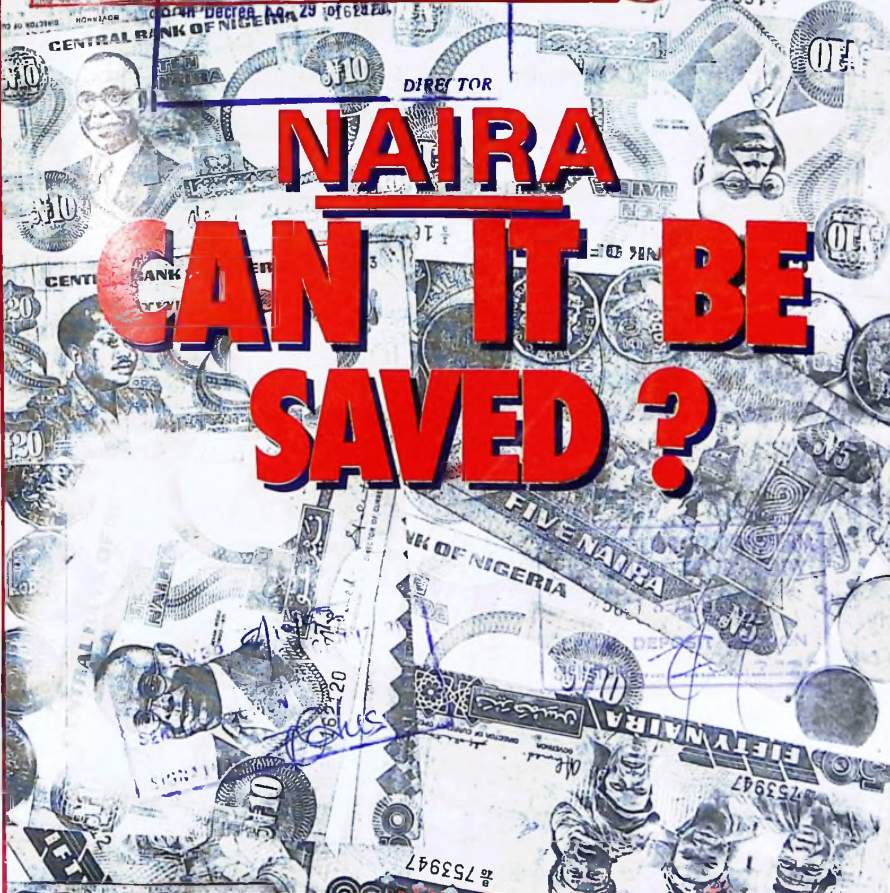


Osun State: The million Naira angle

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## COVER STORY

# The Naira value



As massive devaluation of the Naira worsens Nigeria's economic condition, economic gurus debate the way out of the mess

Page 11

### Storm in Oshun State

The thaw in the cold war between Osun State lawmakers and executive relapses into open confrontation

Page 18



## Departments

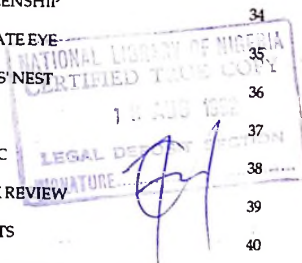
|                    |    |
|--------------------|----|
| FROM THE EDITOR    | 4  |
| LETTERS            | 5  |
| VIEWPOINT          | 6  |
| MOHAMMED HARUNA    | 9  |
| NIGERIA            | 18 |
| FORUM              | 22 |
| ENCOUNTER          | 24 |
| BUSINESS & ECONOMY | 27 |
| AFRICA             | 29 |
| WORLD              | 31 |
| BILKISU YUSUF      | 33 |

## BACK-OF-THE-BOOK



Music Thrills and frills Page 38

|                       |    |
|-----------------------|----|
| CITIZENSHIP           | 34 |
| PRIVATE EYE           | 35 |
| POETS' NEST           | 36 |
| ARTS                  | 37 |
| MUSIC                 | 38 |
| BOOK REVIEW           | 39 |
| SPORTS                | 40 |
| DEFINITIONS-IN-HUMOUR | 42 |



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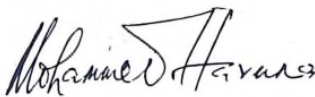
## FROM THE EDITOR

**L**ong before the March 13 debacle for the Naira, debate had raged on what is its realistic value vis-à-vis the hard currencies, in particular the pound sterling and US dollar. Most people seemed to agree that even at 10 Naira to the dollar, the Naira was under priced. Yet no one could say, with any scientific certainty, what the "realistic" value of the Naira was. The trouble, obviously was that economics, like other social sciences, has always been part science and part arts. If, for instance, 20 Naira is unrealistic, why were hundreds of thousands of people prepared to pay the black market rate for one dollar? Liberal economists would say that this is because market forces will always defy any attempt to "tame" it and they may be wrong. Chances are that, as Alhaji Adamu Bello, *Dan Iyan Misau* and the managing director of Habib Nigeria Bank Ltd once told this magazine, the explanation lies more in the fact that there is such inequitable distribution of income in the country that the relatively privileged few can always afford the dollar at perhaps even higher than the black market rate.

Since the March 13 deregulation of the Naira, government has been the butt of criticism as inflation soared a way and unemployment got worse. Naturally government-bashing comes easy for the good reason that those who get elected or shoot their way into power do so with an explicit statement that they will make life more abundant. Yet, if truth be told, we all are part of the problem, at least those of us privileged to be in the middle or upper class. When government pegged the Naira at around 10 to the dollar, a few — mostly bankers and financiers — made a killing, while the rest of us paid the black market price. When government reckoned that equity demanded that the privileged ones should join us, all hell broke loose.

You are then forced to wonder where really lies the solution? We thought knowledgeable people in society should know, so we went round to ask them. That was how we put together this weeks cover. As you can see, we seem to be long on analysis and short on cure.

The story was put together By Akinyele Aluko with reports from Mahmud Jega, Yinka Tella, Tola Sunday and Samson Ojo



Citizen (ISSN 1115 2389) is published by Citizen Communications Ltd. G11 Unguwar Kanawa, PMB 2334, Kaduna. Tel. 212165 Fax. 210037  
Telax. 71704 Lagos Office: 10A Acme Road, Agidingbi, off Ishen Road, P.M.B. 21742, Ikeja. Tel: 821389 Telex: 27061.  
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## LETTERS

### Jeddah crash

Sir,

In your recent coverage of the Jeddah air crash two points deserve special attention and comment. First, the issue of the fundamental rights of the citizens concerned to decide whether or not to seek redress for the loss of their kith and kin and their equally fundamental rights to engage the services of lawyers of their choice if they decide to seek redress. Secondly, the issue of whether any government agency has the authority to appropriate these fundamental rights of citizens and decide for them who is to represent them in the pursuit of their rights. And in particular the purported decision of the Pilgrims Affairs Directorate in the present case to impose Hold Trade, one of the principal dramatis personae in the tragedy, and a possible defendant, on the victims' families.

The Directorate has no legal authority to usurp the rights of citizens, and they know it. As for their purported imposition of Hold Trade, it simply boggles the mind. There can not possibly be any civilized legal system any where in the world, past or present, which would con-



### '91 Hajj Air Crash The full story

done such a manifest travesty of the most elementary principles of justice. What in effect the directorate did is to put the fate of the victims' families in the hands of one of the culprits, indeed the prime mover in the tragedy. And, as the late Malik

Shabbaz, better known as Malcolm X, would put it, "you don't take your case to your criminal; you take your criminal to the court". This decision which is really an insult to the intelligence of the victims' families leaves one astonished that the length the directorate seems prepared to go in its determination to shield Hold Trade from the possible consequences of their acts of commission and omission

A.B.Hassan  
Box 9842, Kaduna.

### Makama's presidential ambition

Sir,

As the chairman of the National Republican Convention (NRC) in Niger State, I deny the allegation that I or the party in the state has endorsed the candidature of any of the presidential aspirants.

This allegation was carried by the *Nigerian Tribune* of Wednesday 22nd April, 1992 on its front page. According to the news report he was alleged to have endorsed Alhaji Bamanga Turuk and abandoned Alhaji Shehu Musa, an indigene of the state, who declared his intention to contest for the presidency of the country under the platform of the National Republican Convention on Thursday 16th April, 1992.

It is on record that the National Republican Convention in Niger State has accorded equal treatments to all the aspirants that visited the state so far. In fact none among the aspirants will complain of lack of attention or shabby treatment so far. The state party hierarchy did all it could to gather supporters from all the aspirants from all the 192 wards in the state whenever they indicated their intention to visit the state.

And Alhaji Shehu Musa *Makaman Nupe* could not be said to have been abandoned because members of the state executives at all levels witnessed the launching of his presi-

dential campaign which took place on Thursday 16th April, 1992.

Abubakar M. Bosso  
NRC, Niger State, Minna

Sir

I read with utmost dismay an article in *Citizen* of April 13-19, 1992 Vol. 3 No. 15 page 19 with the above caption attributed to an organisation called the "Bida Youths Movement".

This sort of advertisement, the second of its type, appearing in *Citizen* exhibits a lot of sycophancy and does not in any way represent the views of the generality of the youths in Bida, the domain of *Makaman Nupe*.

The *Makama* and his political cohorts should note that the youths in Bida are underrepresented or not even represented in the youths movement, hence the movement may be seen by a large number of us as a mere propaganda machinery for the *Makama*.

The *Makama* may have the best credentials amongst the presidential aspirants, and though politics cannot be divorced from sentiments of whatever type, it would take much more than the "Bida Youths Movements" advertisements to make the *Makama* popular amongst his own people whose cause, it is believed, he never championed.

Mohammed K. Mohammed  
Box 467, Bida

### The Palestinians

Sir,

If the lives of only half a million Kuwaitis and their oil wells deserved the sacrifice of Americans and allied forces blood, should not the millions of Palestinians who face the genocidal war of Israeli authorities deserve some kind of international protection? Israeli soldiers have now resumed their ritual killings of Palestinians.

L.G. Hassan  
UDU, Sokoto

Letters to *Citizen*, carrying names, signatures and addresses, should be brief and to the point. They should be typed double space and addressed to Letters Page, *Citizen*, G.11 Ungwan Kanawa, PMB 2334, Kaduna.

## How much is the Naira worth?

**N**aira's true value has become a million Naira question — and the answer is unlikely to be found anytime soon. Both the government and its critics each insists that it is the one in the right.

Even after a devaluation totalling more than 1500 per cent, the government apparently still believes it should not intervene to raise the value. For the experts, however, even before it slumped down to its new low, the value was already well below what they were ready to accept. Then the government, as if specifically out to spite them even more, decided to adopt the black market rate as the new realistic starting point. Clearly, this has never been done before; and it made all too obvious the pains of the structural adjustment.

It fuelled an inflationary wave that was already too high. It began giving ideas to the populace, and whether directly or indirectly, these difficulties were the origins of the recent coup rumours that swept through the country. Since then there have been calls from many quarters for the government to do something about the situation, and especially about Naira value.

The experts are divided about what needs to be done but they seem agreed that at least something must be done about the Naira itself. Perhaps they unanimous that it must go up.

Even level-headed critics like Professor Sam Aluko have called on the government to scrap the Naira and create a new currency, or at least fix its value at no more than three Naira to the US dollar.

We do not agree that the interplay of market forces should be left to determine the value of the Naira in a market in which the other forces needed to fix a fair, realistic prices are either absent or are not allowed similar freedom.

We believe it is not too difficult to determine what is the true, fair and realistic value of the Naira. Now, this is what the government must decide, fix and announce. And if it will take the advice of those who favour a new currency, we can only say that it will all be much neater. The government must, however, do this as speedily as possible, if only to show how much it cares for what people are undergoing now.

## Pools betting in Kaduna

**S**o at very long last the Kaduna State Government has listened to the voice of reason and rescinded its ill-advised intention to re-introduce pools betting and legalise the operation of casinos in the state.

This decision, we understand, was supposed to have been a special anniversary present to the people of Kaduna State to celebrate the first 100 days in office of the state's governor and his Executive Council. How unfortunate.

If the problem at hand is dwindling state revenues, it is incomprehensible if pools betting is the first solution to lend itself to the state administration. And even if it is chosen for some merit that must remain hidden to reasonable men, it will still rank as a most insensitive choice of solution.

We agree with Alhaji Tijjani Ramalan, the governor's executive adviser on information

and home affairs, that the re-introduction would have been against public interest. Seen against the initial blunder of having contemplated bringing back such socially harmful and morally bankrupt practices, it is difficult to recognise what the adviser called responsiveness as a merit.

The easiest way to make money is to stop losing it. Therefore if Governor Dabo Lere's expressed concern and desire to improve the revenue base of Kaduna State government is genuine, let's see him being more prudent about how funds are spent and accounted for. Let him plug all the gapping holes through which funds are being siphoned out or dissipated in projects of doubtful benefit.

We believe it is not impossible for government to device ways and means of raising revenue without having recourse to

methods of doubtful utility. Indeed pools betting and casinos are not just of doubtful utility, they are of proven harm. Stories of people hooked on pools and wasting precious funds and time on a process that only impoverishes them are legion. In such a situation it actually amounts to a betrayal of people's trust to reward them with such a harmful anniversary present. The state certainly deserves something better.

We hope in future the government will demonstrate that it has learnt its lesson. It is better to consult before hand and take all

sensitive matters into consideration in making decisions that will affect people, than rescind a conclusion supposed to have been reached by mature people.

