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**NEWS**  
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## Nigeria's debt not forgivable

The Ambassador of France to Nigeria, Mr. Yves Gauduel, says Nigeria's debt is not forgivable because of its size and resources.

He told newsmen in Kaduna, Saturday that, "if you compare the size of Nigeria and the debt (about \$35 Billion) and the country's Gross Domestic Product

From Sani Babadoko, Bureau Chief (Kaduna) and Ruby Rabi, Defence Reporter

(GDP), then the debt is sustainable."

The diplomat however said that France is in talks with the Paris Club, the London Club and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), to see what can be done "one-way or the other" to reduce the debt.

Another concern he expressed is how the proceeds from any reduction in the debt will be put to use to generate employment and provide social amenities in Nigeria which has to be negotiated.

Mr. Gauduel said France is Nigeria's second trade partner after the United States of America (USA) with over 120 French companies operating

## - French Envoy

in the country.

He said France has realised that it was important to encourage Nigeria to succeed in its economic reforms because, "if Nigeria suc-

ceeds, it will be of benefit to the whole of Africa."

The ambassador also observed that Nigeria has to create a conducive investment environment by improving its infrastructures such as electricity, water and the road network. "It is not a one way street. It is a two way street," he declared.

Mr. Gauduel said French

policy is to work with international organisations such as the European Union (EU) to channel assistance to African countries and cited the European Development Fund, through which Nigeria got about 500,000 Euros, into which France contributed 24 per cent.

Contd. on Pg 2



Cross River State Governor, Mr. Donald Duke (right), Bauchi State Governor, Alhaji Adamu Mu'azu (middle) and House Leader, Hon. Abdul Ningi after the PDP National Executive Council meeting held in Abuja... recently. Pix: Felix Onigbinde.

## Confab: Northern delegates meet today

Northern delegates to the on going national political reform conference are scheduled to meet today to fine-tune a common agenda to be presented at the conference which enters its third week after inauguration.

A northern delegate who pleaded anonymity told *Daily Trust* that the meeting which was to have taken place on Saturday last week was postponed till today to enable all delegates return from their constituencies.

Although he was not very categorical about the agenda of the proposed meeting, the source who is a chieftain of one of the major political parties, hinted that the north's position will be articulated around the core interests of its people.

Without explaining what he meant by "the core interest of its people," the delegate however, explained that the north would be prepared

By Abdu Labaran, Group Political Editor

to give as much as it would be given but will not allow itself to come out short-changed.

Contd. on Pg 2

## FG appoints Prof. Oloyede as co-scribe

By AbdulAzeez Abdullahi, Group News Editor and Habeeb I. Pindiga, Political Reporter

In what may be regarded as an attempt to address the imbalance in the leadership and composition of the National Political Reform Conference, the federal government has appointed Professor Ishaq Oloyede, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic, University of Ilorin, as co-secretary of the conference.

Contd. on Pg 2

## FG resumes oil exploration in North

After several years of intense controversy, the federal government has finally budged and agreed to resume oil search in the northern part of the

By Hamisu Muhammad, Business Reporter

country. The government declared that it was offering over 37

blocks located in the inland basins of the country which comprises the Chad Basin and the Benue Trough. Also, part of the inland basin is the Anambra Basin. These are

parts of the 2005 oil and gas exploration and production acreage bid rounds.

Briefing newsmen weekend in Abuja, the presidential adviser on petroleum and energy, Dr. Edmund Daukoru, said over 60 blocks are being put on offer in the bid round spread over the Nigerian sector of the deep offshore of the Gulf of Guinea, Niger Delta and inland basins of Chad, Anambra and Benue.

He said that Sokoto and Bida basins are excluded pending the acquisition of speculative data.

"A total of 61 blocks are offered in the Niger Delta, deep offshore and the inland basins. Sokoto and Bida ba-

## Fish oil reduces heart ailments - Research

Scientists have discovered why a diet high in oily fish like salmon and mackerel may help improve inflammatory conditions such as arthritis and cardiovascular disease.

They have found a key anti-inflammatory fat in humans derived from a fatty acid found in fish oil.

The researchers from Harvard Medical School and Brigham and Women's Hos-

By Jibrin Abubakar, Reporter (Foreign Desk) with agency report

pital, found the diet worked best when combined with low aspirin doses.

The inflammatory response protects the body against infection and injury but when it goes wrong, it can lead to conditions such as arthritis and cardiovascular disease.

The Harvard team identi-

fied a new class of fats in the human body called resolvins which they say can control inflammation.


They do this both by stopping the migration of inflammatory cells to sites of inflammation and the turning on of other inflammatory cells.

Resolvins are made from the omega-3 fatty acids found in high concentration in oily fish.

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**NIGERIAN POSTAL SERVICE**

# News

## Obasanjo says IMF still reluctant about reforms

President Olusegun Obasanjo says the IMF was still reluctant to accept Nigeria's reform agenda although it was already making significant impact.

The president was speaking at the weekend at his Ota farm when he received the publisher and editors of *ThisDay* newspaper who visited him to present him "the lifetime achievement award" for excellence.

He said that the country will continue to be undeterred with the reforms.

He stressed that the reforms, encapsulated in NEEDS, and completely home grown, was achieving results, adding that the nation was not yet completely out of its economic difficulties.

"There is no reason for us to under-perform and if we do, we must blame ourselves. We are the architects of our own misfortunes," he pointed out.

The president who berated the media for its alleged undue criticisms of his administration, charged journalists to be more patriotic to the course of the nation and its development.

"I do not mind criticisms," he said, noting however that such criticisms must not be deliberately harmful and destructive with nothing posi-

tive to offer as solution.

He said that whatever he was doing "at this age is for the benefit of those of you coming behind", stressing that Nigerians must see what

the administration was doing as efforts to reform the economy and make life better for the future.

He also charged the media to support his campaign

against corrupt practices in the country, pointing out that the media should not hesitate to assist government with any vital information disruption.



President Olusegun Obasanjo signing the power sector reform bill during the ceremony held at the State House Abuja, Friday. With him are, the deputy senate president Alhaji Ibrahim Mantu (Second left), the deputy speaker, House of Reps Hon. Austin Opara and the special adviser to President Obasanjo on Assembly matters Senator Ita Giwa. *Pix: Joe Oroye.*

## Tafa Balogun's accounts frozen - EFCC

The bank accounts allegedly operated by former Inspector-General of Police, Tafa Balogun, have been frozen.

Balogun is being investigated by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), for alleged corrupt enrichment to the tune of more than N2 billion.

He was retired on Jan. 18,

by President Olusegun Obasanjo.

The spokesman of the EFCC, Mr Osita Nwajah, told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), in Lagos at the weekend that the federal high court in Lagos ordered the freeze.

He said the commission was still investigating the former IGP contrary to

speculations that the case has been transferred to the State Security Service (SSS).

"It is not true that the EFCC is no longer investigating Balogun or being influenced from some powerful quarters," Nwajah said.

He, however, said the former IGP would be prosecuted after the investigations.

Balogun was appointed IGP on March 6, 2002.

## Nigeria's debt

*Contd. from Pg 1*

"We do not put the French flag on all assistance. We prefer to use the international organisations to channel our assistance to the developing countries," Mr. Gauduel added.

The ambassador was on an invitation of the Peugeot Automobile Nigeria (PAN) Ltd Kaduna and he also visited the Arewa House, the National Museum and the Peugeot French school.

Meanwhile, the Minister of Defence, Engineer Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso, has called on the industrialised world to cancel Nigeria's debt to enhance it implement its economic and political reforms.

The minister made this call at the closing ceremony of a seminar organised by the Africa Center for Strategic Studies in collaboration with the ministry of defence, titled, "Energy and Security."

Engineer Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso said Nigeria plays a vital role in the international scene and is conscious of her obligations to the world in the context of prudent governance and the security of our resources and people.

Kwankwaso emphasised that if Nigeria's debt is cancelled, it would go a long way to complement the president's effort to set the country's national agenda.

He said, "the stability and growth of the national economy is essential for an enduring atmosphere of prosperity and security. In our own circumstances, the time has come for our creditor nations to cancel our debt in

favour of Nigeria. Speaking on the seminar, Kwankwaso commended the organisers on the use of professionals and experts to discuss and evaluate key elements in the hope of finding solutions to the thorny security challenges in Africa's growing energy sector.

He reiterated that the Obasanjo government is committed to peace and security in the Niger Delta since, "Global Economic Security depends on access to stable and diverse supplies of oil and liquefied natural gas."

Speaking earlier, the ambassador of the United States to Nigeria, Mr. John Campbell, had commended the delegates insight on the inauguration of committee which will maintain the communication system capable of monitoring the African center.

While numerating the importance of oil and energy, the ambassador said due to bad maintenance of these resources, people have been forced to wonder if energy resources is a blessing or a curse.

He urged the delegates to take the issues discussed seriously especially with the *Al-Qaida* threat sending dark signals and the latest developments in Kenya which automatically increased the prices of oil.

He said security issues should be of paramount importance and hopes that terrorist threats will end so that the price of oil will be stable and affordable for all nations.

## FG

*Contd. from Pg 1*

sins have been excluded in this round pending the acquisition of speculative data"

The blocks are distributed as: Nigeria deep offshore 12, Niger Delta onshore 6, Niger Delta shallow water 6, Anambra Basin 11, Benue Trough 16 and Chad basin 12.

It would be recall that the NNPC was into oil exploration in the Chad Basin from the late 1970's but abandoned search in the late 1980's under circumstances believed by many to be controversial and political.

However, just last week, the northern Speakers of the Houses of Assembly visited the abandon sites and urged strongly for immediate resumption of the oil exploration in the basin.

Daukoru said recent studies have shown that the prospectivity of the inland basins particularly Chad and Anambra basins may be higher than previously viewed, stressing that these inland basins have become all the more important as the world moves into a scenario in which gas plays a fast increasing role in the energy mix.

He said Nigeria is blessed with all these sedimentary basins with exciting opportunities of which the Niger Delta is dominant, stressing

that the 2005 bid will come up with proposed modifications to the fiscal terms that will improve government's take while remaining attractive to investors

Amongst the modifications, Daukoru said is to reduce block size in the deep water in line with sizes in other deepwater basins around the world (2500 to 1250 sq km), to

introduce options for government to collect its entitlements in kind, introduce a production charge (royalty) element in deepwater in line with the rest of the world and introduce ceiling (80 percent of production), or cost oil recovery in the PSC to provide government with early revenue.

The 2005 bid round is scheduled to take place in August.

## Northern delegates

*Contd. from Pg 1*

Another northern delegate who also confirmed the plan by the region to present a common agenda, disclosed that the northern position was going to be articulated based on the aggregate of the positions of the senatorial zones of each member state.

The delegate who is from Taraba State, told *Daily Trust* that already, the position of his state along with those of other states from the north-east geo-political zone has been aggregated and will be presented at the meeting for harmonisation with the positions of the other two geo-political zones in the north.

The Taraba State delegate expressed confidence that the north will not come out of the conference any more short changed than the south because of his confidence in the capacity of the northern delegates to rise up to the

occasion without loss of face or position.

Oloyede, who hails from Ogun State, is on the Muslim leaders delegation. He joins Rev. Father Mathew Kukah and Mr. Akinleye Arikawe, secretary and deputy secretary respectively.

The appointment was made known in a statement in Abuja by the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Obong Ufot Ekaette.

Oloyede's appointment came after a meeting in Abuja last Wednesday between President Olusegun Obasanjo and a delegation of Muslim clerics and traditional rulers under the aegis of the Nigeria Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA).

The Muslim leaders were said to have protested a perceived imbalance in the composition of the leadership and membership of the confer-

ence.

They said though Muslims constitute 65 per cent of the nation's population, their representation in the confab was 160 against 233 Christians.

Obasanjo was reported to have turned down the Muslim leaders request to reconstitute the conference so that it reflects the religious composition of the country.

The leaders had earlier at a meeting in Kaduna, Tuesday last week, vowed to recall Muslim delegates to the conference if the president refused to heed their demands.

Speaking to *Daily Trust* yesterday, the special assistant to the president on public affairs, Chief Femi Fani-Kayode, said the appoint-

## Fish

*Contd. from Pg 1*

Charles Serhan told the BBC News: "Since we obtained these results, I started to encourage my own children to eat foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids."

The study also reveals a potential pitfall of COX-2 inhibitors, drugs designed to block inflammation, which have been shown to have negative cardiovascular side effects.

The enzyme COX-2 is involved in making Resolvin E1, and the researchers suspect that taking the drugs may disrupt the body's ability to synthesise the fat.

Thus, while the drugs are designed to reduce inflammation, it is possible that they actually undermine one of the body's most important methods for achieving the same effect.

## Oloyede

*Contd. from Pg 1*

ment of Professor Oloyede as co-secretary of the conference was in response to calls by some Nigerians for the need to redress the imbalance in the leadership composition of the conference.

Chief Femi denied suggestions that the federal government plans to appoint a co-chairman as demanded by the Muslim leaders who met with the president last week. He insisted that president Obasanjo did not use religion as a yardstick to nominate Justice Niki Tobr and Mathew Kukah to serve as chairman and secretary respectively.

The special assistant also said that there are no plans now by the federal government to redress the lopsidedness in the composition of delegates to the conference

which Muslim leaders say is in favour of Christians. He said tinkering with the composition will derail the conference as the federal government, for instance, had no hands in the selection of delegates from the states.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs is expected to meet in Kaduna this week to deliberate, amongst other things, the appointment of Professor Oloyede and the next line of action to take.

The chairman of the Katsina State chapter of *Izalatul Bidi'a*, Sheikh Yakubu Musa, told *Daily Trust* that the meeting will deliberate on the need or otherwise to recall all Muslims delegates to the conference to protest imbalance in the composition of the conference delegates.

# NEWS

## Alameseigha, Kalu get Katsina traditional titles

The Emir of Katsina, Alhaji Muhammadu Kabir Usman, yesterday conferred traditional titles on the Bayelsa and Abia governors. Dieprieye Alameseigha got the title of *ganuwan* Katsina, the defender of the walls of the emirate.

Abia governor, Oji Uzor Kalu was made the *Mayaki* Katsina, Katsina warrior. Decorating the recipients, the emir said the honour was informed by the continuous need for peaceful co-existence among Nigerians from all parts of the country.

He said people should respect the religion and tribe of other Nigerians, saying: "We must recognise the fact that we are meant to live together and urged the title holders to be good and worthy ambassadors of the emirate."

The title of *ganuwa* was last held in the emirate in the late 1930s while *Mayaki* was held by the late Chief M.K.O. Abiola. Abiola's title was retrieved and given to the former secretary to the Katsina state government, Alhaji Bello Kofar Bai.



Minister of Agriculture, Alhaji Adamu Bello, addressing State House journalists during the Media Forum held at the Banquet hall of the Presidential Villa, Abuja, Friday. Others are, the Senior Special Assistant to President Obasanjo on media and publicity, Mrs. Remi Oyo and the chairman, State House Press Corp, Mr. Paul Odenyi. Pix: Joe Oroye

## FG to commence sale of Apo qtrs April 1

By Nasir Imam, Property & Environment Editor

As part of the federal government's decision to sell 30,000 houses built by government ministries, agencies and departments, the FCT administration has said it will commence the sale of Apo legislative quarters in April this year.

FCT minister, Mallam Nasir el-Rufai, who stated this while defending the FCT Appropriation for 2005 at the hearing of the senate committee on the FCT, said that 25,000 out of the 30,000 houses slated for sale and built by the FCDA, were located in Abuja.

The Apo legislative quarters

occupied by National Assembly members, the minister said, will be sold through open bidding but that the highest price offered by the bidders would be offered to the occupants of the houses.

"When the bids are open, the highest price offered to the occupant of each house. The house will be sold with the current occupant having the right of first refusal to purchase within 30 days of offers and the right to purchase is neither transferable or assignable," he said.

Daily Trust investigations reveal that already, some banks are making overtures to the lawmakers on financing the purchase of the Apo legislative quarters, for those without the financial capacity even as the minister had said the scheme would be financed through a floating bond on the stock exchange.

## Intercity merges with First Interstate bank

The management of Inter-City Bank Plc has announced plans to merge with First Inter-State Bank Plc, after the ongoing Initial Public Offer (IPO).

The managing director and chief executive officer of Inter-City, Alhaji Lamis Dikko, disclosed this at the bank's media forum held at the Crystal Garden hotel, Saturday. He

From Aliyu Haruna, Correspondent (Kaduna)

stated however that the bank was still going ahead with strategy merger to achieve certain objectives.

According to him, the strategies includes branch network expansion, bringing special products and special customers, adding that the strategies may include acquir-

ing branch networks brought by some banks due to certain skills and the customer the bank has in order to reposition the bank.

In terms of meeting the new regulatory capital, the managing director said that the bank's target in the IPO is to raise about N15 billion, plus the present over N2.5 billion share fund, so that it has about N18 billion, which will enable it meet the N25 billion re-capitalisation eventually when it merges with First Inter-City State bank with a capital base of about N10 billion.

Alhaji Dikko said that the aim of the merger with First Inter-State bank is to fuse with a bank which shares the same vision and aspirations to maintain a viable financial institution capable of competing favourably in an ever dynamic environment.

He declared that the bank is ready to exploit the opportunities inherent in the economy, pointing out that it is evidence that our economic destiny is in our hands to either make or mar.

"This interactive session seeks to use you, gentlemen of the press, to reach out to the masses of our people and indeed all Nigerians to explore the opportunities of the on going offer," he said.

He also declared that the inclusion of both retired veterans and practising journalists at the forum is a deliberate strategy to benefit fully from rubbing, minds and applauded the efforts of media practitioners to identify with the banks efforts.

On the performance of the bank so far, the managing director said that between June 1998 and June 2004, the bank's deposits rose from N1.3 billion to N18.4 billion representing a 1,315% increase, while gross earnings increased from N334 million to N3.89 billion, a 1,064% rise and the profit after tax rose steeply to N488 million from N34 million, representing a 1,335% increase, adding that the phenomenal growth was achieved through hard work and adherence to time-tested banking principles.

## Nigeria's nuclear research for peaceful purpose - DG, Energy commission

The Director-General, Energy Commission of Nigeria (ECN), Professor Sani A. Sambo, says the federal government has resolved to enter into agreement with friendly countries to exploit the nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Professor Sambo told Daily Trust at the weekend at the Centre for Energy Research and Training (CERT), of the Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, where he went on a familiarisation tour that most of the new sources of energy such as nuclear, biomass and solar energy are yet to be adequately tapped because of financial constraints.

"With the push we are making and the good will and commitment by this administration to develop the country, it is only a matter of time," before we tap into these new sources including nuclear. "The government is resolved to utilise all viable energy types and nuclear sources are viable energy materials option for the development of the country especially for ing of agriculture, healthcare, industrial development and the provision of water.

"The Nigerian government has made it abundantly clear that it is not planning to use its nuclear resources and acquisition for harmful purposes but for peaceful applications and it will not have

From Sani Babadoko, Bureau Chief (Kaduna)

any problems with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the ECN, DG added.

He said the commission was in the process of restructuring the four energy research centres in the country for better service delivery. These include the centres for Energy Research at the University of Nigeria (UNN) Nsukka, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ilorin, Usmanu Danfodio University (UDU), Sokoto and the CERT at ABU, Zaria.

He said he was satisfied with the performances of the centres but that the restructuring will prepare them for the strategic planning and coordination of research and development of the country's energy requirements.

Professor Sambo told the staff of the CERT in Zaria that the commission plans to absorb the staff of the centres on voluntary basis and promised that their salaries and other allowances will be paid urged them to reciprocate by showing greater dedication to duty and engage in revenue yielding ventures.

CERT director, Dr. Ibrahim Musa Umar, in a welcome address, said apart from the nuclear research reactor, the centre has within a few years, acquired other research facilities

such as OSL/TL dating machine, divider 2000, atomic absorption spectrometer, radioisotope scanning equipment, HpGe detector and associated electronics as well as radiation monitors.

He said the centre can undertake consultancy in nuclear research, provide protection against x-ray radiation, and assist in solid mineral exploration, safety assessment of radio active activities, among others.

## NIS moves to address officers grievances

The Nigerian Immigration Service has set up committee to address officers grievances of vendetta, favouritism and insensitivity in the recent redeployment exercise.

The committee which is headed by the deputy controller of finance and administration, Alhaji Abdullahi Aliyu has already commenced work at the Immigration headquarters, Abuja.

The Comptroller General, Mr Chukwurch Joseph Udeh, in a chat with pressmen, said the committee became necessary following complaints The Comptroller General

By Ruby Rabinu, Defence Reporter

said the committee will address only genuine cases, while appropriate measures will be implemented to resolve the issues.

Mr Udeh said officers should first report to their various posts and then present their problems later, adding that the redeployment exercise is in the interest of the service.

He explained that redeployment enables officers to be vast in the various operations of the service and that to serve their nation better."

## Daily Trust loses staff

The death has occurred of Mallam Kashim Sule, the Daily Trust and Weekly Trust correspondent in Minna.

He died on Saturday

evening after a ghastly motor accident along the Abuja-Kaduna expressway.

Mallam Kashim was buried yesterday morning in Kaduna according to Islamic rites.

## 900 get Marwa's endowment scholarship

By Abdu Labaran, Group Political Editor

The Buba Marwa Endowment has awarded scholarships for the 2004/2005 academic year to 900 students across the six geopolitical zones of the country, a statement signed by the secretary of the Endowment, Engr. Muhammed Lawal, has said.

According to the statement, each of the six geopolitical zones was allocated 300 while Adamawa, the home state of the founder and chairman of the Endowment, Brigadier Muhammmadu Buba Marwa (rtd), got 300 slots to bring to 900 the total number of students granted scholarships to further their studies in tertiary institutions across the country.

The statement also urged students who have applied to be on the look out for the names of successful applicants to be published soon in some Nigeria newspapers including Daily Trust



Dr. Buba Marwa

# News

## Plane crash: 100 escape death

About 100 passengers aboard a *Chanchangi* airline at the weekend, escaped unhurt as the aircraft skidded off the runway of the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport (NAIA), Abuja, after landing.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), reports that the passengers, including some ministers and members of the National Assembly, were returning from Katsina on chartered Boeing 727 flight when the incident occurred.

The dignitaries were in Katsina for the turbaning ceremony of Governor Diepreye Alamieyeseigba of Bayelsa state as "*Ganuwan Katsina*" and the Abia state governor, Dr Orji Kalu, as "*Maiyakin Katsina*".



Alhaji Isa Yugusa, Aviation minister

## Bafarawa refutes report on LG funds

The governor of Sokoto state, Alhaji Attahiru Bafarawa, has denied allegations that his administration was dipping hands into the joint account with local governments.

Speaking in an interview with *Daily Trust* in Sokoto recently, Governor Bafarawa said the government is not tampering with the local government funds in the state.

In his words, "we are not tampering with their money. They know where their money is going and that our understanding was to execute projects, therefore. No problem.

Bafarawa went further to say that they have accused and blamed of controlling the council through the joint account system and blamed people for their ignorance of the operation of the system.

Bafarawa called on all who want to know about the operation to get across to any local government chairman in the state and find out about the operation of the joint account.

Governor Bafarawa told *Daily Trust* that he will only describe the system as a highly impressive one in the Sokoto state, adding that a lot of achievements have been recorded by council chairmen in the last one year of its operations.

In his words: "we have the constructed 1,000 boreholes and electrified 200 villages in the state.

He said the Isa-Marmona, a 114 kilometre road was electrified by the local government council using the joint account and that the Sokoto and Tambuwal towns were

Airport sources told NAN that the incident occurred at about 4 p.m. after the aircraft had been cleared for landing but that on touching the tarmac, a strong wind hit the aircraft and forced it to veer off the runway.

"The aircraft encountered a strong wind on landing at the airport and this caused the plane to crashland into the grass area of the runway. We thank God it is not serious," one of the sources told a NAN correspondent who visited the airport.

The sources said that all the passengers on board were evacuated by officials and workers of the Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria (FAAN), immediately after the accident.

NAN, however, reports that the ill-fated aircraft has not been removed from the scene of the accident.

NAN learnt that officials of the Accident and Investigations Unit of the Federal Ministry of Aviation were at the airport to ascertain the cause and extent of the accident.

NAN recalls that a *Chanchangi* Boeing 727 aircraft last December crashed landed at the Murtala Muhammed International Airport (MMIA), Ikeja, Lagos.

The incident happened following the failure of the aircraft's front wheels to come out for landing.

No casualty was recorded as a result of the incident which left the aircraft on its belly on the only serviceable runway at the MMIA.

Efforts to get the *Chanchangi* station manager's comments over the incident proved abortive.

## Farmers to get N12.5 billion from Agric Bank

The Minister of Agriculture, Alhaji Adamu Bello, said at the week that over N12.5 billion has been allocated in this year budget to the Nigerian Agriculture Cooperative and Rural Development Banks to be given out as credit to farmers.

Speaking at the maiden edition of the state House media forum, the minister said since he assumed office, over N110 billion has been pumped into the bank following its recapitalisation.

He said since he became minister, "over N110 billion has been pumped into the bank and in the current budget, N12.5 billion is going into the bank to be given out as credit to farmers.

He explained that the rules of operations of the bank has been completely overhauled to give adequate attention to small scale farmers who hitherto were at the mercy of large scale farmers over loans allocations.

"The rules of the bank is that the credit must be divided into the ratio of 70 per cent going to small scale farm-

The Keffi Development Foundation (KDF) has distributed scholarships to 60 indigent students of Keffi origin studying in various higher institutions of learning across the country.

The scholarship scheme which was sponsored by Engineer Sule Danladi (*Turakin Keffi*) and Alhaji Muhammadu Keffi Magaji Malam was two hundred thousand naira with each of the donors providing the sum

## Group offers N200,000 scholarship

By Suleiman Mohammed, Associate Editor (South)

of one hundred thousand naira each.

Speaking at the ceremony, the chairman of the occasion, Alhaji Abubakar Bature Adamu, (*Baraden Keffi*), commended the KDF for providing the assistance to enable the students pursue their education especially those that come from poor background.

He described the education programme of the KDF as laudable and urged them to continue to pursue it with vigour and determination, saying that the importance of education cannot be

overemphasised.

Alhaji Adamu however urged them to cover other aspects including health, employment generation, environment and community development among others, in order to build a worthy society.

In her remarks, the permanent secretary, deputy governor's office, Lafia, Dr (Mrs) Fatu Danladi Yakubu, thanked both the KDF and the donors for their initiative and urged the beneficiaries to make good use of what they have received.

She however called for attention to girl-child education which she described as highly desirable and relevant to the socio-economic and political empowerment of our society.

## Goje, Bafarawa condole Weekly Trust editor

Governor Attahiru Bafarawa of Sokoto state and Danjuma Goje of Gombe state have commiserated with the *Weekly Trust* editor, Alhaji Garba Deen Muhammad over the death of his mother and sister which occurred last week.

In separate statements from government house, Sokoto and Gombe states, made available to *Daily Trust*, the governors expressed shock over the death of the two women and prayed God to grant Alhaji Garba Deen Muhammad the fortitude to bear the loss.

The statement from government house, Gombe signed by Alhaji Mohammed Ahmed Yidikawu, the special assistant, media and public-

ity, said governor Goje considered the incident as a great shock and described it as an act of God and appealed to him to bear it as he (the governor) was joining in prayers for the repose of the two souls.

"May Allah forgive them and reward them with his *Al-Jannah*. May God give you the courage to continue to bear the loss," the statement said.

Governor Bafarawa on behalf of the government and people of Sokoto state, prayed that Allah grant the soul of the deceased *Al-Jannah*.

He also prayed Allah to give the entire family the fortitude to bear "the great losses."

From Abdulfatai Abdulsalami, Correspondent (Sokoto)

also electrified by local government councils, adding that at present, they are constructing about three major roads which are being financed through the local council/government joint account.

## Anambra Saga: Expulsion is cosmetic, says Anglican Bishop

The Anglican Bishop of Enugu, Reverend Emmanuel Chukwuma says that the expulsion of the Anambra state governor, Dr. Chris Ngige and his supposed godfather, Mr. Chris Uba from the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP), is cosmetic and cannot ensure peace in the state.

He told newsmen in Kaduna at the weekend that it makes no sense to leave Ngige as governor adding that election rigging is a crime and since both have confirmed committing the crime, Ngige should be removed and both of them investigated and prosecuted by the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC).

"This expulsion is the type of trick the PDP is playing with corruption. It is cosmetic and cannot ensure peace in Anambra state. Rigging is corruption and if they are found guilty, they should go before the anti-corruption commission and face the music. I also believe the people of Anambra state should have a say in those who govern them.

"Chris Uba is a member of

From Sani Babadoko, Kaduna Bureau Chief

my church and when Ngige was to be made governor, he (Uba) brought him to my house for prayers. He (Uba) said he was bringing him to get a commitment that Ngige will abide by their agreement and that when he did not comply there will be trouble," Reverend Chukwuma added.

He said though he prayed for them and told them the wish of God, "when they go back to their political groups and meet those who want to eat from them, they changed their minds and do the will of those who tell them lies."

The bishop of Enugu said the conference that it does not have legislative powers and warned that its recommendations should not go the way of the Oputa Panel report or the Vision 2010 before it.

He said the conference must not have "no-go-areas," and should be devoid of religious sentiments. He said what should guide it is unity, justice and fairplay for all Nigerians no matter their place of origin or religious affiliations.

## VISITATION PANEL TO KADUNA STATE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, GIDAN WAYA

5th March, 2005

- 1.00 CALL FOR MEMORANDA  
His Excellency, the Executive Governor of Kaduna State, Alh. Ahmed Mohammed Makarfi has instituted a visitation Panel to the Kaduna State College of Education, Gidan Waya. Specifically to examine issues militating against academic excellence at the college.
- 2.00 TERMS OF REFERENCES  
The terms of Reference of the visitation Panel are:
  - i) To examine the law establishing the institution vis-a-vis the Academic programmes and see if they are being run in the spirit of the enabling law.
  - ii) Assess the curriculum and course contents of the institution with a view to advising on the quality of its products.
  - iii) To critically examine the admission policy vis-a-vis the state character and advise on whether it has been achieving the purpose for which the institution was established.
  - iv) Evaluate the management and academic staffing position of the institution and suggest areas where modifications should be made.
  - v) Evaluate the funding of the college vis-a-vis the state of facilities in the institution and make appropriate recommendations; and
  - vi) To look into any other matter(s) that is in the opinion of the Visitation Panel will enhance the quality of teaching-learning.
- 3.00 CALL FOR MEMORANDA  
Members of the public are therefore invited to submit written, memoranda to the Panel on any or all the Terms of Reference in seven (7) typed copies before 28th March, 2005. Those who want to appear in person before the panel may also do so.

Contact:  
Secretary,  
Visitation Panel College of Education,  
Gidan Waya  
C/o Zaria Lodge, State House, Kawo-Kaduna.

Signed:  
DR. J. DE-GANGA  
Secretary, Visitation Panel COE, GN.

**UBA**

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## UBA / STB MERGER: Press Release (2)

Sequel to the formal announcement on January 19, 2005 of the approval of the merger of United Bank for Africa Plc (UBA) and Standard Trust Bank Plc (STB) by the respective Boards of the two banks, we are pleased to provide you with an update of events as it relates to the merger.

- We had taken the decision to merge our two banks out of the desire to provide the Nigerian banking public with world-class services through an extensive network that will bring us as close as possible to everyone with a banking need.
- We envisage a bank with a comprehensive and well-priced product suite.
  - We envision a bank that will have the strength and capacity to support our customers' businesses and contribute meaningfully to the economic development of our country through direct job creation and by supporting ancillary businesses.
  - We dream of a bank that will play a leading role in the development of e-banking and alternative payment systems in the country.
- We are pleased and very grateful for the support and positive response to our merger decision from all our stakeholders thus far. We have received the pre-merger consent of the Central Bank of Nigeria and a letter of "no objection" from the Securities and Exchange Commission [SEC] with regards to the merger in line with statutory provisions. These initial approvals from the regulatory authorities of the merger are indeed heartwarming and provided us with the impetus to forge ahead to the next steps in consummating the merger.
- We have commenced the process of a legal merger of our banks by setting up a steering committee made up of senior staffs of the two banks. We have engaged the services of highly reputable specialists and consultants from across the globe to support the committee and ensure a transparent and seamless exercise with minimal downside risk.
- These experts include some of the Nigerians in Diaspora with experiences from such firms as J. P. Morgan and Goldman Sachs, who are helping the process.
- Concurrent with the merger process, we have also set up teams to commence the process of value extraction and integration of our people, cultures, operations and systems.
- The teams are co-led by two Executive Directors (one each from UBA and STB).
  - Global integration experts under the overall leadership of McKinsey & Company- a global leader in mergers, acquisitions and integration have also been engaged to drive the integration.

