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# DAILY TRUST

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## Business

Workers of Bank PHB say their salaries have been slashed by 35 per cent **25**

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# Ogbulafor can't see Yar'adua

From Muideen Olaniyi & Aisha Umar

PEOPLES Democratic Party (PDP) National Chairman Prince Vincent Ogbulafor has left Saudi Arabia

for India to seek medical attention for his eyes after failing to see President Umaru Yar'adua in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, Daily Trust learnt yesterday. Also yesterday,

the Saudi Arabian Ambassador in Abuja denied that his country was responsible for visiting VIPs' inability to see the ailing Nigerian ruler.

Ogbulafor, along with his deputy Dr Bello Haliru Mohammed and PDP National Secretary Abubakar Kawu Baraje arrived in Saudi Arabia last Friday but they could

not get access to Yar'adua, who has been there for more than 80 days. The PDP Chairman, whose visual impairment became more visi- **Continued on page 5**



PHOTO: MISBAHU BASHIR

AMERICAN naval officers on board the visiting warship USS Samuel B. Roberts training with Nigerian sailors in Lagos yesterday.

## Jos Hausa community:

# 'Ajibola panel vindicates us'

From Andrew Agbese & Ahmed Mohammed, Jos

THE contents of the report submitted by the Prince

Bola Ajibola-led Judicial Panel of inquiry that investigated the 2008 Jos crisis to the Plateau State Government has vindicated

its earlier stance that the panel was only set up to do a hatchet job, the Hausa Community in Jos said yesterday.

The 339 page report had indicted the Hausa Fulani community in Jos for the 2008 crisis while exonerating the state governor,

Jonah Jang of complicity in the crisis. Spokesman of the Hausa Fulani community in Jos Alhaji Sani Mudi stated this yesterday when

he visited Daily Trust Jos office to react to the report. He said, "We were not surprised when the report **Continued on page 5**

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**STUDENTS** of Al Manar International College, Kaduna at a public lecture organized by the school to educate Muslim youth on Islam's stance towards Valentine's Day in Kaduna on Saturday. In our caption to this photo yesterday, both of which were sourced from NAN, the wrong impression was created that the lecture was to celebrate Valentine's Day. We regret the error.

## ACF wants NDDC funds released

From Muhammad Bello, Port Harcourt

THE South-south Coordinator of the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) Alhaji Musa Saidu, has appealed to Acting President Goodluck Jonathan to release the N1.3 trillion due to the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC).

The delay in the release of the

money which is a backlog of statutory allocations to the commission dating back to the administration of Olusegun Obasanjo, has been debated by various interest groups in the region.

In this year's budget, oil producing states are expected to receive an additional N364.71 billion from the federation account, increasing the Federal Government's allocation to the

Niger Delta to N1.824 trillion. Alhaji Sa'idu said the commission needed the money to execute projects in the region, and to create jobs for unemployed youths in the region, saying the Federal Government should effect its release to consolidate on the progress made so far in implementing the post amnesty programme.

"This is not the time to play politics. We are talking about

millions of people in villages and communities whose lives will be affected one way or the other through projects, training, and empowerment. This is the time to take concrete steps to really address the Niger Delta crisis. It does not make sense for the Federal Government to continue withholding the money, despite appeals from majority of Nigerians," he said.

## Buhari's exit will not affect our victory in 2011-Shekarau Group

From Ahmed Mohammed and Mahmud Lalo, Jos

THE Exit of former Head of State General Muhammadu Buhari from the All Nigeria Peoples Party (ANPP) will not affect the victory of Governor Ibrahim Shekarau in 2011.

National Coordinator of Shekarau Exemplary Leadership 2011, Alhaji Hassan Isa Mai Madara, said this yesterday when he visited Daily Trust office in Jos

"We feel his absence seriously, but he left ANPP alone, just as he registered alone

and the party remains intact. We are committed to getting the support of Nigerians in our bid to ensure that our candidate, Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau wins the presidential election in 2011," he said.

Alhaji Hassan said it was the ruling People's Democratic

Party that was doing everything within its powers to cripple opposition parties in the country. He said the ANPP had a lot of supporters. The coordinator accused the PDP of bad governance, saying it had left a majority of Nigerians in abject poverty.

## Edo State varsity students protest over alleged hike in tuition

From Vincent Egunyanga, Benin

STUDENT of the state-owned Ambrose Alli University University (AAU) yesterday protested over the alleged increase in school fees by the university management. It was gathered that the tuition fees was increased from N26,000 to N76,000 for regular students and the fees for part-time students was increased from N30,000 to N100,000. Sources at the university, said the protest began at about 9am yesterday morning by mainly part-time stu-

dents before regular students joined in. They said a girl whose identity could not be immediately ascertained was shot in the leg during the protest.

It was however gathered that the protesting students allegedly damaged vehicles and property belonging to some staff of the institution. People travelling along the Benin-Auchi-Abuja express road were stranded as the students blocked the road. A top police officers who was among those assigned to quell the riot told our correspondent on phone that the

protest was hijacked by cultists and hoodlums who fired several shots. He said the police were warned not to shoot at the students, but to contain the protest. Commenting on the protest, the Edo State Commissioner for Education, Dr. Ngozi Osarenren, said it was the part-time students who started it. While denying that the university management had increased the school fees, Dr. Osarenren however confirmed that the university Governing Council met last week and that one of the issues considered at the meeting was school fees.

## Judicial workers resume suspended strike in Ogun

THE Ogun State branch of the Judiciary Staff Union of Nigeria (JUSUN) has resumed the strike it suspended on Nov. 23. The workers suspended the strike, following an agreement between them and the State Government to start implementing the new salary structure for workers as from January. When newsmen visited courts in Abeokuta yesterday, both the Magistrate and state's High Courts at the Isabo area were under lock and key.

Only members of JUSUN's task-force were seen outside the gates with canes to ensure strict compliance with the strike order.

Prince Adesina Adesanya, the State Chairman of the union, told newsmen that the workers had resumed the strike because the State Government had failed to implement the new salary structure as agreed. Adesanya alleged that government representatives at various meetings held with the union had not been sincere.

The chairman, who described the strike as successful, said they were ready to sustain it until the government decide to implement the new salary structure.

"The state government has implemented a new salary structure for teachers and health workers.

"Why should our own be different?" Adesanya asked. (NAN)

## Oyo legislators want Deputy Speaker sacked

From Femi Akinola, Lagos

A group of legislators in the Oyo State House of Assembly want the Deputy Speaker, Jelili Adeleke removed, alleging that he cannot express himself in English language. The legislators also alleged that Adeleke was imposed on them by Governor Alao Akala, saying that his continued stay in the office was bad for the image of the state Assembly.

A member of the Assembly who did not want his name mentioned told our correspondent that the Deputy Speaker was deficient in many areas.

"Oyo State House of Assembly is rotten because the governor has succeeded in making it so. The House is not independent of the executive and hardly can we take a decision in the Assembly without Governor Akala's approval," the lawmaker said. At the state House of Assembly, an aide of the Deputy Speaker who attended to our reporter said his boss would not grant any interview.

# Bribe taking stalls budget implementation

By Idris Ahmed

BRIBE-TAKING by officials of Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs) stalls the implementation of budgets in Nigeria, Director General of the Bureau for Public Procurement (BPP) Engr. Emeka Eze has said.

Engr. Eze said this yesterday in Abuja at the opening of a two-day workshop on "Strengthening Budget Implementation for Enhanced Project Execution and

Service Delivery" organised by the Budget Office of the Ministry of Finance.

He said rather than blaming lack of capacity to implement annual budget, MDAs should be held responsible for lack of integrity and transparency in awarding contracts.

He said ministries award contract to favoured contractors even if they fail to meet the necessary qualifications.

"The law requires that eve-

ryone gets equal right to bid for contract. Contractors are made to pay N5 million to process contract files and sometimes when contract are approved, the contractors are not aware of it," Engr. Eze said.

He said contractors' files stay up to four months in a particular office until they come to "push the file", which he means paying officials of ministries bribe.

In the year 2009, according to him, 602 contracts received a no

objection from the BPP office and 562 of them certified, 36 on awaiting list while 10 was rejected.

He said less than 300 of these contracts are processed to the Federal Executive Council and that the cost of executing the entire contracts runs into N1.94 trillion.

He said there is a cycle of blame involving the National Assemblies, Ministries, contractors and the BBP for budget failure.

"A lot of people struggle for money they don't know what to

do with. Many of us ask money that we don't really need. We have capacity to implement budget, what we don't have is integrity," he said.

He said if all the approved budgets in the country have been implemented, the country would have been better than it is presently.

The Minister of Finance Mansur Muhtar said the 2009 budget was implemented to the tune of 60.59 percent. About 45 percent of the 2008 budget was implemented.

## Jonathan bans congratulatory adverts, solidarity visits

By Mohammed S. Shehu

ACTING President Goodluck Jonathan yesterday asked Nigerians to stop placing congratulatory adverts in the media over his assumption of office as Acting President.

He has similarly placed another ban on solidarity visits to the Presidential Villa, Abuja by politicians and his supporters who have recently turned the State House into a Mecca of sorts.

A statement from the Senior Special Assistant to the Vice President on Media and Publicity Mr. Ima Niboro said the decision was to enable the acting President focus on the challenges of his new office.

Justifying the decisions, the

Acting President explained that the "nation is at a critical juncture where we must begin to focus on solutions to the daunting challenges that confront us".

However, he welcomed suggestions that could help him accelerate the pace of national development. According to the statement, Jonathan "described as invaluable, the wise counsel and suggestions of Nigerians from all walks of life on moving the nation forward".

Jonathan restated the commitment of the administration to secure Nigeria's path to greatness and guarantee our place among the great nations of the world in the shortest possible time.

## ...meets with economic team

By Mohammed S. Shehu

ACTING President Goodluck Jonathan yesterday met with members of the economic team at the Presidential Villa, Abuja, to review the state of the economy and fashion out modalities on how to design the Federal Government's economic policies.

Speaking with journalists shortly after the meeting with the National Economic Management Team (NEMT), Minister of State for Petroleum, Mr Odein Ajumogobia, said the proposed deregulation of the downstream sector of the petroleum industry remains on course.

The meeting, presided over by Jonathan, was also attended by members of the economic team and the Presidential Committee on Deregulation, as well as labour representatives.

Ajumogobia said the meeting updated the Acting President on the deregulation programme, and it was resolved that the initiative must continue.

He, however, clarified that a

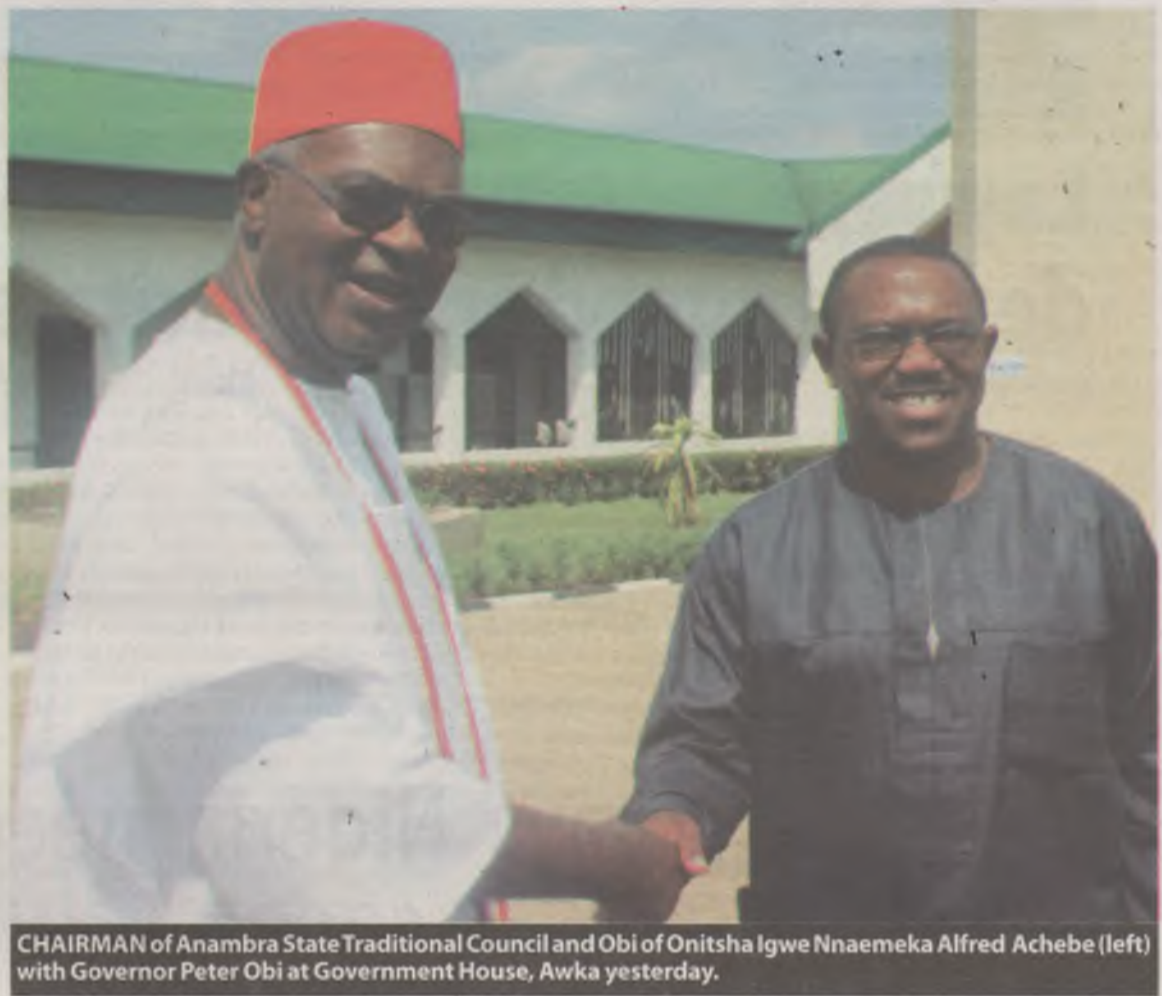
target date for commencement had not been decided yet.

Also speaking, Minister of Finance Dr Mansur Muhtar said the Acting President had agreed to meet with representatives of labour to reach a consensus on its implementation.

Muhtar said the meeting also discussed the legal dimension to the deduction that had been made in the past.

The economic team includes Minister of National Planning Commission Shamsudeen Usman, Minister of Power Rilwanu Babalola, Minister of State for Finance Remi Babalola, Chief Economic Adviser to the President Taminu Yakubu, and Deputy Governor (Economic Policy) of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Sarah Alade among other top government functionaries.

President Umaru Yar'adua reconstituted the NEMT last year to design and execute the Federal Government's economic policies as well as support the work of the Presidential Steering Committee on Global Economic Crisis (PSCGEC).



CHAIRMAN of Anambra State Traditional Council and Obi of Onitsha Igwe Nnaemeka Alfred Achebe (left) with Governor Peter Obi at Government House, Awka yesterday.

## Rep insists Jang had a hand in Jos crisis

By Suleiman M. Bisalla

REP Samaila Mohammed (ANPP, Jos North/Bassa Federal Constituency) has described the report of the Justice Bola Ajibola Commission of Inquiry into the November 2008 crisis in Jos as a worthless document because it was never intended to get to the root of the crisis, let alone proffer sustainable solutions.

Speaking to Daily Trust yesterday, Mohammed said he and others are currently at the Federal High Court in Jos challenging the legality of the commission because of the alleged involvement of the state government and Governor Jonah David Jang who set up the commission.

"We went to the Federal High Court to challenge the legality of the Bola Ajibola Commission of Inquiry and one of our reliefs is

that the report must not be submitted to the state government and the state government must not receive the report," he said, adding that the Plateau State Attorney General and Commissioner of Justice who is expected to work on the report is also a party in the suit before the Federal High Court.

"If they have respect for the rule of law and fairness, they would have discontinued the commission. We said that the governor is implicated and therefore he will never be fair to us," the lawmaker said.

The Ajibola report, which Daily Trust laid hands on, indicted scores of leaders of the Muslim community in Jos including Rep. Muhammed, former Minister of State for Information Dasuki Ibrahim Nakande, former Deputy Senate President Ibrahim Mantu, Alhaji Sale Hassan, and Alhaji Danladi Pasali of having directly or remotely caused

the crisis in Jos.

It, however, exonerated Governor Jang and the state government of any wrong doing in the unrest which was sparked off by the controversial local government elections.

This is even as the report noted government's disregard for a security advice against holding the controversial November 2008 elections that is widely believed to have sparked off the violence.

But Rep Mohammed insisted that Governor Jang has a hand in the 2008 crisis as well as the recent one that claimed hundreds of lives and property worth billions of naira.

He said he was not surprised at the recommendations of the commission as it is exactly what it was set up to achieve and meant to divert attention from the "criminal issues at stake."

PIC: AFOLABI SOTUNDE



**SPEAKER, House of Representatives Dimeji Bankole (left) with the Minister of Health Prof. Babatunde Osotimehin at the launch of Patients Feedback Platform in Abuja yesterday.**

## 2011: INEC to display voters' register in April

By Abbas Jimoh

**DISTURBED** by the lapses in the voters' register noticed during the Anambra governorship election, The Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) yesterday said it would commence nationwide display of voters' register in all wards across the country from April to June 2010.

Chairman of the commission Prof Maurice Iwu said that the exercise will be without prejudice to the display of voters' register that will be carried out few months to the elections as prescribed by law, explaining that the idea is to ensure that the hitches experienced during the governorship election in Anambra state does not recur elsewhere.

Speaking at the post-Anambra state governorship election review meeting with key electoral officers in Abuja, Iwu said that there is work still to be done and there is no time to waste. He said the lapses in the voters register will be addressed without any delay ahead of the 2010 general elections.

"Consequent upon this commitment, there will be a nationwide display of voters' register in all the wards in the country from April to June 2010, for the purpose of correction and re-validation of authentic names on the voters' roll," he said, adding that the exercise will be without prejudice to the display of voters' register that will be carried out few months to the elections as prescribed by law.

## US, Nigerian navy begin search and seizure training

By Misbahu Bashir who was in Lagos

THE United States Navy and its Nigerian counterpart last weekend commenced Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS) training on how best to tackle suspicious vessels.

The training which is being carried out at the non restricted areas of the Nigerian sea waters in Lagos involved the US war ship Samuel B. Robert (FFG58) and two Nigerian war ships, NNS Wamba and NNS Burutu.

Leader of the US naval VBSS personnel ENS William Burkland explained that at the end of the exercise the Nigerian trainees would acquire new tactics on maritime boarding actions needed to meet head-on with suspicious vessels. The exercise will provide an opportunity for expanding both the US and the Nigerian naval patrol officers' knowledge on how to tackle piracy and terrorism, smuggling and searching suspicious vessels.

Samuel B. Roberts which is berthing in Nigerian waters will depart middle of this week after the completion of the VBSS exercise.

## Lawyer wants court to declare Yar'adua dead, resigned or incapacitated

By Atika Balal

A legal practitioner Barrister Peremobowei G. Okele has instituted a suit at an Abuja Federal High Court asking that President Umaru Musa Ya'adua who has been abroad on medical treatment since November last year be declared dead, incapacitated or has resigned from office.

His counsel Doueyi Fiderikumo, is seeking a court declaration that the absence of Presi-

dent Yar'adua from Nigeria and the consequent abandoning of his functions as President from November 23 2009 constitute death, resignation or permanent incapacity within the meaning of section 146(1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999.

He is also seeking a declaration that by virtue of the 'death', or resignation or permanent incapacity of the 1st Defendant, the Office of President of the Federal Republic

of Nigeria has become vacant within the meaning of section 146(1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999.

He wants the court to declare that by these virtues the 2nd Defendant (Dr. Goodluck Jonathan) is the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as contemplated by section 146(1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999.

He is also asking the court to give an order directing the

2nd Defendant to forthwith and without further assurance begin to exercise all executive powers of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria conferred by section 5(1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999. Defendants in the suit are President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan and the Attorney General of the Federation.

Justice Adamu Bello has fixed March 9 for hearing.

## World Bank says Nigeria needs strategy to spend \$200b on climate

By Aisha Umar

WORLD Bank country Director for Nigeria Onno Ruhl says Nigeria needs home grown strategy to be able to spend the \$200 billion already available from clean technology fund.

Speaking at the National Climate Change summit held yes-

terday in Abuja, Mr Ruhl said the money cannot be spent because the World Bank could not find any project available.

He said he was delighted that the minister of environment has come up with home grown strategy on climate change in Nigeria because the focus tends to be on money, if there is money we can

bridge the challenge, which is the belief of the rest of the world but not the case in Nigeria. We need to have a plan on how to spend the money, otherwise the money will not solve the problem."

World Bank Regional Climate Change Coordinator, Raffaello Cervigni said climate change is a threat to development, and world

assessment have been made on 25% children with malnourishment, 1.4 billion people in poverty, 1/6 without clean water and 1.6 billion without modern energy.

He said the current financing for adoption and mitigation on climate change is \$10 billion, which is less than 5% of what may have been needed by 2030.

## Ministers face contempt charge tomorrow

By Muideen Olaniyi

MEMBERS of the Federal Executive Council (FEC) are to face contempt charge in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Court tomorrow for non compliance with Nigeria's Constitution in the resolution they passed on ailing President Umaru Musa Yar'adua.

The Chief Judge of the Federal High Court, Justice Dan Abutu, had on January 25, given FEC 14 days to pass a resolution to deter-

mine the state of health of ailing President Yar'adua in line with Section 144 of the 1999 Constitution.

Following this order, the FEC, through the former Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Mr. Michael Aondoakaa, said that Yar'adua was fit to continue in office with strong belief that a medical treatment outside the country did not constitute incapacity.

However, one of the lawyers who was representing the plaintiffs in the case, Chief Kayode Ajulo,

said the resolution of the FEC did not meet the standard required by law.

Speaking with journalists yesterday in Abuja, Ajulo said the contempt suit would be filed because during FEC's meeting, the Court's bailiff or Registrar was not present as required in the Civil Process and Sheriff Act.

He said the Court's bailiff's presence is to ensure that all the necessary procedures as required by law are followed, wondering

whether the last FEC resolution was passed by two-third majority of their members because of its secrecy.

Ajulo stated that the continued silence of President Yar'adua over the past 80 days 'can be presumed now that he (Yar'adua) is in a state of permanent incapacitation'.

The defence counsels in the case to be instituted against AGF, Adetokunbo Kayode and the FEC are Chief Bamidele Aturu and Chief Kayode Ajulo.



KADUNA State PDP chairman Alhaji Ya'u Usman Jama'a (middle) receiving members of different political parties who defected to the party at Dutsen-Wai village in Kubau Local Government Area of the state yesterday.

## Ajibola panel vindicates us

Continued from page 1

indicted our community over the crises, because the panel acted according to the wishes and aspirations of the government, that was the reason why we said we will not participate in the panel."

Alhaji Sani Mudi said the way the report recommended that government should balkanize the state and acquire mainly Hausa settlements in Jos for development purposes clearly shows the Plateau government's intention to ethnically cleanse Jos of the Hausa community in the name of development. He said it was no coincidence that Governor Jang has been saying lately that he will implement the Jos Development Master Plan.

Mudi said it was unfortunate that a legal luminary of Bola Ajibola's standing will recommend segmenting a group of people and barring them from enjoying social amenities like has happened in Gaza and other parts of the world where some people were denied basic amenities because of their religion.

According to him, "peace will only return to Jos if the governor and his cohorts carry everyone along and change their thinking of inciting the public through provocative statements and start being fair to all."

Also speaking, Secretary of the Ulama Elders Council Barrister Lawal Ishaq said what Ajibola recommended was a slap in the face of the Judiciary because the panel was aware that the people indicted by it, such as former Deputy Senate President Ibrahim Mantu, Sheikh Sani Yahaya Jingir and former Minister of State for Information and Communications Ibrahim Dasuki Nakande have gone to court to challenge their invitation to appear before the panel.

He said it is a slight on the judiciary because both the panel chairman and members were dully served while Ajibola acted without waiting for the decision of the court over the matter and went ahead and indicted them.

Efforts to get the reaction of the Plateau State government failed as the phone lines of both Information Commissioner Gregory Yenlong and the Special Adviser on Media Dan Manjang did not go through when our correspondent tried to reach them.

They however told the BBC in a report monitored by our correspondents that the state government is yet to release the report of the panel and that seeing it on the pages of newspapers was a surprise to them. They intend to investigate it, they said.

Manjang was quoted to have said that the report has not been deliberated on by the government, hence it does not reflect the position of the state government on the matter, while Yenlong said the state government would investigate how the report leaked to the press.

## Govs deny backing Jonathan over \$2bn ECA

By Muideen Olaniji

STATE governors yesterday said sharing the \$2 billion from the Excess Crude Account (ECA) was not the reason why they backed the National Assembly resolution to declare Goodluck Jonathan as Acting President.

Chairman of Nigeria Governors' Forum and Governor of Kwara State Dr Bukola Saraki said media reports suggesting a deal between the governors and Jonathan were false, ill-informed, and totally misleading.

He said the February 4 emergency meeting of the NGF was

convened to deliberate on what was becoming a political and constitutional impasse, adding that they had a role to play in resolving the situation.

"For the avoidance of doubt, we wish to state that Funds in Excess Crude Account (ECA) belong to the three tiers of Government: Federal, States, and Local Governments.

Therefore, States would have no special benefits or interests in requesting that funds in the ECA be disbursed since the three tiers of government benefit collectively from such disbursements," he said.

## Reps commend Army's loyalty to democracy

By Nasidi A. Yahaya

THE House of Representatives yesterday commended the Nigerian Armed Forces for their pledge to defend Nigeria's democracy. The Nigerian Army made the pledge at the weekend in Minna, the Niger State capital.

Chairman of the Committee Rep Oluwole Oke said the Nigerian army deserves commendation over their pledge which they demonstrated throughout the period of constitutional log-jam occasioned by the continued absence of President Umaru Musa Yar'adua from the country.

He said all through the processes that led to the emergence

of Goodluck Jonathan as Acting President, the top hierarchy of the Nigerian Armed Forces, including Rear Chief Marshal Dike expressed their strong commitment for support and sustenance of democracy at every public forum.

Rep Oke said a bill that would provide for exemption of members of the Armed Forces from paying compulsory contribution to Pension Fund monthly would soon be introduced on the floor of the chamber.

He also said another bill was underway to provide packages such as accommodation facilities for members of the Armed Forces on retirement.

## Ogbulafor can't see Yar'adua

Continued from page 1

ible last week when National Assembly leaders paid him a courtesy visit, had in the past asked the party's scribe to read the text of the resolution of the party's National Working Committee (NWC) meetings because of his health challenges.

*Daily Trust* learnt that Ogbulafor's inability to go for the trip over the past two months was due to Yar'adua's continued absence and the party's expectations that he would soon return home. However, one of Ogbulafor's aides, who was contacted yesterday, denied any knowledge about the chairman's whereabouts at the moment.

Meanwhile, the five member House of Representatives delegation that was also in Saudi Arabia

last week to see President Umaru Musa Yar'adua but returned without seeing the ailing leader will present their report to the House of Representatives today.

The House delegation included Rep Baba Shehu Agaie (PDP, Niger State), Rep Mohammed Ali Ndume (ANPP, Borno State), Rep Patrick Ikhariale (PDP, Edo State), Rep Moruf Fatai (AC, Lagos State), Rep Jibril Adamu (PDP, Kaduna State) and Rep Nnenna Ukeje (PDP, Abia State).

But Rep Nnenna Ukeje was dropped shortly before their take off.

*Daily Trust* learnt last night that although the MPs were not allowed to see the President, they would submit their 'report' before the House, details of which would include their experiences there.

Our reporter also learnt that

the members didn't want to preempt the content of their report, hence their unwillingness to speak to newsmen since their return.

According to a source, the delegation, which at first expressed high optimism about meeting the President to enable it deliver the House's message, eventually got frustrated when the members were not taken to see Yar'adua days after their arrival in Jeddah, in spite of the assurances given by the Nigerian Embassy.

It was on that basis that members of the delegation resolved to deliver the message to Yar'adua's wife, Hajia Turai, who has been in Jeddah since her husband's hospitalisation.

According to a source, the First Lady received the delegation and expressed appreciation

for the kind gesture on the part of the House.

The Saudi Arabian ambassador to Nigeria Khalid Umar Abdrabuh told *Daily Trust* yesterday said his country had no hand in the failure of Nigerian delegates to meet with President Umaru Yar'adua, who has been receiving treatment in Saudi Arabia since November last year.

Speaking at the Saudi embassy in Abuja, he said the Saudi authorities does not in any way interfere with who should see the president or who should not be allowed to see him.

He said, "The authority to identify the visitor that could be allowed to see Yar'adua is vested with the doctors and family members attending to the president and not the Saudi Arabian authority."

# Health workers to wear name tags for accountability

By Sunday Williams

HEALTH workers in all Federal Government tertiary hospitals are to wear name tags to enable patients report the quality of service rendered them, Health Minister Prof Babatunde Osotimehin has said.

The minister made the remarks yesterday in Abuja during the formal launch of the patient's feedback platform supported by telecommunication

outfits, MTN and Globacom.

The system will enable patients who visit any of the 52 FG hospitals and medical centres across the country to provide feedback on the quality of services provided by the health-care centres through text messages.

Osotimehin said healthcare workers have the responsibilities to render quality service and most be held responsible in an event of failure.

He warned doctors, nurses and pharmacist against going about as if they are doing patients a favour.

The minister said the platform is commencing in the 52 federal hospitals but will soon be extended to the states and local government levels to make the health workers accountable to their actions.

He said the platform which is currently supported by MTN and Globacom will in the next

few months be in all the networks to admit everybody irrespective of the network used.

He said the messages will be delivered directly to the ministry, adding that it will be disaggregated according to hospitals through a dedicated code number.

"On a weekly, monthly and quarterly meetings all these will be collated and analysed so that we can sit down and talk to Chief Executives Officers in our hos-

pitals to arrest issues that may come up," he said.

Earlier, Speaker of House of Representatives Dimeji Bankole commended MTN and Globacom for providing the service and challenged them to enhance the quality of their networks.

General Manager, Corporate Services of MTN, Mrs Funmi Omogbenigun, said the platform will bring about accountability and improved healthcare delivery in the country.

PIC: NAN

## Jonathan to chair ECOWAS summit today

By Aisha Umar

ACTING Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan is to chair today's summit of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government in Abuja.

Nigeria is to hand over to another West African country or continue with the chairmanship which can only be decided today.

The summit was shifted twice, first from December 21, 2009 and then January 18, 2010. Some said the shift was caused by President Umaru Yar'adua's absence.

The Heads of State will consider the report of the Council of Ministers which took place in November 2009 in Abuja as well as the 2009 Annual Report of the President of the ECOWAS Commission.

## Group calls for INEC reorganization

By Francis Okeke & Muideen Olaniyi

A pressure group, the Anambra Rebirth Coalition, yesterday urged the Federal Government and the National Assembly to restructure the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).

The group said the restructuring is necessary if the nation must move forward democratically.

Anambra State Coordinator of the group, Ike Neliaku, said at a press briefing in Abuja that the inability of INEC to conduct commendable gubernatorial election in Anambra State on the February 6, 2010 is an indication that Nigerians should expect an appalling conduct by the electoral body in 2010.

He said INEC's lapses in the Anambra polls inexcusable and warned that the present INEC may not be able to handle the 2011 general election.

He called for the "public prosecution of the 230 persons" arrested by the Nigeria Police for various offences during the Anambra election to serve as deterrent to others.



SCENE of an accident involving a passenger bus popularly known as 'Molue' at Iyana Isolo in Lagos yesterday.

## UK trains 30 Nigerian meteorologists on air safety

By Shehu Abubakar

THIRTY Nigerian meteorologists have started a five-day training jointly organized by the Nigerian Meteorological Agency (NIMET) and the United Kingdom Meteorological Office for Aeronautical Meteorological Agency forecasters in the country.

The meteorologists were drawn from Port-Harcourt, Lagos, Kano and Abuja airports.

Declaring the training open, Director General of NIMET Dr

Anthony Anuforum said the training is part of the Federal Government's effort targeted at enhancing safety and security at the nations' airports.

He said as the first in the series of trainings planned for Nigerian Meteorologists, the Abuja training which started yesterday is for those working in Port-Harcourt, Kano and Abuja while a different one for those in Lagos will commence next week in the Lagos centre.

Anuforum said NIMET has provided world class meteorological facilities at the nations' airports such as automatic weather observation and display systems, Satellite Display Systems (SADIS), Meteosat Second Generation Satellite (MSG), RETIM workstations and other equipment necessary for air safety operations.

He said: "Apart from ensuring that we conform to the ICAO, WMO and NCAA regulations, NIMET management also considers training and retraining as vital to developing the specialized knowledge and critical compe-

ences required to drive the rapid changing technology in the aviation industry."

Three aviation experts from the United Kingdom Meteorological office David Membery, Collins McAllister and John Ward were drafted to train the Nigerian Meteorologists.

Membery urged all meteorologists to ensure that they always give the necessary weather information to pilots adding that every information on weather could be very useful to pilots.

Membery urged all meteorologists to ensure that they always give the necessary weather information to pilots adding that every information on weather could be very useful to pilots.

## Shagari denies asking Jonathan to cut 7-point agenda

By Abdulmutallib A. Abubakar

FORMER President Shehu Usman Aliyu Shagari yesterday denied advising Acting President Goodluck Jonathan to cut President Umaru Yar'adua's 7-point agenda to four as reported in the media.

Shagari, former Head of State General Yakubu Gowon, and

other eminent Nigerians visited Goodluck Jonathan at the Presidential Villa last week.

Although the Second Republic President refused to elaborate on what transpired between them, he said they were in the State House based on an invitation by the Acting President Jonathan.

He said Jonathan called them to commend their patriotic

intervention to save the country from political and constitutional impasse.

"He invited us. We did not go on our own. He commended us for our intervention on what was going on in the country and we said we told him that we have an advice for him" Shagari told the BBC Hausa Service.

Shagari said they did not

ask Jonathan to cut the 7-Point Agenda, "because there was no reason to tell the presidency to go back on the promise made to the Nigerians."

"Who advised him to make the pledge? This is not a reason and nobody advised him on that. And even if he was advised, I am not the person who said it" he added.

# Gov Aliyu reshuffles cabinet

From Ayegba Israel Ebije, Minna

GOVERNOR Babangida Aliyu of Niger State has approved a minor cabinet reshuffle of his commissioners. This was contained in a statement signed by the Secretary to the Government of the State Dr Kuta Yahaya. The statement added that the move was borne out of the government's desire to ensure that the state attained its desired vision to be among top

three states in the country by the year 2020.

"The measure is in a bid to inject innovative ideas and consolidate on the various approaches in the development pattern of the administration as well as fast track the completion of on-going projects in the state.

The changes will enable commissioners to bring their knowledge, wealth of experience and exposure to bear in their respec-

tive ministries for efficiency and effective service delivery", he said.

Those affected by the exercise include, Mrs Salome Fatima Ndakotsu of the Ministry of Lands and Housing, who has now been moved to the Ministry of Environment and Forest Resources, Pharmacist Adamu Mohammed Sani who was formerly in the Ministry of Environment and Forest Resources is now in the Ministry of Health and Hospital

Services.

Others are, Alhaji Umar Nasko who was in the Ministry of Works and Infrastructural Development now moved to the Ministry of Youths Affairs and Strategies, Dr Ibrahim B Sule formerly in the Ministry of Health and Hospital Services is now in the Ministry of Works and Infrastructural Development.

Hassan Abdullahi, who was in the Ministry of Transportation,

Aviation and Waterways is now in the Ministry of Lands and Housing and Mr Timothy Ibrahim Jiya who was in the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Strategies has now been moved to the Ministry of Land Transportation, Aviation and Waterways. According to the statement, the re-organization takes immediate effect, adding that affected officials are expected to handover before Wednesday.

## Ajibola report a hatchet job – Group

From Isa Liman, Zaria

A human rights organization, Civil Rights Congress, has described the Ajibola panel report on the 2008 Jos crisis as a hatchet job.

In a statement issued yesterday by the President of the Congress, Shehu Sani, the human rights group said, "The Ajibola panel report stands condemned. It is irrational, illogical, mischievously one sided and predetermined. The report is more or less like a poorly scripted Nollywood movie, devoid of imagination, conscience and any sense of justice. What has come out of the report questions the integrity of the panelists and confirms the fears of earlier sceptics."

According to the group, the panel report will neither help the cause of justice nor the search for peace in Plateau State, saying the 339 page report was a waste of energy, time, ink and newsprint.

"Everyone should reject that report and tread the path of peace and reconciliation. Peace cannot be achieved through hatchet panels. The 21st century world of globalization has gone beyond indigene and settler issues," the group added.

The only way to ensure peace in Plateau State, according to the statement, lies with the common people.

"Let the people unite, irrespective of their ethnic groups or religious affiliation," it said.



MINISTER of State for FCT Chief Chuka Odom (middle) flanked by new Managing Director, UBA Mr. Philip Oduoza (right) and Prof. Pat Utomi at a two-day special programme for unemployed youths in FCT area councils in Abuja weekend.

PIC: KENNEDY EGBONODJE

## Niger Delta a force to reckon with – Asari

From Muhammad Bello, Port Harcourt

LEADER of the Niger Delta People's Force (NDPVF) Alhaji Asari Dokubo has said that although there were 'irregularities' in the emergence of Goodluck Jonathan as Acting President, the act has

put the Niger Delta region in a position where it could no longer be considered 'an onlooker' in Nigerian politics.

"Today, the dignity of the Niger Delta has returned and we welcome it. We congratulate and wish him wisdom and courage.

We shall mobilize all the resources at our disposal to help him succeed", he said.

In an e-mail yesterday, Dokubo said although he acknowledged that Goodluck became Acting President unconstitutionally, "I am not unaware of

the fact that all the past presidents of Nigeria have emerged through faulty processes".

Expressing support for the recent call by the O'dua People's Congress (OPC) for independence, Asari said, "It is a wise decision".