This doesn't give a picture of seriousness. Governor Lere and his team need to exercise greater caution in the steps they take to run the state. They shouldn't allow concern about revenue or anything to drive them into impropriety, especially such types as pools betting that will, in addition, fail to do the job even if they are not rescinded.

## Not far enough

South African president Frederick de Klerk a fortnight ago proposed that South Africans, both black and white, elect a five-member executive council to rule the country during the transition towards a truly democratic, non-racial society.

His proposal presented to the all-white parliament envisaged that functions and policies of head of state and head of government would be taken over by the elected council, whose headship would be rotational, on a six-monthly basis.

De Klerk's latest power-sharing plan is a shift, a slight one, away from an earlier one that multiparty committees be set up to advise his government on its transitional programme.

Already his sympathisers in the West are hailing his weekend proposal as a major concession to the African National Congress, (ANC) even before details of the proposal have begun to emerge. What a pity.

Their aim, maybe, is to force this vanguard of black freedom movement into a position where it cannot reject De Klerk's offer. We believe Nelson Mandela and his colleagues in the ANC leadership can see the bait for what it is and reject it.

There is yet no indication that De Klerk is done with playing game. The announcement in parliament was nothing more than an initiative to save a drowning baby.

The Convention on a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) which De Klerk, initiated last December is losing momentum, and black frustration is rising in direct

proportion. So he needed to say and do something, if only to give an impression that he is just as anxious to get the negotiations going fast on a democratic constitution.

The South African president must know that his latest proposal, like previous ones, will fail to make an impression on his country's blacks. The ANC whose hand was strengthened by recent defection of some white Democratic Party MP's to its ranks has consistently advocated an interim-government, lasting six months, to prepare South Africa for a general election on the basis of one man one vote.

De Klerk's new proposal brought him no nearer the ANC position. First, an executive council of 5, elected, presumably, on the basis of proportional representation and on separate rolls, will leave considerable power still in the hands of the minority whites. Second, nothing can be more absurd than a rotational headship of an elected council, whose business it is to see a overwhelmingly black society through its rebirth.

Six months will not be enough time for a leader to make his mark in a society whose "colour of (racial) fury" needs longer time to wash out. In other words, there will be a council strong on paper but ineffectual in practice.

Finally, the South African president made that proposal with his eyes more on chalking up more goodwill in the West and some African governments too impatient to wait to have a handshake with a white De Klerk, than genuinely satisfying the yearnings of tens of millions of blacks for democracy. We say De Klerk, you have to run another mile!

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## MOHAMMED HARUNA

will always serve international capital first and then the needs of the average Nigerian a poor second. Needless to say an economy that reverses these roles requires a herculean effort that taxes ones imagination to describe. Even then it is not an impossible objective. The trouble with all of us is that no one, not the leaders nor the followers, wants to take the first sacrificial steps. We all bemoan our economic plight and

where the chief executive's posh residence has been turned into a guest house for the directors who have recently carried on as if the parastatal is swimming in money when in actual fact it is stone broke. There is another more scandalous case in which a federal parastatal rented an expensive bungalow, added value to it to the tune of over one million Naira and proceeded to use it as a guest house.

## The waste syndrome

As the reader can see, our cover story this week is on the exchange value of the Naira. This issue has since become central to the very economic, possibly even political, survival of the country. The economic dimension is pretty obvious. As Professor Abovade, chairman of the Presidential Advisory Council, said the other day in trying to explain today's economic crisis, the root cause of our problem lies in the neo-colonial nature of our economy. In other words we have little or no control over the price of what we produce and what we consume. Worse, we do not produce a lot of what we consume, whether they are essentials like drugs, or luxuries like V-Boots and satellite dishes.

Not unexpectedly, this economic malaise has since spread into the political realm; the bottom line of today's alarming level of political and religious bigotry is the exploitation by us, the elites, of the palpable hunger in the air, for the satisfaction of our greed or hunger for power.

If you ask me, therein lies the root cause of our economic crisis. I agree with Abovade that the basic problem is the neo-colonial nature of our economy. One implication of this is that even with the best goodwill around and the best economic managers in charge, the vast majority of Nigerians will hardly know prosperity, since the national economy

blame every one but ourselves for our lot, yet we are all too often prepared to take advantage of a situation at the slightest opportunity.

To be sure Nigerians have sacrificed a lot long before SAP but they are mainly those Nigerians who, as the wretched of the earth, suffer as they must. The (tiny) rest of us carry on as if the "good old days" never changed for the worse. Herein lies the source of our problem.

Although both masses and elites alike do not want to forego any privileges much less make any sacrifice, if they can help it, the elites are by far the greater culprits. We make the laws and the policies to suit ourselves in the first place. Then we find ways to circumvent the inconveniences that come with the need for equity.

We can all count many instances that support this position. However, three will do. First, I have often wondered why any ministry, parastatal or department other than the presidency should own a private jet at all, not to say in these hard times. Yet not a few of them do. Invariably these jets are hardly for operational use and again invariably they are often abused.

Second, there is the concept of guest houses. A sound economic concept, if it were to be put to proper use, in practice its abuse has been the norm. I know of one federal government parastatal in Kaduna

Last but by no mean the least, I have often wondered why our leaders need all those long motorcades that accompany them on their tours. Not only do they not serve any security purpose, they are drain on the taxpayers and a terrible nuisance to boot. Ah, you are probably thinking Murtala Mohammed took to low profile and see where it got him! Agreed a leader shouldn't go riding around alone, but most certainly he does not need a motorcade one mile long to secure himself. Afterall John Kennedy was in such a motorcade when he got killed.

Private jets, guest houses and motorcades are not the only privileges those of us in leadership positions can forgo or use sensibly. They are perhaps not even the most wasteful. However, they can be wasteful enough and they certainly are symbolic of an elite that insists on its privileges when it asks others to sacrifice.

To stop these and other wasteful official pastimes would be small gestures in the context of an economy that needs to break out of its neo-colonial mould. But then the journey to the moon, as the Chinese say, begins with one small step. How many of us in privileged positions, critics and the criticised alike, can stand up and be counted among those prepared to take that first step?



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## COVER STORY

# Economy Salvaging the Naira

As massive devaluation of the Naira worsens Nigeria's economic condition, economic gurus debate the way out of the mess

In the wildest imagination of the almost annihilated lower and middle class Nigerians, what today is the fate of the national currency would look like a tale out of the ordinary. When it all started in the '70s, it was as if the country's elite and the ruling class did not care much. Many of them in fact were busy accumulating wealth through looting of the nation's treasury in anticipation of the economic doom that they knew was definitely trailing the boom of the middle '70s.

Only a few voices cried out. One of them, Samuel Aluko, retired professor of economics, recently told

*Citizen* in Ibadan, "I warned the nation in 1975." Today it has almost become a folk tale that the dollar, which today sells for about 18 Naira, once exchanged for just 75 kobo. In the dying days of the Second Republic, Nigerians started crying out against the growing economic problem which manifested in austerity measures. The slippery political terrain of the country then did not help matters either such that when Brigadiers (as they were then known) Muhammadu Buhari and Tunde Idi-

agbon came calling on December 31, 1983, Nigerians who seemed to have had the best under military rulers heaved a sigh of relief. However, from Buhari to the incumbent Ibrahim Babangida administration, Nigerians, like the proverbial snail, have learnt that there are indeed two types of water — hot and cold.

By 1985, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was already knocking at the nation's door. President Ibrahim Babangida in a fashion, threw the debate at the doors of Nigerians. With what happened to countries like Brazil and even neighbouring Ghana that took the IMF facility, Nigerians stoutly said "no" to the IMF vampire. In-

"consolidation of the gains of SAP" becoming permanent features of official policy pronouncement.

As Babangida days increased in Dodan Barracks and now Presidential Villa, Abuja, the economic woes of the nation worsened, but with promises of a better future. The pains of SAP were biting harder. As Professor Modupe Olatunbosun, agricultural economist and SDP presidential aspirant told *Citizen*, the same people who were enjoying during the time of opulence are the same people that are enjoying during the time of adversity. He added, "The people who are more able to withstand the pains and sorrows of SAP are not bearing any burden at all. But those who are less able are the ones bearing the burden of SAP."

Ironically, whether deliberately or out of ignorance, government policies that are meant to cushion the adverse effects of SAP backfired almost immediately they were launched. The latest is the March 5



Naira today: breathing hard

stead of the IMF, the Structural Adjustment Programme, SAP, was introduced with terminologies like the

deregulation of the foreign exchange market, an event which was apparently set off by a secret meeting be-

tween IMF functionaries and the presidential economic council that same day in Abuja. Prices went up in some case by as much as 100 per cent, transportation became a nightmare in the cities while medical services have been declared a no go area for the lower and middle class earners. Even the palliative of removing import duties on vehicles spare parts did not help matters in the transport sector. Isiaka Adeleke, civilian governor of newly created Osun State, joined the chorus in crying out. Said he: "The crash of the Naira has made the 1992 budgets of the state unrealistic." The nation's 1992 budget was earlier based on an exchange rate of value of 9.50 Naira to the dollar. But

with the deregulation, it has plummeted to 18.50 Naira to a dollar.

The groans and cries of Nigerians did not miss the ears of traditional rulers and

the elder statesmen who gathered in Abuja on April 13 to inaugurate the new council of state. Championing the call for an immediate measure to relieve the burden of the masses, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe told the president



Zik: lower class bear the brunt

and the council of state, that "the basis of the economic difficulties faced by us in Nigeria today is because the consumers have been left to bear the burden."

In his address to the same council of state, President Babangida touched on a note that sent shivers down the spine of Nigerians. The president recalled that the dilemma of his administration was similar to that of an "architect who, having designed what he considered a solid and elegant structure, suddenly discovered at the incipient stage of ac-

The question now on the lips of Nigerians is: can the nation's currency be saved? Experts and socio economic critics indeed have a lot to say on the origin, growth of, and, solution to our present economic predicament. Professor Sam Aluko told *Daily Times* Forum that the Naira can never be saved by market forces. Hear him, "In fact the rate of the Naira is not a realistic rate. It is thoroughly unrealistic. They've brought the Naira to the level of disaster. The Naira is in a disastrous state and that's due to



Aluko: predicated the present problem

tual construction that what looked so beautiful on the drawing board could not endure the inclement weather." Added President Babangida, "This sad development might arise because of inherent inadequacies of the model or due to the fact that the workmen employed to actualise the model in real life were unwilling or unable to competently execute the assigned task."

what they call the market forces. And it will continue to depreciate. We haven't reached the end of the road yet. If it continues like this, think by the end of the year we will be talking of about 40.00 Naira to one US dollar. And this government will never achieve a realistic rate of the Naira by market forces. The will never." He elaborated on this at Ibadan during the launching of the

Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe told the president and the council of state, that "the basis of the economic difficulties faced by us in Nigeria today is because the consumers have been left to bear the burden."

# What Nigerians say

**A**haji Abdul-kadir Ahmed, Governor, Central Bank of Nigeria

The Naira is not in trouble. It is Nigerians who are in trouble because they expect magic. They want solutions by administrative fiat. Let Naira be one to one to the dollar and it is done. The truth is that there is no magic to any problem. It has to be through sustained hard work and the sooner Nigerians accept this bitter truth, the quicker we can solve our problems.

**Mr. Alao Aka-Basorun**  
legal practitioner and human rights activist:

The Naira is gone. It is finished. It is caused by spending over budget, pumping money into unproductive sectors of the economy like launchings and donations. All these cause inflation. You

cannot talk of restoring the value of the Naira, you can only talk in terms of the entire governance of the country. We have to start again, the economy and the transition must be started afresh. The entire country has to be restruc-

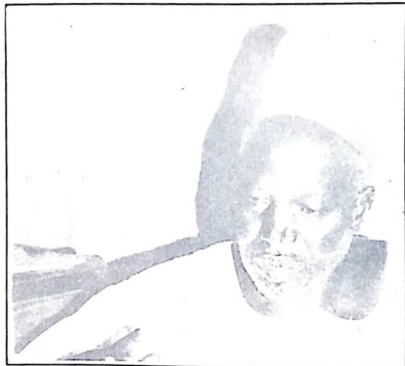
**Abdulkadir Balarabe Musa:** former governor of Kaduna State.

As at 31st March, 1984, the total debts of all state governments of the federation amounted to 13.3 billion Naira. We do not yet know the full magnitude of the

existence as a nation.

We recall that the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria in their pre-budget memorandum for the 1992 federal government budget stated that: "Unless some positive steps are taken to curb the trend towards institutionalised corruption, the economy faces an imminent threat of destruction."

In the agricultural sector we find that our farmers, in spite of the escalating cost of agricultural inputs have, thanks to good weather their own sweat and indomitable spirit, continued to produce more and yet the quality of their lives is sharply declining. Our educational and health services are tottering on the brink of collapse, we are back to the era of non-payment of teachers' salaries. The number of unemployed and under-employed youths and adults is rising. What is more, the transport system throughout the country by rail, road, air and water is so battered that those fortunate to be employed can hardly get to work. Those unemployed cannot look for work; and goods produced can hardly be taken to where they are needed. On top of all this, is a severed and crippling shortage of petrol, over large parts,



**Balarabe:** *our system has collapsed*

tured. Doing it on paper will not work. All the patch-patch' will not work.

total debt of all state governments on 31st December 1991, a few days before the military governors handed over to the new civilian governors. But 14 out of the 30 state governments announced their debts. The total debt on all the state governments may amount to over 100 billion Naira. The worsening public debt situation which is strangulating the economy and the operations of all levels of government is very serious and President Babangida recognised this clearly in his 1992 budget speech. He said it is so serious that it calls into question our



**Ahmed:** *Naira is not in trouble*

of the country, for many months, which has so seriously undermined all forms of economic, social, cultural and even political activity that it actually amounts to national sabotage. All these and more, are the sad effects of the current state of our economy with which we are all too familiar.