Their main areas of focus include

- Strategy and Organisational Model
  - Information Technology Integration
  - Business Risk Management
  - Branch Repositioning
  - Personnel Harmonization Issues

▪ In the meantime, we have put arrangements in place to ensure that throughout the merger period, our valued customers will continue to receive superior and uninterrupted services from the two banks. Our customer service personnel are available in all our Branches to ensure prompt services.

▪ We wish to thank all our shareholders, customers, service providers, friends and well-wishers, who have called and visited us in support of this merger. We are humbled by the show of solidarity and encouragement from a broad spectrum of Nigerians. Our pledge is that we will spare no effort in creating a bank that you will be proud of and one that will be a signpost of Nigerian enterprise and a 'role model for African businesses'.

**Kayode Sofola (SAN)**  
UBA Chairman

**Chief Ferdinand Alabraba**  
STB Chairman

# News

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

### Confab adopts "One Nigeria, One voice" slogan

The Chairman of National Political Reform Conference, Justice Niki Tobi, has carved out "One Nigeria, One Voice" as a slogan for the conference.

The conference which was inaugurated on February 21 by President Olusegun Obasanjo had this week finished the debate on the President's inaugural speech.

Since inception, Tobi had called the attention of delegates at the conference on the need for unity, peace and progress in the country.

He argued that the unity could only be achieved if delegates speak with one voice and restate their belief in the indivisibility of the country.

To drive home his point, Tobi made it a point of duty that at anytime he wanted to call the House to order, he did it with the refrain "One Nigeria, one voice, I love you all."

Each time, he said this; the hall would be thrown into an uproar and later settle down for business as some of the delegates now observe that anytime they were called upon to speak.



Justice Niki Tobi

To also encourage friendliness and cooperation among the delegates, Tobi

advised that their first name should be called.

"For instance, my name is

Niki, please; I will appreciate it if you all call me by my first name" he stressed.

NAN reports that the re-

frain of One Nigeria, One voice has now become a permanent refrain with the delegates that anytime the con-

ference was finding it difficult to agree on an issue, once the slogan is raised, the House succumbed.

### We didn't influence appointments, membership, says CAN

The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) has dismissed the allegation that it influenced the composition and appointment of principal officers to the National Political Reforms Conference.

A statement issued in Abuja and signed by CAN President, Archbishop Peter Akinola, warned that such unbridled utterances were capable of throwing the nation into chaos and anarchy.

NAN recalled that prior to the appointments of two additional Muslims this week, Nuaiman Danbatta and Prof Ishaq Oloyede, Deputy Secretary and co secretary respectively; Christians had three as against one Muslim principal officer at the conference.

Akinola said that the National Council of Muslim Youth Organisation (NACOMYO) had complained of the lopsided composition of the conference leadership and membership.

He said that the Muslim youth organisation argued that the Federal government had nominated more Christians than Muslims to the conference.

The clergyman also said that the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF), the body of Northern elders corroborated the Muslim youth's position

by warning against a possible religious crisis if the federal government failed to reconstitute the conference to reflect the nation's religious status.

The christian body described those statements as disturbing given the painful memories of needless bloodshed in the nation's history.

"What is disturbing about the said publication is the fact that any patriotic individual or group would at this time in our experience as a nation, believe the best approach to peace is to beat the drums of war," he said.

"Let us make it abundantly clear that CAN has not at any meeting discussed either the composition or the agenda of the national CONFAB, or has CAN mandated anyone anywhere to make a statement on its behalf."

"We believe this country is blessed with clear-minded people of integrity in all walks of life and religious expression.

"We also believe we must settle for merit, and look beyond narrow and sentimental boundaries that have stalled our march to greatness over the year," CAN added.

Akinola said that "the time has come for Nigeria as a nation to checkmate those who thrive on chaos and anarchy and who think all is not well when, in fact, there is peace."

"Surely there are appropriate channels for the expression of genuine concerns at a time when we are beginning to count our gains and recapture the wasted years," he stressed.

The statement, however, appealed to Nigerians to pray for the nation and rise to the challenges of its greatness.



L-R: Ola A. Kassim, Nigerians in Diaspora, chairman, NIDO America delegate, Abubakar D. Aliyu, Gombe State delegate and Barrister Abdulrahim Shittu, Oyo State delegate discussing during the sitting of the National political reform conference in Abuja.



Dr. Umar Dikko, Kaduna State delegate (L) discussing with Alhaji Ja'afaru Makarfi and Professor Ango Abdullahi both Kaduna State first and second (R) at the National Political Reform Conference in Abuja.

### Women decry low representation

Chief Bisi Ogunleye, representing rural women at the on-going Political Reform Conference, has kicked against what she terms "gross under-representation of women" at the conference.

Ogunleye told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Abuja at the weekend that a major problem of the conference was the inadequate representation of women.

She lamented that "10 years after the Beijing conference, at which Nigeria was signatory to 33 per cent affirmative action, only 30 women were appointed to the conference, out of 400".

Ogunleye noted that "since women are less than 10 per cent at the conference, allocation of posts and responsibilities will also be low, despite their numerical strength of about 65 per cent in the country."

Nonetheless, she stressed that "the conference should be seen as a challenge for Nigerian women to strive for a new Nigeria, where no one will be oppressed based on sex, tribe or religion."

Ogunleye wants "both men and women to work together for the progress, unity,

peace and development of the country.

"For without the full cooperation of women, men alone cannot run the country successfully," she added.

### Nigeria is multi-religious, not secular -Orire

Retired Justice Abdulkadir Orire has said Nigerians need "to stop referring to the country as a secular state.

"Nigeria is in fact a multi-religious state," says Orire, a member of the on-going political reform conference in Abuja.

Representing muslim leaders at the conference, he told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) at the weekend that "secularism means a state without any religion.

"But the current Nigerian constitution recognises we are under God."

Orire noted that "the section that many people misunderstand is the one that says that there should not be a state religion, meaning that the country will not adopt a particular religion.

"The same constitution gives individuals or groups the right to adopt any particular religion of their choice without any hindrance, either from the state or groups," he stressed.

Orire decried what he called "the non-implementation of the National Inter-Religious Council (NIREC) recommendations on the inclusion of religious curricula in the nation's educational system.

"The government needs to produce the NIREC report and implement its recommendations in order to reduce the level of vices in the society," he said.

Orire also wants adherents of all other faiths in Nigeria to live in peace, as no religion preaches violence and destruction of property or lives."



L-R: Mr. Smart Adeyemi, NUJ delegate, Deacon Gamaliel O. Onosode, Delta State delegate and Rear Admiral Mike Onah also Delta State delegate exchanging views during the sitting of the National Political Reform Conference in Abuja...recently.

# News

National Confab... National Confab... National Confab...

## Muslims hail Oloyede's appointment

Muslims last weekend hailed the appointment of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academics), University of Ilorin, Professor Ishaq Oloyede, as the Co-Secretary of the National Political Reform Conference (NPRC).

The federal government on Friday named Oloyede as the co-secretary of the conference, bringing the number of principal officers to six.

Other officers were Justice Niki Tobi, Chairman, Alhaji Sule Katagum, Vice Chairman, Rev. Mathew Kukah, Secretary, Mr Akin Arikawe, Deputy Secretary and Nui'aman Dambatta, Deputy Secretary.

The Muslim groups, who had earlier petitioned President Olusegun Obasanjo over the lopsidedness in the composition of members of the conference in favour of the Christians, applauded Obasanjo's gesture.

In an interview with the president of the Abuja Muslim Forum (AMF), Malam Idris Usman, he said the appointment of Oloyede shows that Obasanjo is a listening president.

Usman added that the appointment will go a long way to ameliorate the tension generated because of the lopsidedness in the composition of the delegates, with Muslims having less than 32 per cent.

Speaking in the same manner, the national co-ordinator of the National Dawah Co-ordination Council, Alhaji Ishaq Sanni, said Oloyede's appointment, barely 48 hours after their

protest to President Olusegun Obasanjo portrays him as a rational president.

Sanni, however, advised that in future composition of members into any government appointments, government should give attention to religious balancing "so that no segment will feel sidelined".

Oloyede, a delegate representing Islamic leaders in the conference from the South West, could not be reached for comments on his new appointment.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), recalls that Muslim leaders, under the auspices of the Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs and the Jama'atul Nasril Islam, as well as some Islamic bodies, had petitioned the government over the lopsidedness in appointments to the conference.

The leaders, led by the Sultan, Muhammadu Maccido, last Wednesday took their case to president Olusegun Obasanjo for him to correct the imbalance.

## Scholar warns Muslims over ethnic-based agenda

An Islamic scholar, Malam Idris Usman, has warned that any agenda at the on-going national conference based on ethnic and tribal sentiments will be null and void and of no effect.

Usman stated this yesterday while delivering a lecture at the monthly meeting of Muslim Media Practitioners of Nigeria (MMPN), Abuja chapter, on the "National Confab: Any Islamic Agenda?"

The scholar noted that Muslims must be united before thinking of any formidable agenda to be presented at the national conference.

The cleric, who is also the leader of the Abuja Muslim Forum (AMF), said a Muslim agenda should be in line with the divine book of Allah, the Holy Qur'an and the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad.

He warned that any agenda based on ethnic or tribal

sentiments will further divide the Muslims and worsen the problems the conference is set to address.

"Muslims as upholders of justice and peace must set the pace because if anything should happen to the unity of Nigeria, Allah will hold the Muslims for negligence," he warned.

Usman advised that the proposals of Muslims at the conference should be on unity, mercy, social programmes, security, political and economic arrangements and ethical values that would promote cohesion and moral uprightness.

He reminded Muslims not to lose sight of how the Holy Prophet Muhammad governed peacefully and progressively while in Medina with other non-Muslims without any rancour.

The scholar lamented that Muslims nowadays were being hindered by ignorance and their selfish interest as against the interest of the public.

"As Muslims, we know what unites us. The issue of Sharia for instance, is non-negotiable as this is the basis of Islam and supreme to all man made laws," he stressed.

The Imam of Area Two Mosque, Malam Ibrahim Idris, cautioned Muslims on ethnicity and tribal sentiments, stressing that Muslims should use the opportunity of the conference to have a common agenda for the community.

Earlier, the Muslim Media Co-ordinator, Alhaji Abdurrahman Balogun, had said that the choice of the topic was for Muslims to contribute their quota to the task of nation building.

In attendance at the meeting were representatives of the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN), NTA, FRCN, Guardian newspapers, Vanguard newspapers, The Sun and The Triumph.



Barrister Ibrahim Shehu Shema, Katsina delegate analysing his points while other delegates listen during debating session at the National Political Reform Conference sitting in Abuja ...recently



R-L: Sidi Yakubu, Malam Adamu Fika and Col. Adu Mohammed rtd) all Yobe delegates discussing at the National Political Reform Conference.



Prince Bola Ajibola, Ogun State delegate (left) discussing with Professor Ishaq Oloyede, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Unilorin, delegate (right) during the sitting of the National Political Reform Conference held in Abuja ...last week.



Justice Babalaki, Osun State delegate and Senator Olu Alabi, Osun State delegate both discussing during the sitting of the National Political Reform Conference. Pix: Kennedy Egbonodje.

## Speak with one voice, Adamawa PDP chairman urges northern delegates

The chairman of the Adamawa state chapter of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Chief Joce Malaki, has urged northern delegates to the ongoing national political reform conference to shun all forms of sentiments and speak with one voice.

Chief Joce gave this advice while fielding questions from newsmen weekend in Kaduna, saying that considering the backwardness of the region in terms of development it would be better for the delegates to form a formidable alliance that would move the north forward.

He expressed satisfaction with the composition of the delegates from the states, saying that going by their experience and educational background; they are equal to the task of the conference.

From Aliyu Haruna, Correspondent (Kaduna)

ship style of governor Boni Haruna, the PDP boss said that in spite of the opposition and criticisms by the governor has performed creditably well in the last six years of his administration through the initiation of viable projects that have direct bearings on the people of the state.

He added that the governor's focus this year will be on improvement of security for continues protection of lives and property, eradication of poverty especially on the youths of the state and provision of portable drinking water.

Chief Joce appealed to the people of the state not to relent in their efforts to cooperate and support the administration of governor Boni Haruna so that the state can forge ahead.

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## REFLECTIONS

By ISSA AREMU

## Essential Shagari at 80

The spectre of leadership hunts Nigeria. The literary giant, Chinua Achebe was once categorical to say the problem with Nigeria was leadership. With benefits of history Achebe might be saying the truth but might not necessarily be privy to the whole truth! Nigeria is certainly not short of leaders but that is if we dare pay attention to history and details, less to lamentation.

Former President Shehu Shagari recently marked 80 years birthday. The national acknowledgement of the leadership qualities of the former President shows that the problem with Nigeria may not necessarily be absence of leadership but lack of acknowledgement of some worthy leadership qualities until we are overwhelmed with unworthy leadership prototypes.

One essential quality of Shagari is dignity and humbleness with power. In his autobiography, *Shehu Shagari: Beckoned To Serve*, citing the enormous powers vested in the Commander in Chief by 1979 constitution, he observed that there *...is thus some truth in the view that the President's powers were considerable.... such that most people tended to think that all I needed to get things done was simply to issue a command*. He however added that any President would prefer such simplistic exercise of power but the reality is that there are personal, intuitional and socio-economic factors that constraint absolutist exercise of constitutional powers. Indeed Shagari noted that effective leadership is not in some King Kong's dispositions but in constructive cooperation with the legislature, *'one's own colleagues, staff and political party as well'*. The truth is that subsequent leaders after Shagari carried on as if they had absolutist powers, as if colleagues don't matter (and with pointed military dictatorship), as if the nation does not matter!

The other important

attribute of Shagari's leadership is his remarkable singular ability to acknowledge the efforts and contributions of predecessors even while he did not agree with some of their policies. For instance he unquestionably conceded credits to Obasanjo's administration for the *'foresight in starting steel plants'* even as the regime's Land Use decree constrained Green revolution policy of his administration. In his words; *'the Obasanjo Administration did a good job in planning and constructing a modern seaport at Tin Can Island'* even as he had cause to reverse the regime's forced relocation of Abuja's inhabitants and Obasanjo's notorious policy of wage freeze. Thus Shagari shows that nothing was personal; give credit where it was due and then move on to govern based on your own policies!

The truth of the matter is that this rare quality in governance as a continuity started and ended with shagari as subsequent regimes undo all works (including good works!) of their predecessors denying them credits they deserve attributing all that is good to themselves and by precedence, waiting to be discredited once they live office. To show that President Shagari decried vindictiveness in governance witness how he courageously took an exception to the *'arrogance and vindictiveness of the administration of President Roland Regan'*. The latter denied Nigeria's US Cargo planes to airlift some communication equipments (in the wake 1983 NITEL fire!) just because the *'Nigerian foreign Minister had previously publicly attacked the US foreign policy on Angola'*. By the way the latter-day distortionists who presented late Ronald Regan as friend of Africa should better ask Shagari who presided during Reagan years!

The most remarkable

attribute of Shagari is horizontal and vertical consensus building and tolerance in a polity rooted in acrimony and mutual war of attrition. For instance, Shagari ably backed Lagos metro-line project notwithstanding that Governor Lateef Jakande was from the 'vicious' opposition party. He exercised considerable Presidential restraint in the face of provocation of the Oyo state government whose officials demolished NPN houses! Today there is considerable war of attrition between Federal and Lagos state government over issues which called for inter-governmental cooperation and solidarity calling to question the wisdom in official celebration of Shagari leadership without following his method.

Lastly remarkable was the labour dimension of Shagari administration. Interestingly, Shagari leadership shared same malaise with most Nigerian leadership which tended to see all trade unionists' actions as being *'politically motivated'* as if contested government policies are less politically motivate!

What distinguished Shagari leadership was his power of delegation, persuasion and negotiation. He reached a number of agreements with labour over wide range of issues that included minimum wage review, car and leave allowances, provident fund and decent work in general. It is to the eternal credit of Shagari's tenure and his team (the notable being Alhaji Shehu Musa!) that there was only one national strike which lasted one day during the second Republic dispensation. According to President Shehu Shagari, in *'...one particular instance in March 1982 I personally intervened to stop a major strike threat'*. Which Heads of State since Shagari have not personally provoked major strikes?

ISSA AREMU  
(issaaremu@Yahoo.com)

***"What distinguished Shagari leadership was his power of delegation, persuasion and negotiation. He reached a number of agreements with labour over wide range of issues that included minimum wage review, car and leave allowances, provident fund and decent work in general."***

## 2007: Atiku's delicate poise

By Austin Nwanuforo

The Vice-President, Alhaji Atiku Abubakar, is undoubtedly a civilian without any military pedigree. But does his being civilian entitle him to an automatic ticket to the office of the President in 2007? The answer is definitely no. The democratic system provides for free and fair contest among politicians offering themselves as candidates. So, when the time comes, it would altogether be left to the Nigerian electorate to determine the suitability of Atiku, among others, to the office of the President.

Incidentally, Atiku's civilian antecedent does not appear to sit well with the cabal of retired generals who believe it is their exclusive right to produce a President with military pedigree for Nigeria in 2007. It is therefore not surprising that certain elements belonging to this cabal of retired generals appear bent on stripping him of all the substance of power that may give him an advantage over military aspirants like Generals Ibrahim Babangida, Muhammadu Buhari and Buba Marwa, to the presidency in 2007.

While preparations for General Olusegun Obasanjo's re-election to the presidency was on in 2003, and under very difficult circumstances, it had seemed injudicious to attempt Atiku's ouster. But once the re-election goal succeeded, some of these retired generals, with some backing from the top, delayed no time in swinging into action. The sponsoring of a new privatisation bill, which fruitlessly sought to remove the Vice-President as Chairman of the National Council on Privatisation (NCP) was the initial attempt in the plot to weaken Atiku before the 2007 presidential election.

Unknown to those Nigerians who have been wondering why there has been far too early a start to the politics of 2007, the reason lies in that perception of Atiku as a threat to the project by which the retired generals want to continue to foist past military rulers on the nation. And such is the gravity of the on-going persecution of the Vice-President that some of the newspapers now have it that the plot is even programmed to include his impeachment and removal from office through the instrumentality of the privatisation probe in the Senate.

But by whatever standards, getting Atiku out of the way by unfounded

allegations of malpractices (even on the floor of the senate) is bound to entail even greater troubles for a nation already destabilized by bad governance. At present, not much is heard of the supposed candidacies of Generals Babangida, Buhari and Marwa. So, the execution of the plot to politically undermine Atiku sits squarely in the National Assembly. Yet even there, the actions so far taken by some Senators led by the Deputy Senate President (Ibrahim Mantu) have done nothing but heat up the polity further.

And looking historically at the present attempt of the cabal of retired generals to use the legislature to fight Atiku, we are reminded of an earlier scheme and what it revealed of the democrat in Atiku as against the dictator in even elected military officers. Soon after the 1999 elections, it had been a decision of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), at the instance of Atiku, that the late Senator Chuba Okadigbo, a long established democrat and strong fighter for the separation of powers in governance, be made the President of the Senate. But in Atiku's absence, Obasanjo was alleged to have given a listening ear too easily to the cabal of retired generals, who feared that with an independent-minded Okadigbo as head of the legislature, the days of manipulating retired military officers into office as presidents of Nigeria were numbered.

Then the emergence of Chief Evan(s) Enwerem, a well-known military apologist, in the office of President of the Senate. Clearly, the lesson of that episode in our political history is that not all, especially retired military officers, who seek to contest elections in the name of democracy, are true

democrats. The episode equally educates us that it is not the case that retired military officers become democrats simply by winning elections.

So, if presidential politics in both the PDP and ANPP happen to boil down to making a choice between the likes of Babangida, Buhari and Marwa, it would be a clear demonstration that these two parties are not forces for genuine democracy in Nigeria.

Indeed, of the four men (Atiku, Babangida, Buhari and Marwa) being touted as presidential materials for the PDP and ANPP in 2007, only Atiku deserves the honour. But as has been stated earlier, that presupposes that the field is just as well as open to all other candidates who possess similar democratic credentials. However, for the time being, as the anti-democratic forces step up their persecution plans against Atiku, public support for the Vice-President needs to become an essential factor in the peoples' endeavour to secure, in some degree, the gains of their fledgling democracy.

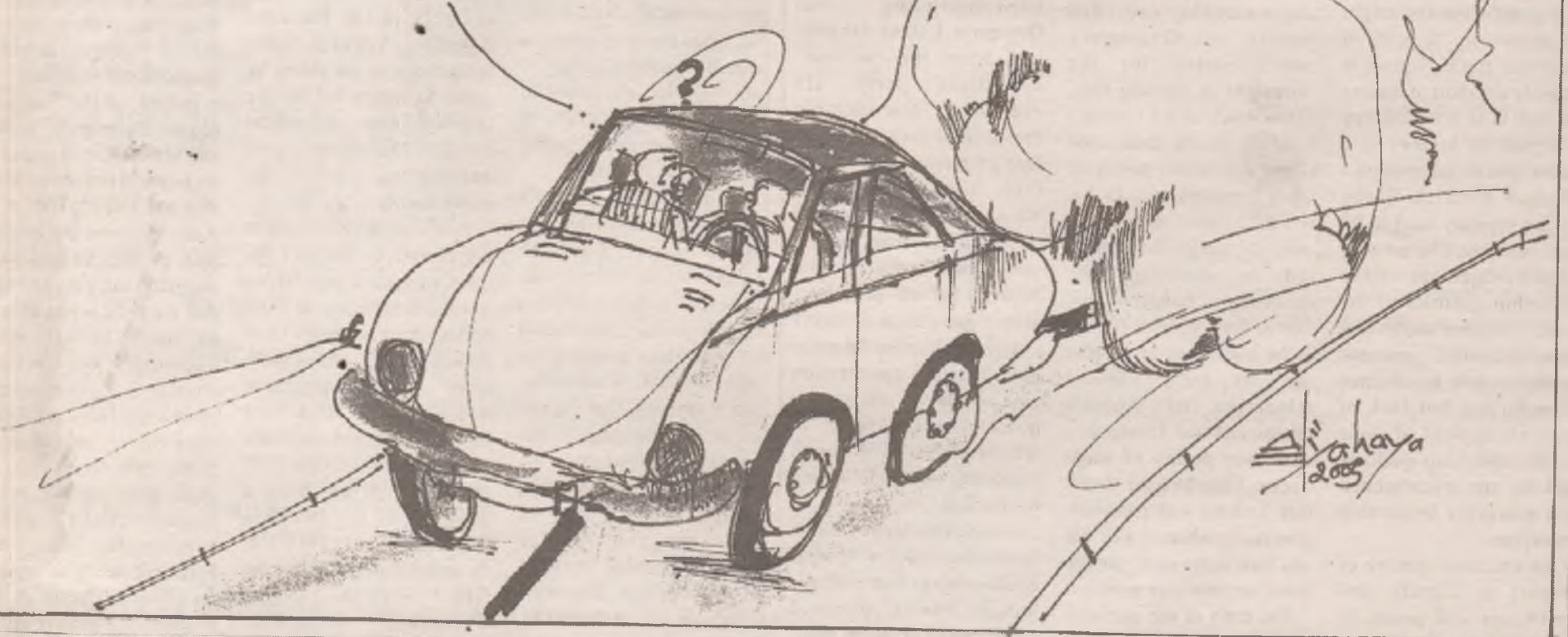
It is surely a very long time between now and 2007. In that case, there seems to be a protracted struggle ahead for those who support Atiku and a civilian leadership of the democratic project in Nigeria. And the strategy for resisting the undemocratic persecution of the Vice-President must be such as to see the struggle for the enthronement of a civilian leadership in 2007 growing stronger throughout the next three years. The democratic stick must not be allowed to fall at any time between now and 2007. Such is the delicate poise of Atiku's situation in the present balance of power in the leadership equation.

Austin Nwanuforo, Plot 561 Sultan Abubakar Way, Wuse Zone 2, Abuja.

***"Clearly, the lesson of that episode in our political history is that not all, especially retired military officers, who seek to contest elections in the name of democracy, are true democrats."***

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## YOUR LETTERS

# Re: Obasanjo Rebuffs Muslim Leaders

To me this shouldn't have been the right time to visit the President or even ask him to make amendment on the list of delegates of the National Confab that is to adjust it to suit the yearning aspiration of my Muslim brothers.

The good thing is that we all know the idea, the brain behind the conference and its motive. We can take from the answer Reverend Father Matthew Kukah, a principal officer and third in command gave when asked about the outcry of Muslims across the country.

The selection of the principal staff and also the happenings within and around the country and other showcases had said it all.

I expected my Muslim brothers to have left the situation; I mean the conference to continue without them asking for a change either in leadership or in additional membership. Since they have voiced out their grievances and the whole country is aware even before the beginning of the conference, I expected the best they should have done is to withdraw so as to save us from this shame because it is an insult, a slap and a disgrace to the Muslim Ummah what Mr. President

the other party will as a matter of fact mock and laugh about this matter, especially the caliber and number of people that paid the visit in addition to the statement Mr. President said: he was disappointed that the Sultan has led such a crowd to him, when he (the President) had at an earlier

meeting, February 28th, explained to the Sultan that religion was not part of the factors considered in nominating delegates.

We shouldn't forget so soon that Allah has Said in His Holy Qur'an: "they are plotting, and We are plotting", and in the end He (Allah) said: "We are the

best of plotters".

Similarly we all know the story of Prophet Musa (ASWS) and Fir'aun (Pharaoh). Pharaoh had been on the thrown for long molesting and torturing the Muslim and the Jews, also for five hundred years he had not even complained of headache, but when Allah's

time came, he became history.

In a nutshell, am not saying they shouldn't have gone, no, but they waited too long and to be fair to him (Mr. President) how is he going to make the amendment now? We ought to have reacted earlier or even refused to participate

so as to show our disagreement with the conference in its totality.

It is know that patience is a virtue and that a clear conscience can bear any trouble. But that does not mean we should sit down and keep quiet while others tramp on our rights simply because we don't have Mr President on our side.

Well, I will say whatever plan will stick to our former National Anthem, NIGERIA WILL REMAIN HEALTHY.

As a reminder, Mr. President should know that this country belongs to all of us no matter the amount of plot. Other presidents will soon emerge, in fact very soon.

What is good for the goose is said to also be good for the gander. Let there not be hoos and boos when it is our turn to serve and also televise our Friday prayers or even daily prayers on national television and even radio stations everyday.

Adams Idris (Prince), No. 3 Maianguwa Idi Road, Abakwa, Kaduna

## Re: The scramble for Nigeria

I have just read your article in the Daily Trust on Monday and I must say thank you for your comments, as you can see from my name, I am a Nigerian from the South-West, I am right in saying we are not as homogenous as people think. Even the term Yoruba and the classical language are recent inventions. Modern Yoruba is developed from the classical Oyo dialect which is just one of the sub-groups.

Yoruba is a linguistic more than tribal idea. Most Yoruba share a tribal and linguistic history with the Igala from whom there was a split thousands of years ago. If so, do we Yorubas realise that we once lived in the part of Nigeria called the North. Education of both the South and North is key. But it is an education about

uses and an appreciation of each others role and lifestyle.

Like Minister Bamanga Tukur observed, we Africans are all just members of the same race. With the world discriminating against us daily, do we not realise we have to sort out our problems and live together as one?

I identify with your comments and even posit

further that the North's cultural base will stand in good stead in the coming years. Most Nigerians know that the values of the average Northerner are sound. I have enjoyed friendship with many people from the North of this our country and find them to be graceful people, I hope we can continue to keep our country united.

We must apologise on behalf of our leaders from both sides who did not rise above their pettiness in shaping Nigeria's future. The main problem in Nigeria has been the emergence of a new kind of political animal. One without grace, dignity or courage. I hope your paper will encourage men of vision and not allow itself to be the voice of the animals in human skin who are trying to destroy us.

Please visit <http://www.ayetoro.com/index2.htm> and listen to some good music to soothe you.

Best wishes.  
Funsho Ogundipe,  
olufunshoogundipe@hotmail.com

## Re: Open letter to Gov Kure, my error

The above article was published by your reputable newspaper on Wednesday, March 9, 2005. In the article, I had a misinformation about one of the tertiary institutions I made mention of. I said that the College of Arabic and Islamic Studies (CAIS) is privately-owned because of the information and/or

publication of this article that information reached me that the school is owned by the Niger state Government. Therefore, I wish to state that CAIS is not private but owned by Niger state government. Any inconvenience that might have been caused is highly regretted.

Al-hassan M. Isah, Wa-

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

# Opinion

## Confab: For Northern delegates' eyes only

By Bello Sahabi

It is not my intention to question the relevance or otherwise of the Conference or the criteria adopted in the selection of the participants, including its leadership, but to put forward some few words of advice for delegates representing the North.

First, all attempts to re-draw the geographical boundaries of the country must be vehemently rejected. In this regard, the calls for ethnic nationalities and ethnically-biased agenda should be avoided. After all, as Bala Usman asserts, the campaign of ethnic nationalities in Nigeria lack historical legitimacy. Realities in Nigeria today in terms of integration (be it in culture, politics, religion, settlement) that are deep rooted in our history cannot be denied. Each state or geo-political zone consists of a number of ethnic, cultural, or religious groups/territories.

In the North Central Zone alone, there are some 180 ethnic groups of different religious orientations. This, it will surely be futile attempts to address the problems of the zone based on ethnic considerations. In terms of the so-called autonomy, it doesn't make sense creating some 180 LGAs (not to mention states) in the zone. In fact, the ethnic groups are so mixed up that Nigeria is yet to produce a genius geographer or boundary

drawer that can re-draw the boundaries of these groups along ethnic lines.

The historical fact in support of the above could be seen in the processes of state formations and composition of the various pre-colonial political entities we had. A glimpse of history of each of our pre-colonial Kingdom/Empire would show that each was composed of people of different ethno-cultural backgrounds. So, the process of cultural integration amongst Nigerians started long before colonial period. Hence, it is quite disturbing the way and manner the elites, political class and military officers (serving and retired) instead of upholding this historical fact to help foster national unity turn round to negate it by constant emphasis on factors of diversity by way of calls for ethnic nationalities or religious identities which allow for ethnic perpetual dominance of the divided Nigerian groups.

Next, let our delegates realize the real unifying factors among most Nigerians. Fundamental issues such as poverty, unemployment, economic hardships brought about by inconsistent government policies over the years, the militarisation of our democracy, declining state of education, health and industrial sectors have profound negative

effect on the masses.

The issues highlighted above are day-by-day unifying Nigerians of diverse religious, cultural and geographical backgrounds. That while the dominant elites are strategizing their perpetual blunder of show of power, little did they realize that the elites are sitting on a timed-bomb. In other words, peoples' anger and frustration over the way they are exploited and rendered vulnerable to hunger, disease and above all politically irrelevant, may end up in unifying them to strategise their revolutionary path; to pull down the once-upon-all-powerful elites and their collaborators.

To avoid Nigeria reaching this stage, it is expected of the delegates to put heads together to review the current state of affairs as they relate to the operation of this democracy; intolerable economic policies; poverty, unemployment, poor state of our educational, health and industrial institutions with a view to arriving at solutions. Pertinent questions such as "why is the North's standard of education falling?", "Why are our hospitals still mere consulting clinics?", "why are our industries closed down day by day?", "How safe is Nigeria and why is each one of us not secured?" These are national questions that bother all Nigerians. Northern delegates and indeed

those from other states and geo-political zones must attempt searching for solutions to.

This brings us to the question of the role of Petroleum and agriculture in our national economy. It is unfortunate that the discovery of this black gold is a ruin instead of blessing to Nigeria. Oil has not only made us neglect agriculture which was the backbone of our economy up to early 1970s but its earnings enabled us put in place initial infrastructures, but its politics is now endangering the survival of our federation. The talks about resource control come about only now, why was this not an issue before independence?

To address this problem, delegates should emphasise on a number of possible solutions. First, they should review the onshore/offshore dichotomy law now inoperative and take a second look at its implication on the North in particular and the nation in general. The key issue is survival of copious Nigerians.

Second, other revenue earnings and natural endowments in all geo-political zones should be explored and tapped for the development of not only individual zones but also the country as a whole. Here, the Northern delegates need to canvass for speedy oil exploration in areas such as Lake Chad Basin and Bauchi Plateau. Also, mineral deposits scattered

in various places in the North should be explored for exploitation.

Third, is for them to come up with a blueprint on rural agricultural, which must not only involve the rural dwellers but also provide them with farming incentives. That way, the lost glory of agriculture in Nigeria could be restored. Again, the Groundnuts Pyramids and Cocoa Houses could resurface.

Fourth, necessary mechanism should be put in place to expand and manage our natural resources for efficient utilization. Our rivers, dams, forest reserves and so on are also economic assets that, if optimally utilized could help develop our economy and upgrade our standard of living.

At regional level, the delegates must focus on our peculiarities. In this regard, our historical consciousness must be refreshed. It is expected that the delegates, under normal circumstances, may be divided in their discussion of national issues. However, they must try to avoid the divisive politics in the garb of sectionalism, which has for some time now been employed by the political elite to destabilize the regions for their selfish ends.