## Committee tasks contractors on N3.2bn rural roads

From Ismail Mudahsir, Kaduna

CHAIRMAN of the Federal Government verification committee on the rehabilitation of rural access roads across the country, Mr. Julius Adebayo Onietan, has charged contractors handling the N3.3 billion rural roads project to work hard to meet the March deadline given to them for the execution of the projects.

In 2009, the Federal Government under the Rural Access and Mobility Projects (RAMP) awarded the contract for 72 rural feeder roads across the six geo-political zones of the country. The contract, according to the chairman of the committee covers 276 kilometers of roads.

Briefing newsmen on the activities of his committee in Kaduna yesterday, he said reports reaching them showed that some of the contractors were yet to mobilize to site, warning them of the consequences of violating the contract agreement. He said the Federal Government had since paid the contractors the 15 percent mobilization fee to enable them mobilize to site and dispelled the rumour of selective payments.

## LGs can no longer fund primary education alone – NULGE

From Isa Umar Gusau, Maiduguri

THE local government areas across Nigeria can no longer fund primary education in the country alone, the National Union of Local Government Employees (NULGE) has said.

Rising from a National Executive Council (NEC) session in Maiduguri at the weekend, the union, speaking through its National caretaker committee chairman, Comrade Bashir Olanrewaju, noted that funds accruing to the councils were being overstretched. The union said there was an urgent need for the con-

stitution to be amended so that the burden of paying salaries of teachers and providing infrastructure for primary schools as well as running costs would be taken off local governments in Nigeria, maintaining that leaving the burden on them would be bad for primary education because the councils could not afford provide quality primary education.

"We believe that the present situation as it affects the funding of primary education is unhealthy for the country's education sector", the union said. The union however advocated for a 70:30 expenditure model between state

and local government areas such that the states provide 70 percent of funds required for primary education while the third tier provides 30 percent.

NULGE also called on the National Assembly to prevent states from interfering with local government allocations to allow them address the yearnings of the people at the grass root level.

The union also called on the National Assembly to amend the constitution to ensure that the issue of elections, tenure and remuneration for local government chairmen and councils are clearly spelt out.

# EFCC boss wants Nigerians to provide information

By Benjamin Auta

THE Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Farida Waziri, has charged Nigerians to always provide useful information that will lead to curbing crimes in the country.

She made the statement in a goodwill message at the graduation ceremony of the Executive Intelligence Management Course 11 (EIMC) of the Institute of Security Studies (ISS) in Abuja.

She said that "security is the business of everybody and we

should be conscious of it, but in Nigeria people don't give information willingly."

The EFCC boss who requested for some slots for the training of some of her staff in the Institute called on the Director General of State Security Service (SSS) to use the mass

media in sensitizing Nigerians on security matter so that ignorant people cannot mislead them on security issues.

Speaking earlier, the Director of the ISS, Mr. William Tosin Akanle, said the EIMC is designed to bring all security agencies together in the area of

sharing actionable intelligence reports in order to achieve a common goal.

He added that such trainings help in standardizing security details as new concepts, module and courses are introduced in tackling present security challenges.



PIC: NAN

## Sani-Omolori appointed House of Reps clerk

By Nuruddeen M. Abdallah

THE National Assembly Service Commission (NASC) has appointed Alhaji Muhammed Ataba Sani-Omolori as the clerk of the House of Representatives. The appointment, which is with immediate effect, was announced last week by the Commission in Abuja.

The appointment was conveyed through a letter dated February 5, 2010 and signed by the chairman of the commission Engineer Abubakar Dogondaji. The new House clerk will resume duty tomorrow.

Before his appointment, Sani-Omolori, a lawyer, was the director of legal services in the commission. This appointment also brought to an end the power tussle that stalled the appointment of substantive principal officers of the commission in the last four years.

The National Assembly leadership had reportedly endorsed the appointment in a meeting held last week.

Sani-Omolori was born into the royal family of the late Ohinoyi of Epira land Alhaji Sani-Omolori. He obtained a law degree from Ahmadu Bello University Zaria in 1982 and was called to the Bar in 1983.

He joined the services of NASC in 1991, where he set up its legal department and rose to become its director.

**The National Assembly leadership had reportedly endorsed the appointment in a meeting held last week.**

MEMBERS of the Joint Research and Allied Institutions Union (comprising NASU, ASURI, and SSAUTHRAL) at the entrance of Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research (NISER) in Ibadan as they began a 5-day warning strike to press home their demand for implementation of new salary structure in Ibadan yesterday.

## Minister tasks NGOs on service delivery

By Akor Ojoma

MINISTER of Women Affairs and Social Development, Mrs Salamatu Hussain Suleiman has advised Non-governmental organisations to increase their capacities through training in order to render effective service to the country.

She gave the advice at a capac-

ity building workshop yesterday in Abuja for Community Based Organisations, CBOs and NGOs in the Northern zone registered with the ministry. She said the NGOs have been complementing the efforts of the ministry and it is important that they are well equipped in addressing numerous challenges as well as contributing to meet the 7-Point Agenda

of the Yar'Adua administration and the Millennium Development Goals among others.

According to her "the objectives of this workshop include equipping NGOs with the necessary techniques that will improve their skills in different programmatic areas; including proposal writing, resource mobilization, monitoring and evaluation as well

as advocacy skills. It is an opportunity to brainstorm on strategies for addressing concerns of vulnerable members of our society through effective programming."

She urged the participants to put in their best throughout the training workshop and also utilise the knowledge acquired to better the lives of women, children, the Elderly and persons with Disabilities.

## Northern youths urge Jonathan to sustain Yar'adua's legacies

By Nasir Imam

THE Arewa Youth Forum (AYF) has implored the Acting President Goodluck Jonathan to sustain the legacies of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua just as it appealed to the eminent Nigerians to allow the Acting President settle down to the business of governance.

A statement release signed by the National President, Gambo Ibrahim Gujangu, on behalf of the National Executive Council at the weekend stated that Nigeria had

already gone very far in the implementation of Yar'Adua's 7-Point Agenda.

The association frowned at the daily bombardment of Jonathan with new ideas by self-serving elders, declaring that these new ideas have the danger of compelling the Acting President to discard the existing policies of the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) as earlier designed by President Yar'Adua.

Gujangu said that the AYF is of the belief that turning back

and starting something new by Jonathan can only turn back the hand of the clock and make Nigeria lose focus as a democratic nation and therefore called for restraint on the part of the former leaders so that the country will avoid going one step forward and going two-steps backward "as this will do more harm than good to Nigeria".

It said it was incontestable that Nigerian democracy went through its most challenging period between November 2009

and February 9, 2010 when the ship of state finally regained its bearing due to the absence of Yar'Adua's illness.

The AYF, the youth wing of the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) then declared that there is now the need for constitutional amendment in the light of the current experience of constitutional inadequacies and the need to end the education sector crisis as well as building on the Anambra State election experiment to strengthen Nigeria's institution towards 2011.

# Doctors threaten strike action

From Aliyu M. Hamagam, Gombe

THE National Association of Resident Doctors of Nigeria (NARD) has given the Federal Government till the end of February to implement the consolidated medical salary structure, threatening that fail-

ure to do that will attract a strike action from the union.

This was contained in a statement signed by the National President of the association, Dr. John Tunde Aremu in Gombe, yesterday. The union said the decision was taken following the resolution

reached by the union at its recent National Executive Council (NEC) meeting in Nasarawa State.

"The NEC is disappointed at the non implementation of the consolidated medical salary structure (CONMESS). NEC demands its immediate implementation with

the payment of January arrears", the union said.

The doctors also at the meeting implored all well meaning citizens of Abia state and the entire country to prevail on the Abia State government to pay the nine months salary arrears owed medical doctors

in the state.

While sympathizing with President Musa Yar'adua on his state of health, the National Association of Resident Doctors of Nigeria appealed that health facilities in the country be upgraded and equipped to international standard.

PIC: NAN

## Anambra traditional rulers say election was credible

From Beatrice Onuchukwu, Awka

ABOUT 100 traditional rulers in Anambra State under the auspices of the Anambra State Traditional Rulers Council led by its Chairman, Igwe Alfred Achebe, yesterday during a visit to Gov. Obi described the last gubernatorial election in the state as satisfactory. The traditional rulers who admitted that some voters were disenfranchised, called on INEC to correct the anomaly before the next election. The council commended the governor for extending a hand of fellowship to other candidates in the election.

"We thank INEC for organizing a credible election, the security agencies and personnel for keeping the peace, and the election monitors and observers for checking the conduct of the election", the council said.

In his response, Governor Peter Obi thanked the royal fathers for contributing to a successful election. "Now that everyone knows that the people's vote count, money bags will be discouraged from purchasing votes," he said.

Obi said the election made him to renew his commitment to the state, saying he would continue to work with the council for the good of the state.



ACP Gozie Malizu (left), Area Commander, Nigeria Railway Eastern District Police Command, addressing newsmen on suspects arrested with railway sleepers in Enugu yesterday. With him is Mr. Paul Ndibe, Nigeria Railway Corporation Eastern District Manager.

## Trial stalled as bank directors fault charges

From Adelanwa Bamgboye, Lagos

THE trial of seven directors of Intercontinental Bank Plc at a Federal High Court in Lagos was yesterday stalled as the directors insisted that the new criminal charge preferred against them was defective.

The bank officials who were arraigned yesterday include, Raymond Obieri, Chairman, Hyacinth Enuha, Christopher Adebayo Alabi, Samuel Adegbite, Isyaku Umar, Bayo Dada, and Sani Adams for alleged illegal banking practice and economic crimes to the tune of N120 billion.

According to the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Raymond Obieri used his position as a director of the bank to grant N8 billion unsecured credit facility to his company, Harmony Trust and Investment Company Limited, an offence which is contrary to the regulations of the bank.

Enuha, Alabi and Umar were also said to have manipulated their positions as directors of the bank to grant N8 billion credit facilities each to their companies - Cinca Nigeria Limited, Stanzus Investment Limited and Tofa General Enterprises Limited, without adequate securities.

The anti-graft agency also alleged that between January and May, 2009, the directors "failed to take reasonable

steps to ensure that the balance sheet and profit and loss account of Intercontinental Bank gave a true and fair picture of the state of affairs of the bank with regards to non-performing credits."

According to the charge sheet, the EFCC alleged that Obieri, Enuha, Alabi, Adegbite and Dada collected \$10, 000 each as holiday allowances, an act which was contrary to the Central Bank of Nigeria code of conduct for banks.

When the case came up for hearing yesterday, EFCC's counsel, Muslim Hassan, told the judge that an amended charge had been filed against the accused persons and that the papers had been served on the accused persons.

The counsel therefore urged the court to allow the bank chiefs to take their pleas on the amended charge, a request which the court granted.

However, after the first count out of the 20 counts was read to the accused person, Wole Olanipekun, counsel to Obieri raised an objection to the charge, insisting that the plea of his client could not be taken because the charge was defective.

Olanipekun, who cited Section 167 of the Criminal Procedure Act to buttress his point, said his client would be objecting to 10 of the 20 counts.

## Strike paralyses medical services in Kaduna

### ... We are on top of the situation - govt

From Ismail Mudashir, Kaduna

STRIKE by health workers in Kaduna State has paralysed health care delivery in the state, forcing patients to leave government hospitals in search of alternatives. The workers commenced the strike yesterday despite the threat by the state government to sack them.

The workers commenced the strike, following the failure of the state government to implement the November 17, 2009 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) it entered with the union. Our correspondent who monitored the strike reports that the striking workers locked all the vital departments of government hospitals. At the Barau Dikko Hospital, the workers were seen in groups discussing the strike while patients were seen leaving. The engagement

of medical personnel of the Nigerian Armed force to replace the striking workers did not yield the desired results as their uniforms scared some patients. Speaking to our correspondent, a patient, Ayo Jegede Samson, said he was surprised that the state government allowed the workers to go on strike. He urged the state government to address the needs of the workers as quickly as possible.

At the Yusuf Danso Hospital in Tudun Wada, Kaduna -South, the case was not different as women who brought their children for medication were seen lamenting over the situation. They however refused to speak with our correspondent.

Speaking for the state government in an interview with our correspondent, the state Head of Service, Alhaji Habib B. Yakubu, confirmed the strike, but said the government

was on top of the situation. He said the state government had directed policemen to destroy the locks on the hospital doors. He added that the state government would invoke the no-work-no-pay rule on any worker who participates in the strike if they did not call-off the strike by 12 noon today.

"Any of our workers who is not satisfied with what we are paying can resign. There are so many people waiting to be employed. It is a matter of choice," he said.

He said the state government had constituted committees to ensure that the strike did not ground health care delivery in the state and that medical personnel of the Nigerian Armed Forces had been mobilised to assist. He added that their engagement would cost the state government N10 million.

## Court identifies lapses in Jigawa LG poll, declares timetable illegal

From Yusha'u A Ibrahim, Dutse

A Jigawa State High Court in Ringim yesterday identified lapses in the just concluded local government election in the state, just as it declared the timetable used for the election illegal.

The court also ordered the State Independent Electoral Commission to include the candidates of the Labour Party (LP) and Congress of Democratic Change (CDC) in the list as omission of their names violated their rights to contest election.

Delivering his judgement, the

presiding judge, Justice Isa Ahmad Gumel said, the court granted all the six prayers brought before it by the complainants. Justice Gumel however ordered SIEC to include the candidates of the two political parties, saying the timetable used for the just concluded local government election violated laws governing local government elections.

He therefore ordered the commission to change the timetable with immediate effect as according to him the National Electoral Act was used to formulate the timetable, instead

of the state electoral act. The court also ordered that the 50 hours given as deadline by SIEC for the return of forms by the political parties contravened the state electoral act which provided 30 days before the election date.

Speaking to our correspondent after the ruling, the complainants' counsel, Barrister Baffa Alhassan said, "With this judgement, my clients can now head to the electoral tribunal and seek a bye election in the four local government area where they have candidates".



DEPUTY Governor of Kaduna State Mr. Patrick Yakowa (left) with the GOC 1DIV., Nigerian Army, Maj.-Gen. Kamaroudeen Roe, at the 2009 West African Social Activities (WASA) in Kaduna.

## 12 corps members to repeat service year in Jigawa

From Yusha'u A Ibrahim, Dutse

TWELVE members of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) Batch A are to repeat their one year national service in Jigawa State, the NYSC state Coordinator, MR. Yakubu Jok has said. Mr. Jok told our correspondent yesterday in Jigawa that, the affected corps members would repeat the service year because

they absconded.

The coordinator added that during the year under review, the Jigawa State NYSC secretariat lost a corps member. Mr. Yakubu Jok said of the 1, 352 Batch (A) of the 2009 corps members that recently passed out, 21 were recognised as outstanding.

The coordinator commended Governor Sule Lamido for his contribution to the NYSC scheme in Jigawa, say-

ing without government's support, the NYSC would not have recorded any success in its activities in the state. He said Governor Lamido had approved and awarded the contract for the construction of a permanent orientation camp in the state.

Mr jok charged corps members serving in the state to reciprocate the gesture being extended to them by exhibiting a high level of commitment while in their posting areas.

## Group donates to orphans

From Muhammad Abubakar, Bauchi

THE Project Manager of the group, Save the Children, Mr. Dennis Onoise, has reiterated the group's determination to implement programmes that would support orphans and vulnerable children in Nigeria.

Speaking to newsmen after a dissemination exercise in Bauchi State at the weekend, Mr. Onoise, said stakeholders who attended the dissemination exercise brainstormed on how to validate the orphans and vulnerable children plan of action launched in the country in 2008.

In his Address, the Secretary of the association of Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Nigeria, Bauchi State chapter, Dauda Bala Pali, said the organization was partnering with government and other donor agencies to ensure that orphans and vulnerable children were taken care of.

## Cattle rearers urge govt on game reserve

From Aliyu M. Hamagam, Gombe

THE National President of Miyetti Allah Cattle Breeders Association, Ambassador Muhammad Faruk Kaoje, has appealed to the Gombe State government to upgrade the Zange/Wawa pasturing game reserve for livestock breeding. Ambassador Kaoje, who said this in Gombe, yesterday while speaking with members of his association at the Wawa/Zange Game Reserve, said the

area which had about 150, 000 hectares of grazing land had been taken over by farmers.

He pleaded with the state government to help cattle breeders by prohibiting encroachment into the game reserve. According to him, without a secured forest in the country for pasturing, cattle breeding and rearing of animal would be impossible and by implication reduce livestock production.

# Borno Appeal Court begins sitting today

From Yahaya Ibrahim, Maiduguri

THE Appeal Court in Borno State will today begin sitting in Maiduguri.

The Chief Justice of the state, Justice Kashim Zanna, disclosed this yesterday in his speech at the 2010 legal year in Maiduguri. He said the permanent site of the Appeal Court was under construction, saying for now, the court would be using the state High Court pending the completion of the court complex. Justice Zanna tasked members of the bar and the bench to fight corruption in the state. The Chief Judge reaffirmed government's commitment to the welfare of judiciary workers in the state to ensure a speedy dispensation of justice, adding that the new salary structure approved by the government for judiciary workers would commence before the end of this month.



UNITED NATIONS  
Office on Drugs and Crime



### EXTERNAL VACANCIES ANNOUNCEMENT

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (Nigeria) announces the following vacancies:

<b>Post Title:</b>	<b>Project Finance and Admin Assistant</b>
<b>Level of post:</b>	<b>SB 3 (Equivalent to GS-5)</b>
<b>Type of contract:</b>	<b>Service Contract</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Yenagoa, Bayelsa State</b>
<b>Duration:</b>	<b>One Year (with possibility of renewal depending on funds availability)</b>
<b>Post Title:</b>	<b>National Project Officer -BEITI</b>
<b>Level of post:</b>	<b>SB 4 (Equivalent to NO-B)</b>
<b>Type of contract:</b>	<b>Service Contract</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Yenagoa, Bayelsa State</b>
<b>Duration:</b>	<b>One Year (renewable to three years in total depending on funding availability)</b>
<b>Post Title:</b>	<b>National Project Officer -JIA</b>
<b>Level of post:</b>	<b>SB 4 (Equivalent to NO-B)</b>
<b>Type of contract:</b>	<b>Service Contract</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Yenagoa, Bayelsa State</b>
<b>Duration:</b>	<b>One Year (with possibility of renewal depending on funds availability)</b>

**Closing date for all vacancies: 5 March 2010**

For further details on the job description and application process, please visit <http://jobs.undp.org/> and submit applications.

UNODC is committed to achieving workforce diversity in terms of gender, nationality and culture. Individuals from minority groups, indigenous groups and persons with disabilities are equally encouraged to apply. Qualified women are encouraged to apply. All applications will be treated with the strictest confidence.

# Online Reactions

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ON [www.dailytrust.com](http://www.dailytrust.com)



## Muslim leaders task FG on police killings

WHAT the police did was a violation of fundamental human rights and a shame. Authorities concerned should act immedi-

ately by punishing the culprits in order to prevent future re-occurrence. **Ali Amaru Maigatari**

*ali\_salisu@yahoo.com*  
\*\*\*\*\*  
It is really unfortunate that while some people are being

compensated for killing people in Niger-Delta, some have been killed innocently in the north. Allah will judge all of us in the

hereafter. Leaders should know this. **Yakubu A Badru**  
*jikamshi@yahoo.com*



ACTING President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan

## Invoke Section 144, SNG insists

THE process that installed Vice President Jonathan as Acting President was unconstitutional. It can lead to a coup. There is no provision in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for such an act. It is a desperate decision by some desperate politicians.

**Sule Isa Akagwu**  
*isa4u25@yahoo.com*  
\*\*\*\*\*

Even though some people considered the action of the National Assembly that elevated Goodluck Jonathan as Acting President as constitutionally deficient, others are still of the opinion that the action was politically expedient, especially for our nascent democracy.

**Zanna Bukar Baruwa**  
*bukar.zanna@yahoo.com*  
\*\*\*\*\*

What the National Assembly did by empowering Jonathan to act as president was unconstitutional and it is bad for our democracy. The Acting President should use his current position to invoke Section 144 of the 1999 constitution to enable the National Assembly do what is constitutionally right for the country.

**Yahaya Achadu**  
*yachadu@yahoo.com*

## Jos crisis 2008: Ajibola panel indicts Hausa

I am very disappointed with this report. Did you hear from the other side (The Hausa community) before making your recommendations? As a judge, aren't you supposed to hear from both sides?

**Hafizu M.**  
*mhafizu@yahoo.com*  
\*\*\*\*\*

What do you expect from a panel set up by Jang? A critical look at the recommendations shows that they really want to complete the genocide they started.

**M.D Mohammed**  
*donmoha4u@yahoo.com*  
\*\*\*\*\*

This man should be commended and given an award. Infact, all commissions of inquiry henceforth should be headed by this man. God will surely judge all of you.

**Haliru**  
*haliru9@yahoo.com*  
\*\*\*\*\*

I want to condemn this so-called report which is full of lies against the Hausa Fulani.

**Khalifa**  
*wanene2008@yahoo.com*  
\*\*\*\*\*

Interesting, where did the committee get their facts from, since the Hausa community did not appear before the committee? Until the two parties involved appear before a panel, we cannot say ascertain the root/causes of the crisis. Let us wait for the committee set up by the Federal Government to submit its report before drawing conclusions. No one is happy with what has been happening in Jos.

**Ali Umar**  
*alukuram@yahoo.com*  
\*\*\*\*\*

So the Hausa community in Jos has been proved right by not participating in that sham called the Ajibola Commission. The outcome of the commission to say the least is not surprising, putting into consideration the antecedents of the chairman and the role Jang played in the crisis. No wonder all

his perceived enemies and those found wanting by the report are of Hausa extraction.

All the recommendations in the report are part of Jang campaign and plan to reclaim Jos from the Hausa's. This report will not achieve anything, but chaos. Jang cannot uproot a community that has been there for centuries.

**Hamza Z. Kofarbai**  
*imanhamza006@yahoo.com*  
\*\*\*\*\*

He who pays the piper dictates the tune. It would have been a surprise if the commission came to a contrary conclusion.

**Abdulfattah Muhammad**  
*abduulfattahmuhammad@yahoo.com*  
\*\*\*\*\*

Bola Ajibola should have tried everything possible to get the Hausa community to testify. As a lawyer, he should have known that a judgement based on a one sided testimony would not be accepted. Do not spoil your hard earned integrity.

**Yusuf Y.A.**  
*yyakubu2004@yahoo.co.uk*  
\*\*\*\*\*

I did not see any where in the report where the committee recommended to the Plateau State government to pay compensation to people who lost either their property or loved ones. By acknowledging and even identifying the number of losses, I expected the Ajibola committee to suggest what should be budgeted for compensation.

**Abdulrahman Abubakar**  
*aburaahaman@yahoo.co.uk*  
\*\*\*\*\*

Mr. Bola Ajibola, GOD is going to thoroughly investigate your committee.

**Lawal**  
*zae12008@yahoo.com*  
\*\*\*\*\*

Tribalism is a great sin in the sight of the Almighty God and all culprits should not go unpunished. For this nation to develop like America, England or Germany, there is need for Nigerians to do away with tribalism, North



PRINCE Bola Ajibola

and South dichotomy and quota system.

**Sam**  
*oyeluko@yahoo.com*  
\*\*\*\*\*

Going by the Ajibola committee's recommendations, every right thinking individual will know that another crisis on the Plateau is in the offing. Let all security agencies take note. A word is enough for the wise.

**Engr. M. S. Liman**  
*engrliman@gmail.com*  
\*\*\*\*\*

I am really disappointed in Ajibola, if what is said about the report is true. I do not have any respect for him anymore. How can he allow himself to be used like that? Ethnicity is really a problem in Nigeria.

**Dan Arewa**  
*samuelobu@yahoo.com*  
\*\*\*\*\*

By this report, the real agenda has been unfolded, which is to indict the Hausa/Muslim community of Jos. I believe it was not a thorough assignment. It was specifically established to achieve Jang's ulterior motive.

**Lamara Garba Azare**  
*lamaragarba@yahoo.com*  
\*\*\*\*\*

We can now understand why they disrupted the sitting of the General Abisoye panel. We will wait and see who the panel is going to indict, especially with the video shown to the whole world by Aljazeera news of Kuru Karama. As for the issue of re-acquiring the aforementioned places, I think Mr Bola was sleeping when he made that recommendation.

**Mr S.M**  
*sanmus2003@yahoo.com*  
\*\*\*\*\*

I think the committee was biased in its reports and recommendations. Such recommendations should not have emanated from a respected Nigerian like Bola Ajibola, except if he wants to compromise his integrity.

**Muhammad Sumaila**  
*bulletflame@yahoo.com*  
\*\*\*\*\*

This report is absolute nonsense. However, the governor should know that what goes around comes around. It's a shame that the panel published a report that is one sided. I therefore urge people not to accept this report.

**Engr Adamu Aliyu**  
*aaleeyu@gmail.com*

## 'Jang has no hand in Jos crises'



PLATEAU Gov Jonah Jang

I do not think this is enough for us to believe that Governor Jang had no hand in what is happening in his state. As a governor, he ought to be aware of everything that happens within his territory, but crises have become a constant event in Jos. Jang

should take measures to stop them.

**Abubakar Chika Maru**  
*abubakarsuleiman2009@yahoo.com*  
\*\*\*\*\*

I am interested in the Presidential Succession Act, a new idea, though. The article is a

master piece, but sir, I would like to know whether the illegality of the new govt is akin to Shonekan's 'unconstitutional' ING which Abacha used as an excuse to gain power.

**Jibrin Abu**  
*jibrinabu28@yahoo.com*



By Mohammed Haruna

## The West, media and Islamophobia (II)

Cont'd from yesterday.

Nature, he said, abhorred vacuum and unless the West, America in particular, did something about this threat, the Islamic countries of Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan will make successful in-roads into Central Asia and hence into Europe.

Terrorist attacks of Americans abroad and of American iconic institutions at home like the 1993 bombing of the New York World Trade Centre served only to accentuate this Western phobia of Islam since those who carried out the bombings were either Muslims or claimed to have done so in the name of Islam.

Such was the fear of Islam created by such attacks that when one, Timothy McVeigh, bombed a federal building in Oklahoma City in April 1995 killing 167 people including children, many leading Americans and media organizations like the right acting *Wall Street Journal* at first attributed the bombing to Muslims.

And not surprisingly when the bomber turned out to be someone with strong Christian fundamentalist views not one media ever referred to him as a "Christian terrorist".

From our various definitions of terrorism it is undeniable that Muslims have carried out terrorist attacks world-



Terrorism is of course not exclusively a religious phenomenon.

There have been non-religious terror groups like Marxist/Maoist groups in Latin America

wide often in revenge, at times to protest what they perceive as blasphemy against Islam, but essentially to chase foreign forces out of their countries. The violence in the Middle East and other regions with majority or significant Muslim population, as a survey in *The Economist* of September 13, 2003, entitled "In the name of God" suggested, have had less to do with the faith itself than with Western support for the venal dictators in those regions. This means the picture created by the Western dominated media and their local echo-chambers around the world, that terrorism is essentially or even exclusively, an Islamic phenomenon is more propaganda than fact.

To begin with, Islam does not boast of the first organized campaign of violence by a non-State for political objectives. The credit for this belongs to the Jews whose Zealots used suicide bombing to try and drive out their Roman conquerors in 73AD. And there was, of course, the even more famous mighty Samson whose capture in a bloody war with the Philistines and subsequent display in a temple in Gaza cost the Philistines dearly. This was when he brought down the temple killing himself and his enemies.

Like the Biblical Jews, modern day Zionists also showed the way in terrorism when they formed terror gangs that waged campaigns of violence against the British as the colonial masters of Palestine and also against the Palestinians themselves when they tried to resist the

creation of Israel out of their land.

Historical antecedents apart, all other religions including Christianity, Judaism, Hindu and even Buddhism, arguably the most liberal of them all, have spawn terror groups. Perhaps the most notorious of these is the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Uganda which for decades has fought the country's government with the declared aim of establishing a theocratic state governed by the Biblical Ten Commandments, but which itself has consistently violated those commandments by, among other things, the killing and maiming of children and women. Less well known is the Buddhist group, the Japanese *Aum Shinrikyo* (Supreme truth) which in 1995 released the poisonous gas, serin, in Tokyo's underground train killing about a dozen people and injuring over 5000.

Terrorism is of course not exclusively a religious phenomenon. There have been non-religious terror groups like Marxist/Maoist groups in Latin America, and racist and nationalist groups all over the world, but particularly in Europe.

Of all these groups however, none seems to have attracted the attention of the Western dominated, and American led, global media like those that use violence in the name of Islam.

The big question is why? The answer is at once simple and complex. The simple answer, in my view, was provided, perhaps inadvertently, by General Norman Schwarzkopf, the American soldier who led the first American invasion of Iraq, in a testimony he made before a Congressional hearing in February 1990. "Middle East oil," he said "is the West's lifeblood. It fuels us today, and being 77% of the free world's proven reserve, is going to fuel us when the rest of the world's has run dry. It is estimated that within 20 and 40 years the US will have virtually depleted its economically available oil reserves, while Persian Gulf region will still have at least 100 years of proven reserves.

"Our allies," he said further, "are even more dependent on Middle East oil. Japan gets almost two-thirds of its oil from the area while our allies in Europe import over one quarter."

In other words, America's and the West's reliance on cheap Middle East oil, and by extension, their reliance on other natural resources from the rest of the world for their economic growth, has been the main source of friction between the West and rest of world.

Naturally America and the West try to hide their attempt to own and control the world's resources under such desirable values as democracy and modernization. At the same time they try to demonize anyone who they regard as standing in their way.

One writer who seems to have in a way accurately captured this strategy of demonizing anyone who stands in the way of Western hegemony was William Blum, an American historian, writer and journalist.

To be cont'd.

Being excerpts of a lecture given under the auspices of Gombe State branch of National Council of Muslim Youths Organizations (NACOMYO)



By MM Buti and Sobati Zaro

## Re: "It's reckoning time for Adamawa Senators."

The article under the above caption written by one Abdulrazaque Bello Barkindo which appeared in the *Daily Trust* of Tuesday, January 5, 2010 made interesting reading. Apart from a lack of any in-depth understanding of the system of government practiced in the country, the article exposed its author as one who has lost touch with his community.

Barkindo maintained, without basis, that those responsible for the infrastructural decay in the state are the 2007 - 2011 Senators, namely Jibril Aminu, Mana and Grace Bent. He offered excuses for Prof. Aminu because of his alleged role in the removal of Governor Boni Haruna and Vice President Atiku Abubakar from office. The point Barkindo tried to make is that Prof. Aminu has the longest years of service to the nation, and was able to attract development projects to the State today e.g., University of Technology Yola, Federal College of Agriculture, Mubi, Federal College of Education Yola, NNPC Depot Yola, nomadic education programme, etc.

But he did not do these things in his position as Senator; rather it was when he was in Executive position as Minister, Vice Chancellor, Secretary, etc. Barkindo was extremely uncharitable to Mana and Bent. He brushed aside Col. Mana, calling him a nonperformer, claiming that his constituency of Adamawa North had started looking for his replacement come 2011.

Barkindo's hammer fell particularly



Moreover, a tarred road is being constructed through the town to ease movement in the rainy season

hard on Senator Grace Bent who, according to him, is a non-indigene but uses Adamawa as goldmine. He accused her of not keeping her campaign promises to the people, including poverty alleviation, women and youth development, and that she had enormous campaign funds which she does not know what to do with it. He argued that, Grace Bent may be a Senator, but she does not understand the needs of the people she represents because in her position as Chairman, Senate Committee on Environment and Ecology, her impact is not being felt in her constituency.

It is obvious that Barkindo is either misinformed about the checks-and-balances procedure in our democracy, or is out to cause mischief, or both. Otherwise how would he not know that senators who are part of the legislative arm of government are not involved in the execution of projects in their states or constituencies? Their main function is to make laws for the good governance of the country. Senators go out of their way to source personal funds with which they address certain critical areas of need in their constituencies.

From such efforts, Senator Bent has been able to execute many wonderful feats. Adamawa State is largely a riverine

area, beginning from Yola the State capital to Demsa, Numan, Lamurde, Guyuk, Shelleng, Mayo-Belwa, Toungo and Jada local government areas. Many lives and properties worth millions of naira are lost to floods annually and you can be sure the poor masses, the electorate, women and youths are the worst hit. It is in effort to address these in her capacity as the Chairman, Senate Committee on Environment and Ecology, that Senator Bent was able to attract erosion control projects to the zone and the state in general. Among them are the Imburu village canalization and embankment project. Imburu is a Numan suburb. Almost each year the village is flooded with consequent loss of lives and properties. The project is designed to control the flood through embankment of the river and digging of canals and waterways in the village. Moreover, a tarred road is being constructed through the town to ease movement in the rainy season. This project has reached 50% completion.

Another project is the Numan roundabout road. Numan town is where the senator and her family reside. Some few years back, the Numan Roundabout road estuary was flooded, and many lives lost; houses and properties destroyed. It is to avoid recurrence that the Senator sought and got the project, which is over 60% completed. She did not limit her effort to Numan area; she attracted similar projects to Mayo - Belwa, Jada, Ngurore and Yola.

The Senator is the brain behind the Jantani river erosion control in Mayo - Belwa, the Ngurore canalization erosion project as well as the Jada erosion control projects. The importance of these projects can be better appreciated if one witnessed the extent of damage caused to the communities in the area annually.

It is needless to over-flog the issue of the six kilometre road off the main highway to Jalingo to her husband's village, Dong, except for the fact that we are talking about environment. It is worth mentioning that Senator Bent embarked on this project before she went into politics. The road is a major outlet for farm produce from Dong, which has the most viable market in Demsa LGA. She is still pressing the Federal Government to complete the road.

Barely two years in the Senate, she influenced the recruitment of well over hundred youths into the military and paramilitary services. Other areas in which she has influenced youth employment are the National Environmental Standard and Regulatory Agency (NOSDRA) National Food Reserve Agencies, etc.

Majority of these youths are from Adamawa South while others are from other parts of the State. Other areas in which the Senator tried to empower the youths, are the provision of 250 motorcycles, Zain telephone handsets, packs; and chairs to enable them earn a living. Some of the youths in other businesses such as tailors, music stores operators etc have been assisted to improve on their businesses. One of the tailors has recently moved to Abuja where he is making a steady progress.

Buti and Zaro are members of Southern Adamawa Coalition, Zing Road, Sabon Pegi, Numan, Adamawa State.



## Your Letters

### Sanusi Abubakar on Lamido

Come on, Mr. Sanusi Abubakar. Your column of last Tuesday read like that of a sycophant praising someone like Sule Lamido, who we all know rigged

the election that produced him. No matter what he does, he is an imposition, and you are an accomplice. What's wrong with you people praising those who don't deserve to be praised? Al-Ghazali praised Goje in the same manner a little while back. Long before him, sometime in 2004, Sam Nda-Isaiah did same on Saminu Turaki (when he was a columnist

for your paper), only for you now to refute Sam's assertion. This is contradictory and you are insulting your readers' intelligence. Just stick to real issues, please. Don't you have more important things to write about, anyway? There are plenty, given the current political situation in the nation.

Dr. Aziz Labo, Kano.

## Text us on 08 131 8000 30

### The Ajibola Report

AJIBOLA panel is an extension of the agenda of the Plateau State governor. No surprises; it is like asking Hitler to set up panel to try the Nazis for the Holocaust.

DANLADI, Jos, 07062237236.

### Haba, Ajibola

EVEN a foreigner can't make such recommendations as your panel has done. Little wonder that the Hausa-Fulani community of Jos boycotted the commission since inception.

SALEM, Abuja, 08055354436.

### Well done

GOOD job, Prince Ajibola. After all, Governor Jang is the chief Security officer and financial

controller of the state. We eat to live now.

MUSA M Gidado, Katsina, 07027076682.

### No water

THERE is no substance in the recommendations made by Ajibola panel on Jos crisis of 2008 because it was sponsored by Gov Jang, hence, it is partial. All we need is implementation of the recommendation made by Federal Government's Commission of Inquiry.

SAMAILA Shiko, Nasarawa Rd, Gusau, Zamfara State, 08030723046.

### Beware

IT takes years to build a name; but

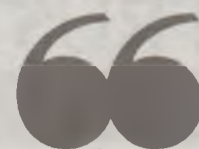
it takes seconds to destroy it. Ajibola has destroyed his reputation by submitting a one-sided report on the Plateau crisis of 2008. The latest crisis will surely prove that Ajibola was biased and only danced to the tunes of the man who appointed him, Jang.

SABO A. Shehu, 07039107332.

### Val Day mix-up

I am sure your front page picture caption of yesterday was erroneous, if not injurious, to Islam. It should have read "a public lecture against the marking of St Valentine's Day, and not to mark the day".

IBRAHEEM Hamza Muhammad, Ungwan Shanu, Kaduna, 08023636988.



By Al-Amin Muhammad

## Yobe housing programme could be national model

For Modu Goni Aisami, a civil servant in Yobe who has spent 27 years in service, it was a hopeless situation to own a decent house before retirement. His dream and that of thousands of other civil servants to move out of make-shift squatter camps to owning decent accommodation has remained a tall, unrealistic dream.

Housing construction is indeed capital intensive and beyond the reach of most civil servants. The attempt by several housing policies and schemes initiated to assist workers own houses have yet to achieve desired results. This explains why some workers called for halt to deductions for housing schemes from their monthly salaries.

Even the owner/occupier scheme introduced to assist workers own houses had left most of the beneficiaries wallowing in debt for the rest of their working lives and, in some cases, get involved in fraud to offset the loans. It's a nationwide problem.

In Yobe, the trend appears to have been bucked.

There, it was dream come true for civil servants to own decent modern houses with little stress. The government last year announced fifty per cent subsidy on over 2,000 houses sold to civil servants under the owner/occupier scheme from 2006 to date.

Governor Ibrahim Gaidam said then that it was a deliberate policy to help workers own houses before retirement and it was only when the civil servant had rest of mind that he would put in his best to serve the state better.

He explained that the subsidy applied to all categories of workers who benefitted from the scheme "and for the avoidance of doubt, let me make it categorically clear that all beneficiaries are to pay fifty per cent of the cost price while those who have settled the whole sum will be refunded fifty per cent of the cost".