**W**hen the president of our country himself admits the gravity of the situation our economy is in and virtually admits that the government does not know what to do; and when the captains of industry in our country speak in terms of "imminent threat of destruction," it is obviously time for all citizens of this country to sit up, look things squarely in the face and seek to take the nation's destiny into their own hands.

**Comrade Ola Oni, for-**



**Aka-Bashorun: back to square one.**

**mer economics lecturer at the University of Ibadan**

The crisis we are having is deep rooted, it is not a temporary one. It originates from the inequality in the process of development which world capitalism introduced. The point I am making is that the issue is not that of the over-valuing of the Naira but the whole approach of



**Obasanjo: double talk and act is no solution**

IMF and World Bank on this perspective is that they are trying to solve this problem from monetary manipulation so as to preserve the accumulation of

imperialist capital. When we talk of the over-value or the under-value, we are not getting to the root of the problem. The question does not arise because of the fundamental disequilibrium that exists between the

colonial economy and the advanced countries. So permanently the colonial economy will be depreciating if you leave everything to the market forces because of the rate of productive activities in the backward areas cannot cope with the rate of exploitation of imperialist economy. I prefer to talk about how we can restore,

change the structural economic relationship between the advanced countries and the colonial economy. What I am saying is that our economic policies should change. It should no longer be dictated by the imperialist

economic policies. We should now be thinking of how we can re-structure our own economy, not through market forces but

through direct control and planning so that structurally we can overcome the backwardness within a short time.

**General Olusegun Obasanjo (former head of state)**

Over the last six years, or so, the Naira

has been officially devalued by about 2000 percent from about 1.20 dollars to 1.00 Naira to about 18 Naira to one dollar. We have gone a long way. But the plain management or no management of the economy, we may still have a longer way to go. We cannot expect stability and improved value for as long as we do not harmonise our management of supply and demand. Disciplined, efficient and accountable economic management is *sine-qua-non* for revitalising the economy, development and growth... With strict economic discipline and less double talk and double-act we can improve and stabilise the value of the Naira.

**Dr. Kayode Familoni (economics lecturer, University of Lagos)**

The demand for foreign exchange is insatiable for a typical ambitious developing economy whereas the supply is



**Familoni: our currency can't stand market forces**

very limited and under constraint. So it is a given dictum that we are in a state of perpetual disequilibrium in the foreign exchange market. So to now subject the exchange rate, the price of your currency to free in-



Okere: address over expenditure

terplay of market forces of supply and demand is illogical because you can never generate equilibrium. The whole idea of asking supply and demand to interact and determine prices is to generate an equilibrium price. The government, though operating the free market economy must realise that the market in Nigeria and

other third world countries is an imperfect market, therefore it cannot freely allocate resources efficiently. If you realise the ineffectiveness in the markets then there must be the need to make supportive measures to make that market work more effectively. What I would propose is that government should find a realistic value for the Naira, and it's easy to find that. If you find a tradable common basket between Nigeria and the United States for example, you value that basket in the United States, let's say the value is 2000 Naira in

Nigeria and 500 dollar in the US, the exchange value is obvious, that is, four Naira to 1.00 dollar. This can be extended to other convertible currencies. We can now say we would stabilise the exchange rate of the Naira vis-a-vis all these foreign currencies by restricting movements in the market rates of the Naira by setting an upper and a lower bound within which

the Naira will fluctuate."

#### Professor Modupe Olatunbosun, SDP presidential aspirant

I am on the side of Professor Aluko, because in a developing economy like Nigeria, it is unrealistic to assure perfection in the free market system. So for any economist to assume that there is fair competition in a developing economy which we know is full of imperfection is to say the least intellectual hypocrisy or intellectual dishonesty. Any economic adviser must be able to tell the difference between theory and practice. It is only in Nigeria that government will leave its national currency to the mere forces of supply and demand. Apart from intervention government still needs to focus more attention on the productive sector of the economy rather than relying solely on oil. The best way is by investing substantially in the rural sector where more than 85 per cent of the population dwells.

Mr. Etherlbert Okere, editor, *The Financial Post*

**I** think we should first address the issue of over expenditure which has always got to a level of profligacy on the part of the public sector. Then we come to the private sector. The activities of some foreigners in our midst who in a bid to repatriate their money are willing to buy foreign exchange at any rate. Also there is a problem being created by the operators

of the banks. It seems only one sector, the finance, that is booming which means they hinge their activities essentially on foreign exchange and the attitude of the regulatory authority does not help matters.

#### Mr. Nnodi Okereke, manager, Abuja Building Society, Kaduna

It is wrong to leave the naira to be determined by market forces because the foreign exchange market is an imperfect market. There is one seller, the Central Bank. The market for *gari*, for example, is a perfect market because there are many buyers and many sellers. If *gari* becomes very expensive in the central market, you can move down to *Sabo* market and if it is expensive there too you can move further on. The nearer you go the village, the cheaper it becomes. There is no such logic in the forex market. The government should use moralisation to fix the exchange rate. In 1973, when we changed from pounds to Naira, the government announced that a pound exchanges for two Naira, and this was subconsciously established — our grandparents literally count the Naira two to a pound to date. If the government had announced in 1976 that a dollar will exchange for ten Naira, we will have psychologically resigned to it by now, and nobody will have the

**If you find a tradable common basket between Nigeria and the United States for example, you value that basket in the United States, let's say the value is 2000 Naira in Nigeria and 500 dollar in the US, the exchange value is obvious, that is, four Naira to 1.00 dollar.**

courage to challenge it. The government should fix the exchange rate at 15 Naira to the dollar.

Policy makers, should aim at the optimal Exchange Rate i.e the rate at that is capable of making industries work and giving spirit of entrepreneurship a boost. The phenomenon of low Naira exchange rate and attendant high cost has been a major factor for the strangulation of the small and medium enterprises.

Government must therefore intervene to moderate market force otherwise the whole mechanism becomes dysfunctional.

**Alhaji Abdullahi Salihu, executive director (operations) NNDC, Kaduna**

**T**he current exchange rate of the Naira is unfortunate, to say the least. We now exchange \$1 for 20 Naira and £1 for 35 Naira. There are many things you can do with 20 Naira in Nigeria which you cannot do with \$1 in America. Many things! Anybody who travels out knows that, many people tend to blame the govern-

ment for this situation. On one hand, yes, the government is to blame. There has not been a situation where a government allows its currency to float. But if you look at it, we Nigerians, while the banks were selling the dollar for 10 Naira, we would go to that hotel on Broad Street in Lagos and buy it for 18 Naira. We Nigerians have

vantage. The bank and black market rates are now quite close, though there will always be a difference, because if I have my money and I cannot stand the paper work in a bank, I will go to the black market and pay slightly more. What can we do? Even if the government wants to fix the exchange rate now, it will look at the trend. It

paying! They might say they have no choice, but that is not true. Government should do something. First and foremost, we must increase national productivity. Specifically, we should identify all our resources and exploit them. all of Katsina is sitting on kaolin, for example, a potential foreign ex-



Salihu: we are all to blame

tacitly accepted that \$1 is worth 18 Naira. This is the most unfortunate part of it all. I think the Naira might soon stabilise, at a disad-

cannot just by fiat say, "7 Naira to \$1." The public is willing to pay the high rate! We all criticise these measures, but people are



Okereke: No logic in FOREX market

change earner. We must also source our raw materials locally. In the past, people thought we could not make biscuit from guinea corn or bread from maize. Secondly, mushroom products must be banned. We have carried trade liberalisation too far. We should take these measures and have the moral courage to enforce them.

**Government must therefore intervene to moderate market forces otherwise the whole mechanism becomes dysfunctional.**

Awolowo Foundation, when he told *Citizen* that "unless a realistic rate of exchange is fixed for the Naira by government, the national currency will continue to depreciate."

**P**rofessor Oyetunji Aboyade, chairman Presidential Advisory Committee, in his reaction to Professor Aluko's call for a realistic approach to the Naira value, said government alone cannot determine the exchange rate of the national currency. A member of his committee, Effiong Essien, supported this stand. Said he, "the last prayer on the value of a national currency can never be said anywhere in the world." Essien added that fixing the rate will shift the burden of debts incurred on foreign transactions on the government. This is echoing Aboyade's statement that government does not have the wherewithal to sustain such an exchange rate. In a way, Professor Aboyade also echoed the fears of the radical elements that imperialism is the root of our economic woes. Said



**Olatunbosun: emphasises productive sector**

the former vice chancellor, "Nigeria's economy is an exposed one and outside it there is an unsympathetic,

unresponsive and hostile world." Aboyade's claims cannot be said to have parted ways with the observation of Comrade Ola Oni, who told *Citizen* in his Ibadan residence that "SAP arises because of the world structural economy in which we in the backward areas have become colonised people... and the intensification of neo-colonial policies of economic control which has arisen as a result of the deepening crisis of the system which we now label as debt crisis."



and expectant nation that how the economy has kept on for so long is a surprise to him. Said the president. "Surely it is not our knowledge, it is not our theories, it is not anything we have read. I still have not found an answer." On the value of the Naira, the president had said that the Naira can appreciate to say one to six, five or even ten. But according to him, this will only be possible if Nigerians work harder, to produce more goods and grow more food. He said there is a need to run away from importation and use what the nation has, adding further that "if we concentrate on this, and you can get whatever you need here in large quantity, then it will be only for machinery and so on that you go outside to get and they can source the

**"In fact the rate of the Naira is not a realistic rate. It is thoroughly unrealistic. They've brought the Naira to the level of disaster."**



**Adeleke: 1992 budget unrealistic**

The nation's economic problems seem to deepen everyday. President Ibrahim Babangida told a hungry

foreign exchange from whatever avenues they want right here.

Analysts and those very close to the grassroot will tell the president that why the Nigerian economy has not collapsed may be because of the endurance of the working masses who will prefer to shed meals in order to pay for a 100 per cent increase in fares to get to work. The limit of human endurance therefore may be the elastic limit of the badly beaten Nigerian economy. As Professor Dupe Olatunbosun said, "We are only fortunate that the air we breathe is free, otherwise the poor would have died of suffocation." Really, the times are hard, but Nigerians still look up to President Ibrahim Babangida to perform an economic magic that will change their lives for better.

**By Akinyele Aluko with reports from Mahmud Jega, Yinka Tella, Tola Sunday and Samson Ojo**

## NIGERIA

# Storm in Osun State

The thaw in the cold war between Osun State legislature and executive relapses into open confrontation

**A**pril 22, 1992, was a bad day for Wale Afolabi, the speaker of Osun State House of Assembly. That day, an unruly band of protesters invaded his domain sacking it and sending its 46 members on their heels. The protesters, among whom were Tunde Fagbougbe and Gbolahan Samuel, president and speaker of Obafemi Awolowo University students union, respectively said they were demonstrating because the legislators had constituted themselves into a clog in the state's wheel of progress by antagonising the government of Isiaka Adeleke, the 37 year old governor of the nascent state. By the time the motley crowd settled its differences with the legislators, 19 people were left with bruises and scars. Events have



Adeleke: "we dont know the problem"

moved quickly since then with both sides of the divide engaged in what an observer called a retreat for reinforcement.

A day after the riot which Afolabi

said was unprovoked, the house asked Adeleke Adewoyin to investigate the remote and immediate causes of the riot which beat the security agencies hands down. On that day, Toye Wahab, the majority leader, among others, pointed accusing fingers at the executive as the organiser of the mob. They said they saw a state commissioner for information and a special adviser to the governor in the crowd that attacked them. They said their presence seriously implicated the executive. Other incriminating evidence against the executive they claimed, include the passivity of the police whose commissioner, Reuben Odunaiye, told *Citizen* last week, did its best in the circumstance. Further evidence? "The attack came on the day the house was to consider its probe committee's report on an alleged irregular award of 175 million Naira contract by Governor Adeleke".

Adeleke has vehemently denied any involvement in the fracas contending that it is inconceivable that he would sponsor a crisis in his own state.

The police said, April 24, that 50 persons had been arrested but investigations are yet to link any prominent political figure with the crisis. The police were also unable to corroborate legislators allegation that the executive sponsored the riot assuring however, that anyone implicated will face the full rigours of the law.

What happened in Osun, April 22, was the climax of a cold war which had raged since January between the executive and legislature both of which are controlled by the Social Democratic Party, SDP. The

first showdown was in January, during the process of election of the leadership of the house. Two contending forces, 20 members loyal to Adeleke and the other 26, owing allegiance to Oladosu Ladapo, a governorship aspirant who lost the party primaries emerged. The intervention of the state council of traditional rulers under the leadership of the *Ooni of Ife*, Oba Okunade Sijuwade, resolved the matter through its reconciliation committee which was burdened with the function of arbitrating conflicts between the two arms.

The ensuing thaw was to last only one month as hostility resumed in March when a series of allegations of unconstitutional award of contracts totalling 175 million Naira surfaced against Adeleke.

