense of the police, when he was invited to give a comic relief at a police function which was holding at the car park at force headquarters. He had after a battery of rib cracking jokes, thrown a challenge to the numerous police men that were in attendance, majority of them, the rank and file of the force. His challenge: a recital of the second stanza of the national anthem. No hand went up! In the pin drop silence that followed, many could hear the shallow breathing of flustered officers, many of which attempted to recite it in low tones, in probable readiness to taking up the challenge. However, none could summon up courage to come forth. Obviously since the challenge was technically thrown at the junior officers, no one wasted time looking towards the side of the senior officers, to find out if the same internal conflict was reflected in their faces. But on the façade of a few of the high ranking officers, a sort of fire was burning, probably rage at the embarrassing scenario that was exposing a weakness of the police.

Probably elated that he had gotten the police again with his explosive humor, the diminutive comedian decided to rub the joke further in. But as he made to do this, a hand suddenly went up in the crowd of uniformed officers. In the momentary loud silence that again ensued, a dark complexioned female police officer, an assistant superintendent of police, ASP marched forward majestically and with a scornful expression written over her face, snatched the microphone from the saucy comedian and proceeded to recite the second stanza of the national anthem, albeit not without flaws. The spontaneous applause that greeted her action no doubt portrayed the gratitude hundreds of her colleagues felt, due to her ability to save them all from the needless embarrassment that could have resulted had she not taken the gauntlet.

The above scenario aptly reflects the apathy most Nigerians exhibit towards the nation's national symbols. Nigeria's prime national symbols, according to Wikipedia Online, include basically, its national anthem and the Pledge, the national flag, the Coat Of Arms and its currencies. Apart from the fact that most nationals do not know that these are the national symbols,



those that do know them exhibit a nonchalance that is reflective of the society's apathy towards the prime importance of the symbols, as ordained in its chequered socio political and economic history of the nation.

This apathy ironically is seen in the recital of the national anthem. From investigations carried out by the medium, while many could easily recite the first stanza of the national anthem, only a select few can go as far as the second stanza. Interestingly among those who found it hard to recite the second stanza, education was not a defining factor, because even well educated respondents found it impossible to recite the stanza

while a few actually struggled through the first few lines before they reached a dead end and sheepishly declined to go further.

Before Nigeria's independence, the British National anthem was used at festivals and official ceremonies, and as expected it prayed solely for the revered British Monarch. Shortly before independence, a new anthem, written by two British ladies, was adopted as the Nigeria's anthem. This was then again changed in 1978 to the current one in usage. The National Publicity Committee set up by the military administration then organized a competition for a new national anthem. A total of 1499 entries were received. The final words were formed from the entries of the adjudged best five picks: John A Ilechukwu, Eme Etim Akpan, B A Ogunnaike, Sota Omoigui and P. O. Aderibigbe. The music was composed by Nigerian Police Band, headed by renowned entertainer, Ben Odiase.

Interestingly, today the national anthem has received a form of modernization, especially by boisterous youths. The anthem which is viewed by many as a solemnization of the attributes, aspirations and the dreams of a people is now used as 'funkified' ringtones in most handsets, with different alterations made to the original tune, so as to fit with modern musical trends. A particular respondent was miffed when he enumerated the level of decadence that has been assigned to the anthem and other national symbols by many Nigerians, who he says have lost sight of the true significance of the anthem in strengthening national consciousness. 'It is now common to see people dancing and tapping their feet when the national anthem is being recited. While others are busy chewing gum, others are also discussing loudly, and exchanging pleasantries at the same time the national anthem is being recited. Some in their disrespect for the anthem, even go as far as moving around when they should be still, observing solemnity just for a few minutes.

“The anthem which is viewed by many as a solemnization of the attributes, aspirations and the dreams of a people is now used as 'funkified' ringtones in most handsets, with different alterations made to the original tune, so as to fit with modern musical trends.



SOLDIERS of the armed forces best exhibit the solemnity required when the national anthem is being recited

It is really bad. At least we see how the citizens of other countries behave, when they hear their national anthem being sung. The seriousness they exhibit then is lacking in most Nigerians. The same goes for the treatment of our other national symbols,' he fumes.

A brief research conducted in the course of the story also revealed a disconcerting trend: a great number of Nigerians do not know what the nation's coat of arms really is. While many expressed minimal knowledge of the symbol, a greater number however exhibited crass ignorance of the national heritage. More disconcerting still is the fact that even the pupils and students, who many believe are still in the formal learning environment, are the worst hit by the viral state of ignorance. Many had blank looks on their youthful faces when asked what the coat of arms was and what it represented. For the adult respondents, incredulity and consternation best describes the variety of responses. A particular respondent gruffly replies: 'what is coat of arms? What has that got to do with me? Will that put food on my table or money in my pocket?'

The Nigerian coat of arms features an eagle mounted on a black shield, which is trisected by two silvery wavy bands. Two white chargers (horses) support the shield. At its base is a wreath of coctus spectabilis flowers cast in the national colors of white and green. The black shield represents the fertile soil, while the silvery bands denote the Niger and Benue Rivers, which form the main inland waterways in the country. The coctus spectabilis is a colorful flower, which grows wildly in many parts of Nigeria. The eagle stands for strength, and the chargers symbolize dignity.

Equally, the green white green national flag has not eluded abuse. A visit to numerous government establishments, especially ministries, will reveal tattered rags, bearing the unmistakable green white green colors of the Nigerian flag. Some flags have endured untold hardship through several administrations of such organizations with no apparent attempt to change such flags. For some the colors, through ageing, especially the white segment has assumed entirely a different shade of another color than that which it was initially designed to be.

Apparently however no national symbol has received immeasurable pummelling than the nation's numerous currencies. Current efforts to change virtually all the nation's currencies to the polymer styled ones is regarded as needless by not a few, if only Nigerians would cultivate the habit of carefully handling the Naira notes. And according to a public affairs analyst in the nation's capital city, Olusina Adeniyi, 'the way and manner Nigerians of all classes handle our currencies, from the market woman, to the bus conductor and even to the suited bank executive, show the disdain we feel for our collective heritage and national properties. Instead of reverently handling these, we prefer to exhibit contempt unconsciously, through the way we hold onto them. Changing our currencies a thousand times will not achieve any measurable goal, until we build the right set of values as a people.'

Kombo M. Braide, an author based in Port Harcourt however reflects in his book, 'Deconstructing Nigerian symbols of national

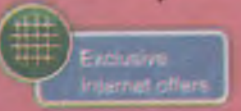
identity' that the apathy exhibited by most Nigerians, especially the enlightened ones, may not be unconnected with the lack of satisfaction they feel with the crafting of such symbols by their forebears. He opines: 'the gravity of the insults heaped on the collective intelligence of Nigerians by the subliminal symbolisms embedded in our national flag, national anthem, coat of arms, corporate logos and currencies, is unbelievable. The Nigerian psyche is being very subtly brutalized, and subordinated to the chauvinistic wet dreams of some amorphous, devious and self-deceiving indigenous colonial mafia. Those symbols of Nigeria's national identity contain concepts, that are diametrically opposite to our hopes and aspirations as a Federation.'

While stating with several reasons that the various symbols do not reflect truly the Nigerian story, and that they ought to be changed, he concludes, 'certainly, the inappropriateness of Nigeria's national symbols contributes very adversely to the nation's psyche, fortunes and worldview. In essence, the Nigerian flag, coat of arms, national anthem and naira notes are symbols of belligerence, siege mentality and internal colonization...'



Discover a world where the more you talk the better it gets

Designed exclusively to fit your lifestyle, with a wide range of meaningful value added services and unique benefits.



Buy a Zain SIM card now and dial *200*#1 to activate (₹1,500 Monthly access fee applies).
For more information, visit www.zain.com, dial *200# or call 111.

Terms and conditions apply

www.zain.com

A wonderful world

Business/Energy

Nigeria moves close to total darkness

By Fidelis Mac-Leva

THESE are certainly not the best of times for Nigeria in terms of electricity generation. Power generation in the country has dropped to its lowest level ever and there are indications that the situation, which has been attributed to acute shortage of gas supply to the nation's power plants, would get worse. The consequences on the nation's economy are better imagined.

Checks at the Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) and the Ministry of Power, show that the nation currently generates between 2,220mw to 2,240mw of electricity per day. Experts say the situation might even get to "fatality level" between March and April.

By December last year when the presidential deadline of delivering the much touted 6000mw expired, the country's power generation slumped to 3,700mw. This was in spite of expending the whole \$5.09 (about N762.93billion) special intervention funds allocated for the power sector last year.

The National Integrated Power Projects (NIPP) for which the federal government had injected N762.93billion were expected to add 4,770mw to the national grid by the end of 2011. But with the worsening situation in the sector, there seems to be no hope in sight that the first unit of the NIPP projects would be commissioned in the first quarter of 2011 as projected. This has further cast a shadow of doubt on the attainment of the vision 2020 development goals of Nigeria.

On February 4, 2010 during the Ministerial press briefing by the power Ministry, the Power Holding Company of Nigeria, PHCN, shocked the audience with the revelation that power generation had dropped to 2700mw. Again, shortage of gas was attributed for the degeneration.

Last week, the situation went further worse as checks at both the PHCN and the Power Ministry showed that power generation had again dropped to 2,500mw. Shortage of gas was equally advanced as reason for the decline in power generation.

A new twist was, however, added to the unfolding power degeneration saga last week. Oil giant, Shell, wrote to the Power and Petroleum Resources Ministries threatening to shut down its two gas plants unless the stock of wet condensate at the Warri Refinery was evacuated.

The volume of wet condensate at the Warri Refinery which Shell, the major gas supplying company in the country, said was hampering the supply of wet condensate was put at 472,000 barrels.

Shell's ultimatum came even



A power plant

as Power Minister Lanre Babalola issued a directive to the Power Holding Company of Nigeria, to accelerate the signing of the pending gas purchase agreement with the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation, NNPC.

"Concluding and signing of the gas purchase agreement with the NNPC will help to secure commitment to its delivery and such a pact will help all parties to keep to terms and conditions of sale and purchase agreement", Babalola said during a meeting with PHCN management staff recently.

With the recurring issue of shortage as being responsible for the steady decline in Nigeria's power generation, analysts and energy experts are beginning to suspect the possibility of sabotage in the power sector.

This is not the first time Nigeria is coming close to total darkness due to gas shortage arising from the built up of wet condensate in the gas plants. In March, 2008, gas supplies by the Nigeria Gas Com-

pany to the Egbin and Geregu power generating plants came to a standstill due to build up of wet condensate in the Escravos gas pipeline.

As a combined result power generation at Egbin had dropped from 800mw to a paltry 100mw, while Geregu plant also suffered a daily shortfall of 150mw due to inadequate gas supplies at the time. There was a period of prolonged load shedding in the country at the time such as the one currently being experienced.

The pertinent questions are: Why has it been so difficult for Nigeria to resolve the problem of gas supply once and for all? Are there deliberate attempts by saboteurs in the power sector [within or outside Nigeria] to frustrate gas supplies for certain ulterior motives? Who should actually be held responsible for Nigeria's gas worsening gas shortage?

Even as analysts and other Nigerians ponder on these ques-

tions, statistics obtained from the PHCN show no sign of improvement in gas supplies from the six major sources of gas supply in the country. For instance the Chevron Escravos-1 gas plant [a Shell facility] is expected to generate 185million standard cubic feet [scfd] but is currently generating nothing. Same situation is obtainable at the Chevron Escravos-2 gas plant, also a Shell facility, which has the capacity of generating 300mscfd per day.

In the same vein, the Sapele gas plant as well as the one at Ughale which are expected to generate 50mscfd and 90mscfd respectively per day, are also currently generating nothing. The Oben gas plant, on the other hand, which has the capacity of generating 90mscfd is said to be getting that amount, albeit on an irregular basis, while the Utorgu gas plant is generating 290mscfd out of its 360mscfd daily generation capacity.

This implies darker days ahead for the country as the shortage of

gas from the gas plants is said to be negatively impacting on the Thermal Plants at Egbin, Geregu, Afam, Sapele, Omotosho and Olorunshogbo.

Daily Trust checks show that the idle capacity of these Thermal Plants arising from shortage of gas has risen to about seventy percent.

How did we get to where we are today?

By December 24, 2009, the power generation in the country stood at 3700MW even as the actual capacity was reported to be 5,500MW.

Available records also show that as at January 2009 the actual generation distributed was 2789.6MW while the idle capacity due to gas and water limitation was 1326MW and 528MW respectively.

Due to what the Power Ministry attributed to pipeline vandalism actual generation dropped to about 1766MW between June and August 2009. Generation, however, rose to over 3700MW by December 2009 through what the Power Ministry attributed to "aggressive repair and rehabilitation" of PHCN existing plants, increased capacity from existing IPPs and collaboration with the Ministry of Petroleum/NNPC to boost gas supply.

By December last year the aggregate installed available generation capacity of the PHCN plants was put at about 5272.2MW with the gas-fired plants contributing about 73 percent of the generation mix. At that time PHCN was deemed to be capable of generating over 3,700MW of power subject to resolving the constraints of gas supply.

A summary of power generation performance in 2009 shows that the highest generation of 3710MW was attained by December 24, 2009 while installed available capacity of 5,226.6MW was reached by December 31, 2009.

The highest installed available capacity of 5,522.5MW was attained on December 23, 2009 while the highest actual generation capacity attained was 3,710MW as at December 23, 2009. On Thursday February 4, 2009, the PHCN announced that the current power generation had dropped to 2700MW. Since then the generation has been on the decline. By last week it dropped to 2500mw while as at the time of this write up it was staggering between 2200mw to 2400mw.

What is the way forward? Acting President Goodluck Jonathan has promised that the power sector would be among his areas of top priority.

Analysts say for his promise to be translated into reality, there must be actual commitment and deliverable targets from critical stakeholders such as the NNPC and IOC's in terms of gas supply.

Business/Interview

'How FG can bailout PAN'

By Jibrin Abubakar

WHAT are the problems facing the manufacturing sector in Nigeria and PAN in particular?

The major problem facing the manufacturing sector in the country is the problem of infrastructure. These include power and transportation. Basically, we can't get enough power to work at a lower cost. In order for us to be able to produce, we needed to invest in gen set worth around N900 million. So that is a substantial amount for us. Power is a major constraint for us. Transporting our products is a big problem also because we need to rent trucks. The other problem in Nigeria is that the policies of government regarding the automobile industry are not right. Importers and manufacturers are paying almost the same duties. The differentials are not there, while we create the jobs. We are however talking to the right people and sending messages to the right channels, hoping that things will be better.

Are you trying to say that government policies do not favour you?

Yes, at the moment it is not favouring the manufacturers, not just PAN alone. The amount of duties you pay is almost the same thing with what other importers are paying. The raw material for our local content providers is not available, and when it is available the kind of duties they pay on it is quite enormous. So at the end of the day your products are not competitive in the market.

Some have argued that SPAN is directly responsible for its problems by producing vehicles only for the elites. How would you respond to this?

It is quite unfortunate that there is that impression. Since we came in after the privatisation, we have been steadily repositioning the company. I don't agree with that. Our cars are made for all the segments of the market and are made for all Nigerians. We have the 307 sedan for the normal household.

Now I am talking about the cost.

As I just told you we have a huge problem, and for manufacturing to be alive in this environment you need someone to pay the cost. We tried as much as possible to minimise the cost but unfortunately there is only little we can do. We need to pay for the light because we are on gen set most of the time. We need to produce at a certain capacity. We need certain power requirement. Unfortunately our government cannot produce that and they cannot guarantee that. The duty we are paying is something they should look into if they want us to bring down our prices.

How has the importation of used cars affected your business in Nigeria?

Malam Shehu S. Dauda is the Deputy Managing Director of Peugeot Automobile Nigeria Limited (PAN). In this interview, he says government policies do not favour the manufacturing sector and that doing business in Nigeria is expensive owing to infrastructural problems. According to him, given the right environment, PAN has the capacity to employ up to 30,000 workers as against the current 600 on its pay roll. He says that the company plans to start recycling used Peugeot vehicles in Nigeria.

Part of our strategy this year is that we are tapping into the second hand market. If you buy a Peugeot car today, we can have an arrangement with you and by that we can recondition it as a certified used car and then take it back into the market may be after a year, and after having arrangement with you, because not everyone can afford new cars. For instance, in Europe 80 per cent of their cars is certified used cars. People don't always buy new cars. We are trying to create market now. We are talking with the right people and the right channels on how we can stop any car that is older than ten years from coming into this country.

Elsewhere around the world people buy vehicles and pay in instalment. Do you have such policies?

At the time our scheme called Pioneer Made Easy (POME) was kicking off, the financial meltdown just came in and it affected the credit availability which is why, I think, we haven't seen the impact yet in the market. I think with the banks, we are doing that. We do have that in place, but we are not handling it directly.

Can you give us an insight into your sales record in 2009 compare to the previous year?

Unfortunately last year everyone in the automobile industry was affected. I can't give you a figure now but all I can tell you is that it wasn't good. You know there was a pronouncement by the Federal Government of not acquiring cars for two years. At that same period, other countries were given incentives and even grants for people to buy cars and for producers to produce cars to be sold. Unfortunately here nothing was done like that. Even we may be moving towards that direction.

What do you want the government to do for you in order to help bolster your production and market?

We don't really need hand out or bailout in that sense. We just want enabling environment to operate. We need patronage for our cars because we are providing jobs in the country. We have after sales points and suppliers all over the country employing people. Bail out could help but we know we have good products and no other product is as good as ours. We want the government to respect the gazette. There was a gazette that the government is mandated to buy the locally manufactured

cars except if the local manufacturing firms cannot provide enough to serve the Nigerian market. If the government do that, it's like it has given us the bailout. When the cars are being sold the return keeps the company going.

Have you been able to make foray into other West African countries?

No, since we took over we have a strategy for growth. But in order to grow properly, we need to deepen the immediate market. We want to stabilise in Nigeria. Going out of Nigeria is not a solution to our problem. We have the market in Nigeria for now and we are trying to tap into it first.

Investors are rational, so also buyers. Buyers will want to be assured of after sales support to sustain the vehicles with regards to mechanics and whether the parts are readily available in the market?

We have about 26 after sales points in Nigeria and we are increasing them gradually. We would guarantee you that we have trained them to the best. We brought people to come and train them. If you look at our training school, we have been partnering with ITF to train the mechanics. We have been certified by ITF (Industrial Training Fund), and they have seen what we are doing and they want us to transfer that knowledge to the public. A good example was what we did with the lady mechanics in conjunction with MTN. It was the first of its kind in Nigeria. That has proven to be a very successful and that what a man can do a woman can do also. We have very qualified after sale supports. If there is problem may be there is a misunderstanding in the markets in terms of after sales support. Our strategy for this year is to give the public more product knowledge of our cars and not just sophisticated but they are world's standard actually. Our cars speak to you. They tell you the problems with your cars.