Governor Gaidam said his administration would continue to construct more houses for workers and other segment of the society to benefit from the programme, assuring that the gesture would be extended to other 500 beneficiaries of the newly constructed houses in the state capital and all the 17 local government council headquarters in the state. In addition, another batch of 2,000 houses is planned by the end of the first quarter of this year.

The government policy to provide subsidy has attracted commendations from individual workers, labour unions as well as opposition parties in and outside the state, with the Nigeria Labour Congress issuing a statement applauding the policy.

State chairman of the Congress, Comrade Bukar Mohammed said "the government has fulfilled our long dreams of workers having decent and affordable houses. We have for long struggled with past administrations for reduction in the rates of the houses sold to workers without success until now that this government introduced the 50% subsidy. It is a welcome and commendable development and, we will reciprocate the gesture through dedication to duties and responsibilities to support government in achieving its developmental targets".

Mallam Ibrahim Muhammad, a civil servant, who praised the subsidy policy said, "I will receive a refund of N350, 000 and will use it to give out my daughter for marriage. This administration has truly provided us with dividends of democracy" he said. The same sentiments were expressed by the state chairman of Action Congress and who doubles as chairman of Conference of Political Parties in the state, Alhaji Mai-Mala Buni, described the policy as productive.

The opposition parties however called for massive construction of affordable and weather friendly houses at the grassroots "to enable rural communities benefit from this laudable gesture".

More houses are in the offing too. Work on the 256 houses under construction is now at finishing stage, according to the commissioner for housing, Alhaji Sidi Karasuwa said the houses were cost effective and quality that will stand the test of time.

He said that government accorded priority to housing accommodation in line with the United Nations' declaration on shelter as well as, to achieve the Millennium Development Goals target on housing. "We are happy to have so far achieved this feat without attracting any facility from any bank. Government has provided 100% finance for these projects" he noted.

Muhammad writes from Ali Marami Estate, Damaturu Yobe State.

## DAILY TRUST

## EDITORIAL

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## Resolving school enrolment crisis

The federal government released statistics recently showing continuing drop in school enrolments, particularly at the basic education level. The figures showed that 17 million children were not enrolled at the primary and junior secondary schools in 2009. According to Education Minister, Dr Sam Egwu, the situation was further compounded by low level transition from junior to senior secondary school, with a steep sixteen percent drop. At the tertiary level, Egwu disclosed that only six percent of those qualified gained admission into tertiary institutions in the country. The minister blamed the enrolment crisis at the tertiary level on low admission capacity of the institutions, in addition to poor funding.

The Universal Basic Education (UBE) provides that all Nigerian school-age children should acquire at least a basic education free and compulsory up to junior secondary school. However, more than a decade after the introduction of the UBE, basic education still remains more of an expensive undertaking than the free social service declared by the government. Little wonder then in the reported drop in school enrolment.

The abolition of the National Common Entrance Examination (NCEE) and its re-introduction several years later is symptomatic of the problem of inconsistency in education planning.

The compulsory component of the UBE programme largely depends on the extent to which it is made free. Budgetary provisions are made annually to the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) at the federal level and the States' Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBs) for the provision of facilities at the basic education level of public schools. In spite of the huge resources set aside annually on basic education, parents still provide most learning materials required. Even the "home-grown feeding" programme introduced into the implementation of the UBE in the FCT and a couple of states has since been abandoned. Potential beneficiaries are yet to reap the full benefits of the UBE programme.

The limited capacity for admission in our tertiary institutions partly accounts for the low level of transition among students from junior to senior secondary school. Any parent whose child after successfully completing senior secondary school, and is forced to sit at home for three or four years seeking placement in to a tertiary institution, would be frustrated by the experience. The failure to tackle the unemployment that awaits young boys and girls after graduation is a disincentive to parents to be eager for transition of their children from junior to senior secondary schools.

The minister's lament over low level of admission of qualified candidates into tertiary institutions is self-indictment, because the problem is occasioned by poor planning on the part of government and a failure to maintain as well as expand existing facilities in tertiary institutions at a rate that would anticipate rising number of candidates seeking admission. At the University of Abuja, for instance, over 30,000 candidates sat for post-UME for the 2008/2009 academic session; only about 3,000 were offered admission.

The National Policy on Education should lay emphasis on vocational education and skills acquisition with a view to making the system more efficient. Only functional education can forestall drop in enrolment figures at any level of the system. The problem of corruption, which has hampered basic education from becoming free, should be speedily addressed. We urge the government to show greater commitment to basic education, which is not only the foundation upon which the rest of the system is built, but also functions as the key to the success of the entire education sector.

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## Why good luck may elude Jonathan

"It is a mistake to look too far ahead.  
Only one link in the chain of destiny  
can be handled at a time."  
— Winston Churchill

If the elite filmmakers in the world know the first thing on the linkage of providence with the compelling story line, they would be swarming like bees on Abuja at this moment. They will be cutting deals with minders of Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, on how to bring the story of his life to the big screen.

Plucked from relative obscurity to play bit part in the intricate script the most sadistic political monster of our times - Olusegun Obasanjo - destiny has ensured that Jonathan now sits in the director's chair as the elaborate drama of deceit and seamless power plots approaches a dénouement. How the final acts unravel is now entirely up to the acting President.

Jonathan has been entrusted with the leadership of Nigeria at a precarious crossroads in our political evolution. The controversial manner of his emergence, notwithstanding, ordinarily, he could choose to obey the first and original law of power, which almost all potentates did for more than a millennium, by opting to consolidate his power base. It was what motivated Obasanjo to have such a very high turnover in the leadership of the NASS, Defence/security establishment, the PDP, as well as other parties such as the rival ANPP, by proxy.

That could explain the speed with which Jonathan handed the disgraced Justice Minister, Michael Aondoaka, his just deserts by demoting him to the inconsequential Special Duties Ministry. He could earn even more accolades by dispatching the other clown at INEC, Maurice Iwu, that is, to oblivion. But consolidation of his power base should hardly be the priority of the acting President at this material time, especially given the controversial manner of his elevation. For the same reasons, I hope that the reported moves to change the service chiefs carried by the *The Sun* last weekend, are untrue.

Jonathan must avoid moves capable of raising suspicions on his motives. In these uncertain times, Nigerians crave for a hero, or another Mandela, if they exist on these shores. The demand improvement in the quality of leadership above the pedestrian level we have experienced in recent times. While the Madiba's shoes may be too big for Jonathan to fill, the expectation is that in the little time on his hands, he can at least set the foundation for a better tomorrow.

What Jonathan has going for him, and may equally prove to be his Achilles heel, however, concerns the awesome powers inherent in the Nigerian presidency. A Nigerian President, even in acting capacity, is more powerful than that of the United States of America, for the following reasons.

In America, the President is perpetually kept on a tight leash. He must defer to Congress at all times, and operate strictly within

## Muhammad Al-Ghazali

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the confines of the constitution enforced by the Supreme Court, or face instant impeachment. Here, the pathetic weaknesses and impotence of our democratic institutions, and structures of government, means the President can get away with just about anything, including murder.

Therefore, unless God touches Jonathan's heart, the urge to become another Emperor, like Obasanjo, is quite compelling. He could choose to shape the destiny of the nation in his own image in much the same manner Obasanjo did to our collective cost for eight wasteful years from 1999 to 2007. But that is not all.

Jonathan must realise in the little time he has in the saddle, that the entire nation is now his constituency. To earn our respect, he cannot afford to be regarded as a stooge of Obasanjo. It was nothing that the former President did not accompany the eminent elders that paid two visits to Jonathan in the past fortnight. Even among his peers, it seems that Obasanjo is now regarded as expired currency.

Jonathan can draw useful lessons from how lowly Obasanjo has fallen in public esteem. What should be of primary importance for him is how to steady the ship of state, to ensure that the titanic, in which, most Nigerians are presently reluctant passengers, does not sink in the manner the Americans predicted years ago. Anything beyond that will be pushing his luck too far.

**Boko Haram massacre: This outrage cannot stand!**

Jonathan can draw useful lessons from how lowly Obasanjo has fallen in public esteem. What should be of primary importance for him is how to steady the ship of state

Ethnic, and religious cleavages, along with a debilitating culture of sycophancy, which, in our peculiar case, easily passes for the 'Fifth Estate of the Realm' - after the Executive, Legislative, Judiciary and the Media - combine to produce despots that always pursue their own agenda, very distinct from what they were sworn into office to achieve.

Already, several solidarity averts have appeared in major newspapers eulogising the acting President for his appointment. In the next few weeks and months, an endless stream of delegations on solidarity visits will also attempt to make the Aso Rock Villa a temporary Mecca. Jonathan must summon the courage to request them to spare him the trouble. The tasks before him are daunting enough, and pandering to the whims of serial sycophants is not one of them.

Nigerians want the long delayed electoral reforms to sail through, along with the cleansing of INEC, to restore sanity and confidence in the system ahead of the next general elections. For his luck to hold, Jonathan must act, and think like a modern statesman. He must resist becoming a hostage of the present, or even the past, no matter what the pressure from his kinsmen on the situation in the Niger Delta. He must be just to them and the nation as well.

In this age of globalization, a fragmented Nigeria stands absolutely no chance of survival. Jonathan must recognize that the steady emphasis on alternative sources of cleaner energy in the West means the over-dependence on hydro-carbons will end sooner, rather than later. The status-quo essentially puts a time frame on the longevity of oil, as the sole bargaining chip of the Niger Delta.

I have seen footages of brutal killings of Nazi SS death squads during the Second World War. When the first Rambo movie hit the big screen, I saw the premiere as a student in New Jersey, along with the sequels as well. But none of these compared to the extra-judicial killings of *Boko Haram* suspects by the Nigerian Police broadcast by the Al-Jazeera television network last Tuesday.

The Rambo series were just movies, and pure fiction. And while the lead actor, Sylvester Stallone took few prisoners, the villains he dispatched with deadly efficiency, were the aggressors, who were also armed to the teeth. The Nazis, on the other hand, systematically starved their victims to death. When they were no longer useful on labour camps, or Josef Mengele's laboratories, gas chambers exterminated them. Reprisal killings were also frequent, and respected neither gender, nor age. Yet the Nazis at least matched their victims to designated pits for the slaughters.

As bloodthirsty as they appeared, the Nigerian police thugs I saw on Al-Jazeera actually lacked sadistic ingenuity. The shooting of unarmed teenaged cripples, in the back, in broad daylight, after they were forced to lay face-down beside their crutches, was heinous crime. It was a disgraceful affront to humanity, and quickly moved me to tears!

Surely, the authorities have no intention of sweeping this outrage under the carpet. The perpetrators of this genocide, including the incompetent President that gave the 'shoot on sight' order to the murderous cowards in Nigerian Police uniforms must be brought to book, and quickly!

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# INTERNATIONAL

## Libya suspends issuing visas to Europeans

LIBYA has suspended the issuing of entry visas to European citizens apart from British nationals, an official at the country's main international airport said yesterday.

Asked by Reuters to confirm reports of the move, the official, who did not want to be

identified, said: "This is right. This decision has been taken. No visas for Europeans, except Britain."

No explanation was given for the suspension, and there was no immediate confirmation from the Libyan government.

Italy's foreign ministry con-

firmed the measure and said it was in retaliation for Switzerland's recent decision to publish a blacklist of 180 Libyans banned from entering the country.

Libya has been locked for months in a diplomatic row with Switzerland over the prosecution of two Swiss businessmen

who had been working in the North African country.

"The Libyan response to the Swiss decision has affected all the countries of the Schengen zone," said a spokesman for the Italian foreign ministry. "Contacts are under way between the countries of the zone to coordi-

nate over this measure."

Libya's Oea newspaper, which has close ties to a son of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, earlier reported that Libya would stop issuing visas to citizens of countries in the Schengen area, which includes non-EU member Switzerland.

SOMALI State Minister of Defence Yusuf Mohamed Indha'adde survived a car bomb explosion that killed two passers-by yesterday in Mogadishu, security officials and witnesses said.

An explosives-laden parked vehicle was remote-detonated near the Ambassador Hotel on Mogadishu's Maka al-Mukarama road where Indha'adde was holding meetings, the sources said.

"They were targeting the minister but he and his people were unharmed," police officer Aden Ali told AFP. Several eyewitnesses said two civilians were killed in the explosion, which sparked an exchange of fire in the neighbourhood.

They also said government forces shot a suspect shortly after the failed attack on Indha'adde, one of the most powerful figures in Somalia's security apparatus.

The embattled transitional federal government (TFG) is believed to be in the final phase of preparations for a much-anticipated military offensive to root out the Shebab, a hardline Islamist insurgent group sympathetic to Al-Qaeda.

Civilians have been fleeing the capital ahead of the planned offensive but those left behind have borne the brunt of the sporadic clashes pitting Shebab-led rebels against TFG forces backed by African Union troops.

## Somali defence official survives bomb attack



SOMALI soldiers ride in the back of a pick-up truck as they patrol in Mogadishu.

## Opposition candidates withdraw from Togo poll

TWO opposition candidates, including a former premier, said yesterday they were withdrawing from Togo's presidential elections next month in protest at what they said were anomalies in the voters' register. Yawovi Agboyibo, a former prime minister, and Brigitte Kafui Adjamagbo-Johnson, the west African country's first woman presidential candidate, said they would suspend their participation in the March 4 vote until their demands to clean up the register were met. "We find that key issues remain unresolved, includ-

ing the correction of discrepancies cited during a review of electoral rolls, the adoption of measures to ensure traceability of ballots and authentication of voters' ballots," Adjamagbo-Johnson told AFP.

Agboyibo, of the Action Committee for Renewal (CAR) and Adjamagbo-Johnson, of the Democratic Convention of African Peoples, are among seven candidates.

The election was moved from February 28 to March 4 at the request of the opposition in talks mediated by Burkina Faso President Blaise Compaore.

## Fresh tussle rocks Kenya's shaky unity government

KENYA'S fractious coalition government faced its biggest crisis yesterday since emerging from post-election violence two years ago, as its rival leaders clashed openly over a corruption probe.

President Mwai Kibaki revoked the suspension of two ministers within hours of a decision announced Sunday by Prime Minister Raila Odinga to sideline them during an investigation into millions of dollars in missing foreign aid.

Kibaki said Odinga had no power to suspend the ministers, and contradicted the prime minister's assertion that he had taken the decision in consultation with the president.

The clash reopened old wounds between the rivals, forced to work together in a power-sharing deal thrashed out in 2008 to end bloody clashes triggered by disputed elections.

"The power struggle between them is indicative of the deep-

rooted suspicion within the coalition partners," said Evans Monari, a Nairobi-based political analyst. "Without a dispute resolution Kenya is between a rock and a hard place," Monari told AFP.

Odinga had suspended Agriculture Minister William Ruto and Education Minister Samuel Ongeru for three months to enable them to be investigated for alleged corruption amid growing international pressure to deal with rampant graft.

## International



RUSSIAN President Dmitry Medvedev, left, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, right, speak prior to their meeting in Moscow's Kremlin.

## Israeli PM calls for fuel sanctions against Iran

ISRAEL'S prime minister yesterday called for "crippling sanctions" against Iran over its nuclear programme after a meeting with Russia's top officials, whom he praised for showing "an understanding" over the issue.

Russia has generally resisted new sanctions, but has shown increasing frustration over the past week as Iran proceeds with uranium enrichment despite international pressure. Critics say the enrichment is aimed at pro-

ducing nuclear weapons. Russian news agencies made no mention of Iran in reports of Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's opening remarks at his meeting with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Israel wants "sanctions, and sanctions that have teeth," Netanyahu said, calling for a blockade on Tehran's energy trade. "The sanctions have to focus on the importing and exporting of fuel," Netanyahu praised Russian officials for showing "an understand-

ing." "I can say that Russia definitely understands there is a need to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons and it understands that steps must be taken," he said. "I trust what I heard from the president of Russia, whose decisions are driven by concerns of regional stability."

Israel is deeply worried about the nuclear programme of Iran, which has expanded in defiance of five U.N. Security Council resolutions, and three sets of U.N.

sanctions, aimed at pressuring it to freeze enrichment.

Iran's Bushehr atomic energy plant was built by Russia, and the country has worked to keep strong ties with Iran despite concerns that the Bushehr plant would be a stepping stone toward nuclear weapons. Russia has also caused concern in Israel with its contract to sell S-300 long-range air-defense missiles to Iran, which would significantly boost Iran's defense capability.

## Yemen Shiite rebels free first captive Saudi soldier

YEMENI Shiite rebels handed over yesterday the first of five Saudi soldiers held captive since their three-month border war, resolving an issue that had complicated efforts to consolidate a four-day-old ceasefire with the Yemeni government.

"The Saudi soldier, Yahya Abdullah al-Khuzai, was handed over today (Monday) in the city of Saada to mediators," working on implementing the truce, rebel spokesman Mohammed Abdul Salam told AFP by telephone. He said that Khuzai had a leg injury.

"This is a humanitarian gesture to ease tension. The other side (Saudis) should work now to end the prisoners issue," he added.

A mediator speaking to AFP

confirmed the release of Khuzai, adding that efforts were under way to "release the other four captives within hours."

The mediator, who requested anonymity, said the rebels were "convinced" during lengthy talks "to leave the question of their prisoners taken by the Saudis, numbering 31, to the Yemeni authorities to follow up." The rebels had complained earlier that Saudi Arabia was refusing to release the prisoners it is holding in exchange for the five soldiers.

The truce, which came into force late last week, continued to hold on yesterday and joint commissions were meeting to implement its terms, both sides said.

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Monday welcomed the ceasefire but expressed concern for the plight of the 250,000 people who fled the six years of fighting between the rebels and the Yemeni army.

"We understand that a mediation commission representing all parties is monitoring compliance with the terms of the ceasefire and beginning the urgent process of reconciliation and reconstruction needed to bring this conflict to a permanent end," she said. "The United States remains concerned about the humanitarian situation in the area, including the approximately 250,000 Yemenis displaced by the fighting."

"To assist displaced Yemenis, the United States has thus far provided 19.3 million dollars during fiscal years 2009 and 2010. We urge other donor nations to support international relief agencies."

The six-point truce requires the rebels to reopen three major routes in the first stage: the road between Saada, Harf Sufian and the capital, Sanaa; the road from Saada west to Malahidh and the road from Saada east to Al-Jawf.

It also calls for a rebel withdrawal from government buildings, the return of arms seized from security forces, release of all prisoners including Saudis, handover of captured army posts, and a pledge not to attack Saudi Arabia.

## Kuwaiti newspaper fined over pro-Israel advert

A Kuwaiti newspaper was fined 3,000 dinars (10,400 dollars) for printing a pro-Israeli advertisement justifying the Jewish state's war on Gaza, *Al-Jarida* newspaper reported yesterday.

The fine was slapped on *Al-Watan Daily* for allowing the printing of the advertisement in the International Herald Tribune, which it prints and distributes locally in the Gulf emirate.

The advertisement was sponsored by the US-based Jewish Anti-Defamation League (ADL) during the 22-day Israeli offensive on Gaza Strip that was launched on December 27, 2008.

*Al-Watan's* lawyer, Rashid al-Radaan, told AFP that he has challenged the verdict at the appeals court, saying that the newspaper did not deliberately allow the printing of the advertisement. "The printing of this advert was not done on purpose," he said, adding that the IHT goes directly to the press without being checked by *Al-Watan*.

Three Kuwaiti lawyers sued *Al-Watan Daily* although the paper had issued an apology to its readers for running the advertisement. About 1,400 Palestinians and 13 Israelis were killed during the Gaza offensive.

## Iraq targets tailors to curb militant attacks

IRAQ is cracking down on shops and tailors who sell and make police and military uniforms after attackers disguised themselves as security forces to slip through checkpoints and carry out suicide bombings in heavily guarded Baghdad.

Security lapses that allowed bombings at government buildings and hotels in Baghdad in recent months were an embarrassment to the Iraqi government ahead of parliamentary elections next month. So now security officials are under pressure to plug as many holes as possible.

Uniforms are widely available at open air markets, and many tailors make them. The problem is exacerbated because the security forces don't have enough uniforms to provide to all their personnel, so soldiers or policemen often have to turn to the market to buy them.

## International

### Suspected Maoists kill 14 Indian police

SUSPECTED armed Maoist rebels riding motorcycles yesterday killed 14 policemen in an attack on a security camp in eastern India, police and officials said.

Two Maoist guerrillas were also killed following a gunbattle with security forces in West Bengal state's Midnapore district, local administrator N. S. Nigam told AFP.

"Nine policemen were shot dead and five others burnt alive in a fire which started following a landmine blast in their security camp," Nigam said by telephone from Midnapore.

The rebel attack came amidst a security offensive in several states to flush out the outlawed insurgents from their strongholds, Indian television reported. Local television footage showed heavily armed policemen hunkering down on a road as the fire blazed in their camp.

### Sri Lanka's opposition coalition cracking

THE main partner in Sri Lanka's opposition coalition will contest the next elections independently, officials said yesterday, the first split since its defeated presidential candidate was arrested for alleged sedition.

United National Party leader Ranil Wickremesinghe told reporters that his party had decided to go it alone, but might still field joint candidates with others in the April 8 polls. The main party representing the country's Tamil minority announced earlier it would also go it alone.

The leader of a smaller opposition party, Mano Ganesan, told The Associated Press yesterday that the possibility that the UNP would reverse its decision was the "only silver lining," because otherwise the opposition would have no chance of countering the president's control of parliament.

"I believe that the grand alliance that took shape during the presidential election is falling apart due to the very rigid position taken by the UNP," said Ganesan, who runs the Democratic People's Front. "I am afraid it may not continue."

Opposition officials and rights groups say that since Rajapaksa's re-election the government has started to seek retribution against political opponents, harassing, attacking and arresting some.

# India says Pakistan 'talks on track' after blast

INDIA and Pakistan will resume peace talks as planned, government sources said yesterday, despite a deadly restaurant bombing and questions over whether Islamist militants were involved.

As police scoured security camera footage of Saturday's blast at the German Bakery in Pune, western India, a government source in New Delhi told AFP there was "no change" to a scheduled meeting of Indian and Pakistani foreign secretaries on February 25.

It will mark the first official talks between the two South Asian rivals for 14 months.

Another source said the government would refrain from any "knee-jerk reaction," amid calls from the main opposition Hindu

nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) that the meeting should be called off. India broke off all official dialogue with Pakistan following the November, 2008 Mumbai attacks which it blamed on the Pakistani-based militant group Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).

Saturday's blast in Pune was the first major attack on Indian soil since then and came just a day after the two sides agreed to the foreign secretaries' meet.

Two foreigners -- an Italian woman and an Iranian man -- were among the nine people killed. Twelve of the 57 people injured were foreign nationals.

Indian media reports sought to link Saturday's bombing to previous attacks by an India-based Islamist movement, the Indian

Mujahideen, fearing sleeper cells were now active and further strikes likely.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has called for swift action to bring the culprits to justice but police have refused to comment on speculation the blast was the work of the Indian Mujahideen. The group claimed responsibility for a series of bombings in New Delhi in September 2008 and reports have highlighted similarities between them and the Pune blast.

A bomb hidden in an abandoned rucksack left under a table exploded at about 7.30 pm (1400 GMT) Saturday while the restaurant was packed with mainly young Indians. Home Minister P. Chidambaram has also refused to

speculate on who was responsible.

But on Sunday he said they were keen to speak to David Coleman Headley, a US-Pakistani national currently awaiting trial in the United States on a string of terror charges.

Headley, 49, is alleged to have scouted possible targets in India for the LeT before the Mumbai attacks. He denies the claims. Chidambaram said Headley stayed at the Osho Ashram -- a religious retreat popular with foreigners -- which is a stone's throw from the German Bakery.

A religious and cultural centre run by the orthodox Chabad-Lubavitch movement is also nearby. A similar centre was one of the targets in the Mumbai attacks.



PAKISTANI lawyers shout slogans during rallies across Pakistan yesterday denouncing President Asif Ali Zardari after he clashed with the Supreme Court in a fresh crisis for the insurgency-hit nation.

## Pakistan lawyers rally against president

HUNDREDS of lawyers joined rallies across Pakistan yesterday denouncing President Asif Ali Zardari after he clashed with the Supreme Court in a fresh crisis for the insurgency-hit nation.

A rift opened at the weekend between the fragile government and influential judiciary when Zardari appointed two senior judges but the Supreme Court suspended the appointments, saying they appeared to violate the constitution.

The showdown threatens

Zardari's Western-backed government at a time of mounting US pressure on the country to eliminate Taliban and Al-Qaeda-linked militants along its border with Afghanistan.

Lawyers yesterday boycotted courts and protested in the capital Islamabad and the cities of Lahore, Peshawar, Karachi and Quetta, following a strike call by the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA).

In the second-biggest city Lahore, about 300 lawyers in

smart suits marched to the Punjab assembly building, where they burnt tyres and chanted, "Go, Zardari, Go!", lawyers' representatives and witnesses said.

Most of the approximately 10,000 lawyers based in Karachi -- Pakistan's largest city and financial capital -- did not attend court proceedings.

"We are protesting for an independent judiciary and supremacy of democracy," lawyers' leader Rashid Razvi said. "All the lawyers are united for one cause, which is

to make Pakistan a truly democratic country."

About 50 pro-Zardari lawyers also gathered in the city, with one of their leaders Qazi Bashir charging that "hidden hands are conspiring against the democratic system of Pakistan." Wearing their trademark black jackets and punching their fists in the air, about 100 lawyers also marched under tight security from the Supreme Court to parliament chanting: "We stand by the judiciary."

## International

## Between Nigeria and Indonesia

By Aisha Umar who was in Indonesia

AS nations' economies all over the globe slowly recover from the global economic crisis, the need to re-align and search out new business alliances has become very evident.

Many countries are re-thinking their old trade partnerships based on how badly or otherwise their partners have suffered in the last one year. Others are strategically re-positioning themselves to create new economic balances for long-term national economic stability.

Nigeria and Indonesia share points of historical, social and cultural similarity. Both nations are highly multi-ethnic with more than 300 distinct ethnic groups each, have a vast population (Nigeria, 150 million (est.); Indonesia, 230 million (est.)). Both countries have also come out of long periods of dictatorships and have experienced the 'resource curse'.

They are combating poverty and unemployment, inadequate infrastructure, corruption, a complex regulatory environment, and unequal resource distribution among regions.

Speaking to the visiting journalists, the Indonesian Director of African Affairs, Iwa Mulyanae revealed that the trade volume between Nigeria and Indonesia in 2007 had stood at \$803 million, but had declined drastically to \$204 million in 2008.

Despite this, he believes that more can be achieved if the two countries utilize the potentials they have. A sign of this is the growth witnessed in 2009. As at September 2009, the trade volume had increased by about a 100% from 2008.

He believes that the presence of over sixteen Indonesian companies playing major roles in the Nigerian market and that of five Nigerian companies playing similar roles in Indonesia boded well for the future the trade partnership between the two countries.

The similarities shared between these two giants, though on different continents makes it likely that each can have lessons that will benefit the other. Already, it seems they are towing the same path to reviving their economies.

Implementation of financial sector reforms, new tax regimes and greater monitoring of the capital markets are some of the steps that Nigeria has taken recently which seem to be borrowed leaves from the Indonesian path.

Presently, Indonesia has succeeded somehow in keeping the percentage of its citizens below poverty line low (17.8%) even though the country has an unemployment rate of 8.4% of its 112



INDONESIAN Director of African Affairs, Iwa Mulyanae, speaking to Nigerian journalists in Indonesia.

million labor force. Nigeria which has a 2.9% unemployment rate among her 57.2 million labor force still has over 45% of her population living below poverty line.

Presently, both countries are not prominent trade partners and share similarities in their major export products, petroleum, natural gas and agricultural products which make the likelihood of a huge change in this equation difficult to predict.

However, Indonesia's booming textile, chemical fertilizers, automotive parts and mining exports can find a ready market in Nigeria.

The recent trade expo organized by the Indonesian Trade Promotion Centre (ITPC) in Indonesia from October 28 to November 1, 2009 had Nigeria among its principal targets and was designed as a forum to excite business oriented individuals into exploring new venture opportunities with Indonesia.

A major drive of Nigeria's recent administrations is the quest to bring in foreign investors to help re-build its economy. With Nigeria's manufacturing sector still struggling, finding quality and reliable product alternatives to meet her population's needs remains a priority which business men can quickly capitalize on. Asian markets have in recent times proved to be

capable of providing such alternatives and the similarities in the histories and cultures of the two countries should make Indonesia-Nigeria business partnerships easier to cement as several mutual grounds can be exploited.

In this way, Indonesia's exports can help in not only meeting the needs of the Nigerian consumer but exports such as machinery and building materials can be of immense value to the resuscitation of the manufacturing sector of the economy. Indonesia could target core industries such as textiles and automobiles and become major suppliers of the needed technological backbone that they can grow on.

Nigeria's ambassador to Indonesia, Ibrahim Baba Mai-Sule also spoke on the similarities between the two countries. "We have had a number of political and bilateral relationships; we are also trying to build an educational cooperation relationship just like we have with Malaysia but the problem has always been that of language because most of their programmes here are run in Basha - an Indonesian language. There are only two universities that run programmes in English language at both undergraduate and post graduate levels: the University of Indonesia and The President University; they both run programmes in English language,"

he said.

"We are also visiting some tourism sites here to see how we can cooperate. One of their major sources of income here is actually tourism. As you know we have Tourism Corporation and Tourism Institute in Nigeria and we believe they can cooperate with the tourism industry here."

The Ambassador believes too that there are lessons Nigeria can learn from the Asian country. Indonesia has been successful in utilizing Public Private Partnership (PPP) especially in construction and maintenance of roads and toll gate which have been very thorny issues for Nigeria.

"We have made our submissions to our government in regards to these through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As a matter of fact, in October 2008, we had a seminar on investments opportunities in Nigeria which was well attended and co-sponsored by Indorama, an Indonesian company operating in Nigeria. I think what we basically need now in Nigeria is infrastructure- roads and power," he stated.

Statistics from the Nigerian Embassy say that as at 2009 there are over 2,000 Nigerians living in Indonesia but less than 1,000 are registered with the embassy. "Right now, there are quite a number of Nigerians in prison and on death row for vari-

ous reasons and we are doing the best we can to assist them. I have just received an invitation from the ambassador of Brazil whose nationals are also among those in detention or on death row. Others are Thailand, Australia, Netherlands and Nepal and we are trying to see what these countries could do in terms of assisting our nationals in detention.

The meeting will also discuss how we can improve our relationship with the host country. However, I believe that the positive contribution of Nigerians here outweighed the negatives", the Ambassador claimed.

He told the journalists that of the 20 Nigerians on death row as at 2008, two had been executed in June. There are still over 80 Nigerians in various prisons across Indonesia and 20 others in immigration detention camps.

"The consular officer here visits them from time to time to see what assistance we can render to them. For those in detention who want to go back home and can pay for their tickets, we can issue them an emergency Travelling Certificate (TC). The embassy cannot provide tickets for them; we can only assist with the TC," Baba Mai-Sule said.

Three Nigerian Journalist where sponsored by Indonesian Embassy.

## International



US soldiers exchange fire with insurgents as Afghan soldiers run for cover during a firefight with insurgents in the Badula Qulp area, west of Lashkar Gah in Helmand province, southern Afghanistan.

## Snipers harass US, Afghan troops moving in Marjah

SNIPER teams attacked US Marines and Afghan troops across the Taliban haven of Marjah, as several gun battles erupted yesterday on the third day of a major offensive to seize the extremists' southern heartland.

Multiple firefights broke out in different neighbourhoods as American and Afghan forces worked to clear out pockets of insurgents and push slowly beyond parts of the town they have claimed. With gunfire coming from several directions all day long, troops managed to advance only 500 yards (meters) deeper as they fought off small squads of Taliban snipers.

"There's still a good bit of the land still to be cleared," said Capt. Abraham Sipe, a Marine spokesman. "We're moving at a very deliberative pace." The massive offensive in the Marjah area — the largest Taliban stronghold and a key opium trafficking hub,

involves about 15,000 US, Afghan and British troops and is the biggest joint operation since the 2001 US-led invasion of Afghanistan.

Yesterday, Afghan military officials gave a more optimistic view of the progress being made, with Brig. Gen. Sher Mohammad Zazai saying Afghan and NATO forces have largely contained the insurgents and succeeded in gaining trust from residents, who have pointed out mine locations.

"Today there is no major movement of the enemy. South of Marjah they are very weak. There has been low resistance. Soon we will have Marjah cleared of enemies," Zazai said at a briefing in Lashkar Gah, the provincial capital of Helmand province. He added that only three Afghan troops had been injured.

Interior Minister Hanif Atmar said he expected some insurgent fighters had already fled the area in advance of the offensive, pos-

sibly heading to the Pakistan border. The enemy "had ample time to flee. Our intention was known to both our public and the enemy," he said.

However, the mission faced a setback on Sunday when two U.S. rockets slammed into a home outside Marjah, killing 12 civilians. NATO said yesterday that the rockets missed their target by about 600 meters, or about a third of a mile. NATO had earlier said the rockets missed their target by just 300 meters.

Six children were among the dead from the rocket strike, a NATO military official confirmed Monday, speaking on condition of anonymity because the information had not been formally released. British Chief of the Defense Staff Air Chief Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup called the off-target strike a "very serious setback" in efforts to win the support of local communities.

## Australian court sentences 5 men in terrorist plot

FIVE Muslims were sentenced yesterday to 23 to 28 years in prison in Australia for stockpiling explosive chemicals and firearms for terrorist attacks on unspecified targets.

Justice Anthony Whealy of the New South Wales Supreme Court expressed little hope the men could be rehabilitated, saying they were motivated by "intolerant, inflexible religious conviction" and had shown contempt for the Australian government, its leaders and laws.

Whealy noted the men remained dangerous and unrepentant, appearing to "wear their imprisonment like some kind of badge of honour." "Each man's conviction was that the plight of Muslims in other lands demanded violent action in this country to redress those wrongs and, through fear and panic in the community, to change the government's policies," he said.

The men, aged 25 to 44, were found guilty last October on charges linked to preparing a

terrorist act between July 2004 and November 2005. The men, Australian-born or naturalized citizens with Muslim immigrant backgrounds, all pleaded innocent. They stockpiled explosive chemicals and firearms, though it was not established where they would target.

During the trial, a former associate of the suspects testified the group had considered bombing an Australian Rules football final in Melbourne in 2005 that was attended by almost 92,000 people.

## Yanukovich's inauguration in Ukraine to be Feb. 25

VIKTOR Yanukovich will be inaugurated Feb. 25 as the new president of Ukraine despite Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko's challenges to the election, a party official said yesterday.

Anna German, the vice chairwoman of Yanukovich's Party of Regions, also told The Associated Press that Yanukovich is considering offering the prime minister's office to banking magnate Sergei Tigipko — one of his rivals in the presidential ballot — or one of several other candidates.

"No one has been given an offer, but he is one on a list of candidates for the post," German said.

Tigipko came in third place during the first round of the presidential ballot Jan. 17, and has said he would accept the prime minister's job if it were offered.

Tymoshenko, who apparently lost the presidential runoff Feb. 7, has refused to concede. She is now pressing to prove her claims of election fraud in court before Yanukovich is inaugurated, her campaign chief Alexander Turchinov said yesterday.

"Tomorrow the court battle begins," Turchinov said in televised remarks. "The court must reach a conclusion before the inauguration. Otherwise the process has no point."

Tymoshenko's hopes of proving the election was rigged received another blow Monday from European election monitors, who have deemed the election fair.

Joao Soares, the head of the observation mission from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, or OSCE, denied Tymoshenko's claims that the organization's observers were ready to support her court challenge with video evidence of elec-

tion fraud.

"The OSCE does not have any video evidence of election fraud as she reportedly claimed in a speech last Saturday," Soares said in a statement yesterday.

German urged Tymoshenko to resign as prime minister and to stop "flooding" the courts with complaints. "This is just a shortsighted attempt to delay the ascension to power of our new president," German said.

Yanukovich's party is in talks with other parties to create a new coalition in parliament that could oust Tymoshenko from her post.

If she is forced out, it would be a further repudiation of the pro-Western Orange Revolution of 2004. The Orange movement that year protested the presidential vote and the courts overturned Yanukovich's election victory due to widespread fraud. A revote brought Tymoshenko and President Viktor Yushchenko to power on the back of massive street demonstrations.

But the two Orange leaders quickly fell out, contributing to a paralyzed political system. Now some of Yushchenko's supporters in parliament are expected to join a coalition with Yanukovich's party.

German said the Party of Regions had decided to delay the inauguration so that Yushchenko, once their political adversary, could celebrate his 56th birthday Feb. 23 while still in office. In a statement, Yushchenko called on the court yesterday to review Tymoshenko's claims "legally and swiftly" in order to allow the legitimate transfer of power.

Also yesterday, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev invited Yanukovich to visit Moscow in the near future.