While the thaw lasted, there was tension. *Citizen* gathered that during the reconciliation several compromises were reached. Part of it was that both sides will be more flexible in the distribution of patronages including political posts and contracts. Both sides, sources revealed, did not honour the agreement as they held tenaciously to their positions. The governor, it was said, proceeded to fill government positions with his associates to the exclusion of the other camp popularly called *Group 26* and being led by Nike Omoworare. The group, our source said, would probably have had a bargain power been in a position to enforce the agreement to share post, had the federal government not amended Decree 50 giving the governor power to make appointments without recourse to the legislature. In retaliation, group 26 used its majority in the house to delay bills. Not only that, it also used its control of the house to frustrate members sympathetic to the cause of the governor. "It was no longer the minority having their say and majority having their way. It was the minority not having any say at all," complained Sola Oni, a legisla-

tor from life.

And so, with both sides intent on frustrating each other, the bubble was set to burst. This was why, said a source, in spite of the governor's denial, the legislators, egged on by Nike Omowore, the deputy speaker, proceeded to investigate the allegations. After taking evidence from Prince Adesuyi Hastrup, the deputy governor, in which he admitted that certain contracts had indeed been awarded without the blessings of the tenders board, the house set up a committee to investigate the matter and report back to it.

Although Wahab Toye said last week that the report was to be submitted on the day of the riot, Sola Oni, another legislator who said he was a member of the committee told *Citizen* that it was not so. Oni denied the existence of any probe committee against the governor, saying that the committee that was set up was to investigate the source of leakages of negative information about the state to the press.

But *Citizen* sources said last week

that there is in existence a report of a committee on the contracts which allegedly indicted the governor. It was gathered that the committee recommended the impeachment of the governor but it was not clear whether the report leaked to the governor or his supporters in the legislature. Although efforts to get Afolabi, the speaker to confirm this proved abortive, the governor still denied last week that he awarded such contracts.

**Citizen sources said last week that there is in existence a report of a committee on the contracts which allegedly indicted the governor.**

Whatever is the case, one thing is obvious. The rift is stalling the state's progress and portends ominous implications for the Third Republic.

Perhaps it was to forestall this that the national secretariat of the SDP sent its national vice chairman,

Augustus Babalola, to parley with both sides in the dispute last week Tuesday. The parley failed as only six legislators all loyalists of the governors, the state party chairman Kazeem Ajayi and local government party officials attended. The meeting had to be adjourned. Babalola told *Citizen* that the peace meeting was poorly attended because some members had gone to Ede for a condolence visit to the family of Niyi Adewolu, a legislator from Ede who died April 26 "after a protracted illness." An unruffled Babalola however expressed optimism that the state will soon get over the problem contending that it was all part of the learning process. "We are in a transition from a military to a democracy and it will take time before we can master the art of democracy" he said.

Meanwhile, the House of Assembly has adjourned indefinitely perhaps to give room for tempers to cool.

By Bolaji Adebisi  
in Oshogbo and Ibadan

## "We will get over it"

Osun State governor, Isiaka Adeleke spoke to *Citizen* on the fracas threatening to engulf his nascent state. Excerpts

**Citizen:** Why, despite the efforts of the reconciliation committee, has the political crisis continued?

**Adeleke:** I don't even know what the problem is. We say there is a problem between the legislature and the executive. We have to identify what the problem is before we can find solution.

I never supported the attack on the legislators. I guess the public is dis-

enchanted, maybe they are sick and tired of the pace of things. On my part I have condemned the violent demonstration. I will never support violent demonstration at all because at the end of the day, public property destroyed will be replaced by the tax payers' money.

**Citizen:** Why then do you think the public is disenfranchised?

**Adeleke:** That will best be answered by the public. But one can start answering this question from the

governorship primaries. I was one of the aspirants that went into a run off with another aspirant. The other aspirant had the support of certain influential people in the state but I have the support of the masses and as God will have it I emerged the winner. Well, I believe that he had his support and I had my own support. But if you want to bring that into the squabble between the executive and legislature it should not be. I sponsored majority of the members of the House of Assembly, with my own money. One will expect

## — Adeleke

them to at least support the administration. Initially, when we were sworn in, I never wanted to know who becomes what in the House of Assembly. But when it dawned on me that certain influential individuals were camping them in life at Royal Motel, then it became apparent that they want to use these House of Assembly members to blackmail this government into submission and that I have sworn they will never get.

**Citizen:** Has any prominent person or your po-

*litical opponent been linked with the April 22 demonstration?*

**A**deleke: The report I got from the Commissioner of Police was that on the first day of the riot 42 or 43 people were arrested and questioned but after interrogation they happened to be just people who lived around there and were just watching. They were not really taken from the riot, they just happened to be picked up. Then the next day another seven set of people were arrested. I learnt they were brought in from Ikirun but they were all released on bail.

*Citizen: But some people have alleged that you organised the demonstration because one of your commissioners was seen in the mob.*

**Adeleke:** That is wrong. Do you think I will sponsor a crisis? Do you think I will want to destabilise the state I am governing? I mean, let's be reasonable. I am not a violent person.

*Citizen: What has been the party's input into all these?*

**Adeleke:** The party has been working round the clock to make sure that everything returns to normal.

*Citizen: To what extent has the political crisis affected the implementation of your programme?*

**Adeleke:** No way. We are on course. It has not

showed down anything. Maybe it has slowed down one or two bills. The crisis does not affect the job of the executive. We are going to construct certain roads, we're constructing them, the health centres and hospitals are equipped, education is free, we are building class-

time these allegations were made, what accrued to the pursue of the state as revenue was only 148 million Naira. 75 million Naira was expended on recurrent expenditure. The balance of 73 million Naira was expended on capital projects. Almost half of the 73 million Naira expended



*A scene during the demonstration*

room blocks for our students, while over 5,000 of our secondary teachers who were sent to Oyo have been absorbed. Also, over 1,500 primary school teachers who were sent out of Oyo, have been absorbed, posted to some primary schools in the local government and we are paying them salaries. The administration is settling down.

*Citizen: We would like you to throw more light on the allegation that you awarded contracts totalling 175 million Naira without reference to the Tenders Board?*

**Adeleke:** I did not award any contract worth 175 million Naira. As at the

on the capital projects was a collection from the past administration.

This administration awarded contract for the construction of 46 classroom blocks throughout the 23 local governments in the state.

*Citizen: Did it go through the Tenders Board?*

**Adeleke:** It went through the Tenders Board.

*Citizen: Your deputy governor said so to the House of Assembly.*

**Adeleke:** No... No... No... wait a minute. The law says that I can delegate powers and authorities to commissioners and my deputy from time to time. So, Tenders Board is what you believe it is as long as

two members are formally there... the secretary and the chairman. Okay? That is it. Anything we have done, we have done it constitutionally. I studied constitutional law, I think I should know how to do things the normal way.

*Citizen: How much did the contract for the 46 blocks cost?*

**Adeleke:** 17.5 million Naira.

*Citizen: Can you give a guarantee of peace and stability in the state henceforth?*

**Adeleke:** Drive around town you will see that everything that has been happening is being confined to one building (House of Assembly) in the capital city of Oshogbo. Go to Ede, Ife, Ilesa, everybody is being going about his business peacefully. It is when the sensational newspaper sees (something small) they go and write (banner headline) 'Osun is on Fire'!

*Citizen: What are you doing to prevent a reoccurrence of what has just happened?*

**Adeleke:** There won't be (a reoccurrence) because... that is why I said it was spontaneous. If it had been planned there is no way the security forces will not have known.

*Citizen: So you do not anticipate a retaliatory measure from the legislators.*

**Adeleke:** I hope not, hope not because the security forces are now alert.

## NRC/SDP In a fix

The two political parties unable to afford the cost of fresh registration of their members, settle for a revision

Going by the directives of the National Electoral Commission, NEC, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the Na-



Nwosu: no to pampered kids

tional Republican Convention (NRC) were expected to have prepared fresh membership register for each of the 6,927 wards nationwide from Monday April 20 to Friday April 30 last week. But that did not quite come off as expected. First, the parties obviously suffering a cash-crunch had demanded 105 million Naira each for the compilation of fresh lists of their members. Professor Humphrey Nwosu, the NEC chairman, apparently suffering considerable budgetary strains since his commission's decision to conduct fresh voter-registration, however felt the parties were behaving like pampered children. He refused to oblige. The parties which all along, had repeatedly complained loudly about the huge financial outlay required for effective implementation of the NEC guidelines on staggered primaries,

recompilation of fresh membership registers and the organisation of indirect-primaries for the house of assembly candidates, also threatened in turn to discountenance the NEC guidelines.

Citizen gathered that while none of the parties has been able to embark on a fresh membership registration drive, alternative attempts to revise the old registers were steeped in murky waters last week. The NRC only began what analyst regard as a somewhat half-hearted attempt to review its membership registers last week Monday, seven clear days after the expiration of the NEC ultimatum. In the SDP, the situation is just a little less chaotic. There were also indications that the 70,000 membership cards that the SDP national executive dispatched to each of the 30 states may have been less than adequate. The issue of receipts for membership dues was also a vexed issue,

Given the obvious lapses it did not come as a big surprise when the SDP national executive rose from a meeting in Lagos to announce the extension of the registration period to Saturday May 9. A statement signed by Mallam Abdullahi Halidu, chairman of the SDP electoral board, also said ward congresses initially scheduled for this

week for the election of delegate for national assembly indirect primaries would now hold on the same date. By the time the two parties meet with NEC Monday this week however, indications are that commission officials who have been complaining loudly that the parties have not furnished them with enough information to enable them "monitor effectively" the registration process could ask the par-

ties to show cause why the exercise should not be nullified.

The parties were not ready to consider that possibility last week. Instead, the two parties came out with final guidelines on the conduct of the senatorial and house of assembly primaries. "The NRC national executive committee which met April 11, with its 16 governors in Benin, Edo State had, after considering the draft guidelines submitted by the Dr. Dickson Anagawa committee, decided on a levy of 40,000 Naira and 20,000 Naira for senatorial and house of representative aspirants respectively. It also directed that application forms endorsed by five members from each of the wards of a candidate's constituency be deposited at its secretariat by last Wednesday although there were indications that an extension of dates might have become imperative.

Taking a cue from the NRC, the SDP national executive after deliberating further on the report of the Alexis Aniello guidelines committee also decided to impose a levy of 10,000 Naira and 30,000 Naira on house of representatives and senatorial candidates respectively.

By Samson Ojo  
and Yinka Tella

## Moving to the limelight

Friday, April 17, the little, quiet lake town of Oguta, in Imo State, contributed its quota to the furtherance of Islam in Igboland with the turbaning of Alhaji Abdulaziz Ude, a prominent Igbo businessman from Enugu State, as the *Ebube Ndi Muslim of Igboland*.

The title, meaning "the might and pride of muslims in Igboland," was conferred on Alhaji Ude by Alhaji Abdulgaffaru Emetumah, the traditional ruler of Awa community in Oguta Local Government area. It was given in recognition of Alhaji Ude's efforts in uplift-

ing Islam in Igboland. This is the first time an Igbo muslim traditional ruler is turbaning a fellow Igbo muslim since the Islamic religion stepped into Igboland about 50 years ago.

Also recently a diploma-awarding institution in Islamic religion, *Shariah, Daawa and Arabic Studies*, known as Deen Ul-Islam Institute was been established in Oguta.

The institute, which came into existence in 1989, is affiliated with the Usman Dan Fodio University, Centre for Islamic Studies, Sokoto.

By Tony Oko in Oguta

# "The federal solution to the national question"

By  
Ladipo Adamolekun  
&  
John Kincaid

**T**he dramatic changes occurring in a number of contemporary federal polities (e.g., Belgium, Canada, the Republic of Germany, the Soviet Union, and Yugoslavia) provide a fascinating but problematic backdrop for considering the future of federalism in Nigeria. After highlighting key issues of concern in these countries, the salience of each issue in the Nigerian milieu will be examined in turn, followed by a brief discussion of the policy implications for Nigeria's leaders in the closing years of the federation's golden jubilee in the year 2004 and beyond.

Without going into details, key factors in the changes taking place in the Soviet Union as well as in some other federal systems include: the limits of Marxist (communist) ideology as a unifying force; the resilience of cultural nationalism, especially the linguistic factor; the rising force of democratic values; and the centripetal influences of economic progress and centrifugal influences of economic decay. Of these four critical factors, only Marxist ideology is irrelevant in Nigeria because it has never gained much foothold in the country. We shall now examine each of the other factors, bearing in mind the positive or negative impact each is having in the federal systems mentioned above.

## The cultural factor

Available evidence on the dynamics of cultural diversity in Nigeria — with its ethnic, linguistic, and religious dimensions — suggests that it could cause divisiveness, tensions, and conflict, similar in some respects to the developments in the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. To avoid such an outcome, it will be necessary to continue policies and practices that emphasise accommodation and coexistence and to diffuse con-

flikt to some degree through constitutional revolution and economic deregulation. It is only with regard to religion that great care will have to be taken to avoid any repetition of the dangerous adventure that sought to take the country into the

## Another important lesson for economic development in the Nigerian federal experience is the need to design national economic policies that allow effective participation for the subnational governments as well as for the private sector, nongovernmental organisations, and communal associations.

Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC). The constitutional provision that affirms Nigeria as a secular state as well as the constitutional guarantee of the freedom of worship must be respected at all times.

Regarding ethnicity, the goal during the next decade should be to create conditions in the social, economic, and political spheres that will make the average citizen aware and accept that loyalty to his or her community and ethnic group is compatible with loyalty to Nigerian multinational federal polity. It would be a great achievement if this idea of multiple loyalty becomes a reality within the next two decades.