Are Peugeot spare parts available in the market?

This is another area where there is misunderstanding. Our spare parts are available in the market.

They are also in our warehouses all over. Once you place an order, we would get them for you. It is just that some people are faking our products with high prices. We advise our end users to go to our dealerships and make proper enquiries.



MALAM Shehu S. Dauda

Has the closure of some tyre making companies in Nigeria affected your business?

Yes it has. Now we have resorted to importing tyres from Europe and South Africa. The duties you pay on such importation are still high and they result into higher cost of production which affected the prices of our products.

Do you really think Nigeria has the comparative advantage of assembling and producing cars?

For example I can talk of my immediate environment, technically we have talented people. We can do anything. We have a case that we had to import people from Europe but they could not solve the issue but our own local people here did it. That for me is a big thing; even AP France recognised the achievements. I think we do have a comparative advantage of producing cars here. It is very possible.

After Sedan car brand which you launched last year, what next?

We do have plans. We do have ideas to bring in new designed cars to complement what we have. Within a short time we are going to come out a new car that is going to be very affordable for Nigerians.

Currently what is your staff strength?

We have up to 600 employees. We can only be comfortable to employ more. We have the capability to take up to 30,000 but this will depend on the volume of our production. We had one thousand plus at the beginning of last year.

What is your capital base like?

I can't give that figure to you now because I don't

have it off head.

Recently you opened a new office in Abuja. What is the rationale behind it?

It was meant to compliment our dealership and supplies. We are not competing with our dealers.

Can PAN survive without government buying its products?

Yes we could if we have the right environment in place. You can see all over the world governments have been supporting their local industries. They were the same people that kept saying that governments have no business in business and now they are coming back to support their industries. I think government has substantial role to play if they can protect local industries against foreign competitors and as well they are buying from them. We can do without them.

The readers may want to know whether despite the huge cost of production, unfriendly policies and harsh environment which you operate have affected your ability to give back to the society what investors called Corporate Social Responsibility?

Yes we've been doing our best to support our immediate environment. We have been helping our local schools to set up their sporting needs.

We open our doors to students to come and have a feel of what we are doing. And that help them to have a thought of the future. We have been supporting sports all over Nigeria. We are willing to do more to support our environment.

Business

Customs Zone B seizes N400.8M duty paid goods

By Sunday Williams

THE Comptroller in charge of Federal Operations Unit, Zone B of Nigerian Customs Service, Kaduna, Abu Bawa Gusau, has announced the seizure of assorted textile materials, children wears and furniture with duty paid value of over N400m within the zone.

A statement signed from

the Nigerian Customs Deputy Public Relations Officer, Joseph Attah, said the items include 2 X 40ft containers fully loaded with printed fabrics, 2 trucks loaded with Laces and printed fabrics and a truck loaded with furniture and children wears.

The statement said that all the seized items have been transferred to the Government Ware-

house Kaduna, adding that two persons are in detention in connection with the crime while investigation to get to the root of the illicit trade is on.

The Comptroller said that criminal minded importers always try to abuse the good intention of ECOWAS liberalization scheme by importing falsely labelled items to claim that they

are manufactured in the region and evade payment of duty or to smuggle a prohibited item like in the case of a China printed fabric labelled made in Nigeria.

It will be recalled that just two weeks ago the same Comptroller briefed journalists of assorted seizures with duty paid value of N165 million.

Comptroller Gusau said though his Zone is vast, covering eleven states

including the Federal capital Territory, their capacity to effectively police the zone is boosted by improved logistics and welfare's posture of the Comptroller-General of Customs.

He called on border community dwellers to provide useful information to customs and provide no hiding place for smugglers as they are enemies to our economic and security wellbeings

'Every Customs officer to own a laptop'

From Adelanwa Bamgboye, Lagos

THE Nigerian Customs Service (NCS) has flagged off a Laptop Acquisition Scheme (LAS) designed to enable every customs officer own a laptop at a subsidized rate.

The Comptroller General of Customs Alhaji Dikko Abdulahi who disclosed this in a telephone chat at the weekend, said beneficiaries would bear only a 50% cost of acquisition. He said the gesture was to underscore the importance that management attaches towards manpower/capacity development.

He added that the LAS was only an aspect of Customs man-

agement vision to reposition the service for the 21st Century challenges.

The Comptroller General disclosed that over 3000 officers had now completed their basic, but compulsory computer training.

"We are determined to boost the capacity of the Service; and this explains why we have embarked on a number of electronic initiatives, meant to drive the ASYCUDA++ project" said Dikko, saying the vision includes the e-declaration of single Goods Declaration (SGD) or Bill of Entry; the submission of electronic manifest by shipping companies,

e-payment of duty; e-transmission of duty to CNB; and electronic generation of exit note by terminal operators.

"All these activities require a basic knowledge of computer skill and relevant soft wares" the Customs boss said, adding that the LAS scheme which is a consummation of the capacity development vision would furnish first batch beneficiaries of LAS with no fewer than 250 units of laptops this week.

He said Customs may further leverage on existing cooperation and collaboration with sister customs organization through intensified local and overseas retraining programs.

'Smuggling rate drops'

From Ruqayyah Yusuf Aliyu, Kano

THE rate of smuggling in the country has dropped within the last four months, President of the National Harmonized Traders Union of Nigeria, Dr Bature Abdulaziz, has said.

He said this is evident from the scarcity of contraband goods found in Nigerian markets.


Abdulaziz said this while addressing newsmen in Kano.

He said the development is not unconnected to deployment of more Custom offic-

ers to the borders of the country who ensure that the smuggled goods don't get to the markets.

He described deployment of more custom officers to the borders was a giant step in addressing the problem saying, smugglers in the country no longer find it easy smuggling in and out of the country contraband goods.

He further said smuggling is a worldwide phenomenon saying, no single country could be described as totally free of smuggling.



ADMISSION INTO

AIR FORCE MILITARY SCHOOL & COMPREHENSIVE/SECONDARY SCHOOLS

2010



1. The general public and prospective applicants are hereby informed that the sale of scratch cards for admission into Air Force Military School Jos as well as other Air Force Secondary Schools is in progress.
2. All interested applicants are to purchase scratch cards for N1,200.00 at any Air Force Primary or Secondary School. The sales of scratch cards/registration will end on 26 March 2010 for Air Force Military School and 23 April 2010 for all other Air Force Secondary Schools.
3. Applicants are to note that the entrance examinations will hold as follows:

Air Force Military School Jos:
Saturday 10 April 2010
by 0800hrs

Air Force Comprehensive/Secondary Schools:
Saturday 8 May 2010
by 0800hrs
4. For more details please visit our website:
www.nafeducation.org

Signed:
Air Commodore Y Anas
for Chief of the Air Staff

Business/Finance

Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE)

Monday, February 21, 2010

COMPANY Name	No of Deals	Quot. (%)	Quantity Traded	Value of Shares (%)
2ND-TIER SECURITIES				
CAPITAL OIL PLC	6	0.60	299,264	179,048.40
JULI PLC	1	3.37	30,000	96,300.00
SECTORTOTALS	7		329,264	275,348.40
AGRICULTURE				
FTN COCOA PROCESSORS PLC	19	0.89	1,042,522	980,375.02
LIVESTOCK FEEDS PLC	2	0.75	37,000	26,640.00
PRESCO PLC	3	5.21	7,000	34,650.00
SECTORTOTALS	24		1,086,522	1,041,665.02
AIR SERVICES				
AIRLINE SERVICES & LOGISTICS PLC	5	2.89	330,000	953,700.00
NIG. AVIATION HANDLING COY. PLC	81	9.01	1,215,678	10,797,163.06
SECTORTOTALS	86		1,545,678	11,750,863.06
AUTOMOBILE & TYRE				
R.T. BRISCOE (NIGERIA) PLC	15	5.23	165,943	869,603.29
SECTORTOTALS	15		165,943	869,603.29
BANKING				
ACCESS BANK PLC	151	9.20	1,518,649	14,022,517.03
AFRIBANK NIGERIA PLC	118	2.65	8,717,633	23,894,524.63
DIAMOND BANK PLC	82	9.50	5,563,397	52,387,071.13
ECOBANK NIGERIA PLC	85	5.19	2,222,878	11,536,736.82
F/CITY MONUMENT BANK PLC	59	9.30	10,187,801	94,710,060.30
FIDELITY BANK PLC	115	2.60	6,022,247	15,704,503.69
FIRST BANK OF NIGERIA PLC	758	14.49	7,404,657	108,015,848.78
FINBANK PLC	83	0.74	54,867,000	39,177,434.14
GTBANK PLC	339	18.06	4,993,228	90,130,293.16
STANBIC IBTC BANK PLC	47	8.61	848,334	7,295,435.15
INTERCONTINENTAL BANK PLC	133	2.05	13,568,180	27,639,666.17
OCEANIC BANK INTER. PLC	184	2.21	12,184,650	27,200,124.14
BANK PHB PLC	62	2.04	2,729,448	5,564,106.00
SKYE BANK PLC	190	7.57	5,182,898	39,204,605.96
SPRING BANK PLC	15	1.13	417,499	471,511.95
STERLING BANK PLC	37	1.85	3,102,766	5,743,970.22
UNITED BANK FOR AFRICA PLC	304	13.22	20,743,776	274,548,183.24
UNION BANK OF NIGERIA PLC	154	5.97	5,220,693	31,190,267.21
UNITY BANK PLC	29	1.05	2,537,400	2,604,007.26
WEMA BANK PLC	34	1.25	3,530,489	4,258,629.90
ZENITH BANK PLC	236	15.89	8,206,392	129,047,984.94
SECTORTOTALS	3,215		179,770,015	1,004,347,481.82
BUILDING MATERIALS				
ASHAKA CEMENT PLC	88	16.20	838,240	13,607,217.25
BENUCEMENT COMPANY PLC	28	50.01	69,965	3,499,206.25
CEMENT CO. OF NORTHERN NIG. PLC	18	16.20	451,558	7,326,502.58
LAFARGEWAPCO PLC	41	35.70	334,530	11,905,119.06
SECTORTOTALS	175		1,694,293	36,338,045.14
CHEMICAL & PAINTS				
BERGER PAINTS NIGERIA PLC	6	3.52	102,200	359,744.00
CHEMICAL & ALLIED PRODUCTS PLC	9	25.78	8,619	220,794.50
DN MEYER PLC	13	3.61	222,366	808,493.00
I.P.W.A. PLC	1	1.32	1,000	1,260.00
NIGERIAN-GERMAN CHEMICALS PLC	3	15.04	2,885	43,275.00
SECTORTOTALS	32		337,070	1,433,566.50
COMMERCIAL/SERVICES				
AFROMEDIA PLC	11	0.51	550,000	283,637.12
COURTVILLE INVESTMENTS PLC	4	0.50	103,000	51,500.00
RED STAR EXPRESS PLC	23	2.44	966,480	2,374,284.80
SECTORTOTALS	38		1,619,480	2,709,421.92
COMP. & OFFICE EQUIPMENT				
NCR (NIGERIA) PLC	2	8.13	10,498	89,547.94
OMATEK VENTURES PLC	18	0.57	1,123,100	628,846.00
SECTORTOTALS	20		1,133,598	718,393.94
CONGLOMERATES				
A.G. LEVENTIS (NIGERIA) PLC	10	2.85	51,903	155,119.14
PZ CUSSONS NIGERIA PLC	55	26.20	384,105	9,961,315.82
SCOA NIGERIA PLC	1	8.71	1,000	8,280.00
TRANSNATIONAL CORP OF NIG. PLC	15	0.50	1,558,400	779,200.00
UAC OF NIGERIA PLC	67	42.50	465,685	19,770,550.36
UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC	83	24.75	3,370,846	84,123,052.26
SECTORTOTALS	231		5,831,939	114,797,517.58
CONSTRUCTION				
COSTAIN (WA) PLC	30	5.30	604,822	3,203,373.50
JULIUS BERGER NIGERIA PLC	38	28.49	422,655	11,419,718.00
MULTIVERSE RESOURCES PLC	1	0.50	10,000	5,000.00
SECTORTOTALS	69		1,037,477	14,628,091.50
ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY				
CUTIX PLC	8	3.04	195,200	591,209.80
NIGERIAN WIRE & CABLE PLC	4	0.84	305,000	256,210.00
SECTORTOTALS	12		500,200	847,419.80
F/BEVERAGES & TOBACCO				
7-UP BOTTLING CO. PLC	14	30.60	33,926	1,082,985.98
BIGTREAT PLC	14	0.81	1,161,000	945,454.00
CADBURY NIGERIA PLC	137	16.40	3,509,857	57,381,348.20
DANGOTE FLOUR MILLS PLC	116	12.60	2,104,717	26,744,459.95
DANGOTE SUGAR REFINERY PLC	51	15.46	968,650	14,933,505.45
FLOUR MILLS NIGERIA PLC	89	47.00	727,289	33,940,799.01
HONEYWELL FLOUR MILL PLC	26	7.05	277,480	1,907,022.00
NATIONAL SALT COY NIG. PLC	18	6.50	161,269	1,017,100.70
NIGERIAN BOTTLING COY PLC	20	27.10	122,270	3,241,032.22
NESTLE NIGERIA PLC	19	270.00	74,990	20,254,558.95
NORTHERN NIG FLOUR MILLS PLC	2	22.50	99,967	2,214,280.60

TANTALIZERS PLC	6	0.91	385,000	349,930.00
UTC NIGERIA PLC	7	0.75	145,320	113,349.60
SECTORTOTALS	519		9,771,735	164,125,826.66
HEALTHCARE				
EVANS MEDICAL PLC	13	1.07	252,661	285,525.87
FIDSON HEALTHCARE PLC	32	2.48	1,956,224	4,679,205.60
GLAXOSMITHKLINE CONS. NIG. PLC	17	26.00	208,416	5,470,664.56
MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC	16	5.04	189,145	953,153.00
NEIMETH INTER. PHARM PLC	10	1.47	77,500	113,980.00
U/DIAGNOSTIC & CLINICAL SERV. PLC	38	0.67	7,134,573	4,855,749.75
SECTORTOTALS	126		9,818,519	16,358,278.78
HOTEL & TOURISM				
CAPITAL HOTEL PLC	3	2.60	307,500	798,550.00
IKEJA HOTEL PLC	20	1.62	1,936,014	3,276,374.68
SECTORTOTALS	23		2,243,514	4,074,924.68
INDUSTRIAL/DOMESTIC PRODUCTS				
B. O. C. GASES NIGERIA PLC	12	11.50	73,866	853,116.04
FIRST ALUMINIUM NIG. PLC	8	0.50	117,337	58,668.50
VITAFOAM NIGERIA PLC	29	4.80	2,378,733	11,630,226.38
VONO PRODUCTS PLC	2	0.63	5,000	3,150.00
SECTORTOTALS	51		2,574,936	12,545,160.92
INFO. & COMM. TECHNOLOGY				
CHAMS PLC	17	0.71	806,000	573,680.00
STARCOMMS PLC	18	2.11	8,156,608	17,212,761.82
SECTORTOTALS	35		8,962,608	17,786,441.82
INSURANCE				
AFRICAN ALLIANCE INSUR. PLC	1	0.50	50,000	25,000.00
AICO INSURANCE PLC	173	1.10	8,683,142	9,449,288.12
CONTINENTAL REINSUR. PLC	5	1.00	371,130	371,120.00
CORNERSTONE INSUR. CO. PLC	19	0.51	1,946,179	1,024,570.00
CUSTODIAN & ALLIED INSUR. PLC	25	3.00	1,693,518	5,048,738.25
EQUITY ASSURANCE PLC	1	0.50	100,000	50,000.00
GOLDLINK INSURANCE PLC	33	0.53	9,129,282	4,704,222.07
GUARANTY TRUST ASSUR. PLC	13	2.28	514,075	1,164,270.13
GUINEA INSURANCE PLC	1	0.50	4,600	2,300.00
CONSOLIDATED HALLMARK INSUR. PLC	2	0.50	66,850	33,425.00
INTERENERGY INSURANCE COY. PLC	21	0.55	1,345,489	754,028.57
LASACO ASSURANCE PLC	38	0.51	2,994,093	1,527,810.30
LAW UNION & ROCK INSUR. PLC	10	0.57	1,525,967	860,011.19
LINKAGE ASSURANCE PLC	3	0.50	60,000	30,000.00
MUTUAL BENEFITS ASSUR. PLC	12	0.64	153,500	98,240.00
N.E.M. INSUR. CO. (NIG.) PLC	30	0.53	2,753,865	1,444,924.80
NIGER INSURANCE CO. PLC	17	0.71	1,406,679	999,952.52
OASIS INSURANCE PLC	3	1.29	167,391	215,934.39
PRESTIGE ASSURANCE PLC	1	3.61	16,470	56,492.10
REGENCY ALLIANCE INSUR. COY. PLC	2	0.50	1,001,850	500,925.00
SOVEREIGN TRUST INSUR. PLC	1	0.50	500	250.00
STACO INSURANCE PLC	3	0.83	39,590	31,276.10
STANDARD ALLIANCE INSUR. PLC	54	0.51	12,937,069	6,620,970.07
UNIC INSURANCE PLC	5	0.81	909,587	734,202.60
UNITY CAPITAL ASSUR. PLC	1	1.21	3,398,000	4,111,580.00
UNIVERSAL INSUR COY. PLC	10	0.50	20,345,200	10,172,600.00
INTERCONTINENTAL WAPIC INSUR. PLC	29	1.00	656,876	652,008.50
SECTORTOTALS	513		72,270,902	50,684,139.71
LEASING				
C&I LEASING PLC	15	2.70	1,006,181	2,627,875.48
SECTORTOTALS	15		1,006,181	2,627,875.48
MARITIME				
JAPPAUL OIL & MARITIME SERV. PLC	116	1.20	4,001,672	4,859,439.96
SECTORTOTALS	116		4,001,672	4,859,439.96
MEDIA				
DAAR COMMUNICATIONS PLC	11	0.73	64,500	46,930.00
SECTORTOTALS	11		64,500	46,930.00
MORTGAGE COMPANIES				
ASO SAVINGS AND LOANS PLC	36	0.65	2,080,800	1,362,988.92
RESORT SAVINGS & LOANS PLC	2	0.50	104,000	52,000.00
UNION HOMES SAVINGS & LOANS PLC	34	0.94	1,588,633	1,491,951.03
SECTORTOTALS	72		3,773,433	2,906,939.95
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS				
CRUSADER NIGERIA PLC	50	1.02	27,052,783	26,419,717.26
ROYAL EXCHANGE PLC	15	0.57	2,094,742	1,194,165.66
SECTORTOTALS	65		29,147,525	27,613,882.92
PACKAGING				
NIG. BAG MANUFA. COY. PLC	304	2.33	3,219,852	7,643,203.70
SECTORTOTALS	304		3,219,852	7,643,203.70
PETROLEUM (MARKETING)				
AFRICAN PETROLEUM PLC	79	41.00	873,947	35,412,865.85
BECO PETROLEUM PRODUCT PLC	12	2.35	282,898	637,948.74
MRS OIL NIGERIA PLC	7	69.79	2,180	153,470.00
CONOIL PLC	22	31.00	85,948	2,795,687.68
ETERNA OIL & GAS PLC	31	6.18	555,986	3,455,253.68
MOBIL OIL NIGERIA PLC	5	97.51	1,474	139,608.00
OANDO PLC	13	93.99	10,045	944,129.55
TOTAL NIGERIA PLC	5	142.50	880	127,608.80
SECTORTOTALS	174		1,813,358	43,666,572.30
PRINTING & PUBLISHING				
UNIVERSITY PRESS PLC	13	5.45	267,300	1,390,563.19
SECTORTOTALS	13		267,300	1,390,563.19
REAL ESTATE				
UACN PROPERTY DEVE. CO. PLC	20	19.35	602,751	11,994,566.85
SECTORTOTALS	20		602,751	11,994,566.85
OVERALL TOTALS	6,175		346,238,985	1,657,690,784.62

What is Investment Fund?