Where, however, the onshore/offshore law gains upper hand, then our delegates must bargain by pushing forward derivation schemes to

benefit the North. Here, it is imperative that the sound of HYPADEC is re-echoed loudly at the conference. The Northwest in particular, and North in general, has a lot to gain from this project considering the importance of the Kainji button it holds.

Next, is the peculiar problem of environmental degradation caused by desert encroachment. Delegates from other parts of the country need to be enlightened on the dangers posed by the sand dunes and infertility of soil on communities along Nigeria/Niger border as a result of speedy encroachment of the desert. Based on this, therefore, there is urgent need to tackle the situation by way of setting up a Special Commission to handle such environmental degradation.

Then, there is the problem of poverty and illiteracy in the region. Realistic policies should be conceived to take care of the North's unique problems as they relate to poverty level and the need to accelerate bridging the gap in educational imbalance currently existing between the region and other regions. Also, the delegates must not forget to address the primary causes of poverty to the level associated with north alone, leading to the daily increase of *almajiranci* among others.

Bello Sahabi B/Kebbi, Murtala Muhammed Airport Road, Lagos

## Gov Sheriff and Kumalia's conspiracy theory

By Mustapha Fannarumbi

The recent allegation by House of Representatives member representing Maiduguri Metropolitan Constituency, Alhaji Mustapha Fannarumbi, that Governor Ali Sheriff and the late Governor, Alhaji M. M. Kumalia, conspired to overthrow the late Governor, Alhaji M. M. Kumalia, is a conspiracy theory.

The late Governor, Alhaji M. M. Kumalia, was a man of peace, justice and fairness. He was a man who was loved and respected by all. He was a man who was a true leader. He was a man who was a true patriot. He was a man who was a true hero.

The late Governor, Alhaji M. M. Kumalia, was a man of peace, justice and fairness. He was a man who was loved and respected by all. He was a man who was a true leader. He was a man who was a true patriot. He was a man who was a true hero.

The ANPP in Borno State is largely peaceful, except, of course, for the recent attempt by the people of the Maiduguri Metropolitan Federal Constituency, to recall Kumalia who, in the eyes of the people, is guilty of non-performance and therefore deserves to be recalled in order to do away with any act that could undermine the party and the government of Ali Sheriff. The party cannot be sacrificed on the altar of unjustifiable quest to position oneself as the anointed governorship flag bearer in 2007. Other than this little distraction which is immaterial, the party has always

been peaceful, just, and powerful and you can feel it in the way and manner the party has dealt with the late Governor, Alhaji M. M. Kumalia, and the late Governor, Alhaji M. M. Kumalia.

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When he was enjoying Sheriff's magnanimity since 1999, Kumalia did not see anything wrong with the way and manner the party was run until now that he is sailing close to the end of his tenure in the National Assembly. It is evident that he is now trying to carry relevance and so he sees a party being turned into a family estate. There is also this mischief

over Maiduguri that the State party chairman is an inmate to the governor's inflow, but what on earth is wrong with the late Governor, Alhaji M. M. Kumalia, and the late Governor, Alhaji M. M. Kumalia, who were both men of peace, justice and fairness.

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nobody is picking any bones out of that. The ANPP chairman in Horno State is a founding member of the party, had traversed all the nooks and crannies of the state, sleeping it out in the bush under terrible conditions and nobody raised any eyebrow then. Now that he has contested and won the chairmanship of the party, some funny elements are crying blue murder. This is a man that, long before now, contested and won an election as chairman of Ngala Local Government—a term he served out successfully. He was adjudged as one of the most active then. He was also a one-time deputy secretary of the ANPP in the State even before the advent of this administration. It is clear that the chairman has paid his dues, and is therefore competent, on his own merit, to occupy any elective post.

maintain his own seedlings. The allegation that he was selected and not elected was a baseless and unfounded conspiracy theory. The late Governor, Alhaji M. M. Kumalia, was a man of peace, justice and fairness. He was a man who was loved and respected by all. He was a man who was a true leader. He was a man who was a true patriot. He was a man who was a true hero.

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in any case, recalling a representative is provided for in the constitution and is

directors—democratic and normal. With a water-tight case against him the resolve to recall him is non-negotiable.

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The fear about the fate of the party in the light of imposing wrangling is unfounded. The ANPP is waxing stronger now. The problem at the national secretariat has been effectively resolved. Just recently, the National Chairman, Chief Etiebet, led other party executive members including the national Vice Chairman (North) General Usman to Maiduguri where the two of them commissioned a number of projects and laid the foundation stone of others. There is no better testimony that the problem of leadership in the ANPP has been resolved, than their show of oneness as demonstrated in Maiduguri. There are parties that are not yet out of their leadership crisis: the PDP and APC, are classical examples

of parties in deep trouble, yet nobody is taking their own problem as irremediable. In Borno, ANPP need not apologise for not being able to recall Governor Sheriff. The party is still strong and will continue to be strong.

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Fannarumbi writes from Levamis Building, Maiduguri, Borno State



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**Long Live the Ganuwan Katsina!**



His Excellency  
**Chief D.S.P. Alamiyeseigha, Ph.D. (JP)**  
 (Ganuwan Katsina)  
 Governor of Bayelsa State

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# TSUNAMI DISASTER RELIEF COMMITTEE

## APPRECIATION

On behalf of the Co-Chairmen, (the Sultan of Sokoto, Alhaji Muhammadu Maccido CFR, Archbishop Peter Akinola CON, President of Christian Association of Nigeria, CAN), entire members of Tsunami Disaster Relief Fund, His Excellency Obong Victor Attah, Executive Governor of Akwa Ibom State, (Chairman contact Sub-Committee) and members of the Dinner Sub-Committee, I wish to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to the President, Commander- In-Chief of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo GCFR and all those who accompanied him to the Committee's Fund Raising Dinner at the Banquet Hall of Aso Rock Villa Friday 4th March, 2005.

The Committee is very thankful to the thirty-six (36) State Governors and Chairman, Federal Capital Development Authority, Chairman, Glo Mobile phone, Otumba Mike Adenuga, Management and Staff of First Bank, Afri-Bank, Habib Bank and Zenith Bank. Special thanks goes to Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) for its kind gesture. The Committee also appreciates the kind assistance of Chanchangi, Space World, ADC, EAS Airlines and host of several others who attended the dinner and contributed generously towards finding succour to the victims of the Tsunami disaster. The kind donations of Afri Jet services, local governments in Kaduna State, Senator David Dafinone, the Erelu of Lagos, Chief Abiola Dosumu, Arc. M.N. Sambo, Alh. Shagalinku and Kamal of Double Four are also appreciated.

The donation of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) through their respective Chairmen, Senator Ahmadu Ali CON and Dr. Don Etebiet are appreciated. The same thanks go to members of National Assembly, Sokoto, Kano and Zauzau Emirate Councils, Church of Nigerian Anglican Communion and Muslim Society of Sokoto State, Staff of the State House and Kano Youth whose financial donations will go along way in alleviating the suffering of the victims.

The Committee is immensely appreciative of the role of the Media, both electronic and print for contributing towards the success of the event.

We also seize this opportunity to appeal to individuals and corporate bodies who made pledges to please endeavour to redeem same before the end of this month. Such contribution should be paid into accounts dedicated to the fund at Zenith, First Bank or Habib Bank respectively.

May Almighty God abundantly bless and reward you all. Amen.

**SIGNED**

**His Excellency**

**MALLAM IBRAHIM SHEKARAU**

**Executive Governor, Kano State.**

**Chairman - Publicity Sub-Committee**

# Trust International

World Report



A Chinese nurse takes care of conjoined twins at a hospital in Hefei, central China's Anhui province recently. The babies, deserted by their mother in a street in Hefei last December, share the same heart and have major respiratory problems. Their mother reclaimed her children last Monday. The babies will be sent to a hospital in Shanghai for an overall health check before a separation operation is performed.

## UK army may recruit more Muslims

The chief of the UK's armed forces has appealed for more Muslim recruits in a bid to better reflect modern Britain.

Chief of Defence Staff General Sir Michael Walker promised "fulfilling careers and high-quality training" for recruits in a speech to Muslim leaders.

He told the Muslim Council of Britain in London that he wanted the armed forces to reflect "religious, cultural and ethnic diversity".

Currently only 300 members of Britain's armed forces are registered Muslims.

Sir Michael emphasised his "personal commitment" to creating more diverse armed forces.

He also paid tribute to the work the council had done in helping build "better community relations and increase knowledge and understanding of the Muslim faith within British society."

"The MCB has made a real and lasting contribution to the creation of a just and tolerant society," he said.

The general's appearance at the MCB meeting was part of the Ministry of Defence's attempts to show they were

serious about recruiting more Muslims.

Iqbal Sacranie, secretary general of the MCB, praised initiatives to get more Muslims serving.

"The MCB welcomes moves by our Armed Forces towards greater recognition of the needs of its Muslim recruits," he said.

"The establishment of the post of a Muslim adviser to the MoD and the recently proposed appointment of an

imam to cater for the spiritual welfare of British Muslim recruits are both commendable steps," he said.

Mr Sacranie said he hoped Muslims would become as much a part of the military as they had other areas of British society.

But Mr Sacranie also made allusions to recent events involving mistreatment of Muslim prisoners in Iraq by British troops when talking about Muslim involvement in British military operations.

## Eight killed in US Church attack

Seven people have been shot dead and several others hurt by a gunman who opened fire at a US church service.

The gunman shot and killed himself after the shooting spree.

The incident happened at about 1300 (1900 GMT) on Saturday at the Sheraton Hotel in Brookfield, Wisconsin, where the service was regularly staged.

Four died at the scene and three others died later of their injuries, police said. They ranged in age from teenagers to over-60s.

Police said they were not seeking anyone else in connection with the shootings.

"There is nobody else being sought at this time as a suspect," Daniel Tushaus of the Brookfield Police Department told the Associated Press news agency.

The gunman was described as a 45-year-old man who had been affiliated with the Living Church of God, which met at the hotel every Saturday morning for several years.

Shocked survivors were eventually led from the hotel.

The group is an evangelical church that observes the Sabbath on Saturday, not Sunday.

There was no immediate indication of a motive, Mr Tushaus said, adding that police were searching the man's home in the nearby area of New Berlin.

Two boys aged 15 and 17, a 72-year-old man and a 55-year-old woman died at the hotel. Three men ranging in age from 44 to 58 died later at a hospital, AP reported.

Four others - two men, a 20-year-old woman and a 10-year-old girl - remained in a serious condition in hospital.

Brookfield is a western suburb of the city of Milwaukee.

The Living Church of God said it operates in North and

South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia.

It has scores of ordained ministers and more than 200 congregations, it says.

## Ukraine seeks technology ties with Nigeria

By Yusha'u Adamu Ibrahim  
Correspondent Kano

The Ukrainian Ambassador to Nigeria, Mr. Oleg Skoropad in Kano state stated that his country is looking forward to bringing its technology to Nigeria with a view to boosting Nigerian technology.

Mr. Oleg who was speaking at Kano state Government House when he paid a courtesy visit to the state governor, Mallam

Ibrahim Shekarau, also described Nigeria as the biggest business part of Ukraine in Africa and pledged to encourage his country's businessmen to develop business partnership with Kano moguls.

The ambassador then offered an invitation to the governor to visit Ukraine for him to contact various business communities with a view to strengthening

business relationship between the two governments.

Responding, Governor Ibrahim Shekarau of Kano state pledged to cooperate with the Ukraine governor to boost business activities to the state, in addition to strengthening cordial relationship between the business communities of the two countries.

Governor Shekarau stated that his administration is working hard towards providing more business opportunities to the state.

Governor Shekarau also observed that Ukraine and Nigeria have a lot to share in terms of agriculture and technology, and therefore called on the two countries to maintain a cordial existing relationship that is already between them.

## Historic election begins in Central African

About 1.5m people in the Central African Republic are voting in polls to end two years of military rule.

The incumbent president and favourite, former army general Francois Bozize, ousted the unpopular Ange-Felix Patasse in a coup in 2003.

He is favourite to win and claims the backing of 30 parties, but does face genuine opposition at the polls.

The CAR has a chequered history of coups and army mutinies, as well as endemic corruption.

There have been some reports of clashes between supporters of Mr Bozize and his main challenger Andre Kolingba during the build-up to polling day.

As well as choosing from 11 presidential candidates, voters will elect a new 105-seat national assembly. A high turnout is expected at the country's 4,000 polling stations.

But what the losers of the presidential elections will do is the worrying question in an

African country which so far remains a prime example of failure, our correspondent said.

In the biggest campaign rally, Mr Bozize - whose campaign slogan is "Bozize, the man for peace" - addressed more than 5,000 supporters, asking them for their vote.

One of his main rivals in the presidential contest - Martin Ziguele, who served as prime minister under Mr Patasse - also held a mass meeting in Bangui on the last day of campaigning.

The army, which has a long history of coups and mutinies in CAR, has not publicly backed any candidate, although two - Mr Kolingba and Mr Bozize - have strong military links.

Mr Bozize was roundly condemned internationally when he seized power in a military coup, but he has gradually gained approval at home after restoring security to the capital, paying wage arrears and launching an anti-corruption drive.

## Egypt frees top liberal on bail

The head of a new Egyptian liberal party has been freed on bail nearly six weeks after being arrested for allegedly forging election papers.

Supporters of Ayman Nour, leader of the Party of Tomorrow and a possible contender for the presidency, insist charges against him were trumped up.

He was freed along with five others also suspected of forging papers to get the new party registered.

Washington has expressed concern over the treatment of Mr Nour.

The six detainees were freed on bail of 10,000 Egyptian pounds (\$1,724) each and the investigation is continuing, Egyptian chief prosecutor Maher Abdel-Wahed told reporters in Cairo.

There was however, he said, "no longer any reason for [Mr Nour's] preventive detention".

Conveying Washington's concern, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice had recently expressed the hope that the issue would be "resolved soon".

Nour's party was only launched in October.

Egyptian officials have insisted the case is a legal, not political, matter.

Police had seized Mr Nour, an MP, as he left parliament on 29 January and he was accused of forging all but 14 of more than 2,000 signatures required to form his party.

Some analysts believe Mr Nour, a former journalist, lawyer and publisher, possesses the necessary profile to make substantial inroads against the president.

## Africa casts doubt on Blair's

commission report

African leaders have offered a cautious welcome to the findings of the UK-led Commission for Africa, which urges a huge increase in aid donations.

It also said African leaders must end corruption and improve governance.

Wealthy nations are asked to double aid to the continent,

adding £30bn (\$50bn) a year over 10 years.

Unveiling the report, UK Prime Minister Tony Blair said reducing poverty in Africa was "the fundamental challenge of our generation".

And in an impassioned plea, rock star and aid campaigner Bob Geldof urged rich countries to "get real" or be shamed forever.

Hopefully, the wish list can be translated into genuine action.

"Africa can change for the better and the report shows how," Mr Blair said at a news conference in London to launch the report.

"There can be no excuse, no defence, no justification for the plight of millions of our fellow beings in Africa today," he said.

He set up the commission, which includes several African leaders and Mr Geldof, in February 2004 and promised to change UK policy to follow the report's recommendations.

Adrian Lovett, of anti-poverty group Oxfam, said the report could be a "rallying call for a generation" but could easily end up gathering dust.

"It's now up to world leaders to make that choice,"

he said.

"In the long term, history will judge this report not just by its content but by its capacity to deliver genuine change."

Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, who launched the report in Ethiopia, said it represented "a moment of awakening for Africa".

He said it was now up to the people of Africa, along with those in the developed world, to make sure the conclusions were implemented.

But South African President Thabo Mbeki warned: "It must translate not into a lot of paper, but into a firm, serious programme of action."

## Somali Muslim workers 'fired' over prayers

Thirty Somali Muslim workers lost their job at Dell Computer's Nashville plant (US firm) for praying during their working hours.

One of the fired workers, Abdi H. Nuur, said that there were forced to choose between their religion and their job.

"They told us that we cannot pray at sunset," Nuur said. "They told us that we would have to wait for our break."

Nuur explained that while some of Islam's five daily prayer times are somewhat flexible, the sunset prayer is not.

Mark Drury, a Dell spokesman refused to comment on the incident, saying that the company didn't receive a specific complaint.

The fired workers gathered at the Somali Community Centre on Thompson Lane earlier this week to discuss their situation.

Some want to return to their job while others are angry, saying that they were forced to leave suddenly and wouldn't consider a return, even if the company offered.

"They told us, if we pray, we're going to be fired," Nuur said.

Abdishakur Ibrahim, The imam at a Nashville mosque who has interfered in similar cases, said that "Islam is a religion where there is no separation between faith and life. In Islam there are specific times when you must pray. And for Muslims, not to pray is to disobey God."

# Trust International

## Middle East



Iraqis try to push a bus through floodwaters, following heavy rains over the last few days, in the Sadr City area of Baghdad, Iraq ...Saturday.

## Powerful quake jolts Iran

An earthquake measuring 5.9 on the Richter scale has hit a sparsely populated area in south-eastern Iran, but no casualties have been reported.

Iran state television said the tremor struck just after 7am (0331 GMT) on Sunday and was centred close to the town of Saravan, close to Iran's borders with Pakistan and Afghanistan.

No casualties were immediately reported, although the television said some houses were partly damaged, with windows broken. The town

lies 1350km southeast of the capital, Tehran.

"The windows of some homes were smashed and some walls were damaged," said Interior Ministry spokesman Jahanbakhsh Khanjani.

"As it was in a sparsely populated area we are not expecting many deaths or casualties," he added.

Iranian authorities said

## ...as thousands flee after floods

Three people are reported to have died and thousands have fled their homes as a result of

rescue teams were dispatched to the area to evaluate the situation and to search for victims.

Sunday's earthquake is the second to hit Iran in less than a month after a powerful tremor with a magnitude of 6.4 struck the neighbouring Kerman province on 22 February, killing more than 600 people and destroying several villages.

floods in Iran.

The rising waters have been caused by continuous rain, some of the heaviest in the past three decades.

This rain and the floods it has caused have affected most of the country but the provinces in the west and north east have been hit particularly hard.

About 100 villages have been flooded in the western province of Lorestan.

Some of them are reported to have completely disappeared under the water.

Officials in the province have called on people to move into temporary shelters which are being set up in schools and university buildings across the affected areas.

The rain that started two days ago has also caused serious landslides damaging several major dams and bridges.

Roads and railway links have been blocked and water supplies cut off in some of the provinces north west of the capital.

And in the northern outskirts of Teheran itself, local officials have warned that some buildings may collapse and called on residents to leave them.

Many fear the situation could get worse as the rain is expected to continue

## Iran rejects US nuclear incentive

Iran has rejected a new US policy offering economic incentives to the Islamic state to give up its nuclear enrichment programme.

"No pressure, bribe or threat can make Iran give up its legitimate right" to use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, said an Iranian spokesman.

President George W Bush announced the major change in US policy on Friday.

He said the US would back European talks to resolve the stand-off over Iran's nuclear issue.

His Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, announced the lifting of a decade-long block on Iran's membership of the World Trade Organization, and objections to Tehran obtaining parts for commercial planes.

Washington accuses Iran of using its nuclear enrichment programme as a cover for developing nuclear weapons.

Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi told reporters on Saturday that "the remedying of some of the faults and the addressing some of the restrictions that were imposed on the Islamic Republic of Iran without any cause will not prevent Iran from getting its legitimate right" to develop a nuclear energy capability.

"The restrictions regarding [aircraft] spare parts that were of no military use should have not been imposed from the beginning, and lifting them is not an incentive," Mr Asefi said.

"Getting into the WTO is

the right of all countries of the world," he said.

Tehran denies seeking nuclear weapons, but has suspended uranium enrichment after negotiations with France, Germany and the UK.

The US and European Union want that move made permanent, and have threatened to seek United Nations sanctions if Iran does not comply.

There have been suggestions that the US is planning to use military force against Iran's suspected nuclear weapons facilities.

If the current negotiations fail, and the issue goes to the Security Council, that would represent a hardening of the

European position and would be worrying for Iran, says the BBC's Frances Harrison in Tehran.

US President George W Bush said on Friday: "I'm pleased that we are speaking with one voice with our European friends."

I look forward to working with our European friends to make it abundantly clear to the Iranian regime that the free world will not tolerate them having a nuclear weapon.

"I look forward to working with our European friends to make it abundantly clear to the Iranian regime that the free world will not tolerate them having a nuclear weapon."

## Fighters killed in Saudi Arabian raid

Two people have been killed and a suspected insurgent has been captured in a shootout in the Red Sea city of Jeddah, a Saudi Arabian Interior Ministry spokesman has said.

Five security officers were also slightly wounded in the raid that took place in a northern neighbourhood of Jeddah, Brigadier Mansur al-Turki said.

"One man, who has not yet been confirmed as a wanted militant, was killed, while a man wanted for security-related matters was captured in the security operation," on Sunday morning, al-Turki said.

"A civilian woman was also killed in the shootout,"

he added.

The incident came less than a week after the US embassy in Saudi Arabia issued a warning of a heightened threat in Jeddah, where fighters had attacked a US mission three months ago.

Saudi Arabia has been battling dissident fighters for nearly two years. Despite recent successes by security forces, diplomats say they believe insurgents are planning further attacks in the world's biggest oil exporter.

Riyadh has vowed to uproot those it says are al-Qaida fighters who aim to topple Saudi Arabia's pro-Western monarchy, and expel Westerners from the birthplace of Islam.

At least 170 people have been killed in the wave of violence since May 2003.

## US contractors killed in Iraqi blast

Two US contractors, working for the Blackwater security firm, have been killed and a third wounded in a roadside bomb blast just south of Baghdad, a US embassy official has said.

"It happened around 2pm (1100 GMT) on the road to al-Hilla. Two Blackwater employees were killed by an improvised explosive device," said US embassy spokesman Bob Callahan on Sunday.

The vehicle had just left Baghdad on Saturday when it was hit by the bomb, Callahan said.

Blackwater, which provides security for US officials in Iraq, lost four employees in Falluja last March when a bomb exploded and their bodies were mutilated by an angry mob.

At least 209 foreign contractors have been killed in Iraq, according to a tally compiled by Iraq Coalition Casualty Count, an independent

body that tracks fatalities of the US-led alliance in Iraq.

Meanwhile, a US soldier was killed in a small arms fire attack in northern Iraq, the US command said on Sunday.

The Task Force Freedom soldier was killed late on Saturday in Mosul, 360km northwest of Baghdad, the military said in a statement.

"The Soldiers of Task Force Freedom send their condolences to the family of the deceased," the statement said.

Fighters have been active in Mosul in recent months, launching near-daily attacks on US troops and their Iraqi allies in the city.

As of Saturday, at least 1513 members of the US military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1153 died as a result of hostile action, according to the US Defence Department.



### REQUIRED TECHNOLOGIES TO MAINTAIN AND SUPPORT THE KANO EDUCATION MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (EMIS)

The following technologies have been used in the implementation of different features of an education database; a reputable and proficient company is required to maintain it.

Proficiency in the following technologies is needed:

- Development in Java, Java Server Pages (JSP), Servlet, JavaBeans and Java Server Pages Standard Tag Library (JSTL).
- Knowledge of Hibernate (an object/relational persistence and query service for Java)
- Knowledge of CEWOLF (Chart Enabling Web Object Framework). This class has been used to create charts and graphic reports.
- Knowledge of MySQL Server database.
- Installation and configuration of Tomcat Server.
- Knowledge of XML, HTML and CSS.
- IP Protocols: FTP, HTTP

Firms who are competent in the technologies used for the EMIS are to contact the:-

Project Coordinator EMIS,  
State Primary Education Board,  
B.U.K Road, Kano.

Email: babazaks@yahoo.com Tel: 08036362063

All applications with profiles must be received not later than 2 weeks after this publication.

# FEATURE

## 144 years of chequered censuses

By Benjamin Auta,  
Crime Reporter

The main reason for conducting a census in every country in the world is to give planners and policy makers relevant data upon which plans and policies are made to ensure fairness, justice and equity in national development.

However, ethnic or religious groups claimed after every census that figures were either below or above what they were. They were, therefore, not reliable for the sharing of national resources. Thirteen years after the last head count, Nigerians are being saddled with the question of "how many are we", which the present National population commission (NPC), chairman Chief Samaila Danko Makama, Ubandoman Pyem is seriously trying to answer.

A cursory look at the first recorded census in the country reveals a chequered history which is smeared with disagreements and litigations from various ethno-religious groups in the country. The first census that took place in the country was in Lagos colony in 1861 when the colonialists undertook to count the people in its colony. Thus they continued regularly for almost one hundred years in the country.

There were censuses in 1866, 1871, 1881, 1891 and 1901 all in the defunct Lagos colony. However, in 1921 the first National census in both the northern and southern protectorate was conducted and the exercise, which spanned a total of 2 years, covered all townships and provinces in the country.

Another census was conducted in 1931 while the 1941 census was disrupted by the advent of the Second World War. But between 1951 and 1953 other rounds of head count were held. The first post-independence census was held in 1962 which was a source of disputes for various groups in the country. The federal government was forced to cancel it and order a fresh head count in 1963 which was further marred by more wrangling over figures presented by the census board.

Those disputes were however fired by the assertions by some international and local demographers, who were of the view that the figures of the census were inflated by about 14%. This made the Eastern and Western regional governments to institute a suit against the results but lost the case at the Federal High Court which made the results official tender for

usage in all government plannings.

By 1973 General Yakubu Gowon conducted another head count on which was

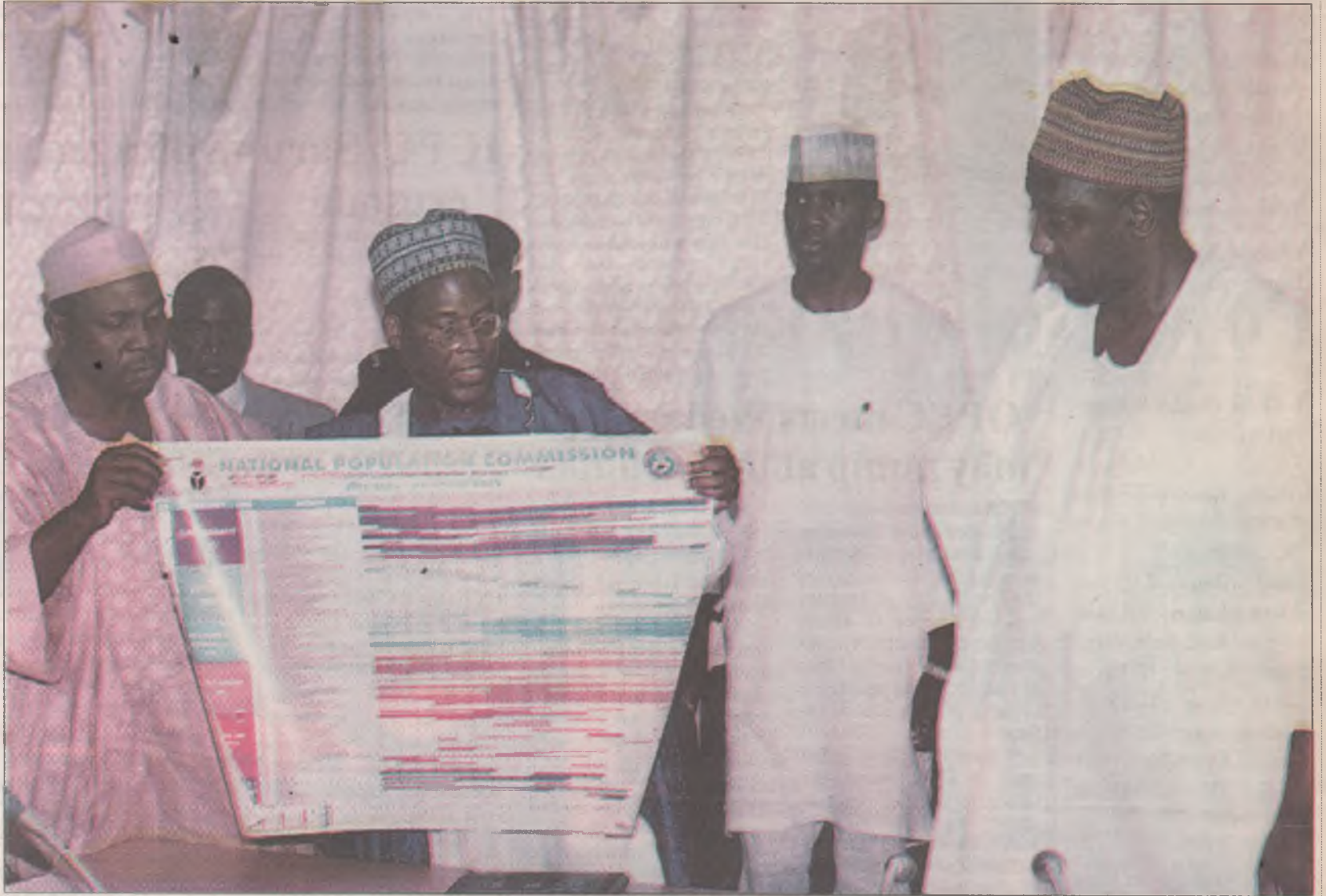
been traversing the length and breadth of the country on advocacy since the official inauguration of the enlightenment campaign of the 2005 population and housing

each playing unique but often complimentary roles in the process.

However, while trying to make the 2005 census credible, watchers have

should be revisited as the problem of ethno-religious issues has been laid to rest by the council of state which has described them as a no go areas in the questionnaire to be administered.

proper logistics and appropriate mapping of areas as the Emir of Yauri, Alhaji Mohammed Zayyanu Abdullahi, remarked that obsolete maps are still being used in some places which



NPC chairman, Chief Sama'ila D. Makama, presenting a demographic data report from July 2004 - December 2005 to the deputy governor of Kebbi State.

also marred by charges of fraudulent figures. And in 1991, the nation undertook another head count during the regime of Gen. Ibrahim Babangida about two decades after the last head count. Even though the results were not contested in the court of law they nonetheless attracted some hard knocks from critics who however, said that the results might be a true reflection of things.

According to a United Nations population projection in 1994, Nigeria's population was expected to grow rapidly. In 2005 the country's population is expected to grow five times than the normal. However, the 1994 UN assessment data made available indicates that Nigeria's total population was 20million less than estimated in 1992. This means that data for projection must be revised downwards. It also called to mind that such exercises always cause apprehension as the possible outcome might be enveloped in divided views from critics.

However, to make this year's census a success, the chairman of the NPC, Chief Samaila Danko Makama, has

census by President Olusegun Obasanjo.

Different phases of Enumeration Area Demarcation (EAD) has been done with the last ending in July this year. Notable achievement by the first two phases of EAD is the National Demographic survey on health and education which was sponsored by the United States department of International development at a cost of one hundred million dollars in the country.

Another big boost in this direction is the European Union donation of N20billion to the commission, which covers about 50 per cent of the census exercise cost for the provision of materials and salaries/allowances of enumerators.

In his recent advocacy visits to the North Western part of the country, Makama acknowledged that the commission was faced with the long and arduous task of a successful head count in 2005. He admitted that it could not be undertaken by the commission alone. He said that a modern census of the culmination of collaborative efforts among partners with

posited that the pre-test and trial census to be conducted by the commission must be used in either solving problems or in sorting out grey areas the commission think will have negative effect on the census proper.

Technical problems such as the random sampling to be employed by the commission

Another issue to be considered is the early release of census laws for the ordinary man to be educated while continuous advocacy and advertisement should be intensified as people, more especially in rural areas, must be educated.

The commission should also not forget the issue of

have posed some problems to both officials of the commission and concerned leaders in some parts of the country.

The commission should ensure that it does not conduct the exercise during pilgrimage, migration and national events as doing so can affect its credibility.



NPC chairman, Chief Sama'ila D. Makama, presenting a demographic data report from July 2004 - December 2005 to the Sokoto state governor, Alhaji Atahiru Bafarawa.

# Business Trust

## Today's flight schedule

### Albarka Air

Lagos - Abuja	07:20
	15:15
	13:00
Abuja - Lagos	8:45a.m.
	11:00
	13:15
	17:00
Maiduguri - Abuja	06:50
Abuja - Maid	17:00
Lagos - Yola	1:00 p.m.
Abuja - Yola	14:30
Yola - Abuja	15:30
Yola - Lagos	4:00 p.m.

### Chanchangi Airlines

Lagos - Abuj	8:15a.m.
	11:00a.m.
	12:10p.m.
	4:45p.m.
Kaduna - Lagos	8:30a.m.
P/H - Lagos	9:00a.m.
	4:30p.m.
Abuja - Kaduna	2:30p.m.
Kaduna - Abuja	1:30p.m.

### IRS Airlines

CBQ - Abuja	8.00 a.m.
Abuja - Lagos	9:45a.m.
Lagos - Kaduna	9:30a.m.
Kano - Lagos	7:30p.m.
Lagos - Kano	11:15a.m.
Kaduna - Lagos	11:00a.m.
Lagos - Abu/MM2	3:30p.m.
Abuja - MM	1:45p.m.
MM - Abuja	3:45p.m.
Abuja - CB	5:15p.m.
Kano - Abuja	1:15p.m.
Abuja - Kano	2:30p.m.
Kano - Lagos	3:45p.m.
Lagos - Kano	6:00p.m.