## Democratic values

For federalism to thrive in Nigeria, it will be necessary for a democratic culture to become more entrenched in the society. Major obstacles to the growth of a democratic culture are military rule and excessive centralisation. The critical prerequisite for ensuring a functioning federal democracy is a definitive end to military rule. General Dawu Jemibewon, who was once a "combatant in government," has argued that the Nigerian military should henceforth scrupulously defend the constitution against serious infractions, "even by its own leaders." He cites as a desirable model the experience of the Philippines, where the military intervened to uphold the victory of Corazon Aquino in elections that the erstwhile president Ferdinand Marcos, was trying to rig for his own benefit. In other words, the military can intervene to enforce respect for the rules of democratic politics but not to assume the exercise of power. If the military can be transformed into such a defender of the democratic constitution, then it can be moved into its most proper position, that of servant of the constitution in which intervention in domestic governance is unnecessary and unthinkable.

It is expected that removal of the military from the political arena will allow the full interplay of the dy-

namics of federalism and democracy under competitive party politics. While the track record of civilian governance suggests that there could be considerable untidiness and some unpredictability, these are unavoidable experiences in the apprenticeship to democratic politics. For example, the configuration of party politics under the Third Republic is almost certain to be radically different from the artificial tidiness that the military has sought to establish by imposing a two-party system. However, the point made regarding the importance of accommodation and coexistence in managing cultural diversity applies with equal force to the conduct of competitive, democratic politics.

#### The economic factor

**W**hile the strength of the West German economy is playing a key role in the reunification of the two Germanies, the decay of the Soviet economy is a major force behind the centrifugal tendencies within that political system. The obvious lesson for Nigeria is that economic progress is essential for the maintenance and strengthening of the federal democratic system. A step in the right direction is the establishment of the Revenue Mobilization, Allocation and Fiscal Commission, which should help to focus attention on revenue mobilization while seeking to allocate available revenue on as equitable a basis as possible. The trend in the past was to focus on federal revenue sharing, with little attention paid to the raising of more state and local tax revenues. As state and local governments become more fiscally viable, federal revenue sharing will become less important, and the federal government will be able to focus on more critical macroeconomic matters. Reductions in federal subsidies and direct spending should create room for state and local governments to take responsi-

bility for their own service provision, financed increasingly from state and local taxes and fees.

Another important lesson for economic development in the Nigerian federal experience is the need to design national economic policies that allow effective participation for the subnational governments as well as for the private sector, nongovernmental organisations, and communal associations. Abandonment of the idea of the state taking charge of the "commanding heights of the economy" (which was enshrined in the 1979 Constitution) in favour of a

tional government responsibilities. In most cases, national governments are ill-equipped to act simultaneously on numerous fronts, too prone to monumental errors, and lacking even rudimentary data, such as an accurate population census in Nigeria, to undertake ambitious national planning programmes. Instead, simultaneity can be framed in federalist terms, namely, as concurrent responses by federal, state, and local governments based on the comparative advantages offered by each type of government for various facets of political and economic development.

## The constitutional provision that affirms Nigeria as a secular state as well as the constitutional guarantee of the freedom of worship must be respected at all times

market economy with a reduced role for the state is also a step in the right direction. This is the main thrust of the ongoing structural adjustment of the economy, the successful implementation of which is expected to relaunch the economy on the path of growth. However, it will be important for the federal government to retain transitional control of adequate resources to enable it to make allocations aimed at reducing regional and/or geographic imbalances as well as protecting the poor and other disadvantaged groups within the society. This capacity of the federal government will be a critical factor in promoting citizen loyalty to the federal polity.

#### Conclusion

The challenges facing Nigeria as well as most other African countries are multifaceted and interconnected; consequently, responses must occur on a number of fronts simultaneously. However, these responses need not be framed as purely na-

The key factor in both kinds of development is citizen participation in politics and economics, both of which suggest the need for a proliferation of accessible small and medium-size enterprises—the kind likely to be fostered in state and local arenas.

In this respect, Nigeria may have an advantage because it has a federal institutional structure, which has endured and been respected in form, despite the lapses into military rule. Translating this form of federalism into the practice of federal democracy will be a key task of the Third Republic; however, the performance of previous civilian governments, the interventionist tendencies of the military, and the stakes already piled up in the national government make the prognosis uncertain.

*Adamolekun and Kincaid are of the World Bank and the US Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, respectively*

## ENCOUNTER

# Kabiru Gaya

## Right wing populist (1)

Governor of Kano State, Alhaji Kabiru Gaya, opened his mind to *Citizen* weeks ago. The discussion centred on issues ranging from assets sharing with Jigawa State and what to do with *almajirai* and the World Bank loan which the state has obtained

**C**itizen: *The election appeal tribunal has confirmed your election as governor. Was there any time during this process when you felt the judgment might go in favour of your opponent?*

**Gaya:** Well, I never entertained any fear throughout the tribunal-cases, from the first to the second tribunal which heard the appeal. I attribute this lack of fear to the simple fact that during the election, I did my best to ensure there was nothing like rigging whatsoever. I believe my election was a mandate by the people, they voted for me, because they wanted me to be their leader.

**Citizen:** *Kano has a tradition of left wing politics and some political analysts were surprised that the NRC, which is to the right, won.*



**Gaya:** *NRC is the best for this nation*

**Gaya:** I partially agree with you that Kano has all along been on the left. Suddenly now, it changed to the right. But most people misunderstood or they did not know the degree of awareness of politics, though they may be

termed a backward state, but in politics the people are highly advanced, they know what they want and they know what kind of leader they want. Malam Aminu Kano who is our hero has been leftist all along, but the people of Kano appreciate him as a leader not because of his ideology alone; but how he received people, his thoughts on redeeming the people and so on. In my case, I took some

things from Malam Aminu Kano and some things from the late *Sardaunan Sokoto* and I put the two things together and the people turned to my side. I mean they voted for me simply because they believe in what I have been saying. That I can perform. I followed the principle of Malam Aminu, I visited the villages on a house to house campaign, telling them my programmes, asking them about their problems and telling them what I can do and that is how the right side of the party succeeded. Even if one is to consider it, the left has failed all over the world, the mighty Soviet Union has fallen, the two Germanies have merged and so on. These are all developed nations, what more of underdeveloped nations? The best party for Nigeria is rather to be on the right than to the left, so NRC is the best party for this nation.

**Citizen:** *It seems you are aiming to be a right wing populist.*

**Gaya:** Yes, I am a populist on the right wing of the party. **Citizen:** *Some of the decisions you have taken in pursuit of trying to win the masses, the abolition of the 12 Naira development levy, allowing street begging and hawking, a lot of people have said that these will have short-term gains, what do you really see as the benefits of this schemes?*

**Gaya:** In any decision making you have to weigh the advantages and the disadvantages. If the advantages are greater than the disadvantages it will be considered a good decision. Consider this, just a few years back there was a task-force set up to get hawkers off the streets and any time the task-force shows up, it will seize their goods and load into open vehicles and arraign them before a mobile court and perhaps at the end of the day fine them a huge sum of money which they cannot even realise after selling all their goods. Then they will be made to sit under the shade and sleep throughout the day, they make a lot of trouble in the town either by stealing or doing one thing or the other because it is the idle mind that cause trouble. So you have to weigh it, is it to allow these people to go freely in town or being molested by the government or keeping them busy? And you know government cannot employ everybody, and everybody cannot be given loan to invest in business, certainly we have to think of doing something, we have to measure the pros and cons. The only disadvan-

tages people are thinking about is that the street will be dirty, the streets will be crowded. These are disadvantages, but even in developed nations, these street traders



Malam: "I admire his principles"

are allowed. Go to other parts of the world you find that in towns people are allowed to trade. I believe in the government of reality. I cannot promise what I cannot do. I believe that the best thing we can do is to enlighten the people to get off the street and settle down somewhere. Within some few months, we will start building shops which will be a little bit far away from the high ways, so that these people can now rent shops. In developed countries, you find shops built off the streets, they are sort of revenue generators, so we said this planning will not be a short term arrangement but a long term one. Then on the issue of *almajirai*. Initially we have proposed to set up an institution, like a transition school, where the *almajirai* will be taken off the streets into a small boarding school, consisting of about 12 classrooms, three per stream with a maximum of 30 students to 90 pupils, and we have over 300,000 of them in Kano metropolitan area alone. If you should accommodate 90 people, what is the ratio, 300,000 to 90? So you find out that the idea is not worth venturing into. We are spending seven million Naira monthly to feed our students in schools, that's spending about 75 million Naira annually to feed less than 150,000 students in schools. If we have 300,000 *almajirai* we have to feed them, three times a day and 12 months in a year, unlike a school which is only seven months and they consume 73 million Naira. If you have twice that number you will spend 200 million on the *almajirai* and the government does not have such huge amount. So the best option is for govern-

ment to embark on irrigation farm projects to provide food for the people. I am sure if this is done, there will be no *almajirai* on the streets, nobody really wants to move out of his parents home if there is means of livelihood. These are the things we are planning, and I am not thinking of it in terms of scoring political points or whatever but to try to make it a reality and also to make it work.

**Citizen:** I have read your budget "Time for action." There are so many programmes, roads, rural electrification etc, what is the total vision, the target you have, say after four years?

**G**aya: Certainly one has made a projection for four years and beyond. I would like to achieve something but one cannot really satisfy everybody. One can only do ones best. Considering this, I will like to develop at least 60 per cent of the arable land in the state through irrigation to make it possible for self-sufficiency in food production which in turn will help build agro-allied industries, provide jobs for the people both in the rural and urban areas. I want to make sure there is adequate water supply in Kano metropolitan and the rural areas. I have set in motion the machinery to facilitate adequate water supply so that in terms of agriculture and water supply, road networks, once we develop agriculture and good roads, there will be easy communication. I also intend to build some new polytechnics or colleges. My other plan is to reform the civil service to make people become more committed to their state, have the interest of their state at heart and then work hard to develop it.

**Citizen:** How will you reform the civil service?  
**Gaya:** The fact is that one has to blame the government for not making the civil service work simply because dedicated workers have not been rewarded. I am considering a programme that will enable government to assess how the worker is faring every three months and reward those that are working hard as a way of encouragement. I have noticed within the last two months that civil servants are working up to 18 hours a day to get a targeted programme, like when I came, most of the street lights were not working and I had to get some civil servants under that unit to get the lights back and within three days they were able to accomplish the task. I was really impressed. The only thing one can do is to encourage the civil servants and it is through this that they can be dedicated. I told the civil servants that we the politicians made the policies, but those who execute our policies are the civil servant so we are a team and I did not aspire to govern to blackmail or remove anybody from office simply because he did not belong to my party. All I am concerned about is to lay a good future for my state and at the end of the day I will like to leave a good name through concrete achievements upon which people can look back and say yes during his tenure he was able to do these and that.

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## Banking

## A pat on the back

## Community banking receives accolades as it clocks one year

**A**buja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) was agog last week as the National Board for Community Banks (NBCB) celebrated its first anniversary.

The climax of the four-day celebrations was the presentation of awards to deserving community banks in recognition of their sterling performance. The awards were given to the community banks that perform best in terms of total savings mobilised, total assets accumulated, best efforts at local government and best management. Addressing participants at the opening of the conference, President Ibrahim Babangida observed that the community banking system, had turned out to be a potent source of unification of warring factions of communities in the country.

He expressed delight that "the concept of community banking has been embraced with considerable enthusiasm all over the country, thus taking a step in the facilitation of our journey towards the emancipation of our national economy. The president noted that the anniversary bore an eloquent testimony to the fact that his administration had moved the nation closer to the realisation of its objectives of grassroots development, self reliance, economic reconstruction attainment and the inculcation of banking habits in people in the rural areas."

Established in January 1990 to cater for the rural dwellers, the bank according to Professor Akin Mabogunje, the chairman of the National Board for Community Banks has been established in 129 communities. The professor gave the banks a

pass mark saying: "The performance of the banks were already startling and highly encouraging". Of the 129 banks commissioned, 91 had



Mabogunje: "startling performance"

been in operation for at least three months, while some had hardly been in operation for a full nine months.

According to the (NBCB), the scheme controlled cumulative assets worth 103 million Naira in 105 community banks as at February this year. This according to financial analysts, outstrips the estimated 116.4 million deposits mobilised by 188 commercial bank branches in the first one year. At Oworonsoki Community Bank in Lagos, Master Kassim Hassan, 13, of Gbagada Comprehensive High School, told *Citizen* that the bank has taught him the act of saving. Master Kassim, whose mother is a trader, said he opened a savings account with the

bank November last year. Also, a pharmacist who preferred anonymity told *Citizen* at Idimu Community Bank that she was satisfied with the operations of the bank.

Apart from encouraging savings, the banks have also strived to satisfy its other objectives of granting loans to people who would not have been qualified for such at the commercial banks. Recently, Oworonsoki Community Bank granted a loan of between 2,000 — 5,000 Naira to 13 successful customers who have reliable accounts with it.

The loans, according to the marketing manager of the bank, Mr. Silas Abayomi were given on the basis of personal recognition, good account with the bank and not on any rigid collateral usually demanded by commercial banks. Despite the success stories of the community banks, economic experts believe that there is a need to shore-up the capital base of the community banks for them to undertake the financing of viable projects. They contend that the present 500,000 Naira capital base minimum requirement of community banks to take off is not adequate to finance small-scale industries and agricultural activities. It was in recognition of this serious limitation that President Babangida, last week decried the exorbitant charges commercial banks impose on the community banks for their services and the difficulties they have clearing their cheques from corresponding banks. He therefore directed the NBCB, the Central Bank of Nigeria, CBN, and the ministry of finance and economic planning to find a workable solution to the peculiar needs of the community banks which were established because of the perceived failure of the conventional banks to meet the yearnings of the rural dwellers.