It is a closed-end fund that offers investors the ability to buy securities that represents a portfolio of investments with a specific investment strategy. These products use funds raised through a public offering to invest in a portfolio of securities, which are actively managed to create income streams for investors.

Google.com

GAINERS

NESTLE	2.00
AP	1.50
FLOURMILL	1.49
NNFM	0.70

LOSERS

NB	3.00
UAC-PROP	0.65
GLAXOSMITH	0.50
UBA	0.45

DIGEST

Playing musical instruments may improve reading

LEARNING to play a musical instrument could help to improve children's reading and their ability to listen in noisy classrooms, according to new research.

Neuroscientists have found that musicians benefit from heightened brain activity that allows them to process information from their eyes and ears more efficiently than non-musicians. They found that the part of the brain that interprets sound, known as the auditory cortex, responds faster in people with musical training and is better primed to pick out subtle patterns from the huge volumes of information that flood into the brain from our senses.

Professor Nina Kraus, a neuroscientist and amateur musician at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, has also found that this part of the brain plays a crucial role in reading.

Speaking at the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in San Diego on Saturday, she called for music to become a more important part of school syllabuses to help children develop better reading and language skills. She said: "There is a strong argument for more musical education, especially in schools. "Our eyes and ears take in millions of bits of information every second and it is not possible for the brain to process all of that, so the sensory systems in our brains are primed to tune into regularities or patterns in the signals it receives.

"People who are musically trained are better at picking up these patterns because they learn to recognise notes and pitches within melodies and harmonies.

"The better you are at picking



THE part of the brain that interprets sound, known as the auditory cortex, responds faster in people with musical training.

up these patterns in music, the better reader you are. This makes sense as letters and words on a page are really just patterns."

Professor Kraus and her team have used a method known as electroencephalography, which measures electrical activity in the brain, to examine how musicians and non-musicians brains respond to different stimulus.

She found that people who are better at picking out harmonies and timing in sounds are also better at reading. Preliminary findings, which are still to be published, have also shown that musicians are better at reading. She is currently conducting a major study of children in schools in Chicago to test whether musical training can improve their reading

skills.

She has also shown that musicians are better at picking out speech in noisy environments such as restaurants and classrooms because their brains are primed to distinguish notes within melodies and harmonies. She said: "Musical experience can enhance everyday listening and language tasks. We are making new strides in under-

standing what changes happen in the brain with musical experience."

Dr Aniruddh Patel, a neuroscientist at the Neurosciences Institute in San Diego, California, added: "Music and language have a lot more interactions than anyone had previously thought and have real implications for treating people with language problems."

Culled from Telegraph.co.uk

Dolphins could hold the key to curing diabetes



DIABETES appears to have evolved in dolphins as a useful way of coping with food shortages

DOLPHINS could hold the key to curing most diabetes, scientists say.

Researchers have discovered that the friendly sea mammals have a form of adult onset diabetes, but have the ability to turn the condition on and off. The discovery opens

the door to revolutionary new treatments for the disease in humans, and possibly even a cure.

Yesterday scientists described the findings as exciting, but stressed they had no plans to use live dolphins in medical experiments. Instead, DNA samples would be taken from routine blood tests already carried out on dolphins in captivity. Around 2.6 million people in the UK suffer from diabetes, the vast majority affected by type 2 which usually strikes in middle and old age.

The disease occurs when the pancreas is unable to produce enough insulin - the hormone that regulates blood sugar - or when its insulin does not work properly.

In humans, diabetes can trigger major health problems including heart disease. But in bottlenose dolphins, the condition appears to have evolved as a useful way of coping with food shortages. When they are fasting, they make themselves insulin resistant. Glucose is not removed from the blood and their brains continue to be supplied with vital energy. When food is available, they switch off their insulin resistance and blood sugar levels are controlled again.

Dr Stephanie Venn-Watson of National Marine Mammal

Association in San Diego, California, believes diabetes may have evolved in our prehistoric ancestors to cope with famines in a similar way, but the switch has been lost over the millennia.

Understanding how the switch works and learning to control it could be the solution to type 2 diabetes.

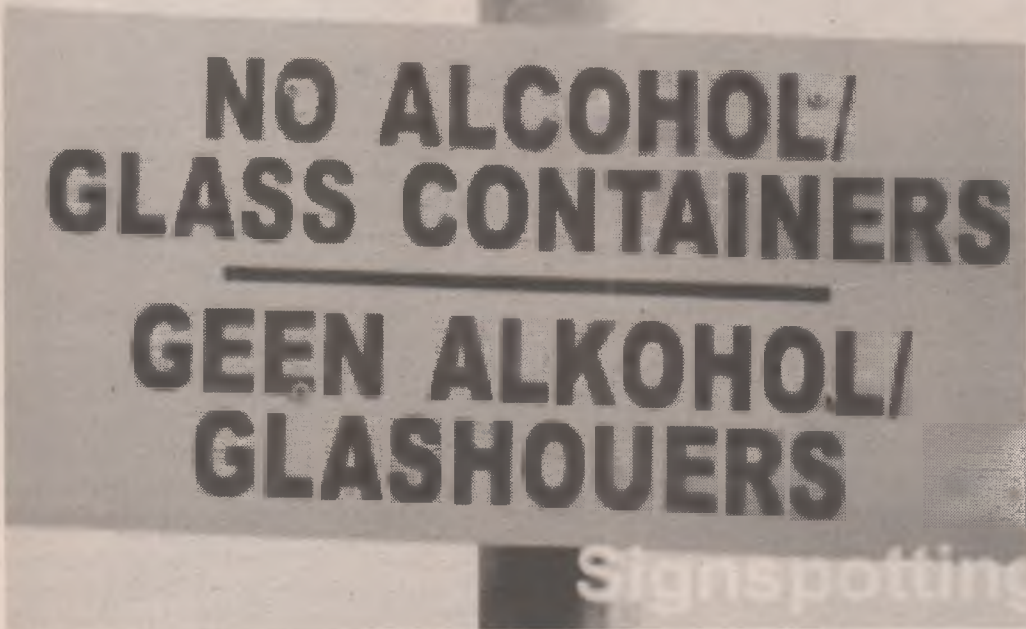
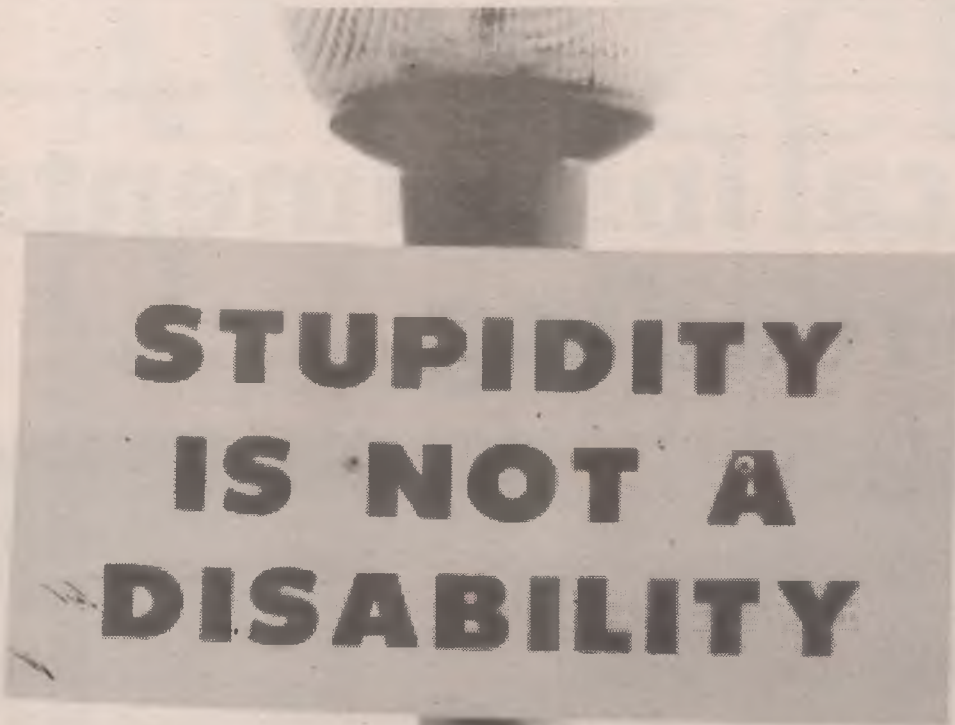
Dr Venn-Watson made it clear her team would never carry out experiments that caused dolphins any harm or suffering and that DNA samples would be taken from blood tests already performed on captive animals. The DNA would then be compared with human DNA.

"No one has any desire that I'm aware of to make a dolphin a lab animal," she said.

However animal welfare campaigners said dolphins should not be used for medical research - and that even keeping them in captivity was cruel.

A spokesman for the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society said: "Dolphins are intelligent and sophisticated animals which are vulnerable to stress and suffering when confined and removed from their natural environment and societies."

Sign Language



Hope it is clear to everyone.
 Photo location: Hermanus, South Africa, by Peter Simpson
 Culled from www.signspotting.com



What about humans?
 Photo location: England, by Margo Scafield
 Culled from www.signspotting.com

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.

92

1	2		9				7	
9			1	8				6
		4	5	6				
		9	6					
	8		2	9	1		3	
					3	5		
				1	9	3		
3				4	6			7
		6			5		4	1

Solution to Sudoku 91

1	5	3	9	8	2	4	7	6
6	2	9	5	4	7	3	1	8
7	8	4	3	6	1	5	2	9
3	7	5	2	9	6	1	8	4
9	4	1	7	5	8	2	6	3
2	6	8	1	3	4	7	9	5
5	9	7	6	1	3	8	4	2
8	3	2	4	7	9	6	5	1
4	1	6	8	2	5	9	3	7

News Extra

Can Niger's coup leaders turn out to be "good soldiers"?

A bid to restore democratic normality or an internal tussle over power and resources? That is the question yet to be answered as Niger's new military regime confirms its hold over the key institutions of this desperately poor but mineral-rich Sahelian state, one of the world's key producers of uranium.

The clutch of officers who seized power have named themselves the Supreme Council for the Restoration of Democracy (CSRD).

Many Nigeriens, particularly supporters of the opposition, will be hoping that the new regime lives up to its name and rapidly makes arrangements for a transition back to genuine political pluralism.

The increasingly autocratic style of the now-deposed President, Mamadou Tandja, was widely resented.

Last August's referendum vote, which abolished term limits, allowing him to prolong his stay in office, was certainly questionable, with opponents claiming the true turnout may have been as low as 5%.

Political efforts to derail the increasing concentration of power in Mr Tandja's hands had failed. When parliament and the supreme court stood in his way he shut them down and organised the election of a more compliant national assembly in questionable polls that were not recognised by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

Mohamed Ibn Chambas, the outgoing president of the regional bloc, saw Mr Tandja as a threat to West African democracy and submitted evidence against Niger when the European Union was deciding whether to continue aid to Niamey.

Ethnic concerns

But it is too early to assume that Niger will now see the rapid restoration of a genuinely pluralist political system like those of Mali, Benin, Ghana or Senegal.

Although it was caught up in the wave of democratisation that swept across francophone Africa two decades ago, the country's subsequent history has been more troubled than that of these reform success stories.

Niger suffered a coup in 1996, followed three years later by the assassination of President Ibrahim Mainassara, who had come to power through the putsch.



PIC: AFP

UN representative Said Djinnit (right), Salou Djibo (second right), leader of the coup that overthrew Niger's president Mamadou Tandja, head of the 15-nation regional economic bloc ECOWAS Mohamed Ibn Chambas (second left), and the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security Ramtane Lamamra (left) after a meeting on Sunday at a military compound in Niamey.



Col Salou Djibo
Coup leader

Col Djibrilla Hima Hamidou
Involved in 1999 coup

Col Goukoye Abdul Karimou
Junta spokesman

Col Amadou Harouna

The subsequent election of Mr Tandja as head of state inaugurated a decade of relative stability, but the army was never far from politics.

Mr Tandja himself is a former colonel and coup participant. And by late last year rumours of renewed army discontent were circulating.

Worried by the dominance of ethnic Djerma westerners in the officer corps, Mr Tandja - who is from the east - built up his presidential guard and the security services.

But there was a sense that he was becoming increasingly isolated, over-reliant on his own bullish self-belief and the advice of a few loyalist colleagues.

Mr Tandja managed to maintain an IMF economic programme - the essential minimum for a partnership with outside donors to reduce poverty levels, which are among the most severe in Africa.

Uranium threat

But Niger has not managed to emulate Mali and Burkina Faso in establishing a sustained long-term grassroots development strategy.

And Mr Tandja's increasingly undemocratic hold on power put support from the EU and other key Western donors at risk.

This may explain why he felt the need to cultivate relations with Libya and Venezuela, both of which he visited in recent months.

And it was rumoured in France that he was considering the award of a crucial uranium mining contract to the Chinese, or even the Iranians, potentially threatening the position of the French nuclear group Areva, for whom Niger is a vital source of supply.

Some sources have suggested that talk of a deal with the Chinese whetted the appetite of some in the military for a share of the material rewards, intensifying tensions within the military over Mr Tandja's monopolisation of power.

Uranium is not the only reason why new developments in Niger will be watched closely by Western governments.

They are also concerned about the growing operational reach of the Algeria-based al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), whose fighters are now active in large tracts of the central Sahara and its southern fringe, the Sahel.

The longstanding rebel and smuggling activities of Tuareg nomads should not be confused with AQIM, but they have been a further contributor to insecurity in the region.

In 2007 a new mainly Tuareg group, the Niger Movement for Justice (MNJ), launched a campaign of attacks across the north.

Rebel activity has seriously disrupted the tourist industry, which is an important source of income for local people, particularly around the desert town of Agadez.

And there is always a risk that individuals taken hostage by Tuareg groups may ultimately end up in the hands of AQIM radicals.

France and the US have been providing military assistance to Niger as part of a wider effort to maintain the security of the Sahel.

Good soldiers?

This is the unsettled context facing ECOWAS and the Afri-

can Union, which has suspended Niger, as they attempt to draw the new military rulers into talks over the rapid re-establishment of constitutional democratic rule.

An ECOWAS envoy, Gen Abdusalam Abubakar from Nigeria, was already attempting to mediate between Mr Tandja and his political opponents.

The military's seizure of power may simplify his task - or it may render it more complicated.

Arguably, the AU's suspension means little, given the sanctions Niger already faces because of Mr Tandja.

And other AU countries suspended for unseating power unconstitutionally, such as the Central African Republic after Françoise Bozize's coup, were allowed back into the fold after holding elections to restore constitutional rule.

There are West African precedents, notably in Mali, for a "good soldiers" pro-democracy coup.

But Niger's new CSRD regime has yet to show whether it really intends to pursue such a path.

And the country's unsettled recent history suggests that turning such good intentions into a national consensus around the route forward could prove difficult.

Culled from bbc.co.uk



Chronic poverty

Population 14 million, 61% live on less than \$1 a day

Resource rich

Huge reserves of uranium, Chinese firms digging for oil

Politically unstable

History of coups, assassinations and on-off rebellion by nomadic Tuareg people in the north

Source: World Bank

Country profile: Niger

News Extra

Is this Nepali teenager the world's smallest man?



KHAGENDRA Thapa Magar, 18, who stands at 22 inches tall, is carried by his father Rup Bahadur Thapa Magar, as he arrives for a meeting with media before leaving for Europe

A Nepali teenager bidding to become the world's smallest man is going the extra mile to achieve his lifelong dream.

Khagendra Thapa Magar, 17, is flying with his father and a supporter to Italy, where they plan to file a claim with Guinness World Records.

Standing just 22in tall, Magar is eight months away from adulthood - and the chance to claim the title of the shortest man in history.

The shortest man ever recorded was Gul Mohammed of India, who measured 22.4in.

Pictured waving to the media before leaving for Europe, the tiny teen, who weighs just 10lbs, is hoping to find fame, fortune and a fiancée on his travels.

His family initially applied for Guinness recognition when he was 14, but Magar was told he would have to wait until he was an adult.

The current smallest man record is held by China's He Pingping, who is 29in tall.

Magar and his father told reporters in Kathmandu that they planned to appear on an Italian television show this week to talk about his bid for the title.

Mr Magar, who was born in 1992 in the Baglung district of Nepal, started to walk only at the age of eight and ceased growing at 11.

'He was very tiny when he was born,' said Khagendra's mother Dhana Maya Thapa Magar.

'It was not possible to bathe him or clean him up because of his size. We had to hold him on our palm,' she said.

According to his father, Magar would become upset after finding that he was much shorter than other children of his age.

'We always tried to console him saying that size doesn't matter at all,' said Rup Bahadur.

But his life has been transformed after the word about his size spread in the area.

Mr Magar, who was born in 1992 in the Baglung district of Nepal, started to walk only at the age of eight and ceased growing at 11.



MAGAR is looking forward to global fame, international travel and an arranged marriage with a bride of similar stature

Magar is looking forward to global fame, international travel and an arranged marriage with a bride of similar stature.

'I keep on telling my father to find a right match for me,' said Magar.

'I would love to have children but haven't decided on the numbers yet,' he added.

Magar enjoys karate and occasionally performs with a dancing troupe in the foothills of Himalayas.