### EAS Airlines

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

### Dasab Airlines

Auja - Lagos	8:30 a.m.
Lagos - PHC	10:30 a.m.
PHC - Lagos	12:30 a.m.
Lagos - Kano	2:30 p.m.
Kano - Lagos	4:30 p.m.
Lagos - Abuja	6:30pm.
ADC Airline	
Lagos - Abuja	7:15 a.m.
	12:45 p.m.
Abuja - Lagos	8:55 a.m.
Lagos - Calabar	11:15 a.m.
Calabar - Lagos	7:20 a.m.
P/H - Lagos	9:45 a.m.
Lagos - Sokoto	8:55a.m.
Sokoto - Lagos	11:55a.m.

Most airlines operate the same flight schedule on week days.

**N**UB International Bank Limited said it has the capacity to meet the N25 billion capitalizations ahead of the Central Bank of Nigeria's (CBN) deadline of end-December this year.

NUB Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Alhaji Muhammad Imam Yahaya, affirmed this at the bank's Customer Forum held in Abuja on Thursday last



M.I. Yahaya, NUB CEO

## NUB reiterates stand-alone option

By Hamisu Muhammad,  
Business Reporter

chairman further explained.

Yahaya said the proceeds of the IPO which are estimated to be about N15 billion will, when added to the N11.7 billion, "place the bank above the minimum CBN stipulated capitalization for Nigerian banks".

He emphasised to the tumultuous crowd of stakeholders gathered at the Abuja Forum that "our main strategic initiative is based on

NUB's intention to 'stand-alone' and the cornerstones are represented by this private placement exercise, the subsequent quotation on the Exchange by way of introduction and the proposed IPO, all of which are to be completed by 31st July, 2005".

He said though the stand-alone option appears to be "overly ambitious" in view of the bank's size, NUB is propelled by the "overwhelming opportunities that

present themselves in our niche market", as well as the bank's desire to provide a strong platform for the actualisation of "the long elusive socio-economic development that is required to further draw the northern economy out of the woods".

*Business Trust* reliably learnt that as a fall-back or contingency option, however, the bank has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for a merger with First City Monument Bank (FCMB).

week, which had in attendance eminent personalities like the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Alhaji Aminu Bello Masari.

According to the bank's CEO, the NUB, in line with the mandate given to the board by its shareholders, is currently raising about N10 billion through a Private Placement Exercise (PPE), stressing that upon completion of the PPE, the bank's shareholders' funds will be N11.7 billion.

"Upon completion of the Private Placement Exercise ("PPE") the bank will present itself for listing on the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) by way of introduction. This step will lead us to the next, which is the commencement of the Initial Public Offer (IPO) that will place the shares of the bank at the disposal of the general investing public", the NUB

## ICPC, Sarumi disagree over anti-graft crusade

From Adelanwa Bamgboye,  
Correspondent (Lagos)

**T**he Independent Corrupt Practice and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the managing Director of the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA), Chief Adebayo Sarumi have disagreed over whether or not to scrap the ports Industry Anti-Corruption standing committee (PIACSC).

The PIACSC was established by the Ports Consultative Committee (PCC) in year 2001 following a seminar held in Lagos by stakeholders in the maritime industry. Its membership cuts across NAP, freight forwarders, Nigerian shippers Council (NSC), the Nigerian customs service, NCS and transparency Nigeria.

As at the time of filling in this report, no member of the PIACSC has ever been indicated for any offence even as their activities cut across all the segments of the maritime industry.

However, in a dramatic twist, the ICPC in a letter dated 3rd February 2005 entitled "co-ordinating and streamlining operational strategies between actors operating within the country's port environment (sea and land) sent to chief

Sarumi, demanded the outright dissolution of the Val Usifo led PIACSC.

This, according to the letter signed by M.A. Salame, Assistant director (PRR) was in order to avoid any further confusion.

Investigations revealed that PIACSC had started work in earnest within the industry before the ICPC came on board.

Perhaps it was for this reason that the NPA boss said that both the PIACSC and the ICPC are to complement each other in checking corrupt practices in the nation's seaports.

According to Sarumi, both the PIACSC's and ICPC's activities are important to the well being of the nation's seaports and the interest of the port users.

Chief Sarumi debunked the rumour being peddled round the nation's maritime sub sector that the PIACSC has been scrapped by the NPA

management, and in its place instituted its internal anti corruption and transparency unit.

Chief Sarumi instead informed stakeholders that, as a mater of fact, "efforts were being made to ensure that the ICPC endorses the PIACSC.

He recalled that the ICPC had directed that every government institution established their in house equivalent of the ICPC adding that the NPA as strategic as it is to the Nations maritime sub sectors economy must comply with such a sensitive issue.

Meanwhile, a team from ICPC held a meeting at the NPA headquarters in marina, Lagos on 14 July 2004 with representatives of NPA management, PIACSC, NPA police, the customs and excise anti-corruption and transparency unit (southern zone) and the Central Working Committee (CWC) Freight Forwarders of Nigeria (FFN) Anti corruption and transparency unit.

## Customs impounds luxury bus with contrabands

**T**he customs area command in Plateau state has intercepted and seized a luxurious bus

From Rakiya A. Muhammad,  
Correspondent (Jos)

carrying smuggled goods worth several millions of naira.

The bus with inscription "Ifeshinachi Industries Nigeria Limited (Transport Division) with registration number Lagos XK219JJJ was intercepted by men of the Nigerian customs at about 4:00am Wednesday at a forest, along Abuja-Jos road.

Speaking on the seizure, the customs the area comptroller Dr. Hussaini Kangiwa said items contained in the bus included textile materials and children's wears.

He disclosed that the driver of the vehicle had been detained and that efforts were on to track down the real owners of the smuggled goods.

The Area Comptroller however said they were still assessing the goods and could not say the exact worth of the goods.

## OPEC meets Wednesday, may pump above oil limits

**T**he organisation of Petroleum Exporting countries (OPEC) is meeting on Wednesday at the Iranian city of Istahan, and may agree to allow members informally to pump above official oil output limits to cool scorching prices, the cartel's president said on Saturday.

With oil prices again within sight of \$55 a barrel, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries is widely expected to maintain its formal production ceiling of 27 million barrels per day (bpd) at its March 16 meeting in Isfahan, Iran.

"OPEC will work for stabilizing prices either by maintaining the ceiling as it is now or allowing overproduction to continue like it did in 2004," Sheikh Ahmad al-Fahd al-Sabah, also Kuwait's oil minister, told reporters at parliament.

Sheikh Ahmad acknowledged that sky-high oil prices had already tempted some members to pump above quotas. A Reuters survey showed the 10 producers excluding Iraq together pumping 600,000 bpd above the official ceiling in February.

"I think that now everybody is overproducing," Sheikh Ahmad said. "Current prices make it lucrative for everybody to hike production without the need for an (official) decision."

On Friday, the International Energy Agency said OPEC production rose in February 390,000 bpd on the month to 29 million bpd due to increases in output from Kuwait, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and Iraq.

"Until now I don't think there is a shortage in the market, and I think OPEC, due to current prices, will continue with the same

By Ahmed I. Shekarau,  
Group Business Editor, with  
agency report

ceiling (at Isfahan)," Sheikh Ahmad said.

OPEC members Iran, Qatar, Venezuela and Algeria have come out in favour of keeping output steady, with Algeria's minister saying on Thursday OPEC had no spare capacity to lift quotas.

But the cartel's president said the producers' group had some 2 million bpd to spare.

Most OPEC members are pumping at full tilt. As was the case last year, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait are the only cartel producers with significant spare capacity and will have to take responsibility for any further supply increase.

"I think if the prices will continue like this, OPEC's ... behaviour will be like 2004 and we will make sure we will do something to stabilize the prices," said the Kuwaiti oil minister.

## ... Rep seeks Nigeria's withdrawal

**T**he Chairman, House of Representatives Committee on Petroleum Resources, Dr. Cairo Ojougboh has said there is gross exploitation of Nigeria's oil resources and revenue by multinational oil companies as a result of, "curiously, unfavourable" terms Nigeria had entered with them in the deep offshore Production Sharing Contract (PSC).

Speaking to Energy Correspondents in Abuja over the weekend, Dr. Ojougboh, said that PSC agreement does not favour Nigeria in OPEC, because the production quota placed on its member countries, makes Oil giants to keep milking Nigeria for free, long as the country meets its OPEC quota.

He insisted that either Nigeria sticks to the PSC agreement and pulls out of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) or remains in OPEC and terminates the PSC deal, if it must fully benefit from its oil riches.

The PSC law was made in 1993 and amended in 1998. It primarily allows Oil companies to produced and export oil from Nigeria's deep offshore fields for at least five years without paying any form of revenue to government, until it recoups its exploration and development cost.

So far a total reserve of about 9 billion barrels of crude Oil has been explored under the PSC agreement. Nigeria's present crude reserve is 35 billion barrels.

"Take the example of Angola, Gabon all in the Gulf of Guinea among other African Countries that are not members of OPEC", he said, "they are free to produce and sale their oil as they want, and see how well they are doing today", he said, pointing out how Angola's oil production has increased by over 600% within a decade and is expected to jump from its present 1 million barrels per day to that of Nigeria's current OPEC quarter (2 million barrels per day) in three years time.

"We have a choice to make", he said, "if are we going to stick to this PSC arrangement, then we must leave OPEC or remain in OPEC and forget about the PSC", he said.

# Business Trust

## Finance



Mrs Fausat Onifade (right), receiving her prize for winning the Oceanic Pearl Account (individual category), from Oceanic Bank's Managing Director, Mrs Cecilia Ibru during the bank's post-AGM luncheon in Lagos ...recently.

### First Interstate Bank moves to raise N17bn

By Anas A. Galadima, Business Reporter

First Interstate Bank Plc, has disclosed plans to recapitalise by raising N17 billion through private placement and rights issue to its existing shareholders.

According to a press release from the bank, proceeds from the offers will among others, be used for the expansion of its branches and other service networks.

The bank will also invest some of the proceeds in "upgrading its information technology and other infrastructure to international standard," said the statement.

Strategic acquisitions in other financial institutions as well as investment in the bank's subsidiaries are other areas which the proceeds would be deployed to.

The offer, which is priced

at N1 per share with a minimum subscription of 50,000 shares is expected to "pave way for a merger with other banks of similar values and aspirations," the statement added.

It would be recalled that since the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) announced a 25 billion capitalisation for banks in the country, most banks have gone to the market to raise funds to meet up the December 2005 deadline fixed by the apex bank.

First Interstate Bank which was founded in 1986 as a merchant bank, got the approval of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) in 2001 to operate as a universal bank.

### NSE: 100m STB shares floating on NSE

From Bright Ewulu, Deputy Business, Editor (Lagos)

The Standard Trust Bank Plc shares on Thursday dominated activities on the floor of the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) as 100 million shares worth N741.5 million of the bank exchanged hands in seven deals.

The fact that there was no price differentials as the bank's share price is under technical suspension because of the proposed merger with United Bank of Africa (UBA) Plc made many analysts in the market suspect that there may have been a major shift in the ownership of the bank.

Infact, according to the figures made available by the NSE activity in the bank's

shares contributed over 90 percent of trading in the banking subsector which recorded 109.1 million shares worth N839 million in 1,429 deals.

Also STB contributed over 80 percent of the transaction on the exchange in the period which recorded turnover 121.3 million share worth N1.08 billion in 3,574 deals.

The market capitalisation fell on the day from N1.735 trillion recorded on Wednesday to N1.732 trillion while the index fell from 21,369 to 21,332.26.

## NAL protests CBN's embargo on new branches

NAL Bank Plc will soon make representations to the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) over its decision to embargo approval of new bank branches until the

conclusion of the ongoing consolidation exercise in the banking subsector.

The managing director and chief executive of the bank, Mr Ben Akabueze who

gave this indication on Friday at Golden Gate Restaurant, Ikoyi, Lagos, stated that this is as a result of the fact that his bank needs to boost its branch network quickly in order to tap the opportunities inherent in the consolidation.

According to him, this reality is the reason why the bank intends to employ 30 percent of expected proceeds from its ongoing public offer on branch expansion programmes, saying this is imperative as they will need the expanded branch network to be able to employ effectively and profitably an enlarged

capital base.

It would be recalled that the CBN deputy governor, Mr Tunde Umo recently in a seminar organised by the Chartered Instituted of Bankers of Nigeria (CIBN) in Kaduna hinted that the apex bank had barred new bank branches until the termination of consolidation December 31, 2005.

According to him the essence was to avoid confusion and to enable banks rationalise their branches, saying also that this will enable banks not to erode their capital base unnecessarily.

### CBN explains drop in NSE's January transactions

By Hamisu Muhammad, Business reporter

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) has attributed the sliding trend of the activities on the Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE) at the beginning of the year to the federal government's inability to release the 2005 budget.

The apex bank stated this in its January edition of the bank's monthly report released last week in Abuja, stressing that "available data indicated that activities on the NSE were on downward trend as all the major indicators declined in January 2005"

CBN said the downward trend also reflects investors' cautious optimism as well as portfolio restructuring associated with the commencement of the new fiscal year.

"The volume and value of traded securities fell by 31.3 and 9.8 percent to 1.6 billion shares and N14.7 billion, respectively, from 2.3 billion shares and N16.3 billion in the preceding month"

"Market capitalisation and the value index also trended downward by 2.9 and 3.6 percent to N2.05 trillion and 26,460.56, respec-

tively, from N2.11 trillion and 27,444.02 in the preceding month"

"Transaction in government stocks which had been dormant in recent months posted a volume of 1.5 million stocks valued at N1.5 billion in January 2005"

The report however, indicates that the banking subsector, as in preceding months, remained the most active as substantial price gains were recorded in its equities during the month under review.

In another development, the review of the monetary and credit development indicated that aggregate banking system's credit to the domestic economy declined by N210.8 billion or 12.2 percent to N1,518.4 billion compared with the decline of N74.1 billion or 4.1 percent in the preceding month.

Also the banking system's credit (net) to the federal government declined by N188.8 billion or 97.0 percent to N5.8 billion, compared with the decrease of N65.5 billion or 9.8 percent in the preceding month.

### CentrePoint Bank earns N726m

CentrePoint Bank Plc posted gross earnings of N726 million for the year ended March 31st 2004.

When contrasted with the N258 million recorded in 2003, this represents 65 per cent increase.

"The profit before tax recorded in the current year is N180 million compared with a loss of N787 million recorded the year before," Acting chairman Dennis Odife said.

Addressing shareholders during the bank's 16th Annual General Meeting in Abuja on Thursday, Odife said profit after tax in 2004 was N143 million as opposed to a loss of N811 million made the preceding year.

Odife said the board and management of the bank were having discussion with a

number of groups and investors to invest in and help recapitalise to the tune of N2 billion before the CBN jacked up the minimum capital base to N25 billion.

"Following this new development, the board and management adopted a three pronged approach to achieve the new capital base," he said.

One of such approaches Odife said, was to get potential investors to help in recapitalising the bank to the tune of N2 billion.

According to the chairman, the bank was also making efforts to identify other banks with which to merge in order to achieve the N25 billion minimum capital base before the December deadline.

### PROPERTY (ESTATE) FOR SALE LOCATED AT KARMO:

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# Business Trust

## International

### Ousted Boeing CEO's wife seeks divorce

The wife of ousted Boeing CEO Harry Stonecipher has filed for divorce, less than a week after the aerospace company's board forced him out for improper conduct related to an affair with a female executive.

Joan Stonecipher, 68, cited "irreconcilable differences" in papers filed Friday in Cook County Circuit Court. The filing comes just a month after the couple celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

She listed her occupation as housewife and demanded a "fair and reasonable sum"

from her husband, who she described as having "substantial income and wealth."

Stonecipher, the tough-talking son of a Tennessee coal miner, was credited with helping Boeing clean up its ethical behaviour and improve its reputation. The company's stock surged 52 percent during his tenure as chief executive officer.

Stonecipher, 68, resigned under pressure March 6.

A phone message left Saturday at the Stonecipher's St. Petersburg, Fla., home was not immediately returned.

### Oil price rises again to \$54

Oil prices bounced back above \$54 on Friday as traders pushed prices up ahead of the weekend after the International Energy Agency said robust growth in the United States and China will pump up consumption even faster than expected this year.

US light crude bounced off session lows under \$53 to settle 89 cents higher at \$54.43 a barrel after tumbling more than \$1.20 on Thursday. Brent crude in London settled 44 cents higher at \$53.10 on Friday, having set a record \$54.30 on Wednesday.

"The rampant speculation identified yesterday's (Thursday's) sell-off as another buying opportunity," said Mike Fitzpatrick, vice president, energy risk management, Fimat USA. "Aided by the IEA's recalculation of

demand."

The IEA, which advises industrialized nations on energy policy, in its monthly Oil Market Report, revised up estimated 2005 demand growth by 290,000 barrels per day to 1.81 million bpd, taking annual global oil use to 84.3 million bpd.

Later on Friday, Venezuelan Energy Minister Rafael Ramirez said the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries has no need to increase the cartel's oil production and should maintain existing crude oil production quotas.

OPEC oil ministers meet on March 16 in Iran to set market-share and production policy. Oil prices have risen about 25 percent since the start of the year on concern about rising demand and tight supply.

### Sale of Enron's Oregon utility blocked

Six months to the day after a federal judge signed off on Enron Corporation's plan to sell its last major assets, state regulators in Oregon have blocked the proposed \$2.35 billion sale of Enron subsidiary Portland General Electric, saying the offer from the Texas Pacific Group is not in the public interest.

"The potential harms or risks to PGE customers from the deal outweigh the potential benefits," said Lee Beyer, Oregon Public Utility Commission chairman.

Beyer and fellow commissioners cited the large debt Texas Pacific would have to carry on the utility and its plan to sell PGE again as soon as the investment showed a profit as the main reasons for discounting the potential benefits the privately held Fort Worth company had claimed for the deal.

"The high debt percentage would likely result in lower credit ratings for PGE than it would in the absence of this transaction," the PUC ruling stated, adding that lower credit ratings could translate into higher electricity rates for customers.

State law required the commissioners to decide whether ratepayers would benefit from the takeover and that no public harm would result. The PUC could have approved the deal outright or

spelled out conditions for approval if the proposal had not met the legal test.

The commission ruling leaves the fate of PGE in the hands of Enron creditors if Texas Pacific decides not to appeal or ask the PUC to reconsider.

Texas Pacific and Enron officials said only that the ruling was a disappointment and will have to be carefully reviewed.

Texas Pacific had been trying to build support for the PGE buyout from bankrupt Enron for more than a year despite widespread criticism and resistance in Oregon, including from major industrial customers such as Intel Corp.

### US budget problems obstacle to growth Greenspan

US Federal Reserve chairman, Alan Greenspan warned Friday that the ballooning US budget deficit poses "a significant obstacle" to economic stability, but that the trade gap was "not overly worrisome."

In a speech on globalization, the central bank chief said his main concerns were over the possibility of protectionism and the US budget situation, and was less troubled by US household debt levels and the current account deficit, which includes



Ex-TWA, N606TW sits on the Timco ramp awaiting its fate, with two Delta 737 aircraft parked in front of the tarmac.

### Delta Airlines may file for bankruptcy

Delta Airlines Incorporated shares plunged Thursday after it warned it will post another substantial loss this year despite a recent round of pay cuts and other cost reductions. It also said a bankruptcy filing remains a possibility.

The disclosure in a regulatory filing fuelled talk that the nation's third-largest carrier may need to sell one or more of its feeder carriers.

Delta shares tumbled 56 cents, or 11.5 percent, to close at \$4.33 on the New York Stock Exchange. That's the largest percent drop since its shares fell nearly 19 percent on Oct. 15, 2004, when Delta was previously on the verge of bankruptcy. The stock has traded in a 52-week range of \$2.75 to \$9.17.

In its filing, Delta said that its cash reserves would be much lower at the end of 2005 than last year unless it can sell assets or raise money in other ways. Its ability to borrow more money, however, is limited because it has already pledged most of its assets as collateral on previous loans.

While the company did not specifically say that it plans to sell subsidiaries

Comair Inc. and Atlantic Southeast Airlines, which handle flight connections for Delta, the warnings in the Securities and Exchange Commission filing suggest it may have to and quickly, analysts say.

"I think it is clearly one of the last options left for them in terms of raising cash," said Bill Warlick, an airline analyst with Fitch Ratings in Chicago.

Earlier this week, speculation over Delta shedding the feeder carriers increased when the chief financial officer of SkyWest Inc. told an investor conference in

Florida that his company was discussing with Delta the possibility of it selling Comair and ASA.

"We know that they have this interest," Bradford Rich, the CFO, said, according to an audio recording of the conference. "By the way, I think it's more than just an interest today." He added. "They need to generate capital. This is one way to do it."

Delta has declined to comment on Rich's statements, and on Thursday refused to discuss the language in the SEC filing or answer any questions.

The airline has not said how much it could get for Comair and ASA, though it took hefty charges in the fourth quarter of 2004 because of reductions in the fair value estimates of the two feeder carriers.

The Atlanta-based company said in its annual report filed with the SEC that it doesn't believe the company's cash flows from operations will be sufficient to meet all of Delta's money needs. It said it would have to tap available cash and the final \$250 million it borrowed late last year from American Express Co.

### China's textile exports soar

China's exports of textile and clothing soared, especially to its biggest market the United States, in January, the first month since decades-long quotas were lifted, figures indicated.

Customs statistics showed exports of such products to the United States jumped 65.26 percent in January, compared to the same month last year, according to the China Textile Economy Information Website, run by the China Textile Industry Association.

Exports to the European

Union, another major market for China, were not immediately available but figures for Germany showed Chinese exports to that country also rising sharply by 46.39 percent in January, the website said.

Germany was China's fourth largest market in January. China is the EU's leading textile supplier, accounting for 17.5 percent of all its textile imports in 2003.

In terms of the value of the exports, products sold to the US market amounted to

1.4 billion US dollars in January-17 percent of China's total textile and clothing exports that month while those to Germany reached 1.5 billion US dollars, four percent of China's total.

The quotas which governed the apparel trade were lifted on January 1, according to the 1995 Agreement on Textiles and Clothing.

As such, trade in textile and clothing products cannot be subject to any quantitative restrictions.

China and India are expected to be the biggest beneficiaries of the move as their competitiveness was predicted to cause large scale factory shutdowns and job losses for other exporting countries, such as Bangladesh.

China, the world's largest exporter of clothing with a 28 percent share of the market, is expected to be the main winner from the disappearance of quotas.

Total Chinese exports of textiles and apparels in January rose 28.77 percent year-on-year to 8.41 billion US dollars a less dramatic rise compared to country-specific figures, but still significant, the website said.

trade and investment flows.

"The resolution of our current account deficit and household debt burdens does not strike me as overly worrisome, but that is certainly not the case for our fiscal deficit," Greenspan told the Council on Foreign Relations.

"Our fiscal prospects are, in my judgment, a significant obstacle to long-term stability because the budget deficit is not readily subject to correction by market forces that stabilize other imbalances."

Greenspan said the US government should get control of its deficits to meet the needs of the baby-boom generation approaching retirement.

Greenspan repeated his view that the balance of payments deficit in the United States may be corrected by market forces.

He said that the free flow of global capital allows the United States to run a current account deficit that would have been impossible years ago. But he warned that imbalances should not be

ignored.

"Has something fundamental happened to the US economy that enables us to disregard all the time-tested criteria for assessing when economic imbalances become worrisome? Regrettably, the answer is no; the free lunch has still to be invented," Greenspan said.

"We do, however, seem to be undergoing what is likely, in the end, to be a one-time shift in the degree of globalization and innovation that has temporarily altered the specific calibrations of those criteria."



# Northern Senators' Forum

Room 227 & 215, Second Floor, Senate Wing, National Assembly Complex,  
P. M. B. 141, Garki, Abuja. Tel:- 09-2341286, 2340658

## Congratulations

The Northern Senators' Forum congratulates her member, Senator Isaiah Chawai Balat, (Kaduna South) on the conferment of the award of Fellowship of the Yaba College of Technology during the 25th Convocation ceremony of the College.



Senator  
**ISAIAH C. BALAT**

We wish you more laudable recognitions for meritorious service



SIGNED:

**Northern Senators' Forum**

# Business Trust

## 1ST-TIER SECURITIES

## THE NIGERIAN STOCK EXCHANGE

REPORT AS AT FRIDAY, MARCH 11, 2005

COMPANY NAME	NO OF DEALS	QUOTATION(N)	QUANTITY TRADED	VALUE OF SHARES
<b>AGRICULTURE/AGRO-ALLIED</b>				
LIVESTOCK FEEDS PLC.	1	2.83	842	2,382.86
THE OKOMU OIL PALM COMPANY PLC	15	16.96	79,261	1,362,148.10
PRESCO PLC.	10	8.61	108,549	926,693.40
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>26</b>		<b>188,652</b>	<b>2,291,224.36</b>
<b>AUTOMOBILE &amp; TYRE</b>				
DUNLOP NIGERIA PLC.	13	1.76	112,309	200,347.46
R. T. BRISCOAE PLC.	24	4.57	216,568	989,715.76
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>37</b>		<b>328,877</b>	<b>1,190,063.22</b>
<b>BANKING</b>				
ACCESS BANK PLC	9	3.42	1,283,612	4,389,953.04
AFRIBANK NIGERIA PLC.	43	6.63	484,813	3,214,310.19
FIRST ATLANTIC BANK PLC	3	3.41	3,001,250	10,234,262.50
CHARTERED BANK PLC	1	3.90	7,387	28,809.30
COOPERATIVE BANK PLC.	2	1.92	30,050	57,696.00
COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT BANK PLC.	2	0.75	3,500	2,625.00
FIRST BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	560	22.95	1,838,523	41,942,911.99
FSB INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	53	1.19	561,670	657,084.36
GUARANTY TRUST BANK PLC.	249	9.50	1,923,312	18,170,951.25
GULF BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	23	0.40	1,083,800	433,520.00
INTERNATIONAL MERCHANT BANK PLC.	26	0.57	640,978	363,366.96
INLAND BANK (NIGERIA) PLC.	2	1.44	48,000	69,120.00
INTERCONTINENTAL BANK PLC.	4	7.81	9,841	76,858.21
LION BANK OF NIGERIA PLC.	4	0.61	252,000	153,720.00
MANUFACTURERS BANK NIGERIA PLC.	11	1.20	626,955	752,246.00
NAL BANK PLC.	1	2.80	5,201	14,562.80
OCEANIC BANK PLC	3	4.46	7,850	35,701.00
OMEGA BANK (NIGERIA) PLC.	1	1.50	2,200	3,300.00
STANDARD TRUST BANK PLC	8	7.41	124,800	924,768.00
TRANS INTERNATIONAL BANK PLC.	2	1.55	100,341	159,528.55
UNITED BANK FOR AFRICA PLC.	27	10.00	99,231	992,310.00
UNION BANK NIGERIA PLC.	357	19.25	700,265	13,438,150.08
UNIVERSAL TRUST BANK PLC	7	0.70	37,936	389,503.40
WEMA BANK PLC.	9	3.93	37,936	149,088.48
ZENITH BANK PLC	201	13.40	1,924,883	25,484,088.83
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>1,608</b>		<b>15,350,080</b>	<b>122,138,435.94</b>
<b>BREWERIES</b>				
CHAMPION BREWERIES PLC.	1	4.23	3,000	12,690.00
GUINNESS NIGERIA PLC.	201	78.99	1,104,724	85,993,738.45
JOS INTERNATIONAL BREWERIES PLC.	2	3.80	1,000	3,800.00
NIGERIAN BREWERIES PLC.	325	36.50	838,592	30,452,161.70
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>529</b>		<b>1,947,316</b>	<b>116,462,390.15</b>
<b>BUILDING MATERIALS</b>				
ASHAKA CEMENT PLC.	85	22.80	418,028	9,383,069.11
BENUE CEMENT COMPANY PLC.	4	4.20	24,256	101,875.20
CEMENT CO. OF NORTHERN NIG. PLC	7	6.44	40,200	264,838.00
WEST AFR. PORTLAND CEMENT CO. PLC.	10	10.35	74,878	774,987.30
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>106</b>		<b>557,362</b>	<b>10,524,769.61</b>
<b>CHEMICAL &amp; PAINTS</b>				
BERGER PAINTS PLC.	22	4.66	47,127	219,535.04
CAP PLC.	12	6.32	27,494	173,649.00
D. N. MEYER PLC.	1	4.80	1,200	5,760.00
NIGERIA-GERMAN CHEMICALS PLC.	6	3.81	13,514	51,358.20
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>41</b>		<b>89,335</b>	<b>450,302.24</b>
<b>COMPUTER &amp; OFFICE EQUIPMENT</b>				
THOMAS WYATT NIGERIA PLC.	1	0.38	19,011	7,224.18
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>19,011</b>	<b>7,224.18</b>
<b>CONGLOMERATES</b>				
C F A O NIGERIA PLC.	2	4.35	1,302	5,663.70
CHELLARAMS PLC.	1	1.71	3,293	5,631.03
JOHN HOLT PLC.	7	0.64	280,000	179,200.00
UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC.	247	15.29	1,388,100	21,213,600.87
P. Z. INDUSTRIES PLC.	71	11.09	262,061	2,895,236.04
U.A.C. NIGERIA PLC.	103	14.17	462,531	6,554,064.27
U.T.C. NIGERIA PLC.	11	0.92	150,148	132,278.88
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>442</b>		<b>2,547,435</b>	<b>30,985,674.79</b>
<b>CONSTRUCTION</b>				
CAPALBETO	1	7.25	256	1,856.00
COSTAIN (W.A.) PLC.	1	0.90	14,280	12,852.00
JULIUS BERGER NIGERIA PLC.	6	15.70	14,650	230,005.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>29,186</b>	<b>244,713.00</b>
<b>ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY</b>				
NIGERIAN WIRE AND CABLE PLC.	1	0.67	14,000	9,380.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>14,000</b>	<b>9,380.00</b>
<b>FOOD/BEVERAGES &amp; TOBACCO</b>				
7-UP BOTTLING COMPANY PLC	22	21.96	18,521	406,483.37
CADBURY NIGERIA PLC.	123	50.00	198,962	9,955,372.74
FLOUR MILLS NIGERIA PLC.	19	16.61	23,393	388,557.73
P. S. MANDRIDES & COMPANY PLC.	1	8.00	600	4,800.00
NIGERIA BOTTLING COMPANY PLC.	61	50.99	54,309	2,762,037.78
NESTLE FOODS NIGERIA PLC.	74	140.00	63,702	8,945,738.15
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>300</b>		<b>359,487</b>	<b>22,462,989.77</b>
<b>FOOTWEAR</b>				
FOOTWEAR & ACCESSORIES MAN. PLC.	2	0.33	836	275.88
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>836</b>	<b>275.88</b>
<b>HEALTHCARE</b>				
EKOCORP PLC.	13	0.81	240,881	195,113.61
EVANS MEDICAL PLC.	10	2.84	183,550	521,249.00
MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC.	6	4.80	99,340	476,847.00
MORISON INDUSTRIES PLC.	1	1.08	50,000	54,000.00
NEIMETH INTERNATIONAL PHARM. PLC.	8	3.10	110,565	332,979.61
PHARMA-DEKO PLC.	3	4.09	14,950	60,905.50
GLAXOSMITHKLINE CONSUMER NIG. PLC.	17	8.20	29,190	235,723.71
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>58</b>		<b>728,476</b>	<b>1,876,818.43</b>
<b>INDUSTRIAL/DOMESTIC PRODUCTS</b>				
FIRST ALUMINIUM NIGERIA PLC.	2	1.00	23,350	23,750.50
B.O.C. GASES PLC.	6	2.98	59,500	178,190.00
VITAFIAT NIGERIA PLC.	23	3.05	230,725	690,963.56
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>31</b>		<b>313,575</b>	<b>892,904.06</b>
<b>INSURANCE</b>				
ACEN INSURANCE COMPANY PLC	1	0.60	2,000	1,200.00
AICO INSURANCE PLC.	8	1.74	37,930	65,998.20
CORNERSTONE INSURANCE CO. PLC.	5	1.40	212,274	297,183.60
CRUSADER INSURANCE PLC.	2	1.00	32,300	32,300.00
LAW UNION AND ROCK INSURANCE PLC.	2	1.24	4,500	5,580.00
LINKAGE ASSURANCE PLC	11	1.34	155,000	207,700.00
MUTUAL BENEFITS ASSURANCE PLC	2	0.93	9,834	9,145.62
N.E.M. INSURANCE CO. (NIG.) PLC.	2	0.73	50,000	36,500.00
NIGER INSURANCE CO. PLC.	6	2.85	16,500	47,925.00
PRESTIGE ASSURANCE PLC.	1	1.97	2,380	4,688.60
ROYAL EXCHANGE ASSURANCE PLC.	10	3.00	2,087,944	5,802,397.48
STANDARD ALLIANCE INSURANCE	5	0.65	256,000	169,520.00
UNIC INSURANCE PLC.	9	0.83	89,940	75,981.20
WEST AFRICAN PROV. INS. COY. PLC.	14	2.45	2,857,805	7,199,669.34
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>78</b>		<b>5,814,407</b>	<b>13,955,789.04</b>
<b>MANAGED FUNDS</b>				
C & I LEASING PLC.	6	1.40	40,000	55,700.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>40,000</b>	<b>55,700.00</b>
<b>PACKAGING</b>				
AVON CROWNCAPS & CONTAINERS PLC.	1	1.10	1,000	1,100.00
NAMPAK NIGERIA PLC.	1	1.66	400,000	664,000.00
BETA GLASS COMPANY PLC.	1	3.87	2,000	7,740.00
VAN LEER CONTAINERS (NIGERIA) PLC.	1	2.04	4,800	9,792.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>4</b>		<b>407,800</b>	<b>682,632.00</b>
<b>PETROLEUM(MARKETING)</b>				
AFROIL PLC.	3	0.75	40,500	30,525.00
AFRICAN PETROLEUM PLC.	55	55.45	84,351	4,625,198.95
ETERNA OIL & GAS PLC.	8	2.04	21,500	43,860.00
MOBIL OIL NIGERIA PLC.	37	172.02	34,960	5,974,343.60
CONOIL PLC.	73	102.05	52,019	5,318,029.01
TEXACO (NIGERIA) PLC.	28	162.70	35,534	5,646,305.60
TOTAL NIGERIA PLC	53	172.90	23,128	3,986,135.81
OANDO PLC.	158	89.99	105,668	9,341,487.51
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>415</b>		<b>397,660</b>	<b>34,965,885.48</b>
<b>PRINTING &amp; PUBLISHING</b>				
LONGMAN NIGERIA PLC.	1	2.10	200	420.00
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>200</b>	<b>420.00</b>
<b>REAL ESTATE</b>				
UACN PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT PLC.	29	8.45	171,244	1,441,111.30
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>29</b>		<b>171,244</b>	<b>1,441,111.30</b>
<b>TEXTILES</b>				
UNITED NIGERIA TEXTILES PLC.	2	2.10	1,325	2,782.50
<b>Sector Totals</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>1,325</b>	<b>2,782.50</b>
<b>Overall Totals</b>		<b>3,725</b>	<b>29,306,264</b>	<b>360,641,485.95</b>

### TOP 10 TRADES FRIDAY

SYMBOL	VOLUME	VALUE	TRADES
GULFBANK	1,083,800.00	433,520.00	23
GUINNESS	1,104,724.00	85,993,738.45	201
ACCESSBANK	1,283,612.00	4,389,953.04	9
LEVBROS	1,388,100.00	21,213,600.87	247
FIRSTBANK	1,838,523.00	41,942,911.99	560
GUARANTY	1,923,312.00	18,170,951.25	249
ZENITHBANK	1,924,883.00	25,484,088.83	201
ROYALEX	2,087,944.00	5,802,397.48	10
WAPIC	2,857,805.00	7,199,669.34	14
ATLANTICBK	3,001,250.00	10,234,262.50	3

### TOP 10 GAINERS

SYMBOL	LASTCLOSE	FRIDAY'SCLOSE	CHANGE
CRSDINSFCP	0.50	100.00	+99.50
TEXACO	155.00	162.70	+7.70
NESTLE	136.00	140.00	+4.00
MOBIL	168.99	172.02	+3.03
AP	52.81	55.45	+2.64
ASHAKACEM	22.29	22.80	+0.51
GUINNESS	78.51	78.99	+0.48
FIRSTBANK	22.55	22.95	+0.40
PZ	10.70	11.09	+0.39
SKBEECHAM	7.85	8.20	+0.35

### TOP 10 LOSERS

SYMBOL	LASTCLOSE	FRIDAY'SCLOSE	CHANGE
OKOMUOIL	17.85	16.96	-0.89
CCNN	6.75	6.44	-0.31
LEVBROS	15.57	15.29	-0.28
RTBRISCOE	4.81	4.57	-0.24
OCEANIC	4.69	4.46	-0.23
NIGERINS	3.00	2.85	-0.15
WAPIC	2.55	2.45	-0.10
ZENITHBANK	13.50	13.40	-0.10
TOTAL	173.00	172.90	-0.10
DUNLOP	1.85	1.76	-0.09

## Dollar slips again

The dollar slipped in a seesaw session on Friday after data showed the US trade deficit widened in January to its second biggest on record despite the greenback's three-year decline.