If this is done, it might be possible

to achieve the aim of mobilising the estimated 50.4 million Naira idle money in circulation within the informal sectors into the mainstream of the nation's economy. With this huge sum in the kitty, the hope is that the banks will be able to sustain its objective of developing "a self-sustaining financial institution owned and managed by a commu-

nity or group of communities for the purpose of providing credit, deposit, banking and other financial services to its members on the basis of their self-recognition and credit worthiness". Notwithstanding the accolades and hopes, there are those who think the cheers should be shelved. One of them is Rasheed Gbadamosi, chairman, Nigeria Industrial Devel-

opment Bank, NIDB, who had earlier warned that the scheme might not be successful in some communities that are suspicious of paying interest on loans.

But, so far, according to the NIB secretary, Alhaji Zakari Isa Chawa, the returns from the operating community banks have been impressive.

By Tola Sunday

## BUSINESS BRIEFS

### New appointments at TCPC

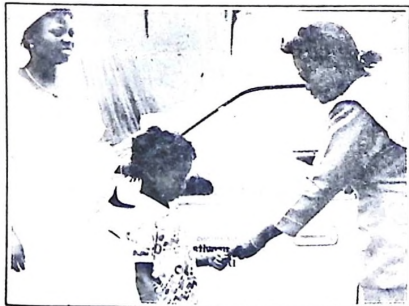
The Technical Committee on Privatisation and Commercialisation (TCPC) has announced new appointments at its secretariat. They are Mr. Bernard B.A. Verr as its new director-general in succession to Dr. Shamsudeen Usman, who is now executive director (international banking) United Bank for Africa UBA Plc.

Prior to his appoint-

ment, Mr. Verr was director of finance and investments in the TCPC secretariat with responsibility for commercialisation, finance and investments.

Other new appointees include Chief Richard Okusanya, formerly deputy director of operation now director (privatisation); and Mr. Emeka Maduegbuna as director, corporate affairs. He was formerly the corporate affairs manager.

### Cadbury Tall dream fulfilled



A six year old boy, Master Kayode Daniel was on Saturday April 25, presented with Amazing

Bournvita Dream Promotion Hyundai Excel Car. Little Kayode, with ticket number K-205, emerged the winner dur-

### Union Bank honours staff

Union Bank of Nigeria Plc last weekend honours its pensioners. Beneficiaries include three former directors, a former deputy-general manager of the bank and about 100 others who were honoured for their dedication, exemplary devotion and service to the bank.

The managing director, Alhaji Sulciman Baffa,

ing the draw held on February 12, 1992. Koyade is a primary one pupil of Hawa Nursery and Primary School, Bukaba Barracks. He lives with his parents at plot 317, Shagari quarters, Kano.

Kayode's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Emmanuel Daniel were on hand to receive the car keys from a representative of Cadbury Nigeria Plc, Miss Titi O. Akintemi, group product manager, Food Drinks and Domestic Products.

According to his parents, Kayode and his brother, Femi, both made five entries. Kayode's entry was filled for him by Femi, his eight year old elder brother.

Their father, Emmanuel Daniel, is a trade unionist and transporter

who made the announcement also revealed that the bank hit over 3.18 billion Naira mark in total assets with total deposits of 99 billion Naira and a total capitalisation of 6.76 million Naira. He urged the bank's staff to rise to the challenges posed by the current economic situation to make the bank remain "shining star in the banking business."

while their mother, Bola runs a provision store.

Mr. Daniel, a transporter, already, has two cars. He said of the Dream car won by his son: "I am very happy because we did not expect it. We have not decided what to do with the car. But when we heard the news, I asked the boy and he said it would be taking him to school every morning. So, that's what we will do now".

The Amazing Bournvita Dream Promotion was held in four regions — Kaduna, Lagos, Aba and Ibadan. There were four star prizes of Hyundai Excel cars and other prizes in each of the zones. It is the second year running in which the promotion would be held. Cadbury Nigeria Plc makers of Bournvita.

AFRICA

# Sierra Leone Exit Momoh

## Mutinous soldiers go on rampage which was to translate into a push

**F**or over 48 hours from Wednesday, April 30, nothing was clear in Sierra Leone. The country was thrown into a state of confusion with some rebel army officers claiming to have overthrown the government. The government later announced that it was still in control. The situation remained so going into the weekend; even though there were strong indications that mutinous troops might have succeeded in taking over government from President Joseph Momoh.

The long wait ended very early Friday morning. Although former president Momoh was fortunate to make it to Guinea, his government was comprehensively sacked. The army officers who will certainly be at the helm of affairs, of the provisional ruling council made a broadcast to the nation to announce the success of the junta.

The usual scenario then followed: the Council's spokesman announced the suspension of the constitution, the indefinite closure of borders and the imposition of a dawn to dusk curfew. The spokesman warned that any false move by anyone will be met with serious consequences. That brought to a head the confused state of things in Sierra Leone since soldiers began what they called protest for better pay and condition of living.

To be sure, when disturbances started early that Wednesday morning, it was reported to be a mutiny by soldiers who were pressing demands for an improvement in what they termed, poor condition and low pay. The soldiers who are reported to have abandoned their post at the country's

borders with Liberia also said they were demanding for the government's support in their fight against the twin-force of some Sierra Le-



Momoh: a bumpy ride to Guinea

onean dissidents and members of Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia. The troops' real intention was to manifest shortly after.

They took over the State House and occupied offices in the capital, Freetown, claiming to have ousted the government of Joseph Momoh who was reported to be out of the building at the time of the take over. The rebels were said to have used a private radio station to make the announcement. To counter the soldiers' broadcast, President Momoh was said to have spoken to Sierra Leoneans from the state owned

radiostation, saying that loyal troops were in control having routed the mutinous soldiers. That was perhaps the only broadcast from President Joseph Momoh, thereby giving strength to suspicions that the government was actually ousted.

Diplomats in the capital also confirmed that battle between the rebels and government forces continued up to Thursday with the rebels claiming to have trounced the government forces and retaken over the state owned radio station. British Broadcasting Corporation, BBC

reported that the troops said they were ready to negotiate their demands with the authorities.

But shortly after, events were to take a more confusing dimension. More soldiers were reported to be abandoning their post and trooping into Freetown. There were fears that a five-man junta said to have masterminded the mutiny has emerged. This, coupled with the silence from the Joseph Momoh camp is seen as an indication of the rebels' success.

This fact became clearer when the junta announced that it was in complete control and that provisional government was being put in place. Meanwhile, shooting in the air con-

tinued well into late Thursday. President Momoh's whereabouts is also not known. One of the commanders of the Sierra Leonean army at the country's borders with Liberia, Colonel Yaya Kanu told BBC that the government of Joseph Momoh has been overthrown and that a ruling council would be announced today, Thursday.

By very late Thursday everything pointed to a success by the rebel forces terminating the Joseph Momoh government which came into power in November 1985.

By Rabiou Barde  
with agency reports

# Mali

## The pain of victory

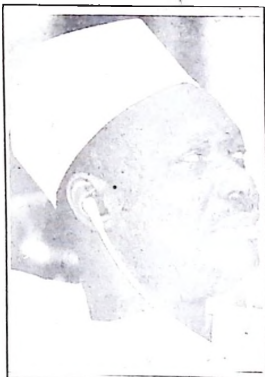
Konare trounces Konate, but daunting economic problems mean he may not savour victory for long

**“W**e Malians are fed up with fighting. Luckily, it's the end of the process.” These were the words of a jubilant Bamako resident soon after the final result of the April 26 second round presidential election was in.

Indeed, it was the end of a long process for Mali's return to democratic civil rule that began with the toppling last May of former President Mousa Traore's dictatorship. The man who came out top at “the end of the process” is Alpha Oumar Konare, a youth minister under Traore. But he played a key role in his boss' overthrow.

Interior ministry tallies gave Konare almost 70 per cent of the votes to his only rival Mamoudou Konate's 30.44 per cent. In the first round on April 12, Mr. Konare polled 45%, not enough to get him elected on the first ballot. Then, it was a crowded field; there were altogether nine candidates. Seven did not make it to the second round. Mr. Konate who made it along with Mr. Konare scored only 14.5 per cent in a poll that witnessed a low 23.5 per cent voter turn-out.

It was even lower in the second round, barely reaching 20 per cent in the capital, Bamako and even less in rural areas. It has been suggested that people whose candidates lost in the first round might have decided simply not to vote again. Another report said the voters' roll was not well drawn up and the figure on the roll may well have been higher than there were Malians eligible to vote.



Traore: end of his era

Yet another report said the parties simply were unable to “get the electorate going.”

Mr. Konate, himself minister of finance in the ousted Traore regime, was handicapped by support for him from the Union of Democracy for Development of General Traore. He believed he was robbed of victory through “a lot of fraud.” But last week he announced that he would accept the final result, anyway.

Everything considered, Mr. Konare's victory did not come as a surprise. First, his party, the Alliance for Democracy in Mali (ADEMA) scored a landslide victory during last March's parliamentary election. Then in the first round of the presidential poll he led the field, but was only 5 per cent short of outright victory. During the second round, it is understood, the other

seven candidates he belted on April 12 threw their weight behind him.

If Malians knew he would be president, what they did not do probably still do not know is what policies he intends to pursue. After his election as president was announced, Mr. Konare was said to have offered those parties that ran against his “a republican pact,” an invitation to bury the hatchet and work together.

It is not clear what responses

Everything considered, Mr. Konare's victory did not come as a surprise. First, his party, the Alliance for Democracy in Mali (ADEMA) scored a landslide victory during last March's parliamentary election.

those parties have given. Some may welcome it but, as one report said there are many people who would want a veritable opposition in place “to question the government's decisions.”

The president-elect does not have to worry about parliament where he has a “good majority.” His real worry though is Mali's ravaged economy. There is no money in the treasury. He cannot raise it through taxes because Malians are too impoverished to be able to pay the dues.

Already, teachers and other servants are threatening to go on strikes for higher pay. In addition there is the lingering Tuareg rebellion in the north of the country. Konare is taking power with a future as unsure as the transition process had been initially.

By Tawey Zang  
with agency reports

# Germany

## The dean's exit

World's longest-serving foreign minister, Hans Dietrich-Genscher, resigns



Genscher: The Dean takes his leave

**H**err Genscher has had to promise his wife that he "won't stay (in office) longer than Gromyko." Andrei Gromyko was foreign minister of the defunct Soviet Union for 28 years from 1957; since his departure in 1985, Herr Genscher has been the dean of the world's foreign ministers, having first assumed the post in 1974.

Genscher's tenure was long and also eventful. In the mid-1980s, he was the leading advocate of a western support for Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms in the east. Genscher also campaigned long and hard against the modernisation of NATO's tactical nuclear forces stationed on German soil. Rewards poured in after 1989, following the fall of East German communism.

Genscher and Chancellor Helmut Kohl painstakingly negotiated with the Allied powers of world war two, with Poland and with the East Germans and were able to pull off the re-unification of the two Germanies.

Since then, Herr Genscher has gone on to establish himself as a leading source of ideas and tactics in the post-cold war era. In the last two years, the German foreign ministry in Bonn became famous for rolling out one major foreign-policy initiative after another. In one short period this year, for example,

the Germans proposed a fund to keep former Soviet nuclear scientists at work; another proposal for a

**Last week, Herr Genscher suddenly resigned. His letter to Chancellor Kohl gave no reason for the resignation; nor did it offer any thanks to Kohl, whom Genscher served for 10 years.**

NATO-Warsaw pact-former Soviet forum; and expanding membership of the council for security and cooperation in Europe, CSCE. Genscher also pushed hard for a European community recognition of the independence of Croatia and Slovenia, the first two Yugoslav republics to break away. At one point, Genscher

threatened a unilateral German recognition of the two republics if the EC dragged its feet.

It was this threat of German *alleingang*, or solo initiative, that is beginning to disconcert other European countries, who fear a revival of "the ugly Germany." Whatever the Germans wanted, they pushed it hard; Genscher and Kohl also campaigned hard for European monetary union, once described by a British minister as "a German racket."

Hans Dietrich-Genscher, described by *Time* magazine as "the savviest political survivor of the epoch," is also the most popular politician in Germany, according to opinion polls. Herr Genscher has been accused of championing only issues that are popular in Germany; as such, he reversed his views about Yugoslavia, where he initially argued against encouraging the break up of the republic, and also kept Germany out of the main action during the Gulf War. The minister thus remained popular despite the relative marginalisation of his party, the Free Democrats, who captured 11 per cent of the votes in the 1990 general elections.

Last week, Herr Genscher suddenly resigned. His letter to Chancellor Kohl gave no reason for the resignation; nor did it offer any thanks to Kohl, whom Genscher served for 10 years. The minister denied that he was resigning because of policy differences with the chancellor; he only wanted to "end speculations about" his future. Chancellor Kohl, caught in the midst of a big national debt, eastern German discontent, and the first public service strike in Germany in 18 years, asked the Free Democrats to nominate a successor for their departed leader. Now back on the backbenches, Herr Genscher may try for the German presidency in 1994, or to succeed Jacques Delors as European Community president.