Happy with his celebrity status, he says he was ridiculed for his size until he became famous in his native Nepal.

'The ridicule has turned into praise. Now people congratulate me as my small size has earned me a big name,' he said.

News Extra



© Adam Gerrard
GONE - A worker stands in the hole left by a stolen ATM

Gang uses forklift to withdraw ATM

A gang used a stolen forklift truck to tear a cash machine from the wall of a bank in an audacious raid. Police said the trio of robbers fled with the contents of the hole-in-the-wall machine after taking it from the NatWest bank in Hatherleigh, west Devon, leaving a ten-foot wide hole in the side of the building.

They had worn reflective clothing and hard hats to pose as construction workers as they carried out the theft, before fleeing in

a 4x4 vehicle and a car at around 3.20am yesterday.

It is not yet known how much cash was in the ATM. Bank staff were on Sunday still assessing the damage and the amount taken.

A police spokesman said the forklift, which has a top speed of just 40mph, had been stolen from the Bideford area of Devon last Thursday or Friday.

He said: "A stolen red Manitou forklift vehicle was used to penetrate the building and then pull the cash machine from the wall."

“A police spokesman said the forklift, which has a top speed of just 40mph, had been stolen from the Bideford area of Devon last Thursday or Friday

All the president's emails

In a unique experiment in democratic transparency, Barack Obama – a BlackBerry owner, and the first American president to use email while in office – has agreed to copy G2 on his otherwise highly confidential electronic communications. Each week, we present a selection from recent days:

To: Dick Cheney
<unclestrangelove@earthlink.net>

Subject: Your surprise appearance at the Conservative Political Action Conference

Dick: look, I know we've had our differences. You've questioned my loyalty to America; I've accused you of gravely undermining the constitution through your support for torture, and I've disciplined my children by suggesting that you might come down the West Wing chimney and scare them with your ridiculous face. But when I watched your surprise appearance at CPAC, and your joke about how the cheering crowds almost made you want to run for office again, I knew I had to reach out. I'm begging you now: just please don't do it. If you

ran for the presidency in 2012, you might win, and then you'd dismantle everything I've stood for. I know it's unusual, making an appeal to your better nature like this. But I'm desperate. If you have any humanity at all, just please don't do it.
Respectfully, Barack

To: David Axelrod <david@davidaxelrod.com>, Rahm Emanuel <rahm.emanuel3@gmail.com>

Subject: Cheney

Well, OK, guys – I sent the email, as discussed. It's a long shot, but it would be SO awesome if it happened. Fingers crossed! Meanwhile, if you run into him at any public functions, no sudden moves: above all, we have to try to keep him alive till 2012.



PRESIDENT Barack Obama on his BlackBerry

BHO

To: Alyssa Mastromonaco, Director of Scheduling and Advance <alyssa@whitehouse.gov>

Subject: Re: Dalai Lama, WTF?

I know, right? Everyone thinks he's this infinitely patient leader

of the Tibetan government-in-exile, radiating loving-kindness and writing books about how to achieve perfect serenity, and then you get the rider document from his "people" demanding "Twelve (12) LARGE bottles of San Pellegrino spring water (sparkling)", "10 chilled cans of Diet Dr Pepper, five large packs of nacho cheese-

flavoured Doritos, and a selection of fresh fruit (ABSOLUTELY NO MANGOS OR PINEAPPLE)", with a warning that he's liable to explode in rage if his requirements aren't precisely met. Even Celine Dion wasn't this high-maintenance. Jeez.

BHO

Culled from guardian.co.uk

News Extra

Haiti earthquake death toll could reach 300,000, claims president



MEXICAN President Felipe Calderon, right, greets Haiti's Rene Preval during the meeting of the Caribbean Community in Playa del Carmen, Mexico

The death toll of the Haiti earthquake could reach up to 300,000, according to the country's president.

Speaking after arriving in Mexico Sunday for international aid meetings, Rene Preval said the figure could soar once all the victims' bodies are recovered from the wreckage.

'You have seen the pictures, you know the numbers, more than 200,000 bodies picked up in the streets, counting those that are still underneath the rubble, perhaps we could arrive at

300,000 deaths,' he said.

Haiti's government has placed the death toll of the 7.0 magnitude earthquake, which caused devastation in Haiti's capital Port-au-Prince on Janu-

ary 12, at between 170,000 and 230,000.

The latest estimate of casualty figures would mean the death toll is higher than that of the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004, in which 200,000 died.

On Sunday, Preval highlighted an urgent need for emergency shelter for the impoverished Caribbean nation, where 1.5 million people are living in squalid tent camps made of bedsheets and plastic scraps.

Fears of disease outbreaks have also been raised due to poor sanitation and with the beginning of the rainy season in March.

Arriving for the regional summit near the Mexican town of Playa del Carmen, Preval said: 'The first rainy days in Port-au-Prince have made it impossible to enjoy a dignified life and this is the reason for the request for shelters.'

He called on Latin American countries to increase industry investments to help Haiti back on its feet, adding: 'I want to thank the Mexican people with all my heart, for the aid the country has sent so far.

According to the International America Development bank, the reconstruction of Haiti could cost as much as £9million.

PIC: AFP



HAITIAN children get free meals from supporters of Haiti's former President Jean Bertrand Aristide at the burnt-out church where he once preached to the poor in a Port-au-Prince slum on Sunday. Titid -- known to the rest of the world as Jean-Bertrand Aristide -- was forced out of Haiti six years ago, but the suffering wrought by last month's devastating earthquake has intensified calls for the return of the Catholic priest who became the country's first democratically elected president.



EARTHQUAKE survivors are forced to live in squalid tent camps made of bedsheets and plastic scraps after the 7.0 magnitude quake destroyed homes

ENVIRONMENT

environment@dailytrust.com

HOTLINE: 07041632079

FG to partner stakeholders on climate

By Mustapha Suleiman

MINISTER of Environment Mr. John Odey has assured that government will work in active partnership with the organized private sector, civil society organization (CSO), women groups, development partners and other stake-

holders towards a multilateral framework at combating impact of climate change.

Mr. Odey gave this assurance yesterday when he received a group of Women from West, East North and Central Africa, led by Dr. (Mrs.) Basirat Nahibi under the umbrella of "Women Advance-

ment for Economic and Leadership Empowerment in Africa", WAELE/ARCELFA in his office. According to him the Ministry "will ensure that women have access to participate in decisions related to climate change", adding, Climate change and environmental policies are intrinsically linked with gender,

as women are often the first to be affected by our changing environment.

Acknowledging the role of women in leadership and economic empowerment, Odey commended the group for its various advocacy and empowerment programmes all over Africa. He also noted that "gen-

der issues and women's involvement in Climate change policies are very essential for the advancement of world development". He therefore invited the group to the ongoing post Cop 15 conference on climate change being organized by the Ministry in conjunction with its Development partners in Abuja.

Yobe govt constitutes committee on climate change

THE Yobe government has constituted a committee on climate change, to monitor, enlighten the public and advise government on the consequences of the changes.

The Commissioner for Environment, Alhaji Wakil Sarki, said in Damaturu on Sunday, that the committee had embarked on an advocacy visit to the rural areas to sensitise the people on the weather.

Sarki said that the ministry was working in collaboration with opinion leaders, traditional institutions and religious leaders.

He said the committee would study the pattern of rainfall in the state this year and advise farmers accordingly on the appropriate cropping season.

In another development, he said all politicians in the state willing to paste their posters and erect bill boards, must obtain permission from the ministry for environment.

The commissioner said, the measure became necessary to check the indiscriminate pasting of posters on public buildings and structures which was defacing the metropolis.

"The provisions of the sanitation edict will be fully applied against offenders. Public structures have been destroyed due to activities of those posting bills" he maintained. (NAN)



A heart-shaped coral reef in Australia

NEMA, NIMET sets to tackle climate change

By Abdulkadir Badsha Mukhtar

FOLLOWING the forecast report of expected low rainfall this year as a result of Global Climate Change the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), the Nigeria Metrology Agency (NIMET) in collaboration with other agencies are set to address the issue, which it says requires urgent attention.

The Nigeria Metrology Agency (NIMET) had recently issued a forecast of low rainfall that could lead to low agricultural production in the country because of the present Global Climate Change.

The forecast, therefore, warned of high

heat wave with dangers of fire disasters, especially in the northern part of the country and rise in sea level with the consequences of flood in the coastal areas.

Addressing a meeting in respond to the NIMET report, NEMA Director General retired AVM Mohammed Audu-Bida said the impact of climate change in the country was becoming increasingly obvious with devastating consequences, which require urgent action to mitigate against looming disasters.

To address the issue of climate change in collaboration with other agencies, he said, his agency will empower appropriate responses through sustainable early warning systems against any disaster.

Abdu-Bida said the agencies involved in the forecast would be required to make the data available ahead of time to be disseminated from the highest level to the grassroots in mobilising the appropriate responses.

NEMA said the agencies must regard themselves as partners rather than competitors, especially in the present situation that require coordinated and integrated forecasting and early warning to address the likely climate related emergencies and disasters.

The country, he said had over the past few years experiencing more droughts in some dry areas, and increased rainfall and flooding in wetter areas.

Climate expert seeks communities' participation in adaptation projects

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

THE Programme Officer of the Building Nigeria's Response to Climate Change (BNRCC), at the Nigerian Environmental Study/Action Team (NEST), Mr. John Ajigo has enjoined communities to make themselves part of the efforts to build adaptation to the impacts of climate change.

Ajigo was part of the team of experts which has just completed a tour of pet

projects initiated by one of the implementing partners - Greenwatch Initiative in two rural areas of Daudu and Falgore in Benue and Kano states, respectively. NEST's projects adviser on pilot projects, Mrs. Ellen Woodley and Samson Ogallah who is NEST's Programme Officer for Communication, Outreach and Network, were part of the team. The team was by Greenwatch's Executive Director, Emmanuel Tembe.

Ajigo spoke to Daily Trust on phone,

expressing satisfaction with the local adaptation of the people of the two communities to the impact of climate change.

Mr. Ajigo said Greenwatch and the communities are on the right tract, explaining that "I am sure at the time Greenwatch withdraws; the communities won't have problems because they are a major part of the project to address their own problems."

He urged all Nigerians to be concerned

about the environment and to heed to the call to respond to the climatic change, in their little ways.

NEST's spokesman, Ogallah said "if the projects we have just visited can be replicated in other parts of the country especially in Northern Nigeria, the project's good adaptation strategy will go a long way at addressing climate change. The strategy is a good model, if well implemented."



Fishermen decry effect of oil spill

FISHERMEN operating in Akwa Ibom say they need divine intervention to end the dwindling fish catch occasioned by the Dec. 4, 2009 oil spill from the Qua Iboe oil fields.

Mobil Producing Nigeria, (MPN) operators of the Qua Iboe oil export terminal in Ibeno, Akwa Ibom, reported that a leak from its pipeline caused the discharge of crude into the Atlantic Ocean.

The Chairman of Artisan Fishermen Association of Nigeria in Akwa Ibom, Rev. Samuel Ayadi, said that fishermen had been praying

for an early rain to "cleanse the waters."

Ayadi said in Eket that the rains would not only cleanse the waters, but would also enable fish to breed.

He said, "The frequent oil spills from the oil fields pose great danger to our livelihood, as crude oil is toxic to aquatic life.

"And each time oil spills, the fishes are killed while the few surviving ones migrate to the high sea. Our hope lies in heavy rains and that is why we have been praying.

"It has been very difficult for our mem-

bers since the last spill in December last year, we toil day and night and end up with scanty catch that cannot offset the cost of fuel for the boats."

Ayadi said that more than 4,000 fishermen who are members of his association had their fishing nets and accessories contaminated by crude oil from the Dec. 4, oil spill.

He said that the slow pace of oil spill compensation process made it difficult for fishermen, who lost their fishing nets and accessories to get back to sea immediately. (NAN)

NOA boss harps on recycling waste to create wealth

From John Kennedy Uzoma, Owerri

THE Director National Orientation Agency (NOA) Imo State Mr. Vitus Ekeocha has identified waste as most neglected resources by government of the country.

Ekeocha stated this yesterday at a one-day state sensitization workshop organized by the agency on the theme "Waste Recycling As A Tool For Wealth Creation and Employment Generation", held in Owerri.

He said that Nigeria generates high amount of waste daily in most of the urban cities such as Lagos, Ibadan, Kaduna, Aba and Kano, adding that the states generate above 50,000 metric turns of waste.

The state NOA boss said that if the waste are properly managed and little amount of values addition done on them it will not only reduce the hydra headed problem of unemployment, generate energy, ensure a clean and safe environment and empower youth.

He said waste recycling apart from ensuring clean environment, is a very lucrative and sustainable business.

Declaring the workshop open the Deputy Governor of Imo State Lady Ada Okwuonu said that the state government would continue to collaborate with agencies to ensure they tackle the problem of waste.

The Deputy Governor, represented at the event by the Senior Special Assistant on General Duties, Engr. Augustine Mbanali, called on other agencies and copreates organizations through private partnership to assist government set up the industry in the state.



PG 42The turbine blades create clouds which hang over the offshore farm even though the coastline remains clear in Great Yarmouth Norfolk UK

Environmentalists accuse FG of double standard on gas flaring

By Nasir Imam

PARTICIPANTS at the meeting of environmentalists have accused the Federal Government of double standards because it is yet to demonstrate commitment to ending gas flaring in the Niger Delta going by the endless shift in flare-out dates while it is professing a commitment to climate change mitigation and adapta-

tion.

A statement from Nnimmo Bassey on behalf of the board, volunteers, staff and management of the Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth Nigeria

(ERA/FoEN) said at its Annual General Meeting and Retreat held in Oghara, Delta State from February 8 to 12, it evaluated current events in the country and globally as they relate to environmental

justice and climate change.

The meeting attended by ERA/FoEN Board, Management, Staff, community campaigners on the platform of Host Communities Network (HoCoN), students and volunteers, expressed dissatisfaction over the state of the Nigerian environment.

The meeting also observed that reckless and illegal logging in what remains of our remain-

ing natural forests poses a grave threat to livelihoods and harmony in the impacted communities, and a major contributor to climate change;

In view of the above, the meeting strongly recommends immediate end to gas flaring in the Niger Delta and appropriate penalties for defaulting companies that will include withdrawal of their operational license.

Kwara records 17 fire incidents in one month

From Mustafa Abubakar, Ilorin

THE Chief Fire officer of the Kwara State Fire Service, Mallam Raji Olayinka Tihamiyu, has disclosed that not fewer than 17 cases of fire outbreak incidents were recorded in Ilorin, Kwara State capital within 24 days.

Mallam Tihamiyu who disclosed this while speaking with newsmen in Ilorin

said that the accidents occurred between January 3 to 27 this year.

He said that the affected areas and building include Ideal Nursery and Primary, GRA, No. 19 Awodi Market, No 15 Atiku Road, No 5 Ikorodo Street, Ipata Oloje, Ola-Iya Street, Railway Line, all in Ilorin metropolis.

He identified power upsurge, and careless attitude of the people as some of

the factors responsible for the outbreak.

He denied the allegation that firemen don't promptly respond to people's calling whenever fire outbreak occur, saying the situation usually get worsen before the victims think of calling for their services.

He explained that fire incidents mostly occurred in the night or when the occupants were not around to quickly

stop the incidents.

Tihamiyu noted that fire outbreak could cause economic setback, dislocation of people or termination of live and health hazard to firemen among others.

He emphasized the need for the establishment of more fire service station and the procurement of modern equipment to enhance their services.



Governments 'misjudging' scale of CO2 emissions

POLICY makers in Europe and United States are markedly underestimating the changes needed to mitigate CO2 emission required to prevent dangerous climate change because they work in 'silos,' according to pioneering research

Dr Sebastian Carney, from The University of Manchester, discovered that the lack of communication between government departments, NGOs and other authorities has resulted in significant differences over who is responsible for what.

He described his work at the prestigious 2010 American Association for the Advancement of Science Annual Meeting held on 21 February in San Diego.

The 'scenario sessions' bring together national and local politicians, council officers, policy

makers and NGOs – among others - to discuss their approaches to emissions.

"When it becomes evident that policy makers, and energy planners are vastly underestimating the scale of the problem, the universal reaction is one of

shock.

"In most cases, they have never sat down and quantified their energy futures in terms of changes in CO2," said Dr Carney, who is based at University's Centre for Urban Regional Ecology.

Farmer cautions against bush-burning

PROF. Nebath Tanglang of the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) has advised farmers against the use of fire to clear farmlands prior to a new planting season.

Tanglang, who is the Centre Manager of NOUN in Gombe, gave the caution while speaking with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Gombe on Thursday.

He said that apart from destroying the eco-system, such fires, when out of control, could cause damage to dry season farmers. He narrated how fire destroyed his sugarcane farm valued at N3 million on Jan. 30.

According to him, fire ignited by some youths while clearing their farmland went out of control and destroyed his ready-for-harvest five-hectare sugarcane plantation in Billiri town. "The plantation would have fetched me nothing less than N3 million but almost everything was destroyed.

"Unfortunately, the farm was not insured and my source of funding in undertaking the project was a loan from a bank," he lamented. The manager said that apart from the loss he incurred, some people he employed in the farm had also lost their source of livelihood. "The security man in the farm started shedding tears when the fire could not be controlled because he knew his source of livelihood was gone.



MEMBERS of Hose Communities Network (HOCON), Abuja Chapter being inaugurated in Abuja by Mr. Nnimmo Bassey, President Friends of the Earth International

Nigerian insurers to develop policy on climate change

CLIMATE change concerns like increased warming and desert encroachment is impacting insurance policies globally and Nigerian insurance space may soon develop policies to cover such risks.

The idea was muted in Lagos by the President Chartered Insurance Institute of Nigeria (CIIN)

Mr. Sunny Adeda at a media parley.

The environmental changes are having a lot impact on the insurance industry in terms of claims elsewhere and the Nigerian industry must be proactive before we are taken unawares, he said.

He said currently, the existing insurance policies does not cover

climate change exigencies but the CIIN (CIIN by law is empowered to train all insurance professionals in Nigeria) is considering a capacity building training module for insurance practitioners in Nigeria so they could develop policies and charge appropriate premium on risks associated with climate change.

He also noted that, though insurance policies does not cover natural disasters but the policies can be extended to cover damages' during risks and other man made crisis.

He also pledged the CIIN, quest to sustain the industry's growth and development through the provision of adept

education.

He said the institute will ensure the promotion and general development of insurance by conducting, encouraging and assisting in the conduct of research into insurance and allied subjects with special emphasis on local practices, laws and conditions.