The deficit widened in January to \$58.3 billion, according to the Commerce Department, from a downwardly-revised \$55.7 billion in December. Economists had forecast a gap of \$56.5 billion.

Exports rose to a record \$100.8 billion but American consumers' insatiable appetite to consume pushed up imports at a faster pace to \$159.1 billion, also a record.

With trade data out the way, investors are now shifting their focus to the capital flows data for January. The report is set for release by the Treasury on Tuesday and indicates how US deficits are being funded.

"The trade number was lousy and the market went short the dollar," said Greg Anderson, senior currency strategist at ABN AMRO in Chicago. "The focus next week is the TIC (Treasury International Capital) data and we can expect more short dollar pre-positioning."

In a volatile Friday session, the dollar initially extended the week's losses to a new two-month low against the euro before rebounding as dealers took the opportunity to buy the currency at cheaper levels and cover large short positions.

But the downward pressure persisted, and along with renewed strength in dollar-denominated commodity prices as gold prices settled at 2005 highs - and US bond market weakness, the dollar finished weaker on the day.

"With policymakers in Washington concerned about the 'sustainability' of the US trade balance, this number will just add to the bearish sentiment toward the dollar," wrote JPMorgan currency analysts in a research note after the data. "Euro/dollar should push above \$1.35 as a result."

Late in New York trading, the euro was up 0.2 percent on the day at \$1.3448. After the trade data were

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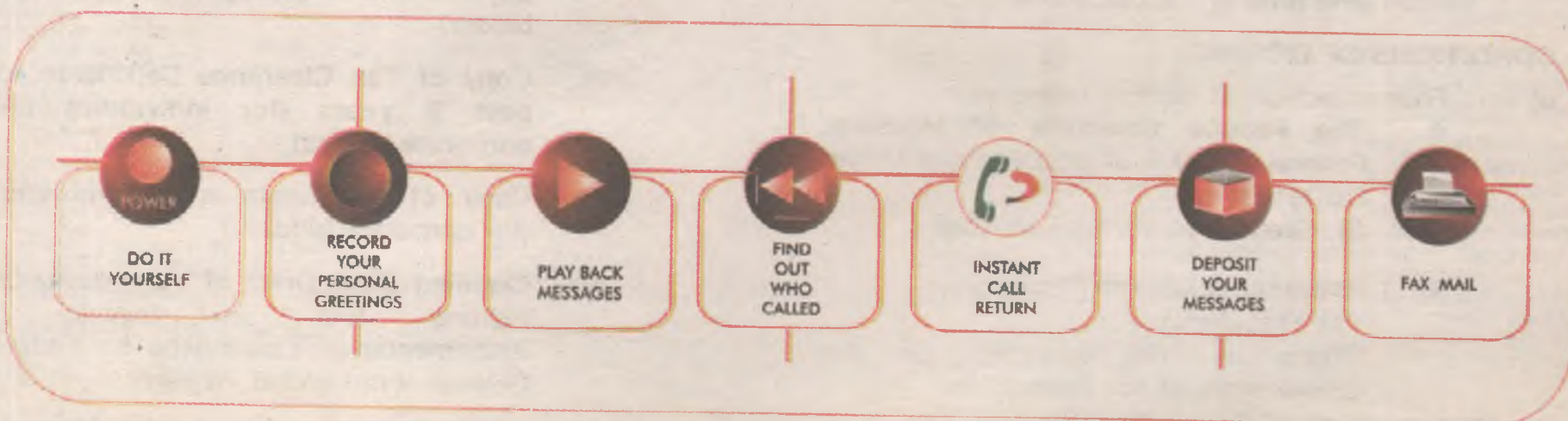


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THE PRESIDENCY

IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE OF THE WHITE PAPER ON THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO THE ALIENATION OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT LANDED PROPERTY

SALE OF SELECTED FEDERAL GOVERNMENT LANDED PROPERTY IN LAGOS

Pursuant to the decisions of the Federal Government of Nigeria to dispose of some of its landed assets in Lagos through sale, the Implementation Committee hereby invites interested members of the public (individuals and corporate organizations) to bid for the purchase of the under-listed landed properties:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>a) <b>Federal Secretariat Complex, Ikoyi</b><br/>Comprising Phases I and II Office Buildings</p> <p>b) <b>Bar Beach Towers, Victoria Island</b><br/>Comprising 5-Nos. 12-Storey Blocks of 24-Nos. 3-bedroom flats with Boys Quarters.</p> <p>c) <b>Federal Government Special Guest House, Victoria Island, Lagos</b><br/>3-blocks made up of 44 double rooms, 19 suites, 3-Nos. Presidential Wings (comprising 5-bedroom house, conference rooms, restaurant, offices etc each), 3 swimming pools, a mosque, a maintenance building on a fenced land area of 13,239.66m<sup>2</sup>.</p> | <p>c) Each bidder should indicate on the left hand corner of the envelope the property he/she is bidding for.</p> <p>d) Completed bidding forms should be submitted along with the following:</p> <p>i) Ten percent (10%) of bid price in certified bank draft payable to the Implementation Committee on Federal Government Landed Property. Unsuccessful bidders will be refunded this money while for successful bidders; this will form part of the payment for the properties (for every bidder).</p> |
|--|--|

CONDITIONS OF BIDDING

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>a) Free collection of bidding forms at:</p> <p>i) The Federal Controller of Housing, Federal Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, St. Gregory Road, Onikan, Lagos.</p> <p>ii) Presidential Advisory Councils, The Presidency, Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Federal Secretariat Phase 1, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Rooms 1A 1.02 and 1A 1.30, Abuja.</p> <p>iii) Bidding forms can also be downloaded from our Website<br/><a href="http://www.fgproperty.org">http://www.fgproperty.org</a><br/>e-mail: <a href="mailto:enquiry@fgproperty.org">enquiry@fgproperty.org</a>.</p> <p>b) Payment of a non-refundable bidding fee in certified bank draft payable to Implementation Committee on Federal Government Landed Property as follows:</p> <p>i) <b>Federal Secretariat Complex, Ikoyi</b><br/>Phase I = N500,000.00<br/>Phase II = N500,000.00</p> <p>ii) <b>Bar Beach Towers, Victoria Island</b><br/>One block of high rise = N250,000.00<br/>Entire Estate = N1,000,000.00</p> <p>iii) <b>Federal Government Special Guest House, Victoria Island</b><br/>Entire Guest House = N500,000.00</p> | <p>ii) Copy of Tax Clearance Certificate for past 3 years (for individuals and corporate bodies)</p> <p>iii) Copy of Certificate of Incorporation (for corporate bidders)</p> <p>iv) Certified Bank Draft of non-refundable bidding fees in favour of Implementation Committee on Federal Government Landed Property.</p> <p>e) Completed bidding forms should be submitted in sealed envelopes addressed to:<br/><i>The Secretary, Implementation Committee on Federal Government Landed Property, PAC, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Federal Secretariat Phase 1, Abuja</i> on or before 12.00 noon on Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2005.</p> <p>f) Bids will be publicly opened on 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2005 at the Secretary to the Government of the Federation's Conference Room, Federal Secretariat, Phase I, Abuja starting at 12.00 noon.</p> <p>g) Winners of bids will be required to pay the bid price in full plus 10% transaction cost within 30 days of the winning.</p> |
|--|--|

*Prospective buyers are advised to inspect the properties and make their assessment before submitting their bids. To arrange for property inspection, please contact: The Federal Controller of Housing, St. Gregory College Road, Onikan, Lagos.*

Signed  
Prof. P.T. Ahire  
Committee Secretary



# NATIONAL PENSION COMMISSION

PLOT 2774 SHEHU SHAGARI WAY

MAITAMA DISTRICT

PMB 5170 WUSE

ABUJA, NIGERIA

Website: [pencom.gov.ng](http://pencom.gov.ng)

## INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION TO TENDER FOR DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL PENSION COMMISSION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The National Pension Commission (PenCom) established by the Pension Reform Act 2004 to administer, supervise and regulate all pension matters in Nigeria is desirous of undertaking the computerization of its operations.

PenCom hereby invites interested and reputable Information Communication Technology (ICT) Vendors/Companies with suitable and relevant experience to apply for pre-qualification in respect of the design, development and implementation of PenCom Information Management System.

### 2.0 SCOPE OF WORK

PenCom requires ICT vendors that would assist it develop and implement a comprehensive and robust Information Management System. The system should enable PenCom have application architecture that would assist it realize its business objectives. The core applications should support PenCom to deliver its key mandate of supervision and regulation. Furthermore, PenCom will maintain a National Data Bank which would provide it as well as contributors and other stakeholders with on-line access to relevant transaction processing facilities and information. The National Data Bank will also facilitate the registration and issuance of unique identification number to each contributor. The system should also facilitate e-payment of contributions and other transactions. The support services should enable PenCom to manage its back office operations and deliver the core services in the most cost effective manner. PenCom Information Management System would include but not limited to the following:

Workflow Management System  
Support Application Systems  
Core Operational Application  
Document Management System  
Enterprise Groupware System  
Multi-channel stakeholder platform  
Enterprise Security System

### 3.0 PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

#### 3.1 Interested ICT Vendor shall at minimum be:

- i) A regular and experienced ICT vendor;
- ii) Had undertaken similar jobs in the design, development and implementation of information management systems in at least two organizations of similar pedigree as per scope; and
- iii) The systems must be in satisfactory commercial operation in the last two years.

#### 3.2 Pre-qualification documents

Interested ICT vendors are required to provide the following information in sufficient details:

- a) Name and address of the Company as well as all established functioning branch offices (if any) including telephone, facsimile and e-mail addresses.
- b) Certified True Copies of Certificate of Incorporation, Form CO2 and Form CQ7.
- c) Certificate of Registration with National Pension Commission as a contractor/supplier or evidence of payment for the registration.
- d) Evidence of Company Income Tax and VAT payments for the Years 2002-2004.

- e) Company profile and evidence of previous verifiable experience in similar works executed in the past including ISO Certification.
- f) Evidence of at least two (2) reference sites of major projects handled that can be contacted for reference.
- g) List of technical staff including their curriculum vitae.
- h) List of development sites/incubators (if any).
- i) List of relevant software, hardware and documentation to be used on the project.
- j) Any other information to further prove the company's corporate existence, technical experience, expertise and capacity to handle this project.
- k) Detailed work plan and methodology to accomplish the job.
- l) Evidence of financial capacity including company's most recent audited statement of accounts not later than 24 months old and bank reference.

Pre-qualification documents must be submitted in accordance with the above listed requirements.

### 4.0 SUBMISSION OF PRE-QUALIFICATION DOCUMENTS

The pre-qualification documents must be sealed and marked "Pre-qualification to Tender for the Design, Development and Implementation of PenCom Information Management System" on the upper left corner of the envelope and addressed to:

The Secretary  
Management Tenders Committee  
Administration Division  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
National Pension Commission  
Plot 2774 Shehu Shagari Way  
Maitama District  
Abuja, Nigeria  
Telephone: +234-9-4133365 & 9-6720095

The documents, which should be submitted in six sets, should reach the Secretary not later than two weeks from the date of publication of this Invitation to tender for the pre-qualification. Pre-qualification documents delivered or received after the deadline shall not be considered.

This pre-qualification enlistment is subject to the approval of the PenCom and is purely provisional and may be cancelled at any time without giving any reason whatsoever. Notwithstanding the submission of these pre-qualification requirements, PenCom is neither committed nor obliged to include any ICT vendor that has submitted the pre-qualification documents.

This notice is not an invitation to tender. Full tender documents would be given only to pre-qualified, screened and suitable ICT vendors. The pre-qualified ICT vendors will be issued with Request for Proposal (RFP) bidding documents to be completed and returned within three weeks from the date the RFP was issued.

SIGNED  
MANAGEMENT  
NATIONAL PENSION COMMISSION

# IT World

## Briefs

### Samsung

Samsung Electronics Company Ltd. unveiled the world's first mobile phone with a powerful 7-megapixel camera on Wednesday, providing a potential competitive threat to manufacturers of digital cameras.

Samsung has been stepping up development of increasingly sophisticated phones for high-end users looking to access games, music and movies on their handsets. It launched the world's first 5-megapixel phone in October.

### Sony

Sony Corporations has launched a new lineup of cheaper Walkman portable music players in another attempt to grab back share from market leader Apple Computer and its popular iPod device.

The cheapest models, which come with a 256-megabyte flash memory chip, will retail below 100 euros (\$132.20) or 70 pounds, a price point the electronics conglomerate hopes will address complaints that its products are overpriced.

### Motorola

Motorola Incorporated is set to unveil several new phones that it says make it easier for consumers to store, share and print pictures, betting that cameras in handsets are no longer just a clever gimmick.

The No. 2 maker of mobile phones behind Finland's Nokia is banking on technology to enhance consumers' experience with digital imaging, James Burke, its senior director of North American product operations, told Reuters.

### Vodafone

British mobile phone giant Vodafone is hoping to have more than one million customers using its third-generation networks in Germany by the end of this year, according to the head of Vodafone's German unit D2.

UMTS, or Universal Mobile Telecommunications System, which allows e-mail, high-speed Internet surfing and live sound and image broadcasts via mobile phone handsets, is still in its early stages in Germany, with only around 230,000 users in the eurozone's biggest economy at the end of last year.

### Gates

Microsoft's boss Bill Gates is top of the billionaires list for the 11th year in a row, ahead of Warren Buffett. The Forbes magazine list of the world's super-rich has increased to a record 691 people with a combined fortune of \$2.2 trillion (£1.14 trillion).

Martha Stewart, the homemaking icon recently released from jail and under house arrest, entered the list for the first time at number 63 with \$1bn.

## Internet craze: Hunting wild animals online

Hunting wild animals is nothing new in Texas. But a new company called Live-Shot.com has added a modern, controversial twist to the primal desire to kill: Internet hunting.

Now, anyone with a computer and a modem can log on and fire real weapons. Howard Giles did it a few weeks ago, becoming the first known Internet hunter to bag a wild hog by remote control.

Giles was sitting behind his computer in San Antonio. The pig was munching on corn about 50 miles away in the Texas Hill country.

"He was a beast," said Giles. "I felt like I was there."

Though Texans wear their love of guns and hunting proudly, the idea of Internet hunting has generated plenty of criticism. A Republican representative in the Texas Legislature, Todd Smith, himself an occasional hunter, has offered a bill to ban the practice.

"I don't think we should be able to kill God's creatures with the click of a mouse," Smith said. "I think hunters are offended by the concept, much less non-hunters."

Wildlife authorities have already taken steps to ban the killing of any native species by remote control, but they cannot ban the Internet slaughter of imported exotic game, including the kind of feral hog that Giles killed.

Several other states are already moving to head off Internet hunting in the event that Internet entrepreneurs try to introduce their own remote control slaughters.

And the Humane Society of the United States is calling on

Congress to make it illegal across the country.

"What started as a depraved idea has apparently become a sickening reality," said Wayne Pacelle, president and CEO of the Humane Society.

John Lockwood, owner of Live-Shot.com, does not see what the fuss is all about. He says that what his company offers is not much different from the traditional guided hunt. He notes that there is

always somebody at the ranch where the remotely controlled equipment is set up. And he said the animals are not penned up.

"They're just as free ranging as on any other ranch," he said. For now, most visitors to Live-shot.com have been shooting not at live animals but at paper targets and balloons.

The remote control hunters and target shooters can see the action through two

cameras. They control the rifle with four arrows and pull the trigger by remote control by clicking on a "fire" button.

Lockwood has scheduled another hunt in early April. That's when Dale Hagberg of Indiana, paralyzed and bedridden, will try to kill a wild animal for the first time since he was injured in a diving accident nearly 20 years ago.

"I was an avid hunter before I got hurt," Hagberg said. "I've missed it ever since."

## CeBIT fair: TV leads 3G mobile phones

Calling is about to become the most basic thing you can do with your mobile phone, with television, music players and the Internet all jostling for control of your handset.

Mobile service operators gathered at the CeBIT, the world's largest high-tech fair, said they have seized new opportunities offered by third-generation UMTS (Universal Mobile Telecommunications System) technology and are now hoping they can set the market alight.

"We're not selling technical abbreviations but applications," the head of T-Mobile, Rene Obermann, told reporters in this northern German city.

After paying billions of dollars for UMTS licenses, European telecoms operators are now trying to convince often-skeptical customers that a phone is not just a phone any more.

Companies have set their sights on young consumers, using options such as video games and MP3 music

players to convince them they need a UMTS handset.

The German unit of Britain's mmO2, O2, is promising access to 230,000 songs with its service while the German division of world leader Vodafone, D2, has upped the ante with a catalogue of 500,000 titles.

The second sweetener being pitched is television, with several models on display at the CeBIT.

T-Mobile is offering its UMTS users videoclips custom-made for mobile phones including, for instance, soccer match highlights.

At the Vodafone stand, D2 was touting access to Eurosport and a German weather channel.

Dutch operator KPN plans to test a digital television service with multiple channels on mobile phones in the Netherlands this summer, with a market roll-out slated for 2006.

But for mobile teleconferencing — a long-time dream in the industry — "the mass market is not there yet," said Lutz Schueler of O2.

The company is plotting instead to encroach on territory dominated by standard telecoms.

It presented an alternative to landline services at the CeBIT called surfathome, a brick-sized box allowing UMTS-driven Internet connections at home using a standard PC or laptop.



Visitors at the IT gadgets fair CeBIT test mobile phones in Hanova, Northern Germany

## Microsoft security practice raises fears

Microsoft Corporation is giving early versions of its software security patches to the US Air Force and other organizations, a practice some experts fear could give rogue hackers important details about how to break into unprotected computers on a massive scale.

Microsoft maintains that participants in its security-testing program abide by strict rules to protect these early software patches from leaking into the Internet's underground. For added security, it doesn't provide documentation to participants about which Microsoft products might be affected and allows only for limited testing in a computer laboratory.

Hackers who study such repairing patches can identify the vulnerable software and build tools to attack it. Microsoft said the program's goal is to more

thoroughly test its upcoming security patches for reliability; some repairing patches from Microsoft in previous years have inadvertently disrupted computers.

"The challenge for us as a company is to make sure the updates we provide are good quality," said Stephen Toulouse, a program manager for Microsoft's Security Response Center.

For years, Microsoft had denied suggestions it privately shared detailed information about vulnerabilities discovered in its software before it's publicly announced. Craig Mundie, a senior vice president, said earlier this week that fears about dangerous leaks compel Microsoft to keep such sensitive information a closely guarded secret.

"We're very highly incented not to be too generous," Mundie said.

Some security experts challenged Microsoft's year-old practice, which was first

disclosed in Friday's Wall Street Journal. They cited the likelihood that even early versions of software patches may leak from participating organizations into the hacker community.

Microsoft said its program participants, which it declined to identify except for the Air Force, were carefully selected and sign nondisclosure agreements. Toulouse acknowledged there was some risk but said building hacker tools by examining a software patch was "a significant engineering challenge."

"One of the things we have to weigh is that risk against making sure we can provide a quality update," he said.

Another outside researcher, Russ Cooper, said he was mollified by Microsoft's efforts to enforce secrecy agreements and withhold important details about any future vulnerabilities.

## Internet telephony ready for Plug-and-Play

Phone calls over the Internet free or at drastically lower rates are no longer the domain of the technically savvy, with companies starting to offer plug-and-play solutions.

When Chou En-Sung, technical director of Taiwanese firm Telewell Electronic, wants to call home from the CeBIT technology fair, he connects a handset made by his firm to a laptop and places the call over the Internet.

"No fixed phone line necessary," he says.

Similar services, such as Skype, have attracted millions of users with the promise of free calls, but require a computer that is

running, forcing users to take calls from their PC.

The next generation of devices that use the so-called voice over IP (VoIP) technology will be easier to use and work with cordless phones, but will be sold bundled with services by Internet providers or telecoms operators, manufacturers said.

Technology group Siemens (SIEGn.DE) is showing an inconspicuous white box at CeBIT that allows users to place calls with a traditional cordless phone as well as surfing the Internet wirelessly, all over one broadband connection.

French wireless technology firm Inventel has a similar

product that comes with a handset, and is likewise sold only to operators that want to offer voice over IP services.

The idea is to offer the same convenience as traditional cordless phones, but services beyond wireless Internet access and phone calls, said Inventel marketing director Cedric Hutchings.

"Operators can push content to the phone, for example sell logos or ring tones, or allow users to search for a phone number in the directory," he said.

"People started to use voice over IP on economic grounds. You subscribe and make calls cheaper or for free, but sometimes at low quality.



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**THE PRESIDENCY  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA  
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON PRIVATISATION  
SECRETARIAT: BUREAU OF PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (BPE)**

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST FOR  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CONSULTANCY SERVICES**

This request for expressions of interest follows the general procurement notice for this project that appeared in Development Business No. 561 of June 30<sup>th</sup> 2001 and the update published in issue No.578 of March 2002.

The Federal Government of Nigeria has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA), towards the implementation of the privatization and commercialization programme by the National Council on Privatization (NCP) through its secretariat, the Bureau of Public Enterprises and intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payments under the contract for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) projects aimed at assisting the Bureau of Public Enterprises (BPE) to facilitate its IT implementation strategies. The services include:

**a) PROJECT MANAGER**

BPE sees the need for the application of project management skills, tools and techniques to project activities to ensure our project objectives are met within specific timeframe and budgetary constraints. The project manager **who must be an individual**, is expected:

- To ensure that each IT project when conceived and authorized supports the BPE's approved overall strategic objectives and contains acceptable risks regarding the project's objectives.
- To plan, control and lead each project simultaneously with all other projects effectively and efficiently so that each will achieve its approved objectives.
- To manage all IT projects successfully, phase-by-phase, from inception to completion.

**Requirements**

- B.Sc./HND Degree in Computer Science, Engineering, Business Administration or any relevant field. Masters Degree in any of these fields will be preferable.
- Certification/knowledge of a project management methodology would be an added advantage
- Well-structured project management experience. Good knowledge of Microsoft Project Central/Server would be an advantage.
- Good communication skills.
- Considerable knowledge of business theory, business processes, management, budgeting, and business office operations.
- Experience working in a Lotus Domino environment
- Substantial experience using standard project management methodologies such as SSADM, Prince2, Waterfall, etc. will be an advantage

**b) DATABASE ADMINISTRATOR/DEVELOPER**

The database administrator/developer **who must be an individual** will assist the BPE with the following:

- Analysis of operational requirements of BPE and its various departments
- Administering and development of database management systems using VB6/VB.Net, SQL, Access
- Development of web driven applications using ASP, HTML, SQL/Access javascript, vbscript.
- Development of SQL server database solutions including tables, stored procedures, views etc
- Install and configure database management system software
- Develop policies and procedures for system operations to better serve BPE users

**Requirements**

- B (Sc.) in Information Technology/Computer Science or Engineering Degree or any other qualifications in related field. A Masters degree would be an advantage.
- Good analytical skills
- Strong programming skills using VB6/VB.NET, ASP, HTML, javascript, vbscript
- Ability to create documentation including specs, operating/user manuals and help files
- Knowledge of XML, Lotus Notes would be an added advantage.

**c) INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) TRAINER (Firm)**

The IT Trainer **who must be a firm** will organize and deliver in-house training courses to meet the needs of users. The courses would include:

- Microsoft Office
- Microsoft Project
- Lotus Notes
- Other general computing awareness courses

**Requirements**

The Lead Consultant must have the following skills:

- B (Sc.) in IT/Computer Science or Engineering Degree or any other qualifications in related field. A Masters degree would be an advantage
- Professional Certification in Lotus Domino (CLF), Microsoft Office Applications, and Microsoft Project would be an added advantage.

- Professional Certification in training would be an added advantage
- Experience of delivering corporate training
- Good communication skills, and must be able to give presentations

**d) PROJECT CENTRAL (Firm)**

The consultant needed for this service **must be a firm** or consortium of firms who are experts in deploying and managing the Project Central/Server infrastructure and deployment. The firm is expected to:

- Conduct requirement analysis across all departments within BPE.
- Plan and design a Project Server infrastructure for BPE.
- Install, deploy and configure Project Central/Server software.
- Assist with the development of work plans
- Assist with the training of staff

**Requirements**

The lead consultant of the selected firm must have the following qualifications:

- B.Sc./HND Degree in Computer Science, Engineering, Business Administration or any relevant field. Masters Degree in any of these fields will be preferable for the Lead Consultant.
- Experience in designing, configuration and deployment of Project Central Server in a similar industry an ideal.
- Experience in designing and administering Microsoft SQL Server Database.
- Experience working in a Lotus Domino environment would be an advantage

**SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (EOIs)**

The Bureau now invites eligible individual consultants/firm to indicate their interest in providing these services. Expressions of Interest from prospective consultants should specify the following information as basis for pre-qualification:

- Company profile/capability statement and Curriculum Vitae of Firm/ Individual consultants who wish to provide these services, including qualification and evidence of firm/individual experiences in handling similar assignments in Nigeria or elsewhere in the world;
- Intended approach to assignment (work plan and proposed time line);

Consultants will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers, January 1997 (Revised September 1997).

Expressions of Interest must be submitted in six (6) hard copies with an electronic copy (CD) in a sealed envelope clearly marked "Expressions of interest for ...." **"The Title of Consultancy Applied for"**

The Expression of Interest should be delivered not later than **5.00 pm Thursday, 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005, in Room 127** at the address shown below:

**Mrs. Irene N Chigbue**  
Bureau of Public Enterprises  
1, Osun Crescent, Off Ibrahim Babangida Way, Maitama  
P. M. B. 442, Garki  
Abuja - Nigeria  
Tel: 234-9-4134664 46  
Fax: 234-9-4134664, 4134671  
Email: ichigbue@bpeng.org

**Attn: Mr. Benjamin Dikki**  
Director, Financial & Management Support  
Bureau of Public Enterprises (The Presidency)  
(1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Room 127)  
1, Osun Crescent, Off Ibrahim Babangida Way, Maitama  
P. M. B. 442, Garki  
Abuja - Nigeria  
Tel. 234-9-4134664, 234-9-6705777  
Fax: 234-9-4134664, 4134671

E-mail: [BDikki@bpeng.org](mailto:BDikki@bpeng.org);  
[jyisa-doko@bpeng.org](mailto:jyisa-doko@bpeng.org)

**Web site:** <http://www.bpeng.org>

Interested consultants may obtain further information, at the address above from **8.00am to 5.00 pm, Mondays through Fridays** (except public holidays).

**Only short listed applicants would be contacted.**



**THE PRESIDENCY  
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA  
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON PRIVATISATION  
SECRETARIAT: BUREAU OF PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (BPE)**

**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST FOR  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CONSULTANCY SERVICES**

This request for expressions of interest follows the general procurement notice for this project that appeared in Development Business No. 561 of June 30<sup>th</sup> 2001 and the update published in issue No.578 of March 2002.

The Federal Government of Nigeria has received credit from the International Development Association (IDA), towards the implementation of the privatisation and commercialisation programme by the National Council on Privatisation (NCP) through its secretariat, the Bureau of Public Enterprises and intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit to payments under the contract for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) projects aimed at assisting the Bureau of Public Enterprises [BPE] to facilitate its IT implementation strategies.

The major components of this program will include the strengthening and expansion of the existing network infrastructure, and the development and implementation of software application. The services include:

**a) NETWORKING CONSULTANCY SERVICES**

The BPE is seeking the for the services of a Networking consultancy firm that will assist with the following:

- Conduct a network performance and security audit and facilitate solutions.
- Implement a disaster recovery and business continuity strategy.
- Develop a set of policies and procedures addressing network operations and security.
- Deploy the latest version of Microsoft Systems Management Server.

**Requirements**

The Lead Consultant(s) of the consulting company should possess:

- B (Sc.) in Information Technology/Computer Science or any other qualifications in related field. A Masters degree would be an advantage.
- At least 5 years experience in network design and implementation.
- Full project life cycle experience and project management methodology
- Professional certification on network administration and security e.g. CCNP, CCIE, CCSP, MSCE, etc.
- Network security design and implementation experience.
- Experience working in a Lotus Domino environment.
- Prior experience working in Nigeria.

**b) LOTUS DOMINO INTEGRATION SERVICES**

The BPE's network software infrastructure is centered on Lotus Domino, an IBM/Lotus software product, that provides such services as messaging, collaboration, web browsing, and can be expanded to include a document management system, workflow systems, etc.