By Mahmud Jega  
with agency reports

# Afghanistan Battle of a different kind

The battle for Kabul should have ended with the exit of the Communist-backed government. But rival guerrilla groups continue the struggle for power

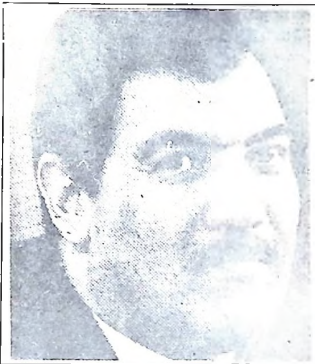
**T**he battle for a truly peaceful and united Afghanistan may actually have just begun. This is not exactly an unexpected development. With the exit of the communist Najibullah government and transition of power to the Mujahideen groups, it became apparent that some rounds of fighting will have to settle which of the various groups would finally form the government. In the end the situation may not be exactly different from the Najibullah days.

The first sign of an ominous future appeared when the interim government that is to take charge of the country has a complete pro-West personalities. The enormously popular albeit hardline Hizb-e-Islami Mujahideen group of Gulbuddin Hikmatyar, which had a strong standing in Kabul, immediately became the target of the interim government. This may be a fatal move, considering that Afghanistan needs a united Mujahideen front in its leadership - which is perhaps impossible.

So after three days of fighting between rival Mujahideen groups and the remnant of the communist coalition, an interim government headed by Professor Sibghatullah Mujaddadi, a well known ally of Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and by extension United States of America was announced. The Professor actually came into Kabul from Pakistan by road under the command of "heavily armed" Mujahideen fighters who were carried in about hundred vehicles. Professor Mujaddadi immediately announced the creation of an Islamic state. He also attempted to make a last political move when he announced an amnesty for all the

members of the ousted communist government.

Professor Mujaddadi did not let himself be deceived by the euphoria and enthusiasm that greeted the return of the Mujahideen after over a decade of bitter and vicious struggle against the communist. He knew that it would be impossible to achieve a peaceful transition with various groups seeing his government as an imposed one, just like the



Najibullah: down and out

ports have it that Mujahideen forces loyal to the government have been pouncing on other groups that are still lurking in Kabul. The biggest casualty from this crackdown is the Gulbuddin Hikmatyar-led Hizb-e-Islami Mujahideen group.

Now, the Gulbuddin group might have been wiped out, the fear however remains that a group such as the Hizb-e-Islami which wanted to establish an "independent, Islamic and non-aligned Afghanistan", can hardly be taken care of completely. The regrouping of this group and other little groups with similar ideas is likely to pose a serious problem to the government. In fact the consensus is that the battle for peace and unity in Afghanistan might have just begun.

This is more so, for the simple fact that the ousted communist regime is being succeeded by a western backed one. It is as if the difference is in the ideology alone. With Pakistan and Saudi Arabia rushing to get a foothold in the new government, dissenting groups are likely going to appear very real soon. The situation is actually that of paying back for past financial help. In the words of Nawal Salim, a spokesman for the Gulbuddin group, both the interim government and its main backers, the northern Mujahideen group leader, now defence minister, Shah Ahmed Massoud are cronies of for-

## The first sign of an ominous future appeared when the interim government that is to take charge of the country has a complete pro-West personalities.

Najibullah regime. It is not unexpected, therefore when Mujaddadi told newsmen that the greatest problem the government will face is that of security. To be sure of this, re-

ign intelligence services. A battle of a different kind might as well be underway.

By Rabiul Barde  
with agency reports



## BILKISU YUSUF

realistic assessment of the economy, a few facts must be laid bare on the table of reason.

The first patient for examination is the Naira. In 1982, the national currency was a healthy and buoyant. The exchange rate was 65 kobo to one US dollar. There were complaints from "experts" about the overvalued Naira, how bad it was for attracting capital from capitalist

economic heresays, the CBN last March devalued the Naira by 96% supposedly to clip the wings of the greedy bankers it ignored for too long.

Today, the CBN sells one US dollar for 18.60 Naira while other (tear) markets sell at 20 Naira for one US dollar it is simplistic and callous to lynch a currency with 1,100 per cent devaluation and not expect chaos and human suffering.

The result is spiralling inflation which has reduced the masses to destitutes and even the middle class to paupers. Given the meat purchasing power of the Naira, a professor or chief executive of a firm who earns 3,000 Naira monthly (150 dollars) would still live below the poverty line. The low income earners, the small scale industrialists and petty traders are now destitutes who cannot be salvaged by SAP palliatives or ineffective sermons on virtues of patriotism and price control. We have devalued our conscience and currency beyond recognition and capital is not flowing in. Instead we are battling with capital flight, nor have expertise been promoted. Trade liberalisation has resulted in dumping of junk luxury goods on our market. Yet what the pundits would have us believe is that the economy has not collapsed. Even more astonishing is the discordant voices of the Naira's too many experts who have either kept mum, dissociated themselves from conception and implementation of SAP or are busy fishing in murky waters for scapegoats. The other day Dr. Oyetunji Aboyade, the presidential economic adviser blamed the triple digit inflation figure on the generality of Nigerians for the state of the economy. Chief Olu Falae, former finance minister now a presidential aspirant has dissociated himself from SAP. But the Chu Okongwu's, Alhajis and the Idika Kalus at various times finance, budget and economic planning ministers have kept mum. The cloak of silence can not absolve the guilty.

## Naira disunion

I am one with the sage who said it is not easy to keep one's head when all around are losing theirs. Likewise when one is forced to live with financial experts who are drunk on incompetence, self interest and agreed, it is virtually impossible to escape from the rumbles of collapsed economy under which the masses are now buried alive. Their room mate in that lonely, dark grave of economic adversity is of course the battered Naira. The two inmates of that cold grave are helpless victims who still care about each other but remain ineffective against their common enemies who reduced them to their pitiable status of the living dead.

That, precisely is where the problem begins. It is an indisputed fact that the Naira is sick and the masses have been infected by the same ailment. The so called "experts" are also unanimous in their diagnosis of the disease — devaluation of the Naira and subsequent inflation that threaten to devalue the masses out of existence. Yet these "experts" are so polarised and far from agreeing on whether the economy has actually collapsed and who to be held responsible for the disaster. Equally contentious is the remedy for the country's economic ailments and whether recovery is possible in the not too distant future.

One is aware that identifying those responsible for the collapse of the economy is one of the touchiest issues in recent times. To arrive at a

economies, for expert promotion and for capitalist economies and for international trade. The country was not short of "experts" who recommended devaluation of the Naira stimulate expertise and attract foreign capital, trade liberalisation, cut in subsidies for agriculture and social services and deregulation of the economy. Our "experts" were encouraged by the IMF and the World Bank, to adopt these measures. The introduction of SAP and FEM in 1986 sealed the deal and the World Bank dangled the carrot fund to help us with our balance of payment problems. That marked the beginning of our downward slide into the abyss of Naira depreciation.

In the ensuing chaos, bankers made brisk business buying foreign currencies at the official rates only to divert them to the parallel market. The CBN looked the other way as the bank boys loaded themselves. The Naira, our collective achilles tendon was left helplessly to the vagaries of nebulous "market forces." The experts took the Naira on a misguided, dislocated monetary adventure of Dutch auction second tier and third tier system. Naira was battered at the instance of pretentious "experts", avaricious bankers, desperate importers and manufacturers and insensitive government officials. It was a fiasco that saw the devaluation of the Naira by 1,100%, the lowest exchange rate any currency has been subjected to. In what amounted to a synthesis of all

**LOOK! OGA! ...TROUBLE  
IN YOUR HOUSE! ... COMMOTION!**



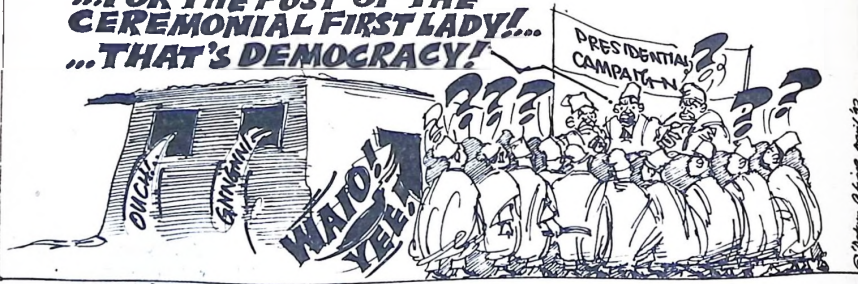
**... OUR DETRACTORS! ... OUR FOES! ...  
HOW DID THEY GET INSIDE  
ANYWAY?**



**... FELLOW SUPPORTERS!  
MARCH INSIDE AND CRUSH  
OUR ENEMIES!** **WAIT! ... WAIT!  
THEY'RE MY  
WIVES! ...  
IT'S A  
CONTEST!**



**... FOR THE POST OF THE  
CEREMONIAL FIRST LADY! ...  
... THAT'S DEMOCRACY!**



# Banking riots

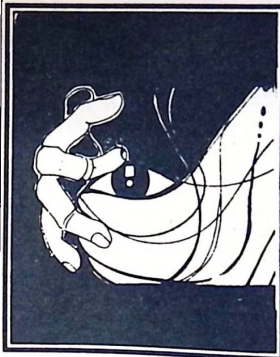
**A**fter the brouhaha at the Peoples Bark of Nigeria and the mudslinging last year, many people expected the barking bankers to settle down to serious business of banking. Information reaching my watchful eye indicate that some petty minded staff of the bark have rolled up their sleeves in readiness for witch-hunting. There are two camps, those who pitched their tent with the old man of Ikenne and his two-timing chief whip and the other comprising those who opened the can of worm on the fraud and murky dealings at the bark.

In what is certainly the u-turn of the century, the old man did admit that some people dipped their fingers into the money pot and he used that as an excuse for resigning. Those who wondered where he was when the itchy fingered bankers were having a field day are yet to receive an honest answer. As we all know, when two elephants fight it is the

grass that suffers.

Now a new spate of victimisation that is assuming a worrisome dimension is unfolding at the peoples bark. It has to do with mass termination of appointment of staff for no reason whatsoever. In what resembles the prelude to Zangon Kafat massacre, those who were employed at the inception of the bark are being weeded out to make room for new peoples type of Nigerians, those who are more equal than others. I would not have read sectarian and tribal motives into the weeding "exercise" hidden under "re-organisation", but when every Abdullahi and Abubakar is replaced with a Katabu Tafiya or Tsaniya Mutuwa, one is forced to raise eyebrows.

In Kachia branch alone, ten employees from the manager to clerks and cashiers employed in January 1991 were fired in December 1991 and replaced with favoured loyalists the following month.



As if that is not disturbing enough, the same pattern is being repeated in ten other branch offices, from Birnin Gwari, Ikara, Kauru and Zangon Kafat to Kafanchan and Saminaka. By the time the "re-organisation" ruse is over, the peoples bark will have room only for a select breed of homo sapiens whose delicacy is the flesh of the only mammal that barks. How's that for a barking bank full of barking bankers?

# 100 days wonder

**T**he problem of being in power is that one gets priorities turned upside down, courtesy of the sycophants who surround those who call these shots. As the civilian governors settled to tackle their assignments, the praise singers were busy clearing their voices to do what they know best how to do - bootlicking. They could not wait for the governors' 100 days in office before flooding the newspapers with congratulatory messages.

They also invaded the electronic media with tonnes of goodwill messages and heaps of praises. Don't ask me just how much work a governor can do in just 100 days, but the way the advertisers went about it you would think these governors have a magic wand that could make

things happen. I have visited many of the states, old and new, blimey, if anything, everything seems to have grown worse. I just wonder what the governors and their well-wishers would do in a year's time.

None of the well-wishers (bore-hole-wishers these days!) sympathised with them for inheriting an almost barren treasury, none of them volunteered to help them combat desert encroachment, drought, resuscitate water supply and other basic amenities through communal efforts. Some well-wishers!

Those who were bolder enough were quick to remind the governors that they are importers and exporters, general contractors and manufacturers agents. Yes! it was a reminder that business should con-

tinue as usual after 100 days. The most amazing thing about these so-called well-wishers is why none of them finds it necessary to sympathise with those who lost election!

Well if other governors are lapping up the false air of admiration, two governors are not impressed one little bit. Governors Ali Sa'ad and Yahaya Abdulkarim of Jigawa and Sokoto states just refused to celebrate their 100 days in office. Ali Sa'ad said the tasks ahead of him as the chief executive of an underdeveloped state did not call for a celebration while Yahaya Abdulkarim dismissed all such festivities as premature. Wise words from realists who are not tickled pink by the antics of praise singers and bootlickers!

## POETS' NEST

## Mothers and wives

"Paradise according to prophetic traditions 'lies at the feet of mothers.'" She toils to nurture the baby infant into an adult. She stays awake to attend to its needs, sings a lullaby, soothing the baby to sleep. Our poets remember the contributions of self-sacrificing mothers and the other "mothers" in their lives.

## Mother

A rose among an ocean of them;  
Mortal love perfected;  
A capacious cauldron in which  
to boil all cares to evaporation;  
A shoulder to cry on;  
A heart that fathoms without words;  
Oasis of rest in the midst of the  
scorching desert of life;  
Isle of tranquillity amidst life's tur-  
bulent sea of troubles;  
Mount-edged, sapphire-surfaced  
Lake Placid;  
A gem, a melodious sound;  
A fragrance, serenity personified;  
A corner in which to lick wounds;  
A capacious cauldron in which to  
boil all troubles to evaporation;  
Cosmic rivulets of love converge at  
a confluence called mother.

Aminu Ali

## Mother

It was always her place to sweep  
away  
the mess we made of life's offerings  
With the menfolk gone, children out  
of the way  
her time comes to relieve the scene  
of  
paper gross, bits and pieces mated  
dust.

Her broom sings the latest gossips,  
too  
So many feet to be swept with the  
weed  
still having a last stand ahead of her  
wish.