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## FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY ADMINISTRATION



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1	TM5000	Project Management	Jun. 14 - 18	Abuja	5	78,500
2	TT7100	Long Term Evolution Technology	Apr. 05 - 09	Lagos	5	130,950
3	TT7010	CISCO CCNA: Layering, Design & Routing	May 03 - 07	Kano	5	115,500
4	TM2816	Call Centre & Help Desk Practices	Apr. 12 - 16	Abuja	5	59,500
5	TM9307	Telecom Accounting & Auditing	Apr. 12 - 16	Lagos	5	142,950
6	TM9560	Cyberlaw, Internetlaw and Telecomlaw	Apr. 12 - 16	Kano	5	149,950
7	TT7754	Next Generation Networks	Jun. 14 - 28	Abuja	10	225,500
8	TT8250	VOIP: Planning, Design & Deployment	Apr. 12 - 16	Kano	5	115,500
9	TM5888	Telecommunication Economics	Apr. 19 - 23	Lagos	5	225,500
10	TT4109	Network Cabling System	Apr. 19 - 23	Abuja	5	83,950
11	TT7016	CISCO CCNP1: Building Scalable Networks Internetworking	Jun. 28 - Jul. 02	Lagos	5	83,950
12	TT5020	Wireless Technology Fundamentals	Apr. 26 - 30	Lagos	5	88,950
13	TT1120	Telecom Technician: Fibre Optics & Cabling	May 31 - Jun. 04	Kano	5	82,500
14	TM9007	Marketing & Sales Management in Telecom	Apr. 26 - 30	Lagos	5	104,950
15	TT5230	Satellite Communication Fundamentals	Apr. 26 - 30	Abuja	5	115,500
16	TM2204	Interconnection Agreement Negotiation & Management	Apr. 26 - 30	Kano	5	115,500
17	TT7020	CISCO CCNP2: Implementing Secure Converged WAN (ISCW)	Apr. 26 - 30	Lagos	5	83,950
18	TT7814	Understanding W-CDMA and UMTS Technologies	May 03 - 07	Abuja	5	104,950
19	TT5910	Emerging Trends in Telecommunications & ICT	May 03 - 07	Kano	5	120,500
20	TT8219	VSAT: Planning, Design & Deployment	May 03 - 07	Abuja	5	83,500
21	IPT422	Telecom Accounting Information System	May 03 - 07	Abuja	5	76,500
22	TT1080	Softswitch Fundamentals	May 10 - 14	Abuja	5	78,500
23	TT9989	INTERNET: Planning, Design & Deployment	Jun. 28 - Jul. 02	Lagos	5	104,950
24	TE5109	QoS in Cellular and Datacom Networks	May 10 - 14	Kano	5	120,500
25	TM2229	IP Billing GPRS-UMTS Billing & Billing Mediation	May 10 - 14	Abuja	5	104,950
26	TT5219	RF/Microwave System: Planning, Design & Deployment	May 17 - 21	Lagos	5	115,500
27	RPL802	Regulatory & Policy Framework for Telecom & Datacom	May 17 - 21	Abuja	5	67,500
28	TT5109	Network Operations & Administration	May 17 - 21	Kano	5	83,950
29	TE5550	Telecom Teletraffic Engineering	May 17 - 21	Abuja	5	115,500
30	TT4900	Introduction to Modern Telecoms	May 24 - 28	Lagos	5	83,950
31	RPL804	Telecom, Datacom & The Law	Jun. 28 - Jul. 02	Abuja	5	104,950
32	TM9206	Revenue Assurance & Fraud Management	May 31 - Jun. 04	Lagos	5	115,500
33	TM2291	Telecom Billing & Interconnect Billing Fundamentals	Jun. 21 - 25	Abuja	5	104,950
34	TT5491	GSM: Planning, Design & Deployment	May 31 - Jun. 04	Lagos	5	115,500
35	TT5991	CDMA: Planning, Design & Deployment	Apr. 26 - 30	Abuja	5	115,500
36	TT5891	WIMAX & WLAN Planning, Design & Deployment	May 31 - Jun. 04	Kano	5	115,500
37	RPL812	Legal & Regulatory Issues in Telecom	May 31 - Jun. 04	Kano	5	104,950
38	TM2203	Telecom For Non-Engineers	Jun. 07 - 11	Abuja	5	59,500
39	ICT685	Cyber security & Cybercrimes	Jun. 14 - 18	Abuja	5	215,000
40	TT3080	PBX Fundamentals	Jun. 21 - 25	Abuja	5	115,500
41	IPT420	Great Plain Accounting System	Jun. 21 - 25	Abuja	5	49,500
42	TT5539	Fibre Optics: Planning, Design & Deployment	Jun. 21 - 25	Abuja	5	115,500
43	TT5900	4G Wireless Fundamentals	Jun. 28 - Jul. 02	Kano	5	115,500
<b>INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TRACK</b>						
44	ISE120	Part 2: A+ Certification - Hardware & Operating Systems	Jun. 14 - 18	Lagos	5	67,950
45	ISE216	MCSE Implementing Windows 200X Network Infrastructure	Apr. 12 - 16	Kano	5	71,500
46	ISE 201	HTML & ASP Programming	Apr. 12 - 16	Abuja	5	49,100
47	IPT250	Microsoft Project 200x	Apr. 12 - 16	Lagos	5	67,950
48	ISE409	Advanced Internet and Office Productivity Tools	Apr. 19 - 23	Kano	3	64,950
49	ISE409A	Microsoft Access 200x	Apr. 19 - 23	Abuja	5	59,500
50	ISE575	Web Site Design Beginners	Apr. 19 - 23	Abuja	5	59,500
51	ISE676	Web Site Design Intermediate (HTML, FrontPage & CSS)	Apr. 26 - 30	Abuja	5	67,950
52	ISE512	Introduction to AUTOCAD: Multimedia Design	Apr. 26 - 30	Kano	5	78,500
53	ISE210	Part 1: MCSE Windows Server-Client Administration	May 03 - 07	Lagos	5	67,950
54	ISE294	Macromedia Flash MX & Advanced Web Graphics	Jun. 28 - Jul. 02	Kano	5	67,950
55	ISE677	Macromedia Flash MX & Advanced Web Graphics	Jun. 07 - 11	Abuja	5	67,950
56	ISE677	Web Site Design Advanced (XML, Databases & Graphics)	May 03 - 07	Lagos	5	78,500
57	ICT240	E-Technologies: E-concept, E-commerce, E-Business & E-Government	May 03 - 07	Abuja	5	99,500
58	ICT277	Enterprise Network Fundamentals (LAN, WAN, WIFI, VPN)	May 03 - 07	Kano	5	78,500
59	ISE501	Part 1: Wireless Networking - CWNA	May 03 - 14	Abuja	5	88,950
60	ISE212	Windows 200X, OS and Networking Essential	May 31 - Jun. 04	Lagos	5	67,950
61	ISE502	Part 2: Wireless Networking - CWSP	Jun. 28 - Jul. 02	Kano	5	67,950
62	ISE 303	VB.NET Programming Language	May 10 - 14	Abuja	5	88,950
63	ISE119	Part 1: A+ Certification Essentials	Jun. 07 - 11	Lagos	5	67,950
64	ICT685	Cyber Security & Cyber Crime	May 17 - 21	Abuja	5	215,000
65	ISE470	Oracle SQL & PL/SQL	May 17 - 21	Abuja	5	71,500
66	ISE480	OCP/MCP: Oracle Database Administration	May 24 - Jun. 04	Abuja	10	225,500
67	ISE482	Intermediate: Oracle Database Administration	May 24 - Jun. 04	Abuja	10	94,500
68	ISE441	TCP/IP and Networking Essentials	May 31 - Jun. 04	Kano	5	67,950
69	ISE219	MCSE Windows Active Directory	Apr. 12 - 16	Lagos	5	71,500
70	ISE485	Advanced: Oracle Database Administration	Jun. 07 - 11	Abuja	5	104,950
71	ISE 340	RDBMS Theory & Practice	Jun. 21 - 25	Abuja	5	70,100
72	ISE215	MCSE Windows 200x Server	Jun. 21 - 25	Lagos	5	71,500
73	ISE109	Internet and Office Productivity Tools	May 24 - 28	Abuja	5	59,500
74	ICT202	ICT for Managers and Executives	Jun. 21 - 25	Lagos	5	59,500
75	ISE295	Macromedia Dreamweaver MX	Jun. 28 - Jul. 02	Abuja	5	67,950
<b>MANAGEMENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT</b>						
76	MGT518	Customer Care & Customer Communication	Apr. 12 - 16	Lagos	5	104,950
77	MGT520	Corporate Leadership and Strategic Thinking	Apr. 26 - 30	Abuja	5	109,950
<b>OVERSEAS COURSES</b>						
78	MGT520	Corporate Leadership and Strategic Thinking	Apr. 11-15	Dubai	5	E4,200
79	MGT575	Advancing Corporation Leadership: Strategic & Change	Apr. 12-16	USA	5	\$8,000
80	Tm3000	Executive Project Management	May 9-13	Dubai	5	E4,200
81	ICT533	IT Protection, Security, Auditing & Control	May 13-June. 04	London	5	E3,000
82	ICT533	IT Protection, Security, Auditing & Control	Jun. 21-25	Dubai	5	E4,200

Courses fees given above cover tuition and Lunch for the duration of the programmes and certifications

**ENROLMENT METHOD:** Enrolment can be made by phone to the DBI Marketing Department (Call: For Abuja Programmes: 09-6719303, 6703144, 08036062017, 08065343760; For Lagos Programmes: 01-7360444, 08036440223; For Kano Programmes: 064-895230), or E-mail: marketing@dbieducation.org

**PAYMENT METHOD:** All payment for course fees should be made through ZENITH BANK PLC, using "Digital Bridge Institute Account (Acct. No: 6014512735 Sort Code: 057080031)". Thereafter prospective participants are expected to notify the DBI Marketing Department, to complete their registration for any course or interest. Direct cash or cheque payments are not accepted at the DBI Accounts offices.

For complete listing of scheduled courses and up-to-date information regarding the entire portfolio or our education training programmes, as well as the applicable fees, course outlines and much more, please visit the DBI website at [www.dbieducation.org](http://www.dbieducation.org)

## MALARIA CONSORTIUM

### Malaria Specialists: Nigeria

malaria  
consortium  
Disease Control, Better Health

Malaria Consortium ([www.malariaconsortium.org](http://www.malariaconsortium.org)) is a leading international organization working in Africa and Asia as well as at international level on communicable disease control, particularly malaria.

We are seeking qualified and experienced personnel for a proposed USAID malaria project that will support the National Malaria Control Program (NMCP). The project will increase the quality, access, and uptake of specific malaria control interventions, including insecticide-treated nets (ITNs), artemisinin-based combination therapies (ACTs), rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs), and intermittent preventive treatment (IPTp) to pregnant women. The project will include the public health sector and the formal and informal private health sector. In addition to scale-up and delivery of interventions, the project will strengthen the management capacity of the State Ministry of Health and Local Government Area health personnel to provide planning and oversight of malaria interventions and improve the ability of the focus states and NMCP to monitor and evaluate malaria interventions.

We are currently looking for qualified candidates to fill a number of different positions. Candidates with qualifications and strong experience in any of the following areas are invited to submit their applications. The areas include:

- Policy level and/or implementation level experience in:
  - o Malaria treatment facilities and communities

- o Malaria diagnostics
- o Long lasting insecticidal net distributions
- o Malaria in pregnancy and intermittent preventative treatment
- Capacity building and training / skill transfer in the area of malaria
- Public private partnerships and work with the commercial sector in the area of health
- Management, operations and logistics related to disease control programmes especially malaria

#### Requirements

- 3-5 years of relevant experience
- Diploma or Masters qualification as minimum
- Nigerian nationals are preferred however qualified candidates from other countries in the region may apply.

#### Application procedure

Candidates who fully meet the above requirements should submit a detailed CV together with a covering letter explaining how you are suited for the position. Please include a daytime telephone contact and three referees (with telephone and email contacts). Submissions should be emailed to [hmigeria@montroseafrica.com](mailto:hmigeria@montroseafrica.com) by 26th February 2010.



## ADVERTORIAL

### GENOCIDE IN JOS: Justice Must be Seen to be Done.

The hearts of the truly humane and Godly must have experienced a most debilitating pain on account of the beastial massacre carried out on Muslim faithfuls in Jos, Plateau State of Nigeria, few weeks back, for the upteenth time right under the nose of the Government.

The mindless orgy in Plateau has always been with a daring character. It is either the perpetrators use the cover of darkness to descend on their unsuspecting victims or more openly wait for them to be absorbed in their weekly congregational prayer (Juma'at) and then launch an attack with various types of weapons made ready for the premeditated bloodletting. However, the recent one, just as the one in 2008, had a more authoritative air about it, as the marauders took their time in a broad daylight and conveniently carried out their slaughter of men, women and children while the Police allegedly looked the other way. In an unprecedented act of barbarism, even pregnant women were gleefully ripped open. According to reports from surviving victims, the defenceless Muslims who took cover in a Police station were taunted by some of the Police officers to go out and face their fully armed adversaries. A Police woman, reportedly unable to hide her disdain for the Muslims insisted that the police station is not a religious institution, hence, the Muslim ladies must remove their Hijabs before they could be allowed into the premises. Having failed to secure police protection from the savagery, the few who thought a police station would be a relief had the shock of their lives as they were allegedly humiliated. While a supposed state-imposed curfew was on, the murderers who regarded themselves as 'indigenes' summarily annihilated Muslims in several villages, dumping their bodies in about 15 wells and toilet soak-aways, making it difficult to recover all the bodies. Villages such as Kuru inhabited by Muslims were completely wiped out in the clear genocide and the houses razed down. In Gyero village, the bestiality was more gory as the murderers severed the heads of their victims and displayed them on sticks. In a particular count, over 80 (eighty) children between the ages of 2 months to 5 years were either having their heads smashed, throat cut or their bodies mercilessly dismembered.

Verily, there is a limit to what anyone could tolerate and indeed, this time around, the threshold level has been reached. The Government, particularly, at the Federal level, has a moral, constitutional as well as social responsibility to act decisively and ensure that justice prevailed on this matter, as that will be the only recipe that will assuage the hurt amongst the surviving victims and their kith and kins. It is indeed unbelievable, yet true, that for years now, this orgy has consistently been perpetrated, at more or less regular intervals, and no one till date has been made to bear the consequences of his or her misdeeds. This apparently, is toying with what has the capacity of igniting fire on the entire country with horrendous consequences, especially, considering the reported involvement of State Government apparatus in the genocidal agenda, from the time of Governor Danyiye in the year 2001 (who chillingly described the victims of the massacre as 'unruly tenants' implying thereby his approval of the pogrom), to the current period of Governor Jonah Jang, whose deep rooted hatred for Muslims is legendary, manifesting right from the period of his days as a Military Governor, under whose nose Muslims were butchered by the Bachamas in former Gongola State. Jang so far has apparently remained unperturbed and remorseless about the atrocities committed under his watch judging from his rather dry 'matter-of-fact' formally expected reactions in public speeches.

From the foregoing, we the Stakeholders of the Muslim Ummah in the Federal Capital Territory under the aegis of the Abuja Muslim Forum (AMF) strongly resolved as follows:

1. That the Federal Government having failed to declare a State of Emergency on time when it was obvious that the Plateau State Government was in 'a macabre dance of a sort' on the incidence, should now, as a matter of urgency,

constitute a high level judicial commission of enquiry made of Nigerians and members of international community belonging to human rights groups of impeccable pedigree to determine the following among others:

- a) The complicity of the State Government under Jonah Jang in the massacre which was mostly carried out by people of his ethnic extraction, and why the genocide recorded the world's worst beastial, gory and 'devil may care' massacres in the Governor's village?
- b) The shocking role of the redeployed Plateau State Police Commissioner, Gregory Anyanting, in giving false information to the Press, accusing the Muslims of starting the unrest and the consistent airing of the allegation in the Plateau State-owned media which further fuelled more killing of Muslims across the State while investigation was still on, according to him.
- c) The role of the Police in direct and indirect killings side by side with the murderers and the preponderance of fake troops in police uniform and guns without the state security apparatus being able to detect such. The internationally witnessed role of the Police in the extra-judicial killings of Muslims during the unfortunate Boko Haram saga as aired by Al-Jazeera is a pointer to the above assertion.
- d) The audacity of the Police in Plateau State in trying to push away Muslims who took cover at the Police Station and forcing Muslim ladies to remove their Hijabs - further indicating police complicity.
- e) How the murderers had a free reign while there was a supposed curfew being enforced by the Police and during which majority of the victims were murdered.
- f) The State Government's non-challancy in providing succour through relief materials and urgent medical aid to the people in camps within the State and neighbouring States instead of the false claims of doing so.
- g) The inability of the various Security Service outfits in the State to pre-empt the plans, the arms build-up and or their complicit silence, etc. prior to the pogroms execution for the fourth time since 2001.

#### 2. We also unequivocally demand as follows:

- a) That the surviving victims of the genocide should be rehabilitated and compensated on their losses jointly by the Federal, State and Local Governments urgently. Recalcitrance on the part of the State or Local Governments should be meted with direct deduction from their statutory monthly allocations.
- b) The National Assembly should as a matter of responsibility, take over the legislative functions of the Plateau State House of Assembly as it has become very clear that the members are in cahoot with the Governor in the agenda of persecuting and annihilating a particular section of the Plateau State citizens branded as Settlers and crudely marked for cleansing in this era of civilization and therefore incapable of sanctioning the Governor in whatever he may be doing.
- c) The Federal Government's panel of investigation on the Jos crisis as currently constituted do not command the confidence of the Muslims who are mainly the victims of the genocide as a result of the inclusion of individuals who are known to be avowed sympathisers of the agenda of cleansing through their action, inaction and or utterances at one time or the other, since Danyiye's time till date. Therefore, we demand that a commission of enquiry should comprise of neutral personalities as stated in item (1) above.
- d) All transparently indicted persons must be seen to answer for their deeds through appropriate punishment to serve as deterrent to others and to placate the victims of man's inhumanity to man. Reports of previous panels whose members are known to be above board in fairness and objectivity should be made public and implemented. The Nation cannot continue on the platform of deadly silence amidst unspeakable atrocities against innocent citizens.

e) The former Plateau State Police Commissioner, Gregory Anyanting, who was redeployed to the Police Headquarters in Abuja has no business remaining in the Police Force, as Muslims cannot expect fairness from him in the discharge of whatever new responsibility he may be given, having clearly demonstrated deadly partisanship by making a false and unsubstantiated claim at a most crucial period of the violence which further lead to more killings against innocent Muslims. He should be facing investigation right now to establish his complicity, commission and or, omission. If at all the country is serious about nipping the Jos crudity in the bud, His role suggests that he is in cahoot with the State Government, as its operatives jumped to his defence locally, and perhaps, may have been instructed by his defenders to make such a claim - thereby denigrating his exalted position as the Chief Law Enforcement Officer for the State.

f) Arrests made must be differentiated clearly in the line of aggressors and self-defenders, as reports abound on how the partisan plateau police and or fake Police arrested Muslim victims after partaking in the killing of their kins. Most often than not, perhaps for the sake of being seen to have done something, the Police resorts to arresting innocent people after the criminals have been allowed to escape. And for the hapless ones arrested, it is their word against the Police. Care must be taken not to add insult to injury in this most painful matter.

g) Security agents should be made to diligently recover all identifiably looted properties, especially, the Cattle herds belonging to the Hausa-Fulani Muslims which were carted away in thousands after owners were murdered. If there is sincerity and commitment, it will not be so difficult to identify the murderers who helped themselves so generously to herds of cattle (becoming cattle-owners or mass meat vendors all of a sudden after the carnage) which are products of other people's life savings.

It is our hope and prayer that sense of responsibility will be brought to bear on this situation in order to nip it in the bud forever. The government at all levels must bear full responsibility for any upheaval that may erupt as a result of inaction or attempt at thwarting justice. The Muslims in Plateau have suffered gruesomely long enough in their own country just because the government in Plateau State which has a responsibility for protecting lives and property have woefully, and perhaps, deliberately failed to do so.

And to our religious leaders, they should remember that Godliness demands that we should be fair, objective and apportion blame where it properly belongs, even against our kindreds, instead of the fear of co-religionists' displeasure for letting them down or the faith in the event of admitting the truth, and as such resorting to uncritical and bigotry-prone solidarity, falsehood and defence of satanism - acts which are all pungently un-Godly. True men and women of God should openly and without fear or favour, disown and condemn all acts of bestiality and inhumanity, even if it comes from their constituency. Until such line is towed by the nation's religious leaders, they would remain a major part of the problem rather than the source of solution and conscience of the nation.

Signed:  
for: Abuja Muslim Forum (and on behalf of Stakeholder Organizations).

Emir Musa Aliyu  
Amir (AMF)

Mortala Abdurrahman  
Secretary-General (AMF)

# BUSINESS

0805 1000 536

## Bharti eyes Africa in \$11bn bid for Zain assets

BHARTI Airtel is in exclusive talks to buy most of Kuwaiti telecom group Zain's African business, the Indian firm's third attempt at gaining a foothold in a continent that offers a last opportunity for major subscriber growth.

Under the exclusivity period the companies have until March 25 to seal the \$10.7 billion deal - the second largest in the industry this year after Mexican tycoon Carlos Slim's move to consolidate his telecoms empire.

Bharti, controlled by billionaire Chairman Sunil Mittal and Zain said the deal was still subject to due diligence and regulatory approvals.

But Mohamed Al Kharafi, chairman of Kuwait's Kharafi group, which owns 11.47 percent of Zain through one of its units, told Indian television he was confident a deal would go through and that an all-cash transaction was planned.

The move by Bharti, which is 30 percent-owned by Singapore Telecommunications Ltd, follows two failed attempts to buy South Africa's MTN Group in a \$24 billion deal.

Analysts expect Bharti to raise debt to finance the Zain acquisition having last year scrapped a planned \$3 billion to \$4 billion loan linked to its planned tie-up with MTN.

ANZ, Barclays Capital, Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ, BNP Paribas, Citigroup, DBS Bank, State Bank of India and Standard Chartered Bank were among the lenders shortlisted for that deal, according to Thomson Reuters LPC.

Bharti has been hunting for emerging market assets as its home turf becomes fiercely competitive. New entrants into the world's fastest-growing mobile market have triggered a vicious price war which has seen some call charges slashed to a fraction of a U.S. cent. Bharti posted its slowest profit growth in more than three years for the December quarter.

"The competitive pressure in the Indian telecoms sector is so high that players such as Bharti will have to redefine themselves and look for overseas expansion," said Rishi Sahai, director at M&A advisory firm Cogence Advisors.

"Chances of a deal happening this time are very high unless some regulatory issues come up."



However, Bharti's share price slumped more than 9 percent at the close of the Mumbai market, wiping around \$2.4 billion off the firm's market value and marking their biggest daily fall since October 6, amid fears that the Zain deal may prove expensive.

"Bharti is offering a high price. Zain's board should bite their hand off," said a London-based telecoms banker, who is not involved in the deal.

"They are probably thinking they need to get a deal in Africa before anyone else that has ambitions there."

Kharafi said if the deal goes ahead

Bharti aims to pay \$10 billion in April for the African assets of Zain, which have \$2 billion of debt on its books, and the remaining \$700 million by the end of the year.

Africa represents about 62 percent of Zain's 64.7 million customers, but only 15 percent of its group net profit.

Zain's board has approved the sale to Bharti, a person familiar with the issue said on Sunday.

Standard Chartered and Barclays are advisers to Bharti, while UBS is advising Zain, sources said. Reuters.

### BRIEF

## BankPHB cuts salary by 35%

From kayode Ekundayo, Lagos

WORKERS of Bank PHB say their salaries have been slashed by 35 percent, a condition for them to remain in the service of the bank.

The bank's Managing Director Cyril Chukwumah said yesterday the bank has not cut any worker's pay.

Daily Trust can authoritatively reveal that the staff of the bank got their January salary slashed by 35 percent.

Some of the staff including senior officials of the bank told Daily Trust under condition of anonymity last night that their January salaries were cut by 35 per cent and that this also depends on the level.

An official of the bank said the measure was not new in the industry, adding that those banks which were not affected by the recent reforms by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) also cut their salary.

He said the salaries of bank workers were high because of competition that followed the 2005 consolidation in banks. He said the reduction would continue.

Another staff told Daily Trust that they have accepted their fate to continue to work, adding that it would have been worse if they send them out of jobs.

The bank's MD in a response to a text message sent to him by our reporter yesterday said, "I do not know the source of your information but provision for staff payments have never been cut by 35 per cent."

### Trust Index

Inflation	→	12%
GDP	→	6.90%
Budget	→	N3.1tr
External Reserves Acct	→	\$42.8bn
Excess Crude Acct	→	\$4.2bn
Poverty Ratio	→	54.4%
Interest Ratio	→	6%
Banks	→	24
Oil Price	→	\$72 a barrel
Power Supply	→	2,700MW
Oil output per day	→	1.9mbd

CBN

### CBN EXCHANGE RATES

2/12/2010

	Buying (NGN)	Central (NGN)	Selling (NGN)
CFA	0.2897	0.2997	0.3097
DANISH KRONER	26.8799	26.971	27.062
EURO	200.1899	200.8681	201.5462
POUNDS STERLING	230.5512	231.3322	232.1132
RIYAL	39.36	39.4934	39.6267
SDR	226.2265	226.9929	227.7592
SWISS FRANC	136.5655	137.0281	137.4907
US DOLLAR	147.6	148.1	148.6
WUA	226.801	227.5693	228.3376
YEN	1.6378	1.6434	1.6489

### BUREAU DE CHANGE RATES

BUYING	
DOLLAR	N151
EURO	N205
POUNDS	N242
SELLING	
DOLLAR	N152
EURO	N209
POUNDS	N244

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

### Stock Market Index

Date: Monday, February 15, 2010

Index: 22,967.26

Deals: 6,277

Volume: 2,357,203,116

Value: N2,095,564,146.08

Cap.: N5,531,722,283,118.26

## Business/Finance

# How \$20bn excess crude account shrank to \$4.2bn

By Idris Ahmed

POLITICAL rather than economic considerations were behind the sharing of Nigeria's excess crude account by the three tiers of government.

From a robust sum of \$20 billion in January 2009, the account has now been reduced to \$4.2 billion through successive withdrawals from the account.

While the need for economic development was always advanced for the sharing of the money, lack of development in all spheres of the nation's building has shown otherwise.

The recent approval by the acting President Jonathan Goodluck for the states to share \$2 billion from the account has clearly shown its political undertone.

According to fillers, it was because the state governors supported the acting Presidency of Jonathan that he hastily approved the sharing even though President Umaru Musa Yar'adua con-

sistently refused the governors' demand for several months.

When the account was created in 2004, the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) contested it (and still contesting it) on the ground of its legality. The Commission said that the constitution only provides for a federation account where all revenue accruing to the government is lodged.

However, the account continues to exist and maintained by the government through which several amounts were deducted almost on monthly basis to argument shortfalls from government revenue.

The account had a balance of \$20 billion as early as January 2009, but in February of that year, the Federation Account Allocation Committee recommended the sharing of \$2 billion after the state governors mounted pressure on the federal government to share \$4 billion.

From the balance of \$18 billion, the National Economic Council (NEC) approved \$5.3 billion to fund the federal government's power intervention. The amount was taken in April, 2009.

The money was supposed to help in the realisation of the 6000MW the President promised but could not deliver to Nigerians at the end of December 2009.

Between June and August 2009, \$4 billion was shared by the government, after the state governors went to court praying that the whole amount in the reserve be shared.

After this, another \$2 billion was shared by the government in the heat of global economic crisis that drastically reduced international oil price.

As the global economic crisis persisted towards the end of 2009, federal government took \$2 billion and injected into the economy as economic stimulus.

While all these deductions

were made, Nigerians say they have not seen any impact to justify the spending.

It could be recalled that when the \$5.3 billion was released by the Accountant General Office in April last year, many feared that the politicians would use it for the 2011 electioneering campaign.

The inability of government to deliver the 6000MW last year, many believe attested to the fact that the money would go into political campaign rather than into any economic development.

Last year, Chairman of RMAFC Engineer Haman Tukur advised that the excess crude money be tied to specific priority projects instead of putting it into any account.

While the excess crude account is drying up, Nigerians continue to experience problems of electricity, acute water supply, bad road network, decaying hospitals and healthcare, neglect of schools and lack of serious efforts to address the decaying railway.

## Mansur rejects poor budget implementation by MDAs

By Idris Ahmed & Yunus Abdulhamid

FINANCE Minister Dr Mansur Muhtar has described the poor performance of budget from some Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) as inexcusable.

He said despite the effort by the federal government to ease difficulties encountered in budget implementation, only 60 percent was achieved at the end of 2009.

He said this yesterday at the opening of a two-day workshop on Strengthening 'Budget Implementation for Enhanced Project Execution and Service Delivery' holding in Abuja. It was organ-

**By the outcome of our experience with the implementation of the 2009 Budget, which so far has been less than anticipated**

ised by the Budget Office of the Federation.

Following a similar workshop held in March last year, identified challenges were tackled head on but despite financial resources placed at the disposal of MDAs, many of them were unable to deliver on the priorities of government, the minister said.

He said: "During the bilateral discussions and budget defence meetings that led to the finalisation of the 2010 budget, many MDAs clamoured for additional resources in excess of their 2009 capital votes but were unable to demonstrate commensurate executive capacity to justify increased allocations."

Director General of the Budget Office of the Federation Dr Bright Okogu also said the workshop was necessitated "by the outcome of our experience with the implementation of the 2009 Budget, which so far has been less than anticipated."

He said it was government determination to focus on deliverables rather than on mere allocation of resources amongst competing needs, saying it is critical that moneys voted in budget, especially for capital projects are actually spent on such projects.

"It is not a thing of joy to us to see funds returned to the Treasury at the end of the fiscal year on grounds of inability of MDA to implement budgets," he said.

The Budget Office boss said in many countries of the world, the volume of fund allocations is partly related to the inability of the MDAs to effectively utilise what is given them in previous year. "We should be moving in that direction," he said.

## Nigeria requires \$100bn to fix infrastructure - Babalola

By Idris Ahmed

NIGERIA requires about \$100 billion to put in place the needed key infrastructure in the next five years, Minister of State for Finance Remi Babalola has said.

He said transformational leadership, physical infrastructure development, macroeconomic stability and the deregulation of the downstream petroleum sector are fundamental for a new prosperous Nigeria. He said this yesterday at the 2010 edition of the Oba Oladele Olashore Annual Lecture at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Osun State.

A statement from the Minister's spokesman Oluyinka Akintunde said the minister explained that the existence of a huge resource gap for government had thrown up the urgent need for alternative funding source for infrastructure.

He said the issue of funding infrastructural projects was being addressed through public private partnership (PPP).

He said: "We need to urgently build a capable state wherein peace, security and private enterprise are guaranteed over a sustained period."

"This requires an enabling political and legal environment for economic growth and equitable wealth distribution with sound macro-economic management, institutional reform and overhaul in human capital development."

The Minister said that diversion of scarce resources in the form of petroleum subsidies which amounted to N1.8 trillion in the last four years will not be sustained in the long-run.

He said: "Therefore, full deregulation of the oil and gas sector remains very imperative. This will encourage investment in refining and marketing infrastructures. "The legal and regulatory framework for the comprehensive reform of this sector is currently being considered by the National Assembly."



## Vacancy

Pact Nigeria, located in Abuja, is the Nigerian country office of Pact, which is an independent international non-profit organization headquartered in Washington, DC, USA. Pact's mission is to "build empowered communities, effective governments and responsible private institutions that give people an opportunity for a better life through strengthening the capacity of organizations and institutions to be good service providers, represent their stakeholders, network with others for learning and knowledge sharing, and advocate for social, economic and environmental justice."

Pact Nigeria is currently expanding its program portfolio and seeks suitable and qualified candidates to fill the following positions:

- Senior Civil Society Strengthening Program Coordinator (Based in Lagos, with trips to Warri)
- Senior Civil Society Specialist (Based in Bauchi)
- Senior Civil Society Specialist (Based in Sokoto)
- Program Officer for Budget Transparency and Expenditure Tracking (Based in Abuja)
- Programmatic Capacity Building Officer (Based in Abuja)
- Programmatic Capacity Building Officer (Based in Bauchi)
- Programmatic Capacity Building Officer (Based in Sokoto)
- Finance and Admin Capacity Building Officer (Based in Bauchi)
- Finance and Admin Capacity Building Officer (Based in Sokoto)

For more in depth job descriptions and application information to any of these positions, please go to <http://www.pactnigeria.org/jobs>

(NOTE: Website now up to date)

Please note that each of the above positions will be closed and taken off the website on February 24<sup>th</sup> 2010.

## Business

# PHCN spends N2.7bn on power in Kano

From Hisham Habib, Kano

POWER Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) said it has spent N2.7 billion to upgrade, repair and installed new equipment in Kano.

Muhammad Tunde Balogun, the Chief Executive Officer of the Kano Electricity Distribution

Company, a subsidiary of PHCN told newsmen yesterday in Kano.

He with the purchase of an additional 150MVA power transformer to the Kumbotso transmission station with the existing 300MVA transmission capacity in the region, power supply in Kano and its neighbouring states - Katsina and Jigawa - would

improve.

He said various feeders have been re-conducted across the zone to reduce load shedding in some places. He said the projects are designed to improve power supply to the numerous customers.

He said efforts are made in upgrading the existing 33/11KV transformer in the region.

He said that over 160 additional distribution transformers have been installed to lift the installed distribution capacity by 67MVA.

Engineer Musa Musa Gumel, the Assistant General Manager in charge of transmission, went round the Kumbotso transmission station with newsmen said the new transformer replaced an

earlier transformer of the same capacity, which went down at the point of installation.

He said the generation, transmission and distribution make up the grid and that they rely on the national control centre which allocates electricity supply, depending on generation, to all parts of the country.

## ABCON President promises closer ties with regulatory authorities

From Kayode Ekundayo, Lagos

THE newly elected President of the Association of Bureaux De Change Operators of Nigeria (ABCON) Dr. Emmanuel Balogun has promised to ensure closer working relationship with the regulatory authorities.

"Top on our agenda is to pursue a closer working relationship with our main regulatory body, the CBN and the other relevant agencies to ensure harmonious relationship with the BDCs, which is critical to future development and progress of the subsector", he said shortly after his election at the Annual General Meeting/election of the association on Saturday.

"We will maintain good rapport with these agencies so as to facilitate improved operational efficiency and profitability of our members. Specifically, we will pursue further expansion of the business of BDCs so that we can offer more products and services to our teeming clientele", he said.

The out-going President of the association Alhaji Farouk Suleiman has raised alarm over the repeated kidnapping and death of their members by armed robbers in the country. He called on all security agencies to stand up to their constitutional responsibility.

He said it is necessary to safeguard the security of the members of the association as men of the underworld have capitalized on the sensitive nature of their business to unleash terror on them.



LEFT to Right: South Africa High Commissioner to Nigeria Mr. Kingsley Mamabolo, Chief Executive Officer, Stanbic IBTC Bank Mr. Chris Newson, incoming South Africa Deputy High Commissioner to Nigeria Mrs. Thandi Mgxwati and the outgoing South Africa Deputy High Commissioner to Nigeria Mr. Peter Malepe at the cocktail party hosted by Stanbic IBTC Bank for the incoming and outgoing envoys in Lagos on Thursday 11, February, 2010.

## CBN rewards entrepreneurs

By Muideen Olaniyi

THE Growing Businesses Foundation (GBF) in collaboration with Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) and Citibank have rewarded entrepreneurs at the CBN's 4th Annual Microfinance Conference/Entrepreneurship Awards in Abuja.

The awards are in recognition of the extraordinary contributions the recipients have made to the economic stability of their families and their communities, CBN Governor Sanusi Lamido Sanusi said at the event.

The awardees were selected from the six geo-political zones of the country under the categories of Most Innovative Product, Employment Generation, Most Marketed Product, Micro Business Model, Best National Farmer and Best Woman Entrepreneur.

The President/Founder GBF Dr. Ndidi Nnoli-Edozien said GBF was formed as a non-profit organization to promote sustainable economic develop-

ment led by socially responsible businesses via collaboration between businesses, governments and non-profit organizations.

Nnoli-Edozien added that the organization was set up to be the leading platform for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and economic development in Nigeria through non-governmental and non-profit operations.

She encouraged the youths to take their destiny into their hands and that no amount of the fear of failure should deter them from achieving their goals of self sustenance.

She said that GBF operates across 34 states of the Federation. She said it has directly or indirectly impact the lives of over two million Nigerians.

She said the organization has invested in and promoted partnerships in more than 22 micro finance institutions, 576 cooperatives and community based organizations, four micro finance banks and thousands of entrepreneurs.

## FAO lauds cassava processing plants

By Sunday Williams

THE Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has lauded the Cassava Processing Plant project established by the Common Fund for Commodity (CFC) in collaboration with Federal Ministry of Commerce and Industry and International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in Nasarawa State and FCT.

FAO representative Dr. Adam Prakash said this during the inspection of the processing plants in Masaka and Kuje. He said the next line of intervention for the project will be the facilitation of alternative energy such as solar for the operation of the cassava processing plants.

He said that there is hope for cassava pellet to be used to fire the drying

process of gari production instead of using wood which has environmental impact and expressed satisfaction with the quality of cassava fofu flour produced from the processing plants.

Dr. Adam disclosed that FAO would ensure free interest loan for the second intervention of the project, stressing that FAO is more interested in the happiness and fair treatment of farmers in the whole chain of Cassava value chain.

Earlier, the proprietor of Joe Beg Bajju Cassava Processing Plant in Nasarawa state solicited for financial support to expand the production of cassava flour and expressed his appreciation to CFC, IITA and Federal Ministry of commerce and Industry for the actualization of the Cassava processing plant.

## Star Feature

# The war of posters

On the streets of the nation, a peculiar battle of supremacy appears to be slowly taking place with its own societal consequences.

By Tosin Omoniyi

**A** BIMBOLA Omoniyi practically lived all her years in Europe, and was only privileged to come home once in a while to see members of her family. The only time she spent that exceeded two weeks was when she came to conduct her traditional wedding with her heart-throb. She recalls with relish the excitement she felt when she came home during that period. She says that at times she wished she had actually spent more time back in Nigeria because the homeliness and boisterous nature of her countrymen and women, is unequalled by any

group in any part of the globe. 'The Nigerian people are one of a kind. No wonder they are described as the happiest people on the surface of the earth. Even with the harsh economic condition prevalent here, they still go about their business with passion and joy. It even astounded several of my white friends that came back home, to savour what it felt like marrying in the African way,' she enthuses.

Two things however stunned not only the soft spoken medical scientist, but several of her foreign friends who spanned several nationalities, German, American and French: the nerve wracking

hold ups in the cities they visited, and curiously, the manner in which posters and banners of all sorts, were pasted haphazardly everywhere they went. The initial euphoria they felt, according to Bimbo, was quickly taken over by amazement at how carelessly the posters were displayed at every corner and available space, the originators could find. According to a statement credited to Nicole, a close friend of the bride, 'this can only happen in very few parts of my country, and if at all it would be in downtown areas where laws forbidding such were a little bit lax. To a large extent nobody would think of pasting posters

just anywhere he or she finds, and certainly not in metropolitan areas. Such a person would be seized immediately not by security officials, but by passers by who may think he or she is psychologically disturbed. But here in Nigeria this appears to be the reverse.'