The consulting firm who wish to carry out this assignment will amongst other functions:

- Implement a document management system solution
- Design Workflow applications to handle internal processes in the Bureau.
- Design and develop Lotus Domino Policies, Standards and Procedures. This should cover areas of security, general work ethics and orientation

**Requirements**

The Lead Consultant of the consulting firm should possess:

- B (Sc.) in Information Technology/Computer Science or any other qualifications in related field. A Masters degree would be an advantage.
- At least 5 years working experience with Lotus Domino tools and objects e.g. Lotus Notes
- Professional certification in Lotus Domino e.g. CLP
- Full project life cycle experience and project management methodology
- Prior experience working in Nigeria

**c) ENTERPRISE SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT**

The consultant needed for this assignment will assist BPE in carrying out the following:

- Build a searchable database of information on all the enterprises to be privatised, by sector/department.
- Build an application / database of all procurement information
- Build a tracking system to track each procurement process
- Build interfaces, which allow enterprise officers/users to check and update information directly from the desktops

**Requirements**

The Lead Consultant(s) of the consulting company should possess:

- B (Sc.) in Information Technology/Computer Science or any other qualifications in related field. A Masters degree would be an advantage.
- Good analytical skills
- Strong programming skills using VB6/VB.NET, ASP, HTML, javascript, vbscript
- Ability to create documentation including specs, operating/user manuals and help files
- Knowledge of XML, Lotus Notes would be an added advantage.
- Prior experience working in Nigeria

**SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (EOIs)**

Expressions of Interest from prospective consultants should specify the following information as basis for pre-qualification:

- Company profile/capability statement and Curriculum Vitae of Firm/ Individual consultants who wish to provide these services, including qualification and evidence of firm/individual experiences in handling similar assignments in Nigeria or elsewhere in the world;
- Intended approach to assignment (work plan and proposed time line);

Consultants will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers, January 1997 (Revised September 1997).

Expressions of Interest must be submitted in six (6) hard copies with an electronic copy (CD) in a sealed envelope clearly marked **Expressions of interest for: "The Title of Consultancy Applied for"**

The Expression of Interest should be delivered not later than **5.00 pm on Friday, 8th April 2005, in Room 127** at the address shown below:

**Mrs. Irene N Chigbue**  
Bureau of Public Enterprises  
1, Osun Crescent, Off Ibrahim Babangida Way, Maitama  
P. M. B. 442, Garki  
Abuja - Nigeria  
Tel: 234-9-4134664 46  
Fax: 234-9-4134664, 4134671  
Email: ichigbue@bpeng.org

**Attn: Mr. Benjamin Dikki**  
Director, Financial & Management Support  
Bureau of Public Enterprises (The Presidency)  
(1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Room 127)  
1, Osun Crescent, Off Ibrahim Babangida Way, Maitama  
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E-mail: BDikki@bpeng.org; jyisa-doko@bpeng.org  
Web site: http://www.bpeng.org

Interested consultants may obtain further information at the address above from **8.00 am to 5.00 pm, Mondays through Fridays** (except public holidays)

**Only short listed applicants would be contacted.**

# IT World

## Revenue boards seek N45m for computerisation

The chairman, Joint Tax Board (JTB) Ms Ifueko Omoigui has revealed that over N45 million is required for the computerisation of the operations of revenue boards in the country this year for effective information sharing and tax administration.

She said the JTB drew up phases of computerisation of the states and federal revenue boards for adoption nationwide, stressing that implementation of the project will not only enhance revenue generation but will also help block leakages and make tax administration faster and more efficient.

Ms Omoigui stated this last week while on a courtesy visit to president Olusegun Obasanjo at the state house, Abuja saying that the project hope to be the beginning of having an automated tax administration system that would enable all state revenue boards to be linked together for effective information sharing.

By Hamisu Muhammad,  
Business reporter

"Tax administration at all levels require a lot of data management to arrive at more scientific assessment of tax payers. It has also become routine for most financial transactions and payment system to rely on electronic

means of transmission and storage" she said.

She pleaded for the president's support for the project through persuading the state governments to make a minimum budgetary provision for the amount required, stating that she had already sent letters to this effect to the state governors.

## Microsoft sites IT village at Katsina-Ala

From Hir Joseph,  
Correspondent (Makurdi)

As part of the implementation of its agreement with federal government to establish information technology (IT) villages around the country, Microsoft has been allocated a site for the project in Katsina-Ala, with Hon Gabriel Tor Suswam, representing the area at the National Assembly as its sponsor.

Public sector investment manager of the global IT firm, Mr. Okey Ikpe who was

accompanied by the special aide to Hon. Suswam, Mr. Joe Isavsar for assessment of the proposed site, announced that the project would generate potential benefit to the people of the area and its environs by way of easing communication. Acknowledging the effort of the law maker at ensuring that Katsina-Ala, headquarter of Sank-era federal constituency is linked to the global village, said the proposed project would serve for three purposes namely training, internet browsing and the provision of information data bank for research work.

Mr. Okey Ikpe who was led for a brief closed door talks with the Katsina-Ala local government chairman, Hon. Tsenongo Abancha also said the project would be even more useful to students and lecturers at the college of education, a major tertiary institution in the area.



Bill Gates, Microsoft boss



Mr. Sola Oyetayo, managing partner, Sola Oyetayo & Co being taken through a demonstration on the wi-fi internet connectivity at the Accelon stand during the 34th ICAN conference in Abuja recently. With him is Lanre Oloyede, group head events, CMC Connet, Lagos.

## Subscribers charge Mashi to turn around NITEL

From Zakariyya Adaramola,  
Correspondent (Lagos)

Even as arguments and counter-arguments still trail the dissolution of Pentascope/NITEL contract and the ouster of some top officials of the government-owned telecommunication company, Nigerian telecoms subscribers have called on the new management team "to settle down for real business and turn around NITEL."

Speaking to *IT World* in an interview in Lagos last week, president of the National Association of Telecommunications Subscribers of Nigeria (NATCOMS), Mr.

Adeolu Ogunbajo said the new NITEL management team led by Mr. Albert Mashi should bring their past experiences to bear and "revolutionise NITEL services."

The NATCOMS president said instead of towing the line laid by the sacked officials, Mr. Mashi and his team should prove to Nigerians "that Nigerians can actually do it by themselves."

According to him, if some former NITEL staff could establish and run private

telephone companies successfully, there is no reason why those running the affairs of NITEL should fail.

His words: "Nigerians expect much from Mashi and his team. He should not be distracted with the arguments that still trail the dissolution of Pentascope's contract. Rather, he should settle down and turn around NITEL. He and the entire team should bring their past commendable experiences to bear and revolutionise the ailing NITEL."

He advised Mashi to work towards restoring the lost confidence subscribers have in NITEL by giving the PTO's the run for their money.

## Bankers' Institute holds IT confab

The place and challenges of information technology in the era of Merger and Acquisition in banks will dominate discussions at the Conference put together by The Chartered Institute of Bankers of Nigeria, (CIBN) to further equip the operators to successfully manage bank mergers and acquisition.

The conference among other things would proffer solutions on how various Information and Communication Technology (ICT) resources and infrastructures in the banks can be effectively and successfully integrated and deployed during and after the consolidation exercise.

According to a release signed by CIBN Head Corporate Affairs, Mr. Fidelis Idoruje, the programme is scheduled to hold at the Shell Hall, Muson Centre, Onikan, Lagos from Monday 14 - Wednesday 16 March, 2005 at 9.00

The statement said that the theme of the event is titled: "ICT Integration in Bank Consolidation: Issues, Strategies and Solutions."

According to it, participants will have the opportunity to deliberate on some topical issues like "conducting ICT Due Diligence in Banks Consolidation Process: Planning and implementing audit solutions during and after Bank Consolidation process; Strategies for consolidating and integrating ICT resources and infrastructures in Merged/Acquired Banks: Designing the best possible integration outline for implementation during and after the Bank consolidation process."

"Partnering for success with the solution providers: The role of ICT companies, vendors, auditors and consultants during and after the Bank consolidation process" among others.



Displayed laptops at CeBIT, the world's largest high-tech fair.

## Dove Media partners with TITV

Dove Media, a USA based company wholly owned by the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) announced that it has entered into a partnership with Trumpet Internet Television (TITV) to bring affordable satellite television and internet services to members of the RCCG.

Dove Media currently owns Urban American TV channel and will soon launch DoveVision. Both channels will be carried on the TITV Direct-To-Home satellite television system.

According to a statement from TITV, Chief Executive Offer of Dove Media, Dr. Ajibike Akinkoye, in a statement said the company is partnering with TITV to realize a dream of the RCCG to use television and the internet to reach out to all of its congregants and to touch the souls of people everywhere.

Dove Media has now established Dove Media Nigeria with offices at Lagos

Island and Pastor Ope Banwo has been named Chief Executive Officer. Pastor Banwo is enthusiastic about prospects for the partnership of Dove Media Nigeria and TITV working together to deliver the new DoveVision, the dedicated Christian Channel of Dove Media and Urban American Television, the secular entertainment television channel to the members of the RCCG.

According to Banwo "Being able to deliver our channels on TITV's affordable platform along with other channels that families will enjoy is a great advantage to our company and to the mission of RCCG."

Commenting on the future plans of Dove Media, Pastor Banwo described the DoveVision channel as a dedicated Christian Channel that will carry messages of the General Overseer of the RCCG, Pastor E.A Adeboye as well as Ministers' Conferences, Annual Conventions and other

events. The first event to be carried was the just concluded Special Holy Ghost Service on March 4, 2005 held at the Redemption Camp which was broadcast on the TITV platform.

Nate Gamer, Managing Director and Chief Executive of TITV said that he is extraordinarily pleased to be working with such an esteemed group as RCCG and Dove media.

Said he "that Dove Media has chosen to partner with us is but one more recognition that our company is on the right track to achieving our mission of serving Africa with a different and dedicated communications medium that to support the hopes and aspirations of black people worldwide."

TITV is a Nigerian owned Satellite Television and Internet Company that offers a bouquet of television channels and high speed (satellite download) internet service.

The company launched its service to the media in September last year.

# ABUJA TRUST

## Re-allocation of houses: Confusion in Gwarinpa Housing Estate

Some occupants of the FHA estate in Gwarinpa, Abuja are in a confused state following the re-allocation of their houses to some civil servants.

The civil servants are those evicted from their accommodation in Lagos as a result of a directive from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that some of the occupants of the houses in Gwarinpa who had their allocation letters signed by the Head of Service of the Federation, are affected.

They were shocked to discover that some of their houses have been re-allocated to those coming from Lagos.

NAN reports that hun-

dreds of families living in the 1004 estate in Victoria Island, Mulliner Towers, Reeve Roads, Alexander in Ikoyi, were on February 25, served quit notice by the authorities of the Federal Ministry of Housing and Urban Development.

The occupants, who are mostly civil servants, were directed to vacate their flats within 30 days or face forceful ejection.

However, they were given allocation letters to houses in Gwarinpa and Lugbe in Abuja, to relocate to, while those currently occupying such houses are now in a state of dilemma.

Mallam Yunusa Musa, a staff of the Ministry of Transport, told the NAN in an interview that he was surprised to discover only last Friday that another person from Lagos had come with an allocation letter to the house.

"I do not know where they got the idea that no one was living in this house when I have been living here in the past two years," he said.

He said that the new letter given to the "Lagos person" was signed by Prof. A. Ahire, secretary of the committee set up by the government to secure accommodation for those affected in the eviction exercise in Lagos.

Another occupant, Mrs. Maimuna Idris, a staff of the Ministry of Industry, confirmed that three of her neighbours had been visited by some people claiming that the houses had been allocated to them.

"We found out really that some people had come here to inquire about the houses with their letters of allocation signed by the secretary of the committee on relocation of civil servants.

The public affairs manager of the FHA, Mr. Fola Awolabi, told NAN that the authority recently carried out a verification exercise to ascertain the legal occupants of the estate. He said that the allocations were done after the findings of the verification exercise. The manager assured that the matter would be sorted out in the shortest possible way.

## AMAC PDP chairman counsels Rep over utterances

A member of the House of Representatives, Hon. Sidi Ali, representing Abuja South federal constituency, has been counselled over his recent criticism of a fellow FCT colleague in the House. Hon. Philip Tanimu Aduda representing AMAC/Bwari constituency.

disagreement would be sorted out.

"Now it seems he is trying to jeopardise our people's collective interests by his action. And these our interests transcend political party differences," Tanko emphasised.

The PDP chairman in AMAC who was a former speaker of the council's legislature in the third republic said Sidi Ali's verbal onslaught against Aduda was clearly off the mark.

He further queried Sidi Ali's claim that Aduda had performed poorly as chairman of the House Committee on FCT.

"What yardsticks or parameters did he use in measuring the performance?" He asked pointing out that only the electorate or the Hon. Speaker of the House of Representatives, Alhaji Bello Masari, were qualified to pass judgment on Hon. Aduda.

Tanko contended that from the angle of his own perception, Hon. Aduda has so far performed well in his dual capacity as the representative of FCT's AMAC/Bwari federal constituency and as chairman of House Committee on FCT.

Sidi Ali, a member of the opposition All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP) had in a recent media interview called for the replacement of Aduda as FCT committee on grounds of alleged non-performance and negligence of the interests of the indigenes.

The chairman of Abuja Municipal area council (AMAC) chapter of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Hon. Bitrus Kura Tanko, in chat with newsmen condemned Alhaji Sidi Ali's call for the removal of Hon. Aduda as the chairman of House Committee on FCT.

Sidi Ali, a member of the opposition All Nigerian Peoples Party (ANPP) had in a recent media interview called for the replacement of Aduda as FCT committee on grounds of alleged non-performance and negligence of the interests of the indigenes.

But reacting to the call, Hon. Tanko reproached Sidi Ali for "going on air over whatever differences or disagreements he had with his brother (Aduda)."

"I don't see any justification why he should rush to the press, no matter his grievances. There are many avenues Sidi should have explored. He should have called our elders together and then invite his brother so that the



Director, FCT Road Traffic Services, Mr. Samson Ataiyero, left, with Cmdr. O.N. Akpuru, Head of Operations, FRSC, FCT command, at a stakeholders workshop on the implementation of the phase II KEKE-NAPEP youth empowerment project in FCT, held at Abuja council for Arts & Culture last week.

## AEPB begins trial of roadside traders

The Abuja Environmental Protection Board (AEPB) said it has instituted mobile courts to try returnee roadside traders after their evacuation from the old Wuse and Bakassi markets. The traders were middle of last week evicted from the pedestrian lane along Herbert Macaulay Way in Wuse Zone 5 by a combined team of members of the Federal Capital Development Authority and Abuja Environmental Protection Board.

Mallam Ahmed a member of the AEPB who spoke to our correspondent last Thursday, said that the court was introduced to try three categories of offenders, those who will come back to the place with

By Maimuna Yusuf, Reporter, Abuja

their wares, traders who erected structures on pedestrian lanes and those who violate rules of the environmental day.

He explained further that arrest have been of some traders that resurfaced with their items. This group, he said were charged between N2, 000 to 3, 000 depending on the size of their goods before they will be released.

Speaking on the closure of Herbert Macaulay Way last Wednesday, Mallam Ahmed said it was the directive from the FCDA to avoid any commotion that might erupt between the fleeing

traders and the members of the public.

"We had to close the road to avoid any reaction from the traders that might affect innocent people passing the road in their moving vehicles as most people would stop to look while others will be crossing at the same time," he said.

Another member of the AEPB who pleaded anonymity told our correspondent that the traders especially hair braiders have converted the frontage of the FCDA quarters to market thereby making the place untidy with pure water sachets and strands of hair flying everywhere. According to him some of the braiders even harass passersby by calling them to come and plait their hair.

The pedestrian lane along Herbert Macaulay Way is now wearing a new look. It is tidy and there is free movement of people and vehicles between the two bus stops up to the bridge in Wuse Zone 5.

The only structure in front of the FCDA quarters is where the mobile court sits with about four policemen and some members of the AEPB. Some traders were seen pleading to get back their seized items.

## Taxi drivers invade Gwagwalada VIO office

Hell was let loose at the Directorate of Road Traffic Services office in Gwagwalada last Wednesday when taxi drivers stormed the office, beating up the officers in the office.

The taxi drivers, who rode in four commercial vehicles, stormed the office at about 9am and started attacking all the officers on duty.

The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) reports that in their bid to escape the wrath of the angry drivers the officers ran into the surrounding bush.

However, a number of the officers were caught by the taxi drivers who were in larger number. Help, however, came to the officers when the police arrived following a distress call by some of the VIO who managed to escape. The taxi drivers took to their heels on sighting the police.

Some of the taxi drivers who spoke to NAN said they were protesting the high handedness of the VIO.

## Water vendors cause accident in Dantata Village

By Abbas Abdullah, NYSC

The careless road crossing of a group of water vendors commonly known as *Mairuwa* led to a serious accident at Dantata Village, opposite Dantata and Sawoe Construction Company along airport road, Abuja.

The accident which occurred last Wednesday by 7.45 am saw a Mercedes Benz V-boot saloon car with registration number DC 240ABC belonging to AKC motors somersaulting several times before it skidded into a trench on the right side of the road.

The lone occupant of the car, who is an employee of the

automobile retailer, our correspondent gathered, however escaped by the whiskers with minor injuries.

Our correspondent, who was at the scene of the accident few minutes after it occurred, gathered that the car was on top speed when the water vendors with their carts loaded with jerry cans of water numbering six carelessly crossed the busy road without looking out for incoming vehicles.

The middle-aged driver who apparently swerved off the road to avoid killing the cart pushers lost conscious-

ness immediately after the accident. He was later rushed to the Wuse General Hospital.

The divisional police officer (DPO) of Asokoro police station, Chief Superintendent of police (CSP) David Jimwan led other sympathizers to rescue the man.

Two police officers from Lugbe later arrived the scene after being contacted by CSP Jimwan, who was a former DPO of Lugbe police station. The six water vendors earlier took to their heels abandoning their carts one of which was wrecked by the car.

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Chairman, Disposal Committee  
Tafawa Balewa Square Investments Limited  
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# KANO TRUST



Second hand clothes otherwise known as Bend-down-boutique in the famous Kofar Wambai Market, Kano attracts customers from villages and towns around Kano and beyond.  
Pix: Aliyu Machika

## Bagwai LG earmarks N51m for electrification project

In a bid to halt the power failure bedevilling the area, Bagwai local government has voted N51million for the electrification project of a 15-kilometre road linking various villages, the council's chairman, Alhaji Yusuf Ahmad Badau, disclosed this while briefing newsmen. He said that the project is expected to be completed before the end of this year. The council boss noted that series of strategies were unveiled with a view to eliminating the problem of the common man,

By Mustapha Isah Kwaru,  
Correspondent Kano

adding that contracts for the construction of bridges linking Tuga, Sare-Sare, Gajemi Romo, Gajemi-Kiyawa and Joben-Yatowns were awarded so as to get rid of the transportation problems that engulfed farmers and also to revamped socio-economic activities.

He explained that the council also accorded an appropriate attention to education sector with the construction of additional blocks of classrooms at

Kwajale, Rimin Dako and Kiyawa primary schools to the tune of N7.5million.

## ...purchases N3m goats for women

In its determination to empower women and boost animal husbandry in the area, Bagwai local government has purchased goats worth N3million for onward sale at a subsidised rate to women, in addition to two sewing machines to distribute as soft loans.

The chairman of the council, Alhaji Yusuf Ahmed Badau, disclosed this while briefing staff of the area. He pointed out that the gesture became imperative in view of ill-treatment meted on the women when it comes to political power sharing, saying the strategy would do away with hawking among young girls, prostitution and other social ills among women.

The chairman stressed that women deserves kind treatment worldwide, saying that the success or failure of up bringing of the society depends on the appropriate attention accorded to them.

According to Alhaji Badau, the council has not isolated men from its empowerment scheme, stating that 120 buses and 200 bicycles were distributed to youths at a subsidised rate.

The chairman applauded the staff for their support towards the development of the area, just as he urged them to maintain the tempo.

Responding on behalf of the staff, the director of personal management of the area, Alhaji Baba Ibrahim Gaya, commended the chairman for improving their welfare, saying the staff will

## Industrial waste threatens Kumbotso residents

By Ahmed Abubakar,  
Correspondent Kano

About 80% of industrial waste products are released in to the Challawa River which serves as the main source of drinking water in Kano state. The chairman of Kumbotso local government council, Alhaji Sagiru Abdulkadir Panshekara accused companies and industries residing in Challawa of indiscriminate dumping of refuse in the environment therefore causing an injurious hardship to people living in the area.

Alhaji Sagiru Panshekara who laments over this act of environmental pollution by the companies, said the local government will no longer fold its arms and let the people of the area who are at the receiving ends continue to suffer in silence.

Alhaji Sagiru Panshekara who was speaking at a meeting held by Kumbotso local

government with companies and industries operating under Kumbotso stressed that the meeting was an avenue to dialogue in order to find a lasting solution to environment degradation in the area.

He also said that there is a provision by law to prosecute ecological defaulters and

while the council will continue to sensitise those offenders, court of law will be a last resort to alleviating the problems of environmental pollution in the area.

Alhaji Lawan Sule Garo appealed to the federal government to construct a secondary treatment plant that will take charge in treating waste products released by factories.

## KNSG to tackle over crowding in sec. schools

From Aliyu s. Machika,  
Correspondent Kano

The Kano state government has pledged to tackle the problems of over crowding due to inadequate class rooms and hostels in the secondary schools across the state. The state governor, Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau, made the statement when he visited Government Girls Secondary School Danbatta recently after a fire incidence which razed the school.

He expressed sympathy over the incidence, and urged both the students and the teachers to be patience as government is doing everything humanity possible to help them over the matter.

In his response, the principal of the school, Mallam Mohammed Adamu, expressed concern over the fire incidence, adding that it was quite unfortunate. He further explained that his administration has set up an investigation committee to identify the causes and the damages of the fire.

He then attributed the incidence to the general insecurity at the school premises and calls for immediate action to tackle the problem.

Meanwhile, the Kano state government has recently built more than eighty junior secondary schools across the state, the commissioner of education, Hajija Balaraba Sule, stated this while briefing newsmen in Government House.

She said government has resolved to the decision of building more classrooms to tackle the problems of over crowding at the secondary schools in the state.

She further said that already about four classes were also constructed at various schools which according to her will give opportunity for all pupils who completed their primary schools to gain admission into the junior secondary schools in the state.

## Pure-water hawkers protest price increment

Pure water hawkers in Kano state have conducted a peaceful demonstration against in the increment of the commodity from N25 to N35 per bag. The water vendors numbering about 200 who started the demonstration from Fagge, one of the state metropolis local council, went round the city through major roads expressing their anger over the price increments.

The hawkers also carried along with them pure water sachets, plastic containers and sack bags while chanting 'sai an rage farashi' meaning 'the price of pure water must be reduced'.

The protestors, Kano Trust learnt passed through Ibrahim Taiwo road, civil centre, post office road and finally went back to the starting point, Fagge.

Malam Salisu Haruna, one of the protestors who spoke to Kano Trust said that the aim of the protest was to convey

By Yusha'u Adamu Ibrahim,

messages to the producers of pure water in the state for them to reverse the price to its former figure.

Haruna, 18 year old from Wambai quarters said that if the pure water is sold to them at N30-N33, they will not gain a reasonable profit despite the fact that they are selling it under the extreme heat of the sun.

He therefore called on the manufacturers of the commodity to look into the issue and take an immediate action to address the problem. Another pure water vendor, Salisu Audu, disclosed that Santana Pure Water Manufacturing Company is one of the most expensive one, as while others were selling a bag for N30, the company was selling at N35.

He pointed out that the hawkers will stop buying the product if they did not revert the price to its former figure.



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# EKO TRUST

## Three die in road accidents

Three persons were killed in fatal motor accidents, which occurred in Lagos last Monday.

A Volkswagen commercial bus with registration number XB 267 BKB knocked down a young man identified as Mohammed Masallah in Ajegunle area of the state on Monday evening.

Mohammed Masallah, crossing the road at the time, was seriously injured, he later died in a nearby hospital. The

incident occurred along Alaba-Ajegunle road close to the victim's shop.

Also at Igando in Alimosho area, a Mercedes Benz car with registration number FY 221 AAA knocked down young man identified as Seun Anori.

The incident, which occurred along general hospital road, left the victim seriously injured. He later died on the way to the hospital.

In Owutu area, a Honda accord car with registration number BP 492 LSD also ran over a female pedestrian along Lagos-Ikorodu expressway. She died on the spot. The

incident occurred opposite Coconut filling station at about 1pm.

Eko Trust learnt that the driver of the Honda car, Mr. Ola, has since been arrested by policemen attached to Owutu police station in Ikorodu while efforts were being made to trace the address of the victim.

The Lagos State police spokesman, Mr. Ademola Adebayo who confirmed the stories said the corpse of the deceased persons were removed from the scenes by policemen from nearby stations. He said the cases were now under investigation.



Members of the Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria at the 2005 International women's day in Lagos...last week.

Pic: Olatipupo Olatunwa

## Army declares Lagos ammunition depots safe

By Samson Ojo, Correspondent (Lagos)

The Nigerian Army (NA) has declared the Ammunition Transit Depot (ATD) in Lagos military cantonments safe for inhabitant and environs.

It would be recalled that on January 27, 2002 bomb explosions occurred at the Ammunition Transit Depot (ATD) in Ikeja cantonment.

Following the unfortunate incident and consequences, the chief of army staff (COAS), Lt General Martin Luther Agwai, tasked the Nigerian Army Engineer Corps and Schools (NAEC) and the Nigerian Army Ordnance Corps and school (MAOCS) who have experts on bomb disposal to clear the unexploded bombs in the area and make it safe for habitation.

To attest to the safety of Ikeja cantonment bomb blast, according to a statement made available to Eko Trust and signed by the director of army public relations Colonel M.D. Yusuf, the COAS, Lt General Agwai undertook a tour of the epicentre on Friday with stakeholders to restore confidence and re-assure the general public of the progress made to clear the depot of unexploded bombs and the entire environs of Ikeja military cantonment safe.

## Female Muslim nurses allege threat over hijab

By Zakariyya Adaramola, Correspondent (Lagos)

Female Muslims nurses using the Islamic head covering, hijab, in Lagos State hospitals have cried out that some top officials of the state hospital's management board have been threatening to suspend or sack them if they insist on putting on hijab while on duty.

According to the concerned nurses, top officials at the Lagos Island General Hospital and the Ikeja General Hospital have been calling us all sorts of names, telling us to remove our hijabs or leave the hospitals' premises."

The nurses, who would not want their names in print, told Eko Trust in Lagos recently that they have called the attention of the officials to a memo from the ministry of health permitting Muslim nurses to wear hijab if the wish.

"We also called their attention to the recent judgement delivered in favour of the wearing of hijab by students of the Lagos State College of Health Technology by a Lagos high court. We also reminded them of the provisions of section 38 of the 1999 constitution which grants freedom to practice one's religion," said the spokesperson of the nurses.

But taking up the nurses' case, a Lagos-based Islamic group, the Muslim Rights Concern (MURIC) has written to the Lagos State commissioner of health, Dr. Leke Pitan, urging him "to call the hospital officials to order before it is too late."

Writing in a press release jointly signed by its director,

Dr. Ladi Akintola and Abdul Samiu Sulayeman and made available to Eko Trust in Lagos, MURIC said Muslims would not stand akimbo while some civil servants take undue advantage of them.

His words: "We alert the Lagos State government of this ugly development. The commissioner for the health must call hospital officials to order before it is too late. The patience of Lagos Muslims must not be mistaken for folly. We will not stand akimbo while some civil servants take undue advantage of Muslims. Government must act before the Muslims come out in protest. The hospitals belong to all (Christians and Muslims) and any official who is allergic to the sight of Muslims should go back home."

The group appealed to Nigerians particularly

hospital authorities to learn religious tolerance, adding that Nigeria has witnessed too many religion-motivated crises in the past.

"We should be careful with the way we treat religious issues. It is a very sensitive thing in this country. Let every Christian enjoy religious freedom. Allow the Muslims to freely practice their religion. By the way, what is the grouse of the officials of the hospitals? Does the hijab disturb the

nurses at work? Do the authorities prefer sexy-looking and half-naked women as nurses?" asked the rights group.

MURIC specifically appealed to Lagos Muslims and Muslims elsewhere not to succumb to provocation, adding that dialogue with a superior argument will change "the oppressors."

"We appeal to Muslims in Lagos State and elsewhere not to succumb to provocation. Dialogue is the answer. Avoid violent

reactions. We will use superior argument to change hardened oppressors," said MURIC.

Eko Trust made several attempts to hear from the senior officials of the concerned hospitals but to no avail as they "could not talk to the press without order from above."

It would be recalled that a Lagos high court last year delivered a judgement in favour of wearing of hijab by the students of state college of health technology.

## Detectives hunt suspected rapist, murderer

By Bola Ojola, Stringer (Lagos)

Detectives from the Lagos State police command are now hunting for a suspected rapist who allegedly forced himself on a married woman while taking her bath in Victoria

Island area of Lagos last week's Sunday morning.

Eko Trust learnt that the suspect, now at large, also allegedly stabbed to death the

son of the victim identified as Seyi when he came to the rescue of his mother.

Sources told Eko Trust that the incident occurred at the Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) quarters on Victoria Island.

The Lagos State police public relations officer, Mr. Ademola Adebayo, who confirmed the incident said the suspect only peeped at the woman in the bathroom and did not rape her.

According to him, trouble started when the woman raised alarm and her son Seyi came to her rescue by engaging the suspect in a fight. He allegedly stabbed Seyi in the chest with a knife and escaped to unknown destination.

Speaking further on the incident, Ademola said policemen from Victoria Island police station later visited the scene and removed the corpse to the public mortuary. He said however that efforts are being made to apprehend the suspect.

## Lagos plans expansion of homestead fish farm

Lagos State government is working out modalities to replicate the Ikorodu homestead fish farm project in the other two senatorial districts in the state, State Agriculture Commissioner, Mr Kaoli Olusanya, has said.

Speaking in Lagos during a one-day stakeholders workshop on the homestead fish farm estate in Lagos, Olusanya said that the decision to expand the scope of the project followed the overwhelming response from the public to the

Ikorodu project.

He said that the interest shown through the sale of over 800 expression forms of interest confirmed that homestead fish farm initiative was well accepted by the people.

He remarked that prompt payment would enable the government to commence the construction of the basic infrastructure, including pond for each applicant.

Olusanya said that the government decided to embark on the construction of the facilities and

infrastructure to ensure quality standard at the project site.

Earlier in his welcome address, the permanent secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, Mr Wale Raji, said that the state government planned to de-emphasise fish hunting and encourage fish farming through the project.

He said that the project would also address the problem of unemployment and save huge foreign exchange being spent on fish importation.

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# News

## Karu generates N12m revenue

**K**aru local government council in Nasarawa state generated about N12 million as revenue last year, according to its chairman, Mr. Andrew Chidawa Bahago. He told *Daily Trust* that the amount represented an increase of 10 per cent over the previous year's revenue. He explained that the amount would have been higher but for the fact that Karu was designated as an urban area, which entitled the federal government to share the revenue with Nasarawa state. 'What is left for the local government is too small for any meaningful developments,' he lamented, adding however that the council was intensifying efforts to boost its revenue base.

The chairman enumerated the areas where the local government was intensifying revenue collection, which included levies on commercial buildings, local businesses, and village markets.

In line with Nasarawa state government directives, the chairman said that his council had established the Karu Environmental

From Jibril Daudu, Regional Editor (Jos)

Protection Agency, as well as a commission to manage wealth disposal. He disclosed that allocations

from the state and local government joint accounts would be used to offset all the arrears of salaries and to defray a loan from Lion Bank inherited from his predecessor.

## Akwa Ibom spends N83m on socio-economic study

**T**he Akwa Ibom state government will spend not less than N83 million on the socioeconomic study of the state. The governor, Obong Victor Attah, made this known last week in Uyo during the official ceremony to flag off the study. He disclosed that the purpose of the programme was to provide timely, reliable, and comprehensive data for proper planning and orderly development, as well as to document the progress in the state's the fight against poverty. With this development, the governor said, 'The hope of the Akwa Ibom state government in

From Edet Ekanem, Reporter (Uyo)

eradicating poverty is established and the era of planning without facts and the publication of spurious data about Akwa Ibom state world have ended.'

The state governor, who was represented at the occasion by the secretary to the state government, Elder Effiong Esang, explained that the study would be coordinated by the state's ministry of economic development in collaboration with federal government agencies and international organisations such as UNDP, UNICEF and UNIPEM.

**A**s the 54 member nations of the Commonwealth celebrate Commonwealth Day today, President Olusegun Obasanjo has described the occasion as 'a celebration of peace, democracy, and human rights.' 'As we celebrate Commonwealth Day,' he said, 'we celebrate our shared values, our commitment to peace, democracy, and human rights, and our determination to cooperate with each other in a spirit of solidarity and common humanity.'