Nigerian youths unite on climate change

By Nasir Imam

MORE than 30 young Nigerians, as part of the Nigerian Youth Climate Action Network, met in Abuja recently to drive forward the youth voice on climate action. "Whether you are prepared or not, you are going to face the consequences of climate change. But only if you are prepared would you be able to tap into the opportunities," said Ngodoo Akuto, organiser of the workshop.

The group ended the meeting having

secured a promise for a Youth Desk on Climate Change at the Special Climate Change Unit of the Federal Ministry of Environment from the representative of the Minister of Environment, Dr. Victor Fodeke. They also reviewed the Copenhagen Accord, its implication on Nigerian Youth and identified main points of action to guide future initiatives.

These include Green jobs for Youth in the Green Environment Programme and in the future Low-Carbon Economy, having a standard climate change

curriculum for schools to aid in the dissemination of information at an early age.

It also includes mainstreaming the youth into NAPA (National Adaptation Plan of Action) process, setting up a youth desk on climate change at the SSCU (Special Climate Change Unit) the desk would represent youth interests and become a link between the youth and the SSCU, and Establishing a Petroleum Future Fund (PFF) to be enacted (based on the Norwegian

model), where a certain percentage of funds are set apart for future generations to enable them cope with climate change challenges.

The importance of the workshop was highlighted by Barrister Nkiru Nnaemego, who said that is was "... a good opportunity for young people working on climate change to present a common united front to promote climate action both at the local and global levels."

The next meeting is scheduled for April 2010.

§ycophant

Environment



environment@dailytrust.com

HOTLINE: 07041632079

'Cactus is the oldest and cheapest method of fighting desertification'

By Tina A. Hassan

WITH Nigeria losing 600 meters of arable land mass to desertification, desert encroachment is now a major threat to food availability and sustainability in Nigeria, especially to states in the north as well as other African countries like Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Chad and Niger Republic among others.

Mr. Moncef Gouja is the Charge D' Affairs in the Tunisian Embassy in Nigeria. He talks with Daily Trust on how cactus can be used as a cheap and efficient plant in fighting desertification and of boosting the economic base of the nation.

Nigeria and Tunisia are in a partnership to fight desertification by adopting methods used by your country to address the problem in Nigeria. How would the method be executed?

Four years back, Nigerian delegation from the Ministry of Environment came because they wanted to know how we are fighting desertification successfully and they visited some areas where cactus was planted in fighting desertification in Tunisia.

We showed the Nigerian delegation how we used cactus for preventing desertification and how Tunisia had been able to use the plant as an economic plant and for fighting desertification and they visited some area where Cactus was planted in fighting desertification.

Can you explain how Cactus

is used in Tunisia to fight desertification?

In Tunisia, we have a very big problem of water so planting Cactus is the oldest method used by agricultural practitioners in fighting desertification and is now being used by the government and for about three decades, Tunisia has practiced the planting of Cactus

as an agricultural food for man and for animals.

The Cactus specie called Cactus Opuntia or prickly pear usually bears fruit with small thorns on it and that fruit is eaten and the Cactus itself is used as feed for livestock and is the cheapest source of fighting desertification

because of its ability to conserve water in very dry environment. In fact, it is a plant that grows in drought prone areas.

Hindi (Cactus) is a feed for all kinds of animals and it is now an exotic fruit that is sold for export to Europe and I learnt that in Europe, the Hindi fruit goes for about four Euros and because of this develop-

ment, Tunisia grows Cactus now not just for fighting desertification but also for export.

Cactus is also used for cosmetic making and for medicinal usage too so if Nigeria is able to plant it, they will enjoy the dual advantage of the Hindi.



Why policy on schools toilets is important to education

By Benjamin Auta

THE recent construction of 55 modern toilet facilities by the Lagos state government and the abolition of pit latrines in all its schools have been lauded by stakeholders in the sanitation sub sector.

The toilets which were constructed by the Lagos state Ministry of environment have five compartment each for females and males. They have wash hand basin, three water tap point, an electric generating plant and a borehole in all the schools they are located.

According to the spokesman of the Lagos state Ministry of Environment, Segun Ogundeji the "idea behind the new toilets is aimed at catching the pupil young and inculcating in them best sanitary habits."

He added that over 2000 bins and 500 pieces of school advocacy sorting bins had been provided to the schools adding that "the bins have been so made to have recep-

tacles for glass, paper and metals."

However most states of the federation lack the will power to construct even pit latrines in most of their schools even if they have a policy on water and sanitation which will make it possible for them to construct basic sanitary facilities for the students.

A field trip organized by the WaterAid early last year to some states in the South West of the federation reveals that girls enlistment into schools due to the presence of toilet facilities.

One of the elders of a village Mal Ibrahim Mohammed, a farmer in Abba Audu, in Ekiti state revealed that he only allowed his daughters to attend the local primary school when they were provided toilet facilities.

"We cannot let our daughters go to school because if they are pressed they cannot do it openly because we frown at open defecation as health practitioners have told of the dangers involved," he said.

He added that until an NGO with the help of the local govern-



DR. Sam Egwu

ment built a latrine very few people allow their daughters and even at time male children to school.

Also in Jigawa state in the northern part of the country, the same result was noticed as both female and male children enrolment into school improved by over 50% due to the provision of water and toilets in some communities.

Speaking with Daily Trust, on the matter Mr. Bisi Agberemi, a

specialist on water and sanitation with the UNICEF in Nigeria, said that "Each state has policy and guidelines for provision of sanitation facilities based on a lot of factors. Provisions of sanitation facilities in schools by states will depend on affordability and geological situation of the state. The most important factor is that sanitary facilities should be provided in schools."

He added that there are some national policies that deal with school sanitation which include the National Environmental Sanitation policy of Federal Ministry of Environment (approved); School Health Policy of Federal Ministry of Education (approved); National Water-Sanitation Policy (Draft from Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources).

He said that these policies provide guidelines on provision of sanitation facilities in schools and UNICEF provided necessary supports in developing the policies.

"The policies are there, the major problem is implementation

and enforcement of the policy provision. The states are expected to be mobilized to implement the policy which can also be adapted to suit local context of the states," he said.

Mr. Agberemi said that the Federal Ministry of Education with technical support from UNICEF has produced technical guide for construction of school sanitation and hygiene facilities as a way of standardizing the provision of school sanitation facilities.

"There are quite a lot of designs in the technical guide depending on which one is suitable for a particular area. The most prominent design for school sanitation especially for rural areas is Multi-compartment Ventilated Improved Pit (V.I.P) latrine. A minimum package being promoted in schools comprises latrine/toilet, urinal and hand washing," he added.

He concluded by advocating for the harmonization of all existing sanitation policies for a more effective and coordinated sanitation delivery in the country.

CITY NEWS



HOTLINES: 0803-3493-462 & 0703-8927-513

email: citynews@dailytrust.com

Gwagwalada council employs 138 medical workers

By Abubakar Sadiq Isah

THE Secretary of Gwagwalada Area Council, Alhaji Usman Yahaya, over the weekend announced that about 138 medical workers have so far been employed since the assumption of the present administration of Alhaji Zakari Angulu Dobi.

According to him, the newly employed health personnel who include medical doctors, labo-

ratory technicians, nurses and community health officers were posted to various health centres in the council.

He revealed that all the 138 health workers including the medical doctors' wages are being paid directly from the council's coffer since they were employed over seven months ago.

The council's scribe said that the council has been able to record 87 percent success in

the area of health care service delivery to its residents since the assumption of the present administration in office two years ago.

He said from time to time, the council invites medical doctors to offer free medical treatment such as surgeries, eye treatments and anti-natal care for pregnant women across all the rural communities in the council in order to alleviate their sufferings.

He said drugs and hospi-

tal equipment have been provided in eight newly constructed health centres by the present administration, saying the council has now embarked on free treatment of malaria as well as free distribution of insecticide treated nets in order to reduce cases of malaria.

He added that 17 health centres which cut across 10 wards of the council have also been renovated with modern facilities.

Kubwa PHCN staff mourn colleague

By Tina A. Hassan

ONE week after losing one of their staff to electrocution, workers of Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) are still mourning.

The elder brother of the deceased, Mr. Aligbali Davis told City News that the real name of his 37-year-old brother, who was electrocuted is Tiemiebi Taiye Aligbali and not Roman Abuza.

Mr Davis accused the company of not following the required safety measures before directing the deceased to climb up the high tension electric pole, which led to his death.

He added that PHCN has not shown any sign of remorse over the incidence, which left late Tiemiebi's young wife a widow and his daughter fatherless.

The PHCN's public relations officer was not in the office when our reporter called but a worker in the office said PHCN headquarter is aware of the situation and three senior officers in the unit have already been issued with queries.

PIX: ABUBAKAR SADIQ ISAH



TIV cultural group entertaining guests in Gwagwalada ...Saturday.



THE Ona of Abaji Alhaji Adamu Baba Yunusa (right) with the FCT Agric Secretary Alhaji Mustapha Bala Batsari, during an event in Gwagwalada ...recently.

Man accused of threatening woman

By Lami Sadiq

THE police Friday arraigned a 28-year-old man, Adamu Mohammed, before an Abuja Upper Area Court for allegedly threatening to kill one Ngozi Aguegbo

Prosecutor Mohammed Garba told the court that on February 12, 2010, the accused who resides at number 15, David Bamigboye Street, National Assembly quarters, threatened to kill the complainant for reporting him to her employer for being rude to her.

He said when the accused drove the complainant along Garki, she asked him to turn down his car radio so that she could answer a phone call but the accused turned

it down reluctantly in annoyance, adding that when the complainant reported the accused to her employer, he threatened to kill her.

The prosecutor further told the court that during investigations, the accused confessed to have committed the offence, saying the one count charge is punishable under Section 397 of the Penal Code Law.

When the charge was read to the accused, he pleaded not guilty and requested for bail.

Judge Umar Kagarko granted him bail in the sum of N20,000 with a surety in like sum, who must live within the court's jurisdiction and adjourned the case to March 12 for hearing.

Three drivers jailed for causing obstruction

By Hussein Yahaya & Ibraheem A. Fatai

AN Abuja magistrate court Friday sentenced three commercial drivers to two weeks imprisonment for causing obstructions on the highway with their vehicles.

Ikenna Sylva, Fatumbi Samuel and Hafis Ademola were all arrested at Lugbe junction, along Airport road, Abuja.

Police prosecutor, Jeremiah Elijah had earlier told the court that on February 18, 2010, a team of policemen led by one John Odobai, an assistant superintendent, arrested the accused persons where they were searching for passengers.

"The accused persons were arrested by Lugbe junction for causing obstruction on the highway by parking their vehicles along the junction searching for passengers," the prosecutor said.

He also stated that the offences the accused persons committed are punishable under Sections 39 (3) and CAP 548 of the Road Traffic Act.

When the charges were read to them, they pleaded guilty, admitting that they actually caused traffic obstruction with their vehicles and pleaded for leniency.

Based on their plea, the prosecutor asked for summary trial in line with the provision of Section 157 of the Criminal Procedure Code and Magistrate Emmanuel Iyanna sentenced each of them to two weeks imprisonment or to pay N5,000 as fine.

He also ruled that the accused persons and their vehicles be taken to the office of the Federal Road Safety Commission where they will receive three-day traffic education on the need to obey highway codes.

Court strikes out case against Neliaku

By Abubakar Yakubu

AN FCT High Court presided over by Justice Uthman Angulu yesterday struck out without cost a civil case instituted by Crown Realities Plc against Ike Neliaku and five others over a land purchased for N300 million by the former that turned out to be a subject of litigation.

In the ruling, Justice Angulu held that the main exhibit presented before the court by Crown Realities is exhibit A2 (i.e a court judgement in favour of another person that states he is the actual owner of the land that was sold

to Crown Realities by a company Neliaku is a director in.

The judge held that there is no nexus between the exhibit and Plot 1647, Cadastral Zone, A03, Garki 2, Abuja.

Justice Angulu, who agreed that the contract of sale between the parties is a valid one, however said the document cannot be regarded as relevant for the determination of the case, adding that the court cannot enforce clause 2c of the contract, where the sellers had agreed to refund or indemnify the purchasers to the tune of the price paid for the property, including other reasonable as well as legiti-

mate expenses incurred in respect of the deal.

By this judgement, the judge threw off an argument of the plaintiff's lawyer that the existence of an adverse claimant constitutes a defeat on the title of land sold to his client by the defendants.

After the ruling, comments of the defense counsel could not be sought because he was not present in court, but the plaintiff's lawyer, Sylvester Imhanobe said the judgement will be studied, adding that on the face of it, there are several appellable grounds.

"For example, absolute reliance on the judgement (FCT/

HC/CV/409/02) detracts from the plaintiff's cause of action, which is enforcement of breach of contract of sale and also, the judgement is merely to show that there is an adverse claimant to the property, despite uncontroverted evidence that there is an adverse claimant on the same land sold by the defendants to the plaintiff," he said.

Meanwhile our reporter gathered that the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) will today arraign Ike Neliaku, Miss Orji Uzoamaka, Mr Wale Arogundade and Ben Ifeanyi Okoye for allegedly obtain-

ing money by false pretence from Crown Realities Ltd.

Ike Neliaku in one of his statements to the EFCC stated that from the sum of N300 million paid to him by Crown Realities Ltd, he will refund the sum of N2 million, leaving a balance N298 million.

He said when the draft of N300 million was paid to him, he made a payment of about N6 million by cheque to Crown Realities upon their confirmation.

"This should be deducted from the said N298,000,000 leaving a balance of about N292 million, which will be paid over a period of 12 months," Neliaku stated.

PIC: ABUBAKAR SADIQ ISAH



FCT Minister of State Chief Chuka Odom (2nd right) during the flag-off of dry season farming at Paikon-Kore community in Gwagwalada ...last Thursday.

FCTA distributes fertilisers to farmers

By Nasir Imam

THE Federal Capital Territory Administration (FCTA) has commenced the distribution of about 12,540 metric tonnes of fertilizers to farmers in and around the territory.

The Minister of State for the FCT Chief Chuka Odom who made the disclosure on Thursday during the flag-off ceremony of the 2009/2010 dry season farming and sales of fertilizers/ water pumps, in Paiko-Kore, Gwagwalada, said farmers could access the products at 50 percent discount.

He said the FCT administration procured 12,540 metric tonnes of assorted fertilizer in 2009 of which part will be distributed to dry season farmers at 50 percent subsidy to increase their productive capacity.

He added that the FCTA has also placed order for additional 16,000 metric tonnes of fertilizer for the 2010 farming season.

The minister further stated that the FCT Administration has identified over 15 flood plains of about 50,000 hectares that have the potential of all-year round cultivation.

"This administration is strategizing to provide wash bores, tube wells, dykes and other irrigation machinery for effective exploitation of the flood plains in the production of fruits, vegetables and fisheries to feed the urban population," he disclosed.

According to Odom, more than 80 percent of the food produced in the country comes from the rural farmers who are faced with many obstacles ranging from lack of credit to that of non-availability of necessary agricultural inputs.

Abaji council comments on AC members attack

By Abubakar Yakubu

OFFICIALS of Abaji Area Council yesterday commented on the attack of members of the Action Congress (AC) at Agyana village Saturday.

The council's Press Secretary, Mallam Umar Salihu Kombo stated that on that Saturday, supporters of AC, who were on their way to Abaji for a rally, suddenly stopped at the frontage of the area council chairman's residence at Agyana and began to sweep the place with their brooms, chanting that the chairman is a liar and will be disgraced out of his seat in the next coming elections.

He said supporters of the chairman later formed themselves into a group and asked the AC members, including councillor aspirants from Alu Mamagi and Yabwards to stop insulting the council's chairman, which later degenerated into problem.

The press secretary said the council Chairman, Alhaji Yahaya Musa Mohammed later came out of his house to express his surprise at the action of the AC members in front of his house in the village.

He said the chairman stated that the AC chairmanship aspirant for the council normally passes by his house without

insulting him and wondered why his members acted rudely.

Mallam Kombo said the matter has been reported to the divisional police officer of Abaji for proper investigation.

Also reacting, the council's Chairman, Alhaji Mohammed, who described himself as a peace loving person, lamented that people coming to his house for visits were attacked on that Saturday.

He said the police recently arrested the occupants of a Gulf car and two motorcycles that were caught removing his posters, adding that the vehicle as well as cycles are impounded in the police station.

Foundation adopts 10 orphans

By Nasir Imam

THE activities of Faith Work Ministry, an orphanage received a boost last week, as Help Line Foundation, a Non Governmental Organization based in Abuja adopted ten of its children with a pledge to take care of their school fees and other needs.

Speaking to our reporter in her office, the President of Help Line Foundation, Mrs. Jumai Ahmadu said the scholarship covers from primary to tertiary levels of education.

She commended efforts made by Faith Work Ministry towards the up keep of the children in the home; stressing that such effort should be supported and encouraged by both public and private sectors.

According to her, "I was

impressed when we got to Kaduna to adopt these children and I discover that Nigerians are ready to support the needy if genuinely in need.

While commenting on the challenges faced by the foundation, Mrs. Ahmadu listed awareness to access their website in order to see the works they are doing and the seemingly lack of trust Nigerians have on foundations as examples.

She revealed that friends and family members are of tremendous assistance in the realisation of the aims and objectives of the foundation.

According to her, the objectives of Help Line Foundation include providing support and assistance to children, orphans and vulnerable women in the society, so that they live an independent as well as productive life.

Man arraigned over forgery

By Romoke W. Ahmad

A suspected fraudster was recently arraigned before an Abuja magistrate court over criminal trespass, forgery and theft.

The man, Adaramola Olufunmilola was accused of withdrawing the sum of N2 million from the bank account of one Mrs. Chizoba Ibeto on January 29, 2010.

Prosecutor Philips Akogu told the court that the complainant reported to the police that she received a credit alert text message from UBA Asokoro branch that the sum of two million naira has been debited from her account by the accused person from Lagos, which she immediately responded to.

"The complainant said she went to the bank immediately to complain to the management that she didn't issue cheque to anybody to withdraw money from her account and as a result of her

complaint the accused was immediately arrested and brought to the police station," the prosecutor said.

"During police investigation, it was discovered that the accused criminally had common intentions with one Mr. Olanrewaju, a banker with United Bank for Africa (UBA) Onikpan branch Lagos, Joshua, a computer analyst at Mushin in Lagos and Madam Grace to commit the crime," the prosecutor stated.

He also explained that it was proven at the police station that Olanrewaju, who is an insider in the bank relayed all information about the complainant's account to Joshua the computer analyst, who forged and printed out everything about Chizoba's account, while Madam Grace acted as the account holder who gave approval for the payment.

"It was equally discovered that Olanrewaju, Joshua, Madam Grace (who are now at large) criminally conspired with

Adaramola to forge a cheque bearing Chizoba's name and signature, which he presented at the same UBA, cashed the money before he was arrested," the prosecutor added.