And there would be space now for a  
mat  
somewhere to dry the chips for a  
market day  
where fates converge, mother always  
gold.

And where lives converse, patience  
always bold  
she gives her day in homely cotton  
wear  
How she covers the backs we slept  
on  
before so many roads took us away.

Odia Ofeimun

## She

She knew when laughter rose  
from bottomless pits of suffering...  
The jokes splitting the haggled faces  
of men hidden by the kindness of the  
night

She knew when laughter rose  
from frustrate cells  
of impatience taught the sad wilt  
of risen manhood

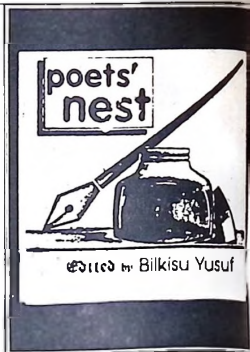
She knew when laughter tapped the  
pain  
of souls steeped in loss

Sitting away from dancing crowds  
she held all music at arms length  
save the scream that screamed in her  
for the lonely man in the bar  
drowning his gods in winecups.

Odia Ofeimun

## She

Her face does shine  
Like an advanced moonshine  
Blissful eyes do glitter  
Like smiling stars in winter  
Popular as event heralding crescent  
And it's glamour twelfth day mo-  
ment  
Permeating like winter snowing  
Have you known the dept



of my ocean brimful feelings  
Staunch like Spartan soldiery forth  
Fall you not of this sudden  
To travails and toils outside Eden.  
Kabiru A. Muhammed

## I remember Tawa

Tawakalitu  
A thwarted brat on the tarmac  
Of existence.  
A ball of humanity,  
Kicked by want into the arms  
Of a mistress.

Tawa!  
A paper boat on the tide,  
angrily swept and tossed,  
Into the hands of servitude,  
By waves of poverty,  
In rebellion against fortune's para-  
ality.

Tawa!  
A voyager without a port,  
A bowel of misery,  
Held in piece by threads of guid-  
ance.

Tawa!  
Beautiful daughter of fortune,  
Break dancing on the fence,  
Of life,  
With a protruding belly that bring-  
to memory,  
The sight of a Biafran child.

Emeka Odigbo



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## MUSIC

# Sony music Reaching out

## Coca Cola takes Sony artistes to Ibadan in a show that had its thrills and frills

**S**unday, April 19, is a day residents of the ancient city of Ibadan would be in no hurry to forget. For it was a day they met "live" artistes in the stable of Sony music in concerts, courtesy of Coca-Cola: Iyanda Sawaba, De Rovans band, Funmi Aragbaye, Sir Shina Peters, Esse Agesse, Majek Fashek... Venue: Ultra modern Adamasingba stadium. Time 10 am. But the show started in an unlikely manner four hours behind schedule.

His band boys numbering 12 decked out in native dresses set the tone, the conventional drums clashing with the talking drums and *shekere*. Soon the entire space reverberated with heavy beat. Then he appeared, in patterned jeans, T-shirt, fez cap and canvas, looking more like a disco buff than the Fuji exponent that he is. Alhaji Iyanda Sawaba is a mere youth with mellow voice who dances with verve and vitality. Too bad, the audience did not share in his gusto. He is a singer, to watch, though.

But the audience was roused by De Rovans band whose performance was a sizzling affair. The youthful sixteen piece band showed that highlife music is not entirely for the old and aged. For the better part of an hour, they sent feet tapping and body swaying, with numbers that recalled such highlife greats as Rex Lawson and Celestine Ukwu. The dancers thrilled in well choreographed steps and the vocalist cum band leader, Biyi Olaitan, brought to the fore, his versatility as a performer. At a point he knelt in total submission and at another he rolled in agony as his involvement became total. The applause was resounding,

as they took their bow.

Funmi Aragbaye's entrance was rather dampening. The singer proved perhaps that gospel music is anything but commercial. Her



Shina Peters' group thrilling the audience

dancers came in multifarious costumes and moved at variance with the rhythm. Their amaturity was all too clear. She did not help matters by rendering her songs literally standing on a spot. Her exit elicited mild applause, more out of courtesy.

Then, everybody was up on his feet-cheering. "Sir" Shina Peters came in style. Bepsetached, he had on a jacket over black trousers while his group wore jeans and long sleeved sweaters. Running up the stage, he stood with his back to the audience, grabbing a guitar which he twanged momentarily. Expectation ran high. But surprise of all surprises, his first tune was Victor Uwaifo's "Jerome", second tune, "Guitar boy." He seemed to be enjoying the audience's befuddlement,

as he threw off his guitar at the point picking the microphone. "Y want me to play "Ace," "Shirmania" or "Dancing Time", he asked. Even before the answer came he said "I'll play Ace." Such finesse. Come was the blumbering Shina of "soonest recover." He had the audience under control, urging them "make una laugh-o" "make una dance." More than anything the show revealed a matured Shina — who best is yet to come.

Bendel girl, Esse Agesse kept up the pitch. Hair flailing, her voice

tilting towards the alto, the audience joined as she went into vigorous dance steps, the microphone changing from one hand to the other. Such tunes as "I like to dance", (she did that quite well), "Bendel Girl" and "Dream boy" endeared her to the audience. It was a fine outing for her.

So too it was for coca-cola, the sponsors who sold off the official drink sprite, to the teeming audience. Talk of marriage of a refreshing drink and music capped by the performance of Majek Fashek, who though insisted on using his own musical instrument thereby delaying his appearance by more than two hours, kept the "chosen one" as he called the few people that remained behind, spell bound.

Oji Ono

## BOOK REVIEW

# The national question

**Title:** Peace and Violence in Nigeria

**Author:** Tekena N. Tamuno

**Publishers:** Panel on Nigeria Since Independence, History Project (1991)

**Size:** 676 page

**Title:** Publius — The Journal of Federalism Vol. 21 No. 4

**Edited by:** Ladipo Adamolekun

**Publishers:** Centre for the Study of Federalism and University of North Texas

**Size:** 202 pages

**Reviewer:** Mohammed Haruna

**T**ekena Tamuno may not be a household name, but it is not obscure either. Tamuno, a professor of history, was a vice-chancellor of University of Ibadan (1975-79) and chairman of the board of directors of New Nigerian Newspaper Ltd, Kaduna (1984-89), among many academic and public offices he has held. At the moment he is a research professor at the National Institute of Policy and Strategic Studies, NIPSS, Kuru, near Jos.

Unlike Tamuno, Ladipo Adamolekun is familiar virtually only in academic circles. A former professor of public administration at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ife, he now works with the World Bank as a management specialist. His area of specialization has been inter-governmental relations i.e. the relations between local, state and federal governments.

Tamuno and Adamolekun have authored or edited publications which, coming recently as they did, could not have been more timely.

So far, the campaign for the remaining tickets of the two parties — presidential, senatorial and house of representatives, — have proceeded more or less peacefully. We thank God for that. But then the contests for governorships — both the primaries and the real thing — were bitter and acrimonious mainly because of a perception that government and many of its senior figures were interested parties in the outcome. Since the stakes in the remain-

ing elections are higher than those already conducted, the potential for violence remains high, unless the public can see that the elections will be free and fair.

It is this potential for political violence that makes Tamuno's book quite timely. The book is actually a child of a more ambitious project, headed by Tamuno, to write a definitive history of Nigeria since independence. After repeated delays, the history professor and his team finally came out with a ten-volume history early last year.

Apparently *Peace and Violence in Nigeria* came out of materials Tamuno must have gathered for the main project but which could not be used for lack of space.

*Peace and Violence* attempts to trace the history of political violence in Nigeria from colonial times to date. This is obviously an ambitious goal, even as a side-objective to editing a comprehensive history of Nigeria. It is obvious from even a casual reading of the book that Tamuno approached his objective with scholarly diligence. Incidences of political and religious violence — or its cousins, street demonstrations and boycotts — from colonial times to date are well-documented. As a result, the book is a good reference material on the nature of Nigerian politics since independence.

However, no book is without its flaws. Two, perhaps three, are somewhat evident in *Peace and Violence*. First, the book is rather placid in its

use of language which is somewhat surprising because Tamuno is perhaps one of the most well-spoken Nigerians you can meet. Second, for documentation, Tamuno seems to have depended largely on the press, especially the Lagos-based newspapers and magazines. Perhaps for lack of time and resources, he did not cross-check much of what the press carried from the people involved. Yet we all know how biased the press can be.

Finally, *Peace and Violence* was long on documentation, but pretty short on analysis. Documentation, of course, has its uses. However after documenting events accurately, they are of little use unless they are analysed for the lessons they contain for the future. But then analysis implies taking a clear stand and from my experience with the professor — I was managing director of NNN for much of the time that he was chairman — life for him is all shades of grey rather than black or white as well.

Like Tamuno's *Peace and Violence*, the journal under review is also timely. The other day, Chief Anthony Enahoro, spoke of what he said was a need to re-examine our federal arrangement as soon as the military retires to the barracks next January 2. Chief Chukwuemeka Ojukwu, the ex-rebel leader, also spoke recently on the same subject. In his peculiar idiom, he said the country's problem was not its unity, "but the type of unity." Enahoro and Ojukwu seem to be articulating a prevalent opinion in the "south" that they are fed up with the status quo where the "north" seems to be permanently in control of power. Perhaps the journal can provide an answer to the frustrations of the Enahoros and the Ojukwus in the context of so-called northern domination. However, whether the journal does have an answer or not, I believe it is a useful guide — for a clue see the article in the forum column on the centre spread — to the debate on what really is the central national question facing Nigeria and what the answer is to that question.

ADAMU ADAMU S

DEFINITIONS  
IN HUMOUR

# Doctors

**L**aughter is said to be the best medicine. If this is true, doctors must be the best jokesmiths. And they are. I should know: I am surrounded by them. At home, at work, everywhere.

I was hoping someone will do his best in the new dispensation unfolding to change the situation of the country's clinics (*clean nicks, nicks cleaned out of all medicines*). I think I have seen part of my answer in Senator (Dr) Bello Katagum (I am writing history in advance. More about him later).

Since I joined, and enjoyed being with, a hilarious circle of medical practitioners in London in 1982, I had wanted take a cold, hard look at the profession.

The London circle comprised of Dr. Waziri Dogo-Muhammad, in private practice in Azare now, and Dr. M.D Ibrahim, in public practice in Abuja now. The third member, who died earlier in the year, was medical director of the FCT.

You can never hope to keep sealed lips when you are with the group, M.D in particular was always busy relating, counting, recounting, inventing, re-inventing, modifying or adapting one joke or epigram, but always to drive a point or teach something. I am sure he will recognise how I have proceeded in modifying one or two of his jokes here.

The following are variants of M.D's and Waziri's, adaptation from 19000 jokes or my own creation. I hope you enjoy them.

Two nurses were discussing private affairs:

**First Nurse:** Why did you break your engagement to Tom?

**Second Nurse:** He deceived me. He told me he was a liver and kidney specialist, and I found out that he only works in a butcher's shop.

"Why, you see, there is considerable difference between having faith in and having faith in you".

Economic difficulty is struggling to invent its own medical vocabulary and is fasting, changing perception of good old doctor otherwise known as medicine teacher.

**Teacher:** Do you know what an operating clinic is?

**Johnny:** Yes, ma'am. It is when you add insult to your injury.

For this hapless former patient the doctor is as bad as SAP.

**Patient:** The doctor said he'd be here on my feet in a fortnight.

**Visitor:** And did he?

**Patient:** Sure. I've had to sell my

Financial problems have taken many victims but this one is most celebrated. And inquisitive nurse tried to find out the nature of his problems.

**Hospital Nurse:** "You said financial problems brought you here?"

**Patient:** "Yes, I saw my tailor cross the road to avoid him, and way across I saw another creditor on the other side. I did not know what I hesitated and went under a car".

You must have often wondered whether, since every profession has a conspiracy against the laity, there is a conspiracy planned by doctors and pharmacists so that no one but can read their writing:

An invitation to dinner had been sent to the new doctor. In reply, the doctor received an absolutely illegible letter. "I must know if he has accepted the invitation," she declared.

"If I were you," her husband suggested, "I should take it to the doctor. A pharmacist can always read doctor's writing, however badly written".

The pharmacist looked at the doctor's notepaper which she had handed over, and, without waiting for her permission, went into his dispensary and turned a few minutes later with a note.

"There you are, Madam", he said. "That will be 50 Naira."

As a variant of *Ina ruwan wani da wani?* a doctor shuffled into a ward and instead of being a comfort to his patients, he made one faint. This proves that forgetfulness in doctors, though unpardonable, is rampant — and can be enjoyed.

The patient was convalescing after an operation for appendicitis. His friend asked him how he was getting along.

"Pretty well," was the answer. "After my first operation, they had to cut me open again. It seems the surgeon had left a sponge in me and they had to get that out."

"But you got over it all right?"

"Oh, yes, only I had another operation yesterday. They found a scalpel which had been sewed up in me by mistake."

"Surely you are all right now, though," the friend said encouragingly.

But the patient suffered a severe relapse, for just then the doctor hurried through the ward saying, "Has anyone seen my hat around here?" I left it somewhere yesterday.

Laughter may be the best medicine but if you suppose doctor takes his own prescription you are in for a shock — especially if the tablets are psychological. What is good for a medical goose is very bad for the doctor's gander. A sick smart alec found this out:

"As I understand, Doctor, if I believe I'm well, I'll be well. Is that the idea?"

"It is"

"Then if you believe you are paid, I suppose you'll be paid."

"Not necessarily"

"But why shouldn't faith work as well in one case as in the other?"



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