**T**he amazement of the group was further compounded when they observed that even the ways the posters and notices were pasted revealed a sort of struggle. 'You could see evidence of madness in the manner in which the whole thing was being done. Someone would paste a notice on a spot, and you will find another person pasting his or her notice on the exact spot. Due to the fact that most of my friends had science backgrounds which sharpened their senses, we could all notice these little observations. Even notices that had current information were defaced by others, mostly political ones, and in some places we saw total chaos as posters of all sorts were posted over one another, some actually having several layers. It



EVEN public utilities are not spared in the war of the posters.

was incredulous what we saw, and I had a tough time trying to rationalize the whole scenario to my colleagues, Bimbo noted.

**T**he current manner in which Nigerians of all classes have reduced the passing of information to their fellow nationals, has been seen by not a few as distressing. At every street corner or available space in major cities of the federation, including the capital city, posters and banners of all sorts can be seen displayed carelessly for all to see. A visit

particularly to spots under numerous bridges in the city will reveal that the supporting pillars of such overhanging bridges, have been increasingly turned to emergency boards, where all manner of information are passed to pedestrians and motorists alike. Such notices include political campaign posters, notices of public services, advertisement of private services and even in some bizarre cases, notices of lost and found items. The battle



POSTERS posters everywhere.

“ The initial euphoria they felt, according to Bimbo, was quickly taken over by amazement at how carelessly the posters were displayed at every corner and available space the originators could find.



ing to use such spaces, so why should there be fights?’

Organizations especially churches and tutorial centers have indeed discovered the new mode of advertisement as a goldmine. On virtually every street corner and at major bus stops, posters introducing the reader to examination solution centers, and notices of crusades and church programmes inundate the pedestrian.

be curtailed. The authorities need to as a mark of urgency provide enough notice boards across cities where people can comfortably paste their messages. In Abuja it has reached an alarming rate that calls for concern from the relevant authorities...

**T**itus Ndawa, a spokesperson for the Abuja Environmental Protection Agency, AEPB could not be reached for comments as at press time, but a member of staff who spoke on his behalf, noted that the board was equally concerned about the menace of indiscriminate pasting of notices and posters across the FCT, and would soon fashion out moves to arrest the unsavory situation. He said that the modus operandi of the agency is to identify a menace to the capital's clean surroundings, plan an appropriate response to the problem, and then quickly move to effect the necessary solution. 'As in the past when we carried out raids on people who dirty the surroundings and constitute hazards to the wellbeing of the society, we have also identified this as a major challenge. And even though it appears that nothing is being done at present to check the problem, that does not mean at the appropriate time we will not make moves to arrest offenders. After the necessary machinery is put in place by the agency's management, we would move out to effect a positive change,' he vowed.

Meanwhile until the relevant authorities make the move, the unique war of posters continues unabated on major

“To a large extent nobody would think of pasting posters just anywhere he or she finds, and certainly not in metropolitan areas. Such a person would be seized immediately not by security officials, but by passers by who may think he or she is psychologically disturbed. But here in Nigeria this appears to be the reverse.”

**A** public affairs analyst however believes that even though there may be no laws banning such practices, Nigerians should learn to discipline themselves in order not to attract ridicule to themselves, as a lawless nation. He opines: 'the mere fact that something is acceptable does not make it right. If you need to paste notices, there are right ways to do it. If you go to the ministries where you can find a lot of workers, there are designated notice boards where you can paste your message and reach a wide audience. Even if you go to the federal secretariat, the authorities in their own wisdom have placed several notice boards for such purposes and nobody would charge you for the use. Even some private companies do the same. You can easily approach those who are stricter for permission to paste whatever you want to paste, and if it will be beneficial for their staff, they will surely allow you. But to be pasting notices everywhere and even as far as pasting on the surfaces of public utilities is the highest degree of wantonness, and this ought to

then maybe going to street corners like that of Wuse and Berger to look at walls, would not be needed,' he responds.

**A**nother respondent, Idowu Aka also sees nothing bad in pasting notices on street walls, as he says the end justifies the means. He notes that, 'if you cannot afford to buy placements in the media to advertise your goods and services, or to carry out your political campaigns, and you find out that you can at least reach out to as many people as possible on the streets through this method, why not? At least you would have realized your goals and someone else would be blessed by reading that notice, that someone else may be someone who cannot afford to buy newspapers to read such notices. You can see by this process that not one but several needs would have been met simultaneously. The only thing I can say is that there should be a form of sanity in the way they are pasted and that it should not lead to fights over spaces. Afterall, nobody is pay-

about anywhere.'

**W**hile some may be pushing for the enactment of stricter laws to nip the trend in the bud, others such as Amaeneken Francis, an unemployed graduate resident in Abuja, sees nothing wrong in the act. He believes that the pasting of job vacancies along the streets has been a source of help for many job seekers. Although he says he has not benefited yet from such posters, he cannot say the same thing concerning many more who have gotten their dream jobs through contacts they are able to get from pasted vacancies. 'Not all of us can afford to buy newspapers on a daily basis in our unending search for jobs. For those of us who fall under that category what other viable option do we have, but to go to such street corners to browse through the available vacancies that have been posted by some considerate companies and persons needing our services. If the government had serious modalities in place to cushion the pains of the unemployed,

seize every inch of available places has become a battle for the fittest with its own unique 'victors' and 'vanquished.' On available spaces on the walls of streets, especially in sub urban areas of the capital city, the struggle is taking a disconcerting turn, making many to wonder if there are no laws in place to check the menace. In some cases fisticuffs and outright battles have occurred between contestants over the defacing of posters by others who go ahead to paste over already occupied spaces.

**S**unday Adeniyi, a journalist practicing in the FCT, recalls with a tinge of humor how during his mandatory one year youth service, he and other concerned residents in Gwargwada, a small village in the outskirts of the capital city, had prevented a bloody skirmish between supporters of two rival parties, when they engaged one another in a battle of supremacy over who had the rights to paste posters of their candidates, over certain portions of the walls in the area. He said it took the spirited mediation of the traditional ruler and some sensible non partisan youths in the community, before frayed nerves could be calmed. He recalls: 'when I recounted my experiences to my fellow corps members in camp after our service, they were amazed that such a little incident could cause trouble, but someone told me that incidents as minute as that, have been known to claim lives especially in situations like politics. I think the relevant authorities should look at ways to stop this unwholesome practice of pasting posters just

## Business

# HJKYB to partner organizations on basin development

From Ruqayyah Yusuf Aliyu, Kano

HADEJIA Jama'are Komadugu Yobe Basin Trust Fund (HJKYB) is ready to partner with any organization whose aim is to accelerate development in the fund, its Administrative Secretary Dr Hassan Haruna Biliya has said.

He said this when he received members of the monitoring team of the European Union Commission under the water supply and sanitation sector reform project in Kano, according to a statement signed by the spokesman of the fund Mohammed Dahiru Idris.

He pledged to put more effort to continue with some projects initiated by the EU under the Integrated Water Resources Management Project (IWRM) in the basin. He said the project has a direct bearing on human development. He expressed appreciation for the immense contribution of the EU under IWRM programme which promotes the development and management of water, land and related resources in the basin.

Hassan explained that the trust fund was created by Bauchi, Borno, Jigawa, Kano, Plateau, and Yobe states with the support of the federal

government to serve as a joint platform for addressing water resources management issues in the Hadejia Jama'are Komadugu Yobe basin.

He said among the successes so far recorded by the trust fund include execution of infrastructural projects such as dykes, control gates and channel clearance which facilitated the desired flow of water in the basin. In his speech, leader of the delegation Mr. Raymond Maria said they were in the state to monitor the Water Supply and Sanitation Reform programme with a view of assessing the impact of the projects in the basin.



TRADERS at the bank of Shiroro Dam, Niger State

## Food price increases in Haiti

By Tina A. Hassan

A sharp increase in food prices is being experienced in Haiti as a result of the earthquake that rocked the country recently.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said the sudden food shortage caused by the earthquake has also led to the sharp increase in food commodity prices.

According to reports posted by the body, the country had a good harvest in the last farming season but the destruction caused by the

earthquake has disrupted the marketing channels.

Henri Jossereand of the Global Information and Early Warning Signal System of the body funded by the European Union said "we're also concerned about implications for the upcoming agricultural season, starting next month."

He also added that the price of wheat flour has risen 70 percent from average December prices and imported rice by 20 to 30 percent. Local maize and black beans, the main com-

modities produced in Haiti have risen by around 30 to 35 percent.

The report states that about 60 percent of the food consumed in the country is imported, further aggravating the food security of the country.

FAO expressed concern over what it described as "non funding for agriculture" in the country, calling on world bodies to respond to the food security emergency appeal made by FAO to raise \$23 million.

## Conference to strengthen agric research

By Tina A. Hassan

A Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development which would bring together leading scientists, inventors, World Food prize laureates and farmers has been scheduled to hold in France to find a way forward in tackling global agricultural challenge.

According to the body, the

conference seeks to bring together efforts among those generating and using agricultural knowledge at all levels in order to strengthen and refocus agricultural innovations for better results.

In statement by the body, the meeting is to serve as a platform for farmers and researchers to align priorities with concrete policies and commitment from donors in order

to lift billions of people out of poverty and hunger.

The statement also noted that the meeting would further enable stakeholders strategize on how to overcome the challenge of doubling food supply over the next 40 years.

World Food Prize Laureate Dr. Monty Jones said the "meeting would mark the beginning of global transformation in agriculture."

### FLIGHT SCHEDULE

#### Arik Air

PH-Abuja: 08.45, 12.12.50, 17.00 (Mon-Fri), 08.45, 17.30 (Sat), 14.40, 17.30 (Sun);  
 Abuja-PH: 07.15, 11.20, 15.30 (Mon-Fri), 07.15, 16.00 (Sat) 14.40, 17.30 (Sun);  
 Lagos-Kano: 12.20pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Kano-Lagos: 02.35pm (Mon-Fri/Sun);  
 Abuja-Kano: 03:35pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Kano-Abuja: 05:20pm (Mon-Fri/Sun);  
 Abuja-Gombe: 11:10am (Mon, Wed, Fri, Sun); Gombe-Abuja: 12.30pm (Mon, Wed, Fri, Sun); Lagos-Yola:  
 Lag-Abj 04:50pm, via Abj-Yola 06:45pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Yola-Lagos: Yola-Abj 08:40am, Abj-Lagos 10:20am (Mon-Fri/Sat); Lagos-Maid: Lag-Abj 03:50pm, via Abj-Maid 06:00pm (Mon-Fri/Sun); Maid-Lagos: Miud-Abj 07:30am, via Abj-Lag 09:15am (Mon-Fri/Sat); Abuja-Sokoto: 11:10am (Mon-Fri); Sokoto-Abuja: 12:50pm (Mon-Fri)  
 Abuja-Akure 02:10pm (Mon, Wed and Fri); Akure-Abuja: 08:50am (Mon, Wed and Fri); Lagos-Kwara: 07:30am, (Mon-Fri) 07.30, 03:50pm Sat 08:00am, 11:45am Sun; Kwara-Lagos: 4:10pm (Mon-Fri), 01:10pm, 05:30pm Sat 09:45am, 05:00pm Sun  
 Abuja-Kwara: 03:25pm (Mon-Fri); Kwara-Abuja 01.30pm (Mon-Fri); Lagos-Jos: 09:05am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); Jos-Lagos: 11.00am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)  
 ABV-QOW 02:30pm (Mon-Fri), 11:30am Sat 03:20pm Sun; Lagos-Kaduna: 10:20am, 04:10pm (Mon-Fri), 10.20 (Sat/Sun); Kaduna-Lagos: 12:10pm, 06:00pm (Mon-Fri), 12.10 (Sat/Sun); Lagos-Warr: 07:30am (Mon/Fri) 07:30am, 03:50pm (Sat), 08:00am, and 11:45am (Sun)

#### Aero Contractors

Lagos-Kad: 08.00am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)  
 Kad-Lagos: 09.40am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)  
 Lagos-Jos: 11.15am (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)  
 Jos-Lagos: 13.15pm (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)  
 Lagos-Abj: 06.50; 13.30; 16.30; 19.45 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); 12.30 (Sun) 16.45 (Sat). Abj-Lagos: 07.30; 13.30; 19.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat); 10.30, 14.30; 19.30 (Sun) 18.30 (Sat); Lagos-Ben: 07:45; 11:00; 15:30; (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun) 12.30; (Sun); 15.30 (Sat).  
 Ben-Lagos: 09.15; 12.30; 17.00 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun); 17.00 (Sat); 14.00 (Sun); Lagos-Cala: 13.15; (Mon-Fri/Sat); 08.30; 19.00 (Sun); Cala-Lagos: 14.45; (Mon-Fri/Sat); 10.30 (Sun); Lagos-Enu: 09.30; (Mon-Fri/Sat); 15.00 (Sun); Enu-Lagos: 09.30; (Mon-Fri/Sat) 16.45 (Sun)

#### Chanchangi Airlines

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

#### Nigerian Eagles Airlines (Virgin Nigeria)

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

#### IRS Airlines

Lagos-Abj: 09.45, 11.45, 12.45, (Mon-Fri) 09.30, 12.45 (Sat&Sun)  
 Lagos-Kano: 06.15 (Mon-Fri), 16.30 (Sat/Sun)  
 Kano-Lagos: 07.30 (Mon-Fri), 10.30 (Sat/Sun)  
 Abuja-Kano: 10.30am (Mon-Fri/Sun)  
 Kano-Abuja: 11.45, 5.00 Fri, 12.15 Sun

#### DANA Airlines:

Lagos-Abj: 07.20; 08.19, 09.00, 12.15, 15.30, 17.10 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)  
 Abj-Lagos: 07.20, 09.45, 11.25, 13.05, 14.40, 17:40 (Mon-Fri/Sat/Sun)  
 Lag-Kano via Abj: 08.19, Abuja: 10.00  
 Kano-Lag via Abj: 11.25, Abuja: 11.25  
 Lagos-Enu: 14.40,  
 Enu-Lagos: 16.20  
 Lagos-PH: 09.27  
 PH-Lagos: 12.15

#### Overland Airways

Lagos-Ilorin: 07.15 (Mon-Fri), Ilorin-Lagos: 16.15 (Mon-Fri)  
 Abuja-Ilorin: 15.00 (Mo-Fri), Ilorin-Abuja: 08.15 (Mon-Fri)  
 Lagos-Ibadan: 07.15 (Mon-Fri), Lagos-Ibadan: 16.15 (Mon-Fri)  
 Ibadan-Abuja: 08.00 (Mon-Fri), Abuja-Ibadan: 5.00 (Mon-Fri)  
 Kats-Abuja: 07.30 (Mon-Fri) Abuja-Kats: 15.30 (Mon-Fri)  
 Minna-Lagos: 09.40 Lagos-Minna: 13.00 (Mon-Fri)  
 Abuja-Minna: 09.00 (Mon-Fri) Minna-Abuja: 14.30  
 Jos-Kano: 10.15 (Mon-Fri), Kano-Jos: 11.30 (Mon-Fri)  
 Abuja-Jos: 09.30 (Mon-Fri), Jos-Abuja: 12.30

## Business/International

# Cameroon GDP set to grow 2.9% in 2010, 4% in 2011

CAMEROON'S economic growth will accelerate to 2.9 percent this year and 4 percent next year but the country will underperform its African neighbours, due partly to a decline in oil production, a Reuters poll showed yesterday.

The economy expanded 2 percent in 2009. The poll of nine economists also forecast that inflation would fall to 2.2 percent this year and 2 percent in 2011, from around 3 percent in 2009.

"Cameroon's growth performance is likely to remain weaker than that of most African countries in the near term," said Victor Lopes of Standard Chartered Bank.

Inflation will fall following government measures to control prices of basic goods, analysts said.

The largest economy in central Africa, Cameroon benefits from demand for its resources including timber, cotton, coffee, cocoa and a small output of oil.

While it stands to benefit from an expected increase in commodities prices as global demand picks up, the recovery is seen filtering very gradually through the economy in 2010.

Oil output is expected to decline this year due to depleting oil fields and because the global financial crisis delayed drilling of newly discovered fields. However, production should start rising by late 2011. (REUTERS)

## Egypt and Uganda mull wheat farmland options

EGYPT, the world's top wheat importer, said yesterday that it was evaluating three options for growing wheat in Uganda in a bid to safeguard its supply of the staple.

The most populous Arab country had said it wanted to set up farms in Nile Basin countries in order to protect its water supply and boost supply of staple crops.

"Egypt wants to ensure there are several sources that guarantee its supply of crops," Saad Nasser, adviser to Egypt's agriculture minister, told Reuters on the sidelines of the Afro-Arab Agricultural Development and Food Security conference.

He said the three options both governments were looking at are whether Egyptian investors would own and cultivate farmland, whether land would be owned in partnership with Egypt and Uganda, or whether land would be owned as a concession right.

He did not give a timeframe for when a deal would be reached.

Egypt, with a population of about 78 million people, consumes around 14 million tonnes of wheat a year. It imports around half of that amount.

Egypt runs three farms in Africa now, one in Zambia to grow corn, one in Niger mostly



AHMED Nazif, Egypt Prime Minister

for rice, and a third in Tanzania for vegetables. The Uganda farm to grow wheat is the latest of a total of 14 planned farms to supply Egypt. (Reuters)

The African Union has in the past criticised what Africans call "land-grabs", as investors, particularly from the Gulf and Asia, have bought up farmland. The African Union argues these investments do not provide benefits to poor nations.

However, the African Union's Commissioner of Rural Economy and Agriculture, said on Monday the union would present guidelines on how to invest in farmland that protect investors as well as locals.

"These countries will benefit from Egypt's expertise, particularly in increasing productivity and in technological skills," Tsumiime Rhoda Peace told the conference. (Reuters)

## Tullow Oil close to Ugandan oil deal

HERITAGE Oil has said the sale of its assets in Uganda to the UK's Tullow Oil will be approved "imminently".

In a statement, the Jersey-based firm said it and Tullow were working closely with the Ugandan government to obtain formal approval for the sale.

Italian energy company Eni, which had also shown an interest, dropped out of a deal to buy

the assets.

Tullow and Heritage each hold a 50% share in two Ugandan oil fields, while Tullow owns a third field outright.

Tullow said it had raised \$1.35bn (£864m) to buy the 50% owned in the two sites by its partner Heritage Oil.

Heritage had agreed to sell its half stake in the two fields in the Lake Albert Rift Basin to Eni.

However, Tullow had an option to buy the stake if it matched any offer. (BBC)

Tullow said it had raised \$1.35bn (£864m) to buy the 50% owned in the two sites by its partner Heritage Oil.

## South Africa's new industrial policy to boost jobs

SOUTH Africa will target capital goods, transport equipment and metal fabrication in a new industrial policy, aiming to boost manufacturing capacity and jobs, a government minister said yesterday.

Trade and Industry Minister Rob Davies said the government was also looking at ways to stabilise the rand, which rallied nearly 30 percent against the dollar last year.

Davies will unveil a long-awaited three-year industrial plan on Thursday, as Africa's biggest economy emerges from its first recession in 17 years and looks to crank up a manufacturing sector hard hit by the global economic downturn.

"It will include a combination of cross-cutting measures and also sector-specific programmes with focuses on capital goods, transport equipment and metal fabrication

sectors," Davies told journalists.

These sectors were seen as benefiting from the government's three-year 846 billion rand public infrastructure investment programme, he said.

Officials are hoping the new industrial policy will provide a much-needed boost for job creation after the economy lost some 900,000 jobs during last year's recession, with the mining and manufacturing sectors -- particularly carmakers -- hit by depressed demand.

Davies said the government was also looking at ways to stabilise a relatively volatile rand.

Trade unions, cabinet ministers and the central bank have warned about the impact of its strength on sectors of the economy following its near 30 percent appreciation last year. (Reuters)

## Zambia 2009 copper output rose 14%: C/bank

COPPER output in Zambia, Africa's top producer, rose 14 percent to 697,860 tonnes last year, but output was hampered by the closure of some mines after the global financial crisis unfolded.

Zambia has previously said copper production could hit 1.0 million tonnes by 2011 as new mines come on stream and expansions and upgrades take place at existing mines.

Frederick Bantubonse, the general manager of the Chamber of Mines of Zambia, said that to boost output quicker, the southern African nation's government should restore investor confidence, which was eroded by the introduction of higher taxes in 2008.

The taxes included a 15 percent profit variable tax, an increase in mineral royalties to 3.0 percent from 0.6 percent and a rise in corporate tax to 30 percent from 25 percent.

"The increase in production could have been higher without the global economic crunch

which forced some mines to close down," Bantubonse said.

"The price of copper is good but there is need to quickly resolve the problems arising from the new mining legislation (taxes) which has affected investments," he said.

Three-month copper on the London Metal Exchange was trading at \$6,880 a tonne at 1222 GMT compared with \$6,810 at the close on Friday.

Zambia's central bank said copper exports jumped to 675,384 last year from 587,125 tonnes the previous year. Cobalt production rose to 5,879 tonnes from 4,617 tonnes in 2008, and exports rose to 5,868 tonnes in 2009 from 4,610 tonnes, the Bank of Zambia said.

Copper mining is Zambia's economic lifeblood and the mines are a major employer in the country of 12 million people. Some foreign mining companies in Zambia include London-listed Vedanta Resources Plc, Glencore International of Switzerland and Metorex of South Africa. (Reuters)

## Egypt sees 1-2 year delay in goal to cut deficit

EGYPTIAN Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif said yesterday the world economic crisis had forced Egypt to delay its 2012 target of reducing the state budget deficit to 3 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

"The goal was to get the deficit down to 3 percent of GDP by 2012. I believe that this goal will have to be postponed a year or two," said Nazif, who was speaking at an economic conference.

Egypt's deficit for the last six months of 2009 was 57.5 billion Egyptian pounds, or 4.9 percent of gross domestic product, the official MENA news agency earlier this month quoted a finance ministry report as saying.

"We've seen our revenues cut in many ways ... we still have a bigger gap between our revenues and our expenditures," Nazif told the conference. (Reuters)

## Business/Finance

Nigerian Stock Exchange (NSE)

Monday, February 15, 2010

COMPANY Name	No of Deals	Quot. (N)	Quantity Traded	Value of Shares (N)
<b>2ND-TIER SECURITIES</b>				
ADSWITCH PLC	1	230	1,400	3,066.00
SECTOR TOTALS	1		1,400	3,066.00
<b>AGRICULTURE</b>				
FTN COCOA PROCESSORS PLC	33	1.01	1,751,267	1,861,140.93
LIVESTOCK FEEDS PLC	12	0.84	950,000	782,450.00
PRESKO PLC	8	5.01	40,621	203,075.20
SECTOR TOTALS	53		2,741,888	2,846,666.13
<b>AIR SERVICES</b>				
AIRLINE SERV. & LOGISTICS PLC	12	3.19	214,960	660,487.40
NIG. AVIATION HANDLING COY PLC	307	8.50	448,318	3,837,122.05
SECTOR TOTALS	319		663,278	4,497,609.45
<b>AUTOMOBILE &amp; TYRE</b>				
DNTYRE & RUBBER PLC	22	0.50	7,389,900	3,694,950.00
INCAR NIGERIA PLC	1	1.97	20,000	38,000.00
R.T. BRISCOE (NIGERIA) PLC	17	5.98	64,538	375,942.85
SECTOR TOTALS	40		7,474,438	4,108,892.85
<b>BANKING</b>				
ACCESS BANK PLC	195	9.42	23,150,046	218,116,717.39
AFRIBANK NIGERIA PLC	99	2.88	9,810,278	29,271,214.92
DIAMOND BANK PLC	62	8.90	2,764,971	24,824,384.55
ECOBANK NIGERIA PLC	27	4.97	296,721	1,474,703.37
FI/CITY MONUMENT BANK PLC	42	9.26	926,779	8,644,432.45
FIDELITY BANK PLC	109	2.65	3,562,586	9,515,692.46
FIRST BANK OF NIGERIA PLC	815	14.95	32,773,215	490,422,849.85
FINBANK PLC	102	0.80	9,655,147	7,797,432.80
GTBANK PLC	316	18.10	3,993,047	72,824,060.74
STANBIC IBTC BANK PLC	110	8.29	2,436,448	20,138,511.47
INTERCONTINENTAL BANK PLC	63	2.11	491,196	1,041,168.82
OCEANIC BANK INTER. PLC	123	2.30	3,542,741	8,284,164.40
BANK PHB PLC	230	1.97	13,313,800	25,554,310.33
SKYE BANK PLC	180	7.60	14,412,728	108,017,888.77
SPRING BANK PLC	11	1.13	526,146	594,544.98
STERLING BANK PLC	88	1.93	27,984,565	53,101,367.92
UNITED BANK FOR AFRICA PLC	237	13.01	8,034,289	104,305,508.52
UNION BANK OF NIGERIA PLC	133	6.09	1,959,976	11,927,557.00
UNITY BANK PLC	34	1.00	4,081,592	4,082,436.11
WEMA BANK PLC	51	1.27	4,931,443	6,296,999.61
ZENITH BANK PLC	224	15.87	24,306,453	377,732,641.25
SECTOR TOTALS	3,251		192,954,167	1,583,968,587.71
<b>BUILDING MATERIALS</b>				
ASHAKA CEMENT PLC	53	16.01	489,452	7,836,436.00
BENUE CEMENT COY PLC	33	50.00	351,343	17,579,082.71
CEMENT CO. OF NORTHERN NIG. PLC	28	15.60	221,703	3,494,312.36
LAFARGE WAPCO PLC	38	35.00	446,750	15,612,757.00
SECTOR TOTALS	152		1,509,248	44,522,588.07
<b>CHEMICAL &amp; PAINTS</b>				
BERGER PAINTS NIGERIA PLC	1	3.36	10,000	35,200.00
CHEMICAL & ALLIED PROD. PLC	3	25.27	26,083	640,112.83
PREMIER PAINTS PLC	2	13.40	5,000	63,650.00
SECTOR TOTALS	6		41,083	738,962.83
<b>COMMERCIAL SERVICES</b>				
AFROMEDIA PLC	2	0.55	94,500	51,975.00
COURTVILLE INVESTMENTS PLC	1	0.50	40,000	20,000.00
RED STAR EXPRESS PLC	9	2.44	39,744	96,975.36
SECTOR TOTALS	12		174,244	168,950.36
<b>COMP &amp; OFFICE EQUIPMENT</b>				
NCR (NIGERIA) PLC	1	8.13	5,000	40,650.00
OMATEK VENTURES PLC	4	0.60	62,000	35,340.00
TRIPPLE GEE AND COY PLC	2	4.37	150,000	655,500.00
SECTOR TOTALS	7		217,000	731,490.00
<b>CONGLOMERATES</b>				
A. G. LEVENTIS (NIGERIA) PLC	12	2.99	160,037	476,561.19
PZ CUSSONS NIGERIA PLC	34	26.20	503,426	13,161,896.65
TRANSNATIONAL CORP. OF NIG PLC	12	0.50	375,150	187,575.00
UAC OF NIGERIA PLC	45	41.00	487,006	19,952,465.29
UNILEVER NIGERIA PLC	47	25.00	565,574	14,147,461.25
SECTOR TOTALS	150		2,091,193	47,925,959.38
<b>CONSTRUCTION</b>				
COSTAIN (WA) PLC	45	5.30	1,760,133	9,384,056.55
JULIUS BERGER NIGERIA PLC	35	28.50	485,322	13,132,214.60
MULTIVERSE RESOURCES PLC	3	0.50	57,800	28,900.00
SECTOR TOTALS	83		2,303,255	22,545,171.15
<b>FOOD/BEVERAGES &amp; TOBACCO</b>				
7-UP BOTTLING CO. PLC	6	30.60	14,763	473,391.19
BIGTREAT PLC	20	0.88	1,504,584	1,323,513.30
CADBURY NIGERIA PLC	78	15.00	717,921	10,732,043.17
DANGOTE FLOUR MILLS PLC	123	12.70	1,519,299	19,175,666.37
DANGOTE SUGAR REFINERY PLC	70	15.20	635,981	9,633,127.62
FLOUR MILLS NIGERIA PLC	71	43.60	486,696	21,260,251.02
HONEYWELL FLOUR MILL PLC	12	6.12	39,700	237,044.50
NATIONAL SALT COY. NIG. PLC	29	6.67	982,625	6,443,424.15
NIGERIAN BOTTLING COY. PLC	14	27.10	30,305	834,042.05
NESTLE NIGERIA PLC	25	268.00	85,505	22,785,900.55
NORTHERN NIG. FLOUR MILLS PLC	1	21.80	300	6,243.00
TANTALIZERS PLC	10	0.88	1,012,695	892,648.55
UNION DICON SALT PLC	1	5.71	7,000	38,010.00

UTC NIGERIA PLC	7	0.75	48,810	
35,523.20				
SECTOR TOTALS	467		7,086,184	93,870,828.67
<b>HEALTHCARE</b>				
EVANS MEDICAL PLC	3	1.12	4,220	4,762.40
FIDSON HEALTHCARE PLC	9	2.17	81,461	181,383.59
GLAXOSMITHKLINE CONS. NIG. PLC	14	26.41	130,652	3,424,389.08
MAY & BAKER NIGERIA PLC	12	5.23	40,235	205,141.95
NEIMETH INTER. PHARM. PLC	9	1.42	151,500	215,130.00
U/DIAGNOSTIC & CLINICAL SERV. PLC	27	0.65	1,890,000	1,170,900.00
SECTOR TOTALS	74		2,298,068	5,201,707.02
<b>HOTEL &amp; TOURISM</b>				
CAPITAL HOTEL PLC	3	2.35	1,034,893	2,411,998.55
IKEJA HOTEL PLC	10	1.41	270,000	378,900.00
SECTOR TOTALS	13		1,304,893	2,790,898.55
<b>IND/DOMESTIC PRODUCTS</b>				
VITAFOAM NIGERIA PLC	14	4.55	31,362	142,697.10
SECTOR TOTALS	14		31,362	142,697.10
<b>INF. &amp; COMM. TECHNOLOGY</b>				
CHAMS PLC	38	0.76	2,330,130	1,734,892.82
IHS NIGERIA PLC	1	4.03	1,000	3,830.00
MAS TELECOM INNOVATION NIG. PLC	2	0.50	15,000	7,500.00
STARCOMMS PLC	21	2.17	42,707,269	86,236,514.83
SECTOR TOTALS	62		45,053,399	87,982,737.65
<b>INSURANCE</b>				
AFRICAN ALLIANCE INSUR. PLC	9	0.61	5,241,850	3,197,528.50
AIICO INSURANCE PLC	311	1.07	6,229,435	6,752,654.45
CONTINENTAL REINSUR. PLC	15	0.99	10,616,030	10,604,900.00
CORNERSTONE INSUR. CO. PLC	8	0.52	292,822	152,267.44
CUSTODIAN & ALLIED INSUR. PLC	57	3.08	14,554,602	43,741,831.86
EQUITY ASSURANCE PLC	4	0.50	167,200	83,600.00
GOLDLINK INSURANCE PLC	38	0.57	1,999,027	1,102,021.79
GUARANTY TRUST ASSUR. PLC	11	2.30	1,136,413	2,612,749.90
GUINEA INSURANCE PLC	4	0.50	500,000	250,000.00
CONSOLIDATED HALLMARK INSUR. PLC	3	0.50	868,333	434,166.50
INTER. ENERGY INSUR. COY. PLC	40	0.56	4,597,200	2,592,269.26
LASACO ASSURANCE PLC	37	0.53	4,182,140	2,190,924.30
LAW UNION & ROCK INSUR. PLC	19	0.53	2,555,905	1,363,429.65
LINKAGE ASSURANCE PLC	1	0.50	150,000	75,000.00
MUTUAL BENEFITS ASSUR. PLC	3	0.64	70,800	45,312.00
N.E.M. INSUR. CO. (NIG) PLC	46	0.55	2,018,096	1,115,721.26
NIGER INSURANCE CO. PLC	17	0.76	577,615	440,835.90
OASIS INSURANCE PLC	2	1.42	80,000	108,000.00
SOVEREIGN TRUST INSUR. PLC	1	0.50	4,700	2,350.00
STANDARD ALLIANCE INSUR. PLC	83	0.58	18,008,803	10,029,231.49
UNIC INSURANCE PLC	3	0.79	303,333	239,633.07
UNIVERSAL INSUR. COY. PLC	1	0.50	150,000	75,000.00
INTERCONTINENTAL WAPIC INSUR. PLC	25	0.98	393,534	371,858.58
SECTOR TOTALS	738		74,697,838	87,581,285.95
<b>MEDIA</b>				
DAAR COMMUNICATIONS PLC	30	0.85	354,712	299,845.20
SECTOR TOTALS	30		354,712	299,845.20
<b>MORTGAGE COMPANIES</b>				
ASO SAVINGS AND LOAN PLC	37	0.65	2,542,912	1,666,656.42
RESORT SAVINGS & LOANS PLC	5	0.50	625,000	312,500.00
U/HOMES SAVINGS & LOANS PLC	38	0.88	2,581,522	2,301,158.04
SECTOR TOTALS	80		5,749,434	4,280,314.46
<b>OTHER FINANCIAL INST.</b>				
CRUSADER NIGERIA PLC	11	0.94	300,850	284,927.50
ROYAL EXCHANGE PLC	6	0.61	121,373	74,037.53
SECTOR TOTALS	17		422,223	358,965.03
<b>PACKAGING</b>				
NIG. BAG MANUF. COY. PLC	198	2.26	1,945,048	4,256,153.34
BETA GLASS CO. PLC	1	14.26	2,000	27,100.00
SECTOR TOTALS	199		1,947,048	4,283,253.34
<b>PETROLEUM (MARKETING)</b>				
AFRICAN PETROLEUM PLC	45	38.00	41,297	1,590,595.37
BECO PETROLEUM PRODUCT PLC	3	2.25	10,470	22,405.80
CONOIL PLC	24	31.00	36,009	1,154,578.40
ETERNA OIL & GAS PLC	50	6.00	944,444	5,797,585.91
MOBIL OIL NIGERIA PLC	7	97.51	1,173	108,666.72
OANDO PLC	10	93.99	14,699	1,381,559.01
TOTAL NIGERIA PLC	22	142.50	87,554	12,696,299.00
SECTOR TOTALS	161		1,135,646	22,751,690.21
<b>PRINTING &amp; PUBLISHING</b>				
ACADEMY PRESS PLC	1	7.21	400	2,740.00
UNIVERSITY PRESS PLC	8	4.92	117,500	578,500.00
SECTOR TOTALS	9		117,900	581,240.00
<b>REAL ESTATE</b>				
UACN PROPERTY DEV. CO. PLC	16	20.00	617,900	12,315,666.00
SECTOR TOTALS	16		617,900	12,315,666.00
<b>ROAD TRANSPORTATION</b>				
ASSOCIATED BUS COY. PLC	1	1.05	120,000	126,000.00
SECTOR TOTALS	1		120,000	126,000.00
<b>THE FOREIGN LISTINGS</b>				
ECOBANKTRANS. INCORPORATED	11	15.80	263,945	4,138,556.15
SECTOR TOTALS	11		263,945	4,138,556.15
OVERALL TOTALS	6,276		357,201,116	2,093,398,546.08

What is a Yield to Maturity? This is the rate of return anticipated on a bond if it is held until the maturity date.

Google.com

**GAINERS**

FLOURMILL	1.60
JBERGER	0.50
WAPCO	0.50
UACN	0.49

**LOSERS**

LAB2013S1	11.25
GUARANTY	0.30
DANGFLOUR	0.29
ECOBANK	0.26



# NIGERIAN ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### CONSULTATIVE PAPER ON REGULATION FOR ACQUISITION OF LAND AND ACCESS RIGHTS FOR POWER PROJECTS

Pursuant to Sections 77 and 96 of the EPSR Act, 2005

Part V of the Electric Power Sector Reform Act 2005 (hereinafter referred to as "the Act") deals with the Acquisition of Land and Access Rights. Section 77 empowers the Commission to make a declaration that land is required by a licensee for purposes of generation, transmission or distribution of electricity. Section 96 empowers the Commission to make regulation to that effect.

Thus, in exercise of the power conferred under Sections 77 and 96 of the Act, the Commission engaged the services of a consultant to draft the Regulation for Acquisition of Land and Access Rights for Power Projects.

A Paper developed by the Consultant seeks to develop, articulate, clarify, and seek views of the public on the policies which will govern the acquisition of land and access rights for power projects in Nigeria. It covers, among other things, the legal and regulatory framework, the acquisition procedures, process of compensation, dispute settlement, resettlement of displaced persons, monitoring and evaluation, and penalties.

Accordingly, comments are hereby invited from all members of the public on the Consultative Paper which can be downloaded from the Commission's website at [www.nercng.org](http://www.nercng.org).

Notice is hereby given that persons who wish to make comments should send their comments within 30 days from the date of this publication to:

**The Administrator,**

**Attention: Head (Legal, Licensing and Enforcement Division)**  
Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission  
Adamawa Plaza, Plot 1099 First Avenue  
Central Business District, Abuja, FCT

Or

By e-mail: [comments@nercng.org](mailto:comments@nercng.org)

For further information, please contact Mrs. Olufunke Dinneh ([odinneh@nercng.org](mailto:odinneh@nercng.org), or Mall. Ahmadu Zubairu ([azubairu@nercng.org](mailto:azubairu@nercng.org)).

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## NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION

### INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION OF CONTRACTORS AND SUBMISSION OF ICT PROPOSALS FOR THE 2010 CAPITAL PROJECTS

The National Universities Commission is desirous of executing the following Capital Projects and Services on contract:

#### a. Rehabilitation of Abuja Office:

- Lot 1A:** - External Painting of Main Secretariat Complex.  
**Lot 1B:** - Replacement of Curtain Wall in the Secretariat Building.  
**Lot 1C:** - Re-carpeting of Idris Abdulkadir Auditorium.