When the charges were read to the accused, he pleaded not guilty and Chief Magistrate Ahmed Shuaib granted him bail in the sum of N500,000 with one surety, who must not be less than a level 10 officer in the civil service.

In another case, a 25-year old sales girl, Aisha Abdul was arraigned recently for allegedly defaming the character of one Mrs Theresa Oluka on February 14.

When the charge was read in court, the accused denied it.

Chief Magistrate Ahmed Shuaib granted the accused bail in like sum of N10,000 with one surety, who must reside within the court's jurisdiction.

The case was adjourned to March 18 for further hearing.

Group raises funds for HIV campaign

By Romoke W. Ahmad

AN Abuja based Non Governmental Organisation (NGO), Silver Lining Initiative yesterday organized a fund raising programme for free HIV voluntary counselling and testing in FCT.

The NGO's Chief Executive Officer, Hauwa Abass said the event is organized in order to raise funds and to also create awareness on the forth coming free HIV voluntary and testing exercise which is to take place at Dutsen-Alhaji Friday.

"As you can see we are washing people's car and in a way getting money from them at the end of the day which will go a long way in contributing to what we require for our upcoming programme," she added.

The chief executive said the organisation is aimed at helping people especially orphanages, less priviledges and people who cannot afford HIV tests in rural areas.

She also explained that in cases where people test positive to HIV/AIDS, the NGO intends to help such people in managing their diseases.

Earlier one of the NGO's board members, Bukola Kamson, said the car wash fundraiser is one of the very many programmes lined up by the organisation to raise funds for the benefit of the people living with HIV and to execute their programmes for free testing and counselling.



YAKUBU GOWON CENTRE FOR NATIONAL UNITY AND INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS - EXTERNAL AUDIT SERVICES

A. BACKGROUND

The Yakubu Gowon Centre for National Unity and International Cooperation was established in 1992 as a private, non-profit making, non-partisan, non-governmental organization (NGO). The organization was established to further the cause of Nigerian Unity, A strong and united Nigeria, free of diseases and poverty, where every citizen has an opportunity for self expression and the realization of their full potentials.

B. SCOPE OF SERVICES REQUIRED

YGC requires the services of an External Auditor to carry out the annual audit of its financial statements. Interested firms are invited to submit a written proposal and provide information indicating their professional capabilities and experience in providing these services.

The objectives for the service requirement include:

- Auditing of YGC's annual financial statements.
- Reporting to the Board an opinion on whether or not the financial statements fairly present YGC's financial position and results of operations in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.
- Providing as part of the annual audit, advice and recommendations on YGC's management and internal control procedures.
- Responding to requirements and duties of the auditors as statutorily required.

C. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Evaluation of bids will be based on the following criteria:

Capacity and experience of the audit team	35%
Ability to meet engagement requirements	10%
Quality of Proposal	10%
Pricing	30%
Ownership, management and staff development	15%

D. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Sealed bids marked "Request for Proposal for External Audit Services" should be addressed to:
The Deputy Chief Executive
Yakubu Gowon Centre
45-Yakubu Gowon Crescent
Asokoro Abuja FCT
Nigeria

The deadline for submission is two weeks from the date of publication.



THE FEDERAL POLYTECHNIC, BIDA

OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR
P.M.B 55, BIDA, NIGER STATE

PRE-QUALIFICATION TO TENDER FOR WORKS/SERVICES TO BE CARRIED OUT FOR ETF 2007/2008 INTERVENTION PROJECTS

1.0 The Federal Polytechnic, Bida is inviting Instrumentation Engineers Contractors/Suppliers of equipment to carryout works/services under the ETF 2007/2008 intervention projects.

The projects involve the construction of academic staff office complex, furnishing of the office complex, procurement of workshop and laboratory equipments and installation of ICT facilities in the Polytechnic for the ETF 2007/2008 intervention projects.

Categories of works/services are listed below:

- 1.1 Construction of Academic Staff Office Complex
- 1.2 Procurement of Office Furniture for the Complex
- 1.3 Procurement and Installation of Accreditation Equipment for Science Laboratories and Engineering Departments.
- 1.4 Procurement and Installation of Computers and ICT facilities in the Department of Survey and Geo-Informatics.

2.0 PRE-QUALIFICATION EXERCISE

Pre-qualification to obtain tender documents are hereby invited from capable registered and competent building/civil water/electrical engineering contractors, reputable and competent equipment suppliers and instrumentation engineers, manufacturers to apply for pre-qualification in the Polytechnic.

The profile to be submitted should include:

- a. Evidence of Registration with Corporate Affairs Commission by inclusion of Certificate of Incorporation and Article of Association.
- b. Tax clearance for last 3 years
- c. Detailed company profile
- d. Evidence of previous experience in similar projects and certificate of completion and letter of award from the awarding agency or agencies.
- e. Evidence of financial capability/reference from a reputable bank
- f. Evidence of registration by partnership by inclusion of certificates
- g. List of equipment, indicating whether owned, hired or leased
- h. VAT registration certificates and evidence of remittances

Note: Original copies of documents may be produced for sighting during the opening ceremony.

3.0 SUBMISSION OF PREQUALIFICATION DOCUMENTS

Prequalification should be enclosed in sealed envelopes and marked 'Prequalification' for (as the case may be).

This is to be addressed to the Registrar, the Federal Polytechnic, P.M.B. 55, Bida and be deposited in the Registrar's Office within the next three weeks to the date of this publication i.e. 8th March, 2010.

4.0 SCOPE OF WORK

- 4.1 Construction of Office Complex for Lecturers, which involves construction of twenty one (21) office spaces for various categories of Lecturers and external works of the building.
- 4.2 Procurement of Furniture for the Office Complex. These involve the 1.6m tables and visitor's chair, the 5ft tables and visitor's chairs with other compliments for the lecturers.
- 4.3 Procurement and Installation of accreditation equipments in various Science Laboratories and Workshop equipment in Engineering Departments.
- 4.4 Procurement and Installation of Computers and ICT facilities in the Department of Survey and Geo-Informatics.

Note: This is not an invitation to tender. Contractors/Suppliers will be prequalified based on the conditions stated in two (2) above. Only prequalified Contractors will be asked to purchase the tender documents. They will be required to collect the tender material and instructions on payment of prescribed fees, based on the projects they are bidding for with full instruction on the procedure from the Director, Physical Planning and Maintenance.

Chief Bisil Adeyemi
Registrar



Invitation for Bids (IFB)
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA



**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION
POST-BASIC (STEP-B) PROJECT**

FEDERAL MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

IDA CREDIT No. 4304-UNI

Date of Issuance: Tuesday 23rd February, 2010

**PROCUREMENT AND INSTALLATION
OF ICT AND PORTAL EQUIPMENT**

(IFB NO: STEP-B/FMST/GDS/NCB/1/2010)

- This Invitation for Bids follows the General Procurement Notice for this Project that appeared in Development Business, issue no. 591 of 2nd July, 2007.
- The Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has received a credit from the International Development Association toward the cost of Science and Technology Education Post Basic Project, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payments under the Contract for the Procurement and Installation of ICT and Portal Equipment (IFB NO: FMST/GDS/NCB/1/10)
- The Federal Ministry of Science and Technology, Abuja, Science and Technology Education Post-Basic Project. (STEP-B Project) Shehu Shagari Way, FCT, now invites sealed bids from eligible and qualified bidders for the Procurement of the following:

S/NO	LOT NO	DESCRIPTION	BID SECURITY	QTY	BID VALIDITY	DELIVERY PERIOD	LOCATION
1		Wide Area Network	At least 2.5% Of bid Price	Various	120 Days	90 Days max	FMST, Federal Secretariat Complex, Phase 1, First Floor, Room 3.5, Shehu Shagari Way, Abuja, Nigeria.
2	2	Web Portal & Collaborative Systems	At least 2.5% Of bid Price	Various	90 Days	90 Days max	FMST, Federal Secretariat Complex, Phase 1, First Floor, Room 3.5, Shehu Shagari Way, Abuja, Nigeria.

- Bidding will be conducted through the **National Competitive Bidding (NCB)**, a procedure specified in the World Bank's Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits, and is open to all bidders from Eligible Source Countries as defined in the Guidelines.
- Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from Project Secretariat, **Federal Ministry of Science and Technology, STEP-B** at the address below and inspect the Bidding Documents from 8:00am to 4:00pm Mondays to Friday excluding public holidays.
- Qualifications requirements include:
 - Evidence of previous supply (sale) of similar Equipment proposed for the last 5 years.
 - Audited Financial Statements for the last 3 years to demonstrate the financial capability of the Bidder in terms of Profitability and adequate working capital.
 - A margin of preference for eligible national contractors **shall not be applied**. Additional details are provided in the Bidding Documents.
- A complete set of Bidding Documents in **English** may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written Application to the address below and upon payment of a non refundable fee of N10,000.00 (Ten Thousand Naira) only. The method of payment will be Bank Draft in favor of STEP-B PROJECT: **Federal Ministry of Science and Technology, Abuja STEP-B** or by cash. The Bidding Documents will be collected by the representative of the Bidder or by courier services on request.
- Bids must be delivered to the address below at or before **2:00 pm on Tuesday 23rd March, 2010**. Electronic bidding will not be permitted. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders or bidders' representatives, who choose to attend in person at the address below at **2:00pm on Tuesday 23rd March, 2010**. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security of 2.5% of bid price in a freely convertible currency or bank draft from a reputable Nigeria commercial bank.
- The address referred to above is:

The Project Manager,
Federal Ministry of Science and Technology,
STEP-B Project Office
Federal Secretariat Complex,
Phase I, First floor, Room 3.5,
Alhaji Shehu Shagari Way, Abuja, Nigeria.
Project Team Tel No: 0803 437 8988, 0705 561 7111, 0703413 6888, 08055322488.
Email: fmst_stepb@yahoo.com

Signed
MANAGEMENT

**USMANU DANFODIYO UNIVERSITY, SOKOTO
(OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR)**



REF: UDUS/R/ACA/44/1 DATE: 15TH FEBRUARY, 2010

**PUBLIC
ANNOUNCEMENT**

THIS IS TO ANNOUNCE THAT REGISTRATION OF NEWLY ADMITTED CANDIDATES INTO THE USMANU DANFODIYO UNIVERSITY, SOKOTO FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES FOR THE 2009/2010 ACADEMIC SESSION WILL COMMENCE ON 1ST MARCH, 2010 AND WILL CLOSE ON 13TH MARCH, 2010.

ALL SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES ARE HEREBY ADVISED TO CHECK FOR THEIR NAMES ON THE ADMISSION LISTS ALREADY ON DISPLAY AT THE UNIVERSITY.

ALL RETURNING (OLD) STUDENTS, UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE ARE ALSO HEREBY BEING NOTIFIED THAT THE UNIVERSITY WILL RE-OPEN FOR THE 2009/2010 ACADEMIC SESSION ON 15TH MARCH, 2010 AND REGISTRATION STARTS IMMEDIATELY ON THE SAME DATE.

(SIGNED)
U. U. BUNZA
REGISTRAR

HEALTH REPORT

NGO donates anti-shock garments for training

By Ruby Rabi

CONCERNED about the high number of women who still die during child birth from excessive bleeding, a non-governmental organization, Pathfinder International, has donated 88 anti-shock garments to the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria to reduce the menace.

The Programme Manager of the organisation, Dr Farouk Jega who spoke about the gesture to Daily Trust said that the anti-shock garment when used in some of the model hospitals, helps in effectively reducing the number of women who bleed to death.

His words, 'we have donated our training materials and

anti-shock garments and videos to the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria with the hope that they will put these interventions as part of their pre-service training for nurses and midwives in the country. At least when they do this, any nurse trained in Nigeria will be vast in the use of the anti-shock garment and other interventions which will help in assisting the women speedily.'

According to him, if the council includes the use of anti-shock garment in its curriculum, then one of the MDGs concerning the lives of women will be achieved.

Farouk explained that the 88 garments are being donated to each of the 88 schools of midwifery in the country to be used for training and demonstration purposes only.

The programme manager revealed that the programme, called continuum of care, addresses post-partum hemorrhage in Nigeria.

Post partum hemorrhage is a major killer of women as a result of complication of pregnancy and child birth. It simply means excessive bleeding following child birth and it is one of the commonest causes of maternal deaths, contributing about 30% of the maternal mortality in the country.

Jega explained that the anti-shock garments, when used on a woman who has lost a lot of blood after delivery, or even applied on a woman who is unconscious, such woman is likely to regain consciousness within three to five minutes.

400,000 African children born with HIV annually -UNAID

By Ruby Rabi

THE Executive Director of the Joint United Nations Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS) Michel Sidibe has disclosed that 400 thousand children in Africa are born with the HIV virus every year.

Sidibe made the disclosure during a high powered meeting with the Minister of Health Professor Babatunde Osotimehin; Minister of State for Health Dr Aliyu Idi-Hung; U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator for the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), Ambassador Eric Goosby; Director General of the National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA), Professor John Idoko, and US ambassador to Nigeria Robyn Sanders.

Sidibe further disclosed that 15 percent of HIV positive children born on the continent die before their first birthday due to poverty, ignorance and limited access to treatment. He described the situation as unacceptable especially when developed countries "record zero percent of children born with HIV".

He therefore called on Nigeria and other African countries to adopt the Universal Access approach in implementing strategies to manage HIV/AIDS.

Coordinator for PEPFAR, Ambassador Goosby assured in his remarks that the global economic meltdown will not affect its donations to Nigeria and other countries.



FROM left: Former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, and religious Leaders hold a mosquito net with a woman lying inside to demonstrate the use of the net against malaria during a function in Kuje, Abuja.

Do you feel unwell 'somehow'? Beware of sudden death

By Onimisi Alao

"HE couldn't have died, I saw him only last night," is the sort of shocked comment you hear from people who have difficulty in believing that someone they were with just hours previously has died.

It often turns out to be true. Death is something no one jokes with. Stories about death are not told lightly. When false stories about death move round in the few times that they do, it is frequently because the subject is in the public domain and the media itches to report something, or because the newsmaker has been known to be ill.

When news broke last Thursday that one apparently robust Edward Badmus slumped and died in Abuja's Zuba, his close friend Kunle was sure it couldn't be his Edward.

"Edward should be on his way out towards Abaji by now if he is not already there," Kunle said. "He left my office not more than three to four hours ago. He said he wanted to see a client of his in Zuba and then take a vehicle from there to Abaji where he said he had an appointment to keep."

"But he is dead," the news bearer repeated on phone to Kunle. "He fell down here in Zuba and died almost immediately. We got your number as one of the last persons he spoke with on his cell phone. It is good that you are actually near. You need to come over and move him."

Unknown to Kunle, Edward had not gone beyond Zuba where he had headed after leaving him hours earlier. He had slumped in Zuba after making his contact there and went to the main road for a vehicle to Abaji. He slumped

while waiting and died before anyone could do anything to save him.

A story published by Daily Trust last Friday to the effect that the rate of sudden death among Nigerians 'is increasing,' brought the manner of Edward's death into sharp relief in the mind of readers who knew about him.

In the story, Daily Trust quoted the Medical Director of the National Orthopaedic Hospital Dala, Kano, Dr. Kabir Abubakar as saying that rising cases of sudden death is a result of people's inability to manage circumstances leading to such form of death.

Sudden death, doctors would say, is most often caused by heart disease. Wikipedia explains: "When blood vessels narrow, the heart muscle can become irritated because of lack of blood supply. In heart attack (acute myocardial infarction), a blood vessel becomes completely blocked by a blood clot, and there is enough irritability of the muscle to cause ventricular fibrillation. In fact, the reason many people with chest pain are admitted to the hospital is to monitor their heart rate and rhythm for signs that might lead to ventricular fibrillation. Sudden death may also be the first presentation of heart disease."

In the light of the above, sudden death or sudden cardiac death refers to natural death from cardiac causes, heralded by abrupt loss of consciousness within a short time of the onset of acute symptoms.

Other forms of sudden death may be non-cardiac in origin, examples of which include respiratory arrest, frequently due to airway obstruction, which may be seen in

cases of choking. Specialists make a distinction between sudden cardiac death and the related term cardiac arrest, which refers to cessation of cardiac pump function which may be reversible.

Explanation of causes of sudden death can be confusing to nonmedical professionals. But it can be simply put that sudden death is often the result of longstanding raised high blood pressure 'which has caused secondary damage to the wall of the main pumping chamber of the heart, the left ventricle.'

What appears always to make sudden death so mysterious is the absence of symptoms just before it occurs.

"These patients may be going about their daily business and suddenly collapse without the typical features of myocardial infarction such as chest pain and shortness of breath," a source explains, but adds, "This being said, there are a number of cases in which patients feel the effect of myocardial ischaemia. Myocardial ischaemia is associated with referred pain, classically to the front of the chest, the left arm and the jaw. Patients may feel generally unwell, with nausea, dizziness and vomiting. These symptoms may precede the death for any length of time between a few minutes and several hours."

The ways to prevent sudden deaths can appear hazy when dressed in medical jargons, as they often are. The easiest approach appears to be regular appointments with your doctor, especially if you have any feeling that all is not well with your body.

Inside Politics

Supporters to determine my stay in ANPP, says Albishir

From Hamza Idris, Damaturu

SENATOR Usman Albishir who recently lost a bid to unseat Governor Ibrahim Gaidam of Yobe State yesterday declared that his supporters would determine whether he would remain in the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) or not.

Albishir, who spoke to our correspondent on phone yesterday, said many political parties including the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) have approached him to join them. He said he had been consulting with the people of his constituency on the best option to take.

Meanwhile, there are speculations that the PDP had shortly after the Supreme Court judgement which favoured Governor Gaidam made a mouth watering offer to Albishir in the event that he decides to dump the ANPP.

The ANPP chairman

in Yobe State Alhaji Sani Inuwa Nguru has also declared that the ruling party's doors are wide open for everybody including Senator Albishir and his supporters.

After about three years of litigation, the Supreme Court last Friday quashed an appeal over the governorship seat of Yobe State involving different suits instituted by Senator Albishir against the election of the late Mamman Ali, who was succeeded by his deputy, Alhaji Ibrahim Gaidam.

The ANPP and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) had urged the apex court to suspend the judgement of the Court of Appeal in Jos, Plateau State, which granted Albishir an "out of time" opportunity to file a case over his alleged wrongful substitution with late Mamman Ali before the 2007 elections.

Albishir is seen as a



SENATOR Usman Albishir

grass-root politician with large followership in Yobe State and whose presence in

the ANPP will play a vital role in the success of the party in future elections.