President Obasanjo added that the celebration acknowledges the crucial role of education in preparing individuals for building

## Obasanjo extols Commonwealth

By Reuben Yunana, Senior Reporter, State House

strong communities, generating growth, and creating opportunities for all Commonwealth people. He described the Commonwealth as a vibrant network of people who, through knowledge, experience, and expertise, helped each other to grow.

'We in Nigeria feel stronger knowing that we are connected to 52 other nations through the Commonwealth with which we share a working language, certain fundamental values, similar

institutions, and a joint commitment to build peace in the world and deliver prosperity to all our people.' The Commonwealth, he said, was a unique forum for global diplomacy which uses the power of consensus to enable multilateralism work. He explained that all voices were heard at the Commonwealth's table and no one was left out in the cold. 'We in Nigeria have benefited from being part of the Commonwealth network over the years and we will continue to do so in the future,' the President concluded.

## Makurdi, environs get first rain

From Hir Joseph, Correspondent (Makurdi)

**M**akurdi, the Benue state capital, at the weekend, had a cool and soothing weather condition in the earlier hours of Friday after its first rain, which lasted for hours.

The rain, which also fell in several other areas of the state, was preceded by tumultuous winds that wreaked immense destruction in some of the areas. Residents of Makurdi who had hitherto sought relief from the heat by sleeping outdoors, said that

the rain brought relief to them. A student at the Benue State University (BSU) in Makurdi said that the rain surprised several of his fellow students who were sleeping outside their hostel rooms. 'The rain came as a surprise. It is unusual for rain to fall in this part of the country at this time,' said the student.

A farmer in Agboughol, a suburb of Makurdi, said that the early rain was an indication that the next

farming session would be fruitful.



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# News

## Ministry launches accident prevention programme

The federal ministry of transport, in collaboration with an independent safety organisation, Risk and Accident Prevention Society of Nigeria (RAPSON) have concluded arrangements for a national accident programme to be launched on March 22, 2005.

Addressing newsmen in Abuja, RAPSON Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Engr. Odohofre Ben Koko, maintained that the idea for the launch of the programme was borne out of the desire to reduce the toll of injuries and deaths resulting from accidents of all kinds.

RAPSON boss pointed out that traffic accidents constitute the major cause of deaths which has claimed an average of 10,000 lives in Nigeria and is also responsible for the increased number of disabled persons and economic loss to about N10

By Sunday Ejike Benjamin, Health Reporter

He said for this reason, RAPSON is evolving strategies aimed at minimizing road traffic accidents in Nigeria through scientific and technical approach. He also disclosed that more than 74,000 Nigerians were killed in road accidents between 1990, with about 192,280 injured through the same cause.

"Accidents occur on daily basis and most times these accidents are avoidable, preventable and sometimes the result can be reduced in terms of its severity. Effects of accidents to families in terms of loss of loved ones

and economic implications are very traumatic to bear," Engr. Koko explained.

RAPSON, he noted will among other things organise and coordinate stakeholders in road accident prevention under one umbrella, through which, ideas about safety, research, problems encountered and solutions can be pooled and channelled towards gradual reduction of accidents in the country.

He said his organisation is ready to work with stakeholders in creating awareness on problems associated with accidents and the indemnity accident victims against loss from medical expenses especially the ones arising through RAPSON accident intervention scheme

Former chairman of the National Population Commission (NPC) Lt. Col Chris Ugokwe (retired) has advised federal commissioners in the agency to seek for money for the execution of the 2005 census.

Ugokwe said they should source for the funds from their respective state governments in their own interest.

He told the commissioners at a retreat organised for principal officers of the NPC at the weekend in Calabar that failure of the 2005 census would have adverse effect on their integrity as respected Nigerians. "Just litigations from states after the exercise would be counter productive".

The 1999 constitution provides for the mass resignation of all federal commissioners of the NPC, including its chairman if the president rejects the result of the 2005 national housing and population census which holds in November this year.

Ugokwe said the slow pace of work at the third phase of enumeration area demarcation (EAD) which would last from January to July showed that

## Ex-NPC chairman urges commissioners to find census money

there was need to put more men on the job for the deadline to be met.

He argued that only 30 per cent of the job were done between January and now, it meant that more money would be required to pay the extra field workers that would be engaged for the completion of the project.

Ugokwe told the commissioners that they must impress it on their respective state governors to invest in the project so that the chances of failure would be minimised.

He urged the commission to conduct several pretests on logistic, questionnaire and other instruments to be used for the exercise to ensure their reliability.

He advised the commission not to "over-publicise the EAD work".

The member of the NPC said

out for the already demarcated local government areas is in the open market, thereby negating the principle of confidentiality," he said.

He advised the commission to release data generated from the exercise as soon as possible since delay would make it lose its value.

On donations from foreign organisations, he said that such gestures called for more seriousness and prudence in the use of resources as the organisations would not hesitate to abandon the project.

"The foreign bodies whose eagle eyes would be watching all through, may not tolerate minor spillage that could have been ignored if it were our own national resources," he said.

Ugokwe emphasised the need to make adequate provision for post-enumeration activities right from the beginning of census preparation so that the commission would not become unattractive.

## Shehu Yar'Adua commemoration begins Thursday

By Tadeo Ujorika, Assistant Editor, Weekly

President Olusegun Obasanjo, chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation will host the 7th National Programme of Commemoration and the Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Memorial Forum, from Thursday March 17 to Saturday, March 19 in Abuja.

The forum will contribute to the rearing of a new generation of national leaders who will be able to carry on the legacy of the late General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua.

The programme will be held at the Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Memorial Forum, which was built by the late General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua.

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Dignitaries expected at the conference include former US Ambassador to Nigeria and Director of Africa Policy Studies at the Council on foreign relations, Ambassador Princeton Lyman, Dr. Robert Pastor, Vice President of International Affairs, American University, Sa'Abel Goubaria, Chairman INEC, H.E. Obiang Victor Ahiar, Governor of Akwa Ibom state, Alhaji (Dr.) Ahmadu Kuru and Alhaji M.D. Yusuf.

The programme will come to a close on Saturday evening with a presidential dinner hosted by President Olusegun Obasanjo. The Yar'Adua Memorial Forum is an initiative of the Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation, established in 1998 to further the ideals of the late General Shehu Musa Yar'Adua.

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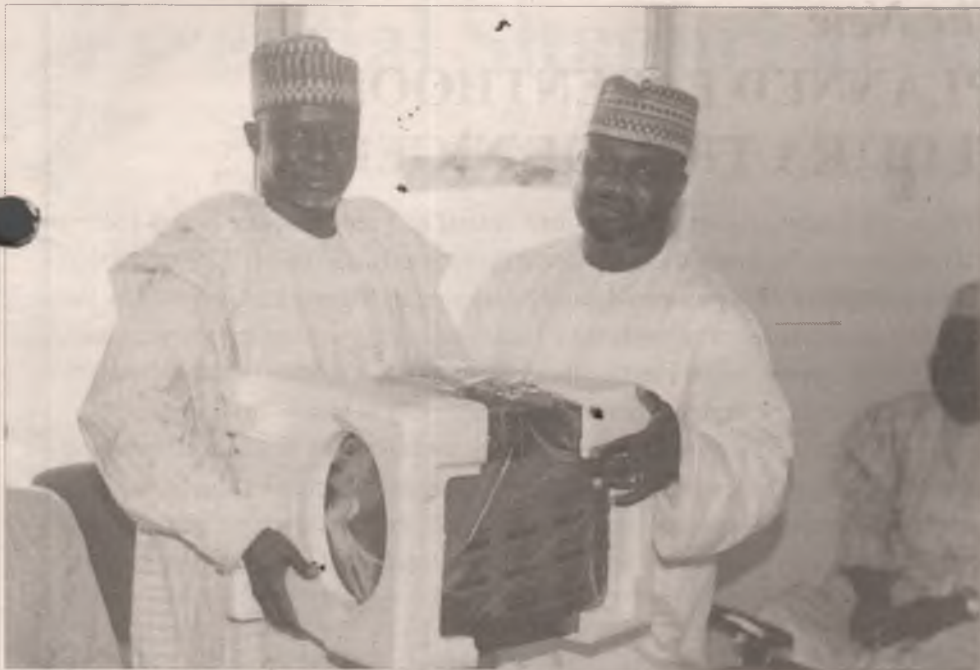
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# News



Member House of Representatives, Hon Dehiru Bornoma donating computer to the Adamawa State ANPP Secretariat. Receiving the computer is the State Chairman, Alh. Ahmed Mahmud.

## Jigawa sets up c'ttee over crises

**D**etermined to bring an end to the recurring violence between the Guraun in Bauchi and Maruta Jigawa communities, a 14-member committee has been set up by the Jigawa state government to investigate the crises. Inaugurating the committee, the secretary to the Jigawa state government, Lawan Ya'u Roni, charged the members to be just and ensure that all measures that would bring an end to the crises were exhausted to prevent future reoccurrence. He revealed that his government was worried about the situation, which has led to the death of several people and the loss of property worth millions of naira.

According to the terms of reference, the committee is to identify the extent of damages done to Maruta, advise the Jigawa state government on the immediate assistance to be given to the people, and suggest how else government could assist the victims. The committee is also to also investigate the circumstances that led to the death of eight people and advise on preventing a reoccurrence. The committee is furthermore to identify the roles of those who participated in the violence and advise the government on any other issue that could promote peaceful coexistence between the two

From Hassan A. Karofi  
Correspondent (Dutse)

The committee is headed by the Jigawa state commissioner for information, Abba Ujukuna, with a representative of the justice

ministry as secretary. Others represented in the committee are the police, SSS, Dutse emirate council, and opinion leaders for the ward and local authorities of Gwuran local government.

The committee has two weeks to submit its report.

## Negligence: Court awards N75.7m against First Bank

**A**Lagos high court at Igbosere, presided over by Justice Bode Rhodes-Vivour, has ordered First Bank of Nigeria Plc to pay the sum of N75.7 million to Atlas Nigeria plc. (claimant) over an alleged negligence and breach of contract committed against the latter.

The claimant sued First Bank in 1980 due to the failure of the bank to apply for foreign exchange on its behalf to facilitate the remittance of the sum of N25.7 million to defray the debt it owed a foreign company, Messrs Kern and company Limited. Atlas Nigeria also alleged that despite several applications forwarded to the defendant in respect of the transaction, the bank did not comply with its request.

First Bank denied receiving all the amounts the claimant claimed. It also denied receiving the proper documents, claiming that the documents it received were so shoddily collated that the bank ran into a hitch in submitting them to the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN).

From Mohammed Shoganya,  
Correspondent (Lagos)

While delivering judgment on the matter however the presiding judge, Justice Bode Rhodes-Vivour, explained that the sum of money (N75.7 million) the Bank was meant to pay the claimant would carry a 4 percent interest per annum beginning from 1987 until the day judgment was delivered.

Justice Rhodes-Vivour said that judgment favoured the sum of N50 million, representing anticipated profit botched by the shoddy consummation of the transactions by the defendant. He estimated general damages at N.5 million, adding that anticipated profit and general damages would attract no interest since that would be unlawful. His decision, he further posited, was based on the conviction that the suit was tied to commercial grounds and practices where money was unnecessarily delayed.

## Aminu Kano Foundation for launch April 19

**A**rrangements have been concluded for the official launching of the Mallam Aminu Kano International Foundation on Tuesday April 19 at the Shehu Musa Yar'adua Centre, Abuja. A statement signed by the secretary of the foundation, Alhaji Mohammed Mustapha, said that an appeal fund will be launched at the occasion,

By Hamisu Muhammad,  
Reporter (Business)

which will also feature a memorial lecture titled, 'The prince of the pauper.'

According to Mustapha, Mallam Aminu Kano deserved to be remembered in the nation's history in recognition of his outstanding values and political ideology, which

have contributed to the building of Nigerian nation. Among the fundamental objectives of the foundation, he said, is the institutionalisation of the values of the late Mallam through a monumental structure in the Federal Capital Territory to symbolise his significance in our history. The statement further read: 'The foundation is founded to promote the ideals and values of the late Aminu Kano. It is a collection of minds that passionately share those values and ideology.'

The chairman of the foundation's board of trustees is the former executive president of Nigeria in the second republic, Alhaji Shehu Usman Aliyu Shagari. Others trustees include Abba Aminu Kano, Margani Aminu Kano, and Dr. Sani Abubakar.

## Ngige bans public gathering in Anambra, heads to court

**T**ension mounted in Anambra state barely 24 hours after the state governor, Chris. Ngige, and his main political opponent, Chief Chris Uba, were both expelled from the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) on Thursday by the party's National Executive Committee (NEC). Accordingly Dr. Chris Nwabueze Ngige announced that his government was prohibiting all public processions to prevent disorder. He directed the state's commissioner of police, Mr. Felix Ogbaudu, not to grant permits for political rallies for or against the NEC decision. The ban will remain in force for two months months.

Reacting to his expulsion from, the governor disclosed that he had instructed his lawyers to challenge the PDP action in court for contravening articles 16(v) of the party's constitution. 'I did not face a disciplinary committee as stipulated by the party's constitution,' he said. 'According to article 16(v) of the PDP constitution, the purported expulsion could only take effect if ratified by the national convention scheduled for November this

From Beatrice Onuchukwu,  
Correspondent (Awka)

year,' since he was the main target of the PDP chieftains' plot. He warned those who might wish to exploit the tense situation to cause confusion in the state to desist from so doing. 'Let me also seize the opportunity to warn all trouble makers,' he

## Tidjani Faces fresh charges


**A**Lagos high court at the weekend slammed a three-count charge of conspiracy, stealing, and armed robbery on Hamai Tidjani. This came barely a day after the presiding judge, Justice Sybil Nwaka, ruled that she had jurisdiction to entertain previous charge before her preferred against Tidjani in suit number LCD/55/2004, which bordered on receiving stolen property.

In charge number LCD/73/2004, Alhaji Tidjani, was charged with conspiracy to commit armed robbery contrary to section 403A of the Criminal Code, Cap C17 Vol 2 laws of Lagos state 2003. The particulars of this offence, according to the prosecution, was that the trans-border robber on or about 19 March, 2001 at the 1<sup>st</sup> Lekki roundabout along the Epe expressway in the Lagos judicial division conspired with others now on the run to commit a felony, to wit, armed robbery. On the

From Mohammed Shoganya,  
Correspondent (Lagos)

he, on or about the 19<sup>th</sup> of March, 2001 at the 1<sup>st</sup> Lekki roundabout along the Epe expressway in the Lagos judicial division, while armed with an offensive weapon, to wit, a pistol, robbed one Moshood Adeboye of a Peugeot 607 saloon car with registration No. AY.651 APP. He was further alleged to have received stolen property contrary to section 427 of the Criminal Code, Cap C17 Vol 2 Lagos 2003. According to the particulars of this offence, Alhaji Tidjani on or about the 19<sup>th</sup> of March, 2001 at the 1<sup>st</sup> Lekki roundabout along the Epe expressway in the Lagos judicial division did receive a Peugeot 607 saloon car with registration number Y651 APP, knowing the same to have been stolen.

The accused pleaded not guilty to the charges however, claiming that he had never been



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Details for needed parts are contained in the tender documents.

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Tender documents should be delivered by hand or courier, in sealed envelopes, marked "AFL SPARE PARTS" not later than three (3) weeks from the date of this publication to: **The Board Secretary, Federal Airports Authority of Nigeria, Headquarters, Ikeja, Lagos.**

Tender documents are obtainable from **The Board Secretary** on payment of N20,000.00 (Twenty Thousand Naira only) non-refundable fee.

**Tenderers will be informed of the date for the opening of tenders.**

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MANAGEMENT

**Management Strategies for Africa (MSA)****Director-General***The New*

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The purpose of this four-year contract position is to provide overall strategic leadership and management in implementing the 2005-2009 PPFN strategic plan: ensuring congruence between the country situation and the plan; facilitating linkages and contacts with government, IPPF, donors, and partners for resources to SRH and PPFN; and supporting PPFN governance and management organs at national and regional levels.

**Responsibilities**

- Organizational vision
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**How to Apply**

Interested persons may apply in one of three ways. Apply electronically via email or fax. Alternatively you may apply by sending your application package in hard copy.

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Applications should be addressed to Management Strategies for Africa, 104-106 Cranbrook Road, Ilford, Essex IG 1 4EZ, United Kingdom, if prepared in hard copy. If in electronic copy, please send to MSA via [info@msforafrica.org](mailto:info@msforafrica.org). Fax to MSA (+44 20) 8636 9994. Closing date for applications is 1700Hrs GMT 1 April 2005.

The *New PPFN* is an equal opportunity employer. Please note that only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

SIGNED  
MANAGEMENT

# News

## Course 27: Commandant commends students' performance

From Manjani Musa Umar, Intern (Kaduna)

The commandant of the Armed Forces Command and Staff College (AFSC), Jaji, Kaduna, Air Vice-Marshal Samuel Akinyemi Odesola, said he was overjoyed on account of the performances of students of 'Senior Course 27' of the Department of Land Warfare (DLW). This was revealed by Rear Admiral Dare Izilein, who represented Odesola at the closing session of a three-day programme tagged 'Land Power Symposium 2005' and organised by DLW at the college premises last Wednesday. Izilein indicated that the symposium organised as part of the three-day

programme and titled, 'Repositioning the Nigerian army to meet emerging and future challenges,' was as an important part of the DLW student officers' training package. The symposium was intended to enable the students contribute to the development of the Nigerian army.

In a paper entitled 'Equipping the Nigerian Army for effective participation in peace-keeping support operation,' a group of students of the department known as 'Syndicate 5,' who analysed medical issues, training, and communication, among others, recommended three months training prior to the

deployment of troops for any peace keeping or peace support operation. 'Syndicate 1' students of the department were presented a well articulated paper titled, 'The Nigerian army and information technology in the face of emerging challenges,' which discussed the importance of IT and the problems associated with the low level of computer literacy in the Nigerian army.

Rear Admiral Dave Izilein, commended the students for their efforts in the symposium, the first of its kind at the college, as well as the DLW Director and his staff. He also expressed appreciation to the senior officers who grace the occasion despite their busy schedules.

The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) has presented relief materials worth millions of naira to the Sokoto state government in aid of the victim of last year's flood in the state. Presenting the materials, the leader of NEMA, Mr. Eze U. Eze, said that the presentation was to partly alleviate the multimillion naira losses that resulted from the flood. In his words, 'we have come to sympathise with the victims and the state in this direction by providing relief to the affected people to be distributed accordingly.' The relief materials included 500 bags of roofing sheets, 600 bags of cement, 300 bags of rice, 150 bags of beans, 300 bags of millet, 300 bags of maize, 1,000 packets of roofing nails,

## NEMA assists Sokoto flood victims

From Abdulkatal Abdulsalami, Correspondent (Sokoto)

to endeavour to respond rapidly to emergencies in due course.

1,000 nylon mats, 500 blankets, 1,500 nos. 2" x 3" x 12' planks, 1,000 plastic buckets. Mr. Eze urged the state's relief emergency committee to ensure that the materials were evenly distributed to the affected victims.

Responding, the chairman of the Sokoto state commissioner for resources and chairman of the state's Emergency Relief Emergency/Committee, Alhaji Atahiru Yusuf Yabo, observed that the flood occurred six (6) months ago but thanked NEMA nevertheless for their gesture. He urged NEMA



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## INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST IN OUTSOURCED SERVICES FOR A NEW PENSION FUND ADMINISTRATOR

**INTRODUCTION:**

A newly established PFA requires the services of a reputable outsourced vendor which specializes in “**providing cleaning services**” for the company premises;

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To be pre-qualified, interested outsourced vendors must provide/supply the following:

- Name of vendor
- Evidence of incorporation/ address of registered office
- Nature of cleaning services provided
- Key personnel and their resume
- List of clients
- Type of cleaning equipment and the facilities being used
- Mode of supervision.
- Length of experience in cleaning business
- Banker's reference
- Tax clearance
- Evidence of registration with local authorities or professional bodies
- Indemnity
- Recruitment and screening standards
- Type of welfare coverage for personnel e.g medical, insurance etc.
- Rates.

**SUBMISSION**

Completed expression of interest package **MUST BE** delivered in a sealed envelope marked “Expression of Interest for Outsourced Service” to the address hereunder on or before 4.00 p.m Tuesday 22nd March, 2005.

The Expression of Interest must be accompanied by a non refundable fee in bank draft for sum of ten thousand naira (N10,000.00) payable in Abuja to, the *Project Coordinator*,

**The Project Coordinator  
P. M. B. 254,  
Garki  
Abuja**

**INTRODUCTION:**

A newly established PFA requires the services of a reputable outsourced vendor which specializes in “**providing security personnel**” for the company's premises

**PRE-QUALIFICATION**

To be pre-qualified, interested outsourced vendors must provide/supply the following:

- Name of vendor
- Evidence of incorporation/ address of registered office
- Nature of cleaning services provided
- Key personnel and their resume
- List of clients
- Type of Training given to security staff
- Mode of supervision
- Length of experience in the industry
- Banker's reference
- Tax clearance
- Evidence of registration with local authorities or professional bodies
- Indemnity
- Recruitment and screening standards
- Type of welfare coverage for personnel e.g medical, insurance etc.
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**INTRODUCTION:**

A newly established PFA requires the services of a reputable outsourced vendor which specializes in “**providing competent drivers**” for the company's motor vehicles.

**PRE-QUALIFICATION**

To be pre-qualified, interested outsourced vendors must provide/supply the following:

- Name of vendor
- Evidence of incorporation/ address of registered office
- Types of drivers provided
- List of clients
- Length of experience in the industry
- Banker's reference
- Tax clearance
- Rates
- Evidence of registration with local authorities or professional bodies
- Indemnity
- Recruitment and screening standards
- Type of welfare coverage for personnel e.g medical, insurance etc.

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**The Project Coordinator  
P. M. B. 254, Garki  
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# Inside Politics

## After the presidential speech, what next?

At last, the National Political Reform Conference last Thursday concluded the rather monotonous debate on President Olusegun Obasanjo's inaugural speech. Each of the leaders of state delegations and represented groups, one elder statesman per state, the six traditional rulers and almost a hundred other interested delegates had spoken during the debate.

Though delegates had shown enough enthusiasm to contribute, they virtually ended up saying the same thing. Summed up, the points raised included the need for unrestricted debate, referendum, resource control, tackling poverty, prohibitive cost of presidentialism, true federalism, proliferation of local governments, removal of executive immunity and debt profile. One most prominent feature in the speeches that lasted nine days is that none of the speakers forgot to thank the president for organising a forum for Nigerians to bare their minds.

During the debates, advocates of resource control (a euphemism for oil producing areas to take hold of the nation's oil wells) did not find it easy pushing home their demands. At different times they had to contend with rebukes from their colleagues who jeer at them. In fact the advocates themselves did not help matters as they allowed their emotions to envelope them. Professor Itse Sagay and Barrister Oronto Douglas, who went as far as alleging that oil wealth was used in building Abuja and that when the North and Southwest produced cocoa and groundnut they sold and pocketed the proceeds, got the rough end of the stick from their colleagues. But for the conference chairman's intervention, the two would not have been allowed to speak further, as the chamber was thrown into near-bedlam.

There were also concerns over the fate of the conference's report. Former president of the Senate, Dr. Joseph Wayas, Professor J. Idachaba, Chief Afe Babalola, Alhaji Mohammed Ibrahim Hassan, Mr. Femi Adegkanye and General Abdullahi Bagudu Mamman, among many others made similar suggestions on what to do with the end result of the conference. While Mamman, Idachaba, Hassan and Babalola urged that the recommendations go straight to the 'people' through a referendum, Wayas and Adegkanye raised some pointers to indicate their concern. "This conference should decide what we are going to do with the end product. Are we going to have a referendum or would it be subjected to

By Habeeb Idris Pindiga,  
Political reporter

series of bills that would become Act? It is important that we address ourselves in that direction." Wayas asked rhetorically. Adegkanye said: "After all these beautiful

Ezeife argued that if the 'minimum' areas were in order, then there was no need for the conference. He, along side others, contended that not even the sky should constitute the limit of what the conference would discuss. Ezeife said "If the federal character

who have that view to talk, let's listen to them because you don't solve problem by wishing it away."

One controversial aspect that reared its head during the debate was whether or not Obasanjo is interested in remaining in power beyond

plan and since so many people consider the convocation of the confab as a ploy to ensure the president remains in office beyond 2007, Obasanjo should have addressed the issue in his speech. Azuike said: "The president should have as-

surances. The president should assure us. People are asking, is what we are doing not a jamboree? We need to be assured that we are not here for a jamboree."

This subject resurfaced on Thursday. A delegate, Mr. Emmanuel Ugboajah urged the president to make his position known to the conference. Ugboajah, who is on the labour delegation, said since Obasanjo had told the conference on its inauguration day that there was no hidden agenda; he should say what the open agenda was. According to him, the question was whether the president was interested in remaining in office beyond 2007 or not. "Since he said there is no hidden agenda in this conference, so what about 2007? We should know where we are heading to" he said.

At the close of the debate, Tobi announced the points of agreement. He said "delegates agreed that the speech did not contain 'no go' areas. And even if it contains 'no go' areas, this conference will go into such areas. The discussion was more in favour of federalism and presidentialism and members essentially agreed that there should be a referendum."

With this, the conference is ready for serious business as it resumes today. Already 18 committees have been created to take over discussions on various spheres of life. This week, the panels would be constituted.

The committees are: the economy; human and social security; national security; social infrastructure for national development and integration; model and structure of government; power sharing; revenue allocation and fiscal federalism; the legislature and the executive; traditional institutions and culture; public service; the judiciary and legal reforms; political parties and the electoral process (models); the environment and natural disasters; civil society, labour and trade unions and national media; local government reforms; foreign policy, national, international development policy; and constituting a new sustainable democratic order in Nigeria. Also a committee on drafting a new constitution will be set up, after the above committees have finished their assignments and their reports adopted by the conference.

From today, the conference is expected to start deliberations on the 18 areas at plenary level, after which each exhausted issue would be referred to the relevant committee for further work that will eventually be presented back to plenary for final decision.



President Olusegun Obasanjo

speeches; after all this work; what becomes of the recommendations? What happens?"

The issue of unrestricted debate for the confab also featured prominently as delegates canvassed for open agenda. They kicked against the 'no go' areas. This first emerged on the first day of debate on the speech. Apparently referring to the eight areas Obasanjo said should be taken as 'minimum' and 'given', delegates said they must discuss everything since none of the eight aspects were perfect.

Former Anambra state governor, Dr. Chukwuemeka

is good for example, we won't be here. So we should do away with all these inconsistencies (in Obasanjo's speech) by discussing anything that's discussable."

For General Victor Malu, "If there are any untouchable points, then I think we have no reason to be here. Most of us are here because we feel we should represent our states because things are not going well"

Adams Oshiomhole, president of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) said "Is it not true that there are people who question Nigeria's unity? In my view, it's our duty to allow those



Justice Niki Tobi

2007. Last Monday, a delegate from Imo state, Chief Ziggy Azuike said one missing vital information in the president's speech was the controversial third term plot. He said if the president was truly not interested in manipulating the conference to serve his rumoured ambition, then he should dispel the speculation before the delegates. Azuike was, however, shouted down by conference chairman, Justice Niki Tobi, who said the man must restrict himself to the topic under consideration.

The delegate said they had expected that since there was so much talk of such a

planned us that he has no third term ambition as is being speculated. He must assure us that he is not a referee in his own match. In his speech he has not sufficiently convinced us of his impartiality...."

But Tobi cut in, warning the delegate to mind his language. "Watch your words. You have no right to speak that way. Restrain your language". The chairman cautioned.

But Azuike insisted that considering the weight of allegations that the confab would be used to water the ground for Obasanjo's third term ambition, "we need as-

**"One controversial aspect that reared its head during the debate was whether or not Obasanjo is interested in remaining in power beyond 2007. Last Monday, a delegate from Imo state, Chief Ziggy Azuike said one missing vital information in the president's speech was the controversial third term plot. He said if the president was truly not interested in manipulating the conference to serve his rumoured ambition, then he should dispel the speculation before the delegates. Azuike was, however, shouted down by conference chairman, Justice Niki Tobi, who said the man must restrict himself to the topic under consideration. The delegate said they had expected that since there was so much talk of such a plan and since so many people consider the convocation of the confab as a ploy to ensure the president remains in office beyond 2007, Obasanjo should have addressed the issue in his speech. Azuike said: "The president should have assured us that he has no third term ambition as is being speculated. He must assure us that he is not a referee in his own match. In his speech he has not sufficiently convinced us of his impartiality...." But Tobi cut in, warning the delegate to mind his language. "Watch your words. You have no right to speak that way. Restrain your language", the chairman cautioned.**



## CHIEF COMPLIANCE OFFICER

Our client, engaged in specialised financial services, has vacancy for the post of Chief Compliance Officer (CCO).

As the CCO, the candidate will report directly to the Chief Executive Officer and will be responsible for ensuring compliance with ALL regulatory requirements and the institution's policies and procedures.

The ideal candidate must have:

- < A good first degree from a reputable institution in Banking, Accounting, Business Administration, Economics or related discipline. Preference will be given to candidates who in addition to the above have professional qualification such as ICAN, ACCA, CPA, AIB, etc.
- < Minimum of 10 (ten) years cognate experience in Financial institutions and or Accounting practice, of which at least 5 must have been spent at Management level. Experience in pension funds management institution will be an advantage.
- < Strong sense of responsibility, high integrity, result-oriented and disciplined
- < Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

The remuneration attached to the position is very competitive in addition to working in a challenging and rewarding environment.

Candidates who meet the listed requirements should forward their applications including email address not later than one week after the date of publication to:

[-ejyks2000@yahoo.com](mailto:-ejyks2000@yahoo.com) or

The Advertiser,  
P.O. Box 2707 Garki,  
Abuja.

## MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA KANO BRANCHES

Wish to invite all Chief Executives of Member Companies to the Manufacturers forum which would take place as follows:

DATE: Thursday, March 17th, 2005

VENUE: Royal Tropicana Hotel, Kano

TIME: 10:00am prompt

TITLE OF THE FORUM: *Reviving Nigerian Industries.*

Please endeavour to attend as vital issues would be discussed.

Thank you.

Signed  
Joshua Kukwi  
Executive Secretary

## FEDERAL MEDICAL CENTRE,

P.M.B. 0037 Ashaka Road,  
GOMBE

### INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFICATION

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Federal Medical Centre Gombe hereby invites Contractors to apply for Pre-qualification for the implementation of the following project:

(i) **Title:** Procurement and installation of 1 (one) unit Medical Waste Incinerator.

(ii) **Objectives:** To provide 1 (one) unit incinerator for the disposal of hazardous hospital wastes.

(iii) **Scope of Work:** Includes supply, installation, housing and commissioning of incinerator at the Federal Medical Centre, Gombe.

#### (iv) Eligibility:

(a) Evidence of Registration with Corporate Affairs Commission;  
(b) Evidence of Registration with the Federal Medical Centre, Gombe, or an application to do so (by payment of a non refundable application fee of One Hundred Thousand Naira (N100,000.00) only in Bank draft, payable to the Federal Medical Centre, Gombe);

(c) Tax Clearance Certificate for the immediate past three years;  
(d) Value Added Tax (V A T) Certificate;  
(e) Evidence of similar works executed in the past (if any), relationship with overseas or local manufacturers of gas fired incinerators and ability to provide after sales maintenance service;

(f) Submission of Company profile;

#### 2. SUBMISSION OF PRE-QUALIFICATION DOCUMENTS

(a) The pre-qualification documents should be submitted in sealed envelope carrying the project title and marked confidential at the upper left corner of the envelope  
(b) Pre-qualification documents should be submitted TWO WEEKS from the date of this publication to:

The Secretary, Tenders Board,  
Federal Medical Centre, Gombe  
P.M.B. 037  
Ashaka Road, Gombe

Responders should note that this invitation for pre-qualification shall not be construed as a commitment on the part of the Federal Medical Centre, Gombe nor shall it entitle any suppliers or manufacturers to make any claims whatever, and/or seek any indemnity from the Federal Medical Centre, Gombe for expenses incurred in preparing pre-qualification responses and in expenses otherwise associated with the pre-qualification process. Pre-qualification response shall be borne solely by the responder. Please, also note that this is not an invitation to tender. Full bid documents will be provided only to responders who have been fully pre-qualified as suitable to provide the service required.

#### 3. PRE-QUALIFICATION SUBMISSION OPENING

Submitted pre-qualification document will be opened by 2:00pm on Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> March 2005 at the Hospital Board Room, Federal Medical Centre, Gombe.

#### 4. FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information, enquiries or clarification, please contact the undersigned.

Signed  
Director of Administration & Board Secretary  
Federal Medical Centre,  
Gombe, Gombe State

## Trust Classified

### GET SOLUTION TO YOUR HEALTH PROBLEM WITH QUMAS HERBS

AZOO is a complete 100% herbal medicine, effective for promoting immune response against sexually transmitted diseases and symptoms relating to them. This Herbal remedy Boost up the system to fight against any infections and flush them out completely.