#### b. Rehabilitation of NUC Liaison Office, Lagos:

- Lot 2A:** - Rehabilitation of Liaison Office – Main Building.  
**Lot 2B:** - Rehabilitation of Liaison Office – Annex.

#### c. Lot 3: - Video Conferencing– (Phase II) for 10 Universities

The details of engagement shall comprise the design, development, deployment and support services for the system and the integration with the existing 5 sites in the 1st phase of the project.

#### d. Lot 4: - Procurement and Installation of Anti-Cultism Equipment/Gadgets

(CCTV & Solar Panels) phase I for 3 Pilot Universities.

#### e. Independent Power Source for NUC Secretariat:

- Lot 5A:** - Solar Street Lighting  
**Lot 5B:** - Office Solar Power Unit  
**Lot 5C:** - Procurement of 1.5 MVA Generator for the NUC Secretariat

Interested Contractors are expected to submit Pre-Qualification Documents/Proposals with the payment of a non-refundable fee of **N20,000.00** (Twenty thousand Naira) to NUC Treasury in Bank Draft in favour of NUC as "Processing fee" for each lot.

For the Pre-Qualification assessment, Tenderers are expected to submit the following documents.

- Evidence of Incorporation by the Corporate Affairs Commission.
- Letter of Bank reference.
- Evidence of current registration with the Federal Ministry of Works (where applicable).
- Tax Clearance Certificate for the last 3 years (2007 – 2009). Also required is V.A.T. registration Certificate and past remittances.
- Comprehensive Company Profile including names of principal shareholders and key staff, qualifications and genuine reachable addresses and phone numbers (enclose photocopies of credentials).
- Verifiable Plants and Equipment of the Company (where applicable). Details of previous relevant jobs indicating clients, contract sum, year of award and date of completion (with evidence)
- Evidence of Financial Capability and access to Financial Resources from a reputable Bank.
- A network Service Provider duly licensed under the relevant ICT professional body (for Lot 3).
- A sworn affidavit that all documents submitted are genuine and verifiable
- A sworn affidavit that none of its Directors has been convicted in any Country, for any criminal offence including fraud or financial impropriety.

The Commission reserves the right to verify the authenticity of Claims made in the pre-qualification documents as submitted.

Pre-qualification documents should be enclosed in sealed envelopes marked "2010 Pre-Qualification Lot ....." Sealed separate envelopes should be provided for each LOT and should be addressed to:

**The Executive Secretary  
 National Universities Commission  
 Plot 430, Aguiyi Ironsi Street, Maitama  
 P.M.B. 237, Garki  
 Abuja.**

The Pre-Qualification Document should be submitted in the "Tender Box" located on the 5th Floor of the National Universities Commission on or before 12 noon of 1st March, 2010.

Tenderers are invited to attend the ceremony for the opening of the submissions by 2:00 p.m. on 1st March, 2010 at the NUC Conference Room.

Please note that this Pre-Qualification is **NOT** an invitation to the financial tender as only those who are successful during the Pre-Qualification exercise will be invited to the financial tender. The National Universities Commission is neither committed, nor obliged to reply any company that is found not suitable.

**EXECUTIVE SECRETARY  
 NATIONAL UNIVERSITIES COMMISSION**



## Jebba Hydro Electric Plc

### EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

#### For Works and Provision of Plant Spares for Jebba Hydro Electric Plc

The Power Holding Company of Nigeria Plc, Jebba Hydro Electric Plc, intends to procure materials and services for the maintenance of her plant and company's complex at Jebba Hydro Electric Plc, Jebba, Niger State.

The procurement will be funded from the company's Internally Generated Revenue (IGR).

#### SCOPE OF WORKS / SUPPLY:

The Scope of Works / Supply are as indicated in the following lots:

S/N	LOT NO.	DESCRIPTION OF ITEMS
1.	Lot I	Compressor, Pumps and Motors.
2.	Lot II	Valves
3.	Lot III	Mechanical items and Plant Consumables
4.	Lot IV	Tools
5.	Lot V	Electrical Appliances and Fittings.
6.	Lot VI	Repair of Electrical/Electronic Systems.
7.	Lot VII	Controllers, Switches, Breakers and Contactors.
8.	Lot VIII	Electronic Units and Modules.
9.	Lot IX	Civil Works/Construction
10.	Lot X	Building materials, furniture and Plumbing materials.
11.	Lot XI	Environmental Protection and Sanitary.
12.	Lot XII	Personnel Safety and Protective Wears.
13.	Lot XIII	Fire Safety and Protective Materials.
14.	Lot XIV	Stationery, Computer and consumables.
15.	Lot XV	Marine Facilities

#### A. REQUIREMENTS:

- Evidence of registration of your Company with the Corporate Affairs Commission.
- Company profile, Experience/Technical qualification of key staff.
- Technical Capability.
- Manufacturer/Franchise/Manufacturer's representative.
- Evidence of Financial Capability/Bank support.
- Company Audited Accounts for the last three (3) years!
- Evidence of having executed similar projects/supplies in the last five years.
- Evidence of valid Tax Clearance Certificate for the past three year.
- VAT registration certificate.
- Any other relevant document that could enhance the company's legibility and place her on comparative advantage over others.

The Submission should be in sealed envelop marked "EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR. (Please indicate Lot No./Project name)" at the top left hand corner and addressed to:

**The Chief Executive Officer  
 Jebba Hydro Electric Plc,  
 Jebba.**

To reach the office not later than 12.00 noon, Monday, 1st March, 2010.

#### B. IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- This notice is not an invitation to bid.
- Only short listed companies will be invited for collection of Bid Documents at the stipulated amount for competitive tendering.
- Submission of Expression of Interest on each of the lots should be independent.
- Interested contractors are advised to contact the Principal Manager (Procurement), Jebba Hydro Electric Plc, Jebba, for clarification.
- Jebba Hydro Electric Plc reserves the right to verify any claim made by Companies. Therefore, Companies are advised to include in their submissions necessary authority and guarantee for such verification.

This advert serves as an invitation to any interested NGO and members of the general public who may wish to witness the opening exercise.

**Management**

**JHE... The Best Power Generating Company.**

# DIGEST

## Anxiety drugs like Valium are addictive in the same way as heroin, warn scientists

A popular form of anxiety drugs use the same potentially addictive 'reward pathways' in the brain as heroin and cannabis, scientists have warned.

Researchers from Switzerland and the U.S found benzodiazepine drugs such as Valium and Xanax exert a calming effect by boosting the action of a neurotransmitter.

This in turn activates the gratification hormone, dopamine, in the brain, and is the same 'reward pathway' activated by some illegal drugs.

The findings may help in developing a next generation of non-addictive benzodiazepines, they wrote in the journal *Nature*.

Roche's drug Valium, known generically as diazepam, is the best known of the benzodiazepine class of drugs, and is prescribed on the NHS.

It and Ativan were among a host of other prescription drugs found in the blood of American pop star Michael Jackson when he died in June last year.

The study found that benzodi-

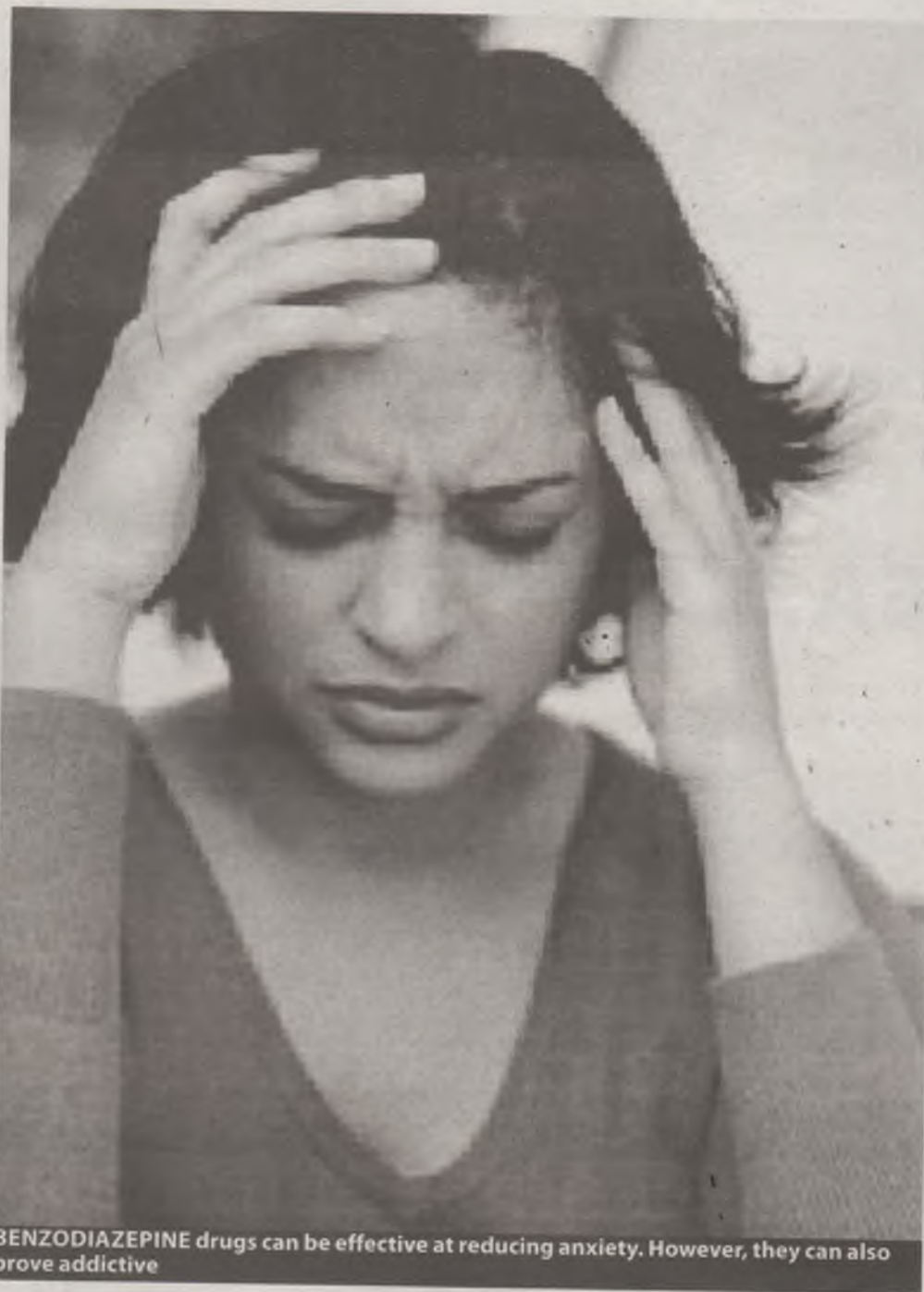
azepines seemed to work by binding to a particular part of the neurotransmitter called gamma-aminobutyric acid.

The findings show that developing similar benzodiazepines that bind to a different part may offer the same drug benefits without the addictive side effects, they said.

A study published earlier this month found that people with higher levels of dopamine in the brain tend to be more prone to addictive behavior.

Drug companies have been trying for some time to develop next-generation benzodiazepines by tweaking their chemical make-up to deliver a more selective effect that avoids unwanted side effects, but it has so far proved an uphill struggle.

German scientists conducting early research into a new compound said last year they thought they may have found a better anxiety drug which could counteract panic attacks without the side effects of existing drugs.



**BENZODIAZEPINE** drugs can be effective at reducing anxiety. However, they can also prove addictive



**CHILD prodigy:** Baby Xavier is tottering unaided at the age of just six months

## The six-month-old baby who learnt to walk before he could crawl

A baby has stunned his parents and medical experts by wobbling to his feet and walking unaided at the age of just six months.

Baby prodigy Xavier can now walk over six feet without any support - a feat most one-year-olds still struggle with.

His parents Mary, 30, and David King, 27, said they knew their son was going to be a fast learner when he started sitting up on his own at three-months-old.

But they were astonished when little Xavier first started tottering around the front room in January.

His precocious walking ability is all the more surprising considering he is only just learning to crawl.

First-time mum Mary, from Cambridge, said: 'It was such a shock. We couldn't believe it.'

'I never thought for one moment he would be walking at six months most children don't until they are a year old.'

'Xavier is more advanced than most babies his age. We go to a day nursery and the children there can't even walk and they are older than him.'

'At the moment he can walk about two metres unaided it was just amazing when he got up and start putting one leg in front of the other.'

The only problem now is that I can't leave him alone so have had to buy a play pen so he doesn't get into any mischief.'

Xavier, now aged seven months, was born in July last year weighing 9lb 1oz.

By October he was sitting up by himself and he started walking unaided last month.

Mary said neither she or David, a shopping centre manager, started walking until they were at least a year old.

She added: 'It was amazing but we always knew he would be a fast learner.'

'I think using the bouncing chair has built up the muscles in his legs but it's funny how he learned to walk before he learned to crawl.'

'I always thought it would be the other way around.'

Child development experts confirmed it was 'extremely uncommon' for a child to start walking at such a young age.

Dr Martin Ward Platt, consultant paediatrician at Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle, said: 'It's very unusual to be walking at such a young age.'

'To be quite so precocious with your walking is extremely uncommon, but with 700,000 babies delivered every in the UK it will happen from time to time.'

'For his parents, having to cope with a much more mobile child much earlier than expected simply brings forward the moment you need eyes in the back of your head.'

Sign Language

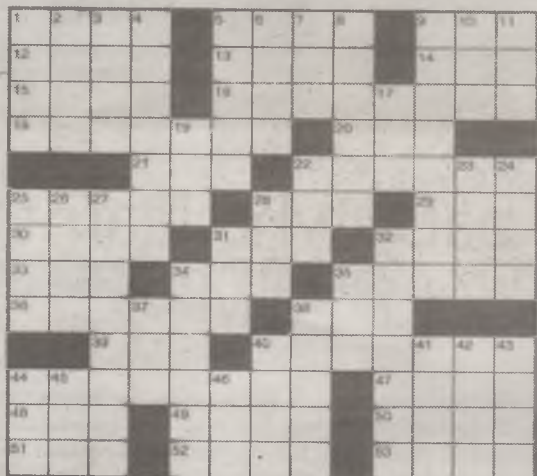


No valet parking for me. I'll park myself.  
Photo location: New Orleans, by Chris Schneider  
Culled from www.signspotting.com

EASY CROSSWORDS

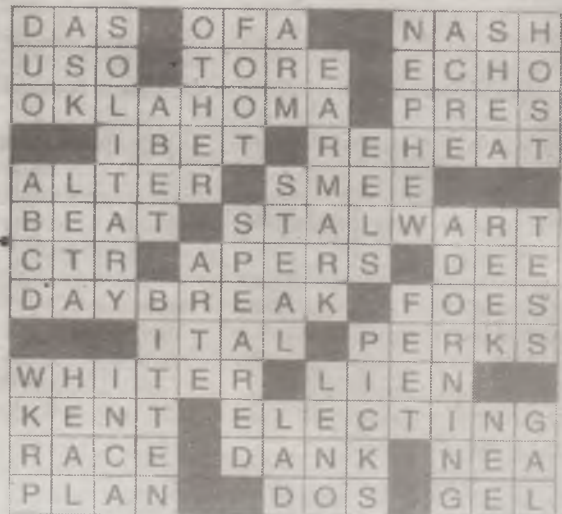
- ACROSS**
- 1. For \_\_\_ care (2 wds.)
- 5. Recipe measurement (abbr.)
- 9. Bonnet
- 12. Lennon or Astin
- 13. Rick's love in "Casablanca"
- 14. Broad street (abbr.)
- 15. See 11 Down
- 16. Pertaining to measurement
- 18. Egyptian structure
- 20. Pen filler
- 21. Completé failure
- 22. Squabble
- 25. Handled
- 28. Stadium shout
- 29. IM provider
- 30. Alack's partner
- 31. Ask humbly
- 32. Army deserter (abbr.)
- 33. Stimp's pal
- 34. Archaeologist's outing
- 35. Landscape
- 36. Firmly anchored
- 38. Congeal
- 39. Jump's relative
- 40. Quiver
- 44. Migraine
- 47. Director Kazan
- 48. Suffix for a doctrine
- 49. Canadian Indian
- 50. Habit wearers
- 51. Bus depot (abbr.)
- 52. Gazed upon
- 53. Head (Fr.)
- 9. Cutting tools
- 10. Hollywood's Gardner
- 11. Israeli city with 15 Across
- 17. Those holding power
- 19. Wet dirt
- 22. Witch
- 23. Robber's slang for money
- 24. Jazz's Fitzgerald
- 25. Author John Dickson
- 26. Toast topper
- 27. Wide-angle view
- 28. Standard (abbr.)
- 31. Auction offer
- 32. Malady
- 34. Mark with graffiti
- 35. Churchill's sign
- 37. Media mogul Turner
- 38. Gluttony
- 40. Penn's pronoun
- 41. Comflower or baby
- 42. Dryer accumulation
- 43. "At \_\_\_!"
- 44. Masculine possessive
- 45. Superlative suffix
- 46. Wall

75



Solution to Easy Crosswords

74



SUDOKU

The Sudoku puzzle consists of a 9x9 square grid made up of smaller 3x3 square grids (regions). The numbers already present within the puzzle are "given"- these are there to start you off. The aim is to complete the puzzle by filling the empty cells. Every digit from 1-9 needs to fit in each row, column and region of 9 squares. Each row, column and region must contain just one instance of each number, 1-9.

87

	1						3	5
			9	5		4	1	
		3	1		6		2	
		6			4			7
8				3				4
1			2			8		
	4		8		5	3		
		3	5		6	2		
9	6							4

Solution to Sudoku 86

2	7	4	8	1	3	6	9	5
5	1	6	7	2	9	4	3	8
9	8	3	4	6	5	1	2	7
1	4	5	3	9	2	7	8	6
6	3	7	1	8	4	9	5	2
8	9	2	6	5	7	3	4	1
4	6	1	2	3	8	5	7	9
7	5	8	9	4	1	2	6	3
3	2	9	5	7	6	8	1	4

## News Extra

# 25 dead and Eurostar halted as two trains collide in Brussels

**T**wo commuter trains crashed head-on outside Brussels yesterday morning killing 25 people and seriously injuring dozens more.

The trains collided in snowy conditions around 8.30am (7.30GMT) in Buizingen, a suburb of the Flemish town of Halle which lies nine miles south-west of the Belgian capital.

The first two carriages of one of the trains were pushed up into the air as a result of the force of the crash. Most of the deaths happened in the train which ended up underneath the first train.

One survivor said: 'It was travelling at a high speed and had no intention of stopping. The collision was like an earthquake. It was absolute chaos.'

Pictures from the scene showed another car that appeared to have tipped onto its side. Rescuers carried victims on stretchers along the tracks. Many of those injured will need to have arms and legs amputated, said Etienne Schouppe, the Belgian transport secretary.

The mayor of Buizingen told Belgian radio the seriously hurt were taken to hospitals and the lightly injured were moved to a sports complex.

Rail traffic from Brussels to south-western Belgium has been halted and Eurostar services have also been suspended.

There has been no immediate explanation as to the cause of the crash but it has emerged that one of the trains apparently jumped a red light.

**I**t raised the terrifying possibility that, as has happened in the past, a language problem between Belgium and Flemish rail workers had caused the accident.

One of the trains was providing a local Flemish service, while the other was travelling towards the major Belgian city of Liege.

Lode Dewitte, the governor of Halle, said: 'It appears that one of the trains ignored a signal at red so causing the collision.'

'There are many fatalities and very serious injuries. Numbers are unconfirmed but there could be as many as 25 dead according to those at the scene.'

One train was travelling was providing an exclusively Flemish service from Leuven to Braine-le-Comte, while the second was on its way from Hainaut to Liege.

Although it is just nine miles from Brussels, Halle is in Flanders, where French is seldom spoken. Instead inhabitants speak Flemish, which is a dialect of Dutch.

It is by far the worst accident in recent European rail history, but the circumstances are eerily simi-



RESCUE workers walk beside the wreckage of two passenger trains following yesterday morning's crash collision at Halle



RESCUE workers sift through the wreckage of a carriage which bore the brunt of the impact



EMERGENCY workers help an injured passenger away from the crash site

lar to an accident in 2001.

Then eight people died and 12 were injured when two commuter trains collided head on outside Brussels. Soon afterwards a language problem between a

Flemish-speaking signalman and a French-speaking colleague were blamed for the accident.

Yesterday morning's head-on crash was at the point where the domestic commuter lines and

high-speed lines meet at Halle, just outside Brussels.

This has meant that rail services - including those of Eurostar - cannot operate in the area.

Eurostar would normally have

run nine services in each direction on its London-Brussels route yesterday. Railway authorities said the accident caused severe damage to overhead power lines in the station.



THIS aerial image shows how after colliding the trains sheared away from each other before landing on their sides

## News Extra

# You are 'too fat to fly'

## ...Hollywood director booted off flight



'TOO fat to fly': Kevin Smith had booked two seats on alter flight



DANGER? Smith posted this picture of himself on Twitter after being allowed on to a later flight

**C**ult film director and actor Kevin Smith sparked an internet frenzy after he revealed an airline had thrown him off a flight for being too fat.

Smith claimed a pilot ejected him from a Southwest Airlines flight from Oakland to Burbank, California, saying he didn't fit properly in a single seat.

The Clerks star raised a stink about the incident on his Twit-

ter page Sunday, saying: 'I'm way fat, but I'm not there just yet.'

He added: 'If you look like me, you may be ejected from Southwest Air'

He posted a picture of himself sitting on the plane with his cheeks puffed out.

'I broke no regulation, offered no 'safety risk' (what, was I gonna roll on a fellow passenger?)' he later Tweeted.

'I saw someone bigger than me on THAT flight! But I wasn't about to throw a fellow Fatty under the plane as I'm being profiled. But he & I made eye contact, & he was like "Please don't tell..."

After landing in Burbank, Smith wrote: 'Don't worry: wall of the plane was opened & I was airlifted out while Richard Simmons supervised.'

Southwest says its 'Customer of Size' policy require travellers must be able to fit safely and comfortably in one seat or make other arrangements.

After a storm of angry online comments from Smith and his fans, the airline issued an apology first from its own Twitter account and later in a statement on its Web site titled 'Not So Silent Bob,' a jovial jab at the Silent Bob character Smith plays in many of his films.

# Pregnant driver cheats death

**A** mother-to-be cheated death when a giant steel girder smashed into her car - because she is so tiny.

Petite Kelli Chapman, just 4ft 11ins, was waiting at traffic lights when the 30ft steel girder fell from a passing lorry.

It ripped open her red Volkswagen Golf GTi "like a tin can" - but Kelli, 26, walked away unscathed as the girder shot through the windscreen over her head.

**C**rash experts said if she had been just three inches taller she would have been killed instantly by the the one and a half tonnes of steel. Kelli, who is three months pregnant, even managed to keep a cool head and call her father PC Rob Chapman from inside the crushed vehicle to ask for help.

PC Chapman said: 'Kelli called me and said "Dad, some metal has

fallen on my car"

'But when I arrived at the scene I was just stunned.



KELLI Chapman escaped death when a girder fell off the side of a lorry

'I could not believe what I was seeing. It was carnage. If she was not such a petite girl she would

be dead.

'If she had been any taller - or even if her car had been three

inches closer to the kerb - the girder would have hit her directly on the head.'



THE 26-year-old walked away unscathed after the girder shot through the windscreen of her Volkswagen Golf GTi and over her head

News Extra

**A** low-profile steel magnate has outperformed other tycoons to become Russia's richest man, a business magazine revealed yesterday.

The number of Russians worth more than \$1billion (£638million) jumped from 49 to 77 last year as the global downturn eased and Russia's economy started to rise, according to Finans magazine. Vladimir Lisin, who owns Novolipetsk Steel, saw his fortune more than double from \$7.7billion to \$18.8billion (£12billion), the magazine said.

The combined wealth of Russia's ten richest men increased 84 per cent last year, to \$139.3billion (£88.9billion).

Finans said Mr Lisin's companies control a sprawling steel mill in the city of Lipetsk and a large chunk of local infrastructure.

The 54-year-old keeps a low profile and is rarely seen in the pages of national newspapers.

Andrei Goryanov, editor-in-chief at Finans, said Mr Lisin was one of the few tycoons who does not enjoy 'special relations' with any faction of the Russian political establishment.

Last year's richest man, Mikhail Prokhorov, the metals and banking magnate, dropped to number two in the list, although his fortune increased from \$14.1billion to £17.8billion (£11.4billion).

He recently bought 80 per cent of U.S. basketball team New Jersey Nets.

Chelsea Football Club owner Roman Abramovich is number three in the list with a personal fortune of \$17billion (£10.8billion). Investors have flocked back



VLADIMIR Lisin

# Secretive steel magnate becomes Russia's richest man ... Leaves Abramovich trailing

to the Russian market in the last year. Russian benchmark index

MICEX has more than doubled since January 2009, moving from under 600 points to 1,315 points

this morning. The magazine publishes its list two months ahead of the better-known U.S. Forbes list

of billionaires, which named Mr Prokhorov as Russia's richest man last year.



## RUSSIAN RICH LIST

1. Vladimir Lisin - \$18.8billion
2. Mikhail Prokhorov - \$17.8billion
3. Roman Abramovich - \$17billion
4. Suleiman Kerimov - \$14.5billion

**“** Finans said Mr Lisin's companies control a sprawling steel mill in the city of Lipetsk and a large chunk of local infrastructure.

LAST year's richest Russian Mikhail Prokhorov was second, while Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich, right, was third with a fortune of

## News Extra

## No Valentine joy for Kenyan rose growers

Valentine's Day might be a time when lovers all over the world express their devotion to each other, but that goodwill is not reaching the rose growers of Kenya.

One reason is the global financial crisis, which has resulted in a reduced demand for flowers.

Another is the erratic nature of the weather because, according to Jane Ngige of the Kenya Flower Council, "when winters are heavy people don't go out shopping for flowers".

December to March is the busiest time of year for flower vendors as it takes in the Christmas period, Valentine's Day and Mother's Day.

Jane Ngige says 2008 was a magical year for the industry with a record volume of 93,000 tonnes worth \$520m (£330m), but the following year that fell 25% to \$390m.

"We planned for more volume this year," she says,



"but there has been a leveling-off in demand rather than an increase."

The main market for Kenyan flower growers is the European Union, which takes 65% of the produce grown, followed by Japan and the east European market.

"Labour has been scaled down but we are hoping

things will improve," Jane Ngige says.

"We try to keep workers with us as long as possible," she adds.

#### Romance lives

Recent research carried out for Interflora, which has 58,000 florists in 140 countries, shows that half of the respondents were not planning to do anything to

celebrate Valentine's Day.

The main reasons cited were because Valentine's Day has become too commercial, and because they wanted to save money.

Jane Ngige remains optimistic however: "We don't anticipate trends to change. People will want to

see their red roses - a sign of romance and a sign of communicating with flowers."

For those who will be giving a gift, flowers - and especially roses - top the list, with chocolate and jewellery also getting a mention.

International appeal  
Valentine's Day has spawned celebrations of

love beyond western culture, although the original meaning seems to have been lost somewhat.

In Japan and South Korea, Valentine's Day has become almost an obligation for women to give chocolates, known as giri-choco, to all of their co-workers on 14 February.

A reciprocal day on 14 March, known as White Day, has emerged in recent times, whereby men are supposed to thank those who remembered them on Valentine's Day with white chocolate or marshmallows, hence White Day.

In South Korea there is an additional Black Day, held the following month on 14 April, for less fortunate men who did not receive gifts on Valentine's Day.

They gather together to eat jajangmyun - Chinese-style black noodles topped with a black sauce.

Culled from [bbc.co.uk](http://bbc.co.uk)

## CAVEAT EMPTOR

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT PLOT NO. 542 SITUATE AND LYING WITHIN THE CENTRAL AREA DISTRICT, CADASTRAL ZONE (A00), REDESIGNED AND NOW DESIGNATED PLOT NOS. 1488 AND 1489 IS A SUBJECT OF LITIGATION BETWEEN

SHELTER CONCEPTS NIGERIA LIMITED (PLAINTIFF)

AND

- (1) THE HON. MINISTER, FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, ABUJA
- (2) THE FEDERAL CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (ALL DEFENDANTS)

IN SUIT NO. FCT/CV/1719/2009, IN THE HIGH COURT OF THE FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, IN THE ABUJA JUDICIAL DIVISION HOLDEN AT ABUJA.

ANY PERSONS THEREFORE WHO HAVE EITHER PURCHASED OR INTEND TO PURCHASE OR HAVE BEEN PROMISED ALLOCATION OR EVEN BEEN ALLOCATED THE SAID PLOT DO SO AT THEIR OWN PERIL AND IS OF NO MOMENT.

**BUYERS BEWARE!!!**

SIGNED

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FOR: SHELTER CONCEPTS NIG LTD

# ENVIRONMENT

environment@dailytrust.com

HOTLINE: 07041632079

## NESREA shuts down Etisalat base station

By Mustapha Suleiman

THE National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA), Thursday shut down a base station belonging to Etisalat, a communication outfit in Kubwa, a satellite town in the FCT.

In a press statement, NESREA'S Director of Legal Services, Barrister Bola Odugbesan said that no Environmental Impact Assessment Certificate was acquired by the company before going ahead to erect the mast.

Barrister Odugbesan who led the closure operation said that the agency was empowered by the NESREA ACT 2007 to prohibit the use of any equipment or technology that undermines environmental quality.

He disclosed that the base station situated within residential area, posed a health risk for residents as it would expose them to radiations emitted by such masts which could lead to diseases such as cancer.

"It is too dangerous to erect this type of base station in the midst of people. In future, people might start develop-

ing all sorts of ailment," he said.

The Legal Adviser further stated that the agency would continue its clampdown on all such base stations which violates environmental laws.

He pointed out that Nigerians have the right to live in healthy environment, promising that NESREA would not fall short of its mandate of ensuring cleaner and healthier environment for all Nigerians.

He added that the agency would further institute criminal proceedings against ETISALAT for disobeying the law.

## British Airways to build first eco-jet fuel plant

AROUND 500,000 tonnes of waste will be used at the facility every year to produce 16 million gallons of jet fuel.

The plant is scheduled to be built within two years in east London and will begin producing fuel from 2014, creating up to 1,200 jobs.

The plant will produce twice the amount of fuel needed to power its flights from London City Airport. However, it will only account for 2 per cent of Heathrow flights.

The airliner claims its facility will cut the amount of waste that is sent to landfill, thus reducing the amount of methane produced. Methane is one of the most hazardous greenhouse gases along with carbon dioxide.

BA will buy all of the output from the plant, which is being built by US firm Solena Group.



**66** The plant will produce twice the amount of fuel needed to power its flights from London City Airport.



MELTING water streams from iceberg calved from Ilulissat Kangerlua Glacier in Disko Bay, Greenland. When an iceberg melts, it makes a fizzing sound called "Bergie Seltzer." This sound is made when compressed air bubbles trapped in the iceberg pop.

## Nigeria, Tunisia partner on desertification

By Tina A. Hassan

NIGERIA and Tunisia are to collaborate in an effort to fight desertification in Nigeria especially among the states in the northern parts of Nigeria.

At a sensitization workshop on the utilization of Cactus opuntia to combat desertification held in Abuja, the Ambassador of Tunisia to Nigeria Mr. Moncef Gouja, said the partnership is to further build on previous agreements between Nigeria and Tunisia on how best to

fight the menace of desertification which has continued to cause more loss of land in Nigeria.

He said "the cheapest source of fighting desertification is Cactus and is a feed for all kinds of animals, Cactus is now an exotic fruit and can be grown for export."

The workshop according to Gouja, is to seek out ways of making partnership with private sector on the execution of the project in Nigeria by next month.

He said a private company based in Nigeria Interact Safety Systems limited, has already

been given the contract of executing the project starting next month.

The Minister of Environment John Odey also expresses optimism that the project would bring relief to fight against desertification in Nigeria.

The Project Director of Interact System Simon Naotm spoke on the many benefits of planting Cactus as a desert reducing plant said the plant to include food for man and animals and as an industrial raw material for cosmetics and for medicinal uses.

## Kano botanic garden organises first workshop

From Halima Musa &amp; Hisham Habib Kano

THE Kano botanical garden has organized its maiden annual workshop at the centre for democratic research and training mambayya house in Kano. The workshop was aimed at exploring the potentials and challenges of the culture and practice of traditional medicine in the country, and to foster understanding and encourage collaboration between modern medicine practitioners and their

traditional counterparts.

The president of the Kano botanical garden, Dr Fatima Batulu Muktar said the workshop was organized to sensitize the public on the importance of plants to human health and the need for the conservation and research on ethno medicine. She explained that the garden which was established two years ago is aiming to inculcate the significance of herbal medicine to the society, saying that is hoped to be formally commissioned in May this

year and sought the contribution of policy makers towards the conservation of plants for medicinal and other purposes.

The chairman of the Traditional medicine practitioners association of Nigeria, who is also a director of the National Universities Commission (NUC) professor Lawal Alhassan Bichi said there is the need for more awareness on ethno medicine, as more revenue is generated worldwide in it, he shunned the attitude of traditional herbalists towards their

own developments sighting examples of sabotage and mischief in the process of unifying them.

In his remarks the vice chancellor of Umaru YarAdua University Katsina, Professor Abdullahi Mustapha spoke on the relevance of ethno medicine as a means of ethnic identity, and the challenges posed by the advent of modern pharmaceuticals, he also emphasized on the need for the regulation of herbal medicine and the Assessment of its safety.



# Abuja to get sanitary inspectors

By Nasir Imam

THE FCT Administration (FCTA) will soon introduce sanitary inspectors to give close environmental monitoring of the entire Federal Capital Territory.

The FCT Minister, Senator Muhammad Adamu Aliero made this revelation on Monday during the FCT Operations Briefing Session in Gwarinpa I District, Abuja.

The Minister further revealed that when the Sanitary Inspectors

come on board, house to house environmental and sanitary condition would be better monitored and improved.

According to him, this measure will go a long way in improving sanitary conditions of individual resident of the Territory especially on their personal hygiene.

Senator Aliero charged property owners in the Federal Capital Territory to as a matter of urgency beautify their houses by planting flowers and ornamental trees.

The Minister urged the Federal Ministries and Parastatals as well as corporate organizations to also do something about their immediate environments by planting flowers in their areas of jurisdiction.

Senator Aliero reiterated that improved environmental condition will positively impact on the health condition of the residents of the Territory; insisting that prevention is better than cure.

He directed the Abuja Envi-

ronmental Protection Board (AEPB) to embark on aggressive campaign to achieve optimal result and to also invite the corporate organisations to buy into this Abuja Clean Environment initiative.

Meanwhile, the AEPB from December 17, 2009 - February 10, 2010 evacuated 303.6m3 special wastes from 276 Health Facilities in 20 Districts and 3 Satellite Towns of the Federal Capital Territory.

## Oyo launches trash bags for residents

From Yemi Bamidele, Ibadan

OYO State government has launched trash collection bags code named "Apo Akala" for residents of the state in its bid to rid the state, particularly Ibadan, the capital of environmental pollution thus making state neat with a view to reducing communicable diseases.

The state Commissioner for Environment and Water Resources, Alhaji Majekodunmi Aborode, told newsmen in Ibadan on the occasion of the launching of the trash-nylon bags which cost N20 per unit, that it was specially designed for the use of members of the public notably road sweepers, market men and women, members of the National Union of Road Transport Workers [NURTW] and other residents of the State.

According to the commissioner, even though the production cost of the bags was N35 per bag, the State Government had subsidized it so as to make it affordable for the entire members of the public.

He further spoke on the benefits of the trash bags which he said include neat and safe disposal of wastes, reduction in emergence of communicable diseases usually associated with unhygienic mode of refuse collection and disposal as well as standardization of refuse management.

The Commissioner noted with delight that Ibadan, Oyo State capital, which was adjudged as one of the dirtiest cities in the world by the United Nation Development Programme [UNDP] some years back, has started wearing a new look with the ongoing improvement in the area of environmental sanitation and beautification of the State, especially under the present administration.

Specifically, he stated that this complete turn-around in the general cleanliness of Ibadan, the seat of Oyo State Government in particular and the State in general has been receiving accolades and applause from national and international agencies as well as non-governmental organisations.



PIX: KENNEDY EGBONODJE

A temporary site where the GSM Village has been relocated at Wuse Zone 1, Abuja.

## Nigeria's Copenhagen experience an eye-opener — Odey

By Mustapha Suleiman

THE Minister of Environment, Mr. John Odey yesterday at the National Climate Change Post-Copenhagen Summit held in Abuja stated that the Nigeria's presence at the Conference was an eye opener to the global environmental and sustainable development politics.

Mr. Odey noted that the theme of the summit "National Climate Change Awareness and Global

Climate Agreement Process" is timely and appropriate following the United Nations Conference on Climate Change held in Copenhagen, Denmark between 7 and 19th December, 2009, which fell short of our expectation.

He said, "the high-level segment brought together 115 Heads of State. There is little doubt that the Copenhagen Conference left its mark in history as never before had climate change featured so prominently on the international

agenda. Although feelings about the outcome are mixed. Millions of people around the world had hoped that the Conference would be a turning point in the battle against climate change. The conclusions of the conference however clearly imply the need to search for home-grown strategies to address the challenges of climate change at national level."

The Minister added that immediately after the Copenhagen Conference, the Federal Gov-

ernment set in motion processes to map out strategies for both mitigation and adaptation purposes.

"We are fast-tracking the development of the National Adaptation Plan of Action (NAPA) as a proactive strategy for national response to the looming negative consequences of climate change just as we are exploring areas of collaboration with our development partners on both mitigation and adaptation projects," the Minister said.

## Berlin Renewables Academy, OGS partner on energy

From Mohammed Shosanya, Lagos

RENEWABLE energy development in West Africa is set to receive a major boost with the coming together of Renewable Academy of Berlin and Oil & Gas Soft Skills to deliver world class training in renewable energy solutions across the region.

To this end, a five-day course

will hold in Berlin, Germany in June to focus on understanding the investment opportunities in the renewable energy industry.