INEC staffs write exams today

By Abbas Jimoh



PROF. Maurice Iwu

STAFFS of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) on grade level 6 and 16 will write promotion examination in the 36 states of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory today.

Majority of the officers in the director cadre were those who missed the 2008 promotion examination due to lack of vacancy up the ladder. Those at the top were said to have failed to exit the service hence there was no space to accommodate those seeking to be promoted.

This development had been a recurring decimal in both the ministries and agencies until the Head of Civil Service of the Federation, Mr

Stephen Oronsaye, brought the New Tenure System Reform that made it mandatory for permanent secretaries and directors that had served their terms to exit the service.

Before President Umaru Yar'adua endorsed the reform last year, many top civil servants almost called for the head of Oronsaye, who, however, was seen as a messiah by younger civil servants carving for growth in the service. Some of them had remained stagnant for so many years due to lack of vacancy at the top.

Some permanent secretaries in the past had served more than 12 years in the same capacity, but with this reform, no one can serve more than the required 8 years stipulated by the new rule.

APGA scribe declares for Zamfara guber race

THE National Secretary of All Progressive Grand Alliance (APGA), Alhaji Sani Shinkafi, has declared his intention to run for the 2011 governorship election in Zamfara.

Shinkafi told said at a briefing in Gusau on yesterday that since the 2007 governorship polls, his supporters had been resolute and solidly committed to ensuring APGA's victory in 2011 election.

"I am mobilising all APGA supporters to rally round me and ensure our victory in 2011 general elections as a panacea for the much-desired development of Zam-

fara," he said.

He dismissed the insinuation by rival parties that the APGA was popular only in the eastern part of the country.

"There is doubt that among all the political parties in the country, our party, APGA, has the most articulate and focused manifesto and programme," stressing that his priority, if elected, would be to overhaul the machinery of governance and strengthen the civil service.

Shinkafi added that other key areas he would focus were education and agriculture to fast track development needs of the people. (NAN)

INEC absolves self from missing names in FCT voters' register

By Abdulmutallib A. Abubakar

THE Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) yesterday absolved itself from blame concerning voters who claim that their names had been omitted in the preliminary voters' register.

The head of Public Relations of the commission in the FCT Okezie Nwankwo told *Daily Trust* that the commission had given enough time as required by the constitution for those whose names were omitted to lay their complaints in order to get any error corrected. Now the time stipulated for such complaints has expired, he said.

INEC, according to the spokesman had displayed the voters lists in designated locations in

the six FCT Area councils 120 days to the election as required by the law guiding election process, adding that those who have not seen their names or whose details are wrongly printed, were expected to report to the commission within ten days, which ended last week.

Nwankwo, however, said those who are in possession of temporary voter cards but their names did not appear in the preliminary lists would be allowed to vote during April 14, 2010 election. He assured that the commission will commence another voter registration against 2011 general election immediately after the council polls.

He confirmed that 16 political parties are taking part in the FCT council election.

Sokoto guber tussle: Groups appeal for justice

By Abbas Jimoh

THE 'Sakkwato State Elders Forum' and the Sakkwatawa Youth Vanguard have appealed to the Chief Justice of the Federation, Judicial Service Commission and Supreme Court of Nigeria to ensure that justice prevails as the Court of Appeal, Sokoto Division, delivers judgment on the governorship tussle between Governor Aliyu Magatakarda Wamakko and his challenger Alhaji Muhammadu Maigari Dingyadi of the Democratic Peoples Party (DPP).

Spokesman of the two groups Alhaji Sanusi Umar Sifawa said yesterday in a statement in Abuja that the judgment which comes up today is a litmus test for democracy and rule of law.

The statement also advised that nothing should be done to interfere with the already fixed date of judgment as announced by the Court of Appeal last Friday.

The groups also condemned the recent attacks on some prominent politicians, describing the actions as political immaturity.

2011 Elections: Sokoto PDP boss decries current campaigns

THE Sokoto State Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) chairman, Alhaji Tukur Wazirin-Bodinga, has described the current political campaigns in the state towards the 2011 general elections as 'child's play'.

His comments were in reaction to the increased political activities in the state capital with posters of aspirants adorning the streets of the state capital.

"All those moves are child's play as the national secretariat of the party is yet to release any guidelines for such. As of today, we have not sold any forms to any aspirant and nobody is allowed to do any open

'campaigns for any positions,' Bodinga said.

However, both incumbent members of the National Assembly from the state and those who want to upstage them have begun campaigns.

Meanwhile, a Special Adviser to Governor Aliyu Wamakko on Pilgrim Affairs, Alhaji Abdullahi Maigwandu, has openly expressed his interest.

Maigwandu is aspiring to wrestle the Sokoto North/Sokoto South Federal Constituency seat under the PDP from the incumbent, Rep. Umar Bature, the Chairman, House Committee on Foreign Affairs (NAN)

Inside Politics

Iwu recommends Trust Fund for women in Politics

By Akor Ojoma

CHAIRMAN of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) Professor Maurice Iwu has advised women to create a Trust Fund to help their quest for better participation in politics and governance in the country.

He gave the advice recently during a courtesy call on him by the Gender and Affirmative Action Based Project (GAA) in Abuja.

The INEC Chairman said the trust fund will not only encourage but also help women to contest for elections, especially those who are financially incapacitated. He said women should not just wait for legislation but employ concerted practical approaches such as the trust fund.

Professor Iwu assured the women that the commission will do all within its power to ensure that they are given a level playing ground to contribute to the development of the country.

Earlier, Mrs Josephine Anenih, who spoke on behalf of GAA, appealed to the commission to support the establishment of the political party registration and regulatory commission (PPRRC) as recommended by the Electoral Reform Committee and also adopt quotas for women in INEC Board and PPRRC.

Mrs Ohakim counsels women politicians

From John Kennedy Uzoma, Owerri

FEMALE politicians have been admonished to uphold the dignity of womanhood, just as they have been charged to play politics devoid of bitterness.

Wife of Imo State Governor, Barr Chioma Ohakim, gave the advice when the Women Leaders of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) of the 27 local government areas led by the State Women Leader, Barr Ugochi Nnanna-Okoro, visited her at the Government house, Owerri, yesterday.

She urged them to exhibit peaceful conduct as they commenced their senatorial rally for the return of Governor Ikedi Ohakim by 2011 while assuring them of her support in promoting the ideals of PDP.

Traditional rulers will not impose Doma on PDP - Illu

ALHAJI Musa Illu Mohammed was commissioner in the immediate past administration of Nasarawa State and top shot of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in the state. He has been a close associate of Governor Aliyu Akwe Doma, but the politics of 2011 seems to have set them apart, especially with the stream of endorsements of the governor for second term, which Illu considers as undemocratic. He speaks to Daily Trust on the issues involved. Excerpts:

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

YOU are known to be close to Governor Aliyu Akwe Doma but you faulted his endorsement for second term by some Emirs through the Lafia Division Unity Forum (LADUF), a forum which you are a member. What is the problem?

Democracy is a system that recognizes due process. We have a party structure in the PDP. There are supporters and elders that form the consultative committee; we have party caucus as well as the executive committee. All these organs are recognized duly in the party's constitution. But nobody recognizes traditional rulers - they have no role in party politics, not even an advisory role because we have party elders who play that role. Elsewhere, traditional rulers don't meddle into politics; they don't try it even if they have interest. They stay far from it in order not to be seen as trying to influence certain decision of the people. But our traditional rulers, no matter how good they may be, are not part of the organ of the party with constitutional responsibility to present candidates for election. So if our traditional rulers in Nasarawa State, and most especially those of Nasarawa-South to take it upon themselves to endorse aspirants for electoral offices or assume the role of king makers in party politics, it is improper and goes to say that something is wrong. The problem is not me and other people who are finding fault in the decision of the Emirs to select candidates for political offices ahead of 2011, the problem is that traditional rulers have abandoned their responsibilities as custodians of our cultures and hijack party politics. That is the problem.

The Emir of Lafia, Alhaji Mustapha Agwai, had signed a communiqué on behalf of LADUF to declare a no

vacancy message in Lafia Government House. But as a member of the forum you are kicking against its decision. Have you made proper consultation before making your position known?

You may be surprised to know that I was one of the people who wrote the communiqué. Why did I do that? I am a stakeholder and an elder in the party. There was an invitation for all stakeholders, former and serving commissioners, and all illustrious people of Nasarawa-South to attend. It was my first time of attending it after I protested its controversial decision in 2006 to endorse Aliyu Akwe for governorship. I protested because I know it is not the responsibility of traditional rulers. By the way, why should they involve themselves in politics? They are supposed to be fathers to all of us, irrespective of which political party we belong. They are supposed to be umbrellas for all us. This time, I was interested in knowing what LADUF was going to discuss, so I attended to see whether I can endorse whatever decision the meeting would take.

And when the motion to endorse the governor for second term was adopted, I was selected to join those to write the communiqué. I partook in drafting the communiqué to show some respect, and because I did not want them to see me as a spoiler. But since then, I have not slept because I have conscience and my conscience has continued to judge me for taking part in a controversial process.

Come to think about it. I objected to this process in 2006 and I have not changed my position even now. But due to our traditional system of respect for elders, so to say, I obliged, but I found out that I was wrong.

To answer your question; that communiqué is not going to work because it is a process that will usurp the powers of the organs of the PDP in the state. It will impose a candidate on

the people and deny them the civic responsibility of deciding their leaders in 2011.

The communiqué based the endorsement on the performance of the governor so far. Are you against this assessment too?

You see, there is a mistake we keep making in Nasarawa State. Why are we clapping hands for the governor? We are doing this because the previous government which I served did nothing. So something, anything at all is better than nothing. But the fact is that Aliyu is not the best performer. He has done his part and everybody knows that. But if you compare Nasarawa to other states like Gombe, Bayelsa, Zamfara and others that were created at the same time with Nasarawa, you can then see that we are clapping hands for nothing. Except a few of them, these states don't earn more than we earn from the Federation Account. But if you assess our performance level today in comparative analysis, you can see that we are nowhere.

For making such endorsement, some observers have suggested that LADUF is PDP. What do you think this development portends for democracy in Nasarawa State?

That is the grave implication of that controversial decision, and that is why I am coming out against it. It can't stand, it's foul. My thinking is that this tendency is likely to kill democracy in Nasarawa State, and particularly Nasarawa-South Senatorial District. You can't do this in Nasarawa-North or Nasarawa-West. It is only here that all these Emirs and chiefs are having a field day. But some of us who are the sons of chiefs or Emirs have decided to reject the decision to show them that democracy is not played that way. I think Aliyu himself will not take this endorsement seriously.



ALHAJI Musa Illu

I say so because the governor knows that the Emir of Lafia wanted his son by every means necessary to become chairman of Lafia Local Government, but we stopped it. His son did not achieve his ambition. If the Emir cannot make his own son chairman of Lafia Local Government, how can he make Aliyu governor of Nasarawa State?

We understand you are convening a stakeholders' meeting to address this issue...

Yes, we are going to call a stakeholders' meeting of this zone to address this matter properly. This is not a matter for me alone, but for every PDP member. I have already spoken to officials of the party at all levels, and I am going to see the state chairman on the matter to tell him this is what we intend to do because he must take his position so that people do not stampede him into accepting what is not properly done.

To crown it all, I want to

advise traditional rulers to steer clear of partisan politics because they are going to drive themselves into disrepute. Some of us who are democrats are going to exercise our rights and insist on democratic processes, which may not be in tune with their responsibilities. They must respect their integrity and stay away from politics.

“ I protested because I know it is not the responsibility of traditional rulers. By the way, why should they involve themselves in politics? They are supposed to be fathers to all of us, irrespective of which political party we belong.

SPORT

Mourinho
banned for three
Serie A games

Page 56



NFF interview Metsu, Dujkovic for Eagles' job

By Orkula Shaagee

THE Nigeria Football Federation yesterday moved a step further in the effort to hire a Technical Adviser for the Super Eagles by interviewing two of the four expatriate coaches short-listed for the plum job.

Those interviewed yesterday at a lengthy session held at the Nicon Luxury Hotel in Abuja are Bruno Metsu and Ratimir Dujkovic, while Glenn Hoddle and Lars Lagerback will be interviewed tomorrow and Thursday respectively.

Metsu and Dujkovic left Nicon Luxury Hotel, venue for the interview moment after they were interviewed by NFF Technical Committee members and Director General in the National Sports Commission Patrick Ekeji without having a word with reporters.

Speaking to reporters after the interview session, Ekeji said he was full of confidence any one chosen from the list of coaches interviewed will do a good job with the Nigerian team.

"All the coaches that have come for the interview are good enough to do the job. Given the right environment they will do what Nigerians expect", Ekeji stated.

NFF technical Committee Chairman Taiwo Ogunjobi rued their inability to get Guus Hiddink or Van Gaal for the job, saying "We tried to convince them but it was not possible because they have existing contract and we have no money to buy out the contract".

Ogunjobi added that after the last interview session on Thursday with Swedish Lars Lagerback, the committee will meet with the NFF Executive Committee on Friday when the new Technical Adviser will be announced.

"I know that many of you will be coming here to hear that a new Technical Adviser has been named for the Super Eagles, but after today's exercise we will make our recommendations to the NFF Executive Committee who will announce the coach."



FRENCH coach Bruno Metsu, left, and Serbian Ratimir Dujkovic, right, were interviewed yesterday by the NFF in Abuja.

New coach gets World Cup semi-final target

By Orkula Shaagee

THE new Technical Adviser to be engaged by the Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) has been given the target to take the country to the semi-final stage of the South Africa 2010 World Cup in June. Chairman of the NFF Tech-

anical Committee, Chief Taiwo Ogunjobi who revealed this at a joint media briefing with the National Sports Commission and the Presidential Task Force in Abuja yesterday explained that the country's target is to surpass its past World Cup performances. According to Ogunjobi, the

immediate target of the Federation is for the country to excel South Africa 2010 World Cup, after which other issues will be considered; adding that if the coach excels he would get contract extension.

"The coach is expected to at least play in the last four at the

World Cup. Our immediate target is short term and if the World Cup ends as expected, nobody will tell the coach to go", Ogunjobi stated.

The former NFA Secretary General, who assured that the coach will be given free hands to do his job, added that the coach

will be based in Nigeria and only be allowed to monitor players outside the country when necessary.

"The Technical Adviser will reside in Nigeria, but can be granted permission to go and monitor players outside the country", he added.

UniBen needs N2.1b for NUGA

From Vincent Egunyanga, Benin

THE authorities of the University of Benin said it will need over two billion naira [N2.1 billion] to host this year's Nigeria University Games [NUGA] in April.

The Vice Chancellor of the university of Benin Professor Osayuki Oshodin disclosed this in Benin at the weekend.

The Vice Chancellor said preparations for the competition is in top gear and that sporting facilities are getting deserved facelift in readiness for the games slated for April later this year.

He explained that the construction of a standard stadium is underway, a brand new swimming pool, laying of tartan tracks and the renovation of the indoor sports hall to be fully equipped with modern sports facilities are what the university is putting in place to ensure the successful hosting of the event.

The vice chancellor is a well known sports administrator, former President of NUGA from 2001-2005, within the period he led Nigerian university delegation to several international games.

Senegalese wins IBB Ladies Golf Open

By Ibraheem A. Fatai

A Senegalese, Mrs. Oumy, has emerged the overall winner of the 12th edition of the IBB Ladies Golf Open tournament which came to an end at the weekend.

SHE emerged the overall winner on the Best Gross and also the winner with the longest drive of 210 metres, while Mrs. D. Utabo from Benin Golf Club came second with a count back win over the third runner-up, Mrs. Valeran Manteau from Port Harcourt Golf Club.

The veteran prize went to a 71-year-old Korean, Mrs. Therese Mortensen, while the Day one best gross and Day two best gross prizes went to the lady captain, Mrs. Farida Wada and Mrs. Rose Danjuma respectively. Nearest to the Pin Day one and Pin Day two prizes went to Mrs. Faith Baya and Mrs. Grace Ihonvere respectively.

The junior category of the ladies golf open tournament which commenced last Friday with an impressive turn-out of 12 registered teams saw an Egyptian boy based in Abuja, Najid Suleiman, emerging the overall winner of the category, returning with 51 strokes over 9 holes and going home with a beautiful trophy as well as a golf bag.

The hotly contested championship which was sponsored by the Nigerian Tourism Development Corporation (NTDC) and Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), Julius Berger, among others, lasted for three days and brought together lady golfers from all over Nigeria and West Africa.



JOE Johnson of Atlanta Hawks, left, battles for the ball with Monta Ellis of Golden State Warriors, during an NBA game at Oracle Arena in Oakland, California, USA on Sunday

Ejiogu blunder costs Enyimba

GOALKEEPER Chijioko Ejiogu's calamitous mistake in first half stoppage time cost Enyimba the chance to return to the top of the Nigerian Premier League on Sunday.

Ejiogu allowed Bola Bello's speculative effort from 25 yards to slip out of his hands and creep into the net to give Kaduna United a 1-0 lead going into the break.

The goalkeeper looked to have the shot well covered as it came in, only for fans to look on in horror as the ball squirmed out of his hands and go agonisingly behind

the line.

There was even more drama in the second half, when Junior Osagie's shot came off the cross bar and bounced on the line. The 'goal' was given by the referee, although replays showed that the ball did not cross the line.

Kaduna United goalkeeper Pius Ibrahim was sent off after using abusive language on the referee and had to be restrained by team mates as he attempted to attack the match official.

Enyimba dominated most of the game but failed to find the back of the net, and the result

means that Kano Pillars, who handed down a 5-1 mauling to Ocean Boys, stayed top on goals difference.

In Minna, there was even more drama as Sharks lost 2-1 to Niger Tornadoes, picking up two red cards in the process.

Victor Ezeji gave Sharks the lead after 28 minutes, but Afolabi Abdullahi drew the hosts level on 50 minutes. Sharks' Kola Anubi and Musa Kundi were red-carded on 95 minutes and 100 minutes respectively. Eugene Salami scored the winner on 105 minutes, but Sharks disputed the

goal, claiming he pushed the ball in with his hands.

The game ended in confusion with fans invading the pitch and the referee escaping to the dressing room.

Elsewhere, Shooting Stars eased their relegation worries with a 2-1 win at Gateway. Dolphins beat Lobi stars 1-0 and Ranchers Bees damaged Heartland's title ambitions with a 1-0 win.

Wikki Tourists played out a 1-1 draw with Sunshine Stars, although the game was disrupted by fans.

Maidabba retains Niger wrestling title

From Lawan Danjuma Adamu, Kano

THE 31st edition of Niger Republic's Annual Traditional Wrestling tournament taking place in Zinder Province ended Sunday evening with defending champion Laminu Maidabba from Agadez Province clinching the highly-coveted sword trophy for the second time in succession.