AZOO CAPSULE  
NAFDAC REG. NO.  
04-5267L



Alhaji (Dr) Qumas

People think there are two general diseases: Syphilis, Gonorrhoea, but there are many others that can be contracted through love making e.g Herpes, Hepatitis, AIDS, Staphylococcus, Chlamydia Symptoms itching in the organ, movement in body pain before & after urinating, body weakness, loss of sexual feeling, stomach noise, vaginal discharge, abdominal pain, menstrual pain, sore like boil, hotness, waist pain, weak erection, low sperm count e.t.c. Without proper treatment these disease can lead to problems.

TREATMENT for weak erection, inability to perform more than one round of sex with partner, quick ejaculation and treatment for low sperm count & watery.

TREATMENT for Fibroid, Miscarriage, Block Fallopian Tube, Diabetes, Hypertension & Penis Enlargement within month  
The Products are available to buy in all our centres.

LAGOS: 32, Ibadan Str. Off Shyllon Str. Ilupeju, Palmgrove. Tel: 01-824788, 0803 301 7350.	KANO: 36B, Burma Rd. Sabon Gari, Kano State. 0802 907 0994	P-HARCOURT: 15, Ogbuagu Str. Off Wikoma Street, Diobu Mile 3.	ABUJA NEW OFFICE: 75 Nsukka Str. Garki Village, Shop 13, 1st Floor. 8am - 7pm (16th - 20th every month).	KADUNA: E15, Bida Road by Abeokuta Str., Kaduna. 0802 568 9780
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## LOSS OF DOCUMENT

This is to inform the general public that Plot No. Q83 measuring about 432m<sup>2</sup> at Garki Village belonging to ZAKWOYI YEPI got missing. If found please contact the ATTACHE, FIELD of Federal Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Mabushi, Abuja.

## MISSING DOCUMENT

Notice is hereby given to the general public that the Original Copy of the OFFER OF TERMS OF GRANT/CONVEYANCE OF APPROVAL (RIGHT) OF OCCUPANCY in respect of Plot of about 2.5 Hectres, Plot No. 394 with reference number MFCT/LA/96/13838 Dated 12/07/1996 is hereby declared missing.

If found please return to Mrs Joy Fergusson Adeyemi of ABC Academy International, Shehu Yar'adua Way, Utako District Abuja.

**Trust Classified**

**NATIONAL CASSAVA EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA**

This is to inform the general public that the above named BODY has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration under Part C of the Companies and Allied Matters Act of 1990.

The trustees are:

**THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES ARE:**

1. Alhaji Umar Tella
3. Alhaji Jibril Yelwa
5. Sir Innocent Okoroama
7. Mr. Chuba Okonkwo
9. Alhaji Yaro Sani Danbatta
11. Chief Akin Omoboriowo
13. Chief Jacob Gbadebo Adetoro
15. Air Cdre A. Okpanachi
17. Engr. S. I. Ike
19. Mr. Borna Anga

2. Rev. Prov. Yusuf Obaje
4. Alhaji Abdulmumin Bello
6. Musa Labaran Wamba
8. Ali Sani Kona
10. Mrs. Apolonia Chukwudi Alana
12. Abdullahi Ali Geidam
14. Wada A. Maida
16. Chief (Mrs.) R. Daniel
18. Hon. Ned Munir Nwoko
20. Mrs. Anabel U. Urankpa

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar- General Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse Zone 5, P.M.B.198 Garki Abuja within 28 days of this publication.

Signed:  
Abdullahi Ali Geidam  
National Legal Adviser

**LOSS OF DOCUMENT**

THIS IS TO INFORM THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY NO. FCT/ABU/NISC. 11772, ISSUED BY THE HON. MINISTER FOR FCT, BELONGING TO DE LAKE PLAZA IS MISSING. IF FOUND PLEASE CONTACT DE LAKE PLAZA, OR THE UNDERSIGNED.

SIGNED  
I.D. OSAWARU  
TEL: 08032175889  
C/O PLOT 727 KADE STREET, WUSE II, ABUJA

**LOSS OF DOCUMENT**

This is to inform the general public that the original offer of the Terms of Grant/conveyance of Approval with plot No. 2943 in Kuruduma Layout.

A. In the name of Ramatu Alhassan but donated to me Mrs. Eneh Tina already varified by AMAC is missing.

All effort to trace the said document proved abortive. Anyone who finds them should please forward to MRS. ENEH TINA, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development Headquarters Abuja.

**LOSS OF DOCUMENT**

This is to inform the general public that the original offer of the terms of grant/conveyance of approval with Plot No. 1405 in Kuruduma Layout.

A. In the name of Hon. Ayuba Ngbako but donated to me MRS. Tina Eneh already varified by AMAC is missing.

All effort to trace the said document proved abortive. Anyone who finds them shall please forward to MRS. ENEH TINA, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development Headquarter, Abuja.

**LOSS OF DOCUMENTS**

This is to inform the general public that the following documents belonging to the Nasarawa State Government are missing.

1. Right of Occupancy (R of O) No. FCT/ABU/MISC.14,213
2. Right of Occupancy (C of O) No. FCT/ABU/KN/1141 and the Power of Attorney for the sale of the property.
3. Certificate of Occupancy (C of O) in respect of Plot No. 1000 Cadastral Zone, A3, Area 11, Garki-Abuja and the Power of Attorney for the sale of the Property.

The publication is to enable the Nasarawa State Government apply to the Ministry of Federal Capital Territory for the re-issuance of Certificate True Copies. Ministry of Federal Capital Territory and the general public please note.

Signed:  
Dr. Amos B. Akawa  
Permanent Secretary  
Nasarawa State Liaison Office, Abuja.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

The General Public is hereby notified that HUDUDULLAH FINANCE AND INVESTMENT COMPANY LIMITED has change its name to HUDUDULLAH MICRO-CREDIT COMPANY LIMITED and the Corporate Affairs Commission has given it approval to the change on 4th January, 2005.

Signed  
ALIYU HAMIDU MODIBBO  
1st Floor, 6A, Ahmadu Bello Way,  
Ali-Akilu/Re Insurance Plaza, Kaduna

**LOSS OF ORIGINAL LAND DOCUMENTS**

This is to inform the general public that the Original Copy of Offer of Grant/Conveyance of Approval Allocation Paper in respect of Plot No. 344 within Kado District Abuja of about 1,268 M<sup>2</sup> with reference No. MFCT/LA/95/JG329 belonging to MR. IBRAHIM-ISMAILA of No. 63 Nasarawa Qtrs, Ringim, Jigawa State is missing. All efforts made to trace it proved abortive. If found please return to Mr. Ibrahim Ismaila at the above address or the nearest police station.

**CHANGE OF NAMES**

I, formerly known and called MISS JENNIVIVE NONYELUM ONYIA, now wish to be known and called MRS. JENNIVIVE NONYELUM EZEKWU. The CBN and general public to please note. All former documents remain valid.

I, formerly known as JUMMAI SULE, now to be known and addressed as JAMILA YUSUF MAGAJI. Gwiwa Local Government and general public to note.

**LOSS OF DOCUMENTS**

THIS IS to inform the General public that the under listed Documents (power of Attorney and other Documents belonging to Chief Osawaru Gabriel Igbinedion were taken away mischievously by one of his houseboys early this year. They include

1. Power of Attorney given to Chief Osawaru Gabriel Igbinedion by Alhaji Usman Nagogo for plot no 468, cadastral zone A4 measuring 3083.16sqm.
2. Power of Attorney given to Chief Osawaru Gabriel Igbinedion by Mr. Mamman Atta Audu in respect of Plot No. 2853, Cadastral Zone A6 Measuring 1755.19sqm.
3. Power of Attorney given to Crown Estate Ltd. by Tourist Gountry-side Resorts Limited, Kaduna, for Plot No. 2096 Cadastral Zone A6 measuring 2163.82 sqm.
4. Power of Attorney given to Chief Osawaru Gabriel Igbinedion by Mr. Adibua Patrick Chike, for Plot 48, Cadastral Zone A6 measuring 900.20sqm.
5. Power of Attorney given to Chief Osawaru Gabriel Igbinedion by Hon. Justice Robert W. A. Rhodes for Plot No. 680 Cadastral Zone A5 measuring 1134.18sqm.
6. Power of Attorney given to Okada Airline Limited by Jahuan (Nigeria) Limited, Jos, for Plot No. 765 Cadastral Zone AO measuring 1.11 hectares.
7. Power of Attorney given to Chief Osawaru Gabriel Igbinedion by Dr. Alhaji Aliyu Musdafa of Lamido's Palace, Yola for Plot No. 2854 Cadastral Zone A6 measuring 2695.61sqm.
8. Power of Attorney given to Crown Estate Limited by Bestarc International Associates, for Plot No. 792 Central Business District measuring 6080.68sqm.

All efforts to trace both the houseboy and the documents has not been successful. Any useful information on these should be made available to the nearest police station or the undersigned. This publication is also to enable us perfect some of the documents at AGIS Office. Abuja.

Signed:  
HIS SOLICITORS  
ILOBI UCHENNA & ASSOCIATES SUITE A14, NEW BANEX PLAZA, BANEX PLAZA VINA  
WUSE II, ABUJA  
08033139828

**AUCTION! AUCTION!! AUCTION!!!**

There will be auction sales at NEPA Egbin Transmission Station. The types of Vehicles are:

1. Steyr Lorry
  2. Mercedes Lorry 911 and other Scrap
- Date: 14/3/2005 Time 10:00am

Signed  
ALHAJILAWALLATEEF,  
Auctioneer

**LET'S READ INITIATIVE FOUNDATION (LRI)**

This is to inform the general public that the above named Foundation has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration under Part C of the Companies and Allied Matters Act of 1990.

The trustees are:

1. INI-OBONG UMOH
2. EFE PETER - OZOHO
3. PROF. DENNIS A. ITYAVYAR

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar- General Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse Zone 5, P.M.B.198 Garki Abuja within 28 days of this publication.

Signed:  
Secretary

**WOMEN ARISE FOUNDATION**

This is to inform the general public that the above named Foundation has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration under Part C of the Companies and Allied Matters Act of 1990.

The trustees are:

1. Mrs. Helen Mark ( President)
2. Arch. John ameh
3. Hon. Miss Comfort Obeya
4. Hon. Alh. Sale Audu
5. Mrs. Maria Odeh

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar- General Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse Zone 5, P.M.B.198 Garki Abuja within 28 days of this publication.

Signed:  
James Ocheche Esq.  
Suite B. E. 9 Banex Plaza, Wuse II, Abuja.

**AEXCELLENCE INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES, ZARIA**

This is to inform the general public that the above named Ministries has applied to the Corporate Affairs Commission for registration under Part C of the Companies and Allied Matters Act of 1990.

The trustees are:

1. Pastor (Mrs) Cordelia Cornelia Achetu Adikwu
2. Mrs. Helen Love Owuna

Any objection to the registration should be forwarded to the Registrar- General Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse Zone 5, P.M.B.198 Garki Abuja within 28 days of this publication.

Signed:  
Comfort Sira Wiwa  
Solicitor

**LOSS OF DOCUMENT**

This is to inform the general public that the Original Land document of Plot No. 18 Gwanrinpa Annex with Reg. No. MFCT/LA/96/KN/3495 measuring about 2,200m<sup>2</sup> bearing Ahmed Umar of Directorate of State Protocol, Presidency Abuja and that of Land Paper of Plot No. 1815 Kuruduma District with Reg. No. MFCT/LA/BA.1593 measuring about 1,00m<sup>2</sup> bearing Rabi Sa'adatu Baba at the above address is declared missing. If found, please return to the above address or to the nearest police station.

**LOSS OF DOCUMENT**

This is to inform the general public that an Offer of the Terms of Grant/Conveyance of Approval with Alotee name AUSTINE EWORO of Kuruduma layout, Plot No. M874 of about 1,000.00 Sqm is hereby declared missing. Anybody who fund this document should please return it to ENGR. JOHN MOSES OF F.C.D.A, Development Control, Wuse Abuja or Sister Mary Iya Beji of Living Faith Church, Durrumi.

**LOSS OF RIGHT OF OCCUPANCY**

This is to report the loss of Right of Occupancy No. MFCT/LA/AN/5425 in respect of Land located at Lugbe, FCT Abuja, belonging to GROUP CAPTAIN N.B. NNORUKA. This publication is for record purpose. The FCDA, the AGIS and the general public to take note.

SIGNED  
GROUP CAPTAIN N.B. NNORUKA.

# Sports

## Tornadoes whips Nationale

Niger Tornadoes F.C. of Minna finally got its season kick started on Saturday, when it whipped visiting Iwuanyanwu Nationale of Owerri 3-0, in a week five encounter.

Three second-half goals ensured Tornadoes' first victory of the season, as well as its first win at home. The triumph also lifted the sack threat hanging over the coaching crew and the management of the Minna side.

By AbdulRaheem Aodu, Reporter (Sports)

The match, which took place at the Bako Kontagora Stadium, began slowly, while both teams sized up each other. However, the tempo increased gradually with Nationale's returnee striker, Jacob proving why he was a hit with his former Russian club.

The burly striker lurking in the Tornadoes' box, slotted the ball into the net on 15

minutes off a pass from enterprising winger Okemiri, but the goal was disallowed for off side positioning.

Nationale kept on pressing for the opener, however efforts by Okemiri in the 25th minute and Tornadoes' striker, Ajilo in the 36 minutes were well saved. The first half ended on a barren note.

Tornadoes came back more aggressively in the second half pushing the Naze millionaires to defend more

cautiously. Striker Ajilo shot over the bar following a one-two pass with man of the match Simon. Tornadoes' other striker, Clement had his dipping shot tipped over the bar by Nationale keeper Oju.

In the 58th minute, Tornadoes' striker, Ajilo reacted first to slot in the ball, when Nationale keeper spilled a hard short taken by Awelu for Tornadoes' first goal of the encounter. The goal threw the filled stadium into uproar.

The home team's effort to increase the tally four minutes later ended futilely, as Clement's well drilled shot was saved by the bar. Tornadoes later got its second goal of the day, when enterprising winger Simon made a waltzing run into the opponent's half before taking a powerful shot which was turned into the net by goal keeper Oju.

Substitutes Ismaila and Ezeh combined well with Simon again, but it was, Kanu Nwankwo's, look-alike, Ezeh who blazed home Tornadoes' third goal from the edge of the box, to take the game beyond redemption for the Owerri lads eight minutes to the end of the match.

The game ended 3-0, while powerful winger Simon was picked as man of the match.

## Gamji Cup flags off in Kano

The under 18 North West Basketball competition tagged "Gamji Cup 2005" begins today at the Indoor Hall of Sani Abacha Stadium, Kofar Mata in Kano.

The competition would involve seven states in the North West geo-political zone, namely Kaduna, Jigawa, Sokoto, Kebbi, Zamfara,

Katsina and host Kano. Speaking to newsmen in Kano, the tournament's co-ordinator, Alhaji Mukhtar

From Yusba's Adamu Ibrahim, Correspondent, Kano

Khalel said three trophies are up for grabs and a cash prize of N50,000, N30,000 and N20,000 has been set aside for the winners, runner-up and third place teams respectively, while the Most Valuable Player (MVP) will receive N5,000 at the end of the competition.

Alhaji Mukhtar said that free accommodation will be provided to the participating teams as well as feeding subsidy.

He added that the Kano state government is sponsoring the tournament with the sum of N500,000 and in addition has also released N200,000 to the Kano state Basketball Association for the adequate preparation of Kano team.

He called on sports lovers in the state to come out en-masse to support the participating teams and also enjoined them to behave well during the competition.

### Premier League results

Tornadoes 3 Nationale 0

3SC 1 Rangers 0

NPA 1 Wikki 0

Pillars 2 Sharks 1

Berger 0 Enyimba 0

Dolphins 1 Kwara Utd 0

Gabres 2 Lobi 2

Gombe 1 Elkanemi 0

Zamfara 0 Insurance 0

Nasarawa 2 Gateway 0

## Babayaro out of Gabon clash

Newcastle defender Celestine Babayaro will miss Nigeria's 2006 World Cup qualifier at home to Gabon on 26 March after his club wrote the NFA that he would not be fit for the game billed for Port Harcourt.

Babayaro who had been given his last chance to show

his national team commitment by the Super Eagles coach, Christian Chukwu has failed to recover from a knee injury he sustained last fortnight against Liverpool.

"Babayaro has a knee injury and will not be part of the squad for the game against Gabon," Nigeria's coach Christian Chukwu told

Nigeriasports.com

"His team doctors sent a fax to inform us about the injury, they said he won't be fit before then and we are forced to excuse him from the game.

"It's sad that that players like Jay Jay Okocha and Wilson Oruma are also recovering from injuries but we can only wish them all the best in their recovery so they can join the rest of the squad," Chukwu said.

Meanwhile, George Abbey from English League One strugglers Port Vale has been called up as Babayaro's replacement.

"We have called up George Abbey to fill that void. I think we need a replacement that has been part of the squad for continuity.

"Every game is very crucial for us and we cannot afford to underrate the Gabonese, they are a good side and that's why we need all our regulars," Chukwu concluded.



Newcastle defender, Celestine Babayaro.

## Dolphin deny Hearts' claim

Nigeria's Dolphin have dismissed Hearts claims that they used an ineligible player in their CAF champions league second round victory last Sunday.

The Ghanaian club Hearts are protesting that striker Endurance Idahor was ineligible to play for Dolphin in that encounter because he was not duly registered before CAF's 15 January deadline.

The 2004 CAF Confederation Cup winners also includes in their protest that Idahor's jersey number and registration card had a February date in contrast with that of other players.

Dolphin's secretary, Fatai Olayinka has told Nigeriasports.com that he is aware of Heart's claims but denies that Idahor was ineligible.

"It's no issue and there's no cause for alarm because we have nothing to worry about. It's disappointing that a club as big as Hearts would thrive on protest to make the next stage of a continental competition," Olayinka said.

"We had a mix up with his first registration back in January and the new one only arrived on the eve of the game, that's why they (Hearts) are crying foul over

his inclusion but we are confident Caf understand the situation better.

On Tuesday, Hearts officials complained to the Confederation of African Football (CAF) that the striker was ineligible to play for Dolphins in the game but Olayinka insist the claim did not come as a surprise.

"We are not surprised they still went ahead with their protest because we noticed [Endurance] was posing beside the centre referee for a photograph at

half time of the game on Sunday.

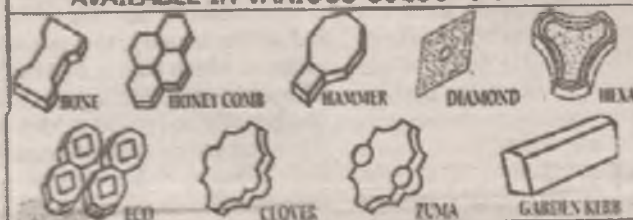
"Instead of planning strategies for the return leg in Accra, they are busy protesting blindly against our player". Olayinka concluded.

Dolphin the Nigerian league champions, defeated Hearts 4-0 in the first leg of that game in Port Harcourt and Idahor the player at the centre of the storm, got Dolphin's second goal.

The second leg of comes up in Ghana on 20 March.

### "LIDER" INTERLOCKING PAVING STONES

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 LAGOS: Total Plz km16, Lekki-Epe Exprway, Agungi Tel/Fax: 5555200  
 ABUJA: Plot 525, Obafemi Awolowo Rd. Jabi. Tel: 5239657, 6701626  
 KANO: 38, Ibrahim Taiwo Road. Tel: 633730, 633391.  
 KADUNA: 25, Gwarina Road, GRA Kaduna. Tel: 415062.  
 PORT HARCOURT: Km 18, P.H. - Aba Exp. Way. (Beside Crush Rock Ltd) Port-Harcourt. Tel: 612093, 612101.  
 BAUCHI: Jos Road, Between Zoranda Hotel & Inland Bank Headquarters Tel: 077-545971  
 ENUGU: Plot 23, Airport Road Opposite ANAWMO. Enugu. Tel: 882244

## FCT SPORTS COUNCIL

RECONSTITUTION OF BOARDS OF FCT SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS.

### PRESS RELEASE

Following the dissolution of all the boards of the 28 Sports Association in the FCT, notice is hereby given to all interested persons resident in the FCT who want to serve as members in any of these Associations to apply with relevant documents on or before 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2005 at 4:00pm.

- Applications are to be sent to the office of the FCT Director of Sports, Area 3, Garki-Abuja
- Name(s) of Associations of interest should be written on the left hand of the envelope and marked confidential.
- All Applications will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

#### Eligibility of Membership

Eligibility is based on the criteria stated below:

- The person must be a Nigerian or a non Nigerian who has resided in FCT for a period of not less than 5 years.
- Must not be below (25) Twenty-five years of age
- Must not have been convicted by any court of law or indicted by public inquiry.
- Must have a minimum of west African School Certificate or its equivalent.
- Must not have been declared bankrupt or insolvent.
- Must not have suffered from any condition, temporary or permanent loss of insanity or any form of unsound mind.
- Evidence of participation contribution to the development of any relevant sport(s)
- Must not have been involved in any legal tussle whatsoever in any form with respective association or the Sports Council.

Signed  
IDRIS UBANDOMA

*This Space is  
for Sale*

# DAILY TRUST

MONDAY COLUMN

Monday, March 14, 2005

## In defence of Reverend Father Kukah

By Sanusi Lamido Sanusi  
lamidos@hotmail.com

I am deeply concerned by two recent articles written by my friends and brothers, Garba Deen Muhammad and Kabiru Yusuf in the Trust newspapers, criticizing Reverend father Mathew Hasan Kukah for his recent criticism of those who questioned his appointment as secretary to the National Political Reform Conference (NPRC) in view of his religious affiliation. Deen's paper was entitled "The Manipulation of Religion" and appeared on the back page of the Weekly Trust on Saturday, March 5, 2005, and Kabiru's piece, entitled "The Kukah I didn't know" appeared almost immediately thereafter on the back page of the Daily Trust of Monday, March 7, 2005. An urgent Muslim intervention is required before the debate becomes one between Muslims and Christians.

Both Kabiru and Deen are gentlemen for whose views I hold the greatest respect. More important, they are highly respected journalists whose views are influential particularly among those who have become the principal constituency of the Trust stable, Muslim northerners. Neither of them is, by any definition, an ethnic bigot or religious propagandist. However, the two articles above risk falling into the trap of serving reactionary northern elitist interests, bent on appropriating religion as an obstacle in the way of any meaningful progress towards constituting a true national consciousness. Moreover, each of the two articles under discussion, beneath the veneer of common sense, contains logical leaps, unfair deductions and dangerous conclusions, none of which serves the best interests of the nation, or even any particular constituency however defined.

Let me begin by admitting that I do not know father Kukah as well as Kabiru does, and certainly never had the opportunity to visit with him in his rooms at the catholic secretariat or elsewhere. I have also never attended a church service at which he officiated so I do not even know if he is a competent priest and theologian. I have met him on a few occasions and have had brief discussions with him, but what I know of him comes from my reading of his articles, presentations, and one book based on his Ph D thesis at SOAS. In other words, I know Mathew Kukah not as a Christian, or a priest, or a theologian (although he is all of those), but as a Nigerian intellectual who writes on matters of national importance and who has shown a deep and sincere commitment to addressing the problems of developing nations.

I do not necessarily agree with everything Kukah writes or says. I also do not believe that Kukah, or any social scientist, can be completely neutral or objective in his interventions in social discourse. The man is an intellectual engaged in knowledge production in a specific social and historical context in which he is implicated. That implication comes with a consciousness of a real or imagined adversity suffered by northern Christians at the hands of northern Muslims in Nigerian political history, and a commitment to address that adversity and alleviate it. I may not agree with him on his perceptions of the nature and true extent of this supposed adversity, but I do not necessarily link his views as an intellectual to his calling as a priest or his choice of the Christian religion. I have been, to give a personal example, perhaps more critical of the northern Nigerian Muslim elite than Father Kukah, even though I am Muslim (although admittedly, a leading Wahhabi scholar in Kano, Ja'far Adam, literally questioned my Islamic credentials in a radio program during the last Ramadhan). I agree with most of what northern Christians have to say about the northern Muslim elite. I only differ with them on two fundamental points. First I believe that not only northern Christians, but-and perhaps more so-, the northern Muslim poor, have been visited with adversity by the northern elite. Second, many of the Christian elite at the forefront of the attack on Muslims are no better than those they criticize. But I digress.

The point I make is that Father Kukah is a northern Nigerian Christian priest, but he is also an intellectual who is appointed to a position on personal merit. As a liberation theologian, he finds in his religion resources to oppose instances of injustice and, unlike many "men of God" on both sides of the religious divide in the north, restricted his public utterances to social and political issues, as opposed to attacking other faiths. To this extent, Kukah is perfectly within his rights to consider as irresponsible the attempt to ignore completely his role as an intellectual and focus on his private choice of religion and profession. He is also perfectly within his right to point out that there are people for whom religion is a business and they will always find something to say in these matters. I remember some months ago a discussion with a Christian friend on the decision by President Obasanjo, a Christian, to suspend Joshua Dariye and declare a state of emergency in Plateau state during

the crisis that engulfed that state. I remarked that, had Obasanjo taken that step in a Muslim state like Kano or Zamfara, all hell would have broken loose as Muslims, who were commending him over his action in Plateau, would have come out with conspiracy theories to show how this was all a grand design to wage war on "Islam" or "Muslims" or the "Shari'ah". What I was not prepared for was the response I received. My friend said Obasanjo was a "stooge" of the Muslims and that he was "acting out a script" written by the Caliphate in Sokoto. OBJ, this friend continued, was not really a good Christian and he was victimizing a Christian to please his "Muslim paymasters." This is the level to which Nigerians, Christians and Muslims alike, have allowed themselves to be dragged, a level at which all issues disappear and everything is seen through the prism of the constant process of construction of identities and manufacture of difference. The concern I have is that this process, long associated with scholars steeped in mediaeval political literature, has sucked in progressive intellectuals who should know better. Now what are the issues, and where did Kabiru and Deen go wrong, in my view?

First, an issue that should be central to any argument of this nature was not addressed, not even tangentially, by either writer. What are the functions of the chairman and secretary of this so-called NPRC and in what way can they determine the outcome of the dialogue and impose their view on the participants and the rest of the nation? If the conference is hijacked by vested interests, are the Muslim participants under any compulsion to hold their peace, to passively acquiesce to the subversion of the interest or their constituency? In any event, for a conference whose legality is doubtful and which is yet to receive the backing of the federal legislature, not to talk of the general skepticism with which it is viewed by most Nigerians, what is the significance of its conclusions and in which way can they undermine Nigerian Muslims? Finally, in the event that Kukah may have an influence on the outcome of the conference, who says he will exert that influence in the name of his religion? Why not in the interest of the North, or the country, or a radical political ideology? And if religion is what Kukah seeks to promote, is he going there as a representative of Christianity as a whole or of Catholicism? What is the basis, from his work, his writing and his actions, for drawing these conclusions? They were reached through a series of logical leaps with little effort at substantiation.

Second, underlying the criticism of Kukah is a presumption that there is something legitimate about the concerns expressed in some quarters on the lop-sidedness of the conference. This in turn assumes that there is something like a "Christian" or "Muslim" position in a national conference about to be hijacked by bigots and converted into a confrontation between two religions. Are the Muslims at this conference representing an "Islamic" position? Who defines it and on whose authority? How do we know that those who are at the conference are not there to serve an agenda driven by the interests of their sponsors and totally unrelated to the people of this country, as a whole, or their ethnic and religious "constituencies" in particular?

The myth that there is anyone speaking for popular Muslims or Christians at a conference is, at least philosophically speaking, highly problematic. The discourse of religion is never monotonous. There are so many conflicting issues within a single religion, issues growing out of say, ethnic and class interests, questions of gender and the limits of personal liberty, the relationship between religion and state etc. that the only way to approach this discourse is by displaying a certain simultaneous, contrapuntal sensibility to the various (sometimes harmonious, often discordant) notes of its polyphony. To pretend that a group of Muslims-irrespective of who, or how the group came into constitution- speaks with a single voice for an undefined Muslim interest under threat from an equally undefined non-Muslim one, is to fall into the trap of complicity with the opportunistic purveyors of superficial panaceas for deep-seated socio-economic and political maladies. The duty of the intellectual is to warn and advise against such characters, not defend and support them. This is what makes the position taken by my two friends a source of concern.

I must stress at this point, that both Kabiru and Deen engaged Kukah with the utmost respect, and criticized him without the use of aggressive vocabulary. However, I must take up issue with a few specific arguments, to underscore the main thrust of this intervention. Take for example, Garba Deen's

surprise at Kukah's expression of "rather strong opinions on matters over which he has little or no knowledge." The matter in question is the comment made by Kukah that "if you go to Saudi Arabia they will mess you up as a Muslim". Garba Deen's only evidence that Kukah is ignorant of events in Saudi Arabia is that if "Kukah had ever been to Saudi Arabia, it couldn't have been as a Muslim." This is what philosophers call a "genealogical fallacy", the refutation of an argument not based on its truth but on who its advocate is. Kukah, because he is a Christian (and, one may add, a man in a cassock!) simply cannot know about what happens in Saudi Arabia! Moreover, if he makes a comment as to what happens there he is speaking out of ignorance. I am a Muslim, and I bear witness that Kukah is correct that many Muslims do receive humiliating treatment at the hands of Saudi Authorities, and that for many non-Arab and non-white Muslims, the only reason they will not stop going to Saudi Arabia is because of the Kaaba Mecca and the Prophet's mosque and tomb in Madinah. Many people have had personal experiences of humiliation in so-called Muslim countries, with Saudi Arabia being a leading example, by virtue of the colour of their skin or their nationality. Most sincere Muslims who have traveled or lived in Saudi Arabia will openly acknowledge it, so it is an open secret even to those who have never been there. Deen does not deny this, but he argues, in effect, that Kukah cannot know it since he is Christian and thus cannot claim knowledge of how Muslims are treated there!

Similar examples of unfair arguments can be drawn from Kabiru's piece. Kabiru discusses "complaints" to the effect that there is "an unwritten rule of our coexistence (not) to appoint two Christians (one of them a reverend father to boot) as chairman and secretary of the conference", and then proceeds with arguments showing he finds this position reasonable. When did this unwritten rule ever exist, one wonders? This country has had its highest offices held by Christians and by Muslims in the past. Garba Deen has pointed out that General Gowon and his second-in-command, Rear Admiral Wey, were two Christians at the helm of affairs for nine years. Generals Buhari and Idiagbon were both Muslims and ruled Nigeria for about two years. In 1993, the Social Democratic Party sponsored two Muslims, Chief Abiola and Ambassador Kingibe for the presidency and Nigerians voted for them. So why are Muslims crying because of some silly committee without executive powers and whose report cannot be binding on anyone? Kukah is absolutely correct. It is irresponsible.

A second instance is the discussion of Kukah's views on PRONACO. At the end of his discussion, Kabiru says "it is certain that if Datti Ahmed, AbdulKarim Dayyabu, AbdulKadir Balarabe Musa and other northern rejecters of the conference had decided to hold a parallel meeting in Kaduna and Kano, neither the government nor probably Kukah would have been so sanguine about it." In making this averment, Kabiru does not adduce a single piece of evidence in the form of an instance in which Kukah took a position against such a group. Maybe he is aware from his intimate knowledge of the man and his views but he did not give his readers that information. There are more examples but these suffice.

Let me conclude. Reverend father Kukah is perfectly competent to defend himself against criticism and does not need any one to help him. Also, I have no doubt in my mind that many Muslims, particularly northerners, agree fully with Kabiru and Deen and their criticism of Kukah. However, it is important to say that many Muslim Northerners, the present writer included, do not care about the religious identity of competent Nigerians appointed to any office whatsoever, so long as they consider their constituency to be the whole nation in the conduct of their official functions. We owe it to ourselves, and to this country, to announce our faith in one Nigeria, a nation in which we can be Muslims without being enemies to fellow nationals. We have had decades of Muslim leadership that brought no benefit to Muslims and the false promises and fears that are raised to deceive Nigerian need to be exposed. For me, Father Kukah as a person is neither here nor there, but the principle counts, and the principle must be defended. That principle is one that stresses the plurality and multi-vocality of the discourse in the "Muslim North", and resists the attempt to manufacture sectional/religious identities that undermine the unity of the nation. This view is one that, I am sure, I share with Kabiru and Garba Deen, but I believe that, in fighting the "northern Muslim corner" and criticizing Father Kukah, they risk giving credibility to the crass opportunism of the northern elite.

In the final analysis, and for the avoidance of doubt, I do not believe this conference has any meaning or use, and I predict that it will be a political jamboree at which alliances are formed to promote some selfish political agendas. Let us focus on what they are saying and doing, and forget their personal choices in matters of faith. In any event, it promises to provide the nation with some hilarious entertainment.