Speaking recently at the partnership signing ceremony, CEO of Oil and Gas Soft Skills, Emmanuel Emielu, disclosed that West African governments and businesses now have the opportunity to build critical

skills and insights for the development of renewable technologies and businesses across the region. Renewable energy technologies offer a short cut for rural and infrastructural development of our countries, and OGS is proud to be part of this phenomenal window of opportunity, he added.

In his remarks, RENAC

Chairman, Berthold Breid said "RENAC is very pleased about the partnership with OGS. Renewable Energies are an important answer to the energy challenges of nations. For the successful development of renewable energy markets, RENAC's training concept comprises the building up of know how in technical, financial, project management,

international market development as well as sales and marketing topics. Most of our courses are enriched by practical exercises in our Training Centre."

Renewables Academy AG (RENAC) is one of the leading, international providers of education and training in the fields of renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Environment



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# FG moves to tackle wrecks on waterways

MINISTER of Transport Alhaji Ibrahim Isa Bio has stated that it is the intention of Government to work hard towards elevating the current status of the country in international maritime industry. He said that as a step in that direction, Nigeria will work hard

to move up from the Category "C" status at the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council to the more prestigious Category "B" at the foreseeable future.

The Minister stated this recently when he inaugurated a Committee on the Auditing,

Wrecking, Clearing and Sale of Residual Metals on Nigeria waterways. Speaking further at the inauguration, Alhaji Bio stressed the need to clear our navigational channels of barges and boats as well as abandoned vessels that have constituted hazard, to safe

navigation. In his words, "It is a matter of utmost concern to note that these seized barges and boats now litter the ports, jetties and channels of several Naval facilities in Warri, Sapele, Lagos, Calabar and Port Harcourt having been detained for long period

of time due to bureaucratic bottlenecks and litigation which have hampered their early release. The clearing of these wrecks from our waterways and navigational channels will further enable us to comply with international standards in the Maritime sector."

## Military introduces desert camouflage uniform

From Mahmud Lalo, Jos

NIGERIAN troops deployed to Jos, Plateau state following the outbreak of civil unrest last month have introduced the desert camouflage uniform for the Jos operation.

The Assistant Director, Army Public Relations, (APRO) Rukuba 3rd Armoured Division, Lieutenant Colonel Galadima Shekari disclosed this yesterday.

According to Shekari, the introduction of the desert camouflage uniform was necessary saying that the uniform will give those that are actively involved in the operation a unique identity.

He added that the people in the North are not very familiar with the navy and air force uniform, which makes some residents to doubt them stressing that "with the desert camouflage we have now harmonized all those that are participating in the operation so that the Army, Navy and the Air Force will have one single identity."

Shekari further explained that by Tuesday February 16th, 2010 all participants in the operation would be fully kitted as many soldiers and officers are already wearing the uniform.



USE this radio in the garden or conservatory, where the batteries will be recharged by the sun and then power the radio for up to 27 hours

## Impact of sanitation on survival

UNICEF reports recently indicated that diarrhoea prevalence rate in Nigeria is 18.8 per cent.

The rate, according to the report, is "one of the worst in sub-Saharan Africa."

For many experts, the situation is "just not good enough" for a leading producer of crude oil, especially as children remain the worst victims of such a preventable disease.

Associated mostly with vomiting, purging and dehydration, diarrhoea has been identified by the Nigerian health authorities as the second largest direct cause of child morbidity and mortality in Nigeria.

According to statistics from UNICEF, diarrhoea accounts for more than 16 per cent of child deaths. That is a total of 150,000 deaths amongst children under five, annually.

Experts trace the disease to a lack of access to basic sanitation facilities and poor hygiene practices.

They say it is closely connected with malnourishment, as undernourished children usually have a compromised immune system and are also at a higher risk of developing pneumonia.

Recent reports from the World Health Organisation (WHO) have confirmed that Nigerian children will continue to be victims of diarrhoea as the country is said to be one of the seven high-population countries with

total sanitation coverage of less than 50 per cent.

In effect, less than half of

the population has access to improved sanitation and the access is as low as 10 per cent in some states with the situation worse in the rural areas.

The situation, according to the reports, has worsened in the last two decades, with environmental sanitation problems resulting in an escalating negative impact on public and environmental health.

Experts say poor environmental sanitation in Nigeria is characterised by the presence of heaps of refuse in cities, indiscriminate disposal of solid and other wastes, blocked drains, overgrown weeds, among others.

The state of food sanitation in homes, markets and abattoirs is equally appalling and unwholesome as food meant for human consumption is exposed to dust, flies, bacteria and other micro-organisms, they say.

The experts say that such probably accounts for the increasing cases of food-borne diseases such as cholera, food poisoning and typhoid fever.

According to Mr Jones Abari, an Abuja-based community health expert, the lack of safe and private toilets and hand-washing facilities in schools has ensured a quicker development of sanitation-related diseases on children.

At this year's National Environmental Sanitation Day, Alhaji Yayale Ahmad, the Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), deplored the poor sanitary condition in the country, and urged Nigerians to assist

government in creating awareness on the prevalence of sanitation-related diseases.

Ahmad urged the states and local governments to join hands with the Federal Government in its effort to take environmental sanitation "to a higher level".

The chairman, Senate Committee on Environment, Mrs Grace Bent, recently expressed



MR. JOHN ODEY

worry at Nigeria's poor sanitary habit, and advised that environmental issues should be put on the front burner.

"The issues should be handled with all seriousness," she said.

For Dr Suomi Sakai, UNICEF representative in Nigeria, quality health, especially that of children, could only be enhanced if sanitation is enhanced.

"A good sanitation that should ensure child survival should be treated as one of the rights of the child that must be enforced," he said.

According to Sakai, UNICEF

is collaborating with the government and other stakeholders to establish the right system and strengthen institutional capacity at national and sub-national levels for scaling up successful sanitation models.

To ensure a good environment, the Minister of Environment, Mr John Odey, said recently that government was introducing strategies aimed at resolving environment issues holistically.

According to him, the Ministry has constructed a bailing centre at Mpape, Abuja, where refuse would be dumped before being sorted out, while the house-to-house sanitary inspection has been reawakened in collaboration with the ministry of health.

He said that steps had also been taken to enforce standards in waste disposals.

Odey said that food sanitation and its related problems have posed great challenges to the country and explained that a National Policy Guideline on Food Sanitation has been developed to provide general principles for proper and hygienic handling of food.

He said that a training manual on food sanitation has been distributed to states, local governments and other stakeholders in order to facilitate capacity building on food handling.

He said that the ministry was collaborating with the federal ministry of education to develop guidelines for school food vendors on home-grown school feeding and health programme.

The policy, he said, would ensure school health policy, periodic surveillance and fumigation of schools.

Odey said that the ministry was constructing a pilot biogas plant for the conversion of abattoir waste to biogas and organic fertilizer, while markets would be strictly monitored to be sanitation compliant.

He also spoke of plans to resuscitate inspection of premises by the sanitary inspectors and environmental health officers, saying that mobile courts would be set up to try sanitary offenders.

But as the nation works toward better sanitation habit, Mr Jonathan Burton, the Country Representative of WaterAid, said it was unfortunate that more than 70 million Nigerians still practice open defecation.

"The only way to tackle the problem is through strong policies that would be implemented by all tiers of government," he said.

He advised Nigerian leaders to pay attention to policies that reduce poverty and hunger, as well as those that would promote education for all, gender equality, reduce child mortality and improve maternal health.

Analysts, while calling for more concerted effort to improve public health, have said that Nigeria's ability to meet the target of halving child mortality by 2015 would largely depend on the collaborative effort of all the tiers of government. (NAN Features)

# HEALTH REPORT

## NAFDAC secures conviction of fake drug importer

Stories by Onimisi Alao

THE National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) has secured the conviction of a drug dealer John Mbanude for importing fake products into the country.

The Federal High Court sitting in Kaduna which described Mbanude's act as being unpatriotic and inhuman ordered him to pay a fine of N500,000.

NAFDAC which instituted the case says in a statement that Mbanude who operates from Onitsha imported fake Delta Medicated and Antiseptic Soap on March 19, 2003 and that laboratory analysis of the product showed that it did not contain the ingredients of a medicated soap.

The statement which noted that the offence is punishable under Section 1(a) of Counterfeit and Fake Drug and Unwholesome Processed Foods Act of 1999 said when the charge was read to the accused he pleaded guilty and asked the court for leniency.

Giving the judgement which lasted for 30 minutes, according to the statement from NAFDAC, the presiding judge Justice Mohammed Lawal Shuaibu argued that importation of fake products was causing the deaths of millions of Nigerians and that appropriate punishment was necessary to discourage people from the act.

By law, a convicted fake drug importer is liable to a jail term of at least five years or an option of a fine of N500,000.

Daily Trust recalls that NAFDAC has been pushing for stiffer penalty for convicted fake drug dealers to add more bite to the war against fake and counterfeit drugs and food products.

## Heart group lists seven essentials for heart health

THE American Heart Association has identified seven secrets to a long life: Stay away from cigarettes. Keep a slender physique. Get some exercise. Eat a healthy diet and keep your cholesterol, blood pressure and blood sugar in check.

Research shows that most 50-year-olds who do that can live another 40 years free of stroke and heart disease, two of the most common killers, says Dr. Clyde Yancy, president of the Association.

The association is introducing an online quiz to help people gauge how close they are to the ideal. If you fall a bit short, it offers tips for improving.

"These seven factors - if you can keep them ideal or control them - end up being the fountain of youth for your heart," said Dr. Donald M. Lloyd-Jones, a cardiologist who was lead author of the statement. "You live longer, you live healthier longer, you have much better quality of life in older age, require less medication, less medical care."

Specifically, those with ideal cardiovascular health can answer yes to the following: Never smoked or quit more than one year ago. Body mass index less than 25. Get at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise each week. Blood pressure below 120/80. Fasting blood glucose less than 100. Meet at least four of these dietary recommendations: 4 1/2 cups of fruit and vegetables a day; two or more 3.5-ounce servings a week of fish; drink no more than 36 ounces of sugar-sweetened beverages a week; three or more 1-ounce servings of fiber-rich whole grains a day; less than 1,500 milligrams a day of salt.

The online quiz calculates a score based on the answers, 10 being the ideal. Doctors say the quiz is a good way for people to get a handle on how they're doing, especially since people often think they're doing better than they actually are. (AP News)

## 'Exclusive breastfeeding benefits adulthood'

WHEN the Country Director of UNICEF (Nigeria), Dr Suomi Sakai, had the opportunity to comment on issues involving children's health yesterday, she educated many on the short and long-term benefits of exclusive breastfeeding.

Exclusive breastfeeding is vital to the children, she noted, not just because the breast milk is nutritious, strengthens the child, and protects him from diseases, it is also because it aids the child's robust growth and intellectual development. How well children develop into adulthood, she emphasized, depends much on the exclusive breast milk he or she had or did not have in at least the first six months of life.

Exclusive breastfeeding, by which is meant adequate feeding of the new baby with nothing other than the mother's breast milk for at least the first six months, is identified by medical science to be the healthiest way to feed the baby.

Breast milk is said to provide 'complete and perfect nourishment for infants, boosting their immune system and protecting them from potential killers such as diarrhoea and pneumonia.' It is said to also minimise an infant's exposure to potentially unsafe food or water, and now saves estimated six million lives every year.

Recent findings have it that the positive effect of breast feeding on later cognitive function continues to be the most consistent effect. It is established that breast feeding is likely to protect against some immune-related diseases later in life, such as type 1 diabetes, coeliac disease, inflammatory bowel diseases and perhaps cancer. Furthermore, breast is believed to be associated with a lower blood pressure and serum cholesterol. Most new studies show a protective effect against later obesity,

although it is said to be small. A new hypothesis suggests that breast feeding programmes the insulin-like growth factor axis and results in higher growth velocity in later years.

It is no special breastfeeding campaign season. All it took, instead, was an advocacy visit to the Nigeria office of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) yesterday by the management of the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC). The agency was at the UN House in Abuja to seek further collaboration with the UN health organ on areas of mutual interest, including the promotion of a culture of breastfeeding in Nigeria for maximum nutritive effects.

The NAFDAC Director General, Dr Paul Orhii who thanked UNICEF for the collaborative efforts that he said had helped the agency in its tasks in the past said it still needed UNICEF on many challenging health issues, including how to sensitize Nigerians on the desirability of exclusive breastfeeding.

He said NAFDAC was still working on achieving a halt in 'flagrant and aggressive' promotion and marketing of breast milk substitutes, something which he said had become 'a major contributory factor to the decline in exclusive and optimal breastfeeding rates in Nigeria vis-a-vis high infant mortality and morbidity rates.'

Some 20 years ago, what was called the Innocenti Declaration was launched to save the lives of millions of babies. It sought a commitment from governments to support and encourage exclusive breastfeeding, which UNICEF believes gives children the best start in life. It is on record that since the launch in 1990 global breastfeeding rates have risen rather slowly,



especially in less developed and largely uninformed countries.

UNICEF which was created by the United Nations General Assembly on December 11, 1946 has been working in Nigeria since 1953 to support the government of Nigeria implement programmes and policies for the realisation of children's wellbeing and rights.

Despite efforts by international agencies like UNICEF and national government agencies like NAFDAC, too many babies are still suffering malnutrition and even dying in many cases because they're not being exclusively breast fed. According to researches, exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months - with continued breastfeeding for the first year - could save 1.3 million lives every year, well over 3,000 lives each day. It is further computed that if breastfeeding is continued alongside appropriate

complementary feeding until at least age two, the world could be saving 5,500 additional lives daily.

The struggle to inculcate the culture of exclusive breastfeeding in Nigeria has been fraught with restrictive realities, such as the difficulty of career mothers who have to spend an average of nine hours in office, almost invariably away from the newborn baby. A nursing mother can only spend three months on maternity leave by existing labour laws.

Happy that he was able to secure the assurance of Dr Suomi Sakai that UNICEF would support efforts of NAFDAC to promote exclusive breastfeeding, Dr Paul Orhii announced that NAFDAC had put a crèche in place and would willing oblige request for help from other organisations which may wish to establish crèches of their own for use of nursing mothers.

## CITY NEWS



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PIC: MUSTAPHA SULEIMAN



CHILDREN of Poorest of the Poor Orphanage Gwagwalada entertaining guests recently in Abuja.

## DPO assures airport PCRC of adequate security

By Abubakar Yakubu

THE new divisional police officer of Airport Police Division, Mr Enele Samuel, a deputy superintendent, Saturday pledged to assist the Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC) in ensuring adequate security around the airport community in Abuja.

Deputy Superintendent of Police Enele Samuel said the police will assist the PCRC to put into practice all security information that aims to curb crimes.

He said strategies would be adopted in coaching the PCRC members as contained in a paper he presented in November last year to participants at Hajj Camp, Murtala Mohammed International Airport (MMA) Lagos, where he last served before his recent posting.

The divisional police officer praised the formation of PCRC in 1984 by former inspector-general of police, Etim Inyang, adding that members of the committee are successful people from all walk of life with missions to develop the security of their community.

He said sacrifices have to be done to achieve great results in community policing as well as absolute devotion before residents are issued with PCRC membership identification card as a way of encouragement.

The police officer urged PCRC members to be conscious about their role as police informants and to verify information before giving them to the police, who will also verify before taking necessary action in crime prevention and prosecute the suspects.

On the issue of the last 'mock bomb rescue exercise', the divisional police officer stated that the police did their best to communicate the matter, adding that response was timely but more attention will be paid to such incidence.

He promised to resolve the Igbo Chieftaincy conflict existing in Bassan Airport Village so that the two divided parties will settle their differences very soon.

# AIT reporter killed at Karu

By Abubakar Yakubu

A reporter with the African Independent Television (AIT), Mr Efenji Efenji was on Sunday night brutally murdered by a gang, who accosted him at Cortland Gardens, Karu, where he went to spend the Valentine Day celebrations with his wife and nine months old baby girl.

The victim's cousin, Innocent Eneji said the deceased and himself decided to take their wives and babies out on Valentine's Day and settled for Cortland Gardens at about 10pm.

He said while entering the place; they observed unruly behaviours from some of the customers of the place and linked it to the free beer from an on-going promotion sponsored by some beer breweries.

Eneji disclosed that Efenji got up to dance and only heard his cry from a distance and had to trace where it was coming from.

"As I got to the place, I met over

10 persons using axe, machetes and bottles on Efenji, who on sighting me crawled and grabbed my legs to beg me to save him as he was about to be killed," the witness said.

The victim's cousin said he immediately rushed at the assailants before Efenji got up and climbed over a barbed wire fence to escape.

Eneji lamented that when the police arrived the scene of the incident; they arrested him along with two other suspects and refused to listen to his explanation that there was an injured person over the fence.

"I kept on telling the police that we should go in search of my relative, who was injured but they ignored me and locked me in their cell," he added.

Our reporter learnt that the corpse of the journalist was seen close to Karu market by a security man in the area, who alerted the police at 4 am yesterday.

Father of the deceased, Mr

Efenji, expressed his disappointment at the action of Karu divisional crime officer, when he was approached for explanation.

He said the officer told him that the case was that of two fighting and that it was not a police case, adding that he was shocked that such statements could come out of a senior police officer.

The Metro Area Commander, Assistant Commissioner of Police Sunday Odukoya was the first top police officer to arrive at Karu Police Station to monitor the level of investigations carried out on the case.

The commander expressed his disappointment at the arrest of the victim's cousin and ordered his immediate release.

A police source told City News that the police from Karu only carried out arrests at the crime scene when the manager called them at about 11.30 pm Sunday and did not take pictures of the broken bottles and blood stains as well as the barb wire the victim pulled down

before he scaled over a fence.

The source said the area commander was also not happy with that development and ordered that proper investigations be carried out immediately.

At the Karu Police Station, relatives of the deceased were consoled by the area commander, who told the press that investigations were just beginning in the case and that journalists will be briefed about the situation.

The divisional crime officer of Karu, Mr Lewis denied telling the deceased person's father that the case is not a police case. He said he only told the father that they can collect the corpse whenever they wanted from the mortuary at National Hospital, adding that as a crime officer, he knows the issue is that of culpable homicide which is a serious crime case.

The crime officer denied any enticement from the manager of the garden, where the incident happened and said the manager is in detention.

Also speaking on the issue, FCT Police Spokesperson, Moshood Jimoh, a superintendent, said at about 22.45 hours Sunday, the police received a complain of a free for all fight at Cortland Gardens and rushed there to investigate.

He said at 5.30 am yesterday, a security guard around Karu market reported the presence of a corpse close to the market and the police rushed to the scene to take pictures as well as identified him from his identity card.

"The FCT police commissioner has detailed the deputy commissioner in charge of criminal investigations department to take charge and I must assure you that the police are doing their best as two suspects have been arrested," he disclosed.

It would be recalled that a few weeks ago, a female lawyer, her maid as well as security guard were brutally killed with similar instruments used on the AIT reporter.

# Maid admits stealing N1m from Reps member

By Hussein Yahaya & Ibraheem A. Fatai

A maid Friday in court admitted stealing N1 million from her master, Henry Seriake Dickson of the National Assembly, Abuja on February 6, 2010.

The maid, Mary Eneji however denied that she converted the money for her own use.

Police prosecutor, Abdul Alhassan stated in court that on

February 6, 2010, one Barrister Friday N. Nwosu of No 2, Idris Garba Close, Apo Legislative Quarters, Abuja, reported to the police that the accused stole N1 million belonging to her master.

"The accused connived with two other persons now at large to enter the bedroom of her master to steal N1 million without his consent," the prosecutor added.

He went further to state that

the offence the accused committed is punishable under Sections 79 and 288 of the Penal Code Law.

When the charge was read to the lady, she admitted stealing the money, but denied converting it to her own use.

The maid told the court some persons persuaded her to steal the money and bring it to them.

After taking her plea, the prosecutor asked the court for

a date for hearing, while Chief Magistrate Hafsat Soso granted the accused bail in the sum of N200,000 with two reasonable sureties in like sums.

The magistrate also ruled that the sureties must be civil servants who must reside within the court's jurisdiction and swear to affidavits to produce the accused in court on the adjourned date.

The case was adjourned to March 24 for hearing.

## Man accused of stealing generator

By Usman A. Bello & Chioma Anoze

A middle-aged man, Kennedy Orihabor, has been arraigned before an Abuja Area Court for allegedly stealing a generator set belonging to Mr. Komi Azigode.

Police prosecutor, Musa Abdullahi, told the court that the accused who resides in Mpape village, Abuja, committed the offence on January 29, this year, at about 1 am.

The prosecutor stated further that the accused entered into Azigode's compound and made away with his generator set and N95,000 cash, adding that during police investigations, the accused confessed to the crime.

When the content of the First Information Report (FIR) was read to the accused, he pleaded not guilty and requested for bail, which was not objected to by the prosecutor.

Judge Lawal Mannir granted the accused bail in the sum of N10,000 with a surety in like sum, who must reside within the court's jurisdiction and adjourned the case to February 22 for hearing.

In another case, two persons were before an Abuja magistrate court for alleged trespass and public nuisance, offences contrary to Sections 348 and 183 of the Penal Code Law.

The accused persons, Musa Ahmed and Sunday Bitrus were said to have trespassed into the premises of Pace Setter Academy School, at Wuse Zone 7, Abuja.

Police prosecutor, David Udeh, informed the court that the accused persons were arrested inside the school's premises and brought to the police station, adding that during investigation, they could not give a satisfactory account of themselves.

The accused persons pleaded not guilty after listening to the charges and requested for bail. Magistrate Fatima Murtari granted them bail in the sum of N10,000 each with one surety each in like sums.

The case was adjourned to March 2 for hearing.



PIC: ABUBAKAR YAKUBU

RURAL dwellers in FCT displaying their farm products during an event in Abuja recently.

## Woman in court over forged documents

By Hussein Yahaya & Ibraheem A. Fatai

THE police yesterday arraigned a 50-year-old woman before an Abuja magistrate court for alleged conspiracy and forgery.

The woman, Mrs. Dorcas Yahaya was accused of collaborating with other persons now at large to forge some FCDA documents.

Prosecutor Boniface Asogwa, a superintendent of police, told the court that sometimes in March 2002, at

the FCDA Quarters in Area 11, Abuja, the accused forged FCDA's documents of offer (MFCT/LA/2878) and a technical deed plan.

"The accused dishonestly and fraudulently forged FCDA's documents with the intent to make them look like documents that originated from the FCDA," the prosecutor stated.

He said the accused used the documents at various police formations in Abuja and FCDA headquarters, Abuja, thereby committing offences punish-

able under Sections 97 (1), 364 and 366 of the Penal Code Law.

When the three-count charge was read to the accused, she denied the charges and requested for bail, which was vehemently opposed by the prosecutor on the grounds that the accused might jump bail or interfere with police investigations.

Magistrate Hadiza Dodo adjourned the case to today when application for the accused person's bail will be determined.

## 22-year-old jailed for theft

By Usman A. Bello & Bumi Omolehin

AN Abuja magistrate court recently sentenced 22-year-old Abubakar Lawal to seven days imprisonment for stealing money from a lady's hand bag.

Police prosecutor, Adamu Abdullahi, had earlier told the court that on February 3, one Grace Obi of the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) reported to the police that the accused dipped his hand into her hand bag at Wuse Bus stop and stole N2,000 from it before he was sighted and apprehended by

other bystanders.

He said during police investigations, the accused confessed to the offence that is punishable under Section 287 of the Penal Code Law.

The accused pleaded guilty to the charge and begged for leniency, saying he stole out of temptation as he has no means of livelihood.

The prosecutor urged the court to try him summarily under Section 157 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC) and Magistrate Aminu Ari sentenced him to seven days imprisonment or an option of N300 fine

PIX: ABUBAKAR YAKUBU & ABUBAKAR SADIQ ISAH



CORPS members during an empowerment programme at Kubwa recently.



DIGNITARIES during the 'FCT Rural Week' in Abuja recently.



FIREMEN battling to put out fire from a vandalised oil pipeline at Gada-Biyu vil-lage ...last Wednesday.



FCT PDP Chairman Alhaji Alhassan Suleiman Gwagwa (right) addressing PDP members at Kwali ...Thursday.



STUDENTS of Government Girls Secondary School Abaji, during the school's inter-house sports competition at Abaji on Wednesday.

# Re: Jos Ethno – Religious Crisis of January 2010

Communiqué issued by Concerned Elders of Plateau State after their meeting on Monday, 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2010, in Jos on the recent crisis in Plateau State.

1. The elders of Plateau State commiserate with the government and people of Plateau State and indeed Nigeria over yet another unnecessary, unwarranted and wanton destruction of innocent lives and properties of citizens in Jos and its environs.
2. The Elders pray for the quick recovery of our dear president and Commander in Chief Alhaji Umaru Musa Yar'adua GCFR who has been hospitalized for nearly three months in Saudi Arabia.
3. The Elders commend the efforts of the Federal Government especially the Vice President Dr. Goodluck Jonathan GCON, for his prompt intervention and personal visit to the State with his entourage.
4. The Elders also appreciate the visit by representatives of the Governor's Forum, Traditional and Religious leaders, various associations, NGOs and public spirited persons who visited and continue to visit and support affected persons in the State.
5. We commend the efforts of the State Governor Da Jonah David Jang for his prompt intervention together with the security services in containing the crisis.
6. We condemn totally the resort to violence at the slightest provocation and state in no uncertain terms that there is no justification whatsoever for the unfortunate carnage in Jos.
7. The Elders Forum reaffirms its unflinching faith in the unity of Nigeria with the guaranteed right of every Nigerian to live and carry on lawful business in any part of Nigeria irrespective of his religion, tribe or creed.
8. The Elders believe that the dispute as to who is a settler or an indigene is absolutely unnecessary as every Nigerian should feel free to settle down and carry on his legitimate business in any part of the country. This clear provision of our constitution carries with it a corresponding responsibility on settlers and indigenes alike to respect the cultural and traditional values of each other.
9. We commend the openness and hospitality of Plateau State indigenes whose sacrifice has made Jos and indeed the entire Plateau State the most cosmopolitan city and state in the old Northern region of Nigeria. Since colonial times and the emergence of tin mining, Jos has been home to the Urhobo, Hausa, Ibos, Yoruba, Nupes, Terawas etc who provided labour for European mining companies and eventually settled down in the mining camps and suburbs that emerged. These people and their descendants have properly integrated with their host communities. As a result, Plateau State has produced a Yoruba Commissioner, Igbo Board Chairman and Board Members, an Urhobo Member of the House of Assembly, various Hausa and Fulani members of local Governments, State and National Assemblies and many others. How many states in Northern Nigeria can match these? Yet only one ethnic group is crying about marginalization in Jos among other settler stakeholders. It is this same group that is needlessly contesting the ownership of Jos with the indigenes.
10. For the avoidance of doubts, we list here below a few of several important executive, legislative and judicial positions held by non indigenes in Plateau State over the Years.

## EXECUTIVE POSITIONS

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. Late Chief Janet Akinrinade | Commissioner for Revenue – Oyo State                  |
| 2. Dr. Chris Abashiya          | Special Adviser on Higher Education – Kaduna          |
| 3. Alhaji Danjuma Adamu Dabo   | Special Asst. to the Governor – Bauchi                |
| 4. Late Alhaji Mabudi          | Special Asst. to the Governor – Nasarawa              |
| 5. Alhaji Alwan, S. Dankurma   | Current Chairman Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board – Kano |
| 6. Alhaji Innusa Ubale         | Current Special Asst. to the Governor – Kano          |
| 7. Alhaji Salisu Musa          | Current Special Asst. to the Governor – Kaduna        |
| 8. Hajija Altine Mudi          | Current Special Asst. to the Governor – Bauchi        |

## LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. Alhaji Isiaku Gwamna        | Member House of Assembly Kaduna – Gombe         |
| 2. Alhaji Isa Haruna           | Member House of Reps Lagos – Kano               |
| 3. Alhaji Salihu Nakande       | Member Northern House of Assembly – Kano        |
| 4. Alhaji Inuwa Dan Anacha     | Member Plateau State House of Assembly – Kano   |
| 5. Alhaji Inuwa Ali            | Member House of Reps Abuja – Kano               |
| 6. Alhaji Inuwa Ada            | Member Plateau State House of Assembly – Bauchi |
| 7. Alhaji M.K. Sani            | Member Plateau State House of Assembly – Kano   |
| 8. Alhaji Dahiru Mabugo        | Member Plateau State House of Assembly – Gombe  |
| 9. Chief J.K. Akporido         | Member Plateau State House of Assembly – Delta  |
| 10. Alhaji Akawu Namata        | Member House of Reps – Kano                     |
| 11. Alhaji A.A. Kazaure        | Member House of Reps – Jigawa                   |
| 12. Alhaji Shehu Sale Hassan   | Member House of Reps – Gombe                    |
| 13. Alhaji Samaila Mohammed    | Current Member House of Reps – Kano             |
| 14. Alhaji Ibrahim Baba Hassan | Current Dep. Speaker House of Assembly – Yobe   |
| 15. Alhaji Asliyu Wana         | Member House of Assembly Nasarawa               |

## JUDICIARY

- |                                 |                                     |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Hon. Justice Obi Okoye       | Chief Judge Plateau State – Anambra |
| 2. Hon. Justice George Uloko    | Chief Judge Plateau State – Benue   |
| 3. Hon. Justice Luke Emefor     | Judge, High Court of Justice – Imo  |
| 4. Hon. Justice M.O. Oyetunde   | Judge, High Court Justice – Oyo     |
| 5. Hon. Justice Constance Momoh | Judge, High Court Justice – Edo     |
| 6. Hon. Justice Azinge          | Judge, High Court Justice – Delta   |

Except for the first three (3) legislative positions, all other appointments were made between 1979 to date. We venture to ask, are there no non indigenes like Ibos, Yoruba, Urhobo, northern minority tribes and millions of other Nigerians in the Sabon Gars and other 'settler's quarters' of Bauchi, Kano, Zaria, Kaduna metropolis, Katsina etc? Do they enjoy the kind of hospitality meted to settlers in Jos? How many have similar positions as shown above? How many have represented these cities even at local government levels?

In Jos North Local Government Council, non indigenes have always been elected or appointed into the council since its creation. For example.

Alhaji Ismaila Mohammed	Elected Chairman, 1992, Hausa
Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki Nakande	Council Secretary 1992, Hausa
Chief Eke	Elected Councilor, 1976, Ibo
Alhaji Raji	Elected Councilor, 1976, Yoruba

Today's Jos North Local Government council includes the following non indigenes

## Elected Councilors

1. Hon. Kelechiku Nnamani Ibo – Enugu
2. Hon. Joseph Ukpabi Ibo – Imo

## Supervisory Councilors

1. Hon. Felix Okonkwo Ibo – Abia
2. Hon. Linda Adeyele Yoruba

Yet their people lay no claim to the ownership of Jos

11. We are proud of the fact that the hospitality of Plateau State has provided a permanent abode for all peace loving Nigerians, nurtured and trained prominent public officers, sportsmen, businessmen, actors, traditional rulers and statesmen including the present and immediate past Governors of Bauchi State (Governors Ahmed Muazu and Isa Yuguda). It is from the House of Assembly of this same Bauchi that Plateau indigenes are being chased out. Ironically there have been calls for the balkanization of Plateau State and 'return' of Jos to Bauchi. From Gombe we have heard weird and ridiculous suggestions that Federal Institutions in Plateau State should be redistributed to Bauchi, Nasarawa and Kaduna States. Given these circumstances, it needs no soothsayer to discern some of the remote causes of the crisis in Jos.

12. We condemn the style of reporting of the Jos crisis by certain section of the media which tend to portray Plateau indigenes and their leaders as unfriendly, hostile, ethnocentric, and unaccommodating. Fortunately, history cannot justify these reports. Was it Plateau indigenes that burnt down churches in Nasarawa Gwom, killed and burnt down houses of their brothers, Berom, Afizare, Anaguta, Mwachavul, Ngas, Gammal people etc? Who dominate Congo Roshia and Angwan Daliop areas of Jos? Or was it the Beroms that burnt their own houses and killed themselves in Bisichi? Where are the corpses and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from the carnage in these areas? Was it Plateau indigenes that razed down and looted Ibo and Yoruba shops in Bukuru? Regrettably the crisis has only succeeded in bringing out the animal instinct in man to the shame of all whether Hausa or Berom, Anaguta, or Ibo, Jarawa, Terawa, Taroh or Yoruba and whether Christian or Muslim, no one was spared this carnage and we must all share in the blame without casting aspersions or accusing fingers at any tribe or religion.

13. Certain media houses have continued to show pictures of IDPs of a particular religion thus creating the false impression that they are the only victims of the conflict. As if to confirm this, corpses of people of different tribes and religions are gathered and displayed to the media as victims from one ethnic group. This was the style exhibited in the 2008 crisis until it was later admitted that the deceased persons displayed and given mass burial included non Muslims whose corpses were picked on the streets! It is most unfortunate that the misfortune and death of innocent citizens is being used as instrument of propaganda.

14. We note with regret the unfortunate reference of the crisis in Jos in certain quarters as 'genocide' and dare to ask: Genocide by who, and against who? There can be no justification for sectarian, ethnic or religious violence anywhere in Nigeria by whatever name it may be called. It is 'genocide' in Jos, it is equally 'genocide' in Bauchi, Tafawa Balewa, Maiduguri, Zangon Kataf, Kano, Kafanchan, Kaduna etc and must be condemned with every legitimate force at our disposal. Genocide is a product of terrorism and must not be condoned unless we want to retain our name in the US watch list of terrorist countries.

15. We condemn the removal and redeployment of the immediate past police Commissioner Mr. Greg Anyanting in the heat of the riots. Another Commissioner of Police was redeployed from Jos in similar circumstances during the 2008 crisis. A system that punishes a person for speaking the truth is most despicable and condemnable. Would the police authorities have preferred false reports that would sweep the truth under the carpet? We urge the authorities to redeploy this courageous officer to his post immediately.

16. We equally condemn the indiscriminate arrest and transfer of alleged rioters from Plateau State for trial in Abuja. One detainee has already died in Police custody

Continued on next page.

Continued from the previous page...

without trial. Is this a vote of no confidence on the Plateau State judiciary or, where then is the rule of law? What has happened to the armed mercenaries from Kogi State arrested in Jos and similarly transferred to Abuja during the last 2008 crisis? We call on Nigerians to follow carefully the fate of the arrested youths and see how many will go on trial and their backgrounds.

17. While we commend the military and security agencies, it is unfortunate that there were cases of gross professional and unethical conduct by uniformed men who shot and killed innocent and defenseless civilians. Cases of 'fake soldiers' were rampant and we wonder where and how these 'fake soldiers' obtained uniforms and armed appearing same as the ones used by men of the armed forces. This matter calls for immediate investigation, otherwise confidence will be lost in our armed forces who have distinguished themselves as international peace keepers.

18. We condemn in the strongest terms the demolition and burning down of places of worship for whatever reasons. If it is true that sectarian conflicts in Northern Nigeria are not over religion, why burn down places of worship? Why slaughter clergy men? Why attack worshippers inside their places of worship. Have we lost our sense of moral values that we fail to appreciate the sanctity of churches and mosques.

19. We listened with shock and dismay as Aljazeera Cable Network TV announced that the terrorist group Al - Qaeda was prepared to intervene and supply arms to defend Islamic groups in central Nigeria particularly Jos. We hope that the Federal authorities and other Nigerians heard the news.

20. We call on the Plateau State Government to immediately set up structures that will initiate dialogue and confidence building measures with the various communities towards finding a lasting solution to the Jos crisis. We call on our traditional Rulers, Religious, Tribal and Community leaders to preach peace, tolerance and respect for one another's religious beliefs, traditional and cultural values. Though tribes and tongues may differ, though cultures religions and traditions may differ, in brotherhood we stand under one true God from whom we came and unto whom we shall return and render account of our journey to this world.

21. Once again, we commend the Vice President for appointing a 15 - man committee to find lasting solutions to the unfortunate perennial crisis in Jos. We appeal to the various communities and stakeholders to cooperate with the committee and make suggestions on the way forward.

22. Finally, we join the Vice president and all the people of Nigeria in praying that this will be the last ethno religious crisis in Plateau State and indeed Nigeria. Unless there is peace and justice in all of Nigeria, our dream to be among the 20 most developed nations of the world will remain but a dream.

LONG LIVE PLATEAU STATE,  
LONG LIVE THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Signed:

Senator George Boba Hoomkwag, Chairman	Barrister Danjuma Maina, Secretary/Member
Chief S. I. Gofwen, Member	Dr. Jonah M. Madugu, Member
Senator Cosmas Nigwon	Hon. Mohammed Abubakar
Ambassador Selchum	Chief G. M. Zyak
Chief Isiro Akun	Alhaji Abubakar Dusho
Alhaji Isidu Shindai	Alhaji Umaru Miango
Hon. Simon Lakong	Chief Joshua Wakkien
Hon. Victor Lar	Cpl. John Dungs (rtd)
Hon. Jerome Makfir	De Bulus Doreng
	Group Capt. I. E. Danyil (rtd)
	Hon. Nanzip Sambu

Brig. General S. Abok (rtd)	Alhaji Ado Ismaila
Brig. Gen. John Tyemlong (rtd)	Hon. Tolatu Agini
Chief S. I. Lot	Hon. Geoffrey Yileng
Hon. Ben. Shikugul	Dr. Charles Gonyok, mni
Mrs. Monica Gwom	Hon. Steve Kibedau
Elder Maiti Gunen	Hon. John Arkson
Hon. Haruna Gini	Hon. Rufus Bature
Hon. Christopher S. Jang	

## Job vacancy



Family Health International (FHI) is dedicated to improving lives, knowledge, and understanding worldwide through a highly diversified program of research, education, and services in family health and HIV/AIDS prevention and care. Since our inception in 1971, FHI has formed partnerships with national governments and local communities in dozens of countries throughout the developing world to support lasting improvements in the health of individuals and the effectiveness of health care systems. We are seeking qualified candidates for the following position:

### DIRECTOR, IT AND ADMINISTRATION (NIGERIA)

The Director, IT and Administration will provide leadership and management to FHI Nigeria's programs and projects in IT systems, including communications and IT applications and packages, facilities and lease management, safety and security, office administration, inventory management, travel, and transport management.