The traditional wrestling contest commenced 10 days ago in Zinder the former capital of

Niger Republic, with 80 heavy-weight finalists, ten representing each of the country's 8 provinces.

Maidabba emerged victorious yesterday after trashing his opponent Mohammad Hannafi from the State of Tawa. The champion received cash award of CFA5 Million, a horse and a sword.

Similarly, Hannafi, who came second, was given CFA3 million, while the winners of third and fourth positions, Umaru Bidin-gau from Maradi and Tasi'u Ibra-

him from Diffa, went home with CFA1.7 million and CFA1 million respectively. This was the second time that Agadez and Tawa were squaring up in the championship grand finale, as they first clashed last year when Tawa lost the first position to Agadez.

Meanwhile, in the province category, the province of Tawa emerged the winner having recorded the highest number of winnings among the provinces and was followed by Maradi.

The champion received cash award of CFA5 Million, a horse and a sword

Ferrero triumphs back-to-back titles

JUAN Carlos Ferrero completed a perfect two-week tour of South America with a 5-7 6-4 6-3 victory over fellow Spaniard and top seed David Ferrer in the Buenos Aires Open.

Former world number one Ferrero, the second seed, had won the Brasil Open in Costa do Sauipe last weekend, having chosen the claycourt tournaments in South America as part of his bid to climb back up the rankings.

"This is an amazing feeling. When I left home I never imagined I'd have two weeks like these and beat such good players as David," said the 2003 French Open champion, who took his tally to 14 titles.

"It's not the most comfortable feeling to beat the best friend you have on the circuit."

The resurgent 30-year-old will return to the world's top 20 on Monday when updated rankings are issued.

The title remains in Spanish

Former world number one Ferrero, the second seed, had won the Brasil Open in Costa do Sauipe last weekend.

hands after Tommy Robredo's victory last year. It was the fourth Spanish win in 10 years after Carlos Moya was twice champion in 2003 and 2006.

Ferrero's victory is the more impressive because of the form his opponent had shown all week, culminating in a 6-1 6-1 semi-final rout of fifth-seeded compatriot Albert Montanes on Saturday - just hours after playing a quarter-final in the rain-interrupted tournament.

The supremely fit Ferrer broke Ferrero in the opening game and dominated the first set as his opponent attempted to find his more varied game.

Ferrer broke again in the 11th to take the set on his second set point when Ferrero netted after an hour of attritional tennis under a heavy sky that threatened more rain.

He also broke in the first game of the second set handed it straight back after volleying long with his rival at his mercy.

Some brilliant exchanges in the middle of the set provided some relief from the long, hard-hitting rallies, with Ferrer's net play bringing the Buenos Aires Lawn Tennis Club crowd to their feet.

But Ferrer netted a service return at 4-5 down to concede the second set then volleyed wide to concede a vital break in the eighth game of the third.

Ferrero needed just one match point to clinch victory when, having forced Ferrer wide to his left, he drove into the other corner.



Andy Murray of Britain grimaces during his ATP Dubai Tennis Championship first round match against Igor Kunitsyn of Russia in Dubai, UAE yesterday.

Li Na eyes No. 1 ranking

LI Na has her sights set on the women's top ranking, just weeks after becoming the first Chinese player ever to enter the top 10.

Li, in Kuala Lumpur for this week's \$250,000 Malaysian Open, said her main goal has always been the world No. 1 spot.

"Every player wants to be No. 1 in the world and it is no different with me. This is my goal and I need to work harder and be more

aggressive on the court and start believing more in myself," said Li, who turns 28 on Saturday.

Li earned the WTA's No. 10 ranking after reaching the Australian Open semifinals last month. She opens her Malaysian campaign as the No. 2 seed against Germany's Tatjana Malek on Tuesday.

Li said she has recovered from a back injury she suffered at the Dubai Open last week.

"I have been seeing the doctor and physiotherapists here in Kuala Lumpur and I feel fine now. These courts are great, and although I'm seeded second, I hope to win this tournament," she said.

Russia's Elena Dementieva, the Beijing Olympics gold medalist, is the top seed. She will look to continue with her winning form after successful title runs at Sydney in January and Paris this month.

Murray wins on comeback

BRITAIN'S Andy Murray beat Russia's Igor Kunitsyn 6-2 6-3 to win his first match since losing the Australian Open final to Roger Federer, in the opening round of the Dubai Open.

The third seed rose to second after Federer's withdrawal and was made to work hard at times, with the second game of the first set lasting a mammoth 25 minutes but ending in a break for Murray at the 10th time of asking.

That seemed to do it for the Scot, although he was forced to overcome break-point to win three consecutive points to hold serve and win the final set.

Murray was joined in the second round by promoted top seed Novak Djokovic, who almost blew a five-game lead in the second set but broke Spain's Guillermo Garcia-Lopez at 5-4 to win an error-strewn match 6-4 6-4.

Earlier in the day, Cypriot Marcos Baghdatis overcame food poisoning to beat France's eighth seed Gilles Simon 7-6(3) 6-4.

Portsmouth boss, Al-Fahim, quits

FORMER Portsmouth owner Sulaiman Al-Fahim resigned as non-executive chairman of the Premier League club yesterday.

Portsmouth spokesman Steve Double said the board had accepted Al-Fahim's resignation.

The Abu Dhabi businessman is one of four people to take over Portsmouth this season. The club is now deeply in debt and in danger of going out of business with 13 league games left in the season.

Al-Fahim said the 10 percent shareholding in the club he had retained would now be given to the Portsmouth Supporters' Trust.

Meanwhile, Portsmouth chief executive Peter Storrie is hopeful that new owners, reported to be a South African consortium, will be in place before the club returns to the High Court March 1 to defend a winding up order from the government's Revenue and Customs authority for unpaid tax.



AL Fahim

Howard shines as Magic overcome Cavs

THE Orlando Magic beat the Cleveland Cavaliers for the first time this season, winning 101-95.

Dwight Howard claimed 22 points and 16 rebounds as Orlando floored its fiercest Eastern Conference rival.

"I was just attacking the basket and trying to use my quickness against their big men," Howard said.

"We have to play inside out and continue to do that if we're going to beat this team. I'm not satisfied, but I'm happy with our progress."

LeBron James scored a game-high 33 points but was held to three in the final period as the Cavaliers (43-14) lost a third straight game for the first time this season.

Cleveland led 85-80 with less than six minutes left but the Magic (38-19) went on a 9-0 scoring burst to take the advantage.

Rashard Lewis clinched the win on a three-pointer with 20 seconds remaining.

Lewis had 15 points and the Magic also received big support in the fourth from Jameer Nelson (18) and Vince Carter (11) who had eight each in the pivotal period.

"We play well in the fourth quarter, it wasn't even about me," Nelson said. "The one thing I'm going to do is shoot the shots no matter how many I miss."

Walcott insists Arsenal still in title race

ARSENAL winger Theo Walcott believes that the Gunners can still win the Premier League this season after the weekend victory over Sunderland at the Emirates.

That game was only Walcott's fifth start of the campaign but he keen to see more action with the World Cup in South Africa draw ever nearer.

He also insists that anyone who has written off Arsene Wenger's team as title challengers may need to rethink that opinion soon.

“People tend to write us off. We stay in the background and do our own thing. We're just six points behind Chelsea. It's looking good.”

“People tend to write us off. We stay in the background and do our own thing,” the 20-year-old said, according to Sky Sports.

“We're just six points behind Chelsea. It's looking good.”

“It was frustrating in the early stages of the season with results not going our way, but it's coming together now.”

Walcott concedes that he is still trying to find his form and sharpness after his battles against injury this season, and knows that staying fit is crucial to his chances of making it into Fabio Capello's world Cup squad.

“I'm starting to get there now, it's just getting that final ball sorted,” he added.

“I'm not looking too far towards the World Cup at all to be honest - I'm just concentrating on Arsenal with all the big games ahead of us because I've not really featured much for my club this season.”

“I just need to stay fully fit and if I do hopefully I'll have a chance of getting on the plane.”



THEO Walcott



RONALDO dribbles his way through two defenders to score for his Brazilian side Corinthians at the Estadio do Pacaembu stadium in Sao Paulo, Brazil. He announced yesterday that he would retire from active football next year.

Brazil's Ronaldo to retire next year

DOUBLE World Cup winner Ronaldo said yesterday he would retire from professional football at the end of next year but still had hopes of appearing for Brazil in the 2010 World Cup finals in South Africa in June.

The 33-year-old three-times world footballer of the year - widely regarded as one of the greatest players of all time - told a media conference in Sao Paulo he was finally calling time on his illustrious but injury-hit career.

Currently playing for Corinthians in Sao Paulo, the player known as 'El Fenomeno' during his prime said he had agreed with the club to play until the end of 2011.

“I've renewed for another two

years and they will be the last of my career. I want to give my all. I hope to have fun and end with some big wins,” he said, according to the G1 news website.

That could include a final appearance for Brazil in the June 11-July 11 World Cup in South Africa, said Ronaldo, who scored 62 goals in 97 appearances for Brazil.

“We'll see. I still have a chance to go (to South Africa). For the next one (in Brazil in 2014), it's impossible. It's so far away and time is passing - including for me,” he said.

The former Barcelona, Real Madrid, AC Milan and Inter striker helped Brazil to victory in

the 1994 and 2002 World Cup, shrugging off injury to end the latter tournament as top World Cup scorer of all time with 15 goals.

He last played for his country in the 1-0 defeat to France in the quarter-final of the 2006 World Cup in Germany. He scored his last goal for Brazil four days earlier in the 3-0 win over Ghana.

Ronaldo's stellar career was overshadowed by injury and fitness issues. He was sidelined while playing for Inter by a knee injury in 1999 only to damage the same knee in his comeback for the club in February 2000, effectively keeping him out of action until March 2002.

Ronaldo was a favourite with

fans at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium during a prolific spell with Real Madrid, helping them to the Spanish title in 2003, his debut season.

That year he also scored a hat-trick in the Champions League quarter-final, second leg win over Manchester United. But injuries and his failure to control his weight led to his departure in 2007 for AC Milan.

In February 2008 he ruptured a tendon in his right knee playing for the club against Livorno, an injury that ended his career with the Italian club and triggered his return to Brazil where he signed for Corinthians last year after a long battle to regain form.

Inter can win Champions League

FORMER Inter defender Giuseppe Bergomi thinks Inter can attain Champions League glory this season.

Less than 24 hours after slamming Jose Mourinho's antics in the dug-out against Sampdoria, the former Italian international admitted he believed the current Inter team are capable of winning it all.

“Inter are a strong team that can match any teams in Europe,”

Bergomi told tuttomercatoweb.

When asked whether Mourinho's men could win Europe's premier club competition, Bergomi admitted, “Many factors come into play, but I would say absolutely yes. This team is second to none.”

Finally, Bergomi went on to reveal that he thinks the key to Inter's success might lay with Mourinho cooling down his controversial behaviour.

Sissoko to miss Ajax clash

JUVENTUS midfielder Mohamed Sissoko will miss the Europa League second-leg clash against Ajax on Thursday, but defender Fabio Cannavaro looks set to return, according to sportal.tv.

The former Liverpool ball-winner did not train at Vinovo today due to gastrointestinal problems and is not expected to recover in time to face the Eredivisie giants. His absence may force coach Alberto Zaccheroni

into a tactical switch.

Meanwhile, Cannavaro has returned after missing the past few matches with a thigh injury. The veteran looked comfortable during Monday's training session.

The Bianconeri defeated Ajax 2-1 at the Amsterdam Arena last week, with two goals from Amauri, giving them an advantage going into the return-leg at the Stadio Olimpico.

THE TUESDAY COLUMN

Sanusi Abubakar

sanusiabubakar@dailytrust.com

This silence at FASS—ABU is embarrassing

It was just a decade and a half ago that Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, still had a Faculty of Social Sciences, better known by its acronym, FASS. The Faculty is now very silent. Those still talking are few, the rest apparently have very little to say which is either interesting, or relevant or informed by any serious scholarship. We now have an intellectual grave yard masquerading as place of learning and research. How did we arrive at this sorry end? Or are we witnessing the birth pangs of a new beginning; the silence before an academic storm?

Love it or hate it, it was a faculty to be reckoned with by scholars the world over, and by any Nigerian regime in power. International in character and orientation, it had scholars from almost everywhere: Americans, British, French, other Africans, but also Nigerians from virtually every state of the Federation. Ideologically, the faculty was perhaps too much to the "left", but still quite diverse: from Abdullahi Smith to James O'Connell; from Yusuf Bala Usman, Mahmud Modibbo Tukur and Patrick Wilmot to Ibrahim Tahir, A.D. Yahaya, Sam Oyovhbaire. Add a very vocal and politically committed student body and you get the picture of a very vibrant and scholarly FASS where everyone wants to come and study, visit, debate and exchange ideas. FASS had something to say about virtually everything. Every new government policy or programme was analysed and debated. The scholarship was world standard, the commitment to the people and the nation were without parallel. Unfortunately, this is no longer the case. The place is now silent.

What really happened? How come, in the face of all the recent intellectually challenging developments – the global financial meltdown, the subsequent economic crises, the banking and oil-sector reforms, the proposed constitutional and electoral reforms, the virtual disappearing of any viable opposition, rising unemployment, fight against corruption, disaster in Da'afur, or even the recent coup in Niger – we are neither hearing nor reading anything from FASS?

Well, administratively, there is no more FASS; the faculty was split into a Faculty of Arts and a Faculty of Social Services some time ago. Normally, this should be a plus in the sense that we should have ended up with two, not just one, great and inspiring faculties. It didn't work out that way. Some say it is because people have left. True, some died, some moved on to new universities, research institutes both here and abroad, while others have set up consultancies and NGOs or joined media outfits. Still others ended up in the private sectors or in politics. Having tasted the lucre of political office or corporate board rooms, many refused to return. Many non-Nigerians have also gone back home. Again, these are all normal and should not have constituted a problem. After all, universities exist to produce capable hands for the whole society, not just to train people who would stay and teach. Others blame the collapse of the libraries and the paucity of resources generally. With the rise of the internet as well as the current increases in university funding, these should not be seen as serious explanations.

Quite a number of people I spoke to blame the deep ideological divide within FASS, especially in late 70s and early 80s, for its collapse at the level of scholarship. That partially touches on the truth, in my opinion. But differences based on ideology (or even epistemology) should make for a stronger, not weaker, academic community. So why did the two main ideological tendencies not strengthen the Faculty at the levels of scholarship and political relevance?

Part of the answer lies in hegemonic tendencies of ideologies when they become not just methodological or philosophi-

cal trends and episteme but articles of faith. And indeed both groups became dominant albeit at different levels. The left dominated debates in faculty because its explanations were more relevant and better fits the data. Observed reality was better explained by its materialism, dependency and other theories. However, students soon learnt that with a smattering of a few phrases and some mediocre grasp of Marxism and a passing familiarity with the works of Claude Ake, Walter Rodney or Andre Gunder Frank they can ingratiate themselves to some lectures and get a Second-Upper degree. Soon these same half-baked chaps become first Graduate Assistants, and later rose to Senior Lectureship and started producing a mediocre bunch of semi-literates like themselves. These chaps soon dominated the faculties. Many engaged in such practices as withholding results, selling or changing marks and forcing patently bankrupt hand-outs on their students. The conservatives on the political right also did exactly the same,

as the peer-review mechanism got bastardized. Serious academics across the ideological spectrum were marginalised.

For those on the political "right" however, hegemony came via The World Bank/IMF so-called Washington Consensus. These two organisations shoved the ideology and program of free-markets and minimal government down everyone's throat. With little empirical evidence, shaky theoretical consistency and even less practical rel-

“The end result is what we are seeing; my former Faculty (now split into two) emptied of real scholarship or societal relevance. The left was marginalised and began some esoteric pursuit of post-modernism; the right became script-writers and apologists for a repressive and corrupt state.

evance, they pushed this admixture of religion plus equations as the only way out for all our nations, forgetting that no developed nation on this planet adheres to this, one-size-fits-all prescription. America and Western Europe controls publications, research grants and consultancy funds. Non-state actors were favoured even in "development assistance" and gradually most academics that are not neo-liberals were edged out. These chaps were invited to conferences, seminars, research teams and so on. Foreign donors set the agenda and control the funds. Scholarship became subservient to them. Even the Nigerian state, crippled by debts, lower producer prices and rising social and economic uncertainties, became focused on these neo-liberal social scientists, contracting them to write proposals and "progress" reports so as to attract more funds from bilateral and multilateral donors. Those they favoured started making it, and attracting their own breed of students to the Faculty, using the same approach outlined above.

The end result is what we are seeing; my former Faculty (now split into two) emptied of real scholarship or societal relevance. The left was marginalised and began some esoteric pursuit of post-modernism; the right became script-writers and apologists for a repressive and corrupt state. Scholarship and societal concerns became the main victims. True, there are some who still teach and do scholarly work but they are few and far between, silenced in a system too much dependent on elections (to become heads of departments, dean or vice-chancellors) and alliances for promotion or progress. You cannot be too harsh on those who elected you, even if they are not performing, because they can kick you out two years down the road. This way, mediocrity got enshrined in our ivory towers.

There still are, within the system, great minds and committed scholars. They should speak up now. It is time to have a rethink and to design new, innovative solutions. I concede that most of what is stated here applies, not just to FASS or even ABU. So let's debate these issues openly, comprehensively and objectively. Otherwise we should stop complaining that parents prefer foreign universities for their kids and wards.

SPORTS REPORT



JOSE Mourinho

Mourinho banned for three Serie A games

Inter Milan coach Jose Mourinho has been banned from the dugout for the next three Serie A games after making a handcuffs gesture in Saturday's 0-0 draw with Sampdoria, the Italian league said in a statement on Monday.

Walter Samuel and Ivan Cordoba, sent off against Sampdoria, receive one-game bans while Inter team mates Esteban Cambiasso and Sulley Muntari were given two-match suspensions for off-the-field incidents.



NOVAK Djorkovic

Djokovic beats Garcia-Lopez at Dubai

Defending champion Novak Djokovic beat Spain's Guillermo Garcia-Lopez 6-4, 6-4 yesterday to advance to the second round of the Dubai Championships.

The second-seeded Serb started well, breaking Garcia-Lopez on his first serve to go 2-0 up. The Spaniard broke back immediately, and games went with serve until Garcia-Lopez, serving to stay in the set, double faulted to give Djokovic set point.

The 22-year-old Djokovic dominated the second set, building a 5-0 lead, before Garcia-Lopez fought back and broke Djokovic twice in the seventh and ninth games to make it 5-4. Garcia-Lopez failed to hold serve when it mattered most, though, allowing Djokovic to take the match.