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- Manage IT and administration functions and their associated teams to ensure system effectiveness, efficiency and value for money at the country office
- Build systems and develop capacities to ensure effective operations of these functions in FHI's 11 zonal offices in Nigeria
- Lead the provision of technical and policy guidance and support the Country Director and other country office departments and the zonal offices in IT and administration services
- Support FHI's affiliate, Achieving Health Nigeria Initiative (AHNI), in IT and administration services

#### Minimum Requirements

- BS/BA in IT, management or related field and 11-13 years relevant experience in international development organizations or the organized private sector
- Or MS/MA in business administration or related field and 9-11 years relevant experience in international development organizations or the organized private sector
- Or PhD in business administration or related field and 7-9 years relevant experience in international development organizations or the organized private sector
- 5-7 years supervisory experience
- Experience in managing IT/communications at a challenging technical level
- In country operations management experience
- Ability to travel within Nigeria at least 20% of work time and ability to travel internationally when necessary

**Note:** This is not an expatriate position and no expatriate benefits or allowances will be provided.

FHI has a competitive compensation package. Interested candidates should visit FHI international employment webpage at [www.fhi.org/en/AboutFHI/Employment/index.htm](http://www.fhi.org/en/AboutFHI/Employment/index.htm) to submit their resume/CV and cover letter, including salary requirements, online.

# Thursday

# 18th

# February

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## Inside Politics

# Gov Shinkafi rejects commissioner's resignation

GOVERNOR Mahmuda Shinkafi of Zamfara has rejected the resignation of Alhaji Kabiru Marafa as Commissioner for Water Resources.

A statement issued in Gusau on Monday by Alhaji Adamu Katuru, the Director of Press to Shinkafi and made available to newsmen, said that the governor had not formally received Marafa's resignation notice.

It said: "The Zamfara government under the leadership of Alhaji Mahmuda Shinkafi denied the receipt of resignation letter from any of its commissioners.

"The Zamfara State Government wishes to re-affirm its confidence in its political appointees and has been enjoying their loyalty and support."

However, Marafa had last week announced his resignation from the cabinet at a brief hand over ceremony to protest his re-deployment from education to water resources ministry.

He said: "From today, I have resigned my appointment as a member of the Zamfara State Executive Council. I thank Gov. Mahmuda Shinkafi for giving me the opportunity to serve under his

administration."

Marafa was deployed to the water resources ministry from education in a minor cabinet reshuffle a fortnight ago for allegedly refusing to cancel the transfer of a secondary school principal.

The principal was allegedly indicted by a committee set up by Marafa to investigate alleged boarding school feeding mismanagement.

It was learnt that after the committee submitted its report, the commissioner consulted Shinkafi on its findings and recommendations before taking the action to

punish the erring principal.

Meanwhile, a powerful delegation has been raised to meet Marafa and plead with him to reconsider his resignation stand.

A Government House source told the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) in Gusau on Monday on anonymity condition that "Marafa's resignation at this crucial second term campaign bid would seriously affect the governor.

"Government is keen in reconciling its differences with Marafa, especially because of his political influence in Zamfara Central Senatorial Zone." (NAN)

## 2011: PDP leaders fault Emir's endorsement of Gov Doma

From Hir Joseph, Lafia

SOME leaders of the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Nasarawa State have faulted the endorsement of Governor Aliyu Akwe Doma by traditional rulers, saying the chiefs have usurped the party's constitutional role over the 2011 election.

Consequently, the party chieftains have concluded plans for a stakeholders' meeting in the week to address the matter with a view to stopping the traditional rulers from interfering in party politics.

Former commissioner during Abdullahi Adamu's regime, Musa Ilo Mohammed who spoke to newsmen in Lafia, yesterday, said the endorsements coming for the governor ahead of the 2011 election are ill motivated and portend grave implications for democracy in the state.

The Emir of Lafia, Alhaji Mustapha Agwai, recently led traditional rulers to Government House in Lafia during which the royal fathers endorsed the governor. The Emir also signed a communiqué of the people of Nasarawa-South zone, declaring that the meeting resolved that "for the avoidance of doubt, there is no vacancy at the Lafia government House in 2011 election for the office of the Executive Governor of Nasarawa State".

But Ilo Mohammed who was also present during the controversial meeting said yesterday, that he and other chieftains of the PDP have decided to go against the endorsement. "We realized we acted against the will of the people which is a norm in democracy," he said.

"As PDP chieftains, we have decided that the communiqué was wrong because it seeks to usurp the roles of the party. The party has democratic organs and processes that will lead to the endorsement of an aspirant, and none of this recognizes traditional rulers. Therefore, we are appealing to our traditional rulers to steer clear of party politics so as not to risk the attendant consequences on their personalities", Ilo Mohammed said.

## PPA leadership crisis: Court rules March 25

By Abdulmutallib A. Abubakar

THE legal tussle between the Chief Orji Ozor Kalu led Progressive Peoples Party (PPA) and the dissident group of the party led by Lisa Olu Akerele would be decided by an Abuja High Court on March 25, 2010.

Crisis began after the resignation of the former National Chairman, Mr. Clement Ebri and the national convention conducted last year which brought Mr. Larry Esin as Chairman.

Mr. Olu Akerele filed suit before Justice Ogakwu seeking a declaration that he should be given a chance to complete the term of Mr. Ebri, having come from the same geo-political zone of the country with him, as stipulated in the party's constitution.

Counsel to PPA, Barrister Chiema Chukwu (SAN), however, argued that Akerele had no locus standi to file the suit, having resigned his appointment as Deputy National Chairman (South) and submitted that the crisis within the party that led to the resignation of some key officers was an intra-party matter which should have been treated as such.

Reacting, counsel to Barr Ezé C. Alexander (SAN) said the resignation of Akerele had no effect whatsoever saying that regarding the issue of locus standi, Akerele had the authority to challenge the actions or inactions of the party as a right.



SECRETARY General Anambra Rebirth Coalition, Ike Neliaku (right) and the Coalition's National Coordinator, Dr. Okey Ikechukwu at the press conference on the just concluded Anambra election.

## Stop litigations, Anambra elders tell Ngige, others

By Muideen Olaniyi

THE Anambra State Public Officers and Elders Forum (ASPOF) has urged Governor Peter Obi's opponents in February 6 governorship election in Anambra State to accept the result in good faith and avoid embarking on court action that could distract his attention.

Chairman of the Forum and former chairman of Police Service Commission, Chief Simeon Okeke, who spoke to newsmen in Abuja,

also appealed to the contestants to accept the result in good faith and in the overall interest a state that has passed through political turmoil in the last 11 years.

Okeke, however, noted that the election had exposed some challenges that need to be addressed before 2011 including omission of registered voters and muddling up of identity of voters. He said such problems could mar the 2011 general elections if left unattended to.

He said the group resolved, "that

in preparation for the 2011 general election, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) is called upon to immediately commence a comprehensive review of the voters' register nationwide.

While hailing the conduct of the security personnel during the election particularly the police, he said the timely intervention of Acting President Goodluck Jonathan on the seeming misconception that arose before the election portrayed him as unbiased and principled leader.

## PDP chieftain advises Jonathan to reshuffle cabinet

By Abbas Jimoh

ACTING President Goodluck Jonathan has been advised to immediately reshuffle the Federal Executive Council in order to move the nation forward.

FORMER national chairmanship aspirant of the Peoples Democratic

Party (PDP) Chukwemeka Kanu, who gave the advice yesterday in Abuja while speaking to journalists, said nature abhors vacuum and Nigeria needs the right machinery and personnel to carry on.

"I commend the National Assembly and the Eminent Elders Group for their intervention that saved the coun-

try from the brinks of collapse.

"HE (Jonathan) needs to work with loyal and hardworking people and if the cabinet reshuffle would be in the best interest of the nation, then it would be the proper thing to do, what is paramount is that thing that would benefit Nigerians in the long run," Kanu said.

# Inside Politics

## 2011: 'Youths must resort to *akasa a tsare*'

YUSUF Manga, son of Second Republic Senator Jaffaru Manga from Southern Borno is a strong member of the ANPP in Borno State. In this interview, he speaks on issues relating to politics in Borno and the nation. Manga also speaks on Nigeria's tax regime. Excerpt.

By Ahmad Salkida

**YOU are advocating for a new tax culture for Nigeria, what is it all about?**

NIGERIA'S culture of paying tax began to fade with the death of the native authority and also during the long military rule. Today, the average Nigerian doesn't know anything about tax or the power of the tax payer. Taxes should be paid because government needs to generate revenues and shift from its reliance on oil to avoid the present status quo which is a mono based economy.

Taxes are paid in different ways, personal income tax, VAT; the two way taxes in our sea and air ports and from offences committed, among others. And when people pay tax they tend to have a sense of belonging in the system; they tend to ask questions about what is done with their taxes and who they should entrust their taxes to manage for them.

**How can this reform affect the lives of common Nigerians?**

Tax is imposed on individuals and organisations in any given state. The funds incurred from taxes are then used by government to provide health care, qual-

ity education and public transport among other basic life support. The way we pay our taxes and how the taxes are translated for the benefits of the general public defines who we are as a people and those in power. So far we (Nigeria) have failed in this way of life.

People don't ask questions; people destroy government properties whenever there is a riot because they feel they have no stake in government properties. People don't demand and insist on accountability because they don't see it as their money. But all these will change if everyone pays his or her own taxes and the common man will begin to have a connection with government.

**What impression do you have of Nigerian politics?**

Well, our parents started well before the military came and took us back to the trenches. Now we have started afresh though things are moving slowly, especially as seen in the Yar'adua administration. But we are making some progress especially now that educated people, youths and Nigerians from the Diaspora are showing interest in politics.

I, in particular believe that we cannot fold our hands and expect things to work out for us the way

we want, we have to fight, we have to tell the youths that look, we don't have the kind of money the older generation have, but we can make a difference.

I believe with this type of advocacy, the kind of violent resistance against government that we saw in the Niger-Delta and the Boko Haram crisis in many parts of the north will be translated positively to aid one of ANPP's greatest philosophy, which is, 'a kasa a tsare' that has helped people like Isa Yuguda and Ibrahim Shekarau to be what they are today.

**What party do you belong to and are you interested in contesting any position in the near future?**

I am a proud member of the ANPP and currently I am making consultations with my people and my leaders within the party, very soon I will know which position the party feels I can make valuable contributions to my people in Askira Uba and my state as a whole.

**Do you think the ANPP will survive after Governor Ali Modu Sheriff's tenure in Borno State?**

Yes, it is a fact that SAS is the brain and backbone of ANPP in Borno State, as a matter of fact



YUSUF Manga

nationwide. Therefore, the question can be extended to include the party itself. And to your question, yes, because Ali Sheriff has done a lot to the state and its people and also the party. I know people will like to dispute this claim because in Nigeria some people will like to look at development not in terms of its concept but rather the belief that a Governor must dole out cash to individuals then he will be seen to be doing a good job. Ali Sheriff can only be

compared to Mohammed Goni in terms of infrastructural development and human development in the State.

In Borno it is only the ANPP that is established in the grassroots; SAS has been able to touch the most remote communities in the state. In fact, he has already done the hard work for those of us that want to start. All that is expected of us now is how to consolidate what SAS and the ANPP has achieved in the state.

### AC promises increased support for women

By Akor Ojoma

NATIONAL Secretary of the Action Congress (AC), Alhaji Usman Bugaje has promised the party's unalloyed support for women especially in the 30% Affirmative Action describing women as central to the success of politics in the country.

He stated this in his address yesterday during a courtesy call on the party by the Gender and Affirmative Action Based Project (GAA) at the party's secretariat in Abuja.

Alhaji Bugaje said AC has been an advocate of women's rights in politics and has it brought that to bear in dealing with women in the party.

"In the National Executive of the AC aside the women leader, we have a female national vice chairman who is from the more tradi-

tional Northwest Zone in the person of Hajiya Rabiya Ishaq, a female national legal leader, national welfare leader, deputy national publicity secretary and we are also fielding a female candidate for the forth coming council election in AMAC. To ensure that women are fully represented and carried along in the country, the AC is also holding a national women's conference very soon, most likely in April," he said.

According to him, even the constitution of the party provides that of the two convention delegates from each local government, one must be female, stressing that the idea is a way of guaranteeing 50% women representation.

Earlier, Mrs Josephine Anenih, President of Women Foundation of Nigeria (WNTM) said GAA is an issue based project with the purpose of advancing gender equity

through a mechanism supporting the use of Affirmative Action as a tool for effective resource management and accountability, adding that it is comprised of both government and nongovernmental institutions and organisations like BAOBAB for women rights, Women's Rights and Advancement Protection Alternative (WRAPA), Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development and Alliances for Africa, among others.

Mrs Anenih said the group decided to meet stakeholders like AC to see that gender equity is actualized.

"Elections are coming up in 2011. We want to see 30% women representation in the National Assembly and all areas of governance. We hope to see this enshrined in the constitution," she stressed.

### Kaduna AC leaders trade allegations

From Ibraheem Musa, Kaduna

KADUNA State' chairman of Action Congress (AC), Alhaji Yahaya Sa'ad is a PDP mole who was planted to work for PDP since he defected in April 2007, Barrister Mohammed Musa Soba, AC's embattled publicity secretary said yesterday.

Soba who was reacting to a press statement issued by Sa'ad, disclaiming him as AC's publicity secretary, recalled that the party chairman defected to PDP in a well publicised ceremony where he gave out AC's state secretariat along Isa Kaita road.

According to Soba, Sa'ad bounced back to AC and plotted against the party "by constituting a kangaroo state Exco with known PDP members to decide the future of AC in Kaduna State."

He further said that the AC

chairman has never been on record to have criticised the Namadi Sambo-led administration.

The AC chairman had earlier accused Soba of extorting money from the state government with the aim of destroying the party and other anti party activities. He also called on security agents to prosecute the embattled publicity secretary.

Soba dismissed the allegation as "a script written and directed by the Namadi administration using Yahaya Sa'ad as a pawn on the Kaduna state complex political chess board ahead of 2011 elections."

He reminded both the government and security agents that criminal offences like extortion and bribery are fought in the court rooms and not on the pages of the newspapers.

## SPORT

Vidic out  
of San Siro  
showdown

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WEST All-Star Steve Nash of the Phoenix Suns passes the ball around East All-Star Dwight Howard of the Orlando Magic during the first quarter of the 2010 NBA All-Star Game in Arlington, Texas on Sunday. A record crowd of 108,713 turned out for the NBA All-Star Game at the Cowboys Stadium, where Dwyane Wade led the Eastern Conference to a 141-139 victory over the West.

## Siasia: I can handle Eagles

By Orkula Shaagee

FORMER Olympic team coach, Samson Siasia yesterday threw his hat into the ring of taking the Super Eagles to the South Africa 2010 World Cup, saying his antecedents have qualified him to do even better job than most of those shortlisted by the Nigeria

Football Federation (NFF) for the job.

Siasia, who spoke to reporters in Abuja, also said he would be ready to work with any foreign coach who has the ability of improving his technical expertise.

According to Siasia, who took the Dream Team to a silver medal

finish at the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, noted that he has better qualities of coaching the Nigerian team than some of the coaches shortlisted for the job.

"If I am asked to come on, I will go but as at now I have not been shortlisted for the job, may be, I am not good to them," he said.

The former international, who said the country's football administrators are still suffering from the inferiority complex of a black man, urged the Federation not to employ their coaches based on the colour of their skin.

He added that the NFF is aware of the fact that he is capable

of taking the Super Eagles to the World Cup, but wants to avoid him because of his tough stand on taking decisions.

"My outing with the Flying Eagles is not the reason for their not listing me for the job, they think I will not listen to them, but they also know I am capable", Siasia stated.

## Glo-CAF Awards: Top three emerge today

By Ismaila Lere

THE five top contenders for the prestigious African footballer of the Year Award sponsored by telecommunications company, Globacom will today know if they will remain in the race for the crown to be relinquished by Togo's Emmanuel Seyi Adebayor.

The unveiling of the top three will be made at the Holiday Inn in

Accra, Ghana today by the former vice-captain of Ghana Black Stars, Tony Baffour and President of Ghana Football Association (GFA) Mr. Kwesi Nyantakyi who are the star guests at the event.

The announcement to be made at an event put together by sponsors, Globacom Limited and the organisers, the Confederation of African Football (CAF), will also see the emergence of

nominees for all other categories including Young Player of the Year, Coach of the Year, Club of the Year and Inter-Club Player of the Year amongst others.

Nigeria's Victor Ikpeba unveiled Cote d'Ivoire's Didier Drogba, Ghana's Essien Michael, Cameroon's Eto Samuel, Mali's Keita Seydou and Cote d'Ivoire's Toure Yaya as the top five nominees in Lagos in December

2009. An official of Globacom explained that the involvement of these former players is in recognition of their contribution to the global prominence enjoyed by current African players.

The Confederation of African Football (CAF) will on the occasion announce the top three nominees voted by the national team coaches of CAF member federations and Baffour, who

played international club football at the highest level, will be on hand to announce the nominees.

"This is the second step in the process of selecting the winner of the prestigious Glo-CAF Awards which will culminate in the crowning of the winner at a ceremony on March 11, 2010", explained Suleiman Habuba, the Communications Director of CAF.

## NBBF, NIKE in long term deal

By Ismaila Lere

NIKE and the Nigeria Basketball Federation, NBBF have entered into a long term partnership that will see the sports wear, manufacturing outfit being involved with the development of basketball in the country.

Disclosing the new initiative at the weekend, president of the Nigerian basketball ruling body, Tijjani Umar, who is currently in the United States of America, said that the new initiative will see NIKE being involved with Nigeria national teams from senior to junior teams in various competitions.

The new partnership, according to Umar, will see the FIBA/NBA Without Border having a stopover in Nigeria in August this year and summer camps for the nation's junior national teams.

The NBBF boss who expected to attend three other meetings with Nigerian players

**“This latest visit to the USA is very rewarding as Nigeria basketball would be the better for it**

in the USA and former players as well and another meeting before returning to the country next week also disclosed that the National Basketball Association, NBA have successfully opened its Africa regional office in Johannesburg, South Africa with Senegalese former international Ahmadu Gallo as Vice-President of the NBA Africa office.

The NBBF president thus describe his recent visit to the USA which saw him being one of the over 100,000 crowd that watched Sunday NBA All-Star game won by the Eastern conference 141-139 as very rewarding. “I want to categorically state that this latest visit to the USA is very rewarding as Nigeria basketball would be the better for it.

Meanwhile the season opening seminar/workshop for the game technical officials comes up in Ilorin, Kwara state from Thursday through Saturday this week.

The workshop will among other things ratify jump-ball dates for the men and women premier league tentatively fixed for February 27 and March 10 respectively.



MANCHESTER United's English midfielder Paul Scholes, left, and England forward Wayne Rooney stretch during a training session yesterday in Milan, Italy ahead of tonight's UEFA Champions League match against AC Milan.

# Senate frowns at N400m NSC spending

By Abdul-Rahman Abubakar

THE National Sports Commission (NSC) yesterday failed to give satisfactory explanations for spending of about N400 million during the National Sports Festival held at Abeokuta in Ogun State.

Officials of the NSC led by the Director General Patrick Ekeji could not provide explanations for most queries raised by office of the Auditor General of Federation when they appeared before the Senate Committee on Public Accounts.

The Auditor General's queries are for various expenditures made by the NSC which violates the financial regulations.

The queries read by the Chairman of the Senate Committee, Senator Ahmad Lawan (ANPP,

Yobe North) revealed that the NSC failed to retire a sum of N145 million advances in 2006 long after the purpose for which the fund was granted had been concluded.

Though the financial regulation provides that such funds be retired immediately, Mr. Ekeji said the NSC has retired N140 million by the end of 2008.

NSC was however unable to justify the spending as there were no vouchers or receipts of payments to explain the spending.

A member of the Senate Committee, Senator Sahabi Alhaji Ya'u (ANPP, Zamfara North) insisted that the NSC must provide evidence to justify the expenditures but Mr. Ekeji apologised and pleaded for time to provide the vouchers.

The Auditor General's report also revealed that the NSC made

split payments of above N5 million to contractors totalling N39.3 million “As final payments for executing different projects without being verified by finance circular E.15775...”

In his response, Mr. Ekeji admitted that the NSC erred saying “The Commission was not aware of the co-signing practice. We shall comply with the requirement in future. The commission regrets the negligence.”

But Senator Lawan expressed dissatisfaction with the explanation saying “Are you saying that you were not aware of the circular after five years. You mean we should just allow this to go just like that, we have to check your books to see if this is still the practice.”

Other queries raised by the Auditor General against the NSC shows that the commission raised

vouchers for N78.8 million without supporting documents, payment of N35.7 million to insurance company for a short premium without following due process and a sum of N22.8 million was paid to contractor for supply of diesel to Abuja Stadium without minutes of the Tender Board meeting that approved the contract.

The NSC also gave N16 million to staff as personal advance, another N38 million was approved for supply of gifts for an international committee without due process while N21.7 million was paid to two contractors for supply of food stuffs without supporting documents.

In his reaction, Senator Lawan expressed disappointment with the NSC as the commission could not provide adequate documents to justify the expenditures.

## Wrestling: Surprise wins dominate first round

From Lawan Danjuma Adamu, Zinder, Niger Republic

NEW names dominate the first round of the ongoing wrestling championship in Niger Republic, tagged Zinder 2010.

The first leg of the championship began on Saturday, a day after it was officially declared open at Zinder Wrestling Arena. Saturday's preliminaries started in the morning when wrestlers from Dosso state take up their counterparts from the state of Tawa, while state of Agadez competed against

that of Tillaberi. And when the competition was resumed in the evening, wrestlers from the state of Maradi clashed with those from the state of Niamey, just as wrestling heavy weight from Diffa competes with their counterparts from the host state of Zinder.

During the first round, big wrestling names like Abubakar Umaru Chera from Dosso, Isa Dangawara, Maradi and Murtala Sani also from Maradi, were defeated by freshers like Yahaya from Tawa and Yakubu Adamu from Niamey.

However, three times champion Bala Haruna and last year's champion Laminu Maidabba were able to claim sounding victories against their opponents during their fights between Saturday and Sunday. Haruna who represents the host state defeated Ali Kawu of Diffa, while the current champion, Maidabba trashed Saleh Dauda of Tillaberi and Salihu Sani of Dosso on Saturday and Sunday respectively. Similarly, the Nigerian-born Aliyu Sallau representing Zinder won his first match against Nuhu Kailu of Diffa.

The score board for the competing states on Saturday showed Agadez tying knots with Tillaberi with 5-5 wins; Dosso lost 4-5 to Tawa, Maradi defeated Niamey 6-4 and Diffa pipped Damagaram (Zinder) 6-4.

The first leg of the championship will end after all the contesting states have fought each other. It is too early to predict who reaches the final as each automatically disqualifies the vanquished from contesting for the highly prized sword trophy to be won at the end of the 10-day competition.



# Leonardo wants balanced performance

AC Milan coach Leonardo will set out to strike the right balance between attack and defense as his side takes on Manchester United in the Champions League tonight.

Milan has won plaudits this season for its attacking play, but much of the team's success has been built on the defensive partnership of Alessandro Nesta and Thiago Silva.

Nesta returned to action in Milan's 3-2 win over Udinese on Friday night after a month out with a hamstring strain, but there are concerns over Silva, who limped off with a groin problem.

"We have 180 minutes to decide this tie," Leonardo said. "One of our objectives is to not concede a goal, but Manchester United is a team that always attacks. We have to get the balance right between not conceding a goal and attacking."

The two sides last met at the San Siro in 2007. Milan won 3-0 in the semifinal second leg en route to a victory over Liverpool in the final.

"The two teams know each other well," Leonardo said. "Not only because of the recent matches between us, but because we are continually studying each other. I think I know Manchester United."

"Ferguson's team is coming back from a tricky period," he said. "There are players that are slowly coming back from injury but it is a well-organized side."

Milan's win on Friday ended a four-match run without a victory. Manchester United by contrast is on a run of eight league games unbeaten.

Klaas Jan Huntelaar is likely to start between Alexandre Pato and Ronaldinho in an attacking



AC Milan players take part in a training session yesterday at the Milanello ahead of tonight's clash against Manchester United.



MILAN striker Klaas Huntelaar will like to impress United's boss Alex Ferguson.

## Huntelaar out to impress Ferguson

KLAAS-JAN Huntelaar is set to line up against Manchester United in what could be an audition for a summer move to Old Trafford.

The Holland striker, long admired by Sir Alex Ferguson, is ready to quit AC Milan in the summer unless he is handed a regular starting place by boss Leonardo. Huntelaar, who scored twice in his side's 3-2 defeat of Udinese on Friday, is expected to play up front in the Champions League first leg against United because of injury to Mario Borriello.

Tottenham Hotspur, Arsenal, Liverpool and Everton all considered bids for him, but Milan insisted he stayed in Serie A till the end of the season.



United defender Nemanja Vidic is out of tonight's showdown.

## Vidic out of San Siro showdown

NEMANJA Vidic was again missing as Manchester United resumed their quest to reach a third consecutive Champions League final.

Alex Ferguson's men flew out Italy this morning for Tuesday's encounter with an AC Milan side featuring former player David Beckham.

Vidic, who has yet to play in 2010 after developing a nerve problem in his leg, was ruled out, leaving Ferguson to decide whether Jonny Evans or Wes Brown should partner new England skipper Rio Ferdinand in central defence.

trident after Marco Borriello was ruled out with a back injury.

Pato returned from a thigh injury to play for the first time in two months in Friday's match and scored his eighth goal of the season in front of United manager Alex Ferguson.

"We are a good team, with a lot of excellent players," Pato said. "We know that we have to do everything possible to win this match and follow the coach's plan. We are aiming to win this game."

Striker Wayne Rooney has been the catalyst for much of United's success this season and is currently the Premier League's leading scorer with 21 goals. However, he does not expect a one-sided game.

"They have Pirlo and Becks (David Beckham), some great players," he said. "Ronaldinho is a special player, too. He's unbelievable when he's on form. We'll need to be at our best to beat them."

"For me, (Clarence) Seedorf is probably the best player I've ever played against," Rooney said. "When we played Milan at the San Siro a few years ago, he was unbelievable."

“For me, (Clarence) Seedorf is probably the best player I've ever played against”



# Benzema fears big-time Lyon

KARIM Benzema has told UEFA.com that Real Madrid CF should be wary of Olympique Lyonnais' ability to shine in the spotlight as he races to be fit to face his former club tonight.

With all the effort Karim Benzema has expended on establishing himself at Real Madrid CF since moving from Olympique Lyonnais last summer, it will be a shame if he fails to win his race for fitness prior to the pair's UEFA Champions League first knockout round meeting at Stade de Gerland this week.

Madrid's medics believe Benzema's groin problem might heal in time for Tuesday's visit to France for the first leg of the tie, but perhaps even the fiercely competitive striker might be relieved at not having to line up against friends and former team-mates in front of a partisan fan base which still adores him.

"Immediately before the draw I was talking to some of the Lyon players, and just for a laugh I was saying 'I hope we get Lyon,'" Benzema revealed to UEFA.com. "Then, as soon as I saw how the draw had gone and that it had come true, I was shocked. It is going to feel really weird, because I scored lots of goals at Gerland. I grew up there, all my friends and family live there, and they will be at the match. It's fantastic for me, and I'm really happy that Real Madrid are playing Lyon."

The fact Lyon have twice beaten Madrid at Gerland in recent seasons, 3-0 in 2005/06 and 2-0 in 2006/07, could establish Claude Puel's side as favourites

for the first leg. However, the club with which Benzema won four successive French titles during 112 league appearances is finding the domestic season hard work, currently sitting fourth in the table and departing the French Cup last month thanks to a 2-1 defeat to AS Monaco FC.

"Lyon's strong point is that they can be playing badly and then, all of a sudden, they produce a fantastic game," countered Benzema. "It often happens when they play a major team - Lyon raise their game to their opponents' level or even beyond it. They suddenly surpass themselves on the pitch, and that element explains how they produce so many top results against big teams, especially at Gerland."

The other strength, Benzema believes, is that even if Real Madrid's magnificent array of talent manages to subdue Lyon, their keeper, Hugo Lloris, remains a formidable obstacle. He was the star of France's World Cup playoff victory against Ireland, and also contributed significantly to Lyon conceding just three goals in the UEFA Champions League group stage, a tally bettered only by FC Girondins de Bordeaux.

"Lloris is a great keeper capable of fantastic saves," argued his French international team-mate. "Last season, I played with him at Lyon and I saw first hand how good he is. If Lloris is on form, it will be difficult for us to score against him." Whether or not his groin injury keeps him out of the first leg, Benzema is brimful of optimism about his move to the



FORMER Olympique Lyon striker, Karim Benzema, now playing for Real Madrid, says he dreads meeting the French side in the UEFA Champions League.

Santiago Bernabéu.

"I feel good, a lot better than I did initially," the 22-year-old confirmed. "At the start, I had never

been transferred before, I'd never left my family, so I was living all alone in a city where I didn't speak the language. But now I under-

stand everything and I speak a bit more Spanish. I think I've played some good games, and I hope it will only get better and better."



ARSHAVIN of Arsenal

## Arshavin to miss Porto clash

ARSENAL forward Andrei Arshavin said on Monday he would miss Wednesday's Champions League game at Porto with a hamstring strain.

Arshavin picked up the injury in last week's Premier League win over Liverpool.

"If all goes well I get back on the pitch as early as the next Premier League match against Sunderland. However, the next game against Porto I will miss," the Russian told the league's official website (www.premierleague.com).

Alex Song is also struggling to make the Porto match after injuring a knee in the same game.

## Klose fit to face Fiorentina

BAYERN Munich striker Miroslav Klose has recovered from an ankle injury and is available for Wednesday's Champions League match against Fiorentina.

Bayern says Klose trained with the team Monday after sitting out the German Cup match against Greuther Fuerth and Borussia Dortmund in the Bundesliga last week.

Bayern is on a nine-match winning streak in the Bundesliga.

## Barcelona lose Xavi, Keita

FC Barcelona's injury problems for next week's trip to VfB Stuttgart continue to mount after midfielders Xavi Hernández and Seydou Keita were both ruled out with thigh knocks picked up on Sunday.

Hot on the heels of their first Liga defeat of the season, holders FC Barcelona have learned that Xavi Hernández and Seydou Keita will miss the away leg of their UEFA Champions League first knockout tie against VfB Stuttgart on 23 February.

Both midfielders had to be substituted during Barcelona's 2-1 loss at Club Atlético de Madrid on Sunday, a game Josep Guardiola went into without Eric Abidal, Daniel Alves and Yaya Touré through injuries. Keita limped off early on and has been ruled out for a month with a right thigh muscle tear. He could struggle to return for the visit of Stuttgart on 17 March.



XAVI of Barcelona

## THE TUESDAY COLUMN

Sanusi Abubakar

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## The Jigawa example and the dangers of cynicism

**W**e have all become very cynical, and not without some reason. We don't believe in anyone anymore. Indeed, so desensitised have we become that any reported theft or misappropriation of mere hundreds of millions hardly merits the front page. God protects anyone that dares to say a particular governor or minister has done well. It is usually assumed the person has been "settled", to use the local slang for "bribed". So, when I decided to write about my favourable impression of what I saw in my recent trip to Jigawa State, I knew what I was getting myself into.

But I was not the only one impressed with what Governor Sule Lamido's Jigawa has been able to achieve in such a short time. Moses Ochonu is an Assistant Professor of African History at Vanderbilt University, USA. With a PhD from the University of Michigan, he is currently a fellow of the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS) and is completing a book titled "Colonial Meltdown: Northern Nigeria in the Great Depression". He was impressed enough by Sule Lamido to compare him with Governor Raji Fashola of Lagos, to many of us the best performing governor in the country. Ochonu said:

"From what I saw in Dutse and its surrounding countryside and heard from many Jigawa State folks during a recent research trip to the state, Fashola faces a formidable contender in Jigawa's Sule Lamido."

Across the capital, new projects are sprouting up or getting completed. From the state Polytechnic, which is being virtually rebuilt, to the ultramodern Staff Development Center, to at least three completed 500-unit housing estates, to the massive new State Secretariat, to the High Court Complex, to the Eagle Square replica under construction, to ubiquitous urbanization projects, Dutse is a city reborn.

Then, there is the crowning glory of this remarkable transformation: the Rasheed Shekoni Specialist Hospital, which brought tears to my eyes in 2007. It had been abandoned for 9 years and had become a habitat for rodents, birds, and insects.

Today, the hospital is completed, fully equipped as a specialist medical institution capable of carrying out most specialist diagnostic, therapeutic, and surgical procedures. One consultant, Dr. Abdulrazak Taiwo, who was recruited from Lagos State, told me in a private conversation that the hospital may be the best equipped in Nigeria. It faces a challenge of attracting qualified medical personnel to run its many specialized units, but it is an impressive medical facility on par with the highest-rated medical facilities in the world. I should know. I patronize a university hospital that is ranked number 6 in the world.

Outside Dutse, in remote villages and local government areas, the story was the same: roads, many of them, newly built or newly refurbished. Educational institutions, primary, secondary, and tertiary, wore new coats of paint, had new office and classroom buildings built or being built. Hospitals and clinics, many newly built or refurbished, dotted rural outposts. There was developmental activity everywhere.

To Steve Nwosu, Editor of the *Daily Sun*, what is happening there is a revolution. In a piece titled 'Why Jigawa is a revolution', published Tuesday, February 9, 2010, Nwosu was very graphic in his description of what is going on in Dutse, Jigawa's emerging capital:

Building the capital is still a work-in-progress. A lot remains to be done but a skyline is emerging, contrasting sharply with the completely rural Dutse that served as state capital since 1991 when Jigawa was created. The idea of Dutse as a new state capital is defined by seventeen major projects. These are

the two giant housing estates on either extremes of the township; the modern motor park; the network of macadamized thoroughfares that now connects the township beautifully lit in the night.

Others are the N6b State Secretariat awarded earlier this year; the official residences of the Deputy-Governor, Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the state House of Assembly and those of the heads of the Judiciary; the Rasheed Shekoni Specialist Hospital and the Malam Aminu Kano Arena, (MAKA). Recently, the capital added another feather to its cap. It was the opening of the children's playground.... Along with the new lighting provided to illuminate the Saminu Turaki Towers. Named after Senator Saminu Turaki, the immediate past governor of the state who actually built the Towers, the new lightening installed on the last Sallah day makes the tower a real tower in the sense of being the point from which anyone can define his bearing in Dutse.

After reviewing Lamido's campaigns against drug addiction, for sanitizing the Okada profession, against violent politics and against the defacing of schools, offices and places of worship with posters in the name of electoral campaign, as well as other physical infrastructural, health and education projects throughout the state, Nwosu was of the opinion that this was "radical populism becoming revolutionary to the extent that a government in Nigeria has been able to concretely put people-centred programmes and projects on the table of democratic governance. If only this, then it is, indeed, a revolution in Jigawa. But it is still a wait-and-see kind of situation". I cannot agree more.

After reviewing Lamido's campaigns against drug addiction, for sanitizing the Okada profession, against violent politics and against the defacing of schools, offices and places of worship with posters in the name of electoral campaign, as well as other physical infrastructural, health and education projects throughout the state

agency of the British. In a statement cited by *The Guardian*, on Monday, February 8, 2010, DFID lauds Jigawa's "new feats in education". Citing the example of Universal Basic Education Intervention Fund, a national initiative to channel more revenue to states for the provision of primary and junior secondary schooling, classrooms, books and teacher training, DFID pointed out that the state hitherto had a fund utilization rate of only 25 percent and contributed nothing in 2006 or 2007. By 2008 it still had N54 billion due to it, which it could not access because it did not come up with the counterpart funding. The Agency lauded Sule Lamido's administration for ending the shame of inability to access education fund while millions of kids are still out of school. In DFID own words:

"The funding backlog has been cleared, implementation of projects (is) proceeding smoothly and Jigawa was the first state to access its 2009 UBE-IF funding. In August 2009, contracts valued at N2.6 billion were awarded for classroom construction and furniture in 401 schools, the majority of which are (now) completed and (are helping to ease) the chronic problem of over-crowding and dilapidated structures affected by storm damage"

The Head, DFID, Northern Nigeria, Dr. Audu Grema in his remarks added that he was happy the current administration had "turned the situation around", adding that "even the Minister of State, Hajiya Aisha Jibril Dukku, recently applauded Jigawa for its excellent progress."

Evidently, many individual and groups are impressed by the progress being made. We should not cynically not simply brush aside all praises. Some state actors deserve commendations. We owe Jigawa at least one thing: give it credit for its great strides.

## SPORTS REPORT



JOHAN Cruyff

## Cruyff: Barca defeat had to come someday

Catalunya coach Johan Cruyff spoke yesterday, in comments reported by Sport, of Barcelona's Liga defeat to Atletico de Madrid in the Vicente Calderon on Sunday evening. The former Barca coach believes that the Blaugrana's unbeaten streak "had to end someday" and also warned that "one should not attribute the loss to the many injuries in the squad".

Analysing the defeat,

Cruyff believes that Barca's problem was conceding "too many losses of possession from the midfield and too little movement in attack", allowing the opposing team to launch quick and threatening counterattacks.

However, Cruyff was convinced that Barca will take a step forward from their loss and that it will not affect their future matches, reminding all that "the Liga leadership has not changed hands".



DICK Advocaat

## Advocaat downplays Russia link

Belgium and AZ coach Dick Advocaat has downplayed rumours linking him with the vacant position of head coach of the Russian national team. Recent reports suggested that Advocaat is a candidate to be named as the new man in charge of Russia.

"I know that I'm being touted as a possible replacement for Hiddink. However, I haven't heard anything from the Russian FA so far. There hasn't been any contact," Advocaat was quoted as saying by reporters.

The Russian Football Association is in the market for a new head coach due to the departure of Guus Hiddink at the end of his current contract, which expires on June 30, 2010, and Advocaat is supposedly one of the top candidates for the job.

